

◆ Part 1 – the excavations

AREA A

PHASE AA: c. 5000 BC–1500 BC ■

Summary

This phase is represented exclusively by a distribution (Fig. 16) of occasionally worked but mostly waste prehistoric flint. Most of the assemblage came from topsoil and Roman contexts, and was therefore residual and redeposited. Flint pieces from most other contexts also appear to have been redeposited, except for three finds in context 56 (Fig. 17). The distribution of all flint finds according to their height above sealevel is interesting in that this distribution, as will be seen, differs markedly from the distribution of most other categories of small finds from the excavations. Most other categories of finds were located to the north of Building 3 (and we will argue that this is a consequence of their having been being deposited when Building 3 was standing), whereas the flint scatters are mostly in the area later to be occupied by Building 3. The greater depths of the flints to the south and west of the site is simply a reflection of lower overall land heights in these areas, but the concentration of low-lying flints on the western perimeter of the site is caused by flints being redeposited in the lower layers of the stream. There is a marked concentration of flints at the southern edge of the site, where context 56 was revealed. A distribution map of four major categories of flints (Fig. 18) indicates that there are concentrations of worked flakes to the west of C56 and blades to the east of C56. This could be suggestive of *in situ* preparation of flint blades.

The associated graph (Fig. 19) indicates those contexts where more than nine flints were located. As expected, most flint finds were redeposited in topsoil (Contexts 3, 201, 202, 401, 701) or were found in contexts overlying Building 3 (Contexts 240, 416, 417). Contexts 38 and 55 were deposits on the southern edge of the trench, close to context 56; these deposits account for the concentration of flints in this area and may reflect less disturbed assemblages.

Description

Context 56 comprised an irregularly shaped ovoid pit, measuring c. 1.75 m east to west, by about 1 m

north to south. The average depth was about 100 mm, although it was slightly deeper (about 200 mm) at the eastern end. It was particularly difficult to define the edge of this shallow pit on the southern side. The pit was filled with a poorly-sorted, yellowish-brown silty clay, and contained occasional flint nodules (up to 70 mm in length) especially towards the centre of the pit. The pit was excavated into the underlying Reading Beds clay.

Finds

A total of 597 pieces of prehistoric flintwork was recovered (see *The Prehistoric Flintwork* by Chris Butler ■). Almost all of the assemblage (94%) is made up of debitage. The flakes are generally quite small, and tend to be long and narrow, with a minority being large and broad. Thirty-five pieces of debitage (6%) have been retouched; ten cores were also recovered (Figs 20, 21).

How the features were formed

Three pieces (two hard hammer-struck flakes and a shattered piece) in context 56 are probably from the same nodule of Type-1 flint, and are likely to have come from the same flaking episode. As they have little patination, and do not appear to have been damaged after being discarded, it is likely that they were deposited here shortly after being removed from the core. The remaining pieces of flintwork in this context comprised a mixture of redeposited Mesolithic and later debitage; there was also a small amount of presumably residual Roman material. Context 56 was the silty-clay fill of an irregular but shallow pit, and it is possible the hand-dug pit, which was filled by natural processes, is of Mesolithic date. The remainder and bulk of this assemblage is likely to have been redeposited.

Overall date

The five microliths from the assemblage are all obliquely-blunted types and, in the absence of any geometric microliths, probably date to the earlier Mesolithic. The remaining scrapers, notched pieces and miscellaneous retouched pieces, together with the button scraper, are likely to date from the later Neolithic or Bronze Age.

Interpretation and comment

The original point of discard of this assemblage cannot now be ascertained, although it is clear that the habitats offered by the channels of the nearby Chichester harbour would have provided excellent resources for communities living by hunting, gathering and fishing. It is clear also, from the later prehistoric flintwork, that the area was also used by communities in the Neolithic and Bronze Ages. The distribution of the flintwork, especially concentrated in the southern and eastern areas of the site, is not uniform or random across the excavated area, and suggests that, although much of the flintwork was redeposited, its overall distribution may still provide some clues as to its original places of discard.

Some of the Mesolithic material may relate to three undated, shallow pits recorded in the vicinity of context 56.

PHASE AB: c. AD 50–90

Summary

This phase is represented by the construction and early life of the masonry building, known as Building 3.¹ The complete ground plan of the building shows it to have been a rectangular structure measuring overall some 35 metres east–west by 21 metres north–south (Figs 22, 23, 24). The plan indicates a symmetrical building constructed around an internal courtyard. There were ambulatories on the north and south sides of the courtyard, while the eastern

and western ends were formed by large central spaces and smaller flanking rooms. The main difference between the eastern and western ranges lay in the internal walls separating the ranges from the courtyard. On the east side the foundations were intact over their entire length, while on the west side the foundations stopped, leaving a large gap of some seven metres.² From the western external wall of the building were flanking or boundary walls that ran north and south away from the building. The full extent of these flanking walls is unknown. To the north of Building 3 lines of post-holes suggest the presence of fence-lines.

PHASE AB: BUILDING 3

Description

The remains of the masonry walls survived in essentially two conditions: either they survived intact to the top of the foundations, or the foundations had been largely robbed. The core of the walls comprised layers of flint nodules, while dressed greensand blocks were used as facing stones, on both sides of a wall-face. An indication is given on Figure 23, which shows that the robbing of the actual foundation material was largely confined to the east and north sides of the building. In addition, there had been extensive robbing at the northern end of the north flanking wall. Discussion elsewhere in this report suggests that not

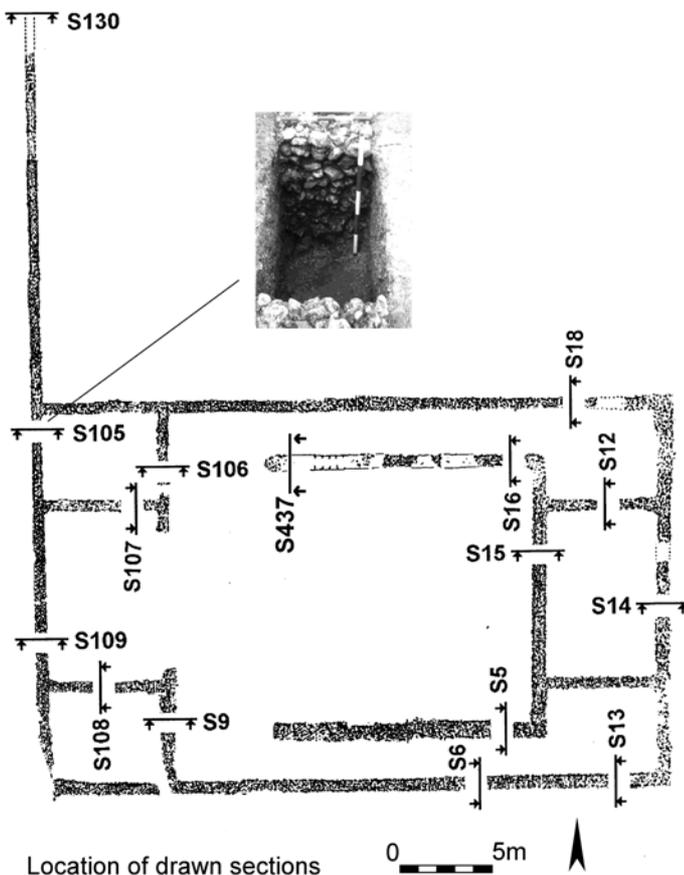


Fig. 22. Phase AB – plan of the foundations of Building 3, indicating the location of all sections excavated through the foundation walls. These sections were excavated in order to find out more about the method of construction of the walls, and to try and locate datable artefacts incorporated in the foundation walls.

all this robbing took place at the same time. It is possible to say with some confidence that the wall foundations, in places, survived intact (ie to floor level) because of the survival of greensand facing-stones, which were intended to be seen above ground.³

It was only possible to locate archaeological evidence for one doorway; this was on the eastern side of the room in the south-west corner of the building. Clearly there must have been external doorways, but the evidence for these must have been confined to breaks in walling and threshold stones engineered on top of the foundations. The appearance of all the walls suggests considerable uniformity and the work of a skilled body of labourers over a short period of time.

Sondages were undertaken in the two areas where the flanking or boundary walls joined the main western wall of Building 3 (Figs 24, 25). In both cases it was proven that the flanking walls had been constructed at the same time as Building 3 and were not secondary. Building 3 and its flanking walls were therefore conceived as part of one architectural design.

Detailed descriptions ■

Detailed descriptions of the sections through the wall foundations where they were excavated (Figs 26–39) are provided. There are 15 such sections in total and these are described by order

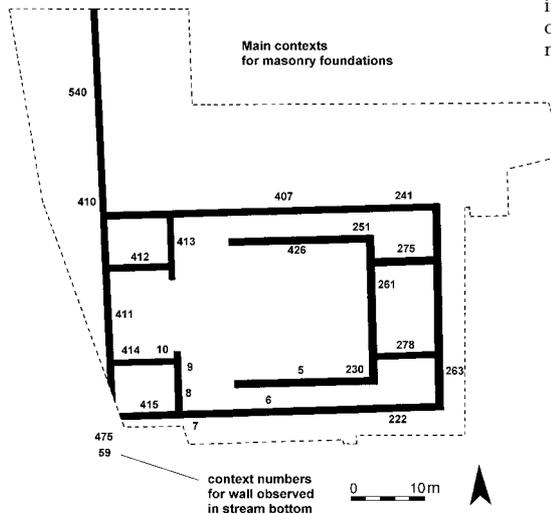


Fig. 24. Phase AB: plan of the foundations showing all masonry context numbers.

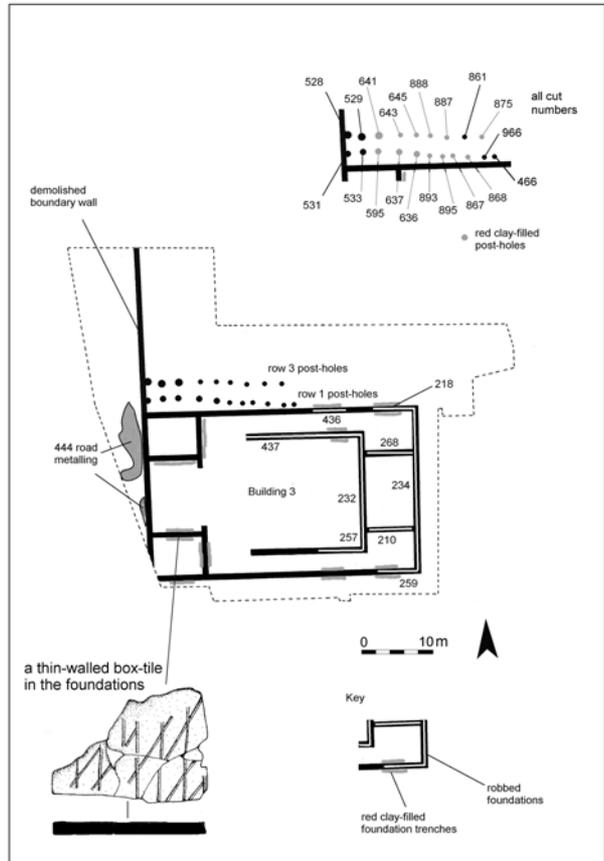


Fig. 23. Phase AB: plan of the foundations of Building 3, indicating robbed and unrobbed foundations, and the locations of 'red-clay' foundation fills; rows 1 and 3 post-holes and the north-south road.

of section number. In addition, the entire ground plan of Building 3 was drawn stone-by-stone. Written comments will only be made on aspects of the walls that are not self-evident from the plan or sections. Please note that in all section drawings the stones are flint nodules, unless otherwise indicated. Only one wall section, that through the northern flanking wall, is described here, owing to its relative stratigraphic complexity.

Section 130 (Fig. 40):

Wall comments: This wall foundation is the flanking wall (540) that runs north from the western side of Building 3. It was built in exactly the same way as the wall foundations of Building 3 were constructed. Greensand facing-stones survived in the middle sections but not in the northern part of the wall. There was not much evidence of mortar, although some flecks did appear at the northern end of the wall.



Fig. 25. The junction of foundation walls 410/407 from the north-east. The north wall of Building 3 is centre left and the boundary wall is centre right. The two foundation walls were bonded together — indicating contemporary construction. Scales are 1 m in length.

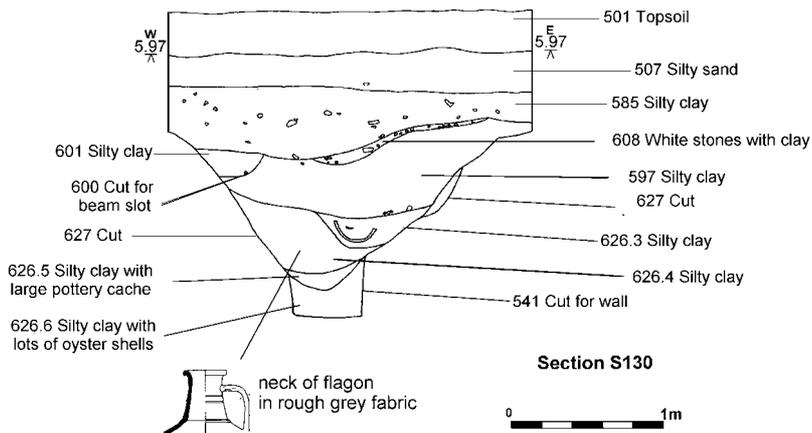


Fig. 40. Building 3: Section 130.

Section comments: The section is one through the fill of the robber trench at the northern edge of the excavation. It proves that the northern flanking wall continued for an unknown distance to the north of Area A. The section indicates a sequence of deposits. From the bottom up these are: the fill of

the robber trench (626 to 626.6); the beam slot (601) and associated chalk floor (608); the midden (585); general overburden (507) and topsoil (501). A large cache of pottery was found in 626.5). A large piece of imbrex tile was found in C626.3. These two deposits indicate that the robber trench fill comprised at least two rubbish deposits, separated by deposits of red clay which may have slumped in from the sides. The clean clay loam (626; 626.2) filling the top half of the robber trench was not consolidated. Consequently a chalk floor (608) associated with a timber building slumped into the fill of the robber trench. After the timber building went out of use the area was covered by a 500 mm of midden deposits.

It could not be ascertained from the section whether the foundation trench was wider than the foundation wall, since the robber trench had all but destroyed the original profile of the foundation trench. The foundation trench did survive at the bottom where it was 500 mm wide; overall, it was prob-

ably 1 m high.

As part of the investigation into the relationship between the northern flanking wall and Building 3, a sondage was excavated in the angle formed by walls 410 and 407 (Fig. 25). The illustration produced here shows that the foundation depth of both walls was identical and that the foundations were bonded, indicating contemporary construction and a unity of design. Whatever the role of Building 3, it was designed to sit within, or as part of, a larger architectural complex.

Finds

The few finds from the foundation deposits of Building 3 were incorporated into the stone foundations as they were either being built, or being backfilled with soil that filled the wider foundation trenches.

The small finds from within the masonry itself were few. The various walls of Building 3 produced a mere five sherds (32 g) of badly broken-up pottery (Assemblage 2), including two sherds in Atrebatian Overlap fabric C.6 and one in Rowlands Castle ware fabric C.11. There are no rim or other diagnostic sherds (*see* pottery report)

The potentially more datable small finds included fragments of tile from contexts 5, 241, 411 and 414; a glass fragment from C5 and a sherd of samian base from C241. Of these, one of the most significant is the piece of tile from C414, some 0.8 metres down from the top of the foundations of the internal wall. This find comprised five conjoining fragments of a keyed, thin-walled box-tile. This piece can only have got into the foundations during the act of construction and therefore provides a significant *terminus post quem* for the construction of Building 3. Ernest Black has looked at this tile and indicates that it only appears at Fishbourne with the construction of the proto-palace, conventionally dated to around AD 65 to 70 (Cunliffe 1971). The samian chip is from the South Gaulish kilns and can be dated no more securely than to the 1st century AD.⁴

PHASE AB: FOUNDATION FILLS

The finds from the contexts that were used to fill or seal the foundations were even more scarce. They included a few redeposited flints, some fragmentary tile and one sherd of samian ware.

How the features were formed

It is clear that the foundations for the walls were constructed in two different ways. Usually a foundation trench which was wider than the actual wall foundation was excavated into the underlying natural soils. Layered flint nodules were then placed in

horizontal strata until the level of the top of the foundation was reached. The soil from the foundation trench was then backfilled on either side of the wall. The layered flint was occasionally mortared together, the process being to apply a flat layer of mortar on top of a layer of flint, then to cover it with another layer of flint. It is not certain that mortar was used throughout in the wall foundations. The second method of foundation construction was to dig a foundation trench of exactly the same width as the foundations. Here the undisturbed sides of the foundation trench supported the sides of the foundation walls.

Several points are worthy of note at this juncture:

1. It was noted that, in places, a line of reddish, redeposited, clay lay adjacent to the top of the wall foundations, sealing the top of the deposits filling the wider foundation trenches. There is little doubt that the clay originated from the act of digging the foundation trench. It seems also highly likely that the clay was placed in such positions to act as a waterproof membrane to prevent water from seeping down into the foundation trenches. The distribution of the clay lines (Fig. 23) was predominantly, but not exclusively, against the external faces of the walls. This technique has also been noted from another major Roman building in southern England: the legionary bath-house at Exeter (Bidwell 1979, 28).
2. The foundation walls were invariably of the same depth, approximately 1 metre, except in the south-east corner of the building where the foundations extended to a depth of 1.3 metres. It is assumed that greater efforts to ensure stability were undertaken in this area, probably because it is the lowest point of the site and therefore one prone to the most waterlogging. It was only at this point also that the foundations were of wider dimensions than the actual wall above them; in all other cases examined the wall foundations were of the same width as the wall above. The average width of intact walls at the top of the foundations was 0.6 m.
3. The wall foundations were invariably constructed in the same way, with layered flint nodules averaging 120 by 120 by 120 mm in size. These nodules had probably been roughly shaped, at least by trimming off any angular projections. Once built to surface level, the walls were faced, both internally and externally, by

greensand blocks averaging some 200 by 100 by 100 mm. The flint nodules are presumed to have come from quarries on the chalk downs some four kilometres to the north, while the greensand came from quarries located on the greensand ridge, to the north of the South Downs, and about 15 kilometres from the site.

4. In just one place it was possible to observe the remains of what might have been a floor surface, or at least the make-up for a floor. This comprised a small patch of clayey sand (C460) along the southern edge of the south-western room in Building 3. The context, measuring about 2 m east–west by 1 m north–south, was characterized by up to 25% stone content, with all of the stones being rounded flint up to 50 mm in length. It was noticeable that the surface of this context took a shine when trowelled. It is possible to suggest that this represents a beaten clay floor, or the surface on which stone flags (subsequently robbed) had been laid.

Dating evidence

Context 303 produced one sherd of a Rowlands Castle-type fabric, which could not be precisely dated and a sherd of samian, form 18R, dated to the 1st century AD (Assemblage 3). There were also a few fragments of tile.

Interpretation and comment

Preliminary remarks can be made here concerning the interpretation of Building 3. Underpinning much of any discussion is the reconstruction of the building. This is problematic for a variety of reasons: the absence of evidence for all but one doorway; the almost complete lack of evidence for any flooring; the absence of wall-plaster; the fact that the distribution of tile fragments tells us nothing about how the roof looked, or which areas of the building were roofed. Neither the depths of the wall foundations, nor the widths of them, are useful in predicting the complete building. Reconstruction is made more difficult because there is evidence that the building was demolished and all reusable materials taken offsite. This is most marked in the tile, where only one large piece was located – on the floor of the pit in the central room of the eastern range. All other tile finds were fragmentary. In addition, no light can be shed on the function of the individual areas of the building from the nature of the portable finds.

AN ANALYSIS OF BUILDING 3 (by David J.A. Taylor)

Building 3 takes the form of east and west ranges of equal width bounding a courtyard. To the north and south of the courtyard are ambulatories that appear to stop short of the west range. The east and west ranges are subdivided into three sections, of which the middle one is the greatest. The central section of the west range is probably the entrance into the courtyard (Figs 41–55).

In any building of traditional construction, its function is usually reflected in its form. In this case the form of this building is not represented in any known building type in Roman Britain, although the plan shares many similarities with a *principia*. The orientation of a building was an important consideration for the Roman mind, and in this case the building is orientated to the west. Traditionally, all military forts, together with their headquarters building, faced the enemy. It was generally accepted that temples should also face to the west (Vitruvius iv.v.1; Campbell 2000, 30). It is unlikely that the building faced east as suggested by Black (1999, 12), as at the time of its construction it fronted a metalled road. There was no evidence of a road to the east of the building. It is more than likely that the building faced west towards the pre-palace buildings and the later Flavian palace.

The importance of Building 3 is reflected in the layout of the Flavian Palace, whose eastern elevation was built to respect it. The east wall to the eastern range of the palace was built parallel to Building 3, whilst the west wall to the same range was constructed more or less parallel to the west range of the palace. This resulted in an asymmetrical plan form: the east range was narrower at its northern end than at its southern end. (Cunliffe *et al.* 1996, 19, fig. 2.6).

The overall size of the building was *c.* 35.40 m east–west and *c.* 21.40 m north–south. The opposing sides of the building were almost equal in length. The overall length at 35.40 m is very close to an *actus*.⁵ The plan form of the east range can be compared with a similar arrangement of the timber *principia* at Hod Hill (25.76 m by 17.37 m), Baginton (21.28 m by 21.28 m) and the stone *principia* at Old Church, Brampton (*c.* 27.13 m by *c.* 24.38 m). One of the closest matches by size is at the fort of Wallsend where the *principia* measured 32.39 m by 24.00 m. The overall width of the identical east and west ranges at *c.* 7.60 m compares well with the dimensions of the cross-halls to the forts on Hadrian's

Wall, which fall between 6.50 m and 9.00 m. This dimension is close to a quarter of an actus, and suggests that each of the two ranges were intended to be a quarter of an actus with a courtyard of half an actus.⁶

The division of the east range into three, with the central element possibly forming an *aedes*, can be seen at the timber fort of Hod Hill and the stone forts of Brecon, Melandra and the Trajanic Stanegate fort of Old Church, Brampton.⁷ In the majority of examples, particularly in the early Hadrianic forts, the rear range was divided into five units. The width of the *aedes* to Building 3, together with that at Hod Hill, was exceptionally wide, with the internal dimensions being c. 9.40 m wide by c. 6.20 m deep and 9.14 m by 4.57 m deep respectively. By comparison, the known *aedes* to the forts on the Hadrianic frontier ranged between 3.80 and 7.00 m wide to 4.00 and 8.65 m deep. No cross-hall is evident, a feature also absent from the timber forts at Hod Hill and Baginton. It is interesting that generally the *principia* in the stone forts were built with cross-halls. This feature would imply that the later *principia* had functions additional to those of the earlier timber forts where no cross-hall was built.

The overall size of the courtyard at c. 20.00 m by 14.00 m is large when compared to the *principia* in most other forts. That at Hod Hill was 13.00 m by 9.75 m and at Baginton c. 15.24 m square, whilst a closer comparable can be seen at Benwell, 24.38 m by 12.19 m.

In most *principia* an ambulatory to each side of the courtyard connects the entrance with the opposing range.⁸ In the case at Fishbourne, this ambulatory would appear to have been incomplete with the foundations to the north arcade finishing some 5m short of the west range. It is almost inconceivable that the Roman builders would not have



Fig. 41. 1996 dig: David talking to a guided tour group; guided tours were undertaken several times each day of the excavation



Fig. 42. 1996 dig: the eastern range of Building 3 from south; scales are 2 m; note the central pit in the middle of the range.

continued the arcade up to the west range, or alternatively across the east elevation of the west range⁹. This would have been alien to their tradition for symmetry and convention, as can be seen both in the building itself and the proto- and Flavian palaces, together with other contemporary military buildings.

The width between the foundations to the ambulatories at c. 2.10 m is similar to that of the south and west corridors of the proto-palace (Cunliffe 1971, fig. 18 facing 68). Most ambulatories to *principia* are wider than this, being generally 4.00–



Fig. 43. 1996 dig: the western side of the eastern range being excavated, viewed from the south.



Fig. 44. 1997 dig: the western range of Building 3 from the north; scales are 2 m; the stream is to the right of the excavation.

5.10 m. The ambulatories at Housesteads are less wide, being 2.55–2.80 m.

At the early fort of Hod Hill and the Trajanic fort of Old Church, Brampton, there is no evidence of any range of buildings adjacent to the entrance of the *principia*, except for an ambulatory. Evidence of rooms flanking the courtyard and extending up to the entrance can be seen at the Antonine II fort of Strageath (Frere & Wilkes 1989, 41). Similar rooms can be seen either side of the entrance to stone fort 2 at Vindolanda (Bidwell 1985, 47), which in this case extend the length of the courtyard. In neither case, however, does an ambulatory run between the rooms flanking the entrance and the rear range.



Fig. 45. Sarah plans part of the south-west room of the western range in 1997 — taken from the south.

The plan of the foundations (Fig. 24) could be seen to reflect different standards of work in their formation. The quality of the work to the west range,

and most of the north and south external walls, shows much greater care in their construction than was taken elsewhere. The standard of work to the remaining areas shows a little less care in laying out the foundations, and this can be seen in the variation of width and straightness. These variations could reflect the efforts of more than one gang of workmen. Examples in the quality and nature of the work of adjacent gangs of workmen can be seen in the *principia* at South Shields (Taylor 2000, 50) and Caerhun (Kanovium Excavation Committee 1938, 71). Red clay was seen to have been rammed down the foundation trenches, particularly those to the external walls. This could represent an attempt to damp-proof the walls; a similar detail has been seen at the military bath-house at Exeter (Bidwell 1979, 28). The internal walls dividing the east and west ranges are almost equally spaced when measured from the external walls. The central spaces to the east and west ranges are almost identical in size.

