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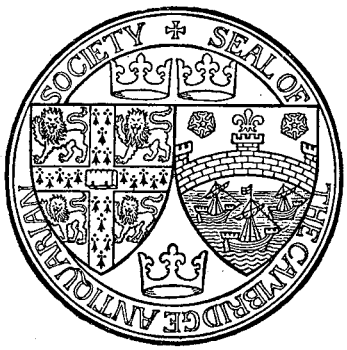
(INCORPORATING THE CAMBS & HUNTS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY)



VOLUME LVIII

JANUARY 1965 TO DECEMBER 1965

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DEIGHTON BELL
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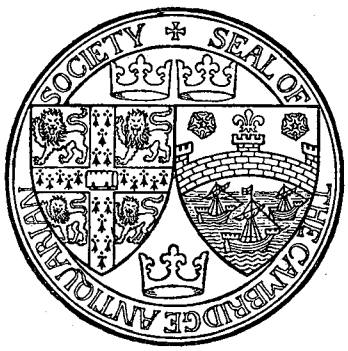

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LATE SAXON SETTLEMENTS IN THE ST NEOTS AREA

P. V. ADDYMAN

I. THE SAXON SETTLEMENT AND NORMAN CASTLE AT EATON SOCON, BEDFORDSHIRE

Commercial developments on the Ouse terrace gravels in the St Neots area have in recent years revealed a number of Late Saxon settlements. Information recovered by their excavation prior to destruction, together with that from a series of research excavations by T. C. Lethbridge and C. F. Tebbutt over the past 30 years,[1] provides an unusually full conspectus of the local settlement pattern and material culture in the period. In this and papers to follow in subsequent *Proceedings* the results of the recent excavations at Eaton Socon, Little Paxton and St Neots are described, and in a final paper the specialist reports for all the sites will be given, together with an attempted assessment of the contemporary environment, economy and material culture.

SUMMARY

Emergency excavations adjacent to Castle Hills, Eaton Socon, in 1962 revealed a rectangular timber building about 38 ft. by about 18 ft. with a subsidiary structure or earlier phase, and its associated ditches. The house had gone out of use by the twelfth century, and a ditch and sump were in use on the site. Associated with the stone hearth of a second contemporary building found under the outer bank of the castle were developed St Neots wares of early twelfth-century type, demonstrating that the bank was Norman. The bank itself was probably revetted with posts, and the associated flat-bottomed ditch was probably partly plank-lined.

INTRODUCTION

The Late Saxon settlement at Eaton Socon is to the east of the present village (Fig. 2), between the church and Castle Hills on the banks of the Ouse, and lies on gravels of the First-Second (undifferentiated) Terrace. The Great North Road,[2] the spine of the modern village, runs along the edge of the Terrace to the west.

The First-Second Terrace,[3] here fairly well developed, is separated from the Ouse by a thin wedge of alluvium (Fig. 1). Alluvial deposits also occur in the Duloe Brook

[1] St Neots: *Proc. C.A.S.* XXXIII (1933), pp. 137–51. Great Paxton: *Proc. C.A.S.* XXXV (1935), pp. 97–105. Southoe: *Proc. C.A.S.* (1938), pp. 158–63. Eaton Socon: *Proc. C.A.S.* XLV (1952), pp. 48–60. Eynesbury: *Proc. C.A.S.* LIV (1961), pp. 85–9. Buckden: *Proc. C.A.S.* LV (1962), pp. 13–15.

[2] As it ran in 1962; a by-pass to Eaton Socon is imminent.

[3] Geological data kindly provided by R. J. Wyatt, Geological Survey and Museum.

valley up as far as Duloe Bridge, and then westwards to Duloe Butts. Erratics derived from the Lower Greensand, and up to 5 ft. in size, are noted around Eaton Mills. The gravels are usually about 10 ft. thick—some 8 ft. were found in the excavation—overlying the Oxford Clay. To the west of a line approximately following the Great North Road, Oxford Clay is overlain by Boulder Clay, here a stony clay with much (and occasionally hard) chalk. Some way south there is an area of Third Terrace gravel on Oxford Clay between the First-Second Terrace and the Boulder Clay.

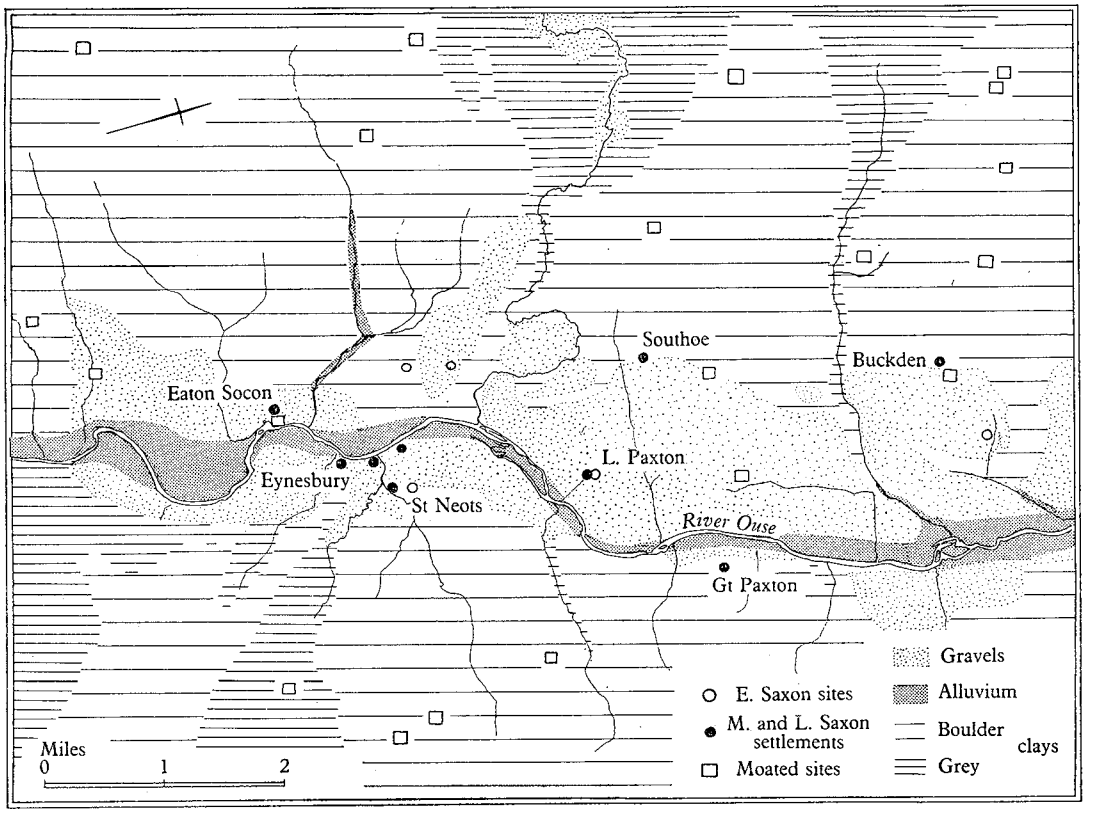

Fig. 1. The St Neots area: geological map showing the distribution of early, middle, late Saxon, and moated sites in relation to the clay and gravel. (Based on the Ordnance Survey 2½ in. map and the 1 in. geological survey (N.S.) by permission of the Directors General.)

The gravels consist largely of chalk pebbles and fragments of flint and ironstone. All of these could have been utilized, for building and smelting respectively. Both the Boulder Clay and Oxford Clay deposits could have provided material for pottery and wattle-and-daub construction.

Eaton Socon is first mentioned in the Domesday Book, as *Etone*, though its importance before this date can be inferred; it had been the head manor of the Bedfordshire thegn *Wulfmar* or *Ulmar* under the Confessor; and in 1086 the manor

comprised 20 hides, including 2 mills, 100 eels, woodland for 400 swine, and 2 acres of vineyard. Ulmar's Bedfordshire lands became known as the Barony of Eaton under Eudo 'Dapifer' the Domesday holder, and its distinctive epithet *Socon*, though not generally adopted until the seventeenth century, appears to stem from its status as a soke or liberty in the thirteenth.[1] The name itself is a common one meaning *tun* or farm by the river, an adequate description in its early days perhaps, though no longer appropriate in Late Saxon times, when the settlement was far more extensive. On Eudo 'Dapifer's' death in 1120 Eaton escheated to the crown

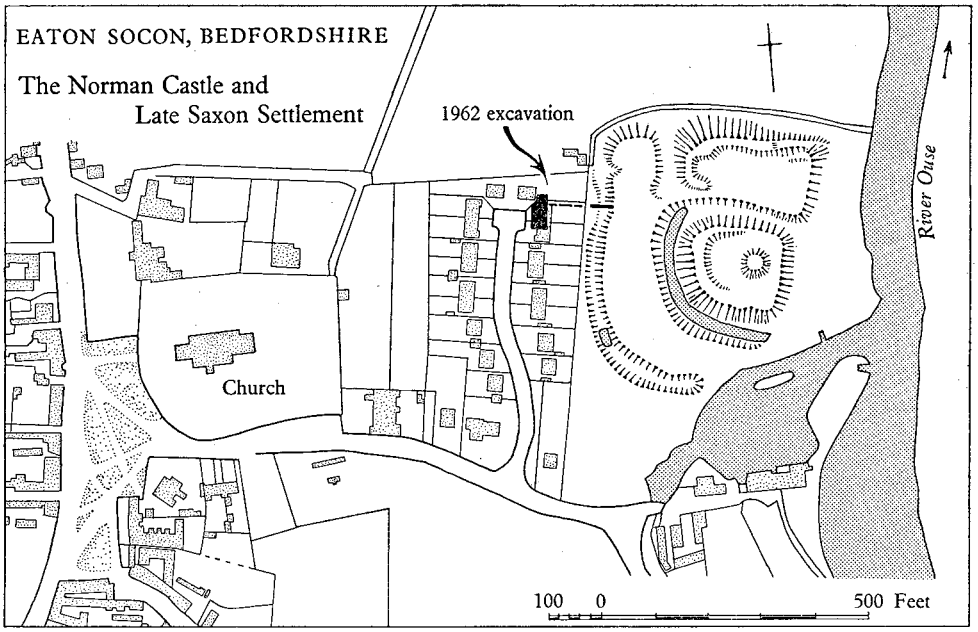

Fig. 2. Eaton Socon: Castle Hills, the excavation site, and the modern village.

and was eventually granted[2] to one of the house of Beauchamp, under whom most probably the castle was built. Lethbridge has suggested[3] that, in view of the connection by marriage or obligation of the first Hugh de Beauchamp with Geoffrey de Mandeville, the castle may be a product of the war between de Mandeville and Stephen, and thus date before 1144.

Castle Hills at Eaton Socon have been well described several times, and partly excavated on at least two previous occasions, most recently by T. C. Lethbridge and C. F. Tebbutt in 1949.[4] The southern of the two inner wards contained timber buildings with clay footings and plaster facings. The objects therefrom are now known to be characteristically twelfth century in date, as is the pottery (discussed here in Appendix I). Occupation was apparently short and the site was abandoned

[1] E. Ekwall, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Place-names* (Oxford, 1936), p. 151.
[2] Details in *B.H.R.S.* II, pp. 61 ff.
[3] *Proc. C.A.S.* XLV (1952), p. 50.
[4] V.C.H. *Bedfordshire*, I, pp. 297–300, and *Proc. C.A.S.* XLV (1952), pp. 48–60.

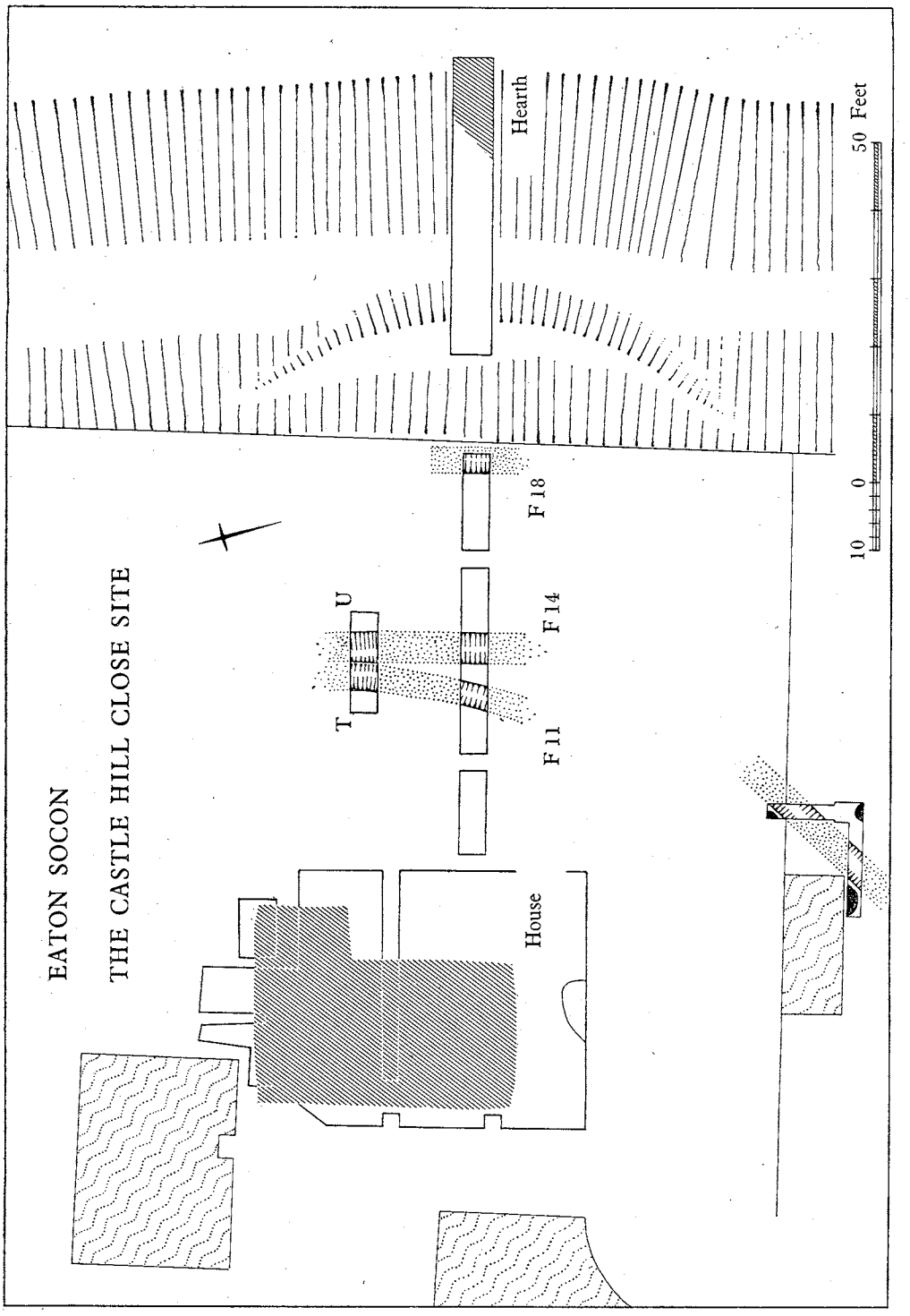

Fig. 3. Eaton Socon: general plan of the 1962 excavation.

until the construction of a mound, probably a windmill tump, in the Late Middle Ages. The northern ward was apparently contemporary with the southern, but was constructed on the site of an extensive and long-lived Late Saxon cemetery, covered by a debris layer of stones, some mortared, including Collyweston slates and part of a pilaster strip; perhaps, the excavators suggested, the rubble from a Late Saxon church. The need for a telling military reason to explain the desecration of a church and the despoliation of a graveyard led them to suppose that the outer bank and ditch of the castle complex was a pre-existing earthwork utilized as an outer defence when the two inner wards were constructed. Such an earthwork might be pre-conquest in date and, boldly perhaps, they suggested that this was the unidentified Danish fortress Tempsford of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. It seemed in 1962 at least possible that the bank and ditch were the defences of a Late Saxon thegn's residence, comparable to, though larger than, the ringwork under excavation at Sulgrave, Northants.[1] J. F. Dyer recently included it in a category of D-shaped earthworks in Bedfordshire perhaps attributable to the Danes.[2]

An opportunity to settle the question arose in 1962 when building operations in the field adjacent to Castle Hills to the west revealed extensive traces of a Late Saxon settlement. A rectangular timber house was partly excavated by C. F. Tebbutt, F.S.A., and completed by the Ministry of Public Building and Works. Mr Tebbutt's results are, with his generous permission, incorporated here. At the same time a small research excavation was carried out on the adjacent part of the outer bank and ditch with funds from this Society and the Queen's University of Belfast. The bank was shown to date from the twelfth century.

