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Excavations at the Roman settlement in Ewell, 1970–2: Ewell Grove and Grove Cottage

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with contributions by
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This report covers two excavations. The first was at Ewell Grove School, between West Street and High Street in Ewell, where Middle and Late Bronze Age features were found beneath an area of Roman occupation. The next use of the site began in the mid-1st century AD with a drainage gully laid out at the beginning of Roman settlement in Ewell. This was succeeded in the 2nd century by a boundary ditch, which was afterwards backfilled and cut by several large pits in the late 3rd century, a period that is known to have seen changes in the economy of the roadside town. The second excavation was at Grove Cottage, near the route of Stane Street, where traces of a 1st century building were found with metalled surfaces nearby.

EWELL GROVE

Introduction

SITE LOCATION

The site is bounded on the north by the buildings of Ewell Grove School, on the south and east by the land behind 74–90 Ewell High Street, and on the west by the footpath and open space called Ewell Grove (fig 1; centred TQ 2193 6244). It is on a gentle slope, running down from south-east to north-west. The geology is complex and comprises bands of North Downs Chalk, Thanet Sand and the brown clay of the Woolwich and Reading Beds.

BACKGROUND

The site (Surrey Historic Environment Record (HER) 1129) had been an orchard prior to its use as a school playground. In 1939 four trenches were dug for air-raid shelters, exposing Roman pottery. This was collected by Cloudesley Willis, who subsequently passed it on to Anthony Lowther; the material now forms part of the Lowther Collection at Bourne Hall Museum. The discovery led to an excavation in the following year by Sheppard Frere, who found a boundary ditch that had later been cut by pits. The finds from the ditch, with pottery ranging in date from the 1st to the 3rd centuries AD, suggested that a building might have stood on its northern edge; it was associated with building material (including cob) and animal bones (Frere 1943). The finds from this work are now in Guildford Museum (acc nos AS 280–8, 530, 18192, 18219–97, 18419–552, 18577, 22693 and 21776).

There is further evidence of Roman occupation in the grounds of the former Ewell House to the south-west of Ewell Grove (HER 2532). Excavation here in 1934 revealed a boundary ditch that contained residual Iron Age pottery, Roman coarsewares and building material (Lowther 1935, 17–28). To the east of Ewell Grove, Roman material of 1st–4th century date has been reported from 56–58 High Street (HER 1164), 72 High Street (HER 1148) and 84 High Street (HER 1159). The nearest of these sites to have been satisfactorily excavated is 46–50 High Street, where pits containing 1st–2nd century pottery were found to have been succeeded by a cobbled surface and a 3rd–4th century well (Hayman 2010).

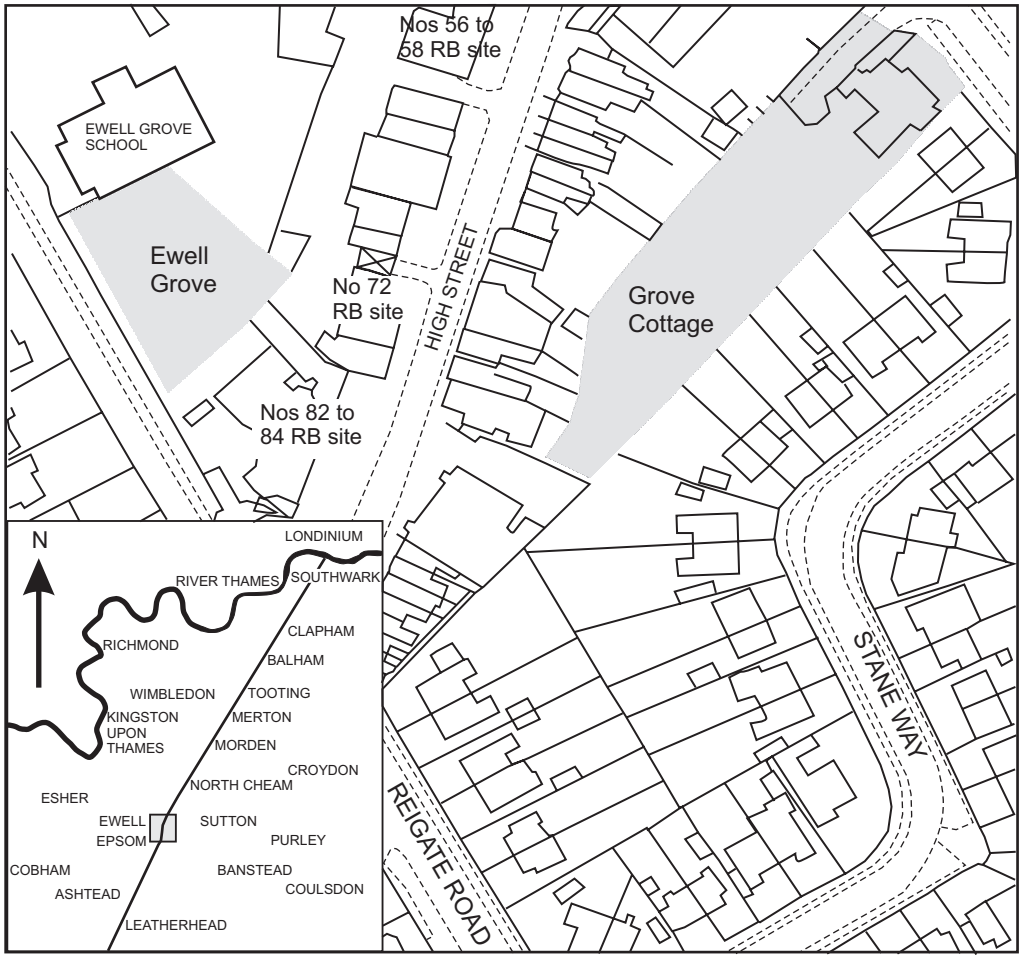

Fig 1 Ewell Grove and Grove Cottage, Ewell. Location of excavation sites and other Roman sites in the vicinity. (© Crown copyright Ordnance Survey. All rights reserved).

EXCAVATION HISTORY

In 1969, plans were announced to build extensions to the main school building that would cover the area of the 1939–40 excavations. Further excavation of the site was then undertaken with two aims: first, to relocate the trenches of the 1939–40 excavation and to trace the ditch, small ditch/gully and pits recorded by Frere (1943, fig 1); secondly, to assess the relative sequence of the ditches and pits on the site, and to determine whether there had in fact been a Roman building near the boundary ditch.

Excavation took place on weekends between August 1970 and December 1972 with the support of the Bourne Hall Museum and the then Nonsuch Antiquarian Society (now the Epsom and Ewell History and Archaeology Society). Local schools and colleges were also involved. Since the site was known to be shallow, it was decided to adopt a form of open area excavation. The excavation plan (fig 2) was based on an alphanumeric grid of 4m squares, the base line extending from TQ 21934 62413 to TQ 21967 62442, and the sides labelled from A to I and from 1 to 10. In all, there were ten archaeologically productive trenches, some of them confined to one grid square, and some extending over several. A few further trenches were commenced but abandoned when they were found to coincide with

fill from the 1939–40 excavations. Along the south-eastern boundary, a series of 1m-wide trenches (A1/B4, A6/8 and A9/10) was laid out to determine whether any structures extended from the neighbouring Roman sites. Trenches CD3, D4, D6 and CD10 were laid out across the middle of the site to try to trace the route of the boundary ditch and the gully or small ditch that had been found by Frere. Trenches E5/F5 and D8/I9 were laid out to find the Roman structure suggested by Frere on the northern side of the boundary ditch (Frere 1943, 59), but without success.

In the initial archive, excavation was recorded by individual grid square, but for the present report the long trenches have been described collectively. The locations of significant finds were plotted using co-ordinates from the nearest grid corner posts. The finds from the site have been deposited at the Bourne Hall Museum under the site code EGE 1970.

The excavation

PHASE 1: EARLY PREHISTORIC

Struck flint was found throughout the site, in all contexts. The largest amount was recovered from layer 3, the horizontal sandy subsoil layer just above the natural in trenches A1/B4 and D8/I9. The material in trench A1/B4 was recorded in 1 x 5m arbitrary spits to check whether it was a preserved working floor, but this was found not to be the case. The flint was mostly debris of an undiagnostic kind, but there were several blades or bladelets and cores of a Mesolithic character, together with microburins and at least one microlith (fig 8, no 9). Frere (1943, 48) also reported a microlith and Mesolithic flakes. A Neolithic presence was indicated by a roughly made leaf arrowhead (fig 8, no 8), and several of the flakes and scrapers were of later prehistoric type.

PHASE 2: BRONZE AGE

The light brown sandy subsoil (3) lay at a depth of 0.9m in trench BC9. This layer, which had built up in late Roman times, rested on loose sandy gravel. It overlay six shallow pits or hollows (fig 3) that had been cut some 0.25m into the natural. Four of these pits (B, C, F and G) had no apparent relationship to each other; a fifth (D), which was 0.50m in diameter, had been cut into the base of another (A). All these features appeared to be closely contemporary, though their upper layers had been truncated. Features D and B contained fragments of Middle Bronze Age bucket urns and a straight-sided jar (see *Prehistoric pottery*, nos 1–4), together with a cylindrical clay loomweight (see *Fired clay*, no 8) and several undiagnostic flint flakes.

The same subsoil layer was present in trench D8/I9, and again rested in most places directly on the natural chalk, sand and clay into which a number of features had been cut (fig 4). A shallow pit, 0.12m deep (A), lay north of a larger pit or depression (D) and both of these had been cut by a later pit (E). Pits A and E contained flint-tempered pottery sherds, as well as a biconical clay spindlewhorl (see *Fired clay*, no 9, from A) and concentrations of burnt flint nodules. Pit D was also cut by two later features, dug from 0.5m downwards; these were a patch of brown soil (X), and a circular patch of charcoal, 0.7m in diameter (Y). Features X and Y appear to have been contemporary with an area of flint nodules and sandstone (feature Z), since X, Y and Z all contained flint-tempered pottery. Another shallow pit (F) also contained flint-tempered pottery, together with flint blades and concentrations of burnt flint nodules. The pottery was predominantly of post-Deverel-Rimbury type (see *Prehistoric pottery*, nos 1–3), though only those sherds from feature A could be identified in the archive with any certainty.

PHASE 3: ROMAN, MID–LATE 1ST CENTURY (AD 50–75)

A small ditch or gully crossing the site was found by Frere, who located it in his trenches Ia and II. (Frere 1943, figs 1 and 3). This was picked up in trench D4 (figs 5 and 6), and in

