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EXCAVATIONS AT 33152
34873 -
35052 -
CHAPEL STREET, HACONBY
BY
HERITAGE LINCOLNSHIRE
FOR
MR. G. GOODMAN

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INTRODUCTION

From April 3rd to April 22nd 1991, Heritage Lincolnshire undertook an archaeological evaluation prior to development of land off Chapel Street, Haconby, Lincolnshire (TF 107254); on behalf of the landowner, Mr. G. Goodman (See fig. 1).

The land to be developed was included in an earthwork survey carried out in 1988 (See Appendix 1). The earthworks located to the south of the site are possibly medieval and post-medieval in date. It has been suggested that the earthworks within the area of excavation are an ornamental garden feature associated with the present manor house which is of a 16/17th Century date.

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the nature, depth, and date of the archaeological remains on this land, and furthermore to establish their relationship to the surrounding earthwork.

The site had previously been used as a dump for builder's debris from construction of houses nearby.

METHODOLOGY

As the exact layout of the proposed housing development was unknown at the time of the evaluation, the trenches were positioned in the areas which were considered to best answer a number of questions which had to be resolved about the monument, namely:

1. The precise nature and function of the 'hollow'.
2. The relationship of the hollow to the surrounding bank.
3. The method of construction of the bank and hollow.
4. The date of the features.
5. To investigate the break in the bank.

Two trenches were opened: Trench I was approximately 5m wide (at its maximum extent) and 25m long; Trench II was 1.75m wide and 2.20m long (see fig. 2).

Trench I was aligned N-S and was so placed in order to investigate the entrance to the earthwork, a portion of the earthwork itself, and a section across the whole area to take in the possible pond. Trench II at the western end of the earthwork was sited in an area where land fill had not taken place and, therefore, it was possible to investigate a portion of the earthwork and a section of the pond with the minimum of disturbance. Trench 2 was also aligned N-S.

Both trenches were initially excavated by mechanical excavator in order to remove modern overburden and topsoil, down to the level at which archaeological deposits were exposed. It was intended that the mechanical excavator enter trench I and dig a further 1.5m wide slot in the bottom, to enable deeper excavation within safety regulations. Unfortunately due to poor ground condition and excess water flooding the trench, this plan had to be abandoned and an area of the site was badly damaged by the mechanical excavator.

A number of auger samples were carried out in unexcavated areas as a quick method of assessing the depth of stratigraphy. Soil samples were taken from several contexts in trench II in order to assess the organic content of the deposits.

Throughout the excavation, records of each soil layer were made, comprising a written description, 1:20 scale plans, 1:10 scale section drawings and, where appropriate, photographs. Each archaeological layer or feature was allocated a unique record number.

EVALUATION RESULTS

TRENCH I

In this trench sections of the gateway and the earthwork were excavated; and a large section was cleared through the 'pond' area.

A great deal of modern infilling was found to cover much of the site and tipping on this site is recorded as having taken place in 1988. The dumped material comprised (approximately) the top 0.70 - 1.30 metres of deposit, formed in various layers ranging from [003], a light grey-brown fine silty-sand with gravel (possibly a former topsoil which had built up between tipping), to [005], a deposit consisting mainly (70% of its makeup) of mortar and building rubble. Little dating evidence was available in these layers although the presence of plastic and unrotted wood in several of the deposits indicates fairly recent tipping - complying with the 1988 date recorded.

In the southern end of the trench, the modern tip deposits lay directly over a fairly compact yellow-grey gravel [018]. This gravel extended E-W across the whole trench, and from the southern limit of excavation, north for 10 metres; and was interpreted as a natural deposit. Underneath the gravel and occasionally appearing through it, was a natural silty-sand [024] which overlay the bedrock. Neither the gravel nor the sand yielded any artefacts.

It seems possible that the gravel [018] may have been deposited here in order to form a pathway between the earthworks and the pond, and to provide a viewing area for the pond. However the gravel did not seem to be compacted enough to form a path without a constant need for repair. The lack of artefacts within the gravel and the fact that it extended underneath the mound would seem to support the conclusion that it was a natural deposit.

The gravel [018] continued to the southern limit of excavation as a relatively flat surface, with no signs of disturbance in the gateway to indicate any structure such as a gate or formal edge having been present. There was no evidence of the steps suggested in the earthwork survey.

