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Edited by M.O.H. Carver

Contents

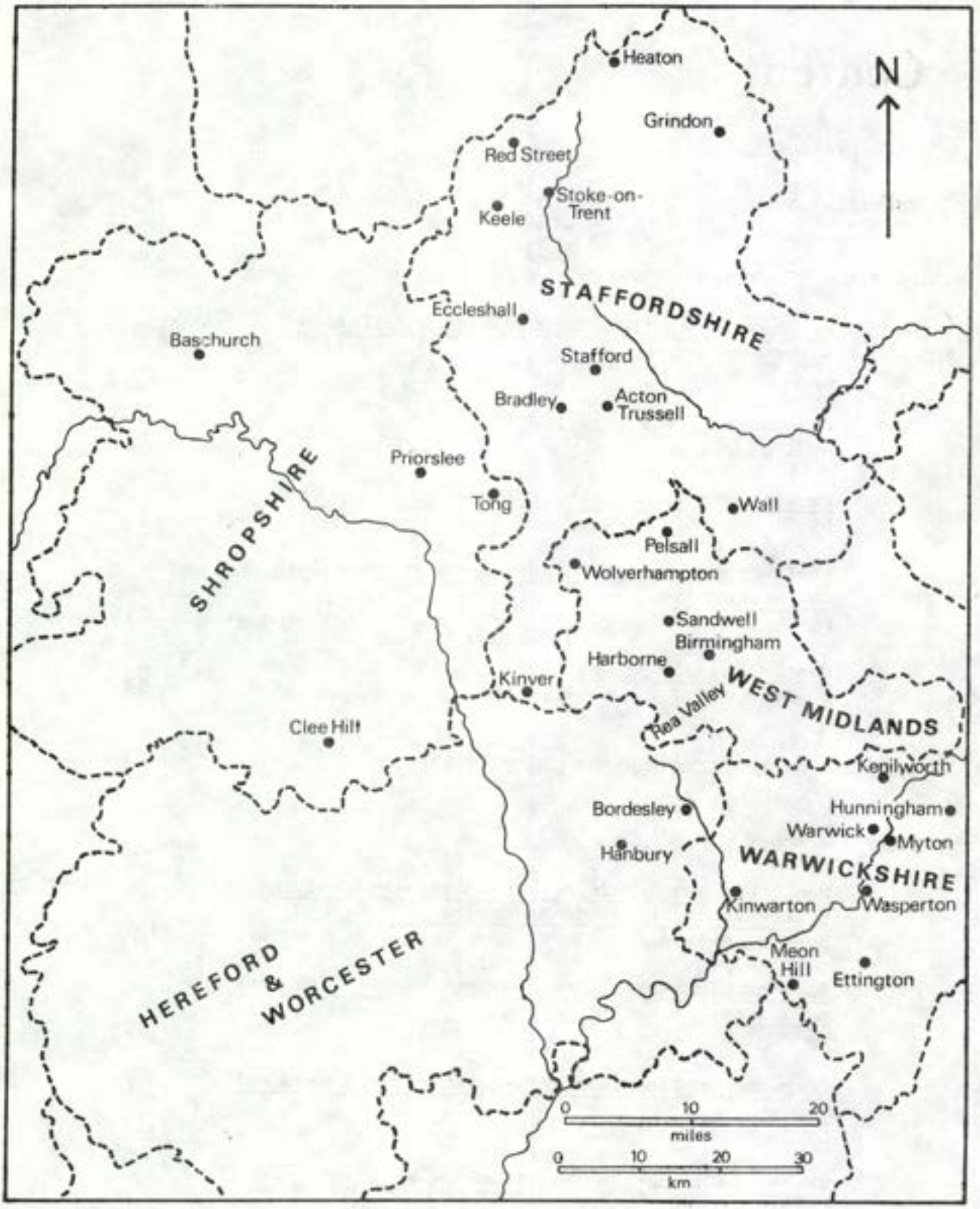

Fig. 1 The West Midlands, showing sites reported (Hooper)

Editorial Synopsis

Our first five contributions this year mark the definitive arrival of landscape archaeology in the West Midlands. Alan Hunt's review of the story of research in the Avon and Severn valleys will be welcomed not only for his comments on the settlement pattern from the neolithic to the Roman period and his valuable index of sites investigated, but as a record of initiatives and approaches since the 1950's - too easily and too quickly forgotten as the research baton is handed from committee to committee. Many of Hunt's points (continuity of earthworks, "ranch" boundaries, the absence of a neolithic-bronze age framework, the need for small-scale sampling of cropmark sites) strike ringing echoes at Wasperton where Gilles Crawford is revealing an extensive bronze age settlement and field system. The need for large-scale low-level mapping of at least one major land unit before "sampling" can mean anything, has never been more evident. In such projects, confirmation of absence (eg. of a villa) is equally possible and important to support such contentions as Simon Esmonde Cleary's, that Romans exploited river-gravels as marginal land, perhaps even seasonally, and he calls for an extension of effort into the generally less accessible and more opaque clay-lands.

The change in human geography must be intimately connected with the changes in vegetation pattern, and Cathy Bowker here gives an introduction to the methods of plant recovery displayed at Wasperton, and a preliminary statement of what has been found. This obviously does not yet amount to 'environmental' archaeology for which her research into peat deposits at nearby Moreton Morrell will be needed, but the potential for defining and mapping the distribution of agricultural activities over the areas explored makes it, even this far, a key contribution to the Wasperton project. Della Hooke's discussion of two Anglo-Saxon Charters reveals again her particular method and skill in bringing the environment alive through the place-names and descriptions in documents. There must one day be an area where these approaches coincide to give a reconstruction of the landscape of singular power.

Of thirty-three other contributions to this edition of WMA about one-third are concerned with systematic surveys of some kind, while two are concerned with recording buildings - that at Stoke-on-Trent being outstanding in its ambition and scope - no less than 30,000 structures have there been placed on record.

Work in West Midlands County has increased gratifyingly over the past few years, and the Rea Valley survey is particularly to be welcomed. Here is a county which would surely benefit from the type of structural recording project which Cameron Hawke-Smith has pioneered at Stoke-on-Trent.

Among individual site studies, that at Meon Hill highlights a hill fort which appears to have been more or less continuously occupied from the neolithic to the early Saxon period. Stafford is the only urban project reported; due to finish shortly, it has been charting the rather dramatic transition from late Saxon burh to Norman town, and its curious post-13th century decline. These changes will be hopefully brought into focus by Lawrence Bowkett's intensive "hinterland" survey. At Sandwell Valley Mike Hodder is placing his priory excavations into context with extensive surveys of probably the last untouched open area in the Birmingham connurbation.

The finds and projects reported this year are of great interest and variety, although their distribution is startlingly uneven (see map). Those responsible for archaeological management in the region must be disquieted by the reports on two coin hoards from Shropshire. That from Priorslee disturbed by workmen stripping topsoil was declared to be Treasure Trove; while that discovered by a treasure hunter on Clee Hill, which appears to have actually been buried in an iron-bound box, was found at inquest not to be Treasure Trove.

A discussion of the law of the land as it now effects archaeology and archaeologists would be a valuable addition to a further FORUM. This year's topics include another indication of the value of Sites and Monuments Records from Bob Meeson, some astute observations from Phil Voice based on his experience on gravel sites, and a scheme for the construction of Project Records intended to streamline publication in line with modern policies. In future years we hope to carry indices of those project records available for consultation in the West Midlands Counties. Excavators and surveyors are invited to send lists of records deposited to the Editor, so that the notice can be distributed nationally through this journal. It is anticipated that there will eventually be a principal archive for each county.

M.O.H. Carver

GUIDE TO WORK REPORTED

SITE	WORK REPORTED	Pal	Mes	Neo	BA	IA	RB	AS	Med	PM	Mod	PAGE
Acton Trussell, Staffs	Casual find (arrowhead)											59
Avon Valley	Review of work											5
Baschurch, Shrops	Survey: moated site											59
Birmingham, WMC	Field survey: burnt mounds											60
Bordesley Abbey, HW	Field survey and exc: abbey, mill, industry											61
Bradley, Staffs	Casual find (spearhead)											64
Clee Hill, Shrops	Casual find (coin hoard)											65
Eccleshall, Staffs	Casual find (flint axe)											65
Eccleshall, Staffs	Exc. of moated site											65
Ettington, Warks	Field survey											67
Grindon, Staffs	Rework on 1950 exc. (Osson's cave)											67
Hanbury, HW	Field survey; monastic grange											68
Harborne, WMC	Salvage exc; St. Peter's church											70
Heaton, Staffs	Casual find (BT arrowhead)											72
Runningham, Warks	Exc. of moated site/ fieldwork											72
Keele, Staffs	Casual find (palstave)											73
Kenilworth, Warks	Building recording											73
Kinver, Staffs	Field survey											74
Kinwarton, Warks	Field survey; moated site											77
Meon Hill, Warks	Field survey											77
Myton, Warks	Field survey											82
Pelsall, WMC	Site eval. of moated site											83
Priorslee, Shrops	Casual find (coin hoard)											83
Rea Valley, WMC	Field survey											85
Red Street, Staffs	Exc. of glass house											86
Sandwell Valley, WMC	Survey and exc. of priory											90
Severn Valley	Review of work											5
Stafford, Staffs	Exc. of town; survey											96

SITE	WORK REPORTED	PERIODS REPRESENTED										PAGE
		Pal	Mes	Neo	BA	IA	RB	AS	Med	PM	Mod	
Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs	Casual find (arrowhead)			———								105
Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs	Building recording									———	———	106
Tong, Shrops	Exc. of college								———		———	107
Wall, Staffs	Exc/salvage exc. of settlement						———				———	108
Warwick, Warks	Field survey of ridge and furrow									———	———	108
Wasperton, Warks	Exc. of landscape				———	- - -	———	———				31
Wolverhampton, WMC	Test exc. of ditch								- - - -			110
Worcestershire	Doc. survey of charters							———				53

Archæology in the Avon and Severn Valleys - a review

By A.M. Hunt

Traditionally the West Midlands have been regarded as something of an archaeological wasteland, certainly as far as prehistoric archaeology is concerned. The last two decades have given archaeologists cause to reconsider this view, and the change is due in great measure to the discovery and investigation of archaeological sites on the lighter permeable soils of the major river valleys - those of the Avon and the Severn - and their main tributaries. This paper is a review of these activities. It began as a contribution, never in fact to be given, to a symposium in 1978; it has subsequently been resuscitated, revised and extended. It sets out to review the background, organisation and progress of archaeology in the Avon and Severn valleys since aerial reconnaissance began to make a significant contribution from the mid-1950's onwards. The history and work of the Avon-Severn Valleys Research Committee are particularly discussed and all excavation projects carried out or begun under their aegis are summarised in a gazetteer (Appendix). It is hoped that this review, by summarising work to date, may not only extend the record but stimulate discussion on the future direction of archaeology in the valleys.

The Avon-Severn river system drains a vast area of midland and western England, not to mention substantial parts of Wales, and in consequence some limitation and definition of the region under consideration is necessary. For the purposes of this paper, as for archaeological organisations in the area and period under consideration, the region is defined as the valleys of the Avon and Severn north of ther confluence at Tewkesbury, together with their main tributaries. These latter (shown on Figs. 2 and 3) will not be enumerated at length, but some will be alluded to in due course. The counties involved (post-1974 reorganisation) are Warwickshire, Hereford and Worcester, West Midlands and Shropshire. Those parts of the river system which fall into Wales or the Cotswolds are excluded. The valleys display considerable topographical variety, from the broad flat flood plain of the lower Avon, through the shelving gravel terraces of the middle Severn, to the Severn gorge at Ironbridge. Likewise the areas drained by these rivers show strong contrasts as one progresses from the northern fringe of the Cotswolds overlooking the Avon in the south, across the liassic claylands of central and eastern Worcestershire and west Warwickshire, to the highland zone fringe scenery of the coal measures, the limestones and the pre-Cambrian rocks of Shropshire and the Welsh Marches.

In this region the great majority, both of early settlements (i.e. up to and including the Romano-British period) and pre-historic ritual and funerary sites, have so far been found upon lighter permeable soils (including plateau gravels and Bunter pebble beds as well as riverine deposits). This distribution pattern is constrained, and indeed may be grotesquely distorted, by the accidents of discovery, chiefly as a result of aerial reconnaissance activities over these highly sensitive geological areas. However archaeological effort has been concentrated in the valleys, in this and other regions, because of the known riches of these valleys. Accordingly this paper confines its scope to the valleys, while admitting this to be a blinkered approach, and interpreting the term valley widely . But even within the valleys it is a mistake to lay undue emphasis on the gravel subsoils: many river valley sites, including crop-mark sites, are on alluvium rather than gravel. There is a further argument against defining a survey in terms of "river gravels". Surveys of the archaeology of the gravels have not always been able to distinguish the river gravels from plateau gravels (which may lie at no great distance from the river), simply because the available geological information did not draw such a distinction (e.g. RCHM 1960, 11). It would be misleading, therefore, to define the scope of this survey in terms of "the river gravels"; but paradoxically most of the sites under consideration are those traditionally classified as gravel sites.

THE GROWTH OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL DATA

The mid-1950's were something of a watershed in the archaeological history of the West Midlands. Two interconnected developments stand out: the increasingly significant activities of Dr. Graham Webster as Staff Tutor in Archaeology for the Department of Extra-Mural Studies in the University of Birmingham, and the aerial reconnaissances carried out by Arnold Baker from 1955 onwards. The literature and unpublished records make clear the extent and importance of their work. Dr. Webster almost single-handedly activated archaeology in the West Midlands, teaching and organising as well as excavating and publishing. He, his students and his associates carried out local surveys and excavations throughout the region. Extra-mural classes and courses led to the formation of local groups, with overall direction supplied by Dr. Webster, who trained individual members of such groups at his annual training excavations at Wroxeter. An interesting account of these developments is given in Webster 1959. Initially a campaign was co-ordinated to examine Roman forts and marching camps; subsequently the defences of some smaller Roman towns were excavated. Very many of the military sites - those around Leintwardine and at Greensforge being perhaps the best examples - were discovered by Dr. J.K. St. Joseph's aerial surveys. The same process inevitably indicated a hitherto unsuspected number of settlement and ritual/funerary sites.

Only the slightest inkling of this was given in RCHM 1960. On the distribution maps published therein the Avon and Severn still looked very sparsely populated by comparison with the Thames, Nene and Welland valleys. But enough had been found to sow the seed, and again Dr. Webster took the lead in co-ordinating surveys and assessing results. He and Arnold Baker worked closely together, as Webster's pioneering and seminal paper 'Aerial Reconnaissance over the Warwickshire Avon' (Webster and Hobley, 1964) explains. Mr. Baker, then flying from Pershore in Worcestershire, covered the Severn and lower Avon; he was joined in 1960 by Jim Pickering who covered the upper Avon. Their areas were of course to overlap, and their ranges to increase vastly, with the passage of time. But their results, once assimilated, were to change the archaeological face of the West Midlands, like the opening up of an underdeveloped country. This is particularly true of the later prehistoric and Romano-British periods. Almost all of the hundreds of cropmark sites photographed by Baker and Pickering were on the lighter permeable soils - and in turn, therefore, a great number were located in the river valleys. There is no reason, however, to think that these distributions of known sites represent a "real" distribution of prehistoric settlement and activity, any more than the conclusions drawn from the sparse scatter of sites and finds available to archaeologists in the 1940's and earlier. Equally we should refrain from dogmatic reassessments until the remaining "negative areas" have received more attention.

To place in perspective the work of the last two decades, we might recall the views expressed by leading scholars in the "pre-aerial reconnaissance period" as they examined the West Midlands, usually briefly. Sir Cyril Fox (1938: 55,58) explained the absence of spots on his distribution maps by referring to a general cover of "damp oakwood forest" in the midlands, supported by the dominant clay soils. A similar view was taken by Professor C. Hawkes and Jacquetta Hawkes (Hawkes and Hawkes, 1953: 241): "This midland country is archaeologically the poorest in Britain, for its heavy soils supported dense forest growth most unattractive to prehistoric man". The "gravel-filled valley of the Thames" is noted as being "always favourable to settlement"(ibid, 5), but the Avon and Severn are not mentioned in a similar context. It must be emphasised that each of these conclusions was reasonable in the light of the information available at the times of writing. The importance of the activity launched by Webster, Baker and Pickering is underlined by comparing these verdicts of pre-aerial reconnaissance days with our present position. Two maps (Figs. 2 and 3 , both prepared in 1978) showing distributions of cropmark sites in the valleys, give some indication of progress if compared with those in Fox (1938) and RCHM (1960).

As cited above, Webster was the first to publish a survey and discussion of the results of aerial reconnaissance in the West Midlands, (Webster and Hobley 1964). Its title is slightly misleading because a substantial slice of south-east Worcestershire is included in the area under discussion. Distributions of cropmark sites and gravel deposits were planned, and for some areas

cropmark concentrations were plotted in detail. Webster concluded that there was a large amount of cultivatable land along the Avon, and by implication in the West Midlands generally, on the river terraces, the plateau gravels and "lighter permeable soils". These attractive areas were rendered accessible by the rivers themselves.

Surveys on the pattern laid down by Webster and Hobley have been continued for the Severn valley and Hereford and Worcester (Hereford and Worcester Sites and Monument Record, County Archaeology Department) and in Shropshire (Shropshire Sites and Monuments Record, Shropshire County Planning Department). The Shropshire cropmarks are annually plotted by the county field officer, and all but the current year's results are recorded fully at the time of writing. Lack of facilities have resulted in a backlog of unplotted material in the other counties, as information continues to accumulate, particularly on the shelves of the Air Photography Unit at the National Monuments Record. This is currently being rectified by computer-corrected plotting at the NMR. In addition to the continuing work of Baker and Pickering, aerial reconnaissance is now carried out by Professor Barri Jones and Chris Musson in the Shropshire area, and has been pursued on a smaller scale by Philip Barker and W.E. Jenks in Shropshire, and by E.A. Price in Warwickshire and Worcestershire. Approaches vary: Baker and Pickering favour repeated visits to sites of known high potential, so that palimpsests of landscape features can be built up over a period of years. A more general reconnaissance approach is adopted by Jones and Musson, resulting in a more general distribution of sites and a steady accumulation of new ones. The former policy offers a deeper understanding of certain important sites. This difference of approach goes some way to explain the difference between cropmark distributions in Shropshire and those in other West Midlands counties (see in particular Fig. 3).

Systematic field survey programmes, in (and out of) the river valleys, were established from the late 1960's onwards. This was initially a relatively unpopular task, but its value was soon demonstrated. Particularly significant was the work of James Bond in the old county of Worcestershire between 1969 and 1974. A much-simplified digest of material from the county's Sites and Monuments record, also established by Bond, was published in a popular booklet (Bond 1972). Field survey by amateur and professional archaeologists continues in each of the counties, often in association with county field officers and Birmingham University Extra-Mural study groups. Recent issues of WMANS report extensive work in the Warwickshire Avon valley, led by Dr. Della Hooke (WMANS 20 1977, 21) and in the Stour valley around Wolverley in Hereford- Worcestershire, where Mrs. Lesley King and others have carried out intensive surveys for some years (ibid, 30-32). Field walking, specifically directed towards sites revealed by aerial surveys, was organised by Arnold Baker in the Avon valley during 1964 (WMANS 7 1964, 11); but this exercise, though productive, was apparently not prolonged.

As a result of recent aerial reconnaissance and field survey programmes, early examples of a "second generation" of distribution maps have recently appeared (eg. Hooke 1981, 60, showing Romano-British sites in the Avon valley). This exercise could usefully be extended to other areas and periods.

DEVELOPMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL STRUCTURES AND POLICIES

A significant attempt to arouse government interest, evaluate problems and promote activity on a regional, rather than a local, basis in the West Midland valleys came in 1963 with the foundation of the Avon-Severn Valleys Research Project. Its original committee was high-powered, numbering among its members Professor J.G.D. Clark, the late Professor Harry Thorpe, Dr. Graham Webster and Philip Rahtz. Representatives of Shropshire, Warwickshire and Worcestershire County Councils were also included. This project was not the first of its kind; the Welland Valley Research Committee was already in being as a response to the needs expressed in RCHM 1960. It is likely that the pre-existence of that body influenced the setting up of a counterpart in the West Midlands. Hindsight indicates that the policies and work of the Avon-Severn Project were important in the development of the "state sector" in West Midlands archaeology, and as a prototype for problem-orientated enquiry on a regional basis. For these reasons I propose to outline the history of the Project, and to present in the Appendix, in abbreviated and tabulated form, an account of its excavations. If the significance of Avon-Severn is doubted, an examination of the Appendix will show that several long-running and important excavations were initiated by the Committee. It is perhaps salutary to note that arguably the most important of these excavations, at Beckford (Hereford and Worcester), ended as late as 1979, some five years after the demise of the Avon-Severn Valleys Research Committee.

The policies of the Project were defined in an early Committee paper, as follows:

" Long Term Policies

(1) To draw up a long term policy of investigation by complete excavation of selected sites.

(2) To encourage the continued aerial reconnaissance of the area and to plot all sites on Ordnance Survey maps for distribution records.

Short Term Policies

(1) To carry out an immediate survey of all surface sand, gravel, and other mineral areas, as scheduled by the planning authorities and operated by the mineral companies, with a view to studying the threatened sites.

(2) To approach the mineral companies to ascertain their immediate and long term plans.

(3) To ensure that the Ministry of Works carry out emergency excavation, where necessary, well in advance of mineral working or any other destructive agency. "

It was emphasised that this was essentially a research project and that emergency excavation should not be part of its functions, except in exceptional circumstances. A number of sites were selected for research excavations in the middle 1960's. Usually these selections were made on the grounds of the scale and complexity of cropmarks at given sites, or the regional rarity of the features concerned. Thus, for example, an early minute suggests that cursus cropmarks could be readily investigated by small groups, at low cost (or no cost), with a view to establishing the existence and position of any bank and dating the site. This was indeed a problem-solving approach to excavation - but very few research excavations actually took place (see Appendix). Finance inevitably was a problem: money not tied to rescue archaeology was in very short supply, then as now. Further, and significantly, the rapidly accelerating pace and increasing scale of threats to valley sites in the late 1960's made necessary more of the rescue excavations which the Project originally intended to avoid except where pressed by circumstances to act. By the early 1970's circumstances compelled Avon-Severn to carry out only rescue excavations. In these cases selection seems to have been carried out using the same criteria of scale and complexity as before, and the imminence of a threat was taken into account in establishing priorities. There was an understanding, if not a definite policy, that the first season on a site was a trial season. Certainly during the writer's period of work for the Committee, badly ploughed sites, or those which proved barren, were never followed up. Geo-physical surveys of limited scope were carried out on occasions, but results were often ambiguous and proved difficult to use in framing excavation policy. Had these surveys been conducted by specialists, they might have achieved notable results.

The last three excavations begun were Holt, Blackstone and Beckford (all in Hereford and Worcester), which became multi-seasonal operations on some scale. These excavations were all initiated by Avon-Severn, but the active involvement of Worcestershire County Council, and in particular James Bond, county archaeological officer 1969-1974, led to the transfer of management to that body in 1973-4. Local initiative also passed to a county council in Warwickshire, where William Ford was active as county archaeologist from 1969-72. Avon-Severn became, in its last years, a co-ordinating body and a channel for DoE funds to sites in the river valleys. At the same time it was channelling funds to other sites, some of them as far from river valleys as one can get in the West Midlands. In effect, it was becoming a regional funding body because an alternative was not available, and inevitably it lost its specialised identity and role in the

process. In 1973 it gave up its officers and its acumen to the newly formed West Midlands Rescue Archaeology Committee (WEMRAC), for which it was in many ways a prototype, and was dissolved. WEMRAC in turn became defunct. Policies and action for rescue archaeology in the region were then briefly co-ordinated by the West Midland Archaeological Review Body (WEMARB) made up of academic and local authority archaeologists, with DoE representation. By an unfortunate coincidence this body has also slipped into obscurity at a time when financial constraints have begun to reduce the resources available for large scale excavations on gravel sites. Substantial tracts of prehistoric and historic landscapes on the river gravels are still eroded or destroyed annually, and excavation costs rise with inflation. In these circumstances excavations on the scale of Beckford, or the recent work at Wasperton can hardly be justified without a rigorous process of site evaluation and selection and a clear research design; and this process is perhaps best carried out through consultation at regional level.

It is right to emphasise that the Avon-Severn Committee excavations, to a greater or lesser extent, were preceded by discussion on these lines, but usually on an informal basis. It is interesting to speculate whether all the excavations recorded in the gazetteer would have begun had a more formal and rigorous exploration of the problems taken place before spades were taken up. A good case could still be made, on academic grounds, for most if not all of the sites; but however good the case we could hardly have afforded to conduct them all in the late 1970's and 1980's. It is fortunate that so much was done at a time when smaller grants bought substantial excavations; for example the first two seasons of work at Holt, in 1970-71, cost £175. It is surely significant that they were given strong voluntary support at a time when professional and amateur interests in archaeology were less polarised, and more people participated in excavations for the sake of sheer enjoyment. The Holt excavations, and those following at Grimley (Hereford and Worcester) and Blackstone, also attracted strong practical support from schools in the West Midlands. Mutual benefit might well follow the re-establishment and development of links between schools and archaeological bodies. Activity need not be limited to excavations, since Steane and Dix (1980) have shown how school students can carry out field surveys successfully. This is not to disparage the good work recently done by local societies and extra-mural classes in this field, but to suggest a parallel way forward designed to provide more archaeological activity - and more archaeologists. In this, as in other ways, the modus operandi of Avon-Severn may have something to teach us for the future.

To sum up briefly the significance of Avon-Severn, it must be emphasised that its programme of excavations on river-valley sites amounted to the first systematic campaign of rescue archaeology in the area, even if rescue excavation was not a high priority when it began. In its latter days it provided mainly an administrative "umbrella" for local initiatives. It is fair,

if embarrassing, to note that few of the Avon-Severn excavations have reached publication stage so far. Barford (Warwickshire) and an excavation at Beckford have been published by Adrian Oswald, founding chairman of Avon-Severn (Oswald (ed.) 1969,; 1974). William Britnell has published an interim report on his excavations at Beckford (Britnell 1975). All these reports have appeared in appropriate county or regional journals: attempts to co-ordinate publications on thematic lines have so far failed.

REVIEW OF FIELDWORK AND RESEARCH

The present scarcity of published reports makes it difficult to review work carried out in the Avon and Severn valleys. In gathering data it is necessary to rely mainly upon the interim notes published by excavators in ephemeral publications, mainly the West Midlands Archaeological News Sheet (now West Midlands Archaeology), and the now discontinued Annual Reports of the Avon-Severn Research Project. The help given by colleagues was particularly important, and is acknowledged in more detail elsewhere. Contemplating this review the writer concluded that for the sake of brevity and unity, the selection of broad subject areas was desirable. The processes of excavating and preparing reports on prehistoric and Romano-British sites in the valleys had provoked a personal interest in, and some familiarity with, the problems of these periods. As the Appendix shows, most of the work undertaken by the Avon-Severn committee involved sites of these periods. For the post-Roman periods important works of summary and synthesis are already in existence (Pretty 1977; Ford 1973 and 1976). Little could be achieved by further summaries of these periods within the compass of this paper. These considerations guided the choice of subject areas. Discussions of problems within the prehistoric and Roman periods, on differing geographical and thematic bases, are published (e.g. Thomas 1974; Webster 1974) or in preparation (Crickmore). What follows is little more than a commentary on the gazetteer (Appendix) and, with the bibliography, a guide for further enquiries regarding the sites mentioned. Excavations other than those carried out by Avon-Severn are referred to in this summary where comparisons are useful.

Ritual and funerary sites of Neolithic and Bronze Ages (Fig. 2)

This group includes ring ditches (the most numerous class), cursus, smaller elongated enclosures and large double circles which may well be henges. Of this latter class there is only one example recorded so far, on the Avon at Nafford (Hereford and Worcester). Obviously, some, all or none of the smaller double (or indeed single) ring ditches might be henges, but this area of uncertainty is left as such. The possibility of relationships between "barrow" ring ditches and henges is referred to below.

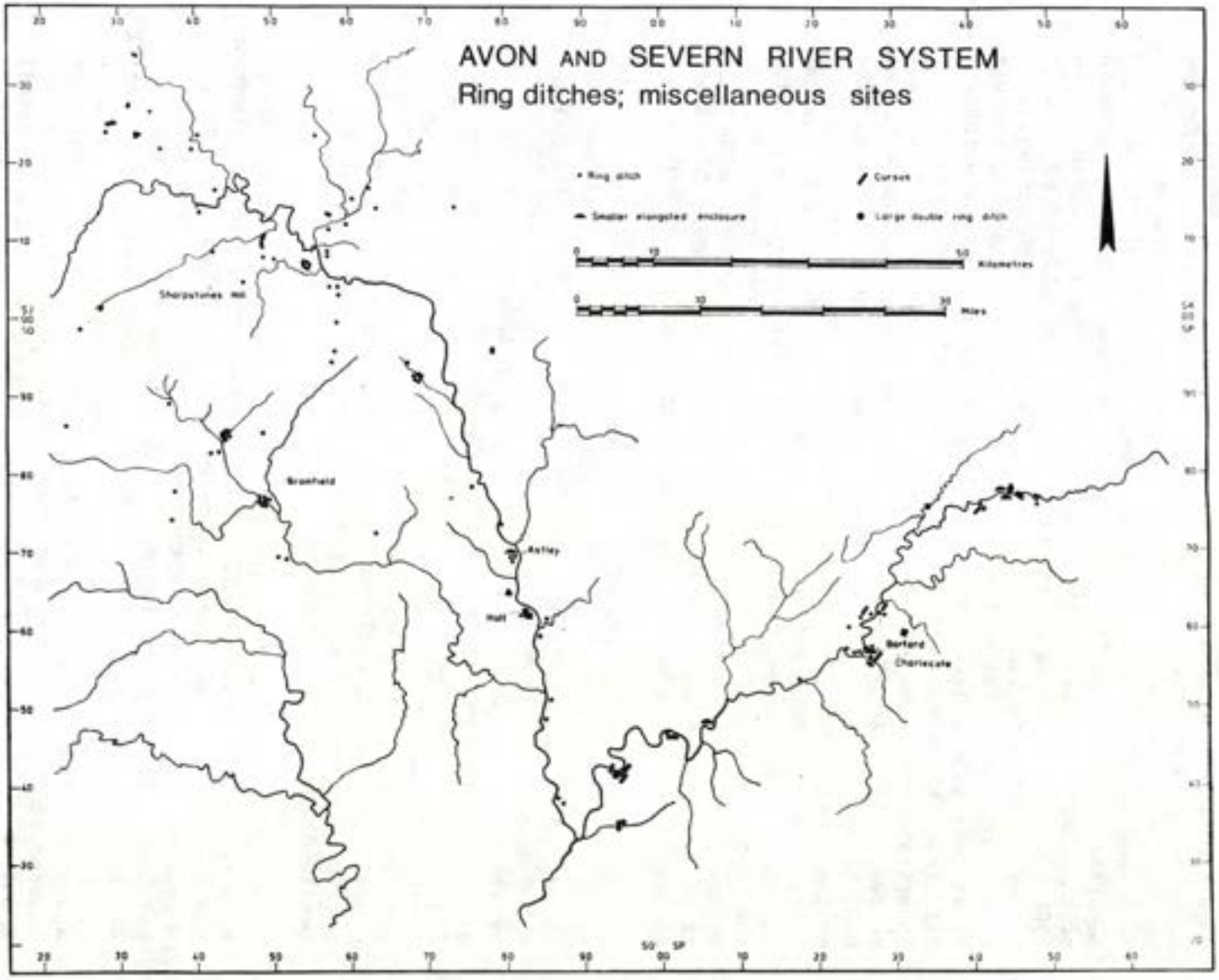

Fig.2 The Avon and Severn Valleys: Ritual and funerary sites of Neolithic and Bronze Age date (Hunt)

The larger complex circles, such as the Nafford example, are at least less likely to have surrounded barrows.

Cursus and smaller elongated enclosures were grouped together by Webster and Hobley who reported six, or possibly seven in the Avon valley. None are recorded so far in the Severn. The larger, square-ended enclosures of cursus type (two more have been recently reported in the lower Avon valley) are here separated from the smaller variety with rounded ends. An example of this latter class was excavated at Charlecote (Warwickshire) in 1968-69 by Ford (in preparation). The elliptically-ended, rectilinear, ditched feature measured 68 x 13 metres, with entrances to the south-west and north-east. More than one phase of activity or use was inferred from silting sequences in the ditch, which at different stages contained Ebbsfleet and Mortlake pottery. No funerary deposits as such were found, but an area of clay (c.5 x 8 metres) with turf edges, situated opposite the north-east entrance, had, on sample analysis, a high phosphate content. The excavator assumed that a mound was raised over the enclosed area, since later (probably medieval) ploughing had scored the gravel outside but not inside the enclosure. Charlecote will probably fall into the long barrow category, but we must await the excavator's report before drawing definitive conclusions. Until that time, there is still good reason to separate this class of cropmark from the apparently distinct cursus type, as on my distribution map (Fig. 2).

A very limited area of the cursus at Barford was excavated in 1972-73, confirming its shape, size and position, and (because it was quite badly ploughed) little more. More significantly, the C-shaped enclosure at the end of the cursus was totally excavated. It was termed the "mortuary enclosure" on typological grounds; there was in fact no evidence for this or any other function, nor for its date. The excavator was unable to positively determine the stratigraphical relationship between this enclosure and the cursus, which are tangentally adjacent to each other. Within the enclosure were pits and post-holes, the latter possibly evidence of a structure whose plan cannot readily be resolved (Loveday, forthcoming).

These three excavations share the common disadvantage that they are as yet unpublished, and therefore lack critical evaluation and comparison. We are on slightly safer ground with the near-ubiquitous ring ditches, because more examples have been investigated in this and other regions. It will be noted from the distribution map (Fig. 2) that there is a marked tendency for small clusters of ring ditches to occur in these valleys, as at Holt and around the henges in the Barford/Charlecote areas. Only one cluster, to my knowledge, includes standing barrows - that at Bromfield (Shropshire). The cluster investigated in most detail is that at Holt where five ring ditches were partly or totally excavated between 1970 and 1975 (Hunt et al in preparation). It is tragic that this highly complex site (ring ditches, settlement enclosures, and field systems) was not investigated before it was substantially destroyed by quarrying, and then only because of the

personal initiative of James Bond in 1970. Two ring ditches (Sites B and D) enclosed cremations and yielded cultural and dating evidence. In both groups primary series collared urns and food-vessels were present, all in a distinctive and apparently local fabric, together with plano-convex flint knives. A cremation deposit from Site D (probably a disc barrow) yielded a radiocarbon assessment of 1590± 130 b.c. The relationships between the ring ditches and the two distinctly separate field systems are of importance. It was apparent that the ring ditches are laid out on a pre-existing field system, and that a later (Romano-British) set of field boundaries uses the rings (assuming barrows of some kind) as markers. The presence of residual ?neolithic and beaker sherds on the site suggests settlement earlier than the barrows somewhere in the vicinity, but the large scale quarrying in this area may already have destroyed it. Clearly this site and the area immediately around it is (or was) of more than local importance.

Holt also shows examples of "complex ring ditches". Site F, a double concentric ring ditch contained no finds or funerary deposits. Site B also had a double ring and post circle, with five cremations in and round a low central mound. Both sites apparently had bowl barrows raised over them. The relationship of these more complex ring ditches to henges deserves more discussion than is possible in this outline. However, in this context attention is drawn to an Avon site, Barford A (Oswald ed. 1969), if only to illustrate the problems of comparison. Barford A, an irregular triple-ditched circle, yielded a radio-carbon date of 2416 ± 64 b.c. from a charred flat wooden object, similar perhaps to a tray, deposited in an internal pit. The excavator interpreted the site as a henge. For all these sites comparisons and conclusions would be premature at present, but data is clearly accumulating for students to evaluate. They will initially be hampered, as we are in the preparation of excavation reports on these sites, by the absence of a pre-existing framework of almost any kind for the neolithic and bronze ages in the area. We are barely emerging from the exploration stage in these aspects of West Midland archaeology, by comparison with other parts of Britain.

Prehistoric and Romano-British Settlements (Fig. 3)

This group includes the most frequent class of sites in these valleys, as in others: settlement enclosures. These are commonly assigned, as a type, to the iron age or Romano-British period; but this is only because the examples so far excavated have usually been dated by associated artifacts to those periods. It is surely possible that some at least are of earlier date. Several excavated sites have yielded evidence for mesolithic and neolithic settlements, and a distribution map of flint scatters would no doubt suggest others. Such maps are not available for the whole region, but for Warwickshire maps see Thomas 1974, and a simplified map of Worcestershire prehistoric sites is available in Bond 1972. This sort of evidence calls for more fieldwork and analysis but gives little basis for a general interpretative discussion.

Hence this section concentrates on the more readily defined enclosed settlements, plus the few open (i.e. unenclosed) settlements of bronze or iron age date found in the valleys. These are attested by excavation at Barford (three iron age round houses, of post-hole construction, found close to the cursus terminal in 1972), and also, but with very limited evidence indeed, at Blackstone, where bronze age settlement was indicated by collared urn sherds in a rubbish pit (Hunt and Davenport, forthcoming). At nearby Astley there was some evidence of open settlement in the iron age, with duck-stamped wares in a ?fired pit, on a site otherwise dominated by Romano-British enclosures (Walker 1958). A number of cropmark sites, showing small circles (possibly hut circles), minor enclosures and pit groups may well be open settlements, but these sites evidently cannot yet be discussed in terms of function, date or even distribution.

Settlement enclosures are very widely distributed in the Avon and Severn valleys. Webster and Hobley (1964) said little beyond suggesting an iron age/Romano-British date, and noting that locality might suggest a choice between the two alternatives if, for example, a group of enclosures lay close to a known Romano-British settlement of some significance (e.g. the group near Hailes on the Isbourne). The relationship, if any, could of course work another way: the substantial Roman structure, or even villa, could be the successor to a sequence of pre-Roman or early Roman enclosures. Ian Burrow starts us on a profitable road by suggesting a classification of enclosures in Shropshire, which might well be applied elsewhere (Burrow 1978). This classification may well be capable of refinement - but it stands as the only suggested basis for comparison of sites in and between sub-divisions of this region. If, as Burrow has suggested, plan-types are compared to size, location and density patterns in and between geographical sub-divisions of the region, taking the distribution of hill-forts and other major settlement evidence into account, we may be able to think realistically in terms of regional groupings and even sequential developments. The Holt area is worthy of further study in this respect, for here a variety of enclosure plans and sizes are present in a relatively limited area. Fig. 3 shows that other possibilities abound.

However, at present our understanding of these settlement enclosures is promoted mainly by rescue excavations. By far the most significant of these is that at Beckford, where William Britnell and Jan Wills have been excavating and salvage recording since 1972 (Britnell 1975; Wills forthcoming). Oswald carried out earlier excavations, in 1964-5, with a further season directed by Mrs. M.G. Sanders in 1967 (Oswald 1974). These excavations will have to be reconsidered in the light of current work. This highly complex network of enclosures and boundary ditches lies on the north bank of Carrant Brook, a tributary of the Avon. The earliest evidence of land-use comes from residual mesolithic/neolithic flints and beaker sherds. A large early/middle bronze age boundary ditch runs across the site, heading in the direction of Bredon Hill with its two hillforts. Since this feature has

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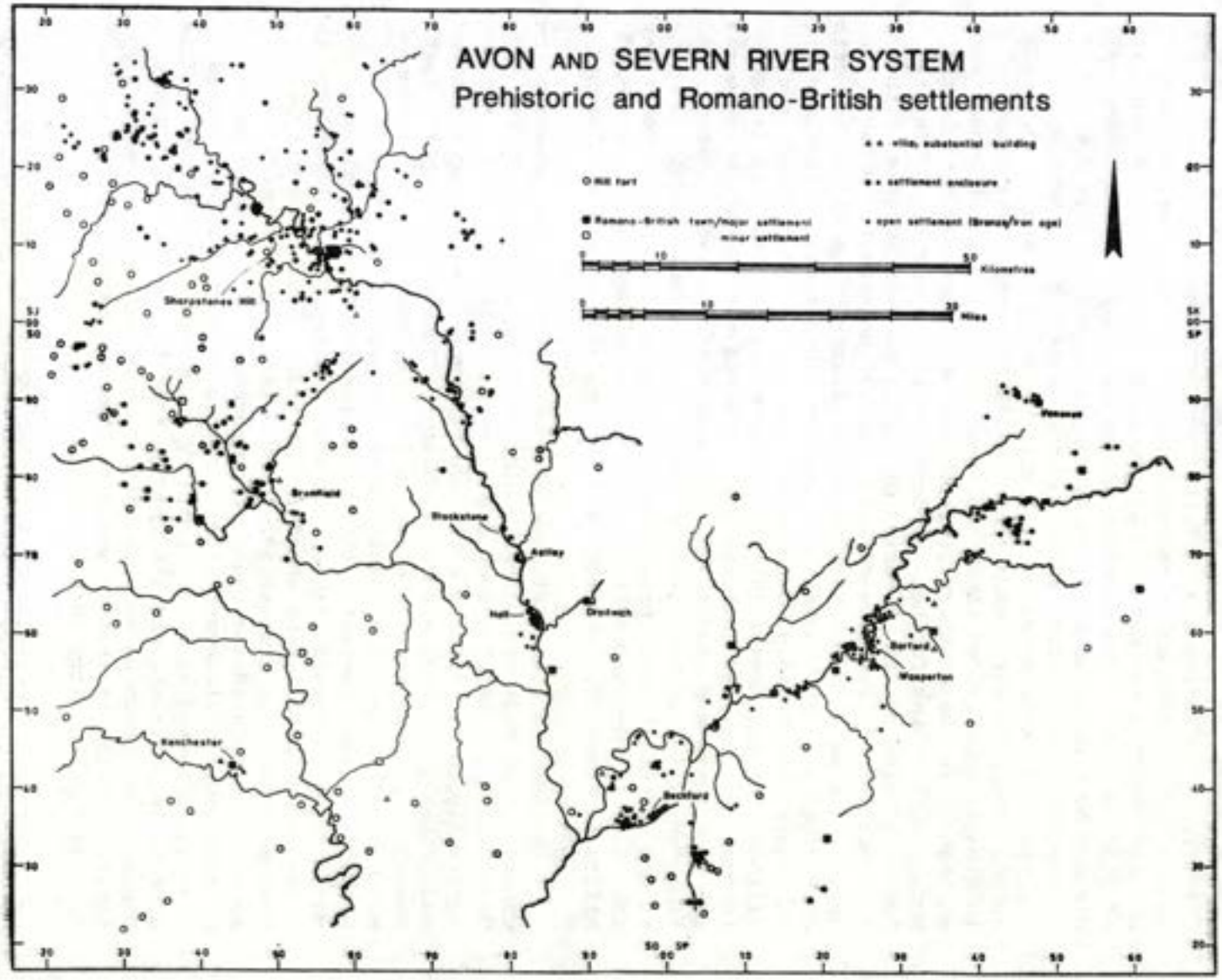

Fig.3 The Avon and Severn Valleys: Prehistoric and Romano-British settlements (Hunt)

not been traced to the north of the narrow gravel terrace, it would be premature to suggest a comparison with the Wiltshire "ranch boundaries". The dominant features of the site are the large iron-age enclosures with shifting patterns of settlement inside them. Particular characteristics are slate-walled round houses, "yard" areas metalled with oolitic limestone, and clusters of storage pits. One northern enclosure was internally sub-divided by a north-south ditch system, with roundhouses concentrated in the western part, and the eastern part taken up largely by a large metalled area with evidence of bronze working. An adjacent enclosure, excavated from 1976 onwards, was also internally sub-divided on an east-west axis, with small house enclosures in the southern division and very numerous pits in the north. There was further evidence of bronze working. In the Romano-British period a series of rectilinear enclosures, with two metalled trackways, were laid out, but no structures have appeared to date. The most recent excavator, Miss Wills, suggests on the basis of arrangement and pottery types that the iron age enclosures are broadly contemporary and may be interpreted as a village-type settlement (Wills, pers.comm.). Phasing is as yet incomplete: earlier contexts yield stamped and linear-tooled wares; later contexts are associated with undecorated Malvernian and fine, wheel-thrown Belgic-style wares. There must surely be strong potential here (particularly in terms of pottery comparisons) for study in microcosm of the relationships between local excavated hillforts (Oxenton, Conderton and Bredon) and lowland settlements.