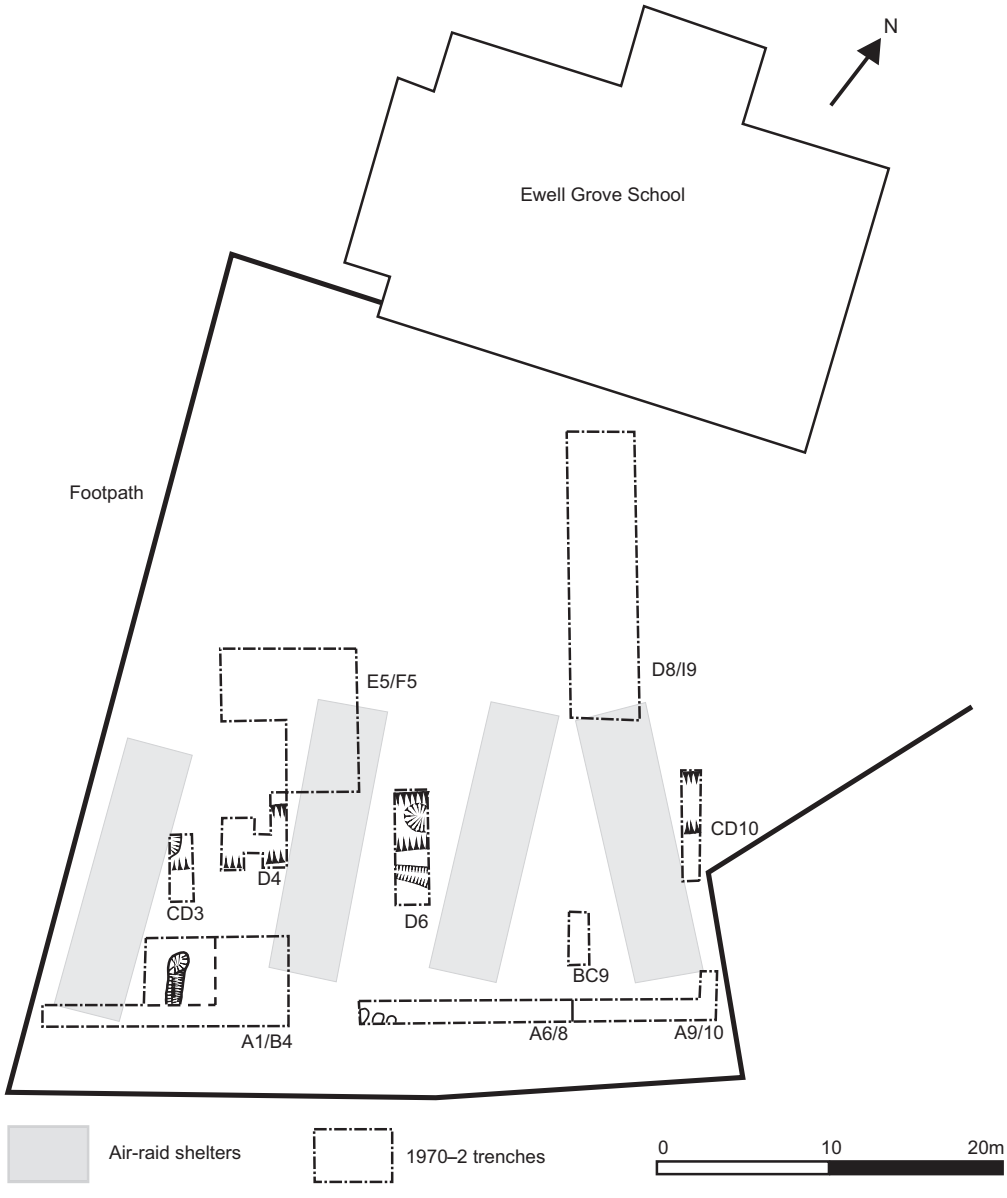

Fig 2 Ewell Grove, Ewell. Site plan. The 1939 air-raid shelters have been marked as located in 1970–2. Abortive trenches have been omitted. The alignment of the phase 4 ditch, together with features not illustrated on other plans, is shown. It should be noted that there is some uncertainty as to the exact location of the 1970–2 trenches. The location of Frere's trenches is not shown because of discrepancies between the 1970–2 and 1939–40 site plans that it has not been possible to resolve.

trench D6 (fig 2). The gully was 0.60m wide and 0.25m deep; on the north side of it was a bank of reddish-brown clay (fig 6) that appears to have been deliberately built up, on that side at least, and has been treated as layer G2, although it could also be interpreted as a natural deposit. A sandy silt, 0.10m thick, had accumulated at the base of this gully, which increased in width from the south-west to the north-east, giving the impression that it was a soakaway. The gully was not located in trenches BC9, A9/10 or CD10, suggesting that it

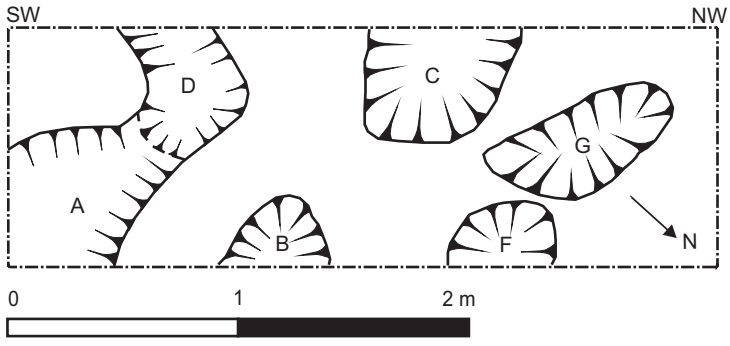

Fig 3 Ewell Grove, Ewell. Plan of Bronze Age (phase 2) features in trench BC9.

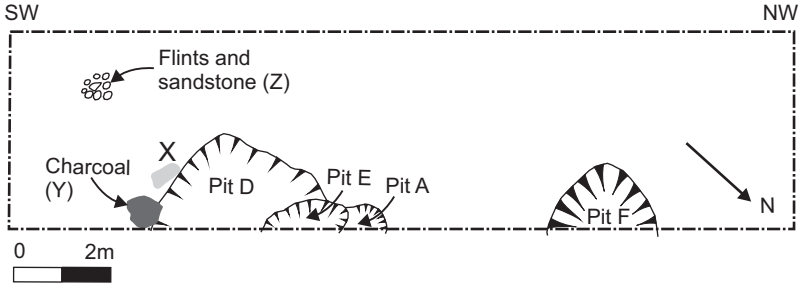

Fig 4 Ewell Grove, Ewell. Plan of Bronze Age (phase 2) features in trench D8/I9.

ended in a sump just east of D6. The pottery that Frere found when he sectioned the feature (1943, 56, nos 21 and 23) dates to the mid-1st century, and this dating was confirmed by the finds made in D4 and D6 (see *Roman coarsewares*, nos 1–4), in particular by a necked carinated jar (no 1), which was found blocking the gully and sealed by the next layer above. This confirms an end date of *c* AD 75 for the use of the gully.

Several other features, including a short length of shallow gully and a small oval pit, were located cutting into the natural in trench A1/B4 (fig 2). The presence of early Roman coarseware sherds in this feature suggests that it was contemporary with the gully, although it is possible that the feature was another of the pits from phase 2, and that the sherds were intrusive.

PHASE 4: LATE 1ST–LATE 2ND CENTURY (AD 75–200)

This phase involved the construction of a large ditch across the middle of the site, apparently as a boundary. This ditch had been originally located by Frere and was found again in trenches CD3, D4, D6 and CD10 (fig 2); trench D4 intersected Frere's cuttings I and Ia. The plan of the ditch in trenches D4 (figs 2 and 5b), D6 (fig 2) and CD10 (fig 2) shows it to have been some 2.50m wide, while from the section in D4 (fig 6) it appears to have been 0.70m deep. It lay to the north of the gully, which was backfilled and banked up to prepare for it (layer LD5 in trench D4, fig 6). Two postholes found along the northern side of the gully (trench D4, fig 5a) appear to have been revetment stakes placed to prevent this embankment from slipping.

The digging of this ditch was followed shortly after by the deposition within it of lumps of cob, apparently from a demolished building. These were found in layer LD4 of trench CD3 and in layer LD6 of trench D4 (fig 6), where a brownish-grey silt in the base of the ditch included large weathered lumps of chalk. Further lumps of cob were found in layer LD4 of

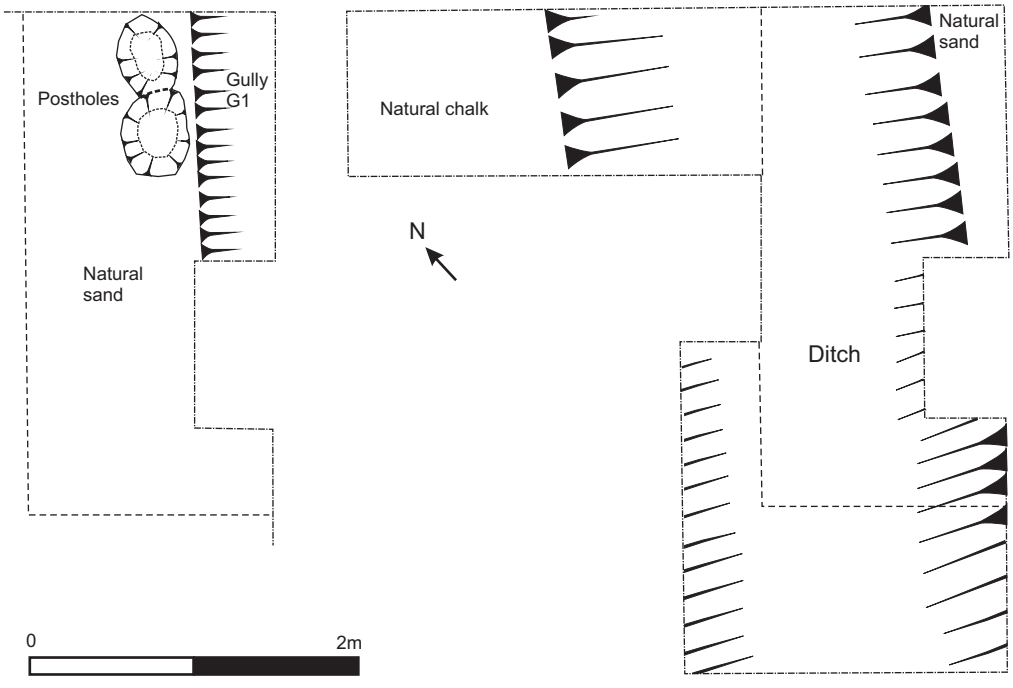

Fig 5 Ewell Grove, Ewell. Left (a) plan of part of trench D4 showing gully G1 (phase 3) and postholes; right (b) plan of trench D4 with Roman ditch (phase 4).

trench D4; this was a chalk and brown soil that had been dumped on the primary silt. Subsequently a cut was made into layer LD4, which was filled with an orange/brown soil with a clay texture (LD3). A further attempt was then made to re-excavate the ditch at this point, cutting into both LD3 and LD4. This was infilled with a brown clay-textured soil (LD2), with lenses of charcoal showing up as tip lines. By this stage the ditch was only 0.25m deep and perhaps of less significance as a boundary.

In trench D6, the primary silting appeared as layer LD4, and another dump of chalk lumps was found higher in layer LD2. In trench CD3 the original fill (layer LD4) was succeeded by a greyish-white silt (LD3) and above this was a brown sandy layer or tip line (LD2) down the centre alignment of the ditch, corresponding with the same layer in D4.

The dating of the coarseware (see *Roman coarsewares*, nos 5–10) suggests that these episodes of ditch fill took place between the end of the 1st century and the beginning of the 3rd century AD. The rope rim jars found in Frere's cuttings I and Ia (1943, 51–4, nos 12 and 15) suggest a similar date.

PHASE 5: EARLY 3RD–LATE 3RD CENTURY (AD 200–70)

This phase saw the final backfilling of the main ditch, which seems to have disappeared as a recognisable feature at this time. The fill (LD1 in all trenches) varied in character across the site; it appeared as a loose chalk and mid-brown sandy soil in CD3, an orange/brown soil with fragments and flecks of chalk in D4, a brown/greyish soil with little chalk fragments in D6 and a brown soil with traces of charcoal in CD10.

The coarseware from this infilling (see *Roman coarsewares*, nos 11–24) is of late 2nd–late 3rd century AD date; this is compatible with the single coin found in this phase, a forgery of a denarius of Caracalla (see *Coins*, no 1). The presence of samian should give a clearer date, but the evidence here is ambiguous. Sherds from this phase (see *Samian*, nos 2–5) suggest a

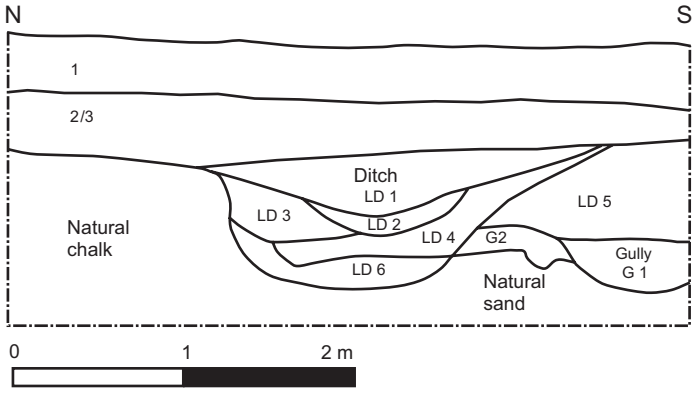

Fig 6 Ewell Grove, Ewell. North–south section through trench D4 showing gully (phase 3) underlying ditch (phase 4).

date in the mid-2nd century AD, but it seems likely that they were redeposited or, more probably, came from vessels that were not broken and discarded until more than a generation after they had been acquired. Frere also found samian pottery in the ditch silts of his trenches I, Ia and V (1943, 49, 53, nos 1–3 and 13–14). This was of Trajanic or Hadrianic date, suggesting that the material had a long history before being deposited.

PHASE 6: LATE 3RD TO MID-4TH CENTURIES (AD 270–350)

After the levelling of the boundary ditch, the site appears to have been open ground. Subsequently several features – a pit in CD3, and another in D6 – were found to have been cut into the buried ditch. In his trench V, Frere also found a pit cutting the buried ditch (1943, 48–9) and this would appear to belong to the same phase.

The pit in trench CD3 (fig 2) was only partially excavated but appears to have been a little under 2m in diameter and 1.5m deep. The primary silt (P6) was followed by another thin layer (P5) with rodent bones, suggesting that the feature had lain open long enough to trap pit-fall victims. Another thin layer (P4) contained more of the rodent bones together with chalk lumps, which are likely to have come from a demolished building nearby. The next layer (P3) also contained chalk lumps in an orange-coloured soil – there were fewer lumps in layer P2, a dark-grey soil – and finally the pit was filled to the old ground level with 1m of grey clay soil and more of the chalk lumps (P1).

