SOUTH MIDLANDS ARCHAEOLOGY

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

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It should be noted that the reports in this volume refer, in the main, to work carried out in 2001

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EDITORIAL

Welcome to volume 32.

The cumulative index to volumes 1-31, 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. For those with no computer I will provide a copy at cost; this is likely to run to 10 to 20 plus post and packing as the index is large.

Once again 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. I once again appeal to County archaeologists and peers to apply pressure to these defaulter.

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 33. Please send a note, however short, of any work carried out in the four counties.

Copy date for SMA 33 is 31st March 2003; please refer to Notes for Contributors.

Barry Horne AIFA
Editor

CBA South Midlands Spring Conference

This was held on Saturday 20th April 2002 at Buckinghamshire County Museum Church Street Aylesbury.

About 50 people, including 10 committee members, attended the 2002 Conference whose theme was Religion and Ritual in the South Midlands - Part 1: Prehistoric to Roman. The day opened with a talk from Andy Chapman on Neolithic and Bronze Age Ritual in the Nene and Upper Ouse Valleys. He was followed by Barry Horne covering Bronze Age Ritual in Bedfordshire and the morning session was closed by Jean Bagnall Smith discussing Worship at Woodcote. Mark Curteis opened the afternoon's proceedings with Ritual Deposition of Iron Age Coins in the South Midlands and the day was rounded off by Gary Lock with Ritual on the Ridgeway. All five speakers gave excellent and stimulating talks which offered many exciting and thought-provoking ideas.

Shelagh Lewis
ALBION ARCHaeology

Ariesey, Letchworth Cemetery Extension (TL 2012 3344)
Gary Edmondson, Sally Dicks and Rob Edwards

Archaeological evaluation comprised geophysical survey (undertaken by Archaeological Services WYAS) and trial excavation of the 13ha study area. This consisted of a small paddock and part of a large arable field on the western outskirts of Letchworth. During sand quarrying at the site in 1939 the Letchworth Museum curator, P Westall, identified a significant assemblage of Iron Age and early Romano-British artefacts, suggestive of an occupation site.

The geophysical survey had to be curtailed after completion of the scanning, which identified modern disturbance that correlated with quarrying visible on post-war aerial photographs.

Within the paddock the only features in those areas unaffected by quarrying were a series of furrows associated with medieval strip cultivation. A small quantity of late Bronze Age/early Iron Age pottery including a rim sherd were recovered from the subsoil, though no associated features were identified. The extensive sand quarries had been backfilled with debris from the local steelworks.

The arable field contained an undated boundary ditch and an isolated posthole. Deposits filling a dry valley in the chalk contained a small quantity of redeposited late Bronze Age/early Iron Age pottery. A small quantity of flint artefacts was recovered mainly from ploughsoil and the subsoil.

Biddenham, the Church of St James (TL 0140 4993)
Gary Edmondson and Stephen Thorpe

An archaeological watching brief monitored ground disturbance associated with insertion of a French drain around the exterior of the Chantry Chapel of the church. The chapel was dedicated to St William, by order of the Boteler family, for a priest to say daily mass for the soul of William Boteler.

The trench around the 15th century Chantry Chapel revealed an offset wall footing and the remains of an associated buttress. The slight contrast in the alignment with the standing wall, may indicate that this was associated with an earlier chapel. As this footing merged into the Chancel wall, it is possible that the structure was associated with the rebuilding of the Chancel in the 14th century.

The trenches also exposed an undifferentiated dark brown grave soil, which was at least 0.8m thick in the area south of the church. No burials or other archaeological features were identified beyond the church walls.

Biggleswade, Stratton Deserted Medieval Village (TL 2042 4417)

Excavations took place to the east of previous work at Stratton DMV, towards the eastern margin of the known area of settlement.

The earliest activity consisted of a small number of prehistoric pits, possibly late Bronze Age/early Iron Age in date. Roman pottery redeposited within later ditches indicates activity at this date in the vicinity. The area was first enclosed during the early medieval period (1150-1250) by boundary ditches. From the early medieval period a complex series of small ditched enclosures, including a circular one of c 12m diameter and a rectangular enclosure 16m long, were established in the south of the area. Groups of pits found in the south contained small quantities of domestic refuse indicating activity throughout the medieval period.

During the late medieval/early post-medieval period a series of three elongated pits measuring up to 10m x 4m were cut into the silted up ditches of the earlier enclosures. These contained well-preserved organic material. Plant remains show that they held standing water and a partial wooden revetment of stakes and planks suggests that they were kept open for some time. Two of the pits had a secondary use as refuse pits and they contained a range of artefacts including objects of wood and leather. The wooden objects include turned wooden bowls, a comb, a stool/workbench and two objects (reused to support the side of the pit) that have been tentatively identified as paddles from a water mill. These were made of ash and appear from their shape to be water worn with mortices and auger holes for fixing. The most numerous artefacts were leather: a minimum of 51 items, mostly shoes but also harness, a possible garment fragment and a costrel. The nature of the leather shows that it was the product of a cobbler's workshop; for example, the costrel had a large piece cut out, presumably for use in the repair of another item. The artefacts from the pits range in date from the late 14th to the late 16th centuries.

This part of Stratton was occupied until the area was emarked in the 17th century and dumps of rubble and tile within pits and hollows may mark the final disuse of the site.

Biggleswade, Dunton Lane (TL 2126 4381)
Mark Phillips

In November 2001 salvage recording work was carried out during construction of a balancing reservoir. Post holes, pits and ditches were found dating mainly from the early medieval (1150-1250) or high medieval (1250-1400) periods. It is likely that the evidence represents an expansion of the settlement of Stratton during the early medieval period, probably in the form of house plots fronting the south side of Dunton Lane. It is possible that this is the eastern end of occupation on both sides of the road. A short distance to the west a series of small enclosures surviving as earthworks extends for 200m along the north side of Dunton Lane.
Bedfordshire

Billington, Choakes Yard (SP 9423 2226)
Gary Edmondson and Andrew Thompson

Archaeological evaluation of a former builder’s yard comprised a desk-based assessment and trial excavation of 0.39ha of land.

The study area was situated at the edge of the medieval village, close to the junction of medieval routeways and adjacent to the site of Billington Manor. The evaluation situated to the rear of the property revealed no features dating to the medieval period. At the western end of the site were recut, deep, though undated features, interpreted as ponds/quarries that were subsequently infilled and a surface was constructed. In the eastern part of the site, construction of the modern yard and buildings had resulted in significant truncation. The only features identified in this area were an undated ditch and pond. Given the high level of ground water, it is possible that this was an attempt to drain an area of marginal land. Despite the apparently advantageous location, the land appears to have had only very limited potential for utilisation in the medieval period.

Bromham Mill TL 0105 5070
Gary Edmondson and Stephen Thorpe

A watching brief was undertaken to monitor ground disturbance associated with the excavation of drainage trenches in the central courtyard area, surrounded by the standing buildings. The present mill buildings, situated on the west bank of the River Great Ouse, mostly date from the 18th century or later. However, documentary evidence suggests that the site had been used for a considerably longer period, with a mill in the area recorded in Domesday Book.

The monitoring of the drainage trenches revealed a number of undated walls. Generally, the brick walls correspond to divisions of the central courtyard area shown on 19th century maps. Two clusters of wall-footings, mostly limestone, appear to define previously unrecorded phases in the history of the site, with buildings encroaching on the central courtyard area. The drainage trench also exposed the upper part of a large pit, probably a well, which had been deliberately backfilled with limestone rubble. No datable artefacts were recovered from the exposed fill of this feature.

Clapham, Oakley Road (TL 0220 5280)
Gary Edmondson, Tony Walsh and Ian Beswick

The archaeological evaluation of the route of the A6 Clapham bypass identified an Iron Age and Romano-British farmstead on the lower ground near the River Great Ouse. In advance of construction of the road an area of 1.7ha was fully excavated. The majority of features lay in the central part of site, decreasing in intensity, both towards Oakley Road to the north and southwards to the river.

A small quantity of residual artefacts attest to Bronze Age and earlier use of the site. The earliest features on the site were a cluster of pits situated on the higher ground and dated by associated pottery to the early-middle Iron Age. It may be significant that during the excavation this area remained workable when the surrounding area flooded.

A sequence of enclosure systems were identified which originate in the late Iron Age. Only the intermittent traces of several curvilinear ditches were identified. These may have been associated with two possible roundhouses defined by drainage gullies, 9-10m in diameter.

In the late Iron Age/early Roman period a new rectilinear enclosure system was established, extending beyond the limits of the investigation. There was considerable range in the size of the land parcels, with the smallest measuring 14m by 11m.

The later enclosures were associated with a trackway, orientated north-east to south-west, with a possible perpendicular track to the west. Large quantities of Roman pottery, including regional imports and Samian, were recovered from the ditch fills. The only structure associated with the enclosures was a carefully constructed T-shaped oven, situated in the corner of a land parcel adjacent to the trackway. The southern continuations of these ditches were sealed by alluvium, dated elsewhere in the middle Great Ouse to the late Roman period.

In the early-middle Saxon period the area beyond the alluvium contained five grubenhauser, clustered into three distinct groups. No contemporary boundaries were identified, though the distribution of the structures may suggest that the enclosures of the previous system, possibly surviving as hedges, were utilised. An unburnt cremation burial truncated the alluvium, suggesting that it was associated with this phase of occupation of the site.

A series of furrows, which only survived to the south, indicate that the area was farmed in the medieval period. A series of large intercutting pits may define medieval quarrying in the north of the site. The majority of artefacts from the pits were considered to be residual from earlier contexts. The lack of associated artefacts suggests that this area was some distance from the contemporary medieval settlement.

Elstow, Progress Park (TL 0430 4683)
Gary Edmondson, Andrew Thompson, Rob Edwards and Stephen Thorpe

Archaeological evaluation of the 11.5ha site adjacent to the Elstow Brook was undertaken between 2000 and 2001. It comprised geophysical survey (Archaeological Services WYAS), desk-based assessment and trial excavation.

The evaluation revealed a variety of features, preserved below masking deposits of alluvium, concentrated in the low-lying area south of the brook. These included pits,
ditches, organic patches and areas of burning. Artefacts included flints and a Roman brooch. The number of features declined up slope towards the pond and towards the brook. To the north of the brook a recut boundary ditch contained a small quantity of Iron Age pottery. In contrast the higher ground south of the pond contained modern features associated with the former use of the area as an allotment. The only earlier feature in this area was an isolated boundary ditch of post-medieval date.

The peripheral areas of the site were the subject of a watching brief. This revealed an undated former course of the brook and a series of recut ditches, possibly of medieval date, which partitioned the higher ground to the north of the brook. Very few artefacts were recovered from the features, suggesting the area was located away from habitation.

**Harrington, Land at Goswell End** (TL 0388 3096)

Julian Watters

A trial trench evaluation followed by open area excavation was carried out during 2001 on 0.6ha of land at Goswell End, Harrington. The site lay within an area of known earthworks which had been surveyed during the 1980s and interpreted as medieval settlement remains.

Excavation revealed evidence for human activity dating from the 12th century onwards. A few isolated pits and post holes were excavated but did not form any recognisable structures or areas of occupation.

Most of the excavated features proved to be hollow ways - linear depressions formed by constant trampling of established pathways. One of these features (recorded on maps as Long Lane) was particularly well defined. It was 6m wide, 1.1m deep and had been re-defined on at least one occasion. Other hollow ways had been cobbled and provided with drainage gullies.

The majority of the ceramics dated to the 13th-15th centuries and came from a spread of dark, buried soil. This was interpreted as a cultivation layer, the result of a deliberate deposition of midden material imported from another site in order to improve soil fertility.

**Old Warden, Swiss Garden, Aviary** (TL 153 446)

Matt Edgeworth and Stephen Thorpe

An archaeological excavation was carried out on the interior of the ruined aviary structure, to obtain information that would facilitate its reconstruction. The remains of the aviary are situated on the eastern side of the early 19th century Garden, which was designed in the 'picturesque' style. The low walls of the twelve-sided structure survive in partially ruined condition but the metal cage superstructure it supported is no longer extant.

The interior was excavated in order to locate the former floor level, entrances and any interior structures. Several test pits were dug to examine wall foundations. The outer wall was shown to be continuous with no gaps or other evidence of the location of entrances. A former gravel floor level was reached, with numerous pieces of cage and other artefacts found in the demolition layer above. These reveal much useful information about the form of the metal superstructure. The walls of an interior building were also uncovered. The axis of symmetry of both inner and outer buildings is aligned along the principal east-west axis of the Garden itself, perhaps indicating that they were important elements of the original Garden design.

**Pavenham, St Peter's Church** (SP 9917 5594)

Andrew Thompson and Mark Phillips

Excavation of a trench 8m long was carried out alongside a collapsed section of the southern churchyard boundary wall in advance of reconstruction work.

The earliest recorded feature was a possible well, dug into undisturbed boulder clay. The feature contained pottery, dating to the 12th-13th centuries. Its uppermost fill was sealed by a buried topsoil horizon, which also produced a single sherd of medieval pottery.

The remains of two north-south running walls, around 1m apart, cut the buried soil horizon and were partly covered by it, presumably following demolition. The date and function of these walls are unknown. However, their position does correlate with an earlier (more westerly) line of the eastern churchyard boundary, depicted on pre-20th century maps.

The foundation trench for the southern churchyard boundary wall cut the earlier north-south walls. A previous collapse event was evident. This had been repaired by a rough dry-stone wall, which may have included a pedestrian entrance to the churchyard. At some point after the repair, a layer of rubble-contaminated soils around 0.8m deep was dumped against the north side of the churchyard boundary wall.

Two possibly 18th or 19th century burials were cut into the dumped soils. No burials were found in the eastern half of the trench, beyond the earlier, more westerly line of the eastern churchyard boundary.

**Salford, Whitsundolles Farm** (SP 9197 4042)

Mike Luke and Mark Phillips

During September and October 2001 an excavation was carried out as part of a continuing watching brief in advance of gravel extraction. The investigation focussed on late Iron Age and Roman features, c 300m from a previously recorded concentration of pits and postholes.

A water pit, 5m in diameter and 1.1m deep, contained a small amount of late Iron Age pottery and a quantity of
Bedfordshire

animal bone. The lower fills were waterlogged and contained preserved organic remains including three worked timbers, one of which may have been part of an upright from a ladder. Two small concentrations of pits and postholes were identified within 40m of the water pit and are likely to be contemporary, although they contained no dating evidence.

A pair of ditches defining a track or droveway were orientated northeast-southwest, turning through 90° to the southeast. The fills contained a small amount of animal bone and Roman pottery.

The trackway is probably part of the field system investigated 500m to the southeast in previous investigations by BCAS and to the west by Petchey (1978). It probably forms part of a pattern of fields that contained settlement activity now believed to have extended over 50ha.

Reference
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 374 380)
Mark Phillips and Mike Luke

Archaeological evaluation comprising seven trial trenches was undertaken in advance of a planning application for residential development within an area of known Roman settlement.

Earlier prehistoric activity was indicated by residual material (struck flints probably Neolithic or Bronze Age in date) found in later features. Although the sherds of late Bronze Age/early Iron Age pottery were also residual, their presence suggests domestic activity in the vicinity.

The earliest dateable feature was a substantial late Iron Age boundary ditch which contained domestic debris. This might suggest a pre-Conquest origin for the settlement. Roman features were located in the southern half of the study area and included ditches, pits, a posthole and cobbled surface. Many of these features contained pottery, a quernstone, animal bone and fired clay suggesting domestic activity in the vicinity. Roman brick, flue and roof tile fragments were recovered suggesting the presence of a substantial building in the vicinity. Whilst the precise nature and extent of the Roman settlement in Shefford is still uncertain, it seems reasonable to characterise it as a rural settlement that included 'high status' elements. One trench contained only modern quarrying and two others did not contain features.

Stotfold, the Church Of St. Mary the Virgin (TL 2202 3667)
Gary Edmondson and Julian Watters

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken to monitor ground disturbance associated with drainage works on the eastern side of the church. This extended around the exterior of the South Aisle and Chancel, exposing the wall footings. Documentary evidence indicates that the Church of St Mary has its origins in the 12th century, with significant remodelling in the medieval and post-medieval periods.

The investigation allowed the wall footing of the 14th century south aisle to be recorded. It would appear that the Chancel had been completely rebuilt and enlarged during the 19th century, with no evidence of earlier wall footings. A fragment of a rare type of decorated medieval floor tile was recovered from Victorian disturbance adjacent to the South Aisle. This artefact probably came from the church, indicating the presence of a floor that no longer survives. It is possible that it was removed during the Victorian 'restoration' of the building. No burials were exposed, though evidence for probable Victorian disturbance was identified.

Wilsotead, Luton Road (TL 062 431)
Mike Luke and Rob Edwards

Following evaluation by geophysical survey and trial excavation, four areas (totalling 1.3ha) of this housing development were subject to open area excavation. There was limited evidence in the form of ditches and isolated pits for activity during the early-middle Iron Age and the late Iron Age/early Roman periods.

The earliest firm evidence for settlement appears from the late 1st century AD and comprised a ditched enclosure system which contained a roundhouse, other unspecific structures and pits. One of the latter was substantial enough to have served as a water pit or well. An enclosure on a slightly different alignment was established in the later part of the Roman period. It also contained settlement-type activity. Associated with the latter was a shallow pit, containing up to five deliberately placed sheep skulls.

Furrows spaced at 5m intervals and presumed to be medieval in date were located within the excavation areas. These corresponded to earthworks recorded in advance of machining. A large water pit, situated in an area where furrows were absent, is believed to be of medieval date on the basis of the pottery in its fills.

Yeldon, St Mary's Church (TL 0112 6715)
Matt Edgeworth

Excavations took place inside this 13th century church in advance of the restoration of pew bases. Five areas were excavated down to a maximum depth of 0.27m.

Post-medieval disturbance had removed much archaeological stratigraphy, but a pre-church layer (cut by the foundation trenches for the walls) was revealed in several places. Post holes presumably for internal
scaffolding, with the bases of wooden posts still surviving, were also found. The south wall of the nave (taken down when the south aisle was added in the 14th century) was located. An earlier but undated wall, running along its outside edge, was recorded.

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Bedford, Howard Chapel (TL 0514 4981)
Nigel Wilson

During April 2001 a watching brief was undertaken during the conversion of the Howard Chapel, Mill Street, into a nightclub. Several large rubbish pits were identified towards the southern extremity of the site, in an area which had previously been the basement of the chapel school. St Neots Ware pottery dated to the 11th or 12th centuries and a few animal bones were recovered from the fills of these pits. A single burial was also located when a footing trench was excavated towards the northern end of the chapel. No evidence of structures earlier than the 18th century chapel was discovered, perhaps indicating that the area behind Mill Street was open ground during the medieval period.

Kensworth, Bury Farm (TL 0317 1902)
David Fell

Test-pitting was carried out at Bury Farm during February 2001, to determine the presence of archaeological deposits within a range of farm buildings, prior to their conversion for housing. No archaeological remains were found during the investigation, but the work revealed that the west wall of the barns has a complex structural history, probably commencing in the 17th or 18th century.

Leighton Buzzard, 52-54 Lake Street (SP 9237 2476)
Nicola King & Nigel Wilson

An evaluation was undertaken on land at 52-54 Lake Street, Leighton Buzzard in May 2001. The site was situated south of the medieval town. Historical research revealed that the area comprised largely open ground during the 19th century, with a row of terraced houses set back from the street frontage. Fourteen trial trenches were excavated. These revealed that the site contained very few archaeological remains, but an alignment of medieval ditches was present, running parallel to Lake Street. These were interpreted as medieval boundary or drainage ditches.

Meppershall, High Street (TL 3688 1342)
Nicola King & Nigel Wilson

During September 2001 an evaluation at a site at Meppershall was undertaken. Eleven evaluation trenches were excavated, and archaeological remains were found in five of them. One trench produced several features containing Roman remains, and a feature in another trench also indicated Roman activity. Two trenches each contained one feature that produced no dating evidence. The remaining trench containing archaeological features was located on the edge of a large linear feature of probable medieval date.

Bedfordshire

Biggleswade Reinforcement Main
(TL 0970 4660 to TL 2140 4020)
Bob Zeepvat

During July 2001, excavations were carried out on three sites along the route of a water main being constructed from near Cardington to Biggleswade, a distance of some 17km. Desk-based assessment and geophysical survey undertaken in 2000 had identified nine sites of possible archaeological interest along the route. These sites were subject to topsoil stripping under close archaeological supervision. Three, at Moxhill Farm, Old Warden and Langford Road, proved to contain significant archaeological features, and were subsequently excavated. The Moxhill Farm site contained features of late Iron Age to early Roman date, and eight contemporary cremations. At Old Warden, a complex of late Iron Age and early Roman ditches and pits was examined, probably marking the edge of a settlement in the adjoining field. At Langford Road, a small group of early Roman ditches was excavated. A watching brief was maintained on topsoil stripping on the rest of the water main route, but little of archaeological significance was revealed. A report on the project is to be prepared for Bedfordshire Archaeology.

FOUNDATION ARCHAEOLOGY

Land at Biddenham (TL 025 508)
Roy King

The work consisted of twenty-nine 50m evaluation trenches. Archaeological activity was revealed in 20 of the trenches, although no dating evidence was present in many of the features. The evaluation showed a wide spread of dispersed archaeological features across the development area, although many of these were very difficult to interpret due to the sparse dating evidence. The only concentrations of features were present in a possible area of settlement previously identified by aerial photography and also to a lesser extent in the northern part of the westernmost field. Five circular features were identified by aerial photography and three of these were located on the ground by geophysical survey. Two of these features were round barrows, which survived only as ring ditches. These were sampled during the course of the evaluation. The other feature sampled by the trial trenching consisted of a foundation cut for a demolished Post-Medieval windmill. The two remaining circular features were not sampled by either the geophysical survey or the evaluation; as the features could not be
precisely located through aerial photography, due to the steep gradient on site.

Land at Stotfold (TL 219 365)
Roy King

The work consisted of twenty-seven 30m evaluation trenches across an area of approximately 32ha. This evaluation had shown a wide dispersal of archaeological features across the development area, although many of these were very difficult to interpret due to the sparse dating evidence. There also appeared to be a large number of probable agricultural features, most of these were likely later medieval in date. There appears to have been localised settlement during the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age on the south-facing slope of the hill, which may have involved relatively low intensity settlement. Late Iron Age activity was present on the southern floodplain with restricted Late Iron Age/Romano-British activity towards the crest of the hill in the northern part of the site. Early medieval activity was generally present towards the crest of the hill and was also present in the vicinity of Trenches 19 and 20, with restricted evidence of medieval activity elsewhere. It is possible that this activity was originally more extensive and had been destroyed by medieval and later ploughing. Overall there was a generally low level of artefactual or ecofactual evidence for human domestic activity across the site area. The most likely interpretation is that the medieval settlement focus was not within the site area and that the majority of the features present in the evaluation trenches were either boundaries or agricultural in nature, with occasional occupation-type features. The limitations of archaeological evaluation mean that it is impossible to be certain of the full extent and interpretation of these features.

Fig 1. Stotfold.

MANSHEAD ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
Caddington, Manor Farm (TL 066 199)
Ren Hudspith

Observations along the course of a service trench across a paddock to the south of Manor Farm, Caddington (Fig 2) revealed small scatters of Roman potsherds and tile, Medieval sherds, burnt flints and pot-boiler stones and a burnt conglomerate quernstone fragment on the upcast spoil heaps.

The Roman sherds were mainly of a hard sandy/gritty fabric type (similar to finds from the Gatehouse Field

Fig 2. Site plan. Caddington, Manor Farm.
Romano-British site (Hudspith, 1989) and probably of local origin; other Roman pottery wares found at Manor Farm included a brown colour coated sherd and sherds of finer greywares (Verulamium/Much Hadham wares?). The representative rim forms found included fragments of mortaria, bowls, dishes and jars.

At least 4 ditch sections (on east-west alignments) and other features were observed along the line of the trench, with sherd scatters on the spoil heaps corresponding to the two southernmost ditch sections (close to the Luton Road) and also associated with a possible pit containing burnt material.

Two ditch sections and a buried surface, which included bricks and pegtile, were also observed to the north of the field, near the 19th century farm buildings.

The topsoil covering the natural clay with flints appeared to vary in depth from 30-60cm, depth below surface (DBS), perhaps indicating ridge and furrow cultivation, or tree root disturbance. The deeper soil deposits may contain relatively undisturbed archaeological material.

Further service trenches, dug alongside the modern farmhouse and outbuildings revealed well constructed 19th century brick foundations, but no obvious evidence of earlier building work apart from a truncated chalk surface (c 30cm DBS) alongside the modern trackway into the farmyard.

Caddington, Folly Wood/Folly Lane (TL 058 224)
Ren Hudspith

Observations were made along the ploughed out course of a metalled trackway (adjacent to a public footpath and enclosure hedgeline) in a stubble field north of Folly Wood, Caddington. The Viator (1964) identified the line of the trackway as the course of a Roman Road (No 213).

The metalling was probed and found to be 30cm DBS and extend up to 4m from the field edge (including a far from straight section alongside Folly Wood). Where the metalling was visible on the surface it was seen to include rounded flints (including prehistoric struck flakes and fired flints) as well as tile fragments. Sections were drawn across the field end of 'Folly Lane' and across the wood ditch and bank.

Many thanks to the landowner, Mr V Samms, of Manor Farm, for allowing access to his land.

Chalton, Manor Farm (TL 02 26)
Ren Hudspith

The extensive known Romano-British site (Hudspith, 1991) at Chalton Manor Farm (Fig 3) was revisited in November 2000. On this occasion the field under cultivation (A) was walked and a large quantity of Romano-British sherds and tile as well as medieval sherds and worked flints were recovered. Aerial photographs indicate an extensive area of cropmarks c 2ha in extent at the foot of the hill, perhaps enclosures around a villa, or a small hamlet comprising several farmsteads.

In Field B (where a limited excavation had been carried out by the Society in 1962 (Simco, 1984) the dense stubble was walked and Romano-British sherds and tile recovered from the few areas of clearance.

A grid, with baseline along the straight post enclosure hedge separating Fields A and B, was established and a series of small test pits was dug at 10m intervals. Further trial trenches (a-f) were dug to expose buried stonework located by probing (Figs 3 and 4).

Within the area of test pits the plough soil was found to be only 30-35cm deep above the uniform grey chalk marl (due in part to landscaping work carried out by the present landowner on the field to facilitate improvements in drainage and cultivation).

In trenches (a) and (b) (Fig 4) a feature was identified, comprising a short line of sandstone blocks (a doorway or remnant of foundation?) running northeast-southwest set immediately on to the chalk marl, within a 10cm deep black-brown clay soil (occupation layer?) containing organic material, charcoal, potboilers, potsherds, tile fragments and animal bones.

Finds included a fragment of decorated Samian ware (Form Dr 36) and sherds from other Romano-British vessels of c 1st-2nd century date as well as residual late Iron Age/prehistoric sherds.

The shallow depth of the archaeological deposits in this area of the field suggests that they will probably be obliterated by ploughing.

Many thanks to the landowner, Mr R Aldred, for allowing the Society to carry out fieldwork on the site.

Reference
Viator 1964; Roman Roads in the south-east Midlands, 466.

Eaton Bray, Harling Road Nursery (SP 986 186)
Ren Hudspith

During September 2000, successive fieldwalking surveys were carried out (with the permission of the landowner, Mr B Farr) at the Harling Road nursery, Eaton Bray, a known late Iron Age and Romano-British site (Hudspith, 1993, 1994,1998).

The land had been deeply ploughed prior to a reversion of use to grassland. Some 5kg of Romano-British sherds were recovered, as well as Roman roof tile fragments (tegulae); Iron Age, medieval and post-medieval sherds. The
Fig 3. Fieldwork at Manor Farm, Chalton.

Fig 4. Manor Farm excavation, Chalton.

assemblage appears to comprise typical coarseware sherds from cooking vessels, tableware and storage jars of 1st-4th century date, with, possibly, the major part of the assemblage dating from the 2nd-3rd century. A few sherds of imported Hofheim, Rhenish and Samian wares were also found, of c 1st century date suggesting continuity of occupation from the pre-Roman Iron Age period. The site, in Roman times, may have been part of the estate of the Totternhoe villa c 1.2km to the north.

Other prehistoric sherds were also found, including flint tempered sherds of early Iron Age date and part of a burnished jar with a suspension lug, of similar design to a sherd fragment found in the Iron Age ditch on Billington Hill.

Totternhoe (SP 98 22)
Ren Hudspith

The known Romano-British site at Totternhoe, SP9822 (Hudspith, 1997) was revisited, following the attention a number of metal detectorists were giving to the area.
Ploughing had revealed distinctive scatters of stone and tile, perhaps indicating former buildings, with a dispersed scatter of Romano-British potsherds.

Aerial photographs (held by Beds County Council) show possible field boundaries/ditches in this area of Tottenhoe, on both sides of the former railway line.

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NATIONAL TRUST

Gary Marshall

Tottenhoe Castle (SP 9789 2210)

Located on an outlier of the Chilterns, Tottenhoe is known for its medieval stone quarries, which are mentioned as early as 1131 when they were acquired by Dunstable Priory. The 'castle' is actually a Norman motte and bailey, perched rather dramatically on the chalk outlier. Despite the quarrying it is remarkably complete, retaining a small motte surrounded by an inner bailey, together with a large outer bailey sealed by a broad bank and ditch running across the width of the outlier.

The site is a Scheduled Ancient Monument, owned by Bedfordshire County Council but managed by the National Trust. Very little is known about the site. Therefore, in order to test its archaeological potential, a resistivity survey was carried out by National Trust volunteers. Surveys were carried out over the inner and outer baileys and over the approach to the outer bailey. The inner bailey has been affected by quarrying and therefore produced little of interest. The outer bailey, however, revealed a complex of high and low resistance features covering virtually the entire area. These initially proved difficult to interpret until the plot was processed with a low sun angle. The results suggest that the complex is probably the remnant of an Iron Age or Romano-British field system, created with a series of irregular enclosures. If this is the case then it adds weight to the conclusion that the motte and bailey incorporates the remains of a much earlier prehistoric enclosure.

The discovery of this field system, and the discovery of concealed tracks leading up to the outer bailey, provides further evidence of the importance of the site and its archaeological potential. The area protected by scheduling is therefore likely to be extended.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY

Dunstable, Queensway Hall (TL 019 228)
Steve Hayward

Archaeological excavations were undertaken on the site of the former Queensway Hall ahead of a planning application by Asda, following trial trench evaluation (SMA 31 (2001) 11). Ditches and pits dating to the later part of the 1st century AD were uncovered and the quantity of pottery indicated that the site was associated with settlement, although no evidence of buildings was present. While the site may have had an agricultural basis, it is possible that it was associated with the early establishment of the Roman town of Durocobrives. It is unclear whether abandonment in the late 1st or early 2nd century AD represents a purely local change of land use or has wider significance.

Great Barford Bypass (TL 102 513 - TL 159 554)
Steve Morris and Ian Fisher

Geophysical and fieldwalking surveys were undertaken along the proposed route of the A421 Great Barford Bypass. The survey identified nine potential sites including a pit alignment, enclosure systems and possible kilns, as well as artefact scatters dating from the early prehistoric to the medieval periods.

OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY

Dunstable, 88 Union Street (TL 0127 2205)
Robin Bashford

Between December 2000 and May 2001 OA undertook a watching brief at Union Street. An evaluation carried out by OAU in May 2000 identified two Iron Age or early Roman ditches, which ran from east to west across the site and may have defined a trackway. Both these ditches were observed during the watching brief, together with a probable pit and a well, both of which were of unknown date.

Stotfold, Fairfield Hospital
(TL 5206 2352) (TL 5206 2352)
Dave Thomason

Limited trial trenching within the grounds of the Hospital indicated that areas of late Iron Age/Romano-British activity identified in an earlier BCAS investigation do not extend into the study area. Possible evidence for 19th century steam ploughing was recorded.
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

ALBION ARCHAEOLOGY

Buckingham, Prebend House Lodge (SP 6932 3359)
James Pixley and Matt Edgeworth

A watching brief was maintained during limited building foundation repairs. The site was within the supposed boundaries of the Saxon burh, opposite the former site of the church. Sections were obtained through deposits to a depth of about 2m, but these consisted mostly of 18th and 19th century foundations and unfortunately there were no surviving Saxon or medieval layers or features. However, the foundations did cut an ancient palaeochannel (former course of the Great Ouse) at a depth of about 1.8m. There were no finds from this feature.

Hartwell, The Church Of The Assumption Of Our Lady (SP 7950 1250)
Jeremy Oetgen

At the request of the architects, Rodney Melville and Partners, an archaeologist attended the site following removal of rubbish and builder’s debris from the crypt of the 18th century church. The visit was undertaken during the closing stages of a programme of extensive renovation (see also watching brief reported for the year 2000).

Observations were made of the structure of the crypt, which was originally octagonal in plan, but had been subsequently modified by the insertion of brick walls containing a series of tombs along its eastern side. There is also evidence of a blocked up opening in the original eastern wall, which is visible behind some of the tombs. Measured survey was not undertaken. It is possible that some of the tombs are those of members of the Lee family who were originally interred within the medieval church, which has recently been shown to have lain some distance to the north.

Milton Keynes, Monkston Park (SP 883 382)
Martin Wilson and Drew Shotliff

In February 2001 an archaeological evaluation of 4 hectares of land on the eastern flank of Milton Keynes, at Monkston Park, was undertaken. The work was occasioned by the discovery of archaeological deposits during the preparation of land for self-build housing plots.

Trial excavation identified two foci of archaeological features on the western side of the development area, on the western slope of a low ridge overlooking the River Ouzel. The northernmost focus largely comprised shallow ditches or gullies (including two parallel ditches) with occasional shallow pits and post holes. Flint debitage from these features is indicative of a prehistoric date.

The southernmost focus, of greater density and particularly good state of preservation, comprised pits, ditches and post holes, dating from the middle Iron Age to the Roman periods. A deposit of stones cut by a later feature is believed to be the foundation of a structure. The fills of the pits and ditches generally contained organic material and pottery, indicating domestic waste. A fragment of bronze smelting waste suggests that metallurgical production was practised at this site during the Iron Age.

A trench placed between the two foci exposed a further three pits of uncertain date, whilst another trench to the east located a series of undated post holes, one of which contained a second fragment of smelting waste.

Subsequent gradiometer survey located numerous linear features, effectively clarifying the spatial organisation of the Iron Age and Romano-British features encountered during trial excavation. These included a large, rectilinear enclosure which was entirely missed by the trenches. Overall, the results indicate the presence of the remains of Iron Age and Roman settlements, on which pre-enclosure agricultural boundaries were later superimposed.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES AND CONSULTANCY LTD

Chiltern Chalk Streams Project
Jonathan Hunn

This project, commissioned by the Chilterns Conservation Board, was a preliminary study of the historic environment (archaeology, buildings and historic landscapes) of the Chess and Misbourne rivers, and was undertaken during the spring and early summer of 2001. The aim of the project was to characterise the historic environment of these two chalk streams so that the relationship between physical and man-made influences of the river valleys can be better understood and managed appropriately. The study comprised desk-based research, including examination of all readily available sources of historical, cartographic and archaeological information, and a comprehensive walkover survey of the two valley bottoms: the river Chess from Rickmansworth to Chesham (8 miles) and the river Misbourne from Uxbridge to Great Missenden (15.8 miles).

