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# Riparian Cambridge: archaeological excavations near the River Cam at WYNG Gardens, Thompson's Lane, and Elsewhere

Craig Cessford

Incorporating material from Martin Allen (medieval and later coins and jettons), Steve Allen (wood identification), Grahame Appleby (ceramic building material), Mike Bamforth (wood and timber), Steve Boreham (pollen and geology), Chris Boulton (molluscs), David Broomfield (heraldry), Simon Crowhurst (x-ray fluorescence), Val Fryer (plant remains), Andy Hall (metalwork), David Hall (medieval pottery), Adrian Marsden (Romano-British coins), Francesca Mazzilli (Romano-British pottery), Benjamin Neil (human remains), Vida Rajkovača (animal bone), Mark Samuel (moulded stone), Simon Timberlake (x-ray fluorescence), Ian Tyers (dendrochronology) and the Waikato and SUERC laboratories (radiocarbon dating)

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*Excavations at WYNG Gardens, Thompson's Lane, Cambridge, revealed a stratigraphic sequence spanning over 2800 years, from a Bronze Age channel of the River Cam to a terrace of Edwardian townhouses. Despite producing valuable dendrochronological dates and an informative pollen sequence, it appears that there was little human activity near this portion of the River Cam in the Bronze Age, but there is evidence for arable farming during the Iron Age. There were then three phases of Romano-British activity, which shed considerable light upon the lower town/roadside suburb of Cambridge indicating that it was more significant than previously recognised. Following post-Roman alluviation the area was reclaimed and occupied in the 11th/12th centuries, marking the beginning of an urban sequence that continues to the present. An unusually high proportion of Stamford ware is probably linked to the transportation of this pottery along the river, whilst a rare 13th-century Saintonge ware pitcher may be linked to a mayor of Cambridge. There is relatively sparse 13th–15th-century activity, when the area was part of the garden or curtilage meadow, but there are several interesting features and items associated with the ownership of the area by St. John's College (1533–1795). The site was then occupied by a garden until 1911, followed by a terrace of houses until 2014.*

Cambridge, like most urban centres throughout time, owes its location and existence to a river. Despite the centrality of the River Cam to Cambridge, few archaeological investigations have provided substantive insights into the river. Excavations in 2015 at the WYNG Gardens development on Thompson's Lane (Figs. 1–2, Pl. 2) provided a welcome opportunity to address this lacuna. Prior to this the site was occupied by 1–8 St. Clement's Gardens, a terrace of eight Edwardian townhouses constructed on the east side of Thompson's Lane in 1911, acquired in the 1970s by Trinity Hall and demolished in 2014. This redevelopment allowed the Cambridge Archaeological Unit to

undertake one of the most significant archaeological investigations in this part of Cambridge to date (Cessford 2016a; Dickens and Newman 2015; Newman 2013a). The relatively large area available for excavation of c. 640 square metres, combined with the full exposure of a sequence over five metres deep, dwarfed all previous investigations in the vicinity. This earlier work, particularly at Riverside (Firman and Pullinger 1987), 5 Thompson's Lane (Baker and Kenny 2004), 24 Thompson's Lane (Fig. 3; Newman 2008a), on the route of the 33kv reinforcement cable (Davenport *et al.* 2008) and at the Old Vicarage (Newman 2011) can now be reassessed and placed in context (Fig. 1). Additionally, on the other side of the river there has been limited work at Magdalene College (Dickens and Appleby 2015), whilst upstream some insights have been gained from work at the Chapel Court and Master's Garden, St. John's College (Dickens 1996), the School of Pythagoras (Newman 2013c), the St. John's College library bookstore (Cessford in prep), the Jerwood Library of Trinity Hall (Alexander 1997) and the Master's Garden of Clare College (Clarke 2002), although these have involved limited exposures and typically relate to medieval and later sequences.

The investigations revealed a Bronze Age palaeochannel of the River Cam, subsequent Iron Age alluvial flood deposits, a Romano-British settlement and waterside activity, post-Roman alluviation and a sequence relating to the medieval town spanning the 11th/12th–early 21st centuries. Although there is some overlap, this sequence can broadly be divided into two sections; firstly, there are the c. 2500–3000 years until the 11th/12th century when the main narrative is primarily alluvial and although methodologically urban – in the sense of being in Cambridge – the archaeology is not primarily *of* Cambridge, as it does not deal with an urban space. There then followed c. 800 years of predominantly urban sequence.

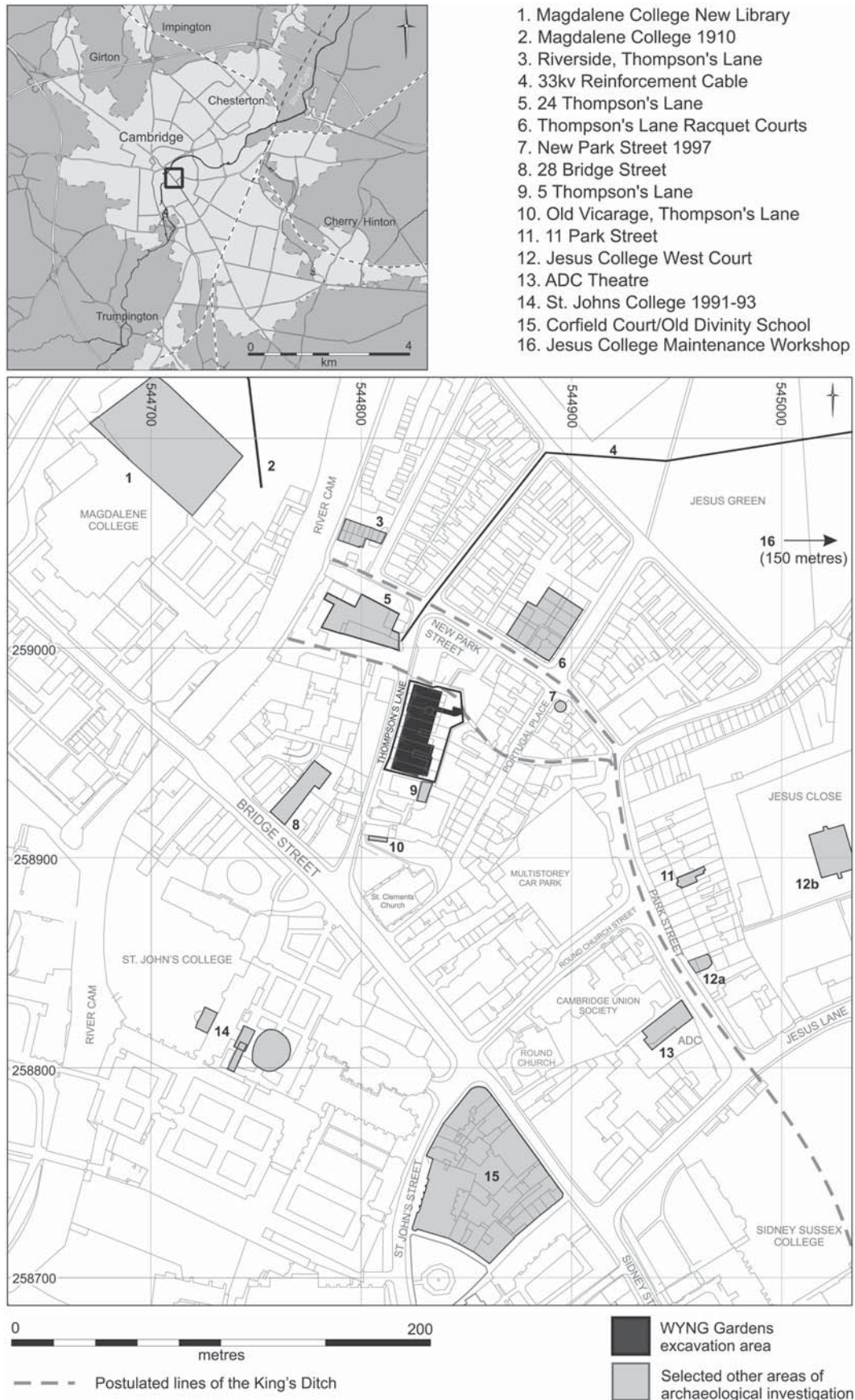


Figure 1. Location plan.





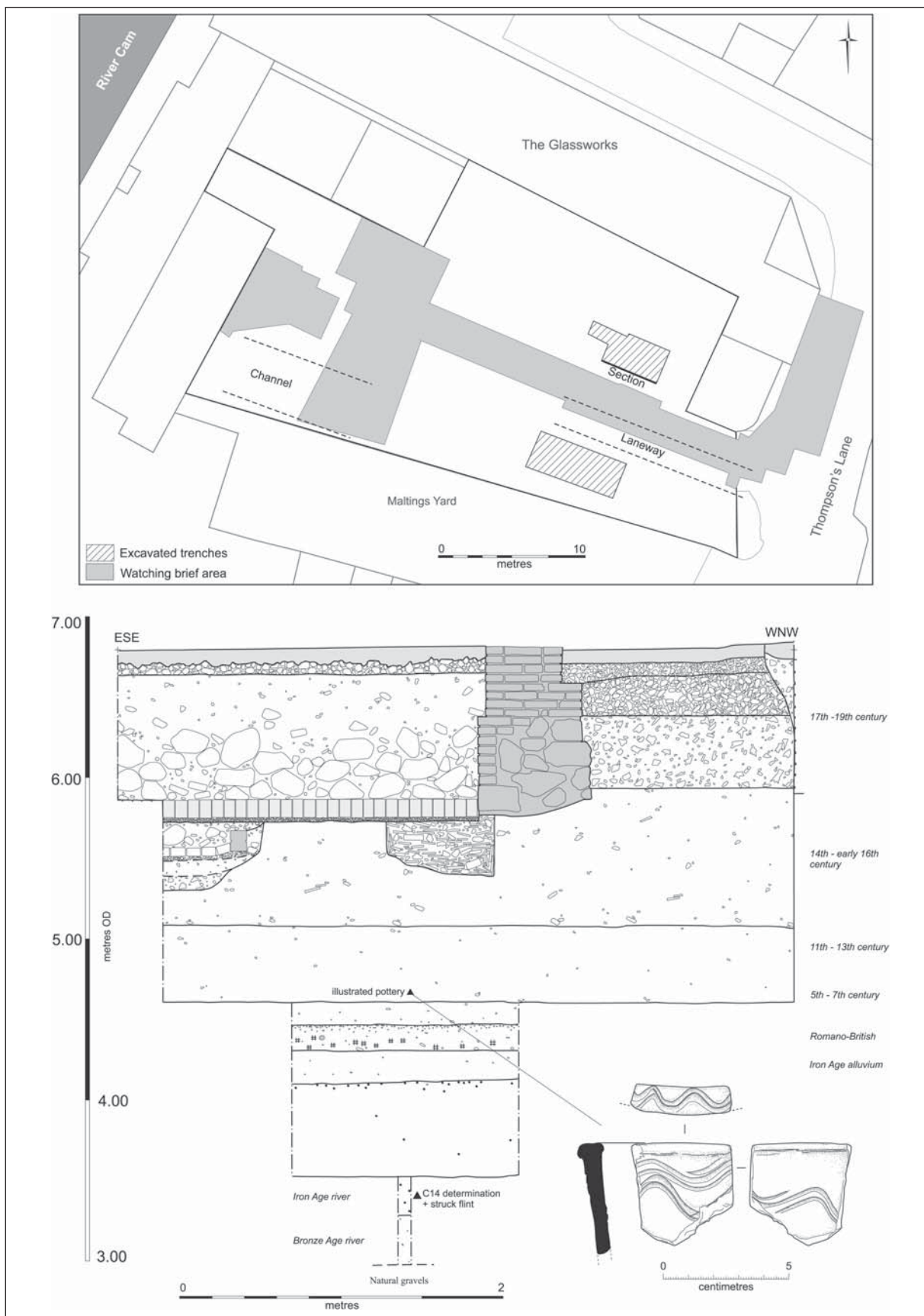
Figure 2. Plan of discrete features and excavated slots and schematic overall section of WYNG Gardens investigations.

### The Prehistoric River

Although the overall course of the River Cam has been subject to change and modification, around Cambridge its route is largely inherited from a Late-Glacial incisional event into the Lower Cretaceous Gault Clay, remaining relatively stable throughout the Holocene. The river drains a c. 1000 square kilometre catchment of low chalky hills to the south and in the area of Cambridge flows along a relatively constrained course, bounded by a mixture of gravel and bedrock. It flows south–north along the Backs, before the geology around Magdalene Bridge creates a distinct pinch point, forcing it to arc to the east and

south, running broadly west–east across the Jesus Green area before eventually resuming its overall northwards course.

The WYNG Gardens and 24 Thompson's Lane sites both lie on the southern side of the palaeochannel (Fig. 4), with the gently sloping southwest–north-east aligned edge of the channel revealed at WYNG Gardens. This stretch of river is likely to have been asymmetrical, with these sites located on the slower and shallower side of a meander bend in an area of reedswamp, whilst the fastest and deepest water would have been on the far northern side. A lack of material with a close relationship to the context where it was deposited hinders dating of the earliest river-



**Figure 3.** Site plan and section of 24 Thompson's Lane investigations, plus sherd of grey coarseware with a hard reduced sandy fabric that has a T-shaped rim form and incised wavy decoration, probably 5th–7th century.

