

# SAXON AND EARLY MEDIEVAL STAINES

PHILIP JONES

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The modern town of Staines in the Borough of Spelthorne was incorporated into the County of Surrey in 1965. Before that date, Staines and the other parishes of old Spelthorne Hundred had lain within the south-west corner of Middlesex, and the River Thames served as the boundary between the 2 counties. Archaeological research within the town began in 1969 with a series of excavations and site-watching that has continued until the present-day. Of the 3 major excavations, Elmsleigh House (Site Z) has been published (Crouch 1976, 71–134), the Friends Burial Ground (Site Y) report should become available as a monograph in 1984, and post-excavation work on the material from the Central Area Redevelopment (Site W) excavated in 1977/78, is currently in progress.<sup>1</sup>

A large corpus of finds was found in stratified deposits of the mid 1st to late 4th century AD Roman small town of *Pontes*, now below the High Street area. There are however, few finds of the next 700 years until the 12th century, that have been found in securely-dated deposits. Most of the pottery of this period has been found mixed within a thick 'dark earth' layer that overlies Roman features in the southern area of the town. Some ditches and other features found below the 'dark earth' provide important evidence for the topography and nature of settlement during the Saxon and Saxo-Norman periods.

The purpose of this paper is to consider all these excavated deposits from within the town; and the pottery from them or

incorporated into later layers. Some attempt is then made to relate these finds to the documentary evidence for Staines and the surrounding area until the early 13th century. By this time the town was expanding, parts of the High Street area were modified in ground plan to that which still survives today, and mass-produced sandy wares began to monopolize the pottery market during the 13th and 14th centuries.

## 2. TOPOGRAPHY

Most of the archaeological features described in Part 3 occupy the riverbank of a channel that ceased to flow before surviving maps of the town were compiled. Much of the hydrology of the immediate area of Staines during the medieval and earlier periods may, therefore, have been markedly different from to-day.

The Flood Plain terrace, comprising gravels lying beneath shallow and often eroded brickearths, fills a basin between Windsor in the North-West and Hampton in the South-East (Fig. 1). The Taplow terrace forms its northern edge, and high ground of heaths and woodlands lie to the south and west. The Flood Plain deposits also extend north along the Colne Valley as a delta behind its confluence with the Thames in the area of modern Staines. There was persistent erosion of the terrace by braided channels of both watercourses until the late 18th century when the channel of the modern Thames was embanked. The hydrography of the area was then effectively fossilised except in seasons of exceptionally wet weather when flooding of old watercourses still occurs.

The area of habitable land around Staines (Fig. 2) has always been dictated by the

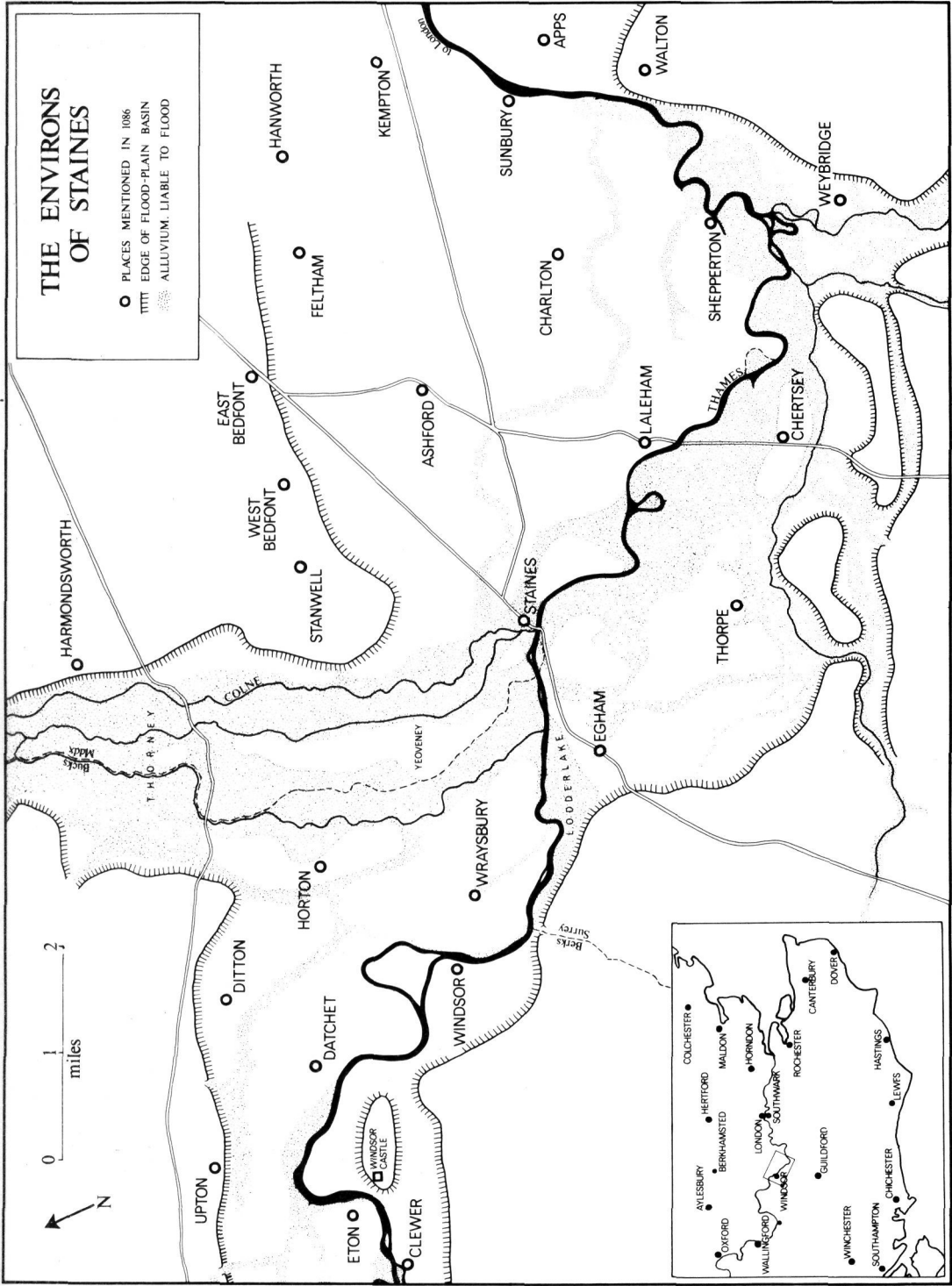


Fig. 1. Staines: The environs of Staines.

remnants of the Flood Plain terrace rising as a broken surface above the marshland of the alluvium. Where the main channels of the River Thames and Colne met, a series of islands were created by the action of periglacial floodwaters. One such island was the area of the modern High Street, and others included Binbury to the north-west on which the parish church now stands, the Hythe area on the Surrey bank of the Thames; Budbury to the south-east with the common fields of Staines; and in the east, the neck of land defined by the Rivers Colne and Ash and Sweeps Ditch, with the medieval hamlets of Birch Green and Knowle Green.

Within a 2 mile radius from Staines were also the islands of Yeoveney between 2 arms of the Colne; and Tinsey, a part of Bucks. on the S. side of the Thames (see Fig. 1). The obstructive effects of the bridges and causeways connecting these islands would have drastically altered the hydrology of the area during the Roman and later periods. A man-made landscape of ditches and leats may have become necessary to ensure against the worst effects of ground saturation and flooding.

It has become clear from excavations along the southern waterfront in Staines that periods of prolonged flood, during which the islands would have been separated by expanses of water, were relatively infrequent. Although the low-lying ground remained as marsh and moorland pasture, prolonged flooding only occurred during severe phases of climactic deterioration, as during the early 3rd century AD; the later 4th and 5th centuries AD, the early 14th century, and the 2nd quarter of the 15th century. During these periods the Staines High Street area would have become an oval-shaped island, with the rivers Thames and Colne to the west, and Sweeps Ditch, another stream of the Colne, to the north and east. South-east of the town, was once another water-course which may have been an arm of the Thames which joined with Sweeps Ditch at the eastern end of the island; or perhaps waters of the Colne enclosed the town to the north, south and east. Excavations have shown that the maximum ground surface levels during the Roman

to early medieval periods were at least 1 to 1.5m lower than at present, through much of the town. Security of settlement against flooding could only have been achieved with ditches that would divert surface water around the town island. Such a watercourse exists as the northern area of Sweeps Ditch, carrying Colne waters both east and west, but its antiquity is not known.

The only known reference to a defensive circuit of Staines is made by Stukeley who, in 1723, described the town as being 'fenced round with a "ditch."' The line of this enclosure may have been along Sweeps Ditch, the Colne, the Thames, and the southern watercourse. During the medieval period, gates were in place, possibly at the bridges over Sweeps Ditch and the Thames at each end of the High Street; West Bar 13th century, and East Bar 1490 (Reynolds 1962, 16). If the settlement of Staines required defences at any time prior to and during the medieval period, then the banks of the watercourses surrounding the High Street area afforded the most effective topographical feature to be exploited.

