

REPORT ON THE EXCAVATIONS OF A MEDIEVAL FARM AT HILL TOP FARM, ALDWARK, NEAR BRASSINGTON, DERBYSHIRE 1992–95

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with contributions from

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INTRODUCTION

Aldwark is a small village in the heart of the White Peak, comprising a number of farms and associated cottages around an enclosed green. The village is recorded as far back as the mid-half of the 12th century as Ald(e)werk(e) (Cameron 1959, 339–341; Ekwall 1977, 5); the name Aldwark coming from the term meaning ‘old fortification’ or ‘old work’. This is taken to refer to the oval banked enclosure situated behind Hill Top Farm (SK 228573) which may pre-date the Medieval farm, but as yet there is no dating evidence for its construction (Hart 1981, 101). The banked enclosure lies on a sloping limestone shelf to the south-west of Hill Top Farm (Fig. 1), at an altitude of 304m (1000’). The hill falls gently eastwards towards Grange Mill in a series of natural terraces (limestone outcrops). The area has been mined for lead as is exemplified by the numerous lead shafts and rakes.

According to Cameron, the oldest farms recorded in the village are Lidgate Farm (1460) and Green Farm (1667), although their origins may go back earlier. The pottery from the excavations confirmed that the Medieval farm dates to at least the 13th–14th centuries AD, with the possibility of a late twelfth century date for its initial establishment.

The land to the north of Aldwark was formerly part of an estate belonging to Darley Abbey. Some of this land (as recorded by Cameron) was called ‘Monks Dale’ (now unidentified), which was probably the valley where the present Aldwark Grange, Grange Barn and Grange Mill are situated. In addition, Cameron identifies another dale called ‘Sewelldale’, taking its name from seven springs. This is probably the small valley directly to the north of Aldwark where a number of springs rise due to a basaltic sill outcropping on the slopes of the valley (Fig. 1). Schirewellclif (1210), or clear spring cliff, probably refers to the limestone outcrop just north of the village, and the spring at SK 222575 could indicate that this is the lost ‘Sewelldale’. There are only two springs which seem to be permanent in the village; one close to the green on the south-east corner is recorded as the Ducket Well (Naylor 1983, 76) (Fig. 2); and the other spring is close by Lidgate Farm, at the north end of the village (Fig. 1).

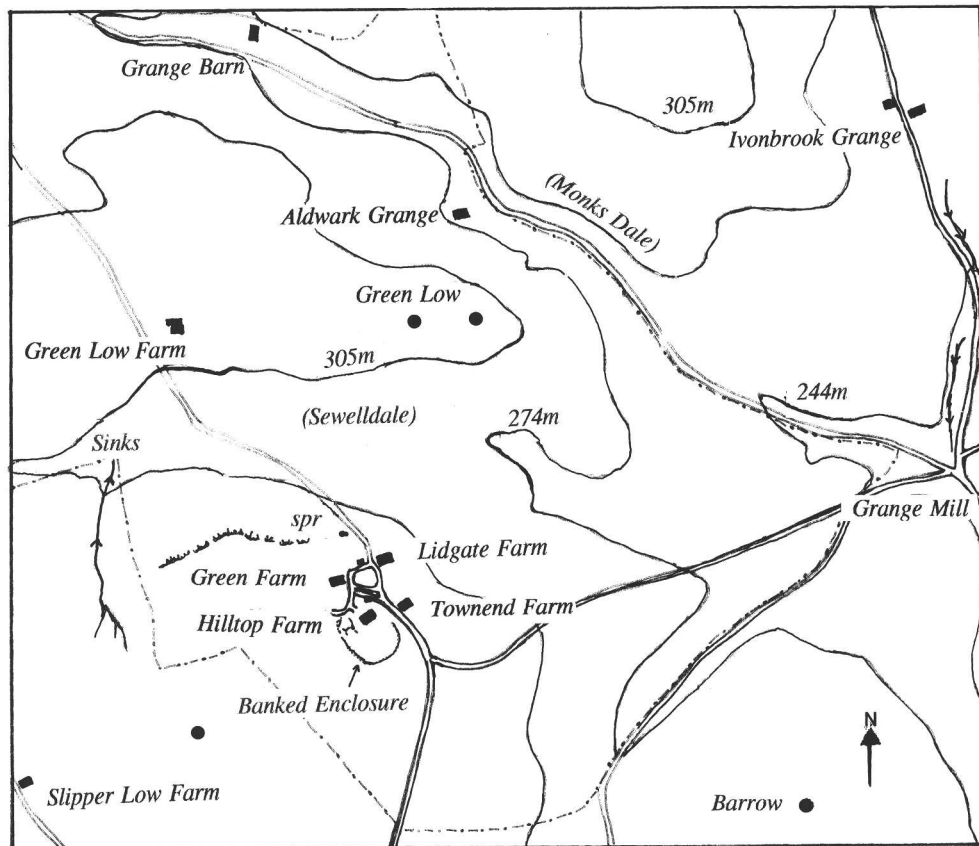


Fig. 1: Aldwarck and its environs.

THE SITE (Figs 1 and 2)

This was first recorded by L. H. Butcher and C. James in 1962 (East Midlands Archaeological Bulletin [EMAB] 1962, 5, 5) and subsequently surveyed together with the author (Butcher Collection, Sheffield City Museum 1976.749). Part of the site was subsequently damaged so a resurvey was undertaken in 1992 (Fig. 2). Butcher *et al.* indicated that the site was Romano-British in date. It is enclosed by a slab-on-edge (orthostats) and rubble bank which has been mutilated and removed in places by mining, farm buildings and later activities. It is substantial in parts where it has been preserved, with a possible inturned entrance on the northern perimeter close to the lane leading out of the village past Hill Top Farm. There are a few large limestone blocks (orthostats) still *in situ*, some embedded into later enclosure walls. Within the enclosure, which is approximately 140 × 150m, are a number of other features which appear to be domestic; a longhouse, a small house and a terrace with platforms and other smaller enclosures. Many of the archaeological features within the enclosure have been destroyed by lead

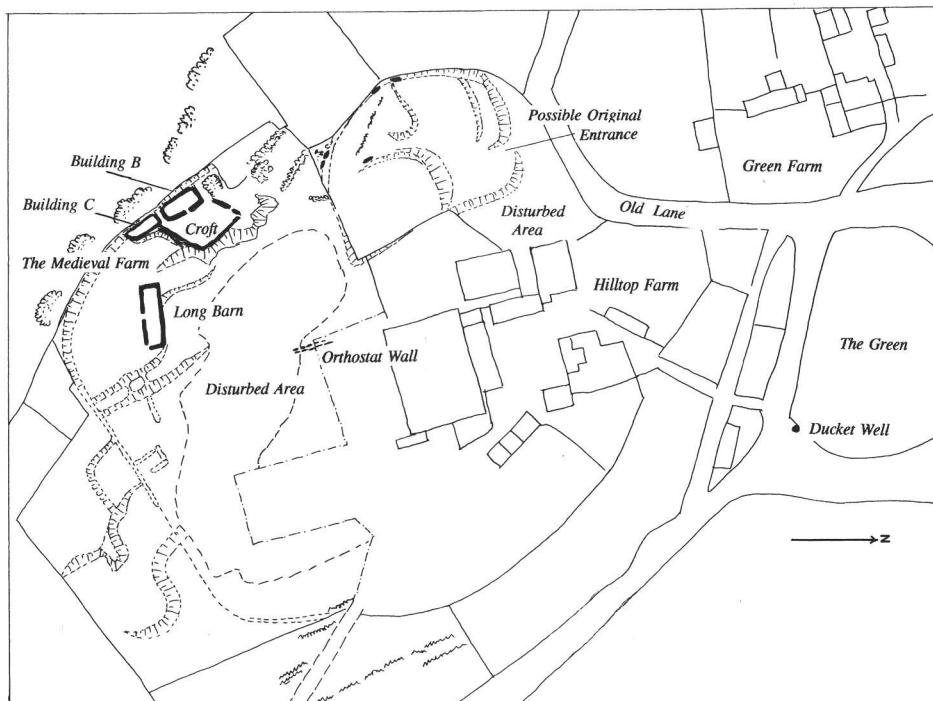


Fig. 2: Aldwark Enclosure: the Medieval Farm.

mining and later farming activities. There are a few unconnected orthostatic wall fragments left isolated by subsequent activities. The excavations were initially conducted as part of the author's research into Romano-British settlements in the area. Romano-British material has been recorded from around Aldwark i.e., at Greenlow, SK 232581 — pottery and coins etc. (EMAB 1964, 7, 1); at Stoney Low, SK 218579 — a flat quern (EMAB 1962, 5, 5); Romano-British pottery near Slipper Low, SK 225568; and also from SK 236567 and SK 235572 (G. A. Makepeace *pers. comm.*).

THE EXCAVATIONS

1992 The Longhouse (Long Barn) (Figs 2 and 3)

The first site selected for excavation was a building $17.5 \times 5\text{m}$ which appeared to have been cut into the hillslope with easily identifiable limestone walls. There appeared to be two doorways, one in the middle of the building and another in the south-east corner.

The excavations commenced in summer 1992. Turf was removed and the exposed surfaces cleaned up, recorded and photographed. Then rubble was removed by hand to expose the occupation surface and walls. It soon became apparent that the building was not Romano-British but Medieval, and proved to be similar in form to one at Staden, near Buxton (Makepeace 1995, 122–3). It also became evident that there had been some prehistoric activity on the site from the few flints found during the excavations. No Romano-British material was found in this area. As the excavations progressed it became

clear that there were only two original doorways to the building, a possible third through the northern wall was the result of later lead mining activities which had destroyed the wall.

There was some evidence for burning from the charcoal fragments found scattered across the western part of the site, however there were no pieces large enough to suggest burnt timbers. The charcoal may have been deposited after building timbers had been removed when remaining timberwork was fired. Alternatively the charcoal may be linked to other later agrarian/industrial activities. Post-Medieval activities continued on the site through to the present day, as is indicated by the fragments of Yorkshire Black Ware and a butter pot, c. 18th century, a 19th century pancheon in red brick tile fabric and some pottery from the 17th century.

From the pottery evidence (see below), the main period of occupation of the farm belongs to the 13th–14th centuries with perhaps a late 12th century beginning. It is possible that the absent 15th–16th century occupation is on the site of Hill Top Farm, where the present farmhouse exhibits 17th century structural features.

