

**Archaeological recording of garden
features at Shilston Barton,
Modbury, Devon**

centred on NGR: SX 6740 5361

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**Report to Sebastian & Lucy Fenwick, owners of Shilston & South Hams
District Council, co-sponsors**

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Summary statement

Any conclusions given here must be considered strictly provisional until further fieldwork and research can be carried out. On the present evidence it would seem that the Shilston designed landscape contains many formal features that might place it within the period 1650-1750. It is possible that there was some alteration and evolution, both within that period, and later, as is shown by a date stamp of 1819 on a seemingly rebuilt crenellated gateway leading into the farmyard.

One of the main foci of the design is a triple arched building built over a series of springs at the head of the Shilston valley. This has been interpreted as a grotto and water theatre with two clear phases within its design. The earliest seems to represent a rare 'water theatre', a terrace revetment wall decorated by various water displays emanating from within and behind it. Such 'theatres' were well known in Renaissance Italy, and the Shilston example seems to be very much in that style. Also associated with this wall is an artificial tunnel or 'cave' leading to a well served by a spring or springs. This has possible classical allusions to pagan deities, and has stylistic similarities with medieval 'holy wells'. Tunnel-grottoes can be shown to have existed in late 17th-century England, and it is thought that the earliest Shilston grotto and water theatre may date from that period.

The second phase of the grotto is represented by triple arched vaulted structure. This type of frontage is common in the early 18th century, and could be seen in designs of William Kent at well-known gardens at Rousham, Chiswick and Claremont. It would seem therefore that the earlier grotto may have been extended c. 1720-50 (on stylistic grounds) in keeping with garden fashion, although a later date should not be excluded.

The landscape also contained three small ponds with formal elements in their design. Between the second and third ponds, there would seem to be the remains of a rustic cascade. This contains distinctive formal and informal elements, suggesting it may have been created in a transitional period of landscape design (eg 1720-50), or it contains two phases like the grotto.

Fragments of 17th-century tin-glazed tiles of high quality were found during the investigations. These were of a Dutch or Flemish school, and can be paralleled with recent finds at Upper Lodge, Bushy Park, Hampton Court. They demonstrate the high status of the site. Despite it being in an isolated part of Devon, both these finds and the design of the grotto suggest the owners of Shilston, the Savery family, seem to have been abreast of contemporary fashion. They appear to have been related to Thomas Savery, a pioneer of steam power and the surveyor of the royal waterworks at Hampton Court. However, certain published statements that this Thomas once owned Shilston are not supported by documentary evidence.

The grotto building is considered to be an exceptional example of its kind, and is perhaps unique in the United Kingdom in clearly demonstrating two important stages in grotto development. It is also the only example known to this author of a water theatre of the Italian Renaissance type to have survived in this country.

Archaeological recording of garden features at Shilston Barton, Modbury, Devon (NGR: SX 6740 5361)

This report has been written based on the format suggested by the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological evaluations* (Birmingham, 1994). The ordering of information follows the guidelines given in this document, although alterations may have been made to fit in with the particular requirements of the work.

1.0 Introduction (Fig. 1; Plates 1-2)

Reinstatement and repair works in the grounds of Shilston Barton, Modbury, Devon (centred on NGR: SX 6740 5361) has uncovered a number of garden features and earthworks. This included a substantial triple-arched garden feature at a springhead near the top of the Shilston valley, together with associated ponds, water channels and other structures and earthworks. It was thought that the triple-arched feature might conceal a rare early grotto. After much consultation with the appropriate officers of the local authority, South Hams District Council, it was decided to seek advice from an archaeologist experienced with garden features, particularly where related to water. The owners, Sebastian and Lucy Fenwick, therefore approached C K Currie of CKC Archaeology, with a view to undertaking archaeological recording of the triple-arched feature, together with exploration of some of its associated features. The work was part-funded by South Hams District Council. The main phase of this work took place between 17th and 21st July 2000.

2.0 Historical background (Figs. 2-4)

The history of Shilston Barton remains to be properly researched, as the standard history of the English counties, the Victoria County History (VCH), has yet to get past the preliminary volume in Devon. Therefore no modern parish or manorial history for the county exists. Antiquarian county histories such as Polwhele (1793-1806) are out-of-date, often poorly referenced and contain some unreliable information. The information collected here concerning the early history of Shilston should not be considered more than an introductory background to the site.

The name Shilston derives from 'shelf stone' (Ekwall 1960, 417). The 'shelf' element referring to the top stone on an ancient cromlech or Neolithic chambered tomb. Both Ekwall (*ibid*) and Gover et al (1931, 280) agree on this interpretation, although the latter state that at 'this particular place no trace of such [the cromlech] survives'. The name occurs in the Domesday Survey of 1086 as *Silfestana*. Here it was part of the vast West Country estate of Robert, Count of Mortain, half-brother of King William I.

The Domesday entry tells us little of the late 11th-century estate other than it had an ancient right to be considered a separate manor within the later parish of Modbury. A man called Richard held it from the Count, and an equally anonymous Wado had held it before the Norman Conquest. It paid tax for half a hide, and had land for three ploughs. There was one plough in demesne and another held by the four villeins and three smallholders who inhabited the manor. They also held another virgate. The assessment also listed two slaves,

half an acre of meadow, one 'animal' [probably an ox] and 14 sheep. The value before 1066 had been twenty shillings, but it had been reduced to ten by 1087 (Thorn & Thorn 1985, 15.76), probably the result of an exemption allowed the Count as a close relation of the king.

The honour of Mortain was too powerful for the Norman kings to allow it to survive indefinitely. By 1113 it had been forfeited to the crown on account of rebellion. In this year part of its former lands in Devon were granted to the wife of Baldwin Redvers, and it is through her that the Redver earls of Devon seem to have had a connection with Shilston. This is very vague, as it is not mentioned in their surviving charters. According to Bearman (1994, 5) Guy de Britteville claimed right to a tenement at Shilston that he had recovered from Richard de Combe in the court of the earls of Devon by wager of battle. Bearman quotes the Curia Regis Rolls for 1203-05 (CRR 1203-5, 132, 138) as the source for this information. The tenement recorded here is given as 'Sidelestorn'.

An Inquisition of 1225 ordered the county sheriff to inquire about the lands of William Redvers, late Earl of Devon, to find out what manner of tenure a Roger de Reymes had in the manor of Shilston (Sheldeston) (Cal Inq Misc 1219-1307, no. 2054). Slightly later, in 1242, it is recorded in the *Testa de Nevill* that one John de Silvestane held Shilston in socage (*soccagio*) of Odone de Treverby for twenty shilling per annum as part of the honour of Cardinham in Cornwall (*honore de Cardinan in Cornubia*) (Book of Fees, ii, 771). The daughter of this John de Shilston married Sir Richard Banchem and then John de Ashleigh as her second husband. Richard had a daughter who married Sir Richard Huysch, whose son, another Sir Richard contended with John Ashleigh over the property in the reign of Edward I (Polwhele 1793-1806, 461-2).

The manor had descended to the Hill family by 1392-93, when one Sir Robert Hill, a Justice of the Common Pleas, held it (Pearse Chope 1967, 59n). This family continued to hold the manor until they sold it to Christopher Savery of Totnes in 1614 (Polwhele 1793-1806, 462). John Leland, Henry VIII's antiquary, records this family in his tour around the county between 1534 and 1543:

'Hill, a Gentilman [lives] in Modburi Paroche; this Name rose by a Lawier and Juge that left onto his heires a 300 Markes of Land. The Grandfather of Hille now lyving sold an £100 land' (Pearse Chope 1967, 59).

The Saverys continued to hold the property into the 19th century, when it was sold to pay off their debts. It is suspected that a medieval house once existed on or near the site of the present house. Early Ordnance Survey maps mark the present house as on the 'site of a manor house'. A drawing of c.1700 shows a large house on the reputed site. This seems to have a medieval hall, a large porch, and a large early post-medieval wing (Modbury Local History Society 1980, 5). If this picture really is of Shilston then it was clearly once a house of some distinction.

At some time in the 18th century yet to be accurately determined the old house was demolished, and a new mansion erected (Cawse 1860, 21). This was thought to be slightly

to the east of the old house, but it may have partly overlaid the earlier building, possibly incorporating parts of this earlier house. By the time of the tithe map (Fig. 2) the house seems to have been altered again, and converted into a farmhouse (barton). This seems to have signalled a period of neglect for the landscape, and the triple-arched feature was partly buried by an old track. Other garden features, including areas of terracing and a crenellated eyecatcher, have subsequently become overgrown. Clearance by the present owners has rediscovered a number of these features. Reinstatement works were in progress when this present work was undertaken.

3.0 Strategy

The strategy for this work was laid down in a project design (Currie 2000). It included proposals to record the triple-arched feature, by plan and selected elevations, and to excavate exploratory trenches aimed at aiding site interpretation. The work involved:

1. The creation of a plan of the triple arched feature at 1:40.
2. The drawing of five selected elevations of the structure at 1:40
3. Excavating stratigraphically the remaining earth filling the interior of the structure.
4. Excavating a trench through the trackway alongside the triple arched structure to determine their relationships.
5. Machine excavating a trench through the highest earthwork terrace to the north of the house.
6. Watching clearance work around what was thought to be a step within a cascade-like feature in the valley.

4.0 Results (Fig. 5-11)

4.1 The triple-arched structure (grotto) (Figs. 5-11; Plates 1-6)

4.1.1 General description

Even a cursory look at this structure revealed that it had been built in two phases. The first phase comprised a drystone or clay-bonded wall being erected as a revetment to a terrace above. The latter slopes down from the house, which is about 40m to the north. This wall was originally over 2.5m high and contained a number of blind arches and possibly other features. It also served as the frontage of a deep vaulted recess or artificial cave, with a stone lined well or springhead at the end. At a later date the front of the structure was extended about 5m forward giving it a triple-arched frontage, with an elaborate building comprising three vaulted compartments between the old and new frontages. Within this structure was a shallow stone-lined tank divided into three parts by the internal walls. Water from springs found its way into this tank via a number of complex channels.