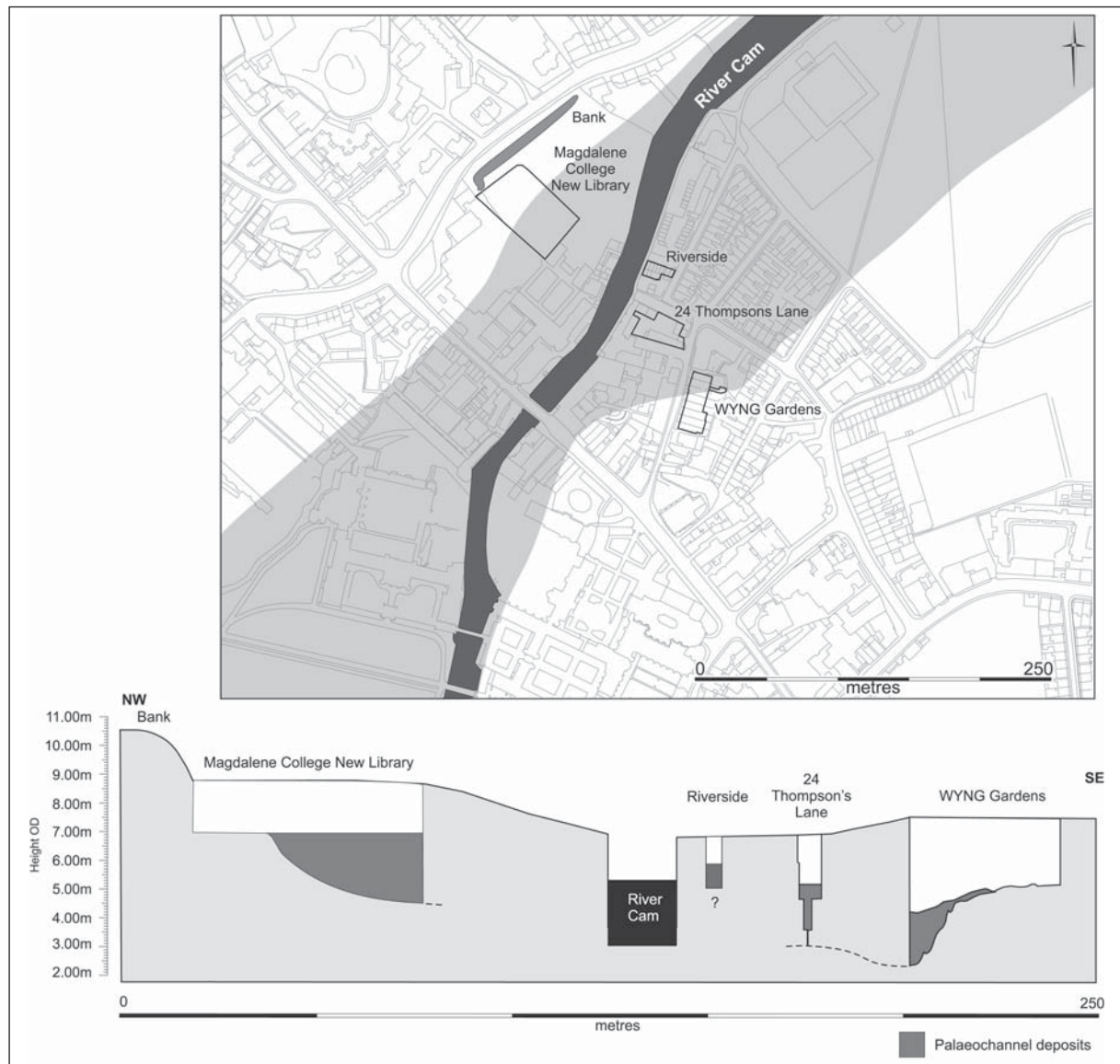


Figure 4. Schematic section and location plan of deposits associated with palaeochannel(s) of the River Cam.

ine deposits. A hazelnut shell from 24 Thompson's Lane was radiocarbon dated to Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age at 2452–2136 Cal BC (Table 1), although pollen evidence suggests it is residual. Small short-lived wood fragments from c. 0.2m above the base of the channel at WYNG Gardens produced an Early Bronze Age radiocarbon determination of 1917–1755 Cal BC (Table 1), although the deposits themselves could be Middle Bronze Age.

The best dating evidence from the channel comes from a group of 12 unworked oak (*Quercus* spp.) trunks and branches (Pl. 2). These were all from a localised area, were found at broadly the same height and shared a common alignment, suggesting a group of material that was washed down the river and came to rest at the edge of a slow moving backwater. This wood overlay c. 0.7–0.8m of deposits, placing them c. 0.5–0.6m over the radiocarbon-dated wood. Seven of the oak trunks and branches were successfully

dendrochronologically dated, creating a 310-year sequence spanning 1257–948BC. It is likely that around four trees are represented; as two groups, of three and two pieces of wood respectively, each match so well that they probably come from a single parent tree. The tree represented by three pieces of wood has end dates of 1042–997BC, 1037–992BC and 1025–980BC, suggesting that it died around 1000BC. Two other trees that died after 1121BC and 1015BC respectively may well have died at around the same time. The tree represented by two pieces of wood died 938–893BC or c. 900BC, approximately 50–150 years after the earlier tree. All four trees were of significantly greater lifespan than the recovered tree ring sequences. This indicates that the remarkably slow growing and long lived sequence found in the parent tree that died c. 900BC is likely to have been c. 400 years in duration. Although not exceptional, this is a relatively old age for an oak and indicates that the parent tree





1



2



3



4

*Plate 2, monochrome. Views of WYNG Gardens investigations: 1. excavation of Bronze Age river channel, facing north; 2. recording of wood from Bronze Age river channel, facing south; 3. cleaning of Romano-British and later archaeology at southern end of site, facing west; 4. cleaning of 12th-century alluvial deposits at northern end of site, facing south. See also colour Plate 2.*

**Table 1.** Radiocarbon determinations from WYNG Gardens and 24 Thompson's Lane.

Lab. no.	Site	Context no.	Feature	Material dated	Radiocarbon age (BP)	$\delta^{13}\text{C}$ (‰)	Calibrated date range, 68.3 % confidence	Calibrated date range, 95.4 % confidence
WK-24825	24 Thompsons Lane	2051	Palaeochannel	Waterlogged hazelnut shell	3823±30	-28.8	Cal BC 2332–2204	Cal BC 2452–2136
SUERC-68696	WYNG Gardens	2075	Palaeochannel	Waterlogged wood, unidentified	3516±27	-24.6	Cal BC 1890–1775	Cal BC 1917–1755
SUERC-68962	WYNG Gardens	1971	Wooden stake beside palaeochannel	Waterlogged wood, <i>Alnus</i> sp.	2576±28	-25.8	Cal BC 801–772	Cal BC 811–591
SUERC-68695	WYNG Gardens	1879	Wooden stake driven into alluvium	Waterlogged wood, <i>Salix</i> sp.	971±29	-25.1	Cal AD 1021–1148	Cal AD 1016–1155

began to grow around 1300BC. Even when allowance is made for a time lag between the deaths of the trees and the deposition of the trunks and branches this depositional horizon can be firmly assigned to the Late Bronze Age, with the trees beginning to grow in the Middle Bronze Age.

No evidence for nearby contemporary settlement was identified and the various channel silts contained very little cultural material. No pottery or flint was recovered during excavation, or from the 84 litres that were wet sieved. Only an extremely small quantity of animal bone fragments — comprising a cow radius plus four unidentifiable cattle-sized elements — and some charcoal was recovered. On the edge of the palaeochannel there was a group of at least seven vertically driven small stakes and some other pieces of wood, indicating some kind of localised human activity. These were predominantly made from type(s) of alder (*Alnus* spp, seven), some type of willow (*Salix* sp, one) and a fruit wood (*Pomoideae* sp, one), such as apple, pear, quince, hawthorn etc. The stakes are worked with simple radial conversions and ends trimmed to tapered points. This woodworking is typical of the period and the species represented are all likely to have been growing nearby, the alder and the willow in particular thriving in damp ground. One stake produced a radiocarbon date of 811–591 Cal BC (Table 1), and is probably Late Bronze Age as there is an 87.8 per cent probability that it dates to 811–751 Cal BC. Although these stakes definitely relate to human activity in this location it is unclear what their original function was. If they originally formed part of a single structure it was certainly somewhat *ad hoc* in nature.

Pollen suggests that the area consisted of reed-swamp and mixed-oak woodland, with little evidence for human activity near the river (Fig. 5). Cereal pollen is entirely absent except in the very uppermost palaeochannel deposits, which may date to the Early Iron Age. These uppermost palaeochannel deposits contained a fragmented and broken length of good quality, straight grained, radially aligned oak dowel heartwood. Although somewhat water worn, this item appears finished and may have been part

of a handle or a broken length of baton, perhaps a roof purlin from a roundhouse or other structure. Waterlogged plant remains indicate that habitat was predominantly marshy, with occasional areas of drier grassland (some of which may have been disturbed) and a little colonisation by trees/woody shrubs.

Sealing the Bronze Age river channel — as well as a considerable area beside it — was an extensive grey silt-rich alluvial sediment. This was c. 0.55–0.6m thick at the northern end of WYNG Gardens and c. 0.15m thick to the south (Fig. 2), whilst a comparable c. 0.2m thick deposit was also present at 24 Thompson's Lane (Fig. 3). Similar deposits are widely known across the floodplains of river valleys in southern England. Known as the 'Romano-British silt', these date to the Middle Iron Age at the earliest and were deposited by a series of flood events, caused by a combination of tree clearance and deep ploughing. This led to large amounts of soil erosion in the catchment of the upper portions of rivers, such as the Cam, overwhelming the river systems and leading to over-bank sedimentation. The silty clay at the southern end of the site is characteristic of slower moving deposits, located at the limit of such flood events. There were negligible quantities of material culture in this deposit, indicating an absence of settlement or significant human activity in the immediate vicinity. The pollen record has abundant evidence for agriculture, including cereal production and land disturbance, indicative of a post-clearance signal markedly different to that of the Bronze Age deposits (Fig. 5).

There is evidence for contemporary activity with a Middle/Late Iron Age ditched enclosure settlement compound with associated pits at the Maintenance Workshop and Gardener's Compound at Jesus College, located c. 250m to the east (Evans and Williams 2004). To the northwest on the other side of the River Cam a relatively extensive and high status settlement was founded on the summit of Castle Hill in the late 1st century BC, with three phases of pre-Roman activity (Alexander and Pullinger 1999, 17–25; Evans and Ten Harkel 2010).



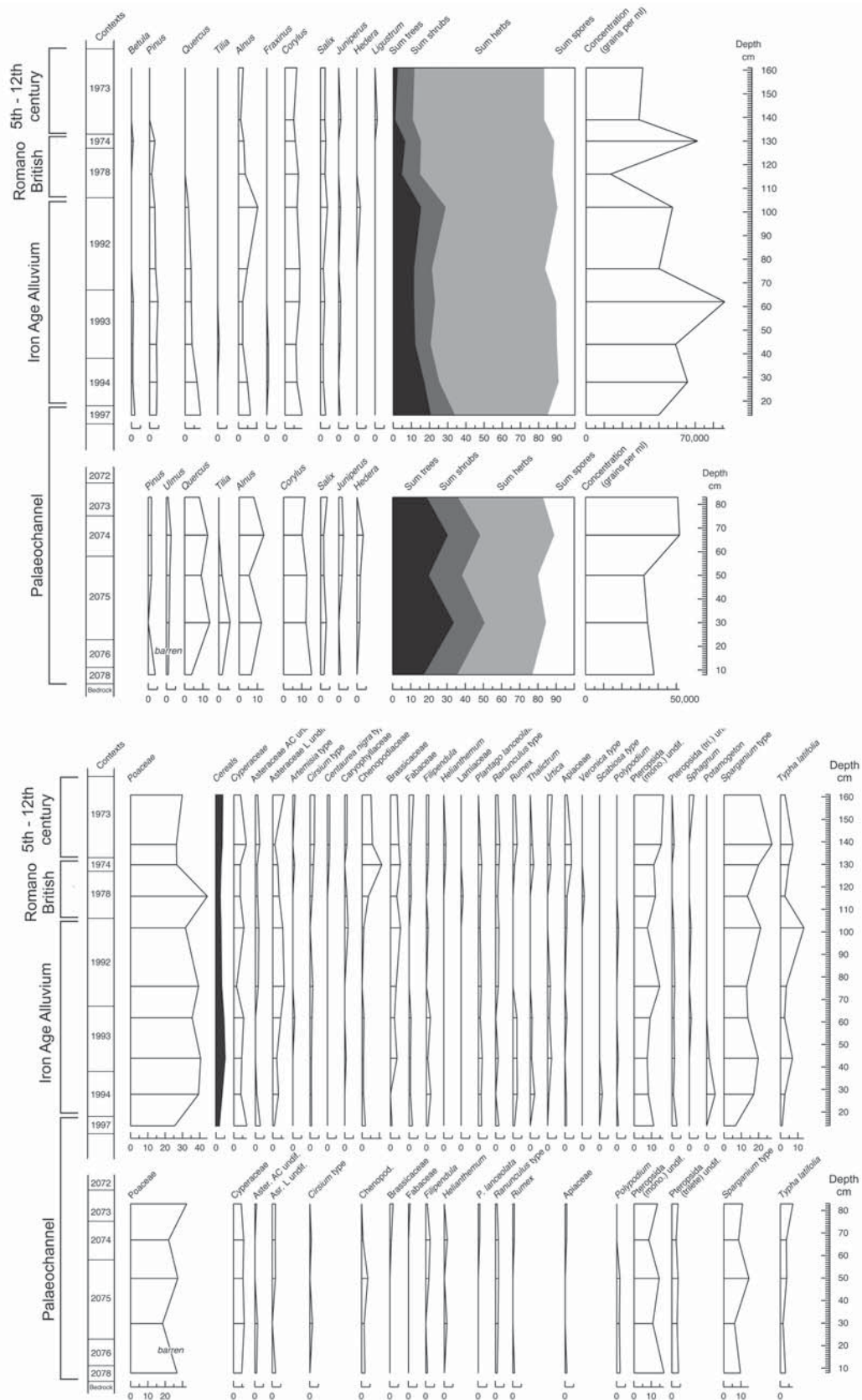


Figure 5. Percentage pollen diagram from the alluvial sequence at the northern end of the site: trees, shrubs and summary (upper) and herbs, spores and aquatics with cereals highlighted for emphasis (lower).



