

## **Trial trenching on a probable moated site at Downside Farm, Cobham**

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*Downside Farm is probably the site of the manor of Downe, referred to in medieval documents. Trial trenching in advance of gardening and building works produced pottery dating from the 11th/12th centuries onwards. No intact medieval features were found, but an excavation within the dining room of the existing 18th century farmhouse revealed an underlying flint floor, a wall and an apparently external cobbled surface belonging to a building of late 15th–17th century date. The existing curving water-filled linear feature, mainly to the north of the farmhouse, was found to have originally extended along its east side as well and these cuts probably represent two arms of what may have originally been a three-sided moat.*

### **Introduction**

In February 2004, following an earlier geophysical survey, using a resistivity meter, a team from the Society was asked to excavate a trial trench in the low-lying lawn to the north of Downside Farm (TQ 11724 58125) in advance of gardening works. While the trench revealed no features demonstrably earlier than the 18th century, it was felt that, in view of the historical references, it was worth opening a 1m-square test pit on the higher ground to the south of the house. This produced a small number of sherds of medieval pottery but was neither large enough nor deep enough to make sense of any archaeological features.

Given these results, the team returned to Downside in June of the same year to open a larger trench over the area of the test pit and also to investigate the possible line of a continuation of the existing moat, to the east of the house. This was visible as a slight depression in the ground and its existence was also indicated on the original geophysical survey, which had extended over this section of the site.

While work was in progress the owners mentioned that the flagstones in the dining room of the farmhouse were due to be lifted and the underlying soil removed and replaced by a damp-proof layer and new floor. A small test pit in the room revealed an earlier flint floor at some depth beneath the existing flagstones. The team therefore returned for the third time in October 2004 and opened a larger trench within the dining room in order to date the floor and examine any underlying features.

The quantity of pottery recovered during the course of the excavations was insufficient to merit a separate report but was examined by Kevin Fryer of Guildford Museum and his comments are incorporated in the text.

### **Background**

#### TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

Downside Farm is situated approximately 2km south-west of the village of Cobham, in Surrey and is skirted to the east by a small stream which runs into the nearby river Mole (figs 1 and 2). While surrounded by low-lying ground to the north and east, the farmhouse itself sits on a platform cut into a gently rising slope that levels out to the south of the building. Beyond the lawn to the north is an open linear stretch of water which starts to curve around the west side of the garden before being abruptly blocked by a brick building and the driveway. This water feature is fed via a sluice from the small stream and has the distinct appearance of consisting of parts of two arms of a moat. There is evidence, in the form of brick footings (now no longer visible) in the banks for the previous existence of a bridge. A map of c 1795 (SHC: 2610/1/38/21; fig 3), however, shows a wide causeway crossing the centre of the

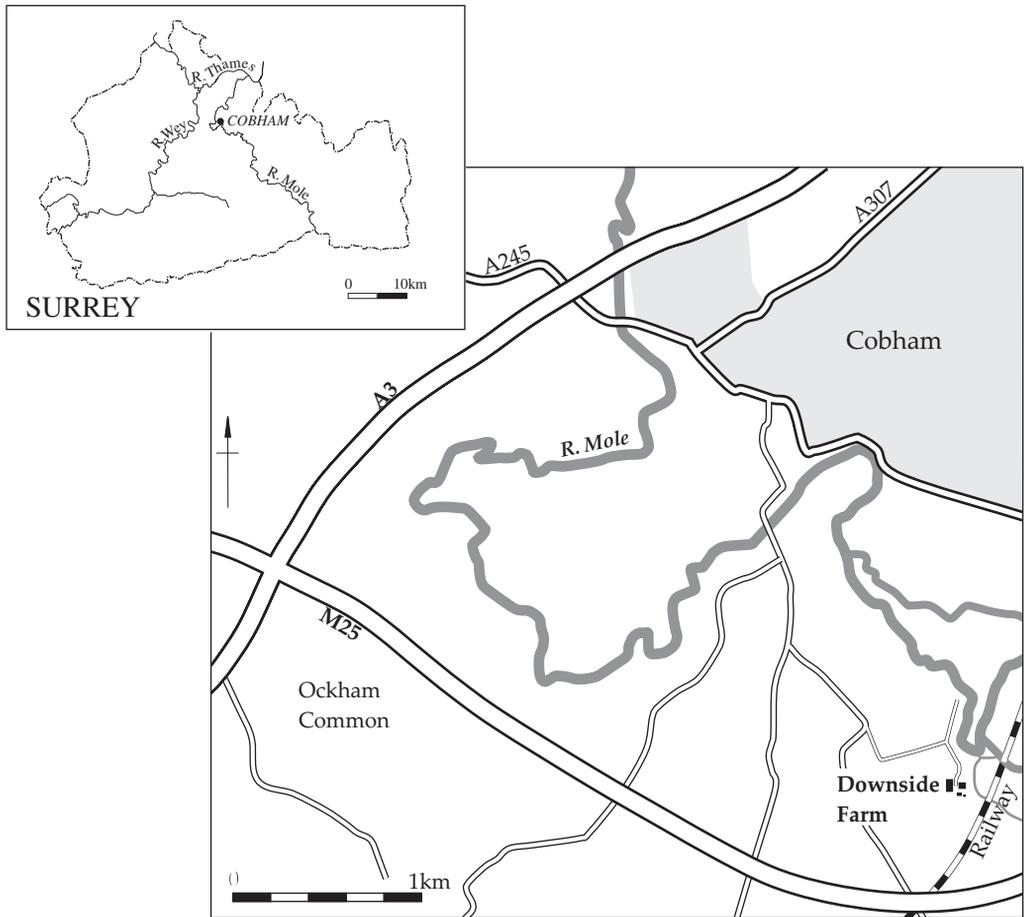


Fig 1 Downside Farm, Cobham: location plan. (© Crown copyright and/or database right. All rights reserved. Licence number 100014198)

