

Channel Tunnel Rail Link  
Union Railways Ltd

# West of Boxley Road, Boxley, Kent

ARC BXR 97

Archaeological Evaluation Report

Contract No. 194/ 870

Oxford Archaeological Unit

July 1997

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**UNION RAILWAYS LTD**

**WEST OF BOXLEY ROAD, BOXLEY, KENT**

**ARC BXR 97**

***ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION***

**OS GRID TQ 7702 5855**

**Contract No. 194/ 870**

**REPORT**

**Volume 1 of 1**

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July 1997

## WEST OF BOXLEY ROAD, BOXLEY, KENT

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

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## WEST OF BOXLEY ROAD, BOXLEY, KENT

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

#### SUMMARY

*The Oxford Archaeological Unit was commissioned by Union Railways Ltd to conduct a field evaluation of a 4.7ha site on farmland to the West of Boxley Road, as part of a wider programme of archaeological investigations along the route of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link.*

*Twenty-two trenches were excavated to investigate a thin, but well-defined scatter of Late Iron Age (50B.C. - 43 A.D.) and early Roman (43A.D. - 200A.D) pottery identified by a surface collection survey undertaken in 1993 (URL 1995).*

*The evaluation identified only two features of Late Iron Age and Roman date, probably representing two phases of the same boundary, and dating to the 1st century A.D. They were located immediately adjacent to one another in the northern part of the site, within the area of the Late Iron Age and Roman fieldwalking scatters. The generally poor level of preservation of the features may indicate that others of the same date have been entirely destroyed by later agricultural activity.*

*The evaluation also investigated a surface scatter of medieval pottery to the west of Boxley Road. A medieval ditch was discovered on a north-east to south-west alignment in Trench 1570. The ditch ran parallel to, and c.30m east of, the former edge of Park Wood. It is likely to be of 12th or 13th century date. The pottery scatter, the medieval ditch and three stray metal-detector finds of medieval date, all lie immediately to the west of a post-medieval (1500 A.D. - 1800 A.D.) and modern (1800 A.D. - present) farmstead, named as 'Boxley Cottage' on the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1867, which may suggest that the farmstead has medieval origins. The Documentary evidence indicates that the line of Boxley Road was diverted in 1884, and that the site of the farmstead buildings is located under, or on the eastern side of the present road. The evaluation identified the southern boundary of the farmstead extending eastwards from Park Wood, and a number of lesser boundary features.*

## SECTION 1: FACTUAL STATEMENT

### 1 BACKGROUND

#### 1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 The Oxford Archaeological Unit (OAU) carried out a field evaluation, between 2/5/97 and 9/5/97, on land to the West of Boxley Road, Boxley (NGR TQ 7702 5855), on behalf of Union Railways Ltd (URL), as part of a programme of archaeological investigation along the line of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL). The purpose of the investigation is to assess the effect of the rail link on the cultural heritage of the site. An Environmental Assessment has been prepared (URL 1994).
- 1.1.2 The evaluation was conducted in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by URL and agreed with the County Archaeologist and English Heritage.

#### 1.2 Geology, Topography and Land-use

- 1.2.1 Boxley is one of a line of settlements located at the foot of the North Downs escarpment. The evaluation area, which was 4.7ha in extent, lay on land to the south-west of Boxley village, between Boxley Road and Park Wood (Fig. 1).
- 1.2.2 The site lies between 40m and 57m above Ordnance Datum, and is under arable cultivation.
- 1.2.3 The drift geology consists of gault clay with flint gravel over most of the site, except for the north-west corner of the site, where it consisted of chalky marl, and the northern edge of the site, where it comprised variable patches of silty clay, including a localised deposit of bright orange brickearth.

#### 1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 A surface collection survey was carried out at the site in 1990 by the Oxford Archaeological Unit (URL 1995).
- 1.3.2 Worked flint occurred in a thin scatter across the whole area, but there was no clear earlier prehistoric focus.
- 1.3.3 Well-defined late Iron Age (LIA) and Roman pottery scatters were identified in the northern part of the evaluation area. The Roman material was concentrated slightly further east than the LIA, but there was substantial overlap between the two, suggesting that they represent a single site.
- 1.3.4 A magnetometer and magnetic susceptibility survey was also undertaken in 1996 (URL 1996) over a 30m x 100m strip of land adjacent to Boxley Road, and a second

30m x 100m strip between Park Wood and Boxley Road. Although small positive magnetic anomalies were located, the results were generally inconclusive.