No Late Saxon finds other than those from the Castle area are recorded from Eaton Socon. The present site is, however, one of a series on the gravel terraces along both banks of the Middle Ouse (Fig. 1) and had a perhaps comparable or even more flourishing neighbour in the settlement less than a mile away in the Eynesbury and St Neots area, to be described in a later report.

During 1961 and early 1962 numerous ditches, pits, floors and areas of burnt daub were noted by Mr Tebbutt during the construction of a new road and housing estate, *Castle Hill Close*, in former allotments immediately west of Castle Hills. An amount of Late Saxon pottery was recovered. Foundation trenches for No. 12, Castle Hill Close revealed in 1962 a concentration of burnt daub, and an excavation revealed that this was the burnt debris *in situ* of a large timber building, of which a part was revealed. The remainder of the building was investigated at Mr Tebbutt's suggestion by the Ministry of Public Building and Works. His trenches were incorporated in a 15 ft. grid system, and trenches were dug to the east of the house on one of the grid lines to explore the area behind the house, and to establish its stratigraphical relationship with the outer defences of the castle. The section was extended into the castle area as a research excavation, and a 6 ft. wide trench across the bank and ditch was dug. In the area between house and castle two converging ditches were located and trenches were dug to confirm the course of these.

[1] *Med. Arch.* VI–VII (1962–3), p. 333. [2] *Beds. Mag.* VIII, no. 62 (1962), p. 238.

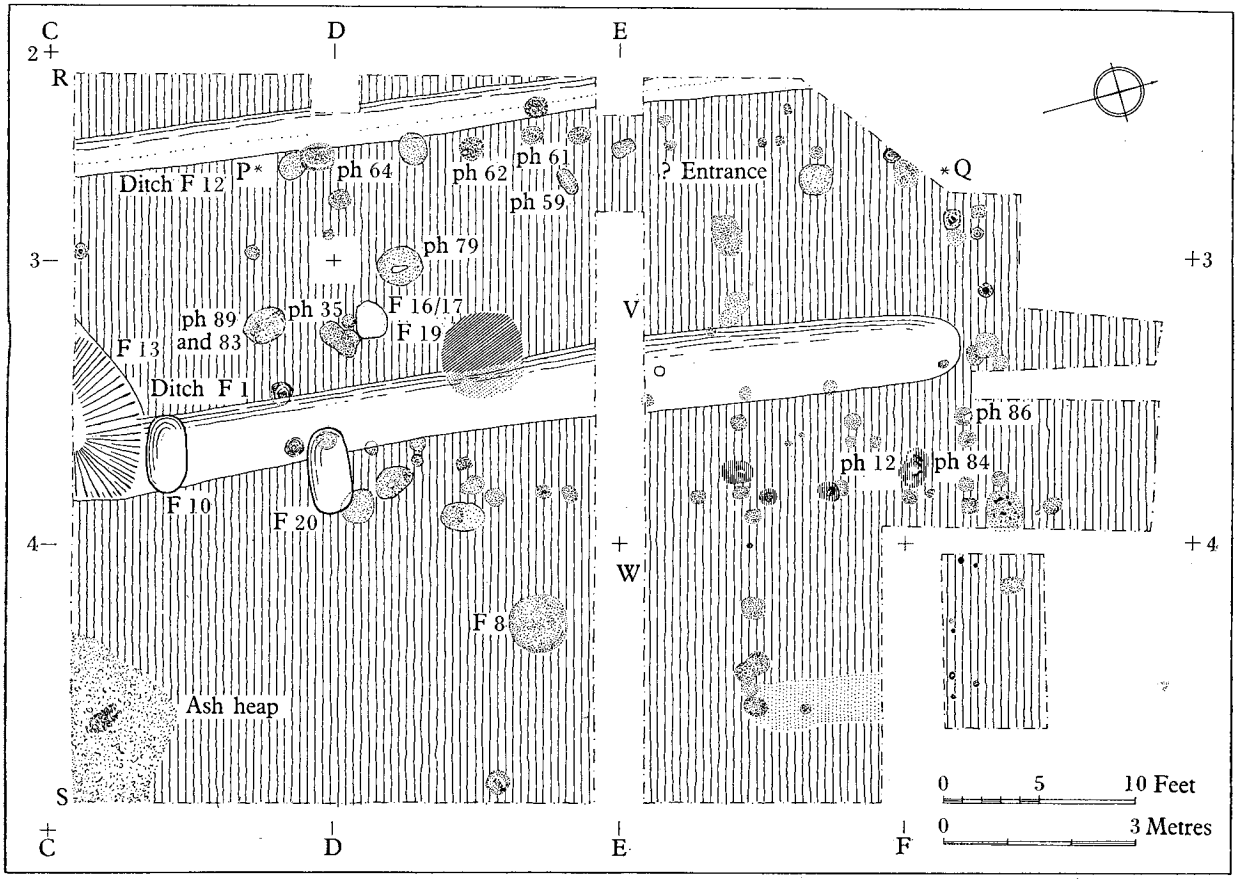

Fig. 4. Eaton Socon: plan of the main buildings excavated in 1962 (pp. 43–8 and Pl. I).

THE EXCAVATION

(*a*) *The Late Saxon house*

In the house area the topsoil varied from 6 to 9 in. On its removal eleventh- and twelfth-century features were immediately revealed (Fig. 7, A). The only subsequent activity had apparently been a single ploughing, the parallel furrows from which had scored the top of the earlier features and layers.

Two parallel ditches, Feature 1 (F1) and Feature 12 (F12), running north–south, cut through the remains of the house. F12, about 2 ft. wide, flat bottomed, and with an even brown soil filling, contained a bronze buckle of thirteenth-century type (Fig. 11, no. 19). F1, about 5 ft. wide, of shallow U-shaped profile, was filled with an upper layer of yellow clay (Fig. 5) and a lower layer of even brown silty soil containing charcoal specks. It contained twelfth-century pottery. F1 was cut through by two shallow oval holes F10 and F20, of which the former contained twelfth-century pottery. Beneath F1 at the south end of the area examined was a 5 ft. deep pit F13, with very dark, even earthy layers near the bottom and layers containing

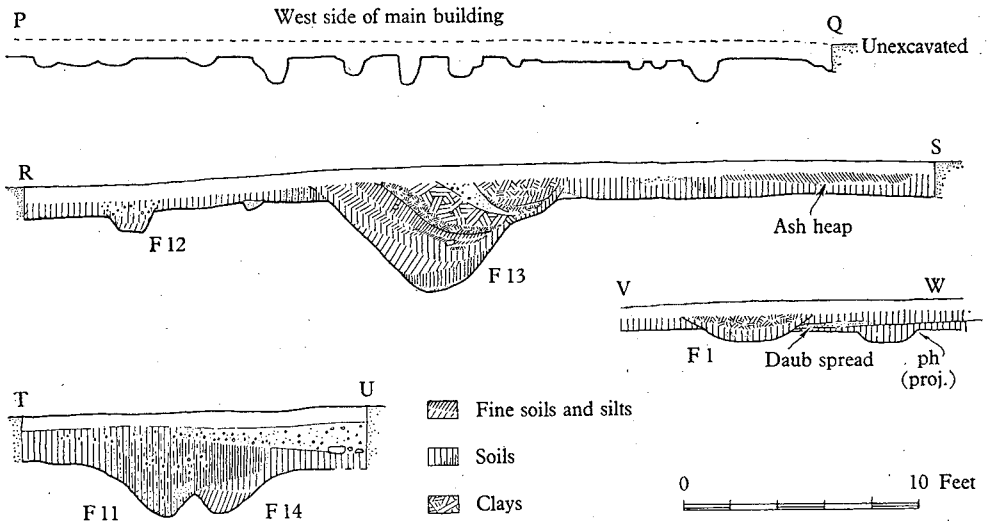

Fig. 5. Eaton Socon: sections through the west wall of the main house (P–Q), and through F1, F11, F12, F13 and F14.

clay, gravel, or a mixture of the two, nearer the top (Fig. 5). The distinction between the fillings of F13 and F1 was not clear and their relationship was confused by the intrusion of F10. Nevertheless it appeared that F1, which sloped gently from the north, probably drained into the pit, and both were levelled up with clay after a

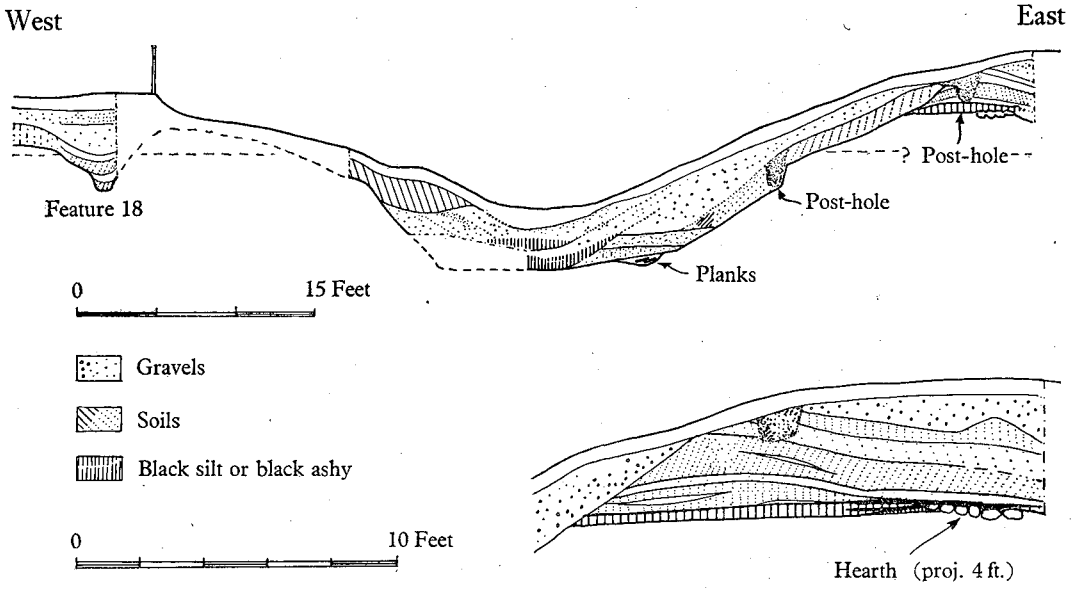

Fig. 6. Eaton Socon: section through the outer bank and moat of the castle: the upper (north side) is a composite section showing the main features; the lower (south side) shows the relationship of the buried hearth (projected) to the overlying bank. See Pl. II *d*.

certain amount of silting had taken place. The small amount of pottery from the upper layers of F13 was consistent with a twelfth-century date, and the specks of charcoal and daub in the lower layers may have arrived there after the destruction of the house. It is possible, however, that the pit was first dug when the house was still in use.

After the removal of the features later than the house, a layer—not present in all areas—of fairly friable clayey material, apparently mostly burnt, was found. It ranged in colour from red and pink to yellow and cream, often found closely in conjunction, giving the impression that it was not a homogeneous mass burnt *in situ*, but tumbled debris. It was particularly thick, and burnt deep red, near the north end of the house, and the ground beneath it here was heavily scorched. Several of the adjacent post-holes contained charred post-cores. If the burnt clay represents the burnt collapsed walls of the house, as seems possible, the fire may have reached its hottest in the north-east corner. Fragments of the daub contained wattle impressions, and others bore the impressions of squared beams or posts. It is studied in detail on p. 62; although several types were found, most can be regarded as debris of wattle and daub walls on a post framework. The main distribution of the material (Fig. 7, B) seems to indicate the direction of collapse of the walls. Small fragments and thin layers of it occurred, however, in the top of a thick layer of even brown-grey silty material present in areas outside the house, and presumably had become spread after destruction. The layer itself was interpreted as a general rubbish layer and soil level which had accumulated during the occupation of the house. The pottery it contained, all fragmentary, has been taken to represent the main period of occupation (e.g. grid D4, layer 2). Fragments of 'daub' were also found in a small circular pit F8, to the east of the house, which was thus open at the time of destruction; the purpose of this small pit, of which the upper filling was fine dark humic soil, is obscure. A bone comb (Fig. 11, no. 22) was found in it.

The 'daub', and where this was not present a layer of dark even grey-brown soil, were removed, revealing yellowish-grey, fine almost silty material into which were cut the post-holes of a timber building complex. A number of post-holes, particularly at the north-east corner, contained black charred cores of posts, while many others contained in their fillings fragments of 'daub'. These post-holes (Fig. 7, C) presumably held posts at the time of destruction of the building and can be taken to represent its final form. In addition other post-holes were found, sometimes partly cut away by those containing daub or post-cores, of which the filling was predominantly grey or grey-brown soil. These (Fig. 7, D) may have fallen out of use, and have been refilled, before the building was destroyed. Some of them also appeared to cut others.

Most of the post-holes were 6–9 in. deep and of flat-bottomed, or in some cases U-shaped profile. Some in the west side wall of the building complex had deeper holes in the bottom on their inner side (Fig. 4, post-holes 61 and 62). Post-hole 89, the deepest at 1 ft. 3 in., was placed approximately in the centre of the south end wall of the building. Its fellow in the north end wall, though apparently replaced three

times, was neither so substantial nor so deep. The main profiles and the filling of each post-hole were recorded on index cards which are deposited, together with other excavation records, with the Ministry of Public Building and Works.

