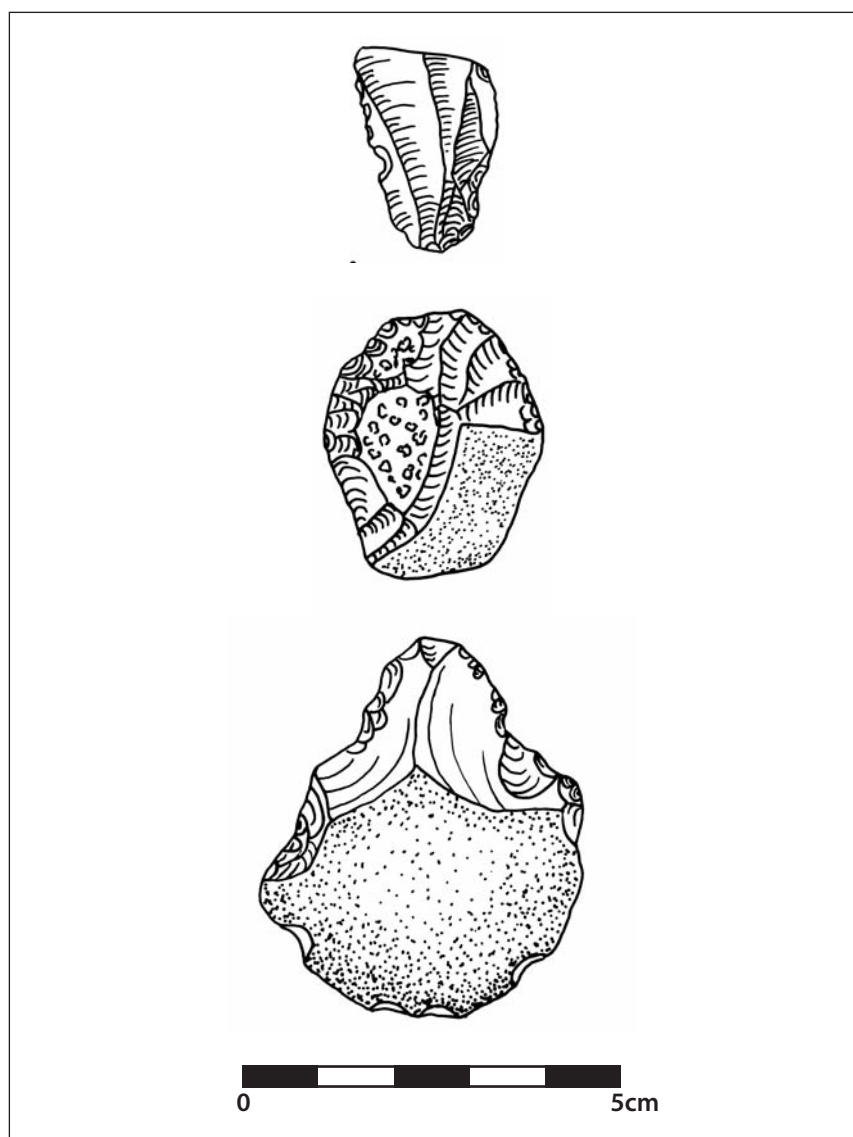


# Bulletin

SOAG



SOAG Bulletin No. 65





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Articles, accompanied by illustrations if appropriate, and book reviews are invited for publication in the next issue of the *SOAG Bulletin*. Authors are referred to the *Notes for Contributors* inside the back cover.

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Cover illustration: *Three prehistoric worked flints from the Greys Mound lithic assemblage. Top: Mesolithic notched tool, Centre: Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age thumbnail style scraper, Bottom: Later Bronze Age end and side scraper. See article on p.19.*

# Contents

<b>Cynthia Graham Kerr 1920-2011</b>	<i>Janet Sharpe</i>	2
<b>Mary Kift 1922-2010</b>	<i>Matthew Coome</i>	4
<b>Mary Kift and Marian Fallowfield: a Memoir</b>	<i>Pat Preece</i>	5
<b>Chairman's Report 2010</b>	<i>David Oliver</i>	6
<b>Honorary Membership</b>		
Pat Preece	<i>Sue Sandford</i>	7
Margaret Westwood	<i>Hazel Williams</i>	8
<b>Meetings and Visits</b>		
Lectures and Visits 2010-2011		9
<i>Calleva Atrebatum</i> : Roman Silchester	<i>Sue Sandford</i>	10
Oxfordshire Past	<i>Mike Green</i>	11
<b>Reports and Articles</b>		
<i>Greys Mound</i>		
Continuing the Wide Area Survey of the Prehistoric Landscape	<i>David Nicholls and Mike Green</i>	14
Report on the Lithics from Greys Mound	<i>Janet Eastment</i>	19
<i>The Search for the Missing Church of St Michael, Bix Gibwyn, Bix</i>		
Completion of Investigations 2010-2011	<i>David Nicholls</i>	25
<i>Brightwell Baldwin Community History and Archaeology Project (BBCHAP)</i>		
2010 Excavation in Brightwell Park	<i>Ian Clarke</i>	26
The Brightwell Park Lace Tag	<i>Janet Eastment</i>	32
Two Medieval Smithies at Newington, Oxfordshire	<i>Gwilym Williams</i> <i>(John Moore Heritage Services)</i>	33
<i>Gatehampton Farm Roman Villa Excavation</i>		
Interim Report 2010	<i>Hazel Williams</i>	38
Roman Nails at Gatehampton	<i>Dave Jobling</i>	43
The Woodlands of the Allnutt Charity, Goring Heath	<i>Pat Preece</i>	47
A Guide to using Google™ Earth as an Archaeological Aid	<i>David Oliver</i>	51
Age Concerns – Lead Astray?	<i>John White</i>	56
<b>From the Archives</b>		
SOAG Bulletin No. 40 1984 (1985)		
Excavation at Park Field, Newington: Interim report	<i>Cynthia Graham Kerr</i>	59
SOAG Bulletin No. 39 (1983)		
A Parish Survey: One Way of Tackling It	<i>Mary Kift</i>	60

# Cynthia Graham Kerr

1920-2011

Janet Sharpe



Cynthia Graham Kerr

*The passing of SOAG's founder and President Emeritus on 12 January 2011 has marked the end of an era in the Group's history. For those of us who had the privilege of knowing Cyn for many years, things can never be quite the same again.*

Cyn's strong character and determination were responsible for creating an archaeological society that continues to flourish today, whereas so many of its contemporaries have fallen by the wayside. SOAG was founded in May 1969, at a time when public interest in archaeology was undergoing a strong revival, assisted by the boom in adult education and the wide choice of courses available at the time. Cyn came relatively late to archaeology but in so doing discovered her métier. Times changed and amateur archaeology declined with the growth of the professional units in the late 1970s and 1980s and more recently with the closure of university extramural departments and other opportunities for continuing education at affordable prices. SOAG weathered all this, thanks to Cyn's overwhelming enthusiasm – and her persistence and powers of persuasion in continually recruiting new members. She was the queen bee who controlled every aspect of the SOAG hive for nearly 40 years until increasing age and poor health eventually persuaded her to relax her grip. Even then she remained as SOAG's figurehead until the day of her death.

Cynthia Amelia Hayward was born in Isleworth on 21 October 1920. Both her parents had military backgrounds, her mother having been a sister with the Queen Alexandra Nursing Corps, and her father a captain in the Royal Naval Air Service. An only child, she grew up in Hampton Hill, where she attended Summerlea School and later the Lady Eleanor Holles School. She became a Girl Guide and a Sea Ranger at Teddington, and she spent many days sailing and camping. It was this early enthusiasm for the 'outdoor life' that stood Cyn in good stead for field archaeology later on.

School was followed by art college, where she studied graphic design. During World War II she worked as a tracer for the Ministry, identifying sites of potential military interest among other projects which frequently took her away from home and fostered an interest in travelling. After the war she attended various courses at Ashridge College of Further Education in Hertfordshire, including courses on geology and local history and one on the sea, which is when she met her future husband, Walter Adam Graham Kerr. Cyn and Adam were married in June 1949 and made their home in Strawberry Hill, Twickenham. They were both passionate about the sea and sailing, and had common interests in geology, local history and travelling. At this time Cyn also took up pottery in addition to painting and drawing, and also Scottish country dancing. Again, these interests in creative arts and physical activity were to come to the fore when archaeology took over her life.

Her only child, Alistair, was born on 12 January 1958; sadly, Cyn died on his 53rd birthday. In the 1960s, like his father before him, Alistair was sent off to boarding school and it was during this time that the family moved from Strawberry Hill to the Thatched Cottage in Whitchurch Hill, South Oxfordshire. With this move, Cyn was able to give full rein to her life-long passions of gardening and watercolour painting – and she also took up a new hobby which involved breeding and showing Persian cats.

Cyn's latent interest in local history was rekindled in South Oxfordshire. She worked as a volunteer recording pottery and other finds at Reading Museum, and she and Adam met Dr Cecil Slade when he was directing fieldwork at Bozodown Camp, very close to where they lived. One thing led to another, and as a result of this developing interest Cyn formed SOAG with a small group of 11 founder members in order to research and record the archaeology of South Oxfordshire. From that very first meeting in 1969, Cyn kept meticulous notes of all SOAG's activities in a series of foolscap 'log books', which she maintained right up to the beginning of 2009. These log books provide a precious record, not only of SOAG's aspirations and achievements over this long time span, but also of the often humorous anecdotes concerning past and present members of the Group.



Above: Cyn at Abingdon in 1989

Right: Cyn holding one of the flints found at Gatehampton in 1988

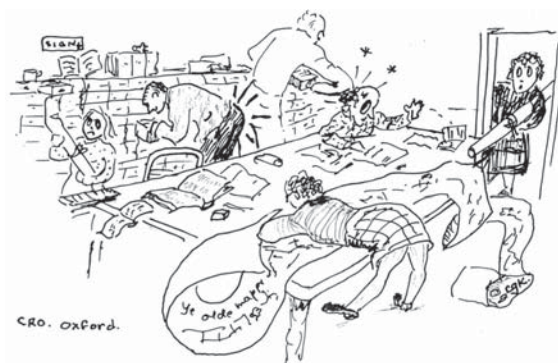
SOAG has undertaken some ambitious projects in its time, including the Lilley Farm dig at Mapledurham in the early 1970s, before embarking on the work at Gatehampton in the late 1980s, which continues to this day. The SOAG archives comprise far more than the log books: Cyn recorded absolutely everything and was famous for her numerous handmade notebooks which appeared in various shapes and sizes, depending on what spare paper she had to hand. She was a serious champion of recycling, even back in the early days, and the backs of envelopes were also frequently pressed into service. All these scraps of information were carefully filed away and we are now approaching the stage when the SOAG archives can be added to the Oxfordshire county records for public access. It is good to know that all Cyn's hard work will not be wasted.

With the founding of SOAG, Cyn began to make herself known among the archaeological community of Oxford. Never one to shy away from new encounters, Cyn was soon to list a number of eminent Oxford academics among her personal friends, including Professor Stuart Piggott, who she affectionately referred to as 'Piglet'. Her enthusiasm and determination were recognised by all of them, including the professionals at the Oxford Archaeological Unit (OAU, now Oxford Archaeology), and first Richard ('Charlie') Chambers and latterly Tim Allen became her friends and mentors. Although never having followed a recognised course of study in archaeology, before she took the Oxford extramural Certificate in Archaeology in the early 1980s, she was never short of informed advice and guidance for SOAG's activities.

Cyn was indefatigable and somehow found the time and energy to take part in archaeological digs in other parts of the country and abroad. She and Adam dug with Professor Martin Biddle at St Albans and Repton, and for several years she went over to France (another of Cyn's many achievements was fluency in French) each summer to work at a Mesolithic site in the Ardennes under the direction of Dr and Mme Rozoy. She has also dug at Crickley Hill, Cirencester and Sutton Hoo. The SOAG logo is based on a complete

Roman pot excavated by Adam in 1989 when they were both working at the Abingdon Vineyard site under the auspices of the OAU. In the same year, Cyn and Adam enjoyed an archaeological tour to Jordan and Israel.

A glance through some of the earlier issues of the *SOAG Bulletin* will provide insights into some of Cyn's many skills. In addition to the annual President's Report, she wrote many articles about the work that SOAGs had carried out, including interim reports on the Gatehampton dig until 2000, interspersed with some more quirky items including poems (usually set to a tune from the Girl Guide song book) and some wonderful cartoon drawings of 'work in progress'.



Work in progress at the County Record Office!

Despite all this activity, SOAG did not form the entirety of Cyn's life. She was an active member of the Women's Institute whilst at Whitchurch Hill, and an able needlewoman. She met regularly with a group of like-minded ladies who comprised the eponymous 'Sew-and-Sews'. Her skills found expression in appliqué work, intricate embroidery, patchwork and, when pushed, knitting. Whenever she went away, she kept a detailed holiday log book embellished with sketches and watercolour drawings. She even decorated her Christmas cake with a SOAG theme each year – which sometimes included real flints! For good measure, she also sang in the church choir. Her son Alistair recalls that after a busy day Cyn liked nothing better than to sit in front of an open fire with a mug of cocoa, a good book, and her family (including the cats) around her.

Cyn first came into my life in 1983 when I was a new mum stuck at home in Pangbourne, missing my work colleagues and my archaeology classes in London. I have never looked back. She whisked me out of the house and in no time I was digging at Newington with the baby perched on a blanket by the side of the trench (health and safety weren't the same in those days). We quickly became firm friends and 'Auntie Cyn' was a prominent and much-loved figure in my daughter's life. We shared a lot of fun and laughter, not least while trying to prepare the *SOAG Bulletin* on my old typewriter, aided by a pair of scissors and a gluestick.

Things won't ever be quite the same again.



# Mary Kift

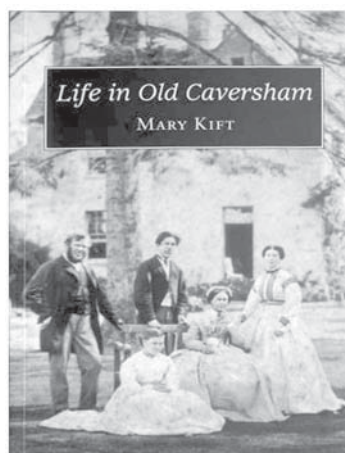
1922-2010

Matthew Coome

Any tribute to Mary will inevitably be built on personal memories of a wonderful lady who was so full of interest in her surroundings and the people she met on her journey through life. I grew up in Caversham in the 70s and read the *Caversham Bridge* newspaper. My interest in local history drew me to Mary's regular contributions on the history of Caversham. When Canon Grimwade planned the St. Peter's Festival in 1978, he suggested to Mary that I joined her sub-committee producing an exhibition on the history of Caversham. Mary was good to accept me and what fun we had! This was typical of Mary who would bring fun as well as hard work to any task she performed. I have an abiding memory of the laughter from the pair of us as we struggled to carry the blacksmith's anvil up the stairs in Church House!

Mary lived her life in Caversham and South Oxfordshire. A schoolmistress by profession, she started at St. Peter's Hill School where she had been a pupil and returned there following a break in the war years in service in the Land Army in Compton, Yattendon and the Lambourn valley. Following her return to teaching, she taught at Checkendon and Wallingford before becoming headmistress at the village school in Mapledurham. It was during her time on the land and in small communities that Mary's interest in the countryside and in the people who lived there became central to her life. She gained an extensive knowledge of natural history and also of the human history of the land. She had an expert eye in noticing features of the land that had been man-made and in finding out what had influenced their creation. When she coupled this with her friendliness towards those she met and her natural ability to draw out memories from them, she built up and left for others a deep fund of personal accounts from people all over the area in which she lived.

Over the years Mary and I continued to keep in touch. My last memories were a series of chats we had a year before her final illness. Sitting in the quiet of her lovely house in Darrell Road, we 'walked' through the Caversham she had known throughout her life and she told me of the little springs that once flowed out into Grass Hill, the rural cottages that stood on the Woodcote Road at Chazey Heath, stories of St. Margaret's, Mapledurham, that was so important in her life, and so many other things. Without seeking to do so, Mary inspired me, as she did so many other people, to continue researching the history of the community we live in. I miss her sorely but count myself so fortunate to have had her as a friend with a shared interest. Her legacy exists in her two books, innumerable articles written with so much care and – though many might not know this – the road names of Symeon Place and Notley Place in Caversham and Emmer Green, selected by the council but with Mary's 'guidance'.



# Mary Kift (1922-2010) and Marian Fallowfield (1923-2010)

Pat Preece

What follows are my memories of Mary, but as our lives were so bound up as a threesome, Marian will be an important part.

Thirty-five years ago my husband Gordon and I moved to Caversham. One day, walking down to the local shop, I met Derek Fallowfield; we started talking about archaeology and he mentioned SOAG. Shortly afterwards I joined and met Marian and Mary Kift. They had just finished digging at Lilley Farm and then the dig moved to the Devil's Churchyard near Checkendon. We found that very hard work as it was in an area of felled woodland and there were masses of tree roots.

Shortly after the dig Cynthia announced that people were needed to do parish surveys, so Mary, Marian and I went to Woodstock, where the Oxfordshire Unit was then situated, to find out about it – our future was then sealed! Mary had a great knowledge of Mapledurham and as Marian and I lived in the parish we decided to start with that. We met James Bond who encouraged us and was very helpful.

Marian and Mary did quite a lot of pot washing, but as I was still at work and had other activities I did not. When the Newington dig was proposed we did quite a lot of field walking. As a considerable number of documents formed the background to the areas we were involved with, I went to Keele University on some courses to learn Medieval Latin and writing. Mary and I had already been to some Joan Dils courses but still found it difficult. As Newington had belonged to Canterbury Cathedral, Mary and I went to the archives there. We had a delightful week, staying in a small hotel that overlooked the cathedral.

As the archives were only open for a short period each day, we did quite a lot of sightseeing, including the site of the Saxon cathedral and St Martin's Church which we found fascinating and with which Mary

was thrilled. At the archives I struggled with many court rolls with Mary writing down the translations. Unfortunately the rolls were mostly about the cleaning of the waterways, but it was obvious from the many names that Newington was now a shrunken village. The other problem was that the then archivist was not very helpful (she left shortly afterwards).

Mapledurham was examined as best we could, learning as we went along. Checkendon followed and by then we were getting into our stride and realising that we were interested in the landscape in all its aspects – of course we had read Hoskins and Beresford and Marian especially was interested in Hooper and hedges.

Mary in particular loved the countryside and its plants and knew their names which we tried to remember! She drew our attention to the birdsong and knew the names of the birds – Marian was better than me at this. As we went on there was a period when we looked at barns and farmyards measuring and recording what we found. We had to convince the farmers that we were not interested in the conservation of the many derelict barns, otherwise we would not have been welcome. Mary used her memories of the Land Army to help us about farmyards. So we went on to look at South Stoke and the other parishes up to Crowmarsh – happy days. We met on Fridays every week for thirty years, sometimes to go out, and when the weather was unsuitable, to sit and research and record the parishes. At first we sent our researches to Woodstock and then to Oxford in the Westgate Library and then it became obvious that there was no interest but we continued and recorded what we could.

It is sad that of the three of us only I have survived so far, but my memories of both Mary and Marian are very happy ones.

# Chairman's Report

Dave Oliver

The AGM of 2011 marks the 42nd year of SOAG. That great length of time may offer an explanation as to why we have sadly lost a number of our long-standing members during the past year. Cynthia Graham Kerr, who died in January, had been the force behind the formation of SOAG and had been active until relatively recently at Gatehampton. She only relinquished her role of President to become President Emeritus two years ago, when many of you will remember seeing her at the 2009 AGM celebrating SOAG's 40th year.

We also lost Mary Kift, whom I will personally remember for her writing on the history of Caversham; and of course last year we lost Marian Fallowfield, who, together with Pat Preece, contributed so much to our understanding of the landscape of South Oxfordshire.

Pat has made a generous donation to SOAG with a view to helping SOAG members to carry on their excellent work in landscape archaeology. The money, so kindly donated, has been used to set up a fund that will assist members with the costs of undertaking approved landscape projects. The simple rules governing the fund are published elsewhere, but the committee is looking forward to hearing proposals for projects that the fund could help bring to fruition.

## Finances

We also received another grant from the Robert Kiln Trust following an application by David Nicholls in his role as a SOAG project leader. This grant is intended to help with the costs of the Greys Mound project. That, together with the necessary small rise in membership fees a year ago, does mean the group is financially sound for the time being, that is, we break even. However, our basic running costs do continue to rise significantly, with simple things like printing and posting the *SOAG Messenger* and *SOAG Bulletin* costing around a third of a member's subscription, let alone the annual insurance charge required to cover members during group activities, and the lecture programme expenses. As those of you who actively dig on our projects will know, we now make a daily charge to attendees. While this is capped, these extra funds are used by the individual project leaders to pay

expenses directly incurred by the individual project. It is not unknown for our leaders to dip into their own pockets to allow an excavation to proceed as it should.

## SOAG publications

While they are relatively expensive productions, I am sure you will agree that both our monthly *SOAG Messenger* and annual *SOAG Bulletin* are excellent publications. After his recent, and first-rate, lecture to the group our Patron Professor Airs told me how much he thought of them and said he did read both from cover to cover. So thank you, Mike Green, for editing the *Messenger* and Sue Sandford for editing the *Bulletin*; both put in a great deal of time to produce the publications. It is with regret we will be losing Sue from this role, as well as from the committee, after many years service to the Group.

## Lecture and visits programme

Nancy Nichols has, with suggestions from other committee members, generated a really good lecture and visit programme. The speakers have been very well qualified to give their lectures and would grace any high-level academic archaeological event. However, some lectures have had poor audience attendance, even though Keith Lowndes' efforts, in promoting them to non-SOAG visitors, have had some success and raised a small income. The two organised visits this year were in July to Silchester, where a strong group of SOAGs were guided around the long-running excavation by Professor Fulford; and a dual site visit in August to Ascott Park and SOAG's Brightwell Baldwin "lost" manor house.

Poor attendance at lectures is of great concern to the committee and it has become clear that the village location of our venue is a significant factor. To correct this we are looking at a possible venue change to the centre of Henley-on-Thames, which offers a more attractive location on dark winter nights. The membership will be consulted prior to any such change as some will undoubtedly have to travel further than at present, but many more will find the journey easier if not shorter. In considering this, the SOAG Committee is also mindful that a base



for SOAG in the capital town of South Oxfordshire would offer enhanced status, better access to funding and local support, and the potential for a significant boost to membership – all factors vital to the future survival and continued success of the Group.

### Field archaeology

Our three major field projects, at Gatehampton, Greys Mound and Brightwell Baldwin, all had very active and productive years, and are reported on elsewhere in this edition of the *SOAG Bulletin*. The fieldwork at Bix was completed in early 2010 (and reported on in last year's *Bulletin*). Thanks are due to our project directors, Hazel Williams, David Nicholls and Ian Clarke, and to all SOAG members who participated. This year special thanks are also

due to Steve Gibson, who has taken on the role of Deputy Director at Gatehampton, and Janet Eastment who was Site Supervisor at the Brightwell Park dig.

I must also thank the committee as a whole for the time they put in both inside and outside the committee meetings. These meetings cover a lot of ground on behalf of the group and it is not unusual for them not to finish until very late. The committee then have individual actions to be followed up before the next meeting, plus tasks associated with their basic roles.

Finally, I must extend thanks to Professor Nancy Nichols, who has taken on the role of Vice-Chairman.

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# Honorary Membership

## Awards of Honorary Membership of the South Oxfordshire Archaeological Group

*(Below are the citations delivered at the 42nd Annual General Meeting of SOAG in April 2011)*

### Pat Preece

It is with real pleasure and a deep sense of gratitude that SOAG today is awarding Honorary Membership to Pat Preece.

New members may be unaware that Pat, who joined SOAG in the mid seventies, served on the committee for nearly 30 years and was for five years its chairman. 'Always reliable, determined, ready with sound advice, and able quickly to cut through nonsense': this was how fellow former chairman Ian Clarke described her six years ago. But he was right to add that 'kindness and humour' were, and are, some of her other characteristics.

However, Pat's major contribution to SOAG has always been through her research. For nearly 40 years, often with her great friends Mary Kift and Marian Fallowfield, Pat has been investigating the history of South Oxfordshire using as her primary sources the

landscape itself, the memories of local people, and historical maps and documents. While working full-time in the Health Service, she studied Medieval Latin, Medieval handwriting and Old English, and in 1985 completed the three-year Oxford Certificate in Local History, taught by Joan Dils.

Pat's combination of documentary research, interviews with working and retired woodmen and sharp-eyed observation has led to her becoming an acknowledged expert on local woodlands. She has contributed 41 articles to the *SOAG Bulletin*, fifteen concerning woodlands, as well as contributing to other journals, including *Oxoniensia*.

Pat has been inspired by our local countryside, usually beautiful, often enigmatic and intriguing; and by the writings of W.G. Hoskins and Oliver Rackham, who taught us how to read and understand the

woods and hedges, banks and fields, tracks and paths in the landscape. Again in Ian's words: 'her determination to show that archaeology is not just about digging artefacts out of holes in the ground, but is about people, the way they lived, and the way they shaped the landscape around them, has been an inspiration to us all. Landscape Archaeology is the modern archaeology – Pat was in at the start of this pioneering movement.'

It gives me great pleasure to thank you, Pat, on behalf of the President, the Committee, and the Members for your past work in helping to run the organisation, but also for your dedication to establishing Landscape Archaeology as an essential and integral part of field research in the South Oxfordshire Archaeological Group.

*Sue Sandford, on behalf of the SOAG Committee*

## Margaret Westwood

I am sure that like me you are very pleased that SOAG is today awarding honorary membership to Margaret Westwood.

Margaret had a career as a teacher of art in London girls' schools before moving to Goring in the early 1980s. She met Cyn at the local yoga class, found her friendly and welcoming, and joined SOAG. She already had an interest in historic buildings and had taken part in the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings National Barn Survey in the 1970s.

She and her husband, John, became keen members of SOAG, participating in most of the projects, large and small, that the SOAG group were involved in over the next 28 years. The first excavation they took part in was at Newington, the project that was recently re-excavated and was the subject of the January lecture by Gwilym Williams. Margaret has many fond memories of that excavation. Margaret also took part in the major excavation of the Anglo-Saxon monastery site at Abingdon in the 1980s where SOAG worked with Oxford Archaeology.

Following this, Margaret was one of the group that worked with Oxford Archaeology on the Thames Water site at Gatehampton, and went on to do extensive fieldwork in the area in the late 1980s. A number of trial trenches were dug and I have an archive photo of Margaret, alone in a large ploughed field, obviously dressed for cold weather – the diggers were more hardy in those days – with trowel in hand, kneeling in front of a small 1m sq trench. It is thanks to the efforts of Margaret and the other early members that we have this project that has been so important to SOAG over many years.

But I think Margaret's most important contribution to SOAG has been her 12 years as Honorary Secretary from the early 1980s to the mid 1990s.

She mentioned to me that already the minute book was an historical archive of SOAG activity over many years. Margaret continued the meticulous recording by hand of the SOAG minutes and administration, before the days when PCs were available.

SOAG was an active and social group and although Margaret downplays her role somewhat, crediting Cyn with organising activities, I'm sure that Margaret was equally responsible for the smooth running of the group over these many years. A lot of work was involved in the arranging of lectures, visits and social events – summer parties were held every year at the Oratory School in the late 80s.

After stepping down as Hon Sec, Margaret very kindly continued for several years to help organise tea and coffee at lectures. She and John have continued to be enthusiastic supporters of all SOAG activities and are still regulars at lectures and events, taking a keen interest in the various projects; I was pleased to see her at Gatehampton recently.

It is with great pleasure that we thank you, Margaret, for your past work as Honorary Secretary of the group for 12 years, for your participation in fieldwork on SOAG projects large and small over 28 years, and for your continued and loyal support of all the SOAG's events, projects and lectures.