The pit in trench D6 (figs 2 and 7) was 1.5m in diameter and 2m deep. The primary silt (P3) was followed by two large deposits that filled the pit – first a fill of 1m (P2) of light grey sandy soil, and then another of 0.5m (P1) of a greyish sandy soil mixed with chalk fragments.

Also belonging to this phase were three small pits in trench A6/8 (fig 2). They were cut into a brown sandy layer above the subsoil, and each was packed with coarseware, bones and chalk lumps, with charcoal-filled centres suggesting posts that had burnt *in situ*. The coarseware from this fill (fig 10, nos 25–27, 30) dates from the late 3rd century onwards, although the dating is obscured by the presence of redeposited pottery from accidental excavation of the ditch. The samian (see *Samian*, nos 6 and7) is also likely to have been redeposited.

PHASE 7: MID–LATE 4TH CENTURY (AD 350–400)

There were no features associated with this phase, but it is marked by some unabraded sherds of the 4th century AD and by coins. Frere also recorded 4th century pottery in the upper

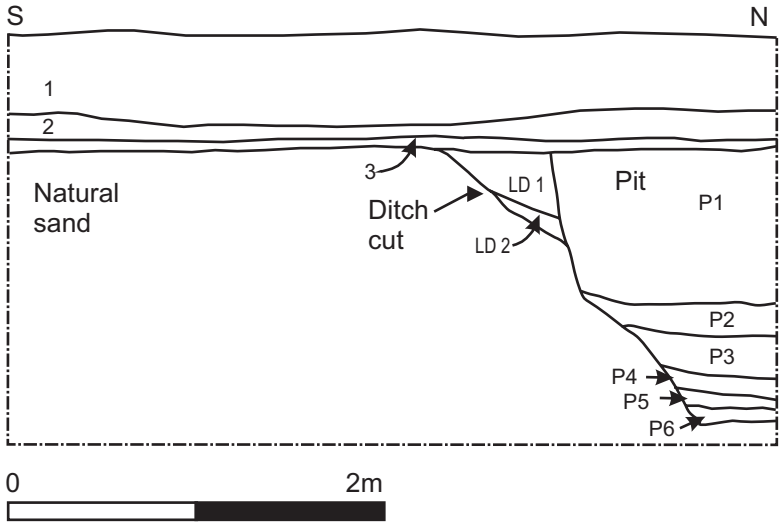

Fig 7 Ewell Grove, Ewell. South–north section through trench CD3 showing ditch (phase 4) cut by pit (phase 6).

layer of his trenches Ia and II (1943, 56, no 22). Most of the coins found on site belong to this phase, including two of the House of Constantine (see *Coins*, nos 2 and 3), which appear to have worked their way down to the final backfill of the boundary ditch. The earliest coin to be found in layer 2 is a barbarous radiate of Claudius II Gothicus (see *Coins*, no 5) and the latest is a clipped *siliqua* of Valens (see *Coins*, no 10) issued between 364 and 378 but is likely to have had a history of use until *c* 400.

The finds

FLINT, by Jonathan Cotton

A total of 727 pieces of struck flint was recovered from the site. The bulk of the assemblage lay within horizontal subsoil layers 2 and 3 in trenches A1/B4 and D8/I9 (a table of contexts is provided in the archive report).

The raw material is mostly river cobbles with smooth rolled cortex, together with a smaller amount of nodular flint that has a fresher, rougher, cortex, both of which would have been available locally. Bullhead Bed flint from the base of the Thanet Sand is a small but persistent component and there are also a few pieces of the highly coloured umber/orange flint present in other lithic assemblages from the Hogsmill valley. Most of the present assemblage is in a fresh and sharp condition although there are a few partially recorticated pieces and one piece is burnt.

Catalogue of the illustrated flintwork (fig 8)

A full catalogue can be found in the supplement (see *Endnote*)

2 Awl worked on the distal tip of a robust flake/blade of dark grey/brown flint shot through with purple veins. A patch of thin smooth cortex survives at the proximal end. Trench A1/B4 layer 2.

4 Medial section of a crested blade of triangular section of dark grey/black flint with a patch of thick buff cortex towards its proximal end. Trench D8/I9 layer 3.

5 Small convex 'thumbnail' end/side scraper worked on a tertiary flake of mottled dark grey/brown flint. Trench D8/I9 layer 3.

6 Bladelet of mottled grey/black flint with two shallow notches worked at the distal end of one edge. Trench D8/I9 layer 2.

7 Distal tip of bladelet of mottled pale grey flint with blunting retouch, possible microlith. Trench D6 ditch layer LD1.

8 Leaf arrowhead, perfunctorily worked on the distal

end of a broad shallow flake of mottled glossy dark grey/black flint. Trench CD3 pit layer 1.

9 Scalene point worked on a blade segment of banded dark grey/brown flint. Trench D8/I9 layer 2.

Discussion

The assemblage is clearly chronologically mixed, and dominated by debitage. While most stages of the knapping cycle are identifiable it is noticeable that there are very few formally retouched pieces present (only five convex scrapers, for example). As noted above, the bulk of the assemblage was recovered from horizontal subsoil layers in trenches A1/B4 and D8/I9, with fewer flints from various contexts in the other trenches. Only two small nondescript flakes were recovered from features containing prehistoric ceramics in trench BC9.

The presence of a number of blades, blade fragments and bladelet cores of various forms hints at early post-glacial activity, although these are widely scattered across the site with no obvious concentrations. The tip of a possible microlith from the Roman ditch in D6, a complete scalene point from D8/I9 layer 2, and two microburins from subsoil layers 2 and 3 in the same area support a generally Mesolithic date (as does the possible butt of an adze from D8/I9), with the scalene point hinting at later rather than earlier Mesolithic activity. Core preparation and maintenance are evidenced by a single crested blade from D8/I9,

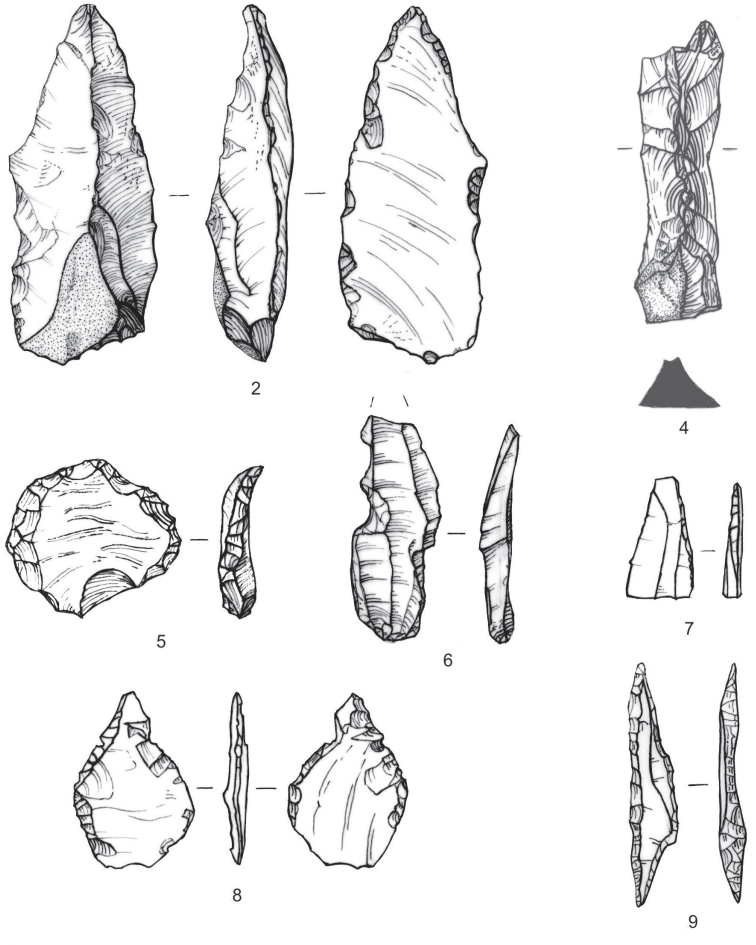

Fig 8 Ewell Grove, Ewell. Worked flint: nos 2 and 4–8 (scale 2:3); no 9 (scale 2:1).

together with small numbers of core tablets and rejuvenation flakes – the latter of both plunging and platform renewal types. Bladelet cores of single platform pyramidal form are also present, although in low numbers. Furthermore, the report for Frere's earlier excavation in this area records the recovery of 'flakes of Mesolithic appearance', a core tablet and a single obliquely backed point from his trenches II and III (Frere 1943, 48; see also Batstone 1943, 150–1). Frere's site archive at Guildford Museum contains 40 flints, comprising 31 flakes, two blades, five cores, a scraper and a microlith (Mary Alexander, pers comm).

Diagnostic later prehistoric pieces are few: there is a single Neolithic leaf arrowhead from a Roman pit in CD3, and several flake knives from D8/I9, together with a small series of convex scrapers including a thumbnail example from D8/I9 layer 3. Many of the flakes are small and squat, with wide striking platforms and terminal hinge fractures. Typologically, these are likely to be of later Neolithic or Bronze Age date; the presence of Middle and Late Bronze Age pottery on the site provides a plausible chronological horizon for at least some of this material, although only two flakes were found in direct association with the Middle Bronze Age pottery. A few flake cores of one-, two- and multi-platform type are present, together with two keeled pieces. Tested nodules and shattered pieces are indicative of a less formal approach to nodule reduction. In addition, there are a number of pieces that have been miscellaneously retouched or utilised, including many with notches worked on the margins of blades and at the distal ends of larger flakes.

Taken as a whole, this assemblage of flintwork is typical of the range of material regularly recovered from sites surrounding the headwaters of the Hogsmill in Ewell. Here there are many diagnostic artefacts of later Mesolithic type such as narrow blade microliths, usually as part of surface scatters or as residual finds in later contexts (Carpenter 1958, 155). By contrast, later Neolithic and Bronze Age lithics have tended to attract less attention, although these are occasionally present in apparently contemporary contexts, as at Glyn House (Stansbie & Score 2004, 191–3 and 201–4).

PREHISTORIC POTTERY AND FIRED CLAY, by Jonathan Cotton

Pottery

In all, 269 sherds of handmade prehistoric pottery weighing 3.22kg were recovered from a range of contexts across the site. Most were recovered from subsoil layers 2 and 3 or from demonstrably Roman contexts, although a number appear to have lain within contemporary features in trenches BC9 and D8/I9 (analysis is provided in table 1: see *Endnote*). The vast majority comprised small plain body sherds, with varying degrees of surface abrasion.

In hand specimen it was immediately clear that there were two quite distinct crushed burnt flint-tempered fabrics present: the first poorly to moderately sorted, with individual inclusions up to 9mm in size (F1); and the second moderately to well sorted, with individual inclusions up to 4mm in size (F2). To judge from the vessel forms and occasional surface decoration, it was equally clear that these two generic fabric types had chronological validity, the first attributable to the Middle Bronze Age and the second to the Late Bronze Age. It would be perfectly possible to further subdivide these two fabric types without radically altering the overall validity of the bi-modal division. But given the small size of many of the sherds, and the fact that a good proportion of them were effectively unstratified, this was not attempted here. With the exception of a few stray body sherds, all the Middle Bronze Age F1 material was recovered from features D and B in trench BC9, while the bulk of the Late Bronze Age F2 material was recovered from other areas of the site, with the focus on a scatter of features in trench D8/I9.

Catalogue (fig 9)

TRENCH BC9 FEATURE D

1 Three sherds weighing 223g belonging to the upper part of a large bucket urn with a carefully applied, neatly fingertip-impressed, cordon at the girth. Hard, leathery, flint-tempered fabric (F1) with traces of surface wiping and some contraction cracks, fired red/brown on the exterior and grey/black on the interior.

2 Thirty sherds (some conjoining) weighing 616g belonging to the rim, walls and base of a plain, thin-walled bucket urn with an upright/slightly inward-turning rim. Hard, somewhat brittle flint-tempered fabric (F1) with smoothed surfaces variably fired grey/black/brown.

3 Five sherds weighing 92g including one fragment of rim and the expanded base of a small plain straight-sided jar. Brittle flint-tempered fabric (F1) variably fired grey/black/brown.