The arches of the later front are blocked by a crosswall along their lower half. To the south of this earth was built up to form the line of a trackway from the west extending towards a gate leading into a farmyard. A stone wall was further erected on the south side of this track

to revet it on this side. South of the track is a quasi-rectangular pond fed by water flowing from the grotto via a stone-lined drain that passes under the track.

4.1.2 Archaeological recording

The triple arched structure is clearly a highly complex building that contains a large number of recesses, alcoves and water-related features. No attempt will be made to try to describe every minor feature because it is not considered necessary to do so without reducing the description to an unreadable jumble. This description will restrict itself to discussing the main aspects of the structure. All dimensions given in this description are approximate only. Heights are given from the floor level at the time of the recording. This may not have been a historic floor level in all cases.

The core of the structure is the well at the back. This is cut into the hillside. The entrance to the passage leading to it is a well-made round-headed arch. Later building partly obscures this but its form can be seen from behind. In the entrance arch are two steps that do not extend the full width of the passage. Ascending these one enters a passage 5.9m in length and 1.6m wide. This has a pointed vault. Cut into the west wall almost at the end of the passage is an alcove. It is set about 0.7m above the floor, and is 0.96m wide and 1.04m high. Its top is cut into the vault of the passage. The lower walls of this alcove are slate lined. The triangular pediment at the top of the structure also has a slate face, with small holes cut into it. All around the edge of the alcove are traces of mortar suggesting a frame may have been fixed onto it (Fig. 10).

The well chamber is set at an angle of about 20 degrees to the main passage. This is of similar drystone construction to the main passage, being about 0.75m square. The depth of water within the chamber is about 0.7m. There is a shallow channel cut in the floor stones of the tunnel leading to the well. A slight flow of water followed this channel at the time of the fieldwork although it is not entirely certain if this comes from the well or elsewhere. This channel keeps to the west of the main passage, disappearing into the west wall after about 3.6m.

The well passage is built into a drystone wall that acted as a revetment to the terrace behind. This contains a number of features. There is some evidence to suggest that it continued further along the face of the terrace, but it has since been buried when the later additions were added to make the present structure. The wall to the east of the well passage is plain for the 1.2m length that it is visible. The wall to the west of the passage is complex. Covering the lower wall, and extending across about half of the passage are the remnants of what appear to be mortar or plaster protuberances. These extend about 0.2m beyond the wall face, extending up to approximately the level of the top passage steps (about 0.8m). Although now making an anomalous lump, this mortar probably served to attach something to the lower part of the wall.

About 1.2m west of the passage is a large alcove with a three-centred (depressed) arch above. The alcove is about 2m high, 1.24m wide and 0.8m deep. Within the alcove is a large granite basin, about 0.6m high and filling the lower part of the alcove. Water enters

the basin mainly through the east wall, this being a continuation of the channel in the floor of the well passage. In front of the basin on its west side are the remnants of a mortar/plaster feature. These appear to take the form of a short pair of legs spread apart. The exact original form is uncertain because of subsequent erosion. At the apex of these 'legs' is a hole through which water can leave the basin (Fig. 9; Plate 4).

There is another small alcove 1.3m to the west. This is 1.6m high, 0.6m wide and 0.6m deep. The arch appears to be a three-centred type. There are traces of mortar/plaster on the lower part of the alcove, suggesting decoration of some sort. Between this alcove and the last one on the wall face are further traces of mortar/plaster surrounding a channel that appears in the wall at a height of about 1.15m. The mortar/plaster extends out from the stone face by as much as 0.25m, and appears to have formed a deliberate shape once, although this is not immediately apparent any more. Water flowing out from this channel in the wall (only about 50mm wide) seems to have eroded a substantial groove in the former mortar below. There are two flat stones protruding from the wall either side of the channel. This may have been a single piece once, with the water flowing out over its upper surface to form a small curtain waterfall below. Originally the mortar/plaster may have formed decorative ornamentation behind this curtain (Fig 9; Plate 5).

The final alcove is similar to the last. It is roughly of the same dimensions, although its west side is partly obscured by a later wall butting against it.

To the south of the above retaining wall a three-chambered vaulted structure had been added. This was clearly an addition as it could be seen that it was not bonded into the earlier wall, but butted against it with a straight joint throughout. In some cases the gap between the two structures was as much as 10mm, showing the clear division between the two builds. This later structure was made of similar local stone to the earlier, but was mortared throughout with a brittle white mortar.

The later structure was divided into three compartments by two cross-walls. Both cross-walls had segmental arched openings at their north and south ends seemingly to provide for a continuous walkway around all four sides of the structure. Within the structure was a stone lined tank or pond. This was about 6.4m E-W, 1.8m N-S, 0.25m deep, and was divided into three roughly equal parts by the internal cross-walls. The latter actually sat in the water of the pond, a single small aperture in the base of the cross-walls acting as a drain to allow water to move between the three compartments. The pond was lined by irregular stone slabs, usually faced on the inner edge to provide a reasonably straight side to the tank/pond. On average the stones forming the edging of the pond were between 0.2m and 0.3m deep. Beyond this was a sandy clay loam soil that acted as the surface to the conjectured walkway around the inside of the structure.

The structure had a mortared vault over, with three depressed arches fronting it. These did not extend down to the ground level of the internal chambers, but were blocked by cross-walls across their bottom halves. These cross walls were approximately 1.4m to 1.5m high, and served as a revetment to the track running across the exterior face of the building. Above these walls the arches were open to the exterior. The two centre piers of the three

arches were faced by buttresses that tied the arches into the lower cross walls. All elements of this vaulted structure were bonded together, and seemed to be of a single build. The heights of the open arches averaged about 2m high. It would seem that they were not built to a level line (a common phenomenon in the past), and the top of each arch was about 10cms lower than its companion to the east. However, the overall height of the arches from the old ground level seemed to be about the same. The arches decreased in width from east to west from 2.57m to 2.14m. They were composed of flat local slate-like stone set vertically, with a granite keystone in the centre. This differed from the arches on the internal, earlier wall, which were local slate-type stone throughout (Fig. 9; Plates 2-3)

There were a number of alcoves and other features within the vaulted structure. All those described hereafter were built into that structure, and were hence contemporary with it. On the east and west walls were alcoves set at a height of about 1.2m above the internal floor of the structure. There were three alcoves set symmetrically into the east wall, and two in the west. Those in the west wall were set in the same pattern as the east, but the space where the southernmost arch would have been was left as a blank wall. It is thought that this was because steps down into the building had existed here. Slight traces of these steps could be seen built into the south wall of the structure adjoining this blank wall. The alcoves averaged 0.96m high, 0.6m wide and between 0.45m and 0.55m deep (Fig.10; Plates 5-6)

It was notable that all the arches (internal and external) and the alcoves of the west wall within the vaulted structure had horizontal slots built into their vertical edges. In some cases traces of timbers could still be seen within these slots. These features compared with the barns and other buildings on the site, where these timbers were inserted into the slots to hold wooden frames. This suggests that some of these openings had doors or shutters attached. In the case of the arches fronting the south face, it was thought that they might have supported railings or a wooden balustrade-like feature, possibly to prevent people or animals from falling into the structure.

The final features to note internally were a set of curious alcoves set into the base of the west, east and south walls of the vaulted building. These varied in size, but were all essentially similar in construction. They comprised a rectangular opening, with slots to hold timber lintels across the top of most of the openings. All the spaces within the openings seemed to have curved ends and domed roofs, and some were slightly angled (Fig. 8).

There were three in the west wall. The entrance to each opening was about 0.3m square. They were set symmetrically into the north section of that wall. Where a fourth opening should have been the wall had been left blank because of the conjectured steps leading down from the outside. The average depth of the features was about 0.55m.

Under the south wall there were three large spaces to the west of the drain taking water from the internal pond to the outside, and four smaller spaces on the east side. The three larger spaces had openings averaging 0.4m wide, with a similar height, and a depth of nearly 0.8m. The smaller openings to the east averaged 0.2m wide and 0.2m high at the opening, with a depth of over 0.4m.

Only two similar openings were seen in the base of the east wall. These were both at the south end of the wall, and were of similar size to the smaller openings in the south wall. The purpose of these holes could not be determined, and any interpretation of their function must remain conjectural.

4.2 Excavation of the soil from within the structure (Trench 1; Figs. 6, 11; Plate 5)

The maximum height of the soil filling the western compartment of the triple-arched structure was 0.72m. This dropped down to a depth of less than 0.3m against the north wall. The greatest height was against the outer wall. The soils filling the other compartments had been removed previously.

The largest and lowest of the infill layers was a stony clay [context 08]. This extended as far as the north side of the internal tank, and rose to a height of 0.42m against the south wall. It was overlain by a sandy silt layer [context 07] that extended from about halfway across the tank to the north wall of the building. This was overlain in turn by a further clay layer [context 06] containing less stone than 08. It was partly overlain by context 04. This latter layer had a strange disposition, compared with the lower layers. It seems to have a deliberate line of stones along its north edge. The layer itself, up to 0.3m deep, contained a number of large stones that may have been once used as part of the building. Beyond the line of stones was a shallow layer of clay loam soil [context 05].

The only finds made were sherds of a white porcelain bowl from near the bottom of context 07. These were possibly of 19th-century date. They coincided with other 19th- and early 20th-century pottery (transfer-printed wares and late stonewares) that had been recovered from the fill in the other two compartments, suggesting that the soil had been dumped within the building during the later 19th or early 20th century.

