

PN:

15584

BRIDGWATER

and District

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

The "BARN", a Romano-British building

Location (NGR ST 3667 3876)

In October 2001, an area in the field known as 'Below Orchard' at Ford Farm (north of Stawell village) (Fig. 1) was subjected to a square (30m x 30m) survey of soil resistivity by metre-squares, utilising the overhead electricity line and adjacent pole as site references (Fig. 2): site datum was 12.49m. O. D. at the base of this pole. A number of metre-squares had then been designated for investigation and these had been linked by excavation to form four separate trenches (Fig. 3).

Trench 1

Local ground level here was 0.06m above site datum. Trench 1 (Fig. 4) had revealed packed stone wall-footings at a depth of 43cm (0.37m below datum). These stones had been set in a trench 0.9m (three feet) wide and L-shaped in plan, thereby suggesting that the footings had formed part of the southwestern corner of some structure: two roughly squared lias blocks (see A-A in Fig. 4) remained to indicate the former location of the interior face of the lowest course of a wall or plinth: their upper surfaces were at a depth of 25cm (0.19m below datum).

Trench 2

Local ground level here was 0.11m above site datum. Trench 2 (Fig. 3) to the northwest had revealed similar footings at a depth of 69cm (0.23m below datum). These footings, which bore no vestige of plinth or wall-stones, formed a northwestern corner of the same structure. The footings in both trenches had returns to the east, suggesting that a building approximately 7.6m (25ft) wide and with a minimum interior width of 5.8m (19ft) had existed immediately to the east.

Trench 3

Local ground level was 0.22m above site datum. Trench 3 (Fig. 3) was a large one, 6 x 2 metres, aligned with the original survey grid. This had revealed an overall spread of broken lias roofing tiles of familiar 'Roman' pattern at a depth of about 23cm (0.01m below datum). A sondage was cut through this rubble at the northwestern corner of the trench: at a depth of 40cm (0.18m below datum) the top of a 5-centimetre (2-inch) deep layer of occupation debris was found. The occupation material here contained a few small (? trampled) sherds of BB ware, crumbs of mortar, tiny chips of white lias (from the roof?), and an iron nail, all in a matrix of black soil.

At about 4 metres east of this sondage, some of the fallen roofing material within the 6 x 2m area was removed by the excavators who found pottery *etc.* (see below) at a depth of 46cm. Assuming ground level 4 metres east of the sondage to be 0.34m above datum, these artefacts were found at 0.12m below datum (see + in Fig. 6).

Immediately northwest of this sondage a small extension to the 6 x 2m trench had been dug, in which packed stone footings had been disclosed at a depth of 58cm (0.36m below datum). It was assumed that these footings indicated the course of the former north wall of the building.

Further extensions to Trench 3 are described below, under the heading 'Roofing'.

Trench 4

The local ground level here was 0.38m above site datum. Trench 4 (Fig. 3) was opened 10½ metres east of the footings exposed in the northwestern corner of Trench 3. A continuation of the run of stone footings was found at the western end of Trench 4 at a depth of 61cm (0.23m below datum).

Trench 4 was then extended towards the east in expectation of encountering remains of the eastern wall of the former building: this trench was 0.8m wide and just 6m long. However, it was found that the continuing run of footings ceased abruptly: they were missing because a later ditch had been cut through them. A body-sherd of good quality greyware, having two burnished grooves 12mm (½ inch) apart around the vessel, was found in this ditch at a depth of 1.1m (0.65m below R/B ground level). Detailed drawings have been made of both the west end (Fig. 5W) and the east end (Fig. 5E) of Trench 4: one-and-a-half metres of the 'empty' central portion of Trench 4 is omitted from this pair of drawings.

Towards the east end of Trench 4 (where the present ground level is 0.39m above datum) a large stone (B) in the southern face of the trench (Fig. 5E) was postulated to be part of the eastern line of footings; while opposite, on the northern face, the clear profile of a robber trench was seen. Here, the shadow of the former external ground level in the R/B period was seen at 42cm below present ground level (*i.e.* 0.03m below datum). The profile appeared to confirm that the stone (B) was an *in-situ* remnant of footings that formed the eastern extremity of the building.

When Trench 4 was extended southwards, footings were encountered (Fig. 5E) to full width of 0.9m (3ft) at 0.20m below datum. Further digging in Trench 4 revealed that two lower courses of footings existed below the top course.

Levels

A graph of the levels taken along (or close to) the line of the north wall is given in Fig. 6. The points in the Figure represent observed levels and these have been linked by smooth curves: thus, the curves in the drawing are hypothetical. The Figure shows that the present-day ground level rises by about 28cm (11in) towards the east end: the footings rise only 20cm (8in) over the same length. (A correction has been made for a single course of footings which appeared to be missing from Trench 3). The interior floor level appears to have been very little different from the local ground level, which is what one might expect of a barn or cattle shed. All the remains are well below modern plough levels. Artefacts described above were found 5 metres east of Trench 3 sondage at the depth shown by the + sign in Fig. 6.

Shape and size of the building.

The evidence from the Trenches indicated that the western and northern footings of the building had been set out at right-angles; and that the eastern return at the south end of the western wall, together with the southern return at the east end of the northern wall suggested a building having a simple rectangular plan. The roughly-squared stones A-A indicated that walls of unknown height had been raised upon the footings. Inside, multiple layers of Roman-style stone roofing tiles (none found unbroken) showed that the building had been quite thoroughly robbed of re-usable building materials: profiles of robber trenches were found, which confirmed this interpretation.

Roofing.

There was abundance of evidence, in the form of broken stone tiles on the floor, that the roof had been very heavy. As the span was estimated to be 19-20ft, an initial hypothesis was that the building had had a ridged roof supported on a central line of piers or timbers. Consequently, a small southward extension of the main part of Trench 3 was made in order to examine an area centred on a point about 4½ metres from the western line of footings: here, remains of one of a pair of piers - or the base or padstone for a vertical timber - was sought. Under fallen tiles, a few small lias stones were found which, from their size and disposition, were unconvincing evidence of a pad-stone assembly. Incidentally, a rim-sherd of BB ware was encountered here. Another extension of the 6 x 2m trench was then cut to the east (where a lesser depth of stone tiles was found) to examine the eastern one of the two postulated sites of pier-bases or pad-stones, but none was found.

An alternative hypothesis was that three equally spaced vertical piers or timbers had supported the roof, so an area around 3½ metres from the east end was also examined, but no evidence of a pier-base was found. Another system of roof support was then considered briefly, namely the use of twin side-aisles; but this was soon rejected on account of the limited width of the building.

It is therefore postulated that the width of the building had most likely been spanned by heavy timbers and that a ridged roof had been supported on king-posts.

Walls

From the results concerning roof support outlined above, it is evident that the whole weight of the roof was borne by the walls. The options for the latter are (a) timber-framed walls with in-filled panels of wattle-and-daub, cob, *etc.*, or (b) solid stone walls. Bearing in mind the quality and width of the wall-footings provided, coupled with the absence of cob or daub in the excavations, it was concluded that stone walls had been provided to full height.

A Storage Bin

The extension of the 6 x 2m trench described above revealed a single line of fallen stones running only approximately along the centre-line (see Fig. 7) of the building, possibly the remains of a thin interior wall (too thin and insubstantial to be a fallen pier) with a return to the south, the pair possibly forming part of a storage bin. A sherd of black burnished ware was found between two of these stones.

A Hearth

Beneath the thin line of stones was found the circular burnt clay remains of a hearth containing cinders associated with iron working (see Fig. 7). Many specks of brilliant white lime and one small piece of coal were found in the vicinity. Six samples of slag were collected from the site: (a), a lightweight slag with no metallic content, possibly glass; (b), grey slag adhering to a solid angular substance, some copper present, possibly from site of bronze or brass working; (c), a red slag, residue of iron-working, smithing; (d), a heavy, iron rich slag from furnace wall, smelting; (e), glass slag, part moulded by dropping on rounded surface while hot; (f), a dark grey slag from iron working. The hearth was left *in situ* (see Backfilling).

