

Finds from Chelmscote Manor, Buckinghamshire (A4146-14)

Alan Vince

Archaeological investigations in advance of road improvements on the A4146 at Chelmscote Manor revealed a trapezoidal moat, a hollow way, and other traces of occupation. The finds from this investigation include ceramic building material, copper alloy, glass, iron, lead, and pottery. The datable finds appear to range from the medieval period (late 11th to early 12th century onwards) through to the early modern period. However, the late finds seem in the main to come from unstratified contexts and were probably dropped on the site after abandonment.

Description

Ceramic Building Material

Two fragments of flat roof tile were recovered from colluvium and subsoil, Trenches 4 and 9. That from Trench 4 (402) has a fine-textured, variegated fabric with lenses of light-firing clay and sparse rounded quartz grains up to 1.0mm across. The fragment from Trench 9 (context 901) has a sandy fabric and the moulding sand on the base consists of well-sorted rounded, water-polished quartz grains with a coating of haematite. This is probably derived from the Woburn Sands which outcrop in central Bedfordshire.

A collection of ceramic building material from Trench 7, context 703, consists mainly of flat roof tiles, some with peg holes, together with brick and field drain.

The tiles occur in a number of distinct fabrics, probably indicating different sources of tile rather than variations within a single site's production (Table 1). The distinguishing characteristics of each fabric are listed in Table 1.

Table 1

SUBFABRIC:	BRICK	BRICK / HEARTH	FLAT	LAND DRAIN	Grand Total
ABUNDANT OFFWHITE MUDSTONES; MOULDING SAND (INC GSQ)		2	3		5
ABUNDANT RHOMBOID VOIDS; STREAKS OF LIGHTER-COLOURED CLAY				1	1
ABUNDANT RQ (INC GSQ); M WHITE MUDSTONE			3		3
ABUNDANT RQ (INC GSQ); S FESST (WOBURN SANDS?)			31		31
ABUNDANT RQ (SOME FE-COATED); S FESST (NO GSQ)	1				1
ABUNDANT VOIDS; DARK GREY CORE; S WHITE			4		4

The Alan Vince Archaeology Consultancy, 25 West Parade, Lincoln, LN1 1NW

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MUDSTONE					
ABUNDANT VOIDS;DARK GREY CORE;S WHITE MUDSTONE;LOW FIRED			5		5
MODERATE WHITE ANG FLINT <3.0MM			1		1
SPARSE ANG FLINT;UNTEMPERED BODY			2		2
Grand Total	1	2	49	1	53

Copper Alloy

Four copper alloy objects were recovered, all from topsoil or subsoil. They consist of a bent fragment of rod (context 1200), a small lathe-turned handle(context 1100), probably attached by a rivet, screw or bolt. Perhaps from the drawer or lid of a small item of furniture or box; a fragment of sheet metal (context 701), folded over, which has a seam formed by folding c.10mm of the sheet over. Possibly from a sheet metal vessel; and a cartwheel penny of George III, minted in 1797 (context 1300).

Glass

Two fragments of glass were recovered, both from context 703. One is definitely the neck and rim of a shaft-and-globe bottle of mid 17th-century date. The other is a base fragment which might be from a late 18th-century or later tall bottle but which might be from a light green glass phial, which could also be of mid-17th-century date.

Iron

Six iron objects were recovered.

A probable fiddle key nail head was recovered from context 506 (the fill of gully 505). The fragment is corroded and a better idea of its original shape could be obtained from an x-ray photo. If indeed a fiddle key nail then it would have used with a horse shoe of 13th-century or earlier date.

Two nails and a possible knife blade fragment, all heavily corroded, were recovered from context 703.

A washer was recovered from context 301. The washer is thick and corroded, although the corrosion products have spalled away.

A large nail was recovered from context 700. This too is corroded and spalled.

Lead

Seven lead or lead alloy objects were recovered.

That from context 703 is a small ingot of metal, formed in an irregular triangular-cross-sectioned groove.

That from context 701 is a thin runnel of metal which has subsequently been folded over twice.

Two lead shot were present, both 12mm in diameter. One of these appears to have been shot at a brick, part of which has embedded itself in the shot (context 600) whilst the other is unblemished (context 1200). It is likely that both were produced in two-piece moulds and that from context 600 has a circular stamp with a single central line which was possibly incorporated into the mould.

A fragment from a strip of lead has been cut to a rectangular shape and then used as a washer, with a rectangular hole in the centre, probably indicating the former presence of a nail (context 1100).

Two fragments of roughly cut lead sheet were present (contexts 800 and 1200).

