

The excavation of a medieval site at Muddleswood, near Hurstpierpoint, West Sussex

by Chris Butler M.I.F.A.

A field survey carried out in advance of the A23 road improvements discovered a previously unknown medieval house platform. Sampling, and then larger-scale excavations during 1987 and 1989 revealed evidence for an early medieval settlement. Evidence for prehistoric activity and for a 19th-century military encampment was also found.

INTRODUCTION

During a field survey of the projected route of the A23 road improvements south of Hurstpierpoint, the farmer, Mr Andrew Nelson, drew my attention to a platform and other features in a field which were on the road's line (Fig. 1). During 1986 small-scale excavations were undertaken (Butler 1986), which confirmed that the site was medieval in date. In 1987, after carrying out a resistivity survey, two large trenches (Fig. 2) were excavated: Trench 8 on the western part of the platform, and Trench 9 across the 'hollow way'. These trenches revealed further evidence for occupation in the medieval period. During 1989, with the construction of the new road approaching, further excavation work was carried out.

A number of trenches (10 to 21: see Fig. 2) were dug across the site, and expanded as features were located. The opportunity was also taken to section the pond (Trench 21) which we hoped to be able to date to the medieval period, but no diagnostic material was found. Having completed the excavations, we were pleased to note that a last-minute change of route meant that the new road would miss the site, thus preserving for the future the parts not investigated.

THE SITE

The site is situated on the Greensand belt that runs between the north scarp slope of the chalk South Downs and the Wealden clays to its north. It comprises a large platform, 47 m × 27 m, divided into two by a shallow depression running north-

south (Fig. 1c). To the north of the platform is a large ditch-like depression (hollow way?) which also extends around the west side where it broadens out. In the south-west corner of the site is a small mound (17 m × 8 m and 0.8 m high), and near to this a pond. On the east of the platform is a circular depression which is marked on a map of 1826 as a pond (ESRO Dan 228). This has been drained in more recent times.

The excavation produced extensive evidence for occupation during the medieval period, but although flint wall-footings were found, it was not possible to distinguish the complete plan of any building(s). The trenches that produced features are considered below in more detail (Fig. 3).

TRENCH 8

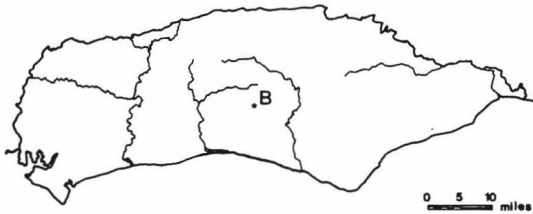
The eastern end of this trench produced no features and very few finds. Its western end, as finally excavated, revealed a number of areas of flint (Fig. 3). Two of these areas may be footings for walls, the third was an oval spread of flint and sandstone which was more likely to have been a floor or 'metalling' of some sort. The flint and sandstone pieces making up this floor had a rounded upper surface, possibly due to wear. A pit (47) contained a large amount of unabraded medieval pottery and a second pit (48), only partly excavated, at the edge of the trench, produced a smaller quantity of pottery.

TRENCH 9

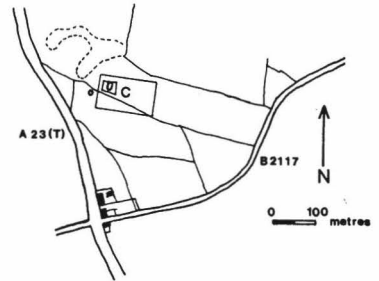
This trench was cut across the hollow way on the north of the site and revealed a shallow ditch and an area of flint alongside. This may have been the metalling of a possible path, or simply flint that had

MUDDLESWOOD

A



B



C

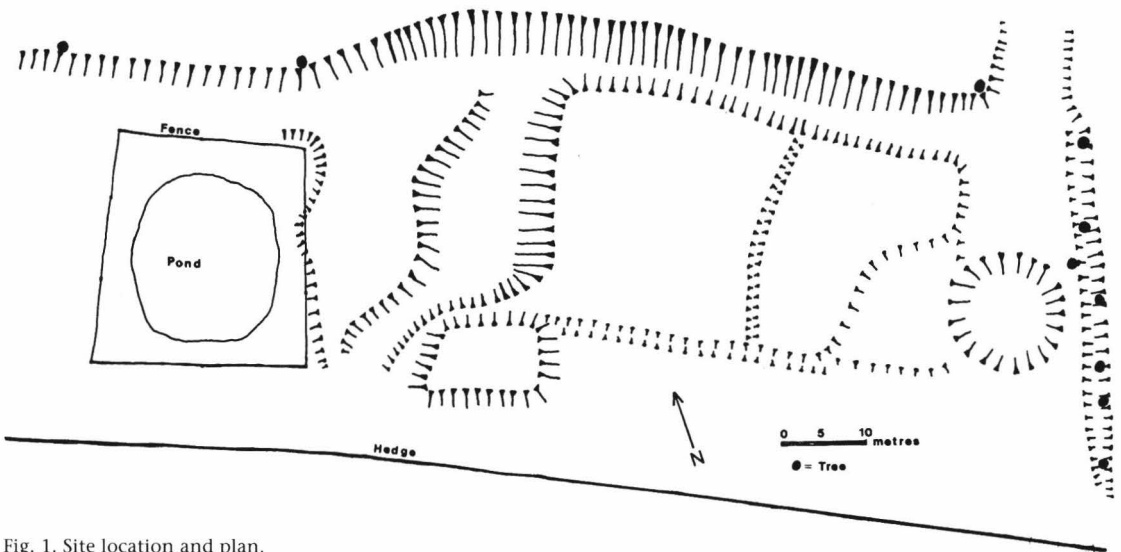


Fig. 1. Site location and plan.

accumulated in the bottom of the hollow way. The shallow depression running across the platform was seen to be a gully which ran into the ditch.

TRENCH 14

This trench produced a substantial quantity of medieval pottery in the top-soil, together with some possible wall-footings comprising sandstone blocks and flint at a depth of 450 mm.

TRENCH 17

This trench was immediately south-west of Trench

8. It produced similar areas of flint, and here it was possible to propose a sequence. The earliest feature was a pit (62) which contained medieval pottery and some animal bone. Above the pit was a layer which comprised a dark brown/black humic soil with charcoal, daub and medieval pottery in it. Probably contemporary with this layer and on its east side was a wall, the flint footings of which survived to a height of two or three courses in places; this wall was sitting in a shallow trench (64). At some stage the wall had collapsed across the humic soil layer sealing below it, amongst other things, a cut farthing likely to have