The earthwork itself, as stated previously, seemed to sit directly on the natural gravel [018], and consisted of a fairly simple stratigraphy (See Fig. 3). In total, the section of the earthwork excavated was approximately 3 metres in height, rising at an angle of between 30° and 50° .

The top layer was a mid yellow-orange sandy-gravel [013] approximately 0.50m thick. No artefacts were found in this layer although, with the aid of a metal detector, a Roman coin was found in the spoil from this area. This can be interpreted as residual and represents activity on or close to the site from an earlier period, although no evidence of activity on this site was found.

Below [013] were layers [016], a mid-grey silty gravel, 0.25m deep and [017], a dark yellow sandy-gravel, approximately 0.10m deep. Neither layer contained any artefacts, and both can be interpreted as minor makeup layers of the earthwork.

A more substantial deposit [014] lay below these: a dark grey silty-sand, 0.70m deep. This layer may represent the original topsoil and, therefore, ground surface at the time of the construction of the earthwork, with layers above ([013], [016] and [017]) being those forming the bank. Pottery from layer [014] has been identified as of an early and late Anglo-Saxon date. Only a very small quantity was found, and this may also be residual.

Below [014] was the primary layer of the mound, [015], a light yellow-orange sandy gravel approximately 1.20m in depth, which lay directly on top of the natural gravel [018]. No artefacts can be definitely ascribed to this layer, although the remains of a bronze buckle came from this area (possibly from the topsoil) during digging by mechanical excavator.

The whole mound was grassed and covered by topsoil. From the stratigraphy studied, it appears that the topsoil had formed before the rubble makeup had been dumped, as topsoil spreading down from the earthwork was found between natural gravel and modern overburden in the gateway.

At its northernmost extent, the gravel [018] appeared to slope down uniformly to the north over the full width of the site, at an angle of

approximately 25 - perhaps suggesting the cut for the edge of a pond or similar feature. The gravel [018] was covered on the slope by a dark red-brown gravel and clay deposit [010], which may have formed the lining of the pond - this deposit was not, however, found in the auger tests in the fill of the pond.

Due to damage to the site by the mechanical excavator and excess groundwater it was impossible to follow the slope of [010] to its full extent, or to excavate the remainder of trench 1.

The remainder of trench 1 consisted, at its top layer, of a mid grey-brown silty clay similar to [020] in trench 2, a deposit interpreted as pond fill. This suggested that the rest of the trench consisted of several layers of pond-fill, and auger tests over the whole area confirmed that this was the case. However, due to damage on the site by the mechanical excavator, this was impossible to investigate.

TRENCH 2

In this trench, a section of the earthwork was stripped of topsoil and a large section of the 'pond' area was excavated. The lack of modern rubble makeup in this area made it possible to investigate the sequence of deposits in the pond itself.

Lack of time and poor conditions meant that the relationship between the pond and the earthwork could not be fully established in this trench. However excavation in this area showed that the pond fills extended right up to the earthwork and were not divided by an area of gravel as in trench 1.

The fill of the pond consisted of several different silty deposits: [019] was a dark yellowish brown silty-sand with some gravel, and varied between 0.10 and 0.20 metres thick.

Below [019] was a layer of mid greyish-brown silty clay, up to c. 0.50 metres deep - this deposit [020] formed the major fill of the feature. Frequent, well rotted, organic material was contained in this fill along with a quantity of animal bone and pottery dating to the 18th century.

The deposit below [020] is interpreted as the primary fill of the pond (perhaps while it was in use). This layer [021] was a dark grey-black clayey silt with a good deal of preserved organic matter including shells, twigs and leaves (the good state of preservation of the organic matter here can be attributed to the fact that the deposit was below the water table

and was constantly waterlogged). The nature of this deposit was consistent with an accumulation of debris in the bottom of a pond. The deposit is particularly interesting as it was revealed over the whole site by the auger tests, further substantiating the conclusion that it represents the primary fill of the pond.

Below [021] two deposits were noted, [022] and [023]. Both are interpreted as natural glacial sands. The uppermost, [022], contained quantities of small shells and silt, presumably having been contaminated by the water in the pond above. The lower layer [023] rests directly on top of a pitted, but relatively level, bedrock, and contained some fragments of this rock identified as a form of limestone.

