

22a The Green, Scotter Archaeological Evaluation

INTRODUCTION

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at 22a, The Green, as a condition of outline planning consent, on the instructions of the owner Mr R. Robinson.

DESCRIPTION

The area in question currently forms the back garden to 22a The Green and contains two bowling greens. The natural topography of the ground may be seen in the churchyard to the east where it drops steeply from south to north. Most of the garden is lawn and has been terraced to create the two greens. This has involved a lot of digging out of soil and filling in elsewhere to create the required level surfaces. Levels taken on the site show that the land drops by 3.30m from Church Lane to its northern limit. (These are marked on Fig. 2 and are not corrected to the Ordnance Datum but give heights relative to an arbitrary zero point close to the site entrance.)

BACKGROUND

The proposed development site is of great potential archaeological interest because of its position adjacent to the church, close to the old market place to the north and site of the medieval manor house to the east (Fig.1). Examination of the Sites and Monuments Record at the City and County Museum, Lincoln showed that human remains had been discovered at the junction of High St and the Green. The site is known to have been part of the area called Brand's Croft.

Brand's Croft apparently preserves the name of Brand, Abbot of Peterborough from 1066-1069. He is supposed to have come from Scotter and his family gave large tracts of land to the Abbey. Scotter was the recognised centre for these lands which became known as the Liberty or Barony of Scotter.

The traditional site of Brand's Croft is thought to be bounded by the Green to the north, High St to the west, Church Lane to the south, the church yard itself and the un-named lane leading from the church to the Green (Fig. 1). A new sheepfold was erected on Brand's Croft by Abbot Godfrey of Peterborough (Abbot from 1299-1321).

The proposed development site was church property from the Norman Conquest onwards and probably manorial land before the Norman Conquest. It is unlikely, therefore to have been disturbed during the Middle Ages and the potential for Anglo-Saxon remains and burials near the church is high.

GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY

A fluxgate magnetometer, which measures deviations from the magnetic field of the earth's surface, was used to scan the ground. This machine can locate ditches, hearths and other archaeological remains without disturbing the ground. There can be difficulties in interpreting the data if the ground is too disturbed and readings cannot be taken close to features which interfere with the signal, such as metal fences.

The machine was aligned to the earth's magnetic field and set to '0' after having scanned the ground to find the background level of magnetism. (The level of background noise varies according to soil type and ground conditions). 8 grids, each 20m x 20m were surveyed (Fig. 2) with readings taken at 1 metre intervals.

After the survey was completed the readings were fed into a computer which converted the data to random dot distributions. (Fig. 3) The higher the positive reading the blacker the readout. White areas are higher negative spots.

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

On an archaeological site clusters of high readings (showing black on the printout) might variously represent hearths, rubbish pits or pieces of metal. Linear anomalies are easier to interpret than clusters because there are fewer alternative interpretations. They generally represent ditches or gullies. It should be noted that it is not always possible to identify features positively from the data. For example, a large metallic object buried at some depth below the ground surface may give off a signal similar to that of a small feature closer to the ground surface.

Very little was revealed in the survey. The readings suggested that Grid 1 and part of Grid 2 may be relatively undisturbed with four areas of readings which might be interpreted as possible archaeological features. In the rest of the survey area there was considerable disturbance, probably as a result of the landscaping carried out to create level areas in a sloping hillside.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The geophysical survey confirmed that much of the proposed development site has been disturbed by the creation of the bowling greens. Nevertheless it is possible that the ground adjacent to the church (Grid 1-2) may remain relatively undisturbed.

Given the potential importance of the area care should be taken in the design of any housing development avoiding too much activity in the area close to the

church. Notwithstanding the general disturbance to the ground it is recommended that a watching brief should be kept during construction of footings and service trenches.

