

Excavations on the Site of the Early Norman Castle at Gloucester, 1983–84

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INVESTIGATIONS AT 28–32 Commercial Road, Gloucester, provide the first excavated evidence for the first Norman castle. Parts of the bailey surface and motte ditch were explored. Gullies, pits and post-holes attributable to the occupation and use of the castle were found in the bailey; one pit contained the remains of a tabula board with bone inlay and a complete set of counters. Sealed beneath the bailey surface were the remains of a substantial late Roman building which, according to a radiocarbon date, continued in use through the 5th century. This late occupation of the building was associated with the formation of a 'dark soil' outside its walls. The ruins of the building intermittently provided the setting for a range of activities between the 6th century and the 11th, at one stage being the site of a farrier's workshop.

Gloucester is well-known for its succession of early medieval castles. The latest, or 'new castle', was built between 1110 and 1120 on land acquired by Henry I from St Peter's Abbey and St Oswald's Priory and now lies largely beneath Gloucester Prison. Documentary research¹ and salvage excavations in 1985² provide much detailed information about this castle, which from at least 1233 until the Baron's War of 1263–65 enjoyed a brief moment of glory as a royal residence for Henry III. Much less is known of the nature and position of its predecessor, the 'old castle', which is recorded in the Domesday Survey of 1086 and the Evesham Abbey Survey of 1097–1101,³ and which must therefore belong to the relatively small group of early Norman urban castles known in England.⁴

Fosbrooke in 1819 identified the early castle at Gloucester with the Barbican Mound — a conical earthen mound depicted to the east of the 'new castle' on a number of post-medieval illustrations and maps⁵ and noted in a variety of documents.⁶ This mound was flattened in 1815–16 and found to be of post-Roman date, although whether it was a Norman feature, a civil-war defence work, or the remains of some other entirely different structure was not ascertained. Fosbrooke postulated that it was the motte of a motte-and-bailey type castle, and in 1972, during a watching brief in Ladybellegate Street, some archaeological evidence was found to support the idea that such a castle existed in the south-western part of the city.⁷ A

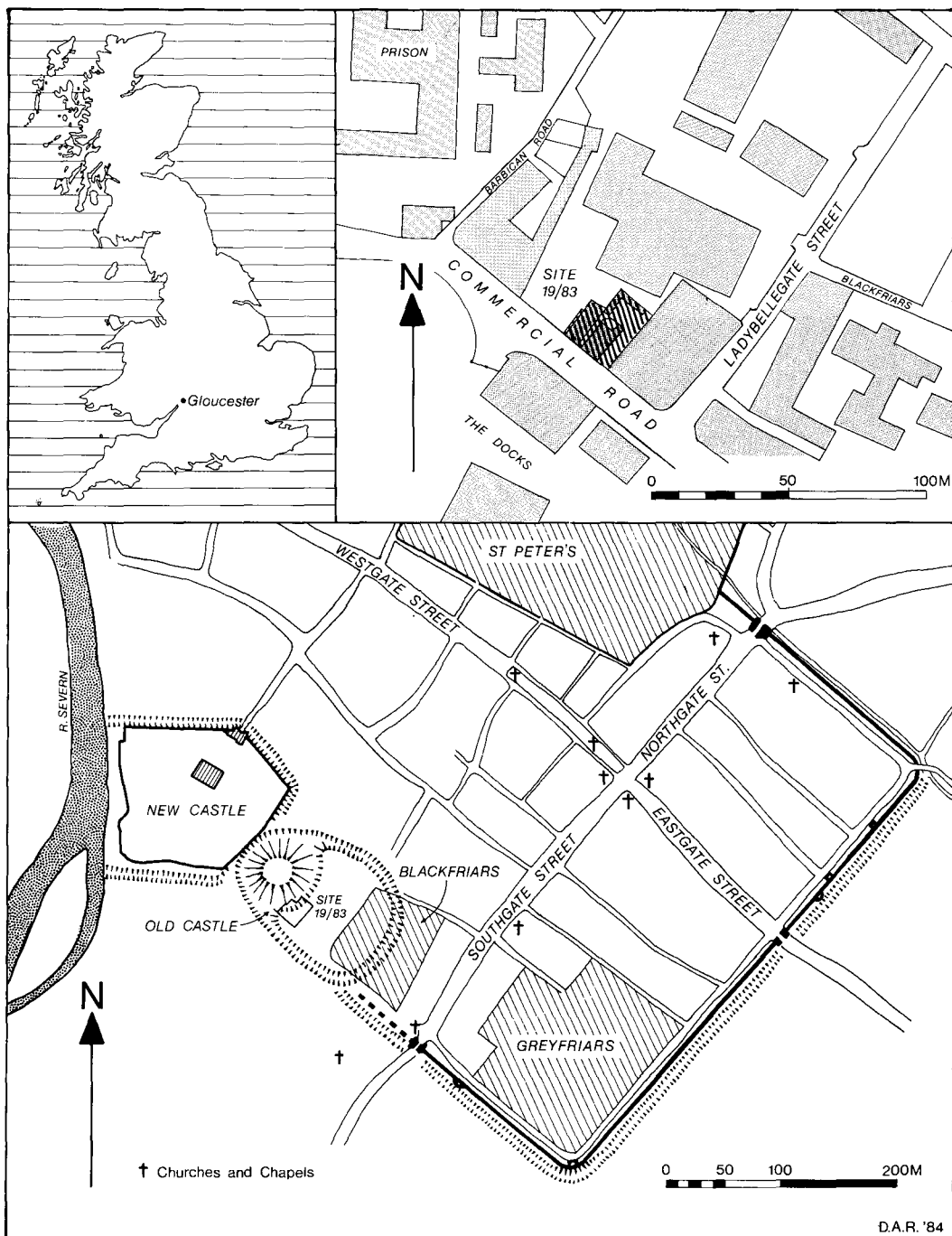


FIG. 1

General location of the site. Main map shows Gloucester in 12th/13th century

large ditch over 5 m deep was recorded in section, together with associated surfaces and building levels dated to the 11th century by small quantities of pottery. Additional evidence for the line of the ditch was possibly recorded during excavations beneath the church within Blackfriars.⁸ Together, these pieces of evidence allow the outline of the 'old castle' to be tentatively mapped in relation to its modern and early medieval setting (Fig. 1).

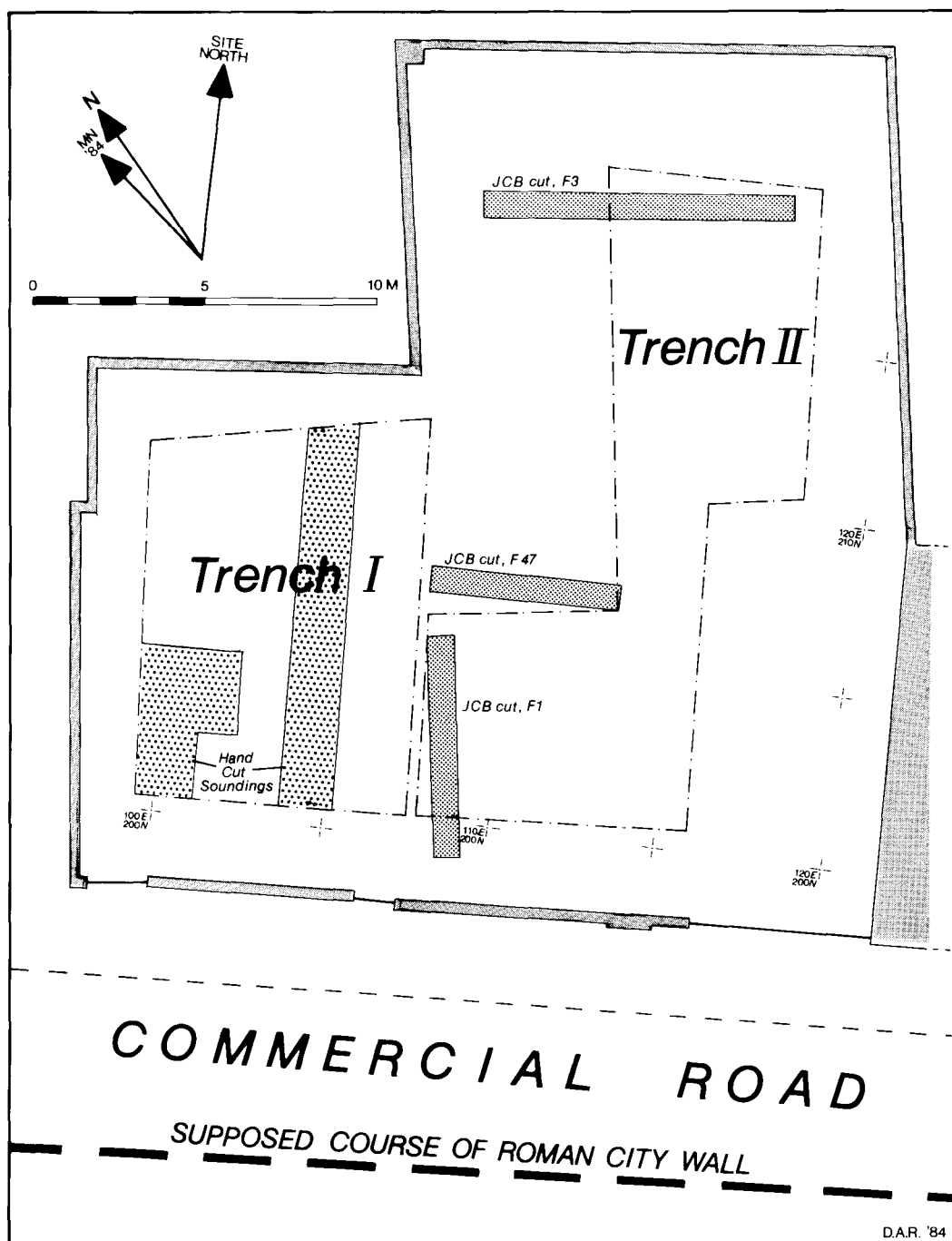
Nothing is known archaeologically of the late Saxon occupation in the south-western corner of Gloucester, although some information is provided by the historical sources. The Domesday Survey, for example, records that the castle covered the site of sixteen houses,⁹ while the Evesham Abbey Survey compiled a decade or so later states that the castle occupied the site of 24 houses.¹⁰ Mr H. Hurst has used this discrepancy, and the possibility that the SW. wall of the city was demolished in the 11th century, to postulate a pre-motte-and-bailey phase to the early castle — possibly an earthwork cutting off the SW. corner of the defences.¹¹ No archaeological evidence exists for this contention, although several parallels can be cited in towns where the construction and development of the castle are better understood.¹²

Because of the many uncertainties concerning the exact position, form, date and development of the early castle, the archaeological investigation of an area within its presumed curtilage was identified as a research priority in 1974.¹³ Accordingly, when the redevelopment of 28-32 Commercial Road was proposed the opportunity for excavation offered by the owners of the site, the Midlands Electricity Board, was gladly accepted.

THE SITE

The site is situated between Barbican Road and Ladybellegate Street, about 400 m south-west of the present and ancient centre of Gloucester at the Cross, and at about 14 m OD. It lies to the south-east of the recorded site of the barbican mound,¹⁴ covering part of the presumed bailey and motte ditch if the reconstructed position and orientation of the early castle are correct (see Fig. 1). In the context of the Roman military fort and subsequent *colonia* the site lies just within the SW. corner of the walled area; the line of the Roman S. wall runs down the middle of Commercial Road immediately south-west of the site. Investigations were limited to the medieval and Saxon deposits, terminating at the latest Roman levels for two reasons: the high cost of shoring for a deep excavation and the fact that the proposed development on the site would not penetrate the Roman levels.

Immediately prior to the excavation, the site had been occupied by two buildings erected in 1851: the Stoke Prior Saltworks (no. 28-30) and a non-conformist chapel latterly used as a storehouse (no. 32). It is clear from 16th- to 19th-century documents and maps that this area of the city was open ground in the post-medieval period, and was probably a garden belonging to Blackfriars during the later medieval period. Thus, apart from 19th-century building works, little disturbance of archaeological deposits was expected.



D.A.R. '84

FIG. 2
Excavated areas and positions of deep soundings

EXCAVATION AND RECORDING

The excavations took place in two stages in order to retain all the spoil within the site. Trench I, situated on the western side of the site, was excavated under the supervision of Mr I. Stewart between September and December 1983. Only two parts of this trench were completely excavated down to the top of Roman levels because of safety constraints. Using the results of work in Trench I, and information from three machine-cut deep soundings, Trench II was set out to examine the maximum possible area of preserved bailey surface (Fig. 2). Excavations in Trench II, and the post-excavation programme for both trenches, were directed by the author. All the work was undertaken on behalf of Gloucester City Museum by the Gloucester-based Manpower Services Commission Project (no. XGLU 11434) sponsored by the Western Archaeological Trust.

This report provides a summary of the stratigraphic evidence and its interpretation. The accompanying discussion of the finds is complete except for studies of the environmental evidence recovered (animal bones and soil samples), since the analysis of these materials lay beyond the range of skills available within the project or its sponsoring bodies.¹⁵ Roman and post-medieval finds are given minimal treatment except where germane to the discussion. A full archive containing the primary site records and post-excavation analyses has been deposited with the finds in Gloucester City Museum (site code and accession number 19/83). The report was completed in July 1987.

THE STRATIGRAPHIC SEQUENCE

The recorded stratigraphic evidence has been divided into thirteen phases on the basis of superimposition and datable finds. In the following discussion these phases are described under a series of five chronologically successive period headings.

*Roman**Phase I — 1st century A.D.: Military occupation (not illustrated)*

No contexts of this period were investigated, but robber-trench sections and deep soundings revealed the presence of a well-mortared metalled road, F40, running E. – W. through both trenches. At least one remetalling was represented. A sill-beam slot cut into a relict soil profile immediately above natural subsoil, and traces of plaster floors and walls were revealed in the northern part of Trench I. These layers are interpreted as the military intervallum road and remains of timber buildings within the military fort corresponding to Period I of the Roman defensive system recorded elsewhere in the city.¹⁶

Contexts and Features: 117; 121; 351; 352; 360; 361; 362; 363; F40 [= 325; 118].

Phase II — 2nd to 3rd century: Colonia levels (not illustrated by plan)

No contexts of this phase were investigated, but robber-trench sections and deep soundings revealed the existence of a stone-built structure (F42) and associated mortar floors overlying Phase I deposits in the northern part of Trench II. These are interpreted as

TRENCH II SECTIONS

— Limit of Excavation — Stratigraphy Continued

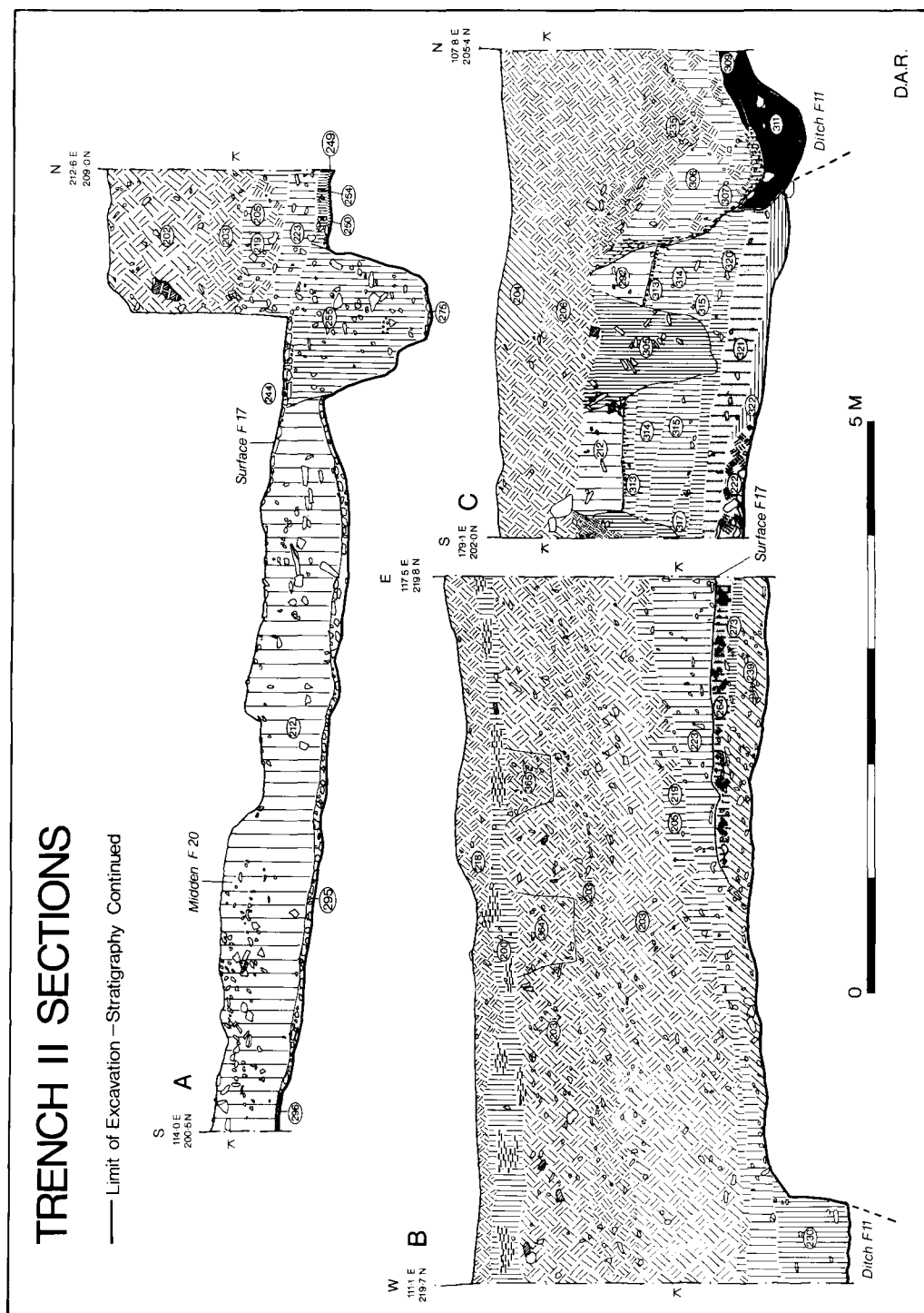


FIG. 3
Sections in Trench II

structures of the early *colonia*. In the southern part of both trenches a series of earth and clay dumps (Contexts 222, 321 and 322 on Fig. 3.C), generally dipping to the north, is provisionally interpreted as the tail of the earthen rampart set inside the city walls equating with periods 2–3 elsewhere.¹⁷ Pottery from 222 includes 2nd-/3rd-century wares.

Context and Features: 114; 119; 124; 125; 126; 127; 128; 222; 317; 318; 319; 320; 321; 322; 323; 324; 329; 339; 340; 341; 343; 344; 345; 346; 347; 348; 349; 350; 356; 357; 358; 359; 368; 369; 370; F42 [= 331, 342].

Phase III — early 3rd to mid 4th century: construction and use of F19 (Fig. 4)

Immediately overlying deposits described above as Phase II were spreads of rubble sealing the buildings, and clay and loam (Contexts 313–320 on Fig. 3.C) over the rampart tail. These deposits are taken to represent clearance of the area early in Phase III and dumping against the rampart throughout Phase III, respectively. In the cleared area at the N. end of Trench II, a substantial building was constructed, F19. Only the uppermost levels were investigated, although earlier levels were recorded from robber-trench sections. Figure 4 shows the plan of the building in its last constructional phase as revealed within the excavated area.

The three E.–W. walls represented by robber-trenches F13, F18 and F23 are primary features of the building. The loose rubble footings survived in all cases: large flat slabs covered with a layer of small limestone rubble. The N.–S. wall represented by robber-trench F21 was a later addition providing an internal dividing wall. The footings in F21 were less substantial than the other walls, and were butt-jointed to the footings in F18.

The latest floors of F19 were examined in detail (see Fig. 4). In the north, Context 277 was a roughly metalled surface incorporating rounded stones, broken tile and mortar. Context 240 was a mortared floor with small quantities of broken tile and stone packed into its surface. Context 250 was an *opus signinum* floor, up to 0.45 m thick, and with quarter-round moulding on the S. and E. sides at least. Two intersecting pits, Contexts 272 and 274, dug from the level of the floor and sealed by later deposits, were located on the N. side of the room. Context 261 was similar to 250, with quarter-round moulding on the W. side against wall F21. All four floors were heavily worn, Context 240 more so on the N. side than on the S.