CONCLUSIONS

A number of features were excavated in the course of the evaluation, in order to investigate theories put forward about land use in this area in the earthwork survey (see Appendix 1). The evaluation elucidated the land use in the excavated area which appears to represent a pond, perhaps as part of a 16th or 17th century formal garden.

A section through the earthwork in trench 1 revealed a simple stratigraphy of several overlaying layers. It is possible that there may be two phases of earthwork completion here, with [014] representing a buried topsoil. Unfortunately there is no dating evidence to support this theory, and [014] may be explained as material having been brought from different areas to form the earthwork.

It seems most likely that the earthwork was formed by material dug out from the 'pond' area. A similarity between natural gravel [018] and gravel layers [013] and [015] is evident, suggesting the natural gravel was dug out to form the pond and was dumped and banked up to form the earthwork.

No evidence for a wall was found, either buried in the earthwork or on top of it, as suggested by the earthwork survey. A possible post-hole in the top of the earthwork in trench 1 seems more likely to be a natural feature formed as a result of the sloping stratigraphy, or layer [013] having slumped after its deposition to reveal a part of [014].

Unfortunately little dating evidence was found for the earthwork. The Roman coin and Anglo-Saxon pottery are interpreted as being residual artefacts (present in the soil before the earthwork was formed). Artefacts found in the topsoil over the mound were of a 17th or 18th century date - this may suggest a date at which the mound was being gradually covered - giving a terminus ante quem for the construction of the mound in the 17th century.

A section through the gateway was also excavated. No evidence of any structure was found that may have edged this entrance or formed a 'gate', and the naturally sloping (i.e. not truncated) edges of the earthwork appear to have formed the gateway. There was no evidence of any steps as had been suggested - however the limit of excavation did not extend far into the gateway and any steps may have been further to the south.

The natural gravel [018] appeared to form a flat 'floor' surface here; extending for 10 metres to the north of the gateway. It may have provided a form of viewing platform for the pond, which would suggest that it was more of an ornamental garden feature than a (medieval) defensive structure as suggested in the earthwork survey.

In trench 2, a number of deposits were studied - these were interpreted as pond fills due to the large proportion of silt in their makeup. Layer [021] can perhaps be interpreted as having built up while the pond was in use, due to the fact that it consists almost entirely of silt and organic material; the other deposits may have been dumped here in order to backfill the pond, although the high proportions of silt and extremely small

quantities of artefacts suggests that they are natural accumulations of material. Layer [020] contained a quantity of post-medieval pottery dating to the 18th century and a quantity of animal bone, which may indicate that this layer was infilled from another place or that the area was used as a rubbish dump. The pottery may however give a date for the infilling of the pond.

Bedrock was reached over the whole site - in trench 2 it was uncovered in the sump; and in other areas it was recorded with the auger. This rock appeared to be very flat and even (with a difference in depth of only 0.18 metres over the whole site), although its surface was pitted and rough. It is possible that this was artificially levelled to form the base of the pond. This rock may also be identified as the large stones in the interior which were noted by the earthwork survey.

The area excavated is interpreted as a garden feature with a large pond covering most of the area, with the up-cast material from the construction of this being re-used to reconstruct the surrounding earthworks. The gateway appears to take the form of a gravel path between two banks of the earthwork, with possibly a gravel area to the north of the gateway from which the pond could be viewed.

Dating evidence for these features is extremely limited, although from the artefacts found it seems most likely that the pond and earthwork date from the post-medieval period (i.e. after 1500). This would thus fit in with

the interpretation of this area as part of a garden, which is related to the nearby manor house.

The evidence from the excavation corresponds with the position put forward in the airphoto survey, that this area formed a part of a formal garden circular, containing a pond and surrounding paths. If the excavated area can be taken as a representative sample of the original garden, most of the site, other than the central, paved area, will be suitable for a garden's needs.

Therefore, it is recommended that if this is the original part of the site to be developed, the central area, as shown on the plan, should be the focus of the particular development, and the design of the original garden should be followed, as far as possible, to preserve the character and layout of the garden.

