

**MILBORNE ST ANDREW FLOOD MANAGEMENT SCHEME,  
MILBORNE ST ANDREW, DORSET  
Archaeological Observations**



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**Milborne St Andrew Flood Management Scheme,  
Milborne St Andrew, Dorset  
Archaeological Observations, September 2001**

**CONTENTS**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Summary .....                                 | 1 |
| Introduction .....                            | 1 |
| Archaeological and Historical background..... | 1 |
| Aims and Objectives .....                     | 2 |
| Methodology .....                             | 2 |
| Results .....                                 | 2 |
| <i>Allotment Bypass</i> .....                 | 2 |
| <i>Manor Farm Bypass</i> .....                | 3 |
| <i>Finds</i> .....                            | 3 |
| Conclusions.....                              | 3 |
| Project Archive .....                         | 4 |
| References .....                              | 4 |

Figures

|                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1 Location plan.....                  | 5 |
| 2 Plan of Allotment Bypass site ..... | 6 |
| 3 Plan of Manor Farm Bypass site..... | 7 |

Plates

|  |   |
|--|---|
| 1 Exposed remains of brick wall at NE end of Manor Farm Bypass channel ..... | 8 |
| 2 Wall footings at SW end of Manor Farm Bypass channel .....                 | 8 |
| 3 Detail of north end of brick culvert.....                                  | 8 |

Cover illustration of Milborne House (Hutchins 1863)

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# **Milborne St Andrew Flood Management Scheme, Milborne St Andrew, Dorset**

## **Archaeological Observations, September 2001**

### **SUMMARY**

*Archaeological observations and recording were undertaken during flood management works at two locations adjacent to Manor Farm on the south side of Milborne St. Andrew. The Allotment Bypass site (SY80299725) revealed no significant archaeology. The Manor Farm Bypass site (SY 80279709) revealed traces of a brick wall running north-south along the west side of the stream and a wall footing running east-west at the southern end of the site. These wall remnants are probably part of the walled gardens of Milborne House, demolished in 1802.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

This project was commissioned by North Dorset District Council, following advice from Steven Wallis, Senior Archaeologist, Dorset County Council. This is in line with Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (Archaeology and Planning).

The works subject to archaeological observations and recording comprised the rerouting of the Milborne Brook in two locations to the north and to the south of Manor Farm, on the south side of Milborne St Andrew at NGR SY80299725 and SY 80279709 (Figure 1).

The site lies on the south side of the present village of Milborne St Andrew, centred on Ordnance Survey NGR SY802971, at a height of about 67 m above OD. It is situated in relict parkland on the eastern margins of the floor of the Milborne Brook valley, which drains to the south. The brook is canalised in this area, forming a relict mill leat to a now demolished mill to the south of the site. It also fed into a pond to the north of Manor Farm, which has now been drained. The underlying geology is mapped as Upper Chalk (Geological Survey of Great Britain 1:50000 Sheet 328 *Dorchester* 1981).

The fieldwork was carried out between 18<sup>th</sup> September–1<sup>st</sup> October 2001.

Terrain Archaeology would like to thank Mike Coker of North Dorset District Council for his help during this project. The archaeological recording was made possible by the cooperation of the groundwork contractors, Lee and Sons. The fieldwork was carried out by Paul Pearce.

### **ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

Milborne St Andrew has a complex but poorly understood settlement history. Historically it comprised two distinct settlements: Deverel to the north of the Blandford to Dorchester road and St. Andrew to the south. Deverel straddled the Milborne Brook but St. Andrew was situated on the west side only. To the east was Milborne Stileham which was formerly part of Bere Regis parish and may also have originated as two separate settlements. Earthwork traces of former settlements have been found to the NW, NE and south of the present village (RCHME 1970, 175).

Manor Farm lies to the south of the present village of Milborne St Andrew (and the medieval settlement of St. Andrew) on the western bank of Milborne Brook. The farmhouse probably incorporates part of Milborne House, the seat of the Morton and Morton Pleydell family from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Hutchins 1863). The house had been improved and repaired in 1729 but was dismantled in 1802 (RCHME 1970, 177). A view of the house and grounds is illustrated in Hutchins (1863, 598), showing the three-storied stone-fronted house facing south, set in parkland. A long water feature shown to the south of the house is still visible on the ground today. To the east of the house are a series of walled gardens.

## **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The objective of the archaeological observations is to establish and make available information about the archaeological resource existing on the site.

The archaeological works aimed to observe and record all the in situ archaeological deposits and features revealed during the groundworks to an appropriate professional standard.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The observations were carried out in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (1994, rev. 1999).

The location of the works was taken from plans provided by the client and any archaeological features exposed were located using taped measurements from existing landscape features.

All archaeological deposits and features exposed during the works were recorded on annotated plans and section drawings complemented by a free text description.

The records have been compiled in a stable, cross-referenced and fully indexed archive in accordance with current UKIC guidelines and the requirements of the receiving museum, Dorset County Museum.

## **RESULTS**

### **Allotment Bypass**

The Allotment Bypass site (SY80289725) lay to the north of Manor Farm, at the southern end of a series of allotments. The works involved the removal of a dog-leg in the watercourse, part of the former millstream, by constructing a new curving channel across the southeast corner of the allotments (Figure 2). The new channel measured about 35 m long, 5 m wide and 1 m deep and was dug out by machine.

