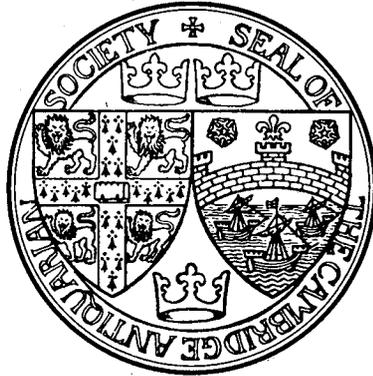

**Proceedings of the
Cambridge Antiquarian Society**
(incorporating the Cambs and Hunts Archaeological Society)

**Volume LXXXVIII
for 1999**

Roman Cambridge

Excavations on Castle Hill 1956–1988

John Alexander and Joyce Pullinger



This volume is dedicated to more than 400 volunteers who worked in their free time on the excavations and post excavation work, and to those contributors to the final work who did not live to see the results: Don Allen, Bernard Denston, Ray Farrar, Chris Godfrey, Rex Hull, Joan Liversidge and John Scott.

Roman Cambridge: Excavations on Castle Hill 1956–1988

John Alexander and Joyce Pullinger

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Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society
(incorporating the Cambs and Hunts Archaeological Society)

Volume LXXXVIII
for 1999

Editor: Alison Taylor

Published by the Cambridge Antiquarian Society 2000

ISSN 0309-3606

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4. Civil Settlement of the 2nd Century

Summary

Early in the 2nd century reorganisation of the western part of the hilltop took place, involving levelling the fort and infilling the pits and ditches of the derelict Iron Age village. Single-room wattle and daub houses, most with fenced or ditched gardens and gravelled yards, were built, and there were numerous pits and timber-lined wells. A stone building with hypocaust was probably a *mansio*, a key factor in the development of the town and road system in the early 2nd century. One massive subterranean feature containing animal sacrifices, high status pottery and other artefacts including a Bacchus gem, was a ritual structure probably linked to mortuary rites and other ceremonial activities. The eastern part of the hilltop saw less development, and the few structures there were scattered and more substantial.

Introduction

In preparation for redevelopment, a pond formed by conjoined Iron Age pits, the fort ditch and the uneven surface above the Iron Age enclosures were filled in and the whole area levelled. The pond was first drained by trenches to lead the water away. Timbers were removed from the palisade trench in RGS I, IIb, III, which was then deliberately filled. Pottery in the filling suggested a date c. 110 AD (Plate LXVII: 351–6). Sinkage over the ditch of Iron Age ditch III was similarly treated and Flavian pottery and coins (App. IV: 3, 6, 7) came from the final ashy-loam infilling. Infilling the pond and Iron Age ditch must have immediately preceded building, for no time was allowed for consolidation and sinkage soon took place. The fill of the fort ditch was better compacted and sinking did not occur. In GT the ground surface of this period survived where a 30cm thick stratum of loam covered all the earlier features. It contained much charcoal, oyster and mussel shells, animal bones including articulated bovid limbs, iron nails, pottery of the 2nd–3rd century but no building debris.

Description (Fig. 4.1)

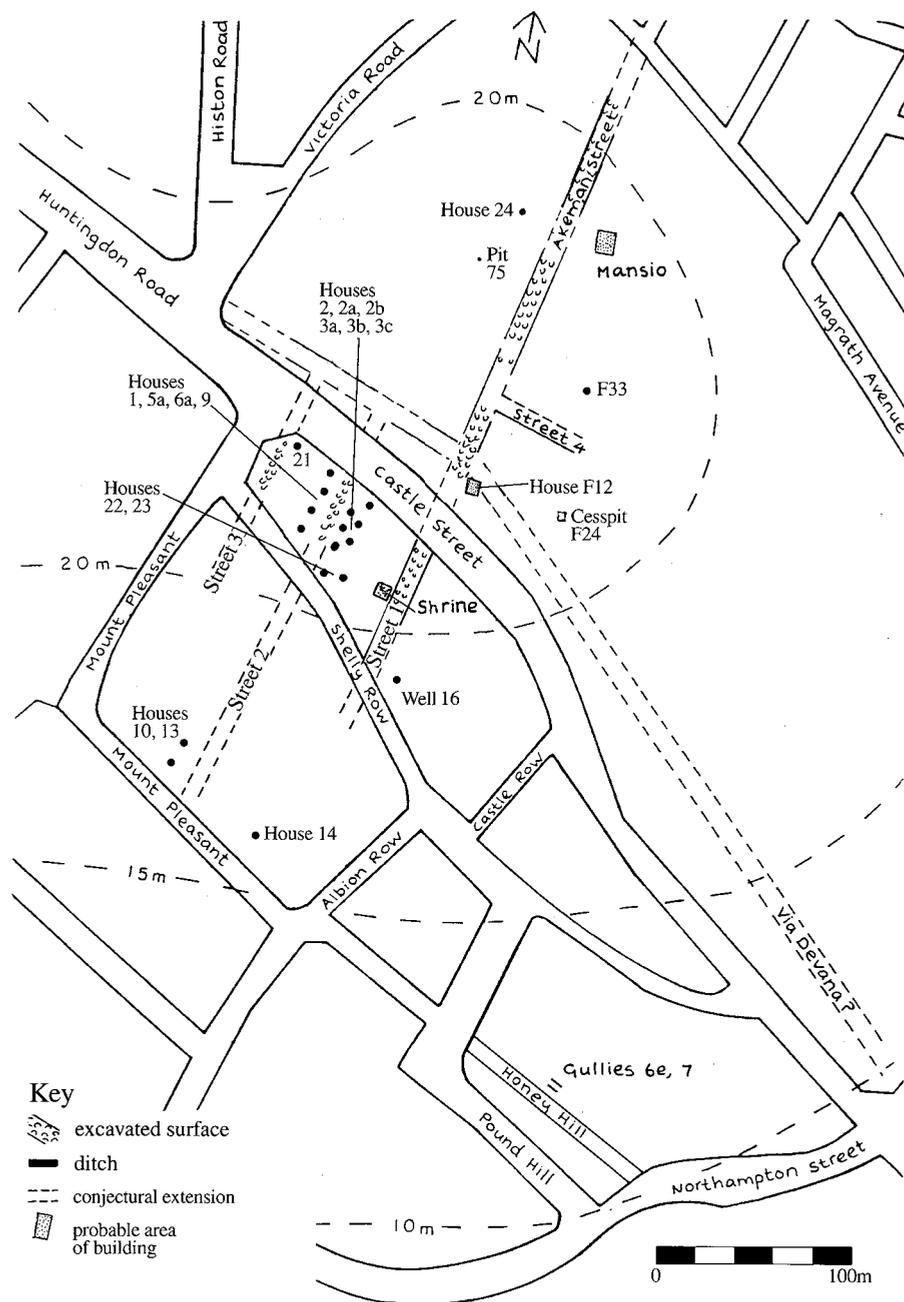
Phase I

Streets

In this period Akeman Street was covered by up to 10cm of sandy clay in the southwest. From this clay came a 1st century brooch (Plate III: 19), two bronze fragments and later 2nd century sherds. Beside the Via Devana and Akeman Street the gravelly sand layer (61), in SH VI, which overlays the earlier surface of Akeman Street, grades into this make-up deposit suggesting mixing during deposition and thus contemporaneity. Various fractions within the make-up deposit were distinguished during excavation, although their boundaries were not distinct. These components (74) were a heterogeneous mixture of fist-sized marl lumps, clay, gravel, pea grit, and crushed building material, bounded on the north by the ditch F42 and on the south by the cellar of the 2nd century building F12. Apart from considerable Roman pottery (17 medieval sherds were considered intrusive) the finds included a penannular brooch, the catchplate of a brooch, and from the transitional zone between (74) and (61) to the west, a brooch, bone needle and a coin, all of the late 1st century AD (Plates III: 18, V:32). This remake was also noted in CH 86 Area B (Plate CXIX: 842).

Cross streets parallel to Akeman Street were laid out and metalled in the newly levelled quarter of the settlement. Coins and pottery in, under and above the streets suggest construction early in the 2nd century. East and north of the Via Devana and on both sides of Akeman Street scattered buildings were found, but no new roads were apparently made to match those south and west of the Via Devana.