The most important aspect of this project has been the development of a methodology for recording the historic environment of these streams, and for identifying and classifying the pattern of exploitation from historical and archaeological sources. The ultimate aim of the project is to inform and guide stream management decisions in the future. To this end, the project has produced detailed digital data on each segment of the two rivers and a GIS-based information system to enable rapid access to the historic environment data.
Haversham, Hill Farmhouse (SP 8362 4366)  
David Fell & Nigel Wilson

An evaluation was undertaken on land at Hill Farmhouse, prior to the construction of a large detached garage. The site was close to the location of a known Roman building and a short length of wall of possible Roman date was present. Two further walls, dating to the 18th or 19th centuries were also found. No finds were recovered.

Haversham, Hill Farm Office (SP 8367 4366)  
Nigel Wilson

During March 2001 a watching brief was undertaken at Hill Farm, during the construction of an extension to the farm office. No archaeological features or finds were observed.

Milton Keynes, 6 Mullen Avenue, Downs Barn  
(SP 8599 3998)  
Martin Lightfoot

In August 2001 a watching brief was carried out during topsoil stripping for housing development on this site. Two archaeological features were identified: a shallow ditch or gully, and an amorphous scatter of burnt material. Both features contained significant amounts of pottery dating to the Iron Age - Romano-British transitional period (c 50 BC - AD 100).

Milton Keynes Heritage Map  
Bob Zeepvat

In 2001 ASC was commissioned by English Partnerships to undertake research for the preparation of an updated version of the MK Heritage Map. The original version of this was produced in 1982 by the former Milton Keynes Archaeology Unit. The updated map should be available in 2002.

Olney-Lavendon & Cold Brayfield Water Main  
(SP 8890 5230)  
Nigel Wilson

A watching brief was undertaken during the construction of a new water main between Olney, Lavendon and Cold Brayfield, in January 2001. The route, which followed existing roads, passed close to the Roman settlement at Ashfurlong. However, no archaeological remains were observed.

Newport Pagnell, flood defences (SP 8660 4470)  
Nicola King

Between July and September 2001 a watching brief was carried out during the construction of flood defences at three sites in Newport Pagnell; Kickles Farm, Castle Meadow and Riverside Meadow. No significant archaeological features were encountered at any of these sites, though post-medieval ceramics, clay pipes and building materials were common unstratified finds. The Kickles Farm site produced evidence of ridge and furrow cultivation, clearly apparent in the subsoil and as features in the adjoining fields. Castle Meadow produced abundant unstratified medieval pottery and revealed the footings of a post-medieval building in the children’s playground. In Riverside Meadow the excavated footings revealed the make-up layers of the riverbank and the adjacent yard.

North Crawley, 32 High Street (SP 9280 4470)  
Nigel Wilson

During January 2001 a watching brief was undertaken on an extension to 32 High Street, North Crawley. Three-footing trenches and an area stripped for a conservatory were examined. No archaeological features or finds were observed.

Penn, Rose Cottage, Tylers Green (SU 9070 9394)  
Jonathan Hunn & David Fell

An evaluation comprising a desk-based assessment and trial trenching was undertaken in the garden of Rose Cottage in June 2001. The site is situated in the centre of Tylers Green, which was a centre for the production of medieval floor tiles. The assessment produced evidence for the development of the site since the late 18th century, but did not indicate that archaeological remains were present on the site. A single trial trench and test-pit were excavated. The trial trench revealed parts of two structures, a post-medieval kiln and a building with tile-built walls. Eleven examples of medieval Penn type decorated floor tiles were found, along with a small assemblage of pottery and roof tile wasters.

Ravenstone - water main renewal (SP 8490 5060)  
Nigel Wilson

During April and May 2001 a watching brief was undertaken on behalf of Anglian Water during the laying of new water mains through Ravenstone village. Every open cut more than 300mm wide was subject to the watching brief. No features or artefacts were identified during the project.

Singleborough to Great Horwood Sewer  
(SP 7662 3187 to SP 7699 3109)  
Neville Hall

During October 2001 a watching brief was maintained during the construction of a sewer pipeline between Singleborough and Great Horwood. The easement corridor traversed a plough headland of medieval origin and ridge and furrow of both medieval and post-medieval date.
Buckinghamshire

Stoke Goldington, water main renewal
(SP 837 487 to SP 834 475)
Nigel Wilson

In September 2001 the construction of a water main to the south of Stoke Goldington village was monitored. As the main was laid by drilling, monitoring was limited to the drilling holes, set at approximately 100m intervals along the route. No archaeological features or finds were observed during the project.

Winslow Zone Main Trunk Renewal (Mursley-Wing)
(SP 816 292 - 875 216)
David Fell & Nigel Wilson

Following a break in construction occasioned by the foot & mouth epidemic, archaeological monitoring on the final section of this project was completed in July 2001 (see SMA 31, 12). The final section, past Wing Airfield to the A418 Aylesbury - Wing road, was constructed by drilling. As a result, observations were limited to the drilling pits, dug at c.100m intervals along the route. Although this section of the route passed through a known area of Iron Age/Roman activity south of the airfield (CAS 6229), the limited disturbance caused by the access pits meant that no archaeological features were recorded along this part of the route.

BABTIE GROUP

Summary Archaeological Report
Jonathan Mullis

Introduction

Babtie Group was commissioned by Buckinghamshire County Council to carry out archaeological watching-briefs under the conditions attached to planning applications CC/5499 and CC/7000 for a series of developments at Aylesbury High School, Walton Road, Aylesbury. The watching-briefs, which centre on SP 8248 1325, at a height of 83m AOD, were:

Site 1, the new Music Centre development (AHS 2000);
Site 2, the replacement tennis courts and long jumps site (AHS 2000-2); and
Site 3, the classroom extension development (AHS 2001)

A Project Design was submitted to and approved by Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service on behalf of the Local Planning Authority. The 3 watching-briefs were undertaken between 14 September 2000 and 26 February 2001. Only the Site 1 watching-brief uncovered deposits of archaeological interest, which dated from the Prehistoric, Roman and Post-Medieval periods.

Background

The Aylesbury High School site lies on a ridge of Portland Limestone which runs north-east to south-west mainly on the west side of Walton Road. This limestone ridge provides a free draining focus for settlement within the clays of the Vale of Aylesbury and, as such, is known to have attracted occupation activity since the Neolithic, with further settlement in the Bronze Age, Roman and Saxon periods also identified.

Archaeological Results

Site 1. Despite the high level of post-depositional disturbance evident on the at the new Music Centre site, a number of archaeological features were discovered. The post-deposition disturbance meant that in addition to a large proportion of post-medieval glazed earthenware and miscellaneous modern sherds of pottery the overburden contained residual sherds of medieval, Roman and Late Belgic date pottery.

The earliest dateable pottery is from the early-middle Iron Age, but the majority of the assemblage is datable to the Roman period; primarily of a probable 2nd century AD date. The vessels recovered are indicative of a domestic assemblage, comprising tablewares, storage jars and cooking pots, presumed to represent an accumulation of settlement debris. A total of 132 sherds of pottery (2kg) were recovered together with 143 fragments of animal bone (1.5kg).

Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of assemblage by percentage</th>
<th>Period % of Assemblage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pre-Belgic Iron Age</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late Belgic Iron Age</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Roman</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Area A, contained a large pit (003) to the south of the site, which yielded securely dated Roman pottery. The pit was fairly steeply sloping, roughly circular in plan, and was interpreted as a clay pit. A residual sherd of pre-Belgic pottery was also recovered from this pit.

Also in Area A a layer of rammed limestone was interpreted as the remains of a floor surface (021) to the south of the site. The area was bounded by a cut [016] on the east side, interpreted as a north/south orientated foundation trench. Although this trench contained no surviving evidence for masonry, it is possible that the trench was robbed out, or may have only contained a timber wall. The floor surface yielded a Roman hobnail, Romano-British pottery and part of an iron brooch. The robber trench yielded Romano-British pottery and a hobnail.

Area B, revealed an east/west orientated ditch (45) and a pit (48) both of which contained pre-Belgic early to middle Iron Age sherds. These were the earliest features identified on the site.

Area C revealed a large northeast/southwest orientated ditch cut [028] and [023] which was recorded in the sections of two construction trenches. The fill yielded sherds of a number of late Belgic vessels within a securely datable context, representing primary deposition. This feature was
interpreted as a boundary ditch, the line of which could be projected under the existing school buildings.

Site 2, the tennis courts replacement site, and Site 3, the classroom extension site, yielded no significant archaeological features. It is clear that the previous development and landscaping of the playing fields will have had a detrimental impact on these sites.

Conclusions
The range of pottery types and artefacts from the Site 1 new Music Centre site revealed evidence of occupation, dating from the early/middle Iron Age to the Roman period. In view of the previous scarcity of material from the Iron Age in the vicinity, this is significant in providing missing evidence for activity from this period in the Walton area. The material hints at the presence of an Iron Age settlement close to the Walton Road, which has not yet been pinpointed.

The presence of Iron Age activity along Walton Road appears to back up the assertion that subtle differences in the underlying micro-geologies and topography of the area have great importance in determining land use (Farley 1995). The special qualities of the Walton area have continued to attract settlement throughout all periods, from the Neolithic onwards.

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COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

Halton, RAF Halton, Princess Mary Hospital
(SP 8780 0860)
Mark Brett

In October 2001 an archaeological evaluation of land at Princess Mary Hospital, RAF Halton, revealed a small number of undated or post-medieval features including postholes, pits and a possible ditch terminus. The evaluation also demonstrated that there had been considerable levelling and landscaping across the site, evidently contemporary with the construction of the hospital itself in the 1920s or the later residential housing estates.

Denham, The Lea (TQ 0490 8600)
Laurent Coleman, Tim Havard, Mark Collard, Simon Cox, and Ed McSloy

Introduction
Following evaluation in 2000 (Coleman 2001, 17), the first phase of area excavation in advance of gravel extraction was carried out by CAT on behalf of Harleyford Aggregates Limited. The excavation, covering an area of c 6ha, took place between May and September 2001 and included the
Buckinghamshire

site access road, a drainage ditch around the site and the southern part of the extraction area (Fig 1).

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

Mesolithic, Neolithic, and Bronze Age

A large assemblage of worked flint material dating to the earlier part of the prehistoric period was recovered during the excavation. The earliest dated material recovered comprised a small number of residual blades and bladelets of probable Mesolithic date. Earlier Neolithic material was similarly restricted to residual flint artefacts, in this instance two leaf-shaped arrowheads. A large proportion of the remaining worked flint (over 300 pieces) comprised waste flakes and would appear to be contemporary with later prehistoric, probably Bronze Age, activity. A single sherd of cord-pressed pottery represented the earliest pottery to be recovered and was probably of Early Bronze Age date.

Late Bronze Age

The focus of Late Bronze Age activity appeared to be located in the north-western part of the excavation area and comprised a segmented double-ditched feature orientated northeast-southwest. A series of contemporary field system ditches then extended from this feature towards the south-east to form a series of rectangular enclosures. Dating evidence from these features comprised a quantity (130 sherds) of thick-walled, coarse flint-tempered pottery, some of which featured applied finger-tip decorated shoulder cords. This pottery was representative of the Deverel-Rimbury tradition.

Iron Age

Iron Age activity appeared to be focused on the eastern side of the excavation area and comprised a probable roundhouse gully with a centrally located hearth together with a number of associated pits and postholes. Pottery dating to this period was also excavated from the rectilinear field system and the segmented double-ditched feature suggesting that these features were still in use at this time. A possible cremation burial was identified within the rectilinear field system at the western edge of the zone of later prehistoric activity. Pottery dating to the Late Bronze Age and Iron Age was recovered from the cremation, which had been deposited at the centre of a shallow sub-circular pit c. 6m in diameter. The status of the cremation is not definitive due to the very small quantities of bone recovered during the excavation of the charcoal-rich fill of the feature. However, it should be noted that virtually no skeletal material, either animal or human, was recovered during the excavation. The loss of this material is probably due to the acidic nature of the soils, though it did survive when thoroughly burnt, for example within the pyre identified during the evaluation (Coleman 2001, 17). The pottery of Mid to Late Iron Age date was represented by some 900 sherds in fine flint or quartz tempered fabrics. Diagnostic forms consisted mainly of slack-shouldered jars or bowls, some with strap handles.

Romano-British (first and second centuries AD)

A rectilinear enclosure on a new orientation was constructed through a gap within the double-ditched Late Bronze Age feature. The only Romano-British feature identified within the eastern end of this enclosure was a curvilinear ditch. A large circular pit c. 8m in diameter was also dug at this time. This pit was located to the south of the enclosure, was dug to the water table, and may therefore have simply been a watering hole for livestock. A Romano-British ditch, oriented southeast-northwest, respected the location of this pit by curving around it in a series of segmented lengths. A further curvilinear ditch dating to this period enclosed an area at the south-eastern corner of the enclosure area. The Romano-British ditches represent a much less intensive and perhaps less formalised pattern of land-use than the preceding prehistoric field system. A number of pits and ditches dating to this period were also identified in the access road trench. Early Roman pottery was scarce and comprised a few sherds of local wares, Verulamium region whitewares, and samian. Large numbers of iron nails of probable Roman date were recovered, mostly from possible cremations distinguished by charcoal-rich fills again containing small quantities of burnt bone. These features were located to the east of the enclosure in the vicinity of the pyre site identified during the evaluation. Two coins were recovered during the excavation; a badly worn mid to late 1st century AD dupondius and a radiate copy of late 3rd century date.

Romano-British (third and fourth centuries AD)

Fewer features dating to the later part of the Romano-British period were identified, but they contained the majority of the Romano-British finds recovered from the excavation area. A single, richly furnished, late Roman burial was excavated on the line of the access road to the west of the main excavation area. No trace of human bone survived in the grave, which was aligned north-northeast-south-southwest. Iron nails were found close to the grave-cut corners suggesting the use of a coffin and the nature of the grave finds suggested a female. Most of the grave goods were clustered close to the southern extremity of the grave and it is clear that, with the possible exception of the ring, these were not worn but placed close to the head or feet. Some of the finds were also deposited during the back-filling of the grave. The most spectacular find was of a necklace consisting of over 300 small glass beads and four jet spacer beads. The glass beads occur in a variety of forms and colours and include 25 'gold-in-glass' types which incorporate gold foil within a protective layer of clear glass. Other finds from the grave include seven jet hairpins all with faceted cuboid heads, a decorated jet finger-ring, a shale spindlewhorl, a bracelet of bone or antler with a copper alloy fastening, a copper-alloy bracelet with crenellated decoration, three blue glass gaming counters and a pottery dish. The form of some of the items within the grave (the hairpins, bracelets and beads), indicated a late Roman date, c. AD 280-400. Certain attributes (the use of black glass
beads, the bone bracelet and the jet finger ring), suggested a date late within this range.

The probable watering hole was also backfilled during this period and most of the later Roman pottery, which comprised the majority of the total assemblage of 1200 sherds, was recovered during the excavation of the this material. A mid to late third-century date range is suggested for this material due to the presence of Oxford mortaria, lower Nene Valley colour coated wares, and late forms in local greywares.

**Medieval and post-medieval**
A single ditch was identified running east-west across the excavation area. This feature was probably a post-medieval field boundary ditch.

**Discussion**
The excavations to date have revealed a shifting pattern of various types of activity across the current excavation area. This can be characterised as follows: the rectilinear field system focused on the north-western part of the excavation area was established in the Late Bronze Age and may have continued into the Iron Age. At this time a roundhouse and post-built structures were constructed and storage pits were excavated on the eastern side of the extraction area. The pattern of land-use was then radically changed when the Romano-British rectilinear enclosure was established in the 1st century AD with possible occupation activity to the west and only occasional ditches to the east. This enclosure may have been used until the later part of the Romano-British period when a richly appointed inhumation burial was interred within it. The dead may also have been disposed of in possible cremation burials to the east of the enclosure during the Romano-British period. The distribution of features and the finds recovered from the Romano-British features suggested the presence of a settlement focus, possibly with substantial buildings, to the north-west of the current excavation area. No activity dating to the post-Roman or medieval periods was identified although there was some limited evidence for agricultural activity dating to the post-medieval period.

**Reference**
Coleman L 2001; Denham, The Lea, SMA 31

**COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGICAL (TRAINING) SERVICES**

**Hanslope, Gordons Lodge Farm**
Pat Lawrence & Jonathan Thomas

Prehistoric (Centred on SP 771 482)
Staff and students conducted a comprehensive programme of non-intrusive archaeological fieldwork, on an area of land known historically as Hanslope Ground. Digital Terrain Modelling, Geophysical Survey and the interpretation of aerial photographs highlighted a number of linear features, enclosure ditches and plough damaged earthworks that are thought to be prehistoric in date. Whilst lithics and ceramics found fieldwalking provide physical evidence of land use during the late Palaeolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age.

**Romano-British (SP 772 481)**
During a fieldwalking exercise over one hundred pieces of broken *regula* were recovered from a dense but restricted limestone surface scatter. A subsequent resistivity survey has revealed the footprint of a rectangular structure measuring approximately 12m x 14m.

**Saxon and Medieval (SP 772 481)**
In the light of new evidence gathered from aerial photographic and geophysical surveys, a training excavation designed to determine the extent of; and possibly reinterpret the findings of two previous archaeological evaluations (Buckinghamshire SMR Card No 1408) was conducted. New discoveries included a 20m long ditch with a possible cesspit at one end. A substantial amount of faced and moulded stonework, which included pieces of ornate door surround, window mullion and a head shaped corbel. The small finds included an almost complete 12th century curb bit with associated bridal fittings and sherds from a rare Lyveden Stannion 'A' Ware, face jug. Pottery analysis conducted by Paul Blinkhome suggests that the site was occupied between 1100-1225.

**FOUNDATION ARCHAEOLOGY**

**Aylesbury, Weedon Hill (SP 812 157)**
Roy King

The results of the evaluation indicated that there were dispersed Romano-British features across the study area. No clear evidence of settlement activity (such as posthole clusters or pit groups) was identified during the evaluation. Features of Romano-British date were concentrated on the crest of the hill (Trenches 1, 3, 11, 12 and 17) with less frequent features on the slope (Trenches 4, 15 and 18). A single sherd of late Iron Age/Romano-British pottery was recovered from Trench 13 and is likely to be a residual sherd in a medieval plough furrow. The majority of features identified are likely to be representative of Romano-British field systems and other features on the periphery of a settlement. The pottery assemblage included material dating from the 1st century through to the 4th century and is indicative of settlement throughout the Roman period. All the features identified during the evaluation were truncated and overlain by medieval agricultural remains. Modern ploughing has in places penetrated through to the top of the underlying natural and has removed all upstanding traces of the Medieval ridge and furrow.
Buckinghamshire
THE HERITAGE NETWORK LTD

Olney, land off Timpson's Row (SP 890 513)
Chris Turner

Seven trial trenches were located over the proposed development area, positioned across the footprints of the new dwellings. Despite the proximity of the site to the planned medieval town, only two features of potential archaeological interest, a large pit and a tree hole, were encountered. Both features contained sherds of undiagnostic and abraded Romano-British pottery, chiefly shell-tempered wares from the kiln sites at Harrold, approximately 10km to the north-east. Although the presence of post-medieval material in the same fill of the pit suggests that the Roman sherds may have been imported on to the site, there still remains a possibility that this material indicates the presence of Roman activity in the vicinity. This work was undertaken on behalf of Phoenix Consulting.

JOHN MOORE

Hedgerley, Knight's Rest, Moat Farm Barns, 74 Hedgerley Lane, Gerrards Cross (SU 9777 8830)
John Moore

The archaeological watching brief during excavation for new footings exposed parts of two medieval walls relating to the either the original Preceptory of the Knights Templar or its subsequent ownership by the Hospitallers.

High Wycombe, The Courtyard, Rear of 25-31A Frogmoor (SU 8637 9326)
John Moore

An evaluation of the site found that no deposits of medieval date survived on the site. The earliest (apparently waterlaid) deposit is dated to perhaps the 16th century, later used for horticultural activity. A distinct change of landuse appears to have occurred in the seventeenth century with the area surfaced with a substantial depth of chalk. This suggests the need for heavy-duty yard surface for perhaps wagons. Above the chalk surface was an undated deposit presumably imported to raise the area at the rear as successive road surfaces of Frogmoor were laid.

Ludgershall, The Warrens, Piddington Road (SP 65785 17701)
John Moore

An archaeological watching brief during excavation for footings for a new garage exposed a ditch and pit of 17/18th century date.

Penn, Stumpwell Cottage, Church Street (SU 90955 93360)
John Moore

The site lies within the medieval settlement of Penn, which is first recorded in the 13th century. Documentary and archaeological evidence demonstrate that Penn had become the centre of a major floor tile manufacturing industry by the 14th century. It supplied high status sites including Windsor Castle and the Palace of Westminster.

An evaluation of an area proposed for an extension to the existing property was undertaken. The evaluation found one post-hole of late medieval date and a piece of worn glazed tile, a product of the local industry.

Princes Risborough, Town Farm Barns, Church Street (SP 8075 0345)
John Moore

Archaeological investigation took place prior to the construction of seven residential units in the area of the former farmyard of Town Farm. A sherd of early/middle Saxon pottery indicates activity of this date in the vicinity of the site. Residual early medieval pottery may indicate that the Church Street frontage was occupied in this period. By the late 15th century the area was a ‘backyard’ for a property on Church Street, and was sub-divided in the 17th century before the farmyard was separated from a small garden/orchard in the 18th century.

Wing, Land Adjacent to 6 Church Street (SP 8814 2261)
Amy Gray Jones

A late 19th century - 20th century agricultural soil extended across the evaluation area sealing 19th century features which possibly relate to the site’s occupation by Parish rooms.

MICHAEL FARLEY ARCHAEOLOGY

Mentmore, St Mary’s Church (SP 9038 1976)

Excavation of drainage trenches was observed at St Mary’s church, Mentmore. The church was substantially restored in 1857, shortly after the construction of the adjacent Mentmore House for Baron Rothschild. Ancaster Stone was used extensively in the restoration.

The watching brief noted early footings which indicated that the chancel, said to have been rebuilt during the restoration, may also have been extended at that time. Other footings recorded at the east end of the north aisle, indicate that the modern vestry may be on the site of an earlier vestry of which there is an account prior to the restoration. The north
A few burials were disturbed by drainage trenches in the churchyard and a possible wall was noted. One soakaway revealed what was apparently a buried soil, and another an Upper Greensand (fluvial) feature. Attention is drawn to the presence of an undated mound in the churchyard and a perimeter churchyard bank, the latter possibly of Mentmore House period.

Chalfont St Giles, St Giles Church (SU 991 935)

A watching brief carried out whilst a gas pipe trench was being dug on the north side of the parish church of St Giles, Chalfont St Giles, exposed only one feature of archaeological interest, a probable short length of mortared flint wall close to the tower and not apparently related to the present church structure.

Cuddington, St Nicholas Church (SP 7374 1121)

During a watching brief at St Nicholas, Cuddington, when french drains were being laid and soakaways dug, the external footings of the tower were unexpectedly found to be present just below existing ground level. A substantial build-up of 'churchyard soil' had been anticipated as the floor within the tower is about 0.5m lower than the external level. The reason for this difference is not clear. The floor level inside the tower may have been designed to be lower, in which case its external face would have been built against the face of a cut, or it might have been lowered after the tower's construction in the 15th century. If the latter was the case, this probably took place not long after construction. A lowering would have required the internal face of the footings to have been restructured. An earlier Royal Commission observation that the west door jambs had been lengthened may support the latter interpretation, however as the internal walls of the tower are plastered and not visible, the matter could not be resolved.

Parts of two decorated floor tiles, possibly made in the Brill-Boarstall industry were recovered. Some nine burials which were probably articulated, were also recorded, and other disturbed human bone.

Wing, All Saints Church (SP 880225)

The unblocking of a former doorway into the first-floor ringing floor of the 15th century tower of Wing church was observed. The blocking was shown to have probably taken place in the 19th or 20th century. The 'original' opening when revealed, was faced with plaster but lacked stone dressings, having apparently been cut through the rubble core of the tower. This suggests that the opening, as exposed, was unlikely to have been an original feature of the tower.

NATIONAL TRUST

Gary Marshall

Ashridge, Duncombe Farm (SP 4969 2140)

A watching brief was maintained by the National Trust during repairs and alterations to this farm, which is located in the Aldbury Valley on the Trust's Ashridge estate. A number of re-used timbers forming the floor joists at first floor level were recorded. The farm building was the subject of an earlier vernacular buildings survey carried out by the Trust in 1994 and the observations made as part of the watching brief confirmed the conclusions presented in this earlier survey. The farm has an original timber framed four bay hall house, the middle two bays of which were probably open to the roof. A substantial range, timber framed, was then added on the west end of the hall in the early 17th century, creating a 'T' plan. Subsequent additions were made to the west range in the 18th century, when the original timber framed parts of the building were cased with brick.

Boarstall Tower (SP 6242 1425)

A detailed geophysics survey in the garden at Boarstall has successfully mapped the remains of the 15th century (?) manor house, which was demolished in the 1770s after the tragic accidental death of the son of the Aubrey family. An earlier geophysics survey conducted in 1999 had confirmed that the footprint of the house remains well preserved beneath the present lawn. The purpose of the project 2001 was therefore to repeat and extend the area covered by the earlier survey. The full outline of the house was successfully mapped by this survey, as was the outline of service buildings and yards shown on the detailed engraving of 1695 published in Lipscombe's History of Buckinghamshire. A topographical survey of the gardens is also underway to accurately map the subterranean earthworks, which surround the 14th century tower. The results of the geophysics will be transcribed onto this survey to pinpoint the precise location of the buildings and garden features which appear on the 1695 engraving.

Cliveden Canadian Red Cross Memorial Hospital (SU 9128 8450)

Cliveden is perhaps best known for the 'Cliveden set' and as the home of Nancy Astor, Britain's first female MP. Not surprisingly it is less well known for the dilapidated remains of the former World War II military hospital, which was erected entirely with funds raised by the Canadian Red Cross. Hidden away from sight on the south-east corner of the estate, this was actually the second purpose built
Buckinghamshire

Fig 2. Plan of the Red Cross Memorial Hospital, Cliveden.


The World War II hospital was built to the designs of Robert Atkinson and was erected in six months, comprising a series of brick buildings with cast iron windows and asbestos sheet roofs laid over prefabricated trusses. The buildings were arranged on either side of two main axial corridors. The administration block, together with the ear, nose and throat dept, X-ray dept, and dispensary were placed on the east side of the hospital. The laboratories, operating theatres, dining room and kitchen block were placed between the corridors, and the fifteen individual ward blocks were placed on the west side of the west corridor. Each of the ward blocks had a sun lounge at its west end.

The survival of these buildings to the present day provides testimony to the quality of their design and construction. Indeed, they were still in use until 1985 when the site was last used as an NHS hospital. Most of the buildings underwent only minor modifications and the original design and construction of the hospital can therefore be traced closely from the original plan drawings. Sadly, the buildings have been heavily vandalized and still retain large amounts of asbestos pipe lagging. The site is to be developed for housing in the near future. A detailed recording exercise has therefore been carried out by James Moir of Finial Associates in advance of the demolition of the buildings.

Hughenden Manor (SU 8610 9534)

A watching brief was maintained by the National Trust over repairs to the north and east fronts of Hughenden Manor near High Wycombe. The watching brief paid particular attention to recording evidence of former decorative
schemes and methods of 'penny' pointing applied to the building in the 18th and 19th centuries. It is known from engravings of the 19th century that the brick built house had been lime-washed, and this was confirmed by the discovery of lime wash on certain areas of brickwork, including that added by Edward Buckton Lamb during his alterations of 1862-3. On the east front evidence of yellow ochre was found beneath the lime wash, suggesting an earlier colour scheme dating from the late 18th or early 19th century. Evidence of a red ochre was also found on the north, south and east fronts, and this had probably been used as a means of unifying areas of brick repair and alteration carried out in the 1860s.

Stowe Gardens (SP 675 373)

Archaeological surveyors from the Exeter branch of English Heritage have just completed a topographical survey of the park at Stowe, in advance of a major restoration project, which will involve replanting nearly 4000 trees, repairs to the park buildings, and the removal of late 19th century hedges. The restoration process has been guided by combining archive evidence and archaeological evidence from the survey. The park at Stowe was first laid out in the 1640s. Subsequent 19th century additions to the park on the south and west sides of the gardens incorporate and preserve major blocks of ridge and furrow ploughing, which elsewhere in the locality have all too rapidly disappeared as a consequence of post war ploughing.

Recent excavations have successfully revealed traces of the original gravel paths around two of the garden buildings - the Queen's Temple and Cobham's Monument. These paths have therefore been restored on their original alignment. The arrangement of paths at Stowe is superbly recorded by an estate map of 1843 in the Huntington Library in California, but nevertheless the subtle detail of how the paths gradually merged and approached the various buildings is only made evident from archaeological excavation. This is usually done with a JCB, which is used to cut a series of trial trenches across the assumed alignment of each path. Careful removal of topsoil and overlying stratigraphy by this method can quickly reveal the bright yellow colour of the gravel against the brown clay/gravel subsoil, a contrast not always evident as a consequence of troweling since the ground dries out too quickly.

A major excavation for a water pipe across the south front encountered a stone footing for what is likely to have been one of the outbuildings - perhaps a stable - associated with the Tudor house at Stowe.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY

Broughton Barns Quarry (SP 9076 4056)
Andy Chapman

Archaeological trial excavation in 1996 revealed the remains of Iron Age and Roman field systems and settlement enclosures, and a watching brief has been maintained through four years of quarrying (SMA 30 (2000), 21 and SMA 31 (2001), 22). In 2001 two previously unknown C-shaped enclosures were located. In one a single un-urned and two urned cremations were recovered from the ditch, but there were no internal features. Charcoal from one of the urns has been radiocarbon dated to the early Bronze Age, and this urn also showed a complex sequence of deposition indicating how material had been carefully collected from the pyre site and equally carefully deposited in the urn. It comprised the following sequence (Fig 3):

(1) skull followed by long bone fragments in clean sand: a selected and clean bone deposit

(2) charcoal rich, grey-black soils, with some burnt soil and sparse small bone fragments: pyre debris

(3) clean yellow sand, a thin scatter of small bone fragments and burnt (reddened) sand: soils from beneath the pyre

(4) mixed deposit of grey-black soil with some charcoal and small bone fragments: the leftover mixed debris

Towards the north-eastern end of the quarry, much of the plan of a rectangular enclosure has been recovered. It had internal pit groups, one including a clay-lined oven, and the pottery is all dated to the early to mid 1st century AD. A linear ditch towards the northern side of the quarry was of later Roman date.

High Wycombe, The Rye (SU 874 924)
Peter Masters

A geophysical survey was undertaken on behalf of The Chilterns Conference, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty as part of the Chalk Streams Project. Few archaeological anomalies were detected in relation to the Roman villa remains. A short length of ditch and the possible remains of building rubble were identified. Other anomalies detected include a series of pipes, a former stream channel and associated spring, a field boundary and the possible outline of a building to the north of the present swimming baths.

Pitstone, Pitstone Quarry 2 (SP 950 650)
Tim Upson-Smith

Prior to the resumption of quarrying, a desk-based assessment and trial excavation was carried out on behalf of Castle Cement. Given the close proximity of a number of previously investigated sites, 150m of trial trenches were excavated, but the only features recovered were one modern disturbance and an undated shallow gully.

Upper Wittington, RAF Medmenham (SU 817 846)
Mark Holmes

Following an archaeological evaluation in 1998, a watching
brief has been maintained during the construction of new offices and associated landscaping at the site of the former RAF Medmenham. To date, the watching brief has revealed only a group of three undated pits and a fourth separate pit which contained a small quantity of Iron Age pottery.

OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY

Brill, 6 Highland Close (SP 65305 14086)
James Mumford

In October 2001 OA carried out an archaeological watching brief at 6 Highland Close. The work was commissioned by Kavan Davies Architecture Ltd and carried out in advance of construction of an extension at the rear of the premises. The watching brief revealed a large pit/quarry feature and a thick soil layer.

Brill, 18 The Lawns (SP 1420 6545)
Robin Bashford

In July 2001 OA undertook a watching brief at 18 The Lawns. No archaeological deposits or features were observed during the groundwork.

High Wycombe, RAF High Wycombe (SU 829 987)
Dave Thomason

OA carried out a field evaluation at RAF High Wycombe on behalf of Mott Macdonald Consultants for the Royal Air Force. The evaluation revealed only a single possible gully that was undated. OA also mapped the line of the ancient Grim's Ditch that crosses the base here.

Iver, Delaford Close (TQ 0405 8115)
Andy Norton

In October OA carried out a field evaluation at Delaford Close, on behalf of the Diocese of Oxford. The work was carried out in respect of a planning application for a new vicarage (Planning Application No. 01/00690/FUL). The evaluation revealed a modern garden soil over a possible ancient soil, which contained a fragment of modern garden soil. No features of archaeological interest were encountered.

Iver, St Peter's Church (TQ 0500 8130)
James Mumford

In October 2001 OA carried out an archaeological watching brief at St Peter's Church. The work was commissioned by the Diocese of Oxford, prior to a planning application for an extension to the north side of the church. The watching brief was requested by the church, in order to establish the presence, or absence, of surviving archaeological features relating to the Saxon church or pre-dating the church construction. It was necessary to establish the extent of both the disturbance of the proposed area by burials and the survival of earlier burials and features despite the later intrusions. The watching brief revealed that the area had been heavily disturbed by graves and burial chambers, and also construction debris from later alterations to the church and services.
Marlow, Widmere Chapel (SU 832 892)
Julian Munby and John Gill

The Grade II* listed Chapel at Widmere Farm was stripped of external render and its fabric recorded, in August 1999, by the Oxford Archaeological Unit. The 13th century chapel is of special interest, both in being on an estate belonging to the Knights Hospitallers and especially for the high quality of its original masonry. The roof is in a remarkable state of preservation, being very much unspoilt. Evidence was found for the changes in the walls when new windows were added in the 14th century and the survival of the original roof (with notch-lapped joints) was noted as a significant feature. A watching brief on the digging of drains revealed no significant buried features.

Meadle, Ivy Cottage (SP 795 065)
Robin Bashford

In June 2001, Oxford Archaeological Unit undertook a watching brief at Ivy Cottage, Meadle during groundwork associated with the construction of a new menage. Two undated south-east - north-west aligned ditches were revealed, that may represent the line of a former trackway. Two possible post holes were also undated. A post-medieval land drain was also discovered in the course of the work.

Milton Keynes, Belvedere Nurseries, Fenny Stratford (SP 8874 3395)
David Thomason and Greg Pugh

In December 2001 OA carried out a field evaluation at Belvedere Nurseries at Fenny Stratford. The work was carried out on behalf of Conserve-A-Tree Ltd and revealed features associated with a Roman field system. Features included probable boundary ditches and associated pits. The site is near both Watling Street and Magiovinium and appears to represent a field system orientated around roadways.

