

◆ Southwick Roman villa

ITS DISCOVERY, EXCAVATION, PUBLIC DISPLAY AND EVENTUAL LOSS – A CAUTIONARY TALE

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This paper provides a history of the discovery, excavation, attempts at interpretation, public display, ownership, and eventual loss/general destruction of one of the most important archaeological sites to have been found in Sussex: a large early Roman villa (or 'mini-palace') at Southwick. It is ultimately a very sad story, beginning with various very poorly recorded excavations in the 19th century before eventual large-scale but still poorly documented excavations and then public display in the 1930s. Ultimately, in the 1950s, the lack of adequate financial resources resulted in the then owners and guardians of the villa, the Sussex Archaeological Trust, deciding to sell the site for building development. Also sad is the fact that most of the finds recovered from the various 19th- and 20th-century excavations are not kept in museums; instead, many finds were given away or not retained. We recount this sorry and cautionary tale, but also provide the results of recent research including the 'discovery' and now publication of two important 19th-century excavation plans.

INTRODUCTION

The Romans arrived in Sussex via the sea, primarily from Gaul, and in the second half of the 1st century AD, they helped establish a number of villas along the coast, initially with the main access from the sea and/or by river rather than by road. Figure 1 is a map of part of Sussex, showing the locations of the known large early villas and other selected Roman sites. The villa at Southwick was a substantial building that was constructed and then modified in at least three stages, starting in about AD 70/80 (about the same time as the building of the Flavian palace at Fishbourne (Cunliffe 1971, 77). This was either during the client kingdom of Togidubnus or after his death when the kingdom would have been absorbed into the Roman province of *Britannia*. The site was possibly occupied until the middle of the 4th century, the latest coin found being an issue of Constans minted c. AD 347/8, but no obvious reason for the demise of the site has been adduced. It was not burned, as was the fate of the palace at Fishbourne, and perhaps also of the villas at Angmering and Preston. Destruction by Saxon or other raiders is possible. Such raiders were evidently troublesome even before the end of the 3rd century, judging by the occupation of the late 3rd-century forts at Pevensey and Portchester (both of which may have initially been intended to help

protect the usurpers Carausius and Allectus and their breakaway 'British Empire' from the central Roman empire), and the building in the late 3rd century of strong town defences at Chichester. A high-status maritime villa and estate might have been especially vulnerable to raiding from the sea.

After being abandoned, the villa at Southwick faded from public knowledge. The presence of the villa at Southwick cannot now be recognised by passers-by, though in 2011 the Southwick Society erected a board at the site which carries some pertinent information. In the 1930s, when the site was owned by the Sussex Archaeological Trust, it was partly uncovered and exposed, and was of considerable interest to people in Brighton and the surrounding area. The surviving structural remains of the villa are currently scheduled, but lie largely hidden under a Methodist church and its associated buildings, built after about 1961. Whilst the current whereabouts of many of the various artefacts and other remains discovered at the villa are now sadly unknown, several finds are located at three local museums: the Museum of Sussex Archaeology in Lewes, the Marlipins Museum, Shoreham and the Manor Cottage Museum, Southwick. This paper details how the current sorry state of this once very elaborate and impressive villa and its contents has come about. The origin of this paper was an assignment undertaken by one of the authors (G. J. L.) as part of the MA in Field Archaeology at the University of Sussex.



Fig. 1. The distribution of 1st-century villas and various other important Roman sites (including some later villas) in Sussex. The larger triangles represent the early villas. The line of hills immediately north of the coastal plain, now called the South Downs, is very clear, as well as the cluster of early villas along the coast. The numbered sites are early villas: Fishbourne Palace (1); Borough Farm, Pulborough (2); Westhampnett (3); Tarrant Street, Arundel (4); Angmering (5); Eastbourne (6); Newhaven (7); Batten Hanger, Elsted (8), and posting stations/vicus settlements: Hardham (9); Hassocks (10); Bridge Farm, Upper Wellingham (11); Alfoldean (12) and Iping (13).

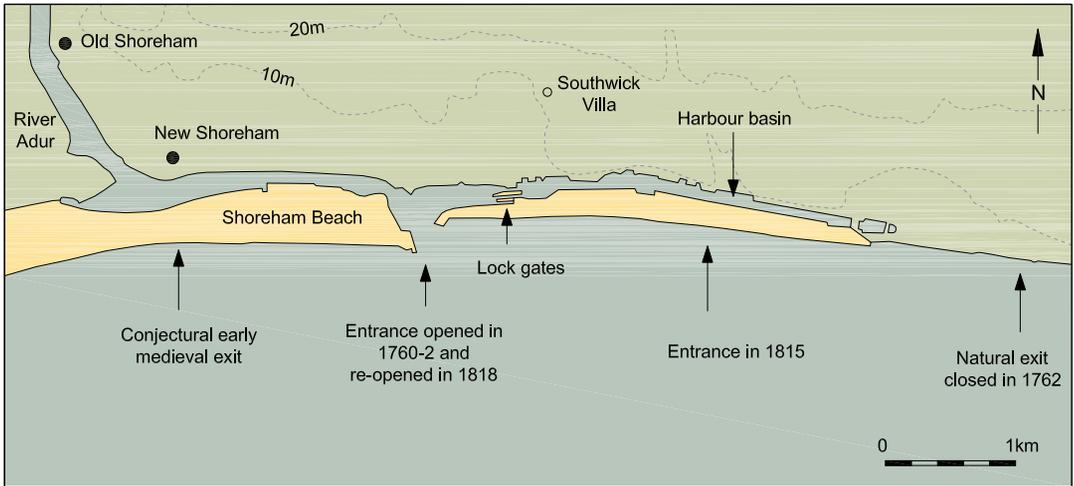


Fig. 2. The historical development of the mouth of the River Adur in recent centuries (after Robinson 1999). Modern Southwick Green is situated north of the lock gates and of the Shoreham–Brighton railway. The former mouth of the Adur has been located as far east as Hove, but was probably as far west as the early medieval exit when Old Shoreham was a viable commercial port.

DISCOVERY AND EXCAVATION OF THE VILLA

Maps of a reasonably modern kind were not produced until the 18th century, and the available earlier maps of Southwick do not show the site of any remains that might have suggested the presence of a Roman villa. When the villa was constructed, the primary access was probably from the sea via the River Adur and a creek that is modern-day Southwick Green. Salmon (1922, 87) even suggested that the neighbouring port might have been the Roman ‘Portus Adurni’. Although it is now not completely sure where the coastline was in the Roman period, Figure 2 gives some idea of how it has changed more recently (Robinson 1999, 9a). Since Roman times long-shore drift from the west, and later the construction of the Brighton–Shoreham railway and the development of the port of Shoreham, have all influenced the coastline. Cheal’s (1921, 25) surmise that in the Roman period the coastline in this area was about a mile further south than it is now may be an exaggeration, but there was undoubtedly no river and considerably more land immediately to the south of what today is the line of Shoreham High Street and the A259 road, and just west of the coast at Southwick. The mouth of the river Adur has moved, and in historical times has been as far

east as present-day Hove. A detailed discussion of long-shore drift in Sussex was prepared by Ballard (1910). It should be noted that this same long-shore drift was responsible for the manner in which the harbour works and tide mills at Newhaven were developed. In addition, the mean sea level has certainly risen considerably since Roman times (Waddlelove and Waddlelove 1990), and the coast may have been very different from today in places where low-lying land met the sea. For a concise and recent summary of these various coastline and tidal issues regarding Sussex, the reader is referred to an article by Woodcock (2003).

As stated above, the early maps of the area around present-day Southwick show no villa remains, and some do not even show Southwick itself. Southwick was not originally an independent manor, and formed parts of the neighbouring manors such as Kingston Buci. Estate maps drawn up by local landowners to define their holdings are no more informative in this respect. The Tithe Map of 1845 shows no villa, though, in retrospect, it was in the field numbered 90, then belonging to a local landowner called Nathaniel Hall, who had considerable holdings in the area. The Ordnance Survey map of 1879, however, marks the villa site quite clearly, and by that time the presence of the remains of a Roman villa in a field which was a part of a market garden was evidently well known.



Fig. 3. The archaeologist at work: Samuel Edward Winbolt. Reproduced with the permission of the Southwick Society.

This map may be consulted on-line at <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/map.aspx?compid+15540> (consulted in January 2013). By 1922 the site was known as ‘Roman Field’ (Salmon 1922, 87).

The responsibility for large-scale excavation of the villa was ultimately assigned to Samuel E. Winbolt (Fig. 3). In about 1925 he tried to obtain the permission of the then owner, Nathaniel Hall, the grandson of the aforementioned Nathaniel Hall, to excavate the Southwick villa site, but permission was refused, as described below. However, in 1931 the lease of the tenant of the market garden which covered the area of the villa expired, and the site was sold for development (*see below*). Winbolt then finally obtained permission to excavate. Winbolt was educated at Christ’s Hospital and at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, where he studied classics, before returning to Christ’s Hospital as a master (Margary 1944). Upon retirement he devoted himself to Roman and related archaeology.

Winbolt (1926a; 1932) described his efforts to establish previous local knowledge about the existence of the villa. In 1925 he had asked members of the Sussex Archaeological Society (SAS hereafter) if anyone had information of the villa from before 1800 (Winbolt 1926b). There is no record of any replies, although it is now clear that extensive excavation of the site did take place in the 19th century. In addition, walls, pottery and plaster had been observed during normal work on the market garden. The more modern excavations date from the 1930s, 1965 and 1981.

In summary, there are no known reports of Southwick Roman villa before 1815 (*see below*). According to Winbolt’s 1926 account, Mr E. F. Salmon, then Secretary of the now defunct Sussex Archaeological Trust, which was at one time entrusted with the care of the properties belonging to the Sussex Archaeological Society, had visited the site as early as 1922. Salmon (1922) had also published an account by a Mr James Rooke, a local

resident of Southwick, which was recorded in 1873. Rooke spoke of Roman remains and pavements and plastered walls that were exposed by excavation but later knocked down to facilitate ploughing. Rooke had seen these discoveries in about 1815, when it would appear that he was about ten years old. In 1893 Mr E. Wheatland, the parish clerk and sexton, 'dug up' a brass coin of the emperor Commodus (AD 180–192), and reported it to the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Club. This was noted in the *Sussex Daily News* on 7 March 1893, but see also Salmon 1922. Wheatland also prepared a rough plan of the villa which Winbolt (1926b, 13) mentioned, and it is possibly the sketch plan drawn up in 1913 which is mentioned by G. Philip Burstow (1931), one of the volunteers on Winbolt's excavation, but this has since disappeared without any note of its content.