Street 1 (continuation of Akeman Street) (Fig. 4.2) was traced for 17m. It was composed of clean yellow/orange gravel spread over a surface 2.75m wide. At least three resurfacings could be recognised. A coin of Hadrian came from the lowest level and there was 2nd century pottery throughout. A side ditch along part of its length was located. The ditch cut into the uppermost fills of the earlier camp's palisade trench. Its lowest fill was of a soft light brown silt. (Plate XCV: 606–616)



4.1 Plan of 2nd century features

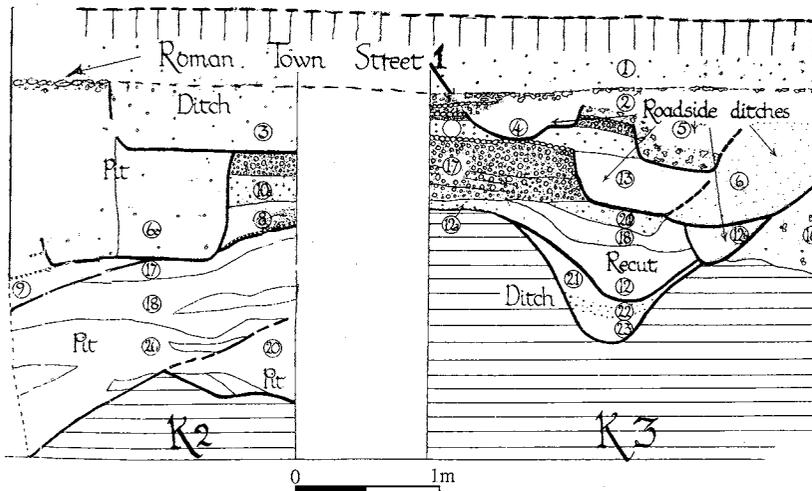
Street 2 ran straight for at least 36m from the Via Devana. It overlay ditch III and the pond and was composed of 15–30cms of orange gravel spread to make a cambered surface 3.6m to 4.2m wide. It had no continuous drainage ditches, although irregular stretches occurred along of both its eastern and western edges. Where the road lay above the Iron Age ditch and the pond, sinkage took place and up to 85cm of gravel had been dumped here by the 4th century. Four successive road surfaces were recognised.

Street 3. This had a cambered layer of gravel and stones approximately 20cm thick, suggesting a street parallel to the others.

Street 4. One side street was recognised northeast of the Via Devana. It was right angles to Akeman Street, was cobbled, cambered and had a ditch on its southern side.

Houses and yards (Fig. 4.1 and 4.3)

New buildings were also erected on the southwestern hilltop; they were small and rectangular (from 3–6m in length) and were built of wood with wattle and clay. Some roofs were tiled but most were probably thatched. Their only sophistication seemed to have been their lime-plastered and painted interior walls and, in some cases, cement floors and internal fireplaces. Two kinds of construction were found; the commoner used shallow foundation trenches for



4.2 RGS. 2nd century ditches of Street I, above Iron Age enclosure ditches

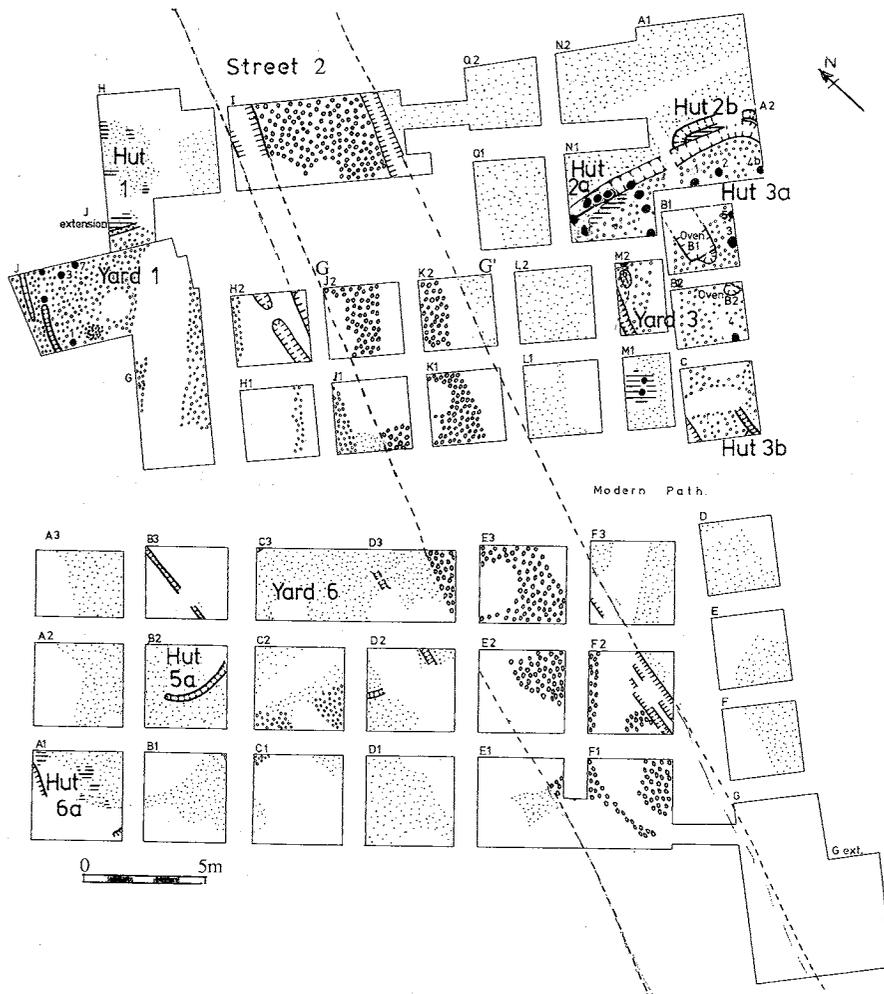
family life, for querns, wells, ovens and hearths, sometimes within timber shelters, were found in them. Beside some of them were fenced and ditched ungravelled areas which were interpreted as gardens; here, rubbish pits were dug from the loamy land surfaces. Of the three houses erected beside the new Street 2 one of them remained in use for two centuries; the others were abandoned in the 3rd century.

In MP in the early 2nd century the area was apparently open land and only one pit was found. It was sealed by a later 2nd to 3rd century dwelling (House 14).

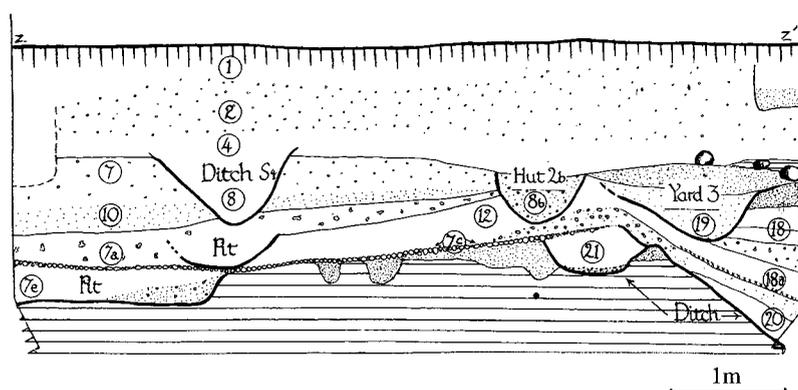
timber sills on which the walls were erected, the other, a series of large posts for each wall. Sixteen were excavated, some of which were replacements. Associated with them were yards up to 12m long which were often fenced and ditched with substantial gates and causeways or bridges across their ditches. They were gravel-covered and obviously centres of

RG

House 1. (Fig. 4.3). Much damaged by later digging. It was aligned along street 2 and was c. 4.9m wide by more than 5.2m long. Only a small portion of one wall survived as a vertically-sided slot 20cm wide and 25cm deep. Fragments of burnt clay found nearby might have been daub belonging to the walls. Five