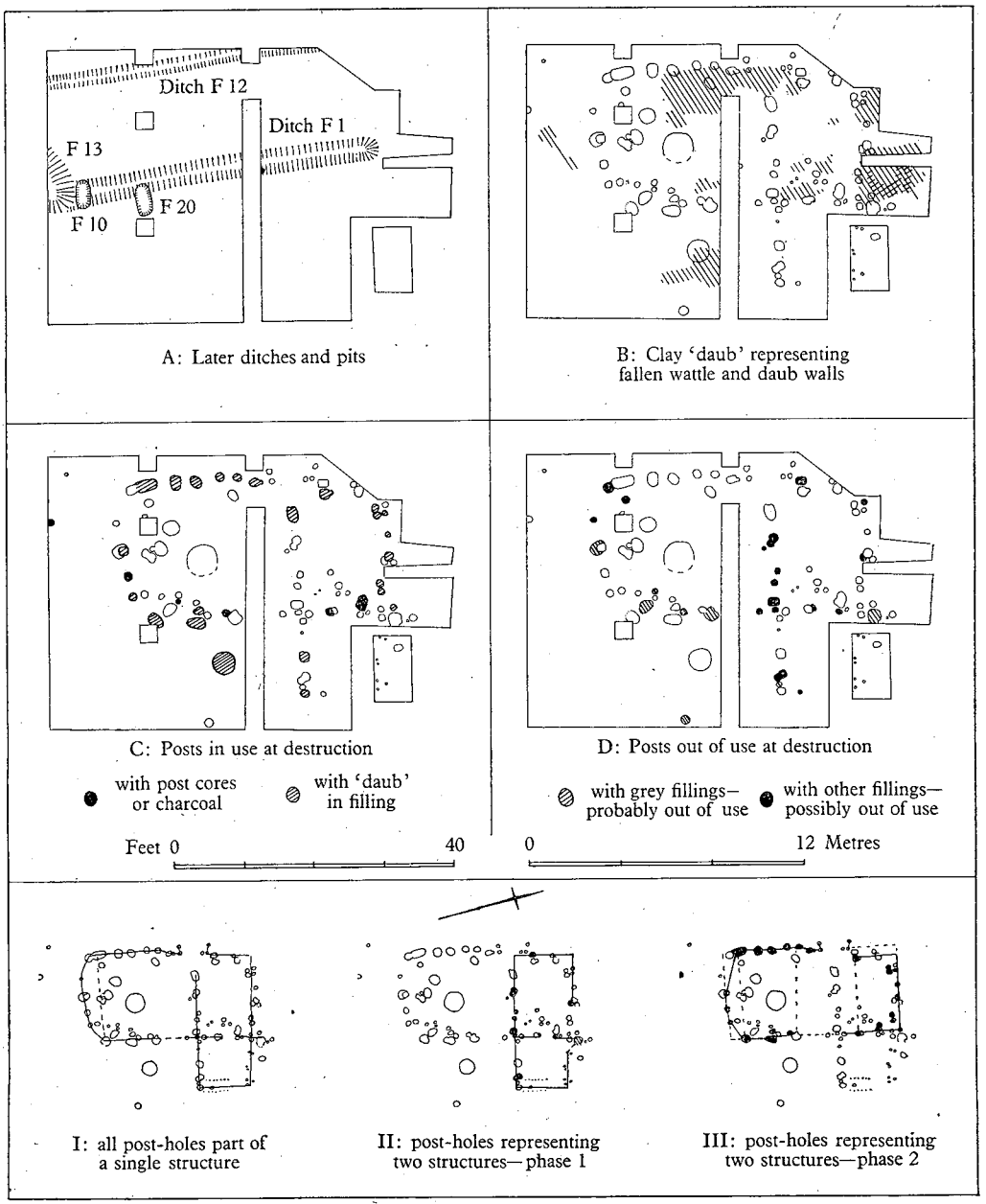

Fig. 7. Eaton Socon: the main structures. A: Features later than the building. B: Daub spread. C: Post-holes in use at the time of destruction. D: Post-holes out of use at time of destruction. I: Interpretation I (p. 50). II and III: Interpretation II (p. 50). See Pl. II*a–c*.

The post-holes formed quite clear if not very regular alignments. The main structure was a rectangular building approximately 38 ft. by 18 ft., running north–south. It was divided internally in the proportion 1:2 by a row of posts which, however, extended some 12 ft. east of the building. A row of small stake-holes some 3–4 in. across and deep extended similarly from the north end wall; the east end of the two rows was joined by a shallow and very slight depression containing a few specks of daub in its slightly darker filling. Most though not demonstrably all the post-holes in the transverse rows had the grey-brown soily filling elsewhere supposed to be indicative that the posts had gone out of use before destruction. It is thus clearly possible that they represent an earlier structure which the main building succeeds and partly overlaps. This is unlikely on the one hand because the east wall of the 'later' building is an integral part of the 'earlier'; and on the other because the stake-holes clearly stop at the 'later building'. Possible interpretations assuming both premisses are discussed below (p. 50).

The only internal features of the building apart from the partition were two hollows near the south end, F19 and post-hole 79. The former was filled with black soil and charcoal fragments. The soil around was not, however, burnt and the feature cannot itself be a hearth; sherds of sandy and gritty pottery in its filling suggest it may even be later than the house. There was no other trace of a hearth, and, if the structure was a domestic one, heating may perhaps have been by brazier, the contemporary use of which—in military circles at least—is demonstrated by the Bayeux tapestry.[1] It is possible that the scorched areas near the north wall represent the true hearths of the house, and cooking may even have been done in a separate building, as apparently in the thirteenth-century timber building at Seacourt, Berks.[2] The position of the doorway is not clear; it may be represented by the 4 ft. 6 in. gap flanked by small post-holes in the west wall, or it may have been centrally placed in the east side. It does not, at any rate, seem likely to have been in the ends.

South-east of the house was an area of dark grey soil (C4, layers 2 and 3) containing white ash lenses and much small charcoal; it is presumably the remains of an ash heap either from fires connected with the house, or from some other nearby domestic source. The exploratory trenches between the house and castle revealed no further timber structures. The dark rubbish-bearing layer aound the house thinned and gave way to the underlying yellow-grey silty material. In the top of this were found in places (layers 6 and 7 in each locality except D7–D12) an amount of apparently hand-made 'St Neots ware', together with wheel-thrown St Neots ware, and one or two sherds of hand-made pots in other wares, suggesting the proximity of an earlier Saxon settlement site. Two ditches F11 and F14 were found between 40 and 50 ft. from the house (Fig. 3). They appeared to converge, but a trench cut over their intersection failed to show conclusively which was the later because their fillings were so nearly identical. In both, the upper filling was fine crumbly and fairly humic grey-brown soil, giving way gradually in the lower part to yellowish-grey silty material.

[1] Sir F. M. Stenton, *The Bayeux Tapestry* (London, 1957), pl. 48.
[2] *Oxon.* XXVI–XXVII (1961–2), p. 100.

Consideration of all the sections available suggested that F11, the nearer, was probably the later; it had some fragments of 'daub' in its filling, and thus may have been open when the house was destroyed. A ditch which may perhaps link with F14 was found in builders' trenches some way to the south. A further ditch, F18, was found apparently running parallel to the outer ditch of the castle, along its outer lip. It was some 6 ft. deep, and steep-sided and narrow near its base; the lower filling was of even silty soil, yellowish-grey near the base, darker near the top; the upper part of the ditch was, however, filled with gravelly material, of which there was a compact level layer near the top. Pottery from the lower part of the ditch was predominantly St Neots ware (Fig. 13, VII). That from the gravelly layers was mostly the hard sandy pottery which by the thirteenth century (Fig. 13, VIII and IX) had largely replaced St Neots ware in the area. The ditch thus, after a period of silting in Norman times, seems to have been filled up intentionally, perhaps (see below, p. 49) with material derived from a cleaning of the castle ditch. Its purpose is not clear. It may have been a palisade trench, but there were no indications of posts in the limited section examined. It might if so interpreted represent an early defence or boundary along the line of the later castle ditch.

(*b*) *The Castle ditch*

At the point it was examined the castle ditch had cut through occupation levels associated with a former building. What remained of the building, including a well-built hearth of cobbles and chalk set in clay, had been buried by the bank. Pottery in the ashes around the hearth and in the occupation levels suggested that the building went out of use in the early twelfth century. The hearth was removed for magnetic dating (Appendix II). With the limited resources available for the research excavation it proved impossible to investigate the building further, but presumably it and others await investigation in the outer bailey of the castle, where happily no threat is likely.

The castle bank consisted of layers of yellowish-grey sandy material in its lower portions, with occasional lenses of charcoaly or darker material. The upper parts were of brown sandy clay and, near the present top, gravelly soil. The lower layers were thought to be topsoil scraped from the surface in the area of the ditch, and therefore including material from the occupation levels of the former house. The upper part of the bank was presumably derived from deepening of the ditch, and it was perhaps capped with a considerable amount of gravel, of which only a small amount remains. The bottom parts of two possible post-holes were noticed at the present crest of the bank, suggesting that the bank may have been topped with a palisade of posts spaced at about 6 ft. intervals. A similar post-hole was noted about half-way down the side of the ditch, and planked lining was found *in situ* in the bottom of the ditch (Fig. 12). It is therefore possible that the bank and ditch sides were faced with planks retained by posts. This would almost be a necessity in the ditch since the present water table is high, and the gravel most unstable below.

The ditch had been dug through the natural gravel, here about 8 ft. thick, to clay,

perhaps Boulder Clay, below a whitish-blue clay with small chalk pieces. The bottom was fairly flat. At its junction with the sides a notch had been cut to take planks, perhaps the sole remainders of the formerly more extensive plank lining suggested above. Parts of a collapsed post, probably a retainer for the lining, were also found. The filling of the ditch (Fig. 6) consisted of gravel, gravelly soil, and black silty material in organic material. The two basal layers—of gravelly soil, and gravel concreted with 'iron pan'—had more or less level tops, indicating they had been laid down in water (as would have been inevitable). They had been partly cut away and a rich even black soil with much organic material had accumulated in the 're-cut'. Over this, interleaved with a second black soil level, was a thick layer of gravelly soil, predominantly on the east side, and largely having come from that direction. This covered a post-hole cut into the gravel side about half-way up the east slope; and also the dark soil above natural gravel higher up the slope, and the sand in the same position lower down. This thick gravelly layer presumably represents the bulk of the bank, which must have collapsed into the ditch after the timber and plank revetments had decayed. It clearly happened some time after the recutting of the ditch, as is shown by the amount of organic mud therein. The process must have continued for some time. The ditch appeared before excavation to have a slight platform halfway up its west side in this area; it was shown to consist of a layer up to 2 ft. thick of brown soil lying above the main gravel filling, and is presumably to be explained as soil dumped in relatively recent times, perhaps from small-scale gravel quarrying which according to local informants has taken place in most adjacent fields.

INTERPRETATION

The finds, while indicating the close proximity of a settlement from at least the ninth century, suggest a *floruit* in the eleventh century for the main structures; these, together with that under the castle bank, seem to have gone out of use by the mid-twelfth century. The size of the former and the well-built hearth of the latter indicate that both were relatively important structures, and it is reasonable to regard both as domestic buildings of the Late Saxon village of Eaton, the church of which was previously located in the castle area. Finds during the recent housing development indicate that the settlement spread at least 200 ft. west of the excavated area, and also to the south, though there the finds grew less frequent. The early village might thus be thought to have had an axis extending west from a point near the ? church. It is not impossible that the present lane running east–west some 200 ft. north of the modern churchyard (Fig. 2) perpetuates the line of the early street, and traces of its former continuation can perhaps be recognized in the uneven ground north of the excavation site (unsurveyed). The thegn's residence, which can legitimately be inferred from Eaton's position as Ulmar's chief manor, was presumably near the church.[1] There seems little doubt that excavation of the outer bailey of the

[1] Such an association has been demonstrated at Sulgrave, Northants, where a thegn's house and ringwork have recently been excavated.

castle would reveal, if not the thegn's house, at least much more of the Late Saxon village. The excavation of a village with so early a desertion date is a current archaeological need.[1]

The post-hole complex found in the 1962 excavation is capable of several interpretations. The choice between them is made difficult by the lack of stratification within the building (it was apparently kept scrupulously clean) and by an unfortunate ambiguity in the relationship of post-holes at key points. It is also complicated by the recutting of post-holes, sometimes more than once, and it is impossible to say which sets were in use at any one time.

In Interpretation I (Fig. 7, I) all posts (apart from the recut ones) are considered broadly contemporary. They thus form an L-shaped three-roomed structure with an entrance, represented by a 4 ft. 6 in. gap in the west wall flanked by smaller post-holes, opening on to a partition wall between two rooms, giving access to both. In the probable absence of trussing such an arrangement is possible. Access to the third room would probably be gained through a gap in the partition. Under Interpretation I the building is best regarded as a main two-cell north–south block with a less substantial annexe to the east. The annexe might have been a low structure with single-pitched roof, as its north wall, represented by a line of stake-holes, can hardly have been more than a light withy screen. The presence of such a building would account for the lack of daub in the area (Fig. 7, B); the main block appears to have collapsed eastwards, the west wall falling in and the east wall falling out, except at the north end, where it would have been held up by such an annexe, accounting for the accumulation of daub at the north end.[2]

In Interpretation II the differences in the post-hole fillings (Fig. 7 C and D) are used to separate two possible building phases (Fig. 7, II and III). The earlier is a two-cell east–west building some 29 ft. by 13 ft. The later is the main block of Interpretation I without the internal cross-division, a building about 36 ft. by 18 ft. The earlier building is somewhat implausible as part of its north wall consists of stake-holes alone. A third interpretation sees the whole complex as part of a long range of buildings stretching north under ground unavailable for excavation in 1962. These possibilities emphasize the need for stripping of large areas in investigation of sites of this sort.

The ambiguous ground plan makes reconstruction of the structure or structures unprofitable, but some points are clear. The pairing of posts, haphazard if present at all, suggests that trussing can only have been rudimentary. The irregular alignment of the wall posts denies the use of wall-plates. (Sill-beams, in contemporary use at St Neots a mile away, did not occur in the area examined.) The impressions of squared timbers, and timber joints, in the burnt daub (p. 63) suggests that some carpentered wall-framing was used, the evidence being fairly clear that the round post-holes held squared posts above ground, disproving the adage. Square posts with

[1] Stated in C.B.A., *A Survey and Policy for Field Research*, Part II, forthcoming.

[2] A similar building in which the daub walls had collapsed and remained undisturbed was found on Gørding Heath, Jutland (Early Iron Age), *Kuml* (1951), pp. 40–64.

round bases below ground level were preserved in the tenth-century building at the Husterknupp, Westphalia,[1] and must have been a common feature. The apparently rudimentarily framed walls at Eaton Socon were clad with wattle and daub, the wattles being consistently between $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$ in. thick.

Since the plan of the Eaton Socon building cannot be established, analogies for it are impossible to suggest. One feature deserves comment: both end walls of the main block have major posts, renewed two or three times, near their mid-point. If these are to be incorporated in the wall line, the end walls must have been rounded (Fig. 7, I and III). Rounded corners in north European long houses of the Early, Roman and Post-Roman Iron Ages are an aspect of their withy hurdle construction,[2] but it is doubtful whether this explanation holds here in the absence of stake-holes and the presence of carpentry techniques. A curved ended building is recorded at Hemingford Abbots, 10 miles away, in the thirteenth century[3] but to have attracted mention this must probably have been more specifically apsidal. Three unexcavated stone buildings in Westmoreland with a flat three-sided apse at one end are thought to be medieval or earlier; one, at Cow Green, Crosby Ravensworth, is 39 ft. by 20 ft., and thus resembles the Eaton Socon building in proportions.[4] An explanation of the feature in both areas will probably come with further excavation in the locality.

While the Eaton Socon building with its wattle and daub-clad post walls has no close analogies in the contemporary settlements excavated locally at Buckden, Little Paxton and St Neots, this does not mean they do not exist. Evidence from St Neots (Part III of these reports) demonstrates that different types of building occur in different areas of the village, perhaps reflecting social or functional distinctions, and indeed parts of post-built structures do occur at St Neots. The distinction may also be a chronological one; the Eaton building with its renewed posts and accompanying scatter of ninth- or tenth-century pottery may be an archaic survival into the eleventh, much as fifteenth-century buildings survive locally today.[5]

The burnt daub suggests that the building was destroyed by fire, perhaps under prevailing wind conditions since the house appears to have collapsed eastwards. The debris remained *in situ* except where disturbed by later features. The few finds within the building and amongst the debris are of little help in dating the destruction, for they themselves have broad date ranges. It could have taken place any time after the appearance in the area of pottery in sandy/gritty fabrics, but before these had come to predominate over St Neots ware. The range thus indicated, according to current opinion on the dating of these ceramic changes, is *c.* 1050–1150. Possible historical occasions for destructions within this period are the Fenland campaign of

[1] A. Herrnbrodt, *Der Husterknupp* (Köln, 1958), p. 36, Abb. 19, etc.