4.3 Trench 2 (Fig. 5)

This was a trench 4m in length and 1.3m wide cut into the uppermost terrace to the north of the house. This had the appearance of a platform at the west end of a terrace line, and it had been suggested that it might be the location of a structure to take in the best view of the property.

Excavation revealed that the terrace had been formed by cutting into the hillside. There was no evidence to suggest the terrace had been built up artificially. Instead soil seems to have been removed on the south side to form the sharp scarp. A thin layer of clay loam topsoil [context 02] overlay undisturbed clay [context 03].

4.4 Trench 3 (Figs. 6, 11; Plate 3)

Trench 4 was cut through the track in front of the south wall of the triple-arched structure. It extended from the eastern edge of the drain cutting across the track for 2.35m, and examined the build up of the track. There was only one layer within this build up, a very stony clay [context 09], averaging 0.72m deep. The track had once been deeper, but upper

layers had already been removed before this trench was excavated. It is thought that these would have been similar to the layer excavated, extending the layer by possibly another 0.4m. Below this layer was a wet clay layer [context 10], which was possibly undisturbed. No finds were made within context 09 to date the track.

4.5 Trench 4 (Fig. 5)

This was the trench number given to observations made during the clearance of debris and hillwash from around a structure within the stream between the second and third ponds. Observation of a small number of deliberately made stone steps suggested that the stream between these two ponds had been made to form a narrow, rustic cascade. Towards the south end, the last 30m appears to have taken on a more formal appearance, with a drystone wall, about 1.2m high lining the west bank. It was at the north end of this wall that the observations were made.

There did not appear to be any comparable revetment on the east side of the stream. All the indications suggested that the sides sloped in a natural manner streamwards. At the north end of the drystone wall, it turned through a rough right angle, and continued across the stream as a low step. The western part of this return was about 1m wide. If it had a built end once, this seems to have been eroded. The lowest courses of the wall extended across the stream to form a stone step about 0.25m high. This was a maximum of about 1m wide. There was some evidence that rockery-like stones had been set into the bank opposite the steps. To the NE of the step there was evidence of circular clay tile drains bringing water from small springs in the eastern side of the hill.

Below the step, it would seem that the stream entered a semi-formal run about 2m wide that followed the line of the drystone wall. From the east this wall appears straight, but seen from the north and south, it can be seen to bend slightly. It is not known if this was deliberate or the result of pressure from the earth in the hillside causing the wall to bulge eastwards. There was much stone debris within the stream channel, suggesting further stone steps that have subsequently been eroded from their original positions.

4.6 Trench 5 (Figs. 6, 11)

This trench was excavated on the terrace above the triple-arched structure. It was sited to cut across the earliest north wall to see if there had been a balustrade or similar structure above it. There was no evidence to suggest any such structure, and, on the evidence found here it would seem the wall had a plain top part.

Topsoil here comprised a thin layer of clay loam [context 11]. This overlay a layer of clay [context 12] up to 0.4m deep. The lower part at the north end of the trench of this contained a modest quantity of sherds from a broken Westawald jug. These tend to date from the later 17th or early 18th century. The unabraded nature of the sherds suggested they may have been deposited without much further movement within the soil. Nearer the south end of the trench a handle of a creamware vessel of possible early 19th century date was found

immediately overlying the slaty clay layer [context 14] below. The author was not present when this piece was found, so it is not possible to state the exact position it came from.

Below context 12 was a clay layer containing much slaty material, possibly from demolition of a structure elsewhere on the site. This was about 0.2m thick, and overlay a layer of less slaty clay [context 16]. The last layer overlay both the retaining wall of the earliest 'grotto' [context 15] and the roof vault of the triple-arched structure [context 13]. The earlier wall was confirmed as a clay bonded structure 1.2m thick. The roof vault of the later structure butted against it, and was made of roughly fashioned local stone set vertically in a brittle whitish mortar.

5.0 Discussion

5.1 The landscape

The earthworks surrounding Shilston Barton seem to be the remains of a well-preserved set of formal garden features. There is a set of terraces behind (NE of) the house, although limited excavation failed to find evidence for any structures on them, or as part of the terraces (revetments etc). Elsewhere in England it might be considered unusual to find garden terraces overlooking the house, quite in the manner as seen at Shilston. However, the archaeologist for South Hams District, has informed the author that this is not uncommon in the hilly, constricted valleys of South Devon (Robert Waterhouse pers comm).

To the west of the house is a roughly rectangular walled garden, apart from an irregular SE corner. This is approximately 47m E-W and 30m N-S and surrounded by a stone wall of varying heights. In the NE corner is a crenellated building that appears to have acted as a gazebo or summer house, with a view out over the valley. This is approached by a raised terrace walkway along the north wall of the garden. This seems to have served as a viewing terrace, such features being common in 17th and early 18th-century gardens. Such a terrace is shown on Gervase Markham's well-known drawing of a water garden, thought to be based on Tackley, Oxon (Markham 1631, 183). Another well-known example surrounds the garden at Shaw House, Berkshire (Godwin Arnold 1977; Currie forthcoming). Both examples are thought to date from the 17th-century, although the style probably continued into the early 18th-century, and may have been copied in early 19th-century formal revival gardens.

The date of the walled garden is not known for certain, but stylistically, it seems to be of 17th or early 18th-century date. However, an early 19th-century dating is suggested by the Listed Building description, and this possibility needs to be considered (DoE Register, Modbury no. 2/158) The crenellation on the corner building is of interest in this respect. Medieval revivalism is generally considered to be a later 18th century phenomenon, with Sanderson Miller's castle at Hagley (1747) being one of the earliest examples (Currie 1998, 197-8). Does this suggest that the walled garden might post-date 1740? There are other crenellated structures within the landscape. One of these, a gateway leading into the farmyard, has a date stone marked '1819', but the crenellation here may have been a later rebuilding to a pre-existing structure. This date stamp occurs at a time (1818-21) when the

Savery family were placing advertisements in the press to sell Shilston (Modbury Parish Folder; DRO 51/7/2/5), and it is possible the date refers to a tidying up of the estate for the purposes of selling it. It is therefore not possible to date the crenellation on other buildings with any accuracy from this date stone alone.

To the south of the house are further features of interest. There would appear to have been a large terrace (or terraces) in front of the house that terminated with the revetting walls incorporated into the triple-arched structure. This latter is thought to be a rare example of a 'water theatre' and grotto in the Italian Renaissance style that was later altered into the triple-arched form that was reasonably common in England in the 18th century. This feature and its dating will be discussed in more detail later.

Below the grotto is a series of three ponds of irregular rectangular shape, with a number of associated water channels running down a relatively steep and narrow valley. It is not proposed to discuss these at length here. However, in summary, it ought to be noted that the ponds are all lined with drystone walls, and are associated with a series of rills and leats that suggest that they did not simply drain from one to the other, as is sometimes found in pond series of this type. At least some of these water channels could be used to divert water around a lower pond. Such diversion channels are common in medieval ponds. Research by this author has suggested that diversion was essential to the type of efficient management practised in pond husbandry at this time, a phenomenon that is found less commonly (although not unknown) in ponds built in the late 18th-century or later (Currie 1988a, 1988b). Diversion allows ponds to be more easily drained for maintenance, sluice replacement and fishing. They also allow silt to be diverted around ponds, thus alleviating the need for its regular removal.

Like most ancient diversion channels, the Shilston examples possibly served a dual purpose, and could be used to supply other features that may have been further downstream, such as other ponds and watermeadows. It would seem that a number of the Shilston water channels were very well made, and had carefully-constructed stone cobbled linings, forming attractive rills as between the upper and middle ponds. This could be construed as introducing a decorative element into their purpose. It should be further made clear here that the reference to diversion channels made above does not imply that these channels are necessarily of medieval date. They may have medieval origins, as may the ponds, but the rectangular lined appearance of the ponds suggests they are either post-medieval, or have been adapted from earlier ponds in the post-medieval period. Early post-medieval treatises suggest that medieval pond construction methods continued well into the 16th and 17th centuries (Currie 1990; *cf* Dubravius 1563, Tavener 1600, North 1713) only gradually being superseded by less thorough methods in the later 18th century.

The most interesting channel is the one that passes directly between the middle and lower ponds. As discussed briefly above (section 4.5), this has the appearance of a deliberately made rustic cascade. This is slightly unusual in having an apparently informal nature in its upper half, with a formal form in its last 30m or so. Its rustic nature has a number of parallels, although the combination of formal and informal elements is rare. The latter might

suggest a transitional date between the formal and informal period of English garden design in the early 18th century.

Cascades are a subject that has been poorly covered in garden history. The otherwise reliable *Oxford Companion to Gardens* makes the misleading statement that cascades are 'a rare feature in English 17th-century gardens, the only surviving example being Chatsworth (Derbys)' (Goode 1986, 95). Other commentators have further implied they were unusual (Jacques & van der Horst 1988, 145). Although it is difficult to date accurately many of the recently discovered formal cascades in England, research (Currie and Locock 1994) has demonstrated that they are far more common than once thought. Many of the latest discoveries seem to have come in the final phase of formal gardening in the first forty years of the 18th century, but there are certainly newly discovered examples that could have slightly earlier origins. One of these closely parallels that at Shilston.

Knowle Hill in Derbyshire is a narrow cascade falling out of a small formal pond at the head of a narrow valley. Its exact form is almost entirely destroyed today by erosion, but it is still possible to recognise a stone lined channel, and to conjecture steps in the fall from the large amounts of flat stones littered along its length. The fall at Knowle is steeper than at Shilston, but it ornaments a similar landscape that has decided Italian influences (Currie 1995).

