

Notes

DOCUMENTARY SOURCES FOR THE COURSE OF THE MEDIEVAL TOWN WALL, NORTHAMPTON

The course of Northampton's medieval defences has been investigated by analysis of contemporary documents (eg. Brown 1915, Foard 1995) or by archaeological excavation (eg. Williams 1982, Chapman 1999). The purpose of this paper is to add another dimension to the debate: post-medieval property boundaries. The approach is to look at the space the defences occupied in terms of internal and external property descriptions. It is important to provide as much information as possible on the likely location of the defences to make the optimum use of opportunities for excavation through development. From the evidence of past excavations it appears only a narrow band of possibilities is being considered, yet the results are ambiguous. This research demonstrates the need for a wider search pattern when development opportunities arise, particularly as the research differs greatly from the locations suggested in previous archaeological papers.

After demolition in 1662, what remained of the defences constituted town waste, under the terms of the *Liber Custumarum* LXX, Statutes and Ordinances made anew for waste spots or places (Markham 1898). For example in 1669 Assembly Book II (NRO Boro Rec. 3/2 p212) records 'voyd or wast ground' near the east gate to be leased or sold. However it is often difficult to distinguish these acquisitions from adjacent town property. The new sources considered are, firstly the continuity of defence related land mentioned in the Hundred Rolls as town property. Secondly the Inclosure Award of 1779, and several pre-Inclosure properties, provide an indication of external boundaries. Finally deeds for properties within the wall which make reference to the defences are considered, and any inferential evidence, such as property extents that might once have been delimited by the wall, or an intra-mural road. These can be compared with accounts of the wall circuit by Hooper, 1645, Bridges 1722, and Pretty c1849.

Most of the obstructions described in the Hundred

Roll can be identified in a terrier of town property dated 1586, suggesting that the town adopted the affected areas in response to the assize. The most notable of those relating to the town defences are 'Gyselgot' or 'Gyles Gutter' near the north gate, the town ditch from West Gate to near Marvell's Mills, and the wall between Derngate and Abington Street. Additional clues are provided in the Town Rentals of c1300 and 1503-4. The Inclosure Award in 1779, and the plans produced in association, should describe land outside the medieval defences, although it might include civil war outworks. A small number of property deeds relate to land in proximity to the wall, some of which make direct reference to the wall, others providing inferential evidence.

Hooper's survey has been transcribed and discussed by Foard 1995. It comes from a small clasped pocket book used as an account book by John Hooper, who also records surveys carried out for the military authorities (Notts Archive Office M381a f29 & 77-74). The survey of Northampton dated 9th October 1645, gives the circuit of defences from the castle clockwise to a point near Cow Lane on the south-east side as 9,728 feet. It does not describe the remaining defences on the south. At the back of the account book, written from the back, with the book upside down, are the individual distances between named defensive features measured in roods. The section from the castle to the North Gate is short of expectations by between 10 and 20 percent, depending on interpretation of distances across mounts and bastions. Foard 1995 resolves this by re-aligning the Civil War defences south of St Andrew's Priory, along Grafton Street and Lower Harding Street, and taking the dimensions of the castle forework into account. The error seems to be on the west side, because if Emy Lane is accurately located below, the circuit from there to North Gate corresponds. Hooper altered his first measurement from 20 to 25 roods, and may have been aware of the error.

Bridges account is from his manuscript history (Bodleian Library Top. Northants), which contains an entry dated 9 May 1722 describing the town defences. Bridges describes the circuit from the south gate anti-clockwise to the castle, so again does

not describe part of the defences on the south-west. The most important evidence in Bridges is confirmation that St Andrew's Priory was included in the medieval circuit, and that the wall ran along the south side of St George's Street (St Andrew's Lane). Pretty is the author of the historical notes in Wetton 1849, and appears to have taken his material from first hand observation, newspaper archives, to which he had access, and contemporary writings. Most importantly Pretty describes the defences on St George's Street and near Cow Meadow. He also attests that until very recently, at his time of writing, the course of the fortifications was traceable across Dergate: *'towards the east end of St Giles's Church up to St Edmond's-end, along the mounts, past St Sepulchre's, along the south side of St George's Street, by the Barrack-Wall, down to St Andrew's Mill, where the only part of the fosse in its original state now remains'*. RCHM 1985 says Wetton should be treated with the utmost caution, while Shaw (1996) says Wetton is *'notoriously unreliable'*.

The evidence provided by the three new sources, together with those of Hooper, Bridges and Pretty, will be assessed in a clockwise direction from the castle northwards and round to the west gate. Each stage is prefaced by an outline of the location of the defences derived from this research, and any differences from recent archaeological assessments, notably RCHM 1985 and Foard 1995. The evidence will be considered under the headings of clues from the Hundred Rolls, external and internal boundaries, evidence from more recent times, and any excavation evidence bearing on the research.

THE EVIDENCE IN THE WEST SIDE

The research suggests any defences were close to the floodplain, and included St Andrew's Priory, passing along the east side of St Andrew's Road, whereas RCHM 1985 placed the defences west of St Andrew's Road, within Miller's Meadow. Foard 1995 suggested that the Civil War defences excluded St Andrew's Priory, following Lower Harding Street as far as Grafton Street. Neither course appears to have been tested by excavation, although one excavation east of St Andrew's Street in 1980, just south of the junction with Grafton Street, was discounted as defences and attributed to monastic ponds or ditches instead (Williams & Shaw 1980, RCHM 1985).

The Hundred Roll mentions two tracts of ground enclosed by St Andrew's Priory: an area 300 by 200 feet around Nonnewell, and a garden and meadows under the wall from 'Eged' (Giles?) holme to St Andrew's Mill. This alone would suggest that the medieval wall extended this far north (see below). Thompson (1909) identified Nonnewell as the spring in Hovel Close, near the junction of Spring Lane and Monkspond Street; the land to north was Priory land at the dissolution.

On the west side of the town no deeds have been found which make reference to defences, other than the outworks north of the castle. In 1637-45 property within the town is described as abutting on the Beast Market on the east, and two lanes down to the river north and south, and cabbage ground on west of same (NRO NPL 2711). The two roads were Bath Street and Scarletwell Street. Perhaps the defences were west of the cabbage ground. Other mid to late 17th century documents in this locality show a similar lack of reference to defences (eg NRO Boro Rec Sec II Pt II 107, Scarletwell 1658; YZ 5111 Harte Close 1680). There is, however, 'a boggy and unprofitable piece of ground being part of the waste' just north of Scarlet Well, in 1736 (Assembly Book II p.520; NRO Boro Rec. 3/2), which might indicate waste on the site of the defences.

St Andrew's Priory is described in various documents as being within the walls (eg. NRO Box X8521). I have already highlighted the Hundred Roll evidence that the town wall extended up to St Andrew's Mill. Bridges in 1722 (p23) describes the priory as within and adjoining to the town wall, and St Andrew's Lane (St George's Street) without. Both Speed 1610 and Pierce 1632 clearly show the North Gate aligned to St George's Street. One of Hooper's landmarks is 'the curtain next matlocks'. Matlock's Holmes, in three parts, are referred to in an abstract of title to the St Andrew's Priory lands in 1780 (NRO Box X8521). This appears to correspond to the present Miller's Meadow Park.

Millers Meadow was purchased by the Borough around 1874, converted to a public park in 1882 and in 1884 they exchanged part east of St Andrew's Road to complete the length to the outfall of the mill. The meadow extended up to 67 feet east of St Andrew's Street (plan accompanying NRO NPL 543). An acre at the south end was sold for the Slipper Baths and public convenience, south of Spencer Bridge Road, in 1925 (Reg. of Corporate

Property). It had been called Gates' Meadow in the 18th and 19th century, after a previous owner, William Gates and his heir Mary Gates (NRO ZB 91/68). It is quite likely that this is synonymous with Matlock's Meadow, which must in turn be the meadow from Eged's holme to St Andrew's Mill in the Hundred Roll. The Borough also straightened the river, removing a meander at the Spencer Bridge end, early in the 20th century.

In 1994 the writer discovered some zigzag ditch and bank features on the edge of Millers Meadow, thought at the time to be garden features, or shelter for trees in an orchard. The report is in the SMR (1160/362/4). These are close to St Andrew's Road and extend along most of the lower half of Millers Meadow. Although slight and narrow, one other possibility is outworks associated with Civil War defences. The excavation further south (Williams & Shaw 1980) should be re-assessed, as it appears more likely the defences lay east of St Andrew's Road.

THE EVIDENCE FROM THE NENE TOWARDS THE NORTH GATE

The research suggests the defences passed south of the present Mill Lane, and close to the south side of St Georges Street. RCHM 1985 show the wall on the north side of Mill Lane, strictly in Kingsthorpe Parish and on the north side of St George's Street. Several excavations described below, failed to find defences there. Foard 1995 proposed that the Civil War defences excluded St Andrew's Priory and ran along the north side of Grafton Street. Shaw 1995 took this a stage further, placing the medieval walls under Grafton Street. A glance at the Hundred Rolls which suggest the medieval wall extended as far as St Andrew's Mill might have avoided this sort of speculation. The research considers a reference in the Hundred Rolls to 'Gyselgot'; the bounds of North Gate Close; whether the Priory included all the land between St George's Street and Grafton Street as far as the North Gate, and the evidence of Hooper, Bridges and Pretty. There is clear evidence in Bridges 1722 and Wetton 1849, which places the wall on the south side of St George's Street.

In the Hundred Roll the Priory is accused of enclosing a street beneath the wall within the town, called Gyselgot. In the terrier of town lands in 1586 is a close of one and a half acres called Gyles Gutter,

described in the entry following one for a garden at the north gate, in the north quarter. The location is confirmed in 1778 in a register of leases (NRO Boro. Rec. 9/2 p48), where a narrow foot passage, 'Gil-gutter Lane' appears to be the modern Grafton Street. Grafton Street was not extended west of Harding Street until about 1855, and then only as a narrow lane for access (NRO X 8519 Bundle 3). The Borough leased a one-and-a-half acre plot of land on its south side, between Sawpit Lane and Broad Lane. A close south of St George's Street is described in 1724 as being at the North Gate near the town wall, within the perimeter of the town, and adjoining on the south to a close of Francis Arundel Esq (NRO Nethercoate Deeds bundle 13 nos 49 & 52). Francis Arundel was the heir of the former St Andrew's Priory estate, and the property so described lies between this and Grafton Street, and is presumably the acquired land of the Priory which led to Gyselgot being blocked. Two properties described in the Town Rental of 1503-4 in St Sepulchre Street next to the North gate had been acquired by the priory, but had secular holders in the Rental of c1300. The plot next to St George's Street has a subsequent history (NRO NPL 2246-2250, including a plan with NPL 2247), and so is not the one in Borough ownership in 1778.

Despite both Bridges' and Pretty's assertion that the defences were on the south side of St George's Street, Williams 1982 carried out excavations north of the street. These trenches lay just north-west of the bounds of the old enclosure known as North Gate Close, which was outside the gate, probably the Foss Close of the 1503-4 Rental. That part nearest forming the Black Boy or John Friend's charity, founded in 1682, was redefined in lieu of its predecessor in the Inclosure Award in 1789. However its shape is predetermined by the next south, fronted by St Andrew's Villa, now Regent House, which has title deeds back to 1666 (NRO NPL 2759), as part of the rent is paid to a charity. Also the bounds are clearly shown on Pierce's map in 1632. St George's Street cannot have been within the medieval wall.

Following 'Matlock's', Hooper's next reference is to the bulwark at Emy Lane, which is probably Mill Lane. Until 1880 this was not the present lane but one slightly south, leaving a triangle of land between this and the present lane, of 1 rood 12 poles, 0.325 of an acre (NRO ZB 91/68). The distance on this old lane allowing for the bulwarks at the ends could correspond to the 21 roods 5 falls (341 feet) to the next bul-

wark described by Hooper. Pretty in Wetton 1849 (p43) describes a bastion at the corner of Harding Street 'leading down to St Andrew's Mill', which is surely Hooper's bulwark. Pretty describes another on St George's Street, possibly Hooper's 'St andrews mount', again with the defences being on the south side of that street, as with his description on p.29 of Wetton.

THE MOUNTS (NORTH GATE TO EAST GATE)

The research reveals that the medieval defences lay south of The Mounts, or under the modern road towards its south side. Both RCHM 1985 and Foard 1995 place the medieval wall towards the north side of the modern road or beyond. A number of excavations have found only ambiguous small ditches north of the Mounts, while there has been little consideration of defences to south, not least one in 2001 which ruled out finding the medieval wall south of The Mounts. The evidence below considers limited Hundred Roll evidence, Morton's account in 1712, the Inclosure Award, an intra-mural road and the Grey and White Friars' lands.

The Hundred Roll refers to the obstruction of a street between Mount Sorrell and Lurteborne postern, but there is no identifiable counterpart in the 1586 terrier. Cox 1898 and the Goosey Map place Mount Sorrell in the vicinity of Campbell Square. Both Speed 1610 and Pierce 1632 show both intra-mural and extra-mural roads here, and both show anomalies north-east of St Sepulchre's Churchyard, Speed a deflection of the wall and the Campbell Square triangle, and Pierce the truncation of the churchyard by an extended Newlands Lane.

Foard (1995) interprets the Civil War ditch as being outside the medieval lines; but there is no documentary basis for this assumption. Morton (1712) records that the medieval ditch had been enlarged by the Civil War defenders:

'The wide Ditch that now encompasses the Northern Part of the Town was originally made according to a Tradition of the Inhabitants, to defend the Town against the Danes: And was only fcou'd up and enlarg'd by the Parliament Forces which were in Garrifon there againft King Charles the Ift.'

Morton only came to the county in 1701 as Rector of Great Oxenden near Market Harborough. However he did make regular visits to Northampton, on one occasion to take measurements in a well at the

Fleetwood mansion, close to this ditch. So his observations have validity.

The main evidence lies with the Inclosure Award, for which the accompanying plan shows a street, the precursor of Upper Mounts, as the boundary of the enclosed common fields against the circuit of the town. However this road is described in the Award, and is a boundary to adjacent properties northwards, and must be understood to have been laid out of the common as part of the award, and not part of the town. Hence it would be expected that the town defences were south of this road which ran *'from the north end of the town of Northampton at a certain house there called or known by the Sign of the Bull by the side of the houses and town walls of Northampton to the east end of Abington Street.'*

The Bull was an inn shown in the 19th century at the corner of Regent Square and Bull Lane (title deeds NRO NPL 2756). Further, the Award describes land awarded to the Bailiffs of Northampton: *'owners of a piece of Greensward called the Mounts and of two thirds of a certain piece of meadow ground called the Bailiffs Hook and in lieu thereof one plot or parcel of ground containing three acres, three roods and nine perches.'*

Subsequent to the Award the Borough leased this land, and those in 1779 and 1800 repeat the full description (NRO Boro Rec 9/2). It comprises a rectangle of land on the north side of the Mounts (occupied by the police and fire stations) with a projection southwards into a triangular space east of St Sepulchre's Churchyard, where Pretty and Thompson 1915 record a large quarry. The size of the original Bailiffs Hook is not confirmed, but one lease specifies a two acre part in 1766 (NRO CC 123). If it was just two thirds of two acres, that would reduce the available space for the Mounts component to 2.5 acres, or less. A plan of the Civil War mounts in Soden & Holmes 1995, shows hypothetical mounts covering approximately 1100 and 3000 square metres, which together equate to two acres. However that would be based on the medieval wall being near the north side of Upper Mounts; taken from the south side of the road it would add a further acre. Yet the original Bailiffs Hook could well have been more than two acres. On the basis of the above calculation a civil war defence north of The Mounts is impossible, and Morton's explanation is more likely.

