

SOAG reports in *Oxoniensia* and the *CBA South Midlands Journal* (SMA):

1972 - 1996

SOAG projects and activities from its foundation in 1969 to the present day are mainly reported in SOAG's own journal, *SOAG Bulletin*, and newsletter *SOAG Messenger*. These are available in searchable form on SOAG's website:

<http://www.soagarch.org.uk/publications.html>

However some of projects and activities were either exclusively or additionally reported in two other journals:

Oxoniensia

<https://oxoniensia.org/>

and the *CBA South Midlands Journal* (SMA)

<https://www.archaeologyuk.org/cbasm/Journals.htm>

The present document is a compilation of all SOAG's submissions to these two journals, in chronological order, from 1972 to 1996. (It is anticipated that this will be soon updated to the present day.) The source documents can be found in the above websites.

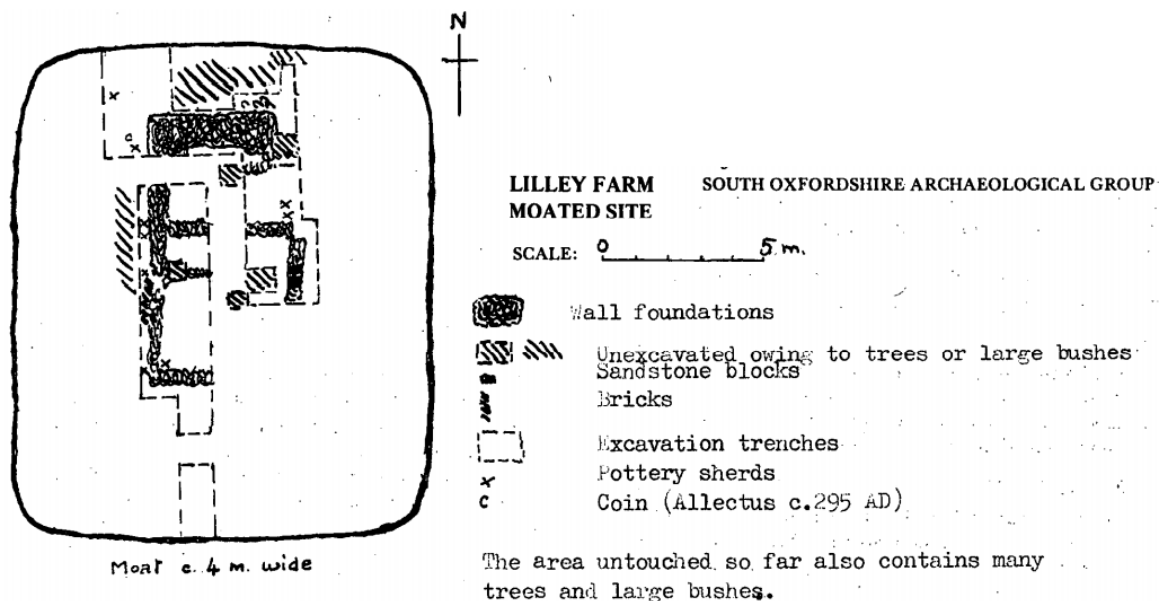
In summary, a search of SOAG's own journals plus the current document provides nearly all the material that SOAG has formally published. (If other reports in other archives are located these will be added to the SOAGs website).

Acknowledgements:

Thanks are due to SOAG member Alan Hall for creating this compilation

LILLEY FARM MOATED SITE, OXFORDSHIRE SU 678768

The nature and definite dating of the structure on this rectangular island, 15 by 13m, remain speculative, as work this year has been limited and possible documentary evidence has not been available. However, extension of the first cuttings southwards has shown foundations more complex than the rectangular base originally envisaged. It is only on the west that the presumed external wall foundation is apparently continuous, and also three east-west lines have been partially cleared. Since these, and the presumed eastern and western external footings, are on a higher level and of far less solid construction than the north face, there could be two or more small linked structures on the site. While the general inference is of a context of not more than 200 years ago for the final use and possible partial demolition of the structure(s), nine of the sixteen sherds found to date have been identified as belonging to the 16th and early 17th centuries, while three may be earlier-13th century -and two could be Iron Age. These last, like the Roman coin found last year, are probably not significant for dating purposes. Most of these sherds have been found outside or between the wall foundations and on or just below the surface of the clay mixtures which everywhere underlie some 20-30cm of leaf mould and topsoil. They could thus belong to the material from which the island was constructed or which was packed round the foundations. To date, small finds other than pottery have also been few; this would indicate a use of the site other than for habitation. At one point on the eastern side there are two tooled and probably reused sandstone blocks incorporated in the foundation wall. This is the first exception to the general use of large flints, with some bricks and chalk blocks.



W.J. FOWLER for the SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL GROUP

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SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE A programme of fieldwork was begun in May 1971 which it hoped will eventually result in a survey of all the parishes from the Thames north to the Crowmarsh-Henley road (A4130 and A423). To date significant traces of old roads and trackways, field boundaries and lynchets have been noted, as well as old gravel, clay and chalkpits. Every field, woodland and

coppice in the parish of Goring Heath has been surveyed, and a moated site found at SU 64508065. Most of a 13th-14th century cooking pot was recovered from pipeline trenching at SU 63657847. Some work has been done and is continuing in the parishes of Whitchurch, Goring, Mapledurham, Kidmore End, South Stoke and Ipsden. The results are going into the Oxfordshire Sites and Monuments Record at the City and County Museum, Woodstock, and the Assistant Field Officer is giving considerable assistance with the project.

CLIVE HART for the SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL GROUP

SMA No 3 1973, P38

The programme begun in 1971 (Newsletter No. 2 p. 33) has been continued, concentrating on areas of proposed road improvements and housing schemes. Surveys alongside the Henley-Reading road (A4115) have produced medieval pottery at SU749769, and in **Highwood, Harpsden** (SU751796) an odd angular deflection in an enclosure bank and ditch led to a circular mound of clay and gravel, 5.5m. diam. and rising to 1.2m. above ground level. Beneath the beech and bramble which covered it, the surface was scattered with minute tile fragments, which included two larger pieces of Roman tegulae and one of imbrex. There is a villa site V2 mile NE (VCH Oxon. I p. 33). In Swan Wood, Highmoor (SU695856), surface finds of masses of Roman sherds and fragments of burnt clay could indicate a pottery kiln.

P40

LILLEY FARM MOATED SITE (24) SU678768

Work here has been limited this year but most of the ground plan of the structures on the island has now been uncovered. There are two contrasted foundations. The N structure is a solid almost rectangular platform, 4m.x1.5m. and 60cm. deep, constructed of two layers of chalk blocks, topped by 4/5 layers of mortared flints with some bricks. Below some 15cm. of topsoil and chalky clay it is set in yellow clay, the bottom of which has not been reached. The S structure is marked by wall foundations only, predominantly of flint but incorporating chalk and re-used sandstone blocks in some lengths and varying in width and depth so that it is difficult to envisage any substantial superstructure. The only evidence of a wall is on the W, where a metre length of three courses of bricks has apparently slid outwards off the flints. There would seem to have been a rectangular structure, 4.5x4m., divided unequally by an internal wall. The surface within and outside, below the topsoil, is a hard, compacted chalky clay. Finds, all from the topsoil or the top of the clay mixture, are meagre and provide no clear evidence of use, and certainly none of habitation. A few more sherds, a 17/18C. key and an 18/19C. candle holder, a small cache of oyster shells, have been added to an assemblage which is puzzling and seems haphazard. A tentative conclusion is that the structures were of late 18/early 19C. construction, and that they were demolished, and useful material probably removed, certainly long enough ago for substantial trees to grow over and within them. It is hoped in 1973 to complete the clearing of the foundations and possibly find evidence of a moat crossing. If the season is dry it may be possible to section the moat, which probing of the sludge indicate may have a flat bottom. WJ. FOWLER References: Newsletters No. 1 p. 21 and No. 2 p. 25.

SMA 1979 P38

Mapledurham - P. Preece, M. Kift, and M. Fallowfield

Fields and Woods

A study has been made of the 1841 Tithe Award Map recording the field and woodland names. Some of them have been found to date back to the early middle ages, and their curved boundaries of the woods supports this. It has been possible to locate the common fields of the two manors of Mapledurham Chasey and Mapledurham Gurney, though no ridge and furrow has been found. It

seems that much the same area has been under cultivation since the middle ages, and that woods also occupy the same area. Of the 35 acres recorded on the 1841 map as coppice little remains, though some areas appear to have been coppiced over a long period. In 1841 24 acres were under cultivation as osier beds, and one of these beds was still in use until about 1930. It now remains as a marshy patch of willows.

Banks, Hollow Ways and Hedgerows

Fieldwalking, started several years ago, has continued, and banks and hollow ways are being mapped. One stretch of double bank and ditch has been found in woodland on the parish boundary. Some hedgerows had a species count. One hedge along a hollow way has 10-12 species per 30 yd. stretch, including spindle and broom.

Houses

Work has also continued on the examination and photographing of the old houses in the parish, and whenever possible permission has been obtained to see the interior. In several cases this has shown the building to be older and more interesting than it appeared outwardly.

Water Supply

Owners of cottages in Nurey Green told us that water for all purposes was originally obtained from the two ponds in the woods, but that after an epidemic rain water collected from the roofs was used this passed through three filter beds one of sand one of gravel and one of charcoal and then was stored in a brick lined pit in the garden. When in times of drought these pits dried up the owners climbed down and cleaned them out.

Documents

Record cards are being filled in for all the houses visited. A study of parish records is being made and the Bodleian, Eton College and Oxford County Record Office have been consulted. The work continues.

Caversham - Redlands Gravel Pit - Ruth and Ernest Just In the middle of 1977 Richard Chambers of the Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit asked us to keep an archaeological eye on the sixty acre Redlands Gravel Pit site between the Caversham - Henley Road and the Thames, because of planning permission for gravel extraction. We have visited the site regularly, but have found little so far. Gareth Thomas reported seeing two linear features from the air in a neighbouring gravel pit area. They were found on the ground, and the O.A.U. are deciding whether to seek the landowner's permission for trial sections.

P38

CAVERSHAM Extraction continues at the Redland's gravel pit. Ruth and Ernest Just are continuing to watch for any new archaeological material-although so-far nothing has been found.

SMA 1980 P171

CHECKENDON, The Devil's Churchyard.

Woodland clearance prior to a tree replanting scheme has enabled the Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit assisted by the South Oxfordshire Archaeological Group to assess the archaeological value of an earthwork known as the Devil's Churchyard.

The site lies in a heavily wooded area of the Chilterns in (Checkendon parish (FRN 9131;. Centred SU 6525 8400). The enclosure lies on sloping ground facing south-west across a steep sided dry valley.

Sited just above 150 m above sea level. The subsoil is Plateau Drift Comprising chiefly clay and flints over chalk.

The site was surveyed by two in-service trainees, Carlos Urrejola and Heather Bird (Fig.47.). An irregular ditched enclosure with remains of an inner and outer bank lies down-slope from a curvilinear ditch and bank at the top of the hill to the east and south of the enclosure.. The quality of the earthwork remains varies considerably from point to point. The banks are very low with the exception of a length of the outer bank on the south-western side of the enclosure where there-is a difference of some 1.5 m. from the top of the bank to the bottom of the unexcavated ditch. A timber haulage, track has levelled a portion of the bank On the South Western side of the enclosure creating the possibly false impression of an entrance and similarly forest clearance for a new ash tree plantation has obliterated the enclosure on the north-west side.

Three trial sections are currently-being excavated to examine the nature and date of the enclosure. The work is being supervised by Cynthia Graham-Kerr of the South Oxfordshire Archaeological Group. Two sections have been cut across the enclosure ditch. One along the North-western side has

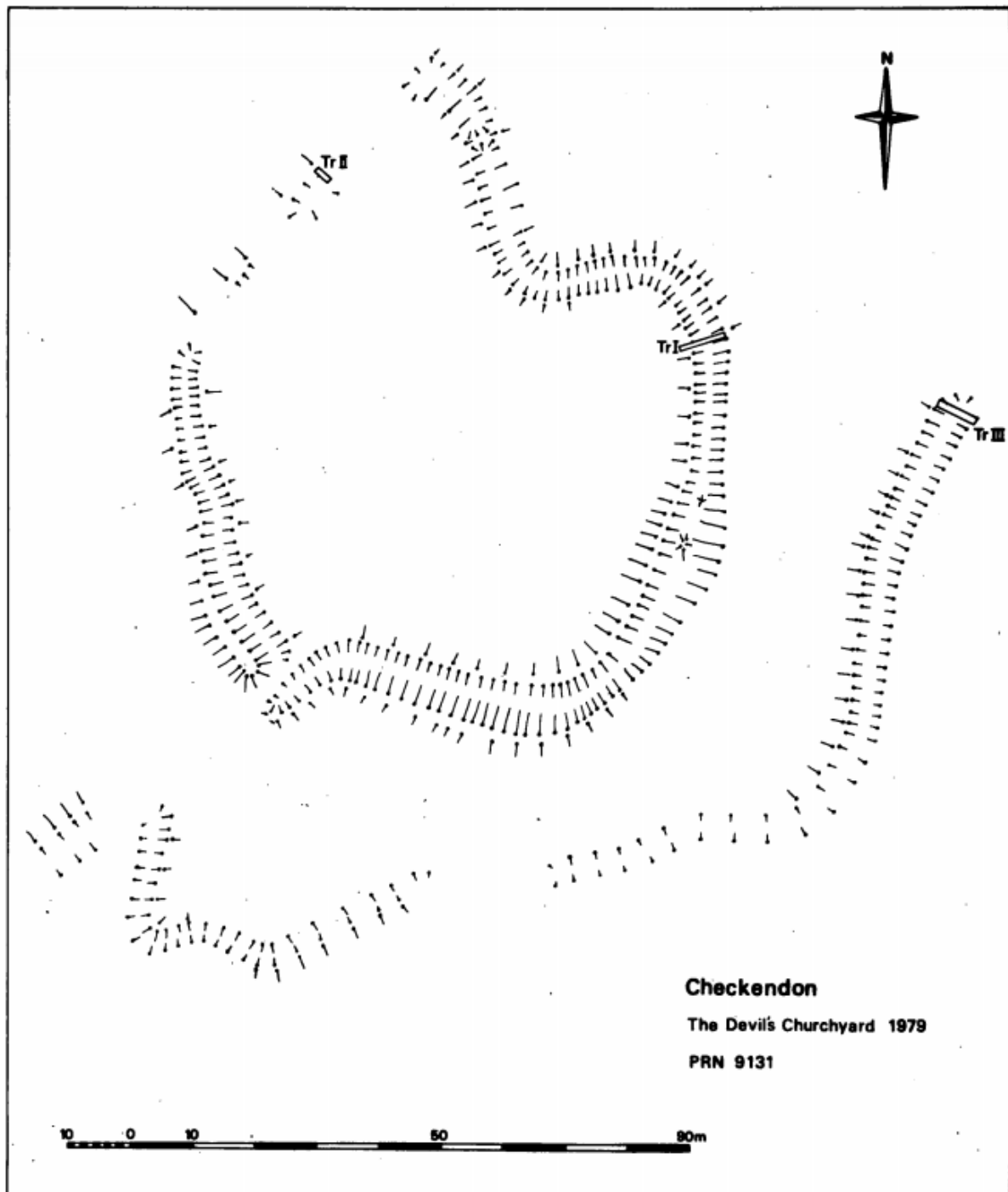


Figure 47

shown that the enclosure ditch does continue even though there is very little surface evidence as shown on the plan. A second section has been cut across the north-eastern side of the enclosure. In both sections the ditch was some 3 m wide, 1.7 m deep and with a V-shaped profile cutting into the underlying chalk. In both trenches some animal bone, worked flint and from one trench fragments of Iron Age pottery have been recovered. A third trench confirmed the terminus of the north end of the curvilinear ditch and provided some similar pottery confirming that the two earthworks are related. The quality and quantity of the finds from the trenches do not imply whether the irregular shape of the enclosure is due to a later expansion of the enclosed area. The exploratory survey work on this site will be completed in 1980. SMA 1981 P42

Introduction

On entering a church, much consideration may be given to the carving round the door, and its shape, but scant attention is paid to the very objects that allow it to be used, viz, the hinges. These highly functional artefacts are often brilliant examples of the blacksmiths' skill and vary in this area from church to church. Many are local products and provide an interesting study of ironwork reflecting the fashion and expertise of the time, both in their design and execution.

The older church hinges of this area are mostly stout straps with a split decoration at the head whilst the later 19th Century restorations have fussy curlicues embellished with finials of trefoil or fleur-de-lys shapes, often in light strapping of approximately 11- cm. The bolts which hold them on are also an integral part of the design, arranged not only to spread the support, but add to its beauty, and these too vary in size and shape.

Many call for great skill in their manufacture (as the author can testify, having learnt heavy forge-work) and are of considerable artistic merit. Some early Norman hinges had a strong Viking influence in their ship and dragon designs (usually to be found farther north than here). By the 12th Century the designs had become more geometric and conventional, with bold crescent shapes. It is said that this C-shape related to St. Clement, the patron saint of smiths. The 13th Century was the heyday of ironwork, with graceful foliated scroll-work, fine design and incised bands, rosettes and trefoils, often showing a strong link with the medieval tile designs.

In some places the curlicues became so elaborate as to practically cover the door - which also reinforced it.

By the 14th Century the art had declined, and studs were used to make patterns together with wrought-iron locks and keyplates, and it was not until the 18th and 19th Centuries that the hinges began to be copied (see Whitchurch and Mapledurham) although they never quite regained the lightness of design of the 13th Century or the stoutness of the Norman smiths' work.

The following illustrations of hinges, selected from both medieval and more recent types, were drawn originally at the sites on squared paper for accuracy; and together with a few brief notes, hope to demonstrate a more unusual facet of interest in ironwork.

St. Mary's North Stoke (Fig. 13 No.1)

Rebuilt in the 13th-14th Centuries with later restorations, this church has 14th Century ironwork on the north door and the two simple strap hinges ending in split curled tails are quite different. The top one with ornate lines in herringbone fashion, incised right along its length, ends in two small tails and is firmly held with nine handmade bolts, - the jamb one being round - a characteristic noted elsewhere. The incisions are filled with a whiteish material - possibly painted or limed' - 43 - sometime. The bottom hinge is shorter, 5cm. wide with seven bolts 12 cm apart, and thinner tails, it is not incised. The door itself is contemporary, being well weathered rough old oak.

St. Mary's, Ipsden (Fig. 13 No.2)

These beautiful hinges on the south door, none of which match exactly - a proof they are handmade - consist of a simple band 4 cm. wide ending in complicated tails round a foliate central tongue, and a second pair curl outwards. The pair at the base of the door have a short centre piece and curlier outer tails. It is interesting to note that there are two unused holes in the bottom left hand strap, which suggests they may have been re-used on a new door, as this does not appear to be nearly as old as the hinges, which are held on, surprisingly, with flat head screws! The church, a chapel to North Stoke, was built in late 12th Century.

St. Peter and St. Paul, Checkendon (Fig. 13 no.3)

The south door of this Norman flint-and-stone church seems too smooth to be very old, but the furnishings such as the lock and bolt inside appear to be older, so it is possible that everything,

including the hinges, was re-used on a new door. The strap is of simple design of a slightly tapered band, incised with triangles near the jamb, and a collar near the head, which consists of two fluted leaves, made by splitting the end and splaying it outwards, with a central tongue for the bolt, and incised with a curved triangle towards the collar. The bolts are chamfered to look square on a round base, but the one at the jamb is square.

St. Mary's, Whitchurch-on-Thames (Fig. 13 No. 4 and 5)

Both the south and north doors of this completely restored church were worth attention, and it is interesting to see how entirely different they are to each other. The north door (no.4) with its elegant leaf finial, is a pleasing contrast to no.5, and has a central rosette incorporated in the band, and slim tapering branches with anchor-like endings. These branches curve inwards and, together with the main band, are lightly incised down the centres, and held with small round bolts. The church, restored in 1858, by H. Woodyer, in the 14th Century style, still retains the Norman south doorway, and it is here the heavier hinge is used (no.5). It tapers from 5 cm to 4 cm. at the head, which consists of three heavy fleurs-de-lys followed by curly leaves and little spurs at the base. By the jamb barb-like branches dart out at 45 degrees giving a rather unbalanced effect. It is held with rounded bolts and is matt-black.

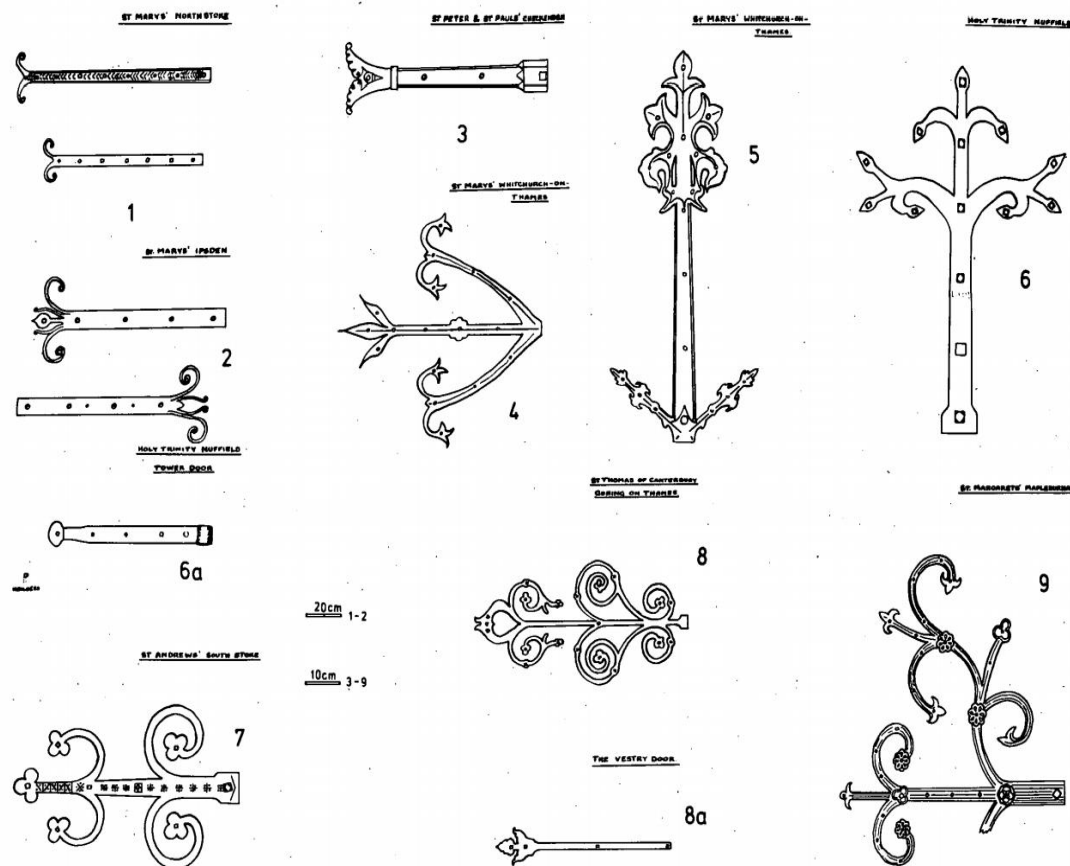


Figure 13

Holy Trinity, Nuffield (Fig. 13 No. 6 and 6a)

No.6: Although there are still a good many Norman and 14th Century features about this church, the chancel was restored about 1845 by Ferrey and this may have included the door, which is brown painted wood with thick foliate hinges looking more cut-out than forged. It was suggested that the

hinges might be quite modern, they are painted black and a smaller version was found on the north door. These, from the west door, are all alike and have large square bolts of 2 cm. across, and chamfered corners. The one second from the jamb, however, is not chamfered being slightly rounded and uneven. Between it and the third bolt a welded joint is visible. No.6a: This plain strap hinge on the door into the tower from the vestry, was recorded, as it is probably contemporary with the medieval tiles on the floor here, and the door itself is old, so they might well be 14th Century. It is neatly forged in one piece, the jamb end being coiled into the gudgeon, then-continuing straight across to the flattened head, and held with handmade half-T-headed nails, except the one in the head which is a 0.75cm. squarish bolt; and the one nearest the jamb, which is quite round and flat.

St. Andrews', South Stoke (Fig. 13 no.7)

Another 13th - 14th Century church much restored in 1857 by J.B. Clacy; the doorway being 14th Century but the south door itself looks younger, and the hinges decidedly so. It has an interesting and unusual design incised down the band, and simple curlicues each side with trefoil finials, repeated at the head. The square bolts are chamfered and vary in size.

St. Thomas of Canterbury, Goring-on-Thames (Fig. 13 no.8)

This hinge is of light strapwork 1.5 cm wide with trefoil finials and small square bolts. There are two on each of the large west doors and look rather inadequate being only 30 cm. across at the widest part. They are painted shiny black on a dark blue door. This church was heavily restored in the 1800s and the west door faces the site of the old priory, excavated in 1892. No.8a: Of more pleasing design is this light strap hinge with an attractive leaf finial, found on the vestry door.

St. Margaret's, Mapledurham (Fig. 13)

This small church was restored in 1863 by William Butterfield and has most elegant hinges on its smooth oak north door. Starting with a short length of 4.5 cm. wide band, it changes to 2.5 cm. at a three tier rosette consisting of an octagonal base with a quatrefoil superimposed, and a finer quatrefoil on top. This band continuous for 30 cm. reaching another rosette, this in a trefoil shape, and diminishing to 1.25 cm. to end in a blunted fleur-de-lys. The gracefully curving branches have seven-petalled rosettes at their joints and a variety of finials, the bolts are square-headed.

SMA 1981 P 117

CHECKENDON:

The Devil's Churchyard - Richard Chambers

The South Oxfordshire Archaeological Group continued to work on this Iron Age enclosure. A new section across the outer earthwork was begun at a point 50m south of Trench III (see CBA 9 Newsletter 10, 172 Fig. 47). It is hoped that this section will provide dating evidence and further information on the original dimensions of the bank and ditch (centred SU 6525 8400; PRN 9,131). SMA 1982 P45.