It is possible that the earlier English cascades were of a less ambitious nature demonstrated at Knowle, which is provisionally dated to the last decades of the 17th century. Later types seem to become more ambitious over the first forty years of the 18th century. The Earl of Halifax's well-known cascade at Upper Lodge, Bushy Park, near Hampton Court (1709-15) is a fairly modest feature falling between two equally modest grottoes. However, there are many examples that are now recognised as being highly ambitious. These include Dyrham (Glos, 1690s), Bramham (Yorks, 1699-26), Shireoaks (Notts, before 1726), Stanway (Glos, c. 1700-50), The Gnoll (South Wales, 1728) and Drumlanrig (Scotland, before 1739). The number of recognised sites continues to grow (Currie & Locock 1994, 261-4).

Beyond the immediately obvious landscape at Shilston is an area of woodland on the west side of the hill. A channel leaving the second pond enters this area from the north, and can be traced passing through it. It is not the intention of this work to make any detailed comment about this area of landscape, particularly as it was heavily overgrown at the time of writing, making the accuracy of any comments questionable.

It would seem that this area comprises a series of terraces, with at least two certain and three possible alignments seen. These seem to have been arranged as walks for viewing the valley and its surroundings. At the far south end of the area is a rectangular building, with a much higher north wall surmounted by crenellation. The latter was apparently intended to present a more imposing face, possibly as an eyecatcher, when viewed from the direction of the house. The wooded area forms an elongated triangle and has widely spaced trees marked on it on the 1st edition 25" OS map. The formula used in marking these trees is similar to that used for orchards, and it might not be coincidence that an apple tree survives on the overgrown terraces today. The Modbury tithe map of 1841 lists this area as 'Hay Ball

Orchard', thereby confirming this suggestion (DRO Modbury tithe survey). It is thought that these plantings may be a relatively late addition to the landscape. At present only a few old trees can be identified along the outer edge of that area, with the exception of a line of very large coppiced sweet chestnuts and limes along the lower (east) boundary of the area.

It might be argued that the terraces were once open to obtain views of the valley. However, the sweet chestnuts at the foot of the terraces are exceptionally large and very ancient. They also appear to have originated as coppiced trees, possibly making a hedge or pleached row. They could be over 300 years old, thus making them a part of the earliest designed landscape. These trees cause some problem in interpreting the terraces above as areas to obtain views because they may have blocked certain views. The terraces, therefore, may not have acted solely as viewing areas, as the views might have been restricted.

The great age and size of the sweet chestnuts suggest that they may have acted as shade lining one of the walks. This could have been a deliberate part of the design, particularly when one considers the formality of dress in that period. The extent of ladies' petticoats would have made hot days uncomfortable for them, and shaded walks were always an integral part of English designed landscapes. The lowest walk within this triangular area should therefore be seen in this light. One should also consider the element of surprise, which was important in post-medieval gardens. Walking amongst trees could possibly provide opportunities for 'surprise' views between trees, with the trees themselves acting as attractive frames to the views.

These terraces have all the appearance of later 17th and early 18th-century earthworks. The rectangular structure at the southern apex of the area may be later. Although heavily overgrown with ivy, the north façade seems to have crenellation on it. Its position seems slightly obscured by the chestnuts from the house, but this is not to say that at the time a vista was not cut in a way to allow it to be seen. It is also possible that it was partially hidden from some quarters to make its appearance a surprise. To the immediate north of this structure, one of the terraces seem to widen out into a platform that was possibly used for 'picnics' and the like by the building, and for acting as a point for further views south down the valley.

An odd point about this area is that it does not link up with other formal earthworks and features within the landscape. To the west of the grotto is a wide terrace that sits below the present track. Above the track is the walled garden. Between these features and the triangular area, the valley side is devoid of earthworks. It is too steep to have been ploughed, and it has to be considered that there were no earthworks here. It is therefore necessary to accept that there may have been a deliberate gap here for reasons that can not be presently explained.

Taken overall the designed landscape around Shilston Barton has many characteristics of an English formal landscape of the later 17th and early 18th centuries (*c.* 1650-1750). These surviving earthworks may represent a stage in the landscape's development that evolved from earlier late medieval and early post-medieval layouts. However, there is nothing presently surviving from these periods that can be seen obviously, and the present remains

seem to be mainly from the period 1650-1750, although the possibility of them being part of an early 19th-century formal revival design should not be discounted. In offering this earlier date, one has to consider that local variations in style might result in a later date for certain features than similar ones at the centre of fashion around London. A formal garden with many anachronistic features, including a grotto, at Grotto Wood, Hertingfordbury, Hertfordshire, was still much admired by local people well into the second half of the 18th century (Currie forthcoming b), and at Castle Bromwich Hall, West Midlands, Sir John Bridgeman was still constructing an elaborated walled formal garden at his death in 1747 (Currie & Locock 1993).

Sale advertisements that occur between 1818 and 1821 for the Shilston estate give some other interesting information about the landscape (see Appendix 3). The earliest (1818) states that the house had been 'built about six years since'. There are other sources that corroborate this statement. Lysons and Lysons (1822, ii, 343), writing only a few years after the event, state that 'Shilston House was rebuilt about the year 1813'. Later Cawse (1860, 21) states that in the 18th century Christopher Savery built a new commodious house on the estate. He further comments that 'Tradition states that the old house at Shilston was a splendid specimen of the Baronial style', and that it had a 'noble hall, minstrel gallery, and extensive offices...'. There are two Christopher Savery's in the 18th century. The first was Christopher III, who owned the estate from c. 1689-1708, with the second being Christopher Savery IV, who seems to have inherited the estate in 1744 (Burke's Dictionary, 1858, 1065). It is not certain which Christopher is referred to by Cawse (although see below, section 5.2).

5.2 The grotto

In the early 18th century, Stephen Switzer (1729, *passim*) both writes about and illustrates a number of cascades and similar waterworks that begin with a structure around a springhead set in the side of a hill. Many of these are grotto or grotto-like structures. They are described by Woodfield (1991, 133-34) and others (eg Miller 1982), who recognise that many of the best early grottoes could be found in Italy. It is from these that many later grottoes take their inspiration. Switzer was certainly aware of this, and most of his more elaborate cascades he describes (and grottoes associated with them) were to be found in Italy.

Many of these early examples include what Miller (1982) calls a 'theatre of water'. This involves a façade fronting a terrace or hillside, sometimes with a cave-like feature attached. The façade presents a complex of various water 'plays' to its audience. These take the form of cascades, waterfalls, water jets, basins and statuary, all combining to make a tableau of water and water-associated features. For example, the statues frequently depict people or creatures associated with water. Neptune is a popular figure, with the mid-18th-century grotto at Stourhead (Wilts) containing a statue of the river god, Tiber, well known for his classical associations with Rome. Switzer shows plates of a number of such features. He refers to a series of small cascades falling over and from a terrace wall into a basin at Villa Aldobrandini, Frascati, Italy as a wall or 'theatre of water' (Switzer 1729, 410, plate 55). There are many other similar designs like this illustrated by him (*ibid*, plates 52-60 and *passim*).

The earliest structure at Shilston seems to fall into this category of 'water theatre'. The complex system of outlets, and apparent ornamentation on the wall face, suggests a multiple 'play' of water into a basin at its foot. This is exactly like those shown in Switzer (op cit). The water plays that survive on the exposed face at Shilston may be only a percentage of the original number that were visible before the second phase structure was built. At present there is a large basin in an alcove, with water exiting between what seems to be the legs of a mortar/plaster statue. The thick haunches of the legs suggest this might be a Pan-like figure. The exit for the water seems to suggest it was clearly meant to amuse the watcher. It was only in later Victorian times that people would have been prudish about a 'urinating' statue. Also set into this wall is another exit or fall of water over a flat surface before falling over further plaster/mortar ornamentation. The plaster/mortar projections appear all along the length of the lower part of the wall, from the 'cave' entrance westwards. Although erosion has made it impossible to determine what this represented, it might be suggested it was a decorative frieze of some sort. Whether this represents eroded statuary or a mortar bed for shellwork or other attached decorations can not be determined on the present evidence. The apparent legs of 'Pan' suggests statuary played some part in the design, but it is possible that all the suggested elements may have been present.

The 'cave' itself leads to a deliberately constructed well fed by a natural spring or springs, with an alcove set in the wall near the well. Water also flows through a shallow carved channel along the tunnel floor. The 'cave' element is the commonest characteristic of the grotto. Woodfield (1991, 132-33) defines a grotto as:

... a roofed construction that strictly may be defined as a garden building imitative of the natural cave. It was remarkably popular from the earliest period of garden design...'

He speaks of the symbolism that is frequently involved in their design, and suggests that their construction can not be ascribed 'simply to fashion...' (ibid, 133). He gives a number of explanations, none of which fully explain these subconscious reasons :

'Indeed it [the grotto] can be physically entered like a womb, and the visitor can be brought up face to face with *primaeval* order... in the more elaborate, the visit may take the form of a transition, a death and rebirth experience, emerging in quite another place from that where one entered.' (op cit).

However, he then goes on to suggest what that all successful grottoes must produce a feeling of horror. However this is viewed, it must be seen as a vital element, with the entering of a dark, damp, underground place somehow satisfying the human love of frightening one's self. The modern popularity of horror films is a clear example of this phenomenon.

It would be too hypothetical to try to understand the Shilston grotto designer's exact motives in making this 'cave' part of the overall design. One should not overlook the Holy Well, a feature that often takes a similar form to the Shilston well. Such forms can be seen all over the west of England and Wales (*cf* St. Davids, Pembrokeshire). A study of these features

show they have clear pagan antecedents, and the practice of making offerings at spring-heads pre-dates Christianity, even if that religion later adapted earlier beliefs into its own traditions (Jones 1986). Classical worship of water deities was well known in the post-medieval period, and one has to consider the possibility of the Shilston well-cave being constructed out of pretended reverence to such beings. If this is the case, then the alcove in the wall may have originally existed to hold a statue to the deity.