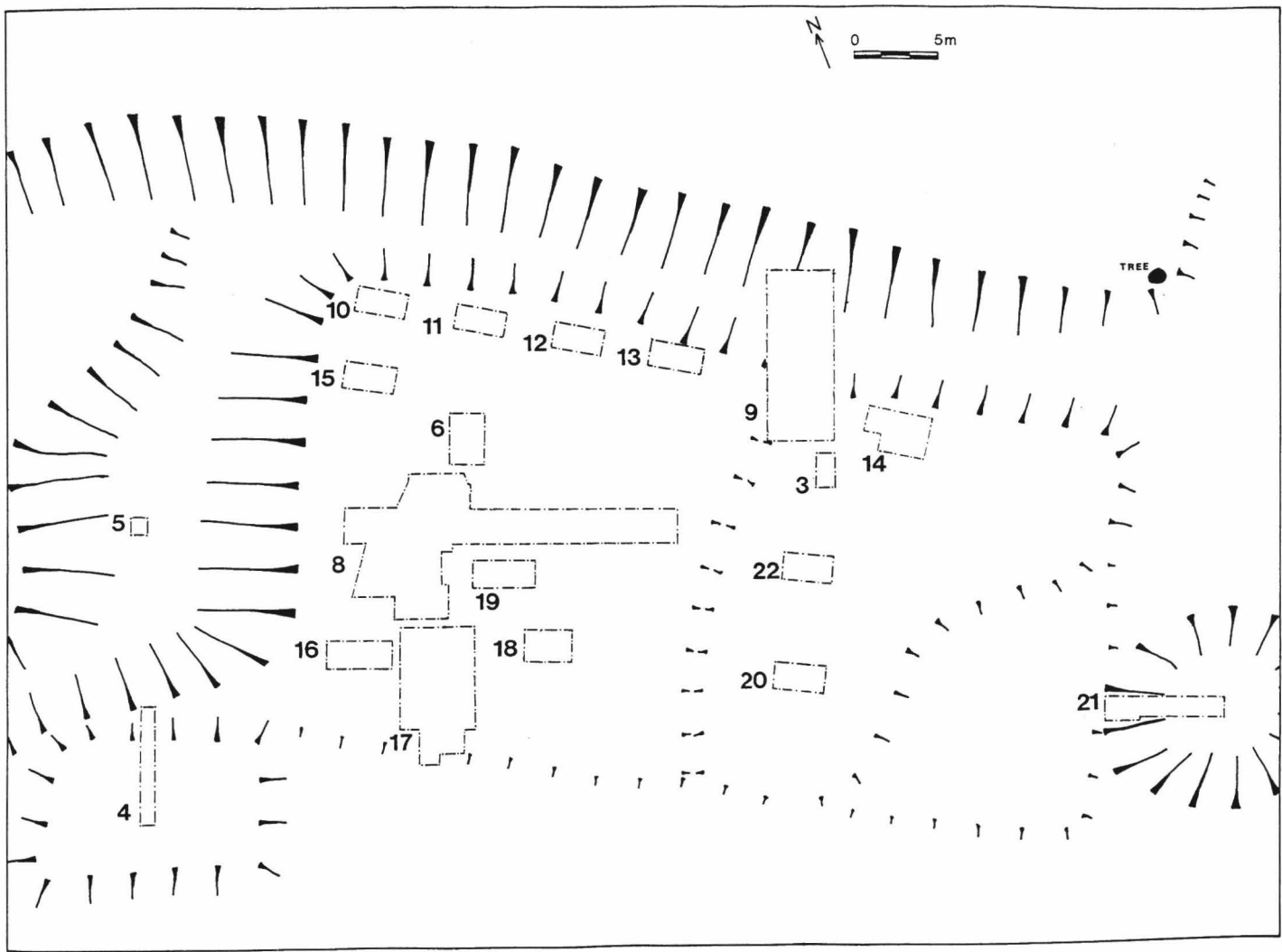


Fig. 2. Site plan showing location of trenches.

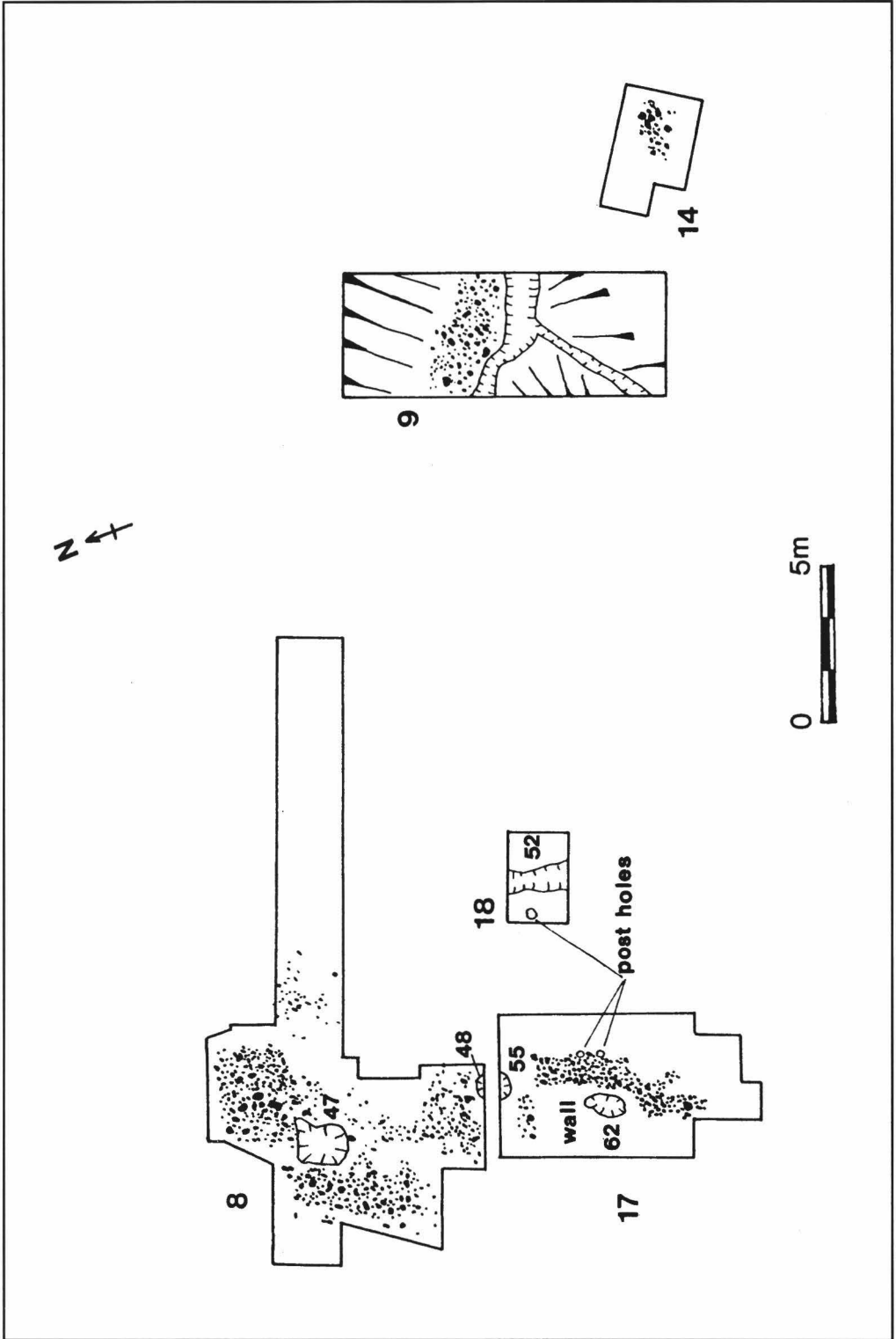


Fig. 3. Plan of trenches 8, 9, 14 and 17.

been lost before 1280 (see Rudling, this report). On the east of the wall were two post-holes, one of which (58) produced some medieval pottery. On the north edge of the trench, part of a pit (55) was revealed; this may be an extension of pit 48 in Trench 8.

TRENCH 18

Two features were revealed in this trench: a shallow ditch (52) running north–south which contained some early medieval pottery and also a barbed-and-tanged arrowhead. The other feature was a small post-hole to the west of the ditch.

THE FINDS

POTTERY

A total of 11,727 sherds of medieval pottery, weighing 61.75 kg was recovered during the excavations, both from the top-soil and medieval contexts. In addition, small amounts of earlier pottery together with some post-medieval pottery came mainly from top-soil contexts, and are described on microfiche.

Medieval pottery

The medieval pottery was sorted into fabrics according to the type, quantity and size of inclusion, broadly based on Barton (1979). The five main fabrics, of which the first four are coarse ware fabrics, and the fifth a fine ware fabric, comprise the majority of the medieval pottery.

1. Black to buff-red or grey coarse soft fabric with frequent medium (<1 mm) to large (>1 mm) angular flint, and occasional chalk inclusions (Saxo-Norman ware).
2. Red or occasionally buff or black soft fabric. Frequent small (<0.5 mm) round and smooth quartz inclusions with small to medium angular flint inclusions. Almost always with a reduced core.
3. Buff, red, brown/black and occasionally grey in colour. Smooth soft fabric. Quartz inclusions as Fabric 2. Occasional small angular flint inclusions. Some sherds have a green or brown glaze. Generally reduced core.
4. Orange-red/buff in colour. Smooth soft fabric. Medium-sized grog and small quartz inclusions with very occasional small angular flint inclusions.
5. Grey-buff smooth hard fabric. No inclusions or very occasional small quartz inclusions. Most have a trace of green glaze, some have slip present, West Sussex Ware (Barton 1979).

In addition there were three medieval fabrics which were represented by small quantities of pottery.

