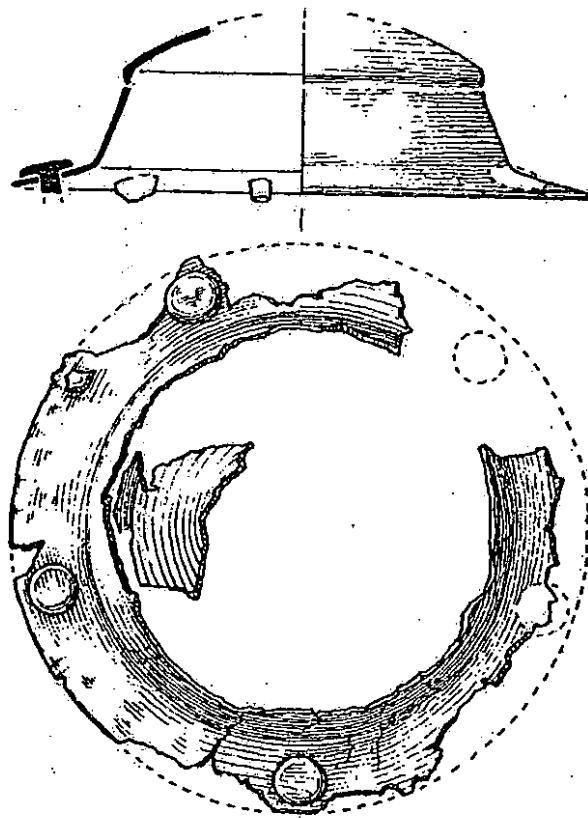


EWA 7263  
SWA 18577  
MWA 7277  
RB settlement  
MWA 4757  
Saltworks  
MWA 4949  
JA enc.  
MWA 957H  
AS built

# The Excavation of a Romano-British Settlement at Billesley Manor Farm, Warwickshire in 1995

Stuart C Palmer



**Warwickshire**  
County Council  
Libraries & Heritage  
Museum Field Services  
Archaeology Projects Group

March 2003

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Stuart C Palmer

With contributions from Umberto Albarella, Jeremy Evans, Edward Lewis, Angela Monckton, Nicholas Palmer, Philip Wise and illustrations by Candida Stevens and Patricia Mallett

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## SUMMARY

Excavations in advance of pipeline construction at Billesley Manor Farm in 1995 revealed part of a Romano-British settlement constructed adjacent to the Roman road between Alcester and Stratford-upon-Avon. Two main phases of activity were recognised, although no complete buildings or structures were excavated. A 2nd century phase comprised some stone walls and a number of pits, whilst in the late 3rd/mid-4th century two substantial stone buildings were erected. One contained a corndrier, which was possibly replaced by another built outside the building. A number of other partial structures were recorded.

The function of the settlement, as evidenced by the two corndriers and the animal bone, is likely to have been basically agricultural although its position on the road, mid-way between Alcester and Tiddington, means that it may also have provided services to travellers. There are reports on the coins, the pottery and tile, bronze, iron, animal bone and charred plant remains. Occupation of the settlement apparently ended in the mid-later 4th century.

An Anglo-Saxon inhumation was excavated from one of the defunct corndriers. Analysis of the skeleton is accompanied by a description of the iron grave goods, which include a spear, a shield boss and two buckles.

Appendix A details the results of a section excavated through a middle Iron Age enclosure at Fulbrook, through which the pipeline passed. No internal features were encountered so the function of the site remains unknown but local parallels are discussed.

## INTRODUCTION

In August 1995 the excavation of a Romano-British settlement adjacent to the A46 on Billesley Manor Farm, north-west of Drayton Barn Cottages, was undertaken by the Warwickshire Museum on behalf of Severn Trent Water Ltd (STWL). Part of an Iron Age enclosure located at Sherbourne Hill was also investigated (see Appendix A). The excavations were conducted in advance of the laying of a new water main (the Stratford Strategic Supply) from Alcester to Warwick via Stratford-upon-Avon in Warwickshire. Part of the pipeline route was influenced by the proposed A46 Alcester-Stratford Improvement, for which extensive preliminary archaeological work had been undertaken the previous year (Warwickshire County Council 1994, Warwickshire Museum 1995). This earlier work had included desktop survey, fieldwalking, geophysical survey and trial trenching, and had identified the Billesley site, which was previously unknown.

STWL commissioned the Warwickshire Museum to undertake a programme of archaeological works in accordance with a Brief (dated January 1995) agreed between the Warwickshire Planning Archaeologist and their own archaeological consultant. This programme included full excavation of the affected section of the Romano-British settlement site at Billesley Manor Farm (Site 4); salvage recording on the Alcester - Stratford Roman road (Site 1) and at Sherbourne Hill, Fulbrook (Site 7); test pitting at Westgrove House (Site 2); and observation during topsoil stripping at Red Hill (Site 3), Manor Farm, Bishopton (Site 5) and at Marraway Farm, Snitterfield (Site 6). With the exception of the excavations at Billesley Manor Farm and Sherbourne Hill, this work has been reported on separately (Palmer & Meek 2003).

## Location and Topography

The site at Billesley Manor Farm lay to the north-west of Drayton Barn Cottages, on the north side of the A46 Alcester–Stratford road (SP 152 559) (Fig 1). The site sits on the 75m contour of a Jurassic plateau of Lower Lias, (British Geological Survey 1974), between two marked Warwickshire landscape types, the Feldon and the Arden. To the west of the site, the land surface rises to c.100m a.o.d at Red Hill, a ridge of Rhaetic and Tea Green Marl, then drops sharply some 40m into the valley where Alcester sits at the confluence of the Rivers Alne and Arrow. South and east of the site the River Avon, which flows from the east through Stratford, has incised a narrow valley and deposited low gravel terraces, irregularly on either bank. Further south, this Feldon landscape is flat and open, punctuated with gravel capped hills and broader valleys. North of the site the land rises, the Blue Lias and Mercia Mudstone here incised by narrow, deeper valleys, which characterise the Arden region.

## Archaeological Background

Prior to the work on the A46 improvements, the immediate area surrounding the Billesley Manor Farm site had received very little archaeological attention. This is primarily a result of its rather isolated rural location in an area of limited development and therefore modern research (see Fig 1).

Evidence for Mesolithic activity in the region is mainly restricted to a few typological flints recovered from the Avon Valley that have been registered on the Sites and Monuments Record at Bidford-on-Avon, Welford-on-Avon, and Clifford Chambers. One larger flint assemblage was identified at the foot of Red Hill during fieldwalking in advance of the proposed A46 improvement. A programme of trial trenching in 1994 and subsequent test pitting and observation work during pipeline topsoil stripping in 1995, failed to identify any cut features or further finds (Warwickshire Museum 1995; Palmer & Meek 2003).

There is a general increase in the amount of later Neolithic and Bronze Age activity in the area but again it is mostly restricted to sites along the Avon Valley. The evidence consists mostly of occasional flint finds, which typologically are not precisely datable. Find spots include Marcliff, Welford, Temple Grafton, Stratford, Clifford Chambers, Milcote and west of Stratford. Stone axes have been found west of Tiddington, west of Alcock's Arbour and in the Arrow Valley. Large concentrations of flintwork are known from the Bidford area and at Salford Priors. Neolithic pits have been excavated at Broom in the Arrow Valley and in Alcester. Sepulchro-ritual monuments are equally scarce with a small cropmark ring ditches in the Avon Valley at Milcote and a small group around Tiddington. Two other discrete examples lie in the valleys of the Alne and Stour.

Bronze Age pits are known from excavations at Stratford, whilst at Broom pits were found along side a cremation pyre that produced parts of up to three bronze cauldrons. Other late Bronze Age metalwork in the area includes a socketed gouge found at Alcock's Arbour and a socketed axe found at Welford. Occupation sites associated with these finds are yet undiscovered although some of the undated cropmarks in the area may originate from this period. Few such cropmarks have been tested by excavation or have yielded associated finds, but they are likely to date from the later prehistoric or Roman periods. Iron Age settlement is known from Alcester, Bidford, Welford and Tiddington and Iron Age coins have been recovered at Alcester, Bidford, Welford, Tiddington, Alcock's Arbour and Kinwarton. A sandstone saddle quern of probable later prehistoric date was found near Red Hill.

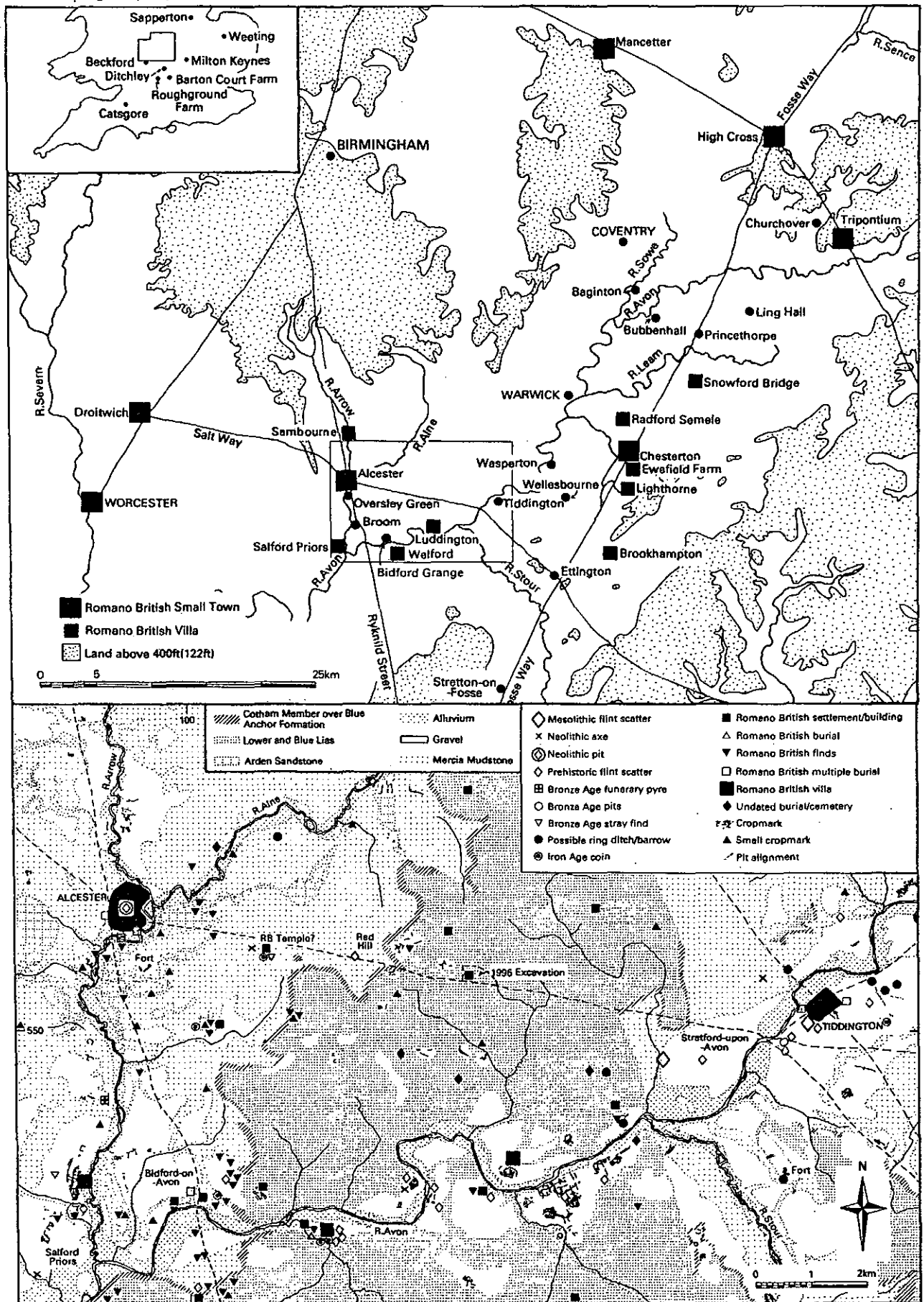


Fig 1 The West Midlands, with sites mentioned in the text, and the Warwickshire Arrow and Avon Valleys and their watershed

Alcester was the major Roman town in the region and has been extensively excavated (see Cracknell 1985; Cracknell & Mahany 1994; Cracknell 1996; and Booth & Evans 2001 for details). The town probably evolved around a mid-1st century fort (Webster 1960) which replaced a short-lived fort indicated by a cropmark on a high ridge that overlooks Alcester from the south (Booth 1996, 32). Tiddington developed on a crossing of the Avon at the very end of the Iron Age becoming a thriving village type settlement in the Roman period (Palmer 1982).

Alcester and Tiddington were linked by a road (the Salt Way, now the A46). This was probably laid out by the Roman military in the mid-1st century, but later served to link the salt producing industry at Droitwich with Alcester on the junction with Ryknild Street, before continuing east to Stratford. From Stratford it continued south-east to cross the Fosse Way and link with the road from Alcester to Towcester (Margary 1973, 278-313). The road was thus an integral part of the Roman communication system.

Roman villas are known at Welford and Luddington with a further two examples in the Arrow Valley at Salford Priors and Sambourne (Palmer 2000a, 219). Several other Romano-British sites have been identified through concentrations of Roman artefacts. Examples include Little Luddington, Bishopton, Billesley village and on the edge of Red Hill. Possible rectilinear field systems to the east of this site have been identified from cropmarks shown on aerial photographs of the area (Figs 1 & 2). Antiquarian references indicate extensive settlement at Aston Cantlow and recent fieldwork has identified settlements at Bidford Grange (Hart *et al* 1991) and at Exhall (Coutts & Gethin 1998). A possible Romano-British shrine or temple postulated at Alcock's Arbour may have had prehistoric origins.

For the Anglo-Saxon period, the excavated cemeteries at Alveston Manor, Stratford (Ford 1996, 59-98) and Bidford (Humphreys *et al* 1923; Humphreys 1925; Booth & Hodgson 1990, 85) indicate two possible settlement foci. Further burials are known from Aston Cantlow and rather less conclusively at Kinwarton. The two important river crossings at Bidford and Stratford need not reflect extensive settlement in between, but the Roman road probably remained in use as an important route for the salt trade, as shown by its naming in Saxon Charters as *Sealt Stret* (Houghton 1932; Warwickshire Museum 1995).

## **Fieldwalking, geophysical survey and trial trenching in 1994**

### **FIELDWALKING**

A programme of fieldwalking was undertaken in 1994 (Fig 2) as part of the assessment of the impact of the proposed A46 Alcester-Stratford Improvement scheme on the Cultural Heritage (Warwickshire County council 1994, Warwickshire Museum 1995). Four fields to the north and west of Drayton Barn Cottages were included in this survey (Fields 57, 58, 59 and 61)

The four fields were walked over in transects at 10m intervals and finds were collected within 20m stints. During this process Romano-British material was noted in the western edge of Field 61, prompting a further detailed survey. An area c.100m x 160m was divided into 20m grid squares with and rewalked more intensively.

A significant concentration of Romano-British pottery and other material was recovered along the eastern side of the boundary between Fields 58 and 61. The pottery scatter was spread from the road at the south, some 180m to the north. The transect survey indicated a gradual fall off in distribution to the east and a more acute fall off to the west and south.

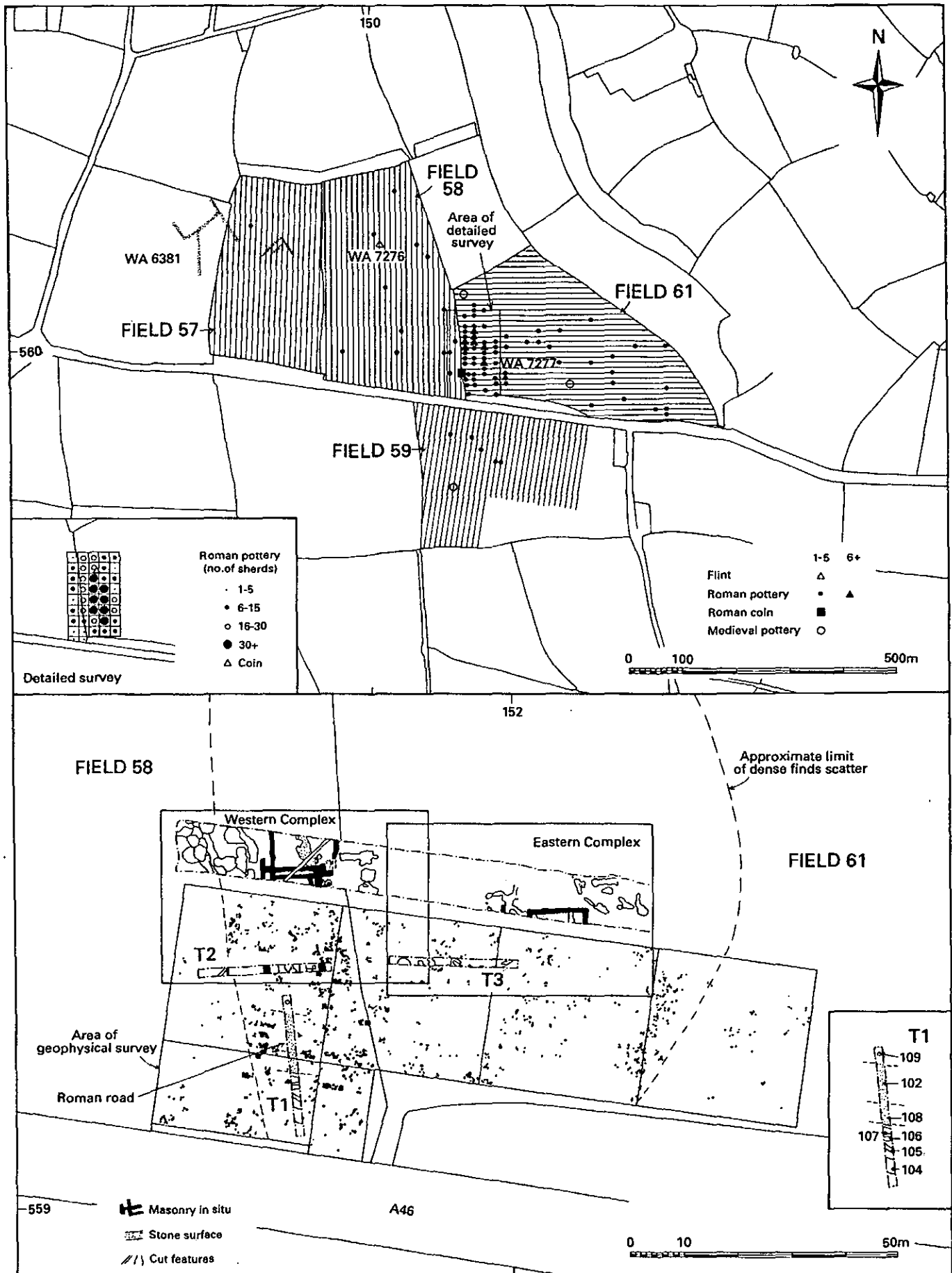


Fig 2 Billesley Manor Farm, fieldwalking surveys, geophysical survey and trial trenching 1994 and excavation 1995



The pottery recovered indicated activity throughout the Roman period, perhaps commencing in the late 1st century AD. Much of the material was identified as 2nd century with perhaps the greatest intensity of pottery discarded then. Late 3rd and early 4th century material was also recognised, as were three coins of this period. The functional composition of the group, the proportion of fine wares (1.9%) and the absence of amphorae seemed to suggest a rural farmstead of no particular pretensions. However, the presence of vessel glass and roof tile implied a site rather higher in the socio-economic scale.

#### **GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY**

Following the fieldwalking survey limited geophysical survey was carried out to determine the extent of the underlying settlement within the proposed road corridor (Fig 2).

A series of four 30m grid squares and two partial squares were laid out in Fields 58 and 61 and surveyed using a Geoscan FM18 Gradiometer. Readings were taken at 0.5m intervals along 1m traverses. Data was processed using GEOPLOT 2.0.

The survey did not really succeed in identifying individual elements in the settlement plan, but there was a general increase in background 'noise' disturbance corresponding to the area of dense finds revealed by the fieldwalking survey.

#### **TRIAL TRENCHING**

A series of three trial trenches were excavated in the areas that showed the highest noise in the geophysical survey (Fig 2). They were able to clarify the existence of Romano-British features within the area of the proposed road corridor. The results of this work have been integrated into the following excavation narrative.

## **THE 1995 EXCAVATION**

### **Methodology**

The excavations commenced in tandem with an August heat wave, temperatures were regularly in the mid-30s centigrade and the sky continually cloudless. The topsoil was removed by a tracked 360° excavator using a 1.8m toothless ditching bucket which created large spoil heaps within the pipeline easement at either end of the cleared site.

The ground was very hard and many cracks were observed that penetrated from the topsoil well in to the natural clay. Machining was impeded in places, where the natural bedrock projected into the plough soil thus preventing all the topsoil from being removed mechanically. The proliferation of this jutting bedrock had also evidently affected the site's survival, many deposits showing evidence that modern ploughs had dislodged bedrock and dragged it through the archaeological features.

The stripped area was cleaned by hand and photographed and planned prior to excavation. Contexts were recorded using the standard Warwickshire Museum Recording System. Each feature or layer was given a number and individual fills within a feature were given a sub-number (expressed as e.g. feature 21 and fills 21/1, 21/2 etc). Evaluation context numbers (prefixed with E in this report) reflected the number of the trench from which they were derived; e.g. E203 was a feature in Trench 2. Finds were recorded with the context number from which they were recovered. Particularly interesting finds were three-dimensionally recorded and given a Small Find Number, expressed eg SF 12.

Plans were drawn at 1:50 and sections at 1:20 and 1:10. Soil texture descriptions were based on the Soil Survey Field Handbook (Soil Survey 1976) and colours matched against a Munsell Soil Colour Chart (Munsell 1975). Soil descriptions are given without the charcoal and gravel content unless one or either was particularly significant. The vast majority of soil deposits were a combination of the natural subsoil and the topsoil, very little imported material was observed.

Phases were developed on a combination of context stratigraphy and pottery dates. The stratigraphy was plotted on a Harris (1979) type matrix and pottery spot dates used to indicate individual phases. Contexts were recorded on pro forma sheets and a register in the form of a site notebook.

#### SOIL SAMPLING

Soil samples for charred plant remains were recovered on a 'most likely to produce results' basis. These were often areas of burning, such as the corndriers, or with other concentrations of domestic rubbish. To save time, small bone samples were not taken on site, but were retrieved from the bulk soil samples during processing. Soil samples were numbered after the context they were taken from; expressed 21/1/1 and 21/1/2 for a second sample etc.

#### Site phasing and chronology

For ease of reference, the site has been divided along the line of the present field boundary into two parts: the western complex and the eastern complex. The following table illustrates how the phases from the two complexes relate to each other.

**Table 1 Site phasing**

Date	Western Complex		Eastern Complex	
Undated	Phase 1?			
2nd century	Phase 1a Phase 1b Phase 1c	Phase 1d		Phase 1e? (undated)
Late 3rd-mid 4th century	Phase 2 Phase 2a		Phase 2	
Anglo-Saxon			Phase 3	
Post-Roman	Phase 4			
Post-Medieval	Phase 5			
Modern	Phase 6			

#### Natural and early undated features

##### NATURAL FEATURES

The underlying geology in the area is Lower Lias clay, the site itself being situated on an outcrop of bedrock. This bedrock rises at a low angle and at the surface erosive processes have worked on the strata, which breaks off in thin plates, to form hollows in which clays have formed. Small fragments of shattered bedrock that had worked into the clay filled hollows as the clay had shrunk during drier periods were evident

across the site. Contexts 41, 82/2, 104, 108 and 109 represent such clay filled hollows but have been omitted from the drawings to aid clarity.

**Table 2 Natural hollows**

No	Shape	Dimensions (m)	Depth (m)	Descriptions
41	Seen as layer in section only		0.15	greyish brown silt with flecks of charcoal and fragments of Lias stone
82/2	Sloping sides and rounded base	1.65 wide (Section N)	0.55	brown silty clay
104	Sloping sides and rounded base	0.30 wide (Section AE)	0.20	brown silty clay
108	Steep sloping northern side and flattish base	2.90 n/s	0.35	yellowish brown silty clay with Lias stone fragments
109	Seen in section only	(Section AE)	0.32	light olive brown silty clay

#### PHASE 1?: UNDATED

##### *The Road (Fig 2)*

In T1 and T2 a number of amorphous and unexcavated anomalies have been assigned to this phase and are detailed in Table 3. The principal feature in T1 was a possible road surface. This was not excavated but the surviving section was at least 11m wide and aligned parallel to the modern road. It was comprised of small and medium Lias limestone rubble E102 overlying pebble layer E108. The exposed surface was flat, evidently truncated by modern ploughing. To the south of the road a series of E/W linear features (E104, E105, E106 and E107) could represent a succession of drainage or boundary gullies although none of them were examined in detail. Also within the trench was a single possible pit E109 on the north side of the surface.

**Table 3 Phase 1, undated anomalies in T1 and T2**

No	Shape	Dimensions (m)	Descriptions
E104	linear	2.3 wide	light olive brown clay loam
E105	linear	0.65 wide (Section AE)	light olive brown clay loam
E106	linear	0.75 wide (Section AE)	light olive brown clay loam
E107	linear	1.25 wide (Section AE)	light olive brown clay loam
E109	circular	0.8	dark greyish brown clay loam
E210	amorphous	5.0 wide	large deposit disturbed by root action filled with dark greyish brown clay loam
E214	amorphous	5.0 wide	brown clay loam
E218	amorphous	0.9 wide	dark greyish brown clay loam with charcoal and Lias fragments

##### *Other features*

Pit 105 (not on plan) was in excess of 1.30m wide with a flat base 0.38m deep and filled with pale brown loamy clay. It was cut by shallow pit/ditch 106=107, which was 1.72m across with a flat base, a maximum of 0.18m deep and filled with yellowish brown silty clay (located on Fig 7, Section AE).

## The Eastern Complex (Figs 3-5; Plates 1-4)

### PHASE 1d

#### *Pit 52=50 and Gullies 53 and 48*

On the southern edge of the excavated area, pit 52 was cut to the west by later **Building A** (Section A). Its extent and indeed function remain unknown but it may have been contemporary with 50 to the east (Section A). It was at least 0.37m deep and filled with brown silty clay. On its east side it was cut by gully 53 which was aligned NW/SE and protruded to butt end some 2.20m from the southern edge of the excavation. Gully 53 had very steep sloping sides and an acutely pointed base 0.58m deep (Sections A & B). The earliest of its three fills 53/3 very dark brown clay, was overlain by 53/2 dark yellowish brown clay which in turn was overlaid by 53/1 very dark greyish brown clay loam with Lias rubble. Gully 48 was aligned N/S 2m north of 53. Its full extent was not identified but it may have had a relationship with 53 to the south. It had sloping sides 0.80m wide, a flat base 0.18m deep and was filled with very dark greyish brown silty clay.

#### *Amorphous hollows*

A number of shallow, amorphous, irregular hollows or scrapes were recorded in the area. These features appeared to form between outcrops of bedrock in the (softer) clay hollows and probably represent the result of some kind of repetitive activity. They included 16, 17, 18 and 25 on the north side of the excavated area, 20, 23 and 29 in the central area, 21 and 22 on the south side, E301, E309 and E324=E323 in T3. Hollow 29 cut tree hole 35=54, which was probably still growing during the initial phases of occupation (Sections G & K).