Beside the potential, scale, complexity and good preservation conditions of Beckford, other enclosures seem less significant. Nevertheless, a brief survey may be given. At Blackstone an apparently double-ditched enclosure is now seen as having a complex, and probably lengthy, structural history (Hunt and Davenport, forthcoming). There is some evidence for a planned internal arrangement, possibly including small-scale iron-working. As with Beckford's later contexts, this site produced almost entirely undecorated Malvernian wares with some apparently local fabrics, and a handful of Belgic-type sherds. In terms of settlement type, however, the sites are markedly dissimilar. Blackstone is an apparently isolated enclosure, a component in a dispersed pattern of settlement enclosures, albeit in this case an unusually sited example, situated as it is on a very steep-sided promontory. This defensible position, and its location near to a potentially significant river crossing and possible focus of ancient routeways, invite speculation that it was more than a peasant farmstead (Grundy 1936; Chitty 1963).

Nearby a succession of large Romano-British settlement enclosures were sampled by Ian Walker at Astley in the late 1950's (Walker 1958, op. cit.). Large pottery groups underlined the continued dependence of Severn valley rural communities on the Malvern pottery industry, and probably on the Severn as a channel of communications. A system of enclosures and associated field systems at Holt was much eroded before a large part of one enclosure was excavated in 1974-75 (Hunt et al, in prep). This enclosure

(and by implication, perhaps, its neighbours) was of Romano-British date, although very little pottery survived in stratified contexts. A square-planned post-in-trench structure, with an almost identical neighbour featuring a narrowed entrance, were the principal buildings in the enclosure. A small sub-rectangular post-hole building lay nearby. The almost total lack of finds or other domestic debris (albeit in a very acid soil environment likely to rot almost any bones) gave rise to speculation that this may not be a domestic enclosure at all. The square building was not unlike the Heathrow "temple", although smaller: is this perhaps a diminutive shrine/ temple? In any case, arrangement is contrasted with the larger, more regularly rectilinear enclosure with large central hut-circle to the south, which seems to have been the focus of other, lesser enclosures and the field system.

Finally, moving north and west to the Shrewsbury area, excavations were carried out in 1965-71 at Sharpstones Hill in the Rea valley by Mr. W.E. Jenks (Haldon and Jenks, forthcoming). Two rectilinear enclosures (Sites A and E), with evidence of timber structures inside and outside them, were excavated. Round houses and rectangular sill-beam type houses were present. A ditched field system was dated to the late bronze or early iron age. The excavation is important in that it may act as a controlling sample for the very dense distribution of enclosures in this area (about one site per square kilometre).

It is fitting that enclosures, the most frequent river valley sites in this and most other regions, should have been comparatively widely excavated. Future excavation policy may be affected by certain problems exposed in these excavations. On the Severn gravels, with their dry acid soils, preservation of faunal remains is generally bad, although an acceptable recovery rate for flora was tested and evaluated on a considerable scale by Carole Keepax at Blackstone (Keepax 1977). Also on the Severn gravel deposits excavation is rendered difficult, in all but optimum climatic conditions, by the intractable nature of the soils and sub-soils. To add to the problems of this luckless valley, ploughing has taken a heavy toll; and in the middle Severn area sand and gravel extraction has been comparatively widespread. It is entirely appropriate that effort has recently been concentrated on Avon sites of proven quality with good preservation of evidence: Beckford and Wasperton. Site selection and strategy is much more critical, and ruthless, than in the days of Avon-Severn. But doubts must persist; the contrasts between Avon and Severn settlements, as at present understood, make it difficult to write off the superficially less attractive Severn sites completely.

THE FUTURE

A programme for the next two decades might well appear as follows:

1. Aerial reconnaissance

The fundamental value of this needs no extra emphasis. It is to be hoped that, at the least, the present level of activity and specialist involvement can be maintained.

2. Field survey

This should be encouraged as widely as possible, perhaps on a parish basis in the river valleys. Crop-mark sites should ideally be walked several times after ploughing takes place, but as many have never been examined at all there is a considerable backlog to cover. Field-walking in the vicinity of barrow/ring ditch groups and field systems might well discover evidence of associated settlements. This is well illustrated by Peter Woodward's work in the Bedfordshire Ouse valley (Woodward 1978). One or two possibilities come readily to mind, in particular the parish of Holt in Worcestershire, where field systems and associated settlements can be demonstrated or postulated from the bronze age to the post-medieval period,and where field-walking can potentially supply answers to remaining problems.

Other priorities may well be: concentration of enclosures near hill forts or RB settlements; enclosures chosen on grounds of typology or environment; areas of high-grade agricultural land where RB settlement is known or suspected, and where early medieval material and/or evidence of continuity might be found. More prominence might be given to geo-physical surveys, which have seen little application in the region since the earlier days of the Avon-Severn Project.

3. Excavation

It is probably realistic to assume that few large-scale excavations on the scale of the current (1982) work at Wasperton will take place in the next decade. They are likely to be highly intensive investigations of carefully-selected sites of proven quality where high returns can be expected. Small-scale sampling excavations might well be carried out at sites revealed by aerial reconnaissance and field survey.

4. Resource Management

A fair number of river valley cropmark sites are now scheduled, particularly in Warwickshire. The list should be extended. It might be useful to draw up a scale of criteria for preservation, as well as excavation, of sites on a regional basis. One would like to see a wider application of the acknowledgment payments scheme on these sites, which are in many cases more seriously threatened by ploughing than by gravel extraction.

5. Synthesis of data

This matter is left to the end of this summary, in order to emphasise its importance. We now have a large body of evidence from the Avon and Severn valleys. It is a pity that much of this is unpublished (and the writer bears a responsibility at least as heavy as that of any other person in this respect), but this matter is currently being rectified. With published site reports and improved distributional data it should be possible to advance beyond the "spots-on-the-map" stage at which we presently find ourselves, to a broader regional understanding within the national context.

A.M. Hunt

Weymouth 1982

Acknowledgements

A paper surveying the work of the Avon-Severn Project gives an opportunity to record a personal debt of gratitude to Bert Round, formerly Hon. Treasurer of the Avon Severn Committee, and Geoff Taylor, who was a long-serving Hon. Secretary. Both were unfailingly patient, encouraging and helpful during the years 1970-1974, when I and others were involved in the setting up and directing of Avon-Severn excavation projects. In addition Mr. Taylor kindly made available to me his copies of Avon-Severn publications and papers, which provided much material for this review. My particular thanks are due to him, and to a number of colleagues who have supplied information during the preparation of this paper. Julie Crickmore, Dr. Kate Pretty, Annelise Wilson, James Bond, Dr. Ian Burrow, Martin Carver, Peter Davenport, Bill Ford, Dr. Raymond Lamb and Roy Loveday were all very helpful in this respect. Martin Carver and Peter Davenport read and commented on drafts of the paper, which was improved as a result. Some omissions are inevitable in a study of this kind. If I have inadvertently overlooked anyone's work, or failed to acknowledge their contribution, I hope they will accept my apology.

Bibliographical abbreviations

These follow the pattern set by the CBA, with the following additions:

AR Avon - Severn Valleys Research Project Annual Report
WMANS West Midlands Archaeological News-sheet

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APPENDIX

GAZETTEER OF EXCAVATIONS CARRIED OUT OR INITIATED BY AVON-SEVERN VALLEYS RESEARCH PROJECT

NAME OF SITE	NGR	DATE (YEAR) OF EXCAVATION	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	DIRECTOR	PUBLICATION	COMMENT
BAGINTON (WARKS) Webster-Hobley Site 93	SP341755 SP3387345	1968	Ring ditch and "storage hollows"; no artefacts. Pits with neolithic pottery; enclosure ditch.	B. Hobley W.J. Ford	WMANS 11 (1968)6-7 WMANS 12 (1969)16 Hobley 1971 WMANS 14 (1971)6	Rescue excavation in adbane advance of road construction
BARFORD (WARKS) Webster-Hobley Site B3	SP289624	1964-65	Site A - Large, 3 periods: C^{14} 2416± 64 bc for ?Period 2. Site B - ?neolithic storage pits Site C - neolithic settlement Site D - ring ditch and "approach avenue" Site E,G - iron age rectilinear enclosures Sites E,J,H,K - large ?neolithic pits Site K - RB field boundaries	A. Oswald	AR 1 (1964)5-6 AR 2 (1965)6-9 WMANS 7 (1964)4 WMANS 8 (1965)4 Oswald(ed) 1969	Originally research excavation by Warwick School, under general direction of Dr. G. Webster. Imminence of major road works and gravel quarrying made rescue excavation, on a larger scale, necessary 1964 onwards.
		1972-73	Pit alignment, undated. Terminal of cursus and intersecting ditch of C-plan "mortuary enclosure". Small, unenclosed iron age settlement with round-houses.	W.J. Ford A.M. Hunt	Loveday, forthcoming	
BECKFORD (HEREF/WORCS) Webster-Hobley Site 14	SO080361	1964-65, 1967	Settlement enclosure (ditch and palisades) with subsidiary internal enclosures. Late iron age pottery.	A. Oswald and M.G. Sanders	AR 1 (1964)3-5 AR 2 (1965)4 AR 4 (1967)3-5 WMANS 7 (1964)4 WMANS 8 (1965)4 WMANS 10 (1967)3 Wilson 1966,206 Oswald 1974	Rescue excavations in advance of quarrying
	SO984364	1973-74	Bronze age boundary ditch. Iron age settlement enclosures, with round-houses, storage pits, and bronze-working. RB field system.	W.G. Britnell	WMANS 16 (1973)10-11 WMANS 17 (1974)44 Wilson 1973,287 Wilson 1974,429 Goodburn 1978,438-9 Britnell 1975	Combination of salvage excavation over large areas, and hand-excavation of selected smaller areas, made possible the examination of very large continuous tract of land, densely crop-marked. Policy continued by Wills in 1975-79
	SO988365 SO984364	1975-79		J. Wills	WMANS 18 (1975)38-39 WMANS 19 (1976)35 WMANS 21 (1978)43-45 Wills, forthcoming	

NAME OF SITE	NGR	DATE (YEAR) OF EXCAVATION	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	DIRECTOR	PUBLICATION	COMMENT
BLACKSTONE (HEREF/WORCS)	SO792736	1972-73; 1977	Late iron age settlement enclosures, with earlier prehistoric occupation.	A.M. Hunt	WMANS 15 (1972)10-11 WMANS 16 (1973)19-20 Wilson 1974,429 Hunt and Davenport, forthcoming	Rescue excavations in advance of quarrying
CHARLECOTE (WARKS) Webster-Hobley Site 71	SP268578	1965	Site A - "elongated enclosure" (probably long barrow reduced by ploughing) trenched. Neolithic date established.	P.M. Christie	AR 2 (1965)5 WMANS 8 (1965)6	Research Excavation
		1969	Total excavation of same. No funerary deposits, but high phosphate content in central area. Ebbsfleet and Mortlake pottery. Site B - ring ditch: no finds.	W.J. Ford	AR 5 (1968-69)8-10 WMANS 12 (1969)16	Rescue excavations in advance of quarrying
		1971	Site C - ring ditch (13-sided polygon postulated by excavator); central grave, single contracted inhumation: Mortlake sherds from ditch fill.	W.J. Ford	WMANS 14 (1971)6-7	
		1967	Site K - ?Bronze age boundary ditch. RB settlement AD I-III	M. Gray	AR 4 (1967)6-8 WMANS 10 (1967)6 Wilson 1968,188	
FLADBURY (HEREF/WORCS)	SO996464	1967	Bronze age pits. Late RB burials. Grübenhaus, C^{14} assessment AD 851 ± 51: post-hole building	D.P.S. Peacock	AR 4 (1967)9-11 WMANS 10 (1967)7 Peacock 1967	Rescue excavation in advance of construction works. In WMANS 10, NGR given as SO996463
GRIMLEY (HEREF/WORCS)	SO833610	1966	Linear features (?field boundaries), undated	E.J. Peltenburg	WMANS 9 (1966)4 Peltenburg 1967	
		1972	Pits and ?post/stake-holes, undated.	A.M. Hunt		Trial excavation in area threatened by quarrying. Not pursued, due to lack of well-preserved, dateable features.
HAMPTON LUCY (WARKS) Webster-Hobley Site 74	SP264595	1964	Enclosure ditch sectioned: RB pottery, burnt tile and "?pre-Roman" pottery recovered.	C.C. Dyer	AR 1 (1964)6 WMANS 7 (1964)11	NGR given as SP263595 in WMANS 7

NAME OF SITE	NGR	DATE (YEAR) OF EXCAVATION	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	DIRECTOR	PUBLICATION	COMMENT
BOLT (HEREF/WORCS)	SO825622	1970-71	Early bronze age ring ditches, with earlier and later boundary ditches	A.M. Hunt J. Woodhouse	WMANS 13 (1970)27 WMANS 14 (1971)7-8 WMANS 17 (1974)46	Rescue excavations in advance of quarrying
	SO824623	1974-75	Further ring ditches; RB ?settlement enclosure		Hunt et al. (in preparation)	
KEMERTON, ASTON MILL FARM (HEREF/WORCS) Webster-Hobley Site 4	SO945354	1970	Sub-rectilinear enclosure, attested by aerial survey, not found by excavation: assumed to be ploughed out since air-photographs taken	P.J. Reynolds	Reynolds 1971	Trial excavations in area threatened by gravel quarrying
	SO946353	1974	Trial excavation for same enclosure in adjacent field. Negative results	S.R. Hillson	WMANS 16 (1973)46-48	
KINGS NEWNHAM (WARKS) Webster-Hobley Site 104	SP440774	1968	Ring ditches and elongated enclosure. Mesolithic, neolithic and bronze age artefacts.	D.D.A. Simpson	AR 5 (1968-69)11-14	Research excavation
RYTON-ON-DUNSMORE (WARKS) Webster-Hobley Site 97B	SP371725	1966	2 ring-ditches and 1 rectilinear enclosure examined; flints, bucket urn with associated C^{14} assessment "850-650 BC" (sic in WMANS 10 p.9). Also "iron age B" and RB pottery. Coin of Tetricius II recovered. Kilns suspected.	R. Thomson, V.S. White, J. Bateman and A.B.G. Howard	AR 4 (1967)12 WMANS 8 (1965)7 WMANS 9 (1966)5 WMANS 10 (1967)9 WMANS 11 (1968)7 WMANS 12 (1969)16-17 WMANS 13 (1970)28	Distinction between Sites 97 and 97B not drawn in Webster-Hobley survey. Also known as Bubbenhall. Site 97(SP374726) watched during gravel quarrying in 1975. Rescue excavations, in advance of quarrying, followed.
STRETTON-ON-THE FOSSE (WARKS)	SP218383	1968-72	RB and early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries	W.J. Ford	AR 5(1968-69)4-7 WMANS 11 (1968)12 WMANS 12 (1969)29-30 Wilson 1972,319-320 Wilson 1975,249 Wilson 1976,331 Frere 1977.398	Rescue excavation in advance of sand quarrying
	SP215383	1974-76	Mesolithic shelter and hearth; grind-stones or rubbers, with flint artefacts. Ditch, late neolithic flints in lower fill. RB settlement enclosures, with metal-working evidence	R.I. Baldon and P.J. Gardner	WMANS 17 (1974)44,51 WMANS 18 (1975)38,46	Further work necessitated by expansion of quarries
	SP221381		Iron age pits		WMANS 19 (1976)34-35,49 TBWAS	

NAME OF SITE	NGR	DATE (YEAR) OF EXCAVATION	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	DIRECTOR	PUBLICATION	COMMENT
THELSFORD (WARKS)	SP271583	1966	Priory (founded 1200-14) of Trinitarian order; church and other structures located, with moat or large ditch to south and west.	M. Gray	WMANS 9 (1966)3 AR 3 (1966)6-8	Rescue excavation in face of plough-damage threat.
		1972	Ditches (?drainage, or boundaries), and stone drains/sluices; most broadly contemporary with monastic occupation		WMANS 15 (1972)31	Further excavation in face of road-widening
WASPERTON (WARKS) Webster-Hobley Site 72		1965	Rectilinear enclosures; late RB floor levels found	?	AR 2 (1965)5 WMA 24 (1981) WMA 25 (1982)	Research excavation, remarkably little detail on extent or results available Extensive quarrying threat at time of compilation (1978-9). Further excavation from 1981 onwards.
WEEPING CROSS/ SHARPSTONES HILL (SALOP)	SJ508105, SJ508104, SJ496104	1965-69	Neolithic ditches and pit. Bronze age cremation cemetery and 3 ring ditches. 2 iron age and RB settlement enclosures with roundhouses. Medieval and post-medieval settlement.	P.A. Barker, W.E. Jenks and R.G. Livens	AR3 (1966)4-5 WMANS 8 (1965)14 WMANS 9 (1966)13 WMANS 10 (1967)21 WMANS 11 (1968)7,15 WMANS 12 (1969)17-18 WMANS 19 (1976)34 Wilson 1971,260 Baldon and Jenks, forthcoming	Rescue excavation In typescript 1979

Romans and River Gravels

by S. Esmonde-Cleary, University of Birmingham

The current work at Wasperton is the latest and largest of a number of projects which have concerned themselves with investgating man's past exploitation of the gravels of the Warwickshire Avon. It is comparable with projects undertaken over the past fifteen or so years on similar sites, particularly in the Thames basin. Taken together these sites have yielded a wealth of structural, artefactual and environmental evidence which must generate new appraisals of the rôle of the river gravels sites. This note is by way of being a ballon d'essai composed of thoughts prompted in the author by a preliminary survey of the new evidence insofar as it relates to the Romano-British period.

River gravels are by their very nature freely-draining. Unless there are clay deposits within the gravels or a brickearth capping,the soils that form over them tend to be light, have a relatively low clay content (though those over a calcareous rather than a silicaceous gravel may have a higher clay content) and likewise drain very easily. Because of this archaeologists have long tended to view the gravels as areas likely to be preferred by peoples with only a primitive agricultural technology, particularly the ard. However, it is just this free-draining quality of the gravels and their soils which leads to another reason for them to be preferred, this time by the archaeologists. The poor water-retention leads to considerable soil moisture deficit which causes the formation of large areas of crop-marks amenable to aerial photography. This has led to the appearance of a notable series of regional surveys of gravel sites (e.g. Benson and Miles 1974; Gates 1975; Webster and Hobley 1964) but it may well have influenced archaeologists, both in their strategies for choosing sites to excavate - they know there is something there to dig - and in their evaluation of the results - it is easier to compare a site with other known sites of a similar type and location. This has undoubtedly helped cause the prominence of gravel sites in the discussion of rural settlement in many archaeological periods. But for the Romano-British period there are features of gravel sites which must give us pause. One may take these problems under the three evidential headings referred to earlier: structural, artefactual and environmental.

If one examines the surveys cited above for the settlement types represented at gravel sites, then it soon becomes clear that the most celebrated class of Romano-British rural site, the villa, is almost entirely absent. Such few as there are are small and unimpressive and, often as not,late in date. This avoidance of the gravels can occur at two levels. One is the local, such as the situation on the lower Nene and its tributary the Billing Brook. In

these valleys the villas lie on clay ar cornbrash rather than on the gravel terraces nearby,(pers. comm. D.F.Mackreth). The other is the regional level whereby villas cluster thickly and richly along the Jurassic ridge from Ilchester through Bath, Cirencester and North Oxfordshire, but not in the Thames or Avon valleys. The reasons for the precise sitings of villas are little understood and this is not the place to pursue them. For the moment, I wish to point out the general difference between the gravels and the surrounding uplands; that is, the sites which above all others demonstrate rural wealth do not favour the river gravels. The typical site of the river gravels is the small farmstead, of un-romanised plan, generally built of timber, and prone to shift its site through time. With it are associated areas of rectilinear fields and frequent droveways. Such settlements clearly did not command the sort of wealth that is expressed by a villa.

The artefactual evidence is congruent with such an argument. Coins from such sites tend to be few in number, both absolutely and relative to other classes of site. The paucity of coins from the large areas cleared at Beckford or at Wasperton compared with those from villas such as at Barnsley or at Frocester is striking. Other classes of metalwork too, such as brooches, are few and far between, and the pottery is notable for the low proportion of samian or fine wares, and the high proportion of grey wares and 'hand-made' coarse wares. The gradient in types of find between the small town at Alcester, the nucleated rural settlement at Tiddington, and the farmstead at Wasperton is evident on preliminary comparison (pers. comm. P.Booth) and will well repay detailed study. In sum the structural and artefactual evidence combine to suggest that in the Romano-British period gravels sites were materially poor, and higher-status sites were on non-gravel areas.

A major feature of recent excavations on gravel sites has been the immense amount of effort put into environmental work (c.f. Lambrick and Robinson 1979) and the huge consequent increase in our understanding of these sites. Here I can only comment on some of this information. First there is the actual location of the gravels. Proximity to a river is of course useful from the point of view of access to a ready water supply, but this can be overdone. Even with modern management rivers frequently flood. Evidence for flooding from the Romano-British period is not yet available but it is a possibility which must be kept in mind. Inundation would of course directly affect the floodplain, whence perhaps the place-name Wasperton (Buteux 1982:26). The lower terrace gravels would suffer indirectly from the rise in the water-table, making them soggy. The higher ones would not be so troubled. In the summer the water-table would drop, and the drainage of the gravels which is such a boon to the air photographer would be a liability to the farmer. Even with modern agricultural techniques gravels soils can require extensive use of fertilisers and frequent rain or irrigation. With the deforestation of the soils of the limestone and clay uplands through the Iron-Age (c.f. Turner 1981) and the increasing ability to work them, the advantages, such as they were, of the gravels to prehistoric agriculturalists must have declined sharply. Moreover, during consideration of

environmental material from Thames valley sites (Lambrick and Robinson 1979; Robinson 1981) it emerged that there was evidence that sites were only being used seasonally rather than permanently, presumably conditioned by the height of the river and the water-table. Taken together these factors suggest that by the Romano-British period the gravels were areas of more marginal land; whatever may have been the case in earlier prehistory.

If then the structural, artefactual and environmental evidence conspire to demote the gravels by this period from a position of dominance to one of relative marginality, we shall have to consider the gravels alongside other areas which have come into the picture. How may we attempt to construct a suitable context or model for the comprehension of the rôle of gravel sites? The argument suggesting seasonality must give us a way in. If a site or area is only being occupied seasonally then we must perforce consider along with it the sites or areas which complement its occupation.

In the west midlands, particularly the upper and middle Avon valley, we are fortunate in possessing the evidence analysed by Ford (1976) for transhumant relationships between the Feldon and the Arden during the early medieval period. Indeed he suggests that this system may have been established in an even earlier period. Without necessarily wishing to endorse a Romano-British origin for or employment of the particular routes and relationships he examines, this evidence provides a most useful demonstration of the sort of short-range transhumance and economic and social relationship between upland and river valley that could well have existed in Roman Britain. It may be that the villas derived some of their prosperity from the gravels sites.

Yet it is clear that animal husbandry was not the sole component of the gravels economy. The finds of carbonised grain, of cereal and associated weed pollen, and structural evidence such as 'corn-driers' show that crops too are to be expected on such sites. Thus it will be no simple matter to establish economic links between different sites. This must, nevertheless, be an important objective of future work. In the environmental field we now need the excavation of deposits on non-gravel-sites suitable for the recovery of evidence comparable with that now available from gravel-sites. Plants of course are not susceptible to a transhumant regime, and only if there were marked differences in the crops grown at the different types of site could we perhaps examine reasons for such differences. However it appears to be the case that similar suites of botanical evidence can be expected from different types of site, if conditions of preservation are similar. Faunal evidence is likely to be more help in testing such models. If the same types of animal are kept at the different types of site, and are managed in the same way, then one can neither prove nor disprove anything. If however one could establish complementarity of management rather than parallelism this might be fruitful. If, for instance, animals were slaughtered at different ages on the uplands to on the gravels it might suggest some sort of connection.

Study of artefacts may also help establish links. Peacock (1982)

has discussed the rôle of household and estate production in the manufacture and use of roman brick and tile. Were we to have the sort of good fortune usually denied the archaeologist we might be able to isolate certain fabrics or types on a discrete set of locationally differing sites. This might be evidence of the type we seek.

So far this discussion has been concerned with the sort of economic relationships which are most suitable for the use of archaeological evidence. But such relationships must have involved and been embedded in a nexus of social and legal relationships to which archaeological evidence can offer only the most approximate of guides. But in trying to establish economic relationships we shall certainly help point towards the system of other relationships that articulated Romano-British society.

In a note of this length I have, of course, only been able to skate lightly over many topics (much the best thing to do with thin ice, some may think). I hope, though, that I have shown that we are now able to undertake a much more penetrating, realistic and rewarding analysis of the role of gravels exploitation in the Romano-British period. I hope that by diminishing the apparent significance of gravels sites and bringing forward such ideas as transhumance that I have demonstrated the need to examine these sites as part of a much wider pattern, rather than as a species peculiar to themselves. If we seek a key to the functions of the gravels sites in the Romano-British period, the time may well have come to stop looking at such sites and to transfer our attention to non-gravel-sites.

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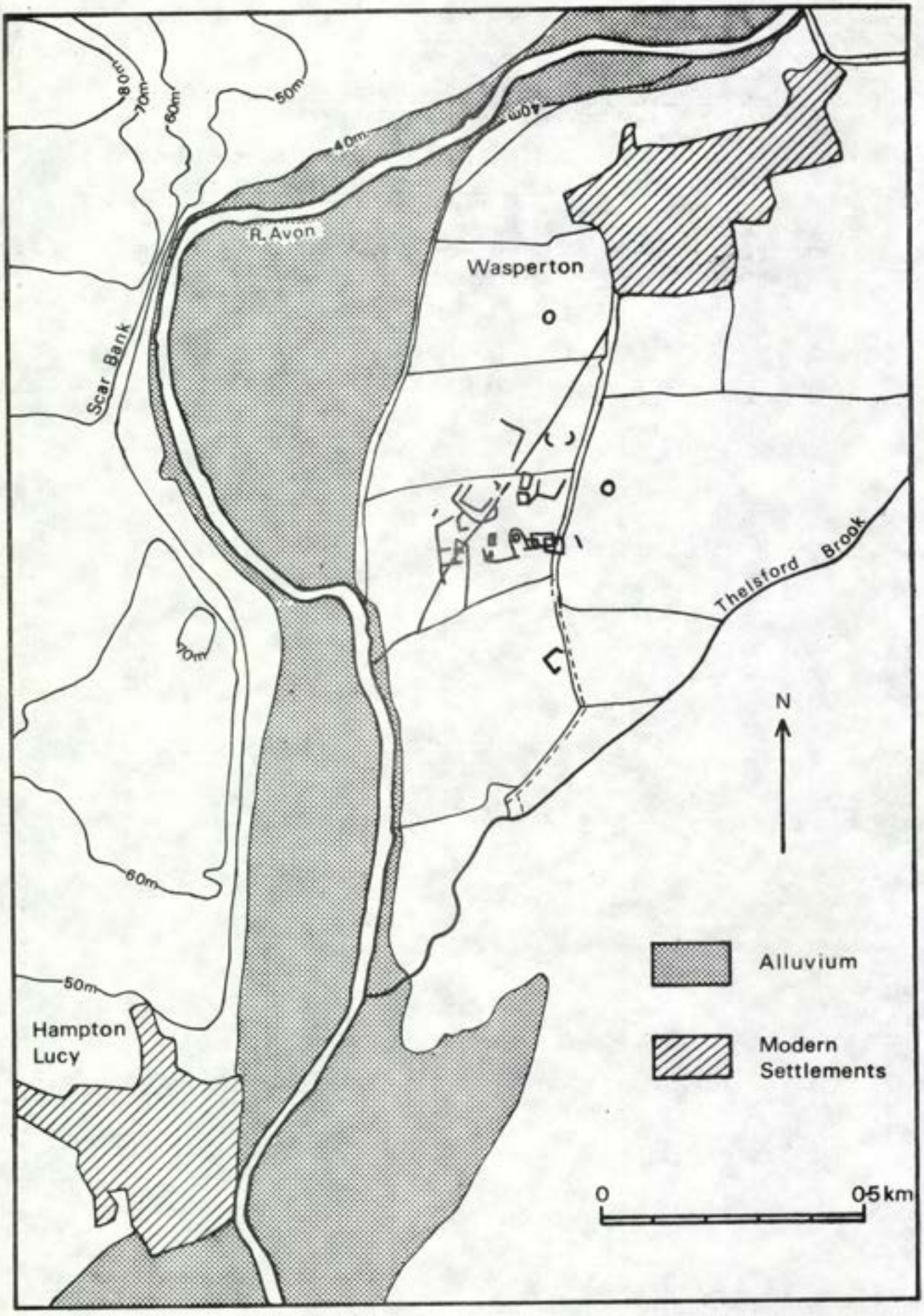

Fig.4 Wasperton: the crop-mark and surrounding landscape (Bowker)

Excavations at Wasperton: 2nd interim report

G. Crawford

Introduction:

The current excavations on the cropmark complex at Wasperton (figs. 4,5) have been in progress for two years. Since the last interim report (Crawford 1981), the gravel extraction has continued to the extent that almost all of the original site (Site 70 in Webster and Hobley's survey, 1964) has been quarried away. The extraction face has now moved to the field adjacent to the north, where the excavation effort is currently focussed.

The research design as previously outlined (Crawford 1981) has not been wholly realised. Pressure from the quarry operators, combined with bad weather conditions has resulted in certain areas being cleaned and planned only: a change in the subsoil from gravel to silty sand presented a serious drainage problem in the winter and spring of 1982, and consequently part of the site could not be investigated. Lastly, although good relations have been maintained with Mixconcrete Aggregates Limited, access roads to the quarry face have destroyed archaeological evidence without record. Despite these limitations a large proportion of the field has been investigated and sampled. The basic elements of the site are: a prehistoric settlement of at least two phases; the main spread of Romano-British activity; a late (possibly sub-) Roman and pagan Saxon cemetery (of which about half has so far been excavated).

Prehistoric

The evidence for prehistoric settlement consisted of a series of rectilinear and subsquare enclosures, plus elements of a 'field system'. The principal enclosure was, in its original form, a subsquare, with sides about 50m long, with an entrance in the S.E. side (fig.6). It was oriented with the corners approximately at the cardinal points of the compass and was integrated into the 'field system'. The enclosure ditch, F700, was of a steep V-shaped profile, measuring about 2.5m in width by 2.5m in depth, occasionally with a cleaning slot; no sign of a bank was detected. The entrance was 7m wide and appeared to have been narrowed by a small slot in either ditch terminal: this may have held some provision for gating the gap. If an internal bank comprising the upcast from the ditch is postulated, a formidable barrier would have been created. It is therefore interpreted as a defensive structure. The presence of a cleaning slot implies that the ditch was maintained, at least for a time. However, it fell into disuse and seems to have rapidly silted up. The enclosure ditch was then replaced, and a slightly larger area encompassed, but retaining the S.E. entrance. The new boundary appears to have consisted partly of a shallow, flatbottomed

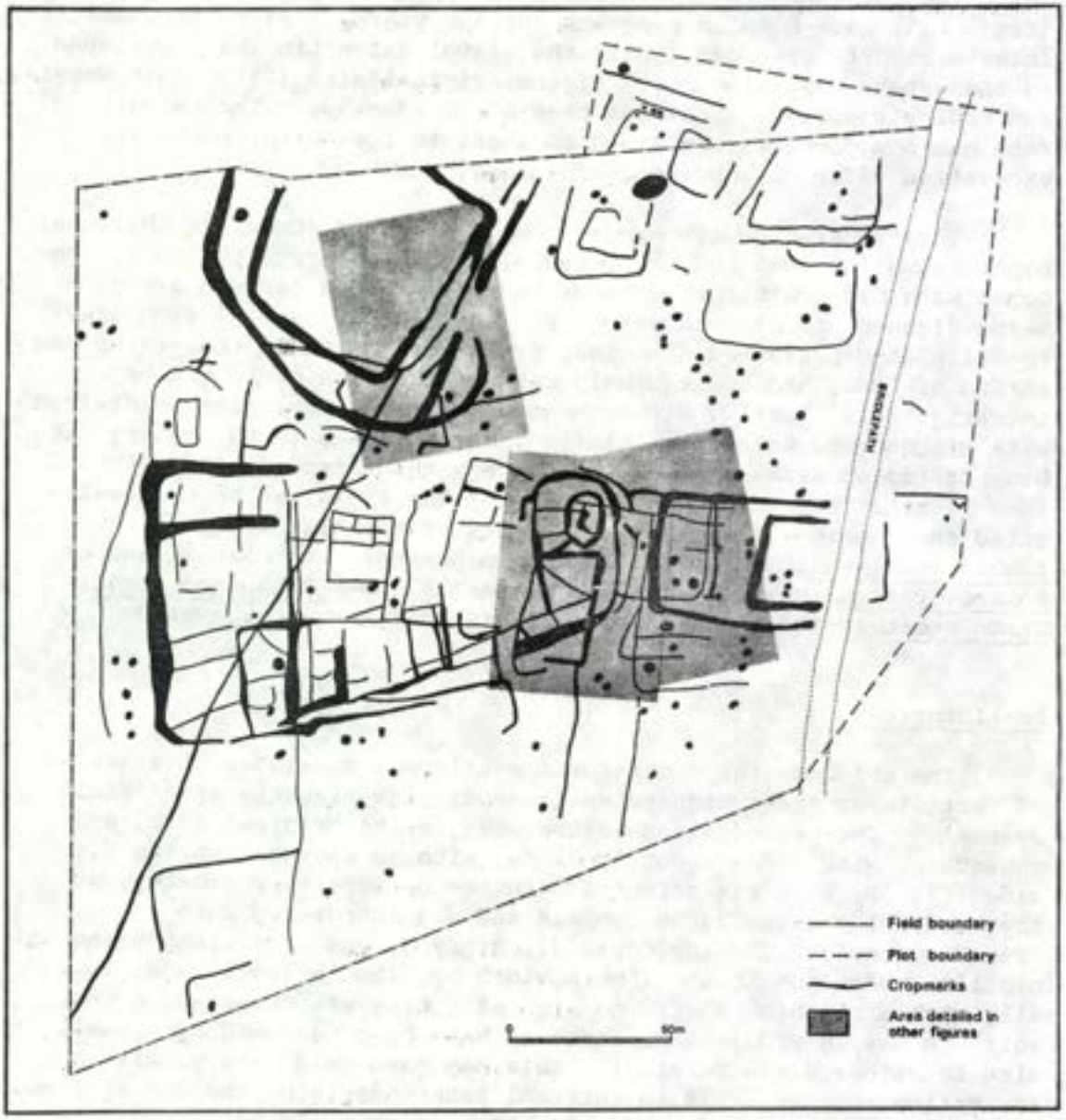

Fig.5 Wasperton: the crop-mark (NMR plot) showing areas detailed in other figures (Crawford/Bass)

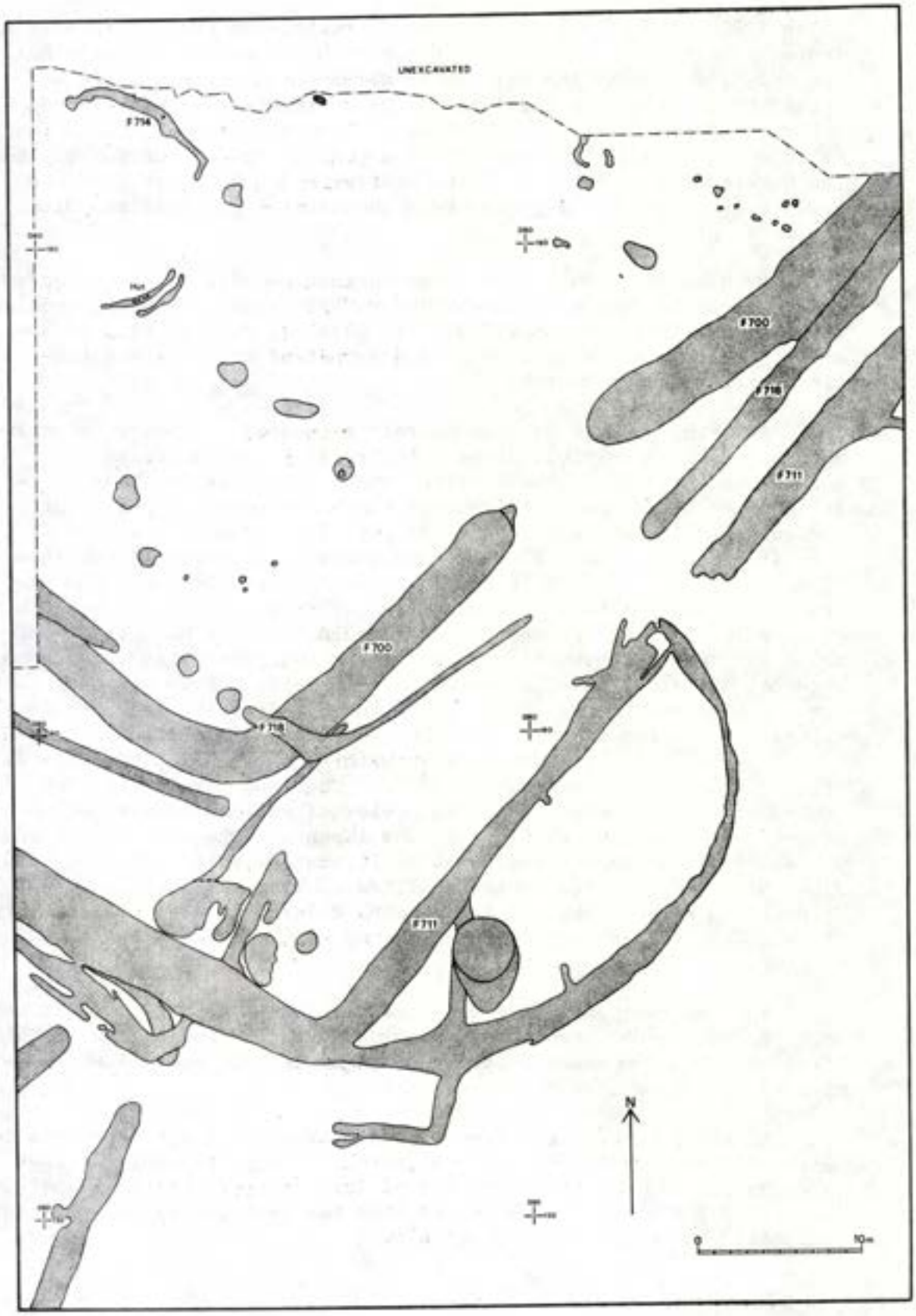

Fig. 6 Wasperton: prehistoric enclosure and hut-circles (Crawford/Bass)

ditch (F720) and partly of circular postpits, and presumably held a fence or palisade. Outside, a ditch with a U-shaped profile, F711, was added, following the same basic alignment. From the south corner to the southern terminal of the entrance, F711 was flanked by a curving ditch forming an outwork. This enclosed a circular feature (abraded to an oval) interpreted as a pond or spring, presumably for the watering of stock. Thus the massive ditch (and bank) of the earlier enclosure was replaced by a substantial palisade and ditch in the later phases.

Much of the interior of these enclosures was not investigated due to severely impeded drainage and damage caused by quarry machinery. The internal features comprised: two parallel partial ring grooves, a slot with an inturning terminal, a number of circular and sub-circular pits and a hearth.

The ring grooves were completely excavated. They were narrow and shallow with vertical sides: the inner retained traces of stakes sunk into the natural silty sand: the outer had been back-filled with earth and small stones, which included two pieces of saddle quern and sherds of handmade pottery. The slot was of similar dimensions to the outer ring groove, and may be a continuation of it: its backfill included a complete saddle quern and handmade pottery similar to that found in the ring grooves. The combination of ring grooves and slot would create a hut circle of about 13m internal diameter. Apart from the inner ring groove, no internal divisions were recovered. No parallels have yet been found for the pottery, but it would appear to date from the late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age on form and appearance and association with saddle querns. The pottery is comparable with that found in the lower fill of the earlier enclosure ditch, F700. The 'hut circle' is thus deemed to be contemporary with the original enclosure, although a direct stratigraphic relationship was absent. The pits were circular or subcircular; many appeared to be truncated, surviving only to a depth of 0.1-0.2m: few contained finds. They were not closely dateable to either phase. The hearth, consisting of a shallow patch of charcoal, was not associated with any other features and contained no finds.

The original enclosure was directly linked to the long ditches of a 'field system' encountered previously in the excavation. This 'field system' comprised a series of major land boundaries which divided up the preshistoric landscape.

To the east of the defensive enclosures was a series of discrete enclosures on roughly the same alignment. Their boundary ditches were shallow and may have held fences (cf. Crawford 1981). Small quantities of slag were recovered from the interior of one enclosure, but their function remains uncertain.