6. Hard, grey, sandy fabric. Occasional small quartz inclusions. Some sherds are glazed.
7. Black fabric. Very frequent small to medium quartz inclusions.

TRENCH 21

This trench was excavated to section the pond (Fig. 2). A sequence of silts and fills was revealed in the section, although none of these could be dated from the material found.

None of the other trenches excavated revealed any features, although they all produced a large number of abraded medieval pottery sherds. In addition to the medieval features and finds from the excavation, a quantity of prehistoric flintwork was found together with a scattering of post-medieval material in the top-soil.

8. Cream to buff hard fabric. Occasional small quartz inclusions. Thick sherd size.

Although large quantities of medieval pottery were recovered during the excavations, there were only seven sealed features which produced assemblages (Figs 4 & 5).

Pit 47

This pit contained some of the most interesting pottery, with examples of Fabrics 2, 3 and 5 present (Table 1 on microfiche). A number of these sherds could be rejoined.

Fig. 4

1. Rim sherd. Fabric 5.
2. Decorated sherd from jug with yellow-green and light brown glaze. Fabric 5.
3. Base sherd with traces of a green glaze on underside. Fabric 3.
4. Two sherds from jug with handle. Yellow-green glaze with the pattern in a brown glaze. Fabric 5.
13. Rim and spout from a jug. White slip under a green glaze. The slip extends inside the pot. Fabric 3.

14. Base sherd. Yellow-green glaze on outside. Fabric 5.

15. Handle, possibly from same vessel as 14. Trace of green glaze. Fabric 5.

16. Strap handle. Fabric 2.

17. Rim with rod handle. Two rows of slashed decoration on handle. Fabric 3.

Fig. 5

18. Rim from cooking pot. Fabric 3.
19. Rim. Red/brown outer surface and dark brown inner. Not reduced. Fabric 3.
20. Rim. Fabric 3.
21. Cooking Pot. Buff-orange fabric with slightly reduced core

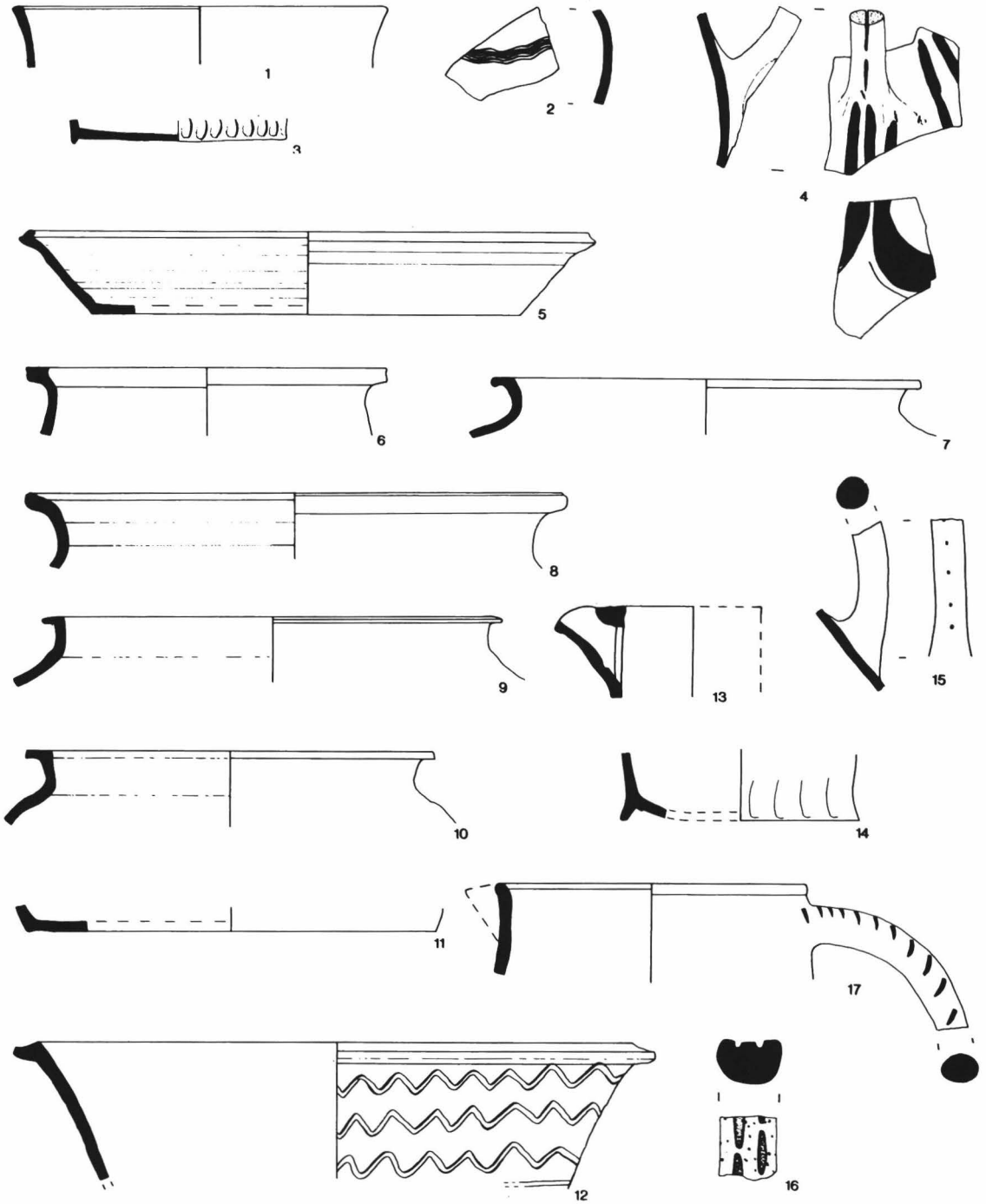


Fig. 4. Medieval pottery from sealed contexts.