**Table 4 Phase 1d, irregular or amorphous hollows**

No	Shape	Dimensions (m)	Depth (m)	Descriptions
16	amorphous	1.2 x 0.5 (Section C)	0.20	dark greyish brown silty clay
17	Linear	1.20 x 0.60	0.17	irregular sloping sides and base 17/1 very dark grey clay 17/2 brown silty clay
18	amorphous	1.10 x 0.65 (Section D)	0.23	irregular sloping sides and base 18/1 dark grey clay 18/2 dark greyish brown silty clay 18/3 brown silty clay
20	sub-circular	0.85 x 0.70 (Section E)	0.08	shallow sloping sides and a rounded base 20/1 very dark grey clay 20/2 very dark greyish brown clay
21	amorphous	1.0 wide (Sections H & I)	0.30	21/1=12/2 olive brown clay
22	amorphous	0.50 wide (Section I)	0.12	sloping sides and a rounded base 22/1 very dark greyish brown clay loam
23	amorphous	1.5 x 0.70 (Section F)	0.22	23/1 dark greyish brown clay loam 23/2 olive brown clay
25	Linear	1.8 x 0.4 (Section C)	0.08	rounded sides and ends greyish brown silty clay
29	amorphous	0.60 (Section G)	0.22	sloping sides and a rounded base very dark greyish brown clay loam
E301	unknown	2.50 wide (Section J)	0.20	dark grey clay loam
E309	unknown	1.0 wide	0.08	dark greyish brown clay loam with Lias fragments
E323	unknown	1.0 x 0.60	?	very dark greyish brown clay loam

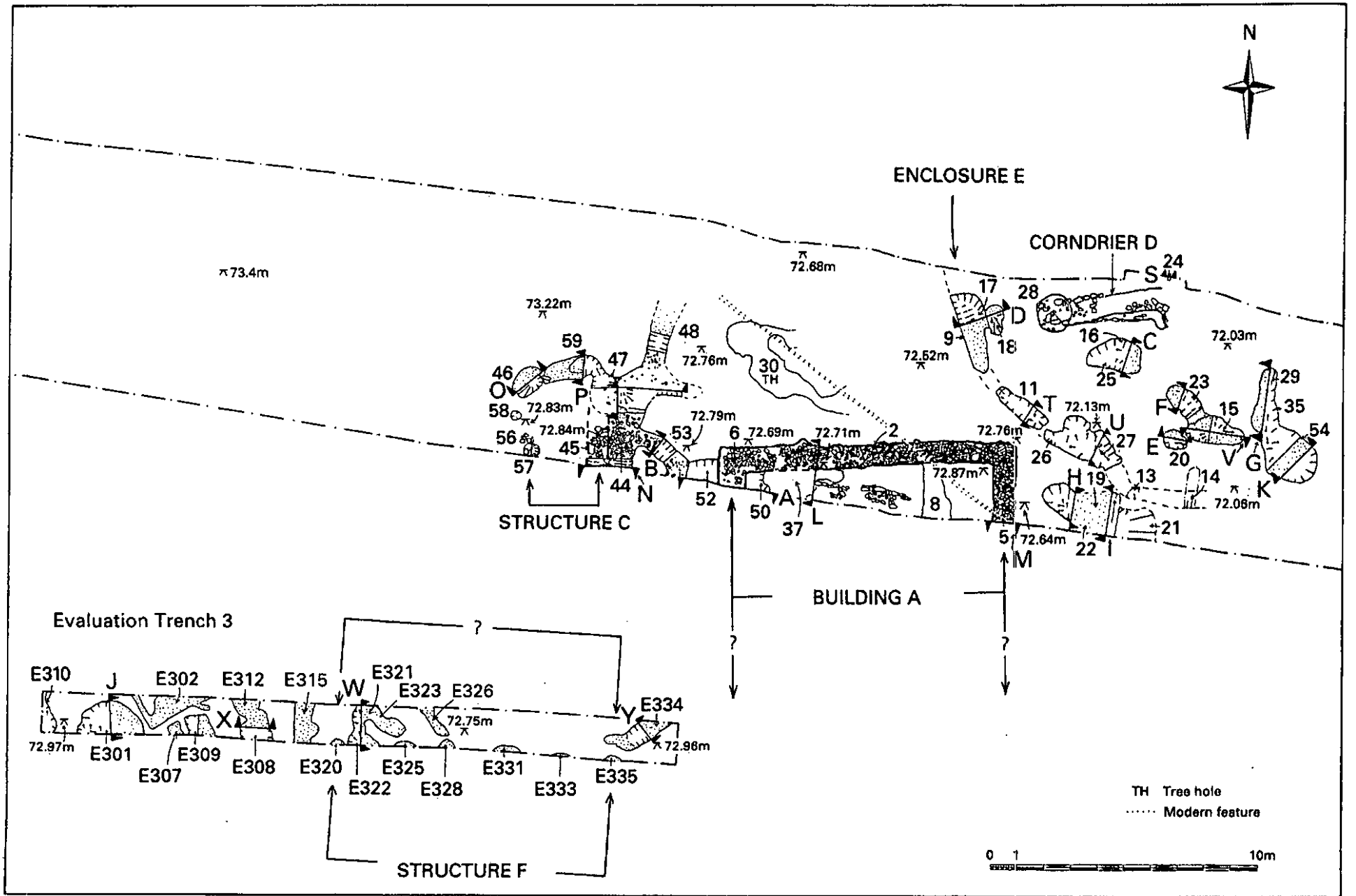


Fig 3 Eastern complex, detailed plan





*Plate 1 Eastern complex, general view from the east*



*Plate 2 Building A, from the west*



## PHASE 1e

A number of irregular anomalies of uncertain character and function were recorded in evaluation trench 3 (not shown on plan). These features although undated seem likely to belong to phase 1.

**Table 5 Phase 1e, undated anomalies in T3**

No	Shape	Dimensions (m)	Descriptions
E302	amorphous	0.2 wide	dark greyish brown clay loam
E307	amorphous	0.4 wide	dark grey clay loam
E310	amorphous	unknown	dark greyish brown
E311	sub-circular	0.75 x 0.6	olive brown
E314	sub-circular	0.35 wide	greyish brown clay loam
E315=E316	linear	0.65 wide	greyish brown clay loam with Lias fragments
E317	sub-circular	0.4 wide	greyish brown sandy clay loam with Lias fragments
E318	amorphous	0.4 wide	very dark greyish brown clay loam
E319	sub-circular	0.4 wide	very dark greyish brown clay loam
E329	amorphous	1.6 wide	possible surface of Lias rubble
E330	amorphous	0.95 wide	dark greyish brown clay loam with Lias fragments
E326=E327	linear	0.40 wide	olive brown clay loam
E332	sub-rectangular	1.5 x 0.8	probable smear of topsoil

## PHASE 2

### *Building A* (Figs 3-4, Plate 2)

Wall foundations 2 (Section L), 5 (Section M) and 6 represented the edge or end of a stone-footed building on the southern edge of the excavated area. Externally it measured 11.1m east-west and protruded 2.6m into the excavated area. It was constructed 0.42m deep in a vertical sided foundation cut 0.90m wide. The foundation base was comprised of a mixture of Lias rubble, larger toward the base, and partially bonded with brown clay. A stakehole 40, revealed in section, 0.80m north of wall 2 could relate to this building. It was V-shaped 0.25m wide, 0.30m deep and filled with very dark greyish brown silty clay (not shown on plan).

### *Corndrier B* (Fig 5, Plate 3)

A corndrying oven 31, was cut into the natural clay and bedrock floor inside Building A (Section L). Although not fully exposed, the drier was laid out east-west inside wall 2, the stakehole to the west and a flue extending to the east, apparently curving to the south at its eastern extremity, forming an L or J shape. It was at least 5.2m long, the bowl being 1.1m long cut 0.45m deep from the level of the natural surface. The flue was a maximum of 0.50m wide.

The sides of the structure (7) were made up with medium sized dressed Lias blocks, which had largely collapsed in a matrix of strong brown sandy clay loam and mortar flecks (7/1). The back of the stakehole was lined with thin, flat angular Lias slabs 38/3 mortared together. These had collapsed along with their covering of dark reddish brown clay loam 38/2. Similarly 38/1 a deposit of dark brown clay loam, reddened in places, with frequent mortar patches had slumped into the flue.

The base of the flue contained a thin layer of dark grey ash 31/4. It was covered by a thin layer of black (greasy) ash 31/3 which contained some charred bone and pottery. This in turn was overlain by a thin lens of white ash 31/2 which was covered with pockets of dark grey ash 31/1.

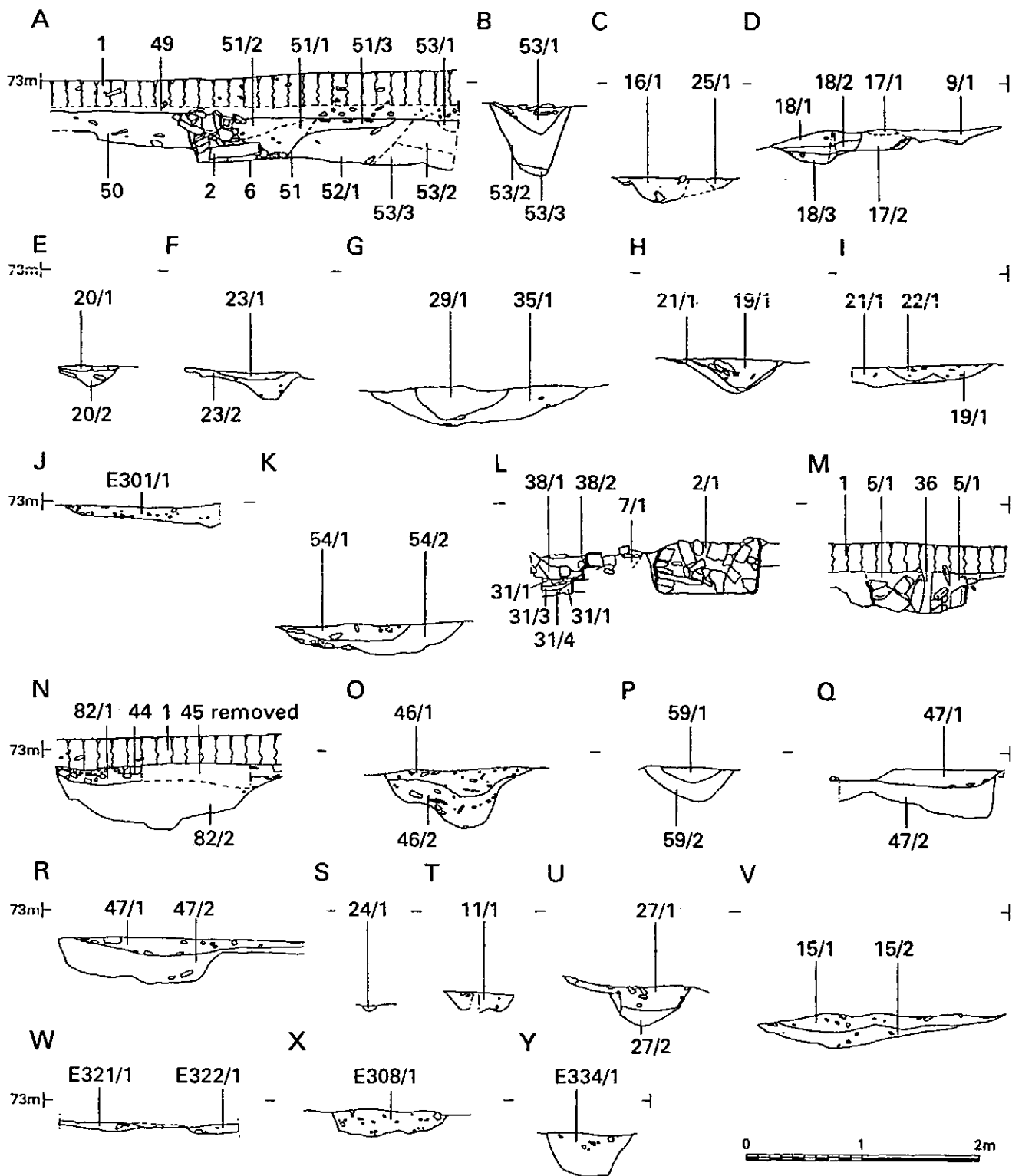


Fig 4 Eastern complex, sections A-Y



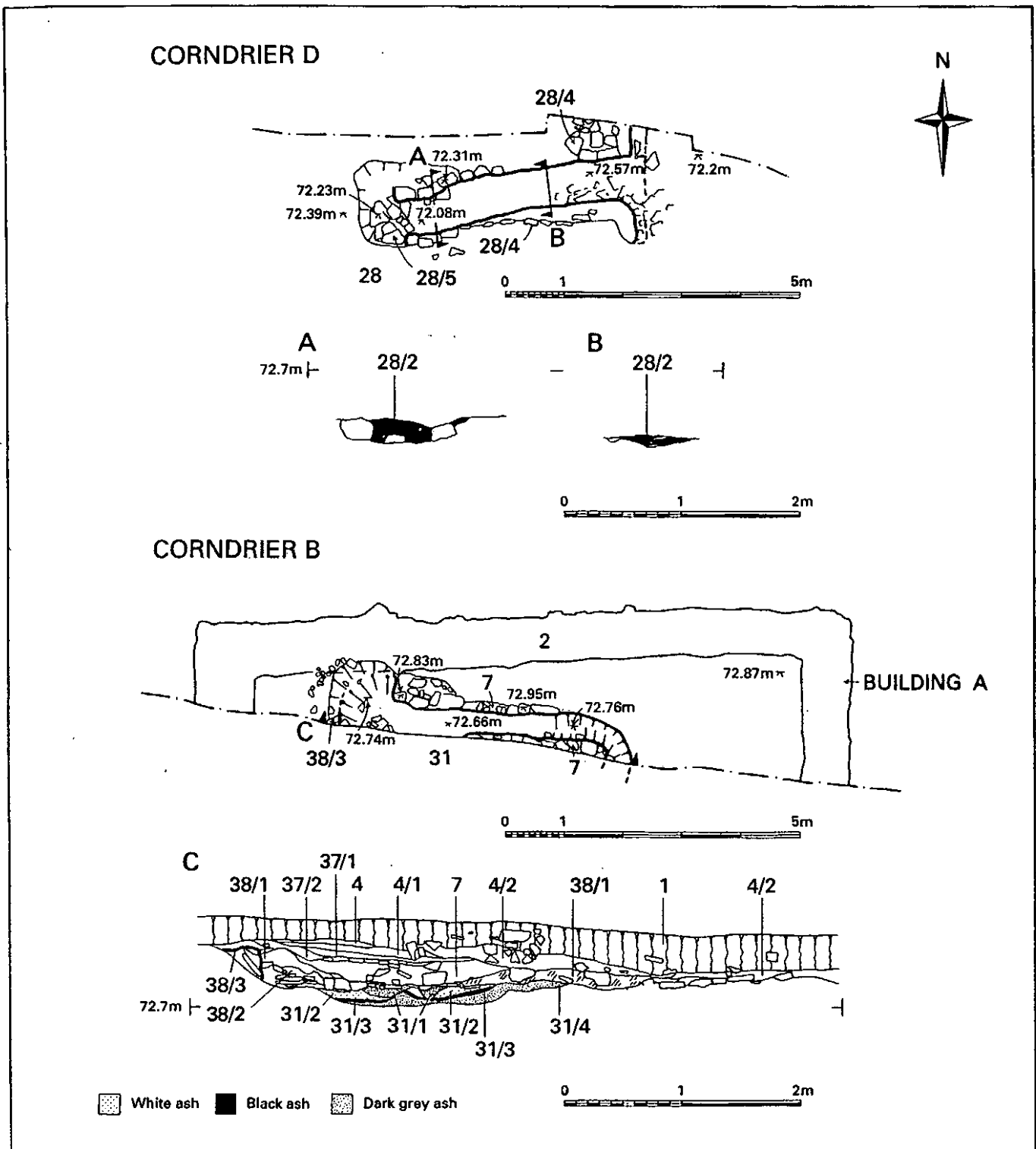


Fig 5 Corndriers D and B

*Interior floor (Fig 3)*

The corndrier was evidently abandoned during the life of the building, the remaining void being levelled with layers 37/1 and 37/2 dark brown clay loam and mortar patches. A compacted layer of mortar and crushed Lias limestone 37 was then laid over as a floor surface. On the eastern side of the building a layer of very dark





*Plate 3 Corndrier B in building A, from the east*



*Plate 4 Corndrier D, from the west*



greyish brown clay loam with medium Lias fragments (8) may also have been part of a floor surface.

### *Demolition*

A sequence of demolition layers above this may represent infill from the dismantled **Building A**. 4/1 dark brown clay loam with mortar and pebbles was overlaid by 4/2 (strong brown sandy clay loam which contained mortar and small Lias blocks) and 4, (also dark brown clay loam with mortar flecks and small fragments of Lias stone rubble).

### *Structure C (Figs 3-4)*

On the west side of **Building A**, part of **Structure C** protruded into the excavation area. It was defined by wall 45 which formed its eastern side and by post settings 57, 56 and 58.

Wall 45 was 0.70m wide and extended from the southern edge of the excavated area 1.5m, although, it undoubtedly was originally longer, perhaps 2m - 3m. It consisted of a single course of medium sized Lias blocks dressed to the faces, with a core of small rubble, all a maximum of 0.15m deep (Section N). Posthole 57 lay 1.7m to the west against the southern edge of the excavation. It was roughly circular, 0.50m in diameter, with a rounded profile 0.15m deep and packed with small Lias rubble in a matrix of very dark greyish brown clay. Immediately adjacent was a circular stone pad 56, 0.35m in diameter, composed of a single course of small Lias fragments in very dark greyish brown clay. A shallow scoop 58, 0.60m to the NNW may represent a further posthole (0.40m diameter). A layer of small Lias rubble and cobbles was rammed (0.10m thick) to form a surface 44 over 82/1 (Section N) on the east side of wall 45. Its preservation in this location may be the result of it sinking into the underlying natural hollow 82.

A curving arrangement of pits to the north probably defined the maximum extent of **Structure C**. Oval pit 46, 2.1m from the southern edge of the excavated area had steep sloping sides 1.30m by 0.90m, which stepped to a narrower base 0.50m deep (Section O). Its earlier fill 46/2 very dark grey clay with Lias fragments was overlaid by 46/1 also very dark grey clay but with smaller Lias fragments. An elongated pit 59 immediately to the east, was 2.1m long by 0.90m wide with sloping sides and a rounded base 0.29m deep (Section P). An earlier fill 59/2 very dark grey clay was overlain by 59/1 very dark greyish brown silty clay. It had an uncertain relationship to the SE with pit 47 which was 1.30m long by 0.90m wide and had steep sloping sides and a flat, albeit stepped base, 0.32m and 39m deep (Sections Q & R). The earlier of its two fills 47/2 brown clay was overlaid by 47/1 very dark greyish brown silty clay. The function of this feature group is unclear. They could have contained upright timbers but the nature of their fills seems to preclude this.

### *Corndrier D (Fig 5, Plate 4)*

Stone-lined corndrier 28 located on the northern side of the excavated area was apparently free standing, but was built within a small enclosure (E).

The stone structure 28 was T-shaped and in excess of 5m long, although, the T-bar was mostly absent. It was cut directly into the natural bedrock and the sides built up with 28/4 a single course of medium sized dressed Lias blocks, set in 28/3 yellowish brown mortar c.10mm thick. Internally the flue was 0.50m wide, the T-bar at least 2m across and the rake-out pit at the western end approximately 1.4m across. The base of the flue was covered with charred black layer 28/2 which contained some very small Lias fragments. A c.30mm thick Lias slab 28/5 found at the western end of the flue and covering the base of the rake-out pit and layer 28/2 could have been

inserted to aid the removal of burnt material, it being far easier on the flat surface than on the uneven bedrock. It was overlaid by 28/7 grey ash, presumably the result of the last firing. The structure had evidently been robbed and where stonework was missing, 28/6 dark grey clay with very small Lias fragments had been deposited. Demolition rubble 28/1 lay across the structure in a matrix of very dark grey clay loam with yellowish brown clay flecks. A small circular depression 24, which could have been a post setting was identified within the northern arm of the T-bar. It had a rounded profile 0.12m in diameter by 0.05m deep and was filled with black silty clay loam (Section S). This perhaps was for a support inserted some time after the initial construction.

### *Small enclosure E*

An enclosure was constructed around the southern and western sides of Comdrier D. It was represented by a discontinuous gully formed by a series of elongated pits that extended from the northern edge of the excavated area. All the pits were irregular in profile, a result of their having been hewn from the bedrock. At the northern edge, pit 9 was 3.0m long, 0.75m wide, 0.10m deep and filled with very dark grey silty clay (Section D). Some 0.8m to the SE, pit 11 was 2.20m long, 0.70m wide, 0.15m deep and filled with very dark grey silty clay (Section T). A further 0.2m to the SE, pit 26 was at least 3.0m long, 0.40m wide, 0.11m deep and filled with very dark grey silty clay. It had an uncertain relationship to the north with an amorphous pit 27 that was 1.10m wide and 0.33m deep (Section U). The earliest of its two fills 27/2 very dark greyish brown silty clay was overlaid by 27/1 very dark grey silty clay. Pit 15 was located 2.5m NE of 27 and although it was not orientated on the same curved alignment as the previous pits, it was of a sufficiently similar character that it surely represented part of the enclosure. It was 2.20m long, 1.0m wide with gentle sloping sides, a flattish base 0.30m deep and filled with very dark grey clay (Section V). This feature was appeared indistinct from hollow 13 to the SE, which curved around an outcrop of bedrock. It was at least 1.5m long and 0.5m wide, with sloping sides and irregular base filled with very dark greyish brown clay. The alignment probably continued to the east with hollow 14 which survived overhead truncation as a an irregular scoop 0.50m wide and 0.25m deep, filled with very dark greyish brown clay loam.

### *Amorphous hollow 19=12*

An amorphous hollow 19=12 on the southern edge of the excavated area was similar to those in Phase 1 and probably represents an area of activity. It was basically linear, c.3m long, 0.80m wide with sloping sides, a rounded base 0.25m deep (Section H) and filled with very dark greyish brown clay loam with Lias fragments and mortar probably derived from Building A.

### *Structure F*

On the south edge of T3 a row of anomalies could possibly have represented postholes for a building or structure some 11m in length. A single example E322 (Section W) was excavated, the remainder (E320, E325, E328, E331, E333 and E335) are included by association. E322 was 1.15m wide, by 0.17m deep with a flat base and was filled with very dark greyish brown clay loam with Lias fragments. E321 to the north of E322 may also belong to the structure. It was 0.50m wide, only 0.06m deep and filled with very dark greyish brown clay loam (Section W).

A further feature in T3 dated to this phase was a possible gully aligned N/S E308=E312, some 2m west of E320. It had irregular sides 0.96m wide, an irregular base 0.23m deep and was filled with dark greyish brown clay loam (Section X). At the east end of the possible Structure F, gully E334 was found to have steep sides 0.72m apart, a flat base 0.34m deep and be filled with brown clay loam (Section Y).

## The Western Complex (Figs 6-7, Plate 5)

### PHASE 1a

#### *Enclosure gullies*

A series of gullies broadly aligned NNW/SSE, crossed through the excavated area and are likely to have formed phases of enclosure. Although not stratigraphically proven, they probably expanded outward from the occupation site and have therefore been divided into this and the following two sub phases.

Gully 86=88=91 appeared to extend from the northern edge of excavation from the north-west and abruptly turn southwards and terminate within the area. It was shadowed by gully 85=87=92 which butt ended adjacent, although their stratigraphic relationship was never established. Gully 86=88=91 generally had steep sloping sides 0.82-1.10m wide, an irregular base 0.15-0.23m deep (Section AB) and was filled with dark greyish brown clay with some small Lias fragments. Gully 85=87=92 was also irregular in profile, between 0.48-0.70m wide shallow and steep sloping sides, a flattish but uneven base 0.15-0.22m deep (Section AB) and filled with dark greyish brown clay with small fragments of Lias and small pebbles. Gully 95 appeared to represent an opposing terminal 1.2m to the south. It was badly disturbed by root action but appeared to have steep sloping sides 1.10m wide and a sloping base 0.40m deep (Section AA). The earliest of its three fills 95/3 yellowish brown silty clay contained a large Lias block. It was overlaid by 95/2 brown silty clay that in turn was overlaid by 95/1 grey silty clay.

Continuation of the enclosure to the south may be evident as gully E211 on the east side of T2. It was in excess of 1.9m wide, the eastern extremity being cut by wall E201. Its profile suggested that it had been re-cut, perhaps twice, as it had an irregular base at least 0.3m deep (Section Z). It was filled with dark yellowish brown clay loam.

#### *Wall 99*

This phase contained the first clear indication of construction in the form of N/S wall 99, which was located immediately west of the modern hedged boundary. It was only evident as a linear arrangement of small Lias rubble 0.5m wide, constructed directly on top of the bedrock. The function of the walls remains unclear, but it seems unlikely that it formed part of a conventional building.

### PHASE 1b

#### *Gully 83*

Gully 83 was aligned N/S and extended from the southern edge of the excavated area, although its full extent remains unknown. It had steep sloping sides 0.69m wide and a shallow V-shaped base 0.42m deep (Section AC). Its earliest fill 83/2 olive grey clay was overlaid by 83/1 very dark grey clay. This upper fill was evident to the north as 102=103 where it contained significant quantities of charcoal, fragments of Lias and mortar pressed into the surface.

#### *Walls 66, 84 and 79*

Wall 66 was aligned E/W and at its eastern end it overlay the earlier foundation 99 before being truncated by the modern field boundary ditch. It survived as a 12m long stretch, albeit truncated at its western end. It comprised medium and large rubble, loosely packed in a 0.70m wide trench that had a sloping northern side and

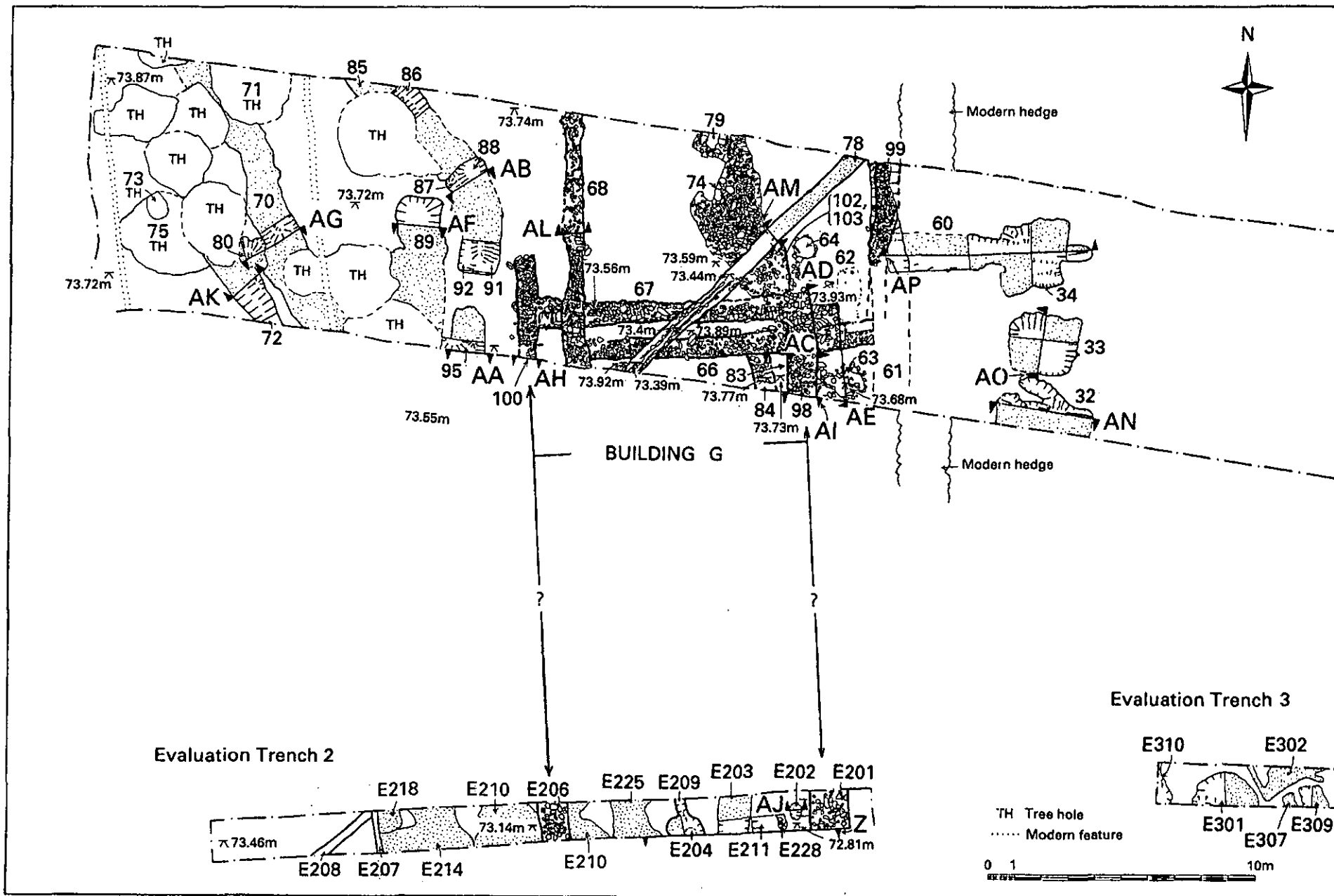


Fig 6 Western complex, detailed plan

vertical southern side, up to 0.40m deep (Sections AD & AE). It was abutted on its southern side by 0.70m wide wall 84 that protruded 1.2m from the southern edge of the excavated area and had seemingly sunk into the softer fill of underlying ditch 83. This wall was broadly aligned with wall stub 79 which protruded 0.5m from the northern edge of the excavated area some 5m to the west of 99.

#### *Enclosure gully 89*

Gully 89 was aligned N/S some 0.5m west of 85 and aligned with it at the point where it curved to the south. Its terminal end was 1.55m wide with steep sloping sides and a flat uneven base 0.32m deep (Section AF). It was filled with dark grey clay that contained small Lias fragments. It was badly disturbed by tree roots to the south but probably extended beyond the edge of the excavation.

#### PHASE 1c

#### *Enclosure gully 70*

Gully 70 was aligned NNW/SSE some 4m to the west of gully 89 and was 1.40m wide with sloping sides and irregular base 0.32m deep which could have been the result of two cuts (Section AG). It was filled with 70/2 olive yellow clay, which was overlaid by 70/1 dark greyish brown clay that contained Lias fragments.

#### PHASE 1d

#### *Oven E204+E209*

A small oven-like feature examined in T2 could belong to any of the Phase 1 sub-phases. The pit-like bowl E204, 1.20m in diameter by 0.20m deep (Section Z) was lined with E204/2 strong brown (burnt) clay, which was mottled red and contained charcoal. A narrow, 0.45m wide channel E209 abutted the bowl on its northern side and both were filled with E204/1 dark yellowish brown clay loam.

#### *Building G*

This building on the western side of the main excavation area was represented by an H-shape of wall foundations 100, 98 and 67. Externally it measured at least 11m E/W although it is anything but certain if this represents the length or width of the building. If it extended to the south as far as T2 and was represented by walls E206 and E201, it was at least 20m long, and as there was no corresponding evidence for it in T1, it would have been a maximum of 25m long.

The western wall foundation 100, extended from the southern edge of the excavation some 3.3m, the northern 1.5m representing a buttress as it extended further to the north than the E/W wall 67. It was cut into the subsoil 0.46m deep with vertical sides 0.66m wide (Section AH) and it was composed of interleaved Lias rubble (100/2) in a matrix of dark brown clay loam (100/1). In T2 it aligned with E206 which remained unexcavated but was 1.1m wide on the surface.

The eastern wall foundation 98 extended 3.8m into the excavation area, the buttress extending 1.4m north of the E/W wall 67. It was constructed within a cut which had steep sloping sides 0.92m wide and a flat base 0.54m deep and filled with medium and large Lias rubble within a matrix of dark brown clay loam (Section AI). In T2 it aligned with E201 which revealed a wider, more sloping profile 0.6m deep (Section Z).