Construction of the Longhouse (Long Barn) (Fig. 3)

The longhouse/barn foundations comprised a double row of coursed limestone walling, three to four courses high (probably originally up to five or six courses), with an infill of weathered limestone rubble. The site appears to have been first cleared (de-turfed) and a sloping terrace cut into the hillside exposing the natural limestone in a number of places. Evidence for the cutting was found in the south-western section (Fig. 4). The foundation walls were approximately 0.7m high, the width varying between 0.6–1m. Although the building appeared to be of one period, there was a change from the use of stylobates/post-pads in one part of the building to the use of possible sill beams in the other. This may mark a change in construction or alteration, the post-pads belonging to an earlier timber phase.

A porch (3 × 2m) added on the south-eastern corner of the building around the doorway, was constructed of less substantial material. It appears to have comprised a simple stone and rubble foundation wall with a timber framed structure erected on it, abutting the main walls.

A second and larger doorway was set into the southern wall mid-way along its length. This was substantial, being 2m wide and set into half the width of the wall. No post holes were found in this area, only a few flat stones marking a possible base upon which a door sill beam may have lain, similar in form to the longhouse entrance at Staden (Makepeace 1995, 123).

No internal hearth was found and very little domestic debris, except for the occasional sherd or iron nail. The floor was hollowed and uneven through wear and possible sweeping to the extent that the natural limestone was exposed over a considerable area within the building.

In the western half of the building, it was possible to identify the seating for two pairs of posts. Along the northern wall, a pair of limestone post-pads were found, laid directly opposite the ‘bays’ where posts had been seated in the opposing wall. In the most westerly of the two bays there were indications that a post, 0.2 × 0.3m thick and 0.13m deep with packing stones around, had occupied this position. When these bays were excavated and

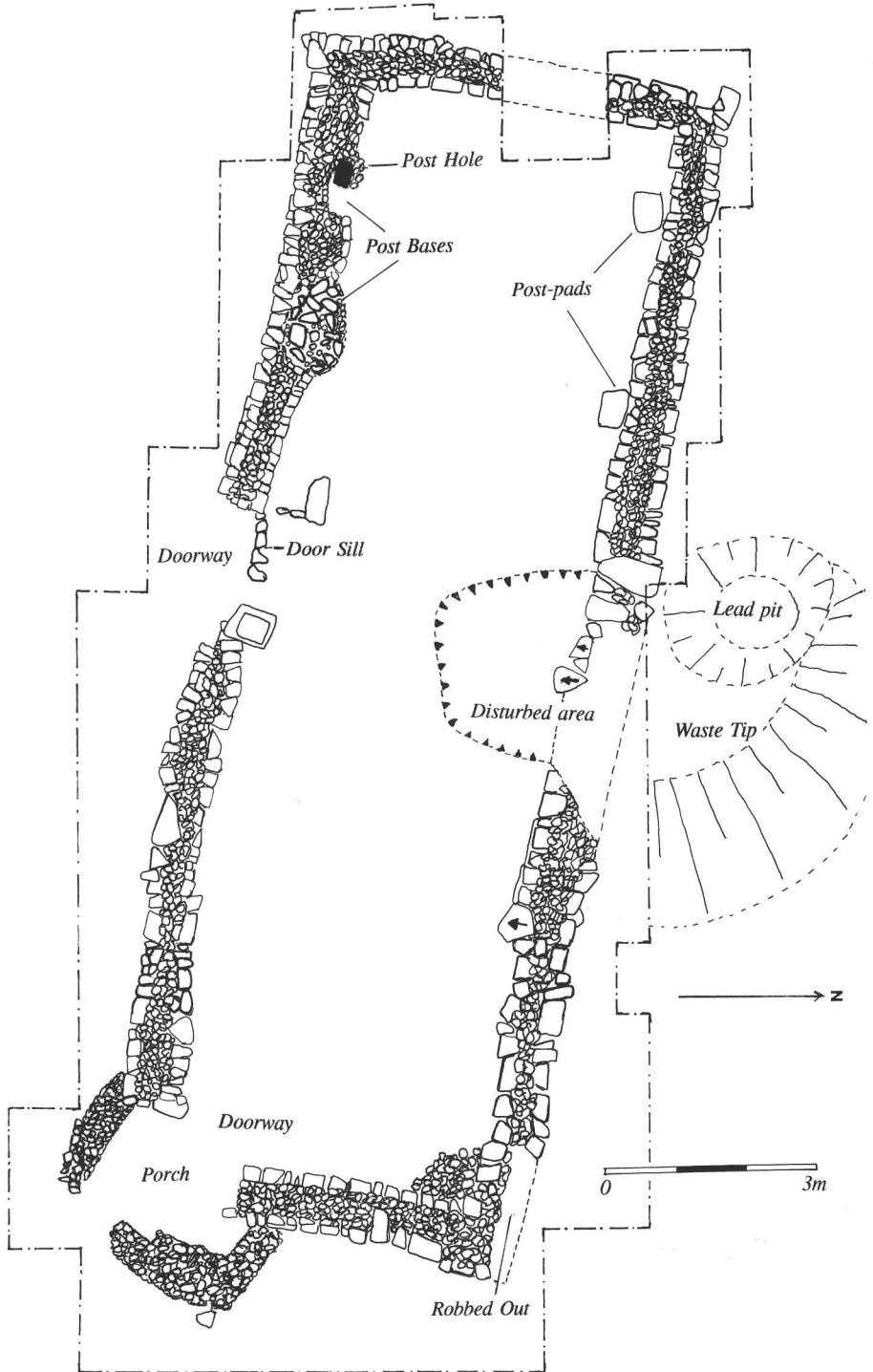


Fig. 3: Aldwark Long Barn: after excavation.

Long Barn

SECTIONS

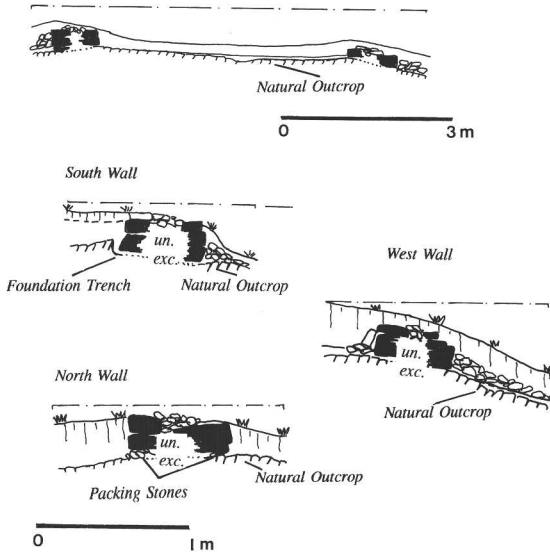


Fig. 4: Aldwark Long Barn: sections.

cleared, it was found that the second post had been seated on a small platform of flat stones and that the wall had been built around both posts.

No more post-pads were found in the eastern section of the longhouse, but assuming that the distance between each was about the same, and counting the end gables, then there may have been seven pairs of posts to the building. It is possible that in the eastern section posts were set into timber sills lying on the low stone foundation walls, rather than on stone pads. It is also curious that two posts were embedded into the wall while the opposite pair were set on post-pads and that there are no other indications of this embedding elsewhere in the building or of more than one phase of construction. This may indicate that the posts were reused timbers from an earlier building being incorporated into the longhouse/barn.

Set in the north-eastern corner of the longhouse/barn was a small low triangular platform of weathered stones, but this was unassociated with any other feature.

There were large amounts of limestone rubble spread on either side of the walls and it may be possible to infer that these formed additional courses, probably up to two to three courses higher than the present walls.

Purpose of the Longhouse (Long Barn)

Is this a longhouse or barn? There were no sub-divisions within the building, no hearth or hearth stone and little Medieval debris to suggest habitation (Fig. 5). Although this does not rule out habitation, as is indicated by the cleanliness of many longhouses on other sites (Beresford 1989, 99). Most sherds were found close to the doorways, as were the iron nails. There were no drains or other indications that this was a byre for animals,

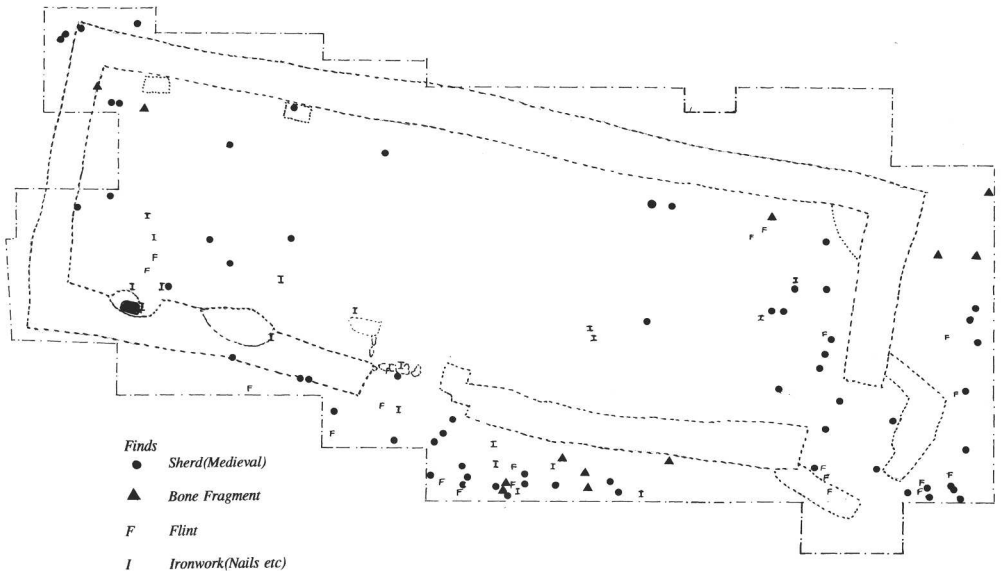


Fig. 5: Aldwark Long Barn: distributions of pottery, bone, flint and ironwork.

as was found at the Lawrence Field site, near Hathersage (G. A. Makepeace *pers. comm.*; Hart 1981, 134), and other Medieval sites. The porch on the corner of the building indicates that some protection was required. Certainly porches have been found in the higher villages in the South-West from the 13th century onwards (Beresford and Hurst 1989, 97). The floor of the building was uneven, most of the hollows were in areas where the subsoil was present, the more prominent parts of the floor being limestone bedrock. In conclusion it would appear that this building was a barn which formed part of a farm occupying the old enclosure. From the survey (Fig. 2) it would appear that the smaller buildings to the west were the house(s), lying at right angles to the barn.