SMA 1982 P143

CHECKENDON: 'The Devil's Churchyard - Richard Chambers

During 1981 the South-Oxfordshire Archaeological Group continued work on this-Iron-Age earthwork enclosure with a level survey. This has provided topographical sections to compliment the earthworks survey (CBA94 Newsletter 10 (19804-172, Fig.47). The level-survey concludes the field work programme on this site (PRN 9, 131; centred SU 65258400)

CHURCH DOOR HINGES IN SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE - II - Cynthia A, Graham Kerr

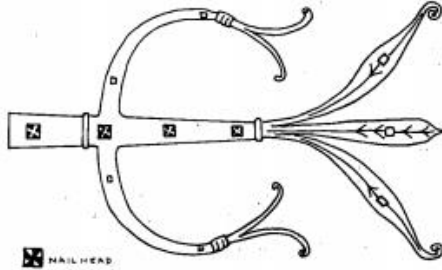
Introduction

In last years' newsletter, a selection of the hinges on Church doors from Norman to Victorian times was discussed, with illustrations showing how they grew from simple strap-hinges, to elaborate curlicues. They were all taken from churches north of the Thames (ie. 'old' Oxfordshire), this time*there are a few examples from 'new' Oxfordshire, (such as Moultsford) included. ,It is most difficult to suggest dates as one cannot judge by the state of the door - more than once old hinges have been found on what appears to be a new, or restored door - often Victorian. The older metalwork has a 'look' about it, and it is not very difficult to distinguish hand-beaten work, but with some of the later work and good Victorian copies, it is not so easy. Certainly, the strapping becomes more uniform in width and thickness, and the ends and curls are not beaten out, or made by splitting; also some of the nastier Victorian ones almost look stamped out. There is remarkably little literature on this subject, apart from the odd note on one or two of the more complicated designs; and any additional information would be welcome. It seems likely that most of the hinges were made locally, by the village blacksmith, perhaps as his contribution to the village church. It is rare indeed to find hinges mentioned in the history of a church, and it would be regrettable if these beautiful examples of the smiths' work went unnoticed and unrecorded. Types Church-door hinges can be roughly divided into two types - plain strap and curlicue; but having said that one can immediately divide them into innumerable types such as flat strapwork, incised; simple, split or triple finials, curlicue from base, secondary branding use of staples and extra straps, and finally the type that covers the whole door. Even so, no two designs seem to be alike, and often the top hinge varies considerably from that at the base of the door. The nails also of fer clues: the older ones being hand-made, are very variable, both in size and shape; whereas later hinges have neat, mass-produced nails with chamfered heads, and sometimes quite modern screws have been used without any thought of incorporating them in the design, as the older smiths often did. Straps across the hinge. Like huge staples, hold some in place (see Drayton St. Leonard) and nails, often vary considerably in sizes to suit the width of the strap and its position. The illustrations were again drawn at the sites on graph-paper, and notes of the main characteristics made.

ST. LEONARDS, CROWMARSH GIFFORD (No. 1)



ST. LEONARDS, DRAYTON ST LEONARD (No. 2)

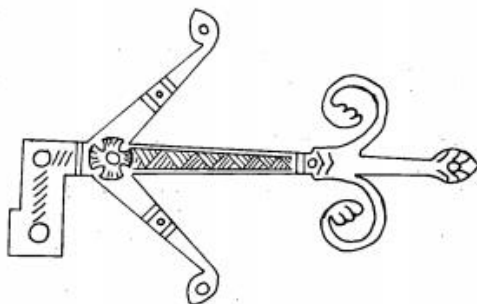


ST. JOHN the BAPTIST, MOULSFORD (No. 3)



NB. Scale 1:10

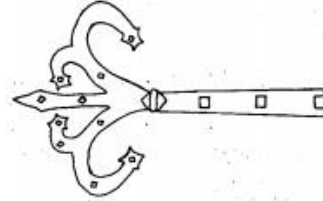
ST. JAMES'S, SOTWELL (No. 7)



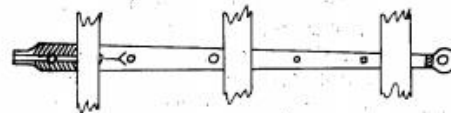
ST. MARY'S, CHOLSEY (No. 8)



ST. BOTOLPHS, SWYNCOMBE (No. 4)



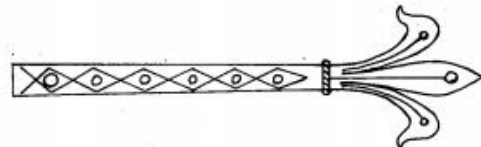
ST. MICHAELS, ASTON TYROLD (No. 5)



ALL SAINTS, ASTON UPTHORPE (No. 6)



ST. LAWRENCE'S, TOOT BALDON (No. 9)



THE ABBEY of ST. PETER & PAUL, DORCHESTER (No. 10)

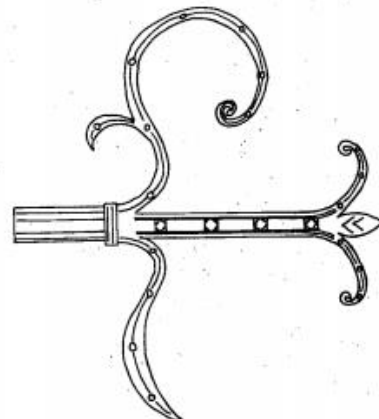


FIGURE 12

Scale 1:10 10cm

Notes on the Illustrations*

St. Leonards, Crowmarsh Gifford-(Figure 12 No. 1)

This small church is said to have been kept for the use of Lepers, and still retains Norman features, the hinge being a typical strap-hinge with a rudimentary finial, first cut and slightly, beaten out. The hinge has herringbone incisions right along with the base and last two bolts being 1.5 cm and the others-2, cm diameter.

St. Leonards, Drayton' St. Leonards (Figure 12 No. 2)

These fine handmade hinges are-of the St. Clement design -(C shaped) with split ends forged into small curlicues and an extra small plate at the base of the split. The bolts are neatly chamfered to give a Maltese cross lock. The main finial consists of three finely tapered and veined leaves, the side ones curled like tendrils at the ends, the whole being split from a single strap and beaten out into the leaf-shapes. Two neat staples hold the hinge behind the branches and the whole thing is a most elegant example of the smiths' work.

St. John the Baptist, Moulsoford (Figure 12 No. 3)

This is a, very large 'wrapped' hinge going right round the door and the inner strap has a smaller finial. Quite a delicate design, with unusual scalloped edges, and the 1.5 cm bolts chamfered, whilst those on the finial, which has trefoil ends, one 1 cm diameter. the church dates from the 17th Century with a substantial oak door and large lock-case inside.

St. Botolph, Swyncombe (Figure 12 No. 4)

It was surprising to find a somewhat Victorian looking hinge on the door of this lovely little Norman church. It was 'restored' in 1850 by Ferry - who built the south porch where the hinge was located. This hinge is unusually short, being only 53 cm long and has small square finials (quite unlike the usual trefoils or leaves), and a staple with a small plate slipped under, at the base of the finial. The hinge is a 'false' one and purely ornamental, another suspiciously Victorian feature.

St. Michaels', Aston Tyrolde (Figure 12 No. 5)

In a village of many old houses the church is said to be the oldest building; although-the porch is an extraordinary hotchpotch of two odd 14th - 15th Century screens, some medieval glazed bricks, pebbledash, and a door that might be 14th Century, with tracery cutting across the plain strap-hinges. There is a small amount of incising at the base and it is fixed with handmade nails. The church dates from 1080, but the porch is possibly early 19th Century. The hinge is a genuine one and set in behind a wooden lintel.

All Saints, Aston Upthorpe (Figure 12 No. 6)

A small interesting Norman church, restored here and there, including-, possibly the door, which does not appear to be particularly old, nor the hinge; but it is an interesting one, having an 'extra strap running right down the centre, but strapping at the lintel where the 'rest. of the hinge' continues round onto the gudgeon. It also has two 'staples.' - one at the neck of the finial and the other below the tiny branches with crosses incised there, and square chamfered bolts.

St. James', Sotwell (Figure 12 No. 7)

This hinge provided several unusual features, with its dropped base, added Maltese cross embellishment and curved leaf finials, with veins in the headstones and complicated incising on the strap. The secondary ones were rounded and paw-like, and the finial of the small straight branch turned back awkwardly. There has been a church on the site for 700 years.

St. Marys', Cholsey (Figure 12 No. 8)

The square doors (which appear to be new, inside), are set in a fine Norman doorway. This may be another case of old hinges on a new door as the hinge is beaten, with unusual chamfered sides, and a plain trefoil finial. It is held by a round bolt at the base and large screws of 2 cm diameter down the strap. The church is said to have been sacked by the Danes and has several interesting features.

St. Lawrence, Toot Baldon (Figure 12 No. 9)

Hidden down a long track into the fields, the epitome of a country church, St. Lawrence's hinge has a medieval flavour in its fleur-de-lys finial. A curled notice, about postcard size, written in faded md ink and pinned to the porch gives its history briefly:

"St. Lawrence, Toot Baldon
Wooden church about AD700
Stone about 1200
Restored E end 1872"

The hand beaten strap hinge, with its carefully shaped fleur-de-lys, held with domed nails, has a pleasing 'rope' staple at its neck, and neat incisions diamonding each nail along the strap with a final large bolt before turning into the hinge itself.

The Abbey. of Sts Peter & Paul, Dorchester (Figure 12 No. 10)

This, not surprisingly would make a study on its own. There were five doors to choose from, the west door was chosen as being the most different from the other churches considered. Instead of both branches being similar, the bottom one is a simple elongated leaf-shape, whilst the top one circles round into a tight curlicue end, a very small leaf sprouting near the junction. A ridged staple lies just below the junction, and the strap widens here from 4 - 6 cm. The finial ends in a fat leaf, veined and curlicue branch each side, chamfered bolts hold it at close intervals and lines are incised throughout.

SMA 1982 P49

NOTICE! SOME UNUSUAL AND AMUSING NOTICES IN SOAG AREA - Cynthia A. Graham Kerr

Our language is a thing that grows and changes as fast as ourselves, but, even so, one is surprised to find that the phrases and expressions of our grandparents seem extraordinarily archaic and even funny.

With this in mind, the words of a few Public Notices were collected - some still on display - to demonstrate how soon an everyday object becomes an 'interesting artefact'.

Our most famous one is the Toll Bridge Charges at Whitchurch on Thames, There is now an up-to-date one, with the unpleasing decimal 'p' taking over from the old 'd' I enquired for the old board, and was told rather sourly it was lost; but luckily I was able to take Tolls in pence from the book of my old friend John Baker, 'Whitchurch on Thames' - they are as follows:

For every person on foot ½d
For, every horse, mare, guelding or mule, laden or unladen, not drawing 2d
For every ass laden or unladen, drawing or not drawing 1d
For every bull, ox, cow, steer, heifer, calf ½d
For every sheep or lamb 1d
For every boar, sow or pig 1d
For every horse, mare, guelding, mule or other beast, except asses, drawing any carriage 2d
for each and every wheel

Persons on foot, and bicycles are now free, but motor bikes are 2p, and cars 4p. but not, fortunately per wheel!

If we cross into Pangbourne to visit the United Reform Church Hall, we shall find, just inside the door, the following injunction:

In case of fire call The Fire Brigade (!!)
Send runner to the Fire Station '..(where else?)
The Brigade should be called to any Outbreak However Small

A most interesting Notice is to be found, sideways, on the shed door of Mr, Bill Fidler, of Whitchurch Hill. This was a most important affair, affecting the whole village just 100 years ago in the 1880s. To appreciate its significance it 'must be explained that the only supply of water for the whole village was the very deep well, and the Reservoir, both organised by Squire Gardiner. This Reservoir, situated in Hill Bottom, was 15 ft deep, with access by an iron cover immediately behind a corrugated iron hut, built to accommodate the pump. On payment of 1d old Lewenden the postman; would bring the key from April Cottage, where he lived, opposite the Reservoir and allow one to draw two bucketfuls per day only. About 1908 the mains came, so it fell into disuse and Bill Fidler now lives in the adjoining bungalow. He said the shed door was too narrow to get bikes in, and the Notice-board was 'just handy and the right size', - so it's turned round and hinges put on and the bikes went in. It was just possible to decipher the rapidly fading lettering which had been creosoted over and Bill also allowed it to be photographed. The Notice read as follows:

NOTICE

THIS water is for drinking purposes only
The allowance must not exceed 2 gallons a Head
- Per Day -
A(ny)one wasting the Water or taking more than
this quantity will Forfeit the right to make
use of the Supply
The Caretaker is authorised to stop the Supply
to anyone abusing these Priviledges
And those using the water are Specially asked
to assist the Caretaker in his Duties and
in the Interests of All to see there is no Waste
And that these (R)ules (are) not Departed from
(1)880 C.L.W. GARDINER ESQ.

- all in beautiful Copperplate! If this supply dried up in hot weather, the water-cart had to go nearly 2 miles downhill and up again, to the Thames, to get supplies. How spoilt we are now, with taps!

For the next notice we again cross the Thames, and into Streatley. High on the wall of the Parish Hall is a large board, with the charges of the ferry between Streatley and Goring before the present bridge was built. This is an even older notice than our Toll and it is very praiseworthy that it has been so well cared for since.

An Account of the
PRICES to be taken at Streatley Ferry
By Virtue of
Letters patent under the Great Seal of England
Bearing Date of the Eight Day of April in the 5th
year of the Reign of King George the 1st and in the year of our Lord 1719.

	s d
For every Waggon or Cart and Horse loaded	1 .0
Foe every Waggon or Cart and Horse not loaded	6
For every Coach, Chariot or Chase with 4 wheels.	1 .0
For every Coach, Chariot or Chase with'2 wheels .	6
For every Horse or Mare with his-Burden .	2
For every Horse	1

A pennworth of ferrying. with 20 fidgety sheep seems most reasonable, but .-the expense of a 4-wheeled Chariot !!

The water supply for this area consisted of wells and rainwater cisterns, until the turn of the century when a grand new reservoir was built on the highest point at' Woodcote. On the high surrounding wall is an oblong plaque (like a memorial on a church wall) made of-not very good stone as it is now almost unreadable with suitable scrolls top and bottom. In the centre recess is the following, with the date 1906 over the top:

Sir T. Herman Hodge, Bart.
opened (this) Reservoir
Mrs. Henry J. Robus
unveiled this stone
July 13 1907

Directors

Henry J. Robus Esq. Chairman
Fred E. Bodkin Esq.
Vice-Chairman Lieut. Col. J. Elyard
JP Augustus Hutter Esq.
Stephen A. Child Esq.

Opposite, on a red brick house, the waterworks office, was the following information on a squarish cast-iron plate, freshly painted in white, with black lettering:

1904 Thames Valley and Goring
Water, and Gas Company
Limited
Directors H.J. Robus Esq.
Chairman F.E. Bodkin Esq.
Lieut. Col. J. Elyard JP

C.H. Robus
Engineer
London EC

Water and gas is an interesting mixture (did they make soda-water??). [Editorial Note: the company would-have made water gas by passing steam over red-hot coke, which gives a mixture of-hydrogen and carbon-monoxide] A friendly official explained that this building is now the Thames Water Authority, but the Reservoir opposite belongs to the Lamborne Water people, and.is now nothing to do with the red brick office. Alas, what would Chairman Robus think? .I

It is of some interest to note that all these notices have to do with Water a thing We usually take for granted, but a commodity our grandparents were obliged to use with some care and thought.

SMA 1982 P141

CHECKENDON: 'The Devil's Churchyard –

Richard Chambers

During 1981 the South Oxfordshire Archaeological Group continued work on this Iron Age earthwork enclosure with a level survey. This has provided topographical sections to compliment the earthworks survey (CBA94 Newsletter 10 (1984 172, Fig.47). The level-survey concludes the field work programme on this site (PRN 9, 131; centred SU 65258400)4

SMA 1984 P38

THE ODD AND UNUSUAL IN THE SOAG AREA

Introduction

Most of the artefacts about which notes are written, fall 38 comfortably into classifications such as tools, graves, buildings and so on, but there are things which are one-off, and do not fit into any category.! Whilst Parish-Surveying and generally poking about, I noticed a number of rather strange artefacts around the District, and I have, therefore, recorded some of the more interesting whilst they are still with us. The numbers apply to the appropriate drawings.

The Reade Memorial, Ipsden

Sited in a boggy patch of scrub which hides it from the Lane, is a memorial marking the spot where John Reade's ghost was seen. It is a substantial stone edifice, about 6ft high, with an iron railing encircling it, and posts, linked with chains which have long since disappeared, inside the railing, and it is sited on a slight mound by what was a pond. The inscription, on the west side, reads as follows:

John Thurloe Reade
Esquire
Schaarunpore
November 25th 1827
"Alas my brother"

The Reade family (John's brother was Charles Reade the novelist), still live in Ipsden. The memorial was erected by Edward Anderton Reade, when he returned from India in 1860, and his Mother was still alive; to mark, as near as possible, the spot where John appeared.

The story is true, and has been handed down, and the youngest Reade of that generation remembered the monument being erected.

John was the cleverest of the family of eleven. He was Head Boy at Rugby at the age of 15. On leaving school he entered the service of the East India Company and sailed for India in 1817.

John's Mother would walk down to the Wallingford road to collect the mail, which was scanty in those days, and one evening on this journey she saw the ghost of her son coming towards her in great distress. So strong was this vision that she was convinced he had died without Christian burial; and she arranged with the Vicar to hold a service next day. Both she and the Vicar were down-to-earth, and not superstitious, but they both were completely convinced that the message was real - indeed, the next mail to arrive informed her that John had died of dysentery near Schaarunpore and had been buried by his servants in the jungle.

The memorial is now in a disgraceful state: we tidied it up on one occasion, but now the cap has been broken, the stones and top nearly pulled down, (young grave-robbers?) and the railings bent. A little help and some cement would go a long way . . .



Fig ①



Fig ②



Fig ③

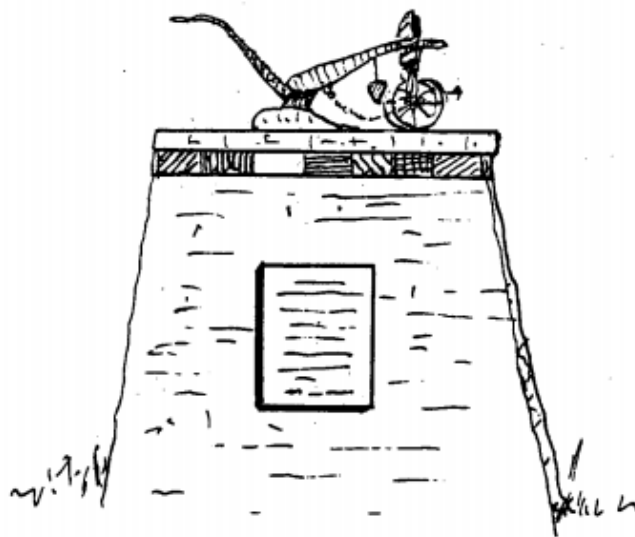


Fig ④

The Monkey's Grave, Henley

This is situated very oddly under a large tree on the main road into Henley; a small grave-stone neatly carved with this inscription:

JIMMY

A tiny marmot*

Aug 16th 1937

There isn't enough
darkness in the world
to quench the light
of one small candle

It stands, about 39 inches high, 33 inches across and 7 inches thick, beneath a special kind of oak-tree, *Quercus Borealis*, the Red Oak. This tree, bigger and different to its fellows, may well have been chosen especially, but no one seems to know why the marmot was buried there, or to whom he belonged.

* Marmot - ? marmosette

A letterbox in the garden, Whitchurch.

People do have strange things in their gardens, but a letterbox, sitting on the step of a summerhouse', is quite riveting.

Especially as it is a Victorian one, and not let into a wall, but standing by itself, its red paint peeling, and door firmly locked.

The owner, a great character, told me she saw the Post Office men pulling it out, near her house, some ten years ago, and asked them what they were doing. They replied that they were fixing a new one and that it would be thrown away. "Well, you can throw it in my garden", she said promptly, which they did and there it remains, a monument to Post Office extravagance.

The Plough Cairn, Warborough

As one turns off at the roundabout to Warborough, the road bends sharply left. Fields lie on the right of the road, and tucked in the outer angle of the bend, between hedges, is a column, 2.5m x 1.5m, in neat limestone, surmounted by an excellent pale blue model of a plough - there is still some gold on it in places.

It is the Trophy for the World Ploughing Contest, and around the top, in different coloured stones are carved the names of the competing countries. Round the left side are Netherlands, Germany, Sweden, in the centre: Canada, Denmark, Gt. Britain, France, Finland; North Ireland, and Belgium; and on the right New Zealand, U.S.A. and Norway. A slate plaque affixed to the centre gives this information:

World Ploughing
Organisation
This
CAIRN
of Local
and Overseas Stones
and
GOLDEN PLOUGH
(Model given by Canada)
commemorates
THE 4TH
WORLD PLOUGHING CONTEST

HELD HERE
OCT.11th & 12th 1950
UNVEILED 13Y H.R.H. THE
DUKE OF GLOUCESTER
PAX ARVA COLAT

The Crinkle-Crankle Wall, Pangbourne

On one side of the little carpark behind the International Stores, is a Crinkle-Crankle wall, so-called to describe its peculiar waviness.

This bordered the fruit and vegetable garden of the Beedon family, who owned quite a large area of land adjoining the River Pang in the village. An old photo shows the house to have been a thatched cottage, and the little side-road known as The Moors, running up beside the house, was still gated when the photo was taken. The curved wall was to accommodate fruit trees, so that they would get the full benefit of sun and warmth. Now the shop has taken over it is tarmac one side, and a path to peoples' back gardens, the other; and the wall alone remains.

The Druids' Circle, Ipsden

This lies on a rise of about 3 ft on the path between New Town and the village street. The circle is about 20ft across and consists now of seven stones, one in the centre (with three bits) - see plan. Again, it was Edward Anderton Reade (then aged 20) who was responsible for this ersatz circle, when he was on leave from India in 1827. There are many 'Loose' sarsen stones in this area, and young Edward thought a Druid's Temple would be fun to construct. He and brother Compton set to, and, borrowing nine of Farmer Wears' horses, managed to move to the site the "King" stone, on a sledge which fell to pieces on arrival!

In his diary it says there were, originally, 27 stones, but it is so overgrown only 7 large ones could be found.

The young men had no intention of forging an antique, as is shown from extracts from Edward's diary - they just spent several days enjoying its construction and say it "received general approbation"!

The American's Castle, Highmoor

The Highmoor road is lined for about li miles with rough woodland before emerging at Nettlebed, so it is quite difficult to spot this curious little castle, half-hidden by brambles at the roadside.

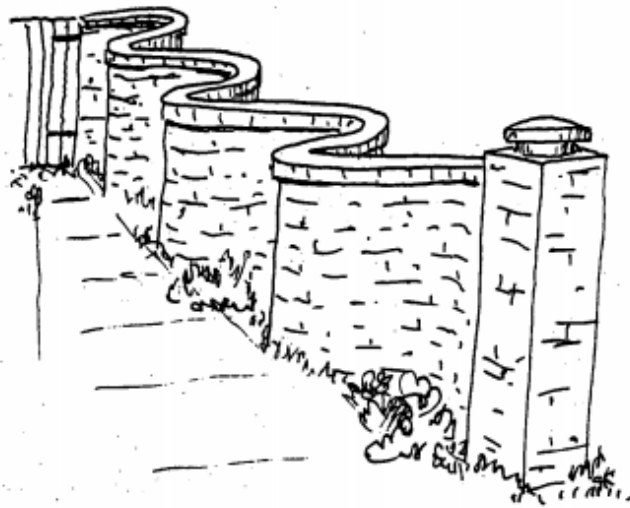


Fig ⑤



Fig ⑥



PLAN



Fig ⑦

A Church Bell on the Porch, Whitchurch Hill

The Church of St John's, Whitchurch Hill, was built by the "munificence", as the Victorians expressed it, of Squire C.L. Gardener, and the Rector of Whitchurch; to relieve the people of the journey up and down the mile-long hill between the villages. It was consecrated in 1883 by the Bishop of Oxford. The Porch was not added until after the Great War, when Mr and Mrs Palmer of Bozedown House (and Humbley & Palmer) erected it as a thank offering for the safe return of their sons. The plaque recording this, in the porch, is also a War Memorial for the village.

There was, originally, quite a small bell, rung by hand by the Father (long dead) of the inhabitant living opposite the church. The pulley remains, and the rope is in a drawer in the Vestry; - also a muffler, as the present bell is exceedingly loud and wears a leather muffler; - even so, the deafened parishioners have to dart in, between strokes. This bell works by electricity and was installed by another nearby villager. It occasionally goes wrong and has been known to "go off" in the middle of the night - to everyone's alarm!

Round the centre of the bell, which is bronze, is "Beatrice Forbes me dedit AD 1951" and at the top '1952 + John Taylor + Founders There is a tablet inside the door to Beatrice and Patrick W. Forbes who were also "munificent" to the Village.

The Elephant Well, Binfield Heath

Situated in a wood after crossing a long field, this astonishing construction has no apparent connection with anything. The Well itself is large and shallow, overflowing under the paving in a muddy stream which goes on down the Wood.

The Elephant, roughly sculpted in a rectangle of concrete, with the sun drawn with trowel-slashes, surmounts a 6ft brick wall, off centre, with 16 bricks to the left and 20 to the right. It is faintly reminiscent of the Maharajah's Well elephants at Stoke Row, but no one knows its history. It looks, by the brickwork (nicely restored in places) to be of the 17-1800s. There is an iron-bar gate (bolted) and small worn brick step to the well-brim. Outside at the back the well is domed over in brickwork and earth, looking like an icehouse. The wall, about 6ft high and a foot thick, hides the dome protecting the well. The arch over the gate is 13 bricks wide, and over it, under the Elephant, is a slab reading:

Whosoever drinketh of this water
shall thirst again, but whosoever
drinketh of the water I shall
give him shall never thirst.

