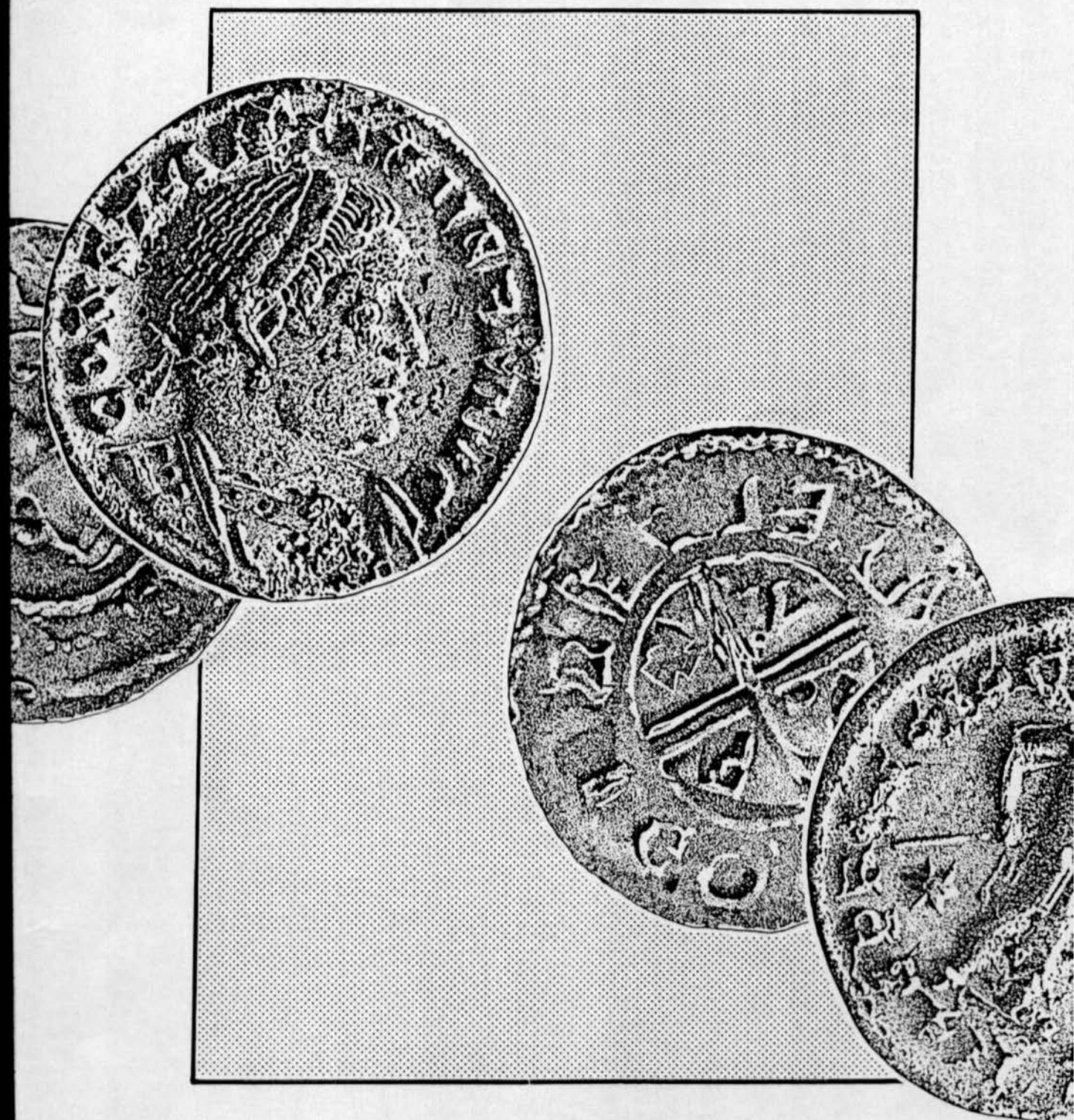


ILCHESTER

Archaeological Training
Excavations 1988



An Interim Report
by Peter Leach & Alex Jones

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Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit 1988

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ILCHESTER

Archaeological Training Excavation 1988

An Interim Report

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Arising out of opportunities provided by proposals for a residential development in the centre of Ilchester (Almshouse Lane), and the availability of a second site originally prospected in 1986 (Dolphin Lane), an archaeological training excavation was arranged by the Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit in June and July 1988. The excavation programme ran concurrently for both sites and was organised in conjunction with the field training requirements of undergraduate students from the Department of Ancient History and Archaeology at Birmingham University. Provision of training and experience in archaeological excavation and related techniques was designed both for the benefit of undergraduates and for local amateur participants. A series of field excursions were arranged to local sites of historic and archaeological interest in Dorset and Somerset, and liaison with local schools included class introductions to archaeology and site visits to the excavations. A visit of H.R.H. The Princess Royal (Princess Anne) to Ilchester on July 15th provided the opportunity for a display and exhibition of finds relating to the archaeology of Ilchester in the Town Hall, and the project Director was presented to her Royal Highness.

Overall project direction was the responsibility of Peter Leach (B.U.F.A.U.), Alex Jones (M.A. graduate student, Department of Ancient History and Archaeology, Birmingham) deputising and taking specific responsibility for supervision of excavations at Dolphin Lane. The project involved a total of 28 students from the Department, supported by staff from the Field Unit and local volunteers, and was underway for a six-week period between June 12th and July 24th. A fine spell of weather

at the commencement of the project was not sustained in July and resulted in some curtailment of objectives, particularly in the final week.

2.0 THE SITES AND THEIR SETTING

Despite its modest modern-day appearance, Ilchester has figured prominently in the past as an important regional centre (Fig. 1a), the former county town of medieval Somerset and of its Roman predecessor. Little of this is apparent today, and for the Roman period in particular, most of the evidence for earlier settlement and its importance lies beneath the ground.

Archaeological excavations, notably over the past two decades, have vastly expanded our knowledge of these times, emphasising more fully the significance of Ilchester, its region and its role, past and present. The publication of much of this work (Ilchester Volume 1 1982, and a second volume in press) by Peter Leach has highlighted many aspects of earlier settlements and their people. As more knowledge is gained it is axiomatic that our even greater ignorance is emphasised, but equally it becomes possible to direct researches towards specific problems more effectively. Opportunities for archaeological excavation in Ilchester are most often determined by the destructive threats to that which still survives below ground, but need be no less relevant for that.