Romano-British:

The main part of the cropmark proved to be almost entirely Romano-British in date. Both settlement areas and fields were

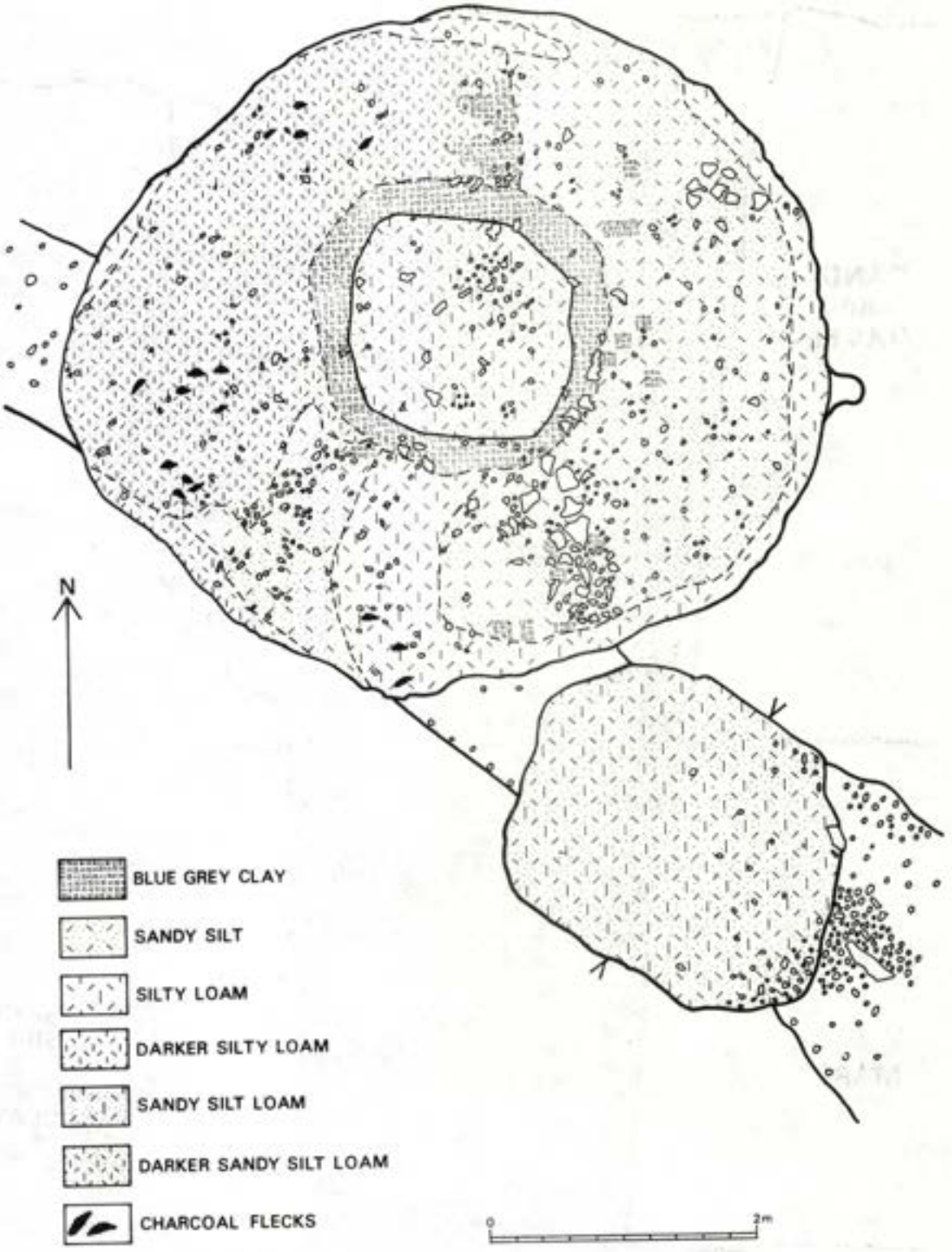

Fig.7 Wasperton: plan of the two Romano-British wells, F741 (above) and F739 (below).

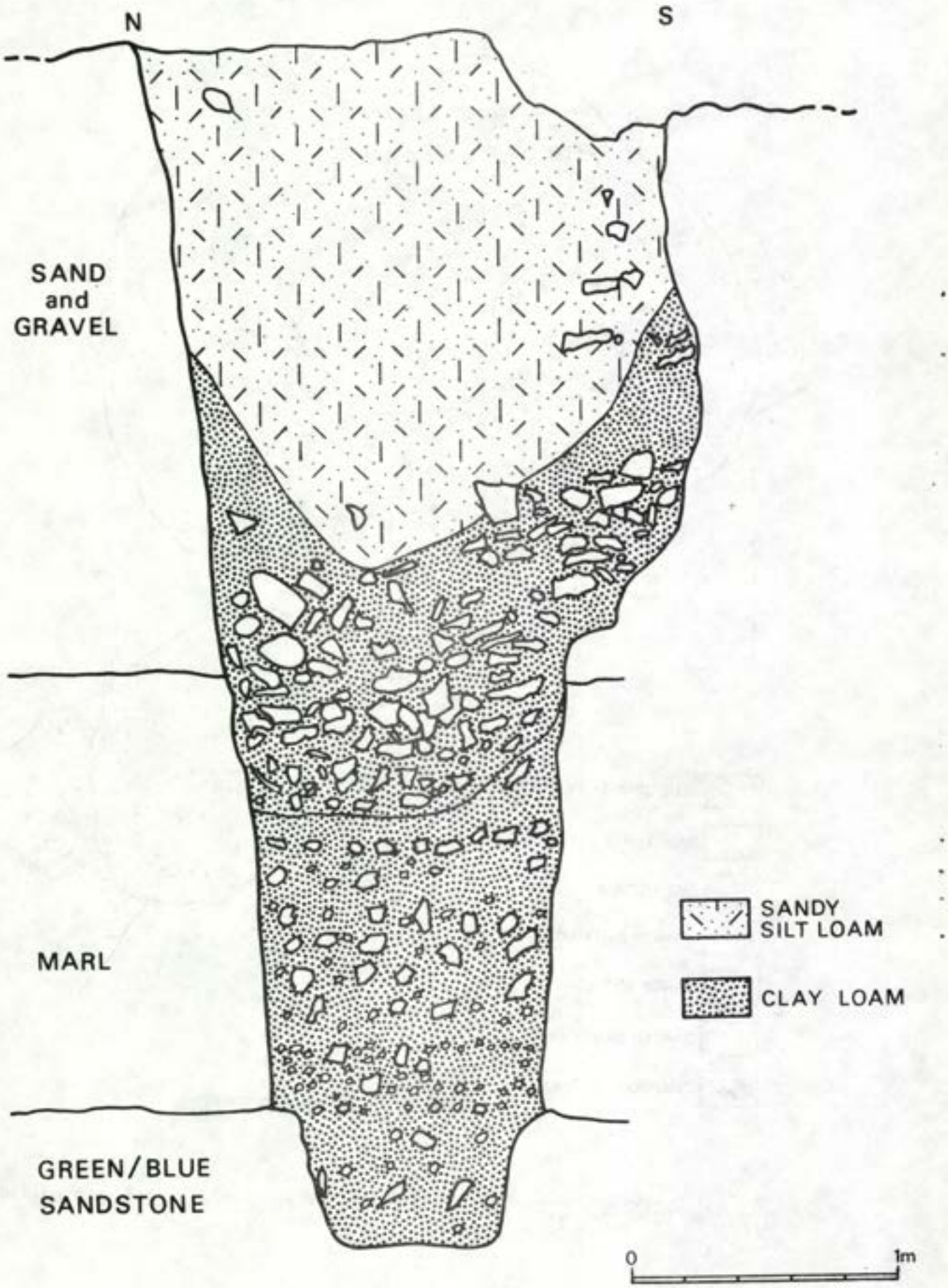

Fig.8 Wasperton: Section through well, P739 (Crawford/Bass)

present, and indicated, initially, a community engaged in subsistence agriculture at the lower end of the economic order. This conclusion was based on the lack of imported luxuries, coins and traces of substantial buildings. However, such assessment can be challenged, by the discovery firstly of a stonelined well, and secondly of two substantial stonebuilt corndrying ovens. Although these are the only stone structures to be recorded on the site, they indicate a level of sophistication and knowledge of building in stone unusual in a 'peasant' settlement. Elsewhere on the site, evidence for buildings has been confined to slots and clay filled 'post pads', indicative of timber structures.

Two wells have been discovered in close association - they appear to have been successive. The less sophisticated in construction (the earlier), F739, was subsquare, in surface plan (fig. 7) and consisted of a simple shaft 4.5m deep, with evidence for a timber lining. The collapse of one side (fig. 8) led to abandonment and backfilling with earth and limestone rubble - possibly stone chippings from the lining of its successor, F741. The backfill and primary silts have been sampled for environmental analysis (Bowker this volume), F741 appeared in plan as a large circular feature with an inner ring of clay (fig. 7). Whereas F739 comprised a simple shaft, F741 was more sophisticated in design: it featured a circular wellpit with an internal well-lining of 32 courses of limestone blocks. The stones had all been individually shaped and keyed into a backing of blue clay (which appeared in plan): no mortar was used in the construction. The whole of the primary context has been kept for environmental analyses, as well as a large proportion of the backfill below the watertable. Finds from the primary context include a finger ring, a bead, a coin and a quantity of shaped wood and planking possibly representing a collapsed superstructure at the wellhead. The backfill comprised large boulders and shaped stones - the remains of a building around the wellhead? - in a fine loam matrix. A large quantity of animal bone, representing a wide range of species, was also recovered from the backfill (Bowker, this volume).

The area around the wells was not investigated due to ground conditions and it is possible that a substantial stone and timber building could have been missed.

Two corndrying ovens, situated within a series of oval and subrectangular enclosures occurred towards the eastern end of the site: in association were two 'dumps' of charred material. The whole area appears to have been set aside for crop processing (fig. 9). The innermost enclosure within which both corndriers were sited, was subrectangular, with sides 18m and 12m in length. The ditch was steepsided and flatbottomed and probably held timber walls: there was no entrance across it. The outer enclosure ditches were shallower and probably held more flimsy fences or hurdles. They were probably successive, each having only a short lifespan before needing to be replaced. A timber building, represented by a rectangle of beamslots, outside these enclosures may have been associated, possibly as a granary.

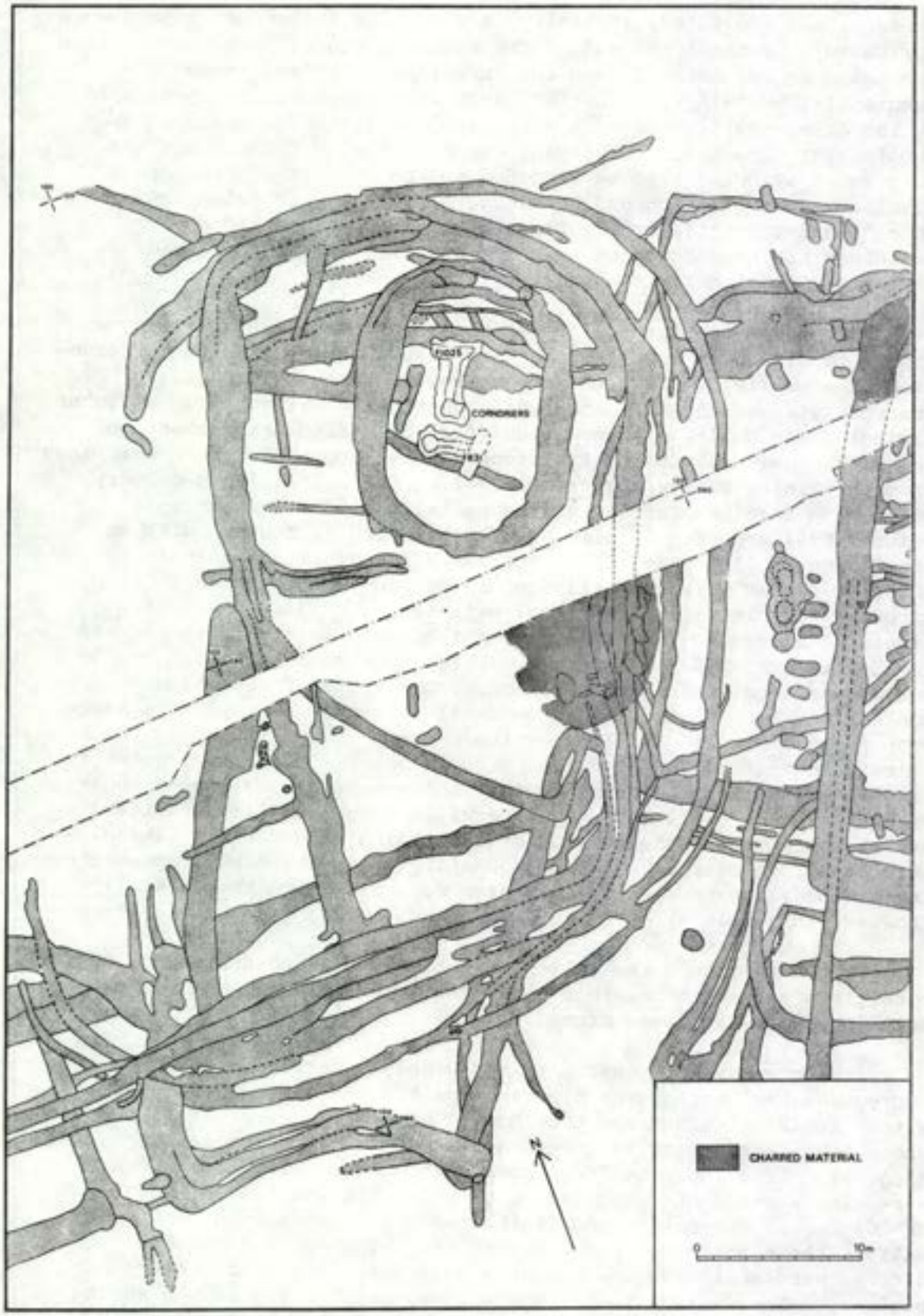

Fig.9 Wasperton: Romano-British corn-drying ovens and associated enclosures (Crawford/Bass)

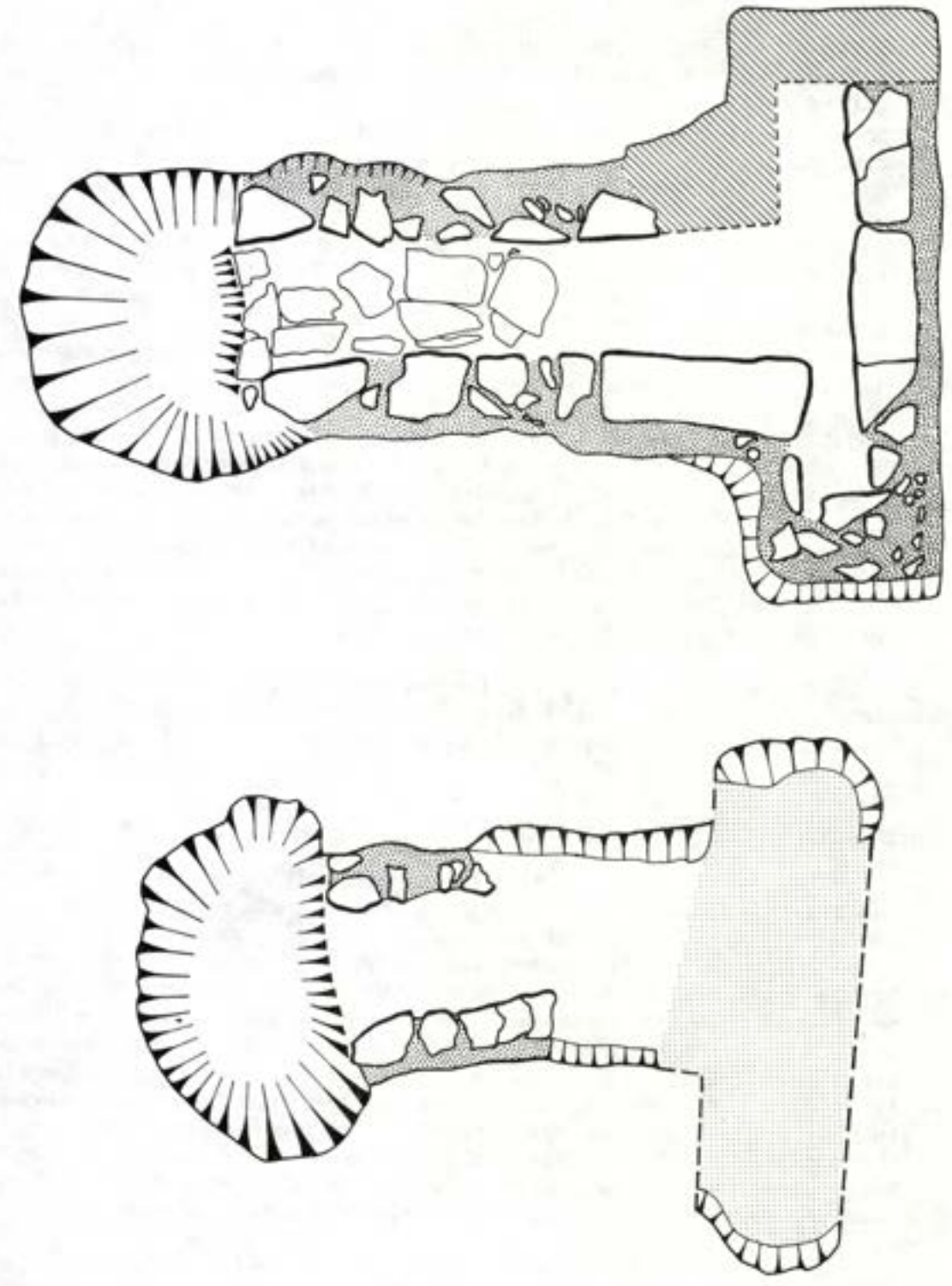

Fig.10 Wasperton: Detail of corn-drying ovens, F1025 (above) and F831 (below) (Crawford/Bass)

The first 'dump' of charred grain overlay part of the ditches of two of the enclosures and an area inside, possibly as an attempt to 'level up' the ground. The second 'dump' comprised the upper fill of a stretch of an adjacent enclosure ditch. The 'dumps' appear to have been the result of accidental overfiring in the corndrying ovens. Detailed analyses of the deposits is in progress (Bowker, this volume).

Both ovens were T-shaped and had been constructed of stone (fig. 10). F1025 was built of sandstone slabs set in clay (which had hardened in the course of firing), with a partly flagged floor in the main flue. The western arm of the crossflue had been robbed out. The flues contained a mixture of collapsed superstructure and charred grain overlying deposits of pure charred material. The walls of the main flue still stood to a height of three courses (about 0.2m). The stokehole contained large amounts of ash and charred material as well as a twisted iron rod - perhaps part of a poker or shovel handle. Corndrier F831 was less elaborately constructed, the main flue being faced with roughly-shaped limestone blocks. Unfortunately, most of the crossflue was removed without adequate record. The floor of the main flue and the stokehole both yielded quantities of charred material. The two ovens were probably close in date if not contemporary.

Elsewhere on this site the Romano-British features comprised series of overlapping enclosures, with both 'slot' and 'ditch' type boundaries. These indicate both settlement and agricultural functions.

Late Roman and Early Medieval:

Immediately east of the grain-processing area was an inhumation and cremation cemetery superimposed on a sequence of overlapping enclosures (fig. 11). The cemetery was mainly confined within a large enclosure ditch. Exceptions were: a group of three inhumations to the south; a row of six inhumations to the west which appeared to be aligned with the enclosure ditch; and on the north where graves spilled over the boundary. The cemetery appears to have extended at least as far east as the modern bridlepath. Excavation, in early 1981, of a narrow strip parallel to the bridlepath revealed three inhumations and the eastern area of the cemetery enclosure. Two of these graves definitely lay within the enclosure: the third had been badly disturbed, but appeared to lie outside (Crawford 1981). The area between this strip and the excavated cemetery remains to be dug.

Bone preservation at Wasperton is very bad: few graves have yielded skeletons and few of these can be used for ageing and sexing. Burials have therefore been assigned a date and sex on the basis of grave goods - this is still at a preliminary stage.

The cemetery was in use during the late Roman and pagan Saxon periods. A late Roman date has been assigned to graves fulfilling one or more of the following criteria: burial with Roman metalwork, hobnailed footwear, or mutilation of the corpse. The latter, which included decapitation and repositioning of some of the limbs,

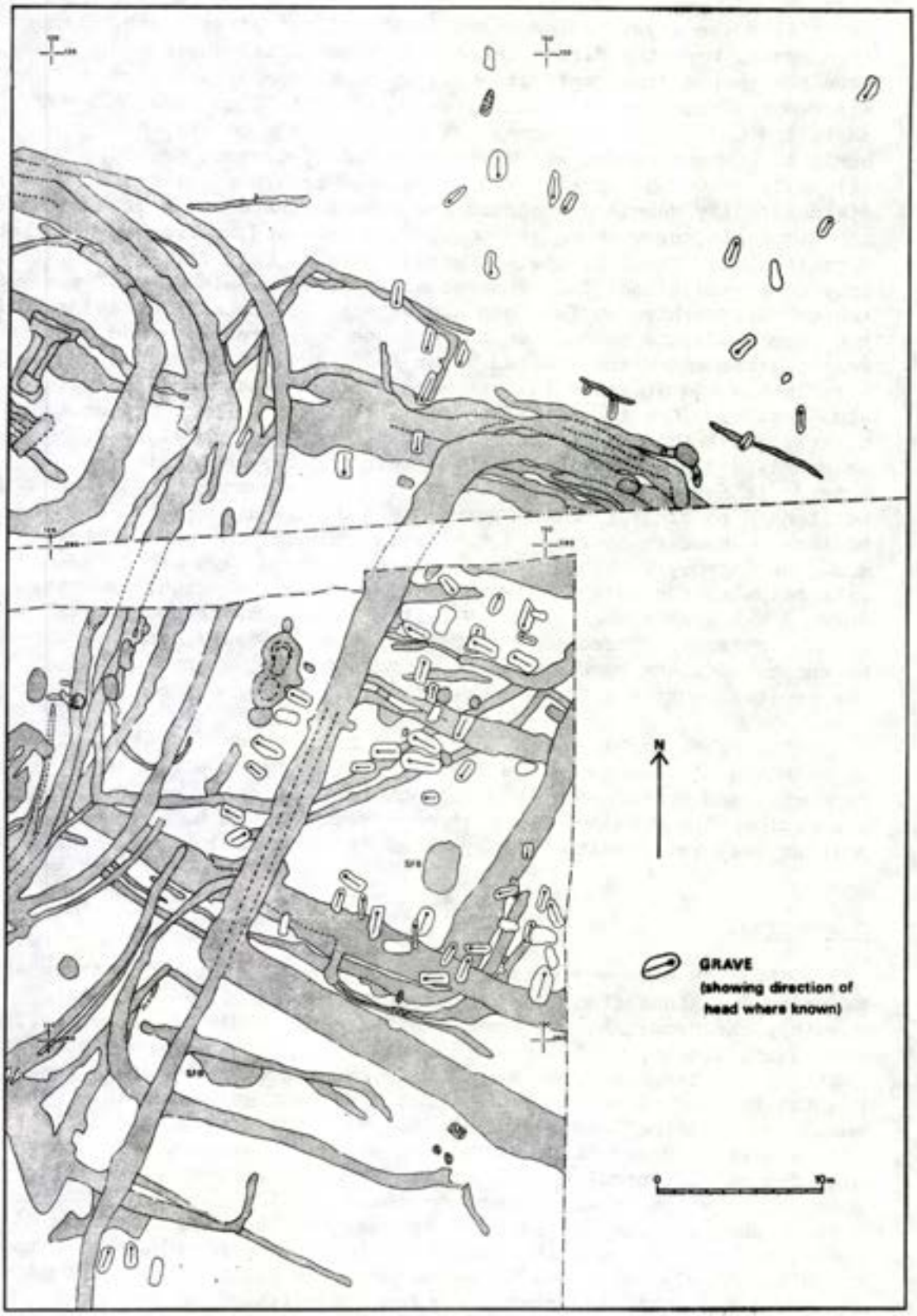

Fig.11 Wasperton: Late Roman and Early Medieval inhumation and cremation cemeteries (Crawford/Bass)

especially the legs, was presumably carried out after death, rather than having been the direct cause. In some cases where whole bones have been moved, the implication is that the corpse had already been allowed to decompose, indicating a considerable time lapse between death and burial. No attempt has yet been made to sex the Roman burials. Saxon graves are differentiated by gravegoods: diagnostically male gravegoods are shield bosses and spearheads (and ferrules); diagnostically female gravegoods are brooches, beads and girdlehangers. Non-diagnostic gravegoods are pottery, knives and an ironbound bucket decorated with sheet bronze. Further work on belt fittings may provide an additional indicator of sex. Seventy-six inhumations and ten cremations have so far been excavated: 39 inhumations and all of the cremations are Saxon, ten inhumations are late Roman and the rest were unaccompanied and undated. At least 16 of the Saxon graves were female and at least 15 were male: one of the cremations was also female. Due to the bad preservation of bone, the proportion of graves attributable to children is not known. The late Roman graves all occurred in the southern third of the enclosure, and outside it to the south: the Saxon burials were more evenly spread, but tended to cluster north of the Roman distribution: the distributions do however overlap. The orientation of the graves shows some consistency: the late Roman graves tend to have been placed with heads to the north; Saxons with heads to the south, or west. Where a W-E grave overlapped a N-S, the former was always later. In the 'overspill' area to the north of the enclosure, the principal orientation of the head was south. More intensive analyses of the cemetery must await the completion of the excavation.

Two other probable Saxon features occurred on the site; these were sunken floored buildings (SFB). One occurred within the cemetery, and contained only one posthole; the other occurred outside the enclosure and was of two post construction: it had been cut by a later feature. Neither SFB yielded diagnostically Saxon artifacts.

Discussion:

There is now good reason to suggest that the gravel terrace at Wasperton was inhabited continuously from the later prehistoric - possibly the Bronze Age - through to the early Medieval period. The population density would appear to have been quite high over most of that time. The resources required to construct and maintain the prehistoric defensive enclosures must have been considerable. These enclosures and the land boundaries to which they are linked indicate a 'parcelling up' of the landscape on a large scale and point to a high degree of central control. The defended enclosure, and the boundary to which it was directly related, delimited an area of gravel terrace and floodplain formed by a meander in the river. These boundaries may have been for stock control or may have been territorial. The site clearly continued in importance into the pre-Roman Iron Age and, judging by the amount of early Roman material from the upper fills of prehistoric features, was inhabited into the Roman period. The focus of settlement then appears to have shifted south and east, breaking up the earlier land divisions, probably in response to a more intensive cultivation regime. The settlement appears to have

become more extended with settlement areas being interspersed with fields. However certain activities were centralised - for example corndrying and the provision of wells - although other activities were not, for example the grinding of corn into flour, based on the distribution of quern stone fragments. Although luxury items are rare and traces of substantial buildings generally absent, the standard of living enjoyed by the inhabitants may have been quite high. The techniques employed in constructing the two corn-drying ovens and the stonelined well, and also the building debris which formed a large proportion of its backfill, suggest that the inhabitants were able to call upon skilled workers in stone. The discovery in early 1981 of a worked sandstone slab bearing the legend FELICITER corroborates this. Any community which had access to such workers must have been of some standing. The interspersion of dwellings and fields and the probable shifting nature of both may have conspired to reduce the outward signs of affluence. Substantial native dwellings may have left little trace. The relative absence of coins is easily explained in a rural community without much resource to commerce. The size of the RB population is not known. Only three burials have occurred as distinct from the cemetery. It is not known how long the cemetery was in use for before the arrival of the Saxons. It must however still have been in use then, or knowledge of it have survived as a folk memory. The enclosure within which most of the graves occurred was definitely RB in date, although its original function is unknown Part of the ditch had been filled in (with charred grain from the corndriers) but there may have been an extant fence or hedge to delimit the area. The deposition of Saxons within the same area as the RB dead is indicative of peaceful continuity of settlement. It is probable that the overspill of graves to the north of the enclosure is a later occurrence.

As yet there is no evidence for Saxon settlement. The presence of SFBs within cemeteries is not unusual, and the settlement proper may have been at some remove from the burial area.

Work is continuing at Wasperton, and the total landscape sample is expected to achieve 10 ha. in extent.

Acknowledgements

Many people have contributed to the successful running of the Wasperton Archaeological Project: these include Martin Carver of BUFAU and Helen Maclagan of Warwickshire Museum. The excavation team is financed by MSC under its Community Enterprise Programme. The project also receives a grant from DoE. Additional help has been provided by students and staff of Birmingham University. Administrative help has been provided by Warwickshire Museum and BUFAU.

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Environmental Research at Wasperton: procedure and assessment

By C. Bowker

Geology, Topography and Soils

The site is situated on the east bank of the River Avon where it lies on an almost level surface of the second terrace between 40-45m O.D. The area covered by the site forms a land unit (fig. 4) bounded by the Thelsford Brook to the south east and the alluvium of the present day flood-plain to the west. From the west bank Mercian Mudstone forms the sharply rising Scar Bank and there is little evidence of terrace deposits. A variety of soils is found on the second gravel terrace. These are principally coarse, loamy, slightly acidic, freely-drained brown earths. Gleyed brown earths develop where drainage is impeded and in areas affected by seasonal fluctuation in the water-table.

Preliminary Environmental Study

During 1979 when the cropmark complex at Wasperton was first threatened by gravel extraction, the Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit was invited to investigate the archaeological and environmental potential of the site and suggest a research design. Preliminary soil analyses and sampling revealed that a whole range of environmental data was attainable from the site (Palmer 1979). These included the possibility of buried soils in undisturbed areas and evidence of early land usage from distributions of phosphate. Soil pH was found to be near neutral, although values will vary across the site. These would differentially affect the preservation of both animal bone and molluscan remains which require a more alkaline environment for survival. Palynological investigations were also made, but pH values were often too high and seriously limited pollen preservation. Additionally, the stony nature of the sediments and soil faunal activity would reduce the possibility of obtaining uncontaminated column samples. However, charred cereal and other plant remains, which do not require special soil conditions for preservation, were retrieved from the samples. It was also suggested that waterlogged contexts such as wells would provide further floral and faunal remains.

Partly as a result of these investigations, a strong environmental component was incorporated into the research design when large scale excavations started in late 1980, with the intention of assessing the changing environment of a complete land unit.

Current Work

Extensive excavations at Wasperton are providing evidence for three main phases of occupation within the landscape unit; a

Prehistoric settlement, a Romano-British settlement and a late Roman/Anglo-Saxon cemetery. A major feature of these excavations, since January 1981, has been the intensive sampling programme designed to investigate environmental and economic continuity and change during the various phases of the site. All excavated contexts are sampled for this purpose.

As soil conditions are unsuitable for the preservation of pollen, environmental research has concentrated mainly on the recovery of charred cereal and other plant remains from across the site, to investigate crop husbandry.

Despite fluctuations in the level of the water-table caused by quarrying, some permanently anaerobic contexts have been found. Principal among these are two, c. 4th century wells. Their waterlogged contexts are providing supplementary environmental information from micro- and macroscopic domestic debris, consisting of a wealth of animal bones. This is a particularly important context in terms of examining animal husbandry, as animal bones are less well preserved, if at all, due to soil acidity, in the aerobic contexts normal to the site.

Sampling

- Charred Cereal and other Plant remains

  A sampling programme has been devised to obtain as much quantitative and qualitative information as possible relating to the environment and economy of the settlements. Thus, all excavated features and contexts are sampled to see if seed deposits are peculiar to particular areas/phases of the site. The size of sample examined, c. 7kg, is thought to be large enough to give an idea of relative frequencies in a deposit and the range of taxa present. For obviously rich deposits and specific features associated with crop processing and use, for example corn drying and bread ovens, bulk samples are taken and in some instances whole contexts removed. This is necessary to provide representative samples and numbers large enough for statistical analyses. The data provided by all contexts not sufficiently rich to provide adequate quantitative material is still of very great importance; in some cases the data can be aggregated with contemporary deposits in the same areas. They also provide the background without which the rich samples cannot be viewed in context.

- Waterlogged Faunal and Floral Remains

  To date, the two wells, F739 and F741 (Crawford, this volume), are the most important waterlogged features to have been excavated containing permanently saturated contexts. As F471 contained an important quantity of faunal remains, 90% of the fill was sampled, comprising 52 bulk samples each c.15-20 kg. As there appeared to be no faunal

remains in F739, except the possibility of insects, only fifteen samples of similar weight were extracted, mainly for the analyses of macroscopic plant remains. 32 sub-samples c. 30g were obtained from both features for palynological analysis.

Recovery Methods

Charred Remains

On-site sieving techniques

1. All samples are weighed in their natural state.
2. A two-tier sieve stack is employed, consisting of a 1cm aperture mesh over a 1mm.
3. A sample is washed through the 1cm sieve using a hose to wash pebbles clean of finer particles before being discarded.
4. The 1mm sieve containing the residue is gently swirled in a container of water to remove most of the sand and also the silt and clay fractions.
5. The clean residue is placed in a tray to dry.

Laboratory Methods

1. When dry a sample is mixed with water.
2. The water and the organic remains which float are slowly decanted through a 710µm (0.71mm) mesh.
3. This process is repeated until the residue is entirely free of organic material.
4. The 'flotant' is slowly dried and stored for sorting and identification.

Where large quantities of sediment of variable texture are processed, the above techniques proved to be the most practical for the recovery of charred material for a variety of reasons. Firstly, on-site sieving is necessary to reduce the quantity of material processed; pebbles which may damage charred remains are removed, and cleaning a sample in water frees it of finer particles, especially aggregating clays. This enables efficient drying which induces charred material to float as its specific gravity is lowered. Being relatively clean, the point at which a sample is free of charred remains is readily detectable.

A possible problem with this method is the potential danger of losing very small plant remains through the 1mm aperture mesh. However, since a force of water is not

directed onto this sieve, the possibility of loss is reduced to a minimum. As an independent test on how much material is lost and which species are affected, experimental work in the laboratory is currently being undertaken. A variety of aperture sizes is being employed and the remains collected on each thoroughly analysed. The aim is to determine an optimum sieve size, which allows for efficient sieving (too small an aperture will cause clogging) combined with minimal loss. This should determine an efficient level of extraction which will be consistent and will allow quantitative analyses and comparisons between samples to be undertaken.

Waterlogged Remains

On-site sieving techniques

1. to 4. as above.

5. All bone retained in the 1cm sieve is washed and dried.

6. The residue in the 1mm sieve is tranferred to a polythene bag and sealed to retain its moisture.

Laboratory Methods

1. A two-tier sieve stack is employed, consisting of a 3.0mm aperture mesh over a 710µm.

2. Using a hose the residue is washed through the 3.0mm mesh onto the 710µm.

3. The material retained in the 3.0mm sieve is dried and stored for the extraction of bone.

4. The residue in the 710µm sieve is gently swirled in a container of water and the organic material is collected on one side of the sieve and removed.

5. This is stored in alcohol for seed, insect and bone extraction.

Contexts

At present over 1000 contexts have been sampled. 200 of these have been sorted and the results indicate that charred remains occur in the backfill of c. 75% of features excavated. The majority of contexts sorted contain only a small quantity of charred material. This may consist of cereal grains, chaff and species of weed, in variable states of preservation. However, a small number of features have yielded contexts rich in charred remains. These are sources of great environmental and economic information.

Evidence for Prehistoric environment and economy appears to be limited as preliminary examination of samples shows only small quantities of material are being recovered. The upper fill of the earlier Prehistoric enclosure ditch, F700, (Crawford, this volume), was relatively rich in charred remains, but these are found in association with Roman pottery. As yet the lower fill has only produced a few fragments. However, there is evidence for Prehistoric agriculture from features within the enclosure where cereal remains occur in the fills of pits and slots. This evidence is further substantiated by a complete saddle-quern from a slot and two fragments of saddle-quern from the ring groove of a possible hut.

In comparison, evidence for Romano-British agriculture is considerable. Two. c. 4th century, stone-lined, T-shaped corn-driers and eleven small bread/drying ovens have been excavated: numerous rotary-quern fragments have also been recovered. These indicate the full range of crop processing.

Samples taken from the stokeholes and flues of the corn-driers were found to contain large quantities of chaff and cereal grain, including sprouted grain and weed seeds. It is hoped that detailed analyses of the composition of these remains will provide evidence of crop use and processing and also the function of these ovens. For example, they may have been used to roast sprouted grain for malting; to parch cereal spikelets to make the hulls brittle so that grain can be easily released by pounding; or to thoroughly dry clean grain prior to storage. It is possible that they had more than one function. In close proximity to these corndriers were two areas whose contexts wholly comprised charred material. These are thought to have been refuse 'dumps', built up from repeated raking-out and cleaning of the corndriers.

The small ovens, which were mainly concentrated in the western part of the cropmark, were initially thought to be bread ovens. As detailed analyses have not yet been made, their functions are uncertain. As most were found to contain small quantities of cereal remains, it is possible that they were small drying ovens. Chaff and weed seeds also occurred and these may have been components of fuel for firing. In particular, the flue of F349 was rich in chaff in comparison to the contents of the oven (which also contained cereal grains and weed seeds). However, interpretation of accumulations of charred material from different parts of ovens is made difficult as they all eventually collapsed. F349 was found to be overlain by one of the refuse deposits noted above, and contamination from this may explain the high incidence of charred material in it. However, this can only be determined from detailed work on the composition of both deposits.

A few fragments of charred remains have been recovered from post Romano-British contexts, but are insufficient to indicate specific agricultural practices. It is feasible that these are contaminants from earlier deposits.

Preliminary floral and faunal identification

Charred Remains

Although preservation is often poor and only fragments of charred material are recovered, many samples are rich in identifiable remains. Sample composition includes: cereal grain, spikelet forks, glume bases, rachis fragments, cereal sprouts and weed seeds. Preliminary identifications reveal that Triticum spelta (spelt wheat) and Triticum dicoccum (emmer wheat) were the main crops in use. These are wheats which are characteristic of the Iron Age and Roman periods in Britain. Also present are small numbers of Triticum aestivum/compactum (bread wheat), Hordeum sp. (barley), Secale sp. (rye), Avena sativa (cultivated oat) and Avena fatua (wild oat). Further work is required to determine the significance of these minor components as they may prove to be contaminants of the main crop. Species of weed include: Polygonum avicular (knotgrass), Polygonum convolvulus (black bindweed), Rumex spp. (dock), Raphanus raphanistrum (wild radish), Juncus spp. (rush), Gramineae spp. (grass) of which Bromus sp. (brome) is identifiable. These are all inhabitants of open ground, found mainly in cultivated and waste places.

Waterlogged Remains

Micro- and macroscopic plant remains have been recovered from samples from both wells, thus providing supplementary environmental information. Additionally some charred material has been recovered.

Pollen, although found to be in a poor state of preservation, is identifiable (Greig, pers com). Initial investigations show a dominance of open, dry grassland species: Compositae Liguliforae (e.g. dandelions), Gramineae spp. (grass) and Plantago Lanceolata (ribwort plantain). Also present are Cruciferae and Chenopodiacea which indicate disturbed ground, and in close proximity trees and shrubs including Tilia (lime), Quercus (oak), Alnus (alder) and Corylus (hazel).

Macroscopic plant remains are well preserved and provide more detailed information as they can be identified more accurately to species level. The most abundant seeds are those of Labiatae and Hyoscyamus niger (henbane); commonly found on bare and disturbed ground. The preferred habitats of the majority of seeds are also bare and waste places and cultivated ground. These include: Urtica urens (annual nettle), Sonchus asper (prickly sowthistle), Cirsium cf. arvense (creeping thistle) and Conium maculatum (hemlock).

Thus the overall environment suggested by these assemblages is a dry, open habitat, partly wasteland, partly cultivated against a wooded background.

Faunal Remains

Samples from both wells contain insect remains, mainly Coleoptera (beetles) which ones identified will provide additional environmental information. The animal bones extracted from F741 are also awaiting specialist analysis. As well as providing information about domesticated animals, the species range should also include the local wildlife.

Future Work

In the near future it is hoped that results from laboratory experiments will enable recovery methods for charred remains to be revised if necessary. Current work includes: day to day processing of samples, identifications and the compilation of a reference collection of modern cereal and weed seeds. Future work will concentrate on examining sample composition to determine species significance and it is hoped that statistical analyses, for example, the examination of grain/chaff ratios, will provide information on crop processing methods. The results will then be used to examine the spatial distribution of remains. This will allow identification of areas of activity and use, which should aid the interpretation of continuity or changes in the environment during the various phases of the site and also economy and diet of its inhabitants. Comparisons will also be made with sites of the same periods on similar soils to see if environmental and economic patterns emerge.

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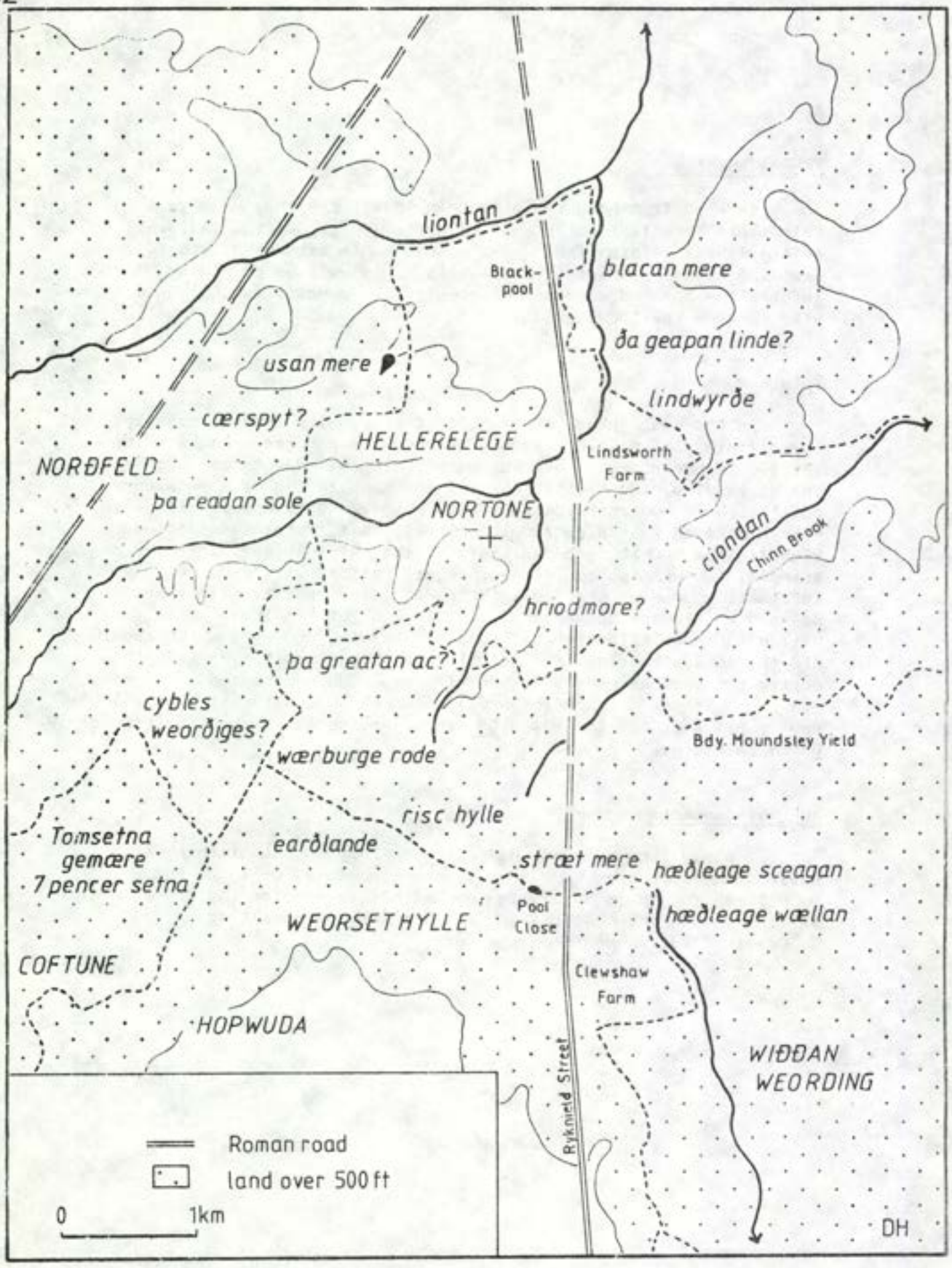

Fig.12 West Midland Charters: suggested Anglo-Saxon charter boundaries in North Worcestershire (Hooke)

West Midland Charters and Anglo-Saxon Topography

by Della Hooke, University of Birmingham

Pre-Conquest charters offer a rich but little-used fund of information about the nature of the Anglo-Saxon countryside. This is all the more valuable as the period is marked in the West Midlands by a dearth of archaeological evidence. While place-names give an indication of the general character of the region the charters can contribute, for certain areas, more detailed information about local features, features which can, moreover, be accurately located. Much of the information is contained in the boundary clauses which accompany many of the charter grants dating from the 8th to the 11th centuries. These set out to define the exact estates being leased or granted by describing prominent landmarks at points along their boundaries. In the 1920s G.B. Grundy attempted to offer detailed solutions of many of these clauses but these are often difficult to follow and are not completely reliable. A further difficulty arises for the local historian in that although most of the charters can be found in printed sources - many of the manuscripts are now in the British Museum - these were published over a hundred years ago and are not readily accessible. The present writer has used the charters and clauses to examine the topographical evidence available for a reconstruction of the Anglo-Saxon landscape of the West Midlands (Hooke, 1981) and the British Academy has now funded a project to publish the detailed solutions in mapped form. While the solutions offered are based upon both fieldwork and a study of documentary and cartographic sources local historians will undoubtedly be able to contribute further details from their own experience and knowledge. It is hoped that the Worcestershire charters will be available early in 1983.