North Crawley, The Church (SP 9270 4475)
James Mumford

In October 2001 OA carried out an archaeological watching brief at St Firmin’s Church. The work was commissioned by Peter Gilbert Scott, architect on behalf of the Archdeaconry of Buckinghamshire, in advance of laying a new tile floor. The watching brief revealed 19th century floor make up and service ducting.

Olney, East Wing, Lavendon Grange (SP 9025 5365)
Robin Bashford and Alan Hardy

In January 2001 OA undertook a watching brief at Lavendon Grange. A north-south aligned rubble filled ditch and evidence for a possible 17th century garden feature were recorded during the watching brief.

Westcott, 7 Lower Green (SP 720 170)
James Mumford

In November 2001 OA carried out an archaeological watching brief at 7 Lower Green. The work was commissioned by Garfield Homes and carried out in advance of new development of dwellings. The watching brief revealed no archaeological deposit or features.

THAMES VALLEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES LTD
Compiled by Steve Preston

Amersham, Amersham Museum, 49 High Street
(SU 9565 9736)
Sarah Coles

A watching brief during construction of an extension to the museum located a flint-nodule wall below 19th century made ground, and chalk-flecked floor layers possibly associated with the wall. No closer dating was possible, although unstratified 18th/19th century pottery, a clay pipe stem and fragments of peg tile were recovered. A single flint spall could possibly have been prehistoric, or might have been a product of the use of flint in the walling.

Dadford, land adjacent to Grooms Cottage, Main Street
(SP 6680 3830)
Sin Anthony and Sarah Coles

Three evaluation trenches revealed 20th century pits, and a gully terminus. Residual and spoil-heap finds included pottery from the 17th and 18th centuries and a single sherd of Potterspury ware which could date from the later 13th century through to around 1600. These finds may be indicative of nothing more intensive than manuring.

Edgcott, Parish Church of St Michael and All Angels
(SP 6800 2280)
Sarah Coles

A watching brief during digging of a new drain and soakaway revealed nothing of archaeological interest.

Great Missenden, Church of SS Peter and Paul
(SP 9000 0101)
Andrew Taylor

A watching brief during the cutting of a new drain (entirely through made ground) observed a number of human burials.
Buckinghamshire

to the north of the church, some in brick-built vaults, and some disarticulated human bone. The association of only-partially decayed wood and copper-headed nails with some of the burials suggests a relatively recent date. Natural geology was not reached in any part of the trench. A single undiagnostic struck flint was the only artefact of note.

Milton Keynes, Tattenhoe Phase 2B, Site 33
(SP 82950 33750)
Kate Taylor

Six evaluation trenches uncovered a ditch across two trenches, and a probable pond or quarry. Finds from the pond ranged from a 14th century floor tile through 16th and 17th century brick to 18th century pottery and modern brick, tile and glass. Finds from the ditch included late medieval pottery and a single sherd of late Roman pottery; one 18th century sherd was probably intrusive and a late medieval date is preferred for this ditch. It was perhaps a field boundary rather than an extension of the known village to the west.

Old Amersham, Chimney Cottage, The Platt
(SU 9564 9719)
Andrew Taylor

A watching brief during groundworks for a new extension observed no archaeological deposits.

Old Amersham, Four Winds, The Platt
(SU 9567 9716)
Kate Taylor

A single trench revealed a quarry pit which had been backfilled in the 17th century. All the finds were of this date, and included 24 sherds of pottery, six fragments of clay pipe, four pieces of tile and a couple of animal bone fragments.

Old Amersham, The King's Arms, High Street
(SU 9566 9730)
Sarah Coles

Evaluation trenching located one pit containing pottery of the 11th to 14th centuries, and four 19th century pits.

Wing, All Saints Church (SP 88005 22560)
Lisa-Marie Hardy

A watching brief during installation of new central heating pipes inside the church revealed only that these were laid through layers of modern rubble and make-up.

Dr TOM WELSH

Milton Keynes, Old Wolverton (SP 802 412)

Traces of an oval earthwork were observed in July 2001, apparently predating the motte and bailey and garden earthworks there. It encloses an area 260m south-west to north-east, where cut by the Grand Union Canal, by up to 110m. It mainly comprises a bank or escarpment above a terrace or ditch, sometimes with counterscarp bank, but on the south-east is complicated by more recent features. The main fragments are (1) south-west of the church SP 80264123 to 80264130; (2) and (3) near the canal at SP 80384141 to 80434143, and SP 80464138 to 80454135; and (4) at SP 80404130 extending the line of the pond and pit towards a dry valley south of the Old Vicarage (now Longville Court). Between (1) and (2) the present scarp, ditch and counterscarp on the north-west side of the bailey, is only slightly offset from the expected line, suggesting reworking. North of this the oval appears to lie beneath the part of the garden built out from the slope. A plan and report suggesting an interpretation of this and later features has been deposited with Milton Keynes Archaeological Unit. One of the later features, which may assist interpretation of the Longville house and garden sites, is a former approach road, which crosses the park boundary at SP 80504126, towards an apparent bridge site at SP 80434131, between the pond and modern pit. I am grateful to David Went of English Heritage for going over these features with me in March 2002.

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER (FORMERLY UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM)

Richard Jones

Medieval Settlement and Landscapes in the Whittlewood Area: a pilot

Work continued throughout 2001 on this major multidisciplinary research project which seeks to understand the origins and development of divergent forms of medieval settlement (nucleated villages, dispersed settlements, hamlets, farmsteads etc.), set within their landscape, political, economic, social, demographic and administrative contexts. The project covers a block of twelve modern civil parishes straddling the county boundary of Buckinghamshire and Northamptonshire between Buckingham and Towcester. Several concentrated campaigns of fieldwork, deploying a variety of techniques, were undertaken. These can be summarised as follows:

Wakefield Lodge Estate (Potterspury, Northants) Centred on SP 738 425

Provisional survey of earthworks within ancient woodland on the Wakefield Lodge Estate
Nineteen blocks of woodland were walked on 50m transects to locate earthworks of all dates. The survey revealed the basic layout of the medieval copse system within this central part of Whittlewood Forest visible as low, broad banks and associated ditches. This had been severely truncated by the laying out of vistas and other parkland improvements made during the 18th century. Post-medieval woodland origins can be suggested for Oakley Spinney (SP 743 442) where remnant ridge and furrow was found within the copse. The location and identification of features depicted on a map of Whittlewood Forest drawn in c 1608 (NRO Map 4120) is of particular importance, since this source can now confidently be used as an accurate survey of other medieval features lying outside the bounds of this survey.

Akeley (Bucks) Centred on SP 708 378

A programme of excavated Shovel Test Pits within the village of Akeley

Twenty four Shovel Test Pits (STPs) were excavated across the village. The STPs (1 x 1m) were excavated in spits to natural, unless archaeological features were encountered when they were excavated stratigraphically. All spoil was sieved for artefacts. All vertical sections and horizontal plans were drawn. Despite the haphazard location of the STPs (dictated by access to private property), the results were encouraging. Quantities of Romano-British wares and Medieval wares were recovered, and from two STPs early medieval pottery. The results suggest a complex early village morphology, far more dispersed than the village appears today. Of particular interest was the lack of finds from the centre of the village, whilst early settlement foci could be suggested close to the church (SP 708 378) and towards Manor Farm (SP 711 376).

Whittlebury (Northants) Centred on SP 692 440

A programme of excavated STPs within the village of Whittlebury

Following the same methodology as that used in Akeley, eighteen STPs were excavated in and around Whittlebury. Once again, the results suggest a complexity of development which is invisible today. It would appear that the main focus of the early settlement - again pre-conquest - lay near the church. This itself, appears to lie within a large oval enclosure which may be Whittlebury’s burh. The southern extension to the village along the A413, however, appears to have been planned no earlier than c 1250.

Stowe School (Bucks) SP 674 375

A geophysical survey of the South Lawn and area north of Stowe Church

A resistivity and magnetometer survey of the South Lawn of the school and rough pasture north of the parish church was undertaken in order to identify features associated with the deserted medieval village. The results were negative, with the exception of the identification of a curvilinear feature running north from the churchyard boundary. It is possible that this marked the western extent of the village, which would not therefore have run onto the South Lawn. If, however, the village had once stood here, any evidence appears to have been removed with landscaping associated with the re-siting of the house.

Buckinghamshire

Various parishes - Akeley, Leckhampstead, Lillingstone

Fieldwalking within the Whittlewood Project Area

A total of 41 fields (4172.9ha) have now been walked within various parishes in the Whittlewood area. The fields are line walked (15m intervals) and artefacts collected by stint (20m length). This coverage has begun to reveal important trends in the reconstruction of both the Roman and medieval landscape. Several minor Romano-British farmstead sites have been identified, together with more major Roman occupation sites. The ubiquity of Roman pottery still leads to the suggestion that the area was less wooded than in later periods. However, areas where Roman pottery is absent might suggest important blocks of woodland at this period. These may well form the core from whence later Whittlewood Forest was to regenerate. In the medieval period, quantitative analysis allows the reconstruction of the mosaic of woodland and arable fields. However, it is now clear that a further factor needs to be taken into account, that of population level. There is a clear correspondence between higher densities of pottery scatter and higher levels of population. Fieldwalking has also revealed important areas of medieval occupation on the peripheries of the modern villages, notably at Leckhampstead. The reconstruction of the morphology of these villages will help to understand their post-conquest development and shrinkage. Importantly, fieldwalking is also producing early medieval pottery indicating activity, possibly occupation. More work needs to be undertaken to assess the implication of these findings in the light of the ‘Northamptonshire model’ which suggests retreat from the claylands in the post-Roman period. In addition to pottery, a number of flint scatters have also been identified.

More detail about the activities outlined above may be found on the project’s website at: www.le.ac.uk/clh/whittlewood/index.htm
Northamptonshire

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

ALBION ARCHAEOLOGY

Corby, Oakley Vale (SP 878 865)
Jeremy Oetgen and James Pixley

70ha of a major development on the southern outskirts of Corby was subject to archaeological evaluation. The work comprised a study of the historic landscape, fieldwalking, geophysical survey and trial excavation. Fieldwalking identified two concentrations of material: a scatter of struck and burnt flint on a plateau towards the middle of the survey area and a dispersed spread of medieval pottery on the western perimeter of the site. Geophysical survey and trial excavation did not identify any significant archaeological remains. The trial excavation identified a significant level of modern disturbance in the area, the result of ironstone extraction, agricultural disturbance and railway workings.

AOC ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP

Northampton, The Riding (SP 7571 6058)
Les Capon

The following summary comprises the results of an archaeological excavation undertaken by AOC Archaeology during November and December 1999, on the site of proposed development off The Riding, Northampton. This was the second excavation on the site, following Northampton Development Corporation’s Archaeological Unit’s programme of excavation between September 1981 and December 1982. The primary objective of that work was to locate the medieval Gobion Manor, and to ascertain the existence, or otherwise, of pre-Conquest settlement.

The recent work identified phases of activity, and securely dated deposits were recorded which can be equated with activities recorded during the previous work. The earliest activity took the form of a large quarry, in which a large stone foundation of the 13th century was found. This was sealed by layers of medieval made ground into which pitting had occurred. There was a large quantity of dumped ironstone rubble on site, some of which were demolition deposits, some just course components among layers of made ground. Two other structures were recorded dating to the 13th century, one of which seems to have survived until the 16th century. The wall was superseded by a short-lived ditch which was filled by no later than AD 1400, the same time as a decline in the fortunes of Northampton.

The site lies within the estate of the Gobion manor, an important property within the city walls, and the potential for locating the site of the manor itself was one of the aims of the investigation.

A horizon of burnt material was recorded dating to the 16th century which had burnt one of the 13th century structures.

Little activity except the establishment of another boundary ditch occurred on site until the 18th Century, but layers of made ground indicate episodes such as the 1675 fire, and the creation of the Riding Ground. A large pit was cut through the ditch in the late 18th century, and two stone drains were recorded of a similar date. Victorian activity on site was typified by the construction of a row of terraced houses. Following their demolition, basements were dug to the rear of the site, which were filled prior to any archaeological work on site. After this, the site had been abandoned as waste ground until the new development.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES AND CONSULTANCY LTD

Aston-le-Walls, Appletree Farm (SP 4837 4958)
Bob Zeepvat & Nicola King

In August 2001 a survey was undertaken of farm buildings at this location, prior to their conversion for office use. The present buildings, grouped around a square yard, represent a typical planned farm of the Victorian High Farming period, and were constructed by the Overstone Estate in the 1870s. The buildings are of ironstone and brick construction under slate roofs. Despite modernisation, mainly connected with the mechanisation of farming techniques, some original features remain, notably those relating to the provision of power for processing and other machinery, and the supply of water. Associated historical research shows that the present buildings replaced a complex of farm buildings, probably of 17th century date, which lay immediately to the south, fronting the farmhouse.

Cogenhoe, St Peter’s Church (SP 8302 6104)
Bob Zeepvat & Nigel Wilson

During February 2001 a programme of test pitting and a watching brief were undertaken at St Peter’s Church, prior to drainage installation. The test pits were located on the south side of the church around the tower, and the south-west end of the south aisle. The cutting of a drainage trench running along the south side of the path from the porch was also observed. The stepped footings of the tower were found to extend at least 1m below the present ground level. From the south-west wall of the aisle a pipe trench was excavated to a silt pit about 1m south of the aisle wall. In this trench three articulated burials were recorded and left in situ.

Hartwell, 6 Forest Road (SP 7855 5039)
Bob Zeepvat

In March 2001 an historic building survey was carried out on this property in advance of refurbishment. This semi-detached cottage is listed Grade II, and was constructed by the Grafton Estate in c 1840. The survey
revealed that the cottage had been subject to many internal alterations and additions, mostly during the last fifty years. Apart from the basic structure of the house, few internal features of the original cottage remained.

Rothersthorpe, Danesfield Farm (SP 7165 5667)
Martin Lightfoot

An evaluation of this site in 2000 has previously been reported on (SMA 31, 32). Between November 2001 and January 2002 a watching brief was carried out on excavations for the foundation trenches of housing being developed on the site. No finds were recovered and the only feature encountered was a medieval gully recorded in the evaluation stage.

Stoke Bruerne Plateway (SP 7413 5006)
Bob Zeepvat & Nigel Wilson

In October 2001 a programme of survey and evaluation was carried out on the southern part of this monument, prior to the construction of a footpath and viewing platform. An initial desk-based assessment confirmed that the plateway was in use from 1800 until 1805, when Blisworth Tunnel was completed. After the tunnel was opened the iron rails were lifted and used to construct a tramway from Gayton to Northampton. Three evaluation trenches were excavated by hand to examine the makeup of the trackbed, and to identify surviving structural evidence for the plateway. Originally there was a bank and ditch on the south western side of the trackbed, and a possible shallow ditch on the north eastern side. No surviving rail or stone sleeper blocks were discovered in the trenches. The stone makeup for the trackbed was identified in each trench, with a better state of preservation in each successive trench going northwards away from Stoke Bruerne village. Partially obscured by the north eastern side of the trackbed, part of a possible stone culvert for a stream was exposed in the southernmost trench. An earthworks survey and a metal detector survey were also undertaken as part of the project. No significant metal finds were made.

HERITAGE NETWORK

Church Brampton, Fox Covert (SP 7215 6490)
David Hilleston

Archaeological evaluation was undertaken prior to the development of the site as an extension to the Northamptonshire County Golf Club. The work comprised a woodland survey, by David Hall, and the excavation of six trial trenches.

Evidence from the woodland survey indicated that the site may have formerly been part of the medieval open field system, which was left to go wild. Post-medieval sand quarries and earthwork banks were also identified. Although the site is located within a known area of archaeological interest, which suggested a high potential for the discovery of features and artefacts from a range of historic and prehistoric periods, no features or finds were revealed by the archaeological evaluation.

Wollaston (SP 90 62)
Helen Ashworth

Open area excavation was undertaken on land to the south of the town during the summer and autumn of 2000. This followed evaluation stages in the previous year (see SMA 30 and 31).

Post-exavcation work has been on-going during 2001, both on the site records and on the artefacts and ecofacts recovered during the excavation. Spot-dates from the pottery indicate that the site was occupied from the mid 5th century to the 12th century. Evidence of cloth working, including three ceramic spindle whorls and a number of worked bone needles and pin-beaters, were also recovered, primarily from the sunken feature buildings. Personal items, such as iron knives, double-sided bone combs and dress pins were also found. None of the artefacts found on the site are uncommon on Saxon sites in the region. So far there is no evidence that this was a particularly high status settlement, but it is unusual in that it appears to have been continuously occupied for so long.

A further phase of excavation is scheduled for Spring 2002, and the evidence from this site will be reported on in due course, along with the material from the earlier phases of fieldwork.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY

A43, Towcester to M40 Dualling Project
Andy Mudd

Excavations took place on the following sites in Northamptonshire (see also Oxfordshire).

Silverstone, Fields Farm (SP 683 461)

This Iron Age and early Roman site was discovered in the watching brief during earthmoving (Fig 1). The site consisted of three roundhouse gullies within a trapezoidal enclosure and pit groups that contained a total of about 80 pits. In the north-west corner there was a smaller enclosure, defined by a deeper ditch of two phases with an entrance facing east. The middle fills of the later ditch contained five infant burials, while the upper fills contained a large quantity of domestic refuse.

Silverstone, Shacks Barn Farm (SP 681 455)

Geophysical survey and trial trenching were undertaken on
Northamptonshire

Whitfield, Whitfield Turn (SP 607 399)
Part of a Roman settlement, dating from the early 2nd to 3rd centuries AD, was excavated within the road corridor. Features comprised mainly ditches with few other features, but included two pottery kilns dating to the 2nd century AD. These appear to have been used to make bowls and jars in a sandy grog-tempered fabric.

A6 Rothwell and Desborough Bypass (SP 799 816)
Tam Webster, Charlotte Stephens, Chris Jones, Rob Atkins

As a further stage of archaeological mitigation within the corridor of the proposed bypass, a programme of trial trenching was undertaken on behalf of URS Thorburn Colquhoun. The trenches were targeted at suspected archaeological sites highlighted from the previous surface collection and geophysical surveys. The results confirmed the presence of three sites of archaeological interest; an Iron Age settlement, a pit alignment, Roman enclosures and an undated trackway. There were few associated finds.

A6 Rushden and Higham Ferrers Bypass (SP 967 682)
Steve Hayward

Six trial trenches were excavated on land off Newton Lane, Higham Ferrers, as archaeological mitigation works in connection with the proposed bypass. The site had been identified as part of a probable Roman settlement through previous surface collection and geophysical survey. The excavation confirmed the presence of Roman remains in the form of substantial ditches. No structural features were discovered although quantities of finds suggest that there was occupation nearby, probably with a focus west of the proposed road corridor.

Blatherwycke Boundary Cross (SP 983 969)
Steve Hayward

An archaeological recording action was carried out at the request of English Heritage, East Midlands Region, at the former site of the Blatherwycke Boundary Cross (National Monument 29713). The medieval stone boundary cross originally stood on the parish boundary between Blatherwycke and King’s Cliffe, but was displaced in February 1998 by a combination of tree root disturbance, nearby drainage works and vegetation clearance. A small excavation located the in situ broken base of the cross shaft partly under a willow tree. The cross itself had been kept in a grain store nearby; an inscription from 1835 was noted on one side.

Bozeat Quarry (SP 897 600)
Chris Jones

Previous evaluation had identified archaeological remains covering about 9ha, and excavation was undertaken prior to the commencement of quarrying by Hanson Ltd. Two areas of Romano-British occupation comprising linear ditch
systems and smaller rectangular enclosures were excavated. Thirteen pottery kilns and four inhumations and one cremation burial were recovered within the northern area and a single inhumation burial in the southern area. In both instances features extend onto adjacent areas and will be subject to an ongoing watching brief as the quarrying progresses across the intervening area.

Brigstock, Hall Hill (SP 947 853)
Alex Thorne

A watching brief took place at the request of the owner on two test pits at Hall Hill, Brigstock. These showed that an introduced topsoil and subsoil overlay natural limestone. The ground had previously been graded in 1976, prior to the construction of the current house, removing all the original soil profile up to a depth of 1.5m over the garden area, so only very deep features will have survived. The single feature observed was not fully excavated but is thought to be an infilled well.

Clopton, Home Farm (TL 0630 8035)
Tam Webster

An archaeological watching brief was carried out during the excavation of footings for new dwellings on land adjacent to Home Farm. The features found included pits, two possible gullies and a brick floor, but none pre-dated the 19th century.

Crick, A428 Bypass (SP 720 580 & 720 590)
Dennis Jackson and Jim Brown

A watching brief undertaken during the construction of the Crick bypass revealed no archaeological features relating to the Iron Age, Roman and early-middle Saxon settlement remains at the nearby Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal site. Evidence for past use of the landscape was limited to traces of the medieval open field system, and possible quarry pits containing sherds of Roman pottery.

Earls Barton, Mallard Close (SP 8536 6458)
Rob Atkins

Part of an Iron Age and Roman enclosure system, previously identified by geophysical survey and confirmed by trial trenching, was investigated on behalf of Samuel Rose Ltd, Archaeological Consultant to Spacewall Ltd. A small square enclosure of late Iron Age date had a 3m wide entrance on the western side and contained postholes and possible
storage pits, but no definite structures (Fig 3). Pottery from the ditch suggests around two centuries of use, from the 2nd or 1st century BC to the second quarter of the 1st century AD. There is evidence for crop processing and the large quantities of animal bone imply a mixed farming regime. There is also secondary evidence for small-scale iron working and antler working.

By the mid 1st century AD, the enclosure was replaced by a succession of boundary ditches. Two posthole structures and a stone-lined well were also uncovered and kiln waste suggests nearby local pottery production. A T-shaped corn drier or malting oven was constructed in the eastern part of the site during the 2nd century. Three lengths of substantial stone wall running northwest-southeast were uncovered in the south-western part of the site; they had been partially robbed in the 4th century. They imply the former presence of a high status structure further to the southwest, in an area destroyed by a modern quarry. The fill of one of these robber trenches produced a fine facemask from an Oxford flagon dated c 350-400, with an elaborate coiffure (Fig 4).
Finedon, Quaker Meeting House
Steve Hayward

An archaeological watching brief was carried out during the construction of disabled access to the Old Quaker Meeting House. Disarticulated human remains were recovered from the topsoil and one grave cut was located and excavated to the maximum depth of the construction. No articulated bodies were recovered and all disarticulated remains were reburied.

Finedon, St Mary the Virgin (SP 9124 7196)
Tim Hallam

A trial excavation and watching brief were carried out ahead of and in conjunction with the development of a toilet and associated drainage works at the Church of St Mary the Virgin. The exterior trial excavation and pipe trench did not extend below the grave earth of the churchyard and revealed no pre-modern deposits. A pit within the west tower revealed a sequence of construction phases with evidence of an earlier floor.

Greens Norton, St Bartholomew's Church (SP 669 499)
Steve Hayward

Two trenches were hand excavated adjacent to the church prior to a proposed extension of the building. The excavation confirmed the presence of several phases of burial, but no earlier building remains were present.

Guisborough, Cob Coal Barn (SP 7442 3135)
Joe Prentice and Tam Webster

An archaeological building recording comprising a measured survey was carried out on the cob coal barn in order to assist in the future conservation of the structure. This identified two key stages of works needed to arrest the decline of the cob fabric. The first was the removal of soils which had built up against the base of walls, followed by the installation of improved drainage around the base of the building.

Hemington, Main Street (TL 093 853)
Rowena Lloyd

The area to the east of the parish hall in Hemington was investigated by trial trenching prior to residential development by East Midlands Housing Association. A single pit and part of a ditch containing 12th - 13th century pottery indicated an earlier presence on the site. There was extensive post-medieval activity including demolition evidence from earlier cottages. The location of the 'lost' road was also confirmed, running on an east - west alignment only slightly different from the current road.

Higham Ferrers, Motte and Bailey (SP 961 5685)
Dennis Jackson, Steve Morris and Tim Upson-Smith

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during excavation of geotechnical test pits before proposed housing development by Hampton Brook Ltd in an area within Scheduled Ancient Monument 13607, which incorporates a motte and bailey castle with ponds, warren and dovecote. It appeared that quarrying, probably for limestone, had taken place in this area and natural bedrock was only uncovered between 1.5 and 2.85m below ground level. A further watching brief below a modern car park revealed mixed deposits of fragmented limestone and clay, but no significant archaeological activity was observed.

Irlamton, Lime Street (SP 949 708)
Rob Atkins and Rowena Lloyd

Part of an Iron Age/Roman settlement and Saxon and medieval occupation, previously identified by trial trenching, was investigated in an open area 0.2ha in extent. The work was carried out on behalf of Acorn Homes in advance of residential development. The Iron Age settlement comprised a roundhouse ring ditch within a small enclosure, with adjacent pits, and early Roman occupation was represented by a rectangular enclosure and a linear ditch.

A few late Saxon features and associated finds were found, and in the early medieval period there were several pits and probable plot boundary ditches. By the 14th century there was a stone-built dovecote, a malt house with an unusually large oven chamber at the western end, and a barn with buttressed door surrounds in the east wall. These buildings stood on the southern and western sides of a courtyard, with access onto Lime Street which flanked the eastern side of the courtyard (Fig 5). The buildings were abandoned by the end of the 14th century and the site remained undeveloped until the present day. The 1405 survey of Irlamton by the Abbot of Peterborough shows that the site lay within land owned by the Bataille Manor, and the scale and functions of the buildings would be appropriate with this manorial status; they are likely to have formed part of the manorial farm.

Nene Guillotine Lock Gates, Wellingborough and Higham Ferrers
(SP 899 662; 908 672 and 955 701)
Alex Thorne and Tam Webster

Three Guillotine Locks on the river Nene were recorded in detail prior to demolition. The Guillotine Locks had been constructed during the 1930s by the Nene Catchment and Drainage Board, as part of a wider scheme to improve the navigability of the river. The Environment Agency is replacing the gates with the more traditional mitre pointing doors on health and safety grounds.
Northamptonshire

![Diagram of Irthingborough](image)

**Fig. 5. Irthingborough. Medieval malthouse, dovecote and barn.**

**Northampton, Express Lifts (SP 737 608)**
Andy Chapman and Steve Morris

The former Express Lifts factory, which includes the well-known lift tower, is being redeveloped for housing by The Lifebuilding Company. Evaluation had established the presence of significant remains of the Augustinian abbey of St James's (SMA 31 (2001) 36), and these were further investigated by a combination of watching brief and open area excavation.

The site of the abbey church and the ranges set around the cloister to its south, have been largely preserved by raising the ground level by a further metre, although the west range had been lost to earlier building works. However, removal of the foundations of the factory buildings and major service trenches for the new development enabled the building arrangement to be further defined. The abbey church was 76m (250 feet) long by 19m (62 feet) wide, but apparently was of a basilica form without transepts. The cloister was located, and part of the chapter house was exposed, with a mortar floor that may well have been formerly tiled, and two stone-lined tombs with plain slab covers.

The known cemetery, which formed a second cloister to the south-east of the chapter house, was excavated within an open area measuring 30m by 27m. A total of 294 burials were recovered, which represents the greater part of the cemetery, although the northern extent was not determined. There was intensive use and reuse of most of this area with many intercutting graves and much disturbance of the earlier interments. The earlier use was in well ordered rows, and the presence of many wooden coffins, ceramic roof-tile and stone-lined graves and a single stone coffin suggests the occupants were of relatively high status. In the later use the arrangement was less well ordered, and the majority of the burials were in simple earth-cut graves. To the south lay a range containing two mortuary chapels. Within one there was a stone-lined tomb, and a fragment of life-sized sculptured leg, with chain mail and a stirrup strap, came from a broken-up effigy. A highly decorated grave slab and the remains of two skeletons had been unearthed from the other chapel during building works in 1970. Preliminary assessment of the burials indicates the presence of a high percentage of elderly individuals including examples with extreme trauma and pathological conditions, such as healed fractures, fused and/or deformed leg joints and advanced degeneration of the spine. These may well be individuals who had died in the abbey infirmary. There are very few infants or juveniles, but the presence of some women suggests that the cemetery was not exclusively monastic.

**Northampton, St Peters Way (SP 753 602)**
Mark Holmes and Vanessa Clarke

An evaluation comprising desk-based assessment and trial trenching had indicated that building remains associated with the former Augustinian Friary survived within the former Burgess site at St. Peter's Way (SMA 31 (2001) 37). Consequently, archaeological recording was undertaken in advance of construction of a sunken loading ramp associated with a proposed development. The robbed out remains of at least two phases of stone buildings, including a vaulted stone drain, were uncovered. The medieval pottery of predominantly mid 13th to early 15th century date, recovered from the rubble layers associated with the structural remains is consistent with the postulated dates for the Friary. In addition, the ‘Sauce’ bottle and the aquamanile fragment found in the rubble confirm the above average status of the site. Ceramic floor tiles and roof tiles had been reused in a later system of drains, and medieval window glass and architectural fragment were recovered from the rubble layers. However, it has not been possible to identify any form or function for the fragmentary structural remains.

**Northampton, Upton south-west (SP 723 600)**
Steve Hayward

Following the extensive excavation of Iron Age and Roman settlement remains in 2000 (SMA 31 (2001), 37), and prior to the residential development of the site by English Partnerships, further trial trenching was undertaken over five fields further to the south, towards the River Nene. The absence of earlier features demonstrated that Iron Age and Roman settlement did not extend onto the margins of the floodplain.
Pilton, The Stone Barn New Library (TL 0237 8485)
Tim Hallam and Jim Brown

A desk-based assessment followed by trial trenching and watching brief was undertaken on behalf of Lady Margaret and Stephen Graubard to investigate the potential for the presence of significant archaeological remains on land adjacent to The Stone Barn at Pilton, Northamptonshire. The trial trenches located medieval ditches, possibly field boundaries or enclosures, probably relating to the medieval village.

Pitsford Quarry (TL 4765 2666)
Tim Hallam

An archaeological recording action was carried out ahead of proposed quarrying within the northern portion of Bottom Sheep Dale Field, on behalf of Samuel Rose Ltd acting for Peter Bennie Ltd. The excavation revealed an undated pit alignment and a system of enclosures dating from the middle to late Iron Age.

The pit alignment ran north-south, predating the later enclosures and on a different alignment. The Iron Age settlement comprised a rectangular enclosure containing a roundhouse ring ditch with multiple recuts set within a smaller enclosure. There were further subsidiary enclosures and linear ditch systems on the same alignment, a further two roundhouses and scattered deep storage pits cut into the ironstone bedrock. Finds from the storage pits included an articulated sheep burial and an intact lower stone from a rotary quern.

Thrapston, 68/72 High Street (SP 9969 7862)
Rowena Lloyd

68/72 High Street Thrapston was investigated by desk-based survey and trial trenching for potential archaeological remains. This revealed evidence of post-medieval activity probably related to buildings seen on the c 1781 enclosure map, including a wall, probably of a cellar, and a pit. There were other features of modern and uncertain date, and all features were sealed by a thick layer of modern demolition rubble. There was no evidence of any medieval or earlier activity.

Tocester, Islington Road (SP 6949 4836)
Simon Carlyle

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken on behalf of Augusta Developments Ltd in advance of residential development on a plot of land off Islington Road, Tocester. The evaluation revealed evidence for marginal domestic ‘backyard’ activity, broadly dating to the Roman period, probably associated with dwellings fronting onto Watling Street. There was no evidence for industrial activity. These remains were sealed by a ‘dark earth’ deposit, up to 0.6m thick, which extended over the entire site and appears to date to the late Roman to sub-Roman period. Its formation is probably associated with a change from suburban settlement to agricultural land use. Evidence for later activity is restricted to a large pit dating to the 17th century or later, and the construction of a boundary wall of similar date.

Northamptonshire

Tocester, Richmond Road (SP 6922 4853)
Steve Hayward

Following the discovery of a substantial ditch during an earlier evaluation, further investigation confirmed that the ditch was 2m deep and contained abraded Roman pottery and post-medieval tile fragments. Its location and relation to other archaeological sites in the area suggests that this ditch could relate to the 17th century fortification of the town.

Tocester, 163-165 Watling Street (SP 694 486)
Joe Prentice

An evaluation on behalf of Hazelwood PLC identified part of the Roman town wall and its associated ditch, confirming the previously anticipated route of the defences in this part of the town. Occupation levels relating to the period before the wall was built in the late 1st and 2nd centuries were also located. Near to the Watling Street frontage there was a single medieval pit; the scarcity of medieval features was also noted in previous excavations on adjacent areas. The whole site has been truncated by the hardcore base for the present tarmac and concrete yard surface, which means that no later Roman levels have survived.

Tocester, Watling Street (SP 6895 4911)
Rob Atkins

An archaeological evaluation involving a desk-based assessment and trial excavation was undertaken on behalf of the Environment Agency. A possible boundary ditch of 2nd century date was uncovered, but the lack of other activity confirmed that the northern suburbs of Roman Tocester were not located in this area. Similarly, there was no evidence for Roman, Saxon, medieval or Civil War town defences in the southern part of the development area, and the remains of Roman and later Watling Street were not encountered. A single medieval stone wall, probably part of the medieval leper hospital of St. Leonards, was found and the wall was dated by 13th to 14th century pottery. A well-made cobbled track running north to south parallel to Watling Street directly to the west of the wall may be related to the hospital.

Weldon, Deene End (SP 930 897)
Alex Thorne

Area excavation in advance of housing development identified the remains of three phases of medieval stone
Northamptonshire

building, an earlier post-built structure and extensive medieval quarrying and associated features. Ceramic evidence suggests that occupation at the site centred upon the 13th - 15th centuries, although later post-medieval and recent features were also encountered. The later building phases were associated with quantities of iron working tap slag, indicating that iron smelting was carried out nearby, and an excavated kiln may have been used for primary roasting of iron ore. Trench plot boundaries appeared to match those of the 1587 Hatton Estate Map, although these originate earlier in the medieval period.

Welford, Shoulder of Mutton (SP 643 804)
Rob Atkins

An archaeological evaluation comprising a desk-based assessment and trial excavation was undertaken at the Shoulder of Mutton, High Street, Welford, on behalf of the owners Mr and Mrs Corlett. The desk-based assessment showed the site was within the core of the medieval village fronting onto Portway Street, the main road from Northampton to Leicester. The evaluation found that archaeology only survived in the northern third of the site, the post-medieval buildings had destroyed any earlier archaeology to the south. On the northern part of the site there were four small ditches and one pit, dated by single medieval pottery sherds to 12th to 15th centuries. Two east-west ditches may have been backplot boundaries, and one of these aligns with the present northern wall of the Shoulder of Mutton.

Wellingborough, 29/30 Sheep Street (SP 8927 6770)
Tim Upson-Smith

Building recording of the Tudor restaurant, 29/30 Sheep Street Wellingborough was carried out in response to a planning and listed building consent application for this grade II listed building. A new doorway was opened in what had previously been an internal wall. A newspaper recovered from the core of the wall demonstrated that the wall had been previously altered in the mid-1960s.

OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY

Canons Ashby House (SP 571 506)
The installation of an environmental control system at Canons Ashby necessitated both the digging of trenches outside and the lifting up of floorboards inside the house. Observation of the trenches revealed no evidence for the former entrance drive, but a number of minor features including drains outside the kitchen. Internally the lifting of floorboards revealed a possible earlier fireplace in the Tapestry Room and a lower floor in the Drawing Room. Some redundant features were noted behind the panelling in the Dining Room and the Tapestry Room. The stonework collection was examined and found to contain some significant items of medieval decorative masonry.

Higham Ferrers, Kings Meadow Lane
Beth Charles and Alan Hardy

Excavations were carried out by OA on behalf of the Duchy of Lancaster for a second phase of development to the east of Kings Meadow Lane in Higham Ferrers during the period of April to October 2000. The main purpose of the excavation was to investigate the Saxon activity in relation to the earlier excavations immediately to the north of the site which exposed an oval enclosure and associated structures. The earliest features identified at the site were Roman ditches from which a small amount of Roman pottery was recovered. These were probably trackway or boundary ditches. No other features were identified from this period, although residual Roman pottery and a number of coins were recovered from later features or the topsoil. Three sunken feature buildings provisionally dated to the early/middle Saxon period were excavated and may relate to four similar buildings discovered in previous excavations to the north west of the site. The majority of the features at the site were dated to the mid Saxon period (8th century) including a large mid Saxon enclosure ditch associated with the oval enclosure. At least four rectangular post-built structures were also identified. One of the more unusual finds recovered from the backfill of the large enclosure ditch were the remains of a mutilated body. The head, some of the cervical vertebrae, shoulder blades and arms were not present and the body lay in a crouched position with the legs brought up under the body, possibly as a result of the body having been tied. Pottery found within the context was dated to around the 9th century. In addition to the evidence from the main excavation, middle Saxon corn dryer/malting oven was identified during an earlier evaluation of part of the development area to the south-west. Post excavation analysis on these excavations is currently underway.

References

Higham Ferrers, Kings Meadow Lane, Higham Ferrers Area G
(SP 9557 6940)
David Score

OA carried out an excavation at Kings Meadow Lane, Higham Ferrers on behalf of The Duchy of Lancaster, during August and September 2001. The excavation revealed two phases of Roman activity. Features identified included the stone foundations of a small building with an associated stone and clay lined pit, two wells, five inhumation burials, a cremation and numerous boundary or enclosure ditches. A
Fig 6. Higham Ferrers. Phase plan showing features from 2001 excavation.
Northamptonshire

small number of possibly pre-Roman ditches and a Saxon sunken feature building were also recorded.

Dr TOM WELSH

Daventry, Borough Hill (SP 5862)

A re-appraisal of the south fort was carried out in September 2001 to see if remains of defences could be discovered in or near previously reported gaps. Over a thousand metres of defences were found outside the locus described in the RCHM Inventory for Northamptonshire Volume III, Figure 54. Most significantly defences were found on the north-west, across the gap between the south and north forts, showing the south fort to be as separately contained as the north. The new evidence amounts to more than a third of a circuit of 3000 m, excluding the north fort, and more than doubles the length of defences said to survive in the RCHM Inventory. Plans and detailed descriptions have been deposited with Northamptonshire SMR.

The new evidence is as follows:
On the north-west SP 58626277 to 58906306, the rampart, ditch and counterscarp bank are traceable along a north-west facing escarpment which turns inwards from the edge of the summit at SP 586627. It probably continued, in much disturbed ground and beneath standing buildings, to meet the east side of the fort at SP 590630. The rampart is overlain by the angular feature on RCHM Figure 54 at SP 588629, part of an enclosure described by Bridges in 1823. North-east of this it corresponds to the linear feature shown on their plan, except that the turn shown by RCHM appears to be an overlying field bank, and the rampart continues beyond it, though barely discernable. The counterscarp bank is overlain by the southern arc of a circular enclosure at SP 589630, 30m diameter within a 6m bank. There are several possible subsidiary banks or outworks beyond the counterscarp.

Towards the south end on the west side, between SP 58626232 and 58666197 the bank, ditch and counterscarp bank are still extant, starting from a point west of that suggested by RCHM, and maintaining a southward heading, whereas the RCHM plan shows a south-easterly curve. The angle of the south-east corner is nearly a right-angle, and up to 50m west of that on RCHM Figure 54, but there is a gap of 60m of disturbed ground between this and the continuation of the south-side defences. The south terminal of the extant rampart, ditch and counterscarp shown by RCHM, at 'a' on Figure 54, is 10m too far east. As a result the southward continuation of the rampart scarp is expected to lie beneath the modern trackway, whereas the remains converge with the west side of the track over a 75m distance. On the east side, from the south-east corner, SP 58986189 to within Borough Hill Plantation at SP 59056246, the RCHM plan shows only a scarp here. However the ditch and counterscarp, albeit in low profile, are clearly preserved beyond it, particularly just south of and within the plantation. From SP 59036232 to 59116250, there is a complex of scarp and linear features converging and diverging, suggesting that the defences have been reworked several times around the head of a gully and adjacent steep slopes.

Daventry, Burnt Walls (SP 585612)

An appraisal of the site was carried out in September 2001 by permission of the owner's agents, Lambert Smith Hampton, as the site and surrounding ground were for sale, with a view to industrial use. The southern part of the site is depicted as an Old Quarry on RCHM Inventory for Northamptonshire Volume III, Figure 58, and hatching implies rock faces, none of which are to be seen. Though the hollow contains many diggings and deposits of material, there are also many structural details, including on the floor of the hollow, about mid-way, what appears to be ridge and furrow. A cambered roadway with side ditches, rising from the south side of the present entrance gap, which is 40 m from the south-west corner, ascends the northern side of the hollow. After 35m it turns north-east to climb more steeply as a worn terrace, then resumes its old alignment close to the crest. At the west end of the hollow it overlies a substantial rectangular foundation, 32m long, projecting between 5 and 7 m south of the road. Within the south-west corner of the hollow is an embanked platform, clearly there by design.

The south-west corner of the site seems to have been redesigned several times; the straight ditch on the west side has been cut through a realignment of this corner, which at the base appears almost a right-angle, but at the crest is a gradual curve. Several rectangular features occur at the eastern end of the hollow, one of them an embanked platform similar to that on south-west, but 20 m short of the south-east corner. Pits between the bank forming the south side and the interior either expose the face of this bank or cut into it. A large gap centrally on the south side exposes the construction of the bank. From a point 10 m east of this gap a sinuous bank crosses the hollow north-eastwards. An attempt made to determine the evolution of these features has been deposited with the Northamptonshire SMR, but it is unlikely that the sequence and relationships can be elucidated without excavation. It is suggested that the 'quarry' is an early feature of the site.

Earls Barton, Bury Close (centred SP 8513 6389)

An appraisal of much-mutilated features in the Bury Close, north of the ditch of the Berry Mount, SP 851638, suggests there was a Bailey or defended courtyard here. The enclosure springs from terminals 60m apart on the outer edge of the ditch, at SP 85126384 and SP 85176386. The bank on the west is faint, but that on the east is substantial. These curve out to meet a bank, up to 12m broad and ditch possibly 8m wide across the promontory between SP 85076391 and SP 85166393. This encloses an area up to 80m wide extending 60m from the Berry Mount ditch. In the north-west corner
this arrangement has been reworked, by cutting a second ditch 10 m wide into the bank, round three sides of a complex rectangular foundation 30m east to west by 15m extant, contained by an outer bank between this and the original ditch. This inserted feature suggests a gatehouse, although it is difficult to extricate the remains from more recent features. The ditches are encroached on by ridge and furrow. Clearly if this does indicate a bailey, the suggestion that the Berry Mount is Saxorn or Iron Age rather than a motte (Royal Commission Inventory for Northamptonshire Volume II pp 40-42) needs re-evaluation. Plans and descriptions have been deposited in the Northamptonshire SMR.

Northampton, The Carmelite Friary
(SP 756607 / 756608)

As part of an urban historical morphology project the precinct of the Carmelite Friary has been more precisely defined. The buildings probably lay east of the former Wood Street, north and south of Lady’s Lane, and not west of Kerr Street as suggested in the Royal Commission Inventory of Archaeological Sites and Churches in Northampton (1985) at SP 755608. The project uses post medieval plot history documentation as a framework for keying in earlier documentation, and relies on direct evidence, and exclusion on account of other property histories. Part of the suggested site of the Friary is waste ground, formerly occupied by a factory building, which has recently been advertised for redevelopment. The Franciscan and Carmelite Friaries are researched jointly in a report dated 16th November 2000; the Dominican and Augustinian Friaries were defined in 1998 and 1999. The documentary research has been deposited in the Northamptonshire SMR, but is held for the current SMR locations of the friaries, not for the locations identified, and is not cross-referenced.

When Francis Samwell acquired the Franciscan precinct in 1545, he was able to incorporate house plots on the west side of the former Wood Street into what was subsequently known as Greyfriars Close. He was not able to absorb all the land units on the east side of Wood Street into a close to the east. Although the Greyfriars and that part of the Whitefriars lands north of Lady’s Lane were sold around 1600, the Samwell family retained their interests east of Wood Street, part of which was sold to Richard Raynford before 1658. Two house plots, formerly belonging to the friary and purchased in 1577, were sold in 1644, while five cottages there were still part of the Samwell estate in 1690. In 1523/4, in an entry in the Liber Customarum of Northampton, the Carmelite Friary is described as being in the Parish of St Michael, which places it south of Lady’s Lane. Part of St Michael’s Parish, west of Wood Street, was incorporated in St Sepulchre’s Parish, while that east of the Wood Street houses was incorporated in St Giles Parish with a boundary on the north side of Lady’s Lane. Various deeds refer to the friary, and later the Samwell property, as east or north of properties on the east side of Wood Street, known as Newland in the 13th century and Whitefriars Lane in the 14th and 15th centuries.

The Shyde Close, described in 1544 as being on the east side of the dormitory, was later known as the ‘three-cornered close’ in the 18th century, now under the law courts. The area west of Kerr Street, where the Fleetwood mansion stood, is more likely to have been the plot acquired in 1380, adjoining their dwelling house, which measured 29 by 16 perchs. Much attention has been given to the inquisition of 1278 that prevented the Carmelite Friars from enclosing a portion of the town wall. However the inquisition shows that it was not proposed to obstruct a lane between the wall and the place of the friary. In the Eyre of Northampton 1329-1330 a murder took place outside the cemetery of St Michael’s Church, by the house of the Carmelites. The will of John Clerk of 1500 refers to the St Giles Charity holding at SP 75626067 as being 'agenst the parish church of Saynt Michell.' That places the church west of the charity, where John Williams excavated a church in 1972 (Northamptonshire Archaeology, Volume 13); Samwell acquired the churchyard in 1548 and incorporated it in Greyfriars Close. It is therefore certain that the Carmelite Friary lay east of Wood Street and Kerr Street.

The other friaries.

The Franciscan Friary lay towards the west side of Greyfriars Close, and probably extended as far north as Lady’s Lane (SP 755607). In the Town Rental of 1503-4, describing the market square, the first house in the row where the grain is sold (now The Parade) is 'towards the Friars Minor', and the sequence of rents on the east side of the market square begins 'Next the Friars Minor'. Claustral buildings were excavated by John Williams in the southern part in 1972 (Northamptonshire Archaeology, Volume 13, pp 96-160). The Dominican Friary was situated north and south of King Street, now the Moat House Hotel (SP 752605 and 752606), between College Street and Horsemarket. Documents dated 1691 to 1698 describe the buildings and precinct in detail, relating how it was acquired by Hatton Farmer and Robert South. Henry Lee, writing c 1716 (ms history in the Bodleian Library) refers to a friary "in possession now of Mr Robert South, between the College Lane and Horsemarket". The current location in the Northamptonshire SMR, around SP 75060606 has secular ownership from 1508, part of which had been a property of St James’s Abbey acquired in 1536 (the Dominican Friary was sold in 1544). The Augustinian Friary was located from documents relating to the Church of Lady Grace, to SP 752601, but the precinct extended almost to the former Woolmonger Street, and as far west as Horseshoe Street.

Wellingborough, Croyland Park
(SP 88456702)

A mound, one of three together, on the west bank of Swanspool Brook, appears to be the alleged tumulus described by John Cole in his “History of the Antiquities of Wellingborough” 1837, p18. His mound was on the verge of the Swans’-pool rivulet, about half a mile from Croyland Hall, three or four feet high, enclosed by a ditch, one hundred yards in circumference. He recorded that the brook had
Oxfordshire

undermined part of the mound. The mound lately discovered is 900m upstream from Croyland Hall. It is over a metre high, has a base diameter of 27m, top 20m, and is surrounded by a ditch 5m wide. The ditch and 3m of the mound on the east have been eroded away by the stream. There is a central depression 7m across. The three mounds are contained in an area 95m long north-south, by up to 45m. The mound to south has been reduced by a third of its diameter by the stream. 25m base diameter surrounded by a ditch 3 to 4m wide. The mound to north is also incomplete, having been at least 25m across with a raised rim or bank enclosing the top. Both are lower than the central mound. It is not certain, given their situation, that these are barrows. A plan and report has been deposited with Northamptonshire SMR.

Northampton, The Medieval Town Wall

As part of an urban historical morphology project the course of the town wall has been determined from internal and external property boundaries and references to town waste. The circuit includes St Andrew's Priory but is otherwise contained within the circuit of the inner ring road (The Mountains, York Road, Cheyne Walk, Victoria Promenade etc). The circuit described in the Royal Commission Inventory of Archaeological Sites and Churches in Northampton (1985) shows the defences mainly outside the inner ring road, and inconclusive excavations for the town defences have been confined to this circuit. The research has been deposited in the Northamptonshire SMR in sections, and a paper has been submitted for inclusion in Northamptonshire Archaeology Volume 29.

On the west there are no direct references other than the Hundred Roll reference to meadows beneath the wall as far as St Andrew's Mill. The location "the curtain next matlocks" in Hooper's account of 1645 (Notts Archives M381a) can be identified with Millers Meadow from a 1780 description of Matlock's Holm. It turned east at SP 74946130 between Mill Lane and Hampton Street, along what is probably Hooper's Emy Lane. RCHM (1985) place the wall on the north side of Mill Lane, which is a 19th century creation. It turned south-east at SP 75046130 where Pretty, in Wetton's Guide 1849, describes a bastion on the corner of Harding Street, to follow the south side of St George's Street (Bridges 1722 and Pretty 1849). Bridges 1722 manuscript in the Bodleian Library describes St Andrew's Priory as within and adjacent to the town wall, and St Andrew's Lane (now St George's Street) without. From there, crossing Regent Square, it continued along the south side of The Mounts and beneath Lower Mounts (Inclosure Award 1779). South of Abington Street, it ran from SP 75926073 to SP 76006053, along the inside of the Town Wall Closes and the east side of St Giles Churchyard. From there it turned south-west, passing behind the houses on Melbourne Crescent (off Cheyne Walk) to meet Derngate at the junction of Spring Lane SP 75936029. A 1601 entry in the First Assembly Book, and a 1630 deed in the Town Records describe the intra-mural road between that part of the New Pastures acquired in 1630 within the walls, and that part acquired in 1634 beneath (outside) the walls. This corresponds to evidence in the Hundred Rolls, the Town Rentals and the Town Terrier of 1586.

From Derngate the wall lies beneath the 18th century walkway called Victoria Promenade, while the ditch lies beneath the modern road. The section of Victoria Promenade between Bridge Street and Cattle Market Road was created in 1874-6 by demolishing St Thomas Hospital, which was built over the town ditch in 1460, outside the town wall (Sir Henry Dryden in Associated Architectural Societies' Reports and Papers Vol XIII, p 231). The road was subsequently widened southwards. The south front of the Plough Hotel is therefore built on the wall. Westwards of the South Gate, the town charities include a property latterly known as The Pheasant, SP 75386009, demolished in the 1970s, which was a property within the wall and next to the gate, acquired in 1439, called "le Yatehouse". Deeds in 1439 and 1460 refer to ground here either side of the town ditch. The ditch continues alongside the lane called Back Side Westons on Noble & Butlin's plan (1746) to SP 75016017, where the ditch served the meal mill, north of the site later developed as the Cotton Mill. This was culverted in the late 19th century and ran nearly parallel but 20 m back from the Cotton Mill channel, coming onto the line of the medieval defences found at Green Street 1995-6. This fits the descriptions of the ditch in the Hundred Rolls and the Town Terrier of 1586.

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER (FORMERLY UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM)

Medieval Settlement and Landscapes in the Whittlewood Area: a pilot - see Buckinghamshire

OXFORDSHIRE

ABINGDON AREA ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Abingdon, Barton lane (SU 5117 9716)
Roger Ainslie

A stone trackway (trackway 2) was located by Bob Eeles and recorded by the Society in advance of gravel extraction in 2001. This ran in an approximately north-south direction. Its purpose may have been to allow access to open water over alluvial clay reed beds on the edge of a water channel. This however does not explain its apparently curved shape. It was under c 1.3m of alluvial silt and peat at c 49.9m OD and was over c 30cm of alluvial clay which in turn rested on the natural gravel. The construction was of large limestone pieces being embedded into the alluvial clay with smaller limestone pieces and burnt cobbles as a surface over this. In places a sandy gravel surface survived on top of this cobble
Fig 1. Abingdon, Barton Lane.
Oxfordshire

layer. If it was not for the finds from the trackway material it would be considered to be a fairly standard Roman road. The finds largely came from the construction of the cobbled surface layer and contained pieces of triangular loom weight, globular bowl and pieces of smithing slag. Amongst the bones were some human ones although these were not articulated. Apart from a Roman coin found in the gravel company's spoil heap none of the finds were later than the middle Iron Age. In 2002 Paul Russell of Radley College has been directing the Society's excavation of a smaller timber trackway (trackway 3) in this area. This trackway, being at a higher level than the others, has largely rotted away although it appears to have some relationship to a spread of small cobbles in the area. The finds from this trackway included a barbed and tanged arrowhead and a chisel-like instrument made from a polished axe fragment. This indicates a Neolithic/early Bronze Age date for this trackway. This area is still being excavated and has recently produced several small ditches, probably of Bronze Age date. We could therefore have a settlement with its own landing stage here. A previous Iron Age trackway (trachway 1) was reported in SMA in 1999.

Thrupp House Cottages (SU 51843 97230)
Roger Ainslie

Small trenches have been excavated under the direction of John Cooper and Jeff Wallis. This is in advance of a small bridge being erected in the garden of this property. These have revealed small medieval gullies of c 13th century date of overlain by about a metre of overburden which was probably caused by ditch digging in the area. The finds include about 500 sherds of medieval pottery. It would appear that the cottages may be the shrunk remains of a small deserted medieval village and documentary research is also taking place with a view to obtaining a fuller picture.

Radley, Pembrey Farm (SU 532 975)
Roger Ainslie

Over 1700 Neolithic and Mesolithic flints and some bone was found by Bob Eccles whilst a nature pond was being dug in this area. The density of flints and the small spall size of some of them indicates flint working and settlement on the site in Mesolithic and Neolithic times as evidenced by microliths and pieces of polished axe. It was possible to walk some 19 10 x 10m squares and 3 hearth areas and these produced over 600 flints of which the hearths produced about 300. The amount found, however, depended on the extent to which the top crumbly alluvial clay had been removed as the finds were in an old soil under this and on top of the gravel. Bearing in mind the riverside gravel island location of this site it is of concern that no evaluation was required prior to planning permission being given for the works as this type of location almost always produces prehistoric settlement.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES AND CONSULTANCY LTD

Oxford, Grove Cottages, St Cross Road (SP 5194 0853)
Jonathan Hunn & David Fell

An evaluation, comprising a desk-based assessment and trial trench, followed by a watching brief, was undertaken on land at Grove Cottages during February and March 2001. The work revealed that the area had remained undeveloped until the 18th century, when a number of small buildings were constructed on the site. It also confirmed that Grove Cottages date from the 19th century. A single trial trench was excavated, revealing that a number of modern layers were present and that the area had been badly truncated by post-medieval and modern pits. This was confirmed by observations during the watching brief. A single late medieval pit was present in the trial trench. A small assemblage of medieval pottery and a copper-alloy pin were recovered.

BIRMINGHAM UNIVERSITY FIELD ARCHAEOLOGY UNIT

S Litherland

Cherwell District Council commissioned the Unit to carry out an assessment of the Industrial Archaeology of the Oxford Canal Corridor in Banbury (centre SF 4600 4040) in November 2001. The assessment was designed to provide an overview of the character of the area, evaluate the significance of any remains, and offer proposals for the protection or enhancement of that material heritage.

The Oxford Canal Corridor comprises a roughly 10ha area of land situated to the east of the historic town centre. It contains a broad range of locally, regionally and nationally important buildings that relate to the economic, social and transport history of the town. The survey included documentary research and internal and external building inspection. This resulted in the identification of a wider range of surviving buildings than was previously recognised, and the compilation of fuller descriptive records has allowed several buildings to be more tightly dated and their function more accurately assessed.

Important local and regional examples of traditional industrial buildings related to rope making, malting and milling were identified, as well as important structures associated with mechanical and electrical engineering.

Therefore, it was recommended that consideration be given to a revision of the existing conservation area in Banbury to include the canal and significant associated infrastructure. There are several structures that should also be added to a list of buildings of special local historical value.
BOARS HILL RESEARCH PROJECT

Roman pottery kiln (SP 4948 0142)
Rod Scott

The Excavation of a Roman pottery kiln took place under the direction of the writer in 2001.

This kiln had been revealed by waste pit digging for a chicken farm. The kiln appears to largely have produced grey ware, which has been dated to the late 3rd or early 4th century by Paul Booth on the basis of a slashed band around the neck of some vessels and the presence of a used piece of colour coat pottery. Whilst colour coat pottery, and a peculiar coarse pottery (with many voids, colloquially called 'ugly ware') was found it was not in sufficient quantities to indicate that it was made in this particular kiln.

The kiln design has no central pedestal and no tongue which therefore differentiates it from the Churchill type kilns. The small size of the kiln however makes it similar to those already found in this area (see Oxoniensia 1974). The lack of a floor to the firing chamber makes it similar to the New Forest type kilns, but the length of the stoke hole has similarities to the Churchill kilns. It could be that the small diameter did not require the perforated floor which kilns of double the diameter needed. A large piece of storage jar, too large to have been fired in this kiln, was found and this could have been used as kiln furniture. Alternatively the floor could have been destroyed in the past as pieces of unburnt animal bone were found in the firing chamber fill.

The site of a second kiln was identified in this field and animal burrows have revealed others on the adjoining land.

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COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

Eynsham, 11 and 11a Cassington Road (SP 4370 0968)
Jonathan Hart

An evaluation at the rear of the property encountered no archaeological features or deposits.

Begbrook to Yarnton Mains Replacement
(SP 4735 1375 to SP 4855 1255)
Jonathan Hart

An archaeological watching brief identified the presence of a v-profiled Romano-British ditch within an area of known cropmarks of probable Iron Age or Romano-British origin. A wide, shallow and flat-based Saxon pit and a post-medieval field boundary ditch were also identified beyond, but close to, the known extent of the cropmarks.

Oxford, Pegasus First School, Blackbird Leys
(SP 588 028)
Kevin Colls

In August 2001 a watching brief was carried out during the construction of classroom extensions at Pegasus First School, Blackbird Leys. No archaeological features or artefacts were identified.

Watchfield, Shrivenham Hundred Business Park
(SU 2480 9070)
Mark Brett

In February 2001 an archaeological evaluation on land to the east of Shrivenham Hundred Business Park revealed

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Fig 2. Boars Hill; location plan, plan and section of kiln.
Oxfordshire

evidence of ridge and furrow cultivation, a pit or ditch terminus, and a single tree-hole pit. Although dating evidence was very sparse, it is likely that the pit/ditch terminus is of 12th to 14th century date and that the furrows represent a cultivation system of similar date.

Witney, Downs Road (SP 3280 1040)
Kevin Colls

In June 2001 a watching brief was carried out during groundworks for the Curbridge Park development scheme, Downs Road, Witney. One pit of Early Bronze Age date was identified, analogous with other examples discovered during earlier evaluation (CAT 1992).

Witney, North-East Witney Sewer Requisition (SP 3635 0960 to SP 3675 0980)
Tim Havard

Between February and May 2001 a watching brief was carried out during the construction of 600m of sewer. No archaeological features or artefacts were identified.

Didcot, Abingdon Road (SU 538 906)
Alan Thomas and Mark Collard

Excavation revealed a buried soil, possibly a Romano-British ground surface. It was cut by a trackway with flanking ditches which produced 2nd century pottery. It is unclear whether these ditches are contemporary with a field system, consisting of north-east/south-west aligned drainage gullies, identified to the east. At least two phases of second or third-century gullies defined this field system, and two may have flanked part of another trackway. The gullies were covered by alluvium, derived from episodic flooding of minor local tributaries of the River Thames. The Abingdon Road site lies at the base of a slope leading to a Romano-British settlement at Hadden Hill, and as such may lie within its agricultural hinterland.

FOUNDATION ARCHAEOLOGY

Hanwell Fields, Banbury (SP 452 425)
Roy King

The work consisted of twenty three 30m evaluation trenches over a site area of 11.3ha. The evaluation followed a previous evaluation to the west of the site in September 2000. Archaeological features comprised a ditch in Trench 1, a shallow ditch/gully in Trench 2, two ditches, one with a possible recut or pit cut into the top, in Trench 9, and two pits in Trench 22. Artefactual material from these features were restricted to a number of tiny fragments of burnt clay from the ditch in Trench 2 and one sherd of 17th/18th century salt-glazed pottery from Trench 22. The remaining features were undated, although all were sealed by the subsoil and may, therefore, be of some antiquity. The results of the evaluation suggest a low-level of archaeological activity across the study area as indicated by the assessment document and the previous phase of evaluation work undertaken to the west of the site. The undated ditches present in Trenches 1 and 2, both close to Hanwell Brook, are likely to represent drainage features. The remaining features were all identified within the western part of the site, on the edge of the river terrace and are indicative of archaeological activity adjacent to the floodplain. The location of the study area within, and on the edge of, the river valley of the Hanwell Brook defines the land-use of the study area as meadowland during the medieval and Post-Medieval periods. Post-medieval/modern activity was restricted to drainage channels. The field has been harrowed in recent years which has led to some mixing of the alluvial deposits and the subsoils. This has removed the potential for survival of earlier positive archaeological features and caused some degradation of negative features, although the evaluation demonstrated that such features do survive in a truncated form within the study area. The evaluation demonstrated that a low-level of spatially restricted archaeological activity is present within the study area, with a very low background scatter of unstratified artefactual evidence of prehistoric, medieval and post-medieval origin.

The Former Maltings Site, The Vineyard, Abington (SU 4994 9735)
Clare King

The evaluation comprised the excavation and recording of three 30m trenches across the proposed 0.85ha development area. Trench 1 revealed four archaeologically significant features, comprising a gully containing two post-holes, and a small pit. Both features were securely dated to the medieval period, with a date span of mid 12th to 14th century. Modern disturbance was extensive across the site, resulting from the demolition of houses and previous malting buildings. No archaeological deposits were identified in Trenches 2 or 3. The features suggest the presence of a Medieval fenceline or structure with upright timbers, set into a foundation trench.

Monks Farm, Grove (SU 4060 9070)
Roy King

This evaluation has shown a wide spread of archaeological features across the development area, although these are very difficult to interpret due to the sparse dating evidence. There appear to be a large number of probable drainage features, some of which are securely dated to the Bronze Age or Iron Age. This could indicate that attempts were being made during that period to utilise this area of land, which might have been very prone to waterlogging as it is today. There was certainly some form of settlement during the Iron Age in this area, as evidenced by the concentration of pottery sherds from the ditch in Trench 7. It is possible
that the post holes and other features concentrated at the east end of the project area may point to a settlement focus here. There is however a distinct lack of artefactual or ecofactual evidence for human domestic activity which is unusual on a site of this period. Possible interpretations might be that the settlement focus was not within this area and the features are either boundaries or agricultural in nature, or that the site was abandoned after just a short period of settlement. The limitations of archaeological evaluation mean that it is impossible to be sure of the full extent and interpretation of these remains. The single inhumation found in Trench 5 could be associated with the Iron Age settlement or it could be later. A medieval extended burial has been previously recorded on the southern edge of the development area. The deeper ditch features, which appear to occur towards the north west corner of the site were of sufficiently large dimensions to represent part of an enclosure ditch. Possibly the edge of the settlement. No features were present that dated to the Roman, medieval or post-medieval periods.

JOHN MOORE

A watching brief carried out during excavation of footings for a new house and garage found evidence of Roman and medieval activity. Not only does this show a new site of occupation in the late 2nd to early 3rd centuries but indicates that this part of the village was occupied in the 11-12th centuries and probably later.

Banbury, Grimsbury Manor, Grimsbury Green
(SP 4625 4173)
John Moore

Excavation immediately south of this site during the construction of Hennef Way found remains of prehistoric settlement, Roman activity as well as parts of the 12th -15th century deserted medieval settlement.

These sites did not continue into the area to the rear of the Grimsbury Manor (formerly Grimsbury House) where a watching brief only recovered pottery dated to the later 14 or 15th century from a ploughsoil.

Barton, Bernwood School, North Way (SP 5535 0780)
John Moore

An evaluation of the playing field was undertaken and found one inhumation of possible Roman date.

Bucknell, St Peters Church, Bainton Road
(SP 5609 2560)
Amy Gray Jones

Ground reduction for an oil tank and excavation for an associated pipe trench did not disturb any archaeological deposits or features.

Burford, Land adjoining Muffety Cottage, Tanners Lane and 174 The Hill
(SU 6043 89753)
John Moore and Simon Tomson

A watching brief carried out during ground reduction for a new house found evidence of medieval activity. This confirms the view gained from the watching brief to the rear of the Old Ropery, some 50m to the north, that the medieval settlement of Burford extended up the hill further than previously thought. The ceramic evidence from both sites suggests occupation from the 12th and 13th centuries onwards.

A single sherd of Iron Age pottery indicates activity of this period in the vicinity of the site but not on the site.

Chilton, Chilton School, Downside (SU 4843 8592)
John Moore

The archaeological watching brief undertaken during topsoil strip revealed nothing of archaeological significance.

Chipping Norton, Chipping Norton School
(SP 3160 2662)
John Moore

An archaeological watching brief recovered flints of the Later Neolithic to Bronze Age period indicating that the top of the hill was used for some activity during this period. Finds of pottery within a ploughsoil show that the area was used for arable purposes from at least the early medieval period.

Cogges, Cogges Manor Farm, (west of fishpond)
(SP 3622 0973)
John Moore

A watching brief was carried out during excavation for a gas pipeline at the south-west end of Church Lane. The field through which the pipeline passed is to the south of the Madley Brook and west of the medieval fishpond. A ditch was found, which has been interpreted as a leat for the fishpond to the east. It is aligned, as best can be estimated from the short section exposed, on the mid point of the southwest side of the fishpond. Either the exit sluice did not feed surplus water directly into the Madley Brook at its closest point and led into the Brook further downstream, or this leat fed a further fishpond in the area of the now disused playground to the southwest. The possibility of a further fishpond in this area has been raised by Steane and Bond (1984).
An evaluation of an area proposed for development for residential purposes was undertaken to determine the presence/absence of significant archaeological remains. A ditch and two postholes, pre-dating a medieval ploughsoil, were found. A medieval ploughsoil covers the whole of the evaluation area and a few sherds of medieval pottery were recovered from this deposit. A high concentration of medieval pottery however was found on higher ground to the south of this plot at SP3681 0900. A flint blade and flake core must represent casual discarded or lost items associated with hunting/gathering activities in the Mesolithic and Neolithic period.

A watching brief did not find any continuation of the Romano-British settlement known to the southwest.

Archaeological investigation took place in two areas within the grounds of Mill Cottage, which occupies part of the former extent of the Augustinian Nunnery of St Mary. As expected, the area between the Millstream and the Thames was subject to flooding during the medieval period and appeared to be used for some rubbish disposal. Parts of four buildings were found in the southermost area of garden adjacent to the present churchyard. Three of these buildings are thought to be the guest house, hospitium and necessaria.

An evaluation of an area between St Leonard's Chapel and Chantry House was undertaken as part of a consideration for new facilities. No structural remains pre-dating the post-medieval period were found to be present in the area of the proposed development. The use of the whole area for burial has destroyed any early medieval evidence pre-dating the construction of Chantry House and any deposits associated with the early use of Chantry House.

Chantry House is considered to have been built c 1500 as a warehouse, one of a series of commercial buildings and merchant's houses parallel to the wharf alongside the Thames. A lane (presently Church Lane) ran behind them from Hart Street to New Street, from where it continued as Wharf Lane. With a decline in the grain trade in the middle of the 16th century, Chantry House partly became used as a school in 1553. The continuing decline in the river trade meant that Church Lane as an upper access to the granaries and storehouses was no longer required. Almshouses were built where granaries and storehouses once stood and St Mary's churchyard was gradually extended eastwards towards the Chantry House (Dunn, undated).

Pottery and pits shows that the site was occupied during the medieval period, certainly in the 15th century and probably earlier. No structural evidence was present. The fact that the pits and the pottery were found well back from the road suggests that a building did not front the street but may have been in the position of the present cottages or the barn known to have been standing in 1819. This suggests that the site in the medieval period may have been a farmstead with a yard to the front.

An excavation was undertaken in the cellars under the Codrington Library. A dense mass of pits was examined. The pottery assemblage, although relatively small, contains some of the best preserved early medieval pottery which has been excavated in Oxford in recent years, with the late 11th - 12th century material being particularly worthy of note. The assemblage also produced one of the few sherds of imported early medieval Pingsdorf ware from the city, and also a 15th century sherd of Spanish tin-glazed earthenware, a similarly rare find in Oxford.

The pottery is also notable for a small but extremely well-preserved group of late 17th century pottery, including two dated and named German stoneware vessels and a fragment of a decorated plant-holder. Overall, it appears from the pottery that the site was occupied by individuals of higher than ordinary status during the late 15th century and beyond.
course of construction to the rear of Nos. 2 and 3 Cowley Place recovered evidence to show that activity of c. the late 11th century had occurred here. This evidence was in the form of pottery recovered from a small area of deposits of this date surviving on the edge of a gravel terrace. Elsewhere post-medieval activity had removed earlier deposits. Walls of a building survived that may date to the medieval period.

Oxford, rear of Cowley St. John Vicarage, 271 Cowley Road
(SP 53360 05408)
John Moore

Davis’ map of 1793 shows a fork off the Cowley Road just to the west, and the northern arm appears to run close to this watching brief site on the projected alignment of the present Barracks Lane to the east. However, it was shown that the road did not cross this site. Archaeological evidence and close examination of map evidence suggests that the road may have run along the extreme south-west side of the Bartlemas Cottage plot immediately to the north of the site.

Risinghurst and Sandhills, Land adjacent to Thornhill Park and Ride Car Park
(SU 5650 0732 and SU 5665 0743)
John Moore

The evaluation carried out on this site proposed for development failed to find any significant archaeological features. A post-medieval ditch was located. A flint core of probable Bronze Age date was recovered from a post-medieval ploughsoil.