Naomi Field
April 15th 1992

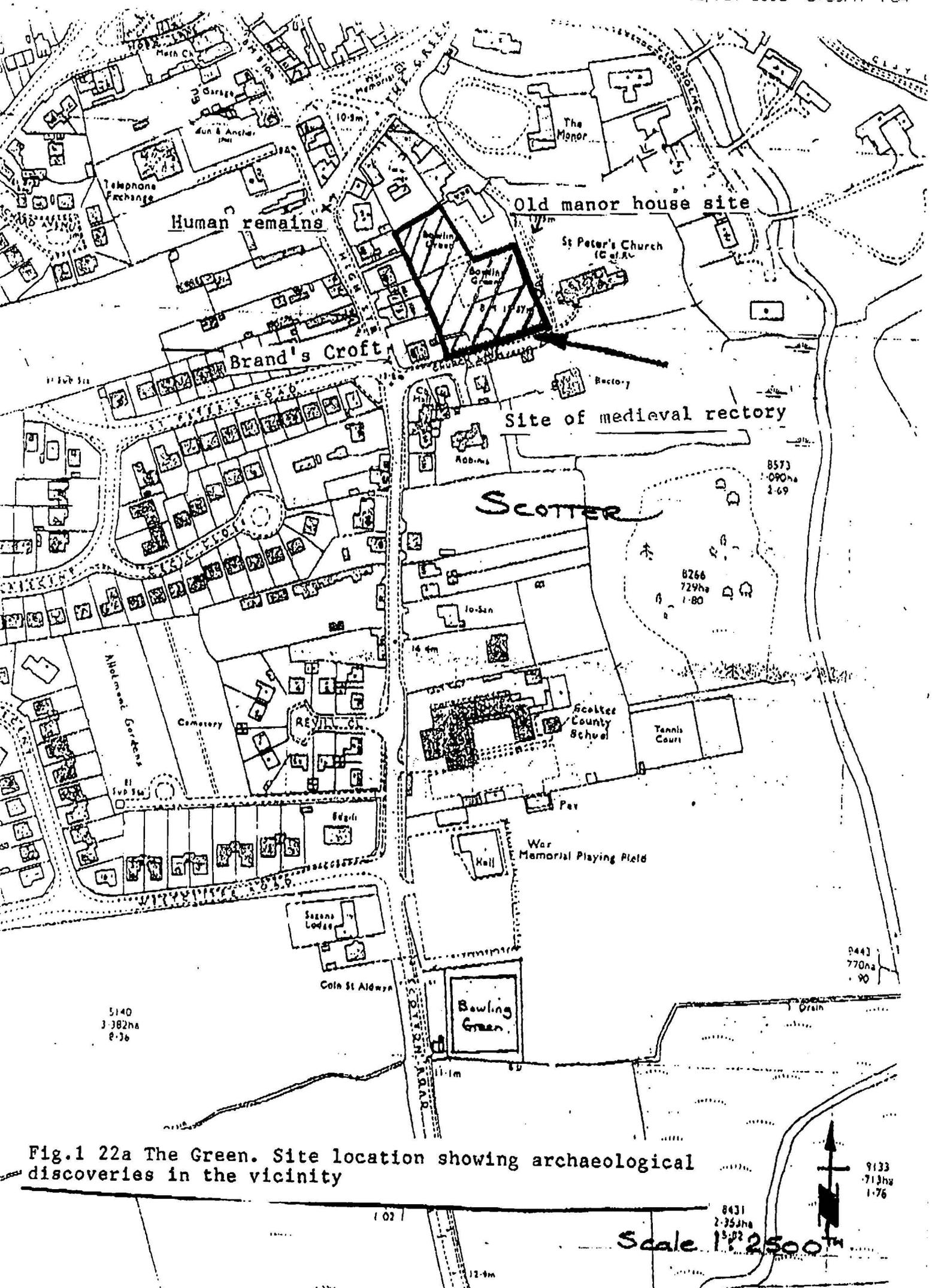


Fig.1 22a The Green. Site location showing archaeological discoveries in the vicinity

