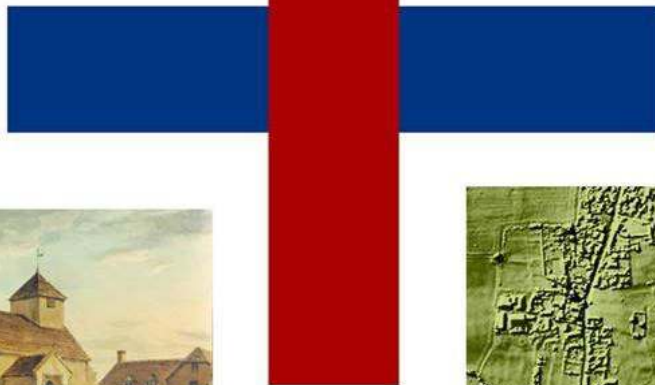


Archaeological + Historical Landscape
Research Group

Second Season of Archaeological Investigation at Easton Royal, Wiltshire



Collated by Robin Holley

2015

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Research Aims

The main aims of the project were to determine the location and development of the Trinitarian Priory, and to map and extend our knowledge of human activity throughout the ages in the village to enhance the Wiltshire Historic Environment Record (HER).

1.2. Previous Field Work

In 2014 research was carried out in Easton Royal, this included a geophysical survey and collection of finds from mole hills in the field where the Priory was thought to be located. Other work undertaken was to excavate test pits in gardens around the village and an excavation across the line of the Roman Road. All the 2014 reports are available on a DVD (Holley, ed. 2015).

1.3. Location, Geology, Topography and Land use.

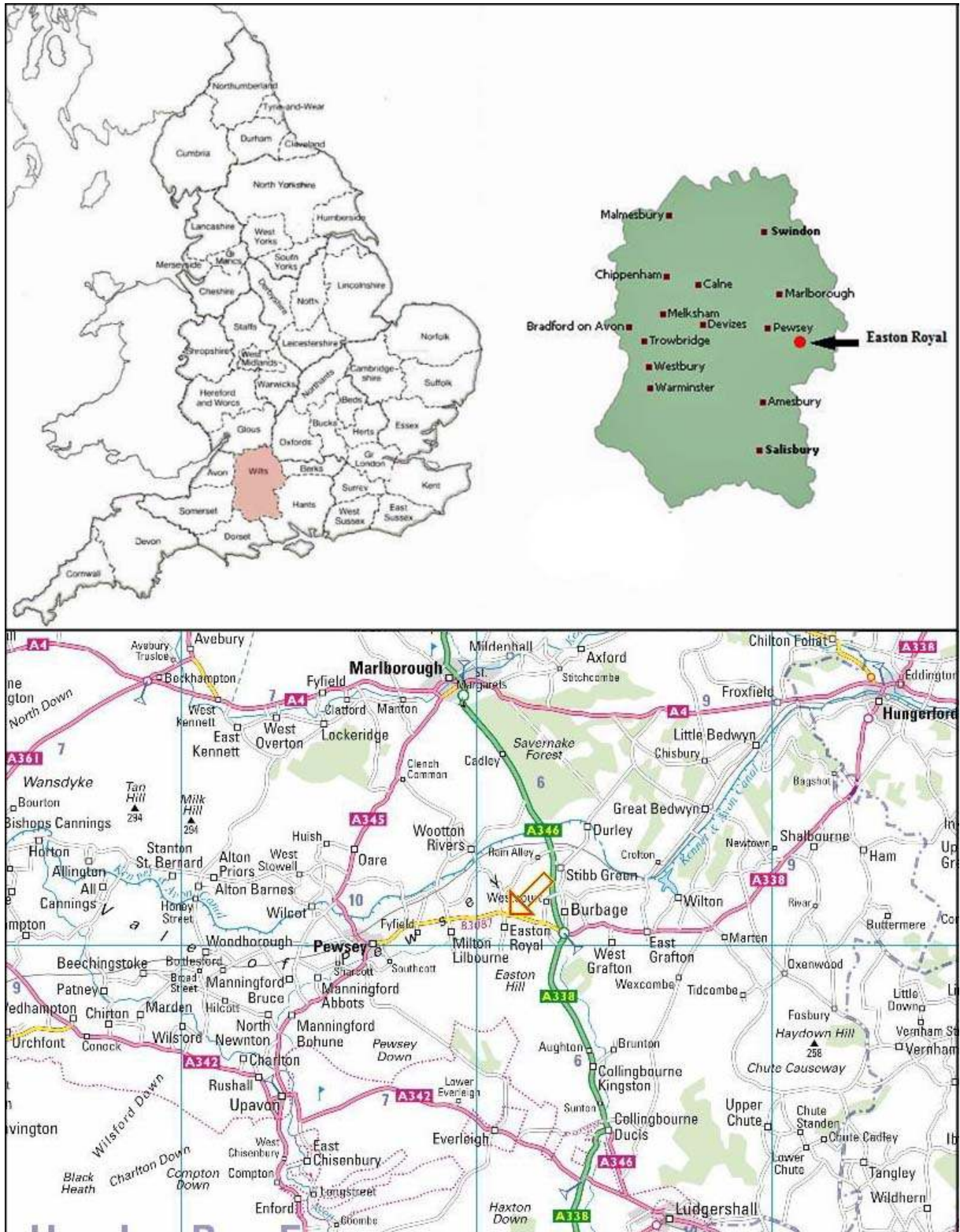
Easton Royal is located 7 km south-south-east of Marlborough and 2.50 km west of Burbage in east Wiltshire (see figure 1.1). This long and narrow parish is oriented north-south with an area of around 897ha. The village is in the Vale of Pewsey, which runs eastwards from Devizes to end east of Burbage. The vale is a low-lying valley which separates the higher lands of Salisbury Plain to the south and Marlborough Downs to the north.

The parish of Easton Royal is divided into two completely different areas of geology, the northern half lies predominantly on upper greensand overlain in places by alluvial deposits; the southern area is lower chalk, which forms the main escarpment onto Salisbury Plain. Two small streams cross the parish from east to west and then drain into the Hampshire Avon.

The height of the land in the parish varies from 173 metres in the north and gradually descends to around 130 metres in the south, before rising steeply to the summit of Easton Hill at 240 metres. The site lies at a height of c152.4m above Ordnance Datum, to the south of Easton Farm, centred on SU20987-60387.

The lands around the village are used for growing crops and as pasture for cattle and sheep.