There are a number of charter clauses for north Worcestershire which Grundy was quite unable to solve and a suggested solution is offered here for that of *Hellerelege* in Kings Norton. The accompanying map also covers part of an estate at *Coftune* and other places And the relevant parts of this clause are also quoted below. In A.D. 699 x 709 King Offa granted an estate at Shottery beside the River Avon to the church of Worcester and included in the grant two areas of woodland at Huthurst in Arden and at *Hellerelege*. These woodland estates lay near the northern boundaries of the Hwiccan kingdom in a relatively undeveloped area, both stated in fact to lie 'in wooded country'. There is some evidence to suggest that in the early Anglo-Saxon period this marginal area may have been a region of inter-commoning for surrounding folk-groups, for estates within it are later found to be linked with others in more intensively developed regions to the south-west and south-east, as shown by the Shottery charter. Indeed, a landmark in the *Coftune* charter seems to refer to

two Staffordshire folk-groups who had claims to territory in this frontier zone (Hooke, 1983a, forthcoming). As the Anglo-Saxon period progressed administrative boundaries were firmly established and the Hwiccan boundary, as represented by that of the medieval diocese of Worcester, appears to have run some miles to the north of the landmark referred to above.

The *Hellerelege* boundary

The clause accompanies a grant by Offa, 'King of Mercia' (*reote* of Essex) to the church of Worcester, A.D. 699 x 709, of estates at Shottery, Nuthurst and *Hellerelege*, the latter assessed at 3 *cassati*. The grant is regarded as having an authentic basis (Sawyer, 1968, S.64) and is printed in Birch (1885-99, B.123). The clause appears to be of 9th-century date (

Ærest on leontan þ cume on blacan mere. þonne þ cume in ða geapan linde. þonon þ cume on lindwyrðe. spa þ cume on ciondan. of ceondan þ cume on reodmore. þonon þ cume on þa greatan ac. þonon þ cume in ða readan sole. þonne þ cume on cærspytt. swa þ cume in usan mere. of usan mere. þ cume eft on leontan.

Also B.123B (as on map)

"First to *leontan/liontan*': this was an early name for a tributary of the River Rea called Griffins Brook which forms the northern boundary of Moundsley Yield in Kings Norton parish. The Yield boundaries are described in a perambulation of 1608 and shown in map form in 1843. *Leontan* may be derived from Welsh *lliant* 'a torrent, flood, stream', Br. root *lei-* 'to flow"? (Ekwall, 1928, 250); 'until it comes to the black pool', Blackpool survived as a field-name in 1843. It lay beside the boundary with Moseley Yield at SP 054809; 'thereafter until it comes to the spreading lime-trees'; 'thence until it comes to Lindsworth (enclosure by the lime-trees)'; this name survived as Lindsworth Farm at SP 062794 until recent years and now as Lindsworth Road. It lay on the eastern boundary of the Yield; 'thus until it comes to *ciondan*'; this is the Chinn Brook which flows north-eastwards across the eastern part of Moundsley Yield and is noted as the Chyn Brooke in the boundary survey of the manor of Kings Norton in 1608. *Cionde* may have denoted 'a ravine, a narrow valley' (Ekwall, 1928, 80). The boundary does not appear to have incorporated the eastern part of Moundsley Yield;

'from *ceondan* until it comes to Reed-marsh'; probably on the southern boundary of the Yield. The boundary does not appear to have followed the irregular course of the later boundary separating Moundsley and Headley Yields, but was making its way across undeveloped countryside;

'thence until it comes to the great oak'; the oak may have stood at the junction of the boundaries of Kings Norton and Northfield parishes at SP 037785 or at the south-western corner of Moundsley Yield at SP 037782; 'thence until it comes to the wallowing-place'; perhaps in the valley of the River Rea near Wychall Farm;

'thence until it comes to cress-pit;

'thus until it comes to *usan mere*'; OE *mere* 'pool', is compounded with the river-name *use* and a pool is still found in Row Heath Park

on a headwater stream of the River Rea. It has obviously been partially drained in modern times and must have extended further eastwards to meet the parish boundary about two hundred yards away. For *Usmere* as a province-name, see Hooke, 1982; 'until it comes back to *leontan*'; the boundary returns to the north-western corner of Moundsley Yield.

The *Coftune* boundary

The clause accompanies a lease by Ealhun, bishop, with his *familia* at Worcester, to King Berhtwulf, A.D. 849, of land at *Wearset felda*, Cofton Hackett, Rednal, Wast Hills, Hopwood and *Witlafes felda*. The clause is discussed in Hooke (1983a forthcoming) and only the landmarks on the northern part of the Alvechurch boundary are shown here.

First part of boundary clause (B. 455 (1)):

Primum Tomsetna gemære 7 pencer setna foran rehtes gæt in wærburge rode deinde ad risc hylle bi ðam earðlande fore weardum. sic in stræt mere. Tunc in hæðleage sceagan ðar he ðynnest is of stræt mere. Deinde in hæðleage wællan. sic in midlestan dene ...

'First the boundary of the *Tomsætan* and the *Pencersætan* straight forward to *Wærburh's rode* '; the boundary begins at the junction of Cofton Hackett and Alvechurch parishes (as shown on a 1792 map of Alvechurch). *Rode* may be from OE *rōd* 'a cross' or *rod, rodu* 'a linear-clearing'. The term is used with uncertain meaning;

'then to the rushy hill by the front part of the ploughed land'; Red Hill at SP 045766. The ploughed land may have been associated with the estate of Wast Hills;

'so to the pool by the street'; the street is the Roman Ryknield Street and a small pool still exists near a field known in 1792 as 'Pool Close'; 'then to Headley Heath copse (the shaw of the heathy wood or clearing) where it is narrowest'; the area is still known as Headley Heath and a farm near the boundary is called Clewshaw Farm;

'then to Headley Heath spring'; the source of a headwater stream of the River Cole at SP 061762;

'so to the middle valley', a Middle Lane runs nearby ...

The *Hellerelege* estate may derive its name from OE 'tiler, slater' (Johansson, 1975, 89) and comprised the western part of a division known as Moundsley Yield in Kings Norton parish. By 1086 *Nortune* 'the northern farmstead or estate', and *Lindeorde* (Lindsworth) 'the enclosure by the lime-trees' are noted as berewicks of Bromsgrove. The 20-hide estate at *Coftune* and elsewhere was initially granted by Offa of Mercia in A.D. 780 to the church of St. Peter, Bredon, but the boundary clause accompanies a ninth-century lease of the estate to King Berhtwulf. The estate comprised a number of separate vills which include Cofton, Wast Hills, Rednal, Hopwood and an unidentified *Wearset felda* and *Witlafes feld*. These last two estates were, with Hopwood, grouped with Wast Hills in the earlier grant and may have lain in the same locality. *Wearset felda* and *Weorset hylle* both contain a reference to the OE term *weardsetl* 'watch-tower', and are two amongst a number of such names encountered near the northern frontiers of the Hwiccan kingdom.

The boundary clause shows that the estate extended over the present parish of Cofton Hackett and part of Alvechurch (probably omitting the Domesday manor of Osmerley) and the number of vills names strongly suggests the existence of numerous individual small settlements in this area in the Anglo-Saxon period, that at Cofton referred t referred to as a *hamsteall* 'a farmstead'. The Domesday survey indicates a number of additional berewicks in the same area but provide provides confirmatory evidence of the relatively limtied extent of arable in the area and the prominence of woodland (Hooke, 1983b, forthcoming). The name *Ælfgyðecyrce* 'the church of *Ælfgyð*', first appears in an 11th-century hand in the margin of the 8th-century cha century charter and may indicate that a church had been established by that date upon the estate (Gelling, 1981, 7).

The clauses themselves help to identify the extent of the actual estates referred to in the charters and the territorial implications have been hinted at above but accurate solutions must be obtained if any conclusions based on such evidence are to be valid. Only a small number of features can be reliably identified today and surviving minor place- and field-names are welcome pointers. Correspondence between the landmarks and topographical features must also be sought. If the boundary can be defined man-made features referred to in the charters may be related to archaeological data or surviving features - the *stræt* of the Cofton charter, for instance, refers to the Roman Ryknield Street - and additional sites of archaeological significance are frequently revealed. While the *Hellerelege* clause contains few references to man-made features, apart from the possible settlement of Lindsworth, the reliance upon natural features as boundary landmarks in itself indicates a little-dveloped countryside. The *earðlande* of *Coftune* etc., however, shows the existence of an area of arable land which probably gave rise to one of the medieval fields of Wast Hills. Scattered throughout a sparsely settled region these arable lands gave rise to the irregular medieval field systems which were to be characteristic of north Worcestershire. Only a glimpse of the early background is visible through the medium of the charters but this forms an important addition to later evidence in permitting an understanding of the evolution of the present landscape.

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Map of the parish of Kings Norton by John Walker, surveyor, 1843. I am grateful to Stephen Price of the Birmingham City Museum for the loan of field-name maps of the parish.

Map of Alvechurch, 1972. I am grateful for the assistance of Alvechurch Local History Society for their assistance in using this map.

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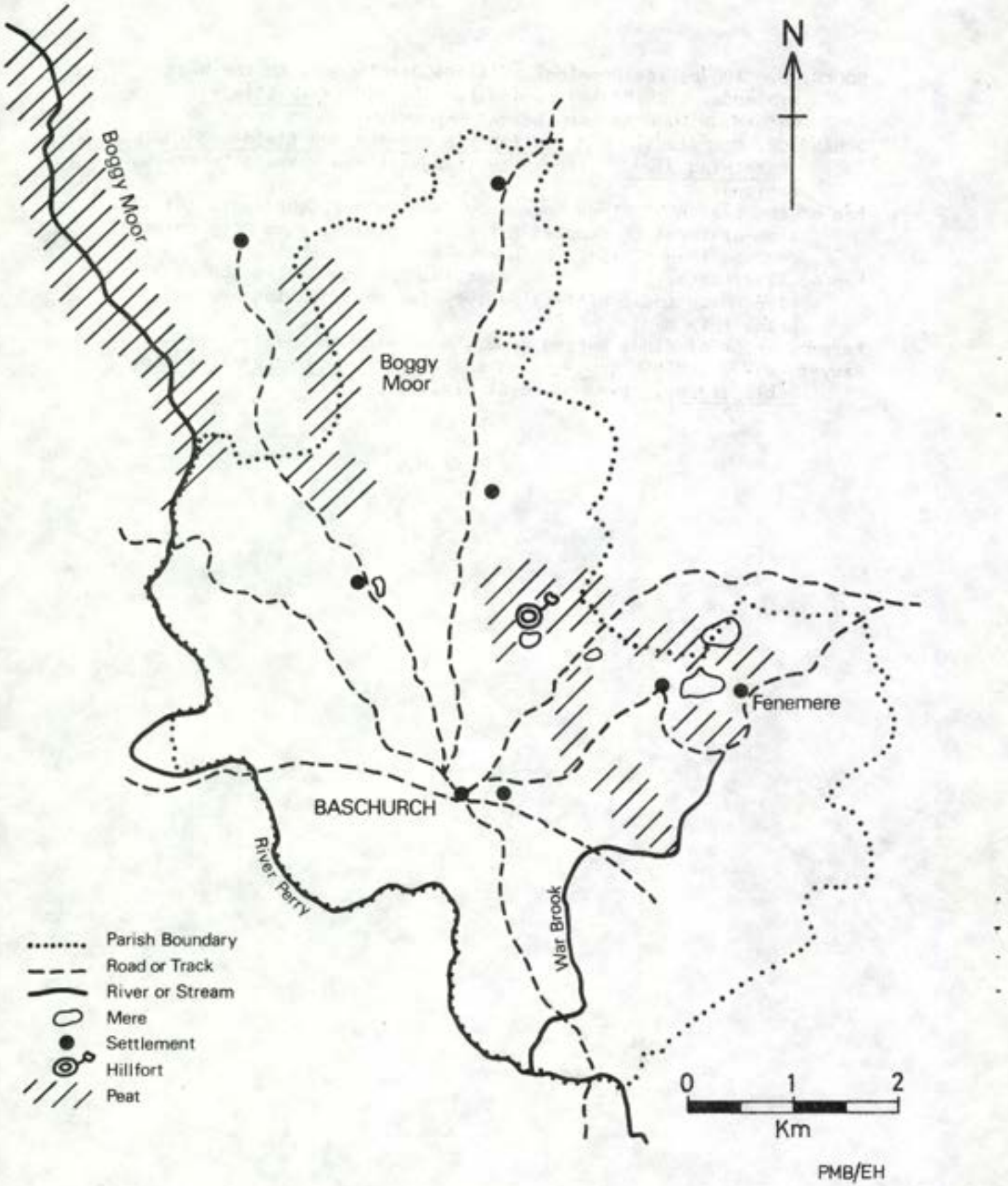


Fig.13 BASCHURCH: Location map (Bayliss)

West Midlands Archæology in 1982

ACTON TRUSSELL and BEDNALL, Staffordshire SJ 738179

A worked flint found in 1972, described and illustrated in Staffordshire Archaeology 3 (1975): 54 was incorrectly attributed to the mesolithic period. It is in fact a good example of a late neolithic tranchet arrowhead. The arrowhead is held in the City Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent (acc. no. K6.1980).

C.F. Hawke-Smith

BASCHURCH, Shropshire SJ 4222

Introductory report and landscape survey Fig. 13

Baschurch parish lies in the South Western part of the North Shropshire Plain immediately below the morainic system around Ellesmere with its well documented lakes and mosses. Although perhaps not very well-known, the Baschurch landscape is an extremely interesting and varied one. Irish sea and Welsh drift met here, bringing sand and gravel and boulder clay, and meres and moss still exist despite past drainage work. The River Perry, which demarcates the Western boundary, acted as a glacial overflow channel for the now drained and peaty area of Boggy Moor, and the underlying Triassic sandstones rise to the surface in several places. Outside the parish, the outcrop of Grinshill cut by a dolerite dyke, the hillfort of Bury Walls at Hawkstone, and the crossing of the River Roden, are linked by the East-West road running through the parish of Baschurch, with the area towards Llanymynech Hill. The route is marked by enclosures of various dates and a scattering of stone and bronze artefacts; evidence for early metalworking has recently been discovered within the defences of Llanymynech Hillfort, and copper mining is thought to have taken place in the area since at least Roman times. We have, then, within and around the parish a landscape of great diversity and many natural resources which have been exploited by man from the third millennium to the present day.

Aims

Baschurch is probably best known for its enigmatic link with the 7th century hero Cynddylan, reputedly buried in the area (Williams 1933), but the parish has many unexplored facets, and it is the writer's intention, by bringing together a catalogue of archaeological and documentary evidence, and by systematic fieldwork, to produce an up to date evaluation of the area as a sound basis for further research.

Work so far

Sadly, much of the early evidence recovered, particularly from the West of the parish, has been lost, and the writer's exhaustive enquiries regarding the disappearance of the more recently found artefacts have been abortive. However, the sensitive areas along the river are now being watched and landowners alerted to the necessity of reporting finds. Dredging of ponds in Boreatton Park has been observed, as has exploratory work carried out by the

River Authority on the edge of the River Perry. No artefacts were recovered, but soil profiles were noted.

Fieldwalking at Penemere in the East of the parish resulted in the discovery of a possible moated site, and surface finds of sandstone rubble and tile. A documentary search points to the possibility that this may be the Manor of Lynches, last apparently heard of in the 13th century. Pottery found on top of the earthwork pre-dates its probable medieval origin, but other adjacent features have yet to be fully explored.

Medieval documentary references to fishing rights in the meres and on the river, and to a weir on the War Brook, aroused the writer's interest in these activities, in particular to the yield of eels. A start has been made on bringing together field, documentary and cartographic evidence in an effort to list sites. This work has led to the recording of a mill site at SJ 422404. This was one of two mills farmed in the 13th century under Haughmond Abbey by Richard de Knight of Walford.

Future work

Fieldwalking will continue, with some priority directed towards the peaty areas of high potential at Boggy Moor just outside the parish, where proposed work on the river bed may lead to increased drainage activities by local farmers.

The area in the vicinity of the parish church will be looked at more closely, both in the field and on early maps in an effort to differentiate between natural and artificial features.

The original layout of the villages of Baschurch and Stanwardine in the Fields will be studied more closely as there appears to be some similarity of plan, and whilst Baschurch village has undergone some changes, Stanwardine is as yet untouched by modern development.

Patricia Baylies

Reference:

Williams, I. 1933 'The Poems of Llywarch Hen' PBA 18.

BIRMINGHAM, West Midlands County SP 0381

Burnt Mound Survey

Observation of a trench cut for a sewer pipe alongside Griffin's Brook provided further information on the Cob Lane site excavated in 1980 and 1981 (WMA 23, 14-26; 24, 56-59) and located another burnt mound nearby.

At the excavated site, the trench revealed that the lowest level contacted in the excavation, a waterlogged grey silt containing wood fragments, underlay the alluvium on which the mound had accumulated and overlay Keuper Marl. There was no trace of a former stream channel on the southern side of the burnt mound to match that found in excavation on the north. The new burnt mound, now named Cob Lane Police Station Site, was revealed by turf and topsoil removal before the trench was excavated, and subsequently examined by the excavation of a machine trench through it. It was located c.100 m distant from the main Cob Lane Park Site, and lay on the western side of Griffin's Brook. It measured approximately 16 m in diameter. This is an example of a burnt mound that was not visible as an exposure in the nearby stream, showing that stream walking will not find all the sites, even if they are well preserved and close to the stream edge.

In Woodland Park, less than a mile from Cob Lane Park, another site was located as an exposure of burnt stones and charcoal c.60 m long. This is the longest exposure of burnt stones so far found in South Birmingham. The extent of this mound away from the stream bank was later planned by both magnetometer and resistivity surveying. A second exposure was also found elsewhere in the park.

The systematic search of stream banks in south Birmingham continued in June 1982 with undergraduate students from the Department of Ancient History and Archaeology, University of Birmingham. Most banks were found to be too overgrown for the location of new sites but the locations of stream banks suitable for examination under winter conditions were recorded. The survey concentrated on the River Rea since all sites previously found were situated on smaller tributary streams. The river has eroded its channel more deeply than those of the smaller streams, and as a result the surface of the alluvium on which the burnt mounds are situated has been eroded. However a group of heat-cracked pebbles was found in the bank of the Rea near Wychall Lane, King's Norton, which had been derived from a mound which probably had originally existed at a higher level.

The results of the excavations and surveys of burnt mounds in Birmingham are now being prepared for publication.

L.H. Barfield and M.A. Hodder

BORDESLEY ABBEY, Hereford and Worcester SP 045686

14th Interim Report on excavation of medieval monastery

The 1982 excavation took place during a wet August, when work continued on the Industrial Site and a new area of the church was opened.

The Industrial Site

Most resources were again devoted to the excavation of the water mill located next to the monastic (industrial) workshops at the east end of the Arrow Valley. This year's work was concentrated on the pre-mill phases defined last year in Area A, and the abandonment and destruction levels of the mill building and its surrounding area, including the leat, wheel pit and north bank of the mill pond, in Areas B, C, D and E. As in previous years, further contributions were made to the understanding of the 'three landscapes' of the Arrow Valley - the pre-monastic, monastic and post-monastic.

The Pre-Mill Phases - Area A

The earliest level on site was a layer of grey silt with well preserved twigs and branches, seen at the base of negative features (an eighteenth-century drain and medieval ditch), which may represent the pre-monastic land surface. This surface was sealed by c. 1.5 m of red clay which appears to have blanketed most of the area under excavation, sometime after c.1200. A ditch had been cut into this clay and partially filled with silt before its sides collapsed. Subsequently a larger replacement ditch was dug. This secondary ditch had three well defined phases. First, judging from its lower fill, the cut channelled running water, controlled at its NW end by a timber sluice gate. In the second phase the ditch was used for dumping rubbish and, thirdly, was finally filled with clay. The rubbish layer was over 20 cm thick

and consisted almost entirely of well preserved organic material. A 1.5 m section across the ditch was excavated this year and, because of its unusual character, all the excavated fill was wet-sieved on site. Some 1800 worked pieces of oak were recovered; these are interpreted as chips and offcuts produced from adzing large baulks of timber. A 3 m long worked timber with two pegs in situ was recovered in addition to ten pegs, similar in size and shape to those used to fasten joints in timber-framed buildings, and large quantities of daub. All this might suggest that we have evidence not only for the demolition of a timber building but also modification for re-erection. In 1980 the bottom of a large timber, the upper part of which had been dug out, was recorded in a land drain.

The ditch also produced worked wood from other activities - including four gear pegs (? from an earlier mill), finely shaped points and sorticed joints. Sheets of leather and parts of shoes imply cobbling was taking place nearby. Material more typical of domestic assemblages was also recovered - bones from meat joints (sieving produced very few fish or small animal bones), seeds, nuts and near complete pots. The latter date this phase of the ditch to the later thirteenth century.

The Mill Phases - Areas B, C, D and E

Work was concentrated this year on the areas around the mill building. Whereas the 'industrial' period (contemporary with the mill) was marked by the laying of a thick cobble hardstanding over Area A, this did not continue around the mill building itself. The major padstones of the mill appear to have been laid directly on the thick red clay layer. The area to the north of the mill (Area B) had discrete areas of cobbling which may be the remains of a continuous surface, but are more likely to mark the final stages of consolidating the fills of pre-mill ditches. The occupation of the mill, and its destruction, was marked by an accumulation of grey silt. This produced quantities of pottery, bone, copper allow, iron slag and an early fourteenth-century silver penny - the fourth coin of this date from levels contemporary with the mill (see 1981 interim).

North-west of where the mill butted onto the remains of the north bank of the mill pond (in Area C), a pebble surface, continuous with the external facing of this pond bank, showed little sign of wear. This may suggest that the main access to the industrial site was elsewhere, perhaps over the mill race. It is now clear that the mill building had several phases for a secondary lean-to was added on to the west wall, the bank of the pond having been cut back to accommodate this extension. The last floor level of the mill itself was uncovered and showed that the part of the building facing the wheel pit was divided into a series of rooms, each with a pitched tile hearth, and perhaps devoted to different aspects of metal working.

Stumps of large baulks of timber found embedded into the banks of the leat and wheel pit probably represent the upper members of the wheel frame and promise well for future work. Although the medieval deposits of the wheel pit and leat were not excavated in 1982, these features appear to have a sequence as complicated as that of the mill building. The wheel pit appears to have been altered by the laying of a clay bank at its eastern end, perhaps to shift the wheel further west into the leat; and the cutting of a step in the bottom of the leat may have been to increase the gradient just before the wheel.

The abandonment of the mill is also more complicated than was thought last year. Two phases of destruction were discovered on the west side of the mill - the first represented by a layer containing many nails, and the second by the slighting of the north mill pond bank to create a rough pebble surface which contained large quantities of tile.

After the abandonment of the mill complex the area was covered by flood deposits. The wheel pit and leat were then backfilled with clay and pebbles, derived from the mill pond banks. A drain was then cut into this backfill in the eighteenth century to drain not only the wheel pit, as was thought last year, but also the mill pond.

The chronology of the mill is also more complicated than was thought last year. The backfilling of the pre-mill ditch in Area A in the late thirteenth century and the abandonment of the mill by the mid-fourteenth century mean that the industrial site was only functioning for a maximum of eighty years. This is perhaps even more surprising considering the capital investment which was necessary for not only the buildings, but also the construction of the large triangular millpond and associated water works. Next year's programme is designed to excavate the medieval layers of the wheel pit and leat.

THE CHURCH

Excavation

An area of 120 square metres was opened, the northern edge of the excavation being a westward continuation of the existing axial section E-W through the church and the southern edge the much robbed wall of the south aisle. The excavations of the 1970's and early 1980's have now been linked with those of the 1960's, the west edge of the new area incorporating the east edge of Trevor Rowley's 1967 nave excavation. This area thus includes the eastern part of the south aisle, the east end of the south nave arcade, and the southern portions of the west end of the choir (with a large stall of the abbot), the pulpitum (with stone entrance sill), the retrochoir, the rood screen (with sill beam emplacement) and its altar foundation to the west in the nave/lay brothers' choir. In 1982 the later 15th century to 1538 (Period 4C: see Rahtz and Hirst, Bordesley Abbey, B.A.R. 1976) level was defined below a massive overburden of destruction levels and fallen masonry, including a collapsed but still articulated section of nave pier (from immediately below the capital of the third or fourth nave arcade pier after the crossing) below earlier excavators' spoil. The floor was of trodden 'dirt' in the aisle, with panelled tiled floors (witnessed by tile impressions in mortar and tiles in situ) in the choir, retrochoir and nave.

Notable finds include some very elaborate relief letter wall-tiles from the rood screen altar area, some fine new decorated floor tiles (some in situ), much window glass, polychrome painted masonry fragments, a book strap end, and part of the vane from the feather of a quill pen (the two last from the 'dirt' accumulating in the sub-floor space of the choir stall).

Architectural evidence

David Walsh comments on the new architectural evidence as follows:

The area opened in 1982 is of considerable architectural interest, containing three bays of the south arcade and robbed aisle wall as well as other internal structures. The sequence of arcade piers is of special concern in view of the alternating system initiated west of the crossing uncovered in previous years. It is now clear that in Period 1, only the first bay had piers (the SW crossing pier and the first pier of the south nave arcade thereafter) with facing rectangular plans; the first pier of the nave arcade after the crossing pier had a semicircular respond to the west, the second was a regular octagon, and the third was circular. Only the rectangular base of the fourth nave arcade pier could be seen in the section at the western limit of the excavation. The positions of the Period 1 piers provide valuable evidence in the continuing study of the proportions of the first church and expand our picture of its decorative vocabulary. The blocking of the arcade piers in Period 2, forming the backing walls for the choir stalls, was seen to continue to the second pier where the stalls end at the pulpitum, although the blocking of the second intercolumniation is of a different construction from that of the first.

Comments by Woodward about the use of red sandstone in the nave and notes of Rowley's excavation had suggested that remains there would be later than Period 1, though it was uncertain whether there was a continuous construction, perhaps c. 1200 (when red sandstone was introduced to the site), or if there was a later reconstruction. The recovery of parts of a fallen nave pier (from the third or fourth nave arcade support after the crossing) shows conclusively that within the area excavated there was considerable rebuilding involving the arcade piers (though erected on Period 1 bases) and, very likely, much of the superstructure. Fallen tracery - with some associated glass - in the latest choir stalls would seem to have come from the clerestory which may have been rebuilt at the same time as the arcades. Comparison of the tracery with that of the rebuilt cloister of the late 14th or early 15th century indicated that the clerestory might have been reworked or totally rebuilt at this period as part of the same programme. Parts of the fallen pier also are similar in style to the cloister articulation, and it is tentatively proposed that the nave after the first few piers, (at least its southern part) was rebuilt at the same time as the cloister.

Post-excavation work

Work on the second monograph is well advanced, and publication (under the editorship of Sue Hirst, Sue Wright and David Walsh) is hoped for (by BAR) in 1983. It includes the report on the excavation of the presbytery, eastern choir and crossing; the rooms to the south of the south transept (by Ian Burrow) and a section on the finds by Lorna Watts and Philip Rahtz; the latter includes illustrations of the series of well over a hundred patterns of decorated floor tiles. There is an extensive section of architectural analysis and reconstruction by David Walsh.

Grenville Astill, Susan Hirst, Philip Rahtz, David Walsh and Susan Wright.

BRADLEY, Staffordshire Fig.14 SJ 877211

A bronze side-looped spearhead was found in 1981 at Dearnsdale Farm, near Stafford. The finder was Michael Flude and the item was presented to the City Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent by the landowner, Mr. F.L. Busby (acc. no. K251.1981). The spearhead has a broken tip and damage to the socket, which may have resulted from a miscasting. Illustrated.

C.F. Hawke-Smith

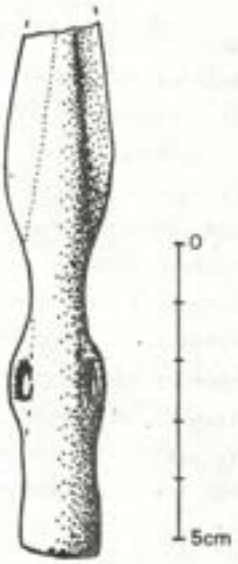


Fig.14 BRADLEY: Bronze looped spearhead (Hawke-Smith)

CLEE HILL, Shropshire SO 616757

Post-medieval coin hoard

This hoard was uncovered in March 1982 by a treasure hunter whilst metal detecting. It was found in a field on the south side of Clee Hill Common near Doddington (SO 616757). The hoard consisted of 21 gold coins of the reigns of Charles II (1660-1685) and William III (1689 - 1702), of which there were 13 guineas of Charles II, four half guineas of Charles II, and four guineas of William III. They were found at a depth of 15 cm - 30 cm, together with the remains of an iron clasp and surrounded by traces of iron staining, which seems to suggest the hoard having been deposited in some form of metal container. The date of deposition of the hoard is thought to be c.1700.

At a subsequent Treasure Trove inquest a verdict of non-Treasure Trove was returned on the hoard.

M.D. Watson

ECCLESHALL, Staffordshire SJ 75653220

A partially ground flint axe was found in 1978 at Moss Farm, close to Bishop's Wood, during ploughing. It was presented to the City Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent by the landowner, Mr. J.C. Naginton (acc. no. K1.1980). The axe is patinated light grey and has a small patch of cortex on the butt end. Length: 120 mm; Width: 44 mm; Thickness 24mm.

C.F. Hawke-Smith
Stoke-on-Trent Museum

ECCLESHALL, Staffordshire Fig.15 SJ 8923 2901

Excavations at a medieval moated site, Eyeswell Manor, Churchfield Road, Eccleshall

Excavation of this site continued through 1982 in advance of building development. The way in which the site has been opened up has been largely dictated by the contractor's time-table. Hence it has not been possible to expose one uninterrupted area of the site at one time. In Areas I and II (see plan) following removal of the topsoil a number of partially robbed gravel and sandstone fragment floors were found. These were associated with a roughly constructed wall-base of weathered sawn sandstones packed in stiff red clay and a stone 'post pad' of similar construction. Although, given the limitations of the area exposed, a definite interpretation of these features cannot be made, they probably represent part of a barn and associated floors. They date to c.1500-1700 A.D. The gravelly spreads sealed a dark grey 'garden' soil of c.30 cm, which covered the entire site (I and II). This contained several pits with large quantities of coarse and decorated pottery provisionally attributed to the 13th century A.D. Towards the northern end of I, the natural level of the platform had been artificially raised in medieval times with two distinct layers of sand, separated by a humic horizon. After the removal of the upper of these layers structural features were revealed. A tightly compacted cobbled floor was the most striking of these features. It is some 4 m across and has a semi-circular plan. It lies adjacent to an almost square room, marked out clearly on the sand in shallow beam slots. This complex has been provisionally interpreted as a detached kitchen. The garden soil underlying this feature has been completely removed over Area II. It lies directly on the undisturbed subsoil of sandy-clay, at a depth of

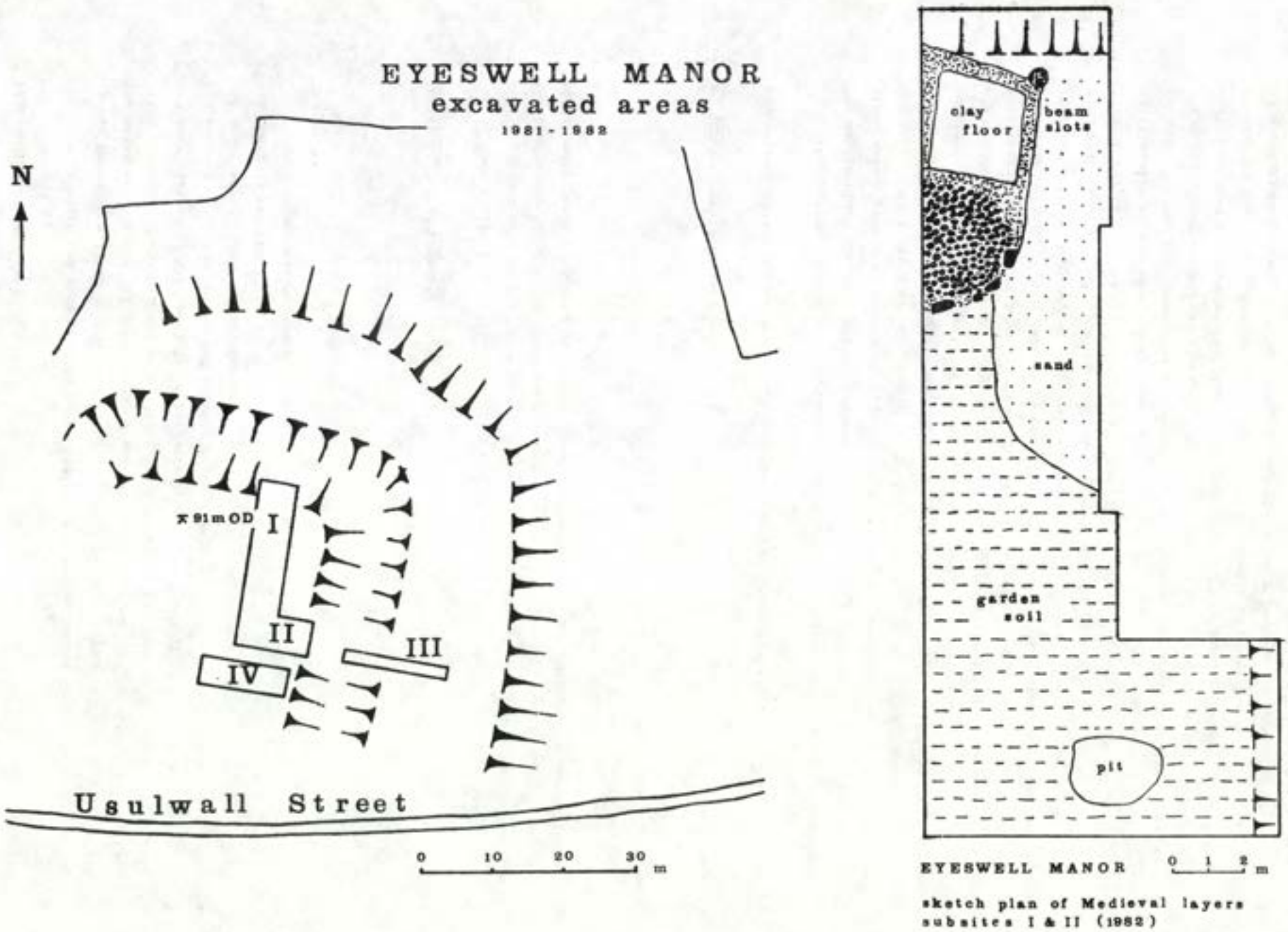


Fig.15 ECCLESHALL: Eyeswell Manor - excavated areas, 1981-82 (Hawke-Smith)

c. 1m. A V-shaped ditch, nearly 2 m across was found running N-S across this area and this had been deliberately lined with dark grey and stiff red clay, presumably to retain water in a highly permeable subsoil. A shallow trench joined this at a right angle. These features may possibly pre-date the cutting of the moat. They are cut into the subsoil. No datable material has been found in them. A fine late neolithic flint scraper was found on the subsoil surface. To the E of the platform a trench was cut across the moat and the embankment (Area III). The original ground surface was identified, and above this an undulating mound of sand, whose surface has been vegetated prior to the building of the embankment. This suggests two phases in the construction of the bank and hence the cutting of the moat, but these have not as yet been satisfactorily dated. This part of the site is not subject to immediate threat.

A contour survey of the earthworks has been made. Excavations are to continue in 1983 in Area IV which has now become available. A limited amount of documentary research has been carried out and this has shown that the site was occupied by a cadet branch of the Swynnerton family between c.1250-1500 A.D. It seems never to have been a 'Manor' in the strict sense and was constructed on one of the burgages between Eccleshall High Street and Usulwall Street, now a footpath, which is referred to in an episcopal survey of 1298.

C.F. Hawke-Smith
Stoke-on-Trent Museum Arch. Soc.

ETTINGTON, Warwickshire SP 2749

Further field-walking in the Thornton township of Ettington, Warwickshire, by Extra-mural class students confirmed the presence of Romano-British settlement sites in the vicinity of the deserted medieval village of Thornton. One site lay beside the stream beneath the later village and a second occupied a hilltop position overlooking it. The latter site produced large quantities of Romano-British coarse Severn Valley and Grey ware and smaller quantities of Black-burnished, Nene Valley and Samian ware, together with pieces of mortaria, a grit-stone pounder and part of a rotary quern. In spite of extensive field-walking beyond the village site the only other Romano-British 'finds' noted consisted of a very small number of abraded Severn Valley sherds gathered from ploughed land beside the Ettington-Wellesbourne Road.

D. Hooke

GRINDON, Staffordshire SK 09570571

Epipaleolithic material from Ossom's Cave

Material from excavations conducted in the 1950's by Dr. Don Bramwell of the Peakland Archaeological Society was presented to the City Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent in 1981 (acc. no. K250.1981). The material consists of a flint industry and associated fauna and microfauna dated by C^{14} to 8640 ± 70 B.C., and the site is therefore one of a handful known

in the British Isles of this phase of the Late Glacial. It is currently under study by Dr. Tony Stuart and Kate Scott of Cambridge University, and a full report is forthcoming.

C.F. Hawke-Smith

HANBURY, Hereford and Worcester SO 9664

Documentatation and field survey Fig.16

In the spring fieldwork began with a visit to a site, observed but not recorded in 1981, which lies to the east of Hollowfields Farm, beside the probable course of the north-south Roman road. The site (illustrated) consists of a complex of hollow-ways and building platforms, partly obscured by modern dumping, and associated field systems. Documentary evidence suggests that it is the site of Holewey Grange, belonging to Bordesley Abbey, which was founded in the mid-12th century and probably abandoned before the Dissolution.

The final season of summer fieldwork lasted for a fortnight in June and July, with a party of 13 students. These completed the field by field survey of the parish by working over the area of Middle and Upper Hollowfields Farms, and by visiting isolated fields elsewhere in Hanbury which had been inaccessible in the past. In addition a detailed study was made of some of the more important long-distance features which run across parts of the parish. These included continuous boundaries and largely abandoned roads, which merited further attention in their own right.

Parties of students were also involved in planning selected earthwork sites discovered in previous years. The plans are detailed measured ones suitable for publication. Most of the sites were isolated small settlements, but the whole complex of moat and ponds at Parkhall was also recorded in this way.

Field walking in the winter and autumn added considerably to the number of Romano-British sites. Romano-British pottery has now been found in more than 60 fields in the parish. After ploughing, the grange site mentioned above yielded large quantities of pottery, worked sandstone (including some facing stones), and tiles, as well as evidence of iron working. The site also produced some Romano-British sherds.

In the spring extramural students worked on modern documents in the Vernon and Bearcroft archives at Hereford and Worcester County Council Record Office. This was particularly valuable because it enabled us to add to the list of medieval fields and houses with precisely located sites. Meanwhile there has been detailed analysis of all the earlier maps of Hanbury and neighbouring parishes, with particular attention being paid to the Dougharty maps of the early 18th century. This has revealed a great amount about the development of Hanbury's landscape, as well as adding considerably to the detailed picture which has resulted from the fieldwork.

Holewey Grange

Bordesley Abbey acquired the estate of Holewey from the Crown in c. 1140. The monks probably reorganised it to create a grange in the late 12th century; this consisted of a block of land in the east of Holewey, centred on a major complex of buildings. This land unit survived, held on lease by a layman, at the Dissolution in 1538, but the grange buildings may by then have been abandoned.

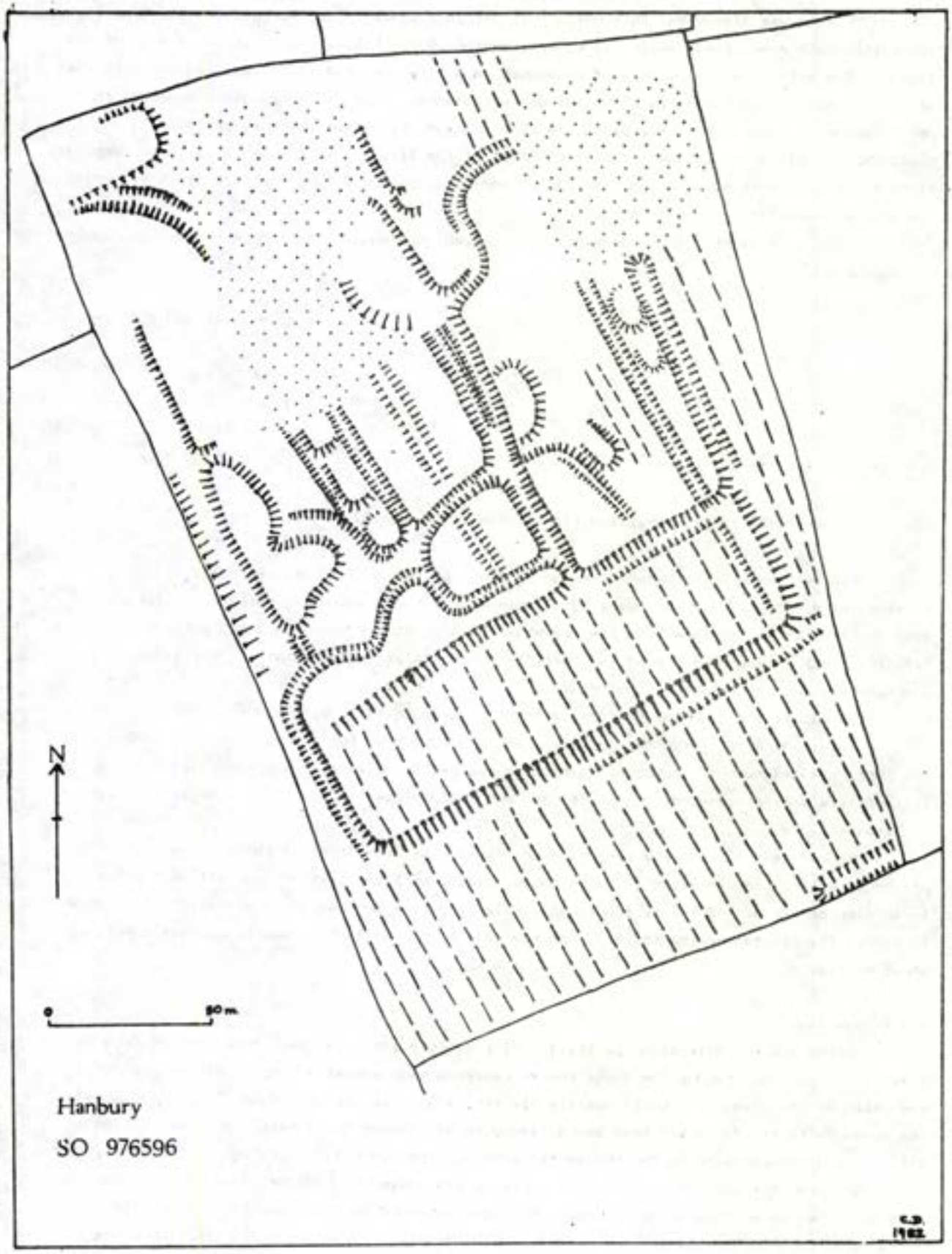


Fig.16 HANBURY: Earthworks marking the site of Holewey Grange (Dyer)

The site was discovered this year. It lay on a south-facing slope, near the line of the north-south Roman road, which may be represented by the hollow-way on the west side of the field. The site consisted mainly of a network of hollow-ways and platforms, representing the sites of domestic and agricultural buildings, with access roads. Modern disturbance to the north (shown by stippling on the plan) has obscured some of the earthworks, including a major platform and hollow-way in the north-west corner of the field. To the south lay a contemporary ridge and furrow system, of which part was at some time enclosed by a bank and ditch extending the southern boundary of the grange.