It is recommended that the original garden should be developed, if possible, in the original form, and the central area should be paved.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER WORK

The evidence from the evaluation corresponds with the theories put forward in the earthwork survey, that this area formed a part of a formal garden complex, containing a pond and surrounding banks. If the trenches excavated can be taken as a representative sample of the deposits present, most of the site, down to the bedrock, consists of pond silts and modern builder's rubble.

Therefore, it is recommended that if only the central part of the land is to be developed (i.e. the pond area), no further work will be required. However, if the earthworks themselves are to be damaged by the development, further work will be necessary to record their construction and confirm their purpose.

It is recommended that further archaeological excavation should be undertaken, if damage to or destruction of the earthworks is unavoidable.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Heritage Lincolnshire would like to thank the following for their assistance with the archaeological work: MR. G. GOODMAN for funding the excavation and post-excavation work, and for allowing us to site a portacabin on his land; DOUBLE AND MEGSON (solicitors), for their assistance during the planning stages of the evaluation; and the site team who undertook the work.

APPENDIX I

EARTHWORKS SURVEY

HACONBY TF 108253

This series of earthworks is situated some hundred metres to the east of the church of St. Andrew and the manor house, and is presumably associated with the manor of Haconby. In 1086, there were four holdings in the vill, which encompassed the hamlet of Stainfield, but the major holding was Heppo the Arblaster's manor of three carucates and two and a half bovates (1). The descent of the fee is complex. Nothing is heard of it until the reign of King Richard I when it escheated to the crown, and two carucates were granted to Ralph de Hauville. The estate was an augmentation of a ministerial tenement in Dunton, Norfolk, to which lastage dues in Boston were also attached, and was held by the grand seargancy of keeping the king's gerfalcons (2). This grant coincided with considerable changes in the tenorial structure of Haconby, and its lord acquired a part of at least one other estate at about the same time. In 1086 Drew de Beurere, the lord of Bourne, held, illicitly according to the jury of the wapentake of Aveland, nine bovates of sokeland which belonged to Gilbert de Gant's manor of Edenham (3). Superficially, it would seem that these were absorbed into the honour of Bourne's manor of Rippingale, for its tenant enjoyed rents in Haconby into the sixteenth century (4). However, it seems more likely that they are represented by a fee of nine bovates, variously said to be held by knight's service and petty seargancy, which belonged to Roger the Fat, for,

although held in chief, forinsec service was still rendered to an estate in Edenham in the thirteenth century. Roger alienated almost all of his land to various interests and, on his death sometime before 1202, he was only in possession of a capital messuage which was waste (5). This was subsequently granted to a member of the Hauville family, and held by a service of 12d per annum, it descended with the main manor until the mid fourteenth century (6).

The Hauville estate disappears from the record by c.1350, and the principal estates in the vill appear to be the manors of the Tiffour family and the honour of Stafford. The latter can be traced from 1086, and although few details have come to light, it is possible that it was substantially situated in Stainfield (7). The former had its origin in the enfeoffment of Walter of Haconby in four bovates by Roger the Fat, and as late as 1349, it was still of modest extent. In 1365 however, its tenant was called the lord of the manor of Haconby, and it would therefore seem that it had absorbed the Hauville fee. By 1506 it was the major holding of the vill (8). Further land was held of the Bishop of Lincoln, but, as in 1086, it was parcel of the manor of Dunsby where its rents and dues were rendered (9).

No evidence has come to light to indicate the location of the capital messuages which were held by Roger the Fat, Walter his tenant, and the Stafford estate (10). But that of Odo the Arblasters fee was probably in the vicinity of the church which belonged to the estate throughout the Middle Ages (11), and its site may therefore be close to the present manor house. The earthworks are identified on the Ordnance Survey six inch map as a moated complex, and it is therefore possible that they defined the

