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Osbournby, The Drove  
Watching Brief  
Fieldwork 1993  
Report 1994

EVENT 42211

SOURCE L16904 L16905  
Negative



LINCOLNSHIRE

OSBOURNBY THE DROVE WB

ADVANCING LINCOLNSHIRE'S PAST



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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF  
OF A WATER PIPELINE AT  
THE DROVE,  
OSBOURNBY,  
LINCOLNSHIRE**

Work Undertaken For  
Anglian Water Services Ltd.,

March 1994

Heritage Lincolnshire  
28 Boston Road,  
SLEAFORD,  
Lincolnshire NG34 7ET  
Charity No: 1001463. Company No: 2554738 (England)

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## 1. SUMMARY

*An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the excavation of a water pipe trench alongside The Drove, Osbournby, Lincolnshire.*

*The site lies in an area of significant archaeological interest. Northwest of the village are numerous and concentrated sites and finds representing occupation of the area in the prehistoric, Roman, Anglo-Saxon and medieval periods. The Drove is located on the east side of the village and runs between the medieval church and the Roman road, Mareham Lane. At various locations close to the pipeline route, prehistoric stone tools, Roman pottery and metalwork and medieval artefacts have been recovered. Additionally, aerial photographs record that The Drove crosses enclosures of apparently Roman date.*

*The watching brief identified The Drove as a probable causeway road, built up above the surrounding countryside. Soil layers, interpreted as road make-up, were found to be uniform along the length of the pipeline and no archaeological deposits were recognised, nor artefacts recovered. The pipetrench did not extend through the full depth of the embankment. Consequently, archaeological remains, including the enclosures recorded on aerial photographs, were neither seen in, nor affected by, the pipeline excavation.*

## 2. INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 Background

In June and July 1993, an archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the excavation of water pipe trench along the northern side of The Drove, Osbournby

(between NGR TF071381 and TF089387). Commissioned by Anglian Water Services Ltd., this work was carried out by Heritage Lincolnshire.

### 2.2 Topography and Geology

Osbournby village is situated approximately 7km south of Sleaford in the civil parish of Osbournby, North Kesteven District, Lincolnshire (Fig. 1). At the village, soils are the Ruskington Association, gleyic brown calcareous earths on glaciofluvial sand and gravel with a calcareous substrate containing limestone stones, flints and quartzite pebbles (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 304). Curdrige Association typical argillic gley soils on Jurassic Kellaways sand, sandstone and clay beds (*ibid.*, 153,4), are traversed by The Drove.

Commencing from the centre of the village, the pipeline stretched eastwards to Mareham Lane, approximately 2km distant. Ground surface dropped from *c.* 21m OD at the west end of the pipeline down to 14m OD at the eastern limit of the route. Located on the east side of the village of Osbournby, The Drove crosses The Beck, a stream that flows around the south side of the village before heading north (Fig. 2).

### 2.3 Archaeological Setting

Osbournby village is located in an area of archaeological remains dating from the prehistoric through to the medieval period.

Artefacts of Prehistoric, Romano-British, Anglo-Saxon and Medieval date indicate that the focus of earlier occupation lay northwest of the present village. Supplementary to the finds locations, as evidence of previous settlement, are earthworks and cropmarks recorded on

aerial photographs.

East of the village is The Drove. At various points relatively close to this road, prehistoric stone tools, including axes (NK48.29; NK48.36), a macehead (NK48.35) and an axe-hammer (NK48.32) have been found.

Towards the eastern end of The Drove, aerial photographs record cropmarks that represent enclosure complexes (Fig. 3). On morphological grounds, these enclosures could be late prehistoric or Romano-British. However, the later date is suggested by finds of Roman artefacts, including a brooch and pottery (SMR) from the general location of the cropmarks. Mareham Lane, which provides the terminus of the pipeline, preserves the line of a Roman road.

Evidence of Saxon settlement (NK48.14) is recorded close to The Beck, a little south of the pipeline route. The Medieval period is represented by the church of SS Peter and Paul which contains Decorated (c. 1290-1350 AD) elements (Pevsner and Harris 1989, 595). Metalwork, including a thirteenth century heraldic pendant, has been found close to The Drove. Additionally, pottery of medieval date (NK48.30) has been recovered from the south side of the village.

### 3. AIMS

The purpose of the work was to locate and record any archaeological remains exposed during the excavation of the pipe trench.

### 4. METHODS

A mechanical excavator was used in the construction of the pipe trench, which

measured 0.60m wide, 0.90 deep and approximately 1.9km in length. See Fig. 4 for the location of the recorded sections.