4.3 RGS. 2nd century street, houses and yards



4.4 Hut 2b and Yard 3, above fort ditch

small areas of the floor foundations, a soft sandy loam, were found, but the floor surface itself had not survived. Many fragments of imbrex and tegula were found in the later levels in this area, perhaps from the roof. A yard lay beside the cross-street, above a 7cm thick layer of orange gravel spread over the levelled infilling of the pond. The yard measured 7.6 x 8.2m and was bounded by a fence and ditch on two sides. To the northwest a flat-bottomed trench 30cm wide and 15cm deep was traced for 2.75m. This turned slightly inwards to a butt end to form a gateway c. 1.5m wide. The gateway was marked by two postholes, 25cm in diameter, with a gravelled path between them. Outside the trench, the path crossed the drainage ditch on a causeway. The ditch was V-profiled, and its silt contained 2nd century sherds. To the southeast, beside the street, the fence foundation trench (here 60cm wide) and the drainage ditch were found, also interrupted by a gateway with a causeway across the ditch. A short section of the southern edge of the yard was found, but no feature marked its edge here. In the eastern end of RGN I was a cobbled area which may have been part of the yard associated with house 1. There were sherds of 2nd century date lying on its surface which was covered with a c. 3cm thick layer of black fibrous material. Something of the history of the yard could be recognised from the successive spreads of gravel. Several centimetres of mud accumulated on the first surface of the yard before it was re-metalled; a rotary quern and 2nd century sherds, some broken *in situ*, were found in this mud layer. Surface 4 was added when the older well-used surface 5 had sunk several centimetres; from it came 2nd to 3rd century sherds. There had probably been some structure here, for two postholes had been dug in surface 5 and sealed by the surface 4. Posthole J.7 had the outline of a 15 cm square post in its clay packing. Sinkage still continued and two large patches of gravel (surfaces 3 and 2) had to be added; many 2nd to 3rd century sherds, broken *in situ*, lay on them. A hearth, which had probably been protected by a light shelter, was also found. It was c. 60cm in diameter and made of clay smoothed over stones, the whole being burnt a deep red. Half a rotary quern lay near the hearth and postholes may have formed part of a protective shelter. Posthole J.3 showed a 20cm square post

in its clay packing. The final surface of the yard belonged to the 4th century.

House 2b (Fig. 4.4). Postholes and stake holes for one wattle and daub wall, probably that of a building. Sherds of the stratum immediately above these were of 2nd century date. Nothing was left of the interior of the building, later features having cut away the surface. The alignment of this wall does not appear to be that of the street grid.

House 5a. There was probably a house and yard to the south of house 1 but the evidence was not

clear. Two flat-bottomed foundation trenches which may have been related, though their junction was not found were sealed by 4th century features. They suggest a building c. 6.1m x 3.65m aligned on, and 7.6m from, the street. 3.95m of the eastern foundation trench was found; it was 30cm wide and cut 15cm into bedrock. The southern wall trench and the southwest corner were 18cm wide and cut 8cm into bedrock. The northwest wall trench appeared to have been cut only into the loam above the bedrock. No floor was found.

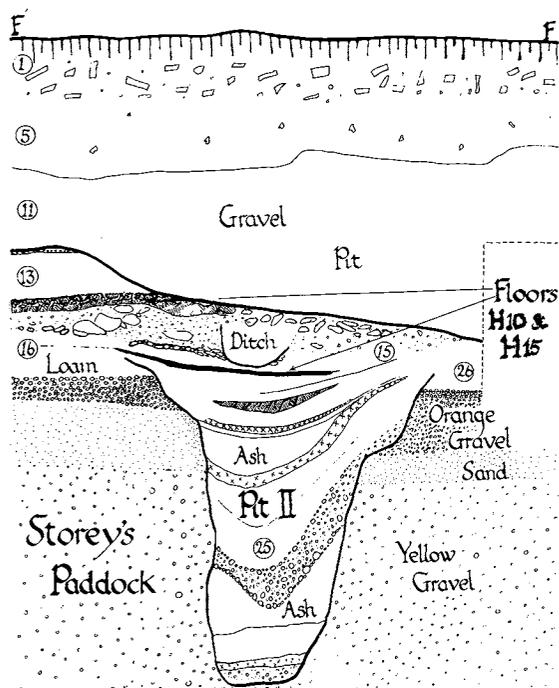
A contemporary yard was found between house 5a and the street. Although largely destroyed by 3rd to 4th century features it could be seen to be rectangular and c. 9m long, for three stretches of drainage ditch in RG (PG) Trenches D2, D3 and C3 marked the boundary. They were 30cm deep with a wide U-profile and seemed to have silted up slowly. From their fill came 2nd century sherds. A stretch of a similar ditch in trench C3, sealed by a 4th century floor, might have been the northern boundary. One posthole (C3.13) might also have been contemporary. Patches of cobbling and gravel in trenches C2, B1 and C1 were all that survived of the yard surface. In trench C2 an area had been cleared down to the chalk surface and a single layer of cobbles laid on it. Its northern limit was ditch C2.7a, which was still in use in the 4th century, but which might have marked an earlier boundary. Its southern limit was possibly ditch B1.22.

House 6a. Part of another house was suggested by two short lengths of flat-bottomed ditches in RG Trench A1 which were also aligned on the main street. The northwestern wall foundation trench (30cm wide and 23cm deep) was traced for 1.8m, the rest having been destroyed by 4th century pits. Another shorter section at right angles to it was probably part of the south foundation trench. 2nd century sherds came from both trenches. Patches of puddled chalk may have been part of a floor.

Of these houses and yards only house and yard 1 certainly remained in use until the 4th century, the others were abandoned, probably in the 3rd century (see below).

Phase II

SP. House 10 (Fig. 4.5). Near the southwestern limit of settlement, an area of the original ground surface was



4.5 House 10, above Pit II below House 15.

excavated. Cut into the level surface of the gravel bedrock and above an earlier pit were two phases of house and yard ditches, and a posthole which contained many late 1st to 2nd century sherds. Evidence from the soil, ditches and posthole suggests settlement beginning by the end of the 1st century.

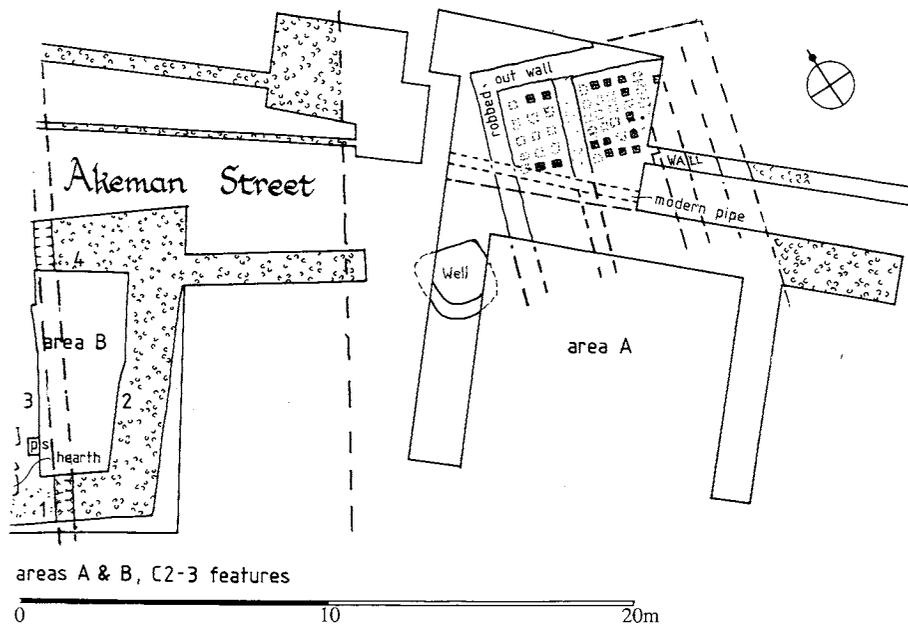
At CEF, CP, SR, MP 4, AR, HC and CR, little land surface survived and no features of this period were found. Further southeast only small parts of the hillside have been examined, in StP, HM and PH. In only two of them were features or a land surface of this pe-

riod found.

