

Archaeology in Northamptonshire 2005

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PREHISTORIC

A43 CORBY LINK ROAD

NGR SP 861833 to 910872

Geophysical Survey and Trial Excavation
Northamptonshire Archaeology

An archaeological evaluation comprising a geophysical survey by Adrian Butler and Ian Fisher and trial trench excavation carried out by Tim Upson-Smith on the line of the proposed A43 Corby Link Road revealed a number of scattered archaeological sites. An isolated ring ditch, known from previous aerial photography, is 38m in diameter and the ditch is 0.9m deep by 4.8m wide. Although no dating evidence was recovered, it is likely to be the ring ditch of a Bronze Age round barrow. A further potential ring ditch was also located, along with an Iron Age ditch and two Roman ditches.

HEMINGTON, ELLANDS FARM

NGR TL 084 846

Excavation

Northamptonshire Archaeology

Two main areas of archaeological features were discovered on the site of a proposed group of six wind turbines near Hemington by Steven Morris. The area of Iron Age occupation, comprising mostly curvilinear gullies, shallow pits and postholes, was not closely datable but the pottery is characteristic of the middle to late Iron Age.

NORTHAMPTON, HARDINGSTONE ALLOTMENTS

NGR SP 763 574

Geophysical Survey and Trial Excavation
Northamptonshire Archaeology

Two irregular linear ditches recorded by geophysical survey, carried out by Adrian Butler, were investigated by trial trenching, by Paul Mason, on

former allotments in Hardingstone. The ditches contained Iron Age pottery, animal bone, charred remains and the bottom stone of a rotary quern, suggesting a focus of settlement nearby. They appeared to be a continuation of ditches previously recorded on land to the east in 1969. Early Roman pottery kilns had also been recorded on the school site to the east and a little way to the north-west, but the geophysical survey did not locate any potential kilns within the allotment site. This forms the last substantial open area within this known complex of Iron Age and Roman activity on the Hunsbury ridge to the south the Northampton.

ROMAN

CRICK, WATLING STREET

NGR SP 5782 7152

Excavation

Northamptonshire Archaeology

Remains of a metalled road surface was revealed on a length of public byway, which was part of Watling Street Roman Road, to the west of Crick, during an archaeological recording action carried out by Chris Jones on behalf of Northamptonshire County Council's Rights of Way section. No dating evidence was present.

DEANSHANGER, KINGSBROOK SCHOOL

NGR SP 7684 3957

Excavation

Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological remains to the south-east of a Roman villa that was first identified in 1957 were examined by Jim Brown and Ed Taylor. Excavations in 1972, 1974-5, 1996 and 2004 had expanded upon the recorded evidence for the site. There were late 1st century to early 2nd century ditch systems in the north-eastern part of the excavated area. In the southern area, where truncation was less severe,

there were two enclosures dated to the mid-2nd century. Robbed walls dating to the late 2nd and early 3rd centuries defined the south-east corner of the villa courtyard and were aligned on the earlier enclosure pattern. Two circular stone structures, probably bread ovens, were also found.

HEMINGTON, ELLANDS FARM

NGR TL 084 846

Excavation

Northamptonshire Archaeology

Two main areas of archaeological features were discovered on the site of a proposed group of six wind turbines near Hemington by Steven Morris. The area of Iron Age occupation also included ditches and gullies dated to the Roman period. The Roman area, largely comprising linear ditches and gullies representing a concentration of enclosures covering c 3 ha, was dated to the 1st and 2nd centuries AD. Finds included rotary quern and mortar fragments, charred cereals and animal bones.

IRCHESTER, CHESTER HOUSE FARM

NGR SP 9178 6672)

Trial Excavation

Northamptonshire Archaeology

An evaluation was carried out on the access road to Chester House Farm by Michael Webster and Tim Upson-Smith. Three burials were noted in three of the test pits, and suggest the presence of a previously unknown cemetery to the east of the walled Roman town of Irchester.