The Pottery

Two sherds of plain Samian ware (*terra sigillata*) have been found in the black earth of the floor of this building: they are both from the same vessel, but are not adjacent pieces. One is a large base-herd, approximately half of the base of the vessel; the other is a small rim-herd with a very distinct and narrow line of abrasion on part of its rim, indicative of having been moved repeatedly in an inverted position; as if moved repeatedly between table and shelf in daily use (being stored upside-down). This line of abrasion has allowed the angle of the side of the vessel to be determined with considerable accuracy, showing it to have been part of a widely-flared vessel.

The base is of a distinctive form and is readily identified: it has a foot-ring (much abraded on the sole) and the interior base of the vessel is raised centrally.

These two pieces are clearly parts of a dish of Hadrianic 18/31 type from Central Gaul, A.D. 100-150, illustrated and described by B. R. Hartley, *Roman Samian Ware* (H.A.S. Print No.1), pp. 245-6. The two sherds have been marked BA1.

Fourteen sherds of BB ware were derived from a single vessel: these were re-assembled into one large rim-herd (5 pieces), one smaller rim-herd (2 pieces), one body-herd (3 pieces) and one body sherd (1 piece); the remaining 3 pieces were body-sherds, very small and non-relocatable. These appear all to have been part of a jar (see Fig. 8) of Wessex Archaeology Series, Type 3. The re-assembled upper portion has a very everted and burnished rim with a small underlying bead at its outer edge; the rim diameter is approximately equal to the body diameter, and it measures 8cm from belly to rim, and therefore its original height is likely to have been between 17 and 20cm: the neck diameter is 3cm less than the belly diameter. There is a burnished groove between neck and shoulder, and another separating the somewhat faint but unmistakably obtuse lattice from the burnished shoulder above it: this groove is 6cm below the rim. The interior shows clear signs of wiping.

As the original height of the vessel is unknown, its original shape is a matter of conjecture. Unfortunately for dating purposes, pots of this kind are found from late C3 to early C5. These sherds have been marked BA2.

One small body-herd of orange/buff ware. Insufficient material upon which to estimate a date range. This sherd has been marked BA3.

Four small sherds, one being a rim-herd, were of black-burnished ware, apparently from a single vessel of WA Type 25, Period 10, (4th-century or later), as No. WA 371. These sherds have been marked BA4.

Further small finds

In addition to the slag, cinders, lime and coal (?from Radstock) mentioned above, a number of the broken roofing tiles exhibited nail holes, some with nails *in-situ*. Numerous loose tile-nails were found in the 6 x 2-metre area of Trench 3. A small part of an *imbrex* (probably used as intended as a ridge tile) and two small pieces of flat tile of similar fabric were also found in the 6 x 2-metre area, together with two large square-section iron nails (too large for tile-nails), some pieces of 'Sully' stone (local), mortar droppings, and a small piece of tufa (local). About 30 animal bones were also found.

Backfilling.

Having previously received warnings from the land-owner of his desire to recover this area for agriculture, and having already been kindly granted further extensions of time, work in this area was suspended after depositing a modern coin beneath a prominent cinder found in the centre of the hearth. Roofing tiles *etc.* were returned to their approximate find-spots prior to backfilling by machine.

Other Buildings.

The resistivity plot (Fig. 2) shows two other areas of above-average resistivity lying to the north of the present site. The nearer one of the two was investigated and the remains of a wall were found; the farther one has yet to be examined. There is a very large R/B building 80 metres to the north which is currently being examined.

CONCLUSIONS.

On the assumption of a simple rectangular building, its approximate dimensions were quickly apparent. On the basis of all the evidence above, it is now known that the original overall dimensions were 16.5m (54ft) x 7.6m (25ft). Furthermore, it may be stated that the interior dimensions of the building would have been 14.7m (48ft) x 5.8m (19ft) if the blocks A-A (see Fig. 4) had been part of the interior face of the wall; or about 15m (49ft) x 6.0m (20 ft) if blocks A-A were part of an interior plinth. No evidence was found of padstones or bases for vertical columns of timber or stone to support a ridge-piece. It is therefore presumed that heavy timbers would have been used to provide a clear span across the width of the building, with the presumption of a ridged roof supported by king-posts, the most likely option.

Bearing in mind the quality and width of the wall-footings provided, coupled with the absence of cob or daub in the excavations, it was concluded that stone walls had been provided to full height.

That Samian pottery was found in the black-earth floor cannot safely be used to date the origin of the building: early pottery of this kind may have been discarded from what appears to have been an early R/B residence lying only 80m to the north. All that can be concluded from the evidence of the pottery is that the building survived until the fourth century or later, although we know that the ground upon which it was built had been occupied from the pre-Roman Iron Age or earlier: there is the backfilled ditch of a previous occupation only some three to four metres to the south of it.

The building was typically Romano-British. It was a substantial stone-walled and stone-tiled building which may have been initially used as a barn or cattle-shed, but later, used as a workshop or for industrial purposes. It survived until the roof fell in, smashing a large number of tiles. Subsequently, all re-useable materials e.g. wall-stones and a few unbroken tiles, were recovered for use elsewhere.

Acknowledgements.

The site was dug by Hamish Ramsay and Colin Tarrant and reported by the present writer. The Society is grateful to Steve Membery, County archaeologist, for identification of the slags. The Society gratefully acknowledges the assistance in many ways of the landowner, Mr Paul Warren, whose arable land we were kindly permitted to occupy for an extensive period.

Peter B. Ellison, March 2003.

'NAP,BAS', Scaleable Shade-map, Wet or Dry Option.

FIELD CHECK: 39

SITE BEARINGS

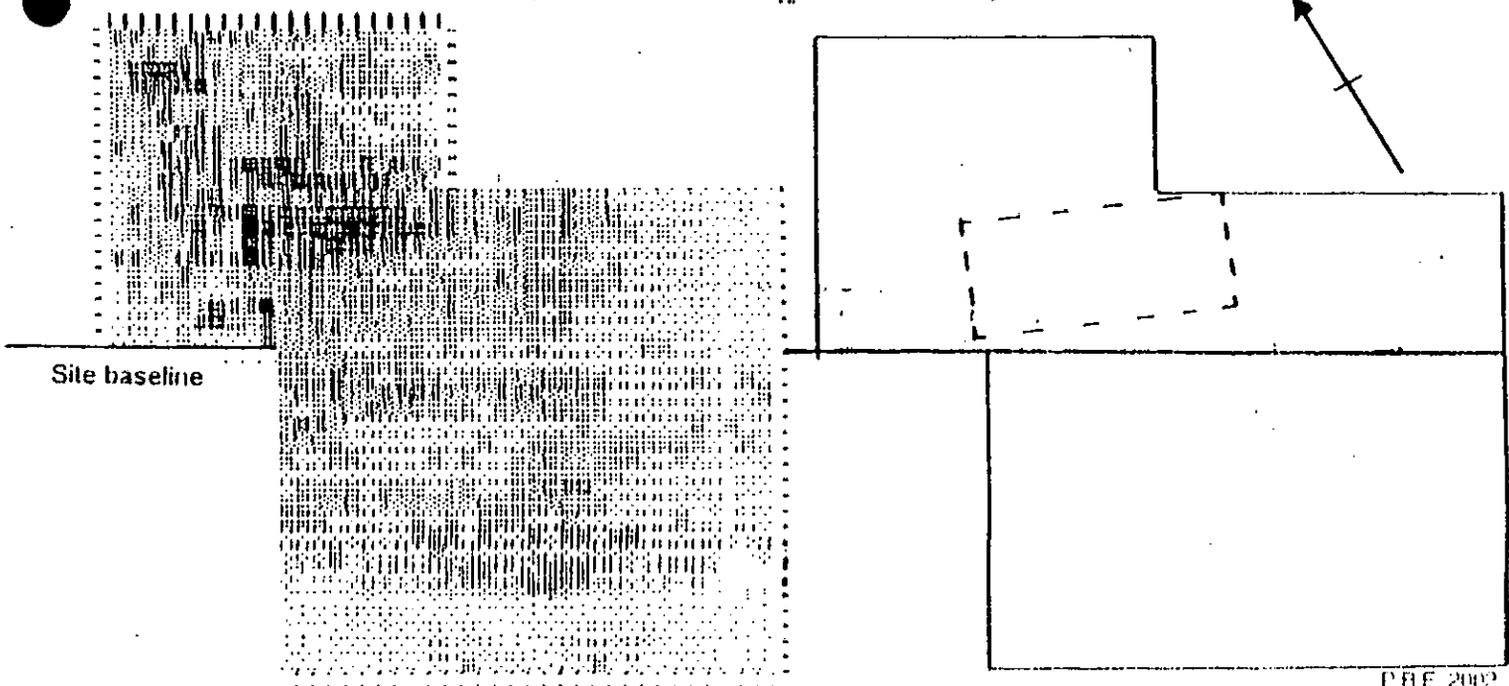
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Largest value is 58
Smallest valid value is 13
Range is 45
There are 10 different SHADES
SHADE Increment is 4,5