Streams north of the town would have been used during the medieval period as leats to drive the 2 mills that stood on the Wyrardisbury and Colne rivers between the High Street and Binbury. Six mills were recorded on the manor in 1086 and at least one of them probably stood close to the town. Hale Mill is the earliest to be recorded by name in 1354 and occupied a triangular piece of land between the Colne and Sweeps Ditch. (Reynolds 1962, 21). Maps of the 18th and 19th centuries show that it was supplied with water via a system of leats, some perhaps of great age such as Bonehead or Bourne Head Ditch (a name that implies a control of water flow) which formed part of the eastern parish boundary.

It is not known how long a Thames bridge had existed in Staines before the 13th century, when several grants of trees from Windsor Forest were given by the King for its repair (Turner 1926, 14; Reynolds 1962, 13) Wardens were responsible for its maintenance from as early as 1228. The causeway from the Hythe on the Surrey bank opposite Staines, to Egham is frequently mentioned in medieval documentary sources together with the

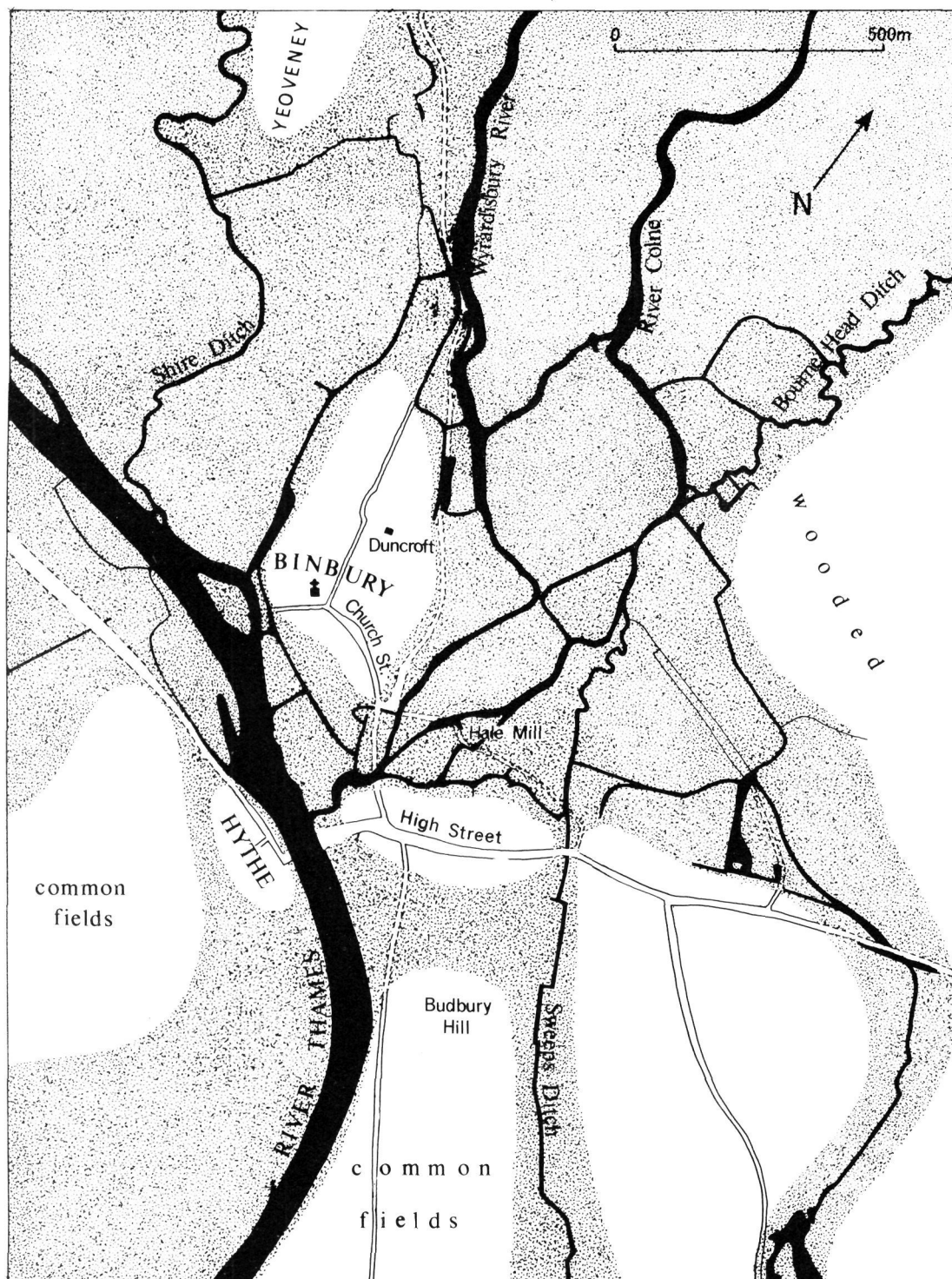


Fig. 2. Staines: General topography. (See Note 9, p. 212).

bridge, and it was repaired with the aid of pontage grants during the early 15th century. (Turner 1926, 17). Earlier, both had been the responsibility of the Abbot of Chertsey although Thomas de Oxenford, a prominent local landowner had been credited with the construction of the causeway during the 13th century. By the middle of the 14th century, and whilst disputing any liability for its repair, the Abbey also claimed that Thomas had built the bridge. (Turner 1926, 15). The inability of the Abbot to trace the history of the bridge before the 13th century may indicate that there was no earlier bridge across the Thames other than the *pons* implied in the name of the Roman town *Pontes*. It seems unlikely that the Abbot of Chertsey would have permitted a bridgehead on his property that would have enabled road traffic to by-pass the Abbey on the western route out of London. No such structure is included as a boundary feature in the descriptions of the extent of the Abbey's estates before this time (see below). A 'crossing' made here by part of a Scandinavian army in 1009 could have been by way of a ford as it seems unlikely that a bridge could have survived raiding, such as occurred in 993 and 1006 (see p. 192).

Other bridges were necessary during the early medieval period to connect the separate parts of Staines. The High Street followed the line of the Roman road to London, and bridges and causeways carried it east across Sweeps Ditch and the Littleton Brook (also known as the River Ash). Binbury and the High Street were connected by Church Street which crossed the Colne at Longford Bridge. Moor Bridge carried Hale Street over the Wyardisbury River to connect the mill with Binbury. South from the High Street extended Thames Street by way of bridges or causeways to gain access to Budbury, the common fields, and Laleham parish (Reynolds 1962, 15).

A market in Staines, first mentioned in 1218, probably occupied the High Street between its western extension as Bridge Street (the modern Market Place) and beyond the junctions with Thames and Church Street in the east. Rocque's map of 1754 shows a middle row of buildings dividing the High Street

immediately east of Thames Street and these probably represent more permanent structures that replaced earlier market stalls. An alternative market or fair site lies towards the north-west end of Church Street where it broadens out before entering Binbury Row and St. Mary's churchyard.

Binbury was a settlement from at least the 14th century, probably extending along what is now Church Street and Binbury Row.<sup>2</sup> It is possible that the demesne manor of Staines was also sited here close to the church. Speed mentioned in 1613 an enclosure at Binbury measuring 28ft × 83ft but there is no visible remains of this, nor is it shown on the earliest maps of the area. The dimensions of the 'enclosure' may indicate that it was, perhaps, the foundations of a large hall or barn rather than a ditched or embanked earthwork enclosure. An alternative site for the manor is Duncroft House standing north of the church. This has traditional associations with the constitutional events of 1215 for the Bishops and Barons are said to have assembled here before the parliament with King John and the signing of Magna Carta (Richardson 1968, 14). St. Mary's parish church occupies the highest ground of Binbury and was in existence by 1179. The site may be close to that of a small religious cell that probably existed within Staines in the pre-Conquest period (see p. 191).

Another Saxon occupation site nearby may have been the site of Yeoveney Manor, a mile north of the church on slightly elevated ground between two arms of the Colne. The estate was described in the 11th century as lying in the pasture of Staines (Reynolds 1968, 18) and the site of one of the mills of Staines mentioned in the Domesday survey may have been within the vicinity. Most of the estate now lies submerged below the Wraysbury Reservoir.

At the southern end of the Yeoveney high ground between the manor and Binbury, once lay Stern Hill Field. Excavations of a Neolithic causewayed camp here in 1961 also produced some mid Saxon pottery and other indications of settlement (Robertson-Mackay 1961, 132). 'Stern', possibly meaning 'at the back end', may refer to the boundary between the estates

of Yeoveney and Staines which existed close by.

There is some evidence that during the second half of the 14th century, major changes occurred in the economy of the town. Both of the town mills were abandoned and demesne farming was curtailed. Apart from the site of the church and the probable sites of the bridge and mill, we know very little about the topography of Staines prior to these changes.