[2] Examples are numerous: Holland—Ezinge, Jaarverslag XIV–XV van der Vereiniging voor Terpenonderzoek, e.g. pl. 24. (Early Iron Age); Germany—Federseen Wierde and Tofting, *Neue Ausgrabungen in Deutschland* (Berlin, 1958), pp. 215–42 (Early Iron Age and Dark Ages); Denmark—Gørding Heath, *Kuml* (1951), p. 42, fig. 1 (Early Iron Age).

[3] Ramsey Cartulary (ed. W. H. Hart and P. A. Lyons, 1886, vol. II, p. 243).

[4] R.C.H.M. *Westmoreland* (H.M.S.O. 1936), p. xlvii.

[5] One such building near Eaton Socon church was demolished during the excavation; it is hoped to publish accounts of this and other such buildings in the parish in *Beds. Arch. J.*

William I, and the anarchy. While the former might be more appropriate to the main building, pottery from below the castle bank suggests that the anarchy might well be the date of destruction there, and almost certainly provides at least a latest possible date for the structures beneath it.

The economy of the Eaton settlement will be discussed together with the data in the final paper of this series; lava querns, game and stock bones indicate that it was a mixed agricultural one. This limited excavation produced no indication of major industrial activities.

THE POTTERY

The pottery from the excavation, all very fragmentary, comprises no more than 1700 sherds ranging in date from the ninth to the twelfth centuries. There are no specific groups which can be regarded as closed finds, or restricted to a particular period. Various layers did, however, produce assemblages differing widely in their components, illustrating the progressive uses of hand-made wares, wheel-turned St Neots wares, and sandy or gritty wares. Fig. 13, showing a selection of these assemblages, demonstrates graphically the changing fabric frequencies. In addition a summary of the forms represented is given; the number of recognizable pots is too small, however, and the assemblages are insufficiently discrete, for distribution diagrams of form frequency and pot size to be prepared, as has recently usefully been done for the Logic Lane, Oxford, St Neots ware groups.[1] Sherds have been illustrated either for their individual interest, for their importance as dating evidence for parts of the excavation, or as groups, albeit only loosely associated, from single layers or features.

The histograms, showing incidence of fabrics by weight in the selected assemblages, are intended only as simple statements of the contents of layers, the material being incapable of statistical treatment as the amounts are so small. The histograms are open to hazards of massive misrepresentation; if for instance Thetford ware had been represented in Fig. 13, I, by a complete storage jar rather than by one sherd then the relative proportions of other fabrics would have sunk to almost unrepresentable amounts. In the groups represented, however, except perhaps in XI, something approaching a random sample is suggested by the smallness and heterogeneity of the sherds; few joined and few were demonstrably of the same pot. The sequence they present is consistent with the local and general development of pottery as known from other sites,[2] and also with the stratigraphy. The percentages presumably include not only pottery current when the deposit was forming, but rubbish survivals from earlier times, a particular hazard when the fragments are so small.

[1] *Oxon.* XXVI/XXVII (1961–2), p. 56 and fig. 8.

[2] A detailed assessment of the time range, type incidence, and fabric incidence of all the St Neots area sites will be attempted in the final report. The following sites, mainly on the edge of the St Neots ware province, have produced usefully comparable pottery series on which the dating of the present material largely depends: Northolt, Middlesex: *Med. Arch.* V (1961), pp. 254–70. Oxford, (*a*) pits under the Castle mound (pre-1071), *Oxon.* XVII/XVIII (1952–3), pp. 77–111; (*b*) Clarendon Hotel (some deposits pre-1140/80), *Oxon.* XXIII (1958), pp. 1–83; (*c*) Logic Lane (eleventh- and twelfth-century groups), *Oxon.* XXVI/XXVIII (1961–2), pp. 38–69. Other evidence is presented in Hurst's 'Saxo-Norman Pottery in East Anglia' in *Proc. C.A.S.* XLIX (1956), pp. 43–70.

Three groups from the weathered top of the natural (Fig. 13, I, II and III, from D4, C3 and C4 respectively) represent the earliest material from the site, and include proportions of hand-made wares in both gritty and shell-filled fabrics. Each has a preponderance of wheel-thrown wares of the St Neots type (shell-filled pink to grey fabrics ranging from soft and soapy to fairly hard and harsh). One sherd of Thetford ware was found in D4 (I), but there were no sandy or gritty wares of later eleventh- or twelfth-century type in these deposits. Dr Hope-Taylor has shown that hand-made wares can survive in currency into the eleventh century in the south of England,[1] but these groups must be considerably earlier since there are many local assemblages presumably antedating 1050 which contain nothing but quantities of wheel-thrown St Neots ware.

Three stratified deposits in D7 (Fig. 13, IV, V and VI, layers 4, 3 and 2 respectively) also all contain a preponderance of wheel-thrown St Neots-type wares, the lowest (IV) to the exclusion of all others. In V both hand-made and sandy/gritty fabrics occur in small proportions, the former possibly as rubbish survivals, the latter possibly brought down by rabbits (the intense activity of which on the site in former times renders any unusual associations open to question). In the upper layer the proportions of St Neots and gritty fabrics are almost equal. A second sequence of three layers, from the successive filling layers of a ditch in D8 (Fig. 13, VII, VIII and IX, layers 7, 6 and 5 respectively) show a similar sequence, the earliest having St Neots fabrics exclusively, the second having equal proportions of St Neots and sandy/gritty fabrics, and the third much as the second.

Assemblages from features subsequent to the post-hole structures have in general a preponderance of sandy/gritty fabrics, and are represented by that from F1, a ditch cutting through the house area (Fig. 13, X). The small proportion of hand-made sherds presumably represent rubbish survivals, perhaps having weathered from the sides of the ditch. The assemblages associated with the hearth beneath the outer bank of the castle contained a number of sherds of a St Neots ware cooking pot which form a large proportion of the St Neots ware shown in Fig. 13, XI, probably distorting the histogram, since other features suggested the deposit had formed towards the end of the currency of St Neots ware. The overlying bank produced an assemblage, very small in size, in which the sandy/gritty wares are slightly in preponderance (Fig. 13, XII), in common with the latest layers of the two stratified sequences and the features later than the main building.

The forms represented in the Eaton Socon assemblages cover a wide range and include, for the first time from the main St Neots ware province, the hand-made precursors of St Neots ware, as well as a series from its long main period and from the period of its decline and replacement by later medieval forms. There are two main types among the hand-made pottery. A few sherds came from small cooking pots up to 6 in. in rim diameter with upright or slightly everted rims usually thinned at the very top (Fig. 8, nos. 1–5); all are in hard sandy or slightly gritty grey to black fabric. The remainder came from thicker-walled cooking pots with rim diameters

[1] *Med. Arch.* II (1958), pp. 183–5 and III (1959), p. 23.

from 5 to 8 in., with everted rims either squared off and quite unmoulded (Fig. 8, nos. 6–9) or slightly rounded (10, 11). All are finished off with a final wipe under the rim and several have traces of wiping within and without. The construction method where visible is, at least at neck level, by the application of rings of clay smoothed down the outside (8) or inside (10 and 11). In fabric they resemble St Neots ware, with crushed shell inclusions, pink to grey colour and a medium hard, but only slightly soapy feel. The first type is common in many Saxon deposits prior to the introduction of mass-production techniques, though it may well survive until the ninth century at least.[1] The second type is less well recognized but is related to the pot used to support the ninth-century date given to the original assemblage from St Neots.[2] It may well provide the immediate precursors of wheel-thrown St Neots ware cooking pots which, typologically, could be derived from it (e.g. Fig. 8, nos. 12 and 13). It occurred together with small wheel-thrown cooking pots, as did the first type, and there is no reason to suppose that the types were not concurrent. If a ninth-century date for the introduction of true (wheel-thrown) St Neots ware is acceptable these deposits presumably date to that century. The hand-made wares seem not to have survived long, for there are numerous local deposits which contained the wheel-thrown wares exclusively, and which themselves presumably antedate the introduction of sandy/gritty wares from about 1050.[3]

The St Neots ware from Eaton Socon includes most of the main types defined by Hurst.[4] Fig. 8, nos. 12, 14, 17, 33, 34 and 35, all come from early levels and tend to support Hurst's suggestion that in the early stages St Neots ware cooking pots were usually small. Larger cooking pots (e.g. Fig. 8, nos. 25–8) usually occurred in deposits seen to be late either by their stratigraphic position, or by the incidence of sandy/gritty fabrics. Rims with hollow mouldings did not occur in the early deposits, and a number with pronounced round mouldings (26–8) came from the later deposits. The latest St Neots ware, sometimes with admixture of sand to the fabric, was as in that from Northolt,[5] rough and debased (Fig. 8, nos. 26 and 27).

Deep and shallow bowls occurred; the lower levels produced Fig. 9, no. 38, very thick and heavy, but also 37, 39 and 44, the latter having a slightly developed inturned rim. Deep bowls with pronounced inturned rims (e.g. Fig. 9, nos. 41, 42, 43) came only from later deposits, and here as elsewhere belong to the maturity of the St Neots ware series. No. 42, with true finger impressions around the rim, comes from a deposit with much sandy/gritty ware, and is an outlying example of the common eleventh-century Cambridge type.[6]

[1] E.g. Sutton Courtenay, *Archaeologia*, LXXIII, pp. 176–9; Whitby, *Archaeologia*, LXXXIX, p. 77; Maxey, *Med. Arch.* VIII (1964), p. 54 and fig. 13, nos. 20–22.

[2] *Med. Arch.* III (1959), p. 19.

[3] The local changeover to sandy/gritty wares is still not known in detail; it is well under way by 1070 in Oxford, and the process is given dates 1050–1150 at Northolt. The Great Paxton evidence (*Proc. C.A.S.* XXXV (1935), pp. 102–3, and XLIX (1955), p. 51, n. 2) suggests it was starting in the St Neots area about the time of the Conquest.

[4] *Proc. C.A.S.* XLIX (1955), pp. 43–70.

[5] *Med. Arch.* V (1961), p. 263.

[6] *Proc. C.A.S.* XLIX (1955), p. 61, fig. 6.

The sandy/gritty wares vary greatly and only a few sherds have been illustrated (Fig. 9, nos. 50–60 and 63–4). Three (Fig. 8, no. 30, and Fig. 9, nos. 54 and 55), in even hard harsh sandy fabric, are from large cooking pots with simple everted rims. Two came from the castle bank and may be twelfth century, but no. 30 came from E3, layer 7, one of the earliest deposits; it must presumably be an intrusion due to rabbits. No. 57 is an example of Hurst's 'early medieval wares',[1] and nos. 59 and 60, in hard light grey ware, are members of the widespread 'developed early medieval ware' group. They come from the main part of the moat silting, which is thus seen to have been in progress in the later twelfth century and perhaps into the thirteenth. The complete absence of thirteenth-century cooking pots or glazed wares both in this location and in general suggests that at least the outer bailey of the castle, and the village site, were not occupied at this period.

Saxon and Saxo-Norman imported wares were conspicuous by their infrequency. Nine small sherds of Stamford ware were found (none illustrated), mostly from the later deposits. Thetford ware was represented by three small sherds, and one base (Fig. 8, no. 36) may be of Ipswich ware.

A i. HAND-MADE GRITTY OR SANDY FABRICS (Fig. 8, nos. 1–5)

1. Small cooking pot in hard grey fabric with small sparkling sandy grits. F3, layer 5.
2. Small cooking pot in hard light grey fabric with sparkling sand content and a few grits. F3, layer 7 (weathered natural).
3. Small cooking pot in hard grey to black fabric with sparkling sand content. E6–7, topsoil.
4. Small everted rimmed cooking pot in hard sandy grey fabric. F3, layer 6 (floor of house).
5. Small cooking pot in hard dark grey or pink-grey fabric with sparkling sand content. F3, layer 6 (floor of house).

A ii. HAND-MADE SHELL-FILLED WARES (Fig. 8, nos. 6–11 and 32)

6. Cooking pot with squared-off everted rim having a very slight hollow moulding within; the exterior has vertical wiping on the body and a final horizontal wipe under the rim. The medium hard but slightly soapy fabric includes much crushed shell visible on both surfaces. Tebbutt excavation: 'silt layer over and around house'.
7. Cooking pot, akin to 6, but with horizontal wiping outside, where few shell inclusions are visible. E2–3, layer 1 (topsoil and unstratified).
8. Cooking pot akin to 6 and 7 but smaller; pinkish; final wipe under rim. Tebbutt excavation: 'floor level of house'.
9. Cooking pot akin to 8, with horizontal wiping and final wipe under rim; shells obscured outside, perhaps by wet finishing. D4, layer 4.
10. Cooking pot with everted and slightly rounded rim, vertical wiping and final finger wipe under rim; interior very rough. C3, layer 6 (weathered natural).
11. Cooking pot with thick shoulder and thinner everted rim, slightly rounded; pink to black fabric somewhat more soapy than 6–10. C2–D2, topsoil.
32. Base of ?cooking pot; bottom thick, sides thinner; made with basal pad and coil applied round it. Pink surfaces and grey core; many shell inclusions. D4, layer 2.

[1] *Med. Arch.* v (1961), p. 259, and *Med. Arch.* III (1959), pp. 44–8.

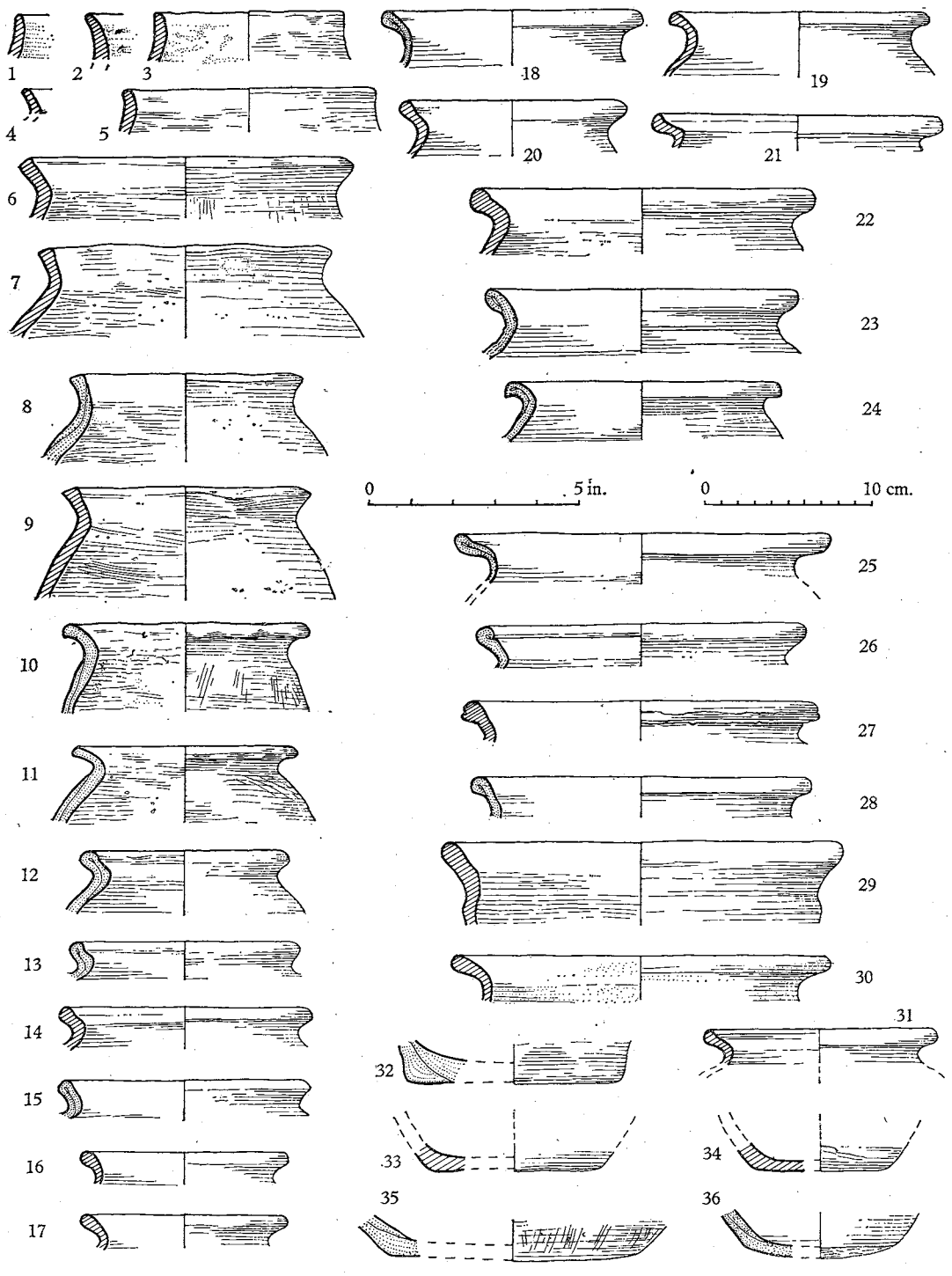

Fig. 8. Eaton Socon: cooking pottery. Nos. 1–11 are hand-made (1–5 gritty; 6–11 St Neots fabrics); nos. 12–29 are wheel-thrown (St Neots fabrics). Scale: $\frac{1}{4}$.