*Hazel Williams, President of SOAG, on behalf of the SOAG Committee*

# Meetings and Visits

## SOAG Lectures 2010-2011

### 2010

*January 28*

Steve Allen (York Archaeological Trust)  
**'Boats, Bowls and Buildings: Recent Work in the Conservation Lab'**

*February 25*

Paul Smith (Oxfordshire County Archaeologist)  
**'Review of Recent Archaeology in South Oxfordshire'**

*March 2*

**SOAG 41st Annual General Meeting**  
**Review of SOAG Archaeology 2009-2010**

*April 22*

Helen Webb (Heritage Burial Services, Oxford Archaeology Unit)  
**'The Medieval and post-Medieval Burial Archaeology in St Peter-le-Bailey Church, Oxford'**

*September 23*

Dr Richard Massey (English Heritage, SE Section)  
**'Looking for the Atrebates: Settlement and Change in the Iron Age of Southern Britain'**

*October 28*

Dr Rick Schulting (Institute of Archaeology, Oxford)  
**'Knocked about the Head: Evidence for Interpersonal Violence in Neolithic Britain'**

*November 25*

Julian Munby (Oxford Archaeology)  
**'Timber Building in Oxfordshire/Berkshire'**

### 2011

*January 27*

Gwilym Williams (John Moore Heritage Services)  
**'Medieval Excavations at Newington: Drawing Together the Results of Work by SOAG and JMHS'**

*February 24*

Professor Malcolm Airs (Kellogg College, Oxford; Patron of SOAG)  
**'The Survival of the Country House in the Twentieth Century'**

*March 24*

Dr Nicholas Saunders (University of Bristol)  
**'Twentieth-Century Conflict: Archaeological and Anthropological Perspectives'**

## Visits 2010

*July 10*

### Silchester Town Excavation

Guides: Professor Mike Fulford and Elise Fraser (Finds) (University of Reading)

*August 1*

### Ascott Park and Brightwell Park Excavations

Guides: John Sykes and John Stean (Oxford Buildings Trust); Ian Clarke (SOAG)

## *Calleva Atrebatum:* Roman Silchester SOAG Visit 10 July 2010

**Sue Sandford**

The afternoon of Saturday, 10 July, saw 22 SOAG members gathering at Silchester, some of them after a congenial pub lunch at the nearby Red Lion. The occasion was a guided tour conducted by Professor Mike Fulford of the University of Reading, for 37 years director of the Silchester excavation.

Silchester is a very large site, and the current excavation is also very extensive. About 70 young people were busy digging, sorting or writing up their findings. There was an air of orderly bustle. Mysteriously, a number of pirate flags were flying over the dig: nothing to do, we learnt, with either Romans or Celts, but instead, with the local pub's Pirate Night!

Professor Fulford began with a brief history of the site and its excavation. Victorian archaeologists were interested in the major public buildings of the Romans, and investigations stopped in the early Edwardian period in 1909. Many of their finds are in Reading Museum.

Silchester developed as a trading centre, situated as it was at the crossroads of major trading routes. Roman Silchester began to be developed soon after the invasion of 43AD. Indeed, some believe that the trigger for invasion was the Iron Age king's request to Rome for help against threats from neighbouring kingdoms. What became Silchester was the capital of the Atrebates; the area they governed was roughly coterminous with pre-1970s Berkshire.

'Period I' of Silchester runs from the late 40s to the 60sAD, when it is truncated. The 60s are marked by an 'horizon of destruction', perhaps evidence of the devastation caused by the revolt of the Iceni, led by Boudicca. However, building began again. Defences were constructed in the 3rd century, and late in that century were rebuilt in stone. The community continued perhaps to the late 6th or early 7th century, until the rise of Anglo-Saxon Wessex. There is no evidence for what happened at this site from the 6th to the 10th centuries, and the Medieval settlement is outside its boundaries.

After providing this historical outline, Professor Fulford turned to the present focus for investigation: 'Insula IX, The Town Life Project'. (*Insula*, Latin for 'island', here means a block within a gridded street

plan.) This area was chosen, in 1997, because it is ordinary; it contains no major public buildings and lies to the north-west of the central Forum Basilica. The project is both a training Field School and a research excavation. The intention has been to go down through the various levels of occupation in order to understand the way the town has developed. The dig has now reached the settlement that existed before the Romans arrived. This too was laid out on a grid, but at 45° to the Roman one, being aligned NW/SE. This in itself suggests a sophisticated urban culture in the Late Iron Age.

With SOAG members watching from the walkways built to give an elevated view of the site, Professor Fulford described the streets, workshops, hearths and wells evidenced by the irregularities of level and soil colour in the 3,000sqm excavation before us. Most striking was a Roman street constructed at 45° to the underlying Iron Age ones. The Iron Age rubbish pits and wells have contained some interesting finds: an 800-litre wooden wine vessel, perhaps put into the well to shore it up; and from a level of the 30s AD, remains of coriander, celery and flax, again suggesting the sophistication, and extensive trading routes, of pre-Roman Britain.

Next Elise Fraser, the site's Finds Officer, showed us, and allowed us to handle, some of the more interesting recent finds. Last year the excavation produced a quarter of a ton of pottery, and the team's practice is to record all objects the day they are found – a great deal of work.

Elise Fraser is hugely enthusiastic about her work, interested not only in the objects in themselves, but in what they suggest about the people who owned or handled them. Marbled Samian ware is very rare in Britain, but two pieces have been found here. Is it rare because it was a fashion that didn't catch on?



Fig. 1. Copper alloy brooch, made from a single piece of bent wire, with incised decoration along the bow

A beautiful copper alloy brooch of Iron Age design was found in a Roman level of 200 years later (Fig. 1). Was this a cherished heirloom? The evidence is that this was not the case, but that the pin was newly made to an Iron Age pattern: a 'retro' brooch, a 'Heritage Industry' product. What does this suggest? Nostalgia for Iron Age times; assertion of local identity in the face of Roman cultural imperialism; a fashion for 'ethnic' decoration? These questions in turn give rise to the consideration of how far we can interpret past behaviour by the light of our own cultural experience.

After this, SOAG members dispersed, some to walk to other parts of this huge site, such as the amphitheatre, or the southern walls; some to look at the little garden of contemporary cultivated plants; some, on this very hot day, to return home. All of us left with renewed respect for Professor Fulford, whose 37 years of painstaking dedication have been revealing to us the history of our corner of Britain two millennia ago.

Further information can be found at  
[www.silchester.rdg.ac.uk](http://www.silchester.rdg.ac.uk).

## Oxfordshire Past 2011

Mike Green

The 17th annual Oxpast conference was hosted by the Witney & District Historical & Archaeological Society (W&DH&AS) at the Methodist Centre in Witney. With the retirement of County Archaeologist Paul Smith, the administration of the conference has been taken over by the Oxford Architectural and Historical Society (OAHS). In his introduction the conference organiser, Shaun Morley, explained that this year's agenda was designed as an even balance of history, landscape study and archaeology.

The first presentation was by Simon Townley of the Oxfordshire Victoria County History (VCH). After describing the more straitened circumstances of his organisation this year – less financial support from the County, and greater reliance on specific sponsors – the subject of Simon's talk was the history of **Bradwell and Langford**, in the west of the county, and which he titled 'Domesday to William Morris'. The landscape of this area is flat, dominated by a mix of arable and sheep farming. The villages are mainly nucleated, dating in their present forms from 18th- and 19th-century enclosures: typical Cotswold villages that he contrasted with the dispersed village structures more typical of the Chilterns in the east of the county. At the time of Domesday (1086), the

large Saxon royal estates were already beginning to be broken up, and modern parish boundaries date largely from that process; anomalies such as Little Farringdon and Langford, being detached parts of Berkshire, have since been resolved. The south of the area near the Thames eventually began to play a more prominent role in the economy and Simon reminded us of a recent (2008) *Time Team* at Radcot which discovered an 11th-century planned settlement with a causewayed road to a river crossing, and a 12th-century Norman castle.

Several of the villages in the area can be clearly classified as 'open' or 'closed'. In Holwell, a 'closed village', life was dominated by a powerful estate, which provided most of the employment and social cohesion. (In Medieval times 70% of the population were serfs.) Village life was strictly controlled by the establishment figures of the landowner, the vicar and the schoolmaster. As a result there was little independent community activity, few public houses, and later on no Nonconformist churches. By contrast, in Filkins the estates broke up early in the post-Norman period, and by the 17th century the village was dominated by independent yeomen freeholders. This yielded a vibrant working-class culture with a large number of public houses and several Nonconformist churches. Simon concluded with a look at Kelmscott, another 'open' village characterised, even in the present day, by several 17th- and 18th-century grand houses built by the many prosperous yeoman farmers. Kelmscott is also famous for being the home of William Morris, who said that his intellectual philosophy 'grew out of the ground' there. He is buried in the local church.

The second talk was by Susan Lisk for Oxfordshire County Council who first described the new arrangements at the council following the non-replacement of Paul Smith. Three existing members of staff have picked up Paul's workload: two handling planning applications for respectively the north and south of the county; and Susan being responsible for the Historical and Environmental Record (HER). She also briefly described the new Higher Level Stewardship Scheme, a new scheme managed nationally by Natural England, and designed to support landowners wanting to preserve land and property from going under the plough or development.

Susan then ran through four of the more interesting recent projects in the county. The first was a dig on the site of the **Old Gaol in Abingdon**, prior to its development as a car park. Evidence was found of an Iron Age *oppidum*, a Roman building and several boundary ditches from the early Middle Ages. The



second was **Gill Mill near Witney** prior to extension of the gravel extraction area. As a result of excavation, locations where the density of finds was particularly high will be protected from further extraction. The site is split by a Roman road and one of her slides showed a textbook section across the road, even including an intact top surface. The third site was **Great Western Park near Didcot**, the site of a proposed 3000-house development. Of particular interest here was a Bronze Age alignment that has clearly been re-used by all subsequent occupiers of the area. The developer promises to respect this alignment, both in the layout of the development and also via the naming of new roads. Whether future residents will be aware of this continuity remains to be seen! The fourth site was the A41 **Wendlebury Road near Bicester**. Road widening cuts along a length of the Roman road that runs into the fort at Alcester. Susan also remarked that a recent discovery of Middle-Saxon burials in Bicester itself hints at the presence of the Saxon minster nearby. She also noted that there seems to be a long-term reduction in the level of the water table in the Bicester/Alcester area, which presents a real threat to much of the prehistoric and Roman archaeology yet to be discovered.

The final site described by Susan is closer to SOAG territory. A small dig in **Crowmarsh** prior to housing development immediately adjacent to the bridge over the Thames – the Lister Wilder site – discovered a very large ditch which is believed to have been constructed during the 12th-century siege by Stephen in his unsuccessful attack on Wallingford Castle, occupied at the time by Matilda.

In the first talk after the coffee break Hugh Babbington-Smith described the work of **SOFO, Soldiers of Oxfordshire**. At the core of their activities are the archives of the three Oxfordshire regiments of the British Army. In recent years SOFO has increased its remit to include military activity in the county itself, and is trying to reach a wider audience through exhibitions and outreach programmes. It hopes to have a permanent museum in Woodstock in 2013.

Hugh was followed by David Radford, archaeologist for the City of Oxford. He began by listing the development pressures in the city: extensions and alterations; flood relief schemes; college and University expansion; infill development; the Northern Gateway; Barton new housing project; and retail development. In particular there is growing pressure to expand downwards, to protect the city's famous skyline. As examples he cited: a proposed redevelopment of the Westgate Centre which will expose Greyfriars Priory; the redevelopment of the

Radcliffe Infirmary site, which has already uncovered much prehistoric landscape; and the need of many colleges to modernise their facilities, a process which often exposes their Medieval underpinnings. The main part of David's talk covered three archaeology projects triggered by college enhancements: **Brasenose College's** redevelopment of their Medieval kitchen; **Queens College**, where the discovery of a previously unknown 18th-century vaulted room showed that even with the best-mapped buildings there can be major surprises; and **Pembroke College** in Brewer Street, where an extension has exposed the remains not only of a 13th-century mill, but also earlier Saxon features. David also described the near completion of a comprehensive *Development Archaeology Plan for Oxford*, which will be available for consultation in October 2011.

There followed a short talk by Tony Hadland from the **Oxfordshire Family History Society**, which is based in the Holford Centre in Stanton St. John. Their main activity is the transcription onto the Internet of parish registers and other sources of genealogical data such as monument inscriptions and Oxford City's graves register.

Barbara Allison then introduced us to a project that transcribes probate documents, and in so doing reveals much of Oxfordshire's social history. Her main examples were a study of 17th-century probate relating to two of **Henley's** inns: *The Bell* and *The Catherine Wheel*. *The Catherine Wheel* is of course still a major presence in Hart Street; *The Bell*, further from the centre in Northfield End, is unrecognisable from its 17th-century self, as it now has an 18th-century frontage and is no longer an inn. By studying the wills of inn owners, Henry Boler and Abraham Goodwin respectively, she was able to show that these establishments catered for very different clientele. Henley was a major entrepot, being a port on the Thames channelling agricultural goods from Oxfordshire to London, and manufactures and luxury goods in the reverse direction. *The Catherine Wheel* was situated close to its busy and thriving market place and consequently attracted a visiting clientele who required not only bed-and-board, but also facilities to conduct their business. Bedrooms usually served this dual purpose, as evidenced by Boler's will listing one room as having 12 leather chairs! *The Bell* on the other hand turned its back on the market place, and Goodwin's will, contemporary with that of Boler, shows that it was a high status inn, as evidenced by the high valuation of the contents of some of its rooms. It is known that travelling aristocracy, accompanied by their retinues, sometimes took over the whole inn.

The wills also tell us stories of social mobility. In both cases first sons had already been secured highly-valued apprenticeships, probably with London livery companies, which facilitated their future movement up the social ladder. The inns, prosperous though they appear to have been, were passed to the second and third sons.

The next talk was by David Clark from the **Oxfordshire Buildings Record**, a volunteer group devoted to the recording of Oxfordshire's historic buildings. In 2010 it researched and recorded buildings in Abingdon, Steventon, Burford, Kelmscott, Mapledurham and Henley. David paid his respects to the work undertaken at the last two locations by SOAG members Dan Miles and Ruth Gibson respectively. His talk then focused on three particular buildings: Reavleys Chemist shop in Burford, which claims to be the oldest pharmacy in England; Wysdom Hall in Burford; and the Abbey Buildings in Abingdon – the Long Gallery in particular. In all three cases the complexities of the Medieval origins of the buildings were revealed.

Records from the workhouse movement of the 19th century provide us with much of our social history of the period, and after the coffee break Jane Cavell, a volunteer at the local Witney museum, provided us with a rich account of the **Witney Workhouse**, enabled in large part by the fortuitous salvage of a workhouse register from the early 1840s.

The Thames Valley in the Iron Age is well studied, but of the **Lambourn Downs** and the eastern **Cotswolds**

much less is known. What hill forts there are have been examined, but little work has been done on settlement and it has been generally regarded as hinterland that was relatively unoccupied. This was the opening statement by Dr Alex Lang whose PhD covered a study of the Iron Age settlement of the eastern Cotswolds, between the Evenlode and Cherwell rivers, where there does seem to be a possible cluster of unexamined settlements. He described in detail a pilot investigation undertaken in 2010 of an Iron Age banjo enclosure north of Chipping Norton near Rollright Heath. The archaeology was in his words 'spectacular': a complete sequence of North Oxfordshire/Warwickshire Roman pottery; the burials of several children; and large amounts of animal bones from Middle and Late Iron Age feasting activities. This is clearly an important site, filling in the gaps in our understanding of the sub-Roman Midlands, providing important evidence about the abandonment of banjo enclosures, and the transition from the Iron Age to the Roman period. From the materials uncovered he also speculated not only about what banjo enclosures 'were for', but also about the exchange and trade networks that existed in England in the Middle to Late Iron Age. Coming into this area were salt, from Cheshire, stones for making querns, and of course iron, but what was going in the other direction? Perhaps horses, cattle and leather.

The meeting was closed by Ian Gourlay from W&DH&AS, following which Witney Museum across the road was opened specially for those attending the conference.



Committee member Keith Lowndes manning the SOAG display at Oxpast 2011

# Reports and Articles

## Greys Mound

### Continuing the Wide Area Survey of the Prehistoric Landscape

David Nicholls (Project Leader) and Mike Green

#### Summary

During 2010, SOAG continued its geophysical survey of Barrow Field, which contains the Mound, and the surrounding area, providing many SOAG members with the opportunity to gain experience with the techniques of magnetometry, resistivity and Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) surveying. Collaboration with the Archaeology Department at Reading University continued to provide access to equipment and valuable expertise. In addition, this year the site has been the subject of theses by two students pursuing archaeology degrees. Rafael Korczynski, a student at Reading University, supervised by the Reverend Dr Tim Astin, generated much useful data about the geology of Barrow Field. SOAG member Janet Eastment, studying at Bristol University, supervised a second SOAG fieldwalking exercise in an area immediately adjacent to the Mound, which provided plentiful evidence of prehistoric human activity from the Mesolithic to the Late Bronze Age. It is increasingly clear that this is an area of previously unsuspected prehistoric activity, which offers continuing scope for future archaeological study, including excavation when resources permit.

#### Introduction

Greys Mound is the title given to a mound and surrounding ditch about 60m in overall diameter in Barrow Field (in this project also referred to as Greys I) near the village of Rotherfield Greys, Henley-on-Thames. Suspicion that it might be of prehistoric origin initiated SOAG's interest in the site. The Mound itself was first surveyed by SOAG in 2007 (Nicholls, 2008) and in each following year the Mound, together with the surrounding area, has been subject to further surveys and study (Astin, Nicholls and Nichols, 2009). See Fig. 1 for an aerial view of the area and the names used in this report for various identifying features.

SOAG has employed various resources on this project. SOAG itself owns a resistivity meter, and also has access to a resistivity meter owned by SOAG member Gerard Latham, and a single pole magnetometer owned by SOAG member Geoff Deakin. In addition, a working relationship has developed with the University of Reading that has provided us with additional access: to a dual pole magnetometer and a GPR system. In 2009 Rafael Korczynski, supervised by Dr Tim Astin, and Janet Eastment began to use the site as a vehicle for their research theses.

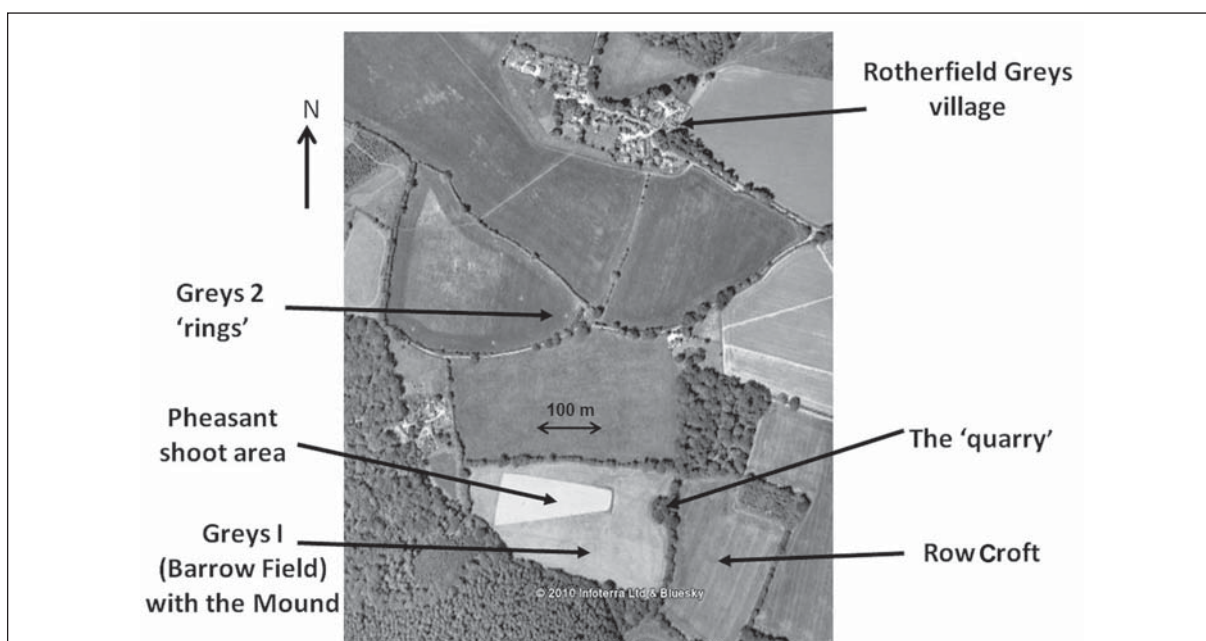


Fig. 1. The landscape under study by SOAG

© Google Earth



Finally, many SOAG members have used this project as their introduction to the techniques of geophysical surveying. In 2008 and 2009 all these resources were used to extend the non-intrusive survey of the Mound and its immediate environment, including the feature we call 'the Quarry', and the adjacent fields, Row Croft and Greys 2.

By the beginning of 2010 it had become clear that the Mound itself was almost certainly the remains of a Bronze Age barrow, which contained a central circular feature with a complex internal structure, surrounded by an outer ring ditch with a total diameter of about 60m. There may also be a second, non-concentric ditch of larger diameter, and there are some indications that the barrow may have been built on the site of a Neolithic structure. The former Oxfordshire County Archaeologist, Paul Smith, has commented: 'This all makes for a rare, and possibly unique, site in this part of England, but certainly in the Chilterns'.

### Goals for 2010 archaeology

SOAG's broad goals for 2010 were:

- to complete the geophysics survey of Barrow Field
- to undertake fieldwalking in Barrow Field when the opportunity arose
- to continue the study of the wider area.

Plans evolved as the year progressed, since they were dependent on access to particular field locations being granted by the farming and gaming contractors; on weather conditions; and on SOAG and University resources.

### 2010 activities

The following activities were undertaken in 2010. Participating organisations and lead individuals are in parentheses.

#### Barrow Field (Greys 1)

- Extension of the magnetometry survey (SOAG and Reading University)
- Extension of the resistivity survey (SOAG)
- A fieldwalking exercise in the 'pheasant shoot area' close to the Mound (Eastment and SOAG) to study the lithics
- A test pit to study the underlying geology (Korczynski)
- Auguring in the Mound's 'outer ring ditch' to examine its nature (Korczynski)
- High-resolution resistivity transect survey across the Mound to provide a more detailed profile (Korczynski and SOAG).

#### Greys 2

- A repeat resistivity survey of the ring features seen on Google Earth (SOAG).

Each of these activities is reported below.

### Magnetometry survey

A partial magnetometry survey of the field was undertaken in 2009 under the leadership of Tim Astin, using the university's Bartington gradiometer (Astin, Nicholls, and Nichols, 2009). In 2010 this was extended to include the 'pheasant shoot area' and a strip in the north of the field. (See Fig. 2 for the integrated results.) Note that most of the linear features visible probably represent post-Medieval or modern activity – most notably the lines of the hay bales used in recent years to delineate the 'pheasant shoot area'. There is no obvious evidence of the Mound, although there is an indication of the outer ditch on the north side of the Mound. The extended survey does suggest a distinct difference in character between the north-west and south-east parts of the field. This difference is even more pronounced in the resistivity survey (Fig. 3).

### Resistivity survey

Partial resistivity surveys of Barrow Field were undertaken in 2007-2009 using Gerard Latham's TR/CIA meter. In May 2010 the survey was extended by two teams:

- Geoff Deakin and Mike Green led a team which used SOAG's RM-15 meter to cover the north-east part of the field and part of the strip north of the bale line

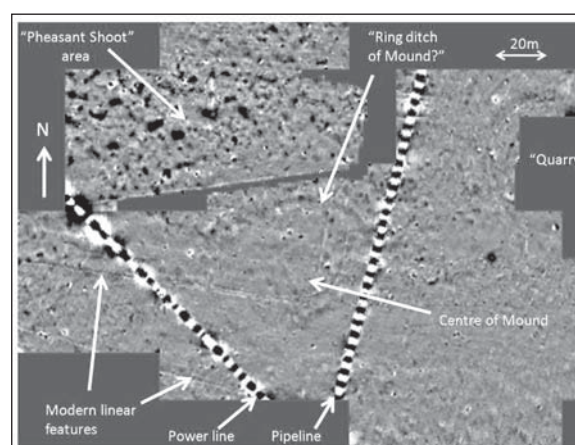


Fig. 2. Extended magnetometry survey of Barrow Field

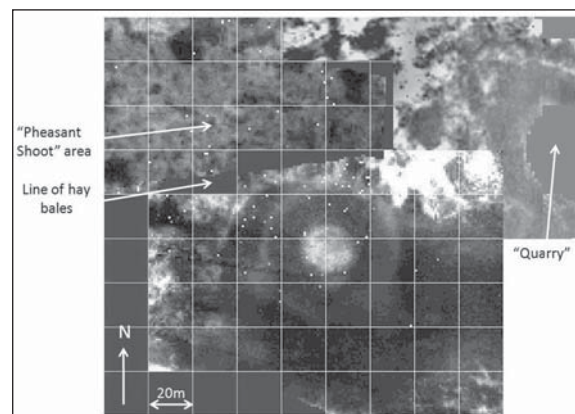


Fig. 3. Extended resistivity survey of Barrow Field. (Two yet-to-be-integrated datasets.)

- Gerard Latham led a team that used his own meter to survey the 'pheasant shoot area' and part of the field north of the bale line.

See Fig. 3 for the results. (NB: At the time of publication, the outputs from the two meters, which have different recording standards, have not been technically integrated. The two surveys are differentiated in the figure by the presence or absence of grid lines.)

### Analysis of the geophysics

Tim Astin, in a personal communication, has stated: "Both [geophysics] plots strongly suggest a lot of archaeological activity in the NW area, with a patchwork of resistance and magnetic anomalies more intense than elsewhere. The interpretation of this NW area isn't straightforward ... Korczynski's recent test pit [see later] ... suggests to me two plough layers combining to about 30-40cm total depth. I suppose most of the geophysical anomalies in the NW are below the plough layer(s). They seem to include both a) geometrical features with right angles, especially in the resistance mapping, and b) a patchwork of anomalies that suggests extensive ground disturbance, perhaps by pits. In the magnetic plot, the relatively large positive magnetic anomalies suggest to me some burning. I saw a few burnt stones in the modern plough soil when we did the survey that may support this idea. Both plots show the mound being in an undisturbed area, suggesting that it pre-dates most or all of the activities in the NW area. As is often the case, the geophysical surveys have thrown up more uncertainties than resolutions."

### Test pit and auguring

Korczynski continued his study of the field as part of his Masters degree in geoarchaeology (Korczynski,

2011). About 50m west of the 'outer ditch' (see Fig. 6 for location) he dug a test pit 1m square and 1m deep to examine the underlying geology of the field.

Four layers were identified in the test pit vertical section, and samples were subjected to Laser Particle Size (LPS) analysis, a technique that measures particle sizes in deposits. The layers are characterised as:

Z1: sandy silty (the plough layer)

Z2: upper silty sand

Z3: lower silty sand

Z4: very fine silty sand

Korczynski also augured two boreholes, the locations of which are shown in Fig. 5 superimposed on the resistivity pseudo-section taken across the Mound in 2008 (Astin, Nicholls, and Nichols, 2009). Borehole 1 (BH1) was selected to sample the material in and below the feature we call the 'ring ditch', or 'outer ditch'; Borehole 2 (BH2) was chosen for its apparent neutrality in the geophysics surveys. BH1, BH2 and the test pit were also aligned to create a geological cross-section of the site (see Fig. 6).

Korczynski's LPS analysis of the sediments in BH1 and BH2 revealed differences between the two (Fig. 7). Both series contained a top layer of sandy silt (deposit A), and both sequences also contained similar layers of silt and similar underlying layers of lower sandy silt (deposits B and C). BH1, however, indicated the presence of an additional sandy silt layer somewhat different in composition between the deposits A and B (deposit X). This additional layer lies at a depth of about 50-160cm.

Analysis of the GPR data and the resistivity pseudo-section (Astin, Nicholls and Nichols, 2009) indicated a base of the 'ring ditch' at a depth of about 160 cm. The depth of layer X is synchronous with this and suggests the ditch may have been dug within underlying deposit B. Fig. 7 also indicates dipping horizons of deposition from west to east.

### High-resolution linear resistivity across the mound

Korczynski, aided by Mike Green, also undertook a high-resolution resistivity transect from the centre of the Mound out across the ring ditch (Fig. 6). The notable feature of this survey is that the sampling interval was 25cm, instead of the 1m interval used for the wide-area survey. The purpose of this new transect was to provide a more precise definition of the Mound and outer ditch features. Fig. 8 shows the high-resolution resistivity data aligned with the GPR vertical cross-section. (The text labels on the GPR scan are the analysis by Astin and Korczynski.)