Winbolt (1926a) visited the site in 1925, when it was still a market garden, and the gardeners spoke to him of pottery, tiles and flint walls. There was clearly much local interest in the discoveries at Southwick. The first volume of the *Sussex Archaeological Collections* (SAC) in 1848 lists various meetings and related activities of the Society. In particular, on pages ix and x two meetings are mentioned, on May 5, 1847 at New Shoreham, probably at the Bridge Inn, and the AGM on July 1, 1847 at the Dolphin Inn, Chichester. At these meetings, pottery, 'mosaic', etc from Southwick Roman Villa and belonging to Mr N. Hall (and perhaps a plan?) were exhibited by the Revd. C. Gaunt (from Uckfield). The Society had been founded in 1846, and the records show that Revd. Gaunt was a founder member of the Society and also a member of the Committee. Mr Hall was never more than an associate member of the Society, and Revd. Gaunt was the principal figure in the talks concerning Mr Hall's finds. Winbolt must have been aware of all this, but not of any plan of the villa. Winbolt did some preliminary digging using a sketch plan (probably Wheatland's) drawn up by the parish clerk in 1913, and saw a coin of Constantine I dating from about AD 323 and found by Mr H. Reed, the tenant of the ground.

In a letter to Winbolt dated 14 December 1925, Nathaniel Hall, the then landowner and grandson of the Nathaniel Hall mentioned above, said there was no point in digging the site again because his grandfather had already excavated it in about 1844, and had found (he said) perhaps four rooms,

a few coins, and a human cremation in an urn, all of which had disappeared. He wrote of an urn broken by a clumsy workman, and plastered walls of a beautiful blue. Grandson Hall knew of no plan arising from this work. However, a recent discovery (see below) has shown that he was incorrect.

A list of manuscript maps held by the SAS was published as *SAS Occasional Paper number 4* (Dickins 1981). Included in this list is a plan of Southwick Roman villa, dated to about 1845. This plan was subsequently deposited in the East Sussex Record Office, which may confuse present-day researchers, because Southwick is currently (just) in West Sussex, and the West Sussex Record Office has no information about this plan. There are, in fact, two plans, one which is coloured and carries annotations in pencil (Fig. 4), and the other is a black-and-white fair copy (Fig. 6). The annotated version was clearly drawn by a person who had actually excavated the villa, and this can only have been Grandfather Nathaniel Hall, whose grandson had assured Winbolt that he knew nothing of any such plan. Figure 5 is a version of the annotated plan, with the original pencilled notes made bolder and more legible. The two Hall plans had been obtained at some time in the 19th century by William Figg, a Lewes surveyor and also a member of the SAS, who had an interest in collecting such memorabilia. He subsequently gave his collection to the SAS. These two plans are essentially consistent with the plan produced nearly a century later by Mr T. Ward (Winbolt 1932, 15), but there are elements in Hall's plans that are clearly inaccurate and, in one instance at least (the planning of the south-east baths), apparently fanciful. Thus Hall shows two shallow apses on both the north and south sides of the main baths range. Whilst the annotation '30 feet to end of 2nd curve' next to the southern pair of apses (Fig. 5) indicates careful personal observation, comparison with Winbolt's plans (1932, 15; 1935, 27) suggests that Hall's plans may be largely invented and based on the single, much deeper, southern apse located as planned by Winbolt. Perhaps Hall also misinterpreted some remains of the projecting stoke-hole (45) on the eastern side of room 44 as part of a second apse (E. Black pers.comm.). Regarding the two northern apses as shown on both of Hall's plans, no evidence was revealed by Winbolt. A similar lack of evidence was also recovered in the 1930s with respect to the 'steps'

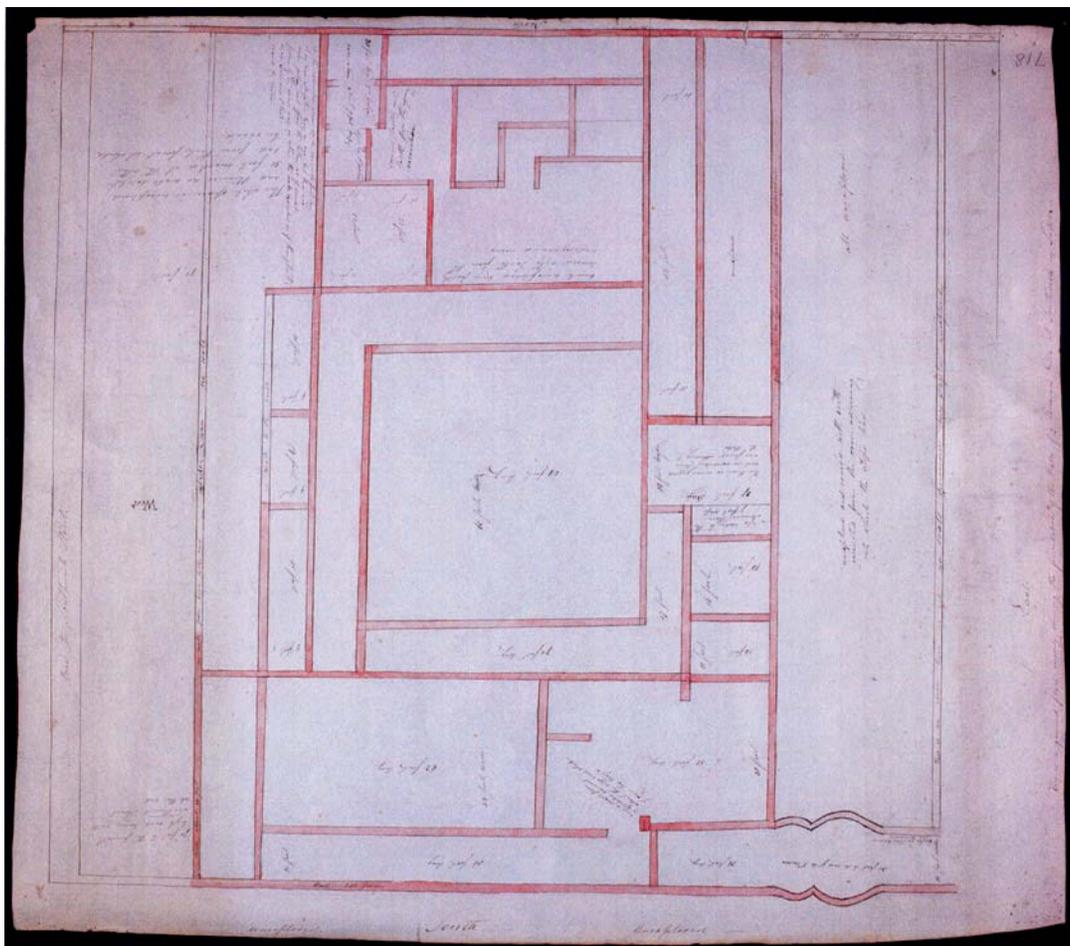


Fig. 4. Grandfather Nathaniel Hall's sketch plan of the remains he unearthed in about 1845. The original sketch was collected by William Figg (Dickins 1981), and is now in the East Sussex Record Office, reference ESRO ACC 34112/3/718, and is reproduced here by permission of ESRO. The orientation is approximately north upwards, so that north is to the top of the page. The drawing is covered with pencilled notes principally indicating distances. The orientation of the villa was square with the cardinal compass points, and these are marked in pencil. There is no scale, though individual distances are marked. For a clearer version of the pencil notes see Figure 5.

in room 31 adjacent to the 'deep room' (29; Figs 5 and 6). These two examples suggest that Hall may have indulged in considerable restoration in the case of his planning of the south-east baths, whilst he may have surmised the former presence of 'steps' for access regarding room 31. Since Hall did not allocate numbers to the rooms shown on his plan, the following discussion makes use of the room/area numbers provided by Winbolt (1932, 15). For completeness, the current authors have allocated additional numbers (Fig. 7) to the rooms revealed later by Mr C. R. Ward (Winbolt 1935, 27).

The area Grandfather Hall investigated did not include the north-west corner of the villa, which was covered by a chalk yard floor in his day, and which was subsequently shown to cover a suite of baths (Ward 1934a; 1934b). Nor did Grandfather Nathaniel Hall find the apse (Winbolt 1932, 15, 30) which Winbolt described as part of the original baths complex. There were no mosaic floors indicated by Hall, although the 1847 report of SAS activities mentioned above refers to 'mosaic' being shown to members. However, Hall did indicate the small piece of 'tessellated pavement'

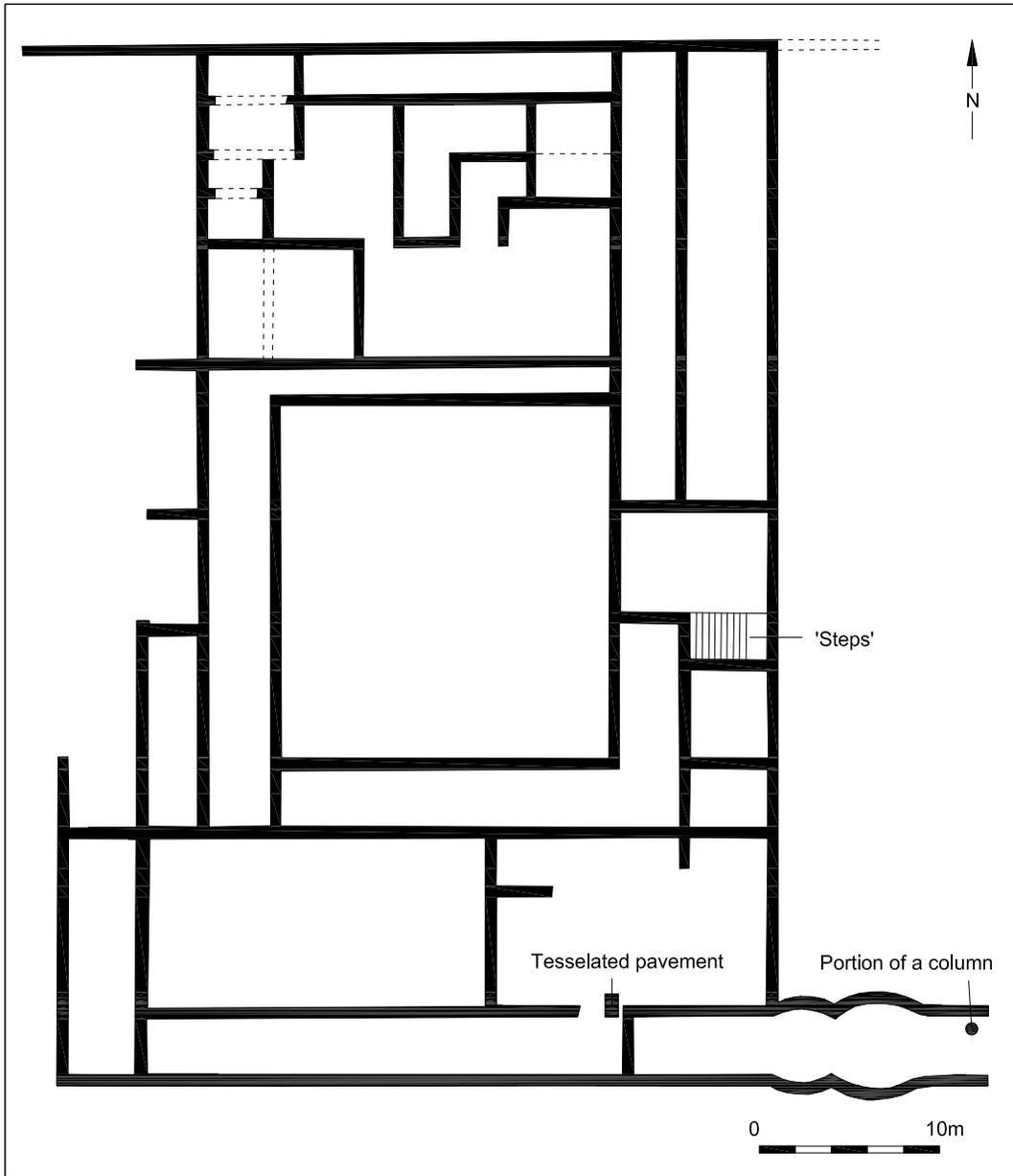


Fig. 6. The fair copy version of Fig. 4, also collected by William Figg (Dickins 1981). The original is marked with a scale, 30ft to 1in, and was presumably used by Revd. Gaunt at the meetings in Shoreham and Chichester in 1847. North is marked at the top. The severely discoloured original is held in the East Sussex Record Office, reference ESRO ACC 3412 3/43 and is reproduced by permission. Note the steps (centre, right) leading down below ground level by about 7ft. The unexplored areas noted in Fig. 4 have here been omitted. In scarcely legible pencil, the positions of the tessellated pavement (black square towards bottom right) and the column pedestal (black dot, extreme bottom right) have been noted.

