

# Saxon and medieval Battersea: excavations at Althorpe Grove, 1975–8

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with contributions from

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*In addition to traces of prehistoric and Roman activity, excavations undertaken at Althorpe Grove, Battersea, revealed rare evidence for Middle Saxon and medieval rural settlements in London's hinterland. The main emphasis of this report is on the Saxon and medieval phases of occupation. Saxon activity was represented by a number of small gullies and other linear features. Pottery and other artefacts suggest that the main period of Saxon activity was in the second half of the 8th century, when Barking Abbey probably owned Battersea. The link with Barking Abbey may explain the presence of imported pottery on the site; alternatively, the imports might be explained by the proximity of this riverside site to the major trading port of Lundenwic, just 6km downstream. A few features were of either Middle Saxon or medieval date. These included two parallel slots just over 2m apart, which may mark the position of fences. There were also a number of undated features that are thought to be early in the sequence. It is suggested that occupation at Battersea ceased temporarily during the Danish invasions in the second half of the 9th century, when Barking Abbey itself appears to have been abandoned. Historical sources suggest that settlement had been re-established at Battersea by the mid-11th century. Among the earliest medieval features on the site were a pit, possibly of Saxo-Norman date, and a boundary ditch, which may have been infilled in the second half of the 12th century. Other features are dated to the 12th and 13th centuries and include structural remains, perhaps representing part of a farm building, and a number of gullies and pits. These might be related to the documented manor house at Battersea, but it is suggested that the main nucleus of occupation lay closer to the church. In the post-medieval period a series of long, narrow bedding trenches, some with individual plant holes in their bases, shows that the northern part of the Althorpe Grove site was occupied by the kitchen gardens of the later Battersea manor house.*

## Introduction

This report summarizes the results of excavations undertaken between 1975 and 1978 at Althorpe Grove, Battersea (site code AG75), by the South-West London Archaeological Unit of the Surrey Archaeological Society. It incorporates material from correspondence, notes and an unpublished report by Scott McCracken, who directed the excavation (McCracken 1986). The site lies approximately 100m from the Surrey bank of the river Thames and is bounded by Battersea Church Road to the north and west, Sunbury Lane to the east and Westbridge Road to the south (fig 1; TQ 2686 7679). It takes its name from a cul-de-sac, which runs into the site from Westbridge Road.

The excavation was carried out in advance of a housing redevelopment scheme by the Greater London Council. The site was targeted for investigation because of its proximity to the parish church of St Mary's, which was the focus of the medieval settlement of Battersea, and to the site of the post-medieval manor house (and possibly its medieval precursor). Both lie just north of the excavation, on the opposite side of Battersea Church Road. The project had three main aims: first, to relate the geology of the area to the known settlement pattern; secondly, to determine whether there was any evidence for Saxon or early medieval settlement, and thirdly, to locate any outbuildings attached to Battersea manor estate (McCracken 1986).

Initially thirteen trenches were opened for investigation (figs 1–3, A–H and J–N), but following the discovery of medieval features it was decided to expand the excavation into

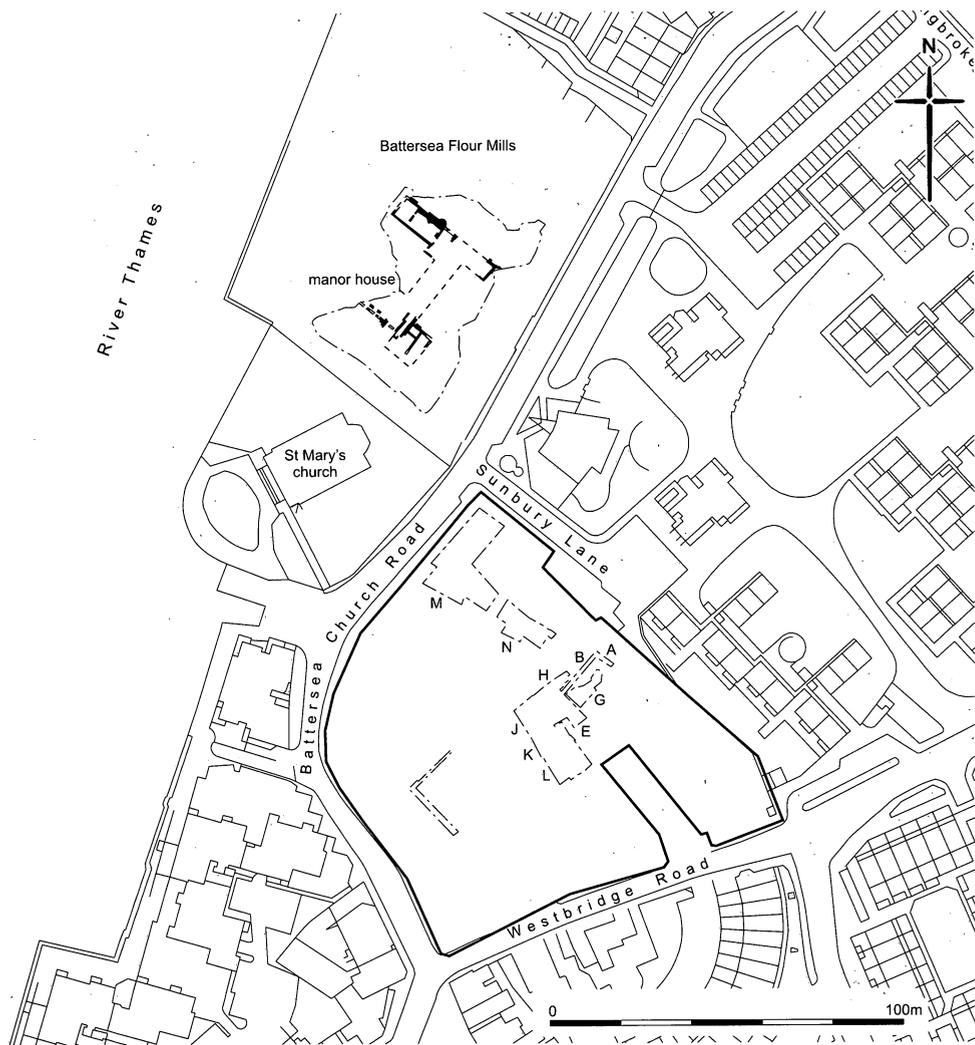


Fig 1 Althorpe Grove, Battersea: location plan, showing the site and excavation areas in relation to the river Thames and St Mary's Church. (Reproduced by kind permission of the Ordnance Survey, © Crown Copyright NC/01/24321)

large open areas (McCracken 1986, 1). Numerous post-medieval features were revealed, including walls, pits, postholes and bedding trenches. Many of these later features were associated with the kitchen gardens of Battersea manor. A considerable number of earlier features were also found. These included pits, postholes, ditches and other linear features, together with numerous apparently random stakeholes, which were grouped together on a single-phase plan. The linear features, some apparently containing postholes, were originally thought to be slots for the sill-beams of Saxon timber buildings (Richardson 1977, 39; Webster & Cherry 1978, 148), and were later published as such (Blackmore 1986, 214–15, fig 5 no 2). It was suggested that these 'enigmatic' features might represent a post-in-trench and sill-beam structure akin to Saxon buildings at Chalton in Hampshire (Addyman *et al* 1972; Champion 1977) and Wicken Bonhunt in Essex (Wade 1980). There were, however, problems with this interpretation, not least because the features did not appear to form a coherent ground plan for a building, and some of the beamslots were

rather wide. The reason for this became apparent following a full reassessment of the site archive, which revealed that a number of the so-called Saxon features had in fact contained prehistoric and medieval artefacts, while many others were empty and could not be dated. This suggests that the features were a palimpsest of a number of different periods ranging from prehistoric to medieval.

The following account first summarizes the topography, archaeological and historical background of the area, and then presents the archaeological and artefactual evidence for prehistoric, Saxon and medieval occupation on the site. Details of the post-medieval features and finds may be consulted in the archive. Those aspects of the report concerned with artefacts are mainly by Lyn Blackmore, while others are mainly by Robert Cowie. The authorship of reports by the other contributors is indicated in the text. A key to the pottery fabric codes and their dating may be found in the appendix.

## Geology and topography

Battersea is situated in a fairly level low-lying area on the inner bank of a meander in the river Thames some 7km upstream of the City of London. The core of the historic settlement is located at the southern edge of a bank of sand and gravel designated as unclassified terrace deposits (BGS 1981). This geological feature would at one time have formed a low island, or *eyot*, surrounded by marsh and mudflats (Browning & Kirk 1891, 208; Nunn 1983, fig 1). Indeed, the name Battersea is thought to be derived from the Old English place-names *Badrices ege*, *Batrices ege* and *Beauduric's eg*, which strongly suggests Saxon origins for the settlement. Various interpretations of these place-names have been offered, including 'the island of the boat-region' for *Batrices ege* (Browning & Kirk 1891, 207), and more plausibly 'Badric's Island' (Bonner 1913, 434–5) or 'marshy island' (Gover *et al* 1934, 12–13).

The main watercourses of the area are the Thames and its tributary the river Wandle, which now joins the Thames approximately 4km upstream from Althorpe Grove. The Wandle is generally considered to be the river named in late 7th century charters as *Hydaburna* or *Hlidaburna* (see below Saxon). However, the *Hydaburna* has also been identified as the Falcon brook (Barton 1992, 50), a minor watercourse which once entered the Thames less than 2km to the south of the site at a place formerly marked by Creek Street (Gover *et al* 1934, 13).

A borehole survey undertaken by Ground Exploration Ltd (report no 5788) on the Althorpe Grove site showed that the surface of the terrace sand and gravel sloped down from about +2.3m OD near the north side of the site to –0.61m OD on the south side. The sand and gravel in the southern half of the site was overlaid by alluvium termed 'river brickearths' by the British Geological Survey (1981). The alluvium was described in the borehole report as 'brown sand clay'. A borehole in the vicinity of the main excavation area, just to the north of Althorpe Grove, indicated gravels and sand at –0.9m OD and sandy clay and gravel at +1m OD, overlaid by 1.8m of alluvium. Few details were recorded about the geological deposits revealed during the excavation, but it was noted that brown terrace gravel was exposed in trench M at the north end of the site, and orange-brown alluvium was revealed in trench B, further south.

## Archaeological and historical background

### PREHISTORIC AND ROMAN

There is relatively little evidence for prehistoric settlement on or near the site. However, a number of prehistoric artefacts, mainly dating to the Bronze Age and Iron Age, have been dredged from the Thames in the Battersea area; the most famous of these is the 'Battersea shield', now in the British Museum, which dates to the 1st century BC. Some may have been lost accidentally, but most appear to have been deliberately deposited as votive

offerings, perhaps thrown into the river during funerary rites. The earliest artefact from this stretch of the Thames is a Mesolithic flint axe, which was recovered 60m to the east of Battersea Bridge.