- 1.3.5 LIA and Roman sites and finds are numerous in the area. Probable settlement sites within a 2km radius include a LIA/ Roman site located 1.6km south-east of the site in Detling parish (Kent Sites and Monuments Record [KSMR] 75 NE 78). Features and finds of LIA and Roman date, including burials and a possible Roman building, are recorded within and to the west of Boxley Abbey, 0.8-1.0km west of the site (KSMR 75 NE 16, 17, 19, 24). Roman pottery and tile has also been noted in and around Boxley Church (KSMR 75 NE 2 and 5).
- 1.3.6 Stray metal-detector finds of this period are also common, with notable clusters of LIA and Roman coins found close to the line of the North Downs Trackways, c.1km to the north of the site (KSMR 75 NE 26, 99, 100, 118, 164, 167, 257). Three LIA coins, including a 'Potin' coin (TQ 769582) and a copper alloy stater (TQ 770583), are recorded to the south of the site (Arch. Cant. 1984).
- 1.3.7 Documentary and cartographic evidence indicate that the line of Boxley Road was moved to the north-west in the late 19th century. A group of buildings, enclosures and orchards are marked on the OS surveyors drawings of 1799 (sheet 117) immediately west of the former road alignment (URL 1994, 128, para. 5.21.1.4). The farmstead is named as Boxley Cottage on the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey (OS 1st Edition 1867, 6" Series, sheet 31). The site of the buildings is now located under, or on the eastern side of the present road, but the associated enclosures and orchards extend to the west of the road, into the evaluation area. A cluster of medieval pottery (OAU No.1340) identified by the walkover survey to the west of Boxley Road (URL 1995), and stray metal-detector finds recorded within the evaluation area (including a 13th-14th century circular seal die (TQ 7658), a papal bull of Gregory IX (1227-41) (TQ 771586) (Arch. Cant. 1989) and a 16th century purse bar and belt hook (TQ 771584) (Arch. Cant.1990)), suggest that the farmstead may be medieval in origin.
- 1.3.8 Other metal-detector finds of medieval date from the vicinity of the evaluation area include a Saxon coin of Harold I and a medieval silver ring-brooch, recorded within 0.5km of the site to the south-east (Arch. Cant. 1989).
- 1.3.9 The site of the Cistercian Abbey of Boxley, which was founded in 1146 and dissolved in 1530, is located 0.8km west of the site.
- 1.3.10 Cartographic sources indicate that the north-western part of the site fell within Park Wood (west), which formerly extended further north than the present wood (Fig.6). An undated aerial photograph of Boxley Abbey shows that some trees remained in the north-western part of the site in the mid-20th century. The southern part of the site was largely covered by orchards between at least the late 18th and mid-20th century (OS Drawing 1797, NMR 7658/1).

## **2 AIMS**



- 2.1 The aims of the evaluation, as set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation, were as follows:
  - 2.1.1 To determine the presence/ absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any subsoil features or deposits of archaeological interest which may be associated with, or in close proximity to, the recorded surface concentrations of Iron Age, Roman and medieval pottery and prehistoric flint.
  - 2.1.2 To determine the presence and potential of environmental indicators preserved in any archaeological features or deposits.
  - 2.1.3 To determine the local, regional, national and international significance of such archaeological deposits as are revealed, and the potential for further archaeological fieldwork to fulfil local, regional and national research objectives.
  - 2.1.4 Trenches 1561TT, 1562TT and 1568TT were located to sample a small surface concentration of Iron Age pottery; the remainder were located systematically.

### **3 METHOD**

#### **3.1 General**

- 3.1.1 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the evaluation was agreed by Union Railways Limited with the County Archaeologist and English Heritage. The following summarises the archaeological aspects of the methodology and notes any deviations from the originally agreed specification.

#### **3.2 Survey**

- 3.2.1 The location of the trenches was established on site by P.H.Matts, Building and Civil Engineering Land Survey (Reading) based on the trench location plan provided by URL (Drawing No.400-DGH-06010-00007-AA). An additional trench (3050TT), was excavated following a task instruction from URL. The trenches have been plotted from digital information provided by URL using AutoCAD (Fig. 2).
- 3.2.2 All co-ordinates used in this report relate to the URL local project grid unless otherwise stated. A full list of Ordnance Survey National Grid trench co-ordinates, together with the conversion formula used to calculate them, is included in the site archive. Individual trenches were planned manually in the field at scales of 1:50 or 1:100. Sections were drawn at 1:20, unless circumstances dictated otherwise.
- 3.2.3 The evaluation area (Fig. 2) falls within URL's Route Window No.20.

#### **3.3 Excavation**

- 3.3.1 An array of 21 trenches was planned to sample the evaluation area. An additional trench (3050TT) was excavated close to Boxley Road, following instructions from the Directors' Representative, in order to investigate the eastern extent of the archaeological deposits identified in Trench 1570TT.
- 3.3.2 All trenches were 30m long and 2m wide. The topsoil and, where present, the subsoil, were removed by machine using a 360° 21 tonne Samsung mechanical excavator using a toothless ditching bucket, under close archaeological supervision. Machine excavation was generally stopped on reaching natural deposits, except in three trenches (1561TT, 1562TT, 1568TT), where 2m square test pits were excavated to depths of 1.2m. Trenches 1556TT and 1559TT were both excavated to depths exceeding 1.2m, in order to reach natural deposits. The remainder of the trenches were between 0.25m and 0.5m in depth.
- 3.3.3 The trenches were hand-cleaned except where archaeological deposits were clearly absent. Sample sections were excavated through all archaeological features and possible features. Artefacts from archaeological deposits were collected by context and submitted for specialist examination.
- 3.3.4 Bulk samples were recovered from those deposits containing artefacts and/ or charred plant remains.