curia of the medieval manor. However, their orthogonal form may indicate that they relate to a post-medieval formal garden. The present manor house is of sixteenth or seventeenth century date, and is alleged to have been partly constructed by one of Oliver Cromwell's aides (12); he may well have been modernising both house and garden at the same time. The area surveyed is more or less rectangular, some 175 by 200 metres, with the Manor house approximately at the centre. The part south of the house abuts onto the east side of the churchyard, the church itself being well elevated on a mound which overlooks open fen to the east. The principal features on the ground are a very regular arrangement of ditches with small depressions and possible ponds at the southern end. An east/west ditch which crosses the site north of the house forms the southern side of a level platform about sixty by fifty metres which rises to a slight bank at its northern end. The bank may conceal a buried wall; it forms a pronounced edge to the platform and overlooks a regular feature at a level a good two metres below. This is interpreted as a formal pond or canal; it measures eighty-five by thirty metres. When first seen it contained water in its north-west corner, and large stones have been reported in its interior (1988), but whether in situ, fallen or deposited is not known. At the time of writing, the ground level had recently been raised by up to half a metre. In the centre of the bank is an opening 1.4 metres wide which may indicate an original feature such as steps, but is now worn down to provide sloping vehicular access to the low area. The main ditch on the east side, 180 metres long, continues round the south end of the site for about forty metres but then becomes less clear where it starts to turn northwards. A parallel length of ditch to the south is separated from the first one by a

strip between ten and fifteen metres wide, but the remaining features at the south end of the site are somewhat confused.

subsequently held in serjeanty, and it seems likely that he himself held an annual service, as his name suggests.

1. Howe 12/41.

2. Howe 12/42; Howe 12/43; Howe 12/44; Howe 12/45; Howe 12/46; Howe 12/47; Howe 12/48; Howe 12/49; Howe 12/50.

3. The post was located within the site of the old castle, and was situated at the south end of the site, and was situated at the south end of the site.

4. Howe 12/51; Howe 12/52; Howe 12/53; Howe 12/54; Howe 12/55; Howe 12/56; Howe 12/57; Howe 12/58; Howe 12/59; Howe 12/60.

5. The post was located within the site of the old castle, and was situated at the south end of the site, and was situated at the south end of the site.

6. Howe 12/61; Howe 12/62; Howe 12/63; Howe 12/64; Howe 12/65; Howe 12/66; Howe 12/67; Howe 12/68; Howe 12/69; Howe 12/70.

7. Howe 12/71; Howe 12/72; Howe 12/73; Howe 12/74; Howe 12/75; Howe 12/76; Howe 12/77; Howe 12/78; Howe 12/79; Howe 12/80.

8. In the early part of the century a post was still visible to the east of the castle, and was situated at the south end of the site, and was situated at the south end of the site.

9. The post was located within the site of the old castle, and was situated at the south end of the site, and was situated at the south end of the site.

10. Howe 12/81; Howe 12/82; Howe 12/83; Howe 12/84; Howe 12/85; Howe 12/86; Howe 12/87; Howe 12/88; Howe 12/89; Howe 12/90.

11. The post was located within the site of the old castle, and was situated at the south end of the site, and was situated at the south end of the site.

1. Lincs DB 7/31; 42/14; 59/17; 61/1.
2. RH i, 252a; BE 180; CI i, 72, 216. All Heppo's manors were subsequently held in sergeancy, and it seems likely that he himself held by personal services, as his name suggests.
3. Lincs DB 72/44.
4. Lincs DB 42/13; BE 180; QCO, MS 366, fix; RH i, 253 a-b; FA iii, 212; CI ii, 261; CI v, 268; CI ix, 209.
5. The earliest Lincolnshire Assize rolls AD 1202-1209, ed. D.M. Stenton, LRS 22, Lincoln 1922, 82, 130-1; 179; BE 180; RHi, 253a; CI ii, 108.
6. RH i, 253a; CI i, 145; CI i, 245; CI iv, 71; CI x, 177.
7. Lincs DB 59/17; LRdeS 26, 613; BE 180, 1027; RH i, 258a; FA iii, 168, 211.
8. The earliest Lincolnshire Assize rolls AD 1202-1209 ed. D.M. Stenton, LRS 22, Lincoln 1922, 82; BE 180; RH i, 253a; FA iii, 171, 213; CI ii, 108, 229, 236; CI ix, 154; CI x, 176; CI x, 208; CI xi, 172; CI xii, 40, 144; CI xvi, 58, 371.
9. Lincs DB 7/31, 180/1; QCO, MS 366, fix; RH i, 253a; CI HVII iii, 438.
10. In the early nineteenth century a moat was still visible to the west of the church (Harrat iii, 177), but nothing is known of the site or its origins and nature unless associated with the present Hacconby Hall, whose grounds have not been examined.
11. Lincs DB 61/1; Rotuli Hugonis de Welles iii, ed. W.P. Philmore, F.N. Davis, LRS 9 Lincoln 1914, 13.
12. H. Thorold, J. Yates, Lincolnshire, a Shell guide London 1965, 71.