TRENCH B/C9 FEATURE B

4 Two sherds of thick-walled bucket urn weighing 96g with small fingertip or possibly stick impressions on top of the rim and perforations below, one of which has not fully penetrated the vessel wall. Hard flint-tempered fabric (F1) with surface contraction cracks, fired grey/brown. (Another, thinner-walled sherd with traces of two perforations below the rim came from Trench A6/A8, layer 1.)

TRENCH D8/I9 LAYER 2

5 Single sherd weighing 38g belonging to a jar with inward-turning hooked rim. Hard flint-tempered fabric (F2) variably fired red/brown with traces of horizontal wiping on the interior. (A second smaller rim sherd weighing 9.49g from another similar vessel came from trench D8/I9 layer 3).

6 Single sherd weighing 43g belonging to the shoulder or base of a hard, flint-tempered jar (F2) variably fired red/grey/brown on the exterior and grey/black on the interior.

7 Single sherd weighing 24g of an expanded, pulled-up base of a hard, flint-tempered jar (F2) fired grey/buff on the exterior and grey/black on the interior.

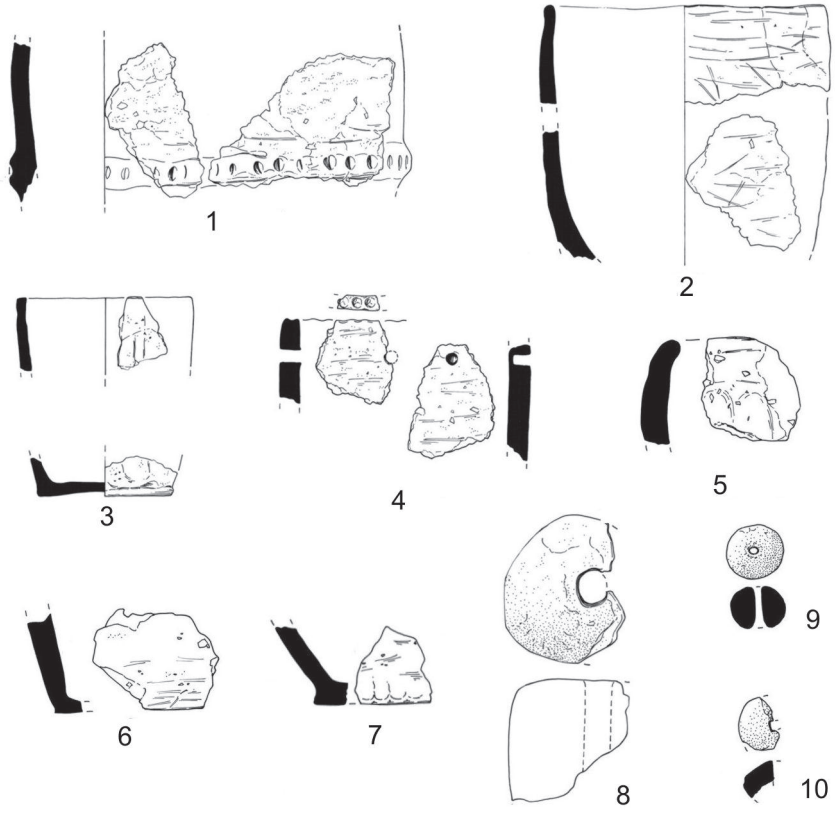

Fig 9 Ewell Grove, Ewell. Prehistoric pottery and fired clay objects: nos 1–4 and 8 (scale 1:5); nos 5–7 and 9–10 (scale 1:4).

Fired clay

A number of pieces of fired clay were recovered from various contexts scattered across the site. Most were undiagnostic as to form, function and date, although a number of fragments of chalky daub were recovered from the Roman ditch located in trenches CD3, D4 and D6. However, three diagnostic prehistoric objects of fired clay were recovered from contexts within trenches B/C9 and D8/I9. All appear to have lain within the fills of shallow features cutting into the natural deposits.

Catalogue (fig 9)

TRENCH BC9 FEATURE D

8 Large fragment of a cylindrical clay loomweight with slightly faceted sides, weight 483g. Well-wedged flint-free sandy fabric.

TRENCH D8/I9 FEATURE A

9 Globular spindlewhorl of flint-free sandy fabric with hour-glass perforation, weight 18g.

TRENCH D8/I9 'FEATURE'

10 Fragment of what was probably a biconical spindlewhorl of flint-free sandy fabric with squarish perforation, weight 5g.

Discussion of the prehistoric pottery and fired clay

As noted above, two distinct phases of activity are represented by the pottery and the fired clay objects. The earlier of the two is represented by an assemblage of Middle Bronze Age Deverel-Rimbury pottery and part of a cylindrical clay loomweight recovered from features D and B in trench BC9. The later phase is represented by sherds of Late Bronze Age post-Deverel-Rimbury pottery recovered from subsoil layers across the site and from several features in D8/I9, and also by the two clay spindlewhorls – one definitely and one probably from the features in D8/I9.

The Deverel-Rimbury ceramic component comprises a minimum of four vessels: three bucket urns and a small straight-sided jar. Sherds of two of the bucket urns and of the straight-sided jar were recovered from feature D along with a large fragment of a cylindrical clay loomweight and a single flint flake of Bullhead Bed flint. Two sherds belonging to the third bucket urn were recovered from feature B together with a single flint flake.

Two of the bucket urns are decorated: the one from feature D (fig 9, no 1) has a neat finger-impressed applied cordon at its girth, and that from feature B (fig 9, no 4) has fingertip or stick impressions on top of the rim and perforations below. The third bucket urn (fig 9, no 2), although plain, is relatively thin-walled and has a smooth, burnished, surface reminiscent of the finish of a globular urn. The small straight-sided jar (fig 9, no 3) is also undecorated and has a coarse surface finish.

All four vessels are characteristic of Ellison's Thames Valley group of Deverel-Rimbury ceramics, whose currency lies within the mid-2nd millennium BC. The Thames group is dominated by bucket urns, and defined on the basis of a number of well-known cemetery assemblages (eg Barrett 1980a), the latter now increasingly complemented by settlement assemblages producing both bucket and finer globular urns, as at Thorpe Lea Nurseries (Cotton 2004, 28; Phil Jones, pers comm). Locally, however, Deverel-Rimbury ceramics are not particularly well represented (eg Needham 1987, fig 5.7); a stray plain body sherd of comparable fabric to the Ewell Grove F1 material was reported from Glyn House (Stansbie & Score 2004, 205). Cylindrical loomweights are common finds on both Middle and Late Bronze Age sites, although they are not especially sensitive indicators of date. Here, however, the association with Middle Bronze Age Deverel-Rimbury pottery appears clear and decisive.

The post-Deverel-Rimbury sherds are widely scattered within subsoil layers across the site, but focus on a small series of intercutting features in trench D8/I9. The latter also produced

a few struck flint flakes, small fragments of sandstone (perhaps from a saddle quern), a burnt quartzite pebble, and two clay spindlewhorls – one complete. Although pottery was clearly recovered from several of these features it was only possible to differentiate the material belonging to feature A in trench D8/I9 (which also included the complete spindlewhorl (fig 9, no 9).

The post-Deverel-Rimbury sherds can be comfortably accommodated within the general run of Late Bronze Age plainware assemblages (Barrett 1980b), of which Surrey has a large and representative selection. Such assemblages are usually dated to the 10th–9th centuries BC, ie broadly coincident with the earlier end of Ewart Park metalworking. Locally, stray sherds have been reported from the King William IV site, for instance (Orton 1997, fig 12). Finally, the two spindlewhorls (fig 9, nos 9 and 10) can be added to others recovered from local sites of the period, eg Queen Mary's Hospital, Carshalton (Adkins & Needham 1985, 35 and fig 13, nos 406–7).

ROMAN POTTERY, by Frank Pemberton

The description of Roman coarsewares below employs the vessel forms defined by Marsh & Tyers (1979) and Davies *et al* (1994), and the fabric codes used by Museum of London Archaeology, supplemented where necessary by the National Roman Fabric Reference Collection (Tomber & Dore 1998).

Fabrics

In all, 27.80kg of Roman pottery was recovered from the site and was sorted by fabric (for fabric definitions, see *Endnote*). Much of this material was found redeposited in subsequent phases, so that quantification by phase would give misleading results; analysis is therefore based on a cumulative total for all periods.

Coarsewares in the narrowest sense of the term – wares typically used for jars and other cooking vessels – made up 88.2% of all the pottery found, of which more than half was from the Alice Holt potteries (44.6%). The other wares, in descending order of frequency, were SAND 16.4%, OXID 9%, FLINT 6%, SHELL 1.6%, PORD 1.4% and BB2 1.2%, while BB1, GROG, HIGH, NKSH and VCWS accounted for less than 1% each.

Amphorae made up 7.5% of the pottery, and mortaria 4%, almost all of it from the Oxfordshire potteries (3.3%), while COMO, VRMO and VWMO accounted for less than 1% each. Fabrics typically used for flagons made up 1.8%, almost all of this from the Verulamium region (1%), while HOO, MHAD and VRRW accounted for less than 1% each.

Of the tablewares, fabrics typically used for bowls made up 3.1%, and those typically used for beakers 1.4%. Almost all the bowls were samian (2.3%), while LOND, OXCC and OXRW accounted for less than 1% each among the bowls, and BUTT, COLC, FOX, GCC, MICA, MOSL, and NVCC similarly among the beakers.

Forms

Rim sherds from phases 3, 4 and 5, together with those from securely dated features in phase 6, were sorted by vessel form. In all there were 61 sherds, of which 42% came from jars and 7% from lids, while flagons accounted for 7%, bowls and dishes for 34% and beakers for 10%.

Catalogue of illustrated sherds (fig 10)

The full catalogue can be found in the supplement (see *Endnote*)

PHASE 3 (from the gully in trench D4)

1 Carinated beaker, type IIIG (AHSU fabric); light grey fabric, with a darker margin and surface; similar to beakers from Purberry Shot, fig 19.5 in Lowther (1949), and from Wanborough temple, fig 46.57–8 in Bird (1994); this type is fig 86, nos 548–9 in Davies *et al* (1994); AD 50–100.

PHASE 4 (no 5 from ditch layer LD4 in trench D4; no 9 from ditch layer LD2 in trench CD3)

5 Jar, type IIF (AH fabric) with everted curving rim; hard grey sandy fabric with a blackish-grey margin, and a grey slip on the upper body to rim, similar to jars from Purberry Shot, fig 27.1 in Lowther (1949), and from Rapsley, no 113 in Hanworth (1968); this type is 3A8 in Lyne & Jefferies (1979); *c* AD 50–150.

9 Jar, type IIC (AHBB fabric) with everted rim; fabric with a reddish grey sandy core, and burnished surface to inner face of rim, an Alice Holt burnished type; up to *c* AD 250.

PHASE 5 (all sherds are from ditch layer LD1: 11–12 in trench CD3, 13 in trench CD10, 15–18 in trench D4)

11 Bowl, type IVH (BB fabric), with small rounded triangular rim; fabric with a grey core, blackish-grey outer margin, and burnished surface, having some parallel line decoration below the rim; this is form 38.1b in Tyers (1996); *c* AD 150–220.

12 Bowl, type IV (AHBB fabric), with a whitish-grey core to the fabric, and a black/grey margin and finish; late 2nd–early 3rd century AD.

13 Bowl, type IVHS (BB fabric) in a dark grey sandy fabric with burnished black surface and a light grey margin; *c* AD 120–250.

15 Flagon, in a fine black New Forest fabric (NFCC) with a polished finish; a New Forest oil flagon similar to examples from Lower Sloden Kiln (Swan 1972, fig 8.9); from 3rd century AD onwards.

17 Jar, type IID (AHSU fabric), with 'figure 7' rim; light grey fabric; this is class 3A9 in Lyne & Jefferies (1979) and type 19 in Millett (1979); this style of rim on Alice Holt jars starts *c* AD 50 and continues until *c* AD 160.

18 Jar, type FACE (VRW fabric) a cremation face jar, in mid-grey core fabric with orange-brick margin and a white slip; it may be significant that a cremation with a VRW flagon is known from the site overlooking the springs at Bourne Hall; jars with eyebrows up against the rim are known from Walbrook in London (Braithwaite 1984, fig 6; Davies *et al* 1994, fig 37, no 183); mid-2nd century AD.

PHASE 6 (sherds 25–7 are from the pit in trench CD3 (25 from layer 3, and 26 from layer 1); 27 and 30 from the pit in trench D6 (27 from layer 2, and 30 from layer 1))

25 Jar (AHFA fabric), with vertical plain rim; light-grey fabric with self-coloured silky slip; *c* AD 250 onwards.

26 Bowl, type IV (AHFA fabric), a shallow dish; light grey fabric with dark grey margin/surface; *c* AD 250 onwards.

27 Jar, type IIR (BB fabric), a narrow-mouthed jar with flanged square rim; bluish-grey sandy fabric with black matt finish; this is type no 124 in Hanworth (1968) and type 30 in Millett (1979); mid-3rd to end 4th centuries AD.