northern arm of the 'moat' and it may be that this was the precursor of the narrower brick bridge. This observation is perhaps reinforced by the fact that the existing access road for most of its length is aligned on the centre of the 'moat' until diverting at nearly the last moment to pass to the west of it, presumably to service the 18th century farm outbuildings. To the east, the line of the 'moat' seems to continue as a low depression in the ground, which appears to terminate near the top of the rising ground and slightly to the rear of the house itself. A geophysical survey across the higher ground in the field to the south of the farmhouse produced no evidence for the presence of any southern arm to the possible moat.

Geologically, Downside is sited on London Clay, which is overlain in places by alluvial deposits associated with the river Mole. The site lies at a height of approximately 25m OD.

### **Historical background,** by David Taylor

Downside Farm is a small red brick farmhouse that has been investigated by the Domestic Buildings Research Group (Surrey). They found that, in the main, it dated to the early 18th

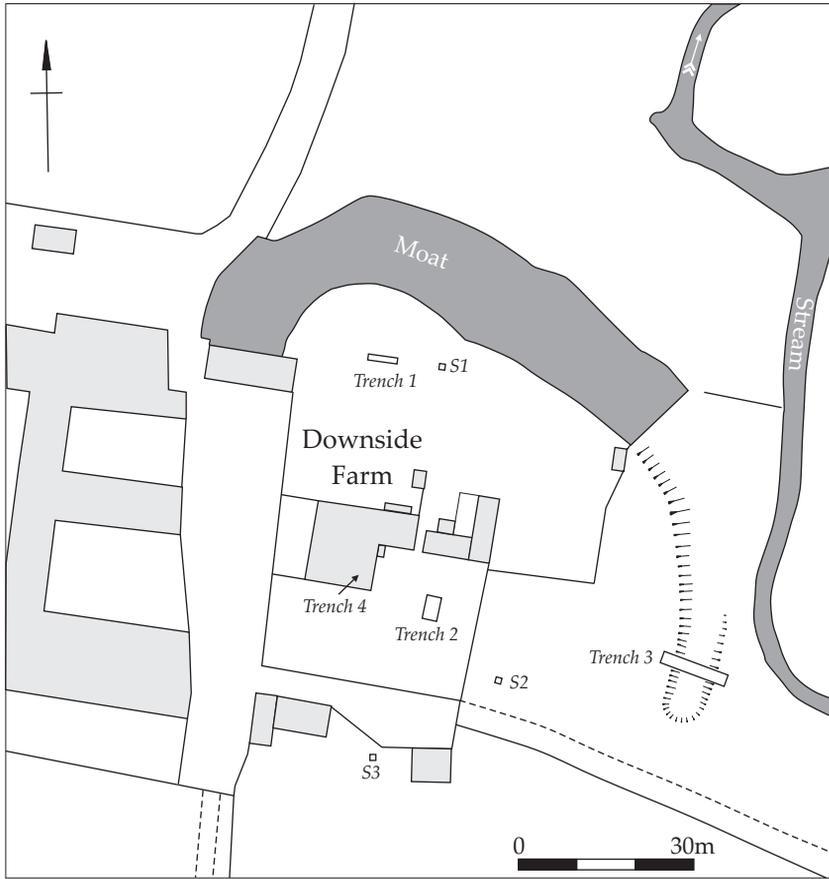


Fig 2 Downside Farm, Cobham: location of trenches.

century but had been extended in the early 19th century by the addition of a north wing with 'gothic' windows.<sup>1</sup>

The house is partly surrounded by a curving linear water feature which was first noted as a possible moat by H E Malden in 1912.<sup>2</sup> Not far from the farmhouse is Downside Mill, the site of which is probably that of one of the three mills recorded at Cobham in the Domesday Book.

Recent research points to the present farmhouse as being on the site of the ancient reputed manor house of Downe. The name is derived from the hill or down which rises steeply from the river Mole within what is now Cobham Park. No manorial court rolls appear to exist, but it is certain that this was always the most important private estate in the parish.<sup>3</sup>

A certain Deodatus de Dunes held land in Cobham in the early part of the 13th century and the *Victoria County History* suggests the possibility that the manor of Doneham, which is mentioned in 1280, may have been this manor. The Chertsey Cartulary states that in the time of Abbot Medmenham (1261–72), Henry de Doune conveyed two Bookham bondsmen to the abbot in exchange for the abbot's bondsman Ralph Blunt of Bookham, with his whole

<sup>1</sup> DBRG report no 3303 (August 1985).

<sup>2</sup> *VCH*, 4, 400.