Studies of the building materials used in the construction of F19 (including those from its collapse and demolition found in later phase deposits) are presented below. Although the full plan is not known it was most probably a courtyard structure with the open area to the N. of the range of rooms found in the excavated area. A verandah, possibly colonnaded on the N. side in view of the broken column base found in the destruction rubble, is suggested by the wear on the surface of 240 and the narrower footings in F13. The interior of the building had *opus signinum* floors and possibly a pink plaster ceiling. The width of the footings in F18 and F23, 0.7 m and 0.6 m respectively, suggests a substantial building. Details of the roof are given below. No doorways were located, although the intersecting pits 272 and 274 may represent the robbing of a threshold stone. Approximately 196 fragments of ceramic tile bearing RPG series stamps came from building F19.

There is no dating evidence for the initial construction of F19, but at least three earlier *opus signinum* and mortar floors were noted in robber-trench sections cut through the final floors just described. A late 3rd-century barbarous radiate coin from Context 322, a make-up layer, suggests a date after A.D. 286 for the third of the four successive refloorings. The last refurbishment may have been as late as the mid 4th century.

Dark loam and clay deposits already noted accumulated to the south of F19, probably as dumps on the back of the rampart followed by rain-washing and soil movements. Coins and pottery suggest that the latest of these deposits, 301/313, formed in the mid 4th century. Overlying 301/313 was a roughly metalled, but extensive, surface composed of broken ceramic tile, building stone and sandstone tile (Contexts 295/296/103/108: Fig. 4 and Pl. I, A). This surface may represent an attempt to consolidate the tail of the rampart. From the coins on Context 301 the surface must have been laid down after A.D. 351. It is proposed, on

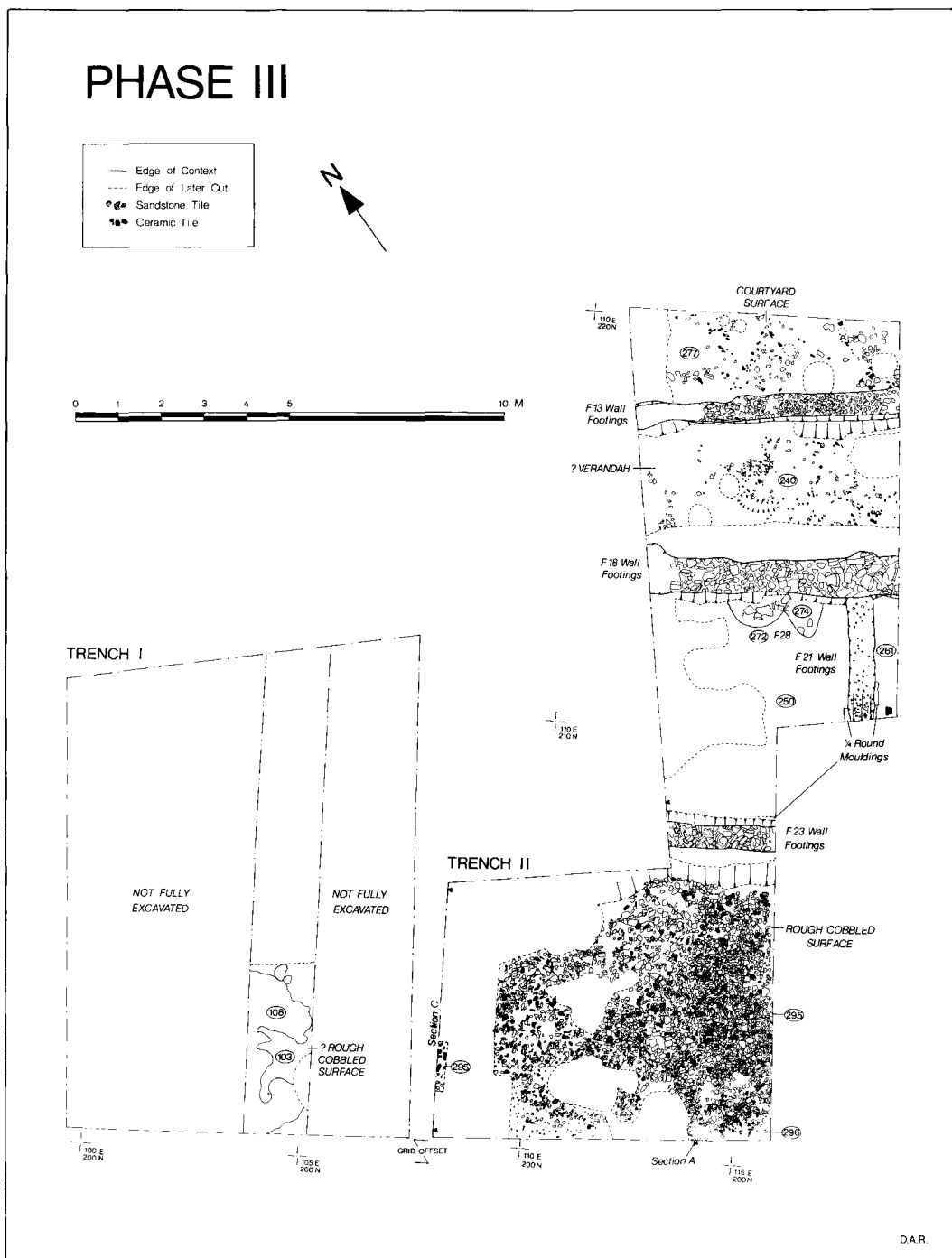


FIG. 4
Phase III contexts and features

the basis of similarity in absolute levels, that this surface equates with the latest floor levels within building F19, although this cannot be proved stratigraphically (see Fig. 3.A showing N.-S. section through surface and F19 floors).

Contexts and Features: 103; 107; 108; 109; 110; 111; 112; 113; 122; 123; 295; 296; 301; 313; 314; 315; 316; F19* [= 238; 240; 246; 250; 253; 261; 272; 274; 275; 276; 277; 282; 283; 326; 327; 328; 330; 332; 333; 334; 335; 336; 337; 338; 354; 355; 367]. (*F19 incorporates F13, F18, F21, F23, F28).

Post-Roman

Phase IV and IVA — mid 4th to (?)7th century: intermittent occupation (Fig. 5)

The walls of building F19 stood throughout this phase and consequently affected the disposition of activities (Fig. 5). Because the sequences within the building cannot be stratigraphically tied to those overlying the open area south of the building this phase has been divided into two sub-divisions: IV relates to the sequence within the building, IVA to the area south of it.

In the north of Trench II, four small post-holes (F29-32) were revealed, dug into the courtyard surface. Each was about 0.24 m diameter and up to 0.2 m deep. The posts they contained had almost filled the holes. Whatever structure they relate to extends beyond the excavated area. In the possible verandah between F13 and F18 the plaster surface Context 240 continued to be used and was repaired at least once (Context 253). A shallow gully (268) and a circular hollow (248) were dug into the surface, and a roughly circular hearth, 252, cut by a later feature, was established on the surface causing scorching of the floor and presumably providing all, or some, of the charcoal flecks incorporated within Contexts 248 and 268.

Within the main part of building F19 activity was more intensive and the deposits better preserved. To the east of F21, the *opus signinum* floor was sealed by a layer of greasy textured grey silty loam, Context 259. To the west of F21 the floor was sealed by a layer of clayey loam, 249, up to 0.03 m thick, fairly compact and having a worn surface. Above 249 were two hearths, one (270) against wall F18, the other (269) against wall F23 (Pl. 1, B). Both comprised areas of dense burning, about 1.0 m in diameter. Visible fragments of charcoal up to 0.02 m long were present. In both cases substantially complete sandstone roof-tiles lay on the periphery of the hearth area. Around these hearths, and above the loamy floor deposit, was a spread of clean sharp sand (Contexts 263 and 263i) in places up to 0.03 m thick. A plano-convex lead ingot approximately 0.12 m in diameter and 0.03 m thick was found in this context, but was lost during transportation from the site to the excavation headquarters. In the NE. corner was a pile of raw charcoal, Context 271 (see below, Charcoal samples, for identifications) up to 0.05 m thick and contiguous with the sand, Context 263. Unburnt bone fragments from within the pile of charcoal indicate that it was not *in-situ* burning but an introduced deposit.

These deposits represent the use of building F19 during the 5th century, and perhaps later. The loamy soil horizons 249 and 259 suggest that by this time the function of the building had changed and that the maintenance and cleaning of its floors were no longer considered important. The presence of hearths, charcoal and coarse sand suggests some kind of industrial activity. Building F19 was presumably still roofed at this time, although there is no direct evidence for the general condition of the building.

The duration of Phase IV is difficult to gauge. A coin of Valentinian from the bottom of Context 249 provides a *terminus post quem* of A.D. 375 for the formation of the deposit, but the subsequent activities could have been much later. The radiocarbon date of 1670 ± 40 b.p. (HAR-6685) from charcoal in Context 271 (see below for details) suggests that this layer was deposited before the early 6th century.

The Phase IVA deposits encountered south of F19 in Trench II are matched by deposits in Trench I. The metallised surface represented by Context 295 etc. continued in use during

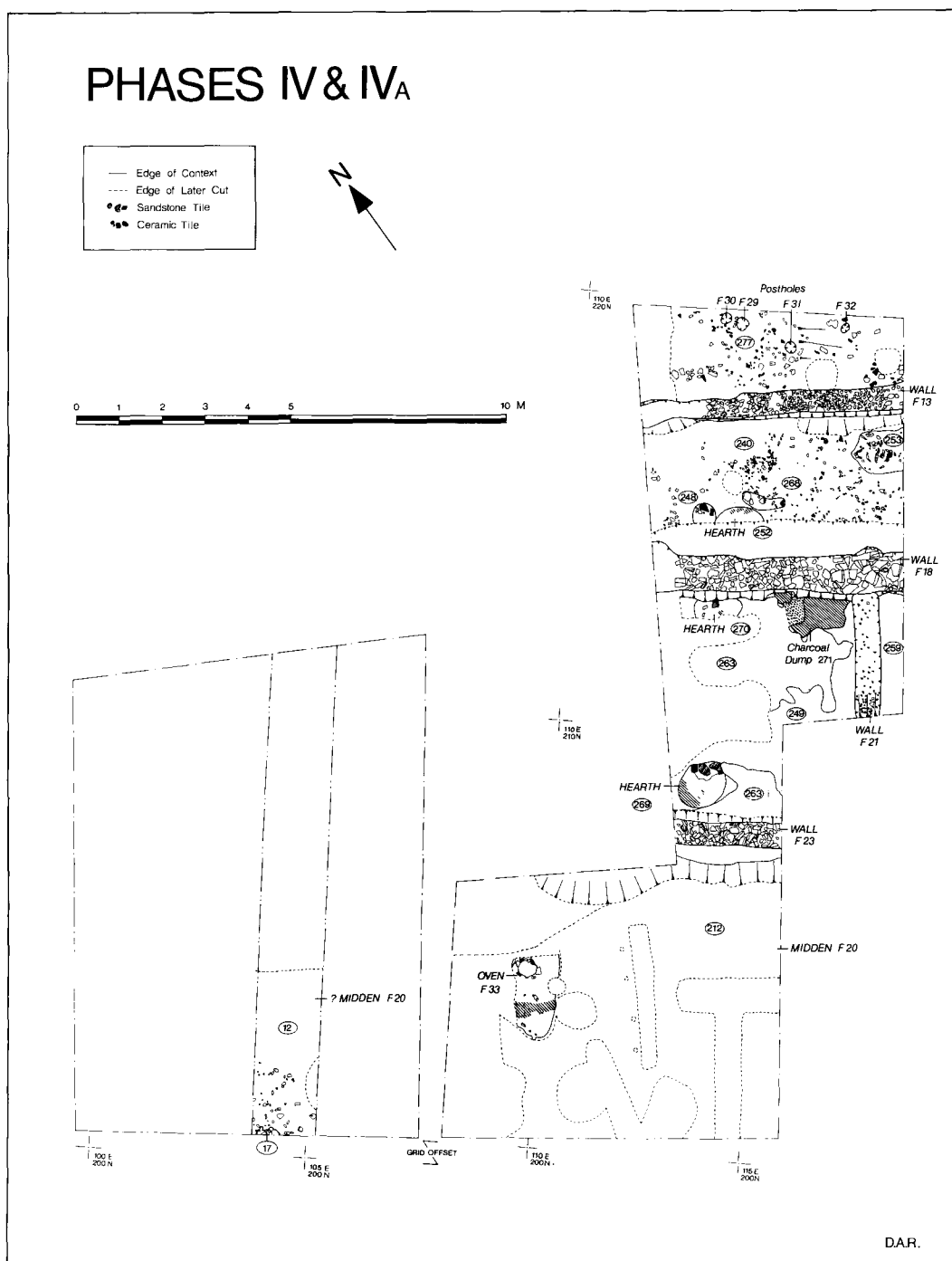


FIG. 5
Phase IV and IV_A contexts and features

the first part of this phase, but later became the base of a midden (Pl. 1, A). Animal bones, including cattle horn cores and lower leg bones, were present in considerable numbers over the surface, in some places concentrated into groups. Once established, this use of the area continued and a midden, F20, developed, in places up to 1.0 m thick (see Fig. 3.A and C). The matrix of this midden was a black soil. Animal bones were particularly numerous and included articulated portions of animal skeletons, particularly horse and cattle (Pl. 1, c). Several pieces of human bone, including a skull portion, were noted. Pottery, mostly residual 1st- to 3rd-century types, was present together with abraded building stone, sandstone tile and ceramic tile. Identifiable sub-divisions within the build-up of the midden were few, although quantitatively more stony or more bone-rich lenses were noted. It is possible that some of these lenses represent periodic cleansing of the dumps by covering them with soil brought from elsewhere.

Cut into the top of the midden was an oven, F33, constructed in a bell-shaped hollow dug into Context 212. A layer of fine sand formed the base, and this was overlain by a floor of hard clay. A fire-box at the northern end was made from sandstone tiles. A spread of dense charcoal may mark the position of a flue. No features cutting the midden were recorded in Trench I.

The midden F20 clearly had a long life. The only useful dating evidence from it was a collection of sherds of sub-Roman pottery of a type not previously recorded from Gloucester (see below). These sherds are probably of 5th- to 7th-century date and all derive from low down in the midden on the E. side. Other 4th-century and later pottery, including late Roman shelly ware (Gloucester type fabric TF22) and N. African amphorae (TF10C), was present. Part of a bone comb and a thread-picker of Saxon date also came from Context 212. A few pieces of 11th-century pottery, TF41B, came from the upper part of 212, but could easily be intrusive from the many features cut down into 212 from above (see Phase VIII). The oven F36 contained no dating evidence, and although partially cut into Context 212 the midden could have continued to accumulate after its construction. Similarities between the oven and the hearths within F19, for example the use of sandstone tiles and sharp sand, suggests contemporaneity of use.

Contexts and Features: 248; 252; 259; 260; 263; 269; 270; 271; F20 [= 17; 104; 106; 212]; F22 [= 249]; F27 [= 268]; F29 [= 279]; F30 [= 281]; F31 [= 278]; F32 [= 280]; F33 [= 285; 288; 289; 290].

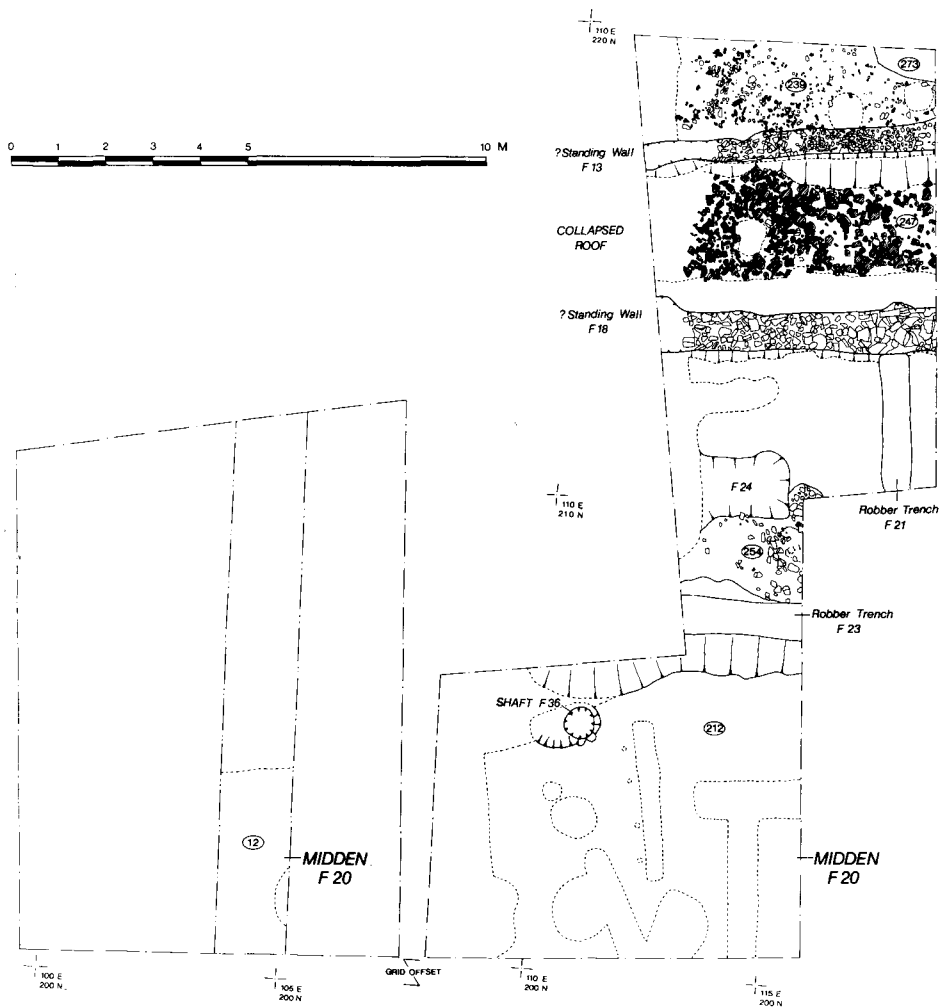
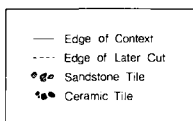
Late Saxon / Norman

Phase V — ?6th to mid 11th century: collapse/demolition of F19 (Fig. 6)

Immediately sealing Phase IV contexts were three primary deposits of broken stone, rubble and tile (see Fig. 3.A and B). Inside building F19, Context 254 against the S. wall sealed the Phase IV hearths and floor, and comprised mostly plaster and fragments of building stone. This deposit was up to 0.25 m thick, and contained in its upper level fragments of an iron vessel which probably forms part of a group of twelve iron objects from within the collapse and primary robbing of F19 (see below). In the area previously occupied by the possible verandah were the collapsed remains of its roof, Context 247, comprising over 400 kg of lozenge-shaped sandstone tiles, some complete, together with the iron nails that originally secured them. A fragment of column base was also found in this deposit. To the north of F13, which may have remained partly standing, the courtyard area was buried beneath a deposit of broken ceramic tile (Context 239), up to 0.25 m thick, and small spreads of clay and mortar (e.g. Context 273). Over 200 kg of ceramic tile were recovered from Context 239 alone.

These deposits are interpreted as the primary collapse and/or demolition of building F19. Datable finds were few, and while all three deposits contained sherds of TF41B, a limestone-tempered Saxo-Norman ware probably dating to the mid 11th century and later,

PHASES V&VI



D.A.R.

FIG. 6
 Phase V and VI contexts and features

they could have intruded during the robbing and levelling of the building in Phases VI and VII. Building F19 probably stood in a ruinous condition for some centuries.

Contexts and Features: 239; 247; 254; 273.

Phase VI — mid 11th century: intermittent activities and primary robbing of building F19 (Fig. 6)

Cutting through the layers representing the primary demolition/collapse of the roof and walls of F19, but sealed by Phase VII contexts, were two robber-trenches, F21 and F23. Both were backfilled with dark soil, broken stone, tile and plaster, presumably derived from the primary collapse of the building. The fill of F21 contained five iron objects which, like the rest of the backfill, probably originated from intermittent activities in the ruins of the building (see below). Eleventh-century and residual pottery was present in F21 and F23.

The remaining walls of F19 (F13 and F18) were not robbed at this time, although they may have been razed to ground level.

