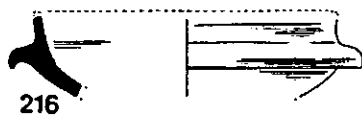


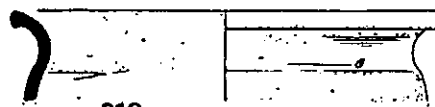
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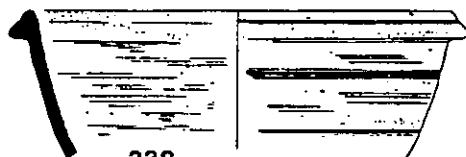
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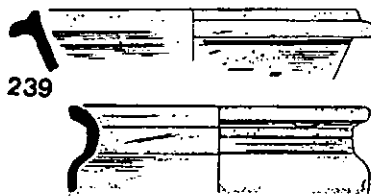
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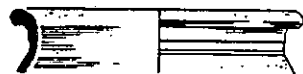
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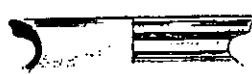
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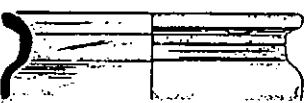
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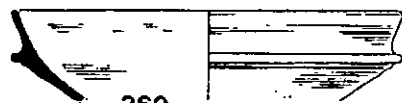
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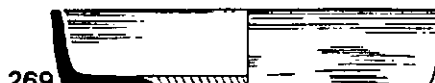
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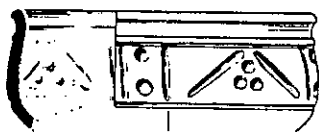
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Evaluation Report



Cover Drawing

Roman pottery vessels from the 'Hadham' Kilns
Drawing courtesy of Clive Partridge

THE HERTFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

**EXNALLS FARM GOLF COURSE, MUCH HADHAM
Hertfordshire**

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

by Hester Cooper-Reade

November 1991

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INTRODUCTION

During November 1991 the Hertfordshire Archaeological Trust carried out an archaeological evaluation in advance of the construction of a golf course at Exnalls Farm, Much Hadham, Hertfordshire. The evaluation was executed on behalf of Bulldog Developments Ltd.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

There are several sites of known archaeological interest both within the area of the proposed golf course, and close by. The majority date from the Roman period. Of particular importance are the Hadham ware kiln sites (SMR Nos. 1155 and 6805). Details of these sites are kept on Hertfordshire County Council's Sites and Monuments record and are summarised below.

SMR No. 1155:- Excavations in 1953 produced large amounts of pottery, a possible tile kiln, a substantial building and a probable clay pit. The type of pottery found indicates that this was a kiln site, possibly also associated with tile manufacture. It has been dated to the 4th century. This site lies c.400 m. to the west of the development area.

SMR No. 6805:- A pottery dump associated with a kiln site was found in the 1960s/70s. This was located to the north east of Exnalls Farm.

SMR No. 1695:- Burnt areas associated with pottery were found 200 m. east of the golf course.

SMR Nos. 2175 and 2176:- Aerial photographs have revealed two small circular crop marks; possibly bronze age barrows levelled by ploughing.

SMR No. 1999:- Exnalls Farm and moat . All that remains of the moat is a depression, c. 0.50 m. deep, west of the house. A 'V'-shaped depression observed in the base of the pond south of the house, may represent the original moat. The foundations of an earlier building were revealed during building work south west of the existing farmhouse.

METHOD OF WORK AND OBJECTIVES

The principal objectives of the evaluation were to identify and assess the importance of archaeological sites located within areas of ground disturbance, and make recommendations for the protection of the sites. The construction of a golf course comprises many elements: greens, tees, bunkers, fairways, practice areas, tree planting, ponds/reservoirs, drainage, a clubhouse, car park(s) and access road. The first phase of the evaluation of the Exnalls Farm site was concerned with the extensive areas of tree planting. Where archaeological remains coincide with the proposed tree planting the archaeology can be protected either by altering the layout of the golf course or by creating artificial banks to divide up the site. Because the archaeology is to be preserved a rapid evaluation was considered to be the most appropriate response; the exercise is primarily one of observation and notation and very limited excavation is undertaken.

The evaluation of the areas of tree planting was undertaken by cutting trial trenches. Using a mechanical excavator 171 trenches, 30 m. x 1.80 m. were cut at 30 m. intervals. Trenching at 30 m. intervals ensures a good probability (85%) that substantial archaeological remains will be revealed. The trenches were cut to a staggered pattern to increase the probability of detecting sites. The evaluation provides a

keyhole view of the archaeology and even a low density of features per trench (one or two) can be significant.

The majority of the trenches were cut to the base of the ploughsoil (0.20-0.40 m.), which was sufficient to expose the surface of the natural subsoil and archaeological features, where they existed.

DESCRIPTION OF WORKS

SITE A (GRID REF. N6/R3)

Site A is substantial and encompasses an area of at least four hectares. It is located east of an old quarry.

Archaeological features were observed in 14 trenches.