Pottery

Medieval

Twenty-three sherds of medieval pottery were recovered. The earliest, from context 4000, is a sherd from a handmade sand-tempered vessel in which the sand is haematite-coated and rounded and clearly derives from the Woburn Sands. The appearance of this sherd suggests a later 11th to mid 12th century date. The remainder consist of handmade jars in two fabrics: a calcareous fabric (in which the inclusions have been leached, leaving voids, EMCH) and a handmade sandy greyware (MEDLOC). The former may be the same fabric as is found in the City of London in the later 11th and earlier 12th centuries (Vince and Jenner 1991). The latter fabric is similar to those found in the late medieval period at Everton and Flitwick, suggesting a south Bedfordshire source. The deliberate reduced firing (as opposed to a dark brown or black firing due to incomplete removal of carbon) is a feature which appears during the 12th century, starting in the mid century. Together, these features suggest a mid 12th century date for these sherds.

Post-Medieval

Nine sherds of post-medieval pottery were recovered from Trench 7, context 703. Most have a fine fabric containing well-sorted angular quartz c.0.1mm across reminiscent of the medieval Brill/Boarstall fabric. They may therefore be post-medieval Brill fabrics. One is a tankard, with a black internal and external glaze. This form is typical of the earlier part of the 17th century (as at Harlow in Essex, where it was produced alongside Metropolitan Slipware). Another sherd is from a bowl with an internal black glaze. Such vessels were produced in the midlands in the late 16th and 17th centuries and were traded from the Potteries, for example, in large quantities in the later 17th century but this example appears to be locally produced (although it has a slightly different fabric from the remainder).

Nevertheless, its use of black glaze may suggest that it is copying these midland types and is of a similar, later 17th century, date.

Assessment

The earliest find is probably the potsherd from context 4000. Next are those from Trench 5. They consist of sherds of mid 12th century pottery and a fiddle key nail. Such nails were used with horse-shoes with wavy outlines, which are mainly of 13th-century or earlier date.

The finds from Trench 7, context 703, form a moderately large assemblage which contains mid 17th-century glass and pottery of similar date. The building material, however, probably spans a much longer period of time, stretching back into the medieval period, and appears to be debris from several structures (or a complex structure with several different roofs or re-roofings). It includes a single piece of field drain which is probably of 19th-century or later date, but this is the only later find in the assemblage.

The remaining finds are all unstratified and include some which are probably or possibly of 17th-century date (such as the lead shot) but are probably in the main of late 18th century and later date (such as the cartwheel penny).

None of the finds is of intrinsic interest and none require further treatment. Nevertheless, they should be retained for future study.

Bibliography

- Vince, A. G. and Jenner, M. A. (1991) "The Saxon and Early Medieval Pottery of London." in A. G. Vince, ed., *Aspects of Saxo-Norman London: 2, Finds and Environmental Evidence*, London Middlesex Archaeol Soc Spec Pap 12 London Middlesex Archaeol Soc, London, 19-119.

Appendix 1

Trench	Context	class	Cname	Subfabric	Form	Part	Description	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Diam	Use	Condition
	4000	POTTERY	MEDLOC	WOBURN SANDS	JAR	BS	HM;11T6H/12 TH C	3	1	20	0		
3	301	IRON	IRON		WASHER	BS	CENTRAL HOLE 17MM DIAM;MODERN?	1	1	22	36		
4	402	CBM	MTIL	VARIEGATED OFFWHITE/LIGHT BROWN;SPARSE RQ	FLAT	BS	MED/PMED	1	1	61	0		ABR
5	500	POTTERY	LMRW		JAR	BS	12 TH C+	1	1	9	0	SOOTED EXT	
5	500	POTTERY	EMCH		JAR	B	L11TH/12 TH C	1	1	10	0	BLACK DEPO INT	LEACHED
5	500	POTTERY	EMCH		JAR	BS	L11TH/12 TH C	1	1	1	0		
5	501	POTTERY	LMRW		JAR	BS	12 TH C+	2	2	10	0		
5	501	POTTERY	EMCH		JAR	BS	L11TH/12 TH C	1	1	3	0		LEACHED
5	504	POTTERY	EMCH		JAR	BS	HM; L11TH/12 TH C	1	1	14	0	SOOTED EXT	LEACHED
5	504	POTTERY	LMRW		JAR	BS	12 TH C+	1	1	4	0		
5	506	IRON	IRON		FKEY NAIL	BS	L11TH/13 TH C	1	1	6	0		VERY CORRODED
5	506	POTTERY	EMCH		JAR	R	HM; L11TH/12 TH C	4	1	41	0		
5	506	POTTERY	LMRW		JAR	BS	HM?;12 TH C+	4	1	23	0		
5	506	POTTERY	EMCH		JAR	B	HM; L11TH/12 TH C	4	1	43	0		LEACHED
6	600	LEAD	LEAD		SHOT	BS	MOULDED WITH CIRCULAR FLAT FACE WITH RAISED LINE ACROSS DIAMETER;PMED	1	1	11	12		BRICK EMBEDDED ON ONE FACE
7	700	IRON	IRON		NAIL	BS	ND	1	1	43	0		
7	701	COPP	COPP		SHEET	BS	FOLDED SHEET WITH ONE ORIGINAL FOLDED OVER EDGE;VESSEL?;ND	1	1	15	0		
7	701	LEAD	LEAD		WASTE	BS	FLAT RUNNEL FOLDED TWICE;ND	1	1	9	0		