NORTHAMPTON, UPTON, PINEHAM NORTH

NGR SP 7134 5850

Trial Excavation

Northamptonshire Archaeology

Following geophysical and fieldwalking surveys, trial trench evaluation by Ben Pears identified two areas of Roman settlement spanning the 1st to 4th centuries. One settlement had been occupied during the 1st to 2nd centuries, with curvilinear ditch systems replaced by rectilinear ditches. A second settlement area was in use between the 2nd and 4th centuries, perhaps as a direct successor. The ditches appear to form a system of rectilinear enclosures, and clusters of postholes and pits may denote the presence of timber buildings.

TANSOR AND COTTERSTOCK

NGR TL 0525 9065

Fieldwalking, Geophysical Survey and Watching Brief

Northamptonshire Archaeology

A programme of archaeological works was undertaken prior to and during the laying of the Tansor to Cotterstock sewer pipeline. The fieldwalking recovered small amounts of Roman material, while the geophysical survey in the same area revealed a number of potential features to the west of the River Nene associated with cropmarks. Two small gullies and a trackway were uncovered during the watching brief by Ailsa Westgarth. The gullies lay to the west of Cotterstock church and the trackway to the west of the River Nene.

WEST HADDON BYPASS

NGR SP 6284 7243

Area Excavation and Watching Briefs

Northamptonshire Archaeology

An open area excavation and a watching brief carried out by Paul Mason and Anne Foard-Colby took place in advance and during construction of the West Haddon Bypass. Field survey and subsequent trial trenching undertaken in 1997/8 had demonstrated the presence of a Romano-British settlement located to the south-east of Village Farm. The earliest evidence for occupation was a circular ditched enclosure and a larger irregular enclosure defined by a sinuous gully. Both of these undated features predated the establishment of a Romano-British settlement comprising a series of sub-rectangular enclosures set out either side of a ditched trackway. The excavation examined parts of three enclosures together with associated features and a section of the trackway. The evidence indicates a rural settlement of modest status whose economy was based upon crop cultivation. The Romano-British settlement appears to have been established in the mid-1st century and reached its zenith in the 2nd to 3rd centuries before being abandoned by the late 3rd century.

ASHTON, CHURCH OF ST MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS

(SP 76525 49975)

Richard Ivens

Two Test Pits (each 1.5 x 1.5m) were hand-excavated

ARCHAEOLOGY IN NORTHAMPTONSHIRE 2005

at locations on the proposed line of a new service trench on the N side of St Michael's Church, Ashton. Despite several modern disturbances evidence of both Roman and medieval activity was revealed.

ANGLO-SAXON

NORTHAMPTON, KINGSWELL STREET

NGR SP 7532 6033

Excavation

Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological excavations were carried out on land at the junction of Kingswell Street, and Woolmonger Street by Jim Brown. The earliest features were late Saxon pits, and a Saxo-Norman timber structure.

OUNDLE, OUNDLE SCHOOL

NGR TL 0370 8815

Trial Excavation

Northamptonshire Archaeology

Oundle School is located directly to the north of the historic Saxon and medieval core of the township. A trial excavation was carried out by Adrian Burrow in advance of the construction of a new Science Technology Block. Documentary and archaeological evidence had suggested that the area was located towards a focus of early-middle Saxon settlement. However, the excavation found only one archaeological feature, a pit, from which was recovered a single potsherd with a late Saxon/medieval date range.

RAUNDS AREA PROJECT

Steve Parry and Andy Chapman

Northamptonshire Archaeology

The series of monograph reports detailing the results of those aspects of the Raunds Area Project carried out by the then Northamptonshire Archaeological Unit in the 1980s to early 1990s will finally be appearing over the next year or two. Final editing and the publication of the volumes is being fully funded by English Heritage and the volumes will be published by Oxbow Books.

The report on the results of the Raunds Area Survey, by Steve Parry, detailing the model of prehistoric landscape use and Iron Age, Roman, Saxon and medieval settlement development that has emerged as a result of the systematic field walking of four parishes, as well as complementary

documentary analysis and the results of trial trenching and other minor excavations, is currently in press and should be available by the time this note appears in print.