B. WHEEL-THROWN SHELL-FILLED WARES OF ST NEOTS TYPE (Fig. 8, nos. 12–29, 31, 33–5; Fig. 9, nos. 37–49, 56, 62 and 65)

The St Neots ware from Eaton Socon is apparently harder and less soapy than the 'norm',[1] though it compares closely with the original group from the type site. It ranges in colour from a warm black through shades of grey to pink. The deep purplish tones of Cambridge and Oxford are rare, and the majority is light pinkish grey. The fabric is only described where it differs from the site norm.

Cooking pots

12. Small cooking pot with rounded everted rim. C4, layer 5 (rabbit-disturbed material derived from ash heap).

13. Small cooking pot with thick slightly moulded rim; thick soot deposit. C4, layer 2 (ash heap).

14. Small cooking pot akin to 12 and 13, but with slight ridge on outside of rim found on many pots of the type. D4, layer 6 (weathered natural).

15. Small cooking pot with everted rim, similar to 14. C4, layer 2 (ash heap).

16. Very small cooking pot with rounded everted rim and horizontal striations within suggesting it was thrown on a fairly fast wheel. C4, layer 2 (ash heap).

17. Very small cooking pot with rounded everted rim; very light pink. D4, layer 6 (weathered natural).

18. Small cooking pot with rounded everted rim formed by folding clay over and luting externally. D4, feature 8, pit containing daub, bone comb (Fig. 11, no. 22) and battered tenth- or eleventh-century copper alloy strap-end (Fig. 11, no. 17), and thus tenth century or after.

19. Small cooking pot with everted rim and slightly thickened neck. Tebbutt excavation: 'floor level of house'.

20. Small cooking pot with everted rim with interior hollow moulding; fairly hard salmon pink fabric with sand in addition to shell inclusions. D12, layer 18 (base of castle bank).

21. Medium cooking pot with everted rim formed by folding clay over and luting inside (cp. 18); slight interior hollow moulding. D12, hearth beneath bank.

22. Medium cooking pot with everted rim having rounded exterior and hollow interior moulding. Salmon pink rather smooth surfaces. Tebbutt excavation: 'silt layer over and around house'.

23. Medium cooking pot with everted rim, rounded exterior moulding and throwing grooves. C3, layer 4 (top of feature 13, later than house.)

24. Cooking pot with strongly everted rim with sharp exterior moulding. D3, feature 1 (later than house).

25. Large cooking pot with everted rim having hollow interior moulding; purplish pink fabric. D7, layer 3 (Fig. 13, V).

26. Medium cooking pot with everted rim having round moulding formed by folding clay inwards but not smoothing it; a carelessly made version of, e.g., 22. The fabric contains sandy grits as well as shells. D12, from castle bank.

27. Medium cooking pot with everted rim much ridged and rough externally; careless finish (cf. 26). D12, castle bank. 26 and 27 are presumably late in the St Neots ware series.

28. Medium cooking pot in soft salmon pink fabric; the form, presumably a late one, is imitated by the clumsy 27. D4, feature 1 (ditch later than house).

[1] The definition given in *Proc. C.A.S.* XLIX (1955), p. 44, relates more to developed St Neots ware, and describes accurately, e.g., much of the Oxford material. The inclusions in 'St Neots' and allied fabrics have recently been studied: *Med. Arch.* VIII (1964), pp. 50–1.

29. Large ?cooking pot or bowl; rim slightly everted with slight hollow moulding and horizontal throwing striations. Tebbutt excavation: 'silt layer over and around house'.

31. Small cooking pot with everted rim having marked hollow interior moulding; akin to 25 but smaller. D7, layer 4 (Fig. 13, IV), a layer containing St Neots ware exclusively.

33. Cooking pot base with rough outer surface but probably wheel-thrown; dark grey inside, pink outside; F4, layer 6 (weathered natural).

34. Cooking pot base in thin hard sandy fabric with a few white inclusions. D4, layer 6 (weathered natural).

35. Base of ?cooking pot; marked diagonal external wiping. D4, layer 6 (weathered natural).

Bowls and dishes in St Neots ware (Fig. 9, nos. 37–49)

37. ?bowl with plain slightly thickened upright rim. D4, layer 6 (weathered natural).

38. ?bowl with very thick upright rim slightly thickened at top. The fragment is small and the diameter shown here may be too large. E2, layer 7 (weathered natural).

39. Bowl; a small fragment akin in profile though not in sitting angle to 37 and 38. Part of an applied pad, together with a lift in the rim-line, suggests there may have been a suspension lug. D4, layer 6 (weathered natural).

40. Bowl with inturned rim having curled-over moulding. Tebbutt excavation: 'silt layer over and around house'. The deep bowl is a common form in developed St Neots ware assemblages, e.g. here 41–3.

41. Bowl with inturned rim formed by folding clay in, then out, and luting on the outside. E6–7, topsoil; a similar bowl with much less drawn out inturn from F3, layer 7 (weathered natural) may represent an earlier form.

42. Bowl with inturned rim with true finger impressions (and nail-marks). A mature type in the inturned-rim bowl series. D6, layer 2.

43. Bowl, perhaps a shallow bowl, with slightly inturned rim allied to the previous series. Tebbutt excavation: 'floor level of house'.

44. Bowl, perhaps shallow bowl, slightly inturned rim. C4, layer 6 (weathered natural). This and 37–9, from early layers, probably stand at the head of the bowl series from the site.

45. ?shallow bowl with widely splayed sides though similar profile to 44. D4, layer 4 (soil layer earlier than feature 8 which contained the objects Fig. 11, nos. 17 and 22).

46. ?shallow bowl having widely splayed sides and slight internal bevel. Tebbutt excavation: 'silt layer over and around house'.

47. Shallow bowl with inturned rim. Tebbutt excavation: 'floor level of house'.

48. Small bowl similar to 47 except in size. E3–4, topsoil.

49. Bowl, probably fairly large, with upright sides, and thickened rounded rim undercut externally; terra-cotta red fabric. E4, topsoil. This was the only sherd of a widespread local twelfth-century class.[1]

Other vessels (Fig. 9, nos. 56 62, 65)

56. Base of large cooking pot with calcareous inclusions, not necessarily all shells; developed St Neots ware. C3, feature 10 (pit later than house and ditch, feature 1).

62. Small jug; part of rim and handle springing; the handle has incised lattice decoration; fabric dull red with grey core and some small white inclusions, not necessarily all shells. Twelfth century? D3, feature 1 (ditch cutting through house, Fig. 13, X).

[1] Examples are published from Eynesbury, *Proc. C.A.S.* LIV (1961), p. 87 and Felmersham, *Antiq. J.* XXXI (1951), p. 48, nos. 10–14.

65. Sherd of large vessel with applied diagonal finger-moulded band (cf. technique of 64); fabric fairly smooth, light pink with grey core and numerous shell inclusions. D4, topsoil. Developed St Neots ware.

C. SANDY OR GRITTY WARES (Fig. 8, no. 30; Fig. 9, nos. 50–5, 57–61)

30. Cooking pot with everted slightly rounded rim in sandy harsh fabric akin to that of nos. 54 and 55. E3, layer 7 (weathered natural). This was the only sherd of wheel-thrown sandy/gritty fabric from the weathered natural, and since closely analogous sherds are probably twelfth century in date it may have been brought down by rabbits.

50. Small bowl with simple incurving rim; hard brownish fabric with sparkling sand content. No clear signs of wheel-throwing. D9–11, layer 3 (upper filling of castle moat). The vessel might be part of a crucible (cf. 51, in different fabric) or, as a stray sherd in this context, Middle Saxon finer hand-made ware.

51. Crucible; small vessel with incurving rim in hard light grey fabric with incrustrations on outer and inner surfaces. Several Saxo-Norman examples have been found in Oxford.[1] D8, layer 5 (Fig. 13, IX), a deposit containing a slight majority of sandy/gritty wares, perhaps twelfth century.

52. Cooking pot with everted rim comparable in profile to degenerate examples in St Neots ware nos. 27 and 28; roughly finished sandy pink to brown fabric. D3, feature 1 (ditch cutting through house).

53. Large cooking pot with everted rim having external bevel and slight hollow moulding within; hard pink to brown sandy fabric with grey core and occasional white inclusions. D3, feature 1 (ditch cutting through house).

54. Large cooking pot with apparently everted simple squared-off rim; fine hard harsh sandy fabric predominantly grey with brown tones. D12, castle bank.

55. Large cooking pot with everted rim; fabric and findspot as for 54.

57. Medium cooking pot with simple everted rounded rim in hard but not harsh sandy fabric with very occasional white inclusions; brick red within, fumed grey at the mouth and grey with red-brown tones externally. E6–7, layer 4, fill of ditch, feature 11. The form recalls some in St Neots ware from other sites, but the fabric places it with Hurst's 'early medieval wares', which, together with the associated pottery (e.g. 58) indicates its twelfth-century date.

58. Cooking pot with upright neck and slightly out-thrown rim with slight internal and external bevels; hard sandy but not too harsh red fabric. D6, feature 11 (ditch, apparently the same as that in E6–7).

59. Cooking pot with everted rim having internal and external bevel; hard light grey fabric with little sand. Finer in character than other sandy wares, though related to them (e.g. 58), and possibly later (twelfth/thirteenth century?). D9–11, layer 4 (main filling of castle moat).

60. Cooking pot with everted rim having finger mouldings along top; hard harsh sandy fabric, medium grey within, light grey without. Twelfth–thirteenth century; D9–11, layer 4 (main part of filling of castle moat).

61. ? jug; sherd of vessel with flaring rim, here thought to be part of a necked jug. The rim is undercut externally and bevelled internally; decoration of wavy lines made with flexible 'comb', e.g. bristles, internally and externally. The fabric, hard, fairly smooth with little sand, dull red surfaces and grey core, seems out of place in the findspot D3, feature 1 (ditch cutting through house), where the sandy/gritty wares are otherwise of eleventh- to early twelfth-century character.

[1] *Oxon.* XVII/XVIII (1952–3), pp. 96–7; they are here dated pre-1070, but occur also in later deposits.

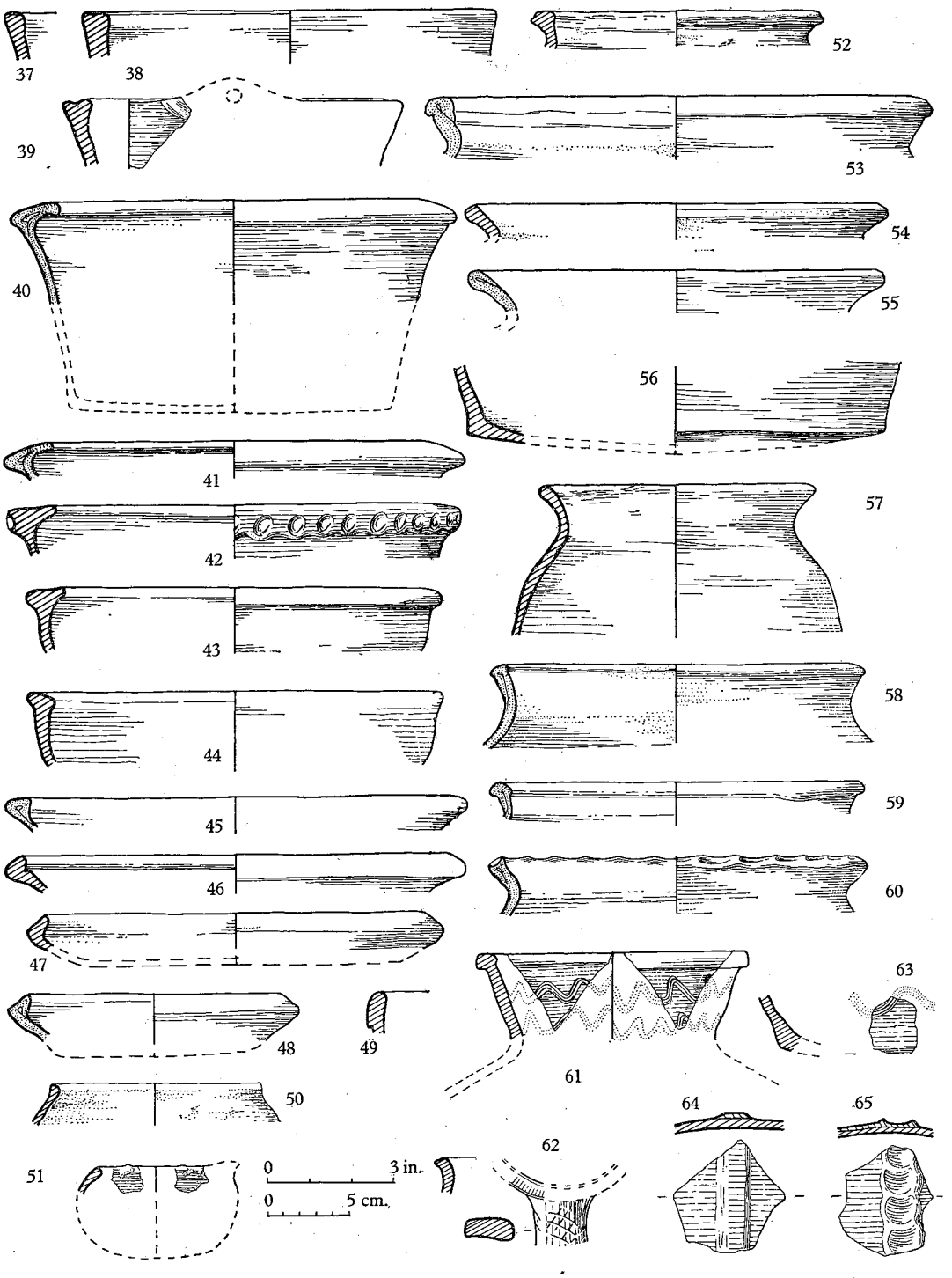

Fig. 9. Eaton Socon: bowls and dishes in St Neots fabrics (37–49); cooking pots in sandy fabrics (52–60); and miscellaneous sherds. Scale: $\frac{1}{4}$.