Very little evidence for Roman activity has been found in the Battersea area. The few Roman artefacts from the area include ingots from the Thames, and a number of chance finds from the foreshore, including a miniature chalk head of possible Iron Age or Roman date (Cotton 1996), coins and pottery. However, Cotton (1996, 93) suggests that some objects found on the foreshore may have been introduced by the importation of material during consolidation and reclamation work in the 19th and 20th centuries. Roman finds in Wandsworth tend to concentrate along Stane Street, the Roman road from London to Chichester, which passed near the east side of Clapham Common about 3km east of the site at Althorpe Grove.

#### SAXON

Among the earliest Saxon artefacts from the locality are two spearheads from the Thames (MoL acc nos A15462, A7347; Wheeler 1935, 163–4, pl IX.7, fig 38.4), which have been dated to between the 5th and 7th centuries, and suggest activity in the Battersea area during the Early Saxon period. A third spearhead from this stretch of the Thames (MoL acc no A8840; *ibid.*, 168, Pl X.4) was dated to the 6th or 7th century. Other Saxon artefacts from the river include a Series E *sceat*, which would have been struck during the first few decades of the 8th century (Stott 1984, 243; 1991, 305), a 9th or 10th century *scramaseax* (MoL acc no A13921; Wheeler 1935, 180, Pl XIII.6), a Late Saxon axe (MoL acc no A17302), a bead (MoL acc no 3987) and a small ‘bun-shaped’ loomweight (MoL acc no C928; *ibid.*, 155). In addition, a bone comb and weapons of Saxon date have been found in the Wandsworth area of the Thames (*ibid.*, 152, 168, 171, 173, 174, 180, 181; Riddler 1990, 11–12). A human skull from the river at Battersea apparently dates to the Middle Saxon period, since it gave a radiocarbon date of  $1320 \pm 60$  BP (OxA-1191; Bradley & Gordon 1988, 507–8) calibrated to AD620–810 (calibration curve in Stuiver & Pearson 1986).

The earliest documentary references to Battersea are in two Saxon charters. Both documents were supposedly issued by Eorcenwold, bishop of the East Saxons, who had been given land at Battersea by Caedwalla, king of Wessex. One, probably dated to 687 (Hart 1966, 125), granted privileges and land at *Badoricesheah* (Battersea) by *Hydaburna* (river Wandle) to Barking Abbey (Sawyer 1968, 362, no 1246). Although this charter is considered to be fundamentally a fabrication it may embody some authentic material (Hart 1953, 11–14; 1966, 122–7; Gelling 1979, 149). The other, dated to 693, granted land at *Batrices Ege* to the church of St Mary Barking (Sawyer 1968, 363, no 1248). This document is only known from later copies, but is thought to embody the substance of the original (Gelling 1979, 151).

Battersea was located near three important centres in the Middle Saxon period. The most substantial of these was the large trading port of *Lundenwic*, about 6km downstream (Vince 1990; Cowie with Harding 2000, 182–90). Another was Westminster, where Offa of Essex may have founded the first abbey, and where evidence for Middle Saxon activity has been found (Mills 1995). The third was Chelsea, on the opposite bank of the Thames, which in the 780s and 816 was the meeting place for a number of councils attended by Mercian kings and leading churchmen and nobles (Stenton 1971, 218, 237, 309), and which was probably the site of a royal vill. Interestingly, evidence for Saxon settlement was recently discovered in Chelsea, during excavations by Pre-Construct Archaeology at Old Church Street (site code OCR97; Farid 1997). Occupation at this site was dated to between AD650 and 750, slightly earlier than the recorded events. A nearby Saxon fishtrap, recently found on the Middlesex foreshore immediately upstream from Battersea Bridge, may have been associated with the settlement at Chelsea. Its remains comprised two converging rows of posts, which formed a roughly V-shaped configuration. Samples from

the posts gave a radiocarbon date of  $1250 \pm 50$  BP calibrated to AD730–900 at 95% confidence (GU-5685, GU-5687; Mike Webber, Thames Archaeological Survey, pers comm).

At some time during the following centuries Barking Abbey ceased to hold its estate at Battersea. It is possible that this was as a consequence of the Danish invasions (Hart 1966, 141), particularly as there is evidence that Barking Abbey was abandoned from about 870 until the early to mid-10th century (Knowles & Hadcock 1971, 256; Redknap 1991, 359). By the mid-11th century, however, the estate at Battersea had been acquired by the Crown, since Domesday Book records that Earl Harold (otherwise known as King Harold) held the manor there before the Conquest, when it consisted of 72 hides.

#### MEDIEVAL

In 1067 the manor of Battersea and the adjoining berewick of Wandsworth were granted in a charter by William I to the abbey of Westminster, in exchange for the redemption of the crown and royal regalia of the late King Edward, which were held by the abbey (Browning & Kirk 1891, 220–3). Somewhat confusingly, Domesday Book erroneously records that Battersea was granted in exchange for Windsor (Morris 1975; *VCH*, 4, 11), but according to William's charter Windsor was given to the abbey in exchange for other lands in Essex.

In 1086 the manor of Battersea was assessed in Domesday Book at 18 hides, and included among its inhabitants 45 villagers and sixteen smallholders with fourteen ploughs, and eight slaves. However, Westminster Abbey did not hold all the original manor. Four hides were held by a knight, one and a half by the earl of Mortain, three by Gislebert [Gilbert] the priest, two by the bishop of Lisieux and one by the abbot of Chertsey (Morris 1975). When the abbey was dissolved in 1540 the manor passed to the Crown.

Archaeological evidence suggests that the medieval village of Battersea was centred on the area around the present parish church of St Mary's, which is located just to the north of the Althorpe Grove excavation site. This church had definitely been established on its current site by 1301, although not in its present form, and there may well have been earlier churches on this site. Documentary sources indicate the presence of a church in Battersea by about 1159 (Browning & Kirk 1891, 237), while Domesday Book records a priest owning land at Battersea, and there is also a reference in William's charter of 1067 to churches, although their locations are not specified. It is possible, therefore, that there has been a church at Battersea since the second half of the 11th century. A manor house at Battersea had presumably been standing for some time by 1303, when apparently the roofs of the residence, the haybarn and the cowhouse were in need of repair (*VCH*, 4, 12; Smallwood 1969, 71). The location of the medieval manor house is not known, but is generally assumed to be on the same site as its post-medieval successor, which was located next to the church on the site later occupied by Battersea Flour Mills. Recent excavations by Wessex Archaeology on this site revealed only limited evidence of medieval occupation, but these include traces of a possible timber building and other structures (site code BCD96; Cooke 2001, this volume, 93–131).

A more detailed account of the medieval and post-medieval history of the manor of Battersea is given by Christopher Phillpotts (2001, this volume, 116–126).

#### POST-MEDIEVAL

In the early post-medieval period the settlement was focused on the church and Battersea manor house. Until recently the layout and appearance of the manor house were chiefly derived from documentary and pictorial evidence (Smallwood 1969). However, excavations undertaken on its site in the 1990s revealed the remains of brick walls and floors

belonging to the manor house complex, some of which may date back to the late 16th century (site codes: SBM91 (Bruce 1992); BCD96 (Cooke 2001, this volume, 93–131)).

## The stratigraphic sequence (figs 2–5)

*For pottery fabric codes see appendix*

### SOIL OVERLYING THE NATURAL STRATA

The geological strata were covered by soil. Apart from its colour there is little information about the soil, but apparently it could be divided into two horizons — 118 and 102. Numerous features that ranged in date from the prehistoric period to the medieval period (see below) cut the soil horizons. The interface between the two soil horizons was not well defined, and was particularly difficult to distinguish during the hot dry weather at the time of excavation. Consequently a proportion of the finds assigned to one horizon may actually have come from the other. Furthermore, it was sometimes unclear from which level features had been cut, and some were only apparent at the level of the geological strata. For this reason the two horizons are discussed together here.

The earlier horizon (118), described as 'brown soil', was interpreted by the excavator as 'the top of the natural subsoil'. It produced the largest single group of prehistoric pottery, comprising fifteen flint-tempered and two sand-tempered pieces. It also contained five sherds of Roman pottery, and six of Saxon chaff-tempered ware. One sherd with a calcareous fabric may date to the prehistoric or Saxon periods, while another finely flint-tempered sherd may be of prehistoric or early medieval date. In addition, the soil contained fifteen very small medieval sherds, which range in date from the 10th to the 15th century. These must either be derived from layer 102 or bear witness to disturbance of the soil over a long period of time. The earlier fabrics comprise six sherds, which probably date to the later 11th century (EMFL, EMS, ESUR and ESUR + FL). Nine sherds are of 12th to 13th century date (SSW, SHER, LIMP, LOND and LCOAR), while two sherds date to after 1270; these comprise a tiny fragment of Coarse Border ware and one of Mill Green ware (MGCOAR) with white slip decoration. The latest piece is the base of a pipkin (?early post-medieval redware), probably of Tudor date, which must be intrusive from layer 53.

Layer 118 was overlaid by 'orange-brown soil' 102, which produced a mixed group of pottery. Two sherds, one with possible impressed decoration (fig 4, no 1), are of prehistoric date. Saxon material comprises two sherds of fine chaff-tempered ware (CHSFI), one in a chalky fabric (MSCH), and a chip of Badorf/Walberberg-type ware (BADOF) dated to the mid-8th century (see below). One sherd was recorded as CHSFI but may be prehistoric. A significant Saxon find is a spiral-headed pin (see below; fig 5, no 1).

The bulk of the pottery from this horizon, however, was of medieval date. The 59 medieval sherds comprise a mix of early medieval types (EMCH,

EMFL, EMS, EMSS, ESUR), greywares (SHER, LIMP), London wares and a few sherds of pottery from Kingston and Mill Green (MGCOAR). Among the greywares is a strap handle with thumbing down each side, while the London wares include sherds from Rouen-style and highly decorated jugs dating to the 13th century. In addition there are sixteen post-medieval sherds which probably derived from the overlying post-medieval garden soil 53. Most of these are Tudor/post-medieval red and whitewares; the exceptions comprise one sherd from a Martincamp flask, one from a Frechen stoneware jug and a sherd of tin-glazed ware.

### UNDATED FEATURES (figs 2–3)

Some features produced no artefacts, and most of these could not be dated on stratigraphic evidence. However, the lack of finds suggests that these features antedate the post-medieval period. They include numerous apparently random stakeholes (not illustrated), a ditch, gullies, pits, slots and postholes.