The excavated evidence clearly shows that a boundary wall, built as part of the front wall of the

building, extended along the road frontage. The interpretation is that an enclosure may have surrounded the north, east and south sides of the building. This enclosure would seem to have formed part of the building's use; if the building had a military function it could have been used as a military compound and store.

Two pits could be associated with the building in the 2nd century. One sub-rectangular in shape, with sides of c. 3 m, is situated in the courtyard in front of the central room in the east range. It is difficult to see how this could relate to the structure, as it would appear to have blocked any access to the central room; it was also dug at an angle to the main axis of the building.

The second pit within the east range, c. 3 m by 3 m by 500 mm deep, is positioned with its northern edge close to the central axis of the building. A pit 1.52 m square by 1.21–1.52 m deep, thought to be a strongroom, has been seen at Baginton. This pit was lined with timber and had corner posts. Almost square strongrooms, 3.05 m by 2.74 m, have also



Fig. 47. The southern corridor walls of Building 3; scales are 2 m; note the greensand edging stones and the flint core of the foundations.



Fig. 48. The north wall (414) of the south-west room of Building 3; the scale on the top of the wall is 0.5 m; note the greensand edging stones.

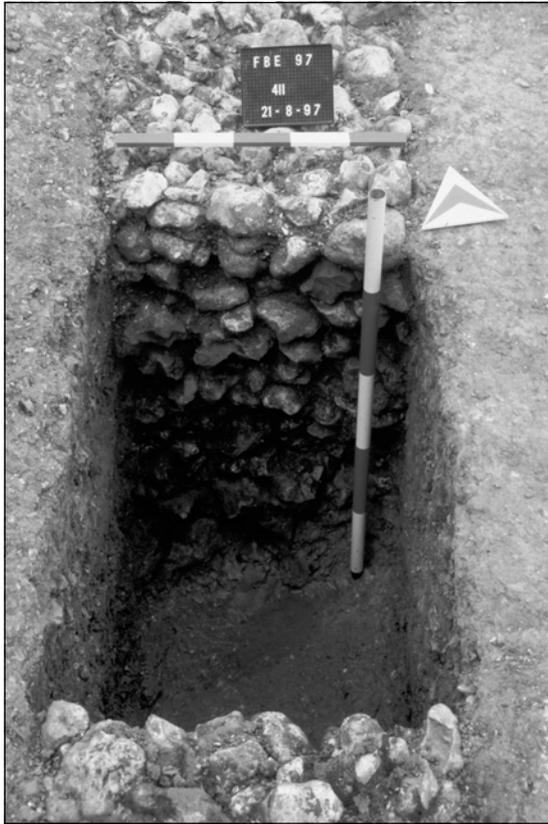


Fig. 49. An excavated section through the west wall (411) of Building 3; the vertical scale is 1 m; horizontal scale 0.5 m.



Fig. 51. South-east corner of Building 3; robber trench (259); horizontal scale is 1 m.

been recorded at Newstead and Segontium. Smaller rectangular pits in the aedes were seen at Brecon (2.13 m by 1.52 m by c. 900 mm below floor level), and Caerhun (2.29 m by 1.52 m by 900 mm deep). Many confirmed strong rooms have been identified on Hadrian's Wall (Bidwell & Speak 1994, 83, table 3.2). Most of these date from the early 3rd century, and almost all have stone-vaulted roofs with the exception of that at Vindolanda, which is of a later date. The size of the pit at Fishbourne is large by comparison with that of most known strongrooms and is closest in plan size to that at the fort of Chesters (2.90 m by 2.90 m), which housed an *ala quingenaria*. It is possible that the pit in the east range is a strongroom and its size reflects the size of the military unit with which it was associated. Exceptionally large strongrooms are found at the forts of South Shields and Maryport. The size is thought to relate to their positions as forts at the ports serving the Hadrianic frontier, and the need to store large amounts of coin in transit.

Possibly the greatest clue to the use of the building lies in its construction. The general standard of the work to the foundations is variable with some areas being of high standard whilst other sections are of lesser quality. The standard of construction is typical of that of the military builders. If the building had been for a ritual or similar high-status use, it is almost certain that a higher standard of construction would have been desired and achieved (Figs 56–62).

The question of ritual within the *principia* is problematic. There can be no doubt that the standards and other military regalia, kept in the sacellum within the *principia*, held a very important place within the army. *Principia* were sacred spaces and upon its erection, each one was ritually sanctioned as a *templum*. This was because every decision made inside it by the commanding officer had to be ritually validated by being made in a sacred space. In this way the commanding officer's tent, the ancient forerunner of the *principia*, was a sacred space.¹⁰ There is strong evi-

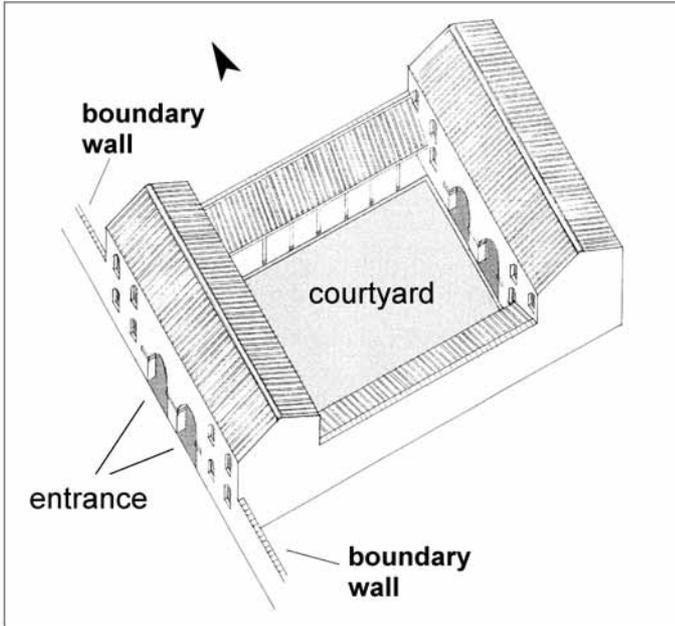


Fig. 55. Phase AB: hypothetical reconstruction of Building 3 by David J. A. Taylor.

dence that, at the forts of Brecon (Wheeler 1926, 39, fig. 30) and South Shields, the aedes was constructed before the rest of the building (Bidwell & Speak 1994, 58). This would have ensured the safety of the regalia and formed a focus for any form of ceremony. In Roman military religion the standards were worshipped, oaths were taken alongside them, and they were given precedence over the gods (Pitts & St Joseph 1985, 81 & note 67). There is a strong connection of water with *principia*, which is always provided within its curtilage. This is usually in the form of a well in the central courtyard, although a cistern close to the range opposite the entrance was sometimes provided instead. A cistern of this nature could have been present at Fishbourne. A pit on the central axis of the courtyard at Inchtuthil (Pitts & St Joseph 1985, 81), in which charcoal and bone were seen, suggested to the excavators that it had had ritual significance. Unfortunately, the number of excavations carried out of *principia* where a high level of recording has taken place are limited, and some relevant features may have not been recognized in earlier excavations.

Reconstruction (Fig. 55)

Judging by the plan form, it is probable that access

into the courtyard was through a double portal leading to a covered area. This enclosed entrance space would then have provided the opportunity of either proceeding directly ahead through another double portal into the courtyard, or of entering either of the rooms flanking the entrance. It could be that entry into the building was controlled from these flanking rooms. It is also probable that a doorway in the east wall of the two rooms gave entry into the ambulatory and thence into the east range.

The focus of the building is on the central room of the east range, which is identical in size to the space between the two double portals. It is suggested that this room was entered via a double portal, so matching that on the other side of the courtyard. It is suggested that this arrangement occurred at the Hadrianic *principia* in the Wall fort of Chesters (Taylor 2000, 77). It could be that this central room, possi-

bly an *aedes*, held the standards and other religious items relating to the army. Richmond considered that the large *aedes* at Hod Hill was the result of more than one unit sharing the headquarters building, so that a larger area in which to house the individual regimental shrines or tribunalia was necessary (Richmond 1968, 75). This could have been entered from the two flanking rooms with their double doors to the courtyard only opened as required. If the building was used by the army for ritual use and administrative duties, it is unlikely that all administrative duties were carried out there. The evidence from Vindolanda shows that much of the administrative work was carried out in the *praetorium* (Bowman 1994, 16)

In the reconstruction of the building the height of the eaves to the east and west ranges is determined by the height of the portals. This height can only be assumed. However, two known precedents occur on Hadrian's Wall where at the forts of Chesters and Birdoswald the height of the impost to two gates is set at approximately 2 m above ground level. In both cases the portal widths were about 3.30 m, so if one assumes a semicircular arch, the height at the centre of the opening would have been c. 3.65 m. This height would have allowed a

mounted horseman to pass through without difficulty. Whether the same criteria can be applied at Fishbourne is open to question, but the military mind was conservative and it is suggested that it is unlikely that there would have been much difference in the height of the portal opening.

The width of the clear opening to the entrance and the *aedes* is 9.30 m. Assuming a respond to each side of 600 mm and a *spina* of c. 1.50 m, the width of each portal would conveniently match those of the precedents stated. As in all known similar examples the arch would have been made up of a ring of voussoirs of a minimum depth of 600 mm, which would have matched the depth of the respond. Above the crown of the arch there would have needed to be a minimum of one or two courses of stonework. Using these minimal dimensions an eaves height of around 4.65 m is determined. This is almost certainly too low, taking into account the width of the central spaces to the east and west ranges, so therefore a height of around 6 m is suggested. This dimension is close to the internal width of the east and west ranges, and would give a space almost as wide as it was high. It is possible that the two rooms to either side of the central spaces to both ranges could have had a second floor, as the height would be great when compared to the floor area. This second floor could have been accessed by means of a simple stair or ladder. This height would easily accommodate the monopitch roof to the ambulatory. It is suggested that the clear height to the eaves of this was 2.40 m, with a height adjacent to the external wall of something over 4 m.

As the width of the external walls to the building is c. 600 mm with a suggested height of 6 m, it is implied that a roof with little lateral thrust was used. The clear span of 6.40 m would have been most economically roofed using a simple truss, with purlins spanning between each truss. As the clear distance between the external gable walls is 20 m, it is possible that these were spaced at 2-metre centres, a probable spacing for contemporary roof trusses.¹¹ It is likely that boarding, on which roofing tiles were laid, overlaid the purlins. As no spars were set on the purlins this would lead to flush rather than a projecting eaves. The pitch of the roof was possibly something less than 25 degrees. As the height of the eaves has been determined by the entrance portals, it is suggested that this roof form was continued over the rooms to each side of the central space, as it would have been uneconomic to

reduce the height of the roof over these areas.

Continuous arcades are shown to the north and south ambulatories, although as has been discussed previously, these foundations do not run up to the west range. The continuous foundation to the arcade matches that of the contemporary proto-palace, and although not always found in buildings of this type, can also be seen in the *principia* at Housesteads and Melandra. The inconsistency of the foundations to the east and west walls of the west range could raise a question over the interpretation of the openings to this range. It has been found that a great many of the buildings on Hadrian's Wall were constructed by first building the external walls, and then adding the internal walls, which were butt-jointed against the external ones (Taylor 2000, 46–7). If this was the case, in this instance, it would have been logical not to continue the foundation through the opening to the east wall of the west range. This would have enabled the opening to be formed by omitting the foundations over its width. It is suggested that there was a *spina* base in the centre of the opening with the foundation course made up of two or more stone slabs.¹²

Window openings are entirely conjectural, although it is likely that the internal reveals would be splayed. It is quite probable that the openings would have round heads made up of stone or tile voussoirs, as these would have been easy to construct out of small building elements. It is probable that the external walls were rendered. This is a wall finish with which the builders would have been familiar, and would have provided an attractive surface giving a finish better than that achieved using the local stone. It is probable that natural colours were used in a final coating of limewash. Although there is no evidence of this type of wall finish, it is consistent with that found elsewhere in the province. Tiles were probably used to finish off the top of any external flanking walls so as to protect the wall surfaces below.

Conclusion

Although the use of the building may never be known, its form and construction bear considerable resemblance to the headquarters building within a Roman fort. Comparisons have been made with several *principia*, although no exact similarities can be seen in the plan form. It is unfortunate that the extant remains were limited, as some greater indication of the building's features together with

architectural fragments could have told us so much more.

PHASE AB: POST-HOLES (ROWS 1 & 3) ■

Additional features

Two rows (rows 1 and 3) of post-holes were located to the immediate north of Building 3 (Figs 62, 63).¹³ These are assumed to represent the remains of two fence-lines, each about 16 m long. The spacing of the post-holes was fairly regular (Fig. 23) and they seemed at times to be arranged in north–south pairs. What is most obvious from the alignment of the two rows is that they are not parallel to the north wall of Building 3. They get progressively closer the further east they go, with the easternmost (context 462) apparently dug into the red clay fill of the foundation trench of the building.¹⁴ This fact seems to rule out the possibility that the post-holes represent the timber frame of a lean-to, or stand-alone, building, parallel to Building 3.

Description □

The dimensions of the individual post-holes are provided in the attached Table 52.¹⁵ The average north–south dimension was approximately 500 mm, while the average east–west was 450 mm. The average depth was only 200 mm. In only one case was it possible to distinguish with certainty any indication of a post-pipe. The conclusion, therefore, is that the dimensions represent the surviving size of the post-pits. Although the average depth of the post-holes is extremely shallow, the data mask the fact that the post-holes were marginally deeper at the western end of the rows. It may well be the case that only the bottoms of the post-pits survive and that their upper parts were levelled during their infilling, and the laying of the greensand road, which covered the row-3 post-holes. A conservative estimate of their original depth might suggest 350 to 400 mm, and their surface dimensions are suggestive of actual timbers of about 200 mm scantling.

The post-holes of these two rows were clearly not parallel to the north wall of Building 3, as the location plan demonstrates. The post-hole represented by C462 is further to the east than the others, and had a different filling of greensand blocks, flint cobbles and tile. It may not have belonged to row 1. What is clear is that most of these post-holes had their timbers deliberately removed and were then backfilled with reddish sandy clay to make good the ground. This was very clear during the excavation as most of the post-holes showed up as pinkish cir-

cular areas of almost pure clay, against a background of buff-coloured, sandy-clay soil.

Finds

There were a few finds which included a game counter, a worked flint, a few sherds of coarse ware and a few fragments of tile.

How the features were formed

The post-holes were mostly very shallow holes cut into the natural subsoil and sandy clay. Only in one instance was it possible to determine the shape of a decayed post-pipe. After excavation presumably timber uprights were held in the holes while the earth and occasional flint block were rammed back around the posts to hold them earthfast. After a period of time it appears that the fences were deliberately removed, possibly to allow space for the greensand road surface that was laid over the tops of the infilled external row of posts.¹⁶ The infilling was carried out using reddish clay, no doubt rammed down into the holes to make the surface good for the laying of the road.

Overall date

Five of the post-holes relating to row 1 produced pottery (Assemblage 5): context 594 yielded 11 flagon sherds in very-fine-sanded orange fabric; contexts 628 and 858 yielded one and three sherds of Rowlands Castle greyware respectively and the latter fill context also had one chip of each of orange sandy fabric C.12 and Atrebatian Overlap fabric C.4A.¹⁷ The one drawable rim came from post-hole 867. Pottery was totally lacking from the fills of the post-holes in row 3, suggesting that this fence may have been the earlier of the two and erected on a ground surface bereft of any previous occupation debris. The suggested date of this assemblage is AD 50–60.

There is important stratigraphic and associated evidence to identify these two rows of post-holes to this phase. Firstly, these two rows of post-holes terminate at the western end just by the side of the flanking or boundary masonry wall. This factor separates them from the other and later post-hole rows that go across the demolished remains of the masonry wall. Secondly, the northernmost line of these post-holes lay underneath the remains of the greensand road and were clearly earlier than it. The northernmost rows (4 and 5) of the later post-holes clearly cut through the greensand road and were later than it.¹⁸

Interpretation and comment

The rather insubstantial size of the post-holes argues against a building interpretation. A possible explanation for the posts is that they represent tethering posts, perhaps for horses. They would, therefore, have only had to be about one metre high, and perhaps were joined together by horizontal timbers.¹⁹ Timber scaffolding erected during the construction of Building 3 remains a remote possibility.

PHASE AB: NORTH-SOUTH ROAD**Summary**

To the immediate west of Building 3 two small irregular areas of gravel and flint metalling were discovered (Fig. 23). These appeared to be the vestigial remains of a road or path running north-south; one possible wheel rut orientated north-south was observed as an impression in the metalling.

Description

The metalling (444) comprised a clayey sand deposit containing about 50% rounded flints up to 50 mm in length. The larger area of metalling stretched for about 5m north-south by about 1.2 m east-west and was approximately 50 to 100 mm thick. There was a moderate number of tile inclusions in the metalling; most of the tile fragments displayed a rounded and weathered appearance. The round-bottomed depression caused by the rut was some 200 mm in width by 80 mm deep, and could be traced for a distance of around 6 metres. The context (447) beneath, and to the south of the metalling, comprised stone-free, yellowish-brown clayey sand and could have been the top of the natural, undisturbed soil profile. There was a third small surviving area of metalling of the same road (C589) to the north of C444. This section was overlain by part of the greensand road (C509) — see Phase AD below.

Finds

The finds from the metalling (444) included a small amount of tile and a sherd of samian; the finds beneath the metalling (447) included two sherds of samian pottery.

How the features were formed

The deposit under the metalling (447) was a stone-free, iron-stained clay, possibly to be interpreted as the top of the undisturbed subsoils. There was no indication of a buried topsoil and it is presumed that the topsoil had been removed from this area

down to the clay subsoil, which then acted as a base for the metalling. The metalling would have incorporated pottery and small finds as it was laid down, and also incorporated finds as objects were trampled into its surface during use. The pottery from C444, therefore, probably both antedates and post-dates the construction of the metallated surface.

Overall date

Sherds of samian pottery from C447 can all be ascribed to the pre-Flavian period. Sherds from the metalling itself include sandy black Atrebatian Overlap examples, and the base of a Central Gaulish mica-dusted indented beaker dated c. 60–100 (Assemblage 4). Dating for the laying down of the metalling is therefore not very precise. A date as early as AD 50 could be argued, on the basis that the beaker base was trampled down into the metalling during use of the road. Equally, a slightly later date can be argued, although as the Atrebatian Overlap pottery disappears from Fishbourne around AD 60, the metalling is not likely to be post-Neronian.

Interpretation and comment

It seems clear that C444 represents the surface of a road or path that supported wheeled traffic in a north-south direction. The original width of the metalling is problematic. If it dates to around AD 50 (and was therefore in existence before the stream was moved to the east) it could have been considerably wider. Once the stream was re-channelled, it only allowed a space of about 5 m east-west for the metalling. It is therefore possible that the new channel for the stream may have been excavated through the western half of the metalling. That could account for the fact that more sherds from the beaker were found in the lower silts of the stream (context 484).

Overall date for Building 3

It will be useful at this stage in the report to summarise the dating evidence for the construction of Building 3. Very little material came from the masonry itself. The most significant piece was the tile, which has been discussed above. Very little material was also found in the foundation fills, and certainly nothing that can be relied upon for dating. Sherds from the road surface suggest a date of AD 50–60. Leaving aside the problematic dating for the piece of tile, the best approximation for the construction date of Building 3 is probably between AD 50 and AD 70.

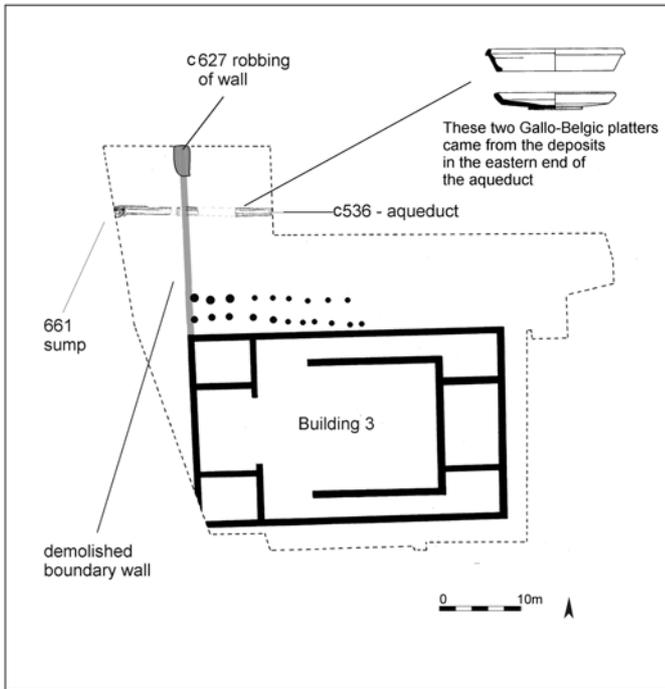


Fig. 64. Phase AC: general plan; note that the boundary wall to the north of Building 3 has been demolished, and the aqueduct cuts through the foundations of the wall.

PHASE AC: c.AD 65–110

Summary

During this period a decision was taken that whatever the function of the flanking or boundary walls that ran north and south from Building 3 had been, these walls could now be dispensed with. It is likely, therefore, that the flanking walls, but NOT Building 3 itself, were pulled down to top-of-foundation levels. At the northern end of the flanking wall the foundations were completely robbed out (Fig. 64). The posts formed by rows 1 and 3 were still in existence at this time.

A major new feature was a channel for an aqueduct laid from east to west, crossing the northern part of the site, and cutting through the demolished masonry flanking wall (Fig. 64). This aqueduct is the same feature located by excavations by the former Southern Archaeology in the mid-1990s some 200 metres to the east (Fig. 8), and may have provided, later in phase AD, water to the proto-palace. Alec Down, on the basis of artefactual debris filling the aqueduct, suggested that the channel was not filled in until the third quarter of the 3rd cen-

tury AD (Cunliffe *et al.* 1996, 21). Right at the western edge of the excavation the channel fed what appears to have been a much deeper sump or holding tank. It is unclear what the specific arrangements were for collecting water at this point.

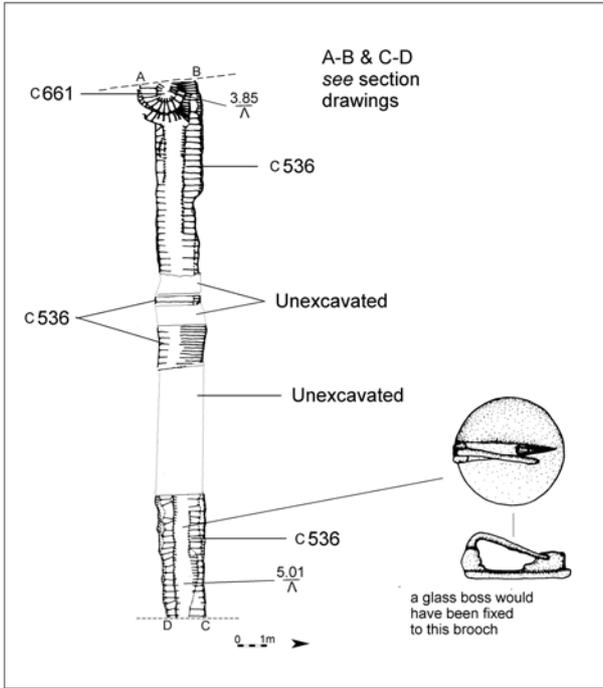
PHASE AC: AQUEDUCT ■

Description

The cut for the aqueduct measured some 1.1 m deep by about 2.6 m across the top (Figs 65–68). At its eastern end the upper filling of the aqueduct comprised yellowish brown silty clay (535), and incorporated medium-sized pieces of greensand (some of which appeared to have been squared) and tile. Under this was a deposit (C613.1) of very smooth, silty clay, which contained a rough line of medium-sized greensand and tile along the central axis of the aqueduct, stretching for about four metres to the west. Beneath, deposit 613.2 continued the same alignment, but comprised several crushed pottery vessels and amounts of charcoal. Beneath again, C613.3 was a deposit of dark grey silt containing large quantities of oyster shell. There is some evidence in the section for the possibility that the aqueduct channel was re-cut at some stage, perhaps to repair or relay a section of the timber conduit, although this was not observed during excavation.

At its western end the upper fill of the aqueduct was very different. It was filled by a deposit of fine, well-sorted silty clay (604.1; 604.2) which contained less than 5% stony material: small, sub-rounded pieces of flint up to 40 mm in length. There was considerable evidence of iron-staining and, whereas the upper eastern fills of the aqueduct appeared to have been deliberately dumped, the western fills appeared to have been water-laid.

Across the top of the aqueduct, at its eastern end, deposits 556 and 557 could be seen in section, both containing considerable amounts of greensand. It will be argued elsewhere in this report that these two deposits relate to the demolition of Building 3. The channel for the aqueduct was excavated through the flint foundations (540: Figs 64, 74) of the demolished flanking wall of Building 3. The aqueduct therefore produced some critical stratigraphic observations: it had been constructed



through the northern flanking wall, but, once abandoned and filled, it was covered by deposits relating to the demolition of Building 3.

Finds

There were a considerable number of finds from both eastern and western sections of the aqueduct. Bulk finds included quantities of ceramic building material, while small finds comprised approximately 80 fragments of samian pottery and glass.

How the features were formed

Descriptions of the fills of both sections indicate that the western section contained more deposits that had been laid down by natural processes of infilling (e.g. wind and rain), whereas the eastern section had been filled by a combination of natural silting and deliberate deposition.