#### **3.4 Recording**

- 3.4.1 Recording followed the standard OAU single context recording system (Wilkinson ed. 1992). Blocks of context numbers were assigned to two arbitrary site areas, (north-east area: contexts 1-499; south-west area: contexts 500-1000). All evaluation records were prefaced by the site code ARC BXR 97.
- 3.4.2 All trenches and archaeological features were photographed using colour slide and black and white print film.

### **4 RESULTS: GENERAL**

#### **4.1 Presentation of Results**

- 4.1.1 Trenches 1556TT, 1559TT, 1569TT, 1570TT, 1574TT and 1575TT, containing significant, or potentially significant archaeological features, are described in detail below. Trenches containing only modern features or no archaeological features have been summarised in Section 5.5. A summary of all recorded contexts and finds appears in the Archaeological context inventory (Section 6). Detailed reports on the worked flint, pottery, environmental remains, animal bone and other finds are contained in Appendices 1-5.

#### **4.2 General description**

- 4.2.1 Archaeological features of LIA/ Roman date were identified in only one trench (1569TT). These two adjacent linear features, which may form part of the same boundary, were severely truncated by ploughing, but produced a comparatively large group of mainly LIA pottery, and a small amount of early Roman material. The location of the features coincides with the LIA/ early Roman pottery scatter identified by the surface collection survey.
- 4.2.2 A north-south aligned linear ditch, of medieval date, and an undated circular pit were identified in Trench 1570TT. The ditch runs parallel to, and *c.*30m east of, the former edge of Park Wood.
- 4.2.3 A modern field boundary in Trench 1574TT is interpreted as the southern boundary of the medieval/ post-medieval farmstead enclosure, shown on the 1799 OS surveyors drawing extending eastwards from Park Wood (OS drawing 1799, sheet 116). Four other modern boundary ditches, which were identified in Trenches 1566TT, 1571TT and 1572TT, are probably also associated with the farmstead. A group of six undated post-holes in Trench 1572TT, may also fall into this category.

### **4.3 Site Archive**

- 4.3.1 The site archive has been compiled in accordance with the specification prepared by URL and agreed with English Heritage and the County Archaeologist. It includes six electronic datasets for the Fieldwork Event, Contexts, Bulk Finds, Finds, Environmental Samples and Graphical Output.

## **5 TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS**

### **5.1 Trench 1569TT (Fig. 3)**

- 5.1.1 Two very shallow, plough-truncated linear features were identified, sealed beneath 0.27m of topsoil and 0.2m of subsoil.
- 5.1.2 Feature 536, which was orientated from north to south, was flat-bottomed with imperceptibly sloping sides. It was 2.6m wide, and survived to a depth of 0.19m. The single silty clay fill (537) produced the only significant group of pottery from the site. ninety-eight sherds of LIA pottery were recovered (Appendix 2), the majority of which were derived from three vessels. There was also one sherd of early Roman pottery which may be intrusive. The feature is interpreted as a boundary feature of mid-1st century A.D. date.
- 5.1.3 Feature (538) was truncated to the extent that the alignment and profile could not be determined with certainty, although the remaining fill (539) lay on a south-west to north-east alignment. The surviving portion was 0.96m wide and 0.18m deep, with very shallow sides and a slightly concave base. The single fill of this feature contained a single sherd in an exclusively 'Belgic' fabric and a number of small sherds of 1st-2nd century date.

5.1.4 As the features were immediately adjacent to one another they may be elements of a single boundary feature. The pottery suggests that both features are likely to be of 1st century date, but it is not certain which side of the Roman conquest they originate.

## **5.2 Trench 1570TT (Fig. 3)**

5.2.1 A truncated linear ditch (528), orientated from north-east to south-west, was identified close to the south end of the trench. It had shallow sides and a flat base, measuring 0.85m wide and 0.31m deep. The single fill (527) was a yellowish-brown silty clay with flint gravel, which was difficult to distinguish from the natural, and produced a single medieval sherd and a small quantity of fragmentary, unidentified bone. Two further medieval sherds were recovered from the ploughsoil in this trench. The alignment of the ditch is not quite parallel with the present line of Boxley Road, c. 40m to the east, but is approximately parallel with the former course of the road and the former eastern edge of Park Wood.

5.2.2 A small, circular pit (533), 0.9m in diameter and 0.19m deep, was located beside ditch 527. It had vertical sides and a flat base. The feature had three distinct fills: The upper fill (530) was a mid greyish-brown clay with occasional flint gravel; the middle fill (531) was similar in composition, but darker in colour. The primary fill (532) was a black silty clay containing a high proportion of charred plant remains (Appendix 3). The only associated artefacts were two fragments of fired clay from the primary fill.

## **5.3 Trench 1572TT (Fig. 4)**

5.3.1 This trench contained two modern boundary ditches (581, 583), and a group of six undated post-holes (564, 566, 568, 570, 572, 574).