If this was so, it would appear that the alcove may have been later adapted as a storage shelf. The mortar around the outside, plus the perforated slate in the apex, suggest a possible butter-well or cupboard for storing milk or other dairy products. Such wells were used throughout the West Country to keep such products cool (Robert Waterhouse pers. comm.), although one might suggest that the structure as a whole is too elaborate to have been built solely for that purpose.

The dating of the grotto, with its adjoining water theatre, is difficult. On strictly architectural grounds, the round-headed arch leading into the cave has a definite 'Roman' feel. It has been suggested that the arch over the stone basin is of 17th-century date (Robert Waterhouse pers. comm.), but one should be careful in ascribing too much to this alone. The entire structure seems to be imitating classical themes, and it may be that the arches were constructed in an anachronistic method to suggest antiquity. Dating evidence from above the 'theatre' wall is also ambiguous. The layers here clearly extend over both wall and later vault in one sweep, suggesting that there is no earlier soil overlying the wall. This might suggest that earlier levels extended only to the top of the wall. Alternatively they could have been removed, and the terrace relandscaped after the building of the second phase structure. On balance, it is felt that the earliest levels went to the top of the wall, but a heightened terrace was constructed to go with the vaulted structure. Perhaps this was done for no other reason but to make it safe to walk over the vault. Most of the pottery and other dating evidence from these post-vault layers dates from the late 17th century, with a possibility of extending into the early decades of the 18th century. A creamware handle found at a reasonable depth within these soils prevents us from asserting that the layer seems to have been put down by *c.* 1720. It is now necessary to consider that the terrace build up may date to the early 19th century, although there is the problem of the unabraded nature of the earlier pottery. This contradictory evidence does not allow for close dating of the earlier structure, but the preponderance of late 17th century pottery might suggest activity above at this time.

It is not impossible that the Shilston water theatre and early grotto dates from the first half of the 17th century. Italian examples on which it might be based tend to date from slightly earlier in the later 16th-century. Salomon and Isaac de Caus were working around the late 16th/early 17th century, and they were renowned for their waterworks. Isaac de Caus' grotto at Wilton House (Wilts) dates from this period (de Caus 1982), and from 1628 Thomas Bushell was becoming well known for his grotto and waterworks at Enstone (Oxon). Nevertheless, these sites had connections with people at the height of contemporary fashion (Bushell was an associate of Francis Bacon). There is no such evidence at Shilston this early, and it is difficult to imagine that such an out-of-the-way place could be so innovative.

It is far more likely that Shilston represents an attempt to copy Renaissance Italian ideas nearer to the end of the 17th century, or even in the early decades of the 18th century.

The only example known to this author of an unambiguous attempt to imitate the Italian hillside villa in England is at the previously mentioned Knowle Hill in Derbyshire. As well as a cascade, this has a grotto-like cave cut into the hillside. Although now at the bottom of the much-ruined cascade, this feature was originally in the back of the house (the front of the house now being demolished). There are, nevertheless, parallels between Shilston and Knowle Hill. The latter was begun in 1686 by Walter Burdett, an eccentric younger member of the Foremark Hall family (Currie 1995).

There are other examples of the 'tunnel' form of grotto known in England at this time. The tunnel-like grottoes at Albury Park in Surrey were suggested by John Evelyn to Henry Howard, later 6th Duke of Norfolk. These were much more elaborate than those at Shilston and Knowle Hill. They are described by Aubrey:

'In the hill... is a cave digged thirty six paces long, four broad and five yards high: and at about two-thirds of the hill he hath dug another... The vaulting of the upper part... are not made semi-circular, but parabolial, ... there are caves for beer etc' (Jones 1974, 16).

The mention of the use of these ornamental features doubling up as storage rooms is of note. Alcoves cut into the outer tunnel at Knowle Hill were interpreted as used for the storage of wine. The dual use is plain here, as the 'storage' tunnel opens out into a semi-circular room with seating around the sides, clearly a place to sit and repose in a dark and 'spooky' place. That such storage was clearly not taboo in such places, suggests that utilitarian features are a clear possibility, despite the otherwise decorative nature of the grotto.

At a later date, the Shilston structure was drastically remodelled. The water theatre wall became the back wall of a vaulted grotto that incorporated the earlier tunnel-grotto into the design. The straight joints of the triple-arched structure make it clear it was later, as does the different construction technique of mortaring the stones. It appears that the pond/tank in front of the earlier water theatre was retained, with the internal dividing walls being set into the pond. Although it is not impossible that the pond is also a late feature, the common occurrence of basins and ponds in front of Italian water theatres makes its inclusion in the earlier design more likely.

The second phase building is characterised by a triple-arched front. This type of frontage was common in grottoes, cascades and similar water features from the early 18th century. The best known of these are William Kent's designs at Chiswick, Rousham and Claremont. The latter was converted from a triple-arched cascade into a grotto of similar design from 1750 by Stephen Wright (Symes 1992, 12-14). Kent's work dates mainly to the 1730s and early 1740s, and are often associated with gardens no longer considered to be of a formal type (although formal elements sometimes survive in them). This might suggest that the second phase grotto at Shilston dates from this period. It has already been noted that the cascade below it contains formal and informal elements, suggesting that it could fall into the

transitional period between formal and informal landscape design. It is difficult to date this period, as it tends to vary with locality. Even in the second half of the 18th century the great garden commentator, Horace Walpole, was able to complain of his neighbour, the Duchess of Queensbury, for building a formal garden against the normal run of contemporary fashion (Wornum 1876).

Examination of the arches has suggested to those with local experience that they date from the 18th or early 19th century (Robert Waterhouse pers comm). Before concluding that the second phase grotto dates from the 18th century (*c.* 1720-50 being the most likely on stylist grounds), one needs to consider the possibility of a later date. The creamware handle found in the soil above the vault might suggest this. The type of handle is later in the creamware period, suggesting a date *c.* 1800-30. This happens to coincide with a well-attested building period at Shilston *c.* 1813-9, and the possibility that the second phase grotto falls into this period needs to be considered.

In front of the second phase grotto is a trackway. This has clearly been made as an integral part of the structure. The wall filling the lower part of the arches is contemporary with the arches, and this served as a revetment to keep the earth out of the grotto. Likewise, the wall on the south side of the track serves a similar purpose on the other side. This track leads directly to an archway that acts as the main entrance to the farmyard to the SE of the main house.

It is possible that the track and the entrance to the farmyard are not contemporary, although this is less likely. Close examination of the arch and the crenellated wall over seems to show evidence for two different builds. The crenellation, which contains the 1819 date, is much neater masonry than the main body of the wall below. Although not impossible that both are contemporary, this is unlikely. The difference in techniques indicates different builds. This, in turn, suggests that although the track and entrance are probably contemporary, they may be earlier than any changes made in the early 19th century.

It is not known how much earlier. The track in front of the grotto showed signs of having been built higher at a later date. There was also evidence (now removed by the owner) that the wall facing the pond had been heightened. Despite this it is unlikely that this heightening is contemporary with the crenellation because this increase in level seems to have coincided with the infilling of the grotto. It is unlikely that repair to the crenellated gateway was occurring at a time when the grotto was being infilled. The infilling of the grotto seems to have been relatively unsystematic, and a possible haphazard response to perceived safety. It is unlikely that all the soils were washed in by rain, although it is possible that this may have been partly the case. Some of the soil seems to have entered the structure as a by-product of raising the level of the track outside. All this seems to date to a time when the landscape was in decay. The tithe map appears to show that by 1841 the mansion had been reduced in size, and local tradition ascribes this to its demotion to farmhouse status. This is thought to have happened in the earlier part of the 19th century. It was possibly some time before this demotion affected the grotto, and the present evidence suggests the infilling occurred in the later 19th or early 20th century.

The evidence of the creamware above the grotto vault could be explained by a restructuring of the terrace above it during an early 19th-century phase. There is good evidence to show that there was possibly a major rebuilding phase to the house around 1812-3, and relandscaping in front of the house may have been part of that work. This does not necessarily imply the vault was of that date, as any terracing works overlying it could be later alterations. The evidence presently available does, however, leave the date of the second phase grotto in question. Stylistically it falls into the period 1720-50, although dates outside of this range are possible. One can not push it back too far, as the earlier 'water theatre' phase needs to be accommodated. It is possible that the second phase grotto relates to the phase of crenellating certain features in the landscape. However, such an association should be regarded with caution. It seems that the date stamp of 1819 on the crenellated gateway leading into the farmyard post-dates the gateway itself, and may have been the result of a repair to tidying the estate up during attempts to sell it between 1818-21. It is impossible to know, on present evidence, if the earlier gate was also crenellated, and at what date the track that passes the grotto on its way to this gate was originally made. On balance, the present evidence suggests that stylistic parallels offer the best solution. A strictly provisional dating for the later phase is thereby given as 1720-50, with a date for the earlier phase of 1650-1720. Nevertheless, the possibility of a later date for the second phase should not be ignored.

Can the grottoes and their landscapes be associated with any particular individuals? Shilston has been in the hands of the Savery family since 1614. Christopher Savery, a former mayor of Totnes and sheriff of the county, had bought the property at that date from the Hills family (Polwhele 1793-1806, iii, 462).

The house had been of some status from a relatively early date. In section 2.0 it is recorded how the property had manorial status from at least Late Saxon times (op cit). A picture thought to be of Shilston in the early 18th century shows a substantial mansion with a medieval stone hall, plus porch (Modbury Local History Society 1980, 5). This building was thought to have been replaced by the present house in the 18th century. The exact date is not known, but it is now thought to be before 1750.