100 VALUES are LIGHT

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22	(= Shade 3 <	26,5	·
26,5	(= Shade 4 <	31	·
31	(= Shade 5 <	35,5	·
35,5	(= Shade 6 <	40	·
40	(= Shade 7 <	44,5	·
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53,5	(= Shade 10 <	58,01	·

Orientation
NORTH

Scale; metres (i.e. 1/12-inch=1 metre)



PBE 2002

Fig. 2: Resistivity Surveys

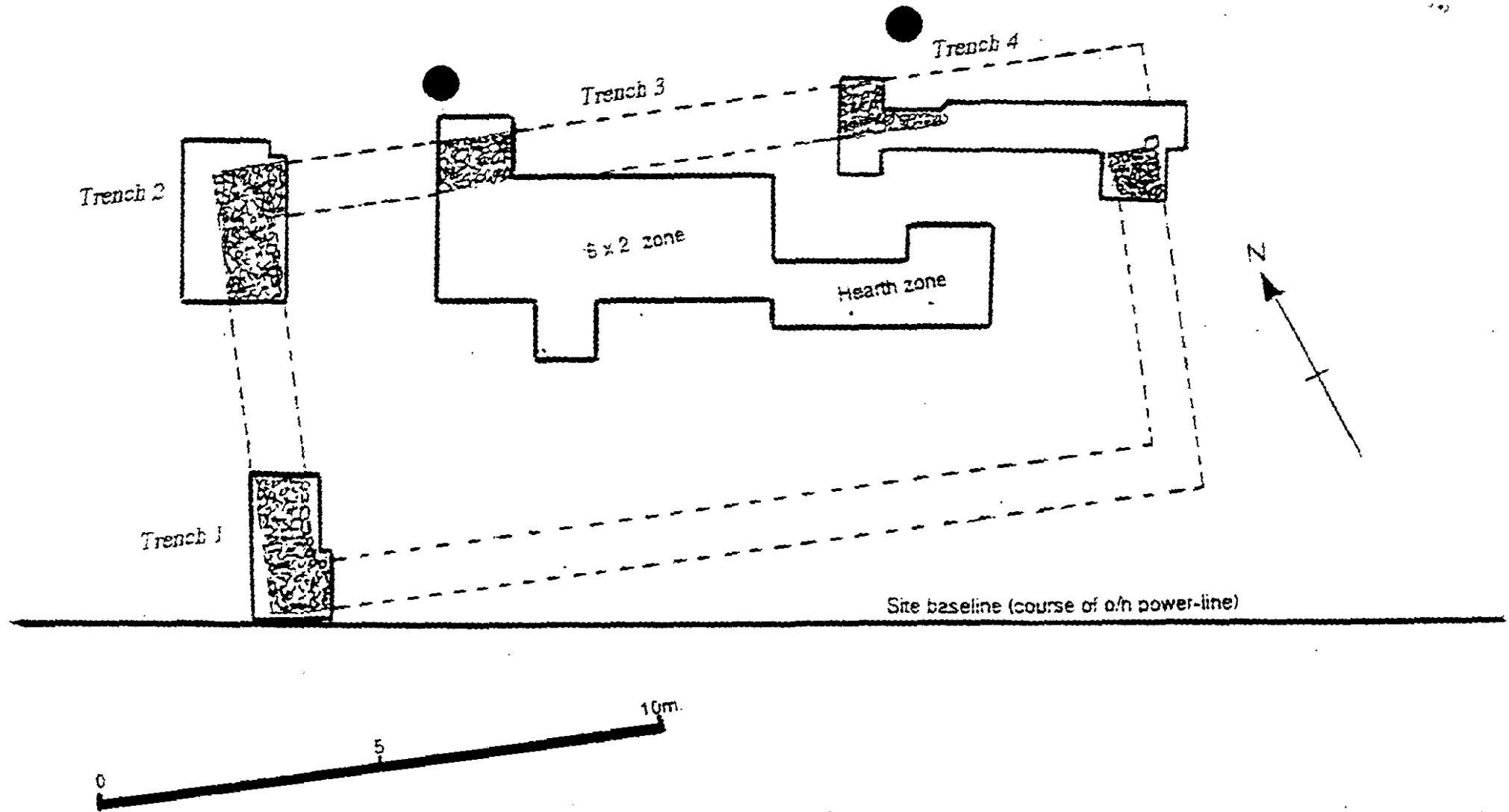


Fig. 3: Plan of Excavations.