<sup>3</sup> Walker 1961.

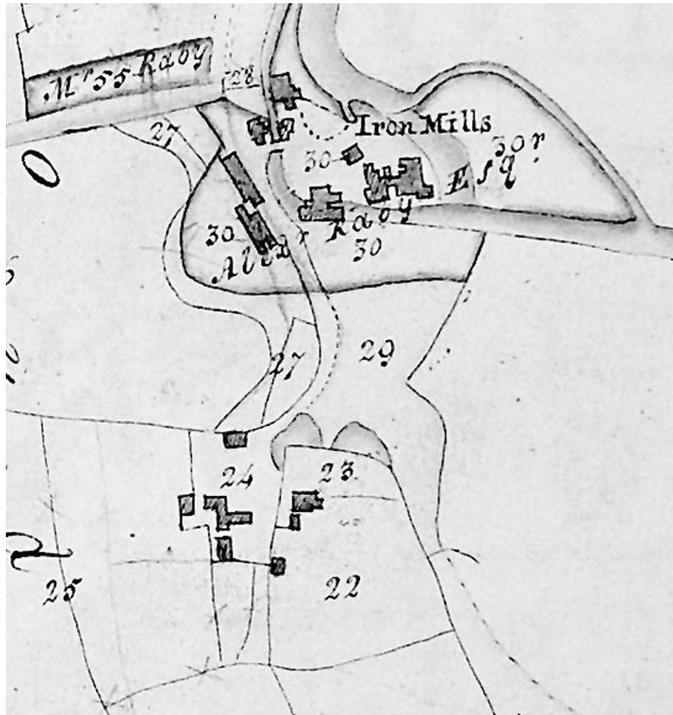


Fig 3 Downside Farm, Cobham: Thomas Crawler's map of c 1795. Downside Farm can be seen below and slightly to the left of '23' and the two halves of the causewayed/bridged moat just above the number (SHC: 2610/1/38/1). (Reproduced by permission of Surrey History Centre)

family and all his chattels for ever.<sup>4</sup> In the reign of Edward I a William de la Dune held the royal office of Keeper of the Hanaper, a wicker basket made to hold the Great Seal,<sup>5</sup> and ancillary evidence seems to indicate royal visits to Downe Place between 1292 and 1306. It may well be that the moat feature dates from this time having been created as a status symbol rather than for any defensive purposes.

In 1331, a William de Doune having died, Henry his son was admitted to the holding on payment to Chertsey Abbey of an ox value 13s 4d as a heriot, and as relief the sum of 15s 9d, nine gallons of honey, and horse '*ad ordines pro monach*'. The honey was an annual payment for allowing Doune's tenants to grind at Doune's own mill.<sup>6</sup>

The property remained in the hands of the Downe family until the 17th century. Ralph Agas's survey of the manor of Cobham (1598) states that 'Thomas Adoune holds freely a tenement called Doune Place and divers lands thereunto appertaining, and a tenement called Haythornes formerly Matilda Haymonds now called Blackes'.<sup>7</sup> Haythornes, also called Blackes, stood to the west of Downside Farm overlooking the common. Its site is now occupied the 19th century Laundry Cottage which was built to serve Cobham Park (TQ 113 584). There is a tenuous connection between this Thomas and John Evelyn. Thomas's daughter married Thomas Stinte and had a daughter called Joan(e) who became the second wife of George Evelyn, the grandfather of John. Thomas Stinte also had a lease of a tenement and

<sup>4</sup> *Cartularies*: Cal. Of Lansdown MSS, 434. *Special Eyre*, 26.

<sup>5</sup> *CalPR*: Edward I, AD 1292–1301, p 183.

<sup>6</sup> *Cartularies*: Cal. Of Lansdown MSS, 434. *Special Eyre*, 26.

<sup>7</sup> A transcription of the Agas survey is in the Surrey Archaeological Society's Research Collection, no 118/1.

40 acres in Wotton 'lately one Astones' which he left to his son Fraunces, brother in law to George Evelyn.<sup>8</sup>

In his will dated 1656, proved 1661, John Downe of Downe Place left £2 to the vicar of Cobham for sermons on Christmas Day and Ash Wednesday, and 20s to the poor in good bread to be given in the church on Ash Wednesday after the sermon.<sup>9</sup> The first two of these bequests indicate that Downe was probably a churchman and a royalist as celebration of these days was frowned upon during the Commonwealth.<sup>10</sup> To his 'kinsman' George Smyther, John Downe left all his lands, mills, and tenements in Surrey including Downe Hall. John Downe's widow, Elizabeth, gave 30 shillings for the 'Free and Voluntary Present' made to Charles II in 1661/2. Elizabeth's was the third largest sum in the parish.

The Surrey Hearth Tax of 1664 assessed Smyther for 10 hearths making Downe Place one of the largest properties in the parish.<sup>11</sup> (Cobham Court, the manor house, was assessed for 13 hearths.<sup>12</sup>)

In 1671 George Smyther of Cobham leased the 'Manor and Capital Messuage called Downehall alias Downe Place' to Thomas Baldwyn of Guildford and Richard Hunt of Wotton.<sup>13</sup> When George died in 1684 he was succeeded by his only son John who died without issue in 1702 and the property passed to his sisters.