TRENCH LOCATION

SITE LOCATION

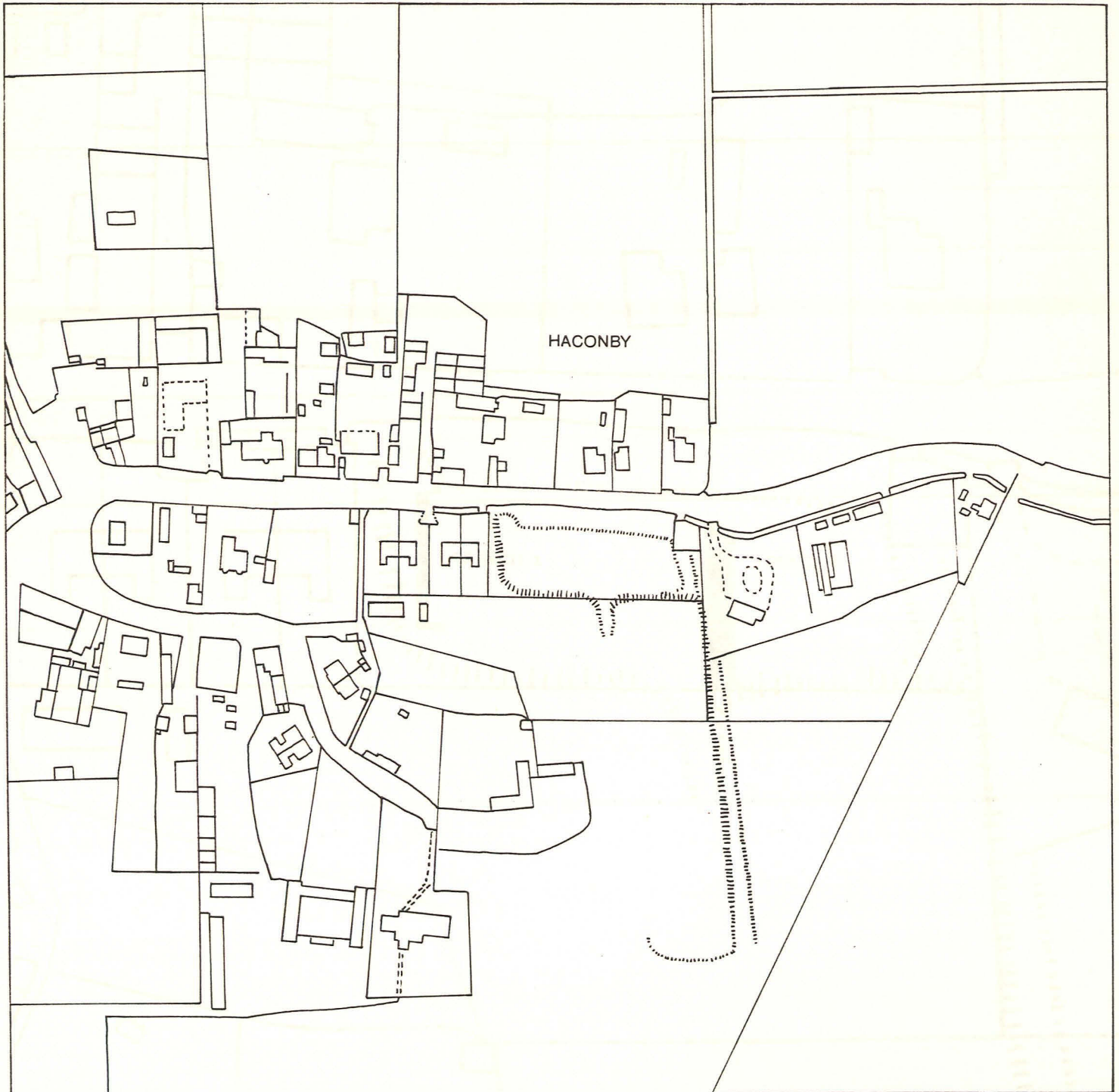
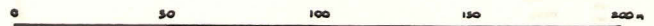