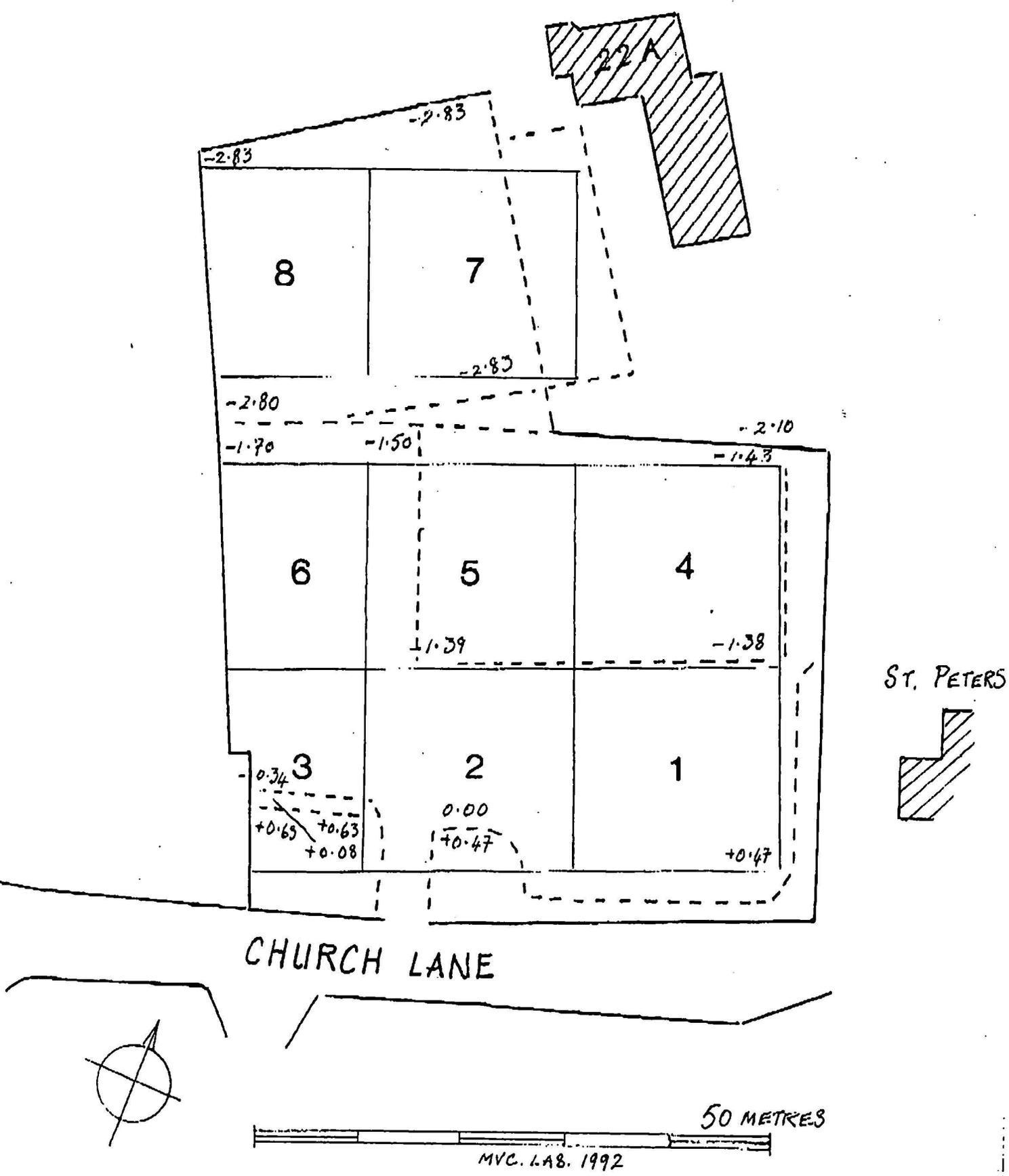


Fig.2 22a The Green. Position of magnetometer survey grids and relative ground levels