Figure 1.1. Location Map



2. HISTORICAL SUMMARY OF THE PRIORY AT EASTON ROYAL by Graham Bathe

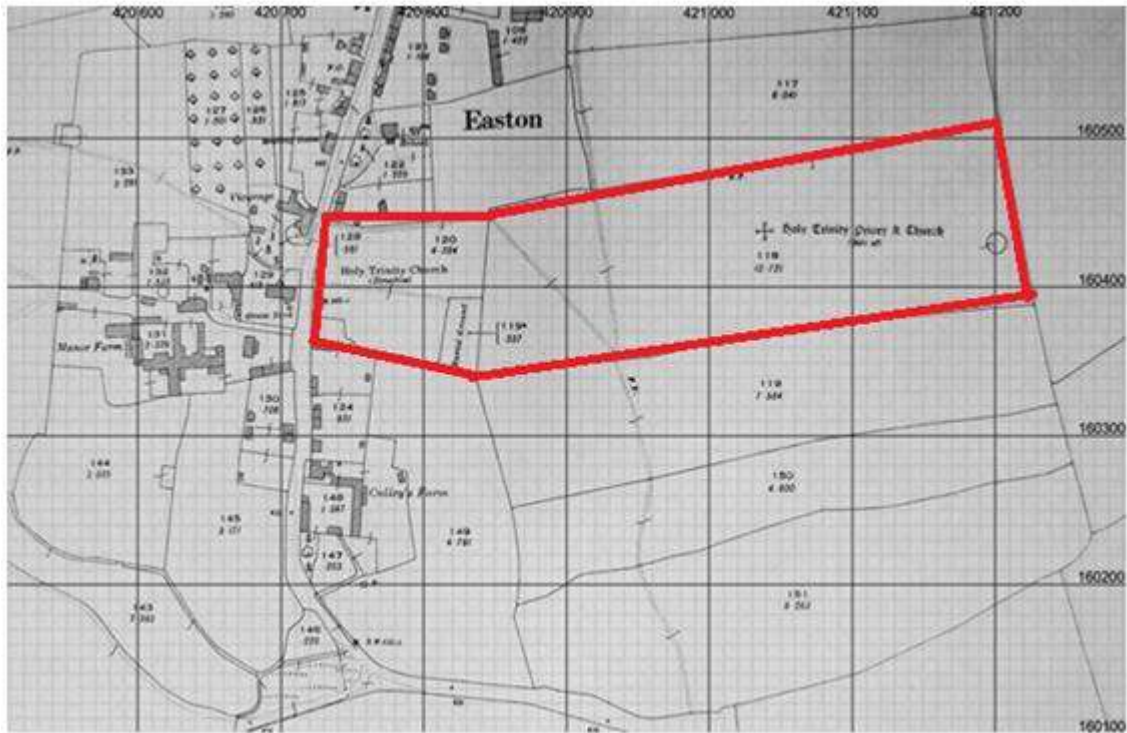
- a. The Order of the Holy Trinity established a presence in Easton from the middle of the 13th century. The original building was probably a house which had been built by one Adam of Easton, father of the founder, Stephen.
- b. The property consisted of:
 - i. A hospital or hostel to provide accommodation for travelers, established between 1229 and 1234.
 - ii. A priory, founded by 1246.
 - iii. A church or chapel.
- c. These three parts may all have been within a single building, or a complex of buildings with outhouses.
- d. The Trinitarian Order was established in 1198, with the principal function of raising money for the release of captive Christians in pagan lands. In due course its function was split three ways: to raise funds for freeing hostages, to entertain travellers, and to provide worship.
- e. There were 11 Trinitarian Priors in England. None have surviving above-ground features. All except possibly Easton and Knaresborough have been built over. The Priory of Adare in Ireland survives.
- f. At its founding the priory was given the parish church of Easton (as a source of income from the tithes), and later obtained other properties to provide additional income, including in Easton, Milton Lilbourne, Puthall near Marlborough, Savernake Forest and the churches of Froxfield and Tidcombe.
- g. In 1369 the parish church of Easton was demolished because the parishioners were too poor and too few to maintain it. The building materials were used by the Priory, and the parishioners were allowed to use the Priory Chapel or Church ('60 paces away').
- h. In 1493 the priory, church, other buildings and contents were all wholly destroyed by fire. The King granted permission for the brethren to seek alms.
- i. In 1536 the Priory was dissolved. The buildings and church were described as being in ruin because of the poor roofing, and the outhouses in great decay.
- j. The priory was granted to Edward Seymour, later Duke of Somerset, and repaired to form a mansion.
- k. The priory church was in ruins in 1590, and a new parish church built at Easton (Holy Trinity) in 1591.
- l. The Priory building or Mansion House was demolished in 1763.

3. GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY IN THE PRIORY FIELD by Robin Holley and Brian Clarke

3.1. Location

The area under investigation (figure 3.1) is a field measuring 475 metres in length by 200 metres in width, but it is not a complete rectangle as parts have been utilized in the past centuries for housing, and for a burial ground with its access path. The field is now predominantly grassland used for grazing (see figure 3.2).

Figure 3.1. Gridded map of the site, area of survey marked in red



The location of the priory/mansion was determined through documentary research, surviving earthworks, geophysical survey, and plotting the position of artifacts recovered from mole hills during field walking. No previous archaeological survey or intervention has been carried out on this site.

The priory provided hospitality for travellers, and therefore was presumably situated close to the main Salisbury-Marlborough Roman Road, which is thought to pass along the eastern edge of the village.