### Fieldwalking in the pheasant shoot area

In May 2010, the 'pheasant shoot area' was ploughed and seeded, and SOAG was given permission for a fieldwalking exercise. Since this area approaches the

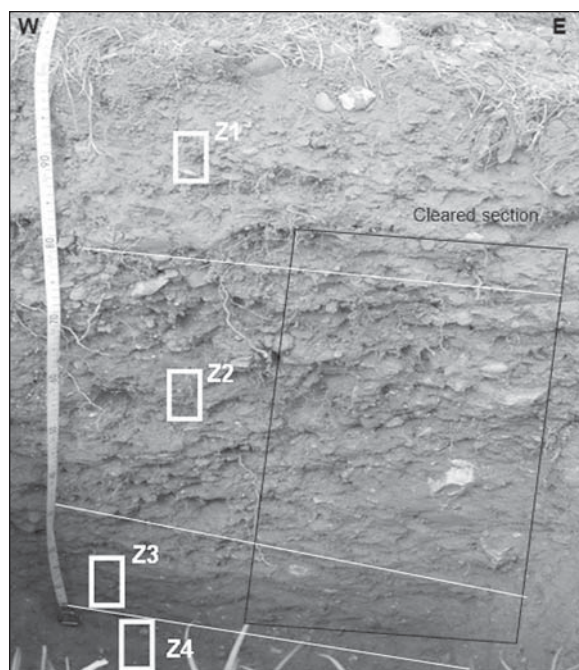


Fig. 4. Barrow Field test pit cross-section (Source: Korczynski)



Fig. 5. Location of boreholes

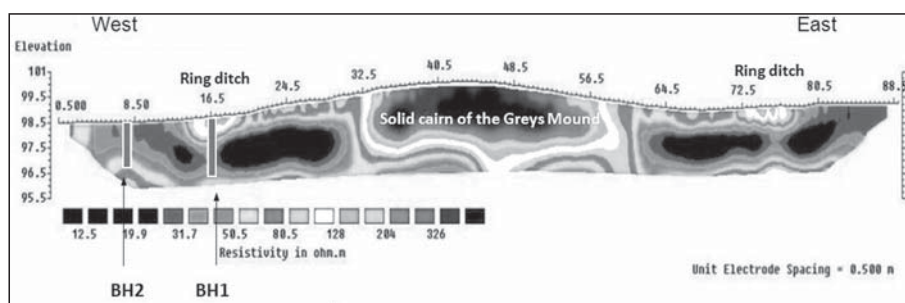


Fig. 6. Alignments of the geological cross-section, and the high-resolution (25cm) transect  
(Source: Korczynski 2011)

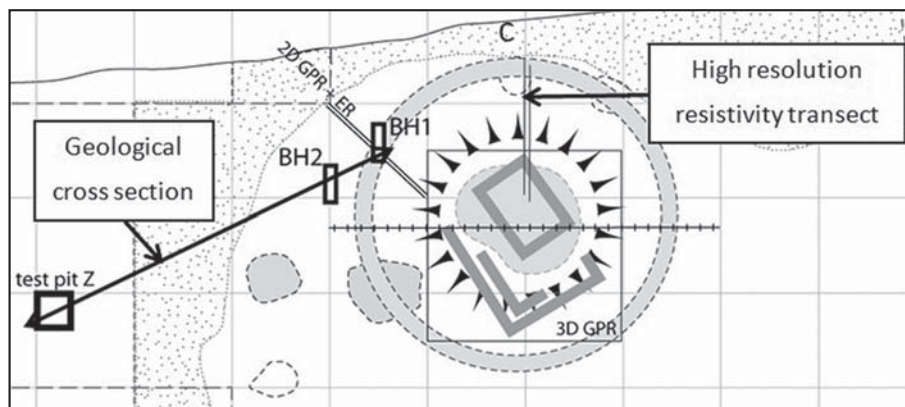


Fig. 7. Simplified geological model of the Greys Mound site showing the sedimentary context of the ring ditch and lateral variation of lithology  
(Source: Korczynski 2011)

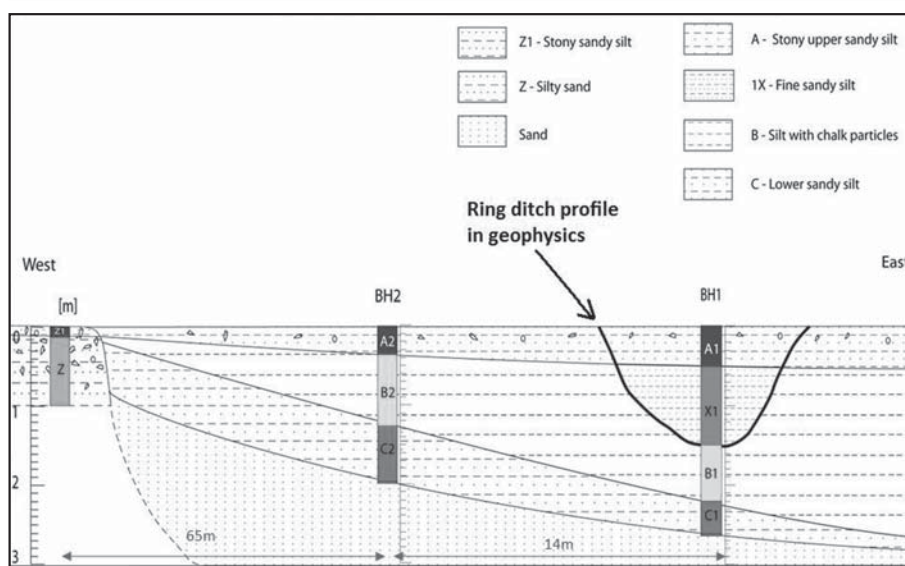
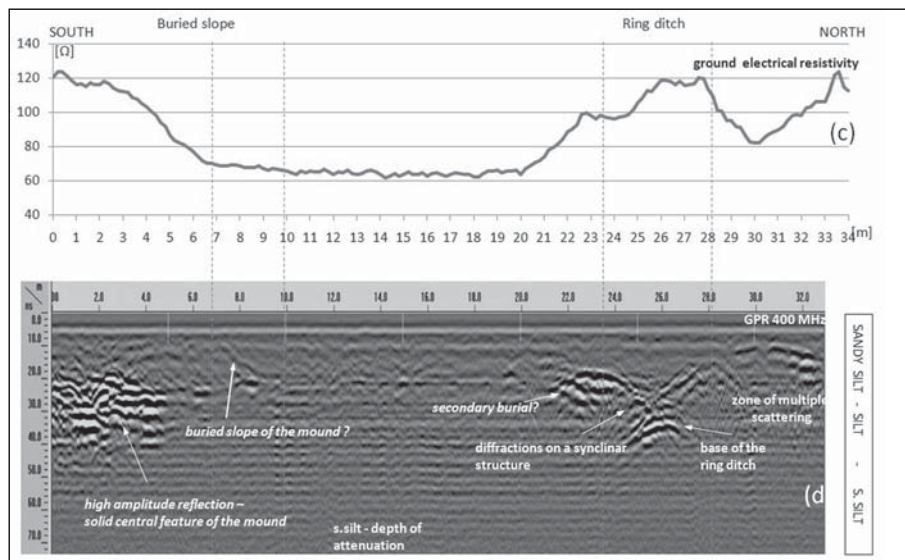


Fig. 8. Top: resistivity survey (25cm probe spacing). Bottom: GPR survey on same scale and alignment.  
(Astin and Korczynski)



edge of the Mound, a valuable opportunity was afforded to research the lithics of the area, and a team of 12 SOAG members was led in the exercise by Janet Eastment. Eastment's thesis for her degree in Archaeological Studies at the University of Bristol is based on a study of the worked flints collected in this exercise and also from a similar exercise in Row Croft in 2009. She concludes that occupation/activity extended from the Mesolithic to the late Bronze Age (see below). The assemblage strongly indicates occupation in the immediate vicinity during the later period.

Janet Eastment's study has provided important data on extensive unsuspected prehistoric activity in this part of the Middle Thames upper land areas. Even though only a small proportion of the area has so far been studied, when seen in conjunction with the geophysical results, it may indicate an area of ceremonial or religious significance.

### Greys 2

Greys 2 is a field about 250m north of Greys 1. A study of Google<sup>TM</sup> Earth aerial photographs reveals the presence of what appear to be two rings, each about 15m in diameter, separated by a gap of about 5m. SOAG first surveyed the area in 2009 to discover whether it indicated similar archaeology to the Mound at Greys 1. Dowsing by Janet Sharpe indicated a positive response. In 2008-9 resistivity and magnetometry surveys were undertaken by SOAG and the University of Reading, but always in less than ideal conditions, and the results were unclear (Nicholls, 2010). Accordingly, it was decided to undertake one more geophysical survey in November 2010 when soil conditions were considered more suitable. 16 grids were surveyed over three days using SOAG's resistivity meter under the supervision of Geoff Deakin and Mike Green. The results are shown in Fig. 9. The image on the left is the Google Earth photograph, the rectangle marking the approximate survey area encompassing the rings. The picture on the right is the resulting resistivity image.

There is no obvious correlation between the contents of the aerial photo and the geophysics (the linear feature at the lower left in the geophysics image is probably modern) and accordingly that represents the conclusion of SOAG's study of this field image.

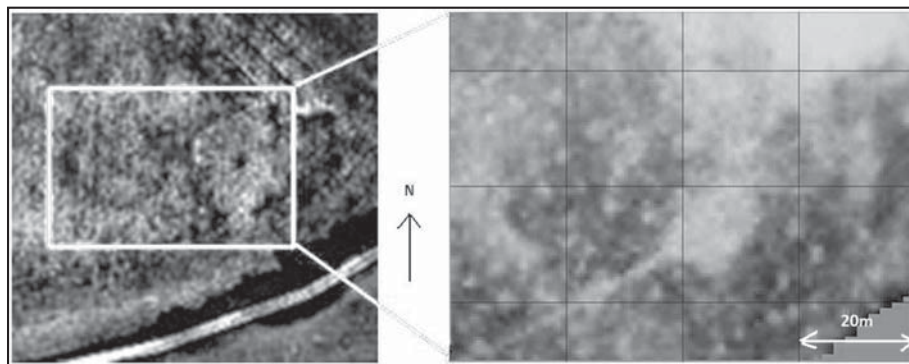


Fig.9. Greys 2 rings survey results

### Future work

Future studies of this important site – and landscape – can be undertaken in two ways by SOAG:

- continuing with geophysical surveys of Greys 1 (NB: the extreme west end of the field has not yet been surveyed) and adjacent fields and woodland areas
- undertaking limited trial trenching in Barrow Field at (a) the Mound and its ring ditch, and (b) the 'Quarry', to obtain dating and environmental data, as suggested in a personal communication by Professor Richard Bradley of Reading University.

For both these exercises funding will be necessary for post-excavation analysis and reporting, as well as limited site costs.

Farming practices are changing in Greys 1, but, by agreement with the landowners and the tenant farmer, the important features will be left untouched. Our main collaborator at the University of Reading, the Reverend Dr Tim Astin, is moving away from the locality, but we are hopeful that SOAG's relationship with the University can continue, providing access to resources, expertise and students.

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## Report on the Lithics from Greys Mound

Janet Eastment

*I would like to thank all the SOAG members who participated in the fieldwalking surveys at Greys Mound in August 2009 and May 2010. The worked flint collected from these surveys has since been analysed and catalogued and the results are presented in this report.*

### Fieldwalking Surveys

*Row Croft, August 2009*

Since access to the site was restricted to just a single day it was not possible to grid and walk the whole field. Therefore only a small section at the north end was intensively surveyed using a grid (Fig. 1) while the remainder was extensively walked in transects.

The drift geology of Row Croft is Winter Hill Gravel at the north end and Clay-with-Flints at the south end. However, an examination of the soil suggests a more uniform clayey silt matrix with about 35% of the ground surface being covered with stones; flint is the predominant lithic present on the surface (around 80%). The field is generally level with no discernible slope in any direction.

The grid, ten 20m squares in two rows running east-west across the field, was laid out. Grid squares A-E were walked in a west-east direction and F-J in an east-west direction. Each 20m square was walked in 2m wide transects and material was collected in separate bags and labelled by transect and square.

The remainder of the field was informally walked in roughly 5-8m intervals and again walked in straight lines in an east-west direction. By this method the remaining area was covered in a space of one and a half hours. Although the level of reconnaissance here was not as intense it was possible to establish that scatters of worked flint appeared to be focussed in the north end of the field.

A large quantity of flint was collected during the course of the survey, which was subsequently washed and sorted for analysis.

*Barrow Field, May 2010*

The drift geology of Barrow Field is well-drained gravels in a silty sand matrix. About 70% of the ground surface was covered with stones, of which around 20% was flint. The cultivated area of this field formed a trapezoid shape of approximately 0.75ha (see Fig. 1). At its narrowest point it measured 25m widening to 62m over a distance of 180m; the ground surface is level.

The area was walked in 2m wide transects in a north-south direction alternating to south-north. Material was collected in separate bags and labelled by transect. A total of 93 transects were walked in this manner by the SOAG members participating in the survey during the day.

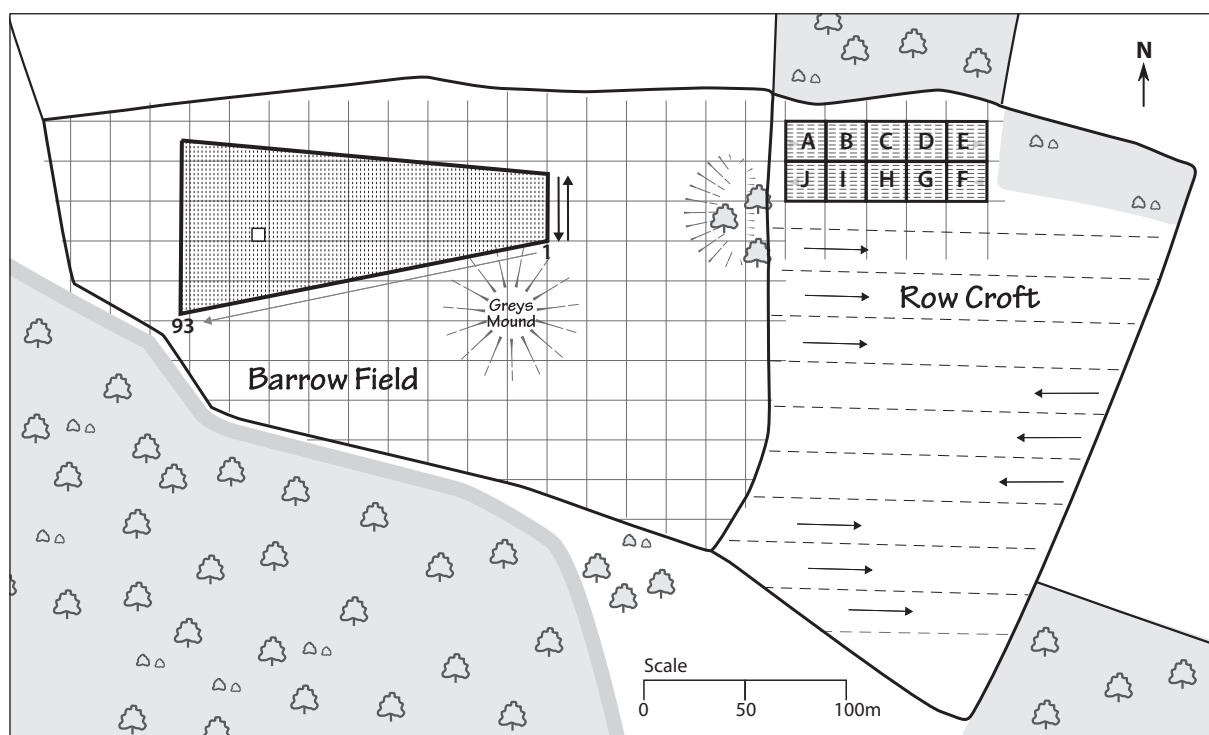


Fig. 1. Plan of the areas fieldwalked at Row Croft and Barrow Field

(Illustration: Janet Eastment)





Fig. 2. A selection of the worked flint collected during the fieldwalking survey at Greys Mound

(Photo: Janet Eastment)

### Results of the fieldwalking surveys

Approximately 3.75ha were fieldwalked, divided between Row Croft and Barrow Field. After carefully washing and sorting the large quantity of material collected I established a total of 154 pieces of prehistoric struck flint had been recovered as a result of both fieldwalking surveys (Fig. 2). The majority of these appear to be from small nodules of flint probably of the local Clay-with-Flints origin. However, several pieces seem to be from a different source; it is possible the flint source for these was the nearby chalk outcrops.

### Analysis of the lithics from Greys Mound

The lithic assemblage from Greys Mound has been analysed and classified following Andrefsky's criteria for determining the attributes of the specimens (Andrefsky 2005).

The attributes used for this analysis were:

- measurements – length, width and thickness
- weight
- colour
- amount of dorsal cortex
- patination.

Other characteristics recorded were:

- evidence of a striking platform
- bulb of percussion size
- flake termination – feathered; hinged; step; plunging or overshot; broken
- modified edges – flakes exhibiting edges with use wear or retouch have been considered tools; the form of retouch was assessed when classifying the flakes into tool categories.

### Artefact types

After a comprehensive analysis of the assemblage it was found that the artefact types fall into four distinct categories: flake tools, debitage, cores and natural utilised flint. Flake tools represent the highest percentage of artefact type recovered. These have been classified into tool types: scrapers, knives and cutting blades, retouched edges, borers, notched, combination tools and fabricators. The quantities of each tool type recorded are listed in Table 1.

Artefact type	Row Croft	Barrow Field	Total
<b>Flake tools:</b>			
<i>Scraper</i>	12	23	35
<i>Knife/cutting edge</i>	5	15	20
<i>Retouched edge</i>	1	11	12
<i>Borer</i>	0	2	2
<i>Notch</i>	3	4	7
<i>Combination tool</i>	5	6	11
<b>Total flake tools</b>	26	61	87
<b>Debitage</b>	16	16	32
<b>Cores and core tools</b>	3	5	8
<b>Natural utilised flint:</b>			
<i>Scrapers</i>	4	8	12
<i>Knife/cutting edge</i>	2	0	2
<i>Borers</i>	2	4	6
<i>Notch</i>	1	1	2
<i>Combination</i>	3	0	3
<i>Fabricator</i>	1	1	2
<b>Total natural utilised flint</b>	13	14	27
<b>Total artefacts</b>	58	96	154

Table 1. The quantities of each artefact type collected at Greys Mound

**Scrapers.** 35 definite examples of this tool type were recorded while eight of the combination tools incorporated scrapers on one of their edges. Scrapers represent the largest percentage of tool type in the whole assemblage, with several types present, including: end scrapers; side scrapers; hollow scrapers and invasively retouched scrapers (Fig. 4). Placing these into periods there are: one end scraper attributed to the Mesolithic and four scrapers to the Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age. These are the invasively retouched scraper, similar in shape but slightly larger than a thumbnail scraper; one side scraper; one end scraper and one abruptly retouched on all edges. The remainder were attributed to the Later Bronze Age; many of these were made on thick broad flakes, broken flakes or natural fractured flakes.

**Knives and cutting blades.** According to Butler (Butler 2005: 61-200), most simple knives had one unretouched edge while the other was either blunted, so it was easier to hold, or was a thicker edge, sometimes with cortex remaining.

The type referred to as a knife was invasively retouched on the straight edge while the opposing edge was either blunted or unmodified. There is one example of a Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age knife (Fig. 4) within the assemblage that fits the typology (Richard Bradley, pers. comm.), while another six fit the cutting blades typology (Fig. 6). One is Mesolithic and the other five are Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age. The remainder are classified as cutting edges from either edge retouch or use-wear evidence.

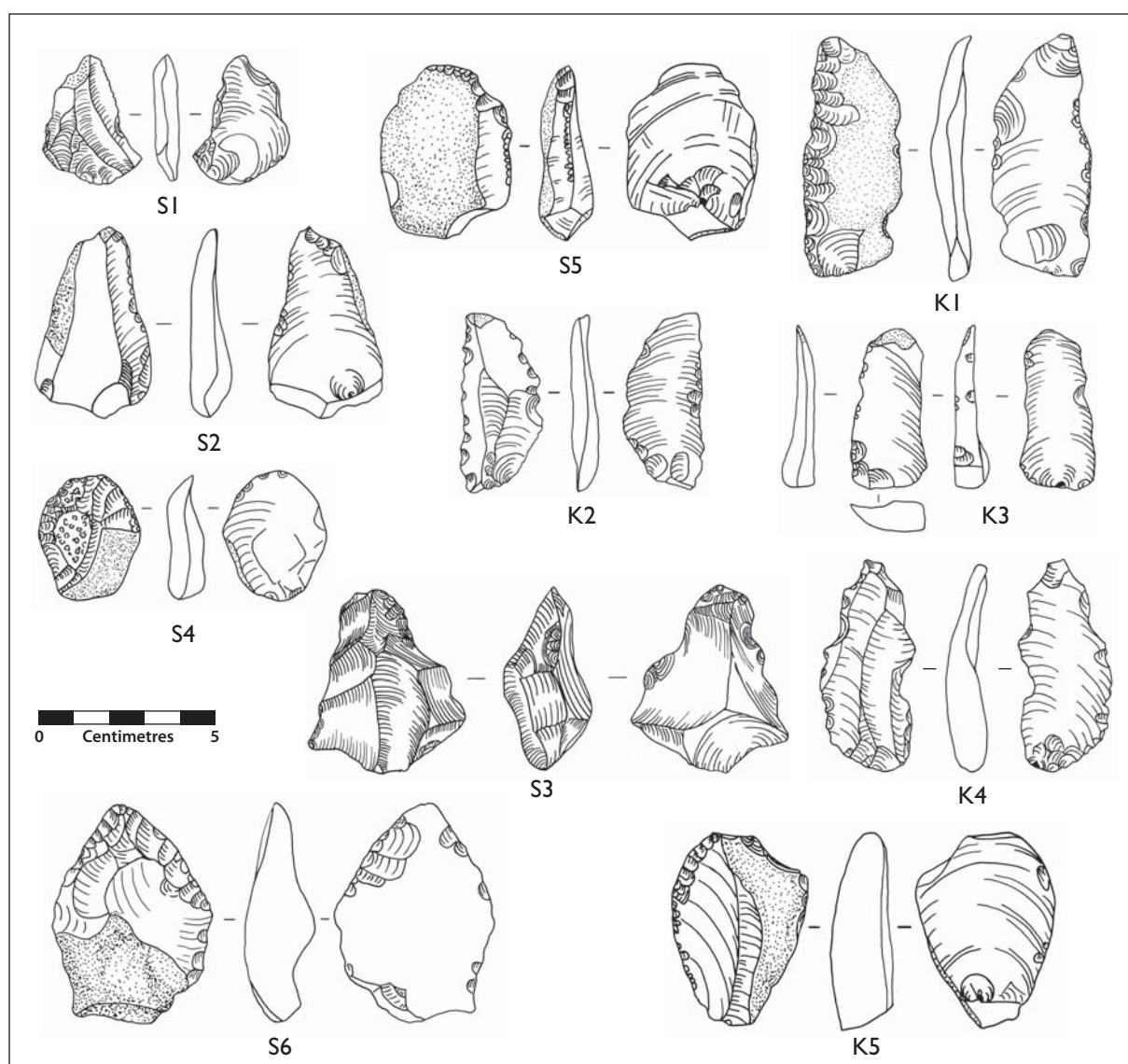


Fig. 4. A selection of scrapers and knives collected during the fieldwalking surveys at Greys Mound. S1: BF-79-01 – Mesolithic end scraper on a rejuvenation flake; S2: BF-00-02 – Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age side scraper; S3: RC-007 – Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age core and end scraper; S4: RC-029 – Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age thumbnail style scraper; S5: BF-24-01 – Later Bronze Age end and side scraper; S6: RC-015 – Later Bronze Age end and side scraper on a natural flake. K1: RC-017 – Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age knife (same as Fig. 28); K2: BF-72-01; K3: BF-52-02; and K4: BF-47-01 – Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age simple knife/cutting blade; K5: BF-44-02 – Bronze Age backed cutting blade. (Flint drawings by Janet Eastment)



**Retouched Flakes.** This group comprises flakes with evidence of retouch along one or more edges, demonstrating they were modified for a purpose, but it is not evident what they might have been used for. However it is possible these too were used for cutting.

**Combination, borers and notched tools.** Twelve flakes had edges modified to perform different functions. These are referred to as combination tools (Butler 2005: 168). Frequently the combination includes a scraper along one lateral edge, or at an end with either a notch or a borer/piercer created on a different part of the flake.

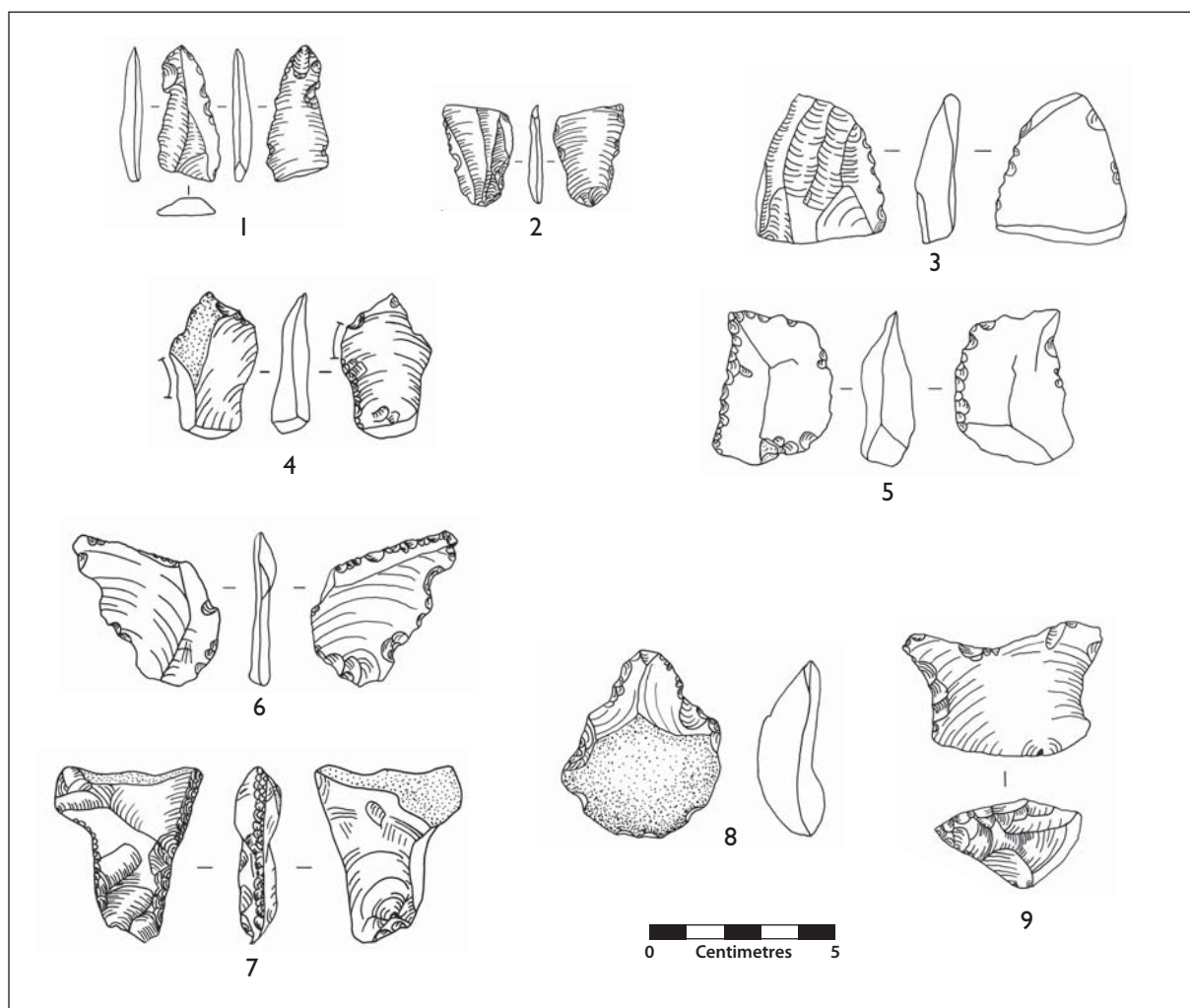
The combination tools in the Greys Mound assemblage are characteristic of the Later Bronze Age period (Fig. 5). Most are quite crudely made on large flakes, or natural flakes of a suitable shape.