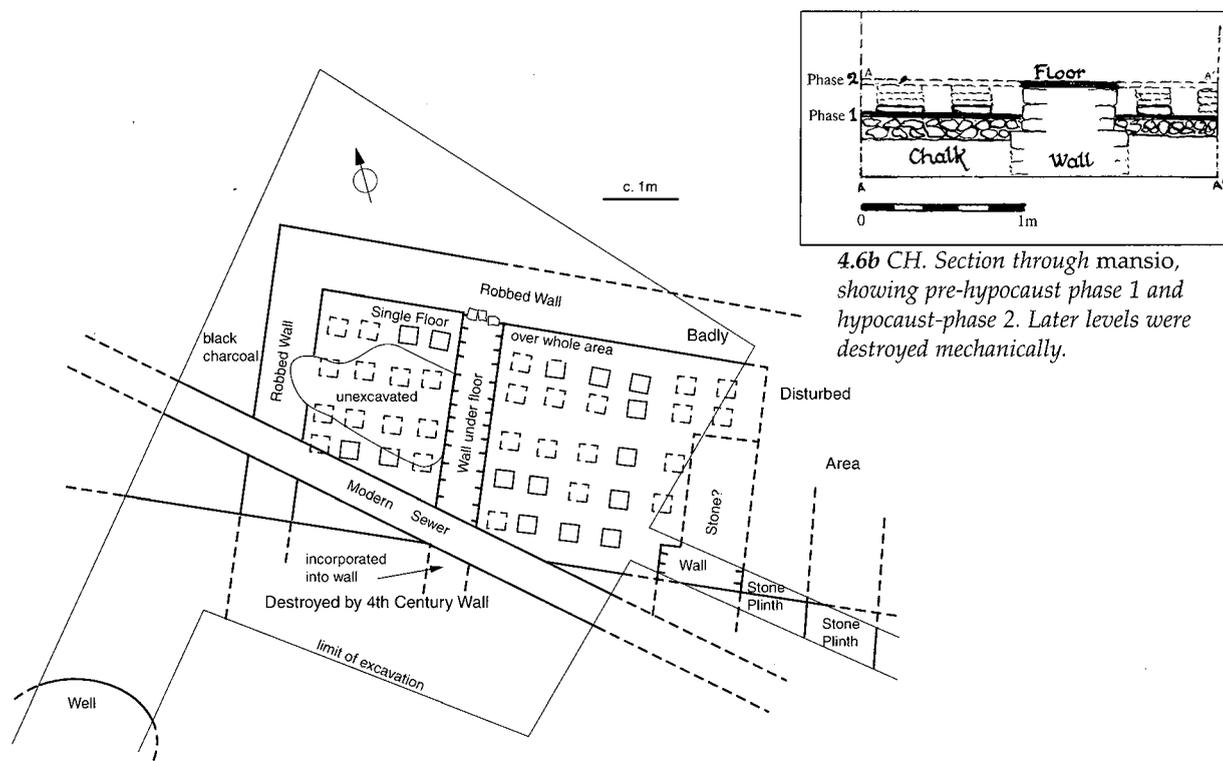
North and east of the Via Devana the level area was extensively examined in GT, SH, and CH and sherds of this phase was found at all sites. Trenches in CH also produced evidence of 2nd to 3rd century features.

Mansio (?) (Fig. 4.6, 4.6a, 4.6b)

At CH Area A, at the northern limit of the town next to the Akeman Street, was a substantial building of two phases. It was built of limestone blocks, although most of the stones had been robbed out except where their lower courses were sealed by the 4th century town wall. The outer wall of the building seen below the remains of the 4th century town wall showed it to have been built with a stepped plinth. The two steps were each c. 1m wide with a 10cm rise. The wall was 1.2m thick in Phase 2. An internal wall had been reduced in height when two rooms were made into one and a hypocaust added. The wall was well constructed of carefully cut rectangular limestone ashlar. The lowest course was wider and the stones shaped to form a plinth at each side. The footings of this wall continued beyond the hypocaust room in a southerly direction and overlay ditch F7. The underfloor of the hypocaust room was still intact. Limestone rubble was laid across the levelled natural chalk marl, those stones next to the internal wall overlapping its shaped foundation layer. Mortar had been poured over the stones to form a smooth surface into which were partially set the base tiles of the pilae. These tiles measured 26 x 26cm, except for one column, 30 x 30cm. The pilae had collapsed or been destroyed except in the eastern corner where they remained three tiles high. In this corner were large pieces of opus signinum, the upper surface of which had been painted dull red and cream. Close examination shows it to have been painted more than once and that the second



4.6 CH. Mansio, phase 1, in relation to Akeman Street in the 2nd century, showing the area destroyed by the 4th century town wall.



4.6a CH. Mansio, phase 1, showing the area destroyed by the 4th century town wall in more detail.

4.6b CH. Section through mansio, showing pre-hypocaust phase 1 and hypocaust-phase 2. Later levels were destroyed mechanically.

coat was all cream. There were many broken flue tiles, stained black on the internal surface and fragments of roof tiles were also found. Among the building material above the hypocaust floor were 28 sherds of 2nd century pottery, including samian ware and colour coated 'Hunt' cups. In the robbed out wall trenches were 25 sherds of the same period, three iron nails and a possible iron cleat (Plate XXVIII: 203). Adjacent to the west of the building, towards Akeman Street was a large burnt patch of earth. The foundation trenches of walls on the northwest corner of the building sealed an earlier cobbled path.

Considerable quantities of wall-plaster were found. There were several design-areas, implying that fragments came from different walls, perhaps from different rooms. Mock-marble panels, probably from dados, had been popular in the building and a large-scale figure had once graced one of its walls. One fragment of dark green overlying yellow was next to creamish piece of drapery or clothing, shaded pink at the edge and in the folds. There were three more dark green pieces close by (Fig. XI: 2). Another fragment showed two flexed-over fingers, on a cream background with traces of mauve and red. The fingers are skilfully painted with light pink highlights and red outlines. The finger widths are about 1.25cm, and the lengths between the upper and lower finger-joint are about 2cm. This would perhaps indicate a figure about two-thirds life-size (Fig. XI: 3). (App. XI)

To the east of the building was a cobbled area. Small cobble stones were laid on a 6cm thick layer of greenish grey clayey loam which overlay the fill of ditch 7. Over seventy 2nd century sherds came from the cobbled layer, including samian and Rhenish

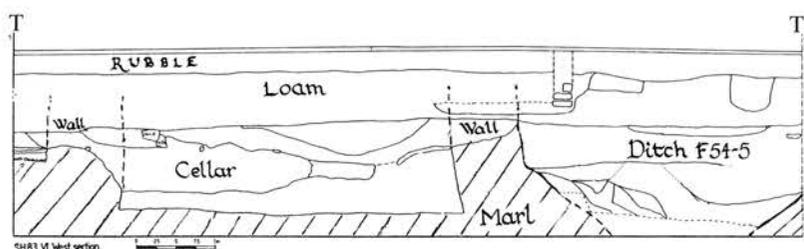
wares. The clayey layer below the cobbling contained 79 sherds of the 1st to 2nd century.

Since it was not possible to excavate more than a small part of this building there is no direct evidence as to its use or when it went out of use but no 3rd or 4th century sherds were found. What is known is that when upper parts of the building were destroyed some of the building material was pushed into a neighbouring well; also that the foundation walls were standing to floor height (top of hypocaust) when the 4th century town wall was constructed, for it incorporated the walls.

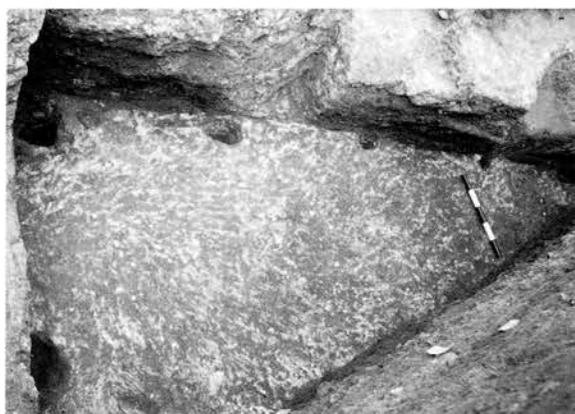
Cellar F12 (Fig. 4.7, 4.8, 4.9)

SH 83 VI.