Two features, a gully (339) and a possible posthole (1247), cannot be later than Middle Saxon in date since they were cut respectively by gullies (247) and (1068), which are dated to the 7th or early 8th century (see Middle Saxon). The gully was 90mm deep with sloping sides and an irregular base, while the posthole was 0.15m deep with steep sides and a flat base.

### PREHISTORIC FEATURES (figs 2–3)

Four features produced artefacts dating exclusively to the prehistoric period. The finds include three sherds of flint-tempered pottery, which were found in a 0.3m-deep pit (1593) cut into the natural gravel in trench M. This feature was also recorded as containing two or three struck flint flakes and fragments of daub, which are now missing.

The three remaining features cut subsoil layer 118. One, a pit or ditch (1656) located in trench N, was up to 0.25m deep and contained a flint-tempered potsherd. The others were in trench L, and comprised a ditch (1306) and a possible posthole (1345). Both contained single sherds of pottery with calcareous fabrics (CALCS) and may date to the Late Iron Age. Ditch 1306 was aligned east–west, and was 0.1m deep with a flat base, while posthole 1345 was triangular in plan, up to 0.17m across and 0.15m deep.

### MIDDLE SAXON FEATURES (fig 3)

Four gullies, (247, 1068, 1114 and 545), a possible beamslot (1109), and a hollow (336), are dated (with

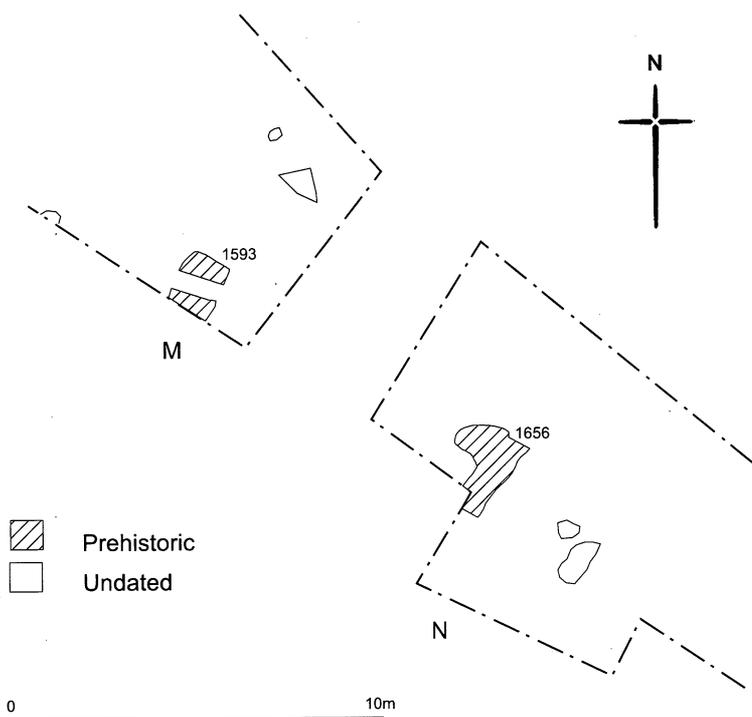


Fig 2 Althorpe Grove, Battersea: plan showing undated and prehistoric features in trenches M and N

varying degrees of confidence) to the Middle Saxon period. They all cut the earliest soil horizon (118), and produced pottery dated to between AD600 and c AD750.

Gully 247 in trench G was aligned south-west to north-east, and was initially thought to be a continuation of gully 125. It was up to 0.25m deep, and produced a sherd of Middle Saxon pottery, probably from Surrey (SLGSA), and three cattle bones.

Gully 1068 in trench K was aligned north-south; it was 0.32m deep, with sloping sides and a rounded base. It produced a sherd of residual Roman pottery (OXID), and two sherds of Middle Saxon pottery, one of CHSF, the other a rim in SSAND (fig 4, no 3), and a few cattle bones. An undated gully, 1308, may possibly be a continuation of this feature, since it was on the same alignment. Also in trench K was the butt end of a gully (1114) containing two sherds of chaff-tempered ware; this was 70mm deep with four stakeholes in the base.

Gully 545 in trench J was 50mm deep. A number of animal bones were recovered from the feature. These were mainly of cattle, but sheep, pig, horse, cat and chicken were also represented. Although the gully produced a sherd of chaff-tempered ware, and a residual sherd of prehistoric flint-tempered ware (FLIN2), it may be post-medieval, since it also contained tile and was described in one record as a post-medieval drainage ditch. However, it was cut

to the south-west by a gully (546) which appeared to be medieval in date.

A possible beamslot (1109) in trench K was aligned approximately north-south. Most of the feature was only up to 0.1m deep, but the western third formed a slot that was 0.26m deep and 0.35m wide. It contained one sherd from a chaff-tempered jar (fig 4, no 5) which joins with others from the post-medieval garden soil (53) and a post-medieval pit.

The hollow (336, not illustrated) was in trench H; although containing a single sherd of chaff-tempered ware it was shallow (80mm deep) and irregular and may have been caused by root disturbance.

#### MIDDLE SAXON OR MEDIEVAL FEATURES (fig 3)

A few intercutting linear features could date to either the Middle Saxon or the medieval periods, since their stratigraphic relationships are not clear.

Most problematic is a gully, or beam slot (125) with sloping sides (depth 0.16m). This feature, which contained two sherds of Saxon pottery (CHFS, IPSF), was first thought to be related to gully 247 (see above), but it was also on the same alignment as gully 1013, which contained medieval pottery. Gully 125 was intercut with gully 126, but since their respective fills were indistinguishable the excavators could not tell which was the earlier.



isolated stretches (341/564/631) and was between 0.11m and 0.25m deep. The only datable finds were a sherd of residual prehistoric pottery and sherds of medieval pottery, dated to AD1080-1200 (from context 564), but the latter could represent contamination from an intercutting feature (1013).

#### MEDIEVAL FEATURES (fig 3)

##### *Building*

Several postholes and slots (1069, 1070, 1115, 1249, 1346, 1348, 1369, 1374) on the north-east side of trenches K and L may represent one side or end of a rectangular timber building. They were between 50mm and 0.26m deep. Most were cut into the earliest soil horizon (118), but postholes 1069 and 1070 cut the Saxon gully 1068. The only datable finds were from slot 1369, which produced an iron object, possibly a buckle, and a sherd of South Herts/Limpsfield greyware (SHER) dated to AD1140-1300. The bottom 60mm of this feature consisted of a 0.16m-wide slot with vertical sides and a flat base, and may have originally held a sleeper beam. The upper 0.1m was broader and irregular in plan, and may have been a robber cut. The remains of a cat had been thrown into this feature when it was backfilled.

##### *Other possible structural features*

A number of other possible structural features were found close to the putative building. These were slots 580/581, 533 and 643 in trench J, and 1305 on the south-west side of trench L. All produced pottery dated to the second half of the 12th century or the 13th century.

Beamslot 580/581 was aligned east-west with a shallow pit (807/865) at its east end. The slot was between 0.18 and 0.32m deep and produced two sherds from a cooking pot in SHER, animal bone and a fragment of daub. Another possible beamslot (643) was about 0.2m deep. It produced animal bone (not kept), tile fragments and a sherd from a cooking pot in London-type ware (LOND). Slot 533 was 0.26m deep, and produced bone, tile and a sherd from a cooking pot in Limpsfield-type ware (LIMP).

Context 1305 comprised a row of closely-spaced slots or small pits, one of which contained a sherd of 12th or 13th century pottery (SHER). These features were only partly exposed, but appeared to be on a north-west to south-east alignment. The deepest, at a depth of 0.42m, was at the north-west end.

##### *Ditches and gullies*

Ditch 19 cut the natural alluvium in trenches B, G and H. It was aligned approximately north-west to south-east, and ran in the direction of St Mary's church. The ditch was up to 2.80m wide and 2.35m deep, with steeply sloping sides and a flat base. This substantial feature may have marked a boundary, which was possibly aligned on the church. The homogeneity of its fill suggested that the ditch had

probably been infilled (McCracken 1986, 2). This may have occurred between cAD1150 and 1200 since the pottery includes seven sherds from cooking pots in fabrics typical of this period (LIMP, SHER, LOND, SSW) as well as part of an Early Style jug in London-type ware. Also present are seventeen residual sherds of Late Saxon and early medieval pottery (LSS, EMCH, EMS, EMSH, EMSS, ESUR), and one sherd of post-medieval redware (dated AD1480-1600) which is definitely intrusive. The base of a small baluster drinking jug is problematic as it is dated to the later 13th century; it seems likely that this piece is also intrusive. Among the other finds from the ditch were a small horseshoe nail and an iron fragment which is probably part of a horseshoe; three sherds of prehistoric pottery in both flint-tempered and sandy fabrics, Roman pottery and five sherds of Middle Saxon pottery were also recovered from this feature. The latter comprise one sherd of possible Ipswich-type ware and four of chaff-tempered ware (including fig 4, no 4 — further fragments from this pot were found in the post-medieval garden soil 53).

Two other ditches, 245 and 246, in trench G were on a similar alignment to that of ditch 19. Ditch 245, which might have been part of ditch 19, was heavily truncated and only survived to a depth of 0.15m. Ditch 246 produced part of a medieval horseshoe, possibly of Clark's type 3 and of 13th or 14th century date (Clark 1995, 86-8, 96-7).

Gully 546 in trench J cut the Middle Saxon gully 545. It had steep sides and a flat base, and was 0.31m deep. The gully contained a small sherd of fabric EMSS and another originally identified as Ipswich ware, but which is probably a medieval greyware (currently missing).

Gully 1013 in trench J was on the same alignment as gully 125, and was intercut with the Saxon or medieval slot 564 (see above). It was 0.18m deep. The fill, which contained two residual sherds of chaff-tempered ware and Early Medieval Flinty ware (EMFL), is dated to cAD1270-1300 by a sherd of SHER and another of Coarse Border ware (CBW).

In trench K two intercutting gullies were found. The earlier was gully 1058/1060, which was on a north-east to south-west alignment, and was up to 0.29m deep; the south-western half had vertical sides with a generally flat base. The finds include single sherds of prehistoric and Saxon pottery (FLIN2 and CHSF), and ten small sherds of medieval pottery. The latter include cooking pot and jug sherds in Kingston-type ware and Coarse Border ware (KING, CBW), and a sherd from a Mill Green ware jug (MG), which together suggest that the gully dates to the last quarter of the 13th century. Several fragments of cattle and sheep/goat bone were also recovered.