5.3.2 Ditch 581 was aligned north-east to south-west, and was cut by Gully (578). Feature 581 had moderately steep sides and a concave base, and two identifiable orange-brown silty clay fills (580, 579). The upper fill (579) produced a fragment of modern tile and an oyster shell. Feature (578) was a narrow, shallow gully with a single mid brown silty clay fill (577), and may be a recut of Ditch (581).

5.3.3 Ditch 583 was a small, undated shallow feature which is likely to be of post-medieval or modern date as it is on a perpendicular alignment to the modern ditch (581). The single dark greyish-brown silty clay fill (582) produced no finds.

5.3.4 A group of six small post-holes clustered adjacent to Ditch 581 were all very similar in size and appearance. All were roughly circular or oval in plan, with an average depth of 0.16m, and were filled with a dark grey clay. No convincing interpretation of the post-hole group can be offered as they produced no artefacts, and do not form any obvious pattern. However, they are perhaps most likely to be associated with the post-medieval farmstead. The dimensions are summarised in Table 1.

*Table 1: Dimensions of post-holes in Trench 1572TT*

Context	Length	Width	Depth
564	0.30m	0.25m	0.15m
566	0.26m	0.26m	0.35m
568	0.23m	0.23m	0.08m
570	0.20m	0.22m	0.16m
572	0.22m	0.24m	0.06m
574	0.34m	0.34m	0.17m

5.3.6 This trench coincides with the south-west corner of the plot formerly occupied by the farmstead buildings associated with Boxley Cottage. Ditch 581 occupies a similar position and orientation to the rear boundary of the farmstead plot, as recorded on the 1799 OS surveyors drawing (OS drawing 1799, Sheet 117) (Boxley Cottage fronted onto the pre-19th century line of Boxley Road). Ditch 583 is likely to be a lesser boundary associated with the farmstead.

#### 5.4 Trench 1574TT (Fig. 4)

5.4.1 This trench exposed a substantial field boundary ditch (25), filled with a dark greyish brown silty clay (24) containing 19th and 20th century artefacts. A 2.7m wide band of builders' rubble in a clay matrix (23) lay on a parallel alignment, 3.25m north of the ditch. It included unfroged bricks stamped 'Boxley', and was laid on the surface of the clay subsoil. The rubble band is interpreted as a farm track foundation.

5.4.2 The boundary described above (5.4.1) was still extant in the mid-20th century, as it is visible as a trackway on an undated aerial photograph (NMR 7658/1) of that period.

#### 5.5 Trench 1575TT (Fig. 5)

5.5.1 A single undated circular pit (28), 1.25m in diameter and 0.35m deep, was identified in this trench. It was steep-sided, with a flat base and contained two grey clay fills (29, 30). The lower fill (29) produced a single oyster shell and two fragments of fired clay, but no datable artefacts.

#### 5.6 Trench 1559TT (Fig. 5)

5.6.1 This trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 2.0m. The exceptional depth of the deposits in this trench can be explained by the presence of two substantial pits (559, 560), cut into a clean orange silty clay which suggests that the site has been quarried for brickearth. Tip lines visible in section indicate that the artificial hollow created by the quarrying activity has subsequently been filled in, probably to level the field for agricultural purposes.

5.6.2 Pit 559 had moderately sloping sides and a flat base and was 3.4m in diameter. It was 0.8m deep from the top of the cut and extended to 2m below the modern ground surface.

- 5.6.3 Pit 560 was steep-sided, 1.95m in diameter and 0.85m deep.
- 5.6.4 The fills of the pits, contained modern tile, pottery and bone fragments, suggesting that the quarry was active in the 19th or early 20th century.
- 5.6.5 Beneath the topsoil (501) five layers of silty clay (552, 553, 554, 555, 556) containing modern brick and tile fragments covered the quarry pits, extending all along the trench except for the extreme west end. The layers, which sloped down towards the centre of the trench, are interpreted as 20th century land-fill material, used to level the site for agricultural purposes after the quarry pits fell out of use.

## 5.7 Trench 1556TT (Fig.5)

5.7.1 The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.6m. This depth was not maintained continuously as the trench was crossed by numerous land-drains. The natural chalky marl was covered by several layers of clayey silt, and a thin darker layer, which may be a buried soil. No archaeological finds or features were present in the trench. The atypical depth of the deposits suggests that this area may be covered with an artificial land-fill deposit, as was the case in the adjacent Trench 1556TT. The depth of the deposits is most likely due to the result of quarry pits being levelled off for agricultural purposes.