The combinations in the assemblage are shown in Table 2.

<i>Tool combinations</i>	<i>Row Croft</i>	<i>Barrow Field</i>
Scraper/borer	3	2
Scraper/notch	1	2
Borer/notch	-	2
Retouched or cutting edge/notch	2	-
Retouched or cutting edge/borer	2	-

*Table 2. Tool combinations*

While notched and borer tools were most frequently found on the combination tools, there were a few flakes specifically made to perform just one of these tasks. The two borers are both characteristic of the Later Bronze Age. Of the five notched tools, two are Mesolithic, one is Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age and the remainder are Later Bronze Age.



*Fig. 5. A selection of retouched edge, combination, borers and notched tools collected during the fieldwalking surveys at Greys Mound. 1: BF-58-01 and 2: BF-57-01 – Mesolithic notched tool; 3: RC-006 – Mesolithic blade core with retouched edge; 4: BF-34-01 – Bronze Age, retouched edge tool; 5: BF-35-03 – Bronze Age borer on natural utilised flint; 6: BF-46-01 and 7: RC-012 – Bronze Age combination tools; 8: BF-31-02 – Bronze Age borer on natural utilised flint; 9: BF-24-06 – Bronze Age borer. (Flint drawings by Janet Eastment)*

**Fabricators and rods.** Possibly two specimens fall into this category, and although it is difficult to determine their function they have been extensively retouched. Butler (2005: 56) suggests uses may include: retouching other flint tools; grinding; or being part of a fire-lighting kit.

### Attributes analysis

The measurements recorded from the lithics provide information on the size of the flakes and the debitage. This information shows a wide range of artefact size and weight, possibly reflecting the depth of time and changes in tool production and technology. The scatterplot graphs in Fig. 6 show the width and length measurements of the flake tools from Row Croft (A) and Barrow Field (B). These charts show a fairly even distribution of flake size, with just a few exceptions.

Flakes that can be classified as having blade-like attributes (twice the length-to-width ratio) were in the minority. However, the majority of specimens displaying these attributes are amongst those classified as either knives or cutting blade/edge. The scrapers form a group made on large flakes with consistently equal length/width proportions.

The Barrow Field scatterplot graph shows more distinct groupings of the earlier artefacts, while the artefacts attributed to the Later Bronze Age are more random.

### Assigning a prehistoric period to the lithics

When determining a specific period for the flake tools, certain criteria need to be considered: the technology used during the flint knapping process; the type of retouch; the overall shape and form of the flake. When these characteristics are analysed the artefact can be assigned to the established typologies for specific periods in prehistory.

The lithic assemblage from the fieldwalking surveys at Greys Mound has revealed three separate prehistoric periods of human activity at this location:

- Mesolithic 6.5%
- Later Neolithic/Early Bronze Age 11.7%
- Later Bronze Age 81.8%.

The presence of flakes and a core attributed to the Mesolithic confirm the first period. Although no specific activity can be inferred from these artefacts, they demonstrate people were visiting the area at this time, but just passing through.

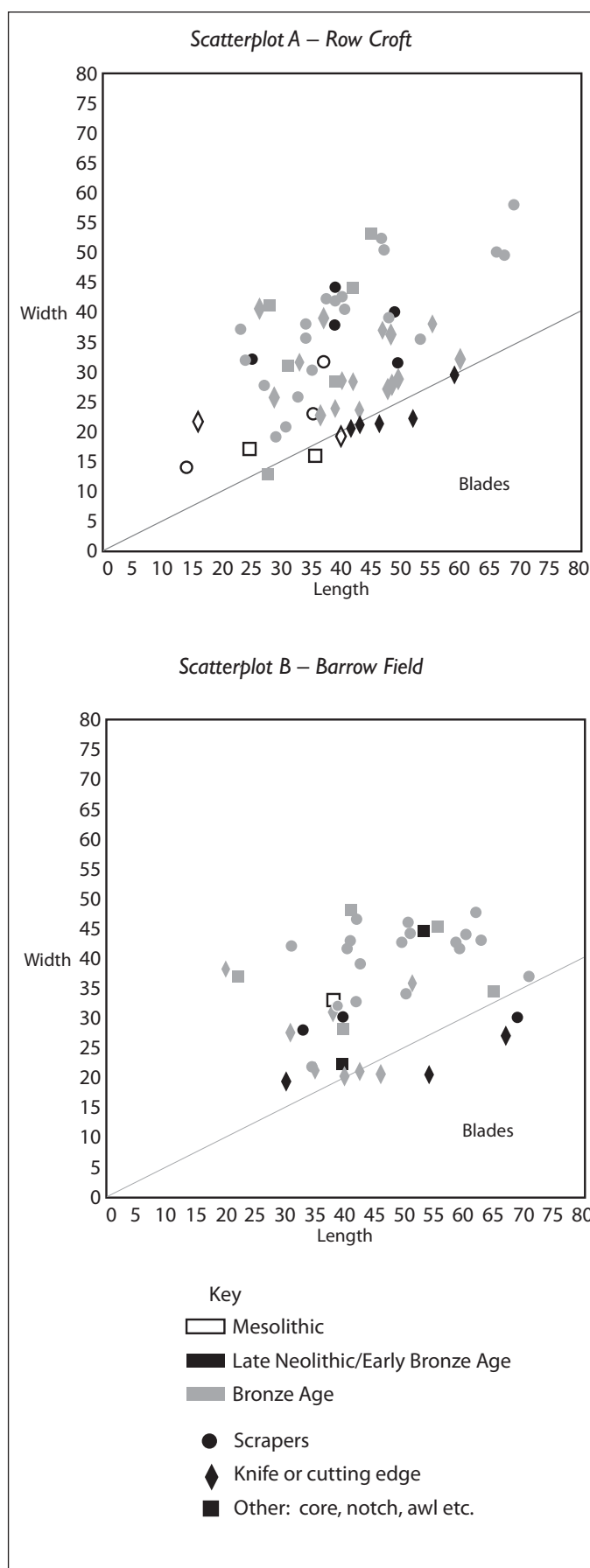


Fig. 6. Scatterplot graphs of the width and length measurements of the flake tools (Diagram: Author)

The second period of activity probably relates to the construction of the barrow in the Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age. The tools attributed to this period are: one knife, six cutting blades, five scrapers, two notched flakes and a core. These types of artefact might be indicative of a short stay camping area, possibly just for the duration of the barrow construction, with domestic activities being carried out. Alternatively it could indicate an area where activities connected with the funerary rites occurred, which may have involved food preparation and possibly feasting.

The bulk of the assemblage (81.8%) is characteristic of later prehistory and suggests a settlement around this location during that period. These artefacts are typical of the Middle Bronze Age onwards, when marginal land such as this became settled and people used expedient tools, picking up whatever was at hand to use at once then discard.

### Summary

In summing up these results it could be said that this study has made a valuable contribution to our knowledge of an area that, considering the paucity of the records, appears to have been neglected for its

archaeological potential. While this study has been centred on the Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age barrow at Greys Mound, the lithic evidence from the fieldwalking surveys (Fig. 7) has revealed other previously unknown activity during the Mesolithic and Middle to Late Bronze Age at this site, which must also extend into the local area. The density of the lithics relating to the Middle to Late Bronze Age suggests a settlement and farming in the vicinity, which has not been previously known about at this location.

### Future research

This study formed the basis for my BA dissertation and I am hoping to continue to expand the fieldwork at Greys to encompass a wider area for postgraduate research. This will present opportunities for SOAG members to join me in future fieldwalking surveys.

### Acknowledgements

I would like to thank David Nicholls for giving me the opportunity to organise the fieldwalking surveys at Greys Mound for use in my dissertation. Thanks also go to the landowners Sue and Sam Samuels for their continued support and for granting us permission to work on their land.

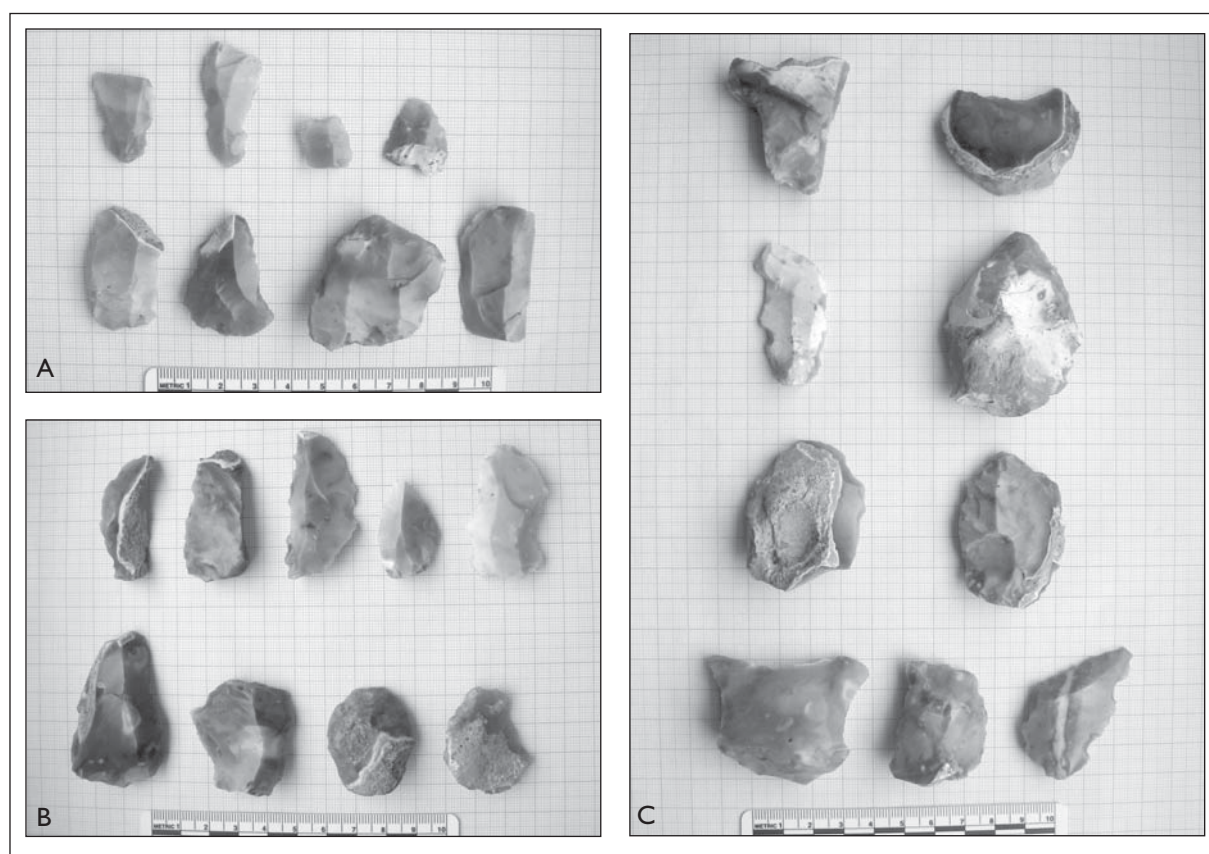


Fig. 7. A selection of the worked flint collected during the fieldwalking surveys. A: Mesolithic, B: Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age, C: Middle to Late Bronze Age.

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# The Search for the Missing Church of St Michael, Bix Gibwyn

## Completion of Investigations 2010-2011

David Nicholls

Following the final fieldwork, conducted in March 2010 and reported on in last year's *SOAG Bulletin* (Nicholls, 2010), and the release in 2010 of the degree dissertation by Matt Berry, of Reading University, covering the results of his extensive geophysical survey, it has been possible to reach a final conclusion concerning the site of this 'lost' early church. We have determined that Chapel Field, Bix Bottom, is indeed its location, despite no conclusive evidence for the actual structure being found. The intermittent deep masonry located within the limited area of excavation has been attributed to the Roman period, with a probable date of about the 2nd century AD.

### Analysis of Geophysical Results

As previously reported, the search project benefited from the exceptional support of the Department of Archaeology at the University of Reading, under the guidance of Dr Timothy Astin, who used both magnetometry and Ground Probing Radar (GPR) search tools. Student Matt Berry adopted the project for his degree course and carried out the extensive searches over a period of two weeks. Due to the considerable ground disturbance on the site during the 19th and 20th centuries when the cottages were built, pulled down and rebuilt, and the previous use of the plot for agricultural purposes, much change has occurred to the soil stratification and this impacted upon the integrity of the imaging obtained during the GPR scanning. The profile of the imaging obtained, indicating probable foundation features of a structure, determined our subsequent trench positioning, and this ultimately revealed the masonry referred to. Radar imaging appeared to show a small structure: of a size anticipated, being axially approximately WSW/ENE (Nicholls, 2010, Fig.3).

In March of this year, 2011, during detailed discussions with Dr Tim Astin, Dr Stephen Miles on of the Victoria County History (VCH) and the writer, the GPR imaging data was re-evaluated – particularly concerning the orientation of indicated linear features. These features relied upon expert interpretation of the 'reflectors' – individual responses from radar transmitted signals – which created the linear (or other) features. Some modification of the original interpretation was agreed upon, with the result that the probable structure is now not so clearly defined on a loose east/west orientation, but now appears to cover a wider area, particularly to the west and partly to the north-east.

The restrictions imposed upon our fieldwork by the extensive number of burials revealed within the limited trench area prevented any further opportunity for extending the excavation. A wider area of search would have enabled further corroboration of foundation features indicated by the GPR.

The consensus of opinion is that the imaging suggests foundations for a large building, or buildings, of unknown extent, predating the Medieval period when the site was utilised for a burial plot. Interments were excavated down to and limited by an extensive mortar spread, possibly of a floor, and sporadic areas of deep flint masonry. Mortar samples obtained may ultimately determine dating, when future technology can provide this. A large percentage of the recovered pottery sherds, although unstratified, strongly support evidence for Roman activity on this site.

It is highly probable that the actual position of the church structure may lie (or was positioned if completely robbed out) just outside our area of search and certainly very close to the Medieval burial ground.

This element of our support for the VCH project is now complete, although SOAG may participate in future fieldwork in this beautiful valley, for evidence of further Medieval occupation and activity.

A detailed report on this joint project will appear in the forthcoming issue of *Oxoniensia* by Dr Stephen Miles on and the writer.

### Acknowledgements

Once again I would like to thank all who participated in this long, albeit enjoyable, search, for their individual expertise, enthusiasm and sheer hard work; and Jane and Paul Wyatt, for continuing to allow our disturbance of their quiet garden. Finds, kindly donated by the landowners, Major General Lord Alvingham and Lady Alvingham, will be deposited in Oxfordshire County Council's Museums' Resource Centre at Standlake.

### References

Nicholls, D. (2010) The Search for the Missing Church of St Michael, Bix Gibwyn, Bix: Concluded? *SOAG Bulletin* No. 64 (2009/10).



# Brightwell Baldwin Community History and Archaeology Project (BBCHAP)

## 2010 Excavation in Brightwell Park

Ian Clarke

### Introduction

The tentative conclusion from the 2009 dig was that we had uncovered part of a wing of the main house, built along the north side of a courtyard, with possibly part of a 'gatehouse' appearing in the south-west corner of the trench. If correct, then the Great Hall of the Medieval manor would probably be fronting the east side of that courtyard about 8m (25ft) east of the trench (Clarke, 2010a & 2010b). A re-examination of the geophysics appeared to support this interpretation, so for 2010 it was decided to partly reopen and extend the 2009 trench (hereafter Trench I) to the south and west to look for evidence of a gateway or gatehouse. The new area of Trench I was centred on a major cross-axial alignment (established from the geophysics) which linked the later carriage gate on the west side of the house to the centre of the parterre garden immediately to the east of the house. The reopened area of Trench I provided a reference level and allowed further excavation to address unanswered questions from 2009. The total area open at the end of the dig was 90 square metres of which 62 were new.

This report covers the 2010 excavation, the findings from which substantially revise a number of the provisional interpretations from 2009. The report is an abridged version of an interim report to be published in *South Midlands Archaeology* No. 41 in 2011.

### Description of the archaeology

Fig. 1 is an overhead photograph of the extended Trench I taken from a pole camera and showing the archaeology near to the end of the dig. Following the date of this picture, a further 4m<sup>2</sup> was opened and cleaned on the north side, as indicated by the solid lines, and cleaning of areas in the south-west and north-east corners was completed. Numbers for contexts that had been removed by this stage are not shown.

#### *Earlier features – the north-east and south-east corners of Trench I*

We start our description in the north-east corner in the area of the trench that was reopened. Building features here are among the earliest uncovered and a more detailed examination of these was part of the excavation plan.

The plan did not allow the complete removal of later building archaeology to fully reveal earlier levels, but

the latter were partly explored in 2009 by a sondage through a gravel layer [004]. This revealed the lower layers of a substantial wall [016] about 1m (3ft) thick, built from large, rough-hewn, local chalkstone (Totternhoe stone) in a lime mortar. This had been reduced to a level just above a mortar floor [014] about 50-75mm (2-3in) thick, laid after the wall was built and abutting it on the east side.

The southern edge of floor [014] was bounded by another chalk and lime mortar wall [008] built from the same ground level as the floor. Both walls were built before the floor was laid. They contained very rare fragments of brick and tile, which suggests a date in the later Medieval but is not in itself conclusive. Wall [008] at first appeared to be about 0.5m thick with tumbled masonry on its south side, but there was uncertainty about this in 2009. Further excavation in 2010 confirmed that it was twice as thick at about 1m (3ft). The confusion arose because there was a distinct line along the centre line of the wall where the northern half-thickness had survived to a greater height. This might simply be a quirk of survival, but more likely is evidence that the wall was at some time reduced in thickness down to ground level (and probably also in height) to match wall [009] built later at right-angles to it (see below).

Further cleaning in the north-east corner revealed that the eastern end of wall [008] merged seamlessly and at right-angles with a line of masonry [049] running parallel to the trench edge and disappearing into the east and north balks, the visible part being about 0.6m wide and of similar construction to [008]. It is clearly another wall, parallel to wall [016], and floor [014] is bounded by it on the east side. These three walls enclose three sides of a room 2.8m (9ft) E-W and at least 2m (6ft) N-S, probably larger.

In the south-west corner of this room, the floor was broken away along an irregular line. This, together with some tumbled masonry in line with the western end of wall [008], had suggested in 2009 that the latter might originally have extended up to and abutted wall [016]. Further investigation in 2010 revealed no clear evidence for such a link at ground level and it is possible that there was a narrow gap here 0.6m (2ft) wide, defining a door opening. If so, we may reasonably infer a link between these walls at a higher



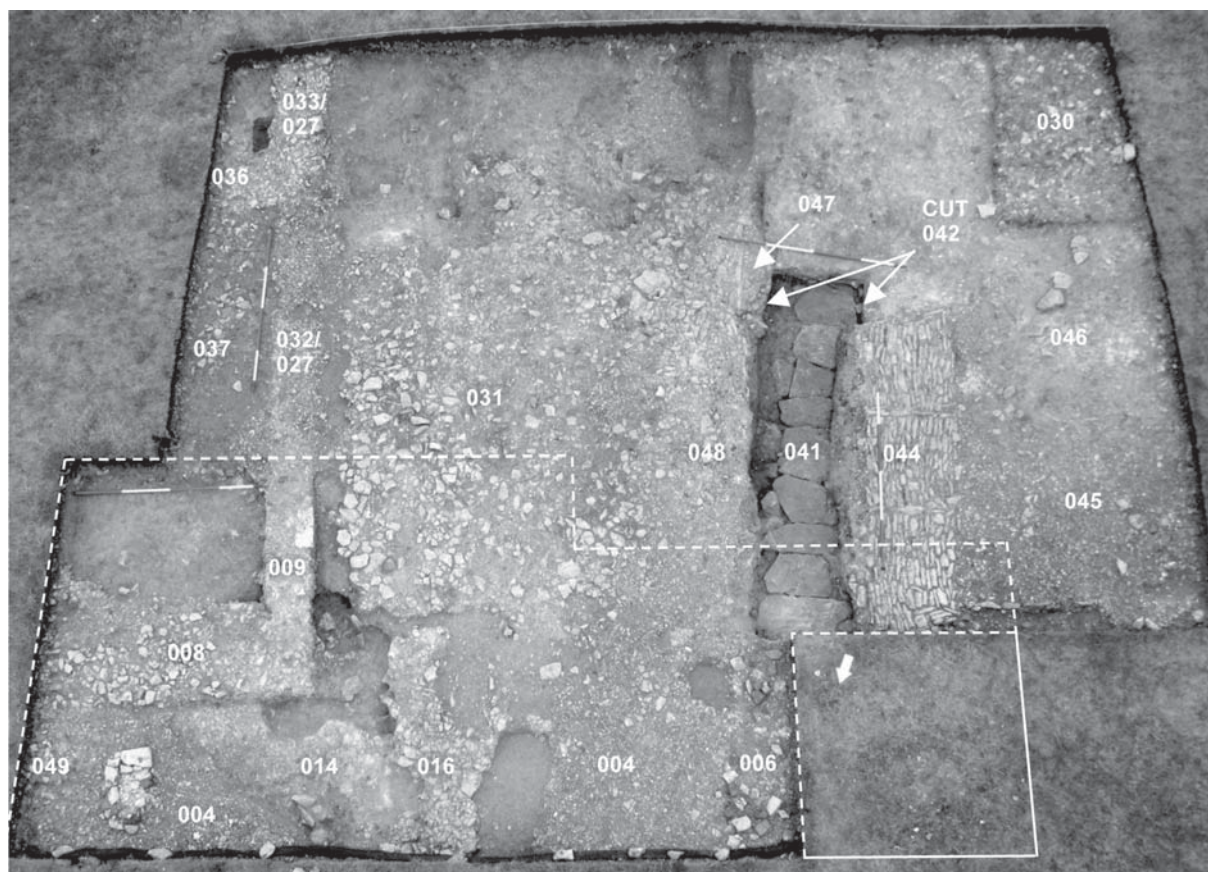


Fig. 1. Overhead photograph of Trench I

level. However, the limited excavation here showed no clear evidence for wall [016] beyond the projected line of the inner face of wall [008], suggesting it may have been deliberately truncated and wall [008] cut back to accommodate later changes. The damage to the floor in this corner could have resulted from this.

Close examination of the construction and relationship of wall [008] to wall [009] built at right-angles to it confirmed that the latter belongs to a later phase. It is only 0.46m (18in) thick and is built from a ground level some 75mm higher. Rather than being bonded in, it appeared to butt up to the older wall along a 45° angle, although this could not be confirmed without complete removal. This could suggest that the earlier wall [008] incorporated a large chamfer on the outer corner extending to about one third its thickness, lending weight to the interpretation of a doorway here, but equally may be deliberate keying of the new wall to the old.

Moving now to the south-east corner of the extended trench. Here a substantial wall [033] about 0.65m (2ft) thick was revealed on the same alignment as wall [009] and disappearing into the south balk. It joined seamlessly with a similar wall [036] at right-angles disappearing into the east balk. Probably the corner of a building, the construction was similar to wall [008] and apparently of similar date. Like [008], wall [033]

showed signs of having been reduced in width, the eastern side being below the later ground level, as was the entirety of the remains of wall [036]. Between wall [008] and the corner formed by walls [033/036], a gap about 4.4m (≈15ft) wide defined the entrance way into the courtyard. This gap was later filled in by a new wall [009/027], as will be described more fully in the next section.

#### *Later features – the central area of Trench I*

We now turn to a description of the major features across the centre of the trench, traversing from west to east.

On the west side, part of a metalled track [045/046] about 3.5m (≈11ft) wide was revealed, with a compacted surface of small/medium flint. It approached from a south-westerly direction on a gentle downward slope, curving to the right at the end to meet a well-constructed chalkstone pavement [044] which continued at the same slope. The approach track was bordered and contained by large rough-hewn chalk slabs laid on edge, still *in situ* on the north side but displaced and scattered on the south side. These edging stones ran square to the pavement on the north side, but curved away to the south-west on the south side. The surface on the south side of the track was worn away, suggesting heavy traffic to and from that direction in the later stages of use. A single line

of medium cobblestones provided a decorative edging between the track and the pavement, a few of these remaining *in situ* on the north side but elsewhere displaced or missing. The approach track and pavement are centred on the cross-axial alignment mentioned in the introduction, with an error of less than a 0.3m (1ft), and are in line with the entrance way to the courtyard on the east side of the trench.

The pavement [044] was constructed from large rough-hewn chalk slabs, dry-laid on edge in close-packed parallel lines across the line of the track. These were bordered and divided into large rectangular panels by single lines of slabs at right-angles, forming a decorative pattern. Three panels covered the width of the track and a fourth (= [013] from 2009) extended northwards beyond the track. This northern panel was less well preserved and its function less clear, but it probably represents an alternative approach from the north-west. Only the upper half of the pavement remained *in situ* – the lower half had been cut through and removed to insert a later drain [041] as described in the next section – but it was clear that originally the pavement had sloped down to a surface gully [047]. This gully had also been largely cut away to insert the drain, but a small part remained *in situ* at the southern end sufficient to reconstruct its appearance: medium/large rough-hewn chalkstones, laid on edge, formed a line (possibly a double line) of long, narrow, rectangular boxes, filled with close-packed medium cobblestones, providing a robust and decorative feature.

Sloping up beyond the gully towards the central area of the trench was a compacted flint hard-surface [048] similar to that of the approach track [045/046]. It merged along an irregular line with a large area of medium/large rough-hewn chalk slabs and rubble [031] with some embedded broken roof tile. The surface of this had been consolidated with lime mortar. This formed a roughly level hard-surface covering the whole, sub-rectangular, central area of the trench. Layer [031] stopped just short of the line of wall [009] suggesting it had been cut through to construct that wall and what may have been a later extension of it [027] (see below). Layer [031] was on a level with the courtyard surface [037] beyond the line of wall [009/027].

Overlying layer [031], notably on the northern side, were thin, patchy areas of fine reddish and yellowish sand and sandy gravel [010/024] (not shown). These fine sandy gravels were thought in 2009 to be associated with post-fire demolition and clearance events, but it now seems more likely that they are remnants of a top-dressing for [031], now clearly seen as an exterior, metallised surface.

The south side of layer [031] was bounded along an irregular line by an area of silty-clay sub-soil extending

into the south balk. This had large, irregular sunken areas which had been filled with medium flints in a compacted sharp-sand matrix, with the whole area then roughly levelled with the same material [028] (not shown). Whether the sunken areas resulted from the removal of structures or from natural subsidence was not determined. The same sub-soil also extended into the west balk alongside the approach track [045/046] and appears to be the natural.

Returning briefly to the area on the north side of the trench: at some point in time wall [016] was reduced to close to the level of floor [014]. This area was then covered and levelled by a compacted layer [004] of small/medium flint in a sharp-sand matrix, up to 150mm thick. This was bounded by wall [049] on the east side and partly by wall [008] on the south side. Otherwise on the south side it was contiguous along an irregular line with layer [031] (= [018] from 2009). Gravel layer [004] is the same as the hard surface [048] and represents the same event.

As noted in the previous section, between wall [008] and the corner formed by walls [033/036] there was a gap about 4.4m (≈15ft) wide, only later filled in by wall [009/027]. It is possible that this infill was carried out in two stages. Wall [009] has a shallow foundation that ends at a sub-rounded cut to the same depth. This cut may once have held a stone terminal pillar for wall [009], leaving a reduced width opening into the courtyard of about 2.5m (8ft). It is also possible that walls [033/036] were demolished or reduced in height at this time and a similar pillar and wall were built along the former line of [033]. If there was a pillar at the end of [009], at some time it was removed and the shallow cut filled in with a yellowish sandy gravel. Beyond it a very thin layer of the same material provided a levelled foundation [032] up to the end of reduced wall [033] for the construction of a new courtyard wall [027], closing off the gap. Wall [027] was about 0.46m (18in) thick and would then have



Fig. 2. The 'porter's lodge' (room with the mortar floor) is in the foreground. Beyond it was the Medieval gateway leading into the courtyard on the left. The rubble area centre-right is where the Tudor gatehouse once stood. The wall stretching away to the south is the post-Medieval courtyard wall.





Fig. 3. The approach to the Tudor gatehouse was from right to left across the chalkstone pavement. Originally twice this width, the pavement was cut through to insert an 18th-century drain. It sloped down to a surface gully lined with cobbles, a small remnant of which survives at the far left corner of the drain cut. Beyond the gully to the left a flint surface sloped up to where the gatehouse once stood.

formed an extension of wall [009] up to and along the line of [033]. However, it is equally possible that the whole of [009] and [027] were built as one event and that the shallow, sub-rounded cut has some other interpretation not yet considered.