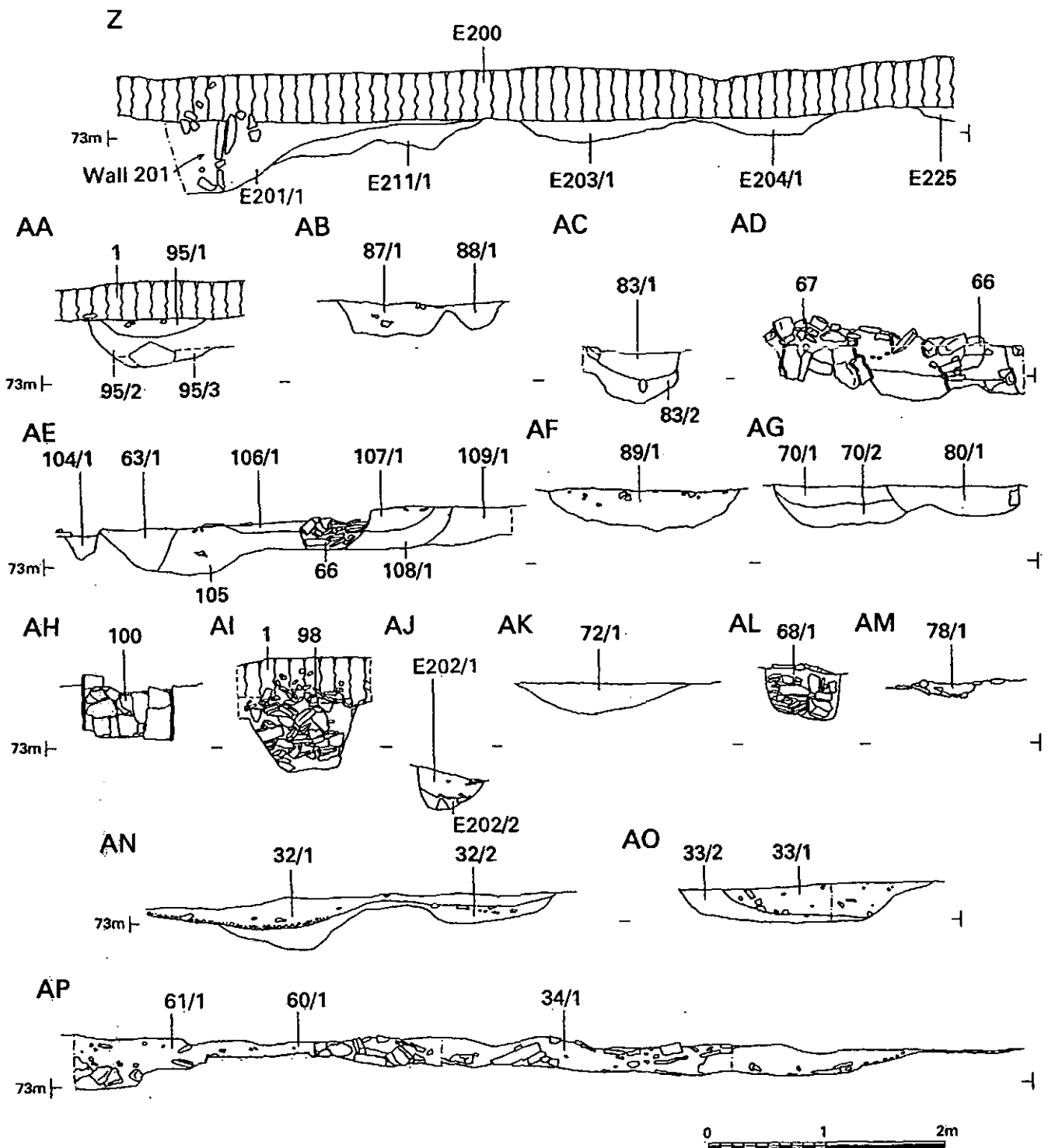


Fig 7 Western complex, sections Z-AP

The northern wall foundation 67 was 9.2m long, abutted both the western and eastern walls and was cut into the subsoil 0.55m deep by 0.80m wide (Section AD). At its base medium Lias rubble was overlaid by smaller rubble in a greyish brown matrix.

No mortar or wall plaster was found in association with the building and in the absence of contemporary floor layers or other deposits very few finds can be attributed to it.





*Plate 5 Western complex walls, from the south*



*Plate 6 Anglo-Saxon inhumation 3*



### *Internal features*

Two parallel gullies that lay between E206 and E201 in T2 may have been related to the building. On the west side gully E225=E229=E227(=E205)=E226 had sloping sides at least 1.5m wide, a flat base 0.10m deep and was filled with brown clay loam with Lias fragments (Section Z). Some 2.1m to the east, gully E203 had a similar profile, being 1.5m wide and 0.18m deep (Section Z). A small pit E202 adjacent to wall E201 may also relate to this phase. It was oval with sloping sides 0.80m x 0.53m wide, with a rounded base 0.25m deep and filled with very dark greyish brown clay loam (Section AJ).

### *Enclosure Gully 72*

Gully 72 on the western edge of the excavated area was aligned NW/SE and continued the sequence of boundary or enclosure gullies seen in Phase 1. It had shallow sloping sides 0.86m wide, a rounded base 0.14m deep and was filled with dark grey clay that unusually contained no Lias fragments (Section AK).

### PHASE 2a

#### *Wall 68*

Wall foundation 68 cut N/S through **Building G**, extending across the entire width of the excavated area (c.9m). It was built within a square sided slot 0.64m wide and 0.40m deep filled with a tightly knit jumble of medium and large Lias blocks bonded with clay (Section AL). At the surface level patches of mortar indicated the type of bonding used in the superstructure. The western wall of **Building G** (69) may well have still been extant at this time because the western end of the E/W wall 67 was possibly strengthened, buttressing both 68 and 69. The eastern end of wall 67 was probably already demolished because the foundations were disturbed by the new construction. This is unlikely merely to have been a boundary wall and may have formed the rear of an otherwise unknown structure.

#### *Postholes 63 and 64*

Two postholes on the western side of Phase 2 wall 98 may also relate to this phase; 63 at the southern edge of the excavated area and 64, some 4.3m to the north. Posthole 63 was 0.65m wide with sloping sides and an angular base 0.35m deep (Section AE). It was basically circular in profile but had an integral slot-like spur to the east 0.45m wide, perhaps suitable for a wooden beam connecting it to wall 98. No evidence for a post-pipe was noted but a circular (0.55m diameter) gap in the overlying rubble 76, indicated the former presence of an upright. It was filled with brown silty clay. Unexcavated 64 was represented by a 0.80m wide gap in rubble 76.

#### *Rubble surface 74=94*

A surface of medium sized Lias rubble 74=94 was laid within a shallow hollow, possibly created by the removal of the wall which conjoined Phase 1b walls 79=84.

#### *Drains 78=E208? and E207*

The area to the east of wall 68 was crossed by stone-lined drain 78. This feature extended across the area excavated NE/SW but probably drained to the NE and was integral to surface 74=94. It was constructed in a 0.6m wide slot and comprised two rows of irregular sized Lias plates laid on edge 0.10m apart forming a slot 0.10m deep, with smaller rubble packing them out to the rear (Section AM). A further alignment of Lias plates was positioned as a cover along the entire length. A deposit

of brown clay loam with charcoal flecks had formed in the base of the drain. A very similar feature (E208) on the same alignment, albeit displaced some 10m to the east, was recorded in T2. This feature appeared to relate to a N/S drain E207 that was only 0.2m wide.

### *Oblong pit 62*

Oblong pit 62 was dug slightly east of the posthole alignment 63 and 64 but seems likely to belong to this phase. It was 1.7m long by 1.0m wide with shallow sloping sides, an uneven base 0.25m deep, and filled with very dark greyish brown clay with small Lias fragments.

### *Linear pit group 32, 33, 34 and drainage gully 60=55*

A series of three pits aligned N/S adjacent to the modern hedge line appear to have been used for drainage and perhaps rubbish disposal. Alternatively they may have been tree root holes which had filled with silts when uprooted. Prior to excavation they were almost square in plan, whilst excavation revealed an irregularly eroded profile. Narrow grooves on their western sides may have drained water from the building range to the west. These features may more accurately be placed in Phase 4.

At the southern edge of the excavated area pit 32 was 3.60m wide and over 1.90m long, although, it had a double scooped base a maximum of 0.46m deep (Section AN). The earlier of its two fills 32/2 very dark grey clay with Lias fragments, covered the base of both the scoops and was overlaid by 32/1 very dark grey clay loam, also with fragments of Lias. The central pit 33 (2.10m x 2.70m), had sloping sides and a flattish base (0.32m deep) and its earlier fill 33/2 dark yellowish brown clay was overlaid by 33/1 dark grey clay with Lias fragments (Section AO). The northernmost pit 34, (2.60m by 2.50m) was 0.31m deep, with shallow sloping sides and a flattish base 0.31m deep filled with very dark greyish brown clay with small and medium Lias fragments. It appeared to be contemporary with drainage gully 60=55, which extended from the west (Section AP). The western end was obscured by the disturbance caused by the modern hedgerow, but it was 0.90m wide with irregular sides and a sloping base 0.33m deep, filled with the same very dark greyish brown clay as pit 34.

## **Anglo-Saxon and later activity**

### **PHASE 3: ANGLO-SAXON**

#### *Inhumation 3* (see Fig 14, Plate 6)

This phase is represented by a single inhumation (3) within the Eastern Complex. The body was interred inside the Phase 2 **Corndrier D**. No grave cut could be discerned, the body being laid out supine with the head to the east inside the flue and covered over with the charred black silty loam and strong brown burnt clay flecks from the flue fill.

### **PHASE 4: POST-ROMAN**

#### *Tree holes*

Parts of the site were damaged by a morass of amorphous hollows indicative of tree root action. These predominantly occurred in pockets of natural clay between outcrops of bedrock. Many of them contained the darker soils associated with

occupation, along with finds that must have been lying around on the ground surface. It is not certain if this phase pre or post-dates phase 3.

Only a single definite example (30) was observed in the eastern complex, probably because much of the surface in this area was bedrock. Five such features were examined in the western complex (71, 73, 75, 80 (Section AG) and 101).

**Table 6 Phase 4, tree holes**

No	Shape	Dimensions (m)	Depth (m)	Descriptions
30	u-shaped	c.3.0 x c.3.0	0.10	very irregular horseshoe shape very dark greyish brown clay loam
71	Sub-oval	c.1.5 x 1.5	0.33	sloping sides irregular base dark greyish brown clay with Lias fragments
73	Oval	1.0 x 0.70	0.14	sloping sides and a flattish base, cuts 75 dark grey clay with Lias fragments
75	Sub-oval	1.54 wide	0.24	sloping sides and rounded base dark grey clay with medium Lias fragments
80	Amorphous	?	0.24	not recorded
101	Sub-circular	?	?	not recorded

#### PHASE 5: POST-MEDIEVAL

##### *Field boundary ditch 61*

A shallow ditch 61 was dug along the western side of the existing hedged boundary. It was not fully sectioned but was at least 2.5m wide and over 0.43m deep, cut through bedrock and truncating wall 66. Its upper fill 97 (not drawn) dark greyish brown clay loam contained small and medium Lias rubble.

#### PHASE 6: MODERN

A number of ceramic land drains crossed the excavated area including 36, 39, 51 (Section A) and 81. Topsoil across the site (1=100=200=300) was very dark greyish brown clay loam and was between 0.30m and 0.35m thick. During the course of the work further numbers were given to areas that required further cleaning either because topsoil had been erroneously left on or because an interface had formed from plough action mixing topsoil with the underlying deposits. Other numbers were allocated to cleaning layers: 10 topsoil west of the hedged boundary; 43 cleaning layer above surface 44; 49 interface layer over Building A (Section A); 69 rubble from wall 100 moved by plough action; 76 rubble overlying eastern end of Building G; 90 rubble from wall 98; 93 rubble from wall 68; 96 finds layer over rubble spread 76.

## THE FINDS

### Worked flint

Four pieces of worked flint were found residually in the 1995 excavations, but no worked flint came from the evaluation trenches or from the fieldwalking. The group included two scrapers SF 31 (Phase 2, 47/2) and SF 68 (Phase 6, 1). The latter a distal end scraper, and a bladelet SF 22, (Phase 2, 7/1) could reasonably be ascribed to the Mesolithic period. The fourth piece was an undiagnostic preparation flake SF 66 (Phase 2a, 33/1).

This very small group, although in itself not terribly significant, confirms that the area was visited during the Mesolithic period and its proximity to the scatter found at the foot of Red Hill c. 2km to the west demonstrates that the landscape outside the major river valley's was utilised. The locale would have offered some vantage of the river valley but equally may have been on an established route-way or seasonal round on the edge of the higher, drier ground.

### **Romano-British Pottery** by *Jeremy Evans with a contribution by Brenda Dickinson*

Some 2429 sherds (24.133kg) of Roman pottery were recovered from the site, 846 sherds being from stratified Roman contexts. The material has been recorded following the Warwickshire Museum fabric type series and recording system. Detailed fabric descriptions are in Pottery Appendix 1. The occurrence of rim forms by phase is tabulated in Pottery Appendix 2. A tabulation of fabric occurrence by area and phase (by count, weight, minimum numbers of rims and RE) is in Pottery Appendix 3. All forms recovered from the site are illustrated in the form type series (Figs 8-10).

### CHRONOLOGY

The site samian list includes a few South Gaulish pieces, the earliest closely dated being a decorated bowl of Sulpicius, AD85-110. There is also a Les Martres piece, but little evidence of Hadrianic or early Antonine deposition, with the bulk of the material being later Antonine. The coarse pottery also seems to mirror this, with virtually no class E fabrics, suggesting pottery deposition did not commence until after c.AD 60/70. There is a small amount of material, such as some of the Malvernian jars, which dates to the later 1st to mid 2nd century, but much more seems to be of later 2nd century or 2nd-3rd century date. The strength of 3rd century deposition may be illustrated by the occurrence of BB1 lattice decorated sherds, with only a single Hadrianic-Antonine acute lattice decorated one to sixteen 3rd-4th century obtuse lattice decorated ones. In terms of the BB1 forms represented sixteen vessels are allocated to the Hadrianic to mid 3rd century period and seventeen to the later 3rd to mid/late 4th century. Mortaria do not appear on the site until the later 2nd century, when a Central Gaulish samian Dr45, AD 170-200, is found, and the majority appear to be 3rd century, with an early 3rd century Mancetter type, two Oxfordshire type M17s and a type M19, all dated AD240-300, compared with two Oxfordshire type C97s with a range AD 240-400, but which probably reached the site in the 4th century.

There is comparatively little material which can be allocated to the last decades of the 4th century, such as the latest Southern Shell tempered ware, late Nene Valley types and the latest Oxfordshire types (cf. Evans 1996, Gas House Lane, Phase D). However, quantities of these types were also absent from Salford Priors (Evans 2000) despite its very strong late coin list. The coin list here is of little help, beyond confirming occupation to the mid-4th century. All that can be said with confidence is

that there is no clear evidence for occupation in the late 4th century on the site, but such occupation cannot be ruled out.

Forty-eight sherds of Roman pottery were recovered from Phase 1a. These included sherds of BB1 of Hadrianic or later date from 85, 87 and 91, and a white ware campanulate cup (W24.1), perhaps of 1st century date from 95. No samian was present.

Seventy-nine sherds of pottery were recovered from Phase 1b, which succeeded Phase 1a. This contained Central Gaulish samian including an Antonine Dr 33 from 83 and a Dr37 of Cinnamus from 83 (see below Dickinson Decorated ware No 2) dated c.AD 150-80. It also included a greyware jar (R41.3) of Hadrianic-Antonine date from 102 and a Severn Valley ware jar (O231.5) of, perhaps, 2nd century date from 89. Thus a mid-later Antonine date might be appropriate for this phase.

Only five sherds were recovered from Phase 1c the only datable sherd being a sherd of Central Gaulish samian of indeterminable form of Hadrianic-Antonine date from 70. However, stratigraphically the phase succeeded Phase 1b.

Phase 1d is the stratigraphic equivalent of phases 1a-1c, and as such should span the 2nd century at least. It contained seventy-seven sherds of pottery including a later 2nd century BB1 jar (B11.2) from E324, a 2nd-3rd century Severn Valley ware wide-mouthed jar (O21.2) from E301, a Severn Valley ware tankard (O29.6) of similar date also from E301, and a Central Gaulish samian ware Dr 18/31R or 31R of Antonine date from 29. Also present was a Pink Grog tempered ware storage jar (G11.1) of later 3rd-4th century date from 20, which was presumably intrusive.

Phase 1e includes unexcavated features in Trench 3 which probably date within phase 1. Eighteen sherds of pottery are recorded from these features, including a sherd of red-slipped Oxfordshire mortarium (M71) from E301, dated to after c.AD 240 and a sherd of Southern Shell-Tempered ware (C11) from E327 probably of later 3rd-4th century date. All these sherds probably come from topsoil slumping over the features.

Phase 2 deposits stratigraphically succeed those of Phase 1c and 1d and contained 355 sherds of pot. The pottery included obtuse lattice decorated BB1 sherds from 12, 15 and E202 of 3rd-mid 4th century date and two BB1 developed beaded and flanged bowls (B11.7) of later 3rd-mid 4th century date from 57. Oxfordshire colour-coated ware (F51) comes from 11, 19, 45 and 47 which must date to after c.AD 240 and two Oxfordshire C97 mortaria (M71.1) of similar date come from 37 and 38. There is a sherd of Southern Shell-tempered ware (C11) of later 3rd-4th century date from 12 and a possibly later 4th century sherd of ?South-West Brown-slipped ware (F59) from 28. Severn Valley wares included wide-mouthed jars (O231.16 and O27.4) of later 3rd-4th century date from 46 and 27. The Phase 2 assemblage would seem to have a later 3rd-mid 4th century date range.

Phase 2a, containing 338 sherds of pottery, appears to succeed Phase 2 but only on the western area of the site (whereas Phase 2 deposits include material from the eastern side of the site which could be contemporary with Phase 2a. It includes obtuse lattice decorated BB1 bodysherds of 3rd-mid 4th century date from 32, 33, and 60 and developed beaded and flanged BB1 bowls (B11.7) from 33 and 60. Southern Shell-tempered ware of later 3rd-4th century date comes from 33, 60 and 63, and Oxfordshire colour-coated ware, dated to after c.AD 240, comes from 32, 33, and 34. An Oxfordshire M17 mortarium (M23.2), dated c.AD 240-300, comes from 33, and a sherd of ?South-West Brown-slipped ware of perhaps later 4th century date from 60. There is nothing in the Phase 2a assemblage which appears to post-date that from Phase 2. As discussed above it is not clear that pottery deposition continued on the site in the later 4th century.

## THE FABRICS

### *Fabric Class A, Amphorae, 0.1%*

The only amphora type represented on the site is Dressel 20, as is usual on rural sites, and levels are very low, there is none in the stratified deposits and only 0.1% in the entire assemblage. This is typical for a basic level rural site.

### *Fabric Class B, Black Burnished wares, 8.0%*

BB1 appears at the site in the Hadrianic-Antonine period, representing 10.1% of the assemblage in Phase 1, 8.2% in Phase 2 and 8.9% in Phase 2a. The 2nd century BB1 levels here are comparable with those at Alcester (9% on the Baromix site, Phase E) and are rather higher than the 2.5% at Salford Priors area C1 and the c.7% at Bidford Grange. Unusually the level of BB1 falls slightly here in the 3rd century, in contrast to Bidford Grange, Salford Priors and Alcester, where 3rd century urban levels have 20-40%. This would seem to suggest a fall in the level of contact with the urban market through which BB1 seems to have been distributed (Evans 2000) in the third century, which had been quite strong in the 2nd.

Table 7 shows the functional composition of BB1 from Billesley Manor. As at Alcester and Salford Priors tablewares are dominant. However, as at Salford Priors jar levels are lower than at Alcester (Evans 2000, Table 15), this may be because of competition from other, more local cooking pot suppliers, most of which did not produce cooking bowls and dishes.

**Table 7 Functional composition of BB1**

Jars	Bowls	Dishes	Lids	
34%	41%	23%	2%	n=44

### *Forms (Fig 8)*

#### *Fabric B11*

- B11.1 A slightly everted BB1 jar rim, cf. Gillam 1976, nos 4-7, later 2nd-early 3rd century.
- B11.2 A BB1 jar with out-turned rim tip, cf. Gillam 1976, nos 3-6, later 2nd century.
- B11.3 A BB1 jar with sharply everted rim, cf. Gillam 1976, nos 8-12, 3rd-mid 4th century.
- B11.4 A BB1 cavetto rimmed jar, cf. Gillam 1976, no 8, 3rd century.
- B11.5 A BB1 flange rimmed bowl, 2nd to very early 3rd century.
- B11.6 A flanged bowl with grooved rim, cf. Gillam 1976, no 43, early-mid 3rd century. Not illustrated.
- B11.7 A developed beaded and flanged bowl in BB1, later 3rd-4th century.
- B11.8 A BB1 simple rimmed dish.
- B11.9 A bead rimmed dish in BB1 with intersecting arc decoration, later 2nd century or later.
- B11.10 A simple rimmed lid rim fragment. Not illustrated.
- B11.12 A BB1 counter cut from the base of a dish, diam. c.37mm (Phase 6, 43)

### *Class C, Calcareously tempered wares, 2.2%*

Two or three shell tempered fabrics are represented on the site. All are absent from Phase 1 and appear in the later Roman period, being commonest in the unstratified material. Fabric C11 is probably from Harrold, Beds., and is the main coarseware at Alcester in the last decades of the 4th century, but seems to penetrate very weakly into the surrounding rural hinterland (Evans 2000). C11 is the commonest fabric in this group at 0.3% in Phase 2. The other main fabric is C15, this is probably from northern Oxfordshire, perhaps a little to the north of Alcester (Evans forthcoming b) and appears at Alcester occasionally from the 3rd century onwards. It comprises

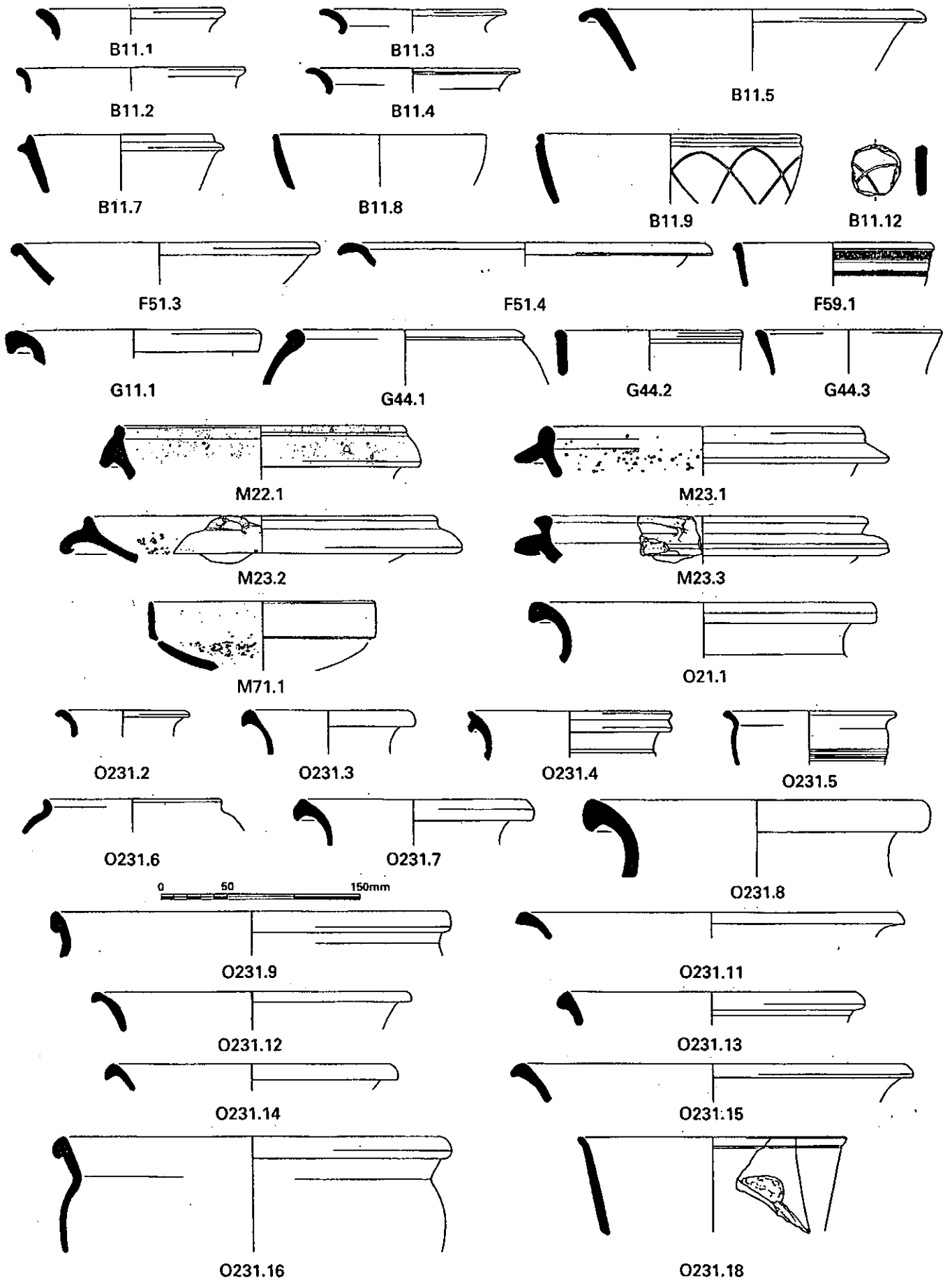


Fig 8 Romano-British pottery, Class B Black Burnished Wares, Class F finewares, Class G gritted wares, Class M mortaria and Class O oxidised wares



0.6% in Phase 2 and 0.9% in Phase 2a. The third group, C12, may be a variant on C15.

### *Forms*

#### *Fabric C11*

C11.1 An outcurving rimmed jar, perhaps later 3rd to early 4th century. Not illustrated.

#### *Fabric C15*

C15.1 An outcurving rimmed jar. Not illustrated.

### *Class E, Early 'Belgic' wares, 0.0%*

Fabrics allocated to this class make up a negligible proportion of the site assemblage, whereas they comprised over 30% of Salford Priors' area D assemblage. This clearly demonstrates the absence of occupation on the site before the Flavian period. No stratified deposits contain fabrics of this class. A single form is represented, which is probably late in the series.

### *Forms*

#### *Fabric E31*

E31.1 A bead rimmed bowl? rim fragment, just possibly a Dr 37 copy. Not illustrated.

### *Class F, Finewares, 1.8%*

Non-samian finewares are rare in the assemblage, comprising only 1.8% of all the pottery. They are absent from the Phase 1 group and this could reflect supply accurately. The earliest fineware present is an unstratified sherd of later 2nd to early 3rd century Central Gaulish? 'Rhenish ware'. Nene Valley ware is present. At Salford Priors the fabric did not appear before the later 3rd century and here only one of the five sherds is stratified, contributing 0.3% to Phase 2a. Oxfordshire colour-coated ware (excluding mortaria) comprises 1.4% of the Phase 2 assemblage and possible South Western Brown Slipped ware 0.3%, and in Phase 2a the figures are 1.5% and 0.3% respectively.

### *Forms (Fig 8)*

#### *Fabric F51*

F51.1 Rim fragment from a Young (1977), C71-3 or C86, AD 240+. Not illustrated.

F51.2 Rim fragment from a Young (1977) C51, AD 240+. Not illustrated.

F51.3 A Young (1977) C45, AD 270-400+.

F51.4 A Young (1977) C47, AD 270-400+.

#### *Fabric F59?*

F59.1 A bowl of form Young (1977) C55, AD 240-400+. If the fabric is correctly identified (which is not certain) then this piece is liable to be of later 4th century date.

### *Class G, Gritted wares, 2.1%*

Two fabrics are represented in this class, G44, Malvernian Metamorphic tempered ware, and G11, Milton Keynes pink grogged ware (Booth & Green 1989). The former appears in Phase 1, at 2.6% and in Phase 2 at 4.5% and in Phase 2a at 2.7%, again suggesting this might not be residual in the 3rd century (cf. Alcester, Gas House Lane (Evans 1996)). It is less common here than at Salford Priors in the 2nd century. Fabric G11 is present at 0.4% in Phase 1 but is absent from Phase 2 deposits. It presumably arrived here in the later 3rd century or later given the date of its appearance at Alcester.

## Forms (Fig 8)

### Fabric G11

G11.1 A storage jar with an everted, undercut rim, cf. Booth & Green (1989), nos 4-6, later 3rd to 4th century.

### Fabric G44

G44.1 Barrel jar with beaded rim, 1st to early 2nd century (Peacock 1968).

G44.2 Tubby cooking pot with beaded rim, Antonine (Peacock 1968).

G44.3 A carinated bowl? with slack, sinuous profile and slightly beaded rim.

## Class M, Mortaria, 1.3%

Mortaria comprise 1.2% of the assemblage, a very similar level to that at Salford Priors. The earliest vessel is a later 2nd century Dr 45. This is followed by a Mancetter vessel of early 3rd century date and after this supply is monopolised by the Oxfordshire industry. This reflects the picture at Alcester where Mancetter loses its markets to Oxfordshire by the later 3rd century and Salford Priors where it may take place earlier, as here.

## Forms (Fig 8)

### Fabric M22

M22.1 A Mancetter proto-hammerhead mortarium with bead at top and bottom of flange, early 3rd century.

### Fabric M23

M23.1 An Oxfordshire mortarium of Young's (1977) form M19, AD 240-300.

M23.2 An Oxfordshire mortarium of Young's (1977) form M17, AD 240-300.

M23.3 An Oxfordshire mortarium of Young's (1977) form M17 with grooved flange end, AD 240-300.

### Fabric M71

M71.1 An Oxfordshire mortarium of Young's (1977) form C97, AD 240-400+.

## Class O, Oxidised wares, 65.0%

Oxidised wares, or more accurately Severn Valley wares, dominate supply to this site, comprising 65% of the total assemblage. The main fabrics are O21, O23, O231, O24, O241, O27, O29 and O36. How well the fabric groups are defined is probably variable. Two of the major groups are newly defined, O231 and O241, representing a finer variant on fabric O23 and a fabric with large stone and ?grog inclusions.

Severn Valley wares are extremely common on this site, forming 58.2% of the Phase 1 assemblage and 55.1% of that in Phase 2 and 59.1% of Phase 2a. This pattern is atypical when compared with Alcester or Salford Priors where greywares are commoner in the 1st and 2nd centuries and Severn Valley wares reach a peak in the later Roman period.