At the junction of the Via Devana and Akeman Street was the corner of a building with a cellar, tiled roof and painted walls. For the construction of the cellar, a pit had been dug about 60cm down into the marl bedrock. The linings were preserved to a height of about 80cm above the level of the cement-hard stamped marl floor and were a mixture of crushed marl and clay with gravel. Part of the eastern lining was excavated as (82) and contained 1st to 2nd century pottery. Traces of burnt wood on the inner faces of the linings showed that the cellar had been lined with horizontally placed planks, and postholes (70cm to 1m apart, cut to a depth of 15–18cm) around the periphery of the floor show that posts retained the planks in place. Just over 3 square metres of the cellar floor were exposed. The primary fill of this cellar (84) was a very loose ashy deposit containing much disintegrated daub and plaster, burnt wood, a number of iron nails and a bolt 8.5cm long. A large quantity of



4.7 SH. Section through house F12 cellar



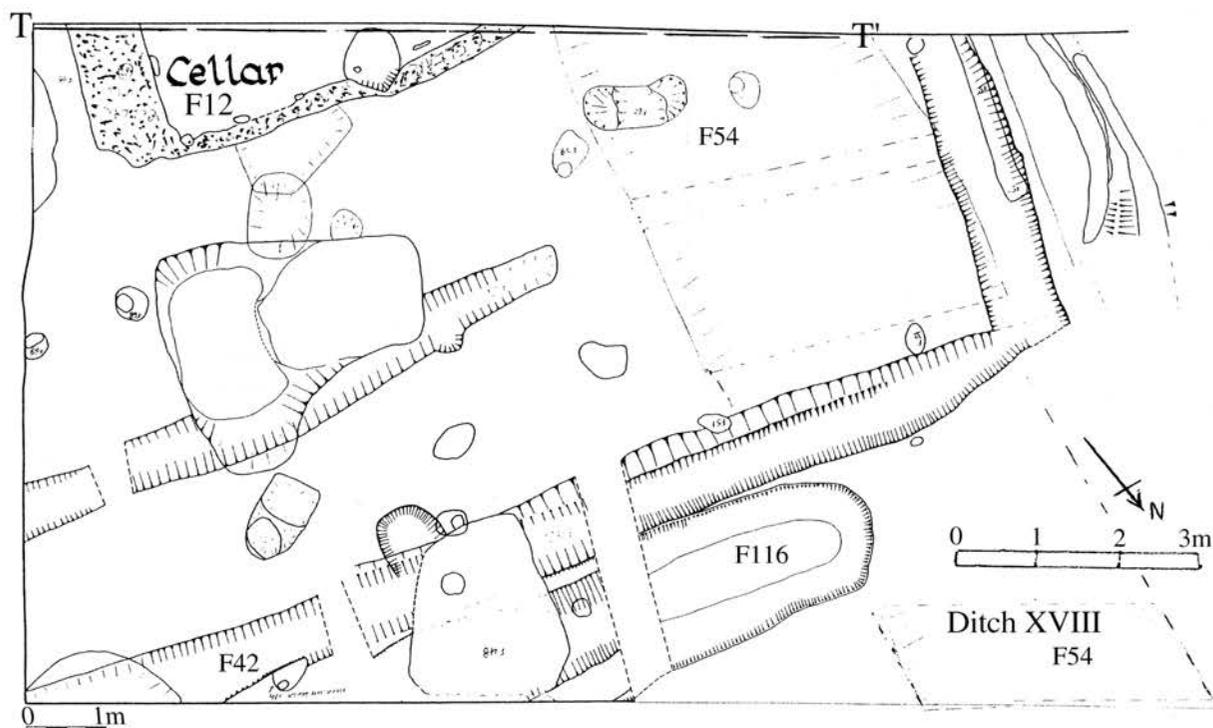
4.8 F12 after excavation

tegulae were present in this fill, as well as painted plaster (below). Pottery from the cellar was of late 2nd century date and included body sherds of amphorae. Other finds include a fragmentary iron bar 19cm long, a large lead plumb bob encased in a bronze sheath (Plate XXIV: 183) and several lumps of glauconite. All evidence suggests that the upper part of this building

was destroyed by fire and collapsed into the cellar.

Following the collapse of the building into its cellar, the upper infilling became a compact heterogeneous deposit (24) containing marl and clay lumps, pebbles, much building material (some of it burnt), iron nails, two iron bolts and many oyster shells; these deposits seem likely to have derived from the destroyed building. They could well have resulted from continued degeneration of the ruin after the fire, during which time rubbish was dumped in the derelict structure. The pottery in this layer is dated to the 2nd century. Above this was a deposit of dark grey-brown soil with much ash and carbon fragments (F12(8)), which contained Roman pottery and a few intrusive Saxo-Norman sherds. Like (24) which it overlays, (8) contained a very high concentration of oyster shells, as well as many nails, daub, brick and tile and it is suggested that this deposit too would have derived, in part at least, from the burnt-out building. (8) yielded a coin and an iron ring, possibly from a bridle. Above all of these layers of building debris was a layer of sandy soil which appears to have been deliberately deposited in order to level the area off. It contained nothing later than 3rd century sherds.

Wall plaster from this building included a variety of colours and patterns. Dado material was identified as well as three types of design from the upper zone: a simple panel-scheme, a figural/vegetal composition and a plain area decorated with a plain band. One large intact piece showed four or five coarse plaster



4.9 SH. F12 and other features in Shire Hall 83 Trench VI

layers. The dado had a red unburnished background with a fine spattering of black and grey paint 'mock marble'. A few fragments of the upper zone show evidence of a red panel, thin grey lines, a small motif and blobs, perhaps a plain red panel marked out with fine rectilinear lines which are interrupted at intervals by simple motifs. Elsewhere there are a few black fragments. There were also some fragments of designs: faint shades of grey and mauve, and broad green brush strokes perhaps representing parts of leaves on a pink background. Elsewhere, on a white background, was part of a figural/vegetal design. Between two broad green brush-strokes (leaves?) a roughly lens-shaped object painted in different shades of red and pink might be drapery, indicating a fairly large-scale figure. A large lump of finely granular green pigment was found in the same archaeological context as the wall-plaster. This lump of pigment was no doubt used in the decoration of the walls of the upper room, on work which was perhaps not finished (App. XI).

Houses

SP. House 13. A probable house foundation trench cut through ditch 6. It was 30cm wide, flat bottomed and deeper to the east. Traced in a straight line for 1.7m. Later in the 2nd century House 13 must have gone out of use, for three pits were dug through it.

MP. House 14 must have been more than 1.8m x 3m in size. It was later extensively repaired in the 3rd and early 4th centuries, but the earliest floor, an earthen one, and two or three successive hearths and two interior postholes probably belong to the 2nd-3rd century. The earliest hearth (III) was oval, more than 1.2m x 60cm and dug down 10cm into the loam and filled with wood-ash and charcoal. At its southern edge was a small pit or posthole (30cm in diameter and c. 30cm deep), which had been filled with clay and its surface smoothed; on this fires had been lit. Just north of this was hearth I, which had been replaced by hearth II. Both were round, c. 1.05m in diameter, 15cm deep and filled with wood-ash and charcoal. A clay floor 2-5cm thick with a well-smoothed and level surface was then laid over the whole area. It extended in all directions beyond the 10m² exposed by excavation. There were no breaks in it and no sign of any walls. The surface showed signs of fires having been lit on it, especially above the two earlier hearths, suggesting that it was probably within the same building. On it a thin layer of ash and charcoal accumulated before a second layer of clay 1cm thick was laid and smoothed down. The surface of this was also heavily burnt (hearth IV) especially to the east above the earlier hearths. A few 2nd to 3rd century sherds came from the floors. Further south, c. 5.6m² of the original ground surface, a 30cm thick gravelly loam, containing 2nd to 3rd century sherds, was found intact. Cut into it were three pits and two postholes belonging to a yard gate of this period.

CH Area B. House 24. The foundation trench of a house, 56cm wide and 10cm deep, cut into natural and the fill of an earlier ?palisade trench. Small post and stake-holes were in the bottom. Nails, lumps of daub and wall plaster lay over the postholes. A hearth, cut into the ?palisade trench. 69 x 90cm and 30cm, with a layer of charcoal 5cm thick on the bottom, may be associated.

RG (Fig. 4.3).

House 2a lay above the 1st century fort and below the late 2nd century yard 3, so its chronological position was certain. It was the best preserved of all the early houses, was 3.5m x 3.5m, aligned on street 2. One wall, set in a flat-bottomed foundation trench 60cm wide and 20cm deep, consisted of five 20cm diameter posts set in postholes filled with stones. The east and west walls were composed of slightly larger, c. 30cm diameter posts, packed around with stones but without foundation trenches. Five of the postholes were excavated and contained 2nd century sherds. A 20cm diameter posthole, M2.6, without any packing, might have been part of the south wall. The size of the posts suggests this was a substantial building. A 15cm thick area of the chalk floor was found intact and, although thinner, was found over the rest of the house interior below the floor of the succeeding yard 3.

House 2. This house lay beneath the late 2nd century house 3b and yard 3 and should therefore belong to the mid 2nd century. Since it lay a little further east and was aligned along the main street it may have been one of a row facing the main street. It was rectangular and c. 3m wide. Its north wall was set in a flat-bottomed foundation trench, 60cm wide and 20cm deep. No postholes were found in this, but 2nd century sherds came from its fill. Only one posthole B1.5 marked the south wall in Trench B1. North of this post the floor consisted of a 10cm deep layer of marl and also included within the floor were patches of gravel and sand and chalk from which came 2nd century sherds. One interior pit A2.2, 75cm in diameter and 30cm deep was found, filled with chalk and stones.