Excavation of the new channel showed that the modern overburden and garden soils, between 0.2 m and 0.3 m thick, rested directly on alluvial silts and gravels.

The new channel cut through a hedgebank running along the stream. The bank comprised upcast dark brown loam containing 19<sup>th</sup> century pottery. No trace of a sealed land surface was identified.

At the eastern end of the new channel, the alluvial deposits dipped below a layer of dark brown loam, similar to the garden soil above (Figure 2). It contained 19<sup>th</sup> century finds.

A modern service trench, aligned approximately north-south, crossed the new channel near its mid point (Figure 2).

No significant archaeology was encountered.

### **Manor Farm Bypass**

The Manor Farm Bypass site (SY80279709) lay in a pasture field immediately to the south of Manor Farm (Figure 3). The new channel was designed to bypass a silted-up brick culvert. The new channel measured about 65 m long, 5 m wide and 0.75 m deep and was excavated by machine.

Excavation of the new channel revealed that the 0.25–0.32 m thick modern turf and topsoil lay on top of a brownish-grey gravelly subsoil. The precise derivation of this deposit is unclear but it is likely to be natural river gravels. No archaeological features were observed except at the northeastern and southwestern ends of the new channel, adjacent to the existing watercourses.

At the northeastern end, the remains of a brick wall running north-south, parallel with the millstream was discovered about 2.5 m west of the existing watercourse (Figure 3). The wall was 0.47 m wide and built from un-frogged handmade bricks (typically about 9½" x 4½" x 2"), bonded with buff to yellow lime mortar (Plate 1). The single course of bricks exposed was all laid with the brick headers exposed, suggesting that it was built in English Bond. A linear cut into the subsoil about 0.28 m east of the wall may be the remnants of a construction cut. It was filled with mixed sandy silt loam and building debris. Similar material appears to have been dumped against the western face of the wall, forming an irregular spread of material up to 1 m wide and up to 0.38 m deep.

At the southwestern end of the new channel, the heavily robbed remains of a wall footing aligned east-west were exposed. These footings comprised large nodular flints bonded with buff to yellow lime mortar to form a foundation about 1.2 m wide (Plate 2). Pockets of demolition debris consisting of soil mixed with numerous brick and mortar fragments were found on top of this foundation. No complete bricks were recovered but it was clear that they were of a similar type to those found at the northeastern end of the channel. The mortar was similar also.

Final machining at the northeastern end of the new channel disturbed the northern end of the brick culvert (Plate 3). A 0.26 m thick band of clay was exposed between the brick wall footings and the culvert. This may represent an original clay lining to the millstream. The culvert appears to have been inserted into this channel and the space between the clay lining and the culvert backfilled with mixed soil and rubble. No datable material was recovered from it. The clay lining does not survive beyond the area of the culvert due to past cleaning of the stream by machine.

### **Finds**

No finds were retained.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The observations on the Allotment Bypass Site revealed no significant archaeology.

The results from the Manor Farm Bypass Site are more interesting. The exposed wall remnants were probably part of a single structure, given the similarity of the bricks in both sections. Further parts of this wall can be traced to the north of the site along the western side of the millstream (Figure 3). This wall, constructed from hand-made bricks laid in English Bond, is visible up to three courses high beneath the present garden wall of Manor Farm. The earlier wall is about 1 m closer to the stream and can be traced for about 57 m, up as far as the brick-built footbridge across the millstream (Figure 3). No secure dating evidence for the walls was found, but the character of the bricks suggest a pre-19<sup>th</sup> century date. This would make it part of the demolished Milborne House rather than part of the present Manor Farm. Examination of the Hutchins (1863) illustration of the house reveals that the walled garden boundary runs along the same line as the wall footings revealed during the observations (see frontispiece). It is likely that the exposed features are the remains of this garden wall.

The construction of the culvert is also undated. It is built from similar bricks to the garden wall and stretches for a distance of about 51 m. It is unclear what was the reason for the construction of this culvert, but it is interesting to note that its northern end started at the point where the early brick wall was destroyed. Perhaps the stream was culverted to allow access to the fields on either side of the stream once this area was brought into farmland, rather than part of the gardens and park of Milborne House. If this were the case, then the culvert would post-date the demolition of the house (c. 1802).

## PROJECT ARCHIVE

The archive (Terrain Archaeology Project No. TA5086) will be deposited with Dorset County Museum, which has agreed in principle to accept the archive, subject to fulfilment of the Museum's requirements of the preparation of archaeological archives. A copy of the microfilmed archive will be deposited with the National Monuments Record.

The indexed and cross-referenced project archive consists of: –

- File 1:**
  - 1.1 Archive Index
  - 1.2 Correspondence
  - 1.3 Watching Brief Report 5086.1
  - 1.4 Field Records
  - 1.5 Drawing Register
  - 1.6 Drawings
  - 1.7 Photographic Register
  - 1.8 Monochrome contact sheet
- File 2:**
  - 2.1 Monochrome negatives
  - 2.2 Colour transparencies

## REFERENCES

- Hutchins, J., 1863      *The History and Antiquities of the County of Dorset* **2**, 3rd edition.
- RCHME 1970      Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England 1970 *An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in the county of Dorset* 3, Central.