

Cutting 10

An area in the north-eastern part of Wroughton Mead, named Enclosure C, was investigated from XX 1963 to XXX. Excavation centred on the raised area within the triangular enclosure, with one cutting, G1 West, examining the Enclosure's northern bank (see Fig. XXX).

West extension to G1

Description

The excavation of G1 West, across the northern side of Enclosure C, showed that the bank comprised of two phases. The earlier bank would appear to have had a ditch on its uphill (north-west facing) side, as it was filled with material of a similar nature to that of the bank, and a sarsen revetement on the downhill side. The ditch also contained two large sarsens. The later bank of brown loam with flints had an area of gingery loam with flints cut into it at the top, possibly indicating where a hedge or tree had once stood (see Cutting 11, p. XX).

Discussion

Although no dating evidence is available for this cutting, the composition and positioning of both banks indicate the earlier formed part of the 'Celtic' field system within Wroughton Mead which was heightened in the medieval period, possibly at the same time as the construction of Enclosure C (see Cutting 11). If the lower section is a CF lynchet, it may be a continuation of the one sectioned in Cutting 3 & 3a across the bank of Enclosure A.

The Platform

Description

Excavation across the rised area in Enclosure C uncovered what was described as a flinty 'terrace' or 'floor'. Stones, many of them large enough to protrude through the topsoil, were uncovered below this flint layer. As the terrace lay over or had sunk around the majority of the stones, it would point to them having been in position prior to the laying of the flinty terrace 'floor'. It is unclear whether these stones, if any, had been deliberately positioned as part of the construction of the raised area or were tumble from the bank to the north. A distinct line of stones marking the edge of the platform was clearly apparent and had evidently had the terrace laid backing up to it. It thus formed a revetement to the southern side of the platform.

Discussion

The more obvious concentrations of stones forming the revetement are approximately 16 feet apart, the maximum distance allowed by the laws of physics

for a timber upright to take a cross-beam without necessitating the use of aisles. These fairly regular patches of stone could thus be footings for timber uprights, and although no obvious structure was apparent, the nature of the finds on the flint terrace (numerous nails, large ?door studs, horse-shoes and general farming equipment) point to the site having been the platform on which a barn and/or livestock shelter once stood, probably with the bank acting as the back 'wall'. Is it possible the Copse, lying as it does on the windward side, was used or indeed planted as further protection for this grange ?

Apart from two large nails dated to the 13th century, the material evidence indicates this platform was in use from the late 15th until the 18th century .

Xfit 16; 13th C cooking pot; **GF242** J1 bottom of topsoil above clay with flints with **GF734** from B4 floor level.

Similar sherds to these (**GF730** & **GF743**) were noted in Cutting 11 in the topsoil over the bank and, more interestingly, at the bottom of, or beneath the bank in the east. As bank and eastern ditch (and possibly western one as well) of Enclosure C, are possibly contemporary, at least along the eastern side, this evidence may indicate that the ditch picked up in O of Cutting 10 acted as a sort of barrier, either a ditch or ditch and fence, which joined the northern bank of Enclosure C with the eastern one. Furthermore, as the humic layer in B3 is considered occupation material, ditch, Enclosure C and B2 could have been contemporary, although the material used to construct the Enclosure C may contain contaminant of earlier material.

Sherds **GF242** from above the flinty terrace and **GF734**, from the floor of B4, are from a 13th century cooking pot. Is this indicating that a structure in Enclosure C was in existence at the same time as B4 or do we have here in Cutting 10 the stones taken from the delapidated B4, which inevitably meant earth, and therefore detritus from B4, being taken over to the build the ?barn to the north-east. The latter would explain why such a sherd was found amongst later ones. If terrace is a road used over many centuries, then this would explain diversity of finds & sherds.

Overall, therefore, the evidence points to a relationship between the remains of B4 & the flinty platform in Cutting 10, possibly the robbing of B4 being earlier than (or contemporary with) at least one of the ditches.

MN2 & 3

Description & Discussion

The finds register refers to 'walls' and 'wall foundation' in, and perhaps significantly (see below), only in MN2 and MN3, whereas the platform is described as having a revetement. The area MN2 & MN3, towards the east of the cutting where an increase in the number of finds is evident, may be the site of a building. ? J2 could have picked up the southern end of the wall,?? with MN3 clearly picking up a wall continuing south (downhill). The structure could have had its other wall to the north (possibly picked up in J1), or to the south. In fact the line of stones in J1 is 14 feet from the one in J2, the width of the longhouses B1 & B4. Of further note is that

about 14 feet to the south of the apparent corner of the structure in MN2, the ditch curves round at 90° to seemingly run along the eastern side of Enclosure C. Whether the ditch was dug to go around a building or whether a building was constructed to respect the line of the ditch, or neither, is unclear.