A rectangular feature, F24, approximately 2.1 m by 1.4 m, with a sloping bottom which dipped to the west, also belongs stratigraphically to this episode of robbing. Its purpose is obscure. The fill, Context 256, contained 11th-century wares.

Later than robber-trench F23, but also sealed by Phase VII deposits, was a shaft, F36. The top had a rectangular cut but this quickly narrowed to a cylindrical shaft 0.8 m in diameter and 1.1 m deep. The fill (297) was a homogeneous clayey matrix with much iron staining. There was no trace of a post-pipe and the sides were clean-cut and hard. The lower levels contained more stones than the upper fill; the bottom was flat. There was mid/late 11th-century pottery in the fill. It may have been a well or cistern.

Together, F24 and F23 suggest that in late Saxon times the ruins of building F19 hosted one or more episodes of activity. The features themselves provide few clues to the nature of those activities, but a group of twelve iron objects suggests that leatherworking and farriery were undertaken nearby if not actually in the area excavated. These objects are described in detail below. All derive from a small area within F19, one from within the primary collapse of the building, five from the fill of robber-trench F21, and six from the levelling of the building prior to the construction of the castle.

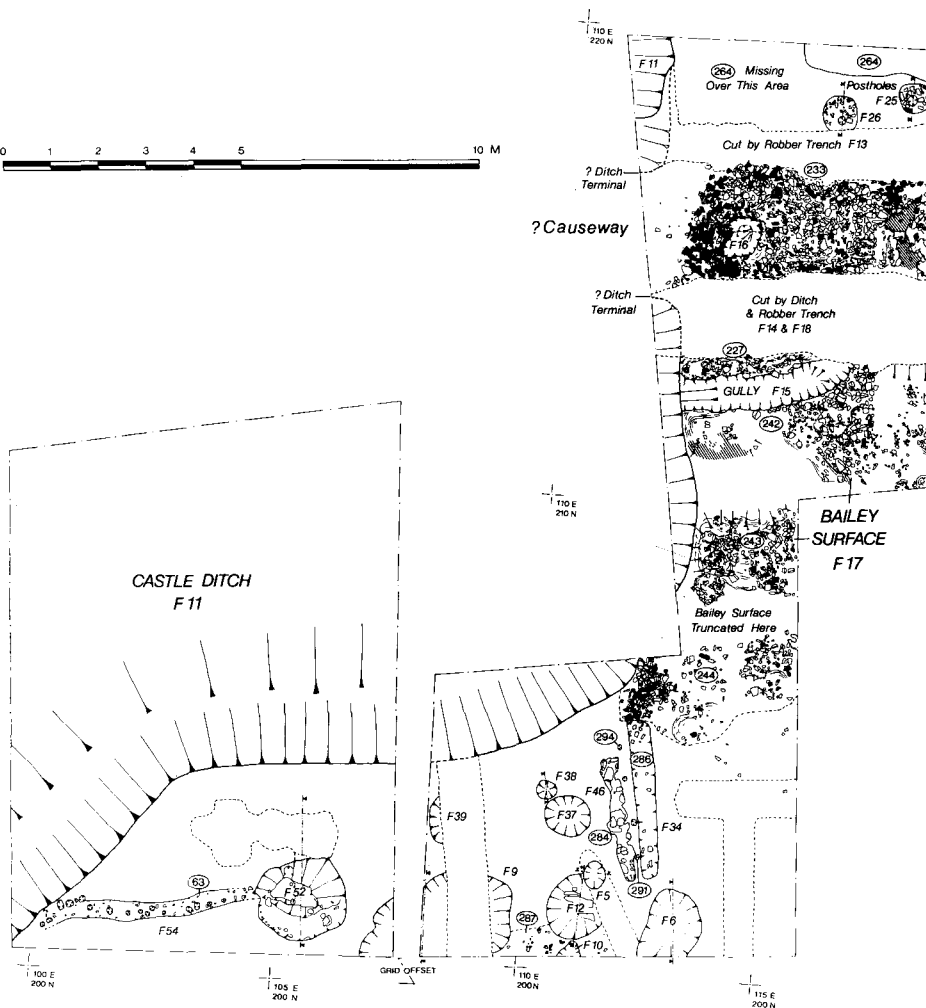
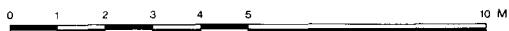
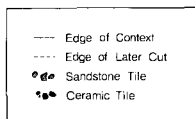
Contexts and Features: F21 [= 258; 251; 257]; F23 [= 299; 255]; F24 [= 256]; F36 [= 297].

Phase VII — mid 11th century: construction of the Norman castle (Fig. 7)

The principal deposits of this phase comprised a thick layer of building debris and rubble topped with a metallised surface, F17 (Pl. II, A), interpreted as the bailey surface of the early castle. Its preservation was highly variable because later features cut through it. Its original composition also varied considerably across the site, but the materials for it had clearly been derived from the final demolition and levelling of what remained of F19. Thus in the north of Trench II, Context 264 was substantially clay and broken tile. Over F19 itself rubble, tile and plaster were prevalent and in the extreme south of the site stone and tile were common. Within the rubble underlying the metallised surface over the S. part of building F19 were a further six iron objects which are taken to be related to those already noted from Phase V and VI deposits and interpreted as associated with activities in the ruins of F19 during Phase VI. Figure 3.A shows the relationships of F17 (244) to the earlier midden F20 and robber-trench F23, and Fig. 3.B shows F17 sealing the Phase V primary collapse deposits in the north of Trench II.

The most completely preserved portion of F17 was Context 244 near the edge of the castle ditch F11. Here the surface was clearly well worn. Many of the finds from contexts comprising F17 were residual Roman and late Saxon. Pottery of 11th-century type was common, however, mostly Saxo-Norman TF41B. In places broken pottery was a significant component of the surface itself.

PHASES VII & VIII



D.A.R.

FIG. 7
Phase VII and VIII contexts and features

The castle ditch, F11, was dug at this time. The outer edge was located in both trenches, but the inner edge lay outside the site and was not traced. Safety constraints made it impossible to excavate far beyond the upper fills of the ditch. The profiles revealed in the machine-cut soundings F1, F3 and F47 (Fig. 2) suggest a steep-sided ditch at least 4.0 m deep (Fig. 3.C shows the upper part of the ditch in F1).

At a point on the W. side of the northern part of Trench II the Roman and medieval stratigraphy continued into the western baulk of the trench suggesting a causeway about 2.5 m wide across the ditch. There was also slight evidence for ditch terminals shown by a shallowing of the side angle and differing fills either side of the putative causeway. Insufficient ditch could be explored to determine whether this was a true causeway across to the motte, or simply an irregularity in the erosion of the ditch side caused by the remains of stone walls F18 and F13, the footings and lower courses of which were still unrobbed at this time.

Contexts and Features: F11 [= 129]; F17 [= 227; 233; 242; 243; 244; 264; 287].

Phase VIII — mid to late 11th century: occupation and use of the castle (Fig. 7)

This phase is represented by pits, post-holes, gullies and slots cut into the bailey surface F17. In areas where F17 was truncated, features have been assigned to this phase on the basis of finds. Along the S. side of the site was a line of pits F52, F9, F12 and F6, all over 2.0 m in diameter and over 1.0 m deep (Fig. 8). All had multiple fills although no soil analysis has been carried out to suggest functions.

Pit F52 contained 120 fragments of bone inlay from a fairly complete *tabula* board and 30 counters or tablemen in the lowest fill, Context 97. This context was excavated as a series of spits in order to facilitate the reconstruction of the arrangement of pieces forming the board. Figure 9 shows the overlays for each spit and Pl. II, B shows the pieces during the course of the excavation.

Pottery from the pits includes Saxo-Norman wares, and small finds include a key, wall-hook and folding balance.

Adjacent to these features was an E.-W. line of stake-holes, F54, possibly a fence of some kind, and a shallow N.-S. orientated square-cut linear slot, Context 286, with four associated stake-holes to the west, 291-94. The purpose of this feature is unclear but it may also have been a fence and the linear spread of hard-packed green-grey coloured clay, Context 284, may have accumulated against it. Other small depressions of uncertain function were present; most had a uniform fill. To the north of this cluster of features was a relatively open area, punctuated by the gully F15 which dipped towards the castle ditch and may have been a drainage gully. Further north still were three post-holes, F16, F25 and F26 (Fig. 8).

All the features of this phase contained quantities of mid to late 11th-century pottery but little of later date, which suggests a fairly short period of use. This is supported by the fact that there was little inter-cutting of features.

Contexts and Features: 63; F5 [= 208]; F6 [= 210; 211; 213; 214; 215; 216; 217]; F9 [= 16; 60; 61; 62; 221; 302; 303; 304]; F10 [= 225]; F12 [= 226]; F15 [= 232]; F16 [= 234]; F25 [= 262; 266]; F26 [= 265; 267]; F34 [= 286]; F35 [= 291-294]; F37 [= 298]; F38 [= 300]; F39 [= 305]; F46 [= 284]; F52 [= 23; 24; 25; 91; 95; 96; 97; 98; 99]; F54 [= 32-57]

Phase IX — late 11th to early 12th century: backfilling of the castle ditch (not illustrated by plan)

Only the upper fills of the castle ditch were examined, and these mostly in Trench I. All comprised well-packed clays and dark soils, some possibly derived from clearing occupation in the vicinity. Section C on Figure 3 shows the upper fills, 235, 306, 307, 309 and 311 as revealed in the W. side of F1. The general trend of the fills is to dip northward, but there are irregularities in this pattern which suggest deliberate filling, as does the presence of clay.

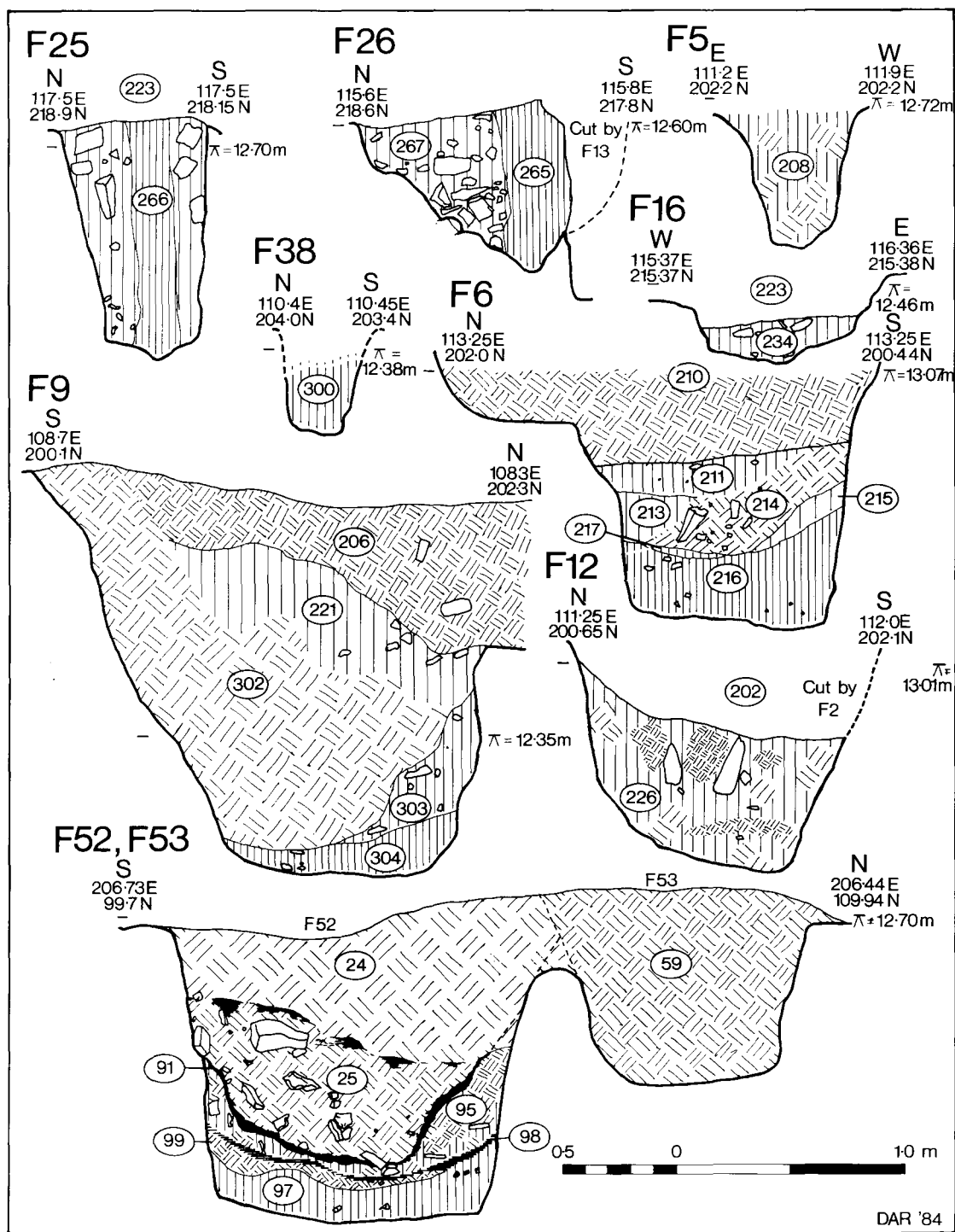


FIG. 8
Sections through Phase VIII features

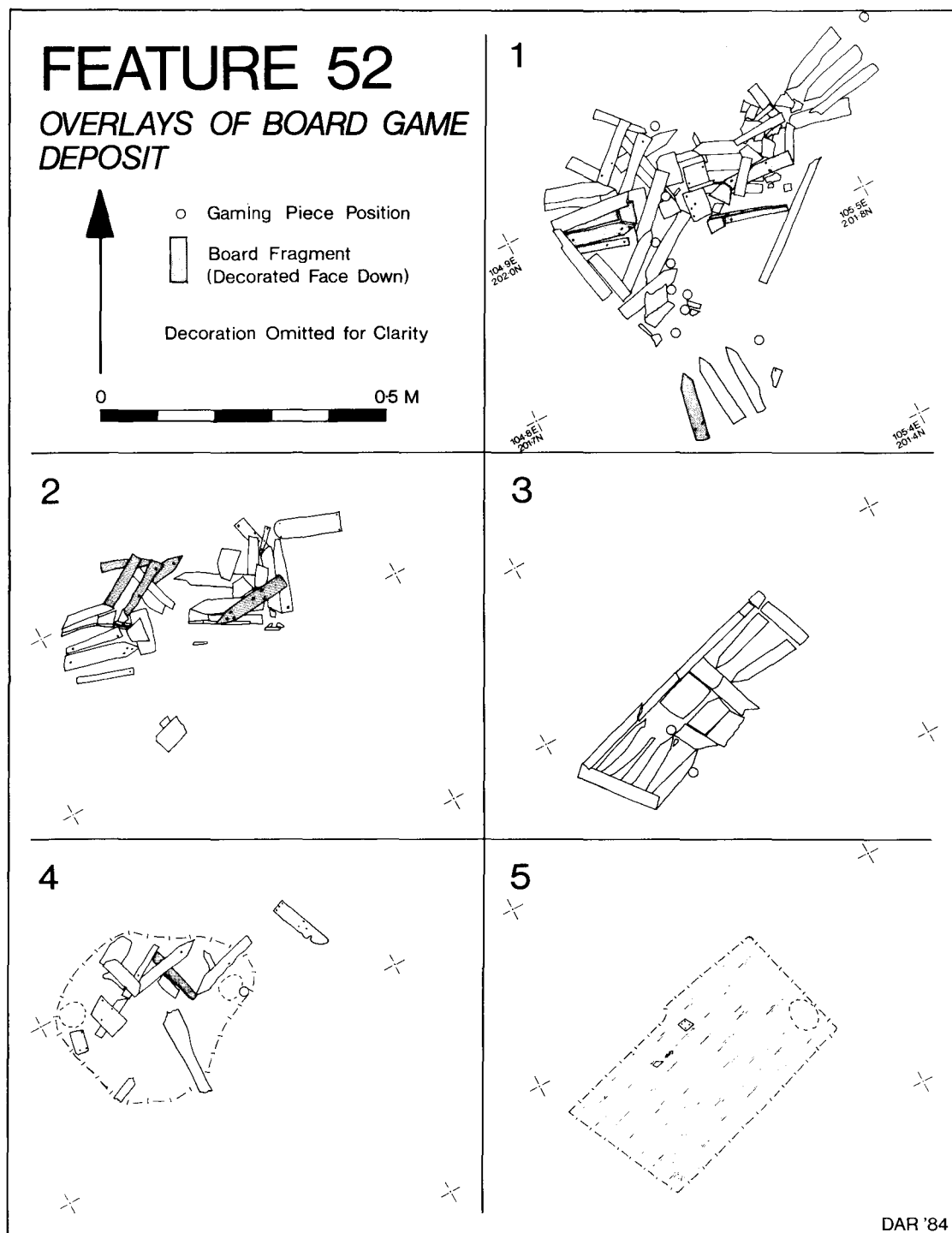
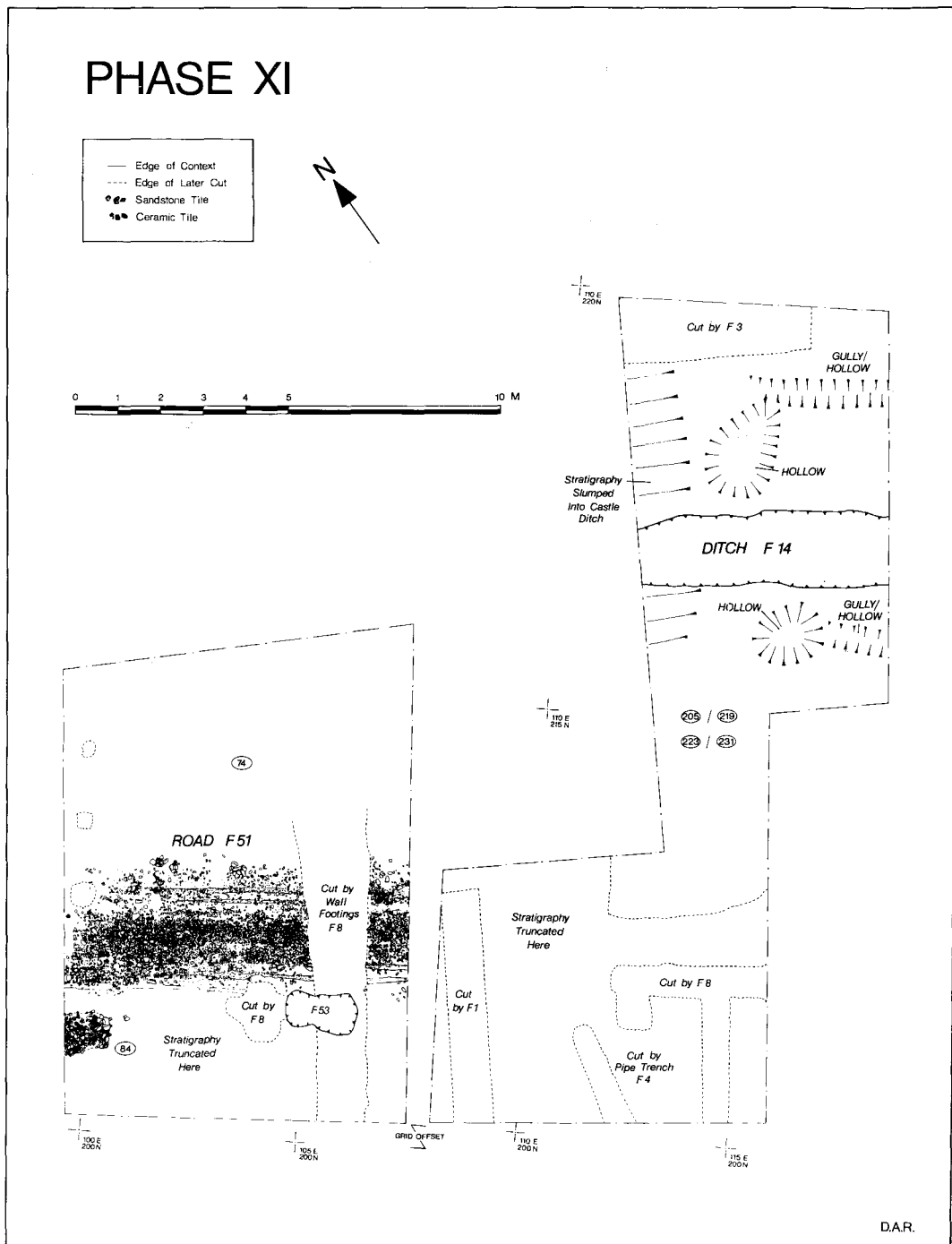


FIG. 9
Overlays of *tabula* board and counters in F52



Finds include TF41B pottery of the late 11th century, but no glazed wares, suggesting that the ditch was filled by the late 12th century.