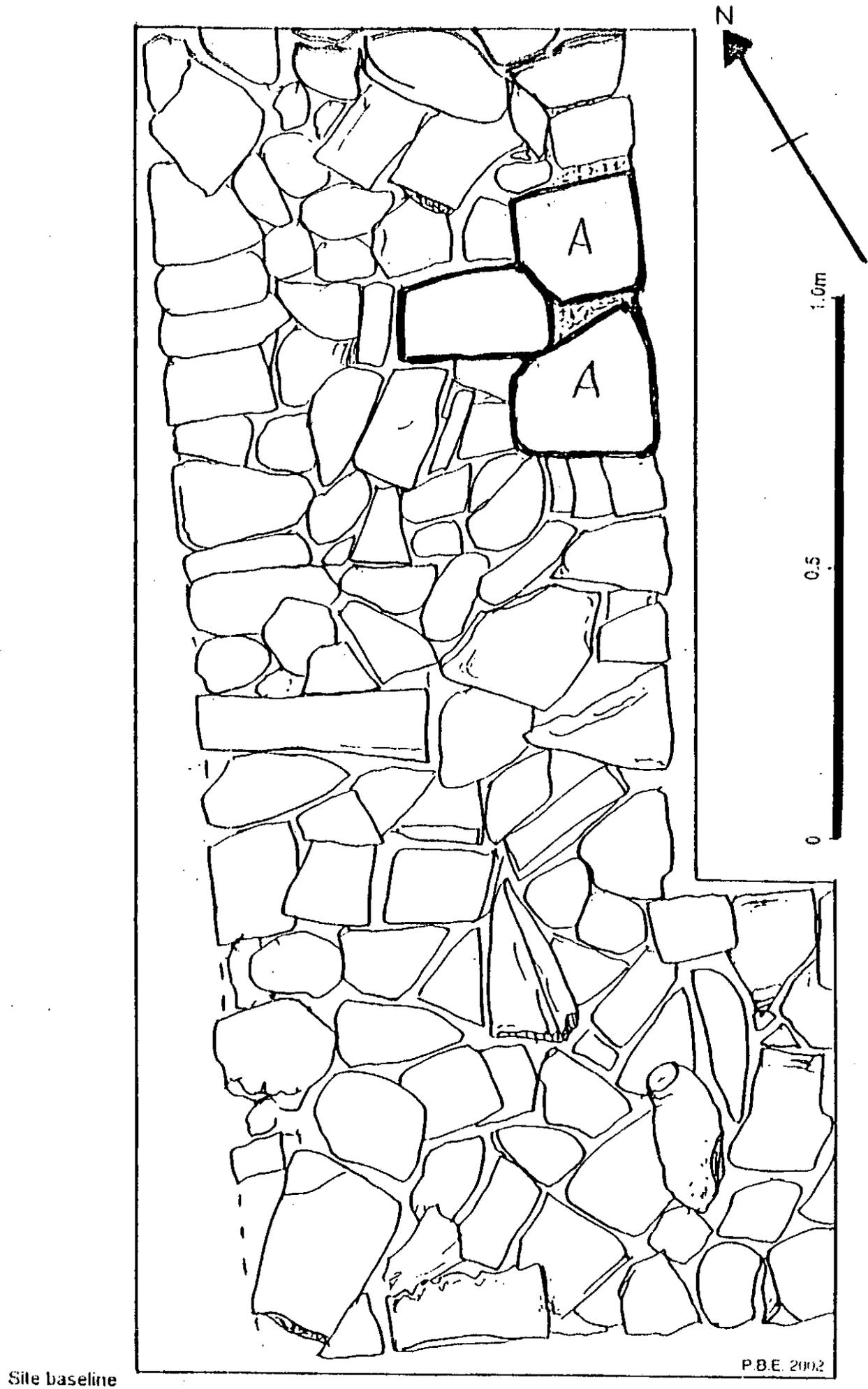
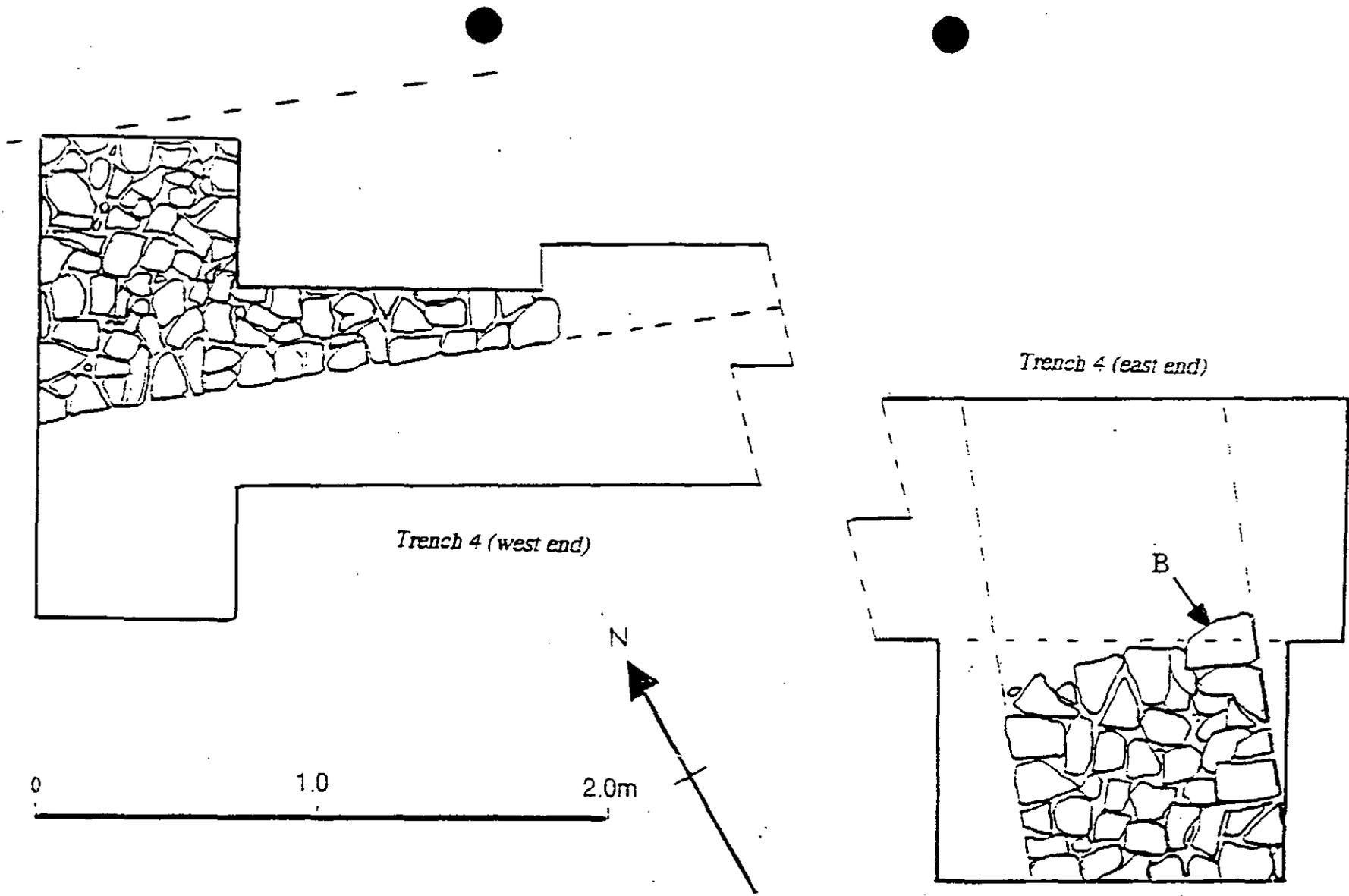


Fig. 4: Footings in Trench 1.



• Fig. 5: Trench 4.

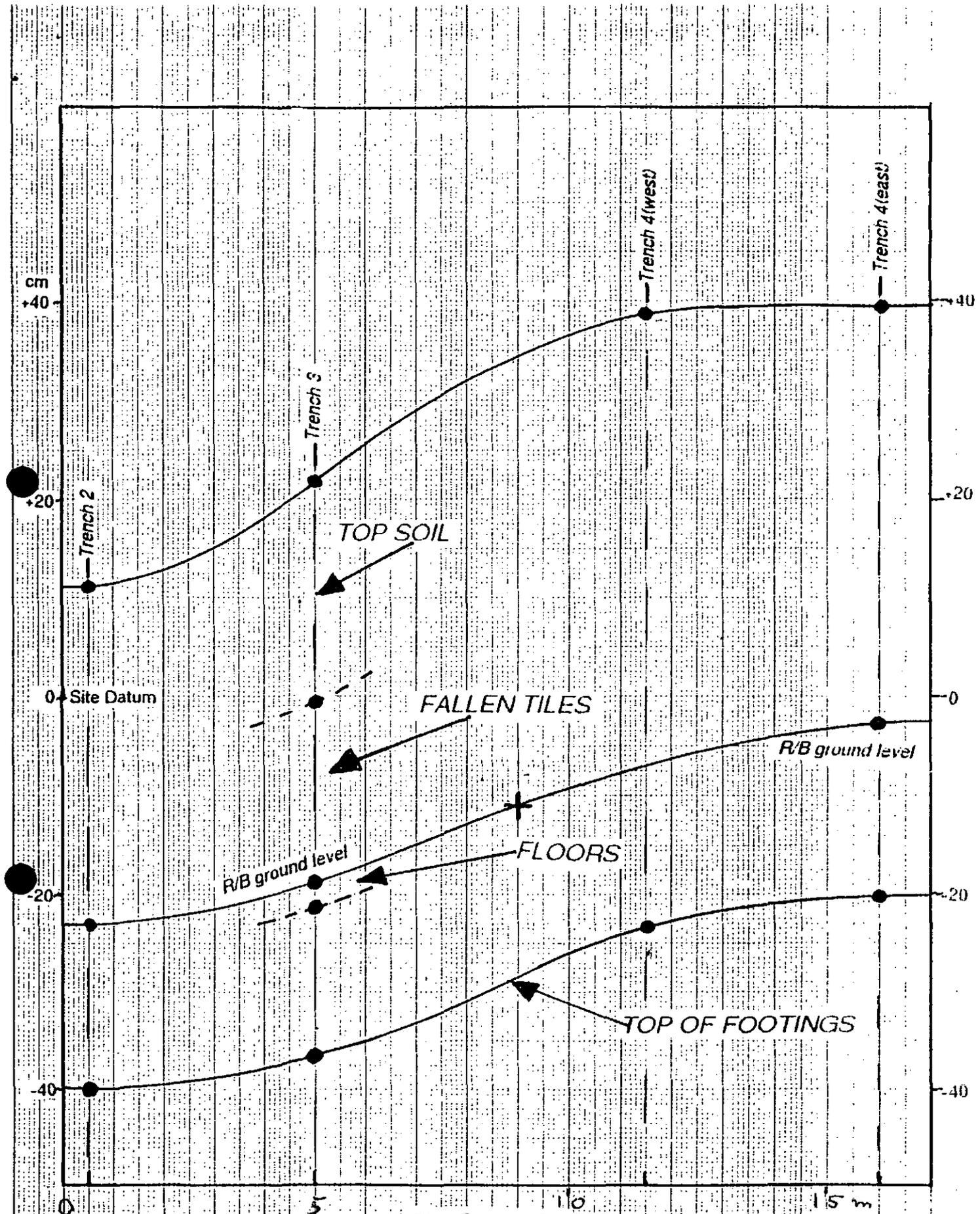


Fig. 6: Levels.