In 1988 the sites chosen both lay well within the bounds of the historic settlement core area; in one instance (Almshouse Lane) threatened by development proposals, in the other (Dolphin Lane) as an existing opportunity to expand upon previous discoveries (Fig. 1c). The nucleus of settlement at Ilchester is focussed upon the crossing of the River Yeo at

ILCHESTER Archaeological excavations Locations 1988

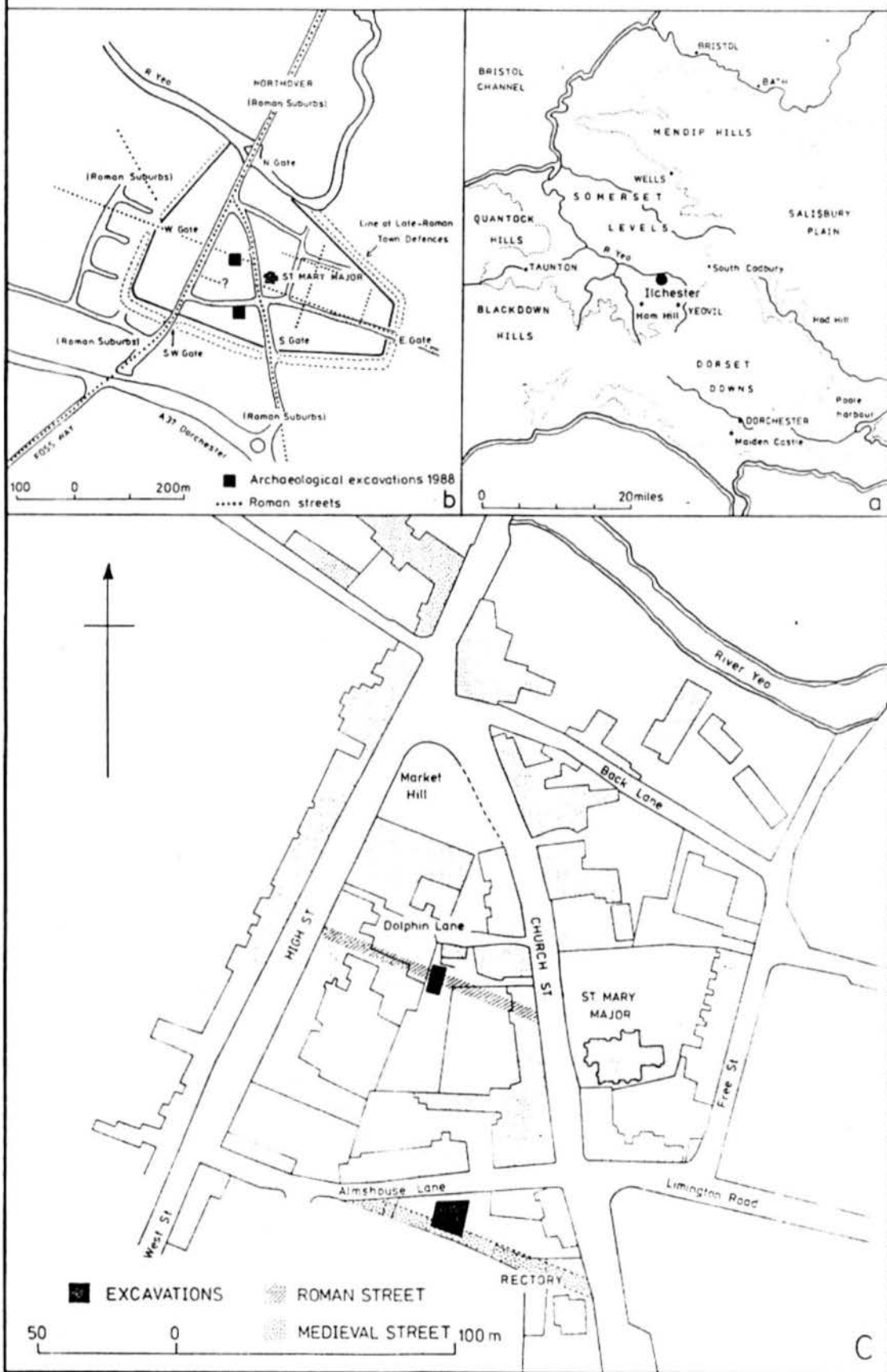


Fig. 1

the junction of two main roads - the Foss Way and the road south to Dorchester. This nucleus was emphasised first by the construction of a large fort by the Roman army towards the end of the 1st century AD., and subsequently by earthen and stone town defences in the 3rd and 4th centuries (Figure 1b). Following post-Roman decline and abandonment the medieval town was re-established on the site of its Roman predecessor, the same core area emphasised once again by a defensive stone-walled circuit. Both sites for excavation were located inside that nucleus, where the maximum sequence and accumulation of archaeological deposits might be expected to have survived. A more completely researched report on the results of these excavations and their significance will be prepared for publication in due course.

3.0 ALMSHOUSE LANE

3.1 Introduction

The larger area for excavation was located in the rear garden of No.1 Church Street adjacent to Almshouse Lane. Its proposed sale with planning permission for residential development prompted the requirement to carry out archaeological excavation prior to the insertion of building and service foundations. This was achieved with the co-operation and active support of the then owners, Mr. and Mrs. M. Penn, without which the project could hardly have succeeded.

Prior to this excavation the best available archaeological information relating to this area of the town derived from trial excavations and watching briefs carried out between 1980 and 1984 in the former grounds of the Manor House immediately to the south and now occupied by a modern housing development (Ilchester Volume 2, Archaeology, Excavations and Fieldwork to 1984, forthcoming). These operations suggested surviving elements relating

to several Roman town building phases, some prehistoric occupation, and the remains of medieval buildings, within up to 2m. of accumulated soil and other deposits. Historically, the garden of No. 1 Church Street was known to overlie the former medieval course of Almshouse Lane, whose eastern alignment was altered to its present more northerly course in the 19th century. Arising from this circumstance was the potential for enhanced archaeological preservation; on the one hand through a better survival of pre-medieval deposits beneath a road, and on the other the possibility of detecting the remains of medieval road-frontage properties along its north side. In the event only the first of these objectives was realised.