Cutting gully 1058/1060 was gully 579/1067, which was also recorded in trench K. This feature was up to 0.41m deep; it was on a north-west to south-east alignment and also cut gully 580/581. It produced a few bones of cattle, sheep/goat, horse and goose. The gully also contained single sherds of

prehistoric and Roman pottery and eight medieval sherds. Three of these date to the 11th century, while the others (CBW, KING, LOND, SHER) date to the late 13th century. The real date of this feature is uncertain, since it also contained three very small late 16th century sherds, but it seems likely that these are intrusive.

### *Pits*

Three medieval pits (1163, 1048 and 1095) were found in trench K. The earliest of these was an irregular pit 1163 (not illustrated), which was 0.73m deep. It contained fragments of tile and a sherd of pottery dated to AD1050–1150 (EMFL).

Pit 1048 was irregular in plan and profile, and was only 80mm deep. It contained an iron object (possibly a nail), tile and three sherds of medieval pottery (two of SHER and one of Mill Green ware), which suggest that the pit dated to the last quarter of the 13th century.

Perhaps the latest feature in this group was pit 1095, which was 0.48m deep, and produced glass, tile and single sherds of greyware and a cooking pot in Coarse Border ware. Although the pottery points to a late 13th century date, the pit may be later since it cuts gully 1067.

### POST-MEDIEVAL STRATA AND FEATURES (NOT illustrated)

Soil horizon 102 was covered by brown post-medieval topsoil 53, which was associated with the kitchen gardens of Battersea manor house, and

## The finds: pottery

*For pottery fabric codes see appendix*

The total pottery assemblage comprises 2362 sherds which range in date from prehistoric to post-medieval. Of these, 188 are from contexts discussed in this report, the distribution of which is outlined above. This material is summarized chronologically, although, as already noted above the small size and undiagnostic nature of some pieces precluded precise attribution to a period.

### PREHISTORIC AND ROMAN POTTERY

In all 52 sherds were identified as being prehistoric (294g, 0.8 estimated vessel equivalents or EVEs), of which only six were stratified (see above); in addition, a few sherds listed as Saxon could also be of prehistoric date (and vice versa). The sherds were classified using the system established by the Prehistoric Ceramics Research Group (1995). The majority are flint-tempered (38 sherds, 73%). Most common is the medium coarse fabric (FLIN2), which is represented by 18 sherds, including a battered everted rim with rounded bead from soil horizon 118; thirteen sherds are of the finer ware (FLIN1), but only seven are of the coarse variety (FLIN3). Nine sherds (17%) are sand-tempered (fabrics

contained a considerable quantity of post-medieval pottery (total 212 sherds). Other finds comprise two copper alloy dress pins, fragments of copper alloy wire, vessel glass, an unusual iron pin with lead head (fig 5, no 3), a lead cloth seal, a fragment of lead waste and an unidentified fragment of iron. A certain amount of residual prehistoric, Roman, Saxon and medieval material was also present in this layer. Of these the three prehistoric sherds comprise a sherd of flint-tempered ware, and two from a sand-tempered jar (fig 4, no 2). The eleven Saxon sherds comprise seven sherds of chaff-tempered ware (including fig 4, nos 4 and 5), two from a stamped Ipswich ware pitcher (fig 4, no 6) and one shell-tempered sherd. Other notable finds include a decorated Saxon bone mount (fig 5, no 2) and an iron knife. Medieval finds include a fragment of window glass and 84 sherds of pottery; one of these is of Rhenish stoneware (LANG), while one is of Spanish lustreware (VALM).

Many of the post-medieval features were apparently associated with the kitchen gardens of the manor house, notably pits and a series of bedding trenches, some with individual plant holes in their bases (McCracken 1986, 1–2). Other post-medieval features recorded included drains and brick structures. Although these features and strata are generally beyond the scope of this report, a few contained residual artefacts ranging in date from the prehistoric to the medieval period. These include 25 sherds of Middle Saxon pottery, including a chaff-tempered sherd with finger-nail impressions (fig 4, no 7), and single sherds of Ipswich ware, Badorf-type ware and a rim in an oolitic fabric (fig 4, no 8).

SAND2, SAND3, SAND4, SAND6), while one is quartz-tempered (QU). Three sherds have a calcareous fabric (CALCS), while one contains GROG. In the absence of diagnostic forms dating is difficult. Two sherds may be Neolithic (from 1218 and 1069), while one sherd with possible impressed decoration from 102 may date to the late Neolithic or Early Bronze Age, although rather thick-walled for Beaker pottery (fig 4, no 1). The rim from 118 and the sand-tempered jar found in the post-medieval garden soil (fig 4, no 2) probably belong to the Late Iron Age, and this is likely to apply to most of the assemblage. It is not impossible that another sherd (fig 4, no 5) is also of Iron Age date (see Chaff-tempered ware).

Roman pottery amounts to 23 residual sherds in seven fabric types (identified by Louise Rayner). The most common type is SAND (six sherds), followed by OXID (five sherds). Other types are AHFA (three sherds), FINE (three sherds), HWC (one sherd), PORD (two sherds) and SHEL (one sherd). Forms comprise beaker fragments in FINE and HWC, and a bowl/dish in AHFA. Dating in most cases can only be placed at AD50–400, but where greater precision is possible the material is mainly of late 3rd to 4th century date, although one group (126) is placed at AD70–160.

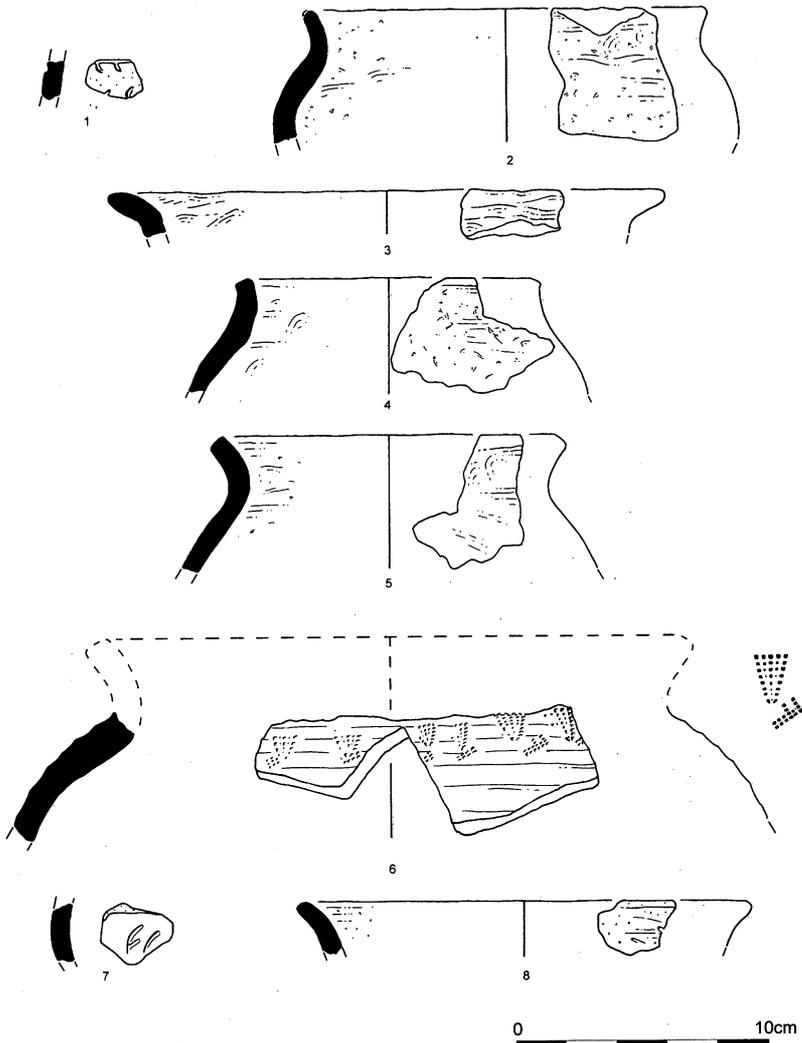


Fig 4 Althorpe Grove, Battersea. Prehistoric pottery: 1-2 (contexts 102, 53). Saxon pottery: CHAF: 3 (context 1068), 4 (contexts 19, 53), 7 (context 43); CHSF: 5 (contexts 1109, 53, 555); IPSF: 6 (context 53); MSOLC: 8 (context 501)

#### MIDDLE SAXON POTTERY

A total of 57 sherds was dated to the Middle Saxon period (588g, 0.33 EVEs), of which 32 are from the medieval and earlier contexts noted above (235g, 0.14 EVEs). Only eight sherds are from stratified contexts; six are chaff-tempered, while two are sand-tempered. Five sherds are from contexts which could be Saxon or medieval (three chaff-tempered, one of Ipswich ware and one imported). In all fourteen fabrics were identified (table 1). With one possible exception, no sherds are diagnostic of the Early Saxon period. Most sherds are chaff-tempered, with Ipswich wares in second place; five sherds are probably of regional origin, while one is from further afield; only three are Continental imports.

#### *Chaff-tempered ware*

Chaff-tempered wares account for c 68% of the total Saxon assemblage (39 sherds). This handmade ware is characterized by the use of an organic temper made of chaff, grass or dung. Three types are present here: a fine variant with sparse organic matter (CHSF); a coarser sandy variant (CHFS) and an iron-rich type (CHFI) made of local brickearth or London clay with frequent naturally occurring pellets of iron oxide or iron-rich clay. The latter type is more common than usual (seventeen sherds in all), suggesting local production near the site. Fabric CHFS is rare (four sherds), and none is as heavily tempered as some sherds from Merton Priory.

Vessels in this ware are crudely made and unevenly fired; as wall thickness is variable and the rims are irregular, diameters are difficult to ascertain with certainty. Three rims are of everted form, while that from ditch 19 and layer 53 is inverted (fig 4, no 4). The former includes two stratified sherds, one from gully 1068 (fig 4, no 3); the other from 1109, which joins with a rim found in 53 (fig 4, no 5). It is not impossible, however, that this pot is of Iron Age date. The third rim is from a later context (43). One tiny rim from layer 53 is of upright flat-topped form (diameter 120mm, 4% EVE; not illustrated). One sherd has slight finger nail impressions/rustication (fig 4, no 7), a trait more usually found on Early Saxon sites in the London area, such as Brentford (Sheppard 1978, 85, fig 100, no 1; Blackmore 1993, 134). It is uncertain whether this is a Middle Saxon piece with accidental marks, or an earlier find (again an Iron Age date cannot be completely ruled out).