The descent of the Saverys at Shilston is confused, and the sources are often at variance. An attempt to clarify this is given in Appendix 4. They were an exceptionally prodigious family, forming many branches. One of the more notable members was Colonel Christopher Savery. According to Polwhele (ibid), he was the son of the Christopher who bought Shilston. Christopher II did service as a colonel in the Parliamentary army. The *Visitation of the county of Devon* gives his death as 1656 (Vivian 1895, ii, 671). Servington, his son, continued to show his father's misgivings about the Stuart dynasty, and a warrant was issued for his arrest during James II's reign (1685-8) because of his disaffection with the regime (Polwhele 1793-1806, 462). He died shortly after, but his son, another Christopher, was rewarded for the family's support of William III by being made sheriff of the county in 1693. His son was another Servington. Polwhele (ibid) says of him that he married a daughter of Judge Hale in 1691 and was 'a very ingenious mathematician and mechanic; being the inventor of artificial magnets, the diagonal barometer etc as is well known among men of science'. His dates are uncertain, the *Visitation* being confused and seemingly

offering his birth as 1699. If Polwhele is correct about his marriage, this might be questioned. More reliable is the date of his death in the *Visitation* as 1744 (Vivian 1895, 672).

These last three Saverys are the most likely to have owned Shilston during the making of the two phases of the grotto. Servington senior's apparent dates are 1620-89, Christopher III's are 1644-1708, and Servington the mathematician's are ? to ?1744 (ibid). Their apparent years as masters of Shilston are 1656-89, 1689-1708, and 1708-44 respectively. One of the first two is probably the maker of the first grotto, with Servington the mathematician having a connection with the second. It is not impossible that this Servington made both, but on balance the earlier phase was probably one of his predecessors.

The construction of the two phases of the grotto may relate to alterations to the house that it ornamented. A view from the bottom of the valley would have shown the grotto terrace in front of the earlier house, with the house seemingly sat over it. It is possible that the earliest phase, the 'water theatre' terrace, coincided with the house that had developed from medieval times. If Cawse (1860, 21) is correct, and a 'Christopher' Savery was responsible for building a new house 'in the 18th century', this might have given a reason to rebuild the grotto, possibly to make it more fashionable or to reposition it slightly to match a possible realignment of the house. However, if this 'Christopher' was the one who died in 1708, the second phase grotto may be too late to have been built by him. However, the same may be said of Christopher IV, as he does not seem to have inherited until 1744, and this may have been too late to start a major redesigning of house and landscape that fits the postulated chronological sequence.

It would seem that Christopher III was the more likely rebuilders of the house at Shilston. This Christopher was a sheriff of the county, and a keen supporter of William III, making him a man who might consider it important to show his fashionable leanings by rebuilding his house. However, he may not have lived long enough to finish all the changes required to build a new house, and to alter the landscape to go with it. The completing of this work might have been left to Servington II, the mathematician. His relatively long ownership (1708-44) would have given him ample time to effect the changes. Furthermore, his known curiosity about the mechanics of science may suggest he was the type of person who might be interested in playing around with complex water features. Christopher IV's life is more shadowy. It is not certain if he held Shilston for any length of time. It is possible that he rebuilt the house and the grotto, but until more information comes forward, the evidence favours the earlier Christopher, and his son, Servington. It should not be ignored that the 'water theatre' phase may relate to Christopher III's rebuilding, with a later Savery (possibly his son) adding the triple-arched façade subsequently

One also needs to consider the possibility of change occurring when the house was further rebuilt c. 1813 (Lysons & Lysons 1822, 6.ii, 343; Sale Particulars, Modbury Parish Folder). The family circumstances (Shilston no longer being their chief residence) make a complete rebuilding at this date puzzling. It is possible that the 'rebuilding' was a ploy to make the property more attractive in the sale advertisements of 1818 and 1821. The reality may have been a refurbishment, or conversion, of an existing structure in need of repair rather than a

literal rebuilding from scratch. Lysons and Lysons might therefore have repeated the Savery family's sale propaganda. Nevertheless, the possibility of changes at this time should not be ignored until better evidence is forthcoming.

Another member of the Savery family of some distinction has been connected with Modbury (Modbury Local History Society 1980, 5). This is Thomas Savery (?1650-1715), a military engineer, inventor, and former surveyor of the royal waterworks at Hampton Court (Lee 1897, 354-55). According to the *Dictionary of National Biography*, Thomas was born at Shilston (ibid, 354), but he does not seem to be otherwise associated with the place by Vivian (1895, 671-2) or Polwhele (1793-1806, 461-62). The DoE listed building description (DoE Register, Modbury 2/157) says that he 'owned' Shilston, but this is clearly incorrect. Thomas appears to have been the son of one Richard Savery, who is, in turn, reputed to have been a younger son of Colonel Christopher Savery (Jenkins 1913, 345-6). However, as Jenkins (ibid) points out, other sources contradict this information. There is no reference in the local church registers of Thomas Savery having been born at Shilston. Nor does Vivian's *Visitation* (op cit) record that Christopher Savery had a son called Richard. The only true link between Thomas Savery and the Shilston Saverys is a reputed letter written by Servington Savery the Mathematician in 1727 that is now lost. This is said to have stated that Thomas Savery 'was the youngest brother of my grandfather' (Jenkins 1913, 346). It is not possible, therefore, to link Thomas Savery directly with the design of water features at Shilston, but he may have discussed them with his relations. However, any links with Thomas and the landscape are purely conjectural at present, and should be treated with the utmost caution (see Appendix 5).

Amongst the finds made during these investigations were fragments of coloured tin-glazed tiles. One almost intact tile showed a brown rabbit against a blue, white, yellow and green background, the whole enclosed in concentric blue roundels. This was probably made by a Dutch or Flemish craftsman, and were often part of commissioned sets. They are rare in the United Kingdom, and are even rarer from archaeological sites. A find of similar nature has recently been made at Upper Lodge, Bushy Park, part of the Hampton Court Parks (Currie forthcoming). This site was associated with a renowned water garden laid out by the Earl of Halifax between 1709 and 1715. This garden included a cascade flanked by two grottoes that was illustrated by Stephen Switzer, one of the very few English examples he used to illustrate his work. The tiles were found amongst demolition rubble believed to be associated with Halifax's destruction of the earlier lodge soon after 1709. The style of the tiles at Shilston and Upper Lodge are so similar that a connection might be postulated.

Both the tile fabric and style of the design suggest they came from the same source. Could this suggest a connection with Hampton Court? This might be considered tenuous as Thomas Savery did not become surveyor there until 1714 (Lee 1897, 355). The archaeological context for the Upper Lodge tiles seems to pre-date 1709, by which time they seem to have been thrown away and buried. Nevertheless, they do show that the Savery family obtained items of the highest quality to decorate their home, and a pre-1714 family connection with Hampton Court is possible. The finding of the tile shows that it should not be a surprise to find they could have been abreast of the latest in fashionable gardens. They might therefore be fully aware of the European precedents in garden design

known to Switzer, and it is possible that the Shilston Saverys discussed their landscaping with their famous relative, even if he was not directly involved with it.

6.0 Conclusions

Any conclusions given here must be considered strictly provisional until further fieldwork and research can be carried out. On the present evidence it would seem that the Shilston designed landscape contains many formal features that might place it within the period 1650-1750. It is possible that there was some alteration and evolution, both within that period, and later, as is shown by a date stamp of 1819 on a seemingly rebuilt crenellated gateway leading into the farmyard.

One of the main foci of the design is a triple arched building built over a series of springs at the head of the Shilston valley. This has been interpreted as a grotto and water theatre with two clear phases within its design. The earliest seems to represent a rare 'water theatre', a terrace revetment wall decorated by various water displays emanating from within and behind it. Such 'theatres' were well known in Renaissance Italy, and the Shilston example seems to be very much in that style. Also associated with this wall is an artificial tunnel or 'cave' leading to a well served by a spring or springs. This has possible classical allusions to pagan deities, and has stylistic similarities with medieval 'holy wells'. Tunnel-grottoes can be shown to have existed in late 17th-century England, and it is thought that the earliest Shilston grotto and water theatre may date from that period.

The second phase of the grotto is represented by triple arched vaulted structure. This type of frontage is common in the early 18th century, and could be seen in designs of William Kent at well-known gardens at Rousham, Chiswick and Claremont. It would seem therefore that the earlier grotto may have been extended *c.* 1720-50 (on stylistic grounds) in keeping with garden fashion, although a later date should not be excluded.

The landscape also contained three small ponds with formal elements in their design. Between the second and third ponds, there would seem to be the remains of a rustic cascade. This contains distinctive formal and informal elements, suggesting it may have been created in a transitional period of landscape design (eg 1720-50), or it contains two phases like the grotto.

Fragments of 17th-century tin-glazed tiles of high quality were found during the investigations. These were of a Dutch or Flemish school, and can be paralleled with recent finds at Upper Lodge, Bushy Park, Hampton Court. They demonstrate the high status of the site. Despite it being in an isolated part of Devon, both these finds and the design of the grotto suggest the owners of Shilston, the Savery family, seem to have been abreast of contemporary fashion. They appear to have been related to Thomas Savery, a pioneer of steam power and the surveyor of the royal waterworks at Hampton Court. However, certain published statements that this Thomas once owned Shilston are not supported by documentary evidence.

The grotto building is considered to be an exceptional example of its kind, and is perhaps unique in the United Kingdom in clearly demonstrating two important stages in grotto development. It is also the only example known to this author of a water theatre of the Italian Renaissance type to have survived here.

7.0 Finds

Finds were few but significant. Only a summary of the finds is given here as an interim to a complete report proposed for publication.

7.1 Tin-glazed tile

Seven sherds of tin-glazed earthenware tiles were found. Four of these made up one whole tile with green, brown, blue, white and yellow painted decoration. This showed a rabbit with concentric roundels. The style was characteristic of 17th-century Dutch or Flemish workshops, and had very close similarities to tiles found recently at Upper Lodge, Bushy Park (Currie forthcoming). The tile fragments were sent immediately to the British Museum for conservation. They are to be conserved by Maria Barlow, a member of the British Museum's conservation team.