South Stoke, Ivol Barn, Woodcote Road (SU 6162 8381)
John Moore

An evaluation of the site of the proposed new grain store facilities found archaeological features considered to be prehistoric in date and to pre-date the barrow cemetery just to the northeast of the investigation area. The features were pits, a ditch and a gully representing occupation of some form. The flints recovered during the work are not closely dated but the technology used to produce them is common in the Neolithic and Bronze Age. Given that that occupation sites are not close to barrow cemeteries the date can be refined slightly to the Neolithic to early Bronze Age periods.

The barrow cemetery just to the northeast is on an arc as opposed to the more general linear arrangement seen elsewhere (cf. Barrows Hills, Abingdon). This is explained by a band of flinty soil that occurs in the River Terrace Gravels. The cemetery must have avoided the flinty material, confining itself to the more easily dug gravel deposits.

Swalcilffe, Swalcilffe Grange (SP 3718 3698)
John Moore

The archaeological watching brief undertaken during levelling work immediately to the west of Swalcilffe Grange along the south side of Grange Lane revealed nothing of archaeological significance.

Wallingford, 16 St Georges Road (SU 60433 89753)
John Moore

A watching brief was undertaken during excavation of footing trenches for a new bungalow. The eastern boundary of the property lies immediately adjacent to Scheduled Ancient Monument 234, the defensive bank and ditch of the Saxon burh.

The original outer edge of Saxon burh ditch was located in this area showing that the ditch at this point was still curving round from the north on its outer edge before straightening as the western side of the burgh.

An undated ditch was found parallel to and close to St George’s Road. The very steep angle of rest for the fill layers suggests that the ditch has been deliberately infilled with imported material. This feature may be related to the boundary hedge that is marked on the 1st edition OS map. However the ditch is large, estimated at least 3m wide and possibly 1.5m+ deep.

A further undated ditch occurred between the two mentioned above. Again the ditch appears to have been deliberately infilled with imported material. It was unclear whether the ditch was parallel to the Saxon ditch over its whole length or whether the apparent orientation seen at its southern known extent is real. If the angle in the southern footing trench is as found, then the ditch is more likely to pre-date the Saxon ditch; as an additional defensive ditch, apparently joining the main ditch, would not make sense at this point on the defences. However, if the ditch is parallel to the Saxon ditch then it could be a strengthening of the defences on the west side of the town. The ditch is undated and could be Saxon or date from the civil wars of the reign of Stephen when it is thought that the castle was strengthened (Rodwell, 1975, 155).

Reference

Wolvercote, Wolvercote First School, First Turn
(SP 4974 0984)
John Moore

A watching brief was carried out during excavation for new accommodation at the school. The results showed that the site had been primarily in agricultural use through from the medieval period.
Three consecutive phases of archaeological fieldwork were carried out at Dorchester Abbey during 2001. These were an evaluation (March), excavation (May-June) and subsequent watching brief (August-December). The work was undertaken as part of the Parochial Church Council’s programme of re-ordering and improvements both within and outside the church. In particular, it was necessitated by proposals to upgrade the heating system within the church and to build a new external pentice on the north side of the nave. The boiler room for the new heating would be housed at the west end of the pentice, and the excavation here was expected to reach a depth of approximately 2m below current ground level. Small-scale excavations in the Cloister Garden on the north side of the nave during the early 1960s suggested that the site had considerable potential for Roman and medieval remains. Past discoveries both within the abbey church and in its surroundings also suggested that important archaeological remains might be encountered.

The evaluation Excavation of a single test pit inside the church against the north wall of the nave suggested that the wall represented a rebuild over an earlier foundation, possibly of late Anglo-Saxon date. The three trial trenches dug immediately outside and to the north of the church in the former position of the monastic cloister (now the Cloister Garden) showed that archaeological levels survived under modern overburden at a depth of approximately 1-1.2m below the existing surface level. Probable Roman or Anglo-Saxon deposits were identified in two of the trenches, and the ceramic assemblage was dominated by Romano-British pottery. Medieval horizons were restricted in extent, but appeared to represent a series of make-up or bedding layers for floor surfaces within the south cloister walk and possibly within a passage through the east walk into the central garth. The positions of the south and east walls appeared to be defined by foundation and robber trenches. At least five graves were also revealed and the skeletons within them exposed (but not removed). Most of the graves probably belonged to the monastic (medieval) period.

The boiler room excavation An area of approximately 6m (east-west) x 4m was excavated to a depth of up to 2m in advance of construction work. The nave north wall formed the south side of the excavation area. Natural brickearth was found over the whole of the excavation area, lying at or about formation level at the west end of the deep excavation and sloping up gradually to the east from there. No Roman soil horizons or features were encountered within the trench, although the majority of finds (especially pottery) continued to be of Roman date. The excavation site is thought to lie outside the eastern defences of Dorchester Roman town, though the exact location of the wall or rampart remains elusive. The Roman finds may be consistent with the use of this area as an extra-mural rubbish dump, either as a municipal initiative or on a ‘fly tipping’ basis. It would be interesting to re-assess the 1960s excavations in the light of the recent work.

The brickearth was directly overlain by an impressive sequence of Anglo-Saxon soil layers, surfaces and features. The earliest remains comprised a substantial sunken-featured building. Only the east side of this was found, running at right-angles to the medieval abbey church. The remainder of its plan extended beyond the limits of the trench. Several parallel north-south linear features (probably beam slots) had been cut into the base of the structure. Soils accumulated within and over the sunken area. Provisional assessment of the pottery and other finds suggests a date within the 6th-8th centuries.

Two successive trench-built timber structures were then erected. The post trenches cut into the earlier soils on a different alignment from the sunken-featured building. Both trenches ran on a fairly true north-south alignment, ie obliquely to the abbey church. Unfortunately these were the only features of the two buildings to be uncovered, but floor surfaces to either side of the earlier trench demonstrated that it was an internal element between two separate rooms (presumably within a single building). The later trench, by contrast, had floors to the east only. This shows that it was the external (west) wall of a building, and indeed a substantial ditch (property boundary?) was found running parallel with and to the west of the wall trench. The ditch terminated within the excavation. The likely date range for these structures is the 8th to 10th or early 11th centuries. The final Saxon feature was an impressive stone-lined well cutting the northern terminus of the ditch.

The upper level of the Anglo-Saxon sequence was cut by approximately 15 graves and a number of charnel features. No positive dating evidence was forthcoming for these, but they all appeared to belong to the medieval monastic establishment rather than earlier or later phases. Other medieval remains included a surviving fragment of the foundations of the west cloister range, a few surviving patches of bedding material for floors in the south cloister walk, and a number of postholes. The latter most probably relate to the construction or refurbishment of the nave north wall. The latter was shown to rest on surprisingly shallow foundations. These had not been bedded into the underlying gravel - indeed in places they did not even cut into the brickearth but rested instead within the Anglo-Saxon soil sequence.

Post-medieval features were restricted to robber trenches along the west cloister range and an associated buttress, and a pit containing domestic rubbish such as pottery and glass bottles. The upper 1m (approximate) of the soil sequence comprised late post-medieval or Victorian soils, apparently dumped here to level up or landscape the site.

The watching brief: external The shallow dig for the pentice foundations revealed 12 articulated human skeletons, mostly within clearly defined grave cuts, in the central area
of the pentice between the boiler room excavation and evaluation trench 4. They occurred at significantly higher levels than expected on the basis of the evaluations and boiler room excavation. At least one child was present, and also a pregnant woman. A solid stone medieval sarcophagus was also found, buried tight against the foundations of the nave north wall. The lid of the coffin had been broken in antiquity, and this was removed so that the inside could be inspected. It had been hewn from a single, massive block of limestone. The skeleton within was that of an adult male, probably a prior, but there were no obvious grave goods (eg personal jewellery, chalice and paten etc). The skeleton was left in situ and the lid replaced, so that the burial remained essentially undisturbed. Further fragmentary remains of articulated skeletons were observed in drainage trenches out from and alongside the pentice trenches. All the burials were probably medieval, although a later date for some of them cannot be ruled out. Further but restricted areas of Anglo-Saxon stratigraphy were revealed in some of the drains and associated manholes.

Machine and hand excavation of trenches to the north and west of the tower revealed more of the west cloister range, and the original foundations of the tower itself. The latter was rebuilt at the beginning of the 17th century.

The excavation of a new gas supply trench along the pathway from the lych gate in front (south) of the abbey Guesthouse and around the base of the tower exposed only cultivation soils with occasional patches of rubble. No earlier floor or road surfaces were present, suggesting that the gate and path are a relatively recent feature. It seems likely that the medieval outer gate into the monastic precinct from the High Street lay somewhat to the north of the lych gate, with a roadway passing to the north of the Guesthouse. This makes considerable sense given that the jetty of the upper floor is on the north side of the building, ie facing onto a putative access road here.

The watching brief: internal As with the exterior, limited areas of Anglo-Saxon stratigraphy were revealed within the nave, but too little was present for meaningful interpretation. Nevertheless the presence of these layers is clearly significant for interpretation of the Saxon sequence on the site. It was also possible to observe and record the original 12th century foundations of the west end of the nave, the chancel and the crossing at several points on both sides of the church. The most significant discoveries were at the west end of the church, where the likely original positions of western and south-western doors were noted as blocked openings within the base courses of ashlar masonry exposed below the current floors. Several vousoirs and jamb stones with fine beak-head ornament recovered during the watching brief may well have derived from these doors (or associated windows). A number of other beak-head fragments are present within existing collections of architectural masonry at the abbey.

The Norman foundations of the chancel were noted on both sides of the building behind the existing choir stalls. The foundations were in good condition and demonstrated that the medieval floor surface was only a little below today's level here. The scar of the eastern foundation and wall of the south transept running south from the crossing was also noted under the Shrine Chapel floor. Excavation within the south transept exposed another limestone sarcophagus, but it was possible to keep the duct route to one side of this. It was therefore possible to leave the sarcophagus in situ. Approximately 30 architectural fragments were discovered among a dump of stone rubble immediately underneath the paving in front (west) of the modern shrine to St Birinus. Most of the fragments are plain and of little interest, but a few 14th century window elements are present, and two large pieces of parapet may derive from the west tower.

Other discoveries largely related to post-medieval, Victorian and modern arrangements within the church. A number of graves and burial vaults were observed, for instance, but it was possible to leave the skeletal remains in these undisturbed. The positions of earlier structural features of uncertain function were noted in places within the nave and chancel. It should be possible to suggest interpretations for these on the basis of further analysis and research. Modern features included a large under-floor chamber in the south-west corner of the nave associated with a former (early 20th-century?) boiler position.

The watching brief: the blocked door in the nave north wall Unblocking of the door at the east end of the nave north wall revealed intact plain wall plaster to the jambs and soffit of the arch, and a few decorated tiles surviving in situ on the floor. The positions of several other tiles could be identified easily because their original mortar bedding survived.

NATIONAL TRUST
Gary Marshall
Coleshill

A watching brief was maintained over repairs to two of the National Trust's estate buildings at Coleshill, Mill Cottage (SU 2347 9341) and Middle Leaze Farm (SU 2384 9475). In both of these properties, which date from the 18th century, unblocking of the brick fireplaces led to the discovery of internal niches in the side walls, thought to be former bread ovens, or perhaps salt or herb drying cupboards.

Building recording was also carried out over the remains of the former hen houses attached to the north wall of Coleshill Walled Gardens (SU 2365 9375).

Greys Court (SU 7254 8345)

Geophysics surveys carried out in 2001 have successfully traced and mapped the buried remains of medieval and post-medieval buildings situated between the house and the
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Fig 3. Greys Court. Plan of excavations in the north tower and at the base of the east section of the curtain wall.

east section of the fortified curtain wall. Oxford Archaeology were commissioned by the National Trust to partially excavate the interior of the medieval North Tower prior to repairs on the walls. This revealed a modern concrete surface forming part of the floor, whilst the remainder of the floor was found to consist of rubble in a silt matrix. A brick surface forming the floor to what is thought to be a 16th century building incorporated into the east section of the curtain wall was also excavated by Oxford Archaeology.

As a consequence of the repairs a short section of brick and flint wall was revealed, abutting the north section of the curtain wall. This was previously thought to be a garden feature, a small retaining wall holding back a garden bed. However, it is made up of narrow Tudor bricks, which form the west face of the wall, laid in Flemish bond. It is therefore likely to be the west wall of the Tudor building containing the floor excavated by Oxford Archaeology. It was clear that the north end of this wall had cut across the curtain wall, suggesting that the medieval wall had been cut back and truncated by the 16th century.
Fig 4. Greys Court. Detail of the 16th century (?) wall abutting the north section of the curtain wall.
Fig. 5. Priory Cottage, Stevington. North elevation after the removal of modern render.

NORTH ELEVATION

Mortises for original mullions
Iron strap
Jelly brackets omitted
Putlins supporting bargeboards
Brick
Hollow chamfer
Garden wall omitted
Stone
New sandstone blocks
Coving
former window
former window
inner gable tiebeam

0
5
10 FEET
0
2
3 METRES
Great Coxwell Barn (SU 2690 9402)

Minor repairs to the medieval barn at Great Coxwell were carried out during 2001, involving re-pointing of the lower parts of the walls and re-fixing of loose coping stones on the end gables. An archaeological watching brief was maintained during this work and excavations were also carried out to assess the ground make up at the base of the walls. The excavation against the base of the east wall revealed a very shallow spread of crushed stone lying below the existing pitched stone paving, which is probably a 19th century addition. Rather surprisingly, the projecting footing at the base of the east wall was found to be only two courses in depth, and laid directly onto the natural limestone bedrock. Similar evidence was found on the west side of the building, where the stepped footing was found to lie directly over the bedrock. Below the topsoil a thick dump of soil and rubble containing pieces of 20th century farm machinery was found abutting the footing. The evidence therefore suggests that the stepped footing was always exposed, a conclusion supported by evidence from an 18th century engraving, which shows the ground surface as lying below the footing on the west side of the building.

Oxford Archaeology were employed to extend the trench on the west side of the building after what was thought to be a rock-cut grave was exposed. A large coffin-shaped piece of timber was found at the base of the cut, hence the initial interpretation as a grave. However, the cut proved to be much longer than the length of a grave and the conclusion was therefore that the cut had served as a drain around the building, and perhaps also as a source of stone used in the construction of the building.

Priory Cottages, Steventon (SU 465 915)

Repairs to the timber frame and wattle panels of the north and west elevations were carried out in 2001. James Moir of Finial Associates was commissioned to carry out a watching brief, which involved recording the sequence of construction and repair apparent in the panels of these two elevations, together with the south elevation of the courtyard.

Dendrochronology sampling undertaken by Dan Miles revealed felling dates of 1462-63 for the timbers of the east section of the north range, 1443-44 for the timbers of the north-west range, and 1570-71 for the timbers forming the bay window of the north-west range. The results from the dendrochronology dating are significant because they allow the phasing of the building established by the Trust's vernacular buildings survey (1989, based on earlier work by Chris Currie) to be reinterpreted. The 1463 date was known from documents and was thought to relate to the construction of the north-west range, whereas in fact the date for this range has been established as 1442-44. The east section of the north range was thought to be mid 16th century, whereas in fact it is a hundred years earlier i.e. 1462-63. The 1570s date for the bay window is 30 years earlier than the c 1600 date suggested by the vernacular buildings survey.

NORTH OXON FIELD ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP

Edward Shawayner

Activities in 2001 had been greatly scaled down even before the foot and mouth disaster and were further reduced when the fears of our landowner about the exposed, public position of our new, intended dig site caused us to settle for a 9 day intensive excavation rather than a season long endeavour. Our efforts were once again centred upon the Roman settlement at Swalcliffe Lea, this time upon a site on the other side of the road from the Roman villa we had excavated for the last four years. The new location is in the Blacklands sector of the settlement, so called after the field names of the 1840s description of the site. The reason for investigating this location was the very high count of artefacts spread over a large area, which seemed to hint at either an important complex or a cluster of smaller buildings. There were also high counts of fine tablewares, even more than on the villa site, though there were no further signs of high status such as tesserae and large quantities of baked and stone roof tiles. The excavation therefore was centred upon one of the main concentrations of material identified by fieldwalking. In the short period we had managed to reveal the outline of a quite large late Roman building similar in some respects to the "strip" building found in the neighbouring field by the Shipton Historical Society in the 1960s. A deep section across the structure was started, but never finished due to time restrictions, though it did reveal an earlier, perhaps higher status building beneath, the extent of which is unknown at present. During the 9 days most of our attention was concentrated upon excavating and recording the upper building as well as trying to ascertain its size and function.

The Late Roman Building

This edifice was located just 20-25cm below the surface with no traces of any later settlement above. The covering soil was a rich, dark brown humus containing mostly Roman pottery and a lesser amount of Post-medieval wares, with only a very small percentage of Medieval wares. Trenches 1 and 2 came down directly upon what turned out to be a floor surface and extensions had to be made in order to establish if the surface belonged to a building. A number of smaller trenches were sited along the course of the walls to get some idea of the size and shape of the structure. What emerged was a large rectangular edifice of barn-like proportions, with at least two rooms, of which the one that was partially excavated measured at least 10m+ long by 9m wide. The floor surface strongly appeared to be differentiated into two distinct halves with a stone slab floor on the western side and a tightly packed smaller stone surface on the eastern side. The slab floor was virtually identical to the late 4th century ones found in the villa across

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KEY TO SYMBOLS

1. 4TH CENTURY WALLS
2. COURSE OF WALLS
3. EARLIER WALLS
4. PILLAR BASE
5. POT SUNK INTO FLOOR
6. POTTERY TUMBLERS
7. STONE KERBING
8. 1a STONE FLOOR
9. 1b STONE SLAB FLOOR
10. CLAY FLOOR
11. EARLIER CLAY FLOOR
12. PROBABLE COBBLED YARD
13. LIMITS OF FEATURES
14. LIMITS OF EXCAVATION

Fig 6. Swalecliffe Lea. Plan of Roman building in Blacklands Field.

the road and was clearly a working floor for both industrial and agricultural purposes. There was a certain amount of iron slag found on the slab floor and many stones were fire reddened, which revealed that probably some metal working took place there. One interesting feature was a prominent stretch of stone kerbing, which upon later examination seemed to be delineating a squarish section of the room. The kerbing strangely resembled a similar feature we excavated at a 17th century stable in Cleveley (see CBA9 Newsletter 28), which was used to mark out two horse stalls. These were divided by a wooden partition and a large posthole was found, which is significant since there was the suspicion of a large posthole interrupting our Roman kerbing as well. The posthole was not totally clear since large portions of the rooms floor had been robbed, mainly on the western side since the slab floor contained better building stone. The eastern side of the room consisted of a tightly packed layer of smaller stones 15cm thick, which might have had a layer of clay upon it, the like of which we had found at the villa site, but no traces of any clay floor were detected in the excavated area. A small, intact grey ware vessel which had been deliberately inserted into the floor was found in the north eastern corner of the room. The jar had no contents save a small quantity of gravel or seeds at the bottom of the vessel. The initial opinion of the Museum experts is that the jar may have been votive, possibly a dedication to the Lares or Household Gods. No significant portion of the second room was excavated to be able to say anything of its nature, save that it was another stone floor. Initial examination of the ceramics seems to reveal a Late Roman assemblage with some late 4th century forms. An interesting feature of this collection was the seeming large percentage of fine tablewares which included decorated Samian, Oxford and Nene Valley colour-coated wares and some silvery French or German pottery. In the south-east corner of the second room a squarish post pad was found inserted into the wall, a feature which we also discovered in the late 4th century phase of the villa.

The Earlier Roman Building

Only a small section was dug and this had to be discontinued since we had not enough time to go any deeper; what it did reveal was a wall running parallel to the later east wall above, with a clay floor to the west of it. The clay rested upon a layer of small tightly packed stones 20cm deep, beneath which was a layer of dark humus and not the natural orange coloured clay-ironstone soil. This type of floor construction was also found on the villa site and may have been common throughout the settlement, though the records of the earlier digs are too poor to tell us if any traces of clay
were discovered on the stone cobbled surfaces. Close examination revealed that the clay floor was only recognizable in places as a different coloured soil, showing that it must have degraded through mixture with humus. Perhaps in earlier digs such things weren't noticed since the change was a subtle one. Only one tiny fragment of pottery was found in the footings of the lower floor and this was a small piece of Nene Valley red colour-coated ware, which seems to indicate that this earlier building was probably Late Roman as well. The dark humus the footings rested on was
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80cm beneath the ground surface, a fact that hints at further occupation deeper down, since in the part of the villa where late 4th century floors were found the natural was 1.2–1.3m beneath the ground as opposed to only 75cm of depth where late occupation was absent. In the 1959 excavation of a Roman building just a field away the depth was also 75cm and here late alterations were also lacking. Unfortunately details are lacking for the Shipton society’s building which did have late 4th century floors.

Conclusion
The initial results of the preliminary excavations seem to reveal a large rectangular one- to three roomed house as categorized by Richard Hingley (see Rural Settlement in Roman Britain by R. Hingley 1989 Seaby). The dateable artefacts reveal that the building existed in the mid-late 4th century and maybe earlier since two 3rd century coins were found by the walls, although a late Roman date is suggested for the earlier building as well. The differentiated floor surfaces and stone kerbing strongly suggest that the structure housed both humans and animals with wooden partitions dividing them, though these features seem to be more characteristic of aisled houses. Stone surfaces were detected on both sides of the building which could be a stone yard, the like of which was found on all the other sites in the settlement, but further extensions cannot yet be ruled out.

The traces of metalworking, slab floors and the use of pillars inserted into the walls are all features of the late 4th century occupation found on the villa and Shipton site, so it is likely that this location is the first proper late 4th century house found in the settlement as opposed to the cruder workshop structures found on the other sites. The building was quite wide, measuring 7.5m internally thus necessitating the pillar base for the support found in room 2. No traces of mortar or clay packing were found in the walls which were about 66-70cm wide, which makes it likely that they were merely low sill walls supporting a wooden structure. A number of white limestone slates were found just outside the west wall as well as a few inside the building, but it is unlikely that such a large timber building could have safely supported the load of a slate roof. It is possible that the slates belonged to the earlier structure which may have been narrower, though the Shipton building was a large 3 roomed house at least 21.5m long by 7.8m wide and this was roofed with slate.

The large amount of fine tablewares found on the Blacklands site hints at a certain degree of prosperity, possibly from the metal working industry established in the settlement. The original query about the high level of activity in this field was concerned with a possible villa or mansio site but now it looks likely that it is associated with the metalworking phase instead. The very small section dug on the earlier building doesn’t tell us very much at present so anything could be there, though the early findings from these excavations do point to significant late 4th century activity in this part of the settlement.

Fieldwalking

Roman sites Great Bourton/Cropredy Parish (undisclosed location)

A collection of Roman pottery was found a few years ago by a Great Bourton farmer and only revealed to Edward Shawyer this year. The location of the site was determined and further enquiries revealed that contractors had also found Roman pottery there during agricultural work. Due to personal reasons the owner’s family do not wish the location of the site to be revealed for the present.

The finds consisted of shell tempered wares, grey wares, white wares and Oxfordshire colour-coated wares. In addition baked roof tiles were found and also fragments of comb decorated hypocaust flue tile, which makes it highly likely that there was a villa building nearby. The pottery and tile were examined and identified by Paul Booth at the Ashmolean Museum. Up until the present the only Roman find made in the parish was a coin of Maximinus Daza in 1863 and here also the find site was unknown. (see Banbury Historical Society, Cake and Cockhorse 1964 edition)

Rollright Stones (SP 296 308)

Fieldwalking has begun on a farm property just across the county boundary from the stones which has at least two Roman sites on it, one of which is a courtyard villa recently discovered by aerial photography. The significance of these sites is their clear relation to the Iron age settlement near the stone circle, since they are only just two or so fields away. The entire orientation of the villa is interesting because it ignores a beautiful view to the east to look instead up onto a bleak hillside and directly face the stone circle to the south-east. This suggests that the site still had some religious meaning for the Romano-Britons, which is likely since the area belonged to the Dobunni who were allies of the Romans and adopted their culture.

Post Medieval sites

Epwell, private field to the north (SP 355 408)

Further observations in this field when the grass was cut short revealed the course of the former north road leading out of the village and showed that it bifurcated to head to both Shutford and Shenington. This road was last indicated on the 1833 map, but had disappeared by 1882. The possible house platforms nearby were re-evaluated as merely a combination of old end-on furlongs and odd features created by seasonal run-off from the side of the road. Since the Banbury area is very hilly there are many areas by old hollow ways where seasonal rainwater creates odd features, as we discovered at Ledwell in 1997.

Barford St Michael, Manor Farm, The Manor House (SP 432 327)

Further to the observations made last year, architectural
expert David Clark and ex County Archaeologist John Steane were invited to have a look at the existing buildings of the Manor. The general consensus was that the eastern section of the house was 16th century in origin with later 18th and 19th century features being added on.

The other western section of the Manor (referred to as the "central" section in last year's newsletter) had been connected at some stage to the eastern section and may have been contemporary or later in date, but it did appear to have an 18th century window. The alleged traces of the continuation of the western section visible as features in the garden wall and alterations to the end of the existing house excited a difference of opinions, which it was concluded could only be answered by an excavation in the garden, but Mr and Mrs Ault naturally were not too keen on this idea.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ARCHAEOLGY

A43 Towcester to M40 Dualling Project
Andy Mudd

Excavations took place on the following sites in Oxfordshire (see also Northamptonshire).

Tusmore, Cottisford Turn (SP 566 319)
David Leigh

The site consisted of a rectilinear alignment of ditch segments running north-south, and deliberately sited to cut earlier pits. The few finds comprised some small fragments of later prehistoric pottery.

Tusmore, Drain Outfall (SP 558 307)
Jim Brown

A watching brief was undertaken during soil stripping for a new drainage outfall on the eastern edge of a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The only archaeological feature discovered was a shallow ditch containing Iron Age pottery. Roman pottery of 2nd-3rd century date was retrieved from the topsoil. The results would suggest previously unrecorded Iron Age and Roman settlements within the scheduled area.

OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY (OA)

Compiled by Emily Edwards

Abingdon, Morland's Brewery (SU 4945 9695)

Morland's Brewery site in Abingdon in advance of an application for the redevelopment of the site. Some of the brewery buildings were found to be of considerable industrial archaeological interest particularly the tower brewhouse and the maltings. Neither was listed but there were five Grade II listed structures each of which appears to pre-date the brewery. The archaeological potential of the site was considered to be moderately high.

Abingdon, St Nicholas School (SU 4960 9788)
James Mumford

In May 2001 OA carried out an archaeological watching brief at St Nicholas School. The work was commissioned by W S Atkins in advance of the construction of an extension for a new Information Technology and administration area. The watching brief revealed a single undated ditch cutting the natural gravel.

Banbury, 24 High Street (SP 4554 4046)
Robin Bashford

Between August and September 2001 OA undertook a watching brief at 24 High Street. A possible cobbled surface associated with the 19th-century listed building was recorded during the groundwork, although this lay below the final impact level and was only partially revealed.

Banbury, Thorpe Park, Thorpe Way (SP 4680 4040)
Robin Bashford

In July and August 2001 OA undertook a watching brief at Thorpe Park, Thorpe Way, Banbury. No significant archaeological features or deposits were observed during the watching brief.

Banbury, Tudor Hall School, Wykham Park (SP 4400 3805)
Robin Bashford

In July 2001 OA undertook a watching brief at Tudor Hall School, Wykham Park. No archaeological remains were observed as the site had previously been landscaped to provide a level surface for the existing playing field.

Burford, Rose Cottage, Church Lane (SP 2528 1230)

OA undertook a watching brief in the garden of Rose Cottage in January 2001. Two east-west aligned trenches were observed, along with a localised deposit of large, unworked limestone blocks.

Chadlington, St Nicholas' Church (SP 326 221)
Jon Hillier

In May 2000 OA undertook a watching brief at St Nicholas' Church. No archaeological features were seen and no finds were retrieved during the course of the watching brief. Limited observations were made of stonework present in part of the trenches, though no certain interpretation was made of this on site within the limited confines of the trench.
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Charlbury, The Lawn, Market Street (SP 3560 1957)

OA undertook a watching brief at ‘the Lawn’ in Charlbury. Nothing of archaeological importance was noted.

Cholsey, 10 Amwell Place and Paternoster Lane (SU 589 685)

James Mumford

In April and October 2001 OA carried out an archaeological watching brief at 10 Amwell Place and Paternoster Lane. The work was commissioned by St Helens Homes Limited in advance of the construction of residential properties fronting Amwell Place. The watching brief revealed one east-west aligned ditch and one north-south aligned ditch in the foundation trenches to the rear of 2 and 4 Paternoster Lane, which together may have formed part of a potential medieval enclosure. A single undated pit was observed in service trenches excavated adjacent to 10 Amwell Place.

Dorchester, Plumtree Cottage (SP 5793 9388)

James Mumford

In August 2001 OA undertook a watching brief at Plumtree Cottage. The foundations were excavated through a deposit of alluvium mixed with garden soil and did not impact on any significant archaeological deposits or features.

Dorchester-on-Thames, 14 Watling Lane (SU 5760 9429)

Valerie Diez

In June 2001 OA undertook a watching brief at 14 Watling Lane. Natural sand was observed at the base of 1m deep foundation trenches for a new building. An undated soil horizon was observed in the trench sections, sealed beneath modern make-up layers associated with previous construction work. No significant archaeological features or deposits were observed in the course of the watching brief.

Drayton, Drayton Mill (SU 4897 9335)

Robin Bashford

Between June and October 2001 OA undertook a watching brief at Drayton Mill, Drayton. Two potential drainage channels and a pit, all of uncertain date, were observed during the groundwork.

Drayton St Leonard, The Barn (SU 5978 9605)

The Grade II* listed barn at Drayton St Leonard, which is thought to date to the 15th century, has been recorded prior to and during its conversion to the headquarters of the Aston Martin Owners Club. It is a very impressive timber-framed structure, which appears to have undergone few structural alterations since its initial construction, its importance lying therein. The only evidence of phasing uncovered were mortices suggesting that a projecting porch may originally have fronted one of the two wagon entrances. Historical research suggests that it was a manorial barn serving the Drayton estate rather than a tithe barn.

Eynsham, Foxley Farm (SP 4190 0808)

Robin Bashford

Between November 2000 and September 2001 OA undertook a watching brief at Foxley Farm. A number of archaeological features were observed during the groundwork for the development and included a partially exposed Bronze Age ring ditch, a cremation and numerous pits and post-holes. The ring ditch (Group 98) is undoubtedly part of the scheduled Barrow cemetery (SAM 119). The majority of the pottery sherds recovered from the upper fills of the ditch were Roman, suggesting that the upper fills were deposited during the Roman period.

Garsington, Garsington Manor ‘Brewhouse’ (SP 5819 0197)

OA was asked by Nichols, Brown, Webber to carry out a programme of archaeological recording at the above premises which lies immediately to the north-west of the Jacobean manor house. As part of the facilities for the open-air opera held at Garsington Manor each summer, dressing rooms were to be inserted into the earlier north-south wing of this L-shaped Grade II listed building. The two wings together are listed as ‘Former bakehouse and attached out building’ although locally the building was sometimes known as the monk’s ‘brewhouse’. Whilst the exact function of the earlier wing was unclear, the later east-west wing still clearly showed evidence of latterly having been used as a bakehouse and evidence was noted suggesting possible earlier use as a brewhouse also.

The present building is not shown on two surviving 17th century maps but archaeological evidence suggests that it must have been constructed soon after and it therefore appears likely that the north-south range was built in the late 17th or early 18th century and the east-west added in the 18th century date. Although both wings show much evidence of later work, the earlier of the two wings, which was to be affected by the proposed development, was notable on account of some well preserved roof and window carpentry of the 16th and 17th centuries and some potentially 11th century long and short work. It is more likely, however, that this later work is an anachronistic post-medieval feature. The early carpentry suggests that the building may have been constructed with a significant quantity of reused material from a previous structure. No evidence was found to suggest that any part of the standing structure was medieval. The building was also of interest as it was thought to contain evidence of later use for domestic electricity and gas production. The proposed conversion
work revealed the towering of the internal floor level by up
to 1m and observations revealed a succession of
post-medieval floor layers above natural deposits as well as
some foundations of an earlier building on the site. A
detailed study of the building itself and its foundations
revealed that it had originally been only five bays in length,
with timber framed gables. It was probably partially
open-fronted to the east and it seems to have originally
abutted an earlier east-west range at its northern end. This
erlier building is shown on the two 17th century maps.
Despite there being no evidence of early upstanding fabric,
clear evidence was found to indicate that the 'Brewhouse'
overlies the foundations of one, if not two earlier buildings,
both of which were of probable medieval origin.

Mr Wickham’s Land at Garsington (c. 1624) Map of the
Parish of Garsington (Late 17th century) Bodleian Library:
(MS D.D. TYRWHITT-DRAKE a.1)

Goring, Church of St. Thomas of Canterbury
(SU 59765 80715)
Andrew Holmes and Jon Hiller

OA carried out an archaeological field evaluation at the
Church of St Thomas of Canterbury, Goring, in April 2001.
This followed a Geophysical Survey of the churchyard by
Stratascan. The evaluation was commissioned by Rob
Howard, architect of Streatley, and was carried out in
respect of plans to build an extension on the south side of
the church (between the existing vestry/boiler [east] and
kitchen/lavatory [west]). The extension will conform
approximately to the outline of the former cloister walk
(north side) belonging to the now demolished Augustinian
priory. In addition, a new path has been proposed, to be
situated north of the church. A test pit and a strip trench were
excavated on the site of the proposed building extension to
the south of the church and a further trench was excavated
on the site of the proposed new path on the north-west side
of the church. The evaluation revealed the wall of the
priory’s northern cloister walk. Part of a probable wall
nearer to the south side of the church was also discovered,
though its function was unclear. In the area immediately
north-west of the church, limited evidence was revealed for
an 18th century blacksmith’s building.

Hampton Gay, Manor Cottage (SP 4863 1647)
Robin Bashford

Between August and September 2001 OA undertook a
watching brief at Manor Cottage. No archaeological
features or deposits were observed during the groundwork
for the new development.

Henley-on-Thames, Greys Court, Rotherfield Greys
(SU 7264 8334)
John Payne and Ric Tyler

OA was commissioned by the National Trust to carry out an
archaeological recording action at Greys Court in
Henley-on-Thames. The work was commissioned in
advance of a programme of consolidation work to the 14th
century Curtain Wall, a Scheduled Ancient Monument that
survives at the site. The Manor of Rotherfield Greys is
recorded in the Doomsday Book as being in the ownership
of Anchetil de Greye sur Mer and the property was owned
by this family for over four centuries. There are fragmentary
remains of the fortified manor, including the southeast and
southwest towers, part of the north tower linked by the east
curtain wall (with attached Great Tower), and the keep. The
work included recording of a stone seat and loose masonry
against the southwest wall of the North Tower; removing
rubble within the North Tower; recording an area of brick
and stone paving adjoining the wall and a short stretch of
wall at 90 degrees to the curtain wall. The ornamental garden
seat was formed of three re-used architectural fragments.
The seat comprises an incomplete, inverted fireplace mantel
and the supporting Venetian Gothic style columns may date
to either the 12th century or 16th century. The fragment of
wall and brick floor suggests that there may have been a
building against the wall, with a substantial fireplace. This
would have been contemporary with the building of the
curtain wall and the original crenellation (dating to 1347).
Other areas suggested that the curtain wall may have been
refaced during either the 19th or 20th century. The rubble in
the North Tower represented the degrading of the wall over
a short period of time, although there was some suggestion
that some material had been gathered from elsewhere and
either dumped or stored in the Tower.