#### *Sand-tempered*

Two fabrics are present. One, from 247 contains Lower Greensand ironstone sand with some flint (SLGSA); this is probably from Surrey (Blackmore 1988, 87). The other, a markedly everted rim sherd found in 1068 (fig 4, no 3), is from a crudely made jar in an indeterminate sandy ware with sparse organic matter; this is texturally close to fabric SSAND which is found in *Lundenwic* (Blackmore 1988, 87; 1989a, 80), but is unusual in that it is oxidized and lacks the burnished surface and careful finish of that ware; it is not impossible that this is a prehistoric ware.

#### *Chalk-tempered and oolitic wares*

Two sherds from soil horizons 102 and 118 contain calcareous inclusions (MSCH: Blackmore 1988, 88; 1989a, 83), although that from 118 could be prehistoric. One rim sherd from 501 (fig 4, no 8) is in an oolitic fabric with additional fragments of limestone (MSOLC: Blackmore 1988, 89; 1989a, 84), which must come from a source to the west of London.

#### *Ipswich ware*

Ipswich wares amount to c 14% of the group (eight sherds). This was the first post-Roman ware to be fired in permanent kilns; some vessels are wheel-thrown; but most were handmade but finished on a turntable (Hurst 1959; 1976; West 1963; Blackmore 1988, 85–7; 1989a, 77–80). Four sherds are in the fine variant IPSF. These include two sherds from a spouted pitcher or storage jar with stamped decoration of two different stamps which were found in the garden soil 53 (fig 4, no 6); the most complete stamp measures c 13 x 20mm. Around the neck, spaced somewhat erratically at intervals of between 5mm and 20mm, is a band of gridded pendant triangles. Below this is a row of inverted 'key' or 'L'-shaped stamps set obliquely just to the right of each triangle; the return is uppermost and angled inwards toward the triangle, although in some cases the impression

is either incomplete or blends with the triangle. Similar triangular stamps have been found at the Royal Opera House and on other sites within the main settlement of *Lundenwic* (Wheeler 1935; Blackmore 1988; Blackmore in prep (b)), but no parallels are known for the other motif.

One sherd found in a post-medieval bedding trench (528) is possibly of Ipswich coarse ware (IPSC), although this could be a medieval greyware. Two sherds are of the medium sandy variant IPSM, both found in a post-medieval layer (1647).

#### *Shell-tempered ware*

One rimsherd from 53 is in a soapy fabric similar to Maxey-type ware (MSSH) (Blackmore 1989a, 83). This is considered to be of later 8th or 9th century date, although as it is from a late context it could be a variant of the medieval ware EMSH (Vince & Jenner 1991, 63–8).

#### *Imports*

One sherd recovered from feature 441, which was described as a beamslot (no further details were recorded), is of a hard grey sandy ware typical of *Lundenwic* fabric NFGWA, Hodges class 15 (Hodges 1981, 21; 25–8; Blackmore 1988, 90). Another, from slot 126 is in a hard grey ware with distinctive sandwich firing (*Lundenwic* fabric NFEBB, Hodges class 13), which is thought to be from northern France/southern Belgium (Hodges 1981, 21; Blackmore 1988, 91; 1989a, 87).

Two small sherds of fine sandy buff ware are identified as being from the Cologne Vorgebirge, probably Walberberg (fabric BADOE: Blackmore 1988, 92; 1989a, 90). One of these, from 118, is irregularly finished and may derive from the lower body of an early amphora. The other, from a later context (12), is probably from a deep jar similar to finds from contexts dated to the late 7th or early 8th century in *Lundenwic* (Blackmore in prep (b)).

#### MEDIEVAL AND LATER POTTERY

A total of 373 medieval sherds in 25 different fabrics was recovered from the site, of which 135 are from contexts noted above (excluding 53). Most comprise rather mundane coarsewares, with few stratified jug sherds, although these are slightly more common in later contexts. The general paucity, and small size, of the sherd material demonstrates that most of the pottery used in the manor house was disposed of elsewhere.

Taking the assemblage as a whole, three sherds are of Late Saxon date (LSS), while a few date to the later 11th to 12th century (fabrics EMCH, EMFL, EMS, EMSH, EMSS, ESUR and ESUR FL). Comparable material has been recovered from Northolt Manor, a contemporary site of a similar status within the London area (Hurst 1960). Most of the material dates to between c AD1230 and 1350. Collectively, greywares are the most common type, with 57 sherds in a range of fabrics which are

TABLE 1 The distribution of the Saxon pottery (Env = maximum vessel count)

Fabric	Sherds	%	Env	%	Weight	%	EVEs	%
BADOE	2	3.5	2	4.2	7	1.3	.00	0
CHFS	4	7.0	3	6.3	29	5.0	.00	0
CHSF	17	29.8	11	22.9	120	20.4	.08	24.2
CHSFI	18	31.6	17	35.4	120	20.4	.10	30.3
IPSC	1	1.8	1	2.1	8	1.4	.00	0
IPSF	5	8.8	4	8.3	175	30.0	.00	0
IPSM	2	3.5	2	4.2	11	1.9	.00	0
MSCH	2	3.5	2	4.2	23	4.0	.00	0
MSOLC	1	1.8	1	2.1	6	1.0	.05	15.2
MSSH	1	1.8	1	2.1	56	9.5	.00	0
NFEBB	1	1.8	1	2.1	4	.7	.00	0
NFGWA	1	1.8	1	2.1	8	1.4	.00	0
SLGSA	1	1.8	1	2.1	8	1.4	.00	0
SSAND	1	1.8	1	2.1	13	2.2	.10	30.3
Total	57		48		588		.33	

probably from South Hertfordshire and 51 which are more likely to be from Limsfield (total 29% of the medieval assemblage); these include a handle of oval section with paired thumbing down the back (found in ditch 19: Hurst 1960, fig 71, nos 2, 3; Renn 1964, 8; fig 3, WH1). A rod handle has crude combing and stabbing at intervals on the back (53); the junction with the pot itself was ineffectively skewered, and the handle has broken off at this point. A large bowl fragment has a bevelled flanged rim with thumbing around the inner edge. In second place are London-type wares, with 61 sherds of the finer ware and 18 of the coarse ware (total 21.3%). These are followed by Kingston-type ware (45 sherds) and the Coarse Border ware (36 sherds); some of the latter, and the three sherds identified as being from Cheam could be of 15th century date. As usual, Mill Green ware is the least common of the main medieval fabrics (18 sherds). Non-local wares are confined to Earlswood (EARL) and Brill (BRIM), the latter rare in London, while the only imports are four sherds of Langerwehe stoneware (LANG) and one sherd of Mature Valencian lustreware (VALM); all the latter are residual.

Post-medieval pottery amounts to 1871 sherds (66 different fabric types), of which 23 sherds are from contexts noted above, mostly from soil horizons 102 and 53: this mainly comprises Border wares, and redwares, with one tin-glazed sherd; the only imports are Frechen and Martincamp stoneware (one sherd of each). Taken as a whole, the post-medieval assemblage is dominated by 18th and 19th century types, although later 16th to 17th century wares are also well represented. Coarsewares amount to 331 sherds (18% of the total), while Border wares (both white and red fabrics) collectively amount to 261 sherds (14%). Stonewares comprise 12% of the assemblage, but most of these are of English origin (219 sherds). Tin-glaze wares comprise 11%; of note is a substantial part of an 18th century 'Merryman' plate with painted motto. A range of imports is present, although not abundant: Dutch redware,

Raeren, Cologne, Frechen and Westerwald stoneware, Chinese porcelain, North Italian marbled ware and a few Spanish wares.

## Other finds

### SAXON ARTEFACTS

#### *A copper-alloy pin*

Stratigraphically the earliest find is a pin (fig 5, no 1) that was found in soil horizon 102. The shaft, which is complete, is straight-sided and tapering; it bifurcates at the top suggesting that it was of spiral-headed form, made by splitting the top of the shank into two wires which were coiled inwards in a heart shape (length c 55mm, width at head 7mm).

Both the shaft and the head are in themselves standard types for the period. The pin is, however, unusual in that the head seems to have been extremely small in relation to the length of the shank (55mm). The dimensions across the top are the same as that of the smallest published example from *Hamwic* (Hinton 1996, fig 11, 31/1648), while the shank length falls between the two longest published examples from *Hamwic*.

Pins of this delicate form are found in silver as well as copper alloy; the eleven examples from *Hamwic* are all of leaded bronze; there is also considerable stylistic variation. The silver pair from Eccles is arguably the most ornate (Detsicas & Hawkes 1973, 283), while the tiny fragile example from the Royal Opera House (Blackmore in prep (c)) falls at the other end of the spectrum. The other more elaborate finds are from consumer sites such as Shakenoak (Pretty 1972, 84, fig 31, nos 156, 157), or higher status sites such as Flixborough (Leahy 1991, 97, nos 69j, 69k) and Brandon (Webster 1991, 84, no 66g/h), whereas those from the emporium of *Hamwic* are of a simpler form.

This type of pin was formerly dated to the 7th century (Welch 1976, 212), but examples are known

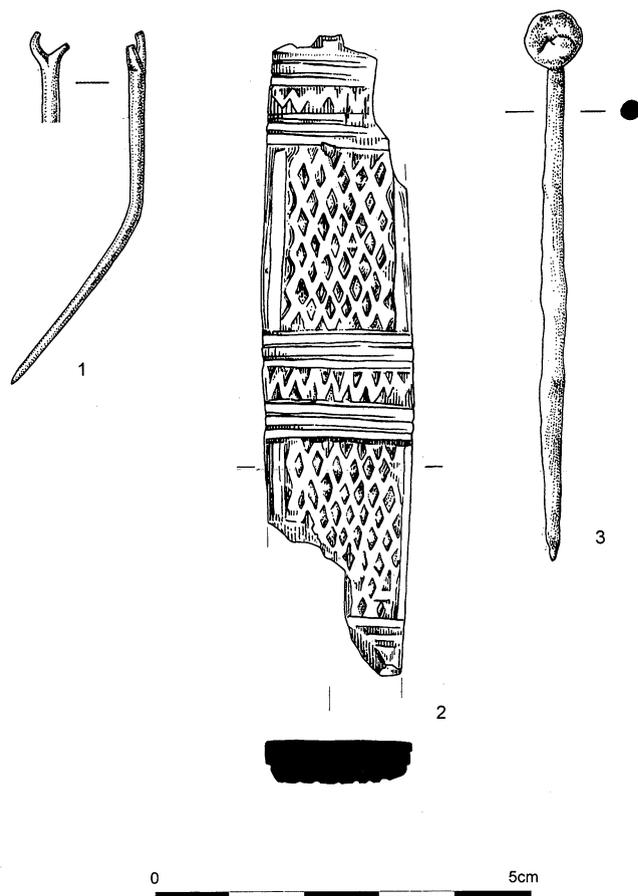


Fig 5 Althorpe Grove, Battersea: 1, a copper alloy spiral-headed pin (Saxon; context 102); 2, a decorated bone mount (Saxon); 3, an iron pin with lead head (post-medieval)

from earlier 8th century contexts, and the type continued into the mid-8th century at *Hamwic* and possibly elsewhere (Webster & Backhouse 1991, 97–8; Hinton 1996, 30, 35). The main distribution seems to have been in the south and east of England; no examples are known from the Continent. Their function is uncertain. The fact that at least one example is from a nunnery (Jackson 1988, 182–3) while several are from burial contexts, where they tend to occur in pairs, has led to suggestions that these may have been shroud pins and used primarily by women but this must remain inconclusive (Hinton 1996, 30). None of the *Hamwic* finds were from graves, although it was noted that several were found on sites where burials are known (Hinton 1996, 29). One of the two finds from Fishergate was from a grave, although in this case dated to between the mid-11th and mid-12th century (Rogers 1993, 1363). Althorpe Grove is close by Battersea Church, but as no Saxon burials are known in the Battersea area the status of the present find must remain uncertain; it could derive from either a funerary or a domestic

context. Although the top is missing, the lack of a collar and the plainness of the shaft suggest that it was not one of the more ornate examples of its type.

