

## Archive

### WC Cutting 5

The excavation of a small mound, c. 6.3m in diameter, E of B2 (AWC 231)

30/07/61. Quadrant laid out over the W half, and to the W of, a small mound, c. 6.3m in diameter, E of B2 ( 231 Archive). Excavation in the NE quadrant found the topsoil to contain a scatter of medieval 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. 5-8cm on top and at S & N ends, although c. 15cm on S slope.

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 .

This Chalk was removed down to the red Clay-with-Flints in the SE (GF398 & GF451) 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 subsoil (layer 6).

#### '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'. The ditch was 0.58m deep below the modern surface, 0.3m below the Clay-with-Flints and flat bottomed. It was c. 0.9m wide across the top. However, it was later realised that this had been mistakenly labelled as a ditch. In fact it represented a continuation of an underlying layer (layer 4) of thick, dark, 'charcoally' material.

#### GF numbers & sequence:

**Clayey brown humus/Topsoil.** c.8-38cm.

**GF224**, 2 nails type 11 & 12. C13th sherds, 2 EG. Bone

**GF237**, iron heckle tooth; nail shank. C13th sherds

**GF275**, Cu alloy annular brooch; nail type 11.

**GF281**, iron curving sheet fragment. C13th sherds

**GF304**, iron nail shank. C13th sherd

**GF339**, iron perforated strap fragment; sheet fragment; strip object; horseshoe nail type 4; 2 nails type 11 (?one extracted). C13th sherds

**GF360**, C12-13th hazelnut (TWA, Table 28). C13th sherds

**GF396**, sherds? topsoil <30cm to red Clay-with-Flints subsoil?

**GF404**, iron perforated strap fragment. **Sherds?**

**Layer 1: Flinty / flinty brown loam layer over Chalk mound.** c.13-46cm.

**GF232**, Cu alloy finger ring; C13 (TWA, 1). C13th sherd

**GF235**, iron strip fragment. C13th sherds. Bone

**GF259**, 2 horseshoe nails, type 3; 2 nails, type 11; 4 nail shanks. C13th sherds, 2 MG. **NB** flint to 'subsoil'

**GF310**, C13th sherds, charcoal, bones. To 'subsoil'

**GF328**, iron chain link. C13th sherds. 1 EG. Sandstone. "Below topsoil"

**GF362**, C13th sherds. "Below topsoil"

**GF369**, horseshoe nail, type 4. C13th sherds

**GF373**, 1 RB. C13th sherds. Nails, burnt bones, and sandstone

**GF398**, C13th sherds

**GF418**,

**GF419**,

**GF420**, horseshoe nail, type 4; nail shank; bone; C13th sherds

**GF451**, C13th sherd; stone?

**GF460**, iron rectangular staple. C13th sherds  
**GF464**, C13th sherd

**NB:** Some confusion as in some areas there appears to be no Chalk cap and the flinty layer gives way to the Clay-with-Flints - erroneously referred to as subsoil. *e.g.* GF418 from the SE quadrant refers to finds in "humus and flints down to chalk of mound or clay with flints".

Layer built up after mound had been constructed and may represent the occupation period of the 'new' buildings (1, 2 & 3) 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 activity. 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.

**Layer 2: Chalk / Chalk lumps with red clay.** c.15-36cm.

**GF398**, C13th sherd  
**GF441**, C13th sherd  
**GF458**, C13th sherd

This mound material is likely to be the natural Chalk dug from the levelling of the ground to the W., *i.e.* under the Clay-with-Flints subsoil. As natural Chalk should not contain any finds, the sherds from this layer are undoubtedly ones either dropped during the digging process and/or ones from Phase 1, into which the mound builders were digging.

**Layer 3: red Clay-with-Flints.** c.30-51cm.

**GF411**, iron sliding bolt (C10-12, TWA, 7); perforated fitting with white metal plating. "Flinty soil to clayey subsoil" c. 58cm  
**GF494**, iron sheet fragment. C13th sherds. 'Down to dark brown soil between the two layers of red'.  
**GF511**, 2 EG sherds.