An aisled building with post-pads and a building with a porch were found at Roystone Grange, which appear to have been abandoned by the end of the 13th century (Hodges and Wildgoose 1991, 46–50). These buildings may have had low stone foundation walls and timber superstructures similar to those at Aldwark.

1993–4 Buildings B and C (Figs 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10)

Further excavations were conducted to the west of the long barn, close to the old enclosure bank where a terraced area is present which seemed to indicate the site of a building or buildings. The 1993 excavations proved the existence of one building (Building B) and part of another, Building C (not excavated until 1994). Building B was fully excavated together with an area of the ‘courtyard’.

The House — Building B

After initial clearance and removal of overburden it was ascertained that the building had been damaged at the northern end by robbing, probably by wall builders for the later enclosure wall, and by lead mining where a ‘quarry-pit’ had been dug. The building seems to have been constructed in two distinct styles. The southern half was constructed

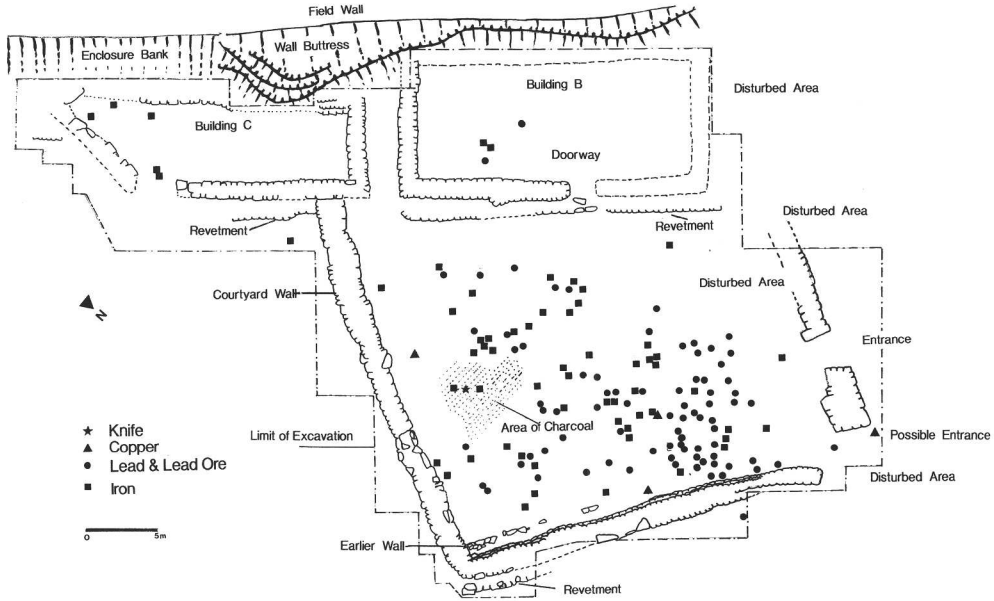


Fig. 6: Aldwark, Buildings B and C: distribution of metal objects.

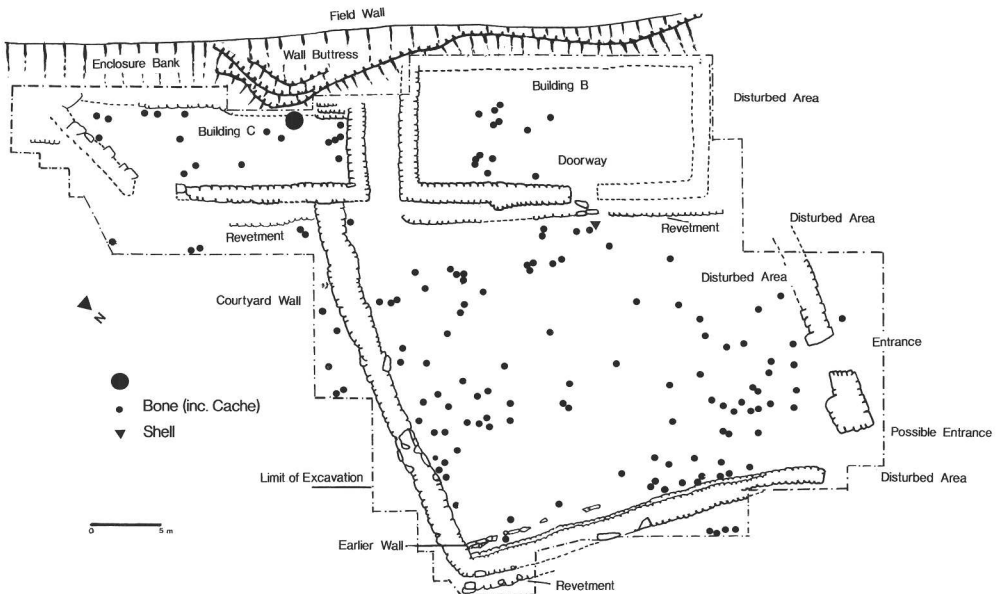


Fig. 7: Aldwark, Buildings B and C: distributions of bone and shell.

of a built 'coursed' foundation wall up to the doorway where it changed to a rubble platform of small weathered stones and limestone gravel, perhaps forming a solid foundation for sill beams.

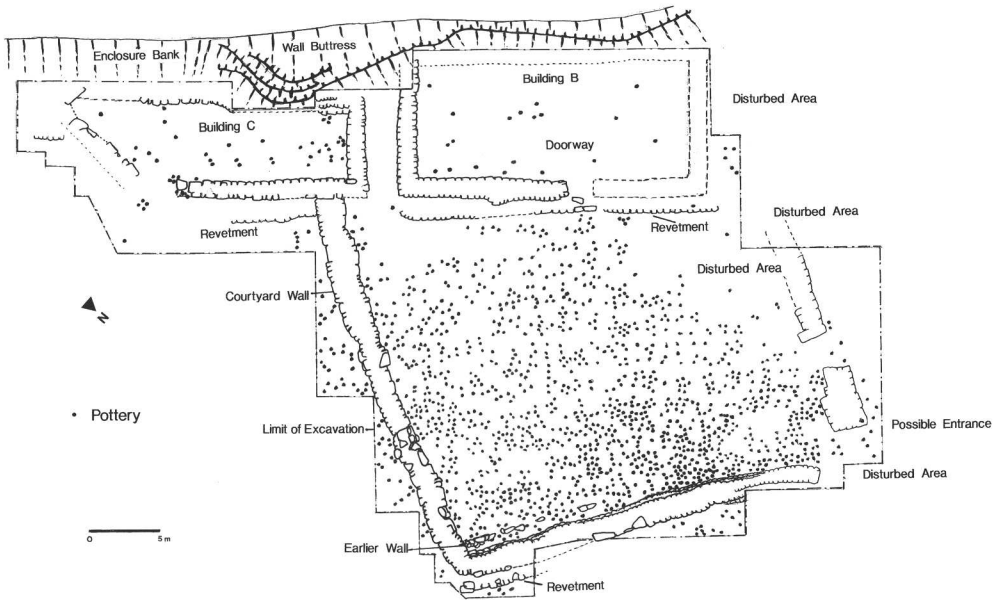


Fig. 8: Aldwark, Buildings B and C: distribution of pottery.

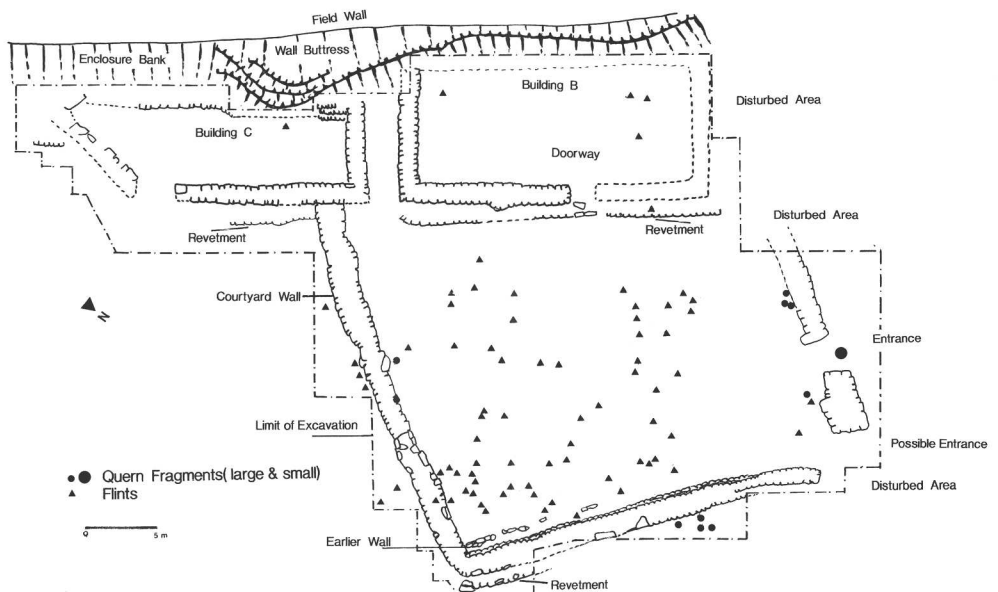


Fig. 9: Aldwark, Buildings B and C: distributions of querns and flints.

The building measures 5×11 m, and was constructed on what appears to have been a cleared site, cut into the back of the slope and edge of the enclosing bank. The uneven surface had been levelled by an infill of small weathered limestones and limestone gravel, 0.1–0.5 m thick and tightly packed together. This material was intermixed with Medieval

refuse (bone and pottery) and the occasional flint. Along the eastern side of this platform and floor, a revetment was constructed of limestone blocks with stone rubble infill for consolidation.

The building's eastern wall was four to five courses high and *c.* 0.7–0.75m wide. The shorter southern wall ran up to, and partially cut into, the earlier enclosure bank. All that could be deduced from the poorly preserved rear wall was a line of fragmentary limestone blocks marking its base. Presumably a sill beam had rested on this as no post holes were found.

A collapse of the eastern wall may be indicated by the bulge near the centre, where the foundation wall inclined outwards in places. Fallen blocks were found lying over the revetment and into the courtyard area indicating that the wall had collapsed outwards.