## 5.8 Trench Summary

Table 2: Trench summary

Trench	Orientation	Max. Depth	Features	Natural	Comments
1556TT	N-S	1.4m	land-drains	chalky marl with some flint gravel	no archaeological significance
1557TT	E-W	0.6m	tree bole, plough marks	chalky marl with some flint gravel	no archaeological features
1558TT	N-S	0.8m	tree bole, field drain	chalky marl with some flint gravel	no archaeological significance
1559TT	E-W	2.0m	quarry pits, land-drains	orange silty clay (brickearth)	modern brickearth quarry pits
1560TT	N-S	0.45m	features 512, 514	banded silty clay with variable colour and composition	two undated linear features, probably geological
1561TT	E-W	0.27m (1.3m deep test pit dug at E end)	land drain, ploughmarks	banded silty clay with variable colour and composition	no archaeological features. Numerous bands and lenses in natural clay
1562TT	E-W	0.3m (1.2m deep test pit dug at E end)	land drain	light brownish-grey silty clay with flint gravel patches	no archaeological significance
1563TT	N-S	0.3m	none	mid greenish grey gault clay with flint gravel	no archaeological features

<b>Trench</b>	<b>Orientation</b>	<b>Max. Depth</b>	<b>Features</b>	<b>Natural</b>	<b>Comments</b>
				patches	
1564TT	E-W	0.3m	land drains	mid greenish-grey gault clay with flint gravel patches	no archaeological significance
1565TT	N-S	0.22m	2 tree boles (roots <i>in situ</i> )	mid greenish-grey gault clay with flint gravel patches	no archaeological features
1566TT	E-W	0.3m	gully or land-drain (12), tree-bole	light orange-brown gault clay with flint gravel	contains possible modern boundary gully or land-drain
1567TT	N-S	0.25m	tree boles, plough-marks, land-drain	yellowish-brown gault clay with flint gravel	no archaeological significance
1568TT	N-S	0.3m (0.75m deep test pit dug at S end)	tree bowl, land-drains	Variable, banded olive-brown silty clay	no archaeological significance
1569TT	E-W	0.48m	2 gullies (536, 538), land-drains	yellowish-brown gault clay with flint gravel	contains LIA/early Roman features
1570TT	N-S	0.4m	medieval ditch (528) and pit (530), land-drain	yellowish-brown gault clay with flint gravel	contains a medieval ditch and undated circular pit
1571TT	E-W	0.3m	modern gully (542), tree bole, land-drain	yellowish-brown gault clay with flint gravel	contains modern gully
1572TT	N-S	0.83m	2 modern ditches (581, 583) and a group of 6 post-holes (564, 566, 0568, 570, 572, 574) land-drains	yellowish brown gault clay with flint gravel	contains various modern or undated features
1573TT	E-W	0.4m	land-drains, plough-marks	yellowish-brown gault clay with flint gravel	no archaeological significance
1574TT	N-S	0.4m	modern track (23) and associated boundary ditch (25),	yellowish-brown gault clay with flint gravel	contains modern field boundary, identified on 1797 OSD and later maps



			ploughmarks		
1575TT	E-W	0.28m	small med/ post-med pit (28), land-drains	yellowish-brown gault clay with flint gravel	contains med/ post-med pit
<b>Trench</b>	<b>Orientation</b>	<b>Max. Depth</b>	<b>Features</b>	<b>Natural</b>	<b>Comments</b>
1576TT	N-S	0.65m	tree boles (roots in situ)	yellowish-brown gault clay with flint gravel	tree boles within area of former orchard
3050TT	N-S	0.3m	land drains, ploughmarks	yellowish-brown gault clay with flint gravel	no archaeological significance

## **6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY**







## SECTION 2: STATEMENT OF IMPORTANCE

### 7 CONCLUSIONS

#### 7.1 Extent of archaeological deposits

7.1.1 A thin scatter of features and finds were recorded across the site. LBA, LIA, early Roman, medieval and post-medieval material were all represented, but the quantity of artefacts recovered was very small, and no significant concentrations of either features or finds were noted.

#### 7.2 Date and character of archaeological deposits

7.2.1 In general, the small number of boundary features of various dates, appear to reflect a low level of activity on or near the site in a number of periods. There is no evidence for sustained settlement within the site boundaries at any period, although it is possible that a high proportion of archaeological features may have been lost to plough erosion. The largest number of dated features belong to the post-medieval and modern periods, reflecting the presence of Boxley cottage immediately east of the site.

##### 7.2.2 *Prehistoric finds*

The small quantity of LBA pottery occurred only as residual material in later contexts.

##### 7.2.3 *LIA/ Roman deposits*

In spite of the presence of a well-defined surface scatter of LIA/ early Roman pottery, only two features in Trench 1569TT, of this date were identified. These appear to represent different phases of a single boundary. The quantity of material from these contexts may indicate that there was a settlement immediately adjacent to the site at this date. However, the fact that only two features were located either suggests that it was of limited extent, or that it has been largely destroyed by agricultural activity.

##### 7.2.4 *Medieval/ post-medieval and modern deposits*

A single medieval boundary ditch was identified in Trench 1570TT, on a parallel alignment with the former edge of Park Wood. Its presence suggests that Boxley Cottage, which is recorded immediately to the east of the site may be medieval in origin (OS 1st Edition 1867, 6" Series, sheet 31). The ditch lies within a scatter of medieval pottery identified by the surface collection survey, and close to the recorded location of metal-detector finds including a 13th-14th century circular seal die, a papal bull of Gregory IX (1227-41) and a 16th century purse bar and belt hook.