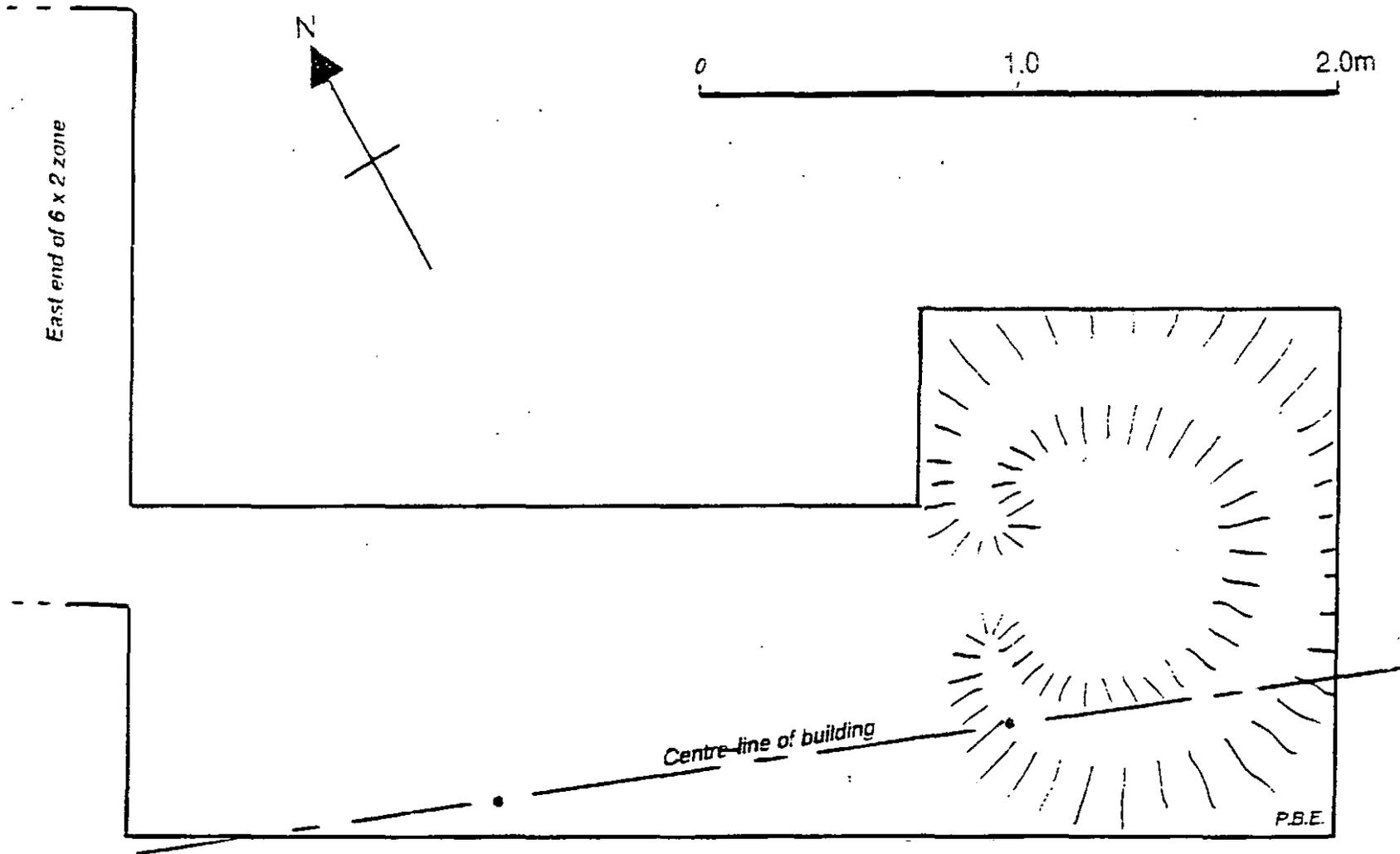
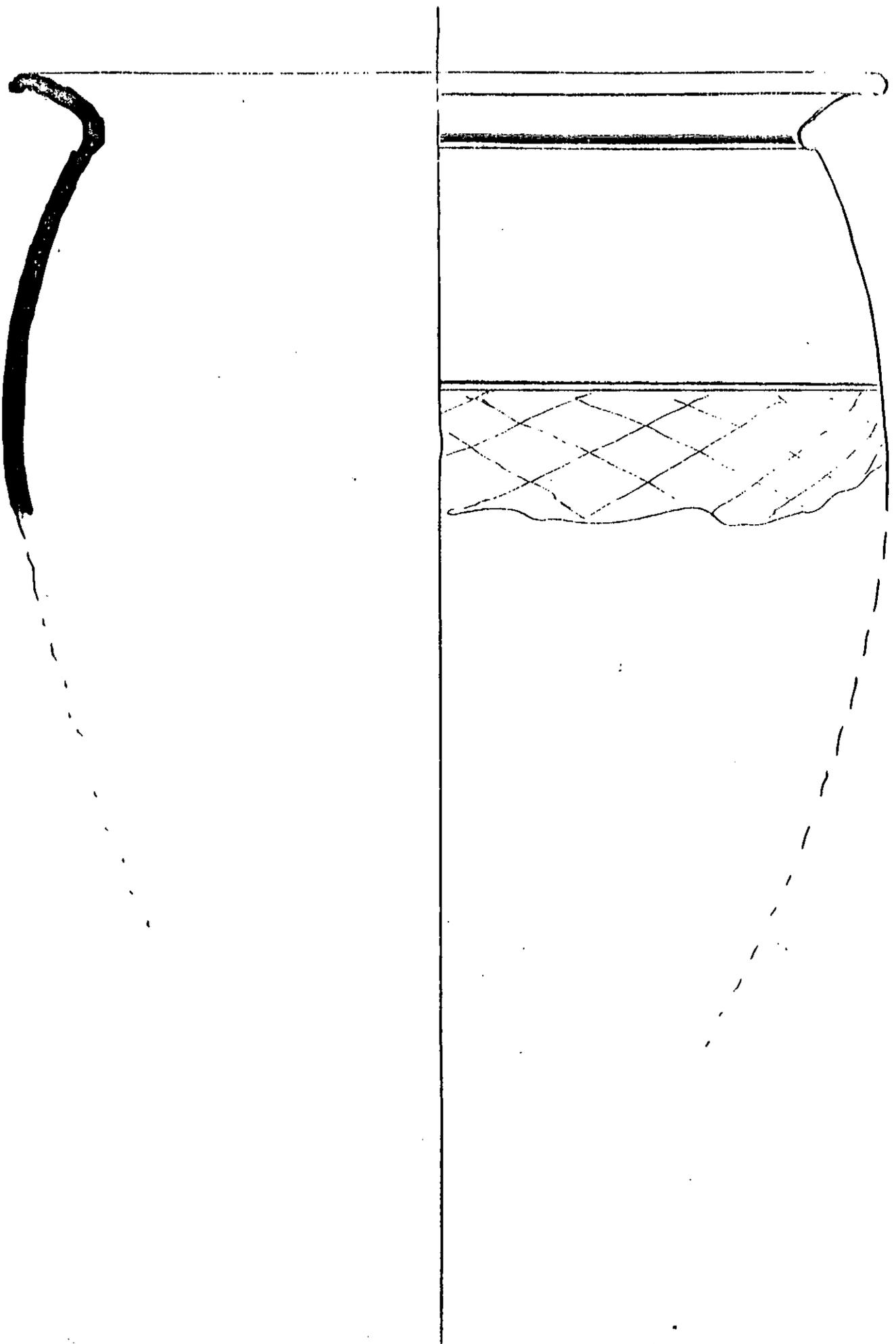
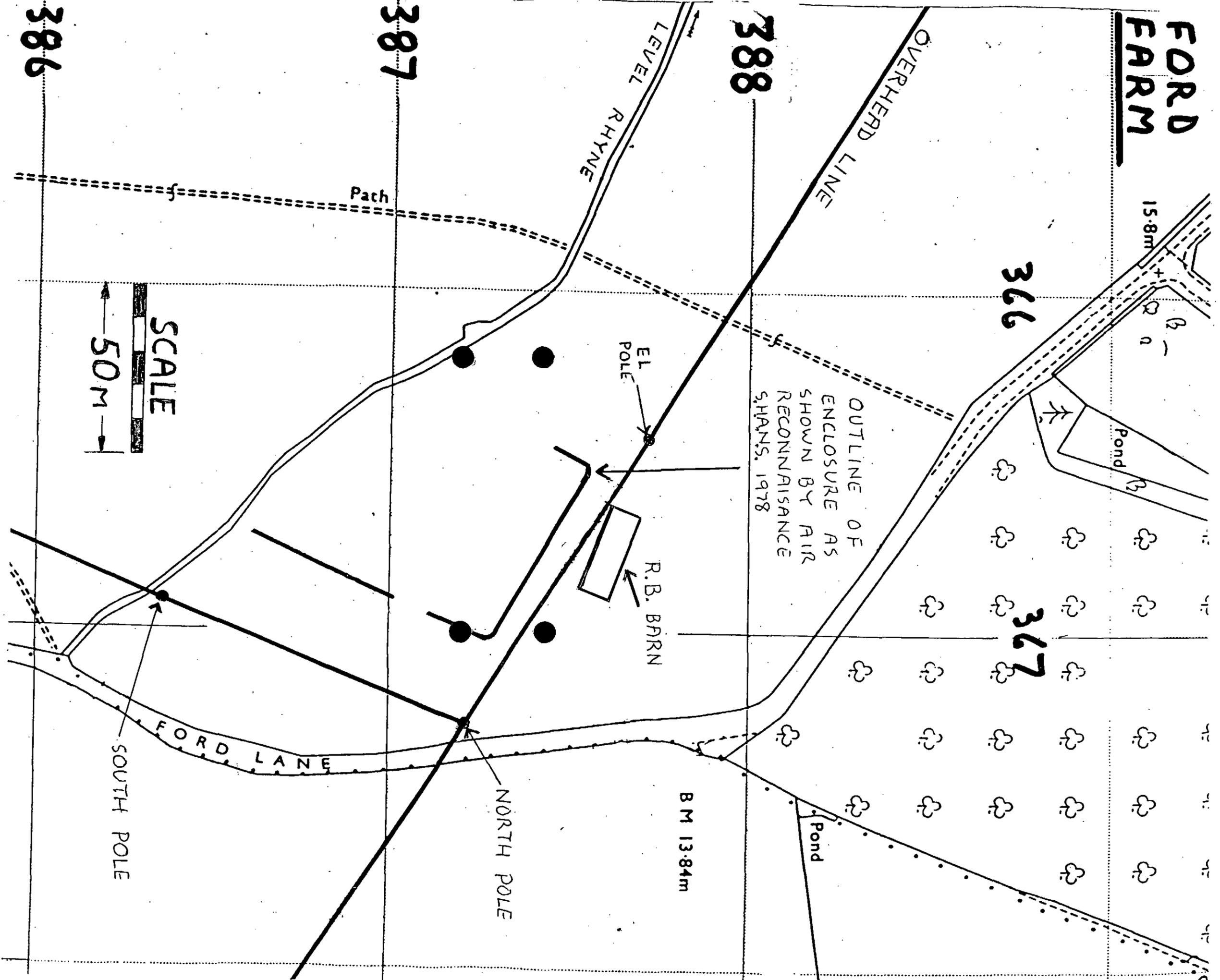