Properties adjoining both the north and east gates were bounded by a lane within the wall. In 1632

(NRO NPL 417) property near the North Gate on the east side had *'a certain lane leading from the said north gate unto the east gate lying on the north part thereof'*. It is unlikely that the extra-mural road was being described because that would have placed the property on the site of the north gate, whereas it was described as being within the town of Northampton. In 1702 the property at the east end of Abington Street next to the East Gate, is described as having *'a certain lane or highway lying by the late town wall side on the east side'* (NRO MKM 124/11/3). A lane between the wall and the Carmelite Friary is described in an inquiry in 1278, whereby if the Carmelites had blocked the crenellations on the wall, the townsfolk would have been compelled to use the muddy and unpleasant lane (PRO C143/4).

There is no certain evidence as to the extent of the Franciscan and Carmelite Friaries on the north that would define the location of the medieval defences. In 1850, when William Kerr's grandson sold the remainder of his share of The Park to H. B. Whitworth, the northern extent at the west corner of Kerr Street fell five metres short of the road at Upper Mounts (NRO ZB 91/60). Whether this indicates the intra-mural road or the wall is unknown. The Three-cornered Close east of Park Street, which may equate to the Shield Close of the post-dissolution Carmelite Friary site, and which has distinctive symmetry in 19th century documents, appears to have extended up to the road, and was bounded by an old wall (NRO ZB 135/35). However Wood & Law's Map of 1847, and Ordnance Survey maps show a marked offset of Lower Mounts in relation to Upper Mounts. Given the north side property here remained unchanged after the Inclosure Award due to early development, the offset must be due to the Lower Mounts overlying the defences.

In 1973, in advance of road improvements, an excavation was carried out on the site of a Victorian property north of the Mounts near the junction with Lady's Lane (Williams 1982). A ditch 8 metres wide and 2 metres deep was found under the rear of the property, associated with 12th to 15th century pottery. In 1995 excavations were undertaken at the former school site on Campbell Square (Shaw 1995), yielding an oddly curved ditch in an area largely disturbed by quarrying. However there has been no corresponding interest in the south side of the Mounts, notably during the construction of the Law Courts. Demolition of part of the site of The Bull for

road widening in 1985 secured only a watching brief (Shaw 1995). Investigation of former commercial premises on the west side of the modern St Sepulchre's manse, at 30 Campbell Street, Planning Application N/2000/0130 (Flitcroft 2000) did not expect to find town wall remains: *'It is extremely unlikely that the medieval and Civil War defences are located within the current proposal site, and the area is likely to have formed the rear of tenements fronting onto Sheep Street.'*

EAST GATE TO DERNGATE

There is a significant difference of opinion between this research and the course shown by the RCHM 1985 and Foard 1995. A detailed account of the documents was sent to the County SMR dated 19th May 1999. The documentation available gives the most concise positioning of the medieval wall of any part of its circuit. The wall ran along the East boundary of St Giles Churchyard to the east side of the junction of Spring Gardens with Derngate. RCHM (1985) shows the wall up to 70 metres east, on the east side of York Road and Cheyne Walk; within the extent of the common fields at the Inclosure Award. Foard 1995 places the Civil War defences along the west side of York Road and Cheyne Walk, and the medieval wall up to 35 metres east of the location proposed in this research.

The location of the town wall is defined by documents in the First Assembly Book and in town property papers. The primary evidence is the intramural road between Derngate and St Giles Street, which is implicated in the Hundred Roll obstructions and perpetuated as town property in the 1586 terrier; in a key document in 1601; and in 17th century deeds. This confirms Bridges description in 1722 where the wall encompassed St Giles Churchyard. In the Hundred Roll, five parties, including John Eustas and the Friars of the Sack, had blocked a street within the wall from Derngate to the court of Dandelini. The location of the latter is indicated by a reference in the Eyre of Northamptonshire in 1330 (Sutherland 1981), to the tenements of John Daundelyn outside the east gate. John Eustas had also blocked part of the street near Derngate. In the Town Rental in the time of Edward I, John Eustas had land next to the Derngate postern. In the 1586 terrier of town lands is *'a little close near*

the Dearne Gate, containing a rood of land' (Cox 1898).

In the First Assembly Book is an instruction to enclose the intra-mural road dated 29th October 1601 (NRO 3/1 p565/293), an item also transcribed by Frank Lee (NRO Box X1055). This describes a portion of the new pastures within and adjacent to the town wall, which was wide enough for two carts to pass, from Derne Gate to the postern, aligned to the wall of St Giles' Churchyard. Ground belonging to Thomas Neale adjoined on the west. In 1630 Henry Neale sold this ground to the Borough, and it was incorporated in the New Pastures (NRO NPL 2659, Bor Rec. II Pt 2, 102a). It appears in the Town Rental of 1503-4 as a garden between the churchyard of St Giles on the north and another garden south. In 1630 it was described as near the churchyard, '*abutting on a certain lane or way between the walls of the said town and the said close on the east part and upon certain highways on the south and west parts*'.

It is known from a document in 1775 (NRO Boro. Rec. 9/2 p46) that what is now Spring Gardens formed the west boundary of New Pastures, and this identifies the highway on the west in 1630. That part of the New Pastures 'under' or outside the town wall was purchased by the Borough in 1634 (NRO Borough Records II Pt 2 103a).

The wall ran from the junction of Spring Gardens and Derngate, diverging and passing west of Melbourne Crescent (off Cheyne Walk). Dividing walls between gardens here show frequent patching and rebuilding, perhaps indications of subsidence. What might have been a fragment of the ditch was detected in a GPO trench in July 1975 at the east corner of Spring Gardens (Moore & Giggins 1976). A watching brief behind the original part of the YMCA Hostel in 1990 found no evidence of the defences which, on the basis of the current research was probably further west. However, according to Thompson (1915) '*the fosse continued up at the back of Cheyne Walk, and a least one of the large houses standing well back from the road, built for Mr MacQuire, gave much trouble to get proper foundations owing to the moat infilling*' (see also Welsh 1994). Plans for the houses on Melbourne Crescent in 1861 show that MacQuire's was No 3, now Cheyne Walk Clinic (NRO Borough Records II Pt 3 228/9).

There were several old enclosures outside the walls, which were acquired at various times by the Borough, such as the outer part of New Pastures

described above, in 1634. Notably in 1513 there was a croft and orchard *outside the east wall* near the postern gate adjoining St Giles Churchyard called *Feyre Croft* (NRO Finch Hatton 1132), which is presumably one of the Town Wall Closes. Several waste plots next to or opposite the town wall are referred to in the Rental of 1503/4 for St Giles Street; similarly outside the East Gate. By the 17th century these are named as the Town Wall Closes, between East Gate and St Giles Street, and part of the New Pastures from there to Derngate. A postern is frequently mentioned near St Giles Churchyard, St Giles Street ended at the junction with Spring Lane/St Giles Terrace, as shown on Noble & Butlin's plan in 1747. Though the street extends to the wall on Speed 1610, no postern is shown, whereas Pierce in 1632 indicates a postern but shows St Giles' Street terminating before the churchyard as on Noble & Butlin. The road was not extended along the south side of the churchyard and across the boundary between Town Wall Close and the New Pastures until 1790, by taking one rood thirteen poles from the latter (Corporation Minutes NRO 3/6). Hence St Giles Street is shown extended in Roper & Coles Map of 1807.

Sold off before 1838, the northern of the two town wall closes (about half an acre) was incorporated in a garden, formerly a quarry, belonging to a property fronting Abington Street (NRO NPL 2652). It was later sold for development with part of the adjacent garden; this boundary survives behind the buildings fronting York Street as a wall formerly marking the edge of the quarry, now dividing the gardens. It is possible that the town wall lies on the east side of this. The southern Town Wall Close (one and a quarter acres in 1749 NRO CC123) was sold in 1838 (NRO ZA 3598; Boro Rec. II, pt 2 215). Foard places both the civil war and medieval circuit on the east side of these closes. There is no conclusive evidence to confirm whether they were within or outside the medieval wall. It seems likely, from Bridges and Pretty's accounts, and the evidence for the course in New Pastures discussed above, that the Town Wall Closes were mostly outside the medieval wall. Any excavation opportunities should consider both options.

DERNGATE TO SOUTH GATE

The medieval wall follows the boundary of Tower Close and St John's Hospital, later the New Walk on

Victoria Promenade was built over the top of it. The town ditch is under the modern road. The wall near South Gate was under the south frontage of the present Plough Hotel, while the ditch was under the northern half of Market Street. RCHM 1985 shows the wall on the south side of Victoria Promenade and Market Street. Foard (1995) makes this the line of his Civil War defences, and places the medieval wall towards the north side of Victoria Promenade.

The Hundred Roll refers to obstruction of a street leading from Cougate towards the west gate, and in 1586 the town terrier records property near Cow Lane end and elsewhere in Cow Lane, confirmed in 1791 as west of the lane at its south end (Corporation Minutes NRO 3/6). One of the parties to the obstruction in the Hundred Roll is St John's Hospital, whose precinct extended up to the wall, including one plot called Saffron Ground in 1500 (NRO YZ 3649).

As in the previous section there were old enclosures outside the wall between Derngate and the postern below Cow Lane (Swan Street). The Derne Croft was purchased by the town in eighth part portions in the latter half of the 17th century, including 1658 and 1675, and amounted to five acres between the ditch under the town wall and Cow Meadow (Borough Records II Pt 2 107, 108). By the time of 1779 Plan of the Commons by Merryweather this had clearly been incorporated in the Town Common, as well as the ditch and berm, as the boundary of the common was the course of the town wall.

The location of the wall is also known from the release of land for St Thomas Hospital in 1439. This comprised a strip extending 28 yards from the bridge 4 yards wide between the wall and the ditch, and an identical strip south of the ditch (NRO Borough Records II Pt 2 48). The Hospital was built about 1460 by culverting part of the ditch adjoining South Gate. In a dispute over watercourses in 1591 several witnesses referred to the ditch under the hospital (Brown 1926); clearing the ditch here appears in Assembly Book 1. The same author provided a drawing in his paper on the fortifications (Brown 1915). The position of the Hospital, demolished 1874-6 to make way for Victoria Promenade, is as shown on Ordnance Survey plans, but is further confirmed by Dryden 1876. It is also depicted on Noble & Butlin's plan of 1746, and Bridges says in 1722: 'the Town Dike goes under the Hospital'. The

town wall therefore was located under the present frontage of the Plough Hotel.

The wall between Cowgate and Derngate also functioned as a parish and civil boundary, and according to Bridges' manuscript in 1722 coincided with the boundary walls of St John's Hospital and Tower Close. Assembling this evidence, it is apparent that the 'new walkway' on the north side of what is now Market Street/Victoria Promenade, is built on top of the wall and encroaches onto the land to north. Both Wood & Law in 1847 and Merryweather's Plan of the Commons show the town ditch. An earlier draft of the former, amongst Beeby Thompson's papers, labels this 'remains of the town moat levelled and planted 1841'. This confirms Pretty's observation in Wetton 1849 (p 62) '*the ditch, which protected the town on the south side, was also filled up and planted, as far as Cow Lane*'. Victoria Promenade was built over the site of the ditch. In 1975, during observation of Water Board trenches (Moore & Giggins 1976) the south lip of the ditch just 5.3 metres within Beckett's Park was detected, and the other side of the ditch on the north side of the road, near the east boundary of the former High School for Girls.

SOUTH GATE TO THE WEST GATE

Here also there are significant differences between the research and the locations suggested in RCHM 1985. The research shows the medieval wall ran along the north side of the modern St Peter's Way, diverging from it near the modern Towcester Road, and passing the south end of Tanner Street, then parallel to the mill lane until south of the West Gate, where excavated by Shaw 2000. RCHM shows the wall south of and parallel to St Peters Way, where it approaches the West Gate from south-east, out of alignment with the Green Street excavations.

Defences on the south-west are not mentioned by Hooper, nor by Bridges in 1722, yet they figure in both the Hundred Roll and the 1586 terrier, as well as the Town Rentals. Chapman (1999) describes both the Rental and terrier evidence, but only mentions the Hundred Roll via RCHM 1985 (p329). He refers to my earlier notes lodged with the SMR, though not specifically one dated 12th October 1997, pointing out the existence this information. The Hundred Roll obstructions include ground outside the west gate, a

piece of ground one rood wide by sixty feet long between the wall and the ditch at the West Gate, the King's ditch, twelve feet wide, between the west gate and Mythenesmylnedam, and a street within the wall between South Gate and Mythenesmylne. The 1586 terrier describes the Towne Dyke: a ditch extending eighty yards from the West Gate to the river, then in lengths of sixty, seventy, and fourteen yards, and finally an unspecified length to Mervels Mylls. The ditch is described as from six to ten yards wide and in places fifteen or sixteen yards wide, often with willows growing in it. Both the Rental of the time of Edward I and that in 1503-4 have an entry under St Peter's Parish, describing a waste tenement next to the town wall extending to the river. The latter also refers to the town wall and ditch near Mervyn Mill.

Confusion has arisen however between Marvell's Mill and the Cotton Mill as the two are not synonymous. Chapman 1999 concludes that the town ditch runs 'alongside the river as far east as Mervyn's or Cotton Mill'. The medieval mill was located on the ditch continuing the alignment at Back Side Westons, hence the implication of that channel in the 1591 mills dispute (Brown 1925). The site was at the angle of Tanner Street. In 1753 there were two mills described here, the Cotton Mill bearing the name Marvill's Mill, and an oat meal mill to the north (NRO Box X6144). The latter seems to have gone out of use in the 1760s, when the Cotton Mill owners acquired the Tanner Street grounds. After part of Tanner Street ground was sold in 1825, the channel which supplied the oat meal mill became a boundary again, and was the subject of several disputes. The position of the channel apart from the cotton mill supply is hinted in a description of the Marvel's Mill grounds in 1684, where a strip of ground measuring one rood is situated on the north side of the mill pool (NRO Borough Records Sect II Pt II 109a), thus distinguishing this from the boundary channel. The channel was culverted as a sewer before 1878 (plan in County Library). The course of the ditch appears to be as described in my 1997 notes in the SMR under 1160/3, in which alignment it continues towards the alignment of wall exposed in excavations at Green Street in 1995-6 (Chapman 1999).