The sides of the trench were cleaned by hand and inspected for archaeological remains prior to recording the sections. Each deposit or feature revealed within the pipe trenches was allocated a unique reference number with an individual written description. A photographic record was compiled and sections were drawn at scale 1:20.

### 5. RESULTS (Figs. 5, 6 and 7)

Records of the deposits identified during the watching brief were examined. Phasing was assigned based on the nature of the deposits and recognisable relationships between them. A total of two phases was identified:

Phase 1	Undated deposits
Phase 2	Modern deposits

#### Phase 1 Undated Deposits

At a depth of 0.9m, the surface of a layer of flint pebbles (3), that maintained a fairly flat level horizon, was encountered. With a surface height equivalent to, or slightly higher than, the ground level of the surrounding fields, this flint pebble layer is considered to have been deposited by human rather than natural agencies.

Sealing the pebble layer was a deposit of brown sandy clay c. 0.6m deep (2). With the surface of this clay being approximately 0.75m above the surrounding fields, the layer is interpreted as a make-up deposit.

## Phase 2 Modern deposits

A mixed, dark brown clayey topsoil (1) approximately 0.3m deep constituted the present ground surface of the investigation area. Ground level of the surrounding fields was about 1m lower than the surface of this topsoil layer.

## 6. DISCUSSION

Uniform layers of flint pebbles and clay (phase 1) occurred throughout the length of the pipeline. Rising to *c.* 0.75m above the surrounding countryside, these deposits are considered to be make-up layers for the construction of a causeway road. No evidence for previous road surfaces was revealed in the pipetrench. If such earlier metallings exist they are probably beneath the present road, with the observed pebble and clay layers serving as a foundation for the highway.

No evidence of the manner of ducting The Beck, the watercourse crossed by The Drove, was observed (see Fig. 5, Section 6). Such negative testimony suggests that the road make-up deposits sealed the method used for culverting the stream.

Topsoil constituted the modern ground surface (phase 2). This layer was pebbly and root disturbed, possibly due to incorporation of material cleaned out of the adjacent dyke.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

Archaeological investigation of the pipeline alongside The Drove, Osbournby, established that make-up deposits consisting of layers of flint pebbles below clay occur to a height of *c.* 0.75m above the surrounding countryside.

None of the archaeological deposits and features known to be traversed by The Drove were compromised by the excavation and no artefacts were recovered during the watching brief.

## 8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Heritage Lincolnshire wish to thank Anglian Water Services Ltd for funding the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. Steve Haynes coordinated the work and Dave Start edited this report. Mr James Pickering generously allowed reproduction of the aerial photograph. Nicola Nuttall, the North Kesteven Community Archaeologist, kindly permitted access to the relevant parish files. Information from the County Sites and Monuments Record was provided by Ian George and Julia Wise of the Archaeology Section, City and County Museum, Lincoln.

## 9. PERSONNEL

Project Manager: Steve Haynes  
Supervisor: David Brown  
Finds Processing: Denise Buckley  
Illustration: Paul Cope-Faulkner  
Post-excavation Analyst: Gary Taylor

## 10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Hodge, C A H, Burton, R G O, Corbett, W M, Evans, R, and Seale, R S, 1984 *Soils and their Use in Eastern England*, Soil Survey of England and Wales Bulletin No. 13

Pevsner, N, and Harris, J, 1989 *Lincolnshire*, The Buildings of England, (2nd ed, revised Antram, N)



## 11. ABBREVIATIONS

Archaeological detail coded 'SMR' is site information held in the Lincolnshire County Sites and Monuments Record.

Numbers prefixed by 'NK' are the reference numbers used by the North Kesteven Community Archaeologist.