Contexts and Features: F11 [= 12; 29; 58; 64; 71; 73; 87; 88; 100; 101; 102; 105; 130; 131; 132; 134; 136; 224; 230; 235; 306; 307; 308; 309; 310; 311; 312].

Phase X — mid 12th century: robbing of Roman walls (not illustrated by plan)

This phase may be contemporary with Phase IX, and simply comprises the robbing of the footings and lower courses of the two northern walls (F13 and F18) of the earlier building F19. The robber-trenches cut through the bailey surface and in some cases features associated with the use of the bailey. F13 was probably backfilled immediately as the sides were fresh and sharp, but F18 was partially backfilled and then left open as a ditch, possibly to drain into the castle ditch which must have acted as a sump. Pottery from F13 and F14 is pre-13th century in date.

Contexts and Features: F13 [= 228; 236; 245]; F18 [= 237; 241].

Post-castle

Phase XI — mid 12th to 18th century: cultivation (Fig. 10)

After the abandonment of the castle, and the episodes of robbing and backfilling represented by Phases IX and X, the area remained clear of buildings. A series of soil horizons was identified. All were well mixed and seem to have been cultivated. This may explain the poor condition of the bailey surface in some areas. Pottery of 13th- to 14th-century date predominated and glazed wares of this period are present. Hollows and slumping were evident in the topography of the upper surface because of settling in earlier features. A linear E. – W. ditch, F17, followed the line of the earlier robber-trench F18, and on the S. side of trench I was a metalled track/road, F51, of unknown date.

Contexts and features: 74; 205; 219; 223; 231; F14 [= 229; 229i]; F51 [= 3; 27; 28; 31; 65; 66; 67; 79; 80; 81; 82; 83; 84; 85; 86; 89; 90]; F53 [= 59; 78].

Early modern

Phase XII — early 19th century: demolition of the castle motte (not illustrated by plan)

A thick layer of redeposited grey lias clay, Contexts 203 and 206 (see Fig. 3.A–C) was revealed over much of the excavated area. This sealed all earlier levels and was absent only where cut by Phase XIII features. The clay was up to 1.0 m thick. The deposition of this clay is interpreted as the demolition of the motte in 1815–16.

Contexts and Features: 2; 8; 9; 11; 18; 19; 30; 72; 75; 203; 206.

Phase XIII — mid 19th century to 20th century: construction and use of 28–32 Commercial Road (not illustrated by plan)

These contexts were revealed in section only. Clearance of Contexts 203 and 206 to prepare and level the ground for the buildings seems to have taken place, the clay removed being dumped in the northern part of the plot (Fig. 3.A and B, Contexts 202, 203i, 203ii etc.) to create a total build-up of clay over 2.5 m thick in some areas. Walls, foundations and service trenches also belong to this phase.

Contexts and Features: 1; 4; 5; 6; 7; 10; 13; 14; 15; 20; 21; 22; 26; 68; 69; 76; 77; 93; 94; 200; 203i; 203ii; 218; 364; 365; 366; F1 [201]; F2 [202]; F3 [209]; F8 [204]; F [207]; F7 [220]; F47.

THE FINDS

The following specialist reports summarize studies of the pottery, small finds, coins, building materials and charcoal from the site. No studies of environmental samples, iron slags, nails or post 17th-century material were undertaken, but full listing of these materials can be found in the site archive. Where phase numbers are assigned to finds they relate to the phase in which the object was found; as with any deeply stratified site, most finds were residual.

THE POTTERY. *By* P. A. GREATOREX

Approximately 11,000 sherds of pottery, weighing 138 kg, were recovered, ranging in date from the 1st to the 20th century A.D. All pre-4th-century wares were residual in the phases investigated.

In general, the pottery was well preserved, although few complete profiles were recorded and the average sherd-size was small. The pottery was sorted into fabric groups following the Gloucester City Excavation Unit Type Fabric Series (TF nos.).¹⁸ A secondary classification according to vessel form was then made. An estimate of the minimum number of vessels based on identifiable sherd-groups was made for each context after checking for matches and joins between contexts. Table 1 summarizes the quantified data (sherd weight) by phase. The samian ware (TF8) was examined and catalogued by Mr P. Isaac; a full report is contained in the site archive.

No definite links could be found between Trenches I and II by way of joining sherds, but parallels in fabric distribution are present.

A detailed archive resulting from the pottery analysis is held by Gloucester City Museum. The following summary report provides notes on dating and acts as a commentary on the table and figures.

Phase I

No pottery was recovered.

Phase II

Pottery was recovered from sections only and all pre-dated the 4th century. Pottery from Context 222 comprised 2nd- to 3rd-century wares. Samian ware includes six Central Gaulish and two South Gaulish sherds, ranging from Flavian to Antonine in date.

Phase III (Table 1)

This assemblage is dominated by 2nd- to 4th-century wares, especially TF4, black-burnished ware (BB1) cooking-pots, and TF11B, Severn Valley ware jars. TF22, late Roman shell-tempered ware, dates Context 295 to the mid 4th/5th century.

Phase IV (Table 1)

Very little pottery was recovered from this phase; it is mostly TF11B jars. All fabrics date to the 4th century or earlier. The absence of much pottery from these contexts may be significant for the interpretation of activities undertaken within building F19 at this time.

Phase IVA (Table 1)

A wide range of pottery datable from the 2nd through to the 11th century is dominated by the Roman wares, especially TF4 cooking-pots and bowls, TF5, micaceous grey-ware bowls, TF11B jars and TF12A (Oxford colour-coated) beakers. A copy of a black-burnished

style bowl in a previously unknown fabric (TF226) was present. From the later period were pieces of TF10C, Late Roman North African amphorae (Peacock and Williams Class 35), similar to those found elsewhere in the city¹⁹ and on other sites in western Britain.²⁰ Sherds of TF300 and TF301 represent a type of pottery previously unrecognized in Gloucester (see below).

The late 11th-century wares, mostly TF41B, were confined to the upper levels of the midden F20, and may be intrusive.

Comparable groups of pottery have been found elsewhere in Gloucester, for example period 3D at 1 Westgate Street²¹ and at New Market Hall.²² In view of the presence of sub-Roman wares, the Commercial Road deposit is probably slightly later than both these groups.

Report on the sub-Roman pottery from Phase IVA. By A. G. VINCE

A small assemblage of distinctive hand-made pottery in a style not previously recognized from Gloucester was recovered from Context 212 and as residual pieces in later phases. The assemblage comprised nineteen sherds weighing a total of 193 gr. Two fabrics were represented, now numbered TF300 and TF301, and these may be characterized as follows:

TF300 — Black, and tempered with well-sorted, abundant sand. The principal components of the sand are individual ooliths c. 1.0 mm across, derived from the weathering of oolitic limestone. No quartz grains are evident, nor is the fabric notably micaceous.

TF301 — As TF300, but the tempering is angular quartz/quartzite fragments up to 0.08 mm across with some small fragments of ironstone.

The form and manufacturing techniques displayed by this group of sherds single them out from medieval wares and suggest an earlier date. Two basic shapes of vessel are represented. The first (Fig. 11, 1 and 5) is a slightly enclosed jar with an out-turned rim, while the second (Fig. 11, 2-4, 6-8 and 10) is a small bowl form, also with out-turned rim. Both the inside and outside of the vessels are burnished all over, but not with burnished patterns.

The general form and the surface treatment of the vessels are similar to those of local Iron-Age pottery, but no precise parallels are to be found in Gloucestershire. The fabric is similar in petrology and firing to early Roman 'native wares', examples of which are found in late 1st- and early 2nd-century contexts in Gloucester, but these rarely employ burnishing as an overall surface treatment and never have internal burnishing.

With the exception of a few sandstone-sand tempered vessels from the Cirencester area, all the known early post-Roman pottery from Gloucestershire has chaff tempering, and none has such proficient burnishing. Parallels for the well-sorted limestone temper, the general form of the vessels, and the overall burnishing are known from the upper Thames valley, in early Saxon contexts (material from Sutton Courtenay and other sites in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, for example). No petrological comparison of these wares with the Gloucester sherds has yet taken place, but on geological grounds the Gloucester sherds are perhaps more likely to have been made closer to the city than the upper Thames. Nevertheless, on balance it seems that a 5th- to 7th-century date for the manufacture and use of the Gloucester vessels is most likely.

Given this dating, the implications of the find must be considered. It is just possible, because of the similarity of the fabric to that of later medieval vessels, that sherds of it have been missed on other sites. Against this, however, the form and burnishing are so distinctive that any sizable fragments would almost certainly have been recognized. It is more likely that this is the first site in the city on which the ware has been present in any significant quantity. Several vessels (?ten) are represented, and it is not therefore possible to dismiss them, as can be done for other finds of early or mid Saxon date, as the result of scavenging by people living outside the walled area. Indeed, the Commercial Road site would have been immediately behind what must have been a substantial city wall and ditch.

TABLE I
INCIDENCE OF POTTERY FABRICS (IN GRAMS) BY PHASES

[illegible]

TABLE I *continued*

INCIDENCE OF POTTERY FABRICS (IN GRAMS) BY PHASES

FABRIC	PHASE									
	III	IV	IVA	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI
Roman wares										
126								105		
205			9	37						
206	83		214			59				
207B	3		14	28				5		
210					5					
214										133
226			117							
Saxon wares										
300			111							24
301			17							
Medieval wares										
40							318	1809	29	3515
41A					13		20	32		
41B	28*	32*	1199*	107	637	274	3375	3742	648	10883
41C								120		
42								205		10
43			69	12	18	4	40	823	42	634
44			6		14			291	9	590
45					60		3			80
48A										30
48B							16			
49										
51									8	
52								230		382
53								380		557
59										79
81								65		
83										5
90								560		918
91								56		53
93								3		
98										9
TOTAL	7801	106	14532	9626	5813	10023	9499	21789	6490	39856

* ?intrusive

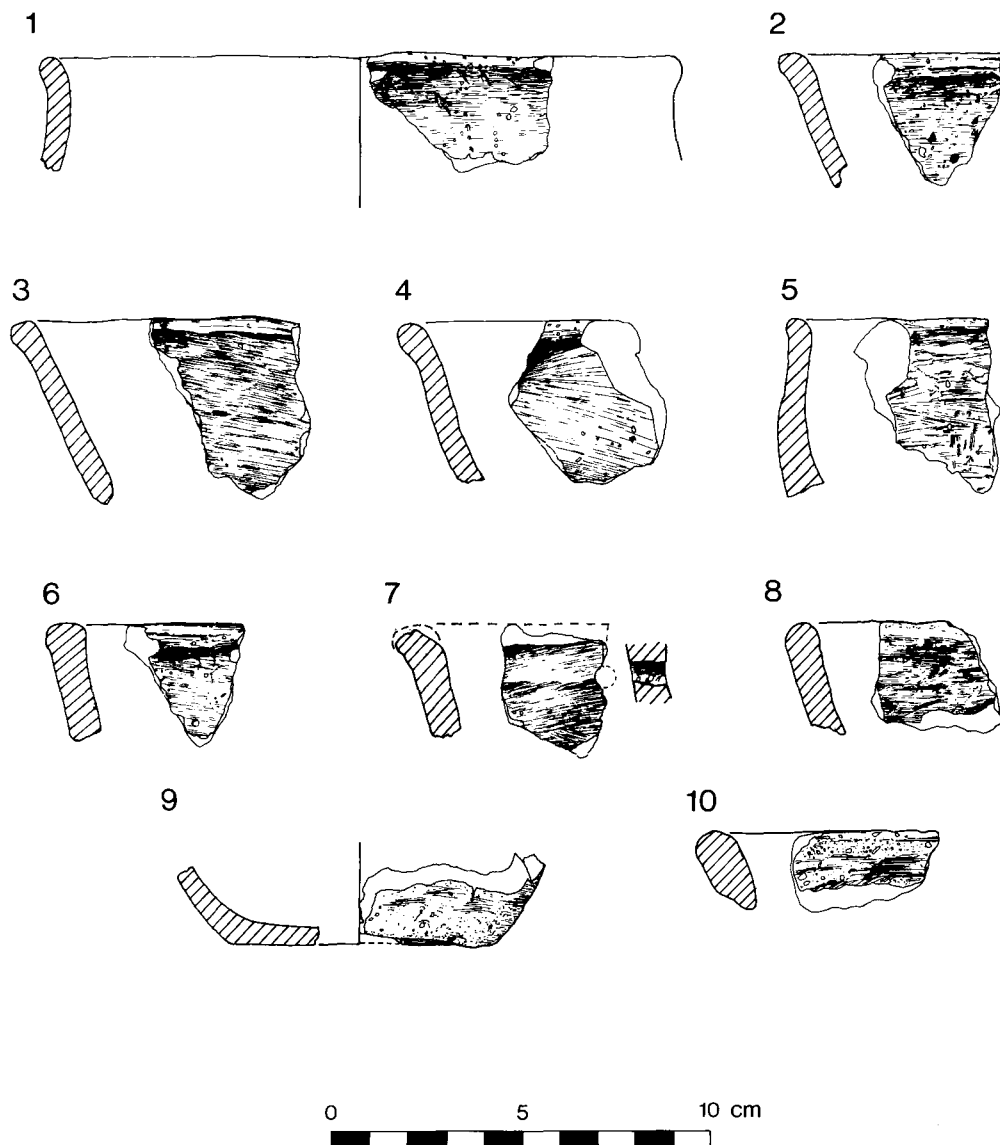


FIG. 11
Sub-Roman pottery. Scale 1:2

Tentatively, therefore, the cultural associations of the makers of this pottery can be identified in the Anglo-Saxon settlements of the upper Thames valley.

Phase V (Table 1)

Although the usual range of 2nd- to 4th-century wares is well represented, this phase is marked by the appearance of TF41B, oolitic limestone-tempered Saxo-Norman wares²³ in significant quantities. At least eight vessels are characteristically cooking-pots and jars.

Phase VI (Table 1)

Robber-trenches F21 (Contexts 251 and 257) and F3 (Contexts 255 and 299) and the rectangular feature F24 can be dated to the mid/late 11th century by the presence of TF41A, TF41B and TF45 cooking-pots (Fig. 12). The shaft F36 is similarly dated. The remainder of the pottery from this phase is residual Roman.

Phase VII (Table 1)

TF91 and TF43 date this phase to the mid or late 11th century, although these only represent approximately 6% of the pottery recovered. A few sherds of TF41A and a quantity of TF41B and TF43 are known to have been recovered from Context 244, the bailey surface, but were lost before this report was prepared. The predominance of TF41B provides a useful chronological baseline for the changeover from TF41A to TF41B in the last third of the 11th century.

Phase VIII (Table 1)

Contemporary 11th-century wares, TF40, TF41B, TF43 and TF45, are well represented, accounting for approximately 20% of all pottery recovered. A single sherd of TF48B, Cheddar Class E ware, was recovered from F6. Pits F6, F9, F12 and F52 contained sealed groups of late 11th- to early 12th-century wares, mostly cooking-pots. A selection is illustrated on Fig. 12. Comparable deposits from Gloucester include Period 6 at 1 Westgate Street²⁴ and contexts at both Eastgate and Northgate.²⁵

Phase IX (Table 1)

Pottery from the ditch fills is similar to that from the features cut through the bailey surface (Fig. 13). Glazed wares are notable by their absence suggesting that the ditch was substantially in-filled by the 13th century. Context 230 contained a single sherd of Italian amphora (TF10).

Contexts sealing the top of the ditch in Trench I (Contexts 71, 73 and 88) contain early 13th-century wares including TF53, Ham Green ware, TF81, Saintonge ware, and TF90 and TF91, Worcester wares.

Phase X (Table 1)

All pottery recovered is pre-13th century, with no glazed wares. Two further sherds of Italian amphorae suggest a link with the previous phase at least in terms of the origin of the deposits. Figure 13 illustrates a TF41B cooking-pot from F13.

Phase XI (Table 1)

Half the pottery from this phase is residual Roman wares, and half contemporary 13th-/14th-century wares. One sherd of the sub-Roman ware TF300 from this phase shows the intermixing of earlier deposits. Contemporary wares (TF44, TF52, TF53 and TF90) are illustrated (Fig. 13, 39-43). One sherd of TF59, late Surrey ware, suggests that Context 209 is at late as the 15th or 16th century.

Phase XII

The majority of pottery from this phase was residual. Contemporary wares represented by TF61 (Staffordshire black-glazed), TF62 (Delft ware), TF63 (Miscellaneous flowerpot), TF69/71 (White china) and TF74 (Iron-glazed ware) show an 18th- to 19th-century date.

Phase XIII

Pottery not examined.

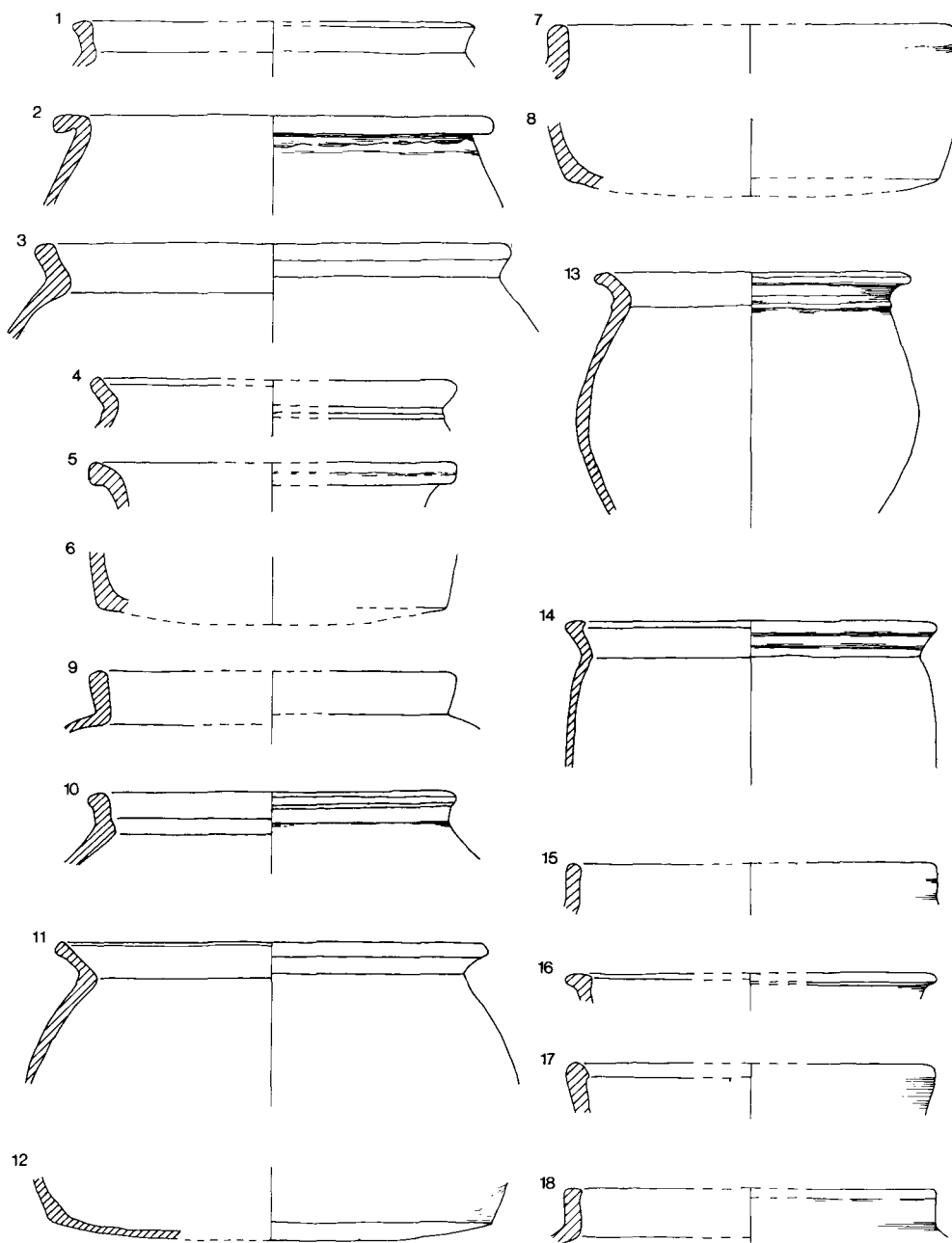


FIG. 12

Selected medieval pottery from Phases VI-VIII. Nos. 1-3, TF41B (F24); 4, TF41A (F23); 5, TF45 (F23); 6, TF41B (F23); 7-8, TF41B (F36); 9-10, TF41B (F9); 11-12, TF41B (F52); 13, TF41B (F52); 14, TF40 (F46); 15-18, TF41B (F15). Scale 1:4