D. IMPORTS (Fig. 8, no. 36; Fig. 9, no. 64)

Nine small sherds of Stamford ware and two possibly of Thetford ware are not illustrated.

36. Small ?cooking pot; slightly rounded base with marked basal angle, some surface dragging on the base. The pot has a slightly uneven interior finish and may have been thrown on a slow wheel. Very hard smooth fabric with medium grey outer surface, light brown layer varying from 2 mm. (sides) to 4 mm. (base), and lighter grey core. The effect may have been caused by a period of oxidizing conditions in the kiln before a short final dampening down producing a return to reducing conditions. C2–D2, topsoil. ?Ipswich type ware.

64. Sherd of large vessel with applied undecorated relief band or strip; the strip has been attached by smoothing between the index and second finger, producing a characteristic ridge on the left side. Fine hard fairly smooth grey fabric with light grey core and a 1·5 mm. light brown layer below the surface (cf. 36). Thetford ware.

FINDS OF STONE (Fig. 11, nos. 1 and 2)

Lava querns

Small fragments of lava querns were found in the following locations: D4, layer 6 and C3, layer 15 (weathered natural); D3, layer 5 and Tebbutt excavation 'floor level' (deposits probably contemporary with the occupation of the house); Tebbutt excavation 'silt level' and D4, layer 2 (rubbish deposits perhaps contemporary with the house); and C2, feature 12, a fourteenth-century ditch, where the fragment may be a stray. Only one fragment, Fig. 11, no. 1, is illustrated. There is no evidence that the fragments are from anything but querns. Miss H. A. H. Macdonald reports that the lava probably comes from the Niedermendig–Mayen area of the Eifel, but specific location within this area is at present not possible petrographically.[1] Querns were produced in the Eifel from the Neolithic onwards. The present fragments correspond well with early medieval examples from the Rhineland[2] and similar fragments are a constant feature of Middle and Late Saxon artefact assemblages from Eastern England.[3]

Hones

A fragment of a fairly large rectangular-sectioned hone was found (Fig. 11, no. 2). Miss H. A. H. Macdonald, Geological Survey and Museum, reports: 'A fine-grained sandstone, possibly from the Coal Measures—nearest area about 50 miles away in the Pennines—but could have come from local gravel.' Similar hones of materials probably derived from a local gravel were found at the Middle Saxon settlement at Maxey, Northants.[4]

Flint (not illustrated)

Fifteen flints were found, comprising a core, three implements and small narrow and other waste flakes. It is possible to find flints over most of the gravel lands in the locality, but these are

[1] The specimens are to be included in a general investigation to be undertaken shortly to try to clarify the 'Mayen–Niedermendig' problem from a petrological standpoint. See *J. Brit. Archaeol. Assoc.* XXVII (1964), p. 82.

[2] *Neue Ausgrabungen in Deutschland* (Berlin, 1958), pp. 268–84.

[3] Summarized in *Dark Age Britain* (London, 1956), p. 232. To this list should be added Middle Saxon examples from Maxey, Northants., and Late Saxon ones from Little Paxton, Eaton Socon, and further, relatively complete, querns from St Neots. These objects are virtually the only imports at all these sites, presumably being essentials in peasant communities which could not afford luxuries.

[4] *Med. Arch.* VIII (1964), p. 58.

recorded as possibly indicating the proximity of an industrial site. The cultural affinities of the material are not obvious; the small core, for blade-like flakes, recalls, with its high platform angles at both ends, examples from some Mesolithic assemblages,[1] while the simple scraper with steep retouch could be paralleled in many Mesolithic and later industries.

SOIL SAMPLES (Table 1, p. 73 and section Fig. 5)

Soil samples were submitted to the Ancient Monuments Laboratory for information on four points. A series of five samples from the filling of feature 14, a ditch outside the main area with a filling of very fine dark soil (Fig. 5), were taken in the hopes of learning whether the filling could have been rubbish or was more likely to have been natural silting, and, further, whether from the presence of daub fragments, it might be thought that this ditch was open during or after destruction of the main house. In Table 1 these are samples 1–5. Secondly it was hoped that confirmation or otherwise might be possible of the interpretation of the yellow-grey silty layer found everywhere on the site under the main culture layers which contained finds in its upper parts, but merged gradually into underlying apparently natural yellow buttery material. (The layer was interpreted as the weathered top of natural, having become discoloured and mixed by treading, digging, etc., or by muddy conditions which may have pertained at times during the occupation.) Samples 6 and 7 were taken for this purpose. Thirdly samples were taken to decide whether layer 3 in D7, apparently above the ditch, feature 14, was a developed topsoil, indicating an appreciable period between the filling of F14 and the levelling up of the site with the gravel spread layer 2. Samples 8 and 9 are from this layer and from the adjacent modern topsoil respectively. Finally a sample of silt from the bottom of the castle moat, rich in organic debris, was submitted in the hopes of reconstructing the immediate micro-environment when the ditch began to fill, and to say something about its condition—e.g. whether it was waterlogged. This sample will be discussed in the final report.

Mr L. Biek, Ancient Monuments Laboratory, reports:

'In the absence of a site investigation comments can only be relatively limited and comparative. Specifically, 8 is unlikely to represent a topsoil; especially when considered with 1 and 2, the organic status would seem to reflect rather the 'humic' variation with depth and the effects of (wetter) conditions in a depression. 6 and 7 appear to be basically similar but in their present state the samples do not firmly indicate whether disturbance in 6 is artificial or natural; on the whole the latter (an A_2 horizon?) seems more likely.'

The table offers little evidence on the nature of the filling of feature 14, but the presence of daub is confirmed, corroborating the impression gained on the site that the ditch may have been open at the time of demolition of the house. From the evidence available the suggested interpretation of the 'weathered natural' seems less likely.

BURNT CLAY

All the burnt clay 'daub' fragments from the house and adjacent areas which were strong enough to lift were submitted to Mr Biek. Care was taken to present the less well fired with the better and the series is probably fairly complete. Mr Biek reports:

'Altogether 45 groups of material weighing 27 lb., nearly all containing many individual fragments and about a quarter comprising specimens of more than one type, were submitted for examination. This was carried out in the main visually, under low power magnification, supplemented in isolated cases by microscopy at about × 50, and some microchemical tests. No X-rays

[1] E.g. Farnham, Surrey, *P.P.S.* v (1939), p. 85, no. 3, etc.

were taken (as e.g. for the material from Chew Valley Lake,[1] Maxey[2] and other sites) because visual comparison, both internally and with type specimens from other sites, suggested this would be unnecessary.

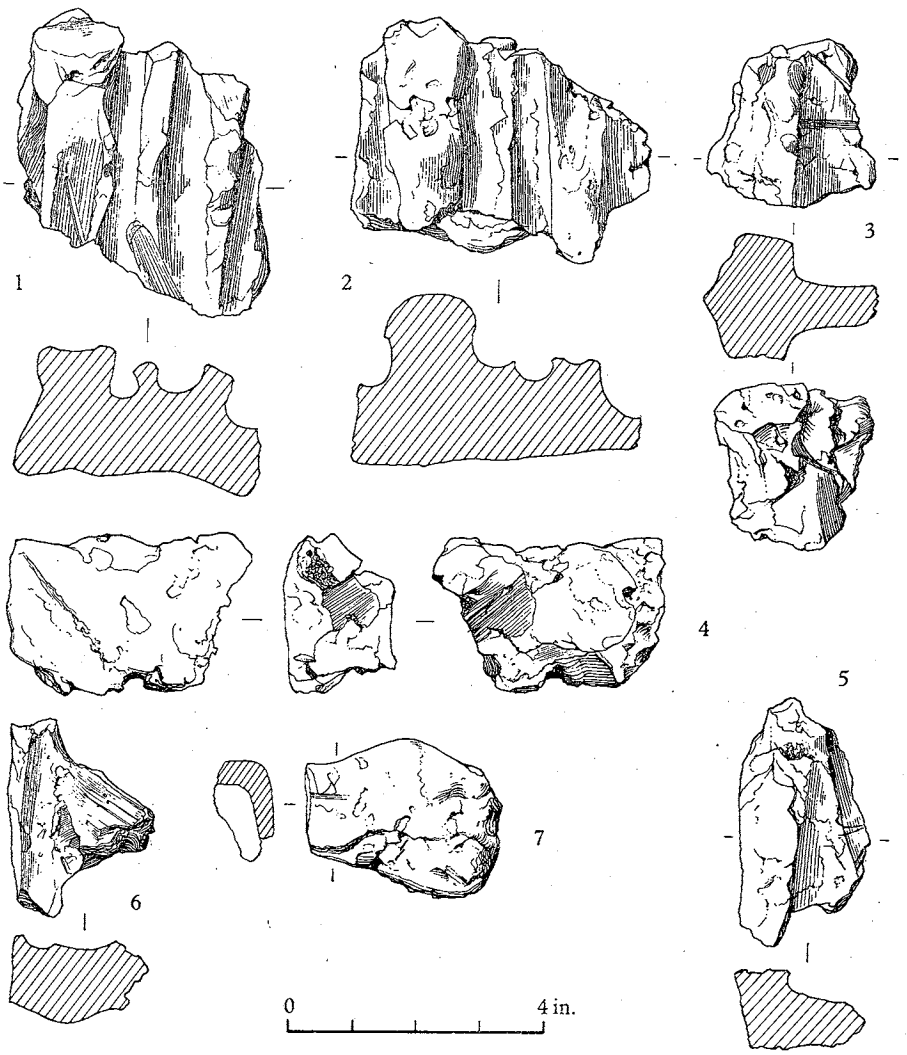

Fig. 10. Eaton Socon: burnt clay fragments, apparently burnt daub. Nos. 1–6, type A; no. 7, type E. Scale: $\frac{1}{3}$.

This is by far the largest, most complete and homogeneous collection yet examined in this Laboratory. It is particularly valuable in providing both comparatively large pieces and statistically valid evidence. This makes possible a more complete technical evaluation than has hitherto been encountered. Numerous wattle impressions consistently indicate (*a*) an average diameter of $\frac{1}{2}$–$\frac{3}{4}$ in., both extremes often found side by side (Fig. 10, nos. 1 and 2 from the main daub

[1] Rahtz and Greenfield, *Chew Valley Lake* (H.M.S.O.), forthcoming.
[2] *Med. Arch.* VIII (1964), p. 65.

spread in F3) as well as smaller sizes; (*b*) slightly rounded right angles as if formed against "square-sectioned" beams or posts (Fig. 10, no. 3, from a deposit disturbed by rabbits in D6); (*c*) "sharp" right angles, both "positive" and "negative" (only one of each: Fig. 10, nos. 4 and 5, from the topsoil in the Tebbutt excavation); and (*d*) a possible multi-surface "junction" fragment (Fig. 10, no. 6, from feature 1, ditch cutting through the building). Such impressions invariably occur in material (type A) which constitutes over four fifths of the total. This is often variable within a single piece, ranging from pale pink, or even creamy, to buff oxidized fired clay, with grey and occasional darker reduced fired patches, and contains a variety of (mainly small) inclusions of chalk, flint, pebbles and ironstone. The material clearly provides a wholly homogeneous collection with a hard and compact texture which makes all impressions clear and reliable.

Three other types were distinguished in minor quantities: Type B, though still variable, gave a more uniform overall impression of smaller pieces and a deeper pink; appeared to contain more and whiter inclusions; showed greater evidence of cracking; and seemed less firm. No large or significant impressions were noted, though a very few pieces had small areas of one flat surface (e.g. from D4, layer 4; from the silty layer around feature 8; and from feature 16 in D3, a pit later than the ditch cutting the house). Type C, represented by only four small fragments, three from one group (D4, layer 4, silty layer around feature 8) and the other from D3, layers 5–7 (layer 5 is the daub spread), carried what appeared to be (flat) white plastered surfaces on one side, backing on to a type A base. Type D occurred in only one group (D4, layer 6, weathered natural) and was not unlike type B but almost white in colour and permeated with calcium carbonate, probably chalk.[1]

A fifth type of material (E), present in small quantities in five groups, may represent a different activity. It is red, sandy and largely amorphous, occurring mainly in small fragments. The only substantial piece (Fig. 10, no. 7, from D7, feature 14, ditch) suggests, however, a deliberately smoothed as well as shaped section, such as might possibly be part of a specialized hearth or even a smelting furnace. The material appears to be capable of withstanding a higher temperature than the other types though there is no clear evidence of this having been reached, or of any slagging.

Six of the post-hole fillings (nos. 12, 59, 64, 83, 84 and 86) contained material (type F) which did not appear to have been burnt at all, being greenish-brown and friable with a porous and crumbly texture, in association with seemingly lightly burnt fragments of essentially the same type. These latter were intermediate between the unburnt material and type B, suggesting that there may be a connection between them. It might appear that specialized conditions in post-holes might have produced the vesicular appearance peculiar to this type; on the other hand, in most other post-hole fillings, as e.g. in no. 35, which contained substantial pieces of true type B, one or other of all types was present in a "normal" state, and one would have to look for conditions special to the six post-holes to provide a finer explanation.[2]

About half the occurrences of type B are in the same groups as type A; although there is no direct evidence of transition on any single piece there is none, either, against the simultaneous presence of both types in closely adjacent areas. The smaller pieces in the post-holes are usually of type B presumably because they would have been more easily broken and dissipated, but type A also occurs. In nearly all cases, type B was found in features (apart from the post-holes, in features 1, 8, 11, 12, 14 and 16); the exceptions are D4, layers 2 and 6; and D6, layer 2, but other layers in these areas are associated with features. Conversely, type A occurs alone only once in a feature (F1), but in the same feature in the adjacent grid type B occurs alone. A common characteristic of all types, including E, is the presence of substantial amounts of (calcium)

[1] This, coming from the 'weathered natural', and therefore earlier than the main conflagration, may be from a different source altogether—P.V.A.

[2] Nos. 12, 83, 84 and 86 are close together in the north-east corner, amongst the greatest concentration of daub, and, curiously in the circumstances, near the areas of scorched soil—P.V.A.

carbonate throughout the matrix. Voids and impressions due to included organic material such as "grasses" and other plant debris were also noted throughout, but especially in types A and B.

The general picture suggested by the evidence as a whole is that type A represents outer or near-outer surfaces, more efficiently compacted and fired to a higher temperature; type B the more friable and less fired inner portions; type C, "decorated" surfaces possibly from isolated areas; type D, possibly not part of the construction, perhaps residues from "plastering"? All this material seems more likely to have originated from the Boulder Clay rather than Oxford Clay deposits, and sandy pockets in the Boulder Clay may have provided type E, though it seems probable that some deliberate preparation was (also?) involved.'

METAL OBJECTS

Iron (Fig. 11, nos. 3–16)

The pins 3 and 4, the latter probably incomplete, are of a type found at the Middle Saxon settlement at Maxey, Northants,[1] and at local Late Saxon settlements; when complete the lengths are remarkably uniform. The three knives 5–7 are again of common Saxon types,[2] no. 6 having the characteristic groove along the back on both sides of the blade. There are no examples of the type with angled back, nor of the Viking type with long tang, both of which have been found locally in Saxon settlements. No. 8, part of a horseshoe, is of the wavy-edged type with long oval countersunk nail holes, normally attributed to the twelfth century,[3] which could well be its date here; it was found in the main filling of the castle moat, near the pottery (Fig. 9, nos. 59 and 60).