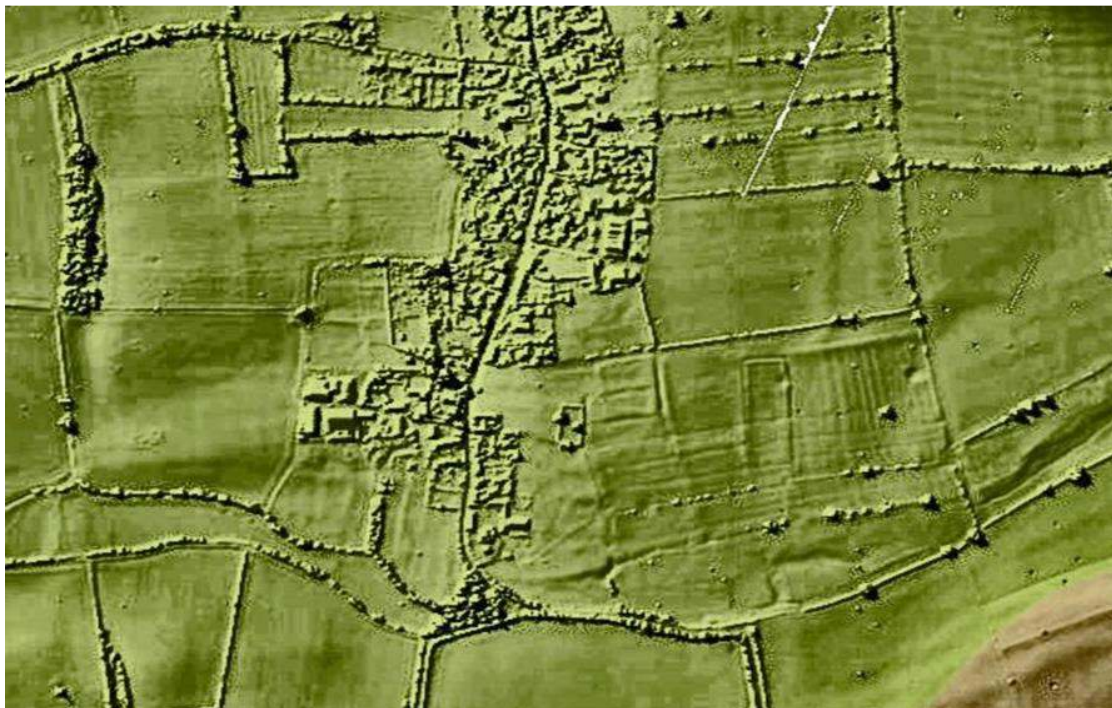
3.2. Field Work

Initial field-walking and surveying identified many areas of linear earthworks, tracks/ hollow ways and enclosures of different shapes and sizes. LiDAR and Aerial photographs (figure 3.2 & 3.3) showed these earthworks to be clustered around two discreet areas. It soon became apparent that a geophysical survey of the complete field was required, and with the use of BACAS geophysical equipment and the technical expertise of John Oswin and his team a survey was carried out in 2014 and 2015 across seventy five percent of the field.

Figure 3.2. Aerial Photograph showing Earthworks in the Priory Field



Figure 3.3. Easton Royal Earthworks LiDAR Image



3.3. The Geophysical Survey

Fifty five grid squares had previously been surveyed in March 2014, this year we surveyed 78 grids to the east and south of the original survey area. The results (see figure 3.5) show there are ditches and other features, including evidence of ploughing, which appear to post-date the priory structures and the fishpond.

3.3.1. Method

The area was gridded into 20 m squares (see figure 3.4) and readings were taken every 50cm using two twin probe resistance meters, and every 25cm using the magnetometer machine, along north-south transects 1 m apart. This gave 800 readings per 20 m grid square for the resistance meter, and 1600 readings per 20 m square for the magnetometer.

Figure 3.4. Showing positions of the grid square surveyed



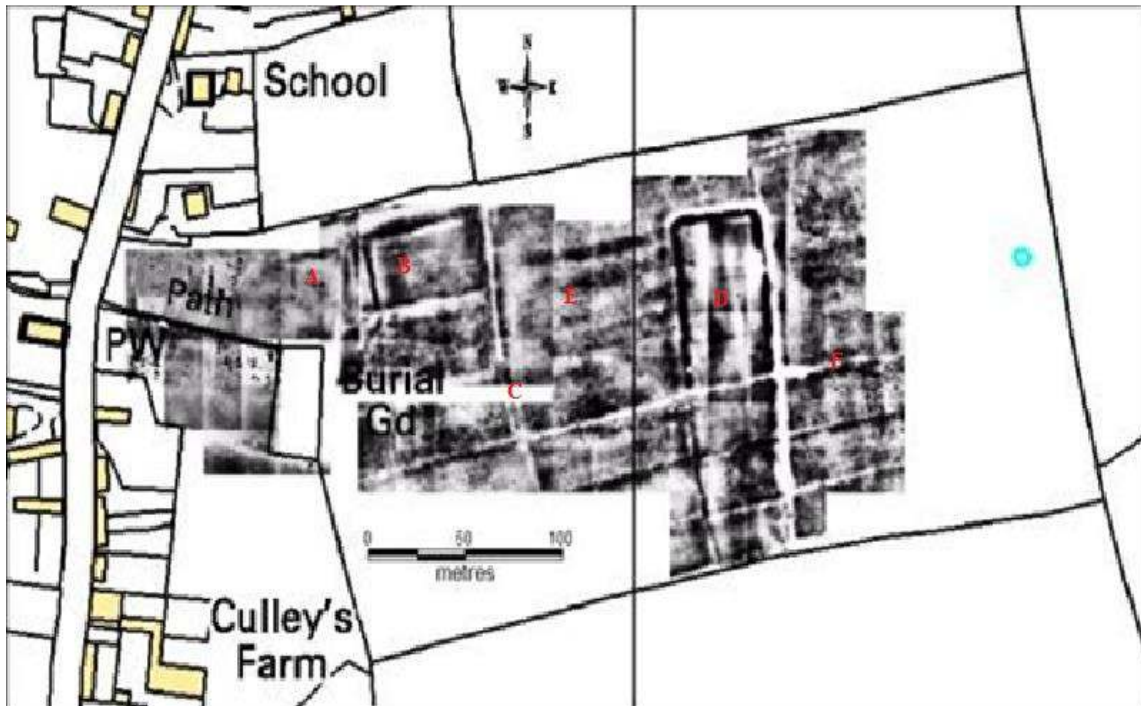
3.3.2. Magnetometry

Magnetometry was used on the first day of surveying in 2014 but unfortunately the greensand soils were not susceptible to magnetic variation, so magnetometry proved ineffective (Holley, ed. 2015, p90). Most of the signals came from a number of iron water pipes crossing the survey area.

3.3.3. Twin Probe Resistance

This method proved effective although time consuming to carry out. The results of the resistance survey are shown in figure 3.5. The geophysical results generally mirror, but clarify, what is seen on the LiDAR and aerial photography.

Figure 3.5. Twin Probe Resistance results



Areas of interest are indicated:

- [A] Structures possible cloister of the priory.
- [B] Structures, perhaps the hospital and church inside and surrounded by a moat or ditch.
- [C] Path of the Roman Road as it passes through the village.
- [D] Large rectangular fishpond.
- [E] Ridge and furrow medieval or later.
- [F] Drainage channels cut after the disillusion of the priory

With the landowners permission, further geophysical survey is required to fully map any other anomalies in the area of the field not surveyed to date. This is needed before any intrusive intervention to verify if this is the priory site is planned.

4. A SECOND ASSEMBLAGE FROM MOLEHILLS IN PRIORY FIELD, EASTON ROYAL, WILTSHIRE by Lynn Amadio

4.1. Summary

As part of a second season of field investigations in Priory Field, Easton Royal, Wiltshire, molehills were examined, find positions were recorded using a hand held GPS and the results plotted. The assemblage has again increased the number of Prehistoric, Romano-British and Medieval find spots, and however, this season the assemblage was heavily skewed to the Post Medieval period.

4.2. Background

A geophysical survey was undertaken in Priory Field, Easton Royal, Wiltshire to locate and understand the Trinitarian Priory. As the survey was carried out it was noted that artefacts were appearing in mole hills, these were collected and recorded; these artefacts may add to and aid knowledge of the priory.

4.3. Methodology

Mole hills were examined, soil removed using a trowel, artefacts collected and their position marked using a handheld GPS.

4.4. Collection Policy

This season the collection policy was changed.