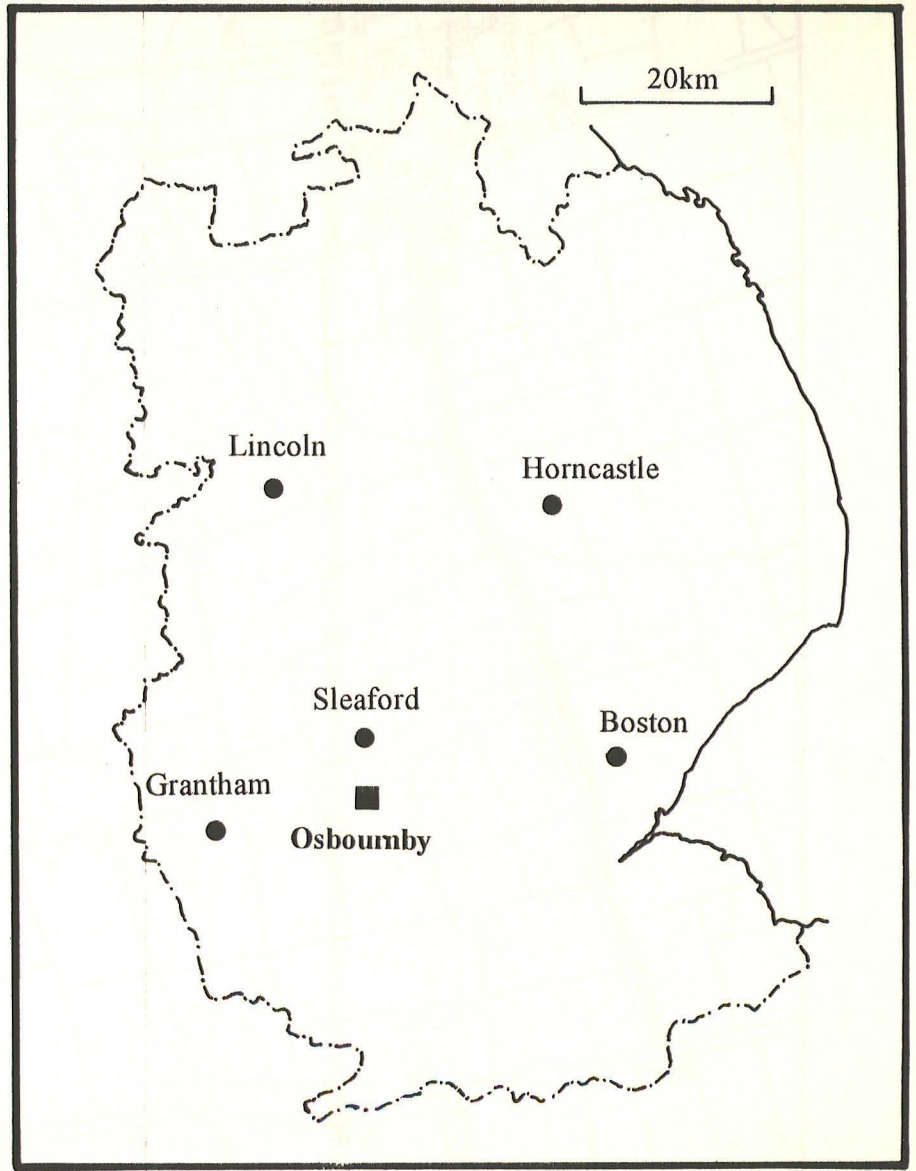
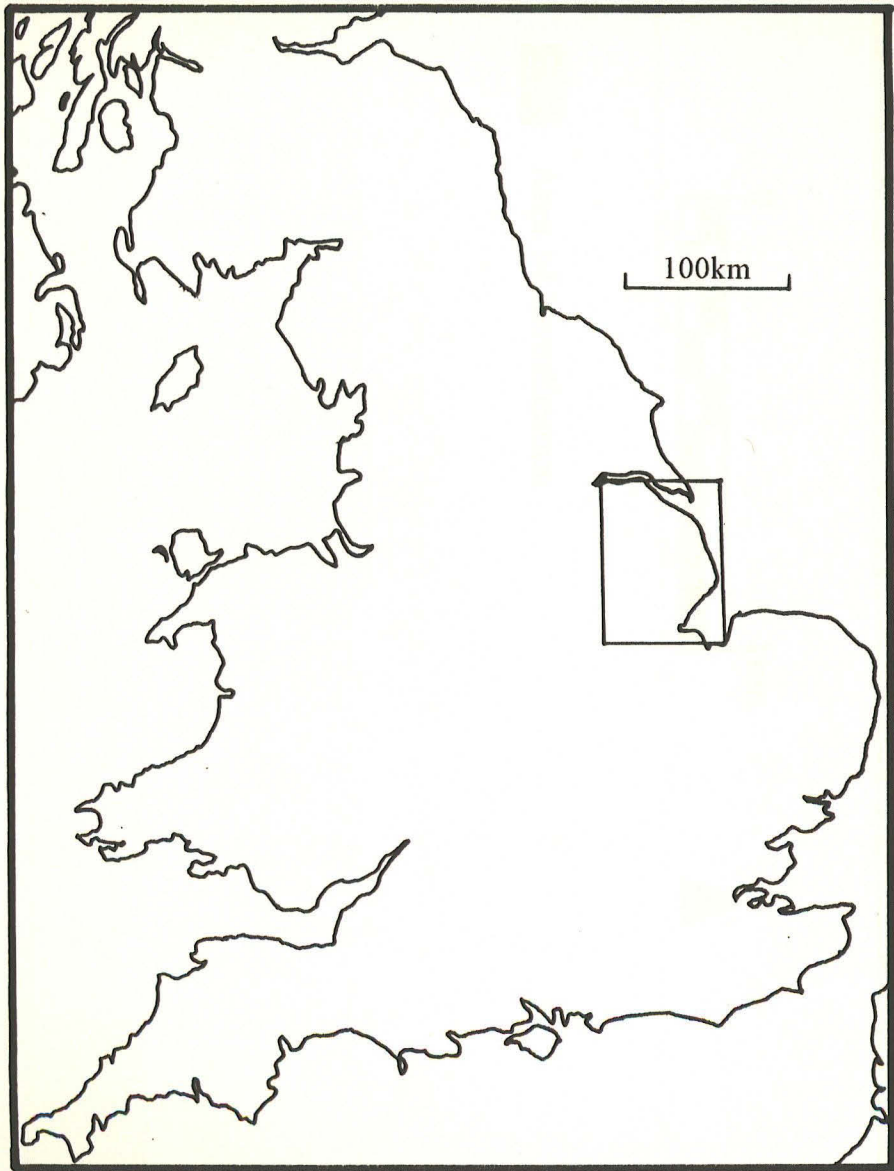
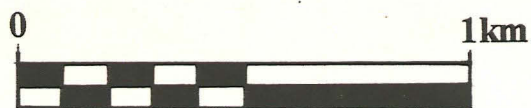