Xfit 5; a later 13th century jug; **GF332**, from B2 (Cutting 4) NWd, among stones outside wall, to 13", above floor level; with **GF314** in wall foundation of MN3, 6"-9". **GF314** also contains Nail type 11, 2 nails type 20 (structural) and nail shank. Does this indicate B3 was robbed to make MN3? CHECK nail types.

GF314 is from the wall foundation of the feature uncovered in Cutting 10 MN3, with **GF332** from the occupation/humic layer in B2 CHECK!! . **GF314** produced 16 sherds, **GF332** produced 3. If the stones in MN2/3 were part of a wall for a building, then this was therefore constructed in the latter part of the 13th century. **GF333**, also from the wall, points to a 13th century date for whatever MN2/3 was. However, the large amount of later-medieval and early modern material from this area indicates that building MN2/3 saw much activity in the 15th C, and was in use until end 17th (**GF490**), possibly later. The cross-fits may indicate that stones were taken from the B1/2/3 complex to build MN2/3, but 16 sherds were uncovered in MN2/3 from the jug, which suggests it was broken in this area and then spread to the B1/2/3 complex. I would suggest this jug is later in date (late 15th C?). Whatever the sequence, MN2/3 seems to have been in use for 300 - 400 years.

Another idea: MN2/3 is built in 13th C & goes out of use 14th. The finds represent rubbish thrown out from the platform area, which is 15th C - 18th. Thus bones.???

The Ditch

Description

A ditch, c. 2' deep, was uncovered in O3. It was found to run from the northern bank of Enclosure C for some 40' before it turned to run parallel with the eastern arm of the triangular enclosure. However, no evidence was sought to determine whether the ditch actually connected with the enclosure bank. A second, slightly narrower ditch was discovered cutting into the earlier, larger one. It was clear that the latter had been filled in before the former had been dug into it. This situation with one ditch cutting another was not apparent in the other cuttings (O1, O2 & O5). The ditch was perfectly straight, according to note-book, between O3 & O1 and in N1.

Discussion

This ditch would appear to join the 'Celtic' field lynchet/ end of medieval bank (see Fig. XXX Archive) with the triangular Enclosure C to the south (see Cutting 11). If this is the case, then it could be part of the construction of Enclosure C. Of interest ? is a Norman horseshoe (**GF299**) from the loamy filling of the ditch. This loamy layer seals the (later) ditch filling, and although this could be a contaminant, it is certainly a *terminus ante quem* for the second ditch. What is the date of the earlier one then? Norman = 11th - mid 13thC, so deeper one is pre-1250, later one is beginning to fill in by the mid-C13th.???. CHECK THIS !!

The ditch could here be acting as a 'stop-gap', blocking off the north-eastern corner of Enclosure C, possibly with a fence (stakehole? in cutting O3) on the outer side. If there was a fence on the outer side, this would indicate the enclosure was to keep animals in rather than out. The ditch depth would point to sheep rather than cattle. Although why a ditch and not a continuation of the bank, or was the bank already there??? or were they using the line of a earlier ditch still visible as a depression. Where did ditch soil go? to build platform?

Date = early C13th, with B1/2/3 complex ? & MN2/3 ??

Xfit 1; GF512 from Cutting 10 with **GFs 293, 318 & 376** from Building 2 (Cutting 4). A 13th century bowl; **GF293** (inside B2 in SEf, humus, 10", with a Norman horseshoe nail pre-mid 14th), **GF318** (humus, outside wall in B2SEf, 10"), **GF376** (in filling of chalk cut trench along inside of wall in B2SEf, 9"-18") and **GF512** (flinty soil over top of ditch in Cutting 10/O5, 16").

Ditch in Cutting 10 is therefore filled in by mid-14th C and it seems this was before and during the occupation of B2.

GF512, a 13th century coarseware bowl sherd, was from over the top of the ditch uncovered in cutting O5, down to 16". This would indicate that the digging of the ditch in O5 was earlier than the building and occupation of the B2/3 complex. This is shown by **GF376** from the filling of the trench in B2 on which the east wall of B2 was built. Naturally, the filling of the trench may have occurred at the same time as, or slightly earlier than, the building of B2, but clearly the ditch found in O5 was already partially filled in when B2 was built (unless sherd is from disturbance). The Norman horseshoe fragment (**GF299**) in O3 lends credence to the ditch being earlier than B2. **GF299** also produced a tapering spike (TWA, 11, similar to **GF61**, Cutting 3), possibly structural.

Platform was C15- 17th, barn/stable? with a ditch and bank forming a penning with a sheep cote (MN2/3) as shepherd's place ? Possibly built earlier; in late 13thC.

Pottery Analysis

100 diagnostic sherds came from Cutting 10

Ware & Date	Quantity
RB	1
CS/CW 13th C	14
MG Later 13th	18
LMED	2
PMED	62
EMOD	3