Henley-on-Thames, Shiplake College (SU 7675 7834)
Jim Mumford

In November and December 2001 OA carried out an
archaeological watching brief at Shiplake College,
Henley-on-Thames. The work was commissioned by
Nicholas Brown Webber Architects and Landscape
Planners in advance of the construction of a new 6th Form
House at the College. A former college building was
demolished in the course of the works and the watching brief
revealed natural clay and subsoil levels below the topsoil.

Kelsmscot, Kelsmscot Manor Barn (SU 2510 9891)

Kelsmscot Manor is best known as the country home of
William Morris, where he lived from 1871 until his death in
1896. A programme to refurbish one of the main barns at
Kelsmscot prompted a programme of archaeological
building recording prior to and during the refurbishment.
Although it is an impressive and attractive building it is
significant more for its historical association with Kelsmscot
Manor and for forming part of a good group of buildings
constructed in the local Cotswold vernacular style than for
any particular intrinsic architectural significance held by the
barn. It is possible that the barn was constructed in the later
16th century as part of the original complex but the trusses
are of a slightly later date, suggesting the late 17th century.
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Middle Aston (SP 4756 2703)
Jon Hiller

In April and May 2000 OA undertook a watching brief at the former Fired Earth site in Middle Aston. The site appears to have been covered with an extensive layer of ‘demolition’ or landscaping rubble, that directly overlay the natural sand. This landscaping, that appears to have also involved the removal of former soil horizons that may have been present, probably took place at the time of the construction of the factory that formerly occupied the site. Nothing of archaeological significance was recorded during the watching brief.

Noke, Tree Nursery, Old School House (SP 5455 1317)
Robin Bashford

OA carried out a watching brief at this site in summer 2001. No archaeological features were observed during the groundwork.

Oxford, Michael Sobell House Hospice, Churchill Hospital (SP 5425 0570)
Robin Bashford and John Hiller

In March 2001 OA monitored the excavation of geotechnical test pits at Michael Sobell House, Churchill Hospital. A possible ploughsoil of indeterminate date was observed during the watching brief. This is consistent with that of a Roman ‘subsoil’ previously noted during archaeological work at The Churchill Hospital (Young, 1972; OAU 2000) and it is possibly that archaeological remains survive underneath the more recent deposits.

References
Young C J 1972; Excavations at the Churchill Hospital, 1972: Interim Report. Oxoniensia XXXVIII

Oxford, New Chemistry Laboratory (SP 5170 0692)
Beth Charles, Daniel Poore and Alan Hardy

OA was commissioned by Laing Ltd to undertake an archaeological excavation on the site of a new laboratory complex at 2-4 South Parks Road. The aim of the excavation was to further investigate archaeological deposits revealed by an evaluation of the site carried out by OA in June 2000. The earliest activity on the site was represented by Neolithic/Bronze Age pits and a ditch. This was followed by Romano-British activity in the form of field deposits and features possibly characteristic of a nearby settlement focus. No evidence was found of Anglo-Saxon or medieval activity, the site remaining undeveloped until the 17th century. A large part of the site was then occupied by a section of the Civil War outer defensive ditch. The final phase of activity was represented by the basements and garden features of 19th century houses along the north side of the site.

Oxford, The Rector’s Garden, Lincoln College (SP 5160 0640)
Annie Bingham, John Hiller and Alan Hardy

In March 2000 OA was commissioned by Lincoln College to undertake a watching brief within the college grounds during the excavation of trench runs for new heating and service ducts. The service trench extends through the Fellow’s Garden and the Rector’s Garden. The excavations established the presence of parts of two walls forming a probable building aligned east-west immediately south of the college chapel. The exact date of construction of the building was not established, though the walls were set within deposits containing a range of post-medieval material. Part of a third wall on a north-northeast - south-southwest alignment corresponds with that of a building depicted on Taylor’s 1750 map of Oxford. Pottery and glass from associated deposits was of post-medieval date. No evidence of medieval buildings or occupation was recovered from the service trenches. Deposits overlying the demolished structures indicate that the site was levelled in the 19th century in preparation for the gardens on the site today.

Reference
Taylor’s Map of Oxford, 1750

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

In November 2001 and January 2002 OA carried out an archaeological recording action in Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, during the re-positioning of St Frideswide’s 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, 15-16 Ship Street

The refurbishment of Nos 15-16 Ship Street provided an opportunity to investigate the remains of the City Wall and Defensive Tower (Bastion 5) preserved in the listed building. It is thought that all the towers are contemporary with the 13th century rebuilding of the City Walls, which at this point stands on the late Saxon earth wall of c 900 AD. The investigation found that the tower has many building phases and that it has been extensively rebuilt, with original work showing at the base. It is possible that the well-built
east wall is indeed medieval, thus, the south wall is a later alteration and the wall dividing the cellar is later still. It is of special interest as being one of only two surviving towers that are still inhabited.

Oxford, Wadham College Front Quad

The Oxford Archaeological Unit was commissioned by Wadham College to undertake a programme of archaeological recording within the south range of the Front Quadrangle, in advance of the installation of a wheel chair lift. This resulted in changes to the historic fabric, which were the subjects of archaeological recording before and during works. The discoveries could be related to historic plans of the original room layout, which is derived from the newly built Fellows Quadrangle at Merton College. Evidence was also found for painted decoration on the chamber walls.

Oxford, St Frideswide's Shrine, Christ Church Cathedral
Kate Newell

The Oxford Archaeological Unit contributed to a measured survey of St Frideswide's Shrine at Christ Church Cathedral. The work was carried out to aid general discussions concerning the proposed relocation and reconstruction of the monument. Several additional stone pieces from the shrine had been discovered during recent excavations at the Cathedral, which provided further evidence of elements of the shrine such as the capitals and columns of the piers that supported the canopy. An outline survey of the monument was carried out, at a scale of 1:5, during August 1999. This was then used as a control framework for Kent Rawlinson to provide detailed measured survey drawings of the intricate carving and moulding of the elevations. The framework survey was drawn up in AutoCAD and the detailed survey drawings were scanned and positioned creating composite elevations and plans. These AutoCAD drawings were then used to trial various reconstruction proposals.

Oxford, Integrated Disability Centre, Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre (SP 5475 0660)

In February and March 2001 OA undertook a watching brief at the Integrated Disability Centre at the Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre. A deposit of probable kiln waste with a sizeable assemblage of Roman pottery was recorded to the east of the site, adjacent to Windmill Road. The site lies within the vicinity of the East Oxford Roman Pottery industry and there is considerable evidence of Roman activity close to the area. The majority of this is focussed towards the south of the NOC, within the grounds of the Churchill Hospital. Past excavations have revealed kilns, potters' workshops, wells, pottery dryers and buildings, all dating to the Roman period. A field system dating to the 2nd century has also been recorded.

Oxford, Staircase 2, Pembroke College (SP 513 059)
Andy Holmes and John Hiller

In July and August OA undertook a watching brief at Pembroke College, Oxford. Some shallow occupation layers may have been represented, the earliest of which contained some early medieval pottery (possibly from the 12-14th century). The deposit that contained these sherds was not fully excavated and it is not clear whether or not they were part of an in situ medieval horizon. Above this layer, was a stone structure showing signs of burning. The burning and the circular shape of the structure facilitated an interpretation of the feature as a hearth, of post-medieval date. This hearth probably belongs to the newly established Pembroke College, as it would have been in 1624. The lower deposits may be associated with the preceding buildings on the site, namely Broadgates Hall.

Oxford, Proposed Waste Management Site, MPRD Site, BMW Plant (SP 558 040)
Andrew Holmes

OA undertook an archaeological field evaluation on the site of the proposed New Waste Management Centre at the BMW Plant, Cowley Works, East Oxford, in April 2001. The evaluation site lies immediately east of the line of the Roman Road from Dorchester on Thames to Alchester.

Natural clay deposits were recorded at the base of one of the trenches, which was sealed beneath a layer of 'made ground' probably imported when the original car factory was built. A substantial concrete raft was also encountered, and this relates to an earlier phase of the car plant. The second trench exposed a further concrete raft and the remains of a tarmac surface of 20th century date, overlying contaminated natural clay. A large service trench also cut across the line of the trench. The absence of former soil horizons and finds of any antiquity from the evaluation suggests that this area of the current factory was cleared prior to its construction.

Oxford, Site of Former Government Buildings, Marston Road (SP5295 0675)
Annie Bingham

In October 2001 OA carried out a field evaluation at Marston Road in Oxford, on behalf of GSS Architecture, for their client, Brookes University. The evaluation revealed a series of naturally formed colluvial and alluvial layers to a depth of over 1m. In places these deposits had been truncated by terracing, probably when the recently demolished buildings on the site were constructed. The remains of a possible farm structure were observed in one of the trenches associated with a modern ceramic pipe; this structure probably dates to the 19th century. No artefacts were recovered from the
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excavated trenches and no deposits of archaeological significance were encountered.

Oxford, Department of Physiology, North-East Extension University Parks Science Area
(SP 1562 7068)
Andrew Holmes

In July 2001 the OA carried out a field evaluation at the Department of Physiology, University Parks Science Area, on behalf of the University Surveyor’s Office, Oxford. The evaluation revealed a buried soil horizon of uncertain date overlain by modern road surface make up deposits. No features were identified within the evaluation trench, despite its location in an area rich in prehistoric remains.

Oxford, Grandpont Causeway, Abingdon Road
(SP 5142 0575)
John Dalton, Robin Bashford and Alan Harding

In February, March and April 2000, OA undertook a watching brief at the Grandpont Causeway on Abingdon Road in Oxford. Limestone rubble from the Norman bridge work was exposed in plan at the base of the trench. No further features were seen and no finds were retrieved. Further work was carried out during repairs to the existing water main in January 2001 and a small section of the eastern face of the bridge work was exposed.

Oxford, Rewley Abbey Wall, Upper Fisher Row
(SP 5067 0846)
James Mumford and Jon Hiller

In October 2001 OA carried out an archaeological watching brief adjacent to a particular segment of the river Thames towpath which flanks a wall, formerly surrounding the Cistercian Abbey of Rewley in Oxford. This section of the towpath is situated north of the end of Upper Fisher Row. The watching brief was commissioned by Oxford City Council in advance of the construction of a new footpath with new lighting. The watching brief revealed probable 19th century building footings and brick-built surfaces of comparable date, presumably associated with demolished structures along the riverside. The structural remains were overlain by a general spread of rich loam topsoil that had also accumulated over the former path. Medieval deposits known on the site were not impacted in the course of the work.

Oxford, St Christopher’s First School, Cowley
(SP 5433 0450)
James Mumford

In September 2001 OA carried out an archaeological watching brief at St Christopher’s First School, Cowley.

The work was commissioned by WS Atkins in advance of the construction of a new extension to existing school buildings. The watching brief revealed a deposit of made up ground, presumably associated with the construction of the existing school buildings and post medieval land drains.

Oxford, Peers School, Littlemore (SP 5420 0290)
James Mumford

In November and December 2001 OA carried out an archaeological watching brief at Peers School, Littlemore. The work was commissioned by Rokbuild Ltd in advance of the construction of a new teaching block and car parking. The watching brief revealed no archaeological deposits or features. Pottery sherds were recovered from the subsoil; one piece dated from the Roman period and the rest from the 13th to 18th centuries. These derived from manuring and ploughing in the field.

Oxford, Oxford Castle Mound, New Road (SP 510 063)
Jon Hiller

In October and November 2001 OA carried out an archaeological watching brief at Oxford Castle Mound, New Road. The work was commissioned by WS Atkins and was undertaken during installation of new security measures and lighting on the mound. The watching brief comprised the photographic recording of the new lighting installation in the well chamber of the mound, and the erection of a new gate to the well chamber. A new fence was also erected at the base of the mound. Excavations were limited to both a shallow trench for a new electricity cable dug up the side of the mound and also some small pits for the erection of the new gate and fence. The floor deposits of the well chamber and base of its stair well were partly excavated and inspected; a bowl from a late 18th century clay pipe was recovered from the floor.

Oxford, Broad Street (SP 5130 0644)
Annie Bingham and Emily Glass

In November 2001 OA carried out an archaeological watching brief in Broad Street, Oxford. This watching brief was further to an earlier phase of work that has previously been reported. The work was commissioned by Oxford County Council in advance of plans to install hydraulic bollards across Broad Street. The work involved the machine excavation of an east-west trench to examine the below ground deposits, prior to installation of a drainage pipe to connect the base of the bollards to an existing below ground drain. The watching brief revealed layers of modern deposits, service pipes and road make-up down to a maximum depth of 1.35m. No evidence of earlier street surfaces or archaeological features were revealed.
Oxford, Provost’s Garden, Queen’s College
(SP 51745 06365)
Robin Bashford and Alan Hardy

In April 2001 OA undertook a watching brief in the Provost's Garden, Queen's College. A number of features and archaeological deposits were uncovered but due to the nature of the excavation, the interpretation of these was problematic. A general sequence of late 11th century deposits overlain by 13th and 16th century deposits was inferred from the pottery. One very large feature may have been either a pit/quarry or a ditch marking the boundary between messuages.

Oxford, St Hilda’s College, New student Accommodation
(SP 52220 0570)
Robin Bashford and John Hiller

From July to September 2001 OA carried out a watching brief at St Hilda's College. The earliest finds on the site were dated to the 18th century or later. The absence of medieval and earlier finds from any of the excavated deposits suggests that historically the site was little used until the 19th century at the earliest. Deposits and pits observed on the site relate to the foundation of buildings on the site in recent times.

Oxford, St Giles’ Church (SP 5113 0698)
John Hiller and Alan Hardy

OA carried out a watching brief at St Giles’ Church, Oxford, in January 2001. Four brick vaults were revealed, of which one contained a lead coffin and one a wooden coffin. These date to the late 18th to early 19th century. A further brick structure was identified and this may have served as a water tank. The excavated soil from the trenches contained a quantity of loose human bones, which were replaced below the floor. A few coffin fittings dating to the latter half of the 18th century/start of the Victorian era were recovered from general make-up layers. No structural features relating to the medieval church were observed in the course of the work.

Oxford, King's Mill Lane, Marston Road, Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies (SP 5275 0650)
John Hiller and Greg Pugh

An evaluation was undertaken at King's Mill Lane in Oxford, in October 2000, by OA. The oldest features uncovered comprised a well-preserved cobbled yard surface and stone trackway, which were both dated to the 18th/19th century. A trackway was located, which is known to have been in use in 1913. The structural remains of a greenhouse and a well were also dated to the late 19th or early 20th century.

Oxford, Proposed Musculoskeletal Science Centre, Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre (TQ 5455 0660)
Andrew Mayes and Ken Welsh

In January 2001 OA carried out a field evaluation within the grounds of the Nuffield Orthopaedic Hospital in Oxford. Four trenches were excavated but very little of archaeological significance was revealed. A single sherd of Roman pottery, dated to 2nd century AD, was retrieved from a possible buried ploughsoil, along with an undated small pit or posthole.

Oxford, Said Business School (SP 600 305)

Work continued at the Said Business School, in 2001, with a watching brief. Nothing of archaeological significance was discovered.

Oxford, New Oxford University Clubhouse, Mansfield Road (SP 5175 0608)

OA carried out a field evaluation at the site of the University Clubhouse on Mansfield Road. The evaluation revealed an undated curvilinear ditch, thought likely to be prehistoric. The University Parks, to the north, have been shown to contain a range of prehistoric features, including the ring-ditches of five Bronze Age barrows and a Roman field system. There were also features associated with the ‘King’s Mound’ earthwork, a civil war defensive feature adjacent to the site; excavations to investigate these features were obstructed, however, by modern services and tree roots. Terracing on the site was investigated and found to be a result of landscaping for the current playing field.

Oxford, The White Hart, Marston (SP 5270 0872)

OA was commissioned by Banner Homes, on behalf of Morrells brewery, to carry out an archaeological desk-based assessment for the site of the White Horse public house, Marston. The proposed development would entail the construction of 11 new homes, the demolition of late 19th-early 20th century outbuildings and the conversion of the public house onto two homes. The scope of the work was to identify the archaeological potential of the proposed development area and assess the potential impacts of the proposed development on this resource. Towards the street, the White Hart maintains to a large extent its 17th and 18th century appearance (with the exception of the stone-built 20th century porch) and, as such, represents an integral and valuable historic element within the village. To the rear of the main range, the series of 20th century brick extensions are of no architectural merit and serve, if anything, to obscure much of the original range. Internally, successive phases of refurbishment have left little of historic interest within the structure. The oldest elements of the extant structure are found at second floor level and within the roof on the form three stop-chamfered beams and the series of
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19th century trusses, representing a re-roofing exercise contemporary with or post-dating the extension of the property to the north.

Stanton Harcourt, Gill Mill House (SP 3795 0692)
Robin Bashford

In July 2001 OA undertook a watching brief at Gill Mill House, nr Stanton Harcourt. A roughly east-west aligned limestone wall footing and a potential robber trench on the same alignment were observed. Also recorded during the watching brief were a spread of limestone rubble, a large sub-circular feature and a line of potential post-holes. Large quantities of Roman pottery dating from the 1st to 4th centuries were recovered from deposits closely associated with these features, as were a fragment of sculpted oolitic limestone and a number of coins.

Steventon, 1 The Causeway (SU 4175 9195)
Robin Bashford

In May 2001 Oxford Archaeological Unit undertook a watching brief at 1 The Causeway, Steventon. Two limestone wall footings and a brick-lined well were observed during the watching brief, as were two anomalous deposits of uncertain date.

Thame, Thame Park (SP 716 038)

OA was commissioned by Strutt and Parker to carry out a Heritage assessment and survey of Thame Park, a Grade I listed building, on behalf of the owner. The house is known to incorporate substantial surviving elements from the medieval monastic buildings of the Cistercian Abbey. Much of the North Wing, including the roof, is of 14th century date. The South Range is also partly monastic. The late medieval buildings of the abbots' house with their renaissance decoration are of exceptional importance. Within the grounds there are significant buildings which add to the value of the park. The chapel is believed to be of a monastic date, although heavily restored during the 19th century, but its relation to the monastic plan has been uncertain. It is of equal importance that further unknown monastic-period structures survive, either submerged below the floor or hidden within the walls of the largely later building. It is known, for example, that previous (possibly monastic) buildings were demolished to allow the construction of the 18th century West Wing and that at the south-west corner of the house, the Palladian building is set on a foundation of much older (again, possibly monastic) stone. During the field evaluations carried out within the Rear Courtyard (north-east of the building), medieval wall lines and foundations were revealed. These walls suggested a covered walkway linking the north and south Wings and a further previously unrecorded building to the east of the courtyard. After building analysis and more excavation, the phasing was established. The eastern half of the South Wing is a later extension of the western half, which belongs to the earliest phase of construction. The covered walkway would probably have been added during the 14th century, when the Northern Wing's eastern wall (of which it is a continuation) was built. These probably relate to the Infirmary buildings east of the main cloister.

A geophysical survey was carried out as part of the evaluation, primarily to ascertain the whereabouts of any surviving abbey remains. There is no clear record of the location of the abbey church or of the other main buildings belonging to its complex. Parts of the abbey, possibly outbuildings now underneath the stables, were referred to as still standing in 1785. In 1840, a Mr Twopeny was able to examine the outline of the church, the results of which were published in 1888, yet no plan of this investigation survives. This mentions buildings arranged around three main courts, with the guesthouse in an outer court to the north. The church is recorded has having been north of the house and its dimensions were recorded as being 230 x 70 feet (with a Lady Chapel extending 45 feet to the east). The resistivity survey was carried out as a means of clarification and/or extension of this limited available information. This survey produced strong yet inconclusive evidence that the church lay north west of the house.

Tubney Wood, Fyfield and Tubney (SP 4480 0085)
Hugo Lamdin-Whymark

The Oxford Archaeological Unit carried out a field evaluation at Tubney Wood Quarry on behalf of Hills Minerals and Waste Ltd. The evaluation revealed an extensive scatter of early Mesolithic flint in the topsoil and subsoil; early Mesolithic flintwork was also present in seven tree-throw holes. In addition, a small number of later Neolithic and early Bronze Age flints were also recovered. Eight ditches were located, several of which run parallel to modern boundaries and may represent the medieval precursors to these. Two of these ditches could be early in date, as the latest material recovered from them is early to middle Saxon. Three other undated ditches in the east did not conform to the modern field layout. A single undated pit was also uncovered. The early Mesolithic scatter is of particular significance as such assemblages are rare in the county. The flintwork from the evaluation contained considerable evidence of knapping and a varied and high proportion of retouched artefacts was present, including two flints bearing use-wear from scraping hides. Early indications may indicate repeated or extended habitation, as was identified in New Plantation to the south (Bradley and Hey 1993).

Reference
Bradley P and Hey G 1993; A Mesolithic Site at New Plantation, Fyfield and Tubney, Oxfordshire, Oxoniensia 58, 1-26
In May and June 2000 OA undertook a watching brief during construction work at 64-65 High Street, Wallingford. The town is known to date at least to the Saxon period, as is suggested by the Saxon cemetery, predating the 9th century town defensive works. It is also known that Bullecroft Park lies within the Saxon burh and was the site of the Benedictine Priory of the Holy Trinity. In 1997, OA revealed a large flint foundation and tiles behind 55 High Street, which may have been associated with the Priory foundations, revealed during the 19th century. During the
May-June watching brief in 2000, a probable charnel pit was recovered. The remains of at least 48 individuals were counted, of both sexes. The bones showed signs of having been damaged after death, possibly by being removed from their original location. The body areas represented also supported the interpretation of the pit as being a charnel pit. Certain body parts are usually over represented in charnel, due to being easily recovered during exhumation. This was true of the remains from the pit. These remains were possibly originally interred and removed from the Priory. It is also possible, however, that they belonged to the Saxon cemetery. Unfortunately, no dating evidence was found to coherate either theory. There was a suggestion of a mortar and stone floor at the base of one of the trenches, which may have been part of the Priory; too little was exposed for a conclusive interpretation to be made.

Wantage, 11/12 Market Place (SU 3985 8790)

11/12 Market Street in Wantage is an important local building, which has grown in a number of phases from the construction of the original section of the building in the 16th or 17th century to its substantial renovation in the late 19th century. The building was previously investigated and recorded in 1998 by John Steane and John Rhodes. Structural works in 2000 allowed a further programme of recording. The work concentrated particularly on an exposed area of the first floor, including painted joist soffits and the frame of a gable, which required substantial strengthening. It also included a general low-level record throughout the building and an assessment of its phasing.

Wallington, St Leonard’s Church

In January 2001 OA undertook a watching brief at St Leonard’s Church in Wallington. The church was almost completely rebuilt in 1877 although surviving features suggest that the building dates from as early as the 12th century. There are also 14th and 15th century alterations. During the installation of a new floor within the church, a west aligned inhumation and a brick structure were partially exposed - the inhumation was left in situ as no further impact would be made. This burial is likely to have dated to before the 1877 renovation. The brick structure was likely to have represented either a vault or a brick floor support for an earlier floor surface, presumably that which existed before the refurbishment in 1877. Evidence for the refurbishment of the church in 1877 was also recorded in the form of brick floor supports and a deposit of lime mortar. Following the reduction of the existing path from the south porch to the lych gate, a number of burials were recorded, two of which were excavated and re-interred prior to the deposition of hardcore for the new path. Those remaining were left in situ as they were only subject to minimal impact from the ground reduction.

Weston-on-the-Green, Oxford Court (SP 5328 1880)

Dave Thomason

The OA carried out a field evaluation at Oxford Court in Weston-on-the-Green in June 2001, on behalf of Batterton Tyack Architects/Swan Hill Homes Ltd. The evaluation
Fig 11. Thame Park. North Range, showing monastic features.

Fig 12. Thame Park. South Range, showing monastic features.
revealed no archaeological deposits other than modern made ground and make-up layers. A modern dry stone wall was observed which overlay modern deposits.

**Witney, 6 Church Green (SP 3555 0950)**
Jim Mumford

In November 2001 OA carried out an archaeological watching brief at 6 Church Green, Witney, Oxfordshire. The work was commissioned by Skyline Developments in advance of the construction of a new office building at the rear of the property. The watching brief revealed a number of late post-medieval/Victorian rubbish pits and late post-medieval wall footings associated with outbuildings on the site at this time. The function of the buildings is uncertain, but they were evidently associated with properties on the street frontage.

**Witney, 4 Meadow View, Cogges (SP 3628 0980)**
Robin Bashford

In May 2001 Oxford Archaeological Unit undertook a watching brief at 4 Meadow View, Cogges, Witney. The development lies within Scheduled Ancient Monument 28177 at SP 3628 0980. No archaeological features or deposits were observed during the watching brief. Modern deposits were observed which may relate to work carried out in the 1980s.

**Woodperry Garden Tower Benjamin Jeffs**

OA carried out an archaeological and historical analysis of Woodperry Garden Tower, on behalf of Johnston Caves Associates. The works revealed that the building post dates the construction of the retaining walls for the kitchen garden, and is largely of a single phase of construction. The origins of the building may be late 17th or early 18th century.

**OXFORDSHIRE BUILDINGS RECORD**

Grant Audley-Miller

Oxfordshire Buildings Record was launched in May last year and has held a number of 'recording days': the OBR held a recording day at the Abingdon Police Station on 2 September 2001.

**Abingdon County Police Station (SU 4980 9690)**

Abingdon County Police Station was built in 1856 as a purpose built police station to serve one of 9 districts in the then recently formed Berkshire County police force. The building was extended in the 1890s and remained in operational use until 1999.

The first phase of 1856 is built of roughly coursed dark yellow ochre limestone rubble, the second phase in
matching materials probably greensand. The main facade of the two phases is plain and unpretentious, with seven bays, symmetrical about a central doorway. It has vertically hung sashes with narrow glazing bars and window dressings of red brick. The flat arches above the windows and doors are of fine rubbed orange sandy brickwork. An ashlar plattband on the first phase has in Roman capitals the inscription:

‘COUNTY POLICE STATION’. The roofs are covered with Welsh slate.

An early 20th century floor plan shows that the ground floor consisted of an enquiry office, guard room, mess room and scullery, the sergeant’s private suite with a drawing room, sitting room, kitchen and pantry and the superintendent’s study. Three windowless cells were located in the centre of the building. The first floor was entirely living accommodation for the sergeant, superintendent and constables. the census of 1871 shows that there were 14 people living in the station, including the superintendent and his family and two constables.

The cells are one of the most interesting features of the building and are accessed through a set of doors: the first timber, the second a heavy wrought iron security gate. To open the security gate, the custody officer had to unlock a small wall-safe and release the sliding metal bolt. The security gate is also fitted with hinge bolts to prevent it being lifted off its hinges.

This set of doors opens into a corridor, lit by the small heavily barred windows. These windows have heavy stone lintels and diamond-section iron bars which match the cell windows of the Old Gaol to the rear. Each cell opens onto the corridor through a wooden outer door, fitted with a lock, and a wrought iron inner security gate with lock. The specification for the security gate locks survives in the Berkshire Record Office, along with a number of the tenders received. There is no evidence either in the building or in the Record Office, as to which firm won the job, although James Wilder & Sons of Reading submitted the lowest tender. Inside each cell is a built-in unit comprising a wooden bedstead and toilet and probably dating from the mid 20th century. Chain-operated cisterns in the corridor flushed the toilets prior to the installation of push button flushes inside the cells. These cells were in use until the station closed in 1999 and were reputed to be the oldest operational cells in the country.

The first phase of the station appears to have been built in 1856. A ‘Court Room’ is shown on the 1st Edition OS map of 1874 to the south-east of this first phase and may have been for the Police Court. Conflicting evidence from the 1st Edition OS map, auction details and late 19th century photographs make it difficult to establish when the court room was demolished, and the extension built.

Archive material for the Police station is limited. The only documentary material in the Berkshire Record Office relating to the construction of Abingdon police station is a tender for £1312 9s 5d for the building, from James Thomas, builders, of Abingdon, dated 25 July 1856. We might assume that, as this is the only tender to survive, that it was indeed from the successful firm. The specification for the cell locks and fittings, and five tenders, the lowest of which was from Wilders of Reading survive in the Berkshire Record Office. Neither the Thames Valley Police (successors to the Berkshire force) nor the current owners hold any archive material.

The definitive work on the operation of the Berkshire Force 'A Short History of the Berkshire Constabulary' provides only a limited insight into the operation of the force between 1856 and the 1950s and almost no information on the Abingdon Station.

Conclusions The recording of the County Police Station in Abingdon has uncovered material which has shed light not only on the building but on the operation of the police force between its establishment in 1856 and the date when it left the premises. Few archives appear to have survived and this study has highlighted the effects of the loss of documentation from the very recent past. It has also highlighted the paucity of published information about the history and operation of the police force. The OBR intend to carry out further archive research to understand the history of the building and the operation of the police force, which occupied the building for almost 150 years.

Reference
Indge W (Sergeant) 1956; A Short History of the Berkshire Constabulary (1956)

PHOENIX MM ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC RESEARCH

Wigginton Interim Roman Site Report
Mark Morris

Phoenix MM Archaeology & Historic Research, is an amateur group consisting of people with diverse interests in archaeology/history, and was formed in 2000

It is a group that welcomes all ages and archaeological experience with an ethos based on membership participation at all levels. The group encourages members to have as much fun as possible whilst embracing the golden rules of Heritage Conservation and Protection.

This is a summary of the archaeological investigation work, which has been carried out by the group at the Roman Villa site in the village of Wigginton, in Oxfordshire, during the period from Aug 2001-March 2002.

Wigginton has been known for some time as the site of a Roman Villa, and has been excavated in varying degrees over a period of some 200 years.
Oxfordshire

In the 1960s, The Ministry Of Works took on the last archived excavation of the Villa, but sadly this work was not fully completed due to the untimely death of the archaeologist Professor Ian Richmond. To date, no other excavation of the villa site or the immediate surrounding area has been concluded, so Phoenix Archaeology decided to investigate further to find out if any evidence lay in and around the area that might possibly point to an earlier occupation.

In particular it relates to the discovery of a dark, crop mark feature, that measures approximately 30m square, and has the appearance of an enclosure boundary ditch, which shows up only on aerial photographs. There also appears to be a round, pit-like crop mark in one corner of this feature. It was decided from the beginning, that no immediate excavation of the Roman Villa would take place until investigation of these various anomalies was completed. The dimensions of the crop mark were estimated by taking a known distance on the aerial photograph and using it as an increment to gauge where best to locate any trench work.

To begin with a 7.62m (25ft) x 1m trench (Trench 1), was dug at a right angle across the boundary ditch crop mark. Just below the topsoil, at a depth of 30.5 cm, an area of dark soil was noticed which was attributed to a silt infill of a ditch over a period of time and a small amount of Roman style pottery was also discovered.

A second trench (Trench 2) was then opened up approximately 17m further down the field towards the village and cut directly across the boundary ditch crop mark again. It was noted that the ditch had been cut through clay and was approximately 1.83-2.13m wide, however the final length of this trench has not yet been determined. Once again, we noticed the same "dark soil feature" as trench 1, and we also came across a scattering of pottery, tile and burnt stone at the same depth.

The group considered the pottery to be Roman, although expert opinion would need to be sought to find a positive date, area of manufacture and verify the type of pottery, which was later identified by an expert as almost certainly Iron Age. The group discovered the tile was a piece of Imbrice Roman roof tile. However, the bone fragments and the burnt stone were beyond our identification resources.

The next stage of the ditch investigation involved random test-pits of about 60cm square and 30cm - 35cm deep. These were dug in an area within the enclosure to attempt to locate the larger pit-like feature that was also seen on the aerial photograph. The first test-pit revealed no silt marking or evidence of a feature but it did yield a flint flake and a piece of bone that appeared to have cut marks on it. However, the second test-pit revealed only natural Coiswald Limestone bedrock.

At the time of writing this report, another trench is in the process of being excavated and it appears that silt and burnt stone have been revealed, therefore the round crop mark, which measures approximately 3m across, may possibly have been found, so we are investigating further.

To conclude this interim report, it is worth mentioning the general environment in context to the site. The area around the Villa (and the rectangular feature) is undulating and unusually "hillock like" and bounded on two sides by Dash Lake and the River Swer.

The locality has almost certainly had some sort of attraction as a meeting place or gathering area, which has subsequently led to the establishment of a settlement. With this in mind the group will continue further investigations and research into the various features and hopefully in the future, be able to create a better picture of Wigginton's ancient past

THAMES VALLEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES LTD

Abingdon, Morlands Brewery, Ock Street (SU 4950 9690)
Kate Taylor

Following the evaluation reported in SMA 31 (65-7), excavation of five trenches at the site of the former Morlands Brewery in Abingdon, Oxfordshire, discovered complex deposits representing medieval (11th-15th century) occupation on the south side of Ock Street. This discovery adds to the information gained from earlier excavations on the north side of the street at Enock's Coal Yard (no 75) and the Mr Warrick's Arms Hotel and The Crown public house (nos 83-88).

The combined effect of these excavations is to reveal that medieval occupation extended further along this main street of the town than was previously thought. This suggests considerable westward expansion of the settled area in the 11th-13th centuries, by comparison with the Saxon settlement. Trench A was located near the road frontage. It revealed 2 substantial buildings represented by series of earthen floors and massive limestone walls. One of these was probably in use from the late medieval period until the 17th or 18th centuries. Later phases of site use comprising further walls, brick and flagstone floors, a well, a fireplace and a probable chimney-stack may be the remains of demolished buildings shown on the Ordnance Survey map of 1874.

A number of large medieval (11th to 13th centuries) storage or rubbish pits were found beneath the lowest floors. Trench B was set further back from the road and uncovered a large number of intercutting pits, some huge, that had been backfilled with rubbish. Some were originally domestic storage pits relating to the buildings, but others seem to have been for the industrial processing of animal products, probably including the tanning of leather. The majority of
these dated from the 16th to the 18th century, some were 13th century, and one was Roman. The earliest discovery on site was a spread of struck flints from the late Mesolithic period, c. 5000 BC. Trench D was excavated alongside the river. It revealed dump deposits indicating land reclamation, and pits with timber and mortar linings, probably dating to the 13th century. Similar pits from other sites are known to have been used in tanning. In confirmation of this, waterlogged deposits from this area yielded leather offcuts. Other trenches revealed fewer features, mainly medieval pits and gullies, and only a single feature that might date from the Saxon period.

Abingdon, Abbey House, Abbey Close (SU 5000 9200)
M John Saunders

A watching brief during stripping of topsoil and contaminated ground, and construction of piled building foundations and service trenches, did not locate any archaeological features.

Abingdon, South Abingdon Community Centre, Drayton Road (SU 4872 9638)
Helen Moore

An evaluation consisting of two trenches did not reveal any archaeological deposits or finds; this negative evidence at least demonstrates that the nearby Saxon cemetery did not extend this far west.

Abingdon, Punney Farm, Radley (SP 5280 9840)
Erlend Hindmarch

An evaluation comprising 53 trenches located a concentration of archaeological deposits in the north-west of the site. The majority of the datable features belong to the early and middle Iron Age, and most of the undated features should probably also be assigned this date.