Fabric O21, which is heavily organically tempered, is commonest in Phase 2a, but still less so than the 11% of the 2nd century site C2 assemblage at Salford Priors, where it was the commonest 2nd century fabric. It has been generally established that this is an early fabric which probably dies out by the end of the 2nd century, being effectively absent from Alcester, Gas House Lane (Evans 1996). The lower levels here on a site which does not commence strongly before the later 2nd century may suggest it was in decline by this time.

Fabric O231 was first separately identified as a group at Salford Priors. It may be of Malvernian origin, as its presence at Worcester suggests (Evans forthcoming c). It appears at Billesley Manor in quantity rather earlier than at Salford Priors, probably in the later 2nd century, being the commonest fabric in Phase 1, at 18.1%. It remains

at this position in the later Roman period 2 at 20.6%, and continues at 19.8% in Phase 2a.

Fabric O24 is commoner in Phase 1, 8.8%, falling to 2.3% in Phase 2, and 3.0% in Phase 2a, and this is borne out by the frequency of 2nd-3rd century forms compared with 4th century ones. At Salford Priors it tends to be commoner in late Roman deposits, but at Alcester it also shows a 3rd century decline. It seems likely to be from a fairly local source and is not thought to be Malvernian.

Fabric O27, for which a Malvernian source has been suggested (Evans 1996), appears at 9.4% in Phase 1, rising slightly to 11.2% in Phase 2 and 10.7% in Phase 2a. At Salford Priors a later Roman floruit is also suggested, with a currency from the 1st century onwards, and there is similar evidence from Alcester, Gas House Lane (Evans 1996).

Fabric O29 is one of the more interesting from this site. It is rare at Alcester. It is not thought to be Malvernian. The forms suggest a 2nd to 4th century date range and the fabric comprises 9.3% of the Phase 1 assemblage, 12.7% in Phase 2 and 6.8% in Phase 2a. Levels here are about double those at Salford Priors. This would seem to suggest a source to the east and south of Billesley Manor.

Fabric O36, another possibly Malvernian fabric, is found at similar levels to those at Salford Priors with 3.5% in Phase 1 and 5.6% in Phase 2 and 8.9% in Phase 2a, and with a range of 2nd to 4th century forms.

Table 8 compares the functional composition of the major Severn Valley ware groups from this site and Salford Priors. Overall there is a comforting similarity between the same fabrics on both sites, suggesting the groups have some coherence. Tankards are a major part of the output of most of the fabrics, as are wide-mouthed jars, and virtually all of these forms on the site are in Severn Valley wares.

**Table 8 Functional composition of Severn Valley ware groups from Billesley Manor Farm and Salford Priors**

Fabric	Wide mouthed jars	Other jars	Constricted necked jars	Flagons	Bowls	Carinated bowls	Dishes	Tankards \ beakers	Lids	n
O21 SP	54%	0	4%	0	13%	8%	0	21%	0	24
BM	83%	0	0	0	0	0	0	17%	0	8
O231SP	44%	15%	24%	0	5%	2%	0	7%	2%	41
BM	44%	14%	12%	0	12%	0	0	19%	0	52
O24 SP	33%	6%	6%	0	9%	0	3%	42%	0	33
BM	11%	0	11%	0	11%	0	0	56%	11%	9
O27 SP	35%	17%	0%	0	17%	3%	0	28%	0	29
BM	42%	2%	5%	0	12%	0	0	39%	0	41
O29 SP	27%	18%	0	0	0	0	0	54%	0	11
BM	26%	11%	5%	0	5%	0	5%	47%	0	19
O36 SP	21%	14%	7%	0	10%	10%	0	38%	0	42
BM	27%	0	9%	9%	18%	0	0	36%	0	11

## Forms (Figs 8-10)

### *Fabric O21*

- O21.1 A wide mouthed jar with swelling, triangular-sectioned rim, slightly undercut, cf. Webster (1976) no 21, mid to late 2nd century.
- O21.2 A high shouldered wide-mouthed jar with thickened, everted, slightly undercut rim, cf. Webster (1976) nos 23 and 25, 2nd-3rd century. Not illustrable.

### *Fabric O231*

- O231.1 A constricted necked jar with everted rising rim, cf. Webster 1976, no 1, 1st to 4th century. Not illustrated.
- O231.2 A constricted necked jar with everted, slightly undercut rim, cf. Webster 1976, no 5, 2nd to 3rd century.
- O231.3 A constricted necked jar with an everted, undercut rim, cf. Webster 1976, no 6, 2nd to 3rd century.
- O231.4 A constricted necked jar with everted, bifid rim, lower flange projecting, cf. Webster (1976) nos 10-11, 3rd-4th century.
- O231.5 A small jar with an everted, rising rim, cf. Lee and Lindquist (1994), O162, form not described in Webster (1976), perhaps derived from 2nd century BB jars.
- O231.6 A small jar with short, everted, fairly vertical rim, cf. Lee and Lindquist (1994), O.193.
- O231.7 A medium-mouthed jar with triangular-sectioned, sharply undercut rim.
- O231.8 A storage jar with undercut, triangular-sectioned rim, cf. Webster 1976, no 8, 3rd century.
- O231.9 A shouldered wide-mouthed jar with beaded rim, cf. Webster 1976, no 31, 4th century.
- O231.10A wide-mouthed jar with an everted, rising, thickened rim, cf. Webster (1976), nos 20-21, 1st to 2nd century. Not illustrated.
- O231.11A high shouldered wide-mouthed jar with thickened rim, cf. Lee and Lindquist (1994) O128, perhaps 2nd century.
- O231.12A high shouldered wide-mouthed jar with everted, slightly undercut rim, cf. Webster (1976) nos 23 and 25, 2nd-3rd century.
- O231.13A high shouldered wide-mouthed jar with triangularly beaded rim, cf. Webster 1976, no 22, 2nd to 3rd century.
- O231.14A high shouldered wide-mouthed jar with an undercut rim, cf. Webster 1976, no 27, later 3rd to 4th century.
- O231.15A high shouldered wide-mouthed jar with triangular-sectioned, tapering rim, cf. Webster (1976) no 23, mid 2nd to 3rd century. (Phase 6, 1).
- O231.16A high shouldered wide-mouthed jar with an everted, tightly undercut, rim, cf. Webster 1976, no 28, later 3rd to 4th century.
- O231.17A bead rimmed tankard with splaying wall, cf. Webster 1976, nos 42-3, 2nd to 3rd century. Not illustrated.
- O231.18A bead rimmed tankard with strongly splaying wall, cf. Webster 1976, no 44, 4th century.
- O231.19A bead rimmed bowl with grooved and cordoned shoulder, probably a Dr37 copy, 2nd to 4th century. (Phase 6, 1).
- O231.20A curving walled bowl with reeded flanged, undercut rim, cf. Webster 1976, no 53, later 3rd to 4th century. (Phase 6, 1).
- O231.21A curving walled bowl with reeded, horizontal, flanged rim, cf. Webster 1976, no 56, 3rd century. (Phase 6, 1).
- O231.22A curving walled bowl with a flanged undercut rim, cf. Webster 1976, no 51, 3rd century. (Phase 6, E300).
- O231.23A Dr 38 copy bowl, cf. Webster 1976, no 63, later 2nd to 4th century

### *Fabric O24*

- O24.1 A constricted necked jar with everted, rising, thickened rim. Not illustrated.
- O24.2 A high shouldered wide-mouthed jar with everted, undercut rim, cf. Webster 1976, nos 23 and 25, 2nd-3rd century.
- O24.3 A bead rimmed tankard rim, cf. Webster (1976), nos 38-41, 1st to 2nd century. Not illustrated.
- O24.4 A bead rimmed tankard with slightly splaying walls, cf. Webster (1976), nos 42-3, 2nd to 3rd century.
- O24.5 A bead rimmed tankard with strongly splaying walls, cf. Webster (1976), no 44, 4th century.
- O24.6 Bowl with beaded rim and grooved shoulder, possibly a Dr 29/37 copy.
- O24.7 Simple rim of a straight walled lid.

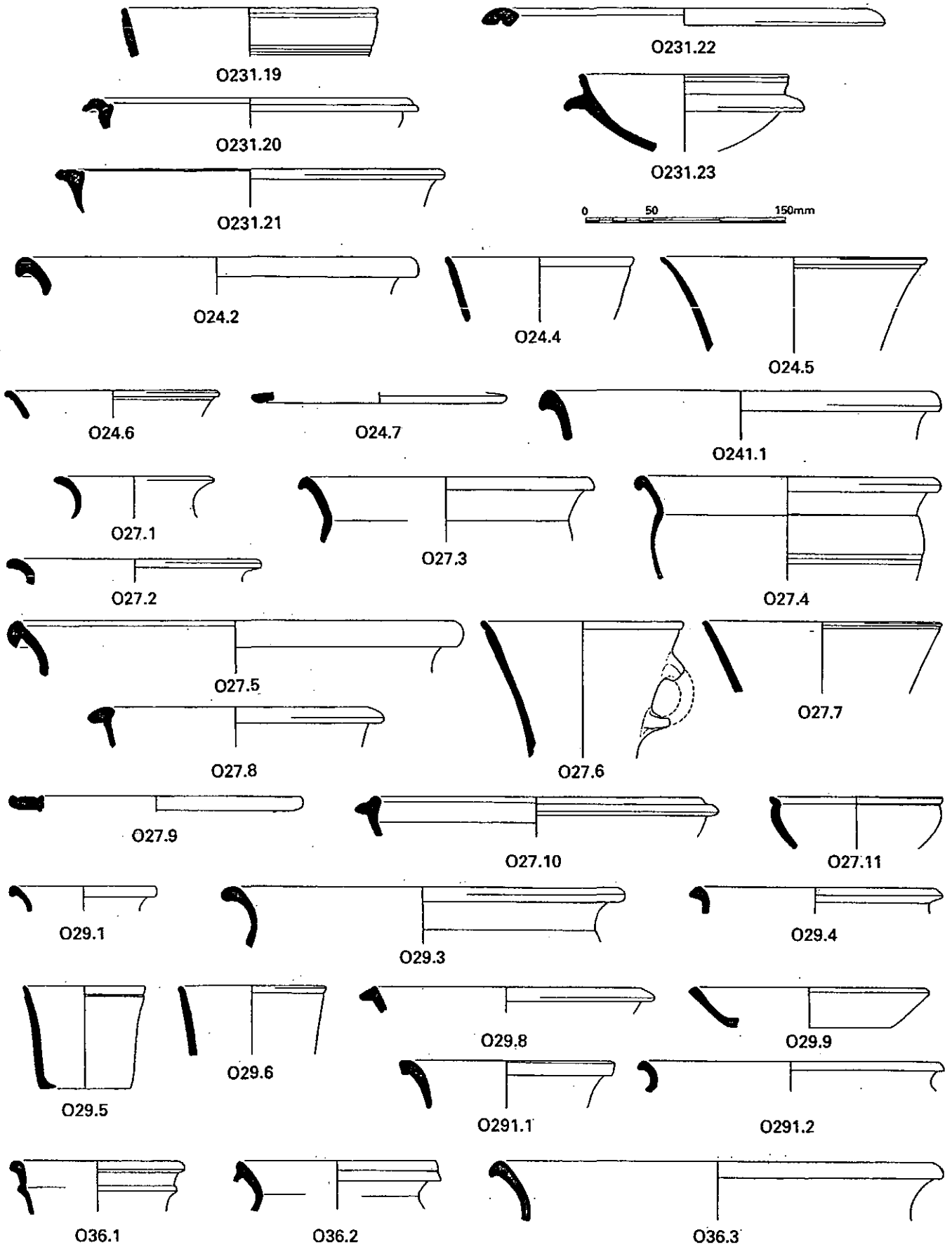


Fig 9: Romano-British pottery, Class O Oxidised wares

*Fabric O241*

- O241.1 A high shouldered wide-mouthed jar with everted, slightly undercut rim, cf. Webster (1976) nos 23 and 25, 2nd to 3rd century.

*Fabric O27*

- O27.1 A constricted necked jar with everted, rising rim, cf. Webster (1976), no 1, 1st to 4th century.  
O27.2 A medium mouthed jar with everted, rising rim, cf. Lee and Lindquist (1994), O162, form not described in Webster (1976), perhaps derived from 2nd century BB jars.  
O27.3 A wide mouthed high shouldered jar with triangularly sectioned rim, slightly undercut, cf. Webster (1976), nos 23 and 25, 2nd-3rd century.  
O27.4 A high shouldered wide-mouthed jar with an undercut, beaded rim, cf. Webster (1976), no 30, later 3rd to 4th century.  
O27.5 A high shouldered wide-mouthed jar with undercut, triangularly sectioned rim, cf. Webster (1976), nos 27-8, later 3rd to 4th century.  
O27.6 A bead rimmed tankard with slightly splaying wall, cf. Webster (1976), nos 42-3, 2nd to 3rd century.  
O27.7 A bead rimmed tankard with splaying walls, cf. Webster (1976), no 44, 4th century.  
O27.8 A curving walled bowl with flanged, internally beaded rim, cf. Webster (1976), no 50, later 2nd to 3rd century.  
O27.9 A curving walled bowl with reeded, horizontal, flanged rim, cf. Webster (1976), no 56, 3rd century.  
O27.10 A curving walled bowl with internally beaded, flanged rim, cf. Webster (1976), no 57, 3rd century.  
O27.11 A curving walled bowl with stubby everted rim, cf. Webster (1976), no 34, 2nd to 4th century.

*Fabric O29*

- O29.1 A constricted necked jar with an everted, slightly undercut rim, cf. Webster (1976) no 4, 2nd to 4th century.  
O29.2 A medium mouthed jar with everted, rising, thickened rim. Not illustrated.  
O29.3 A wide-mouthed jar with an everted, rising, thickened rim, cf. Webster (1976), nos 20-21, 1st to 2nd century.  
O29.4 A high shouldered wide-mouthed jar with an everted, triangular-sectioned rim, cf. Webster (1976), no 22, 2nd to 3rd century.  
O29.5 A bead rimmed tankard with straight, fairly vertical walls, cf. Webster (1976), nos 38-41, 1st to 2nd century.  
O29.6 A bead rimmed tankard with slightly splaying walls, cf. Webster (1976), nos 42-3, 2nd to 3rd century.  
O29.7 A bead rimmed tankard with splaying walls, cf. Webster (1976) no 44, 4th century.  
O29.8 A beaded and flanged bowl, probably later 3rd to 4th century.  
O29.9 A simple rimmed dish, perhaps cf. Webster (1976), no 74.

*Fabric O291*

- O291.1 A medium-mouthed jar with thickened, everted, squared rim.  
O291.2 A medium-mouthed jar with outcurving, slightly undercut, rim. (Phase 6, 1).

*Fabric O36*

- O36.1 A wide-mouthed flagon/lagena with beaded rim and cordoned neck.  
O36.2 Constricted necked jar with everted, bifid rim, lower flange projecting, cf. Webster (1976) nos 10-11, 3rd-4th century.  
O36.3 A high shouldered wide-mouthed jar with everted, slightly undercut rim, cf. Webster (1976), nos 23 and 25, 2nd to 3rd century.  
O36.4 A high shouldered wide-mouthed jar with a triangular-sectioned, undercut rim, cf. Webster (1976), no 27, later 3rd to 4th century.  
O36.5 A bead rimmed tankard with straight walls, cf. Webster (1976), nos 38-41, 1st to 2nd century.  
O36.6 A bead rimmed tankard with slightly splaying walls, cf. Webster (1976), nos 42-3, 2nd to 3rd century.  
O36.7 A curving walled bowl with flanged and internally beaded rim, cf. Webster (1976), no 57, 3rd century.  
O36.8 A curving walled bowl with flange rim, cf. Webster (1976), no 48, 2nd to 3rd century.

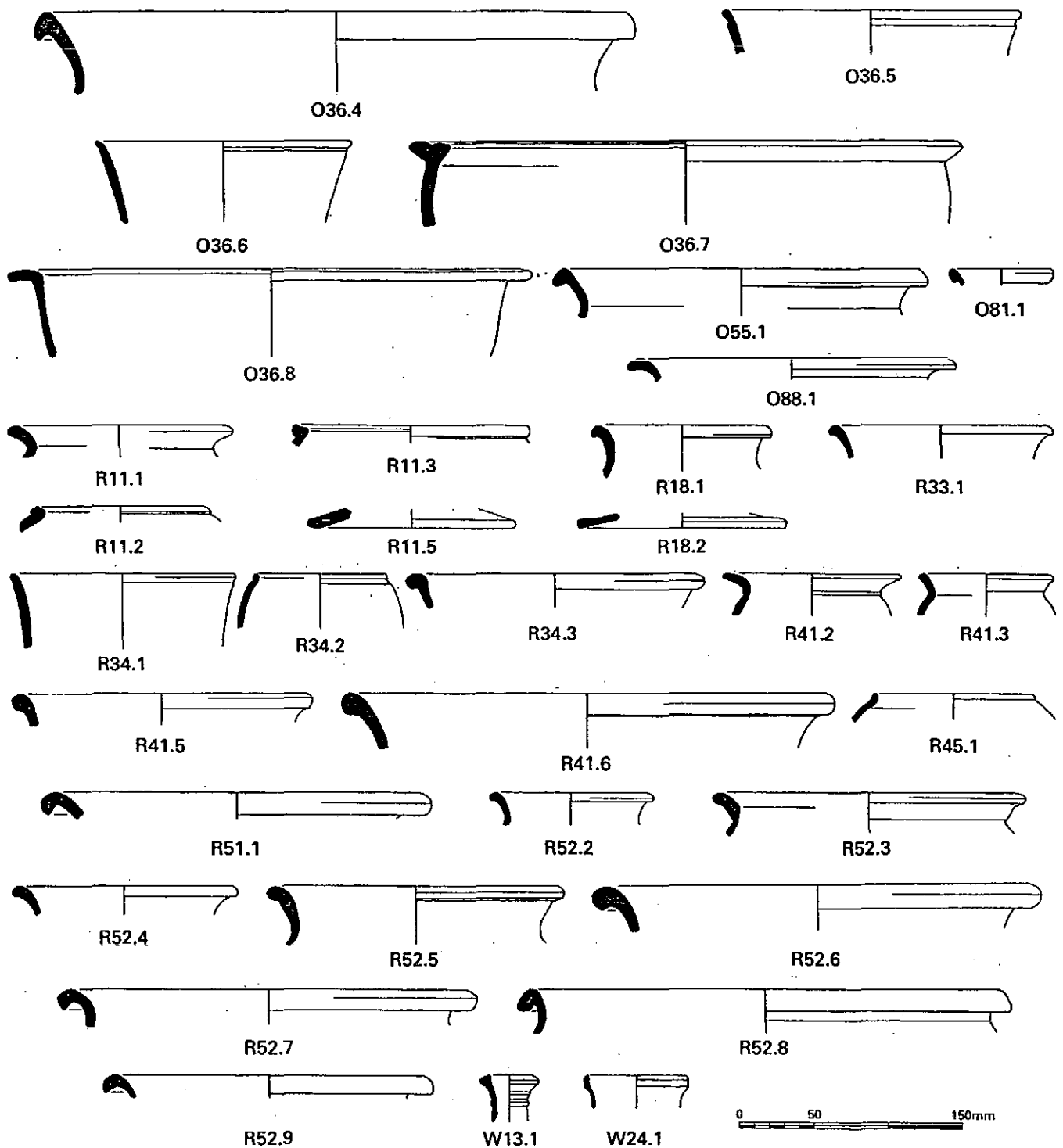


Fig 10 Romano-British pottery, Class O Oxidised wares, Class R reduced wares, Class W whitewares

*Fabric O55*

O55.1 A high shouldered wide-mouthed jar with a triangular-sectioned, undercut rim, cf. Webster (1976), nos 23 and 25, 2nd to 3rd century.

*Fabric O81*

O81.1 A bead rimmed flagon rim.

*Fabric O88*

O88.1 A medium mouthed jar with everted rising rim.

### *Class Q, white slipped flagon fabrics, 0.1%*

A very few sherds of white slipped flagon fabrics occur on this site, amounting to only 0.1% of the total assemblage.

### *Class R, reduced wares, 15.6%*

Reduced wares form 16.5% of the assemblage in Phase 1 and 20.1% in Phase 2 and 19.6% in Phase 2a. These are similar levels to those found in the 2nd and the 3rd-4th centuries at Salford Priors, both rather forming a contrast with Alcester, where greywares were commoner in the 2nd century and very rare in the 3rd, returning in the 4th. The commonest greywares at Billesley Manor were R11, R41 and R52, which are also the commonest at Salford Priors in the 2nd-4th centuries. Fabric R34 is present here, at 0.9% in Phase 1, whereas it is found at levels of 10% at Salford Priors in the 1st century, reflecting its early date range, and suggesting it could not have continued much, into the 2nd century, although a BB copy jar, apparently in this fabric would suggest a continuation at least into the Hadrianic era. Notably absent from both sites is fabric R32, an organically tempered greyware which appears common at Alcester in the 2nd century.

Fabric R11, a sandy greyware, appears at 4.7% in Phase 1 and 5.2% in Phase 2 and 5.0% in Phase 2a. This fabric group is visually identical to Mancetter, Bubbenhall and other northern Warwickshire producers, but others are also likely to be represented in this range. It seems likely that much of this group does derive from the Bubbenhall/Wappenbury industry (Evans forthcoming a). Five jars, two bowls and a lid are represented in this group, the datable vessels being 2nd century.

Fabric R41 is a moderately sandy greyware, present at 2.6% in Phase 1, 3.4% in Phase 2 and 6.8% in Phase 2a. Forms represented are six jars, two wide-mouthed jars and a tankard, a similar range to that at Salford Priors (Evans 2000, Table 19). The datable forms in the fabric are 2nd and 3rd century.

Fabric R52, a smooth greyware with some grog/clay pellets, appears at 7.9% in Phase 1 and 9.3% in Phase 2 and 2.4% in Phase 2a. This is rather more than at Salford Priors where it peaks at 7%. The fabric is also common at Alcester and as far north as Ling Hall and Princethorpe in northern Warwickshire, where it makes up around 15% of a 1st-2nd century assemblage. A source of this fabric to the east might be expected, possibly in Northants, it being common, along with Bubbenhall material, at Dirft (A Hancock pers comm). Forms represented in R52 are seven jars and seven wide-mouthed jars. The latter type are commoner here than at Salford Priors, but there also wide-mouthed jars are a significant element in this fabric (Evans 2000, Table 20).

### *Forms (Fig 10)*

#### *Fabric R11*

- R11.1 A medium mouthed jar with everted rising rim, possibly a BB copy.
- R11.2 A small bead rimmed jar.
- R11.3 A small jar with flat topped, triangular-sectioned rim. (Phase 6, 1).
- R11.4 A flange rimmed bowl, probably a BB copy, Hadrianic to early 3rd century. Not illustrated.
- R11.5 A simple rimmed, straight walled, lid.

#### *Fabric R18*

- ?R18.1 A constricted necked jar with everted, slightly beaded rim.
- R18.2 A simple, straight walled lid with swelling rim.

#### *Fabric R33*

- R33.1 A carinated? bowl rim with slightly thickened rim. (Phase 6, 1).



*Fabric R34*

- R34.1 A bead rimmed tankard rim with straight walls, probably 1st to 2nd century.
- R34.2 A small beaker/jar with sub-cornice? rim, 1st to 2nd century.
- R34.3 A bead rimmed straight walled bowl, probably a 2nd century BB copy.

*Fabric R41*

- R41.1 A small jar with an everted rising rim. Not illustrated.
- R41.2 A medium mouthed jar with everted rising rim with cordon on the neck.
- R41.3 Jar with everted rising rim, probably a BB copy, 2nd century.
- R41.4 Jar with an everted rim, probably a BB copy, 3rd century or later. Not illustrated.
- R41.5 A medium-mouthed high shouldered jar with slightly bead, squared rim.
- R41.6 A wide-mouthed high shouldered jar with beaded rim.

*Fabric R45*

- R45.1 A small bead rimmed jar.

*Fabric R51*

- R51.1 A high shouldered wide-mouthed jar with everted, undercut rim.

*Fabric R52*

- R52.1 Small jar with everted rising rim. Not illustrated.
- R52.2 A medium-mouthed jar with everted rising rim, probably a BB copy, 2nd century.
- R52.3 A medium mouthed jar with everted rim with beaded tip, probably a 2nd century BB copy.
- R52.4 A medium mouthed jar with everted rim.
- R52.5 A high shouldered wide-mouthed jar with slightly beaded rim.
- R52.6 A high shouldered wide-mouthed jar with beaded slightly undercut rim.
- R52.7 A high shouldered wide-mouthed jar with everted, undercut, square-ended rim. (Phase 6, 10).
- R52.8 A high shouldered wide-mouthed jar with sharply downsloping undercut rim.
- R52.9 A high shouldered wide-mouthed jar with downsloping tapering rim.
- R52.10 A high shouldered wide-mouthed jar with broadly hooked rim. Not illustrated.

*Class S, Samian ware, 3.0% by Brenda Dickinson*

The excavations produced 71 sherds of samian, representing a maximum of 62 vessels. Much of it consists of small scraps, of unidentified form. The sources are listed in Table 9.

The samian ranges from the late 1st century to the first half of the 3rd. The bulk of it is Antonine, much of it from the later 2nd century. Three of the East Gaulish pieces, and perhaps a fourth, could be as late as the middle of the 3rd century.

The South Gaulish pieces, a decorated bowl probably in the style of Sulpicius, and two dishes of form 36, are all from La Graufesenque. They, and a Trajanic sherd of Les Martres ware, are the earliest vessels.

The absence of dishes of form 18/31 and the scarcity of forms such as 18/31R and 27 suggest that no significant quantities of samian were being discarded in the Hadrianic and early-Antonine periods. The later 2nd century is represented by two examples of form 31R and three gritted samian mortaria. There are also decorated bowls in the styles of Cinnamus ii and Paternus v, or their associates, and a stamped plainware cup of Saturninus ii.

The East Gaulish ware includes form 27 from La Madeleine, one of the earlier factories of the region. At the other end of the range are three vessels from Trier, forms 31R and 36 and a flanged bowl, probably the Ludowici Smc type, or

Massenfund Type 11a (Huld-Zetsche 1971, 32). These are all certainly 3rd century, as could be the single piece from Rheinzabern.

Whilst no great insight into the history of the site can be gleaned from this small collection, the build-up of samian in the second half of the 2nd century may have some bearing on changes in the density of occupation at that time.

**Table 9 Samian ware assemblage (by minimum number of vessels)**

Form	SG	CG (M-de-V)	CG (Lez)	EG	Total
18/31R	-	-	1	-	1
18/31R or 31R	-	-	1	-	1
27	-	-	1	1	2
31	-	-	8	1	9
31R	-	-	2	1	3
33	-	-	5	-	5
36	2	-	1	1	4
37	1	-	5	-	6
38	-	-	2	-	2
38 or 44	-	-	1	-	1
45	-	-	3	-	3
Lud Smc?	-	-	-	1	1
Dish	-	-	3	-	3
Dish or bowl	-	-	5	-	5
Cup	-	-	1	-	1
-	-	1	14	-	15
Total	3	1	53	5	62

Abbreviations: SG – South Gaulish, CG (M-de-V) – Central Gaulish (Les Martres-de-Veyre), CG (Lez) – Central Gaulish (Lezoux), EG – Eastern Gaulish.

#### *Decorated ware*

1. Phase 6, 10. Form 37, South Gaulish. The trident-tongued ovolo is on bowls from Nijmegen (Mees 1995, Taf 94, 1) and Wilderspool with mould stamps of Sulpicius. It is also on an anonymous piece from Newstead, which has the same spirals in beaded festoons as here (Curle 1911, 209, 2). A small plant between two festoons is probably Hermet, pl 10, 60. The lower zone has a kneeling stag (Hermet 1934, pl 27, 4). c.AD 85-110.

2. Phase 1b, 83/1. Form 37, Central Gaulish. The ovolo (Rogers 1974, B143) and beads (Rogers 1974, A9) were both used by Cinnamus ii. A panel contains the top half of a Venus (a smaller version of D.176 = O.286) in a small, double medallion. While it is not unknown for Cinnamus to show the forequarters of animals on his bowls, it is extremely unusual for him to use anthropomorphic figures in this way. In view of the formality of his style, it is likely that this bowl is by an associate, rather than by Cinnamus himself. c.AD 150-80.

3. Phase 6, topsoil. Form 37, Central Gaulish, with one of the ring-tongued ovolos used by Paternus v = Roger's Paternus ii (Rogers B105). c.AD 160-95.

### Potters' stamps

1. Phase 6, 90. DO[CILIS] on form 33; Docilis i of Lezoux, die 3a (Dickinson 1994, 510, 6). The potter's decorated ware occurs in Scotland and his repertoire includes forms such as 18/31 and 27, but none of the later second century forms. c.AD 135-65
2. Phase 2, E203. [S TVR]NINI on form 31R; Saturninus ii of Lezoux, die 8a (Dickinson 1986, 195, 3.186). A stamp used on some of the forms introduced in the later second century, such as 31R, 79R and 80. There are many examples from the group of late Antonine samian recovered off Pudding Pan Rock, Kent. c.AD 160-200.

### Class W, Whitewares, 0.7%

Whitewares comprise only 0.7% of the total assemblage. Some possibly Mancetter pieces are represented along with Oxfordshire whiteware and parchment ware.

#### Forms (Fig 10)

##### Fabric W13

W13.1A ring necked flagon with prominent upper bead, perhaps Young (1977) type W3, AD 100-240.

##### Fabric W24

W24.1A campanulate? cup with grooved, beaded rim, perhaps derived from Dr 24, maybe 1st century.

### FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS AND FINEWARES

Table 10 shows a functional analysis of the pottery from the two stratified assemblages and the unstratified material. Jars are the dominant type, 53% in Phase 1, 52% in Phase 2, 31% in Phase 2a, and 45% amongst the unstratified material. The decline in jars with time is part of the typical pattern of 'Romanization' from an Iron Age jar based assemblage to a much more diverse use of ceramics with much higher levels of tablewares. The jar level from Phases 1 and 2 suggest the site falls within the usual range for basic rural sites, although the levels in Phase 2a and the unstratified material suggest something rather different, and could be compared with the later villa levels from Salford Priors. It might also be noted that the jars levels in Phases 1 and 2, although falling within the basic rural range are towards the higher end of it. Tableware levels are low, though rising from 11% in Phase 1 to 24% in Phase 2, 45% in Phase 2a and 24.7% in the unstratified material, the Phase 2a level being notably high for a rural site. The site continued the trend discussed elsewhere (Evans 2000) of a regional functional composition to rural assemblages in the Severn Valley characterised by very high levels of drinking vessels, mainly tankards.

Table 10 Functional analysis by Phase

Phase	Flagons	Constricted necked jars	Jars	Wide-mouthed jars	Bowls/cups	Dishes	Mortaria	Tankards	Beaker	Lids	n
1	4%	4%	32%	21%	11%	0	0	21%	4%	4%	28
2	0	0	26%	26%	24%	0	11%	13%	0	0	46
2a	0	0	17%	14%	38%	7%	5%	19%	0	0	42
6	1.2%	6.8%	18.5%	26.5%	19.8%	4.9%	2.5%	18.5%	0	1.2%	162

## *Finewares*

Overall fineware levels from the site are rather higher than might be expected, being 6.1% in Phase 1, all samian, 4.5% in Phase 2 (2.8% of this being residual samian), with 4.7% amongst the unstratified material (2.7% being samian). These levels are very close to the overall ones from the Salford Priors villa, however, they are much lower than the 12% found there on the areas actually associated with the villa site. Nonetheless, these fineware levels are a little higher than the 2% or less generally found on rural sites in this region (Evans 2000), and the site would seem to be at the top of the range for a basic rural site. It would be possible that the excavated structures are associated with a higher status site to the north, however, the pre-excavation fieldwalking program produced data of a distinctly basic rural character from across the site as a whole (both in terms of functional analysis and fineware levels) which casts doubt on the existence of a higher status focus.

## DISCUSSION

The site provides further useful evidence about pottery use on mid-Warwickshire rural sites. As at Salford Priors Severn Valley wares are even more dominant than at Alcester. Again most of these seem likely to be Malvernian in origin, but there is now some evidence for another source (for fabric O29) to the south-east, as well as potentially fairly local sources for O24 and O21. The site received a comparatively strong supply of BB1 in the 2nd century, although later, as on other rural sites, levels are well below urban ones at Alcester. Amphora levels are very low, as is usual on rural sites, but the function figures, although consistent with a rural site are at the upper end of the range, whilst the fineware data are at higher levels than is usual for rural sites in this region. Given the presence of stone strip buildings on the site, some at least probably tiled, the ceramic data may be reflecting a village type of site, with good transport links to the nearby town at Alcester (ie a rural nucleated site of rural, not small town, character).

## POTTERY APPENDIX 1: FABRIC DESCRIPTIONS

All fabrics are wheel-made unless the contrary is stated.

### *Fabric Description code*

#### *Class A - Amphorae*

A21 Dressel 20, Baetican amphora; common limestone/chalk sand and silver mica, exterior sometimes white-slipped.

#### *Class B - Black burnished wares*

B11 BB1, Poole Harbour, Dorset (Williams 1977).

#### *Class C - chiefly calcareously tempered wares*

C11 Southern Shell-Tempered ware (Sanders 1973), probably from Harrold, Beds. Abundant shell inclusions c.0.1-4mm, grey core, surfaces light brown or grey.

C12 Shell tempered ware, handmade, source unknown, with a dark grey core and brown margins with common fine shell temper c.0.3-0.5mm and occasional shell c.2-3mm long.

C15 Shell-tempered ware, source probably northern Oxfordshire area. Fabric and colour as C11 but hand-made.

C22 Malvernian Paleozoic limestone tempered ware; a soft hand-made reduced fabric with abundant rounded limestone inclusions c.0.3-3mm.

#### *Class E -Early, mainly grog tempered, 'Belgic tradition' wares*

E24 A reduced fabric with some moderate sand temper c.0.3mm, common rounded grog c.0.3-0.5mm, and occasional organic inclusions c.0.5-2mm.

#### *Class F - Fine wares (all colour-coated)*

F32 'Rhenish ware', probably Central Gaulish.

F51 Oxfordshire red colour-coated ware (Young 1977).

F52 Nene Valley colour-coated ware, parchment ware fabric (Howe *et al* 1980).

F59 South-Western Brown Slipped ware, Gloucestershire. An externally brown-slipped fabric with common fine sand temper <0.1mm and some fine black ironstone c.0.1mm.

#### *Class G - heavily gritted fabrics (some hand-made)*

G11 Pink grogged ware, Milton Keynes area (Booth & Green 1989). A hand-made fabric with grey core, buff-brown margins and common angular grog

temper c.0.5-3mm. Cirencester fabric 140.

G44 Malvernian metamorphic-tempered ware, Malvern Link, Worcestershire. A hand-made fabric with common angular white-pink inclusions c.1-6mm and some black igneous inclusions, c.0.5-5mm, sometimes with gold mica inclusions.

#### *Class M - Mortaria*

M22 Mancetter-Hartshill mortaria; white fabric with red and brown grog trituration grits.

M23 Oxfordshire white ware mortaria; white fabric with translucent, white, and pink quartz trituration grits (Young 1977).

M71 Oxfordshire oxidised red colour-coated mortaria (Young 1977).

#### *Class O - Oxidised wares*

O21 Severn Valley ware; often with grey core and orange-brown margins, with abundant organic temper voids c.0.3-3mm.

O22 Severn Valley ware; often with grey core and oxidised margins, with common brown ironstone inclusions c.0.5-2mm and sometimes occasional grog.

O23 Severn Valley ware; abundant very fine sand temper c.0.1mm. Visually similar to Cirencester fabric 108.

O231 Severn Valley ware; similar to O23, generally pale yellow-orange in colour, sometimes with a pale grey core, with a 'soapy' texture, and with surfaces which have a finely micaceous appearance. There are occasional brown ironstone inclusions c.0.5-1mm and sometimes some rounded grog c.0.5-2mm.

O24 Severn Valley ware; some moderate sand temper c.0.3mm and brown grog c.0.2-0.4mm and some ironstone c.0.3-2mm.

O241 Severn Valley ware; common-abundant orange-brown grog c.0.3-3mm and some buff-white sandstone inclusions c.2-4mm.

O27 Severn Valley ware; visually very similar to products of the Great Buckman's Farm and Newlands kilns in the Malvern Link complex. Common fairly fine limestone/chalk sand c.0.1-0.3mm.

O29 Severn Valley ware; common-abundant moderate sand temper c.0.3mm.

O291 Severn Valley ware; some moderate sand temper c.0.3mm. Much less sand than O29.

O36 Severn Valley ware; similar to fabric O21, but with less organic tempering. Some-common organic temper voids

- c.0.3mm and sometimes some white ?calcareous inclusions or grog inclusions.
- O55 Severn Valley ware; grey core and orange-brown margins soft and with a laminar texture, occasional brown ironstone and occasional limestone/chalk sand inclusions, surfaces appear micaceous.
- O72 A coarse Severn Valley ware with common large grog temper c.1-5mm and some organic voids.
- O75 An oxidised fabric with grey core and oxidised, orange-brown margins, with common coarse sand temper c.0.4-0.5mm, some rounded red ironstone c.1-2mm and very occasional, sub-rounded white quartz c.5mm.
- O81 Oxidised ware with common fine sand temper c.0.1-0.2mm and some moderate red ironstone inclusions.
- O87 A soft oxidised fabric with rounded red ironstone c.0.3-1mm and some fine sand <0.1mm.
- O88 A fairly soft oxidised fabric with abundant fairly fine sand temper c.0.2mm.
- O891 A pale orange oxidised fabric with common moderate ferruginous sand temper c.0.3mm.
- Class P - Iron Age tradition, hand-made fabrics*
- P50 Iron Age tradition fabrics with calcareous temper predominant.
- P63 A reduced hand-made Iron Age fabric with common-abundant organic temper c.0.5-1mm.
- Class R - Reduced wares*
- R01/11 A reduced fabric with common fairly coarse sand temper c.0.4mm.
- R111 A reduced 'sandwich' fabric with grey core, oxidised margins and black surfaces, with common moderate sand temper c.0.3mm.
- R18 A reduced fabric with brown core, grey margins and black surfaces, with occasional vegetable temper voids and some fine limestone/chalk sand.
- R27 A reduced wheel-made fabric with common coarse sand temper c.0.3-0.4mm.
- R31 A hand-made reduced ware with common vegetable voids c.0.5-2mm.
- R32 A reduced fabric with common small vegetable voids c.0.3-0.5mm.
- R33 A reduced fabric with red-brown core and black surfaces, with common fine calcareous sand inclusions c.0.2-0.4mm, some vegetable voids c.0.5-3mm, occasional dark brown ironstone c.0.5mm, and occasional sand c.0.2mm.
- R34 A reduced fabric with some/common moderate sand temper c.0.3mm and common fine organic temper voids up to c.2mm.
- R41 A reduced fabric with some moderate sand temper c.0.3mm and occasional brown moderate ironstone.
- R51 A reduced fabric with some moderate sand temper c.0.3mm and occasional grey grog(?) inclusions c.0.5-2mm, and occasional rounded white inclusions c.0.3mm.
- R52 A reduced fabric with some moderate sand temper, occasional black ironstone inclusions and some grey grog inclusions c.1-3mm.
- R72 A hard reduced fabric with common black ironstone inclusions c.1-3mm and white angular quartzite c.0.5-2mm and some moderate sand.
- R81 A reduced fabric with a 'soapy' texture, blue-grey core and grey margins, with fine sand temper <0.1mm and occasional black ironstone.
- R83 A fairly fine reduced fabric with common fine sand temper c.0.1mm and occasional rounded brown ironstone c.0.5mm.
- R831 A soft, 'soapy', 'clean', reduced fabric with some ironstone inclusions c.0.5-1mm.
- R85 A reduced fabric with common-abundant fine black ironstone(?) inclusions c.0.2mm and common fine silver mica.
- R94 Wheel-made Malvernian Metamorphic tempered ware, with some grey-white stone inclusions c.0.2-1mm and very occasional gold mica flecks.
- Class S - Samian wares*
- S10 South Gaulish samian ware, La Graufesenque.
- S20 Central Gaulish samian ware, Lezoux.
- S21 Les Martres-de-Veyre samian ware.
- S32 Rheinzabern East Gaulish samian ware.
- S33 Trier East Gaulish samian ware.
- S34 La Madeleine East Gaulish samian ware.
- Class W - White wares*
- W12 Mancetter-Hartshill white-ware; a white fabric, sometimes with a pinkish core, with common moderate white and pink sand temper c.0.3mm and some moderate red ironstone.
- W13 Oxfordshire white ware (Young 1977).
- W15 Oxfordshire parchment ware (Young 1977).
- W24 A yellowish-buff white-ware with occasional moderate sand temper c.0.3mm and some fine sand c.0.1mm.
- W43 A yellowish-buff white-ware flagon fabric with some rounded red ironstone c.0.3-1mm and occasional white grog inclusions c.0.5-2mm.

POTTERY APPENDIX 2: FORM OCCURRENCE BY PHASE

Figures in rounded brackets ( ) represent the numbers of vessels and those in square brackets [ ] the RE values of each.

*Phase 1a*

<i>Fabric</i>	<i>Forms</i>
O29	Tankard[2]
R52	R52.1[5]; R52.4[4]
W24	W24.1[8]

*Phase 1b*

<i>Fabric</i>	<i>Forms</i>
G44	G44.3[5]
O231	O231.5[14], Wide-mouthed jar[1]
O291	O291.1[9]
R11	R11.1[8]
R41	R41.3[10]
R52	R52.8[8]; R52.9[11]
S10	DR36[5]
S20	DR27[10]

*Phase 1d*

<i>Fabric</i>	<i>Forms</i>
B11	B11.2[3]
G11	G11.1[10] Intrusive
O21	O21.2[4]
O231	Wide-mouthed jar[3]
O24	O24.1[6]; O24.7[5]
O29	O29.3[9]; O29.6[3]
O81	O81.1[17]
R34	Bead rimmed bowl[5]

*Phase 2*

<i>Fabric</i>	<i>Forms</i>
B11	B11.3(x3)[2,6,5]; B11.5[1]; B11.7(X2)[2,6]
C15?	Jar
F51	BOWL[6]; F51.3[5]
F59	F59.1[6]
G44	G44.1(X2)[12,10]
M22	Mortarium[6]
M23	Mortarium[7]
M71	M71.1(X2)[9,8]
O21	O21.1[18]
O231	O231.10[7]; O231.16(X2)[5,19]
O24	O24.2[6]
O27	Wide-mouthed jar(x3)[5,3,1]; O27.4[16]; O27.6(X2)[10,12]; O27.8[10]; O27.11[14]
O29	O29.2[7]; O29.3[7]; O29.5[12]
O36	O36.3[6]; O36.6[6]
O88	O88.1[5]
R11	Jar[4]
R33	Jar[3]
R34	R34.2[8]
R52	R52.2[14]; R52.3[7]; R52.5[6]
S20	DR33[6]; DR38(X2)[1,2]; DR31R[5]; DR45[5]

*Phases 4-6: Post-Roman*

<i>Fabric</i>	<i>Forms</i>
B11	B11.1(X4)[11,5,3,9]; B11.3(x3)[8,1,5]; B11.4(x2)[7,3]; B11.5[7]; B11.6[3]; B11.7(X5) [4,8,3,5,13]; B11.8 (X7) [7,4,7,5,3,8,10]; B11.10 [7]
C11	C11.1[2]
C15	C15.1[1]
C22	Jar[3]
F51	Bowl[4]; F51.2(X2)[5,3]; F51.3(X2)[3,7]; F51.4[2]
G44	G44.2[10]
M22	Mortarium[5]
M23	Mortarium(x2)[1,7]; M23.1[5]; M23.3[3]
M71	M71.1[4]
O21	Tankard[1]; O21.1(X2)[10,9]; O21.2[12]
O231	Jar(X2)[6,6]; O231.1 (X2)[12,6]; O231.2 [9]; O231.3[19]; O231.4(X2)[12,10]; O231.5[6]; O231.6[12]; O231.7[17]; O231.8[15]; Wide-mouthed jar(x4) [3,3,1,5]; O231.9[9]; O231.11(X2)[6,8]; O231.12(X4)[8,1,5,14]; O231.13[13]; O231.14[11]; O231.15 (X2)[7,4]; O231.16 (X2) [5,5]; Tankards (X3) [1,2,6]; O231.17(X2)[5,3]; 231.18(X5) [4,11,8,5,8]; O231.19(X2) [13,5]; O231.20 [7]; O231.21[8]; O231.23[17]; Bowl[5]
O24	O24.4(X2)[11,4]; O24.5(X2)[6,3]
O241	O241.1[6]
O27	O27.1(X2)[15,18]; O27.2 [19]; Wide-mouthed jar [3]; O27.3(x5) [4,4,5,6,7]; O27.4[16]; O27.5(X6)[4,3,5,8,4,8]; O27.6(X8)[2,3,16,16,33,4,4,4]; O27.7(X2) [8,11]; O27.9[10]; O27.10[8]; O27.11[13]
O29	Jar[3]; O29.1[14]; Wide-mouthed jar[2]; O29.3[11]; O29.4[10]; O29.5[6]; O29.6(X4)[6,5,4,20]; O29.8[4]; O29.9[15]
O291	O291.2[4]
O36	O36.1[2]; O36.2[11]; O36.4[5]; O36.8[6]
O55	O55.1[19]
Q00	JAE[3]
R11	R11.1(X2)[13,7]; R11.2[9]; R11.3[7]; R11.5[8]
R18	R18.1[5]; R18.2[6]
R33	R33.1[10]
R41	JAR[11]; R41.6[8]
R45	R45.1[7]
R51	R51.1[7]
R52	JAR(X3)[7,3,3]; R52.6[6]; R52.7[6]; R52.10[5]
S20	DR33[3]; DR31(X2)[9,7]; DR31R[6]; DR37[3]
S32	DR31[2]
S33	LUDSMC[2]; DR36[10]
S34	DR27[9]
W13	W13.1[25]

POTTERY APPENDIX 3: FABRIC OCCURRENCE BY PHASE

Entries of 0.0 are present at levels below 0.05%.

Phase 1a-e

Fabric	% count	% Wt	% Min no of rims	% EVE
B11	10.1	7.1	3.6	10
C11**	0.4	0.1	0	0
G11**	0.4	1.2	3.6	2.3
G44	2.6	1.4	3.6	1.2
M71**	0.4	0.1	0	0
O21	0.9	5.8	3.6	0.9
O231	18.1	10.0	10.7	4.2
O24	8.8	4.9	10.7	4.0
O241	0.4	2.9	0	0
O27	9.7	23.6	7.1	31.3
O29	9.3	6.7	10.7	3.3
O291	2.6	2.5	3.6	2.1
O36	3.5	4.9	0	0
O55	4.9	2.3	0	0
O72	0.4	1.3	0	0
O81	0.4	0.2	3.6	4.0
O87	0.9	0.2	0	0
O88	0.9	0.3	0	0
P63	0.4	0.1	0	0
R11	4.9	4.1	3.6	1.9
R34	0.9	0.9	3.6	1.2
R41	2.6	1.3	7.1	5.8
R52	7.9	12.6	14.3	15.7
R55	0.4	0.1	0	0
R85	0.9	0.5	0	0
S10	0.4	0.1	3.6	1.2
S20	5.7	2.9	3.6	8.9
W24	0.4	0.1	3.6	1.9
W43	0.4	1.9	0	0
n	227	1906	28	428

\*\* - Intrusive in Phase 1e

Phase 2

Fabric	% count	% Wt	% Min no of rims	% EVE
B11	8.2	3.6	13.0	9.4
C11	0.3	0.1	0	0
C12	0.3	0.3	0	0
C15	0.6	0.2	2.2	0.3
F51	1.4	1.5	4.3	1.7
F59	0.3	0.2	2.2	0.9
G44	4.5	3.9	4.3	5.8
M22	0.3	0.3	2.2	0.9
M23	0.3	0.6	2.2	1.1
M71	3.7	1.7	4.3	2.6
O00	0.9	0.6	0	0
O21	0.3	2.7	2.2	2.7
O22	0.3	0.1	0	0
O23	0.6	0.3	0	2.7
O231	20.6	10.7	6.5	12.3
O24	2.3	1.2	2.2	0.9
O241	0.6	0.8	0	0
O27	11.2	19.3	17.4	12.0
O29	12.7	9.6	6.5	11.0
O36	5.6	18.8	4.3	5.1

O55	0.9	0.2	0	0
O88	0.3	0.2	2.2	0.8
R00	0.9	0.3	0	0
R11	5.1	10.5	2.2	18.0
R111	0.3	0.2	0	0
R18	0.3	0.1	0	0
R33	0.3	0.1	2.2	0.5
R34	1.1	0.4	2.2	1.2
R41	3.4	1.4	0	0
R52	9.3	8.1	6.5	6.7
R94	0.3	0.2	0	0
S20	2.8	1.4	10.9	3.6
W12	0.6	0.5	0	0
n	355	4406	46	661

Phase 2a

Fabric	% count	% Wt	% Min no of rims	% EVE
B11	8.9	9.0	30.9	14.1
C11	1.8	0.8	2.3	0.5
C15	0.9	1.0	0	0
C22	0.3	0.3	0	0
E24	0.3	0.2	0	0
F51	1.5	0.3	2.3	0.7
F52	0.3	0.0	0	0
F59	0.3	0.1	0	0
G44	2.7	2.3	2.3	2.9
M22	0.3	1.9	2.3	1.8
M23	0.6	2.1	2.3	1.4
O21	1.5	4.1	0	1.6
O23	1.2	0.8	2.3	0.9
O231	19.8	16.5	0	2.1
O24	3.0	2.5	2.3	2.5
O241	2.4	2.0	0	0
O27	10.7	8.7	7.4	3.0
O29	6.8	6.6	2.3	6.6
O291	1.2	0.3	0	0
O36	8.9	17.5	11.9	8.0
O55	3.6	0.7	0	0
O88	0.9	0.1	0	0
R11	5.0	4.5	4.8	5.2
R18	0.9	2.3	2.3	11.4
R27	0.3	0.1	0	0
R32	0.9	0.9	0	0
R34	1.2	3.2	2.3	19.4
R41	6.8	5.8	11.9	6.4
R52	2.4	2.4	2.3	3.9
R72	0.3	1.0	0	0
R83	0.6	0.3	0	0
R831	0.9	0.3	0	0
R94	0.3	0.2	0	0
S20	2.1	0.7	4.8	6.8
S33	0.3	0.2	2.3	0.7
W15	0.3	0.0	0	0
W43	0.3	0.3	0	0
N	338	3235	42	561



## Romano-British coins, copper alloy, lead, iron, bone, stone objects and glass by Nicholas Palmer

### 1-9 COINS

The nine Roman coins from the site, including three from the 1994 fieldwalking, ranged from a *denarius* of Severus to an AE4 of Constantius II of 336-41. Except for the former they were all in poor condition, and five could not be identified in detail. The emphasis on late 3rd/4th century pieces reflects the general coin use and supply in Britain rather than density of occupation on the site in this period.

On a rough measure, without allowing in detail for the scale of the various excavations, the small size of the group fits with those from smaller local rural Romano-British settlements, towards the lower end of the socio-economic scale, such as Wasperton (14 coins), Bidford Grange (Hart *et al* 1991, 11 coins), Abbots Salford (3 coins) and Glebe Farm, Bubbenhall (0 coins), rather than the villas at Salford Priors (Mays 2000, 142 coins) and Welford on Avon (Booth 1994a, 579 coins), the larger nucleated settlement at Tiddington (554 coins) or the town at Alcester (Seaby *et al* 1985, 1527 coins).

**Table 11 Romano-British coins**

Ruler	Denom	Date	Type	Ref	Wt	Context
1. Septimius Severus	Den.	202-10	Restitutor Urbis	RIC 4.1 289	2.64gm	(SF 43)
2. Radiate?	Ant?	Late 3rd cent.			1.93gm	(Field 61, 184)
3. Urbs Roma	AE3/4	330-7	Urbs Roma, Arles	RIC 7 Ar 343?	1.855gm	(Field 61, N)
4. Constantius II	AE4	336-41	Gloria Exercitus, 1 standard		0.93gm	(Phase 6, 1, SF 48)
5. House of Constantine?	AE4	336-41	Gloria Exercitus, 1 standard?		1.148gm	(Phase 5, 61/1, SF 38)
6. Uncertain	AE3/4	4th cent.	Legend within wreath?		1.92gm	(Phase 6, 1, SF 47)
7. Uncertain	Frag.	4th cent.			0.26gm	(Phase 2a, 33/1, SF 20)
8. Uncertain	AE3/4 chipped	Late 3rd/4th cent.			0.78gm	(Phase 2a, 94, SF 37)
9. Uncertain	AE4	Late 3rd/4th cent.			0.55gm	(Field 61, I)

### 10-19 COPPER ALLOY OBJECTS (Fig 11, nos 10, 12-15)

All the indentifiable items in the small group of copper alloy objects from the excavations were personal items: brooches (10-11), a bracelet (12), a hair pin (13), a finger ring (14), a fragment from a medical/toilet implement (15), and a probable tweezer fragment (16). None were particularly remarkable and a number have parallels on local sites.

10. Brooch, Polden Hill type, plain with un moulded wings, an unpierced catchplate, and no foot-knob. L 47mm. (U/S, SF 40). A plain example of a common West Midlands type dating to c AD 75-150. Cf examples from The Lunt (Mackreth 1966-7, 107-8, Fig 19, no 1) dated c AD60?-early 2nd century, and Alcester, Birch Abbey Site C (Mackreth 1994, 163, Fig 75, no 11) dated c AD75-150, from a later 3rd century or later context, and Baromix excavations (Lloyd Morgan 2001, 71, Fig 58, ALC 69 no 7) from a Phase D context, dated c AD125-50/60.

11. Brooch spring coil fragments. (BM94, Phase 1d, E309/1, SF 1).

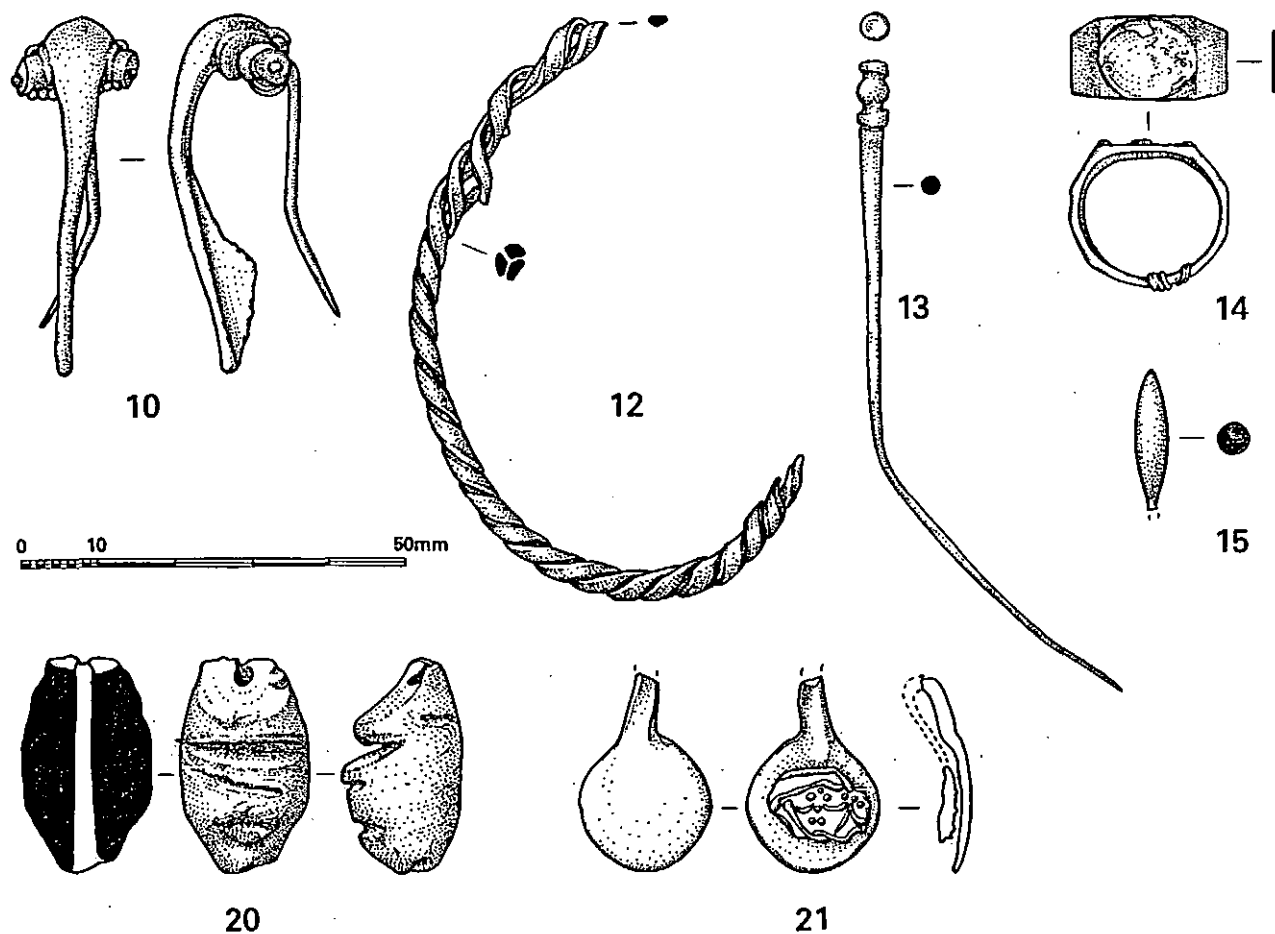


Fig 11: Copper alloy (nos 10, 12-15) and lead (nos 20-21) objects

12. Bracelet fragment, fashioned from three strands of cabled wire. Surviving L 125mm. (U/S, SF 44). These are a relatively common type of bracelet (Clarke 1979, 303, Type A2). Locally examples have come from Tiddington (Lloyd Morgan forthcoming, nos 82-85) and Alcester (Lloyd Morgan 2001, 73, ALC 69 no 27).

13. Pin with crude baluster moulded head. L 100 mm. (Phase 2, 46/1, SF 25).

14. Finger ring, flat sectioned, tapering hoop with rectangular bezel with traces of solder for oval setting on front; iron wire around rear of hoop. Diam 15-17.5mm, Th 1.6mm, Ht 4.35-11.4mm (U/S, SF 39).

15. Probe tip fragment from medical/toilet implement. Surviving L 18 mm. (U/S, SF 46). Similar to a more complete example from Alcester, Baromix excavations (Lloyd Morgan 2002, 76, ALC 72/2 no 18).

16. Strip fragment, bent over, undecorated, possibly from tweezers. W 5.2mm. (Phase 6, 1, SF 23)

17. Button, plain flat disc with rear boss with wire attachment loop, post-medieval. Diam 28.3mm (Phase 6, 1, SF 30)

18. Sheet fragment, rolled to make crude ferrule. L 35mm, diam c 7mm. (Phase 6, 1, SF 1)

19. Crude cast fragment. L c 15mm. (Phase 6, 1, SF 26)

## 20-22 LEAD OBJECTS (Fig 11, nos 20, 21)

Of two unstratified lead objects, an ovoid weight (20) may have been a Romano-British plumb bob or fishing weight, while a cloth seal (21) with traces of a decorative stamp will have been medieval.

20. Ovoid lump with vertical piercing, rough cut-marks presumably from later damage, possibly a plumb bob or fishing weight. L 28mm, diam 16-17.5mm. (U/S, SF 42).

21. Cloth seal fragment, medieval. (U/S, SF 49)

22. Folded lead sheet fragments. (Phase 6, 1, SF 29)

## 23-43 IRONWORK (Fig 12, nos 23, 25, 26, 28, 33-4, 36)

The ironwork also comprised a small, fairly typical collection. A punch (23), probably used in metalworking, was the only definite tool found, but there was also a possible wedge (24) and a possible tang or binding from an implement (25). The one complete knife (26), of Manning (1985) Type 11a, was almost identical to one found at the Salford Priors Villa (Palmer 2000, 143, Fig 61, no 8).