### 3. DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

The main sources of historical evidence for Staines prior to the 12th century are several land charters purporting to be of the late Saxon period, entries within the Domesday survey of Middlesex, and inferences to be made from the annals of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.<sup>3</sup>

After the collapse of Roman administration in the early 5th century AD, Staines probably lay within the territory of the *Middelseaxan* which was possibly a *regio* even before the ascendancy of the Kent and Essex royal houses in the 7th century. Their overlordship extended far to the west of the River Lea. It has also been implied that Staines lay within an early Saxon enclave of the *Sunningas* lying on both sides of the Thames, from Sunbury to Sonning (Barrow 1976). The antiquity of the similar 'folk name' *Staningas* or 'men of Staines' implied from the name *Staningahagae* of the London property of Staines, mentioned in a charter of Edward the Confessor (see below), is unknown but may be of much later date.

South of the Thames, the overlordship of Surrey was in dispute between Wessex and Kent in the 6th century. It was ruled by a *subregulus*, Frithwald, during the later 7th century when Chertsey was founded by King Egbert of Kent, but Frithwald, who had granted the estate, owed his allegiance to Wulfhere of Mercia, according to the foundation charter of 670 (Whitelock 1955, 479–80). By this time both banks of the Thames around Staines lay effectively under Mercian domination.

From the revival of Wessex at the end of the 7th century until the mid 9th century,

there began a period of uncertain control over the Thames bank-side settlements. With the onset of Danish raiding from the mid 9th century, the Thames valley became of strategic importance for the Saxons and an organised defence culminated with Alfred's treaty with Guthrum in 886 in which terms were agreed to contain the Danes within the eastern Thames Valley and outside Middlesex. The terms were little observed, and in 893 a force of Danes are said to have crossed the Thames from Surrey 'where there was no ford', and entrenched 4 miles north of Staines at Thorney, then presumably an 'island' within the floodplain of the River Colne. They resisted all English attempts to subdue them and terms were eventually settled that enabled their safe return to their fleet at Benfleet, Essex.

The foundation of new fortified towns and the creation of shires begun by Alfred, was continued by his successor Edward, but it was not until the mid 10th century that equilibrium was reached with the Danes and peace restored to the Thames Valley.

The earliest grant by charter of land at Staines purports to be of this period and is dated 969, but was forged most probably in the post-Conquest period (see below). At least some of its details however, are verified by other sources. King Edgar's charter confirmed *Stana* and other estates including nearby Ashford, Teddington, Halliford and Feltham to the Abbot of Westminster, and also states that Staines had once been the site of a religious house (*cenobium quod Stana vocatur*). There is another reference to a pre-conquest religious house in the Domesday Book entry for East Burnham in Bucks. Three thegns who held the manor before the Conquest were obliged to pay an annual sum to the *monasterium* of *Stanes*, most probably Staines in Middlesex (VCH Bucks VIII, 211). East Burnham was one of only two estates in Bucks that belonged also to St. Peter's, Westminster in the 11th century. Land held by Staines within London prior to the Conquest was a privilege granted to only a few rural estates, many of which were ecclesiastical foundations. There is therefore a strong possibility of a Saxon minster at Staines that

was abandoned, perhaps as the result of raiding in the 9th century.

By the closing years of the 10th century, renewed Scandinavian attacks penetrated the Thames Valley. The first authentic reference to Staines concerns one of these incursions recorded in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. In 1009 a large expeditionary force that included many Vikings, moved through Kent, and having failed to take London, passed on to Oxford which they burnt early in the following year. The army returned on both sides of the Thames until they received warning of vigorous defences planned by the men of London. Those on the north bank are then said to have crossed the river at Staines to regroup and return to Kent in avoidance of the City.

In the first half of the 11th century and possibly before, elements of Scandinavian culture seem to have been absorbed into the fabric of local Saxon society. It is known from various entries in the Domesday Book that many of Edward the Confessor's guard were of Danish stock and held much land within this part of the Colne valley and near to his palace at Old Windsor. At least one customary payment was rendered in Norse currency, to the minster in Staines from East Burnham, and several place-names indicate Scandinavian influence. A field adjacent to the parish boundary of Staines was called Augur Hedge in 1828 and may refer to a burial mound (ON or O Dn *haugr* a mound, heap, hillock or grave-mound).

There are 4 surviving land-grant or confirmation charters for Staines of the reign of Edward the Confessor. All are considered to be later copies or forgeries perpetrated by Westminster scribes possibly in the late 11th or early 12th century. Sawyer considered that the charters of 1042 and 1053 were based on authentic documents whereas the 2 confirmations of Edward, and the confirmation by Edgar in 969 were of more dubious origin. It is in the 1053 charter that first reference is made to the *staningehagae* in London, berewicks, and a soke of 35 hides.<sup>4</sup>

The Domesday Book entries for Staines further emphasise the importance of the estate during the 11th century. The manor with its

4 berewicks was confirmed to the Abbot of Westminster. The soke of 1053 can be identified from within the Spelthorne Hundred as being Staines, its berewicks (probably the holdings of Teddington, Halliford, Feltham and Ashford mentioned with Staines in the 969 charter), and other estates recorded as having jurisdiction from Staines (2 in Laleham, 1 in Charlton, and another Ashford property). Collectively the assessed Domesday hideage is equal to the 35 hide sokeland of 1053.

The high proportion of bordars (58) to villeins (16) on the manor of 1086 is unusual and Maitland, thought that a grain 'factory' may have been operating, with at least one of the 6 mills of Staines (Maitland 1897, 181). It has been noted however, that a high proportion of bordars may imply that settlement had become fairly widespread throughout the estate (Harvey 1979, 105–109). 46 burgesses were of this manor in 1086 and they provide better evidence that Staines was a marketing centre in the 11th century.

The *Staningehagae* of Edwards 1053 charter is not recorded in the Domesday Book but Maitland considered that the burgesses of Staines may have formed part of London's mercantile community operating from within its own lands (Maitland 1897, 181). The area within London may approximate to that of the medieval parish of St. Mary Staining with its church (*ecclesia de Stanigehage* 1189), at the top end of Staining Lane (*Stanigelane* 1206–8) that led south through the City.<sup>5</sup>

One factor of unknown antiquity is the jurisdiction of London over the Thames as far as Staines and the confluence with the Colne which, from the late 9th century formed the boundary between Bucks and what remained of Middlesex. The earliest reference concerns a dispute over the authorisation of fish-weirs between London and Staines. The wardens of Montfichet and Baynards castles in the 13th century both claimed that jurisdiction to Staines had belonged to their Lords during the previous century (*pers. comm.* Tony Dyson, Museum of London). It is interesting to note here with reference to a possible military zone west of London, that in 893 and again in 1009 Scandinavian raiders were prevented from

crossing the Colne into Middlesex when returning from expeditions in the west.

Although well placed relative to major road and river routes, and despite its status as having been a Roman town, Staines by the Late Saxon period would have been restricted in its commercial activities by competition from nearby Old Windsor 5.6kms upstream, and Chertsey 4km downstream.

Chertsey (*Cerotaesei* c 730) had been an important monastery since its foundation, despite the probable ravages by Danes and King Edgar's expulsion of its canons in the 10th century. The Abbot owned an extensive estate in North-West Surrey and perhaps Southwark. During the 11th century it held sake and soke over London holdings which included at least one *hythe* (Dyson 1980, 87). The Abbey was, therefore, an active marketing centre to rival Staines.

Across Runnymede from Staines and on the Berkshire banks of the Thames lies Old Windsor (*Windlesora* 1061). This had become another important trading centre by at least the mid 11th century and the site of a palace of King Edward the Confessor (Astill 1978, 70). Excavations of Saxon features have provided evidence of prosperity and organisation of the manor over 2 centuries earlier, and it has been suggested that the demesne may therefore have been held by a person of high rank as early as the 9th century. (Hope-Taylor 1958, 184). Despite the destruction of at least part of the site, possibly during the Danish Wars, the manor was host to the 3rd largest town in Berkshire by the time of the Domesday Survey with 95 *hagae*. The growth of Old Windsor under royal patronage prior to the Conquest would have been checked by any substantial increase in Staines trade or by a bridge placed there.

Despite this competition, Staines was by the 11th century a rural estate of some importance. Its London *hagae* may date back to the reorganisation of King Alfred in the late 9th century, or else they may once have belonged to the minster at Staines.

#### 4. ARCHAEOLOGY<sup>6</sup>

Apart from a few isolated pits found nearer to the High Street frontage, most of the

archaeological features of Saxon to 12th-century date were excavated on the backlands of the southern side of the High Street and were associated with a series of waterfronts facing S.E. over one of the surrounding streams (see Fig. 3). Severe flooding had damaged the southern fringe of the Roman town c. AD 220 and there seems to have been a subsequent decline of domestic activity until the later Roman period when several buildings were in use on sites Z and W.

The rectangular timber buildings found on the north-west part of Z were eventually dismantled and the fill of their beamslots and postholes included a few sherds of rolled mid 4th-century pottery. They had been set at right angles to, and south of the main east-west Roman road, observed on W to be partly underlying the modern High Street.

