

Notes

Edited by

E C MUSGRAVE and M TINGLE

EXCAVATION IN ADVANCE OF THE A605 BYPASS AT ELTON

Pre-construction survey and excavation along the route of the A605 Chesterton/Elton Bypass (French, forthcoming) was undertaken in the spring and summer of 1989, funded by the Transportation Department, Cambridgeshire County Council. Very little was known of the archaeology on the route, largely because the local geology is not susceptible to aerial survey and there are large areas of permanent pasture which preclude field-walking survey. Nonetheless, attention was focused on the extant remains of the medieval landscape at the Elton or south-western end of the bypass route (FIG 1).

Topographical and geophysical survey of Elton Estates land immediately to either side of the present day Cambridgeshire/Northamptonshire border revealed a small colluviated valley with hints of prehistoric use. First, there seems to have been Mesolithic activity in the near vicinity, evidenced by very fine flint microliths in the colluvial/hillwash deposits which cover the lower slope of Charlie's Close Field and the northern part of Dog Kennel Field (FIG 1).

This enigmatic episode was followed by considerable Neolithic activity, and in particular a small, sub-square ditched enclosure about 12 m in diameter (FIG 2). The ditch contained abundant, small abraded sherds of earlier Neolithic shell-gritted pottery, blade flints and waste products, and very small fragments of burnt and unburnt bone. This material was predominantly recovered from the tertiary fill of the enclosure ditch, especially to either side of the eastern entranceway. The complete absence of artefacts in the primary and secondary fills may suggest simple enclosure status as much as any 'ceremonial' function, whereas the tertiary use may indicate the presence of a domestic structure of turf and/or hides and wooden poles which have left no trace.

Contemporary with this Neolithic enclosure, there was an open, multiple inhumation pit situated about 50 m to the south (below the area covered by FIG 2). This 2 m wide, sub-rounded pit contained the disarticulated remains of at least five different humans, as well as two later Neolithic, backed blade flints. It is possible that the bodies were already defleshed prior to burial.

About 60 m to the southeast of the enclosure and inhumation pit, there was a curious structure consisting of two arcs of post holes, a larger arc of nine post holes and a smaller arc of four posts with a different orientation (FIG 2). Off-centre to and within the larger arc of post holes, there was a 'kerb' of four large river gravel pebbles behind which was a roughly circular to sub-rectangular area of river gravel pebbles. Although open to doubt, this complex may possibly represent the remains of a Neolithic cairn, which has been much disturbed by medieval ploughing.

This set of ceremonial/burial/settlement features was either integrally set within or later enclosed by a rectilinear system of shallow, narrow ditches (FIG 2). These composed at least two fields of *c.* 75 × 100 m in size with a corner entranceway and driveway. This ditch system was oriented at right angles to the present day county boundary and stream. Upon excavation of the present day stream area at the base of the slope in Charlie's Close Field, a large relic stream channel was revealed, some 35 m across and 1.5 m deep. It is probable that these rectilinear fields were aligned at right angles to the former stream, a small tributary of the River Nene, during the Neolithic period, just as field systems were aligned at right angles to the fen-edge at Fengate, Peterborough (Pryor, 1980) and to a former course of the Welland in the lower Welland valley between Maxey and Northborough (French and Pryor, forthcoming).

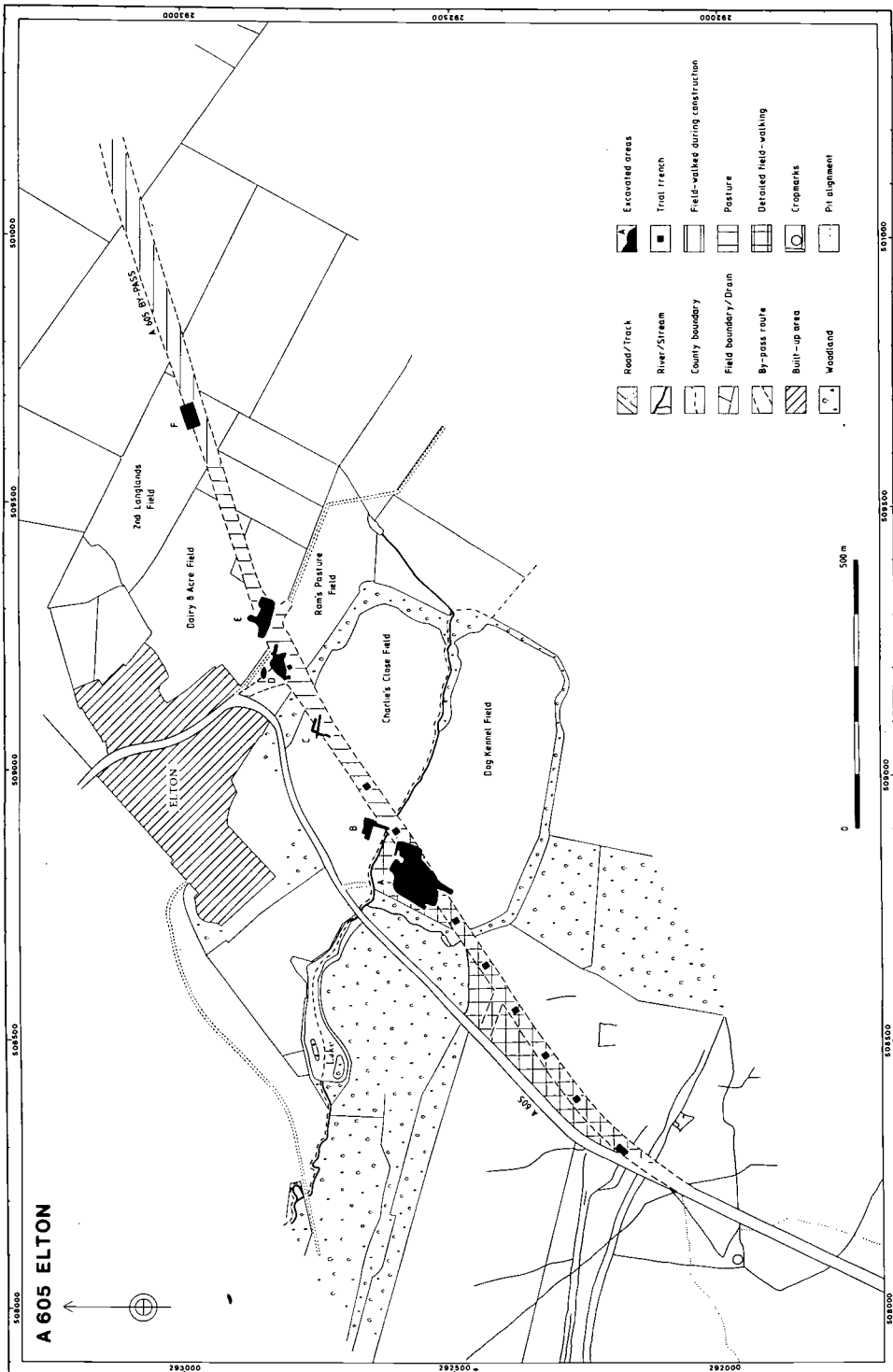


Fig 1 Location map of the bypass route through Elton Estates land showing the areas excavated



Fig 2 Plan of the excavation in Dog Kennel Field, Elton

It must be emphasised that the laying out and construction of these field systems and monuments implies a major clearing of this part of the landscape by the later 3rd millennium BC. The absence of later prehistoric and Roman activity is significant, and implies a major change in the use and orientation of the utilised landscape. It is very possible that the Neolithic activity was short-lived, and may be viewed as use over a very limited time, perhaps only over a few seasons, before moving on somewhere else in the vicinity. The absence of material later than the Bronze age is also explained by the deposition of considerable quantities of colluvium which covers the base of this small valley to either side of the relic and present streams. This colluvial material undoubtedly derives from clearance and cultivation on the slopes immediately upstream, which was probably an intensifying process throughout later prehistory and the Roman period. There is little doubt that the stream channel and valley floor area was infilled and out of use by the Saxon period when the parish boundary bank was built over the infilled and buried relic stream channel.

Later events within the Elton area which were affected by the roadworks included a Bronze Age enclosure, extensive medieval field systems, and a series of 18th century AD cobbled roadways and stone-lined drains. At the north-eastern or Haddon end of the bypass, a substantial 1st to 4th century AD farmstead was excavated which has provided good evidence of a well developed mixed pastoral/arable economy.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge the financial support of the Transportation Department, Cambridgeshire County Council, and the land-owners—Elton Estates and Mr J Thory.

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AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION AT WOLLASTON

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at Wollaston, in 1990, for Pioneer Aggregates (UK) Limited. The eight fields assessed lie east of the River Nene, between the villages of Wollaston and Doddington (FIG 1), and some 3 miles south of Wellingborough.

Aerial photographs had previously revealed a number of ditched enclosures, and linear boundaries, both in the area to be assessed and in many of the arable fields nearby (FIG 2). The site of a Roman villa and associated cropmarks lies to the north of the surveyed area.

A comprehensive plot of all the known cropmarks was obtained and trenches were positioned to determine the date, nature and extent of the archaeological activity. A total of 122 trenches were cut and an area of almost 4000 sq m was examined.

NEOLITHIC AND BRONZE AGE ACTIVITY

Early prehistoric activity is not well represented in the survey area and no barrows or other monuments of this period have been located. Three small pits of Neolithic date were however revealed in Field 8.

THE IRON AGE AND ROMAN PERIODS

The majority of the features revealed as cropmarks at Wollaston are of Iron Age date, and may represent activity over a lengthy period of time. The numerous pit alignments are clearly some of the earliest features on the site, and these in turn were replaced by ditched linear boundaries with associated enclosures. At least two of the enclosures date to the middle to late Iron Age period, and these may have been sited in the corners of fields bordered by pit alignments and ditches. The paucity of finds from the enclosures may suggest they were associated with small farming communities.

It is not possible to say if settlement at this time was intermittent, but there was no evidence of occupation continuing from the Iron Age into the Roman period. The Roman activity located in the survey area, is confined to a small area near the boundary hedge between Fields 6 and 7, and the south-west corner of Field 8.