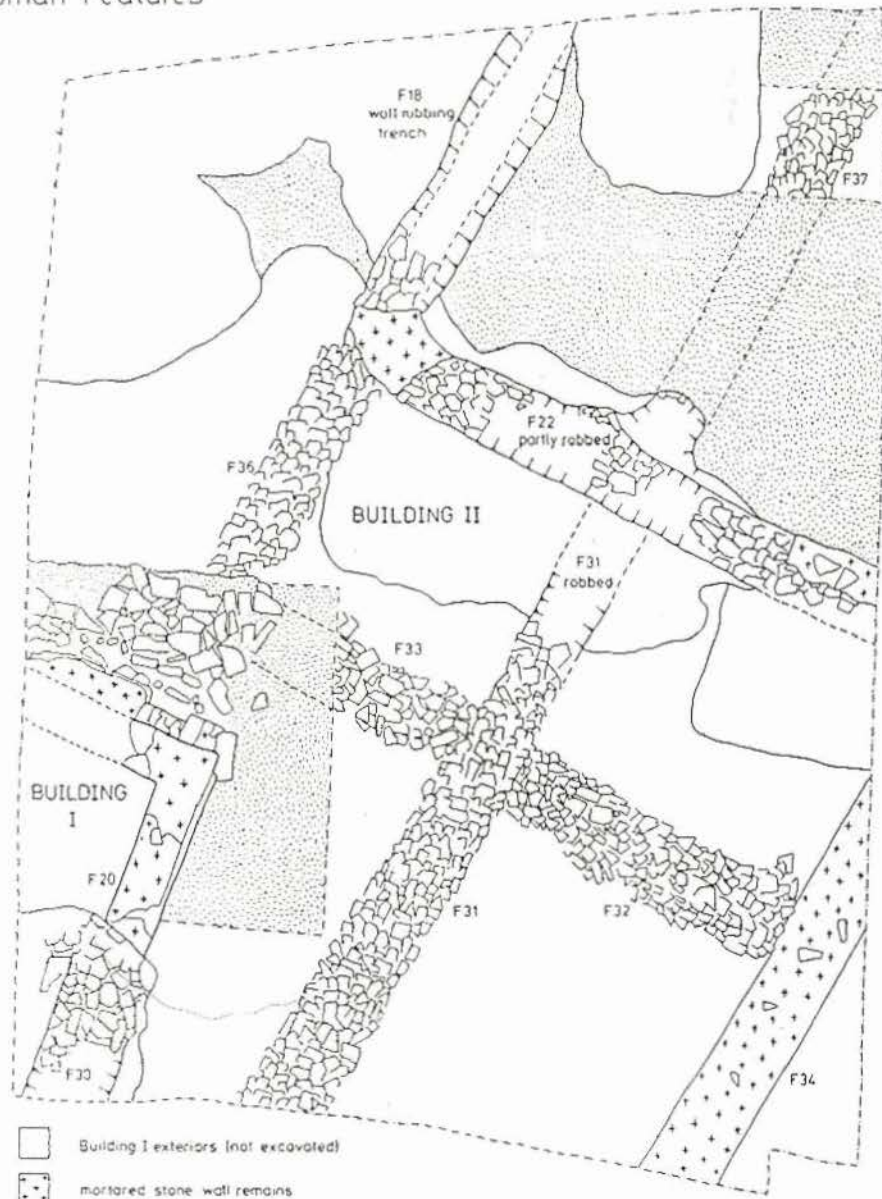
The process of archaeological excavation is almost inevitably conducted in reverse. To understand and reconstruct the sequence of events recorded in excavation, and thus interpret the history and significance of the discoveries made, we have to invert the order in which they were actually made on site. Thus for example the discovery of a building may be heralded first in the course of excavation by a deposit representing its destruction. Such an interpretation may only be possible subsequently when further layers are removed and the building foundations are revealed. To understand an archaeological excavation we must start at the bottom and follow through a stratigraphically defined sequence of events and discoveries from the earliest to the latest.




3.2 Prehistory

At Almshouse Lane the earliest levels reached contained Roman pottery of the later-1st century AD lying upon an alluvial silt, contaminated in its upper 0.20 metres or so by charcoal flecks and small scraps of pottery, animal bone, etc. Deposits of river alluvium