West from these, on Y, 3 sides of a rectangular-ditched enclosure were excavated, which had been abandoned in the 4th century. Sherds from its V-shaped ditch were of mid to late 4th-century types but also included some handmade shell-tempered vessels of 'Roman' form.

Passing north-east/south-west through the southern end of site Y, an old watercourse filled with soft muddy clays since the flooding of c. AD 220, remained uninhabitable until the post-Roman period (Area 19 on Fig. 3). A Saxon-type spearhead had sunk through its upper levels, before the deposit had consolidated into dry land. South from this, a small neck or island was eventually reunited with the main body of land when the muddy clays of the old watercourse had dried out. One or two drainage gullies cutting through the dried surface of the watercourse probably emptied into the main river channel, the bank of which lay further south. This river-bank line has been examined on various sites for over 125 metres through the southern backlands of Staines, and on most of them, an iron-panned clay had been formed along its crest. Later flooding caused this deposit to slump down the side of the bank and onto the beach, and its upper surface had been truncated prior to the formation of 'dark earth' layers, except on some areas of site Z. Found within the clay bank and slightly later beach deposits were



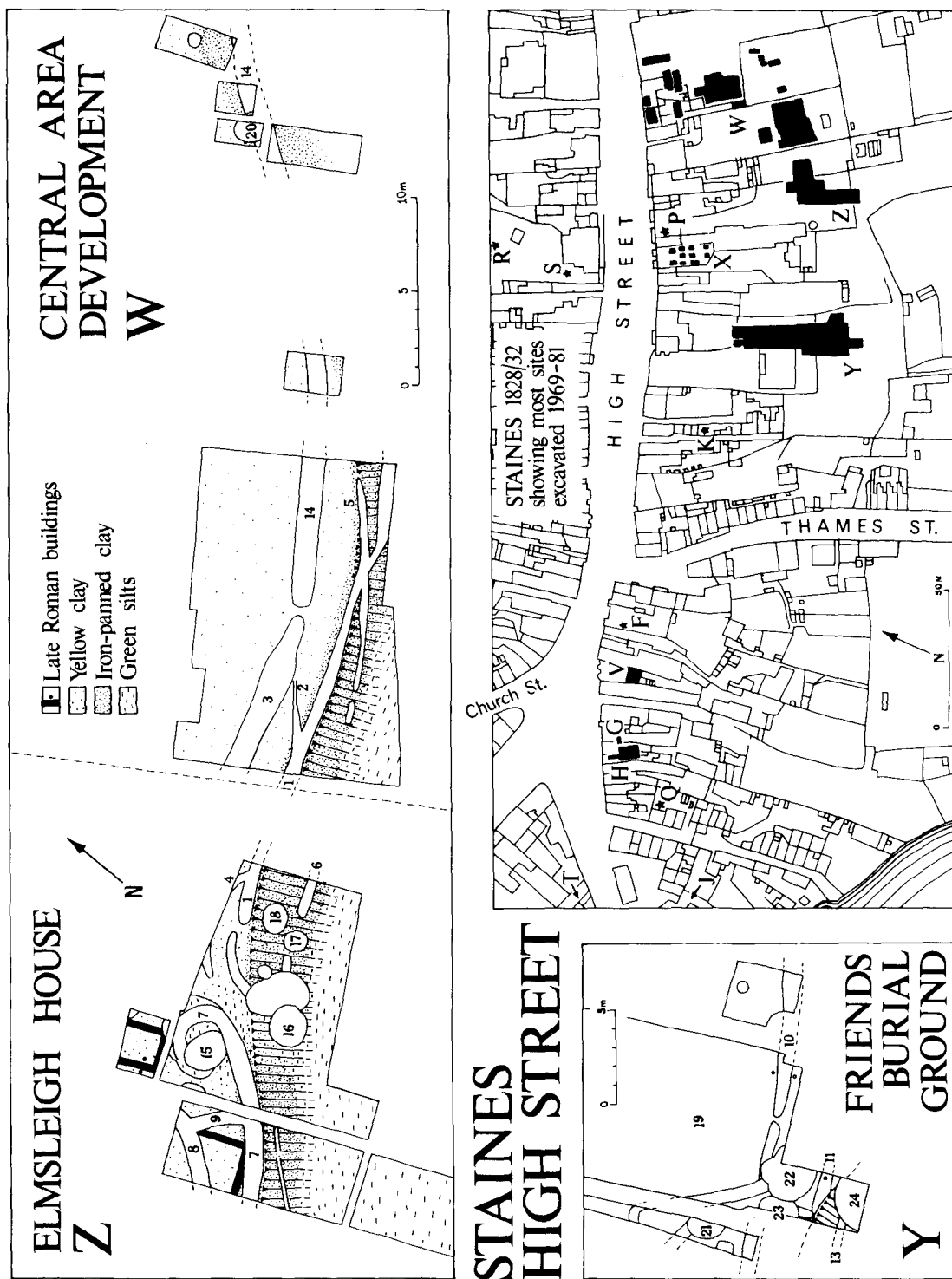


Fig. 3. Staines: Location of excavations and Saxon features.

a few sherds of Late Roman pottery. Their rolled condition however, is similar to that of other deposits which also include some rare grass/chaff-tempered (MA1) sherds (see below).

A further phase of erosion and flooding breached the iron-rich clay bank on site Z and deposited a grey/green silt that also filled several partially-filled pits, some of which contained MA 1 sherds (Features 15, 16, 17, 18). Subsequently, a series of intersecting, and often interrupted gullies were dug along the crest of the bank and have been found along at least 60 metres of the southern backlands (Features 1–11, 14, Fig. 3). The gullies contained rolled later Roman sherds as well as small amounts of Saxon MA (grass/chaff-tempered) and MB (sandy) sherds that includes a fragment of Early Saxon-type decorated pottery with horizontal zones of rosette stamps between series of linear grooves (Jones in Crouch, forthcoming). The decline of grass/chaff-tempered pottery occurred locally during the 9th century (see below) so it seems reasonable to suggest that these gullies are of Early to Mid-Saxon date.

It is interesting to note the similarities between these parallel gullies and those from Shepperton Green 3 miles south-east of Staines. (Canham 1979, 103–110). Here also was found a series of close-set Saxon gullies north of a watercourse with another and deeper ditch set further back of later Saxon or early medieval date. The early Saxon and Saxo-Norman pottery is similar in form, fabric and decoration, and at both sites was found single examples of a squared and faceted pin head type of Mid to Late Saxon date. There had also been Roman occupation within the immediate vicinity of the site.

North of the waterfront and on both sides of the modern High Street, Early to Mid Saxon occupation is represented by a few pits on sites Y and W, and a ditch aligned north-west/south-east on site R. No surface features were found to have survived below 'dark earth' deposits or medieval levelling.

There is little evidence of later Saxon activity apart from a dirty gravelled area on site Z, some lower levels of 'dark earth', and Ditches 3 and 14 on site W. Both ditches were

frequently re-cut; Ditch 3 and the eastern part of 14 until the 11th century or earlier, but the western part of 14 was not abandoned until the late 12th/early 13th century. Pit 20 which contained Late Saxon pottery was cut through the levelled eastern part of 14.

Saxo-Norman features most probably of post-Conquest date include Pit 16 of 11th/early 12th century date; four wells on Y that span the 12th century (Features 21–24); some dirty gravelled areas; and the lower levels of the 'dark earth' formation along the southern waterfront area.

Excavations and site-watching at the western end of the High Street have not revealed any definite evidence of Saxon occupation. Only two grass/chaff-tempered sherds and a handful of late Saxon pottery was found within the 'dark earth' on site V, but a number of post and stake-holes that penetrated a Roman hearth area on site H, may possibly be of Saxon or Early Medieval date. A service-trench dug on the north-west side of the Old Town Hall in the Market Square revealed a water channel revetted with wooden posts and aligned roughly north-west/south-east. Muddy silts that accumulated within the channel contained late 12th/early 13th-century pottery.

Other items of interest from Staines include two spearheads of Late Saxon or Viking type recovered during dredging operations along the Thames (Berks. Archaeol. J. 1958, 54–6), a few sherds of red-painted Pingsdorf-type ware, mica-schist whetstones and some of the numerous fragments of Niedermendig lava quern-stones.

During the early 13th century a series of timber buildings with clay floors and foundations of flint or chalk were built on site H, and on site V there was a similar succession of clay floors on both sides of a gravel alley that led off the High Street. The alignment of these and other features in the High Street as far east as site N suggest that some organised planning was adopted at this time. Between the time of the abandonment of the late Roman buildings on sites Z & Y and the late 12th/early 13th century however, there is no excavated evidence of property boundaries other than the bank and ditch features,

or of any formal planning based on the line of the High Street.