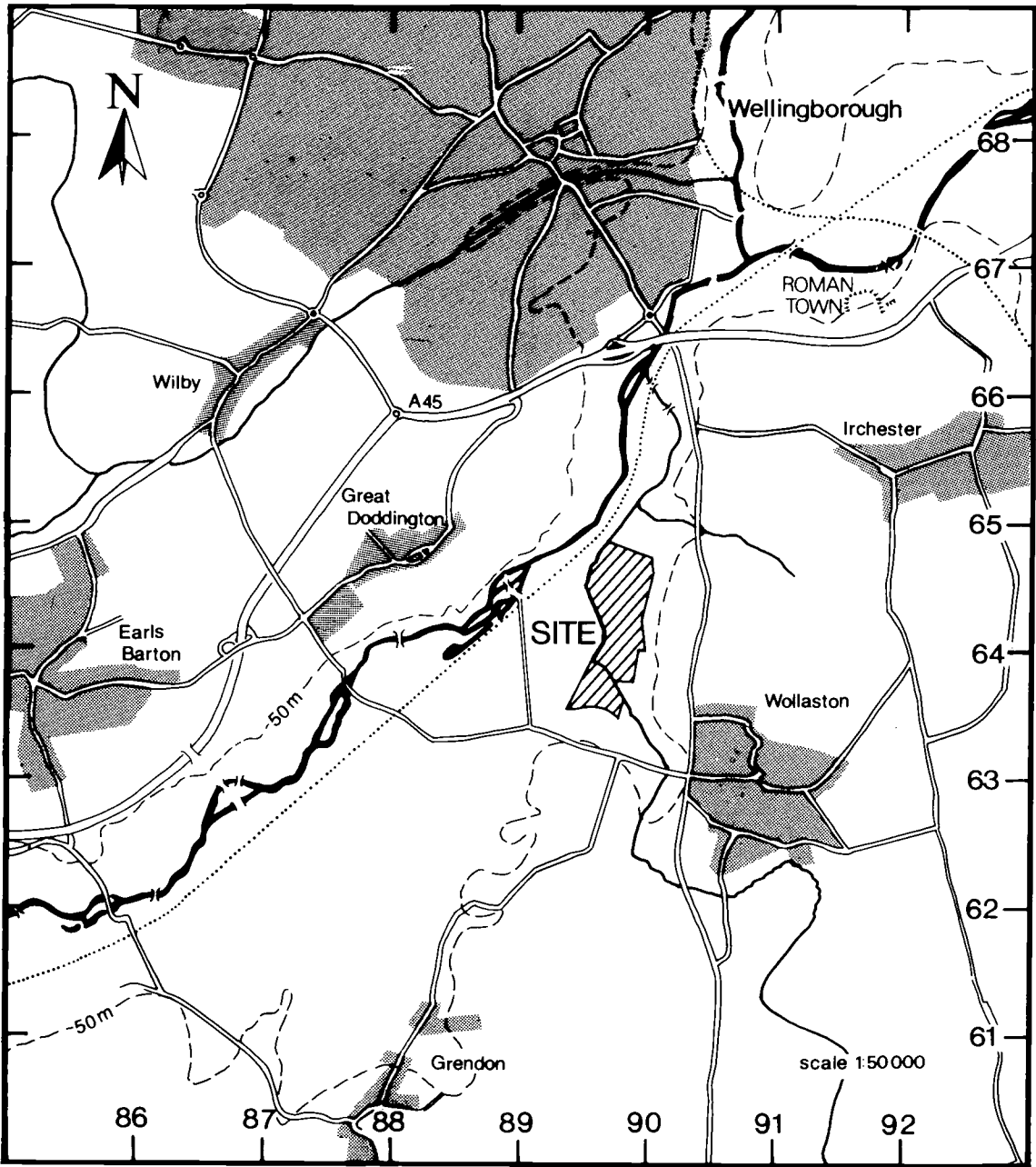


Fig 1 Wollaston: location map.

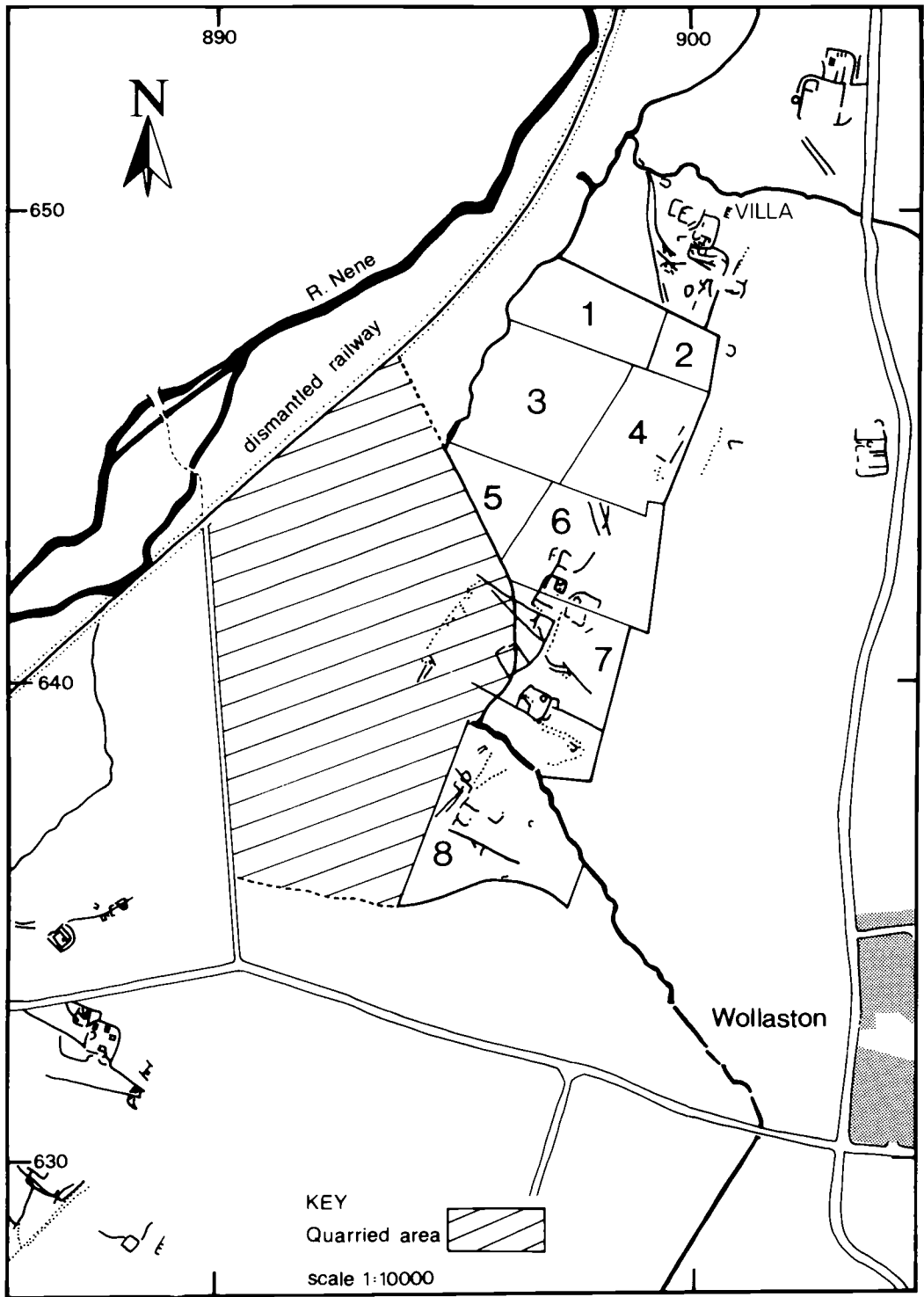


Fig 2 Wollaston: cropmarks of ditches and enclosures

Similar Iron Age and Roman complexes have been recorded on the gravel terrace nearby at Earls Barton and Grendon (Windell 1983, and McCormick and Jackson, forthcoming). The survival of structural detail is poor on each of these sites, because little stratigraphy has survived above the gravel or silt.

"LAZY-BED" SYSTEM

An unusual series of parallel trenches, or ditches, was found extending over much of Field 4 and part of Field 3. The trench system was not securely dated but appears to be pre-medieval in origin.

The trenches were spaced from 5 to 8 m apart and were cut up to 50 cm deep in the gravel. Most appear to have originally been straight sided, or U-shaped. A similar, but smaller, area of trenches was recorded at Grendon in 1980, but on this site the trenches were uniformly spaced and only 3.5 m apart.

FUTURE WORK

Further excavations and watching briefs have been arranged by Pioneer Aggregates prior to, and during, gravel extraction. The settlements will be examined, and the pattern of land use and field systems recorded. An environmental study of past landscapes in this part of the Nene valley will also be undertaken.

D A JACKSON, for PIONEER AGGREGATES (UK)
LIMITED

REFERENCE

Windell D, 1983. Clay Lane 1980: interim report. *Northamptonshire Archaeol.* 18, 33-42.

THE FINA PIPELINE PROJECT, AND A ROMAN POTTERY KILN AT FINESHADE

A new oil pipeline was laid through Northamptonshire in 1990, and during its construction the oil company, FINA plc, financed a programme of archaeological recording along the route. The main contractors appointed for the project were the Wessex Archaeological Trust but they in turn used locally based sub-contractors to carry out some of the fieldwork. The first phase of work was carried out in advance of soil stripping, and included a fieldwalking programme and geophysical surveys. Subsequent to this a number of trial boxes were excavated to check the geophysical anomalies, or the depth of stratigraphy.

All the soil stripping along the corridor was watched by archaeological inspectors employed for this purpose and any exposed features of archaeological interest were covered to prevent further damage by heavy machinery or vehicles. Trial trenching on the line of the trench was carried out only on sites at Denford and Lyveden. The pipeline trench itself was only open for a short period, and there was little opportunity to record features exposed in section. However, additional cleaning and recording was undertaken on a number of sites, along the corridor, after the trench had been backfilled.

The pipeline traversed Northamptonshire from Wakerley in the north to Hargrave on the east. Its line crossed the Nene valley between Islip and Denford, and here a section, 900 m long, was tunnelled beneath the surface, and subsequently avoided damage to the site of an extensive Roman villa, or buildings.

The Roman sites recorded along the corridor include a well-preserved pottery kiln, and a small aisled barn at Fineshade, (see below), as well as settlements at Bulwick, Deenthorpe, and Raunds. Features of Iron Age date were recorded at Denford, Woodford, and Raunds. A short description of each site occurs in the note section of this journal, and further details and plans will be deposited in the Northamptonshire Archaeological Archive.

The new pipeline exposed relatively few new sites when compared with other examples which have been routed within or close to the Nene

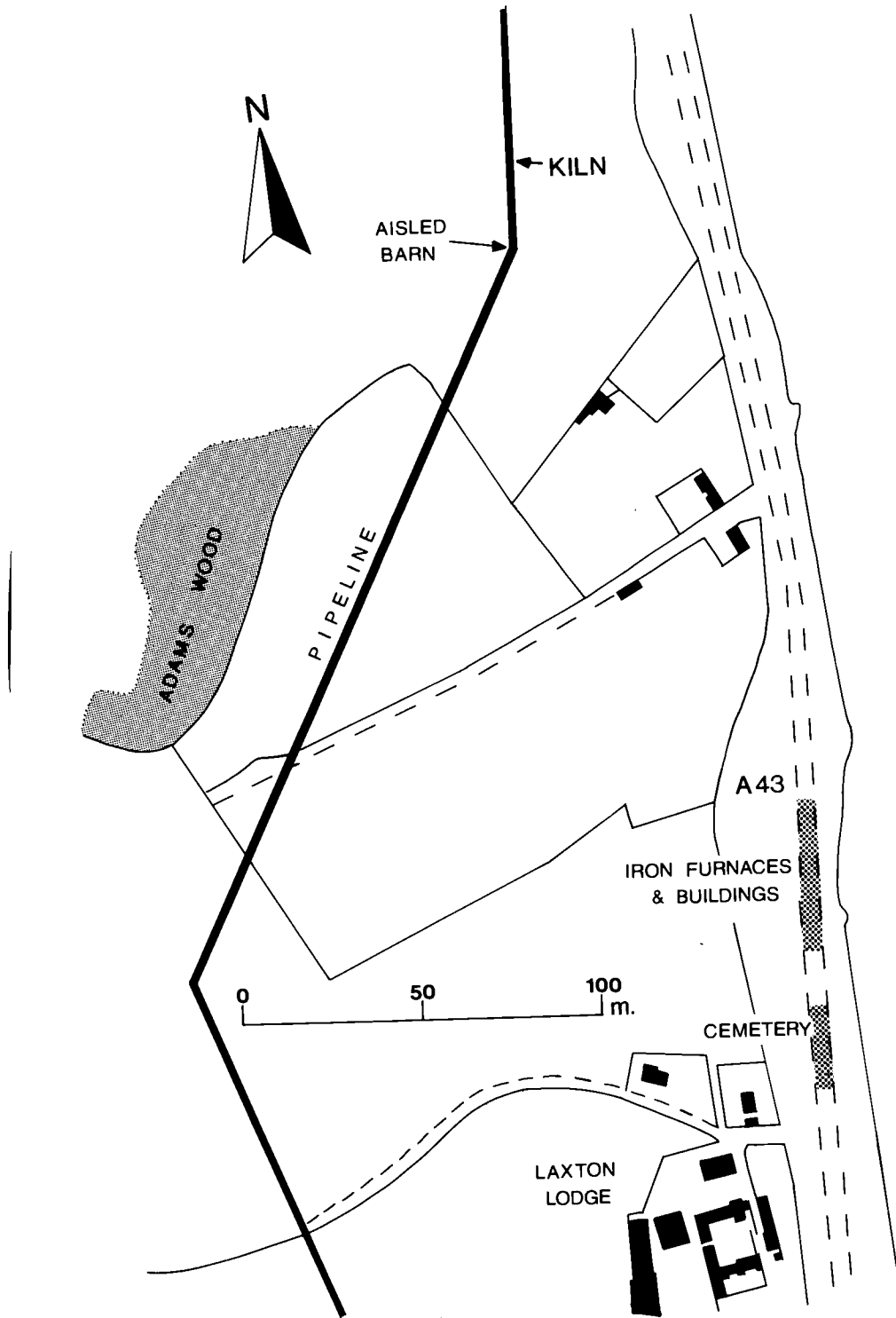


Fig 1 Fineshade: location map



Plate 1 Fineshade: pottery kiln.

valley. Much of the corridor crossed Boulder Clay subsoils, however, and the pipeline was routed to miss known sites.