Individual features were not always discernible but any lack of definition was due to the high density of intercutting features. Most of the discrete features are ditches (probably field boundaries or enclosures for stock), farm buildings or dwellings. Structural remains (post holes) likely to have been associated with timber barns or houses are also present, as are a large number of pits, probably used for the disposal of rubbish.

Three buried urns containing cremated human bone (Grid ref. 06) were also uncovered. These cremations were in close proximity to each other and additional burials undoubtedly exist.

The pottery retrieved from the upper fill of a limited number of features dates from the late Iron Age to early Roman period (mid to late 1st century AD). Fragments of a beehive quernstone and Roman tile were found on the ground surface within the boundaries of the newly identified site.

SITE B (GRID REF. I10)

The evidence for Site B comprises two undated features: a post hole (0.25 m. deep) and a shallow (0.03 m.), circular cut which contained charcoal. The evidence is slight, but the low number of features recorded is a reflection of the evaluation technique not necessarily the scale of the site.

SITE C (GRID REF. S24)

Site C was designated by a single pit which had probably served as a hearth. Pottery from the pit is contemporary with that from Site A, i.e. late Iron Age/early Roman period.

SITE D (GRID REF. K21)

Site D was recognised by a very high density of features within one trench. At least seven features were recorded, including ditches, post holes and a large pit.

SITE E (GRID REF. F21)

The evidence for Site E comprises three parallel ditches, aligned south west/north east, and approximately 30 m. apart. A fourth, ditch-like feature, aligned west south west/east north east, was revealed c.13.50 m. to the north. The date and function of the ditches was not demonstrated, but they probably represent boundary or enclosure ditches.

SITE F (GRID REF. F22)

Site F was revealed within an area, 3.60 m. x 1.80 m., which contained a number of intercutting features, none of which could easily be defined.

SITE G (GRID REF. D21)

Site G encompasses a large area which produced evidence of metalworking dating from the Roman period. An estate map of 1726 records that the field in which this site is located was known as 'Black Field'. The derivation of this name can be readily understood because the ploughsoil is considerably darkened as a result of its high charcoal and slag content. Large quantities of slag and metalworking debris were collected from the surface of the field.

Two trial trenches were cut. A large sub rectangular feature and additional ill-defined feature(s) (possibly two ditches) were revealed in the westernmost trench. A large circular pit, at least 19 m. in diameter, and filled with layers of clay, charcoal and metalworking debris, was found in the second trench. The distribution of the surface finds indicates that the main concentration of slag is c.10 m. east of the trenches, i.e. approximately at the centre point of the large circular pit. This is evidently where the majority of the smelting was carried out.

POTTERY REPORT by Karen Waugh

A small amount of pottery was recovered from the excavations at Exnalls Farm. Although most of the sherds are small, abraded and undiagnostic in respect of form, it is clear that they date from the early Roman and possibly the pre-Roman period (mid-late 1st century A.D.).

Most of the sherds are from wheel-turned jars made in fine, sand-tempered fabrics, or in fabrics tempered with abundant quartz particles. These examples are typical of what is known as 'Belgic' pottery, i.e. native wares produced from the end of the Iron Age for local distribution. These wares continued to be made and distributed on a local scale for several decades after the Roman invasion of Britain (A.D. 43). In some more backward or conservative areas, these pots were used side by side with the newly-introduced Roman style vessels well into the 2nd century A.D.

There is at least one vessel in this fabric, probably a jar, that was used as a cremation urn. It contained fragments of burnt human bone. The sherds are extremely abraded and no diagnostic pieces (i.e. fragments of rim), which could have dated the vessel more precisely, were found.

Several sherds within the assemblage are of Hadham greyware, manufactured at local kiln sites. The Hadham industry probably had iron age (or Belgic) origins but began to expand shortly after the Roman Conquest, taking advantage of new markets opening up in the region. As well as catering for the needs of the invading army, the Hadham kilns supplied the new town and villa sites which were rapidly being established in the region. The sherds from Exnalls farm are indicative of the early Hadham greyware jars. The industry did not reach its peak until the later Roman period (4th century A.D.) when it became the major supplier of general household wares (jars,

bowls and flagons) in an area covering London, St Albans, Hertfordshire, Essex and parts of East Anglia.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

No physical evidence of the (?)bronze age ring ditch, visible on an air photograph, was revealed (Grid ref. R15). It is likely, however, that the area trenched was located south west of the crop mark. The principal area of tree planting in this field overlies an old quarry which would have destroyed any existing archaeological remains.

The trenches cut to the north of the farmhouse revealed neither evidence for a building predating the present day farmhouse, nor for a moat

Seven new sites were revealed and four produced some dating evidence. Late Iron Age/early Roman pottery sherds were recovered from Sites A, C and D, dating at least one phase of the site. Site G is later, but still dates from the Roman period.

Because of the limited excavation undertaken during a rapid evaluation even the basic identification and dating of a site may not be possible. This is true for sites B, E and F.

The range of features associated with Site A are characteristic of a farmstead comprising dwellings, farm buildings and stock enclosures. Comparable late Iron Age/early Roman sites have produced funerary evidence. Site A is well located on the brow of a hill and the tributary of the River Ash close by would have provided a source of water.