In Raunds itself, the excavation of several sites at the northern end of the village revealed much of interest to students of the origin of villages. Dispersed early Saxon occupation gave way to a middle Saxon farm at Langham Road, while the manorial centre at Furnells had its origin in an Anglo-Scandinavian farm of the 9th century that, in the 10th century, following the reconquest by the Saxon kings, was absorbed into a new plot system with the Saxon timber halls later replaced by a stone-built manor house. The report on the associated church and cemetery has previously been published, but this volume will also contain a revised chronology for the overall development of Furnells manor and the nearby settlement. The report, originally prepared by Michel Audouy has been edited for publication by Andy Chapman and should appear in 2007.

Finally, the extensive excavation of the deserted medieval hamlet of West Cotton, Raunds, on the edge of the river floodplain, revealed the complex and dynamic story of what appeared in earthwork to be a simple peasant hamlet, had its origin as a late Saxon timber manor. This had an attached watermill, and the manor buildings were rebuilt in stone in the 12th century at a time when catastrophic flooding led to the demise of the watermill and the provision of a protective floodbank to ensure the survival of the hamlet. The manor house was later relocated and enlarged, but shortly afterwards the buildings were sub-divided to form several peasant tenements, which farmed the former manorial demesne lands until desertion between the early 14th and 15th centuries. The report has been prepared and edited by Andy Chapman and should be available in 2007.

MEDIEVAL

NORTHAMPTON, KINGSTHORPE, GOOD SHEPHERD PRIMARY SCHOOL

NGR SP 75237 63080

Watching Brief

Northamptonshire Archaeology

Following the recovery of human remains, building works being carried out in the grounds of the Good Shepherd Primary School were examined by Andy Chapman and Pat Chapman at the request of the

police. Whilst digging a deep pit to form a sump for a new drainage system, much of a human skeleton was disturbed and recovered by the works contractor. It appears to have lain within a shallow grave cut 0.4m into the soft natural sand, with the head to the east, indicating that it was probably a formal Christian burial. The remains are probably female, perhaps aged between the late 20s to late 30s at death. In 1200 St. Andrew's Priory founded a hospital on the site. Following the dissolution in 1570 the buildings passed into private hands, and the hospital building was demolished in 1928. It is therefore most likely that the burial was of medieval to late medieval date as a deceased patient of the former hospital. Other burials may well lie in the surrounding area.

NORTHAMPTON, KINGSWELL STREET
NGR SP 7532 6033

Archaeological excavations by Jim Brown were carried out on land at the junction of Kingswell Street, and Woolmonger Street. Both streets are integral to the understanding of the layout and development of the medieval town. The majority of the medieval features dated to the 13th to 14th centuries and comprised quarry pits, a well pit, a malting oven and a baking oven, four stone buildings and numerous pits, some of them stone-lined. A few pits contained 15th century pottery.

The 16th to 17th century activity comprised pits at the rear of Woolmonger Street, and a wall and stone-lined latrine pits at the rear of 8-10 Kingswell Street.

Industrial waste products comprising clay pipe bowls, stems and a fragment of saggar were recovered from a pit at the rear of 12 Kingswell Street. Ten wells were identified as having been filled during the 18th and 19th centuries. Other late post-medieval features included two cellars, five of the main boundary walls for the former tenement plots and seven stone-lined pits.

WEST STREET, OUNDLE, NORTHANTS
(OLD WAGGON AND HORSES SITE)
WATCHING BRIEF AND EXCAVATION
NGR TL 0375 8805

Martin Tingle

The watching brief at the site took place over a period from 4th May to 26th September 2005. When the area in which the modern extension to the barn

was stripped of topsoil, a sub-rectangular feature was apparent measuring approximately 3.5m x 2 m and characterised by a dark grey fill. In the first instance this feature was thought to be a sunken floored building (SFB) since an example measuring 3.4m x 2.5m had been found approximately 300 metres to the east of the site during excavations at Stoke Doyle Road in 1979. When the West Street feature was initially sectioned across the short axis, a linear spread of pitched limestone slabs was revealed which was subsequently shown to run along the axis of the feature. No evidence of post holes was observed.