THE ROMAN POTTERY KILN AT FINESHADE

During work on the FINA pipeline in 1990, to the west of the former abbey at Fineshade (SP 9680 9766), an area of what appeared to be burnt subsoil was noted and recorded in the trench face by the pipeline inspector Mr P Darling. Subsequently work by the writers and Mrs G Johnstone, revealed a well-preserved updraught pottery kiln dating to the 2nd or early 3rd century AD. Although the trench had only clipped the rear of the kiln and damage to the structure was minimal, the laying of an additional drain to the east of the pipe trench necessitated the partial excavation of the structure.

The kiln was situated 400 m N.N.W. of a major Roman iron-working complex and settlement, located during modifications to the

A.43 in 1985. (Jackson and Tylcote 1988). Ditches and pits of Roman date were also revealed in the pipeline corridor and the foundations of a small aisled barn, measuring 12.5 m × 7.3 m internally, was recorded 80 m to the south (FIG 1). Whether any or all of these features was contemporary with the kiln is uncertain.

The kiln had been dug as a circular chamber, roughly 0.9 m in diameter and survived to a depth of 0.85 m. This had been lined with clay. The substantially surviving clay floor rested on a tongue pedestal, joined to the kiln wall on the western end, and also on intermittent corbels projecting radially into the kiln from the outer wall. Lying between these corbels were eleven surviving vent holes to allow the hot gases from the fire to enter the oven. There may have originally been up to 15 vents, the majority to the rear of the structure, normally the coldest area of a pottery kiln.

The flue, running to the east, had originally

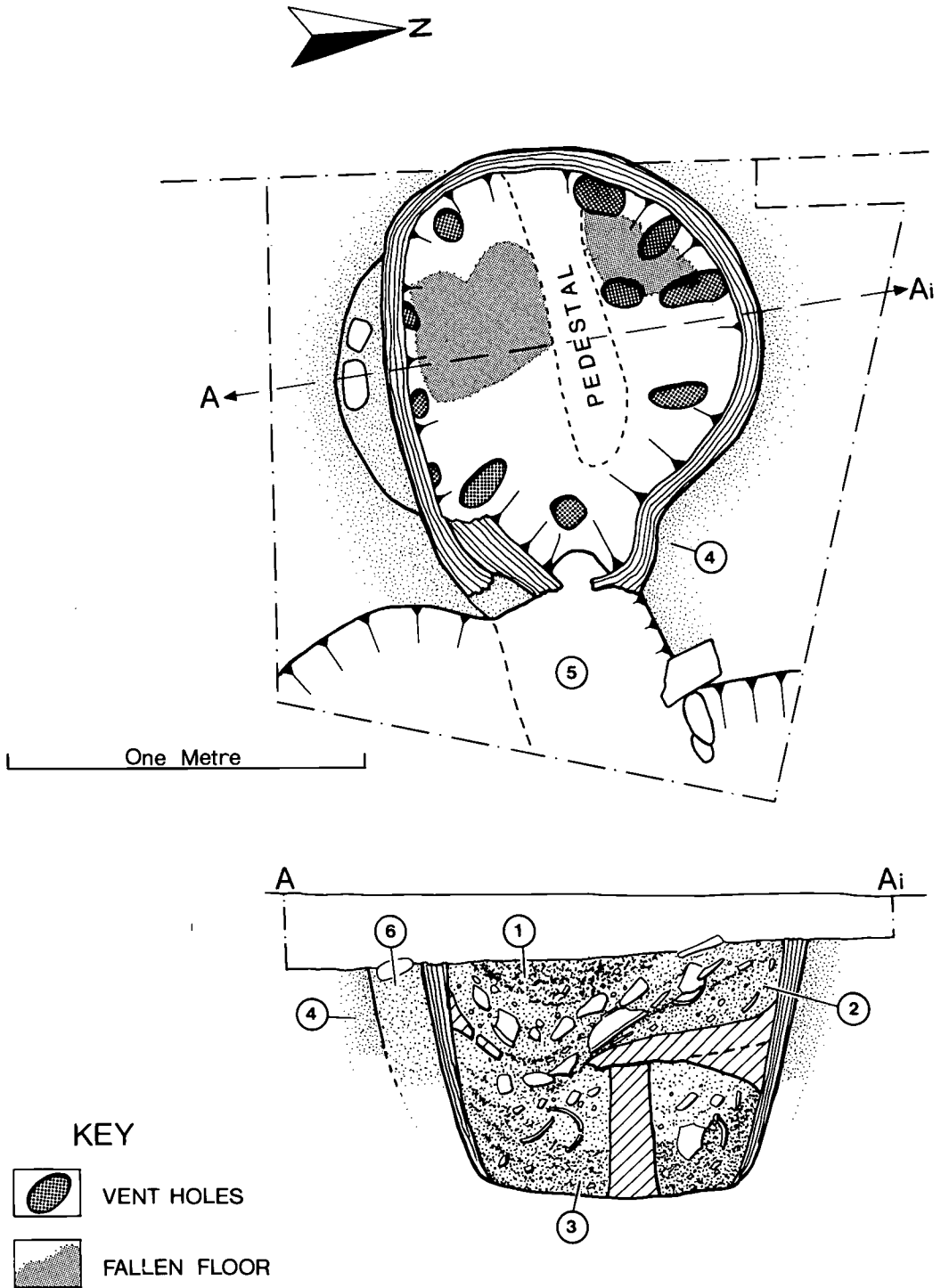


Fig 2 Fineshade: plan and section of the pottery kiln

been crudely lined with stone and led into an extensive stoking pit which ran beyond the limits of the excavation.

It is obvious that the kiln had been modified on a number of occasions. The original plan had been flattened to the southern side, possibly prior to use and the lining to this side of the flue had been drastically altered at some point during its use. It would also appear that the stokehole and flue were enlarged to the south, perhaps to facilitate drawing the kiln.

Roman pottery kilns with solid clay floors are rare in Northamptonshire and the lower Nene valley. Indeed only a single definite example has been excavated in the region at Sibson. (Swan 1984: 96) The structure of the kiln, with a tongue pedestal, solid clay floor and corbels, tends to place it on morphological grounds with the Oxfordshire pottery industry to the south, but obviously, the lack of comparisons and similarly dated kilns in the region makes meaningful association impossible.

D JACKSON AND A WILLIAMS

THE POTTERY FROM THE KILN

R Turland

The majority of the pottery was found above the surviving clay floor of the Firing Chamber. One hundred and seventy-seven sherds, weighing eleven kilogrammes, were removed from the Firing Chamber. These consisted of thirty different vessels, identified by their rims. There were another eight, represented by a group of base sherds that are not part of the above vessels.

The floor of the kiln was not removed, but where sections had collapsed a number of sherds were recovered from below this level. These are similar in fabric to the pottery found on the kiln floor and appear to be of second-century AD date. A late first to second-century AD mortarium sherd in a pink sandy fabric was also discovered in the flue.

TYPE OF VESSELS PRESENT

The majority of the sherds found in the kiln came from wide mouth jars. These consisted of two main types. Those with a central groove in the top of the rim (six vessels), and the remainder with everted or well turned out rims

(seventeen vessels). Variations in both groups have wavy, burnished decoration on their shoulders or neck.

Miscellaneous pottery.

- (24) Joining sherds from a wide mouth Bowl. (? Second-Century)
- (25) A near complete Black-Burnished Jar. (Second-Century)
- (26) Large rim sherd from a large Narrow-Necked Jar. Sandy. (Second-Century)
- (27) Rim sherd from a Colour-Coated Bowl, in a pinky-buff fabric, heavily sanded and with an Orange Coloured slip. (Second-Century)
- (28) Small smashed fragment of a Caster-Ware Bowl, with Dark-Brown slip possibly with painted decoration along the rim (? Second-Century)
- (29) Tiny piece of rim from a small bottle or flagon. (? Second-Century)
- (30) Small piece of rim from a Calcareous-Gritted Jar (? Third or Fourth-Century A D)

All the remaining base sections appear to be from Wide-Mouth Jars, and with the exception of the Calcareous-Gritted Jar and the two Colour-Coated Bowls it is likely that all of the above vessels were manufactured on the site. This may suggest there are other kilns nearby.

CLAYS

The clay used in the majority of examples appears to have had insufficient preparation after being quarried. There does however appear to be some added inclusions, and although several variations are present, it is only with the size and quantities and not the type of inclusions that these differences can be seen. Therefore it is suspected that all of these similarities stem from the same source.

LIMESTONE

These vary greatly from tiny flecks to large pieces well over 5 millimetres thick. Their inclusion has resulted in dire problems during the firing stage, many have fluctuated through the heat and large pieces of the vessels' surface has flaked away. Others display a softening of the limestone inclusions, either due to the temperature or adverse firing conditions.

IRONSTONE

Although ironstone inclusions are present as very tiny flecks, there are many that are very large, and appear as small black or red-brown stones. It is hard to believe that these were added to the clay deliberately, and it seems likely there was an Ironstone deposit in close proximity to the source of clay, and the stones may have been accidentally introduced. (Perhaps the same applies to the limestone inclusions.)

VOIDS

Most of the vessels contain voids to some degree. These can be attributed to either vegetable inclusions burning out, the expansion of trapped pockets of air, or to the weathering out of inclusions.