The Iron Stag, Whitchurch Turn

This fantastic and beautifully sculpted iron stag peers over the hedge as one rounds Whitchurch Turn at Ladygrove.

At Christmas it does indeed give one a turn, as the local family deck him with holly and garlands, and, one year, a Father Xmas sat astride him! He was one of a pair of stags made by a London firm, and some friends of a man from Nettlebed offered it to him, but he refused it, being superstitious. He did, however, mention it to the family for whom he worked, and they at once accepted it and placed it at the Turn for all to enjoy.

The drawing cannot do him justice as, in spite of being highly stylised, he seems extraordinarily real, standing in the undergrowth, and is a splendid example of the blacksmith's work.



Fig ⑧

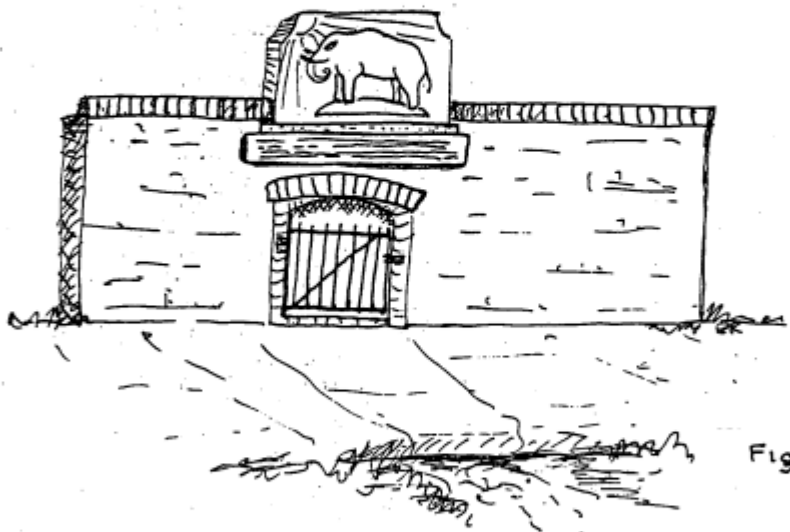


Fig ⑨



Fig ⑩

C.A. Graham Kerr

SMA 1985 P70

Park Field, Newington.

The South Oxfordshire Archaeological Group continued to work: throughout the year at this medieval site. A new trench was - opened on what appears to be a large platform, and a cobbled yard with a rich scatter of 13th - 15th century pottery, bones and a number of nails and pieces of slag, suggesting a working area, were found, -together with a medieval horseshoe. Another interesting find, was a large key and -part. Of another; and large . amounts of limestones and tile point to possible buildings.

The trench was extended 3 times to get a clearer-picture of the area and we hope to open up more as soon as the Weather permits, .so as to follow up interesting features such.as a gully which may be a beam-slot and some limestone arranged in a pattern.

We would like to thank our host, SOAG member Chris Maltin of Newington House who has given us every sort of help and facility including a Site Hut.

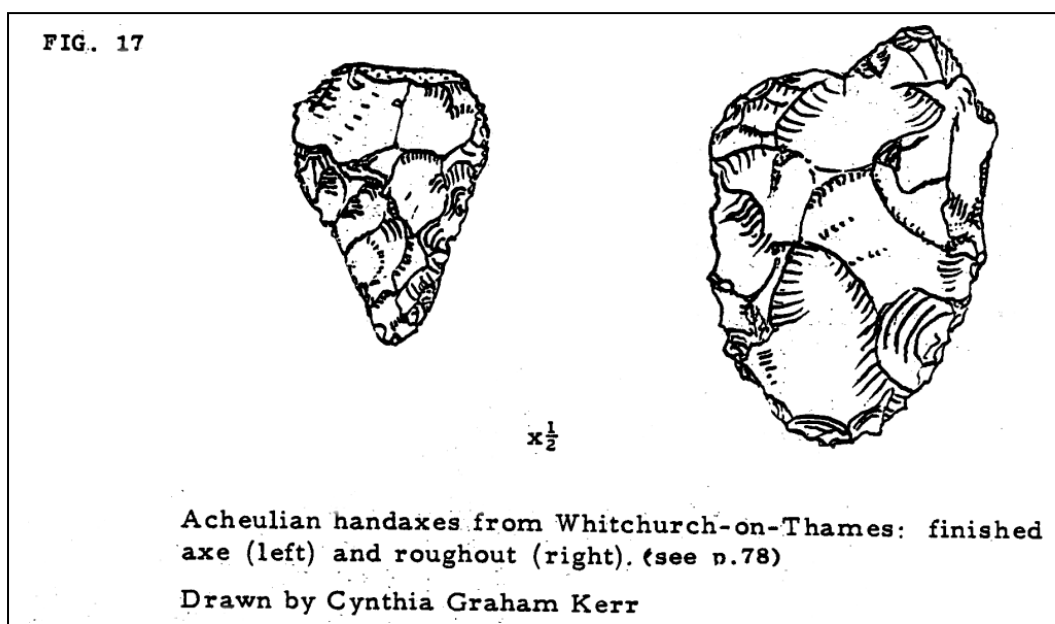
Great Bowling Field, Newington .

Last year a very rich scatter of medieval pot, etc.. was noticed by 3 SOAG members in this field, so at the beginning Of October when the field was available, we got permission to intensive field walk -it.

The field- was laid out in 10m, squares, gridded to the O.S., and finds from each square bagged. and numbered. By November 10th we had walked 512 squares, with a selection of pot, bones, tiles And - brick and metalware (including medieval' horse-and ox-shoes); in almost every square. As the weather was now very wet and the corn up, we started 'pot-washing" and-processing- and have continued every: Tuesday throughout the winter. Some -members are also doing research'. on the historical side of. both sites.

C.A. Graham Kerr

SMA 1987 P77



Acheulian handaxes from Whitchurch-on-Thames (see Fig: 17)

In October 1985, a small Palaeolithic hand axe Was found in a garden at Swanston Field, Whitchurch on Thames (SU 637774). Although only: about three inches long; this pear-shaped tool had been well

made and is typical of its kind. A few weeks later a second hand axe, a larger but unfinished roughout this time, was found in the same garden.

Both tools have been examined by Dr Derek Roe of the Quaternary Research Centre (Pitt Rivers Museum) in Oxford. They are both later Lower Palaeolithic or Acheulian handaxes, with an approximate date of 250,000-150,000 BP. Acheulian handaxes are associated with the Middle Gravel deposits of Ice Age Swanscombe and Hoxne. Secure Hoxnian datings from the Upper Thames region are very rare, but these tools were probably made and used in the Hoxnian interglacial and subsequent warm phases in the following glacial period.

The finished hand axe is of white flint, patinated with lines of iron stain which is typical of a surface find in a chalky area. Some of the flaking was carried out using a 'soft' hammer, which has resulted in flat, shallow flake scars. The larger roughout has also been weathered in chalk and is similarly iron-stained; it shows evidence of the use of a 'hard hammer' only. Both are made of local flint.

The design of the hand axe gives it a sharp cutting edge and a heavy butt. They are generally regarded as butchery tools: only three handaxes from this country have been examined for traces of wear, but all show evidence of having been used to cut meat. However, they were probably general purpose tools.

One other hand axe has been recorded previously from Whitchurch-on-Thames and this is described as 'a white ovate hand axe from Binditch Camp, Whitchurch, with flecky iron stains, very worn, and with thermal damage'. This specimen, which seems to be similar to the two reported here, is now in the British Museum. These latest Palaeolithic finds from Whitchurch have been entered in the county sites and monuments record at Woodstock Museum.

Janet Ridout Sharpe

SMA 1988 P 96

The Forged Gates of Bozedown Estate

Cynthia A. Graham Kerr.

Introduction

Bozedown House lies on the spur of the Chilterns at the southernmost part of Oxfordshire, in the Parish of Goring Heath and is attached to the village of Whitchurch Hill by its long, tree-lined drives. The house itself was rebuilt in 1906 by Mr. C.H. Palmer (of Huntley & Palmers' biscuits fame), after a disastrous fire and the grounds are emparked up to the village with park railings and forged gates. It was in the course of fieldwalking that I noticed that all the gates were of different designs, - and also that several are falling to pieces. I thought, therefore, to record them before they disappear completely.

I found each gate to be of a unique design, purpose made to suit the field it enclosed. The gate-adjointing the House-drive, for instance, is much grander than the others, with a most-complicated push-latch - fit for ladies to open it without soiling their gloves!

Approach & Method

The whole perimeter was walked, and all land areas enclosed by park-railing examined for gates. The gates were sketched roughly with as many useful measurements as possible written in, together

with any necessary notes. A fair drawing was then made for each of the gates, using a scale of 1" to 1'10". This enabled all details of latches, hinges and ironwork to be shown 7 some of which is quite intricate (see Fig. 6). There are also four kiss-gates and two small gates, but they did not have any features of interest, and were similar, so I kept to field gates only. The material used was that usually found in a forge: strap-iron, angle iron; and solid rods, square and round, in a variety of sizes. All the curlicues and parts of latches, bolts, etc., had been hand-forged, so each gate is quite a work of art, although for the purely functional job of closing a field-entrance.

The gateposts, too, varied; (Some are illustrated) - being several-sided, with knobs or shaped tops. Many of the gates. Overgrown, hidden in hedges, held up with string, or falling that photographs would have been inadequate. All showed the touch of the master blacksmith. I have named them after the field or which they give access, or their general location.

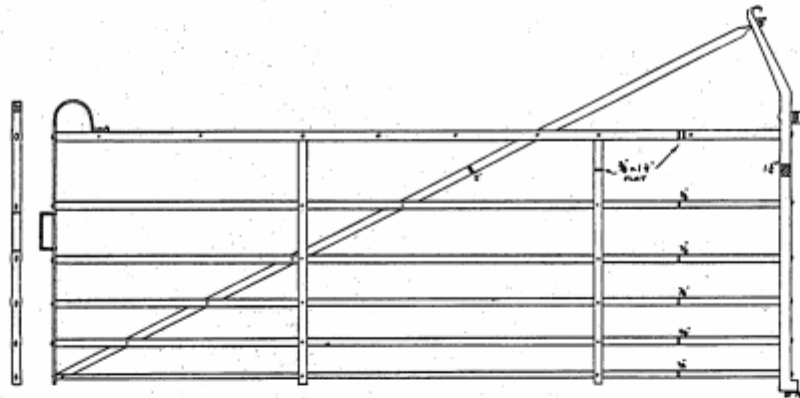
Historical Background

The local Blacksmith remembered they came from a firm in the Midlands, costing a few pounds per gate, and the typical park-railing that went with them enclosing the estate, cost 5/- per yard. This used to be painted by a local man from Cherry Common for 1d per yard (1930's): he boiled up the tar on the 'spot. I wondered how many yards he did per day?

Although the bars of the railings are badly broken in places, such as by falling trees, most of it survives, but could well do with its pennyworth of tar.

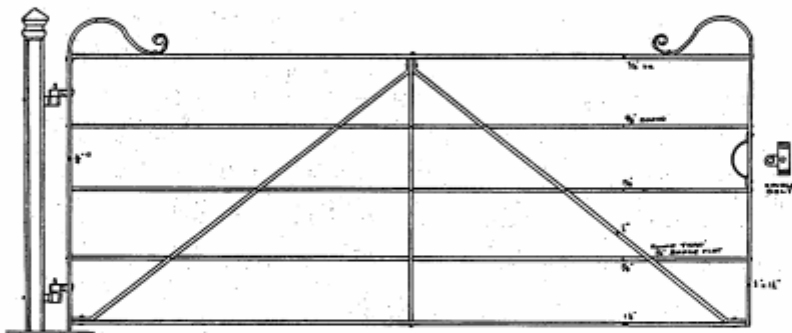
It was erected at the turn of the century, similar to that of its neighbour Coombe Park; as from the 1880's it became the fashion to empark gentlemen's-estates thus.

Few pause to notice these elegant gates, so much more interesting than the plain and noisy tubular ones enclosing many fields today.



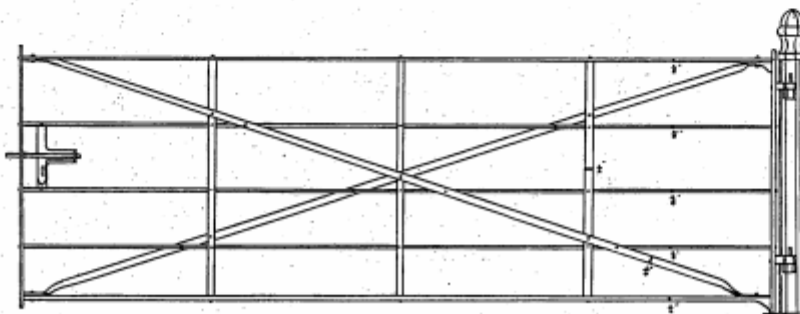
THE THRATCHED COTTAGE
Fig 1

SCALE
1" = 1' 0"



NORTH BOWDOWN FARM
Fig 2

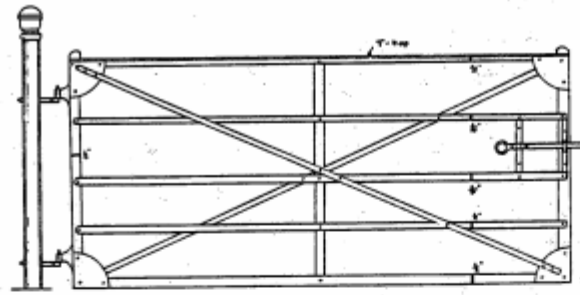
SCALE
1" = 1' 0"



THE SKIPPETTS
Fig 3

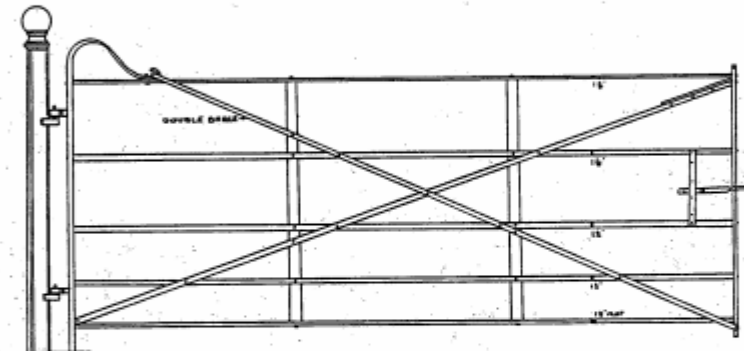
(97)

SCALE
1" = 1' 0"



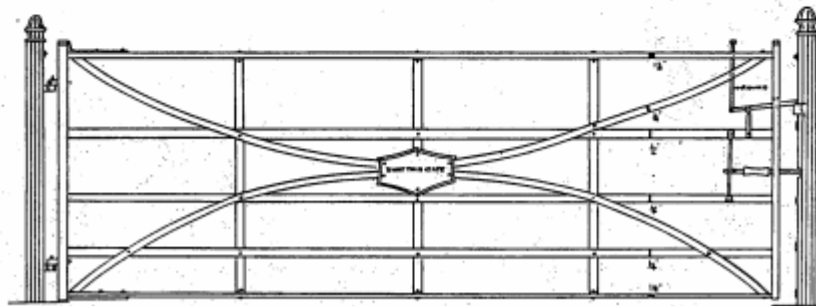
HOME GROUND
Fig 4

SCALE
1 FT.



BOZEDOWN CAMP
Fig 5

SCALE
1 FT.



WEST DRIVE
Fig 6

SCALE
1 FT.

(98)

Notes on the Figures

Figure 1

The gate into the Thatched Cottage has a unique raised back stile, supporting the curlicued end of the extended diagonal brace. The base of the back stile has a heel pivot in a turning cup. The oak gateposts (not shown) are 9" square with a pyramid top. There is a dog-bar, and the gate has a hook-on latch, which is mounted on the post.

Figure 2

North Bozedown Paddock is smaller and lighter, with a large curlicue at each end of the top bar. The braces meet at a single upright in the centre. The journals are alike, and the pillars round. The latch has two bolts, and there is no dog-bar.

Figure 3

The Skippetts is a tangly wood, so its gate was drawn from outside – It is one of the longest of the gates, being 10' 0" long (to allow for tree carting?). It has a cross-brace and three uprights and sexagonal pillars: the hinges are outside the wood, to allow the gate to swing right back.

Figure 4

In contrast to Fig. 3 the little gate into Home Ground is only 6' 7" long and opens into the North drive, near Bozedown house itself. This gate has quarter circular plates reinforcing the top and heel bars. The tails of the journals axe bolted through the round pillar.

Figure 5

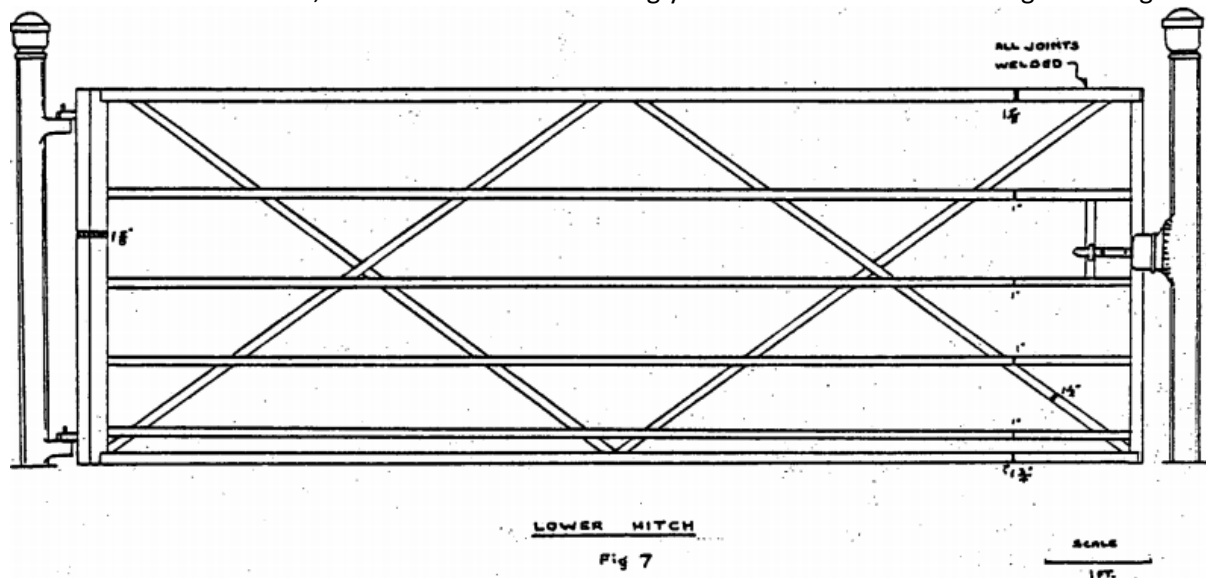
The gate adjoining Bozedown Camp has round pillars with welded journals. The back stile finishes in a curve onto the top bar, where the brace, which is double, is held together by a piece of round rod, and cleverly hooked over the curlicue of the curve. It is riveted to the two central bars, as is the single brace from the top of the toe bar or front stile, down to the base of the back stile.

Figure 6

The splendid gate in the West Drive is near the main entrance to Bozedown House, so its braces are elegantly curved, with a fancy plate requesting SHUT THIS GATE cast on it. The pillars are slimly octagonal, with matching tops, the latch a most complicated push-down affair, nicely balanced, with an additional bar-push bolt below, with a flanged central finger-piece.

Figure 7

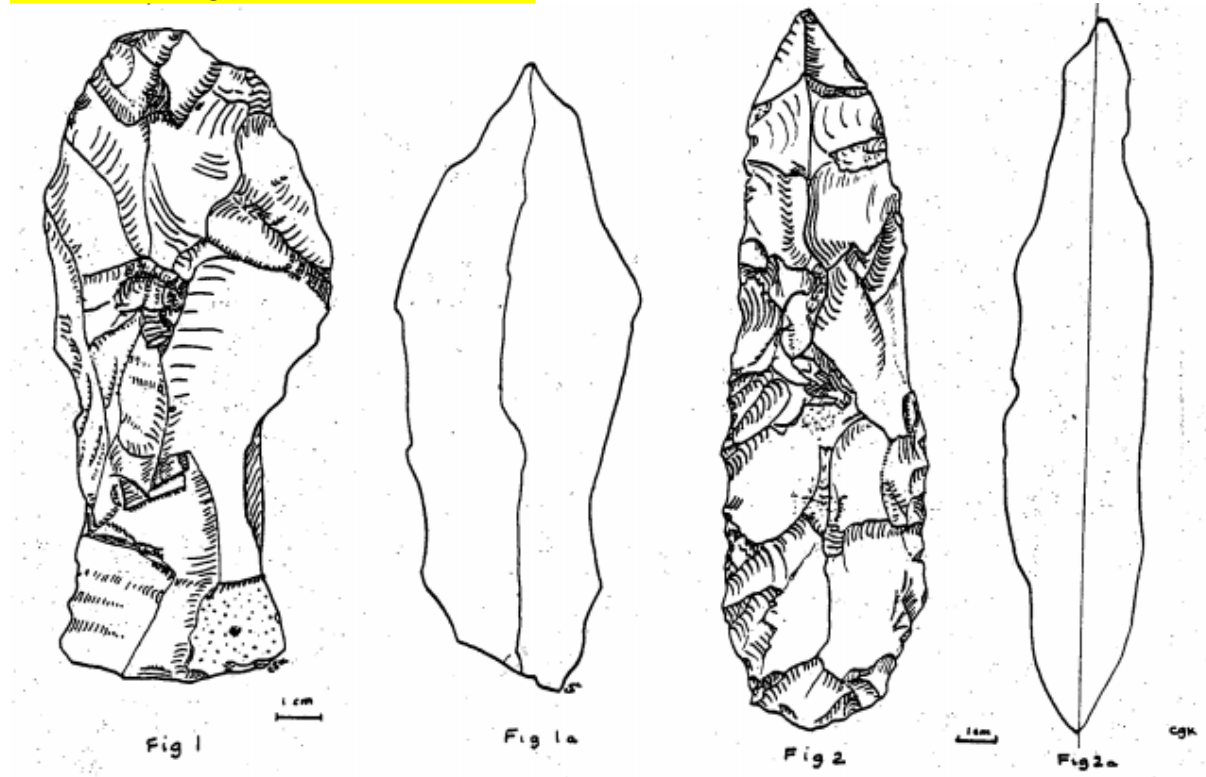
Lower Hitch gate has been adapted to the original round pillars, and it appears, on inspection, not to be as old as the others. It has no curlicues, all joints are welded, not riveted, and is altogether plainer and simpler in design. The braces are quite different, being a double X, meeting at the centre of the bars. It is the next field to, No. 6 and contrasted strongly with the elaborate furnishings of that gate.



P101

Cynthia Graham Kerr

New flint working sites in South Oxfordshire



Interim Report

Beginning with the Acheulian handaxes found at Whitchurch (S.M.A. CBA 9, 1987 pp. 78) several different flint-working sites have now been found near Whitchurch and Goring. These sites have been prolific in flakes, but not many tools were found, until our latest ones (Sites 9 & 13). A preliminary examination of the Hardwick flints by Dr. Derek Roe (Donald Baden-Powell Quaternary Research Centre, Pitt-Rivers Museum, Oxford) suggests that these represent late Neolithic/Bronze Age working areas. This is particularly interesting as few sites of these periods were known until now in the South Oxon area.

WHITCHURCH

Site 1. Hardwick

The field at the corner of Hardwick Road and the road to Path Hill, formerly pasture, was ploughed and sown for cereal in the autumn of 1986. Only the perimeter of this field, to about 3m from the hedges, was walked to avoid trampling the crop. There was a thick scatter of flakes, some blades, a possible hammer-stone and one or two cores. Large waste flakes showed that suitable flint was abundant and had been used unsparingly. The paucity of tools and the numerous flakes suggested

this Was a working area only; but the presence of some potboilers indicated that there may have been a short-term encampment. The north edge of the field immediately to the south, (across the road) yielded a similar assemblage. There was very little pottery, none of it obviously contemporary with the flints.

WHITCHURCH HILL

Site 2. Late Mary Winfield

The field of this name lies north of the fields at Hardwick', near the Iron Age camp at Bozedown. The Perimeter of this field was also walked; and again, showed a thick scatter of flakes.

Site 3. Lower Hitch

This pasture, which showed ridge and furrow, was ploughed for resowing, and the central furrow was still visible, with darker soil, so, assuming that things would tend to wash down into this, it was walked first. About halfway along a tanged Late Neolithic/Beaker arrowhead was found with several other flints, including two possible blades and a core. It was noted that this furrow lay on a terrace, and more flints were found downhill. The field was then systematically fieldwalked in 20m transects, running north to south along the line of the ridge and furrow. Few flints were found at the top of the field but there was a fairly dense scatter on the terrace, and soil creep had provided a thinner scatter towards the bottom of the field to the south. A dark roundish patch of soil just north of a stand of trees seemed to have a slightly heavier scatter.

Site 4. 'Oakdene'

Two struck flakes had been found in a small area (about 1m square) whilst preparing the ground for a rockery. This area was then sieved and some (101) 160 flints were recovered. It is worth noting that in 1943 a cremation pit and a piece of pottery dated c. 1500 BC by the Reading Museum, were found close by, and may be associated with this site.

Site 5. Bozedown Camp

Struck flints were noticed in the lower field, known as the Basin or Hammersleys', so permission was obtained to walk it.

The field was laid out in 20m transects. Flints and potboilers were more numerous towards the eastern end of the field and a number of tools, and some early gritted pottery were found. Most finds lay consistently along the plateau gravel ridge towards the south, in heavy scatters.

We also noticed heavy scatters in the other two fields (Great & Little Binditch), in the interior of the camp, and will be walking these in the future. It is interesting to note that the NE perimeter field abuts Late Mary Winfield field (Site 2), although Peter Wood dug in Bozedown Camp in 1953 this appears to be the first record of worked flints in this area. We are now processing the finds.