Internally the floor area had been cleared and partially levelled with limestone rubble/gravel. Rough limestone paving formed the floor close to the doorway and part of the terrace upon which part of the foundation walls had been built. From this, the floor sloped up towards the rear wall. The doorway (approximately 0.92m wide) lay halfway along the eastern wall with rough stone steps leading into the building from the courtyard. Iron nails, pottery and a few flints artefacts were found intermixed on, and in, the floor material but no other domestic features were found.

Building C

A much smaller building, constructed in a similar manner to the Long Barn and Building B, was 3.5m wide by 11m long with a tapering section to the south-east. The walls varied in thickness from 0.5–0.75m and from three to four courses high, with occasional packing stone(s) under the basal blocks. Like the other buildings it had been constructed on a cleared site cut into the hillslope and enclosing bank, roughly levelled and then the walls constructed on top. The rear western wall was better preserved in places and cut into the natural limestone outcrop, but was not continuous suggesting that the rear wall uprights needed little support. An entrance may have existed along the eastern wall where the coursed walling terminates and the rubble wall begins, as seen in Building B. No post holes or stone thresholds were found.

The eastern coursed wall ran straight before changing to a rubble wall and veering to join the rear wall at an angle. This southern part of the wall had some revetting built into the rubble construction for support, as did the longer eastern wall, similar in fact to Building B. The rubble wall was less well defined.

1993–5 The Courtyard Area

Excavations within the courtyard area started in 1993 and continued through until 1995. It was found that the original undulating land surface had been masked by the gradual build up of occupation debris, up to a depth of 0.4m, forming what is now a gently sloping terrace. In this occupation layer was found much of the pottery (Fig. 8); the occasional flint (Fig. 9); iron nails and iron fragments, lead ore and smelted lead, a spindle whorl, an iron knife (Fig. 6); bone (Fig. 7); and other artefacts. No evidence for earlier structures was found, except for an earlier section of the eastern courtyard wall of which a few basal stones survived. There was evidence for fires as indicated by large spreads of charcoal, but no hearth or burnt clay. The concentration of charcoal was approximately 2 × 2m square, close to a large natural limestone slab (Fig. 6).

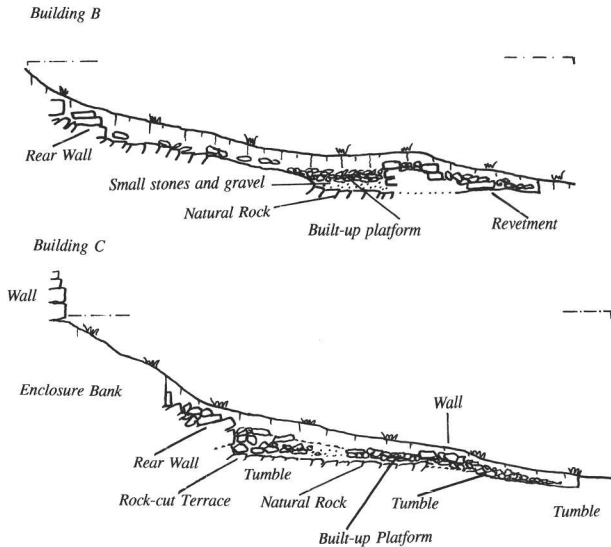


Fig. 10: Aldwark, Buildings B and C: sections.

The Courtyard Wall and Entrances

This wall began at the north-eastern corner of Building C and ran for 14m north-eastwards towards the edge of a natural outcrop where it turned at right-angles to run north-westwards for another 14m. The wall here had been revetted in places, probably to strengthen its base, as an earlier wall was found inside the later wall. The later wall was 0.7–1.10m wide and up to four to five courses high with packing stones in places, supporting some of the basal blocks with the occasional orthostat. Towards the north-east corner the wall becomes irregular in width, probably due to frequent collapse. In the courtyard area there were signs of other wall foundations but these were inconclusive. At the northern corner, there appears to have been a narrow entrance (though this is not certain due to robbing), followed by a shorter section of walling 2.5m long to the main entrance. From here the wall ran up to the larger house site (Building B), although most of this walling had been destroyed by later activities. The entrance way was paved with limestone slabs and a reused broken quern fragment, all lying over natural limestone.

The Medieval Farm

The site is reminiscent of the properties of the prosperous Medieval peasant farmer or yeoman who acquired their freehold during the later Medieval period (Beresford and Hurst 1989, 107). The farm demonstrates prosperity and a break with the earlier longhouse tradition (where living accommodation and animals were under one roof) emphasised by the distinction between living and farm accommodation, not only in separate buildings but also at an angle to each other. Whether there were any other buildings associated with the farm which could have been byres awaits discovery. Animal bone evidence also indicates that perhaps there were pens for cattle and sheep nearby.

THE FINDS

Summary

Prehistoric

The evidence for prehistoric activity comes from flint and chert artefacts, including debitage, scrapers, a barbed and tanged arrowhead, cores, a possible leaf arrowhead and knife(s), and a composite flint blade which may have formed part of a much larger tool. No structures or features were found associated with these due to the later clearance and disturbance of the site during construction and occupation of the farm. The diagnostic pieces suggest a Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age date.

One very small sherd of Beaker with comb decoration was found in the courtyard which may well have been associated with the other artefacts, as it is of similar date.

Medieval

Most of the Medieval pottery was locally manufactured at Burley Hill near Duffield and at Brackenfield near Wingfield, where a 13th to 14th century date appear to be firmly established, although there may be some late 12th century fabrics. The lead spindle whorl and lead ore suggest some small scale lead processing on site for domestic use, as well as the possibility of spinning and weaving. The copper tweezers are a rare find and most certainly would have belonged to the 'lady' of the house, as also the copper belt mounts.

The fragments of gritstone querns certainly indicate grain processing on the site, though many had been reused as paving stones, wall stones or hearth stones, as some have a thick, sooty, carbonised deposit on their flat surfaces.

Over 2150g of lead ore was recovered from the courtyard area, including 45g of lead in the form of small, twisted, mis-shapen bars. Most of the ore appears to have been collected from open areas or streams and not mined, due to its weathered appearance.

Most of the iron objects are nails and the occasional larger piece of unidentifiable, badly corroded metal. In total, approximately 373g of iron was found around the farm but in no real concentrations.

Post-Medieval pottery

These are mainly 18th and 19th century fabrics scattered immediately above the Medieval layer, though occasionally intermixed within the same strata through later disturbances.

Prehistoric artefacts (Fig. 11)

- 1 Core — flint, brown, translucent, blue patina, cortex present, multi-directional, small flake scars. Core, Class C (Clark 1960).
- 2 Blade — flint, brown, semi-translucent, cortex on right side, broken, some finer retouch on left edge.
- 3 Core — flint, brown, semi-translucent, multi-directional, partly battered and broken.
Core, Class C (Clark 1960).
- 4 Blade — flint, dark brown, semi-translucent, broken tip, retouched on right distal edge, rounded basal edge, possible leaf-shaped arrowhead.
- 5 Blade — cherty-flint, grey, retouch around nose.

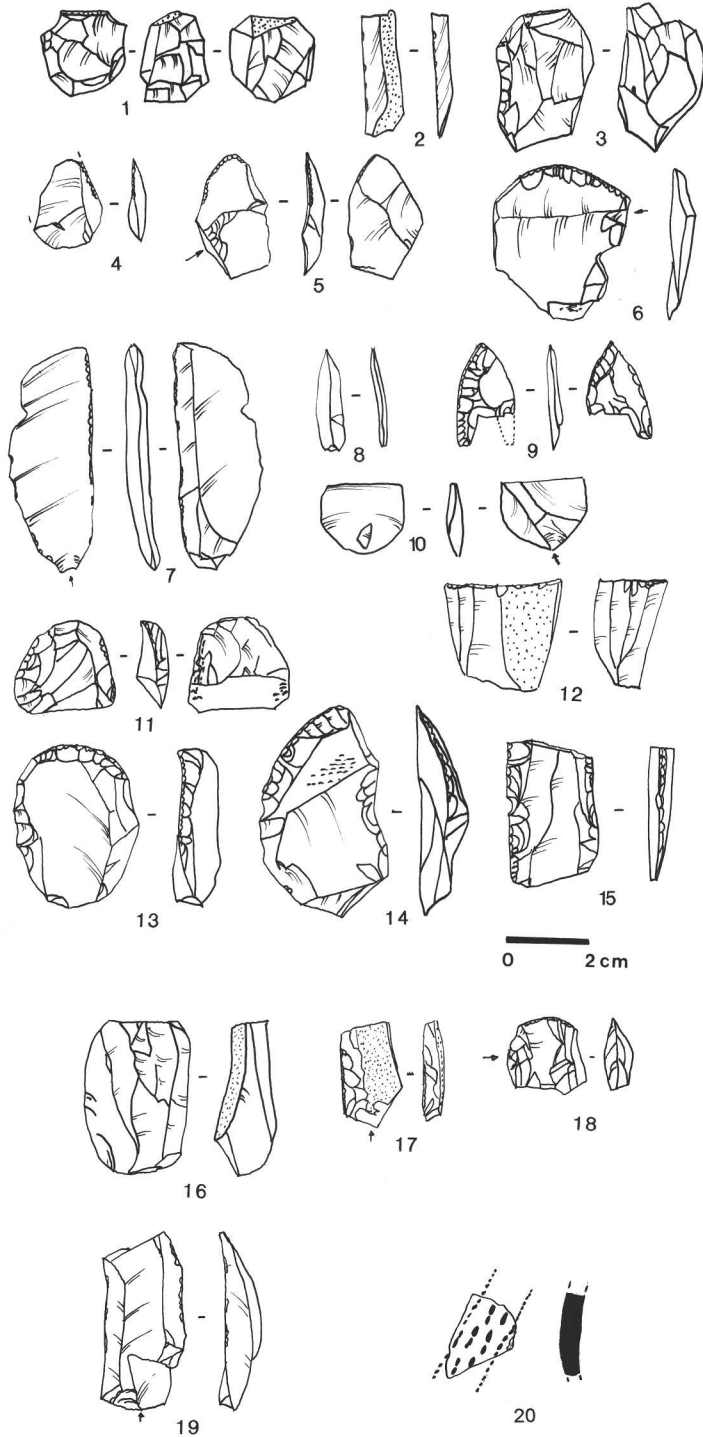


Fig. 11: Aldwark: prehistoric flints and pottery.