Within five months of the drawing of this plan, the whole site had been deep-ploughed and destroyed.

S.R. Bassett and C.C. Dyer

HARBORNE, West Midlands County SP 028 839

Emergency excavation in St. Peter's Parish Church Fig.17

Harborne Parish lies between the Bournbrook and the Chad Brook, and was part of Staffordshire until 1891. It was a rural community with no nucleated village settlement from Domesday until the late 18th century when the High Street began to develop towards Harborne Heath. The area around St. Peter's remains fairly rural retaining a village atmosphere amidst the City of Birmingham.

The earliest documentary reference to the church is 1217, with the death of Warin FitzGerold, Hereditary Chamberlain of the Exchequer and Lord of the Manor of Harborne, who owned the 'advowson', the right to appoint the priest of Harborne Church. After this it is fairly well documented in lawsuits and ownership papers and the Parish Registers started in January 1538.

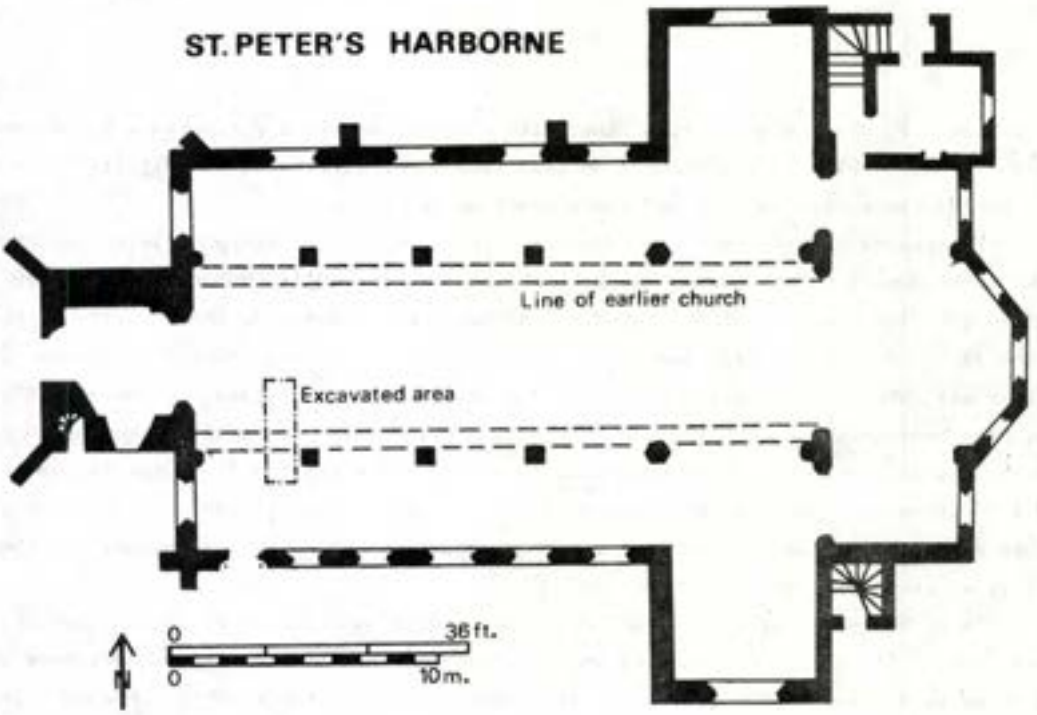
The earliest part of the church is the tower, the decoration of which is in the style of the late 14th century although it is thought to be built on earlier foundations. There is no plan or picture of the church in the medieval period but two pictures dated c.1820 show it before its reconstruction in 1867, and the line of the earlier, possibly medieval, wall is shown on fig. a.

The Excavations

During a minor alteration to the interior in July 1982, two pews were removed from the back of the church. Under the floor boards, workmen came across a human skeleton and BUFAU was asked to investigate. Unfortunately the area available was only about 2 x 3 metres and the space under the floor had been backfilled with very loose dusty building rubble during an alteration in the heating system making the sections crumbly and unsafe.

The skeleton was not articulated and the bones proved to have belonged to more than one person. They were lying on top of the rubble and appeared to have been thrown back into consecrated ground after being disturbed by building work. The rubble (context 1000) was about 50 cm deep and contained fragments of modern wood, brick and tile, pebbles and boulders, two bronze pins, a green glazed medieval floor tile, and various human bones.

Having cleared this, (fig. b) it was found that half the area was taken up by the vaulted brick roof of the present boiler-house (F1), and a wall (F2), supporting pipes for the



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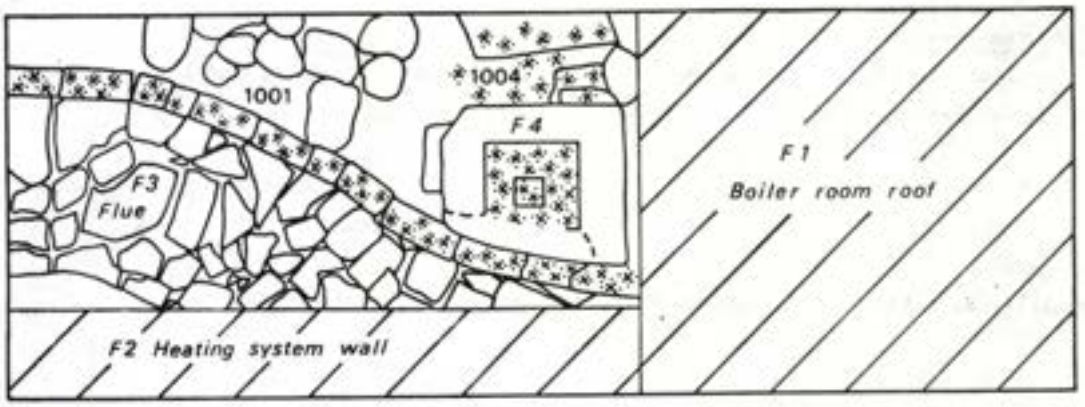

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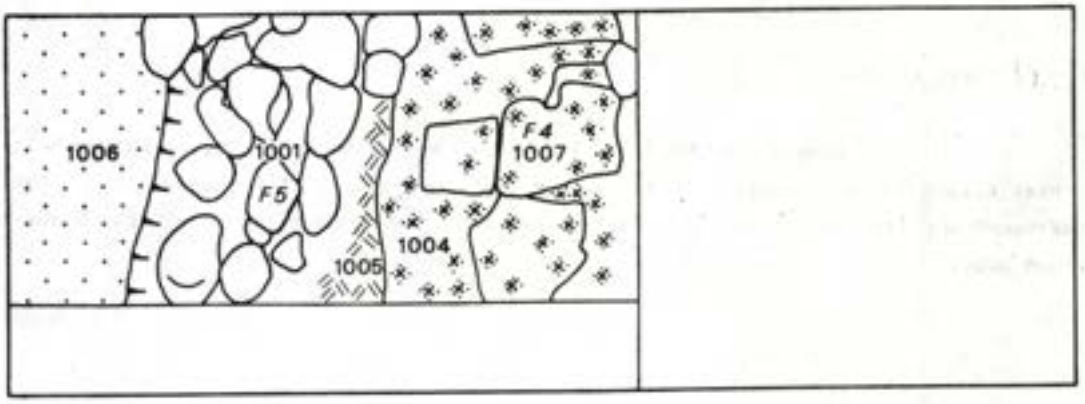

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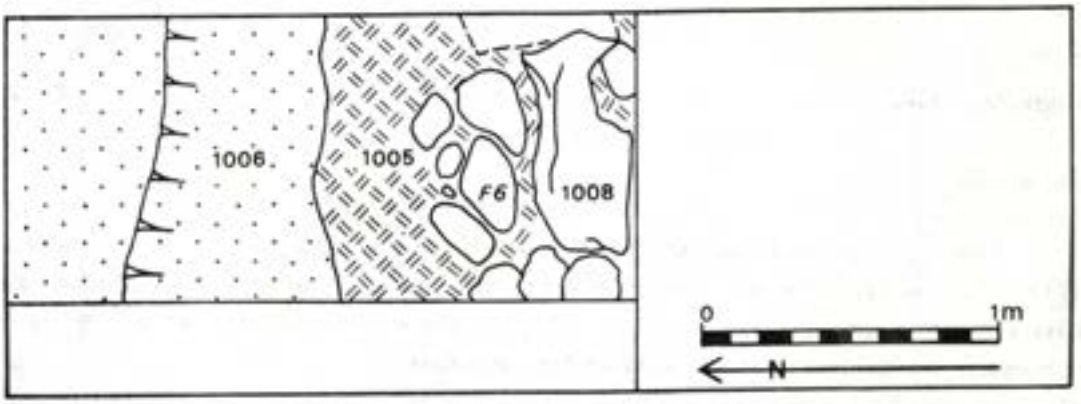

d

Fig.17 HARBORNE: Church plan showing location of excavated area detailed in plans below (Roe)

radiators. F3 was a disused flue lined with mortared bricks and floored with broken red quarry tiles, sloping fairly steeply up away from the boiler room. Badly filled-in brickwork inside the boiler room showed where the flue had joined it.

F4 appears to have been the foundations of a wall, consisting of large sandstone ashlar blocks bonded with mortar (1004 fig. c) near the top, and built on top of thick clay (1005) set with smooth flat boulders (1008 fig. d). Although not excavated, these seemed to be the fill of the foundation trench (F6) for the foundations (F4). F4 was probably the base of the earlier wall shown in the pictures of the church prior to the reconstruction of 1867, and may have been medieval, although there was no dating evidence. The large worked stone on fig. b, was approximately 50 cm x 60 cm x 40 cm and had a shallow 31 cm square cut in the top and a 10 cm square socket in the centre of this. The socket did not seem deep enough to hold a post of any height and the stone may have been used as the base for the arch of the south doorway as it was in the right position.

In such a small area it is not possible to draw many firm conclusions from the excavation. It had to be abandoned at the stage shown in fig. d because to remove any more stones or to dig any deeper would have been unsafe. There was no dating evidence from finds for any of the features but it is possible that F4 was part of the medieval foundations of the church.

Acknowledgements

I should like to acknowledge with thanks the Rev. Michael Counsell and his staff, and Andrew Brooker-Carey and Ander McIntyre for their interest and help.

Annette Roe

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HEATON, Staffordshire SJ 97176432

A barbed and tanged arrowhead was found just below the bridge of Sythamley Hall Lodge by Miss Alison Mould in 1981. It is on long term loan to the City Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent (acc. no. L1.1981). The flint is in good condition, though the barbs are broken away.

C.F. Hawke-Smith

HUNNINGHAM, Warwickshire SP 371 680

Moated site

Excavation has continued slowly on this moated site (WMANS 21 (1978) 95; WMANS 22 (1979) 77; WMA 23 (1980) 94; WMA 24 (1981) 81). The patterns of building stone on the platform surface are slightly clearer, confirming the suggestion mentioned in WMA 24 that there are probably two buildings in the area so far excavated.

Field walking, particularly in the field adjacent to the moated site, has produced a considerable quantity of struck and worked flints. These include a fragment of a finely finished arrowhead of probable neolithic date; and the group as a whole suggests mesolithic/neolithic activity.

Fabian Radcliffe
for Leamington Archaeology Group
and Trinity School Archaeologists

KEELE, Staffordshire SJ 820445

A bronze palstave was found in fields in front of Keele Hall during World War II by Mr. W. Good. It is now owned by Mrs. M.E. Summerfield and is on permanent loan to the City Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent (acc. no. L1.1979). It has damaged flanges and part of the end missing.

C.F. Hawke-Smith

KENILWORTH, Warwickshire SP 289 715

Recording of timber-framed buildings

In early 1981 the Society decided that there was a need to record existing timber-framed buildings in Kenilworth and a study group was set up, organised by two of the members. Dr. N. Alcock kindly gave two evenings tuition, the first recording a barn in Fieldgate Lane, and the second on drawing up the results of the survey.

During 1981 and the first half of 1982, the following buildings were recorded and the results will be published by the Society in due course.

Barn at Fieldgate Close, Fieldgate Lane. This was a simple, two bay, structure of late 17th century date but incorporating material from an earlier building. The building is used as a double garage with half the loft converted into a bathroom.

The Barn, Abbey Fields. This is a stone built structure with a timber-framed roof taken from another building. The roof structure contains three trusses, one forming the east gable. There is no truss in the west gable. Each truss has a tie beam and two collars and the purlins contain bridle scarfs between the upper face of the truss and the winf brace.

50 The Square. This was a salvage recording, the existence of a timber-framed structure not being known until the building was demolished for redevelopment. The side framing indicated a two storey jettied structure, some wattle and daub still surviving. The south side contained a large curved brace at first floor level.

Tudor Cottage Cafe, Castle Green. In this case, the main building was not recorded, only the attached outbuilding at the back. This building was originally an open sided byre, the wooden posts on both the 'open' and enclosed sides standing on sandstone bases. The two exposed, intermediate, roof trusses are of different dates, one being pegged while the other is held together by a coach-bolt.

Queen and Castle Hotel, Castle Green. Alterations to this building provided an opportunity to record a one-bay timber-framed section in the rear wing. This bay was assymetrical and was originally part of a larger structure. It was built in the early 18th century and some wattle and daub still survives. There were a number of features indicative of a late date.

East Chase Farm, Chase Lane. This farmhouse, built c. 1670, is a substantial structure which has been extended but contains few other alterations. The original dwelling can be identified and all main frames and trusses, including those which were originally part of attached farm outbuildings, were recorded. There were numerous carpenters marks and a small amount of wattle and daub surviving.

The assistance of owners and agents is gratefully acknowledged.

S.G. Wallsgrove
for Kenilworth History
and Archaeology Society

KINVER-WOLVERLY AREA, Staffordshire

Ninth Interim Report of Survey Work at SO 8080 and vicinity Fig. 18

During the winter of 1981/2, the usual search was made for flint-scatters in the area around Kinver Edge, and new find-spots were recorded, mostly at a few flints per acre. In addition, Benson's Pool Piece, Caunsall (SO 858812), previously partly examined, was searched completely, and 200 struck flints were retrieved (c.14 per acre). They include a leaf-shaped and a petit-tranchet derivative arrowhead. There was a marked concentration in the part of the field containing the apparent IA/RB enclosure cropmark in Arnold Baker's air-photograph SO 8581/1 of 1962, from which flints and R.B. pottery have previously been collected (WMA 20: 32; 21: 75).

Although it is time-consuming, the present writers now plot each individual flint by pacing or measuring (cf. Hodder, in WMA 24: 144). For example, the accompanying figure shows the flints found in 1980/81 at Nine Acres, Brown's Farm, on the Staffordshire-Worcestershire boundary (SO 821826), and kindly identified by Dr. L.H. Barfield. The total was 206 (23 per acre), a prolific site for the district being studied, where scatters are widespread but sparse. The arrowhead shown is barbed-and-tanged (broken), and the possible microliths are both slightly anomalous backed points.

This scatter continues into the adjoining field to the north; it is then separated by 7 acres of unploughed land from the field "The Bury's' in Kinver (SO 819831), from which 196 flints were retrieved in 1980 (19.6 per acre), including four broken microliths.

The finds remain for the time being in the possession of the writers.

Reg Fisher and Leslie King

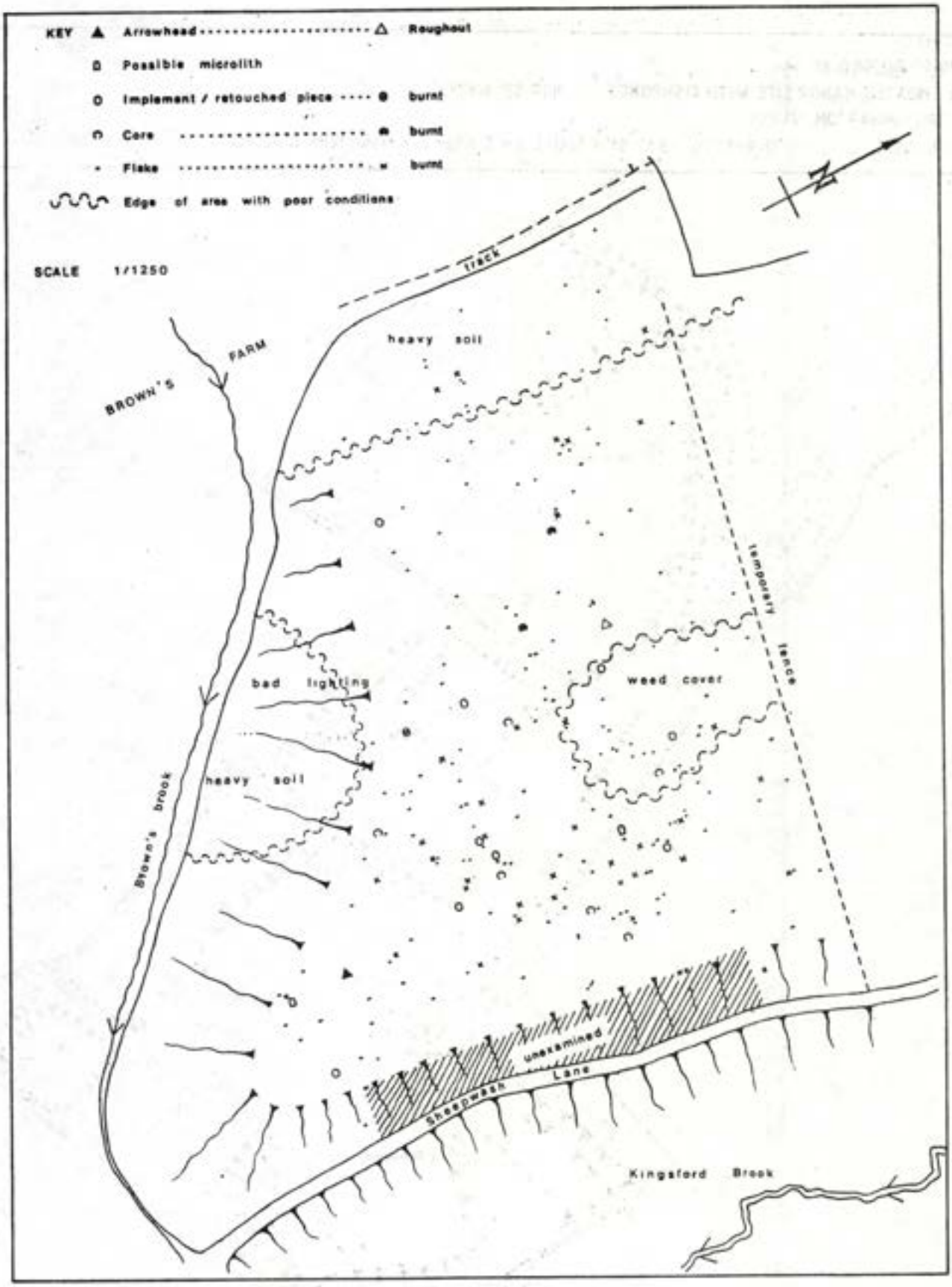

Fig.18 KINVER-WOLVERLEY AREA: A flint scatter from "Nine-Acres" Kingsford (Fisher/King)

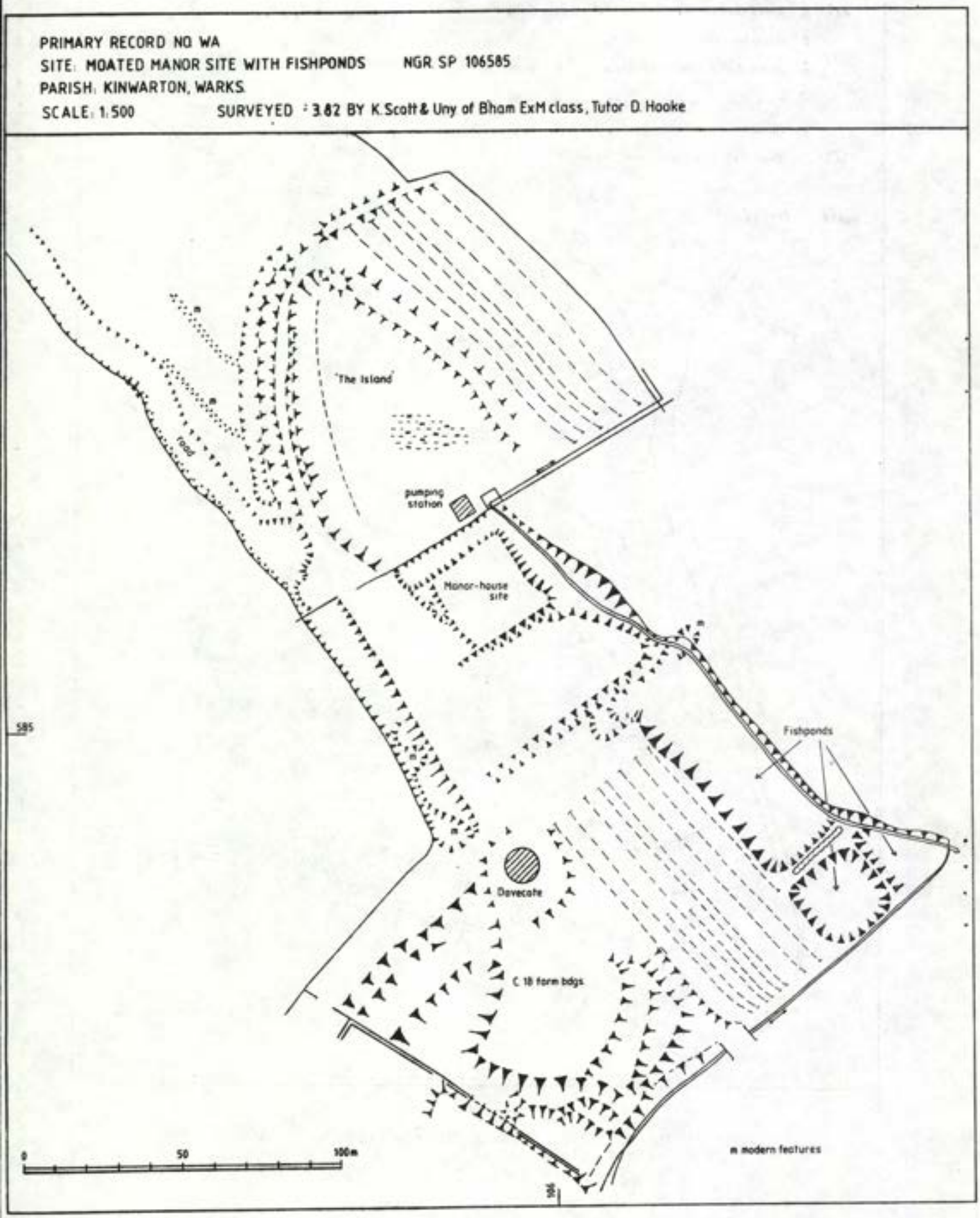

Fig.19 KINWARTON: Site of Moated Manor with fishponds (Hooke)

KINWARTON, Warwickshire SP 105 584

Arrow Valley Survey Figs. 19, 20

In 1981-2 work by extramural class students in Kinwarton included the surveying of the medieval moated site and the surviving village earthworks. (Fig. 19) Pot-sherds collected from the village site included Romano-British, medieval and post-medieval ware.

The shape of the manorial moated site is comparable with others in this area, although it is somewhat smaller in size (Fig.20). Although the date of construction cannot be established without excavation, the site at Kinwarton has much in common with others thought to represent subsidiary manorial centres.

Mappleborough was a sub-manor within Studley parish by the 11th century but Netherstead in Morton Bagot may represent a manorial split which occurred in the 13th century. Wike in Coughton is also identifiable as a subinfeudation of the fee of Coughton in the 13th century and Kinwarton was held in the 12th and 13th centuries by branches of a family based in Coughton. Size and shape of moats in this area may, therefore, prove ultimately to be indicative of status and date of foundation.

Other moated sites in the area include a number of oval or circular moats, usually established at manorial centres, and some of these were to attain proportions indicative of a defended castle site (e.g. Studley). A number of moats survive only in fragmentary form and can be identified with holdings claimed to be sub-manors in the medieval period. Priory sites were also associated with irregular moats (e.g. Spernall). A full discussion of the Arrow Valley sites will be published in due course.

Della Booke

MEON HILL, Warwickshire SP 177454

Interim report on field survey of the Iron Age hill fort Fig.21

The aim of this survey is the topographic recording of the ramparts, field walking of the interior and the cataloguing and publishing of previous finds.

The Fort

Around the summit of Meon Hill, just above the 175 metre contour are a series of ramparts, enclosing some 10.4 hectares - 25.7 acres. The varying pattern of the rampart is shown on the figure. Around the south side there are double ditched ramparts with a counter-scarp bank. On the east side the ramparts have been completely ploughed away. On the north side there is a single rampart and ditch, the profile does not show any trace of ploughed out ramparts. Aubrey, in the 17th century described Meon as a "Fortification of Treble Works" (Aubrey, 1980: 339). On the north-west side all the defences, except the innermost rampart, appear to have been destroyed by a historic landslip (Hodges, 1906: 12). Dryson's map of 1844 (1888 copy in Gloucester City Library - Mickleton 9534 box VIII, 33) shows the same pattern of ramparts except on the east side, where it shows two ramparts, (the inner one is a natural break of slope) and a possible entrance is the south-east corner, SP 179452.

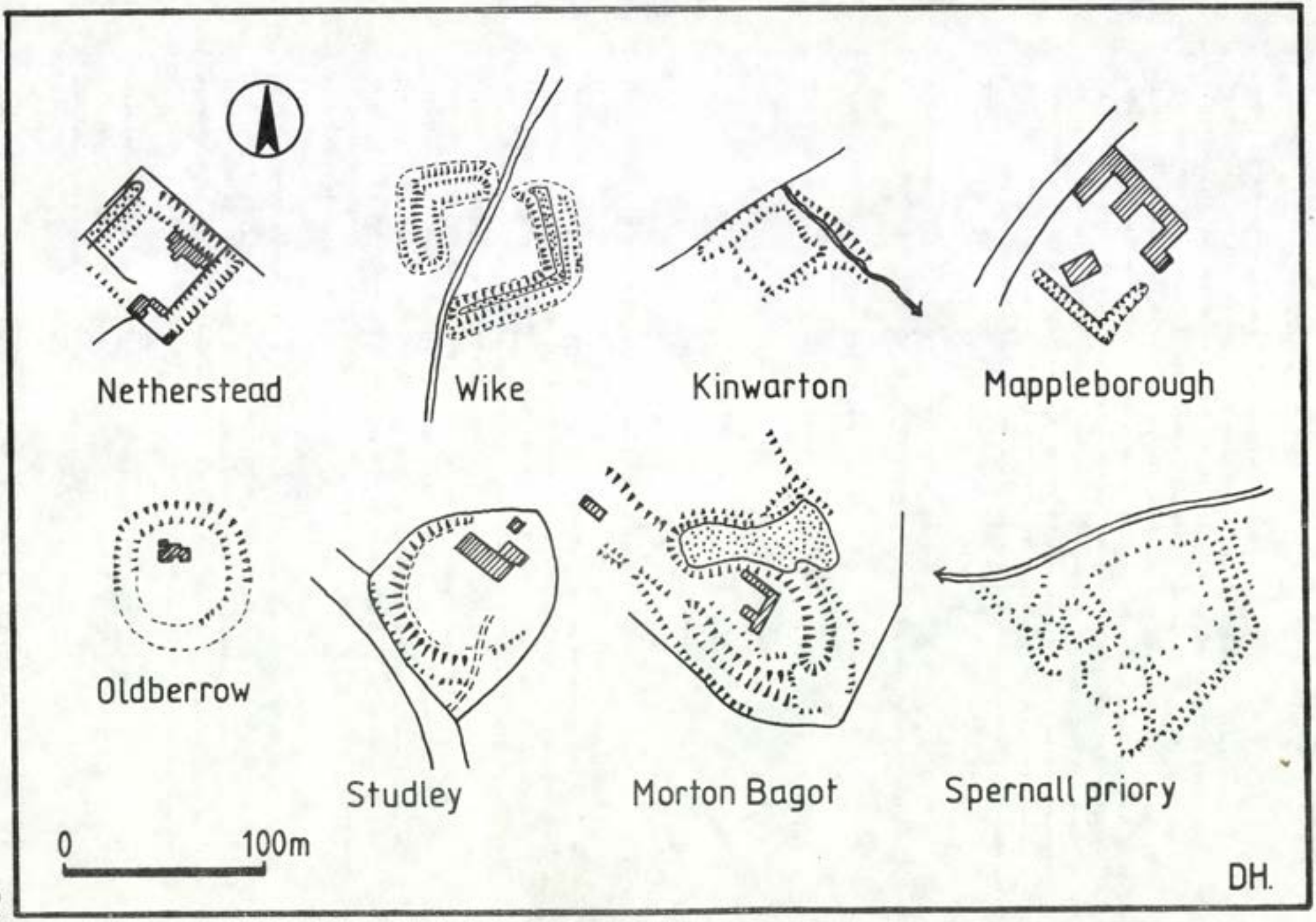

Fig.20 KINWARTON: Other moated sites in the surrounding area (Hooke)

There are two possible entrance (see figure). We think the north-west entrance is a recent breach of the rampart, for driving stock in, as it could not offer vehicular access.

The interior of the fort is now divided into two fields (hereafter referred to as the north and the south field). The north field was recorded as under plough by Dryson in 1844. Hodges in 1906 recorded the same pattern of land use, noting the south field contained "some half-dozen or more saucer-shaped depressions 14 to 20 feet (4.3 to 6.1 metres) diameter" (Hodges, 1906: 122). Else in 1941 reported "within the camp are traces of a dew pond and ancient pit dwellings" (Else, 1943: 301). Today the entire interior is under cultivation and there is no trace of pit dwellings.

Old Excavations

Two excavations have been carried out on the site, although neither has been adequately published. In 1906 Mr. Dixon excavated one of the saucer-shaped depressions on the very summit of the hill (estimate - SP 176453 area). The depression was 4.9 metres diameter and 1.1 metres deep and was interpreted as a half sunken-hut cut into the Marlstone, with an encircling stone wall that had fallen inwards. No hearths were found. Finds included residual flints, a broken spear head, a nail and sherds of Iron Age and Roman pottery (Hodges, 1906: 122-23). In Cheltenham Museum are finds and a letter by Dixon describing the excavation. Marshall dated this pottery to Phase One (6th to 3rd century B.C., or later) of the Cotswold Iron Age and suggested the hut and one sherd were probably contemporary with the currency bar hoard dating to Phase Two (4th or 3rd to 1st century B.A.) (Marshall 1978a and 1978b: 24).

In 1922 Mr. Walford carried out an excavation which produced Roman pottery, "earlier pottery" and undated flints and bronzes (Andrews, 1926: 57). Whether Walford sectioned the defences (as was the current fashion) or dug inside them, is not known.

Prehistoric Finds

Hodges (1906) listed surface finds of flint arrowheads, awls, flakes, one fabricator, battered pebbles, hammer stones, sling stones(?) and three Neolithic stone axes. The New Place Museum (Stratford-upon-Avon) catalogue lists finds of flint leaf arrowheads, awls, chisels(?), cores, one fabricator, besides rubbed and battered pebbles/hammer stones, one unfinished Neolithic axe and a thin butted, partly polished, stone axe (believed to be from the fort - see Hodges, 1906: 125).

Burrow (1924: 90) noted surface finds of flint and scrapers; Else (1943: 301) recorded hammer stones, flint knives and scrapers. The datable tool types suggest a Neolithic/Early Bronze Age date (c. 3500-1500 B.C.).

Recent field walking has yielded a very sparse scatter of flints (cores and waste flakes), mostly from the south field, so dense occupation seems unlikely.

Iron Age Finds

A number of historic finds of probable Iron Age date have come from the fort. Lort (1779: 118) listed a bronze chisel. Both Rudder (1779: 614) and Hodges (1906: 124) listed finds of two halves of bee hive querns. Mr. Hall recently found the upper part of a rotary bee hive quern on the surface of the south-eastern part of south field. The quern's diameter is 36 cm, height 10 cm, with a central vertical pouring hole, concave base and a side slot for horizontal handle. Rotary querns were first used during the Iron Age c. 3rd century B.C. The New Place catalogue lists finds of millstone grinders, pebble/cobble corn grinders and rubber stones. In 1824 a hoard of 394 spit shaped currency bars (Allen, 1967: 311) was found inside the fort at a depth of 4 feet (1.2 metres) below the surface, buried together

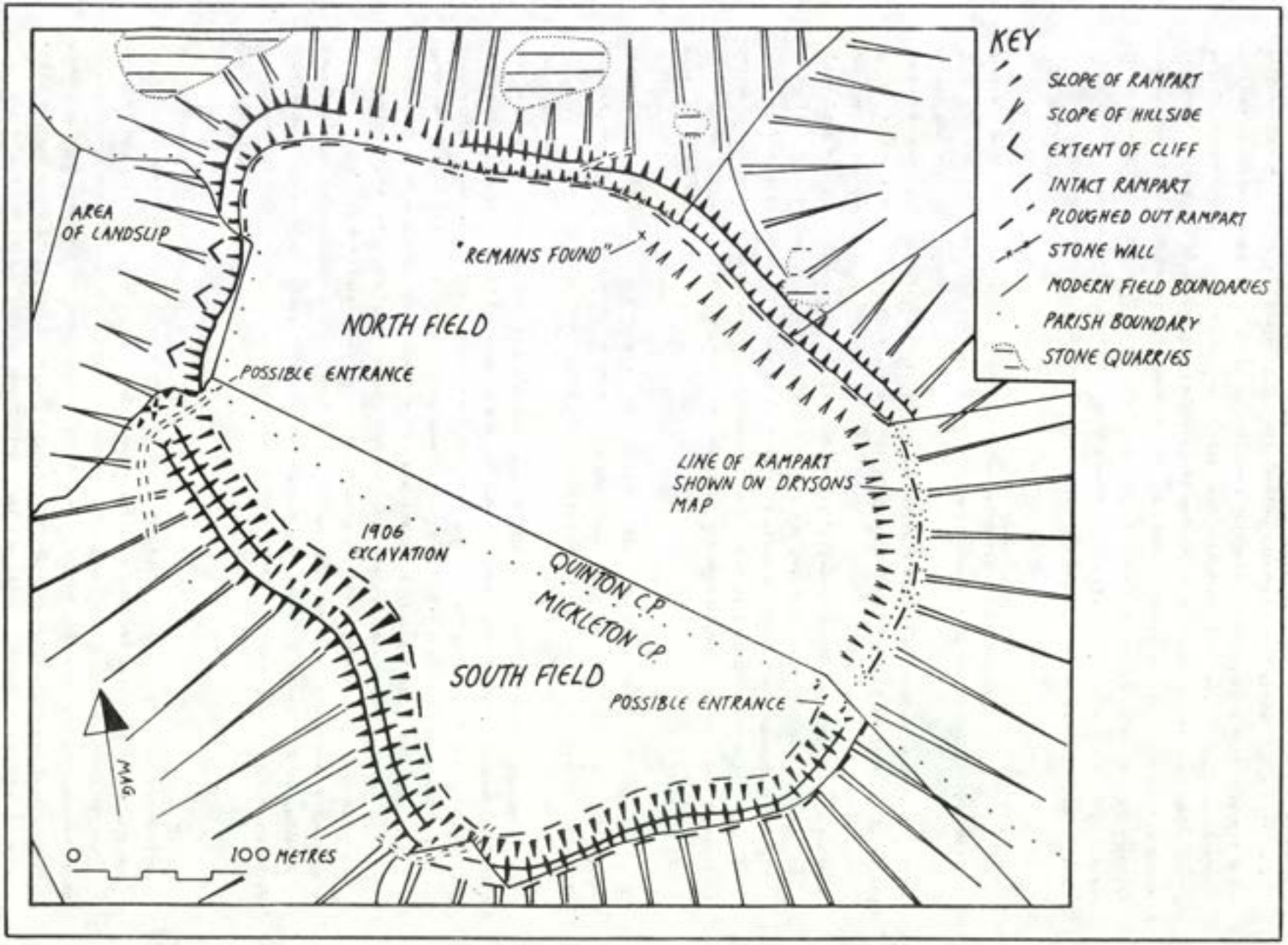

Fig.21 MEON HILL: The ramparts of Meon Hill Iron-Age hill fort (Price/Watson)

(Bloom Collection, Vol 103, 58, Shakespear's Birth Place Trust Record Office, DR4/103). The find spot is not known, but it may be the spot marked "remains found" on Dryson's map, SP1773 4551.

Field walking of the interior has yielded a sparse scatter of Iron Age pottery, besides animal bones/teeth, fired clay/daub, fire cracked pebbles/cobbles, possible sling stones and post medieval debris. The identifiable iron age pottery consists of one thick-walled storage jar rim, with slashed decoration, one sherd with finger tip impression decoration and another sherd with finger pinched decoration. All date from Marshall's (1978a) Phase 1 and 2 (6th century B.C. to 1st century A.D.). There are a number of sherds of uncertain date, although some have iron age rim forms. All the pottery is of the same basic fabric, shell tempered, often with a pock marked surface, the result of the shell temper leaching out, or of organic inclusions in the pottery. The surface colour varies widely from red to brown to grey to black.

Hodges (1906: 120) listed surface finds of hand made pot sherds from the fort and dated these to the neolithic. The sherds were probably iron age, judging by the description of the only ornamented sherd - a rim with an "incised line" decoration. This decoration sounds typical of the Cotswold Iron Age pottery (Marshall, 1978a). Some of this pottery is very likely in the New Place Museum, Humphries Collection. Sadly it appears to have been mixed up with pottery from Loxley Lane gravel pits.

Romano-British finds

Field walking has revealed a sparse scatter of abraded Romano-British pottery across the interior. The following fabrics have been identified (listed in numerical order):- Orange Severn Valley Ware, Grey Wares, Sand tempered Grey Wares, Orange Oxford Ware Mortaria, Brown Colour Coat Ware, local imitation of Dorset Black Burnished Ware, local shell tempered Ware of Iron Age - Roman date (Price and Watson, 1981: 92) and Malvernian Ware of late iron age - Roman date.

This assemblage could be of any date from the 1st to 4th century A.D. Many hill forts have produced Roman material, e.g. 40% of the Gloucestershire hill forts (Burrow, 1979: 217). These finds could be interpreted as either continued occupation after the Claudian invasion - evidenced by Dixon's excavation or immediate post-Roman occupation - evidenced by Early Anglo-Saxon material and the possibility of local 5th century A.D. use of Severn Valley Ware (Price and Watson 1981:93).

Anglo-Saxon finds

In 1957 one Anglo-Saxon inhumation with shield boss, spear head and ferrule, was found in the fort (Meaney, 1964: 26). The New Place catalogue lists a human skull fragment from the fort. Field walking of north field in 1982 yielded a small fragment of bone comb strengthener, decorated with circules and dots. This can be paralleled with finds from Bidford Anglo-Saxon Cemetery (Humphreys et al, 1924: Plate XVI, fig. 2d).

We conclude there was an Early Anglo-Saxon inhumation cemetery (A.D. 450 to 650) inside the fort.

Acknowledgements

Grateful thanks are given to:

Mr. Hall, Mr. North and Mr. Slatter - who farm Meon Hill, for their co-operation and permission to walk the site. Helen Rees of the Beckford project and Janet Richardson of the Corinium Museum, for identifying pottery, and Mr. A. Saville of Cheltenham Museum and Major P. Gardiner of New Place Museum, Stratford-upon-Avon, for access to their reserve collections.

E.A. Price and B. Watson

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MYTON, Warwickshire SP 302652

Field Survey of Medieval Village

The site of this village, as reported in WMA 23 (1980) 104 and WMA 24 (1981) 94 lies at Myton Grange Farm, Warwick where development of the site for housing purposes continues to be carried out. A watching brief is being maintained, with the co-operation of the developers, but, again, no stratification of finds has been observed due to previous ploughing.

Over the past year (November 1981 to October 1982) it has been possible to make significantly more visits and this has resulted in a substantial increase in the number of finds collected, (a further 267 items). Included in these were 50 sherds of medieval pottery (12th to 14th centuries), 106 pieces of clay pipe stem, 13 clay pipe bowls (or parts thereof) spanning a number of centuries, and large numbers of late Victorian items. These included three china dolls heads and a china doll's leg. Most of the Victorian items were concentrated in a shallow pit, with large amounts of ash and charcoal, where a tree may have stood. It would therefore appear that, when a tree was felled (an avenue of trees is known to have existed here), the resulting shallow pit was used as a rubbish dump and was then levelled and grassed over.

S.G. Wallsgrove
for Leamington Archaeology Group

PELSALL, West Midlands County SK 023042

Survey and trial excavation of moated site Fig. 22

An earthwork survey and a small trial excavation were undertaken at Moat Farm, Pelsall, for West Midlands County Council in advance of residential development. The most prominent surviving part of the moat is an irregular pond which includes its south corner and parts of its west and south-east arms. The west arm continues as a dry ditch, joining a marked scarp along the present field boundary, which probably marks the north-west arm. There is no trace of the east arm, but the limit of the site on this side is indicated by ridge-and-furrow in the adjoining field. A small trial trench was excavated on the moat platform near its south corner, in a position which was not occupied by any of the buildings of Moat Farm. There was no evidence for an artificial platform. A stone and brick wall, partly robbed out, a single posthole, and irregular hollows, were located. All the pottery associated with these features was of 17th century or later date.

A full report has been deposited in the Conservation Section, West Midlands County Planning Department.

M.A. Hodder

PRIORSLEE, Shropshire SJ 709093

Post-Medieval Coin Hoard

This hoard was found in April 1982 by workmen engaged on stripping topsoil during M54 construction work at Priorslee. A total of 368 coins of the reigns of Mary Tudor(1 coin), Elizabeth I (99 coins), James I (45 coins) and Charles I (223 coins) were found. The earliest coin was a sixpence of Mary Tudor dated 1554 and the latest a half-crown of Charles I dated 1646.

The hoard appears to have been struck by an earth moving machine and spread over a 5m long strip. There were no remains of any container in which the coins may have been deposited. The finders did however report that the soil surrounding the bulk of the coins was lighter in colour, and this could possibly have been caused by the erosion of a container of some kind for the coins.