#### *The land drain (and other late events)*

Mention has been made above of the later insertion of a drain. This was laid in a linear, rectangular trench [CUT 042] about 1.1m wide and 0.6m deep, dug on a slightly curving north-south line, crossing the west side of Trench 1 and extending into the south and north balks. This trench cut through the subsoil on the south side, the stone gully [047] and chalkstone pavement [044] in the central area, and the hard surface [048/004] on the north side. The upper fill of the cut was excavated in the vicinity of the pavement to reveal a well-constructed, 200mm (8in) square-section land-drain [041], with a clay-lined floor and walls of large, rough-hewn chalkstone capped with very large chalkstone slabs. The drain was inspected over some distance in both directions with a fibre-optic camera and was in good condition, with the build-up of loose soil in the bottom from water seepage and worm action only 50-75mm (2-3in) deep. The drain was dry-stone built with a fall of 1 in 12 from south to north.



Fig. 4. 18th-century field drain with one capping stone removed. The bottom is clay lined.

After construction, the drain was covered in with the soil and building materials that had been excavated [040] (not shown), including chalkstones and cobblestones from the pavement and gully. This was topped off within the upper section of the cut with a mixture of chalk rubble and broken brick in lime mortar [006/030]. Finally, the whole area of the track, pavement and gully was covered with similar building rubble in lime mortar [030], bringing this area up to the level of the central area [031] and creating a gentle and even slope downwards from west to east.

This mortared rubble layer extended into the southern and western balks where the geophysics suggests it does not continue for any great distance. There was no sign that this rough rubble surface had been finished to create a smooth driveway.

It is important to note here that the mortared brick and chalk rubble upper fill [006] of the drain cut was wrongly interpreted in 2009 as the remains of a probably Tudor period outer wall. Rather than the gravel hard-surface [004] being laid up to this supposed 'wall', it is now clear that [004] was cut through to insert the drain and then back-filled with [006]. Likewise, the widening out of the supposed 'wall' in the south-west corner, interpreted in 2009 as the possible corner of a gatehouse, proved to be simply a corner of layer [006=030] overlying the gravel hard-surface [004].

### **Discussion and provisional interpretation**

The focus of the 2010 excavation was to try to locate a gateway or gatehouse into the courtyard. No mention of the discovery of such has been made so far in our description of the archaeology, so we must now address this important issue.

We will start by outlining what we might expect to find at a manor house such as Brightwell Park, which spans the Medieval, Tudor and early post-Medieval periods. Gatehouses first appeared as a defensive feature of castles, spreading to cathedral, abbey and monastic enclosures in the late 13th and 14th centuries in response to increasing social unrest. The purely domestic gatehouse is essentially a feature of the later Medieval (Wood, 1965). The nature of domestic gateways changed over time, from being a simple gate in a courtyard wall in the earlier Medieval to a large and often decorative gatehouse in the Late Medieval and early Tudor periods. Defining the formal approach to a house, an elaborate gatehouse became a fashion statement, declaring the wealth and status of the owner and often displaying his heraldry. Increased stability in the late Tudor and Jacobean periods, together with growing French and Italian influences on fashions, brought significant changes to domestic house and garden layouts (Strong, 1979). The house became outward looking. Old Medieval courtyard walls were demolished or reduced in height to open up the house to the view, and to be viewed, and houses were remodelled to reflect the new fashion for symmetry. The owners of Brightwell Park during this period were sufficiently influential at court and at times wealthy enough to have kept up with these changing fashions (Fraser, 1988). But what evidence do we have from Trench 1 to suggest that they did so?

The major features across the centre of the 2010 trench are aligned on an important cross-axis of the complex and clearly represent an approach to

the house of some status. It is not unreasonable to suppose that somewhere here there was a gateway and perhaps a gatehouse at some point in time. Indeed we can fairly say that even if we have not found an actual gateway, we have much that tells us where it must once have been. But the evidence is perhaps more compelling than that.

The gap between the room with the mortar floor in the north-east corner and the building in the south-east corner defines the entrance way into the Medieval courtyard. The most likely location for a gate in this period would be in the line of outer wall [016] if projected across this entrance way. The wall is thick enough (about 1.0m) to have been built of solid masonry to a sufficient height and the area at the truncated end of this wall might be where part of the wall and a substantial doorpost (as suggested in 2009) was removed. Whether the outer wall continued beyond the entrance way for any appreciable distance, or doglegged to meet the building in the south-east corner, is unproven, although the latter seems more likely. It is possible that the projected wall is the outer wall of a typical 14th-century 'oblong block' gatehouse with integral porter's lodge (Wood, 1965: 157), with the inner wall perhaps being in line with wall [049]; there is slight evidence that the latter may once have extended southwards. The room on the north side is certainly the right size and location for a porter's lodge. The possible doorway in the south-west corner of this room could provide access to the entrance way, but only if the main gate was located far enough away for the gate leaf (which would open inwards) not to block the doorway. Even then access would be inconvenient, so with this layout it seems less likely this was doorway. A final possibility is that the outer wall of the gatehouse projected forward of the line of [016], which might then give the necessary clearance for the porter's doorway here, especially if the main gate was doubled with a small pedestrian gate on the north side, a layout popular in the Late Medieval (Wood, 1965:157). Whatever the layout was, there would have been a track approaching the gate from the west. But the elaborate threshold features revealed across the middle of the 2010 trench are clearly of later construction.

We know that outer wall [016] was demolished at some time and appears to have been truncated, and that both it and the adjacent mortar floor were covered over with the flint gravel layer [004]. The 'porter's lodge' on the north side of the entrance way then ceased to exist. This new gravel layer formed an exterior hard-surface which extended eastwards for several metres and southwards across the entrance way as [048]. It is clearly an integral part of the constructions in Trench 1 that provided a new, robust and decorative threshold to the gate. But was this for



the old gate/gatehouse or for a new one, and if new, what form did it take?

Across the approach, the gravel threshold [048] slopes up from the gully to the level area [031] occupying the central area of the trench. This level area, centred on the entrance way, is quite different and clearly not of the same quality or construction as the rest of the new threshold features. The rough, chalkstone layer occupies a sub-rectangular area of about 5.5m (18ft) N-S by 3m (10ft) E-W and appears to be a fill for an area exposed by the removal of some large structure. And the only likely structure here is a gatehouse. The area is not large but is sufficient for a modest gatehouse, appropriate in scale to the manor house. If the structure was an existing gatehouse (but without the porter's lodge) then it confirms that this projected forward of the line of wall [016], as suggested above. But given the apparent truncation of the earlier wall, it is possible that a new gatehouse was built. In the late 15th and early 16th centuries, when this change appears to have taken place, the fashion was for symmetrical, tall gatehouses, often built in brick (Wood, 1965:161). It seems likely that either a new gatehouse was built or an existing one was remodelled in a more elaborate, taller, style. This would have had a four-centred arch with a rectangular frame or label and a decorative window above. Plenty of constructional chalkstone and Tudor brick fragments have been recovered from the site, including some bricks with rubbed mouldings and chamfers. The late Tudor dovecote built of chalkstone with brick door and window surrounds may well echo the style of this earlier Tudor gatehouse. Regrettably, there was insufficient time to excavate the quantity of chalk rubble that made up layer [031], so any direct evidence for the gatehouse remains buried.

The final stage reflects clearly the Jacobean/early post-Medieval fashion for opening up the house to view. The gatehouse was demolished and the foundation area filled in, but leaving the approach features in place. Any Medieval buildings on the west side of the courtyard were demolished along with the old courtyard wall. A new, low, courtyard wall was built on the same line, with a narrower opening, probably with decorative pillars. The new entrance way was slightly to the right of centre of the old gate, suggesting the front of the house may have been remodelled with a central porch, in line with the new symmetrical fashion. Later it seems that this entrance too was closed off, which must mean that a new entry to the house was devised. Given the layout of the formal, 18th-century carriage drives, arrival would still have been to this area, so an entry through the north wing seems possible. Two brick foundation pads found in 2009 hint at a remodelling of the façade here.

The insertion of the drain and levelling of the area with rubble is difficult to date with certainty. The rubble layer contained a substantial quantity of ceramics from the 17th and 18th centuries, but nothing later than about the 1750s. So whether the work pre-dated or post-dated the 1788 fire is unclear at this stage. It may have been work in progress to create an improved turning area for carriages, or could be a need to improve drainage and ease the work of transporting salvaged materials to the new manor house site. Given the quality of the work carried out on the drain, the former seems more likely.

In summary, the 2010 excavation uncovered the fine approach features forming the threshold for a gatehouse in the Tudor period, and evidence for an earlier Medieval gate or gatehouse with integral porter's lodge. Although the excavation stopped short of finding direct evidence for the gatehouse, the indirect evidence from the surrounding archaeology leaves little doubt about where it once stood – on the high central area of the 2010 trench. The dig revealed too that the Tudor gatehouse was demolished in the 17th century to make way for the new, outward looking fashions of the post-Medieval, hinting at more wide scale changes to the house itself. It seems that the owners of Brightwell at this time were indeed 'keeping up with the Joneses'.

### Acknowledgements

A community project's success is dependent on the enthusiasm and skill of its volunteers. We would therefore like to thank all who took part in the excavation, not least Site Supervisor Janet Eastment, Finds Officer Catherine Clarke, and Site Organiser Mike Vincent, and to congratulate them on their achievement. Our grateful thanks go once again to our enthusiastic and supportive landowners, Tessa and Nigel Mogg, who this year had the pleasure of walking through the gateway to the old house.

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## The Brightwell Park Lace Tag

Janet Eastment



Fig. 1. Small Find No. SF29, a Type 1 lace tag. The central seam and chamfered end with a rivet still in place can be seen at the end to the left, while the other end is rounded off. Inset: location of context 26 in relation to the trench. (Photographed on 1 mm<sup>2</sup> graph paper.)

During the 2010 excavation a small copper-alloy object (SF29) was recovered from the area near to the chalk wall (009) in Context 026 (Fig. 1).

Research into similar objects recovered from Medieval sites suggests that SF29 fits the description of a 'lace tag'. Oakley and Webster (1979) have made a study of lace tags and have classified them into two types. This example fits their 'Type 1 tag' category. Using a magnifying glass, it is possible to see a tiny iron rivet at the end where the lace entered, along with a few fibres still attached. At the other end the tag is rounded off. Measuring around 38-40mm, it also fits the upper measurement of the Type 1 tag classification.

According to Oakley and Webster (1979) the Type 1 tag, made from a rolled strip of metal with a central seam, chamfered end and a rivet, is an earlier form usually found in contexts dating to the 15th century or earlier. Later Type 2 tags were made from a wider piece of metal, folded twice from each edge towards the centre, gripping the lace along its length with no need for a rivet, and date from the mid 16th century.

The significance of this find to the excavation is the fact that it was found in a secure stratified context (A) (Fig. 2). Also its being found at a lower level than contexts 009 and 032 means it was lost at a time before the wall was built or the gravel surface was laid down and the subsequent wall (027) constructed. Because this lace tag is a diagnostic item it is possible, using Oakley and Webster's classification, to suggest that this was lost when the area was an entrance to the manor house with people passing through possibly up until the mid 16th century. This would mean the alterations at the entrance to the manor house and the blocking of this entrance by constructing the wall were possibly later 16th-century events (Fig. 3). However, it must be acknowledged that a Type 1 tag might have been in circulation later than the mid 16th century when the Type 2 tags were being produced.

Laces were used for fastening many articles of clothing such as jerkins, hose and jackets (Gabra-Sanders, 1995). The earliest reference to lace tags is found in a London haberdasher's inventory of 1378 (Cunnington & Cunnington 1973: 108, cited in Gabra-Sanders, 1995).

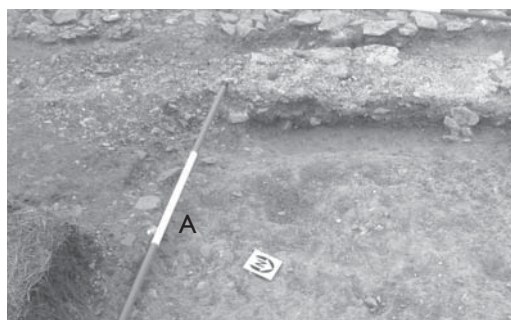


Fig. 2. 'A' marks the position where the Small Find SF29, the lace tag, was found

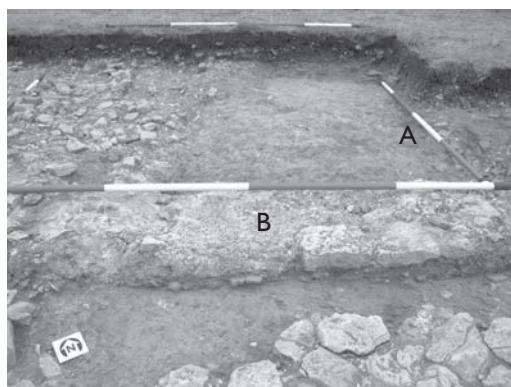


Fig. 3. Context 26 viewed from the west. The lace tag was found at 'A' suggesting it was lost before the wall 'B' was constructed and when this was an entrance to the manor house.

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## Two Medieval Smithies at Newington, Oxfordshire

Gwilym Williams (John Moore Heritage Services)

*This article reviews archaeological work by SOAG in the early 1980s and its follow-on some 20 years later. The result of the more recent work was the recovery of two early Medieval smithies, of which there are only a few in the country. Fieldwalking by SOAG has confirmed the existence of buildings shown on a late 16th-century map.*

### Preamble

Between 1983 and 1986 South Oxfordshire Archaeological Group undertook a programme of archaeological interventions in the grounds of Newington House, Newington, Oxfordshire (Fig. 1). A recording action, test-pitting, and excavation were carried out at Park Field, Newington House; and field-walking at Great Bowling Field, east of the A329; documentary research was undertaken at the Bodleian, at Christ Church, Canterbury and at the Oxfordshire County Record Office. All this work was carried out under the direction of Cynthia Graham Kerr and her enthusiastic team of amateur archaeologists (Fig. 2).

The Sealed Knot (SK) had been invited by a previous owner, Christopher Maltin, to demonstrate a Civil War period encampment at Newington House, which would have been newly built in the mid 16th century. With Cyn, a number of SOAG members visited, and Medieval pottery was collected from a mocked-up well. Subsequently the palisaded ditch, excavated by SK, was recorded (Fig. 3).

However, by 1986 the project was coming to a close and despite the keen involvement of a number of people on various parts of the project, the archive was put aside, along with the research, and largely forgotten. A few notes had crept out in the regional publication of the Council for British Archaeology (CBA), South Midlands Archaeology (SMA) every year during the project, which ended up on the county's Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), now the Historic Environment Record. Similarly the site is recorded on the National Monuments Record, but in both cases the details are insufficiently accurate.

Some twenty years later, in 2006, the present owner applied for planning permission to create a lake in the gardens at Newington House. As the precise location of the previous works was not known, a watching brief condition was felt to be sufficient to cover all eventualities.

Machining commenced and almost immediately stone footings were revealed. Further cleaning of the excavated surfaces revealed extensive evidence of ditches, pits and postholes. Sampling of the features revealed a date-range from the 11th to 13th centuries.

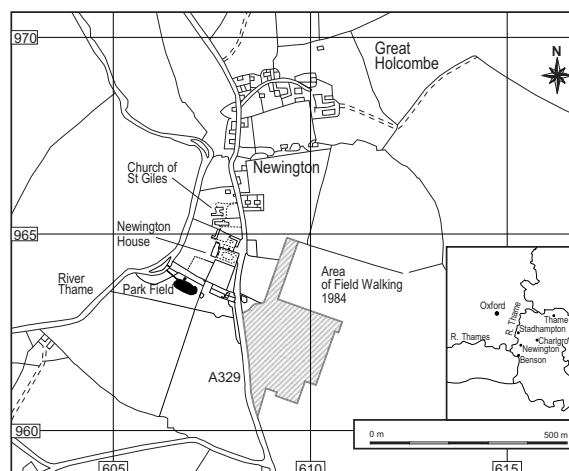


Fig. 1. Newington, showing location of interventions in text



Fig. 2. SOAG at Newington House



Fig. 3. SOAG recording Sealed Knot trench

The structure – it was clear – was more than a domestic building: it was a smithy of which there are only a half-dozen or so Medieval examples in England; most of which are later Medieval or early post-Medieval in date and none from Oxfordshire.

The landowner was in a position whereby either to continue or to backfill would require further work, neither of which were options in the context of such a singular find. At this point English Heritage (EH) was approached for help in concluding the excavation. Following site visits by EH, and a Written Scheme of Investigation and fieldwork budget prepared by JMHS under tight time-constraints, EH generously provided funds enabling the conclusion of the dig.

Due to weather conditions, the digging extended over the next couple of months but it covered the complete excavation of the 13th-century smithy and the partial excavation or recording of a further four structures, in addition to pits, ditches, a palaeochannel, and midden deposits. Following completion of the fieldwork, JMHS made contact with SOAG and were kindly lent the SOAG archive, enabling the identification of a further building at Park Field, and tying the two campaigns of fieldwork together.

### **Topography & geology**

The site, which is on a bluff on the east bank of the Thame overlooking the river between Chiselhampton and Dorchester-on-Thames, is located on a plateau at the foot of the rolling landscape between the Chilterns and the Thames Valley. The geology is the Gault Clay, although some Head gravel deposits are also present.

### **Prehistoric**

Fieldwalking in Great Bowling Field (Fig. 1) by SOAG recovered a modest assemblage of prehistoric pottery. There is no other prehistoric activity recorded in the immediate vicinity of Newington and it is hard to put the pottery in its context. A few residual flint flakes were also recovered during the JMHS excavations, although there was no flint in the SOAG archive. However, the pottery does indicate prehistoric settlement in the environs of Newington, which given the proximity of the River Thame is unsurprising; it is perhaps worth bearing in mind the amount of prehistoric activity along the river. In the environs of Thame, there is much Mesolithic, Neolithic and later prehistoric occupation on both sides of the river, indicating the colonisation and use of the landscape from early prehistory.

### **Roman**

Roman pottery was picked up by SOAG in Great Bowling Field during fieldwalking; residual sherds of Roman pottery were also recovered from a number of later Medieval features from the excavations by JMHS in Park Field. A number of the sherds found by JMHS were unabraded and did not appear to have moved far. This indicates the strong possibility of Roman activity – perhaps a small riverside settlement – in the vicinity of the confluence of the Thame and the unnamed tributary at the foot of Great Bowling Field. Certainly to the south-east Roman activity was found during the excavation of the Aylesbury-Chalgrove

pipeline, and of course to the west, Dorchester was an important Roman town.

Although the data for the prehistoric and Roman periods is not abundant, nonetheless it is clear that the landscape was already inhabited and worked. At Newington there is then an apparent hiatus in activity until the 11th century.

### **Medieval**

The earliest documentary reference to Newington is in the late 10th or early 11th century when Queen Emma, wife of Cnut, gave Newington to the priory of Holy Trinity, Canterbury. A number of charters refer to this gift, some of better authenticity than others (Gelling, 1979). No archaeological remains from this period have yet been found at Newington.

### **Phases 1 & 2 (Fig. 4)**

From the late 11th or early 12th centuries, no doubt associated with Archbishop Lanfranc's taking over of the Canterbury estates, enclosure ditches were laid out in Park Field. At Domesday the population of Newington consisted of 5 slaves, 22 freeholders and 10 smallholders, which gives an estimated total of something in the region of 130 inhabitants for the whole parish, from the Canterbury holdings at Berrick and Britwell Priors in the south to Brookhampton in the north.

North of the enclosure ditches a stream ran toward the drain that separates Park Field from Newington House. This palaeochannel ran north-west from the pond in Park Field and appears to have been subject to silting up. Rubbish pits were dug between the enclosure ditches and the stream creating a midden area for rubbish disposal.

### **Phase 2a (Figs 5 & 6)**

By the late 12th century the enclosure ditches had been backfilled, and a number of plots were laid out (Fig. 5). During the excavations by JMHS three such plots were identified. The westernmost plot, nearest the River Thame, revealed the footings of a stone building. This building was only seen in section and its function is not known.

In the neighbouring plot to the east, the north and south gable-ends of an earth-fast timber building and its associated beaten earth floor were investigated, measuring 13.5m x 7m. This building was more than likely a smithy. Unfortunately, most of the building was under the island in the lake, and consequently was not fully investigated (Fig. 6). However, a range of metallurgical debris including smithing hearth bottoms, hearth lining and hammerscale was recovered from a number of features in the immediate vicinity of the building. The floor of the probable smithy was clean of remains. A similar process has been observed at other smithing sites, specifically at Sønder Sø, Denmark (Jouttijärvi, n.d.) where during a period of



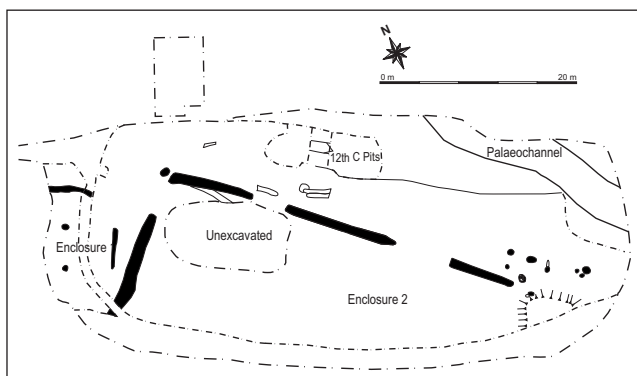


Fig. 4. Phases 1 & 2: 11th- to early 13th-century

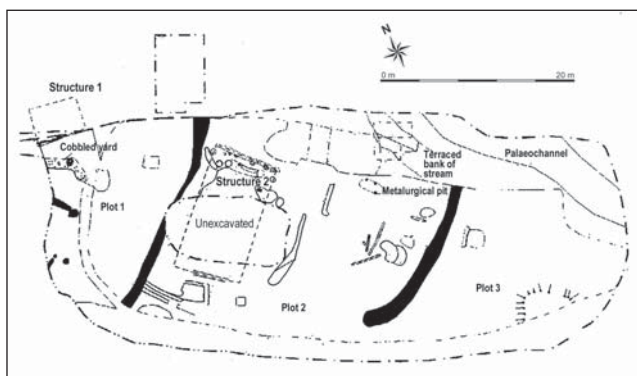


Fig. 5. Phases 2a: 12th- to 13th-century

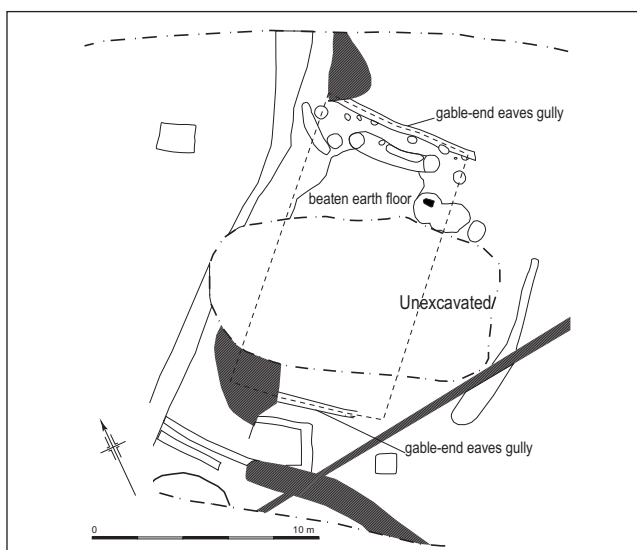


Fig. 6. Structure 2 smithy

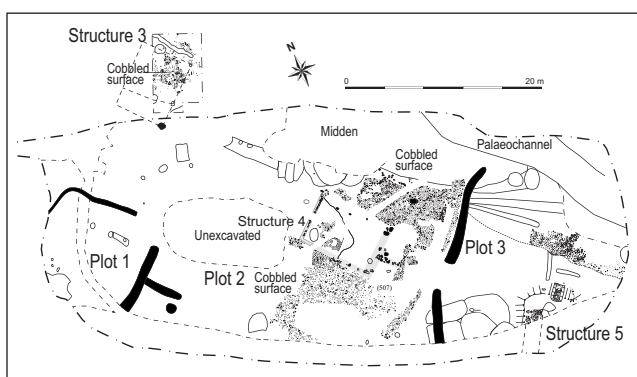


Fig. 7. Phase 3: 13th- to 14th-century

just over five years in the late 10th century a smithy was maintained for periodic visits by a smith before it was rebuilt *de novo*. This would indicate that the smithy at Newington was probably not abandoned, but decommissioned.

The easternmost of the plots evidenced only light occupation activity as a possible fence line was laid out. The midden area adjacent to the stream was terraced at that time, possibly to improve the flow of water.

### Phase 3 (Figs 7 & 8)

By the 13th century, the plots were reorganised (Fig. 7), the earliest smithy had been decommissioned and a new building, Structure 4 (Fig. 8) had been laid out east of the earlier 12th-century smithy. This building measured 8m x 5m and consisted of stone footings on the west, south and east sides and postholes to the north; a small annexe on the east side of building probably functioned as a fuel store or similar. Within the later smithy a stone anvil setting, a pair of perpendicular hearths and a bosh were located in the southwest corner of the building. Samples for hammerscale indicated that this was indeed the location of the anvil. Similar, if later, smithies, such as that at Alsted, Surrey (Ketteringham, 1976) – also a Canterbury manor – have a more centred smithing area within the smithy; however, the location of the hearth, anvil and bosh in the corner of the Structure 4 smithy at Newington do create a larger space for horses to be shod within the building.

At the same time the plot in which the later smithy stood was increased in size to the north, as Plot 1 was reduced. In this northern part of the plot stood Structure 3 (Fig. 7), originally excavated by SOAG between 1983 and 1986. The full extent of the building is not known, but it appears to have comprised a north-west/south-east oriented partially post-fast timber building, with two, possibly gable, post-pads at the east end and a drip gully on the northern side. Internally the floor was a rough stony spread and patches of beaten clay. During the more recent excavations, a further post-pad was recovered. The most significant find was perhaps the ceramic tuyère of a bellows, associating the SOAG work with the smithies excavated twenty years later.

Test-pitting carried out by SOAG at this time effectively located the site of the smithy excavated in 2006. The results of this work are reported for the first time here. Postholes, pottery and hard-standing were reported in the SOAG archive, extending across all three plots investigated by JMHS.



East of the Structure 4 smithy was Plot 3, which during the earlier part of the 13th century was characterised by rubbish pits within an open area. At the north end of the plot by the stream, which appears to have been slowly silting up again, was an area of hard-standing. At the south end was a large squared stone setting, which was probably part of the stone footings to a building, Structure 5. This was not investigated further but undoubtedly represents part of the earthworks reported by SOAG.

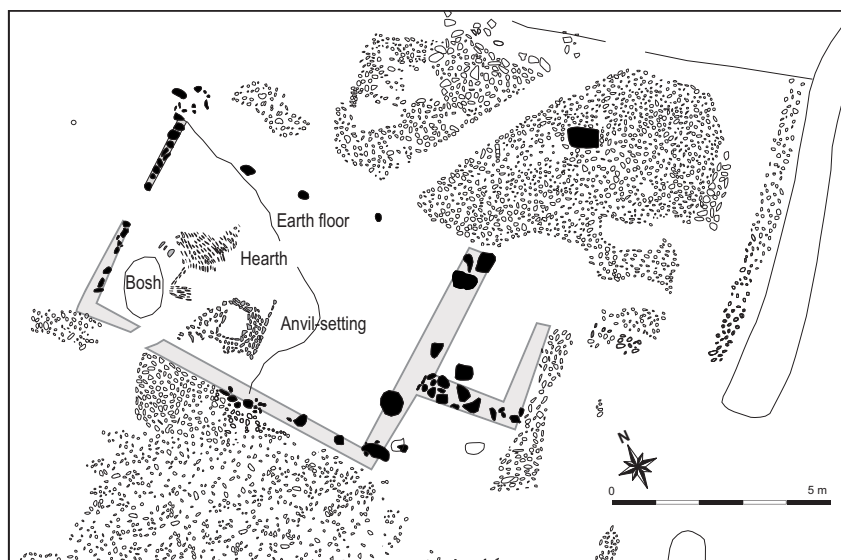


Fig. 8. Structure 4 smithy

At this point the previous plot boundary between Plots 2 and 3 was filled in and cobbles, in places, sealed it. Subsequently, at a point after the second half of the 13th century, a new boundary, incorporating an access between Plots 2 and 3, was laid out, cutting some of the earlier rubbish pits in Plot 3. At the same time a stone-lined oven apparently for roasting iron-ore was built to the north of Structure 5. Similar examples have been excavated in the Weald.