## Romano-British Settlement

Traditionally the main focus of Romano-British settlement has been believed to have been located on Castle Hill (Alexander and Pullinger 1999; also Evans and Ten Harkel 2010). There is, however, a growing body of evidence for the existence of a complementary Romano-British lower town/roadside suburb to the south of the river (Fig. 6). Although known from 19th-century observations and the recovery of artefacts, the nature of this settlement has only recently become clearer. By the 1st century AD the southern end of the site was c. 0.8–0.9m higher than the northern end. The higher end appears to have formed the northern limit of a settlement focussed upon Bridge Street (Fig. 7.1). The main feature was a substantial mid-late 1st century west–east aligned ditch, c. 3.4m wide and 1.1m+ deep with a broad relatively flat-bottomed profile, which crossed the entire width of the excavation area (Fig. 7.4). The ditch appears to have had an external or counterscarp bank and was located c. 65m from Bridge Street. Its scale suggests it was created by some form of central authority. At the lower northern end of the site alluvial deposits built up, indicating continued significant flooding at least seasonally.

In the early 2nd century some pottery was dumped in the base of the ditch. This included significant portions of three cooking pots that were locally manufactured imitations of Black-Burnished 1 in two different fabrics, one bowl of genuine Black-Burnished 1, a buff sandy ware flagon and two handles from a Dressel 20 amphora (Fig. 8.1–6). There was no other associated material — such as animal bone — making it unlikely that this was simple domestic refuse and it is intriguing that whilst the other vessels were largely complete the main body of the amphora was absent. In the mid-2nd century the bank was levelled and the ditch partially backfilled. Even in this reduced state the ditch was c. 3.0m wide and 0.8m+ deep, with a broad relatively flat-bottomed profile (Fig. 7.2). The levelling of the bank created a flat area, upon which a substantial 9.0m+ long by 4.6m wide rectangular timber post-in-trench structure was built. The only other features were a few nondescript pits, although the presence of a neonate left humerus and a fragment of an adult tibia in later ditches indicate that inhumation burials were taking place. At the northern end of the site alluvial deposits continued to build up. By the mid-3rd century the ditch had been largely filled in through a mixture of dumping and natural erosion, leaving a shallow hollow, and the timber building was demolished (Fig. 7.3). A substantial new ditch was created, defining some form of enclosure that lay mainly to the west of the excavated area. There is also evidence for activity to the north of this, with a south–north aligned c. 1.0m wide spread of stones and gravel creating a pathway — or at least an area of firmer footing — leading down the slope. There were also two extended prone inhumations. One was a c. 5'6" tall probably male individual aged c. 18–25 years. Only the legs and part of the pelvis were present and it appears that the upper portion

of the body had been scoured away by subsequent water action (Fig. 7.5). The other was a c. 5'9" tall male aged c. 38–48 years, with a coin minted in AD268–70 in the grave fill (Fig. 7.6). These burials lay on the edge of the alluvial area, in a fringing band of reeds etc. and disarticulated human bone in later deposits indicates the presence of at least five adults. The partially scoured away burial parallels discoveries from Romano-British London, where at a cemetery occupying marginal land next to the Wallbrook human remains were frequently exposed and washed out, but burial continued (Harward *et al.* 2015). To the north of this alluvial deposits continued to build up and two phases of west-east aligned ditch were dug in the late 3rd–mid-4th century, presumably for drainage and to make the area at least seasonally more usable. Quantities of material culture in the alluvial deposits were noticeably greater than in earlier centuries, but still not particularly high densities.

The latest coins were minted in 360s or 370s. By the Theodosian period (AD388–402) coin use had declined and was restricted to urban centres, military installations and settlements situated at nodal points on major routeways (Walton 2012, 106), so it is possible that occupation continued after this time.

## Material Culture and Economic and Environmental Data

The WYNG Gardens excavations produced the largest assemblage of Romano-British pottery from this settlement to date, which can be added to other material from Corfield Court, the Old Divinity School and the West Court of Jesus College (Cessford 2012, table 3; Timberlake and Webb 2016, tables 5, 8, 10). WYNG Gardens produced a moderately-sized assemblage of 1,942 sherds of Romano-British pottery, weighing 37,448g (Table 2). In total the lower town/roadside suburb has produced 3,876 sherds of Romano-British pottery weighing 62,849g quantified in a broadly comparable manner. The composition of the assemblage is broadly typical of sites in southern Cambridgeshire in terms of the range of forms and fabrics. The proportion of finewares at over twenty per cent is considerably higher than at nearby rural sites, where they are usually around five per cent. A 2nd-century East Gaulish Samian Drag.67 beaker sherd has incised graffiti on the outer surface below the rim (Fig. 8.7). This appears to read *Pio(t)ri(x)*, which is probably a Latin personal name that translates as 'pious woman'. Graffiti is rare on Romano-British pottery from Cambridge and nearby settlements and the presence of a personal name on Samian ware appears to be unparalleled locally. Also unusual is a rim fragment of a 1st-century Pascual 1 amphora; few examples have been recovered from southern Britain and these are mainly from late Augustan–Tiberian contexts, although production may have continued into the later 1st century.

Other significant material includes 34 Romano-British coins, ranging in date from Nero (AD64–68) to Valentinian I (AD367–75) and Valens (AD364–78).

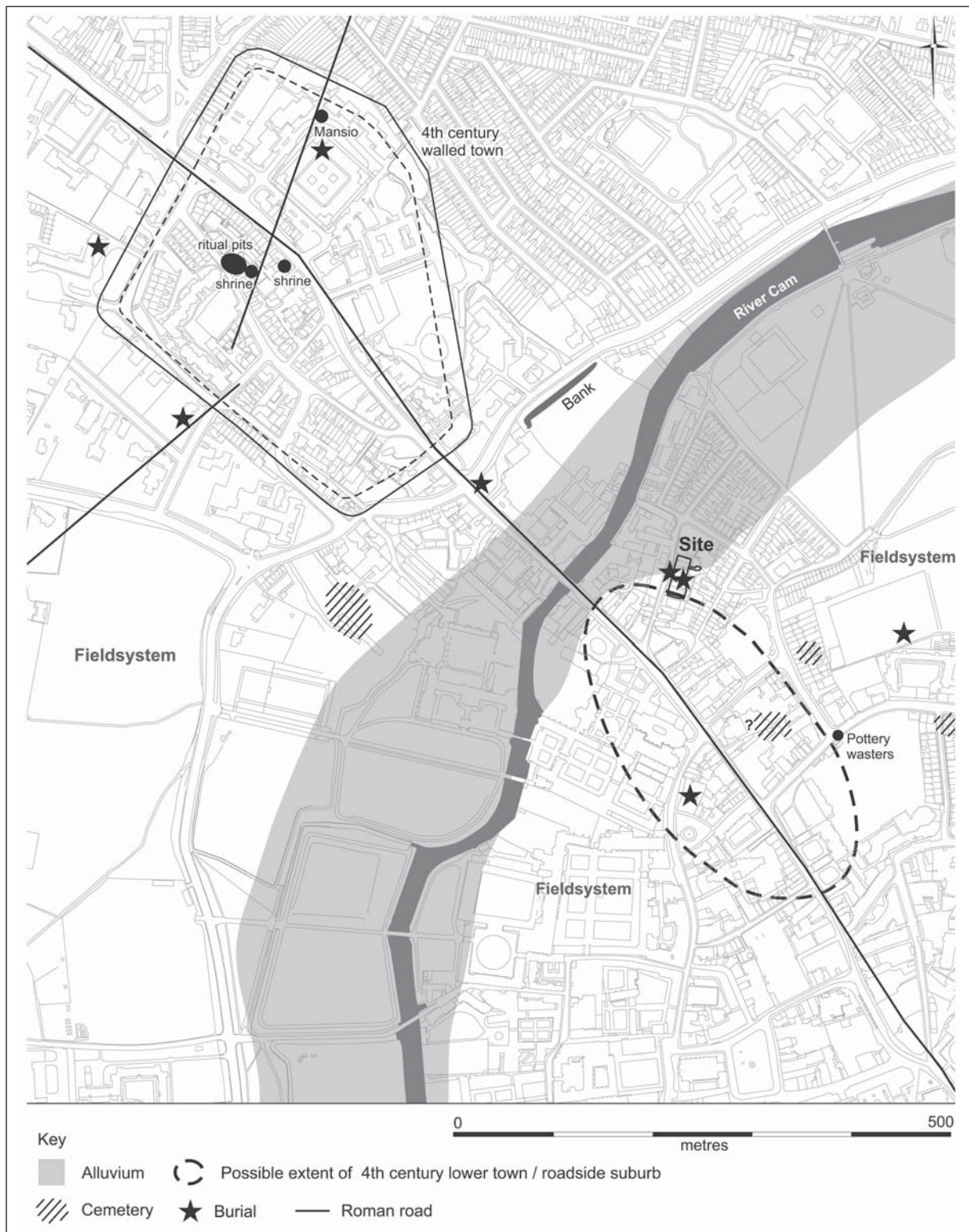
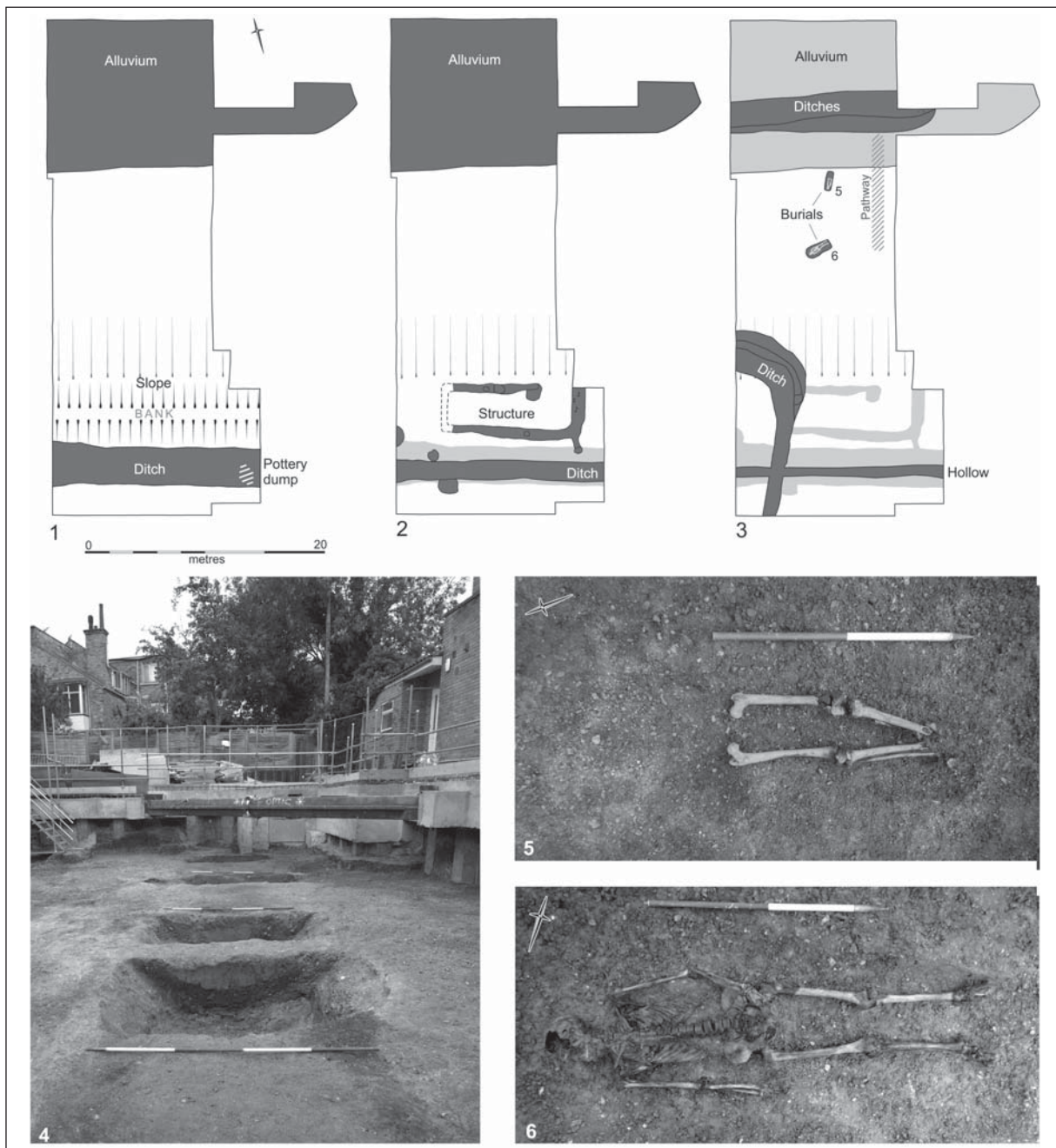


Figure 6. Reconstruction of the Romano-British lower town/roadside suburb and the Castle Hill settlement.



