

## WC Cutting 5

The excavation of a small mound, c. 21' in diameter, east of Building 2 (see Fig. XXX Archive) produced a large scatter of sherds, predominantly 13th century coarseware, from the topsoil and the flinty brown loam layer over the mound's chalk core. The late 12th/early 13th century glazed sherds (**GF224** [2], **GF268**, **GF328**, **511** & **550**) and a 10th-12th century sliding bolt (**GF411**) point to activity at Wroughton Mead at this time, as do the two later 13th century ones (**GF259**), but clearly the vast majority of the data shows occupation concentrated around the middle decades of the 13th.

The bronze finger ring (**GF232**) from the flint layer (layer 1) is a 13th century type.

metal objects, nails (**GFs 235, 237, 259, 310 & 460**).

The top two layers, being over the chalk core, built up after the mound was constructed, possibly as a result of the mound being used as a domestic rubbish dump from the Building 1/2/3 complex. The low mound itself consisted of a chalk lumps over redeposited clay with flints over a black soil layer. This was lying on a light brown clayey soil.

The hypothesis is thus; the decision was taken to construct Buildings 2 & 3 (possibly with Building 1 or extension south of it) and a level surface to on which to build was required (see Cutting 4, p.XX). The OGS to the west, that is layer 4 of mound, was, naturally, the first to be dug up and was then dumped some 45 feet to the east on the OGS there (layer 5 of light brown clayey soil). This thick, dark, 'charcoally' layer may well represent the pre-mound occupation layer (the OGS) from the Building 1/2/3 complex and should allow us the possibility of a *terminus ante quem* for the mound and also, therefore, possibly for those buildings. In addition, the fact that a layer such as this had the time to form (some 2"-3"), must point to a certain length of occupation at Wroughton Mead prior to the mound building. This shovelled up material was charcoally, possibly from hearth clearance from Building 1 (?pre-south extension phase) or from Building 4, or from the burning down of a pre-stone timber phase to Building 2. Either way, this layer was full of the detritus from a pre-mound occupation phase; charcoal, nails, an awl, general house-hold iron work, pottery *etc*, of the 13th century, with a hint, but no more, of early 13th century activity (**GF268**). The OGS onto which it was placed was not, however, similar in make-up, probably because it was away from the main occupation area, although it was similar in date.

As levelling continued to the west, so the clay with flint subsoil was reached, and this in turn was carted off and dumped on the burgeoning mound. The redness of the clay the workers had now reached may have given Raddon (Red Down) its name. Below the clay, the natural chalk was cleared down to form a level platform for the building(s), thus the chalk was the final excavated layer to be deposited on the mound. This explains why it is situated below the later humic

occupation layer and topsoil, yet above clay with flints and two old ground surfaces. Finds from this chalky core are ones which inevitably became mixed in as the various other layers were also being cut into. This would explain why Romano-British sherds were uncovered in the later occupation material (layer 1) above early medieval ones in the old ground surface (layer 5).

The core of chalk lumps was found to continue well away from the centre of the mound in a north-westerly direction probably because the mound was gradually becoming elongated towards the area which was being levelled.

Clearly, the stratigraphy of the mound is difficult to elucidate with any clarity due to the method in which it was built. Of note, however, is a sliding lock bolt (GF411) of an 11th century date, indicating a structure at Wroughton Mead at this time and possibly on the site of Buildings 2 & 3 (see GF199, Building 1 p. XX).

It is reasonable to assume the mound was built in the 13th century, probable mid to later.

Why charcoal? what sort of activities were going on here in Phase 1?  
Is this pre-occupation (pre-medieval)? or contemporary with the earliest phases of WC occupation in the early C12th?  
Is it burning of an earlier building on the site of Cuttings 2/4?  
Is it clearnace from fires in House IV?  
Was the land cleared of scrub by burning or was the area now referred to as Cuttings 2/4 where fires were lit. Hearth area?  
Pottery making area? You don't need a kiln to fire pots, could be an 'open' firing area.  
Phase 1 'charcoal period' (contemporary with House IV?), then there's a gap (the time it takes to build a c. 2"-3" topsoil) when OGS builds up (grass, charcoal, etc), then area 'Cuttings 2/4' is dug out for the new abode and barns and modern loo, thus charcoally topsoil is dumped to E., then clay with flints, then chalk subsoil and hence mound is built, and voila, flat, new building area and one mound.