7.2.5 Boundary features of post-medieval and modern date were the most common type of feature found. Several can be identified with boundaries shown on cartographic sources from the late 18th century onwards, enclosing the paddocks and orchards of the farmstead located to the east of the site.

7.2.6 A group of 19th or early 20th century quarry pits, originally located at the north-east corner of Park Wood, are probably the result of brickearth extraction, since a very localised deposit of clean orange brickearth was recorded at the west end of Trench 1559TT, cut by one of the quarry pits. The size of the two pits identified suggests that extraction was carried out by hand on a small scale, probably to supply the local brick-making industry.

7.2.7 There is evidence for post-medieval and modern brick-making in the vicinity of the site:

A field immediately south of Park Wood is called Brick Kiln Field on a late 17th century estate map (Park Farm estate map 1697), and a number of unfrosted stock bricks, of probable 19th century date, stamped 'Boxley', were recovered during the evaluation. The quarry pits are not clearly marked on the Ordnance Survey, although the 1st edition 6" OS map shows a number of unidentified features at the north-west corner of Park Wood, which may represent pits (OS 1st Edition 1867, 6" Series, sheet 31).

### **7.3 Environmental evidence**

7.3.1 The environmental sampling program has demonstrated that while charred plant remains survive in most features, they are not abundant and only a limited range of species are present.

7.3.2 Animal bones also survive in a range of conditions, but the great majority of fragments were recovered from modern contexts. Bone fragments from earlier contexts were very few and in poor condition.

7.3.3 There is therefore little potential for the recovery of significant environmental and economic indicators from the site.

## **8 IMPORTANCE OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL DEPOSITS**

### **8.1 Survival/ condition**

8.1.1 Features of all periods were truncated by plough erosion. This was particularly the case with the LIA/ early Roman features, in which only the very base of the features survived. Truncation by ploughing may account for the high concentrations of pottery in the plough-soil identified by the surface collection survey. The absence of anything but modern boundary features from those areas formerly occupied by woodland and orchards, may be due to the erosion of archaeological features by root action. It would also be the case that if the woodland were very ancient it would preclude occupation during the medieval and possibly earlier periods.

### **8.2 Period**

- 8.2.1 The thin spread of features and finds discovered appears to represent a low level of activity on or near the site in a number of periods. The LIA, early Roman, medieval and post-medieval periods were all represented by features and finds. In addition, three residual LBA sherds may indicate a human presence in the vicinity in that period.



### **8.3 Rarity**

- 8.3.1 Excavated sites of LIA date are comparatively rare in Kent, and the quality of evidence is generally poor, although isolated finds, particularly of coins discovered by metal-detectors, are numerous (Champion and Overy 1989, 33). Roman sites, many of which have suspected or proven LIA antecedents, are well-known, with 38 villa sites recorded in the county. The foot of the North Downs was a favoured location for villa sites, as it has been for medieval and post-medieval settlements.
- 8.3.2 The single boundary of LIA or early Roman date identified at Boxley Road is therefore an unexceptional find which is unlikely to add significantly to knowledge of the LIA/ early Roman period in Kent. The presence of early Roman pottery in conjunction with LIA material is a common occurrence on sites in Kent, which serves to emphasise the continuity of pre-conquest and post-conquest settlement patterns in this area (Detsicas 1983, 83).

### **8.4 Fragility/ vulnerability**

- 8.4.1 The shallow depth of topsoil across much of the site means that such archaeological deposits as are present are extremely vulnerable to ground disturbance.

### **8.5 Diversity**

- 8.5.1 The majority of features identified are interpreted as field boundaries, most of which can be associated with Boxley Cottage, located immediately to the east. The single LIA/ early Roman boundary presumably reflects an earlier period of agricultural use of the site. Small-scale industrial activity is represented by a small 19th or early 20th century brickearth quarry. Otherwise the site is characterised by a general scarcity of finds from stratified contexts, and a lack of identifiable structures.

### **8.6 Documentation**

- 8.6.1 The only previous systematic investigation of the site is a surface collection survey carried out by the Oxford Archaeological Unit in 1990 (URL 1995). Some aerial photographs are lodged with the NMR, although the site is only included incidentally on shots of Boxley Abbey and Boxley Park. The earliest aerial photograph is undated, but is likely to be a wartime reconnaissance photograph.

### **8.7 Group value**

- 8.7.1 Two other sites with evidence for LIA/ early Roman activity may be investigated in the vicinity of Boxley as a result of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link. These include a multi-period finds scatter on Boarley Farm (URL 1996, OAU No.1337), and the Roman villa at Thurnham. Insufficient evidence was recovered from the Boxley Road site to contribute significantly to any broader discussion of LIA/ Roman sites in the area.

## **8.8 Potential**

- 8.8.1 The site by itself has little potential for addressing local, regional or national research issues, but could add to a wider picture which is beginning to emerge from work along the CTRL route. The post-medieval and medieval boundary features will be relevant to any study of the post-medieval farmstead on the east side of Boxley Road.