In 1720 Anne Smither, widow, and Elizabeth Smither, spinster, both of Dorking sold the property to the Rt. Hon. Frances Viscountess Lanesborough who then lived at East Horsley for the sum of £5500.<sup>14</sup> It was then described as 'All that capital messuage or manor house commonly called [...] Down Place alias Downe Hall, with outbuildings, lands, 140 acres, in Cobham and Little Bookham now in the tenure or occupation of John Box or his assignees at yearly rent of £85.'<sup>15</sup> In 1728 Elizabeth Smither's ability to have executed the conveyance was called into question when her second cousin John Tanworth of Dorking sued out a Commission of Idiocy against his cousin.<sup>16</sup> A commission met at the King's Head, Dorking and a list of very frank questions and answers about Elizabeth Smither appears to refer to an adjourned meeting but the result of the enquiry is not given.

Lady Lanesborough had purchased the manor of Cobham and some small farms from the Gavell family in 1708. When Lady Lanesborough died in 1721 she left the manor of Cobham and Down Place to her grandsons of the Fox family.<sup>17</sup> It seems likely that the earliest surviving parts of Downside Farm are the result of a rebuilding during their ownership.

In 1728 one of the farms purchased by Lady Lanesborough with the manor of Cobham was sold by James Fox to John Bridges, son of Sir Brook Bridges, Auditor of the Imprest and one of the first Directors of the Bank of England. The old property, called 'Bridge House Farm' because of its proximity to Downside Bridge, was demolished by Bridges and replaced by a particularly grand house whose architect is now believed on stylistic grounds to have been Roger Morris.<sup>18</sup> This house became the first Cobham Park and was replaced by the present mansion in 1872. In 1749 Bridges sold his Cobham estate to Sir John Ligonier (later

<sup>8</sup> Will of Thomas Stinte of Downe Place dated 26 November, 45 Elizabeth and proved 18 February 1602/3. Herringman Register.

<sup>9</sup> Will of John Downe of Cobham dated 10 February 1656. NA: Prob/11/306.

<sup>10</sup> Further evidence of the Downe family's royalist leanings is evidences in 'The Free and Voluntary Present' to Charles II at the Restoration when John Downe's widow gave 30 shillings, the third highest in the parish.

<sup>11</sup> *Surrey Hearth Tax*, nos XLI and XLII.

<sup>12</sup> Cobham Court TQ 101 597.

<sup>13</sup> SHC: K176/9/6.

<sup>14</sup> The Articles of Agreement are in the WYRO (LF 83/44) and copies of the Lease and Release are in the Cobham Park estate archives.

<sup>15</sup> WYRO: LF/LXXXIV/21.

<sup>16</sup> WYRO: LF/LXXXIV/46.

<sup>17</sup> Walker 1961.

<sup>18</sup> Bridge House Farm/Cobham Park TQ 109 593.

Lord Ligonier) Commander in Chief of the British Army. In 1759 Ligonier purchased Down Place from The Hon George Fox Lane.<sup>19</sup>

Towards the end of the 18th century, Downside Mill was acquired by the ironmaster Alexander Raby and converted for the production of iron goods. Although Raby built himself a house close to the mill, Land Tax records show that he also leased Downside Farm for a while.<sup>20</sup>

Following Ligonier's purchase, Down Place, or Farm, as it became known, was incorporated into the Cobham Park estate. Ligonier's heirs eventually sold the estate to Henry Lawes Luttrell, 2nd Earl Carhampton in 1801. Carhampton did not stay long at Cobham Park and in 1806 he moved to nearby Pains Hill and sold Cobham Park to the brewer Harvey Christian Combe. Harvey Combe's son, 'Young Harvey', enlarged and developed Cobham Park into a country gentleman's estate and it is likely that the farm was fully developed as the Home Farm during his lifetime. Cobham Park mansion was sold out of the estate some years ago but the remainder of the estate continues to belong to the Combe family and Mr Dominic C H Combe, of Cobham Lodge, is the present owner.

#### THE EXCAVATION

##### *Trench 1* (fig 2)

This trench (5 x 1m) was excavated in the lawn to the north of the farmhouse and was positioned to intersect the line of any access track crossing the possible bridge, the site of which was indicated by brick footings still visible in the banks of the 'moat'. In addition the geophysical survey had indicated the presence of a linear feature at this point apparently heading towards the door of the farmhouse. In the event a narrow (*c* 0.84m wide) but substantial gravel and tile path (102) was found at a depth of about 0.2m below the modern surface and aligned as expected between the possible bridge and the door of the house. The path had been set into and was partially overlain by a 0.45m-thick layer of dark brown soil (101) which, to the east of and roughly level with the path, contained a scatter of tile and brick rubble including a number of intact rubbed bricks, most likely Georgian in date. The path was therefore probably originally laid to serve either the then newly built farmhouse or perhaps its rather later 'gothic' extension. Beneath the dark brown soil was a 0.2m-thick layer of mid-brown ashy soil (103). This contained a general scatter of tile and also produced a late 16th/early 17th century Nuremburg jetton. This level in turn overlay a 0.1m-thick band of gravel (104). No datable material was recovered from the gravel and it is unclear whether this is a natural deposit or whether it represents a laid surface. A test trench (fig 2: S1) some 7.5m to the east showed that the same gravel layer extends at least this far across the site. However none of the other trenches showed any sign of this level, so it must be confined to the area in front of the existing house.