Fig. 65. Phase AC: the plan of the aqueduct, which at its western end terminated in the sump.

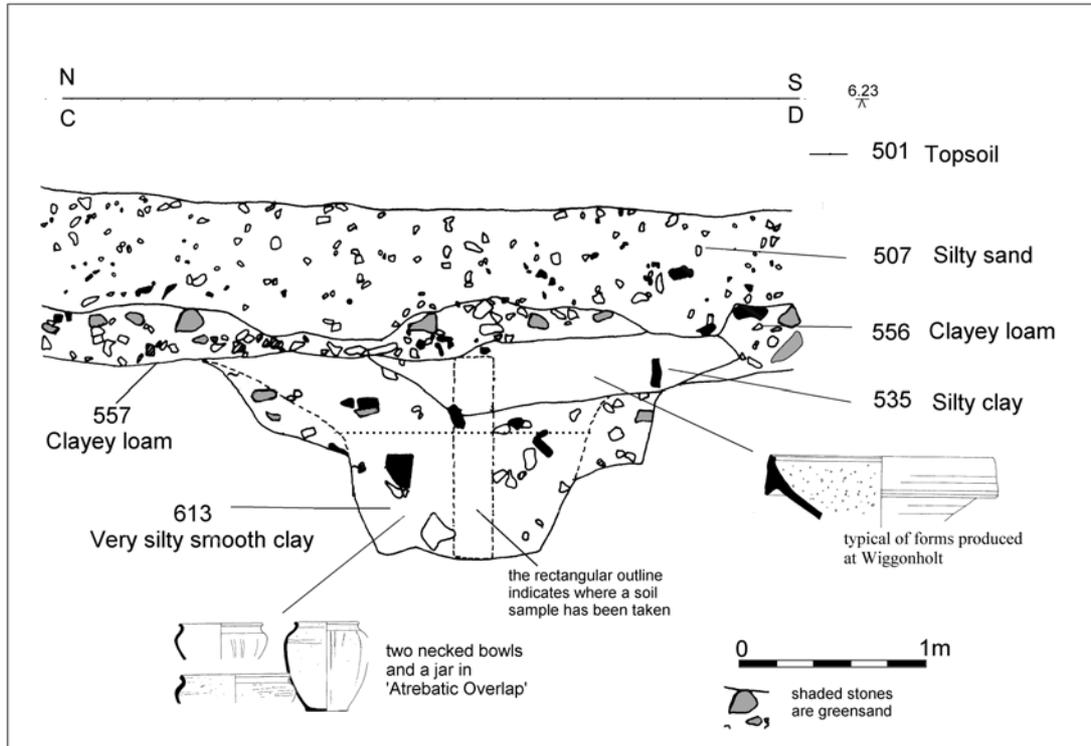


Fig. 66. Phase AC: the eastern section of the aqueduct.

A possible explanation for the presence of all the fresh-looking early material (Assemblage 7) in the bottom of the eastern section of the aqueduct is that the water was conveyed by a wooden boxed conduit in the slot at the bottom of the ditch. At the time of its construction this was then covered over with soil and recent refuse from earlier phases of occupation.

Overall date

The lower filling of the aqueduct, including the rubbish deposits, is therefore interpreted as a constructional deposit. The 468 sherds of pottery from the bottom of the aqueduct (C613.2 and C613.3) include a number of partly complete vessels and were probably dumped soon after the digging of the feature. The large

percentage of Atrebatian Overlap wares (46%) would be more in keeping with a Cunliffe Phase 1A assemblage predating AD 50 and the presence of handmade

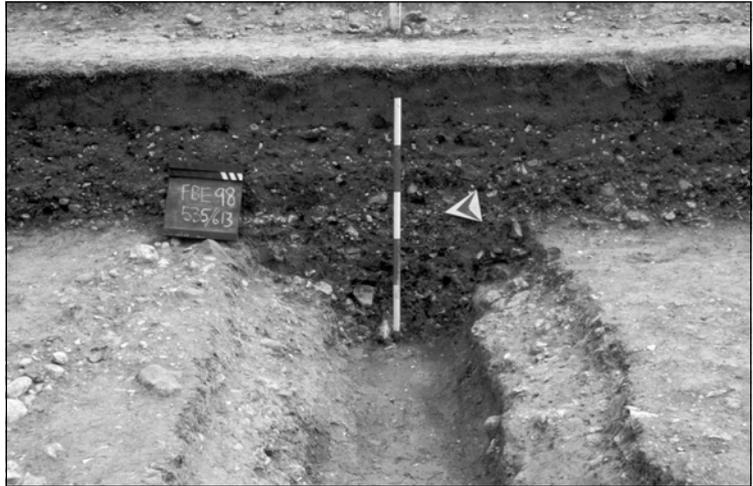


Fig. 67. Phase AC: the eastern section of the aqueduct.

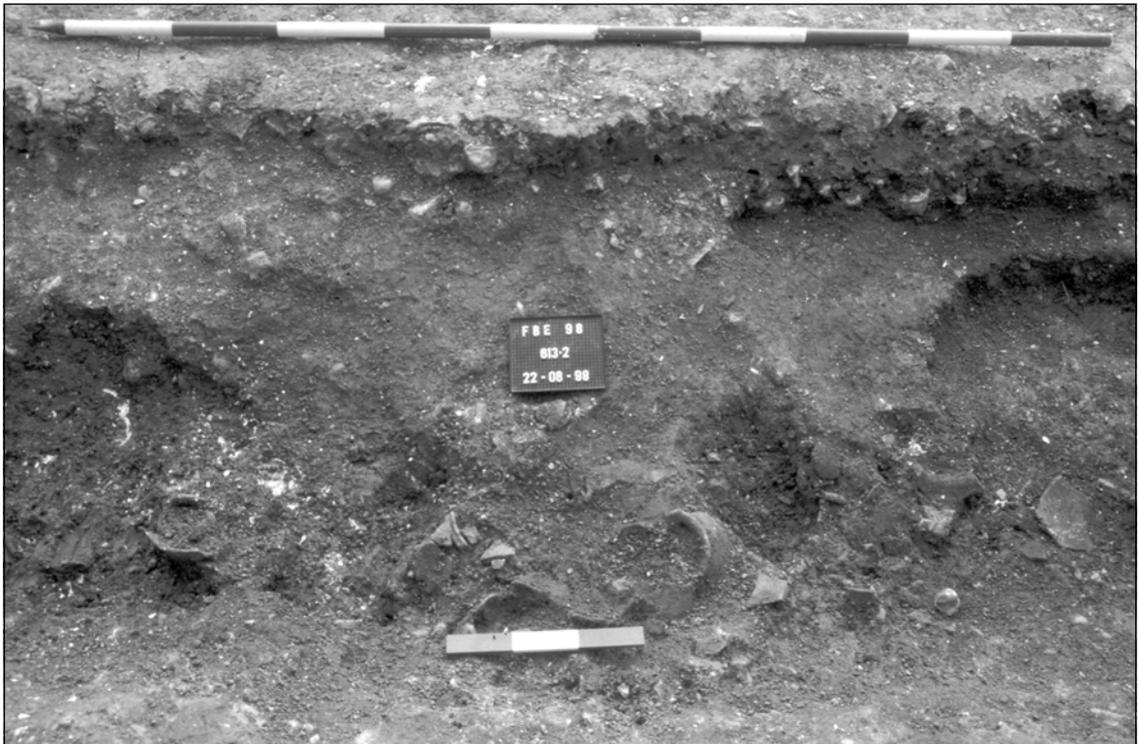


Fig. 68. Phase AC: the pottery dump in the aqueduct; this is a critical assemblage (Assemblage 7), since the boundary wall of Building 3 must be earlier than the date of deposition of this assemblage.

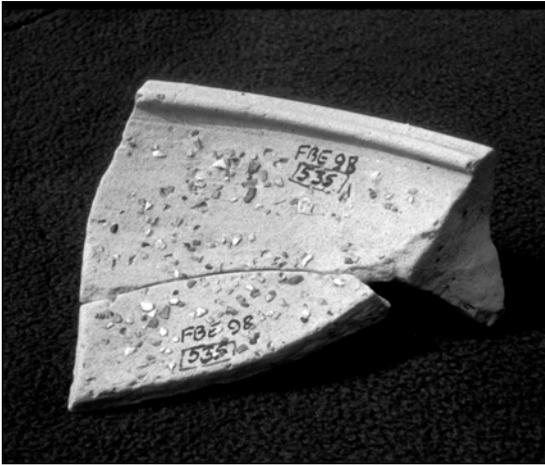


Fig. 69. Rim of a mortarium from the upper filling of the aqueduct of Phase AC.



Fig. 70. Rim of a storage jar from the filling of the aqueduct of Phase AC.

vessels amongst the Fabric C.10A material would also suggest that they belong to the earliest years of the Hardham or related Arun Valley pottery industry. The earliest piece of samian is of Claudian-Neronian date from context 535.2. There are no pieces which could safely be attributed to the 3rd century and the impression is given that the aqueduct was finally backfilled with old rubbish of wide-ranging date during the late 2nd century.

Interpretation and comment

One immediate question concerns how the water was carried in the aqueduct. The interpretation presented above is that the ditch contained a wooden conduit placed at the bottom of the ditch. This was then covered with pottery and other domestic debris (Figs 68, 71). This explanation seems plausible. There was no indication of ceramic pipes from the aqueduct, nor of circular iron collars that could have held together wooden pipes. If iron collars existed, then the wooden sections of the conduit must have been at least 4 m or so long, since 4-metre lengths of aqueduct were excavated without trace of iron collars. When excavated, the lower deposits of the eastern section of the aqueduct contained linear deposits of sherds sitting vertically in the soil, as if they had fallen or settled into a void left by a decaying timber conduit. This putative method of construction contrasts with the ceramic pipes found in a feeder channel to the aqueduct further to the east.



Fig. 72. Phase AC: the aqueduct cuts through the boundary wall. This was a key stratigraphic observation.



Fig. 73. 1998 dig: the eastern end of the aqueduct at lower right; the northern boundary wall runs left to right across the middle of the photograph.

The dating evidence for the construction of the aqueduct could be viewed as surprisingly early, if one takes the crucial evidence for a *terminus ante quem* being the Atrebatic Overlap wares that post-date its construction. And, as the ditch for the aqueduct was excavated through the foundations of the northern flanking wall (Figs 72, 73, 74) that is associated with Building 3, this has implications for the construction date of Building 3. However, the Overlap wares cannot be so precisely dated and, at the earliest, a pre-Flavian date for the construction of the aqueduct is just a possibility.

The Atrebatic Overlap wares in the aqueduct and the lack of such in the stream fills suggests, *prima facie*, that the aqueduct may have been earlier than the stream. If such is the case, it must mean that the aqueduct cannot have been constructed to supply water to the proto-palace baths since the baths can only have been constructed at the same time as the stream was diverted to its new channel, or indeed after the stream was diverted. *This then means that the aqueduct (and the sump) may predate phase AD but postdate phase AB.* What the aqueduct was

supplying water to remains uncertain, although it is conceivable that the proto-palace may well have been a two-phase structure, with a stand-alone bath suite constructed first, followed by a courtyard and rooms to the north at about AD 65. (This suggestion will be explored further in the General Conclusions). The dating evidence from our excavations suggests that the aqueduct may have gone out of use during the late 2nd century.

PHASE AC: SUMP ■

Description

The sump was a semicircular depression, about 1.8 m north-south, by 1.4 m east to west and approximately 1.2 m deep (Figs 75, 76, 77). It is not known how much further to the west it would have continued. However, if it was circular, it can be anticipated that the overall diameter was about 1.8 m. The sump was sealed by C580, a context equated elsewhere in this report with the demolition of the Palace at the end of the 3rd century. The upper two context divisions (621.1 and 621.2) contained a very fine silt with iron-pan staining which also incorpo-



Fig. 74. 1998 dig: boundary wall to left; the excavated post-holes in the foreground were those excavated by Alec Down.

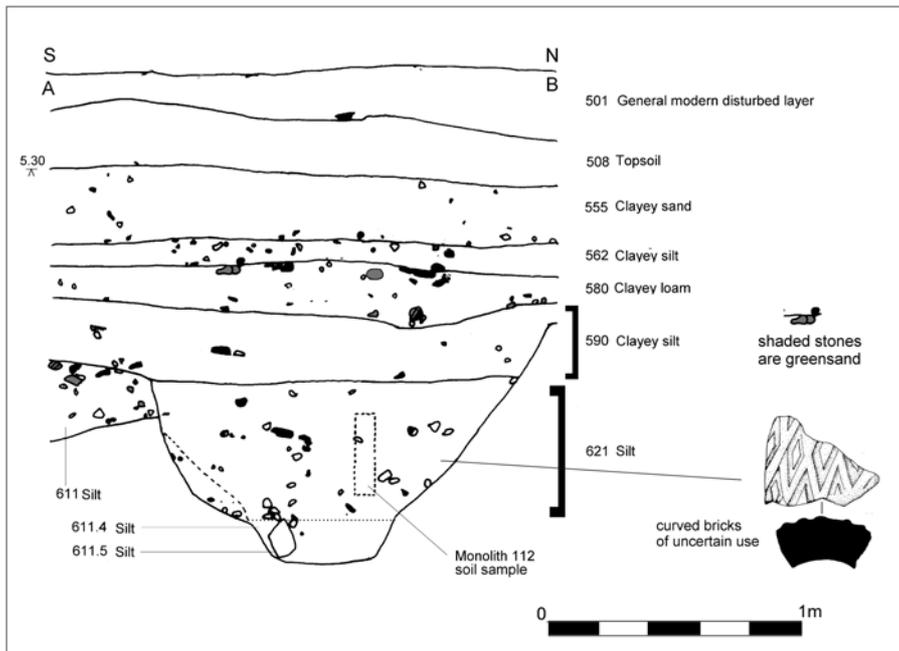


Fig. 75. Phase AC: the western section of the sump.



Fig. 76. Phase AC: sump, and Phase AE – greensand causeway; from the north.

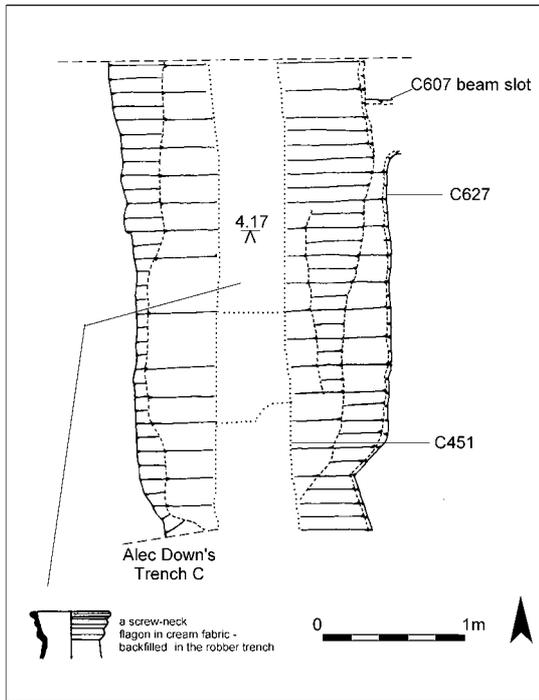


Fig. 78. Phase AC: plan of the robber trench on the north flanking/boundary wall; the beam slot cut across the top of the filled-in robber trench.

rated occasional medium-sized pieces of greensand, tile and flint. The main context divisions filling the sump (621.3 to 621.8) comprised deposits of clean, grey silt, with lenses of pea-grit, and occasional large pieces of tile. At the bottom of the sump was a context (611), divided into two (611.4; 611.5), which comprised silty deposits containing some large greensand blocks.

Finds

The sump contained quantities of tile and coarse ware, and the small finds comprised approximately 30 fragments of samian and glass.

How the features were formed

The filling of the feature suggests gradual deposition by largely natural processes. In this the filling is very similar to the gradual silting seen in the adjacent (western) section of the aqueduct.

Overall date

The earliest samian sherd is pre-Flavian and comes from deposit 621.8. The pottery report suggests that

sherds were being thrown into the sump from the mid-to-late 1st century through to the end of the 3rd century.

Interpretation and comment

It is difficult to state anything with certainty concerning this feature since only a fraction of it was located for excavation in the trench. It is assumed that an unknown proportion of this feature lies immediately to the west, unfortunately underneath, or truncated by, the current bed of the stream. On dating evidence the feature is assumed to be contemporary with the aqueduct and therefore may have had some role in storing water in quantity before that water was pumped or extracted for use elsewhere on the site. It seems plausible that the use of this feature as a sump was very short-lived; it may have served no useful purpose once the stream had been realigned in phase AD, and the conduit from the aqueduct may have simply emptied into what remained of the eastern half of the sump, which then fed the stream.

PHASE AC: ROBBING OF NORTHERN FLANKING WALL

Description

A section against the north face of the trench revealed the sequence of deposits that filled the robbed foundation trench of the northern flanking wall. The northern flanking wall had been totally robbed for a distance of 3.5 m southwards from the north section (Figs 40, 78–80). From the bottom up these deposits are: the filling of the robber trench (626 to 626.6); the beam slot (601) and associated chalk floor (608); the midden (585); general overburden (507) and topsoil (501). Deposit 626 comprised brown silty clay, with 10% of small, rounded flint pebbles; in the lower half this deposit exhibited concentrations of flecks of charcoal, tile, mortar and oyster shell. A large cache of pottery was found in C626.5. A large piece of imbrex tile was found in C626.3. These two deposits indicate that the robber trench fill comprised at least two rubbish deposits, separated by deposits of red clay, which may have slumped in from the sides. The clean clay loam (626; 626.2) filling the top half of the robber trench was not consolidated. Sealing the top of the robber-trench fill was C597, brown silty clay, relatively stone-free, but containing fragments of oyster shell, pottery, painted wall plaster, bone and nails. Consequently a chalk floor (608) associated with a timber building slumped into the fill of the robber trench.

Finds

The bulk finds from the robbing of the northern flanking wall included considerable quantities of coarse ware (Assemblage 8) and tile. The small finds from the robbing of the northern flanking wall comprised 36 finds, almost entirely samian sherds.

How the features were formed

The flint foundations at the northern end of the flanking wall were completely robbed, presumably for building work elsewhere. This clearly left a linear hole, of maximum depth 1.2 m that presumably needed to be filled in relatively quickly (C626). To that end a dump of rubbish, including pottery, was thrown into the bottom of the hole, while the upper fillings consisted of quantities of oyster shell, fragments of broken tile, small rounded flints, and flecks of charcoal and mortar. Over the fill of the robber trench was a general deposit of soil and mortar flecks (597), clearly derived from the processes of robbing and backfilling the robber trench.

Overall date

The samian sherds included one sherd of Nero-Vespasian date and one sherd of pre-Flavian date from the lower fills of the robber trench. The other pottery finds (545 sherds) suggest that robbing of the wall took place during the period AD 55–65, followed by subsequent dumping and then more gradual rubbish accumulation. Pottery of Rowlands Castle grey wares shows a marked increase in significance and now accounts for a quarter of all the pottery. It seems likely, however, that this sudden upsurge in the supply of such wares during this period was due to a Rowlands Castle potter moving to Fishbourne to supply pots to the kitchens of the new proto-palace and associated buildings. It is possible also that the robbing of the foundations was to locate supplies of flint nodules that could be used in the construction of the proto-palace.



Fig. 79. Phase AC:- pottery in robber trench; this is a key assemblage (Assemblage 8).

Interpretation and comment

The robbing of the end of the northern flanking or boundary wall clearly took place after the middle of the 1st-century AD. The wall robbing presumably was progressing southwards from a point to the north of our current excavations and terminated when sufficient flint rubble had been recovered for the building purpose in hand.

PHASE AD: c. AD 70–150

Summary

At the outset the stream is canalised 30 m to the

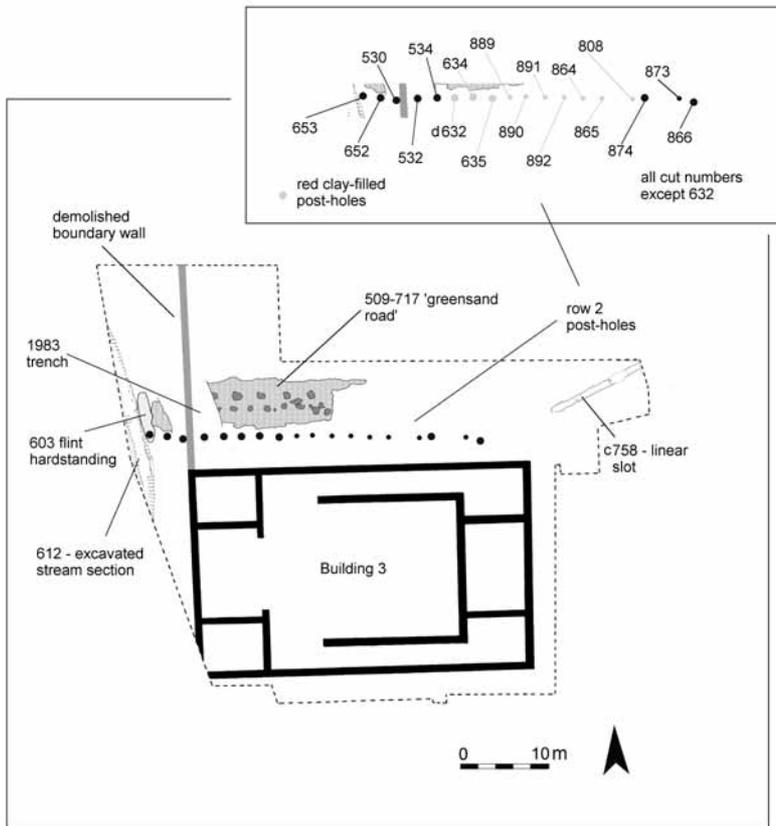


Fig. 82. Phase AD: general plan; note that the row 2 post-holes cross the line of the demolished boundary wall.

make way for a construction road, made of crushed greensand blocks, which runs east to west and crosses the now canalised stream on a presumed timber bridge (Fig. 82). The eastern limits of this greensand road were indeterminate and it is possible that eastwards the surface has been destroyed by medieval ploughing.²⁰ Stakes driven into the bed of the stream seem too slight to have supported the bridging planks, and are more likely to have revetted the sides of the stream. The eastern approaches to the bridge were reinforced with hard-standing of large flint blocks covered by gravel (context 603). Just to the east of this hard-standing a coin of Claudius was located. To the west, across the stream, there is a radical reorganisation of the space. To the south-west the proto-palace (Building 2) is constructed (or enlarged: see General Conclusions), while the foundations of a masonry building (Building 1) may have been contemporary some 130 metres to the west of Building 3 (Figs 268, 269). It is possible that the construction road was laid down to carry building materials across the stream to the construction sites of these two buildings. Soon, however, during this period there was a radical re-think of the development of the area to the west of the stream, culminating in the decision to construct the Palace.

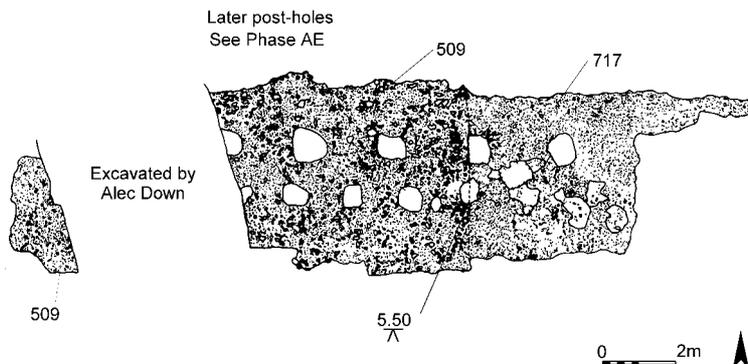


Fig. 83. Phase AD: greensand road; note that the western section has been truncated by the excavations of Alec Down.

PHASE AD: GREENSAND ROAD Description

east of its former position, and the old stream bed filled in. In a further development the fence-lines formed by rows 1 and 3 post-holes were removed to

The deposits forming the greensand road (Fig. 83) were 509 and 717. Both comprised up to 95% of broken greensand stones, which formed a deposit measuring overall approxi-

mately 22 metres east–west by 5 metres north–south, and a average thickness of 0.1 m. The road surface was essentially one course thick, and had not been laid on any prepared surface. Surrounding and between the stones was a yellowish-brown fine sandy soil which had been weathered out from the stones. The greensand stones were poorly sorted, with some examples up to 0.3 m in length, but most stones were about 80 mm in their maximum dimension. Some of the larger stones displayed straight faces and had clearly originated as facing-stones in the demolished northern flanking wall. Most of the smaller stones were fragmentary and worn to a sub-rounded shape, probably pieces of originally larger stone blocks. There were occasional pieces of tile, up to 0.1 m in length, embedded in the surface. On the northern side of the greensand surface there was some evidence of narrow, linear depressions, at least six in number. These were 0.1 m wide by about 0.1 m in depth. The eastern end of the greensand road petered out in a ragged fashion.

At the western end of the greensand road, and on the edge of the stream, was a line of large flint rubble (603), measuring some 5 m north–south by a maximum of 2 m east–west, and forming a depth of 0.2 m. The sub-rounded flints were up to 0.25 m in length, and set in a silty clay matrix. Again the stones were not laid on any prepared foundation, but simply on top of what appeared to be the top of the natural soil profile.

Finds

The small finds from the make-up of the greensand road and the flint surface included approximately 30 finds of samian, glass, metalwork and stone. The bulk finds from the make-up of the greensand road and the flint surface comprised coarse wares and ceramic building materials. The greensand road surface was covered by two contexts, 510 and 512, and itself sealed deposit 599.