## 5. THE POTTERY

### (i) Introduction

At an early stage of research into the post-Roman archaeology of the town it was decided that all Saxon and medieval pottery recovered from excavations would be examined. This was partly because surviving features were generally found to contain only small groups of pottery that could be closely dated, and most of these were made up of old and newly-broken sherds. The discernment of manufacturing trends could only be made possible by a full analysis of all sherds which greatly increased the sample size. It was also considered possible that some Saxon and Saxo-Norman ditch features constructed perhaps during events documented for Staines up until 1200, could be more accurately dated if the pottery from their infill was compared against the sequence of a pottery form and fabric typology established from all excavated material. Previous work undertaken on the pottery from the Elmsleigh House site (Jones and Shanks 1976, 101–114) was also felt to be superficial in comparison with the published results of new methods of analysis undertaken elsewhere.

Within this report, 'ware-type' refers to groups of sherds that have a consistent range of characteristics which may perhaps indicate a single source for the pottery. 'Fabric-type' sherds show more variable ranges of characteristics that may prove to be divisible into more specific wares at some later stage of research. Method of manufacture is less easily described when a sherd is not obviously hand-made or fast-wheeled. Descriptions such as 'hand-rotated' or 'slow-wheeled' do not have a place in the working vocabulary of potters that I know, although the latter term has been retained in this report for pots that do not satisfactorily indicate their method of construction. For several ware-types, it was clearly a common practice to 'finish-off' the rim of a hand-made vessel on a wheel.

The dating of pottery within this report is based on some generally accepted trends of

pot manufacture within the Thames Valley of the Saxon and Early Medieval periods (Hurst 1976, 283–343). Some handmade 'slow-wheeled' wares other than those that are typically Early to Mid Saxon, could be of pre-Conquest date but this is by no means certain. In the absence of a succession of assemblages in Staines it is possible that these wares could have been made during a regressive phase of the industry during the latter half of the 11th century.

With reference to the published report on Saxon and medieval pottery from Elmsleigh House, vessels illustrated there as Fig. 17 Nos. 46, 50 and 55 are republished here as Fig. 4 No. 7 and Fig. 6 Nos. 97 and 123 because more of the profiles have been obtained by reconstruction, and their inclusion as significant pieces completes this survey to 1980 of the relevant fabric-types. In addition, opportunity must be taken here to correct some mistaken identifications in the 1976 report. Fig. 17 Nos. 45, 47, 48, 49 are late Roman sherds, Fig. 20 Nos. 157–9 are early Roman sherds, and Fig. 29 No. 160 is more likely to have been a late Iron Age or early Roman pedestal base.

### (ii) Method of examination and some general comments

1,500 sherds from Staines were examined with the aid of a binocular microscope ( $\times 20$ ). This comprehensive sample included all the Saxon and medieval pottery as well as a number of Roman pottery fabrics that can be confused with certain Saxo-Norman types. Inclusions within the clay body were then quantified using the methods adopted by Peacock and others (Peacock 1977, 26–33).

The main tempering agents used within Saxon and Saxo-Norman pottery from Staines were found to be quartz, quartzite, flint, chalk, shell, fossils, grass/chaff, and ironstone. These had been added in a wide variety of combinations, in marked contrast to the bulk of Roman pottery currently undergoing microscopic analysis, which is far more standardised and generally have a smaller range of variability, with some important exceptions.

It was found possible to distinguish the Roman pottery fabrics from similar Saxo-Nor-

man types and the latter from the products of industries producing fast-wheeled and quartz sand-tempered pottery which probably began during the late 12th century. The emergence of these fabrics (MI) remains unclear. The only recognisably archaic vessel forms in MI ware are of a fabric type that was also made in forms of demonstrably 13th-century date.

It soon became apparent during physical examination that the division of many Saxo-Norman fabrics into concrete groups would not adequately reflect the tempering practices involved and that too much reliance would subsequently be placed on such a classification. Short of submitting each sherd to more scientific methods of physical determination, current methods of visual analysis of these variable fabrics remain highly subjective both in the identification and quantification of inclusions, and the discernment of one ware-type from another. It should be noted therefore that 'type' standards in which the inclusions, their characteristics, and method of firing remained constant are a rarity in Staines pottery of the Saxo-Norman period. Generally the fabric-types merge towards the extremes of their variable range, although some are more easily divisible into specific wares. It is probable therefore that examples of both localised wares and more widespread traditions of pot-making are present within the Saxo-Norman pottery of Staines.

Of the pottery fabric-types described below, and especially types MF/MG/MH, some continued in general use well into the 13th century and more specialized products into the Late Medieval period. Pottery fabrics tempered only with quartz sand and ironstone have been largely excluded from the type-series, partly because the emergence of these types locally is not precisely known, and because their ancestry is more relevant to the growth of pottery industries during the 13th and early 14th century.

(iii) Pottery fabric type-series

MA, MB, MC Early to Mid Saxon hand-made fabrics.

MD Calcareous-tempered wares of the Late Saxon/Saxo-Nor-

man period, probably still being manufactured up until the late 12th century.

ME Saxo-Norman imports.

MF Handmade, flint-gritted ware of the 11th century or earlier.

MG/MH Variable sand/calcareous/flint-gritted fabrics of the post-Conquest period with some possibly earlier.

MI 'Early' forms of Medieval sandy fabrics.

### MA: SAXON HANDMADE AND ORGANICALLY-TEMPERED FABRICS

The majority of sherds of these fabrics are of standard type MA 1, but there are at least two other fabric types of the more variably tempered MA 2. Other pottery in Staines tempered with organic inclusions include Romano-British coarseware of the 1st century AD, variably tempered with small carbonised segments and grog. Although the vessel forms of these earlier industries are easy to distinguish from Saxon products it is possible to confuse individual sherds with the variable MA 2 types. Sherds of another type of organically-tempered ware, apparently made on a fast-wheel have been found within a large 4th-century well on site V.

#### MA 1 'STANDARD' CHAFF-TEMPERED WARE

Handmade; fairly hard; smoothed exterior surface or occasionally wiped; burnished on the interior of vessel rims; of variable wall thickness *c.* 7–10mm. Generally dark grey to black with dull brown surfaces; occasionally red core with reddish or black surfaces.

Inclusions: ORGANIC—frequent, illsorted, long carbonised skeletal stalks, glumes and occasionally seeds from cereal grasses. QUARTZ—rare to sparse, illsorted, subrounded *c.* .02–.05mm. Some very rare accidental inclusions of angular CHALK and FLINT.

Vessel forms: Cooking-pots—27 simple everted rims generally of small diameter (under 15mm). Only 4 flat basal sherds and a gently rounded base angle have been found, so most vessels were probably simple round-based forms. 12 rims from Z were published in 1976 (Crouch 1976, 112–3, Fig. 20 Nos. 145–156), and the 6 rims from Y and 3 from W will be published in the near future.

Bowls—1 large rim sherd of a hemispherical bowl with a broken stub projecting above part of the rim, probably part of a lug, and a straight-sided vessel with everted rim which may also be from a bowl or basin. Both found on site W (Jones in Crouch forthcoming).

Distribution: Small quantities of this fabric-type have been found on all excavations within the Central High Street Area but has only rarely been found at the western end beyond the junctions of Thames and Church Streets. Only two sherds were found on V, and none from any other excavation or service trench in the area.

Several sherds were found within gullies set along a contemporary waterfront at the southern ends of High Street properties (Z33, Z136, C24, C28, C29). Other sherds were found in Saxon pits associated with the gullies, or else sited further N towards the High Street. At least one other gully or ditch containing sherds of this pottery was found on the opposite side of the High Street at site R. Within all the above features, sherds of this Saxon fabric-type were accompanied by rolled sherds of Roman pottery mostly of the 4th century, and sometimes also by other handmade Saxon types (MB and MC fabrics). Of a total of 112 sherds 49 came from Z and 41 from Y. The majority of these were recovered however from residual contexts.

Dating: There are still considerable local difficulties concerning the dating of this and other Saxon organically-tempered wares. Most of such pottery found in Hampshire and the Thames Valley from Oxfordshire to Essex has been dated to the Early and Mid Saxon periods. At both Staines and Shepperton Green, MA fabrics may have been in use by at least the late 5th or 6th century as some sherds have been found associated with decorated pottery typical of this period. At nearby Old Windsor, chaff-tempered wares are dominant within deposits dated prior to the late 8th or 9th century and is found associated with sherds of Ipswich-type sandy ware (Hope-Taylor 1958, 183-185). This Mid Saxon fabric-type with a date range possibly of *c.* 625-850, has also been found with MA wares at a number of other sites in the Mid-Thames Valley (Moorhouse & Jones 1981, 119). MA fabrics therefore began to be used fairly early within the Saxon period locally and continued as the major potting tradition until the late 8th or early 9th century. Its absence from Oxford, a town established during the 9th century is no surprise (Hassall 1972, 10) but the handful of sherds which is all that has been recovered from excavations in the City of London is puzzling as London was trading by at least the 7th century and was described as a metropolis by Bede writing in the 8th century.

#### MA 2

These pottery fabrics, whilst of the same manufacturing tradition, are atypical of the standard type MA 1 in Staines. The sherds have been subdivided into three groups based on the amounts of chaff, quartz and flint temper. All other characteristics are similar to those of MA 1. Whilst none of the 24 sherds were found within securely dated Saxon deposits, the rim forms and method of manufacture seem to indicate a date range similar to that of the standard type.