In addition to the positioning of the town wall at St Thomas's Hospital there is accurate positioning for the start of the wall west of South Gate. The same source in the Borough Records in 1439 describes

similar strips west of the gate, except that it extended 18 yards by five yards wide between the wall and the ditch but only 18 yards by 3 feet south of the ditch. A later document in 1472 shows buildings had been constructed on both sides of the gate in this fashion (NRO Boro Rec II Pt 2, 52). In 1438 the town had purchased 'le Yatehouse' within the South Gate, between the wall of the town on the south and another acquired house north (NRO NPL 387). This remained a town charity holding until recent times, a public house known as The Pheasant on the corner of Bridge Street and Weston Street (now St Peter's Way). It is shown on a plan of estates of the trustees (NRO Maps 6054). Weston Street was shown as Back Side Westons on Noble & Butlin's plan of 1746.

This narrow lane ran along the north side of the ditch which continued the alignment of the one under St Thomas Hospital. Clearly from this evidence it is on the line of the medieval ditch. The post dissolution documents for the Austin Friary include land bounded on the south by a footway called Backside Westons in 1824 (NRO NPL 2686).

Brown (1915) cites a personal communication from Beeby Thompson, who describes this ditch between Weston Street and Back Side Westons, as having had little bridges over it, discovered by excavation. It continued under St Thomas Hospital and under Cattle Market Street to near the bottom of Cow Lane. He says that ultimately it became essentially a sewer and a nuisance, and was done away with when the new sewage farm was acquired.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper is intended to highlight a range of documentary material, much of it previously unpublished, which demonstrates that documents, including post-medieval sources, can contribute to a better understanding of Northampton's medieval defences. Further research is needed, and it is not intended that this should be seen to replace previous understanding. It is considered that a more important outcome would be accommodation of a wider swath of possible locations for the defences when opportunities for excavation arise. Even the previous main archaeological accounts, RCHM 1985 and Foord 1995 differ significantly in their location of the wall.

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T.C. WELSH

THE EXCAVATION OF IRON AGE SETTLEMENTS IN NORTHAMPTONSHIRE: PAST AND PRESENT

INTRODUCTION

Major changes in excavation methods and scientific techniques have occurred over the past 20 years, but it can be argued that the best use is not being made of the vastly increased financial resources now available through developer funding. Very large Iron Age sites or site complexes have been revealed by modern survey methods in recent years, but the amount of new information revealed by their excavation has not lived up to the high expectations expressed before the work began.

Extensive Iron Age activity has been revealed in the county by geophysical surveys on sites such as Crick, Courteenhall, and Wilby, and as a result a plan of the enclosures, ditch complexes, or ring ditches. has been available before the excavations began. This should have been a major advantage and

enabled resources to be concentrated on the most promising areas. When compared to the results from previous excavations in the county however the structural evidence, particularly of house sites, has been disappointing and the information on the chronological development of the sites very inconsistent

At the time of writing the excavations at Crick, Courteenhall, and Wilby have not been published and the writers observations are about the general policy observed during site visits, and are not intended to be critical of individual fieldworkers. Comparisons are made below with earlier excavations to suggest a change in emphasis is needed.

EARLIER EXCAVATIONS IN THE COUNTY

The earliest excavation of an Iron Age settlement in Northamptonshire took place on an airfield at Draughton during the last war (Grimes 1961, 1). Subsequently a number of sites were excavated by the writer between 1965 and 1981, the principal ones being at Twywell, Aldwinkle, Wakerley, Weekley and Brigstock. (Jackson, 1976, 78, 86/7 & 83) The

first four named were excavated ahead of quarrying whilst at Brigstock the site was threatened by deep ploughing. The excavations were funded by the Department of the Environment and carried out on a relatively small budget.

Other major Iron Age excavations were carried out in the late 1970's and 1980's at Earls Barton (Windell 1983) and Stanwick (Neal forthcoming) but the results have yet to be fully published. More recently the thorough excavation of sites at Wootton Hill Farm, Northampton (Jackson 1988/9), and Rothers-thorpe (Holmes 1989) has produced good results, with the latter an example of successful targeting of certain areas.

During the excavations at Twywell in 1967 (Jackson 1975) the late Sir Mortimer Wheeler gave a talk to the boys at Kettering Grammar school, and the Twywell site was discussed. His comments then were to always give priority to obtaining a plan as accurate and detailed as possible, and this advice was followed both at Twywell and during subsequent excavations directed by the writer. Subsequently each of these sites were cleaned by handpick, trowel, or brush, and all medieval furrows removed. As a result good definitive house plans were recovered at sites at Aldwinckle, Wakerley, and Brigstock, whilst at Twywell the many phases of stockade and enclosure ditch revealed by cleaning exposed the longevity of these features. Good stratified assemblages of pottery were also recovered from most these sites.

THE BRIEF

The excavation of Iron Age sites today can be on a large scale and these can be very costly to developers. The project director is usually working to a brief prepared by the local archaeological planning officer, but this can define a policy that often lacks flexibility and may be too restrictive. Working to guidelines can be understandable however where, as often happens, the project director is largely confined to the office, the day to day running of the site is left to others with less experience. The planning officer is aware of the academic requirements needed for each excavation, but it is a pity the practical application and limitations of the work cannot be discussed with experienced field workers at the brief stage.

SURFACE CLEANING AND THE OVERALL PLAN

Huge areas of topsoil have been stripped on a number of recent excavations and this has the advantage of revealing a large part of each settlement. Where good plans have been obtained beforehand by geophysical survey though the plans from excavation have often differed so little from that produced by geophysics as to suggest that concentrated surface cleaning in more limited areas, and sampling elsewhere, would have been more beneficial.

On some sites only features filled with material contrasting with the natural bedrock will be revealed by geophysics and machine cleaning, and to ignore the less obvious features could result in a plan that is neither complete or accurate. In addition the removal of medieval furrows is important where house sites and posthole complexes exist but this is no longer regarded as a priority.

The practice of cleaning the surface of pits, postholes or ditch intersections before they are excavated is rare on most sites. In the case of postholes, this can mean that their true diameter and any replacements are probably not recorded, and in general possible recuts or intrusive features may not be recognised. The depth, diameter and filling of postholes are important too when trying to assign them to individual structures.

Postholes are not always obvious and time needs to be allocated to maintain a running plan and search out the postholes needed to complete a pattern. For example on house sites at Wakerley many of the evenly spaced postholes supported a ring beam were not obvious on a first cleaning of the bedrock and they were subsequently located by measuring their position. Likewise on an unenclosed EIA settlement at Weekley Hall Wood, near Kettering (Jackson 1976) only two post holes were revealed by machine stripping, but by careful cleaning a total of 98 were subsequently recorded, including a possible house site and six fourpost structures (Jackson 1976) It is doubtful if sites such as Weekley Hall Wood would be recognised if occurring amongst later features without adequate surface cleaning. Finally mention can be made of a house site at Aldwinckle (*op. cit.*) where the colour of the post hole filling was the same as the natural silt, and only slightly looser filling or charcoal flecks enabled their detection.

The need to accurately record post groupings has been emphasised by the late Dr Peter Reynolds, and the above examples are given to illustrate the need for time to hand clean if all post structure are to be located

CHRONOLOGY AND POPULATION

Numerous Iron Age sites are known in the county but it is difficult to estimate the population at any one time because complete sites or houses may have been frequently moved to new ground. The new site could be adjacent to the old one or perhaps moved to the nearest piece of suitable ground. It is probable too that some sites were only occupied intermittently or on a seasonal basis.

Most of the large Iron Age sites excavated in the county in recent years have occupation extending over 300 years at least, and it is necessary to decide which area or areas were in use in the same phase. Scientific dating is not reliable for parts of the Iron Age period, but by using a combination of radio-carbon dates and pottery typology it is possible to assign pottery to within five chronological phases, or to a date that is broadly correct within 100 years. The major problem with phasing Iron Age sites or features is being able to recover enough diagnostic pottery from individual contexts or features.

The quantity of stratified diagnostic pottery, recovered from individual contexts, has in the low from recent excavations in the county, and it is suggested more effort should recovering sizeable assemblages. During earlier excavations at Gretton (Jackson 1985) and at Weekley (*op. cit.*) long lengths of ditch were excavated specifically to recover good stratified pottery assemblages, dating to the EIA and LMIA respectively. There is a need for similar assemblages from other parts of the Iron Age to assist in dating the ceramics and phasing the settlements.

A flexible approach to excavation was used at Thrapston where an evaluation trench was machine cut across an enclosure ditch and a possible rubbish deposit was noted in the filling (Note in NA 24. 956, Fig 2). The trench was subsequently widened by machine down to the level of this deposit, and this layer was carefully excavated for dating evidence. As a result 10 rim sherds of LBAEIA pottery were recovered from this layer whereas only a further 10 rim sherds came from the subsequent excavation of the site.

BETTER USE OF RESOURCES

It is understandable that contractors need to try to work within their budget and at the same the requirements in the brief. It is clear therefore that any changes in policy must be specified beforehand so that contractors have a level playing field when preparing the estimates.

There is usually a requirement at present to dig a certain percentage of enclosure and other ditches, and maybe resources could be better used. Many ditch sections are not informative, other than to illustrate the number of recuts at that particular point, and relationships at intersections can often be determined by cleaning the surface. In addition to the time spent on their excavation, further time is taken up by cleaning and drawing each section. Pottery from the lower levels of a ditch is often sparse and its value reduced if there is a residual element present. It is possible that the practice of having a quota of ditch and pit sections to excavate may result in hurried work, with the filling of the features not being broken up and examined for dating evidence.

The taking of numerous soil samples, and their subsequent analysis, is time consuming and perhaps not always relevant. A lot of environmental work has been carried out on Iron Age sites in Oxfordshire and elsewhere, and it may be time to question whether it is a priority to repeat the same process on all occasions.

TOOLS

Surface cleaning is generally carried out using a hoe, although this tool can be ineffective in some soil conditions. The writer has found that using the flat side of a handpick or an entrenching tool is better, and will clean surface areas cleanly and quickly, whatever the bedrock. A threepronged tool known as a Canterbury hoe can be useful for loosening soil where mattocks are too cumbersome.

WEATHER CONDITIONS

It is the current practise to start excavations at any time of the year and in any conditions, and on wet sites this can be seriously detrimental to understanding the archaeology. At Crick part of the site

had not been damaged by ridge and furrow and was therefore better preserved than the average Iron Age site. Unfortunately this was not appreciated beforehand because the evaluation trenches were dug at a time of year when they soon filled with water. Parts of the excavation at Crick too were carried out in the late autumn when much of the site soon flooded, making work very difficult. It is a pity that on clay or wet sites developers don't have to agree to excavations being carried out at a suitable time of the year

CONCLUSIONS

It is suggested that where very large sites are excavated insufficient time can be devoted to obtaining a complete and accurate plan, and more work should be concentrated in the occupation areas. In addition

greater priority should be given to obtaining enough dating evidence so that the chronological development of the site can be understood. Whilst revealing whole landscapes is a worthwhile aim, there needs to be more awareness of what is practical and likely to be informative.

With earlier rescue excavations there was often less pressure to meet time and budget requirements, and it was an advantage to spend more time on interpretation in the field rather than at the post-excavation stage. However developer funded archaeology is a business and contractors cannot be expected to return to the slower pace common on earlier excavations. In spite of this there appears to be a need to target more areas for careful surface cleaning and make sure the right priorities are emphasised in the brief.

DENNIS JACKSON

A FURTHER PILGRIM BADGE OF THE *PIETÀ* or OUR LADY OF PITY, FROM TOWCESTER

This note refers to a find made on tipped material in the Pury End quarry, carried there from the main drainage scheme undertaken by the Anglia Water Authority within the town in 1976. The dumped material was being scoured primarily for Roman material, during which the Roman column capital was found, subsequently published (Woodfield 1998).

The lead badge, 24mm wide at its maximum (Fig 1) was referred to Brian Spencer at the British Museum for an expert opinion, who confirmed the subject matter. Curiously, only two other near parallels have been found, one in the 1954 excavations on the Grammar School Site at Towcester (Brown and Alexander 1982, 51-54, and fig 20:24) and one from under the choir stalls of the Beauchamp Chapel, Warwick. This new badge from Pury End differs distinctly from the published Towcester example in that the clothing of the Virgin is more elaborate, having a central panel down the front of her robe, and a cross hatched lower border to her cloak, and what may be interpreted as a girdle below the arm of Christ. It is less complete, having lost the head of

both the Virgin and of Christ above His stubble beard, and there is no evidence for the gabled canopy on the Grammar School example, and the enriched canopy on the Warwick example.

The *Pietà*, as it is usually now called in art history, arose naturally out of the earlier portrayal of the Deposition, and is symbolic of the devotion to Mary which gained ground in the Late Middle Ages, where the representations are moving increasingly towards the celebrations of her Sorrows rather than her Joys. (Duffy 1992, 258 ff). The *Pietà* image may be distinguished from other popular iconographic images in that Mary is seated, facing, holding across her knees the Crucified Christ, and where she often assumes an hieratical and other worldly dignity. Other similar images occur, such as the Man of Pity, the naked body of Christ showing the scars of flagellation and the wounds of crucifixion, and the Lamentation, where others have taken down the crucified Body whilst Mary laments nearby. The emphasis was thus shifting from the crucified Christ to the distress and anguish suffered by his mother, Mary. These have in common that they are less hieratical, and emphasise the pathos of the occasion, and where St John and St Mary Magdalen often appear helping or comforting the Virgin in her distress, for example the wooden Burgundian Lamentation in the Cluny. (Catalogue,

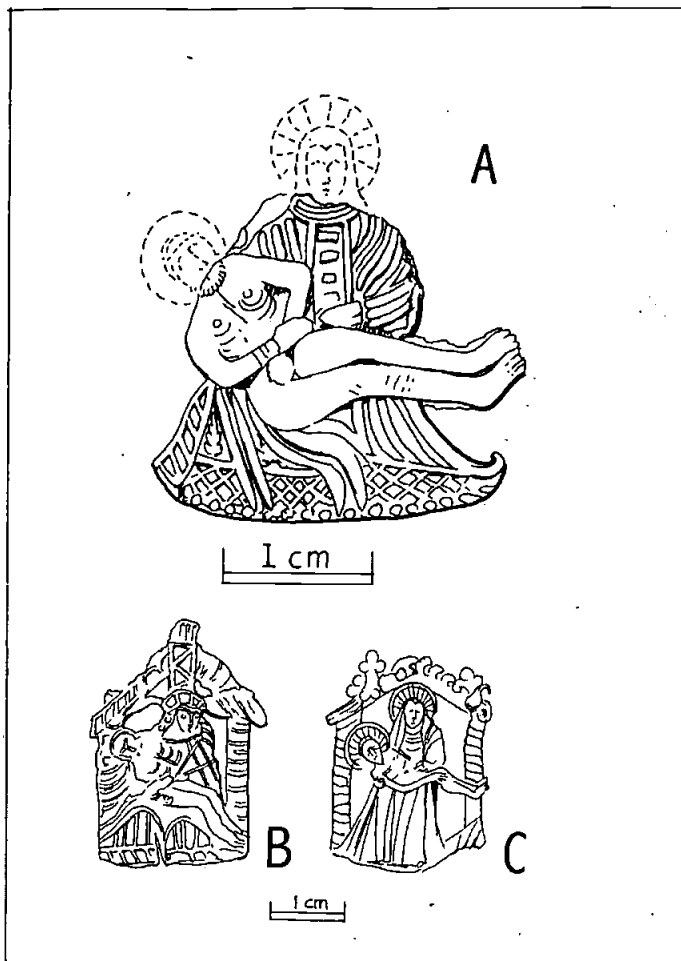


Fig 1

A) A new lead Pilgrim Badge from Towcester.
 B) Towcester Grammar School, 1982.
 C) Beauchamp Chapel. St Mary's, Warwick.