How the features were formed

The greensand road was formed by broken up greensand blocks, presumably deriving from the broken greensand that came from the demolition of the flanking walls.

Greensand itself is not a particularly hard-wearing stone and the road may have been a short-lived affair. It did serve a purpose long enough to sustain wear damage in the form of ruts (Figs 84, 85) on its northern side. These turn slightly to the south at their western end, perhaps laden carts making the last adjustment in their steering as they approach the flint hardstanding and the bridge across the stream. Part of the road is covered by a dump of pottery and tile (in 512), which appears to be part of the demolition from the main Palace. It is notable that there is an almost complete absence of flint

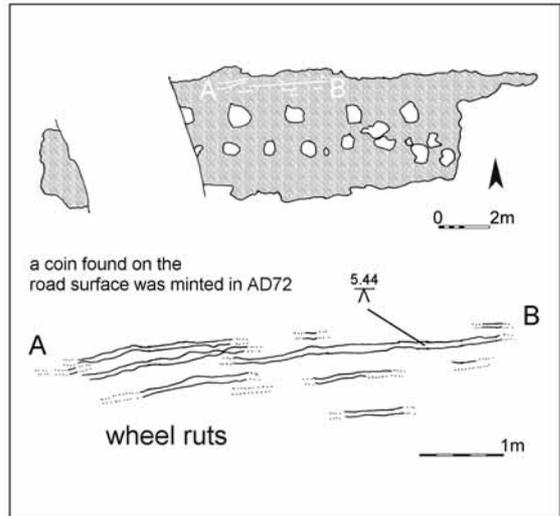


Fig. 84. Phase AD: wheel ruts in the greensand road.

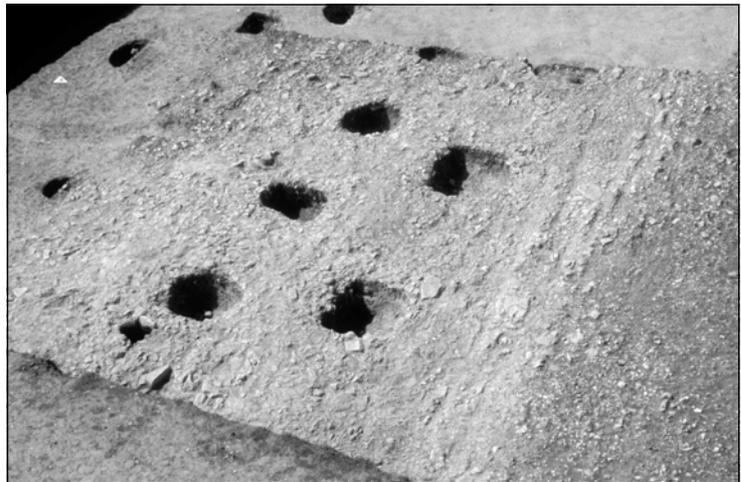


Fig. 85. Phase AD: wheel ruts and post-holes in the greensand road.

in the road surface, apart from the flint hardstanding. This may imply that the robbed flint from the demolition of the northern flanking wall was used in building work elsewhere, whereas many of the greensand blocks probably sustained damage during demolition and were not capable of reuse. It is noteworthy that flint was used in the area immediately leading up to the stream, where the pinch-point would have produced a concentration of load-bearing traffic, demanding the use of a more resistant stone. The road does not seem to have been laid down on any prepared base, simply burying a thin topsoil that lay above the natural brick earth.

Overall date

The samian sherds buried in context 599 beneath the road are a mixture of Flavian and pre-Flavian date, while a coin (SF No 2538; context 510) found on the road surface (by D Rudkin) was minted in AD 72. This would seem to indicate that the greensand road surface was laid down during the first decade of the Flavian period. The samian sherds from contexts above the road (510; 512) range from Flavian to Antonine/second century in date. Three coins

from 512 (SFNo 3598; 3956; 3838) range from the last quarter of the third century to mid-fourth century, and date approximately this demolition deposit. A coin of Claudian date was found just above the natural and to the immediate east of the flint hardstanding. It almost certainly pre-dates the flint hardstanding and the greensand road.

The road construction layers 509, 603 and 717 produced a total of 80 sherds of pottery (Assemblage 9). The assemblage is too small for meaningful quantification but includes fragments from a Pre-Flavian South Gaulish Samian Dr.18 dish. Fragments from a bead-rim jar in black Fabric C.6, a beaker in TR3 fabric and a platter in Campanian Pompeian Red fabric are also present. This assemblage is all pre-Flavian and residual.

Interpretation and comment

The clear interpretation with respect to the greensand road was that it was a road surface laid down with a specific purpose in mind. Presumably the fence-lines represented by the post-holes of phase AC were demolished to make way for it, and its orientation clearly indicates that it was aiming



Fig. 88. Phase AD: 530, row 2 post-hole, from the west; scale is 0.3 m.

for the bridge across the stream. The fact that traces of the road could not be found in the eastern part of the excavation may indicate that it was not so much a road, rather a rectangular area of hardstanding to support the weight of wheeled traffic as it approached the stream.²¹ That it went out of use fairly quickly is demonstrated by the fact that post-holes for new fence-lines were dug through the greensand surface later in the first century. It seems logical to assume that the road was laid down to facilitate access to the area to the west of the stream, perhaps in order to allow carts full of building materials access to the area.

PHASE AD: POST-HOLES (ROW 2) ■

Summary

As has been discussed elsewhere, the construction of the greensand road meant the destruction of fence-lines represented by the row 3 (and possibly row 1) post-holes, since the southern edge of the road covered the in-filled post-holes of row 3. It is quite possible that, whatever function these posts had, they were always required for the proper functioning of Building 3. Another fence-line of posts was required, therefore, and it seems that this need was filled by the row 2 post-holes (Figs 86, 87, 88).

Description

The dimensions of these post-holes are given in the Table 53.²² The average north–south dimension was approximately 0.38 metres, while the average east–west was 0.45 metres. The average depth was only 0.25 metres. Two of the post-holes (654; 651) had packing stones of flint and greensand blocks in them. These dimensions probably represent the surviving size of the post-pits. Although the average depth of the post-holes is extremely shallow, the data mask the fact that the post-holes were marginally deeper at the western end of the rows. It may well be the case that only the bottoms of the post-pits survive and that their upper parts were levelled during their infilling. A conservative estimate of their original depth might suggest 0.35 to 0.4 metres, and their surface dimensions are suggestive of actual timbers of about 0.2 m scantling.

The post-holes of row 2 were dug just beyond the southern edge of the greensand road (Fig. 82). The fence-line that they represent was extended across the demolished remains of the northern flanking wall and continued almost to the edge of the stream. The fence-line continued much further

to the east than the post-holes of rows 1 & 3, extending almost to the end of Building 3, and adopted a much more parallel alignment to the building. What is clear is that most of these post-holes, like their predecessors in rows 1 and 3, had their timbers deliberately removed and were then backfilled with reddish sandy clay to make good the ground. This was very clear during the excavation as most of the postholes showed up as pinkish circular areas of almost pure clay, against a background of buff-coloured sandy-clay soil.

Finds

The small finds from the row 2 postholes included a few sherds of samian. The bulk finds included fine and coarse ware (Assemblage 10) and ceramic building material.

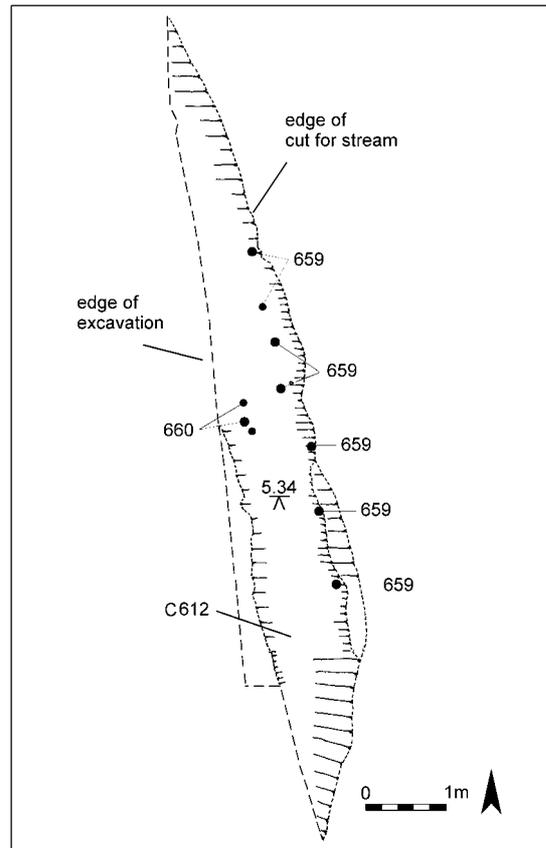


Fig. 89. Phase AD: cut for stream, showing the positions of the stake-holes at the bottom.

How the features were formed

The postholes were mostly very shallow holes cut into the natural subsoil and clay. After excavation presumably timber uprights were held in the holes while the earth and occasional flint block were rammed back around the posts to hold them earthfast. After a period of time it appears that the fence was deliberately removed, possibly when the greensand road went out of use and the row 2 fence was replaced by rows 4 and 5, the post-holes of which were cut through the greensand road. The in-filling was carried out using reddish clay, no doubt rammed down into the holes to make the surface good. This was identical to the way in which the post-holes of rows 1 and 3 had been made good.

Overall date

There is little in the way of direct dating evidence for the row 2 post-holes. Only five of these post-hole fill contexts (630, 651, 654, 878 and 881) produced any pottery. Of a total of 24 sherds of pottery, the bulk came from the fills of post-hole 653 (654) and 652 (651). The former produced nine large fresh sherds from a CAM 182 amphora similar to Cunliffe's Fishbourne Form 148.3 in orange Italian fabric (c. 50 BC–AD 50) and the latter yielded four fragments from a carrot amphora (c. AD 43–75+). Post-hole 652 also produced one sherd each in fabrics C.22 and F.12. Since these finds all occurred in

the red clay deposits that were used to make good the post-holes they indicate that the fence line went out of use sometime towards the end of the 1st century.

Interpretation and comment

There is little that can be added to any interpretation of these post-holes to that which has been stated for the post-holes of rows 1 and 3. It does appear that they represent a fence-line, and perhaps tethering posts for horses. It is interesting to note that the row 2 post-holes extended much further to the east and, of course, crossed the demolished northern flanking wall of Building 3. They would have formed a fence-line that bordered the southern edge of the greensand road, right up to the point where it crossed the stream. Although only a single line of posts, the row 2 post-holes were as numerous and the rows 1 and 3 combined, perhaps indicating that there was a need to provide approximately the same number of spaces for tethered animals.

PHASE AD: STREAM

Summary

This phase marks a radical transformation of the environmental and architectural geography of the site. At the outset of this period the stream is canalised some 30 metres to the east of its former position

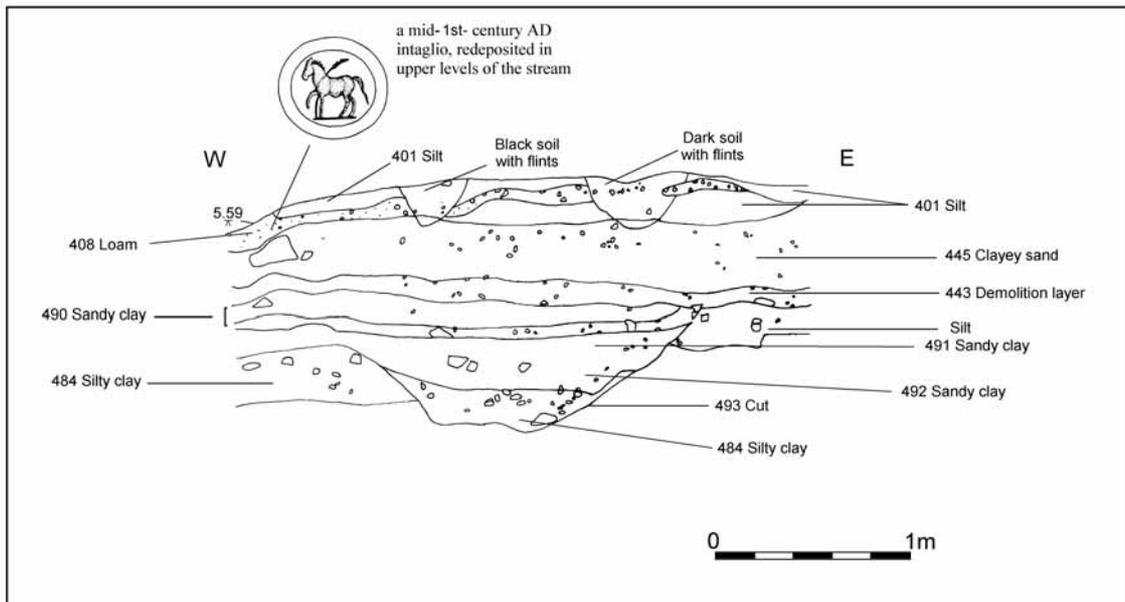


Fig. 90. Phase AD: section across the stream.

and the old stream bed is filled in.²³ The effect of this is to bring the canalised stream within 5 metres of the western front face of Building 3. The crucial junction between stream, the sump and the aqueduct unfortunately lies mostly underneath the modern stream and may well have been destroyed by it. All we can say at present is that the canalised Roman stream does not appear to be straight, since it veered back towards the west and disappeared under the trench edge.

Description

The cut for the new stream bed curved into the excavation from the north and out again a short distance to the south (Figs 82, 89, 90, 91). Approximately 18 m of stream (north-south) was observed in total, although at no point was a full width of the stream within the excavated area. The average depth of the cutting for the stream was about 1 metre. Two very different stratigraphic sequences were observed in the excavations of the stream fills; in the southern part a more typical sequence of fills was recorded, while in the northern part the sequence of deposits comprised at least two phases of bridge or causeway across the stream.

Southern Section

The cut for the stream bed (493) produced, in profile, an eastern side that sloped gradually down towards the uneven bottom of the stream. Right in the bottom was 485, a deposit of fine silty clay which incorporated also occasional greensand blocks up to 150 mm in size. Above was 484, a deposit of pea-grit, which also contained occasional medium-sized lumps of flint and greensand. There was a large quantity of ceramic finds

from this deposit (Assemblage 11). Above this were deposits 492 and 491, which had been laid down as a result of water action washing soil from the upper edges of the stream sides. There were frequent patches of iron-pan staining, flecks of charcoal, and again occasional blocks of greensand up to 120 mm in length. Above 491 was a deposit (490) formed by two distinct layers: a layer of sandy clay sealed a 50 mm thick band of tile fragments and small gravel. Sealing this deposit were the lower horizons of 443, a demolition deposit containing large quantities of broken tile, and some large blocks of greensand up to 0.25 metres in length.

Northern Section (Fig. 90)

In the bottom of the stream bed a number of small stake-holes (Fig. 94) were recorded. These were recorded in two series (context 659-east side and context 660-west side). The average diameter of these holes was 100 mm and the average depth about 150 mm. The ones on the east side were more numerous and closer to the bottom edge of the stream. Sealing the traces of the stake-holes was deposit 646. This was a compact and laid layer of large greensand flat slabs (Fig. 93), which also incorporated occasional large pieces of broken tile. The largest of the flat slabs measured some 0.45 m by 0.35 m and the deposit was about 0.2 m deep. The north-south extent of this laid surface was approximately 4.5 metres, and the stone slabs were laid directly on top of the length of stream bed in which the stake-holes had been found. Above was context 625, which was a 0.4 metres thick deposit of dumped blocks of greensand, with occasional pieces of tile. The largest pieces of greensand were up to 0.3 m in length, and some of them had originated as building stone, presumably deriving from the demolition of the northern flanking wall of Building 3. This deposit was sealed by a very thin layer of pea-grit, suggesting it had been exposed as a surface to the elements. There was also a considerable amount of pottery in this context. Above was context 590, silty clay containing frequent pieces of broken tile and about 10% flint and greensand blocks. It is highly likely that 590 is equivalent to 490 further south. Deposit 611 was characterised by occasional greensand blocks to the north of 625,

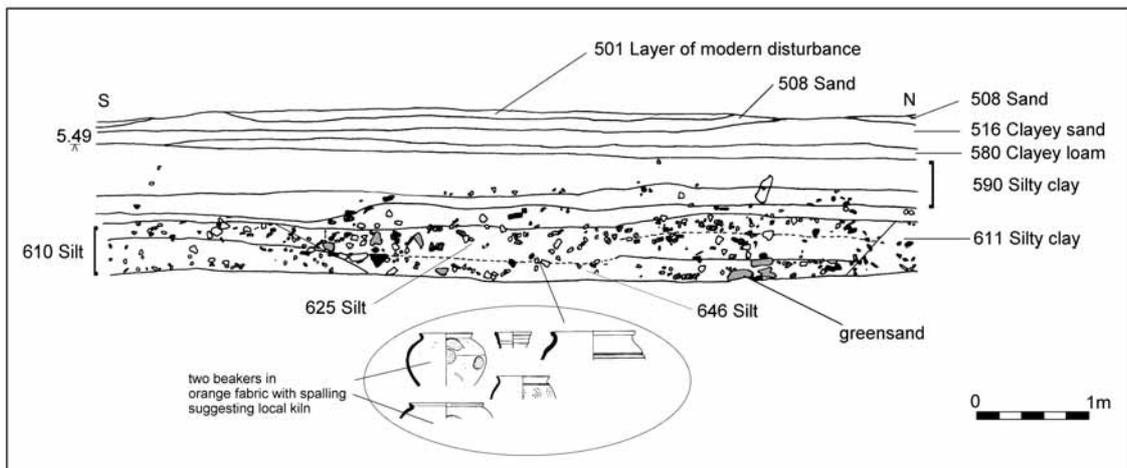


Fig. 91. Phase AD: section along the stream.

while 610 formed a deposit of stone-free silty clay to the south of 625.

Finds

The bulk finds from the stream ditch included considerable quantities of coarse and fine wares, as well as ceramic building material. The small finds from the stream ditch comprised 140 finds, mostly sherds of samian and fragments of glass vessels. There were also six coins.

Table 1. Six coins from the deposits in the stream.

Context No.	Layer	Small Find No.	Date	Type
491	1	1604	347–50	Coin
490	1	1631	260–80	Coin
590	1	6804	293–96	Coin
485	1	1623	C1st/2nd?	Coin
610	2	7021	64–6	Coin
625	1	7752	77–8	Coin

How the features were formed

The stream was excavated with digging tools and, while water flowed in the original stream bed to the west, wooden stakes were driven into the sides of the ditch torevet the sides. It is possible, although there is no proof, that the stakes were only driven in to support the stream sides that would be concealed underneath the timber planking that formed the putative bridge. Once the revetting was in place, however widespread, the planking for the presumed timber bridge was put in place, presumably the respective ends of the planks resting on the east and west sides of the stream. It was presumably at this point that the water was diverted from the original bed into the new bed, allowing the original bed to be filled in. It is important to note that the bed for the new stream was probably excavated through the foundations of the southern boundary or flanking wall, since, as will be argued elsewhere, both the northern and southern flanking walls had certainly been removed at this time.

Although part of subsequent phases it is useful here to summarise the other deposits that eventually filled the stream. After a period of time, perhaps twenty to thirty years, the wooden planks were removed and a surface of large greensand blocks (646) was laid on the bottom of the stream. This is likely to have been effected in the summer when the stream had little or no water in it. The wooden revetting stakes were removed as they served no further purpose. On top of the greensand blocks was laid a mixture of large rubble and broken tile (625), which served to form an elevated causeway across

the stream bed. Since no culvert could be discerned running through the rubble fill, it is presumed that water from the stream flowed over the top of the causeway and southwards on towards the Chichester channel.

Subsequently, through two centuries, the stream silted up, although it can be expected that most of this silting occurred towards the end of this period since the stream was probably regularly cleaned out by the staff of the Palace. Finally, a layer of demolition (443 - see elsewhere) that included much broken tile was laid over the upper silts of the stream (Fig. 92).

Overall date

This assemblage (Assemblage 11) spans Phases AD and AE and continues a trend towards increasing supply of Rowlands Castle products to the Palace (43%). A lack of pre Phase AD material is reflected in a complete absence of Atrebatian Overlap pottery: the latest of the samian sherds are four *c.* AD 100–120 dated fragments from the Martres de Veyre kilns and indicate that rubbish deposition continued into the earliest years of the second-century. The samian finds from the bottom contexts of the stream (484; 485) are largely pre-Flavian (5 sherds) and Flavian (13 sherds) in date, perhaps suggesting that the channel for the stream was excavated prior to AD 69.

The bulk finds and the small finds from the filling of the stream indicate categories of objects consistent with the idea that the stream became the repository for the disposal of occasional household waste (coarse and fine wares, samian sherds, glass fragments, animal bones) and occasional building debris (tile) over a long period of time. A partly legible coin (SF 1623) from 485 in the bottom of the stream can be dated to the 1st or 2nd centuries AD. A coin (SF 7021) from the bottom silts (610) is pre-Flavian, while one (SF 7752), from the greensand causeway (625) is post-Flavian. Coins indicate that the upper silts of the stream were accumulating in the later third century (Fig. 91).

Interpretation and comment

The excavation of the new stream ditch, and the in-filling of the old stream bed, indicates that a major re-organization of the landscape was underway at Fishbourne. This was no doubt the period when the *proto-palace* was constructed (or enlarged: see the General Conclusions) to the southwest of our site, since the old stream would have

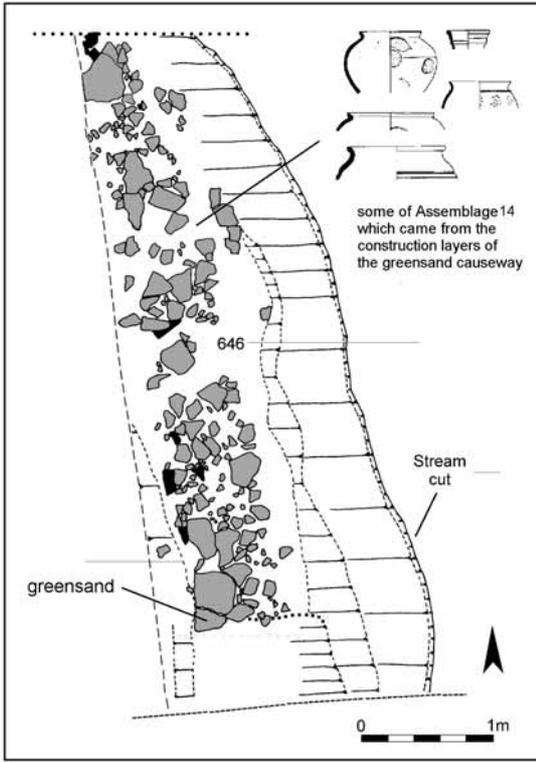


Fig. 93. Phase AE: greensand stones in the stream; Assemblage 14 came from this context.

flowed through the site of the *proto-palace*. It is possible that at this time also the masonry building (M1), buried beneath the western range of the later Palace, was constructed. It is highly likely that timber building T4 and T5, identified in the 1960s excavations, had been demolished by this date. It may have been also at the start of this period that other radical transformations were made. Crossing the stream would have been effected by a simple timber bridge, with the sides of the stream beneath revetted with stakes.

PHASE AD: LINEAR SLOT

Summary

This phase is also marked by a linear slot — orientated south-west–north-east that is situated just to the north-east of Building 3. The slot is presumed to have been the seating for a horizontal timber or timbers. Two pits seem to have been dug into the slot — one halfway along its length, the other at its south-western end. The linear slot would have been located just to the north-east of the row 2 fence-

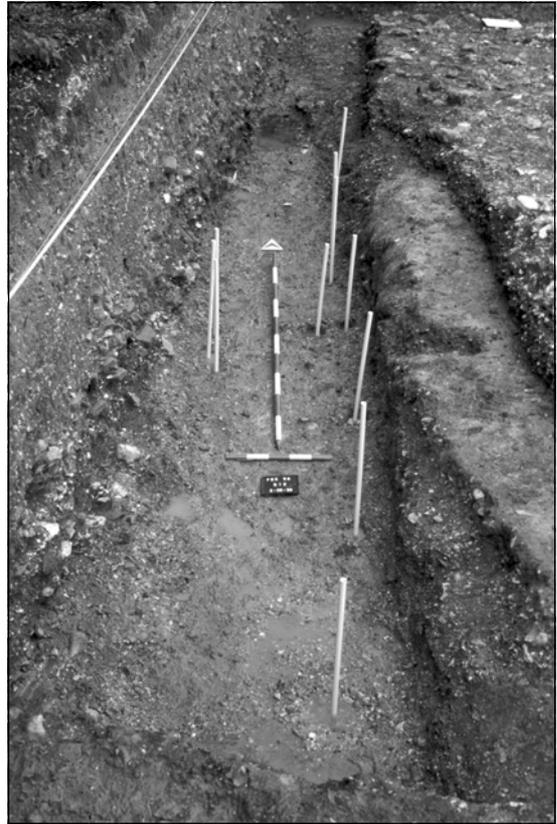


Fig. 94. Phase AD: stake-holes in the bottom of the stream; taken from the south.

line, and may in some way, have continued that barrier to the north-east. The presence of the linear slot suggests that the greensand road may never have come this far to the east.