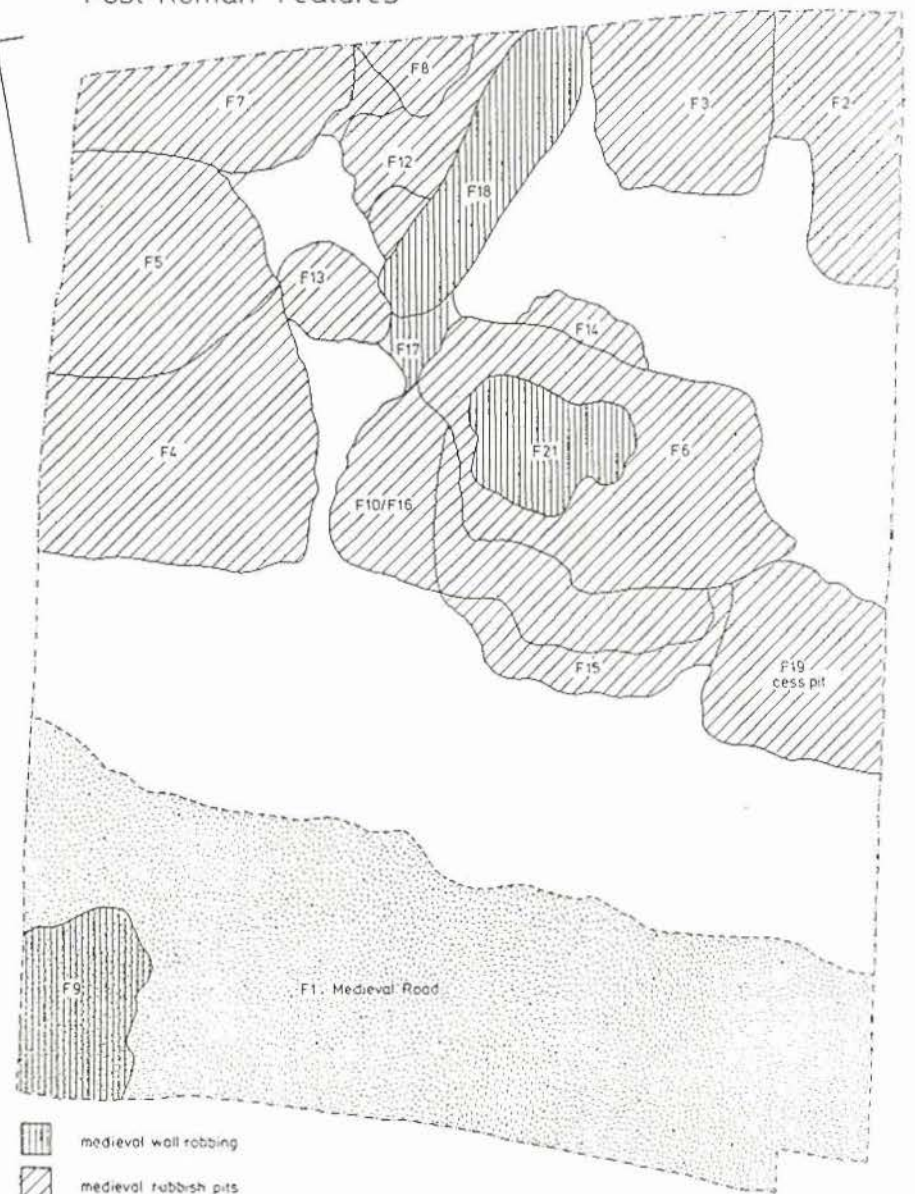
ALMSHOUSE LANE 1988

Roman Features



-  Building I exteriors (not excavated)
-  mortared stone wall remains
-  pitched drystone wall foundations

Post-Roman Features






-  medieval wall robbing
-  medieval rubbish pits
-  road metalling

Fig. 2

beneath Ilchester are for the most part of prehistoric origin; formations whose accumulation appears to have been much influenced by human interference and exploitation of the landscape in and around the Yeo valley since Neolithic times. Prehistoric finds and occupation levels are sometimes encountered within the alluvium - early Iron Age pottery was discovered in one such context a few metres to the south of this excavation in 1980. A few pieces of similar prehistoric pottery have been recognised from this site, but all apparently in later horizons disturbed from their original levels by subsequent activities. Perhaps the most exciting discovery of this type was of a polished Neolithic stone axe found within the fills of a deeply-cut medieval pit. This may well have been manufactured some 3000 years before Ilchester's foundation as a Roman settlement, and appears to be of a Cornish-derived stone. This is the first documented example of such an artifact from Ilchester or its vicinity.

3.3 Early Roman

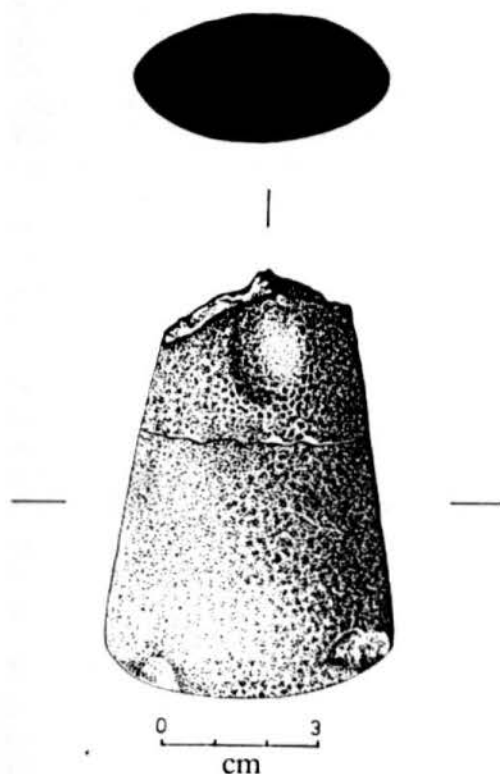
Excepting the likelihood of prehistoric Iron Age settlement remains beneath Ilchester, the earliest clear evidence for its foundation relates to the remains of a Roman fort sited here by the army in the second half of the 1st century AD. This establishment appears not to belong to the initial phase of Claudian conquest, having been built here 20 or more years later.

One objective of these excavations was to gain further information concerning the interior of this otherwise little known fort. Finds of Flavian pottery from the earliest excavated levels and the recovery of two iron javelin heads of military type probably relate to this phase, but regrettably no coherent structural remains were recognised.

A moderate build-up of deposits, attributable principally by their pottery content to the late-1st and 2nd centuries AD, probably represents the earliest civil phase of urban development in Ilchester. Structural remains were unclear or absent and it may be that this area of the town was undeveloped, lying perhaps at some distance from a street frontage. Whatever the precise circumstances the next phase was clearly marked by the layout of a substantial stone-founded building in this area.

These foundations, defined as Building II (Fig. 2a), belonged to a suite of rooms orientated NE-SW. This is in conformity with the Foss Way to the west, and with other Roman building remains encountered beneath the town centre, e.g. those immediately to the south in 1980-84.

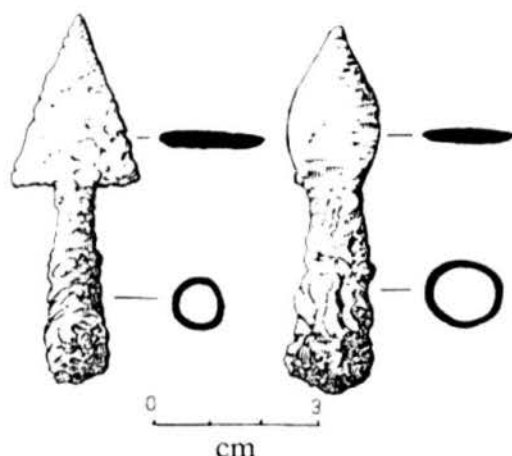
Since no street is known from excavations or watching briefs in the area to the south (extending to the rear of the town defences), the evidence of Building II provides a strong hint for the existence of a cross street fairly nearby to the north. This could have provided a frontage for Building II, the street set at right angles to the Foss Way and connecting with the Dorchester Road to the east. A



Neolithic Polished Stone Axe

medieval wall robbing
 medieval rubbish pits
 road metalling

Building I exteriors (not excavated)
 mortared stone wall remains
 pitched drystone wall foundations



Roman Military Iron Javelin Heads

parallel counterpart is represented by the example actually discovered at Dolphin Lane further to the north (4.0 below).