It appears that prior to the motorway development the piece of ground where the hoard was found had remained relatively undisturbed, having been in use as a garden or fold attached to a now demolished farmhouse since at least the late 18th century.

The hoard is a good representative example of a Civil War hoard, and is particularly interesting due to its high proportion of Royalist issues; it also contains a high proportion of high denomination coins, with half-crowns making up about one third of the total.

The coins were declared to be Treasure Trove by the Treasure Trove Inquest held at Wellington in November.

Michael D. Watson

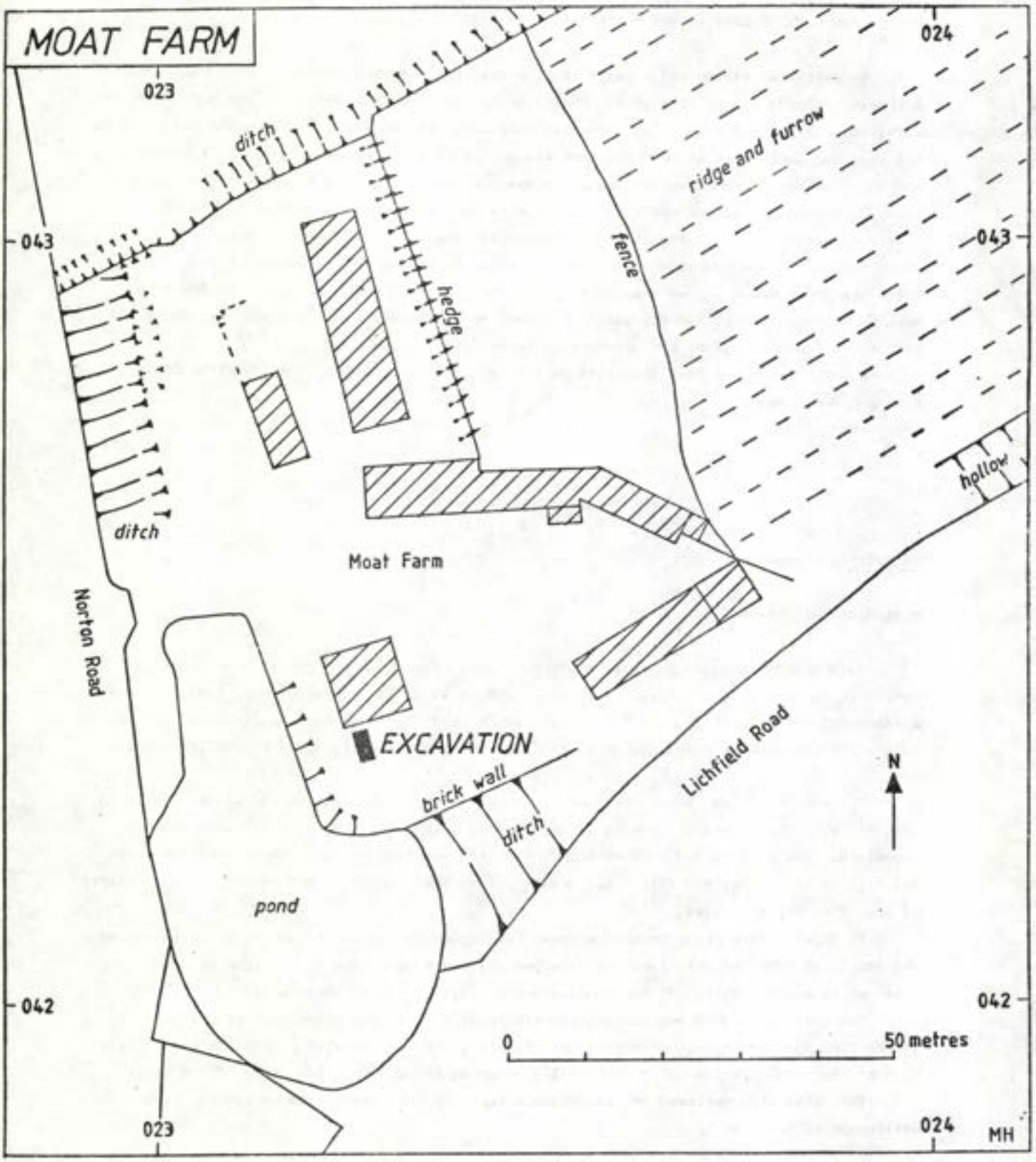

Fig.22 PELSALL: Plan of Moat Farm and site of excavation (Hodder)

REA VALLEY, Birmingham SO 9070, SP 0070

Archaeological and landscape survey Fig. 23

In view of the proposed drainage scheme along the river Rea from Fordhouse Lane, Stirchley, to Longbridge, it was decided in June 1982, to undertake an archaeological and landscape survey of the length in question.

The immediate purpose is conservation. It is hoped that the final design of the scheme will take into account the findings of the survey and preserve as many threatened sites as possible. The first priority is therefore to record what is currently surviving. It is already clear that much has been lost in the last few decades and that the pace of destruction is accelerating.

The longer term aim is a comprehensive study of the landscape history of the Rea Valley. The riversides in Birmingham are among the few areas where the pre-urban environment can be expected to have survived to any great extent.

The study not only focuses on the river and flood plain, which have attracted a specific land and water use, but also ranges over the broad corridor of the Rea Valley. Certain conclusions may be found to be applicable to an even wider zone, now enveloped by the growth of Birmingham.

The study area has been extended beyond Longbridge and the City limits to the source of the Rea on the slopes of Windmill Hill.

The period of study has no fixed starting point but terminates conveniently around the year 1840, a date which corresponds (a) with the Tithe survey and (b) with the arrival of the railway, heralding rapid urban and industrial growth. Work will inevitably concentrate on the medieval and early modern period, though evidence of earlier periods have already come to light.

The project will call upon as many techniques as can be usefully applied. These include traditional documentary research, examination of early plans and maps, and analysis of place-name evidence. Preliminary field work has already been completed and it is intended to survey the more important sites, using also geophysical methods. Field walking is possible in a few locations in the uppermost reaches of the river. Significant features where excavation would be illuminating are to be identified. Aerial photographs, vertical as well as oblique, have already proved to be indispensible and as many collections as possible will be examined.

Preliminary findings

At this stage in the project the most obvious sites and features have been identified, though many still require interpretation. These are plotted on the distribution map and listed on the accompanying key.

Preliminary conclusions

The Rea Valley is a much exploited corridor of land. Six mills and their waterworks were crammed into approximately five miles. Frog mill has been relocated and the site of Rednal mill identified with some certainty.

Significant contrasts are emerging between the landscape history of Kings Norton and Northfield parishes, related in all probability to the differing levels of seigneurial control exercised by the medieval lords of Kings Norton and Northfield.

The short time spent so far on the project has already proved the value of work on the pre-urban landscape surviving in the open spaces of major cities.

George Demidowicz,
Birmingham and Warwickshire Archaeological Society, Field Group

REA VALLEY SURVEY

Key to plan Fig23

1 Lifford Reservoir
2* Lifford Mill II and leets
3* Lifford Mill I
4 Lifford Hall
5* Roman Road (Ryknild Street)
6* 19th Century arable strips (Kings Norton)
6a (Kings Norton)
7 Old holloway
8 Kings Norton Mill, pond and head-race
9* The Moats/Cotteridge (Moated Settlement)
10* Newhouse Farm (Kingsuch)
11 Canal Feeder
12* Wychall Mill
13 Wychall Reservoir
14* Wychall Farm Moat
15 Parish boundary feature
16 Open-field strips (Northfield)
17* Moat Farm
18* ?Holloway
19 Northfield Mill, pond
20 Parish boundary feature
21 Hawkesley Mill Farm
22* Hawkesley Mill, pond, head and tail race
23 Hawkesley Farm moat
24 Double ditch (turf mark)
25* Tessal Farm
26* Roman Road (possible route)
27* Rednall Mill?
28* Fish pond and dam
29* Enclosure (soil mark)
30* Colmers Farm
31* Chapel
32* Frog Mill
33* Double bank, parish boundary
34* Fish ponds
35 Gannow Manor moat
36* Fish pond/enclosure?
37 Fish pond dam
38 Enclosure?
39 Fish pond(s)
40 Boundary banks?

* Destroyed or built over

RED STREET, Staffordshire SJ 8286 5068

Interim Report on excavation of 17th century glasshouse Fig. 24

Introduction

The Red Street glasshouse is an early example of a coal-fired glasshouse:- dated to the early - late 17th century. It was situated on top of a very rich seam of coal, and consequently threatened by an open-cast mining operation. Between 1977 and 1982, the Keele Archaeology Group (KAG), represented by G.T. Emery and W.H. Edwards undertook documentary research and mounted a series of small-scale excavations on the site. The documentary evidence indicated that a Francis Bristow and his son, Randle (d. 1668) produced glass at this glasshouse between the early and late 17th century. That window glass was produced is supported by the fact that the Liversages-itinerent glaziers appeared in Newcastle-under-Lyme in the 1620's. KAG did not find the main furnace, but they did find a 3m x 3m furnace with

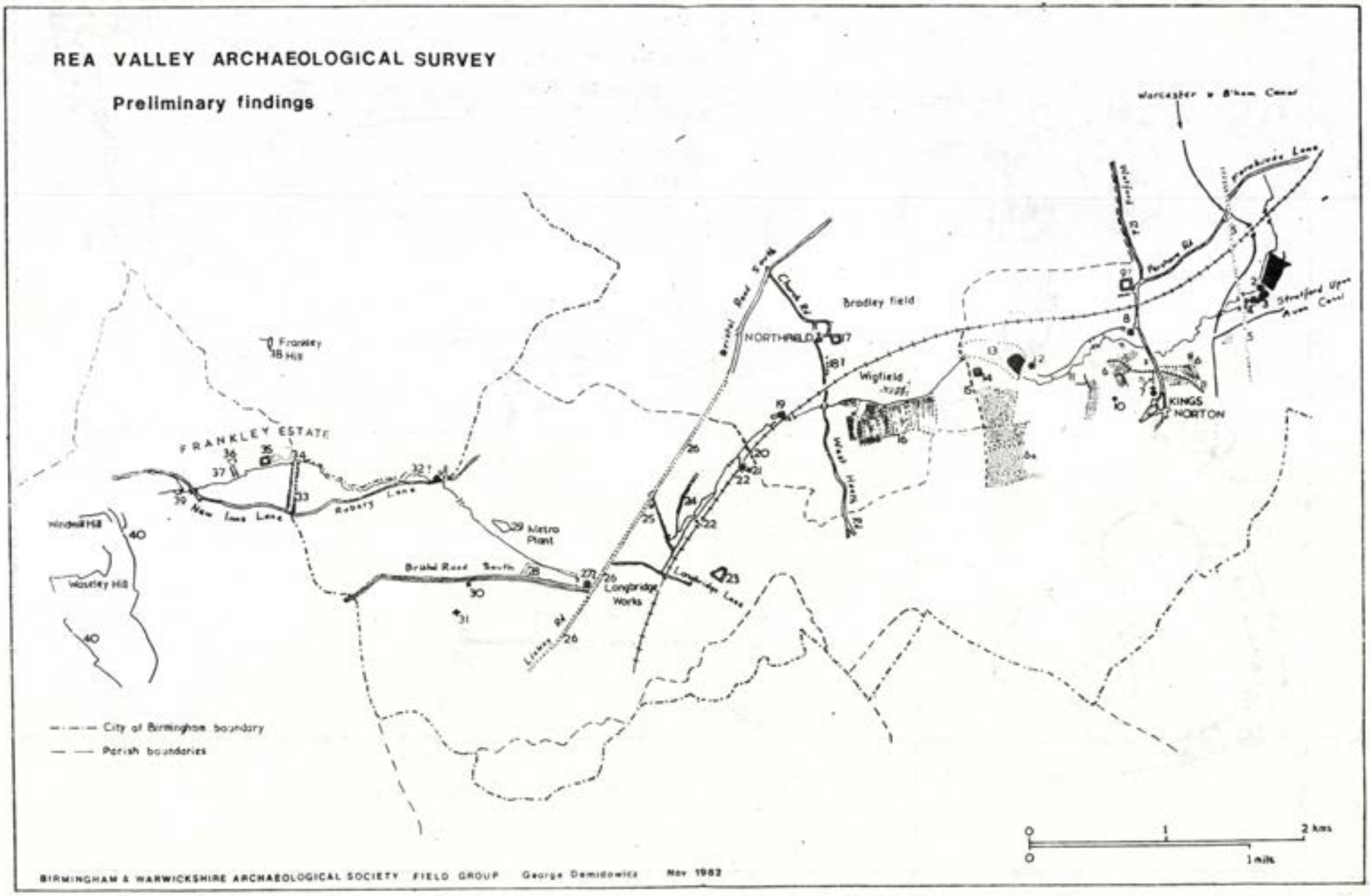

Fig.23 REA VALLEY: Preliminary findings of archaeological survey (Demidowicz)

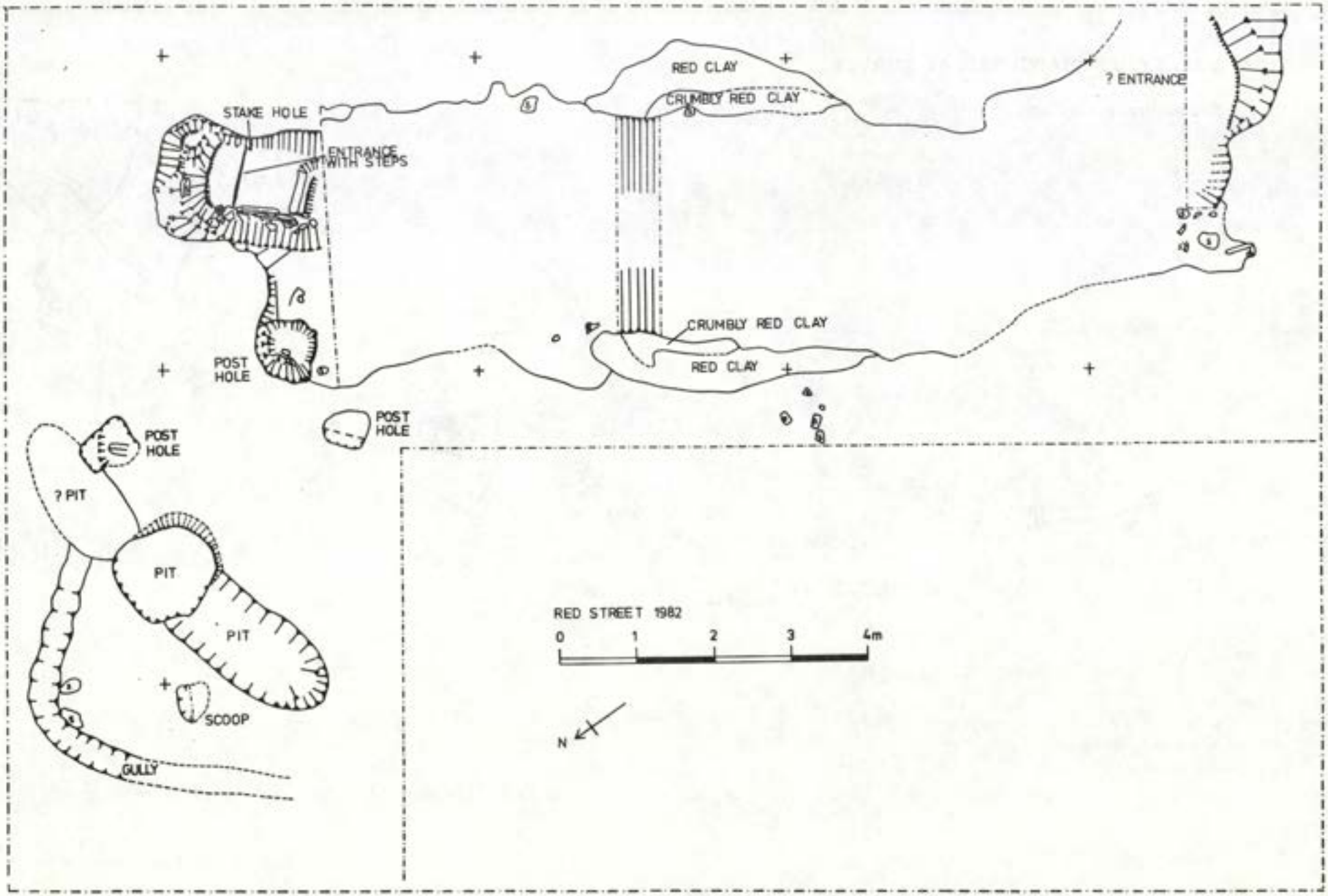

Fig.24 RED STREET: Plan of excavations (Taylor)

a red clay floor, and robbed c. 50 cms thick sandstone walls. This may have been a forming furnace or a crucible oven. This appears to date to the late 17th century. The glass found was mainly green window glass. Some fragments of bottle glass were found, but they may only have been scattered cullet. The crucibles - of a grey fabric - were very thick: 75 mm at the base to 20 mm at the rim. They were calculated as having a diameter of up to 1 m. - In February 1982, BUPAU conducted a two week rescue excavation. It was preceeded by a magnetometer survey by Dr. P. Strange, which revealed a major anomaly. Upon investigation this proved to be furnace and air passages. A number of other features were also defined and excavated. The area had already been stripped of topsoil by graders. It was further cleared by a bulldozer. All features were defined against natural clay. This meant that a depth of at least 50 cms of the site had been lost, and that no vertical stratigraphy had survived.

The Furnace (see plan)

This was a NE-SW running feature, c. 14 m long, c. 4 m wide, and defined by dark grey clay against yellow clay for most of its length, and by two bands of red clay, c 2 m long and c. 50 cms side appearing halfway along the feature. Three sections were cut across it: a north, a south, and a middle section. The north section revealed a steep-sided cut, c. 1.5 m deep. At the bottom of the cut was the remains of a step with horizontal and vertical wooden facing, and a stake hole for a retaining stake. Traces of at least three other steps were observed. The west side of the cut was faced with eleven courses of sandstone and shale, reaching c. 80 cms upwards from the bottom. Included in the lower backfill was a clay pipe bowl with the initials "CR" (Charles Rigg) and having a date range of 1600-1660 (probably 1650). The south section was more difficult to understand, but in the east of it traces of a step cut into natural were revealed. The middle section revealed red clay down both sides, but grey-yellow clay at the bottom. The primary fill at this point was cinders. During the final destruction of the glasshouse by bulldozer, a series of photographs of the longitudinal section was obtained. Study of these have shown that there appears to have been a partly destroyed stone structure immediately to the north of the middle section.

Other features (see plan)

Associated with the furnace and sealed by the top backfill was a subtantial post-hole c. 60 cms deep. It was position on the NW corner of the furnace. A second feature was revealed in section on the NE corner of the furnace. It also was c. 60 cms deep and may have been a post-hole. It was cut by the NE side of the furnace. The other pits, post-holes, gully and scoop were all of uncertain use. One, though, the circular pit with vertical and undercut sides was filled with cinders similar to those found at the bottom of the middle section of the furnace. This layer was sealed with a layer of mixed grey-yellow clay matrix. This matrix also filled the other features.

Interpretation

This is, obviously, a tentative interpretation awaiting results from finds analysis, magnetic dating results, and further research in general. Most of the minor features have uncertain functions, except the cinder-filled pit, which may have been for the disposal of cinders from the main furnace. None of them has been dated. The substantial post-hole at the NW corner of the furnace, and the possible post-hole at the NE corner may indicate a pitched roof structure similar to that postulated at the Bagot's Park glasshouse (Crossley 1967). The furnace itself appeared to have an entrance at both ends and a firebox structure in the middle, where the red clay indicated an area of high temperature. The deposition of cinders in the northern part of the furnace implies that the cinders were removed to the

north keeping the southern passageway clear so that the prevailing SW winds had clear access. The backfill, assuming that it is partly derived from the destroyed superstructure, may indicate a clay superstructure over the furnace and stone foundations or walls, or a larger covering structure as there was at the Bagot's Park glasshouse. It can be dated to the third quarter of the 17th century, or later, using the date for the clay pipe, which was in a well-sealed deposit. The natural clay, especially when fired appears to have been solid enough to keep its shape without too much revetting or lining. The NE side of the furnace does not appear to have been faced like the NW side. From the size of the furnace, and the cinders, it is obvious that it was coal-fired. This is also borne out by its siting on a coal-seam and by its likely date of use: within the 17th century. Most of the finds from the furnace were broken crucible and green window glass, with some pottery and some mis-shapen glass. No evidence of any cullet heap was found, although some of the mis-shapen glass may have been cullet.

M.D. Taylor

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SANDWELL, West Midlands County SP 03 92

Interim Report on Sandwell Valley Archaeological Project Figs. 25,26,27

The project began in August 1982, as a Manpower Services Commission CEP scheme initiated by BUFAU andsponsored by Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council. It is concerned with the recording and public display of the archaeology and history of the Sandwell Valley, one of the few open spaces of any size in the West Midland conurbation. The project includes archaeological survey and excavation, documentary research, and vegetation survey.

Field survey

A preliminary assessment has been made of the archaeological potential of the whole of the Sandwell Valley. Its landscape is typical of that of open areas within the West Midland conurbation: it consists mainly of grassland used for recreation and for horse grazing, together with some woods and a small area of arable land. There has been extensive earthmoving for landscaping in recent times, but some ridge and furrow and other earthworks are preserved in grass. The aerial photographs of the area have been examined, and one cropmark has been located, in grassland (SV4, below). Early in 1983 it is intended to walk the arable fields and to search stream banks for exposures of sites.

The documentary research has now been extended to cover the whole of the Sandwell Valley and an exhibition is in preparation for display at Sandwell Park Farm from March 1983.

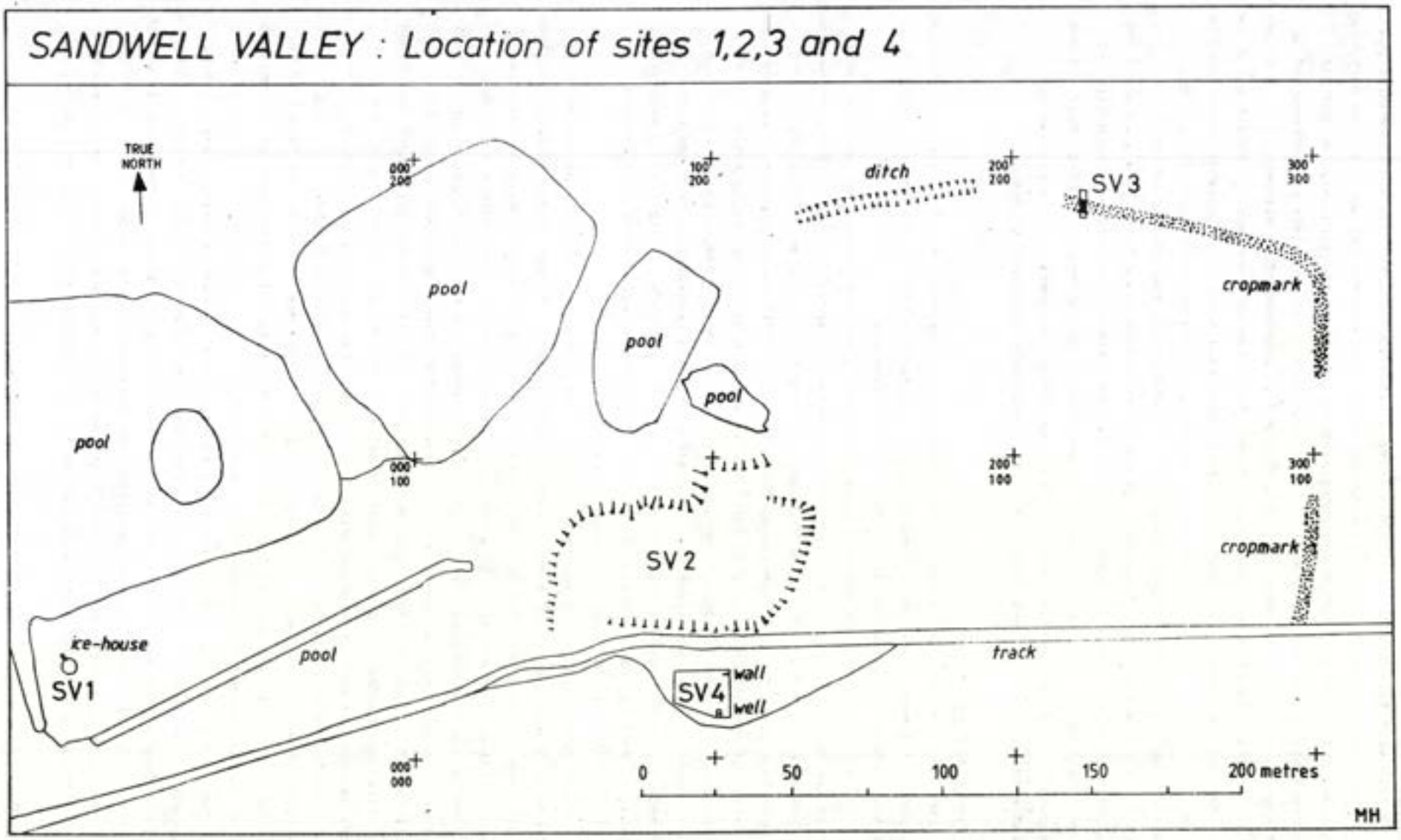

Fig.25 SANDWELL: Location plan of Sites 1,2,3 and 4 (Hodder)

The ice-house (SV1) (figs. 25,26)

There were formerly two ice-houses serving Sandwell Hall, but one was discovered and destroyed without record when the M5 motorway was cut through the valley. At the surviving ice-house, sufficient excavation was undertaken to understand its structure, so that it would be restored for public viewing. It is brick-built, and consists of a chamber and an entrance passage. The chamber is c. 4 m high and is composed of a cylinder 2.9 m in diameter and 2.7 m high, capped by a hemispherical dome. A second wall encases the cylinder and the lower part of the hemisphere, creating a cavity for insulation. The chamber was entered on the north side at a height of 2.4 m above its base, along a bridge passage 2.8 m long, covered by an arched roof. This opened out on the north on the edge of the pool from which the ice was have been obtained. The whole structure was covered by a clay mound for insulation. It was probably constructed in the 18th century following the rebuilding of Sandwell Hall in 1705-11 (SV2, below). It went out of use during the 19th century and was subsequently used as a rubbish dump. The bases of the chambers and the passage were filled with pottery and glass fragments of 19th and early 20th century date.

The Priory and Hall (SV2) (fig.27)

Documentary and field surveys were undertaken to determine the location and condition of structural remains, and to determine the most suitable locations for trial trenches to test the archaeological potential of the site by excavation.

The aim of the documentary search was to identify building phases on the site and to isolate the archaeological implications of each phase. Sandwell Priory, a Benedictine house, was founded c. 1180-90. There are few early sources for the history of the priory, and the two most important, Gervase Pagnel's confirmation of the 12th century endowment charter, and the survey of the site made in 1526 after the suppression of the priory, survive only as copies, probably somewhat corrupt (Mon, vol.iv). From these accounts the layout of the priory complex can be reconstructed. Transcriptions and translations from the Latin have been made of other documents relating to the priory (Homer 1928). The site is referred to as Sandwell Hall by 1611. There are several 17th century leases (CRO). A probate inventory of 1705 (LRO) lists the rooms of the hall.

Major rebuilding took place in 1705-11. From then on the bulk of the documentary evidence is provided by the Dartmouth estate papers (CRO). These include letters detailing the progress of the rebuilding and audit reports referring to later repairs and extensions to the buildings. There are also a number of drawings of the 18th century hall (WSL). The final group of documents, from which the relationship between the buildings of the hall and those of the priory can be deduced, are newspaper cuttings (WBL) which cover the demolition of the hall in 1928. At this time the brick walls of the later hall were found to overlie the foundations of the sandstone walls of the priory in some places, and in others sections of the upstanding walls of the priory had been encased in brick.

A survey of the existing vegetation of the site was made in October 1982, and vegetation zones were defined. The purpose of the survey was to assess the impact of the proposed archaeological excavations on the natural habitat, and to find whether the existing vegetation was related to the underlying archaeology.

Two of the zones (2 and 3) are predominantly wooded. Each contains a large proportion of sycamore, the removal of which will improve the quality of the natural habitat. There was a large proportion of ash, but oak was absent other than as seedlings. The quantity of ash may be a result of a shallow soil overlying lime-rich ruins on the site.

The existing masonry and earthwork features of the site were planned, and levels were taken. The most prominent earthwork feature is a rectangular platform c. 80 x 40 cm, with

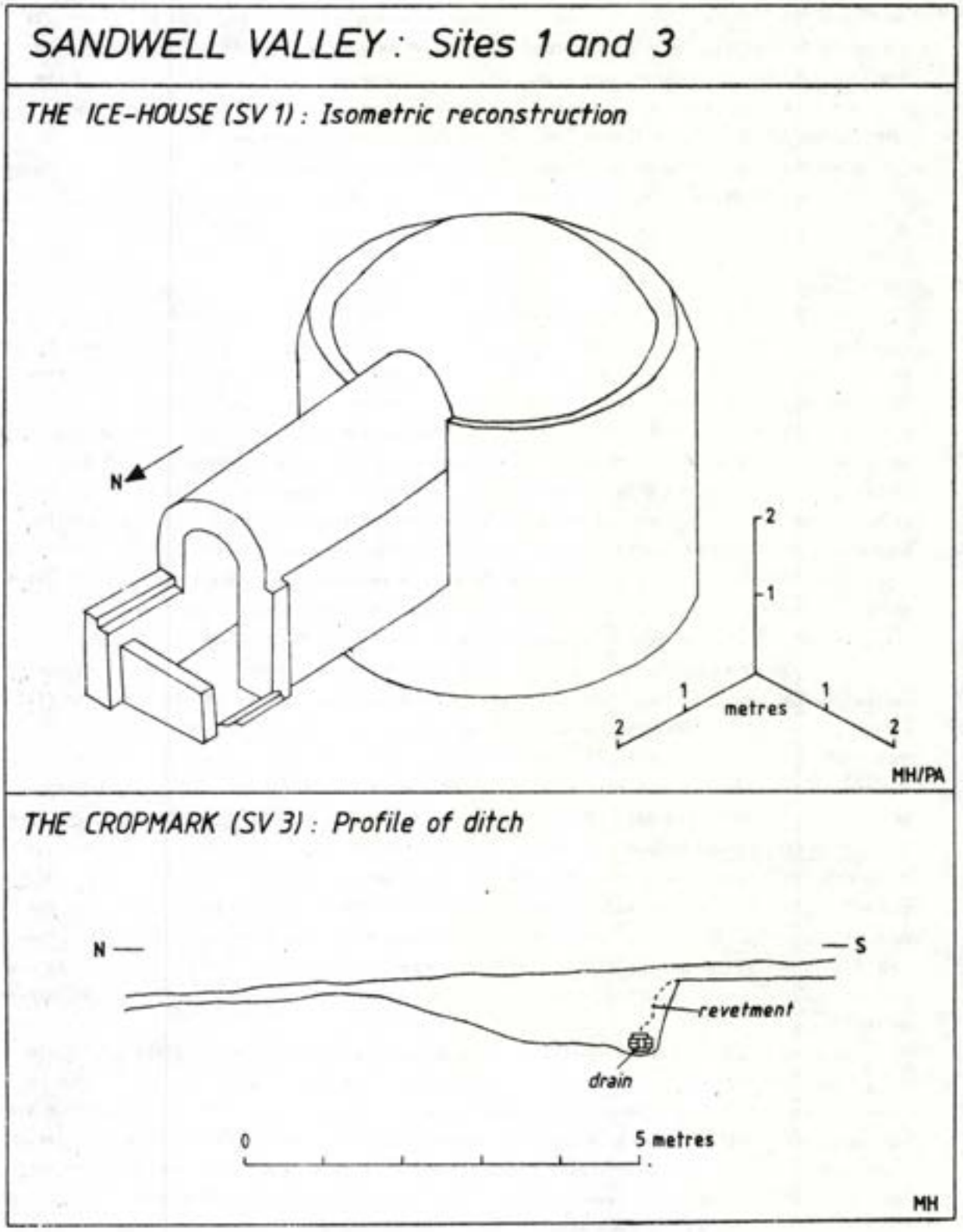

Fig.26 SANDWELL: Sites 1 and 3 (Hodder/Atkinson)

a rectangular extension to the north. The platform is c. 1.5 m below the surrounding ground level on the south and east c. 1.5 m above ground level on the north and c. 2 m above on the west. There is brick and sandstone rubble, including some dressed stone, on the surface of the platform. The standing masonry features include a rectangular brick-built structure to the north of the platform, a length of sandstone wall with brick casing, and smaller sections of sandstone and brick walling and concrete floors. Disturbance of the site after the demolition of the hall is indicated by pits and their associated dumps. Probing suggested that the floors and wall foundations of the hall remain.

The trial excavations, beginning early in 1983, will consist of six trenches to locate the walls of the priory and hall and to determine their condition and the condition of deposits between them.

The cropmark (SV3) (figs. 25,26)

Aerial photographs (WMCC 1977, no.101/077; 1980, no.9182 and 9183) show a curving dark line c. 5 m wide in the field to the east of the priory/hall site. It is broken by a gap of c. 20 m in its north-south stretch. To the west its line is continued beyond the field boundary by a straight ditch c. 4 m wide on a slightly different alignment, whose south side is revetted with a brick wall. To the south the feature is not traceable further as either a cropmark or an earthwork. The feature may define an enclosure around the priory/hall site. Nothing is marked on the line of the cropmark on the 1:2500 OS map of 1889, so the feature represented had been dug and filled in before then. Ditched precinct enclosures are known at the Benedictine houses of Bardney (Lincs) where the enclosure has an entrance east of the church, and at St. Benet's of Holme (Norfolk) (Brakspear 1922; Knowles and St. Joseph 1952, 22-25). At Sandwell the surviving western arm could have been straightened and brick-revetted to serve as an ornamental garden feature in the 18th century.

Surveys and an excavation were undertaken to determine the form and date of the feature represented by the cropmark. Probing across the line of the cropmark showed that the fill of the feature was harder than the surrounding ground, and the line of the feature was confirmed by dowsing. The field is now grazed by horses and the cropmark is visible on the ground as a heavily-grazed area, although other parts of the field away from the cropmark and also heavily grazed. The distribution of fruiting spikes of the broad-leaved dock Rumex obtusifolius was mapped. This appears to pick out the line of the cropmark but again docks also grow elsewhere. The presence of dock on the cropmark is probably a result of the grazing activites of the horses; they graze the area of the cropmark in preference to the rest of the field, and the shortness of the vegetation then allows dock seedlings to become established here. A quadrat analysis of the vegetation both on and off the cropmark is now in progress, to obtain detailed quantitative information on differences in plant communities in the field.

In October 1982 a trench, 9 m x 2 m, was excavated across the line of the cropmark near the western edge of the field. This revealed a ditch 1.6 m wide and 1 m deep cut into the natural clay. It was filled with coal and clinker. The fill sealed a brick revetment against the south side of the ditch and a brick land drain along its base. Finds suggested that the ditch was backfilled in the late 18th or early 19th centuries. Although there was no evidence for recutting, the ditch may have been originally dug as a boundary to the priory complex, and later recut to serve as an ornamental channel, like the surviving ditch to the west.

The Holy Well or Sand Well (SV4) (fig.25)

A vegetation survey was carried out in October 1982 of the area around the spring known as the Holy Well, to assess the effect of clearance of the area for archaeological excavation

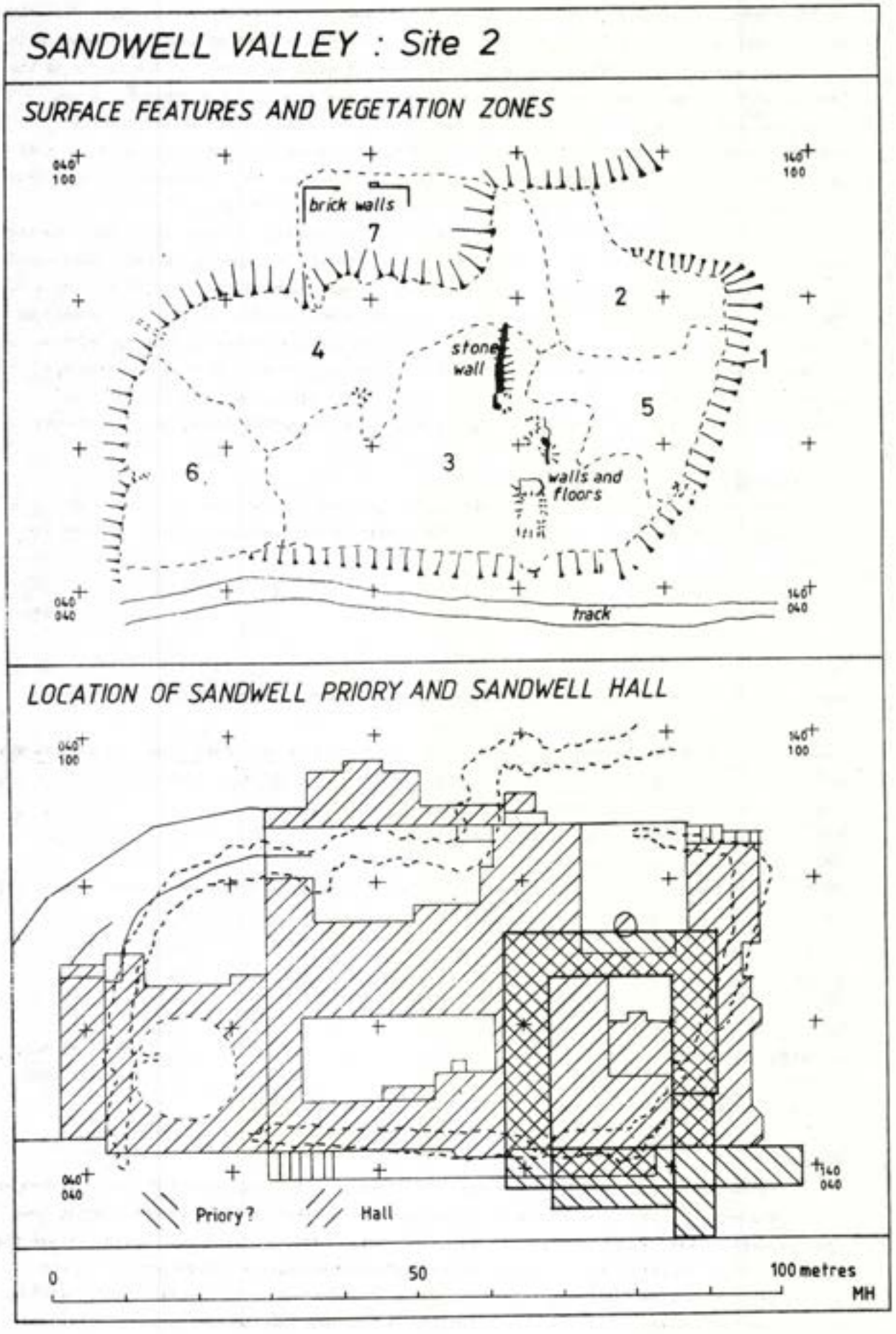

Fig.27 SANDWELL: Site 2 (Hodder)

on the floral diversity of the valley, and to see whether the existing vegetation was related to the underlying archaeology. Forty-four species were found, all of which are common both nationally and locally. The trees on the site had all grown up since the demolition of the hall in 1928. There was a trend north-south across the site; in the north there was grassland, and in the south scrub with small trees. Cartographic and archaeological evidence (below) indicates that the track to the north formerly extended further south than at present. The area of the track was available for colonisation by plants at a later stage than the rest, hence there is more mature vegetation in the south part.

An area of c. 18 m x 18 m is at present under excavation. In the south there are the remains of a drinking fountain fed by springs. It consists of three brick tanks surrounded by iron railings. On the north a gravel surface, an extension of the track to provide a turning circle for coaches, overlies a carefully laid cobble surface with a clearly-defined western edge. In the north-east corner of the site a sump pit revealed that the cobbles had been laid over a wall foundation of dressed sandstone blocks. This is possibly the south wall of the south aisle of the priory church, which then lies further south than predicted (above, SV2; fig.27) and is likely to be well preserved below the existing track.

Acknowledgements

Parts of this report were contributed by the project supervisors, R. Barnes and G. Higgeson (archaeological excavation), J. Glew (documentary research), and S. O'Donnell (botany).

M.A. Hodder

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LRO Joint Record Office, Lichfield

Mon. W. Dugdale, Monasticon Anglicanum

WBL West Bromwich Library

WMCC West Midlands County Council aerial survey (in Planning Department, County Hall)

WSL William Salt Library, Stafford.

STAFFORD, Staffordshire

Area: SJ 9122

SMR: ST 1600

Excavations in central Stafford Fig. 26

Summary

The second season in the current research campaign into Anglo-Saxon Stafford closed with two of the main samples (Bath Street and Clark Street) complete and two others (Market Area and Eastgate Street) fully open and within a few months of Saxon levels. Together these four sites (ST 15,19,29,34) comprise about 1.5% of the predicted area of Saxon settlement and represent four different zones within it. About 30 additional cuttings have contributed to the evaluation and mapping of the early medieval settlement, and we now have the option on

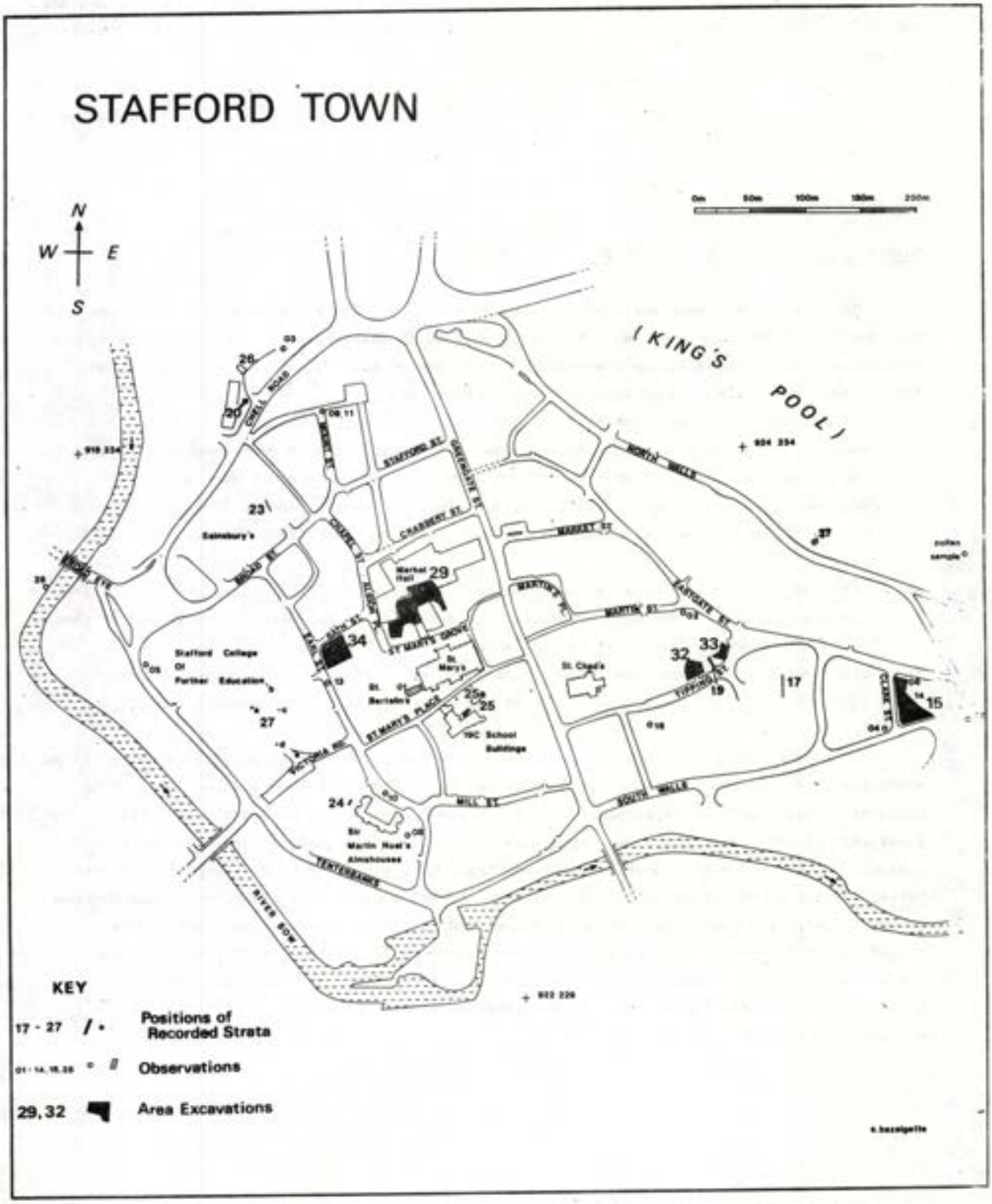


Fig.28 STAFFORD: Town plan and location of sites (Bazalgette)

the re-excavation of the area of St. Bertelin's Chapel, thought to be the nucleus of the pre-Aethelflaedan activity. In 1983, the two current sites are scheduled for completion and salvage recording will therefore be carried out on the Market Area site. Post-excavation analysis will concentrate on Anglo-Saxon activities, Stafford ware, and the hinterland project, while project records will be finalised which include all information recovered since 1950, banked in consistent format. Publication is now to take the form of a fully illustrated monograph.