7.2 Pottery

Pottery was generally rare except within the terrace layers overlying the grotto roof. The only sherds found within the grotto were of a plain white porcelain bowl. This was probably English, and of 19th-century date. It was found in late 19th- or early 20th-century infill of the grotto.

On the terrace roof a number of unabraded sherds of a Westawald jug were found, including an almost complete base. The slightly crude stamped decoration suggested it was early in the Westawald tradition, possibly 1680-1700. Also found were small sherds of plain white tin-glazed earthenware characteristic of the 17th century, and two creamware sherds. The latter included the handle of a possible chamber pot or teapot, possibly later in the creamware range of 1760-1830.

7.3 Clay Pipe

Only one fragment of stem was recovered. It had no characteristic features.

7.4 Glass

Two fragments of the bases of glass 'onion' bottles were recovered from the terrace soils above the grotto. These bottle types were characteristic of the 17th or early 18th century.

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9.0 Archive

The archive for this work will be deposited with a local museum approved by the archaeological adviser to South Hams District Council. Copies of the report were lodged with the clients, the County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), and the National Monuments Record in Swindon, Wiltshire.

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Appendix 1: list of archaeological contexts excavated

Context no.	Trench no.	Description	Munsell Colour
01	1	clay layer	10YR 4/3
02	2	clay loam layer	5YR 4/3
03	2	clay layer	5YR 4/4
04	1	loamy clay layer	10YR 3/3
05	1	sandy clay loam	10YR 3/3
06	1	clay layer	10YR 5/6
07	1	sandy silt layer	10YR 3/3
08	1	clay layer	10YR 5/6
09	3	clay layer	10YR 4/4
10	3	clay layer	10YR 4/6
11	5	clay loam layer	5YR 4/3
12	5	clay layer	5YR 4/4
13	5	stone structure (grotto roof)	
14	5	clay layer	5YR 4/4
15	5	stone structure (back wall of grotto)	

Appendix 2: Key to tithe map field numbers

Modbury Tithe map and award, 1841 (DRO)

Abbreviations: M - Meadow, P - Pasture, A - Arable, O - Orchard, Plant - Plantation, W - Wood

Henry Collins Splatt owns, William Helmore occupies

Field no.	Field name	Land use	Acerage in acres, rods & perches
574	Hennoe Mead	M	6-0-25
575	Coytes Mead	M	3-2-31
578	Blakes Ball	P	7-0-15
579	Higher Homer Way Ball	P	3-2-34
581	Lower Homer Way Ball	P	4-3-0
582	Hay Ball Orchard	O	1-3-0
583	Lawn	P	5-0-36
584	Gardens	-	0-3-10
585	House, Lawn, Court & Lanes	-	2-2-15
586	Beanhay	P	3-2-16
587	Winnowing Piece	A	0-3-0
588	Plantation	Plant	0-0-22
589	Plantation	Plant	1-0-14
590	Home Elwells	P	4-1-8
591	Middle Well Park	A	8-2-0
592	Wood	W	0-2-10
593	Orchard	O	1-3-0
594	Quarry Well Park	A	10-0-25
595	Home Ball	P	7-1-0
596	Waste	-	0-3-6
597	Yonder Ball	A	10-3-14

Appendix 3: sale description of Shilston, 1818

The following description is to be found in the Modbury Parish Folder at the Devon Local Studies Library. The name of the newspaper it appears in is not given, but it is dated 6th August 1818. It states:

'A very fine property scarcely to be equalled to be sold by Private Contract, together or in the following Lots, the fee simple of Lot 1, The Capital Mansion-House of Shilston, situate near the centre of the whole of the Lots, having three regular fronts, pleasantly situate in a rich well sheltered valley, built about six years since, and consisting of a spacious entrance and Lobby twenty-eight feet by fifteen, handsome double Staircase, Drawing and Dining-room each twenty-five by seventeen and a half, Breakfast-room eighteen by seventeen and a half leading from one to another by double doors with marble chimney-pieces, another Parlour wainscoted and ornamented with ancient carved work nineteen feet three by thirteen and a half and a Book-room the same size, all leading from the Lobby and twelve feet high, and the doors and wainscot and beautiful bird-eyed maple highly polished, twelve good sized Lodging-rooms with several Dressing-rooms ten feet and a half high, good Kitchens, Offices and servants' apartments and Lodging-rooms with back stair-cases, Water-closets, Etc Etc; good walled garden and kitchen garden, several ponds, good Stables, Etc

Together with The Barton and Farm of Shilston, consisting of a good Farm-house, complete farm-yard, Threshing-machine, Cider-pound, Corn-mills, Barns, Stables, Linneys, Etc about Six Acres of Garden and Orchard, Thirty-two of Meadow, about Eighty-eight of Pasture, and about Forty-five of Arable, all of the richest quality, and about Six Acres of Coppice, including a meadow part of Ryder's Tenement, about Three Acres and a half, all in a ring fence.... There are never failing Springs of Water almost in every Field, and a fine Trout stream... there is a considerable quantity of Lime Rock with two Lime Kilns on the Premises, and much valuable Timber with many large ornamental thriving Plantations and Shrubberies...For viewing the different estates, application to be made at Shilston House; and for further particulars to C Savery at South Efford, near Modbury, where Maps of the Estates may be seen...Dated Aug 6th 1818'

Appendix 4: the Savery family at Shilston

There is much contradiction in the sources concerning the Savery family at Shilston. These sources are Polwhele's *History* (1793-1806), Burke's *Dictionary of the Landed Gentry* (1858), and Vivian's *Visitation* (1895), which includes a family tree of the Saverys. Other sources include Jenkins' well-researched essay on Thomas Savery (1913). There are a number of other sources that are not so well researched, and clearly repeat traditions that may have no foundation in fact. It is concerning the connection between Thomas Savery and the Shilston Saverys that the majority of these contradictions occur. These are discussed in the main text. This appendix deals mainly with the succession of the Shilston estate, and shows reasonably conclusively that Thomas Savery was never master of this estate, but that he may have been related to the members of the Savery family who were. Appendix 5 discusses Thomas Savery in more detail.

1. According to Polwhele (1793-1806, iii, 462n) the Shilston estate was purchased by Christopher Savery I in 1614. He had been mayor of Totnes in 1593, was sheriff of Devon c. 1619-20, and died in 1623. He had been a Knight baronet in the reign of Elizabeth, and had married a descendant of Sir William Servington, a medieval sheriff of the county. This latter information will account for the recurrence of the name Servington in the subsequent family. He was succeeded by his son, Colonel Christopher Savery II. According to Burke's (1858, 1065) he had a second son, Richard, who was the father of Thomas Savery the Inventor. Neither Polwhele nor Vivian record this Richard, despite the latter listing a number of other sons attributable to Christopher I.
 2. Colonel Christopher Savery II's dates, according to Vivian (1895, ii, 671), are 1592-1656. He was colonel in a regiment of foot in Parliament's army in the English Civil War. He was succeeded at Shilston by his eldest son, Servington I.
 3. Servington I's dates are given as January 1620 to March 1689. He was disaffected with the Stuart monarchy in the reign of James II (1685-8), and a warrant was issued for his arrest. This was not carried out, and the family were strong supporters of William III's claim to the throne. He married Catherine Luscombe, widow of Richard Luscombe of Totnes as his first wife, and Florence Fowel, daughter of Sir Edmund Fowel of Fowelscombe. He was succeeded by his son, Christopher III.
 4. According to Vivian, Christopher III's dates are March 1644 to October 1708. Burkes (1858, 1065) states that he married Elizabeth, daughter of Colonel Cloberry. He was succeeded by his son, Servington II.
 5. According to Vivian, Servington II died in March 1744. Burkes states that he married Elizabeth, daughter of John Hale of Bowrings-Leigh. Polwhele (1793-1806, iii, 462) gives the date of this marriage as 1691, and states that John Hale was a 'Judge'. Polwhele also goes into some detail over Servington's achievements as a mathematician and inventor. He attributes the invention of a type of artificial magnet and the 'diagonal barometer' to him amongst other things. Burkes accredits him with the letters 'MA FRS' after his name. According to an unpublished history of the Savery family, written in 1809-10 by John Savery, it was this Servington who wrote a letter in 1727 to the Royal Society claiming that the then well-known inventor, Thomas Savery, was related to him. He is said to have stated that Thomas' father 'was the youngest brother of my grandfather'. Servington II (the Inventor) was succeeded by his son, Christopher IV.
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6. Burkes (1859, 1065) claim that Christopher IV inherited the estate in 1744, and is most likely the Christopher attributed as rebuilding the mansion at Shilston by Cawse (1860, 21). In 1717 he married Sarah, daughter of Sir John Davy of Credy. He was succeeded by his son John Savery.
 7. John Savery married Sarah, daughter of Walter Prideaux and had three sons. The descent is confused here with Burkes (1859, 1065) claiming he was succeeded by his third son. Mr Robert Savery of Lincombe Farm, Devon says that John was succeeded by his second son, another John. The elder son, Christopher, died without issue in his twenties (pers comm).
 8. John Savery II would seem to be the Savery who wrote the family history of 1809-10. Polwhele (1793-1806, iii, 462) states that John Savery I was the father of the 'present' owner, another John Savery. Jenkins (1913, 346) accredits this John as being the Savery who purchased Butcombe Court near Bristol, which, he seems to claim, resulted in the demotion of Shilston to a farmhouse.
 9. Christopher V is given by Burkes (1859, 1065) as 'of Shilston and South Efford'. He was born in 1756 and married Mary, daughter of John Wise of Wonwell and sole heir of Arthur Ayshford. He had two sons and one daughter. According to Mr Robert Savery (pers comm) John Savery II sold Shilston to Christopher, but their exact relationship is not known. Christopher is given as the owner of Shilston in the sale advertisement of 1818, but he was living at South Efford at that time (Modbury Parish Folder). 1818 was the year that Christopher's wife, Mary, died, and this may have had some influence on the decision to sell Shilston.
 10. In 1821 another sale advertisement advises prospective buyers to apply to the 'Office of Mr Servington Savery, Solicitor, in Modbury' (ibid). The Servington was Servington Savery III, the son of Christopher V. It is thought that Christopher may have still been alive at this time, but had left the sale in the care of his son on account of his suitable profession. Servington III was born in 1787 (Burkes 1859, 1065). In 1813 he married Mary, Daughter of John Lukeman. He purchased the estate of Fowlescombe in 1839 and formed another branch of the Savery family listed in Burkes as 'Savery of Fowelscombe' (ibid).
 11. It is not known exactly when Shilston was sold, but it must have been by 1841. In that year the tithe survey gives the owner as Henry Collins Splatt, with William Helmore as his tenant (DRO Modbury tithe survey).
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Appendix 5: Thomas Savery (c. 1650-1715)