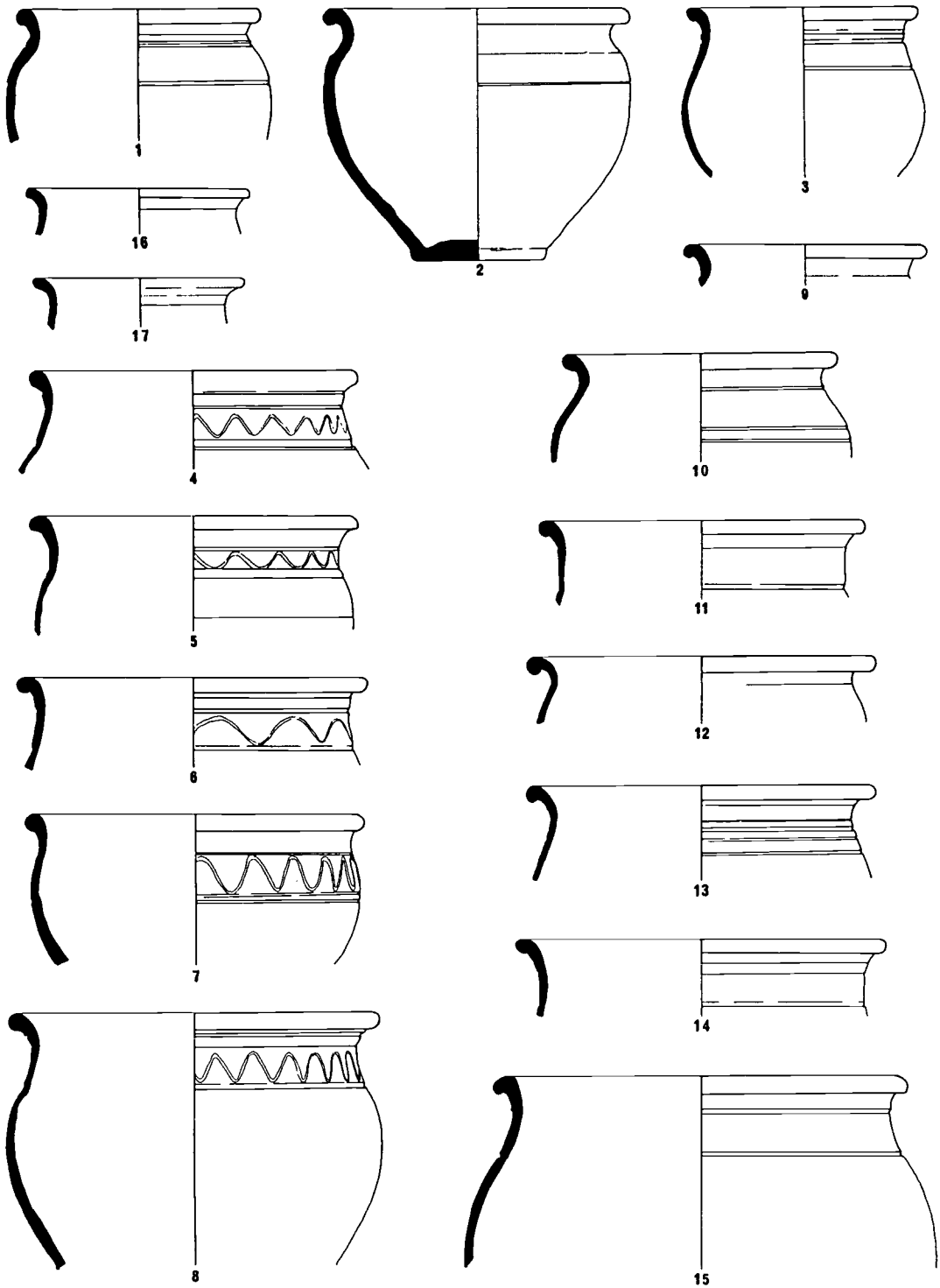


Fig 3 Fineshade: pottery from the kiln

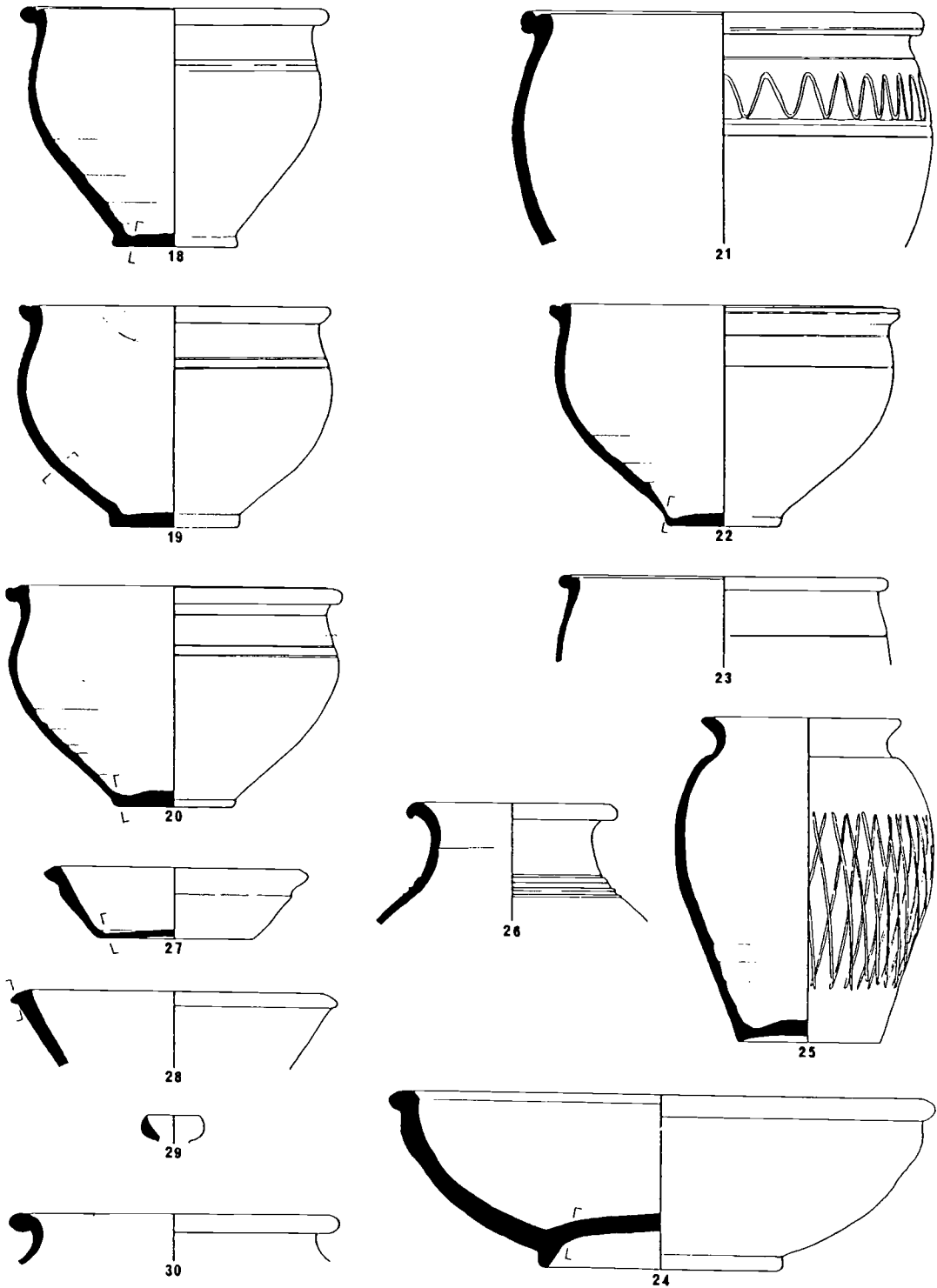


Fig 4 Fineshade: pottery from the kiln

QUARTZ

All the pottery displays some rounded translucent or white quartz grains, and although they vary in quantities from vessel to vessel, they are probably native to the area. Several have very few quartz inclusions, suggesting that these sands are added. Other tiny glints are mica, natural to the clays.

FIRING

The pottery is generally well fired. The majority of vessels show complete maturity and the final stages of firing were sealed to produce a reduced ware. The fabric is hard throughout, except for the large bowl, No 24, and with this vessel most of the surviving sherds vary in colour from orange to grey. All the rest of the group had been fired to various shades of grey.

MANUFACTURE

The whole group of pottery has been wheel thrown. Many unfortunately, appear to have been made very hurriedly or by a semi-skilled potter. Rims vary in width and thickness or shape. Some are inconsistent in shape, others are lop-sided. Bases are poor and have been damaged during careless removal from the potter's wheel, with no attempt to clean them up before firing.

Grooves are not constant and often return as a double line on the opposite side of the vessel.

Burnishing is present on most of the pottery but this also looks a little careless in its execution

Clay particles abound, adhering to the sides of several pots.

Handling the vessels prior to firing has resulted in squashed forms and dents. Of course these damages may be the result of premature collapsing of the kiln floor during the early stage of firing.

SLIPS

The surfaces of some of the pottery, appears to have some sort of slip. However, it may be wet clay slurry which could be the result of too much water on the surface of the pottery during turning.

CONCLUSIONS

It is difficult to understand why pottery so badly prepared should ever be fired. This peculiarity is not confined to Fineshade as poor quality pottery was also found in kilns excavated in the neighbouring parish of Wakerley. (Woods in Jackson and Ambrose 1978). This may suggest that there are markets for cheap inferior pottery.

Dating this pottery by form alone is difficult for pottery is manufactured for specific markets that demand the type and or size of any vessel. Also a kiln found in isolation may be part of a much larger complex, producing a wide range of ceramic products, which when viewed in

total can be seen to fit into a clearer picture and perhaps a particular period of time. It is noticeable that the common bowl forms are absent (except for two small sherds probably from an earlier firing) and the group consists principally of Wide Mouth Jars. These forms are in common use from the second century AD onward and were still in use at the end of the Roman occupation. However, the near complete lattice decorated vessel of Black Burnished form (25), is of a type that was in use during the second century AD and if not a true Black Burnished vessel, then it would be a copy of the same date.

The two Colour-Coated sherds (27 & 28) are again of a form in use as early as the Late Second-Century, although these do not share the same origins. Only one sherd of Calcite-Gritted ware, so common on the excavations at Brixworth (Woods 1972) and reminiscent of the Third/Fourth Century was found and was therefore possibly intrusive, having fallen into the kiln's cavities at any time after the kiln's obsolescence. There is no reason to suppose that this kiln is any later than the early third century AD. A tentative date is more likely to be Late Antonine to Severan.

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AN ANGLO-SAXON BROOCH FRAGMENT FROM GRAFHAM WATER, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Over many years Mr and Mrs Rainbow of the Post Office, Woodford, have monitored a variety of archaeological sites along the western edge of Grafham Reservoir. They have collected and plotted archaeological material, usually pottery fragments, dating from the Iron Age to the Saxon periods. A slow but steady

Howe M D, 1984. Three Anglo-Saxon Burials From Alwalton, Cambridgeshire, *Northamptonshire Archaeology*, 19, 53-61.

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EXCAVATIONS AT THE PREBENDAL MANOR HOUSE, NASSINGTON, PETERBOROUGH

The Nassington Project, since its inception in 1984, has amassed a considerable archive of archaeological, environmental and documentary evidence relating to the manor and its immediate surroundings. Work on the standing buildings has included detailed recording by photogrammetric methods, EDM survey and basic hand measurement.

The project also includes the renovation and conservation of the fabric, an aspect now partially supported by English Heritage. Archaeological excavation and recording has, to date, taken the lion's share of the input to the project, but now greater emphasis is being placed upon post-excavation and documentary research.

The archaeological excavations within the main hall, combined with investigations to the east of the main hall have revealed evidence (in the form of enclosure ditches), for the use of the site since the Early Iron Age.

Unstratified finds of flint work and the shattered blade of a Neolithic polished axe may reflect earlier use, unless these are connected with the introduction of river gravels for path making during the medieval period.

Actual occupation of the site, during the 9th century, is first encountered in the construction of earth-fast post structures only partially observed due to later, medieval and modern, archaeologically destructive developments. At the end of the 10th century the site was apparently re-organised, and the earlier buildings were replaced by a single-aisled timber hall of at least three bays.