Artefacts to be recorded and collected

- Pottery
- Struck/worked flint
- Glass
- Metal
- Burnt material of any kind
- Burnt or fired clay
- Ceramic Building Material (CBM), it was noted whilst setting out the grid for the geophysical survey that there was very little CBM in the southern part of the field, it was felt that the spread of CBM may produce useful information

Artefacts not to be included in the assemblage

- Animal bones as these may be the result of predation, animal scavenging and natural events

4.5. Results

Excluding CBM and burnt material 48 dateable artefacts were retrieved.

4.5.1. Flints

Table 1. Flints

Artefact	Easting	Northing	Description
Flake	SU20935	60300	C 10% cortex remaining
Broken flake	SU20934	60302	5-10% cortex remaining
Retouched flake	SU21015	60452	No cortex
Debitage	SU21050	60326	No cortex
Flake	SU20951	60367	No cortex
Broken blade	SU21133	60429	No cortex

All the flint was chalk derived and was unpatinated. The broken blade is illustrated in figure 4.1 below.

Figure 4.1 Broken Flint Blade



4.5.2. Pottery

Table 2. Romano-British

Artefact	Easting	Northing	Description
Sherd	SU20925	60278	New Forest ware
Sherd	SU21161	60398	Grey ware
Sherd	SU21060	60312	Possibly Severn Valley ware
Sherd	SU21108	60454	Severn Valley ware

In addition to the pottery 2 or 3 pieces of the CBM maybe R-B and the 2 pieces of Pennant stone.

Table 3. Medieval

Artefact	Easting	Northing	Description
Sherd	SU20911	60302	Green glaze
Sherd	SU20944	60322	Local ware
Sherd	Fish pond area		Local ware
Sherd	SU21064	60354	Local ware

No high status pieces, all local wares. In addition to the pottery 4 Medieval tiles were found.

Table 4. Post-Medieval

Artefact	Easting	Northing	Description
Sherd	SU21067	60310	Stoneware
Sherd	SU20942	60306	Tan glaze
Sherd	SU21077	60391	Blue and White transfer print
Sherd	SU20943	60317	White china
Sherd	SU21053	60459	Brown glaze
Sherd	SU21031	60451	Blue and White transfer print
Sherd	SU21020	60429	Blue and White transfer print

Artefact	Easting	Northing	Description
Sherd	SU21089	60372	Blue and White transfer print
Sherd	SU21086	60362	Rim, light brown glaze
Sherd	SU21013	60396	Mustard glaze
Sherd	SU21089	60373	Khaki glaze
Sherd	SU21030	60370	Dark brown glaze on exterior and
Sherd	SU20749	60416	Blue and White transfer print
Sherd	SU21102	60417	Rim and handle seating, mustard
Sherd	SU20952	60474	Tan glaze base
Sherd	SU21098	60457	Rim, unglazed

No high status wares

4.5.3. Tobacco Pipes

Table 5. Tobacco Pipe

Artefact	Easting	Northing	Description
Stem	SU20944	60360	Fine stem, small diameter
Stem	SU21042	60369	Medium size
Stem	SU21030	60368	The hole was quite a large bore
Stem	SU21043	60370	An extremely fine stem
Stem	SU21062	60464	Fine stem

None of these pieces had maker's marks, so precise dating is not possible. These were found along an old field boundary, now gone, and along paths.

4.5.4. Glass

Table 6. Glass

Artefact	Easting	Northing	Description
Sherd	SU20976	60414	Green, curved body piece of vessel
Sherd	SU20906	60373	Green, vessel
Sherd	SU21075	60458	Thick green, vessel
Sherd	SU21085	60467	Fine clear window glass
Sherd	SU21099	60464	Clear vessel glass
Base	SU20835	60426	Part of a wine glass base

All pieces were modern glass

4.5.5. Metal

Table 7. Metal

Material	Easting	Northing	Description
fe	SU20962	60302	Corroded
fe	SU21047	60358	Corroded
fe	SU21057	60458	Corroded
fe	SU21033	60411	Spike 85mm x 18mm corroded
fe	SU21104	60362	Corroded nail with rectangular body and head

Due to the corrosion and nature of the objects it was not possible to date these artefacts, although there was little to suggest a date before the Post-Medieval period.

4.5.6. Dressed Stone

Table 8. Dressed Stone

Artefact	Easting	Northing	Description
Pennant	SU20748	60416	Tile
Pennant	SU20795	60419	Tile

Pennant was favoured in the Romano-British period as a building material and these pieces could date to that time, excavations of the Roman Road in 2014 found evidence of a Roman- British building in Easton Royal (Holley ed. 2015: p115 *et seq*).

4.5.7. Burnt Material

Table 9. Burnt Material

Artefact	Easting	Northing
Burnt material	SU20872	60380
Burnt material	SU20877	60368
Burnt material	SU20876	60365
Burnt material	SU20883	60371
Burnt material	SU20894	60374
Burnt material	SU20988	60446
Burnt material	SU21106	60427
Burnt material	SU21103	60459
Burnt material	SU21110	60457
Burnt material	SU21103	60444

Whilst burnt material is found across most of the site there are pronounced spreads centred on SU2088060370 and SU2102060420. It is known that the Priory burned down in 1493 and it was felt that collection and plotting of burnt material may indicate the site. SU2088060370 is possibly the southern part of the Priory enclosure and SU2102060420 is thought to be a fish pond.

4.5.8. CBM (Ceramic Building Material)

Small fragments of CBM were widespread across the field; none were large enough to be of use diagnostically, except those around gates, stiles and fence lines, these larger pieces are hardcore used to build up tracks and all are modern. It is not proposed to list all the spots where CBM was found, however, some pieces thought to be earlier than the Post-Medieval period will be listed. Lacking specific expertise, the techniques used when examining pottery were also used with the fragments of CBM. Those which had poorly sorted temper, a mixture of clays, and those which lacked uniformity in the firing are listed here.

Table 10. Early CBM

Artefact	Easting	Northing	Description
CBM	SU20944	60322	Possibly R-B
CBM tile	SU21021	60308	Medieval glazed tile
CBM	SU20911	60362	
CBM	SU20951	60384	
CBM	SU20981	60398	
CBM	SU20794	60419	
CBM tile	SU21161	60398	Medieval green glazed
CBM tile	SU21161	60398	Medieval cream glazed
CBM tile	SU21022	60415	Medieval unglazed