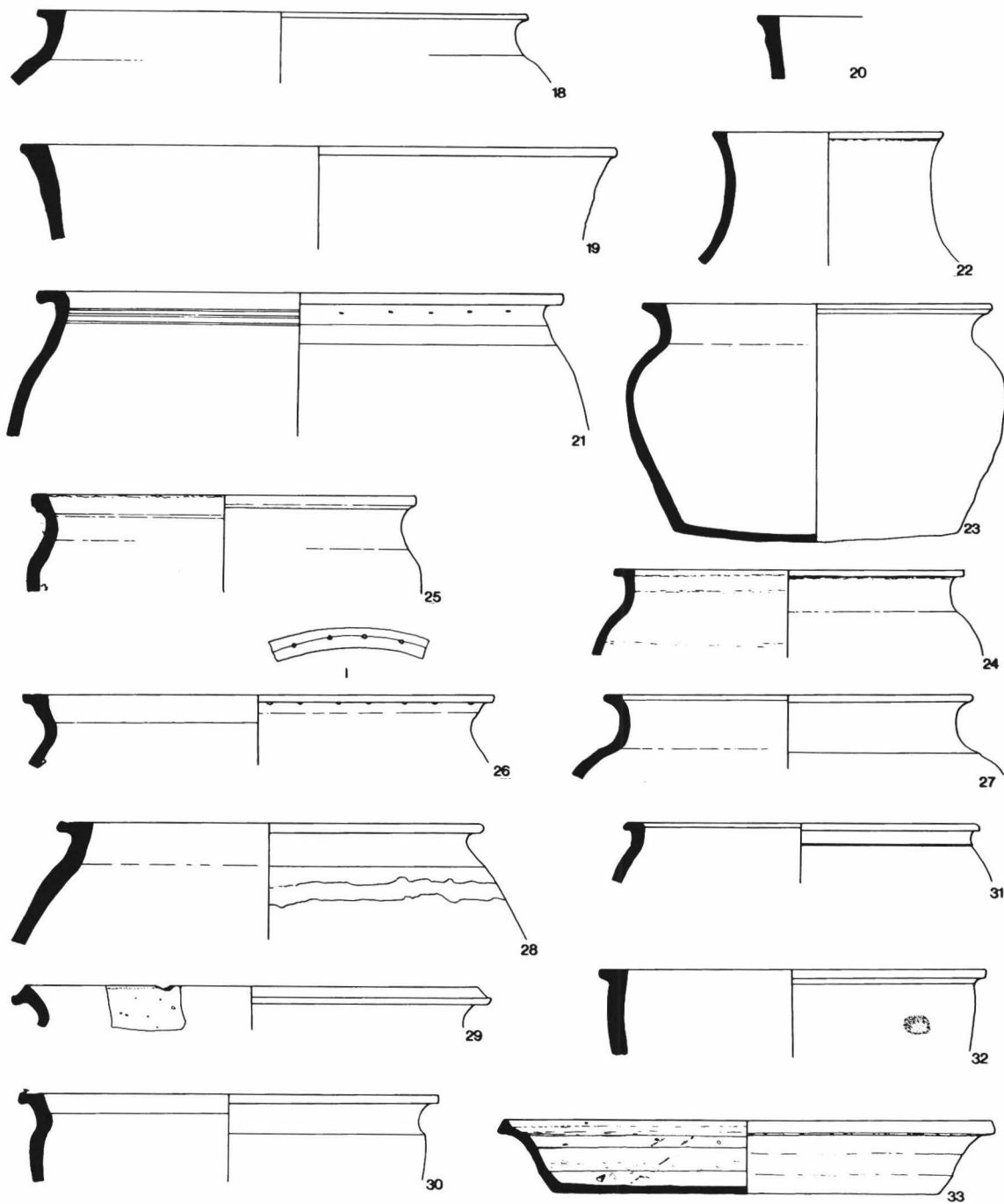


Fig. 5. Medieval pottery (i) from sealed contexts (18–25) and (ii) other illustrated vessels (26–34).

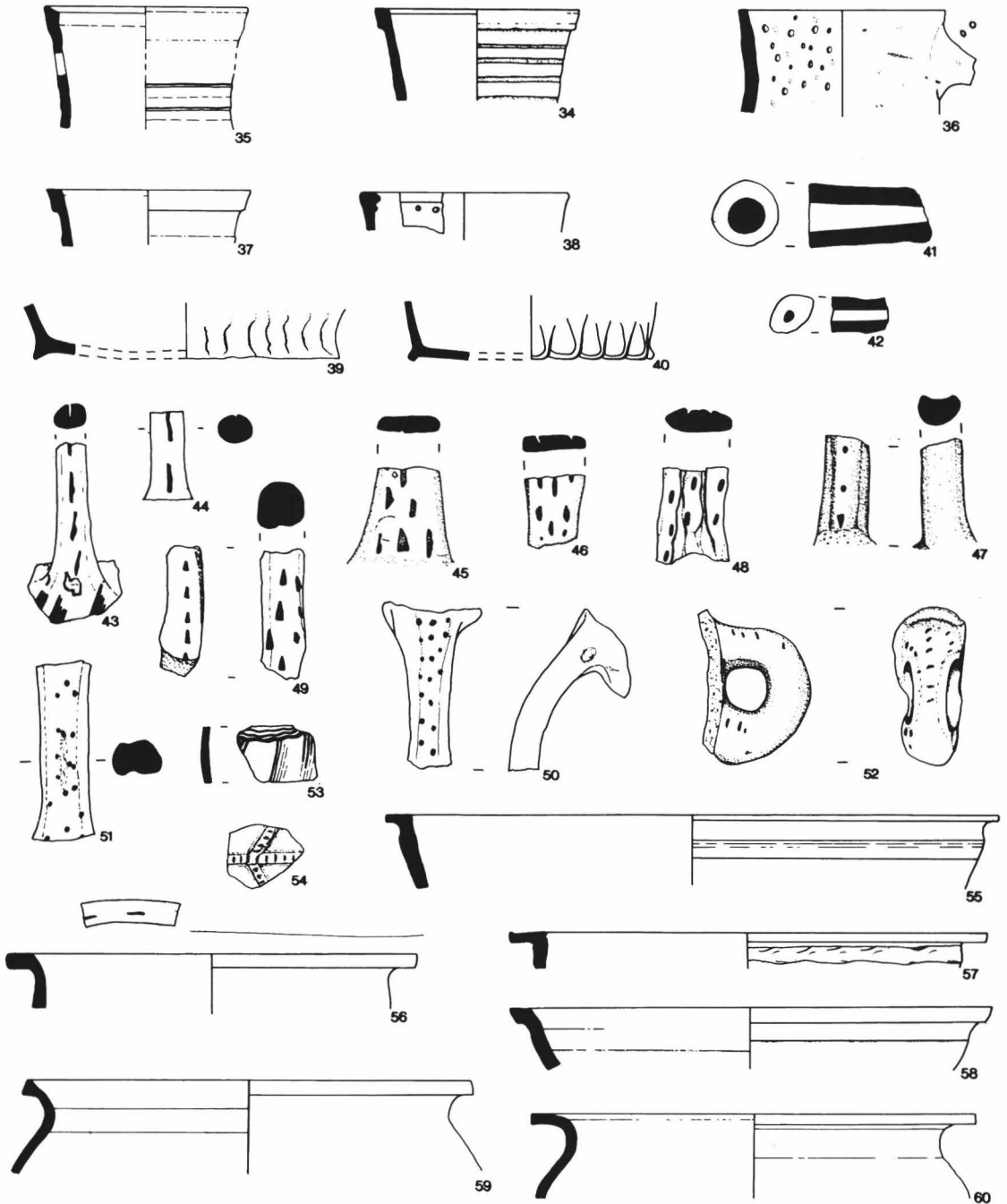


Fig. 6. Medieval pottery: jugs (35–40), spouts (41–2), handles (43–52), decorated sherds (53–4), other vessels (55–60).

in upper part of vessel. Few quartz inclusions and occasional holes from either burnt out organic, or dissolved calcareous, material. Stabbed decoration to top of rim and immediately below rim. Fabric 3.

22. Rim from jug. Fabric 3.

Pit 62

Amongst other sherds, this pit contained a partially complete cooking pot in Fabric 3.

23. Cooking pot. Blackened, due to sooting, over lower outer surface. Fabric 3.

Context 64

This wall footing trench contained a small number of sherds (Table 1).

24. Cooking pot. Fabric 3.

Figs 5 & 6

25. Cooking pot. Fabric 3.

26. Cooking pot rim. Blackened surface in places (due to sooting?). Incised decoration around rim. Fabric 3.

27. Cooking pot rim. Fabric 3.

28. Cooking pot or storage jar rim. Very roughly applied strip on body. Fabric 2.

29. Rim from dish. Black inside and buff outside. Reduced core. Groove on inside edge of rim. Fabric 2.

30. Cooking pot rim. Fabric 3.

31. Cooking pot rim. Rough surface. Fabric 3.

32. Rim from cooking pot or bowl. Finger impressions on outside of one sherd. Fabric 2.

33. Dish. Slight trace of glaze on lower inside and base. Fabric 3.

34. Jug rim. Green glaze on outside with trace of white slip under the glaze. Fabric 5.

35. Jug rim. Patchy yellow-green glaze on outside. Fabric 5.

36. Jug rim with part of handle. Roughly made and pock-marked inside. Fabric 4.

37. Jug rim. Faint trace of white slip on outside. Fabric 3.

38. Jug rim. Dark green glaze on rim and outside. Circular 'lumps' on inside below rim. Fabric 5.

39. Jug base. Yellow-green speckled glaze on outside, and traces underneath. Fabric 5.

40. Jug base. Red-brown slip and green glaze. Fabric 5.

41. Spout. Fabric 2.

42. Spout. Fabric 3.

43. Rod handle. Speckled green glaze with parallel line decoration in a darker green glaze. Handle has incised decoration. Fabric 5.

44. Rod handle. Trace of green and brown glaze. Fabric 5.

45. Strap handle. Trace of yellow/brown glaze inside vessel. Fabric 3.

46. Strap handle. Stabbed decoration. Fabric 3.

47. Strap handle. Stabbed decoration to underside of handle. Fabric 3.

48. Strap handle. Trace of white slip below a yellow /green glaze. Fabric 3.

49. Rod handle. Rough surface. Fabric 2.

50. Rod handle. Fabric 3.

51. Handle. Stabbed 'dots' along back of handle. Fabric 3.

52. Handle/lug. Traces of incised 'slash' decoration. Fabric 2.

53. Decorated sherd. Buff inner surface, orange outer surface. No reduction. Dark green glaze decoration. Fabric 5.

54. Decorated sherd. Applied strips with finger impressions. Green glaze on body and brown glaze on applied decoration. Fabric 5.