#### *An iron knife blade*

The front part of the blade from a small angle-backed knife was found in the garden soil 53 (68mm long, 15mm wide). The back is parallel with the cutting edge angled down to the tip (Ottaway 1992, 561: type A1); there is a groove along both sides of the back. Angle-backed knives are a long-lived form, but are most common in the 9th to 11th centuries; a much larger and more ornate example of the type is the *scramaseax* from Battersea, dated to the late 9th century (Wheeler 1935, 180, pl XII.6; Wilson 1964, 144–6; pl 22, no 36). Grooves of this type are considered to be a Late Saxon trait. A knife of similar proportions was recovered from the dark earth at Bedfordbury, in *Lundenwic* (Blackmore 1989, 124; fig 42, no 36), while others are known from the nearby Saxon site at Whitehall (Huggins in prep)

and from Saxon levels at Portchester Castle (Cunliffe 1976, 200). If this is a Middle Saxon artefact, therefore, it would seem to be slightly later than the Saxon pottery, which suggests a central date of c AD750-800 for the occupation; as it is a residual piece, however, it is not impossible that it is of Late Saxon or Saxo-Norman date.

#### *A bone mount*

A highly decorated bone mount made of a cow-sized long bone was found in the garden soil 53 (fig 5, no 2: 86mm long, 20mm wide). This is decorated with panels of diaper decoration divided by transverse chevron bands between triple grouped lines. There are also longitudinal grooves along either edge. The underside has a polished, soapy feel.

This piece was originally dated to the 10th century (Richardson 1977, 39) but the decoration seems to be in keeping with the 8th to 9th centuries. The chevron between triple grouped lines is found on a handled comb from the Thames at Wandsworth (Wheeler 1935, 152, fig 30; Riddler 1990, 11-12, fig 1b), on another comb from the Thames (*ibid.*, 14-15, fig 2c) and on examples from York (Waterman 1959, fig 17, nos 1, 3), but no exact parallels have been found for the honeycomb panels.

The function of the piece is uncertain. It has always been referred to as part of a handled comb (Richardson 1977, 39; Blackmore 1986, 214; Riddler 1990, 9-10; Huggins in prep), but combs of this type found in southern England are most commonly made of a single piece of antler into which a slot was cut (Riddler 1990, 9). This piece is unusual in that it is not of antler, and that it is quite flat, rather than rounded. Furthermore, although there are the possible vestiges of one or more grouped rivet holes at one end, none are present for a length of over 80mm, as would be expected if comb tooth plates had to be secured. It is not impossible that this is part of a comb case although it is rather wide and the decoration has no parallels among the cases published from York (Waterman 1959, pl XIX), from the Frisian terps (Roes 1963) or elsewhere (MacGregor 1985, 96-8). Some contemporary comb cases comprise closely paired ribs joined by cross pieces in the back (MacGregor 1985, 96-8), and this is the likely form of a recent find from the Royal Opera House (Blackmore in prep (d)) but a possible parallel is offered by a find from Threadneedle Street (Wheeler 1935, 152, fig 29), the plates of which are widely spaced so that the connecting plate of the comb can slot between them (length 92mm, width 13mm).

THE ANIMAL BONE, by Charlotte Ainsley

#### *Introduction*

A total of 979 fragments of animal bone (weighing approximately 25kg) were recovered from the site. This report, however, is only concerned with the 188 fragments (4681.3g) recovered from those features dated to the Middle Saxon and medieval periods. The

Among the other possibilities are knife handles and casket mounts. The scales of a folding knife from Northampton are rather shorter than this piece, but have a similar profile and a similarly long gap between the rivets (Oakley 1979, 315, fig 6, no 78), but if this were a knife one might expect some corrosion products, and none are present on the Battersea find. The decoration is also unusual for casket mounts of this period, which, like the comb cases, have designs based on ring-and-dot motifs (MacGregor 1985, 196-203; Waterman 1959, pl VII). In view of these uncertainties the term mount is perhaps the best for this piece, although given the wear on the back it seems most likely that it is from a comb case.

#### MEDIEVAL AND LATER FINDS

Definite medieval finds are limited to two horseshoe fragments from ditches 19 and 246 and a small pennanular iron fitting or buckle attached to a part of an iron mount (16mm in diameter) from a slot associated with the possible building. A fragment of grozed window glass from the garden soil 53 and lead from other post-medieval contexts may also be of medieval date, perhaps derived from the nearby church.

Post-medieval finds from the garden soil 53 comprise part of a George I halfpenny of 1720, two complete copper-alloy dress pins, part of a cloth seal from Norwich, the rim of a drinking glass, some lengths of copper-alloy wire and a lead offcut, all possibly derived from the manor house. A lace chape was found in a post-medieval posthole. The remaining finds are either of post-medieval or uncertain date (details in site archive). They include a complete shoe buckle with concave sides (25mm square), structural fittings, fragments from a number of glass bell jars used for forcing plants and fragments of industrial glass vessels. The identifiable coins comprise a farthing of Charles I (1625-49), and two halfpennies of 1723 (George I) and 1803 (George III). Two Nuremberg jettons were also found.

#### *A composite metal pin*, by John Clark

A most unusual find is a large iron pin with ball head of lead (fig 5, no 3) found in the post-medieval garden soil 53 (length 74mm, diameter of head 8mm). The form is reminiscent of Saxon types but the only parallels for the combination of materials are from post-medieval contexts at Wharram Percy (Goodall 1979, 121) and at Hadleigh Castle, the latter a smaller example (length 49mm, diameter of head 6mm) from a demolition group of the mid-16th century (Goodall 1975, 144, fig 29, no 380).

remaining bones are discussed in an unpublished assessment report (Ainsley 1998). The bone was generally in good condition, allowing accurate recording of butchery marks and identification of measurement points.

### *Methodology*

The animal bones were collected by hand, and no sieving programme was undertaken. They were recorded, on an individual basis, directly on to the MoLAS Environmental Archaeology Section ORACLE (version 7) database. Identifications of species and anatomy were aided by using the MoLSS Environmental Archaeology reference collections in conjunction with Schmid (1972), Cohen & Serjeantson (1996) and Cannon (1987). All available information for each bone was recorded including proportion present and zonal (Rackham 1986). The ages of the animals were determined through analysis of tooth wear stages (Grant 1982) and epiphyseal fusion (Silver 1969). The position and direction of butchery marks were recorded, and if possible the method and tools by which they may have been made were noted. The location and description of any pathology was similarly recorded, and suggestions made as to its possible cause. The other modifications, which were recorded on a regular basis, were gnawing and burning. The former was attributed to either rodent or carnivore wherever possible and, for both, the location and degree of severity were also noted. Measurements were taken largely following von den Driesch (1976). Where it was impossible to determine exact identifications to species, approximate classifications based on size were used, ie cattle-sized and sheep-sized.

### *Middle Saxon*

A total of 50 fragments (1766.5g) of bone were recovered from four Middle Saxon features: gullies 247, 545, 1068 and 1114 (table 2). Gully 545 contained 80.4% of the bone fragments from Middle Saxon features.

Cattle and cattle-sized material constituted both the largest percentage of weight and fragment counts for this period. All sections of the skeleton were represented: forelimb (scapula, humerus, radius, carpals, and metacarpal), hind limb (tarsals, astragalus and metatarsal), a small fragment of juvenile skull and a small quantity of vertebrae and ribs. There was, however, a noticeable lack of phalanges, though this might be because such small bones are often missed by hand collection. Butchery marks on the bones indicate that a forelimb had been separated from a carcass by chopping through the scapula (chopped between the supraglenoid tubercle and the glenoid cavity). Further subdivision of the limb occurred just above the 'elbow' joint, with a single transverse chop through the distal end of the humerus. Grazing chop marks on the shaft of a humerus indicate that meat was removed prior to cooking and not served 'on the bone'. Two bones, a humerus and a metacarpal, had been chopped longitudinally to extract marrow. All the cattle bones, except a single fragment of juvenile skull, were fully fused indicating that the animals were fully mature.

The sheep/goat remains consisted of a small fragment of a toothless mandible, a worn maxillary tooth and a proximal fragment of femur (fused). The mandible of a juvenile sheep with a worn deciduous premolar 4 and first molar was also found. A single sheep horncore had been chopped transversely across the base, presumably in order to remove the

horn and horncore from the skull so that the outer horn could then be removed for working.

The remains of other species were found in gully 545. They included single bones from a pig (a single fused calcaneum) and a cat (the fused distal end of a tibia), and two fragments of horse. The latter comprised a fused pelvis and a distally unfused metacarpal, which were probably from a single animal aged about ten to twelve months. Two chicken bones, a humerus and a tibia, were also recovered from the gully. The humerus had a transverse knife mark on the posterior side of the distal epiphysis, probably representing the dressing of the bird for the table.