Figure 4.2. Medieval glazed tiles



Figure 4.3. Prehistoric Finds

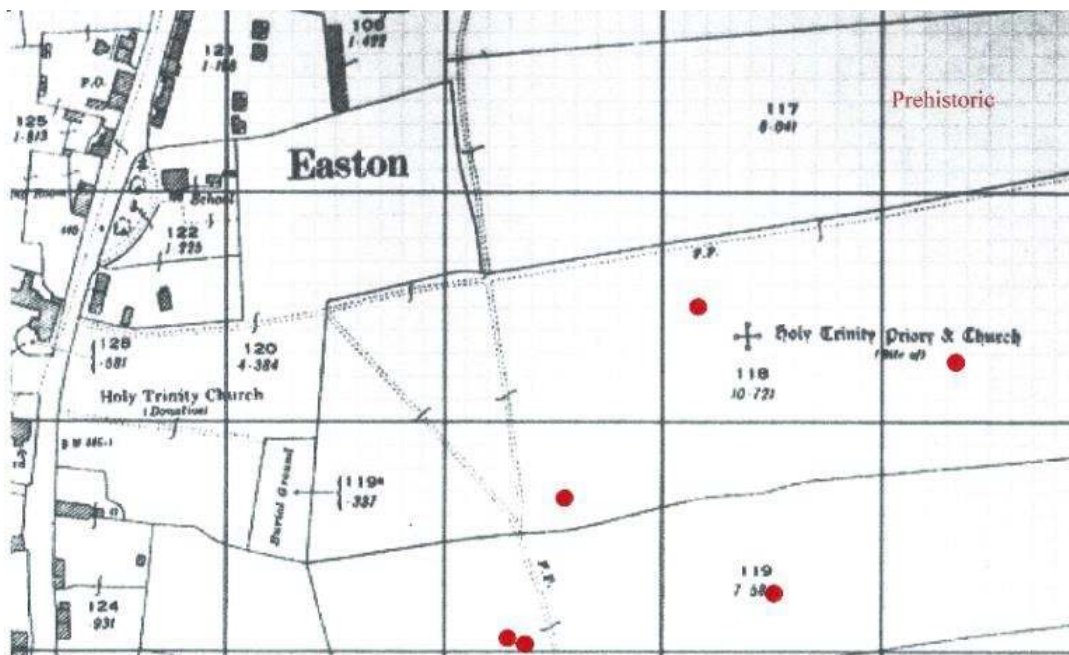


Figure 4.4. Romano-British Finds

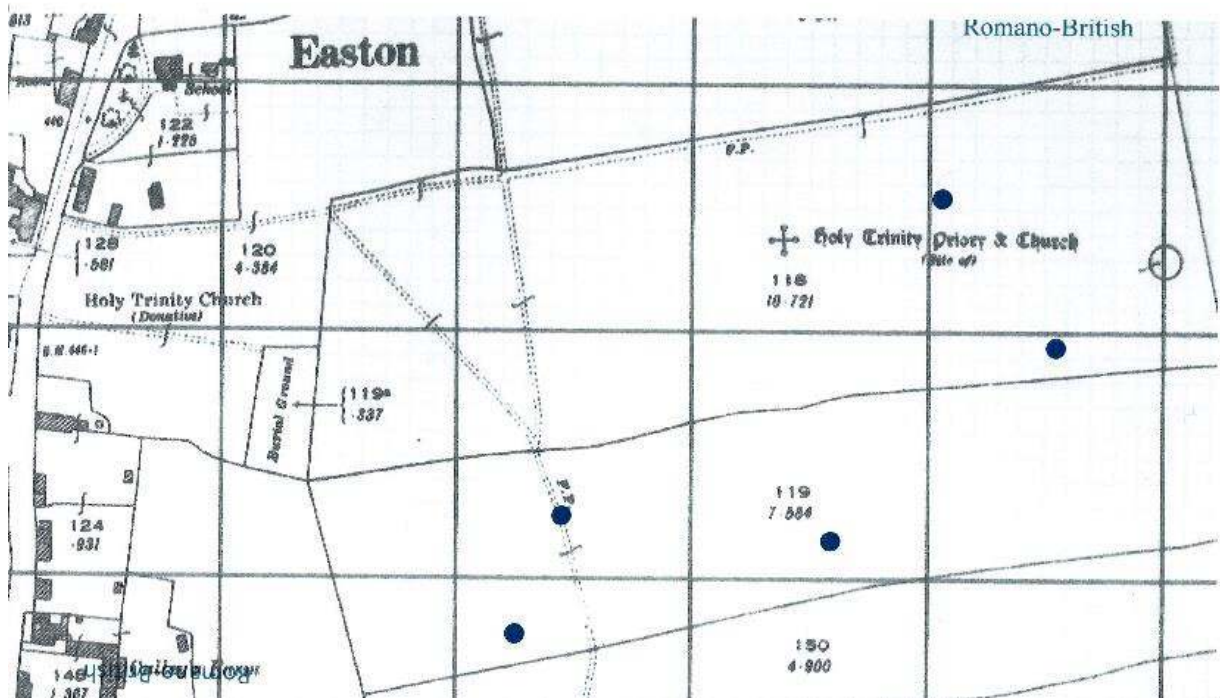


Figure 4.5. Medieval Finds