*Table 2. Romano-British pottery from WYNG Gardens and other recently studied sites from the same settlement. This does not include Portchester D ware and Terra Nigra, which have been recovered in small quantities at other sites.*

Fabric	WYNG count	WYNG wt. (g)	Total count	Total wt. (g)
Alice Holt/Farnham greyware	1	38	1	38
Baetican amphora, Pascual 1	1	285	1	285
Baetican amphora, Dressel 20	3	1674	6	2247
Black-Burnished 1	24	882	30	1239
Black-Burnished 1, unsourced local imitations	53	1743	69	2035
Black-slipped ware	85	1565	200	3395
Buff sandy ware	90	839	128	1314
Coarse sandy greyware	406	7499	1101	15316
Coarse granular greyware, limestone and quartz inclusions	11	102	11	102
Coarse sandy micaceous greyware	122	2380	128	2484
Coarse sandy greyware (white slip)	5	100	5	100
Coarse sandy micaceous greyware (white slip)	1	98	1	98
Coarse sandy oxidised ware	102	1719	256	3289
Coarse sandy oxidised ware (shiny ochre slip)	11	172	11	172
Coarse sandy oxidised ware (reddish/brownish slip)			3	7
Coarse sandy micaceous oxidised ware	22	215	26	337
Coarse sandy oxidised ware (white slip)	11	175	12	213
Coarse sandy micaceous oxidised ware (white slip)	5	98	5	98
Colchester Colour-coated			2	5
Colchester whiteware			11	1497
Colour-coat			9	70
Fine sandy greyware	165	2254	165	2254
Fine sandy greyware (white slip)			6	82
Fine grey slipped ware			49	547
Fine sandy greyware (ochre slip)	1	6	1	6
Fine sandy micaceous greyware	79	873	79	873
Fine sandy oxidised ware	10	88	10	88
Fine sandy micaceous oxidised ware	4	80	5	87
Fine sandy oxidised ware			2	4
Fine sandy oxidised ware (dark brownish slip)	5	42	6	44
Fine sandy oxidised ware (white slip)	15	100	25	169
Fine sandy micaceous oxidised ware (white slip)	2	11	2	11
Grog-tempered ware	9	304	16	684
Hadham Red-slipped ware	43	478	51	649
Hadham reduced ware			1	17
Horningsea greyware	46	2913	135	6064
Horningsea oxidised ware	66	2605	74	2798
Nar Valley			1	25
Nene Valley greyware			6	67
Nene Valley colour-coated ware	223	3082	340	4116
Nene Valley colour-coated ware/parchment ware			12	90
Nene Valley whiteware	17	1226	23	1410
New Forest-slipped ware	2	34	4	68
Oxfordshire red-slipped ware	79	963	87	1015
Oxfordshire parchment ware	2	15	3	17
Oxfordshire whiteware	2	61	4	122
Pakenham colour-coat ware			1	4
Red-slipped ware			6	30
Reduced sandy ware	6	106	148	2531
Rhenish ware			3	5
Samian ware			1	13
Samian ware, Central Gaul	66	59	125	591
Samian ware, East Gaul	11	69	27	209
Samian ware, Northeast Gaul			3	40
Samian ware, South Gaul	18	203	25	273
Shell-tempered ware	100	1929	175	2975
Verulamium/Godmanchester whiteware	11	321	16	418
Verulamium/Godmanchester whiteware (white slip)			3	71
Whiteware	7	42	20	129
<b>Total</b>	<b>1942</b>	<b>37448</b>	<b>3676</b>	<b>62849</b>

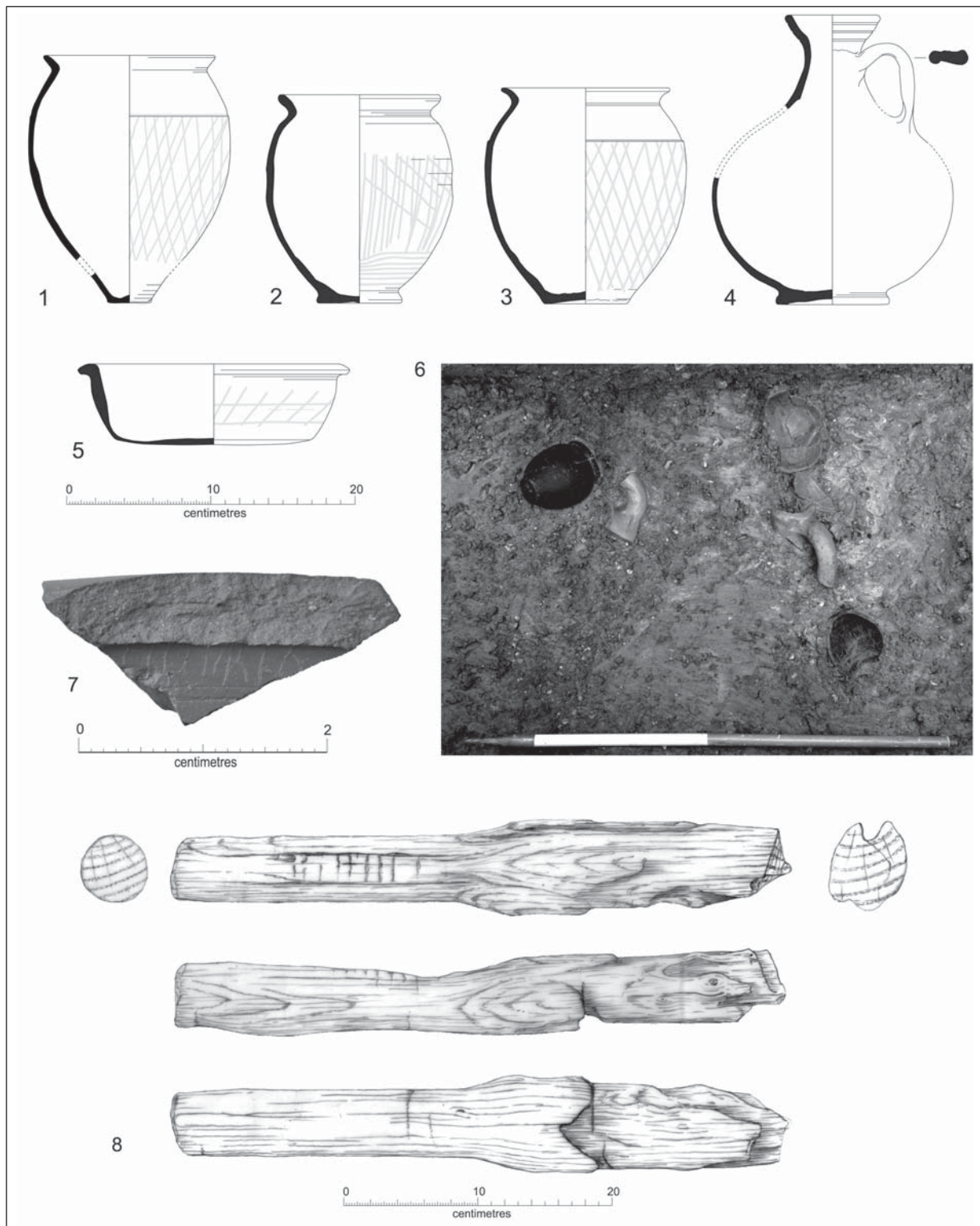


**Figure 7.** Romano-British activity at WYNG Gardens: 1) mid/late 1st–mid-2nd century; 2) mid-2nd–mid-3rd century; 3) mid-3rd–mid/late 4th century; 4) main boundary ditch, facing east, 5) partially scoured away male inhumation; 6) male inhumation with coin minted in AD 268–70.

There are also six bone pins; of the three complete examples one is headless, one is polygonal headed and one has a complete spherical head with incised lines. There were also small glass bottle fragments, iron slag and a wooden object (Fig. 8.8). The wooden object is fashioned from good quality, straight grained ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) heartwood; a radial eighth has been trimmed and hewn into a well finished length of handle and possible blade. The end of the handle has been cross cut with a slight chamfer and shows evidence of wear from use. The sub-rounded handle

is slightly waisted near the shoulder, possibly from use, before flaring out at the shoulders to form a possible blade section. Beyond the handle, the artefact is sub-triangular in cross section and is badly damaged and broken at the end. Although the handle section is somewhat short for an oar it may be a paddle; alternatively it could be a beater or wooden mallet. Given the location where the artefact was recovered, a short, heavy paddle for propelling a water borne craft seems likely. The ceramic building material includes fragments of roof tile (*tegulae* and *imbrex*), floor or hypo-





**Figure 8.** Romano-British finds:

1–6. Group of early 2nd-century pottery found in base of main boundary ditch;

1–3. locally produced cooking pots imitating Black-Burnished 1; 4. Buff sandy ware flagon; 5. Black-Burnished 1 bowl; 6. in situ view of pottery including amphora handles, facing east;

7. 2nd-century East Gaulish Samian Drag.67 beaker sherd with incised graffiti appears to read Pio(t)ri(x) on the outer surface below the rim; 8. broken wooden object, probably a paddle, made from ash.

caust tile (*pilae* or *pedales*), plus one piece of probable box flue (*tubuli*). The presence of possibly sooted material, box flue and hypocaust tiles indicate a building of some pretension, such as a bath house, nearby.

The animal bone was dominated by cattle and cattle-sized elements, whilst sheep/goat were of secondary importance, followed by horse and pig, the latter in surprisingly low numbers, plus meat-bearing elements of red and roe deer. Dog and cat were present, whilst birds include members of the chicken and duck families, plus a single possible raven bone. Based upon NISP (Number of Identifiable SPecimens) cattle bone is more common than sheep/goat by a ratio of 1:0.43. In contrast the ratios for sites on or near Castle Hill range between 1:2.39 and 1:2.54. Cattle increase in importance in the Romano-British period compared to sheep/goat, and are best represented on military and urban sites (Maltby 2014). Whilst none of the assemblages are large, this predominance of cattle might indicate that WYNG Gardens was more 'Romanised' than the Castle Hill area, although it may also reflect temporal differences as the dominance of cattle tended to increase in the later Romano-British period (Maltby 2014). There were also shellfish, predominantly oyster plus some mussel. The only charred cereals identified were wheat (*Triticum* sp.), some of which were probably spelt (*T. spelta*).

Pollen evidence indicates a mosaic landscape of hazel scrub, alder and willow wet woodland (carr), arable and pastoral agriculture and large areas of reedswamp, whilst the waterlogged plant remains suggests that the flow of water was quite slow, with plants indicative of both stagnant conditions and shallow, muddy water occurring most frequently (Fig. 5). At least some adjacent land was being cultivated and areas of open grassland/pasture are also indicated.

### *The Romano-British Lower Town/Roadside Suburb*

A ribbon or roadside settlement was established on the southern side of the River Cam along the contemporary Colchester to Godmanchester road, itself located upon a gravel ridge, during the mid-late 1st century AD (Fig. 6). In addition to the excavations at WYNG Gardens significant recent investigations of this settlement, whose results are incorporated into this publication, include burials at 35–37 Jesus Lane and 11 Park Street (Alexander *et al.* 2004), gravel quarrying and domestic settlement at Corfield Court and the Old Divinity School (Cessford 2012; Newman 2008b) and various features at Jesus College (Timberlake and Webb 2016).

The major boundary ditch at WYNG Gardens suggests that this settlement was more centrally organised and less *ad hoc* than has previously been believed. There appears to have been domestic occupation along both sides of the road and the settlement had a strong agrarian focus, with extensive ditched field systems surrounding it. There is also evidence of pottery production, possibly of 2nd century date. Gravel quarrying also took place, relating either to immediately local needs or the Castle Hill settlement.

There are also suggestions of the presence of high status buildings, such as a bath house.

The earliest burials from the settlement are probably some poorly contextualised 'cinerary urns' (Alexander *et al.* 2004, 92), as cremation was the preferred rite locally until the later 2nd century. After this inhumation became more common and was dominant by the mid-3rd century. There is evidence for at least two isolated inhumations in pits, one radiocarbon dated to the late 1st–3rd century cal. AD (Cessford 2015, 55, table 14; Timberlake and Webb 2016). The best evidence for burials is of a later 3rd–4th-century inhumation cemetery at 35–37 Jesus Lane (Alexander *et al.* 2004), broadly contemporary with the inhumations at WYNG Gardens. The density of burials at WYNG Gardens is rather too low, even when later disturbance is taken into account, to convincingly classify it as a formal cemetery. Instead it is better conceived of as a zone where burial occasionally took place. Some probably 3rd–4th-century inhumations at 11 Park Street, comprising two adults and six neonates, could be part of the same cemetery as 35–37 Jesus Lane (Alexander *et al.* 2004), but probably fit better with the idea of a less formal zone of burial. The settlement continued until the second half of the fourth century, but it is uncertain when it was abandoned.

The evidence is still too scanty to fully understand the Romano-British lower town/roadside suburb to the south of the river. Indeed, although the Castle Hill settlement is generally thought of as a Romano-British 'small town', this is a relatively unhelpful label for a heterogeneous range of sites and the nature of the activity on Castle Hill is overdue a full re-appraisal. Given the different scale of investigations on the two sides of the river comparisons are difficult; however the archaeology of Castle Hill 'has something of an "underwhelming" quality' and is not discernibly urban (Evans and Ten Harkel 2010, 53, 57). If the 'far from conclusive' putative Flavian fort on Castle Hill, whose existence is based upon 'indications, but no real proof' (Alexander and Pullinger 1999, 27, 77), is ignored then there is no particular reason to assume that either area was dominant or more important in the 1st century. A case can be made for the Castle Hill area being more significant in the 2nd century; this is based principally upon the presence of a substantial stone building with hypocaust, interpreted as a *mansio* or official stopping place, and a shrine or ritual structure (Alexander and Pullinger 1999, 35–47). Despite this, the evidence does not indicate that the Castle Hill area was densely occupied and the recovery of possibly sooted material, box flue and hypocaust tiles suggests that there may also have been at least one substantial building on the WYNG Gardens side of the river. WYNG Gardens also provided evidence for literacy and potentially more 'Romanised' animal bone than Castle Hill. In the 3rd–early 4th centuries there is evidence that although the settlement on Castle Hill may still have been flourishing there were significant areas of 'dereliction' and the best evidence for the site being particularly significant is a number of 'ritual shafts' (Alexander and



Pullinger 1999, 49–58). More recent investigations have indicated how complex the hydrology of Castle Hill is, and it appears plausible that the 'ritual shafts' are in fact wells that failed after relatively short periods and were then backfilled with material that included infant burials, dogs and other distinctive deposits. In the early 4th century an area of 8.6 hectares on Castle Hill was enclosed by a substantial ditch, stone wall and rampart and there is evidence that relatively thriving occupation continued until the late 4th century, with some level of activity into the 5th century (Alexander and Pullinger 1999, 59–74). The reason for the early 4th-century fortification of Castle Hill is unclear, it may relate to protecting supplies of grain to the military (Taylor in Alexander and Pullinger 1999, 82) or even partly status.