House 3a. This replaced house 2b. It was 3m by at least 4.5m. Its west wall was marked by two postholes 60cm and 30cm in diameter; its east wall was marked by posthole 60cm in diameter and filled with stones packed round a 30cm post. The yard surrounding house 3a was surfaced with clean gravel and a chalky loam along the line of the west wall.

House 3b and Yard 3. Houses 2a, 2b and 3a were shortly replaced by this larger yard and house which followed the same northern boundary. It dated from later 2nd century, and in the late 3rd century rubbish pits were dug through its gravel surface. The yard was rectangular c. 8m x 12m laid down over houses 2a and 2b and aligned on the cross-street. The northern ditch was 75cm wide and 45cm deep with a broad U-profile.

It had silted up slowly and 2nd to 3rd century sherds were included in the fill. The northwest corner and the western ditch had a different initial silt, possibly because there was no house near them. The western ditch shallowed rapidly and was not found in M1, suggesting there may have been a causeway and entrance to the street at this point. An area of marl suggested a possible structure between the street and yard. On the marl surface were found 2nd century sherds and articulated cow vertebrae. A layer of charcoal and burnt material lay over the marl and, with two stakeholes, one 10cm square and one 25cm in diameter, might have been a gate to yard 3. The surface of yard 3 consisted of a mixture of chalk and gravel with patches of ash and charcoal.

Oven B1 just north of house 3b, within the yard, was set on a clay base, 1.5 x 1m in diameter and 30cm deep. This rectangular oven 60 x 45cm, at the centre of the yard floor had been built with clay walls 5cm thick. These were still standing 22cm high amid the debris of the oven. Clay reinforcement had been piled around outside and a 20cm gap left to the south where a semi-circular depression full of charcoal marked the fire-pit. The whole area was heavily burnt. Several 2nd century sherds came from the clay of the oven. This oven had collapsed and then remained undisturbed.

Oven B2 was similar to B1, being set in a shallow clay-filled pit, but facing west. Only its entrance could be excavated and this was 22cm wide with 15cm thick flanking walls buried in the debris of its fallen roof; much charcoal lay outside. Posthole B2.4 had been packed with broken roof tiles and contained 2nd to 3rd century pottery. It might have been part of a shelter for the oven. Both ovens also belonged to the latest phase of occupation since they were never disturbed after falling into disuse.

House 3c. The southwest corner of another house was found by yard 3 and probably belongs to this phase. 1.5m of a foundation trench 30cm wide and 38cm deep was aligned on the cross-street, cut by a 3rd century rubbish pit. A short length of another similar foundation trench at right angles to it might have been part of an interior wall. The area contained within these ditches was a stony loam different from the yard surface outside them. The area had been too badly disturbed by later pits to be certain of the construction of this house.

House 9. Two successive floors suggest that house 9 had been rebuilt after a fire. On the evidence of the pottery and the stratigraphy, the house dates to this period. It had been laid over a 1st century pit (P2.17) and was sealed by the 4th century yard 9b. Only a small part of it, less than 2m², could be cleared and no walls were found. The lower of the two floors was composed of a close-set horizontal layer of marl lumps. Above this was a 13cm thick layer of dark loam which contained charcoal, many 2nd century

sherds and a large (nether) quern-stone set in its surface. Above this lay the upper floor, a level 3cm thick layer of puddled chalk. A yard found 6m away was at the same depth as house 9, like it, sealed by 4th century yard 5b. It was made of 10cm of hard yellow gravel which was found over the whole trench. Areas of charcoal and burnt daub overlying yard 9 may be debris from burnt house 9. The soil beneath it contained only 1st to 2nd century sherds.

House 23, S26. Only a 1.5m stretch of foundation trench 60cm wide and 22cm deep, was found. In RGS VI a second corner post and part of a wall foundation trench with postholes and a wattle and daub walls was found, probably the same house. Postholes were 24, 27 and 30 cms in diameter, with stakeholes between them. There were 2nd century sherds immediately above the postholes. In RGS VII a gully parallel to the above house wall contained a few Roman sherds and probably defined its yard. It was 24 cm deep and 56 cm wide with a butt end to the west, by the probable end of the house.

RGN II House 21. A gully of this 2nd century building was traced for 4m. It was 1m wide, V-shaped and 40cm deep and its dark brown friable fill contained 2nd century sherds, a few bone fragments, a fragment of lava quern stone, pieces of tile and *opus signinum* and a finger ring (Plate X: 87).

Fragments of several ditches, postholes and beam slots were found at Shire Hall. These were interpreted as the disturbed remains of further houses and yards. Near the edge of the town there were fragmentary but quite substantial ditches, possibly the boundaries of smallholdings. Boundary ditch F29/38 averaged 1.2m deep and 1.6m wide and contained much pottery (Plate XCVI–XCVII: 618–631).

Pits

CH: pits F19, F24, F29, F31 and F39

GT: pits Be.8 and Be.9

PH: pits 2 & 2a.

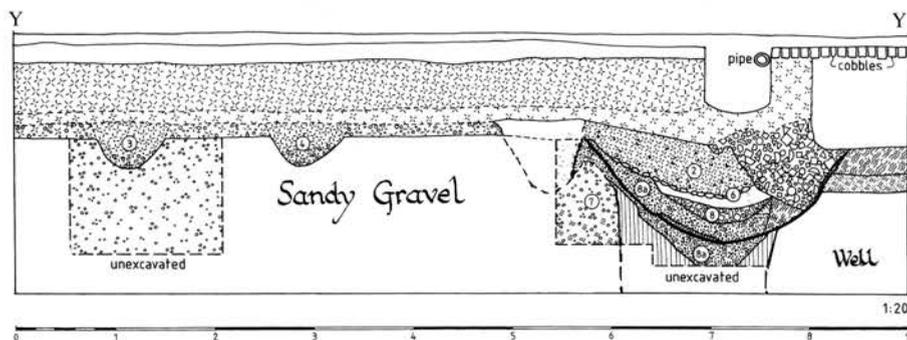
RG (N): pits G11, B13, C15. 24, 27 and 20a

RGS: pits 4a, 12, F25, and 32.

SH pit F75 (Fig 4.10).



4.10 Pit with burnt deposits, F 75, Shire Hall



4.11 CH. 3rd century ditch and well adjacent to mansio.

RGS VI, Pit 21. This almost circular pit 1.5m x 1.2m and approximately 1.5m deep, cut an earlier pit (2x) in trench VI. A layer of light sandy brown loam covered layers of darker loamy clay containing large lumps of chalk marl and a layer of fine dark brown crumbly loam. This latter layer contained many stones and sherds. Below this was a layer of light brown clay flecked with chalk marl. Sherds throughout were of 2nd century types and there was also a quantity of daub fragments, a brick and a piece of cut chalk. There were also 6 bones from at least 5 human infants, a dog skull and cattle and sheep bones – mainly mature animals. Pottery included one amphora sherd with graf-fito (p157, Plate XXXI: 64, and XCVII: 818–826).

Soil from pit F75 (Fig 4.10) was sampled by flotation and the evidence of its seeds was analysed. It appeared to be the residue of domestic waste with seed of fruits (bullace, cherry and apple) which are quite commonly found in such contexts. Seeds of elderberry and blackberry could also belong in this category or could have entered the pit from nearby plants if it was open at any stage. Peas and beans probably also represent food waste as might the wheat but the latter might also come from seed cleaning operations as cereal weeds were also present. Single seeds of celery and coriander are also domestic in origin, celery being used as a potherb and its seeds, like those of coriander, were used for flavouring. The oriental plane is a native of southeastern Europe and western Asia and has been widely planted as a shade tree since ancient times. The single seed found here could represent an 'ornamental' tree grown for shade in a private garden or public open space. The majority of the other species present could represent weeds found in cereals, or removed during cleaning them, or simply weeds growing in the area whilst the pit was open. The latter is perhaps more likely in the sense of the seeds of cocksfoot, a perennial grass not usually found in cereals, and the sedge, plants of damp or waste places.

CS included a series of shallow pits (23, 24, 40 and 41) filled with sandy silt loam. All were between 0.5–0.6m in diameter, shallow bottomed, and survived to a depth of less than 0.3m. The exception was a steep sided rubbish pit (5a) only a fragment of which survived.