It was not possible to determine the true dimensions of the aisled timber hall. Later

quarrying had truncated the northern end, and the southern end continued under the present cross-passage and was inaccessible to excavation. A 12th century reconstruction of the northern end to a more substantial timber structure is dated by co-joining fragments of a ceramic couvrefeu found in four of its post pits.

Evidence of the industrial use of the site in the late Saxon period can be seen in the large amounts of iron smelting and smithing slag that have been recovered.

In the early 13th century the timber building was replaced by a stone building. Although modified and renovated, the present manor house is essentially a medieval building.

The manor at Nassington in its structural history closely parallels that of the Raunds Furnell manor, excavated by the Northants Archaeological Unit, but Nassington's social and economic history is radically different.

Nassington was established as a Royal manor by the time of King Cnut. In the early 12th century Henry I granted the manor and some of the lands to the Bishop of Lincoln for the endowment of a prebend. A number of the prebends of Nassington became very powerful clergymen.

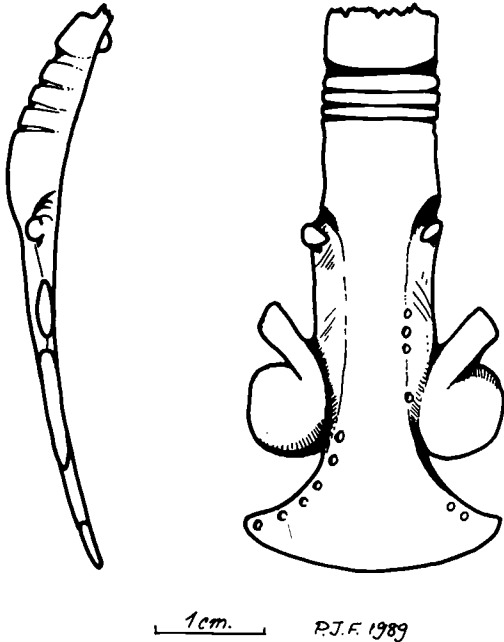
A decline in the status of the manor is documented in the letting of the property in 1535 to a farm of Thomas Beeston. In 1616 the manor went into secular ownership when Sir Anthony Mildmay bought the property and leased it out to tenant farmers. In 1969 it was separated from its agricultural land and sold as a private residence.

This much abridged history of the manor's social decline illustrates an important archaeological aspect of the site. Because the site has been continuously occupied since the late Saxon period, the excavations are producing an unbroken sequence of ceramics, faunal and environmental data. It has also highlighted the attrition through time caused by extended occupation of one period after another.

A short, illustrated interim report about the excavation of the manor house can be found in the 1989 volume of the *Archaeological Journal*, No 146. It is hoped to produce an up to date interim report for this Journal's next edition.

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erosion of the sides of the reservoir, especially following stormy weather, which can generate considerable wave action on this large body of water, has produced a constant supply of new material. At certain locations archaeological features have been revealed by the erosions. The frequent visits made by the Rainbows have been of great value in recording them before they disappear. This work has been supplemented by a certain amount of fieldwalking around the perimeter of the reservoir and it was from such an exercise that a fragment of an Anglo-Saxon brooch was recovered. Small quantities of early Anglo-Saxon pottery indicate the possibility of some form of settlement of that date in the vicinity. The brooch was found in the Spring of 1984 at GR. TL 080122315 and remained in the possession of the finders at that time.



DISCUSSION OF THE BROOCH (Martin Howe)

The object recovered once formed the foot of a Cruciform brooch snapped off at the junction of the foot and lower bow. The foot had been bent into a gentle curve along its length and is marked on its recessed reverse by three deliber-

ate punch marks. The foot is in the form of a full face animal's head with bulging eyes and a crescentic muzzle. Two outward turning lappets form the animal's flared nostrils. The top of the head is delineated by three cast raised horizontal lines.

The fragment came from a brooch of Aberg's Group IV (Aberg 1926, 42-50). This group is characterized by its varied knob types and animal heads with scroll-shaped nostrils. The forehead can have a vertical score and the temples curve gently away from two prominent eyes. The Grafham fragment easily fits into this group and can be readily paralleled throughout East Anglia. Brooches from Girton, Cambs., (Fox 1923, p.1 XXVII,2), Woodston, Cambs., (Peterborough Museum reg. no. 496), Holywell Row, Suffolk (Reichstein 1975, p.1105, 3) are closely similar to the Grafham fragment. All the complete brooches have developed head knobs and the full development of the lappets suggests that all of the above examples belong to the latter part of Aberg's typological series. In the case of the Group IV brooches this lies within the second half of the 6th century, just prior to the appearance of the Group V 'florid' cruciforms (Aberg 1926, p.48). Reichstein's more recent work assigns these developed brooches to his Nassington types and gives them a 6th century date (Reichstein 1975, p.95).

Fragments of cruciform and small-long brooches are fairly common finds from fieldwalking and chance discovery. In most cases the physical condition of the damage indicates that it took place in antiquity. Much of this destruction may well have resulted from the ploughing out of cemetery sites during the Middle Ages (Howe 1984, p.61). The damage done to the Grafham fragment seems to be of a more deliberate nature. The force necessary to bend the foot and break the bow suggests deliberate destruction. The presence of the punch marks on the reverse support this suggestion and indicate that the Grafham fragment may have been deliberately reduced to scrap metal for recasting.

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<i>Charles II</i>				
169	Crown	EMC 17	1668	1
170-79	Halfcrowns	N.2761	Uncertain (5)	
		EMC 64	1670 (1)	
		EMC 65	1671 (2)	
		EMC 76	1676 (2)	
Total Charles II				$\frac{10}{11}$

<i>James II</i>				
180	Crown	EMC 214	1686	1

SCOTLAND (3)

<i>James VI</i>				
181-83	30/-			
	(halfcrown)	Thistle		3

FORGERY (1)

*Charles I c. of N.2215 Sceptre (1)				1
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DENOMINATIONS SUMMARY

	Crown	Halfcrown	Shilling	Sixpence
Philip and Mary	—	—	2	—
Elizabeth I	—	—	12	50
James I (VI)	—	4	5	10
Charles I	—	48	29	11
Charles II	1	10	—	—
James II	1	—	—	—

WEIGHTS SUMMARY (English hammered)

	Halfcrown	Shilling	Sixpence
Philip and Mary	—	3.73g (2)	—
Elizabeth I	—	3.96g (12)	2.15g (50)
James I	8.25g (1)	3.69g (5)	1.99g (10)
Charles I	11.58g (48)	4.00g (29)	2.36g (11)
Charles II	10.82g (5)	—	—

the reign of James II (1686). The majority of the coins are very worn, indicating heavy use within the currency pool, with the exception of the later issues of Charles II and James II. However even the crown of James II has received some wear indicating the hoard may have been closed in the 1690s and comprising coinage available in the currency pool at that time.

It could be suggested from the circulated condition of all the coins and possible date of closure that the hoard was deposited in response to the great recoinage of 1696. This replaced the many clipped and badly worn hammered coins that were in circulation along

with the fresh milled coinage. The poor state of the coinage at this time is well reflected in the hoard pieces. Although unclipped hammered coins were still allowed to be used for a while provided that they were officially pierced in the centre. However the fact that the hoard contains seven milled coins, including a rare crown of James II, may suggest that the hoard is nothing more than an accumulation of savings.

Nearly all the hammered coins have been heavily clipped. The total loss in weight of these pieces is about 25%. The inclusion of foreign coins in hoards of this period is not uncommon: 30 shilling pieces of James VI of Scotland

THE ASHTON COIN HOARD

The hoard was found on 17 February 1955 by Mr E W Bonsor while removing the thatch of Brook Cottage, 85 Hartwell Road, Ashton near Roade. The find was declared Treasure Trove at a coroner's inquest held in Ashton on 21 February 1955. It was subsequently acquired

entire by Northampton Museums (P.10.1955-6).

The 184 silver coins comprising the hoard have a total face value of £12-10-6d. The face value of the hoard can be reckoned on having a purchasing power of around £700 today. The earliest coins date to the reign of Philip and Mary (1554-55) while the latest coin dates to

LIST OF THE HOARD COINS

<i>ENGLAND (180)</i>			
<i>Philip and Mary</i>			
1-2	Shillings	N.1969	(2) 2
<i>Elizabeth I</i>			
3-14	Shillings	N.1985	Plain cross (1); Cross crosslet (1); Uncertain (1)
		N.2014	⌘ (1); Tun (2); Two (2); Uncertain (5) 12
15-64	Sixpences	N.1997	Pheon 1561 (1), 1564 (2); Rose 1565 (1); Coronet 1567 (1), 1568 (2), 1569 (1), 1570 (1); Castle 1569 (1), 1570 (1), 1571 (3); Ermine 1572 (1), 1573 (2); ?Ermine 1573 (1); Acorn 1573 (3); Eglantine 1575 (1), 1577 (2), 1574-8 (1); Plain cross 1578 (1), 1579 (1), 1578-9 (1); Long cross 1580 (2), 1581 (1); Sword 1582 (1); Bell 1582 (1); Uncertain 1567 (1), 1573 (4), 1577 (1)
		N.2015	Bell 1582 (1); ⌘ 1582 (1), 1583 (2), 1583-4 (1); Scallop 1584-6 (1); Hand 1590 (2), 1591 (1); Tun 1593 (1); Key 1596 (1) Two 1602 (1); Uncertain 1594 (1) 50
			Total Elizabeth I 62
<i>James I</i>			
65	Halfcrown		Uncertain (1) 1
66-70	Shillings	N.2099	Rose (1)
		N.2100	Scallop (1); Uncertain (1)
		N.2101	Uncertain (2) 5
71-80	Sixpences	N.2074	Thistle 1603 (1); Uncertain 1604 (1)
		N.2102	Lys 1604 (1); Rose 1605 (1); Uncertain 1604 (1)
		N.2103	Scallop 1606 (1); Coronet 1608 (2); Uncertain 1607 (1), 1605-9 (1) 10
			Total James I 16
<i>Charles I</i>			
81-128	Halfcrowns	N.2201	Lys (1)
		N.2206	Plume (1)
		N.2207	Portcullis (2); Uncertain (2)
		N.2209	Bell (2); Uncertain (2)
		N.2213	(P) (1); (R) (3); Eye (9); Sun (4); Uncertain (6)
		N.2214	Star (4); Triangle in circle (4); (P) (1); Uncertain (2)
		N.2215	Sun (4) 48
129-57	Shillings	N.2221	Plume (1)
		N.2223	Portcullis (1); Uncertain (2)
		N.2225	Crown (2); Tun (1); Uncertain (1)
		N.2229	Uncertain (4)
		N.2230/1	Triangle (1)
		N.2231	(P) (1); (R) (1); Triangle in circle (3); Triangle (2); Uncertain (4)
		N.2232	Eye (1); Sun (2); Uncertain (1)
		N.2234	Uncertain (1) 29
158-68	Sixpences	N.2240	Harp (1); Uncertain (1)
		N.2241	Tun (3)
		N.2244	Anchor (1); Triangle (1); Uncertain (1)
		N.2246	Star (1); (R) (1); Eye (1) 11
			Total Charles I 88

(James I), of which there are three examples in the hoard, were allowed to circulate in England as halfcrowns following the Union and from 1604 the equivalence of Scots to English coins was at 12:1. Counterfeit coinage only forms 0.5% of the hoard being represented by a single false halfcrown of Charles I. In the recoinage of 1696 one-sixth of the called in hammered coins were found to be false. This may suggest that the hoarder tried to avoid such bad coinage.