It may be noted here that the flints of this area (including Hardwick) were mainly black and clear colours, whereas many of those down at Gatehampton Farm (Site 7) had a white patina, which suggests that they had been exposed, but the Hardwick ones had stayed underground, having remained under pasture.

MOULESFORD

Site 6. Moulesford Down

Some earthworks (bank and ditch) were noted in a pasture on Moulesford Down, and one or two flakes were found in mole-hills.

GORING

Site 7. Gatehampton Farm

The dig at Gatehampton Farm (directed by Tim Allen, Oxford Archaeological Unit) yielded vast quantities of flints and a 'Neolithic Quarry'. (See Tim Allen, this volume). As members of SOAG were able to work continuously on the site, we worked several features (mainly the Roman grain-dryer) which contained flints, and so saw the whole range of flints being recovered. One member found the 'Thames axe' in a pit (See i' 1Y' and this compares interestingly with the similar one from Site 8 (Fig. 2)

Site 8. Brunel Bridge Meadow

A Mesolithic 'Thames axe' was found in a drainage-ditch in this field, by Mr. Gutheridge, who brought it (and others) to show workers at the Gatehampton Farm dig, since it came from the adjoining field, next to the river (Fig. 2) It was not unlike the axe found by SOAG member Jean Allen in the dig itself (Site:7).

The Water Board have continued their work along the river and so including a section of the drainage ditch. We fieldwalked this and found a few flints and potboilers within 2-3 metres of the ditch.

Site 9: Gatehampton: Water Meadow

Following on Site 8 the Water-Board have continued their wide-trench (102) westwards, running parallel to the river, and round by a track to the end of Manor Road. We walked this and found a scrape where the bulldozer has exposed a broad line about 1-2 ft wide, of flints and chalk (at least the depth of a trowel) running diagonally across the trench for some 30 metres. In this, we found a large number of tiles, a few struck flints and a rim sherd, probably medieval. This was, perhaps, a patch across the alluvial floodplain. There were also struck flints and potboilers in the spoil-heap where the trench turns, by the track. We are keeping a watching brief.

Site 10. Gatehampton Farm area

In addition to the finds at Gatehampton Farm dig, a member informed us that his son had found many flints here some years previously; and he kindly allowed us to record and photograph them. They included 3½ Thames axes around 12-14 cm long and an enormous one 25 cm x 7 cm; also an interesting collection of cores, blades and various tools. The Oxford Unit has been offered access to these, and we may possibly resume work at the site in the future.

NOTE

The whole area covered by Sites 7-10 is within a huge curve of the river, so, although found separately, the sites are related, and show continuous settlement along the alluvial plain of the river. All material recovered by SOAG at Goring has been deposited with Tim Allen, of the O.A.U. for analysis, along with the finds from the excavation (Site 8).

IPSDEN

Site 11. Wick's Wood

An earthwork discovered by S.O.A.G. some 15 years ago has just been re-examined; and a rough sketch made of as much as we could (a length of about 332m.) before dark. Along this stretch we noticed a number of potboilers and found about 8 struck flakes in the upper bank, which was about ½m high. The outer-bank sloped more and dropped another ½m. to a downhill slope. The soil was chalk with sandy gravel and flints.

MAPLEDURHAM

Site 12.

North of Sandhill Plantation Walking along the path in this field west to east, 3 potboilers and 6 flakes were found, mainly to the east. Four of the flakes looked retouched and there was also a possible core.

Site 13. North of Park Wood

Starting from the lane to the north of the field, a line north-south was 'taken down to Park Wood itself. Along this line 5 flakes, a potboiler and 2 probable post-medieval sherds were found. Three of the flakes looked rather fresh, but the other flake and a small blade were less black and more patinated.

Oxoniensia LX (1995) P. 431

THE SHRINE OF ST. MARY, CAVERSHAM

In 1981 an article was published in *Oxoniensia* by C. Haigh and. Loades, entitled "The fortunes of the shrine of St. Mary of Caversham". In it they attempted to discover, amongst other things, the site of St. Mary's Chapel.¹ This, following the Dissolution of the monasteries, appears to have disappeared completely. The chapel may have originally belonged to the manor of Caversham, as Walter Giffard, the lord of Caversham, gave it to Notley Abbey in Buckinghamshire in 1614. It appears to have been an important shrine with many relics apparently rivalling Walsingham.²

During the last two years three members of the South Oxfordshire Archaeological Group have been attempting a landscape survey of the old parish of Caversham, and during this have tried to find the lost site of the shrine. This we think we may have accomplished.

Sarah Markham's book on John Loveday of Caversham (1711-89)³ quotes from his journal, in which he records that he was told by an Alderman Watts of Reading that "Chappel of Our Lady was at Benwells Caversham Farm". The Benwells owned the Farm now called Deans Farm in the 16th and the beginning of the 18th century. It is thought probable that the site of Deans Farm was that of the old manor house, although there is no proof. The manor house was already ruinous or pulled down by 1493, and the moat had already been drained.⁴ Deans Farm is by the side of the Thames on a dry gravel spit above the surrounding flood plain; this would have made provision of a moat easy, and as the only access, even now, is by a causeway, it would been defensible. The farm is away from habitation (although the flood plain to the east is being built on at the moment), and this would agree with Dr. Johnson's statement that "St. Mary's standeth so wildly".⁵ London was given the task of removing the valuables and clearing the building, and was remarking that he was not worried about lead being removed from the roof. Standing outside Deans Farm and looking across the river, the site of Reading Abbey, also the focus of pilgrimage, can be seen opposite. Henry III gave the canons of Notley two oak trees for the building of a boat to ferry pilgrims across the river to the shrine of St. Mary's⁶. In 1306 there is mention of passage money for the use of barges at "Essthorpe" or Lower Caversham.⁷ This ferry would have served both the pilgrims and the inhabitants of Lower Caversham. It is thought that East Throp is the oldest part of the village, which equates with the manor house being near. It therefore seems possible that the chapel was originally part of the manor complex.

The field name evidence has now been examined. In a royal survey for Francis Knollys in 1551-2,⁸ half a virgate called Popes included one close [called] St. Mary croft and a half acre in Reyley. These lands, by their position in the survey, were down by the River Thames. (Several pieces of land at Caversham were given to Notley Abbey by William Marshal the elder, including one of unspecified size "inter carpellum & aquam Tamaisie"⁹ – could this be the croft?) A list of property in 1633 included "... all that parcel of land called Capull alias Riley":¹⁰ Capull can therefore be equated with chapel, and Riley is a corruption of Reyley. The tithe award of 1846¹¹ shows, to the west of Deans Farm, two fields called Left-handed Ray and Right0- handed Ray. Ray means meadow next to a river, and Ley can also mean meadow,¹² so it seems possible that Reyley is the same as Ray.

The possible site of the shrine may now be under water as there are huge gravel workings to the east of Deans Farm. A Romano-British font was found when digging gravel in this area, which may indicate that this has been a Christian centre for a long time. That we are making bricks without straw is possible, but we are convinced of the position of the shrine.

P. PREECE, M. KIFT AND M. FALLOWFIELD.

SMA 1990 P89

PILLBOXES IN OXFORDSHIRE

A W J Graham Kerr

During the First World War, and later in the Second World War, England built miniforts, or pillboxes, to defend our small island from the Germans. Firstly they were built along the East Coast, then around London and the South East. Henry Wills wrote "Pillboxes" in 1985, recording over a thousand sites, but there are still many unrecorded, and many well worth preserving. A line of pillboxes known as "The Red Stop Line" was to go from Tilehurst. Reading to Warwick along the River Thames and the Oxford Canal. Between Whitchurch-on-Thames and Shillingford there are 32 of the 190 pillboxes of the Red Stop Line. Of these, there are 3 unusual ones which have not previously been looked at. One, at Carmel College, (SU 607878) is a pillbox built into a boathouse of red brick, which gives it very good camouflage; and another, at Goring-on-Thames (SU 597808) is camouflaged to resemble a summer house (Fig. 1). This until recently was a type 24 pillbox, built on the lock island and surrounded with gardens and paths, with trellis painted on it to disguise it. It also had a flagpole, and was connected by a telephone to Goring. This pillbox was demolished for a new weir in 1989. Another site lies only a few miles upstream (SU 595833) and is a type 22 base (Fig. 2); this was discovered by SOAG whilst fieldwalking the Thames Water pipeline, and has since been destroyed. The latest find was hidden in an old riverside garden near Shillingford Bridge at SU 597921, and is unusual in that it had a thatched roof (so the landowner told me) before 1950. This was impossible to draw, being buried in ivy and creepers, but parts of its concrete walls were visible, as were concrete ammunition lockers in the back of its hexagonal sides. The preservation and recording of these buildings is important as they are the most recent of British coastal and inland defences. The Red Stop Line was designed as a major line of defence in a series of pillbox chains round the country.

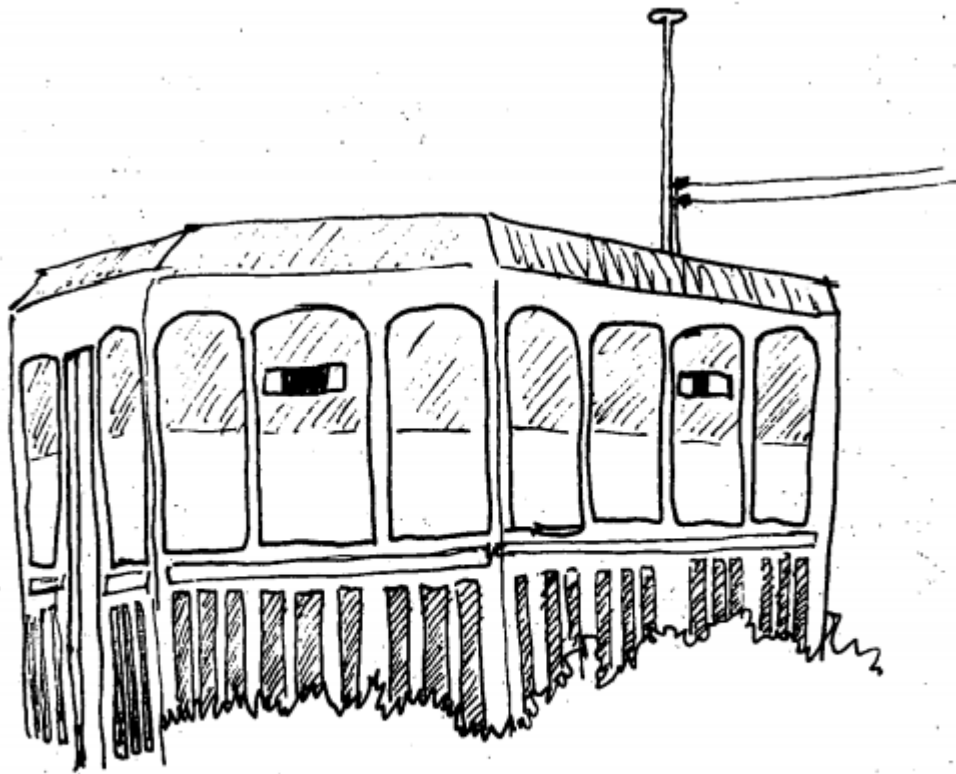


Fig. 1. Camouflaged as a summerhouse. SU 597808.

SCALE

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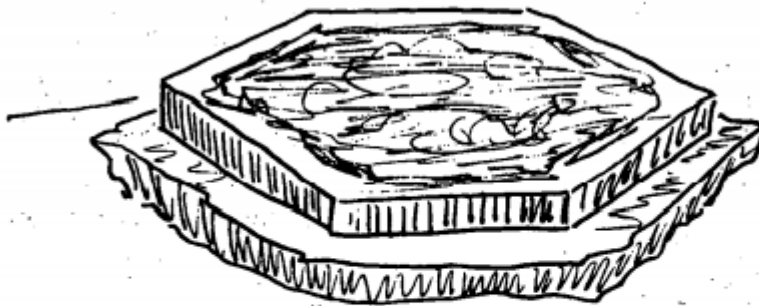


Fig. 2. Hexagonal base. SU 595833.

SCALE

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Pillboxes in Oxfordshire

A W J Graham-Kerr.

This is part of a large-scale study of pillboxes in various regions, carried out by the Fortress Study Group.

If the Germans had crossed the English Channel and in time taken London, it is said that the Government would have moved to Stratford-upon-Avon. Working on the basis that the Germans had landed in the south of England, it was reasoned that once they had a foot-hold in the southern counties they would start to head in a northerly direction towards Oxford. Re-grouping at Andover and then moving north to the GHQ line running along the Kennet and Avon canal it would be important for them to pass around the towns because of sniper fire and booby-traps. Between Hungerford and Newbury would be the main push, so this is what GHQ did. Joining the A338 to Oxford on the north of the town, Wantage was the only other town on the A338, which was easy to by-pass. Oxford, which they hoped to defend, sits on the Thames at the top of its bottle-neck, Abingdon lies south of Oxford and has the river passing through it after Oxford; further up the Thames and to the west is Newbridge. The distance between Abingdon and Newbridge is only six and a half miles; this is where GHQ chose their second line of defence.

It is this line that I am looking at: the pillboxes are built at half mile intervals, in a line running from Abingdon Common through the villages of Marcham, Frilford and Fyfield to the Thames at Newbridge. The line consists of 20 pillboxes, of which most are rectangular (FW3728). These were the largest of the pillboxes built for the 2-pounder anti-tank gun, in some cases even a 3-pounder or a 6-pounder. The 2-pounder was a highly mobile gun which, with wheels removed and trails splayed, made an effective weapon against the lightly armoured tanks of 1939-40¹.

Fig 1

Heading north towards Oxford along the A338, one passes over a stream then past the pub, the Noah's Ark. Just ahead lies the cross-roads of the A415; at this cross-road is a hexagonal base: this is rather unusual and during the war it would have had a 6-pounder Hotchkiss gun bolted to the top of the base. The site is at SU 443971.

Also in this GHQ line is where 15 of the 2-pounder guns are, of the 170 2-pounder guns for the whole GHQ line. One interesting bunker remains (which is underground and is at SU 413995) is that of the Royal Observer Corp, and was in use until the 1960s. Aerial photographs show the outline of the anti-tank ditch, especially between Marcham and Abingdon. The GHQ line was manned by five platoons and Fig. 1. 116 these were: Frilford, Cuthill, Appleton, Fyfield and part of Frilford.

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1 Wills, H., *Pillboxes* (Leo Cooper, 1985)

2 rice, M., *Stronghold* (Batsford, 1984)

P116

Notes on the Celtic Head Tradition in the South Oxford shire Area

Cynthia A Graham-Kerr

Introduction.

Attention was drawn to this subject by an article by Mary Kift in our journal, *The Bulletin*, 1986, pp28-29, describing a fine Celtic head noticed locally. This reminded us of another, noted years ago in Woodcote - were there others extant?. They are not by any means common in this region, but about 13 possibilities were located and recorded.

Some may well be medieval, but are included as they contain Celtic features, and the sculptors might easily have been influenced by the Celtic cult when carving them. The descriptions are headed under the area from which the head came.

Note: The measurements are approximate, as the heads are often in totally inaccessible places, such as church towers.



Fig. 1.



Fig. 2.



Fig 3.

West Challow (Wantage District)

(Fig. 1) It was this particular head which started the project and is now in a garden in Seaton, Devon. The family who used to live in a cottage "near Wantage" (?West Challow) unearthed it in 1956 about 2 feet below ground. They thought it was a garden ornament and took it with them on moving to Seaton. The following comments were made about it by Dr Ann Ross: "Among the hundreds of stone heads, etc, from all over once-Celtic Europe ... there is a class which is distinguished by the treatment of the features, from eyebrows to chin ... this example is one of the finest". It would appear to be about 60cm high with negroid features, and a feeling of character and strength about it; the carving is crude, with the typical bulging eyes. It was not possible to locate its supposed original site in West Challow, in spite of help from locals.

Whitchurch (Fig. 2)

This small head, of about 24cm high, is still in position above the Norman archway of the south door of St Mary's church, sheltered by a 15th century porch. It was noted by Canon Slatter in his *History of the Parish of Whitchurch* in the 1880s when the church was rebuilt: "The porch had decayed ... and was taken down, revealing a crudely carved face set into the wall ...". This head has decidedly Romano-Celtic characteristics and was fortunately left alone during the Victorian rebuilding.

Aldermaston (Fig. 3)

This head has the typical crescent-shaped droopy moustache (cf Figs. 2, 7 and 11) and "Celtic" protruding eyes, placed at the outer sides of the head. It is around 30cm high and over a blocked north door inside the church: but we have been unable to find any reference to it in the church literature. It is limestone, and not in very good condition - the edges are broken and chipped.



Fig. 4.



Fig. 5.



Fig. 6.

Woodcote (Fig. 4) This is a large and well-sculptured head, 28cm high, with typical protruding eyes, exaggerated lips and flattened nose. The folds of skin on the neck and musculature at the back of the head have been carefully detailed. It is of white oolite limestone, and was found at Wayside Green, Woodcote. It is Romano-Celtic, probably 1st - 2nd century, and is now in Reading Museum (Ref 401-78).

Caversham (Fig. 5) A small head in Jurassic limestone, of Romano-Celtic date, was found near St Anne's well at Priest's Hill. This is one of the old holy chalybeate wells, associated with pagan Celts,

and the head was in a garden nearby. It is 16cm high and crudely executed in a slab-like manner - almost bas-relief, with prominent eyes. It is now in Reading Museum (Ref 262-74).

Tidmarsh (Fig. 6) This head is not an integral part of the early Norman arch, as would seem at first glance. Upon close observation it is clear that it has broken edges fitted neatly onto the Norman edging, and may even have been part of a vertical slab, as suggested by the shoulders. The features show a strong Celtic influence. The black outlines in the drawing are white mortar in the original.



Fig. 7.



Fig. 8.



Fig. 9.



Fig. 10.

Bucklebury (Fig. 7) This head, in the south Norman doorway (1150-70) may be more medieval than Celtic, with its extraordinary crest, and the very odd dotted object, "entwined" with mantling of sorts. The eyes, moustache, and nose, however, repeat the Celtic formula. In this case it seems to be

integral with its surroundings and it is included in this article, as a "curious reversion to an earlier type - a strange face" (Keith Poste, *History of St Mary the Virgin*, 1976). 118 Fig. 6. Fig. 5.

Chaddleworth (Fig. 8 & 9) This church was mentioned in Domesday, it lies besides a fine old manor and has many Norman features. Here were two possible heads: one set in the centre of the string-course on the south side of the tower (Fig. 8) - thus it was difficult to see clearly but it had the characteristic features - unlike the heads on the corners which looked decidedly medieval. The second head (Fig. 9) was quite different, being inside the church and on the eastern pillar, about 6 feet from the floor of the tower arch, southern side, and just jutting out. There was no stone, carved or otherwise, protruding from the north pillar of the arch, although the carved head had a flat top not unlike a corbel. In contrast to the rather severe one outside, this one has a broader and most amiable face, but serves no apparent purpose. It measured about 20 x 26cm.

East Garston (Figs. 10 & 11) On the south side of the tower is a large old sundial and just below it, attached to a small plinth is a head with decidedly Celtic features (Fig. 10). Again, it was difficult to see detail. It is interesting to note this church is very near the River Lambourne; water is so often associated with pagan worship. The head was rather triangular, eyes and nose crowded together in the middle and what might be hair, or a background, squaring up the sides.

On the outside of the Lady Chapel. on the eastern wall was a stone with the date 1684, below, a string course with decorative heads each end. In the centre, however, is set a head of a different type (Fig. 11) with the thin moustache and plain features of the Celtic head, and usual glum expression. His chin rests curiously on the apex of the window, and like his neighbour at Chaddleworth, he appears to have been added in when alterations were being made.



Fig. 11.



Fig. 12.



Fig.13.

Abingdon (Fig. 12) The Abingdon Museum has a tricephalous, or three-faced head, 32 x 5cm high, and 18cm wide (Acc. No 8096.1142), but they do not know its exact locality, but think it was from the Abbey area. This is quite possible as recent new excavations (Allen, 1989) have produced quantities of Iron Age, Bronze Age and Roman artefacts. Sculptured heads of this type were made by the Celts in Roman times and several have been found in Britain (see below). The triple aspect apparently held a special religious significance for the Celts (Ann Ross, *Pagan Celtic Britain*, 1967).

Ibstone (Fig. 13) Heads are often placed on or over the keystone of an arch, but this one at Ibstone church is strange indeed. It lies at the highest point under the chancel arch (rebuilt in the 13th Century). There is some unusual Norman work in the church, noted as "probably Saxon" (church notes). It is a tiny church on a hillock, a stone coffin lies by the gate. (The village moved further up, following the plague, leaving the manor and church isolated).

The head, high at the top of the arch, has a slab base and typical Celtic features including a long chin as noted on other heads. It faces the floor, lying N-S under the arch and estimated as 22cm long. Outside the church over the window to the right of the porch is another head (not illustrated), but although it has the long moustache and plain features, the mouth is open and hollow and it does not look many Celtic.

Summary

It is interesting to note the positions of these heads: over doors, or towers, and loose' ones, which are dug up quite near the surface. Were they 'saved' when pagans became Christians, as familiar friends to be tolerated? Also, the presence of water nearby is a pagan link: eight of the churches concerned are within reach of water - rivers and St Anns's Well, Caversham, was a holy well of chalybeate water, used for cures. The Celtic religion held that both the human head and healing waters were of the utmost importance and this runs through Celtic cults everywhere. The head was the centre for the spirit and thus became an elaborate ritual object, a symbol of veneration, which developed into heads with horns, cats' ears and other appendages although we have not, so far, found any of these locally.

Looking through the photographs in Ann Ross' *Pagan Celtic Britain*, it is remarkable to see how different types of heads mentioned in these notes have parallels in heads from such diverse places as Norway, Denbighshire and Corbridge but the ones in this region seem to have more moustaches. Did these various types originate from a few sources, or were ideas spread as the sculptors travelled, or did the heads themselves travel? Any further information on heads in this region would be of considerable interest.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my colleagues and members' of SOAG who have worked with me on this project, especially Mary Kift, who started me off with her article in the SOAG Bulletin 1986. Janet Sharpe who came hunting in the cold of winter, also Malcolm Todd, and my husband who accompanied me to obscure Places and held chairs whilst I photographed. Also Professor Stuart Piggott who encouraged me and put me in touch with Dr Miranda Green, who has taken an active interest in the project and Nancy Hood, Curator, Abingdon Museum, Leslie Dram of Reading Museum, both of whom produced heads and information.

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Drawings by the author

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Notes on some old local implements

C A Graham-Kerr

These old country implements have been lying around our house for years - people are inclined to dump "old things" on me - knowing they will be appreciated, and I thought it might be of some interest to put them on record.

Billock - Figure 1

Properly spelt "Billhook" (or, in some localities, `bille'), this is pronounced bill 'ock locally, and they are still in everyday use for light chopping and hedge-trimming. There are about 30 different types which vary from county to county and this is the typical `Oxforde' one. Each locality has a strong tradition as to shape and indeed they vary so much that some hardly seem to be the same tool. Other craftsmen who use them are the thatcher, who splits his spars and runners (usually hazel in our locality) with skilful strokes, and the woodman who have them for general work such as bean rods, and for trimming.

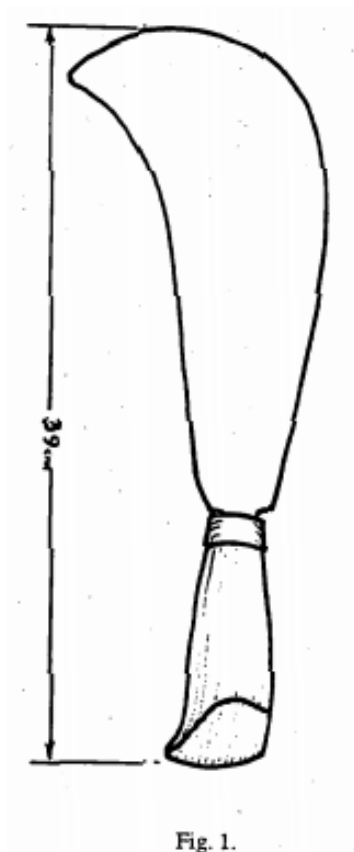


Fig. 1.

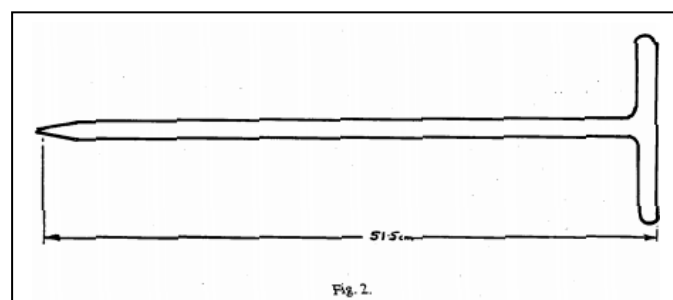


Fig. 2.

Thatcher's Needle - Figure 2

This T-shaped flattened iron, with its sharp point is an essential tool for the thatcher. The slim stem will stab into thatch without harming the straw. It is 51.5cm. long and strong enough to stop a ladder slipping and hold up the 0.0t, , Fig. 2. 121 bundles of straw; but mainly for keeping one layer of thatch up tight, whilst the next bundles are tucked under, when using wheat or Norfolk reed. It is, in fact, a maid-of-all-work where anything needs holding, stopping or pinning down.

Skimmer - Figure 3 This circular object, which looks like Fig. 3. a vegetable ladle, is evidently handmade, the holes being unevenly spaced, and its small curly handle roughly soldered to the edge, and it measures 13cm. in diameter. It is especially made to skim off the cream from shallow pans of rich milk, which are "set" to allow the cream to rise, as with Devonshire cream. This one is a very superior brass skimmer - they are usually made of tin.