M.O.H. Carver

Market Area, St. Mary's Grove (ST29) Fig. 29 SJ 9213 2327

The site has now been extended to cover an area of c. 750 m^2, more than half of the back gardens of St. Mary's Grove. The black soil which characterizes the post-medieval has been removed by machine leaving a maximum of c. 20 cms of material above the natural sand. Even at this early stage three important facts are evident:

1) The natural sand slopes sharply down from 1 m in the SW to 3 m below modern ground surface in the NE. The dumping which caused this increase in depth may be a result of attempts to level off what would have been a considerable slope down from the highest point of the town (at St. Mary's Church). However, though shallower, the truncation of the earlier strata by cultivation which was evident on ST34 has not taken place.
2) The northern half of the site continues to be relatively free of later features. The few that occur have now been excavated. Later feature concentration increases to the south and excavation of these is continuing.
3) The discovery of a possible grave at the south end, closest to the churchyard, may indicate that the site includes part of the earlier extent to St. Mary's cemetery.

On the northern side of the site, excavation of the late Saxon strata has begun. It now seems possible that the first dumping episode may be late Saxon rather than medieval. The medieval material in this layer seems to have intruded as a result of later cultivation. The lower part of this layer contained large quantities of Stafford Ware and was cut by two features. One is a sunken feature with two "Chambers", separated by four substantial post holes, forming an '8' shaped pit. The eastern end had a burnt clay floor, which was covered in burnt grain, and the feature may have functioned as a corn drier of some sort. The second is similar to the low-temperature oven excavated in the 1979 trial trench to the north (Carver 1981). Very little pottery has been recovered from either feature, but both are probably late Saxon. The Anglo-Saxon sequence is scheduled to be completely excavated during 1983.

J. Cane

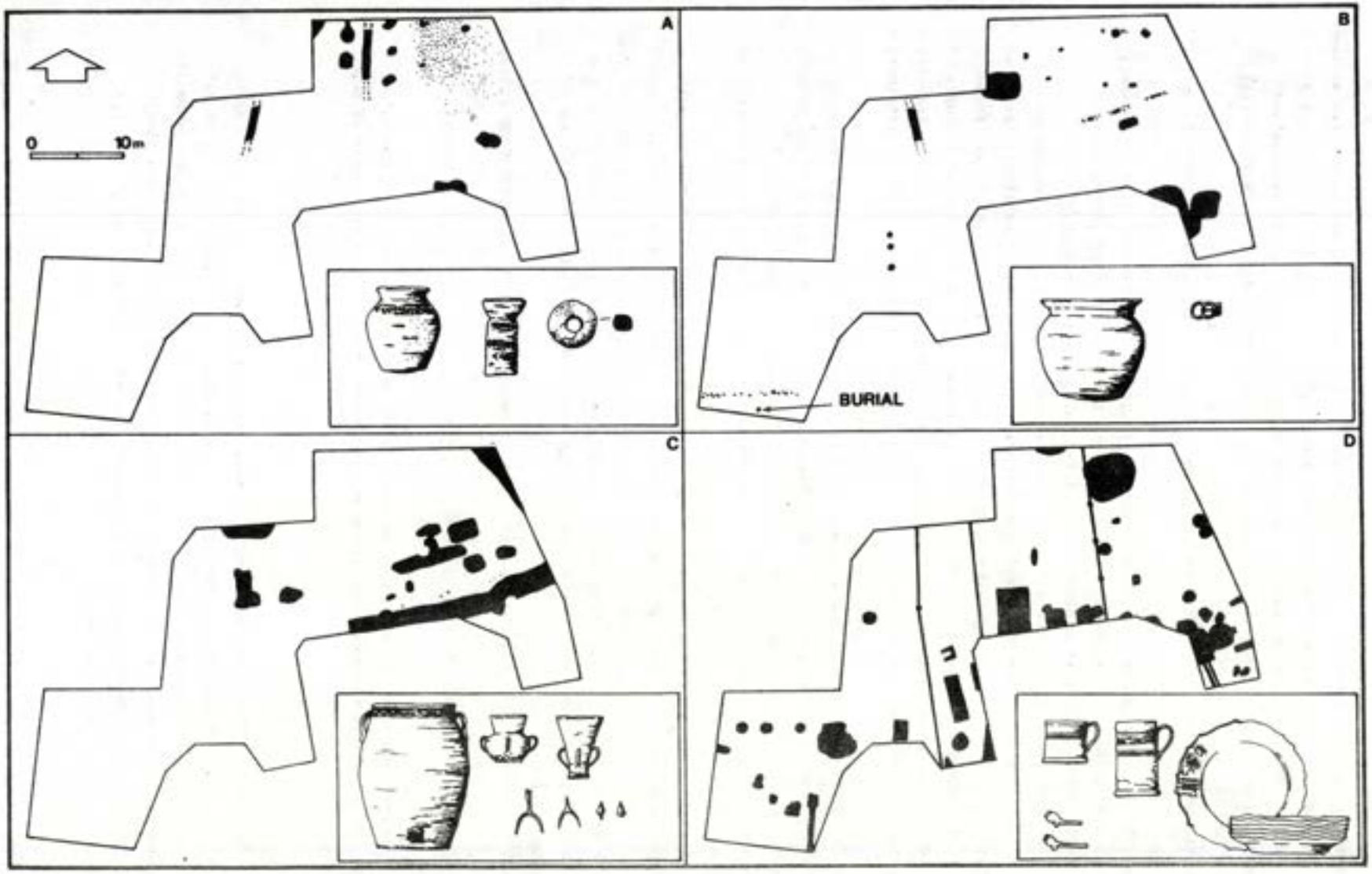


Fig.29 STAFFORD: ST29 - Main phases with artefact types: A. Late Saxon; B. Medieval; C. Late Medieval; D. Post Medieval. (Cane)

Market Area Excavations: Bath Street (ST 34) Fig.30 SJ 92030 23214

Excavation of a car park fronting onto Bath Street and Earl Street was undertaken between November 1981 and July 1982 in advance of redevelopment (WMA 23, 1980, fig.3). Of the area under threat just under 50% was examined. The aim of the excavation was to recover and analyse evidence of activity from the earliest to the post-medieval deposits, with special emphasis on the earlier medieval Saxon deposits.

Two trenches (ST 35, ST 36) were excavated by machine in March 1981, as part of the Site Evaluation strategy adopted for Stafford (Taylor in BUFAU Report No.4, 18). The earliest surviving deposits were of medieval date. Additional information from documentary sources suggested strongly that the area as a whole had been devoid of buildings from at least the early part of the 17th century to the later part of the 19th century.

The earliest occupation on the site took the form of a fairly shallow, round-bottomed rubbish pit (F.74 fig.30) which contained animal bones and a number of identifiable 'Stafford Ware' pottery sherds. No other features or finds of a similar late Saxon date were found.

The next stage in the development of the site is represented by a series of features which cut into the natural sand and gravel subsoil. They can be broadly classified into three distinct groups of features - a distinction that is made more interesting by their distribution on the site.

Confined to the west end of the site are a series of shallow linear beam slots aligned north-south and running almost parallel to Earl Street. The difference in alignment between F 78 and F.96 (see fig.30) may suggest at least some rebuilding. Post-holes running parallel and at right-angles to these shallow beam slots add further to the interpretation of timber built properties set side-on to the street.

The south-east corner of the area excavated contained a high density of rubbish pits. Most were sub-rectangular or circular in shape, had steep sloping sides and varied in depth from 50 cms to over 2.5 m deep. Rubbish deposits comprised animal bone, pottery and occasional fragments of roof tile. These finds were in most cases confined to the upper 10% of the pit fill, the remainder being very humic soil largely devoid of artefacts. No evidence of timber lining was found.

Restricted to the north side of the site were a group of pit features with steep sides, rectangular or square in shape and with fairly flat bottoms. Their shape and dimensions taken with their notable lack of material rubbish suggest that they are of an industrial nature.

This medieval activity was sealed by garden soil of 18th century date. A number of post-medieval brick buildings were also uncovered and can be dated to the later part of the 19th century.

Acknowledgements

The excavation of this site would not have been possible without the help and efforts of many people. I would like to acknowledge with thanks Jon and Charlotte Cane for their immense interest and involvement in the work on site. I would also like to thank my assistant Jenny Glazebrook who saw the site through from its inception to the end. And lastly I acknowledge the co-operation and support of Arrowcroft Limited, Stafford County Council, Stafford Borough Council and the DoE.

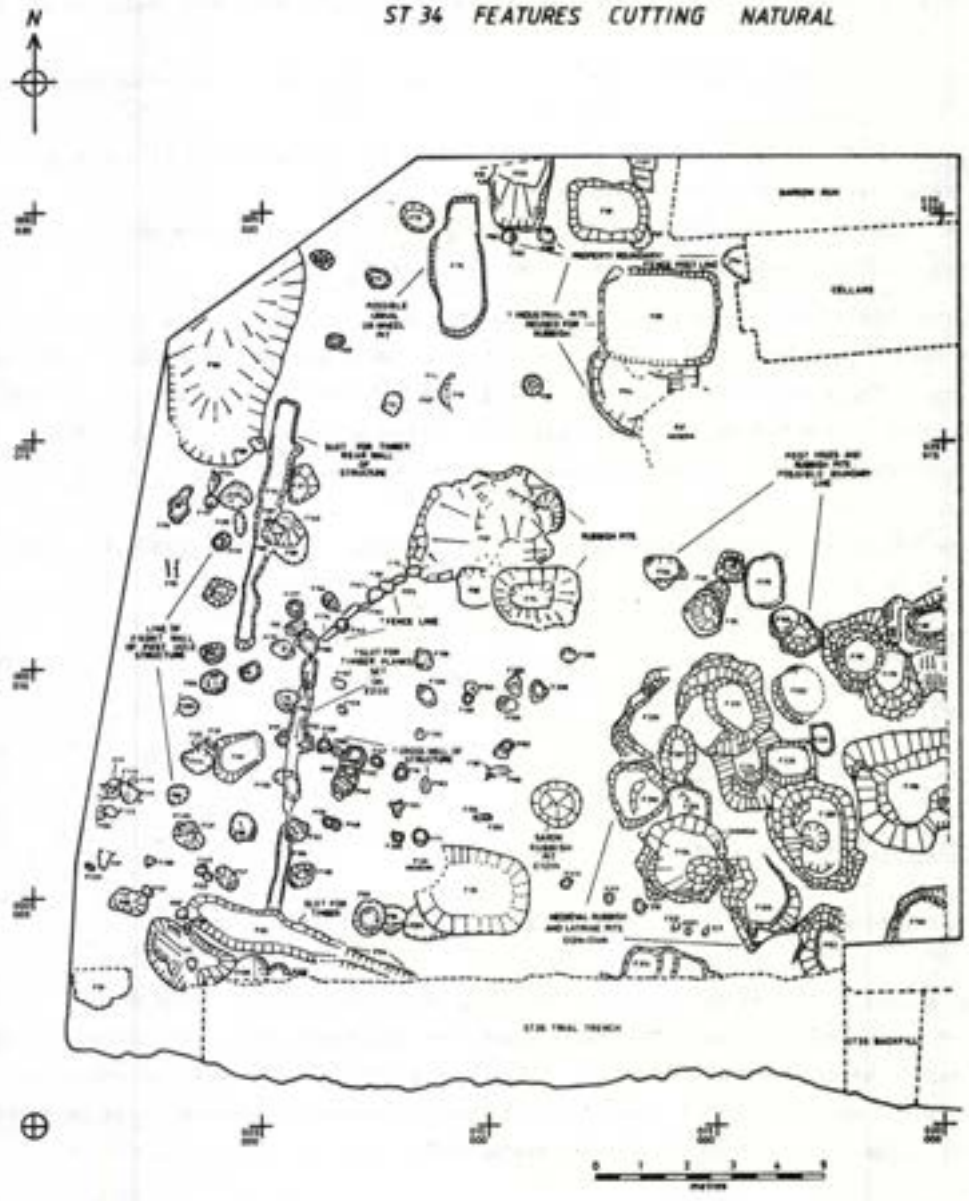


Fig.30 STAFFORD: ST34 - Plan of excavations (King/Glazebrook)

Eastgate Street (ST 32) Fig. 31 SJ 9235 2320

ST32 is situated on the north side of Tipping Street. We know from map evidence that this area was built up with houses by the early 17th century. It is, therefore, reasonable to assume that ST32 is situated in the back gardens of these houses, and that the features of this date and later are connected with them and their successors.

The medieval strata are currently being excavated. There are three main areas of interest:

1. An area of sparsely scattered sandstone blocks and a hint of a pebble surface, much cut by later pits.
2. A large area of dark grey-brown soil which appears to mask a series of large pits (perhaps a parallel to the ST34 pit area).
3. A timber-lined well, square in plan. The bottom two sets of planks have been preserved, and a sample from one has been taken for C^{14} dating.

These were sealed by garden soil. Cutting this soil is an area of early post-medieval features: a series of post holes; and two possible boundary ditches appearing to delineate a plot of land. The post-medieval period is well represented: particularly by rubbish pits; and two latrine pits, the northern one of which was a free-standing structure. Modern features include walls, pits, and deep sewage pipe trench immediately under the car park surfacing.

The site is currently being extended to the east, roughly trebling its size. The completion date for it is August 1983.

M.D. Taylor

A Note on "Stafford Ware" Fig. 32

Discovery and Distribution:-

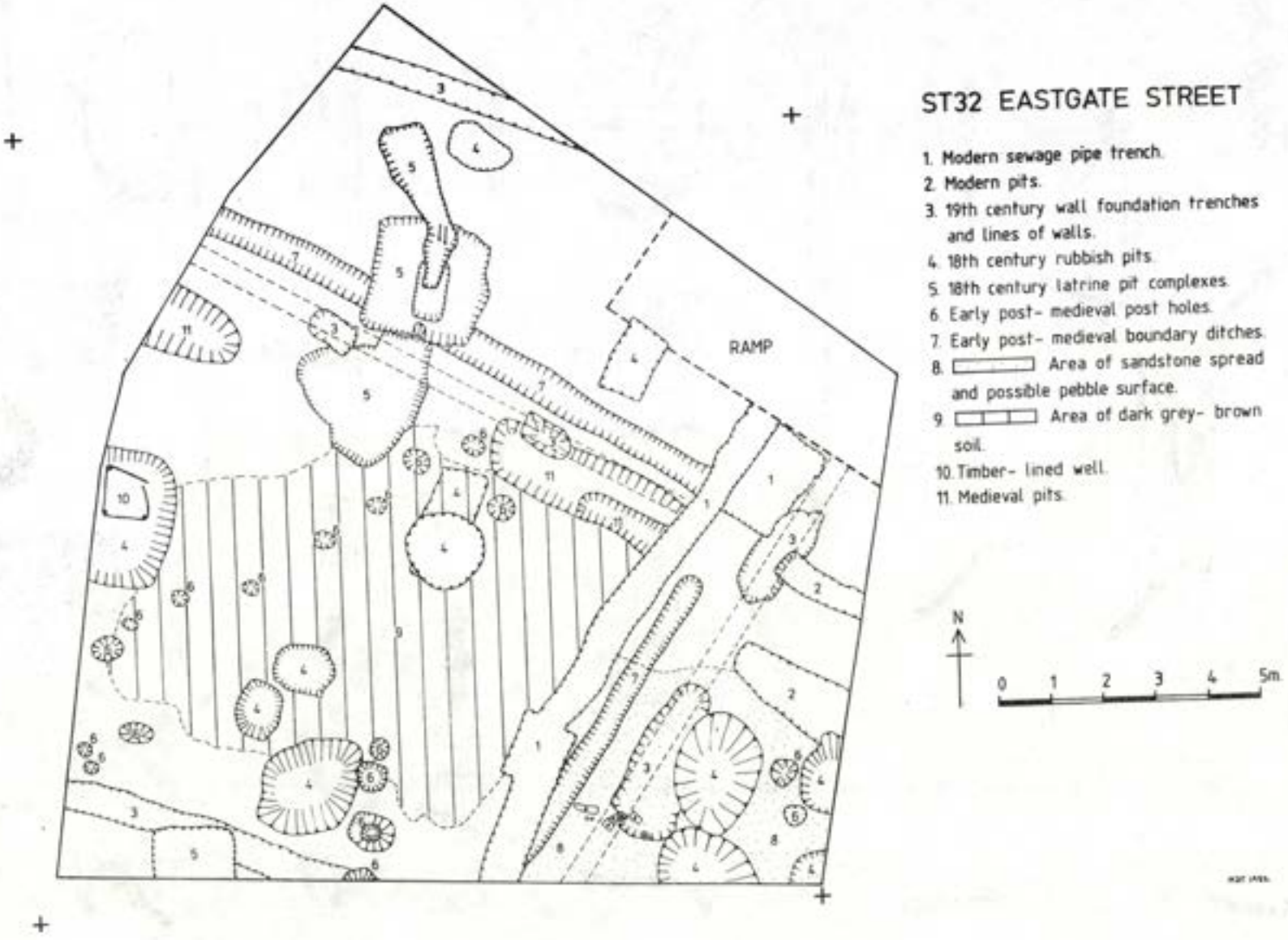
A large quantity of pottery found during the 1975 excavations in Clark Street, Stafford, was identified by its fabric, form, decoration and site stratigraphy as Late Saxon. This pottery was very similar to 'Chester Ware'. However, in 1977 a kiln was discovered in Stafford containing wasters of this pottery, which has consequently become known as 'Stafford Ware'. Other finds spots include Worcester, Shrewsbury, Hereford and Barton Blount.

Fabric, Form and Decoration:-

'Stafford Ware' fabrics are characterised by very large amounts of quartz with occasional red and black inclusions. The body is usually orange, often with a grey core, but reduced grey fabrics regularly occur.

The body is usually fairly thick but occasionally very fine. The most represented form is the rolled-rim cooking pot; also represented are flanged rims, usually on bowls. Pitchers may be represented by fragments of handles and some possible spouts. All 'Stafford Ware' forms found so far have sagging bases (fig.31).

Many of the 'Stafford Ware' vessels are decorated with rouletting, usually made up of irregular lozenges but there are also examples of square patterned rouletting. Some vessels are decorated with incised lines.



ST32 EASTGATE STREET

1. Modern sewage pipe trench.
2. Modern pits.
3. 19th century wall foundation trenches and lines of walls.
4. 18th century rubbish pits.
5. 18th century latrine pit complexes.
6. Early post- medieval post holes.
7. Early post- medieval boundary ditches.
8. Area of sandstone spread and possible pebble surface.
9. Area of dark grey- brown soil.
10. Timber- lined well.
11. Medieval pits.

N

0 1 2 3 4 5m.

Fig.31 STAFFORD: ST32 - Plan of excavations (Taylor)

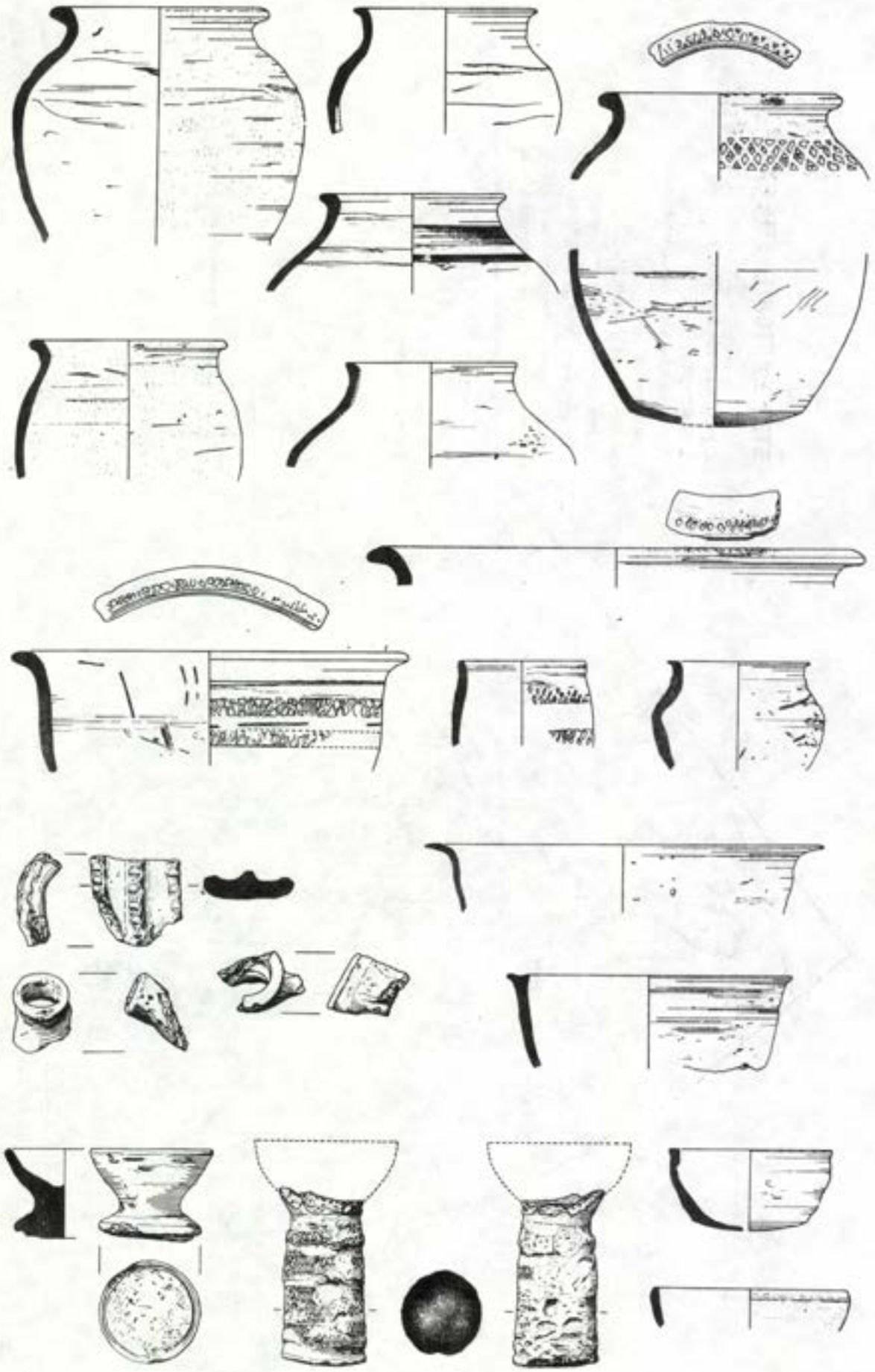


Fig.32 STAFFORD: A selection of "Stafford Ware" form types, including two lamps (bottom left) (Hooper/Skippon-Cook)

Research Aims:-

The present Stafford excavations should answer some basic questions concerning 'Stafford Ware' by providing information on:

1) The range of fabric and forms;
2) A chronological framework with indpendent dates;
3) The relationship with 'Chester Ware' and other Late Saxon pottery types;
4) The source of raw materials.

The Bath Street excavations, now completed, contained small quantities of residual 'Stafford Ware' and only one primary context containing substantial quantities - fragments of a half complete pot. In Tipping Street residual 'Stafford Ware' occurs in half of the post medieval pottery groups, and in most medieval groups. The latest Saxon layers in St. Mary's Grove have produced large quantities of 'Stafford Ware', and many new form types, including a torch (fig.32). This torch is in 'Stafford Ware' fabric, and the handle is decorated with lozenge rouletting, which appears to start and finish, in each row, along the same vertical line.

From the Bath Street site, five sherds of partially green-glazed pottery have been discovered with a fabric identical to 'Stafford Ware'. This may suggest that the 'Stafford Ware' industry was experimenting with glaze, in the same way as the 'Northampton Ware' industry. One of these five sherds is a rim sherd, but it may not be very firmly diagnostic as it appears to be a waster.

C.B.K. Cane

Hinterland Project

A study has begun to examine the evolution and interaction of the settlement structure in an arbitrary region of the West Midlands (with special reference to Stafford) and to observe the distribution of activities and functions relating to this settlement in successive periods. The study area is a 60 km square (with Stafford approximately central) and all relevant data will be collected for the Norman period through to the Reformation, enlisting all possible sources of information (archaeological, historical, topographical, etc.). So far, a collection of material from the relevant Sites and Monuments Records has been completed and a series of maps showing this information is being produced. Further stages in the study are to include an evalution of thenatural resources of the area and their influence on Stafford and its hinterland.

L. Bowkett

STOKE-ON-TRENT, Staffordshire SJ 863435

A leaf-shaped arrowhead was found in the garden of 83 Leawood Road, Trent Vale, Stoke-on-Trent by Mrs. K. Shotton in 1978. It was donated to the City Museum and Art Gallery (acc. no. K2.1980). Length: 31 mm; width, 9 mm; max thickness 5 mm.

C.F. Hawke-Smith

STOKE-ON-TRENT, Staffordshire SJ 8643

Historic Buildings Survey: City Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent

This survey, financed by the Manpower Services Commission, began in December 1981, and was due for completion in December 1982, but has been extended for a further three months. The non-intensive survey, based on external observation only, and consisting of a series of photographs and written description has to date (12.82) covered 75% of the City, representing c.30,000 structures. All buildings still standing from before 1922 are included in this survey. The intensive survey, consisting of detailed measured drawings and photographs, has so far concentrated on structures in immediate danger of demolition. So far 40 buildings have been covered, including several 'bottle-ovens', Hanley Market, and a sample of timber-framed and terraced houses. A structural survey of all the extant bottle-ovens has also been completed.

The records will be placed in an archive at the Museum, where they can be consulted freely by interested persons. It is hoped that indexing and publication of the survey will be achieved in the near future.

C.F. Hawke-Smith

SUTTON CHASE, Staffordshire/Warwickshire/West Midlands

Field survey Area SP 1097

The study of the development of aspects of the landscape of Sutton Chase, previously reported in WMA 23 (pp.114-117) and WMA 24 (pp.110-112) continued in 1982.

In Sutton Park a test-pit was dug into one of the 'burnt mounds' which had been partially excavated in 1926, to extract a charcoal sample for radiocarbon dating. The mound was found to be composed of heat-cracked stones but no charcoal was found. The Sutton Park site differs from the other burnt mounds in the Birmingham area (WMA 23, pp8-26; 24, pp.56-59; 25, pp.00-00) in both the absence of charcoal and in its location on a slope at some distance from a source of water.

Also in Sutton Park, a straight length of bank and ditch with a total width of c.2.5m was traced just inside a part of the existing park boundary which was created in 1826 when Lady Wood, one of the 16th century woodland enclosures, was taken out of the park. The bank and ditch earthwork is of the same size and form as the boundaries of the other 16th century enclosures, and may therefore be interpreted as the southern boundary of Lady Wood.

M.A. Hodder

TONG, Shropshire SJ 795073

SMR AM 300

Excavations at the College of St. Bartholomew

Research into the overall Tong area, which proceeded during investigations and excavations on sites affected by the M54 Telford motorway, raised questions concerning the development of the village itself.

A 'Tong Church' referred to in a local Saxon will could have been within the Tong Norton area, which does not occur by name till the 12th century. The 11th century church founded by Earl Roger of Montgomery began a Norman development of Tong village at its present location. The excavation of the site of the College to the south of Tong Church could therefore provide evidence of occupation either before or after the building of the Norman church.

The site of the College was first located in August 1911 by Mr. N.H. Howard-McLean of Tong Priory who observed and drew the outline of the College foundations, clearly visible in the form of parch marks in a field adjacent to the churchyard, which, by coincidence, were also visible during May whilst the excavation was taking place. The last occupation of the College buildings was during the late 18th century, the buildings being shown on the Map of Tong drawn in 1739, with the buildings themselves being demolished around 1800 to 'tidy up' the landscaping between Tong Castle and the church. The excavation of the College was proposed for three reasons: firstly, to determine whether the outline drawn by Howard-McLean is a true representation of the actual remaining foundations; secondly, to see whether any other, or earlier, buildings lay within the College complex; and lastly, to try and determine the earliest occupation on the site prior to the building of the College in c. 1410.

The excavation revealed a pre-existing building to the west of the predicted College plan. The excavated foundations showed the original plan of the College to be a small quadrangle with four surrounding buildings enclosing the square and having a walled cloister or walking area alongside the inside of the buildings. A sunken cobbled trackway was located to the west of the early building and a single doorway in the north east of the building appears to be the entrance into the College from the trackway. The large room within the earlier building had curved stonework in one corner which could have been an elevated pulpit or rostrum if the room had been the College refectory or dining-room. A stone-lined pit in front of the curved stone-work appears to have been an access through the floor to a sunken water-supply, possibly fed by a spring from a higher level in the field, which has now dried up. A large stone tile had been laid to support the flooring or a cover and was one of many such roof tiles excavated from the site.

The doorway from the sunken track led into a smaller room in the middle of which was a large square post-hole cutting into the natural red sandstone bedrock which did not align to any of the building walls. The post-hole's shape and size was identical with examples in the 11th century defences at Tong Castle and although earlier building foundations and further bedrock cuttings have been located to the west of the sunken way, the date and reason for the occupation of the area has still to be determined.

Alan Wharton
for Tong Archaeological Group

WALL, Staffordshire SK 098066

Excavation on the Roman Site

Excavation has now been resumed immediately north of the stone courtyard building and east of the Bath House. An area 27 x 12m has been opened up, and at the western limit a considerable amount of material from old spoil heaps is being removed to reveal a buried turf layer 150 mm thick. This layer sealed old excavation trenches which are unrecorded and appear to be the work of Colonel Bagnall in 1887. These features are now being examined, recorded and plotted.

At the eastern end of the excavation were the remains of a 20th century allotment garden, which has been excavated to remove contamination. This operation is now complete and the seed and planting trenches dug into the sub-soil duly recorded.

Frank and Nancy Ball
for South Staffs. Arch. and Historical Society
and Department of the Environment

WALL, Staffordshire SK 097065

Salvage recording at Village Institute

During October 1982 a new kitchen and drain were built at the Village Institute situated on the south side of Watling Street. The construction trenches and soak-away were examined but found to be dug only into unstratified levels and no features were observed. Some pottery was recovered similar to that from other parts of the area and included military grey wares.

Frank and Nancy Ball
for South Staffs. Arch. and Historical Society
and Department of the Environment

WARWICK, Warwickshire SP 290651

Survey of ridge and furrow at St. Nicholas Park Fig. 33

A small area of surviving ridge and furrow, together with other features, were threatened by the proposal to build a swimming pool on land that had been used as a pitch-and-putt golf course on part of the north boundary of St. Nicholas Park. It was therefore decided to carry out a sketch survey of these features before construction commenced.

The park had originally been an ancient commonable meadow known as St. Nicholas Meadow but was affected by the Warwick (St. Nicholas) Inclosure Award of 1773 (C.R.O. ref. QS 73/123). This award divided the meadow into allotments but retained the ancient rights of common of the

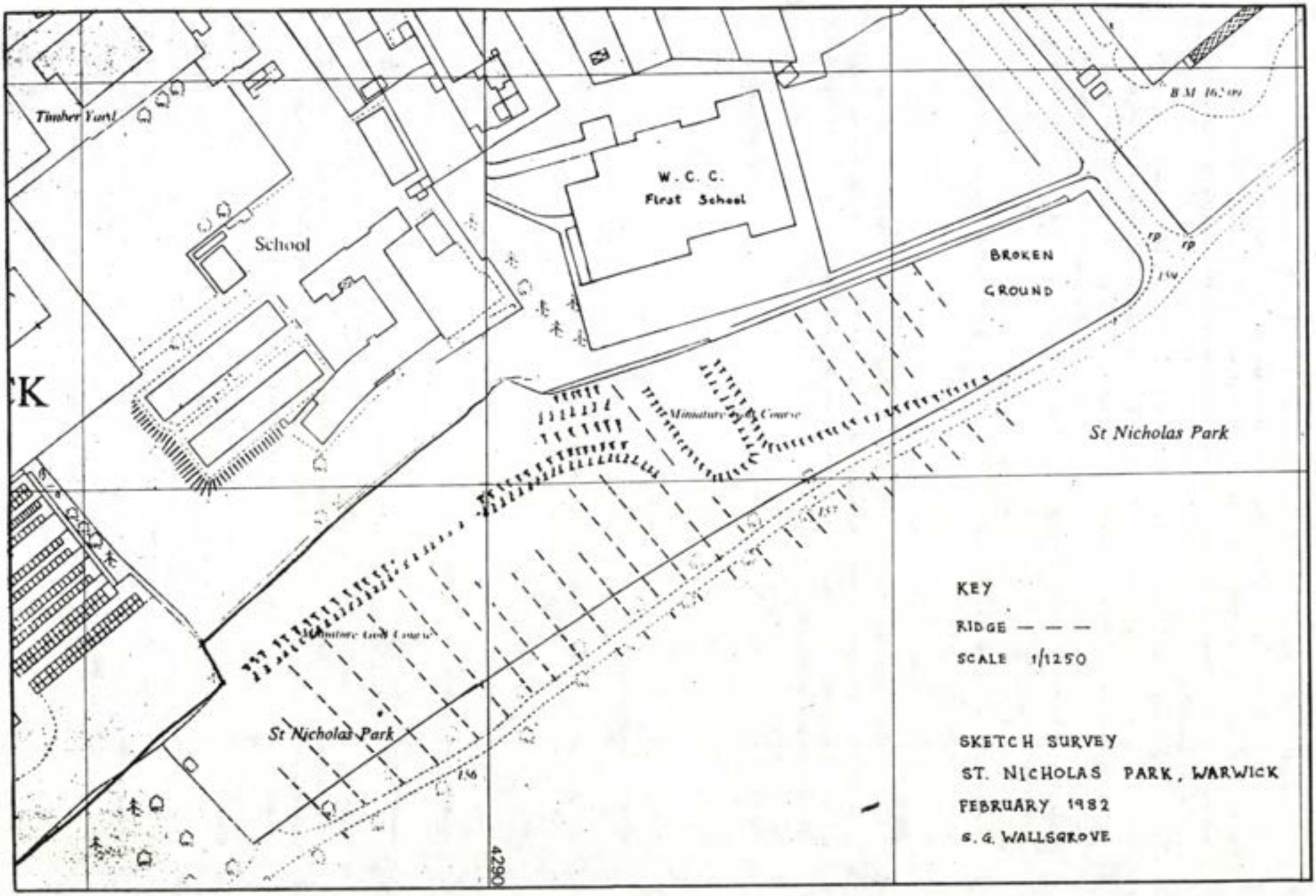


Fig.33 WARWICK: Sketch plan of survey of St.Nicholas Park (base map, O.S. 1:1250) (Wallsgrove)

"Lattermath or Aftermath of so much of such meadow as is called Midsummer Land".

Although there is no map with the Award, there are two estate maps of 1788 (C.R.O. ref. Z122(U)) and 1806 (C.R.O. ref. Z276/2 (U)) which clearly show the subdivisions and their owners. These can be directly related to the Award by the detailed descriptions of the allotments.

The survey showed that a main ditch and break of slope, which lay at the end of the ridge-and-furrow, could be identified with allotment boundaries while the ridge-and-furrow to the south-east of this boundary could be identified with other allotments. In particular the survey showed that the most narrow allotments contained two ridges while another contained four ridges and a further section (part of an allotment in the Award, but shown with a separate boundary in 1806) contained six ridges.

Part of one of the two allotments to the cottagers in common also contained similar ridges across the narrow strip of land, although it was not clear whether they had continued through the adjoining hedge.

Conclusions

The features recorded relate to the post-enclosure landscape and show that the use of ridge-and-furrow as an agricultural technique did not die out with the enclosure but continued for some time afterwards. There was no evidence that the meadow had contained similar ridge-and-furrow before enclosure.

S.G. Wallsgrove

WASPERTON, Warwickshire

Excavation of multi-period landscape - see Part I.

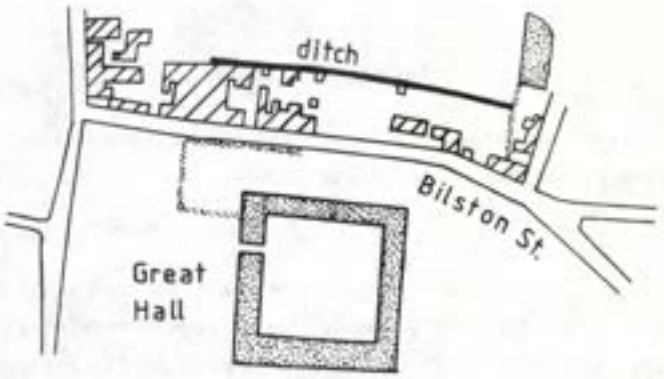
WOLVERHAMPTON, West Midlands County SO 9198

Excavation of medieval ditch in Bilston Street Fig. 34

A one-day rescue excavation was conducted on the 14th March 1982 on the site of a suspected medieval ditch on land being redeveloped between Bilston Street and Tower Street, Wolverhampton. The work was commissioned by the Wolverhampton Art Gallery and Museum and the Wolverhampton Civic Society, and J.P. Malam for BUFAU supervised the excavation.

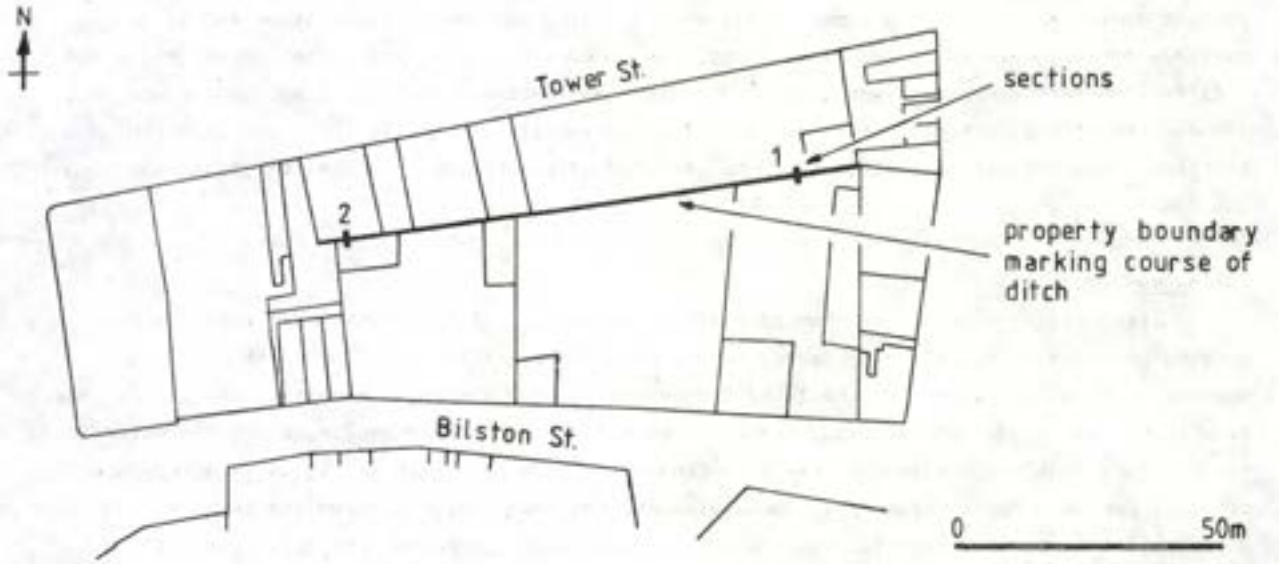
Historical background

Isaac Taylor's 1750 plan of Wolverhampton indicates a long east-west feature labelled as a 'ditch', lying north of the Great Hall moated settlement on ground known as Pipers Meadow. It is seen to form the rear property boundary for premises with Bilston Street frontages, and at its eastern terminus it is apparently fed with water from a short channel leading south away from a fenced pool. The ditch is shown holding water, and using Taylor's scale it is some 150 m long. Previous writers have suggested that it may belong to a late Saxon defensive



Taylor 1750

0 100m



Section 1

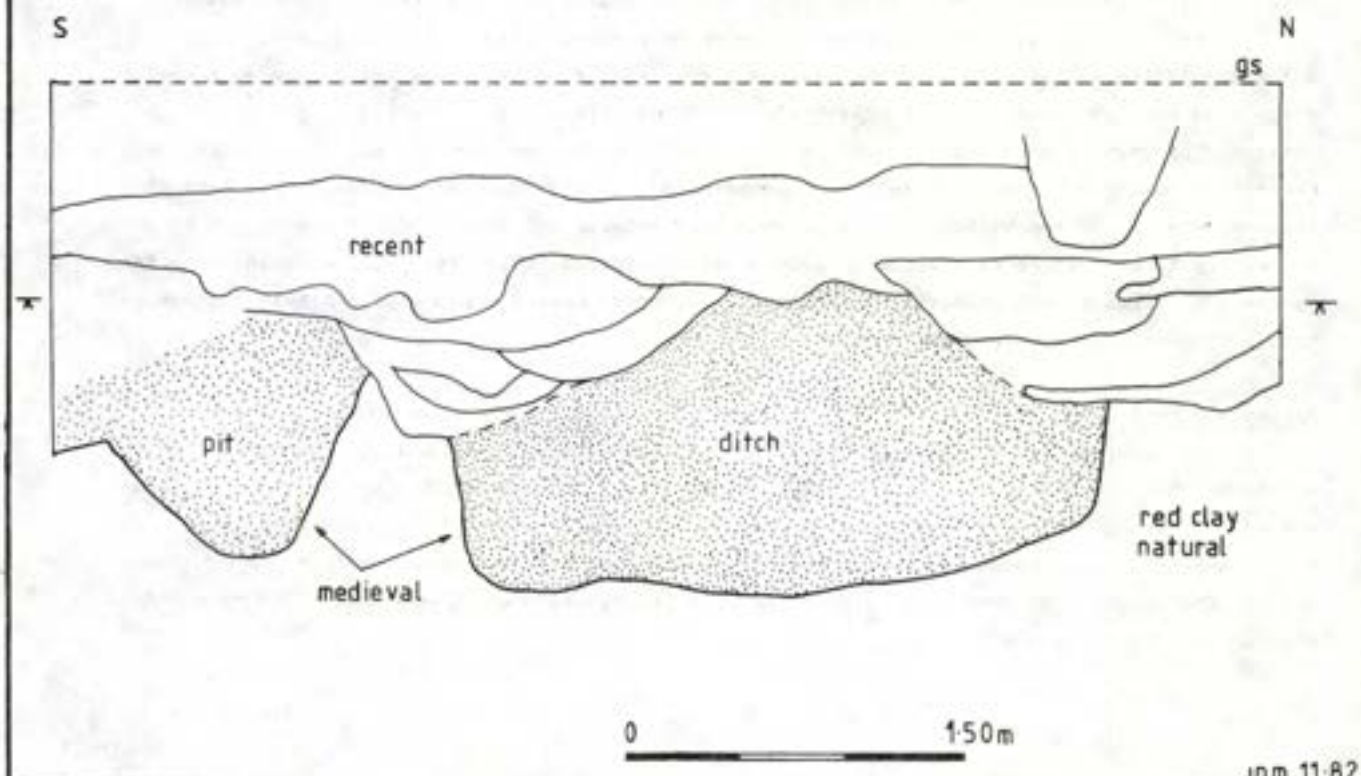


Fig.34 WOLVERHAMPTON: Location plans of site and section through ditch (Malam)

circuit, cutting across the neck of the 155 m contour (Baker 1980), or even to a prehistoric earthwork due to the incidence of 'bury' place and street names (Roper 1966).