The most significant iron item was a frying pan (28) found just to the west of the settlement after the excavation, while the water pipe was being laid. This was unstratified and is not necessarily Roman. It also lacks a handle which is unfortunate as the flanged, pivoted folding handles are the most diagnostic part of Roman frying pans. Otherwise its form is consistent with a Roman date. Such frying pans are not uncommon and another has been found in Alcester (Mould 1996, 106, Fig 56, no 81). As valuable items they are often found in late Roman hoards (Manning 1985, 104), and this might easily have been concealed in a hoard on the edge of the settlement.

Among the ironwork from the gridded fieldwalking (not otherwise discussed here) was another domestic item, a short bucket side mount (29). Two rings (30-31) could have come from harness or domestic fittings, while structural fittings from buildings or furniture included an L-shaped wall hook (32), a split spiked loop fragment (33) and two joiner's dogs (34-5). A cleat (36) may have come from a shoe or been used to join smaller timber than the dogs.

**Table 12 Timber nails** (Types after Manning 1985)

	Type	1B	2	3	4	10	Stems	Total
BM95		64*	-	1	1	31	65	162*
BM94		2	1	-	-	1	7	11
Total		66*	1	1	1	32	72	173*

NB \* including 2 from Anglo-Saxon Grave 3

As usual the commonest iron objects found were timber nails (Table 12). A large majority of these were the standard Manning (1985) Type 1B (with a square-sectioned, tapering stem less than 150mm long with a flat sub-rectangular to circular head). However the site also produced quite large numbers of hobnails (Type 10) with short stems and domed or pyramidal heads. Most of these were probably from shoes. There were groups of six from Phase 2a, 33/1, four from Phase 6, 93/1 with heads flattened, possibly by wear, and four from Phase 4, 75/1. Other hobnails,

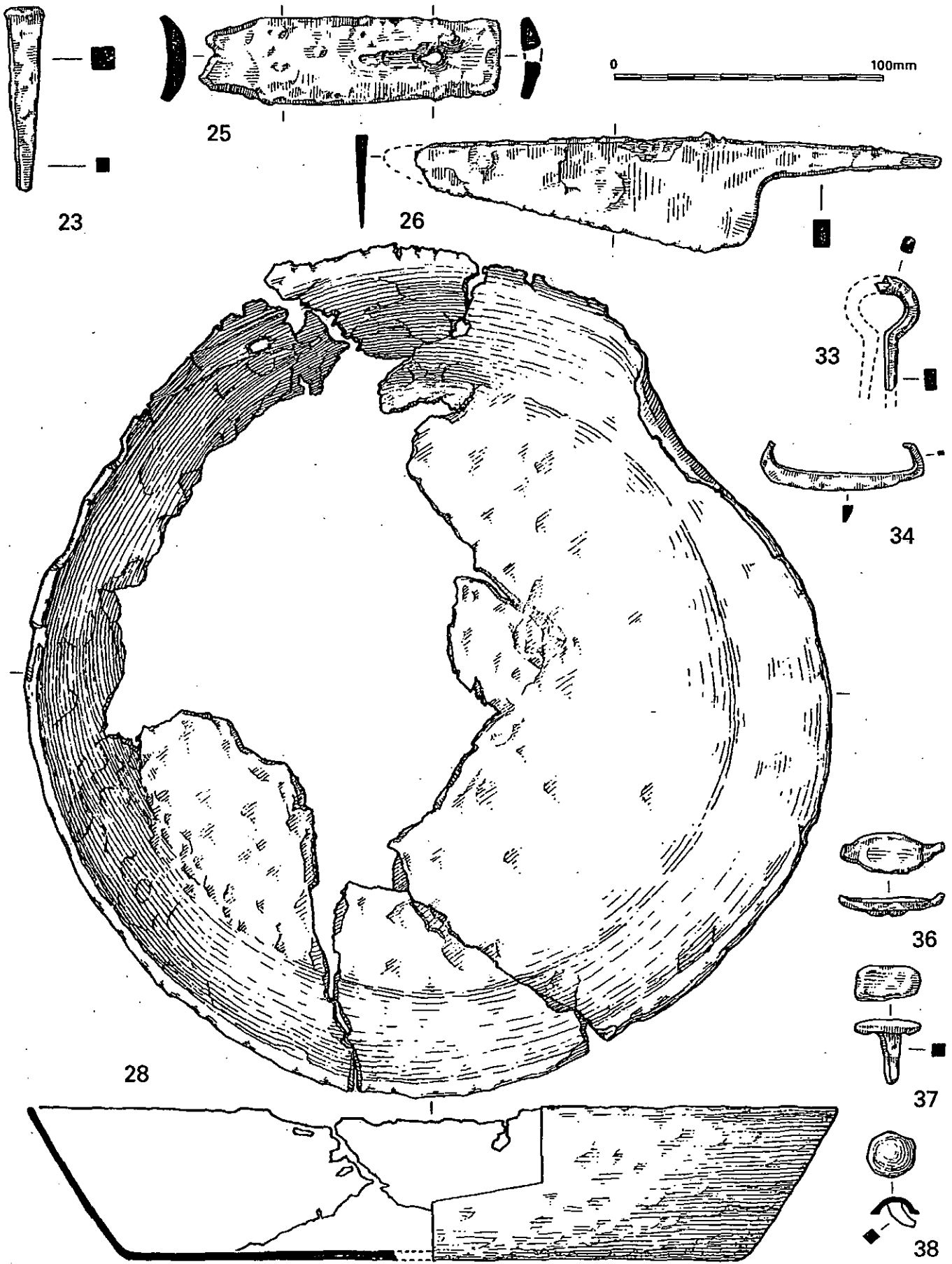


Fig 12 Ironwork (nos 23, 25-6, 28, 33-4, 36-8)

including one with a 17.5mm long stem (from Phase 2, 47/1), may have been used as decorative studs on leather or furniture. There were also examples of nail Types 2 (triangular head the same thickness as the stem), 3 (with a short T-shaped head the same thickness as the stem) and 4 (with an L-shaped stem the same thickness as the head). Related to the nails were two larger studs (37-38), probably also for decorative use on timberwork. No 37 with a rectangular head is similar to a Type 1B nail, while no 38 with a domed head is similar to Type 8.

23. Punch with tapering rectangular section and expanded head. L 69mm. (Phase 6, 10, SF 35).

24. Possible wedge, with splayed blade and head expanded on one side. L 93mm, blade W 32mm, head 20mm x 17mm. (Phase 5, 61/1, SF 41).

25. Strip with curved section and attachment hole with linear countersinking. Possibly the tang of an implement attached to a pole, or a section of binding (Cf Manning 1985, 142, Pl 67, S107). Surviving L 111mm, W 35mm. (Phase 2, 47/1, SF 27).

26. Knife with triangular blade, tip missing, with a straight edge and back continuing the line of the tang. Manning 1985, 114, Fig 28, Type 11A, cf Q34. A very similar knife came from the nearby Salford Priors villa (Palmer 2000a, 143, Fig 61, no 8). Surviving L 198mm, blade W 43mm. (Phase 6, 10, SF 3).

27. Blade fragment. L 56mm. (Phase 2, 47/1, SF 28).

28. Frying pan. Fragments from shallow oval/circular pan with sloping sides and a flat bottom. Handle missing. Diam 313mm x 290mm, Ht 59mm. (U/S, found c 30m west of the site during pipelaying operations). Despite being unstratified this could be a Romano-British frying pan. Unfortunately it lacks its handle, as the flanged, pivoted folding handles are the most distinctive feature of Roman examples. Roman frying pans are not that rare (Manning 1985, 104), and another example has been found in Alcester (Mould 1996, 106, Fig 56, no 81).

29. Bucket side hoop, leaf shaped, with two attachment holes set horizontally and D-shaped hoop above. L 86mm, surviving W 41mm, hoop diam c 11mm. (Field 61, fieldwalking grid D).

30. Ring fragments, possibly from harness ring. Diam 45mm, Th c 4mm. (BM94, Phase 6, E300, SF 4).

31. Ring fragment, Diam c 32mm. (Phase 6, 1, SF 59).

32. L-shaped wall hook. Stem L 36mm, hook L 27mm. (Phase 6, 1).

33. Split spiked loop fragment. L 43mm. (Phase 6, 1, SF 45).

34. Joiner's dog. L 60mm. (Phase 4, 80/1, SF 32).

35. Joiner's dog, incomplete. L 45mm. (Phase 2, 27/1).

36. Cleat, oval with two circular protrusions. L 38mm. (Phase 1d, 29/1, SF 19).

37. Stud/nail with rectangular head. L 24mm, head 25mm x 14mm. (Phase 2a, 33/1, SF 21).

38. Stud with domed head. L c 18mm, Diam c 18mm. (Phase 6, 10, SF 36).

39. Large T-spike with rounded head. Modern? (Phase 6, 1, SF 24).

40. Strip fragment. W c 18mm. (Phase 4, 73/1, SF 33).

41. Strip fragment, tapering. (Phase 1d, 18/1, SF 61).

42. Sheet fragment. (Phase 2, 38/3, SF 65).

43. Sheet fragment. (Phase 6, 1, SF 59).

#### 44 BONE OBJECT (Not illustrated.)

44. Bone pin shaft fragment, polished. Surviving L 23.5mm, diam 4.3mm. (Phase 2a, 33/1, SF 62)

#### 45-50 STONE OBJECTS (Fig 13, nos 45, 46, 49 & 50) (Geological identifications by John Crossling)

The small group of stone artefacts included three objects made from the local 'White Lias' – a spindle whorl (45), a probable pot lid/stopper (46) and a stone roofing slate (50). This was the only roofing slate collected suggesting that, despite its local availability, it was not much used on the roofs of the settlement. A whetstone (47), a fragment of jet (48) and a millstone fragment (49, Millstone Grit from Derbyshire) represent traded items imported to the site. The size of the millstone fragment suggests it came from a mill turned by animal or water power, rather than a hand-operated quern.

45. Spindle whorl, Langport Member of the Penarth Group, 'White Lias', finely finished. Diam 36mm, Th 8.5mm, piercing 8mm. (Phase 2a, 78/1, SF 34)

46. Disc, Langport Member of the Penarth Group, 'White Lias', roughly cut, possibly for use as a pot lid or stopper. Diam 34.5-36.5mm, Th 8mm. (Phase 2a, 63/1, SF 67)

47. Whetstone, fine-grained micaceous sandstone, not local, possibly Coal Measures sandstone from Nottinghamshire/Yorkshire, rod with worn rectangular section. Surviving L 42mm, W 21mm x 12mm. (BM94, Phase 6, 200, SF 2)

48. Jet fragment, possibly from bracelet L 12mm. (BM94, Phase 2, E322/1, SF 3)

49. Millstone fragment, coarse gritstone, Millstone Grit from Derbyshire, upper stone fragment with sloping grinding surface, vertical sides and flat top with rounded lip around rim. Diam 760mm, Th 107mm. The size of this fragment suggests that animal or water power would have been required to turn it. (Phase 2a, 63/1, SF 71)

50. Stone slate, Langport Member of the Penarth Group, 'White Lias'. (Phase 2, 38/3)

#### GLASS (Not illustrated)

A single fragment of pale blue window glass came from the excavations (Phase 2, 57/1, SF 70). A small quantity of vessel and window glass also came from the 1994 fieldwalking.

#### **Romano-British tile** *by Jeremy Evans*

Some 166 fragments of tile were recovered from stratified contexts on the site and 252 fragments were unstratified. All the stratified tile has been visually sorted into fabric groups. The fabric groups used are the same as those used at Salford Priors in the Arrow Valley, to the west of this site (Evans 2000).

#### TILE FABRICS

##### *Fabric descriptions*

T1 - An orange oxidised tile fabric with common-abundant moderate sand temper c.0.2-0.3mm. There may be two variants in this group, one of a pale-ish yellow to orange colour which may be part of a continuum with fabric T3, the other is a much deeper orange colour typical of Romano-British tiles.



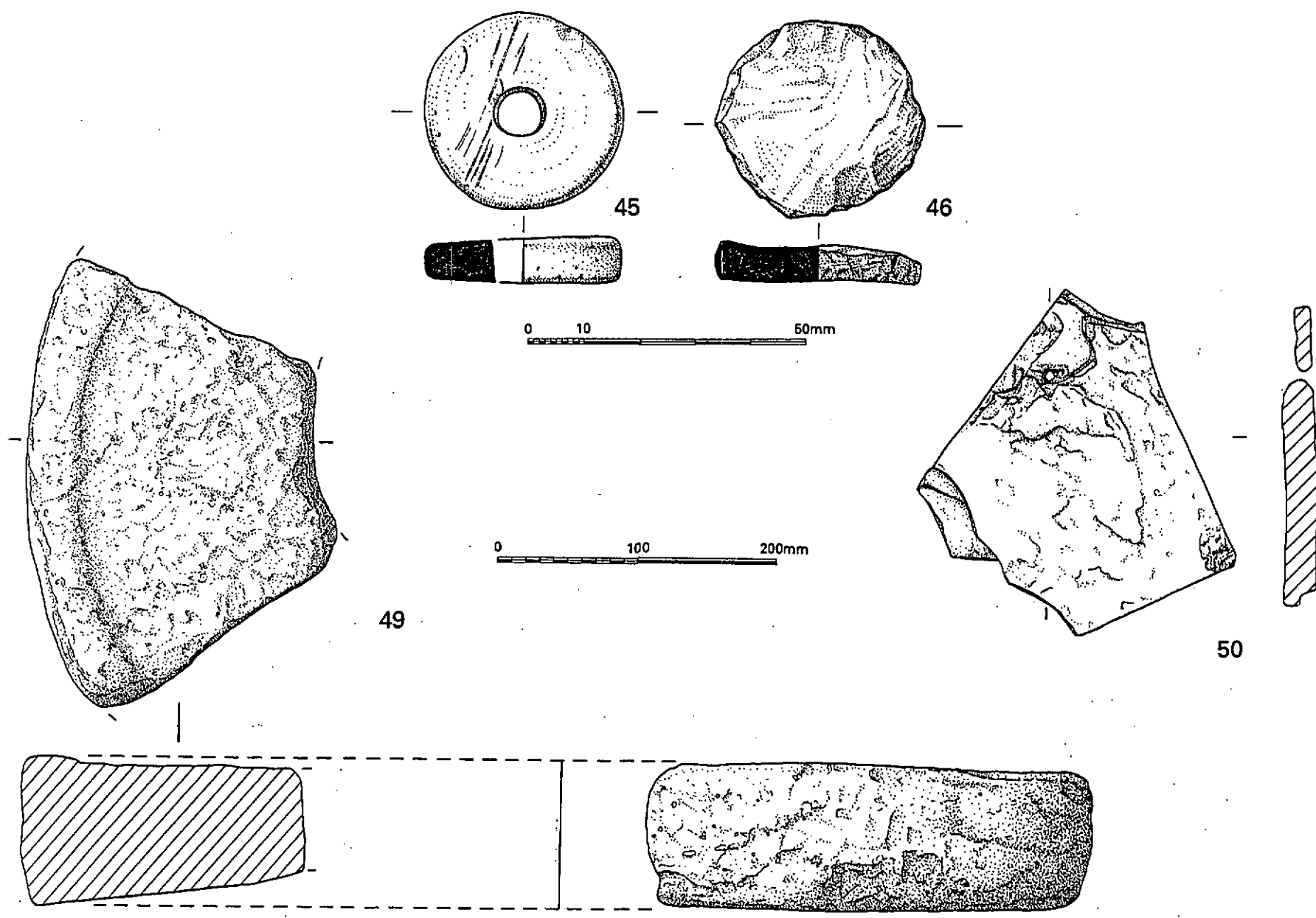


Fig 13 Stone objects (nos 45-6, 49-50)

T2 - A pale orange to pale brown oxidised tile fabric with common moderate sand temper c.0.2-0.3mm and common rounded grog/clay pellet inclusions c.1-3mm. Possibly a variant on fabric T3.

T3 - A pale yellow to pale orange tile fabric with common-abundant moderate sand temper c.0.2-0.3mm. This may be related to the paler variant of fabric T1, and might be related to T2.

T4 - An orange-brown oxidised tile fabric with some sand temper c.0.2-0.3mm.

T8 - A deep orange oxidised tile fabric, heavily fired, with little or no visible sand temper, some orange ironstone inclusions 0.5-3mm, some voids c.1-3mm and some white non-calcareous rounded temper c.0.5mm.

T9 - A pale orange oxidised tile fabric, with little or no visible sand temper with common black rounded ironstone inclusions c.0.5-2mm, and some grey clay pellet trails and inclusions c.0.5-3mm.

T10 - A deep orange oxidised tile fabric, with common moderate sand temper c.0.2-0.3mm and common rounded black ironstone inclusions c.0.5-3mm.

T11 - A pale orange oxidised tile fabric, with little or no visible sand temper. The surfaces have a common fine silver micaceous appearance from fine mica or very fine sand temper. some rounded orange ?grog inclusions c.2-3mm.

T12 - A pale orange oxidised, poorly levigated, tile fabric, with occasional sand temper c.0.2mm, and common orange and white grog/clay pellet inclusions c.1-10mm. Possibly some overlap with fabric T2, but that is sandier and better levigated.

T13 - A mid orange-brown oxidised tile fabric, occasional moderate sand temper c.0.3mm and common rounded brown ?grog inclusions c.1-6mm.

T14 - A pale mid orange-brown oxidised tile fabric, no visible sand temper, common white calcareous sand temper c.0.2mm.

T16 - A deep orange oxidised tile fabric, fairly hard fired, with some-common sand temper c.0.2-0.3mm and common rounded white grog? inclusions c.1-5mm.

T20 - A pale yellow-orange tile fabric with some white grog/clay pellets c.3-5mm, some rounded red ironstone c.1-2mm and occasional white quartz c.2mm. Interior sanded with coarse quartz c.0.5-2mm. Surfaces slipped orange-brown.

#### DISCUSSION

Table 13 shows the proportions of the fabrics from the assemblage as a whole. There are seven major fabric groups, T1-T2, T4, T10, T12, T13 and T14, of which T1-T2 may be related, or parts of a continuum. The range of fabrics represented appear to be very similar to those at Salford Priors, although the frequencies of fabrics from the two sites varies. A much closer match of fabric frequencies from the two sites is found if the Billesley Manor Farm data are compared with Salford Priors area C3. This may be largely because of the greater proportions of roofing materials from that collection, as there is little evidence of box flue tiles from Billesley, there being a single combed fragment from Phase 1d 16/1 which may be from a box flue tile. It is worth noting, however, that fabric group T14 is much better represented at Billesley than in any of the Salford Priors groups. The dating of the Billesley and Salford Priors area C3 collections to the 3rd-4th centuries is broadly similar.

**Table 13 Stratified tile fabric proportions (with comparative data from Salford Priors)**

Fabric	Billesley Manor Farm		Salford Priors
	% count	% weight	% count
T1	30.1	39.3	15.4
T2	9.6	17.9	11.4
T3	0.6	0.7	26.8
T4	18.0	12.8	2.3
T8	0.6	0.1	1.7
T9	0.6	4.4	0.2
T10	6.0	5.2	6.4
T11	3.6	1.2	1.4
T12	9.0	4.3	3.4
T13	10.2	4.3	1.5
T14	9.0	6.2	0.2
T16	1.2	3.0	1.6
T20	1.2	0.7	0
	166	3295g	

The Billesley Manor Farm collection is too small for any detailed analysis of tile types present and the fabrics they occur in, although most of the material would appear to be tegulae, imbrices or floor tile, with very little evidence of box flue tiles. There is a single tegula flange present in the stratified material (flange type B in fabric T1 from Phase 1d, E301/1).

### **Anglo-Saxon Ironwork** *by Philip J. Wise*

#### **CATALOGUE** (Fig 14)

##### **1. Spearhead**

This spearhead has a small leaf-shaped blade with a lentoid cross-section, no solid neck and a damaged cleft socket. There is no evidence of preserved wood within the socket. The overall length of the spearhead is 132mm and of the blade 87mm. (Phase 3, 3, SF 2)

One of the more common types of spearhead which Swanton describes as type C1, which he dates to before 550 AD, although, he adds that type C1 frequently come from poorly furnished graves, and few are dateable (Swanton 1974, 8). Several other examples of Swanton type C1 spearheads are known from Warwickshire. The nearby cemeteries at Bidford on Avon and Alveston Manor (Stratford on Avon) produced two and one examples respectively, while from further away one was found at Baginton, one at Churchover and three from Stretton-on-Fosse (Swanton 1974, 31, 33, 41, 85). No finds appear to have been made in Worcestershire although two C2 spearheads, having a larger blade, are recorded at Beckford B (Evison & Hill 1996, 4).

##### **2. Shield Boss**

This shield boss is very badly damaged, being represented by three large fragments of the flange and wall (SF 8, 16) and a mass of tiny pieces which probably are the remains of the cone and apex. The flange is narrow and the wall straight, and the reconstruction drawing suggests that the cone was relatively low. Three rivets are present on the surviving pieces of the flange and, again from the reconstruction drawing, there would appear to have originally five. It is only possible to measure the width of the flange (20mm) and the approximate external diameter of the shield

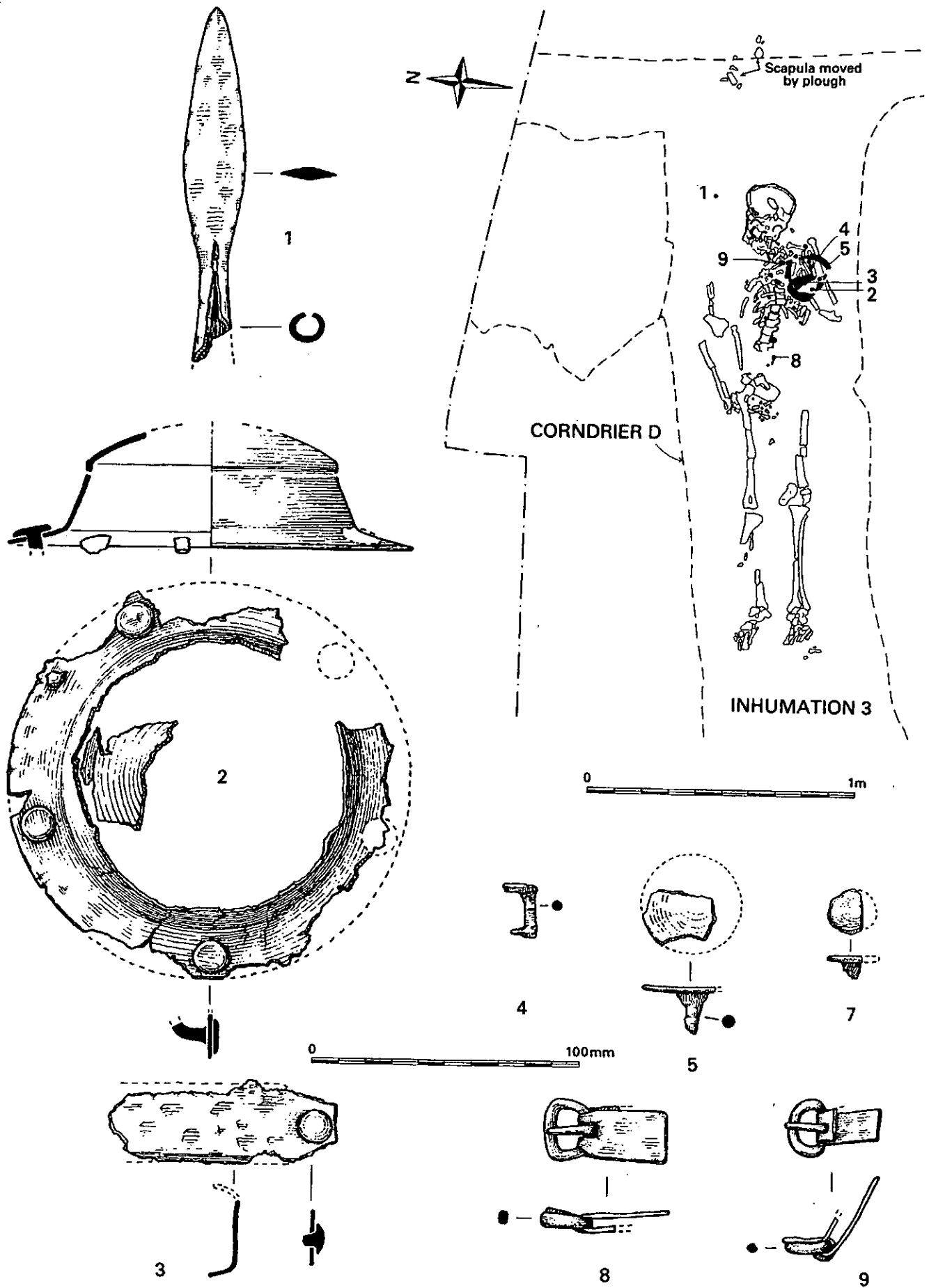


Fig 14 Anglo-Saxon inhumation and grave goods



boss (150mm) and its minimum height (48mm). (Phase 3, 3, SF 5, 6, 8, 11, 13-16, 18, 50, 53, 55)

Based on the reconstruction drawing this shield is most probably an example of a Dickinson Group 2 boss, which is dated to the mid-6th century. Group 2 bosses are comparatively common in the West Midlands and in Warwickshire are recorded from Bidford (Grave 182) and Stretton-on-Fosse (Graves 84 & 95) (Dickinson & Härke 1992, 13-4, 80-8).

### **3. Shield Grip**

The shield grip is represented by a single flat piece of iron with the remains of the side flanges, which were hammered round a wooden handle. As with the boss, identification of type is very difficult. The fragment of grip measures 84mm long and approximately 30mm wide. (Phase 3, 3, SF 17)

### **4-7. Shield Rivets**

Two probable (4, 5) and two possible (6, 7) shield rivets were identified. Only one (5) was largely complete, with a flat round head of 27mm in diameter. (Phase 3, 3, no 4. SF 9; no 5. SF 10, no 6. SF 54, no 7. SF 56)

### **8-9. Belt Buckles**

Two belt buckles and a fragment of associated belt plate were found in the grave. Both buckles have an oval loop around which a separate plate is wrapped. One (7) is broken in two, but its length may be reconstructed as at least 50mm. The loop has a width of 27mm. There is a single rivet on the plate. The second (8) is represented by a single fragment broken across the plate, and has a loop width of 24mm and a surviving length of 24mm. A small fragment of plate (SF 7), about 28mm by 16mm, belongs with this belt buckle. (Phase 3, 3, no 7. SF 4; no 8. SF 7, 12)

Very small iron belt buckles are described by Sue Hirst as being "characteristic of the 7th century" although she adds that iron buckles "are difficult to date and classify" (Hirst 1985, 86).

## **ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE**

### **Charred Plant Remains by Angela Monckton**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Samples were taken from the two corndriers and other features to recover charred plant remains which can give evidence of the crops exploited, and possibly give information about activities on the settlement site. It was hoped that the investigation of these samples would provide the opportunity to add to our knowledge of agriculture and diet at this time and to compare the evidence from this site with others in the region.

Features known generally as corndriers are interpreted as having had a stoking area, flues and a drying floor and have been suggested as having a variety of possible functions (van der Veen 1989). Cereals in the following forms could have been processed in corndriers (van der Veen 1989): whole ears could have been dried for storage or to produce green corn; spikelets could have been parched for removal of chaff; cleaned grain could have been dried for storage or to harden it for milling; and germinated grain could have been roasted for the production of malt. Interpretation of the use of these features is complicated by the use of chaff for fuel, since this may

become mixed with the some of the product making it difficult to define the material being processed. Chaff is known to be a favoured fuel for grain drying and roasting (Hillman 1982) as it produces little smoke and is an efficient use of a waste product. In addition the material being processed rarely survives in situ so it is difficult to prove the function of such kilns. Furthermore the remains found represent the last use or last few uses of the feature which may not relate to the usual function (van der Veen 1989) and sometimes may only represent rubbish backfill of the feature. The samples found here were of ashy or charred material from the flues of two kilns thought to be corndriers and the composition of the samples was examined in order to find out the type of cereal remains which may indicate the kind of processing that was carried out.

## METHODS

A total of 14 contexts were sampled and processed by wet sieving in a 1mm mesh with flotation into a 0.85mm mesh sieve, the mesh sizes here compare with those used by Hillman (1982), the flotation fractions (flots) were then air dried and packed carefully. The flots were assessed by Lisa Moffett and seven contexts were found to have abundant charred plant remains and were selected for analysis.

During the analysis the selected flots were sorted at x10 magnification with a stereomicroscope and then the plant remains identified by comparison with modern reference material at Birmingham University, counted and recorded in Table 14. The larger flots had a sub-sample sorted because of the abundance of the material. The plant names follow Stace (1991) and are seeds in the broad sense unless stated. To compare the samples with each other and with those from other sites the percentages of chaff (glumes and spikelet forks which consist of two glumes joined together), cereal grains and weed seeds were calculated for each sample (Table 14) and shown on a triangular diagram (Fig 15). This was because the proportions of types of remains can give evidence of crop processing activities (Hillman 1981). The proportion of charcoal in the flots was estimated and recorded in Table 14.

## THE PLANT REMAINS

### *Wheat*

Wheat chaff fragments were numerous in most of the samples and the majority of identifiable glumes were of spelt (*Triticum spelta*) with prominent minor veins, one prominent wide angled keel and wide bases. A few glumes were identified as emmer (*Triticum dicoccum*) because of their lack of prominent minor veins, the acute angles of the two keels and their small size. Glumes which were too short to distinguish these features or were of intermediate type were identified only as the glume wheats either emmer or spelt (*Triticum dicoccum/spelta*). Small rachis segments were also identified only as glume wheat. The identifiable cereal grains were mainly of wheat (*Triticum* sp), a few of these had the characteristic humped shape of emmer, and a few were short rounded grains classed as free-threshing wheat, possibly bread wheat (*Triticum aestivum* s.l.). However the majority were consistent with the form of spelt wheat grains and spelt can also produce short grains. Germinated grains with sprout impressions were very few, but some grains were identified as germinated because they were shrivelled and shrunken. Germinated grains formed a small percentage of the grains and detached cereal sprouts were of varying length and were not numerous. Many of the indeterminate cereal grains were probably wheat and these did not appear germinated.