### *Middle Saxon or medieval*

A total of 79 fragments (1547.8g) of animal bone were recovered from two apparently associated features of Middle Saxon or medieval date, 124/126 and 341/564 (table 3). Cattle and cattle-sized were represented by head bones (mandibular and maxillary fragments), limb bones and a small number of fragmentary vertebrae. The evidence indicates that the animals were of various ages, though only one mandibular tooth row, from an animal of 6 to 12 months, was sufficiently complete as to allow a close age determination. Another section of mandible was from a slightly older individual. Other diagnostic bones included an unfused distal section of radius from an animal less than 42–48 months old, and a distally fused fragment of femur from an individual older than 42–48 months. The cattle-sized vertebrae were not fused, and must have come from animals under seven years of age. Butchery marks on two cervical vertebrae indicate that a carcass had been split in half either directly along the mid-line of the

TABLE 2 Animal bone from Middle Saxon features

Species	No of fragments	Weight (g)
Cattle, <i>Bos taurus</i>	28	1415.0
Cattle-sized	10	73.0
Sheep/goat, <i>Ovis/Capra</i> sp dom	4	30.0
Sheep, <i>Ovis aries</i>	2	32.0
Pig, <i>Sus scrofa</i>	1	5.0
Cat, <i>Felis domesticus</i>	1	2.0
Horse, <i>Equus caballus</i>	2	207.0
Chicken, <i>Gallus gallus</i>	2	2.5
Total	50	1766.5

TABLE 3 Animal bone from Middle Saxon or medieval features

Species	No of fragments	Weight (g)
Cattle, <i>Bos taurus</i>	30	1100.0
Cattle-sized	16	156.2
Sheep/goat, <i>Ovis/Capra</i> sp dom	5	22.2
Sheep-sized	15	19.2
Pig, <i>Sus scrofa</i>	3	21.0
Horse, <i>Equus caballus</i>	1	12.0
Pilot whale, <i>Globicephala melaena</i>	1	138.0
Chicken, <i>Gallus gallus</i>	8	6.2
Total	79	1547.8

vertebrae or just to either side. Chop marks on a pelvis indicate the removal of the hind leg through the acetabulum. Further subdivision of a carcass into more manageable parts is indicated by a transverse chop through the very distal end of the femur. Chop marks along the axial plane were common and indicated that the bones had also been processed for marrow extraction. A humerus and a radius both had been burnt black. Four bones, including a femur, had been moderately to severely gnawed by carnivores. Unlike the femur the other bones were of low meat value.

Sheep/goat and pig were very poorly represented in this assemblage. Only five bone fragments were positively identified as sheep/goat: a metacarpal, a metatarsal, an unfused vertebra, a maxillary tooth and a small fragment of mandible. Both the metapodials had been chopped along the axial plane to extract the marrow, and the metatarsal had been burnt. There were also 15 sheep-sized bones. The pig bones comprised a burnt (black/white) astragalus, a section of scapula and interestingly an infant humerus.

A mandibular tooth from an adult horse was recovered from slot 126 and eight chicken bones were found in slot 564. Where it was possible to determine, all the chicken bones were from adults. Two chicken bones, a femur and a tibia, had medullary bone (a calcium deposit laid down by birds prior to laying eggs). It is possible that all the bones originated from two individuals.

The most notable find, however, was of a whale vertebra, probably of a pilot whale (M C Sheldrick, British Museum Natural History, pers comm), which was discovered in feature 124. Butchery was evident: there were two transverse chop marks on the posterior end of the left side, and three possible transverse chop marks in an eroded area on the ventral mid section.

#### Medieval

A total of 58 fragments (1367g) of animal bone was recovered from ten medieval features. Cattle and cattle-sized bone were predominant, and there were relatively few sheep/goat and sheep-sized bones. The cattle and cattle-sized remains were predominantly from the skull region (loose mandibular and maxillary teeth and two partial mandibles). Feature 1346 contained a butchered mandible, which had been chopped transversely through the front. Other transverse chop marks on the medial surface of the diastema were probably made during the removal of the tongue. The humerus of an adult animal had been chopped transversely across the distal end separating it from the lower limb, and grazing chop marks along its shaft were probably caused by the removal of the meat from the bone prior to cooking. A distal unfused element was also present indicating an animal less than three and a half years old.

Sheep/goat bones comprised fragments of humerus, femur, tibia, metapodials, calcaneum,

mandible (from a three to four-year-old animal), fragments of skull and a maxillary tooth. A fused chicken radius and a goose tarso-metatarsal were also recovered.

The partial skeleton of a cat was recovered from slot 1369. Although most of the skeleton was present,

there was a noticeable lack of phalanges and metapodials, but such small bones could easily have been missed by the excavator. The fusion stages (Amorosi 1989, 117) observed in the remains indicate that the cat was about nine months old.

### *Conclusions*

The material from Althorpe Grove provided a rare chance to study faunal remains from a Middle Saxon and medieval rural settlement site in London's hinterland. It must be stressed however that, owing to the small size of the assemblage and the high risk of residuality, conclusions based on this material should be treated with caution. Furthermore, because all the bones were collected by hand rather than by sieving, it is likely that the assemblage is biased towards larger animals, such as cattle and horse, while the bones of smaller animals, such as young domesticated mammals and birds, are likely to be under-represented. This could explain the absence of fish, which would almost certainly have been consumed at the riverside settlement.

The range of species suggests that the diet of the inhabitants of the settlement was largely restricted to domesticated animals and did not vary greatly between the Saxon and medieval periods. Cattle formed the bulk of the diet and were supplemented with a small quantity of sheep/goat and even fewer pigs. There was also evidence for the limited consumption of chicken. Goose was the only other bird recovered, and was only represented by a single fragment from a medieval gully (1067).

There was limited evidence of butchery. In one case a forelimb had been removed from a torso by chopping first through the shoulder and then through the distal humerus. Similarly a hind leg was dismembered by chopping through the pelvis and then through the distal end of the femur. This would not have been the easiest way to butcher a carcass, and would have required a sharp heavy blade. Grazing chop marks on the shafts of many bones show that meat was removed prior to cooking, and the bones were then further processed to extract the marrow. Butchery marks on a sheep/goat horncore suggests that horn working may have been undertaken on the site, but only on a small scale.

Evidence for on-site breeding was very limited: a juvenile sheep mandible from a Middle Saxon feature and a single infant pig humerus from a Middle Saxon or medieval feature. It is very likely that pigs were kept by households during the Saxon and medieval periods, as they would have been easy to maintain, and could be fed on a wide range of domestic refuse. They were important as a source of essential fat and, because of this high fat content, pig meat was relatively easy to preserve.

The presence of the butchered pilot whale vertebra is very interesting. 'Fat fishes' (which may have included sturgeon and porpoise as well as whale) were considered a delicacy during the Saxon period. Whale was expensive owing to its high fat content, making it nutritionally important. Some 'fish' were imported into London; merchants from Rouen brought 'salt whale' on which Aethelred imposed tolls payable at London Bridge (Hagen 1995, 169). Englishmen also hunted whales by driving them into inlets in a similar manner to that employed in the Faroe Islands today. Alternatively, the vertebra may represent the opportunistic scavenging of a beached whale. Whale bones have been recovered from a number of other Saxon and early medieval sites in central London. Finds include a vertebra of a pilot whale from Middle Saxon strata at the Royal Opera House (site code: ROP95; Rielly in prep (a)), a fragment of whale rib from a Saxo-Norman pit at Winchester Palace (WP83; Rielly in prep (b)) and a thoracic vertebra of a sperm whale from a Late Saxon site in Upper Thames Street (UPT90; Rielly in prep (c)).

## Discussion, by Lyn Blackmore and Robert Cowie

### PREHISTORIC AND ROMAN

The topographical evidence suggests that the historic core of Battersea is located on a former eyot, which once lay at the edge of the Thames. Archaeological evidence from other former eyots at Westminster, Southwark and Bermondsey suggest that such locations were often the *foci* of prehistoric and later activity and settlement (Merriman 1989, 162; Thomas & Rackham 1996). There is, however, comparatively little evidence for occupation at Battersea before the Middle Saxon period. Only four features found during the excavations at Althorpe Grove could be tentatively dated to the prehistoric period, and probably represent transitory occupation. Two of the features, a ditch and a posthole in trench L, produced single potsherds with calcareous fabrics. The presence of such pottery, and the apparent paucity of flintwork, suggests that most prehistoric activity on the site occurred during the Late Iron Age. Thus the prehistoric remains at Althorpe Grove may be broadly contemporary with the deposition of the Battersea shield and/or with activity both upstream and downstream, notably at Fulham Palace (Arthur & Whitehouse 1978; Greenwood 1997, 158 and 161) and at St Mary's Clerkenwell, the latter a short distance up the Fleet Valley (Blackmore in prep (a)).

The Roman finds are all residual and how they reached the site is unknown. Although they probably reflect the fact that the site lies near the river, and was a short distance from the Roman road leading from London to Chichester.

### MIDDLE SAXON

Archaeological and documentary evidence suggests that by the Middle Saxon period a riverside settlement had been established at Battersea. At present the extent of this settlement is largely a matter of conjecture, although judging from the distribution of Saxon finds it would seem that the settlement was fairly small. Apart from a few river finds of imprecise provenance, Saxon artefacts at Battersea are concentrated in a small area on the site at Althorpe Grove. Interestingly, extensive excavations at Battersea Flour Mills, about 100m to the north, did not produce any evidence for Saxon settlement.

The status of the Saxon settlement is also unclear. Nevertheless, some objects from the area, such as the *scramaseax* from the Thames at Battersea and the handled comb from Wandsworth (see bone mount), are of sufficient quality to suggest that there may have been a manorial complex in the locality. The discovery of a pilot whale vertebra in a feature of Middle Saxon or medieval date is intriguing, and because whales were a high status food (Gardiner 1997) suggests that the settlement may have been of some importance.

Taking the pottery and other finds together, it would seem that the main phase of Saxon activity at Althorpe Grove was between *c* AD750 and 800, although some finds could be earlier than this (Blackmore 1993, 142). Some of the river finds at Battersea are probably contemporary with the Middle Saxon features at Althorpe Grove. They include the *scramaseax*, the loomweight and probably the Series E *sceat* (see above), especially if the latter remained in circulation for a few decades. However, most other Saxon objects from the nearby river are earlier than the finds from the excavation, while a few, such as the axe, are slightly later, so their significance must remain uncertain.

The artefactual evidence suggests, therefore, that the occupation of the site coincided with the general period of expansion of the nearby *emporium* of *Lundenwic*, which was probably at its peak *c* AD750–75. The site was also probably contemporaneous with the settlement at the Treasury, Whitehall, and early activity on Thorney Island. The latter might now be put back to AD730–800 rather than the 9th century, since the 'Badorf pitcher' (Blackmore & Redknap 1988, 226; fig 3, no 9; Blackmore 1993, 142–3; Blackmore 1995, 80) has now been confirmed as being an early *Reliefbandamphora* from Walberberg. The nearest Saxon site to Battersea was on the opposite riverbank at Chelsea, where

archaeological evidence indicates occupation between AD650 and 750 and documentary sources suggest the existence of a royal vill in the late 9th century.