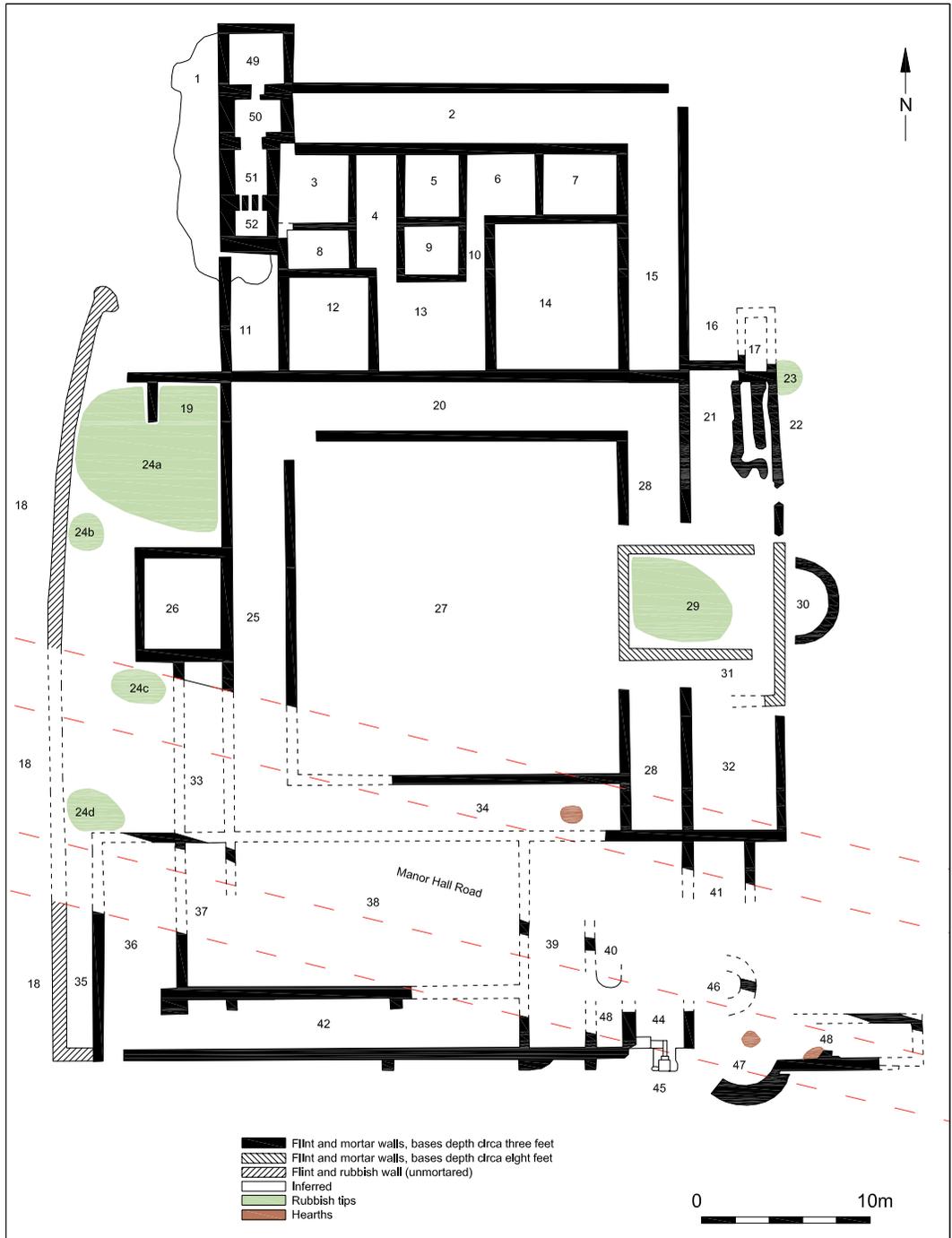


Fig. 7. Plan of the Southwick Roman villa as recorded by Mr T. Ward (see Winbolt 1932, 15; 1935, 27). The road across the site, now called Manor Hall Road, was laid down only months before the excavation commenced. Room numbers 49–52 were added by the authors.



Fig. 8. Local archaeologists 'visiting and helping in the excavation' in 1931. This picture was probably first published in the *Sussex Daily News* in 1931, but was reproduced in the *Shoreham Herald*, October 2, 2008. Reproduced with the permission of the Southwick Society.

the developers, Bakers of Portslade. Large-scale excavation was undertaken in early 1931. This was the subject of Winbolt's paper of 1932, though he published more than one account (for example Winbolt 1931). Excavations on areas around the villa were undertaken by the Ward brothers, whose family home was then a house called Chesters, Roman Road, Southwick, and brief accounts were published in 1935 and 1936, but there was then a hiatus until building developments in 1965 and 1981 provoked two rescue digs, only the second of which has been published in any detail (Rudling 1985).

Winbolt's dig of 1931 was not a very satisfactory excavation by modern standards (see Winbolt 1932, figs 3 and 7; Figs 3 and 8). It was undertaken 'over eight or nine weeks, mainly by three, sometimes four, men', with 'the steady help of enthusiastic

voluntary workers' from many parts of Sussex and elsewhere (Winbolt 1932, 14). In addition to the Ward brothers (see above and below), such volunteers included G. Philip Burstow, who usefully maintained his own records of the excavation (Burstow 1931). (Southwick was Burstow's first excavation. He was 21 in 1931 and in his second year of teaching at Brighton College Preparatory School.) The dig corrected and extended Hall's original plans, but even the new plan may have had problems, at least initially, as an early copy of Ward's plan amongst the Burstow papers carries the note that 'There is considerable error in the SW corner of the court yard'. Winbolt's (1932, 15) numbering of each room or area eases both locating and describing parts of the villa. The excavations also yielded more artefacts, including large amounts of pottery, much locally made, and

jewellery, but little to indicate an exceptionally rich establishment. In particular, there were no floor mosaics, despite the 1847 report. Unfortunately, archaeologists of that period often regarded site finds as their own personal property. Consequently much of what was unearthed passed into individual possession and then disappeared. Many of the listed artefacts, even some of those deposited in museums or with the SAS, have also disappeared. An attempt is made in Appendix 1 of this report (*see* ADS web pages) to list all the finds from the villa whose whereabouts are currently known.

C. Richard Ward undertook further small-scale excavations around the villa site immediately after Winbolt's dig. In 1934 he reported on the remains of a separate building, a roadway, metalworking activity, associated native and Romano-British pottery, and two silver-plated denarii (coins) from about AD 80, which were found south of the newly constructed road (modern-day Manor Hall Road), on a site now built over (Ward 1934b). For photographs of the obverses of the two coins *see* Standing (2011, fig. 2). Pilot holes through the chalk yard shown at the top left of Winbolt's (1935, 27) plan of the site revealed the remains of a typical Roman bath-house with a hypocaust, which apparently replaced part of the original western corridor (11) of the villa. Finds included numerous fragments of patterned (presumably combed rather than roller-stamped) box-flue tiles and several 0.25in white, grey and red tesserae which indicate the former existence of a mosaic floor in the baths (*see* also Winbolt 1935, 27, 70 and the plate opposite page 28). A year earlier Mr Salmon, the secretary of the Sussex Archaeological Trust, had pointed out the similarity of Southwick villa to Horace's Sabine Farm, which assumed a readership with knowledge of the Classics (Salmon 1933, 241). Ward (1938) also reported some further finds made when road works required the digging of a trench along Southwick Street, and he interpreted his observations as concerning outbuildings of the villa, a hearth and a rubbish pit, but this was never followed up. He surmised that the villa complex therefore extended in this direction. Ward also stated that a separate note on the 'pottery, animal bones, coins, glass, metal crucible lining, glazed tile, etc will be published later'. Sadly, this never happened, and the whereabouts of the finds he mentions are unknown. These appear to be the final excavations at the villa until after World War II.

After the war, and before further building on the site, excavations were undertaken by Roy Canham in 1965 and David Rudling in 1981, but these were of much more limited extent than Winbolt's (Rudling 1985). Canham's was a rescue dig in 1965 before the erection of the present-day Methodist church, and this excavation was not written up formally in any detail, although some notes are extant and a brief report was published (Canham 1966). Rudling's excavation covered a very much smaller area before extending the church manse, but his report also describes Canham's excavations and some of his finds.

Rudling and Canham noted that the villa deposits showed no stratification, but this was hardly surprising, given that the villa area had been dug out at least twice before and then been back-filled, destroying any possibility of placing newly-found artefacts within a proper archaeological context. The evidence of the pottery and the coins recovered generally during the 20th-century investigations shows that the villa was occupied between about AD 80 and AD 350. Canham also identified some post-holes on the site, which suggests an Iron Age occupation before the arrival of the Romans, but this evidence should be assessed with caution.

VILLA DEVELOPMENT

The villa ground plan (Fig. 7) as revealed by Hall, Winbolt and Ward is of a large courtyard villa of Mediterranean type and with similarities in some aspects of design to the much larger Flavian palace at Fishbourne (Cunliffe 1971; Rudling 1998, fig. 3; Fig. 9). 'Orientated on magnetic north and south' (Winbolt 1932, 14), the villa (or mini-palace) at Southwick comprised four ranges around a central courtyard (27).