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7	703	CBM		ABUNDANT OFFWHITE MUDSTONES;MOULDING SAND (INC GSQ)	BRICK/HEARTH	BS	MED/PMED	1	1	88	0	
7	703	CBM	MTIL	ABUNDANT OFFWHITE MUDSTONES;MOULDING SAND (INC GSQ)	BRICK/HEARTH	BS	MED/PMED	1	1	80	0	WORN UPPER SURFACE
7	703	CBM	PMTIL	ABUNDANT RQ (SOME FE-COATED); S FESST (NO GSQ)	BRICK	BS	MED/PMED	1	1	13	0	
7	703	CBM	MTIL	ABUNDANT VOIDS;DARK GREY CORE;S WHITE MUDSTONE	FLAT	BS	MED/PMED	4	4	92	0	
7	703	CBM	MTIL	ABUNDANT RQ (INC GSQ);S FESST (WOBURN SANDS?)	FLAT	BS	MED/PMED	31	31	995	0	
7	703	CBM	MTIL	ABUNDANT RQ (INC GSQ);M WHITE MUDSTONE	FLAT	BS	MED/PMED	3	3	101	0	
7	703	CBM	MTIL	SPARSE ANG FLINT;UNTEMPERED BODY	FLAT	BS	ROUND PEGHOLE 13MM; MED/PMED	2	1	36	0	
7	703	CBM	MTIL	MODERATE WHITE ANG FLINT <3.0MM	FLAT	BS	MED/PMED	1	1	53	0	
7	703	CBM	MTIL	ABUNDANT OFFWHITE MUDSTONES;MOULDING SAND (INC GSQ)	FLAT	BS	MED/PMED	3	3	102	0	
7	703	CBM	PMTIL	ABUNDANT RHOMBOID VOIDS; STREAKS OF LIGHTER-COLOURED CLAY	LAND DRAIN	BS	EXTRUDED;MODERN	1	1	33	0	
7	703	CBM	MTIL	ABUNDANT VOIDS;DARK GREY CORE;S WHITE MUDSTONE;LOW FIRED	FLAT	BS	MED/PMED	5	5	100	0	
7	703	GLAS	GLAS	LTGR	PHIAL	BS	17 TH /18 TH C	1	1	2	0	
7	703	GLAS	GLAS	DKGR	S&G	R	M17TH C	1	1	25	0	
7	703	IRON	IRON		NAIL	BS	ND	1	1	15	0	VERY CORRODED
7	703	IRON	IRON		KNIFE?	BS	POSSIBLE BLADE FRAGMENT;ND	1	1	14	0	VERY CORRODED

7	703	IRON	IRON		NAIL	BS	ND	1	1	26	0		VERY CORRODED
7	703	LEAD	LEAD		INGOT	BS	TRIANGULAR-SECTIONED CRUDE;ND	1	1	121	0		
7	703	POTTERY	PMBRILL		TANK	B	BLACK GL INT AND EXT;17 TH /18 TH C	1	1	8	0		
7	703	POTTERY	GRE		BOWL	R	INT BLACK GL;17 TH /18 TH C	1	1	6	0		
7	703	POTTERY	PMBRILL		BOWL	R	INT PLAIN GL;17 TH /18 TH C	1	1	40	0		
7	703	POTTERY	PMBRILL		BOWL	BS	INT PLAIN GL;17 TH /18 TH C	6	6	66	0		
8	800	LEAD	LEAD		SHEET	BS	CLIPPED INTO ROUGH RECTANGLE BUT ORIGINAL EDGE SURVIVES;ND	1	1	67	0		
8	800	POTTERY	LMRW		JUG	BS	UNGLAZED STRAP;STABBED;12 TH C+	1	1	23	0		ABR
9	901	CBM	MTIL	FINE IRON-COATED GSQ MOULDING SAND	FLAT	BS	MED/PMED	1	1	20	0		
11	1100	COPP	COPP		HANDLE	BS	CAST KNOB HANDLE WITH TRACE OF RIVET/SCREW AT END;MODERN?	1	1	4	0		
11	1100	LEAD	LEAD		WASHER	BS	STRIP CUT INTO RECT (TWO MOULDED EDGES TWO CUT) WITH RECT HOLE IN CENTRE PUNCHED THROUGH WITH NAIL?;MODERN?	1	1	13	0		
12	1200	COPP	COPP		ROD	BS	CIRCULAR CROSS-SECTIONED;ND	1	1	4	5		BROKEN AT BOTH ENDS
12	1200	LEAD	LEAD		SHEET	BS	THIN SHEET CUT INTO RECTANGLE ON THREE SIDES;FOURTH SIDE ORIGINAL ROUNDED MOULD EDGE;ND	1	1	4	0		
12	1200	LEAD	LEAD		SHOT	BS	PMED	1	1	9	12		
13	1300	COPP	COPP		COIN	BS	GEORGE III CARTWHEEL PENNY 1797	1	1	25	0		