Fig. 7: Trench 3 (west) - The Hearth.



*Fig. 8: Pottery. Late C3 - Early C5.
(full size)*

FORD FARM



15.8m

Pond

366

367

OUTLINE OF
ENCLOSURE AS
SHOWN BY AIR
RECONNAISSANCE
S.H.A.N.S. 1978

R.B. BARRN

B.M. 13.84m

Pond

NORTH POLE

SOUTH POLE

FORD LANE

LEVEL RHYNE

OVERHEAD LINE

Path

SCALE

50M

388

387

386

AN ABRIDGED ACCOUNT OF THE DISCOVERY OF A ROMANO-BRITISH 'BARN' AT FORD, (2001-2002)

Location

In October 2001, an area in the field known as 'Below Orchard' at Ford Farm (north of Stawell village) was subjected to a square (30m x 30m) survey of soil resistivity over 900 metre-squares, utilising the overhead electricity line and adjacent pole as site references (Fig.5). Site datum was 12.49m. O. D. at the base of this pole, which was situated at NGR ST 366 387.

On completion of this survey, an additional 300 metre-squares were surveyed so as to extend the northern corner of the survey by ten metres northwest and ten metres northeast.

On examination of the resulting resistivity plot, a number of metre-squares having above-average resistivity were selected for further investigation. On excavation, adjacent squares were linked: they created the four separate Trenches shown in Fig. 6.