- (a) Inclusions: ORGANIC—mod, illsorted. QUARTZ—rare to sparse, illsorted. 5 sherds, 2 each from Z and W and one from Y. None from securely dated Saxon features. A rim

from W is a simple everted type like the majority of MA 1 rimsherds.

- (b) Inclusions: ORGANIC—mod, illsorted. QUARTZ—mod, illsorted *c.* .02-.06mm, sub angular. FLINT—sparse, illsorted *c.* .05-.15, angular.

5 sherds from Y, Z from Z, 1 from V, none from securely dated Saxon contexts. They include a simple everted rim from Y202 and a pierced sherd from Z.

- (c) Inclusions: QUARTZ—frequent, wellsorted, *c.* .02-.04mm, subrounded, pale grey/brown. ORGANIC—mod to frequent, illsorted. IRONSTONE—sparse, illsorted *c.* .04-.10mm, subrounded

1 sherd from Z, 2 from Y and 3 from V. Possibly Romano-British rather than Saxon.

### MB: SAXON SANDY WARES

#### MB 1

Handmade; hard; pimply-surfaced; *c.* 5/6mm thickness; Black.

Inclusions: QUARTZ—frequent, wellsorted, *c.* .02-.05mm, subangular, white/opaque. IRONSTONE—moderate, illsorted, *c.* .06-.15mm, subrounded, rust red. 2 sherds found on Y, one with a horizontal stamp series separated by grooved lines, and the other combed and burnished.

#### MB 2

Handmade; hard; smooth-surfaces; generally black with patchy oxidised surfaces.

Inclusions: QUARTZ—sparse, mod sorted *c.* .01-.05, rounded. ORGANIC—sparse, short segments of carbonised stalks. IRONSTONE—very sparse, illsorted *c.* .03-.10mm, angular. FLINT—rare, illsorted up to *c.* .15mm, angular. 4 sherds found towards the southern end of Y, one of which was stratified within the Saxon gully (A5 16W). A jar with 2 burnished grooves on the shoulder may indicate a late or sub-Roman date for this fabric type.

#### MB 3

Handmade; fairly hard; smooth surfaces; variable thickness occasionally over 10mm; Black often with dull brown surfaces.

Inclusions: QUARTZ—moderate, mod sorted, *c.* .02-.06mm, subangular. IRONSTONE—sparse, illsorted *c.* .02-.08mm, subrounded, rust-red. FLINT—rare, illsorted, occasionally over .15mm, angular. 4 sherds found within residual contexts, 2 from Y and 2 from V. Not securely dated to the Saxon period, possibly prehistoric.

#### MB 4

Handmade; hard; fairly thin walls of even thickness *c.* 4-6mm; well-potted; smoothed, often burnished exterior surfaces. Black with occasionally oxidised brown surfaces.

Inclusions: QUARTZ—very frequent, wellsorted *c.* .01-.03mm occasionally larger, subrounded, generally

white to pale grey. **IRONSTONE**—sparse, mod sorted *c.* .01–.04mm, subrounded. 16 sherds from Y including a rim and sherd decorated with incised lines, and 3 from W.

#### MC: OTHER SAXON WARES

Several other sherds from handmade pots have been variously gritted with quartz, flint, shell and quartzite. As some of these may be prehistoric or Roman, each individual type will not be described in this survey. There are 4 sherds from Y and 3 from W of which one was found within the Saxon gully C 24.

#### MD: LATE SAXON/EARLY MEDIEVAL CALCAREOUS—TEMPERED WARES

These include all fabrics and ware-types presumed to have been made from the Late Saxon period to the 12th century, in which the main tempering agent, either singularly or in combination, was of calcareous material. In such pottery from Staines, these inclusions are divisible into the following types:— (i) thin/thick slightly curving platelets of crushed shell, white and with a matt, fine-grained texture, presumed to be either of **BIVALVES** or **BRACHIOPODS**; (ii) similar to (i) but of more crystalline fracture with light-refractive surfaces; (iii) fragments of, and occasionally complete **GASTROPOD** shells; (iv) fossils such as the perforated platelets of **BRYOZOA**; and (v) subangular fragments of grey/white soft **LIMESTONE** (probably **CHALK** in most MD fabrics from Staines).

Research will continue into these inclusions as to the possible identification of **MOLLUSCAE** and other species. There are doubts in Staines as to the use of fossil or contemporary midden shell in certain MD fabrics, and there also exists the possibility that much was made locally rather than being traded downstream from the Oxford region where shelly marls were exploited for pottery production in the Late Saxon period. (Mellor 1980, 19). In the absence of other, definitely fossil material in the temper, there seems to be no criteria by which shells can be identified as coming from a geological rather than a more contemporary source, other than by species identification. The few that are certainly fossil are those in which the calcite of the shell body has been totally replaced by silica (and consequently do not react when acid is administered). In most fossil and modern shells however, the

minerals **CALCITE** and **ARAGONITE** remain fairly stable as the inorganic component of the skeleton, and there is only some loss of magnesium in chemical diagenesis after the death of the animal (Raup and Stanley 1971, 365).

The identification of **LIMESTONES** is a problem in Staines as there is some evidence of influence in pot styles from the south-west (see MD 1 and MF 1) where **CHALK**-tempering was fairly common; as well as from the Oxford area where most such inclusions are apparently from older **LIMESTONES**. More precise methods of identification need to be used on these inclusions which can appear very similar when viewed through a low-powered microscope.

Any development of MD fabrics relative to pot forms is not clearly discernible. On grounds of similar fabric, firing, some common rim forms and association, MD 1 and MD 5 may be related, with increasing numbers of the latter being fast-wheeled during the 12th century. The two ware-types that contain gastropod shells MD 3A and MD 4 are however, less similar, for whereas MD 3A is always a heavy, slow-wheeled and variably fired fabric, MD 4 appears as a proficient fast-wheeled product manufactured in controlled kilns. Were it not for the absence of **GASTROPODS**, MD 2B would be more comparable with MD 4 than to MD 3A. Of all the fabrics of Late Saxon and Early Medieval Staines with calcareous inclusions, it is only the MD 2 wares that are unique in containing **CHALK** unaccompanied by any **SHELL**. The identity of **CHALK** as opposed to other **LIMESTONES** is perhaps confirmed by the occasional **FLINT** fragments found in MD 2B. The proficient wheel-thrown MD 2 wares appear fully-developed and other examples have not so far been found outside Staines. Their later development was perhaps as part of the transitional MH fabrics.

#### MD 1 LATE SAXON SHELL-TEMPERED WARE (Fig. 4 Nos. 1–2)

Slow-wheeled; fairly hard; slightly 'soapy' surfaces horizontally wiped on the exterior; fairly thick-walled *c.* 8/9mm but even; dark grey with red-brown surfaces but more frequently with a black skin on red/brown margins.