FIG.1



TRENCH LOCATION

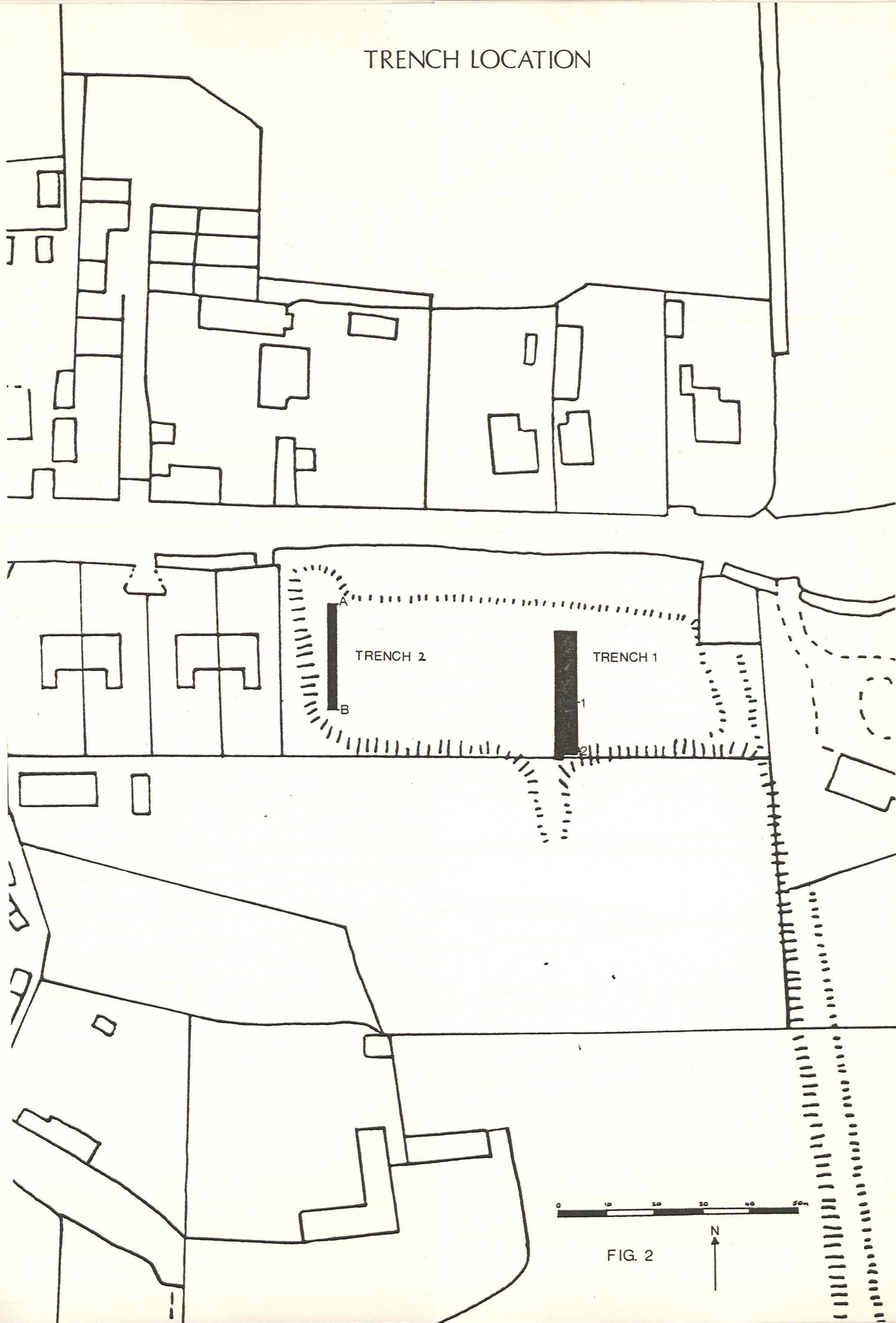


FIG. 2

COMPOSITE SECTION OF EARTHWORK

TRENCH 1