30 Lid (MICA fabric), domed with bead edge and fluted convex surface; light grey fabric with granular black mica-dusted surface; this treatment was in use for jars and bowls in the 2nd century AD onwards.

Discussion

The pottery used in phase 3 was mostly the earliest Alice Holt/Surrey ware (AHSU), which starts at *c* AD 50 and continues to the mid-2nd century AD. In this phase occur the typical necked jar and the bowl with a rounded rim of the early Alice Holt/Surrey ware.

The coarseware of phase 4 is largely dominated by the vessel types of the Alice Holt industry, mostly jars, but there are many more bowls and dishes in black-burnished ware. Quantification shows that more than half of the reduced wares were coming from this area, at first from the Alice Holt/Surrey (AHSU) potteries and later, after a transition phase, from the Alice Holt/Farnham (AHFA) industry. The beakers, the Surrey bowl with a grooved rim and moulded mid-body, and the jar with a 'figure 7' rim and a foot-ring base marked with a single groove, all come from the primary silt of the ditch in this phase, and so do examples of the Alice Holt version of vessels in Black Burnished style (AHBB), which date to *c* AD 160.

Most of the coarseware from phase 5 on the site, deposited when the ditch was being filled, consists of Alice Holt Farnham (AHFA) reduced wares. Among these are the straight-sided dishes, curved-everted, hook-rimmed and other jars recorded as types 5, 23, 26–7 in Millett (1979). There are also quadrangular-rimmed jars with lattice and incised combed wavy lines, and rope-rim storage jars, as well as the Farnham flagons with double beaded rims – types 28–32 and 36 in Millett (1979). These products of the later Alice Holt/Farnham industry

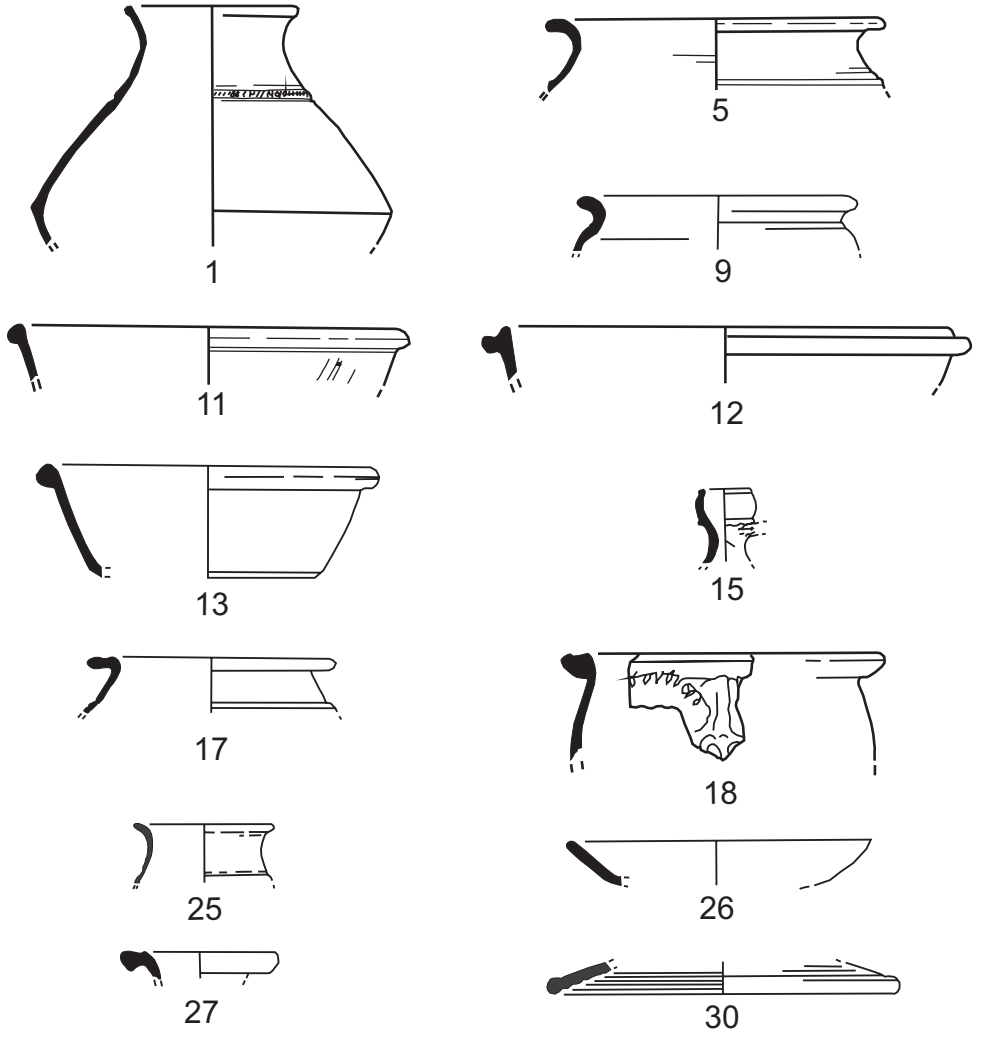

Fig 10 Ewell Grove, Ewell. Roman coarsewares (scale 1:4).

may represent the mass production of pots and their distribution by road or trackway to Ewell; the forms that were then available are described in Lyne & Jefferies (1979, 34–51). The pottery from this phase is dominated by other kinds of jar: these include cordon-necked, hook-rimmed, 'figure 7' rim, curved-everted and cable-rimmed storage types. The bowls consist of straight-sided black-burnished types with wide arcading decoration. This group of wares seems to represent the period of change in vessels and fabrics from the Alice Holt/Surrey to the Alice Holt/Farnham industries.

In the late 3rd and 4th centuries (phases 6 and 7), Alice Holt/Farnham wares are the norm, along with oxidised and sandy wares including black-burnished fabric, mostly in the form of jars.

Throughout the history of the site, Black-burnished wares (BB1 and BB2) were present, together with pots from the Verulamium region (VRR and VRW). Sand-tempered and oxidised wares from local sources constituted up to a fifth of the pottery found, and there was also an interesting range of fine vessels such as the London and Rhenish wares. The presence of Hoo and Much Hadham redwares from Kent and north-east Hertfordshire was

unexpected. There were few imported fine wares apart from the samian of mid- and late Antonine date, which may represent a clearance of broken vessels from a building nearby.

The site produced examples of the globular amphora Dr 20, with angular rim form. This form is thought to have contained olive oil, and was being imported until the turn of the 1st and 2nd centuries (Peacock & Williams 1986). It is the commonest form found on sites in the countryside, and is present at rural settlements as well as villas.

Overall the pottery from the site shows a need for a range of ordinary domestic storage, cooking and pouring vessels. The restricted range of domestic vessels, with little fine ware or glass, suggests that the site was not of high status. This may be due to its location on the edge of the Roman settlement and away from Stane Street.

SAMIAN, by Catherine Johns

Catalogue of illustrated sherds (fig 11)

The full catalogue can be found in the supplement (see *Endnote*)

Phase 5

2 Dr 37, Central Gaulish. Very micaceous ware, with the large ovolo Rogers (1974) B161 and border of large, slightly squared beads. A double festoon contains a hare to the right, Oswald (1936–7) O2057A. There is a double medallion, its outer circle beaded, Rogers E8, and a quatrefoil in the spandrel of the panel, Rogers C276. The ovolo, medallion and the quatrefoil occurs on the work of Doeccus (cf. Stanfield & Simpson 1958, pl 148:18) and this sherd is in his style. Antonine. Trench D6 ditch layer LD1.

Phase 6

6 Dr 37, East Gaulish. Ware burnt to a purplish brown, and very clearly moulded. The ovolo, above a roped border, is Ricken & Fischer (1963) E19. Below it is the end of a stamp IANVF, and part of a segmented medallion, Ricken & Fischer K48, and a leaf, Ricken & Fischer P9. The sherd is by Ianuarius I of Rheinzabern, and is thus a relatively uncommon find in Britain. Ricken (1948, taf 6, 3) and others indicate the general style of the decoration. Antonine. Trench D6 pit layer 2.

Residual in phase 7

8 Dr 37, Central Gaulish. A sherd in thin ware with the small Donnaucus-group ovolo Rogers (1974) B14, a bead-row, and freestyle decoration which includes the snake-and-rock ornament Oswald (1936–7) O2155. This style is that of the Donnaucus–Sacer group. Hadrianic to early Antonine. Trench A1/B4 layers 2–3.

9 Dr 37, Central Gaulish. Good Antonine ware with the ovolo Rogers (1974) B223, bold bead-rows, and part of the male figure Oswald (1936–7) O638. Both ovolo and the figure-type are typical of Casurius. Antonine. Trench A1/B4 layer 2.

Discussion

This is a typical group of Antonine samian, belonging to the late, rather than middle, 2nd century. Most of the plain ware is Central Gaulish, though there is one definite and a few possible pieces of Rheinzabern ware, and the plain forms represented are the normal ones for the period, Dr 31 and Dr 31R, Dr 38 and Dr 45 (Johns 1971; Webster 1996).

The decorated ware includes two sherds earlier than the rest of the material – no 1, the minute piece of South Gaulish ware, and no 8 (see full catalogue). These must belong to the first half of the 2nd century AD. Otherwise, the decorated ware fits in well and no 6, the stamped sherd by Ianuarius of Rheinzabern, is particularly interesting.

It should be noted that the samian pottery from the upper layer of the ditch fill (phase 5) is dated to the Antonine period, while the pits in phase 6 have mostly late Antonine samian ware.

BUILDING MATERIAL, by Frank Pemberton

In all, 22.10kg of Roman ceramic material was recovered from the site. The great majority of this was unrecognisable brick and tile; *tegula* made up 6% of the total, *imbrex* 2%, and box-

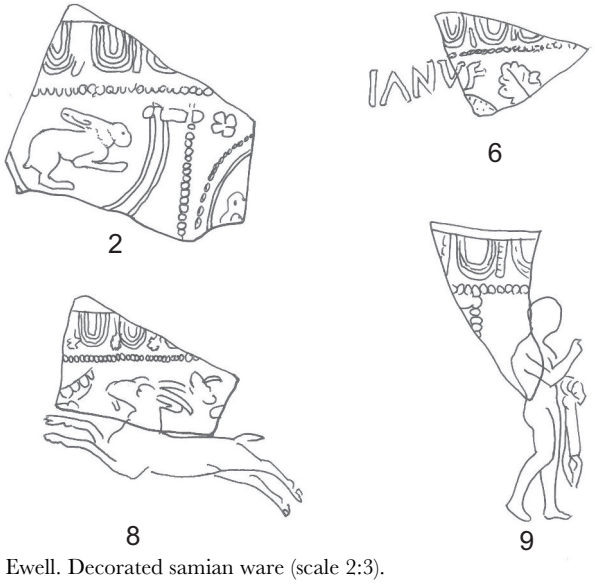

Fig 11 Ewell Grove, Ewell. Decorated samian ware (scale 2:3).

flue tile 4%. All the box-flue tile from the site, apart from nos 7 and 8, was comb-marked. The quantities of ceramic material from the site are insignificant compared to those that would be expected from a villa or a town, which suggests that the settlement, at least in this area of Ewell, had few if any tiled roofs.

The catalogue is printed in the supplement (see *Endnote*). Box-flue tiles that have been roller-stamped with a W-chevron (eg nos 7 and 8 in the catalogue), are known at villas near Ewell, including Ashtead (Lowther 1928, 151–2) and Walton on the Hill (Lowther 1948, 11). Fragments of W-chevron flue tiles were found in the base and foundation of the Roman road at Purberry Shot, Ewell (Lowther 1948, 11; 1949) and as stray finds from the Stew Pond on Epsom Common (Bourne Hall Museum reference Z 051). A late 1st/early 2nd century AD date has been suggested for most relief-patterned tiles in London and the South East.

STONE FINDS, by Frank Pemberton

Phase 4 (fig 12)

1 Part of a quern of Mayen lava, dressed on the upper and lower surfaces with grooves 8mm apart at an angle of 20° to the radius. The radius of the quern, when complete, would have been about 28cm. The dressing on the upper surface is fresher than that on the lower – the grooves continue over the edge, apparently as guidelines for setting out the distances on the upper side – and this suggests that the quern was re-used. Mayen lava querns are known in late pre-Roman and early Roman contexts (Hanworth 1987, 160) and have been found in other Ewell excavations. Trench D6 ditch layer 4.