Although the Romano-British settlement on Castle Hill was clearly distinct from nearby rural settlements, it is unclear whether it should be considered truly 'urban' or rather a dominant rural central place. Although this could in some respects be considered an issue of semantics, such labels are important. Castle Hill is best thought of as a locally significant crossroads settlement near a river crossing, whose hilltop location would prove significant in the 4th century. It is possible that the two settlements on the opposite sides of the River Cam were at least broadly equivalent. Although comparisons are difficult it appears that the excavations on Castle Hill produced 206 Romano-British coins per hectare, rising to 754 coins per hectare on sites where metal-detecting was probably intensively employed (Evans and Ten Harkel 2010, table 8, footnote 5). As practical restrictions meant that only c. 500 square metres could be metal-detected at WYNG Gardens the 34 Romano-British coins recovered equate to 680 per hectare, broadly comparable to the higher Castle Hill figure and greatly in excess of the values found at other types of site such as 'rural settlements', 'major farms' and more even than at 'centres' and 'shrines' (Evans and Ten Harkel 2010, table 8). The ceramic density at WYNG Gardens was 30,344 sherds per hectare, a relatively high value but considerably lower than the 210,167 from Castle Hill (Evans and Ten Harkel 2010, table 8), although it is likely that the different intensities of excavation are largely responsible for this difference. If a broad equivalence between the two settlements is possible, this in turn raises the issue of whether the two areas represent a single settlement on both sides of the river, or two separate entities. Even after the fortification of Castle Hill it is clear that the settlement on the opposite side of the river continued to thrive and there are no compelling grounds for arguing that the settlement or activity inside the walls was more intensive or urban than that across the river.

#### Early–Late Saxon Alluviation and 11th/12th-century Reclamation

The deposition of alluvium at WYNG Gardens, 24 Thompson's Lane and St. John's College indicates that

wetter conditions were quite widespread near the Cam after the Romano-British period. There is no evidence for any occupation in the immediate environs between the 5th–10th centuries, although two sherds of mid-5th–7th-century pottery were recovered at 24 Thompson's Lane (Fig. 3). Middle Saxon (c. 650–850) occupation was almost exclusively focussed upon the Castle Hill area on the opposite side of the river (Cessford with Dickens 2005; Cessford *et al.* 2007). At the northern end of WYNG Gardens c. 0.45m of alluvium was deposited after the Romano-British period, with the uppermost c. 0.1m dating to the 11th/12th centuries. X-ray fluorescence analysis of the alluvial sequence indicated that levels of lead, and less convincingly copper, increased in the Post-Roman sequence (Fig. 9). The start of this rise begins in the Romano-British period and the values fluctuated considerably. This indicates that all the 'pollution' was initially generated during the Romano-British period and deposited in or near the river. Subsequently during the Early and Middle Saxon periods deposits containing lead and copper were washed into the river and the metals were deposited in the alluvium.

There were also a series of preserved wooden posts driven into this alluvium. Although these were only preserved at the Romano-British alluvial horizon they had been driven from much higher up and one produced a radiocarbon date of 1016–1155 Cal AD (Table 1). This indicates that the posts were driven c. 0.6–0.9m into the alluvium, suggesting that they relate to relatively substantial above ground features. These posts had had their branches trimmed and points created with broad iron axes and were made from moderate quality wood, including some type of alder (three), some species of willow (three), hazel (one) and ash (*Corylus avellana*, one). The posts do not form a coherent pattern, partly because shallower posts would not have been preserved. Additionally as the posts were driven in at angles the plan of their bases need not closely reflect the original above ground plan. Some posts probably represent fence lines or similar features, whilst others possibly represent individual posts for tethering grazing animals etc. The cessation of alluviation probably relates to the creation of the King's Ditch around the town, located immediately to the north and northeast of the site (Fig. 1). This was constructed between the mid-11th–early 13th centuries, most probably in the 12th century and potentially linked to events during the Anarchy in 1143–44 (Cessford and Dickens forthcoming).

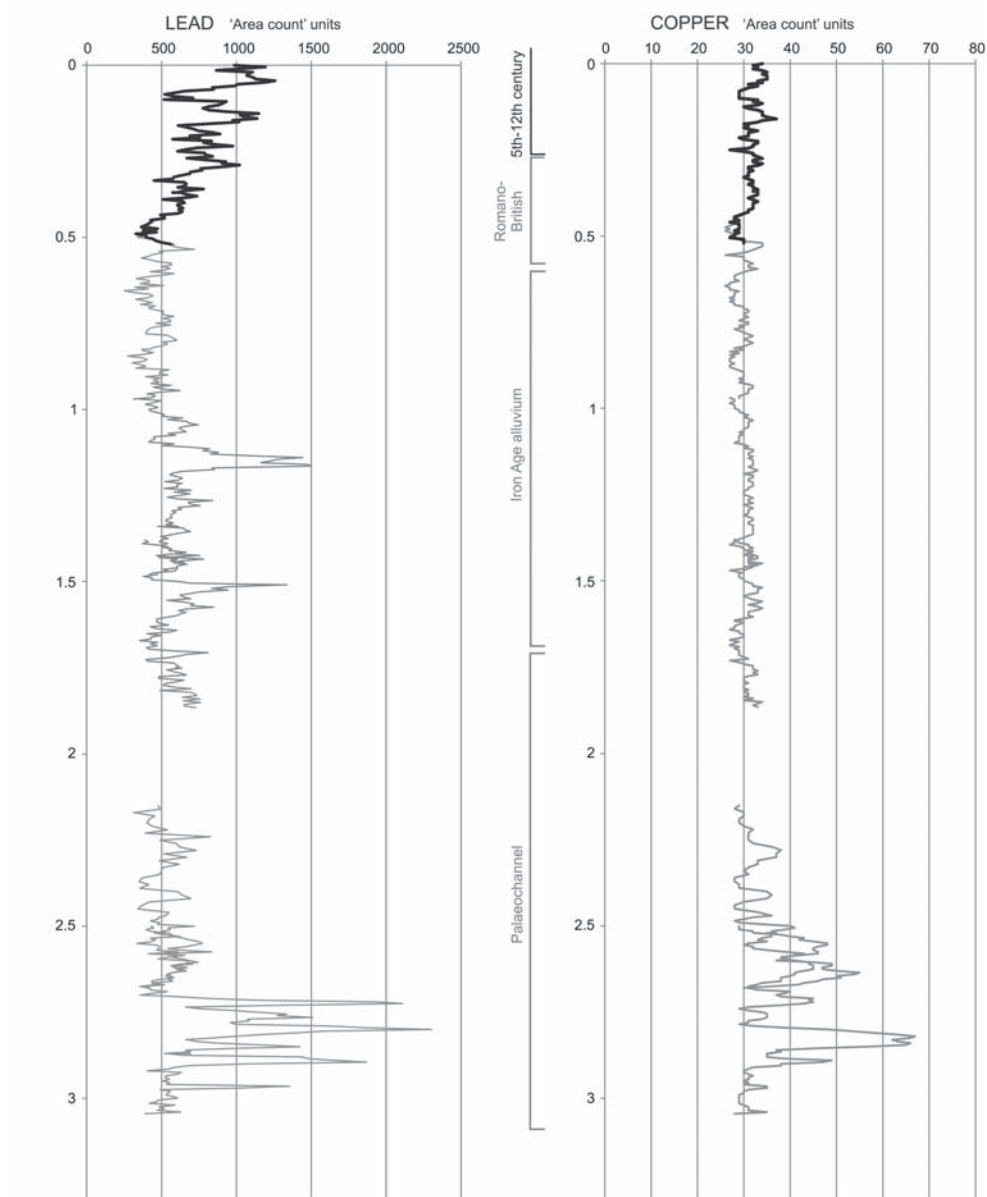
Despite suggestions that this part of Cambridge formed part of the Danelaw period settlement of 875–917 (Haslam 1984, 19–20, fig. 4), none of the recent archaeological investigations support this. Instead the evidence suggests that occupation in the area started around the mid-10th century. This was initially quite tightly focussed upon Bridge Street, expanding during the 11th/12th centuries when activity spread as far as the WYNG Gardens area. The earliest features were some shallow gullies and large amorphous pits at the higher southern end of the site. These gullies probably represent drainage features, with the pits

acting as temporary sumps (Fig. 10.1).

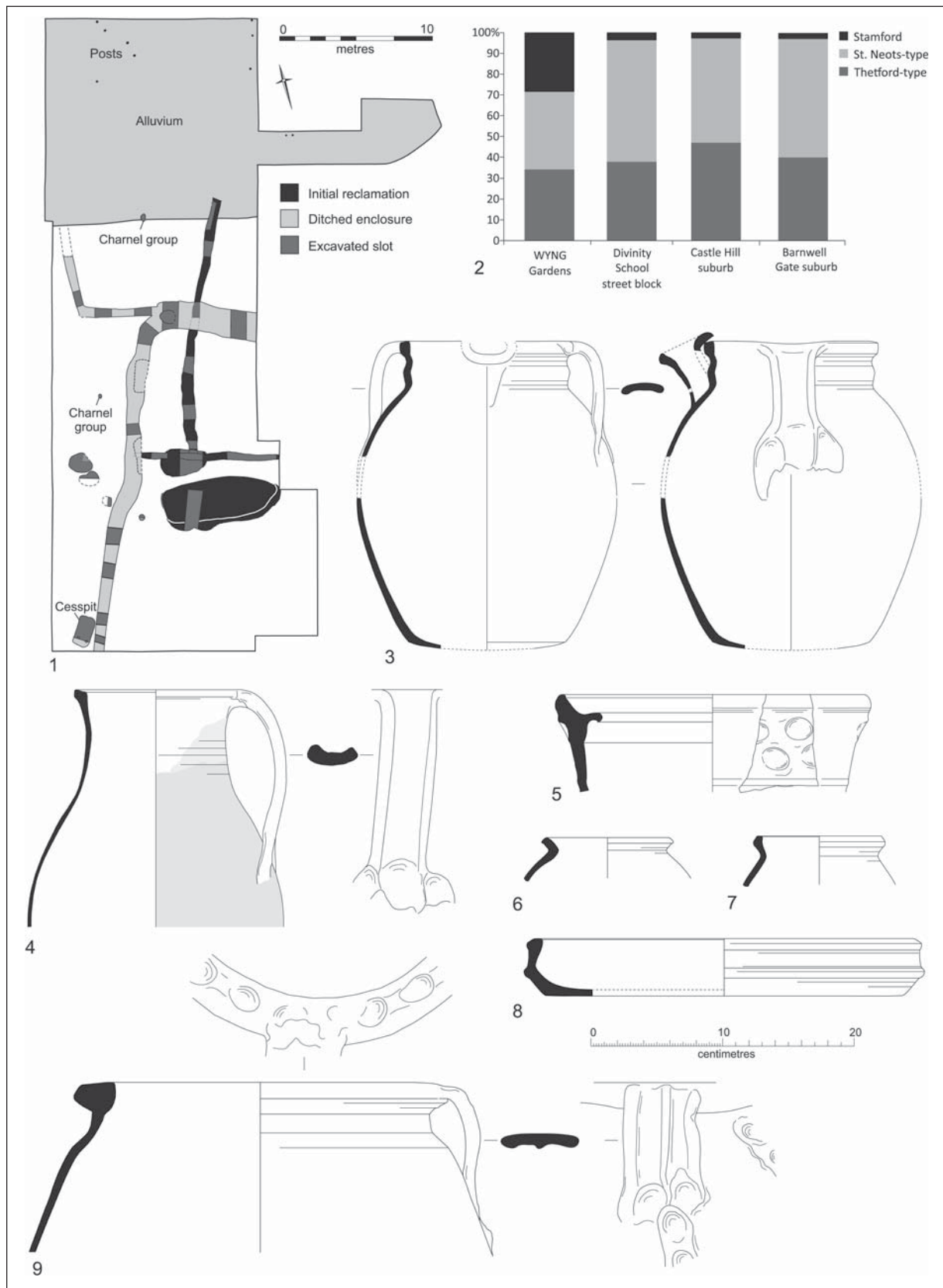
This initial phase of reclamation activity was followed by the creation of a large ditched enclosure, covering most of the northern half of the site (Fig. 10.1). The nature of the features and their date, combined with evidence from other sites about how the area developed in general, suggests that this probably relates to the extension of a property fronting onto Bridge Street, which would have been *c.* 80m long. During the digging of these ditches several Romano-British burials were disturbed and the larger and more identifiable bones were re-interred as groups of charnel in shallow scoops. The only other significant 11th/12th-century feature was a carefully constructed rectangular vertically-sided and flat-bottomed cess-pit. At 24 Thompson's Lane there appears to have been a substantial 12th-century channel leading to-

wards the river, which would have improved drainage and could have provided access for small boats (Fig. 3). Similar broadly contemporary channels are known from the area of St. John's College and Trinity College and there may have been dozens of such channels along the river, with extensive networks of smaller gullies feeding into them.

The 10th–12th-century assemblages were generally small; the only material worthy of particular note is the pottery plus a fragment of gilded binding strip with 12th-century parallels. In Cambridge and southern Cambridgeshire, the 10th–12th pottery is typically dominated by St. Neots-type ware and Thetford-type ware, accompanied by a small amount of Stamford ware, plus some other wares that appear in the mid/late 12th century, although the dating of these is problematic (Sperry 2016, 27–28, 31–32).



**Figure 9.** X-ray fluorescence results for lead and copper from the alluvial sequence at the northern end of the site, only the 5th–11th-century variation is likely to be anthropogenic.