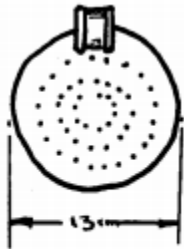


Fig. 3.

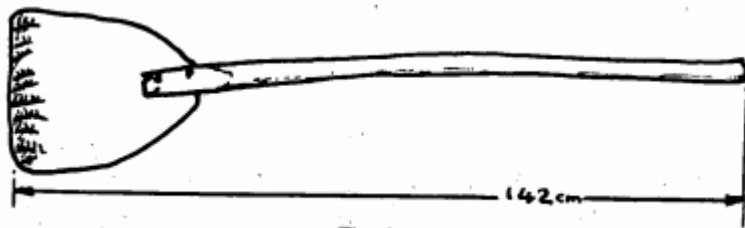


Fig. 4.

Baker's Bat - Figure 4 This

wooden bat, or peel, for removing loaves etc from the oven was discovered in a neighbour's roof under the thatch. (Later a round brick oven, smooth inside, with a domed roof was found behind a wall in the house). The handle is of ash, 124cm. long and the bat blade itself probably oak (which does not burn they can also be elm or beech. The bat blade is 34cm. long to the handle and 37cm. across the mouth which is chamfered to get under the loaf easily. It has been photographed together with the next item for the records.

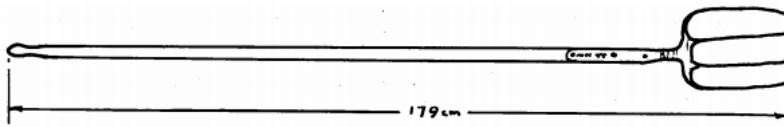


Fig. 5.

Dung Fork - Figure 5 This article materialised mysteriously in my 'Yard. The handle is 154cm long, with a nicely shaped end and the prongs probably hand, forged, are 25cm: long, strongly curved for scooping up litter from the stables and byres when mucking out. It is fixed by three rivets to the handle. It is also called a muck-rake, and a local friend told me that when he was farming in Gloucestershire they called it a "shavick".

Cook's Basting Spoon - Figure 6 This vast cooking spoon has a handle 41cm. long and the bowl itself is 11cm. in length but is not to sup with the devil but to baste the joint. I found it in a farmyard together with a jack of the mechanical brass types. The beaten out handle shows it is forged work, very neatly made.

Well Pale - Figure 7 This object has puzzled a number of people but was in common use in the villages around here and has been seen used at the back of cottages at Fyfield, at Whitchurch Hill, Preston Crowmarsh and by a friend's grandfather at Chalgrove. It is for lifting and lowering the bucket into a shallow well - the pole (broken off on this one) could be very long or quite short, according to the depth of water in well for which it was used. This one is a nice piece of forged ironwork, making it easier to catch the handle of the bucket ironwork, (45cm long) and no doubt local, with the spring clip still strong and working. This looks crooked but that is intentional , making it easier to catch the handle of the bucket and heave it up (Figure 7a)

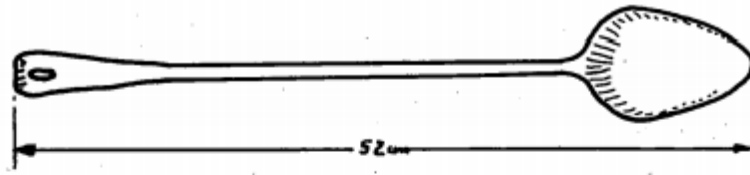


Fig. 6.

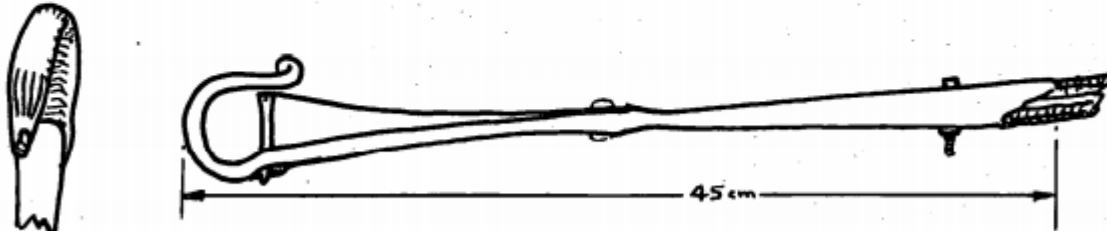


Fig. 7.

Oxoniensia 1984

THE EXCAVATION OF A RING-DITCH AT NORTH STOKE, OXFORDSHIRE

By STEVE FORD

SUMMARY

This report describes the excavation of a Bronze-Age barrow ring-ditch. The flints recovered provide evidence for quarrying activities.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank the following for their help during the preparation of this paper: the landowner, Mr. D. Allen, for permission to excavate and for backfilling the trench; Mr. A. Fleming and the Inspectorate of Ancient Monuments for permission to excavate a scheduled monument; Reading University for the loan of tools; the staff of the Oxfordshire County Museum Field Section; Dr. D. Roe and J. Dumont for help with the microwear study; A. Sherratt, H. Case, M. Fulford and R. Bradley for advice and comments; H. Carter and W. Carruthers for their specialist reports on bones and pollen; members of South Oxfordshire Archaeological Group for finds washing; and finally M. Bowden, C. Graham Kerr, L. Mephram, J. Moreton, D. Richards, J. Temple, G. Thomas, A. White, I. Temple, E. Salvage, G. Olejnik, M. Fallowfield, M. Kift and J. Shearer for their hard work.

INTRODUCTION

The site (SU 6108 8559) is located some 700 m. from the River Thames at a height of 50 m. O.D., on level Chiltern Outwash gravel. It lies towards the centre of a cropmark complex¹ which has been investigated on several previous occasions,² and near the south end of the North Stoke bank-barrow. The excavation was undertaken after the ring-ditch and other features were observed to be eroding into a disused quarry. It was hoped that this rescue work would produce dated artefactual and environmental evidence and enable comparisons to be made with material recovered during systematic field walking in the North Stoke area.

DESCRIPTION OF EXCAVATION

An area of 107 square metres was excavated by hand, as shown in Fig. 1. Twenty-one percent of

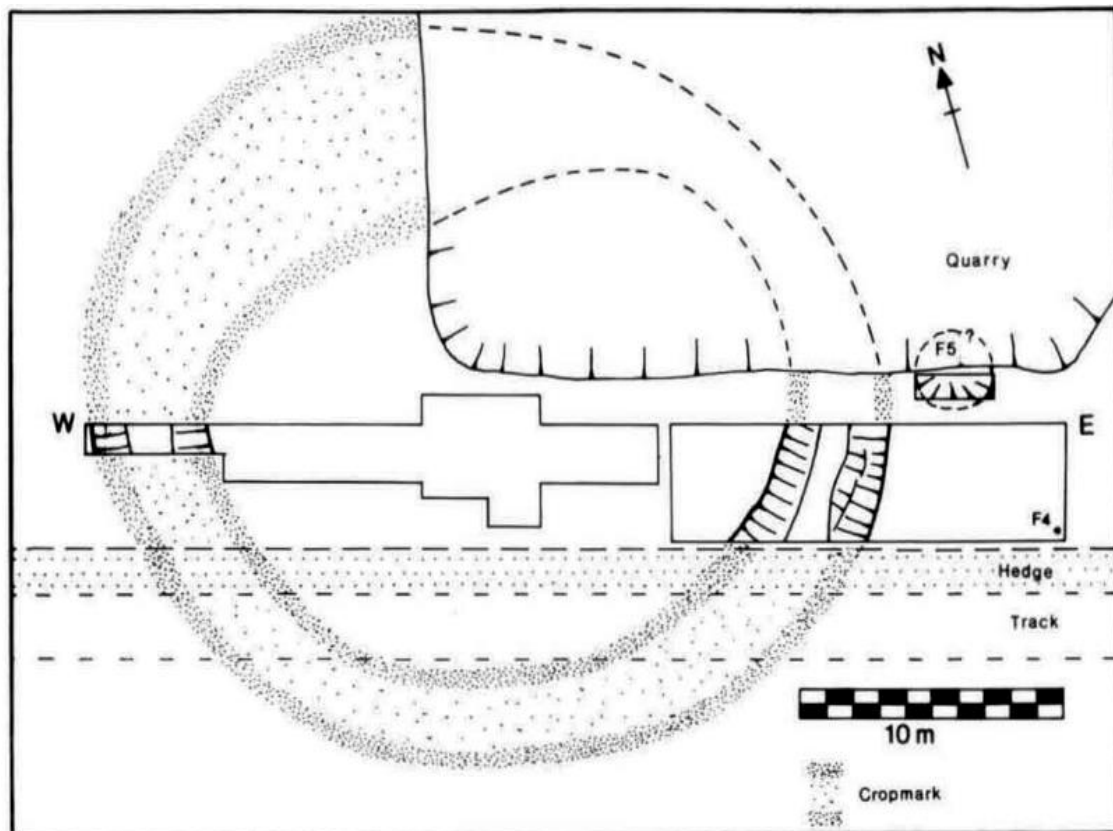


Fig 1 Plan of Trenches

the ring-ditch interior and 7 per cent of the ditch contents were examined. The excavation provided a single section traversing the whole monument, the single ring-ditch in both sections and a single external posthole. No other convincing archaeological features could be demonstrated. FS, revealed in the quarry face, failed to appear in the main trench ; subsequent excavation identified it as the remnants of a large pit or ditch terminal containing a few human feet-bones, probably from a burial.' Apart from the layers within the ditch and FS, little stratigraphy remained . A slight rise in the area enclosed by the ring-ditch suggested a mound, but no structure could be demonstrated, the ditch stratigraphy seems straightforward, with only minor variations between the two sections. Table I summarises the descriptions and interpretations of all layers.

The primary silts (L5), together with the base of L4 (the latter most clearly observed beneath L7), can be regarded as the extent of the stabilised prehistoric phase of the site. LS contained much struck flint and a single sherd of pottery, probably prehistoric, with a further sherd from L10/ L14. Roman pottery only occurred in L4 and above, and thus provides a terminus post quem for the ploughing episodes(s) evidenced by L7 and L13. L9 in the west section suggests that this ploughing activity was not necessarily continuous. A further ploughing episode (LS) can be seen to originate from the inner ditch lip in both sections, and may represent the levelling of the mound. The single posthole, F4, is undated and no association with the

TABLE 1

LAYER	DESCRIPTION	INTERPRETATION
5	Gravel, 5–10 cm. diameter in centre, 2 cm. towards sides. Brown sandy matrix. Some ironstone.	Primary ditch silts.
14	As for 5.	As for 5.
4	Orange/brown sandy loam with few stones.	Secondary/tertiary silts. Turfline?
7	Orange/brown sandy loam with many stones (5 cm.).	Ploughsoil slip from activity outside ring-ditch.
8	Orange/brown sandy silt with many small stones (1–2 cm.), occasionally larger.	Late ploughing episode inside ring ditch. Mound levelled?
15	As for 8.	As for 8.
2	Orange/brown sandy silt, few stones and some rare rounded chalk (1 cm.).	Final silting of ditch prior to modern land use. Turfline?
9, 10, 11	Orange/brown sandy loam with few stones.	As for 4.
12	Orange/brown sandy silt with many stones (5 cm.).	Ploughsoil slip from inside ring ditch? Mound slumping into ditch?
13	Orange/brown silt with many stones (5 cm.).	Ploughsoil slip from activity outside ring ditch.
3	Compact orange/brown sandy silt with many stones (2–5 cm.), occasionally larger.	Subsoil? periglacial deposit?
F4	Compact orange/brown sandy silt, stone-free except for occasional pebbles (1–2 cm.).	Small posthole.
F5		
7	Loose orange/brown sandy loam with many stones (5 cm.) and Manganese pan.	Grave fill?
6	Pale brown sandy silt with many stones (5 cm.).	Natural silting or grave fill.
5	Charcoal lens.	
4	Similar to 7 but lighter. Also charcoal lens.	Deliberate infilling.
3	Red/brown sandy loam with few stones.	Final silting of pit following settling of back-fill?
8	Similar to 4 except for occasional charcoal fleck.	Shallow scoop?

¹D. Benson and D. Miles, *The Upper Thames Valley: An Archaeological Survey of the River Gravels* (1974).

²H. Case, 'The Linear Ditches and Southern Enclosure', North Stoke', in *Settlement Patterns in the Oxford Region: Excavations at the Abingdon Causewayed Enclosure and Other Sites*, eds. H.J. Case and A. W. R. Whittle, C.B.A. Research Rep. xli, (1983); E.T. Leeds, 'Round Barrows and Ring Ditches in Berkshire and Oxfordshire', *Oxoniensia* 1 (1936), 7–23; H.W. Catling, 'A Beaker-Culture Barrow at North Stoke, Oxon', *Oxoniensia* xxiv (1953). 1. – 12

³Identifications by H.H. Carter, Reading Museum.

F5 was stratigraphically different from the ditch. L7 L6 were originally interpreted as primary silts similar to those in the ditch, but the human bones from the pans of L7 disturbed by animals show that this layer at least must relate to the burial. Above this) LS was a charcoal lens, sometimes occurring as streaks in plan. Immediately overlying L5, L4 filled the remainder of the pit; its homogenous nature indicates deliberate deposition. Possibly cut into L4 was a shallow scoop containing Beaker pottery, flint flakes and a little charcoal

POTTERY (Fig. 3)

Sixteen sherds of pottery were recovered (and eight fragments of brick or tile from L4 spit 5). Thirteen sherds were.

prehistoric: eleven from F5 and two from the ring-ditch. Ten of the sherds from FS were Beaker and came from LB. They consisted of a rim and body sherds, decorated with discontinuous square- came sectioned grooves similar to a vessel from Stanton Harcourt (Oxon 28).⁴It is probably a later rather than an earlier type) and would not normally be found in a burial context.) The other sherd from F5 came from the base of the topsoil

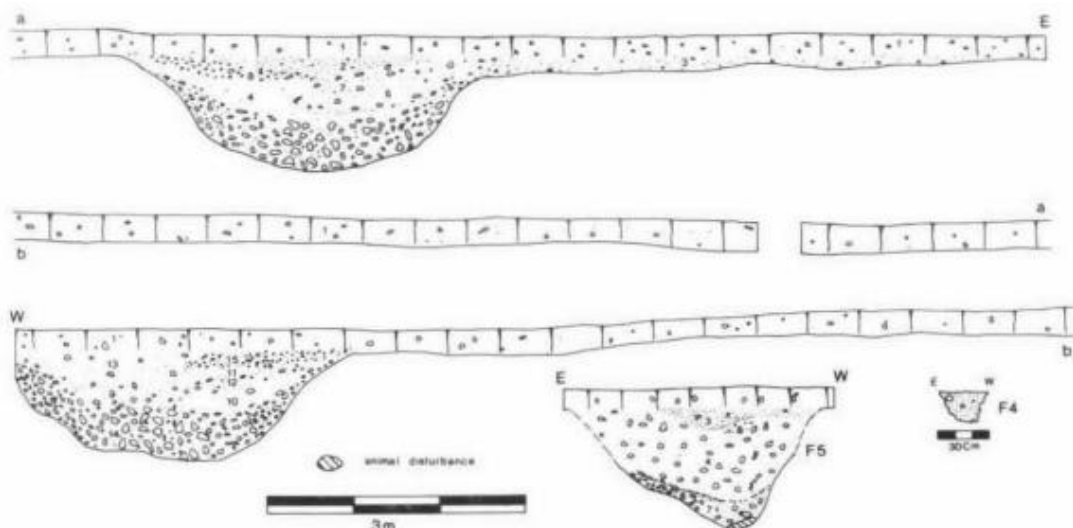


Fig. 2. Section W-E.

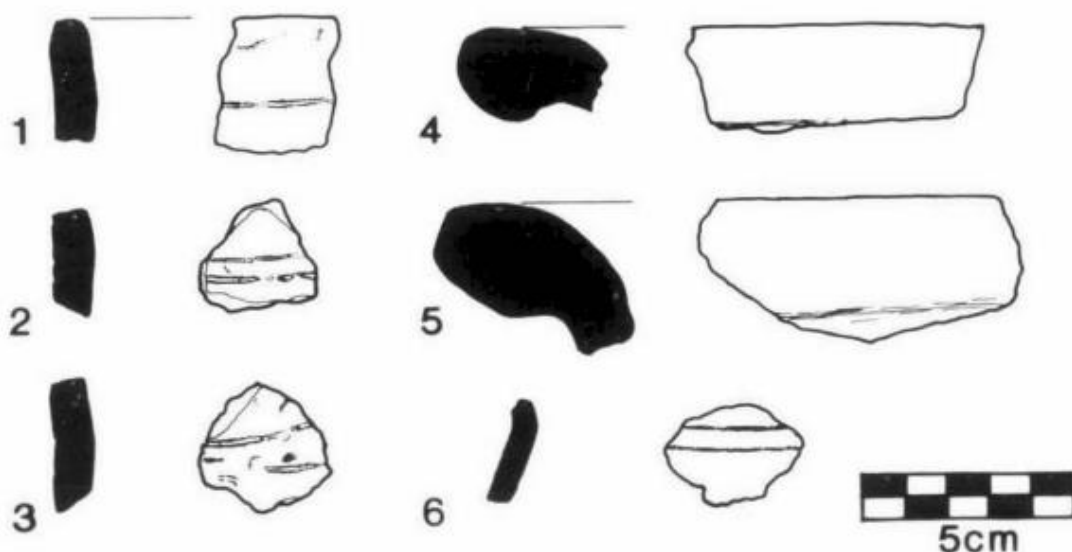


Fig. 3. 1-3: Beaker, L8, F5; 4: Roman storage vessel, L4; 5: Roman storage vessel, unstratified (L8); 6: Roman cooking vessel, L7/8.

The two sherds from the ring ditch were a body sherd from L5 spit 1, and a probable 'urn' fragment from L14 spit 1. Three Roman sherds came from L4 and above in the ring-ditch} and consisted of two large storage-vessel rims and a neck sherd of a cooking-vessel of mid first- to mid second-century date.

FLINT

A total of 545 pieces of struck flint were recovered, including 37 rolled examples which are probably of geological origin. Perhaps as many as seven flint types, defined on the basis of colour, texture, cortex and inclusions, were used, although 87 per cent of the material was of three types only. Nodules exceeding 15 cm were not common; the quality of the material is variable, with many examples showing thermal fracture planes.

Cores

The seventeen cores, which consist of irregular flaked lumps, do not lend themselves to the use of subtle typological schemes such as that based on platform number. What is perhaps more relevant is to quantify the proportion of cores used to produce narrow flakes. The chronological significance of flake Length:Breadth ratios is now well-known, and should equally apply to the analysis of cores.

At North Stoke, three examples were recovered which showed narrow flake scars (one scar per core), but in no way can these be described as 'blade cores'. The small but nevertheless persistent occurrence of narrow Rakes in Later Neolithic and Bronze Age assemblages would presuppose narrow flake scars on some cores.

The degree of core use is variable, and ranges from examples from which only one flake has been removed to those which seem worked out. This variation can partly be explained by the erratic quality or the nodules, but is more likely to be due to the luxury or choice afforded by the relative abundance or raw material.

Flakes

A total of 162 intact unpatinated flakes from the primary ditch silts (L5, sp. 1 and sp. 2) were measured, primarily to recover chronological information. The attributes measured were length, breadth, thickness, type or end fracture, amount or remaining cortex and bulb angle. The Length and Breadth measurements show that Narrow flakes (L:B ratio $\geq 5:2$) account for only 1 per cent of the total, and Broad flakes (L:B $\leq 1:1$) 43 per cent. As with the cores this contrasts strongly with the proportions typical of Mesolithic and Earlier Neolithic assemblages and is more-or-less typical of Later Neolithic and Bronze Age assemblages in Southern England: The other four measured attributes have recently been shown to vary from the Later Neolithic to the Bronze Ages. These variations reveal chronological trends, some more statistically significant than others, which can be used to assist in distinguishing these assemblages. The North Stoke assemblage seems to be characteristic of the Bronze Age. The effect of different circumstances or deposition (quarrying, domestic use, etc.) on the formation of lithic assemblages is not yet known, and the reasons for the above trends are not understood. It has, however, been observed that for North Stoke and three other assemblages from round barrows, the high proportion of cortical flakes may indicate 'extractive' sites.

⁶ Method as in A. Saville, 'On the Measurement of Struck Flakes and Flake Tools', Lithic Studies Society Newsletter 1 (1980), 16-20.

⁷ M. W. Pitts, 'Towards an Understanding of Flint Industries in Post-Glacial England', Bulletin of the Institute of Archaeology University of London xv (1978), 179-197. •

S. Ford., R.J. Bradley, J. Hawkes and P. Fisher. 'Flint Working in the), Metal Age' forthcoming.

Implements

Eight implements were recovered: two scrapers, four irregularly retouched flakes, a notched flake and a possible hammerstone. Apart from one scraper, no other item has been sufficiently modified to show conclusively whether the retouch was intentional or due to accidental 'natural' causes.

Microwear Analysis

Fifteen items from L5, sp. 1 and sp. 2 (6.4 per cent of all flint from this layer) were examined to determine if any had been sufficiently heavily used to produce microscopic wear patterns. The pieces selected for study were those most likely to have seen heavy use, such as easy-to-hold flakes with regular non-cortical edges. In only one instance (a scraper) were traces observed that might be attributed to use, and even this is more likely to be due to post-depositional stone damage. The lack of microwear traces does not prove non-use of particular items; on the other hand unused or little-used flints are what would be expected on an extractive site.

Discussion

From the lithic considerations, it seems likely that the assemblage most contemporary with the construction of the ring ditch is, Bronze Age. The presence of patinated and perhaps rolled flakes shows that earlier material is also represented. It may be suggested that this assemblage represents the by-products of quarrying. The high proportion of cortical flakes and the lack of microwear traces support this proposition, while it is hard to think of any other reason why a non-domestic monument should produce so many flints. In an environment where flint sources were not as widely available as

they are now (after exposure by modern cultivation), material produced during construction of the monument could have been particularly attractive. It is not known what products were removed from the site. Although refitting experiments were unsuccessful, the presence of a high percentage of cortical flakes and worked-down cores shows that both trimmed nodules and flake blanks may have been removed.

CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this excavation, to recover datable artefactual and environmental evidence, has only been partly satisfied. No diagnostic pottery or C14 date was obtained} but the flint assemblage seems likely to be Bronze Age. Since these flints were probably in a primary context, the ring-ditch itself, which represents the remains of a burial monument, may probably be assigned to the Bronze Age. If the above argument is valid, the assemblage is especially interesting as a by-product of quarrying activities.

The ditch stratigraphy suggests that once the monument had become stable} it was set in grassland. Not until Roman or later times did ploughing occur close to the edge of the ditch. On one interpretation, the ditch silting of the Beaker ring-ditch 80 m. to the north-east may result from the same ploughing episode.

Feature 5 is best regarded as the remnants of an inhumation grave for which the Beaker sherds from L8 provide a terminus ante quem. A charcoal sample from L5, suitable for C14 dating, has been deposited with the site archive in case the need arises for an absolute date for this feature. Finally, the monument may have continued as a recognisable mound until after the Roman period. It is crossed by a parish boundary hedge, and it is well known that barrows sometimes served as reference points in Saxon and later land boundaries. A fuller version of this report, including specialist reports and details of the Hint report, has been deposited with the archive and finds in the Ashmolean Museum (Department of Antiquities)

⁹ Analysis undertaken by J. Dumont.

¹⁰ H. Case in Catling op. cit. note 2.

SMA 1983, P134

NORTH STOKE

S Ford

The excavation of a scheduled ring 'ditch eroding into a quarry was undertaken during August, in order to produce artefactual and environmental evidence as a part of a wider fieldwalking project by Steve Ford in the parish of North Stoke.

An area of 106 square metres was excavated. This revealed a complete E-W section across the monument, the single ring ditch in two places and a single external posthole. No direct evidence of a funerary function was revealed except perhaps for a prehistoric sherd with '1117re fabric from the secondary ditch silts. 21 percent of the interior of the ring ditch and 7 percent of the ditch contents were examined. The trenches were located to examine a possible recut or outer ditch observed in the quarry face. This feature! failed to appear in the excavated areas and was at a later date shown to be a large pit or ditch terminal.

About 20 sherds of pottery were recovered from the ring ditch. In addition to the above mentioned sherd, a second undiagnostic prehistoric specimen was. recovered from the primary di tch silts.

Three sherds of Roman pottery were recovered from the higher ditch silts which gives a terminus post quem for the various ploughing episodes recorded in the ditch section. Finally, about 15 sherds of Beaker pottery were recovered from the top of the large pit seen ! . in the quarry! face.

Struck flint was fairly abundant from all layers of the site with approximately 400 from the primary silts. On first impressions these flakes and cores are the residue of quarrying activity utilising good flint produced by construction of the ring ditch. Similar quarries may also occur at Micheldever, Itford Hill and Amesbury G71. A sample of about 50 flakes have been bagged individually unwashed in order that their potential for microwear study can be evaluated.

SMA 1989 P59

IN SEARCH OF APPLEHANGER

Mary Kift, Marion Fallowfield and Patricia Preece

While working on a parish survey of South Stoke for the South Oxfordshire Archaeological Group the name 'Applehanger' appeared time and again in the medieval period. The name seemed to be that of a manor in the Woodcote-Goring region but just where was not clear. Determined to attempt to discover its possible position many hours were spent studying relevant passages in the Goring and Eynsham cartularies and other documents besides walking the area and looking at appropriate maps.

Applehanger was a small manor, partly in South Stoke and partly in Goring. Although an area of it was in South Stoke its affinities appear to be with Elvendon which is in Goring. It was in the jurisdiction of Elvendon manor court and some of the clues came from the Elvendon court rolls.