METAL FINDS, by Frank Pemberton

Catalogue of illustrated finds (fig 12)

The full catalogue can be found in the supplement (see *Endnote*)

Phase 5

1 Copper-alloy flat toilet spoon, 115mm long, with a shaft tapering from 2mm wide and a spoon 6mm in diameter; a similar example was found at Colchester (Crummy 1983, 1901). These spoons are often parts of toiletry sets (Carr 2001). Trench CD3, layer 2 or ditch LD1.

2 Copper-alloy pin and spring, part of a brooch. Probably from a Colchester-type brooch (Crummy 1983, fig 6). Trench D6, ditch layer LD1.

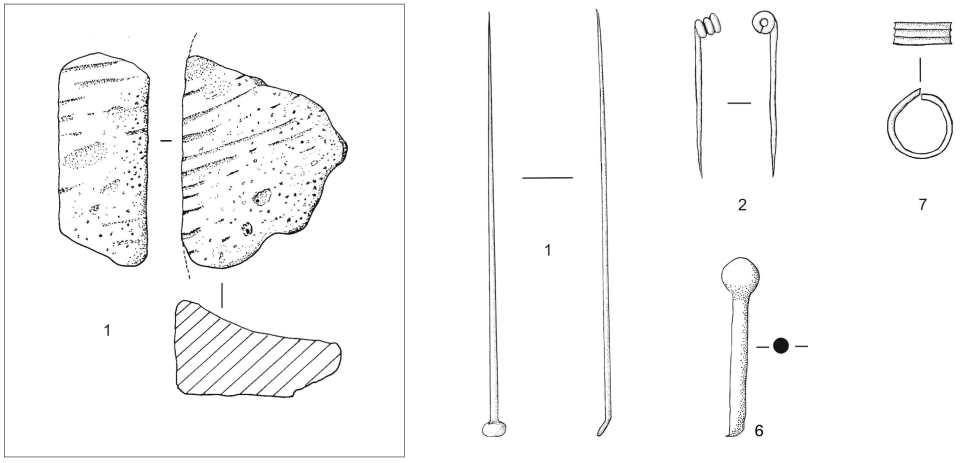

Fig 12 Ewell Grove, Ewell. Roman stone (left, scale 1:4) and metal (right, scale 1:2) finds.

Phase 6

6 Copper-alloy pin fragment, 45mm long, with a shaft tapering from 5mm in diameter and a globular head 10mm in diameter. Trench A6/8, layer 3.

Phase 7

7 Copper-alloy finger ring. The metal is of rectangular section, 6mm wide and 1mm thick, with four latitudinal ridges. A similar example was found at Colchester (Crummy 1983, 1741). Trench A1/B4, layer 2/3.

COINS, by Norman Clarkson

Ten coins were found, the earliest (from phase 5) being a forgery of a *denarius* of Caracalla (198–217) while the rest were barbarous radiates or issues of the House of Constantine. This is in line with other coin finds in Ewell (Abdy & Bierton 1997), and Orton (1997, 114) equates this distribution with Reece's 'Army' category (Reece 1993). The series ended with a clipped *siliqua* of Valens (364–78), which is typical of the heavily clipped coinage circulating up to the end of the 4th century, and sometimes beyond. Details are given in the supplement (see *Endnote*).

ANIMAL BONE, by Geraldine Done

Phase 2

In total, 172 fragments of bone, of which 86 were identified, were recovered from pits of the Bronze Age phase in trenches BC9 and D8/I9. These bones give little information beyond the identification of species: ox (43 fragments) and sheep (37 fragments) were found throughout the area, and there were some of horse (two fragments). The only complete bone was the first phalanx of a horse. A detailed analysis is given in the supplement (see *Endnote*).

Phases 3–6

In total, 817 fragments of bone were recovered from phases 3, 4 and 5, with some material from phase 6 (the pit in trench D6), and of these 448 were identified. Very little information can be learned as to the butchering methods, although there were chop marks on some of the fragments of rib and long bones. Most of the complete bones belong to those parts of the carcass which would normally be discarded by the butcher, such as the feet. The relative proportion of species, from both fragmentary and complete bones, was: horse 6%; ox 31%; sheep 43%; pig 10%; other 10%.

Some of the bones offered evidence for the age of the animals. For horse, there was one 6-year-old lower jaw and indications (a milk molar tooth and two permanent molars, newly erupted) from a horse (or horses) of less than 5 years old. For ox, only one mandible could be aged, and this was approximately 3 years old. The youngest bones (making up less than 2% of the total) were probably about 2 years old, while other assessable fragments belonged to animals between 4 and 4½ years old. On the available evidence, the ages of the cattle ranged from 2 years upwards. There is no sign that calves were kept. For sheep, there was evidence for several lambs. For pig, two mandibles were from pigs aged approximately 6 months. Two maxillae could be placed only within wide limits; one came from an animal aged between 1 month and 1 year, the other from one aged between 5 months and 1 year.

Part of a deer skull with chop marks at the base of one pedicle (where the antlers had been cut off) suggests that venison was available on occasions. Oyster and whelk shells were found in layer LD3 of trench D4 and in layer LD1 of trenches D4 and D6. Bones from at least two dogs were found in layer LD1 of trench D6, and 2 canine vertebrae were found in trench CD10.

Discussion

Analysis of ages at death offers the best evidence for the animal husbandry in the Romano-British period. The sheep bones are consistent with the keeping of a self-contained flock with breeding ewes whose lambs would be used for meat and, in the case of ewe lambs, for replacement stock. There is no sign that such was the case with bovines. No calf bones were found, so, on the evidence to hand, it seems likely that cows were not bred. Instead, the ox bones are more consistent with a practice of buying beef on the hoof, either for immediate slaughter or possibly as yearlings or 2-year-olds to fatten up on good grazing for the market. The presence of fragments from the heads and feet of cattle shows that beef was butchered on site, rather than being brought in from elsewhere as cuts of meat. Pigs were not, apparently popular. Their numbers may have been low for practical reasons; being omnivores, they will in certain circumstances compete for the human food supply.

Concluding discussion

The village of Ewell lies at the head of a flat-bottomed valley at the junction of the North Downs and the London Clay, on the geological boundary that gives rise to the Hogsmill stream. The area between the springs and the rising ground, roughly corresponding to the present Church Street and High Street from Cheam Road to Spring Street, appears to have been the centre of the settlement in Roman times as it is today, while the Ewell Grove site looks down on this from its south-western slopes.

The availability of water would explain the prehistoric occupation of the area, which is recorded from the Mesolithic onwards. The Bronze Age pits at Ewell Grove, which must represent two separate phases of occupation, are compatible with evidence from the King William IV site further down the valley, where several Late Bronze Age pots were identified, together with a number of residual flint-tempered sherds (Orton 1997, 94–5). At both sites the Bronze Age material was found unexpectedly, in excavations which set out to record Roman features, so that any conclusions on distribution would be premature, but it seems that there was little continuity into later periods. Certainly at Ewell Grove there was a hiatus, with no Iron Age sherds being identified in the residual material.

The history of Roman Ewell begins after the construction of Stane Street in the mid-1st century AD, with the establishment of a roadside settlement shortly afterwards. The road influenced the layout of settlement, pulling it away from its natural course along the valley; instead, buildings are found to the west of Stane Street, following its course uphill towards Epsom (Abdy & Bierton 1997, 129). The small ditch or drainage gully found in phase 3 at Ewell Grove may have been dug to drain the site for one of these buildings. If so, it was disregarded by those who laid out the much more ambitious U-shaped ditch in the late 1st

century and 2nd century phase. This was 2.50m wide and must have extended for over 40m. It seems to have marked the boundary of settlement, for no substantial Roman features have been found to the west. The ditch was open for some time, although its repeated use as a dumping ground suggests that it was not needed for drainage. At least one attempt was made to recut it, suggesting that it was still demarcating land into the 3rd century.

No buildings were found in the excavation at Ewell Grove, although they are likely to have existed between the ditch and Stane Street. The presence of tile in the fill of the ditch is misleading, since it is possible that *tegulae* and box-flue tiles brought to Ewell were used for small-scale works and did not play a major part in buildings. The chalk rubble is more likely to have come from buildings, although cob walls require substantial stone or flint footings and these were not located. Nearer to the line of the road, observation at nos 56–58 and 72 High Street (fig 1) has found building material, including daub with wattle impressions, which would have come from timber-framed buildings. The building in phase 4 at the King William IV site was certainly timber-framed (Orton 1997, 95–6), and the flint walls recorded from Grove Cottage (in the second part of this report) and, more substantially, from St Mary's Churchyard (Pemberton 1973, 7) are too thin to have supported cob.

The site at Ewell Grove lay towards the edge of Roman Ewell and only the structures recorded at Persfield and Purberry Shot stood higher uphill. But the quantity and quality of pottery that was discarded, especially in phase 5, shows that it was a prosperous area. The coarsewares were predominantly from the Alice Holt potteries in the Farnham area, as is usual in Ewell. Much of the other pottery, and the Mayen lava quern, were presumably brought down Stane Street from London. This would explain the very wide spectrum of wares that were brought in, including fabrics from north Kent and Verulamium that would otherwise have been outside Surrey's catchment area. This variety of wares has been noted as a feature of sites elsewhere in Ewell (Stansbie & Score 2004, 206). Clive Orton (1997, 112–13) has remarked on the frequency of beakers at the King William IV site as compared with more rural sites, and this is also the case at Ewell Grove. There are minor differences: amphorae, which provided less than 2% of assemblages at the King William IV site, constituted 7.5% at Ewell Grove, but both sites had low proportions of samian (5–7% and 2.3% respectively) when compared with London. At the King William IV site, samian was continuing to be deposited in phase 7 (late 3rd century). This, like the apparent retention of Trajanic samian at later dates in Ewell Grove, suggests that high-class tableware was kept carefully and seldom replaced.

The use of olive oil from amphorae, and of specialised cooking equipment such as mortaria, shows that Roman foods and methods of preparation were adopted at the beginning of settlement in Ewell. The presence of rings, albeit cheap ones, suggests a population following outside trends in fashion. Another sign of outside influence at this site is literacy, as evidenced by the stylus found in the earlier excavation by Frere (1943, 58). David Bird (2004, 149, 163) has noted evidence for this in Roman Ewell, in the form of graffiti, pens and seal-boxes. He suggests a link with shrine centres at the springs and at the ritual shafts east of the village.

The economic status of the site is more easily deduced from this sort of evidence than from the coins found there. The archaeological record of coins is skewed because 4th century issues were less valuable, and therefore less likely to be recovered, than those of earlier periods. The pattern of coin loss at Ewell Grove fits into the broader picture for the village (Abdy & Bierton 1997, 139–40), a picture that suggests a decline in their relative frequency during the last century of Roman administration. Examination of the sheep bones suggests a careful programme of husbandry, connected ultimately with the cloth market. The shears found on the site by Frere (1943, 58) and the iron comb reported from the King William IV site (Bird 2004, 62) suggest the working of wool for weaving or export.

There were about eight sheep for every six cattle, a ratio similar to that from the building found along the edge of Stane Street in St Mary's churchyard (Pemberton 1973, 21–3), where Jennifer Jones reports about eight sheep to five cattle in her forthcoming faunal analysis of the site. Numbers of animals are misleading, however, since a single ox or cow carries the

meat of five or six sheep, and takes as much grazing as that number. On the basis of the reported ratios, it would have been cattle that played the more important part in the economy. The abundance of sheep is typical of Iron Age sites; by contrast, the presence of cattle and pigs is more likely to reflect the Roman methods of livestock management that are found in later civilian settlements (Davis 1995, 183).

There were horses and dogs on site, no doubt for work on farms and also hunting since a deer skull was found with its antlers removed. The presence of deer in an agricultural area is surprising, but both red and roe deer were found at the King William IV site (Orton 1997, 108) and antlers of mature red deer have been recorded from a pit at 46 High Street (Bourne Hall Museum acc no Z050.01) and from the ritual shafts east of the village. The dog-and-stag tiles found at Ashtead would have depicted a real scene, not an imaginary one.