In Period 1 the northern range consisted of domestic rooms (3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12 and 14), surrounded by three large enclosed galleries (2, 11 and 15) and a *porticus* (20). The domestic rooms were accessed either directly from a 'middle room' or *medianum* (13) or via two corridors (4 and 10) which led off it. Entry to this complex of rooms was also via room 13 from *porticus* 20 and the central court which adjoins it. Ernest Black (*pers. comm.*) has recognised the arrangement of rooms in the north range at Southwick as a *medianum*-style apartment similar to those found

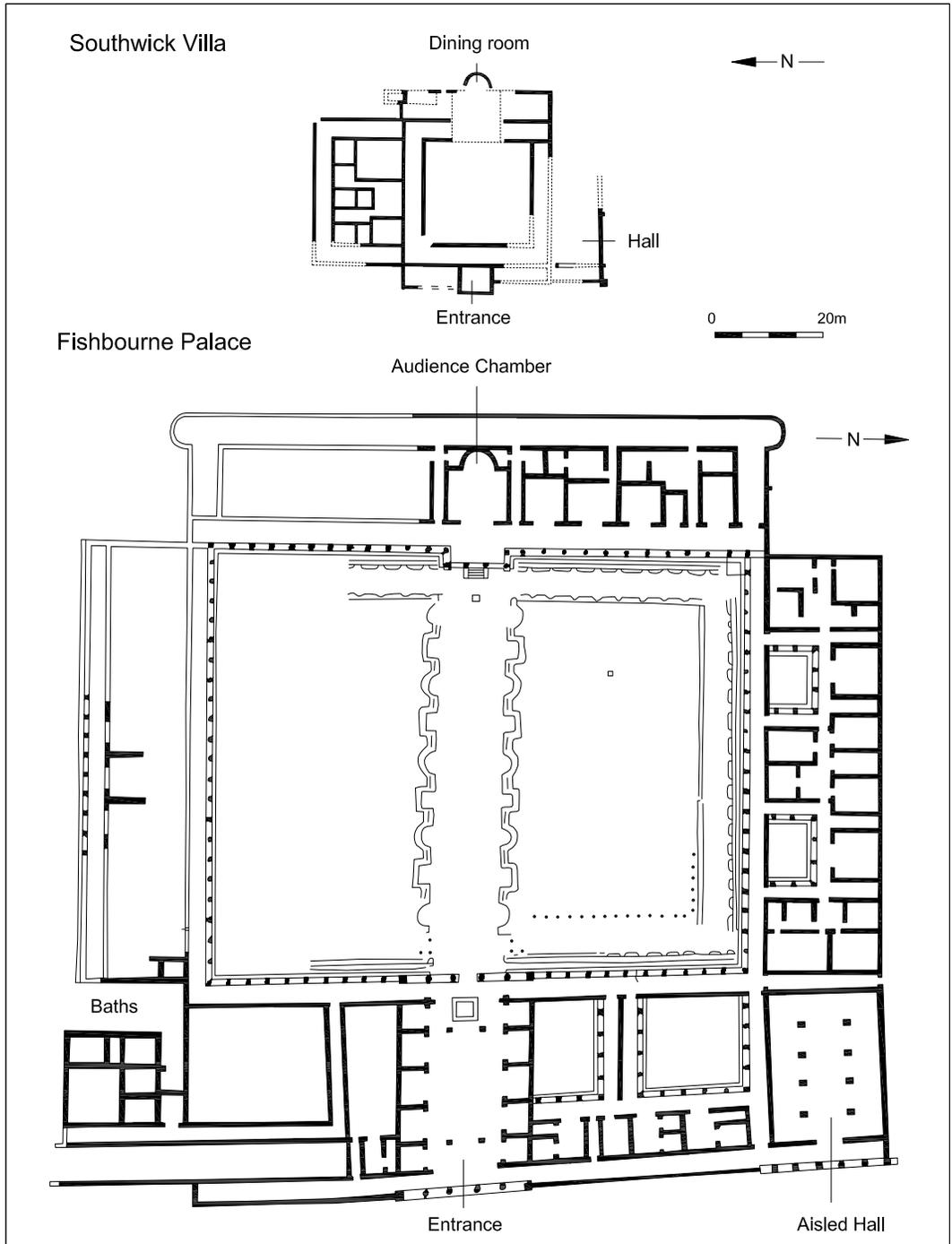


Fig. 9. Plans for comparison of the Flavian palace at Fishbourne and the contemporary Period 1 villa/'mini-palace' at Southwick. The two plans are aligned along the axis formed by their respective entrance halls and 'audience' chambers/dining rooms.

at Ostia and at Rome in Italy (Ellis 2000, 73–8). Previously, such arrangements of rooms (i.e. rooms grouped around a ‘middle room’ and from which access to them is gained) had been identified at Fishbourne Palace (E. Black pers. comm.; Manley 2003, 130). At Southwick the largest room (14), which yielded some gold-on-glass tesserae, has long been interpreted as a reception/dining room, whilst the other large room (12) may also have been a reception room. Both these rooms were entered directly from room 13. Rooms 3, 5, 8 and 9, thought to be bedrooms, were accessed from room 13 via corridor 4. Similarly, room 7 may also have been a bedroom or perhaps an office, but this time opening off room 14. Room 6, accessed via corridor 10, should have been a kitchen or service area for room 14. The three galleries (2, 11 and 15) on the north, west and east sides of the *medianum* block may have been used for such purposes as sleeping space for servants or slaves, craft activities or storage.

In the north-west corner of the northern range Winbolt (1932, 15; ‘1’ in Fig. 7) found a large, roughly rectangular area of chalk surfaced with small beach stones. These deposits, which Winbolt did not remove, were identified as a ‘yard’ and subsequently noted by Salmon (1933, 240) as having been ‘laid down between 40 and 50 years ago’. Later Ward (1934a) removed this ‘yard’, and in doing so revealed the heated rooms of a small bath suite (Fig. 7, 49–52) which had been constructed within the northern end of the original (Period 1) gallery 11. The baths comprised at least three rooms (50–52), the hottest (the *caldarium*: 50) being at the northern end next to the *praefurnium* (49), which projects beyond the northern extent of the Period 1 villa. Next, coming southwards are two *tepidaria* (warm rooms, 51 and 52). Although there is no evidence for a *frigidarium* (cold room) or an *apodyterium* (changing room), these may have been located in the remaining part of the former western gallery (11). Alternatively, Black (pers. comm.) has suggested that room 3 became the *frigidarium* and room 8 served as the *apodyterium*. If so, the number of ‘bedrooms’ was reduced from five to three in the Period 2 building.

To the south of the northern range lies the large central court (27, approximately 20m square) surrounded by porticoes (20, 25, 28 and 34). The inner-most side of each portico was partly open and comprised a small wall with half-columns

above. Such an arrangement would have facilitated lighting the *medianum* (13) and the two large reception rooms (12 and 14), which probably had large window openings above the roof-line of portico 20 and were deliberately sited on the southern side of the apartment block with this in mind (Black pers. comm.). At the south-east corner of the courtyard a cross-wall at the junction of the east and south sections of the portico indicates that the walkway was not completely open. Regarding the nature of the courtyard itself, nothing is known, and the possibility remains that it may have included a formal garden, as at Fishbourne (Cunliffe 1971, 120–31).

On the eastern side of the central court was portico 28, on either side of, but not adjoining, central room 29. In contrast to the walls of all the rooms referred to earlier, Winbolt (1932) noted that the depth of the flint and mortar walls of this room, and also of an adjacent and much smaller room (31) to its south-east, was approximately ‘eight feet’ deep, whilst all the other walls were some ‘three feet’ deep. Subsequently, however, Winbolt (1935, 27) stated that the walls of room (29) ‘went down nearly 9 feet’. It is interesting to note here, for depth (‘12 feet’), health and safety (lack of shoring, working alone, presumably no hard hat) and methodological (‘prodding’ and use of a fork) reasons, that Burstow’s journal entries for the 9th and 22nd October 1931 document that, apparently alone and unsupervised, he had:

arrived before two and set to work. I was bewildered to find that most of the dump had caved in and had covered the floor of the room with boulders. I feel in a way responsible having been over-enthusiastic in undermining when I was up here last. Ward came across on his way to his office and saw the disaster for the first time. It was a nuisance for him[and] I promised to do my share in unearthing the room and borrowed a spade and fork It was very hard work throwing up earth from a pit nearly 10 feet below ground level and I cleared most by carrying away boulders in my arms.

Subsequently Burstow:

set to work digging in the ‘deep room’ [29]. A great deal more had fallen in since I came up last, and had almost obliterated the dump I was working in. However I found a small

patch and turned up several pieces of black pot (two rims) and a chip of Samian Ware. Then I had one of the narrowest escapes of my life. I was sitting prodding into the dump when the entire side twelve feet deep fell in to the bottom. I saw it however in the air and dashed for safety, leaving a fork behind. So much earth came in that though I dug for two hours I could not find it.

He later records that 'Mrs Ward seems rather afraid of the deep room and would like it filled in. I believe that there is a lot more to be found there'.

Rooms 21 and 32, to the north and south respectively of the eastern end of room 29, were wider than, but parallel to, portico 28. Room 31 is of particular interest since it was here that a note on Hall's plans (Figs 4 and 5) records the presence of 'steps leading to adjoining room [presumably room 29]. 7 feet deep'. This discovery, if true (*see above*), might therefore indicate that room 29 had a basement or cellar accessed by the stairs in room 31. Otherwise, given the depth, it was perhaps intended to have a hypocaust. It has been noted that 'Many houses [in Roman Britain] had at least one 'cellar', and that such rooms had their own problems, such as being prone to flooding' (De la Bedoyere 1991, 133). However, for space reasons town houses were more likely to have underground rooms than those in the countryside (De la Bedoyere 1991, 147). Whilst most underground rooms were used for storage, that forming part of the third-century town house at Verulamium, Insula xxviii.1 appears to have had an apsidal shrine, indicating a religious function, although the room is not thought to have been finished and probably served as a cellar (De la Bedoyere 1991, 145: fig. 113). In contrast, the 'Deep Room' at Lullingstone Villa in Kent was constructed in the late 1st century, probably as a storage area, but was 'converted in the late second century into a cult room containing a niche painted with water nymphs'. Later still the room became a repository for marble ancestor busts (Meates 1979, 36). So if not part of a hypocaust, was the basement area of room 29 at Southwick a subterranean cult or ancestor room, as at Lullingstone? It might even have been a place to deposit the remains of ancestors (at this period they would have been cremated), the building above being used as a mausoleum or shrine to the ancestors.

Strangely, Winbolt did not find or record any remains of 'steps' in room 31, but he noted that the walls of room 29 had 'a thick rendering of cream-coloured plaster' which contrasted with the walls above which 'were decorated with fresco in red, sky-blue and other colours, with various patterns of bands and leaves' (Winbolt 1932, 18). Winbolt also records that he found a ledge at the top of some '2.5 or 3 feet of plaster on the lower part of the walls' of room 29. The plastered walls below this ledge were interpreted by Winbolt as the sides of a cold bath (Winbolt 1932, 18 and plate 11). Dating evidence from a large 'rubbish tip' (Burstow's 'dump') at the bottom of room 29 included the spout of a 1st-century mortarium (Winbolt 1935, 27), but we are warned that the finds from this dump 'give no safe indication of the date of the building' (Winbolt 1932, 18). It would be interesting to know for sure whether this 'rubbish' was simply dumped on the floor of room 29, or had been deposited in a pit, and/or had formed part of a 'ritual structured deposit' of the type now being recognised at various later prehistoric and Roman-period sites in Britain (Rudling 2008, 97 and 118).