Features included mainly ditches and pits, although a cobbled surface is notable. This incorporated numerous Iron Age pottery sherds in its make-up, although the occasional Roman sherd also intruded. Parts of the surface had been scorched, perhaps suggesting some industrial process, but no indication of the nature of this was evident. This area of the site, therefore, seems to have seen Iron Age occupation. Further south, the evidence consisted mainly of ditches which can be interpreted as field boundaries and paddocks. These include both Iron Age and Roman examples, some of which coincide with cropmarks already known from aerial photography. There was no indication of any further activity before the 16th century at the earliest. The pottery assemblage included 243 Iron age sherds, 33 Roman and 11 post-medieval. A number of features also produced small quantities of animal bone, but no other finds were retrieved.

Banbury, Hanwell Fields (SP 449 424)
Jo Pine

Four evaluation trenches encountered no archaeology.

Blackthorn, Elm Tree Farm, Station Road (SP 6242 1952)
Steve Hammond and Steve Ford

An evaluation comprising eight trenches identified a number of archaeological features, confined to a single trench. Two small ditches may be late Saxon in date; these were covered by what appears to have been a medieval midden, which contained large, unabraded pottery sherds, and well-preserved animal bone.

Oxford, Church Cowley, St James First School, Bartholomew Road (SP 5435 0353)
Sin Anthony

A series of watching briefs during the digging of foundation trenches and landscaping revealed nothing of interest.

Oxford, Church Cowley Van Dieman's Lane allotments (SP 5440 0344)
M John Saunders

Six evaluation trenches revealed nothing of interest; more specifically, no trace was found of a suspected early boundary ditch, nor of an accompanying bank.

Cowley, Garden House, Hollow Way (SP 5482 0446)
M John Saunders

Six evaluation trenches revealed nothing earlier than a pit filled with 20th-century rubble.

Cropredy, Claydon Road (SP 4665 4670)
M John Saunders

Two evaluation trenches revealed sections of undated ditch and a small undated pit. A single broken flint flake from the spoilheap which could not be closely dated was the only find.

Dorchester-on-Thames, former Filling Station, High Street (SU 5788 9410)
Sarah Coles

Both evaluation trenches uncovered intercutting early Roman features, mainly pits. Over 200 sherds of pottery included numerous imports (South and Central Gaulish Samian, Spanish and Gaulish amphorae, North Gaulish colour coated, rough-cast beaker) as well as regionally
Oxfordshire

traded and local wares. The emphasis is clearly on wares with a 1st century currency, with little beyond the middle of the 2nd. Small quantities of animal bone, oyster shell and ceramic building materials were also recovered. Later material was surprisingly rare, confined to a single post-medieval pot sherd. Graves (undated but thought possibly to be Saxon) have been recorded from land immediately adjacent, and fragments of human bone were also recovered from the spoilheaps of both trenches here; no new light can be shed on the dating of these remains. No features resembling graves were observed, but it is unlikely there would have been Roman burials so well within the presumed line of the Roman defences. These finds fit comfortably with other Roman evidence from Dorchester, although the limited date range suggests an early change in landuse in this area after an apparently prosperous start. It is possible this relates to the development of the civilian settlement from an early fort, although clearly more work is needed on this question. Finally, the lack of medieval activity from a site so close to the Abbey is surprising, and not easily dismissed as being due to truncation.

Dorchester-on-Thames, 1 Manor Farm Road
(SU 57900 94450)
Erland Hindmarch

During replacement of an existing garage, a watching brief recorded only an undated but probably relatively modern stone wall, constructed as two faces of roughly faced, irregular limestone block, random coursed, with rubble infill. This wall followed the modern property boundary.

Headington, former Garage site, Mason’s Road
(SP 5545 0626)
M John Saunders

Four evaluation trenches revealed no features or finds.

Headington, former Slade Hospital, Mascall Avenue
(SP 5556 0540)
M John Saunders

Two phases of evaluation trenching, eight trenches in all, located nothing predating the hospital.

Henley-on-Thames, Church Avenue (SU 7630 7727)
Jamie Preston

A standing building survey was undertaken, supplementing a previous survey at the Old Brewery Yard (SMA 31, 69-70) to ascertain whether an opening for a doorway could be made at any point in the 16th century malthouse wall. No evidence was found of any pre-existing opening, and the main longitudinal elements of the structure appeared to extend the entire length of the wall.

Didcot, Didcot Girl’s School, Sherwood Road
(SU 5132 9003)
Steve Ford

A watching brief during the digging of foundations for an extension uncovered only a substantial ditch backfilled with modern rubble.

Henley-on-Thames, Catherine Wheel Hotel, Hart Street
(SU 7610 8270)
Jamie Preston

In advance of a number of proposed alterations, particularly the installation of a lift shaft, to this Grade II Listed Building, a standing building survey was carried out, comprising written, drawn and photographic records of both interior and exterior features. The hotel originally consisted of 7-9 Hart Street but now also extends to adjacent properties at numbers 11-15. The main phases of development could be identified in the timber frame of the original structures. The earliest (now very fragmentary) elements appear to date from the 16th century but could correspond with the first known reference to the building in 1499.

Extensive modifications occurred in the late 17th or 18th century, and several major modifications were made in the 18th century. Further phases of development followed in the 19th and 20th centuries. Of particular note is the demonstration that the 16th-century structure at Number 9 was originally set well back from the street frontage, and perpendicular to it, and only later extended towards the street. Most of what is visible today dates from the 18th-century phase of development, much of which seems to have occurred in the second quarter of that century. The stable block behind Number 7 dates to the late 18th or early 19th century, a clear response to the rising demands of coach travel. Subsequent developments all tended to encroach on the stable yard space, as the coaching facilities declined in importance.

Oxford, Larkrise First School, Boundary Brook Road
(SP 5320 0465)
Andy Taylor

Three evaluation trenches revealed nothing of interest.

Oxford, Oxford High School, Belbroughton Road
(SP 5118 0861)
Kate Taylor

An evaluation consisting of three trenches produced only three sherds of pottery (two medieval, one 19th century) a fragment of burnt flint and three undiagnostic tile fragments, all from deposits also containing modern material. The major deposit encountered was an alluvial clay which may have been dredged from the river and was used to level out a slope in advance of tennis court construction. This overlay
a buried ploughsoil which yielded a single sherd of 16th-century pottery, which need not necessarily provide a reliable date for this layer.

Oxford, University Sports Centre, Iffley Road
(SP 5225 0550)
Kate Taylor

A single evaluation trench revealed a shallow gully which contained a single prehistoric flint and 60 very fragmentary pieces of animal bone including a sheep jaw and pig tusk. Borehole data suggest there may be a palaeochannel filled with a red sandy silt up to 2m deep, which may have the potential to produce palaeo-environmental evidence.

Oxford, The Oxford Hotel, Godstow Road
(SP 4954 1013)

A first phase of evaluation revealed nothing of interest; a second phase is anticipated.

Shipton-under-Wychwood, Bradley's Garage, High Street (SU 27850 18000)
Andrew Taylor

A watching brief following the earlier evaluation (SMA 31, 71) revealed nothing of interest in either the foundation trenches or the areas previously occupied by fuel tanks.

Thame, 12a Bell Lane (SP 7057 0607)
Clare Challis and Graham Hull

A watching brief during digging of foundations for new offices did not encounter any archaeological features; the originally sloping site had been levelled by the importation of soil relatively recently.

Wallingford, Lamb Garage, Castle St (SU 6075 8952)
Graham Hull and Jo Pine

Four evaluation trenches revealed a complex sequence of deposits dating from the late 11th or 12th century, and possibly from the 10th, all sealed below a 19th century deposit which may be a buried soil or a levelling layer. The Saxon or early medieval deposits included pits, post holes, possibly a wall line, and a buried soil. Dating was provided by a very consistent pottery assemblage amounting to 89 sherds. The location of the site within the Saxon burh and the comparative lack of archaeological work in the immediate vicinity increase the significance of these findings.

Wantage, Yoplait Dairy Crest site, Grove Road
(SU 4000 8902)
Andrew Taylor

An evaluation totalling 16 trenches produced several medieval features. A gully terminus and two more sections of what is presumably the same gully were revealed across three trenches. One medieval, one possibly medieval and one undated ditch were also revealed. Apart from a single Roman sherd from the medieval ditch, all the pottery could be dated to the 11th century, although a wider range is possible. A small assemblage of highly fragmented animal bone was also recovered from these features. The results appear to point to a small early medieval farm nearby.

Witney, 100 The Crofts (SP 3544 0940)
Clare A Challis

Nothing of interest was observed during a watching brief during groundworks for new building.

Yarnton, Begbroke Business Park, Sandy Lane
(SP 4790 1355)
Clare A Challis

Nineteen evaluation trenches produced a single small, undated pit. No finds were recovered.

Publications:
'Iron Age and Roman Settlements, with prehistoric and Saxon features, at Penny Lock, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire,' by Steve Ford and Kate Taylor, Rec of Bucks 41 (2001), 79-123.

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD


Gary Lock, Chris Gosden, David Griffiths, Patrick Daly, Vuk Trifkovic and Tim Marston.

The work at Marcham/Frilford fits in with the wider aims of the Hillforts of the Ridgeway Project in exploring the Ridgeway in southern Oxfordshire as both a physical entity that could act as a conduit for movement and as a cultural barrier separating the chalk downlands from the Vale of the White Horse. After seven seasons of work on the Berkshire Downs we now have an understanding of the character of occupation from the Later Bronze Age through the Iron Age and Romano-British periods. Information is available from the three sites excavated, White Horse Hill in 1994 and 1995
Oxfordshire

(Lock et al in press), Segsbury Camp in 1996 and 1997 (Lock and Gosden 1997; Lock and Gosden 1998) and Alfred's Castle, 1998 to 2000 (Gosden and Lock 1999; 2001; Lock and Gosden 2000), and also from wider research including GIS-based integrated landscape research (Bell and Lock, 2000; Daly and Lock, forthcoming), the results of the English Heritage National Mapping Programme and our own geophysical surveys.

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 over a thousand visitors including groups from local schools and community organisations. Various activities were organised for National Archaeology Day and talks are given to groups throughout the year.

Marcham/Trilford provides an opportunity for further geophysical survey, targeted excavation, wider landscape survey and the collection and collation of existing evidence including aerial photographs and unpublished fieldwork in the area. This should provide a finer resolution of the results from earlier work at Trilford and enable a better understanding of the economic and social articulation in the Vale during these periods, the effects of Romanisation on the late Iron Age settlement pattern, and a valuable comparison with the evidence from the Downs.

Previous work at the site started with the recognition and partial excavation of a late Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon cemetery (Akerman, 1865; Calcins, 1978; Dudley-Buxton, 1920; Rolleston, 1869; 1880). A Romano-British temple and underlying Iron Age structures in the gardens of the ex-Noah's Ark pub were excavated in the 1930s (Bradford and Goodchild, 1939) and re-interpreted in the 1960s (Harding, 1987). These, together with considerable aerial photographic evidence for a series of enclosures, are now scheduled and will not be part of the current fieldwork. This will concentrate in the field to the east of the temple where Hingley has shown the presence of an amphitheatre (briefly published in 1985), which together with extensive surrounding material produced by fieldwalking, suggests a major Romano-British religious centre. Our work will explore the character, dating and extent of this settlement through large-scale geophysics and targeted excavation.

Fig 14 shows the first phase of the geophysics (magnetometry), approximately 4 ha, carried out by Oxford Archaeotectnics in June 2001. It can be seen that the detail within the geophysics is quite remarkable and provided an accurate guide for the positioning of exploratory excavation trenches. The grid established for the geophysics was used for the precise location of the trenches.

**Brief Report on the Excavations in 2001.**

Trenches 1 and 9 are located on the amphitheatre, the former on the eastern entrance and the latter on a geophysical anomaly to the south which coincides with the previous excavations of Hingley. Both of these trenches are unfinished and will continue in 2002.

**Trench 1.**

Fig 15 shows the main features of the amphitheatre's eastern entrance in schematic form as many issues are yet to be resolved in Trench 1 and excavation will continue in 2002. The amphitheatre was positioned within a dry valley which contained thick deposits of sandy loam, a material relatively easy to work with not found anywhere else on the site. The arena was cut down through bedrock in places, as shown by cut [1116] in the south-western corner of Trench 1. Just inside this cut the arena wall was constructed enclosing an area of approximately 47m diameter, [1117]. The top of the wall was also identified as it approached the entrance passage, [1125], although this has yet to be excavated.

Material excavated from the arena filled the gap between the arena wall and the bedrock cut and was heaped up to create the bank approximately 15m wide. At least one layer of local stone and clay was incorporated within the bank probably as a stabilisation mechanism as the sandy loam is not inherently stable. Sondages through the bank show that little of it remains, 0.2m maximum, truncation finishing at the lowest layer of stone and clay. The rear of the bank has yet to be fully excavated but there is a suggestion of a stone and turf revetment. The geophysics also suggest some form of rear revetment for most of its circuit. No evidence for seating structures on the bank has yet been found such as postholes or timber slots, and it may be that people stood.

The eastern entrance passage is defined by a gap through the bank and is indicated on the geophysics by a strong negative anomaly. Complex stratigraphy fills the entrance passage which has yet to be resolved and shows considerable activity within the passage when it was filling. A distinct context could define a wooden revetting wall on the southern side [1031], probably covered with pink plaster as suggested by pieces found within the fill of the entrance. Nothing found so far offers an interpretation for the geophysical anomaly although the entrance passage probably slopes down into the arena and the arena floor could be at least a metre deeper at the inner end of the passage where the top of the arena wall has been identified. The anomaly, therefore, represents something at a lower level within the entrance passage, perhaps a paved floor or stone from a collapsed bank revetment.

As yet there is no dating evidence from Trench 1 and nothing to suggest more than a single phase of construction.

**Trench 9.**

At the southern side of the amphitheatre excavation within Trench 9 explored the stone structure first discovered by Hingley (1985) in order to understand more about the construction of the bank, the arena wall and base, as well as the stone structure itself. Hingley's trench was located and re-opened, revealing the top of the arena wall and part of the stone-built structure. As with trench 1 all conclusions are
Fig 14. Results of the magnetometry survey at Marcham/Frilford, June 2001 showing the excavation trenches, (Oxford Archaeotechnics).
Fig 15. Trench 1. A schematic plan of the amphitheatre’s eastern entrance showing the arena wall and the banks.
preliminary. The trench as a whole stretched from the centre point of the arena to the back of the bank (as determined from the geophysical plot). In the interior of the arena we removed the topsoil but did not excavate, concentrating our efforts on the area from the front of the arena wall to the back of the bank (Fig 16 shows part of the area of the trench). At the southern end of the trench the back of the bank was revealed, but so far no rear revetment has been found. The bank is composed of clay and sand in discontinuous layers and so far no evidence of structures has been found in terms of either post holes or stonework to support the bank. No evidence of seating is preserved. A strip was excavated through the bank at the southern end of the trench and it is possible that there is both a buried soil (of Iron Age date?) and some structural evidence in the form of postholes beneath the bank, but this requires confirmation through further excavation.

Adjacent to the arena the bank dips down to meet a revetment wall, preserved to almost a metre in height. The wall [9034] is a well-built stone and mortar structure, composed of well-dressed limestone blocks. On the southern side, supporting the bank, is a less well-laid wall [9033] composed of poorly dressed limestone blocks, most of which are not set in mortar. It is not clear at this stage whether these walls are of a single phase. At a depth of around a metre from the top of the outer wall is the arena floor, composed of well-packed gravel. We have just revealed the top of this floor and can say no more about its composition and structure as yet.

The most striking feature on this part of the site was a small walled room let into the bank on the southern side of the wall. It is composed of three walls [9004, 9007, 9006] with the arena walls forming a fourth side. The room is roughly 2.5m east-west and just over 4 m north-south. Exactly how it relates to the amphitheatre wall and the bank needs to be confirmed, but at the present the following sequence can be posited. The bank was constructed first and then the retaining wall at the front was built. The room was then let into the bank which had been removed in this area. Sediments then accumulated within the room, eventually filling it to the remaining height of the walls. Once this infill was completed a roughly rectangular structure [9006] made of large dressed blocks was placed on top of the sediment, Fig 16. Around this structure a relatively large number of coins and a fibula with embossed decoration were recovered. We have sectioned the internal deposits removing those from the western half of the structure, but this needs to be completed in 2002. Only then will it be possible to say more about the construction sequence and possible function of this structure. Similar structures have been found at other British amphitheatres, for instance at the military amphitheatre at Caerleon and that outside the town of Calleva Atrebatum (modern Silchester). In neither case is it clear what function the structures performed.

In all, trench 9 has started to reveal important evidence on the structure and history of construction of the amphitheatre, evidence that needs clarification through further excavation.

Trench 2.
This trench was positioned over the central area of a large rectilinear magnetic anomaly which seemed to represent a large stone structure (or 'building'), c 30m by 15m, with its long axis lying east-west. On the west, north and east sides there appeared to be smaller rectilinear extensions or side-chambers, and there was evidence of probable pits and areas of rubble or disturbance within the walled area.

Within a day of beginning the excavation, it became clear that the deposits in Trench 2, including the linear stone features which comprised the 'building', were extremely fragile and extensively robbed and plough-damaged. The shape of the two main stone 'wall' features crossing the trench area east-west, [2027 - 2006] (S) and [2025-2003] (north), including the square northern extension [2009, 2017, 2026], was quickly determined, Fig 17. Subsequent cleaning and recording showed these main 'walls' were in fact very shallow flat features made up of small oolitic limestone rubble stones, laid against the sides of shallow flat-bottomed trenches. Hence these 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.

Along the southern 'wall', robbing and plough-damage had resulted in much of the stone being removed, although the outline of the former wall or foundation trench was clearly visible and filled with a dark secondary deposit. There was also a line of decayed mortar remaining on the inner (north) edge of [2027]. Two opposed pairs of mortar plinths on either side of the southern 'wall' defined the sides of a probable entrance [2040, 2042]. In addition, in the northern part of the trench, a secondary rubble wall [2004], with a probable parallel wall in the trench edge to the north [2005] were discovered leading east from the northeast corner of the square extension [2009/2026]. Of very poor construction, these may represent a later phase external to the main enclosed area. No finds were discovered within the matrix of the stone features.

Within the area enclosed by the main 'walls' was a complex series of discontinuous deposits which reflected very substantial plough-damage. In fact, any Roman-period or later occupation surfaces in the centre of the 'building' had been all but ploughed away, with only a speckled trace of powdered ceramic material, some late Roman coins and the occasional Roman metal object such as nails or bracelet fragments remaining in the base of the ploughsoil. Within the rest of the 'building' where Roman material had been ploughed-out, the layer which remained beneath the ploughsoil, a mottled brown/orange layer, seems to represent an Iron Age soil. In the east-centre of the trench, traces of burnt wood survived at the interface between the lowest ploughsoil and the surface of: this seemed to point to the remains of a Roman-period burning (?destruction) layer.

Oxfordshire
Fig 16. Trench 9. The southern area of the amphitheatre showing the stone room and the arena wall.
Area containing concentrated deposit of Roman building materials, hobnails and coins.
Gravel and mortar.
Stone.

Fig 17. Trench 2. Part of the late Romano-British building.
Oxfordshire

comprising the fallen and burnt remains of structural timbers which had subsequently been almost erased by ploughing. The few surviving pieces of burnt timber were sampled. An identification of oak was made, but further analyses, including scientific dating, have yet to be completed.

Several pieces of Iron Age pottery were found when cleaning the surface of the Iron Age soil, and into it were cut a variety of stake-holes, small pits or post-holes (one of which had a stone quern fragment apparently deliberately deposited in it), and at least one large circular Iron Age bowl-shaped pit cut through to the limestone bedrock. The northwest corner of the square extension to the main north wall [2009-2017] was built over an in-filled Iron Age pit [2010]. The general pattern of Iron Age stake-holes, small pits and postholes (which were difficult to interpret in structural terms), extended with little variation over the whole trench, both within and outside the area of the ‘building’. In the extreme northern extra-mural zone, one small pit contained a piece of human cranium, another [2014] had a fine polished bone weaving pin and a small semi-complete carinated bowl of possible early Anglo-Saxon or alternatively Iron Age date (yet to be subjected to specialist analysis).

There were two significant exceptions to the general loss of Roman and later deposits within the ‘building’. In the east centre of the trench was a slightly-raised platform of burnt clay and mortar [21226] 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.

In the western side of the trench, layers of mortar mixed with burnt soil, animal bone and extensive Roman tile rubble were excavated [2070]. With its upper part actually overlapping part of the base of ‘wall’ [2025], this layer appears to represent a secondary occupation deposit within the ‘building’. A particular feature of this series of linked deposits was the discovery of over 200 stratified low-denomination Late Roman copper coins. A number of coins (some of which were cut) dating to the periods AD 300-48 and 365-78, with five post-dating 378, seem to indicate moderate coin use on the site extending to very late in the Roman period. The rest of the coins discovered in this area of the site, comprising circa 75% of the total, were Fel Temp Reparatio copies dating to the period AD 350-65. Some of these were unusually small, and were only retrievable with continuous pre-excavation monitoring by metal-detector. The Fel Temp Reparatio series are probably from a dispersed hoard. A further unstruck coin blank is possible evidence of coin production at the site.

The layer producing the majority of coins [2070] was also notable for numerous sherd of Oxfordshire colour-coated Roman pottery (late 3rd/early 4th century) and the large quantity of Roman hobnails retrieved. A preliminary analysis of the tile suggests that it is extremely varied in type, and therefore less likely to be the result of an in-situ roof collapse than a dump (or dumps) of tile rubble brought in from elsewhere. This would seem to indicate a secondary floor was laid in this part of the ‘building’. Its full extent and depth is yet to be determined, but its eastern edge extends no further than the interior ‘wall’ corner [2017/2025]. The southern edge is harder to define as it gradually thins out over an Iron Age soil.

A very preliminary interpretation is that the area of Trench 2 saw considerable Iron Age activity, characterised by numerous small pits. 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, and the interior was subsequently partly re-floored with Roman tile rubble. On present indications, activity seems to have extended to the very late Roman period but there is very little evidence for any subsequent presence. These preliminary interpretations will be reviewed during further excavation.

Trench 3.

The excavations at Trench 3 were placed to investigate two distinct features visible from the geophysical survey: a small, sub-circular enclosure, and part of a larger rectangular enclosure at the point where both features intersect, Fig 18. Before excavation the evidence suggested a smaller prehistoric enclosure cut by a Roman ditched enclosure. Based upon a preliminary assessment of the features and material culture recovered, a number of episodes of activity have been identified, four of which have a definite chronological sequence based upon excavated relationships.

1st Phase:
The earliest evidence of activity was found in the bottom layers of the large enclosure ditch. This ditch, initially thought to be Roman, actually consisted of two distinct phases, Fig 6, the earlier of which has been clearly dated by the presence of an almost complete Middle Bronze Age bucket urn found broken and laid, seemingly deliberately, on its bottom [3113]. The profile is approximately V-shaped, a little over a metre deep, cutting through about 0.5 m of limestone bedrock before entering into fine sand. The fills of the ditch that remained were mainly composed of a mixture of sand and gravel, not easily distinguishable from the natural soil it cut through. In fact, its identification as a distinct feature might have been missed entirely if not for the ceramic finds.

2nd Phase:
A roughly circular arrangement of small pits that were largely truncated by the smaller enclosure ditch of the next phase [including pits 3079, 3096, 3045], Fig 18. While it was not possible to excavate any completely, the fills that survived contained moderate quantities of ceramics, faunal remains, and small finds. A preliminary assessment of the material suggests an early Iron Age date.
Fig 18. Trench 3. The complex of ditches and pits ranging in date from middle Bronze Age to Romano-British.
Oxfordshire

3rd Phase:
The pits were difficult to identify because the sub-circular small enclosure ditch cuts through them largely disturbing most of their original fills. This ditch [3095] varies slightly in dimensions and shape, but was mainly flat bottomed, rather narrow and steep sided, cut no deeper than 0.8m into the subsoil. A number of sections were excavated through the ditch, showing that there were between 3 and 4 main fills, Fig 20. A great deal of ceramics, faunal remains, and small finds were recovered from these fills, a preliminary assessment again indicates an Early Iron Age date.

4th Phase:
The sequence was further complicated because the Bronze Age ditch, which had been cut by the Early Iron Age pits and enclosure ditch, was then partially re-dug, [Cut 3091], Fig 19. The fills of this later cut were mostly homogenous, and very distinct from the Bronze Age fills. A few sherds of pottery were found within the main fill of this later cut, and a field assessment of this material indicates a Roman date.

Within the circular enclosure, but not stratigraphically related, are a number of postholes. They suggest that perhaps several phases of timber structures existed. However, it was not possible to identify a clear and articulated outline of any distinct structure. A limited amount of Early Iron Age pottery was recovered from the fill of several postholes. It is thought likely that the timber structures were related to either the 2nd or 3rd phase of activity outlined above.

Trench 4.
Trench 4 was opened within the interior of the larger rectangular enclosure, to ascertain if any archaeological evidence existed therein. Two features were found and excavated in full. While a slight amount of material culture was found, including a Roman coin, the features are tree-throws. Trench 4 did show that the centre of the larger enclosure did not play host to any activities that required features cut into the underlying geology.

Trench 12.
Trench 12 was excavated to verify that both sections of the larger enclosure ditch were part of the same feature, a number of other cut features were also excavated.

A new excavation methodology was experimented with during the excavation of Trench 12. The idea was to devise a strategy that would capture, in a digital format, fine resolution information from the archaeological deposits excavated. The project was designed not merely to probe the possibilities and capacities of digital data capture (as they have already been demonstrated elsewhere), but to develop new ways to use digital tools (such as total stations, digital cameras, on-site databases, etc.) to obtain more information about the complex relationships between objects, contexts, and features. Furthermore, an additional aim was to collect this information in a way suitable for publication within an electronic format.

The basic unit of the recording strategy was the individual artefact. Each artefact was assigned a unique identifier and recorded separately. The exact position of each artefact was recorded by total station, and if deemed necessary, the artefact photographed (digitally) in situ. A database of all objects was compiled on site. On site photography used digital cameras within a geo-referenced grid so that all photos could be geo-referenced. The same technology, coupled with detailed micro-topographical survey of the features using a total station was used across the entire trench. This procedure resulted in data that can be interpolated into a surface model, with the geo-referenced photos ‘draped’ on it, creating a realistic 3D model of each feature, at all stages of its excavation. The process of horizontal photography and micro-topographical survey was conducted at the interface of all contexts, and within contexts if there was clustering of artefacts. The final product allows for the micro-topographical surveys and digital images to be fitted together to re-create the features, including the 3D positioning of all artefacts.

Trench 12 contained a variety of features, most of which were not stratigraphically related, Fig 21. A layer of tightly packed, fist sized stone cobbles was found during the removal of the topsoil, in the southwest portion of the trench. This surface [12017] was densely covered in oyster shells, and a rich assortment of Roman artefacts, including terra sigillata tesserae, and pottery. A metre wide section was dug through the tail end of this surface, and into the ditch [12052] that lay directly underneath it. The ditch follows the same alignment as the surface, and it seems likely that the surface was intentionally laid over the upper fill of the ditch to consolidate it. The ditch, thought to be part of the same large rectangular enclosure as that found within Trench 3, contained three instances of re-cutting, Fig 22. The first cut was a V-shaped ditch [12052], of similar dimensions to that found in Trench 3, with two additional cuts made subsequently [12033 and 12053]. While it is not identical to the ditch in Trench 3, it does seem to have been part of the same sequence of construction.

A number of pits and postholes were also excavated. It is not possible to distinguish the layout of any structures from the arrangement of the postholes, and two out of the four excavated were little more than shallow scoops in the bedrock. The pits were much more prolific. A cluster of three inter-cutting pits was found in the northern portion of the trench. The earliest pit [12046] was subsequently cut by [12047], and in turn both were cut by [12048]. At the bottom of the latest pit several large mammal bones were deposited against the sides. The fills that remained from these pits did not contain a large amount of artefacts, but the ceramics recovered strongly indicate an Early Iron Age date for these features. A smaller pit was found in the east of the trench [12021] containing numerous finds, including most likely deliberately deposited faunal remains and Iron Age pottery, capped by a tightly packed layer of small limestone cobbles.

Nearby, a shallow oval depression, [12015], contained a coarse Bronze Age urn, in poor condition, but mostly complete, and deposited upright in situ. The entire block was
removed by a conservation specialist and the interior of the vessel has not been excavated yet. This feature was cut by a sub-rectangular pit, [12003] with upper fills containing ash and burnt material, and some skeletal material, which was not possible to identify in the field. In lower levels, a large amount of very well preserved, and almost complete ceramic vessels were found, possibly Saxon in date. It is possible that this feature was some sort of cremation, but no skeletal material was recovered to positively identify it as such.

Just to the north was a narrow rectangular feature, [12002]. Traces of firing were visible on the surrounding limestone, and burnt material, half formed bits of metalwork and slag were found, indicating that this feature was used as a small furnace of sorts. A fair amount of Roman ceramics was also found within this feature.

Finally, a spread of badly decayed and truncated human remains was found in a radius of about 1m, just southwest of the three inter-cutting Iron Age pits. The remains were found within a barely perceptible dip of the bedrock, and seem to have been that of a child. The burial lacked any grave goods, or clear association with any features, artefacts, or hints of formality of disposal, therefore no speculation can be made about the date.

Trench 5.
The geophysics show a linear anomaly running across the northern side of the site on an approximately eastnortheast-westsouthwest trajectory, Fig 14. Trench 5 was positioned where this feature gave its strongest readings, but also where it could be observed to intersect a second linear shadow running perpendicular at northnorthwest - southsoutheast. This second possible feature is far less distinct on the survey and any chronological relationship between the two is unclear. The initial hypothesis for Trench 5 was that the strong positive flux readings around the eastnortheast-westsouthwest feature were a possible branch of the nearby Roman road, now known as the A338. The route of this is confirmed until shortly before the western bank of the River Ock, just to the north west of the site. The smaller cross feature gave a positive reading on the magnetometer, indicating a possible ditch with a parallel neighbour showing slightly to its west, as well as the fainter trace of other possible ditches along a similar alignment across a wider area. Initial thoughts of these were that they were the remains of a prehistoric field system.

On removing the topsoil, the number of finds recovered was observed to be less than in the topsoil of all the trenches outside of the amphitheatre. The trench was initially 10m by 10m, Fig 23, and the topsoil was considerably greater in depth along the northern and southern edges of the trench than across the middle directly over the strong signal that registered on the geophysical survey. Patches of consolidated gravel were revealed. As the level of the trench was brought down over a wider area, patches of a greensand material and large areas of orange sand were revealed. When

Fig 19. Trench 3. Section across the middle Bronze Age ditch [3113], recut in the Romano-British period [3091].
examined in section, the sequence of the layers that had been revealed were clear to see: first, sitting directly on the limestone bedrock was the orange sand [5002], which in places was particularly fine and lacked any form of inclusion. On top of this in places could be seen the greensand material, [5005]. Further, in some places on top of this were patches of the consolidated limestone gravel [5006]. In plan the patches of greensand, and where applicable, gravel, formed no recognisable pattern, Fig 23. More importantly, the surface was of a similar nature across the whole trench, not as the survey implied solely concentrated in the centre. Indeed, extension slit trenches were dug to expand the East section of the trench up to a length of 19m in order to chase the spread of the gravel. In this section, it finally appeared to fade at a total width of about 15m. In neither slit trench was there any firm evidence for side ditches, whose presence would be likely next to a Roman road. As for the north-south ditch that was initially proposed, no clear evidence was exposed. Despite excavating into the bedrock at the exact point where the positive magnetic anomaly indicated, no feature could be clearly defined, although with a favourable eye it was considered easier to remove bedrock at this point than elsewhere. The conclusion for the north-south ditch at this point, then, is that if it is present, it remains primarily as a 'ghost' image on the magnetometry.

As for an interpretation of the gravel surface [5006], the possibility of a road is not to be discounted. No similar surface was excavated elsewhere on the site, indicating that it is likely to a deliberate deposit. The lack of side ditches, as well as its wide spread, may be explained by its course through a settlement and perhaps it represents more of an open concourse rather than a wide road. The fragmentary nature of the gravel makes any further interpretation particularly difficult. An exception to the pattern of the gravel surface was a concentration of larger, fist-sized pieces of limestone rubble in the northwest corner [5003]. This may represent consolidation of a damaged surface, or perhaps less disturbed remains of the original surface. What is clear is that the strong magnetic signal was at least in part generated by the dip in topsoil, which in turn had been caused by particularly deep ploughing in recent history.

With a firm identification of the deposits in this trench still to be made, work will continue in 2002. To the East of Trench 5, centred on the co-ordinates 444110, 196355, there appears on the geophysics what would appear to be a better preserved example of the 'road'. Although giving a fainter signal, the topsoil has not been erratically ploughed thus preventing the skewed results that led to the positioning of Trench 5 and possible traces of edging ditches are visible. Just north of the anomaly at this point, a semicircle of post-holes can also be seen, and perhaps excavation at this point will provide the relative chronology that Trench 5 did not.

**Sequence and Significance**

Since the early excavations at Frilford it has been recognised as an important Romano-British religious complex with Iron Age antecedents perhaps based on tribal boundaries (Stevens, 1940). The current work shows that activity within the area started at least in the middle Bronze Age with a possible enclosure, occupation and burials. Excavation and the geophysics suggest the scale of the Iron Age occupation with pits and ditches occurring over the whole area although the activity does seem to be dispersed rather than enclosed. Romano-British use of the site could start with the early rectangular enclosure although whether this is associated
Fig 21. Trench 12. Features ranging in date from middle Bronze Age to Romano-British.
with an early phase of the amphitheatre and any other structures has yet to be resolved. The temple, stone-built amphitheatre and cruciform building all suggest a major ceremonial/religious complex although rural in character rather than the norm of being associated with either a town or fort. The excavated road points towards Abingdon as the nearest Romano-British urban centre at a distance of about 4 or 5km to the south-east. Fieldwalking and geophysical evidence suggests large areas of Romano-British activity and remains between the public buildings and in surrounding areas towards the cemetery to the north identified and excavated in the late 19th century. The next two seasons of excavation will assess these areas in terms of occupation and establish whether there is a domestic component to the site. Anglo-Saxon occupation is ephemeral at the moment although the same cemetery did continue into this period and some of the larger sub-rectangular positive anomalies on the geophysics may be sunken-floored buildings. Marcham/Frilford is an important site in understanding the development of the Downs/Vale area and the evidence for continuity, albeit discontinuous, fits with notions of social reproduction and identity through references to the past (Gosden and Lock, 1998).