The U-shaped ditch was backfilled in the late 3rd century, in what appears to have been a deliberate attempt to end its use as a boundary. Over the next hundred years, at least three large pits were dug along its alignment. It is possible that pits were more generally distributed in the area, since these three were only discovered during the course of excavations intended to follow the ditch line, but it is also possible that the pits were deliberately dug to follow the old boundary. Their presence, and that of postholes a little way from the ditch, hints that here, at least, settlement was moving westward from its original focus around Stane Street in the 1st century. At Purberry Shot a road was found roughly parallel with Stane Street, and 150m west of it; the line of this road was evidently pre-determined, since a well had to be filled in for it to take its course (Lowther 1949, 12–15). The fill of the well suggests a late 2nd century date, so this road may have been the new focus of the settlement. A little uphill of Ewell Grove, at the house called Aberfoyle in the grounds of the former Ewell House, Lowther found a ditch that would have been at right angles to these two roads. This was V-shaped, originally 1.5m deep and 4m wide, and was dug in the second half of the 3rd century, at the time when the Ewell Grove ditch was being backfilled (Lowther 1935, 18–22). The Aberfoyle ditch, which has also been sectioned further to the west in the grounds of Tayles Hill, remained open long after the end of Roman Ewell, since disturbed burials from the Anglo-Saxon cemetery were found in its upper fill.

There is evidence for changes throughout Ewell at the turn of the 3rd and 4th centuries. Phase 7 at the King William IV site saw the demolition of stone buildings to clear the site and the deposition in *c* AD 280 of a hoard shortly after in the backfilling of a well (Orton 1997, 98, 119). Activity in the roadside settlement at St Mary's churchyard came to a halt at the same time (Pemberton 1973, 9). Disruption at this time is known from many settlements on the roads leading into London, among them Staines, Croydon, Enfield and Crayford; clearly the economic basis of the Flavian and Hadrianic settlements was undergoing change (Sheldon & Schaaf 1978, 82). This may represent a reconfiguration of relationships between town and country. In the 3rd century the Roman elite had begun to transfer their seats of status and power out of London into rural villas, which then began to compete with the roadside settlements in their role of entrepôts for collecting rural produce from the hinterland of London and supplying it to the city. At Ewell Grove, occupation continued throughout the 4th century, and the presence of a clipped *siliqua* of Valens suggests that the settlement remained economically active until 400. After that, the archaeological record is blank until the 6th century.

GROVE COTTAGE

Introduction

SITE LOCATION

Grove Cottage is located at 10 Cheam Road, fronting onto that road some 10m from the junction where it leaves the lower section of Ewell High Street and heads south-east. The

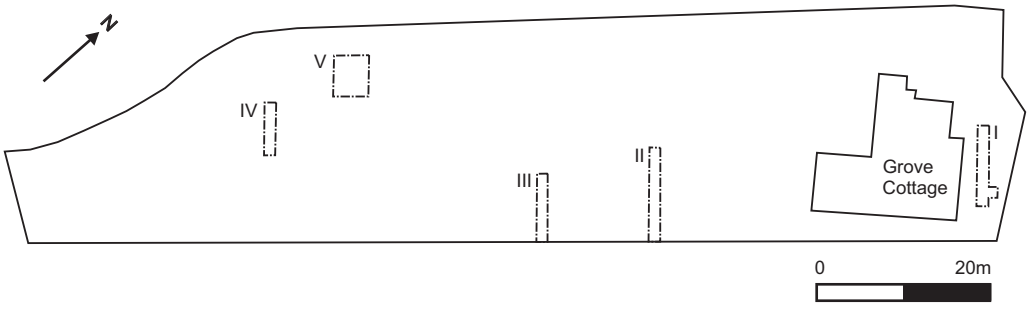

Fig 13 Grove Cottage, Ewell. Site plan showing location of trenches I–V.

upper section of the High Street bends to the south-west, and the grounds of Grove Cottage lie parallel with this part of the High Street. They lie between it and another road, which was called Staneway when it was developed in the 1930s, but was formerly the Fairfield. The Ewell fair and the cattle and sheep market were held here until the mid-19th century. The grounds of Grove Cottage are roughly rectangular, with the corners at TQ 2205 6247, 2207 6246, 2202 6240 and 2201 6243 (fig 13).

BACKGROUND

Shortly before the Fairfield was developed, A W G Lowther carried out an excavation in order to locate Stane Street. His published alignment (Lowther 1935, figs 1 and 14) indicated that the road passed through the grounds of Grove Cottage. A second, spur road was also excavated by Lowther at Purberry Shot on Epsom Road, which is the higher continuation of Ewell High Street. Projection of the line of this spur road (Lowther 1949, fig 2) suggested that this, too, should continue across the Grove Cottage site.

Assumptions about the course of Stane Street, based for many years on the route published by Lowther, were overturned when the road was not found on the expected line in excavations on the King William IV site (Orton 1997). Excavation at Grove Cottage therefore offered a new opportunity to establish the route of the road.

EXCAVATION HISTORY

Prior to the construction of a car park on the site by Epsom and Ewell Borough Council, a two-week period was allowed for excavation of the site. Work took place in February 1972, with assistance of neighbouring societies co-ordinated by the Surrey Archaeological Society Rescue Committee. The site plan (fig 13) gives the location of the trenches, one of which lay to the front of the house, while four were in its rear garden, taking the south-eastern brick wall of the garden as a base line. All trenches were originally 1m wide, although trench I at the front was subsequently enlarged with a small spur trench, and V was expanded to 4 x 4.5m.

The excavation

PHASE 1: PREHISTORIC

Activity on the site was evidenced by the residual flintwork found in all contexts. Few diagnostic tool types were found, but the material is typical of the mixed flintwork found throughout excavations in Ewell, and contains work of Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age date.

PHASE 2: ROMAN, LATE 1ST CENTURY

At some time between AD 50 and 70, the Roman road Stane Street was laid out through what would become the settlement of Ewell. At the eastern edge of the base of trench II (layer 5), sandy gravel was found resting on the natural Thanet Sand (fig 14). This had much the same appearance as the metalling of Stane Street when it was located in St Mary's churchyard (Pemberton 1973, 4), and it is interpreted here as the western edge of this road. After the construction of Stane Street, a structure of flint and other materials was built nearby; from the material found in trench V, it appears to have been the wall of a building (fig 15). The evidence for this consisted of three disconnected blocks of flint nodules and scattered flints, with traces of mortar on them and, in places, a screed of pink cement mixed with broken flue-tile. This was found resting on a layer of pebbles, flints and brown sand, which in turn lay upon the natural Thanet Sand. If, as seems likely, this was the vestige of a collapsed or robbed wall foundation, then the building may have been a wooden structure on a flint-mortared foundation, with the excavated wall facing north. Fragments of samian and Hoo ware found in the walling suggest an early date for the structure.

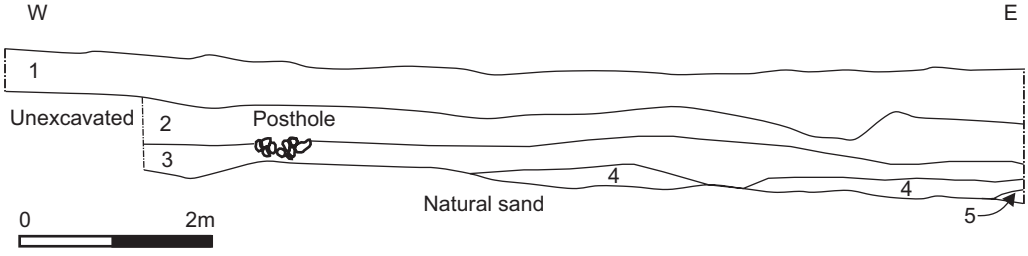

Fig 14 Grove Cottage, Ewell. Trench II section showing the phase 1 road surface (5) to right.

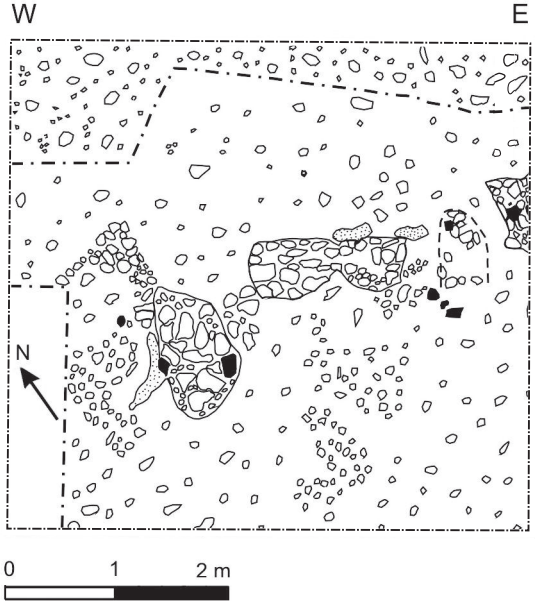

Fig 15 Grove Cottage, Ewell. Plan of trench V structure.

PHASE 3: 3RD AND 4TH CENTURIES

After the stone building fell into disuse, its wall was robbed out and eventually covered by layer 4/5 of trench V, an orange/brown sandy soil with chalk lumps. Sherds of Alice Holt pottery, together with undatable sand, grog and flint-tempered wares, were found in this layer, and the presence of Oxfordshire red ware suggests that the building had disappeared by the late 3rd century.

At this time there was a hard surface laid across part of the site. This surface was found in trench IV (layer 4) as a compacted level of dark brown sandy soil with stones and small flint nodules resting on layers of sand with chalk lumps (fig 16). It had been rammed flat, with a shallow depression or ditch on its eastern side. This surface may have been a second road, but since it does not appear in any trenches other than IV, it is unlikely to have been part of a linear feature. It may possibly be the floor of a yard. A coin of Tetricus II (270–3) was found in this surface (see *Coins*, no 1) as well as sherds of Oxfordshire white ware and Much Hadham ware, suggesting a late 3rd century date. Other material in the surface included tile, slag, many studs/nails, and a few shells.

In the 4th century, the original stretch of Stane Street was covered by an orange/brown sandy soil (fig 14: trench II, layer 4) containing chalk lumps, with flint nodules resting on top. This new surface extended some distance westwards from the assumed original line of Stane Street, where it rested directly on the natural Thanet Sand. It contained mussel shells, fragments of brick and tile, and sherds of Oxfordshire red wares and Portchester D pottery.

PHASE 4: LATE 4TH CENTURY

From the 4th century onwards, there was a gradual build-up of dark brown sandy topsoil across the site, about 0.35m thick (layer 3 in all trenches). This layer covers the extended width of Stane Street, as well as the hard level in trench IV, which now appears to have been broken up by the digging of pits or scrapes. The new land surface contained animal bones, scattered groups of flint nodules and coarseware – mostly Alice Holt/Farnham and Oxfordshire colour-coated wares, with significant amounts of Portchester D ware. A pit was found at the western end of trench III; it had been dug in the 4th century through this topsoil to a depth of over 1.2m, and its fill contained a similar range of pottery.

PHASE 5: MEDIEVAL AND POST-MEDIEVAL

The late Roman topsoil was overlaid by a light brown sandy soil (layer 2 in all trenches) that contained post-medieval glazed and other pottery and clay tobacco pipes. Mixed in with this were shelly wares from medieval occupation of the site. One posthole, dug at this time, was found in trench II (fig 14), and in trench I an oblong pit was dug and afterwards filled with waste including glazed and salt-glazed stoneware vessels of *c* AD 1600–1790. Numerous other

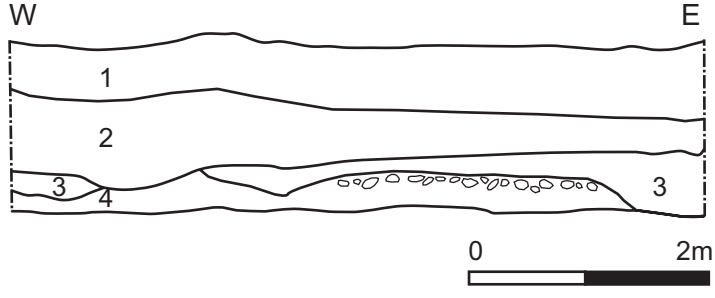

Fig 16 Grove Cottage, Ewell. Trench IV section showing the phase 3 metalled surface (4).

shallow pits had been dug into the topmost layer of the site, containing mid-Victorian 'china', glassware and much animal bone: these were probably associated with Ewell Fair.

The finds

FLINT, by Jonathan Cotton

A total of 174 pieces of struck flint was recovered from eleven separate contexts across the site, the largest amount coming from layer 3 in trenches I, II and V, which collectively yielded 103 pieces. None of the contexts could be dated to the prehistoric period, and the flintwork is dealt with here as a single, albeit mixed, assemblage.

As is usual in Ewell, the raw material derives from a range of sources, principally the local river gravels of the Hogsmill valley and the surface of the North Downs chalk. Bullhead Bed flint from the Thanet Sand is barely represented (a single secondary flake from trench II, layer 3). The majority of the assemblage is in sharp, unweathered condition, although a number of blade-like pieces have been recorticated to varying degrees, while one small broken blade has been heavily burnt.