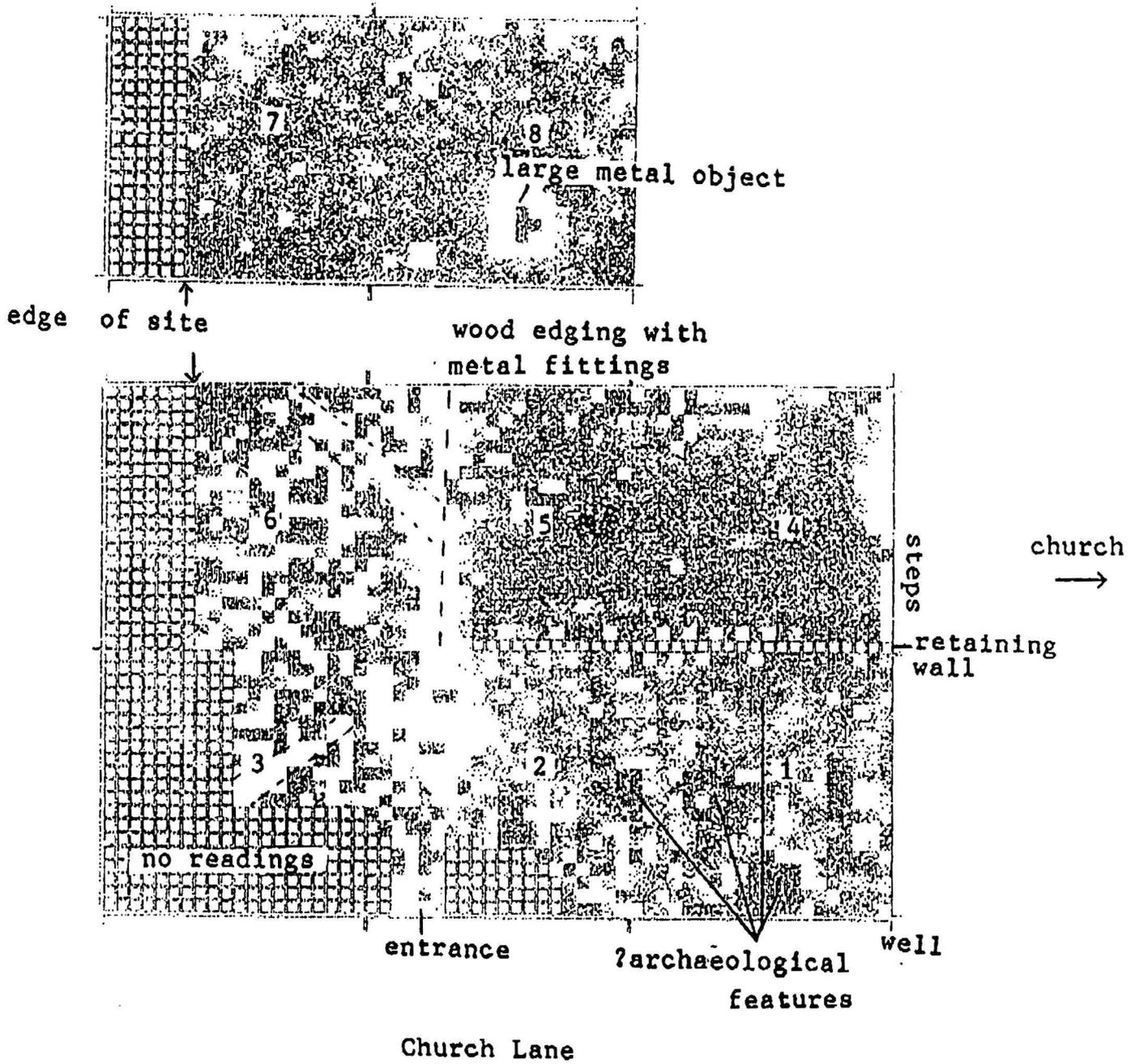


Fig. 3 22a The Green, Scotter. Magnetometer survey results