Fig. 1 GENERAL LOCATION PLAN

Fig. 2 SITE LOCATION PLAN




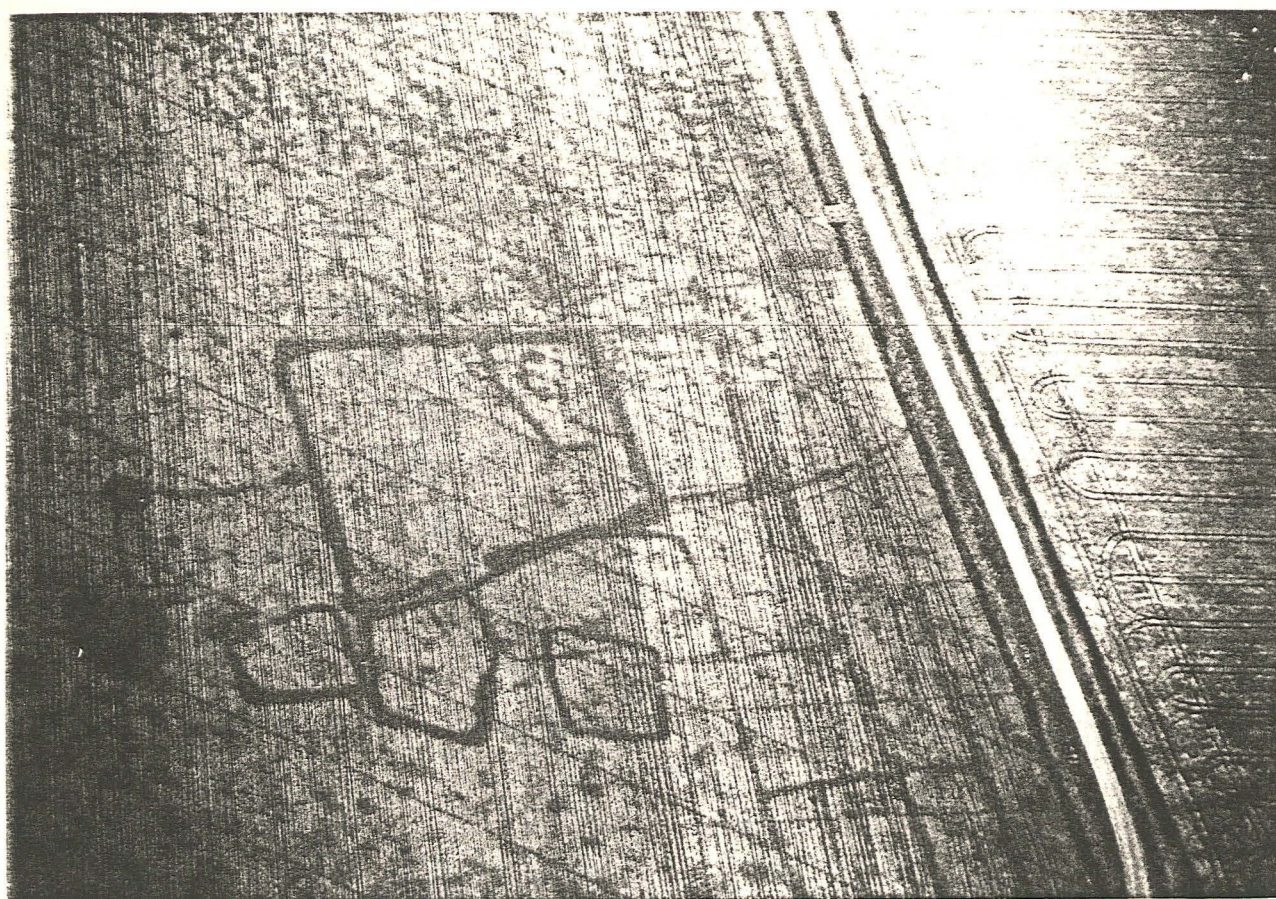
 Area of Investigation