Description

The linear slot (Figs 95–98) measured some 11.5 metres in overall length, with an average width of 0.5 metres, and an average depth of 0.25 metres. The filling of the slot (718) comprised a fine, well-sorted, sandy clay with very occasional (2%) small fragments of rounded flint. Towards the north-east end of the excavated slot was a small area (1.2 m east–west) comprised of 80% flints, some up to 0.2 m in length, and also some lenses of brick earth and clay. This latter context (899) was a deliberately laid deposit, presumably placed to form some sort of hard-standing along the slot. At the south-western end of the slot was another pit filling deposit (900). This measured some 1.6 m east–west, by 1.1 m

north–south, by 0.5 m deep. The pit had a flat bottom and the filling was identical to 718, although the ill-defined edges of the pit covered a larger area than the original south-western end of the linear slot (Fig. 98).

Finds

The bulk finds from the linear slot and pits included a full range of artefacts from coarse pottery and ceramic building material, to metal and animal bones. The small finds from the linear slot and pits included

over 100 finds of coarse ware sherds, glass, flint and metalwork. A noteworthy find from the fill of the western pit (900) was SF 11914, being a gold quarter-stater of Tincomarus (25–20 BC), and from the slot the remains of three almost complete vessels, one placed upside-down in the bottom of the slot (Fig. 96)

How the features were formed

The linear slot was dug out with hand tools and the horizontal timber beams inserted. It may have been much more vertically sided than it appeared on excavation, since it may have filled up, at least

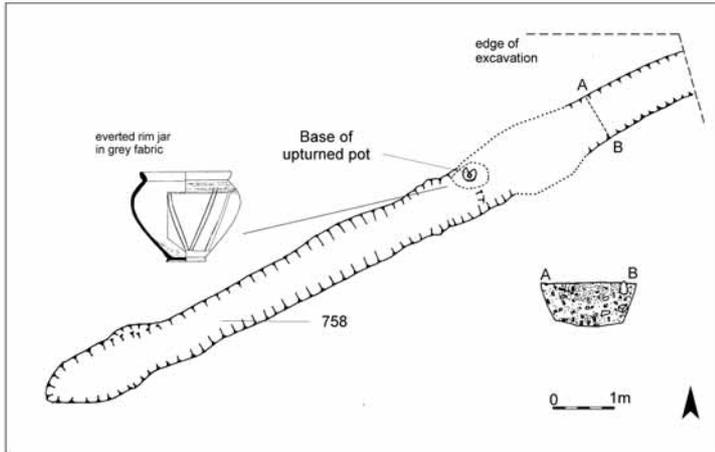


Fig. 95. Phase AD: linear slot.



Fig. 96. Phase AD: upturned pot in the linear slot; scale is 0.3 m.



Fig. 97. Phase AD: linear slot. Phase AE: water pipe. The linear slot crosses from left to right; the water pipe runs from top to bottom.

partly, by natural processes that will have weathered back the sides. The north-eastern pit was inserted into the middle of the slot, presumably before the timbers were laid in the slot. Its filling of compact flint rubble suggests that it may have formed the foundation for some sort of entrance through the timber façade or fence. The western pit was probably excavated around the end of the beam in order to lever the horizontal beam from the ground. There is just a possibility, however, that the beam slot actually cuts, and therefore post-dates, the western pit.

Overall date

The samian from the filling of the slot was a mixture of Flavian to Antonine sherds. It is conceivable that the slot contains a minority of sherds that were deposited in the filling as the slot was excavated and the timber placed, and a majority that may have been deposited in the filling of the slot after the removal of the timber. In addition, many of the sherds could be residual. A coin dated to AD 330–5 (SF 10146) came from the slot. Not a lot can be placed on this evidence, therefore, only perhaps to



Fig. 98. Phase AD: south-west end of the linear slot.

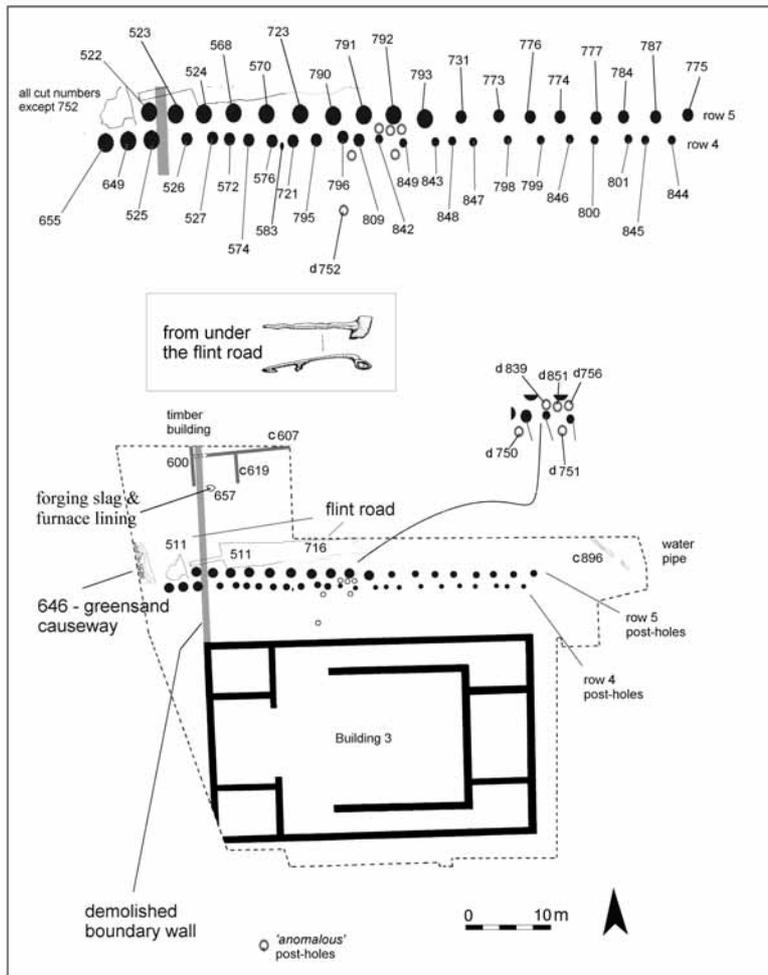


Fig. 99. Phase AE: general plan; note part of the timber building at the northern edge of the excavation.

suggest that the slot is probably early Flavian at the earliest. Assemblage 12 from the slot produced 227 sherds of pottery, including three near-complete and reconstructable vessels. This assemblage can be dated to the mid-second century.

The samian from the two pit fills was distinctive. That from 899 was exclusively of Claudian-Neronian date, arguing that the eastern pit was probably filled in the early Flavian period. Since this is a constructional feature associated with the beam-slots it argues that the beam-slots themselves are probably early-Flavian in date. The fill of the western pit contained three sherds of 1st century date.

Interpretation and comment

The complex of linear slot and two pits is difficult to interpret, no doubt because the slot clearly carries on to the north-east outside of the excavated area. Whether there are further slots that relate to it is unknown. It can be noted that if the slot continues its orientation to the north-east it would soon have met the line of the aqueduct. All that can be surmised at present is that it may have formed a line of upright timbers — whether small and fence-like or larger and wall-like is unknown - with the most likely explanation of the flint-filled pit being a foundation for some sort of entrance/exit through this timber barrier. It is noticeable that the water-pipe trench of the Phase AE is laid across the flint-filled pit. The orientation of the slot is interesting in that it does not adhere to the east-west::north-south orientations that govern most of the other features on the site. For that reason it was suggested initially that the linear slot might have carried water, bringing it from the aqueduct to the eastern end of the fence-lines. However, the presence of the flint-filled pit

halfway along its length would seem to negate this.

What is clear is that the linear slot, if it was an upstanding feature, would have cut across the eastwards projection of the greensand road, and indeed, the flint road. This suggests that neither of these roads continued this far to the east.

PHASE AE: c. AD 120–200

Summary

To the north of Building 3, and between the greensand road and the aqueduct, a flint road was laid out (Fig. 99). This road had smaller flint on the surface capping a foundation of larger flint blocks. It may be that at this time the timber bridge across the stream is replaced by a ford of dumped

greensand blocks and tile, laid on a foundation of horizontal greensand slabs.²⁴ North of the aqueduct, after the complete robbing of the flint foundations of the northern flanking wall, a large timber building, whose foundations comprised substantial beam-slots, was erected. Only a part of this structure appeared in the 1998 excavations and the length and width of the building cannot be ascertained. However, the orientation of the building may be east-west. (In phase AF, after this structure went out of use, a deposit of very dark soil containing a large quantity of small finds, and considerable numbers of oyster shells began to fill the empty beam-slots. This would appear to be largely domestic refuse from the Palace.)

In this phase two further rows of post-holes (rows 4 and 5, which cut through the remains of the abandoned greensand road) run parallel to the north side of Building 3. The post-holes are presumed to relate to the replacement of the earlier fence-line (represented by row 2), interpreted elsewhere as a tethering line for horses. It is noteworthy that the fence-lines were longer than the earlier rows, since the post-holes extend further to the east and further to the

west, almost up to the edge of the stream.

PHASE AE: POST-HOLES (ROWS 4 & 5) 7 ■

Description

The rows of post-holes furthest away from Building 3 were rows 4 and 5 (Figs 100, 101, 102).²⁵ These are again assumed to represent the remains of two fence lines; row 4 measures about 38 metres in length, row 5 about 36 metres in length (Figs 104–109). The spacing of the post-holes is fairly regular and they seemed set at about 2 metre intervals. In terms of position the post-holes of row 4 extend further to the west, closest to the stream, and not so far to the east. This situation is reversed with the post-holes of row 5, which extend just a little further to the east and not so far to the west. Both rows 4 and 5 extend slightly beyond the eastern wall of Building 3. There is no evidence of ‘pairing’ of post-holes between rows 4 and 5, and the overall impression given by the pattern of post-holes in rows 4 and 5 is one of irregularity. At the western end of the excavation, where the greensand road was located, both rows of post-holes were clearly cut through, and therefore later than, the greensand



Fig. 100. 1999 dig: rows 4 and 5 post-holes to left.



Fig. 101. Phase AE: 567: row 5; horizontal scale 0.5 m, vertical scale 0.3 m.



Fig. 102. Excavating post-holes from rows 4 and 5 from the east.

road surface. Indeed, the greensand road could not have been used as such once the posts had been erected.

The dimensions of the individual post-holes are provided in the attached Tables 54 & 55.²⁶ For row 4 post-pits the average north-south dimension was approximately 0.54 metres, while the average east-west was 0.52 metres. The average depth was only 0.26 metres. In five cases it was possible to distinguish an indication of a post-pipe. The dimensions of the post-pipes suggest timbers of at least 0.2 m square scantling. Although the average depth of the post-holes is shallow, the data mask the fact that the post-holes were marginally deeper towards the

west. It may well be that in the east only the bottoms of the post-pits survive and that their upper parts were levelled at some later point. A conservative estimate of their original depth might suggest 0.35 to 0.4 metres.

The post-pits of row 5 had an average north-south dimension of 0.81 metres, and an average dimension east to west of 0.77 metres, and an average depth of 0.3 metres. In ten cases it was possible to distinguish an indication of a post-pipe. The dimensions of the post-pipes vary but suggest, in most cases, timbers of at least 0.2 m square scantling. Although the average depth of the post-holes is shallow, the data mask the fact that the post-holes were marginally deeper towards the west. It may well be that in the east only the bottoms of the post-pits survive and that their upper parts were levelled at some later point. A conservative estimate of their original depth might suggest 0.45 to 0.5 metres.

The post-holes of rows 4 and 5 were different from the post-holes in rows 1 to 3 in some additional respects. Remains of fragmentary nails were found in some of the post-holes, suggesting that the timbers may have formed part of a structure that was nailed together.

In several cases packing stones of flint were found, clearly indicating that these holes did support posts, as opposed to being plant-holes. The nature of the filling of the post-holes of rows 4 and 5 indicates that the posts either rotted in-situ, or more likely were removed once the structure they formed a part of was no longer needed. In any event, the holes were not made good, as had been the post-pits of rows 1 to 3 when the latter had been filled with red clay.

Finds

The bulk finds from row 4 post-holes included quantities of pottery, ceramic building material and animal bones; the small finds comprised about 30

items including sherds of samian, glass and a copper alloy coin (SF 11159; context 850; probably 1st century AD in date). The bulk finds from row 5 included significant quantities of ceramic building material, occasional pottery finds and some animal bone. The small finds were more numerous comprising approximately 80 items including pottery and glass sherds, stone and iron nails.

How the features were formed

Like most post-holes of any size it is presumed that holes are first dug, larger than the size of the intended post, and then timber uprights positioned while packing material is rammed down around the posts until they are earthfast. It is likely that the timbers described here were removed, rather than rotting as stumps in the ground, after the fences had served their purpose. Post-holes of rows 4 and 5 were not made good with an in-filling of red clay, as had been the post-holes of rows 1, 2 and 3. Instead they were allowed to collect a silty in-filling deposited by natural agencies over a period of time. This would account for the fact that these post-holes contained a greater number of finds.

Unfortunately artefacts can become incorporated into post-holes in a variety of ways. They can be incorporated into the packing as it is rammed down the side of the post at the time of its initial setting up, or they can become incorporated in the fill of the post-pipe when the timber is removed. In addition, as post-holes are excavated into the ground, the soil extracted to make the hole may contain earlier artefacts that subsequently get buried with the packing in a later context. Also, rodents and small animals can burrow down the side of standing timbers taking small artefacts down with them. Renewal of decayed timbers in the same post-holes adds a further complexity.

Overall date

The few samian sherds from these post-holes range in date from pre-Flavian to the second century. The difficulty in dating from this evidence can be illustrated from context 743 which has samian sherds of pre-Flavian, Flavian, 1st and second centuries in its fill. There is a coin of probable 1st century AD date from the post-pipe of a row 4 post-hole.

The pottery finds from row 4 post-holes comprised Assemblage 15. Twelve of the post-holes in fence-line 4 produced a total of 43 sherds (240 g) of pottery between them. Most of the fragments are bodysherds from Rowlands Castle and Hardham

greyware vessels but three fresh fragments from a Vectis ware jar of late-1st century character (Tomalin 1987, Form 11) were present in post-packing context 755 and suggest a date between AD 70 and AD 100 for the erection of fence-line 4.

The pottery from row 5 post-holes comprised Assemblage 18. Fourteen of the post-holes in row 5 produced a total of 187 sherds (1715 g) of pottery between them. This is by far the largest amount of pottery from any of the fence-lines and includes fragments of a Cologne colour-coat cornice-rim beaker (c. AD 130–200+) and a BB1 flanged bowl (c. AD 120–200+) from context 743.

Interpretation and comment

The same uncertainty surrounds the interpretation of these post-holes as with the post-holes of phases AB and AD. It is only with some speculation that the pattern of posts can be reconstructed as lines of fences, and perhaps as an arrangement of tethering posts. The western end of the post pattern is not regular, despite a very hard search, no post-hole could be located at the western end of row 5 to match the western end of row 4. While the post-holes of phase AB formed approximately matching pairs there is no such arrangement with the post-holes of rows 4 and 5. It is true that the external row of posts (row 5) are the largest and most substantial posts. Determined checks were made during the excavation to evaluate whether these posts continued around the of the eastern end of Building 3, and therefore formed some arrangement of posts on more than one side of the masonry building. No posts were found to the south of the linear slot which would suggest such an occurrence. Nor were posts found extending to the east beyond the north-eastern corner of Building 3.

Although the artefactual content of these post-holes is not helpful in dating, it can be noted that several of the row 5 post-hole produced nails, which might be taken to indicate carpentry and fitting timbers. In addition, the row 5 post-holes produced the greater quantity of finds, and it is possible that there is a real date difference between Assemblages 15 and 18, which might indicate that row 5 post-holes *replaced* row 4 post-holes. However, the greater quantity of finds, and hence the wider date range in the row 5 post-holes, could be a function of those holes being closer to the human traffic using the flint road immediately to the north. Needless to say there was little indication of any flooring associated with the posts, apart from a suggestion of laid or

trampled red clay to the immediate north of Building 3 that might have formed part of a clay floor. The effect of the fence-lines represented by rows 4 and 5 would have been to form a barrier along the southern edge of the flint road, right up to where that road met the stream.

It is useful at this juncture to point out that there were six post-holes (Fig. 99) in the area of the five rows of post-holes that could not be fitted into any particular row. These comprised contexts 750, 751, 752, 756, 839 and 851. They produced a mixture of 1st century finds (750, 851) and second century finds (751, 752 and 839). The most securely dated of the six is probably 752. It would be possible to argue that the 1st century post-holes probably should be associated with the fences of phases AB and AD, while the second century post-holes could be associated with those of phase AE. However, their irregular distribution in the middle area of this linear spread of post-holes makes this conjecture uncertain and does not help us in clarifying further the date or function of our five fence-lines.

PHASE AE: FLINT ROAD

Description

The foundation for the flint and gravel road (Fig. 99) comprised context 581. This was a deposit of up to 90mm thickness, which was laid down seemingly directly on top of the natural brick-earth. It may be that any Roman topsoil was stripped off before C581 was laid down. The foundation deposit consisted of 50% angular and sub-rounded flints, most up to 60 mm in size, but some as large as 150 mm. This deposit extended about 3 metres north–south by approximately 10 metres east–west. 581 was only really noted underlying the western part of the road surface. Part of this deposit, as well as the actual road surface C511, had been excavated and entirely removed by Alec Down in 1983 (his Trench C). The road surface itself was formed by two contexts (C511 in the west C716 in the east). These comprised about 70% flints, but generally smaller in size, up to 50 mm. Overall the road surface measured approximately 4 m north–south by 20 m east–west. The road surface petered out to the east and, like the greensand road to the south, it is unclear whether the road had actually continued further to the east (and had subsequently been destroyed by ploughing) or whether the flint road surface had only been laid in the area where a trackway approached the stream. Context 514 was a deposit that had accumulated on the road surface and comprised fine,

well-sorted, silty sand with 10% angular gravel.

Finds

The bulk finds from the flint road comprised the usual range of objects: pottery, ceramic building material, animal bones, glass and metal artefacts. From the large flint cobbles (C 581) underneath the road came 121 sherds of pre-Flavian pottery. From the upper road make-up (C511 and C716) came 160 sherds of mid-1st- to early-4th century pottery (Assemblage 13), mostly abraded and redeposited material when the road was no longer in use, but including several freshly broken sherds from a late-1st-century bead-rim jar. From above the road (C514) came 194 sherds of late-second to early-3rd-century date.

The small finds from the flint road include at least 158 finds that are predominantly samian sherds with occasional glass fragments. These finds were distributed in a deposit sealing the road (C514), in the upper road make-up (C511 and C716) and in the large flint cobble foundation (C581) underlying the road. The samian sherds from above the road surface and from the upper road make-up are predominantly late-1st to mid-2nd century in date, while the samian sherds in the lower flint foundation material are mostly pre-Flavian and Flavian. A coin from C716 can be dated to AD 41–50 (SF 10179). Overall this suggests that the flint and gravel road was laid down sometime during the 2nd century AD.

How the features were formed

The flint and gravel road was formed by laying a foundation of large flint cobbles directly on top of the natural Reading Beds clay. It is uncertain whether any topsoil was stripped off beforehand, but its absence suggests that this might have been the case, and the clay would have formed a better foundation for the road. The upper level of the road, which comprised smaller flint, was laid on top of these foundations. The surface of the road (C514) then collected small sherds of pottery, some during its main period of use, but most probably when the road surface was going out of commission.

Overall date

Evidence from the samian and the fine and coarse wares suggests a 2nd-century date for the road. The southern edge of the flint and gravel road covered the northern edge of the greensand road, so in a sense, the former could be seen as a replacement

for the latter, albeit on a slightly more northerly alignment.

Interpretation and comment

The flint and gravel road suggests that there was still a need for an east-west road surface after the greensand road had been abandoned. Given the remodelling of the access arrangements across the stream, it is tempting to link this new road with the replacement of the timber bridge by the greensand and flint causeway. The flint and gravel road will have run to the south of, and parallel with, the aqueduct and may have been in part utilised to reach lengths of the aqueduct in order to maintain it. The flint road, made of more durable material, was intended to last much longer than the greensand road.

PHASE AE: CAUSEWAY

Description

For details of the greensand causeway (Figs. 93, 103) see the description of the deposits filling the stream in phase AD above.

Finds

The bulk finds from the greensand causeway (contexts 625; 639; 646), and the tile and rubble (C590) overlying it, included large quantities of ceramic building material and quantities of pottery and animal bone. There were 40 small finds from the greensand causeway and the overlying tile and rubble, mostly samian sherds, but with one coin and some glass fragments as well.

How the features were formed

The lowest deposit of the causeway was a laid surface of large greensand blocks (C646) up to 450 mm in length. Despite the very high stone content (up to 90% in the southern half of the causeway - the majority of them greensand), it appears that the upper causeway (C625 and C639) was formed by dumping blocks of greensand, with occasional flint blocks, along with tile and pottery sherds, into the bottom of the stream. The timber revetting for the stream sides had either perished by this time or was first removed, since the greensand blocks covered the stake-holes of the revetting. Some of the greensand blocks in the upper fill were up to 300 mm in length and at least one had been worked for inclusion in a wall. A very fine deposit of pea-grit above the stones suggests a period of silting and weathering before the demolition deposit (C590) was dumped into the stream. The effect of dump-

ing C590 was almost to fill the stream itself. Presumably, before the dumping of the demolition rubble, crossing the stream had been effected by walking on top of the surface of the greensand causeway (C625 and C639), rather than via a timber bridge. An interesting question is how the water from the stream, flowing from north to south, traversed the causeway. There was no indication of a culvert through the fill and the assumption is that in summer, with little water flowing, it just seeped through, while in winter it may have flowed over the top.

Overall date

The samian sherds from the layers of the causeway (C625; C639) are pre-Flavian or Flavian in date, while the latest samian associated with its construction is Trajanic in date. The bulk finds from the layers of the causeway (C646; C625; C639) produced 173 sherds (Assemblage 14) including a number (nearly 30% of the assemblage) of spalled and discoloured kiln wasters. Wares in these fabrics appear at Fishbourne from AD 50 to AD 150 and suggest manufacture on site to serve perhaps the needs of the proto-palace and of the Palace itself. More specifically, the laid greensand (C646) produced ten sherds of mid-1st century date. A coin of Vespasian (AD 77–8) found in C625 (SF 7752) provides a specific *terminus post quem* for the causeway, which is likely to be of 2nd-century date.

Interpretation and comment

The functioning of the causeway is problematic and seems to have been formed by two distinct deposits — the foundation of large, laid greensand blocks (C646), and then the higher filling of greensand and flint (C625; C639). These were covered by demolition represented by the dumped rubble (C590). The pottery from C590, 69 sherds of 3rd- and 4th-century pottery, suggest that the dumping of the demolition rubble probably occurred at some point during the 4th century AD.

PHASE AE: TIMBER SLOTS ■

Description

The fills of the three slots that make up the outline of part of a timber-framed building are contexts 601, 606 and 620 (Figs 112, 113, 114). C601 comprised a slot measuring some 3.56 m north–south, by 450 mm wide and 170 mm deep. Its southern end had been removed by Alec Down's earlier excavation, while, at the other extremity, it disappeared into



Fig. 103. Phase AE: the greensand causeway from the south.



Fig. 110. Phase AE: industrial pit; scale 0.5 m.



Fig. 111. 1998 excavation season: the boundary wall of Building 3 to the right, and the square imprint of Alec Down's trench D to the left.

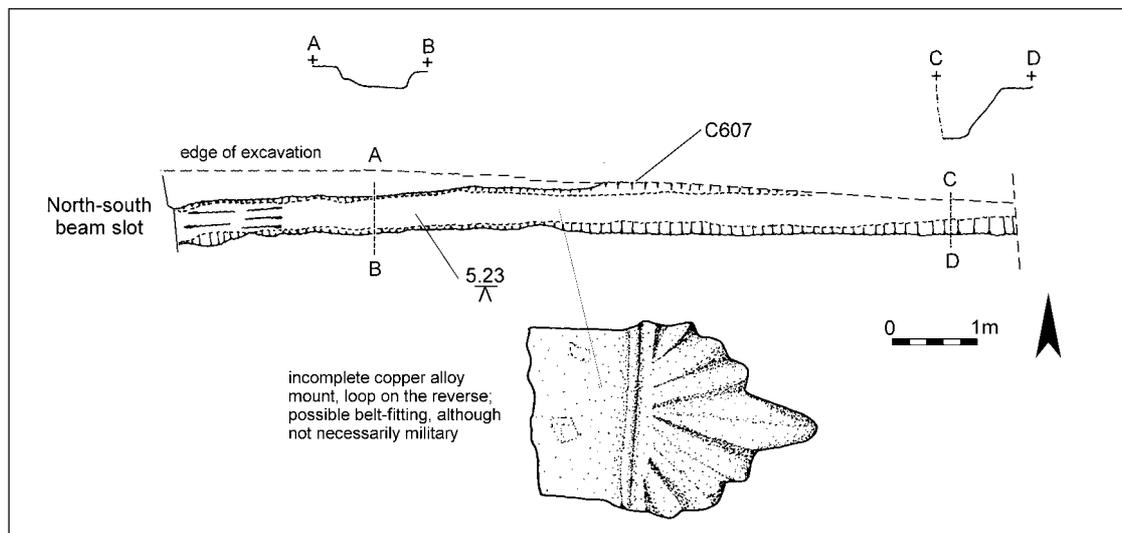


Fig. 112. Phase AE: the plan of the long east-west slot for the timber building.