Of the nails, two, 9 and 10, were of the fiddle-key type used in horseshoes of the type of no. 8, though the second example seems somewhat large. They presumably have the same date-range as the horseshoe. No. 11 may be a wood nail, and has fellows from the contemporary St Neots settlement;[4] the skew-headed nail 12 is of a type occurring throughout the Saxon period.[5] Both may have specialized uses, the former perhaps in timber construction. The two square-sectioned curved bars 13 and 14 cannot be identified, but may be parts of chain-links; they are also recurrent finds on contemporary local settlements.[6] The round-sectioned bar 15, though ostensibly from the weathered natural, may be a displaced surface find since by comparison with other objects it could be modern. The bow-shaped object 16 is reconstructed as a handle with perforated attachment plates at either end on the basis of an object from St Neots.

The objects were submitted to the Ancient Monuments Laboratory for routine X-ray and examination, and Mr Biek makes the following observations:

'In the surface of the corrosion products of the knife 5 (A.M. No. 620661) were traces of burnt and unburnt vegetable debris, and (presumed cold) ash, suggesting it perhaps came from a rubbish deposit.[7] The concavity in the edge of the knife 6 (A.M. No. 620659) may be due to wear. There is copious vegetable debris round the head of the fiddle-key nail 10 (A.M. No. 620671) but probably from burial with woody or plant residues. The nail 12 (A.M. No. 620669) with skewed head comes from an ashy environment, while 11 (A.M. No. 620665) has corrosion products containing fragments of charcoal and other 'slaggy' burnt material, but the object itself was almost certainly not burnt.'

[1] *Med. Arch.* VIII (1964), p. 61, nos. 15–17. [2] *Ibid.* p. 60, with summary of other occurrences.
[3] *Lond. Mus. Med. Cat.* pp. 112–15.
[4] To be published in Part III of this series. Cf. also the Logic Lane Oxford example, *Oxon.* XXVI/XXVII (1961/2), p. 59, no. 9.
[5] *Med. Arch.* VIII (1964), p. 61, no. 8.
[6] Little Paxton; Maxey; and also Oxford (Logic Lane), *loc. cit.* (n. 4), no. 7.
[7] It in fact came from below burnt daub, etc., and the burnt and unburnt vegetable debris might be grass or possibly thatch—P.V.A.

The findspots of the iron objects were as follows: 3—C2, feature 12 (ditch later than house); 4—post-hole 89; 5—D4, layer 4 (silty layer below burnt debris); 6—Tebbutt excavation, 'floor level'; 7—C3, feature 13 (pit later than building); 8—D10–11, layer 3 ('platform' on west side of ditch); 9—unstratified; 10—D8, layer 6 (Fig. 13, VIII); 11—D9–11, layer 4 (main filling of castle moat); 12—D7, layer 6 (from feature 14); 13—Tebbutt 'excavation floor level'; 14—D8, layer 5 (Fig. 13, IX); 15—E2, layer 7 (top of weathered natural—ostensibly); 16—D7, layer 6 (feature 14).

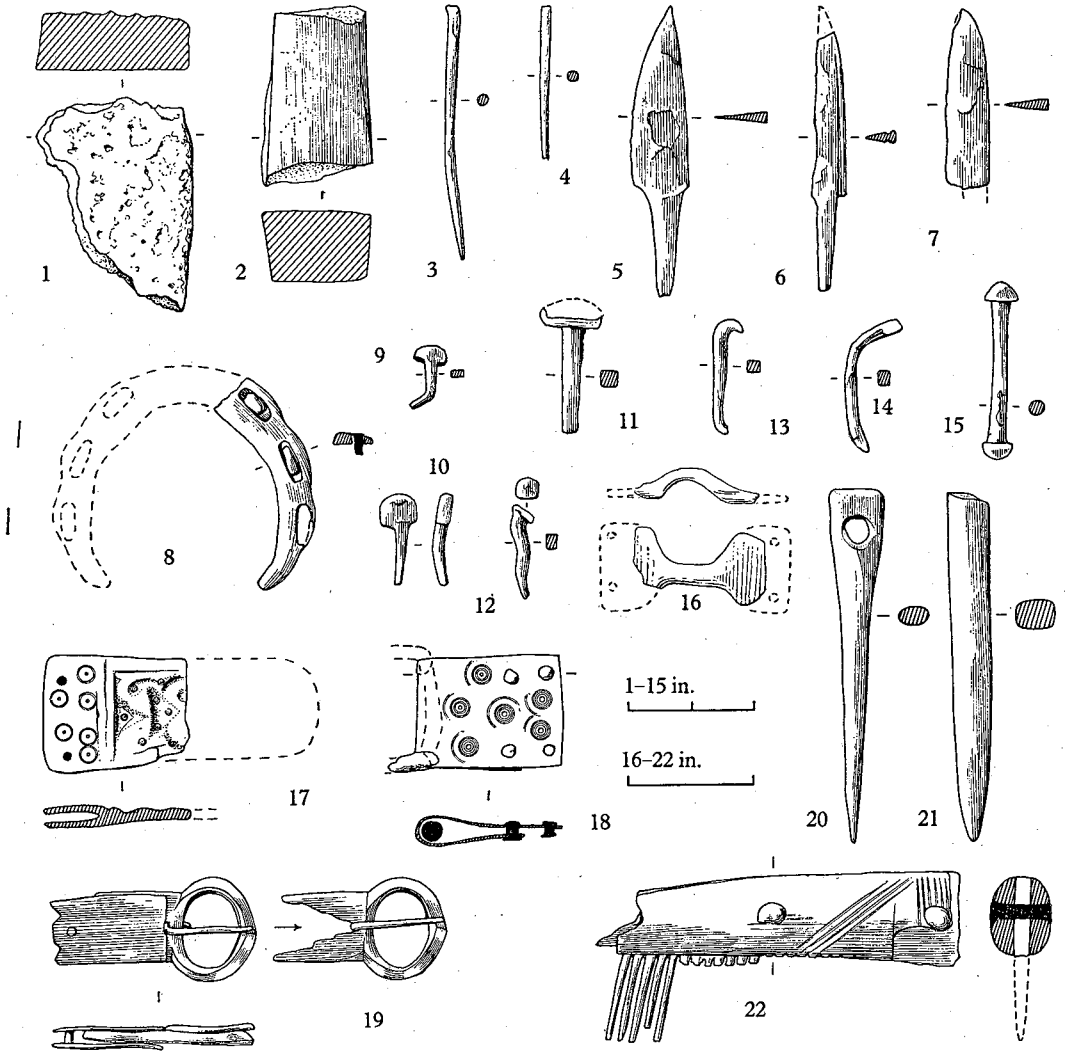

Fig. 11. Eaton Socon: objects of stone (1, 2), iron (3–16), copper alloy (17–19) and bone (20–2). Scale: nos. 1–15, $\frac{1}{3}$; nos. 16–22, $\frac{2}{3}$.

Copper alloy (Fig. 11, nos. 17–19)

17. Strap-end: a fragment, perhaps half, of a strap-end with split attachment plate with two perforations for attachment to strap. The object has ring-and-dot ornament on the attachment plate and a slightly recessed panel on the main part containing a relief design emphasized in places

with small ring-and-dots. The object is much damaged, making the pattern difficult to interpret. Mr D. M. Wilson kindly comments that 'the strap-end belongs to a small class of tenth/eleventh-century objects, with elaborate examples from London and Ixworth,[1] and less glorious ones from Thetford. It is typical of the late phase of Anglo-Saxon metalwork and shows what appears (from the drawing) to be a degenerate acanthus ornament.' Mr Biek reports on a technical examination in the Ancient Monuments Laboratory:

'A.M. No. 620656: Strap end. Fragment consisting of two thicknesses of plate along nearly half its length; presumed to have been forged from a strip bent double all along but united into a single thickness except for the split left at one end to take the ?strap. The metal is thicker, appears heavier and more malleable than in A.M. No. 620655 (No. 18) and may contain some lead. Small areas of fibrous residue were detected in the corrosion products around the split end, but no significant alignment was visible and no suggestion beyond "possibly vegetable", perhaps from grasses, is justified at this stage. Clearance of the space in the split produced no obviously valuable residue except for one small, coherent lump from the area of one of the two (empty) rivet holes. This would suggest, taken with the evidence on the edges of the hole itself, that the rivet might possibly have been of iron. No "leather" residues (cf. 620655) were noted.'

The object came from D4, the interface of layers 3 and 4. The upper of these layers contained daub, the lower was silty, and both dipped into the pit feature 8. The object was probably lost or discarded about the time of destruction of the house, which from other evidence seems possibly to have been during the later eleventh century. The bone comb (22) came from the same deposit.

18. Buckle plate and fragment of iron buckle: buckle plate formed from a bent-over copper alloy strip with four rivet-holes, three containing copper alloy rivets, and decorated with ring-and-dot ornament on one side, disposed in a circle incorporating two of the rivet-holes, with a larger ring-and-dot at the centre. Ring-and-dot is a popular Anglo-Saxon motif, but the object probably dates to the eleventh–early twelfth century, since buckles, as opposed to strap-ends, are rare in Late Saxon contexts. The deposit in which it was found, D6, layer 3, contains pottery which could be of this date. Mr Biek observes from X-ray examination (A.M. No. 620655) that 'part of the iron buckle remains in the fold, and that there are almost certainly deliberate cut-aways at the corners of the plate to allow firm seating of the buckle. In view of the present shape of the buckle remnant it would seem impossible for the buckle ever to have fitted without such corners, which, however, occur on one side only. Clearance and proximate microscopic examination of the material enclosed within the fold, in the space between the "two plates" of the fitting showed the presence of (*a*) pseudo-fibrous masses of rust-impregnated material containing sand grains; (*b*) unorganized fibres, probably vegetable (root?); and (*c*) distinct flat, black particles with curled edges such as have been noted in association with leather residues under comparable conditions.[2] The metal appeared to be a bright yellow alloy of copper, probably containing appreciable quantities of zinc, and possibly even a brass. The fitting was riveted unsymmetrically with two pairs of rivets, one pair through both "plates", and the other, of which one rivet is missing, only through one thickness of metal, but indicating an added thickness of the ?leather originally gripped.'

19. Buckle plate assembly: the drawings show the two components, buckle with forked end, and pair of riveted attachment plates, and their relationship when in position. The buckle part of the object is cast and filed down. The type is presumably to be referred to the 14th century.[3] The forked end of the buckle portion (A.M. Lab. report, A.M. No. 620658)

[1] *Ant. J.* XVIII (1938), pl. LXXIV.

[2] For determination of leather and textile residues in similar circumstances see *Oxon.* XXVI–XXVII (1961–2), pp. 168–9 (A.M. No. 8180). N.B. The Seacourt object is reminiscent of the present one in form, with similar cut-away corners on the under side, though having also a central hole for buckle prong.

[3] *Lond. Mus. Med. Cat.* pp. 267–8.

shows the characteristic taper section found on forked strap-ends, e.g. at Seacourt,[1] as well as ?solder residues, both from visual and X-ray evidence. No traces of fibrous material were seen as received.[2]

BONE OBJECTS (Fig. 11, nos. 20–2)

20. Pin with triangular perforated head (conceivably though not certainly made from a pig's fibula).[3] Such pins occur on domestic sites throughout the Saxon period; contemporary ones come from other St Neots area sites (to be published) and from the eleventh-century assemblage at Clifford St, York,[4] as well as many continental sites.

21. ?threadpicker; also a type occurring throughout the Saxon period. A contemporary example comes from Oxford.[5]

22. Bone comb; part of single-sided three-piece comb with a straight bow, with convex outline to the upper edge, ornamented with incised diagonal and upright lines in groups. A typical Viking single comb. Comparable examples were found in the late tenth- to eleventh-century deposit at Clifford St, York;[6] the type is replaced after the twelfth century by the double-edged type. Found with tenth/eleventh-century strap-end 17 in D4, feature 8.

WOODEN OBJECTS (Fig. 12, nos. 1–4)

Four planks or fragments of planks were recovered from the lower part of the castle moat. Fig. 12, no. 1, was found *in situ* lining the moat; it was originally longer, and contained three dowel holes. No. 4 also contained dowel holes, one large and one small and 3 had a notch, perhaps the rider of a saddle-joint. The wood has been identified as beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) in each case. The dowel rod in no. 1 is alder (*Alnus glutinosa*). (Identifications kindly made by courtesy of Sir George Taylor, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.)

CHARCOALS

Charcoals recovered from the site will be discussed in the final report, in relation to other fuels and natural resources available to local sites.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The investigation was initiated by Mr C. F. Tebbutt, and his generosity in placing data and finds from his excavation at my disposal are here gratefully recorded, together with thanks for help in many ways throughout the excavation and during the preparation of the report. Grateful acknowledgement is made to the bodies and individuals who assisted the work; to the Ministry of Public Building and Works, who organized at short notice and financed the main excavation, and who have contributed to the cost of publication of this report; to the Queen's University of Belfast (Archaeology Department) and to the Cambridge Antiquarian Society for

[1] *Oxon.* XXVI/XXVII (1961–2), p. 168, no. 5 (A.M. No. 8181).

[2] The object was 'cleaned' during drawing, and should have been examined in this respect beforehand—P.V.A.

[3] Identifications kindly attempted by Miss J. E. King, British Museum (Natural History).

[4] *Archaeologia*, XCVII (1959), p. 85 and fig. 14.

[5] *Op. cit.* (n. 4), pp. 87–90 and fig. 16.

[6] Oxon. XXIII (1958), p. 73 and fig. 24. See also *Trans. Leics. Arch. Soc.* XXVIII (1953), 50.