Immediately to the east of room 29 Winbolt found a semi-circular apse not recorded by Hall (it may have lain under Hall's spoil heap). This structure, however, had foundations only 3ft 3in deep. As to the function of the resulting large apsidal building/rooms 29/30, Winbolt (1932, 18) was of the opinion that 'by common analogy' it 'should be part of a bath system', with the apse containing a 'bath of metal' and room 29 being a *tepidarium* (warm room). However, Winbolt's efforts to find a hypocaust were unrewarded, and he therefore changed his identification of this room to that of a 'cold plunge bath, lit by a window in the apse' (Winbolt 1935, 27). In contrast, by making an analogy with the Flavian Palace at Fishbourne, which was discovered after Winbolt's death in 1944, Black (1987, 102) has suggested that apse 30 was part of a *triclinium* (or dining room) which copies that (the 'audience chamber' – room W14) at Fishbourne. Black further suggests that apse 30 at Southwick is all that remains of the original Period 1 *triclinium* and that room 29 was a second phase *triclinium* without an apse, being also narrower than the original and thus not fully filling the gap between the two parts of portico 28. Black (1987, 104) originally hypothesised that the planned, but not completed, room 29 was to be

heated by a pair of *hypocausta*, room 31 (the room with steps, according to Grandfather Hall) being the southern such room; such *hypocausta* are also present at Fishbourne. Construction of the phase 2 *triclinium* may date to the second half of the 2nd century or early in the 3rd century, and its possible non-completion may indicate the abandonment of the east range of the villa (Black 1987, 104). Structure 29/32 appears to have been aligned with the entrance hall (26) in the west range. Currently, Black (pers. comm.) is of the opinion that rooms 29 and 31 may have been a free-standing building (Period 3) that replaced the east range and had nothing to do with the projecting apse (30). Black also suggests that, if the basement of 29 held water, it might have been a cistern rather than a bath, the elaborately coloured painted plaster found in room 29 being derived from a room at ground level. In contrast, Winbolt (1935, 27) was of the opinion that rooms 29 and 30 (despite the differences in the depths of their respective foundations) represented a structure which 'almost certainly belonged to the original design and construction of the villa. The extensions south ... may have been later additions'. For contrasting opinions about these southern rooms see below.

Further potential evidence for the nature of the east range during Period 1 includes the suggestion that room 17 was a *praefurnium* for a *hypocauston* or small chamber with a hypocaust which would have occupied much of the location of later-phase room 22 (Black 1987, 104). Such a chamber would have provided heat to an adjacent room to the west. Black further suggests that subsequently the *hypocauston* was replaced by a corn-drying oven (Fig. 10, Period 4, 22). In contrast, Winbolt (1935, 26 and plate 1) refers to the 'peculiar system of walls' in this area as indicating latrines. In the absence of any record of other partition walls in the east wing, the arrangement of other Period 1 rooms is unknown.

On the other side of the central court (27), room 26 to the west of the west corridor (25) is an entrance hall, and again shows similarities in design, if not size, to Fishbourne Palace. Flanking rooms 19 and 33 may have been parts of porticoes on either side of the main entrance (Black 1987, 15). Black also suggested that at Southwick there was a deliberate attempt to 'give variety to the western [main] façade of the house with alternate projecting and recessed units (36: 33: 26 and 19; 11)'.

To the south of the central court the range of rooms is less well understood because this area was damaged by the road constructed in 1931, though Burstow's journal for 1931 suggests that much may have simply been buried under the road and so might still exist. At the eastern end of the south range two apses and a hypocaust have been interpreted as probably the original baths of the villa (Black 1987, 103). It is possible, however, that an even earlier phase of baths at Southwick existed close by as a free-standing building, as at Angmering, Wiggonholt and (in its earliest phase) Fishbourne (E. Black pers. comm.). Although little is known about the south-east baths, components probably included a main stoke-hole, a rectangular hot bath and a possible wood-store in the area of room 48, where, according to Hall's plan (Fig. 5), a 'portion of stone column [was found] still remaining'. Presumably out of its original context, this architectural fragment indicates the re-use at some stage of building materials in room 48. Room 47 with its apse is interpreted as the *caldarium*, whilst room 44 with its own furnace is identified as the *tepidarium*. To the west, poorly preserved room 40, with its apse of *opus signinum*, may have been the *frigidarium*. The second masonry apse (46) is difficult to explain because it appears to overlap the northern wall of room 47. Perhaps this represents a different phase of the baths or it may have been wrongly recorded (E. Black pers. comm.). Black has also pointed out that neither the Flavian baths at Angmering (Scott 1938, plate I) nor the earliest baths at Fishbourne, and maybe also the baths at Wiggonholt (Evans 1974, fig. 6), had any external apses, whereas the south-east baths at Southwick had at least two, and may therefore, like the north-west baths, be a later (Period 2) addition to the villa.

The discovery of two pieces of flue tile with relief-patterned keying at Southwick provides useful links with other early Roman Sussex sites (Rudling 1985, 82). Thus a tile with Die 96 roller-stamped patterning links Southwick villa with the Fishbourne Harbour aisled building, a site at Little Oldwick Copse, Lavant, and Bignor Roman Villa. Similarly, a fragment from a Westhampnett-type voussoir tile with keying from two different dies (one is Die 21, the other is uncertain) gives a link with sites at Angmering, Wiggonholt, Ranscombe Camp and Westhampnett, as well as sites in London and Middlesex (Betts *et al.* 1997, 92–3). Other early Roman Sussex sites that have yielded different 'London-Sussex group' dies include

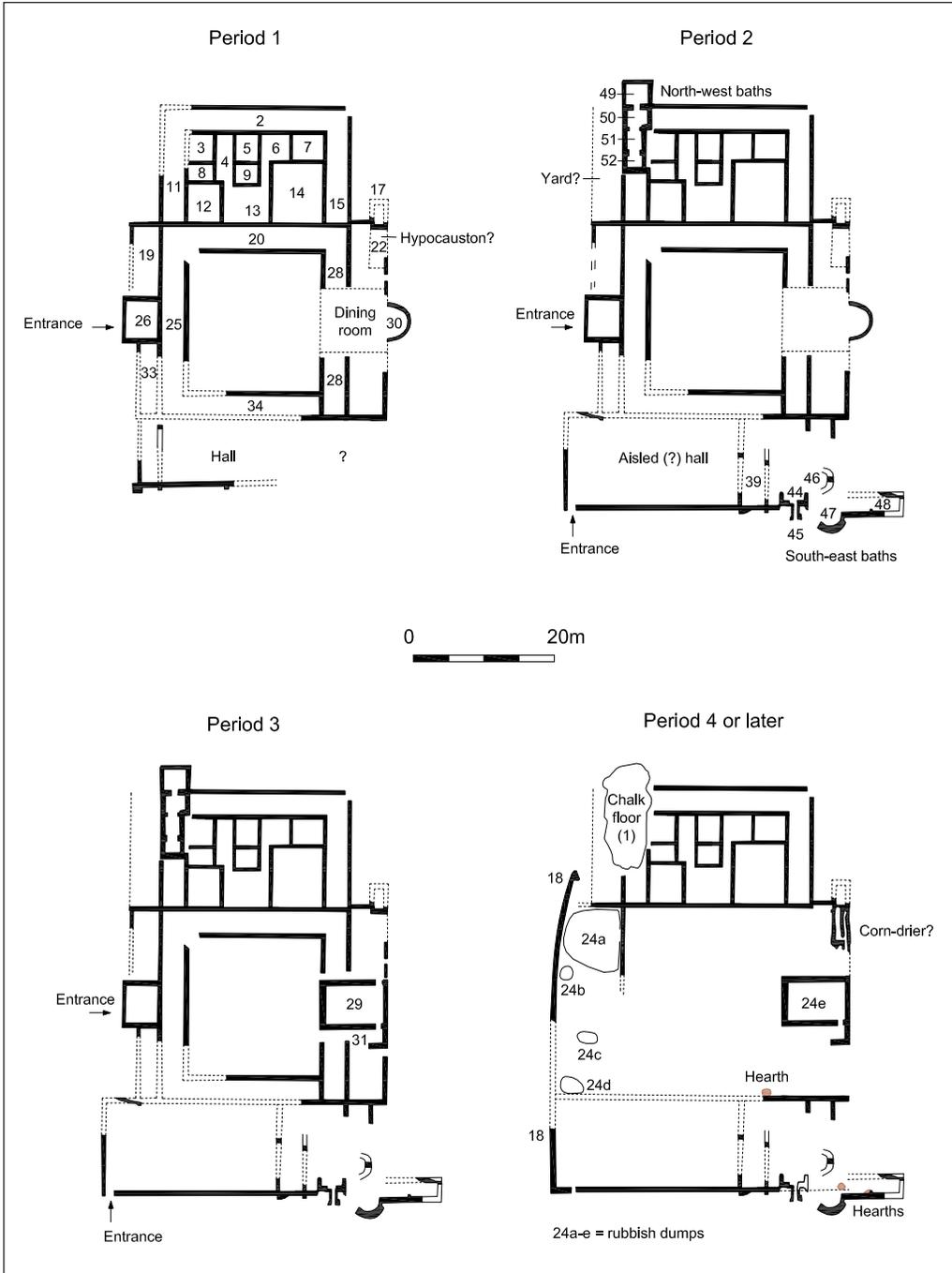


Fig. 10. The hypothetical development of Southwick Villa (after Black 1987, fig. 43 and incorporating additional thoughts from Ernest Black). In Period 3 it is uncertain whether the superstructure of the rest of the east range was still standing. In Period 4 the southern aisled (?) hall and baths may have survived, but the presence of hearths indicates that by this time the SE baths were no longer used for bathing. Similarly, it is possible that by Period 4 the NW baths had gone out of use.

Alfoldean, the Flavian Palace at Fishbourne, High Down (Angmering), Chichester (the public baths), Arundel (Tarrant Street), Eastbourne, Wiggonholt and Newhaven. In addition, the finding of a *tegula mammata* tile at Southwick is mirrored by such discoveries at Fishbourne Palace and at the early villas at Angmering and Arundel (Tarrant Street).