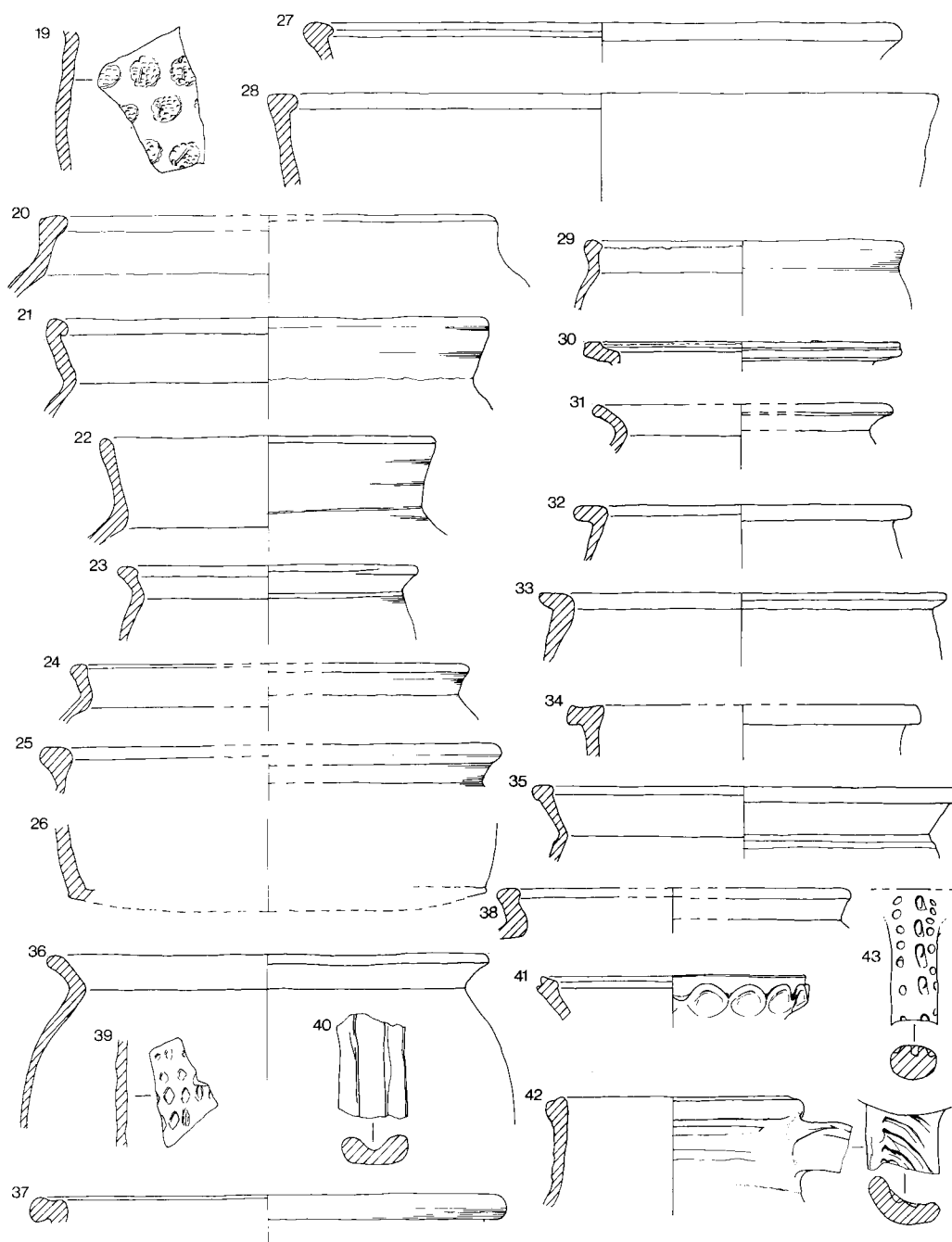


FIG. 13

Selected medieval pottery from Phases IX-XI. Nos. 19-24, TF41B (F11); 25-27, TF40 (F11); 28-29, TF41B (F11); 30, TF91 (F11); 31, TF41A (F11); 32-34, TF41B (F11); 35, TF43 (F11); 36, TF41B (F13); 37-38, TF41B (F14); 39-40, TF90 (205); 41, TF53 (205); 42, TF44 (219); 43, TF90 (219). Scale 1:4

THE SMALL FINDS. *By* P. ISAAC

The following catalogue of small finds is subdivided according to period and material. Multiple examples are grouped together. The stratigraphic origin of individual pieces is given in parenthesis as follows: context number/small find number/phase. Full descriptions can be obtained from the site archive.

Prehistoric

Four flint flakes were the only prehistoric objects recovered.

*Roman**Copper alloy (Bronze)* (Illustrated, Fig. 14)

- 16 Finger ring, plain, broadest at the bezel (223/135/XI)
- 19 Bracelet, twisted wire almost complete, 3rd/4th cent. (234/216/VIII)
- 22 Bracelet, groove-decorated, fragment, late 4th cent. (212/425/IVA)
- 23 Pin, knob head, two knob swellings, broken (219/103/XI)

Not illustrated: Five brooch fragments incl. strip, Hod Hill, bow, Colchester derivative, and penannular types; ring; three bracelets; tack; nail cleaners; stylus; and tweezers.

Iron

Not illustrated: Two styli.

Lead

Not illustrated: Spindle whorl.

Glass

Not illustrated: Twenty fragments from vessels including bowls, flasks, bottle, beaker and cup; one piece of window glass; counter; and eight beads.

Bone (Illustrated, Fig. 14)

- 106 Spindle-whorl, pierced femur head (231/166/XI)
- 107 Counter, top decorated with concentric grooves (216/81/VIII)

Not illustrated: 35 pins including Crummy types 3, 4, and 5;²⁶ bracelet fragment.

Non-architectural stone

Not illustrated: Two jet pin fragments; sandstone quern section; two shale beads; and ten shale bracelet fragments.

Ceramic objects (Illustrated, Fig. 14)

- 169 Stamped tile of previously unrecorded RPG series Class B type (233/555/VII)
- 294 Tile with graffiti, Fabric 1 (236/227/X)
- 295 Tile with graffiti, Fabric 7 (247/372/V)
- 297 Tile with graffiti, Fabric 3 (299/660/VI)
- 318 Antefix bearing adult male head, Fabric 8 (98/66/VIII)

Not illustrated: Lamp (nozzle section); three fragments of stamped samian; fragment of stamped Oxford colour-coat ware; ten stamped tile fragments with RPG Class A stamps; 30 stamped tile fragments with RPG Class B stamps; 70 stamped tile fragments with RPG Class C stamps; 86 stamped tile fragments with unclassifiable RPG stamps; one tile fragment with graffiti; two tile fragments with cloth impressions; one tile fragment with rope impression; two tile fragments with finger-prints; thirteen tile fragments with paw-prints; and one fin-shaped piece of tile.

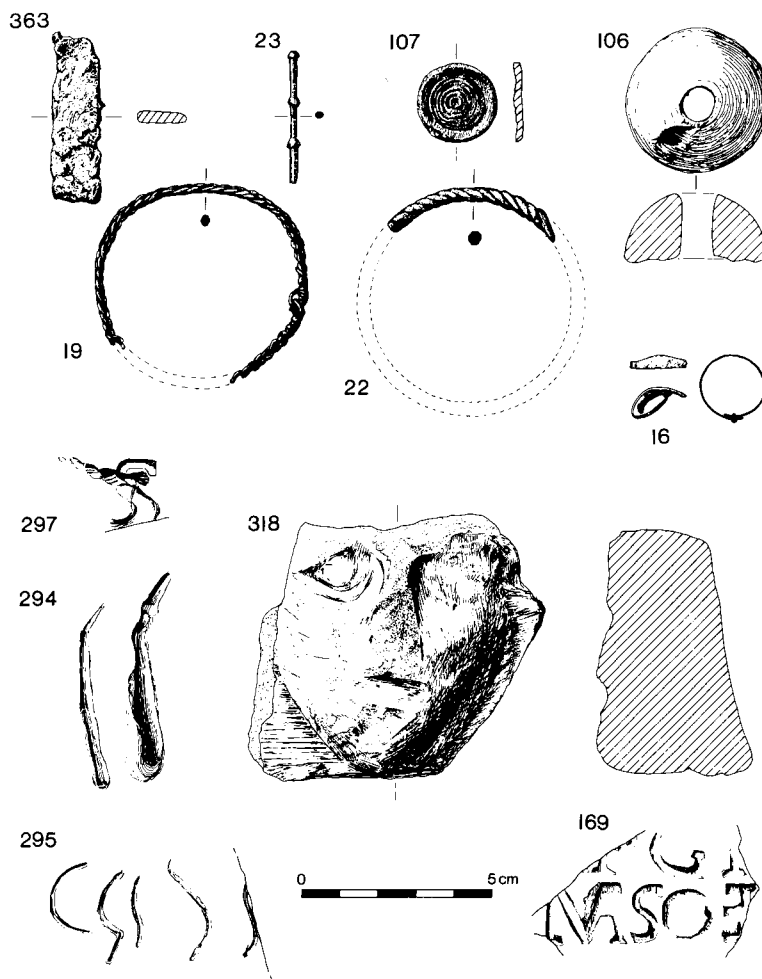


FIG. 14

Small finds and ceramic building materials. Scale 1:2

Notes on tile

Wherever stamps catalogued by Heighway and Parker have been found in stratified contexts in Gloucester they belong to 2nd-century deposits,²⁷ although they consider that the St Oswald's tiler was not abandoned until the 3rd century.²⁸ Most notable among the examples are the specimens of stamp type B13, of which thirteen new examples were recovered to add to the ten already known from St Oswald's, and the new stamp item 169. Enough of the latter remains to reconstruct R P G I I V I R from the top line but M S O J, beyond indicating the names of two magistrates, (—) M S O E T (—), remains for future elucidation.

*Saxon and Medieval**Ceramic objects* (Illustrated, Fig. 15)

321 Ring-type loom-weight, broken (244/326/VII).

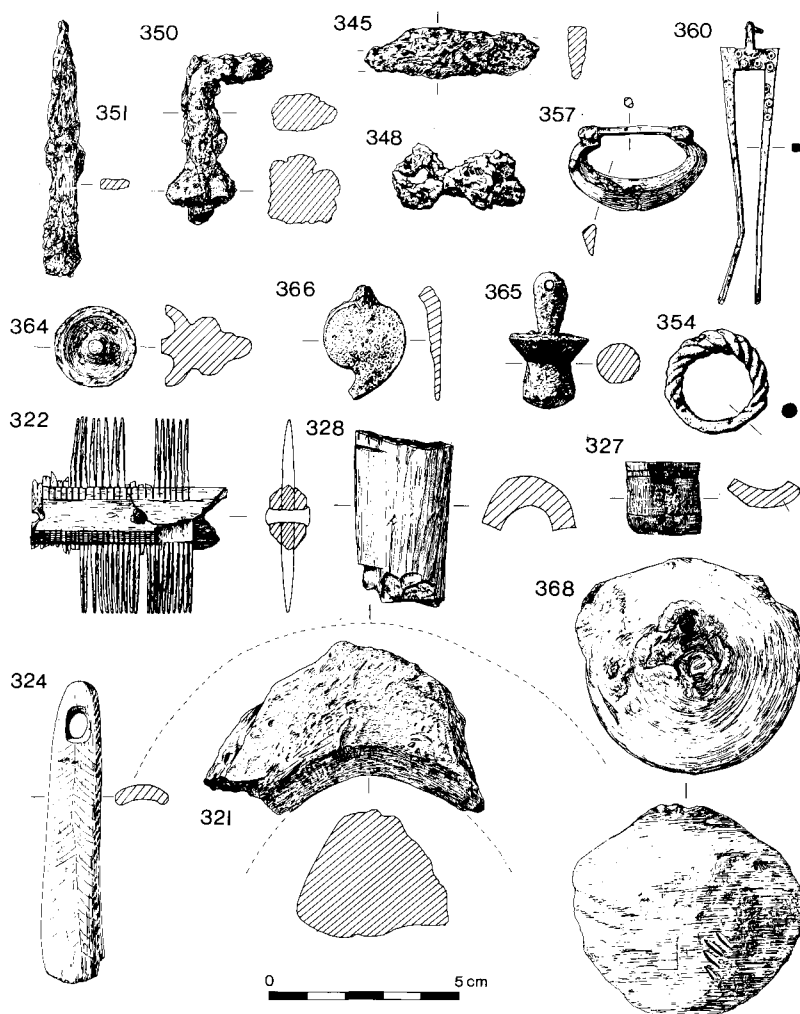


FIG. 15

Saxon and medieval small finds. Scale 1:2

Bone (Illustrated, Figs. 15, 16, 17 and 18)

- 322 Comb fragment, double sided, undecorated (251/237/VI). (Fig. 15)
 324 Thread-picker with perforated head, herringbone pattern lightly incised on upper surface. Broken (212/540/IVA). (Fig. 15)
 325 Set of 30 variously carved counters (Figs. 16–18) and a collection of 120 pieces of bone inlay from a *tabula* board. Described in more detail below (97/29/VIII)
 327 Handle, split piece, with incised horizontal bands (210/72/VIII). (Fig. 15)
 328 Handle, split piece, tapering, undecorated (231/161/XI). (Fig. 15)

Not illustrated: one comb fragment (find no. 323); counter or draughtsman; working waste piece, bone; and working waste piece of antler.

Note on items 321-24

Items 322 and 323 lack decoration which would have allowed closer dating, so only a broad 9th-/11th-century date can be suggested. The loom-weight, item 321, can be paralleled within Gloucester at 1, Westgate Street,²⁹ and item 324, the thread-picker, is also associated with weaving.

Note on the Tabula set. By I. J. STEWART

The fragmentary remains of a *tabula* board and a complete set of 30 counters for the game of Tables were recovered from Context 97, the lower fill of F52 in Trench I (see above Phase VIII). Although animal burrowing had displaced a few pieces, it is probable that the board was broken before being deposited in the pit. The positions of the counters hint that they were with the board when it was dumped, rather than preceding or succeeding it into the pit. Although dice may be expected to have been used with this game, none were found. A preliminary note on the board and the counters has already been published;³⁰ the notes which follow correct one or two factual errors in that account and summarize subsequent research.

The board originally had a single-piece solid wooden base measuring about 0.60 m by 0.45 m. Examination of wood residues from the pit and in corrosion products on the inlay suggests that the wood was ash and the grain ran across the width of the board. The upper surface and the side of the board were entirely covered with bone panels fixed by small iron pins. Some of these pins are still attached to the panels.

The general arrangement of panels was discussed in the previous publication, and follows that preserved in the traditions of present-day backgammon boards. Several bone strips bearing three-strand strapwork were initially published as being ornamentation from a central bar dividing the board into two equal parts. Further work suggests that these pieces are in fact side panels for the board; evidence from early medieval manuscripts suggests that a central bar was not introduced on tables boards until the 14th century.

The 30 counters, or Tablesmen, averaged 44.5 mm in diameter and 7.5 mm thick: 15 are made of Red Deer skull, 15 of Red Deer antler. All the pieces are wider on the upper surface than on the lower. Twenty-six have a central dimple, probably caused by a lathe point when the blank discs were cut.

All the counters are decorated with carved pictures in relief. Around the central scene is a circular border bearing chevron ornament often very devolved. On four counters it is reduced to two opposing lines of nicks. The border of many pieces is undercut, and the scenes depicted are often undercut completely or in part, thus causing holes through the bottom of the piece. This appears to be accidental rather than by design.

Each counter bears a unique scene. Overall the set covers a wide variety of themes including 'everyday' life, animals, biblical events, and astrological signs. Some adopt an unfamiliar perspective, for example a view of a toad from the underside. The following interpretations may be offered at the present stage of research (numbering as Figs. 16-18):

Red Deer skull counters:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 Seated figure with bear | 9 Seated figure eating |
| 2 Figure carrying another | 10 Two confronting birds |
| 3 Hanging man | 11 Hooded archer |
| 4 Squatting figure | 12 Manticora |
| 5 Figure with fish and bird | 13 Figure with spear and shield |
| 6 Seated figure (?) | 14 Figure seated by fire (?) |
| 7 Elephant | 15 Seated figure drinking |
| 8 Aesop's fable | |

Red Deer antler counters:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 16 Tress puller | 24 Copulating couple |
| 17 Man with animal on his back (?) | 25 Harpist |
| 18 Seated fiddler | 26 Toad |
| 19 Samson and the lion | 27 Juggler with hoops |
| 20 Figure threshing (?) | 28 Dancer |
| 21 Figure in <i>Orans</i> position | 29 Snake |
| 22 Centaur with bow | 30 Seated figure with hawk |
| 23 Rider | |

Whether the counters were differentiable through being coloured in some way to distinguish the pieces being used by each player is not at present clear. No unifying theme or themes have yet been discerned in the symbolism represented on the counters.

Iron (Illustrated Figs. 15, 19 and 20)

- 331 Rasp (242/229/VII). (Fig. 19).
 332 Unhairing or fleshing knife (242/400/VII). (Fig. 19).
 333 ?Shield-boss (242/230/VII). (Fig. 20).
 334 Rectangular bar (242/228/VII). (Fig. 19).
 335 Trapezoid strip (242/401/VII). (Fig. 19).
 336 Half-moon knife (244/232/VII). (Fig. 19).
 337 Knife (251/234/VI). (Fig. 19).
 338 Horseshoe (251/234/VI). (Fig. 19).
 339 Perforated bar (251/231/VI). (Fig. 19).
 340 ?Vessel (254/235/V). (Fig. 20).
 341 Butteris (257/673/VI). (Fig. 19).
 342 Sheet metal object (257/236/VI). (Fig. 19).
 345 Knife-blade, L. 92 mm (233/114/VII). (Fig. 15).
 348 Key, annular head, Diam. 34 mm, shank L. 67 mm (91/30/VIII). (Fig. 15).
 350 Handle, strap-type (237/274/X). (Fig. 15).
 351 Chisel, L. 133 mm, blade W. 17 mm (233/188/VII). (Fig. 15).
 Not illustrated: Four knife blades; wall-hook; and a rectangular bar.

Note on Iron objects 331–42. By CAROLE A. MORRIS

A collection of twelve iron objects derived from pre-bailey surface levels over the S. part of building F19 was examined. Stratigraphically, the earliest piece is the fragmentary metal vessel (item 340) from Context 254, primary collapse within F19 (Phase V), but both it and a few sherds of Saxo-Norman pottery may be intrusive. The other pieces probably relate to an episode of activity in the ruins of F19 during Phase VI because they were all found in deposits related to the robbing, demolition, and levelling of F19 prior to the construction of the bailey surface. All the pieces were fairly heavily corroded when uncovered.³¹

331 Large rasp

Rectangular cross-sectioned blade tapering slightly to rounded point; square cross-sectioned tang (L. 60 mm) with broken tip; this is all-in-one piece with the main blade and lies parallel to it, separated by bar, 61 mm long bent at right angles to both. The main blade had good traces of parallel ridges/teeth. L. 322 mm.; W. 25 mm.; Th. 11 mm. (Fig. 19).