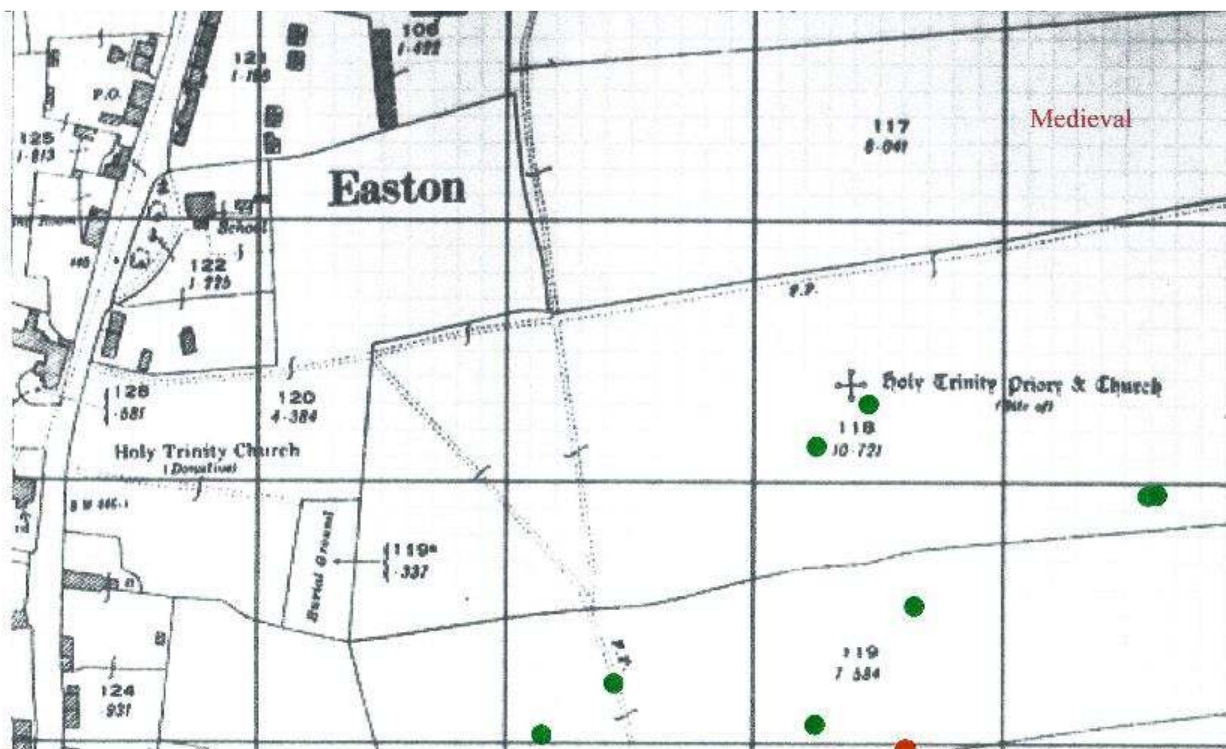


Figure 4.6. Post-Medieval Pottery

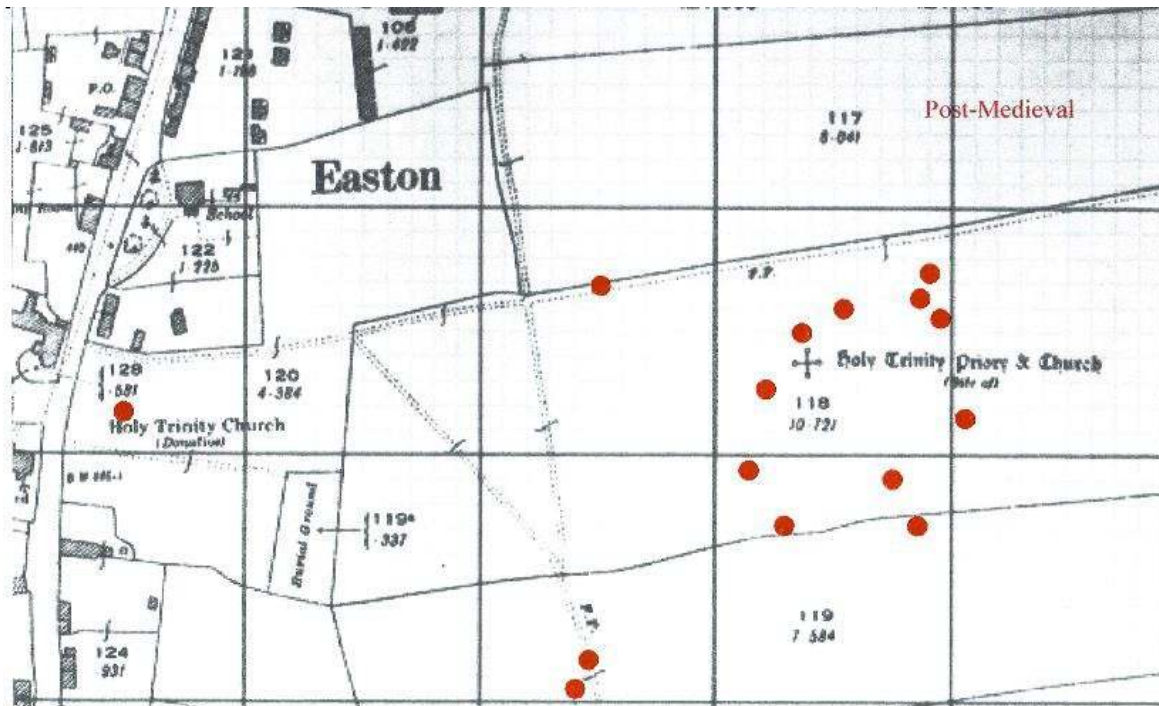


Figure 4.7. Tobacco Pipe

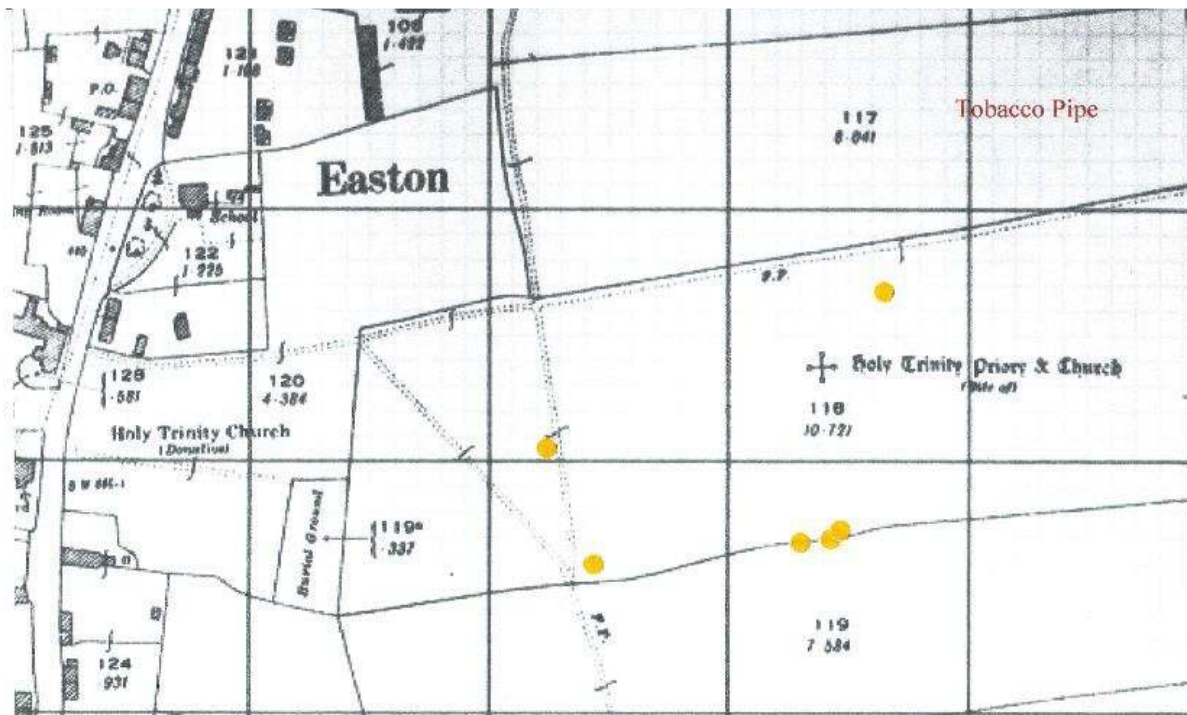
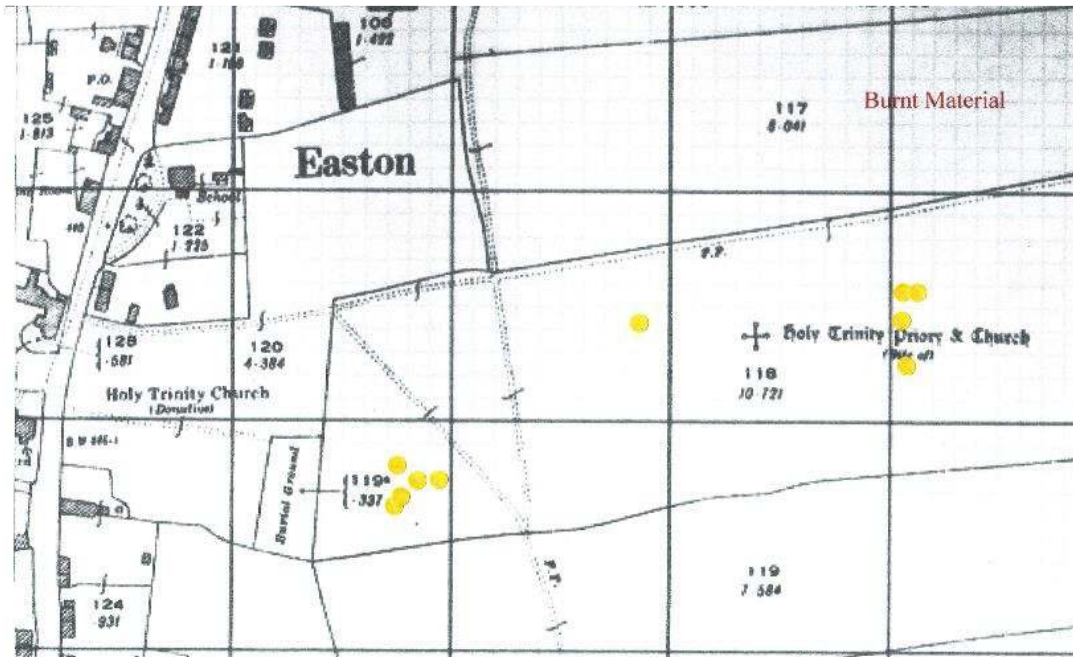