At the western end of the south range the large rectangular area comprising rooms 36, 37, 38, 39 and 42 is intriguing. Could this part of the villa, with its separate but small entrance in the south-west corner, have similarities with the large aisled hall at Fishbourne Palace, where large gatherings could have taken place without providing the visitors with direct access to the private/domestic areas of the palace? Such 'visitors' might have included people associated with the various buildings found by Ward and Standing to the south of the villa (*see above*); this dependent workforce and other non-household people may have used the south-east baths. The idea of an aisled hall was suggested by Miles Russell (2006, 136–7 and fig. 56) and is based on the discovery by Winbolt of parts of two possible column bases which protrude to the south of the wall that divided rooms 38 and 42 (Fig. 7). Alternatively, and more likely, these two possible column bases may have been buttresses, especially as what were evidently buttresses occur on the exterior of the southern wall of rooms 38, 39 and 42. With respect to room 42, and probably significantly, two of these buttresses occur at the junction of this wall with internal walls. Thus in the case of Russell's two surviving aisle post-bases, these and a much larger square of masonry on the outside south-west corner of room 37 can all be interpreted as buttresses supporting the southern wall of rooms 37 and 38, this wall at this period also being the southern external wall of the villa. In addition, the western of Russell's two aisle post-bases is in just the right location to have buttressed the junction of its adjoining wall to a projection of the internal north/south wall which once separated rooms 37 and 38. Whilst the possibility of aisle post-bases thus seems very unlikely, the idea of the former presence in this area of a large hall remains attractive. Black (*pers. comm.*) has suggested that in the Period I villa such a hall and its entrance comprised rooms 38 and 37 respectively, and that this structure had external buttresses at its south-west corner and along its south wall. Subsequently, in Period 2, hall 38 was enlarged, perhaps now

becoming an aisled hall. At the same time, it is possible that the south-east baths were added at the eastern end of the hall, and the blocking wall in the south-east corner of the porticoed walkway round the courtyard constructed. This blocking wall may have prevented those using the hall and south-east baths from gaining direct access to the east and north ranges. In addition, Black suggests that at this phase (Period 2) the walls projecting at 19 may have been added as part of a remodelling of the north-western part of the façade to balance that to the south-west.

Subsequently alterations were made to the Period 2 house (Fig. 10). Thus in Period 3 the second phase of room 29 may have been constructed, this time as a freestanding structure and including the adjacent room with 'steps' (31), perhaps providing access to an underground cellar or cult room beneath room 29. The rest of the former east range may by now have gone out of use. Finally, in Period 4 rooms 29/31 were apparently used for rubbish disposal, as were other areas on the west side of the former courtyard. Although the buildings of the southern range may have continued in use, discoveries of hearths indicate that by now these baths had gone out of use for bathing, a similar fate being also possible at this time for the north-west baths. Also in Period 4, the west range of the villa presumably went out of use when an unmortared flint wall (18) to the west of the west range cut off direct access to the former entrance hall (26). The area between this new wall and the west range contained another 'yard' (24a) and three 'rubbish tips' (24b–d) (Winbolt 1932, 17). Unfortunately, none of these deposits is properly dated, nor is the major 'chalk yard' (1) which both Salmon and Ward thought was 'comparatively modern' but might perhaps represent 'a floor or make-up for a floor within a timber structure' (Black 1987, 104). A floor of broken roof tiles (Rudling 1985, 74) in room 9 may also be evidence that the north range continued in Period 4 as the farm house for some time after the abandonment of the other ranges of the Period I villa. The undated hearths within the southern range (Fig. 7) may represent either Period 4 re-use of former rooms (i.e. a part of a portico and parts of the baths) or post-Period 4 squatter occupation.

Thus at Southwick we had a very important and luxurious early villa (or mini-palace), 'a copy, on a smaller scale of the Period 2 Palace at Fishbourne' (Black 1987, 102), which over time

underwent changes until, in its final stages, the house consisted largely of only the former north range of the original courtyard villa. Ownership of such a villa, as first designed, might have included the native aristocracy, which was left in peace to develop in the strongly philo-Roman atmosphere generated by the client kingdom of Togidubnus (Cunliffe 1973, 79; Rudling 2003, 114). The building of such residences in Sussex so soon after the 'Conquest' may have been due to a competitive desire by the local elite to display their status in a new, romanised way. The financing of such ambitious (and sometimes perhaps over-ambitious) construction projects would generally have depended upon wealth derived from various sources: villa estate farming, the rents of tenants, the profits of industry (stone quarrying, iron mining and smelting, pottery manufacture, etc), and perhaps Roman money lenders. It is even possible that Southwick villa was owned by king Togidubnus or one of his kinsmen. The lack of any dedicatory inscriptions is thus, as at Fishbourne, very frustrating! Official encouragement of such building projects is confirmed by the writings in

AD 98 (i.e. probably soon after the construction of Southwick villa) of Tacitus who, in the *Agricola* (chapter 21), informs us that his father-in-law Agricola, the Roman Governor of Britannia, 'gave private encouragement and official assistance to the building of temples, public squares, and *good houses*' (our emphasis). The wide distribution of the large early villas may be significant, each being located on a distinct block of land which might 'represent the territory over which the [native] land-owning aristocracy held control' (Cunliffe 1973, 79 and fig. 13; Fig. 1). This pattern might reflect the distribution of the tribal sub-units, the *pagi*, about which little is known. Other possible owners of the Period 1 villa at Southwick may, however, have included high-ranking Roman administrators, perhaps after the death or retirement of Togidubnus, or foreign businessmen (*negotiatores*). Such businessmen, especially any from Italy, would have been familiar with the *medianum* type of lay-out of domestic accommodation, and may thus have chosen to employ either an Italian architect or someone who was familiar with such buildings.

THE FINDS

Mention here will be limited to a further update on the very rare gold glass tesserae, two further examples of Roman mortaria sherds held in Manor Cottage, and a summary (for broad dating purposes) of the Roman coins from Southwick. The stone tesserae from Southwick villa formed the basis of a recent article by Allen and Standing (2012) which provides useful comparisons with the contemporary site at Fishbourne.

THE GOLD GLASS TESSERAE

Of particular interest amongst Winbolt's finds were a number of very rare (for Britain) gold-on-glass tesserae which are the subject of an earlier paper in SAC (Standing and Leigh 2012). Only summary details are therefore necessary here. In a preliminary article Winbolt (1931, 482) mentions '... nine greenish glass tesserae measuring on the surface 3/5 inch square. On the top gold leaf had been laid, and this was protected with a very thin flash of green glass'. However, in his definitive account, Winbolt (1932, 24) listed amongst his finds some 'eight exceptional glass tesserae (7 square and 1 triangular) probably used for a wall decoration in room 14'. It is also recorded (Collingwood and Taylor 1932, 221) that some of the gold glass tesserae were found in rooms 2, 6 and 10, i.e. in the vicinity of room 14. The tesserae are described by Winbolt as being of yellow-green glass, the face 7/16 in. square tapering on the inner side to 5/16–6/16 in. Gold leaf was laid on the upper surface and flashed with a very thin coat of glass. The report also contains a rather indistinct photograph of recovered tesserae, including those of gold glass. It is notable that the number of tesserae which are actually of

gold glass is not clear from the published picture, though a higher-resolution photograph of the same assemblage of tesserae taken by C. R. Ward, who excavated the site along with Winbolt, seems to show that perhaps only four were of gold glass (Standing and Leigh 2012, fig. 12; the glass tesserae occupy the top two rows). This recent discovery seems to confirm that only some of the tesserae pictured by Winbolt were gilt. Winbolt surmised that they were probably imported from Aquileia, the glass centre of Italy, or from Damascus.

A list of finds found by Winbolt and Ward at the villa in 1931–2, now in the possession of the SAS, includes 'floor tesserae', a 'handle from a glass bottle' and 'other glass fragments...'. A few of these artefacts are now in the SAS Museum of Sussex Archaeology at Barbican House, Lewes. They carry the registration number 58.19.2. It seems that these artefacts reached the Society only in 1958, probably via Hove Museum, because Winbolt also stated in his 1932 excavation report (page 22) that 'A selection [of artefacts] will be found in the Hove Museum'. Hove Museum now holds no artefacts from Southwick and has no record of ever receiving any.

Some of the artefacts which arrived at Barbican House in 1958 were subsequently forwarded to the SAS Marlipins Museum in Shoreham for display. That museum contains ceramic and chalk floor tesserae and some 16 (originally 17) glass tesserae supposedly from Southwick, each numbered in a series from 1–17. Only four of them appear to the naked eye to be clearly gilt. In 2005, when they were photographed and analysed by Rehren and Schibille (N. Schibille, pers. comm. 2010), there were apparently still 17 glass tesserae (including gold glass examples) in the Marlipins' show-case, but one, the

triangular example, shattered during X-ray analysis and has since disappeared. However, if these tesserae are indeed those unearthed by Winbolt, four of his original eight (or nine) gold glass tesserae have now also disappeared.

Previously, all the glass tesserae said to have been found at Southwick villa were examined by John Shepherd and his report was published by Rudling (1985, 82–3). Shepherd described 20 tesserae in all, 17 from the SAS holdings and the 3 new gold glass tesserae found by Canham. Shepherd described seven gold tesserae in all, of thick olive-green glass with many air bubbles, with a layer of gold leaf sealed by a thin, now heavily crizzled layer of glass (the thin layer of glass often found covering the gold in such tesserae is generally called a cartellina). The sizes (all mm) were 9×10×6 (two examples), 5×4×4, 5×5×4, 4×3×4, 3×3×3, and 10×10×14×6 (triangular). Of these, the two largest and the triangular came from Canham's 1965 dig, and the remaining four were from the SAS collection. Shepherd also lists further tesserae from the SAS holdings: opaque deep blue glass, 7×7×4 (3 examples), 5×5×4 (4), 4×6×4 (2) and 4×4×4 (1); opaque turquoise glass, 5×5×4 (1); dull olive green, 4×5×1 (1); and pale green glass, 4×4×4 (1). This makes 13 in all from the SAS holdings, and these, plus the four gold examples, comprise the 17 (later reduced to 16) subsequently displayed in the Marlipins Museum. However, comparison of the colours and dimensions of the 16 remaining tesserae with the colours and dimensions reported by Winbolt shows clearly that the majority of the tesserae now in the Marlipins Museum are *not* those described by Winbolt (Standing and Leigh 2012). Quite how they came to be in the Marlipins Museum and ascribed to the Southwick villa remains a mystery.

The Southwick Society now holds some villa finds which are displayed in Manor Cottage, Southwick. These seem to have reached the Society in the following way: a note in Rudling's 1985 paper states that, after English local government reorganisation in 1974, some of Winbolt's finds then in the possession of the defunct Southwick Urban District Council (Southwick UDC hereafter) were passed to the new Adur District Council, which placed them in the custody of the Southwick Society, though retaining ownership. How these artefacts came to Southwick UDC is not evident. In addition, the Methodist church which was built over the remains of the villa and was by then owner of the villa site, inherited the various small (or special) finds from the 1965 and 1981 digs, and, at some time after Shepherd's inspection of the glass tesserae, these were donated to the Southwick Society. They were carefully wrapped up, numbered, placed in a box in a cupboard and forgotten. This group of finds apparently included the three gold glass tesserae labelled SF1 (two items) and SF47 (one) found by Canham. During cataloguing of the 'special finds' in 2008, these three beautiful gold green glass tesserae were rediscovered.

Thus 11 (or 12) gold glass tesserae have been definitively reported (by Winbolt and Canham) to have been found at Southwick, and the whereabouts of only seven gilt tesserae currently ascribed to Southwick are definitely known. Perhaps some of the Marlipins tesserae that are not now evidently covered with gold leaf were originally gilded. However, the origin of *all* the current extant glass tesserae, including those found by Canham, is now questionable (Standing and Leigh 2012), so it is probably not worth pursuing that possibility at present.