Wells

CH. Well, to the west of the mansio, close to the outer wall (Fig. 4.11). Rectangular 1.5m wide, excavated to 1.2m, bottom not reached. Cut through ditch F7. Deliberately filled, largely with black ashy loam and building material. Sherds were of the same period as those from the building (Plate CXIX: 843–4). The 4th century town wall partly overlay the filled well. Plaster from the mansio was deposited in the well. Fragments were of white painted over red, plain green, a black stripe and red band on a white background, the edge of a golden-yellow band, pink with traces of darker red shading, a trace of deep mauve and some white over-painting, a brick red with small white flecks of paint, and one small piece with greyish plaster with orange paint (App. XI).

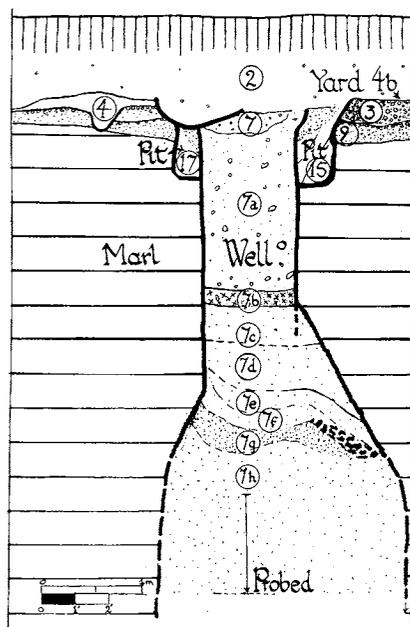
CH. F33 (Well KK/12). (Fig. 4.12). Circular well, diameter 1.36m, the bottom 70cm cutting into natural marl giving a U-profile base. Late 2nd century sherds were found at the bottom (Plate CXVI: 805–6).



4.12 Shire Hall. Well KK/12

CP. Well 7b (Fig. 4.13). Circular well, probably plank-lined, diameter 1.10m. Excavated to approximately 3m without reaching bottom. Fill of very fine light brown gravel with a small quantity of loam. Contained a collection of part-worked bone pin shafts with one finished bone pin (Plate XXII: 179) and a number of animal bones, mainly sheep. 1st and 2nd century sherds. The well appears to have been used, after partial infilling, as a setting for a large post, packed with squared stones, large sherds (Plate XCII: 585–586) and part of a puddingstone quern. The post rested on a hard circular lump of chalk marl, 28cm in diameter. Sherds in the packing were 2nd century.

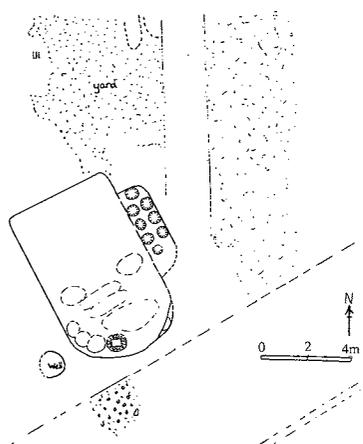
RGS VI. Well 16. 98cm in diameter, partially excavated to 3.80m. Plank lining 20cm thick, but no timber remained. At 3.50m the sides curved slightly outwards. Uppermost fill of light brown gritty loam sealed ashy brown loam with chalky marl lumps. In a pocket of ash 2m down, the articulated skeleton of a human



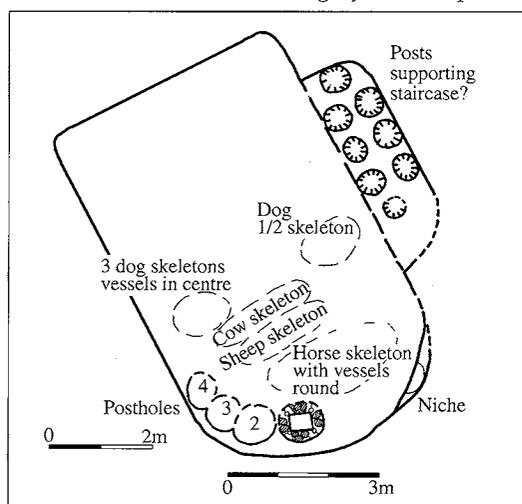
4.13 RGS. 2nd–3rd century well 7. Its fill contained numerous fragments of bone pins, evidently in process of being manufactured.

baby under 10 days old was found, together with 10 other human infant bones. Sherds of 2nd century, including samian in the lower fill dating from 125-145 AD, whilst the upper fill could be dated to the late 2nd to 3rd century. Some bones, mainly of mature sheep and cattle, with a few pig and also numerous fish. This well was deliberately filled at one time, for sherds in the two deposits joined. Three fragments of a fine urn with a painted face on the neck of buff vessel were in the fill. There was further painting on the body of the vessel.

Shrine (Fig. 4.14, 4.15) (Plates XXXI: 63, XXXIII: 76, 77, 79, XXXVI–XXXVII: D1–12, S1–53, XCIX–CXIV: 646–794, CXL–CXLI: 4, 5, 7, 8, 12, 13, 24, 42.) CP/RGS. This feature was 8.18m x 5m, with the eastern end rounded out to a semi-circular area, cut from the contemporary ground level into natural chalk to



4.14 Plan of shrine



2m. A semi-circular niche 60cm wide and 44cm deep had been cut into the chalk 1.5m above floor level in the eastern wall of the apse. A gravel floor (25-30cm thick) was laid over the chalk and a number of post settings could be seen. Posthole 1 held a post 30 x 40cm in a setting 70 x 80cm. There was a stakehole at each corner of the post, presumably for additional support, and several packing stones within the setting. Postholes with 80, 60 and 70cm diameters set along the cellar wall suggested further large posts to support a superstructure. Others may have been placed around the walls in the gravel. The entire structure had been lined with planks probably nailed to the upright posts. Two charred planks could clearly be seen on the gravel floor where they had fallen. On the northern side of the cellar an additional area 1.3m wide had been cut 60cm deeper than the cellar floor. Eight postholes had survived, placed close together in two parallel rows. Nails and small sandy lenses near these postholes suggest the lower part of a wooden staircase. An amphora with a painted inscription came from among these postholes (Plate XXI: 63).

On the underlying chalk, beneath the gravel floor was a badly preserved articulated skeleton of an adult dog and a cow skull with two neck bones still in place. A squared stone, 20 x 10 x 10cm, had been placed on the neck of the cow. Above the gravel floor lay black ashy loam and charcoal interspersed with burnt clay showing lath and plank impressions. Above this was wood ash 2m thick, sloping down to 80cm in the east. In this were corroded iron objects including 2090 nails, 45 hinges and brackets and a key (Plate XVI: 136). Although the land surface round the cellar was carefully examined no structure on the same alignment was found, with the exception of timber slot 23.

On the surface of the ash were articulated animal skeletons and complete vessels. A horse skeleton, its head split open lay within the semi-circular extension. Whole vessels were placed round the horse; a miniature flagon on its head, a large 'flat' mica-dusted platter by its mouth, a huge samian bowl between its legs (Lud T 981), a vessel from kilns in Germany (M R Hull), grey with cups on opposite shoulders, which

probably had snakes looking into the vessel by its tail, and a narrow necked jar with upper half burnished next to its back (Plates CII: 684, 686, 688, 690, CIII: 691). There were two iron objects, one under the forelegs and one in front of the legs. Nearby, forming a triangle, lay three small articulated adult dogs (Fig. 4.16, 4.17). These were like Pekinese in size and leg structure and were mature

animals. The heads of two were overlapping and the third lay across their legs. All wore iron collars attached to links of iron chains. the bottom half of a flagon (with edges smoothed) was placed in the middle. West of the horse lay an articulated cow skeleton, with a sheep between its legs. Nearby lay half of a large adult dog. Over these burials, and thrown in when they were still lying exposed, was a thick layer containing the following artefacts:

Pottery: sherds from small colour coated beakers, samian cups and bowls and over 250 flagons (Plates XCIX–CI: 646–683)
 Glass vessels (Plates XXIX–XXX: 4–8, 10–13, 19–22),
 14 bone pins and needles (Plates VII–VIII: 40–50, 57–59, 68, XIII; 111, 112, 116)
 6 bone gaming pieces, at least 2 with Roman numerals cut on side (Plate XXIV: 138–146).
 Jet pin (Plate X: 82)
 Flute-like bone pipe (XVII: 150) (Fig. 4.18)
 Intaglio of Bacchus (App. I, p90–91)
 6 coins (App. IV: 9–11, 13–15),
 2 spoons (Plate XIV: 118, 119)
 2 hone stones (Plate XVIII: 158, 159)
 AE door handle on iron shaft (Plate XIV: 121)
 Studs probably from shoes (Fig. 4.19).