**Figure 10.** 12th-century reclamation and occupation of area and associated pottery: 1. plan of features; 2. percentages of principal 10th–12th-century pottery fabrics; 3. two-handed Stamford ware spouted pitcher; 4. Stamford ware jug; 5. unusual Thetford-type ware jar rim; 6. small Thetford-type ware jar; 7. small unglazed Stamford ware jar; 8. St. Neots-type bowl; 9. Thetford-type ware handled jug.



documentary evidence indicates that each 16th–18th-century Cambridge household typically possessed their own well, cesspit and other facilities. In contrast the evidence at WYNG Gardens indicates the provision of communal facilities, shared between multiple households. Initially a relatively insubstantial wood-lined cesspit and well were constructed; both appear to have been relatively short-lived, presumably because they were constructed on a scale appropriate for individual households rather than large groups. They were replaced in the mid-16th century by a much more substantial cask-lined well and stone-lined cesspit (Fig. 13.1–3), both significantly larger and deeper than their predecessors. Immediately behind the well there was a timber structure 4.8m by 4.2m in extent, with post-pads consisting of reused Clunch blocks in the corners. A date for this is indicated by the fact that the backfilling of the earlier cesspit contained a Nuremberg Rose/Orb-type jetton of c. 1550–90, whilst the stone from the later cesspit probably derives from structures demolished during the Dissolution of the Monasteries (1536–41), which was most readily available in Cambridge c. 1540–60.

The wooden baseplate of the cesspit (Fig. 13.3) was constructed from four poor to moderate quality pieces of ash plus a piece of elm (*Ulmus* sp.), which had nails and chop marks indicating reuse. These probably come from a timber framed building, with the level of finish suggesting that one or more pieces derived from concealed elements of a roof structure, such as tie beams. One of these pieces had been used as a chopping block, after the structure it derives from was demolished and before it was reused in a cesspit baseplate.

Many of the clunch blocks from the cesspit derive from a church with mid/late 13th to late 14th century features. Given their scale, condition and close association this building, either a parish church or part of a religious institution, cannot have been far away. The earliest reused block was a casement hollow with roll-and-fillet, typical of the earlier Decorated style of 1250–1300. Most of the blocks derive from two different early 14th century two-order arcade arches and a rere-arch moulding of similar date (Fig. 14.2–4). There was also what is probably part of a tomb chest with blind panel tracery dating to after c. 1350 and a large and excellently executed jambstone from a complex four-light traceried window of 1370+ (Fig. 14.5). The latest piece, not necessarily from the same source, was a jamb of an elaborate Tudor fireplace with a pattern of alternations of roll, hollow chamfer and ogee

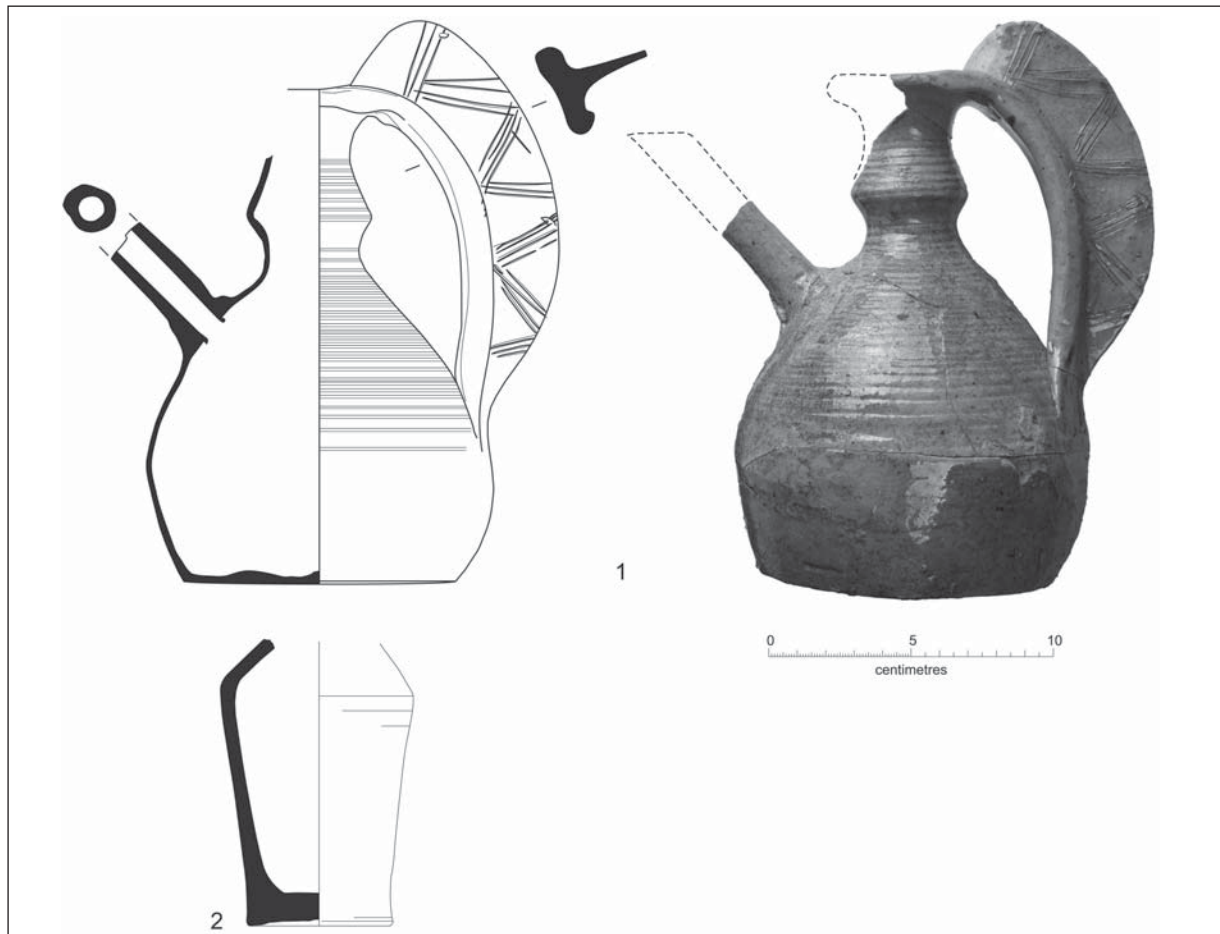
separated by straight pieces (Fig. 14.6). This pattern became common in the later 15th century and was probably employed well into the 16th century. The stone was evenly deteriorated and at least several decades old when the building was demolished in the mid-16th century. In the base of the cesspit there was a flat rectangular block with a smooth/worn upper surface, presumably placed there to provide a firm surface to facilitate periodic emptying. Given the ownership of the property by St. John's College the stone could derive from the buildings of its predecessor, the medieval Hospital of St. John.

The construction deposits of the well contained numerous fragments of stone identified as Upper Jurassic Corallian, a bioclastic limestone probably from a local Cambridgeshire source. Much larger quantities of this type of stone were found in two substantial, vertically-sided flat-bottomed pits that are contemporary with the construction of the well (Fig. 13.4). These pits were apparently deliberately created as facilities for the communal disposal of liquid waste and partly filled with layers of stone to aid percolation. This stone was only very crudely worked and showed no signs of being reused, suggesting that it was ballast that was expediently reused in features located relatively close to the river. The only other mid–late 16th-century discovery of note is a pierced anonymous Lion of St. Mark-type jetton of c. 1500–90. Whilst some jettons may have been pierced to prevent them being used as currency (Mitchiner 1988, 21), the position of this piercing suggests that it may have been to convert it into an item of jewellery.

The mid-16th-century well and cesspit remained in use until the late 17th century. The well was then replaced by a substantially deeper brick-lined well whilst the cesspit was replaced by a brick privy building, with a c. 20m long brick-lined drain connecting to an outflow in the King's Ditch (Fig. 13.5). The well has a square timber baseplate with four pieces of reused oak, two of which come from a 5½ft long structural timber with an off-centre groove running the length of one face containing nine evenly spaced circular holes, plus a Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) cross brace. This may originally have been a sill or headplate, forming part of a planted-on oriel window or similar. The distance between the seven round mortises (c. 200 mm) is within the average range for window lights with the groove accommodating glazing, whilst the mortise holes carried the ends of mullions or stanchions. The mortises/holes on the sides of the timber could accommodate a loose tenon to allow the

Table 3. 10th–12th-century pottery.

Ware	Count	% by count of three principal wares	Wt. (g)	% by weight of three principal wares	MSW (g)
St. Neots-type	144	37.4	2407	19.0	16.7
Thetford-type	132	34.3	8085	63.9	61.3
Stamford	109	28.3	2151	17.0	19.7
Sub-total	385		12643		32.8
Other possible 12th century coarsewares	28		1115		39.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>413</b>		<b>13758</b>		<b>33.3</b>

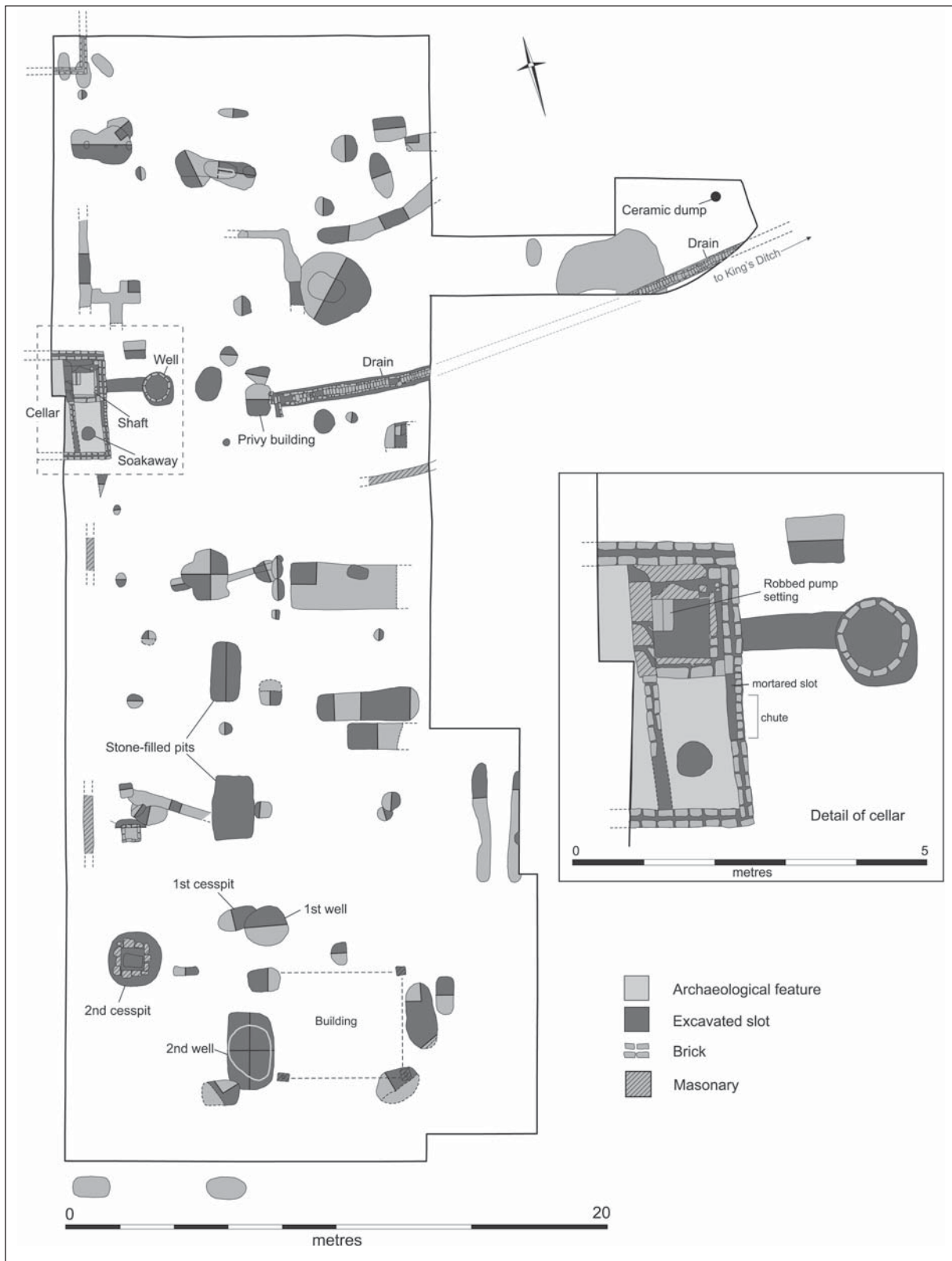


**Figure 11.** 13th-15th-century pottery: 1. Saintonge ware pitcher, fine off-white ware in standard fabric, 13th-century; 2. pygmy jug, buff coarseware with black grits, 14th–15th century.

plate to be fixed in place to the wall of the building. The possibility of the window having a minimum of nine lights suggests that it formed part of a display fenestration from an above average status building. As well as acting as a communal facility the well also had a more direct relationship with a contemporary brick cellar, located a short distance to the west. This cellar was 4.0m wide and 2.0m+ deep, with a chute built into its rear wall allowing materials to be easily moved into the cellar. In the base of the cellar there was a poorly preserved soakaway, lined with a coopered vessel with ash staves and willow hoops. There was also a stone and brick-lined shaft, with internal dimensions of 0.8m by 0.8m that was nearly a metre deeper than the cellar floor. The shaft was connected, via an arch in the rear wall of the cellar and a wood-lined channel, to the well behind. The base of the shaft was c. 0.25m higher than the base of the well and it appears that the initial intention was for the shaft to fill naturally with water. This appears to have been unsuccessful, leading to flooding of the cellar during periods of higher water table. It appears that a lead pipe — which was later robbed — was inserted leading to a pump in the cellar and the shaft was backfilled. The most likely interpretation, given