These 11 tesserae have been described as the largest single group of gold glass tesserae yet found in Britain. For

the reasons discussed above and elsewhere (Standing and Leigh 2012), some of the glass tesserae currently in Marlipins Museum and Manor Cottage, Southwick appear not to be of Roman origin, and they are probably not those found at Southwick villa. However, we have no reason to doubt that the eight or nine tesserae originally reported by Winbolt may be correctly described as unique in a British context. Of those currently available for study, only three, those found by Canham, seem certain to be those from the Southwick villa site, but their lead content, of the order of 20% as determined by scanning electron microscopy (SEMS), makes their identity as Roman suspect (James *et al.* 2013). How they got to the villa site is quite another question. We should note, however, the possibility of 'foul play' as Burstow's journal (March, April and October 1931) records that an 'interesting find ... a lead shield with the letters SPQR round the fasces ... is now pronounced a modern forgery', that the hoax 'was entirely against himself' [Winbolt], and that according to Mr Salmon it was 'a dirty trick' and that 'they know who was the perpetrator' (unfortunately the name of this person is not stated). Previously Sussex had been the location of two major archaeological fakes – Piltdown Man and the Pevensey Castle 'HON AVG ANDRIA' stamped Roman tile finds respectively.

THE MORTARIA (Fig. 11)

The review of finds held at Manor Cottage revealed two previously unpublished stamped mortaria sherds. These add to the corpus of previously published mortaria from Southwick, Winbolt (1932, 29) having listed eight mortaria sherds spanning the period 1st–c. mid-3rd century (Winbolt's dating), whilst Rudling (1985, 79–80) recorded two pieces of stamped white ware mortaria, one made by the potter Matugenus (*c.* AD 85–125) who operated at Brockley Hill (near Verulamium) (Fig. 11: 3), the other produced by Martinus, who also worked in the Verulamium region from *c.* AD 100–140. Rudling also recorded another mortarium sherd which could be from an import from Gaul or perhaps a 2nd-century product of the Colchester kilns. The two new examples, which are additional white ware products from the Verulamium region (M. Lyne pers. comm.), are as follows.

1. Mortarium with large hooked flange and bead rim, Verulamium white ware with flint trituration grits. The flange bears a partial stamp: DJEVAL[US. Dating: *c.* AD 80–90. Malcolm Lyne (pers. comm.), who kindly commented on both this and the other mortarium sherd, notes that 'it is unknown as to what the counterstamp (if any) on Devalus mortaria would have been; perhaps a repeat of the first stamp'. The only museum coding for this sherd is S-T/62/4. Fig. 11: 1.

2. Mortarium with large hooked flange and small bead rim, Verulamium region white ware with no surviving trituration grits. The flange bears a counter stamp: LVGVD. This stamp, which indicates the place of manufacture, belongs to Albinus, who was a prolific potter practising during the period *c.* AD 65–95. Museum coding: S-T/62/2. Fig. 11: 2.

Discussion

Overall, the mortaria assemblage found at Southwick contains a large number of white ware products from the Verulamium area, mostly dating to *c.* AD 80–140. This is in marked contrast to Fishbourne, where Kay Hartley in Cunliffe (1971, 174–5) noted 'the virtual absence of mortaria from potteries at or near

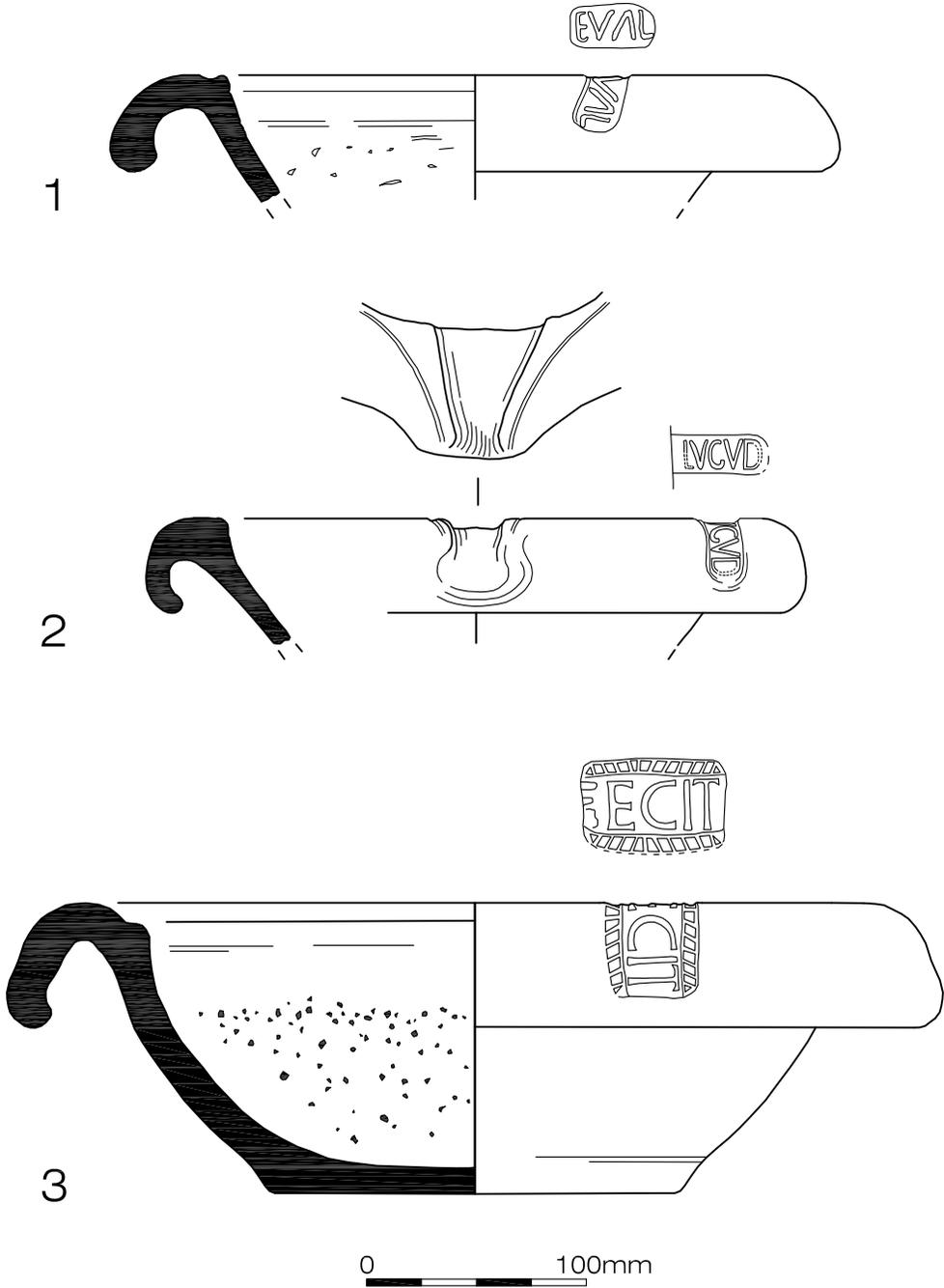


Fig. 11. Drawings by Jane Russell of stamped pottery mortaria sherds found at Southwick villa. Further sherds carrying makers' stamps were found and recorded, but have since disappeared.

Verulamium (including Brockley Hill and Radlett). Hartley also states that at Fishbourne ‘the relatively large number of pre-Flavian and early Flavian mortaria is to be expected on a site of such importance in this period’. Given the relatively large number of early Flavian mortaria at Southwick, Hartley’s statement is equally applicable to this site. The occurrence of mortaria generally is also a useful indicator of early ‘romanisation’, because the use of such a mixing bowl with a pestle, to create rich spicy sauces and purees, was in Roman Britain a distinctive aspect of Roman as opposed to indigenous cuisine.

THE COINS

Unfortunately, the number of recorded Roman coins found at Southwick is fairly small (16 coins in total), especially as ‘many other coins, not now traceable, have been found on or in the vicinity of the site’ (Winbolt 1932, 23; Burstow (1931) also mentions 87 coins having been recovered from the villa site, these apparently dating from Hadrian to Constantine I). Winbolt (1935, 28) lists 11 coins, Ward (1934b, 90; 1938, 118) noted 3 more (the location of discovery of the 2 silver-plated denarii has recently been identified by Standing, who also provides a photograph of the obverses of these two coins: Standing 2011), whilst sadly none was recovered during the excavations in 1965 and 1981. In addition, all six Roman coins found at Southwick but housed in Barbican House Museum (Lewes) were examined by Rudling (1985, 81–2), and details of two not listed by Winbolt have been included below in a total site list by emperor or period.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|
| Titus, AD 79–81 | 1 |
| DOMITIAN, AD 81–96 | 1 |
| Hadrian, AD 117–138 | 2 |
| Faustina I, died AD 141 | 1 |
| Faustina II, died AD 175 | 1 |
| Commodus, AD 180–192 | 1 |
| ?Second century | 1 |
| ?Early third century | 1 |
| Severus Alexander, AD 222–35 | 1 |
| Tetricus or Quintillus, c. AD 270 | 1 |
| ?Diocletian, AD 284–305 | 1 |
| Allectus, AD 294–6 | 1 |
| Constantine I, AD 307–37 | 2 |
| Constans, AD 337–50 (c. AD 347/8) | 1 |
| TOTAL | 16 |

Discussion

Given the small number of recorded coins (16), and the uncertainties as to how representative they are of the total number of coins actually found, generalisations are difficult. However, the lack of any coinage before c. AD 80 or after c. AD 350 is notable. The latest coin is a bronze issue of Constans with a two victories facing each other reverse type issued c. AD 347–8. In addition, the normally prolific radiate issues of the mid–late third century are represented by only a single coin. The use of site dating by reference to coin finds is thus consistent with a date range of c. AD 80–350, with the start date also supported by mortaria and other pottery finds (*see above*).

A definitive list of the finds from Southwick Roman villa currently held in several different archives.

A full listing (Appendix 1) by G. J. Leigh of the known finds from Southwick is available on the ADS website.

DISPLAY AND THEN LOSS

The surviving remains of the villa, though covered by the Methodist church and associated buildings, are now scheduled. The relative positions of all the buildings, Roman and modern, are recorded by Standing (2010, fig. 1) and Rudling (1985, fig. 2). Nowadays the only occasionally visible signs of the villa’s presence are parch marks sometimes discernible in the grass in the garden behind the church hall (Fig. 12). So what went wrong, given that by 1936 most of this nationally important Roman villa had been fully exposed and left open for the public to view? In 1931, and before the commencement of Winbolt’s excavations, a new road, West Way (now Manor Hall Road), was constructed across the site of the villa. Running east–west from Fishersgate and Portslade, this road was intended to be an access road for a large housing development. The larger part of the villa site was still available for excavation north of this road, as was a smaller area to the south (Winbolt 1932, 15 and plate 1).