Animal bones, including:

Horse: Skull and 20 articulated bones, 121 other bones, rest of bones decayed. 6+ months old.

Cattle: 6 horn cores, 16 mature mandibles, 1 immature mandible, 21 not known.

Sheep: 47 mature mandibles, 13 mandibles age 12/14 months, 6 immature mandibles, 444 other bones fused and unfused. Femur of unborn lamb.

Pig: 14 mature mandibles, 1 immature mandible, 21 other bones fused and unfused, (some showing evidence of butchery).

Dog: (5d): 1 mature skull, 2 mature skulls over 7 years, 26 other bones.

(5g)I: Complete skeleton, aged 5 years (Pekinese type)

II: Complete skeleton, aged well over 5 years (Pekinese type)

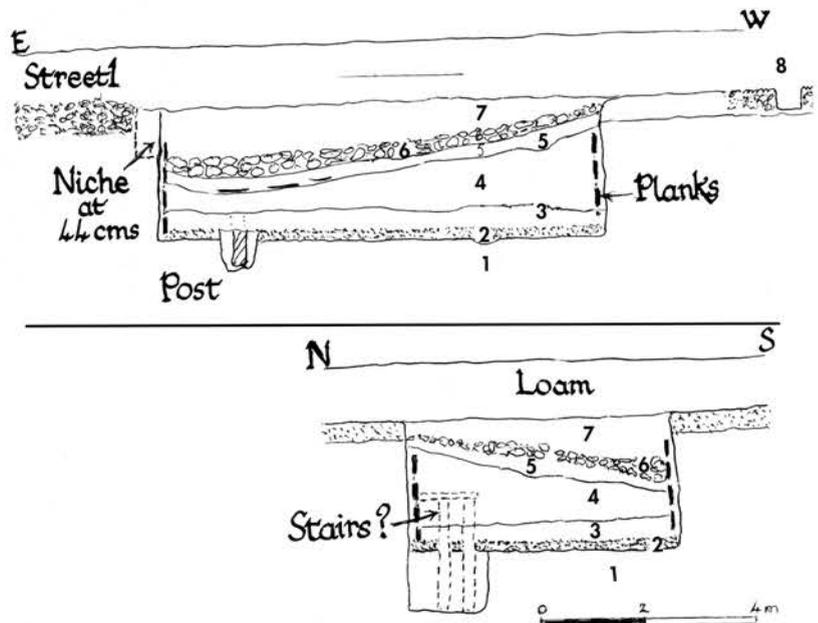
III: Complete skeleton, aged 5 years + (Pekinese type)

(5h): 2 skulls, 2 mandibles (one complete) aged over 2 years, 22 odd teeth, 29 other bones.

(5z): Half articulated mature hunting dog, whippet size. Head, chest and front legs.

Other: include cat, duck, chicken, hare, pigeon, thrush & rat. 6500 oyster shells

Afterwards the shrine deposits were sealed by a layer of clay containing many sherds (Plates CXIV: 786–794, CXLI: 43, 45, 46, CXLII: 53). Later, this broke up into is-



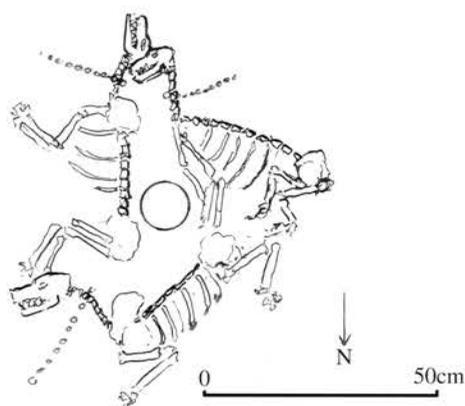
4.15 Shrine: reconstructed sections E-W and N-S

1. Chalk marl
2. Gravel floor
3. Black ashy loam with fallen planks
4. Wood ash with nails, hinges, etc.
5. Clay with much pottery and horse, cow and sheep skeletons
6. Marl lumps
7. Gravelly loam (4th century)
8. 2nd century yard and beam slot



4.16 Three dogs, placed as a triangle within the shrine

lands as the thick layers of ash from the burnt down building compacted. In the late 3rd and 4th centuries the shrine cellar was levelled up by deposits of pottery, bone etc thrown in from the road on the opposite side from which the earlier material had been deposited. (Plates XXIX: 3, 5a, XXX: 30–32, XXXII: 68, 72, 73, 75, XXXIII: 80, 83, CXXXVI–CXXXVII: 979–1008, App. IV: 6, 51, 65, 98, 99).



4.17 Sketch of three dogs

The layer above the shrine also contained:

Fragments of bone inlay (Plate XV: 127)

2 bone pins (Plate VIII: 52, 53)

Jet pin fragment (Plate X: 90)

Animal bones:

Horse: 5 bones.

Cattle: 6 mature skull fragment, 5 mature mandibles, 570 other bones.

Sheep: 39 mature and 11 immature skull and mandible fragments, 329 other bones.

Pig: 1 skull 12–14 months, 1 skull mature, 11 mature skull/mandible fragments, 52 others.

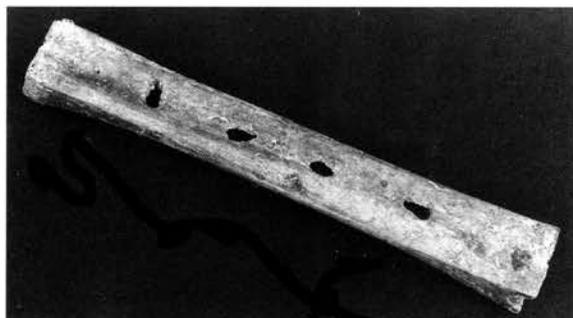
Dog: 1 skull + lower mandible, odd teeth, 10 other bones

Other bones: 7 cat, 13 chicken, 12 pigeon, 6 small birds.

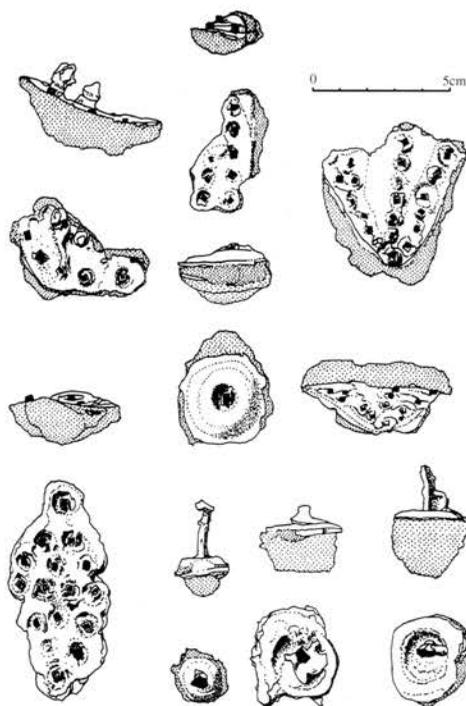
Inscriptions or graffiti were noted on several sherds in or associated with the shrine. These were examined by Mark Hassall whose report, first published in *Britannia* (Hassall and Tomlin 1979) is included in App. VIII.

The postholes along the walls, plank lining, and the gravel floor suggest a carefully constructed cellar with a substantial superstructure. Rows of posts in the sunken area could indicate the base of a wooden staircase. The timber slot and its nearby daub and plaster debris suggest an ancillary building. The building appears to have burnt down, although no reddening of the walls or floor were observed; yellowing of the west wall might be attributed to this. The mass of charcoal and iron objects on the floor suggest an elaborate collapsed superstructure.

Timber slot 23 and a yard lay 3m west of the cellar. The slot was 15cm wide, vertically-sided and flat-bottomed, filled with brown organic matter, probably a timber beam that rotted *in situ*. Daub and plaster found between the gully and the cellar suggest the beam may have supported a wattle and daub plastered wall, possibly of an ancillary structure, which had collapsed towards the cellared building. A yard surface of 16–20cm of gravel with some larger stones, re-surfaced with fresh gravel at least once, was associated with the shrine.



4.18 Bone flute(?) from shrine



4.19 Iron studs and shoe studs in leather, from shrine

Proceedings Volume LXXXVIII, 1999

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