The ceramic chronology for *Lundenwic* has now advanced to the point where groups can be dated with reasonable certainty, but for sites outside the *emporium* it is much harder. Despite pioneer work by Hurst (1961, 211–99; 1976, 61), the local typologies and date ranges remain unclear for want of large well-stratified groups and published material. Chaff-tempered wares are the only types that are ubiquitous, but the tradition is long lived, spanning the Early and Middle Saxon periods. In *Lundenwic*, and on many other Middle Saxon sites, they would seem to have gone out of use by c 750, but this may not have been the case in the hinterland. At Old Windsor, in Berkshire, for example, a peak was noted in the 9th century, while it was claimed that they continued into the 11th century (O’Neil 1958, 184). This seems improbably late, although a Late Saxon date was also proposed for wares from Wraysbury (Astill & Lobb 1989, 102, 107–9).

Where the pottery is limited to undecorated chaff-tempered wares, therefore, it is difficult to provide more than a very broad date range (Jones & Moorhouse 1981, 123), as the absence of diagnostic types may reflect, amongst other things, the function or trading activities of a community as much as the date of the settlement. Battersea, however, has a few diagnostic imported wares which, although mainly residual, show that the site was somehow involved in exchange mechanisms. Non-local types include a sandy ware from Surrey, and Ipswich ware, the currency of which is placed at c 730 to c 850 (Blackmore in prep (b)). Ipswich ware had a wide distribution in southern England. Outside *Lundenwic* it is known from sites at Barking (Redknap 1991, 356–7), Waltham Abbey (Huggins 1976, 104) and Yeoveney, near Staines (Jones & Moorhouse 1981, 120–3), but the real frequency of distribution, and the mechanisms governing it, are unknown. The shell-tempered wares are later than Ipswich wares, and are much less common. In *Lundenwic* they would mainly seem to be a 9th century trend. The imported wares are from northern France and the Rhenish Vorbebirge. They are also known at Barking (Redknap 1992), and occur on most sites in the *Lundenwic*/Westminster area (Blackmore 1988; 1989; 1993). Their distribution elsewhere is more limited and, although Badorf-type wares are known from Waltham Abbey (Huggins 1976, 101, 103, fig 36, nos 17, 18, 31), it is uncertain as to whether these are from Walberberg or later Badorf types.

The other Saxon finds are typical for the period, but differ in matters of detail, which make them important additions to the local and national corpus. The spiral-headed pin and knife are not especially unusual artefacts, but the bone piece is of high quality and must have belonged to a person of some status. These and the non-local ware types may have been brought directly to the site alongside other traded goods, but it is more probable that from the late 7th until the 9th century most imported goods reached Battersea through the *emporium* of *Lundenwic*, or via Barking Abbey.

The absence of Late Saxon artefacts on the site, and the paucity of such material in the general locality, suggests a hiatus in activity, which probably began sometime in the 9th century, almost certainly as a result of Viking incursions. In the immediate context, it is tempting to infer that the settlement at Battersea was abandoned during the first wave of Viking attacks on London in the mid-9th century. This may have been either because the attacks resulted in the general desertion of the market on which Battersea may have relied for supplies, or because this riverside settlement, a mere 6km upstream from *Lundenwic*, itself fell victim to the Viking raiders. A contributory factor may have been Battersea’s connection with Barking Abbey, which was granted land there in the 7th century. It is not known when the abbey lost its rights to this land, but it has been suggested (Hart 1966, 141) that this may have occurred during the Danish invasions. This theory is plausible since there is evidence that Barking Abbey was abandoned from about 870 until the early to mid-10th century (Redknap 1991, 359).

To conclude, the function of the Battersea site in the Middle Saxon period is unclear. If it were domestic one might, on the evidence from *Lundenwic*, expect quantities of animal

bone and loomweights, but these were not present. Nonetheless, given its location near the church and the presence of early medieval domestic activity in the vicinity, it is tempting to suggest that the site lay within a Saxon manorial estate, as has been found at Flixborough (Loveluck 1998), Wicken Bonhunt (Wade 1980) and elsewhere. The demise of the site fits with the general pattern of desertion in London during the mid-9th century, when *Lundenwic* and other riverside settlements at the Treasury and Barking were apparently abandoned, and few, if any, Saxon finds from the locality can be assigned to this troubled period. The tradition of a manor house may, nonetheless, have persisted into the 11th century.

#### MEDIEVAL

Documentary evidence indicates that the settlement at Battersea had revived by the mid-11th century. However, at present there is little archaeological evidence for Saxo-Norman occupation in the locality, and only one pit at Althorpe Grove could be tentatively dated to this period. A small amount of pottery from the site was dated to the 11th to 12th centuries, but most was residual.

There is a marked increase in the archaeological evidence for settlement at Battersea during the 12th and 13th centuries. At Althorpe Grove a substantial boundary ditch (19) appears to have been deliberately infilled during the 12th century, although a few 13th century and later finds were recovered from it, the latter almost certainly intrusive. Traces of a possible rectangular timber building and a number of other structural features appear to date to the second half of the 12th century or 13th century, and at least two pits and two or three gullies are dated to the late 13th century. Remarkably similar evidence was recently recorded by Wessex Archaeology during excavations at the Battersea Flour Mills site, to the north-east of St Mary's Church (Cooke 2001, this volume, 93–131, fig 1). Here a number of features have been dated to the 12th to 14th centuries. They included the remains of a rectangular timber building, which may have been a grain store, and two other possible structures together with a number of pits and drainage gullies.

#### Conclusion

This excavation and the subsequent research have shown that the settlement pattern of the area was influenced by the local geology from the prehistoric period onwards, and have indicated that there was Saxon and early medieval settlement in the vicinity of the site. The archaeological finds from these sites do not appear to represent occupation on a large scale, and it might appear that the medieval settlement at Battersea was fairly small. It is, however, possible that the features and associated finds from Althorpe Grove represent a farm and that the nucleus of the settlement may have lain closer to the church. While the features discussed here cannot be related to the manor with certainty, the presence of the boundary ditch suggests that this is likely to have been the case.

#### Endnote

The Surrey Archaeological Society wishes to acknowledge the 'establishment grant' by the then Department of the Environment, which met the salaries of the small core of professional excavators. Acknowledgement is also due for the welcome grant by the GLC Historic Buildings Department, which paid for limited machining. The remainder of the work was carried out by a fluctuating team of volunteers, as was frequently the norm in the 1970s. By current standards, the operation was under-resourced. There were, for example, no resources for site security and as a result there was almost daily vandalism, which interfered with the progress of the excavation and lowered the morale of the participants.

The excavations were undertaken before the development of single context recording and, as a consequence, the site archive lacks some information that would be commonplace today. Recording standards and methodologies have changed since the 1970s, and some descriptions of features and their stratigraphical relationships inevitably do not meet current expectations. In some cases features were numbered and excavated but records have not survived. Apparent inconsistencies between the site survey grid and plans — which may be a direct or indirect result of site vandalism — have proved difficult for the authors of the report to resolve and the published plans are a best fit.

The original records and new archive may be consulted at the Museum of London Archaeological Archive Centre.

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Site plans are by Steven Cheshire. The finds were illustrated by Jane Sandoe, and the pottery by Lyn Blackmore.

### APPENDIX

#### Key to the pottery fabric codes

Period	Fabric	Expansion	Date range	
			BC	AD
PH	CALCS	Calcareous clay matrix	500	– 50
PH	GROG	Grog-tempered	100	– 50
PH	FLIN1	Fine flint temper	500	– 50
PH	FLIN2	Medium flint temper	500	– 50
PH	FLIN3	Coarse flint temper	500	– 50
PH	QU	Quartz-tempered	500	– 50
PH	SAND2	Brickearth with very fine sand	500	– 50
PH	SAND3	Brickearth(?) with fine sand	500	– 50
PH	SAND4	Fine/medium sand with clay pellets	500	– 50
PH	SAND6	Fine sand with calcareous/organic matter	500	– 50
			AD	AD
R	AHFA	Alice Holt/Farnham	250	– 400
R	FINE	Misc fine ware	50	– 400
R	HWC	Highgate 'C'	70	– 160
R	PORD	Porchester D ware	350	– 400
R	OXID	Misc oxidized wares	50	– 400
R	SAND	Misc sandy wares	50	– 400
S	BADOE	Badorf/Walberberg: medium fine sand	750	– 850
S	CHFS	Sandy chaff-tempered ware	400	– 750
S	CHSF	Sparse organic temper + fine sand	400	– 750
S	CHSFI	Fine sandy organic ware, iron-rich	400	– 750
S	IPSC	Ipswich coarse ware	730	– 850
S	IPSF	Ipswich fine ware	730	– 850
S	IPSM	Ipswich Intermediate ware	730	– 850
S	MSCH	Mixed sand and chalk	600	– 850
S	MSOLC	Oolitic limestone + limestone	600	– 850

S	MSSH	Shell tempered; soft soapy	770 - 850
S	NFEBB	N France/E Belgium? hard greyware	600 - 800
S	NFGWA	N French grey ware, coarse sand-tempered	600 - 800
S	SLGSA	Lower Greensand ironstone sand	600 - 850
S	SSAND	Fine sandy ware, sparse organic matter	600 - 800
M	BRIM	Brill medieval ware	1250-1500
M	CBW	Coarse border ware	1270-1500
M	CHEA	Cheam whiteware	1350-1500
M	EARL	Earlwood ware	1200-1400
M	EMCH	Early med chalky ware	1050-1150
M	EMFL	Early medieval flinty ware	970-1100
M	EMS	Early medieval sandy ware	970-1100
M	EMSH	Early med shelly ware 1050?	1050-1150
M	EMSS	Early med sand and shell ware	1000-1150
M	ESUR	Early Surrey ware	1050-1150
M	ESUR FL	Early Surrey ware + flint	1050-1150
M	KING	Kingston-Type ware	1230-1400
M	LANG	Langerwehe stoneware	1350-1500
M	LCOAR	Coarse London-type ware	1080-1200
M	LIMP	Limpsfield-type wares	1150-1300
M	LLON	Late London ware	1400-1500
M	LOND	London-type ware	1080-1350
M	LSS	Late Saxon shelly ware	900-1050
M	MG	Mill Green ware	1270-1350
M	MGCOAR	Mill Green coarseware	1270-1500
M	SHER	South Herts/Limpsfield greywares	1140-1300
M	SSW	Shelly-sandy ware	1140-1220
M	VALM	Mature Valencian lustreware	1430-1500

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