The oven from Newington was never used, although it may be significant that Potterspury ware, from the iron-rich area of Northamptonshire, is represented by one of the largest assemblages so far south in the county. This may well indicate that during the late 13th century, when the Hundred Rolls (Illingworth and Caley, 1818) indicate a population increase to about 280 inhabitants, Newington was flourishing; but that by the 14th century it was not able to sustain the same growth. This was evidenced elsewhere and was due to climatic factors in the early part of the century and then plague during the latter part of the first half of the 14th century.

The social and economic effects of these factors, as well as the financial benefits of the wool trade, had the well-known effect of speeding up desertion of marginal land as people moved to cities or, at the very least, cut themselves loose from their bonds of serfdom. What is certain is that in the early part of the 14th century Andrew le Smith of Britwell Prior was arraigned before the manorial court (Ault, 1972). The Structure 4 smithy at Newington fell into desuetude during the 14th century, and was clearly abandoned with an attempt at managed dismantlement; on the north-east side of the smithy, the yard yielded a concentration of nails and broken roof tile. We do not know if Andrew le Smith moved to Britwell Prior to smithy from there, or if he lived at Britwell and Newington was the

declining manorial smithy, or indeed whether he had abandoned his forefathers' occupation altogether.

Smithing was not a trade into which one could just enter. The costs of the tools were already beyond the capital investment of most, being probably equivalent to that of a yeoman farmer. The raw materials were also a cost; and as smithing was not a year-round business, animals and crop would have to have been maintained as well. It is no surprise that during the 14th century the smithy was abandoned: as the population declined so too would the need for a smith's services.

#### Phase 4 (Fig. 9)

By the 15th century there was only a large rubbish pit; it would appear that the footings and the cobbles were being over-run by grasses, but that enough was still underfoot for the odd dropped potsherd or metal object to lie there until it became buried by time.

That is the end of the story at Park Field; at Great Bowling Field the fieldwalking carried out by SOAG revealed a codicil to the Newington story. Spreads of pottery and roof-tile picked up during 1984, 1985 and indeed 1986 revealed the location of 16th-century buildings evidenced on a map of 1595 (not illustrated), commissioned by Robert Hovenden, warden of All Souls, in a court case against Owen Oglethorpe, eponymous grandson of the President of Magdalen College and Bishop of Carlisle, who crowned Elizabeth I. Owen Oglethorpe's grandfather had been rector of Newington between 1538 and 1557, and his father, John, was certainly in possession of the manor by the 1580s, having apparently also married the daughter of Owen Oglethorpe's successor to the rectory, Clem Parratt.

While the plague had probably hit the village, the parish and the manor rather hard, it should be noted that the *Nonarum Inquisitiones* of 1341 indicates that

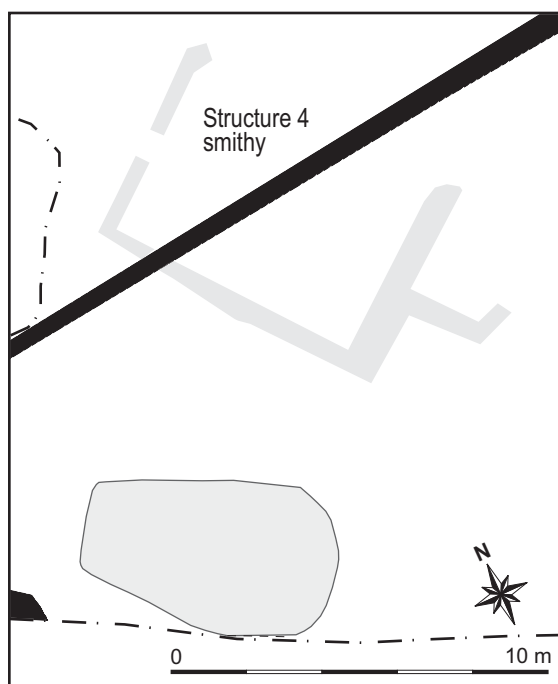


Fig.9. Phase 4: 15th-century

there are twelve people to pay one-ninth of their income (Second and Tapham, 1807). However, the 1595 map shows no more than ten properties in Newington, where the late 13th-century Hundred Rolls indicate nearly twice that number of freeholders. The combination of plague and the change in agricultural regime, from arable to pastoral for the wool-trade, was worked out on the Gault Clay at Newington as at many other more marginal landscapes. Later the dissolution of the monasteries went to provide an asset-base for the sons of clerics as the manor passed into the hands of Owen Ogleforth's son John. The manor was subsequently sold to Walter Dunch who built the present Newington House in 1639 or thereabouts.

### Concluding remarks

The identification of a Medieval smithy is not as self-evident as might be expected. As Astill (1993) noted at Bordesley, and as has been noted elsewhere such as Alsted (Ketteringham, 1976), smithing does not always leave significant quantities of waste. Hammerscale fragments are very small and consequently easy to overlook, and often it is the quality of the waste that is the significant factor. The indication of any such deposits should trigger contact with English Heritage, and indeed, it was somewhat unfortunate that we did not make contact at Newington with the regional science officer in good time. Better contact on our part may well have indicated the presence of Structure 2 during excavation.

Furthermore, this short article goes, I hope, some way to illustrating the great importance attached to reporting the results, positive and negative, to the county archaeological service. Although notes are in

the CBA's annual bulletin *South Midlands Archaeology* for the relevant years, the detail was insufficient for the county archaeologist to decide on the appropriate level of work. Happily the SOAG archive could be integrated into the report to provide a fuller picture than might otherwise have been possible.

A longer version of this article will appear in *Oxoniensia* shortly.

### Acknowledgements

This article follows from a talk I gave to SOAG in January 2011. I wish to extend my thanks to SOAG for the invitation to talk about the results, and in particular to Sue Sandford who has reliably maintained contact following our initial meeting to pass on information and parts of the archive as these became available. I would like to acknowledge the commitment of all those SOAG members, unknown to me, who worked so hard as volunteers in the 1980s, as well as that of my own team at JMHS, particularly Eoin Fitzsimons who has put in a great deal of extra work to bring this to publication. I should like to thank English Heritage for their financial support for the JMHS fieldwork and for the post-excavation analysis of both SOAG and JMHS archives, and particularly Paddy O'Hara of that organisation for his good humour, patience, support and guidance through the MoRPHE process. Finally thanks are due equally to Cynthia Graham Kerr, whose death sadly preceded the publication of this project, and John Moore, who has helped me bring this to the conclusion it so very much needed. As ever, all errors *mea culpa*.

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# Gatehampton Farm Roman Villa Excavation

## Interim Report 2010

Hazel Williams

The excavation in 2010 began with a much smaller open trench area than in previous years after the backfilling of the bathhouse and other small trenches in 2009. This was at times somewhat disorientating for visitors and some diggers used to seeing the bathhouse area, approximately 50% of Trench 7 having been backfilled. The site plan, Fig.1, shows both the backfilled and exposed features: the eastern part of Trench 7 that remained open in 2010; the position of Trench 4; and Trench 3 where part of the north wall was re-excavated in 2010.

The main focus at Gatehampton in 2010 was the central room that lies between the north and south corridors in Trench 7. The chalk floor of this room is the largest excavated in the building so far and has patches of terracotta tessellated pavement. This is the room where small mammal bones from Roman owl pellets were found in the demolition deposit; this year a sampling strategy was devised to identify concentrations and collect more. Also collected and recorded was material from the collapsed roof, comprising large quantities of fallen roof tiles and nails. Plotting the position of all nails found in the demolition layer resulted in the discovery that several had fragments of mineralised wood and this has led to further research (see 'Roman Nails at Gatehampton' below).

A start was also made on investigating the area between the current Trench 7 and the old Trench 3, a few metres east, that was backfilled in 2000.

Although there has been the assumption that the building line continues eastward, there may be a gap or entrance in that area. More work was also done on the north corridor.

As usual, the project was popular with SOAG members and newcomers, some of them trying excavation for the first time. Nearly 50 people worked on the site in 2011, with an average of 16 on site for the 21 Sundays that the site was open.

### Central room

This is described as the central room simply because it lies between a short north corridor and the long south corridor of the western part of the villa building. At 6m square, it is the largest room excavated so far at the villa. It is adjacent to the two heated rooms of the bathhouse to the west and a narrow corridor to the east. The area excavated in 2010 is the square of turf, just over 5m x 5m, visible in most of the high level photos of Trench 7 (Williams, 2010).

### Background

Parts of the room had been excavated previously. A narrow strip on the west side was exposed when the adjacent heated rooms were investigated. This was where the first owl pellet deposits were found and a second sample of the deposit taken (Sharpe, 2007). On the north side of the room another narrow area was excavated to reveal a small rectangular hearth feature along the north wall of the room and an area of terracotta tessellated pavement in the north-east corner where there appeared to be an entrance. The south-east corner was also excavated when Trench 8 was opened. The rest of the room remained under turf as it provided access for work in the surrounding trenches but often prompted questions as to what, if anything, was in the middle of the room.

The excavation of the remaining area provided an opportunity to obtain more samples of the small rodent bones. A complete excavation of the remaining deposits over the floor of the room could provide further evidence of occupation by owls, the position of nesting sites and perhaps an indication of the position of roof beams too. We also were keen to find the extent of the tessellated area and to record more of the substantial quantity of tiles in the demolition deposit over the floor, to confirm that this was a collapsed roof.

### Excavation

By the end of 2009 the adjacent bathhouse area and the narrow area excavated on the west side of the

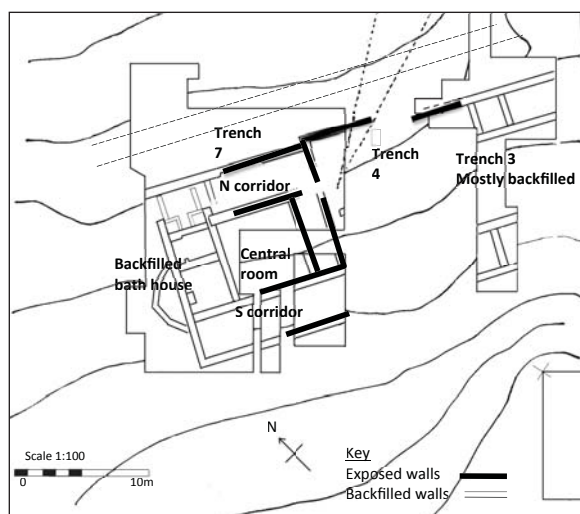


Fig.1. Plan of site 2010 showing exposed walls and backfilled areas of Trenches 3, 4 and 7



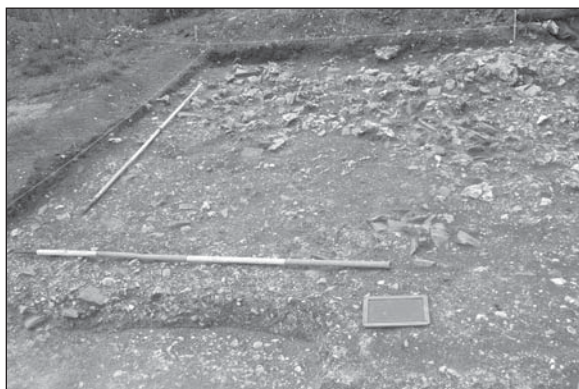


Fig.2. Tile and flint demolition layer in central room with chalk floor left foreground

room were backfilled. While the JCB was on site, the opportunity was taken to skim the turf and about 20cm of topsoil off the surface of the unexcavated area. This meant that at the start of 2010 it was ready to trowel and this provided a good training area for new diggers. The demolition deposit under the topsoil mainly consisted of large fragments of tile and flint rubble and was a greater challenge for diggers as they were asked also to look out for concentrations of very small bones and to record the position of every nail found.

The area is just over 5m square and after some initial clearing was divided into 1m squares using the existing site grid. This enabled further division where concentrations of bones were identified. In an area of this size, sampling of all the deposit – in places 30-40cm deep – would have taken far too long and it was likely that there were parts of the room where no bones would be found. So a strategy for sampling was devised by SOAG member Tom Walker in consultation with Janet Sharpe. This quickly showed where the concentrations of these bones were and these areas were excavated in 0.25m sq spits – upper and lower layers – and all the material sieved. For the diggers, identifying as bones material the size of a pin was quite a challenge. The sieving produced bone fragments that were barely visible to the eye, but which were nevertheless useful in identifying species and numbers of mammals. A full report on the sampling methods and results by Tom Walker is in preparation and it is hoped that this will appear in the *SOAG Bulletin* next year; work is still in progress on the large amount of material produced. However Tom has commented that so far just over 500 individuals have been identified from part of the sample and this suggests occupation of a nest for about a year.

As expected, a substantial quantity of roof tile and flint stones from the surrounding walls was also recovered from the demolition deposit. According to the Ceramic Building Material (CBM) database, compiled by John Hefferan, the CBM removed from this deposit amounted to 13 fragments of brick but



Fig.3. Imbrex tile from central room shown resting on mortar

400 of imbrex and 873 of tegula, supporting the view that this is evidence of a roof collapse. The tile fragments also appear to have remained where they fell and in some cases different parts of the same tile can be identified. Also found with the tiles were more than 30 lumps of hard whitish mortar with concave and convex surfaces. A similar number of these mortar lumps had been seen before, when the north side of the room was excavated. It became clear that these were found in association with pieces of imbrex and that this was the mortar that was placed between tiles at the roof ridges. Some of the tiles have mortar adhering to part of the upper surface, showing where they were mortared in, overlapping the next tile. Fig. 3 illustrates how the mortar and imbrex tile fit together. The position of nails found in this demolition deposit was also plotted and produced interesting results: some patterns of distribution and more importantly, evidence of mineralised wood adhering to some of the nails. This is reported fully below.

Painted wall plaster has been found in all the rooms of the villa. In this room the predominant colours appear to be a bright yellow and deep red, but also some fragments of pale pink plaster with black and white dots. Along the south wall several layers were found in layers painted side up, then over this painted side down, as it had fallen to the floor from the adjacent wall. A similar area was found close to the tessellated area on the north side of the room. The middle section of the east wall of the room was excavated for the first time, having been left under an access baulk. Red-painted plaster and the rendering behind it could be seen still attached to the wall. Pottery found in the demolition deposit includes the usual mid 3rd- to late 4th-century wares found on most of the site and included Alice Holt coarse ware, Oxfordshire mortaria and a few fragments of Samian ware.

Fig. 4 is a view looking west over the floor of the central room at the end of the 2010 excavation. It is a composite produced from several high level photographs, using Photoshop, so there is some distortion. The backfilled area of the bathhouse and





Fig.4. Composite photograph of the central room

a strip of the west side of the room are under the fence line in the background. The south-east corner of the room (left foreground) can be seen clearly and the wall of dressed flint stones extending west. On the north side of the room, against the wall, is the rectangular hearth feature and in the foreground, the tessellated pavement.

The floor of the room was finally cleared by September. It is a firm and well-constructed floor of crushed chalk varying in depth from 15 to 30cm. The centre of the floor is very smooth in places, perhaps the result of long use. At the corners and along the walls the surface of the chalk is rougher and it rises towards the walls. It is found under wall plaster deposits and is therefore part of the floor and not debris from the adjacent walls.

There are two areas of tessellated pavement in the north-east corner of the room. Both are approximately 1.5m long and up to 1m wide and irregular in outline. The patch further towards the centre of the room was excavated in 2010. There are two holes in the floor: a small depression in the tessellated surface in the north-east corner, and a similar sized hole in the new area. These are both approximately 20cm in diameter. A very small section dug through the floor on the east side of the room showed that the tesserae are set into a mortar layer beneath which is yellow sand. This section will be extended in 2011 to look at the relationship between the tesserae and the chalk surface, and also at what lies under the floor.



Fig.5. Detail of tessellated pavement showing 20cm wide hole in floor left of centre and chalk surface top right

It is not yet clear whether the tesserae are simply used to patch an existing chalk floor or whether there was originally a larger rectangular area of tesserae that was damaged and repaired with chalk.

The wall footings on the three sides of the room are constructed of flint, chalk and mortar, varying from one to three courses above floor level. The wall on the north side separates the central room from the north corridor room and is of largely uncut flint nodules with chalk blocks for internal packing. The east wall is of similar construction and appears to butt against the walls on the north and south side. The wall on the south side of the room however is different: it is entirely of flint and mortar with no chalk blocks used for infill. When the south-east corner of the room was excavated as part of Trench 8, it was noted that part of the same south wall was made from carefully-dressed flint stones, cut into neat rectangular shapes. This included one flint, found close to the doorway from the south corridor to the north-south corridor, cut into the shape of a voussoir. A further 2m excavated in 2010 and another 1m section now under backfill are of the same higher quality construction.

### Discussion

This is the largest room excavated in the villa. Part of a room of possibly similar dimensions was identified in Trench 3, but only a narrow section across the room was excavated. The central room is right next to the bathhouse area and seems to be one of the higher status rooms of the building. It has no evidence of use as a working area at any time. The room was heated: it has a well built rectangular hearth in the north wall and may also have benefited from the transfer of heat from the adjacent bath house, either simply through a door opening or possibly through ducts into the room. The walls were decorated with red and yellow plaster and pink plaster with white and black dots and lines. The height of the ceiling is a matter of speculation, but even if the building was largely single storey, the apex of the roof in this room must have been quite high. The evidence of the owl pellets suggests there were horizontal beams across the roof space as well.

It appears to have had a well-maintained floor. The tessellated area in the north-east corner may originally have been a rectangular area of reinforced floor associated with the doorway to the north-south corridor. Alternatively, the tesserae may simply have been used to patch a worn area of chalk floor. Interestingly, one of the site owners, Sarah Edmunds, on hearing discussion of this and seeing the floor, commented that a local stable still used crushed chalk for the floor of the stalls because the chalk was a relatively soft but firm surface for the horses' hooves, had natural antiseptic qualities and was, of course, readily available locally. It was also regularly re-surfaced, with extra layers put down as necessary. Regular re-surfacing may explain the smoothness

of the floor in the centre of the room, where there would be more traffic, and the build-up of chalk at the corners and edges. It may be that what we are seeing is not simply one type of flooring repaired at one time with another material, but the result of many years of patching and renewal, using whichever material was to hand. The holes in the tessellated floor do not appear to be significantly placed and are not equidistant from any wall or feature, but these will be investigated in 2011 and this may affect our view of this corner of the room and the tessellated areas.

The evidence from the small mammal bones seems to show that this part of the building was abandoned and for at least one season, probably longer, owls nested in the rafters and deposited pellets on the floor. The chalk floor surface and the tessellated areas were preserved and sealed by the eventual collapse of the roof and the walls.

### Area between Trench 7 and Trench 3

Work began this year on closing the gap between the current Trench 7 and the old backfilled Trench 3 less than 10m to the east. There has always been the assumption that there is one continuous building, but a direct connection between the walls in the two trenches has not yet been found. There is a gap of only a few metres between the north wall of the villa building at the eastern end of Trench 7 and the section of wall found on the north side of Trench 3, the old trench backfilled in 2000.

### Excavation

A narrow trench was dug over the backfilled Trench 3 and a 2m length of one side of the wall was exposed. The wall was clearly recognisable: in good condition, it still had some of the covering used originally to protect it from frost. Like the other exterior walls in Trench 7 it is a substantial wall, approximately 60cm in width and built of flint and mortar. This confirmed that the recorded position and alignment of the wall was correct and that it did align with the exterior walls at the western end of the villa building. The next step was to open a small exploratory trench between



Fig. 6. View south of eastward extension of Trench 7, showing end of north wall centre right, deeper area of old Trench 4 to left, and tile deposit left foreground

Trenches 7 and 3 in the hope that one or both walls would be picked up. This was at first promising, as a band of broken tile, about 40cm wide, was found along the possible wall line. This type of deposit is found in several places outside the walls of the building, presumably tile fallen from the adjacent roof. But further deep excavation found no sign of a wall, although one corner of the old Trench 4 was visible.

As the completion of the central room was the priority, it was decided to open just a further small area to extend Trench 7 eastward. This included the backfill of the old Trench 4, a 2m x 1m exploratory trench dug in the early 90s. More of the tile deposit was found, again where we might expect a wall line, but no further sign of wall footings or foundations. However, right at the end of the excavation, a mortar surface looking very like wall footings was found. This extended 50cm southwards from the end of the wall in Trench 7. There will be further investigation of this area in 2011. Other features found include a hearth area in the room to the east of the north corridor: an oval area of burnt deposits, c. 1.5m x 1m, lying over the remnants of a reddish *opus signinum* floor. At the base of the topsoil layer above the hearth a coin was found, identified by John Creighton, of the University of Reading, as a *foliis* of Maximianus, circa AD 294, a type of coin very common in the late 3rd/early 4th century and in good condition.

### IMP MAXIMIANVS AVG Maximianus II



Bust of emperor laureate  
Mint: Trier  
Very common at end of 3<sup>rd</sup> early 4<sup>th</sup> century  
ID John Creighton

### GENIO POPV-LI ROMANI (To the guardian spirit of the people of Rome)



Standing figure represents this Genius and holds a cornucopiae on the right, from which all riches flow, and a patera, a small circular dish used in making sacrifices

Fig. 7. Foliis of Maximianus, circa AD 294



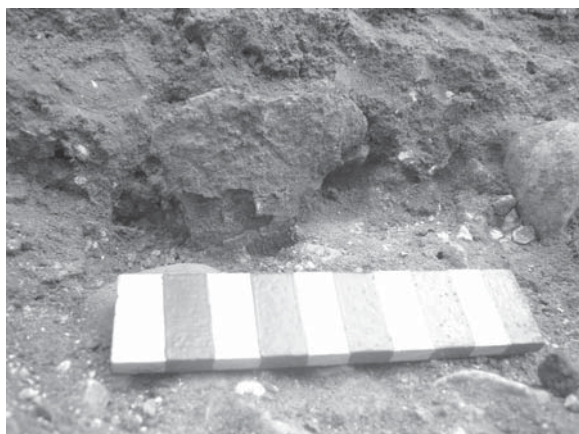


Fig. 8. Triangular metal (Fe) object positioned vertically at base of levelling layer under sub-floor of north corridor

### North corridor

Part of the sub-floor, consisting of mortar and flint stones, was removed to reveal a reddish sandy levelling layer. At the base of this layer a triangular metal (Fe) object was found, probably part of a tool, but not yet identified. It was positioned vertically, suggesting deliberate placement, but it may have simply been the tip of a tool that had broken off during the construction of the floor. It was too far below ground level and a layer of demolition rubble to be a modern intrusion.

### Acknowledgements

Most of the volunteers in 2010 were existing or new SOAG members, but there were also diggers as young as nine years old trying archaeology for the first time, or young people planning to study the subject at university. We also had more than 30 visitors to the site to watch work in progress. My thanks to all of them for their efforts and for their enthusiasm. Most of the regular diggers worked at some time on the

central room. They all handled very well the difficult task of removing heavy demolition rubble alongside detailed and complicated sampling and recording. Fig. 9 shows most of the team on the last day of work on the central room, when the weather was perfect for a final clean of the floor. Even the experienced diggers were delighted to stand for a moment on a floor last used in the fourth century. Particular thanks go to Tom Walker for organising the sampling of this area and his ongoing research on this. Thanks also to Dave Jobling who spotted the mineralised wood attached to the nails whilst plotting and recording them, and undertook the subsequent research. David Cox, as usual, has kept our finds processing under control, ensuring that at the end of the season everything was ready for marking and recording. John Hefferan recorded a mountain of CBM and then did a major part of the bulk finds paperwork during the winter. My particular thanks this year to Steve Gibson who has deputised for me and helped in the running of the site for several years. This year he agreed to step into the role of Assistant Director, with great success, and we have all benefited from this.

We are grateful to John Creighton, of the University of Reading, for his identification of the coin and to Elise Fraser, Finds Manager at Silchester Town Life Project, for spending a day with us and for her advice and comments on the metal object and other finds.

Most of all we would like to express our appreciation and thanks to all those who are associated with the Gatehampton site and who generously allow us access and are keen supporters of the project. Particular thanks to Sarah and Roger Edmunds for allowing us to maintain a large trench on their land, as well as providing storage facilities. Thanks also to Robin Cloke for his continuing interest, advice and support for the project over many years.

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Fig. 9. The diggers in the central room in September 2010

## Roman Nails at Gatehampton

Dave Jobling

### Introduction

During the 2010 excavation of the central room at Gatehampton, 109 nails and nail fragments were recovered. They all came from within the demolition layer, usually high up but below the fallen tiles, suggesting they were part of the timber roof structure.

This paper is necessarily descriptive rather than analytical. It starts by giving some context. Were Roman nails different at every site? How can they be characterised? There follows a discussion of some of the patterns in size, shape and distribution of the Gatehampton nails. Finally, we have some quite rare traces of the original roof timber.

### Roman nails in general

Nails are a common find at Roman sites. It seems that they were not highly valued by the Romans themselves, which implies that they were cheap and easy to produce in bulk. In fact the two main raw materials, iron ore and wood for fuel, were plentiful in Roman Britain. Gatehampton is almost equidistant from the two main Roman iron-mining complexes in England: The Weald (95 miles), and The Forest of Dean (85 miles).

Roman nails were hand-forged from iron blooms, easily transported shapes similar to ingots and themselves a

product of smelting ore. Forging items like weapons and nails from the bloom was a much more distributed activity than the earlier steps in the manufacturing chain, and it is likely that the Gatehampton nails were produced locally by an established workshop, as was certainly the case in the area later, in the twelfth century (Williams, 2011).

Much of our knowledge comes from a hoard of nearly 900,000 nails found at the site of the legionary fortress of Inchtuthil (Angus, Brown and Cleere, 1962) near Perth. It is believed that, in about AD87, during the military withdrawal from the Gask Ridge fortifications, they were buried in order to deny use of the iron to the Caledonian people. Their fine state of preservation means that these nails have been closely studied and used to create a system of categorisation.

Nails from the Roman villa near Brading on the Isle of Wight (Cleere, 1958) are the basis of a competing categorisation, and given that those finds display the same sorts of damage as those found at Gatehampton, that site is more relevant than Inchtuthil. However, neither system covers all known Roman nail forms and for this reason, a synthesis of the two schemes, produced as a cataloguing tool by the British Museum (Manning, 1985), is used here as a framework.

Type	Sub-type	Section	Shape	Head	Comments
1	1a	Square	Tapered >15cms	Irregular (approx. round or rectangular)	
	1b		Tapered <15cms		
2		Flat		Triangular	
3		Flat		T-shaped	
4		Flat		L-shaped	
5			Spike	None	
6		Round	Chiselled point	Round, domed	Very rare. Possibly used for fixing timber to masonry (Angus, Brown and Cleere, 1962).
7, 8, 9					Used on upholstery.
10					Hobnails from sandals and boots.

Table 1. Categories of Roman nails



### Distribution

The 2010 season's nails were uncovered in perhaps half of the total area of the original room, the northern area (now back-filled) and western areas excavated in previous seasons. 65% of the nails and fragments can be plotted with centimetre precision.

25% can only be located to the resolution of a metre square. This is often due to their having been found during sieving for rodent bones, and more precision is not possible. A small number (10%) were found very early on in the season, before the squares system was established, but it is known approximately where they were found (on the "A-E line").

A plot of the nails (Fig. 1) shows that they tend to cluster loosely towards what would be the centre of the room, with only a tiny number being closer than 1m to the walls. There are hints of clusters (squares A to H, squares K to C, and square I).

Nearest Neighbour Analysis (Hammond and McCullagh, 1977) is a statistical measure of spatial non-randomness, returning a 'nearest neighbour index',  $R$ . Values of  $R$  lie somewhere in the range 0 (a distribution that has some discernible cause but was not designed to be regular) through 1 (randomised, with neither apparent patterns nor detectable influencers) to 2.15 (a distribution that appears deliberately regular). For the Gatehampton nails,  $R = 0.213$ .