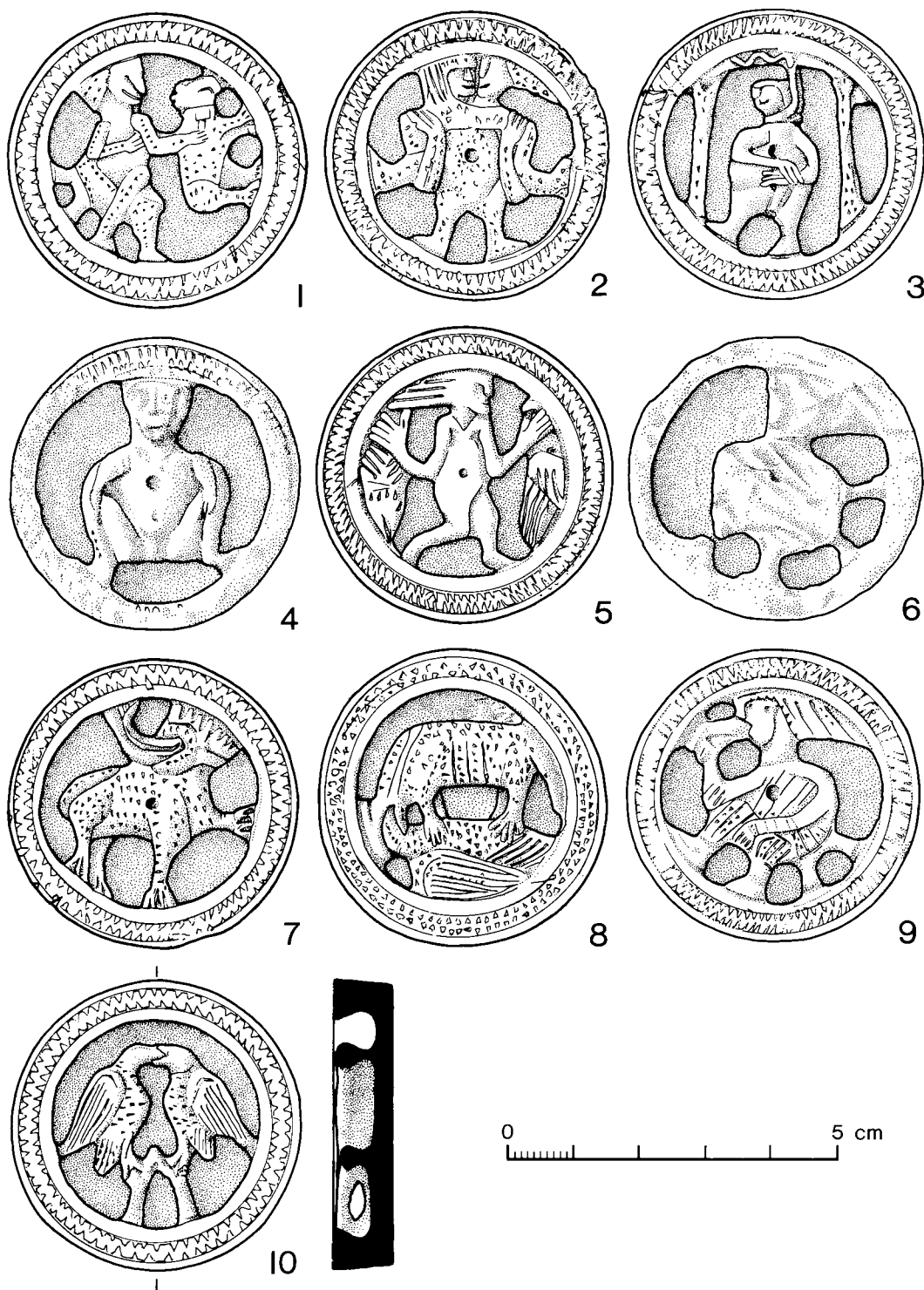


FIG. 16
Bone counters from F52. All of Red Deer skull. Scale 1:1

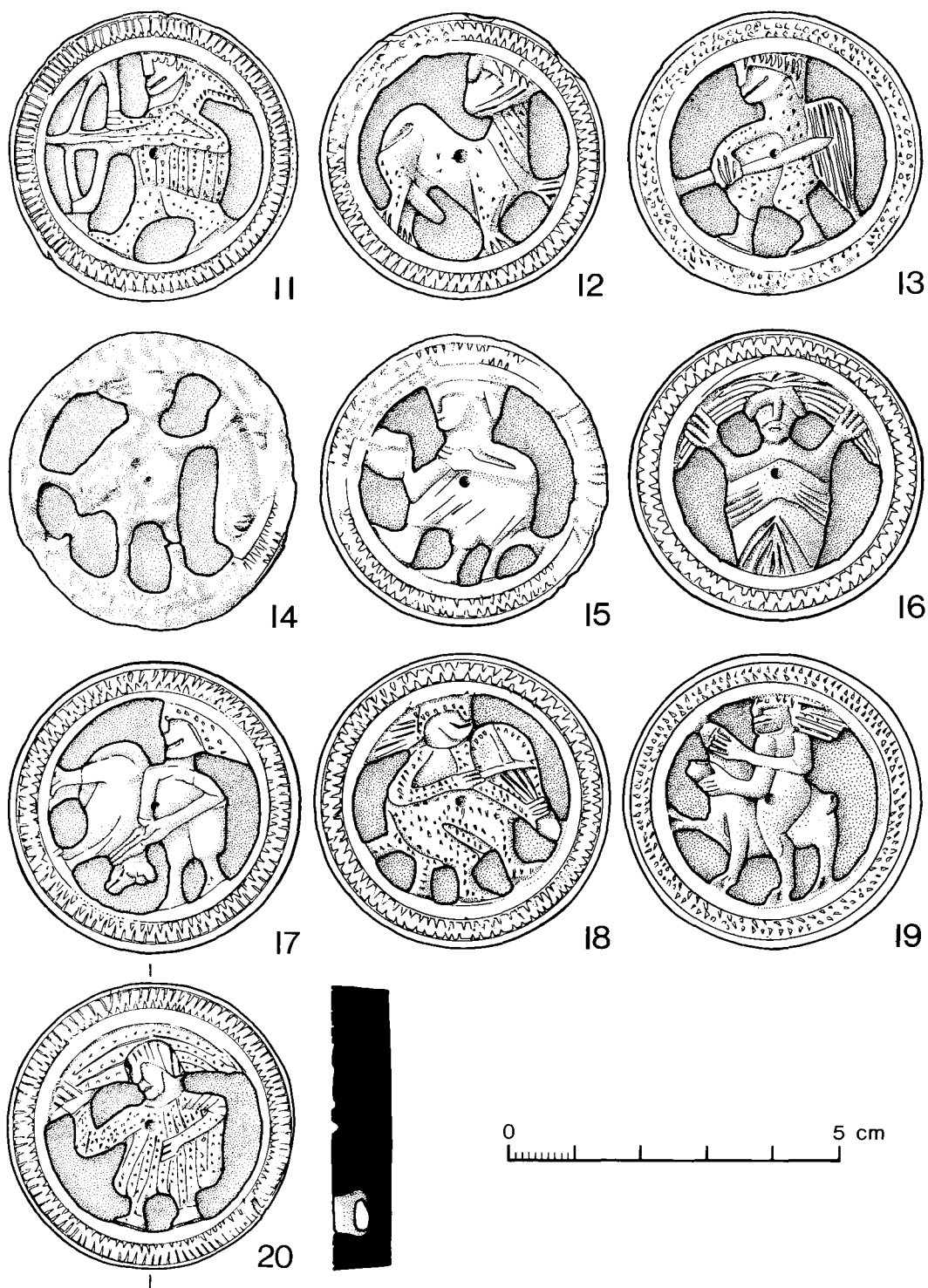


FIG. 17
 Bone counters from F52. Nos. 11-15 of Red Deer skull. Nos. 16-20 of Red Deer antler. Scale 1:1

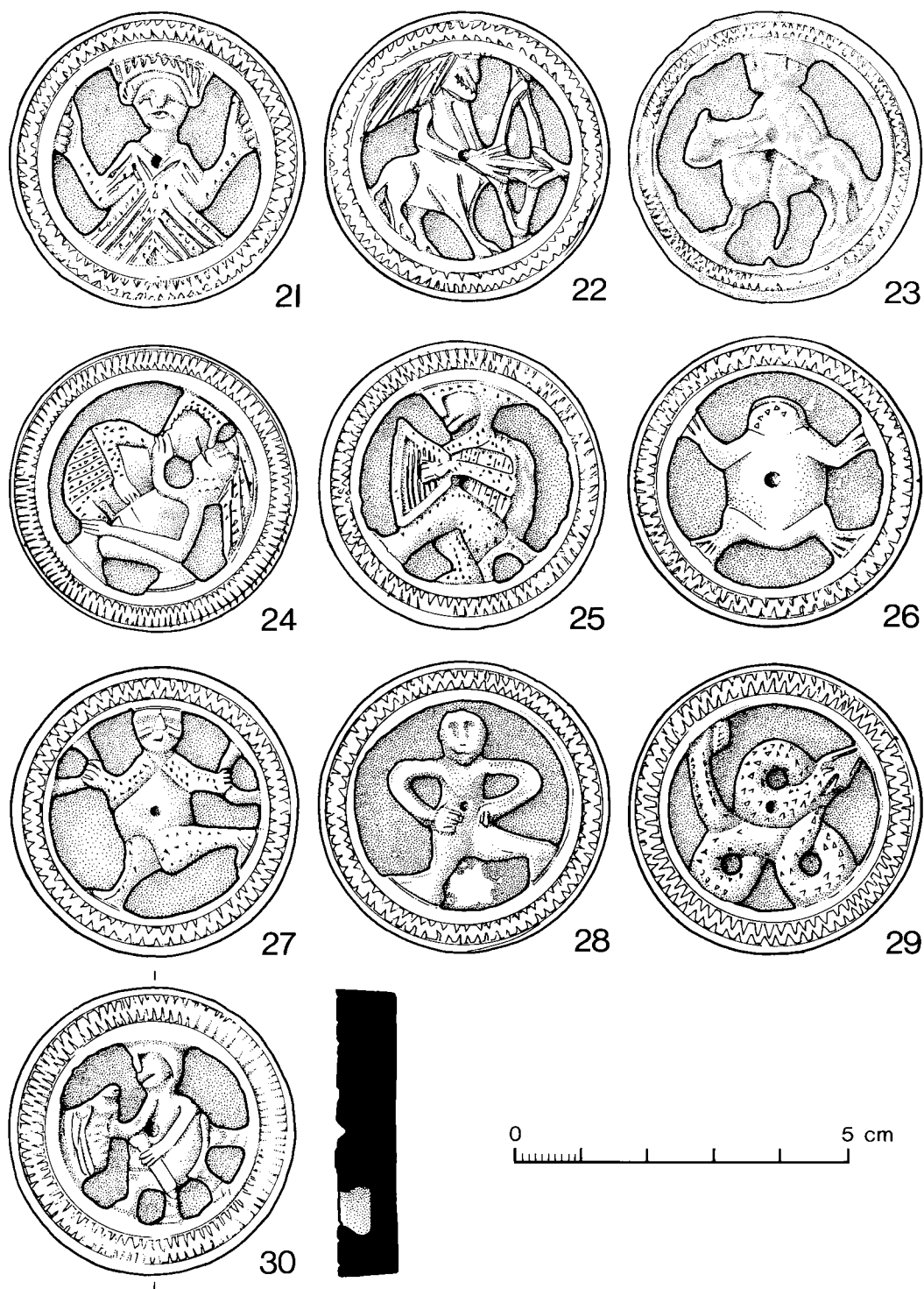


FIG. 18
Bone counters from F52. All of Red Deer antler. Scale 1:1

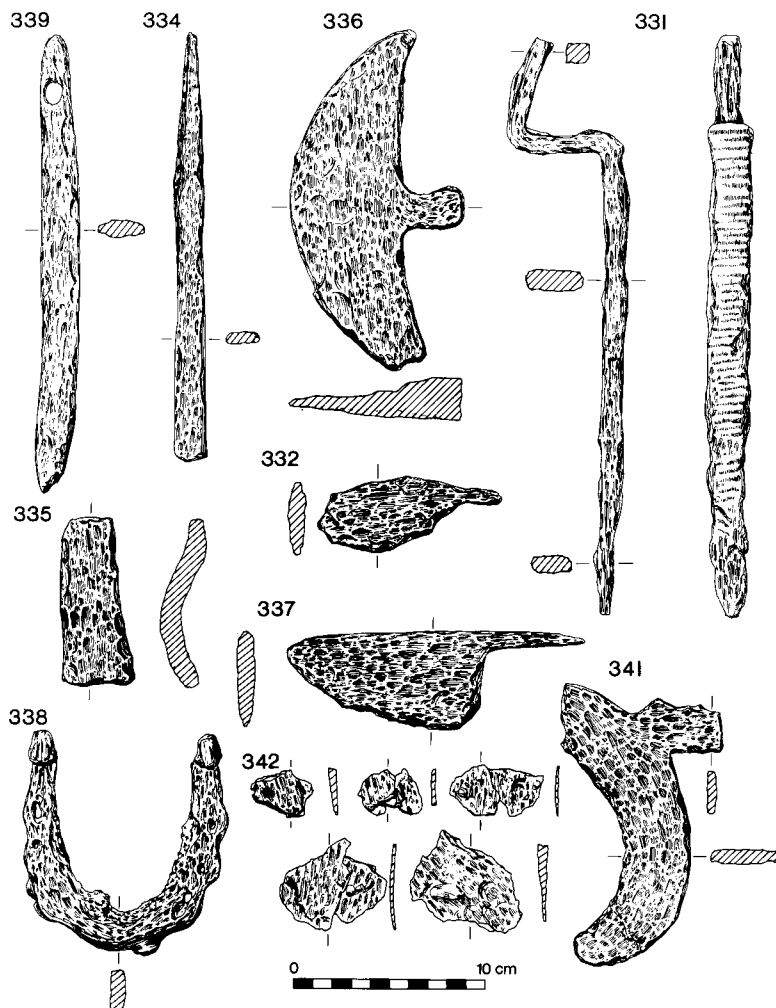


FIG. 19

Iron objects from pre-castle levels. Scale 1:4

This is a fine example of a tool which has parallels in both Roman and post-Roman contexts. An almost identical rasp was found at Silchester³² and two very similar examples were found in a 6th-century craftsman's grave at Herouvillette in Normandy.³³ All three had tangs offset from the blade. These would have been set in wooden handles and the angle would have provided a degree of protection for the worker's hand from the material being filed.

332 Fragment of possible unhairing or fleshing knife

Part of one end of the blade and one broken tang remain; tang is set high near blade back. L. 98 mm; W. 40 mm; Th. 11 mm. (Fig 19).

This would have been a narrow-bladed, two-handled tool which was used to clean a hide by pushing downwards against the hide on a sloping beam. Different forms of this sort of knife are still used by tanners for cleaning the hair, fat and flesh from a hide.³⁴

333 *Fragments of possible shield-boss*

Plain hemispherical form with traces on some fragments of a very slight carination; plain flat flange 42 mm wide, one fragment of which has a probable rivet-hole; upper part of dome does not survive and there is no evidence for a spike. Diam. *c.* 200 mm; dome Diam. *c.* 120 mm; H. *c.* 50 mm. (Fig. 20).

A headless nail with a sub-square cross-section was found with the boss fragments. L. 54 mm; W. 9 mm; Th. 8 mm.

If these fragments are those of a shield-boss, it is more likely to be Roman or sub-Roman than Germanic in influence. Plain hemispherical shield bosses, albeit usually made of bronze, have been found all over the Roman world, for example on 3rd-century oval wooden shields at Dura Europos, at Maffin near Haltonchesters and at Kirkham in Lancashire.³⁵ The latter is very similar in form and dimensions to the Gloucester boss, being 190 mm in diameter with a dome diameter of 110 mm, and a flange width of *c.* 40-42 mm.

The most common Anglo-Saxon shield bosses have a straight or concave dome above a vertical or indented waist and a sloping flange; they are not comparable with the Gloucester boss. Plain hemispherical bosses have been found in the Germanic world, for example at Thorsberg and Nydam in Schleswig, but these are thought to be derived from the usual Roman type.³⁶

334 *Rectangular cross-sectioned bar*

Tapers to one end. Purpose unknown. L. 225 mm; W. 19 mm; Th. 6 mm. (Fig. 19).

335 *Sub-rectangular piece of thick, bar iron*

Curved in profile, wider at one end. Purpose unknown. L. 90 mm; W. 41 mm; Th. 11 mm (Fig. 19).

336 *Leatherworker's or saddler's half-moon knife*

Crescent-shaped blade with solid, square-sectioned handle projecting away from the blade back and appears to be incomplete; the blade back is very thick (*c.* 14 mm) and in profile the blade tapers evenly on both sides to cutting edge; no bevel. L. 183 mm; W. 61 mm; Th. (handle) 23 mm. (Fig. 19).

Half-moon knives are unique to leatherworking crafts and are used for cutting out irregular shapes, splicing and thinning leather. Their form has remained remarkably unaltered over the centuries and they are still in use today.³⁷ Modern half-moon knives have tapering tangs which are fixed in wooden handles, but this example appears to have had a solid all-in-one piece iron handle. There are very few known examples from archaeological excavations, but a striking parallel is the 12th-century half-moon knife found at Lund, Sweden.³⁸

337 *Knife*

Short, wide triangular blade; short whittle tang in line with the blade back; cutting edge curves upwards to meet straight blade back at point. L. 157 mm; W. (blade) 53 mm; W. (tang) 11 mm. (Fig. 19).

This form of knife is very unusual and it is difficult to find comparative material among either Roman or Anglo-Saxon knives. The closest parallel dates from the late Iron Age and was found at South Cadbury, Somerset,³⁹ but since the Gloucester knife appears to be a specialized tool it is possible that the resemblance is purely coincidental. The position of the tang suggests that half of the tool handle would have sat above the blade back, thus keeping the user's hand further away from the worked material. This function is not inconsistent with the idea that the knife is a leatherworker's tool with similar uses to the half-moon knife (item 336). The curved blades of both tools allow a rocking motion on leather laid out on a flat surface.

338 *Horseshoe*

'Lobate' or 'wavy-outlined' profile; six round nail-holes in probably rectangular countersinkings (these are mostly obscured by corrosion); remains of nail in one nail-hole; large calkins on end of branch on ground surface of shoe. L. 118 mm; W. 110 mm; Th. 8 mm. (Fig. 19).

It used to be argued that there was no method of distinguishing between horseshoes of the Roman and early Medieval periods,⁴⁰ but it is now usually accepted that horseshoes made in the form of narrow iron plates bent to the outline of, and nailed to, the horse's hoof were not common Roman artefacts, if used at all. The evidence for their existence in Roman Britain is still debatable, but they are certainly found from the 9th century onwards.

Horseshoes with wavy-outline profiles are usually found on Norman sites and the earliest specimens are mid 11th century in date. Although this 'Norman' type seems to have been used into the

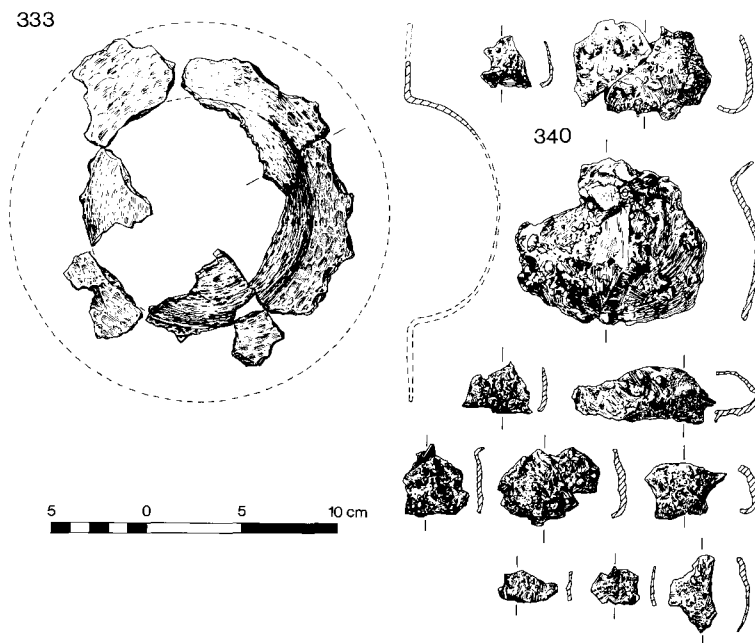


FIG. 20

Iron objects from pre-castle levels. Scale 1:4

13th century, the Gloucester horseshoe is likely to be early in the series since it was sealed by deposits used to construct the pre-1086 castle.