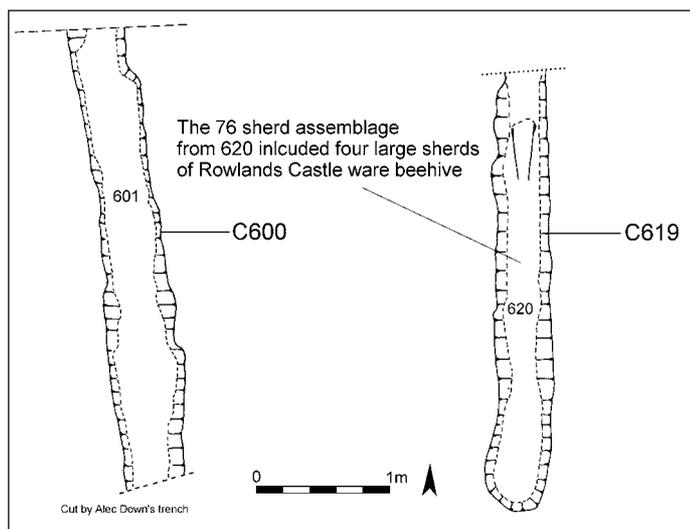


Fig. 113. Phase AE: the plan of the shorter north-south slots for the timber building.

the north section. The slot had a flat bottom with near-vertical sides. It was filled with a loose, brown, silty clay, containing fragments of oyster shell, and occasional pieces of tile. The fill of all three slots was not dissimilar to the composition of the midden (C585) that covered the slots.

The second slot, C606, measured some 8.5 m east-west by 400 mm wide by about 150 mm deep.

It had a flat bottom but more sloping sides than slot 601. It continued beyond the edge of the excavation in the north-east corner, but did not appear to continue beyond slot C601 to the west. It was filled by the same midden-type deposit (C598), which sealed it.

The third slot, C620, measured some 3.3 m north-south, 450 mm east-west and 200 mm deep. It too had a flat bottom with sloping sides. It was approximately the same length as slot 601. It linked to slot 606, but did not go beyond it to the north. The fill again was of midden-type deposit (C598).

Associated with these slots were two distinct areas of possible flooring made up of compacted chalk rubble. The first of these (C608) was bounded to the north by slot 606 and to the west by slot 601. It measured overall some 1.5 m north-south, by 800 mm east-

west by less than 50 mm thick. The average size of the individual irregular chalk blocks was 100 mm, and the surface sloped from east to west, no doubt subsiding into the backfill of the robber trench for the northern flanking wall of Building 3 (Fig. 114). The second area (C633) lay to the north of slot 606. This surface disappeared into the north section. It measured some 1.1 m east-west by 250 mm north-

south and was about 5 mm thick. The average size of the individual irregular fragments of chalk rubble was 5mm. Again the surface had slumped down into the backfill of the robber trench.

To the south of slot 601 was a circular pit (C657; fill 624), which measured some 600 mm in diameter by 350 mm deep. The bottom of the pit was filled with charcoal, although there was no sign of *in situ* burning around the sides of the pit. The soil filling the upper part of the pit was a dark grey silty clay loam, containing and surrounding patches of burnt clay, frequent charcoal flecks, slag, fragments of seashells and several large blocks of greensand and flint. The burnt clay was concentrated in the centre of the fill, surrounded by darker soil containing charcoal flecks.

Finds

The small finds from the slots comprised 38 items, the great majority being samian sherds. The bulk finds from the slots (and the small pit that might have been related to small-scale industrial activity) included pottery, a little ceramic building material, large quantities of shells and some animal bone. It is important to note here that the fill (and therefore finds) associated with these slots was deposited presumably after the timber building went out of use and in reality constitute the lower layers of the overlying midden.

How the features were formed

The slots were formed by digging linear, fairly shallow trenches, into the ground and placing horizontal timbers in them. The horizontal timbers presumably formed the foundations for timber uprights of the wall of the building. It is uncertain if the horizontal timbers decayed *in situ* or were salvaged when the timber building was no longer required. It is more likely, given the probable relatively short life of the timber building, that the horizontal beams were salvaged.

Overall date

To all intents and purposes, the 588 sherds of pottery (Assemblage 16) from these slots represented the earliest part of the rubbish dumping for the overlying midden (C585) deposited into the beam slot trenches of the demolished timber building. All of this pottery can be regarded as being of 2nd-century date, with the presence of Colchester colour-coat and Cologne beaker sherds indicating that some at least of the material is later than AD

130. The date-range of the assemblage further indicates that the previous timber-framed building was probably constructed in the first half of the 2nd century AD and had a relatively short life.

Interpretation and comment

It is difficult say anything definitive concerning the function of the timber building. Clearly only a part of it lay in the excavated area and it was obviously a larger structure, although how much larger is unknown. Nor is the building plan intelligible. It is uncertain, for instance, whether context 600 represents a western end wall, or whether context 607 is an internal wall, or the main southern wall. Indeed, it cannot, without further excavation, be proven that the structure was longer east-west than it was north-south. In addition, the relationship between it and the putative industrial pit (C624) to its immediate south cannot be ascertained.

The pit 624 (Fig. 110) contained 12 pieces of furnace/hearth lining (434 g) and 22 pieces of forging slag (830 g). This represents the largest single group of forging slag and furnace/hearth lining found during the five seasons of excavations. These, and other waste metal residues found elsewhere on the site, may have been the result of smithing undertaken to produce fixtures and fittings for use in Building 3 or the Palace. The relatively small size of the excavated assemblage suggests this smithing did not actually occur within the excavated area, but it is unlikely to have been situated far away.

PHASE AE: WATER PIPE

Description

The overall length of the water-pipe trench was about 6 metres, although clearly it must have extended an unknown length to the south-east and north-west (Fig. 115). The cut for the water-pipe measured some 250 mm in width by 50 mm in depth. The fill (880) of the trench consisted of a poorly-sorted, yellowish brown, sandy clay, with up to 25% stones, mostly angular flint up to 50 mm in length. There is a slight indication, from levels taken on top of the fill, that the water flowed from south-east to north-west. The remains of three iron pipe-collars were located in the trench, spaced at 1.4 m intervals.

Finds

The small finds from the fill of the water-pipe included two iron nails and a flint flake. The bulk finds were similarly sparse and comprised a small amount of ceramic building material.

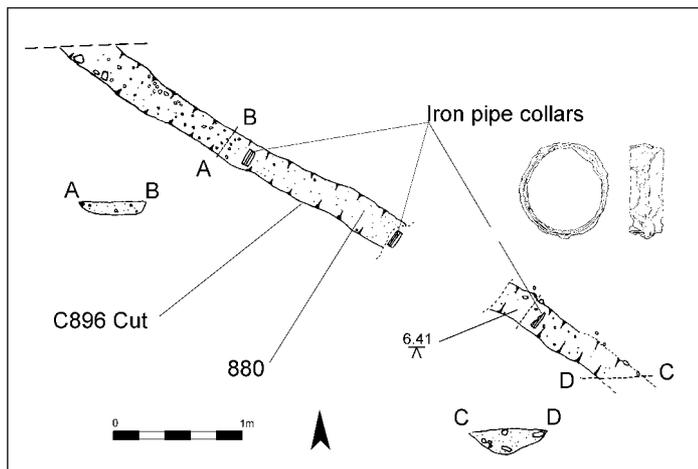


Fig. 115. Phase AE: the plan of the water-pipe trench; the iron collars joining wooden sections of the pipe were still standing upright.

How the features were formed

A narrow and fairly shallow gully was excavated into the ground and the wooden water-pipe sections, fastened together by iron collars, were laid into the gully. Care must have been taken to ensure that the level of the gully bottom allowed the water to flow by gravity towards its intended destination, possibly the north-east corner of the Palace. Soil must then have been placed along the sides of the pipe and, as a covering, on top of it. It is certain that the wooden pipe sections decayed *in-situ* since three iron collars were found upright and equally spaced.²⁷

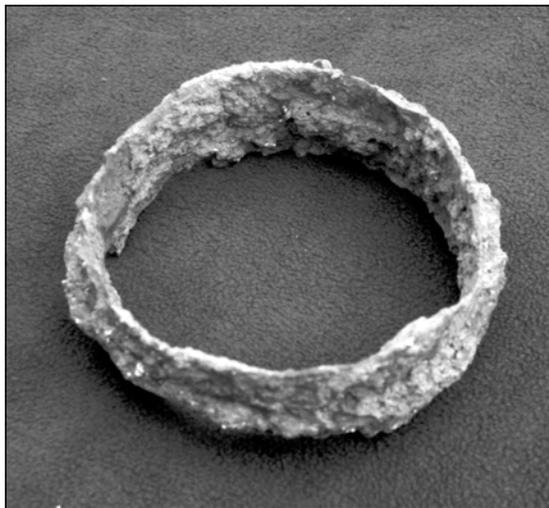


Fig. 116. One of the iron water pipe collars from Phase AE.

Small finds could therefore have become incorporated in the fill of the gully, either as residual or contemporary items down the sides of the gully, or as later sherds falling into the voids left by the decaying pipe.

Overall date

The only datable items are four sherds of pottery, including a beaker fragment, which can be assigned to the period AD 60–120.

Interpretation and comment

The water-pipe has an interesting relationship with the linear slot, which it crosses. In particular, it crosses the linear slot, and was dug into, the filled-in pit 899. It is possible to argue that the function of C899 was to provide a stable foundation so that

the water-pipe could be carried across this barrier safely. As the water-pipe was heading approximately in the direction of the north-east corner of the Palace, it seems logical to assume that it might have been connected with the bath-suite inserted into the former aisled hall. Barry Cunliffe found iron collars exactly similar to ours and at the same sort of interval spacing. It is possible to suggest that our water-pipe was feeding this bath-suite, (which was established at the start of the 2nd century), although how it would have continued across the aqueduct or the stream is unclear. There is slight evidence that the fall of the pipe and therefore the direction of water flow, would have been from south-east to north-west (i.e. towards the Palace). The beaker sherd was probably incorporated into the gully fill as backfill when the pipe was covered. It is interesting to note that the two surviving complete iron collars are not of the same diameter; (the larger one, SF 11430) lay to the north-west of the smaller example. However, this could simply mean that the outer diameters of the wooden pipe were different, rather than a differently sized bore.

PHASE AF: c. AD 150–200

Summary

This period probably spans the second half of the 2nd century AD. It is likely that Building 3 stood for most of this period, not least because of the great quantity of small finds to the north of the Building and the scarcity of finds over the Building proper.

This must indicate regular cleaning of Building 3 and the fact that the masonry structure sterilised the ground beneath it, preventing the accumulation of small objects either discarded or lost. Two groups of contexts can be assigned provisionally to this phase: a midden overlying the now demolished timber building and a square pit inside the eastern range of Building 3.

A vertical-sided pit was excavated into the floor of the central room in the eastern range of Building 3. This was more or less square, with a relatively shallow depth of around 0.5 metre. The remarkable feature of this pit was that great care had been taken to line the floor of the feature with massive greensand slabs of irregular shape. The interstices between the slabs were patched with a variety of stones, including flint. There was no indication from our excavations of how the sides of this pit were retained. It is possible that some kind of lead tank or container was placed in the pit.

PHASE AF: MIDDEN

Description

A homogeneous deposit of dark brown and black silty clay lay over the north-eastern part of the excavation. The deposit was on average about 200 mm in depth, and covered an area of about 5 m north–south by over 10 m east–west (Fig. 117). The deposit disappeared into the north and east sections and clearly continued in both directions. To the west, the deposit entered the partially unexcavated area in the north-west corner of the excavation. It is very likely, therefore, that this midden deposit covered the full width of the northernmost part of the excavation and was bounded to the south by the aqueduct. The midden fill accumulated in, and over the beam slots and the industrial pit from the previous phase, indicating that refuse was dumped here after the timber building had disappeared. The matrix of the midden was a fine, well-sorted, clay loam, with very little (2%) stone content: sub-rounded flint blocks up to 80 mm in size and pieces of greensand up to 120 mm in length. In the deposit were quantities of pieces of tile, up to 200 mm in length, bone, pot-

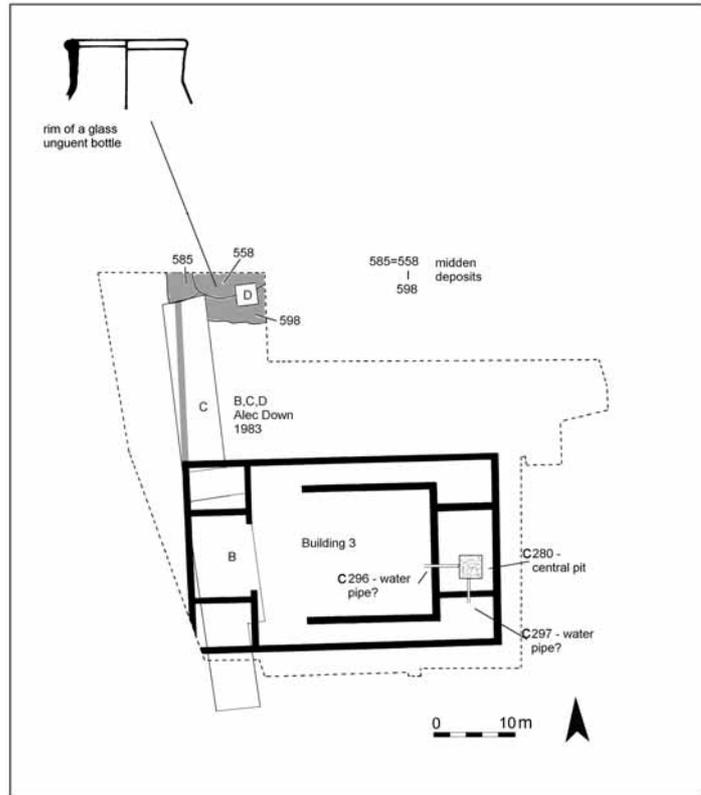


Fig. 117. Phase AF: the general plan; note the position of Alec Down's trenches B, C and D.

tery, glass, flecks of mortar and a great number of oyster shells.

Finds

There were 427 small finds from the midden deposits (558, 585 and 598), predominantly sherds of samian with fewer fragments of glass. Despite the quantity of small finds, there were no metal finds recovered from the midden. The bulk finds included significant amounts of ceramic building material. The range of bulk finds indicates the midden-like character of the deposits, with a full range of pottery, meal debris such as oyster shells and animal bones, and in addition, some building materials.

The animal bones, represented as Minimum Number of Individuals, from C598 were as follows:

Table 2. Animal bones from context 598.

	cattle	horse	sheep	pig	deer
598	2	1	3	3	1

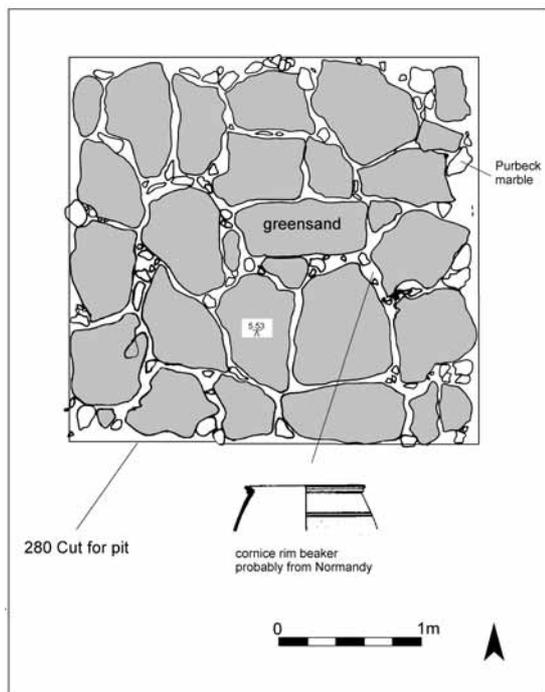


Fig. 118. Phase AF – the plan of the central pit; note how the ‘floor’ was formed by irregularly shaped pieces of greensand, with the gaps between the stones filled by small flints, and a piece of Purbeck marble.

How the features were formed

The uniform black silty soil which formed the midden deposits, indicated that the surviving artefacts were dumped in this location, along with other organic refuse, in small but regular quantities over a lengthy period of time.



Fig. 119. Part of a rim of a bowl of colourless glass from the midden in Phase AF: number 10 in the Glass Catalogue.

Overall date

The fine and coarse ware from the upper level of the midden (context 558: Assemblage 17) comprised 629 sherds (5162 g) of mid- to late-2nd century pottery. This assemblage is once again dominated by vessels of 2nd century character in grey Rowlands Castle ware. These make up nearly half of all the pottery and include rims from numerous cooking-pots of Cunliffe Form 313 and similar; the lack of batch-marked pieces suggests an absence of early-3rd century vessels of this type. (There is an intrusive mid-4th century coin from this deposit (SF 4284)).

Interpretation and comment

The midden clearly spanned the period from the middle until the end of the second century AD. It could have started accumulating earlier in the 2nd century, especially if the timber building of the previous phase had had a short life. As such, it may represent refuse from the main period of the life of the Palace. It is noteworthy that the midden does not seem to have been used during the 3rd century, indicating some break in refuse disposal practices around AD 200. Coincidentally or not, it is probably about this time that Building 3 was partially demolished.

PHASE AF: CENTRAL PIT ■

Description

The fills of the pit comprised contexts 237, 284, 311 and 312; the cut was 280. The overall dimensions of the pit were square, 3 metres on each side, while the average depth was approximately 0.5 m (Figs 118, 121–31). A very fine clayey silt, well-sorted, with orange mottles from iron-pan staining and

about a 1% stone content, consisting of rounded flint nodules up to 100 mm in length comprised context 237. There were some large tile pieces in the fill, especially towards the centre of the pit, and one very large piece lying directly on top of the greensand flagged floor, associated with a deposit of bone and sherds. The floor (284) consisted of large, irregular slabs of greensand (for individual dimensions *see plan*), ranging in thickness from 80 to 180 mm. Smaller nodules of flint had been laid down to fill in the gaps where the large greensand slabs did not meet. On the eastern

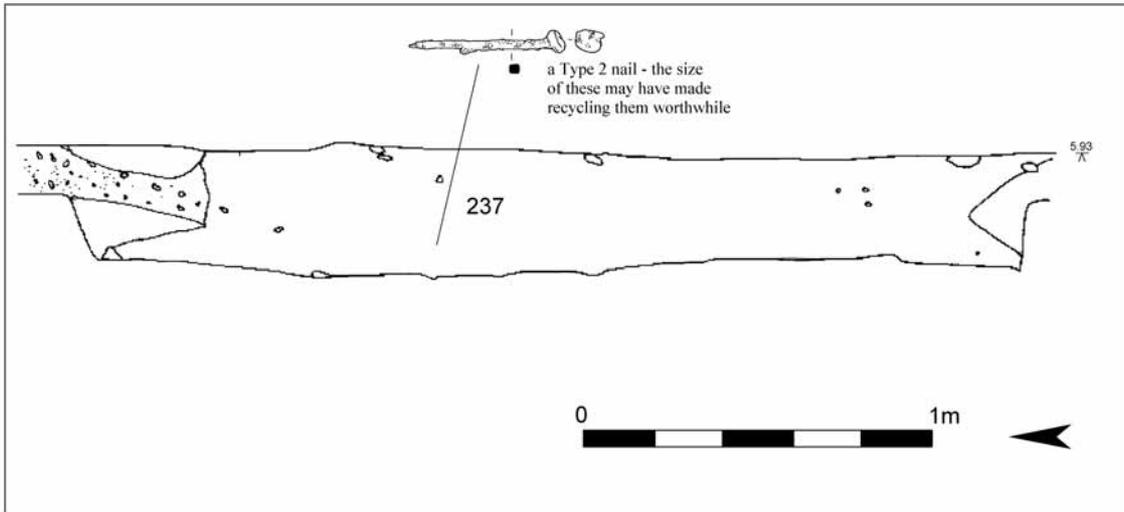


Fig. 122. Phase AF: a section of the central pit.



Fig. 124. Phase AF: the floor of the central pit; note the large fragment of tegula on the floor of the pit towards the top of the photograph. This is the same tegula as in Fig. 120. Note that North is to the left.

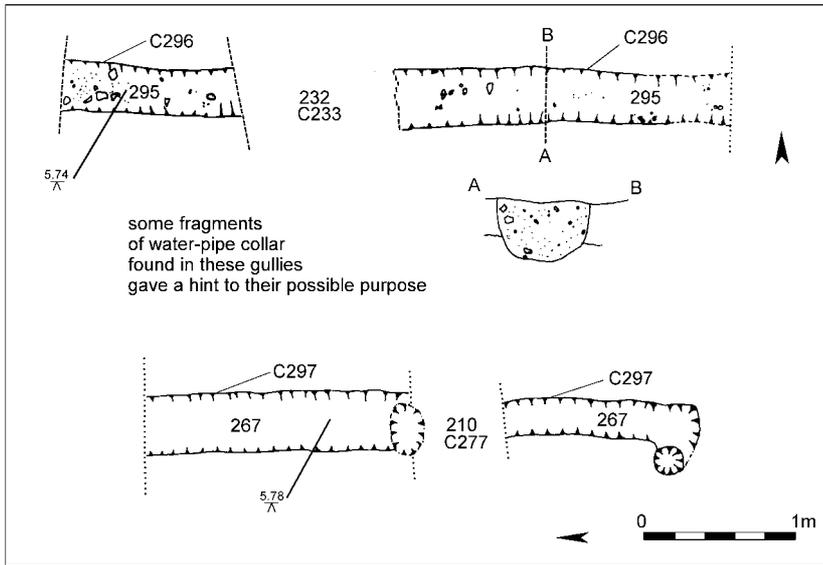


Fig. 128. Phase AF: plans of gullies from the central pit

side a block of Purbeck marble had been incorporated into the floor. In between the greensand slabs was stone-free silty clay soil (311), flecked by orange mottles of iron-pan staining. All the greensand slabs were lifted. Invariably they were found to be resting on the top of the natural red clay (312). Test-holes were excavated into the red clay of C312 to prove that it was undisturbed. The pit had a flat bottom with near-vertical sides. There was no indication of whether or how the sides of the pit had been retained.

Two linear gullies ran from the sides of the central pit, one from the western side and one from the southern side. They were only discovered in the second year (1996) of excavations. It is possible that the western one extended further to the west and went unnoticed in the first year of excavation.

The gullies were numbered 295 (fill C 296); 267 (fill C 297). The east-west gully was straight and was traced for a length of 2.9 m. It was c. 0.35 m deep and 0.2 m wide, with near-vertical sides and a flat bottom. It was filled with a silty clay matrix, which incorporated small gravel up to 20 mm in length and angular flint blocks up to 50 mm (15%). The north-south gully was just over 3 m in length, and 400 mm wide by 200 mm deep, with near-vertical sides and a flat bottom. It was filled by a matrix of clayey silt. The upper 100 mm of fill was relatively stone-free, while the lower fill incorporated small

gravel and rounded flint up to 30 mm (50%). This feature was noticeably more shallow towards its southern end, and there was a suggestion that the southern end returned a short distance to the west before petering out. The gullies were dug into a deposit of fine silty clay (C299) that is likely to represent a former topsoil or buried ground surface.

Finds

The small finds from the central pit were approximately 20 items including nail fragments, tile and pottery sherds. The bulk finds comprised a few

sherds and animal bones. Four sherds were found in gully 295. All four were in an underfired black-core, brown, fine-sanded fabric. One lump of fired daub and some tile were also present. Small finds include iron and flint. From gully 267 there was also some tile, and small finds of flint, iron and glass. A key find from gully 295 was SF 680, which proved to be several fragments of iron from a water-pipe collar.

How the features were formed

A very square pit was carefully dug into the underlying Reading Beds clay. Care must have been taken to ensure that the sides were as near vertical as possible and the angles as close to right-angles as possible. A level and smooth bottom for the pit was effected in the clay and then a floor of large, but irregularly-shaped greensand blocks (284) was laid down to form an approximately level surface. Where gaps appeared between the ill-fitting flags, these were filled with smaller blocks of flint and some fragmentary blocks of greensand stone. The fill of the pit appears to be water-borne silt, which had accumulated in the depression presumably after the roof of Building 3 had disappeared. Since the depression would have appeared as a marshy and wet hollow, objects thrown into this depression may have sunk to the bottom and come to rest on the greensand floor. It seems likely that the two gullies were excavated by hand over a short period of time.



Fig. 129. Helen lifts one of the greensand flagstones in the central pit to reveal...just red, natural clay and not a coin or other dateable artefact in sight!

Overall date

The few samian sherds from fill 237 are of 1st-century date. The 99 sherds of pottery from the fill (237) include much residual material, but also a large fragment from a Rowlands Castle cooking-pot of Form 313 with part of a batch-mark (c. AD 200–300), a flaring BB1 cooking-pot rim of post-AD 290 date and an Alice Holt/Farnham industry developed beaded-and-flanged bowl rim of Type 5B.6 (AD 270–400+). This leaves little doubt that the central pit was filling up at the time of the destruction of the Palace in c. AD 275 or later.

Wedge-shaped between the flags of the greensand floor, and clearly deposited at the time of its construction, were five sherds of pottery (Assemblage 19). These include two fragments of Rowlands Castle ware, a chip of possible BB1 and a sherd from an imported beaker dated to AD 130–200. The presence of this piece and to a lesser extent that of the chip of possible BB1 leave little doubt that this floor was laid after AD 130.

The two gullies were dug into a context (299) that contained three sherds: one black sherd of quartz-sanded 'Atrebatian-overlap' pottery and two sherds of early Rowlands Castle ware. Some fragments of tile were also found in C299. All dateable objects could derive from the infilling of the gullies after they had gone out of use. The paucity of sherds precludes any firm attempt at dating.