- 6 Scraper — flint, grey-brown, semi-translucent, broken base, fine parallel retouch on right edge.
End scraper (short), (Clark 1960).
- 7 Denticulate knife — flint, grey, fine retouch on dorsal left and right ventral edges, notch formed by fine retouch (distal-medial).
- 8 Point — flint, light grey, semi-translucent, no retouch.
- 9 Barbed and tanged arrowhead — flint, brown, translucent, bifacial retouch, one tang and barb broken. Similar to Conygar Hill Type b (Green 1980).
- 10 Blade (snapped) — flint, grey-brown, hinge distal termination, no retouch.
- 11 Scraper — flint, grey-brown, semi-translucent, broken base, battered edge, tip broken, possible use as fabricator. End scraper, short (Clark 1960).
- 12 Core — flint, white, mottled, cortex present, uni-directional flaking. Core Class A2 (Clark 1960).
- 13 Scraper — flint, red-brown, horseshoe type, steep retouch on nose and sides. End scraper, short (Clark 1960).
- 14 Knife — flint, brown, translucent, sub-parallel retouch along left edge, plano-convex knife.
- 15 Knife (snapped) — flint, grey, mottled, triangular section, steep retouch on back, finer retouch on left edge, possible composite tool, ?knife-sickle.
- 16 Core — flint, white/grey, unidirectional, cortex present. Core Class B2 (Clark 1960).
- 17 Blade — flint, brown, translucent, broken, cortex on dorsal surface, retouched on left dorsal edge.
- 18 Scraper/chisel — flint, brown, translucent, broken, retouched on nose, very sharp edge. End scraper, short (Clark 1960).
- 19 Blade — flint, blue-white, fine retouch on left and right edges, possible knife or composite tool.
- 20 Beaker sherd — small sherd of Beaker pottery showing comb decoration (P. Beswick *pers. comm.*).

Medieval metal and other artefacts (Fig. 12)

- 1 Spindle whorl — lead, 32mm diam., 5mm thick, hole 1cm, slightly off-centre, weight (34.5g), plain, slight rounding of the edges (similar to one from Staden: Makepeace 1995, 130–1).
- 2 Tweezers — copper alloy, folded narrow strip with loop, possible soldered shank at top, two loops around shank, one moveable, bent and twisted. Type II (Egan and Pritchard 1993, 382–3).
- 3 ?Jet fragment — polished surface, round, chamfered edge, 16 × 14 × 5mm. Use unknown.
- 4 Lead ?pin — 32 × 3.5 × 3mm, bent at end and possibly broken, mid-rib ridge running along both sides, possible casting mark. Use unknown, possibly tongue off a buckle.
- 5 Knife — iron, badly corroded 153 × 15 × 5mm, whittle tang, possible hilt band in place, tang slightly below shoulder, triangular section. Similar to examples from Staden (Makepeace 1995, 130–1).

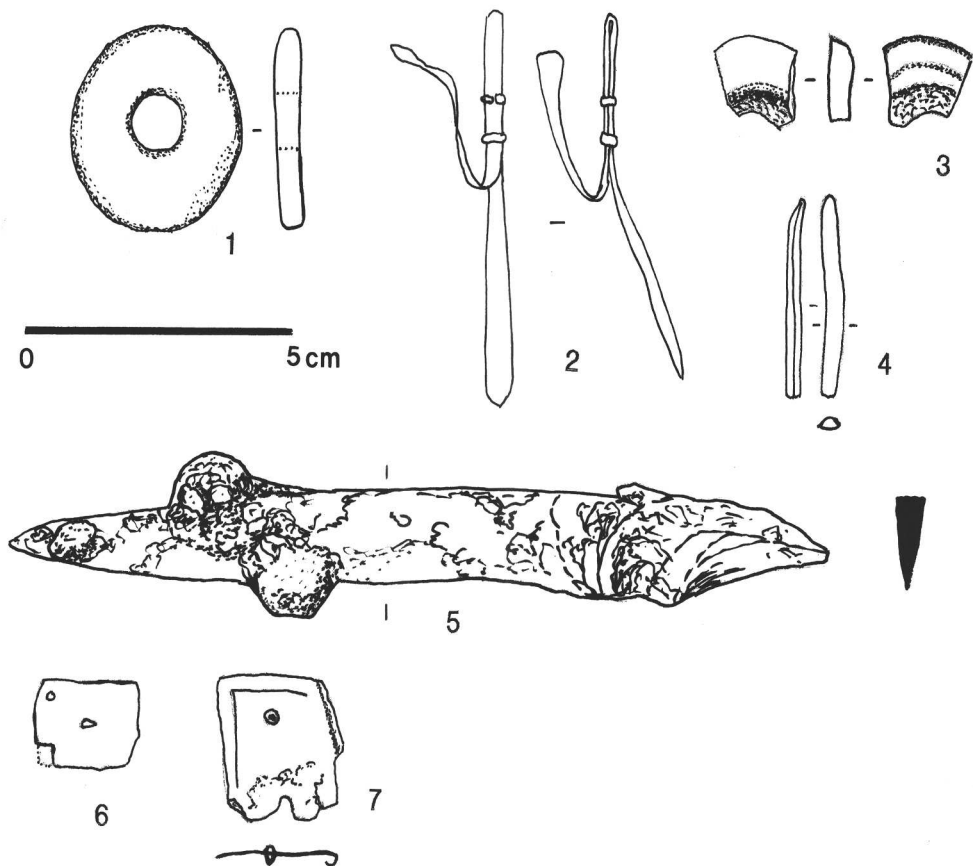


Fig. 12: Aldwark: Medieval metal and other artefacts.

- 6 Mount/Belt chape — copper alloy rectangular, plain, broken corner, two holes present (originally three) central one slightly oval, $20 \times 14 \times 0.05\text{mm}$.(G. Egan *pers. comm.*).
- 7 Mount/Belt chape — copper alloy, lozenge shape, line decoration around two edges, rivet still present, slightly corroded, broken and bent (edge line), possibly from buckle plate, $22 \times 23 \times 0.05\text{mm}$.(G. Egan *pers. comm.*).

Not illustrated:

Copper fragment — $10 \times 7 \times 1\text{mm}$, use unknown.

Copper fragment — $17 \times 13 \times 2\text{mm}$, use unknown.

Glass lump — $9 \times 8/9 \text{ min/max} \times 1\text{mm}$, smooth, rounded corners and edges, matt surface, air bubble inclusions in glass. Use and date unknown.

Stone artefacts (Fig. 13)

- 1 Quern (?Saddle) — fragment, fine grained sandstone (Millstone Grit), dished surface, smooth, could also be sharpening stone, $130 \times 70 \times 23\text{mm}$.
- 2 Quern — fragment of flat quern, gritstone, upper stone, slight dishing on lower surface, some pick-pecked marks on outer edge, $100 \times 70 \times 4\text{mm}$.

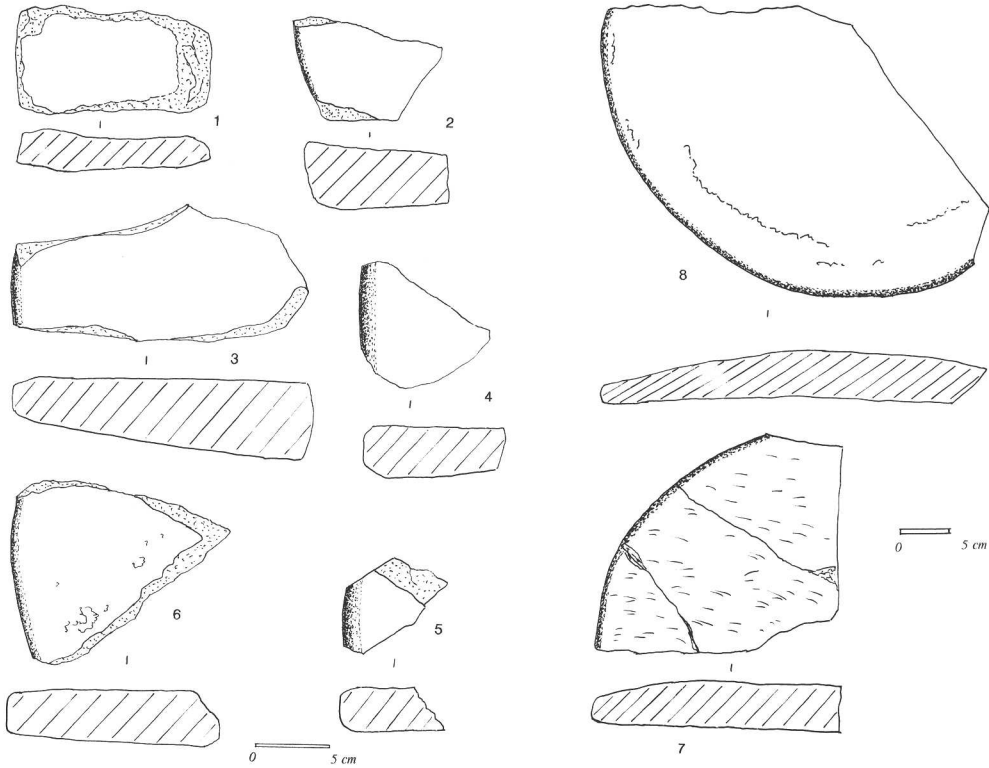


Fig. 13: Aldwark: querns.

- 3 Quern — fragment of flat quern, coarse sandstone, pick-pecked on base, possible lower stone, appears to have been used as a hearth stone with sooty residue on old grinding surface, later incorporated into the courtyard wall, 200 × 90 × 50mm.
- 4 Quern — fragment of flat quern, sandstone, similar reuse as in 3 above, 90 × 80 × 30mm.
- 5 Quern — fragment, coarse sandstone, deep pick-pecked grooves on lower surface, smooth upper surface, sooty carbon deposits, 150 × 120 × 35mm.
- 6 Quern — small fragment, fine grained sandstone, smooth upper surface, 70 × 60 × 30mm.
- 7 Quern — fragment of flat quern, coarse sandstone, pick-pecked on both upper and grinding surfaces, 250 × 200 × 50mm.
- 8 Quern — large fragment of flat quern, coarse sandstone, pick-pecked on grinding surface, slightly dished undersurface, 400 × 255 × 50mm.