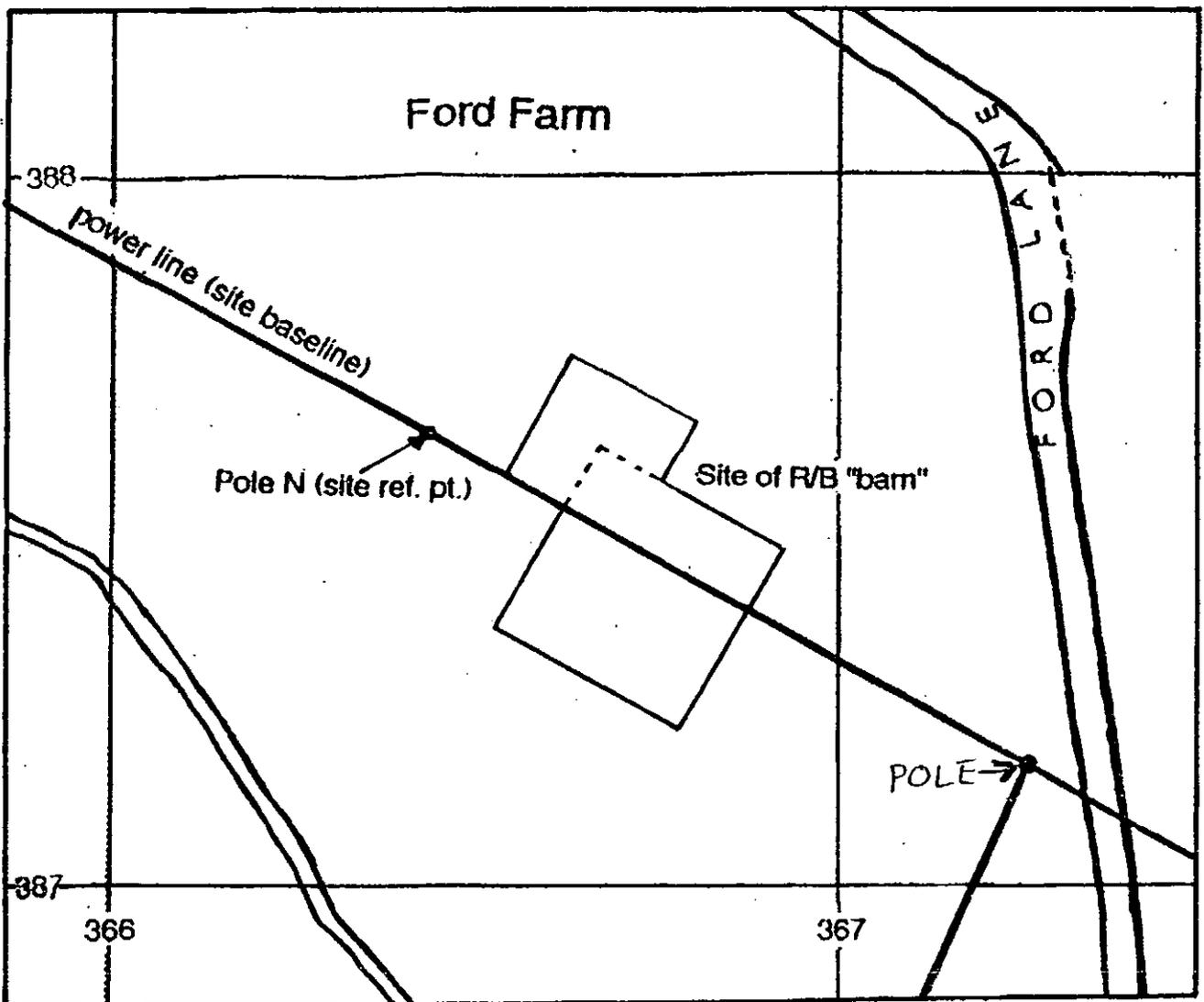


Fig. 5. Plan of Ford

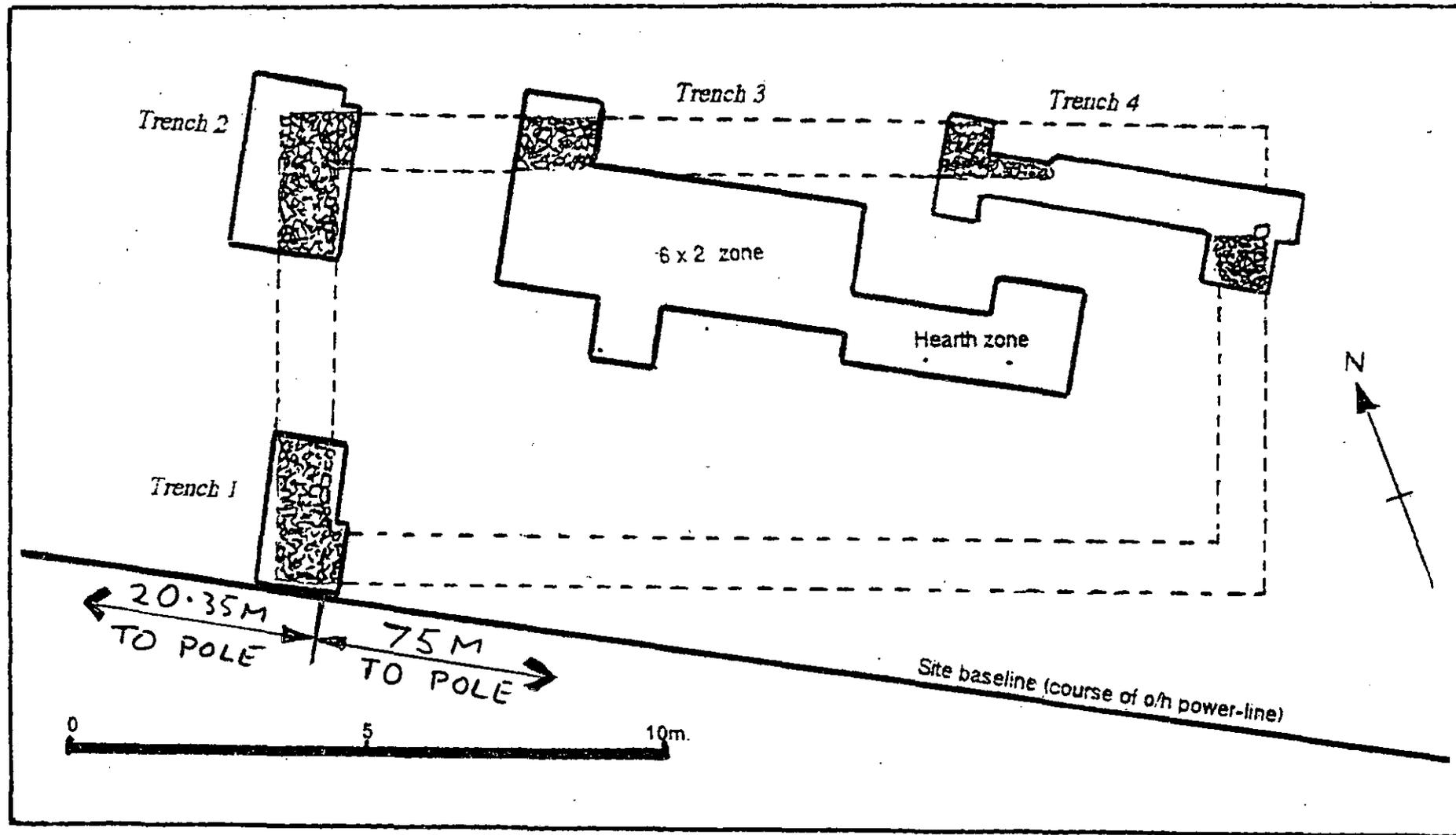


Fig. 6. Plan of 'barn'



Fig. 7. Trench 2, view from North

Trench 1

Local ground level here was 0.06m above site datum. Trench 1 had revealed packed lias stone wall-footings at a depth of 43cm (0.37m below datum). These stones had been set in a trench 0.9m (three feet) wide and L-shaped in plan, thereby suggesting that the footings had formed part of the southwestern corner of some structure: two roughly squared lias blocks remained *in situ* to indicate the former location of the interior face of the lowest course of a wall or plinth: their upper surfaces were at a depth of 25cm (0.19m below datum).

Trench 2

Local ground level here was 0.11m above site datum. Trench 2, to the northwest, had revealed similar footings at a depth of 69cm (0.23m below datum). These footings, which bore no vestige of plinth or wall-stones, were found to form a northwestern corner of the same structure (see Fig. 7). The footings in both trenches had returns to the east, suggesting that a building approximately 7.6m (25ft) wide and with interior width of 5.8m (19ft) had existed immediately to the east.

Trench 3

Local ground level here was 0.22m above site datum. Trench 3 was initially a large one, 6 x 2 metres, aligned with the original survey grid: (it was destined to be further enlarged - see later). This trench had revealed an overall spread of broken lias stone

roofing tiles of familiar 'Roman' pattern at a depth of about 23cm (0.01m below datum). A sondage was cut through this rubble at the northwestern corner of the trench: at a depth of 40cm (0.18m below datum) the top of a 5-centimetre (2-inch) deep layer of occupation debris was found. The occupation material here contained a few small (? trampled) sherds of BB ware, crumbs of mortar, tiny chips of white lias (from the roof?), and an iron nail, all in a matrix of black soil.

At about 4 metres east of this sondage, some of the fallen roofing material within the 6 x 2m area was removed by the excavators who found pottery etc. (see below) at a depth of 46cm *i.e.* at 0.12m below datum.

Immediately northwest of this sondage a small extension to the 6 x 2m trench had been dug, in which packed stone footings had been disclosed at a depth of 58cm (0.36m below datum). It was assumed that these footings indicated the course of the former north wall of the building.

Further extensions to Trench 3 are described below, under the heading 'Roofing'.

Trench 4

The local ground level here was 0.38m above site datum. Trench 4 was opened 10½ metres east of the footings exposed in the northwestern corner of Trench 3. A continuation of the run of stone footings was found at the western end of Trench 4 at a depth of 61cm (0.23m below datum).

Trench 4 was then extended towards the east in expectation of encountering remains of the eastern wall of the former building: this trench was 0.8m wide and just 6m long. However, it was found that the continuing run of footings ceased abruptly: they were missing because a ditch had later been cut through them. A body-sherd of good quality greyware, having two burnished grooves 12mm (½ inch) apart around the vessel, was found here at a depth of 1.1m (0.65m below R/B ground level).

Towards the east end of Trench 4 (where the present ground level is 0.39m above datum) a large stone in the southern face of the trench was postulated to be part of the eastern line of footings; while opposite it, on the northern face, the clear profile of a robber trench was seen. Here, the shadow of the former external ground level in the R/B period was seen at 42cm below present ground level (*i.e.* 0.03m below datum). The profile appeared to confirm that the stone was an *in-situ* remnant of footings that formed the eastern extremity of the building.