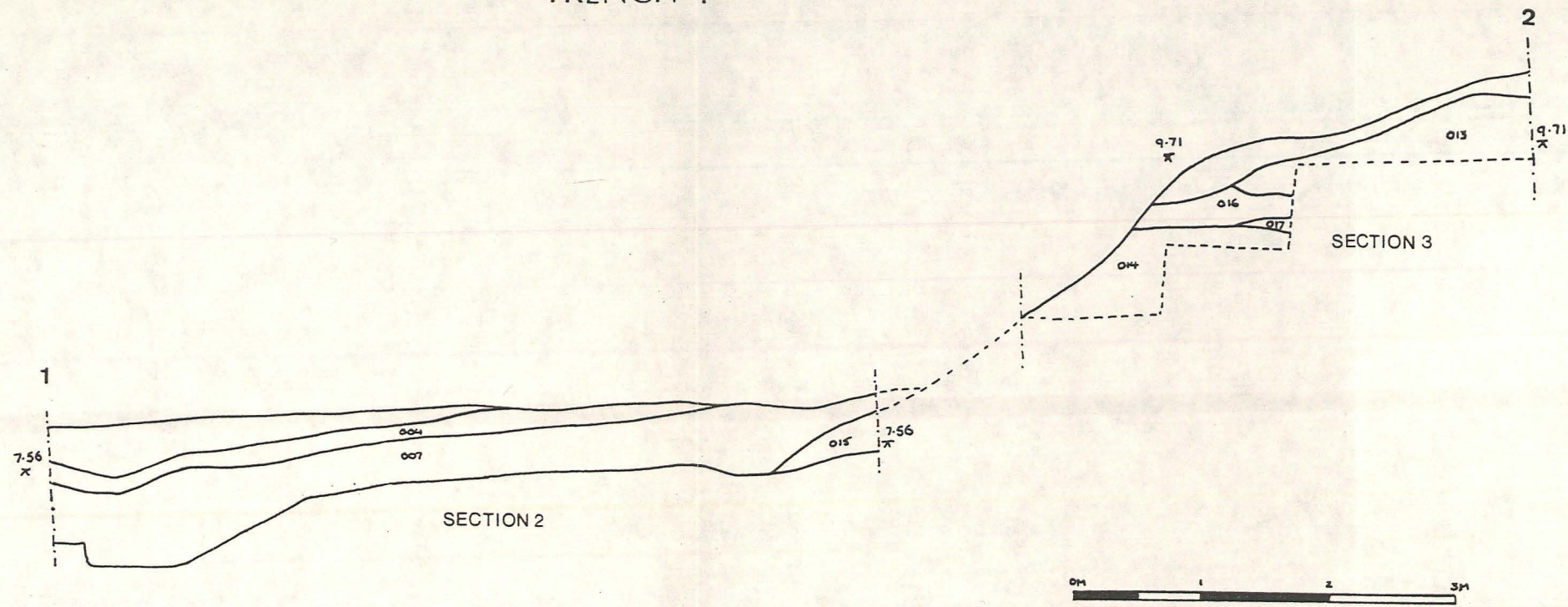


FIG. 3

TRENCH 2 SECTION 1

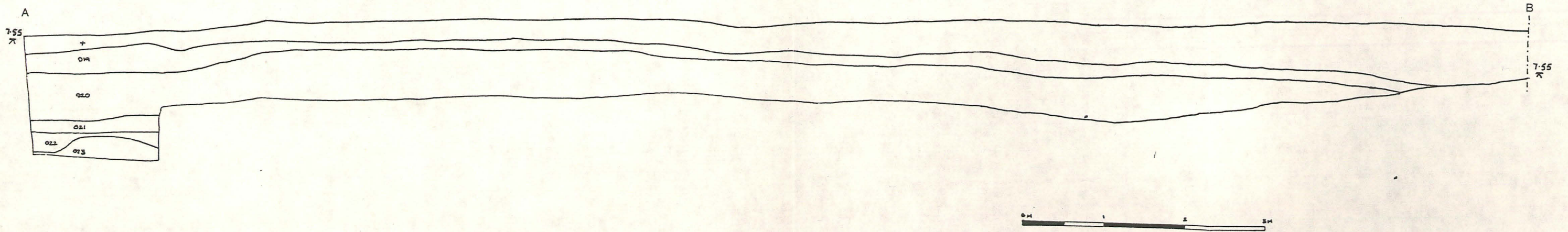


FIG. 4