Not illustrated:

Gritstone fragment — possibly from quern, flat smooth upper surface, burnt, 60 × 50 × 50mm.

Sandstone, part of waterworn pebble — possible sharpener, 55 × 30 × 40mm, groove on upper smooth surface.

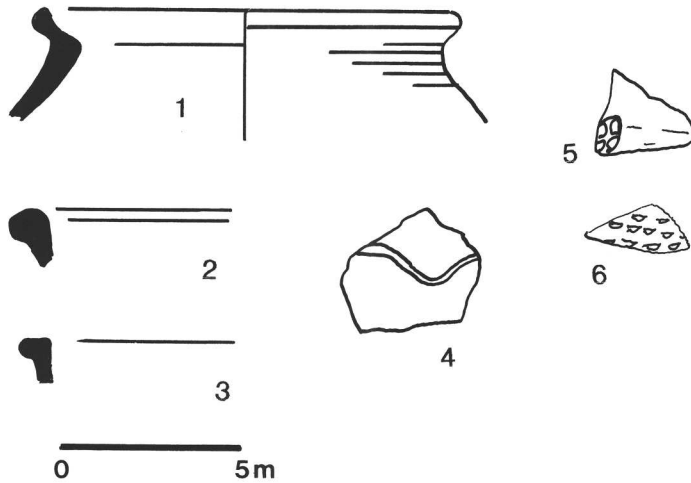


Fig. 14: Aldwark Long Barn: Medieval pottery from 1992 excavations.

Pottery Reports by R. C. Alvey

Pottery from the Longhouse Excavations 1992 (Fig. 14)

- 1 Cooking Pot, splashed ware, glazed, green with orange margins outside; inside brown-orange, sooted exterior.
- 2 Rim sherd, sandy ware.
- 3 Rim sherd, sandy ware.
- 4 Body sherd, wavy decoration.
- 5 Body sherd, Burley Hill ware, grid stamp decoration.
- 6 Body sherd, Brackenfield ware.

Medieval pottery, not illustrated:

A number of small sherds (98), mainly cooking pots together with a few jug sherds.

Fabric	Description	Sherds	Weight (grammes)
a	Orange-brown-grey coarse sandy fabric. Surfaces comparable to medium sandpaper. Possible kiln site at Burley Hill.	33	160.5
b	Orange-grey sandy fabric, much smoother than above. Rim sherd has splashed glaze. 12th-13th century.	6	33.5
c	Burley Hill, orange sandy fabrics.	35	136.5
d	Brackenfield. Creamy white and orange sandy fabrics. Knife trimmed base edges.	24	161.5
	Total	98	492

Table 1: Analysis of Medieval pottery from 1992 Excavations.

Post-Medieval pottery, not illustrated:

Description	Sherds	Weight (grammes)
Yorkshire black-type ware in a creamy white fabric. Red-purple slip below a black glaze. <i>c.</i> 18th century.	2	15.5
Butter pot in a very hard purple fabric, glazed on inside only. <i>c.</i> 18th century.	2	47
Pancheon type ware in a red brick-like fabric. <i>c.</i> 18–19th century.	5	51
Total	9	113.5

Table 2: Selection of Post-Medieval pottery from 1992 Excavations.

Pottery from the Farm Excavations 1993 (Fig. 15)

- 1 Cooking Pot, in orange-buff sandy fabric with grey core.
- 2 Cooking Pot, in orange rough sandy fabric.
- 3 Cooking Pot, in orange-grey, brown, rough sandy fabric with some mica.
- 4 Wide mouthed cooking pot in orange sandy fabric with grey core.
- 5 Cooking Pot in orange sandy fabric with some mica. Soot on external surface.
- 6 Cooking Pot in orange sandy fabric, slightly smoother than 5.
- 7 Body sherd in grey-black sandy fabric, finger nail impressions.
- 8 Cooking Pot in orange sandy fabric with grey core.
- 9 Cooking Pot in cream smooth sandy fabric with some mica. Single small spot of glaze.
- 10 Cooking Pot in creamy orange sandy fabric with a grey core.
- 11 Cooking Pot in hard cream fabric.
- 12 Cooking Pot in cream sandy fabric.
- 13 Cooking Pot in pale red brick fabric with some sand and skerry. Grey core.
- 14 Jug in orange-grey sandy fabric. Dark green crazed glaze.
- 15 Jug in orange-grey sandy fabric. Pale green glaze.
- 16 Jug in grey sandy fabric.
- 17 Body sherd in hard grey sandy fabric with some mica. Green glaze. Applied pad with grid decoration. Similar to Burley Hill types.
- 18 Chamber pot in hard cream fabric. Mottled ware.
- 19 Butter pot in red brick fabric with voids, iron oxide and skerry. Brown-purple glaze inside.
- 20 Large pancheon in a pale red brick fabric with red iron, voids and the odd sand grain. Reddish brown crazed glaze inside.

Medieval Pottery from 1993 Excavations

Fabric	Sherds	Weight (grammes)
Medieval		
1 Shelly wares	11	88
2 Cream sandy wares	34	272
3 Orange-purple sandy wares	5	45
4 Orange-grey sandy wares	46	529

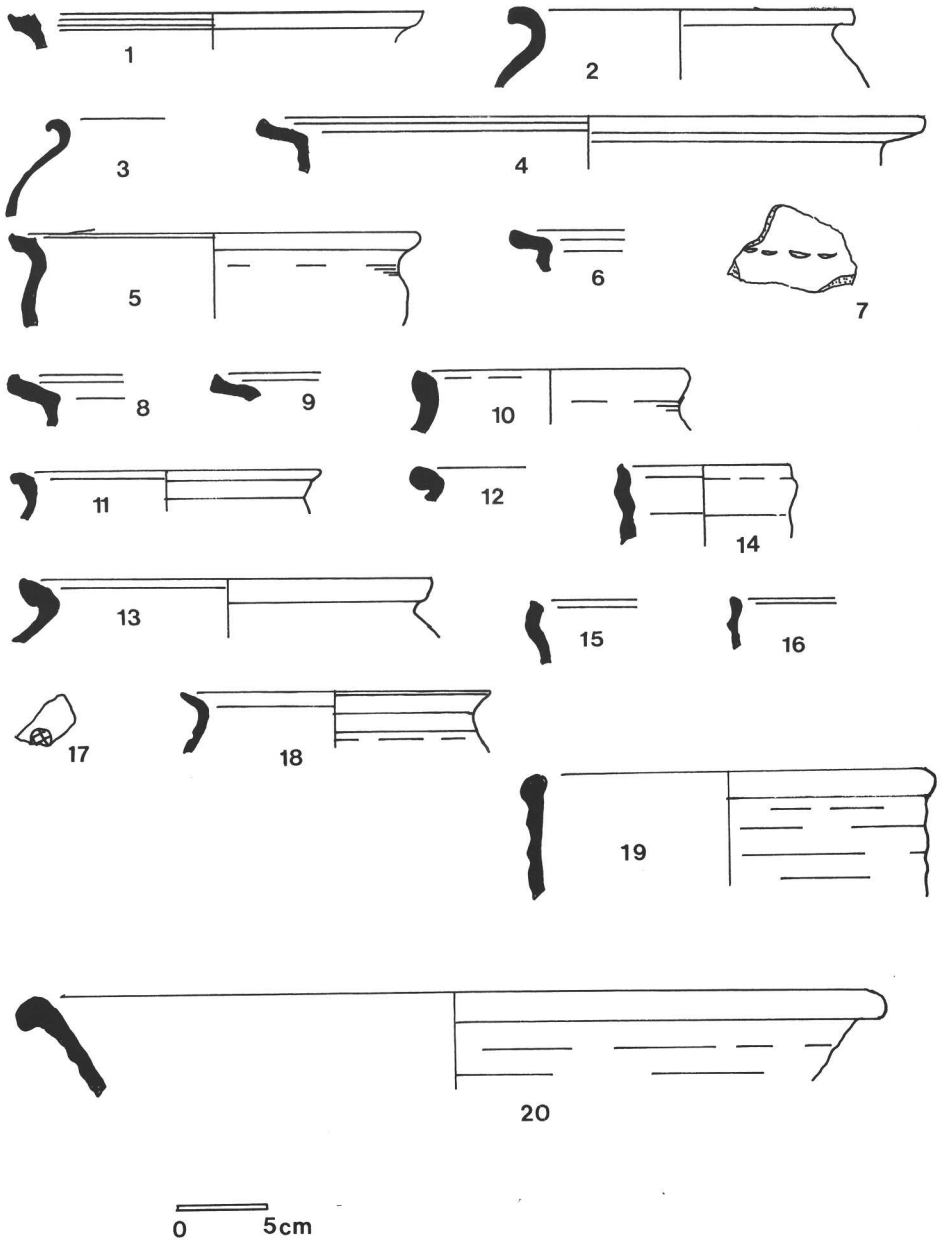


Fig. 15: Aldwark: Medieval pottery from 1993 excavations.

5	Orange-grey-cream sandy wares	96	568
6	Orange sandy wares	125	982
7	General Brackenfield-Burley Hill wares	67	756
Total		384	3240
Post-Medieval (sample)			
	Staffordshire slip-combed ware, 18th century.	11	78
	Mottled ware, early 18th century	1	4
	Nottingham salt glazed, possible brick, 18th century.	1	4
	Mottled ware, early 18th century.	2	58
	Bellarmino, 17th century	1	41
	Butter pot, 18th century	7	222
	Midland black-brown, 18th century	1	88
	Rim, pancheon, 18–19th century.	3	318
Total		27	813
Medieval pottery from enclosure surface			
	In silo bank: body sherds, orange sandy ware, brown glaze, 13–14th century.	4	16
	On molehill: body sherd, cream sandy fabric, green glaze.	1	5
Total		5	21

Table 3: Analysis of pottery from 1993 Excavations.