A considerable quantity of charcoal was contained within the pit which defined Site C. It is possible that the pit served

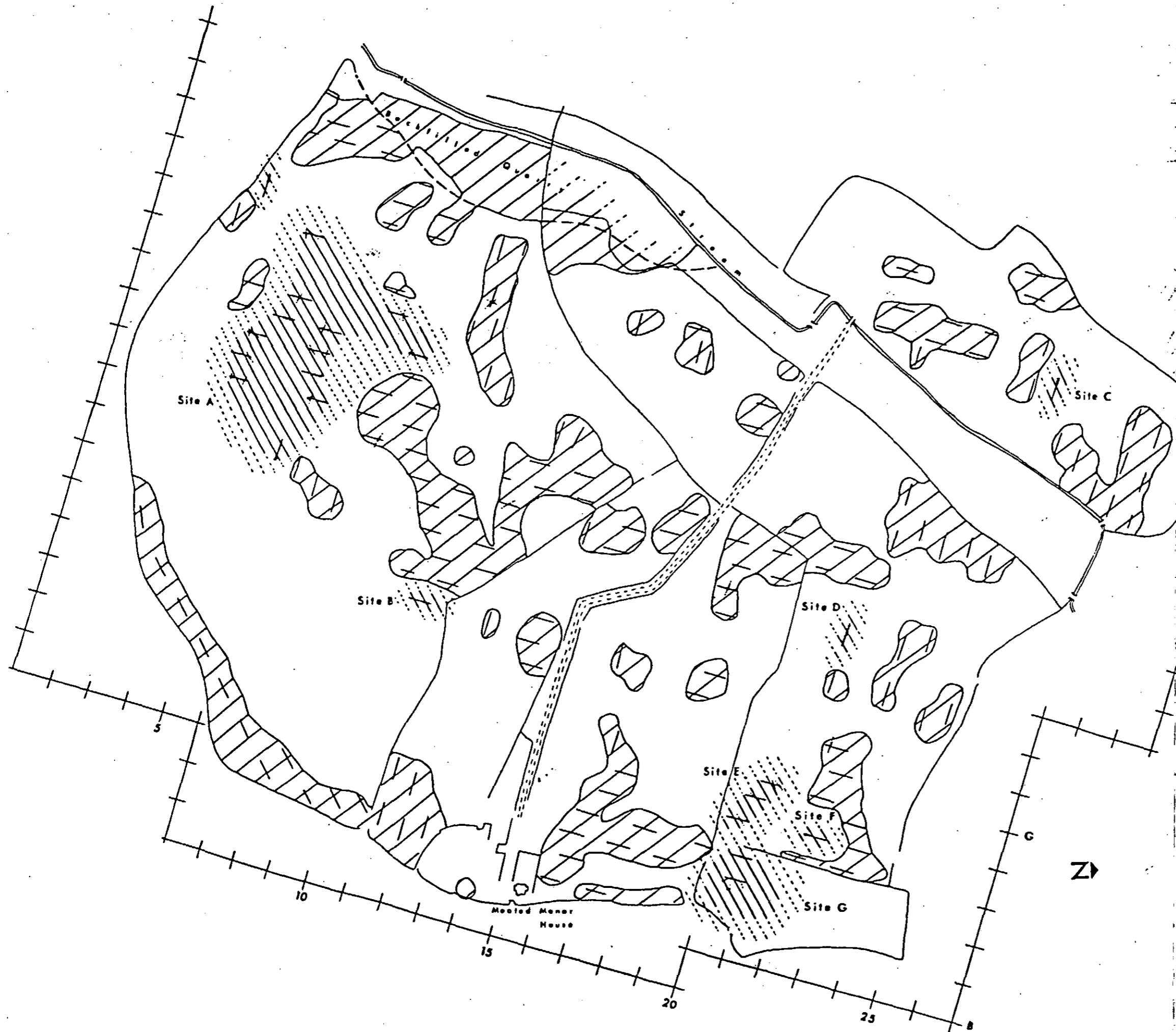
as a hearth and it may be significant that this site is located 400 m. east of a Hadham ware pottery kiln site.

Site D produced the highest concentration of features observed within a single trench. Little comment can be made on the evidence except to note that the site is located 750 m. north of Site A on the western terrace of the same river valley.

The clearest evidence is the metalworking debris dating from the Roman period obtained from Site G. Industrial sites were commonly located away from the settlement sites and consequently rarely yield pottery or other domestic debris. Despite the close proximity of sites E, F and G it is not thought that they are contemporary.







ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As a result of the evaluation seven hitherto unknown sites have been located and will be protected during the construction of the golf course. The Trust wishes to acknowledge Messrs. Jackson and Streeter of Bulldog Developments Ltd. for commissioning the evaluation.



EXNALLS FARM

KEY

-  KNOWN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE
-  POSSIBLE EXTENT OF SITE
-  AREA OF TREE PLANTING
-  TRIAL TRENCH
-  ARCHAEOLOGICAL FEATURES
-  ARCHAEOLOGICAL FEATURE