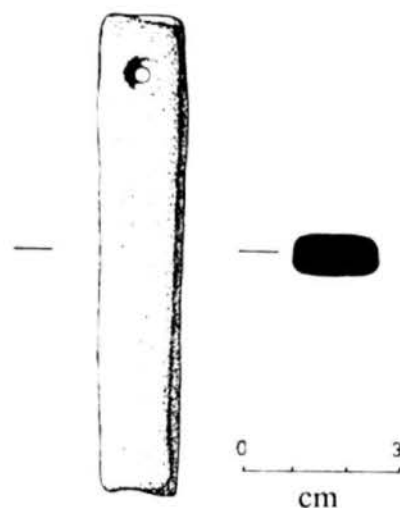
The remains of Building II comprised a series of stone wall foundations defining at least six rooms, the floors of which were more or less truncated.

Although for the most part not removed in excavation, extensive medieval stone-robbing and some excavation revealed deeply-dug and carefully-constructed foundations comprising successive sets of pitched drystone blocks beneath upper mortared sequences. These in turn supported the bottom horizontal courses of the upstanding mortared walls, most of which had disappeared. This construction technique was applied only to the outer building walls and one internal cross wall, other internal wall foundations were more shallow with only unmortared footings, and represent later phases of partitioning to the original building. From the evidence surviving, this appears to be the remains of a strip house with a frontage to the north, or possibly one wing of a more elaborate structure. There were no clear indications of the original function of this building or of its individual rooms, although more detailed analysis of the finds may yet throw some light upon this. Likewise it may be possible to establish the dating of the building with more certainty although an origin

in the latter part of the 2nd century appears most likely.

3.4 Later-Roman

The end of Building II marked a radical change of layout in this part of the town, probably in the later-3rd century. Surviving deposits within many of the rooms suggest a fairly extensive fire and it may well be that such an episode marked its end as a functioning building, leading to a total demolition of the above-ground structure. What followed was a new building - Building I - on a slightly different alignment to its predecessor but located mainly beyond the bounds of the excavation to the south-west (Figure 2a). Only one corner of this building was seen, two horizontal mortared courses surviving above pitched mortared and drystone foundations which were very similar in character to those of the west wall of Building II, and which in fact replaced the latter where it was overlain by the corner of Building I. It was apparent even from the very small exposure of this later building that it had undergone at least two subsequent phases of modification, and its history was reflected further in a series of contemporary deposits which lay outside its bounds to the north and east.



Roman Whetstone

A series of gravel, roughly cobbled, and earthen surfaces were traced across these areas, evidently a sequence of exterior yards contemporary with the life of Building I and sealing beneath them the truncated remains of Building II. An entrance-way into Building I from the north was apparent, while a series of post holes within an early phase of the yard surfaces to the east suggested the existence of less substantial structures in this area for a time. Coins from the latest phases of these surfaces show that this arrangement persisted until at least the end of the 4th century. While the association of this area with Building I is presumed, it is difficult to speculate further upon its function or wider context within the later Roman layout of properties in this part of Ilchester.

3.5 Post-Roman

Evidence for the end of Building I suggests its gradual collapse and decay over a period extending from some time in the 5th century until the ruins were finally levelled, most probably in the 11th century. Up to 0.5m of deposit, representing the time separating the abandonment of Building I from the earliest positive evidence for medieval activity, had accumulated in places on the site. Its upper levels were distinctly humic in character and a considerable range and quantity of primarily late-Roman debris was recovered from throughout the deposit. By analogy with circumstances recorded widely elsewhere in former Roman towns with medieval successors in Britain, this deposit can legitimately be claimed as a 'dark earth', representing abandonment or a change of use within the former Roman settlement prior to a true medieval urban revival.

This is almost the first occasion in Ilchester that such a horizon has been so clearly identified - a graphic expression of Ilchester's 'Dark Ages' in that hiatus between its two principal expressions of an urban society - roughly between the 5th and

the 10th centuries AD.

Nothing indicative of more coherent activity, as for example contemporary structural remains or datable finds, was recovered from these deposits although the latter may yet be revealed in more detailed analysis of the material recovered. So clear a survival of this deposit was due largely to the fortuitous location of a medieval street across the southern half of the excavation, although further portions survived here and there among medieval pit excavations to the north.

3.6 Medieval (Fig. 2b)

The evidence for medieval Ilchester divides neatly in character and distribution between the northern and the southern half of this site. As predicted, the former course of Almshouse Lane was revealed in the southern half of the excavated area as a matrix of rough cobbles gravel and clay makeup. Aligned approximately east-west, this band or lens of material presumably accumulated as successive street surfacings, although only its northern edge was seen here. A robbed segment of the east wall of the Roman Building I contained *c.* 11th-century pottery and was both sealed and partly infilled by road cobbling, thus providing an approximate *terminus post quem* for the latter's original layout. Very few dateable finds were recovered from the road makeup; a little post-medieval pottery, tile and clay pipe fragments in its upper levels signify the latter stages of its use until the mid-19th-century abandonment and realignment of Almshouse Lane to the north.

The northern half of the site was dominated by pit excavations, the majority cutting deep into the earlier Roman and post-Roman levels. Such pit excavation is a widespread phenomenon, both in Ilchester and elsewhere in towns of the Middle

Ages. Their purpose was the disposal of rubbish in areas where living space was restricted, and the back yards or gardens in a town provided the most convenient locations. The majority of pits excavated here are presumed to have been for such purposes, pottery from within their backfilling suggesting use between the 11th and 13th centuries. The full range of more perishable rubbish rarely survives in such pits; animal bone, pottery, metal objects and building debris being the most commonly recovered finds, along with material disturbed from the Roman or earlier deposits beneath. Among this pit group one (F19) appears from its shape and content to have been utilised as a cess or latrine pit. Several others were evidently cut to rob out the stone walls and foundations of former Roman buildings for re-use in the medieval town. Pottery from the fills of such cuts here and elsewhere in Ilchester suggests that most of this stone-robbing took place in the 10th and 11th centuries, before most of the rubbish pits were dug.