The gravel lay directly on the natural clay, which was encountered at a depth of 0.65m below the modern ground surface. Coincidentally this is also the level of the modern water table.

##### *Trench 2* (fig 2)

This trench (4 x 2.5m) lay immediately to the south-west of the farmhouse and was sited over the original test pit that had produced medieval pottery during the first phase of the investigations. The top 0.16m of soil (200) contained a scatter of 19th century and later pottery and a French medallion marked with the date '1917'. Underlying this layer was a laid flint surface (201), presumably that of a yard, which extended across the trench and probably

<sup>19</sup> Taylor 2003.

<sup>20</sup> Crocker 2000.

provided an area of hard standing on this side of the house. Finds from the surface of the flints included pottery, bones, tile, clay pipe stems, glass and nails, all of which provide a 19th century date for the yard, though some residual green-glazed sherds were also present. A number of the bones had been sawn across and others showed knife marks, which perhaps indicate butchery activity in the area.

The flint yard had been laid on a clayey mid-brown coloured soil layer (202) that again produced a range of finds. The pottery was predominantly 18th century in date and included sherds of Chinese porcelain (dated 1700–70), cream wares, coarse Border wares and red Border wares but also one example of early 19th century yellow stone ware. Yet again a number of residual sherds of green-glazed pottery were recovered together with a 13th century jug handle. Other finds included bones, tile, nails, glass and the buckle from a shoe.

At the base of this level was a layer of demolition/construction material (203), 0.12m thick on average, and consisting of fragments of tile and brick but also containing oyster shells and several sherds of 13th century greyware – which is residual in this context. Given the dating material in the layers above and below this level, it would seem probable that it belongs to the early/mid-18th century – which is the presumed date for the construction of the first phase of the existing house.

Beneath the building rubble lay yet another soil level (204) which produced a general scatter of pottery of 15th/16th century date but also examples of Surrey white and grey/brown sandy wares dating to the 13th century and a few sherds of shell-tempered wares of probable 11th/12th century date. The layer had been cut by a single posthole (205) that was sealed by the overlying rubble and which produced one sherd of stoneware and a piece of tile. It would seem probable therefore that the posthole is post-medieval in date and may, just possibly, be connected with the construction of the house. No other features were visible and the natural clay was encountered at a depth of 0.6m below the modern ground surface.

### *Trench 3 (figs 2 and 4)*

This trench (11.5 x 2m) was located to the east of and slightly below the level of the farmhouse and positioned to section the line of the suspected eastern arm of the moat. The topsoil and upper levels were stripped by machine and the lower levels excavated by hand. Beneath the topsoil and extending over two-thirds of the trench was a layer of light brown silty soil (301). The only finds from this context were occasional fragments of brick and tile. Beneath this in the central third of the trench was a layer of dark brown silt (304) that partially filled a flat-bottomed 5.2m-wide ditch cut into the underlying natural clay. To the east and partially underlying this silt was a thin band of clay (302) that, in turn, partially rested on a deposit of gravel and tile which had been tipped into the eastern edge of the cut. The cut, while apparently being only about 0.85m deep, nevertheless seems to be man-made and is likely to be the upper, shallow end of the eastern arm of a stepped moat. There was no evidence that this section of the moat had ever contained water but if it had the moat arm must have contained at least one intermediate dam, as the base of the cut in trench 3 is 0.56m above the current water level in the extant section of the moat. Very little dating evidence was recovered from any of the fills except for a few pieces of pegged roof tile and a worn halfpenny of 1861 which came from the dark brown silt layer (304).

The section would seem to show that there has been much disturbance to the ground levels in this part of the site and in particular that the ground surface on the western (farmhouse) side of the ditch, has been lowered considerably at some stage, while to the east the ditch has partially been infilled with the dump of gravel and tile (303). To compound matters, if the ditch does represent the eastern arm of a medieval moat, as seems likely, then subsequent cleaning operations have removed any evidence for silting earlier in date than the mid-19th century, if the evidence of the coin is to be relied on.