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Fig 23. Trench 5. The possible Romano-British road.
Oxfordshire

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Wendlebury (Alchester), an annexe of AD 44 and the earlier(?) main fortress (SP 570 203)
Eberhard Sauer

Main Results
Evidence for an early fortress underneath the town contemporary with or earlier than the AD 44 annexe
While the 2000 season yielded evidence for the earliest precisely datable Roman timber structure from Britain, a wooden gate built in autumn AD 44, in the light of the 2001 season it appears that this was not part of the earliest military installation on site. There is now evidence for a second military compound, a Roman fortress, underneath the town of Alchester. Not only sections of its outer defences have been traced by excavation (in trench 28) and geophysical survey, but parts of a timber granary (in E. trench 4) were unearthed. A series of indications suggests that the compound whose west gate yielded two identical tree-ring dates of October AD 44 to March AD 45, in the west is its annexe. The combined size of fortress and annexe is estimated to exceed 14ha. The fortress underneath the town is thus probably not later (a hypothesis favoured previously) than the compound of AD 44 in the west, but contemporary or earlier (i.e. it is likely to date to AD 43 or, possibly, AD 44). The western gate (whose location is now precisely known) has a similar potential of yielding a precise dendro-date in a future season as the annexe gate of AD 44.

Architecture and building history of the probable fabrica
We know now substantially more about internal buildings in the annexe, especially about the plan and building history of the military workshop (fabrica). The latter was an extensive complex and comprised various rooms grouped around a courtyard with a timber porticus. Its building history comprised at least four phases, of which three are military (even though it is likely that some, but not all, of the features attributed to phase 3 date to the civilian period). While the second phase starts early (c AD 45?), this observation nevertheless supports the assumption that military occupation continued well into the AD 50s if not beyond. The finds spectrum suggests that military occupation ceased by or before the mid AD 60s at the very latest.) Civilian period use of the building, however, interestingly appears to continue into the late first or early second century. Beam slots of military buildings in trench 28 reinforce the impression of a dense occupation throughout the annexe; it was not a storage area, but will have housed a garrison of presumably c 1,000 men on its own (plus c 2,500 to 3,000 soldiers in the main fortress).

Evidence for artillery and slingers and the type of garrison
The discovery of a catapult bolt and a clay slingshot in the annexe provides evidence for artillery and slingers, of whose presence we had previously no knowledge. These new finds and a large number of other pieces of military equipment suggest that the garrison comprised specialists in all categories of warfare, including also archers and both cavalry and infantry. Both slings (Voelling 1990, 44-6) and catapults were in use by legionaries and auxiliaries alike; the frequent discovery of pieces of artillery equipment in smaller forts and in bases in provinces without legionary garrison disproves that they were in exclusive use by legionaries as some believe. The circular argument that all, except some very rare forms of objects traditionally regarded as catapult bolts, were in fact javelin heads because they occur in auxiliary forts (Baatz 1966) equally fails to convince. Whether the troops stationed in the main fortress were as versatile as those in the annexe is as yet unknown, and we do not know whether the separation of the base into main fortress and annexe had purely chronological reasons or whether we might be dealing with troops of different status (legionaries and auxiliaries?). Much better documentation exists for the later fort of Osterburken in Roman Germany which may form a useful analogy. The fort of Osterburken was built in the later AD 150s, and the annexe over 25, and possibly as much as 35 years later. The fort housed a cohort and the annexe a numerus, a unit of lower status (Schallmayer 1986). While we cannot be sure whether the situation was necessarily similar at Alchester, this analogy may offer some support for an earlier date of the main fortress (AD 43?) and, possibly, a higher status garrison. The Alchester garrison was in any case a numerically strong force capable of defending itself and of operating independently if necessary.

Further waterlogged remains
The completion of the excavation of a section of the inner annexe ditch in trench 24 yielded further fragile wooden artefacts and waterlogged archaeobotanic evidence. The former included three further thin wooden plaques or tablets which were lifted en bloc. While so far none of the wooden tablets has yielded any traces of writing, the survival conditions would be perfect for writing tablets. The tablets are made of oak and some of them might even be large enough to furnish tree-ring dates. Trenches 28 and 31 equally yielded wooden objects and waterlogged plant remains.

The Trenches
The Annexe Ditches in Trench 24
Because of the density and fragility of wooden artefacts, we excavated very carefully and slowly and therefore did not finish the excavation of the inner fortress ditch in 2000. We continued with the excavation of this trench in 2001 (and completed it) for the following reasons:

(1.) In order to be able to produce a complete profile, including the bottom of the inner fortress ditch.

(2.) In the light of the decreasing water table it seemed useful to recover a representative sample of artefacts from a section of the ditch, including some from the very bottom. The trench had already in the 2000 season yielded a rich
assemblage of wooden artefacts, including thin tablets, double-pointed notched stakes (‘tent pegs’) and a wooden bowl (examined by Paola Pugsley who indicated [pers. comm. 2001] that it was one of only a small number [20-25?] wooden vessels in Roman Britain).

(3.) In order to be able to take samples for archaeobotanic analysis from the bottom of the inner fortress ditch likely to shed light on the environment and diet of soldiers in the military phase.

The excavations have been successful on all three accounts. (1.) Interestingly, we found that within trench 24 a deeper and a shallower V-shaped ditch join; the northern 3.1m are c 0.28m deeper than the southern 2.4m. This might simply
Oxfordshire

indicate that two working parties met here. However, it
seems more likely to me that the corner, always a weak point
in any rectangular fortification, was more heavily defended.
The presence of the middle fortress ditch in trench 24,
observed in the previous season, could be interpreted in the
same way considering that no such obstacle existed in the
area of trench 21.

(2.) The further wooden artefacts recovered in 2001
included three additional thin wooden tablets recovered en
bloc for excavation in the laboratory as well as various other
worked pieces of wood. No traces of writing are visible on
any of the tablets recovered in 2000 and 2001 with the naked
eye nor did infrared photographs of the pieces so far
conserved by Dr Graham Morgan reveal any such traces.
Parallels from Roman Switzerland (Schoch 1979) may
suggest an identification as thin wooden shingles, though if
this interpretation should be correct (despite their fragility)
the absence of nail holes or clear traces of weathering
suggest that they were discarded without ever having been
used. An interpretation as raw material to be cut into writing
tables (see Bowman/Thomas 1994, 90-8 no. 154; pl. V for
a particularly large writing tablet made equally of oak) or
lamellae of a shield similar to the Fayum shield (Kimmig
1940; Bishop/ Coulston 1993, 58-9) are alternative possibilities.

Interestingly some local cornbrash stone (identified by
Philip Powell) was found sealed beneath wooden artefacts
of the military period. This suggests that local stone formed
part of the military period rampart, perhaps of its facing.

(3.) The examination of a wide range of soil samples from
this trench and others by Dr Mark Robinson is ongoing and
has already yielded interesting results, such as the earliest
evidence in Britain for imported millet in a sample from the
bottom fill of the outer fortress ditch (Mark Robinson, pers.
comm. 2001).

The Probable Fabrica: Trenches 25, 26, 29 and 30

The remains of Roman military buildings were better
preserved in the area of these four adjoining trenches than
observed anywhere else so far within the annexe. Despite
clear plough marks which, considering the absence of
post-fourth century material in the disturbed layer above,
must be of late Roman or early post-Roman date, beam slots
survived to a depth of up to 0.40m.

Phase 1 (AD 44/45)
The earliest phase is represented by a gully of varying width
(c 1.70m; depth c 0.97m below the modern surface, bottom
at 62.45m above sea-level). The fact that this belongs indeed
to the earliest phase is shown by the fact that various
second-phase beam slots overlie it (Fig 25). Snails from
the bottom fill provide evidence, according to a preliminary
analysis by Dr Mark Robinson, that the gully indeed held
water. It was deliberately filled in before the construction of
the second phase building. This is shown by the fact that
there are no traces of a timber cover over the upper and
lower fill and no signs of soil collapse which one would have
expected had it been covered by timber and had it continued
to function underneath the military building. The absence of
fills from its fill equally points to an early date for its
construction and abandonment. However, it could only
function after the construction of the water supply gully. If,
of course, the main fortress pre-dates the annexe, then the
water supply ditch may already have been in existence by
the time construction works in the annexe started in autumn
AD 44. Even if not, it is hard to imagine that Phase 1 is later
than AD 45.

The gully must have fed a shallow water-basin which was
entirely destroyed at a later date and was within the area of
the rectangular pit at its northern end. This rectangular pit
showed no signs of any timber of clay lining, though the
bottom fill (context 26.50) consisted of silty clay and was
sampled in the hope that these samples might provide clues
of its use prior to abandonment. It contained civilian-period
objects, such as roof tiles, right down to its bottom fill
(26.50). The original water-basin must have been smaller as
the fourth-phase pit is cutting a second-phase beam slot in
the north (Fig 25). There is no doubt that the water-basin
was in the area of the rectangular pit as the gully is clearly
orientated towards its central axis and as it does not continue
in any direction beyond the pit.

In Oberstimm there was equally a water-basin supplied by
a gully whose earliest phase also pre-dates the construction
of the fabrica. Schoenberger (1978, 35; cf. 1976) suggests
plausibly that this basin served for mixing the clay for the
construction of wattle and daub buildings. The Oberstimm
basin, in contrast to the Alchester basin, was integrated into
the fabrica and continued to be used after its completion.
Nevertheless, the original basins may well have served the
same purpose. If so, the Alchester basin lost its function once
the clay for the timber-frame building had been mixed, while
a new industrial purpose was assigned to its equivalent at
Oberstimm.

Surprisingly, the bottom of the rectangular pit is c 0.05m
higher than the bottom of the supply gully, and it did not
reach below the present water table. Test pits into the gravel
underneath the pit confirmed that this was the natural gravel
and not the sterile fill of the original basin (of which no
traces survived underneath the pit). The original water-basin
thus cannot have been deeper than the later pit and it is hard
to imagine that it could have been much more shallow. The
bottom of the pit is at 62.50m above sea-level, i.e. 0.10m
below the bottom of the water supply gully underneath the
west-east road (surviving depth in the northern extension of
trench 20: 0.44m; bottom 62.60m above sea-level, 0.79m
below the modern surface).

The way the water-supply gully curves from south-southeast
to north-northeast (Fig 25) make one wonder whether the
water-basin was indeed fed via a water-lifting device and
supply gully underneath the west-east road which channeled
water from the western section of the Gagle Brook into the
annexe or whether the water supply might have come from
the south or east. Both, the Gagle Brook and a stream whose
modern course is some 250 to 500m east of the east side of the Roman town and earlier fortress, carried, at least in recent years, water throughout the year. If an undiscovered wooden aqueduct was used, the Gagle Brook would have been more suitable since it has a steeper gradient (the point where it crosses the 70m contour is just 1.8km from the centre of Alchester as opposed to 4.9km in case of the eastern stream (though only 2km in case of one of its tributaries just south of modern Bicester if this provided sufficient water). While we do not yet know the precise location of the ancient stream bed of the Gagle Brook in the vicinity of Alchester at the beginning of the Roman era, it seems likely that it was close to its later and present artificial stream bed. If so, it was much closer than the eastern stream. Perhaps a water-lifting device was used to channel water from the Gagle Brook into the fortress, but not (as we had...
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thought previously) from the west, but from the, presumably, even closer section of the stream in the south. This need not imply that the interpretation of the shallow gully underneath the west-east road in the annexe as a water-supply gully was wrong, but the direction of flow of the fairly level gully is open to debate; it might have supplied buildings in the west of the annexe with water coming from a channel leading out of the main fortress.

It seems in any case likely that the water-table in the curving gully was high enough to ensure that sufficient water reached the shallower basin. Despite the fact that it seems curious why the curving water-supply gully should have been, at least marginally, deeper than the basin, it is hard to imagine that we are dealing with a drain. If the gully was a drain leading away from the pit one would have to expect a separate water supply. However, there is no second gully leading towards the pit from any direction. Considering that the water-supply gully underneath the west-east road in the northern extension to trench 20 survives to a depth of 0.44m, it seems unlikely that there would have been a separate water supply system at such an elevated level that no traces of it survive today. Needles to say, such a massive drain would have made no sense for an impluvium (a decorative basin which received rainwater from the roof in a Mediterranean-style atrium).

When Phase 1 ended is a matter of interpretation. The sheer contrast between the sterile fill of the gully and the abundance of military finds elsewhere in Alchester, suggests that the installation was filled in soon, perhaps only a few weeks after it had been constructed. Even on the assumption that it had a timber cover which was removed prior to filling in, it still would be difficult to explain why the re-deposited material used to fill it was sterile as well, had it been filled in even after only a few years. Even though it is well known that the construction of some internal buildings in Roman forts or fortresses tended to take several years (some buildings in Inchtuthil were still missing after c three years of occupation: Pitts/St. Joseph 1985), I am tempted to think that Phase 1 in Alchester came to an end as early as AD 45 or even still in AD 44. If this assumption is correct, then the daub for later buildings (including the second-phase building [i.e the probable fabrica] on top of the curving gully) must have been mixed elsewhere.

Phase 2 (from c AD 45 onwards)

After the gully had been filled in, a large timber building was constructed, presumably still in the mid AD 40s. It will have extended to the main west-east road in the south, though its southern-most parts were destroyed by civilian-period roadside ditches (extending in the north to 0.20m north of the south side of trench 25). Its limits in the west, east and north have not yet been found. The main section explored consisted of several rooms grouped around a courtyard with a timber porticus. The precise dimensions of this courtyard are still a matter of conjecture, but there was a line of three post holes in a north-south direction and at least four in a west-east direction (see hypothetical reconstruction on Fig 25)

Whether there was a second courtyard in the area of the water-basin is unknown. This was no longer fed with flowing water as the water gully had been filled in, but the architecture of the surrounding rooms renders it conceivable that it could have been transformed into an impluvium fed by rain water. Alternatively it might already have been transformed into a pit (for storage purposes?). In either case it cannot yet have been as big as its civilian period successor, considering that the latter is cutting a beam slot of phase 2. We can in any case presume that a sunken feature continued to exist in the area, given its survival into the civilian period when it was enlarged. The western and eastern beam slots also appear to respect its position.

Phase 3 (AD 50s/60s to late 1st/early 2nd century)

A neat separation between Phase 2, 3 and 4 features is, unfortunately, not always possible, and some features tentatively attributed to Phase 3, might belong to Phase 2 and others to Phase 4. The plan of the fabrica (Fig 25) is a first attempt at attributing features to phases, but may have to be modified in the light of the full finds analysis and the results of future seasons.

The post-holes cutting Phase 2 beam slots in trenches 25 and 26 post-date Phase 2 undoubtedly, but it is hard to establish by how much. There are too few of them to assume that we are dealing with entirely new buildings. The fact that they cut existing beam slots might suggest that we are dealing with repairs when the timber of the original building began to rot, but when it had not yet been entirely abandoned. They have been attributed to Phase 3 but it is not yet known whether they pre- or post-date the end of military occupation. Nevertheless, it is tempting to assume that the two post-holes north of the rectangular pit in trench 26 are contemporary with the post-holes in the northwest and southwest corners of the rectangular pit and carried a tiled roof of a restored porticus around the pit. Thus they might belong to Phase 4.

Whether the post-holes of similar size encountered in trench 30, the north-western extension, date to Phase 2, 3 or 4 is equally uncertain since none of them cuts or is cut by another feature. However, they make little constructional sense in Phase 2 and have therefore been attributed to Phase 3.

Equally in Phase 3 large parts of the interior were paved with burnt stones which, according to Dr Graham Morgan (pers. comm. 2001), may be by-products of lime burning. A charcoal-rich layer built up on top of this paving. Small hearths were encountered, in the south of trench 25 and in the south of trench 26 above the gully. It is hoped that the analysis of soil samples will clarify the function of these hearths and will show what kind of (industrial?) activity led to the accumulation of charcoal. According to Dr Chris Salters examination on site there are no traces of metal-working anywhere within the trenches.

Some beam slots appear to have been replaced after some time by more shallow beam slots. Other beam slots attributed to Phase 3 are those which are so close to Phase
2 beam slots that it seems doubtful that they could have existed contemporaneously. While some Phase 3 features may date to the early civilian period, it seems likely that at least the beam slots pre-date the end of military occupation. If so, they attest structural repairs and alterations which suggest that military occupation continued at least well into the AD 50s, if not into the early to mid AD 60s. This conclusion is supported by the large number of military objects lost. The absence of late Neronian coins, brooches or samian ware, however, suggests that the military phase came to an end at latest by the mid AD 60s, if not before.

**The function of the building**
The range of buildings in Roman forts and fortresses with courtyards is limited: the headquarters building, the hospital, an officer's house or a military workshop. The ground plan of the Alchester building rules out an interpretation as a headquarters building or a hospital. Thus it has to be either an officer's house or a military workshop (fabrica). The main arguments for either interpretation are as follows.

**Arguments for an interpretation as an officer's house**
- There are as yet no clear traces of major industrial activities in Phase 2.
- Trench 26 yielded four Republican denarii, the highest concentration of silver coins so far anywhere in the annexe.

**Arguments for an interpretation as a military workshop (fabrica)**
- The terrain was in Phase 1 used for industrial activities and there was often a continuity of function of a specific area within a military compound.
- The paving with burnt stone and the accumulation of charcoal in Phase 3 is more appropriate for a fabrica than for an officer's house.
- The silver coins are a weak counter-argument as they correspond to less than one week's pay of a legionary.
- The area explored is as yet quite small and the absence of industrial installations thus not a strong counter-argument.

The arguments for an interpretation as a fabrica seem more persuasive, but the examination of the soil samples should be awaited before a final decision is made. Interestingly, there was a far lower concentration of body armour fragments in this area in comparison with trench 20. It seems possible that there were barrack blocks in the area of trench 20, largely destroyed by late Roman or early post-Roman ploughing. The comparative scarcity of body armour in the area of trenches 25, 26, 29 and 30 may thus suggest that this part of the fabrica or officer's house was less frequently entered by persons wearing uncomfortable body armour and was not used for the storage or production of body armour. It is unclear how we should interpret an isolated catapult head in trench 29.

**Phase 4 (late 1st/early 2nd century)**
The bottom fill (26.50) of the rectangular pit contained roof tiles, the second layer (26.49) burnt chaff of spelt wheat (Dr. Mark Robinson, pers. comm. 2001) and early second century samian ware (Geoffrey Dannell, pers. comm. 2001). The enlarged pit is, of course, stratigraphically older than its fill, but it seems likely that the roof tiles fell from a roof resting on posts in the pit, supported by stone post packings. (The stones are depicted in black on Fig 25, but should not be confused with phase 5 structures.) Therefore it seems likely that the latest phase during which the sunken feature remained open dates to the later first or even early 2nd century. At least parts of the building thus appear to have been used well into the civilian period. Whether the building or whatever remained of it had by then passed into private hands or whether it continued to be used by state officials is impossible to establish.

**Phase 5 (late 1st/3rd century)**
Phase 5 could be contemporary with Phase 4, but is more likely to be later. It is represented by a stone wall which cuts phase 3 paving. Geophysical survey suggests that it continued in the west to the southeast corner of the 'Castle Mound' bath-house. It probably marked a property boundary at a time when the military building (or at least the adjacent sections of it) no longer existed.

**Water Supply and Drainage: Trenches 27 And 31**
In trench 27 we found the northern and southern drainage gully of the main west east road. The main aim of trench 27 had been to test whether we could find the water supply ditch found in 1999 in the northern extension to trench 20 and in 2000 in trench 23. There were indeed traces of a possible gully whose bottom at 62.56m above sea-level would be perfectly compatible with its interpretation as a part of the water supply ditch underneath the road (62.56m above sea-level in trench 23 and 62.55m above sea-level in the northern extension of trench 20). Unfortunately, however, the remains of this possible gully were so disturbed by a later feature, presumably a tree-root, that it is impossible to be certain about its interpretation. Trench 27 also yielded the only evidence for the presence of slingers, a clay slingshot, so far.

Trench 31 had been excavated across a long ditch (Fig 24) in order
(1.) to confirm whether the ditch dates to the military period as suggested on the basis of the excavation of another section in trench 22 in 1999.
(2.) to explore the drainage system of this low-lying fortress. Was it indeed a drainage or perhaps a water-supply ditch? and
(3.) to examine the potential for the survival of waterlogged remains.

The excavation answered all three questions.
(1.) As in trench 22 the bottom fill of the ditch contained no civilian period artefacts, but a rich assemblage of military-period objects. This observation in conjunction with the fact that a ditch in this wet environment must have silted up very quickly excludes the possibility of a civilian period ditch filled with re-deposited earlier finds. It must have been constructed during the military period.
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A second parallel ditch in the northern half of the fortress (Fig 24) surely dates to the same period considering that it is similarly placed (about half way between the central west-east road and the outer defences).

(2.) The bottom of the ditch in trench 31 was encountered at 61.77m above sea-level as opposed to 61.98m above sea-level in trench 22. Identification of this feature as a ditch draining westwards is thus correct.

(3.) The bottom 0.49m were found to be under water. A deposit 0.09m thick (31.10), 0.08-0.17m above the bottom of the ditch proved to be especially rich in organic remains including pieces of thin wooden plaques or tablets. In order to minimise any risk of damage to wooden artefacts a complete sample of this deposit was taken for excavation in the laboratory.

Trench 28, the Western Defences of the Main Fortress and the Inner Occupation in the Southern Part of the Annex

The main aim of the excavation of trench 28 had been to reveal the function of four linear anomalies shown by the geophysical survey of Patrick Erwin (Fig 26, nos. 1-4) as well as to test whether or not the present field boundary ditch (Fig 26, no. 5) follows an ancient ditch. I had assumed that some of these ditches could be associated with the postulated fortress underneath the town or the via principalis of the western compound of AD 44. The excavation revealed that the westernmost linear feature (no. 1.) was a measurement anomaly, a possibility Patrick Erwin and I had considered before excavation, but thought to be less likely. Nos. 2. and 3. proved to be Roman civilian drainage ditches, no. 2. 0.75m wide (bottom at 62.16m above sea level) and no. 3. 3.71m wide (bottom at 61.82m above sea level). The pottery analysis has to be awaited for a more precise dating.

No. 4. was the westernmost part of a ditch 14.44m wide, 32.80-47.24m east of the western trench end (bottom at 61.50m above sea level), undoubtedly the ditch associated with late 2nd century town wall; it stretched well beyond the modern field boundary ditch (no. 5). This is exceptionally wide; on the east side of the town, interestingly, the town wall ditch appears to have been only half as wide: c 7m (Young 1975, 140-1).

The berm between the outer edge of the probable town wall robber trench and the inner edge of the ditch was merely 0.6m as opposed to 5.00 to 5.8m in the east of the town. This suggests strongly that, unlike on the east side of the town, this wide ditch incorporates an earlier military ditch, thus doubling its width and substantially reducing the width of the berm. The probable bottom fill of this ditch (28.82) was found underneath the town wall ditch and appears to have been cut by this shallower later ditch. It contained Iron Age and mid-first-century pottery (Nicholas Cooper, pers. comm. 2002). It should be stressed that conditions for observation were far from ideal since, for safety reasons, all except the bottom parts of the deep section had to be covered with trench sheets, thus only allowing examination of thin segments of the sections at any one time. Furthermore, the constantly infiltrating groundwater transformed the bottom deposits into liquid mud. Nevertheless, I am fairly confident about the following observations. The probable bottom fill (28.82) of the ditch cut by the town wall ditch survived to a maximum depth of 0.30-0.35m (bottom at c 61.31m above sea-level); it was thus about 0.19m deeper than the latter. It appears to survive for a width of c 3m (41.70 to 44.70 east of western trench end. While some caution is advisable in the interpretation of the results, it appears likely that this is the surviving bottom of the outer fortress ditch, the upper parts of which were integrated into an exceptionally wide town wall ditch.

To summarise, the arguments for this theory are as follows:
(1.) If it was rightly observed that town wall ditch is cutting the earlier and deeper ditch, the latter must predate the former.
(2.) If there was just a single-phase town wall ditch, it would be exceptionally wide: 14.44m as opposed to c 7m in the east. The amalgamation, however, of a town wall ditch and an earlier outer fortress ditch could easily result in such a wide ditch.
(3.) It is interesting to note that c 55m north of trench 28 there is a kink in the field boundary ditch; north of this kink it continues in a similar alignment, but c 4m further west. This might offer further support for the theory that, perhaps for drainage purposes, the southern section of the outer fortress ditch was kept open and formed in this area together with the new ditch an exceptionally wide town wall ditch.

Firm evidence for the western defences emerged from a geophysical survey of the area of the presumed west gate of the main fortress: a c 4m wide very distinctive negative anomaly is clearly visible (Fig 24) crossed by the main west-east road, presumably on a causeway. An area of very high resistance to the west must, as in trench 28, correspond to the stone tumble of the collapsed town wall. Many large stones are visible near the surface. It seems likely that, as appears to be the case in trench 28, the stone tumble overlies the outer fortress ditch. Any ditch under a thick layer of stone tumble is undetectable by geophysical survey. Only the upper parts of what must be the town wall robber trench have been exposed in the easternmost section of trench 28. As in E. trench 4 it is filled with gravel. The band of medium resistance, c 2-3m wide, between the linear long low-resistance feature (the presumable inner fortress ditch) and the area of high resistance (the probable stone tumble from the town wall) must be the town wall robber trench. It appears thus that, as in the east of the town, the western town wall was situated between two mid first century ditches. In opposition to Young (1975) who thought they were drainage ditches I would consider these ditches to represent the defences of the fortress underneath the town.

Trench 28 and the geophysical survey have thus led to the location of the western defences of the fortress underneath the town. In order to confirm this interpretation, it is planned to section also the inner fortress ditch and to excavate the southern half of the western gate of the main fortress in 2002/03.
Arguments for interpreting the western compound as an annexe

The results of the excavation of trench 28 have also major implications for the interpretation of the compound of AD 44. I consider it now to be an annexe to the (presumably earlier) fortress underneath the town.

The following indications point towards this interpretation:

1. The southern ditches of the western compound intersect with the north-south linear low resistance features (Fig 26). Had any of the low resistance features proven to be ditches of the fortress underneath the town, then the intersection of the ditches would have provided evidence that we are dealing with two compounds which did not exist at the same time. Now that we know that the north-south linear low-resistance features visible of the geophysical survey are of Roman civilian date, they do not exclude an interpretation of the western compound as an annexe to a fortress whose western defences are beyond the limits of the geophysical survey (cf. Fig 26).

2. If the western compound was the western part of a fortress, one would expect the via principalis of such a hypothetical fortress to run at a right angle to the west-east
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road. Considering that the length-width ratio of forts and fortresses does not normally exceed 3:2, one would expect this via principalis to be within the area covered by geophysical survey. One would equally expect this via principalis to be flanked by drainage gullies. As no drainage gully was observed during our excavation and as ditches 2. and 3. would not have destroyed more than one drainage gully considering their width, it seems clear that no via principalis existed (unless it was indeed in the area of the later town wall ditch or further east).

(3.) The fact that there is no sign of a causeway over the southern fortress ditches (Figs 24 and 26) provides a further argument against the existence of a north-south running via principalis within the western compound (even though a timber bridge, undetectable by geophysical survey, cannot be excluded).

(4.) The fact that the west-east road forms an axis of symmetry was taken to indicate that it was the via praetoria of the western compound. However, it is by no means inconceivable that it would have been convenient to build an annexe split symmetrically into two halves by a pre-existing road. Each half, for example, could have accommodated an equivalent number of soldiers whether of one unit of c. 500 men each or whether consisting of detachments from different units. In the light of the 2001 season it is clear that both halves were densely occupied.

(5.) Large annexes, while otherwise scarce, are typical for the invasion period of Britain: the fortresses of both Colchester and Wroxeter have very large annexes (Wacher 1995, 118-19 figs. 48-9; White/Barker 1998, 40 fig. 16).

New evidence for the military occupation of the south half of the annexe

Trench 28 has also revealed a series of beam slots. In view of the narrowness of the trench it is a matter of speculation what type of military building they belonged to (the distance of the beam slots would be consistent with north-south running barrack blocks as one possible, yet by no means certain interpretation). It is in any case clear that there was dense military occupation in the area of trench 28 where not disturbed by later ditches.

Ancient plough damage reaches deeper than in the area of trenches 25, 26, 29 and 30. In conjunction with what had already been observed in 1999 and 2000 in the area of trenches 20, 21 and 22 it appears that, in general, the preservation of shallower features such as beam slots is worse in the southern half of the annexe than it is in its northern half. By contrast, as a result of the terrain, the water table tends to be closer to the surface in the southern half than it is in the north and thus the potential for the preservation of organic remains is particularly good in the south (while, however, particularly rich deposits were encountered in the north in trench 24).

Geophysical survey by Adrian Butler and Dr Patrick Erwin also revealed a series of four high magnetic anomalies close behind the rampart (fig 1). In this position hearths and ovens, in particular bread ovens, are often found in Roman forts and fortresses (Drexel 1910; Jacobi 1930; Johnson 1983, 200-2; Hogg 1968). Such installations were placed away from the internal buildings next to the rampart in order to reduce the fire risk. If this hypothetical interpretation is correct (and it is as yet unconfirmed by excavations), then the mass production of bread as well as the high density of military buildings and pieces of equipment indicates that the annexe was densely occupied by troops and was not merely an annexe for storage purposes.

E. Trench 4: The Granary in the Main Fortress and the Southern Defences

The most surprising result of the 2001 season came from this trench. Christopher Young (1975, 139 figs. 2-3) had found in 1974 mid 1st century ditches in the area of the later town walls on the east side of the later town. The remarkably rectangular ground plan of the area surrounded by town walls in the later second century suggested anyway the possibility of a military predecessor to the town. Therefore it had been our aim with this trench to establish whether or not the southern section of the town walls equally followed mid first century ditches. Instead we found what were the remains of a raised floor of a military granary (or even two successive buildings), cut by the later town wall and sealed beneath plough soil under its rampart.

Apart from the town wall rampart and other associated features no structures of the Roman civilian period survived. However, a piece of re-deposited marble may suggest that marble floors existed in the small town. The impression of reasonably high living standards is reinforced by the discovery of a discarded lead stopper for a water pipe from the town wall ditch fill in trench 28 (see Duchatel 1970, 310; 315 fig. 35; 318 fig. 36 for a close parallel) which suggest that not only the fortress, but also the civilian town had a flowing water supply.

The town wall itself had been robbed out to the bottom of its foundations; a thick layer of stone tumble on its south side suggests that this happened only some time after its partial collapse. The town wall robber trench was 2.53m wide and was adjoined by the town wall rampart in the north. Anglo-Saxon pottery (c AD 650-850, identified by Nicholas Cooper) suggests the existence of some sort of dwelling on top of the wall or rampart. While we cannot exclude that this was a temporary re-occupation of a small area, it is tempting to think that the town of Alchester might have continued to exist until at least the 7th century (considering how difficult it is to prove archaeologically continuity of settlement through the 5th and 6th centuries even for towns where there is written testimony for continuity).

Underneath the town wall we encountered 19 parallel foundation trenches (or beam slots?) over a distance of 16.40m. The town wall robber trench and a Roman civilian period ditch reached deeper than the level of these narrow trenches thus destroying their remains in these areas. Assuming an equal spacing (c 0.67m centre to centre), there
would originally have been 25 parallel foundation trenches.

There can be no doubt that these narrow foundation trenches must form part of a military building:

(1.) They are separated from the rampart of the town wall by a cultivation layer 0.22m thick and thus cannot form part of the foundation of the late second-century town wall rampart.

(2.) The stratigraphy [cf. (1.1)] points towards an early date while the type of architecture rules out a prehistoric feature.

(3.) The width (c. 0.25m on average) and regularity excludes an interpretation as plough marks or features associated with the cultivation of any domestic plant.

(4.) No civilian period parallels are known. If the building is of military date there are merely two possible interpretations:

(1.) A timber granary or
(2.) a timber bath-house.

Since only one building, at Vindonissa, with a foundation consisting of parallel foundation trenches has been interpreted as a bath-house (Simonett 1934 and 1936; Hartmann 1986, 39 map 1.9; cf. Bosmann 1999 on a possible timber bath-house of different construction), the interpretation as a granary seems more likely than that as a bath-house.

If it was a granary, however, the narrow spacing of the foundation trenches is very unusual (Johnson 1983, 145-6; Manning 1975); the spacing of foundation trenches of timber granaries tends to be on average twice as wide as observed in Alchester. Whether we are dealing with two successive buildings or an unusual construction, perhaps designed to carry more weight (a more narrow spacing would still have allowed protection of the grain from humidity and rodents), cannot yet be said on the basis of our small trench. It is hoped that the 2002 season will answer these questions. We will also hopefully be able to establish whether traces of posts in the foundation trenches survive.

It appears that we may have found the northern limit of the building; a foundation trench 0.64m long at a right angle to the other foundation trenches might conceivably have functioned as part of the foundation of a loading platform. Neither the location of the west nor of the east side of the building are yet known. Whether the southern side has been destroyed by the later town wall ditch (which appears to have been lined with stones to form a bed for the Gagle Brook) or whether it extends beyond it is not yet known.

We have to assume that the granary would not have been allowed to encroach on the intervallum (the empty space between rampart and internal buildings) as this would have impeded troop movements in case of an enemy attack and as it would have brought the granary within easier reach of burning or blowing enemy missiles. This implies that in this area the southern fortress defences were well beyond the modern course of the Gagle Brook. A geophysical survey has revealed the traces of two possible ditches, the inner side of the inner one some 15m south of the southern end of the trench (Fig 24). Their alignment is similar to that of the foundation trenches. However, it ought to be stressed that the traces of these potential ditches on the geophysical survey are far less clear than the very distinctive linear anomaly in the area of the postulated west gate of the main fortress which must be the inner fortress ditch. Further survey and excavation is needed to test whether or not these slight negative anomalies might indeed be the southern defences of the fortress.

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Portsmouth, Rhode Island, 245-50.

WESSEX ARCHAEOLOGY

Julie Gardiner

Ownership of the watercress beds at Ewelme (SU 463950 191820), near Wallingford, in south Oxfordshire has recently transferred to The Chiltern Society. The beds extend for c 700m on a north-west to south-east orientation through the centre of the village south of the High Street. They ceased commercial production in 1988.

In February 2001 the Society commissioned Wessex Archaeology to carry out an archaeological survey of the beds and adjoining land. The overall aim of the archaeological survey was to provide a large-scale plan and summary condition survey.

The survey programme comprised the three-dimensional recording of a c 600m stretch of the beds, from Manor Cottage in the south-east of the village, to the eastern face of the lower weir, west of the Benson Road bridge using a Total Station Theodolite. The survey area also included a small field of c 0.07ha, which flanks the southern banks of the beds, to the south-west of Manor Cottage.

A large-scale photographic survey of the east and west facing elevations of the Benson Road bridge was also made, to illustrate culverts at the base of the structure and a digital photographic record made to illustrate the detail and general context of the principal features of the watercress beds. The watercress beds comprise a series of partitions each defined by a wooden partition or dam. Where the stream is sufficiently wide, a concrete 'walkway' separates the beds into pairs, presumably to enable different water levels to be maintained in individual beds at different times, depending on the condition of the crop. A narrow channel runs along the southern side of the beds to facilitate the management of water levels to the beds.

Eight main features were recorded in the survey area. These comprise: the banks of the watercress beds, which comprise both earth and grass and a variety of other material types; a concrete walkway which runs up the centre of the watercress beds; wooden dams; wooden stakes; a canalised stream; buildings thought to be associated with the production of watercress; a road-bridge which crosses the beds; earthworks in adjoining land. A small World War II pillbox is also in the field to the south-west of Manor Cottage. The structure was not visible at the time of the survey, hidden by vegetation.
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