The location of these pits relative to the former street to the south suggest that, contrary to expectations, there were no medieval properties fronting onto its north side; although discoveries made previously to the south did reveal the remains of buildings which must have lined the south side of the street. The pits discovered here must in fact relate to properties fronting Church Street to the east, and by their respect for the former course of Almshouse Lane evidently (for the most part) post-date that street's foundation.

3.7 Post Medieval

The final chapters in the history of this area are much less clear from the archaeological record. Pit excavation for rubbish disposal became much less fashionable from the 14th century, and the build-up of soil over the area to the north is probably to be

accounted for by garden cultivation, some surface rubbish disposal, and possibly deliberate levelling-up. The latter event seems to have been most evident following the realignment of Almshouse Lane in the 19th century (Fig. 1c). The Medieval street line was apparently maintained throughout the period from the 11th or 12th centuries, but without a great accumulation of clearly-defined street horizons. There are signs of a deliberate dumping of soil over the whole site, sealing the old road and raising the ground level by almost 0.5m. This may have been connected with the use of this area for a time as a farm yard. Up to the present day the whole plot has been cultivated as the gardens of Nos 1 and 2 Church Street.

4.0 DOLPHIN LANE

4.1 Introduction

The excavations of 1988 at Dolphin Lane were conducted in an area of derelict land occupying a formerly central position in Roman Ilchester, between major routes aligned on the modern Church Street and High Street (Figs. 1b and 1c). A small trial trench excavated here previously in 1986 (Leach and Casey 1986) (Fig. 3c), located a series of Roman road surfaces cut by medieval pits but work was limited to the definition of only the latest Roman levels. The objectives in 1988 were to investigate the full road make-up, define its precise alignment, and to elucidate the immediate and contemporary road frontages on either side.

An area 5m by 10m was opened with the assistance of a mechanical excavator which removed *c.* 0.70m of over burden, comprising largely undifferentiated modern and post-medieval deposits, prior to systematic hand excavation and recording of the earlier levels. Included within this area was the original trench of 1986, the results from which can now be incorporated with those of 1988. The sequence of

events proposed below is presented as an interim interpretation of the finds and stratigraphy encountered, in advance of a more fully researched account for publication.

4.2 Phase 1. Early Roman

Natural deposits of pre-Roman alluvium were encountered at c. 2.8m below the modern ground surface (15.25m. AOD.) but there was no evidence for prehistoric occupation. Above, a contaminated horizon of buff-brown clay silt, possibly in formation during the late-1st century AD, was sealed by the first of a sequence of more than twenty distinct road surfaces. These defined a zone c. 5m in width, aligned WNW-ESE, totalling over 1.5m in depth and were in use almost certainly throughout the life of the Roman town.

The southern edges of the earliest road levels, seen only in a sondage (Figure 3a), comprised successive, irregular surfaces of small flint nodules set in a clay matrix, but appear to be in alignment with the later, more completely excavated levels.

4.3 Phase 2. ?2nd-3rd centuries AD

Above the earliest road surfaces a series of more regular stone-flagged levels of shaped, well worn lias and hamstone blocks set in mortar were accumulating from the 2nd century AD. Amongst these road phases a cambered surface of re-used burnt hamstone blocks included kerbstones to both edges (north and south), thus defining the precise width and alignment of the road; it also featured a pair of parallel cart ruts. Contemporary with the latest of these levels, possibly in the late-3rd century AD., a wall foundation-trench 0.8m wide was cut at the south road margin and respecting its alignment (Structure 2, Figure 3a). Only three

courses of pitched stone foundations survived, and these were possibly laid within an earlier foundation trench 0.5m wide. A V-profile ditch inserted in this phase at the southern road edge may also relate to Structure 2.

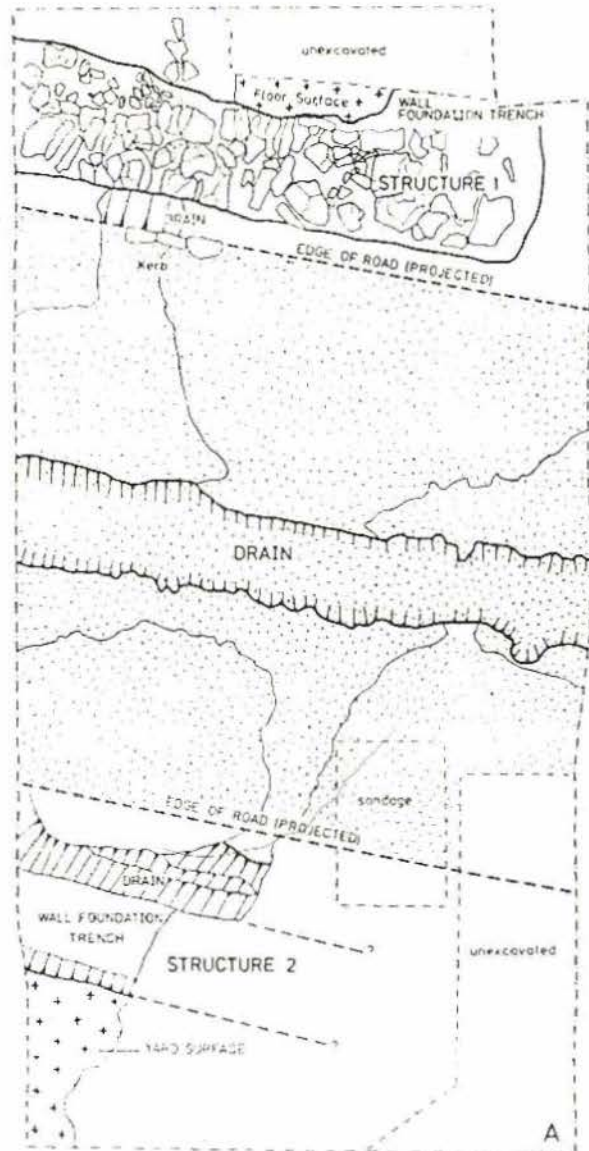
4.4 Phase 3. ?4th century

After the demolition of Structure 2 a layer of silt was deposited during a period of ?abandonment, containing 4th-century pottery. Later, a rectangular-profile, timber- or stone-lined drain was inserted above, in alignment with the southern edge of the road. This subsequently went out of use and the lining was robbed out later in this phase. After a build-up of demolition debris, a yard surface of lias blocks and pebbles set in hard mortar was laid (Figure 3a), contiguous with the south margin of the road. This is likely to represent a late-4th-century or even later road-side arrangement.