55. Rim from bowl. Fabric 2.

56. Cooking pot rim. Top of rim decorated with slashes. Fabric 3.

57. Rim. Band of applied decoration on outside below rim. Fabric 2.

58. Rim from dish. Fabric 3.

59. Cooking pot rim. In addition to the normal quartz inclusions, this vessel also appears to have had grog added to the fabric. Fabric 3.

60. Cooking pot rim. Fabric 3.

71. Two fragments probably both from same vessel. Variable green glaze. Fabric 5.

Medieval pottery — discussion

The medieval pottery from Muddleswood is similar to that found on most 12th- or 13th-century sites in Sussex. The predominant vessel type is the cooking pot, however, other coarse ware vessels such as storage jars were undoubtedly also present. One unusual feature for a site of this date was the large number of dishes apparently being used at Muddleswood. Dishes are rare on 12th- and 13th-century sites and only slightly more common in the late 13th and 14th centuries (Pearce *et al.* 1985). Most sites of this date have only one or two examples, whereas at Muddleswood sherds from a minimum of six dishes were found.

From the number of sherds found that have come from different jugs it is apparent that a large number of these vessels were being used at Muddleswood, mostly in the finer fabric (Fabric 5), although a small number were manufactured in the

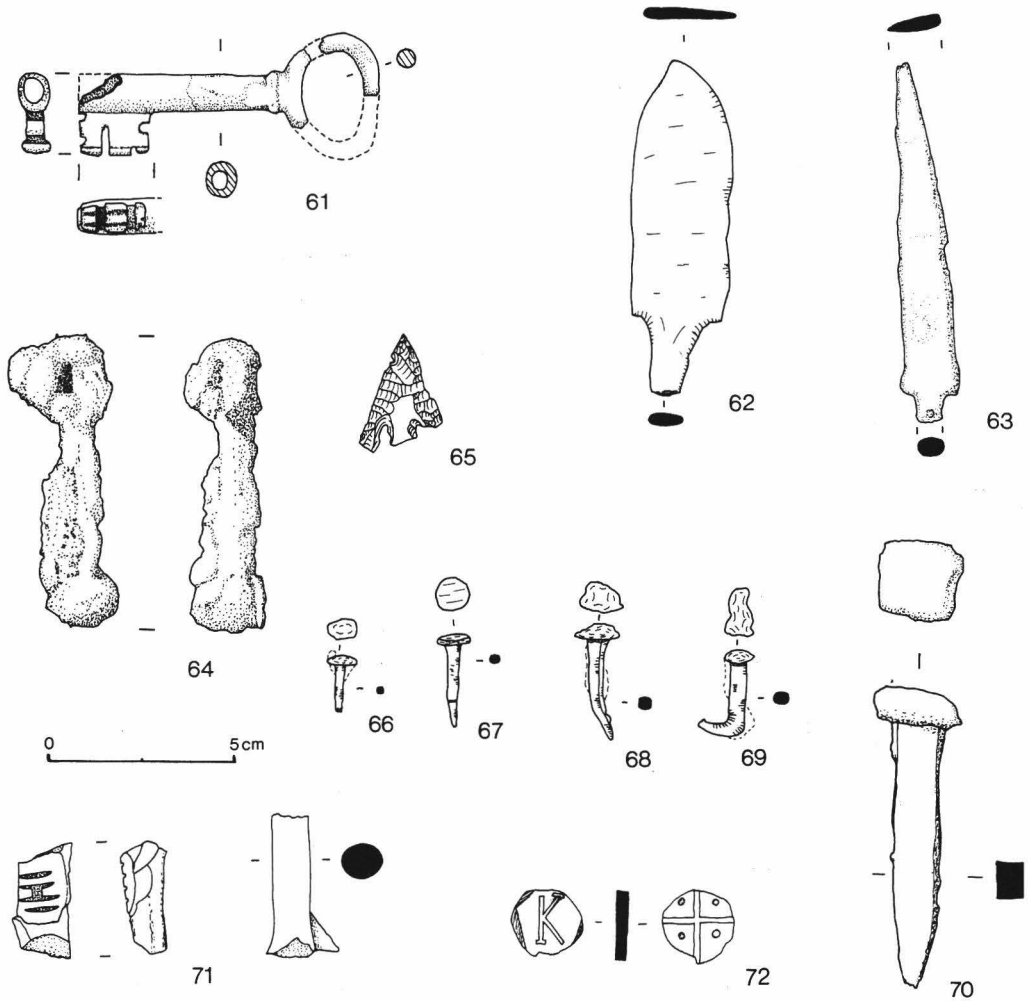


Fig. 7. Small finds: casket key (61), knives (62–3), latch/key (64), barbed-and-tanged arrowhead (65), nails (66–70), aquamanile fragments (71), lead token (72).

coarse fabrics as well (e.g. Fig. 6, no. 37). There was little evidence for any other vessel types in the finer fabric, apart from the two fragments (Fig. 7, no. 71) which may have come from an aquamanile. Both rod and strap handles were present on the site, the former generally being in the finer fabric and therefore associated with jugs.

Although there were only a limited number of sealed contexts that produced medieval pottery (Table 1), it may be possible to suggest a relative chronology based on the fabrics found in each context. The ditch in Trench 18 (Context 52) could relate to an earlier phase as there was a small quantity of Fabric 1 present and no Fabric 5. The pit (Context 47) in Trench 8, however, belongs to a later phase as this contains no Fabric 1, only a little Fabric 2, and a large quantity of Fabric 5. None of the fabrics can be traced to a known kiln, but there are some similarities with the fabrics from the Marchants Farm

kiln at Streat and the kilns at Ringmer, in East Sussex (Con Ainsworth, pers. comm.). It is more likely that there is a closer, as yet undiscovered, kiln source for the Muddleswood pottery. One possible location could be at Albourne, a kilometre to the north of Muddleswood, where a field north of the village is known as 'Potters Field' (O.S. 1:25,000 TQ21/31). However, as yet no fieldwork has been carried out in this area to investigate this.

COINS AND TOKENS By David Rudling

1. HENRY II or RICHARD I. Silver cut farthing. Short Cross Coinage, Class 1–4. Probably Class 1 (c. 1180–9). Reverse: OSB[ER/N]. Unfortunately the name Osber is common amongst moneyers during the reign of Henry II, and is recorded for the mints of London, Exeter, Wilton and Winchester (North 1980, 185). The name Osbern is recorded for the mints of Winchester and Worcester. This cut farthing is likely to have been lost