The life of Thomas Savery is a source of great confusion. Considering that he is often credited as being the inventor of the steam engine, very little accurate information exists about him. As recently as the 1990s a local newspaper (Modbury Parish Folder) was claiming that he owned Shilston. There is no evidence for this, nor is there much evidence for a number of other claims made about him. What is certain is that he was a prolific inventor, and he died in 1715, having achieved high office in the court of the English monarchy. Before he obtained a patent for his steam engine in 1698 his life is very shadowy. However recent research by members of the Newcomen Society has thrown new light on his life. None of this relates to Shilston or to any direct connection with his Shilston relatives.

The latest research has been by Hills (1990). His essay still considers Rhys Jenkins' 1913 essay as the most reliable source for Thomas' life. Jenkins (1913, 345-57) is highly critical of a number of traditions attributed to him. In particular he questions the attribution that he was an army officer and had any direct connection with Shilston.

The earliest and best evidence available suggests that Thomas Savery never owned Shilston. There is even some doubt as to his connection with the house, his reputed birthplace, as Vivian (1895) does not list his reputed father, Richard, as one of the sons of Christopher Savery II. The only true connection between Thomas Savery and the Shilston Saverys is the now lost letter that Servington II is supposed to have written to the Royal Society in 1727, twelve years after Thomas Savery's death, in which he claims Thomas was the son of one of his grandfather's younger brothers (Jenkins 1913, 346). He does not state that this brother was called Richard.

A detailed study of the early history of the steam engine by Smith (1979) has thrown new light on the life of Thomas. He has discovered references to Thomas being a 'merchant of Exeter' (Smith 1979, 6 quoting Historical Manuscript Commission, 73 Exeter (1916), Calendar of State Papers (Domestic) 1673, and Public Record Office C.8.59974). He has also discovered a curious link between Thomas and Worshipful Society of Apothecaries of London.

On Thomas' death in 1715, the rights to the patent for his steam engine passed into the hands of a group of men led by John Meres of London. Meres was the Clerk to the Society of Apothecaries from 1691 to 1726. Payments for the use of Newcomen's engine, which incorporated Savery's patent, were paid to Meres at the Apothecaries Hall at Blackfriars. In 1705 Savery had been appointed as Treasurer of the Admiralty's Commission for the Sick and Wounded. Amongst his responsibilities was the need to travel as paymaster to the seaports including Plymouth and Dartmouth. The Commission agent at Dartmouth was Caleb Rockett, who was an apothecary with business dealings with Newcomen. Smith has suggested (ibid, 6-8) that it was possibly whilst visiting Dartmouth that Savery became acquainted with Newcomen. It might also explain the apothecary interest in the rights to the Newcomen/Savery steam engine.

Smith also argues that considerable money would have been required to finance Newcomen's steam engine, and that there is no evidence that Newcomen had such money. Savery, however, had access to very considerable sums through his dealings with the Commission for the Sick and Wounded. It was not unusual, Smith argues, for men like Savery to put such money to their own use. On his death Savery had considerable debts to the Commission (op cit), and he hints that Savery may have helped finance Newcomen's development of his earlier invention.

A detailed analysis of the life of Thomas Savery is beyond the original brief for this work, and it is not intended to pursue this subject any further. The purpose of this appendix is to clarify Thomas' true connections with the Shilston Saverys and to discuss the most recent discoveries about his life. Jenkins has already thrown doubts on many traditions relating to Thomas' life, and the most recent research by Smith and Hills still considers Jenkins' opinions reliable. The work of Smith has further shown that Thomas' connections with Devon seem to have been firstly with his activities as a businessman in Exeter, and secondly through his connections with Dartmouth and Plymouth as a result of his connection with the Commission for the Sick and Wounded. Through the latter he may have become known to Newcomen.

According to the late L T C Rolt, '...it would be difficult to find an historical subject of comparable importance so impenetrably veiled in obscurity' (quoted in Smith 1979, 15) as the subject of Savery's connection with the invention of steam power and its subsequent development. The same remains true of his life in general, and it has not helped accurate scholarship that there are so many unfounded traditions written about him.

Appendix 6: glossary of archaeological terms

Archaeology: the study of man's past by means of the material relics he has left behind him. By material relics, this means both materials buried within the soil (artefacts and remains of structures), and those surviving above the surface such as buildings, structures (e.g. stone circles) and earthworks (e.g. hillforts, old field boundaries etc.). Even the study of old tree or shrub alignments, where they have been artificially planted in the past, can give vital information on past activity.

Artefacts: any object made by man that finds itself discarded (usually as a broken object) or lost in the soil. The most common finds are usually pottery sherds, or waste flint flakes from prehistoric stone tool making. Metal finds are generally rare except in specialist areas such as the site of an old forge. The absence of finds from the activity of metal detectorists is not usually given much credibility by archaeologists as a means of defining if archaeology is present

Baulk: an area of unexcavated soil on an archaeological site. It usually refers to the sides of the archaeological trench.

Context: a number given to a unit of archaeological recording. This can include a layer, a cut, a fill of a cut, a surface or a structure.

Cut: usually used to mean an excavation made in the past. The 'hole' or cut existed in time as a void, before later being backfilled with soil. Archaeologists give a context number to the empty hole, as well as the backfilled feature (called the 'fill').

Desk-based assessment: an assessment of a known or potential archaeological resource within a specific land unit or area, consisting of a collation of existing written or graphic information, to identify the likely character, extent and relative quality of the actual or potential resource.

Earthwork: bank of earth, hollow, or other earthen feature created by human activity.

Environmental evidence: evidence of the potential effect of environmental considerations on man's past activity. This can range from the remains of wood giving an insight into the type of trees available for building materials etc, through to evidence of crops grown, and food eaten, locally.

Evaluation: a limited programme of intrusive fieldwork (mainly test-trenching) which determines the presence or absence of archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts within a specified land unit or area. If they are present, this will define their character, extent, and relative quality, and allow an assessment of their worth in local, regional and national terms.

Hedgebanks: banks of earth, usually with a ditch, that have been set up in the past on which is planted a stock-proof line of shrubs. There is written evidence that they were made from at least Roman times, but they are suspected as existing in prehistoric times.

Lynchets: bank of earth that accumulates on the downhill side of an ancient ploughed field as the disturbed soil moves down the slope under the action of gravity.

Munsell colour: an objective method of defining soil colour using a specially designed colour chart for soils. The reading defines hue (an objective description of colour; eg YR means yellow-red), value (darkness or lightness of the colour) and chroma (the greyness or purity of the colour). For example 10YR 3/2 is a dark grey-brown.

Natural [layer]: in archaeological reports, this is a layer that has been formed by natural process, usually underlying man-made disturbance.

Period: time periods within British chronology are usually defined as Prehistoric (comprising the Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age), Roman, Saxon, Medieval and Post-medieval. Although exact definitions are often challenged, the general date ranges are as given below.

Prehistoric c. 100,000 BC - AD 43. This is usually defined as the time before man began making written records of his activities.

Palaeolithic or Old Stone Age 100,000 - 8300 BC

Mesolithic or Middle Stone Age 8300 - 4000 BC

Neolithic or New Stone Age 4000 - 2500 BC

Bronze Age 2500 - 700 BC

Iron Age 700 BC - AD 43

Roman AD 43-410

Saxon AD 410-1066

Medieval AD 1066-1540

Post-medieval AD 1540-present

Pottery sherds: small pieces of broken baked clay vessels that find their way into ancient soils. These can be common in all periods from the Neolithic onwards. They often find their way into the soil by being dumped on the settlement rubbish tip, when broken, and subsequently taken out and scattered in fields with farmyard manure.

Project Design: a written statement on the project's objectives, methods, timetable and resources set out in sufficient detail to be quantifiable, implemented and monitored.

Settlement: usually defined as a site where human habitation in the form of permanent or temporary buildings or shelters in wood, stone, brick or any other building material has existed in the past.

Site: usually defined as an area where human activity has taken place in the past. It does not require the remains of buildings to be present. A scatter of prehistoric flint-working debris can be defined as a 'site', with or without evidence for permanent or temporary habitation.

Stratigraphy: sequence of man-made soils overlying undisturbed soils; the lowest layers generally represent the oldest periods of man's past, with successive layers reaching forwards to the present. It is within these soils that archaeological information is obtained.

Archive list for Shilston Barton, Devon

Archaeological evaluation and building recording by CKC Archaeology, July 2000

The archive contains:

1. Context sheets, numbers 01-16
2. Finds recording sheets, total 3
3. Photographic recording sheets, total 1
4. Drawing record sheets, total 1
5. 1 packs of Black/White photographs with negatives.
6. 2 plastic sleeves containing colour slide film.
7. Original permatrace drawings, total 3 sheets.
8. Report with illustrations, 42 pages text and plates, 11 figs plus 3 unreduced sheets in plastic sleeve.
9. Correspondence and miscellaneous papers concerning site, total 7 sheets.
10. Project Design, 11 sheets