### *Preservation*

Many cereal grain fragments were found and the equivalent number of whole grains was estimated but not included in the totals. As well as cereal grain fragments there

were many glume fragments suggesting that the remains were broken, perhaps by physical action, but not destroyed by burning. Experiments have shown that in some burning conditions differential destruction of chaff can occur and examination of the preservation of the grains can give indications of this (Jones and Boardman 1990). Because grains survive burning better than glumes in experiments (Boardman & Jones 1990) the samples dominated by chaff reflect the original composition of the assemblage. Very small fragments of charred and silicified awns (barbs) were found in some of the samples either fallen into the flues from above or carried by the draught.

### *Other cereals*

Occasional barley grains (*Hordeum vulgare*) were found, probably mixed with the wheat during storage or remaining in the features from previous use. The barley was of a hulled form and the presence of twisted grains showed that six row barley was present. Grains identified as cereal or large grass (Cereal/Poaceae) include a few possible oat grains (*Avena* sp) because oat awns of characteristic twisted shape were found, the oat is probably wild oat which is an arable weed. Others of these grains are small cereal grains or tail grains which are usually removed during cleaning the cereal and form part of the waste.

### *Other plants*

The only evidence of collected or cultivated plants used as food was from a fruit stone of sloe or bullace (*Prunus* sp) present probably as food waste thrown into the fire. The seeds present were mainly weeds of arable or disturbed ground associated with the cereal crops with the exception of a few plants of grassland habitat found in one of the samples (see 102/1 below). There is only a small weed flora associated with the cereals, but larger samples may possibly have recovered a wider range of plants. However the low percentage of small seeds suggests that most have been removed earlier in processing by coarse sieving the spikelets (Hillman 1982). Alternative explanations are that reaping high on the straw was carried out or weeding of the fields reduced numbers of weed seeds in the products (Hillman 1982). Most of the seeds can grow in a range of soil types but wild radish (*Raphanus raphanistrum*) and corn gromwell (*Lithospermum arvense*) as found at Tiddington (Moffett 1986) prefer light sandy soils. Spelt is usually considered to be an autumn sown crop but the few seeds unfortunately do not provide sufficient evidence to draw conclusions about sowing time or harvesting methods. The most abundant seeds are those of the larger grasses including brome grass (*Bromus* sp) which are a common occurrence with charred grain (Jones 1981), the large seeds remaining with the grain until final cleaning. The weeds goosefoots (*Chenopodium* sp) and docks (*Rumex* sp) are common on any disturbed ground found in settlements, gardens or cultivated fields.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The main cereal found here is spelt as at many Roman sites (Greig 1991), this is a glume wheat with the grains held firmly in the chaff even after initial threshing which only breaks the ears into spikelets. After threshing the straw is removed and the spikelets winnowed to remove light contaminants and coarse sieved to partly clean the spikelets (Hillman 1981). This type of grain is thought to have been stored as spikelets with the chaff still present, because the chaff protected the grains from weevil and fungal attack (Hillman 1984). Before the grain was used the chaff was removed by parching and pounding, followed by fine-sieving to remove the chaff (glumes and rachis) and any small weed seeds, leaving cleaned grain for use (Hillman 1981). This may be done in small batches for domestic use and it is the waste chaff from this cleaning of grain together with a few grains and weed seeds which is often found on occupation sites. Features interpreted as corndriers, because

of their frequent association with cereal remains, indicate larger scale processing such as drying and parching cereals at these sites. The waste chaff is preserved by charring if it was burnt either as rubbish or if it was used as fuel or kindling. When samples are found with grain more abundant than chaff they may originate from domestic use of grain or may represent part of the product at various stages of cereal processing.

### *Phase 2 Corndriers B and D*

The samples from these two features, 28 and 31, were examined to investigate the proportions of chaff, grains and weed seeds. The samples from Corndrier B (31/2/1 and 31/3/1) consist mainly of glumes (over 87%) with few grains and very few seeds (Table 14). In the former chaff was occasionally fused together, this was more pronounced in the sample of similar composition from Corndrier D (28/2/1) where randomly fused chaff suggests that this material was placed in the kiln after separation from the grains. Grains always survive charring better than chaff (Jones and Boardman 1990) so the dominance of chaff in these samples really reflects the original composition of the material and is similar to waste from cleaning cereals by fine sieving (Hillman 1981). This together with the position of the material in the flues suggests that this is waste chaff used as fuel. The samples from 31/2 and 31/3 are described as ashy and 31/3 contained silicified awn fragments (light chaff), the sample from 28/2 was described as a charred layer. All compare in composition and group together in the bottom right corner of Fig 15 comparing with samples interpreted as fine sievings used as fuel at Tiddington (Moffett 1984).

When consideration is given to the process which may have given rise to this waste the small proportion of glumes remaining attached together as spikelet forks may suggest that the cereal had been pounded but high temperature may also cause this separation. Furthermore there are few germinated grains and cereal sprouts are not abundant; in 28/2/1 and 31/3/1 the cereal sprouts are of varying lengths from half the grain to twice the grain in length. Successful malting usually produces fairly uniform germination with the sprout being the same length as the grain, sprouts of varying lengths have been thought to indicate that malting was not in progress but that accidentally sprouted grain was being dried (Murphy 1984). The chaff probably originates from the dehusking of glume wheat which had some germination, either because it was gathered wet or because some had become damp during storage. The spikelets would have been parched before pounding and dehusking. Awns found in the flues could have come from whole spikelets during parching or drying adding to the evidence for the processing of cereal spikelets. The waste chaff from dehusking was removed from the grain by fine sieving and then used as fuel in the fire to process more cereal, possibly being stored until required for later use.

The composition of the plant remains differed in sample 31/4/1 which contained about equal amounts of grains and glumes, also with few germinated grains and cereal sprouts. In the whole cereal ear and in the separated spikelet there is one glume to each grain so this may represent some of the cereal in this form which was being parched or dried and which was burnt accidentally. In the whole ear of spelt there are two grains to each rachis segment and in this sample there are too few rachis fragments present to indicate whole ears of wheat, therefore if no differential loss has occurred separated spikelets are suggested. The possibility cannot be excluded that this could represent cleaned grains that became mixed with the chaff used for fuel or that some of the chaff has been burnt away, but the proportions suggest that this may represent some of the material being processed lost in the fire. If this is the case the possibilities are that this was spikelets being either dried or parched. This is consistent with parching for dehusking and the presence of waste chaff indicates that dehusking was being carried out on the site, however it is not possible to prove that Corndrier B was being used for this purpose although this seems the most likely explanation.



- 49 items/litre
- 100-200 items/litre
- 402 items/litre

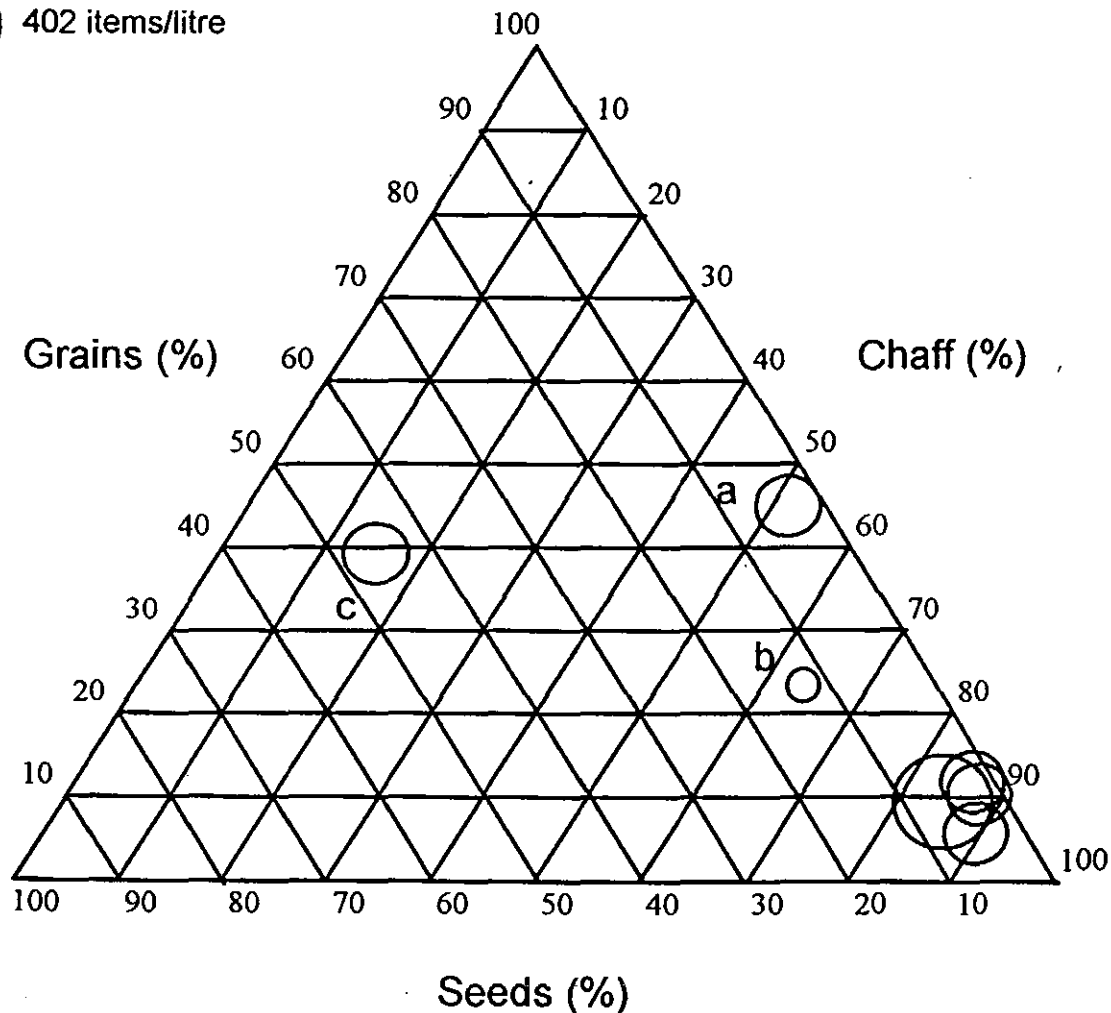


Fig 15 Proportions of grains, chaff and seeds in samples  
 a = sample 31/4/1, b = sample 11/1/1, c = sample 102/1/1

**Phase 1a Layer 102/1**

This produced a sample which has more seeds present than found in the other samples. Some of the seeds are of grassland plants including eyebright or bartsia (*Euphrasia/Odontites*), cat's-tail grass (*Phleum* sp), crested dog's-tail grass (*Cynosurus cristatus*) and fairly abundant smaller grasses. This suggests grassland in the vicinity and the material possibly represents fodder brought to the site, it may however be kindling to start the fire. Abundant chaff with some cereal grains with arable weed seeds suggests the cleaning of grain for consumption. The deposit may simply represent a mixture of rubbish that was burnt for disposal.

**Phase 2 Small Enclosure E: Gully fill 9/1**

The sample from this feature (9/1/1) is so similar in composition to 31/2/1, 31/3/1 and 28/2/1 (see Fig 15) that it appears to be waste spent fuel from the corndriers.

## *Phase 2 Small enclosure E: Gully fill 11/1*

Sample 11/1/1 differs from 9/1/1 in having a higher proportion of grains in a less productive sample and may consist of redeposited spent fuel possibly mixed with other waste.

### *Comparisons with other sites*

The evidence here for the use of spelt chaff as fuel has been found at a number of sites in England (van der Veen 1989) and compares with that found from Roman sites in this area such as at Tiddington village (Moffett 1986), the rural settlement at Wasperton (Bowker 1987) and the villa site at Salford Priors (Moffett & Ciaraldi 2000). Unlike at Tiddington where evidence for malting was found as abundant cereal sprouts and germinated grains, the small amount of evidence for germination here was taken to indicate the processing of cereal including accidentally sprouted grains as was found at Fengate Farm, Weeting, Norfolk (Murphy 1984). The germination found at Wasperton in the corndriers with evidence for spelt chaff used as fuel, was thought to be insufficient to indicate malting but more likely parching or drying of a partially spoiled crop which compares with the interpretation here. The site at Wasperton also had evidence for the processing of barley which was not found at this site. Large scale processing has been found at Tiddington and at Salford Priors and the very abundant chaff remains found as fuel at the latter site was thought to be evidence for processing large quantities of spelt for commerce or trading (Moffett & Ciaraldi 2000), however, there are insufficient plant remains to suggest this here.

### CONCLUSIONS

The main cereal found was wheat consisting of the glume wheats, spelt with a little emmer, there were also a few grains of free-threshing wheat, possibly bread wheat. The only evidence for other cereals was a few grains of barley. Very few weed seeds were found indicating the efficient cleaning of the wheat either by coarse sieving during processing or perhaps by weeding of the fields. The few weeds represented in the samples could have grown on the clay soils of the area although cultivation of lighter sandy soil is also suggested. Processing of glume wheat on the site is indicated because the most numerous remains were of wheat chaff, mainly glumes, with few grains and seeds.

Samples with abundant wheat chaff from the corndriers were interpreted as waste chaff used as fuel because the proportions of remains compare with those found in the cleanings of glume wheat separated by fine sieving. In glume wheats the grain is held firmly in the chaff and they require parching and pounding to free the grain from the chaff before the waste is removed with a fine sieve. This waste therefore indicates the dehusking of glume wheat on the site with the waste probably saved and used as fuel to parch or dry later batches of cereal.

Among the waste was a small amount of evidence for irregular germination of the wheat that is thought to indicate the processing of grain which had sprouted accidentally. The grain may have sprouted either because it was gathered wet or had become damp in storage hence parching or drying would be necessary to prevent further spoilage. A further sample from one of the driers which had about equal numbers of grains and glumes was thought to represent remains of spikelets of the wheat being processed. Parching spikelets of spelt for dehusking may have been one of the processes carried out in the corndrier although the drying of spikelets for storage is also possible from the evidence of the last uses of the feature. There is insufficient evidence from the plant remains to suggest large scale processing of wheat at this site although the presence of the corndriers suggests the ability of the occupants of the settlement to process cereals in batches for storage or consumption, and also the ability to deal with problems of storage of the harvest.

**Table 14 Charred plant macrofossils**

Sample No	102/1/1	9/1/1	11/1/1	28/2/1	31/2/1	31/3/1	31/4/1	
Context type	Layer	Gully	Gully	Corndrier	Corndrier	Corndrier	Corndrier	
Phase	1a	2	2	2	2	2	2	
Date	2nd	L3-m-4th	L3-m-4th	L3-m-4th	L3-m-4th	L3-m-4th	L3-m-4th	
<b>GRAINS</b>								
<i>Triticum cf. Dicoccum</i>	3	-	-	1	1	1	-	Emmer
<i>Triticum cf. Aestivum</i>	-	-	-	4	-	1	2	Bread wheat type
<i>Triticum sp.</i>	11	6	11	39	12	37	70	Wheat
<i>Triticum sp.</i> (germinated)	-	1	2	7	-	7	8	Wheat
<i>Triticum sp.</i> (tail grains)	2	4	-	9	-	6	3	Wheat
<i>Hordeum sp.</i> Hulled	4	-	-	-	-	1	-	Barley
<i>Hordeum sp.</i> Hulled, twisted	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	Barley
<i>Hordeum vulgare</i> L.	-	1	-	2	1	-	-	Barley
Cereal indet.	96	11	19	56	45	107	117	Cereal
Cereal fragments (no of grains)	(15)	(25)	(5)	(35)	(30)	(70)	(50)	Cereal fragments
Cereal /Poaceae	21	-	2	22	-	26	3	Cereal/Grass
Culm node large	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	Cereal stem
Cereal embryos	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	Cereal
Cereal sprouts	2	1	-	27	16	39	1	Cereal sprouts
<b>CHAFF</b>								
<i>Triticum dicoccum</i> Schubl. (sf)	-	-	-	1	3	7	-	Emmer
<i>Triticum dicoccum</i> Schubl. (gl)	-	-	-	-	16	15	2	Emmer
<i>Triticum cf. Dicoccum</i> (gl)	-	4	-	3	6	2	-	Emmer
<i>Triticum spelta</i> L. (sf)	-	-	-	20	10	9	3	Spelt
<i>Triticum spelta</i> L. (gl)	2	46	6	245	31	193	16	Spelt
<i>Triticum cf. Spelta</i> (gl)	2	22	-	49	65	33	28	Spelt
<i>T. dicoccum/spelta</i> (sf)	-	14	1	77	57	89	15	Glume wheat
<i>T. dicoccum/spelta</i> (gl)	43	309	91	1057	393	1216	161	Glume wheat
<i>T. dicoccum/spelta</i> (ra)	2	116	2	263	163	104	23	Glume wheat
<i>Triticum sp. cf. free- threshing</i> (ra)	-	-	-	3	-	1	-	Wheat
<i>Hordeum vulgare</i> L. (ra)	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	Barley
Cereal rachis	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	Cereal
Awns (silicified)	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	Awns
<i>Triticum sp.</i> (awns)	+	-	-	++	++	++	+	Awns
<i>Avena sp.</i> (awns)	+	-	-	+	+	+	-	Oat
<b>WILD PLANTS</b>								
<i>Chenopodium album</i> type	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	Fat-hen
<i>Chenopodium sp.</i>	6	2	3	2	1	13	3	Goose foot
<i>Atriplex sp.</i>	5	-	-	2	-	-	-	Orache
<i>Polygonum sp.</i>	2	-	-	1	1	-	1	Knotweed
<i>Fallopia convolvulus</i> L.	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	Black Bindweed
<i>Rumex sp.</i>	7	2	1	24	3	4	-	Dock
<i>Raphanus raphanistrum</i> L. (pod)	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	Wild Radish
Brassicaceae	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	Cabbage family
<i>Aphanes arvensis</i> L.	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	Parsley Piert
<i>Prunus sp.</i>	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	Sloe/Bullace
<i>Lotus/Trifolium</i>	12	-	-	4	2	-	-	Trefoil/Clover
<i>Vicia/Lathyrus</i>	2	-	-	-	-	2	-	Vetch/Vetchling
<i>Medicago</i> type	20	2	-	3	-	7	-	Medick type
<i>Daucus carota</i> L.	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	Wild Carrot
<i>Lithospermum arvense</i> L	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	Field Gromwell
<i>Euphrasia/Odontites</i>	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	Eyebright/Bartsia
<i>Galium aparine</i> L.	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	Cleavers
<i>Galium sp.</i>	1	-	-	1	-	1	-	Bedstraw
<i>Carduus/Cirsium</i>	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	Thistles
<i>Carex sp.</i>	2	1	-	2	2	3	-	Sedge
<i>Cynosurus cristatus</i> L.	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	Crested Dog's-tail

<i>Bromus hordeaceus/secalinus</i>	-	1	-	11	-	-	-	Brome grass
<i>Phleum</i> sp.	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	Cat's-tail grass
Poaceae large	32	5	6	42	6	13	5	Grasses
Poaceae medium	51	-	-	-	2	1	-	Grasses
Poaceae small	7	5	4	6	2	4	-	Grasses
Indetermined seeds	12	2	-	3	3	4	1	Seeds
OTHER								
Stem fragments	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	Stem
Thorns	-	-	-	-	1	4	-	Thorns
Culm fragments small	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	Grass stem
Culm node small	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	Grass stem
Poaceae (sf)	-	-	-	6	12	-	-	Grass
TOTAL	368	558	140	2008	827	1958	449	(Items) (6338)
Volsample	3	4	3	5	5	11	4	(Litres)
Vol flot	18	12	19	28	40	210	60	(mls)
% Sorted	100	100	100	50	25	12.5	25	(%)
Items/litre	123	140	49	402	171	178	112	(Items/litre)
% Charcoal Ratio	25	33	75	10	10	10	33	approx % glumes per grain
0.4	17.6	2.9	11.1	10.3	8.8	1.1		
PROPORTIONS								
GLUMES	14.1	89.9	67.3	86.4	88.4	87.2	51.4	%
GRAINS	38.5	5.1	23.1	7.8	8.6	9.9	45.9	%
SEEDS	47.2	5.1	9.5	5.8	2.3	2.9	2.7	%

Key: (gl) = glume base, (sf) = spikelet fork, (ra) = rachis fragment; + = present, ++ = abundant.

### Human bone by Edward Lewis

Human bone was recovered from a single context, inhumation 3 (Phase 3). The skeleton was interred within Phase 2 Corndrier D and had suffered damage during topsoil removal, whilst other earlier damage can be attributed to modern ploughing with some evidence of temporary exposure indicated by teeth marks on the right femoral head. However, the majority of bones found in situ were of poor to fair preservation.

The absence of many diagnostic bones made sexing the skeleton difficult but general traits such as bone size, definition of temporal and occipital ridges, size of mastoid process, nuchal crest and sciatic notch were male characteristics which are echoed by the burial practice and the grave goods. Eruption of permanent teeth, including third molars, and fusion of all (available) epiphyses suggest an 'adult' age determination within the region 25 - 35 years old. Eruption of the third molar, or wisdom tooth, on all sides (left and right, maxilla and mandible) suggest an age exceeding 21 years old (Schour & Massler 1941; Brothwell 1972).

Evidence for osteoarthritic change was scarce. Some lipping on the lower lumbar vertebral bodies and slight eburnation on the lateral condyle of the proximal right tibia was noted.

Stature was estimated using standard formulae for adult male caucasoids (Trotter & Gleser 1952, 1958; Brothwell 1972):

$$\text{Tibia} = 2.42 \times (39.9) + 81.93 = 178.488 \text{ cm}$$

$$\text{Femur} = 2.32 \times (46.4) + 65.53 = 173.178 \text{ cm}$$

$$\text{Radius} = 3.79 \times (26.8) + 79.42 = 180.992 \text{ cm}$$

Trotter & Gleser (1958) suggest that stature should be calculated from the bone which has the smallest 'standard error', that is, the one least likely to deviate from actual height. In this case, the estimated height is 173.178cm or 5ft 8ins (taken from the femur). The average height estimation is 177.55 cm (approximately 5ft 10ins).

The general condition (health and physiognomy) of the individual was good, with little evidence of chronic disease or injury.



## **Animal bone** by *Umberto Albarella*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Animal bones were collected by hand from a variety of contexts in the evaluation trenches and the excavated area. Due to the small size of the assemblage the material has been analysed without reference to phase or particular context.

### **METHODS**

The mammal bones were recorded following a modified version of the method described in Davis (1992) and Albarella & Davis (1994). In brief, all teeth and a restricted suite of parts of the post-cranial skeleton were recorded and used in counts. These are: skull (zygomaticus), scapula (glenoid articulation), distal humerus, distal radius, proximal ulna, carpal 2-3, distal metacarpal, pelvis (ischial part of acetabulum), distal femur, distal tibia, calcaneus (sustentaculum), lateral astragalus, naviculo-cuboid, distal metatarsal, proximal phalanges. At least 50% of a given part had to be present for it to be counted. For birds the following were always recorded: scapula (articular end), proximal coracoid, distal humerus, proximal ulna, proximal carpometacarpus, distal femur, distal tibiotarsus, distal tarsometatarsus. Horncores with a complete transverse section and "non-countable" elements of particular interest were recorded, but not included in the counts.

Due to the small size of the assemblages the number of identified specimens was the only method used for calculating the frequencies of species and parts of the skeleton. The minimum number of individual (MNI) is not recommended for small assemblages and was thus ignored. Wear stages were recorded for all permanent and deciduous lower fourth premolars (P4 and dP4) as well as for the lower molars of cattle, caprines and pig, both isolated and in mandibles. Tooth wear stages follow Grant (1982) for cattle and pig and Payne (1973, 1987) for caprines.

Measurements were taken following the recommendations of Payne & Bull (1988) for pig bones and of von den Driesch (1976) for the other taxa. The few metric and ageing data which could be recorded from this assemblage are in archive and can be requested from the author.

### **RESULTS**

The preservation of the bone surface was reasonably good and quite homogeneous for the whole assemblage. The rate of fragmentation was very high, as the large number of teeth compared to bones (Table 15) seems also to suggest. However, the possibility that this uneven anatomical distribution is due to disposal or butchery practices cannot be ruled out. Gnawing marks were uncommon and no bones were found in articulation.

The list of species found is shown in Table 15. The predominance of domestic livestock and in particular of sheep and cattle is typical of Roman sites in Britain. The noticeable under-representation of sheep post-cranial bones could be the result of a combination of butchery and taphonomic factors. The majority of the sheep remains may perhaps derive from primary butchery.

The ageing data are too few to give substantial information about the kill-off patterns of the animal populations. A variety of age stages of sheep teeth suggests that this species was used as a multi-purpose animal (for meat, wool and possibly milk).

Cut marks on cattle phalanges attest to the process of skinning and the use of hides. Chop marks observed on the same anatomical elements may be related to marrow

extraction. A hole on the ventral side of a cattle phalanx could be caused by the same sort of activity, although the possibility that it represents a tool of unknown function cannot be excluded. Cut marks on an equid (probably a horse) humerus suggest that horse meat was used for human or dog consumption.

**Table 15 Number of recorded mammal and bird specimens**

	Teeth	Bones	Total
Caprine ( <i>Ovis/Capra</i> )	41	4	45
(Sheep ( <i>Ovis aries</i> ))	5	-	5
(Goat ( <i>Capra hircus</i> ))	-	-	-
Cattle ( <i>Bos taurus</i> )	26	17	43
Pig ( <i>Sus scrofa</i> )	3	3	6
Equid ( <i>Equus sp.</i> )	-	1	1
Dog ( <i>Canis familiaris</i> )	2	-	2
Domestic fowl ( <i>Gallus gallus</i> )	-	1	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>98</b>

Figures in brackets are included in the general number of caprine bones

## DISCUSSION

### The Road

The road surface identified within T1 produced no dating evidence, but its east-west alignment and proximity to the modern road strongly suggest that it formed part of the Roman road between Alcester and Stratford which then ran on to the Fosse Way and beyond to Watling Street (Margary 1973, 283-4). Further evidence of its antiquity is hinted by the Billesley parish boundary as shown on the Ordnance Survey 1st Edition (1886), which aligns precisely on the north edge of the excavated road. This road is believed to have been laid out by the Roman army in the mid-1st century during the conquest period, probably to support forts set to the north-west of the Fosse Way, south of Stratford and at Alcester. Later in the Roman period it would have served to distribute salt from Droitwich across the Midlands (Warwickshire County Council 1994, I 3/2, 6). It continued in use through the middle ages when it was known as the Salt Way. Since it follows a direct line between river crossing points at Stratford and Alcester the Roman road may have followed an earlier trackway.

This road was examined in Alcester and described as '15ft wide, and constructed of pebble and gravel 12 to 14 in thick ... laid on turf containing sherds of rustic ware (late first century)' (Hughes 1960, 15). Further work by Christine Mahany in 1964-6 found the earliest surviving surface dating to the 4th century (Booth 1994b, 167). Survival of this road is at best sporadic; the geophysical survey conducted in 1994 fails to show any sign of the road continuing to the west. Observation undertaken during the pipeline construction east of Alcester between Oversley Green and Oversley Hill Farm was able to identify part of the road: a c.7m spread of gravel bounded on one side by a line of possible kerb stones was all that remained within a possible 1350m long section that was likely to impinge on the road (Palmer & Meek 2003, 6-7).

The most likely explanation for the absence of gullies on the northern side in T1 is that they were never dug so as to allow access into the settlement site. If this was the case then it can be assumed that the gullies on the southern side were dug after the founding of the settlement but this does not clarify at all the date of the actual road.

## **Buildings and structures**

The earliest structures found dated to the 2nd century AD, but all the identifiable buildings were late-3rd/mid-4th century and even these are ill defined and their interpretation speculative. However, some stone walls appear to date from the 2nd century and although no specific structures were recognised, it remains likely that they formed part of the earliest buildings on the site. The use of stone in construction is uncommon in Alcester until the later 3rd century and the earliest excavated stone structure at the villa site at Salford Priors was early-3rd century (Palmer 2000a, 184). Stone was never greatly used at Tiddington (Palmer 1982, 18). However at all these sites stone had to be imported, while at Billesley it is easily available locally.

### **BUILDING A AND CORNDRIER B**

This building, along with all the other buildings and structures encountered during the excavations, lay only partly within the area excavated. It was represented by walls 2, 5 and 6, which formed the northern façade of an otherwise unknown structure. At just over 11m long the northern wall is too wide to represent the end wall on anything other than an aisled building and such structures are usually but not exclusively associated with villa complexes. The same dimension (c.11m) is repeated in **Building G** in the western complex and the possibility that it represents the shorter end dimension is discussed with that building.

Alternatively, if wall 2 were the longer, side wall, a side-to-end ratio of 2:1 suggests that the building could have been between 5m and 6m wide. The stone foundations could have supported a wall to the eaves, suitable building stone being easily available. However, that it comprised timber framed walls built on sill beams placed on top of dwarf walls seems just as likely. There was sufficient roof tile in the area to suggest that it was roofed in this material. No internal divisions were evident in the limited area available but it had possible floor surfaces 8 and later 37. This type of construction is closely paralleled at the villa site at Salford Priors, where later 3rd-4th century **Building i** (15m x 7m) was stone-founded with a tiled roof and divided into two rooms either side of a central corridor (Palmer 2000a, Fig 76; 185).

At Billesley, the internal **Corndrier B** appeared to have been inserted into the building sometime after the original construction. Although it was not fully excavated, this corndrier appeared to have a, relatively unusual, L-shaped or rectangular flue, similar to a 2nd century example from West Blatchington, Sussex, and 4th century examples from Foxholes Farm, Herts and Longthorpe, Cambridgeshire (Morris 1979, 98, 101, fig 11). The position of **Corndrier B** within **Building A** suggests that any sub-division within the building was necessarily unequal, the corndrier being over 5m long and presumably requiring further space for operational purposes. The building may well therefore have been solely devoted to agricultural functions.