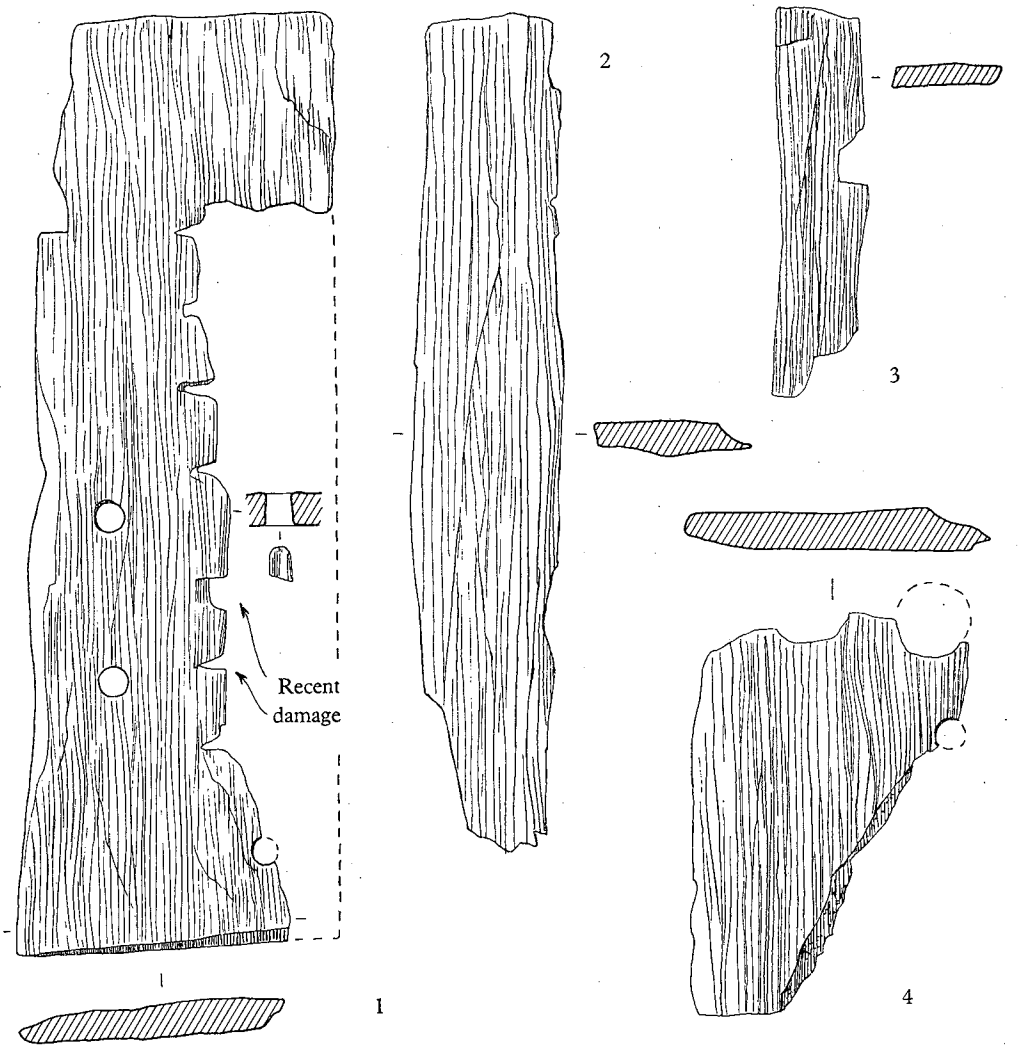

Fig. 12. Eaton Socon: wooden planks from the outer ditch of the castle (p. 48 and p. 68). All are beech. No. 1, which was extensively damaged by forking in excavation, has an alder dowel. Scale: nos. 2–4, $\frac{1}{8}$; no. 1, $\frac{1}{16}$.

financing the research excavation; and to the Cambridge University Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology. Permission for excavation to take place was readily given by the builders, Messrs Robinson and Chapman, who provided every facility at some inconvenience, and by Mr D. Edwards, the owner of No. 13, Castle Hill Close. I am also indebted to Mrs A. W. McNish of Eaton Mills for permission for the research excavation to take place in the castle area.

Mr J. G. Hurst organized the excavation for the Ministry of Public Building and Works, and has helped in many ways throughout. Grateful thanks are also due to Professor E. M. Jope for his interest and advice, and for innumerable suggestions

during the preparations of the report; to Mr S. G. Rees-Jones, who acted as Assistant Director throughout the excavation; and to many volunteers who helped during both Mr Tebbutt's excavation and the Ministry's, among whom Mrs I. Aperghis, and Messrs Daines, Derrick, Gurney, Hailey, Rudd and Woodman all helped for extended periods. The small objects have been drawn by Mr D. S. Neal (except Fig. 11, no. 16); Miss H. A. H. MacDonald and Miss J. E. King and Sir George Taylor have provided specialist reports on these, and Mr L. Biek, as well as arranging for, and carrying out some of, the scientific investigations, has advised and helped throughout. To all these individuals, and many others not mentioned by name, very best thanks are due.

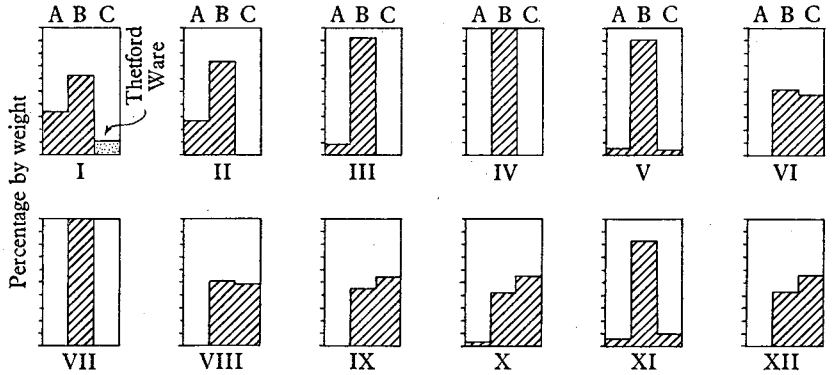

Fig. 13. Histograms showing the incidence of fabrics in various deposits of pottery at Eaton Socon. A: Hand made. B: Wheel-thrown shell-filled 'St Neots' types. C: Wheel-thrown sandy or gritty types.

APPENDIX I

POTTERY FROM THE 1949–50 EXCAVATION AT EATON SOCON CASTLE

The pottery recovered in 1949–50 from occupation layers in the southern ward of Castle Hills, and from the graves and destruction layer in the northern ward, is very fragmentary, and therefore was not published in detail at the time. Rims, bases and decorated sherds were, however, preserved in the Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology. It now seems worthwhile to illustrate (Fig. 14) and describe some of the pottery (with the kind permission and co-operation of the Museum authorities) as it extends the series obtained from the 1962 excavation. If the historical interpretation of the castle as a product of the civil war of 1140–4 is correct, the pottery from the occupation levels of the castle should date to the period around the middle of the twelfth century; though a prolonged occupation cannot be ruled out, it would not seem out of place as a group confined to this period. It is derived from five stratified layers in the southern ward (*Proc. C.A.S.* XLV (1952), p. 53, fig. 2, Ditch D (Group A, earliest); Clay Floor A (Group B); Zone E, 6 (Group C); Zone E, 5 (Group D); and Zone E, 'horizontal layer' (Group E, latest)). Of these the first four are regarded by the excavator as broadly contemporary.

In each of the five groups, as in the latest groups from the 1962 excavation, both shell-filled and sandy/gritty sherds occur in about equal proportions. Everted-rimmed cooking pots in

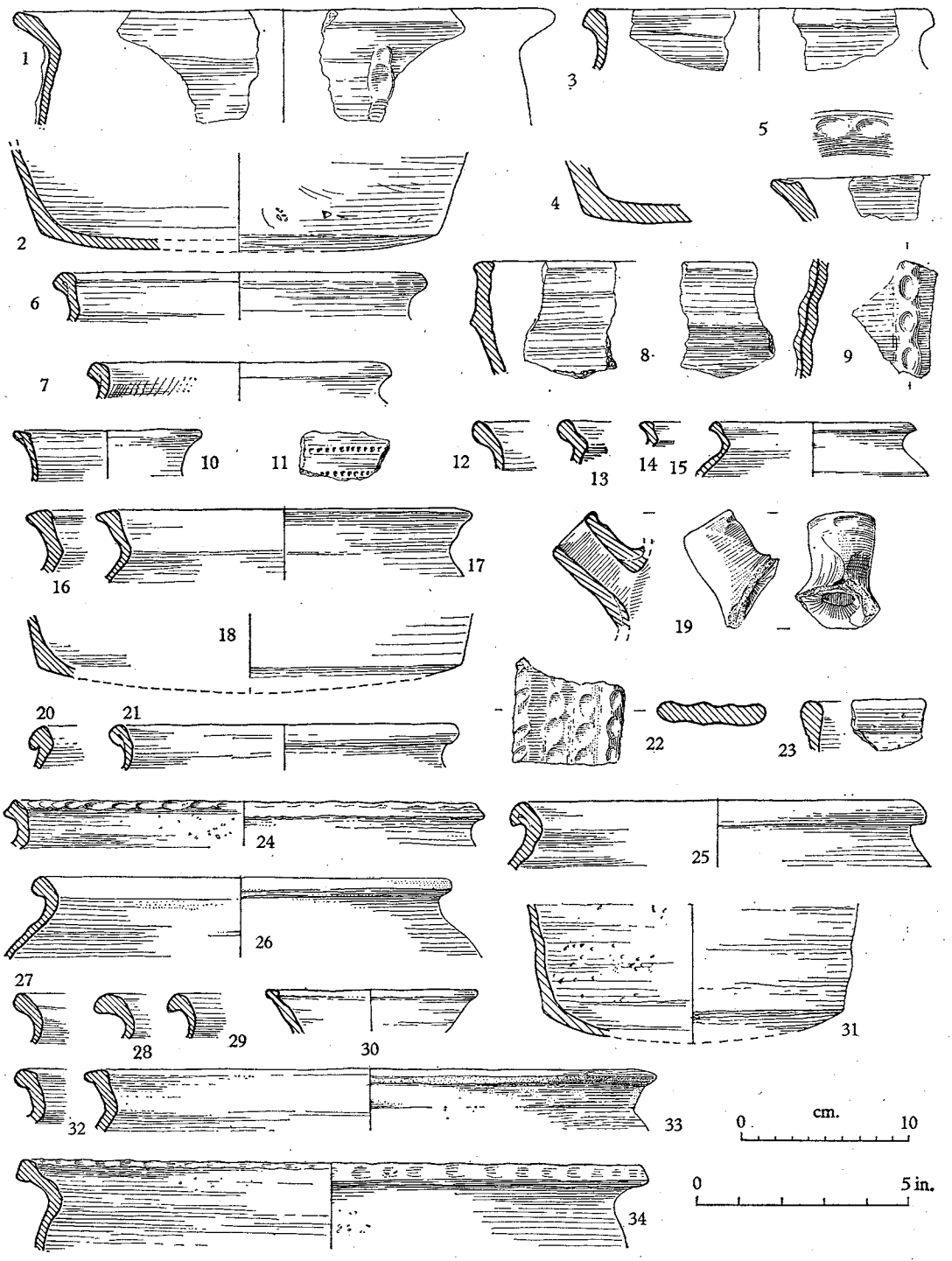

Fig. 14. Pottery from Eaton Socon castle (1949 excavations). Appendix I. 1–5, Group A; 6–10, Group B; 11–22, Group C; 23–5, Group D; 26–34, Group E. Scale: ¼.

sandy/gritty fabric are a constant feature of the deposits (Fig. 14, nos. 1, 16, 17, and 32–3), the larger ones, perhaps fortuitously, coming from the upper layers. Of the shell-filled fabrics, most are fairly hard and harsh, and often bright pink, as were those of the later deposits of the 1962 site. Only Fig. 14, nos. 24 and 34, had any of the soapiness and softness of typical St Neots ware. These sherds and no. 5 interestingly showed finger moulding on the rim. This feature, absent in pottery from the earlier deposits, is perhaps in this area an indicator of twelfth-century date. Roulette decoration on jug fragments, occurring on no. 11, and on an unillustrated sherd from Group E, is a further innovation.

The upright-sided bowl, a type common in twelfth-century sites in the area (*Proc. C.A.S.* LIV (1961), p. 87), is here represented by nos. 8 and 23. The tubular spout, no. 19, bears an impression apparently of a rim near its upper edge; it is perhaps from a spouted pitcher, as has been suggested by Professor Jope for an identical sherd from Oxford (*Oxon.* XVII/XVIII (1952–3), p. 86, no. 36, compared by Jope to the Wedmore, Somerset, bowl, containing a hoard of *c.* A.D. 1042) or a bowl. The everted-rimmed cooking pot no. 1, with vertical finger-moulded applied strip, resembles in fabric and form vessels from later twelfth-century wells excavated at St Tibbs Row, Cambridge (*Proc. C.A.S.*, forthcoming), and is presumably a local type. Only one sherd was glazed, a minute fragment from Group C with a deep green glaze inside and out. It may well be intrusive.

Fig. 14, nos. 1, 2, 5, 9, 16–19, 23 and 32–4 are sandy or sandy/gritty in fabric, nos. 5, 16 and 19 being pinkish, the rest grey. The remainder are all to some extent shell-filled, and range in colour from bright pink (6, 10, 21, 30, 31) to grey (24, 34). In form nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 12–15, 16–18, 20–1, 24–9, and 31–4 are cooking pots; nos. 5, 8, and 23 are bowls; nos. 10 and 31 are probably rims, no. 11 probably a body sherd, and no. 22 probably a strap-handle, all from jugs or pitchers. No. 9 may be part of a storage jar, or of a cooking pot of the type of no. 1.

APPENDIX II

M. J. AITKEN AND G. H. WEAVER

Ten samples of red fired clay were detached from the hearth after marking on each sample its precise orientation with respect to true north and the horizontal. These were removed to the laboratory, and, after suitable storage to allow the effects of disturbance to subside, the direction of the remanent magnetization in each sample was measured. Subsequently the samples were heated to 100° C in a non-magnetic oven and allowed to cool in zero magnetic field: this procedure removes the unwanted 'viscous' component of the magnetization, leaving only the thermo-remanent magnetization which was acquired at the time of firing. The average values found for Declination (D) and Angle of Dip (I) were:

$$D = 21{\cdot}7^\circ \text{ E} \qquad I = 61{\cdot}8^\circ$$

The individual directions spread from 15° E to 28° E in Declination and 55° to 68° in Angle of Dip. The Fisher index for the average value at the 80% level of confidence was calculated to be 1·8°. The average loss of intensity in thermal washing was 10% of the total intensity; the change in average declination was 2·9° E and there was a reduction of 0·7° in average Angle of Dip.

The directions found in individual samples were somewhat scattered, but we are confident that the true magnetic directions at the time of last firing were within two or three degrees of the values quoted. The scatter probably arises partly from the weakness of magnetization of the clay and partly from physical disturbance by trampling in antiquity subsequent to the last firing.

The magnetic result suggests that the hearth was last fired not more than half a century later than the Torksey Kiln I (M. W. Barley, report forthcoming) or the smelting hearths associated with the Stamford Co-operative Site (A. Burchard, report forthcoming). Fuller discussion will be found in the references listed below.

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TABLE 1. *Soil samples*

Relative colour hue	Sample no.	Organic* matter (relative-lab.)	Field description	Laboratory description and report				Site ref. no.
				Daub	Stones	Sand	Charcoal	
Darker grey	1	Low	Very fine very black soil	.	.	.	.	F 14 (4)
Similar to 1	2	High	Even green-grey sandy silt	+	+	.	.	F 14 (6)
Black	3	.	Black (charcoal and ashes) from bottom of layer	(+)	.	.	+(?) (powdered)	F 14 (7) bottom
Grey-brown (matrix)	4	.	Similar, with daub, from top	+	+ (incl. chalk)	.	+	F 14 (7) top
Yellow-brown	5	.	Yellowish grey soil with very occasional daub specks	.	.	.	.	F 14 (7)
Chocolate brown	6	.	Yellow-green silty; weathered or trodden natural?	.	+ Many dark, clayey streaks	+	.	D 7 (10)
Ferruginous	7	.	Bright yellow buttery clayey; assumed to be natural	.	+ Isolated dark root-holes? and spots similar to 6	+	.	D 7 (11)
Lighter grey	8	Medium	Fine grey-brown soil sealed by gravel layer; old topsoil?	+	.	(+)	+	D 7 (3)
Dark grey-brown	9	Very high	Modern topsoil	.	+	.	.	D 7 (1)

+ = Present.

* From ignition test carried out by Mr E. S. Cripps as described in Biek, *Archaeology and the Microscope*, 1963, p. 223.

(*a*)

(*b*)

Eaton Socon. (*a*) Main building from the south on completion of excavation. The ditches F1 and F12 cut through the building.
(*b*) Main building from the north, showing the main post-holes within the structure.

(*a*)

(*b*)

(*c*)

(*d*)

Eaton Socon. (*a*) West side of the main building from the north, showing (foreground) the possible entrance. (*b*) Daub-spread, presumably fallen wall-cladding, inside the north-east corner of the main building. (*c*) Post-hole shown in cross-section, typical of those in the main buildings containing daub in their fillings. (*d*) Outer bank of the castle, showing hearth and floor below bank, bank layers (disturbed by rabbit-holes) and post-hole in top of bank.

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