A brief description of the ownership of the manor may be helpful. Applehanger originally appeared in 1181 when the Priory of Goring was given land from the King by a gift of Thomas de Druival "--- and five acres near to Applehanger". (1) Thomas de Druival must have owned Applehanger because in 1205 he granted it to Hugh de Bixa. (2) After this the picture becomes confused; Matilda, the widow of Hugh, claimed the manor as a dower in 1224, however there seems to have been some problem. The Abbot of Oseney was involved and was said to have recognised that it was the inheritance of Emma Brande, wife of Robert Brande, who 59 was the warrant of the dower. Matilda paid 100 marks to the Abbot of Oseney and obtained the manor. (3)

Emma Brande had the manor on the death of Matilda and it seems possible that Emma and Matilda were related - even mother and daughter? This seems probable because after Emma's death, Applehanger was held in 1300 by her daughter Matilda Brande (4) who might have been named after her grandmother.

In 1347 William Loveday held the manor (5) - though no reference could be found as to how he acquired it. His brother John held the adjacent manor of Elvendon and Applehanger was represented at the manor court there. On William's death the manor was divided between his two daughters, Eleanor and Joan. Eleanor married John Soundy and when he died she married John atte Beche and had a son William; Joan married John Tyrel. Their rights in the estate were laid out in a document dated 1358-9. (6) About the same time, Joan leased her share to the manor to Thomas Brounz and shortly afterwards William atte Beche (after the death of his mother?) did the same. It seems that it is possible that it remained in the Beche family for one or two generations after this but there is no documentary proof.

The division of the manor provides the clue to the extent of the manor. The division was as follows:-
Eleanor atte Beche Joan Soundy

Dovecote	Longfelde
Hayfield	Woodscrofte

Applehanger Park	Bykkefeld
Parkfeld	Stokkyng
Philippeslith	Wellegrove
Ruggecroft	
Barrecroft	
Rycroft (also called Raycroft)	

Some of these places cannot be found on any available map but those that can, or can be traced in any other way, give a clue to establishing the content of Applehanger manor. There will be references to 'shaws': these in Oxfordshire are strips of woodland left after clearance of woodland that act as field boundaries. The names that can be traced are as follows:-

1 *Hayfeld* - can be assumed to be enclosed by Hayfield shaws as marked on the 6 inch OS map.

2 *Applehanger Park* - can be equated with Elmorepark Wood, for in 1358 it belonged to Eleanor Beche and was 'Eleanors park' because in the 1409 Elvendon court roll the name is written as 'Elynore Parke' (8); in 1672 it is found as 'Einar Park' (9) this must have altered over the centuries to Elmorepark. The size was 76 acres - deer parks in the Chilterns tended to be small, mostly below 200 acres. On the northern edge of the wood there is a substantial bank which is approximately 1 1/2 metres high and 3-4 metres wide; this must have been part of the park pale. There are other banks, as marked on the map, but they are not so large.

3 *Parkfeld* - in the area west of Elmorepark wood the tithe award map of Goring (10) shows 'Elmore Park shaws', these surround an arable field which might have been 'Parkfeld'.

4 On the east of Elmorepark wood is found Ruscroft Wood. There are banks surrounding an area which was probably shaws around a field; the erstwhile field has now become woodland but was probably Rucroft - assarted at an early date.

5 *Barrecroft* - must have been on the Bar Way (11) which is now the South Stoke road. William de la Barre was granted land in South Stoke circa 1264-68. (12) Could Broad Street farm have once been Barrecroft?

6 From a charter of 1285 it seems possible that part of High Wood was called *Phelippesgrof* (13) and therefore

PROBALE EXTENT OF APPLEHANGER MANOR

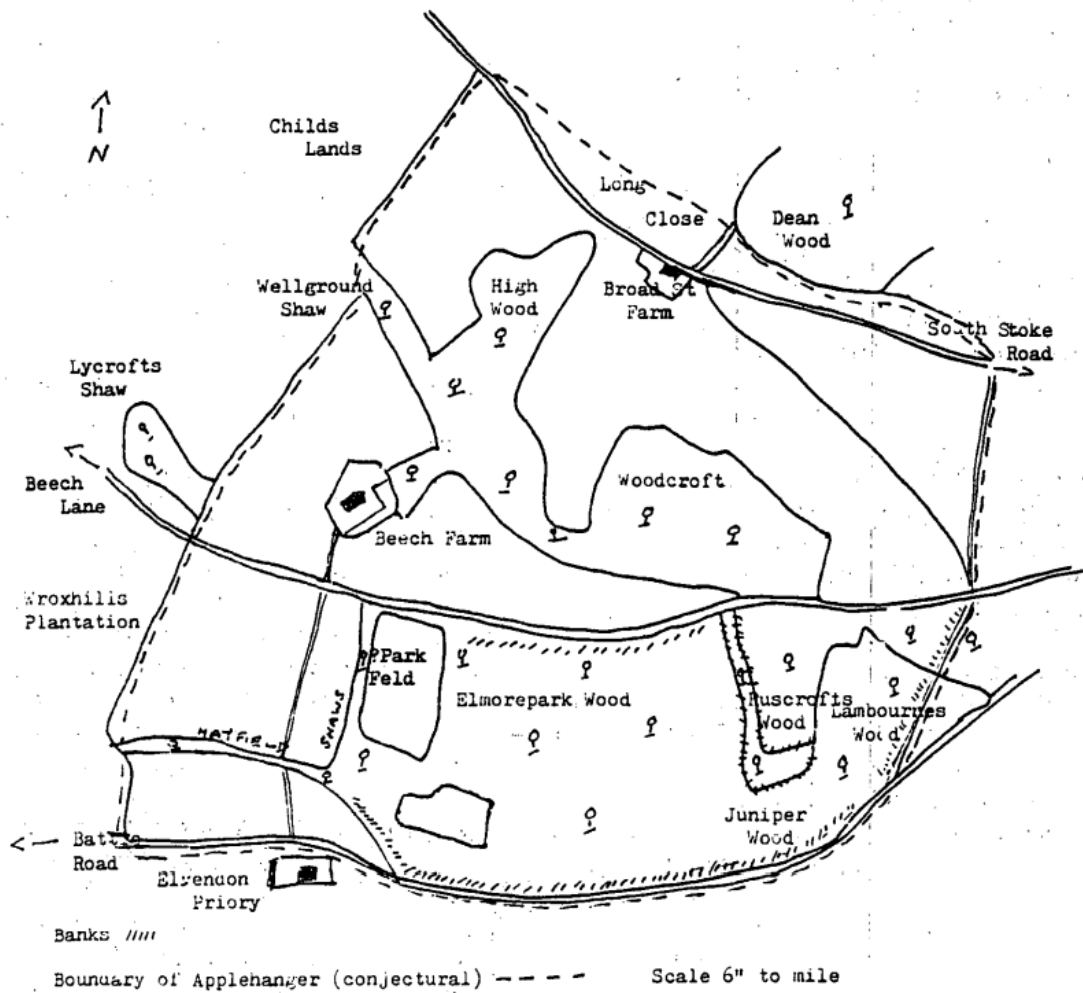


Fig. 1

Philippeslith was in that vicinity. As High Wood has no wood bank on the eastern side, it is probable that Philippeslith lay to the east of the wood and that the wood was considerably smaller at that time, as were so many of the woods due to the land hunger of the late 13th and early 14th centuries.

7 *Woodscrofte* is now Woodcroft Wood.

8 *Wellegrove* must have been a wood as its name implies and Wellground Shaw on the OS map would seem to be in the right area.

9 *Longfelde* is probably the field called Longclose on the Tithe Award map of South Stoke. (14)

Somewhere within the manor there must have been the manor house (with its dovecote) and Beech farm seems to be the Most likely site. The transition from Beche to Beech is obvious. The Present farmhouse apparently, has a very old part and there was a tradition in Woodcote that Beech farm was Applehanger.

Filially to establish the extent of the manor it was necessary to look for surrounding areas that could be excluded and therefore the possible borders were followed round.

On the west Wroxhills Wood and Plantation was part of land probably held by the Wroxhale family from an early period (15) and therefore can be excluded from Applehanger. Travelling clockwise from Wroxhills on the map, Lycroft shaw is reached which can be equated with Leycroft which was held by the de Purve family (16) in the 14th century. Lycroft shaw therefore cannot be part of Applehanger. Next is Childs Lands which are found on the Tithe Award map for Goring (17) and belonged from early medieval times to Eynsham Abbey. The land was leased by the Abbey to a family called Passelewe from the 13th century onwards. (18) This sets it apart from Applehanger.

The eastern boundary of Applehanger is conjectural but it may be that the double banks bounding the track though Lambournes Wood may have formed part of it. There is a path from this towards Beech Lane which may be a continuation of the edge of the manor. The remainder of the eastern boundary cannot be established. The southern edge is clearly delineated by the Battle road which forms the northern boundary of Elvendon manor. There is a bank running parallel with the road which as well as forming the park pale may also have been a boundary bank of Applehanger. An interesting survival is the track which must have been the connection between the two manors, running southwards from Beech farm to what is now called Elvendon Priory although it was only a grange of Goring Priory. Elvendon Court was held there and Applehanger's affairs were handled at it so a road connection must have been essential.

It is believed that after the atte Beches the manor passed to the Lovedays of Elvendon, who held it from the Priory, and lost its identity. The last reference found is in 1526 in the Elvendon Court rolls where the 'Beche lands' are described as 'alias Appulhanger'. (19)

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Tim Allen

Goring: Gatehampton Farm (Centred SU 604 796)

In advance of pipe-laying by the Thames Water Authority on the north bank of the river Thames a strip 7m wide and 150m long has been cleared and excavated along the west side of the Goring-Reading railway. The excavated strip ran north, at right-angles to the river, rising from the very edge of the gravel terrace and floodplain onto a plateau of sand. This is crossed by a wide late glacial channel and gives way towards the north end to a silty clay subsoil.

A Bronze Age barrow cemetery was known from cropmark evidence in this field; and George Lambrick conducted an excavation in 1985 which demonstrated that one of the barrows had a surviving mound, and which recovered Bronze Age pottery from beneath alluvium at the river's edge (South Midlands Archaeology, 16, (1986), 100). The 1987 excavation was expected to clip the ditch of another of the barrows, and it was hoped that peripheral features would be found. In the event features of every Period from Neolithic to Roman were discovered, providing a coherent picture of the history of land use.

On the terrace edge was a Neolithic settlement consisting of hearths, pits and tree-holes filled with pot-boilers, struck flints, animal bone (77) and a little pottery. Part of a flint axe was found in one of the tree-holes pits. The flints are almost all debitage, that is cores and flakes, and this was clearly a flint-knapping site. The assemblage is dominated by long blades, suggesting an early or middle Neolithic date. One circular pit over 4m in diameter may have been a flint quarry; seams of gravel flint like that from which some of the worked examples were made ran round its sides.

Some 30m further north a layer of buried topsoil 0.3m deep was found preserved in the top of a late-glacial Stream-channel. Flint debitage was abundant throughout, and towards the bottom. was an area of burning containing a few sherds of pottery; probably of Neolithic date. Lumps of charcoal should enable the deposit to be radio-carbon dated; the character of the flintwork suggests that it may have been broadly contemporary with the settlement on the terrace edge.

The east side of one of the barrows lay within the trench, and part of the ditch was excavated, recovering pottery, bones and flints. The ditch was characteristically U-profiled' and survived nearly 1m deep: dug into sand and loose gravel, this appears to have' filled in rapidly. The mound of this barrow had been completely ploughed out.

At the north end of the trench, cut into the silty clay, was a vertical sided and flat-bottomed ditch 2.1m deep and 1.65m wide. This ran southeast, across the trench, and may have ended at an internal terminal seen in the east edge of the trench. Sherds of flint-tempered and shelly pottery came from the bottom, and the crouched burial of a juvenile halfway up the fill. The ditch is likely to be of late Bronze Age or early Iron Age date, and may, possibly be part of a defensive enclosure cutting off an area at the bend in the river, in effect a valley fort. There is no evidence for a bank alongside it; this was probably completely ploughed out. There were sherds of middle-late Iron Age pottery in the upper fills and Roman pottery in the very top. The largely infilled ditch seems to have acted as the boundary to a ploughed field to the north in the Roman period.

Further south a large corndrier built of tile, Chalk and flint was constructed on the edge of the Neolithic mound; And Roman pits were dug inside the Bronze Age barrow. The 'corndrier'. consisted of a deep central flue and narrow cross-channel in the usual T-shape, with an additional shallow chamber below the cross-bar of the T either side of the main flue, as at Atworth (see-Fig.p.79). This

structure had survived up to the level at which the tiles of the flue arches began to step inwards. There were no surviving gaps to allow air from the main flue into the side chambers; if they were heated it must have been through gaps just below the floor. Along one side of the 'corndrier' was a dump of charcoally soil bounded by a timber-slot. On the edge of the gravel terrace the Neolithic settlement was cut through by the deep ditches of an early Roman enclosure. All of these Roman features were probably, associated with an adjacent river-crossing; cropmarks show a trackway coming down to the river on the north side just opposite, and Roman buildings of an associated settlement were destroyed by the railway in the-19th century.

Most of an Anglo-Saxon grubenhaus also lay within the trench. This was sub-rectangular and c. 4.5m x 3m across, with a flat bottom and a large posthole at the west end. Pottery from it was largely residual Roman sherds, but there were also a few Saxon sherds. Around this was a scatter of possible postholes.

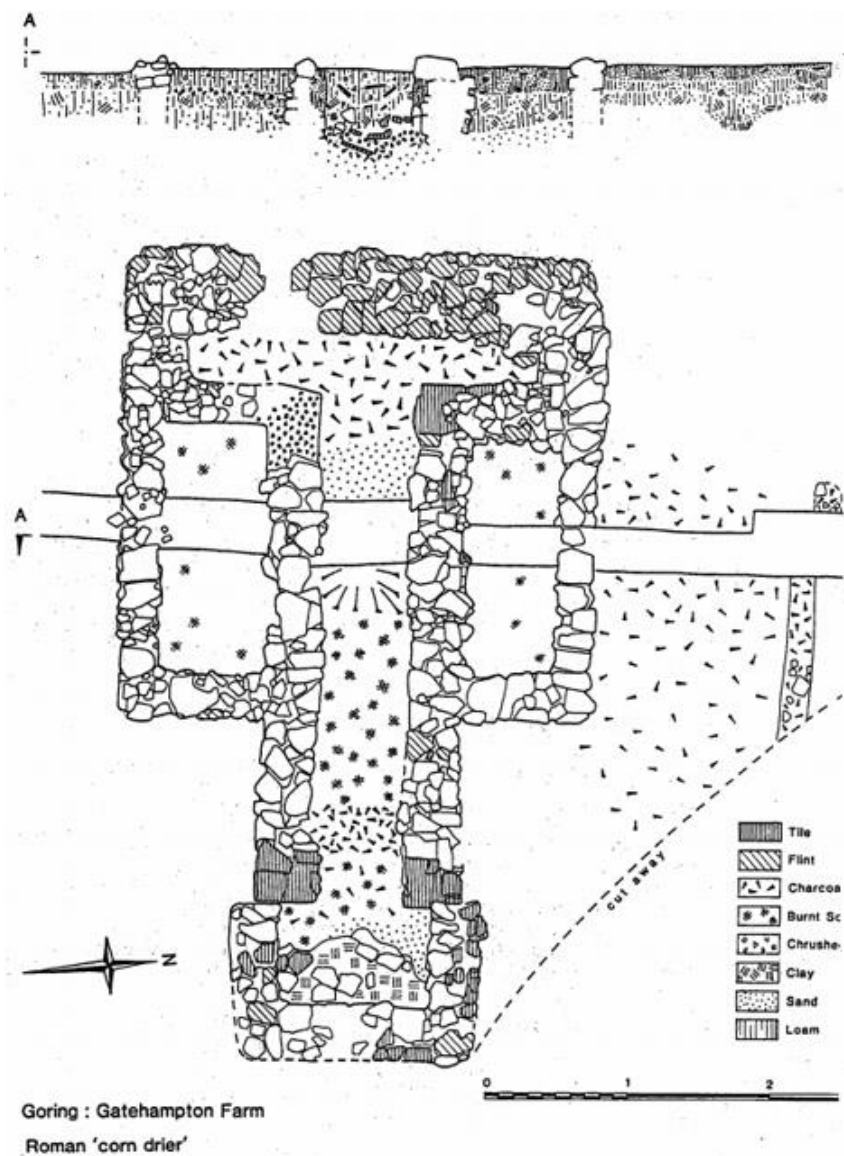


Fig. 1

The excavation has demonstrated that the area is of great archaeological significance, and we are very grateful to Thames Water for funding the work. A further season of excavation prior to pipe-laying is currently in progress.

SMA 1989, p51

Goring: Gatehampton Farm - Tim Allen

(Centred SU 606 797)

Following the unexpected discoveries of the trench dug in advance of pipe laying just west of the railway line in 1987, Thames Water generously funded another season of excavation along the east side of the railway in advance of destruction. Over the 200m closest to the river a trench up to 10m wide was cleared by machine; north of this the line was followed with a 1.5m assessment trench, again dug by machine (Fig 6).

Within the main trench occupation was concentrated in two areas, both in silt-filled channels of a late glacial stream. One ran obliquely across the trench towards the river, Area 2, and the other cut along the junction of the flint gravel terrace and the lane south of it, Area 1. Although the area north of this is known from cropmarks to contain round barrows, hardly any man-made features were encountered within the trench.

Area 1

The hollow, some 40m across, was bounded north and south by ditches 130 and 126 respectively, both on a NE-SW alignment. The ground surface between them had been cobbled over, but this cobbling stopped c. 2m north of ditch 126, as if respecting an upcast bank alongside it. The cobbling also stopped just short of the west trench edge here, perhaps suggesting that the return of 126 lay only just outside the trench; there was certainly no sign of it in the trench west of the railway line. There were no traces of structures upon the cobbling, which can be dated to the 3rd century by a brooch and a coin of Tetricus in good condition found upon it. After some 0.1m of soil had accumulated a second layer of larger cobbles just over 2m wide was laid on a NE-SW alignment down the middle of the enclosure. This had patches of chalk within it, and was edged with squared flint blocks on the north side; it was probably a road. Finds from the cobbling and from the enclosing ditches included an iron sickle and adze, as well as pottery, vessel glass and animal bones.

Beneath the cobbling was a fairly clean silt. This overlay patches of silt interspersed with outcrops of the underlying flint gravel, which appeared to have been heavily disturbed, perhaps due to tree-holes. Flints and prehistoric pottery, probably of late Bronze Age or early Iron Age date, came from the silt, patches of which were reddened or blackened by burning. One or two features in the flint gravel to the north also produced pottery and flints. On the south edge of the hollow, south of ditch 126, the earliest silts produced a collection of flint flakes and tools distinctive for their large size.

During watching of the Thames Water pipe-laying the **South Oxfordshire Archaeological Group** uncovered another cluster of similar flint mapping debris. This lay in the top of a silt-filled channel, a continuation of that excavated in 1987. Two successive layers of flints were recovered, each comprising over 150 long blades and double-platform cores, the blades being up to 20 cms long. These are late Upper Palaeolithic; among the blades are several examples with heavy scarring on the dorsal face, which are known as "bruised blades" and are characteristic of butchery sites of the period.

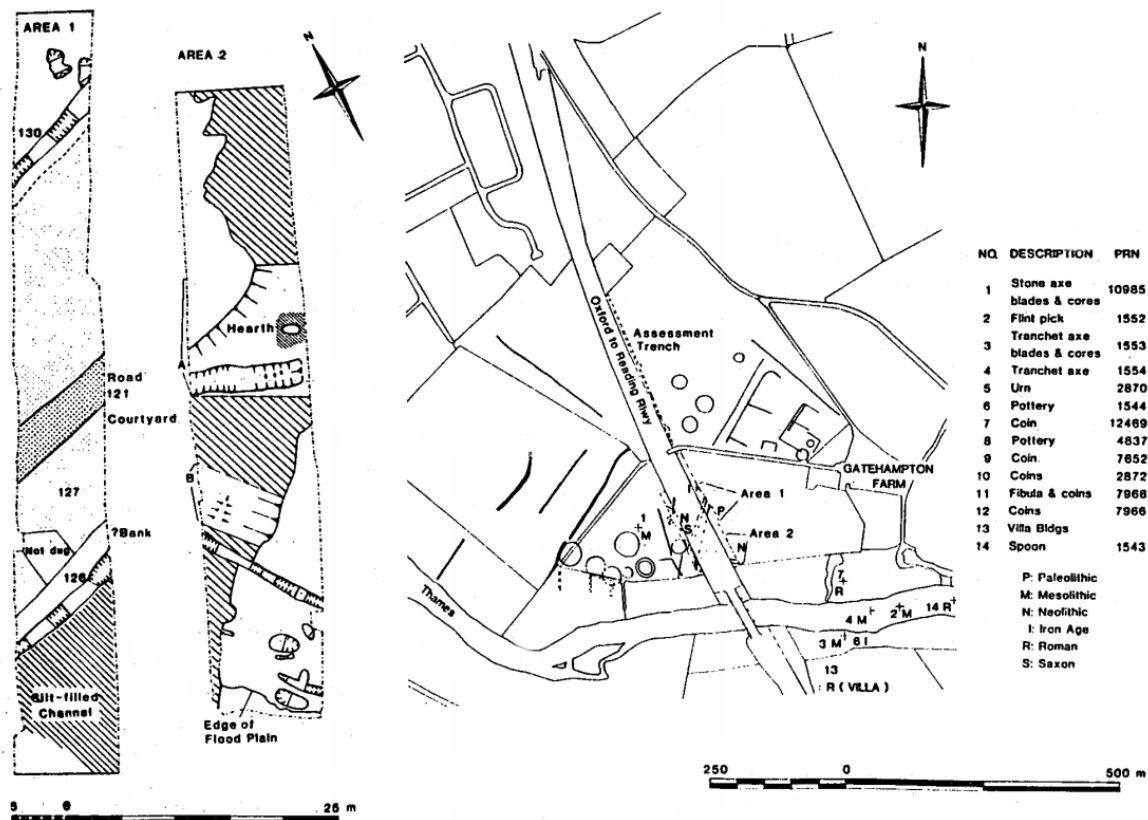


Fig 6 Gatchampton Farm

Area 2

South of Area 1 the sand was virtually sterile. Running south-west across the southern 60m of the trench however was another silt-filled channel, feature 146, whose top contained worked flints, bones and pottery. Two trenches A and B were laid out across this. B contained dark occupation rich silts in two channels along the bottom, both of which were covered by a layer of silt containing a horizon of struck flints. This was cut by postholes, and was overlaid by a sterile silt layer. However the top fill of the hollow contained more flint debris.

Trench A contained a long sequence of silts, most of which had abundant flints in them. Below the top fills was a reddened sub-circular hearth, surrounded by dark occupation soil, and the flints were concentrated in the area of the hearth. Below the hearth was a thick deposit of silt within which soil distinctions were very slight; distinct horizons of flints however indicate a number of successive working surfaces. One or two postholes were also associated with these horizons. In some areas distinct clusters of flint chips occurred, suggesting that these were primary debris from knapping. In general the flints clustered in the area later occupied by the hearth, perhaps indicating a long-lived focus of activity. Below these occupation layers there were two V-profiled ditches cut into the bottom of the channel.

Cores, flakes and other debitage were very common; the flintwork also included parts of two leaf-shaped arrowheads and a roughout for an axe, probably indicating an Earlier Neolithic date. Pottery was scarce and very fragmentary, and cannot be closely dated, but samples have been taken from the hearth for magnetic dating. The top fill included sherds of Late Neolithic and Bronze Age pottery, and associated flints including thumbnail scrapers.

South of this hollow were shallow pits similar to the Neolithic pits found on the terrace edge in the 1987 excavation. The pits and the hollow were cut by Roman ditches on a NW-SE alignment; which contained domestic rubbish.

Roman Roads South and East of Dorchester-on-Thames

By FJ. MALPAS

SUMMARY

Four Roman roads can be shown to enter Dorchester-on-Thames apart the well-known road coming in from Alchester on the N. These roads come from Streatley on the S. (and ultimately from Silchester), from Henley on the SE. (and ultimately from the main London-Silchester road), and from Aston Clinton and Fleet Marston, both on the NE. and on Akeman Street. There is also good evidence for two local roads E. of the Thames at Dorchester

The introduction to the Ordnance Survey Map of Roman Britain (4th ed., 1978) states that 'only well authenticated stretches of road are shown on the map as certain'. For the area under review the map shows only the road coming in from Alchester to Dorchester and its continuation southwards between Brightwell and Sotwell as far as Mackney; the map also shows the prehistoric Icknield Way/Ridgeway. A number of Roman roads S. and E. of Dorchester, for which the writer suggests there is good evidence, are shown on Fig. 1. The purpose of this article is to review this evidence. The article has gained considerably from discussion with Richard Chambers and David Miles of the Oxford Archaeological Unit, but they are in no way responsible for its shortcomings. Thanks are also tendered to the various landowners who have kindly allowed access to their property. The article would not have been possible without the active co-operation of the writer's wife.

A SILCHESTER DORCHESTER

This road enters the area through the Goring Gap at Streatley. A Roman settlement here is indicated by finds of foundations and coins,¹ the latter being frequent, and by the place-name. The actual way through the gap S. of Streatley must have been approximately along the terrace on which the modern road runs.

From a point on the A329 some 600m. north of Streatley crossroads, the modern road runs due N. and straight for 600m till it meets Streatley Farm. This can be taken as the line of the Roman road: if extended southwards, it crosses Streatley High Street as a terrace in front of the Manor House and meets the A329 again S. of the village: if extended northwards, it is accompanied by the modern road swinging a few metres to either side of it till the present county boundary is crossed after another 800m.

At Streatley farm itself the modern road swings W. to avoid the farm buildings; but the suggested Roman line goes straight through them. Indeed, the entrance to the old barn on the N. side is firm, well drained and on the line, as is the former rick yard opposite.² At the county boundary the modern road swings a few degrees W., but the suggested Roman line heads straight for the high ground at Sowberry Court S. of Moulsoford. From here visibility back to the A329 south of Streatley is excellent, and the Roman alignment swings a few degrees W. to point at the saddle north of Brightwell-cum-Sotwell, some 8.5km. away.