47), or Rogier van der Leyden's Deposition of c.1438, in the Prado (Swaan 1988, 197). Another similar representation is the Mater Dolorosa, where she appears standing by the Rood in sorrow, whilst another occasional representation is where the body of Christ is supported by God himself, aided by Mary, as in the Jean Malouel roundel in the Louvre, dated to c.1400, (Swaan 1988, 108).

One of the earliest representations of the Pietà is to be found from the Rhineland, in the Röttgen Collection in the Bonn *Landesmuseum*, dated c.1300, in the characteristically tortured style of German Gothic figure sculpture. (Toman 1998, 352) The popularity of the image no doubts owes much to the growth of Marian devotions, characterised by the *Horae*, and

particularly the *Stabat Mater*, with the words *Fac, ut portem Christi mortem*. The Pietà image spread in England in the C15, with growing devotional attachment (Duffy, pp. 260-1) and representations can be seen in various media in many churches, e.g. on fonts at Orford, Suffolk (Prior & Gardner, fig 502), Bag Enderby, Lincs; on glass at Long Melford, Suffolk; on wall paintings at Broughton, Buckinghamshire, c.1400, and at Corby, Lincolnshire (early C15); and St Cross, Winchester. It also occurs, of course, as free-standing statuary, such as the one survival, a statue 1.06m (3'6") high, at Battlefield, Shropshire, although this may be an import as it is described by Pevsner as being more German in composition.

John Benett of Raunds, Northants. sets down in his notebook his most venerated places, one of which was Our Lady of Walsingham, where an image of her as the Pietà had gained a reputation for miraculous virtue. Another representation of the Pietà is described by the recusant Roger Martin at Long Melford, Suffolk, recalling the furnishings of the church. (Duffy 1992, 38), and indeed one there still exists in the C15 glass of the E window (Munro Cautley 1954, 209). An interesting reference is to a donation of wax and 2 beehives by the vicar of 'Flawford' in 1515 to uphold the light before Our Lady of Pity at the church there.

Not only did the Pietà appear in the fabric of churches, but the self-contained image appealed to makers of *oeuvres de piété*, and portable objects, particularly for the new more numerous and less discriminating group of patrons. The Pietà particularly appealed as an image in its own right, outside the narratives of the Life of Our Lord and the Life of Mary. It does not appear in the cycle of the *Biblia Pauperum*. It is thus an image that recommends itself particularly to small image-makers, in that it is clearly identifiable, and can be portrayed very satisfactorily within a small compass, even responding to the innate wish for symmetry in the design. With the rise of the popularity of the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham, it seems there was a degree of official encouragement for a series of cheap pilgrim badges to be made available to pilgrims in respond to the demand for souvenirs, and as a symbol of a successful visit. This was no doubt a very useful supplement to their income. The Towcester example appears to be one of these.

The alabaster industry produced many, including the famous figure at Breadsall, Derbyshire, of the mid-late C14, found under the floor of the church in the late C19. A number of other alabasters were exhibited in the Society of Antiquaries' Exhibition of 1910, one now in the Nottingham Collection, enriched with polychrome paintwork, and another is now in the Burrell Collection (Cheetham 1973, 55). Although the image was to last in popularity to the end of the medieval period both here and in Europe, where it was particularly venerated in Germany as the 'Vesperbild' in the interval between Good Friday and the Resurrection. (Toman 1998). German images had by c.1430-50 become less emotionally draining, and displayed some tenderness.

By the late C15 there had been something of rejection by sculptors and the producers of religious art

of the naturalistic presentation of the preceding 300 years, and they tended to hark back to the more stylised Romanesque concept of art as a system of symbols, often conveyed by simple repetitive patterns (Stone 1955, 178). However in Italy the naturalistic representations remained popular, culminating in what is generally seen as the ultimate achievement in artistic terms - the marble Pietà by Michelangelo in St Peter's Rome, created 1497-1500.

Towards the end of the medieval period this particular image, as with others, came under attack by reformers. William Marshall, in 1534, issued *A Prymer in Englyshe, with certeyn prayers & godly meditations*, says "why might not a man smell a little idolatry here, in that appeareth in this title a certain respect, a reverence, more to one image than to another" (Duffy 1992, 382). An example of this is at Lenham, Kent, where a Pietà was taken down with the connivance of the clergyman in the 1530s (Duffy 1992, 436).

The occurrence of a second example of this otherwise rare devotional badge from Towcester provides us with a vignette of a personal connection between a medieval inhabitant of Towcester and probably, England's greatest Marian shrine at Walsingham, with the interesting hint that perhaps Towcester could have been a staging post on a frequented pilgrimage route there from the west country, perhaps via Warwick. A small warning though; reproductions are now made, and sold at Warwick, and these might just appear as medieval finds.

I am pleased to acknowledge the help of Charmian Woodfield in the preparation of this note.

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PAUL WOODFIELD

A PROBABLE PRE-REFORMATION FIND FROM POTTERSPURY

During a watching brief undertaken by Richard Ivens, Charmian and Paul Woodfield under the Northamptonshire Voluntary Archaeological Network Scheme, an unexpected find was brought to light.

The site on the north side of No 28 High Street, formerly had an abattoir to the rear. It was being prepared for residential development by the construction of infrastructure roads and drains. A geophysical investigation had not been followed up by trial trenching, although the site had been identified by Philip Mayes as far back as 1965 as having been 'in the ownership of the potter, Leonard Benton, (Mayes 1968). The likelihood of 17th-century pottery kilns was therefore very high, and the road construction immediately revealed large quantities of pottery, a scattering of medieval but mostly post-medieval sherds, and the sites of a number of probable kilns.

During the excavation of a large pit at the upper

NW corner of the site, a bronze object was recovered (Fig 1). This is of copper alloy, of cut bronze sheet 1.5mm. thick, and was rolled to form the shape of a human arm and hand. At the upper end it terminated in an upturned flange with one straight edge, and perforated with a 3.2mm diameter drilled hole. The hand is open, with spread fingers formed by cuts in the end of the metal, and the fingers are properly graduated in length. Near the centre of the palm a further perforation 2mm in diameter, drilled from the front, forms a burr at the back. Notwithstanding the crude construction, some care had been taken to achieve a realistic modelling of the arm muscles, narrowing at the elbow, including pinching in of the tube towards the wrist causing a slight overlap in the meeting edges of the metal. There had been no attempt to finish the back, the hollow tube being left open behind the wrist. The tube appears to be spot brazed at intervals along the joint. The rounded end at the junction of the arm with the body appears to be deliberate.

The arm is clearly part of a larger figure, and has

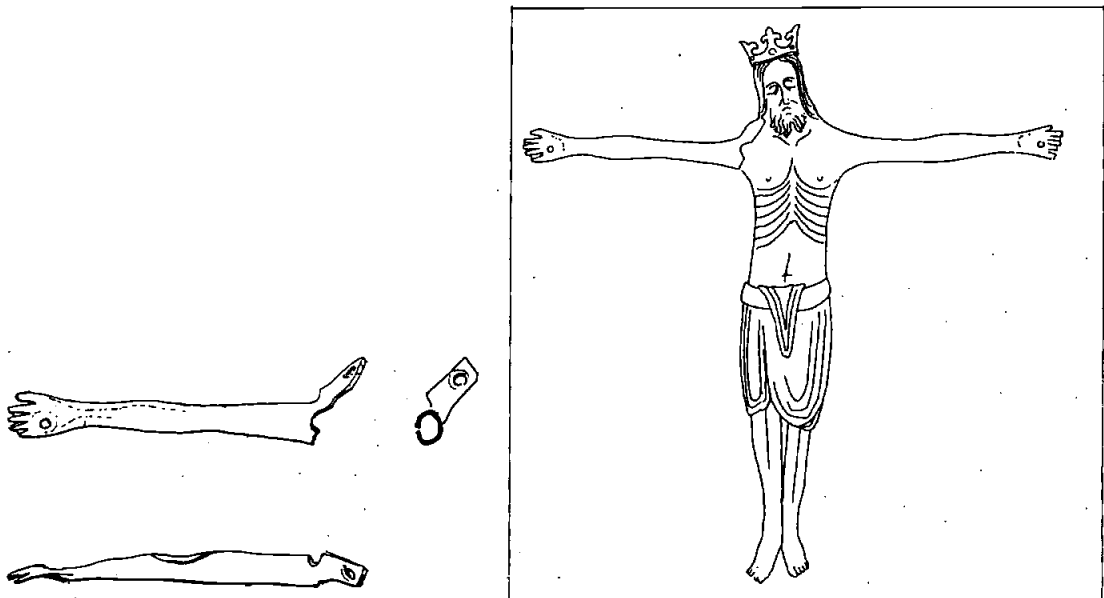


Fig 1 Copper alloy arm probably from a figure of Christ crucified. Scale of arm 1:2.

been mounted on another material by a nail passing through the hand, which is scyphate in form. It was obviously intended only to be viewed from the front. The upstanding flange in the position of the shoulder suggests that it was riveted to the body, either internally or less likely externally, the size inevitably providing rather long sloping shoulders.

The presentation of the underside of the arm and hand, together with the nail through the palm, suggests strongly that it is the right arm of Christ from a Crucifixion, nailed to a wooden cross. Such figures are usually hollow cast, but the crude construction combined with the not entirely unsophisticated modelling, suggests that it is probably an object of personal devotion rather than part of an official cult figure.

As regards date, the long straight arm is suggestive of a Romanesque date (Catalogue, 1984) although with such a simply constructed object, this could well be misleading. There must have been very many relatively crude devotional figures around before the

Reformation. Whatever date, it is very difficult to believe that it has any relevance to the postmedieval pottery establishment on the site, and must be seen to be related to the scatter from the earlier occupation on the site. An attempt at reconstruction is given (Fig 1). This gives the figure a rather Romanesque appearance which may not be correct. It does however attempt to overcome the difficult shoulder junction, which can never have been very satisfactory.

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P & C WOODFIELD

'OLD WALLS' AND 'THE OLD SHOP', THE GREEN, CULWORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

Two properties situated on the south side of Culworth village Green, known as 'Old Walls' and 'Old Shop' were briefly inspected in January 2000. They were set back about 13m from the road and from the exterior appeared to be two attached stone cottages of differing dates. Both were built of coursed limestone. 'Old Walls' still retained its thatched roof but the 'Old Shop' had a modern roof with a much lower pitch. The inspection showed that the buildings dated back to the late medieval period and was formerly a single property. This had been improved in the sixteenth century by the insertion of a first floor over the hall and in a later period the side walls were raised to create a two storey, rather than a one and a half storey building.

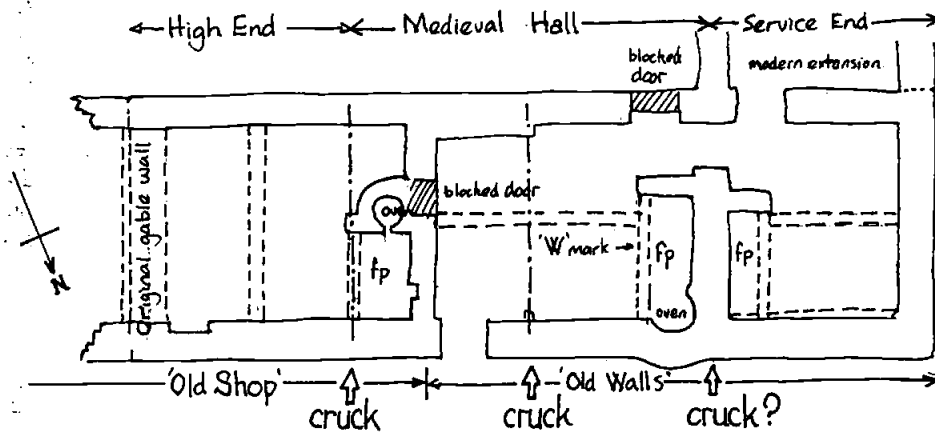
The medieval building was a four bay, three roomed house constructed on the south side of the Green sometime in the 15th century and probably replaced an earlier building, or buildings, on the site.

The central two bays contained the hall which was dominated by a raised cruck truss constructed from two cranked, or elbowed, boughs of oak. These were tied together with a collar about one third down the pitch of the roof and a lower beam situated just above head height. This lower beam possibly supported the chains to hang cooking pots above the central hearth. Smoke from the central hearth appears to have made its way through the thatch as no evidence for a louver in the roof could be located.

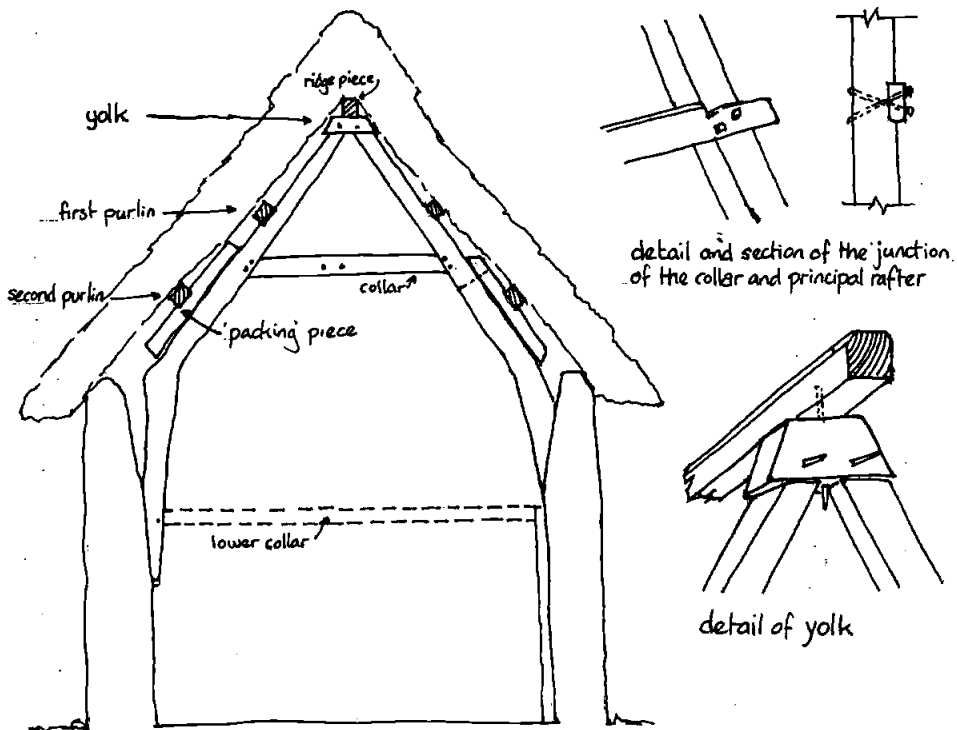
The timberwork at the east end of the hall was finer than that of the central truss and included sawn instead of roughly adzed timbers. This may indicate the position of the 'high' end of the building containing a 'parlour' on the ground floor and a bed chamber, or solar, above. The first floor of the 'upper chamber' was supported on a spine beam spanning between the two side walls.