Fig. 3 CROPMARKS CROSSED BY THE DROVE, OSBOURNBY





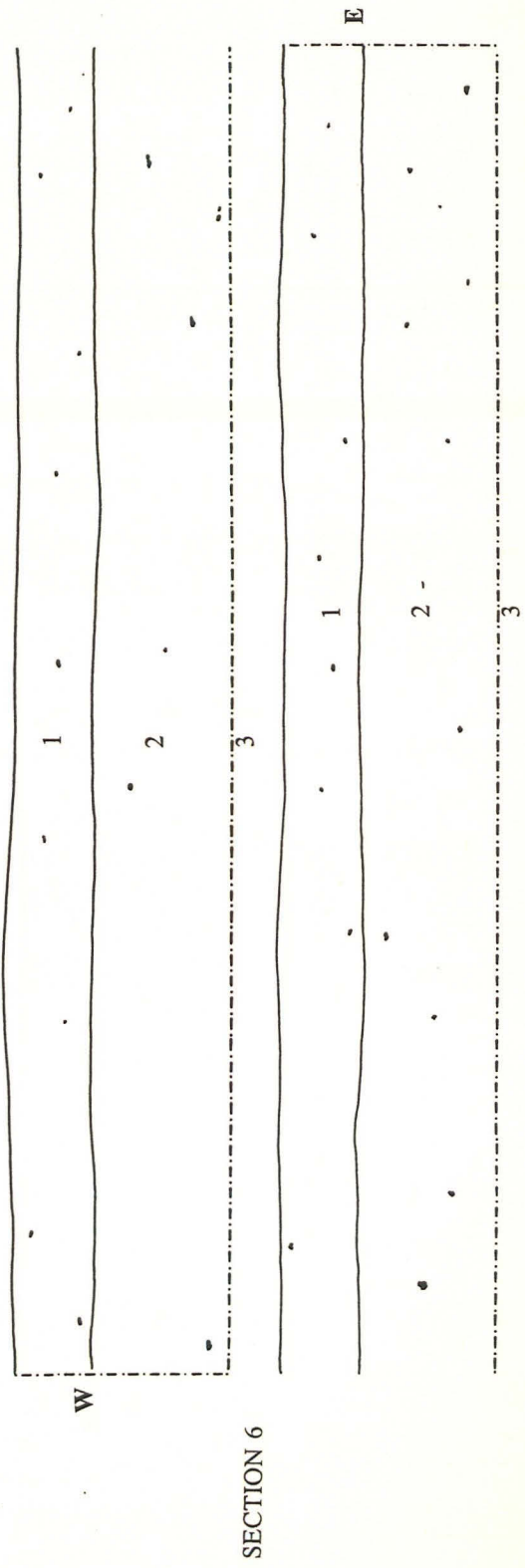
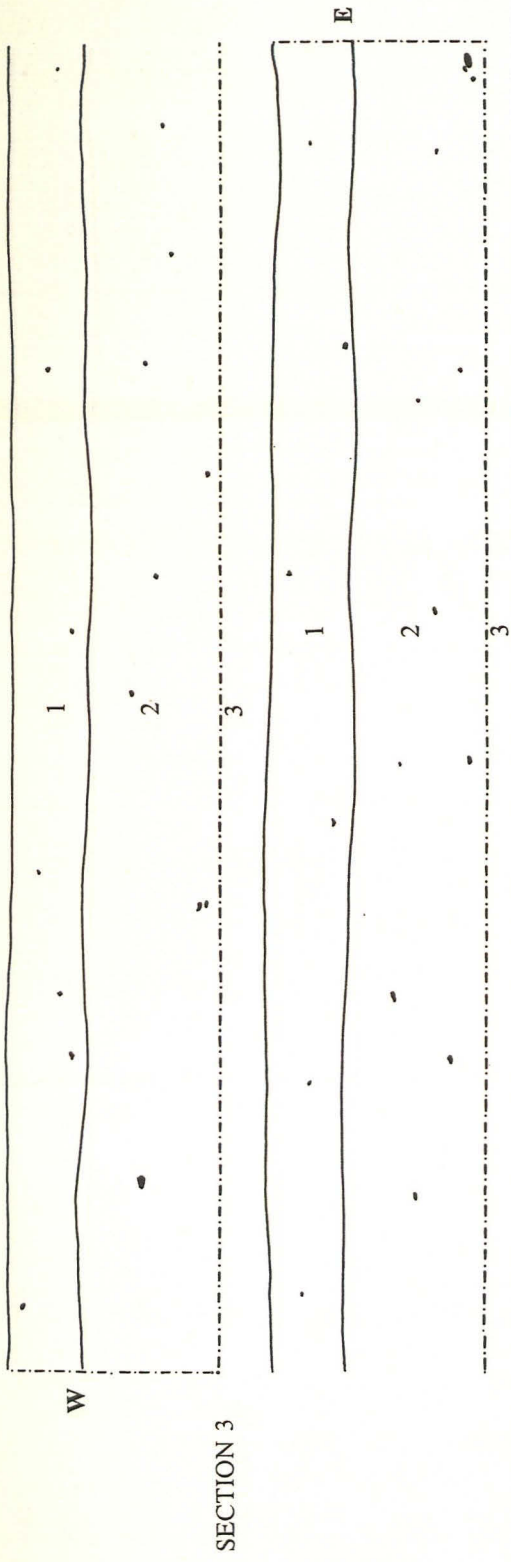
0 1km