**The sequence should be:**

**Latest:**

**Topsoil**  
↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓

**Layer 1 - all Phase 2**  
↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓

**Layer 3 & Layer 2 - all Phase 1. All GFs were dropped during mound-building or came from OGS to W., if possible to differentiate**

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**Layer 4** - all Phase 1. All GFs were dropped during mound-building or (more possibly than 2 & 3?) came from OGS to W., if possible to differentiate  
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**Layer 5** - Phase 1. GF was dropped during mound-building or (more possibly than 2, 3 & 4?) from OGS to W. Dates layer if not residual, if possible to differentiate. If layers 4 & 5 are contemporaneous, **GF550** may give a *terminus post quem* for the mound and buildings II & III, and a *terminus ante quem* for House IV?  
↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓

**Earliest: Layer 6**

Layers 5, 4, 3 & 2 will have Phase 1 material in them, with some rogue Phase 2 material in layer 2, possibly 3. Topsoil and Layer 1 will have no Phase 1 material in them, unless area ploughed or material dug up from elsewhere on the site has been dumped on this mound at a later date.

2/6/95 & 14/6/95 iw  
Not Checked by PJF yet; 14/6/95

## WC Cutting 5

### GF Numbers

(see attached sheet) Archive XXX, S. Shields analysis.

**Phase 1 refers to the period prior to and during the construction of the mound.**

**Phase 2 refers to the period after the construction of the mound.**

30/07/61. Quadrant laid out over the W. half, and to the W. of, a small mound, c. 21' in diameter, E. of Building II (see Fig. XXX Archive). Excavation in the NE quadrant found the topsoil to contain a scatter of med.? pottery and nails. This was removed down to a hard packed layer of small flints, which covered the top of the mound in all four quadrants. Flint layer c. 2"-3" on top and at S. & N. ends, although c. 6" on S. slope.

From flint layer in the NE quadrant came a bronze finger ring (**GF232**) and a large amount of med.? sherds and metal objects (**GFs 235, 237, 259, 310 & 460**). A N. ext. uncovered a large amount of med.? pottery (**GF281**), including the rim and walls of one jar to a depth of 12". Excavation in the SW quad. produced sherds (**GF304**) in the topsoil and in the flinty layer more med.? iron objects and sherds (**GF328**). The topsoil and chalk mound gave **GF418**, the clay subsoil **GF441**. The NW produced similar finds (**GFs 339, 373, 404, 411, 419 & 458**), as did the SE (**GFs 360, 369, 396 & 420**).

Below the layer of flints was a low mound consisting of chalk lumps. This was found to continue well away from the centre of the cutting in a NW direction, and was therefore not simply a small central mound. This elongated mound of chalk lumps over redeposited clay with flints extended over the 'ditch' in the NW (thus later than 'ditch' layer).

This chalk was removed down to to the red clay with flints in the SE (**GFs 398 & 451**) and in the NW (**GF464**). This layer (layer 3) overlay a black soil with small flints and charcoal (layer 4). Below this was the possible OGS (layer 5) of light brown clay (humic topsoil) over natural clay with flints (layer 6).

**GFs 224, 268, 328, 511 & 550** - all early C13th? glazed ware sherds; (prelim. analysis from R. Thomson - could be giving a *terminus post quem* for the building of the mound and occupation of House I, bldgs. II & III??). As this type was noted in the topsoil and layers 1, 3 & 5, as well as the top of the 'ditch' (probably, therefore, top of layer 4. NB almost every layer), this would seem to indicate that the site was occupied at least in the early C13th (if dating is correct). Taking it one step further, as this type was noted in every layer but layer 2, then, it is possible these sherds are from the OGS in area cutting 2/4 and got into these layers during mound building. Thus mound was built after early C13th.