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## **APPENDIX 1**

### **WORKED FLINT**

*by P. Bradley, Oxford Archaeological Unit*

#### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 Only one piece of worked flint was recovered, a single end and side scraper which was residual in a medieval context (527, soil sample 2).
- 1.2 The scraper has been hard-hammer struck, with quite neat retouch. The scraping angle is between 55° and 75°. The edges are worn and abraded.
- 1.3 Although scrapers are frequently the most common artefact type recovered, they are not easy to date and dating single examples is particularly difficult (Riley 1990, 227). However, this example has been quite carefully worked and has been made on a relatively thin, non-cortical blank. A Neolithic date for this type of scraper would not be out of place (Riley 1990, 226) although given the limitations described above, any dating must be regarded as extremely tentative. A background scatter of both worked and burnt flint was recovered from previous fieldwalking (URL 1995).

## APPENDIX 2

### THE POTTERY

by P.M.Booth, Oxford Archaeological Unit

#### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 A small quantity of pottery (119 sherds weighing 581 g) was recovered in the evaluation (Tables 2 and 3). The majority of this material, from a single feature, was of late Iron Age date, although later Bronze Age, early Roman, medieval and post-medieval periods were all represented.
- 1.2 The pottery was in variable condition. Some sherds were abraded, and much of the material was badly fragmented. The pottery was briefly scanned to provide dating and an assessment of the quality and range of the material. Fabrics and forms were not recorded in detail.

Table 3: *Quantification of the pottery by period:*

Date	No.of sherds	Weight
Later Bronze Age	3 sherds	9 g
Late Iron Age	98 sherds	491 g
Early? Roman	13 sherds	8 g
Medieval	3 sherds	50 g
Post-medieval	2 sherds	23 g

#### 2 Fabrics

- 2.1 Three sherds were assigned to the later Bronze Age on the basis of fabric. All were tempered with crushed flint. The sherds were small and no other diagnostic characteristics were noted.
- 2.2 Sherds were assigned to the late Iron Age on criteria of fabric and form. The majority of this material was in grog-tempered 'Belgic type' fabrics, but a fairly fine sand-tempered fabric group was also present amongst this material. Both fabric groups are characteristic of the late Iron Age in this region. Neither was subdivided at this stage.
- 2.3 All the sherds dated to the early Roman period were in a very fine oxidised fabric with a reduced core, containing no distinctive inclusions.
- 2.4 The medieval sherds, in contrast, occurred in two fabrics. Two sherds were sand-tempered and a ?12th-13th century cooking pot rim was in a shell-tempered fabric. None of these fabrics has yet been assigned to a source of production.

#### 3 Forms

- 3.1 Only three vessels were represented by rim sherds; the ?12th-13th century shell-tempered cooking pot mentioned above, and two jars in grog-tempered late Iron Age fabrics.

#### **4 Context and chronology**

- 4.1 Three sherds of later Bronze Age pottery were recovered. One sherd was derived from subsoil layer 535 and two sherds were residual in LIA/ early Roman contexts (537 and 539).
- 4.2 Late Iron Age and early Roman sherds occurred together in two contexts (537 and 539). In the only substantial pottery assemblage from the site (Context 537) the sherds were predominantly in 'Belgic type' (LIA) fabrics, but included a single fragment of fine oxidised ware, of probable 1st-2nd century (early Roman) date. Context (539) contained a single 'Belgic type' sherd, which may be residual, since the same deposit produced a number of small sherds of fine oxidised ware, of probable early Roman date. However, none of the pottery from these deposits (537 and 539) would be out of place in a mid-1st century context.
- 4.3 The great majority of sherds from contexts (537) and (539) appeared to come from only three vessels, two of which were jars or necked bowls represented by simple everted rim sherds decorated with horizontal light grooves or scratches. One of these vessels also had a black coating on the neck, a feature found quite commonly in the region at this date. While 'Belgic type' fabrics probably continued in use after the Roman conquest, it does not seem very likely that the fine oxidised fabric would have been associated with such fabrics without also being accompanied by other early 'Romanised' fabrics. At present it is assumed that the assemblage in (537) was of pre-conquest (but probably still 1st century AD) date, and that the small early Roman sherd was intrusive.
- 4.4 The few medieval and post-medieval sherds all occurred discretely in contexts containing no earlier material.

#### **5 Conclusions**

- 5.1 Overall, the pottery appears to represent a low level of activity on or near the site in a number of periods. The quantity of pottery from the LIA or early Roman features suggests that settlement of this date was located in the immediate vicinity of the area of investigation, but the fact that only two such features were identified might indicate that this was of limited extent.