Archaeological assessment

The ditch was located in two sections cut by machine. Only the eastern section could be recorded in the time available, and that was with difficulty due to the extremely unsafe nature of the wet fill of the ditch. Its location in the west of the area served to fix its course, but here its preservation was limited by building foundations. The eastern section revealed its massive scale of construction, measuring some 3 m wide and with its base 2.5o n below the present ground surface. Its upper levels were disturbed by recent activities, and it was not possible to recognise from where it was cut, but otherwise it was well preserved and contained a fill of compact grey-brown wet silt. The ditch was rectangular in section, and showed no signs of recutting. A pit with a similar fill lay immediately to the south of the ditch section. Only the ditch profile could be recorded before the section was lost following a collapse.

Dating and Conclusions

Firm dating evidence was not adequately recovered. A large unabraded sherd from a cooking pot base in a sandy grey fabric came from an unstratified position in the western section. This is probably of the 12th/13th century. Two sherds in a white sandy fabric came from the pit in the eastern section, one being part of a slashed jug handle, which elsewhere in the Midlands could be credited to the 13th century. Also from this pit was a large fragment of slag, possibly from a bloomery. Otherwise all the sherds were of the 18th century. However, all the recent material came from the layers which truncated the upper part of the ditch, with no datable finds from the ditch fill. The similarity of the ditch and pit fills is taken to be an indication of their contemporaneity, and their relative positions may bear this out. If this is the case, then the sherds from the pit suggest at least a 13th century date, though this can only be an assumption using the sparce evidence with maximum prejudice.

Possible functions for the ditch are even more speculative. Its large scale construction indicates that it would have formed a prominant feature in the Wolverhampton townscape, and this is evident by not only Taylor's 1750 record but also in that it served to demarcate property boundaries into the 19th and 20 the centuries. Its location close to the Great Hall moated settlement is felt to be something more than coincidence, as is the fact that it lies parallel to and within 25 m of the boundary between the manors of the Deanery and Stow Heath. Without further excavation to secure reliable dates, this ditch still remains an urban mystery, but that it was primarily a substantial boundary marker would seem a likely suggestion, though for what purpose remains in question.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to National Car Parks Limited for permission to excavate on their land, and to Mr. S.R. Bassett (School of History, University of Birmingham) for his organisation and enthusiasm for the work. The day's excavation was only made viable by a grant from the Wolverhampton Borough Council's Inner Areas Programme, and by the combined efforts of Miss J. Collens, Mr. D. Thom, Mr. R. Barnes and Mr. A. Brooker-Carey, with Mr. C. Sturges driving the JCB excavator.

J.P. Malam

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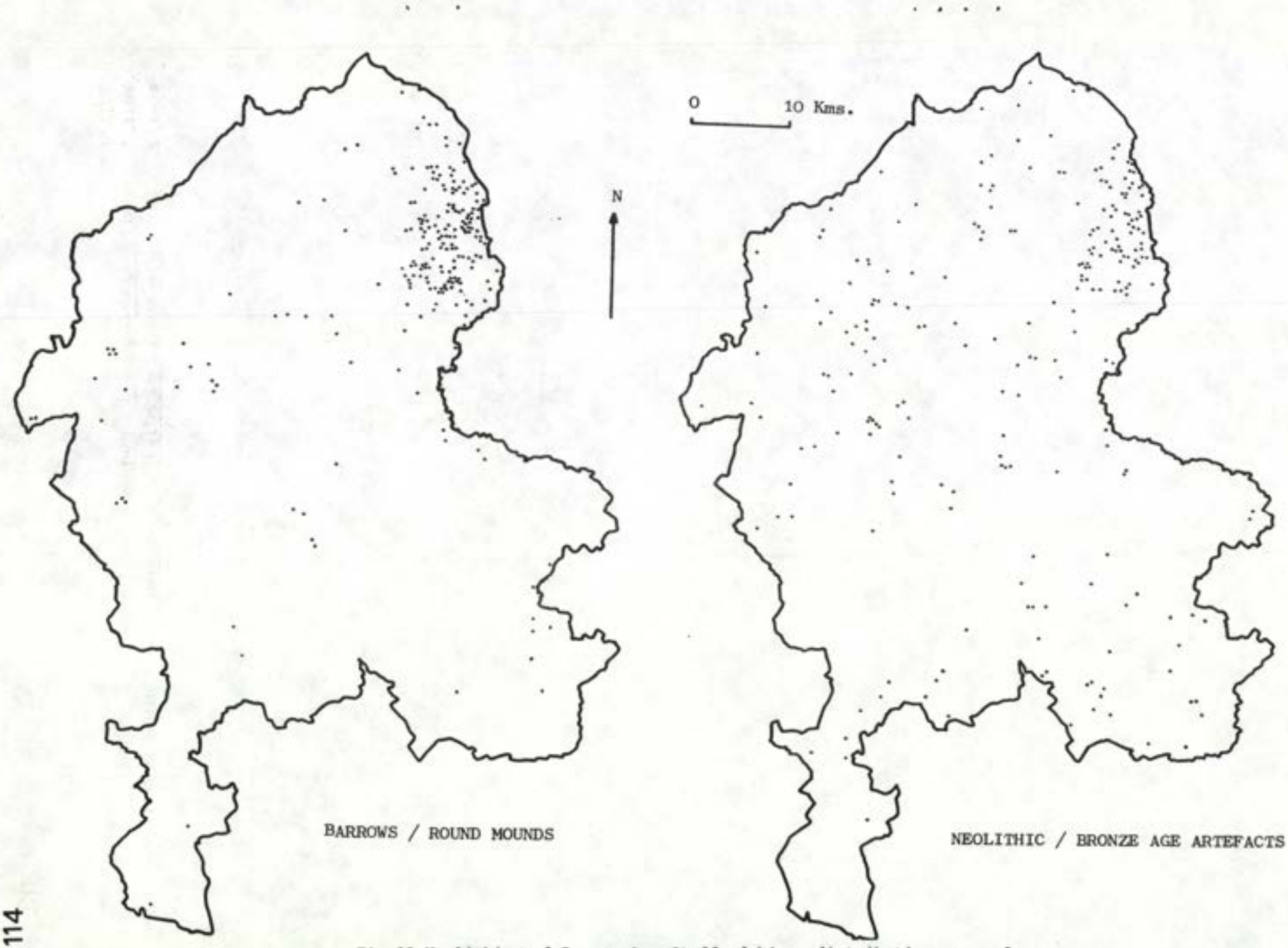

Fig.35 Neolithic and Bronze-Age Staffordshire: distribution maps of funerary sites and artefacts (Meeson)

Forum

Neolithic and Bronze Age Staffordshire and the Potential of Sites and Monuments Records

by R.A. Meeson, Stafford County Sites and Monuments Record

In almost every English county there now exists an archaeological Sites and Monuments Record. Although designed with environmental planning purposes in mind (planning for conservation of heritage either in the landscape or by written record), the academic potential of such records is enormous. In recent years it has been argued that distribution maps of archaeological sites and artefacts have simply reflected the varying intensity of fieldwork in different areas. However there is now such a large corpus of data available for rapid retrieval that, subject to proper academic precautions, distribution evidence may be applicable with renewed confidence. By way of illustration, Neolithic/Bronze Age data has been extracted from the Staffordshire SMR to produce the distribution maps in Fig.35, simplified for this publication. Both maps reflect an interim stage in a continuous programme of data collection, but used intelligently they can produce valid archaeological observations.

First it is essential to consider all factors which might influence the distribution patterns indicated on the two maps. The map of barrows and round mounds (the latter are possible barrows not proven by excavation) would superficially suggest a concentration of interments, and therefore of settlements, in north-east upland Staffordshire, but the nature of the evidence and factors which influence that evidence should be assessed before such a sweeping conclusion is accepted. Earth mounds have survived beneath the pastures of the north-east of the county whereas they may have been ploughed out over the intensively cultivated majority of lowland Staffordshire. This possibility is supported on the gravel soils of the Trent/Tame valley in the south-east where cropmarks include a significant number of ring ditches, many of which would prove to be barrows on excavation, and most of these are not plotted in Fig.35 . The absence of barrows from cultivated clay soils might be accounted for by a relative absence of settlement if evidence to the contrary did not exist. It seems more likely that barrows are less evident on clay soils because the mounds have been ploughed down and the ditches are not yet locatable by aerial photography. The salient point is that where conditions best permit evidence survival for barrows in Staffordshire, barrows have been located.

Although the distribution map of artefacts again illustrates a slight weighting to the north-east, a very large proportion of the finds from that area was retrieved from excavated barrows. When those are discounted the distribution is relatively even across the

county. (Some prehistoric artefacts of uncertain date but which may be Neolithic are not plotted on Fig.35). For a variety of reasons a lower density or absence of earthwork of artefact evidence is predictable in what later became the cores of Needwood and Cannock Forests. Allowance should also be made for such imponderables as the casual nature of most finds and of their being reported.

When the factors controlling the survival and recovery of evidence are taken into account the distribution map of artefacts suggests more widespread settlement of the county in a Neolithic/ Bronze Age context than that suggested by the map of surviving barrows.

When the detailed distribution maps in the SMR are interpreted with all the constraints in mind it is arguable that the factors which determine the survival and recovery of evidence influence distribution maps more than the universal corpus of locatable data upon the period in question. Even so, because of the growing volume of readily accessible data it is now possible to argue that Neolithic/Bronze Age settlement was widespread and probably extensive in Staffordshire. To improve upon this general picture an understanding of local variations of settlement or land use may only be retrievable by intensive fieldwork, systematically organised, fully recorded and reported. Such a task is beyond the resources of professional archaeology alone. The scope for intensive field research by competent and responsible societies of individuals is enormous. In the meantime SMRs are amassing an unprecedented volume of data upon archaeological sites, monuments and artefacts which, in addition to their role in the planning process, is of inestimable academic potential.

Acknowledgements

The writer gratefully acknowledges the use of extensive records held in the Staffordshire County Planning and Development Department.

Some Problems with the Interpretation of Features on a Gravel Site

by P. Voice, Wasperton Archaeological Project

It has been recognised for some time that the efficient excavation of large gravel sites under rescue conditions is dependent on the balanced use of large scale earth moving machinery and a skilled excavation team to carry out more detailed work, locating and defining features.

It has often been taken as a matter of course that the goal of such soil removal is the exposure of the gravel and sand subsoil, against which archaeological features would stand out clearly ready for investigation, there being little evidence for vertical stratigraphy.

Unfortunately, when this goal is achieved, the situation is rarely so straightforward, since it remains to discriminate between archaeological and non-archaeological "features". The observations below relate to problems encountered when making this discrimination while working at Wasperton.

The non-archaeological features may be divided into two categories, i.e. naturally caused features and features caused or affected by machine disturbance. Failure to recognise either of these categories can considerably distort the interpretation of the site and result in the construction of erroneous models.

Natural features

Within the gravel subsoil there are a number of anomalous features which can be differentiated from archaeological features by means of colour, texture and form.

Colour: This varies from mid- to red-brown, often with black humic staining and flecks of charcoal. The end result is a mottled black/brown context.

Texture: This is a compact silty sand with a very low percentage of stones. This context is very soft and "cheesy" to the touch.

Form: This is irregular in shape and size and might range from 20 cms to upwards of 2 m in length.

It has been suggested that such features owe their origins to frost action, that is to say that small hollows in the subsoil have been enlarged by freeze-thaw action. During the thaw phases the water has not drained, and silt has collected in such hollows. Larger stones within these features are concentrated at the periphery. Where sections have been cut across, some of these features have borne out this theory.

An alternative interpretation, based on the concentration of humic material in their fills is that they are the product of deforestation during the prehistoric period. The true nature of their origin remains the object of some conjecture.

For the excavator, such features pose a number of problems, appearing to resemble various types of archaeological features. Below are listed examples of pseudo-features that have been encountered within the last year.

1) The "Hut Circle"

In this case, looping arms of brown stony soil have been uncovered. These are c.25 cms wide and embrace areas up to 3 m in diameter. Superficially they appear to have a slot-like profile and they could easily be interpreted as ring grooves (that might have held stake walls) of small storage huts.

On cleaning an area around such features it was clear that they were attached at one end to a large bulging shape. This pattern of bulge and looping arm is one of the few regularly re-occurring shapes.

2) The "Grave"

In a line of four features all of similar dimensions, three turned out to be late Roman inhumations while the fourth proved to be a natural feature. The major difference was in the nature of the fills. The inhumations had been backfilled with sands and gravels while the fourth feature had a black "cheesy" fill, and showed no evidence of ever having been used as a grave.

3) The "Working Hollow"

In an area where two man-made hollows occurred (proved to be so by excavation), a third irregular feature of similar shape and size was uncovered. On excavation the fill was found to be more mottled and compact, devoid of finds, and it showed no sign of being anything other than a natural feature. One of the proven working hollows was cut through a natural feature, thus confusing the issue further.

4) The "Post-Hole"

Smaller natural features tend to be defined as more circular in shape than perhaps they are and they can easily be misinterpreted as post-holes, particularly when they are found amidst post-holes proper. In one area a number of post-holes forming a rectangular structure were located in subsoil otherwise pock-marked with roughly circular, but probably natural features. In view of the doubts in the interpretation of some of these features it became necessary to classify "post-holes" according to a number of strict criteria:-

i) that it displays evidence for a post-pipe or post-ghost

ii) that it is of a shape and profile consistent with holding a post

iii) that it has in its fill stone packing, or charcoal, or artefacts

iv) that it is in line with at least two others of similar shape and size.

The classification is:-

Class A post holes comply with all four criteria

Class B post holes comply with three criteria

Class C post holes comply with two criteria

Class D post holes comply with one

Class E post holes are too ephemeral to classify, or fail to possess any of the requisite criteria.

The classification of a feature together with the noting of the criteria complied with, can then be entered onto the feature record card. Plots can subsequently be made to include or disregard different classes of post hole.

Machine-Disturbed Features

The topsoil was stripped from the gravel subsoil at Wasperton mainly by a box scraper which, when laden, weighs some forty tons. For the most part, on gravel, the weight of the laden machine is evenly distributed. However, where the underlying subsoil is a softer material, predictably the machine will sink creating ruts and also redepositing material.

Such disturbances may be left exposed to the elements for some time prior to investigation of the area in which they have been incurred. As a result, the deeper disturbances become filled with both water and wind borne silt and on later investigations appear similar to archaeological features. Where such disturbances run alongside ditches they may give the appearance of a broadening of the features having blurred their true edges.

The machinery may also sink into or compress archaeological features. Where these are shallow they may be disturbed throughout their entire depths with their profiles having been destroyed by the machine tracks. On such occasions the decision has to be made whether or not the disturbance is purely a rut or whether it is the "ghost" of a feature.

Thus the location and interpretation of features on a gravel site may not be as simple and straightforward as it might first appear. As such gravel sites tend to be rescue, if not salvage excavations, speed is of the essence in excavation strategies.

Thus it is important to recognise the characteristics of both natural and machine disturbed features to avoid wasting time. However, it is only proper that such features be included on surface plans, and that sections be dug through any feature where significant doubts remain.

Computer Applications in Archaeology - a personal report

by Susan Laflin

Recently a letter was forwarded to me from someone who obviously believed that I was no longer interested in West Midlands Archaeology and was concerned that the work which I had previo carried out was no longer available. I would like to take this opportunity to reassure you that I am still at Birmingham and very interested in helping any local archaeologists who wish to try and apply computers to their problems. During the past few years, I have been studying Computer Graphics in particular and have attended SIGGRAPH 81 in Dallas, Eurographics 81 in Darmstadt, Eurographics 82 in Manchester and hope to attend Eurographics 83 in Dubrovnik. In addition I have developed several Graphics courses for undergraduates within the University and hope to extend this to include Extramural courses, relating to home computers such as the Spectrum, BBC micro or the Dragon as well as covering more general concepts, and this may be of interest to some. Although not every picture is literally "worth a thousand words", most of them can be designed to present a very large amount of information.

During the next six months, I expect to be occupied in transferring software and data from the ICL1906A computer to the interactive DEC20 computer. Next summer the 1906A will be replaced by a new Honeywell system and before that happens I have to transfer anything I wish to retain. This includes most of the applications I have described over the years in this journal. The largest amount of data relates to the gazetteer of sites and small finds, mainly for Shropshire where the gazetteer group has been working since 1970. Although the amount input is still small compared with that which remains, it represents a considerable effort on the part of an amateur group whose detailed checking of the data explains their slow progress and whose standards are as high as any professional. In addition, I also have a few records from Worcestershire and Staffordshire and these too must be transferred and while I am checking them and tidying up, I shall also add extra graphics facilities to explain and illustrate them.

The other major collection of programs are those to present results from magnetometer and other surveys. Several of these are now out-of-date in that they use the "Ghost" graphics package, which is not available on the DEC20, so they will have to be converted to use the GINO-F package and I shall probably add extra sections to use the new colour graphics terminal and plotter at the same time. In addition, one of our final-year students is working on a project to produce dot-density plots of various forms on the new colour terminal and, if successful, this will provide a very attractive addition to the collection. At present the only form of hard copy is a photograph of the graph presented on the screen, but students at Birmingham will find the ability to try different representations of the same data until they have the clearest presentation and then record that, is a valuable tool in their repertoire.

Other student projects have also produced software which is of great interest to historians and archaeologists. In 1981, Chris Bayliss produced a set of programs to draw heraldic coats of arms on the colour terminal - this could also be used for applications such as Egyptian hieroglyphs or medieval floor tiles. It is described in the proceedings of the 1982 conference on Computer Applications in Archaeology, and this volume, which contains 198 pages and 21 different papers, is the largest to date and is available from the Computer Centre. Last summer, Ann Rochfort produced the software to copy the pottery records from Wroxeter onto the DEC20 and use the Rapport package to set up a database and provide various tabulations and other statistics and also the GINO-GRAF package to draw histograms. None of these computers and packages fitted together easily and she spent a lot of time producing a tidy and well-documented method which is now ready for further work on the pottery from Wroxeter.

My own future work will probably relate to the use of my Sinclair Spectrum and will start with the exploration of different methods of displaying selections from the gazetteer, using its eight colours and wide selection of graphics characters.

The MA in Archaeological Practice at Birmingham University

by M.O.H. Carver

General

The MA in Archaeological Practice is a course specifically designed for students aiming for a career in professional field archaeology, and is conceived as a year of work in which teaching is fully integrated with practical experience.

Syllabus

The course lasts one year and consists of a number of taught courses combined with one or more field projects, conducted by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit.

Formal teaching is carried out by seminars and tutorials mainly during the Autumn and Spring terms. The main subject areas taught comprise:

1. Methods of archaeological research in urban and rural contexts, including site evlauation, excavation strategy, excavation techniques, project records, analysis of excavated data, methods of publication, field survey, aerial photography.

2. Study and analysis of artifacts, principally methods used for the analysis of stone, metal and ceramic artifacts.

3. Principles and techniques of environmental archaeology, utilization of information sources in geology and soil science, description and interpretation of soils and sediments, conditions of preservation of biological materials, introduction to site and laboratory techniques and background to collaboration with archaeological botanists and zoologists.

Optional subjects such as Historical Sources in Archaeology and other courses taught within the Department may be taken, as well as subjects at other departments in the University (e.g. surveying).

Programme

Students are encouraged to attend an approved excavation during the summer before their arrival. Attendance on one of the Field Unit's excavations is mandatory for students seeking a Unit Studentship (see below).

Students normally work in the premises of Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit (on and off site) and follow a strict daily working schedule. Three weeks holiday is available during the year, by arrangement with the Unit Director.

The MA is examined by submission of seminar and essay papers and the dissertation. Dissertations are submitted in their final form by 30th September, and late submissions will not normally be accepted.

Eligibility and Application

Applicants should normally have either (a) a good honours degree in Archaeology or a closely related subject, or (b) an equivalent qualification, such as the C.B.A. Diploma in Archaeological Practice, or (c) published work demonstrating attainment of an equivalent standard. In all cases, appropriate archaeological field experience is essential.

The Department of Ancient History and Archaeology (Field Unit) will offer a limited number of studentships each year for experienced and exceptionally promising field archaeologists. All candidates will be expected to apply for State Studentships if eligible.

Applications should be made on the appropriate forms to The Registry, Faculty of Arts, The University of Birmingham, P.O. Box 363, Birmingham, B15 2TT, by 31st March. In addition, applicants should give details of any archaeological framework (including participation in excavations) and publications achieved and an outline of their particular research interest within the fields of archaeological theory and method.

A scheme for Archaeological Project Records

by M.O.H. Carver,

Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit

P R O J E C T R E C O R D S

Components and Formats

Introduction

This guide shows the format and content of the records which should be produced for all the projects we undertake. The design gives priority to the user, and makes the assumption that the records may never be published in multiple copies. Since all records will be held in microfiche, consistancy and elegance of presentation is necessary at all stages.

The overall concept and vocabulary have been considerably simplified: the records are divided into a PROJECT FILE, which is a summary of the work undertaken, a SITE FILE, which contains all excavated data and analyses achieved, and a RESEARCH FILE, containing accounts of unpublished research in any discipline undertaken off-site in direct connection with the project.

The structure of the records is hierarchical, that is, a synthetic index controls the presentation of data at all states of analysis, while the PROJECT FILE acts as a summary and guide to the other files.

These records will be available in copy format at the Unit, and in microform at the Unit, the NMR and the appropriate county SMR. An index of project records available in these archives will be published annually in the BUFAU ANNUAL REPORT and in WEST MIDLANDS ARCHAEOLOGY.

Reproduction of one or more parts of any record will be carried out by the Unit on request from the duplicate format at cost (including postage). It will be available only in A4 on paper. Copies of complete files or sub-files will be available only in microfiche, at cost (including postage).

Morris, E.L. 1981 'Medieval pottery typology' Pride Hill Chambers, Shrewsbury (BUFAU Records Z1a.) 21-23.

Comments on the system are welcome as always.

PROJECT RECORDS

Key to abbreviations and format sizes etc

f - drawing film (permatrace)

p - paper

pp - paper photocopy

TS^2 - typescript, double-spaced

L - set landscape (ie long side horizontal to reader)

P - set portrait (ie short side horizontal to reader)

NMR - National Monuments Record

SMR - Sites and Monuments Record

ct, cd, cb - computer files, on tape, disc, stored in main-frame
po - computer print-out (tear-off A3)

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Format sizes are as follows:-

A1 - 840x 600mm
A2 - 420x 600mm
A3 - 420x 300mm
A4 - 210x 300mm
A5 - 210x 150mm

All reductions mentioned are linear.

Factors for successful reduction (eg pen size) are governed by the Duplicate format.

Microfiche copy undergoes a reduction of 1:24 (linear), except 35 mm negatives which are entered at 1:1.

Elements of microfiche at A3 or smaller, only, can be viewed simultaneously on the reader.

Microfiche capacity is as follows: - A1 - 6 (on 35 mm film)
A2 - 12
A3 - 24
A4 - 60
A5 = 2 X A5(L) set to make one A4(P)
35 mm negative - 6

ALL DRAWINGS MUST BE EQUIPPED WITH ROD SCALE BEFORE ENTERING ONTO FICHE

Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit

P R O J E C T R E C O R D S : THE PROJECT FILE

(All records are held in BLUE binders)

X0 Project Summary

a. Description of project, search areas, NGR, SMR No., Unit project no.
b. Contents of PROJECT FILE, SITE FILE(S) and RESEARCH FILE

X1 Location

Location plan (GB), plan of area(s) investigated, information recovery levels.

X2 Table of Results

X3 List of Publications drawn from the records to date.

X4 Index of Contributors to the records

X5 Project History, including staff, programme(s) and cost(s).

FORMAT for all sub-files

Originator's format (at Unit)	Duplicate format (at Unit)	Micro format (at Unit, NMR, County SMR)
A4/A1	A4, A3/A1 and pp	A4/A3 (P or L) on a single microfiche marked "X".

Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit

P R O J E C T R E C O R D S : THE SITE FILE

(All records are held in BLACK binders)

Code	Component / Archive	Originator's Format Site → County Museum	Duplicate Format Unit Archive	Micro Format Unit, RMB, County Archives.
Y0 (SUMMARY)	**Site Summary** a.Table of contents of site file b.Descriptive text c.Period plans d.Index to Structures e.Index to Activities f.Index to Features g.Index to Contexts h.Index to Drawings i.Album	A4 TS² A4 TS² A1 → x2 to A3(L) A4 TS² A4 TS² A4 TS² A4 TS² A4 TS² -	A4 pp A4 pp A3 pp (folded) A4 pp A4 pp A4 pp A4 pp A4 pp Labelled plates, up to A4, in order of happening.	A4(P)/A3(L) → microfiche no. Y0 -
Y1 (NOTEBOOKS)	Supervisor's notebooks	A4(P)	A4 pp	A4(P) → microfiche Y1
Y2 (CONTEXTS)	a.Context records b.Context plans (individual) showing components inc. "finds"	White A4 cards 1.Pencil ad lib. at 1:10, 1:20 etc. 2.Ink on A4f(P)/A3f(L) at 1:10, 1:20 etc.	A4 pp (or ct, cd, cb, to po(A3)) A4/A3 pp	A4(P) → microfiche Y2 (Y2.1, Y2.2.....) A4(P)/A3(L) → fiche Y2
Y3 (FEATURES)	a.Feature records b.Feature plans (individual) showing "finds" where applicable, eg graves. c.Feature sections	Blue A4 cards 1.Pencil ad lib. at 1:5, 1:10, 1:20 2.Ink on A4f(P)/A3f(L) at 1:5, 1:10, 1:20.	A4 pp A4/A3 pp	A4(P) → microfiche Y3 (Y3.1, Y3.2.....) A4(P)/A3(L) → fiche Y3
Y4 (MAPS)	a.Feature maps (multiple horizontal) b.Context maps (horizontal sections)	1:50 or 1:100 on A1f(L) all north-facing, titled along long side, numbered top left.	1:50(towns) / 1:100(flat) x2 to A3 photo or → 35mm	A3(L) → microfiche Y4 35mm frame on fiche Y4
Y5 (SECTIONS)	a.Multi-context/feature site sections (baulk, site-edge etc) b.Site profiles etc.	1.Pencil ad lib. at 1:10, 1:20 etc. 2.Ink on A3f(L) or A1f(L)	A3 pp (folded) or → 35mm	A3(L) → microfiche Y5 35mm frame on fiche Y5
Y6 (PHOTOGRAPHS)	a.Plates (B/W, colour) b.Slides c.Index	1.Negatives 2.Contact prints in A4 binder → Set of contact prints Slides in hangers A4 TS²	Duplicate slides A4 pp	→ positive fiche Y6 A4(P) → microfiche Y6
Y7 (FINDS RECORD)	a.Assemblage summaries b.Inventory by species c.Sample cards d.Sieving record cards e.Conservation cards f.Drawn finds	Finds listed by context on White A4 cards A4 TS² White A4 cards White A4 cards White A4 cards By species on A4f(P) or A3f(L), labelled.	A4 pp (or ct, cd, cb, to po(A3)) A4 pp (or po (A3)) A4 pp A4 pp A4 pp A4/A3 pp	A4(P)/A3(L) → fiche Y7 (Y7.1, Y7.2.....) A4(P)/A3(L) → fiche Y7 A4(P) → microfiche Y7 A4(P) → microfiche Y7 A4(P) → microfiche Y7 Pot reduced x¼, other finds as applicable, to A4(P)/A3(L) → Y7

21st March 1983

Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit

P R O J E C T R E C O R D S : THE RESEARCH FILE

(All records held in RED binders)

Z0 Summary

a. Summary and index of research
b. Contents and summaries of SITE FILE(S) belonging to project

Z1 Analyses

a. Finds typologies by species
b. Specialist reports
c. Unrectified stratification diagrams
d. Seriation
e. Primary contexts identification
f. Distribution plots
g. Rectified stratification diagrams
h. Phase/period plans
i. Activity lists
j. Site model

Z2 Natural Environment and resources

a. Geology (solid geology, drift geology, soils, river systems)
b. Environment (pollen diagrams, sampling excercises)

Z3 Comparative archaeology

a. Settlement evolution in a defined hinterland, concluding with modern topography
b. Detected and suspected national and international contact points mapped.
c. Comparative corpus of sites, structures and artifacts (indexes)

Z4 Archaeological Site Evaluation

a. Evaluations and strategies
b. Geophysical prospection
c. Chemical prospection
d. Surface or casual finds plot
e. Contour survey
f. Test excavation
g. Aerial prospection

Z5 Surface monuments

a. Buildings
b. Earthworks
c. Inscriptions

Z6 Documentary sources

a. Maps
b. Placenames
c. References within the written record (see separate guide for searchable collections)

Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit

P R O J E C T R E C O R D S : THE RESEARCH FILE (cont.)

Z7 Bibliography

a. Author index
b. Topographic index
c. Historic persons index

FORMAT for all sub-files

Originator's format (at Unit)	Duplicate format (at Unit)	Micro format (at Unit, NMR, County SMR)
A4 / A1	A4, A3/A1 and pp	A4/A3 (P or L) on microfiche Z0 to Z7

Recent Publications

PERIODICALS

Transactions of the Birmingham and Warwickshire Archaeological Society (TBWAS) 90 (1980), issued 1982

P.J. Gardner, R. Haldon and J. Malam 'Prehistoric, Roman, and medieval settlement at Stretton-on-Fosse: excavations and salvage 1971-76', 1

Heather James 'Excavations in Wootton Wawen churchyard, 1974 and 1975', 37

J.G. Perry (with an addendum by Christopher Dyer) 'Interim report on the excavation at Sydenham's, Solihull, 1972-78: a moated site in the Warwickshire Arden', 49.

L.D.W. Smith 'A survey of building timber and other trees in the hedgerows of a Warwickshire estate, c.1500', 65.

N.W. Alcock 'The neighbours stand at gaze: scandalous dealings at Finham, 1611-1716', 75.

Archaeological and Historical Notes

P.R. Wilson I 'Snowford Bridge Roman site (Long Itchington)', 80.

Graham Webster II 'A Romano-British bronze object from Alcester', 82.

Graham Webster III 'Pottery and objects from Ewe Field Farm, Chesterton', 83.

J.G. Perry IV 'An unpublished sestertius of Hadrian from Dorridge, Solihull', 83.

Reviews

Continuity, fields and fission: the making of a midland parish by Charles Pythian-Adams (Margaret Gelling)

A Warwickshire colliery in the seventeenth century by E.G. Grant (Alan White)

Warwickshire country houses in the age of classicism 1650-1800 by Geoffrey Tyack (J.M.H. Thompson)

Public house checks of Birmingham and Smethwick by R.N.P. Hawkins (W.A. Seaby)

West Midlands Studies (WMS) 14 (1981)

Mark Shaw 'Individual Behaviour and Social Change: The Irish in Victorian Wolverhampton', 1-9.

Richard Aldrich 'Sir John Pakington and Education in the West Midlands in the Mid-Nineteenth Century', 10-14.

John Cadman 'An examination of the Social Structure of Kingswinford Village with Particular Reference to Residential Patterns 1841-1871', 15-26.

D.C. Woods 'The Walsall Referendum of 1911 on the National Insurance Bill', 27-31.

J.D. Walters 'The Evangelical Embrace: Relations between Anglicans and Dissenters in the Period 1830-1870', 32-38.

John D. Brewer 'The British Union of Fascists in Birmingham', 39-43.

M.V. Cooksley 'Hyde Mill', 44-49.

Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club, Herefordshire (TWNFC) 43, 1980, Part II issued 1980

Muriel Tonkin 'Mr. Guy's Hospital and its Herefordshire Estate', 91.

A.R. Wilmott 'Kenchester (Magnis): A Reconsideration', 117.

R. Shoesmith 'The Roman Buildings at New Weir, Herefordshire', 135.

W.R. Pye 'A Saxon Spearhead from the River Lugg at Lugg Mills, Hereford', 155.

M. Thurlby 'The Thirteenth-Century Font at Hope-under-Dinmore', 160.

P.E.H. Hair 'Mobility of Parochial Clergy in Hereford Diocese, c.1400', 164.

D. Whitehead 'The Purchase and Building of Stoke Edith Park, Herefordshire, 1670-1707', 181.

J.P. Dodd 'Herefordshire Agriculture in the Mid-nineteenth Century', 203.

Reports of Sectional Recorders

Transactions of the Worcestershire Archaeological Society (TWAS)
3rd Series, 8 (1982)

Directory of Archaeological Groups and Institutions

(amendments and additions gratefully received)

HEREFORD AND WORCESTER

County SMR and Museum:
Hereford and Worcester County Museum,
Hartlebury Castle,
Kidderminster.
(J. Roberts, J. Wills)
Tel: Hartlebury 416

County Field Unit:
Hereford and Worcester County Council,
Love's Grove,
Worcester.
(J. Sawle)
Tel: Worcester 353366 ext. 3818

Worcestershire Archaeological Society:
Editor: F. Grice,
91 Hallow Road,
Worcester.

Avoncroft Museum of Buildings:
Stoke Prior,
Bromsgrove.
(D. Downe, J. Orchard, A. Harris)
Tel: Bromsgrove 72258

Worcester City Museum and Art Gallery:
Foregate Street,
Worcester.
(C. Beardsmore)
Tel: Worcester 25371

City of Hereford Archaeology Committee:
Hereford City Museum,
Broad Street,
Hereford.
(R. Shoesmith)

Woolhope Naturalists Field Club:
Chy on Whyloryon,
Wigmore,
(Mrs. M. Tonkin)

SHROPSHIRE

County SMR:
Planning Department,
Shropshire County Council,
Shire Hall,
Abbey Foregate,
Shrewsbury.
(M.Watson)
Tel: Shrewsbury 222332

Ironbridge Gorge Museum/Institute of Industrial Archaeology:

Ironbridge,
Telford. TF8 7AW

(B. Trinder)
Tel: (0952)-453 522

Telford Development Corporation:
and Telford Archaeological and Historical Society:

Priorslee Hall,
Telford.

(S. Rayska)

Border Counties Archaeological Group:,

Mrs. C. James, 44 Vyrnwy Road, Oswestry, Salop.

Tong Archaeological Group:

Convent Lodge,
Tong.

(A. Wharton)

Whitchurch Area Archaeological Group:

(D.S. Stewart, address above)

Shropshire Archaeological Society:

(Sec: M.Watson, County SMR)

STAFFORDSHIRE

County SMR:

Planning Department,
Staffordshire County Council,
Martin Street,
Stafford.

(K. Sheridan, R. Meeson)

Stafford Archaeological Project:

Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit,
8 St. Mary's Grove,
Stafford.

(M.O.H. Carver, A. Brooker-Carey, J. Cane)
Tel: Stafford 59030

Stafford Castle Project:

Stafford Borough Council,
Riverside Buildings,
Stafford.

(C. Hill)

City of Stoke-on-Trent Museum and Art Gallery:

Broad Street,
Hanley,
Stoke-on-Trent.
ST1 4HS.

(C.F. Hawke-Smith)
Tel: 0782-29611 ext.2397

South Staffordshire Archaeology and History Society:

(Editor, J. Whiston)

J.G. Cole (Secretary)
11 Bracebridge Road,
Four Oaks,
Sutton Coldfield.

Stafford and Mid Staffordshire Archaeology Society:

Longfield,
Wetwood,
Eccleshall, Staffs.

(M.J. Berry)

North Staffordshire Journal of Field Studies:

Mr. R.A. Tribbeck,
Dept. of Chemistry,
North Staffordshire Polytechnic,
College Road,
Stoke-on-Trent.

Old Stafford Society
now Staffordshire Historical and Civic Society:

7, Richmond Close,
Stafford
ST17

Keele and Newcastle Archaeological Group:

Mr.D. Cliffe,
6, Peartree Road,
Bignall End,
Stoke-on-Trent.

Tamworth Castle Museum:

The Holloway,
Tamworth.
(R. Sulima)
Tel: Tamworth 3561 ext. 294

Trent Valley Archaeological Research Group:

Mr.J. May,
University of Nottingham.
NG7 2RD

Staffordshire Archaeological Research Association:

University of Keele
(D. Wilson)

Computer Archaeology Centre:

Staffordshire Polytechnic,
Stafford.
(J. Wilcock)
Tel: Stafford 53511

WARWICKSHIRE

County SMR and Museum:

Warwickshire County Museum,
Eastgate House,
Warwick.
(H. Maclagan)
Tel: (0926)-493431

Birmingham and Warwickshire Archaeological Society:

(Editor: R. Taylor)
Secretary: J. Pierson-Jones,
Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery.

Atherstone Archaeological Society: (K. Scott)

Leamington Archaeological Group: (F. Radcliffe)

Trinity School Archaeologists: (F. Radcliffe)

National Vegetable Research Station: Wellesbourne, Warwickshire (J.F.M. Fennel)

Wasperton Archaeological Project: The Village Hall,
Wasperton,
(G. Crawford)
Tel: (0926)-624 537

WEST MIDLANDS COUNTY

County SMR: Planning Department,
West Midlands County Council,
Queensway,
Birmingham.
(J. Tonkins, S. Whitehouse)
Tel: 021-300 6532

Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery: Congreve Street,
Birmingham, B3 3DH.
(J. Pierson-Jones)
Tel: 021-235 4201

Wolverhampton Museum and Art Gallery: Lichfield Street,
Wolverhampton.
(P. Neeld)
Tel: Wolverhampton 24549

Solihull Archaeological Group: 1 Shaw Drive,
Yardley,
Birmingham, 33.
(Mrs. M. Dunlevy)

Soil Survey of England and Wales: Woodthorne,
Wolverhampton, WV6 8TQ.
(J.M. Hodgson)
Tel: Wolverhampton 754190

Coventry City Museums: Jordanswell,
Coventry, CV1 5QP.
(M. Rylatt)

Sandwell Archaeological Project: c/o Chief Planning Officer
Metropolitan Borough of Sandwell
P.O. Box 42
Wigmore
West Bromwich
(M.Hodder)

WEST MIDLANDS REGION

Council for British Archaeology Group 8:

Chairman:	P.A. Barker, 4,St Georges Sq., Worcester
Treasurer:	J.G. Perry, Department of Archaeology, University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester.
Secretary:	Jane Pierson-Jones, Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery
Membership Secretary:	Rev. Fabian Radcliffe, The Trinity School, Guy's Cliffe Avenue, Leamington Spa.

University of Birmingham:

P.O. Box 363,
Birmingham, B15 2TT
Tel: 021-472 1301

Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit (Tel: 021-472 3025) (M. Carver)
Department of Ancient History and Archaeology (L.H. Barfield, S.Esmonde-Cleary)
Department of Extra-Mural Studies (P.A. Barker, S.C. Stanford)
School of History (S. Bassett, C.C. Dyer)
Department of Geography (P. Buckland, D. Hooke, T. Slater)
Birmingham Archaeological Laboratory (J. Greig, L.Moffett)

Department of the Environment:

Fortress House,
23 Savile Row,
London, W1X 2AA.
(Inspector: A. Fleming)
Tel: 01-734 6010)

Diocesan Archaeological Consultants:

Birmingham:	R. Taylor (Birmingham City Museum)
Chester:	P. Greene
Coventry:	P.F. Gosling (DoE)
Derby:	P. Strange
Gloucester:	M. Hare
Hereford:	R. Shoesmith
Lichfield:	R.A.Meeson
Worcester:	J.P. Roberts

NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

For all contributors:

1. Text should be typed on A4 paper
2. Please use Harvard style citation:

   In Text: (PIGGOT 1965: 42)

   At end of Text: List of refernces in alphabetical order

   No footnotes
3. Please include statements of where records and material from the project may be seen, and name and address of contributor
4. Figures should NOT be titled but have a separately typed caption. Figures should preferably be pre-reduced to A4, (with a good margin) but help will be given if contributors have no facilties for drawing or reduction.
5. Please include SMR No. if available.
6. ALWAYS GIVE NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE

For contributors to PART 1 only:

Contributions should deal with regional syntheses, technical innovations (including new methods of analysis), fieldwork reports (including urban and rural surveys when complete), interim reports of completed major excavations

Normal limit: 300 words and 1 figure
DEADLINE: 1st December 1983

GIVE NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE

One copy of WEST MIDLANDS ARCHAEOLOGY will be sent free to all subscribers to CBA Group 8.

Please send your contribution to:

Martin Carver,
Department of Ancient History and Archaeology,
University of Birmingham,
P.O. Box 363,
Birmingham, B15 2TT.

For enquiries, telephone: 021-472-3025

COUNCIL FOR BRITISH ARCHAEOLOGY, Regional Group 8

CBA Group 8 is one of the 14 regional groups of the CBA. It represents the interests of archaeologists and archaeological societies in the west midland counties of Hereford and Worcester, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, and the West Midlands Metropolitan County.

A membership fee of £2-50 entitles affiliates to:

An annual copy of West Midlands Archaeology

Two newsletters each year, giving information about the Group's activities.

Notice of the day schools organised by CBA Group 8.

Attend the AGM which is followed by illustrated talks upon current archaeological research.

Apply for grant aid for publications or research.

(For further information, write to: Jane Pierson-Jones, Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery, Congreve Street, Birmingham, B3 3DH)

AFFILIATE MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

I have purchased a copy of West Midlands Archaeology No.....(price £2-50) and would like to join CBA Group 8 as an Individual/Society Affiliate for the year January-December, 19....

Name: ..... Address: .....

.....

.....

Telephone No. ....

Signed: .....

Society name (if applicable) .....

Please post this form to: The Rev. Fabian Radcliffe, Membership Secretary, Bishop Bright School, Guy's Cliffe Avenue, Leamington Spa, CV32 6NB