The hoard was contained in a leather 'purse' which had been secreted between the layers of thatch. The 'purse' is made from chamoised (oil tanned) leather with a small gusset of tawed (alum tanned) sheepskin. The form of the 'purse' suggests that it originally formed the pocket of a garment, possibly trousers. A double line of stitching indicates that there was a fabric inner pocket that had been removed prior to the coins being put in. The bag had been tied closed with a linen cord.

ABBREVIATIONS

N—North, J J (1991) *English Hammered Coinage Vol. II*
EMC—Cope, G M & Rayner P A (1975) *Standard Catalogue of English Milled Coinage*.

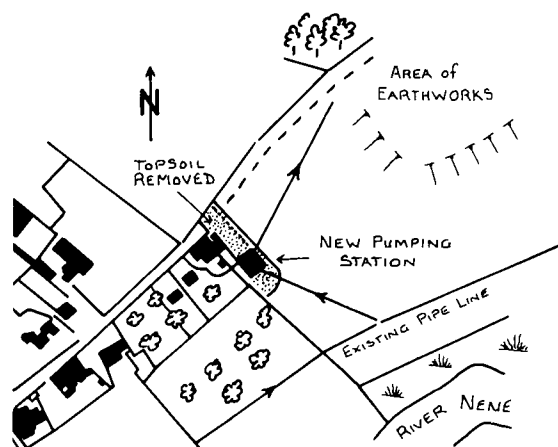
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Simon Davies, Museum of Leathercraft, Northampton, for his examination of the leather pouch.

MARK CURTEIS

A POST MEDIEVAL STRUCTURE AT WOODFORD, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

In September 1979 a pumping station and holding tank were to be constructed on the eastern edge of Woodford village as part of a new sewer expansion scheme. They were to be built on the western edge of a field containing the scheduled earthworks of what was once the large 17th century house of the St. John family (GR. SP 97237696) (RCHM 1975) and from where a quantity of Roman pottery was collected from the spoil of an electricity cable trench (GR. SP 975755) (Rainbow 1982). Construction was to entail the removal of topsoil in a strip, 10 metres wide by 40 metres



1979

WOODFORD

NOT TO SCALE.

1731

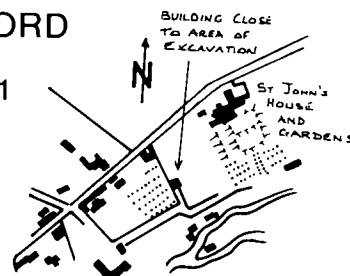


Fig 1 Woodford site location

long, beginning at the eastern end of Church Street and running south towards the river (FIG 1).

Bordering the eastern side of the scraped strip were the foundations of a wall, probably the boundary of the St. John property. At the point where the holding tank was to be excavated (GR. SP 97157695) an area of pitched iron and limestone and large river-pebble cobbles was exposed (FIG 2).

Any archaeological work had to be completed in less than a week, thereafter the contractors would commence excavation. This only allowed time to clean off the 17 metre × 14 metre area of revealed stonework and give a cursory look beyond. Unfortunately, this prevented a full picture being gained of either its extent or function.

THE STRUCTURE (FIG 2)

Between the contractor's spoil heaps, orientated

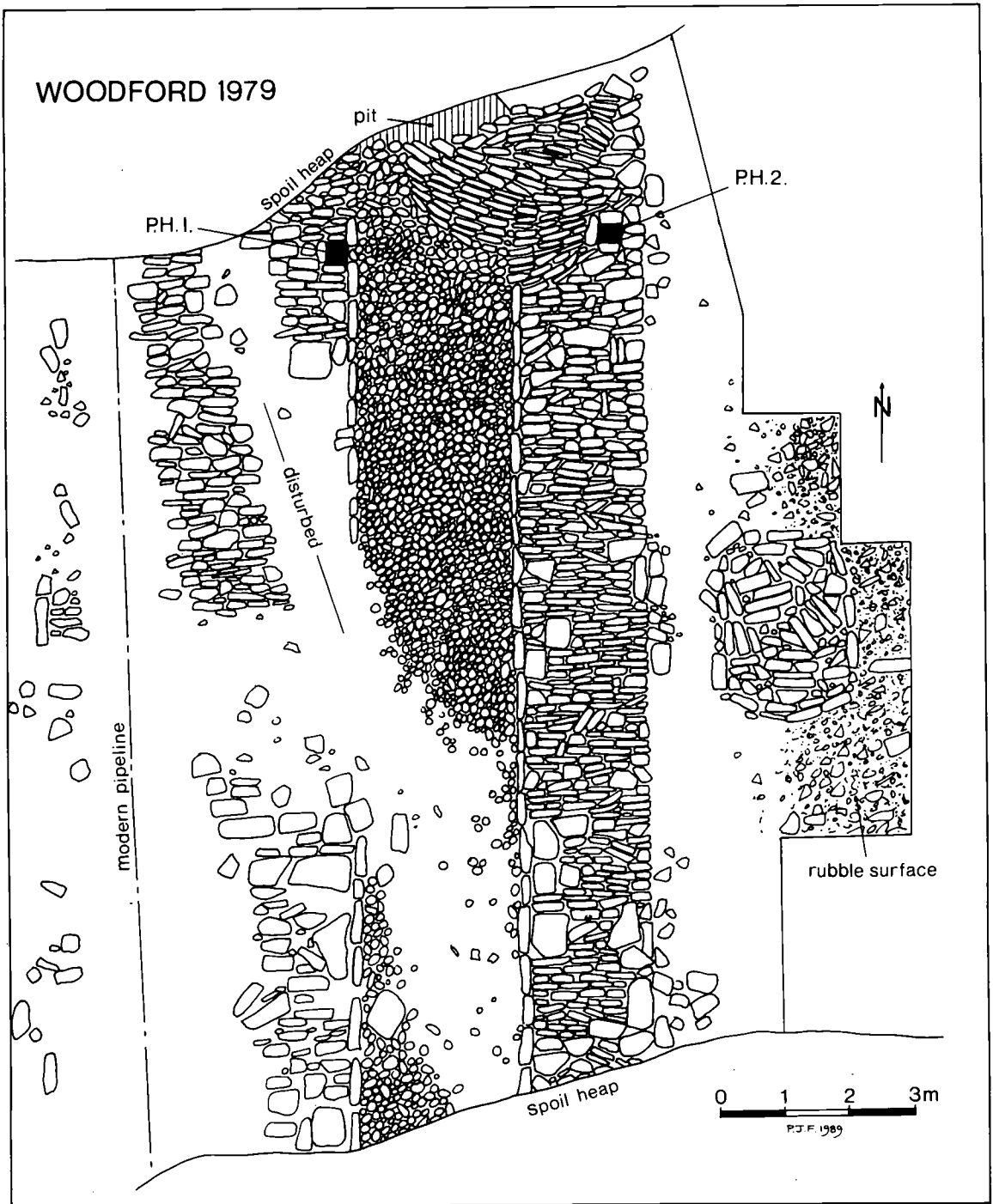


Fig 2 Woodford site plan

north to south and sloping gently down to the south, were two bands of pitched iron and limestones flanking a 2.5 metre band of large river-pebble cobbles. The east and west edges of the cobbles were contained within a line of curb stones. The western strip of pitched stone was very disturbed, with only 3.5 metres of its width being proven and its full extent to the west not defined at all. In contrast the eastern edge of pitched stone survived well and was a proven 2 metres in width at its eastern, outer edge, finishing in a neat, uncurbed line.

All of this exposed stonework was worn and smooth suggesting that it represented a floor area. On its surface and pressed between the stones was a thin layer, possibly demolition related, of charcoal-impregnated plaster or mortar.

At the northern edge of the structure the stonework was disorganised by a swirl of pitched stones. This appeared to be the limit of the floor, but may represent the beginning of another badly disturbed area. There were also two post settings, PH1 and PH2, which may represent evidence for some sort of superstructure or roofing. Underlying this area was a 3 metre-wide pit causing the floor to subside into a hollow. This was sectioned, but not bottomed. The southern limit of the floor was not seen, being covered by the contractor's spoil heap.

To the east of the flooring was a rough yard surface, not very compacted but quite densely packed with small, mostly limestone, rubble. Excavation of a series of small holes showed that this extended to the boundary wall. Between the floor and the yard was a strip largely devoid of any related material which cleaned straight down to the clay subsoil. The clear horizontal divisions between floor, subsoil strip and yard may suggest a protected area, possibly some form of timber wall and/or banked soil. The 2 x 3 metre area of pitched limestone in this area, to the side of the yard, may have been the setting for some form of tank. Its exposed surface was not worn and smooth like the flooring.

DATING

The underlying pit produced a sherd of medieval, possibly 14th century, pottery at a depth of

40 centimetres. From under the pitched stone floor at the northern end a fragment of brown salt-glazed earthenware was recovered. From the fill of the post setting PH2 came fragments of glass, window lead lighting and sherds of brown salt-glazed earthenware.

No buildings in this position are shown on the early Ordnance Survey maps, but on the William Sutton map of 1731, kept in the village church, structures are shown on the same alignment, although further to the south of the excavated area (FIG 1). The materials found would be in keeping with such a date.

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PATRICK FOSTER and MOLLY RAINBOW

EVALUATIONS AND EXCAVATIONS IN NORTHAMPTONSHIRE BY THE OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT, 1989-1990

INTRODUCTION

The Oxford Archaeological Unit was involved in two projects in Northamptonshire during 1989-1990. Both were sponsored by the developer, ARC Ltd, in advance of gravel extraction in the Nene valley. The first project, at Ditchford, consisted of an evaluation undertaken in 1989 (Moore 1989a); this has been followed up by a watching brief during 1991 and 1992. The second project, at Stanwick, also began with an evaluation in 1989 (Moore 1989b), but this was followed by several major excavations in 1989 and 1990. A watching brief has also been maintained at this site during 1991 and 1992.