Inclusions: frequent **SHELL** (illsorted, thick laminated

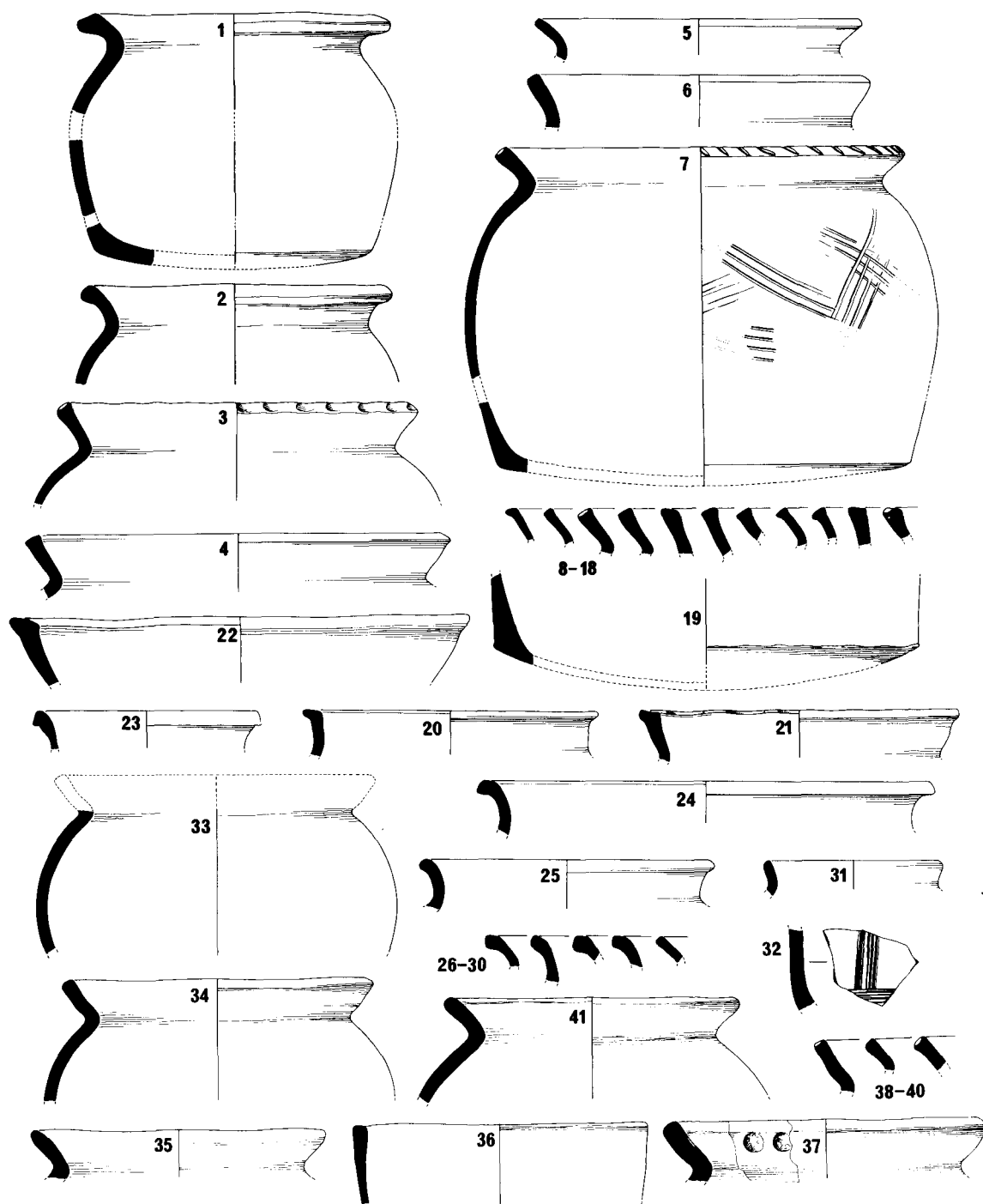


Fig. 4. Staines: Late Saxon and Saxo-Norman pottery (1/4).

platelets; *c.* .02–10 and occasionally up to .30mm long) and sparse IRONSTONE (illsorted, subangular, red-brown, *c.* .02–.08mm), rare to sparse ORGANIC (possibly CHAFF; occasional carbonised stalk segments); and rare QUARTZ sand grains (subrounded, *c.* .02–.03mm).

Vessel Forms: 3/4 well-formed cooking pots with everted and externally beaded rims (Nos. 1 and 2). Full profile of No. 1 showing weak shoulder and angled sagging base, reconstructed from a number of sherds in Pit 20.

Distribution: Only 12 sherds have been positively identified from amongst those of the very similar fabric MD 5. 14 sherds from Z (including No. 2) and 1 from V were found in 'dark earth' deposits of Saxo-Norman date.

Comments: similar cooking-pots to these in both form and fabric have been found in Late Saxon contexts in Oxford (Durham 1977, 132, Fig. 17 Nos. 1–3), and London (info. Mike Rhodes, Museum of London), although there is some doubt as to a common origin or whether they formed part of a more widespread Thames Valley tradition of pottery manufacture. We can at least distinguish the Staines-type which is similar to, but not identical with OXFORD B Ware and LONDON's Late Saxon Shelly 1. Both these fabrics contain fragments identified as LIMESTONE, unlike the Staines examples.

9 large sherds enabled the reconstruction of No. 1 found in Pit 20 on the back areas of the CAD excavations. The pot was associated with sherds of 3 other post-Roman pottery fabrics, MA 1 (1 small sherd, probably residual), MD 5 (3 small sherds) and MF 1 (17 sherds). Probably Late Saxon.

#### MD 2 SAXO-NORMAN CHAI K-TEMPERED WARES

##### MD 2A (Fig. 4 Nos 3–23)

Generally fast-wheeled; fairly hard; smooth, horizontally wiped exterior surface; well-fired and potted; *c.* 5/6mm thick; dark grey to black with grey or patchily oxidised brown surfaces.

Inclusions: 2 varieties of fabric, both with frequent CHALK, illsorted, subangular, *c.* .05–15mm. (i) is fast-wheeled with additional rare QUARTZ and IRONSTONE inclusions; (ii) is slow and fast-wheeled with sparse QUARTZ, wellsorted, subrounded, *c.* .05–.08mm; and rare IRONSTONE and FLINT inclusions.

Vessel Forms: Cooking-pots—10 with simple everted rims (Nos. 3–7, 9–12, 17), 4 similar with slightly thickened ends (Nos. 13–16) and 4 with external bead (Nos. 8, 18, 20, 21). Of these 18, 4 have finger-impressed rims, and 1 has a diagonally slashed rim and lattice combing of the body (No. 7). Most other sherds indicate that the vessels were relatively high-shouldered with an acutely angled neck and angled sagging-base (e.g. No. 19).

Other forms include a beadrimmed bowl with curving walls (No. 22) and a pitcher rim (No. 23).

Distribution: A fairly even distribution of sherds of this fabric from excavations within Staines although it represents only a small percentage of the total of Saxo-Norman pottery. 117 sherds. Other than from residual contexts, sherds were found in several pits on Z, W and Y with other Saxo-Norman pottery.

Dating and Association: The simple rim forms of the cooking-pots are typically Late Saxon to Saxo-Norman. The sharp neck and base angles, even wall thickness and occasional internal throwing rings indicate that this is another of the more sophisticated wheel-thrown Saxo-Norman wares and the consistency of firing and make-up of the paste tends to confirm this. The lattice combing of No. 7 from Z99 (Crouch 1976, Fig. 17 No. 50) is similar to that found on vessels from Aldgate, London and Wallingford within the Thames Valley in Saxo-Norman contexts (Chapman and Johnson 1973, Fig. 19 No. 4; Grove 1938, 67, Fig. 1 No. 13), and at Winchester where the motif was employed on some Winchester-ware products as for example a pitcher from pit M31, considered to be of late 11th or early 12th-century date (Cunliffe 1964, Fig. 37 No. 4). Cooking pots with slashed rims as No. 7 were found in deposits below Oxford Castle mound erected *c.* 1070 (Jope 1952–3, Fig. 34 Nos. 37, 38). The finger-impressed cooking-pot rims may indicate a post-Conquest date for these vessels, as at Oxford these are only rarely found before the mid to late 11th century (Mellor 1976, 259, Fig. 12 No. 11).

Sherds of this ware-type were associated with several other Saxo-Norman fabrics in pits and 'dark earth' layers in Staines; and No. 7 was associated with several MK vessels of 12th century or earlier date. On the basis of the above, the date for the use of this ware is probably late 11th to 12th century.

##### MD 2B (Fig. 4 Nos. 24–32, 73)

Fast-wheeled; hard; smooth wiped surfaces; well-fired and potted, *c.* 5–7mm; generally mid grey with brown margins and mid to dark grey surfaces, only rarely with oxidised brown surfaces.

Inclusions: CHALK frequent; fairly well sorted; *c.* 3–7mm; subrounded. QUARTZ sparse; well sorted, *c.* 3–5mm, subrounded. SHELL sparse; illsorted, thin plates up to 10mm long. IRONSTONE sparse, FLINT rare to sparse.

Vessel forms: Cooking-pots—Two with simple everted rims (Nos. 30, 31) and 6 with more rounded eversions and a square end to the rim (Nos. 24–29). The shoulderless profile of No. 33 has a simple bulbous rim. One sherd is decorated with horizontal and vertical combed bands (No. 32). There are 6 sherds of angled sagging-bases.

Distribution: A fairly constant small percentage of the total number of Saxo-Norman sherds, found on most excavations within Staines as was MD 2A. A total of 71 sherds.

Dating and Association: The simple everted rims are typically Saxo-Norman but the squared-end type seem comparable to the medieval squared and clubbed rims of for example, Hertfordshire reduced wares. The fabric, decoration and method of manufacture is however better related to that of MD 2A and the probable date of usage is late 11th to 12th century. Over 16 sherds from one vessel (No. 73) may be contemporary with later 12th-century fabrics found within the same Pit on site V. Were it not for fabric and context, No. 73 would have been considered an unusual Roman form and there still remains some doubt, but only for this one jar.