Whether access to the first floor chamber was by a ladder from the room below or the Hall is not known. Similarly the form of the partition between the hall and high end cannot be identified.

It is not known whether the west end of the building was two storey or open to the roof. The presence



Sketch plan of 'Old Walls' and part of 'Old Shop'.



Sketch of the Raised Cruck in 'Old Walls', Culworth.

BLS 2000

Fig 1

of smoke blackened timbers in the roof may suggest the latter but this could also occur if the first floor partition did not continue up to the apex. Any evidence for this has been lost by the construction of an internal stone wall at this position at a later date. In the standard medieval plan it would be usual for the 'service' end of the building to contain a 'buttery' for storing liquor or general provisions and a 'pantry' for bread and other dry goods. Each would have a door into the hall or through passage. Although this arrangement has been found in large medieval houses in Northamptonshire there has been no good evidence to show that it occurs in the county's smaller medieval houses. In this building there is similarly no evidence for such rooms and it is possible that a single west room served both functions.

In four bay medieval buildings it would be normal for a 'through passage', linking the street to the rear garden, to be located at the 'service' end of the hall. At this location in the rear wall of the building is a blocked-in doorway that has a very worn sill which is visible internally. This may indicate the location of the through passage but this cannot be proved as an inserted fireplace blocks the opposite side. This fire-place has a slightly projecting side bread oven which would mask any vertical joints of a blocked doorway.

From the style of the cruck trusses it would appear that they were raised into position during construction rather than constructed in situ. This would have involved building the walls about 1.4m high to form a base from which to raise the three crucks. The side walls of the east bay would have been built higher to form a wall for the cruck to rest against. The cruck was then re-assembled with the feet at the base of the upstanding section of wall and the apex to the west. This can be ascertained from the present position of the squared pegs used to secure the collar in position. The cruck was then hauled upright into position from the east. Each cruck would have been secured by temporary struts or by building up part of the walls of the next bay. This procedure would have been repeated for the other two trusses. After this the ridge piece would have been secured to the 'yolks' of the trusses by long wooden pegs and the side timbers, 'purlins', also attached by pegs. The common rafters

were pegged to the ridge piece and the purlins with the feet resting on top of the wall or onto a wall plate. Split laths were nailed to the common rafters ready for thatching.

There is no surviving evidence for the form of the doors or windows of the medieval building. It is unlikely that any windows were glazed but would have been protected by internal or external shutters.

DATA ON THE MEDIEVAL BUILDING AT THE 'OLD WALLS' AND 'OLD SHOP', CULWORTH

Grid Ref: SP 542469

No. of Bays: 4

No. of crucks: 3 - One complete raised cruck and portion of another survive.

Principal rafters: Hall front blade 220mm x 200mm above elbow.

Cruck Apex : pegged yolk

Purlins : Upper and lower (160 x 150mm)

Windbraces: None

Common rafters: poles and squared timbers approximately 100mm wide and at 460mm centres.

Collars: Two: one approximately 4.5m above floor level, the other 2.06m.

Arch braces: none

Floor to ridge height: 6.1m approx

Cruck span: 3.96 m internally

Hall size: 3.96 m by 7.5 m (estimated)

Overall external size: not measured

Wall thickness at ground floor level: front 0.69 m; rear 0.56m; gables not measured.

Smoke blackening: Principal and common rafters, ridge, laths and thatch over hall and west chamber.

Sawn timbers: High end cruck blade and possibly the ridge piece.

BRIAN GIGGINS

INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY IN NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

The archaeology of industrialisation or the archaeology of the industrial revolution has until recently been given scant attention by mainstream archaeologists. Outside the heartland of the industrial revolution in central and north-west England the subject has been primarily the province of amateur enthusiasts with little attention being paid to the subject by the professional archaeological community. This attitude has been reflected in Northamptonshire where for the past 30 years Northamptonshire Industrial Archaeology Group has been the only organisation concerned with protecting and recording the county's industrial past. There has however been a dramatic shift in attitudes to the subject over the past 10 years.

The industrial component of the Monuments Protection Programme has been underway for nearly 10 years with work in progress on a total of 25 industries. A number of industrial sites have been recommended for World Heritage Site status and the current Chairman of English Heritage, Sir Neil Cossons, has a background in industrial archaeology. There have also been significant developments in Northamptonshire. The following is a summary of some of the significant projects which have been undertaken within the past 3 years or are currently underway.

ASSESSMENT

In 1998 Dr Barrie Trinder, Senior Lecturer in Industrial Archaeology, University College, Northampton was commissioned by the Historic Environment Team of Northamptonshire County Council (formerly Northamptonshire Heritage) to produce a report about the industrial archaeology of Northamptonshire. The report examined the significance of industrial activities in Northamptonshire, assessed the state of knowledge/research on industrial archaeology, reviewed the appropriateness of policies for conserving the sites, structures and monuments relating to the county's industrial past and made suggestions about the direction of future work. This report formed the catalyst for a number of initiatives relating to the industrial and modern historic environment of Northamptonshire.

In April 1999 a desk-based assessment of all the major industries and services in Northamptonshire

(1750-1960) including boot and shoe manufacture, ironstone extraction, brewing and malting, stone quarrying, transport, public utilities and commercial/entertainment facilities was undertaken. The assessment outlined all secondary sources and known extensive surveys and assessed the survival and archaeological potential of each of these themes. This assessment was used to form the basis of a resource assessment for the archaeological regional research frameworks review which was undertaken in the county in 1999-2000. A seminar was held at local level in December 2000 where the issue of industrial and modern archaeology was debated and suggestions for the future direction of research were put forward. The regional research frameworks seminar for industrial archaeology took place in March 2000.

SURVEY AND RECORDING

A programme of extensive survey of the industrial and modern archaeology of the county is currently underway. The Emergency Recording Team of English Heritage formerly part of the Royal Commission of Historical Monuments of England has undertaken a survey of the boot and shoe industry in Northamptonshire. The project surveyed all extant buildings (including factories, workshops, warehouses and leather preparation premises) relating to the boot and shoe industry in the county; over 450 buildings were recorded with a photograph and site summary sheet prepared for each individual building. A summary document detailing the history and development of the buildings relating to the industry has been produced and this will be followed by the production of a published book about the boot and shoe industry which will include detailed surveys on particular themes/individual buildings.

The Extensive Urban Survey for Northamptonshire, which provides an archaeological assessment of the major urban centres in the county from the Roman period to the present day, included 16 settlements of importance in the period following 1750 (Kettering, Wellingborough, Rushden, Oundle, Thrapston, Brackley, Daventry, Towcester, Rothwell, Higham Ferrers, Long Buckby, Desborough, Irthlingborough, Raunds, Finedon and Burton Latimer). The aim of the survey was to provide an overview of each town and to assess the potential of the surviving remains. The work included document-

ary research, map analysis, a field visit and the production of a written report.

Geoff Starmer of Northamptonshire Industrial Archaeology Group is building on his work of the past 30 years by undertaking a survey of windmills, watermills and brickworks for Northamptonshire Heritage. The Defence of Britain project, a nationwide initiative aimed at recording all 20th century military sites in the country, has been co-ordinated in Northamptonshire by Graham Cadman of Northamptonshire Heritage. Over 400 military sites have now been recorded through a combination of field-work and documentary sources.

A number of individual industrial sites have been subject to detailed recording prior to demolition, conversion or redevelopment; the work has been carried out through the planning process using supplementary planning guidance 15 (Planning and Historic Environment) and 16 (Planning and Archaeology). The sites recorded include the last remaining maltings building in Oundle, Express Lifts Works in Northampton, the John White Shoe fact-

ory, Rushden and the industrial complex in the Southbridge area, Northampton.

STRATEGY

The initiatives outlined above have considerably enhanced understanding about the industrial and modern historic environment of Northamptonshire, but more work is required to ensure that the industrial heritage of the county is given equal consideration as all other aspects of the historic environment. To this end a strategy has been produced outlining a five year plan for prioritising the conservation and recording of this aspect of the cultural heritage of Northamptonshire.

For further information about any of these initiatives or to arrange to view any of the documents discussed above please contact the Historical Environment Team of Northamptonshire County Council on (01604) 237246

JENNY BALLINGER

AN UNUSUAL POTTERY FIND FROM TOWCESTER

A watching brief was undertaken by C and P Woodfield in November 1997 for Mr & Mrs Iley on the site of a proposed extension to a property now known as 'Nookfield House' in Towcester. The house is a 19th century brick structure lying adjacent to the SW corner of the churchyard of St Lawrence's Church, between Church Lane and the old gasworks site, now the Malthouse Housing Association development. This location is well inside the Roman and later town circuits and the possibility was that undisturbed archaeological levels existed. The trenches for the footings and services reached a maximum depth of 1.2m, and largely consisted of garden soil and 18th century make-up, of little or no archaeological interest. Two-three small sherds of unidentifiable medieval pottery were recovered from residual contexts together with a quantity of 18th-19th century pottery and bottle fragments, including the sherd illustrated.

This sherd (Fig. 1) is of a footed bowl of porcelainous fabric coated with a thick white dimpled glaze. After firing, the interior of the bowl received an inscription, initially set out in black paint, which was then carefully enriched with a thick paint of light brown colour, probably containing some gold in



Fig 1

suspension, or at least intended to give this impression. It was then presumably fired for a second time to stabilise the paintwork. This, being unusual, was submitted to the Department of Oriental Antiquities of the British Museum, and was identified by S. Canby, assistant keeper, as being Chinese De Hua ware, an export porcelain from the southern province of *Fukien* (*Fujian*) (the traditional 19th century spellings are used here, with current orthography in brackets). The inscription is not easily read due to loss of paint but appears to be, surprisingly, the *shahada* or profession of Muslim faith (*lā ilāha illa'llāh muhammadun rasā-lu'llāh*) written in a standard Arabic script. J Harrison-Hall, a keeper of Chinese Ceramics confirms that this is a surprising object to be found on any excavation in Britain.

Fukien province, although lying well east of the large Muslim population of Turkestan and southern China established from the 13th century on, also contains the large seaports of *Amoy* (*Xiamen*), *Swatow*

(*Shantou*) and *Foo-chow* (*Fuzhou*). No doubt the employment opportunities in these great cities in the 19th century encouraged an influx of workers from the countryside. The inscription is clearly brush-painted by someone familiar with the script, and was perhaps intended to appeal to the Muslim market overseas, particularly in the Malay States (Malaysia) and the East Indian Archipelago (Indonesia) which has historically relied on export porcelains from China, rather than the more ultra-orthodox Muslim world where it would not be acceptable to place food or indeed anything on top of the *shahāda*. How this one piece got to Towcester remains a mystery; perhaps an earlier occupant of the Nook, as so many others in that period, had worked overseas in the colonial service in Further India when he acquired the bowl, and, despite its lack of artistic appeal or monetary value, shipped it back to Britain.

CHARMIAN and PAUL WOODFIELD

ROE FARM PREHISTORIC SETTLEMENT

INTRODUCTION

Evidence of prehistoric activity on the Roe Farm site (SP 842605) was first discovered through routine field walking in 1964 by R. Hollowell (1971). Since that time, the site has been regularly walked, as the pattern of agriculture has allowed, but from 1991, by S. R. Hollowell.

The main site (Area 1 on Figure 1) is on mainly light soil, becoming increasingly heavy towards the western field boundary. There is little evidence of gravel flint occurring naturally in the plough soil but there are glacial deposits nearby which fail to outcrop. The site is perched on the southern rim of the Nene valley at a point almost midway between the modern settlements of Cogenhoe and Whiston, which villages together, give their name to the civil parish. Lying on top of a spur of land at approximately 80m O.D. the site looks north and down into the valley basin and flood plain which is 2 km. wide

at this point. The site itself covers 80 hectares and is bounded on the immediate south by Cogenhoe Firs, a modern plantation on the site of exhausted iron ore quarries dating from the mid-19th century and the First World War period. In prehistory, the valley contained rich deposits of flint-bearing alluvial gravels. To the east of the site, the land falls away into a small valley in which a small stream joins the Nene further to the north-east. To the immediate west of the main site is a narrow, north-south cutting formed by the 19th century ironstone workings and railway. To the west of that, there is evidence of further prehistoric activity in the form of worked flints, waste flakes and small patches of Bunters quartzite pebbles before the land is further disturbed by the quarrying (see area 2 on Figure 1). To the north of the main site, the land falls away steeply down to the Cogenhoe-Grendon road and the valley floor.

The Roe Farm flints finds have been discovered during 35 years' field walking in 2 metre strips. An early attempt at gridding the field was defeated by the undulating lie of the land but a number of loose clusters were identified mostly to the north of area 1 in Figure 1 – along the edge of the valley rim.