Middle of mound. Clay-with-Flints is the natural subsoil in the area and again this originated from the digging in the W and would have been under the Phase 1 occupation layer, *i.e.* B2. It was built up on the mound at the same time, but immediately after, layer 2 and thus could feasibly contain material from an earlier occupation period.

**Layer 4: brown/black soil with small flints and charcoal.** c.30-58cm.

?**GF268**, iron whittle tang knife; iron 'U' shaped staple; nail shank. 1 EG. C13th sherds. Layer ?3/4: "On top of ditch"  
**GF282**, 5 hazel, 1 '*pomoideæ*' (hawthorn/apple) and 3 '*prunus*' (cherry/blackthorn), 1 *Ulmus* charcoal pieces. C13th sherds  
**GF283**, iron buckle with pin. Medieval.  
**GF311**, 3 hazel charcoal pieces. C13th sherd; whetstone  
**GF457** (from the 'ditch'), C13th sherd  
**GF505**, black layer, C13th sherd  
**GF526**, black layer, an awl, showing traces of mineral-preserved wood (TWA, 4). Horseshoe nail, type 1, 'Norman'. C13th sherds. Bones and flints  
**GF494**, may also have finds from this layer.

If layer 5 is the OGS of this area onto which layer 4 was placed, then layer 4 is also the OGS of Phase 1, but from the area to the W. One humic top layer was thus dumped on another. This layer of the mound contained charcoal may be because it was nearer to the burning activities ?carried in association with B4.

**Layer 5: light brown clayey soil.** c.58-69cm.

**GF550**, EG sherd, iron nail shank. C13th sherds. "Brown soil between black soil and red Clay-with-Flints"

Layer 5 was the topsoil (OGS) onto which the first layer from the levelling area (layer 4, above) was dumped. Layers 4 & 5 are consequently the OGS during the period immediately prior to the construction of the mound.

**Layer 6: Clay-with-Flints subsoil.**

No GFs. Undisturbed. Material comparable with layer 3, which is the disturbed Clay-with-Flints from B2/ 3 area.

**The sequence should be:**

**Topsoil**

**Layer 1**

- all Phase 2 after 'mound building'

**Layer 3 & Layer 2**

- all Phase 1. GFs were mostly dropped during mound building or came from below OGS to W.

**Layer 4**

- all Phase 1. All GFs were dropped during mound-building or (more possibly than 2 & 3?) from OGS to W ?? **OR OCCUPATION ABOVE LAYER 5 ??**

**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 contaminants. If layers 4 & 5 are contemporaneous, **GF550** may give a *terminus post quem* for the mound and B1/2 & 3 **and a terminus ante quem for B4 ?**

**Layer 6**

- subsoil

## Discussion

**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.

The hypothesis is thus; the decision was taken to construct Buildings 1, 2 & 3 [**or was it for B2 solely**] and a level surface on which to build was required (see Cutting 4, p.XX). The OGS to the west, that is layer 4 of the mound, was, naturally, the first to be dug up and was then dumped 13.5m to the east onto 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 B1 North before its southern extension and/or <<** from a pre-stone timber phase of B2. This layer should allow us the possibility of a *terminus ante quem* for the mound and also, therefore, possibly for those buildings.

This shovelled up material was charcoally,>> **possibly from hearth clearance from B4 <<**. This layer 4 contained much detritus from the pre-mound phase; charcoal, nails, an awl, several iron objects indicating domestic and agricultural activities, C13th pottery, all from 13th century activity (GF268). The OGS onto which it was placed (layer 5) was not, however, similar in make-up, (*i.e.* it contained little charcoal and few sherds) as it was at a distance from the main occupation area.

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 this clay 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 and the final 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 a Romano-British sherd was uncovered in the later occupation material above (GF373 - layer 1), whereas medieval ones (GF550) were found 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. This is 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 10th - 12th century date, indicating a structure at Wroughton Mead at this time and possibly on the site of Buildings 2 & 3 (paralleled by GF199, B1 p. XX).