



**Observation of a building foundation trench, Welham road, Norton, North Yorkshire, on 17.01.92.** by Mark Johnson.

The excavated trench (SE7902 7095, in Norton parish) forms the western side of a proposed building laying a short distance to the east of Welham road, and is roughly parallel to the relict millpond further to the east. This foundation trench is situated on sloping ground, the land falling away quite sharply from west to east and to a much lesser extent from south to north. The entirety of the trench was machine excavated, two sections of which were subsequently trowel cleaned, drawn and recorded. As the building contractors used a level to ensure that the base of the trench was truly horizontal the trench bottom was used as the datum from which all measurements were taken.

The sequence of observed layers can be described thus:

- 1) Thin, compact, dark, sandy loam topsoil containing 19th century and later finds. Some of the compaction is likely to be due to the movement of heavy machinery in the area.
- 2) Moderate to compact, darkish brown, sandy silt loam containing occasional small rounded pebbles. No finds.
- 3) Loose to moderate, dark brown, sandy silt loam containing only a very few small rounded pebbles. No finds.
- 4) Natural. 90% = medium grain sized sands in which some laminations are evident. Remainder = lenses of fine gravel. Colour variations are from yellow to orange. Believed to be of glacial origin.

\* Note : Some mixing at the interfaces of all these layers was evident.  
See section drawings and context records.

### **Brief Summary**

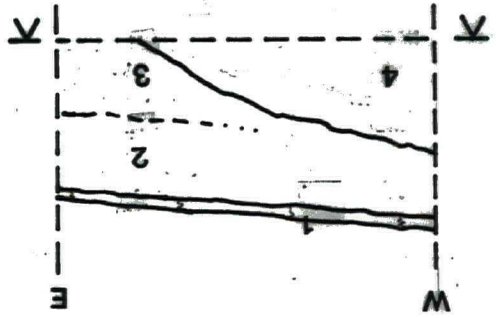
The sequence revealed in section was a simple one although with the exception of ,1, a topsoil showing clear evidence of considerable disturbance possibly derived through use as a garden/growing soil, the interpretation of the remaining layers is somewhat uncertain. It can be seen in the profiles of the natural sand and gravel strata ,4, that the slope of this material is of a steeper gradient than that of the two layers above it ,2, and ,3,. Neither of these two layers produced any finds whatsoever and both were of a clean, undisturbed appearance in which no cuts or evidence of activity was visible. In short, no evidence could be found to prove them to be a product of direct human action. Their characteristics were by contrast, such as may be expected in a gradual accumulation of hillwash. Given the location of the trench part way down a slope such a process must be anticipated in this vicinity. However, examination of ,4, in the longer of the two sections shows two quite abrupt steps in profile. Whilst such a profile may be of natural origin, it does raise the possibility of them resulting from attempts at terracing. Against this it must be pointed out that as the major ground slope is in a west to east direction one must question whether or not the gentle south to north slope would have ever warranted terracing. Finally, attention is drawn to the fact that given the considerable west to east slope of the hillside at this part of the Welham road development site, it is likely in the past to have been of a marginal nature, particularly perhaps in terms of its usage for building purposes.

\* Note : July 1989, three metal detecting finds made by J. Halliday esq in close vicinity of trench:

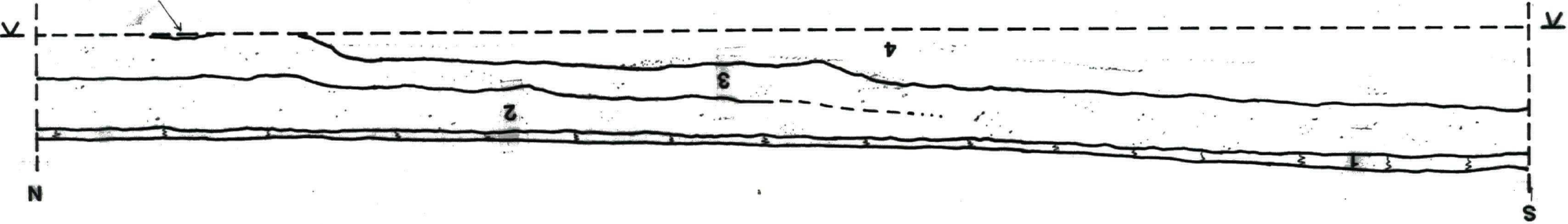
- 1) Ae coin of Constantine c.330 A.D.
- 2) 2 x Ae Fibulae (distorted by heat? = cremation?).