Medieval pottery from the 1994 Excavations (Fig. 16)

- 1 Pancheon, shelly ware, reddish-brown fabric with wavy line decoration on inside of rim.
- 2 Pancheon, shelly ware, reddish-brown fabric.
- 3 Pancheon, shelly ware, reddish-brown fabric.
- 4 Cooking Pot, in hard sandy-gritty fabric with red iron. Glaze green brown.
- 5 Cooking Pot, in hard rough orange sandy fabric, burnt inside.
- 6 Dish, in hard rough orange sandy fabric with grey core.
- 7 Cooking Pot or Jar, in hard orange sandy fabric with grey core.
- 8 Cooking Pot, in grey to orange rough sandy fabric.
- 9 Cooking Pot, in hard orange sandy fabric with grey core.
- 10 Jug, in hard smooth orange sandy fabric with grey core.
- 11 Jug, in hard orange sandy fabric with some vegetable matter included, glazed dark green.
- 12 Cooking Pot, in hard smooth brown-buff sandy fabric.
- 13 Cooking Pot, in semi-vitrified orange sandy fabric, glazed dark green inside.
- 14 Cooking Pot, in hard, red-orange, sandy fabric with a grey core, traces of glaze.
- 15 Pancheon, in creamy pink smooth fabric, splashes of pale green glaze outside and sooted.
- 16 Cooking Pot, in smooth orange sandy fabric. Spots of green glaze.
- 17 Jug, in smooth orange sandy fabric.
- 18 Body sherd, in rough orange sandy fabric, decorated with wavy lines and grooves, sooted.

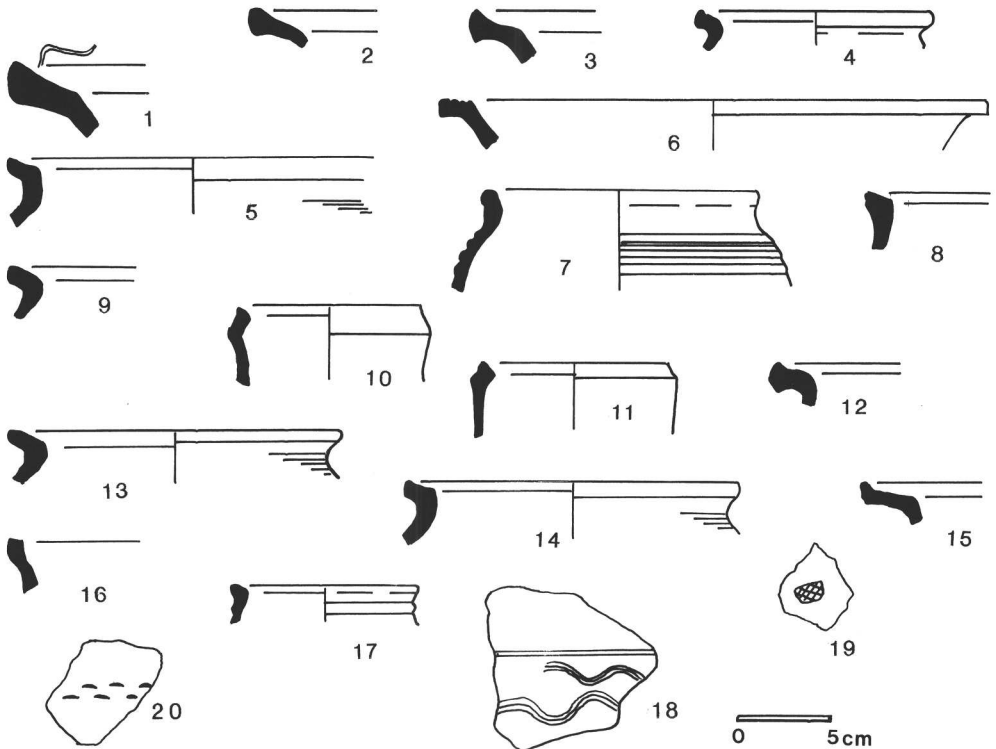


Fig. 16: Aldwark: Medieval pottery from 1994 excavations.

- 19 Body sherd, in hard orange sandy fabric with a grey core, green glaze. Applied pads with grid stamp.
 20 Body sherd, in rough orange sandy fabric, finger nail impressions.

Ware	Sherds	Weight (grammes)
Brackenfield/Burley Hill wares	356	2730
Rough orange sandy wares	232	2181
Shelly ware	17	279
Splashed ware	8	109
Total	613	5299

Table 4: Analysis of Medieval pottery from 1994 Excavations.

Medieval pottery from the 1995 Excavations (Fig. 17)

- 1 Jug, in hard orange smooth sandy fabric with a grey core.
- 2 Jug, in hard orange smooth sandy fabric with a grey core.
- 3 Jug, in hard orange smooth sandy fabric with grey core.
- 4 Jug, in hard orange smooth sandy fabric with grey core.

- 5 Cooking pot, in hard cream, smooth sandy fabric with mica and red iron.
- 6 Cooking pot, in hard brown-buff sandy fabric with mica.
- 7 Cooking pot, in hard orange-buff sandy fabric with grey core.
- 8 Cooking pot, in hard orange sandy fabric, glazed orange-brown. Trace of a wavy line decoration.
- 9 Cooking pot, in hard buff shelly fabric with some grit inclusions.
- 10 Cooking pot, in hard orange sandy fabric with voids. Run of brown glaze outside, inside a splashed orange-brown glaze.
- 11 Bowl, in hard cream-buff smooth sandy fabric with a grey core.
- 12 Pancheon, in hard orange-buff sandy fabric with red iron. Green glaze inside.
- 13 Bowl or dish, in hard orange sandy fabric with a grey core. Traces of green glaze inside. Sooted exterior.
- 14 Dish or pancheon, in hard, cream, smooth sandy fabric and mica.
- 15 Pancheon, in hard orange-buff sandy fabric with red iron.
- 16 Cooking pot, in hard brown-buff sandy fabric with mica. Sooted exterior.
- 17 Pancheon, in hard orange-buff sandy fabric with red iron. Inside glaze with green-orange-brown. Wavy line decoration on rim top.
- 18 Bowl or dish, in reddish pink sandy fabric with mica and red iron.
- 19 Dish or pancheon, in hard, cream, smooth sandy fabric and mica.
- 20 Cooking pot, in hard orange sandy fabric with a grey core. Splashed orange/green glaze. Sooted exterior.
- 21 Cooking pot, in hard buff sandy fabric with mica. Sooted inside and exterior.
- 22 Cooking pot, in hard, cream, smooth sandy fabric with mica and red iron.
- 23 Cooking pot, in hard orange sandy fabric with some small grits and red iron. It is possible that this was handled. Sooted exterior.
- 24 Cooking pot, in orange-buff shelly fabric with some sand and grey core.
- 25 Pancheon, in hard orange sandy fabric. Yellow/brown glaze inside. Deep cut wavy line decoration on rim top.
- 26 Cooking pot, in hard brown-buff sandy fabric with mica.
- 27 Pancheon, in soft creamy pink fabric with the odd sand grain and red iron. Yellow green glaze inside. Wavy line decoration on rim top. Sooted exterior.
- 28 Cooking pot, in hard buff sandy fabric with grey core.
- 29 Cooking pot, in hard pale red, smooth sandy fabric with some grits.
- 30 Body sherd, in hard smooth grey sandy fabric. Green glazed. Applied pads in vertical rows with a grid decoration.
- 31 Body sherd, in hard brown-buff sandy fabric with mica. Wavy line decoration.
- 32 Body sherd, in hard, cream, smooth sandy fabric. Wavy line decoration.
- 33 Body sherd, in hard brown-buff sandy fabric with mica. Finger nail impressions in horizontal lines.
- 34 Body sherd, in hard off-white sandy fabric with mica and red iron. Pale yellow-green glaze. Vertical lines of finger nail 'dug-outs' to raise the lower end slightly.
- 35 Base sherd in buff shelly fabric and a grey core. Sooted. Hole drilled 5.5mm diameter.
- 36 Handle section, in hard, pale red, smooth sandy fabric, some grits. Odd spot of dark green glaze.

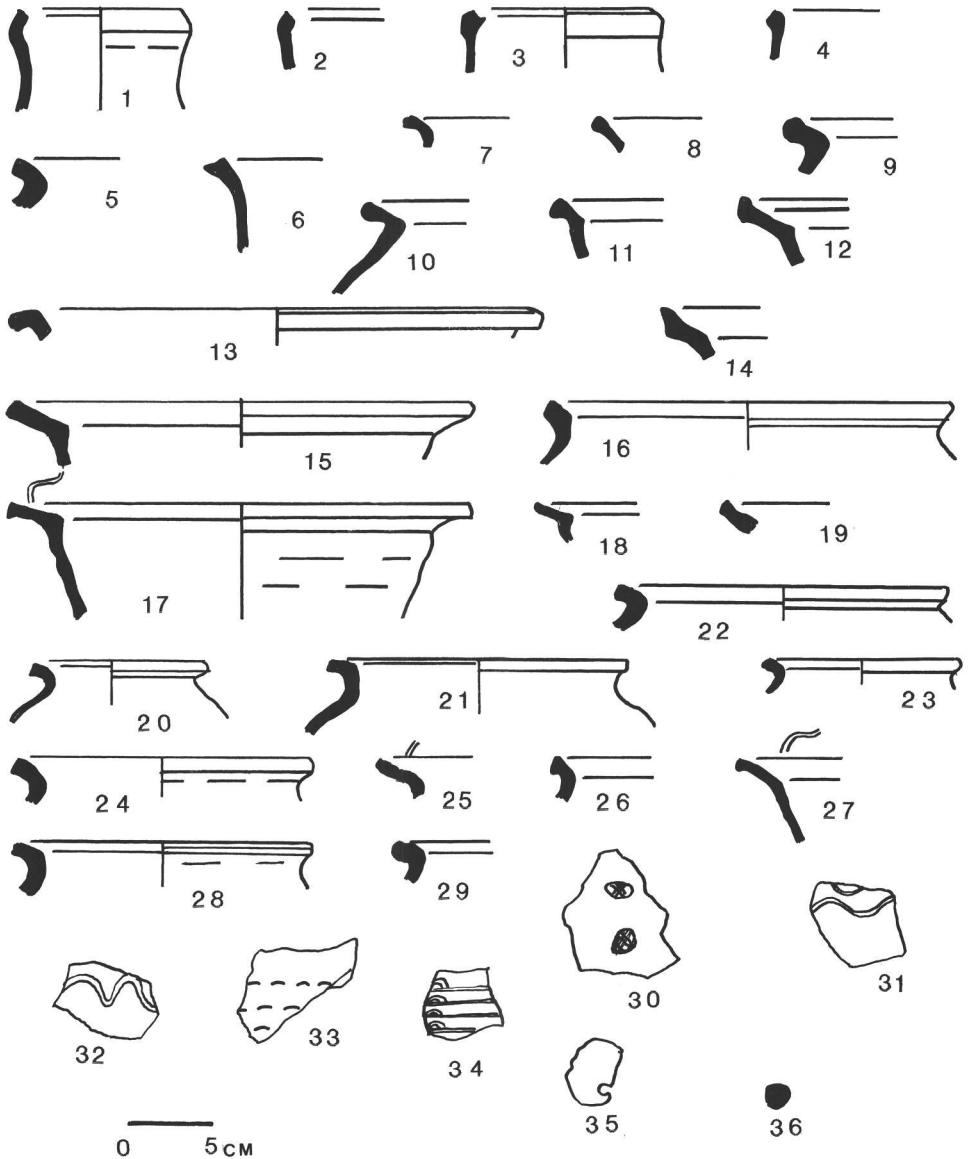


Fig. 17: Aldwark: Medieval pottery from 1995 excavations.