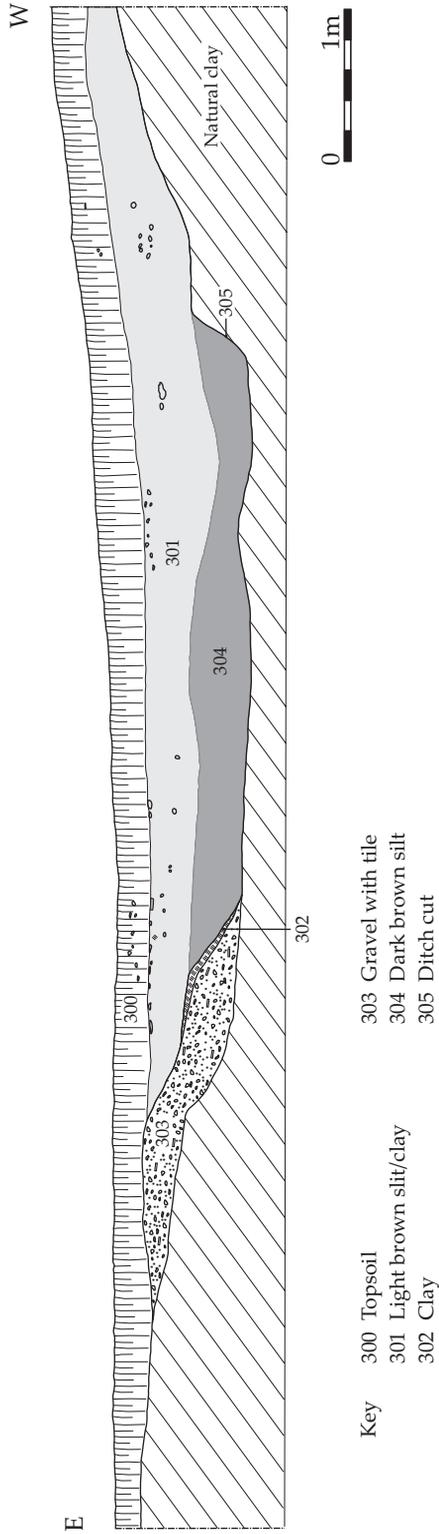


Fig 4 Downside Farm, Cobham: east-west section (south face) across moat ditch.

*Trench 4* (figs 2, 5 and 6)

This trench (in outline 3.3 x 3.2m) was excavated following the removal of the flagstone floor in the dining room of the farmhouse. As shown by the earlier test pit, the floor had been laid on a levelling bed of sandy mortar (401) that contained oyster shells, pieces of clay pipe stems and bowls (one marked with the initials 'W C') and a coin of George II, all of which provide an early to mid-18th century date for the laying of the flagstones. The sandy mortar layer was not, however, totally uniform as there was an area of brick rubble by the inside door and a patch of trampled ash and charcoal in front of the fireplace. In one area, roughly central in the room, were the remains of a small temporary hearth lined with clay – perhaps in use during the building of the house itself. An iron shoe patten, a type of overshoe usually fitting under a wooden sole and worn to raise the feet above mud, was also recovered from this layer. Once again a date of late 17th/18th century would seem likely.

For the most part in the western, longer, section of the trench, this level rested on a number of additional fill levels (402, 404, 405, 406, 407 and 412) which in turn overlay a demolition layer consisting of a thin band of pegged roof tiles (408) which lay, again in the same general area, on a flint floor (411). Trampled on and into the surface of the floor and underlying the tiles were oyster and mussel shells, a boar's tusk and brown/green-glazed pot sherds of probable 16th/17th century date, together with, presumably residual, greywares of the 13th century and a redware rim of 14th/16th century date. Along the western edge and particularly in the south-west corner of the trench the floor and overlying tiles had slumped into an earlier pit or gully and the resulting hollow had been later filled with a number of

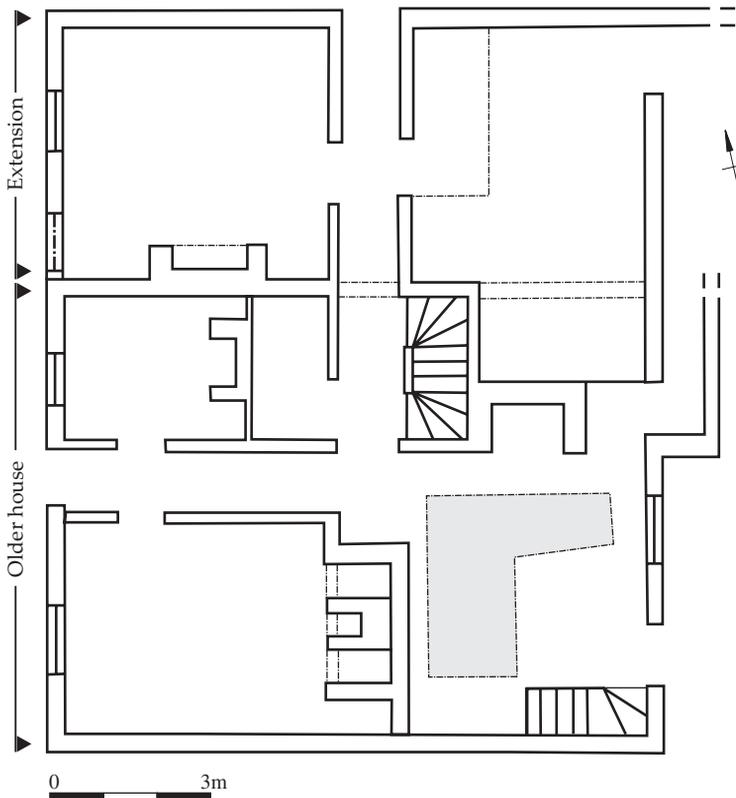


Fig 5 Downside Farm, Cobham: location of trench 4 (grey tone) in dining room. Based on an original DBRG plan.