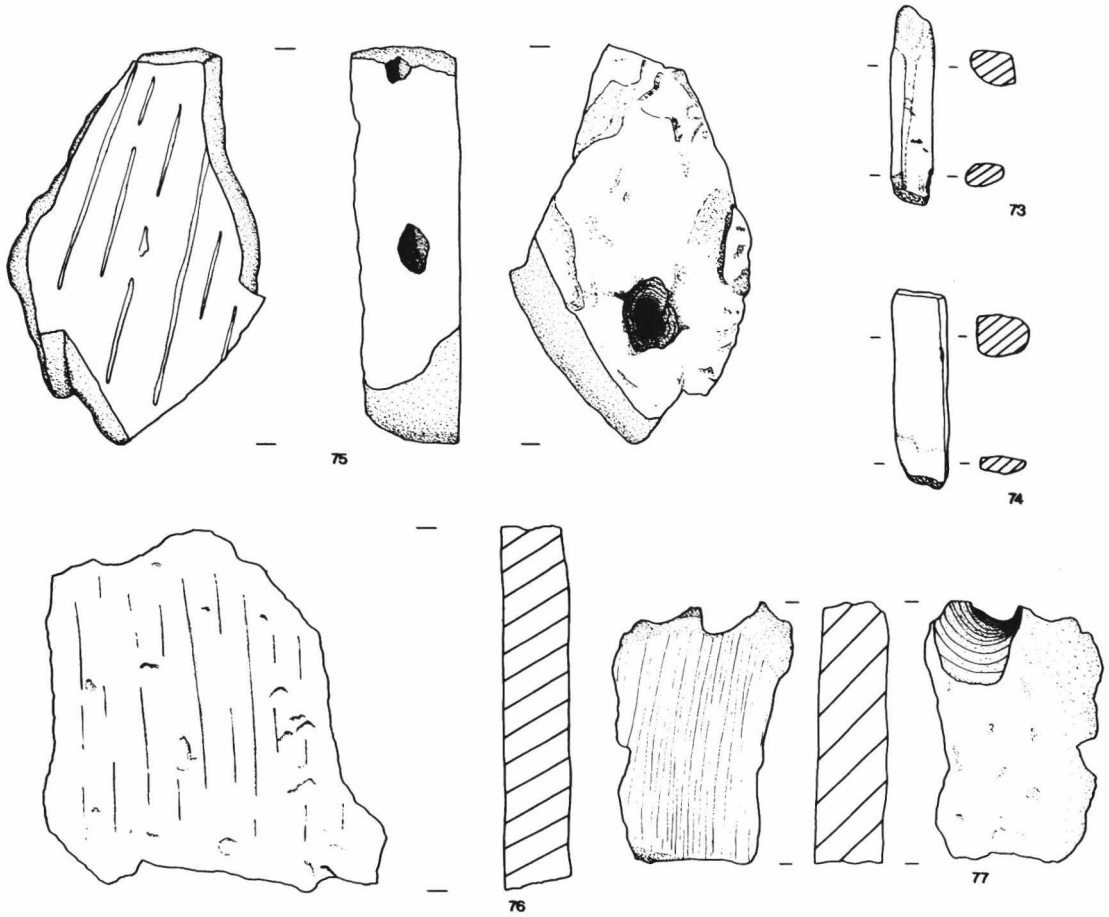


Fig. 8. Foreign stone; querns and whetstones.

before the major recoinage of Edward I, which was embarked upon in 1279. Round halfpence and farthings were struck at the end of 1280, ending the previous practice of making these denominations by cutting a penny into two or four parts (North 1975, 9). Context: 17/54.

2. ELIZABETH I. Third Issue. Silver half-groat. Initial mark: A (1583–84/5). Reference: North (1975) 2016. Top-soil.

3. WILLIAM III. c. 1695–1701, Silver Shilling, very worn, counter stamped with an 'S' and 'W' on the obverse and a 'U' on the reverse. Top-soil.

4. Illegible. Copper half-penny. Probably George II or George III, i.e. c. 1729–1775. Extremely worn/eroded. Top-soil.

5. GEORGE III. Copper half-penny. First issue. c. 1770–1775. Counterstamped with a 'T'. Top-soil.

6. VICTORIA. 1860 Farthing, pierced at the top and presumably

re-used as a pendant. Top-soil.

7. GEORGE V. 1932 sixpence. Top-soil.

8. Illegible. Coin or token. ?Silver. 25 mm diameter. Extremely worn/eroded. Top-soil.

9. Illegible. Probably a jeton. Copper-alloy. 19 mm diameter. Extremely worn/eroded. Top-soil.

10. Lead Token. 17th/18th century. 19 mm diameter. Obverse: Cross and pellets. Reverse: Blank. Cf. Dean (1977, pl. 10) no. 51 and Read (1988, 106) nos 1–3. Top-soil.

11. Lead Token. 17th/18th century. 18 mm diameter. Obverse: Cross and pellets. Reverse: K. Cf. no. 11. Top-soil.

12. Lead Token. 17th/18th century. 20 mm diameter. Obverse: Cross and pellets. Reverse: K. Cf. no. 11. Top-soil. (Fig. 7, no. 72).

METAL OBJECTS

Copper-alloy

The only medieval copper-alloy object was a bronze casket key (Fig. 7, no. 61) which can be dated to the 13th–14th century: Context 35, Trench 8.

Lead

Small quantities of lead were found both in the top-soil and from medieval contexts. These comprised two fragments of white lead, and three fragments of what is probably window lead, together with an oblong sheet; measuring 105 mm × 25 mm, and weighing 30 g. There were also five musket balls found in the top-soil.

Iron

In addition to the iron nails, which are dealt with separately, a number of iron items were found during the excavation. The medieval pieces are: (a) latch or key, heavily corroded, context 35 (Fig. 7, no. 64). (b) knife, context 24 (Fig. 7, no. 62). (c) knife, context 62 (Fig. 7, no. 63).

IRON NAILS

By Maureen Bennell

Thirty-four complete nails and 278 fragments of nails were collected from 34 contexts. Most were in an advanced stage of corrosion which made identification and analysis difficult, but their general appearance was consistent with the 12th–13th-century date suggested for the site (Fig. 7, nos 66–70). Little could be said about the shank fragments except to note that some had been clinched and some were larger in diameter than others. The bulk of the assemblage was of a comparatively small size, the norm was 4 mm in diameter, only 12 were smaller than this and 24 larger. There were also 25 small studs, probably used for decoration.

Complete nails and head fragments were divided into wedge-shaped nails and those with flat heads, as these characteristics to some extent define their function. It was found that there were 124 flat-headed nails (including five complete and the studs), and 70 wedge-shaped nails (including three complete). Less than half of the identifiable nails were the wedge-shaped type used to secure joinery or boards, sinking the head either for appearance or safety. There were slightly more of the flat-headed nails used to secure one surface to another, some clinched for greater strength. The small studs are likely either to have been decorative or used for applying a covering material to an artefact. There were a few more substantial nails, mostly from the top-soil, none of which appeared to be purely decorative.

It is likely that major timbers used in any building at Muddleswood would have been secured with wooden pegs. From the numbers, type and size of the nails found, it can be concluded that they were used in smaller items of woodwork such as partitions or shutters.

SLATE

A small amount of slate was recovered during the excavations, and was reported on by Mrs H. Holden. A number of pieces from the top-soil and from medieval contexts were identified as being 'typical of the slate found in 12th–13th century contexts, and which was brought along the coast from south Devon quarries'.

Such slate may have been used as roofing material or for wedging purposes in the walling. If a building on the site did in fact have a slate roof, and the small quantity of slate found does not necessarily rule this out, it would suggest that the building was of high status (Holden 1989).

ANIMAL REMAINS

The animal bone from the 1986 and 1987 excavations was looked at by Rod O'Shea, and that from 1989 by Pat Stevens; a full summary is on microfiche. Owing to the nature of the soil at Muddleswood very little animal bone had survived, and that which had was in a poor state. From medieval contexts, mainly the floor area in Trench 17, examples of cattle, sheep/goat, and pig were found. The post-medieval path in Trench 1 (Butler 1986) had the bones of cow (femur with butchery marks) and sheep/goat lying on it. Unfortunately the assemblage is too small to allow any firm conclusions.

FOREIGN STONE

A large number of fragments of foreign stone were found during the excavations, and were identified by Tim Gosden. Most of these fragments were incorporated into the flint wall footings and other features, and seem to be irregularly shaped natural fragments of sandstone, probably originating from the Greensand belt on which the site is located.

In addition to the fragments incorporated into the wall footings, a number of whetstone and quern fragments were also found; those illustrated are described below, with the remainder detailed on microfiche.

Whetstone. Feature 43, no. 1. Fine-medium grained micaceous sandstone, light grey-green. (73 g) Fig. 8, no. 73.

Whetstone. Feature 43, no. 2. Fine-medium grained micaceous sandstone, light grey-green. (93 g) Fig. 8, no. 74.

3. Quern fragment. Feature 42. Medium grained siliceous sandstone, dark brown/green in colour. Smoothed side has concentric striations. The other side has a well-worn indentation, and there are two further indentations on the outer edge of the quern fragment. (1.8 kg) Fig. 8, no. 75.

4. Quern fragment. Feature 60, no. 3. Deep red-crimson medium grained ferruginous sandstone. One side smoothed with striations. (1.62 kg) Fig. 8, no. 76.