■ LOCATION OF RECORDED SECTIONS  
(not to scale)

Fig. 4 LOCATION OF RECORDED SECTIONS

Fig. 5 SECTIONS 3 and 6



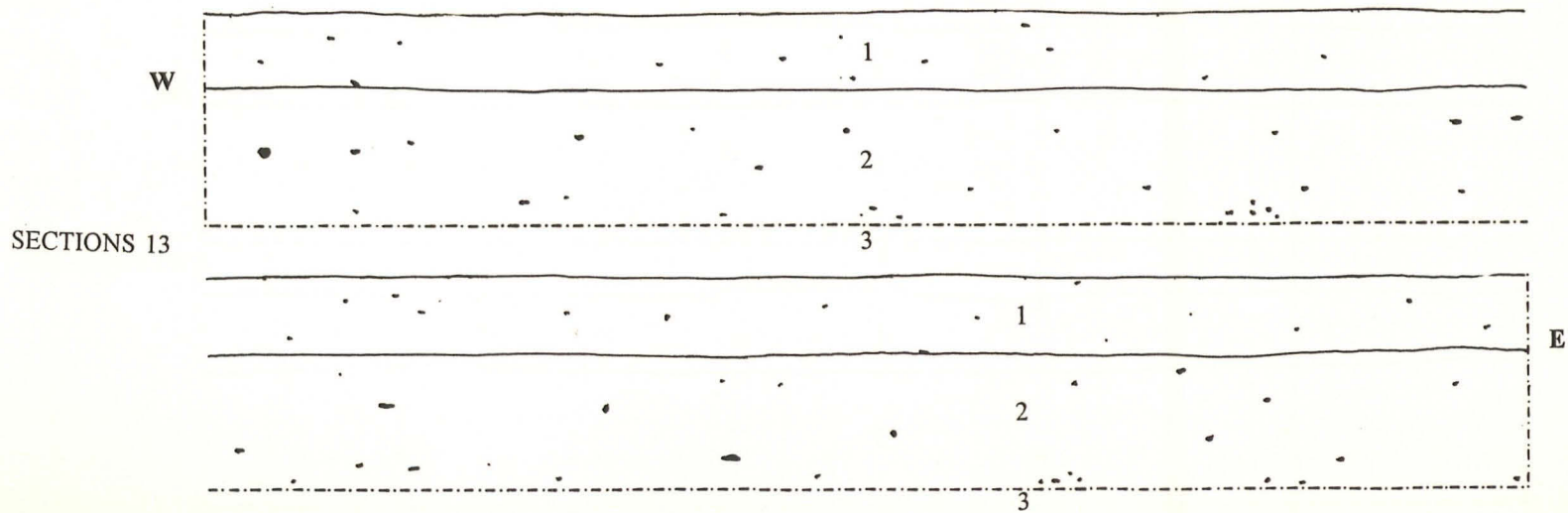
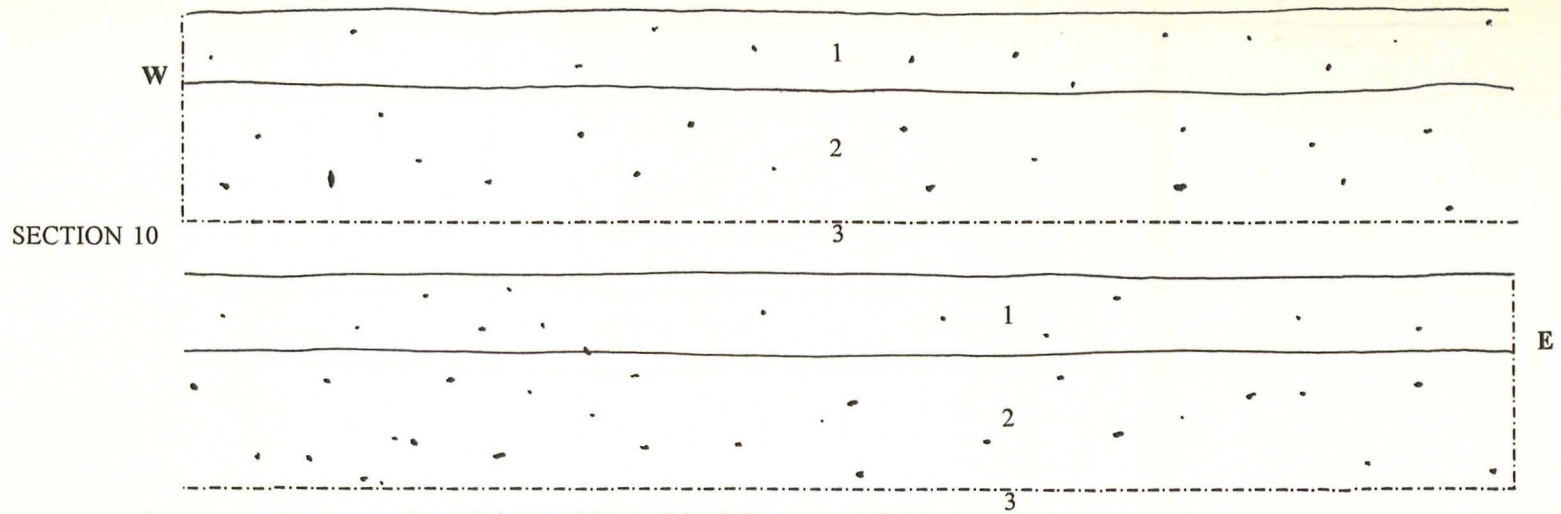