The range of pottery types present suggest that there was continuous activity at the site from the 10th to the later 13th century, but all the pottery dating to before the 13th century is residual. A small quantity of metalworking debris was recovered as well as two iron objects one of which could be a knife blade. A single small fragment of stone collected with the metalworking debris is a fragment of lava stone imported from one of the recognised sources in France or Germany. 101 fragments of animal bone were recovered composed of domesticates (cattle, sheep and pig). Environmental analysis revealed fish bones, several charcoal fragments (mainly oak (*Quercus* sp.) but also some probable *Prunus* sp. – sloe, cherry, plum etc.), and a few poorly preserved charred plant remains including free-threshing wheat grains (*Triticum* sp.) and hazelnut shell (*Corylus avellana*)

SALCEY FOREST

NGR SP 805 515

Earthwork Survey and Watching Brief
Northamptonshire Archaeology

An earthwork survey by Steven Morris and Carol Simmonds was undertaken within a 24 hectare area in the northern part of Salcey Forest, on behalf of the Forestry Commission. The features recorded included a network of substantial bank and ditch enclosures which appear to pre-date the medieval coppices earthworks, as well as probable later features such as ponds and ditches. Under closer scrutiny was a smaller mitigation area to be used for the canopy walkway. No archaeological remains or artefacts were found during the watching brief conducted by Carol Simmonds, Pat Chapman and Andy Chapman when pairs of foundation trenches were excavated for the six steel towers supporting

the walkway, which had been located to avoid damage to the nearby earthworks.

POST-MEDIEVAL

APETHORPE HALL

NGR TL 023 955

Geophysical Survey

Northamptonshire Archaeology

An earth resistance survey was carried out by Adrian Butler on behalf of English Heritage at Apethorpe Hall. A putative group of small structures were detected on approximately 1.3ha of the North Lawn, near the site of the medieval village. Possible remains of brick constructions may have been present towards the centre of the Lawn. A pipeline was confirmed as crossing the site.

BARTON SEAGRAVE HALL

NGR SP 888 773

Building Recording

Northamptonshire Archaeology

Three dormer windows in need of repair were assessed by Joe Prentice at the Listed Grade II Barton Seagrave Hall, a fine building comprising various phases of construction. The west wing, which contains the three dormer windows, is Georgian, and the dormers sit within the attic storey of the five bay west front, overlooking the garden. Each dormer is of the same configuration: pedimented and containing nine lights set in two casement windows, one of three lights, the other of six. Only the casements are in need of repair, the structure of the dormers is sound and will not be replaced. However, the three dormers all appear to be replacements and are not contemporary with the original 18th century date of the wing in which they sit.

BLATHERWYKE HALL

NGR SP 975958

Geophysical Survey

Northamptonshire Archaeology

The plan of the south front of the house, the east quadrant and pavilion and a large area of demolition rubble spread over the site of the former Blatherwycke Hall, demolished in 1948, was revealed by integrated geophysical survey carried out by Adrian Butler and Chris Jones, including magnet-

ometer and resistance survey. Remains of limestone wall foundations, cellars and floors relating to the former demolished hall and a former tarmac road were revealed along the northern edge of the trial trench evaluation. No evidence for the layout of the former south facing garden or medieval remains was discovered to the south of the house.

EASTON-ON-THE-HILL, GLEBE HOUSE

NGR TF 0095 0459

Building Recording

Northamptonshire Archaeology

A small stone outbuilding recorded by Joe Prentice in the grounds of Glebe House, Easton-on-the-Hill appears to have been constructed to serve as a bakehouse. It does not appear to be contemporary with the main house but has been added later, probably in the second half of the 18th century. Currently roofless, the walls remain in reasonable condition and retain three original windows, and a single doorway in the south wall. Inside are the remains of a small contemporary bread oven, fireplace and chimney to which has been added a 19th century 'copper' or water heater built of red brick.

FOTHERINGHAY CASTLE

NGR TL 0622 9297

Watching Brief

Northamptonshire Archaeology

An archaeological watching brief by Dan McAree was carried out during excavations for the laying of a low voltage electric cable at Fotheringhay Castle, Fotheringhay (Scheduled Monument: Fotheringhay Motte and Bailey Castle, National Monument No. 13641). Immediately below the modern gatepost, an earlier limestone gate pier was exposed. There were no other archaeological features.