Winbolt apparently expected that the whole site would soon be built over, and so in 1931 proceeded to excavate the whole site. His findings and details of visits from organisations such as the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society were reported in the local papers (Fig. 8). As a result of such interest, steps were taken by the SAS and others to preserve the remains.

Winbolt was interviewed by the *Worthing Herald* in March, 1931, and many people visited the site, individually or in groups. More than 40 people from all over Sussex had participated in the excavations. Both the *Sussex Daily News* and the *Worthing Herald* published aerial photographs of the villa site during these excavations, and these and that published by Winbolt (1932, plate 1) must have been some of the first archaeological aerial photographs ever publicly released. In a later issue, the *Sussex Daily News* described a reporter passing the site and seeing Salmon with his coat off and hard at work. The article mentioned that the legal ownership of the site by the SAS ensured ‘preservation for the nation for all time’. This, sadly,



Fig. 12. Parch marks due to the presence of the villa foundations, visible in the lawn behind (due east of) the church hall, as seen in July 2009 (courtesy of the minister of the Methodist church). The wall of the church hall is visible at the top of the picture. Photograph by G. J. Leigh.

was not the case. The article also mentioned seeing some tesserae ‘charming in colour’ which were then apparently in the possession of the Society, and being told of pottery bearing the names of five potters (Patricus, Maxtullus, Carus, Macranus and Viducus). A wealth of material had, it seems, been deposited ‘in Hove Museum and elsewhere’. Sadly, it has mostly disappeared. Preservation of the site was certainly desirable and desired, but the SAS possessed neither the manpower to look after it nor the funds to buy and curate a site with expensive development prospects.

Various suggestions for saving the site were discussed, including that the Southwick Urban District Council (hereafter Southwick UDC) might somehow be involved. In the records of its General Purposes Committee dated 26 May, 1931 is a note of a letter from C. Richard Ward, mentioning that the Council might consider acquiring the site. This was agreed, and the council surveyor was instructed to prepare a plan. However, Ward wrote again a month later recommending that no further action was necessary. In view of what happened subsequently, maybe Ward knew more than he then admitted to.

At this stage of the story, the organisation responsible for properties held by the SAS was the Sussex Archaeological Trust. This Trust was dissolved some years ago and its responsibilities taken over by the Society. Like the Society, the Trust was chronically short of money, and it appealed

for public support on more than one occasion. On May 10, 1932, the Trust circulated a letter to the membership both of the Society and of the Trust announcing that it would shortly receive the ownership of the site of the Roman villa at Southwick, ‘through the generosity of a member of both bodies who wishes to remain anonymous’. The letter also noted that the Society had asked help of the Society of Antiquaries in raising a public appeal in order to purchase the site, but apparently the development potential of the land had made the cost too high, and this appeal was never launched. The circular letter finally requested help from the general membership and from residents in the neighbourhood of the villa in paying for the fencing and upkeep of the site. It was noted that membership of the Trust would cost the princely sum of £1 per annum.

Salvation at this juncture had come from an unexpected source. The East Sussex Record Office contains a series of letters exchanged between Miss Maud Haviland, then living at St Leonards, and her solicitor, Mr Stevenson. She may well have been related to a Mr Haviland who was a founder-member of the SAS in 1846. The exchange began on 3 May 1932, when Haviland told Stevenson that she had visited the villa site and wished anonymously to purchase the whole area on behalf of the Trust, and that she was also prepared to contribute towards the cost of fencing the site, and of a caretaker. On 9 May Stevenson replied

that the area was broken up into four plots along Southwick Street and a fifth plot on the south side of West Way. He also advised that a sixth plot (now occupied by the Methodist church) would be desirable, and that the total purchase price would be £982. He also reckoned that it would be too expensive to purchase the road already designated across the villa site, West Way. In a letter dated May 10, Haviland enclosed a cheque for £1146 to cover the cost of these areas, and stated that she was also prepared to buy a further plot to the east so that the whole villa site could be purchased. However, she did not wish the owner of the area to understand that the SAS was the purchaser, and Stevenson later assured her that her cheque would not pass through the Society's accounts, which apparently it did not.

On June 24, 1932, Haviland told Stevenson that she was delighted that Bakers of Portslade (the developers of the site) had agreed to sell, and detailed how she had calculated her gift of £1146, to which she now added a further £60. She was also prepared to help with road charges. However, she was most emphatic that she wished to remain anonymous. Other people also helped. For example, a Mr Loader, who lived at Aberfeldy, Southwick Street, gave £45 towards the enterprise, in order to keep open his view across the villa site.

In July 1932 Haviland visited Stevenson at his office at Marlborough Place, Brighton (he had to meet her off the train at Brighton Station, for she did not know the way). There it was agreed that the SAS would have a free hand to dig on the south side of West Way, and that the remains would be preserved, whatever else transpired. Haviland agreed to contribute openly to enclosing the land, subject to the launching of a public appeal (which seems to have raised £50). As usual, the Society was short of money and could not otherwise have afforded this expense.

The Conveyance document, which covers the transfer of the villa site from the possession of Seaview Estates and the builder, Bakers of Portslade, to the Sussex Archaeological Trust, is dated 31 August 1932. It concerns three plots along Southwick Street, an adjacent fourth plot on the corner of Southwick Street and West Way, a fifth plot adjacent to this on West Way, and finally a sixth plot on the south side of West Way opposite plots four and five. These are the six plots for which Haviland paid a total of £1146 plus a further £60.

However, this was not the happy ending which the Society had wanted, because the Trust now had to find a way to finance the maintenance of its new property, and that wasn't trivial.

It was clear that the Society could not really continue to maintain a site which provided no permanent accommodation for a custodian or caretaker, even though it was fenced (Salmon 1933, 240 and the facing plate). The fencing had been finished in 1932, and the Society had agreed to pay a tithe rent of 2s. 6d per annum, but still not everyone was happy. Eventually the Society felt obliged to fence in the area completely and close it to the public, to prevent its being plundered for souvenirs. In addition, the General Purposes Committee of Southwick UDC received a report (26 August, 1935) that the fence was too high and obstructed the view at the junction of Southwick Street and West Way, which had been renamed Manor Hall Road in 1934. This meant more work for the Trust in 1935. There was also the problem of making up Manor Hall Road, which was yet to be settled. By the terms of its purchase of the area in 1932, the Trust was obliged not only to keep the site fenced, but also to share with the Council the cost of the pavements, sewerage works and water mains for the frontages it owned. The Trust hit upon the idea of leasing the site to Southwick UDC, but unsurprisingly this was not acceptable to the local authority.

However, in 1937 some kind of compromise solution appears to have been reached. As reported by the *Sussex Daily News*, of September 10, Southwick UDC agreed to take over the care of the site and establish it as a rest garden, still leaving the remains open for public view, as long as the Trust continued to look after the archaeological remains. Whether that arrangement would have continued but for the Second World War is not obvious, but between 1939 and 1945 the Roman ruins in Southwick were not foremost in people's minds. The whole problem reasserted itself after the war, when the subject of road charges was raised again. In June 1945 it was decided that Manor Hall Road had to be made up because it was pot-holed and dangerous, and it needed to be provided with the usual services. However, in 1946 (*Sussex Notes and Queries* **11**, 139) the Trust stated that final agreement with Southwick UDC had yet to be reached.

The terms of the original contract of purchase required that the purchasers of frontages along

Manor Hall Road should pay for making it up, in proportion to the length of their frontages. These purchasers included the Trust. On this occasion no Miss Haviland appeared to help. The Trust objected at first to the proposed charges, which were described as unreasonable and excessive, and requested that it should be excused. Although other purchasers had also objected earlier, the Trust's was by now the only objection outstanding, and even this was eventually withdrawn. By March 1948 the total cost of the road works was agreed to be £8566, and the Trust's contribution, estimated to be £600, was beyond its means. The income to the Trust from visitors was minimal. In October 1949 there was a recommendation to the SAS Council, reported in *SNQ* (13, 24), that the site should be filled in. Although this proposal was not initially sanctioned, at its next meeting in December 1949 the Council decided 'that the site of the Southwick Roman Villa should be filled in and eventually become a garden, the tops of the walling showing in outline in the turf' (*SNQ* 13, 46).

Clearly negotiations went on for a considerable time, but the archaeological site continued to deteriorate, so something had to be done. The Trust's annual report for 1953 described the history of the negotiations with Southwick UDC going back to 1930. The proceeds from visitors were small, and becoming smaller, and by 1953 Southwick UDC was refusing to maintain the site. It was also demanding the £600 road charges for the road which actually damaged the villa site. With local competition from the more exciting villa at Bignor, with its elaborate mosaic floors and cover buildings, the unlikelihood that future excavations at Southwick would yield anything much more of value, and the threat of legal proceeding to extract the sum of £600 from the Trust, which the Trust was admittedly obliged to pay, permission was obtained from the Charity Commissioners and the Ministry of Works to sell the villa site. The following year the Trust reported (*SAC* 93, xlv–xlvi) that the sale of the site as three lots had yielded £2443 2s. 1d, after payment of all expenses. Some of this money was used to reconstruct 'the old building at Anne of Cleves House [Southover, Lewes]', and '£500 was paid on account of a heavy bill for repairs to the [Lewes] Castle' (*SNQ* 13, 327). When the construction of the Methodist Church on the site commenced, the Trust exercised a watching brief, but nothing new of any substance was found (*SAC* 93, xlv–xlvi).

Southwick Roman villa is now covered by a church, its related manse, the junction of Manor Hall Road with Southwick Street, and at least one further private house. There must have been a considerable agricultural estate associated with the villa, but most of the area that such an estate would have occupied has been built over, and consequently is inaccessible. However, excavations in the last three years by Giles Standing in the playing field of Manor Hall School (recently renamed Eastbrook School) have clearly demonstrated the remains of walls, features and artefacts which were probably associated with the villa (Standing 2010, 2011). Another imponderable in assessing the extent of the estate in the Roman period is the nature of the road network at that time. In addition, as mentioned above, the coastline itself has been the subject of considerable change. However, Winbolt's suggestion that sea access to the villa might have been via a creek that now constitutes Southwick Green seems very plausible, as most of the other large Roman settlements along this part of the coast also had sea access.

Southwick Roman villa is now effectively lost to future generations. This is a tragedy which could have been avoided had suitable legislation and funding been available to protect it. A similar loss is probably less likely today, and it was fortunate that in 1961 the contemporary but much larger, more luxurious and better preserved site at Fishbourne was 'discovered', excavated and preserved (again thanks to a very generous SAS member and benefactor, this time Ivan D. Margary). Otherwise the loss of Southwick villa would have meant that no such early Mediterranean-style villa was preserved and available for public viewing in Britain. Southwick villa was obviously a very important and early 'romanised' establishment constructed at the end, or just after, the client kingdom of Togidubnus. Its owner must have been someone of importance who wished to indicate clearly both his high status and his commitment to things Roman. The influence of such an owner and his villa estate upon the surrounding area in terms of construction works, roads, agriculture and satellite/tenant Romano-British settlements must have been considerable.

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CONTENTS OF ADS SUPPLEMENT

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Appendix 1. Southwick Villa Finds Catalogue (G. J. Leigh).