In Ferry Lane, Moulsoford, a timber-framed Cottage takes advantage of the firm foundation offered by the Roman road, as does Moulsoford church. This was rebuilt in 1846, but on the old foundations.³ The church stands on a clear terrace, as do various other buildings in Moulsoford; this is best seen from the other side of the river. During the 19th century Roman coins were found in Moulsoford, but it is not clear where.⁴ Just N. of Moulsoford the Roman line crosses the A329. A British Gas pipeline was laid under the road at this point in 1976. but the modern road had apparently obscured any

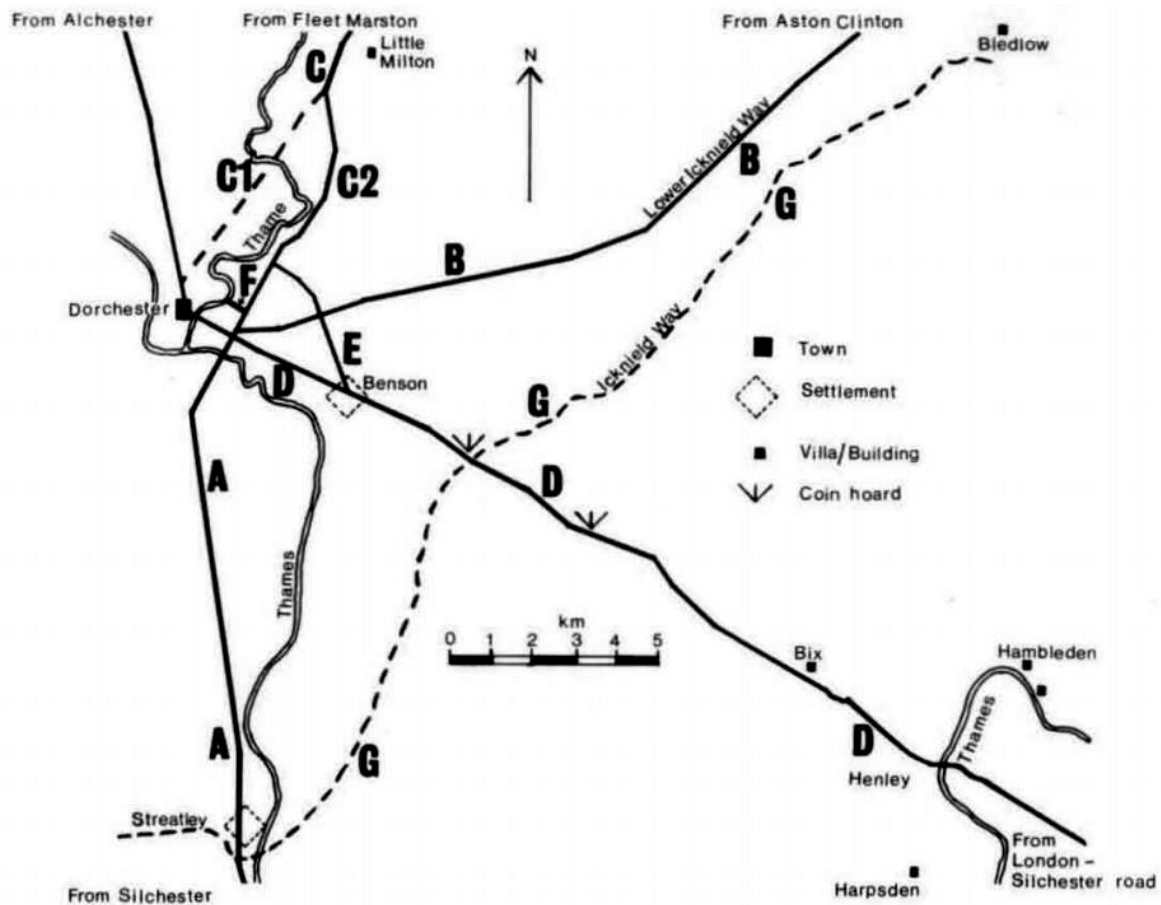


Fig. 1. Outline map of the area, showing roads A-G. *Crown copyright reserved.*

possible remains of the Roman road. The pipeline did reveal two parallel ditches some 4.5m. apart (centre to centre) 250m. to the E., but it is difficult to see any connection between these ditches and the Roman road.⁵

To the N. of this point the agger cause a distinct hump across Halfpenny Lane just to the west of a petrol station on the main road; S. of the lane a concentration of flint is clearly visible after ploughing. North of the lane a track used to run along the Roman line, at least until the late 19th century, and fifty years ago its ridge was still visible across the field, as was a layer of gravel in the side of the railway cutting.⁶ The track still exists north of the railway, and continues through Cholsey as Honey Lane. The swelling of the agger causes a hump across the Wallingford Road outside the vicarage, and when the vicarage was rebuilt in 1931 traces of an old road were seen in its grounds.⁷ There were 19th-century finds of Roman coins in Cholsey, but no locations were recorded.⁸ In Church Road, on the N. edge of the village, there is an old house called Causeway Farm, and although it lies W. of the Roman line its land may well once have included a visible agger. Further N Roman pottery has been found on Hillgreen Farm⁶ but nothing is to be seen on the ground for 2km. N. of the village. Rocque⁹ shows a straight field boundary for some of the way, but there is no other evidence for this and, like many of his field-boundaries, it is probably conventional only. Where the Roman line crosses Mill Brook W. of Hithercroft Farm there is a hard bottom⁶ A slight swelling is visible across the meadow between the brook and the road to the S. of it; in the hedge-line on the N. side of the road when seen from the meadow; in the headland immediately of the road; and in the hedge-line 300m. N. of the brook.

At Mackney the Ordnance Survey line starts and goes along Mackney Lane. It continues as the parish boundary between Brightwell and Sotwell, called 'The old Street' in the mid-10th century¹⁰ as far as the Thames. It goes between the twin villages as a footpath, then between modern houses, crosses the by-pass (A4130) and climbs the hill as an overgrown bridle-way. At the saddle the alignment swings about 30° E. to point at the western flank of Town Hill above Warborough and is marked downhill by the bridle-way and finally by a drainage ditch. The crossing of the Thames was identified by G.B. Grundy as Old Street Ford¹¹ and is marked on the N. bank by a low causeway.¹²

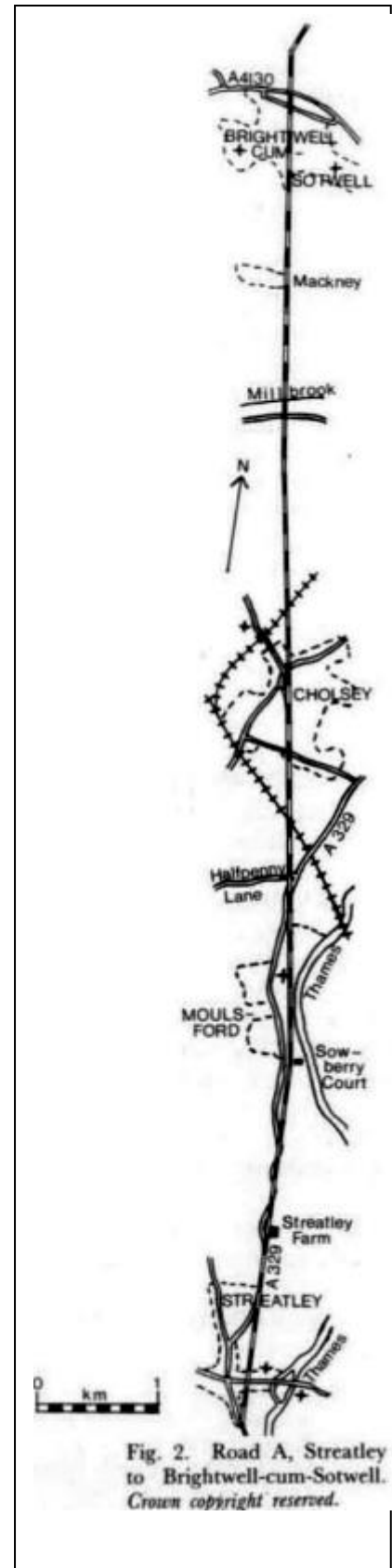
To the N. of the river the alignment swings a few degrees further E. to point directly at the top of Town Hill. It is picked up by the parish boundary between Dorchester and Warborough and soon meets the road coming in from Henley, which it joins 10 Dorchester (sec D below).

8. ASTON CLINTON - DORCHESTER (I.OWER ICKNIELD WAY)

This road leaves Akeman Street west of Tring and runs roughly parallel to the prehistoric Icknield Way, but along the foot of the Chiltern escarpment; it has obviously got its name from this parallel path. Near Shirburn it swings away from the hills and heads for Dorchester via Cuxham, Brightwell Baldwin, Berrick and Warborough. The N. part of the road has been worked out in detail by R.W. Bagshawe and R.H. Reid,¹³ and the S. part in similar detail by C. Morris, C.H. Hargreaves and R.P.F. Parker.¹⁴ Both accounts have accompanying maps, and it seems unnecessary to repeat these details here.

The line near Brightwell Baldwin was confirmed in 1976, when British Gas pipeline construction sectioned the road 600m. WSW. of Brightwell church. The road showed as a cambered layer of packed flint and pebble gravel, usually some 8cm. in thickness. The overall width was some 10m., with the edges marked by very ill-defined ditches. The road appeared to have been widened by some 2m. from an original width of some 8m¹⁵. It is interesting that, of the 21 known or suspected Roman roads crossed by the 355km. of the Southern Feeder pipeline, this was the only one which could be seen in the pipe trench section,¹⁶ a point which stresses the difficulty of determining the course of these roads. Also, the road as found lies S. of the direct alignment from Brightwell to Berrick and some 15-20m. N. of a bridle-way; this demonstrates how these minor roads tend to deviate from the direct alignment but to be built in short straight stretches which are often preserved by ancient bridle-ways and footpaths.

A few points can be added to the original accounts. Between Berrick Salome and Berrick Prior the agger is clearly visible where it crosses the modern road. The alignment from Berrick is probably better regarded as pointing straight at Castle Hill, Wittenham Clumps, which provides a clear sighting point, rather than at the Thames crossing, to which the road does not, after all, go. The agger is also clearly visible where it crosses Green Lane W. of Warborough. The line from Warborough to Green Lane is preserved by a footpath; beyond Green Lane it presumably continues the short distance till it meets road C(2) (see below).



C. FLEET MARSTON - DORCHESTER

Fleet Marston is a Romano-British settlement on Akeman Street to the W. of Aylesbury. The course of the road from there to Dorchester, running through Long Crendon, Great Milton and Little Milton, has been worked out in detail by R.W. Bagshawe." From a point N. of Stadhampton, Bagshawe puts forward a line shown as C(1) on Fig.1; the present writer suggests instead the line shown as C(2). The line C (1) leaves the modern road S. of Cold harbour Farm and goes by an ill-defined route through Stadhampton to Hayward Bridge, where the Thame is fordable. The line follows the modern road SW. for 300m., and then goes cross-country till it is picked up by the parish boundary W. of Drayton St. Leonard. For 1250m. the line is shown, with slight changes of alignment, by the parish boundary, the line of a former track and the modern road to Wally Corner. Here Bagshawe found "several large pieces of limestone" J. Sutton investigated a late Romano British site here, which he concluded to have been in limited use" over a limited time¹⁸. Bagshawe's line then meets the Alchester road N. of Dorchester, where the latter meets the pre-bypass modern Oxford road.

The line C(2) also leaves the modern road and the Roman line have been aligned for 900m. from just . of Little Milton onto the saddle above Brightwell-cum-Sotwell. C(2) heads a little E. of S. for a small patch of high ground by Ascott. For 500m. the line is marked by a hedge and ditch; the old house at Belcher's Farm stands on it, as does the modern barn by the B480 at Ascott. Here there is also a swelling in the road, apparent when vehicles drive fast over it, and from the S. the swelling is visible in the hedge-line; at a fence 100m. to the south a swelling is again visible.

At this point there is a change of alignment; visibility is excellent to both N. and S. The new line heads a little W of S. towards a rise near Great Holcombe; it goes first down into the valley S. of Ascott, where it is marked for 100m. by a boundary brook, formerly part of a mill race. It then goes over the gentle slope of Newbury Hill, and crosses a stream where a farm track does (by a bridge nowadays). On the line, just N. of the hedgerow by the bridge and therefore just E. of the farm track, the Newington Tithe Map of 1840 (Hamlet of Holcombe)¹⁹ shows an unnamed building, now gone and presumably a barn of some sort, which presumably stood on the remains of Roman metalling. There is another change of alignment by Great Holcombe, which turns the line further W. and points to the saddle above Brightwell-cum-Sotwell. The road-line is preserved by footpaths for most of the next 1100 m., but it passes immediately in front of Newington House and the footpath is diverted on to the modern road there. In the dip SW. of Newington the line swings a little to the W., as the saddle above Brightwell-cum-Sotwell is temporarily out of sight, and points at the westernmost of the Wittenham Clumps. For 200m. the line is preserved by a footpath, marked as a hedge on the Drayton St. Leonard tithe Map of 1841;¹⁹ it is then joined by the modern road. Once on the top of the Primrose Hill slope the road-line, Roman and modern, swings slightly E. to point straight at Town Hill above Warborough.

Roman and modern road-lines part company at the lay-by near Lower Grange, and there is nothing visible of the Roman line over Town Hill. At the top of the hill is a change of alignment of a degree or so, to head for the Thames crossing. For 900m. the line is marked by the parish boundary between Dorchester and Warborough; this is crossed by the Lower Icknield Way (B) and the Henley - Dorchester road (D).

Just S. of Town Hill a straight track and parish boundary heads off NW. to the Thame. This line (F) may well be that of a Roman road leading to the cemetery at Church Piece by the Thame²⁰.

The line C(2) is suggested, first because there are more indications of the former existence of a Roman road here than along C(1), and secondly because it makes better sense. It heads directly for the Thames crossing and thus avoids the two crossings of the Thame which a traveller from the north on C(1) would have to make. If the road network is regarded from the S., a road comes from Silchester to the Thames crossing and here splits; one branch goes through Dorchester to Alchester on Akeman Street and on to Towcester (Lactodorum) on Walling Street and so to the NW., while the more easterly branch crosses Akeman Street at Fleet Marston, Watling Street at Dropshort (Mogiovinium) and on to Ermine Street for the N. E.

If the line past Ascott and Newington seems somewhat roundabout, a careful look at the OS map²¹ or, better, a walk along the route will soon show the skill with which the Roman surveyor chose the best possible line. To have gone W. of Ascott would have meant crossing the valley at a very marshy point; to have gone further E. would have meant going through very wet land east of Belcher's Farm. The small valley between Holcombe and Newington is very steep-sided W. of the Roman line. The geological map²² shows that the (geologically speaking) recently-formed alluvial valley of the Thames is on the average broader than that of the Thames, and the Thames meanders a lot; in Roman times there must have been frequent flooding of the Thames and its tributary brooks.

D. HENLEY DORCHESTER

Margary accepts the line from Henley to Dorchester as a Roman road the course of which is certain,²³ and marks it as such on his maps. His description of it is, however, only general between Henley and Nettlebed, and between Nettlebed and Dorchester it is wrong.

The ford over the Thames at Henley, probably prehistoric in origin, remained in use for centuries as the E. end of the royal manor of Benson, until it was superseded by the bridge built when the new town of Henley was laid out towards the end of the 12th century. The Oxfordshire end of the ford would have been in the grounds of Phyllis Court. Margary reports that traces of a buried road have been observed under the centre of the lawns here, leading to the river at a point where old piles have been seen in the river-bed. These piles need not presume the existence of a bridge; if relevant at all, it is more likely that they would mark the course of the ford for a stranger coming this way. On the Berkshire bank, a terrace way comes gently down the hillside in Remenham Wood as a property boundary and points to the ford. The road south-eastwards from the ford, which leads to the London-Silchester road, does not concern us here.²⁴

From Phyllis Court the line of the road is marked by a property boundary heading WNW., clearly visible on the O.S. map and marked on crossing the Marlow road by two 18th-century lodges, where there is also a clear swelling across the road. After three slight changes of direction the line is shown by the wall of Henley Park running NW. beside the Fair Mile for 1.5km. This line from the river is the N. boundary of that part of the manor of Benson which is now in Henley.

The line of the park wall is continued into Lower Assendon by the narrow road bearing to the left off the B480 at Flint Cottage. This road from here to Bix was part of the normal route from Henley to Dorchester until the turnpike trust built a new road in 1798--9 on the line of the present dual carriageway." On the map the old road seems to wriggle about haphazardly; a closer study

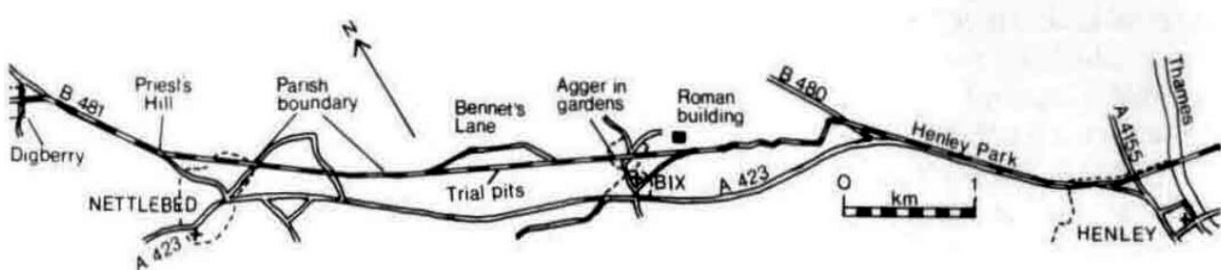


Fig. 4. Road D, Henley to Digberry. Crown copyright reserved.

much better, walking along the road shows that it goes, in typically Roman fashion, in a number of short, straight stretches which tackle the hill in the best possible way. Over many centuries of use the road has become worn down to, in places, a depth of several metres; it is impossible to say whether any of this was the result of deliberate culling, and just as impossible to say whether any such cutting could have been Roman. There has been chalk quarrying all the NE. side near the bottom. It is reasonable to assume that the line of the present road is Roman.

Once the road levels out, it runs straight for 450m.; the present road then turns W. along the edge or Bix Common to the village. Just before the bend, the site of a Roman building lies 100m. N. of the road; it was excavated in 1955 but no report has been published.²⁶

The line of the Roman road continues straight ahead from the bend, gently rising for another 2.5km. Nothing or it is visible at first, but then the agger stands out clearly in the front gardens of 19-22 Bix Common. The agger remains visible, though as a more gentle swelling, until it reaches the edge of Bix Underwood; the present track (Bennet's Lane) bears off to the N. just before the edge of the wood. The agger was just visible in the wood until tree-felling in 1984. Near the house in Bix Underwood there is a definite swelling where a N.-S. track crosses the Roman line, which is then marked for about 200m. by a rather indistinct boundary bank and ditch about 50m. S. of the right-of-way marked on the O.S. map.

Trial pits were dug in 1984 by the writer and boys of Reading School at SU71988588, between this boundary ditch and a vestigial ditch to the N. of it, the centres of the ditches being some 13m. apart. A pit dug centrally between the ditches showed, below 5cm. of topsoil, a 20-cm. layer of small flints over a 25-cm. layer of medium flints, which rested on the undisturbed subsoil of clay-with-flints. Two pits 3m. out from this central pit each showed a similar section, except the layer of small flints was only 15cm. thick. The top of the layer of small flints defined the camber, which was 20cm. higher in the central pit than in the side ones. The chalk bedrock is not far below the surface at this point, and it can never have been worth ploughing here: this may explain the preservation of the road.

The 1st edition of the O.S. 25" map shows the boundary bank and ditch running to the parish boundary with Nettlebed, but nothing can be seen of it now for the last 200m. The line of the road continues through the wood and across a field to join the present track 300m. E. of the entrance to the house called Halfridge; at the entrance, track and line swing a few degrees to the north to stay roughly level along the side of the valley to their N.

After crossing the side road to Crocker End, the track and line continue together for some 50m. The track then bears left along a modern line but the Roman line continues as a property boundary and a deer terrace along the side of the valley. The former hundred and parish boundary between Bix, and Nettlebed ran along the Roman line for 900m. from just E. of Halfridge to where it meets a minor road crossing the head of the valley.

The early County maps²⁷ show a straight road running from Bix Common to Crocker End and Nettlebed but it is impossible to say whether this was on the Roman line. The Bix Tithe Map of 1842¹⁹ shows only, Bennet's Lane as the E. part which curves round more to the N. The present main road from Bix to Nettlebed dates only from 1825²⁸, its predecessor being the road going off to the SW, opposite the 'Fox' at Bix., which now degenerates into a track which joins the B481 just south of Nettlebed.

The Roman line from Halfridge continues straight over what was Nettlebed Common and heads for Priest's Hill, where it meets the B481. Because of old clay workings and modern buildings it is impossible to find anything of the road for the last 750m, but it is shown clearly on Pride's 1790 map²⁹ Nettlebed lies on the flat crest of the Chilterns with sleep-sided valleys to W. and E. The Roman road stays on this flat crest as long as possible, descending gradually from near Ewelme Park and then heading N. of Benson to Dorchester, Margary however, saw the line as that of the medieval road from Nettlebed church and manor-house through Benson to Dorchester (i.e. the A423 before the extension or Benson aerodrome in 19142, except that the section of road from Gangsdown Hill to Gould's Heath is an 1827 turnpike road,²⁸ the older road running N. of Ambrose Farm). The two objections to Margary's line are that it does not follow on from the road coming up from Henley to Priest's Hill at Nettlebed, and that a more Northerly line can be shown to exist.

From Priest's Hill the Roman line swings a few degrees N and is followed by the modern road (with typical slight deviations) for just under 1km. It then turns WNW at first along a parish boundary)- and minor road and then across country for 1200m. The buildings of Digberry Farm lie on the line, but

the rectangular earthwork here has been described as definitely post-Roman by Professor S.S. Frere,³⁰

The line from Digberry was once a bridleway leading straight to Ewelme Park. The first part of this bridleway still exists as a track and parish boundary which now swings away from the Roman line: the second part degenerated through lack of use into a very thick hedge which was grubbed out in the 1960s. The line of the hedge was crossed by the laying of a British Gas pipeline in 1983 but, not surprisingly, no tract of the Roman road was found.³²

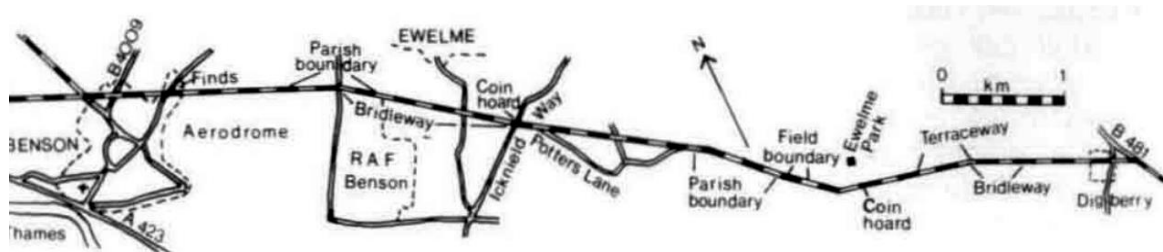


Fig. 5. Road D, Digberry to Benson. *Crown copyright reserved.*

Where the Roman line now meets a small wood at SU681887 it turns Wand heads for where a hoard of Roman coins was found S. of Ewelme Park in 1953,³³ The line is cut at first at an acute angle by the wood boundary, so that the flint metalling of the road is clearly visible for some 35m. in the raised edge of the wood till it emerges running along just inside the wood. This terrace way is some 7m wide, and at first completely overgrown; where it comes out into the open for about 100m, the hedge on its S side has been recently grubbed out and the metalling is again visible; for the next 150m. probing reveals a firm surface some 10cm. down. The 400m from SU681887 are represented by an old field-boundary after the right-of-way turns N., the Roman road has been so disturbed by forestry operations that there are no traces left until the swelling of the agger is visible again at the far end of the wood by the site of the hoard.

The line of the road continues straight for about another 200m., then swings about 25° to the N. and descends a gently sloping valley in the face of the scarp. The line runs as an old field boundary for 150m.;³⁴ from SU667893 it becomes the parish boundary between Ewelme and Nuffield for a further 650m. The last 350m. of this Stretch are along a clear bridleway, and it is at this point that the line put forward here joins that proposed G.H. Hargreaves, R.P.F. Parker and A.W.F. Boarder.³⁵

The present writer agrees almost completely with this last line, and it is now described with only minor amendments and additions. Hargreaves et.al. start from Dorchester and head for Ewelme Park; they do not describe in detail how their road would continue towards Henley, and the writer cannot accept their suggested line up the scarp, which follows the medieval bridleway from the manor-house at Ewelme to Ewelme Park.

From the point on the bridleway where a layer of packed flint-and-pebble was found on the chalk beneath 90cm. of loam,³⁶ to where the alignment crosses the Icknield Way at SU649906, the course of the road may have been either direct or along the line of the present bridleway and Palters Lane. Near the junction with the Icknield Way, a hoard of coins was found in 1720.³⁷ From this point the Roman line is preserved for nearly 1500m by a bridleway which swings from it no more than about 50m.; the last 300m. of this are also the parish boundary of Benson and Ewelme. Beyond this point the parish boundary follows the line for another 400m. across what is now Benson aerodrome, and was accompanied by a bridleway until the bridleway was built.

A straight alignment from here across the flat ground to Dorchester cuts through the NE tip of Benson village. Evidence for a Roman settlement here includes finds of coins and pottery³⁸, a possible cometary³⁹ and the suggestive fieldname Blacklands. About 1500m further W. along the alignment are a burial long suspected to be Roman⁴⁰ and a pottery find⁴¹ both to the W. of Hale Farm. Also near this point, Hargreaves et.al. report a clear section of the Roman road cut by a drainage ditch at Gallows Lease, SU60989265: 45cm. below the modern surface they found a 2t5cm

thick layer of flat limestone pieces, 9m.wide, surfaced with sandy gravel and on a thin foundation layer of debris laid directly on loam.