When Trench 4 was extended southwards, footings were encountered to the full width of 0.9m (3ft) at 0.20m below datum. Further digging in Trench 4 revealed that two lower courses of footings existed below the top coarse.

Levels

The interior floor level appears to have been very little different from the former local ground level, which is what one might expect of a barn or cattle shed. All the remains are well below modern plough levels. Artefacts described above were found 5 metres east of Trench 3 sondage at the depth of 10cm below site datum.

Shape and size of the building.

The evidence from the Trenches indicated that the western and northern footings of the building had been set out at right-angles; and that the eastern return at the south end of the western wall, together with the southern return at the east end of the northern wall suggested a building having a simple rectangular plan. The roughly-squared stones in Trench 1 indicated that stone walls of unknown height had been raised upon the footings. Inside, multiple layers of Roman-style stone roofing tiles (none found unbroken) showed that the roof of the building had collapsed prior to the remains of the whole building being quite thoroughly robbed of re-usable building materials: profiles of robber trenches were found, which confirmed this interpretation.

Roofing.

From the quantity of broken stone tiles on the floor it was evident that the roof had been very heavy. As the span was estimated to be 19ft, an initial hypothesis was that the roof had been a ridged structure supported on a central line of stone piers or timbers. Consequently, a small southward extension of the main part of Trench 3 was made in order to examine an area centred on a point about 4½ metres from the western line of footings: here, one of a pair of piers - or the bases or padstones of vertical timbers - was sought: under fallen tiles a few stone blocks were found which, from their size and disposition, were unconvincing evidence of a pad-stone assembly. A rim-herd of BB ware was encountered.

Another extension of the 6 x 2m trench was then cut to the east (where, incidentally, a lesser depth of stone tiles was found) to examine the eastern one of the postulated sites of piers or pad-stones, but none was found.

An alternative hypothesis was that three equally spaced vertical timbers had supported the roof, so an area around 3½ metres from the east end was also examined, but no evidence of a base was found.

Yet another possibility that was proposed was that twin side-aisles had existed but, on consideration, this was discounted because of the limited width of the building.

It is therefore postulated that the width of the building had been spanned by heavy timbers and the hypotheses of either a lean-to roof or - much more likely it seemed - a ridged roof supported by king-posts.

The extension of the 6 x 2m trench described above revealed a short length of fallen stones running approximately along the centre-line of the building, possibly the remains of a thin interior wall (too thin and insubstantial to be a fallen pier) with a return to the south, the pair possibly forming part of a storage bin. A sherd of black burnished ware was found between two of these stones.

A Hearth

Beneath the thin line of stones was found the circular burnt clay remains of a hearth or oven containing cinders associated with iron working (see Fig. 6). Many specks

of brilliant white lime and one small piece of coal were found in the vicinity. Six samples of slag were collected from the building site: (a), a lightweight slag with no metallic content, possibly glass; (b), grey slag adhering to a solid angular substance, some copper present, possibly from a site of bronze or brass working; (c), a red slag, residue of iron-working, smithing; (d), a heavy, iron rich slag from a furnace wall, smelting; (e), glass slag, part moulded by dropping on rounded surface while hot; (f), a dark grey slag from iron working. The hearth was left *in situ* (see Backfilling).

The Pottery

Two sherds of plain Samian ware have been found in the black earth of the floor of this building: they are both from the same vessel, but are not adjacent pieces. One is a large base-herd, approximately half of the base of the vessel; the other is a small rim-herd with a very distinct and narrow line of abrasion on its rim, indicative of having been moved repeatedly in an inverted position (as if stored upside-down on a stone shelf after daily use). This line of abrasion has enabled the angle of the side of the vessel to be determined with considerable accuracy, showing it to have been part of a widely-flared vessel. Its base is of a distinctive form and is readily identified: it has a foot-ring (much abraded on the sole) and the interior base of the vessel is convex-domed centrally. These two pieces are clearly parts of a dish of Hadrianic 18/31 type, from Central Gaul, A.D. 100-150, illustrated and described by B. R. Hartley, *Roman Samian Ware* (H.A.S.Print No.1), pp. 245-6. The two sherds have now been marked BA1.

Fourteen sherds of BB ware were derived from a single vessel: these were re-assembled into one large rim-herd (5 pieces), one smaller rim-herd (2 pieces), one body-herd (3 pieces) and one body sherd (1 piece); reassembly of the remaining 3 body-sherds was not possible. All appear to have been part of a jar of the Wessex Archaeology Series, Type 3. The re-assembled upper portion has a very everted and burnished rim with a small underlying bead at its outer edge; the rim diameter is approximately equal to the body diameter, and it measures 8cm from belly to rim, and therefore its original height is likely to have been between 17 and 20cm: the neck diameter is 3cm less than the belly diameter. There is a burnished groove between neck and shoulder, and another separating the somewhat faint but unmistakably obtuse lattice from the burnished shoulder above it: this groove is 6cm below the rim. The interior shows clear signs of wiping. As the original height of the vessel is unknown, its precise shape is a matter of conjecture. Unfortunately for dating purposes, pots of this kind are found from late C3 to early C5. These sherds have been marked BA2.

One small body-herd of orange/buff ware was found, but there was insufficient material upon which to estimate a date range. This sherd has been marked BA3.

Four small sherds, one being a rim-herd, were of black-burnished ware apparently from a single vessel of WA Type 25, Period 10, (4th-century or later), as No. WA 371. These sherds have been marked BA4.

Further small finds

In addition to the slag mentioned above, a large number of broken white lias roofing tiles with nail holes, some with nails *in-situ*, and numerous loose tile-nails were found in the 6 x 2-metre area of Trench 3. A small part of an *imbrex* (probably used as a ridge tile) and two small pieces of flat tile of similar fabric were also found in the 6 x 2-metre area, together with two large square section iron nails (too large for tile-nails), some pieces of a local sandstone, some slag, cinders, coal (?from Roman workings at Radstock), mortar droppings, and a small piece of tufa. About 30 medium and large animal bones were also found in the excavations.

Backfilling.

Having previously received warnings from the land-owner of his desire to recover this area for agriculture, and having already been kindly granted further extensions of time, work in this area was suspended after depositing a modern coin beneath a prominent cinder found in the centre of the hearth. Roofing tiles *etc.* were returned to their approximate find-spots prior to backfilling by machine.

Other Buildings.

The resistivity plot shows two other areas of above-average resistivity lying to the north of the present site. The nearer one of the two was investigated and the remains of a wall were found; the farther one has yet to be examined. There is a very large R/B building 80 metres to the north which is currently being examined.

CONCLUSIONS.

On the assumption of a simple rectangular building, its approximate dimensions were quickly apparent. On the basis of all the evidence above, it is now known that the original overall dimensions were 16.5m (54ft) x 7.6m (25ft). Furthermore, it may be stated that the interior dimensions of the building would have been 14.7m (48ft) x 5.8m (19ft) if the blocks (see Trench 1) had been part of the interior face of the wall; or about 15m (49ft) x 6.0m (20 ft) if the blocks were part of an interior plinth. No evidence was found of padstones or bases for vertical columns of timber or stone to support of the ridge. It is therefore presumed that heavy timbers would have been used to provide a clear span across the width of the building: but, in spite of the discovery of part of a clay *imbrex*, there can be no presumption of a ridged roof supported by king-posts, although this seems the most likely option. A hipped roof cannot be entirely ruled out.

Bearing in mind the considerable weight of the stone roofing tiles, the building is envisaged as having been a heavily-built timber structure resting on stout stone sleeper walls. But the fact that such wide foundations were considered necessary certainly suggests that the walls of the building may have been built entirely of stone to full height.

That Samian pottery was found in the black-earth floor cannot be used to date the building: early pottery of this kind may have been discarded from what appears

to have been an early R/B residence lying to the north. At some subsequent R/B period, such sherds may have been turned in on digging the footings. All that can be concluded from the evidence of the pottery found in the building is that the ground on which it was constructed had been 'occupied' from 150 AD or earlier.

There is no doubt that the building was of Romano-British workmanship, possibly built in the third or fourth century and used as a workshop and/or, perhaps later, a barn or cattle-shed; it was undoubtedly associated with the large R/B building currently being examined some 80 metres to the north.

P. B. E., August 2002

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