

around the earlier 13th century, but in assessing the probable date of deposition, one must consider the small size and abraded condition of the sherds.

The pottery from the drainage ditch contained large unabraded sherds of very shelly greyware cooking pots (many from a single large pot) and similar but abraded sherds from many vessels, together with a few large unabraded slipped and glazed London-type jug sherds. Tentatively, the late 12th to early 13th century seems most probable for deposition of this group. The ditch pottery appears to be generally similar to the levelling deposit pottery from the separate eastern trench, but much fresher.

### Animal remains

**Bone** The bone from the moat wall trench is very well preserved and has a total weight of 6.54kg (14lb). The most numerous bones are of cattle, with nearly all parts of the skeleton present. Expressed in terms of the amount of meat associated with these bones, cattle would have been even more predominant. Sheep/goat and pig are moderately numerous, and fallow deer is present, as are avian and fish bones. The larger bones have been chopped, and while most of the remains are good meat bones, there are phalanges, metapodials, and mandibles also. Thus it appears that whole carcasses were brought onto the island for butchery.

Wet sieving of a sample of the moat wall trench fill yielded a few rodent and other bones, a number of fish vertebrae and spines, and small land snails.

**Shell** Many shells were recovered from the moat wall construction trench. They consisted of common oyster, 1234 shells (individual valves); common mussel, 149 shells; common cockle, 3 shells (with well developed summer edges); and common whelk, 1 shell. The comparatively large numbers of oysters suggests that they formed a significant part of the local diet of the period.

## Letter

IN THEIR interesting survey of Roman villas (LA 7, no. 2), Harvey Sheldon et al point out the complete absence of villas in the central part of the Weald, and quite reasonably attribute this to avoidance of heavy clay soils. There are, however, at least two other factors to consider.

Oliver Rackham<sup>1</sup> used Henry Cleere's work<sup>2</sup> on Roman ironworks to estimate that at least 23,000 acres of coppice-wood would have been needed to maintain the many known ironworks in the Weald. His map<sup>3</sup> of areas of woodland in AD 1086, as recorded by Domesday Book, shows that the Weald was the most heavily wooded area near London at the later time.

Since even today, country houses, "villas" and farms are not located in industrial areas, perhaps the villa owners in Roman

### Summary

Scadbury is a moated manor house associated with well documented family histories, especially in its later period, but with very little if any documentation regarding the constructional history of the settlement.

The island and its surrounding areas have been cleared and surveyed, and the remaining brick foundations and other structures have been examined in some detail and recorded.

Two areas have been excavated\*. Excavations along the moat wall have revealed the method and period of construction, and given dietary information. The dating evidence from the excavation would suggest that the moat wall, and by extension perhaps the other brickwork of similar nature, was built near in time to, or during, the ownership of the second Thomas Walsingham (1457-67).

Excavations in the centre of the island have increased understanding of the ruined foundations there, and revealed a filled-in well. More importantly, evidence has been discovered for earlier occupation, in the form of a drainage ditch and levelled ground. These phases may be correlated with the documentary evidence relating to the de Scathebury family in the 13th century.

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4. At present, excavations are also taking place just east of, and within, the kitchens.

times were avoiding the Weald not only because of the difficulty of working clay soils, but also because the Weald was heavily wooded and under intensive industrial use for iron-working.  
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1. O. Rackham *Ancient Woodland: its History, Vegetation and Uses in England* (1980); O. Rackham *The History of the Countryside* (1986).

2. H. Cleere 'Some operating parameters for Roman ironworks' *Bull Inst Archaeol* 13 (1976) 233-46.

3. *Ibid.*, 77.