5. Quern fragment. Feature 62. Deep red-crimson medium grained ferruginous sandstone. Smooth side exhibits concentric striations. Part of well-worn spindle hole present. (595 g) Fig. 8, no. 77.

FLINTWORK

A total of 336 pieces of worked flint were recovered during the excavation, and are summarized in Table 2. The flintwork occurred both in the topsoil and from features across the site, although little of it appeared to be *in situ*.

The flint was of several types, ranging in colour from grey, blue-grey and black to green and orange-brown. A large proportion of the pieces had some cortex present. The types of flint present are typical of those which naturally occur as nodules in the Lower Greensand.

A large number of the pieces of worked flint are Mesolithic in date, and are generally produced from the better quality flint. The flakes and blades have been removed with a soft hammer from small cores and then occasionally carefully retouched to produce an implement. Other pieces are later in date, generally removed with a hard hammer, and are mainly waste flakes. There is also the occasional later implement, including a single barbed-and-tanged arrowhead (Fig. 7, no. 65). These later pieces can be assigned to the Later Neolithic and Early Bronze Age. Two gunflints from more recent times were also found.

Over 1700 fire-fractured flints, weighing 34.6 kg, came from the excavation. The majority were found in the medieval flint features uncovered in Trenches 8 and 17. It is likely that

they were already fire-fractured when they were incorporated into these features, as they were intermingled with other flints which were not fire-fractured.

BUTTONS

Twenty-seven buttons and studs were found in the top-soil during the excavation, and are summarized on microfiche. The non-military buttons were inspected by Miss A. Hart of the Victoria and Albert Museum, whose comments are incorporated here. The military buttons, and possibly some of the other earlier buttons, seem to relate to a military encampment on or near the site. The remaining buttons and studs represent occasional losses since that time.

Military buttons

Eight military buttons were recovered from the top-soil. Seven were Royal Ordnance Corps buttons in a variety of sizes, and date from the period 1790–1830. These buttons generally occur on military sites of this date (Holgate 1988). The remaining military button is that of the 1st Kings Dragoon Guards (Squire 1972), and probably dates from the later part of the 18th century or early 19th century.

Other buttons

In addition to the military buttons, there were 19 other buttons and studs, three of which have designs on them (see microfiche for details).

DISCUSSION

Previous evidence for prehistoric activity around Muddleswood suggested that the area was being exploited during the Mesolithic (Butler 1990, 25). The quantity of Mesolithic flintwork found during the excavation supports this view. A few sherds of pottery and associated flintwork indicates that there was some activity here during the Bronze Age, which corresponds with that located during the fieldwalking survey carried out to the north of the site (Butler 1990).

Also consistent with the results of fieldwalking was the limited evidence for Roman activity found during the excavation. There were only a small number of pottery sherds found which, owing to the closeness of the villa at Danny and the Roman Greensand Way (Butler 1992), may be the result of manuring fields around the villa.

Permanent occupation at the site probably commenced in the 12th century, when one or more buildings were erected on the platform. The walls had flint footings; however, it is unclear whether they were of a similar height to those found at Hangleton (Holden 1963), as those from Muddleswood had only survived to a height of two or three courses. It is possible that just a few courses of flint were laid into a shallow bedding trench, and that timber/daub walls were then constructed on top of the footings. Alternatively, it is just possible that cob may have been used, if so, it would also have been placed on a dry-stone footing such as flint.

There is little evidence of any roofing material having survived; the few small fragments of slate suggest that this was not used for roofing, but may instead have been used as wedging although it is difficult to see how this would have worked with flint. Since no tile or roof furniture was found, it is probable that the buildings were either thatched, or shingled. It is difficult to draw any conclusions beyond this, as to the size or layout of the buildings. The fact that

no hearth was located, and the general untidiness of the excavated areas with pottery and other material scattered everywhere, may suggest that the buildings excavated are in fact outbuildings rather than a house. However, the thickness of the flint wall footings found in Trench 17 indicate that the building they supported may have been fairly substantial and the apparent untidiness could therefore reflect the state after abandonment rather than its occupied state. It is possible that there may have been more than one phase of occupation on the site, although it is not possible to suggest any relationships between these phases. It may be that they simply represent earlier and later phases of the same occupation. It is apparent from the number of trenches excavated which did not produce any features or traces of buildings, that a large proportion of the platform was being used for activities which have not left any trace.

The large quantities of pottery, both table and cooking wares, together with other small finds and the quernstones, do suggest that a house, or perhaps small farm was located here during the 12th and 13th centuries.

It appears that the site was abandoned in the late 13th century. This date is indicated by the lack of any later pottery, and the silver cut farthing sealed below the flint rubble from the fallen wall footings (Rudling, this report). Why the site was abandoned is not clear; there may have been a fire as some of the trenches revealed a thin layer of burnt material and a large proportion of the flint in the wall footings showed the effect of fire, having a reddish surface and occasionally being fire-cracked. However as this fire-fractured flint was intermingled in the footings with flint which had not been fire-fractured, this may suggest that some of the flint had been incorporated from footings of an earlier building which had been burnt down. Documentary sources provide further clues, but no firm evidence for settlement here. The name Muddleswood can be traced to William de

Methelwolde (1327) (Mawer *et al.* 1930), and is today given to the crossroads about 200 m to the south of the site.

Once the site had been abandoned, it appears to have been used for pasture, although parts of it may have been ploughed recently. Two maps, one dating from 1658 (ESRO AMS 2096) and the other from 1868 (ESRO Dan 228) show the site under pasture, with no indication of previous settlement shown. It is, however, interesting to note that on the latter map the field in which the site is situated is called the 'Toll'. The B2117 which joins Hurstpierpoint to the A23 used to be the main access west from Hurstpierpoint and at one time had a tollgate situated at Muddleswood. Possibly the original road, this being the one on which the toll was situated, used to follow the line of the Roman Greensand Way which passes within a few metres of the site at Muddleswood (Butler 1992). If this road was still in use at this later date then it must surely have been in use in the 12th/13th centuries and could indicate why the site is located where it is. Apart from this later agricultural use, the only other activity identified by excavation was a possible military encampment during the late 18th/early 19th century. The evidence for this was the quantity of military buttons and musket balls found in the top-soil. One of the buttons belonged to the 1st Kings Dragoon Guards (1st KDG), a regiment of heavy cavalry then and now part of the 1st The Queens Dragoon Guards. This regiment spent most of the period in

question stationed in the British mainland, apart from 3 years in Ireland, until 1815 when it took part in the Waterloo campaign.

During its time on the mainland the 1st KDG visited Sussex twice; firstly in 1796 when it was 'encamped near Brighton' between June and October (Cannon 1837). The regiment was then quartered in Arundel in 1804 and marched to Brighton on the 7th October 1805, where it was reviewed by the Duke of York (Cannon 1837). It could be that the regiment, or more likely a detachment of it, was camped here during one of these occasions. The obvious attraction of this location for a camp or halt was its closeness to the London–Brighton road and a plentiful supply of water.

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**Microfiche
relating to this article
are
on following pages**



The excavation of a medieval site at Muddleswood, near Hurstpierpoint, West Sussex

Chris Butler

Pre-medieval pottery

9. Buff/red-brown grog-tempered fabric with holes from burnt-out organic material. Large calcined flint inclusions. Middle Bronze Age.

10. Brown/dark brown grog-tempered fabric. Very frequent medium to large calcined flint, and occasional quartz inclusions. Both thick (13 mm) and thin (7 mm) sherds sizes. Later Bronze Age.

11. Grog-tempered ware in variety of colours. East Sussex Ware.

12. Grey sandy ware. Roman.

13. Orange-red sandy ware. Roman.

14. Samian Ware. Roman.

Other

15. Daub; 133 pieces (284 g).

Pre-medieval pottery

Fabric	Number of sherds	Weight (g)
9	1	4
10	5	52
11	13	33
12	1	5
13	1	2
14	1	3
Total	22	

Other illustrated patterns

5. Dish. Buff/red inside, buff/brown outside, reduced grey core. Patchy green glaze on lower part of inner surface. Fabric 3.

6. Rim sherd. Fabric 2.

7. Rim sherd. Fabric 3.

Pit 48/55

Contained sherds in Fabrics 2, 3 and 5 (Table 1), with a number that could be re-joined. None illustrated.