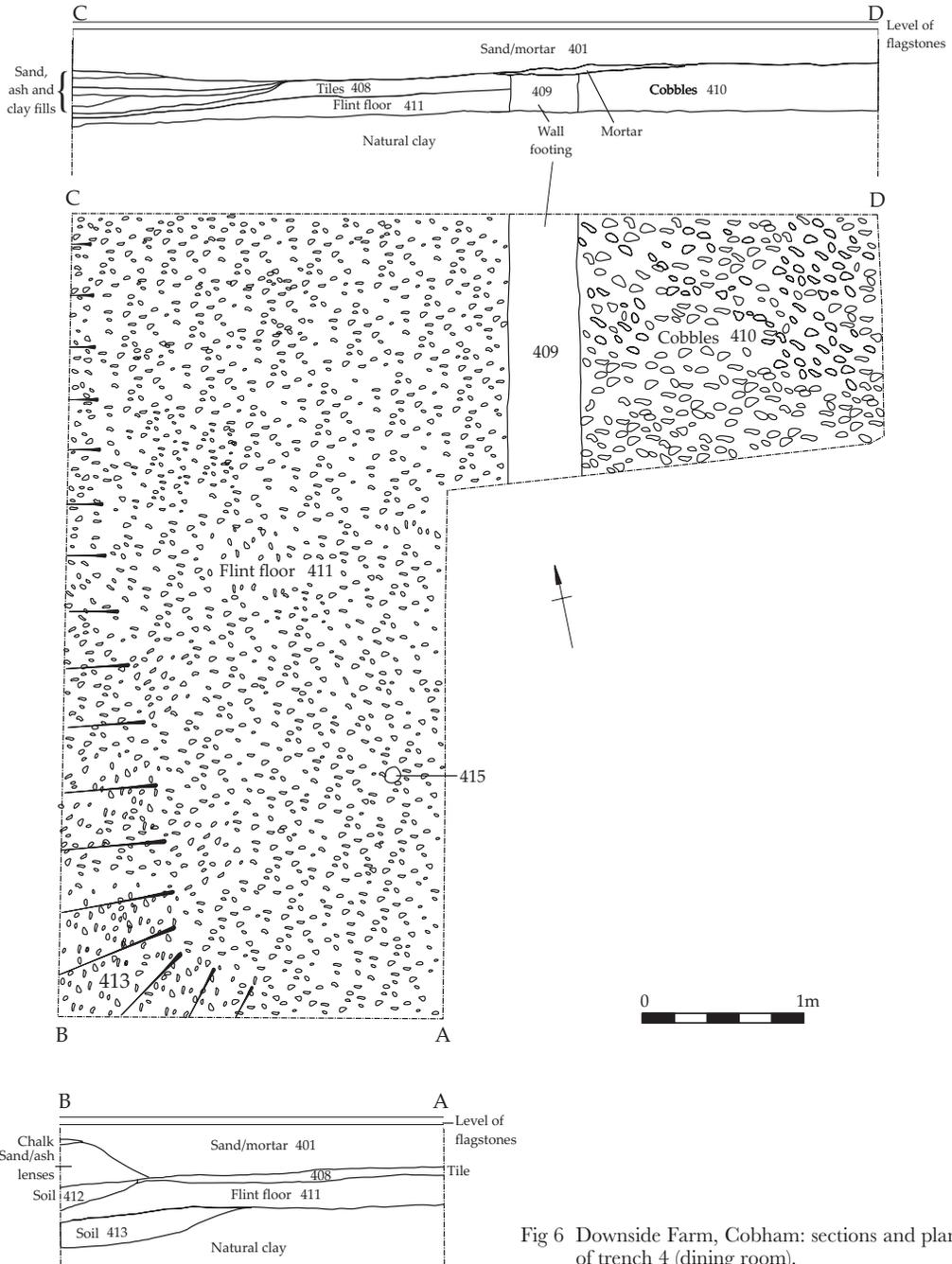


Fig 6 Downside Farm, Cobham: sections and plan of trench 4 (dining room).

sand, clay and ashy fills (404, 406, 407) which produced pottery ranging in date from the 13th century to salt-glazed ware of the period 1720–60. Level with the flint floor, but in the eastern ‘arm’ of the trench, were the footings for a wall (409) which ran more or less north–south. The footings showed clearly as a band of compacted mortar interspersed with tiles. These had unidirectional peg holes and the footings also produced red Border ware of

15th/16th century date and Surrey whiteware rims and body sherds of a similar date. Again there were small numbers of, presumably, residual 13th and 14th century pottery.

To the east of the wall was a layer of cobbling (410), made of much larger flints than those of the floor itself. The only finds recovered from the surface of the cobbles were yet more oyster shells, some fragments of tile and a few bones. Both the flint floor and the cobbles had been laid directly on the natural clay, except along the western edge of and in the south-west corner of the trench, and no finds were recovered from beneath them. In the latter areas the floor had been laid over a dark brown ashy soil deposit that contained a few lumps of chalk, none of which showed any signs of tooling. This deposit consisted of a series of fills (413) within an undated pit or gully, only a small part of which extended into the trench. The nature and purpose of this feature is unknown but it obviously pre-dates the stone floor and must therefore be earlier than the late 15th/16th century.

#### *Other excavations* (fig 2)

Two 1m-square sondages (fig 2: S2 and S3) were opened on the higher ground to the east of and to the rear of the farmhouse in an attempt to locate intact medieval levels. No such intact levels or features were found, though S3 did produce a range of 18th century and later pottery and a small piece of tooled marble. A metal detector survey in the area of S2 failed to produce anything other than modern material.