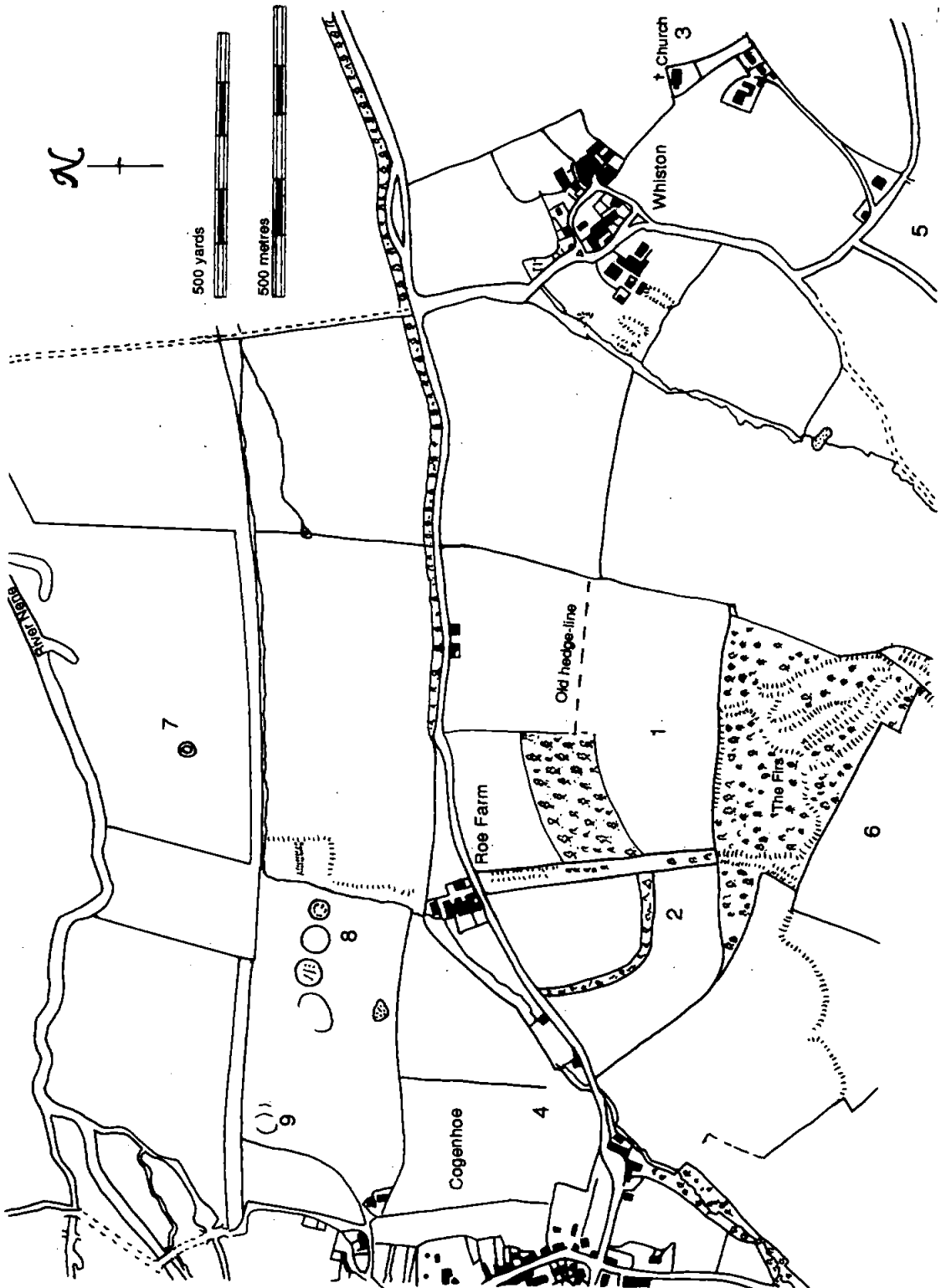


Fig 1 Location map

CONTEXT

Within the context of the area, a number of surface finds have been discovered near to the Roe Farm site and at least one identifiable prehistoric landscape feature is within close proximity. The Tanged arrowhead (Figure 2.1) was found approximately 100 metres east of Whiston church by R. Hollowell in the 1970s (see area 3 in Figure 1) which is 1.2 km from the main site. Also, to the north-east of Whiston church, (SP 858608) and beyond the area covered by Figure 1, is extensive surface scatter from the Romano-British period accompanied by some worked flint such as the notched flake and cores shown in Figure 3 (8–11). The fabricator shown in Figure 2 (7) was also found on the northern edge of this scatter at (SP 85756090), 1.7 Km from the Roe Farm site.

A second tanged arrowhead shown in Figure 2 (2) was discovered in 1998 by R.A. Hollowell, 800 metres to the west and north of the main Roe Farm site (see area 4 in Figure 1).

Closer to the Roe Farm settlement, 200 metres to the south and south-west of Cogenhoe Firs (see area 6 in Figure 1), is the site of an Iron Age and Roman settlement (*RCHM*, 2, (1979), 19, (4)). Here too, occasional worked flints are found, such as those shown in Figure 2 (3–6). In an area, 1 Km to the south-east of the main site (see area 5 in Figure 1), where there are unusually large quantities of gravel flint occurring on the surface, occasional worked tools such as that in Figure 3 (12) are found.

A bowl barrow lies 800 metres north of the site at SP 84026135 (area 7 in Figure 1). Positioned on the floor of the valley but still south of the river and within sight of the main settlement, it appears as a low mound 0.5 metres high and 26 metres in diameter. Air photographs suggest that the mound is surrounded by a 5 metre wide ditch, the spoil from which was used to construct the mound. The ditch is now filled and no longer obvious on the ground. (NMR, Northamptonshire, 17135). Air photographs taken in 1986 suggest other, flattened, barrows, 600 metres south west of the first and 700 metres north-west of the Roe Farm site (see area 8 in Figure 1). Still within sight of the settlement, these mainly appear as circular enclosures or rings. The most easterly of these appears as a large outer circle with an inner one, slightly off-set – as though the outer ring was a later re-cut. Both are bisected by a 19th century branch line from what was the nearby

Blisworth to Peterborough line (Tonks 1989, 132; RAF air photograph CPE/UK 1994, 1192, 13/4/1947). A larger circle appears immediately to the west of this one and is followed by a third which appears to contain marks suggestive of post-holes. A fourth, less distinct mark to the west also borders a public footpath and pre-enclosure road (Eyre 1779). Other, faint marks appear some distance towards the modern field's first western boundary (see area 9 in Figure 1).

It is supposed that bowl barrows date from the late Neolithic through to the late Bronze Age periods (2400–1500 BC). Used for burials, they sometimes appear as individual monuments but on other occasions, in groups. Pryor, in discussing David Hall's contribution to the Fenland Project (Pryor, 1991, 68–70), refers to 'barrowfields' further down the Nene valley. There, in the Peterborough area, numbers of round barrows were found clustered together. Elsewhere, (Pryor, 1999, pp. 83–5), suggests that round barrows were used, not just for the inhumation of the Bronze Age 'upper classes' but were also used as boundary markers. Speculating that they may have been used to demarcate family holdings, he found that many of the very earliest field boundary ditches were either aligned on barrows or respected them in some way or other.

ROE FARM SURFACE FINDS

The assemblage includes 621 struck flints with most having been found on the main site (Area 1 in Figure 1) and consisting of a wide range of flint tools and production waste. On the adjacent part of the site (Area 2 in Figure 1), which is west of the 19th century iron ore railway, the surface finds are fewer and consist of waste flakes, retouched flakes, core fragments, and several heat affected Bunters quartzite pebbles.

The flint is of two possible types. First, gravel flints, which appear in a wide range of colours including white, greys, browns and mixtures. They may have been obtained either from the alluvial gravels in the valley basin or from nearby glacial deposits on the southern rim – the coarse flint gravel, already mentioned, which outcrops south of the main site at area 5 in Figure 1. The second type of material is flint nodules. Their source is not known but a typical example 40mm in diameter (weighing 93g)

was found in area 1. Larger nodules of a black flint and of a light grey flint, identical to that in the assemblage, have been found in glacial deposits 2 km away in the neighbouring parish of Brafield (SP 828588). Nodule fragments found there occur in the weight range – 450g to 930g – easily large enough for the manufacture of small tools and implements. There may be other deposits which are closer but are as yet undiscovered.

Most of the struck flints are unpatinated but a few, mostly blade segments are exceptions to this. A relatively few tools are heavily patinated and several of these have unpatinated retouching suggesting that their original date is pre-Neolithic but that they were re-used in later periods. The flint assemblage from the two areas is summarised in Table 1.

Table 1 Composition of the Roe Farm flint assemblage

	Area 1	Area 2	Total
Waste flakes	350	20	370
Retouched/utilised flakes	81	8	89
Single platform cores	20	-	20
Multi-platform cores	17	-	17
Core fragments	28	7	35
Hammer stone fragments	10	-	10
Leaf-shaped arrowheads	3	-	3
Oblique arrowheads	3+1	-	4
Transverse arrowheads (chisel)	3	-	3
Barbed and tanged arrowheads	3	-	3
Notched flakes	16	-	16
Scrapers	31	-	31
Blades	9	1	10
Piercers	4	-	4
Plano-convex knives	5	-	5
Possible axehead fragment	1	-	1
Unused flint nodule	1	-	1
Possible pot-boiler stone	1	-	1
Burnt flint samples	2	-	2
TOTALS	589	36	625

WASTE FLAKES

The 370 waste flakes have been struck from a wide range of flint including that of a mottled grey and light brown colour (which may have been derived from gravel flint although the cortex does not suggest this). There was also some from more evenly grained, vitreous brown flint and, the equally good quality, black flint. Overall, the sizes of the flakes range from as little as 11 mm (0.3g) to 150 mm (15g). A summary of the assemblage for area 1 is given in Table 2. Primary flakes are those having cortex on more than 50% of their dorsal surface; secondary flakes have cortex on less than 50% of their dorsal surface; and tertiary flakes have no cortex at all. The table suggests that parts of the site were being used for the final stages in the manufacture of tools. This is supported to a

certain extent by the accompanying numbers of cores, core fragments and hammer fragments.

Table 2 Waste Flakes from Area 1

% Proportion of assemblage	Ave. Weight	Weight (g)	Range (g)
Primary	7	6	1–15
Secondary	33	4	0.5–14
Tertiary	60	2.1	0.3–11

Many of the flakes contain areas of cortex which is usually of an even and unabraded texture similar to the Brafield nodules other than its light brown colour which reflects the iron-rich nature of the soil at Roe Farm. All of the flints in this collection show signs of having been struck but there are no obvious marks of adaptation (such as retouching) in order to create a tool. Some could of course, have been used as such, having been created by 'lucky strikes'.

WORKED (RETOUCHED) FLAKES

The 89 flints in this collection have received some degree of retouching. In some cases, this may have resulted in the formation of a tool but in others, the flake may have been discarded during the manufacturing process as unsuitable. In most cases, despite the work on them, their immediate purpose is not obvious although many could have been used as scrapers, some as notched flakes and some as arrowheads. Several different coloured flints are represented, suggesting gravel flints although a few, mainly black flints have areas of cortex. Several have varying degrees of patination.

SINGLE PLATFORM CORES

All of these cores were found on the main site (area 1 in Figure 1) and are of dark grey or black flint. They range in size from 12mm in diameter (11g) to 50mm (177g). They are summarised in Table 3 below. The two largest cores (177g and 122g) have received relatively few strikes and are still largely intact. Both are segments of larger nodules. Eight of the single platform cores are illustrated in Figure 4 (13–20).

MULTI-PLATFORM CORES

All of this group were found on the main site, area 1 and are also summarised in table 3. They include some in black flint but also some in brown, piebald coloured material. Twelve of the cores have traces of cortex and one could be described as discoidal. The

Table 3 Core Weights

Weight range (grams)	Single platform	Multi platform
10-19	10	6
20-29	4	5
30-39	3	2
40-49	-	2
50-59	-	1
60-69	-	1
70+	2	-