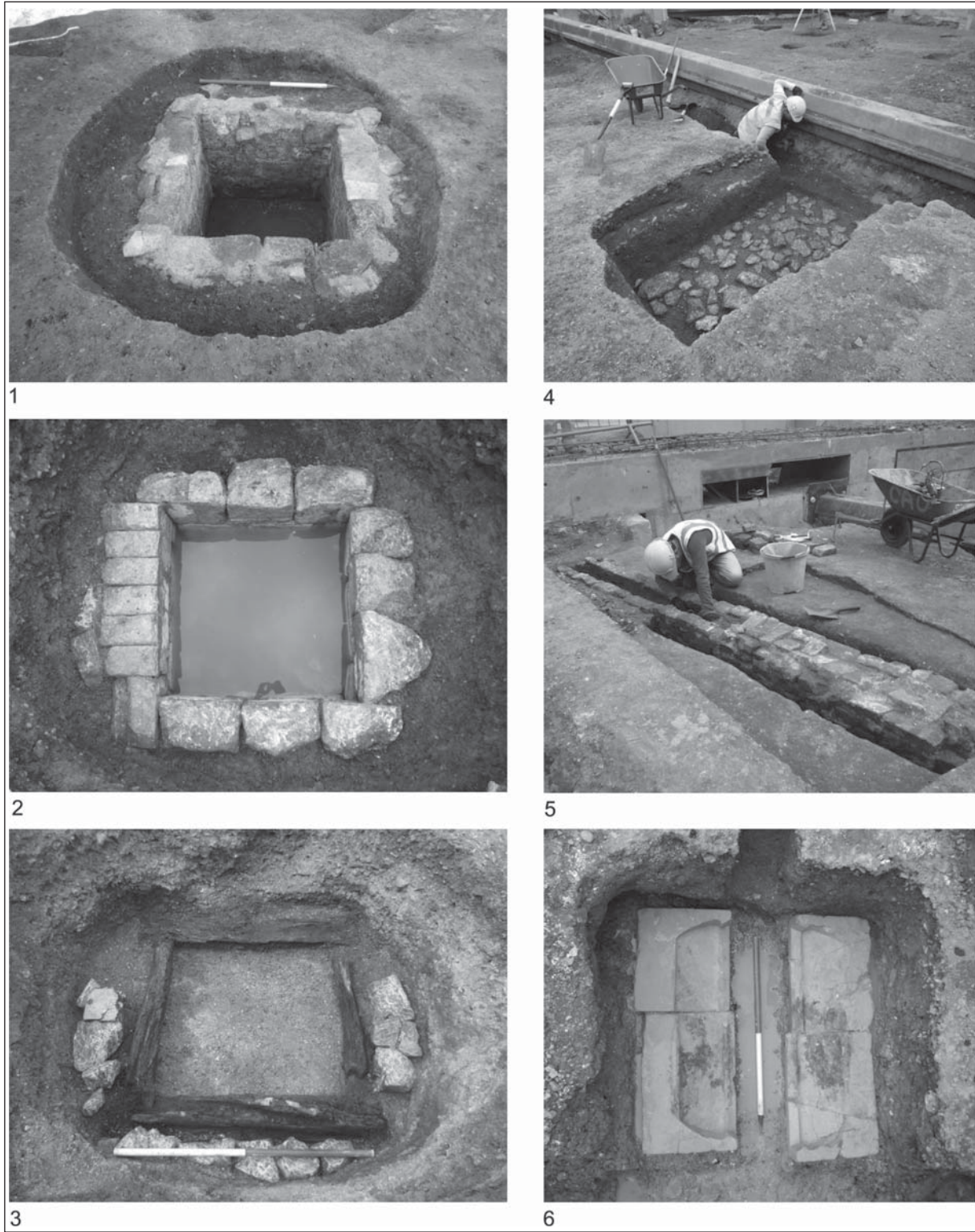
the effort taken to supply and dispose of water, is that this cellar was a kitchen or washroom.

Although predominantly built from brick the cellar walls also contained two reused pieces of hearth edge, whilst the backfilling of the well contained various edging and outer angles of a Late Medieval or Early Modern hearth, probably of Purbeck Limestone, a piece of an Early Modern mantelpiece and gutter blocks. The structure of the associated shaft contained much more reused stone, derived from at least three sets of windows. One was represented by a single chamfered plinth and there was also the sill of a Late Medieval or Early Modern two-light domestic window, made from a hard oolitic Lincolnshire limestone, perhaps Weldon stone. The most impressive blocks had been used in the base of the shaft (Fig. 13.6). These derive from the upper angles of the lintels of at least two windows, suggesting a Tudor two-light domestic window with un-cusped paired semi-elliptical window archlets (Fig. 14.7). The surfaces that would have originally been concealed were only roughly dressed, probably with a bolster chisel, whilst the visible surfaces were highly finished with combs and only slightly weathered. The moulding carried a hollow casement meeting an external chamfer at the outer



*Figure 12. Plan of archaeological features associated with St. John's College ownership of the site, 1533–1795, plus inset detail of cellar.*





**Figure 13.** Views of features associated with St. John's College ownership of the site, 1533–1795: 1–3. mid-16th-century stone-lined cesspit with timber baseplate, facing east; 4. mid-16th-century stone-filled pit, facing southeast; 5. late 17th-century brick-lined drain, facing southeast; 6. base of late 17th-century stone and brick-lined shaft, facing south.

wall face. The interior of the window was splayed to accommodate shutters, which swung on iron pintles set in lead although the valuable lead had been laboriously drilled out prior to re-use. The window had been painted in several colours, both outside and in. The outer hollow casement was originally white-washed, but was subsequently painted a buff hue. The original colour of the internal shutter splay was an ochre hue, later repainted a dark grey. The depth of whitewash on the internal spandrels of the archlets demonstrates the longevity of this window. This style of window was common in the early 16th century in the London area; it must have derived from a quite high-status house and given the scale of the elements and their condition this cannot have been far away.

The most intriguing block from the shaft is a small piece of clunch with an incised coat of arms 'trial piece' (Fig. 14.1). This has a shield 'quartered' or divided into four equal parts, a method of joining several different coats of arms together in one shield. There appear to be two coats of arms; the 1st and 4th quarters (upper left and lower right) have a chevron between three animal heads facing left (dexter) erased. These are probably boars' heads, but might be hunting dogs known as talbots. The 2nd and 3rd quarters (upper right and lower left) have two bars. With no hatching to indicate colour or documentary evidence it is impossible to identify the arms based upon the carving alone, since even assuming they are boars' heads, there are around fifty potential families.

The documentation held by St. John's College relates almost exclusively to the individuals who leased the property from St. John's and rarely if ever occupied it. Instead they in turn sublet parts of the property to other individuals. In 1748 the cellared building fronting onto Thompson's Lane was occupied by an individual with the surname Rayner (Fig. 15). Beside this there was a passage leading to a yard and a second building, occupied by another individual called Brogden. The well was located within this yard, whilst the outhouse structure appears to correspond to an area projecting from the rear of the yard. Given the lack of other wells or outhouses/cesspits these facilities were presumably utilised by other households, although the plan does not provide enough detail to indicate how this operated.

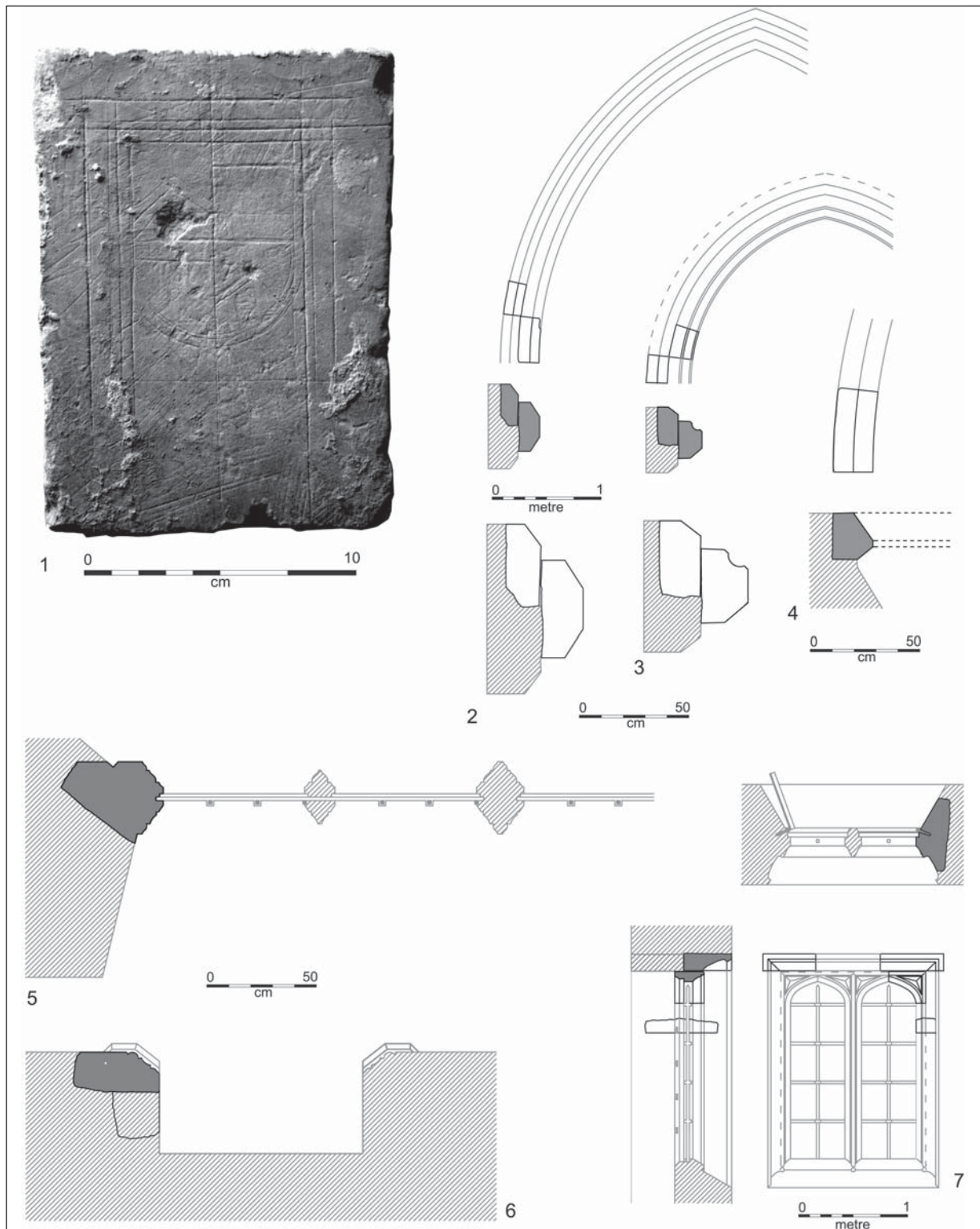
These features survived for a century or so, until they were all carefully and systematically demolished and backfilled in 1791–95, creating a formal garden for a property on the other side of the street and effectively returning the area to the status it had enjoyed in the 13th–early 16th centuries. Broadly associated with this transition were four groups of material; from the drain, the cellar, the well and the garden area at the rear of the property. These four assemblages were rather different in nature, making a comparison particularly informative. As later truncation and the limits of excavation mean that none were recovered in their entirety no attempt has been made to quantify them beyond basic counts and weights, with counts preferred as these have proved more useful. All these groups contained small quantities of

glass bottle fragments, animal bone, clay tobacco pipe stems, metalwork etc. and attention will focus upon the most common material type, pottery (Table 4; Fig. 16), plus any notable items.

The brick-lined drain was largely intact and the material in it appears to date to when it was still in use, post c. 1780. There was a wide range of metalwork — including a spoon, a buckle, eight pins and over 30 nails — plus a clay tobacco pipe bowl of 1780–1820 and a bone implement handle. The pottery consisted of small fragments, with a lower mean sherd weight than the other groups of 11.7g, and the latest types of ceramics present in the other assemblages — particularly pearlware — were absent. The well contained large quantities of demolition debris, but few smaller items. This is representative of a broader pattern in Cambridge, where domestic refuse was largely excluded from the backfilling of wells after c. 1750. The only noteworthy item was a partial sliding beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) wood lid of a small box or case, originally some 6 inches wide. Although well-constructed the lid is simple and plain and likely to have been locally produced. The main body of the cellar was largely backfilled with demolition rubble, principally brick fragments, and contained few other items, although there were several semi-complete ceramic vessels. There was a George II halfpenny minted in 1737, plus three clay tobacco pipe bowls; one with an 8-rayed sunburst on the base of heel and another with the initials PW on the sides of heel. The latter was possibly produced by Peter Wakelin of the nearby St. Sepulchre's parish, who is mentioned in 1766 and was part of a pipe making family based in that parish including Francis Wakelin and his un-named father mentioned in 1752. A similar pipe was found nearby at the Old Vicarage and other examples are known from elsewhere in central Cambridge and Barnwell. Typologically all these pipes date to c. 1730–80, but whilst it is conceivable that they are residual there are indications from elsewhere in Cambridge that the standard typological dates may be wrong for the late 18th century, with the local industry being relatively conservative. The fifteen or so semi- and near-complete ceramic vessels dumped in the upper part of the cellar included Staffordshire-type white salt glazed stoneware tea bowls (two), a milk jug, saucer, coffee can, tankard and tart/patty pan, Staffordshire-type slipware chamber pots (two), posset pots (two) and a large dish and creamware plates (three) (Fig. 16.2–9).