Table 4: Quantification of all pottery by context (sherd count, weight)

Context	Date						
	LBA	LIA/ Early Roman	Roman	Medieval	Post-medieval	Fired clay	Date of context
33					1, 20g		U/S (ploughsoil)
34					1, 3g		Post-med
525				2, 42g			U/S (ploughsoil)
527				1, 8g			Med
532						2, 5g	Unknown
535	1, 5g						subsoil
537	1, 1g	97, 489g	1, 3g			2, 1g	1st century?
539	1, 3g	1, 2g	12, 5g			2, 1g	1st-2nd century?
579						1, 2g	Unknown
<b>Total</b>	3, 9g	98, 491g	13, 8g	3, 50g	2, 23g	7, 9g	

## APPENDIX 3

### CARBONISED PLANT REMAINS

By Dr.M.Robinson and R.Pelling, Oxford University

#### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 Eight samples were submitted for assessment of their charred plant remains. Samples were taken from a medieval ditch section (Layer 527), two ditch deposits (Layers 537, 539) dated to the LIA/ early Roman period. A further five samples were taken from pits (Layers 29, 532) and stake-holes (Layers 565, 569, 573), which were undateable. Sample volumes range from 5 to 20 litres.
- 1.2 The purpose of the assessment was to evaluate the quality of the preservation of the charred material and the potential for further sampling and analytical work.

#### 2 Methods

- 2.1 Soil samples were processed by bulk water separation and floated onto a 0.5mm mesh. Flots were then allowed to slowly air dry before being submitted for assessment.
- 2.2 Each flot was put through a stack of sieves and scanned under a binocular microscope at x10 and x20 magnification. The quantity and quality of charred plant material was noted. Material was provisionally identified and estimates were made of the abundance of grain, chaff, weed seeds, charcoal and other charred items. Abundance of seeds and chaff was recorded on a four point scale, (+ = 1-10 items, ++ = 10 - 100, +++ = 101 - 1000, ++++ = >1000 items). Abundance of charcoal was recorded on a sliding scale (+ = present; ++ = common; +++ = frequent; ++++ = abundant). This information is recorded in Table 4 below.

#### 3 Results

- 3.1 Charred plant remains were noted in two samples. Two *Triticum spelta* (spelt) glume bases and one rachis internode of *Hordeum* sp. (barley) were identified from one of the LIA/ early Roman samples (Layer 537 in Ditch 536). One sample of unknown date, from Layer 29, contained one seed of Polygonaceae.
- 3.2 Occasional fragments of *Quercus* sp. charcoal were identified from the medieval sample (Layer 527) and one undated pit sample (Layer 532). Frequent *Quercus* sp. charcoal was identified in a second undated pit (Layer 29).

#### 4 The Potential for Further Work

- 4.1 The present samples offer no potential for further analysis. However, there is a general paucity of published archaeobotanical records for Kent and assessment of material



from other evaluations suggests that there is a high potential for sampling in the region. It may, therefore, be profitable to employ a suitable sampling strategy if any future archaeological work is undertaken on the site which reveals more substantial datable archaeological features.

## 5 Summary of Scanning Results

- 5.1 Number of samples assessed for charred remains 8; Number of samples with seeds and chaff 2.

Table 5: Summary of Scanning results

Date	LIA/ early Roman	Medieval	Undated
Number of samples	2	1	5
Samples with material	1	0	1
<i>Triticum spelta</i> (spelt wheat glume)			
	+	-	-
<i>Hordeum</i> sp. (barley rachis)			
	+	-	-
Weeds			
	-	-	+
Samples containing charcoal			
	0	1	2
<i>Quercus</i> sp. (oak)			
	-	+	++++

## APPENDIX 4

### ANIMAL BONE

By A.Powell, Centre for Human Ecology, University of Southampton

#### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The evaluation produced a small assemblage of animal bone, most of which is thought to be of modern origin (deriving from a brickearth quarry pit, 559). The condition of the bone is graded on a scale of 1 to 5. Bone graded as 1 is in excellent condition with little post-depositional damage, and that graded as 5 cannot be identified to either species or element (Table 6). The bone was of mixed condition: some had very little post-depositional damage, while much could not be identified to either species or type.

*Table 6: Condition of bone by context*

Condition	1	2	3	4	5
No.of contexts	1	1	0	1	1

#### 2 Species Representation

- 2.1 A total of 36 fragments of animal bone were recovered by hand and one by sieving. It can be seen from Table 6 that a high proportion of the bone recovered was unidentified (78%), the majority of it being highly fragmented. Only eight bones could be identified to species. These included seven fragments of cattle and one of sheep/ goat. The sieved material produced one unidentified bone. The material from medieval ditch fill 527 was too fragmentary to be identified.
- 2.2 Although much of the bone was in very poor condition, knife marks were observed on the shaft of a humerus of a sheep/ goat.

*Table 7: Species present (No.of fragments)*

	Cow	Sheep/ goat	Unidentified
Hand retrieved	7	1	28
Sieved > 10mm	0	0	1

## APPENDIX 5

### OTHER FINDS

#### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 A number of miscellaneous finds were recovered from modern contexts. They are quantified in Table 7 below.

*Table 8: Quantification of Miscellaneous finds*

Context	Description	Number	Date
19	unidentified iron object	1	modern
	building material	1	modern
24	iron nails	3	modern
	building material	4	modern
	glass sherd	1	modern
	slag	1	modern
32	building material	1	modern
34	steel table knife with bone handle	1	modern
34	building material	3	modern
556	unidentified iron object	1	modern
556	building material	10	modern
579	unidentified iron objects	3	modern
580	shell	2	undated
U/S	building material	1	modern