Figure 4.8 Burnt Material



4.6. Discussion

The mole hill finds are not from secure contexts, the fact that they are now on the surface demonstrates that they have been moved. These artefacts could be the result of manuring, where in the past all rubbish was placed in a midden which was then used as compost and spread on the fields. However, these artefacts do indicate human activity in the vicinity.

The mole hills appeared in clusters on higher ground, therefore unlike field walking there was not total coverage of the field.

Table 11. Assemblages 2014 and 2015

Material	2014	2015
Bronze Age pottery	2	0
Iron Age pottery	1	0
Romano-British pottery	1	4
Medieval pottery	11	4
Post Medieval pottery	6	16
Flint	4	6
Tobacco pipe	1	5
Totals	26	35

Numbers of artefacts from the 2 seasons of molehill investigation (the materials which are difficult to date – metal, glass, CBM, burnt material are excluded)

Table 12. 2014 and 2015 Assemblage by Percentages

Finds by period	2014	2015
Prehistoric	27%	17%
Romano-British	4%	11.5%
Medieval	42%	11.5%
Post Medieval	27%	60%

Percentages of artefacts by period (the materials which are difficult to date – metal, glass, CBM, burnt material are excluded)

The 2015 assemblage (excluding materials which are difficult to date – metal, glass, CBM, burnt material) is almost 35% greater than the 2014 collection. However, the team were on site for a longer period in 2015 and covered 44% more grids. In 2014 work was centred mainly on the northern and western sectors of Priory Field, whilst in 2015 work progressed to the central and southern areas of the field.

Of particular interest is the massive increase in Post Medieval artefacts (200%). It was notable that in 2014 the greater percentage was of Medieval finds, these were to the north and west, the site of the Priory. The fact that the higher proportion of Post Medieval artefacts are found to the east of the Roman Road may be explained by the fact that after the dissolution of the monasteries in 1536, Henry VIII gave the Priory to Edward Seymour. Documents show that he repaired the Priory and used it as a Manor House which was demolished in 1763 (Holley ed. 2015), all waste from the house including pottery must have been carefully cleared to a midden. None of the Post-Medieval assemblage is of high status wares befitting a family of high standing, this assemblage is probably the result of manuring the field since 1763.

Also of note is the position of tobacco pipe finds, mostly along an old field boundary and tracks, places where farm workers may have rested.

The Romano-British artefacts are also located to the east of the Roman Road.

4.7. Archive

The assemblage will be returned to the landowner, Mr G Cooper.

5. TEST PITS by Lynn Amadio, Robin Holley and Brian Clarke

5.1. Introduction

In 2014 villagers dug 10 test pits in their gardens, over the weekend of the 11th and 12th April 2015 two new test pits were dug by the project team for residents who were unable to excavate their own. A third test pit was reopened by the owner of the property, helped by team members due to its complicated nature.

The position of the test pits were in an area between the present street and east towards the line of the Roman Road (see figures 5.1 & 5.7).

Figure 5.1. Map showing the location of Easton Barns and the Barn



5.2. Results

5.2.1. Test Pit 1

The first test pit was located 2.15 metres east of the north-east corner of Easton Barnes and centred on SU420859-160874. This pit was positioned on a small piece of cultivated ground and measured 1.10 metres (N to S) and 1.00 metre (E-W). The topsoil (01) was a friable, mid grey brown silty sand with the numerous (5%) inclusions of greensand and chalk fragments, all measured on average 30cm in-depth. Finds recovered from this context included CBM, glass, flakes of flint, pottery and a modern 2p coin. Directly below the topsoil was the subsoil (02) which consisted of a friable to firm re-deposited yellowish brown silty sands, with occasional pieces of stone and chalk. This context was only found in a small area in the north eastern side of the trench, the full depth of this deposit was not established. No finds were recovered from this deposit. After the removal of both the top and sub-soils a chalk surface (04) was discovered, it ran across the trench roughly south-west to north-west. This surface was constructed from chalk and CBM rammed flat to form a rudimentary surface, inclusions of flints and greensand stones were also found. The average depth of this surface was 22cm. Context (05) was a fairly firm, mid to dark brown mixture of a re-deposited sandy silty loam, with the occasional fragments of CBM and small stones and was up to 21cm in-depth. At the very bottom of the trench at 82cm a clay drainage pipe was discovered running from east to west possible to channel water away from the property.