**GF259**, a later C13th? ware, from layer 1, could be giving a date for the period after the mound was built and as layer 1 was beginning to build up.

### 'Ditch'

Initially a ditch was believed to exist in the SW and to the N. of the NE quadrant. A darker humus was evident in its fill, from which came many med.? sherds (**GFs 268, 282 & 457**) and a buckle (**GF283**), as well as miscellaneous finds (e.g. **GF311**). The ditch was 1'11" deep below the modern surface, 12" below the clay with flints and flat bottomed. It was c. 3' wide across the top. However, it was later realised that this had been mistakenly labelled as a ditch, whereas in fact it represented a continuation of an underlying layer, layer 4, which had probably formed prior to the formation of the mound. This thick, dark, 'charcoally' layer may well represent an occupation layer before the mound was formed, in fact it could be the OGS from area 'Cuttings 2/4'. If, as is the suggestion, the mound was formed by digging out the area around Cutting 4 (bldgs. II & III), and possibly Cutting 2 (House I), to level the ground before the construction of those buildings, then this layer (and lower ones) should be earlier than the construction phase of the aforementioned buildings, thus allowing us the possibility of a *terminus ante quem* for I, II & III.

If the 'ditch' is thus a continuation of the layer which was uncovered below the mound, as seems to be the case, then some finds from the dark black soil under the mound should be contemporaneous with those from the 'ditch'. Thus **GFs 268, 282, 283, 311 & 457** (from the 'ditch'), should be of a similar date to or earlier date than **GFs 505, 526 & 550**.

**GF numbers, sequence, layering & initial interpretation:**

**Clayey brown humus/Topsoil. 3"-15".**

**GFs 224, 237, 275, 281, 304, 339, 360, 396, & 404** (possibly **GF411**)

Late Phase 2. Latest material. Modern/post-medieval, with some later medieval material, *i.e.* from agricultural activities associated with Cutting 10 (Grange) ?. Earlier material is probably from ploughing lower layers (e.g. **GF224** - early C13th? glazed ware; prelim. analysis from R. Thomson).

**Layer 1: Flinty/ flinty brown loam layer over chalk mound. 5"-18".**

**GFs 232, 235, 259, 268** (see 'ditch' below), **310, 328, 362, 369, 373, 398,** (possibly **GF411**), **418, 419, 420, 451, 460 & 464**

Second latest material. Phase 2 occupation - C13th/ early C14th? and later?. Layer built up after mound had been constructed and may represent the occupation period of the 'new' buildings (I, II & III) and possibly ploughing over the mound and/or use of mound as a dump from Phase 2 occupation (numerous sherds and metal items) and later (post-phase 2?) activity. As layer 1 built up after the completion of the mound it is unlikely that any Phase 1 is evident in this layer. **GF259**, a later C13th? ware, from layer 1, could be giving a date for the period after the mound was built and as layer 1 was beginning to build up.

**Layer 2: chalk/ chalk lumps with red clay. 6"-14"**

**GFs 398, 441, 451 & 458**

Earliest material, but not earliest finds!. This mound material is possibly the natural chalk dug from levelling of ground to W. (?), *i.e.* under the clay with flints subsoil. As natural chalk should not contain any finds, those from this layer are undoubtedly ones either dropped during the digging process, which could well help date the mound, and/or ones from Phase 1, into which the mound builders were digging. Carried out early/mid C13th?, along with rest of mound.