339 Needle-like bar

Rounded rectangular cross-section; tapers slightly towards one rounded end; perforated by sub-circular hole 9 mm in diameter at this end; other end is possibly broken or roughly shaped to a point, and the bar at this end bends slightly to one side. L. 249 mm; W. 255 mm; Th. 10 mm. (Fig. 19).

340 Fragments of possible iron vessel

Many fragments of plate iron, probably from a metal vessel or similar artefact. The largest piece has traces of a possible rim. Most pieces have some curvature of profile but no reconstruction is possible. Th. 3–4 mm. (Fig. 20).

341 Curved blade-like object

One end rounded, the other incomplete. Thin rectangular cross-section with no evidence for a cutting edge. Incomplete projection, possibly originally triangular in shape, on outer edge. L. 153 mm; W. 76 mm; Th. 7–8 mm. (Fig. 19).

Because of its curved shaped, this object resembles a butteris or paring knife used by farriers for paring horses' hooves before shoeing. The amount of corrosion on the object, however, makes it impossible to be certain whether or not it is a blade.

342 Fragments of plate-iron object

Fragments of plate iron with very little curvature in profile; possibly from a flat object. No reconstruction possible. Th. 2–4 mm. (Fig. 19).

Assuming that the derivation of the objects in Phase VI and VII contexts is, as the excavator believes, from activities during Phase VI in the ruins of building F19, then on

stratigraphic grounds alone the group could in theory date from any period between the 6th century and the mid 11th. There is, however, internal evidence, particularly the form of the horseshoe (item 338), which suggests that most if not all the objects belong to the later part of that timespan, probably the late 10th or early 11th century. The only piece which seems out of place in such an interpretation is the shield-boss (item 333) which appears to be of Roman form.

Collections of iron objects of late Saxon/early Norman date are not common, and what makes this group especially interesting is that, with the exception of the shield boss, all could be related by function since they are associated with ironworking, farriery or leatherworking. The bars (items 339, 334, 335) could be raw material or blanks for forging. The triangular, half-moon and unhairing knives (items 337, 332, 336) were probably for cutting and preparing leather. The rasp (item 331) and the possible butteris (item 341) could be for preparing hooves and the horseshoe (item 338) speaks for itself. The vessel and iron plate are of less clear function, but could easily have found a role within this general range of activities.

Copper alloy (Illustrated, Figs. 14 and 15)

354 Ring, spiral twist, tapering, complete (24/10/VIII). (Fig. 15).

357 Buckle, D-form (219/99/XI). (Fig. 15).

360 Part of a folding balance, ring-and-dot incised decoration (221/86/VIII). (Fig. 15).

363 Strip section, ?blade (223/136/XI). (Fig. 14).

364 Terminal with central rod, ?handle (235/433/IX). (Fig. 15).

365 Steelyard weight (235/478/IX). (Fig. 15).

366 Harness pendant, comma form (229/211/XI). (Fig. 15).

Not illustrated: Ring-type brooch; two rings; three strap-ends; stud; harness pendant; miscellaneous fragments.

Lead

Not illustrated: Pear-shaped steelyard weight, ?Roman; miscellaneous fragments.

Ceramic objects

Not illustrated: Five crucible fragments; clay tuyère.

Non-architectural stone

Not illustrated: Sandstone tile section, reworked to a septagon.

The coins. By P. ISAAC

A full descriptive catalogue of the coins, arranged chronologically according to period, has been deposited in the site archive. The following summary is based on the analysis of the complete assemblage.

Roman

In all, 117 Roman coins were recovered from Trenches I and II. Their chronological range suggests occupation between approximately A.D. 260 and 380. Table 2 summarizes the frequency of coins recovered. It can be argued from the rather worn condition of the later issues that numismatic evidence allows a terminal date for coin use nearer to 390 or 400, but although ten coins of the period 364–78 were found there were no later issues.

The coin series follows a standard pattern for excavated later Roman settlement sites. The high percentage of coins from 259–86 and particularly from 274–87 is normal, as is the later peak from 307–361. Similarly, low totals for the intervening years is a widespread phenomenon.

TABLE 2
FREQUENCY OF ROMAN COINS RECOVERED

DATE	TOTAL	%
259-270	14	12%
270-274	18	16%
274-286	35	33%
286-307	2	2%
307-337	17	15%
337-361	14	12%
361-378	11	10%
TOTAL	111	100%

Medieval

Silver

118 1250-1251, Henry III, Long Cross cut farthing, Class 4 (219/73/XI)

119 1251-1272, Henry III, Long Cross cut farthing, Class 5 (219/110/XI)

The discovery of these coins in the same context confirms their contemporary circulation before the Long Cross coinage was called in in 1279.

THE BUILDING MATERIALS. *By* P. A. GREATOREX

All the building materials from Trench II were retained for study and form the basis of this report. The majority of materials (notably sandstone tiles, ceramic tile and wall plaster) from Trench I were discarded prior to any investigation and recording. A full descriptive report on the building materials has been deposited in the site archive.

Roman building F19 (Phase III)

The main walls of this building are represented by the robber-trenches F13, F18, F21 and F23 and have been described above, together with descriptions of the floors and the lathe-turned limestone column base found near F13 (Fig. 21). Evidence for the superstructure of the building derives from materials found in the destruction/collapse and robbing contexts grouped together here as Phases V and VI.

Approximately 126 kg of faced plaster were recovered from above the floor between F18 and F23. About 90% of this had a uniform pink wash suggesting that it all derived from a single surface. The surface area represented was calculated to be 4 sq. m, but a programme of sieving undertaken on site suggested that only about one-third of all plaster retained traces of a surface. Thus the actual quantity of plaster present probably originally covered about 12 sq. m. This would be insufficient to have covered more than a fraction of the walls, but is almost exactly the area of the ceiling of the room within the trench. In addition to the pink plaster, a number of fragments with a deep maroon wash were found. These may have formed a decorative border.

Approximately 718 kg of sandstone tile fragments were recovered, mostly from the area between F18 and F13, which, it can be suggested, is an appropriate quantity to have roofed this part of the building. Differences in wall thickness and the wear patterns on the floor between F18 and F13 suggest that this might originally have been a verandah.

Approximately 912 kg of ceramic tile fragments were recovered, mostly from the upper part of the midden, F20, and the courtyard area to the north of F19. Stamps were present on 196 fragments (details in the small finds report). By matching the stamp dies with other known specimens from Gloucester, seven of the fabrics (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, and 8) were probably made at or near St Oswald's tiliary.⁴¹ The sources of the remaining fabrics are not known, but are probably fairly local to Gloucester. Fabric 6 is very similar to TF25 in the Gloucester pottery Type Fabric Series, known to have been manufactured at

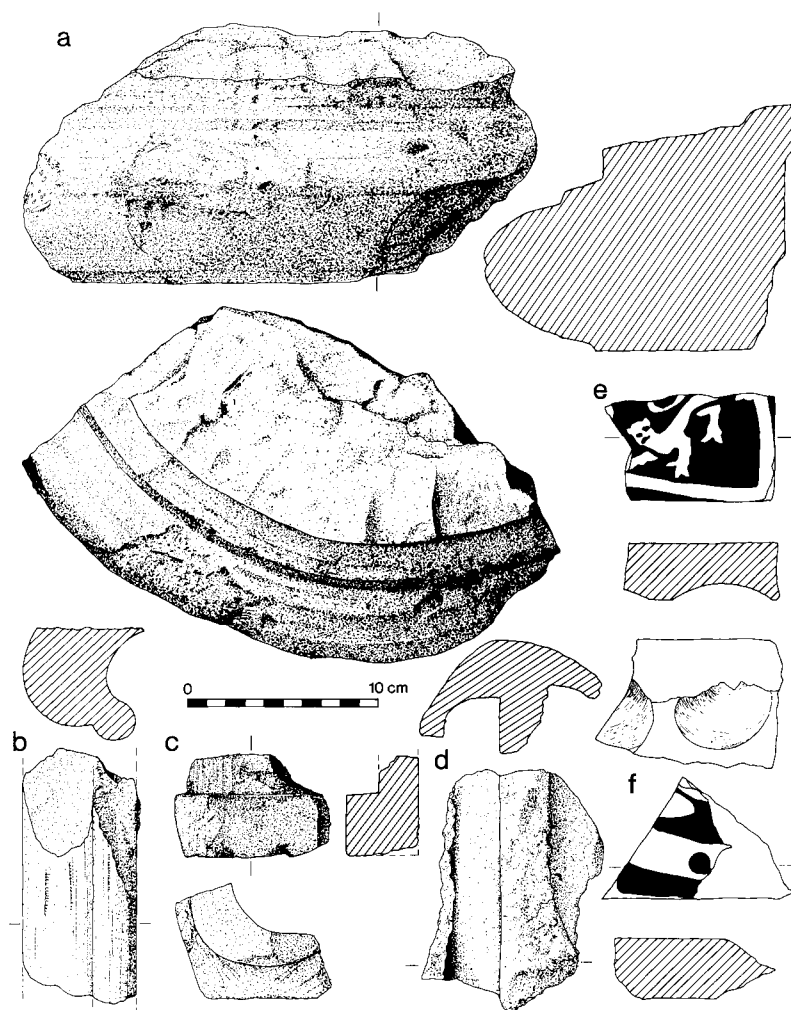


FIG. 21

Worked stone and medieval floor tiles. Scale 1:4

the College of Art site in Brunswick Road.⁴² The quantity of roofing tile recovered was appropriate for a roof area of about 14 sq. m; the area of floor bounded by F18, F21 and F23 increased by 15% for a roof-pitch of 30 degrees, is about 13.8 sq. m. Thus it can be suggested that the ceramic tile roof once covered the main part of building F19.

The box-flue tiles recovered ranged in thickness from 15 mm to 25 mm and showed three different 'keying' styles. The purpose of the flue tiles within building F19 is uncertain; none were found in situ.

Intermixed with the tile was over 13 kg of moulded mortar fragments (Fig. 21.d). These are a type of roof edging used to secure the final row of *imbrices* over the *tegulae* flanges. The discovery of these fragments may help to explain why only one antefix was found on the site (Fig. 14. 318).

Medieval period (Phases VII-XIII)

No evidence of any building was found in Phases VII-XIII, and the building materials recovered from Phase IX-XIII contexts must therefore represent incidental deposits introduced from elsewhere.

Two fragments of floor tile were found. Both are Gloucester TF113 and bear the 'Arms of England' design (Fig. 21. e and f), dated to the late 13th century. Examples have been found at both Blackfriars and Greyfriars in Gloucester.⁴³

The majority of the medieval and post-medieval roofing tiles are similar to Gloucester TF103, probably manufactured at Cranham, 7 km east of Gloucester.⁴⁴ Other fragments, identified as being similar to Gloucester TF90, TF52 and TF54, probably originated from Worcester, Malvern and the Gloucestershire–Herefordshire border area respectively.⁴⁵ All of these examples can be dated to the 13th century.

A number of pieces of worked oolitic limestone were recovered, including 44 fragments of fine string moulding (Fig. 21. b) showing traces of whitewash and yellow paint. These are thought to be the remains of a window frame or decorative border, and probably derive from Blackfriars or Greyfriars. Attempts to reconstruct the arrangement of the pieces proved fruitless.

Another find, of the same material, was an hexagonally-cut block with a 50 mm diameter drilled central hole (Fig. 21. c). The interior was heavily calcified and the piece may be interpreted as part of a flue base or furnace fitting.

CHARCOAL SAMPLES. *By* VANESSA STRAKER

Charcoal from five contexts was examined with a view to identifying the species present and the age of the timber represented. Table 3 summarizes the identifications.

Sample E35 consists mostly of immature wood, probably 5–10 years old. E37 is similar though there is a wider range of species represented. It is possible that the wood in these samples is withies from coppiced woodland, such as might be used in hurdles. Samples E38–40 are from substantial timbers, though it is not possible to say how mature the trees were.

The wood could all have come from local sources as all the *taxa* except for *Euonymus* can regenerate readily by coppicing. The *Euonymus* cannot be identified with certainty, but it is a native shrub or small tree found principally on calcareous soils.⁴⁶

TABLE 3
SPECIES IDENTIFIED FROM CHARCOAL SAMPLES

TAXON	SAMPLES CONTEXT	E35 (271)	E37 (274)	E38 (237)	E39 (235)	E40 (223)
<i>Quercus</i> sp. (oak)		—	+	—	+	+
<i>Corylus avellana</i> (hazel)		+	+	+	—	+
Pomoidae (hawthorn, apple etc.)		+	+	+	—	+
cf. <i>Acer campestre</i> (field maple)		—	+	—	—	—
cf. <i>Euonymus europaeus</i> (spindle tree)		+	—	—	—	—

+ = present

RADIOCARBON DATING. *By* T. C. DARVILL

The following radiocarbon determination was made by the Isotope Measurements Laboratory at Harwell on a sample of charcoal from Context 271 within building F19 in Trench II:

Harwell Ref.	DC13 (o/oo)	Age b.p.	Age b.p.–1950
HAR-6685	–26.4	1670 ± 40	a.d. 280

The charcoal used for dating was a mixture of hazel (*Corylus avellana*) and ?hawthorn (*Pomoidae*) from immature wood probably 5–10 years old (sample E35 above). Calibration of the determination using the curve published by Pearson *et al.* based on a study of Irish oaks⁴⁷ suggests that at one sigma (68% probability) the true date should lie between A.D. 260 and

A.D. 420, while at two sigma (95% probability) the date should lie between A.D. 250 and A.D. 530. Given that a coin of Valentinian in Context 249 provides a *terminus post quem* for the deposition of the charcoal deposit Context 271 and the hearths in Phase IV within F19, and the fact that the charcoal used for dating was fairly young, the deposition of Context 271 is likely to have taken place in the mid 5th century, and almost certainly no later than the first decade or two of the 6th.

DISCUSSION

The excavations at 28-32 Commercial Road provide the first evidence for the early Norman castle at Gloucester recovered through controlled excavation. The absence of intensive later medieval and post-medieval occupation on this site ensured a well-preserved and continuous stratigraphic sequence of late 4th- to early 11th-century deposits.

The early Roman phases on the site were not fully investigated, but sufficient was recorded to confirm the presence of a rampart and intervallum road which can tentatively be assigned to the 1st and 2nd centuries. These observations confirm the line of the legionary fortress and early *colonia* defences in the SW. corner of the city.⁴⁸

The late Roman phases at Commercial Road were dominated by the large building, F19. This structure, which can provisionally be reconstructed as a courtyard building, lay just inside the defences and provides important evidence for the nature of occupation in this otherwise little-explored quarter of the city. F19 was a large and well-appointed building, with plastered ceilings and columns along the edge of a verandah overlooking the courtyard. Its foundation date is not known with certainty, but a late 3rd-century coin from the make-up of the third reflooring suggests that it may date back to the later 2nd century. If this is correct, then the construction of F19 at Commercial Road may belong to the same general horizon of redevelopment within the *colonia* as evidenced at 13-17 Berkeley Street by the courtyard building I, 18,⁴⁹ and at the New Market Hall site by the buildings in masonry period I.⁵⁰

The function of building F19 cannot be determined from the excavated evidence, but two features of its construction are rather unusual and together suggest that it may have been a public building of some description. Firstly, it was refurbished at least four times with little or no modification to its plan. This suggests that it was heavily used and important enough to be regularly maintained over a considerable period of time. Secondly, the main part of the building was roofed with ceramic tiles marked with RPG series stamps, including many examples which give the names of magistrates. No other building in Gloucester has yielded so many stamped tiles, and the only assemblage of comparable size comes from the possible tilery beneath St Oswald's Priory.⁵¹ It is generally assumed that the letters RPG represent a phrase in the genitive, *R(ei) P(ublicae) G(levensium)*, 'of the commonwealth of the Glevensians',⁵² and that tiles marked in this way were products of a municipal tilery for *Glevum*.⁵³ The products of such a tilery would undoubtedly have been used in the construction of public buildings.

Whether an intervallum road lay to the south of F19 is not known. No trace of a road was found within the excavated area, and if Hurst's projection of the ramparts

abutting the rear of the later Roman wall is correct,⁵⁴ there would scarcely be room for such a road between the edge of the excavated area and the presumed line of the defences which at this point lie under the middle of Commercial Road. The possibility must therefore be admitted that this section of the defensive circuit was not served by an intervallum road in the later Roman period.

The evidence for the later history of F19 is particularly interesting as it spans a difficult period in the city's history, the later 4th and 5th centuries.

The accumulation of silts above the late Roman floors in F19 and the presence of hearths both within the building and in the verandah suggests that the building itself continued in use but that its function changed. It must, however, be noted that although the floors became covered, the interior of the building remained clear of debris. The rubbish from activities in and around F19 was presumably deposited on the midden F20 which lay outside the building to the south. The sub-Roman pottery from this midden fits well enough with the radiocarbon date of 1670 ± 40 b.p. (250–530 A.D. CAL) for the pile of charcoal inside the building.

The juxtaposition of the midden and the building has other important implications because, superficially, the midden looks exactly like the deposits of 'dark soil' so frequently cited as the remains of sub-Roman disuse and decay, or of cultivation, within major towns.⁵⁵ Indeed, had excavations been confined to the southern part of the site this would probably have been the interpretation given here. However, with the evidence of a larger area it is clear that in this case the dark soil only formed outside the building to the south; no comparable layer was found in the courtyard. The form and content of the midden preclude its formation through cultivation, because lenses of stony soil and partially articulated animal skeletons would not have survived if the soil been turned over with any regularity. Rather, the abundance of butchered bone hints that primary carcass dismemberment took place in the vicinity, although a full study of the animal bones will be required before the taphonomy of the deposit can be properly determined. The introduction of soil to cleanse such a deposit by periodically covering the surface is not unlikely,⁵⁶ and may also account for the presence of human bones in the midden since extensive cemeteries lay relatively close at hand immediately outside the walls of the city.⁵⁷ On the basis of this evidence it may be suggested that the dark soil on this site results directly from fairly intensive late Roman and sub-Roman occupation of this part of the city.

Looking at Gloucester as a whole during the sub-Roman period, the evidence from Commercial Road provides two important additions to our understanding of the nature and extent of settlement. First, settlement was clearly not confined to the central area of the city in the 5th century⁵⁸ as there was also considerable activity in the south-western quarter of the walled area at least. This is all the more important because the site is well away from any of the known gates. Second, the presence of a previously unknown type of sub-Roman pottery is useful for identifying deposits of similar date elsewhere in the city, and at the same time refutes the idea that Gloucester was aceramic through the early post-Roman period.

The continuity of occupation at Commercial Road through the 5th century and possibly on into the early 6th is also found at other sites in Gloucester. At the New

Market Hall site, for example, the buildings south of the street show clear signs of sub-Roman occupation,⁵⁹ while at Berkeley Street the late Roman courtyard building was demolished before the end of the Roman period, and in its place a rectangular timber building with its walls set on sill-beams was erected.⁶⁰ Perhaps most impressive, however, is the evidence from 1 Westgate Street⁶¹ where some time after 390 a reorganization took place involving the creation of a large metalled area over and around the *forum*. This area could have functioned as a market. Mention may also be made of the early 5th-century burial in a mausoleum at Kingsholm just outside the walled area.⁶² Clearly the city had lost some of its former grandeur as a Roman *colonia*, and there was greater variety in the density of occupation within the walled area, but these changes should not be confused with the loss of status or central-place functions. Archaeological evidence for political, administrative and mercantile prowess is just as tenuous for the Roman period proper in Gloucester as it is for the sub-Roman period. Indeed, the evidence of a large paved area in the centre of the town, a high-status burial just outside, and imported pottery such as the North African amphorae of 4th- to 6th-century date from several sites in the city⁶³ all suggest that Gloucester was just as much a central place in the 5th century as it had been earlier.

Although no major discontinuity of settlement can be found at Gloucester in the 4th or 5th centuries, the same is not true of the 6th century. For this period the evidence from Commercial Road is directly in accord with all the other investigated sites within the walled area; there is a stand-still in the development of the stratigraphic sequence lasting perhaps two or three centuries. It is tempting to link this hiatus with the Saxon colonization of the area in the later part of the 6th century, as this would almost certainly have had a profound effect on the administration and economy of the city and the surrounding area,⁶⁴ but in the present state of knowledge such a link must of course be speculative.

Whether the focus of settlement at Gloucester shifted to a *wic* type emporium outside the city in the 7th to 9th century, as is now thought to have happened at London, York, Lincoln, Canterbury and elsewhere,⁶⁵ or whether nucleated settlement ceased altogether in the area is not at present clear;⁶⁶ certainly there is no evidence of occupation during this period on the Commercial Road site.