Conducting this analysis on the nails when they were in place within the newly built roof would have given us a result very close to 2.15 (they are found where they were designed to be by the carpenter). Had they been scattered across the landscape by a whirlwind, we might expect a result close to 1 (randomness). However a result of 0.213 tells us that the nails were neither dropped at random nor placed deliberately in a regular pattern. Instead, their positions are 'meaningful' because influenced (constrained) by the collapse of the timber structure into which they were hammered and their subsequent release by decay of the wood. There is, therefore, an underlying and explicable process, though one that perhaps requires some effort to reveal, and this is characteristic of an  $R$  value close to zero. Our  $R$  value supports the interpretation that a ghost of the original roof structure remains, and that later disturbance by, for example, ploughing, has not been a factor.

No patterns emerge when the nails are mapped by size or degree of bending. An important pattern can, however, be seen in the distribution of traces of roof 'timber', discussed below.

### Condition and form

Most of the nails show significant corrosion (Fig. 2), though some of the original detail can occasionally be seen, such as a still-sharp point (Fig. 3). All have

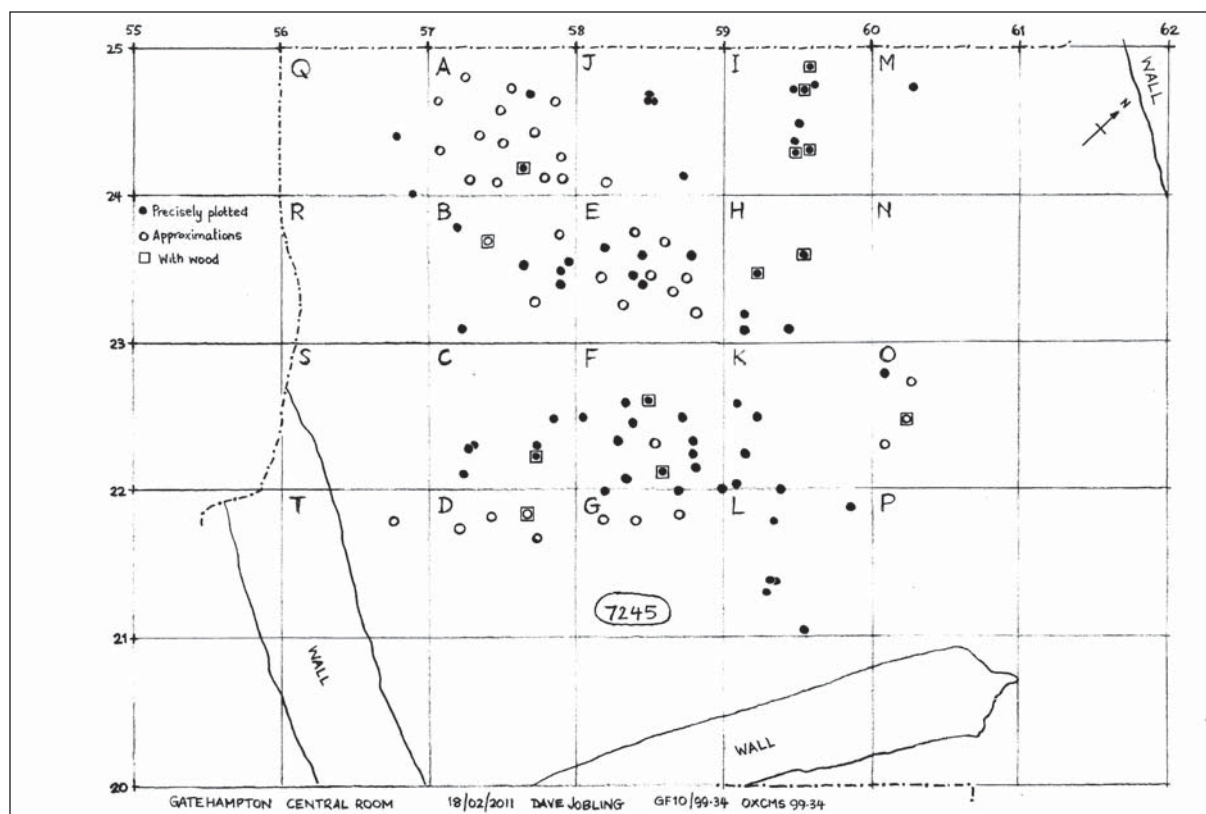


Fig. 1. Distribution of nails in context 7245



Fig.2. Examples of corrosion in the Gatehampton nails



Fig.3. Note the sharp point on the nail second from left

a characteristic hammered surface, and, where still present, an irregular head. All but two are square in cross-section.

Some Gatehampton nails are snapped and some are mere fragments with both head and point missing. In one case (Fig. 3), we can unite two separate pieces, corrosion showing that the break is an old one, presumably caused by the roof collapse itself.

Omitting the snapped nails and fragments (25 from the 109), the average length of a Gatehampton nail is 6cm. With two exceptions, all nails fit into category 1b. Of these 1b nails, we can see two distinct sub-groups, the majority (74) whose lengths range from 3.5 to 7.5cm, and ten nails from 8.0 to 11.5cm, longer and thicker than normal, but not large enough to be of type 1a. Gatehampton is a normal site in this regard, many others showing the same profile of finds (Manning, 1985).

The smaller of the type 1b nails (3.5 to 7.5cm) were used for a wide variety of tasks (affixing boards and battens, for example). A single, entirely unexceptional example was found through a nail hole in a tegula, although it seems likely that, with a steeper roof pitch, nails were also used to hold every second or third row of tegulae in place.

The massive nails helped hold together major components of the roof, such as A-frames. The effort required to drive an 11cm nail into an oak beam can be imagined, and it is probable that augers were used to partially pre-drill the holes. The heads of the largest

nails were often pyramidal in section so that they gradually flattened into the more usual disk shape under the repeated impact of the hammer.

In addition to the mass of 1b nails, we also have a clear example of type 4, and a possible second. This second may have a deformed round (rather than L-shaped) head, but both of these are flat in section. Unfortunately, both are snapped and can be located only to square A.

Types 1a, 2, 3 and 5-9 are not present in the central room at all. Hobnails (type 10), though not found in 2010, have been regularly found in other areas of Gatehampton (for example, in Trench 9, where several were found together, suggesting a discarded sandal or boot). In addition, tegulae found in other contexts occasionally show hobnail imprints.

Minor bends and S-bends appear in almost all the nails found. The quality of Roman iron virtually guarantees flexing and bending during use, though it is known the Roman smiths selected higher quality metal for nails expected to bear higher loads (Angus, Brown and Cleere, 1962).

45% of the non-fragmentary nails are more significantly distorted (Fig. 2). The average point of maximal bending from the head is 2cm, the median value (11 instances) being 1.8cm. Does this correspond to the thickness of a commonly used timber component, such as a board? The 'wood' traces attached to the nail in Fig. 4 are 1.8cm in thickness (see below).

One nail is so abruptly folded that it seems its projecting point might have been hammered over to prevent injury (Fig. 3).

### The Gatehampton roof 'timber'

Sixteen of the nails and nail fragments appear to preserve traces of the original roof timber into which they were hammered. In the complete nails, this is always hard up against the head.

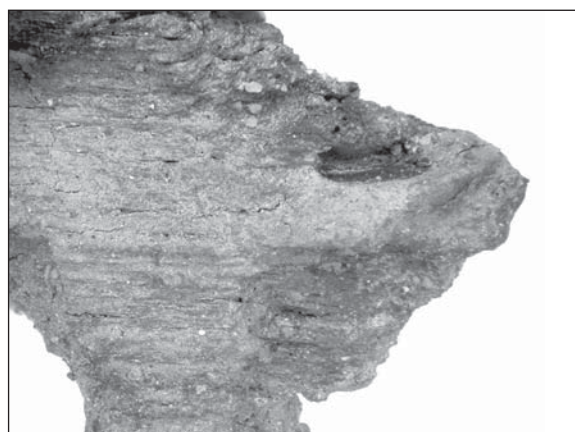


Fig.4. Gatehampton wood replaced by iron corrosion products

Wood preservation usually requires water-logging, not characteristic of Gatehampton. Instead, the original wood has been replaced by iron corrosion products derived from the nails themselves (Keepax, 1975).

Close up, the 'wood' (Fig. 4) shows a distinct grain. This is consistent with corrosion product replacement as the process works at the molecular scale, allowing the preservation of structures within individual plant cells. The cellulose and other organic materials have become iron. It has been possible at other sites, using scanning electron microscopy, to identify the species of tree used in the construction. It is not yet known whether we will be so fortunate, but as a preliminary step, two of the Gatehampton nails (thanks to the good graces of Tom Walker) have been cleaned by Dr Jennifer Foster of the University of Reading.

Of these 'wood'-encrusted nails and fragments, there is a marked linear distribution, stretching north to south along the diagonal of the central room (Fig. 1). Four of the nails and fragments were found in the top corner square metre (square I). They then trail (through H and F) into the centre of the room, then stop in squares C and D. The maximum width of this nails track is only 50-60cms. Only three of the 'wood'-encrusted nails do not fall along this diagonal line (one each in A, B and O).

What could have caused this distribution? Either the conditions were particularly suited to preserving timber for longer, or the type of timber used was particularly suited to preservation. Nothing obviously distinguishes the north-south diagonal from the rest of the room, so does the line of these nails reflect some quality of the wood used: more massive, structural members, better-seasoned timber, or a more durable species?

### Conclusions

Gatehampton is a typical Roman site in terms of its nail finds. Almost all correspond to the British Museum type 1b, with a tiny sample of type 4. This is as expected, as type 1b nails were the workhorse of Roman carpentry. There have been hobnails (type 10) found at Gatehampton, but not in the central room during 2010.

Although the literature is largely silent on damaged nails, few of the Gatehampton sample retain their original form. With the possible exception of the deliberate-looking 90° bend, it is usually impossible to distinguish deformation caused by use from damage sustained in the roof collapse, so we should draw conclusions with care.

Gatehampton is unusual in preserving timber traces, in some cases very clearly, and with a distinct grain. Preservation is by iron replacement, and something encouraged that process to limit itself to a diagonal line across the central room. It is hoped that further analysis can be conducted, to learn more about the timber into which the Gatehampton nails were hammered.

### Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the whole of SOAG, particularly those at Gatehampton, who welcomed me as a member in May of last year. I also want to thank them for entrusting their nails to me after so short an acquaintance. In particular, Hazel Williams and Steve Gibson oiled some of my rusty skills, Tom Walker offered enthusiastic encouragement, supervision and access to library resources, and John Hefferan provided first-class editorial comment.

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## The Woodlands of the Allnutt Charity, Goring Heath

Pat Preece

In the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries, woodlands were probably at their most valuable. Donation of woods to a charity provided a reliable source of income, as it proved with the Allnutt Charity (Preece, 1998). Unfortunately, owing to the declining value of woodlands in the 20th century, all of the Charity's woodlands have now been sold.

The woods in the endowment for the Charity were Lackmore Wood, in Checkendon, and Chalkwood, Bensgrove, Oakwood, Little Oakwood, Common Wood, Birchen Grove and Hawhill Wood, all in the parish of Goring – now in the parish of Goring Heath. Most of the woodlands had belonged to Francis Stoner of Blounts Court, Sonning Common, and in 1652 his creditors leased them and other lands to Henry Allnutt, father of the charitable Henry.

In 1674 appeared a 'Book of Surveigh' by 'J. Godfrey, Artist', presumably commissioned by Thomas Stoner, the son of Francis. In this, apart from the 'rewes' – shaws or pieces of woodland separating fields – there were measurements of the main woods. These were as follows:

Lackmore Coppice conteyneth		59a 3r 20p <sup>1</sup>
Burchin coppice	“	38 2 36
Bence grove	“	33 3 20
Hawhill coppice	“	28 2 26
Oken Wood	“	25 1 10
Chaulkwood	“	50 2 0
<b>Total</b>		<b>236 2 32</b>

In 1679 the manor of Goring, with the woodlands as above, was sold by Thomas Stoner, son of Francis, to Henry Allnutt, for £2,600. The manor, lands and woodlands were inherited by his son Henry Allnutt.

The woodlands include only two woods known to be documented earlier than the 17th century. Chalkwood is the earliest: in 1195 Hugh Druval was granting land to the Priory at Goring, including part of the Grove of Chelcora. The wood was held by the Priory until the dissolution of the monasteries. The other wood with a long history was Hawhill Coppice which, although not called by that name, was part of the lands owned in 1350 by John de Hawe, who held a *carucate* [circa 120 acres, 48.5ha] of land, including 20 acres [8ha] of woodland.

It seems that the Charity was properly established by 1726 as it is then that its accounts begin: account books with detailed accounts for the woods until 1800. These woodlands are the same as those in 'A Book of Surveigh' with the addition of Common Wood. The first known 'woodman' or 'woodreeve' was John Body. He kept the accounts which include details of his salary, 'to myself for one years wages due this day £20'. Woodreeves or head woodmen were not dependent on the salary as they would traditionally get a percentage of money from the wood sold. Richard Weller, 'woodman', was left money in Henry Allnutt's will and may have been woodreeve for a short period.

The accounts record the type of product sold, the quantity, the purchaser and often the place to which it was sent. In the 1726 account, which is only that of arrears due for wood sold by John Body, we have this example:

Wm Leaver of Mouseford [Moulsford]  
30 faggots 18s 8d.

This is a large sum, so it is probable that the '30' was '30 score', as this was a common method of selling.

John Barret of Walborough [Warborough]  
for wood 8s

Robert Hoare of Goring  
40 oak faggots, 4 bavins, 1.5 loads of billet £1 8s 9d  
From neighbour to the widow Field wood 7s 7d

In the last entry one wonders whether a kind neighbour was paying for the widow's fuel.

The 1727 accounts show both the money paid for cutting the wood in the various woodlands and the price paid by the people who bought the products. Apart from the poles, bavins, billet, faggots and so on which were cut and sold, the various activities of the woodmen are detailed. In Birch Coppice hedging and ditching were taking place and 4000 'sets' of hawthorn and blackthorn were being planted. This hedge was probably on the northern boundary and situated on top of a bank, which was not only the border of the wood but also the parish boundary between Goring and Woodcote – now replaced by a wire fence on the bank. The sets were 4d per hundred; 120 bavins were carried to the hedge, presumably to make a dead hedge until the plants had grown up. As well as these, holly was also grubbed (or dug) up in the wood 'to

making hedge'. So the hedges were being thoroughly reorganised. Birch Coppice bordered the fields of College Farm and it was important to prevent stock entering the wood and doing damage. The ditches by the hedge were meticulously maintained: 'money paid for scouring 109 poles of ditch' is a common type of entry. The woods were also gated: '2 locks for Oaken wood gates 2s.' This may have been the entry from the road between Goring and Reading.

In Birch Coppice they were also 'amending the cartway in the wood'. This was part of the system of tracks found in the woodlands along which the coppice products and timber were removed. It was important that these tracks should be negotiable, just as in modern Forestry Commission woodlands.

The gates and hedges were perhaps to keep out local people. For example, in the Quarter Sessions of 12th February, 1785, William and Thomas Hone of Whitchurch were sent to prison for six months for cutting down a beech in Oaken Wood. Their crime seems to have been that they refused to pay compensation. In fact, over a ten-year period, the Quarter Sessions records show only this one theft of firewood and no other woodland crimes. It seems probable that the Charity turned a blind eye to the removal of firewood. In other parts of Oxfordshire severe penalties were often exacted, particularly for stealing firewood.

An early problem experienced by the Charity is found in a comment of 1727. Two of its woodmen, Moses Avery and Thomas Cordery, were sent to Chalkwood to forbid 'Mr Distons cutting wood there'. The land of the Duchess of Marlborough must have abutted onto Chalkwood since they were her employees who cut the wood. In 1728 Mr Body the woodreeve made a journey to Benson 'to get the names of the persons who cut the wood'. The outcome is unknown.

The products of the woods at this time, the early 18th century, were mainly beech coppice and tall timber oak and beech. There is no mention of hurdles, besoms or any of the articles usually associated with hazel coppice. In the accounts the poles were of beech as was the billet, both from the coppice stools. In a statute of 1542 billet was specified as being three and a half feet long and about nine to twelve inches in circumference. These were logs; the old andirons, or log supports, in the fireplaces were designed to take them. At the end of the 18th century billet was a shoot up to fifteen years old, from about three to six feet [1-2m] long and 12 inches [32cms] in diameter. Billet was cut into logs for domestic use and exported to the towns, usually by river. A great quantity of billet was

sold by the Charity, locally, to Reading, and possibly to London.

Faggots or bavins sold from the woods were mostly beech or oak. They were either from coppice or from the side shoots and tops of felled timber trees. Furze faggots too were sold. These were probably obtained from the Common, which may have been covered with gorse. Furze faggots or bavins were often supplied to the Almshouses for their fires. They caught fire and blazed up quickly, and so were used to start fires<sup>2</sup>. The thicker stems of gorse burnt more slowly and were useful on a fire. Holly, also used to start fires, is mentioned.

Paid to several workmen for grubbing  
10,000 of holly bavins     £2.0.0.

As these were 'grubbed' or dug out, the workmen were probably clearing an infestation of holly. One hopes that the workmen working with holly and gorse were able to have thick gloves!

Faggots or bavins were sold in quantity to farmers and local people. Kiln bavins or large faggots were sold to 'Hedges' who had a local kiln making bricks, '1480 Kiln bavins from Hawhill' were sold to Wm Hedges in 1727. This must be a mistake: in 1725 Mary Hedges widow' was renting a barn called Bredys near 'the house and brick kiln of Mary'. The news of William's death had not reached the treasurer of the Charity. She carried on business certainly until 1729 as she was still buying wood for firing the kiln then. 'Mrs Hedges 2,800 kiln bavins, 1 stack of roots.' Roots of trees that had been grubbed up were often sold as firewood. Apparently, being very dense in character, they were very slow-burning.

Beech and oak trees that were grown close together had tall trunks, providing lengths of timber sometimes as long as 100ft [30m]. These trees were regularly 'shragged': 'shredded' or 'pruned' in other parts of the country. Shragging was the custom of cropping the side shoots, leaving a tuft on top. Oliver Rackham in *Ancient Woodlands* claims that this practice vanished from Britain long ago; he refers to it as a 'Medieval practice'. However, in the Charity woodlands it was practised until the 1950s! Shragging was also a method of obtaining wood for faggots. In 1727 there is a reference to 'making 510 shragging faggots at 2s 6d per 100 – 12s 6d' in Birch Coppice. Various spellings are found in the accounts: '600 srag bavins' and '1500 scragling bavins'.

Oak timber was sold to various timber merchants including a Moses Willis of Reading who bought oak worth £126.18s in 1727. The description of the oak sold would have meant something to the woodmen,

but seems rather quaint nowadays: 'good, ornery [ordinary] decayed and shrowd oaks'. 'Shrowd oaks' presumably meant those that had been shrouded or shragged. The oaks were mainly cut in the early spring when, it was believed, the bark had the greatest quantity of tannin, which was used in tanning leather. In the 18th century, much of the stripped bark was sold to a Mr Fludger, a tanner in Wallingford. His family name is commemorated in 'Fludgers Shaw' a wood in Ipsden (Preece, 1993). An interesting item from the accounts is 'bark from poole [pole]'. This is thought to be bark from small or coppiced oaks while they were still standing – the only reference to this source of bark in the Oxfordshire Chilterns. There is, though, an overgrown oak coppice in the local area, which may have been planted for this product. From the end of the 18th to the middle of the 19th century there was a great demand for bark, probably due to the rise in horse transport and the consequent need for more leather accessories. The Napoleonic wars would also have created a demand for leather belts and impedimenta.

A 1727 entry records '6 axel trees'. These would have been sold to a local wheelwright, probably in a rough-out state, having been selected from good-quality beech cut in November.

The detailed accounts with names of people and quantities and types of goods sold continue until the death of John Body, the first woodreeve, in 1729. 'His widow, the said Margaret, being left in very poor circumstances the balance is looked upon as a desperate debt.' The Charity seems to have decided to forget any money owed by him.

The immediate successor to John Body is not known. The wood products seem to have been sold by a Mr Clement, but he appears not to have done any work in the woods. He may have been a secretary or its equivalent to the Charity. In 1730 he died, and a William Body, perhaps John's son, appears in the accounts and works in the woods.

'Body for cutting 6 lds beach poles'

'Body for paying the workers for tailing the wood'.

'Tailing' is the pulling out of a tree-trunk by means of chains attached to a horse, usually a shire: a technique used in the Oxfordshire Chilterns when selection felling. It was often impossible for a timber wagon to get near the felled trees.

It is not until 1734 that there is a note 'Paid Wm Body for looking after the woods £14'.

The accounts continue with less detail, the only recipient recorded being Mr Fludger, who was still buying

bark for his tannery. Much maintenance was done: hedging and ditching and some clearing of woodways. 'Cholakwood' [Chalkwood] was cut and produced

84 lds billet	£52.13.0
870 fagots	£9.2.6
440 Babins	£2.6.0
2 loads beach poles	£1.0.0

The Common produced 7 loads of billet and 1,000 bavins for the fires at the almshouse.

In 1745 Body disappears from the accounts and a Robert Bunce seems to have been appointed woodreeve. He was paying £23 annually for his cottage, presumably the woodman's cottage in Dead Man's Lane next to the Charity complex. He was receiving an annual salary of £14, which possibly was more in the nature of a retaining fee. As with previous and future woodreeves he would have been getting a percentage from the wood sales. After his appointment the accounts changed. Money received for goods is recorded, but not the purchaser.

In 1757 a new account book shows Robert Bunce still recording his receipts and expenditure. Mr Fludger, as well as purchasing bark, was acting as timber merchant and buying quantities of oak.

1759 Mr Fludger for 367ft of oak	£15
1760 Mr Fludger for 304 ½ ft of oak	£18
1761 Mr Fludger for 263ft of oak	£15.15s
1763 Mr Fludger for 372ft of oak	£21

An analysis of the products of the woods gives an idea of their composition.

### Faggots

DECADE	QUANTITY
1730	38,310
1740	39,880
1750	48,855
1760	67,780
1770	54,380
1780	42,455
1790	52,370

Table 1. Number of faggots from all the woods

Most of the woods were producing a steady flow of beech faggots made from systematic shragging and from the lops and tops of the felled trees. The species producing the faggots are not specified except on the Common where the faggots were mostly of furze and were sometimes called furze 'bobs'.



**Billet**

DECADE	LOADS
1730-39	2,219
1740-49	1,353.5
1750-59	1,339.5
1760-69	1,773.5
1770-79	1,691.5
1780-89	3,622
1790-1800	1,853

Table 2. Loads of billet

A load of billet is the amount one horse could pull – possibly about half a ton, depending on the horse and the cart.

**Poles**

YEAR	LOADS
1730	746
1740	196
1750	2
1760	1004.5
1770	1003
1780	940.5
1790	609

Table 3. Loads of poles

As can be seen these were not produced in any great quantity. In fact the two loads in 1750 were from Lackmore Wood, which was the largest woodland. Oaken Wood produced very little, indicating only a small area of coppice; it had 40 years with no poles. Hawhill had 986 loads over the whole period, Oaken Wood only 148.

**Oak timber**

DECADE	LOADS
1730	4331
1740	7788
1750	3847
1760	2761
1770	6725
1780	7552
1790	6759
Av 1730-1790	5680

Table 4. Loads of oak timber per decade

Over the period the most productive wood was Lackmore, with 11,451 loads. Chalkwood had 9,396 loads. Hawhill had 406 loads, suggesting it had little oak compared with the smaller Oaken Wood with its 6,573 loads.

During this period there was a demand for oak for ship building. A load of oak was 50 Hoppus cubic feet, and a good-sized oak might contain 80 h cu ft. The Royal George, launched in 1756, took 5756 loads of oak. Thus the average production of oak from the woods over ten years would have built one warship.

**Bark**

DECADE	LOADS
1730	27
1740	31.5
1750	8.5
1760	14
1770	31
1780	41
1790	72

Table 5. Loads of bark per decade

A load of bark was about a ton.

At the end of the 18th century the life of the woods changed. Coal was being widely used, the railways making transport easier, so billet and faggots became less important for fires. There was some planting of conifers, and the chair leg woodmen arrived in the 1860s. But that is a different story.

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**Notes**

1 'a...r...p' = 'acres...roods...poles'. 4 roods = 1 acre, 40 poles = 1 rood.

2 Shakespeare speaks of 'rash bavin wits, Soon kindled and soon burnt' iHIV [Ed]

## A Guide to Using Google™ Earth as an Archaeological Aid

Dave Oliver

### Introduction

Cropmarks have long been used to assist the identification and interpretation of archaeological sites: a situation greatly enhanced by aerial photographs and now satellite images. This article explores how Google™ Earth can also be used for this purpose with an emphasis on some sites within the SOAG area of interest; it is intended as an encouragement for SOAG members to try the system for themselves.

### The origin of cropmarks and some other noticeable features.

To avoid potential misinterpretation it is important to understand how cropmarks occur and their variation with season and weather conditions. There are many reasons for the origin of marks on the ground that are related to archaeological features; these are extensively and excellently described by Wilson (Wilson, 2000). Drawing on the author's professional experience with hydrogeological organisations, this article discusses one of the main causes of cropmarks and the reasons for their variation, a variation that significantly affects what may be visible on Google™ Earth images. Also considered are some of the other types of marks that can be seen, as well as potential red herrings.

Water, falling as rain onto an area, is removed from the soil on which it lands by a combination of three draining mechanisms: runoff; evaporation; and infiltration. Each of these processes is quite complex, particularly evaporation (Monteith, 1965), but provided a wet soil does drain, the result is a soil moisture deficit when draining continues beyond the soil's maximum ability to hold water.

Cropmark intensity is greatly affected by differential soil moisture deficits. A ditch cut through soil, sub-soil and possibly bedrock will, when filled by the passage of time or deliberate human action, have different (usually higher) water storage capability to that of the surrounding area, as well as possibly higher levels of plant nutrients. Similarly, a buried wall also has different (normally lower) storage characteristics. Thus, a crop planted homogeneously across an area will exhibit different growth and colour above such buried features, due to the plants above them having access to dissimilar resources.

Obviously for there to be soil moisture deficits, the draining has to exceed the rainfall. When this does not happen cropmark intensity is minimal, either because an area never dries, as with a bog, or weather conditions prevent drying. In winter, rainfall can be expected to be relatively high while evaporation is low; thus deficits and hence cropmarks are less likely



Fig. 1. Cropmark effect of ditch

to be observed. Conversely, low summer rainfall with higher evaporation will produce cropmarks, particularly during a long dry summer such as that of 1976, but extreme drying will eventually obscure them. The ability to see cropmarks will therefore vary with both the time of year and prevailing weather conditions. It is worth noting the same applies to some geophysical methods, such as resistivity, where moisture content has a significant effect on reading values (Gaffney, 2003).

Where an archaeological feature causes an increase in the available growing resources, compared with the surrounding area, the crop is expected to grow taller and to be greener. Fig. 1 shows the cropmark effect caused by the presence of a ditch extending beyond the excavated area in the foreground. Fig. 2, taken from a light plane, shows the backfilled excavation and surrounding area as seen from the air some weeks later and after harvesting. The initial cropmark clearly had positive (enhanced) growth as well as retaining a green colour, whereas the post-harvest stubble is light in colour. Fig. 2 also illustrates the advantage of viewing cropmarks from a great height, as layouts and relationships are easy to see.



Fig. 2. Backfilled excavation clearly visible

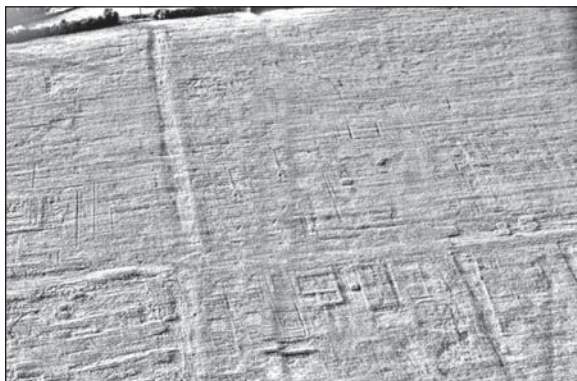


Fig. 3. Negative cropmarks (From Burnham, 1990)

Conversely, the presence of a wall or other hard structure will normally reduce the available water and nutrients, inhibiting growth (negative height) and it may result in a lighter colour crop. Fig. 3 (from Burnham, 1990) shows negative cropmarks at the site of the Roman town at Alchester; these are emphasised by the angle of the sun, which has cast shadows where the crop height drops below the level of unaffected crops. These are so clear that it would be possible to draw a partial plan of the town's layout: a technique used as early as the mid 18th century to provide a layout of Silchester's roads and forum using ground level observation of cropmarks (Boon, 1974). The casting of shadows due to the angle of the sun can be a useful aid wherever archaeological features cause small variations in ground level. Woolley described how he could plot grave sites from a hill during the brief time (a few minutes) the low sun produced shadows (Woolley, 1954). The same effect can be used when standing walls or open ditches are being investigated. This leads to a consideration of other marks that can be seen from above.