NORTHAMPTON, ST GEORGE'S SCHOOL

NGR SP 613753

Buildings Recording

Northamptonshire Archaeology

St. George's School, surveyed by Joe Prentice, had been built by the Borough of Northampton and was opened in June 1908. Whilst having undergone many superficial changes, the school, which comprises a long range housing junior boys and girls and a separate building for the infants, remains largely as built. Separate covered play areas and a toilet block

also survive. The school closed in 1970 and has been used recently by Northampton College. It is to be demolished.

PERIOD UNKNOWN

DEANSHANGER, LODORE, 1 THE GREEN

(SP 7630 3955)

Richard Ivens

A continuous watching brief was maintained during the stripping of the footprint of a new block of flats and associated parking areas in the garden of Lodore, 1 The Green, Deanshanger. This work was followed by continuous monitoring of the excavation of the foundation and service trenches for the block of flats.

An extensive stone structure was identified at the SW corner and to the S of the new block of flats. This appeared to be the remains of a modern garden terrace, presumably related to the early twentieth century occupation of Lodore.

Several undated pits were recorded during the digging of the foundations for the new block of flats. These are thought likely to be modern garden features, for the planting/removal of bushes small trees, etc.

One (machine shattered) sherd of late medieval Potterspury-type (Northamptonshire Type Series 329) ware was recovered from modern topsoil.

No other pre-modern deposits or artefacts were observed.

NO ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS

BARTON SEAGRAVE, LAND TO REAR OF 76-82 POLWELL LANE

(SP 8877 7643)

Richard Ivens

A continuous watching brief was maintained during the stripping of the footprints of two bungalows and associated driveways, etc., followed by continuous observation of the excavation of the foundation trenches for the two bungalows. No pre-modern deposits or artefacts were observed.

CRANFORD ST JOHN, CHURCH OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST

(SP 92730 77095)

A Watching Brief was carried out during the replacement of part of the floor of the N aisle. A

blocked burial niche was exposed but both niche and floor area proved to have suffered considerable 19th-century disturbance. A further Watching Brief was maintained during the construction of a new path in the churchyard but no pre-modern deposits were disturbed.

EAST HADDON, CHURCH OF ST MARY, THE VIRGIN

(SP 6675 6815)

Richard Ivens

A Watching Brief was carried out during the excavation of a service trench across the West Tower and western part of the churchyard. No pre-modern remains were revealed, aside from the foundations of the West Tower itself.

EASTON NESTON, SHOWSLEY, SHOWSLEY GROUNDS FARMYARD

(SP 7175 5077)

Richard Ivens

Five evaluation trenches (87.5 square metres) were excavated within the yards of Showsley Farmyard in advance of a 'barn conversion' development. No pre-modern deposits or artefacts were discovered during the course of the trial trench evaluation. Every trench showed clear evidence of substantial clearance of the site prior to the laying of the existing, modern, farmyard surfaces. Evidence of numerous service trenches criss-crossing the farmyards was also discovered. A small number of modern features associated with the site's use as a farmyard were recorded. Given the level of modern disturbance and the lack of any pre-modern (20th century) deposits it seems almost certain that no extensive archaeological remains could survive within the Application Site of the medieval nunnery of Sewardley.

FLORE, ALL SAINTS CHURCH

(SP 64200 59865)

Richard Ivens

A Watching Brief was carried out during the mechanical excavation of services trenches across the churchyard. A number of grave cuts were noted and a single sherd of Early – Middle Saxon pottery was recovered from one grave. Some human remains were observed. Minor details of the foundations of the N nave wall were also recorded.

YARDLEY GOBION, 7 GRAFTON ROAD

(SP 7663 4491)

Richard Ivens

An Archaeological Watching Brief was carried out during the groundworks for the construction of a new extension. No archaeological features pre-dating the nineteenth century were observed. Four small, unstratified, sherds of medieval Potterspury/Yardley Gobion pottery were recovered.