The next episode of activity at Commercial Road is in the late Saxon period, and this may be associated with the major period of redevelopment in Gloucester following the acquisition of new administrative and military status in the 10th century. At this time, Roman ruins must have been a conspicuous feature of the townscape. The massive colonnade north of the western arm of the *via principalis* seems to have provided the line for Westgate Street, the open area of the forum was used for building, and the city walls were certainly still standing to provide the basis for the refurbishment of the defences.⁶⁷ To this list can now be added the late Roman building at Commercial Road which seems to have provided the setting for a few intermittent activities in the late 10th or early 11th century, including perhaps the establishment of a farrier's workshop and the partial robbing of the earlier building.

The fact that the ruined Roman building F19 does not appear to have been demolished, cleared and levelled until the construction of the castle, presumably

shortly after the Conquest, suggests that this part of the city was not within the area remodelled by Aethelflaed in the 10th century.⁶⁸ The Domesday Survey records that the castle at Gloucester occupied the site of sixteen houses,⁶⁹ and the demolition of F19 could have been part of this. It should be emphasized, however, that there is no firm evidence that F19 was more than a ruin by this time.

No evidence was recovered to support or refute Hurst's contention that the motte-and-bailey castle was preceded by an earlier ringwork, and the crucial relationship between the castle and the city defences, about which there is more than one hypothesis, lay outside the area available for excavation.⁷⁰

The castle was not set on the highest ground in the central part of the city, but on land sloping down to the R. Severn where river traffic could have been controlled. Flood levels in the early Middle Ages are difficult to reconstruct, but the site was probably just above the level of recurrent flooding. The motte would have commanded a clear view both up river and down, as well as across the river onto the western flood plain. Contemporary with the occupation of the castle was the palace at Kingsholm on the northern side of Gloucester which remained in use until the early 12th century.⁷¹

Further work will be required before anything like a complete plan of the early castle is known, but from the evidence recorded at Commercial Road, the results of various watching briefs by Mr A. P. Garrod, and the conclusions of Mr H. Hurst's immensely detailed documentary research, the basic outline can be established (Fig. 1). It seems likely from its position that the S. ditch of the city defences was used to form one side of the castle fortifications. The bailey surface contained a range of features (pits, post-holes, drain, and fences/screens), the distribution of which implies some rudimentary planning, or at least the areal segregation of particular activities. The position of the bridge across the motte ditch is not known with certainty, although it may be represented by slight evidence for a causeway and ditch terminals within the area excavated at Commercial Road. The position of the main entrance is not known. Something of the status of the site may be inferred from the presence of the finely carved *tabula* board and set of bone counters.

Figure 22 shows an artist's reconstruction of the southern part of Gloucester in the early 12th century, giving an impression of the landscape vista visible from the castle, the position of the castle relative to the river, and some of the main features known to lie in the area round about.

The recorded stratigraphy relating to the use of the castle suggests that its occupation was short-lived. This is probably explained by the construction of the 'new castle' in 1110–20 to replace it.⁷² The robbing of the foundations of building F19 through the bailey surface might be associated with the construction or maintenance of the new castle, or some other building work of the same general period. The castle ditch examined at Commercial Road suggests that it did not remain open for very long after the abandonment of the site because the top of the ditch is sealed by 13th-century levels. Settling of the ditch fills could have given rise to the small stream depicted east of the Barbican mound on post-medieval views of the city.⁷³

Much of the area occupied by the early castle (including that investigated at 28–32 Commercial Road) remained open ground through medieval and

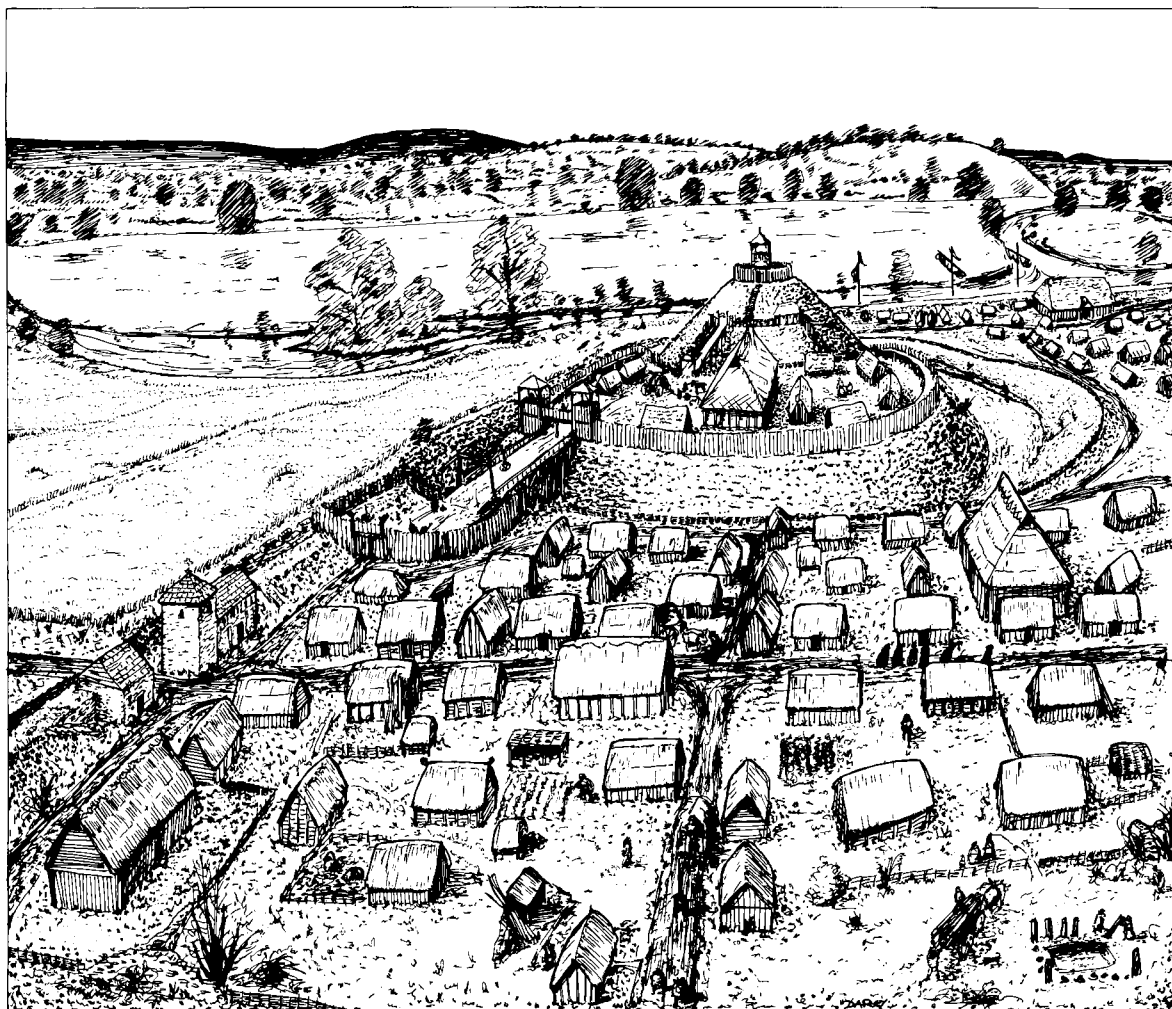


FIG. 22

Artist's reconstruction of the early castle and southern Gloucester in the early 12th century. Southgate Street runs left to right across the picture in the foreground, St Kyneburg church near the former south gate is lower left, the Barbican mound shown is as mapped by H. Hurst (1984) and the hall depicted in the castle bailey is based on observations by A. P. Garrod; other buildings are hypothetical

post-medieval times as it lay within the Crown land attached to the 'new castle'. Barbican Hill and the land around it was sold off in 1815,⁷⁴ and in 1850-55 the Commercial Road frontage was developed as part of the expansion of Gloucester Docks.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Excavations at 28-32 Commercial Road were undertaken through the kind permission of the Midlands Electricity Board, owners of the site. Funding was provided by the Manpower Services Commission through the Western Archaeological Trust. Thanks are due to the following individuals for expediting the administration of the excavations and

post-excavation project: T. Courtney (Director, Western Archaeological Trust), C. Guy (Gloucester MSC Project Manager), M. Paris (Gloucester MSC Project Manager), J. Rhodes (Curator, Gloucester City Museum), M. Watkins (Director, Gloucester City Museum Excavation Unit). Excavation staff included: Ian Stewart (site director, Trench I), Bernard Willoughby (assistant site supervisor), Danyon Rey (draftsman), and site assistants too numerous to mention by name. Gill Julleff (DoE Conservator for the south-west) assisted with the lifting of the *tabula* set. Patrick Garrod (Senior Excavations Officer, Gloucester City Museum Excavation Unit) and Carolyn Heighway provided valuable comments during site visits. Philip Gatrex wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Cherry Gouge and Jane Timby in preparing the pottery report. Gloucester Royal Hospital Radiographic Department prepared X-rays of the iron objects from the site; Fuji films kindly provided the materials. Henry Hurst and the Editor provided valuable comments on earlier drafts of this report, although the author takes full responsibility for any remaining errors of fact and interpretation. The drawings in this report were all prepared by Danyon Rey, except for Figures 16–18 which are by Philip Moss.

NOTES

¹ H. Hurst, 'The archaeology of Gloucester Castle: An introduction', *Trans. Bristol Gloucestershire Archaeol. Soc.*, 102 (1984), 73–128.

² P. Garrod, 'Gloucester Castle', *Glevensis*, 20 (1986), 28–29.

³ For Domesday Book see J. S. Moore, *Domesday Book: Gloucestershire* (Chichester, 1982), 162a; for Evesham Survey see A. S. Ellis, 'On the landholders of Gloucestershire named in the Domesday Book', *Trans. Bristol Gloucestershire Archaeol. Soc.*, 4 (1879–80), 91.

⁴ C. Drage, 'Urban castles', 117–33 in J. Schofield and R. Leech (eds), *Urban archaeology in Britain* (London, Counc. Brit. Archaeol. Res. Rep. 61, 1987).

⁵ E.g. Kip's SW. prospect of the city of Gloucester, 1712, which shows the barbican mound with streams to the east and west, Thomas Robins's view of the castle area from the south-east, 1748, which shows the barbican mound in the foreground.

⁶ Hurst, op. cit. in note 1, 76–79.

⁷ Ibid., 111–16.

⁸ Ibid., 79.

⁹ Moore, op. cit. in note 3, 162a.

¹⁰ Ellis, op. cit. in note 3, 91.

¹¹ Hurst, op. cit. in note 1, fig. 2.

¹² Drage, op. cit. in note 4, with earlier refs.

¹³ C. Heighway, *Archaeology in Gloucester: A policy for city and district* (Gloucester, 1974), 12.

¹⁴ The position of the barbican mound can be accurately assessed from a plan of 1815 which was attached to documents relating to the sale of the site (Gloucester Record Office DC/F7); plan reproduced as pl. VIb in Hurst, op. cit. in note 1.

¹⁵ The faunal remains from all contexts and soil samples resulting from an extensive sampling programme have been retained along with the other finds from the site for future study.

¹⁶ C. Heighway, *The North and East gates of Gloucester* (Bristol, Western Archaeol. Trust Excav. Mono. 4, 1983), 3, Period 1. See also H. Hurst, *Gloucester: The Roman and later defences* (Gloucester, Gloucester Archaeol. Rep. 2, 1986), fig. 41, phases a and b.

¹⁷ Heighway, op. cit. in note 16, 3, Periods 2–3. See also Hurst op. cit. in note 16, fig. 41, phases c and d.

¹⁸ For descriptions of the Roman fabrics see C. Ireland, 'The Roman pottery', 96–113 in Heighway, op. cit. in note 16. For medieval fabrics see A. G. Vince, 'The medieval pottery', 125–31 in *ibid.*

¹⁹ D. P. S. Peacock and D. F. Williams, *Amphorae and the Roman economy* (London, 1986), 158; and see Ireland, op. cit. in note 18, 109; D. P. S. Peacock, 'A North African amphora', 91–93 in M. Hassall and J. Rhodes, 'Excavations at the new Market Hall, Gloucester, 1966–7', *Trans. Bristol Gloucestershire Archaeol. Soc.*, 93 (1974), 15–100; additional information from Jane Timby, pers. comm.

²⁰ Peacock, op. cit. in note 19; A. C. Thomas, 'Imported late Roman Mediterranean pottery in Ireland and western Britain: chronologies and implications', *Proc. Royal Irish Ac.*, 76 (1976), 245–55.

²¹ C. M. Heighway, A. P. Garrod, and A. G. Vince, 'Excavations at 1 Westgate Street, Gloucester, 1975', *Medieval Archaeol.*, 23 (1979), 171.

²² Hassall and Rhodes, op. cit. in note 19, 86–89.

²³ A. G. Vince, 'Late Saxon and medieval pottery production in Gloucestershire', in A. Saville (ed.), *Archaeology in Gloucestershire: From the earliest hunters to the Industrial Age* (Cheltenham, 1984), 252–53.

²⁴ Heighway, Garrod and Vince, op. cit. in note 21, 176–81.

²⁵ A. G. Vince, 'The medieval pottery', 125–26 in Heighway, op. cit. in note 16.

²⁶ N. Crummy, 'A chronology of bone pins', *Britannia*, 10 (1979), 157–64.

²⁷ C. M. Heighway and A. J. Parker, 'The Roman tiling at St Oswald's Priory, Gloucester', *Britannia*, 13 (1982), 31.

- ²⁸ Ibid.
- ²⁹ Heighway, Garrod and Vince, op. cit. in note 21, 201 and fig. 18.8.
- ³⁰ I. Stewart and M. J. Watkins, 'An 11th-century bone *tabula* set from Gloucester', *Medieval Archaeol.*, 28 (1984), 185-90. See also M. J. Watkins, *Gloucester: The Normans: And Domesday* (Gloucester, 1985), 41-49 and plates 7-16 for catalogue.
- ³¹ The iron objects were X-rayed to facilitate identification and study.
- ³² G. C. Boon, *Silchester: the Roman town of Calleva* (Newton Abbot, 1974), esp. fig. 41.15.
- ³³ J. Decaens, 'Un Nouveau Cimetière du Haut Moyen Age en Normandie, Herouvillette (Calvados)', *Archaeologie Médiévale*, 1 (1971), fig. 21, B7a-b.
- ³⁴ J. Geraint Jenkins, *Traditional country craftsmen* (London, 1978), fig. 51.
- ³⁵ H. Russell Robinson, *What the soldiers wore on Hadrian's Wall* (London, 1976), 22-23.
- ³⁶ C. Engelhardt, *Denmark in the early Iron Age* (London, 1966), 48 and pl. 8.
- ³⁷ Cf. Jenkins, op. cit. in note 34, fig. 51.
- ³⁸ A. W. Martensson, 'Uppgravt forflutet for PKBanken i Lund', *Archaeologica Lundensia*, 7 (1976), fig. 159.
- ³⁹ L. Alcock, *By South Cadbury is that Camelot* (London, 1972), fig. 62.
- ⁴⁰ E.g. J. B. Ward Perkins, *London Museum Medieval catalogue* (London, 1940), 112.
- ⁴¹ Heighway and Parker, op. cit. in note 27.
- ⁴² J. R. Timby, 'The Roman pottery', 62 in Hurst, op. cit. in note 16.
- ⁴³ A. G. Vince, pers. comm.
- ⁴⁴ A. G. Vince, 'The post-medieval pottery', 134 in Heighway, op. cit. in note 16.
- ⁴⁵ Ibid., 141.
- ⁴⁶ Habitat and growth information taken from A. R. Clapham, T. G. Tutin and E. F. Warburg, *Flora of the British Isles* (Cambridge, 1962); O. Rackham, *Trees and woodland in the British landscape* (London, 1976).
- ⁴⁷ G. W. Pearson, J. R. Pilcher, M. G. L. Baillie, D. M. Corbett and F. Qua, 'High precision ¹⁴C measurement of Irish oaks to show the natural ¹⁴C variations from A.D. 1840 to 5210 B.C.', *Radiocarbon*, 28 (1986), 911-34.
- ⁴⁸ See Hurst, op. cit. in note 16, 99, for review of this period.
- ⁴⁹ H. Hurst, 'Excavations at Gloucester, 1968-1971: First Interim Report', *Antiq. J.*, 52 (1972), 41-42 and fig. 9 Building I, 18 provisionally dated to the Antonine period.
- ⁵⁰ Hassall and Rhodes, op. cit. in note 19, 22. Note Antonine samian ware in the floor of the building north of the road.
- ⁵¹ Heighway and Parker, op. cit. in note 27.
- ⁵² Ibid., 62.
- ⁵³ D. P. S. Peacock, 'An ethnoarchaeological approach to the study of Roman bricks and tiles', in A. McWhirr (ed.), *Roman Brick and Tile: Studies in manufacture, distribution and use in the western Empire* (Oxford, Brit. Archaeol. Rep. Int. Ser. 68, 1979); T. C. Darvill and A. D. McWhirr, 'Brick and tile production in Roman Britain: Models of economic organization', *World Archaeol.*, 15 (1984), 247-48.
- ⁵⁴ Hurst, op. cit. in note 16, fig. 41.
- ⁵⁵ D. A. Brooks, 'A review of the evidence for continuity in British towns in the 5th and 6th centuries', *Oxford J. Archaeol.*, 5 (1986), 93.
- ⁵⁶ Ibid. for summary of evidence from London.
- ⁵⁷ C. M. Heighway, 'The cemeteries of Roman Gloucester', *Trans. Bristol Gloucestershire Archaeol. Soc.*, 98 (1980), 57-72.
- ⁵⁸ C. M. Heighway, 'Anglo-Saxon Gloucester to A.D. 1000', 35-53 in M. L. Faull (ed.), *Studies in late Anglo-Saxon settlement* (Oxford, 1984), fig. 1.
- ⁵⁹ Hassall and Rhodes, op. cit. in note 19, 27.
- ⁶⁰ Hurst, op. cit. in note 49, 43.
- ⁶¹ Heighway, Garrod and Vince, op. cit. in note 21, 163.
- ⁶² D. Brown, 'A fifth-century burial at Kingsholm', 290-94 in H. Hurst, 'Excavations at Gloucester: Third interim report — Kingsholm 1966-75', *Antiq. J.*, 55 (1975), 267-94.
- ⁶³ See Peacock and Williams, op. cit. in note 19, 158; Jane Timby pers. comm.
- ⁶⁴ C. M. Heighway, 'Anglo-Saxon Gloucestershire', 225-47 in A. Saville (ed.), *Archaeology in Gloucestershire: From the earliest hunters to the Industrial Age* (Cheltenham, 1984), 22; and see C. Heighway, *Anglo-Saxon Gloucestershire* (Gloucester, 1987), 20-40.
- ⁶⁵ See J. Haslam, 'Market and fortress in England in the reign of Offa', *World Archaeol.*, 19 (1987), fig. 2; A. Vince, 'Aldwych: mid Saxon London discovered', *Curr. Archaeol.*, 8 (1984), 310-12.
- ⁶⁶ A detailed survey of the area around Gloucester may provide details of other early/mid Saxon settlements; in view of the connections between 'wic' placenames and middle Saxon 'emporium', one starting-point could be the Hardwicke area about 7 km south of Gloucester where there is also a hamlet called Wicksgreen immediately beside the present course of the Severn.
- ⁶⁷ Heighway, op. cit. in note 58, 35-53.
- ⁶⁸ Heighway, op. cit. in note 58, 40.
- ⁶⁹ Moore, op. cit. in note 2, 162a.
- ⁷⁰ Hurst, op. cit. in note 1, 78; and see Hurst, op. cit. in note 16, 129-31 for summary of debate surrounding the post-Roman development of the defences and the question of whether the western side of the defences were standing in the mid 11th century.
- ⁷¹ H. Hurst, 'Excavations at Gloucester: Third interim report — Kingsholm 1966-75', *Antiq. J.*, 55 (1975), 284-87.
- ⁷² Hurst, op. cit. in note 1, 81-109.
- ⁷³ E.g. Kip's SW. prospect of the city of Gloucester, 1712, showing the barbican mound with streams to the east and west.
- ⁷⁴ Hurst, op. cit. in note 1, 97.