Figure 5.2. Plan of Trench 1 Easton Barnes

Easton Royal Test Pits
ERLG15
Plan of Trench 1
Scale 20:1
RJH 12.4.2015

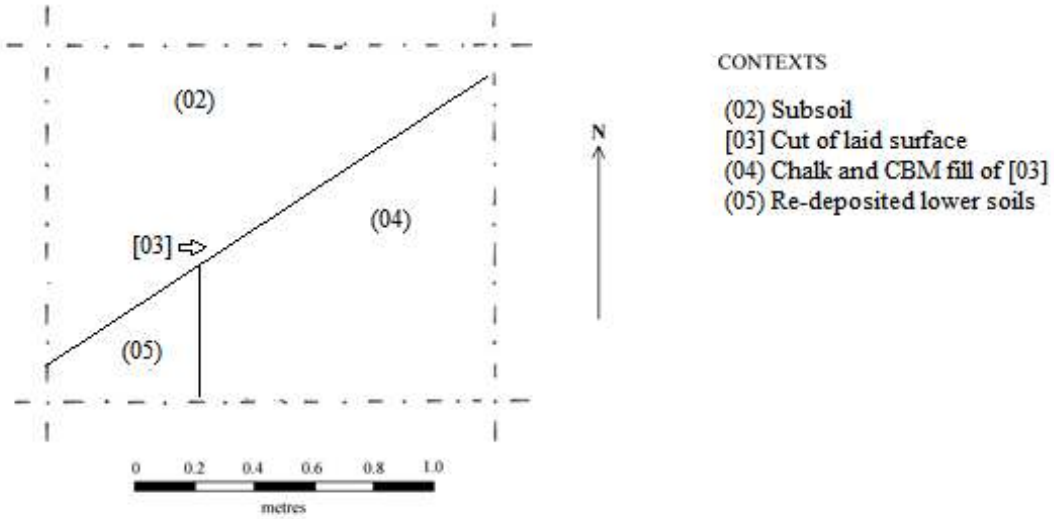


Figure 5.3. Photograph showing excavated trench (T1) at Easton Barnes (South facing)



5.2.2. Test Pit 2

The second test pit was in the garden of The Barn and centred on SU420865-160883. It was positioned on the eastern edge of a long raised area surmised to be the remains of the floor of a barn which once stood in this area. This test pit measured 1.00 metre square and had previously been opened to reveal what was thought to be the floor of a barn or farm building. The mixed soils were removed to relocate this floor and then excavate through the floor to investigate what was lower down. The floor was identified as concrete and was 2cm deep, below this floor was an area of laid ash, up to 2cm in-depth. Below this ash was a brick rubble layer 10cm deep over a laid surface of chalk blocks 20cm in-depth, under which was a double course of rough laid bricks (15cm) without mortar. The lower deposit was a dark brown mixture of a firm, silty sandy soil, which extended downwards for another 83cm, and cut into this was a large posthole measuring 33cm by 18cm. This hole contained the remains of the original post.

It appears that all the layers of brick, stones, chalks and soils were deliberately placed to form floors for a number of post medieval farm buildings which once stood in this area.

Figure 5.4. Photograph showing excavated trench (T2) at The Barn (West facing)



Figure 5.5. Photograph showing excavated trench (T2) at The Barn (North facing)



Figure 5.6. Photograph showing excavated trench (T2) with post hole (North facing)



5.2.3. Test Pit 3

The third test pit was located towards the southern end of the village, in the rear garden of number 4 The Street and centred on SU420750-96339. It was oriented east to west and measured 1.50 by 1.00 metres. The topsoil (001) was a soft, mid grey brown silty sand with inclusions of stones, charcoal and flints and varied in-depth between 14 to 20cm. The subsoil (002) was a mixture of yellowish to greyish brown soils, with CBM, stones, chalk and flint inclusions. It was not fully excavated but was over 18cm in-depth. Protruding into (001) and (002) was a large cast iron pipe which had been cut off and sealed with concrete. In the south western area of the trench cut [003] into (002) was a line of laid bricks (004), which appeared to be the foundation layers of an outside lavatory or garden shed. This structure was well constructed with red bricks bonded with mortar and internally rendered, first with concrete and then plaster. The demolition rubble (005) was partly removed to reveal a concrete laid floor (see figure 5.11).

Figure 5.7. Map showing the location of number 4, The Street.



Figure 5.8. Plan of excavated trench (T3).

EASTON ROYAL TEST PITS
ERJG15
PLAN
SCALE 1:20
BFC 11.4.15

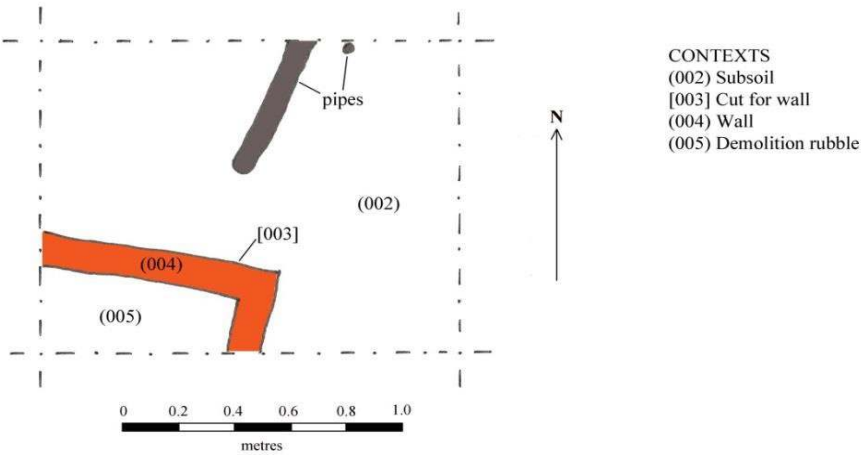


Figure 5.9. Photograph showing excavated trench (T3) with brick structure and water pipe (North facing)



Figure 5.10. Photograph showing the edging bricks of the structure.



Figure 5.11. Photograph showing the partially excavated brick structure (East facing)



5.3. Test Pit Finds.

The assemblages of finds from the three test pits at Easton Barns, The Barn, and 4 The Street, Easton Royal, Wiltshire were similar.

5.3.1. CBM (Ceramic Building Material)

Each pit yielded a lot of modern (Post Medieval) building material, brick, tile, plaster and concrete.

5.3.2. Pottery

Medieval

One sherd of Medieval pottery, a local ware was discovered in the test pit at 4, The Street.

Post-Medieval

Sherds of Post-Medieval pottery were found at The Barn and 4 The Street, the latter producing the greater quantity.

5.3.3. Tobacco Pipe

A piece of tobacco pipe stem was recovered from 4 The Street and The Barn. The piece of stem from The Barn (figure 5.12) has a maker's mark on it 'ED Mills' and has therefore been dated to c1680 when Mills was manufacturing tobacco pipes in Marlborough.

Figure 5.12. The tobacco pipe stem from the The Barn.



5.3.4. Glass

All three test pits contained a few pieces of glass from vessels.

5.3.5. Metal

Each pit produced corroded pieces of iron (fe), most likely nails.

5.3.6. Dressed Stone

Although not discovered in the test pit it was noted that The Barn has a great deal of dressed stone in the garden, including many complete Staddle stones. Easton Barns and The Barn are next door to one another, this must have been an area which was the location of many barns over time. Perhaps the dressed stone is indicative of high quality structures in the past.

Figure 5.13. Dressed Stone from The Barn



6. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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