### **STRUCTURE C**

This structure can at best be described as enigmatic. It was represented by a single length of wall 45 and three post settings (56-58). Its northern extent had been truncated to a ragged edge so it remains possible that a contemporary wall or walls had been likewise lost. The surviving floor 44 on the east side of the surviving wall was probably an exterior surface, perhaps a pathway surrounding the structure. If,

as seems likely, the bulk of the structure lies to the south of the excavation it could have been any size and served any function.

#### CORNDRIER D AND SMALL ENCLOSURE E

Corndrier D was a free standing oven, with a more conventional T-shaped flue. These are relatively ubiquitous on rural Roman sites in south Warwickshire and central England (Morris 1979, Fig 28a). It was constructed within or surrounded by a discontinuous gully that formed **Small Enclosure E**, with an apparent opening to the east. There was no evidence for post settings or beam slots so it is not certain what form the enclosure took above ground. The gullies and pits that formed the enclosure could have been quarries for an earthwork bank into which fence posts were driven or a hedge planted, but it seems unlikely that the oven within was covered by a roof. It is possible that this corndrier was a replacement for the abandoned **Corndrier B**.

#### STRUCTURE F

This structure located within T3 was indicated by a row of seven possible postholes ranged 1.5-2m between centres. If postholes they were, they could represent a wall line or aisle posts for a large building; an aisled building at the Salford Priors villa site had similarly spaced aisle posts (Palmer 2000a, Fig 76, Building j). This building, also dating to the late 3rd/early 4th century, was interpreted as a possible byre based on an internal drain slot and its similarity to an example at Roughground Farm, Gloucs (Palmer 2000a, 185). There is no evidence suggesting that the Billesley building was a byre. It also remains possible that the alignment belonged to a smaller building, its dimension of c.11m matching the recorded dimensions of **Building A** and **Building G** in the western complex. Buildings constructed from earthfast posts were the most common structural type in Alcester and generally ranged in size from c.10-15m x 4-7m (Booth 1994b, 160). Alternatively the alignment could represent a fence line, perhaps bounding a property facing the road.

#### BUILDING G

Interpretation of this building which also had an east-west dimension of c.11m is also problematic. The relationship between wall 67 and the later wall 68 was never satisfactorily resolved. The H-shape visible within the excavated area seems unlikely to represent a double open ended lean-to or shed, the protruding 'buttresses' being too short and the orientation nonsensical. If it extended as far south as T2 its length would be over 20m, but there are plenty of aisled buildings from lowland Roman Britain with these sorts of dimensions (Morris 1979, Figs 35-42). The absence of finds associated with the building, particularly those of a domestic nature, lend weight to an agricultural or industrial function, although, as no superstructure survived it is quite possible that floor layers and other deposits which may have contained such debris have long since been ploughed away.

A further possible parallel was sampled in trenches at Ditchley, Oxon, although this was some 36ft (12m) square. This building was of three bays or rooms built on walls 2ft 6in thick (0.75m) with square buttresses projecting 2ft (0.6m) in the southern corners (Radford 1936, 46-9). The rather longer buttresses of **Building G** (if buttresses they are) imply a structure of some height, perhaps a minimum of two storeys. If so, the structure was huge and difficult to parallel. Buildings of such dimensions are rare but not unknown. At Sapperton, Lincs (Simmons 1995) two late Roman aisled buildings had similarly large dimensions (21m x 11.2m and 27.2m x 13.8m).

However, an alternative interpretation may be that the foundations in the main area represent the northern side of one east-west aligned building of similar dimensions



to that of **Building A** and the foundations in T2 represent a parallel building. Whereas this scenario provides buildings of more typical dimensions, it is very unusual to find buildings with their long sides to the street, except as shop fronts in towns. Buildings in the larger roadside settlements such as Catsgore, Somerset (Leech 1982; Ellis 1984) and Hibaldstow, South Humberside (Finch-Smith 1987) are generally aligned perpendicular to the street, and a similar situation is known at nearby Dragonby (May 1996, 601-5).

## Site dynamics and chronology

### ORIGINS OF THE SETTLEMENT

Aside from the Mesolithic flintwork, there is no evidence for pre-Roman activity on the site, or indeed in the near vicinity. It is possible that the Roman road was preceded by a trackway or at least a traversable route between the river crossings at Stratford and Alcester, but the higher ground may have retained its forestation, as it probably did to the north and west in the 'later' Forest of Arden (Palmer 2000a, 219). Some of the natural hollows evident across the excavated area can be attributed to tree roots and may therefore suggest continued woodland cover. Pollen analysis from Alcester suggests that extensive grasslands had been extricated from the woodland by the end of the Iron Age (Woodwards & Greig 1989, 93-4). It is likely that a similar episode of clearance had occurred around Stratford, but it need not imply that clearance in between was wide-scale. However, a cropmark site on the edge of Red Hill has produced Roman pottery during fieldwalking (Warwickshire Museum 1995) and a further cropmark complex immediately west of the excavated area (Fig 2), although undated, also implies at least a partially cleared landscape in the Roman period.

It seems that occupation of the site postdated the construction of the road. Whether the road was metalled before occupation commenced is uncertain. The evidence for the date of the road's metalling from various excavations in Alcester is at best inconclusive (Booth & Evans 2001, 305-6), and anyway need not reflect the state of the highway in the countryside.

The earliest occupation dated to the early/mid 2nd century. The earliest activity seems to have been limited to a rather nebulous enclosure, first indicated by gully 86. This feature, although only visible on the western side of the site, could have formed part of an enclosure defined by the concentration of fieldwalking finds. That it was part of an enclosure to the west of the excavated area seems less likely unless it can be attributable to activities that did not produce debris such as paddocks. The pit/ditch in T2 (E211) may have represented a continuation of the alignment to the south-east.

Structural activity in this early phase was indicated by north-south wall 99 although its function remains unknown. It was the flimsiest of all the walls encountered on the site. At some point in the early stages of the settlement's development a small oven E204 was operating less than 7m from the edge of the road surface.

Later in the 2nd century an east-west wall 66 was constructed, its eastern extent overlying wall 99. N/S walls 79 and 84 were constructed 5m to the west of wall 99, but again no building or structure can be reconstructed. The unstratified pottery included a higher proportion of fine wares from this period, which could have been associated with a relatively high status building to the north of the excavated area. However this was not reflected in the fieldwalking pottery from this area and was probably a chance effect. The stone walls at Billesley are not an indication of early 'Romanization', merely a reflection of the easy availability of suitable stone.

The position of wall 79-84 could indicate that the former replaced or served a similar function to the latter. A second phase of enclosure gully (89) on the west side of the site, again was not recognised on the eastern side but may have been one of the re-cuts identified as E211 in T2. A further section of the enclosure gully (70) was dug on the west side of the site, once again without a corresponding feature on the east side.

In the eastern complex at this time, a series of shallow hollows had formed and some rather deeper gullies and pits may have been associated with structures or buildings that were replaced by Structure C in the following phase that had left no other readable trace.

Substantial buildings were erected in the later-3rd/mid-4th century. Continuity from the later 2nd century is evident in the pottery assemblage but no structures can be ascribed to the early 3rd century. It is possible that the focus of activity in the intervening period may have been to the north of the excavated area.

The ambiguous Building G was constructed on the western side of the site in the later 3rd/mid 4th century. The earlier wall foundations were not robbed out preceding the new construction, as there was undoubtedly an ample supply of fresh usable stone in the near vicinity. The reuse of the location need not necessarily reflect restricted space within the occupied area as it was common practice to rebuild in the same locality as previous structures. The function of the succeeding structures often remained the same as tradition was an important function of site layout (Neal 1989, 156; Neal *et al* 1990, 89; Palmer 2000a, 187). Implicit in this is the possibility that some form of building did precede Building G, whatever its form.

Occupation and utilisation of the eastern complex was extensive in this phase. Building A, the elusive Structure C, the Small Enclosure E and perhaps Structure F, all forming a coherent group on the east side of the settlement area.

The distinct space or open area between the western and eastern complexes may have reflected a division between two separate properties although no obvious property boundary feature was identified. However, the apparent gap may have served as a north-south trackway through the settlement, a spur off the main road serving properties along its length and perhaps with buildings set perpendicularly to it. The bedrock is very close to the surface in this area perhaps obviating the need for metalling on a road. In this model Building G would not extend to T2 and the remains there would belong to a separate structure; and, both these two buildings along with Building A and Structure F, would be smaller (c.11m long not c.11m wide).

Most roadside settlements appear to have been divided into plots defined by ditches (and presumably banks) (Finch-Smith 1987, 22-41). Their absence at Billesley Manor Farm, even considering the restricted nature and linear arrangement of the excavated areas, is unlikely to be a result of truncation by ploughing. Frontages range from c.15m wide at Hibaldestow to c.46m wide at Catsgore (Finch-Smith 1987, 30-1) so it is useless to speculate on the size of possible plots at Billesley Manor Farm.

The surface pottery scatter recorded during the fieldwalking (Fig 2) extends over an area of some 1.5ha. If the scatter accurately represents the underlying settlement site, as it appears to do on the east-west axis, there could have been buildings and structures extending for some 150m northward of the present road. This area is similar to that of local rural settlements - the Bidford Grange settlement was c.1.25ha (Hart *et al* 1991), that at Abbots Salford c.2.5ha - and villas - the nearby Salford Priors villa extended over an area of at least 2.5ha, with major buildings dispersed along a 250m stretch of the River Arrow terraces (Palmer 2000a, 193).

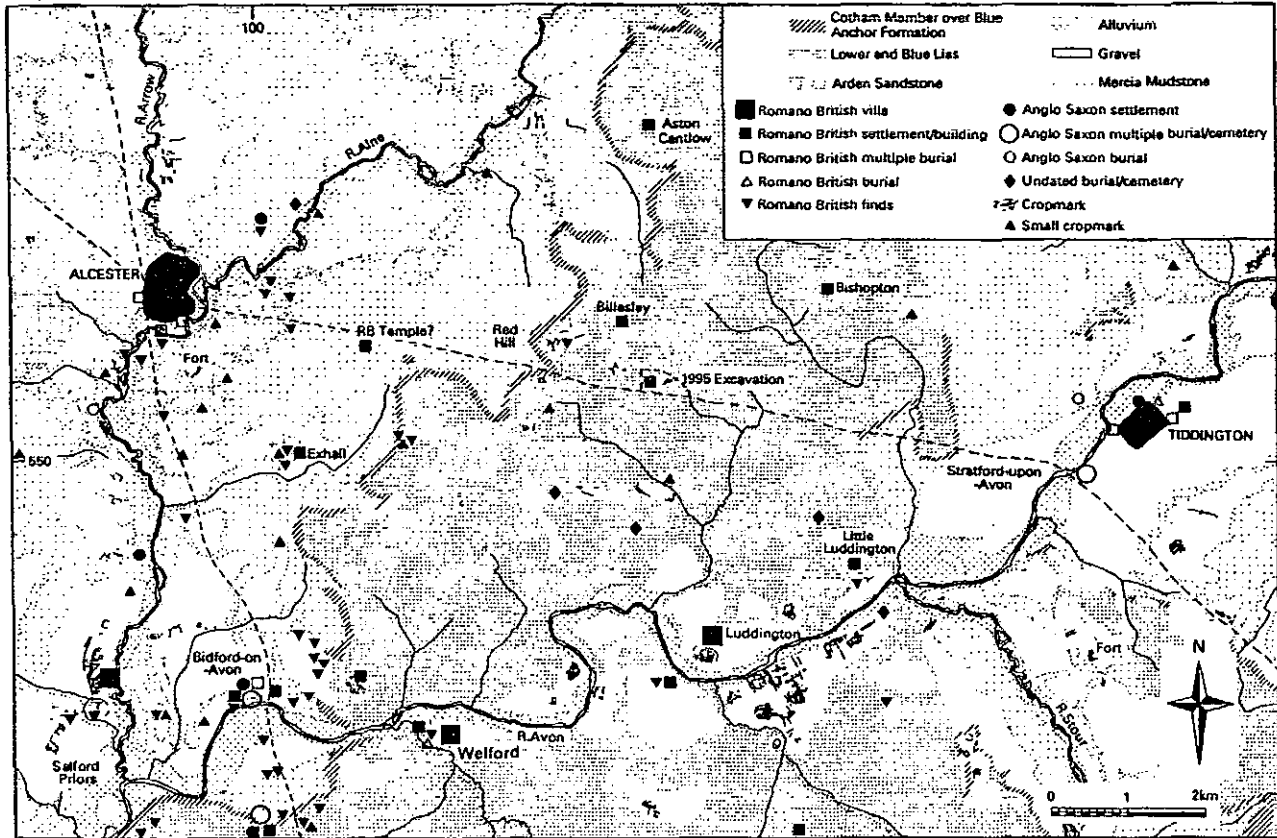


Fig 16 The Arrow and Avon Valley watershed in the Romano-British period

The location of the Billesley site need not count against an interpretation as a villa. Although none of the known Warwickshire examples lies immediately adjacent to a contemporary road, their distribution seems based on a combination of radial distance from a major urban centre and nearness to major road (Booth 1996, 27; Palmer 2000a, 219). Billesley Manor fulfils both criteria.

However on the basis of the pottery assemblage the site would fall at the upper end of the range for rural settlements, and the other finds do not suggest any particularly high status. Despite the fact that some villa assemblages, like Barton Court Farm (Miles 1984), could be rough and ready, the absence of cultural material normally associated with villas such as box flue tile, mosaic pavements and painted wall plaster does rather preclude this model. The site is therefore best seen in the context of rural settlements.

### Economy and trade

The location of the site on the road, equidistant between the two centres of Alcester and Tiddington, themselves set at the usual c.12km or half a day's journey apart for markets (cf. Crickmore 1984; Brown 1995), may be significant. The markets that would have been held at Alcester and Tiddington would seem to fulfil the area's commercial needs, but it is possible that the Billesley Manor Farm site may have offered some limited range of services to passing travellers. A high proportion of drinking tankards among the pottery (Evans above) might suggest the provision of drinks, but this pattern is thought to be a regional phenomenon.

None of the buildings or structures encountered on the site have revealed evidence for a domestic function, but some of them must have been houses, and the finds

exhibit a more-than-basic level of domestic material culture. Evidence for economic activity on the site was provided by the two corndriers. Such features, although not satisfactorily understood, have been found on all the excavated rural settlements in the area and generally are taken to indicate domestic processing. The crops produced seem to have been mainly wheat with some barley. The animal bones suggest the keeping of sheep and cattle and some pigs, and some of the bones suggested that butchery took place on site. Other activities are suggested by individual finds: spinning of wool by a spindle whorl; and metalworking by an iron punch.

As one of the larger small towns in the region, Alcester must have been an avid consumer of grain and the majority of it must have come from the surrounding countryside. At present there are no corndriers recorded in the extensively excavated town, so the inhabitants may have received their grain already processed. By contrast numerous corndriers are recorded at Tiddington, and as most of the inhabitants are likely to have been engaged in agriculture, they may not have imported grain at all. The location of the Billesley Manor Farm settlement, adjacent to one of the main roads into the town, would have made it well placed to service Alcester's demand for grain.

It is possible that the settlement was an outlying part of a larger villa estate, and the most likely candidate for the principal focus of a Billesley estate lies in the area that later developed into the medieval village. Romano-British pottery has been recovered from fields adjacent to the village, which lies c.1km to the north (Hooke 1985, 57). If indeed the two Billesley sites were located within the same land unit as their location in the same later parish conceivably suggests, then the excavation has only examined a subsidiary part of the estate. Direct parallels for this model are not known although this is possibly a result of our tendency to view sites in isolation rather than regionally or as a localised economic and social communities (see James & Millett 2001 for recent discussions on this problem). Indeed, such hypotheses are difficult to press with such limited evidence and the few other known sites in the locale (at Aston Cantlow, Bishopton, Little Luddington and the villas at Luddington and Welford) have not been examined in sufficient detail.

The trading links of the Billesley Manor Farm site seem to be fairly typical for south west Warwickshire. The majority of the ceramics at Billesley emanate from the south west and the Dobunnic heartland, with a reliance on the Severn Valley industry almost from its inception. The later period sees some supply from the north and east, Mortaria from Mancetter in the early 3rd century but later a shift to the Oxford industry. Fabric G11 arrives from Milton Keynes in the late 3rd century as does a little Nene Valley ware and shell tempered ware from Harold, Beds. The two imported stone objects come from Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire/Yorkshire, rather than south-western sources such as the Forest of Dean, although they are only a tiny sample.

### **End of occupation**

At Billesley Manor, definite occupation cannot be recognised in the pottery after the mid-4th century, although it may have continued later. This phenomenon, perhaps due to a decline in the use of pottery, was also recognised at the villa site at Salford Priors, although later 4th century coins were being dispersed around a possible shrine (Palmer 2000a, 196), and Bidford Grange where there was little 4th century pottery, although the latest coin was of Arcadius (388-92) (Hart *et al* 1991, 26-7).

At Tiddington settlement continued until after the late-4th century when a defensive ditch was constructed around part of the village (Palmer 1981). Subsequently the main focus of Anglo-Saxon settlement moved south-westwards to Stratford, leaving



only a small, short lived presence on the original site (Palmer 1997, 25). At Alcester, the defended part of the town was reinforced with a stone wall in the mid-later 4th century but there is currently no clear evidence as to how long the Romano-British occupation continued (Booth & Evans 2001, 305-6). A beam slot which produced a Anglo-Saxon sherd points to some form of contemporary activity within Alcester (Booth & Evans 2001, 111).

Anglo-Saxon incursion in the area seems to have been relatively unobstructed, Cemeteries which probably accompanied by settlements are known at Bidford as well as at Stratford (Ford 1996). Recent work in the Arrow Valley at Broom has identified some early (?6th century) settlement (Palmer 2000a, 197-210) but generally habitation sites are rare, although this is more likely to be a matter of recognition rather than a real absence of settlement.

Billesley was probably in the territory of the *Arosaetna* (Hooke 1996, Fig 2) and part of the Hwiccan kingdom. The *laeh* place name suggests a settlement of some antiquity and an association with woodland. The parish boundary aligns with the Roman road (Ordnance Survey 1886), which is not the case for the other parishes between Stratford and Alcester. Whilst this could suggest that any Billesley estate was not in existence before the Roman period a single 'Belgic' sherd was included with the finds recovered from Billesley village (Hooke 1985, 57).

The excavations produced some evidence for pre- and post-occupation woodland. It would be difficult to prove that the site was positioned within a newly wrested clearing, not least because it is possible that some clearance occurred during road construction. It is also possible that clearance occurred earlier still and without the evidence of corresponding environmental indicators such as pollen, beetle or snail analysis, it must remain speculation. However, regeneration of the woodland in the immediate post-Roman period seems likely given the combination of the excavated and the place-name evidence.

### **The Anglo-Saxon burial**

So where does the Anglo-Saxon inhumation fit within this scheme? As it was located on the edge of the excavated area we can not be sure if it was part of a cemetery and the grave goods imply a date around the mid-6th century or later. However, it is clear that parts of the Roman settlement were still evident above ground for the corndrier was surely selected because it presented a ready made sarcophagus. It is questionable as to whether the burial party knew the former function of the structure, there are no other recorded cases of inhumation in pre-existing agricultural buildings or structures. Such a choice of burial site seems unlikely to be an act of humour and must either be based on ignorance or necessity. If necessity was the reason then perhaps we should consider that it was a convenient spot by the roadside for people who were travelling with some haste. Other single Anglo-Saxon inhumation burials in the area include examples at Aston Cantlow and Ragley Park in the Arrow Valley.

### **IN CONCLUSION**

The work at Billesley Manor Farm has identified a Romano-British rural settlement that emerged during the 2nd century mid-way between the important Roman town of Alcester and the thriving village at Tiddington. The impetus for the new settlement seems to have been the Roman road that linked the two settlements and which formed an integral part of the Roman communications network. By the late 3rd to mid-4th century a number of substantial stone-founded buildings had been built north of the road, although development is likely to have covered c.1.5ha stretching back from the road. The economy of the settlement included an element of

mixed agriculture, evidenced in the two corndriers found on the eastern side of the site and in the animal bone remains.

Any further interpretation of the evidence requires a deal of speculation and guesswork. Definitive answers are hampered by the absence of complete building plans and the difficulties of understanding the layout of the settlement. Further problems arise with the chronology; an apparent 3rd century hiatus is likely to be a result of the limited area excavated. Detailed phasing of the remains has been hampered by limited stratigraphy in an area of considerable tree root damage and gravitative contamination of contexts during subsoil shrinkage and subsequent cracking.

It has not been possible to establish convincingly either the number of individual houses or properties, or the interrelationship between each of the buildings. Whilst its roadside position hints at some commercial activity, and the pottery assemblage at a wealth level at the top end for a rural settlement, there was little evidence to show how this was achieved.

Despite any specialist service activity, the settlement seems to have come to an end by the mid-later 4th century. The site was soon subject to woodland regeneration although we can not be sure when this was allowed to begin. Its early medieval history was punctuated by the burial of a man with his accoutrements in a long-since defunct corndrier. The relationship of this man to the site of the settlement is again unknown, although he may have been part of a yet undiscovered cemetery.

Only further fieldwork can elucidate any of these points and it is perhaps fortunate that so little of the site has already been destroyed; most of the known buildings lay outside the areas excavated. Any future research design now has a broad base of information on which to build, but a lot of questions to answer.

## Appendix A: An Iron Age enclosure at Sherbourne Hill, Fulbrook, Warwickshire

### Introduction

The pipeline route passed through a sub-rectangular enclosure cropmark on the western slope of Sherbourne Hill, Fulbrook (SP 245 611). Sherbourne Hill comprises a ridge of Mercia Mudstone on the western side of the Avon Valley capped with a Quaternary deposit of sand and gravel (British Geological Survey 1984; 1989). West of the ridge the Sherbourne Brook flows north-east to join the Avon on the north side of the site.

The enclosure (WA 4948) was first photographed by A Baker in 1964 (SMR Ref. SP2461/A-B) and on its north side there are other linear cropmark features which may be of geological origin. The enclosure measured c.55m by 45m across, an area of 0.2475ha with an apparent entrance on the south-eastern side (Fig 17). On the basis of its form it was likely to be of late prehistoric or Romano-British date. The south-east part of the cropmark was recently destroyed without record when the A46 was widened.

It was intended that the pipeline should be diverted to the north of the enclosure and that topsoil stripping should be observed over a 300m length in its vicinity in case there were external features. In the event the pipeline was not diverted and ran across the centre of the enclosure. The external area was observed immediately after it had been stripped. No archaeological features were identified, but one worked flint flake was found.

### Excavation (Fig 17)

A series of four trenches, 30m by 1.60m wide, were excavated to locate the enclosure ditches and sample its interior. These trenches were dug in June 1996. The position of the water main within the easement meant that the four trenches had to be amalgamated into one continuous length, but the ditches were located and a 49m section mainly c.3m wide was cleared across the interior, together with a strip 25m long by 1.60-3m wide to the south west.

The north-eastern arm of the enclosure ditch 2 was c.3.20m wide and 0.85m deep, with a shallow V-shaped profile with a square slot in its base (Fig 17, Section A). Along both sides of the ditch there was a band of dark yellowish brown sandy loam 2/2. This was overlaid by three successive ditch fills, brown sandy loam and gravel 2/4, yellowish brown sandy loam 2/3 and brown sandy loam 2/1. The top fill 2/1 contained nineteen sherds of middle Iron Age pottery, from a jar in a reduced sandy fabric, and nine fragments of daub. There was also some slag, probably fuel ash slag (not necessarily from metalworking). An intrusive fragment of medieval/post-medieval tile was also found, probably from the top of the feature.

The south-western arm of the enclosure ditch 3 was 2.70m wide by 0.75m deep to the south-east but widened to c.5m to the north-west, probably because the ditch was beginning to turn to the north. Alternatively the widening may have marked the start of a recut. The ditch profile (Fig 17, Section B) also suggested that it had been recut, but its fill was a single homogenous layer of brown sandy loam 3/1 which contained no finds.

No features were recognised across the interior of the enclosure or outside it to the south-west. Both ditches were cut by recent field drains containing ceramic pipes (4, 5) and overlaid by 1 a layer of dark yellowish brown sandy loam and gravel. This was almost certainly redeposited material, probably from the modern excavated

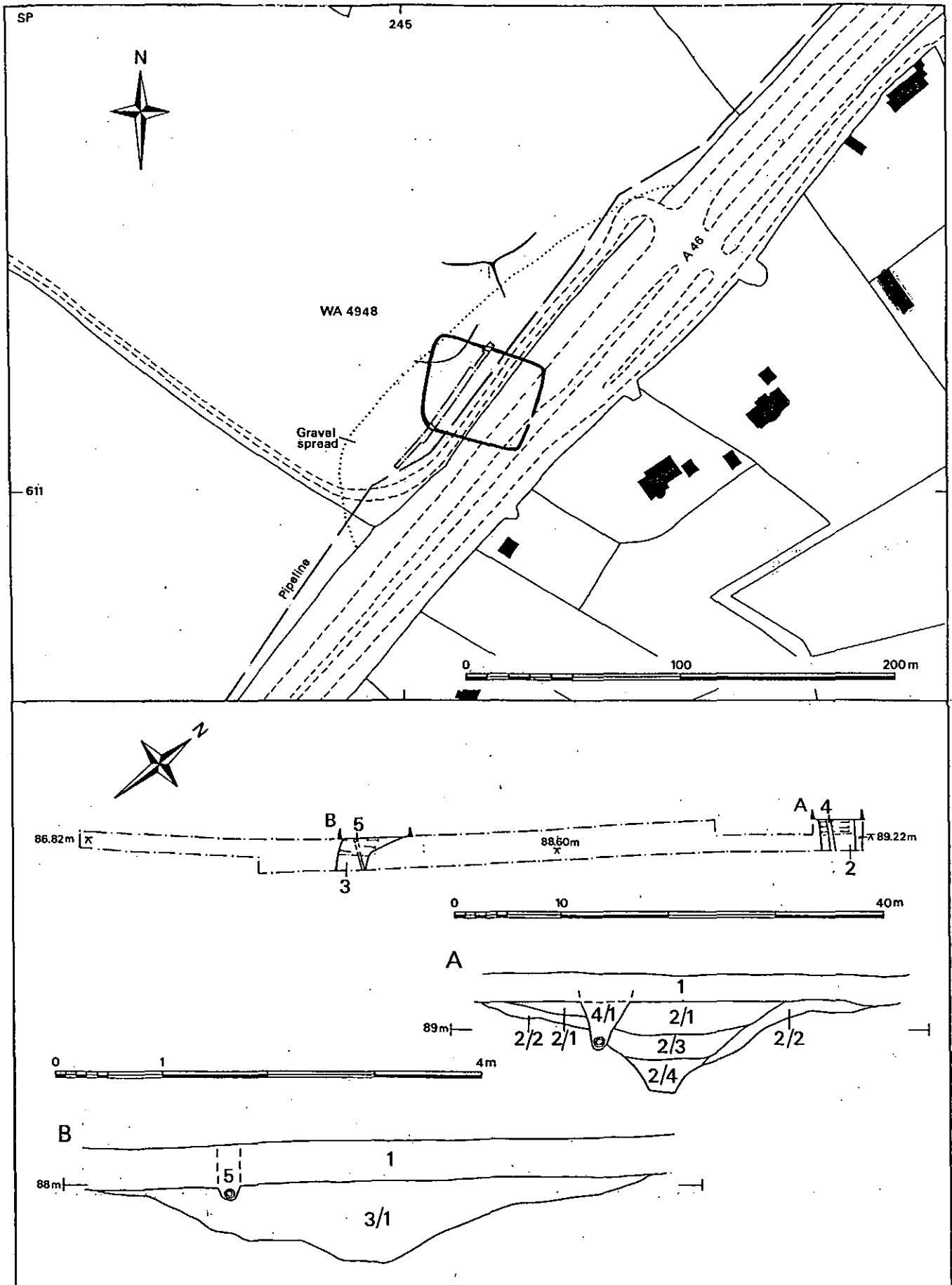


Fig 17 Sherbourne Hill, Fulbrook cropmark enclosure with trench plans and sections



cutting of the existing A46 running parallel on the southern side of the easement. It is likely that this material covered any archaeological remains associated with the enclosure. No finds were recovered from the topsoil removed from the interior of the enclosure or elsewhere.

## **Discussion**

A number of rectangular enclosures dating from the middle Iron Age have been excavated in Warwickshire. The occurrence of pottery of this date, albeit in the top of the ditch around the Fulbrook enclosure, serves to associated the site with a range of occupied enclosures spread in a broad band along the Avon Valley (cf Hingley 1996) and beyond.

The absence of features recorded within the enclosure in no way suggests that this enclosure was unoccupied or was otherwise empty. Recent work at Marsh Farm in the Arrow Valley was able to record a complete enclosure of similar date where internal features were grouped around one corner and the entrance (Palmer 2000b). A ring gully in the centre of the enclosure was barely visible but if a transect similar to the pipeline at Fulbrook is plotted over the completed plan, it too would not intersect with any of the internal features. However, not all these enclosures were occupied: a further enclosure recently excavated at Ling Hall Quarry, Church Lawford seems likely to have had a purely ritual function (Palmer in prep).

Although the proliferation of such enclosures during the middle Iron Age appears to be a regional phenomena, the majority of those recognised and excavated have been located on gravel deposits. These deposits generally exhibit cropmarks more frequently than other geologies within the region and are also more likely to be exposed during development, particularly gravel quarrying. However, of those sites excavated, few have produced evidence for earlier occupation (Hingley 1996), which does seem to suggest that the middle Iron Age was a period of colonisation of previously unsettled or perhaps long abandoned landscapes. A caveat to this model lies in the problems of identifying earlier settlement evidence. If later Bronze Age and earlier Iron Age habitation sites were unenclosed by a large ditch they are unlikely to be well represented by cropmarks. There is also growing evidence that the earlier settlements may have been temporary seasonal stopping places used by herders (Palmer in prep). It has recently been shown that such a nomadic lifestyle was carried out much later than had previously been thought (Richmond 1999). Temporary camps are unlikely to cause significant disturbance and would therefore be very difficult to trace archaeologically.

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