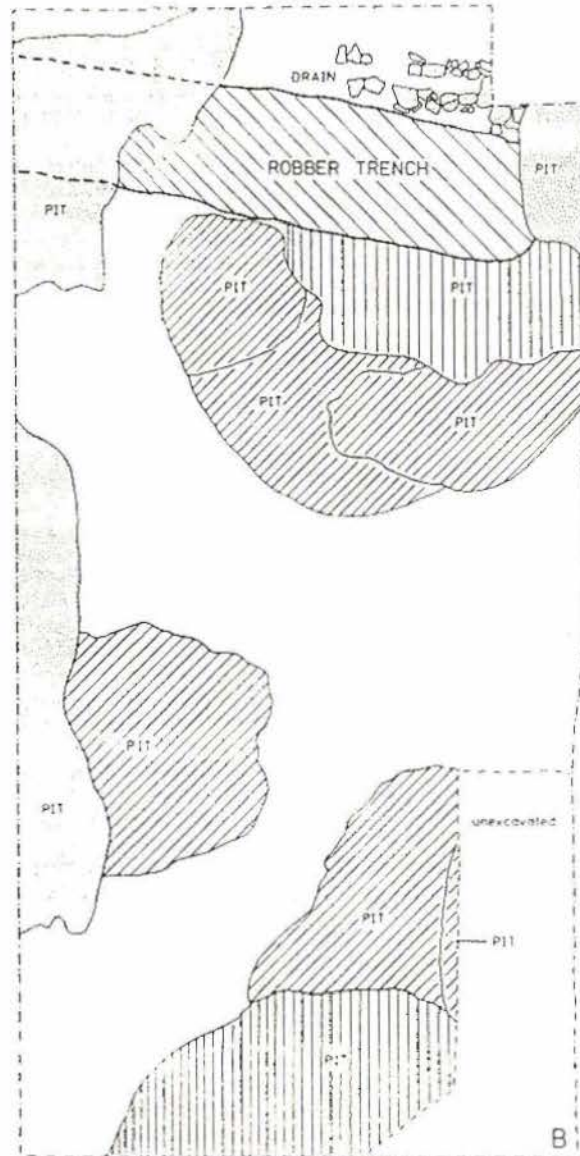
Above the more regular surfaces of lias and hamstone blocks, a series of distinct surfaces comprising small flint nodules and some lias blocks set in a matrix of hard mortar indicate intermediate repairs and patching at this time, and the intensive use of the road.

Also in the 4th century, a massive wall foundation-trench (Structure 1) c. 1.2m wide was cut 0.5m to the north of the contemporary road edge, and following its alignment (Figure 3a). This trench contained three courses of lias blocks pitched in opposite directions; further pitched courses and the wall above may have been robbed in the medieval period. Within the structure, a fragment of mortared surface represents the floor of a room continuing unexcavated to the north. A drainage ditch cut into the northern roadside silts was probably associated with this building.

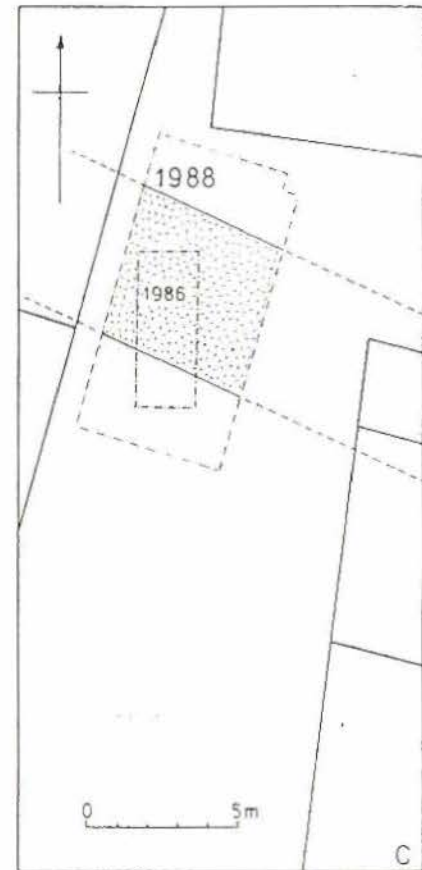
DOLPHIN LANE



ROMAN AND IMMEDIATE POST-ROMAN FEATURES



MEDIEVAL AND POST-MEDIEVAL FEATURES



EXCAVATION TRENCHES 1986 AND 1988

-  Roman street surfaces
-  Earlier medieval
-  Later medieval
-  Post-medieval

Fig. 3



4.5 Phase 4.

Late Roman / Immediate Post Roman

Above the latest cobbled road surface, a layer of silt, up to 0.2m deep accumulated during a period of disuse or neglect of the road; finds of 4th-century date here may be residual.

A refurbishment of the road is indicated by a shallow irregular surface of flint nodules set in clay, sealed in turn by further silt, above which a final irregular road surface of flint nodules and some hamstone marks its last recordable use.

Contemporary with this final period of intermittent road use, a steep-sided ditch (Fig. 3a) 0.8m wide and *c.* 0.5m deep was cut along the centre of the road. The exact alignment of the ditch with the road axis suggests that it originated hardly later than the immediate post-Roman period, when the road alignment still remained visible. On stratigraphic grounds both the ditch and the road levels of this phase pre-date the earliest medieval activity here.