Interpretation and comment

The dating for the square central pit seems fairly conclusive — the greensand floor was laid sometime after AD 130 and the pit gradually silted up after the Palace was abandoned in AD 275. However, it is possible that the greensand floor was the latest flooring and that the actual pit had been excavated at some earlier date. The regularity of the pit, and the care taken in laying the greensand floor, seem to suggest some very specific purpose and therefore it is possible that the pit contained a wooden or metal tank, which would have also helped to keep the sides upright. Again, there is a possibility that it could have held water, and have either been left open as an inside pool within the eastern range of Building 3, or planked over and made accessible through a trap door. If Building 3 is argued to be a military *principia*, then it is possible that the function of the central pit would have been to hold the money chests to pay the troops and other personnel. On the other hand, the juxtaposition of the two gullies (Figs 126, 128), which seem likely to have once con-

tained water-pipes, suggests that the central pit may have been a water-feature of some sort. The falling levels of the two gullies, suggest that both may have served to drain water away from the central pit. It is conceivable that the feature therefore had two phases. Originally, in the 1st century AD, it was intended as a secure store for money chests, possibly therefore in the *sacellum* of a *principia*, and subsequently (when the greensand floor was laid?) was converted into a water feature.

Building 3 was probably three quarters of a century earlier than the greensand flooring of the central pit. It is possible, as suggested above, however, that the greensand is a later flooring. Therefore Building 3 could have been constructed and the central pit installed as part of the original design. The central pit could then have been converted into some sort of internal water-feature, with a new greensand floor, in the middle of the 2nd century AD. In this scenario the gullies, and their water pipes, would have been inserted through the thickness of the standing walls. Perhaps a more likely alternative is that the greensand floor was not actually laid until the end of the 2nd century when Building 3 was demolished, and the associated gullies drained excess water away from what had then become a garden feature in front of the Palace.

PHASE AG: c. AD 200–300**Summary**

This phase commences with the demolition of at least a part of Building 3. In addition, the phase is marked by the possible abandonment of the aqueduct (upper fills 535 and 604), which was sealed by a demolition deposit (557). Connected with the demolition was one area of broken greensand (556) and one area of broken flint rubble (560) (Figs 132, 133). These areas are likely to have been recycling areas for the sorting of greensand and flint derived from the demolition of Building 3. Further demolition deposits were located to the immediate north of the north wall. A cache of pottery was dumped at some date on top of the footings of the north wall.

PHASE AG: DEMOLITION OF BUILDING 3**Description**

There are three contiguous deposits that can be associated with the demolition of Building 3. Context 557 comprised a well-sorted fine sandy-clay loam, with a 10% stone content consisting of sub-rounded greensand stones, mostly up to 100 mm in length,

but some up to 250 mm in length; some of the greensand blocks displayed worked, straight faces. There were also occasional blocks of flint, and quantities of freshly broken tile up to 250 mm in length. The deposit measured c. 5 m north–south by c. 5 m east–west. It was noticeable that the concentrations of stone and tile lessened to the north. Context 556 had an almost rectangular shape (Fig. 133), and comprised 75% stones set in a fine clay loam matrix. All of the stone was greensand and was well-sorted with sub-rounded pieces up to 90 mm at the top and larger blocks of greensand beneath; the latter included a faced block of greensand up to 400 mm in length. The greensand was not weathered, in contrast to the greensand blocks that formed the surface of the greensand road. The deposit contained some fragments of tile up to 60 mm in length. Context 556 measured some 2.3 m north–south by 2.2 m east–west, and lay on top of what appeared to be buff, sandy clay, the surface of the undisturbed natural. Context 560 comprised a well-sorted clay loam containing about 50% sub-rounded and angular flint up to 100 mm in length, and also occasional fragments of tile up to 50 mm in length. The deposit measured some 1.8 m north–south by 2.4 m east–west.

Finds

The small finds from the three contexts comprised 138 objects, most from demolition deposit C557 and, apart from two coins, all of the objects were either samian sherds or glass fragments. The bulk finds consisted of quantities of fine and coarse ware, ceramic building material, and some animal bones.

How the features were formed

The three deposits are associated with a demolition

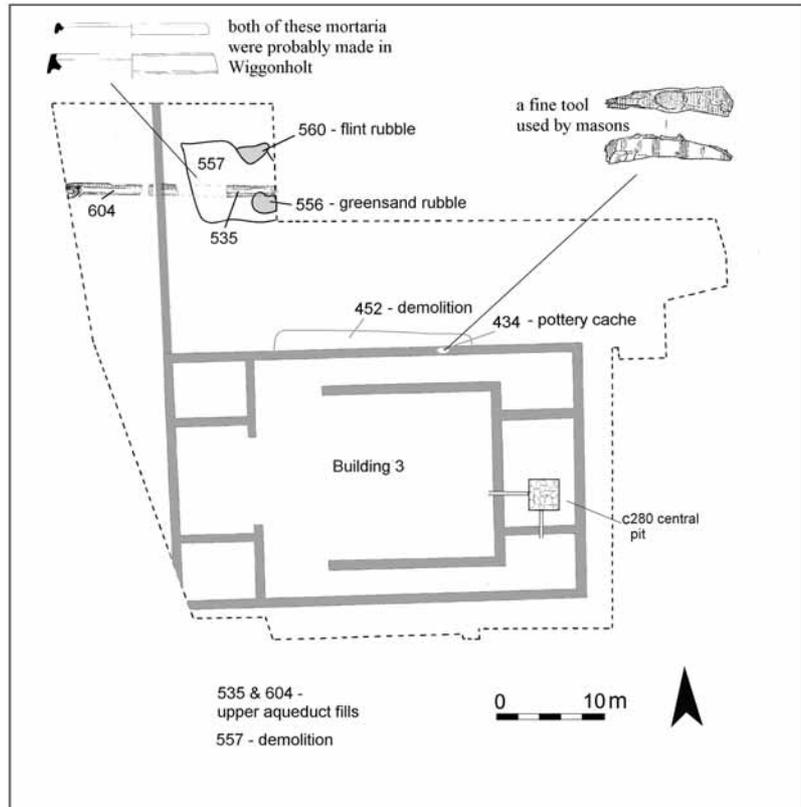


Fig. 132. Phase AG: general plan; Building 3 has been demolished.

process, most probably the demolition of Building 3. Context 557 represented the more general spread of pottery and tile, along with broken pieces of greensand facing blocks. It became less deep as a deposit towards the north, which may indicate that it had derived from the south — i.e. the direction in which lay Building 3 and was presumably a deposit that formed relatively quickly. Contexts 560 (concentration of flint blocks) and 556 (concentration of greensand blocks) were probably the areas where the robbed stone from Building 3 was sorted prior to despatch by cart for reuse elsewhere.

Overall date

The pottery from C557 comprises an assemblage of 2nd- and 3rd century date, dominated by Rowlands Castle wares; samian sherds range from 1st century to late Antonine in date. There is a (residual?) coin of Trajan (SF 5607) in this context and an intrusive coin (SF 4845) of mid-4th century date. The pottery from 556 comprises 133 sherds of 2nd- and early-

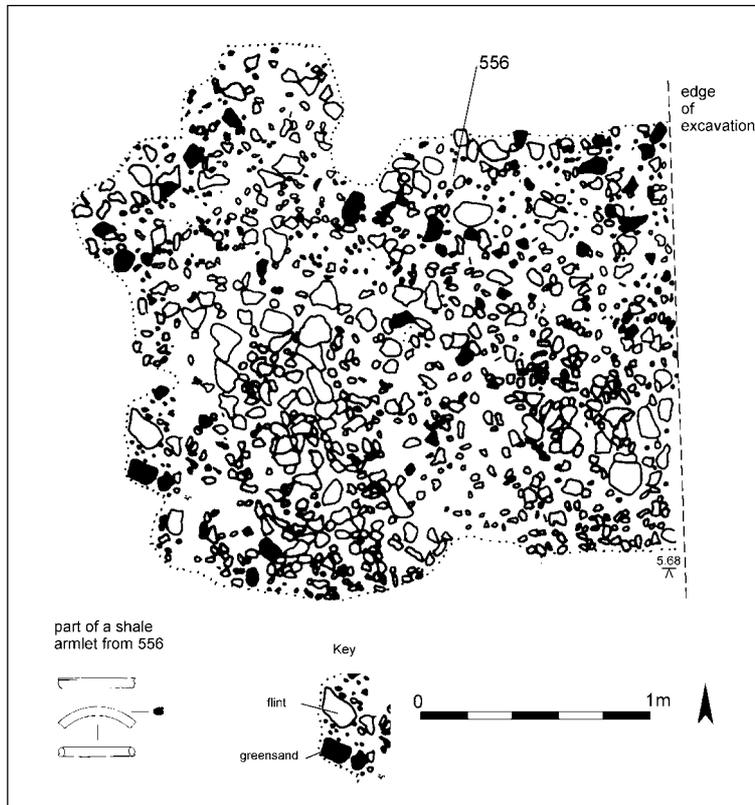


Fig. 133. Phase AG: plan of demolition deposit 556; is this an area where robbed stone was sorted, prior to being used elsewhere?

3rd century pottery. The pottery from 560 comprises 18 sherds of poorly dated Roman wares. The upper fills of the aqueduct (535, 604) contained 1043 sherds (Assemblage 21) of a wide range in date, but with no pieces that could safely be ascribed to the 3rd century. The impression is therefore that the aqueduct was filled with old rubbish during the late 2nd or early 3rd century.

Interpretation and comment

The three deposits are likely to have originated at the beginning of the 3rd century. The area of demolition and the two sorting areas, one of flint and one of greensand, suggest that we have evidence here for the work of the demolition crews possibly sorting rubble derived from the demolition of Building 3 to the south. It can be noted that no trace of these stone-sorting areas were revealed a little way to the south-east, during the 1999 excavation. If these sorting areas are larger in area, therefore, they

clearly spread to the east and not to the south-east. The demolition deposit 557 covered the channel for the aqueduct, although whether the aqueduct actually went out of use at that time is more difficult to prove, since the presumed wooden box-channel delivering the water was always buried; certainly access for maintenance to this section of the aqueduct must have been more difficult thereafter.

PHASE AG: POTTERY CACHE

Description

Two additional deposits can be associated with the demolition of Building 3 — contexts 452 and 434 (Fig. 132). Context 452 consisted of a moderately sorted, clayey sand, containing 10% rounded flint up to 100 mm in length and occasional pieces of broken greensand. The deposit ran parallel to, but outside of, the north wall of Building 3 and measured approximately 15 m east–west by 2 m north–south and c. 50 mm

in depth. There were concentrations of broken tile up to 100 mm in length at the western end of the context and in the middle. The deposit gradually deepened towards the west. A cache of pottery sherds — grey ware and samian, as well as fragments of metal, tile and glass (C434) lay directly over the foundations of the north wall (407) of Building 3. The finds were distributed over an area measuring 1.3 m east–west, 0.6 m north–south and 150 mm deep. The soil was a sandy clay loam which incorporated 15% stones, a mixture of angular flint and greensand.

Finds

The bulk finds from the demolition deposit (C452) north of the north wall, and from the cache of pottery (C434) dumped on the foundations for the north wall, consisted of fine and coarse wares and ceramic building material. The 14 small finds from the cache of pottery (C434) comprised several

samian sherds and three fragments of window glass. Approximately 25 small finds from the demolition deposit (C452) north of the north wall included nail fragments, samian sherds and window glass. The large number of tile fragments from C452 is consistent with the interpretation of this context as a demolition deposit. The relatively high number of window glass fragments suggests that some window panes were broken during demolition.

How the features were formed

The area covered by the demolition deposit (452) lies entirely north of the main north wall of Building 3. There was no extension of this deposit south of the north wall, nor indeed were any demolition deposits derived from Building 3, located south of the north wall. This suggests that the process of demolition was highly structured, the main area for the dumping of demolition rubble being beyond the north wall. This may have been because it was this part of the site that could easily be accessed by wheeled traffic coming along the flint and gravel road. If the origin of C452 lies in the process of demolition, which presumably took a considerable period of time, the origin of the cache of pottery in C434 is likely to have been the result of one momentary episode when the cache was dumped on top of the foundations of the northern wall.

Overall date

In C452 sherds of 2nd- to early-3rd century pottery were recovered, including pieces from a Nene Valley funnel-necked beaker (AD 180–270), and Antonine to early- 3rd-century dog-dish and pie-dish fragments from the Hardham kilns. The samian sherds from C452 are predominantly of Antonine date.

The cache of pottery in C434 (Assemblage 20) consists of 113 large, fresh sherds making up virtually all of the upper part of a large, reeded-rim, carinated bowl of Cunliffe Form 209 with diagonal burnished line decoration (c. AD 100–200). A number of samian sherds were also found as part of C434. These range in date over the 1st and 2nd centuries, but with a majority dateable to the Antonine period. A republican *denarius* of 42 BC (SF 1154), and a small mason's pick, were also found with the sherds. It is possible that this tightly-knit group represented part of the possessions of one individual. It had not apparently been placed in a pit, but simply dumped on top of the wall foundations. No other deposit like it was found anywhere else on the demolished

walls of Building 3.

There is clear evidence for the robbing out of most of the wall foundations in the eastern part of Building 3 during the 13th century, but the presence of this freshly-smashed bowl on top of the foundation for its north wall suggests that the main demolition took place much earlier during the late 2nd or early 3rd century.

Interpretation and comment

These two deposits, which may well be contemporary, seem to represent the major period of demolition of Building 3, approximately at the end of the 2nd century and beginning of the 3rd century AD.²⁸

PHASE AH: c. AD 200–350

Summary

This phase marks the development of the site after Building 3 had gone out of use (Fig. 134). Parts of the eastern range of the building may have been still standing, however. There are several elements that can be broadly dated to this phase. The first comprises three medium-sized post-holes, placed, presumably deliberately, on three of the four corners of the central pit. Despite very careful searching during the excavation, a fourth post-hole at the remaining corner (south-west) could not be found. Packing for the post-holes was substantial and involved broken tile and worked blocks of greensand probably derived from the partial destruction of Building 3. The absence of the post-hole in the fourth corner is a true absence. It was not there in antiquity. The three post-holes are presumably contemporary and must have formed a working entity of some sort. Further features include a drain, and a large spread of tile and pottery over the western part of the site, which appears to be demolition material from the Palace. In addition, the courtyard pit — a large sub-rectangular pit that was excavated in the north-east corner of the courtyard of the masonry building and almost certainly contemporary with Building 3 itself — was filled in during this phase, and the central pit gradually accumulated its upper fills (Assemblage 22).

PHASE AH: COURTYARD PIT

Description

The fills of the pit comprised contexts 11 (same as C283), 28 and 29 (Figs 135, 136, 137). The overall dimensions of the pit taken from cut 30 were 3.5 m north–south, 3.5 m east–west and about 0.6 m deep.

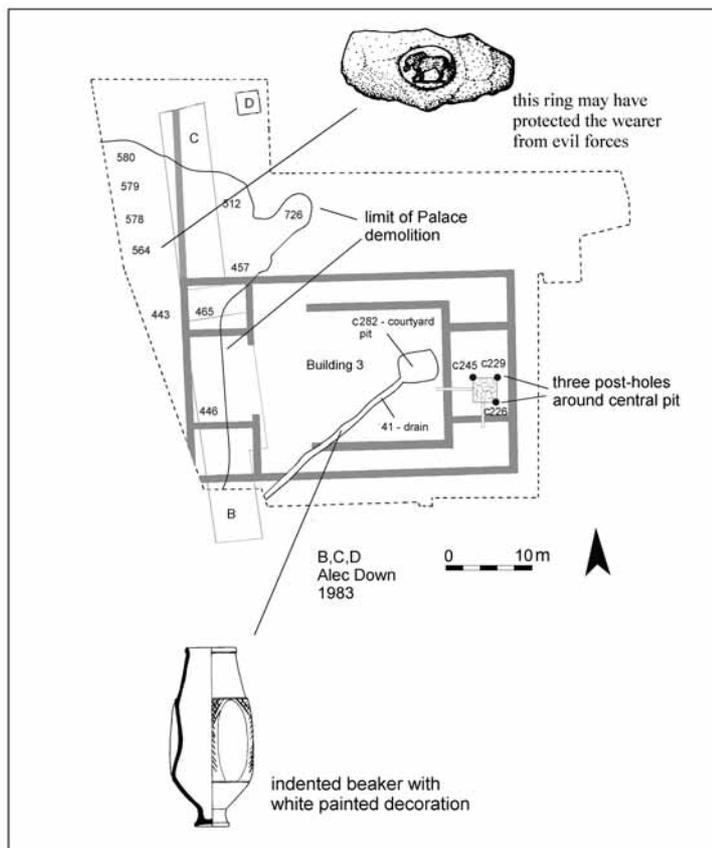
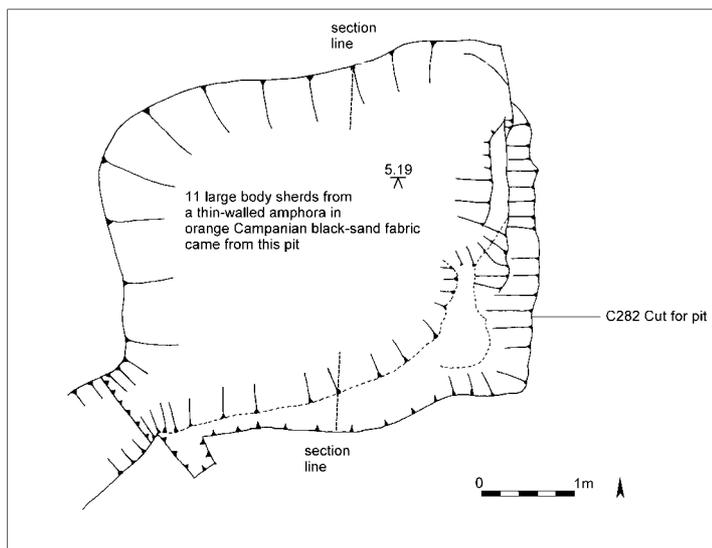


Fig. 134. Phase AH: general plan; demolition deposits probably from the Palace spread across the western end of Building 3.



The upper fill of the pit (11) consisted of a water-lain silty clay, well-sorted and mottled by orange flecks of iron-pan staining, which incorporated several large fragments of brick and tile (especially towards the centre of the pit) and occasional large blocks of greensand. Underneath fill 11 was a 50% poorly-sorted and stony layer containing flint nodules up to 150 mm in length and occasional blocks of greensand (C28). Underlying this was the primary silt (C29) in the pit, represented by a deposit of fine, silty sand, on average about 150 mm deep, containing about 10% of small-sized flint and gravel up to 50mm in length. The cut for the pit (30) had gradually sloping sides and a flattish bottom.

Finds

The 13 small finds comprised glass fragments, including a piece of window glass, nails and a single sherd of samian. The bulk finds included quantities of ceramic building material and a selection of worked building stone.

How the features were formed

A large, rectangular pit was excavated using handtools. It is possible that a metal or wooden container was placed within the pit. At that time, packing materials may have been wedged between the earth side of the pit and the side of the container. After the putative container had been removed, a shallow layer of silt (29) accumulated on the bottom before the layer of flint rubble (28) was thrown into the pit, then followed by more silting and occasional refuse.

Overall date

The samian small find is of

Fig. 135. Phase AH: plan of the courtyard pit; the drain runs from its south-west corner.

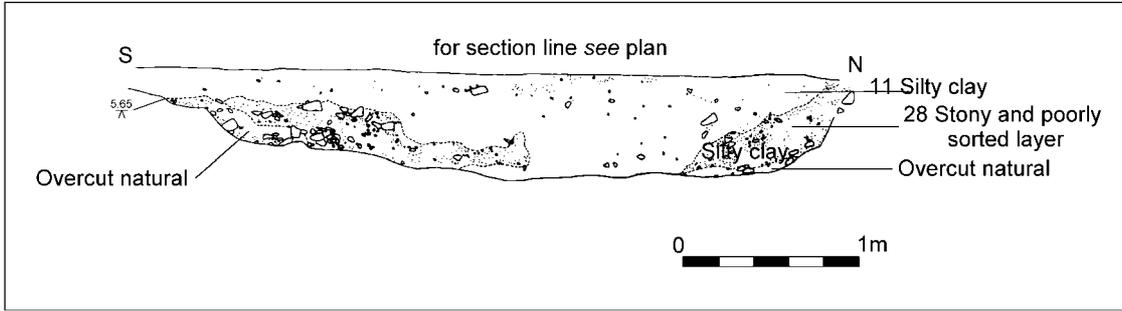


Fig. 136. Phase AH: section of the courtyard pit.



Fig. 137. Mollie excavating the courtyard pit in 1995.

Antonine date and indicates that the pit may have been filling up in the latter part of the 2nd century AD. Thirty-one sherds of late-2nd- to early-3rd century pottery came from the fill of the pit and include 11 large fragments from a thin-walled amphora in orange Campanian black-sand fabric, the spout from a Central Gaulish Dr.45 mortarium (c. AD 160–200) and 15 sherds from a badly abraded, wall-sided mortarium of Cunliffe Form 292 (c. AD 160–250) in

extremely friable cream-buff fabric. These sherds are part of Assemblage 24.

Interpretation and comment

The date of the filling of this pit seems clear enough — late 2nd and 3rd centuries AD; its function, however, is less obvious. It was situated within the courtyard of Building 3, quite close to the inner wall of the eastern range. It appears to have been prob-

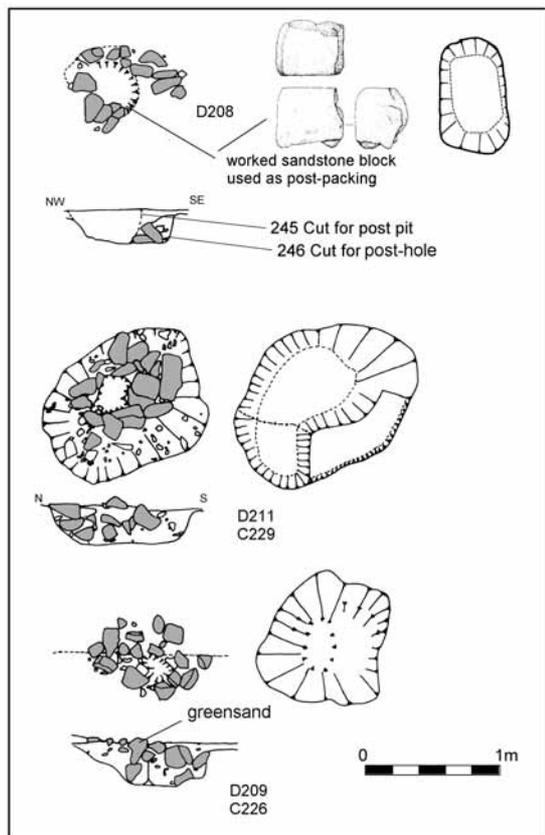


Fig. 138. Phase AH: plans and sections of three post-holes around the central pit.

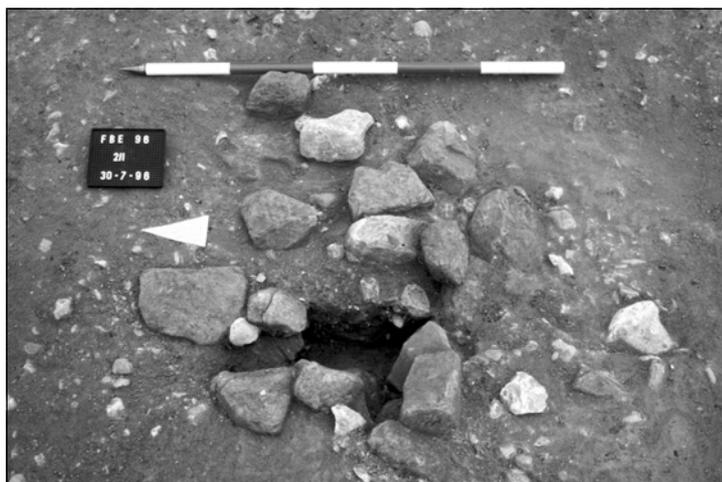


Fig. 139. Phase AH: 211 (one of three post-holes around the central pit).

lematically sited if access into the eastern range from the courtyard is suggested, since the location of the pit would effectively have blocked half of the central room of the eastern range. However, this difficulty may have been overcome by providing a wooden floor over the pit. It is very unlikely that the pit functioned as any kind of rubbish pit, and was therefore presumably only filled up when it was no longer required for its original purpose. This is likely to have been when Building 3 was demolished at the end of the 2nd century. Given the proximity of the water-table at the site, it is certain that this feature, during the winter months, would have held water. It seems probable that this might be connected with its intended purpose and it may well have held a wooden or leaden tank for water. It is possible, therefore, that Building 3 contained some sort of water receptacle in the north-eastern corner of its courtyard. *The date for the construction of the pit is unknown; in theory it could have been contemporary with the initial building of Building 3, or any of its subsequent phases.*

PHASE AH: THREE POST-HOLES

Description

The post-hole at the north-western corner of the central pit (Figs 138, 139, 140) contained a post-pipe (cut 245) which was rectangular, measuring some 380 mm north-south by 300 mm east-west and about 200 mm deep. It had a flat bottom. Filling the post-pipe, after the post had been removed, was a single large, and possibly worked, stone. The

stone measured some 220 mm north-south by 180 mm east-west. The packing material (C208) around the post-pipe consisted of a yellowish-brown clayey sand containing up to 80% stones. The packing stones consisted of irregularly-shaped greensand blocks up to 200 mm in length, with occasional flint nodules up to 50 mm in length. The overall size of the post-pit was 0.9 m north-south, by 0.95 m east-west by 200 mm deep.