EVALUATION AT DITCHFORD

A linear earthwork was examined when ARC Ltd proposed to extend their existing pit at Ditchford, Wellingborough (SU 917673). The site lies to the N of the Roman town at Irchester. The earthwork, which is aligned on the town, consists of a broad, flat bank. It is not

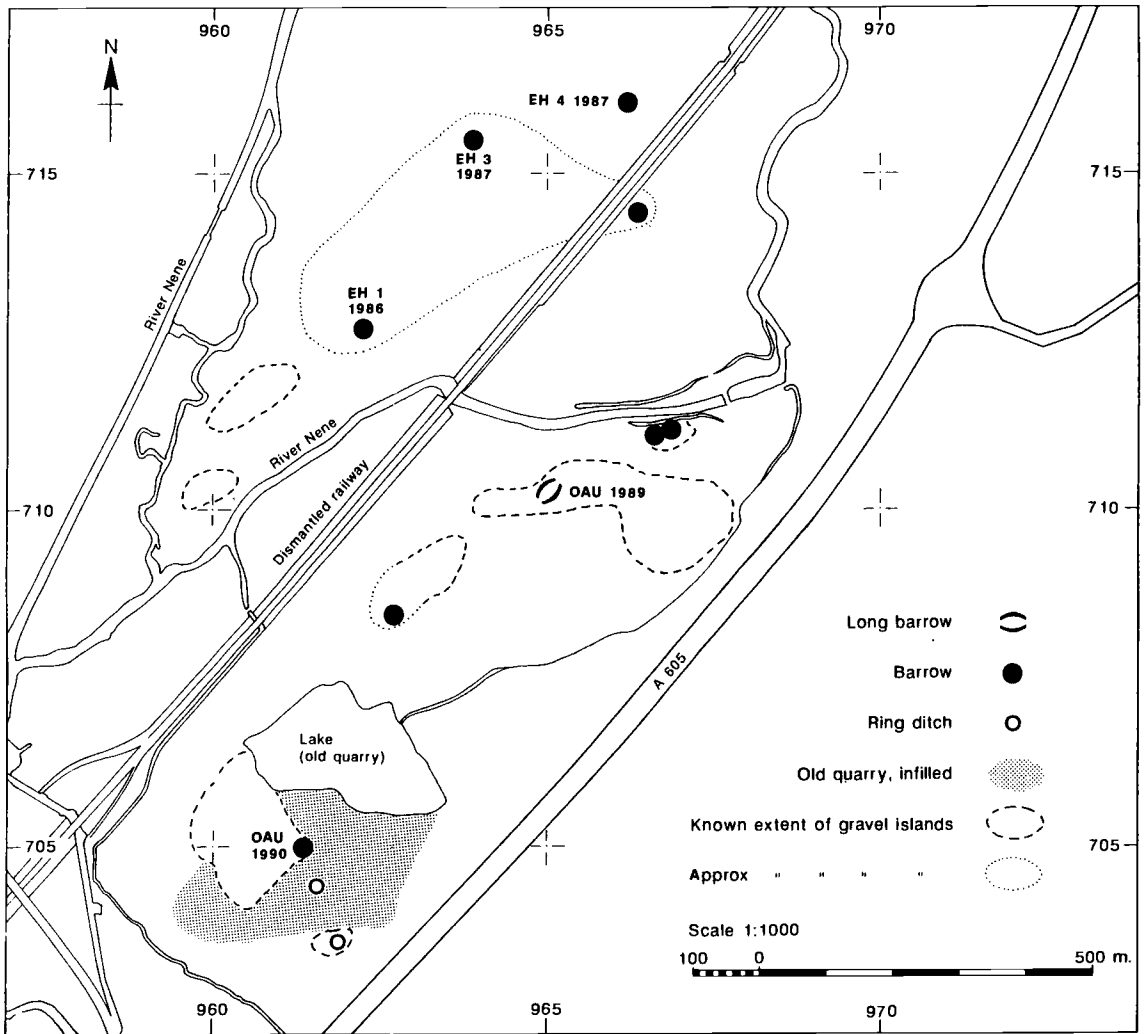


Fig 1 Prehistoric ritual monuments at Stanwick, Northants

continuous, as it fords several palaeochannels (old stream courses).

Six trenches were excavated. These showed that the earthwork was an artificial causeway approximately 6 m wide, flanked by ditches. The latter probably acted as quarries to provide the gravel with which the causeway was metalled, but thereafter the ditches served to control drainage. The causeway crossed infilled palaeochannels at several points, and river cobbles had been used for consolidation at these crossings; the metalling was also different, consisting of limestone fragments.

The causeway seems to be of Roman date. It is oriented on the Roman town at Irchester, and the constructional method seems to be typically Roman. It is likely, however, that the causeway was still used in the late Saxon/early medieval period. A seed of *Bupleurum rotundifolium* was found in one of the palaeochannels (M Robinson pers comm); this plant has not been found in deposits pre-dating the eighth century AD in England.

ARC Ltd have agreed to preserve the causeway within the quarry. The palaeochannels are being studied during the watching brief.

EVALUATION AND EXCAVATIONS AT REDLANDS FARM, STANWICK

In 1989, the Oxford Archaeological Unit evaluated c. 86 ha of arable land at Redlands Farm (centred on SU 964708), SW of Stanwick village. Most of the land lies in Raunds parish, but a small area on the W of the site lies in Irthlingborough parish. The site had already been fieldwalked by the Northamptonshire Archaeological Unit. This work identified several areas of late Iron Age and/or Roman settlement. Furthermore at least one ring ditch had been identified on aerial photographs. The work of English Heritage at Stanwick (Neal 1989) and Irthlingborough (Halpin 1987), and of the Northamptonshire Archaeological Unit at West Cotton (Windell et al 1990), had already demonstrated the high archaeological potential of the area.

Ninety trenches of various lengths were excavated. Particular attention was paid to known gravel islands as these were favoured locations for prehistoric ritual monuments. The evaluation identified at least five such monuments, a possible Bronze Age field system, and five areas of late Iron Age/Roman settlement. Most of these sites have been preserved within the quarry. In three cases, however, preservation was impossible and excavation therefore took place on a Neolithic long barrow (1989), a Bronze Age round barrow (1990), and a Romano-British settlement (1990).

THE LONG BARROW

The long barrow at Redlands Farm (SU 965710) consisted of two large quarry ditches flanking a mound 50 m long and approximately 10 m wide, occupying a low gravel island in the floodplain; plough-damage had reduced the mound to a maximum height of 0.6 m at its NE end. Orientation was NE-SW, and the mound construction was of turf and tipped gravel. There was no evidence for separation of the mound into bays. The mound was, however, constrained on at least three sides by a timber palisade. Plough damage meant that the palisade could not be traced around the SW end of the barrow. Thin timber planks were preserved in waterlogged deposits in the quarry ditches; the planking probably derived from the palisade. Two other features were contemporary

with the mound: a stone cist at the SW end, and a central pit which might also have been a cist but which had been deliberately destroyed. Each feature contained two fragments of bone and no other finds.

Study of environmental samples from the barrow ditches suggests that the monument lay in open country (Moore and Jackson 1990). This may represent locally-cleared ground rather than widespread clearance, as evidence elsewhere points to a wooded environment (Robinson 1990).

During the early Bronze Age ritual activity continued on and around the long barrow. Three Beaker inhumations were inserted into the mound along its central axis, while 16 cremations were located in front of the NE end (Moore and Jackson 1990). Furthermore ten round barrows/ring-ditches were loosely clustered around the long barrow.

THE ROUND BARROW

The round barrow at Redlands Farm (SU 959705) was defined by two concentric ring-ditches, 22 m and 32 m in diameter; plough-damage had removed any stratigraphic relationship between the ditches. Four graves, containing five inhumations, were sited within the circuit of the inner ditch. One of these—not central within the barrow—was accompanied by a Beaker, but the burials were otherwise devoid of grave-goods. Worked flints were notable by their absence, although numerous flakes were recovered from features and layers associated with the villa complex described below.

THE ROMAN VILLA AND SETTLEMENT

An area of approximately 0.6 ha was excavated where both the fieldwalking and trial trenching had pointed to intense activity in the Roman period (SU 959705). Phase I refers to a possible Bronze Age field system. The first Roman phase (IIa) consisted of a mill, 14 m long (E-W) and 6.7 wide, and two rectangular barns set within a system of ditched enclosures and field boundaries; the latter appear to originate in the late Iron Age, although no structures of this date could be positively identified. The mill lay on a low sand island in the floodplain, and was fed

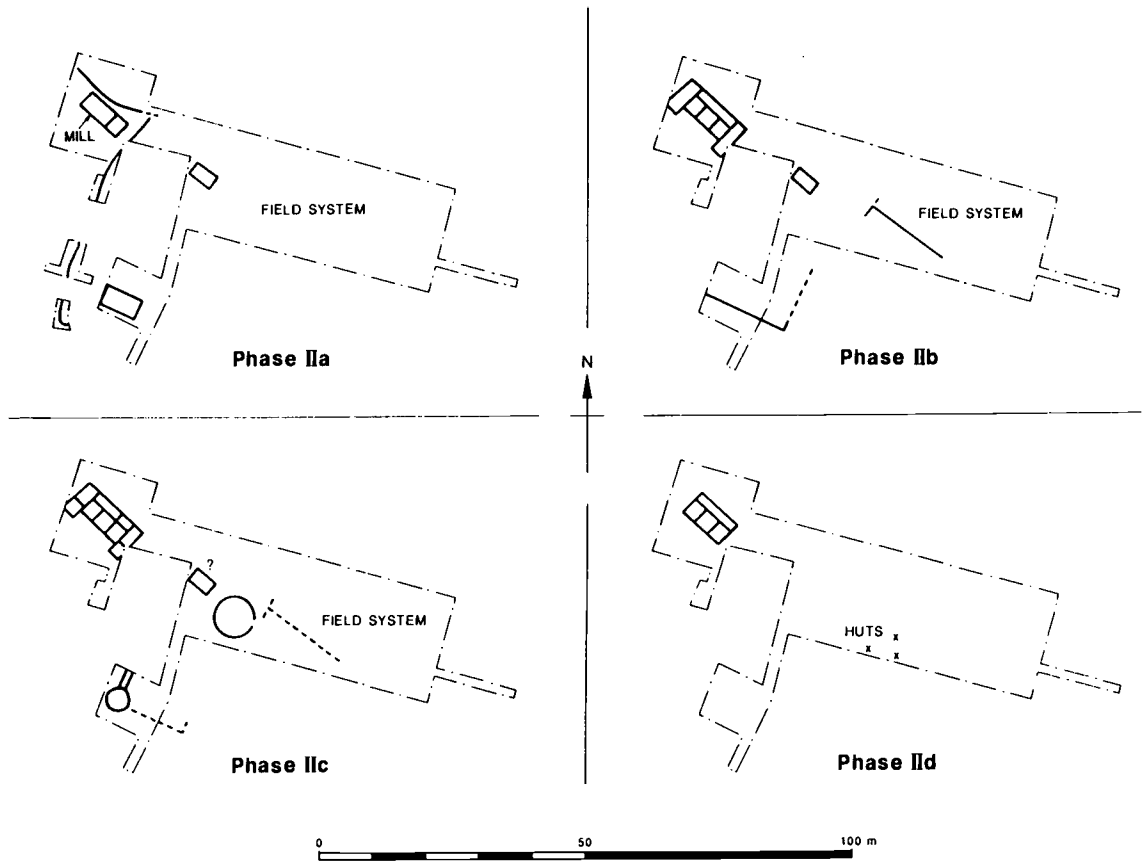


Fig 2 The Romano-British sequence, Redlands Farm, Stanwick, Northants

from the S and W by two leats, each of which drained a subsidiary palaeochannel of the Nene. The E end of the mill building was cellared, and a barn door in its S wall opened out onto the surrounding ground level.

Phase IIb was characterised by the conversion of the mill into a winged villa with rear corridor, S-facing facade, an hypocaust with painted wall plaster, and a tessellated pavement. The building was now *c.* 22 m long (E-W), while the new wings were each 12.8 m long (N-S). The conversion necessitated the destruction of the W leat and the N end of the S one, although the remainder of the latter may have been retained as a landscape feature. A marked dip in the ground to the S of the villa was noted, and it is possible that the leat was

diverted into this to create an artificial pond; this could not be confirmed, however, as work on this part of the site was curtailed following agreement on its preservation.

The field systems continued in use, but were now defined by stone walls, at least one of which merged into a boundary wall around the villa and its associated buildings. One of the Phase IIa barns probably remained in use.

Phase IIc saw further development of the villa, with the provision of a verandah/corridor to the facade, division of the wing rooms, insertion of a mosaic pavement, and the enclosure of the hypocaust furnace. Elsewhere two stone-built round-houses superseded the Phase IIb boundary wall. The field systems continued in use.

The villa declined in Phase II_d. The wings were abandoned and demolished. The N gable-ends of each wing were found where they had been pulled over; that of the E wing would have stood at least 6 m high, suggesting that this part of the building had an upper storey. This may have been a later addition, perhaps in Phase II_c, as the character of the wall fabric changed from herringbone masonry at its base to *tabula* courses in the upper storey. Certainly the demolition appears to have been caused by the obvious structural defect of building the wing over the old mill-lead; the latter had only been infilled with limestone fragments and chippings. A substantial buttress had been added to the E face of the NE corner of the wing in an apparently unsuccessful attempt to shore up the structure.