Catalogue (fig 17, left)

1 Fabricator worked on the distal end of a robust snapped cortical blade of mottled dark grey flint. There is semi-abrupt retouch along both lateral edges and localised grinding/polishing at the surviving tip. Probably of Neolithic date. Trench I, layer 5.

DISCUSSION

Most of the assemblage is made up of debitage and diagnostic pieces are few. Formally retouched tools are hardly present, and comprise just four convex scrapers, one worked on a thermal fragment, and a single snapped fabricator worked on the distal end of a robust blade. Miscellaneously retouched pieces are more numerous, but equally difficult to date, as are the three notched pieces. The blades and blade-like flakes hint at Mesolithic or perhaps early Neolithic activity. There is one possible microburin mishit. Several of the cores, such as a pristine single-platform example from trench I layer 2, were used to furnish blades; various rejuvenation flakes (principally platform renewals) show evidence of organised core maintenance and reduction. By contrast, many of the flakes are small and squat, and terminate in hinge fractures. Such flake removal is usually taken to indicate later prehistoric work.

Despite the paucity of diagnostic tool types, it is very likely that the assemblage from Grove Cottage is a mixed one containing elements of Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age date. As such, it can be compared with the assemblage from Ewell Grove, considered above, and with numerous other local collections from around the headwaters of the Hogsmill stream.

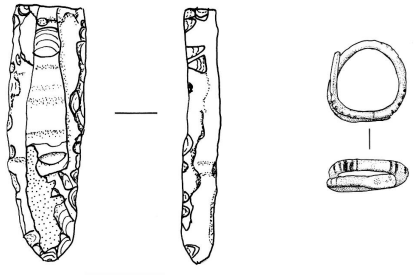

Fig 17 Grove Cottage, Ewell. Worked flint and Roman small find (scale 2:3).

ROMAN POTTERY, by Frank Pemberton

Fabrics

The description of Roman coarsewares below employs the vessel forms defined by Marsh & Tyers (1979) and Davies *et al* (1994), and the fabric codes used by Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA), supplemented where necessary by the National Roman Fabric Reference Collection (Tomber & Dore 1998; cf Symonds & Tomber 1991).

In all, 14.77kg of Roman pottery was recovered from the site. The pottery was sorted by fabric, following the fabric codes used by MOLA (for fabric definitions, see *Endnote*). Much of this material was found redeposited in subsequent phases, so that quantification by phase would give misleading results; analysis is therefore based on a cumulative total for all periods.

Coarsewares in the narrowest sense of the term – wares typically used for jars and other cooking vessels – made up 88.2% of all the pottery found, of which more than half was from the Alice Holt potteries (69.2%). The other wares, in descending order of frequency, were SAND 6.6%, PORD 6.6%, SHELL 3.1%, OXID 2% and GROG 1%, while BB1, BB2, CALC, FLINT, HIGH, NKSH and VCWS accounted for less than 1% each.

Amphorae made up 2.1% of the pottery, and mortaria 1.2%, all of it white ware from the Oxfordshire potteries. Fabrics typically used for flagons made up 2.7%, principally white ware from the Verulamium region (1.2%), while HOO, MHAD, VRG and VRR accounted for less than 1% each.

Of the tablewares, fabrics typically used for bowls made up 6.8%, and those typically used for beakers 1%. The most common sources for bowls were Oxford red ware (3.4%), Oxford white ware (3.1%) and samian (2.9%), while FG and LOND accounted for less than 1% each among the bowls, and COLC, FOX, GCC, MICA and NENE similarly among the beakers.

Forms

In all, the estimated equivalent of 14.7 vessels was recovered from the site. Some 55.1% of Estimated Vessel Equivalents came from jars (with less than 1% from lids) and 39.5% from bowls and dishes. Beakers accounted for 3.4% and flagons for 1.7%.

Catalogue of illustrated sherds (fig 18)

A full catalogue can be found in the supplement (see *Endnote*)

Phase 3

3 Jar (AH fabric) with cavetto rim; in light grey fabric with dark grey slip; early 2nd century. Trench V, layer 4/5.

5 Jar (OXID fabric) with upright rounded rim and lid groove; black slip/finish; AD 50–100. Trench V, layer 4/5.

9 Jar (HIGH fabric), cordoned; in grey sandy fabric; AD 70–160. Trench V, layer 4/5.

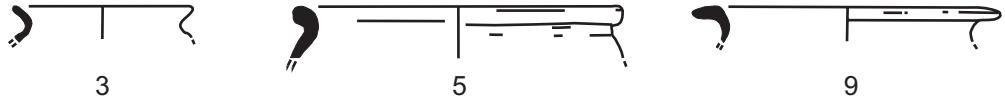

Fig 18 Grove Cottage, Ewell. Roman coarsewares (scale 1:4).

BUILDING MATERIAL, by Peggy Bedwell and Margaret Nobbs

In total, 18.10kg of Roman ceramic material was recovered from the site. The great majority of this was unrecognisable brick and tile; *tegula* made up 14.9% of the total, *imbrex* 4.9%, and flue-tile 0.4% (following the definitions of Betts 1986; Betts *et al* 1997 and Brodribb 1987). Of the remaining tile, a large proportion (42.4% of the whole) came from substantial floor

tiles or *pilae*, with a thickness greater than 30mm. Some of the tiles retained traces of mortar. All the flue-tile from the site was comb-marked, not stamped.

A piece of flat red sandstone was found in trench II layer 4, the 4th century layer above Stane Street. It may have been part of a flagstone.

STONE FINDS, by Frank Pemberton

Phase 4

1 Part of a quern of Mayen lava, coarsely dressed with grooves some 12mm apart. Trench I, layer 2.

2 Part of a quern of hard sandstone, dressed with grooves some 10mm apart. Trench V, layer 3.

3 Fragment of stone made or reworked as a whetstone. It is a flat fragment of hard micaceous red sandstone with a curved edge worn smooth and striated, apparently by sharpening blades. Trench II, layer 3.

METAL FINDS, by Frank Pemberton

Phase 4

1 (Fig 17, right). Small copper-alloy finger ring, knurled with five notches. Internal dia. 13mm, 2mm thick, D-section, similar to Colchester type 1758 (Crummy 1983). Trench III pit.

COINS, by Norman Clarkson

Phase 3

1 An antoninianus of Tetricus II (270–3). Obv: [C PIV ESV TETRICVS CA] ES, radiate bust right. Rev: [SPES] P[VBLICA], Spes walking left and hitching skirt. Trench IV, layer 4. Phase 3.

MEDIEVAL AND POST-MEDIEVAL POTTERY, by Steve Nelson

A small quantity of post-Roman material was recovered from all trenches on the site. Although most finds were found in the topsoil (layer 2), it is worthwhile noting their presence in the centre of Ewell village. The medieval wares range from the 11th to the 15th centuries. The shelly-sandy ware sherds are similar to the form and fabric of the St Neots type wares of East Anglia dated to the 10–12th centuries. Shelly wares such as those from the site with a 'soapy' texture are now well known in Surrey and the South East and continued to the 13th century. One sherd in grey/brown sandy fabric with a flanged rim and inner bead is typical of a form of cooking pot of the first half of the 13th century, an example being known from Eynsford Castle (Rigold 1971, 152–6) and this form is known from many Surrey sites. A rim sherd in fine sandy grey fabric may be a Limpsfield product of the 13th century. There is a body sherd from a glazed white-slipped orange/buff ware jug, probably an Earlswood type usually dated to *c* 1200–1400 (Turner 1974). There is also a rim sherd from a Surrey whiteware jug of the 15th century, very similar to Cheam ware forms (McCarthy & Brooks 1988, fig 280).

Pottery from the fill of the pit in trench I excavated to the front of the site was of mid-18th century date, confirmed by a halfpenny of George II dated 1753. This pottery included a flat flanged rim chamber pot, in Border green ware; a red ware shallow dish with trailed slip design; a cup in white salt-glazed stoneware; a brown salt-glazed stoneware beer tankard, with speckled iron wash; a large mug/jug in salt-glazed stoneware, and a jar in tin-glazed earthenware, with blue line decoration at rim and base.

Concluding discussion

Stane Street is the key to the topography of Roman Ewell, and the excavations at Grove Cottage have improved understanding of the route of this road. The broad outlines of its

course are reasonably certain. The road came into Ewell from London on an alignment parallel to and south of the present London Road, and continued through St Mary's churchyard to the foot of the hill, where it took up a new alignment on a more southerly course. This course has recently been traced by Hall and Pemberton (2006) through gardens at no 43 Staneway and no 6 St James Avenue, after which the road continued towards Epsom and the Downs.

However, the exact route followed by Stane Street through Ewell was uncertain until recently. If the small area of metalling found at Grove Cottage in the eastern corner of trench II layer 5 should be identified, as it is here, with the surface of Stane Street, then clearly the road just clipped the area under excavation, with the main body of the road passing east of Grove Cottage. This means that it was running *c* 6m east of the published alignment through the Fairfield site, as shown on Lowther's map (1935, fig 1). This is the alignment proposed by Hall (2008, 242–6) and it fits the known layout of Roman buildings in Ewell and the apparent street patterns there.

Not long after the construction of Stane Street, probably in the late 1st century, a structure of flint and other materials was built to the west of the road. This may have been built of timber on a mortared flint foundation, with the excavated side facing north. It had disappeared completely by the late 3rd century, most of its building material having been robbed out. At about the same time, the hard-packed surface found in trench IV layer 4 was laid down. This may have served a function for other buildings in the area.

Some idea of the status of buildings in and around this site can be gained from an analysis of the pottery found here. There are no clear contemporaneous groups for this, so it is considered here regardless of stratigraphy. As in most Ewell sites, there was a considerable range of wares, most of which must have arrived via London, although the proportion of samian is less than at Ewell Grove, and much less than would be found in London. Alice Holt is more common among the coarse or kitchen wares than it is at Ewell Grove (69% as opposed to 45%); tablewares were more common, amphorae and mortaria less so. Comparison of vessel forms with those from the King William IV site (Orton 1997, 109) shows that both beakers and flagons were less common at Grove Cottage.

The evidence from the 4th century suggests that the small edge of Stane Street passing through the site was then covered by the deposit of an orange/brown sandy soil (trench II layer 4). As this had a layer of flint nodules resting on its surface, it may have been intended as a paved yard or area, or even as a resurfacing of the old road. Without excavating a larger stretch of Stane Street, it is hard to draw conclusions. However, evidence accumulating from the various excavations at St Mary's churchyard (Pemberton in prep) suggests that the old course of the road there was neglected in the 4th century, and some accumulation of soil occurred. Certainly the whole area of the Grove Cottage site was subject to a build-up of topsoil by the late 4th century, with no further habitation on the site, and it continued as an open field through the medieval and post-medieval phases.

Endnote

The catalogues, table 1, fabric definitions and animal bone analysis listed below are available on the Archaeology Data Service website (http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/surreyac/contents.cfm?vol=96). Copies of this material will also be deposited with the Society's library, Guildford. Photocopies can also be supplied by post – enquiries should be addressed to the Hon Editors, Surrey Archaeological Society, Castle Arch, Guildford GU1 3SX.

Ewell Grove:
Flintwork catalogue
Table 1 Context of prehistoric pottery
Fabric definitions for Roman pottery

Roman coarsewares catalogue
Samian catalogue
Building material catalogue
Metal finds catalogue
Coin catalogue
Animal bone: detailed analysis

Grove Cottage:
Roman coarsewares catalogue

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At Ewell Grove, permission to excavate was granted by Surrey County Council, which was also very helpful in providing accommodation for equipment and finds processing. At Grove Cottage, Epsom & Ewell Borough Council was helpful in providing access to the site. Thanks go to the Surrey Archaeological Society, which supplied equipment and finance for the excavations and a grant towards the cost of preparing these reports. Many members of the Nonsuch Antiquarian Society (now the Epsom and Ewell History and Archaeology Society) helped on site: Olive Temple and the late Phyllis Davies, Ina Godman, Norman Nail and Dick Temple were of great assistance in producing the final archive.

In the later post-excavation work, Peggy Bedwell and Margaret Nobbs undertook the onerous work of pottery quantification, and Roy Canham analysed the brick and tile. Robin Symonds (Museum of London Archaeology Service) offered his help and advice on the Roman pottery. For the finds reports, thanks are due to the specialists who gave their time and expertise: Norman Clarkson, Jonathan Cotton (Senior Curator (Prehistory) Museum of London), Geraldine Done, Steve Nelson, and Catherine Johns (British Museum). Drawings were prepared by Alan Hall, Gabby Rapson, and David Rice. Earlier drafts of this report received many helpful remarks from Dr David Bird, Jonathan Cotton, John Hampton, Rosamond Hanworth, Professor Clive Orton and Harvey Sheldon.

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