Ditch 52

This feature contained a number of sherds from Fabrics 2 and 3, together with 3 sherds of Saxo-Norman ware (Fabric 1) and some daub.

8. Rim of cooking pot. Fabric 2.

Context 59

A large number of sherds were sealed below the spill of the flint wall footings which covered this context. The pottery comprised mainly Fabrics 2 and 3 with a small number of Fabric 5 (Table 1).

9. Rim of cooking pot. Orange-buff outer surface, buff inner with reduced grey core. Fabric 3.

10. Rim of cooking pot. Fabric 3.

11. Base - 2 adjoining sherds. Buff inside, red/brown outside with buff core. Fabric 2.

12. Rim from bowl or dish. Incised wavy decoration on outside. Fabric 3.

Table 1. Medieval pottery from sealed contexts. Number of sherds (weight in g) by Context.

Contexts	Fabrics					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
47	-	10(74)	167(981)	-	141(1426)	-
48/55	-	12(131)	64(413)	-	13(162)	-
52	3(29)	8(75)	20(206)	-	-	-
58	-	1(13)	6(43)	-	1(2)	-
59	1(4)	122(927)	518(3730)	2(4)	22(184)	1(7)
62	1(2)	17(93)	86(561)	-	2(29)	-
64	-	15(108)	56(313)	-	3(14)	-

Post-medieval pottery*Fabrics*

- A Orange-red fabric, oxidized with red brown glaze on one or both sides, no inclusions. Sussex pottery (Baines 1980).
- B Buff to orange fabric with brown glaze on one side, occasional quartz inclusion.
- C Buff to orange fabric, smooth, no inclusions or glaze.
- D Porcelain china, white or yellow/white glaze sometimes decorated.
- E Stoneware — grey or buff-cream fabric, glazed.
- F Orange buff fabric partly reduced core, grey outer edge, trace of brown glaze over grey.
- G Crimson-red colour. Small to medium flint inclusions. Dark brown glaze on both sides.
- H Clay pipe.

Post-medieval pottery

Fabric	No. of sherds	Weight (g)
A	44	177
B	16	60
C	7	35
D	71	109
E	16	131
F	2	7
G	1	48
H	38	n/a

REFERENCE

- Baines J. W. 1980. *Sussex pottery*. Fisher Publications.

ANIMAL REMAINS — SUMMARY**1. Medieval contexts***Cattle (Bos sp.):*

Two individuals were represented by mandibles. Further teeth fragments and calcined bone were also found. All of these examples were found in and below the floor area in Trench 17. Some molar fragments came from Trench 3, Context 11.

Sheep/goat (Ovis/Capra sp.):

A single vertebra fragment was found in the ditch in Trench 18, a metapodial fragment from Context 62 in Trench 17, and a fragment of rib came from Context 36 in Trench 9.

Pig (Sus sp.):

A single molar came from the floor area in Trench 17.

Bird:

One radius, possibly from a pigeon, came from Context 62 in Trench 17.

2. Post-medieval contexts*Cattle (Bos sp.):*

A proximal end of the left femur. Epiphysis chopped off presumably by butchery, another butchery cut distally.

Sheep/goat (Ovis/Capra sp.):

Broken right femur exhibiting some old breaks.

FOREIGN STONE

1. Quern fragment. Feature 43, No. 6. Medium-coarse grained sandstone, dark green/brown in colour, appears to be worked on one side with concentric striations on an otherwise smoothed surface. (201 g).
2. Quern fragment. Feature 35, No. 9. Medium-course grained, fairly well-sorted sandstone. Dark grey-green. (424 g).
3. Quern fragment. Feature 66. Medium grained well sorted ferruginous sandstone, grey/green in colour. Smooth side shows wear consistent with use as quernstone. (151 g).
4. Whetstone. Trench 21, top-soil. Medium grained sandstone, dark grey in colour. (34 g).
5. Whetstone. Trench 19, top-soil. Fine-medium grained well-sorted sandstone, light grey/green. (9 g).
6. Quern fragment. Feature 61, No 1. Deep red-crimson medium grained, well-sorted and heavily oxidised, ferruginous sandstone. (656 g).
7. Quern fragment. Feature 61, No. 6. Deep red-crimson medium grained, well-sorted and heavily oxidized, ferruginous sandstone. (1.68 kg).
8. Quern fragment. Feature 61, No. 9. Light grey, medium grained well-sorted quartz sandstone (Wealden series?). Smooth on one side. (858 g).
9. Whetstone fragment. Trench 18, top-soil. Medium grained, grey-green, non calcareous sandstone. Structureless, but with smooth rounded surfaces. (Not weighed).
10. Quern fragment. Feature 66, No. 1. Medium grained, well-sorted, heavily oxidized, ferruginous sandstone, grey/green in colour. (784 g).
11. Quern fragment. Feature 61, No. 10. Deep red-crimson medium grained, well sorted and heavily oxidized, ferruginous sandstone. Probably lower part of quern, has a groove running across upper surface due to rotating action of upper stone. Specimen No. 6 from Feature 61 (see 7 above) may be part of the opposing stone. (2.09 kg).

FLINTWORK

Table 2. The flintwork.

Trench	Flakes	Blade/bladelets	Crested blades	Shattered pieces	One platform flake cores	Two platform flake cores	Three platform flake cores	One platform blade cores	Two platform blade cores	Core rejuvenation flake	Core tablets	Scrapers	Piercers	Notched pieces	Barbed and tanged arrowheads	Total
1	4	1		1												6
3	5	1	1													8
4	17	5		1										1		26
6	9	2		3					1		1	2		1		17
8	55	7		13	1	1	1						1	2		81
9	16	1		6	1									2		26
10	3			3										2		6
11	6	1		5								1				13
12	12	1		5												18
13	4			2	1			1								8
14	20	1		6												27
15	1	1														2
16	3			1												5
17	24	5		10	2	1		1		1	1	1	1			47
18	7			4									2			12
19	4			1							1				1	6
20	8	1		4												13
21	1	1		2												4
22	5	1		3												9
23	1			1												2
Total	205	30	1	71	5	2	1	2	1	1	1	5	4	6	1	336

BUTTONS AND STUDS

1. Military buttons

Ref. Number	Description
5	Royal Ordnance Corps, 12.2 mm diameter
17	Royal Ordnance Corps, 9.2 mm diameter
19	Royal Ordnance Corps, 9.6 mm diameter
20	1st Kings Dragoon Guards, 12.3 mm diameter
22	Royal Ordnance Corps, 13.4 mm diameter
23	Royal Ordnance Corps, 10.3 mm diameter
24	Royal Ordnance Corps, 9.9 mm diameter
25	Royal Ordnance Corps, 13.5 mm diameter

2. Other buttons and studs

Ref. Number	Description
1	Gilt, 18th century, 23 mm diameter
2	Gilt, probably late 18th century, 20 mm diameter
3	Gilt, possibly a button, 1800 onwards, 13 mm diameter
4	Gilt, probably 18th century, 15.5 mm diameter
6	Copper-alloy stud, 12 mm diameter
7	Fly button, 19th century onwards, 15.4 mm diameter
8	Gilt, 1800 onwards, 12 mm diameter
9	Copper-alloy, pre 19th century, 19 mm diameter
10	Copper-alloy, possibly 18th century, 23 mm diameter
11	Copper-alloy stud, 19 mm diameter
12	Fly button, 19th century onwards, 15 mm diameter
13	Fly Button, 19th century onwards, 12.6 mm diameter
14	Fly button, 19th century onwards, 13 mm diameter
15	Fly button, 19th century onwards, 15 mm diameter
16	Copper-alloy 1800 onwards, 22 mm diameter
18	Gilt, obverse: crown over shield incorporating sword, reverse: unreadable inscription, 12.5 mm diameter
21	Gilt, obverse: horn? over 'V' inside wreath, reverse: inscription (FIRMIN & SONS), possibly a hunt button, 12.9 mm diameter
26	Gilt, engraved decoration in centre, may have had a cloth shank, 1800 to 20th century, 18.6 mm diameter
27	Fly button, 19th century onwards, 16.3 mm diameter