Elsewhere in the building, the hypocaust was disused and the tessellated pavement was partially removed and re-used to seal a group of three infant burials in the abandoned W wing. A further four burials, of three infants and an adult, were found in and around the villa; two infant burials were also located in the field system. Three sunken-featured huts were built to the E of the villa, probably at the same time as the latter was declining. Thus a small bi-focal settlement was formed, as occurred at West Cotton (Windell et al 1990: 16); the siting of both complexes astride river channels is interesting, but it is not clear that the Redlands Farm channel would have been flowing at this time. Limestone slabs had been laid across the channel during the Roman period, presumably because the ground was still damp and subject to occasional flooding. At the very least, however, the course of the channel would still have been obvious as a depression in the landscape.

Following the final abandonment of the villa, it is notable that little robbing of walls occurred. Most of the rooms were covered with thick layers of rubble, most of which were clearly derived from the gradual decay of the remaining structure. Thereafter over-bank flooding began to cover the ruinous structure with alluvium. At least two separate, major episodes of deposition were evident; the earlier of these occurred after the sixth century AD, and extended 50 m E of the villa. Elsewhere

alluviation appears to have become widespread in the late Saxon period and to have continued into the medieval period (Campbell 1990).

After the initial alluviation, a ridge-and-furrow field system was established; the early Saxon huts had been abandoned, as two of the furrows cut into their back-filled hollows. Thus the ridge-and-furrow was probably established in the mid-late Saxon period. Its physical extent is significant, as the system terminated to the W at a ditch and hedgeline. This coincided with the maximum extent of the first alluviation. Only the larger round-house lay to the east of this boundary, and this was the only Roman structure to suffer medieval and later damage.

In the medieval period, the ridge-and-furrow was sealed by a thick deposit of alluvium, as at West Cotton (Windell et al 1990: 41). This must have been caused by massive and persistent over-bank flooding. Thereafter the fields were left to pasture. The land was only brought back into cultivation during the nineteenth century, when field drains were cut through the alluvium along the length of each furrow.

ARC Ltd generously agreed to preserve the villa site while the excavations were still in progress. The site, therefore, was covered over. It is hoped that the excavation can be completed in the future.

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GRAHAM D KEEVIL
OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY UNIT

RAUNDS AREA PROJECT 1987-1990

Irthlingborough (SP 965715 and SP 973723) Excavations of the Neolithic and Bronze Age landscape (Halpin 1987) in advance of gravel extraction continued during the summers of 1987 and 1988 under the direction of Claire Halpin, Central Archaeology Service, English Heritage.

These focused on (FIG 1):

- 1) known upstanding barrows
- 2) the detection and examination of previously unknown structures and deposits by the intensive sampling of the threatened area.

EXCAVATIONS OF BARROWS

Barrow 3 had been constructed in several phases. The substantial mound, which overlay a series of concentric rings and arcs of post-holes, was encircled by a small, irregular and recut ditch *c.* 35 m in diameter. The large central pit contained no human remains. Two unaccompanied cremations were found in pits probably associated with the later phases of mound construction and use.

Barrow 4 had been built in two phases. A small mound of topsoil was added to by upcast from an encircling ditch (diameter *c.* 27 m) with two opposed causeways. An unaccompanied cremation was found within the mound.

EXCAVATIONS OF OTHER STRUCTURES

Despite the very substantial programme of trial trenching, surprisingly limited evidence of activity was found between the mounds. Numerous tree-holes may relate to periods of deliberate clearance which C14 dates indicate may have occurred from the beginning of the fourth millennium BC. Sections cut across palaeochannels provided important environmental sequences.

Two concentric ditches (diameters *c.* 19 m, 22 m) provided the upcast for the mound of

Barrow 5, which overlay an earlier post-circle. The central pit contained a Beaker and five barbed and tanged arrowheads, but no skeletal remains were present. Four cremation deposits were recovered from the mound. In the Roman period the barrow had been reverred as a temenos.

A Neolithic causewayed ring-ditch (diameter *c.* 21 m) was excavated at the south end of the alignment of monuments defined by the Long Enclosure at West Cotton (Windell 1987). The ditch had been recut, there was no evidence of a bank, and placed deposits of antler were found in the southern terminus of the ditch.

Four trenches contained lengths of parallel ditches, spaced 5-9 m apart, which appear to represent fragments of the larger system of fields and droves which stratigraphically pre-date the Iron Age settlement beneath Stanwick villa. These may either have been contemporary with the LNEBA ceremonial monuments or represent a later re-organisation of land use.

Funds were provided by English Heritage with generous additional monies and support from Amey Roadstone Corporation. In conjunction with the prehistoric evidence from the recent excavations at West.

JON HUMBLE

Central Archaeology Service, English Heritage

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EXCAVATIONS AT STANWICK 1984-91

The final season of excavations at Stanwick (SP 97207160) continued with work on the main villa and associated structures to the north and east.

THE VILLA

Excavations in 1990 demonstrated that the

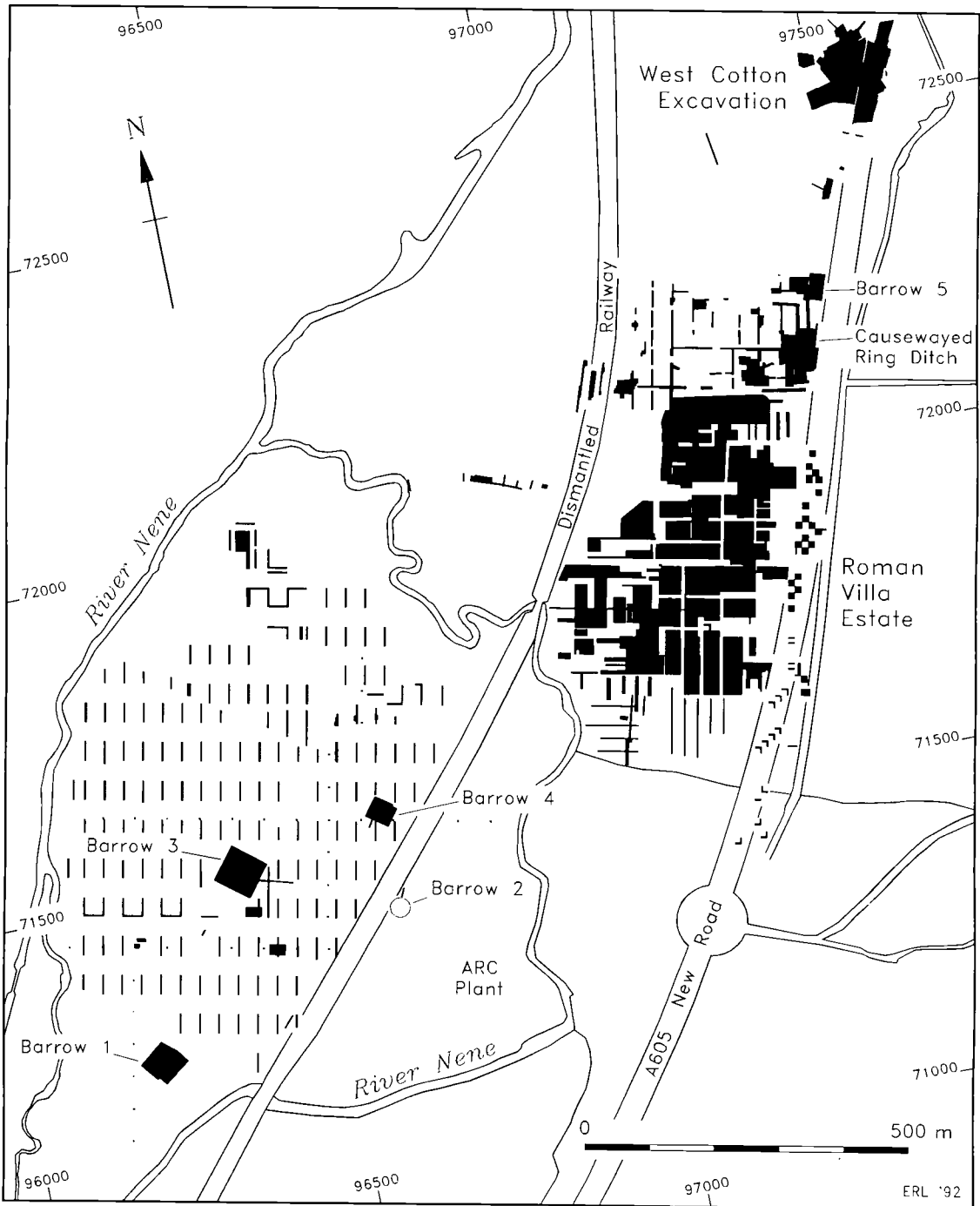


Fig 1 Prehistoric monuments at Raunds

precursor to the villa was a large aisled hall which was adapted into a villa in the fourth century by the addition of a pair of flanking pavilions with fronting wing doors and a verandah. The north pavilion had a bath suite. The south pavilion featured a channelled hypocaust with its flue constructed of fragments of sculptured stone and architectural mouldings now believed to have been stripped from a series of elaborate funerary monuments. From the width of the footings of these extensions, it is possible to suggest that the building in this period was of two storeys. Excavations beneath the mosaics of the villa in 1991 established that this period was not earlier than AD 370.

The earlier sequence of this complex is now better understood. It began in the latter part of the second century in the form of a circular timber hut which was later rebuilt to the same plan in stone. The aisled hall, which had an apse at its west end, replaced this circular hut. The hall is probably of late second or early third century date and is associated with two rectangular buildings believed to have been granaries.

To the north was an associated complex comprising a series of yards with circular houses, the one closest to the villa being about 12 metres in diameter. Inside, it had four post pads and evidence for a series of radial partitions. The most interesting feature however, was an oval-shaped path of pitched stones with a circular distribution of wear marks possibly caused by a donkey powering a mill.

SUMMARY

Now that excavations are complete it is possible to provide a broad overall picture of the site. Apart from a pattern of ancient fields believed to have been set out in the Bronze Age, the earliest occupation began in the late Iron Age with an extensive settlement covering about 4 hectares. It comprised a focus of circular timber houses with shallow ring-ditches, with a concentration of four post timber granaries to the north. Skirting the east side of the settlement was a track and on the east side of the track was a large oval ditched enclosure, possibly used for rounding-up stock as it appears not to have had a gate. The track proceeds

southwards and probably linked with another smaller settlement excavated by Jackson beneath the present silt lagoon for the ARC quarry and located originally on the south bank of a tributary (SP 96897126).

In the early Roman period the focus of the settlement appears to have continued on the old site but in the early second century a pattern of regular fields was laid out cutting existing huts. This period saw the introduction of stone footings but a retention of the earlier house types. Towards the end of the second century a series of isolated stone cottages was constructed and related to a more formal Romanised building identified provisionally as the farm bailiff's office. In plan it resembles a *Principia* with two rooms opposite an entrance on the other side of the square yard. In this period there is no evidence for a 'Romanised' villa.

By the later fourth century, broadly contemporary with the construction of the villa in about AD 370, the site had developed into a series of small-holdings, each with a yard and a well. Circular houses continued in fashion although some enclosures saw both circular and rectangular houses occupied at the same time. The status of their occupants is uncertain; the question of whether they were tenants paying rent or tithe remains unanswered. The juxtaposition of the villa and village may suggest that the villagers had become serfs. Occupation continued into the early fifth century.

DAVID S NEAL