West of this section come 200m. of straight parish boundary (Benson – Warborough) nearly on the Roman line. Then 550m. of straight drainage ditch; this ditch preserve an old field-boundary which continued along the Roman line for a further 250m.⁴² The line crosses the A329 by Oatlands at the S. tip of Warborough village, where it is marked for 250m. by property boundaries on both sides of the road. At a point 600m. beyond the end of the modern road, a broad raised line starts and runs for nearly 800m., clearly visible where it is cut by the Dorchester bypass. It has been interpreted as a headland,⁴³ and most of it is shown as field boundaries on the Dorchester (Hamlet and Overy) and Warborough tithe maps, so it presumably cannot be taken as an agger, but it does preserve the Roman road-line; Roman burials were found to its S. in the 19th century.⁴⁴

This line crosses the Thames between the present (1813--15) bridge and the abbey church, and could have entered the Roman town of Dorchester or a predecessor fort by a gate roughly in the centre of an E. wall; There is no evidence for any Roman crossing of the Thames either at the site of the present bridge or at the site of its medieval predecessor at Bridge End Green. and access from both these sites to the fan or town would have been extremely awkward.

E. FOM BENSON NORTH-NORTH-WESTWARDS.

This road, a kind of short cut, made it possible for a traveller on one of the roads D. B or C(2) to join the other two roads without having to go near) to the Thames crossing and back again. It is shown as a road the whole way by both Jefferys (1776-7) and Davis (1797), but Bryant (1824) and the first edition of the Ordnance Survey 1in. map (1830) show it as such only in portions.

It leaves Benson now as Hale Road, an ordinary asphalted road as far as Hale Farm. North of the farm buildings it becomes a raised causeway some 8m. wide, probably dating in its present form from the 1850s, when the farm was laid out, as the causeway stops when it meets a drainage ditch. The Roman road continues as a slightly raised track, and this contrasts well with the bridleway from Roke to Warborough which it crosses after another 100m.; the latter, probably equally old as a bridleway, is not raised at all. The Roman road is gradually ploughed out in the field N. of the EW. bridleway), but its swelling can be clearly seen from the N. It is soon picked up by the parish boundary of Warborough, which it follows to the end. After it crosses the Lower Icknield Way it becomes a bridleway again; accompanied by a deep ditch, it goes with two changes of alignment to its junction with road C(2).

F: see above

G THE PREHISTORIC ICKNIELD WAY WIDGEWAY

It is generally agreed that this prehistoric long-distance route remained in use in Roman times, as is shown by numerous finds along its path. It is also quite likely that sections of it would have been improved from time to time to Roman standards. Any discussion of this route is, however, outside the scope of this article; Fig. I shows it for the sake of completeness.

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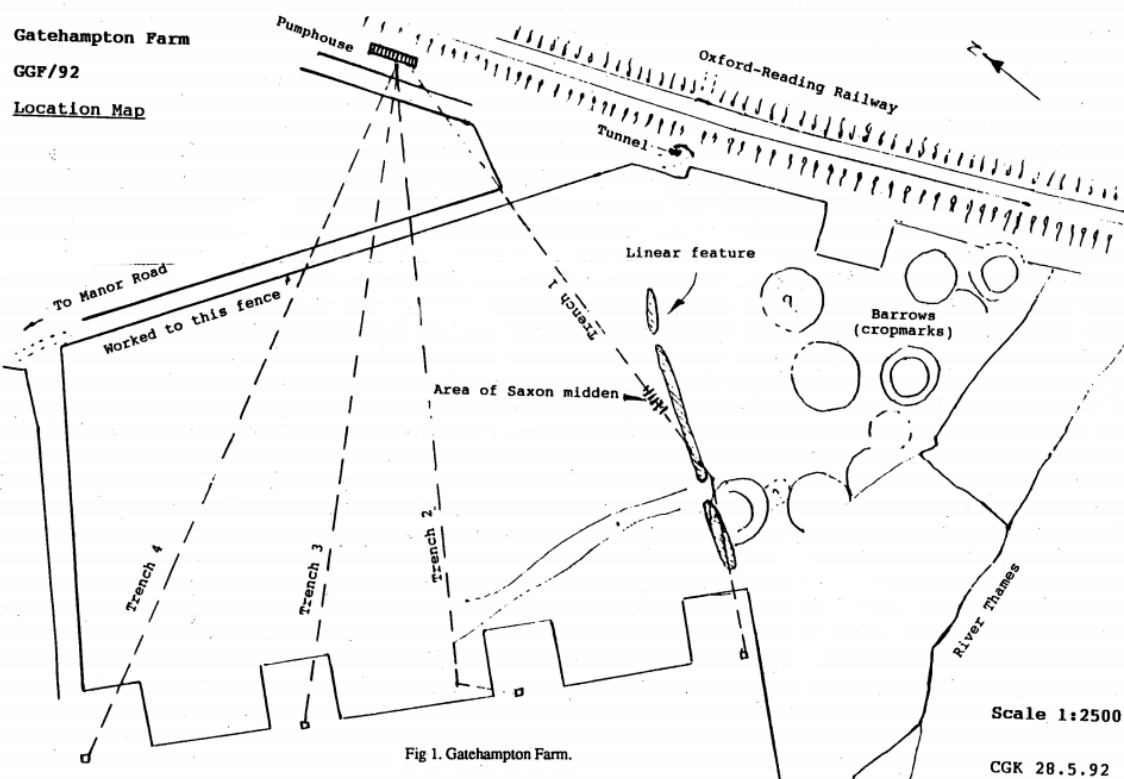
SMA 1992

Gatehampton Farm, Barrow Field 1992

Cynthia A. Graham-Kerr,

A member of SOAG noticed a trench being machine-dug across the Barrow field, lying west of the Oxford-Reading railway and 1 km south of Goring-on-Thames (see fig 1).

This field is known from cropmarks to contain a Bronze Age cemetery (Gates, 1975 map 6) and is the site of the previous excavations carried out by the Oxford Archaeological Unit. (SMA 18, pp77-80, SOAG Bulletin 1988 pp.11-12).



We found that Thames Water were renewing four cables running from the Pumphouse to the boreholes near the Thames. After hasty consultations with Mike Hall, the Thames Water Archaeologist, Tim Allen of OAU obtained permission for us to investigate the trenches. We would like to thank the contractor, Mick Keen, and his assistant Kevin, for being so co-operative throughout.

Approach

Trench 1, judging from the aerial photograph, appeared to cut a linear cropmark feature - (possibly a causewayed camp) and a large barrow. This barrow is the westernmost of the barrow cemetery and still just discernible on the ground.

Trenches 2, 3, & 4 lay further west and no archaeological features were known in this area.

Strategy

For each trench, SOAG walked the whole length, and any ditch-like features in the easterly sections were recorded on scaled section drawings. The trenches were walked in 30 m lengths for about 3 m wide along the surface of one side, from south to north. (These 30 m lengths were also used for the sections)) and finds recorded per length. There were a great many struck flints. **Recording**

Trench 1

The interesting lengths of section were trowelled down, then a member of OAU recorded and plotted them. Pottery (including Saxon and Roman sherds), flints and potboilers were found in a dark area, during trowelling.

This dark soil was probably a Saxon midden deposit, lying on the top of one of the silted channels which cross the site. A full section was drawn of this dark fill, and soil samples taken. Two 20 m lengths, 3 m wide, were walked each side of the trench, from the southern end.

Two sections, 12 m long, were drawn of the barrow where it was cut by the cable-trench. The barrow-ditch was located on the N. side, and contained a small cremation: no trace, however, was found of the barrow-ditch on the S. side. Several other pits were found inside the barrow-ditch, but there were no finds.

Tim Allen of OAU supervised this recording. As there was not sufficient funding for a full-time watching-brief by OAU, it was arranged that SOAG should carry on with the recording of the next three trenches.

The discovery of flints and a feature in Trench 4 led to further recording in this trench by OAU. Trenches 2, 3, and 4

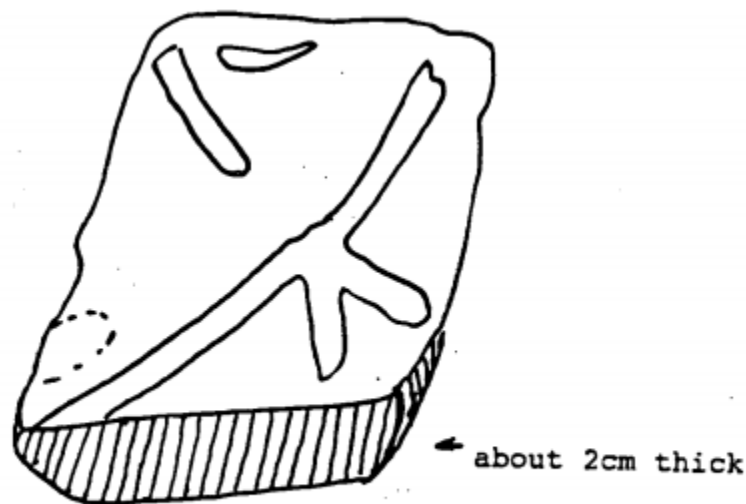


Fig 2. Medieval encaustic tile.

The trenches were measured off in 30m lengths, and walled on one side for a width of 3 m (with the exception of Trench 4 flattened by the JCB and flooded with rain, and with the crop well up on the other side).

Trench 2 The "ditches" were cleaned down and recorded on a scale drawing as before (always on the E side). Finds were bagged and the sudden soil-change to the north recorded.

Thames Water provided a map showing where the cables were supposed to run, but these were not correct, so we took measurements and replotted them (see fig 1).

In conjunction with the recording of the trench sections, Tim Allen and other members of SOAG made a contour-survey of the barrow by Trench 1.

Trench 3 was recorded in 30 m lengths as before. Field walking by members of SOAG recovered a heavy scatter of flint, potboilers, tile and a little pottery. A piece of medieval encaustic floor-tile was found towards the north end. This was keyed at the back and about 2 cm thick, the pattern was in white clay and the tile blackish and unglazed. This has been compared with the ones in Goring Church, but is totally different, so it is unlikely to have been "rubbish" from there, cast on the fields (fig 2).

Trench 4 had noticeably fewer "ditches" and a great band of clayey loam centrally, for several 30 m lengths.

There was, however, a scatter of worked flints in this clayey material, at 136.3 m (from S end) surrounding a feature, which contained a heap of burnt, rounded stones, with flints and charcoal. This was drawn and photographed.

We thought of pits or a hearth, but when the stones were removed, there was nothing further, and it may have been a posthole.

No further features were observed in the narrow trench (all were about 0.5 m across)) only a number of flakes and tools such as blades and scrapers, and many potboilers, in the vicinity, and we collected all we could under the oncoming JCB. The "ditch" features were recorded as before.

Processing

The whole assemblage of finds was washed and bagged ready for Andy Brown to examine them. He has now identified them as a Middle Bronze Age date (c 1500 BC).⁷⁶ This is a period not significantly represented in the earlier excavations, and so is an important addition to the prehistory of Gatehampton.

We shall continue to keep a watching-brief and perhaps do some further work in this area, and our thanks go to our SOAG members (especially Tim Allen of both SOAG and OAU) who turned out in appallingly wet and dirty conditions, and returned well camouflaged with

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THE SHRINE OF ST. MARY, CAVERSHAM

In 1981 an article was published in *Oxoniensia* by C. Haigh and. Loades, entitled "The fortunes of the shrine of St. Mary of Caversham". In it they attempted to discover, amongst other things, the site of St. Mary's Chapel.¹ This, following the Dissolution of the monasteries, appears to have disappeared completely. The chapel may have originally belonged to the manor of Caversham, as Walter Giffard, the lord of Caversham, gave it to Notley Abbey in Buckinghamshire in 1614. It appears to have been an important shrine with many relics apparently rivalling Walsingham.²

During the last two years three members of the South Oxfordshire Archaeological Group have been attempting a landscape survey of the old parish of Caversham, and during this have tried to find the lost site of the shrine. This we think we may have accomplished.

Sarah Markham's book on John Loveday of Caversham (1711-89)³ quotes from his journal, in which he records that he was told by an Alderman Watts of Reading that "Chappel of Our Lady was at Benwells Caversham Farm". The Benwells owned the Farm now called Deans Farm in the 16th and the beginning of the 18th century. It is thought probable that the site of Deans Farm was that of the old manor house, although there is no proof. The manor house was already ruinous or pulled down by 1493, and the moat had already been drained.⁴ Deans Farm is by the side of the Thames on a dry gravel spit above the surrounding flood plain; this would have made provision of a moat easy, and as the only access, even now, is by a causeway, it would be defensible. The farm is away from habitation (although the flood plain to the east is being built on at the moment), and this would agree with Dr. Johnson's statement that "St. Mary's standeth so wildly".⁵ London was given the task of removing the valuables and clearing the building, and was remarking that he was not worried about lead being removed from the roof. Standing outside Deans Farm and looking across the river, the site of Reading Abbey, also the focus of pilgrimage, can be seen opposite. Henry III gave the canons of Notley two oak trees for the building of a boat to ferry pilgrims across the river to the shrine of St. Mary's⁶. In 1306 there is mention of passage money for the use of barges at "Essthorpe" or Lower Caversham.⁷ This ferry would have served both the pilgrims and the inhabitants of Lower Caversham. It is thought that East Throp is the oldest part of the village, which equates with the manor house being near. It therefore seems possible that the chapel was originally part of the manor complex.

The field name evidence has now been examined. In a royal survey for Francis Knollys in 1551-2,⁸ half a virgate called Popes included one close [called] St. Mary croft and a half acre in Reyley. These lands, by their position in the survey, were down by the River Thames. (Several pieces of land at Caversham were given to Notley Abbey by William Marshal the elder, including one of unspecified size "inter carpellum & aquam Tamaisie"⁹ – could this be the croft?) A list of property in 1633 included "... all that

parcel of land called Capull alias Riley":¹⁰ Capull can therefore be equated with chapel, and Riley is a corruption of Reyley. The tithe award of 1846¹¹ shows, to the west of Deans Farm, two fields called Left-handed Ray and Right-handed Ray. Ray means meadow next to a river, and Ley can also mean meadow,¹² so it seems possible that Reyley is the same as Ray.

The possible site of the shrine may now be under water as there are huge gravel workings to the east OF Deans Farm. A Romano-British font was found when digging gravel in this area, which may indicate that this has been a Christian centre for a long time. That we are making bricks without straw is possible, but we are convinced of the position of the shrine.

P. PREECE, M. KIFT AND M. FALLOWFIELD

SMA 1994

Some more 'King' Penn Tiles

The President, Mrs Cynthia Graham Kerr, writes

I was very interested to see the Note by P & S Cauvain (SMA 23) on a "new" Penn tile with the design of a king's head, as I immediately recognised it from 1974 when SOAG were recording the medieval tiles of South Oxfordshire. We had found this one, which must be by the same maker, attached to the wall of a local church (I note that the Cauvains do not give the location of their church or tile). It is complete, although worn in places.

We recorded over 200 different tile designs in South Oxfordshire for the National Census of Medieval Floor Tiles organised by the British Museum. This was the only one of the "king's head" design. We were unable to supply details of the reverse and its thickness as it was let into the wall, with others of more ordinary design.

Another visit to the church was made in November 1993 and, to our surprise, found not one as before, but three more tiles recently set in cement into the wall by the font. We were told that two more were "loose somewhere"!

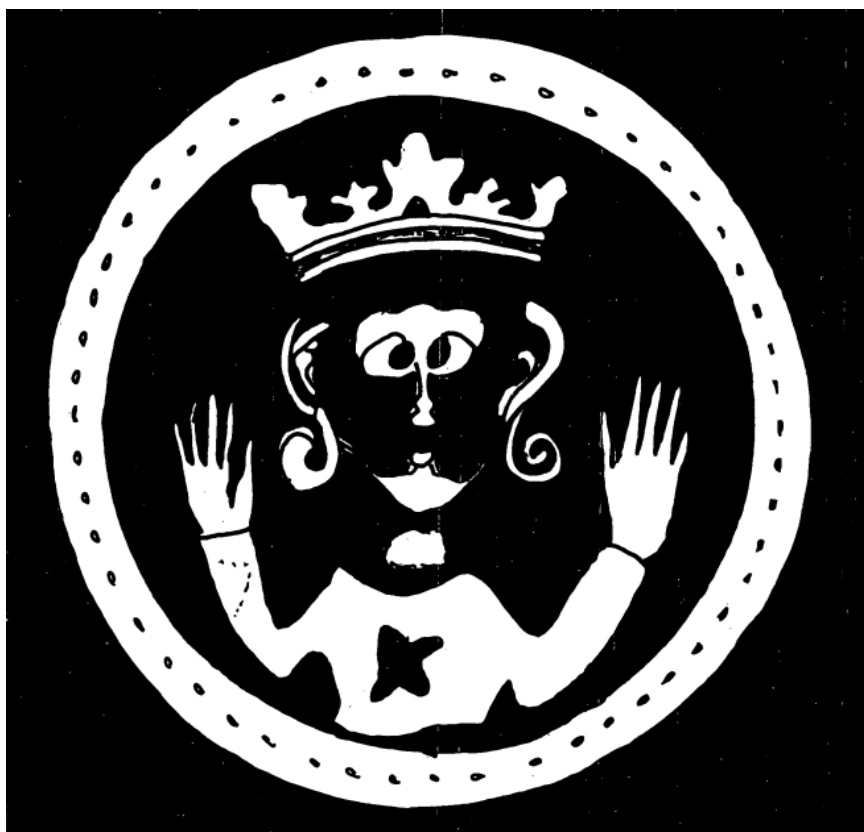


Fig K. Scale 1:1

They were all of the same design as the original one (the tracing tallied) and made of red clay with white slip glazed yellow, the design impressed about 2mm deep, very crisp and clear. The centre of the face is rather worn, but the crown is complete on ours and the hands and an ornament, like a four-pointed star on the front of the robe, show up better than that on the ones on the wall. The circle, with dots, is also complete. Our first tile measured 145mm across with the circle up to the edge on the left (looking at it). This tallied with the others. The size is near enough to the Cauvains', allowing for wear and shrinkage in firing.

All our new ones measured 155 by 160mm - the edges have been well preserved.

The tracing (Fig K) has been clarified by using the best parts of all three tiles, which were identical, as they are very worn in places; they are all complete tiles. The original 1974 tile may be one of the "loose" ones as the hands were much clearer than those on the wall. The Verger did not know where the "loose" tiles were, so we were unable to verify this.

There are some smaller tiles of the more usual designs around the font and elsewhere, but the "king" tiles are all obviously of the same batch. The church has recently undergone alterations and these three tiles were evidently rearranged and inserted in the wall just lately since the cement was very new and not even painted over to match the wall. We could not find the original 1974 tile - it must have been moved during these repairs.

The King is Edward IV, 1442-1483, crowned and holding his hands up in blessing.

SOAG's Silver Jubilee

Cynthia Graham Kerr

This year the South Oxfordshire Archaeological Group will on D. D. . 41P celebrate its Silver Jubilee as it will have been running (hard!) for twenty-five years in May.

We started with 12 friends at the President's house, but soon grew large enough to warrant booking the local school hall. We decided to have a Committee, and a 2/6(12 1/2 pence!) annual subscription to cover costs. Most of our speakers came free and someone offered to type the Bulletin - now a 36 page Journal, produced annually.

We also have a monthly news-sheet - The Messenger - and printed programmes. Our subscription has escalated to .£4 per year and we still cover costs, thanks to much voluntary work, an excellent Editor and a generous membership. The President knows everyone personally and keeps in touch with them all. A variety of activities is offered, to suit all tastes and ages (from 9 to 90, but no limits!) and it is this great flexibility that has kept up our membership and interest unflagging. Hard work, but worthwhile for both present and future generations.

SMA 1996

Cynthia Graham-Kerr

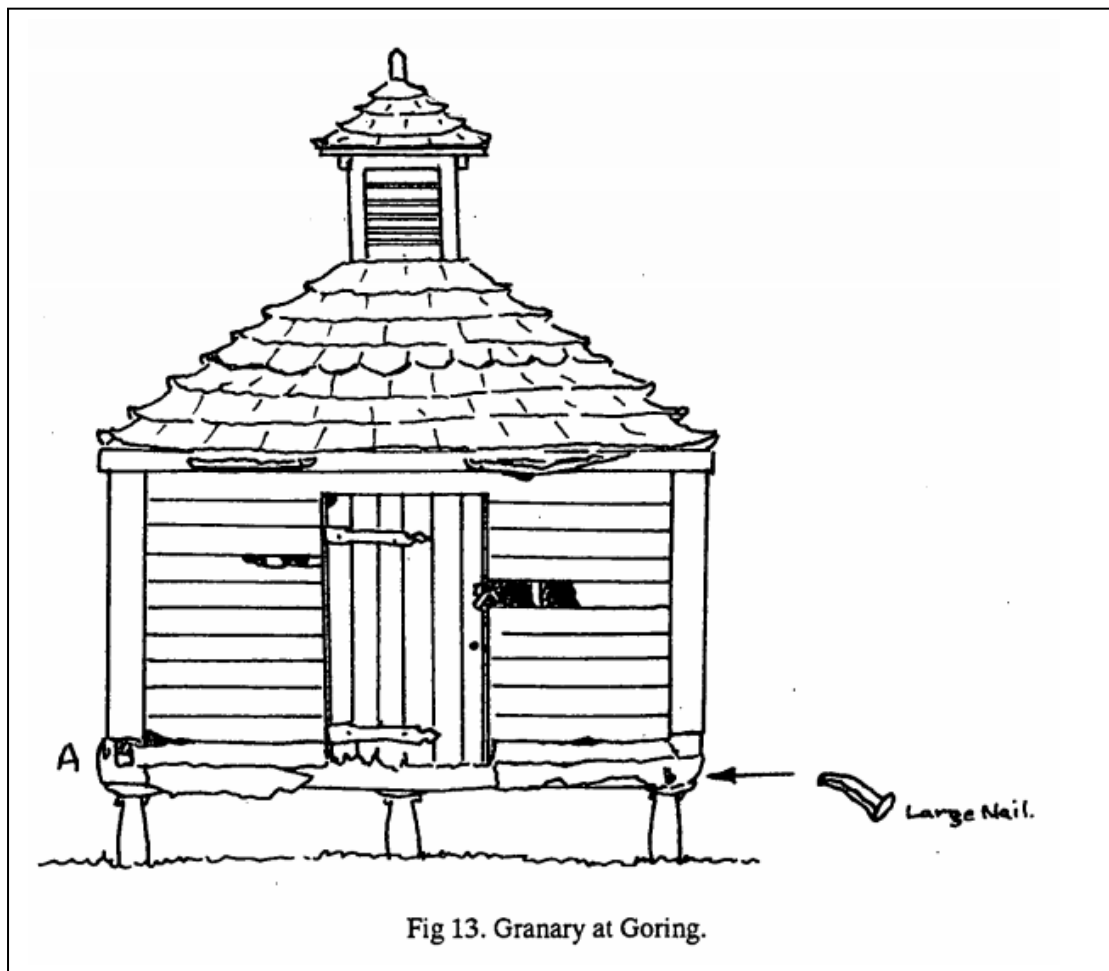
Granaries of South Oxfordshire

Since prehistoric times grain has formed a staple food, and the conservation of it a matter of great importance, and various methods and buildings were tried out to find the best way of preserving the grain from the weather and animals, such as rats.

Many farms had their granary on the upper floor of a cowshed; (R W Brunskill, Vernacular Architecture, p 209) - but he does not describe or illustrate the free standing square granary - his only mention of them is in the glossary of terms - part of paragraph 11, p 209 - "a building raised on staddle-stones" (1).

These attractive little buildings were usually of wood and, as he said, raised on staddle-stones.

These mushroom shaped little pillars, around 60 cm high, were necessary to keep the rats out, who could not climb round the top, and were a most serious problem.



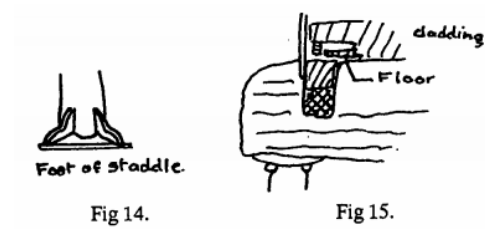
This granary (Fig 13) is the first of a series of granaries of South Oxfordshire which I hope to discover and record this year. It originally belonged to the Grange complex, which is now much divided, built-up and converted to various uses - the cowsheds are now desirable apartments. It is situated in Goring and belongs to a nearby house, whose owner kindly let me sketch and photograph it. It is a 'later' one, perhaps 18th century, and it has cast iron staddles; folded carpet is stuffed between the staddles and the wood.

There are some interesting details; an elegant louvred ventilator, with a little wooden top-knot which caps the red-tiled roof, which has a row of semi-circular ones off-centre. The roof tiles may well be local, from Reading, as many of the local houses have tiles of the same semi-circular design. The door hinges are nicely designed and hand-forged; it has had a latch at one time, but is now secured by a wooden peg. There is a good deal of rotten boarding, and the owner hopes to restore it soon.

At the left corner (see Fig 13A) the wood has fallen away and the construction of the corner can be seen, with a mortised joint and the floorboard inside, just visible (Fig 15). A board on the right-hand corner has a huge nail of about 10-15 cm sticking out (Fig 13). At the side, the foot of one of the staddles is visible (Fig 14), the others are buried. There is a wooden framed window with six panes. The guttering has collapsed; there are two portions hanging precariously in the front, several tiles have slipped, but it is not beyond repair.

It is encouraging that its owners wish to preserve the granary, as these pretty little storehouses are so often neglected and allowed to disintegrate.

It is encouraging that its owners wish to preserve the granary, as these pretty little storehouses are so often neglected and allowed to disintegrate.



Notes

So far this is the only reference I have found and would be glad to know of others. The drawing may not be strictly accurate as it was taken from a sketch, made in the rain, resting on the bonnet of a car.