0 1 2 3 4 5 metres

SOUTH FACING



EAST FACING



**PART A: DESCRIPTION**

Co-ordinates	Site Sub Div	Site Code WELHAM ROAD NORTON.	Context Number 1
Category TOPSOIL			
Levels	Highest	Lowest	
Length	Width	Diameter	Height/depth
Soils	Colour(Munsell)	10YR 3/1 VERY DARK GREY.	
	Texture	SANDY LOAM	
	Consistence	MODERATE → COMPACT.	
	Coarse Components	OCCASIONAL SMALL PEBBLES < 3 CM	
Structure	Bonding Agent	/	
	Constituents	/	
Descriptive Text PRESENT TOPSOIL. VERY THIN, SELDOM EXCEEDING 10 CM. PRESENTLY SUPPORTING GRASSES & SMALL BUSHES ON WASTE GROUND.. APPEARS TO BE QUITE UNSTURBED, THOUGH ONLY FINDS ARE 19th C. ONWARDS.			
Division Of		Divided into	

**PART B: PHYSICAL RELATIONSHIPS**

Earlier Than	Below	
	Filled By	/
	Cut By	/
	Butted By	/
Contemp	Within	
	Contains	
	Bonded With (Structure)	/
	Same As	/
Later Than	Above	[2] & [3]
	Fill Of	
	Cuts	
	Butts (Structure)	

**PART C: INTERPRETATION**

Interpretative Comments	PRESENT DAY THIN TOPSOIL ON WASTE SPREAD.
Part Of	/
Consists Of	/

**PART D: CHECKLIST**

Drawing Nos	①	Plan	/	Section	①		
Photo Nos	/	Colour	/	Monochrome	/		
Finds	Pottery ✓	Bone ✓	Stone x	Lithic x	Metal x	Organic x	Samples x
Other	x						
Recorder	M.S.	Checked	M.S.	Completed	.17.1.92.		

**PART A: DESCRIPTION**

Co-ordinates	Site Sub Div	Site Code	Context Number 2
Category DEPOSIT / LAYER.			
Levels	Highest	Lowest	
Length	Width	Diameter	Height/depth
Soils	Colour(Munsell) 7.5YR33 DARK BROWN		
	Texture SANDY SILT LOAM		
	Consistence MODERATE → COMPACT		
	Coarse Components OCCASIONAL PEBBLES < 2 CM		
Structure	Bonding Agent		
	Constituents		
Descriptive Text LOOSER IN CONSISTENCE THAN [1], OF A VERY CLEAN APPEARANCE. STONE CONTENT LESS THAN IN [1]. SOME MIXING EVIDENT AT INTERFACE, WITH [1] ABOVE. TOWARDS THE SOUTH [2] BECOMES INDISTINGUISHABLE FROM [3] WHERE BOTH CONTEXTS GIVE THE APPEARANCE OF "BLURRED MERSINS"! APPEARS TO HAVE A HUMIC CONTENT, ALBEIT SLIGHT. NO FINDS.			
Division Of		Divided into	

**PART B: PHYSICAL RELATIONSHIPS**

Earlier Than	Below [1]
	Filled By
	Cut By
	Butted By
Contemp	Within
	Contains
	Bonded With (Structure)
	Same As
Later Than	Above [3], [4]
	Fill Of
	Cuts
	Butts (Structure)

**PART C: INTERPRETATION**

Interpretative Comments	SUB SOIL ?? POSSIBLY HILLWASH DERIVED.
Part Of	Consists Of

**PART D: CHECKLIST**

Drawing Nos	[1]	Plan		Section	[1]		
Photo Nos		Colour		Monochrome			
Finds	Pottery	Bone	Stone	Lithic	Metal	Organic	Samples
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Other	x						
Recorder	M-J.	Checked	M-J.	Completed	.17.1.92.		