4.6 Phase 5. Medieval

Evidence of Medieval activity (Figure 3b) comprised a wall-robbing trench, and many intercutting pits for the disposal of domestic refuse. The earliest phase involved the robbing of Roman wall material from Structure 1, and may be dated by analogy with similar activity elsewhere in Ilchester to the late-Saxon or early-medieval period. Later, the Roman deposits were extensively disturbed by the excavation of numerous intercutting pits for the disposal of rubbish, mainly in the 12th and 13th centuries.

The indistinct nature of the fills indicates that they each remained in use for only a limited period. In a later phase of medieval activity further pits excavated for rubbish disposal may have remained open for longer periods of time, and contained substantial quantities of bone, along with redeposited Roman, Saxon and medieval pottery.

4.7 Phase 6. Post Medieval

A further series of pits excavated for domestic rubbish disposal were distinguished by their content (Fig. 3b). These contained large quantities of the local 18th-century Donyatt pottery and, notably, a fragment of hamstone window mullion, possibly derived from the demolition of a medieval building. A rough stone-edged drain aligned approximately W-E at the north edge of the site, may have drained into a contemporary pit filled with large blocks of lias stone, which could represent a soakaway.

Above these deep post-medieval pits the deposits were removed by machine; previous experience, in 1986, indicated that little valuable information could be gained from the painstaking hand excavation of the latest deposits.

5.0 SUMMARY

This publication is an interim report and as such can only be an interim explanation of the archaeology revealed and recorded at Ilchester in 1988. A fuller publication and consideration of the results and their implications must await more extended study and analysis - inevitably a longer term and more costly process. Thanks to the considerable investment of time and resources into Ilchester's archaeology in recent years, we can now interpret the results of almost any new discoveries within established historical, cultural and economic models of its past. Despite their limitations both excavations are easily capable of such integration, and have for the most part fulfilled expectations.

5.1

At **Dolphin Lane** a more thorough exploration of the road located originally in 1986 was the principal objective. This was the first opportunity for a full examination of one of Ilchester's intra-mural Roman



streets and apart from the determination of its dimensions, character and alignment, evidence of a surprisingly long and complex history of use and refurbishment was revealed. These factors alone suggest a road of considerable importance within the town (*LENDINIAE*), which, projected onto the known or suspected street grid provides a link through from the two main arteries (the Foss Way and Dorchester roads) to the suspected West Gate and western suburbs (Fig. 1b).

Our failure to reveal fully its primary level and origin relative to Ilchester's suspected military origins was a disappointment, although a history and development extending apparently from the late-1st century AD. through to the end of the 4th century and beyond was well demonstrated. Over 20 separately-defined road surfaces were established along with episodes of more limited repair, and several sets of wheel tracks recorded. Flanking roadside drains were associated with several phases of road, and the cutting of a central ditch along with surface silting in the latest phases provides a glimpse of the late or sub-Roman town when street maintenance was in decline and the surfaces became progressively choked and ill-drained with silt and rubbish.

An additional bonus was the location of building frontages flanking the street, and their relationship to its different phases of use. Little more could be established of their history or identity and both had been heavily robbed of their stone foundations and upper courses. Those to the north were particularly massive, suggesting the possibility of a substantial building occupying part of the triangular insula so defined, occupying what must have been the central focus of *LENDINIAE*.

5.2

At Almshouse Lane another

sequence of events concerned Roman building arrangements within the town and a medieval street thereafter.

Once again it was unfortunate that total excavation of features and deposits was prohibited by a combination of adverse weather conditions and the complexity of the archaeology. Again, there was little sign of an early military phase here or of prehistoric occupation, despite some finds hinting at both and earlier discoveries in this part of the town. The two substantial sets of stone foundations relating to Roman building arrangements probably spanned a period from the later 2nd century through to the end of the 4th century. There was no evidence of an earlier phase of timber building, sometimes encountered elsewhere in Ilchester, but the radical change of layout recorded in the removal of Building II and its replacement by Building I was remarkable. Apart from the evidence of an extensive fire, no immediately obvious explanation for these events or for the status and function of these buildings can be advanced at this stage. Such flexibility in structural arrangements probably reflects the relative distance of this site from a street frontage where building continuity might have been maintained more rigidly.

Nevertheless, the alignment of Building II in particular suggests that another cross street is to be expected at no great distance to the north, and parallel to that investigated further away at Dolphin Lane (Fig. 1b).

5.3

On both sites much of the post-Roman activity recorded concerned excavations made for the disposal of rubbish in the medieval and post-medieval periods. Locations within the burgrave tenements to the rear of road-frontage properties on Church Street are indicated in both instances. At Almshouse Lane the medieval predecessor of this street was located as anticipated. The absence of street-frontage properties along its

northern side was somewhat unexpected, particularly as these are known to have existed to the south. The degree of protection afforded to the underlying Roman stratigraphy was consequently less than hoped for, though certainly operating immediately beneath the road and its margin.

6.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In terms of both academic and educative achievement the results of this season's field project have been justified fully. This claim to success is owed in no small measure to the efforts and contributions of many people and organisations. We are pleased to thank Mr. and Mrs. M. Penn and Bass Wales and West Ltd. for permission to carry out the excavations on their properties at Almshouse Lane and Dolphin Lane respectively. For the essential financial and material support to the project we are grateful to the following: The University of Birmingham, Ilchester Relief in Need and Educational Charity, Mr. and Mrs. M. Penn, Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society and Somerset County Council. A special debt of gratitude is owed to Mike and Pauline Penn for all their support, hospitality and forbearance throughout, in the course of excavations in their back garden. Many individuals contributed towards the project's success, and we are grateful to all the participating Birmingham students and to our enthusiastic local volunteers for their efforts on site. Several members of B.U.F.A.U. staff were involved, including members of Community

Programme schemes, and the assistance of all these colleagues is gratefully acknowledged. In particular we would thank Rachel Edwards, Peter Ellis, Clare Grove, Roy King, Trevor Pearson and Jon Sterenberg for undertaking supervisory responsibilities. Finally and not least, we express our gratitude to Ilchester and its present-day community for hospitality and tolerance of archaeologists for this and several seasons past, and to the past for its most stimulating archaeology!

Peter Leach
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September 1988

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