NOTES

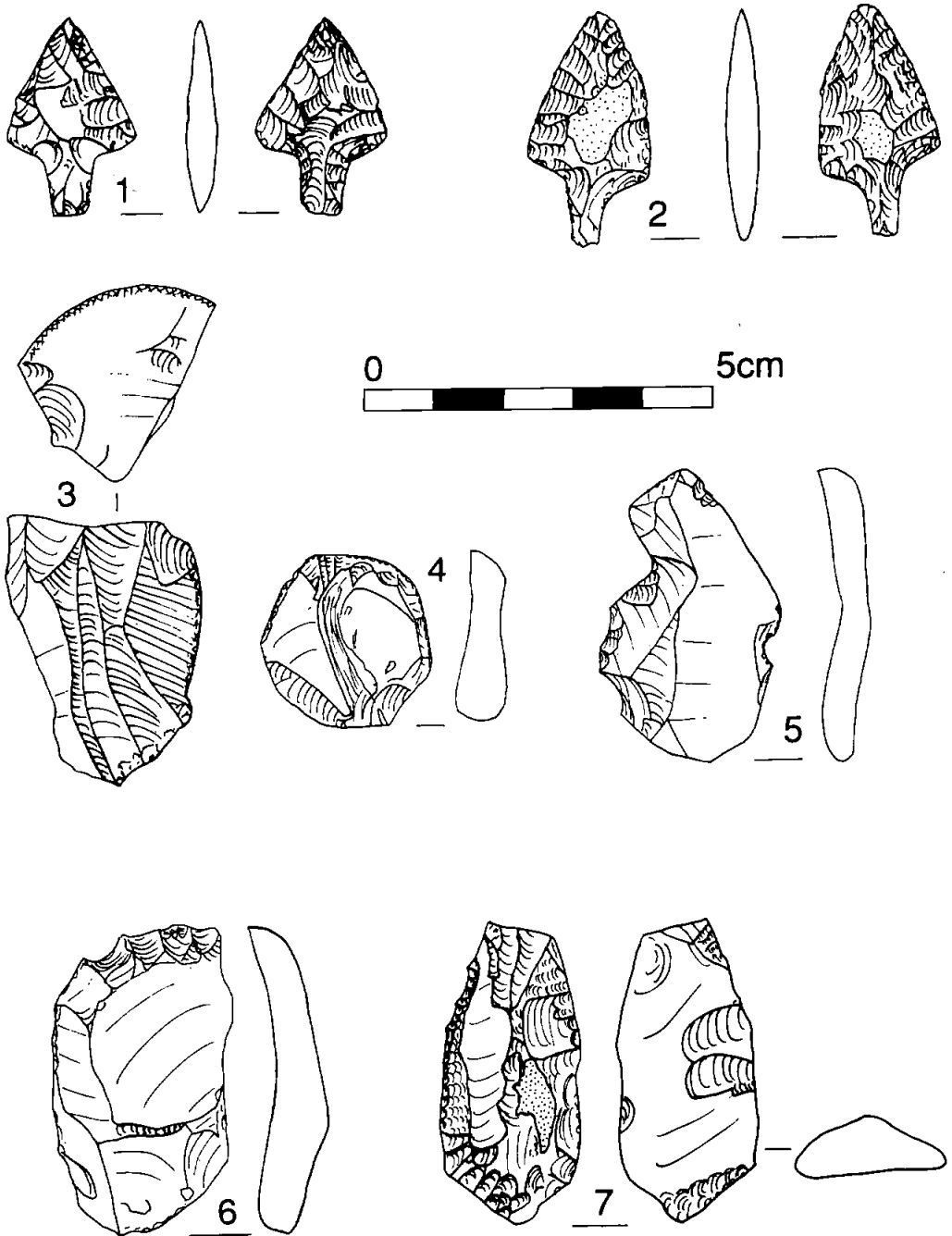


Fig 2

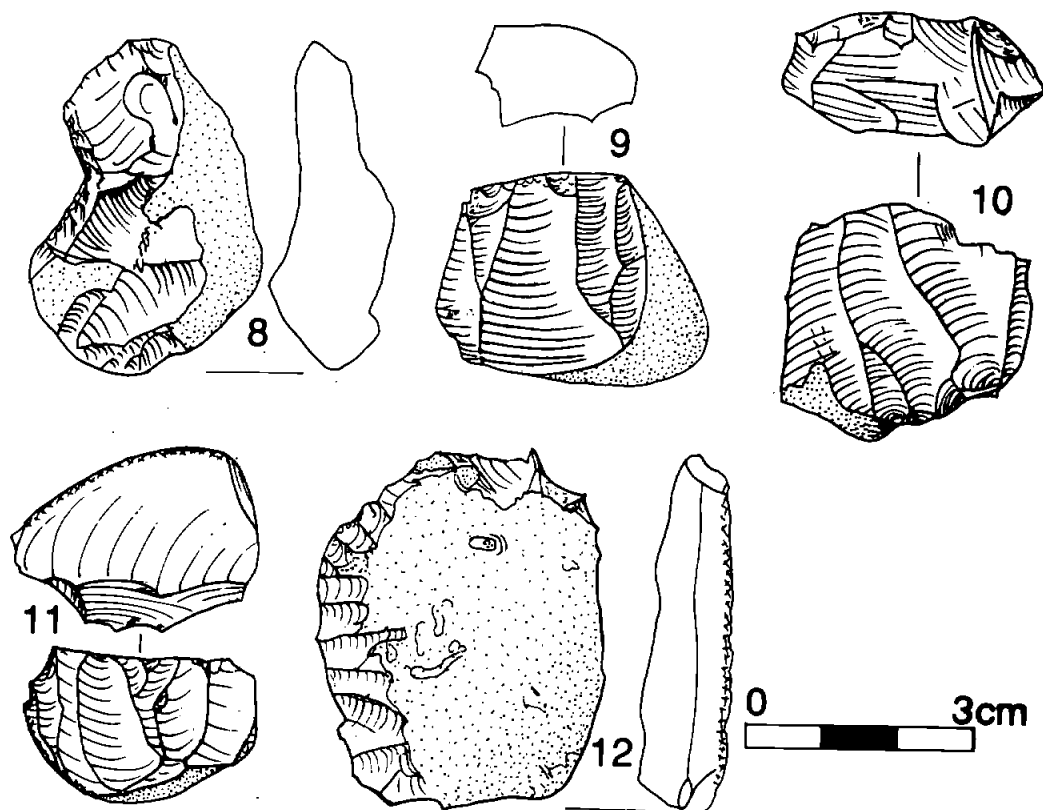


Fig 3

largest core is approximately 45 mm in diameter (51g) and the smallest, 15 mm in diameter (12g). Two of the cores are shown in Figure 4 (21–2).

CORE FRAGMENTS

The average weight of the core fragments is 16.3g. They reflect a similar mix of flint to that of the multi-platform cores and also like all the cores, are unpatinated. One exception to this is a small chip (6g) which displays both patinated and unpatinated flaking scars, suggesting two distinct periods of activity.

HAMMER STONE FRAGMENTS

The hammer stone fragments are all dark brown flint ranging in size from approximately 20mm diameter (14g) to 35mm diameter (40g). The average weight of the fragments is 23.7g. Seven have areas of mainly smooth cortex, 6 coloured off-white, and the seventh a pinkish red, suggestive of heat treatment. All the fragments have varying degrees of surface area damage consistent with continual blows against hard surfaces and were found on the main site (area 1). Two of the hammer stone fragments are shown in Figure 4 (23–4).

LEAF SHAPED ARROWHEADS

Fragments of three leaf-shaped arrowheads have been found. The tip shown in Figure 5 (25) is in black flint with ventral and dorsal retouching. The arrowhead shown in Figure 5 (26) is of a light brown vitreous flint wafer, but only one half survives. It has been extensively retouched on both ventral and dorsal sides. A third and similar arrowhead fragment was found in the south-east corner of the main site (not illustrated) but the point is missing leaving approximately two thirds of the original length. All three leaf-shaped arrowheads are of a style common throughout the Neolithic period.

TRANSVERSE (CHISEL) ARROWHEADS

The three chisel arrowheads shown in Figure 5 (27–9) are all made from dark, slightly mottled, brown flint. They are similar in form to Clark's Class C (Clark 1934). There is little retouching on the dorsal side but very little evidence of the bulbs of percussion, suggesting perhaps, that a soft hammer technique was used in their construction.

NOTES

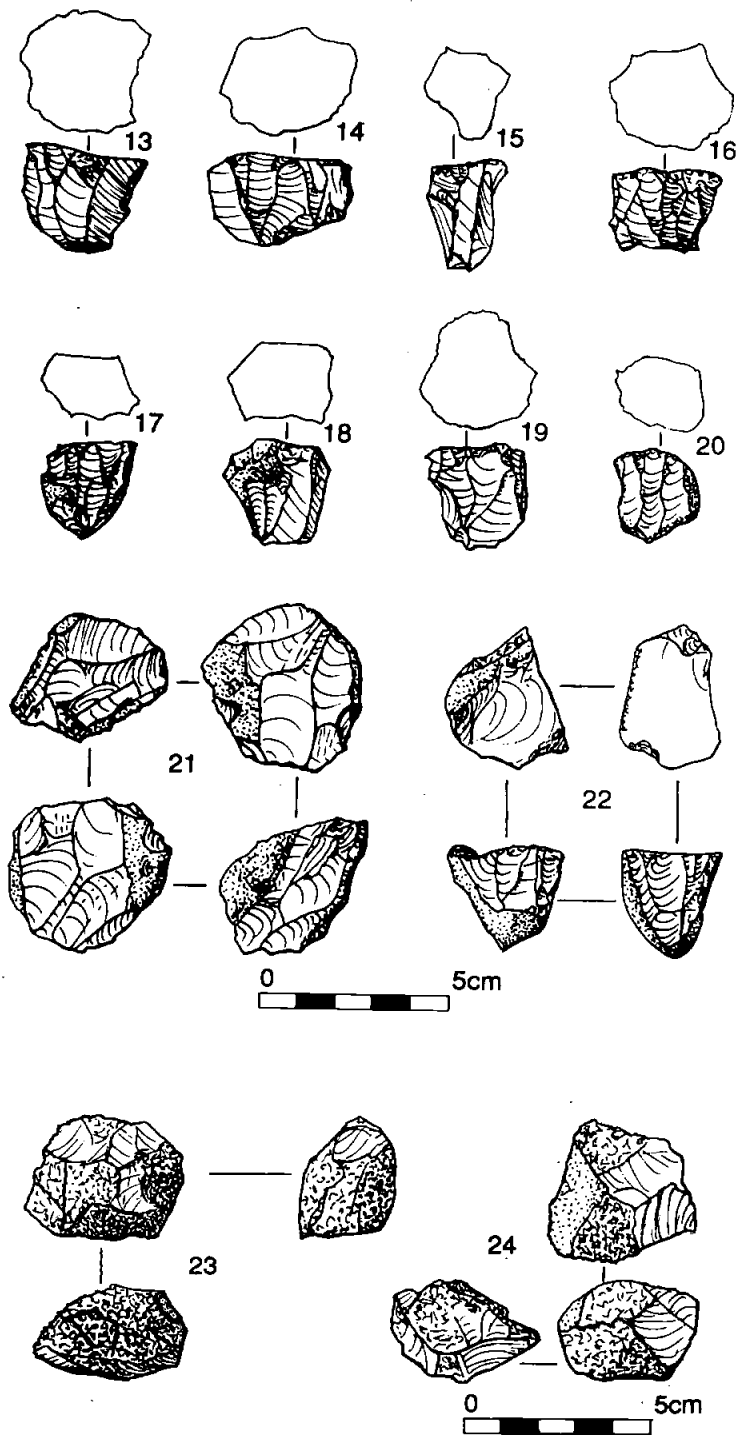


Fig 4

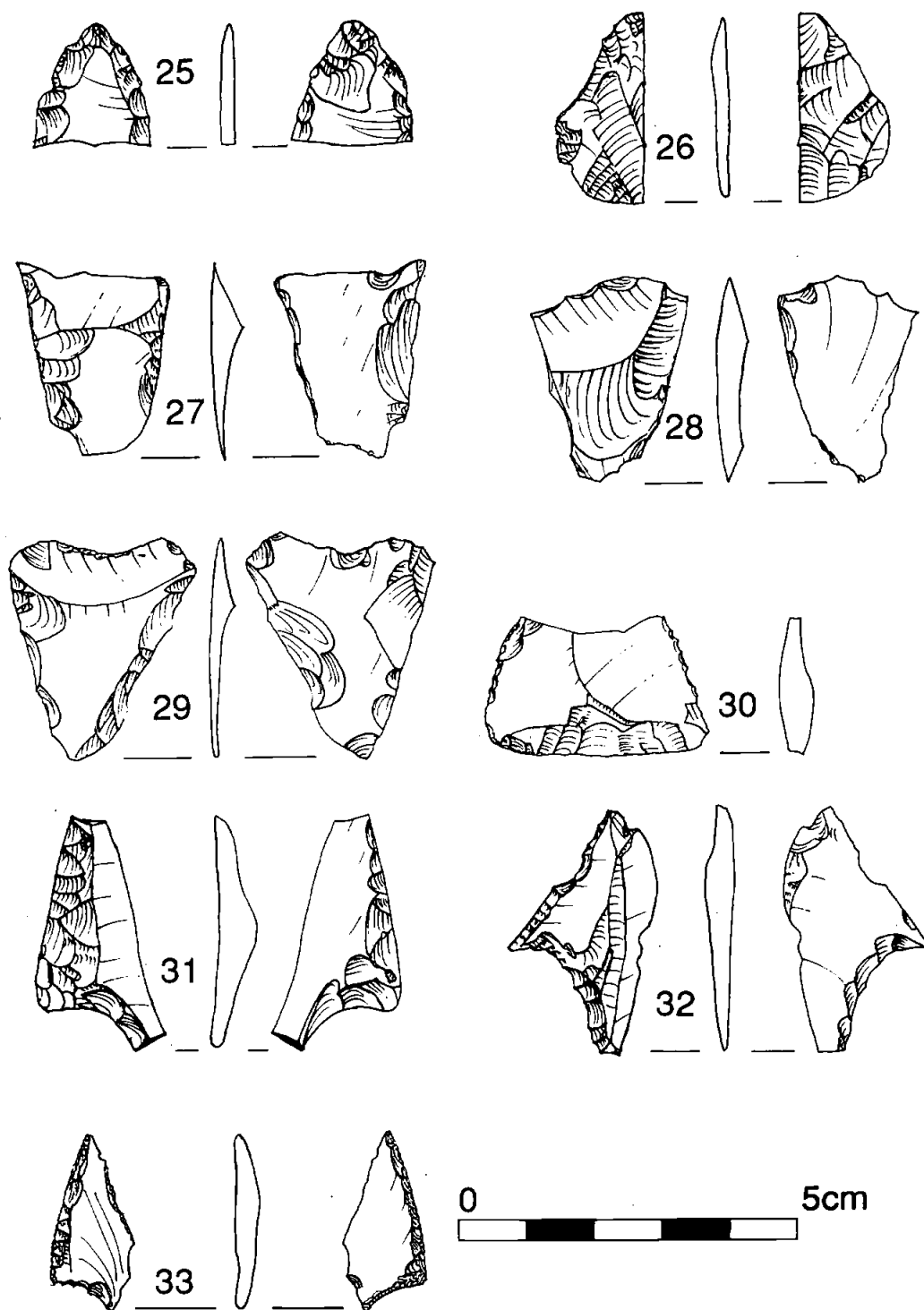


Fig 5

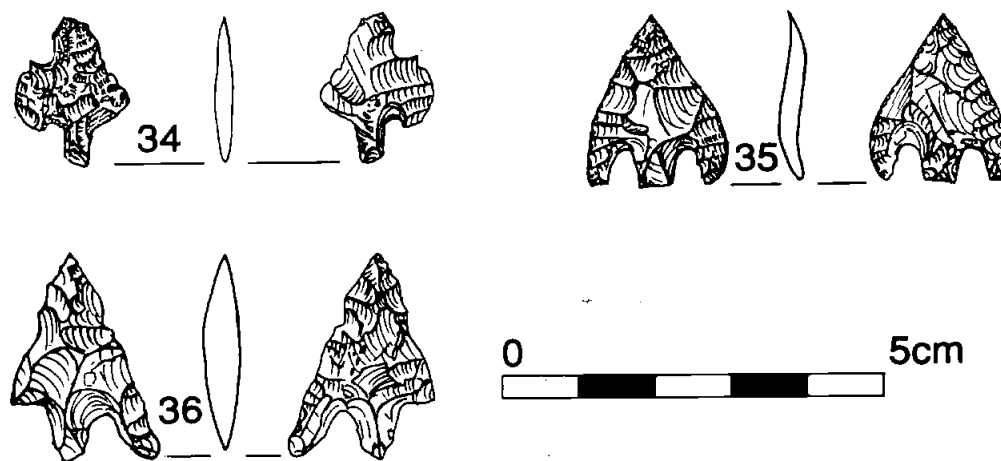


Fig 6

OBLIQUE ARROWHEADS

All of the 4 oblique form of arrowheads from the site (area 1) are shown in Figure 5 (30–3). All are incomplete to some extent, 5 (30) for example represents approximately two thirds of the original arrowhead. This object is made from a light, mottled brown flint and is worked mainly on the ventral face. The other 3 arrowheads are of dark brown, vitreous flint and are similar in shape to Green's oblique type f (Green 1980, 102). All the oblique arrowheads are unpatinated and bifacially retouched, 5 (33) in particular has very fine and steep edge retouching.

BARBED AND TANGED ARROWHEADS

The three barbed and tanged arrowheads are made from even-grained, light brown vitreous flint. They are all bifacially worked and are illustrated in Figure 6 (34–6). Arrowhead 6 (34) is very small, 15mm by 20mm. One barb has been lost and there is a notch on one side. The other two arrowheads are of the type associated with the early Bronze Age, sometimes being used as grave goods in male burials (Darvill 1996, 90–1). An exceptionally long barbed and tanged arrowhead discovered by D. Jackson at Grendon Quarry (approximately 3 km distance from the main Roe Farm site) was also conjectured to have been associated with funerary practises. (Jackson 1995, 9) Arrowhead 6 (35), whilst much smaller than the Grendon arrowhead, is finely worked and may have been intended for such purposes. It is similar in form to Green's Conygar Hill type (Green 1980, 117). The final arrowhead, 6 (36) would also have been a high quality weapon had one of the barbs not broken off. It is possible that this damage occurred during the production process since the cross-section of the broken barb is only 1.25mm².