Not illustrated:

Base, in hard cream sandy fabric with the impression side of a *Hordium sp.* (Barley Grain). Length 10.1mm, thickness 3mm.

Analysis of Medieval pottery from 1995 Excavations:

A total of 1817 sherds weighing 9748g was found, in a variety of fabrics and some with decoration.

Fabrics:

- 1 Hard sandy, buff inside, almost vitrified, grey core.
- 2 Hard brown-buff, sandy with mica.
- 3 Hard cream, smooth, sandy with mica and red iron.
- 4 Hard orange, sandy, grey core, small grits and red iron. Splashed ware.
- 5 Hard creamy-to-off-white, grits, sandy some large sand grains and red iron.
- 6 Hard smooth sandy, orange, grey core.
- 7 Shelly ware.

Decoration:

- 1 Burley Hill types, small pads applied with grid type decoration.
- 2 Wavy Line decoration on body and inside of rims.
- 3 Finger nail impressions on rim top and body.
- 4 Finger nail impressions on body in vertical lines on glazed wares.

General remarks on the Medieval pottery

The main pottery manufacturing areas seems to be those at Burley Hill and Brackenfield from around the 13th–14th centuries. The decorated Burley Hill sherds with grid-stamped pads would be dateable to the above range (Hall and Coppack 1972). Most of the wares have been produced at Brackenfield and Burley Hill, but it is possible that some of the rough orange sandy wares may have been produced locally at Wirksworth, four to five miles away from Aldwark (C. Drage *pers. comm.*).

Report on the Animal Bones by C. Sampson

Many of the bones are in quite good condition, although the edges of some show signs of abrasion possibly due to movement before they were buried. The bones were scattered across the site and form only a fraction of the animals represented.

BOS Head, trunk, limbs and extremity bones are present. This indicates the usual practice of killing such animals on site. Beef carcasses are so heavy that the animal was normally walked to the site and butchered there. The bones indicate some adult animals but small, which may suggest use for milk or traction. Minimum of three ‘cattle’ are represented.

OVIS Again well scattered across the site and consist mainly of teeth and hind leg bones. At least two animals are represented, possibly 6 to 9 month old lambs butchered in autumn. There is a possibility that these may be goat (caprid) as it is difficult to identify between the two species.

SUS Two animals represented, one being under 6 months old.

CANIS The dog remains were thinly scattered between the two ‘houses’ and the courtyard. The remains of head, neck, foreleg and hindleg probably are from one animal, of medium size and over 6 months old (all the teeth had erupted).

EQUUS Only one tooth and one bone are indicators of this animal, of small size, *c.* 11 hands, which might indicate a small pony or donkey.

Summary

With a small number of bones, representing a minimum of seven food animals, generalisation is difficult, but the high number of detached teeth, particularly from sheep, may indicate a level of later ‘mechanical’ action that has freed the teeth from the jawbone.

Part	Bos	Ovis	Sus	Canis	Equus
Horn-antler	1				
Skull	1				
Upper jaw			1		
Lower jaw	1	1	1	2	
Teeth	2	24	7		1
Vertebrae	1	1		1	
Scapula	6				
Humerous	1		1	1	
Radius	1	2			1
Metacarpals	1	2			
Pelvis	9	1			
Femur	2	1			
Tibia	4	6			
Tarsals	5	2		1	
Metatarsals	3	4		1	
Phalanges 1	1	1	1		
2	2				
Patella	1				
Rib fragments	5	1	1		
Long bone fragments	9	6	2		
Total identified	56	52	14	6	2
Minimum no. of animals:	3	2	2	1	1
Juvenile	1	1	1		
Adult	2	1	1	1	1

Table 5: Analysis of animal bone from Aldwark.

One Bos mandible came from an old animal probably used for milking and or traction. Another animal was killed before the age of 2 to 2.5 years old.

The Sus (Pig) and one Ovis (Sheep) were killed while still young, i.e. 6 to 9 months old.

The long bones of the food animals have been chopped (usually for the marrow) and many bear butchery marks and the teeth marks of dogs. All animals were domesticated and are smaller than the breeds today.

A detailed report on the bones has been deposited alongside the bone material in Derby Museum.

DISCUSSION

The Medieval Farm

The Medieval farm at Aldwark belongs to the period which saw expansion onto the higher limestone plateau and gritstone margins during the 12th and 13th centuries, when many new farms and Granges were established. Examples are at Lawrence Field, 11th–12th century (Makepeace 1980); at Staden, 12th–13th century (Makepeace 1995); and at Aldwark. All three sites have longhouses associated. The general expansion onto the higher limestone was probably a result of the growth of the woollen trade and the establishment of sheep farms. Changes in the structure of Medieval farms emerge in the

13th century. This saw a move from wholly timber houses to stone-walled buildings (Beresford and Hurst 1989, 176), together with elaboration and development of longhouses into farm complexes. The change from timber to stone occurred mainly in the lowlands, but in the higher areas the tradition of building in stone may well have a much longer history. What we may be seeing at Aldwark is an intermediate phase of a change from stone/timber buildings to buildings entirely in stone.

The farm appears to have been a direct planting onto a vacant site, and not to have gone through a number of changes, such as was seen at Wharram Percy and Gomeldon (Beresford and Hurst 1989, 111, 123). The occupants were part of a growing group of more prosperous yeoman farmers who could build 'new' farms.

Unfortunately no stratigraphical sequences are available from the courtyard as the artefacts had been churned up again and again. The evidence for prehistoric activity relies on the chert and flint artefacts and the small sherd of Beaker. These appear to date from the Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age and are characteristic of many 'open' sites on the limestone. One Mesolithic backed blade was found close to the present farm during the laying of new drains in disturbed ground, for a new holiday cottage. This indicates even earlier prehistoric activity on the site.

As stated in the introduction, the banked enclosure would appear to be older than the Medieval farm and is reminiscent of many late prehistoric, Romano-British or even Medieval features with its orthostat and rubble construction and at present cannot be dated.

The Medieval farm may have been established late in the 12th century and lasted at least until the late 14th century. The similar construction of all the buildings, suggests contemporaneity. Buildings B and C were cut into the side of the enclosure bank and a terrace made on which the buildings were erected. They probably formed the living accommodation, although Building C may have been an ancillary building or a small dwelling. Little occupational debris was found inside the buildings, most of the archaeological material coming from the construction terrace. This may indicate a very clean and tidy home (Beresford and Hurst 1989, 99), or that the buildings may have had planked floors. The latter may be inferred from the fact that the terrace on which the buildings were erected sloped (Fig. 4).

Although sheep and cattle seem to be the dominant domesticated animals, there was also pig, horse and dog; perhaps the dog was being used to help herd the sheep and cattle. Some of the cattle were slaughtered young for meat whilst there is evidence of more mature animals for milk or as draught animals. Overall the domestic animals indicate a pastoral role for the farm, although the quern fragments may indicate the growing of some grain. An oyster shell found in the entrance to Building B may indicate that some luxury food items were available locally, probably from Wirksworth being the nearest market centre to Aldwark (Coates 1965; Hart 1981, 136–139). The bone remains were scattered randomly around the site, especially in the courtyard, and the few bone fragments associated with Buildings B and C came from the foundation terraces. The small cache of *Bos* bones in Building C was found at the base of the rear wall/terrace. Whether this was a deposit or part of the general dump of material forming the terrace/wall foundations, it was difficult to determine. It was unassociated with any other material (Fig. 7).

The sooted/carbon covered quern fragments and the large area of charcoal in the courtyard are indicative of domestic fires, though no actual hearth was found. A hearth may have been raised off the floor of Building B, but there was no evidence of charcoal or burnt stone in any of the buildings. The sooted/carbon covered quern fragments were probably remains of hearth stones reused to maintain the courtyard wall and entrance way (Fig. 9).

Certainly the large amounts of lead and lead ore (2.55kg) indicate collection and processing. Most was found towards the north-eastern corner of the courtyard, well away from the concentration of charcoal. There were no indications of burnt clay for crucibles or 'burnt' areas. Iron nails, and other small fragments of iron (375g), were randomly scattered over the site (Fig. 6).

The distribution of pottery (Fig. 8) shows that sherds were scattered in a fan shape in front of the doorway to Building B, and concentrated towards the eastern wall of the courtyard. Little pottery came from the floors of the buildings, most being found as part of the general material forming the foundation terraces.

The majority of the Medieval pottery appears to have been made locally at Brackenfield (near Alfreton) and Burley Hill (near Duffield) with some perhaps from the Wirksworth area. As Wirksworth was one of the nearest local markets, it is not surprising to find that the local wares may have been used at Aldwark. Unfortunately there has been little research into the Medieval pottery industry of Derbyshire and more research is required to enable the many Medieval sites to be dated with any accuracy (Hart 1981, 136–139; Hodges *et al.* 1982, 95). A substantial amount of pottery was recovered (*c.* 3000 sherds) weighing nearly 19kg and it may be possible to restore some of these vessels.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My very sincere thanks must go to Mick and Jill Harrison for their very kind hospitality and friendship over these many years, and for allowing the survey and excavations to take place. My grateful thanks to Bob Alvey and to Cliff Sampson for identifying the Medieval pottery and the animal bones respectively and for presenting their detailed reports. To Geoff Egan (MoLAS) for his comments and identification on the copper and jet objects. To Pauline Beswick for confirming the identity of the Beaker sherd.

All the archaeological material has now been deposited in Derby Museum courtesy of Mr. and Mrs. Harrison, Hill Top Farm, Aldwark.

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