#### OTHER FINDS

##### *Worked stone*

A carved stone console, an ornamental scrolled bracket to support a projecting fascia or lintel, was found during restoration works to the north-eastern edge of the moat.

In this case, the large scroll is oval in shape suggesting an artistic depiction of compression under load. This could mean that the console was designed to be used vertically, with the large scroll under a projecting feature. The total projection was only about 0.25m (10 inches), which could be suitable for the cornice of an external door or window pediment. A console of this type is either 17th century baroque or 18th century Palladian in style. It is uncertain whether this find relates to a building on the site or whether, perhaps more likely, it has been brought in from elsewhere. In any event, it must have come from a rather grand house – possibly the former Cobham Park mansion.

##### *Metalwork*

A single example of an iron case shot, 88g in weight and 30mm in diameter, was found in the garden by the Broadbent family. Case shot is not closely datable and was in use over a long period up to and including the Napoleonic Wars. The ball has a casting flaw and it is possible that it was produced at Alexander Raby's ironworks operating in the late 18th century at Downside Mill just to the north of Downside Farm.

#### **Conclusion**

The recovery of a few unabraded sherds of shell-tempered wares from two trenches (2 and 4) hints at a first occupation of the site in the 11th or 12th centuries. Equally the presence of modest quantities of medieval pottery must mean that, as suggested by the historical records, the site was occupied during this period as well. The fact that, with the possible exception of the undated pit or gully in trench 4 (the dining room), no intact medieval layers or features were recovered, must mean that either these lie elsewhere on the site or perhaps that ground levelling works associated with the existing house and its immediate predecessor have removed all or most traces of any earlier occupation.

The flint floor, wall footing and probably external cobbling found under the dining room, are evidence for a predecessor to the existing house. This earlier house is likely to have been of very late medieval or Tudor date and to have been demolished in the early 18th century to make way for the first phase of the existing farmhouse.

The presence of an eastern arm to the moat seems to have been confirmed and, solely on the evidence of the Victorian coin, appears to have been open, though not, on cartographic evidence, holding water, until the mid-late 19th century when it appears to have been backfilled and the site partially levelled. The shallow nature of the moat at this point and its apparent termination a few metres to the south of the trench, where the ground rises more steeply, probably means that, at best, the moat was only ever three sided. Unfortunately it was impossible to date the feature, either because the arm was only excavated in the Victorian period or, much more likely, because it had been cleaned out at some point. The existing water-filled moat (fig 2) appears to turn south as it rounds the western side of the farmhouse, in effect mirroring the path taken by the eastern arm. However, any such extension appears to have been deliberately infilled, perhaps during the 17th/18th century and certainly, again on cartographic evidence, by no later than *c* 1795 (fig 3). This shows that by that date the main approach to the house was similar to that taken by the drive today. Certainly the path found in trench 1, at the front of the house, seems too narrow to have served as the main access to the first phase of the Georgian farmhouse and it may well be that this path and the bridge actually relate to the period of the house's later 'gothic' extension and formed part of a landscaping of the site. Whatever the case, terracing works at some stage probably removed all traces of any earlier levels and tracks associated with the, presumably original, access across the moat.

It seems most likely therefore that the site at Downside was partly enclosed by a curving moat, perhaps with internal dams towards the ends of the two side arms to maintain water levels. Given the present level of water in the open moat, the southern extremities of any side arms would have been dry without the presence of such dams. The geophysical survey found no evidence for a southern arm in the field to the rear of the farmhouse although it is just possible that such a feature might lie under the track that separates the house from the field. Three-sided moats are unusual but not unknown, eg Gamlingay, Cambridgeshire (Taylor 1978, 8, fig 4d) and moats with separate arms, allowing artificial water levels, have also been recorded, eg Lagham Manor, South Godstone (Ketteringham 1984). The original access road to Downside would have followed the line of the existing road except that, for the last few hundred metres, it would have continued in a straight line to the causeway shown on the map of *c* 1795 (fig 3).

Though in some ways not as conclusive as might have been hoped, such evidence as there is, indicates that Downside was occupied from the 11th/12th century onwards and is in all probability the site of the high-status medieval hall referred to in the documents. It has certainly been the site of a building from the early Tudor period onwards. However, a more secure interpretation of the history of Downside must await a much more comprehensive programme of excavation.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are most grateful to Mr Dominic Combe and Mrs Charlotte Broadbent for permission to carry out the work. Mr Combe kindly provided a mechanical digger both to cut the moat trench and to backfill the site and Mrs Broadbent was extremely tolerant of the disruption caused by the excavations in and around her house. Thanks are also due to: Kevin Fryer of Guildford Museum for identifying and dating the pottery; Michael Clements for comments on the worked stone; and to Philip McGrath of the Royal Armouries for identifying the case shot and to Dennis Turner for his comments on the draft script. We are also grateful to Angela Arathoon, Dave Attyde, Judie English, Alan Hall, Marc Hanson, Rose Hooker, Sue and John Janaway, Kate Pickering, Mike Rubra, Jez Smith, Mike Smith, Geoff Stonehouse and Nigel Wilson, all of whom came and helped on the site.

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