Fig. 6 SECTIONS 10 and 13

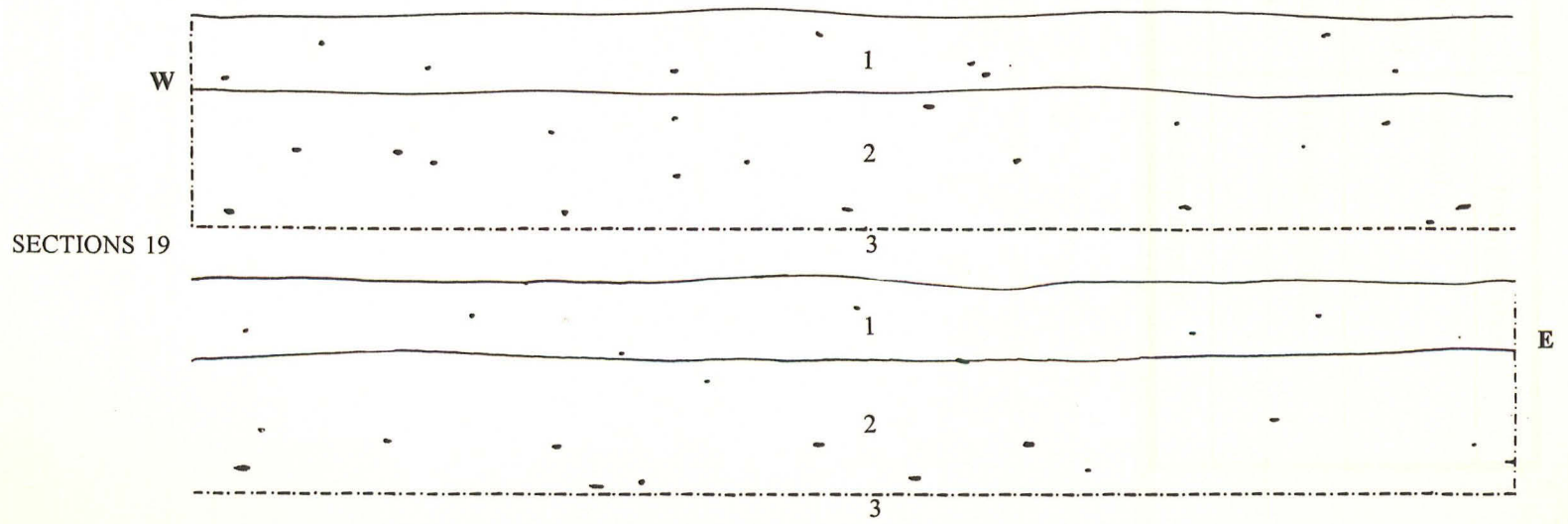
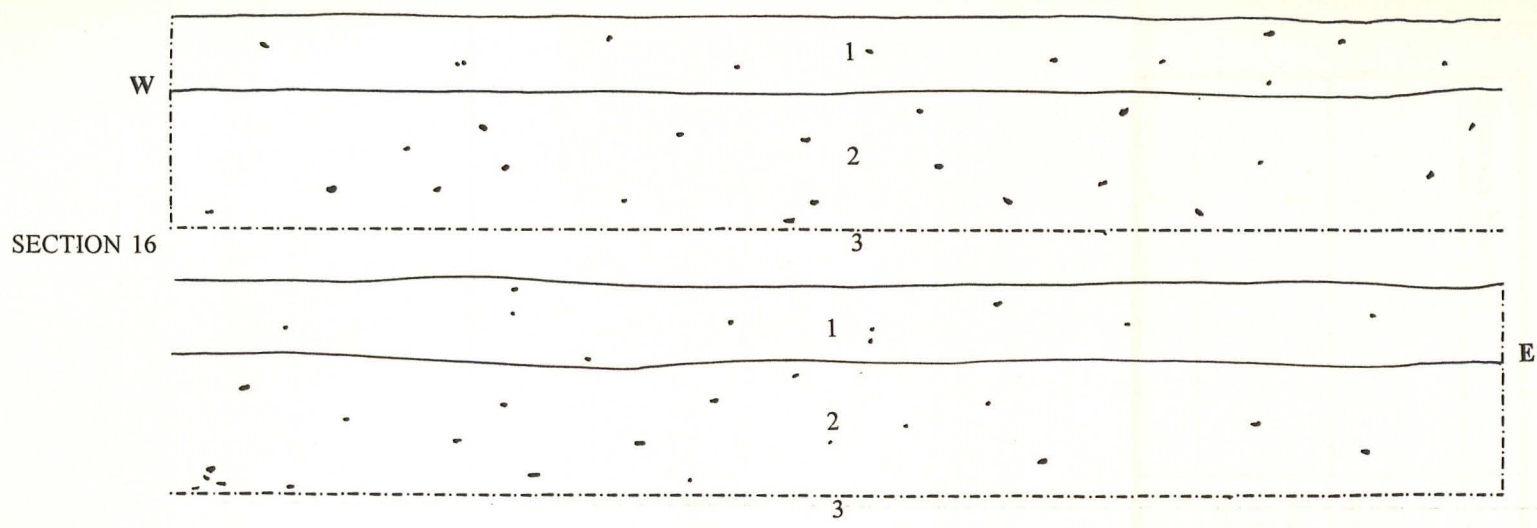


Fig. 7 SECTIONS 16 and 19



APPENDIX 1

Context Summary

Context Number	Description	Interpretation
1	Dark brown silty clay with occasional flint pebbles and moderate root disturbance	Topsoil
2	Brown yellow silty sandy clay with moderate flint pebbles	Make-up deposit
3	Flint pebbles	Make-up deposit

## APPENDIX 2

### The Archive

The archive consists of:

- 3 Context records
- 2 Photographic records
- 20 Scale drawings
- 1 Stratigraphic matrix

All primary records are currently kept at:

Heritage Lincolnshire  
28 Boston Road  
Sleaford  
Lincolnshire  
NG34 7ET

City and County Museum, Lincoln Accession Number: 24.94