**PART A: DESCRIPTION**

Co-ordinates	Site Sub Div	Site Code	Context Number 3
Category <i>DEPOSIT / LAYER.</i>			
Levels	Highest	Lowest	
Length	Width	Diameter	Height/depth
Soils	Colour(Munsell)	7.5YR 3/2	
	Texture	SANDY SILT LOAM.	
	Consistence	LOOSE → MODERATE	
	Coarse Components	A V. VERY SMALL AMOUNT SMALL STONE < 2 CM.	
Structure	Bonding Agent	/	
	Constituents	/	
Descriptive Text <i>LOOSER &amp; OF DARKER APPEARANCE THAN [2], AT LEAST AT NORTH END OF SECTION. AT SOUTH END THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE TWO WAS NOT POSSIBLE TO PRECISELY DEFINE. VERY SIMILAR TO [2] IN GENERAL TERMS. NO FINDS. HAS A HUMIC CONTENT. SLIGHTLY HARDER TOWARDS THE NORTH. DIPS DOWN TOWARDS THE NORTH.</i>			
Division Of		Divided into	

**PART B: PHYSICAL RELATIONSHIPS**

Earlier Than	Below	[1], [2].
	Filled By	
	Cut By	
	Butted By	
Contemp	Within	
	Contains	/
	Bonded With (Structure)	/
	Same As	/
Later Than	Above	[4].
	Fill Of	
	Cuts	
	Butts (Structure)	

**PART C: INTERPRETATION**

Interpretative Comments	<i>UNCERTAIN. LOOSENESS &amp; DARKNESS IN COLOUR TO [2] ABOVE COMBINED WITH HUMIC CONTENT MAKES ONE RELUCTANT TO TERM [3] A SUB-SOIL. - SEVERAL CHARACTERISTICS ARE MORE AKIN TO A TOPSOIL!</i>
Part Of	/
Consists Of	/

**PART D: CHECKLIST**

Drawing Nos	[1]	Plan	/	Section	[1]		
Photo Nos	/	Colour	/	Monochrome	/		
Finds	Pottery	Bone	Stone	Lithic	Metal	Organic	Samples
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Other	x						
Recorder	M.J.	Checked	M.J.	Completed	.17.1.92.		

**PART A: DESCRIPTION**

Co-ordinates	Site Sub Div	Site Code	Context Number 4
Category <i>NATURAL</i>			
Levels	Highest	Lowest	
Length	Width	Diameter	Height/depth
Soils	Colour(Munsell) <i>10YR 8/8 — 7.5YR 6/8. YELLOW TO REDDISH YELLOW.</i>		
	Texture <i>MEDIUM SANDS, SOME FINE GRAVEL.</i>		
	Consistence <i>MODERATE</i>		
	Coarse Components <i>(GRAVEL LENSES).</i>		
Structure	Bonding Agent		
	Constituents		
Descriptive Text <i>SAND WITH SOME LAMINATIONS EVIDENT. ALSO CONTAINS A NUMBER OF FINE GRAVEL LENSES. COLOUR VARIATION IS EVIDENT, TENDING TO OCCUR IN HORIZONTAL BANDS. STEPS DOWN TOWARDS THE NORTH.</i>			
Division Of		Divided into	

**PART B: PHYSICAL RELATIONSHIPS**

Earlier Than	Below	<i>[2], [3]</i>
	Filled By	
	Cut By	
	Butted By	
Contemp	Within	
	Contains	
	Bonded With (Structure)	
	Same As	
Later Than	Above	
	Fill Of	
	Cuts	
	Butts (Structure)	

**PART C: INTERPRETATION**

Interpretative Comments	<i>NATURAL SAND &amp; GRAVEL. GLACIAL ORIGIN.</i>
Part Of	Consists Of

**PART D: CHECKLIST**

Drawing Nos	<i>(1)</i>	Plan		Section	<i>(1)</i>		
Photo Nos		Colour		Monochrome			
Finds	Pottery	Bone	Stone	Lithic	Metal	Organic	Samples
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Other <i>x</i>							
Recorder	<i>M.J.</i>	Checked	<i>M.J.</i>	Completed	<i>.17.1.92.</i>		