NOTCHED FLAKES

The notched flakes shown in Figure 7 are made from flint in a wide varieties of colours including opaque pale grey, vitreous light brown, grey/white piebald, dark brown and black. All are unpatinated and two have traces of cortex. Several are approximately arrowhead shaped. The notching usually takes place on the ventral side but occasionally, and most notably on 7 (51), on the

dorsal side. The notches themselves vary in size and shape, 7 (37) and 7 (38) have sharp, almost right-angled notches. Both 7 (39) and 7 (40) have shallow but wide notches, as though to prepare a tape section material. Flakes 7 (43–6) have notches of approximately 5mm diameter, possibly for cleaning animal ligament in order to make thonging. Flakes 7 (48–50) have wider notches of approximately 9mm diameter and could have been used in the manufacture of arrow shafts. The final object in this section, 7 (51) has several areas of retouch but the principal feature is a worked notch of approximately 15mm diameter.

SCRAPERS

Apart from the retouched flakes already described, there are 31 scrapers, all of flint and all from the main site. These include examples from the full range of colours for the site, several have traces of cortex and one has reddened cortex commensurate with heat treatment. Figure 8 shows a representative sample. In total, there are 4 thumbnail scrapers, 4 larger ovate scrapers, 8 end scrapers, 10 end/side scrapers, 4 side scrapers and 1 pointed scraper with fine and steep retouching on both edges of the ventral side, shown in Figure 8 (68). One side/end scraper is of black flint, heavily patinated on all sides but with unpatinated retouching on the work edge - suggesting two periods of use.

The side/end scrapers can be subdivided into left and right hand scrapers. Assuming that the natural action is across and away from the worker, 8 (63) and 8 (64) are left-handed tools and 8 (65) is right-handed. Altogether, there are 6 left-handed scrapers and 4 right-handed scrapers.

BLADES AND BLADE SEGMENTS

There are 10 blades, 9 of which were from the main site. Most are broken and have varying degrees of patination. The unpatinated and apparently later blades are mostly of light brown flint. The blades are all struck but there is little retouching. A sample of them is shown in Figure 9. Blade 9 (69) is a lightly patinated waisted blade - the notches forming the waist being unpatinated and apparently later.

NOTES

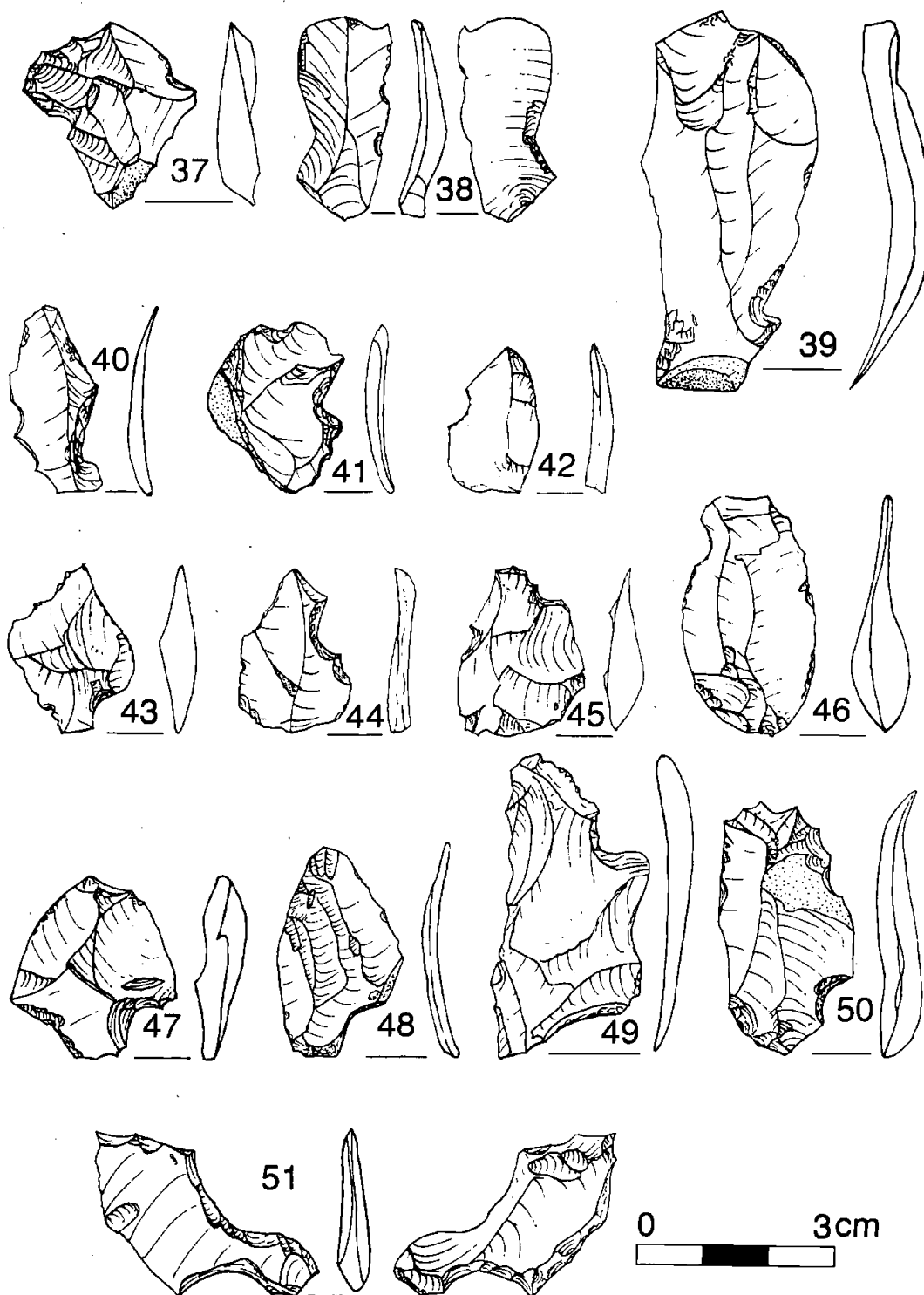


Fig 7

NOTES

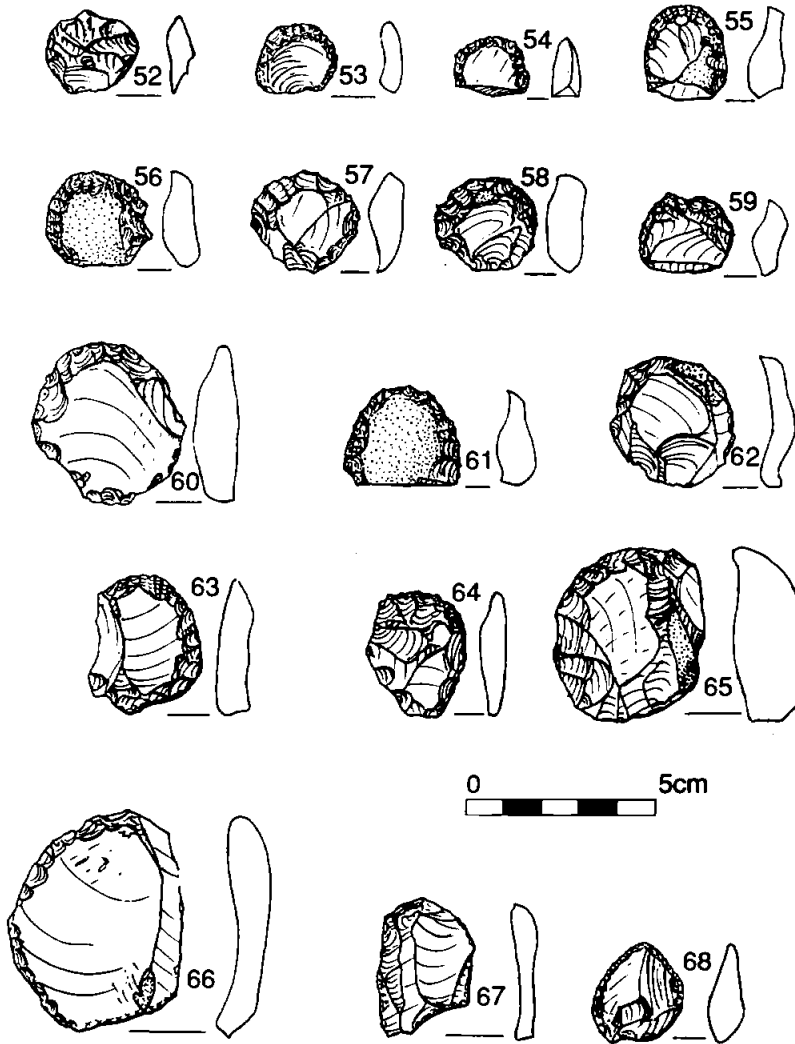


Fig 8

PIERCERS

The 4 piercers all came from the main site. They are of dark brown flint, mostly with areas of cortex, being obtained from the outer layers of nodules. Two are shown in Figure 9 (79, 80).

PLANO-CONVEX KNIVES

The plano-convex knives came from the main site. They are of black flint with only small traces of cortex, being generally of better quality material than that used for the piercers above. A typical one is shown in Figure 9 (81).

POSSIBLE AXE TIP

One flint in the assemblage, Figure 9 (82), may be the tip of a

polished axe-head. It is of a mottled, dense, grey flint, which contains what appears to be calcareous deposits which would have flawed the manufactured tool. Although the surface is generally smooth, the bottom of both faces have been retouched. Allowing for the fracture, the end view is symmetrical. Samples of this type of flint on the site are rare but not unique.

BURNT FLINT

The assemblage contains two samples of burnt flint weighing 10g and 27g respectively. Such material is a common feature of the site and was first noted when it was discovered in 1964. The samples are reddened and fissured. They may be the remains of pot-boiler stones.

NOTES

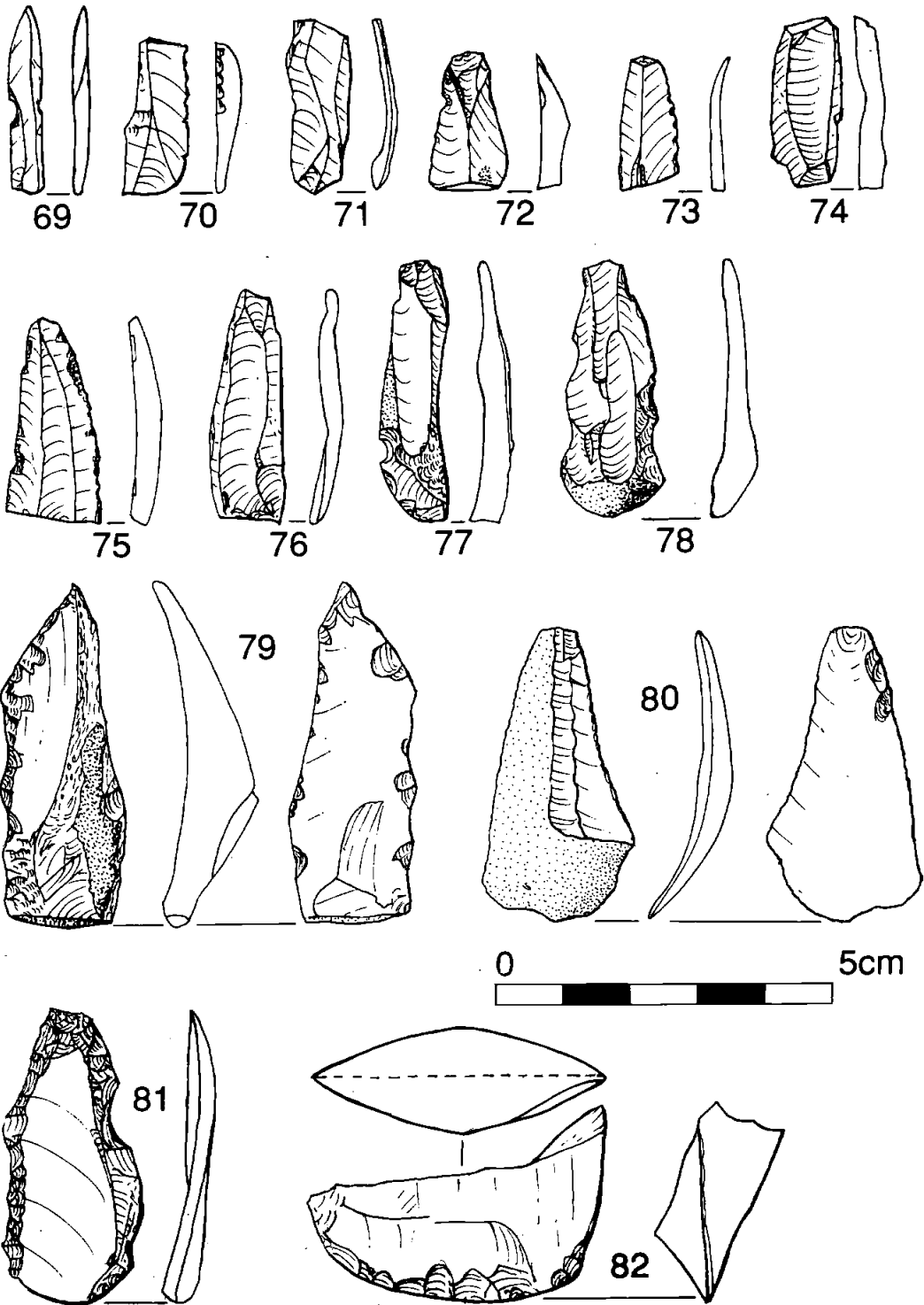


Fig 9

POSSIBLE POT-BOILER STONE

An unworked stone approximately 120mm X 110mm X 55mm and weighing 1.078 kg was found on the main site. It is reddened as though with heat and surface fissured as though by constant quenching. There are no areas of cortex but it appears to be a dense form of flint. Despite its size, it is suggestive of a pot-boiling stone.

CONCLUSION

It seems likely that the Roe farm settlement was associated with the barrows in the Nene valley. These were important landscape features in the Bronze Age and may have been the funerary monuments of the tribal leaders from the main site.

In a broad context, surface finds from the area suggest that this part of the Nene valley was well-populated and provided materials for flint knapping as well as fertile land for agricultural use. On the main site, the scrapers and arrowheads in particular provide evidence that the Roe Farm site was occupied over a long period of time in the late Neolithic and early Bronze Age. Local flint was used for the manufacture of a wide range of tools – many of a high quality. Some flint, originally in the form of black nodules and grey nodules may have been brought in from other areas – particularly the Brafield site. The relatively low proportion of primary flakes suggests that this part of the manufacturing process took place elsewhere – perhaps at the quarry site and the Roe Farm people were skilled knappers who were able to finish the tools to a high standard.

For the future, a geophysical survey of the main site followed by excavation might allow the discovery of dwellings and domestic refuse pits. These in turn could lead to a more precise dating of the settlement and provide more information about life there in the prehistoric period.

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