**Layer 3: red clay with flints. 12"-20".**

**GFs 494 & 511** (possibly **GF398**)

Middle of mound. Clay with flints is well-known subsoil, dug from levelling of ground to W. (?), *i.e.* the natural clay with flints under Phase 1 occupation layer. Built up on mound at the same time, but immediately after, layer 2, and thus could feasibly contain material from a much earlier occupation level/ period. The digging of a level surface would have meant digging into a Phase 1 occupation level and would therefore have thrown Phase 1 material onto the mound. Phase 2 should predominate in layer 1 (with very few, if any, Phase 1), a few Phase 2 in layer 2, possibly some in layer 3 (worm-sorted, 'plough churned') but no Phase 2 material should be evident in layers 4 & 5.

**Layer 4: brown/black soil with small flints and charcoal. To 23".**

**GFs 268** (top of ditch), **282, 283, 311 & 457** (from the 'ditch'), should be of a similar date to, or earlier date than, **GFs 505 & 526** (which are from this black layer). **GF494** may also have finds from this layer.

If layer 5 is the OGS of Phase 1 (see below), onto which this layer was placed, then layer 4 is also the OGS of Phase 1. One humic top layer was dumped on another (only layer 4 topsoil contained charcoal because it was nearer to House

IV?). If this is the case, then both should contain more or less similar (Phase 1) material, although lower down in layer 5 there may be earlier material.

Why charcoal? what sort of activities were going on here in Phase 1?

Is this pre-occupation (pre-medieval)? or contemporary with the earliest phases of WC occupation in the early C12th?

Is it burning of an earlier building on the site of Cuttings 2/4?

Is it clearance from fires in House IV?

Was the land cleared of scrub by burning or was the area now referred to as Cuttings 2/4 where fires were lit. Hearth area?

Pottery making area? You don't need a kiln to fire pots, could be an 'open' firing area.

Phase 1 'charcoal period' (contemporary with House IV?), then there's a gap (the time it takes to build a c. 2"-3" topsoil) when OGS builds up (grass, charcoal, etc), then area 'Cuttings 2/4' is dug out for the new abode and barns and modern loo, thus charcoally topsoil is dumped to E., then clay with flints, then chalk subsoil and hence mound is built, and voila, flat, new building area and one mound.

The chalk lumps over redeposited clay with flints is off to the NW because its where new platform is being levelled. Workers are getting fed up with carting chalk to mound and it gradually gets elongated towards the work area.

(Improbable - iwb - If layer 4 was under layer 5 when dug, it is layer 2 of Phase 1, and was the second layer to be dug up and heaped here after the OGS (layer 5) had been dumped to form the very bottom of the mound. This would make layer 4 earlier than 5, and so, therefore, the finds should be Phase 1 (earlier Phase 1), although it is possible that some later material may have got into this layer during mound building. Possibly contemporary with House IV ? - Another possibility sees Layer 4 as a phase earlier than Phase 1 occupation. The OGS (layer 5), if topsoil from Cuttings 2/4, could be Phase 1 only and thus layer 4, in this scenario below layer 5, is the earliest occupation layer, having been under the original OGS (see below for major doubts).

**Layer 5: light brown clayey soil. 23"-27".**

**GF550.**

Layer 5 was, I am 90% sure, the topsoil (OGS) onto which layer 4 was dumped. Possibly contains material from site prior to medieval occupation (early Phase 1 occupation), contemporary with/earlier than 4 & definitely earlier than 1. Layer 4, if also a topsoil, means 4 & 5 may well have much in common. Layers 4 & 5 are consequently the OGS during the period immediately prior to the construction of the mound.

(Improbable - iwb - If it was the first material dug up from the W. to make a level area for buildings I, II & III. i.e. the humic topsoil (Old Ground Surface) of Phase 1, it could thus be comparable with layer 1, but (100-200-300 years) earlier than it. However, this possibility is flawed because this layer lies on top of natural clay with flints subsoil. If this soil was dumped here from further W., then it was dumped on the natural clay with flints, i.e. there was no topsoil here at the time= unlikely.

**Layer 6: Clay with flints subsoil.**

No GFs. Undisturbed. Comparable with layer 3, the disturbed clay with flints from area Cutting 2/4.

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↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓

**Layer 1 - all Phase 2**

↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓

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