Soil marks can be generated when material of a different colour is exposed by ploughing (Wilson, 2000: 53). For example, if the walls of a Roman villa were made of a material notably different in colour to the surrounding soil, then when such an area is ploughed, the freshly turned soil and the freshly exposed building material will mark features before the crop grows; the same features may then lead to cropmarks.

Geological features can also give rise to markings visible from above. These may include, for example, buried river channels, or marks resulting from the effects of frost, such as ice wedges (Fig. 9). Even some of these may be helpful in aiding interpretation. The area near SOAG's Roman villa site at Gatehampton contains a buried channel (Fig. 4) along the silted course of which Upper Palaeolithic long blade knapping sites have been identified (Allen, 1996: 117). Knowing the position and course of the channel gives a researcher the ability to investigate matching potential locations, as well as suggesting the possible reason the knappers chose that location.

## Google™ Earth

The software package that makes up Google™ Earth is available free of charge to anyone with access to the Internet. Once installed it provides user controllable satellite images that can be used to aid the interpretation of archaeological sites. Importantly it may also help with new discoveries. It is possible to pick almost any part of the world and zoom close. Famous sites such as the harbour of Carthage or the layout of Pompeii can be investigated. Straightaway, browsing the world does show one of the systems limitations: not all areas have high-resolution images. Luckily the current imagery of SOAG's area of interest is mainly of good resolution.

There are other points concerning the images to be considered. Where shadows can be seen on the images they are usually relatively short, hence the images were generated close to noon at whatever time of year they were taken and so the very low sun shadow effect mentioned above is not available. The pictures one sees on the computer monitor are made up from a matrix of images. Having zoomed onto a location of interest, moving across the area it is possible to pass from one of the matrix images into another; the conditions under which the adjacent images were taken can be very different, as can be the resolution (Fig. 4).

While the system has many controls allowing much modern data to be accessed, the following are the ones the author has found most useful when considering archaeology.

Movement around the image is made by using the mouse and/or clicking over some superimposed controls in the top right hand of the screen. One of these controls orientates the image with respect to compass direction; north does not have to be at the top of the screen. The height from which the image is viewed is controlled by a slider under the compass control; moving this up or down provides the ability to zoom in or out. The basic images are taken from many kilometres above the earth and will eventually pixelate and lose clarity when zooming close to the surface. Situated between these two controls there is an icon which, if clicked, switches to 'street or ground level view'. This allows one to see what the view from a location would be like if you were standing there. Fig. 5 is an example of this and would be the view from a possible Bronze Age ring (identified by SOAG's Sue Sandford during a microlite flight) to the south. Thus, before actually visiting the site, it is easy to see the possible grave overlooked the Thames valley and was at the southern end of a narrow high ridge. It was a really noticeable and highly visible place to be buried. However, this facility does not mean you can always get exactly the view you want, but it does aid interpretation of how a site fitted into the landscape.





Fig. 4. One image of the area near Gatehampton. NB the BA rings, the buried channel, the junction between two images with different contrasts near the top of the picture and SOAG's RV site (approx 3 o'clock).

Once a site of interest has been identified, another control – the ruler on the toolbar at the top of the screen – allows features to be measured. One selects the unit (normally metres) and using the mouse, clicks on the point to measure from, then on the point to measure to. The resultant straight yellow line on the image shows the distance between the two points. Fig. 6 illustrates this technique on an as yet unidentified double ditched enclosure, found using Google™ Earth, near Binfield Heath. The line shows the distance between the inner ditches to be 61m.

This particular site can also be used to illustrate another useful Google™ Earth feature, as well as a limitation. As pointed out above, cropmark intensity tends to vary with both the time of year and weather conditions, although it cannot be taken as an absolute rule that a particular time of year will produce or obliterate cropmarks. In a current Google™ Earth image of a location, cropmarks may not be visible simply because the image was taken when conditions were not right for their production. The date at which an image was made is shown in the bottom left-hand corner of the image. The date of Fig. 6 is shown as 1/1/2005 (month/day/year format), but clearly shows crop or soil marks. The same area recorded on 5/30/09 still shows the presumed ditches, but they are far less clear (Fig. 7) and would be easier to miss.



Fig. 5. Ground level view from a BA ring site across the Thames valley



Fig. 6. Measuring the size of a newly found feature



Fig. 7. The same area as in Fig 6, but at a different time of year



Near this site is a good example of marks caused by ice wedges. These are ditch-like in configuration and, like ditches, produce marks that vary with the season and weather conditions. Here they are mainly visible as a series of polygons (Fig. 8). They are natural and not the man-made structures in which we are interested, but where they are nearly rectangular could be mistaken for them.

Some sites will have cropmarks showing multiple periods. This can cause confusion if superimposed. Other sites which have had cropmarks can have other marks superimposed by modern activity. Fig. 9 is of an area south of Dorchester-on-Thames where, within a single field, there are a number of separate cropmarked (possibly soil-marked) sites. The southern terminal of the Dorchester Neolithic *cursus* can be seen containing a probable Bronze Age ring; within the same field there appears to be a Roman farm, as well as other sites. This is a good illustration of how knowledgeable interpretation, research and ultimately excavation are essential for definition.

Fig. 10 covers the same area at Gatehampton as Fig. 4, but was acquired after recent work by Thames Water. The engineering has obliterated the marks seen in Fig. 4. It will be interesting to see how long this effect lasts.

Having identified a cropmark, its position in terms of latitude and longitude can be recorded simply by positioning the cursor over the site and noting the latitude and longitude shown at the bottom centre of the screen. This is important if the site is unknown as it may be added to the Historic Environment Record. There are software packages on the web that will convert the Lat/Long values to a grid reference. Fig. 11 shows some previously unrecorded, probable Bronze Age sites in Emmer Green found using Google™ Earth and now added to the HER by SOAG.



Fig. 8. Cropmarks due to the presence of ice wedges caused by frost



Fig. 9. Cropmarks from the Neolithic, Bronze Age and Roman periods



Fig. 10. Water supply engineering obliterating cropmarks at Gatehampton





Fig. 11. Probable BA rings in a small park in Emmer Green



Fig. 12. Pevensey Castle with hand drawn contours showing how the Roman Fort was on a peninsular guarding the now silted up harbour



Fig. 13. A tenuous regular series of marks with an unknown cause

Adjacent to the latitude and longitude values for the cursor is a value for the elevation of the ground surface at its position. While this is useful for studying the site's relationship to other sites and the landscape, it can be used in other ways. For example, when doing an assignment on the subject of Roman forts, the author used the elevation values around the Saxon Shore fort at Pevensey to hand-plot a four- and five-metre contour (Fig. 12) around the castle. These show a shape that reflects the original peninsular on which the fort was built, revealing why it was located where it was and how the bastions were positioned to cover areas where an enemy had more dry land from which to launch an attack.

Not all cropmarks are as clear as those used here as illustrations. Fig. 13 shows an ill-defined series of marks at Mapledurham. At the bottom right there are some fairly clear probable Bronze Age rings. In the centre of the image is a square shape (measured at about 200m across) with apparent internal features. While looking similar to the layout of a Roman fort, there is no evidence for what it is. It may be nothing more than marks left by the farmer when using a tractor: a perfect example of the need for work on the actual site.



Many hours have been spent by the author in looking for sites in SOAG's area. The ones found have been entered into the list of possible sites for investigation. If you are tempted to try Google™ Earth for yourself and find such potential sites, please add them to our database.

### Conclusions

Google™ Earth is easy to operate and is accessible to everyone. It can be used to provide extremely useful information on how an archaeological site relates to the landscape surrounding it and may indicate why its location was chosen. It also provides a method of measuring sites and locating features to enable pinpointing of investigation work on the ground.

Carefully travelling across the present or earlier images of an area can be used to identify sites that have not been previously recorded.

Although views of an area are controlled by the observer, the time of origin of the images is fixed to whatever is held in the historical views menu. These may not have been made at the optimum time for cropmarks; thus not finding a set of marks does not mean there is nothing there.

While providing a useful tool, which may reduce some fieldwork requirement, it does not replace the need for on-site investigations.

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### Acknowledgements

All the figures from Fig. 4 onwards are from Google™ Earth.

## Age Concerns – Lead Astray?

John White

Even the most amateur of archaeologists use terms such as Stone Age or Iron Age, but the recent SOAG lecture on the Atrebatas prompted me to think about the derivations and uses of such terms. The problem with them is that they use cultural achievements as a measure of time and so vary with the location concerned. For example in Africa the Bushmen tribes were still considered to be 'stone-age' even in the 1950s. Europe is the area of interest to most of us, and here the Stone Age is considered to start about 2.9 million years ago and to last until the beginning of the next 'Age'. The other generally accepted divisions of history are the Bronze Age, with a suggested start 3000 years ago, and the Iron Age, considered to start in Europe about 800 BC and to end with the beginning of historical times. The extreme length of the Stone Age was successfully dealt with by John Lubbock who in his book *Prehistoric Times* of 1865 subdivided it into Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic.

As a scientist I am unhappy with the nomenclature used for the Bronze and Iron Ages. The first metal to be used was copper in about 5000 BC, probably using native metal deposits before the techniques of reducing ores to the metal were discovered. In reality, the Copper, Bronze and Iron Ages are just subdivisions of what might be called the Metal Age based on the development of technology to enable tools to be given sharper and harder and thus longer-lasting cutting edges. I consider that the greatest problem with the Iron Age is that while its start is defined by the discovery of its technology, its end is set by an unrelated cultural development, namely the start of historical times. The result is that in England the Iron Age ends after a length of 850 years with the Roman Invasion, in Rome it ends after only about 270 years with the foundation of the city in 584BC, while in Biblical lands historical narrative goes back 3000 years, so logically from the definition, the Iron Age could not have existed at all.

My heretical answer to this problem is to replace the concept of the Iron Age with that of the Lead Age. Technology would set the start the Lead Age at about the same time as that of the Iron Age but it would also define the end of the Lead Age in the 20th century AD, when an appreciation of the hazards involved stopped the use of lead. During this time, lead had

many more uses than iron, being used in every aspect of civilised life, so that it can even be argued that the standard of living was related to the amount of lead used.

The mining of lead started about 6000 years ago with the Ancient Egyptians casting figurines from the metal and using lead compounds as pigments. The development of the use of lead as sheet metal enabled the Roman engineers to build their aqueducts and water cisterns to provide water supplies for their towns. The use of lead spread to all aspects of Roman life, with the usage in the Roman Empire peaking at about 80,000 tons per year. Dentists used lead to repair teeth, and undertakers used lead coffins for those who were past repair. The Latin word for lead, *plumbum*, has carried through to the modern English words 'plumber', 'plumb-line' and 'plummet'. Even stone-masons used lead, to join stones or fix hinges or railings by pouring molten lead into the cavities made for holding them. More recently lead sheets have been used to keep rain off choirboys and to protect radiologists from x-rays.

Thin sheets of lead were used as a writing medium by the Romans, similar to wax tablets but more permanent, for the important things in life such as curses. When a Roman had his wife or other property stolen he would write a terrible curse on the perpetrator on a sheet of lead, and then fold it up and throw it into a sacred spring or similar holy place for the local deities to give effect to his curse. The National Trust property, The Vyne, in Hampshire has a copy of a gold ring that had been found near Silchester about 200 years ago. Much later, about 70 years ago, in an excavation lead by Sir Mortimer Wheeler in Wales, a lead sheet was found with writing describing this ring and cursing the person who stole it. It is said that Sir Mortimer discussed this over a college dinner with fellow academic J R R Tolkien – but that is another story: *The Lord of the Rings*.

Lead, however, has an even greater curse – it is poisonous. As its uses developed over the centuries it affected everyone from artists to wine-makers, and caused the deaths of everyone from popes to prostitutes. Mostly this was due to compounds of lead, but even water pipes could cause poisoning in soft water areas. I remember my father in the 1940s running the kitchen tap each morning to flush out any lead which may have dissolved overnight, until re-plumbing with copper pipes made this unnecessary. The effect of lead plumbing on health was not appreciated in Roman times, although it was known that large doses of certain lead compounds could be fatal. Sugar, as we know it today, was not discovered

until about 800AD, but the Romans had two ways of sweetening food. The first was honey. The second was a product that they called *sapa*. This was made by the evaporation of grape juice, and ideally would have been mainly grape sugar. Originally this evaporation was done in copper pans, but the use of copper gave the product a metallic taste so the copper was given a lead coating. The problem then was that the lead coating was slowly dissolved away by the fruit acids in the grape juice with the formation of soluble lead salts. This actually enhanced the use of *sapa* as a sweetener as these lead salts do have a sweet taste, lead acetate later becoming known to alchemists as 'sugar of lead', because of its sweet taste and white crystalline form. The poisonous nature of *sapa* produced this way was well known. *Sapa* was eaten by Roman prostitutes not primarily as confectionery, although chocolate had not yet been invented, but for the lead content which gave them a pale skin to make them desirable, and then to cause abortions when they had been found desirable. Mainly, however, it was the Roman rich and powerful who suffered from lead poisoning, as they were the ones who could afford plumbing and manufactured foods. It was probably lead poisoning that caused the reported low birth rates in Ancient Rome and the mental problems of those like Nero and Caligula, and so it has been suggested that it was lead poisoning and not the migration of populations due to climate change that was the cause of the fall of the Roman Empire.

The sweet taste of lead salts, especially lead acetate, was utilised by wine traders. Wine goes sour by the oxidation of the alcohol to acetic acid, eventually forming vinegar. Wine merchants soon learned that wine that was going sour could be made palatable again by stirring lead oxide into it, as this removed the acid that had been formed, replacing it by the sweet tasting lead acetate. For the wine merchant this had the further benefit that the presence of lead inhibited further deterioration of the wine. This process was developed over the years until by about 1800 the method of preserving port wine was to stir lead oxide into sour wine until no more would dissolve. A pint of this product was then added to each hogshead of wine. A similar result could be obtained by putting a piece of lead shot into each wine bottle.

Wine was not the only foodstuff to be preserved. Many of the great British exploring expeditions of the last few hundred years, as well as those sent to rule the Empire, depended on the 'tinned food' supplies which they took with them. Unfortunately lead solder was used to seal these tins. In consequence the food acids now sealed inside dissolved lead from the solder.

As these tins were the reserve food supplies they would only be used when the expedition was already in a weakened state, but no one has yet proved that lead poisoning, rather than starvation or the cold, actually caused the failure of any expedition.

One of the symptoms of lead poisoning is the failure of the kidneys to remove impurities like uric acid from the blood. The result was that this uric acid deposited in the toe joints, causing gout: a condition long associated with drinking port. Another symptom of lead poisoning is colic, the painful blocking of the intestine. This symptom was not considered as bad as the diarrhoea caused by eating food that was 'off', so lead compounds (especially the oxide, litharge) were often used as folk remedies. Modern analysis of his remains showed Pope Clement II died of lead poisoning, but it is not known if this was an accidental overdose of medication or a political assassination by those opposed to his reforms.

As technology developed, even before the leaded petrol of the 20th century, there were more and more ways people, especially the rich and powerful, could be accidentally poisoned. Pottery was coated with lead glazes and wine was drunk from lead crystal, from any of which wine and acidic fruit juices could extract the lead. The effects became well known and exploited. For example after a rich meal the guests would be offered a glass of port to 'settle the meal', which actually meant to allow the colic produced by the lead poisoning to prevent an 'upset' stomach. Interestingly port is still offered to 'settle the stomach', although it is now lead-free and so just a placebo. It could therefore be argued that the British Empire was in as much danger from lead poisoning as the Roman Empire had been.

Another major use of lead was to produce pigments for paints. 'White Lead' is a basic lead carbonate that, because of its opacity and colour, was the preferred white pigment for paints and cosmetics until the titanium oxide pigment was developed in the 20th century. Other lead pigments used by artists include Red Lead, a lead oxide; and Chrome Yellow, which

is lead chromate. All these pigments made being an artist a hazardous profession as it was a common practice for artists to lick their brushes to shape the point. White Lead, in addition to being poisonous, has the artistic disadvantage that it reacts with sulphur-containing compounds to produce lead sulphide, which is black. This is the origin of the myth that the people shown in Medieval manuscripts were black. When painted they would have had Caucasian skin tones based on the use of white lead pigment. In time, this White Lead would have reacted with sulphur in the egg-extract used as a binder for the paint, or with sulphurous fumes from coal fires, to turn the faces in these illustrations black. Nowadays, rather than being an effect of time, this formation of black lead sulphide by the reaction of a lead salt solution with the sulphur compounds naturally occurring in hair is used just for men who wish to hold back the effects of time.

Lead, like many poisons, is absorbed into hair as it grows. Thus a preserved lock of hair can be analysed using modern techniques to give information on the health of historic figures. Beethoven is reported to have suffered all his life with colic and constipation. A recently analysed sample of his hair taken just after he died in 1827 was found to contain 60 parts lead per million by weight, a hundred times more than normal. Today that would be taken to indicate severe lead poisoning, so would account for his health problems, but in Beethoven's time was probably quite normal for aristocratic living.

Health and Safety legislation now considers the use of lead to be too dangerous, even for insecticides. Except for bullets, the one remaining application is in car batteries and this too will fade as lighter weight materials are developed.

So forget the Iron Age. For two thousand years, until the start of what could be called the 'Cotton Wool Age', lead has had a far greater impact on mankind than has iron, as a check on Google for further details on the information that I have given will show.



# From the Archives

## Park Field Newington Excavation: Interim Report

This article was first published in the *SOAG Bulletin* No. 40 for 1984, published in 1985.

**Cynthia Graham Kerr**

Edited by Sue Sandford

The aim of this project is [to] establish the presence of habitation in Park Field, now grazing and hay. The field is located to the south of the walled garden of Newington House and belongs to it. As the owner, Chris Maltin, is a SOAG, there are no landowner problems and he has given us all possible help and freedom. It was known from documents that there were other hamlets around Newington besides Holcombe (to the North) and fieldwalking showed faint platforms in Park Field.

The Sealed Knot held a performance in the field, for which they dug a Bank and Ditch fortification, and made a village with a well and pub. The Well produced sherds of Medieval pot, and the Pub is now our Site Hut (no licence).

The ditch, nominated Trench I, was adopted as an arbitrary trial-trench, and was trowelled down last autumn until flooded in the winter. Assorted pot, bones, slag, flints and iron items were found throughout the length of it. The Sealed Knots were asked by the Maltins to 'tidy up' and dug a further bit of ditch (Trench IA) which produced a mass of sherds (some green glaze), and slag, etc. in the spoil heap, and an interesting section with clay pockets. There was also pot, bones and slag in this section. This decided us to open Trench II, 7m long by 2m wide, between this ditch and the well, on what could be a house platform. This has already produced a good many Medieval and Tudor sherds, bones, nails and a fine Medieval Horse-shoe in what may be a courtyard. We have now extended the whole Trench 1m to the east.

Maureen Durham, of the [Oxford] Unit, spent an afternoon identifying the pottery with Cyn, and the washing and bagging of finds is kept up to date.

The pottery ranges from 13th-15th Century and it will be interesting to compare it with that in the Gt Bowling Field across the road. This we cannot fieldwalk as yet until the crops are cleared; but a preliminary walk was made by 4 members last year

and it is rich in finds. There is work for many years both here and in Park Field.

A survey was made in Park Field, working southwards, and the results show the existence of other possible dwellings in the field, and there is faint ridge and furrow outlying. Our historians are making a special journey to Canterbury to examine the archives of the monks, as Canterbury held lands at Newington for a short time. We hope this may throw light on the findings of decorated Medieval floor tiles in some areas, and whether a grange existed here. Old inhabitants have been helpful with information and one apparently has some 'old maps of 1500' in a tin (!) – it is hoped to see these sometime, as there have been difficulties in finding field names. Visits were made to the Bodleian and County Records Office to search, but the related fields were only numbered.

### Conclusion

Although Trench II is only about half a metre deep, it is already producing ample evidence of habitation and a good variety of early and late Medieval Pottery. The slag suggests iron-working, perhaps a forge or working area, and the possibility of a shrunken [village], or DMV, is not ruled out.

From the above, members will realize we are going flat out on this very satisfying project, and young and old are working every Tuesday, and often Sunday afternoons as well. We have 2 babies, (this enabling otherwise tied Mums to make a comeback) and a good core of workers so that the trench is going down well. More would be welcome, as people cannot always come, and we like to get a whole spit completed. There are plenty of goodies, the surroundings are idyllic, and picnics are brought (tea or lemonade provided). It is certainly good physiotherapy! If the sun's too hot – bring a hat, and layers of clothes you can take off. If you can't dig, come and sit and cheer us on, or wash pots; all SOAGs are welcome, take the opportunity to see the grounds and enjoy a day out.

From *SOAG Bulletin* No. 39, 1983.

## A Parish Survey: One Way of Tackling It

**Mary Kift**

Edited by Sue Sandford

It took Pat Preece, Marian Fallowfield and myself some five years to complete our Parish Survey of Mapledurham, a copy of which is now in the Woodstock Museum. 'Complete' is probably the wrong word, for there is always something else to discover, even after five years' work.

It all began with a casual look at a copy of the 1843 Tithe Award Map for Mapledurham with its accompanying list of field names and numbers, acreage and tenants. There was only the one land area in Mapledurham as the whole parish formed the estate owned by the Blount family. A copy of this list was made before we deposited the map at the Oxfordshire Records Office, its rightful resting place, and not the parish chest from where we had access to it. Before taking it to Oxford we also made a tracing of it for our own use and almost before we realized it we were 'hooked' on our project. A visit to Woodstock on the same day as we deposited the map showed us that very little information on Mapledurham was available. So we set to work to rectify this state of affairs. Field names were filled in against field numbers on our tracing and their names transferred to OS maps; so were the names of woods and farms. So we began.

Of course it was only possible to do this work in any spare time, but over the years a pattern evolved. During the winter we would spend roughly an evening a week filling in record cards for Woodstock, putting in more information on the maps, writing notes and doing anything else that needed to be done. Every now and then we took ourselves off to the Bodleian, the Records Office at Reading or Oxford, once a trip to Eton College library and the Public Records Office in London. These were our days out and we thoroughly enjoyed them – with a good meal to refresh us in the middle of the day. We read the parish registers, wills and various documents. Occasionally we went for a winter walk, even the coldest day did not dampen (or freeze) our enthusiasm – there was one really terrible afternoon of sharp frost with snow storms every now and then when we plunged through Greendene Wood on the way to Cane End. But it was the summer evenings that we kept mostly for our outside work and off we went [...] once a week

to tramp the countryside of Mapledurham armed with cameras, notepad, yard measure, maps and compass. Once in a while we treated ourselves to a whole day out checking fields, hedge dating, noting coppicing and pollarding, looking for wood banks boundaries and sawpits and measuring and recording barns and other farm buildings and farms and cottages. Often we were able to look over the latter by appointment and we found everyone most helpful and interested in our work.

We were fortunate to have a copy of the Rev. Cooke's *Early History of Mapledurham*, a very concise work and now out of print. We also made notes from a thesis loaned by Somerville College on the history of the Manor of Mapledurham.

We have now begun a new parish survey and having learnt from our first effort we are endeavouring to be a lot more businesslike in our approach. We have only been involved in Checkendon for less than two years but already we have indexed every person, field name and wood as we come across them, something we did not do in our previous attempt and already we have bought 300 index cards and used nearly all of them.

Unlike Mapledurham, where the whole parish is actually a private estate, Checkendon was owned by various people and we are finding it vastly different and an even more interesting parish to study.

Once again we began our survey by looking at the Tithe Award Map and were fascinated to discover that the open fields of Checkendon were still laid out in their original strips, but this time belonging to 3 or 4 landowners who either farmed them themselves or rented them out. We are forging on with our work and hope to come across many more 'surprises', you can be sure of some in work like this and no doubt we shall. Meanwhile our enthusiasm remains as keen as ever.

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## NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Contributions are invited for the next issue of the SOAG Bulletin. Articles should preferably describe original field or documentary research undertaken by the author and priority will be given to items relevant to South Oxfordshire. Short reports of SOAG visits and other meetings and conferences, book reviews and correspondence are also invited.

Authors are reminded that copies of the *SOAG Bulletin* are sent to the six legal deposit libraries in the United Kingdom, to local libraries, Oxford Archaeology, the Institute of Archaeology (Oxford) and the Oxfordshire Museums Service. The reputation of SOAG therefore rests largely on the quality of the *SOAG Bulletin*.

In order to ease the burden on the editorial and production team, it would be appreciated if potential authors would also bear the following points in mind:

- Articles are accepted at the discretion of the Editor, who reserves the right to edit material prior to publication.
- Contributions should ideally be between 500 and 2000 words in length. With the agreement of the author, shorter articles may be published in the *SOAG Messenger*. Longer items will be accepted depending on the availability of space.
- Articles should not have been previously published elsewhere.
- Articles should be submitted in Microsoft Word format, preferably by email. However, cleanly typed and/or clearly handwritten articles will be accepted. When sending copy by email, please ensure that you include 'SOAG Bulletin' in the email title and include a few lines of text in the message: unidentified attachments will not be opened.
- Please be as concise as possible, omit non-relevant material and avoid needless repetition.
- Illustrations are welcomed, if appropriate. Drawings and photographs are also invited for consideration for the front cover. Maps, drawings and photographs may be submitted in paper or electronic format as separate attachments: as low-resolution images to the Editor; as high-resolution images suitable for printing directly to Janet Eastment (email address inside front cover). Photographs and original artwork will be returned to authors after publication if requested.

- The text should be single-spaced; the title and author name(s) should be centred in bold; main headings should be placed left in bold; subheadings should be placed left in bold italics. Numbered figure captions should be provided and placed in the text to indicate the approximate position of illustrations.

- Metric units must be used where feasible. When imperial measurements are used, as in documentary studies, the metric equivalents should be added in square brackets if appropriate. For measurements, leave no space between the number and the dimension, e.g. 5.3m.

- Pounds, shillings and pence need not be converted into pounds and new pence.

- Numbers in the text (unless given as actual units of measurement) should be spelt out as words up to and including ten and given in numerals if more than ten.

- The Harvard System should be used for references whenever possible but the author's principles will be followed when items do not lend themselves to this system, subject to discussion.

e.g. Articles from journals and magazines:

Margary, I. D. (1943) Roman roads with small side ditches. *Antiquaries Journal*, 23: 7-8.

e.g. Books:

Henig, M. and Booth, P. (2000) *Roman Oxfordshire*. Stroud, Sutton.

e.g. Chapters from edited books:

Karali, L. (1996) Marine invertebrates and Minoan art. In: Reese, D. S. (ed.) *Pleistocene and Holocene fauna of Crete*. Wisconsin, Prehistory Press. pp.413-419.

- The use of footnotes is discouraged.

Contributions before 28 February for publication in that year to the *SOAG Bulletin* Editor John Hefferan, 41 College Road, Reading, Berks. RG6 1QE. Email: [bulletin@soagarch.org.uk](mailto:bulletin@soagarch.org.uk).

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**Patron: Prof. Malcolm Airs**

SOAG was established in 1969 and now has over 120 members. The aims of the Group are to promote an active interest in archaeology and its allied disciplines, particularly in South Oxfordshire. It works in close cooperation with the county archaeologists and Oxford Archaeology, is a member of the Council for Independent Archaeology and is affiliated to the Council for British Archaeology South Midlands Group.

- Monthly meetings are held from September to April when lectures by professional speakers and members are given in an informal atmosphere
- There are opportunities for members to take part in excavations, fieldwalking, surveys and post-excavation work. Visits are made to places of interest in the summer – sometimes to sites not open to the public
- Members receive the annual *SOAG Bulletin*, which contains reports of the Group's activities and original articles focused on South Oxfordshire, and the monthly *SOAG Messenger*, which carries details of forthcoming events and brief news items
- Experts and complete beginners of all ages are warmly welcomed as new members.

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