The post-hole at the north-eastern corner of the central pit contained a post-pipe (C227) which was rectangular, measuring some 250 mm north-south by 200 mm east-west and about 200 mm

deep (Fig. 139). It had a flat bottom. Filling the post-pipe was a well-sorted silty clay, mottled with orange discolourations due to iron-pan staining and with only 2% stones. The packing material (C211) around the post-pipe consisted of a yellowish-brown clayey sand containing up to 80% stones. The packing stones consisted of irregularly-shaped greensand blocks up to 200 mm in length, with occasional flint nodules up to 90 mm in length. In all some 15 blocks of greensand were used in the packing, and a few of the stones were worked with one straight side, suggesting that they had come from the facing stones of Building 3. There was also one large piece of tile in the packing. The overall size of the post-pit was 1 m north-south, by 1 m east-west by 250 mm deep.

The post-hole at the south-eastern corner of the central pit contained a post-pipe (C224) which was rectangular, measuring some 130 mm north-south by 220 mm east-west and about 280 mm deep. It had a flat bottom. Filling the post-pipe was a well-sorted silty clay, stone-free and mottled with orange discolourations due to iron-pan staining. The packing material (C209) around the post-pipe consisted of a yellowish-brown clayey sand containing up to 50% stones. The packing stones consisted of some irregularly-shaped greensand blocks up to 170 mm in length, with occasional flint nodules up to 50 mm in length. In all some 8 blocks of greensand were used in the packing, and several of the stones were worked with one straight side, suggesting that they had come from the facing stones of Building 3. The overall size of the post-pit was 1.05 m north-south, by 0.85 m east-west by 300 mm deep.

Finds

The bulk finds from the three post-holes included ceramic building material and worked stone. The several small finds from the three post-holes included three nails.

How the features were formed

These three post-holes were all formed in the same way. Holes were dug, partly into the silted up fill of the central pit, and partly into the Reading beds

natural clay into which the central pit was excavated. Once the holes had been dug, timber uprights (of unknown height) were placed in the holes and broken tile and greensand packing stones were rammed in around the base of the uprights to make them earthfast. It is uncertain if, at the end of the structure's life, the posts decayed *in situ* or were removed. A large stone was positioned to fill the hole in post-pipe 245 and this suggests that the posts may have been removed and presumably reused elsewhere.

Overall date

There is a sherd of possibly pre-Flavian pottery from packing 211 (SF 523). From packing 209 came five sherds, including an abraded Rowlands Castle ware sherd. The abraded nature of the sherds suggests that the pottery is residual. From packing 211 and post-pipe 227 there are single sherds whose fabric looks similar to some Atrebatic Overlap fabrics.

Interpretation and comment

It is difficult to comment upon the function(s) of these three post-holes. Although the small fragments of pottery found within them suggest a date rather early in the Roman period, the abraded nature of the sherds and the fact that the greensand packing stones used clearly came from a demolished building in the near vicinity (probably Building 3) argue

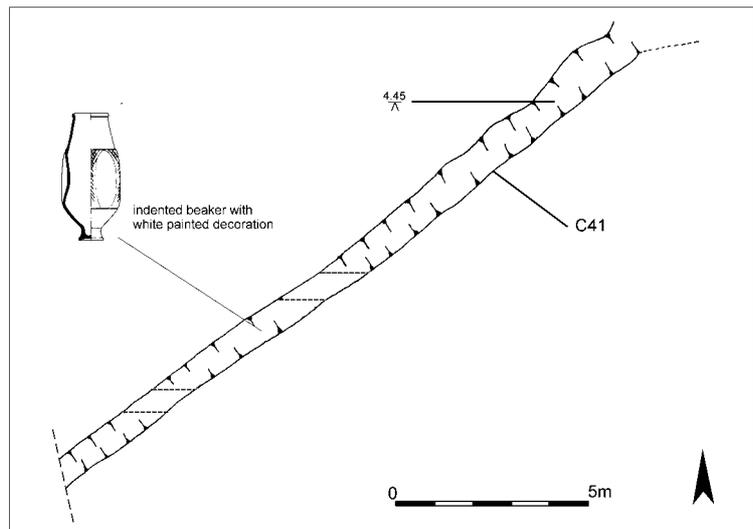


Fig. 141. Phase AH plan of the drain which cut through the foundation walls of Building 3.



Fig. 142. New Forest Beaker from the drain of Phase AH.

for a later Roman date, and probably a date after the demolition of Building 3. In addition, the greensand packing stones are very similar to the packing stones of post-holes recorded and photographed by Alec Down some 25 metres to the north-west, overlying the aqueduct. On balance, therefore, a later Roman date seems more justified.

PHASE AH: DRAIN

Description

The fill (22; 37) of this linear feature consisted of yellowish-brown clayey sand with occasional flint chips (7–30 mm) and a few flint nodules (55–100 mm). The feature was orientated north-east to south-west and measured c. 19 m in length and 0.95 m in

width and had a depth of 220 mm (Fig. 141). Clearly, the feature continued further to the south-west, outside the excavated area, and in all probability drained into the stream. The original length, therefore, may have been as much as 30m. The sides were parallel and sloping, and the bottom of the feature was flat. Levels taken on the bottom of the feature indicate that the fall, from north-east to south-west was of the order of 0.5 m within the excavated area.

Finds

The seven small finds from the drain included three iron fragments, and the bulk finds comprised one almost complete New Forest beaker, some ceramic building material and a small quantity of animal bone.

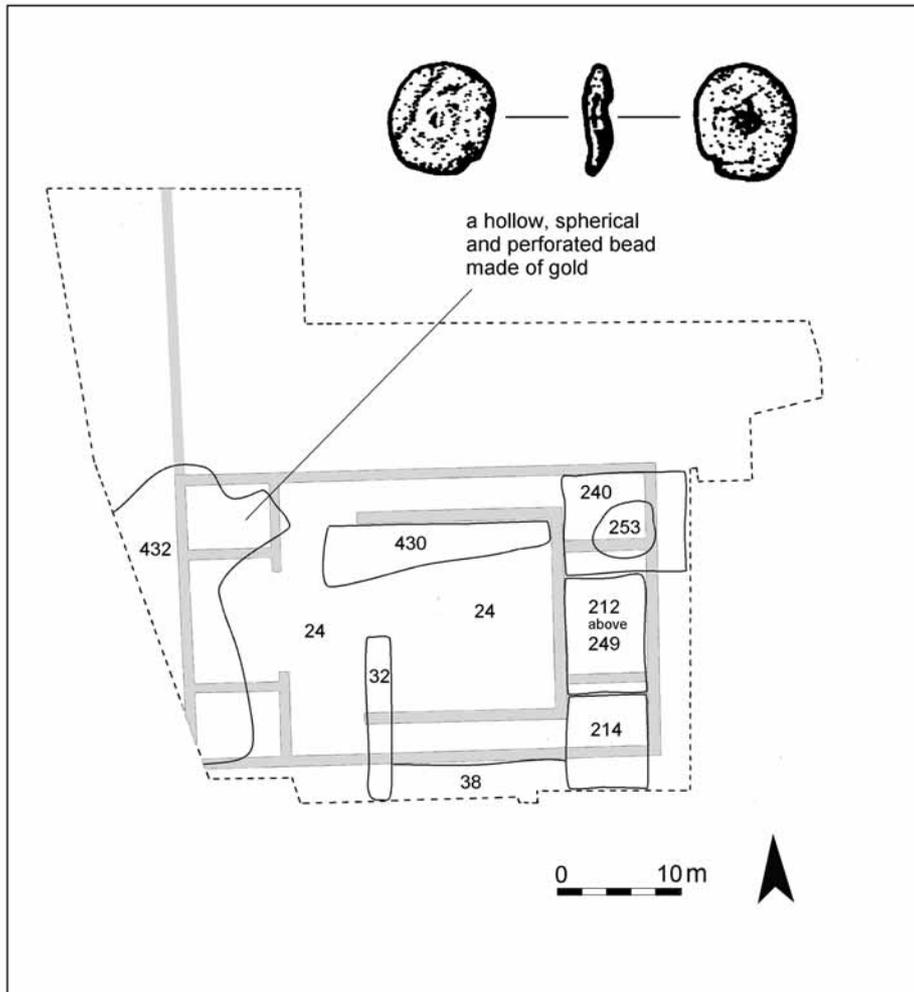


Fig. 143. Phase AI: general plan showing the extent of key deposits, some suggesting medieval activity.

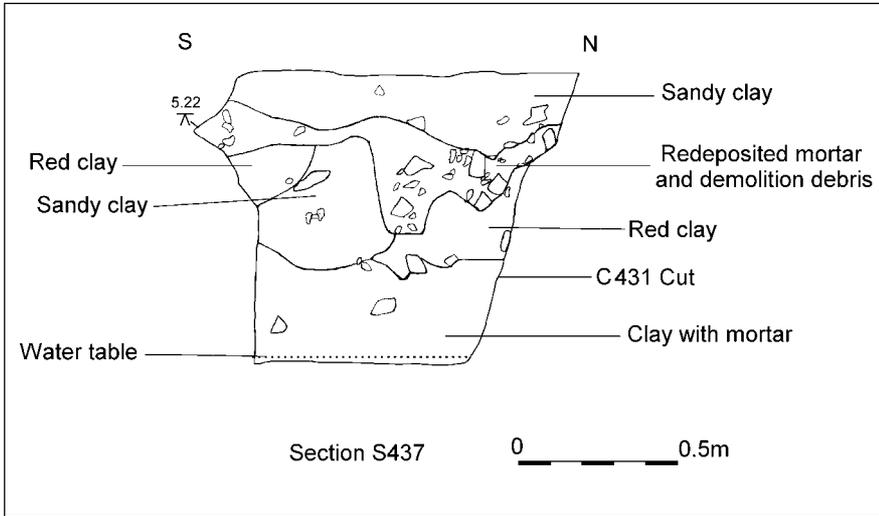


Fig. 144. Phase AJ: section across the robber trench 437.

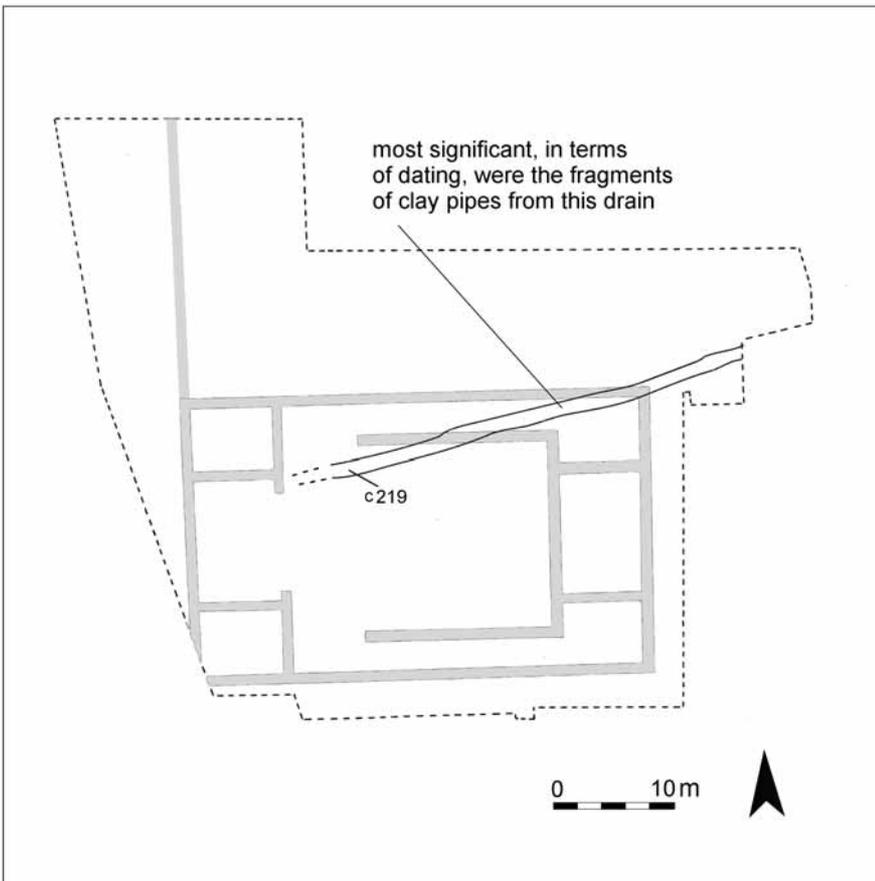


Fig. 146. Phase AK: general plan; the late medieval drain crosses the northern foundation walls of Building 3 on its way to the stream.

How the features were formed

The trench for the drain was excavated from the south-west corner of the courtyard pit, and was dug to lead excess water in a south-westerly direction towards the stream. Given the absence of any pipe, it is presumed that this was an open drain. The drainage trench cut through the masonry foundations of the southern internal corridor wall and the southern wall of Building 3, removing a couple of flint courses from each. The silt filling of the feature indicates that, after it ceased to be maintained by regular clearing out, it was left to fill up naturally.

Overall date

The fill of the drain yielded three fragments of Roman tile, two nondescript pottery fragments and a scatter of fragments making up a nearly complete New Forest beaker of early 4th century date (part of Assemblage 24). If one assumes that the drain was taking excess water from the courtyard pit, then the presence of this vessel suggests that it remained open until after the destruction of the palace and into the early 4th century.

Interpretation and comment

This feature was clearly a drain, which was abandoned during the 4th century. It is possible to suggest that the drain functioned to draw water away from the top of the filled in courtyard pit. If the filling of the pit had settled, it may always have attracted surface water, which needed to be drained from the area into the stream. If it is assumed that the drain was functioning during the 3rd century, it will have drained the immediate area in front of the Palace. It ceased to be maintained some time after the Palace had finally been abandoned.

PHASE AH: PALACE DEMOLITION

Description

Demolition deposits, presumably deriving from the Palace, spread across the infilled stream and into the excavated

area (Fig. 134). The deposits, encountered in three different excavation seasons, were given a variety of context numbers: 443, 446, 457, 465, 512, 564, 578, 579, 580, 726. The overall spread of the material was some 35 m north–south by a maximum of 20 m east–west. The deposits had been interrupted by Alec Down's excavations (his trenches B and C). Context 443 was characteristic of the demolition deposits. It was poorly sorted and consisted of sandy clay with about 15% stones. The stones comprised both small and large flint nodules up to 170 mm in length, and also large blocks of greensand up to 250 mm in length. Also incorporated were large quantities of brick and tile, with some pieces up to 250 mm in length. The average depth of demolition context 443 was about 100 mm. Context 446, to the south, was 90% stony at its northern end, but only 10% stony in other areas. The stones comprised both angular flint and greensand blocks up to 180mm in length. There were occasional tile fragments up to 100mm in length. Context 564 was 33% stony, with flint and greensand blocks up to 100 mm, and fre-

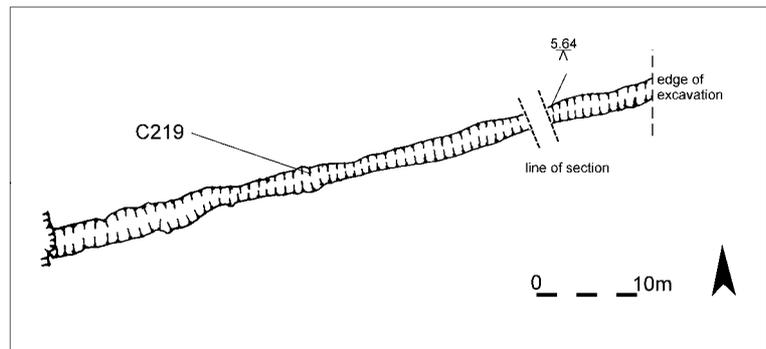


Fig. 147. Phase AK: plan of the late medieval drain.

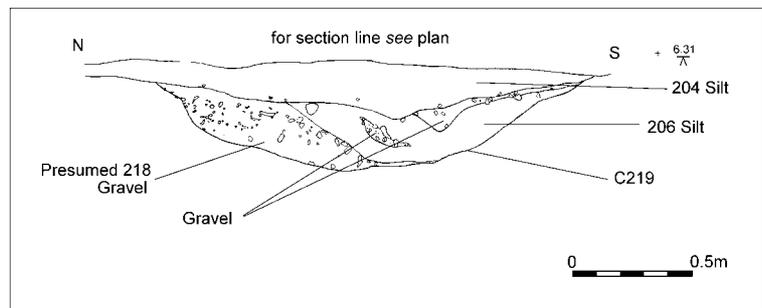


Fig. 148. Phase AK: section of the late medieval drain.

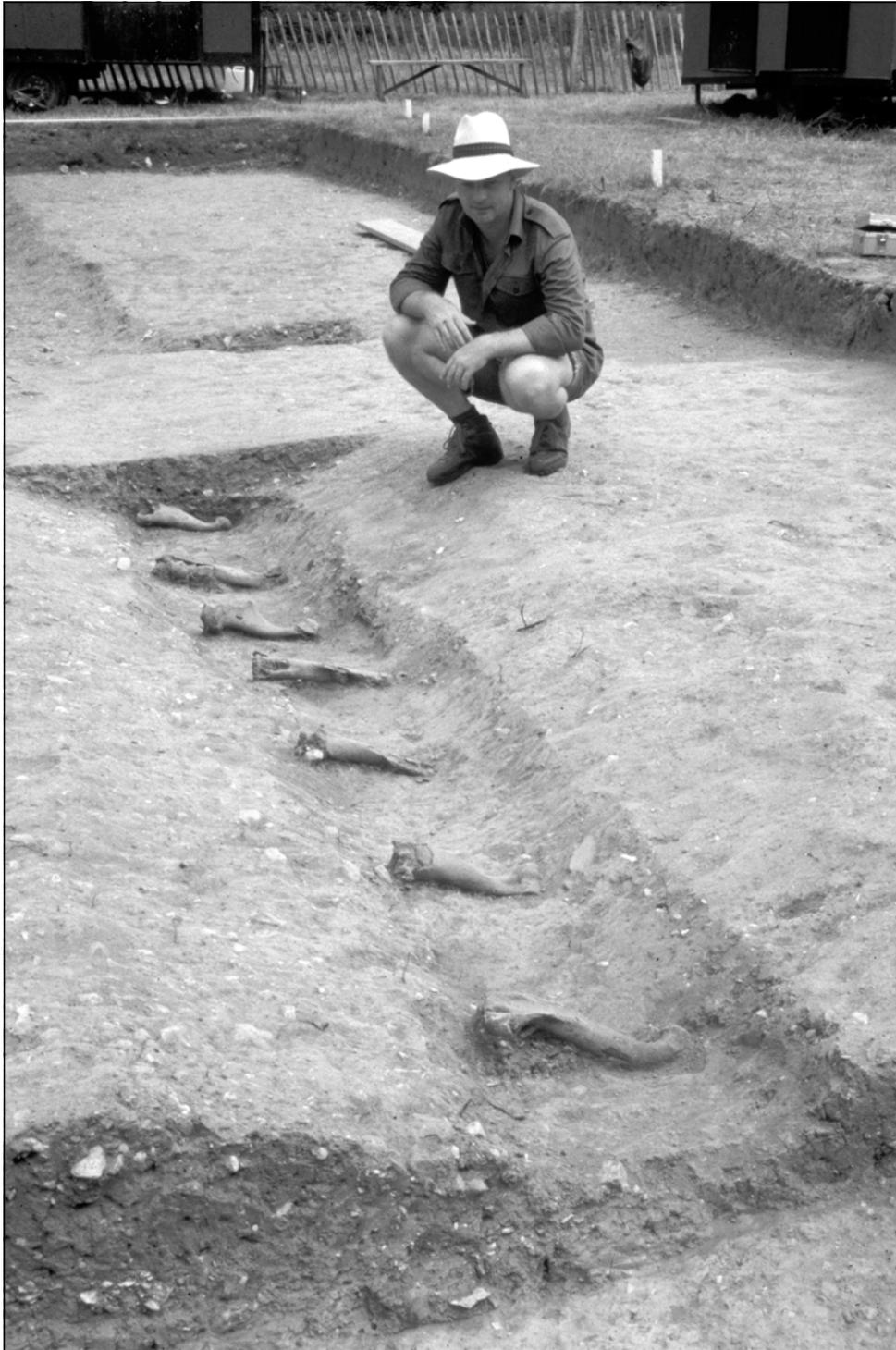


Fig. 152. Phase AL: one of the bone-lines; Steve ponders what it all means. It probably is an unusual method of field drainage.

quent tile fragments with sharp breaks up to 100 mm in length; this deposit was deepest (280 mm) on the west side and less deep to the east. Generally, the demolition deposits were relatively rich in both small and bulk finds, particularly tile.

Finds

Over 300 small finds from the demolition deposits comprised a range of materials: keyed tile, samian sherds, nails, glass, tesserae; a gaming counter; eight coins; iron; flint and stone. The coin list is given in Table 3.

The eight coins, apart from the residual early one, seem to indicate that the demolition deposits were accumulating at the end of the 3rd and into the 4th century. It is noteworthy that a further coin, minted 321–2 (SF 1482), was found in context 445 (immediately above C443).

Context No.	Layer	Small Find No.	Date	Type
443	1	1534	322–3	Coin
512	1	3838	346–50	Coin
512	1	3956	337–41	Coin
579	1	5149	321	Coin
580	1	5263	325	Coin
579	1	5542	268–70	Coin
512	1	3598	270–3	Coin
580	1	5885	Late 1st?	Coin

The bulk finds from the demolition deposits consisted of a wide range of objects including very large quantities of ceramic building material. These finds reflect the heterogeneous nature of the demolition deposits, ranging from pottery and glass to building materials, and to food refuse in the form of animal bones.

How the features were formed

These spreads of demolition material lie along the western side of the excavation and cover the infilled stream. They do not extend more than approximately 20 metres to the east of the stream. The evidence suggests that these deposits formed during the collapse and demolition of what remained of the Palace building in the final quarter of the 3rd century AD, and during the spreading of that rubble eastwards and over the infilled stream. It is noteworthy that the eastern fringes of these deposits cover the western foundations of Building 3.

Overall date

The pottery from these deposits consist almost en-

tirely of late-2nd- to 3rd century pottery with just a little 4th-century material (Assemblage 23). The samian sherds range in date from pre-Flavian to late Antonine, reflecting the heterogeneous sources for these deposits.

Interpretation and comment

The spatial spread of this material, its heterogeneous content and the dating evidence provided by the three coins of Constantine I indicate that these deposits originated from the robbing and demolition of the Palace to the west.

PHASE AI: 13TH TO 14TH CENTURY - MEDIEVAL OCCUPATION OR ACTIVITY? □

Summary

There were a number of deposits, mostly lying directly over the undisturbed subsoil (with the exception of C432), which contained quantities of Roman and medieval sherds; the latter included large pieces with fresh breaks. These finds may indicate that some kind of occupation or activity took place on the site, either in the ruins of the eastern range of Building 3, or more likely, associated with the process of systematically robbing the foundations of the eastern range (Fig. 143).

PHASE AJ: 13TH TO 14TH CENTURY - THE ROBBING OF THE FOUNDATIONS OF BUILDING 3 □

Summary

The eastern end of Building 3, and the entire length of the northern internal corridor wall, were robbed largely or entirely of their flint foundations (Figs 144, 145). The western foundations of Building 3 survived intact.

PHASE AK: 15TH CENTURY - LATER MEDIEVAL DRAIN □

Summary

This phase of activity on the site is marked by a shallow, round-bottomed ditch about 1m wide and nowhere more than 500 mm deep. It ran straight across the excavation from east to west (Figs 146–149).

PHASE AL: 18TH-CENTURY BONE-LINES □ ■

Summary

A narrow, linear gully was located, entering the excavation from the north and turning to the west to join up ultimately with the stream. The distinguishing feature of the gully was that on the bottom of it were placed, at regular intervals, and transverse to the long axis of the feature, animal bones, predomi-



Fig. 156. Area B: from the south-west; the early ditch runs from right to left. The northern pit (Phase BF) is at the top.

nantly the humeri and femora of horse (Figs 150–54).

PHASE AM: 19TH- OR 20TH-CENTURY MOLE DRAINS

Summary

During the 19th or 20th centuries further attempts were made to improve the drainage of the field. This involved the deep ploughing of widely spaced, narrow, linear channels, orientated approximately north-east to south-west (Fig. 155) and draining into the stream.

AREA B

PHASE BA: c. 10 BC–AD 25? – EARLY LINEAR DITCH

Summary

Area B (for position see Fig. 7) was excavated for two very specific reasons:

- To test whether the northern flanking or boundary wall from Building 3 came this far north;
- To test whether the very straight east–west ditch located by Alec Down under the A27 (figs 8, 270) came this far west;

Indeed, the hypothesis before the excavation of this

trench was that the very straight east–west ditch under the A27 might not have been a ditch to supply piped water, as Down had very tentatively surmised (Cunliffe *et al.* 1996, 42), but rather the robber trench for the putative northern side of a masonry enclosure that surrounded Building 3. In the event this hypothesis was disproved. Down had, however, correctly demonstrated that this large ditch was an early feature in the Roman landscape at Fishbourne.

Description

The ditch went straight across the trench, from east to west, and disappeared under the western side of the trench. It measured c. 3.5 m north–south, by about 1.5 metres deep at its deepest point. It was essentially V-shaped in profile with a possible ‘cleaning slot’ at the bottom. The ditch fill was very distinctive with a light grey silt (C919) in the ‘cleaning slot’ and adhering to the south side of the ditch, a charcoal spread (C919.2); the latter had been observed also on the south side by Alec Down (Cunliffe *et al.* 1996, 42), and then a deliberate fill of red clay