At the rear of the property a boundary wall was constructed and a large quantity of soil deposited, straightening the boundary with the King's Ditch and levelling what had previously been a pronounced downwards slope towards the ditch. As part of this a large quantity of ceramics was deposited, apparently from two different sources. The most distinctive items are five plates marked with hand-painted names, three or four of which can be linked to St. John's College and cooks who worked for the college (Fig. 16.10–12). At this time college cooks were semi-independent entrepreneurial businessmen whose responsibilities often included supplying crockery





**Figure 14.** Reused moulded stone: 1. small clunch block with an incised coat of arms 'trial piece'; 2. early 14th century two-order arcade arch; 3. early 14th century two-order arcade arch; 4. early 14th century rere arch moulding; 5. conjectured reconstruction of a four light traceried window of 1370+; 6. Tudor fireplace; 7. Tudor two-light domestic window (based upon original drawings by Mark Samuel).



which remained their own property, which explains why their names occur on vessels (Cessford 2016b). One creamware plate has the initials S I C for St. John's College on its underside, an impressed letter A indicates that the plate was probably manufactured by one of two Staffordshire potters named William Adams, who began manufacturing creamware in 1775 and 1779 respectively (Fig. 16.10). A second creamware plate with a moulded rim has the surname [S]cott on the upper side of its rim (Fig. 16.11), whilst a pearlware plate has the surname Smithson on the underside (Fig. 16.12). On the underside of the pearlware plate there is an impressed mark consisting of the number 3 over the initials IH, the manufacturer's mark of John Harrison of Stoke (c. 1781–83). Another creamware plate has just a single surviving letter S on the underside, which could be the start of Scott, Smithson or S I C. The final creamware vessel has only a surviving letter E or F, plus an impressed letter T suggesting that it may have been manufactured by Jacob Tittensor (c. 1780–95).

William Scott was a cook at St. John's College 1768–1805, whilst Christopher Smithson was a cook at St. John's College in 1782, but may have been working as early as c. 1769. The two were employed at the same time, indicating that the college employed two head cooks — as was the case for much of the 19th century — with one for the fellows and the other for the scholars (students). As Thomas Scott, the son of William Scott, was subsequently the fellows' cook (c. 1808–23), it is likely that this was also the position that William Scott held. The letters S I C indicate that the college itself also supplied plates; one possibility is that these represent an earlier phase before the cooks became responsible for doing so. There is no evidence of marked collegiate vessels from the other assemblages, so it appears that these plates were brought directly from the college for deposition. The presence of three different services (Scott, Smithson and S I C) suggests that this disposal was in some respect a 'communal' one, undertaken by the college — or at least the college kitchens — as a whole. The quantities involved are however small, suggesting that this was an ad hoc exercise to dispose of unwanted — perhaps slightly damaged — material rather than a larger scale

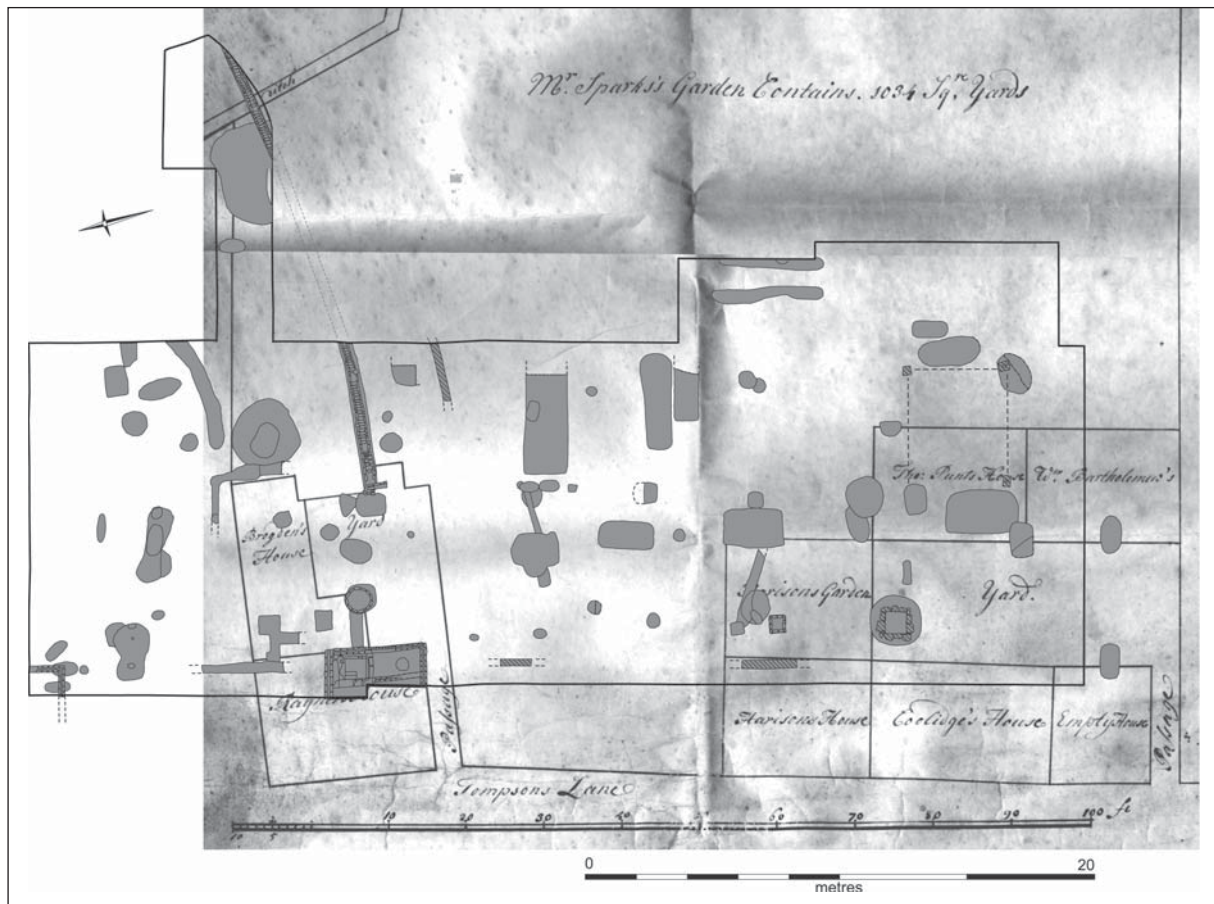
clearance event (Cessford 2017).

The next most distinctive element is the presence of at least eleven semi- or near-complete flowerpots — ten in a fine yellow fabric produced locally c. 1760–1830 — plus one saucer for holding a flowerpot, which appear to have been complete prior to deposition. It is unlikely that St. John's College would have disposed of still useable flowerpots and these probably derive from the property where they were deposited. Whilst there is some evidence from both the drain and the cellar for the use of flowerpots at the property, this is extremely limited. One interpretation of this is that the flowerpots were disposed of at the rear of the garden because they were already located in this area of the property. Assemblages from elsewhere in Cambridge — interpreted as instances where the inhabitants of a particular property disposed of their entire collection of such items — indicate that a small urban garden might possess c. 16–25 flowerpots and a few saucers (Cessford 2014)

Given that two sources for some of the ceramics can convincingly be identified — the owner of the property (St. John's College) and the household(s) that occupied the property — what of the rest of the assemblage? The ceramic fabrics and forms from the garden dump are all paralleled by the material from the cellar, but are also the same as ceramics recovered during investigations at St. John's College. Whilst some plates can be shown to have no college or cooks' names on them this is not conclusive, as there is evidence that unmarked plates were used within colleges until the mid-19th century. The unmarked creamware plates in particular have a Queen's pattern rim indistinguishable from the Scott example, apart from the name. An alternative line of argument is that as there was potentially space to dispose of more domestic material in the cellar, it is likely that all the ceramics in the garden dump are from St. John's College, apart from the flowerpots and saucer that were kept in the garden. This argument is not particularly convincing and the two main conclusions to emerge are that the dump represents a mixture of material from both the occupants and the property owners, and that most of the individual items that constituted the ceramic material culture of the colleges and a typical domes-

*Table 4. Ceramics from late 18th-century assemblages by fabric, quantified by sherd count.*

Fabric	Drain	Cellar	Well	Dump	Total
Unglazed earthenware	3	1		36	40
Glazed red earthenware	8	37	7	46	98
Staffordshire-type slipware	1	45		1	47
Staffordshire-type lead glaze	2				2
Tin glazed earthenware	1	10		1	12
Nottinghamshire/Derbyshire stoneware	3	11		4	18
Westerwald stoneware		5		6	11
Chinese export porcelain	1	5			6
English soft paste porcelain		9		3	12
Staffordshire-type white salt glazed stoneware	10	28		1	39
Staffordshire-type white salt glazed stoneware, scratch blue			2		2
Creamware	2	130	5	66	203
Pearlware		5		1	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>496</b>



**Figure 15.** Property plan of 1734 with archaeological features associated with St. John's College ownership of the site, 1533–1795, overlaid (property plan SJCA/ D18/115 by permission of the Master and Fellows of St John's College, Cambridge).

tic household in late 18th-century Cambridge were so similar that they cannot be distinguished. This is particularly true when it is noted that only one of the five marked plates had its text on the upper face, so the rest would have been invisible during dining.

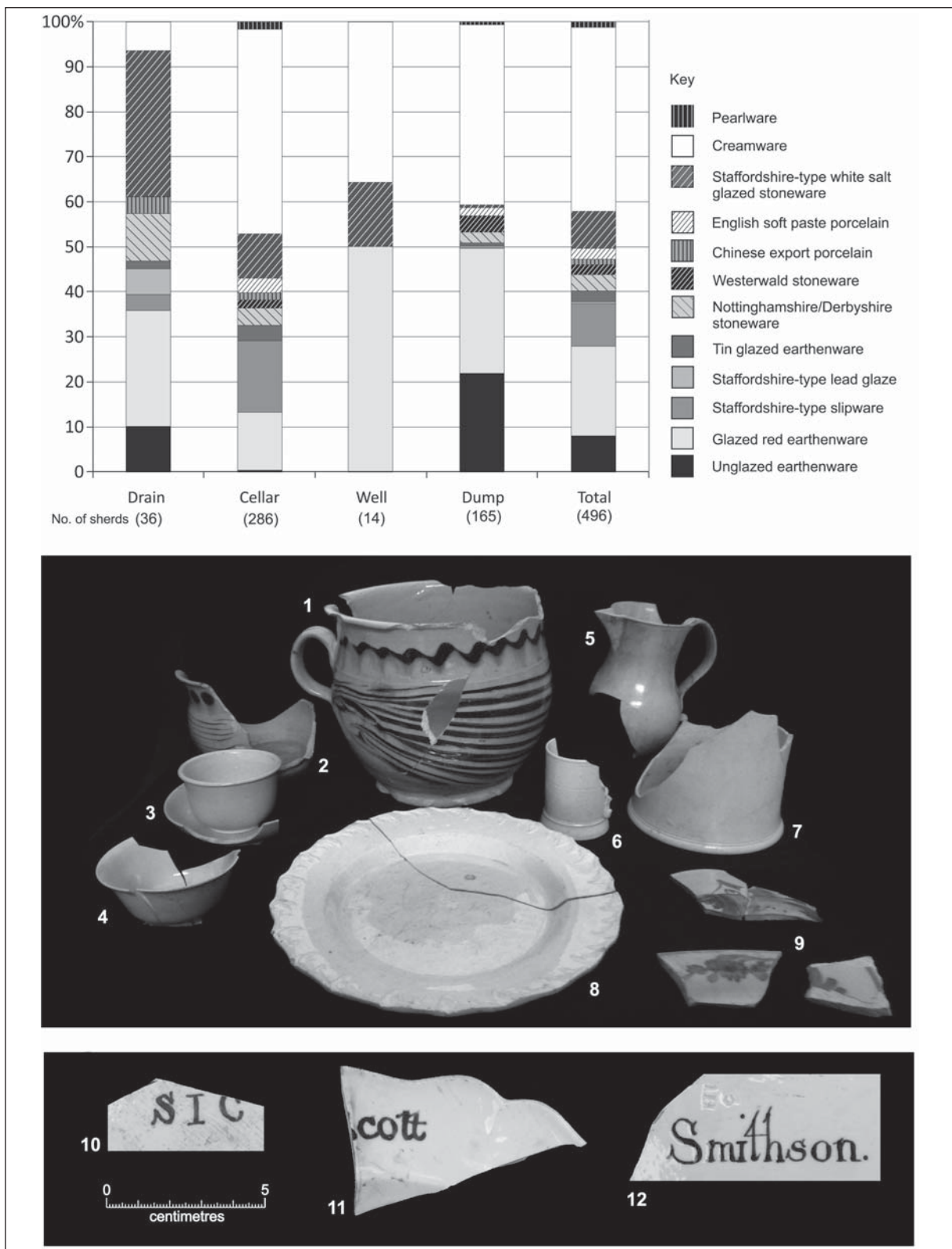
In 1791–95 the area was converted into a large detached garden, associated with a property on the opposite side of Thompson's Lane. No significant features associated with this garden survived. Then in 1911 a row of terraced houses was constructed, which survived until they were demolished in 2014.

### Conclusion

The WYNG Gardens excavations have provided an unparalleled insight into the nature of the Bronze Age River Cam at Cambridge and subsequent Iron Age flooding. Although the environs and local landscape were by no means devoid of a human presence during the Bronze Age, it was a relatively sparsely utilised space, to judge by the lack of material culture and cereal pollen. In contrast arable farming was taking place nearby from the Iron Age onwards. The 1st–4th century Romano-British lower town/roadside suburb was a more substantial and significant entity

than has previously been recognised, emphasising the need to reconsider the nature and function of the 'small town' on Castle Hill. Given the focus of this settlement along Bridge Street and the extent and depth of modern basements along the street frontage, it is questionable if the nature of this settlement will ever be fully understood. Nonetheless, it can no longer be blithely assumed that for the entire Romano-British period the settlement focus was predominantly on Castle Hill and that the settlement south of the river was of secondary importance. It is likely that it was more of a dual settlement, with significant aspects located on both sides of the river.

The growing body of negative evidence strongly indicates that St. Clement's parish was not a significant urban focus during the late 9th–early 10th-century Danelaw period. Although there may have been urban occupation along Bridge Street from the mid-10th century, the medieval urban sequence in this area commences with 11th/12th-century reclamation, in conjunction with the creation of the King's Ditch. The area has subsequently varied between being a relatively undeveloped open area (13th century–c. 1533 and 1791/95–1911) and a collegiate development, albeit one both physically and metaphorically some distance from the quadrangles of





academia (c. 1533–1791/95 and 1911–present).

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