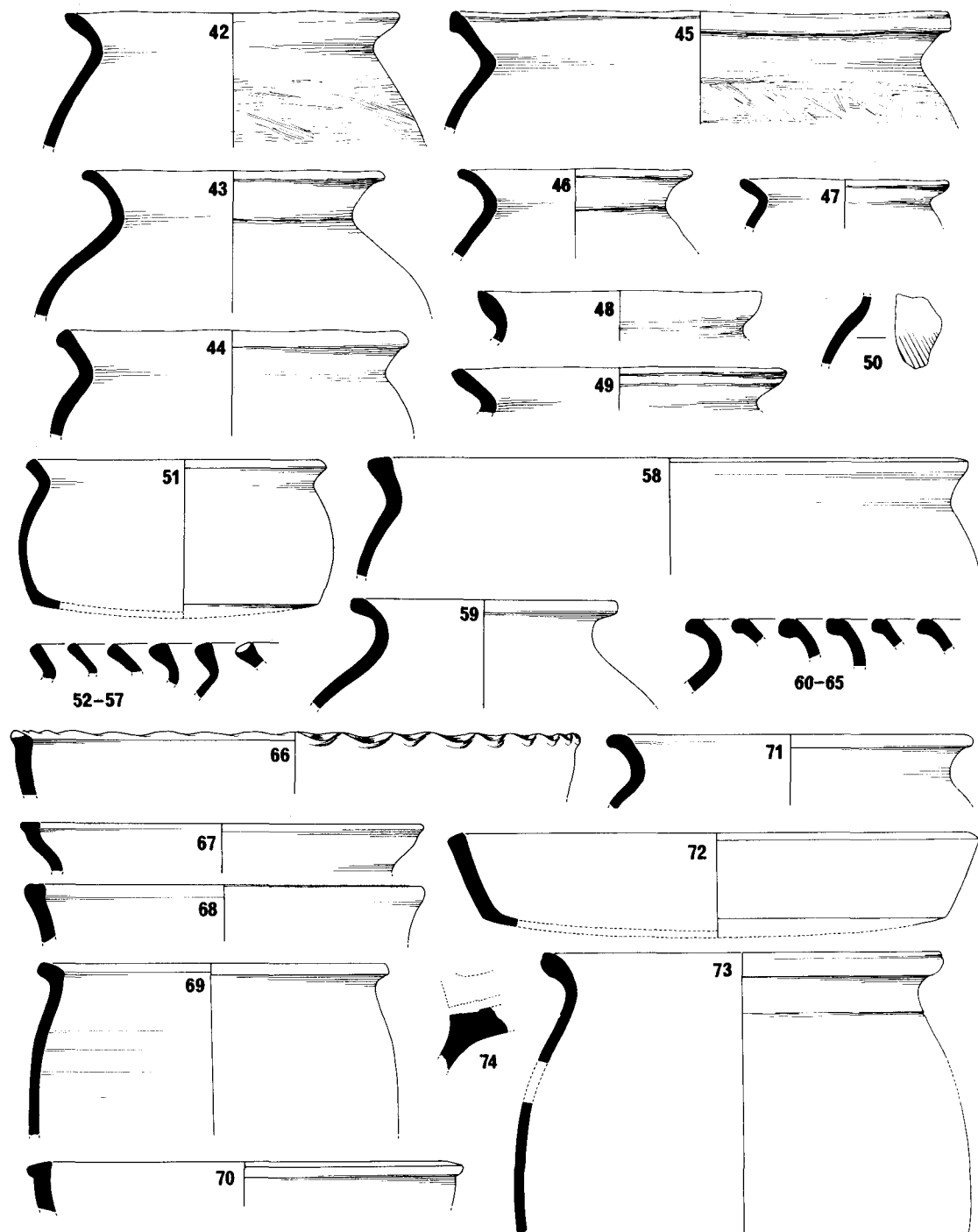


Fig. 5. Staines: Late Saxon and Saxo-Norman pottery (1/4).

## MD 3 HANDMADE CHALK AND SHELL-TEMPERED WARES

MD 3A (Fig. 4 Nos. 33–35, 37–40)

Handmade and slowwheeled; fairly hard; smooth slightly soapy feel; horizontally wiped exterior surfaces; generally quite thick *c.* 7/8mm; mid to dark grey with patchily oxidised surfaces pink-tinged brown to grey.

Inclusions: SHELL freq., illsorted, long thin curvilinear plates up to 20mm, and whole or fragmentary fossil brachiopods. CHALK mod to freq., illsorted, *c.* .03–15mm, subangular. FLINT sparse to mod, illsorted, generally over 15mm, angular. IRONSTONE sparse, *c.* .02–04mm, subangular. QUARTZ rare to sparse, *c.* .03–06mm, subrounded.

Vessel forms: Cooking Pots—6 with rounded or square ended simple everted rims (Nos. 34, 35, 37–40) 3 of which are finger-impressed. A row of circular stamps has been impressed on the internal rim ledge of (No. 37). The stamp may have been more complex, but as it was impressed onto a wet body its internal pattern if any, was obscured. These cooking-pots were globular (as No. 33) and with angled sagging bases, 3 found.

Distribution: a small number of sherds (36), found on most excavations in Staines.

Dating and Association: typical Saxo-Norman rim forms, and the internal stamped decoration of No. 37 is similar to that of several other vessels from Chichester (Down 1978, Fig. 11.3 Nos. 56 and 57; 11.4 Nos. 62 and 64) and Southampton (Platt & Coleman-Smith 1975 Fig. 136 No. 26) found in deposits of the 11th to early 12th century. In Staines, the fabric is possibly earlier than the later 12th century types with which it is generally associated. 11th to early 12th century or earlier.

MD 3B (Fig. 4 Nos. 36, 41)

Slow-wheeled; hard; slightly sandy feel; horizontally wiped exterior; generally quite thick *c.* 7/8mm; mid to dark grey with patchy oxidised brown to grey exterior surfaces.

Inclusions: CHALK frequent, illsorted, *c.* .08–20, subangular. QUARTZ sparse, illsorted, *c.* .04–10mm, subrounded. SHELL sparse, thin curvilinear plates, up to 15mm FLINT sparse, illsorted, angular. IRONSTONE sparse, *c.* .02–04mm.

Forms: Cooking-pots—one with simple straight everted rim with rounded end (No. 41). 4 angled sagging-bases. Bowl—simple upright sides (No. 36).

Distribution and Dating: much the same as the closely related fabric MD 3A. 19 sherds only.

MD 4 BLACK-FACED SHELLY WARE (Fig. 5 Nos. 51–72, 74)

Fast-wheeled; hard; fairly smooth wiped surfaces, well-made and fired; *c.* 6–7mm; generally mid grey, pale red/brown margins, black surfaces.

Inclusions: QUARTZ moderate, well-sorted, *c.* .03–.05mm, subrounded, pale pink and grey. SHELL moderate, thin curvilinear plates *c.* .05–15mm and occasional fossil brachiopod. CHALK sparse, illsorted, *c.* .08–12mm, subrounded IRONSTONE sparse, illsorted, subangular FLINT rare illsorted, *c.* .05–15mm angular.

Vessel forms: Cooking pots—5 with simple straight everted rims (Nos. 51–54, 57) and two with more wedge-shaped eversions and similar from a much larger cooking-pot (Nos. 55, 56, 58). Only 1 of these rims had been finger impressed (No. 57). Two other cooking pots with a slight external bead (No. 67) and on the interior of (No. 68). Eight rims with gently curving everted rims and squared external bead at the tip (Nos. 59–65, 71), only one of which was finger-impressed. This last cooking-pot type was globular, and with sharply angled sagging-base, 10 found. One other cooking-pot type is represented, (No. 69), with square clubbed rim and straight walls.

Bowls—3 were found; simple straight-sided (No. 72), one with more rounded walls and an externally-beaded rim (No. 70), and one with a clubbed rim with finger-impressions (No. 66).

Handled vessel—part of a cylindrical handle with small holes *c.* 50mm diameter pierced through from both ends (No. 74) possibly from a bowl.

Two decorated sherds; horizontal combing of the body and stab-marked horizontal rows separated by grooves (not illustrated).

Distribution: Almost half of the sherds were found within 12th-century pits on site V, although nearly as much came from 'dark-earth' layers on Z. A total of 133 sherds.

Dating: The similarities of certain cooking-pot forms, general finish and firing conditions, indicate some connection with MD 2B ware, and it is not always easy to distinguish between the two. It seems likely that they were in concurrent use or else MD 4 is a later variety when more black faced wares were in demand. Similar decorated sherds to those described above have been found in Saxo-Norman deposits at Chichester (Down and Rule 1971, Fig. 7.9 No. 24). The deliberate reduction of the pottery at a late stage in firing is as characteristic of the fabric as the fossil brachiopods. Other black faced wares but with less frequent shell (mollusc) inclusions are typical of 12th-century deposits in Aylesbury, Bucks (Farley 1976, 252). Probably 12th century.

MD 5 RED/BROWN-FACED SHELLY WARE (Fig. 6 Nos. 75–95)

Fast-wheeled and occasionally slow-wheeled; hard; fairly smooth surfaces; generally mid grey core and margins with red-brown surfaces.

Inclusions: SHELL frequent, illsorted, thick laminated and curvilinear plates, generally 10–20mm and occasionally up to 80mm long. IRONSTONE sparse, illsorted, *c.* .03–10mm, subrounded, dull red. QUARTZ—rare to sparse, illsorted *c.* .04–08mm, subrounded.

Vessel forms: 6 rims are developed versions of the form in which cooking-pots of the ancestral fabric MD 1, were manufactured i.e. everted with thickened external bead (Nos. 88–93). 15 other rims, some with simple triangular thickening of the rim-tip or either external or internal beads (Nos. 75–87, 94, 95). 17 angled base sherds. The only decorated sherd has incised lines (not illus.).

Distribution: More than half the sherds came from Z, and a third came from V. None however were found in

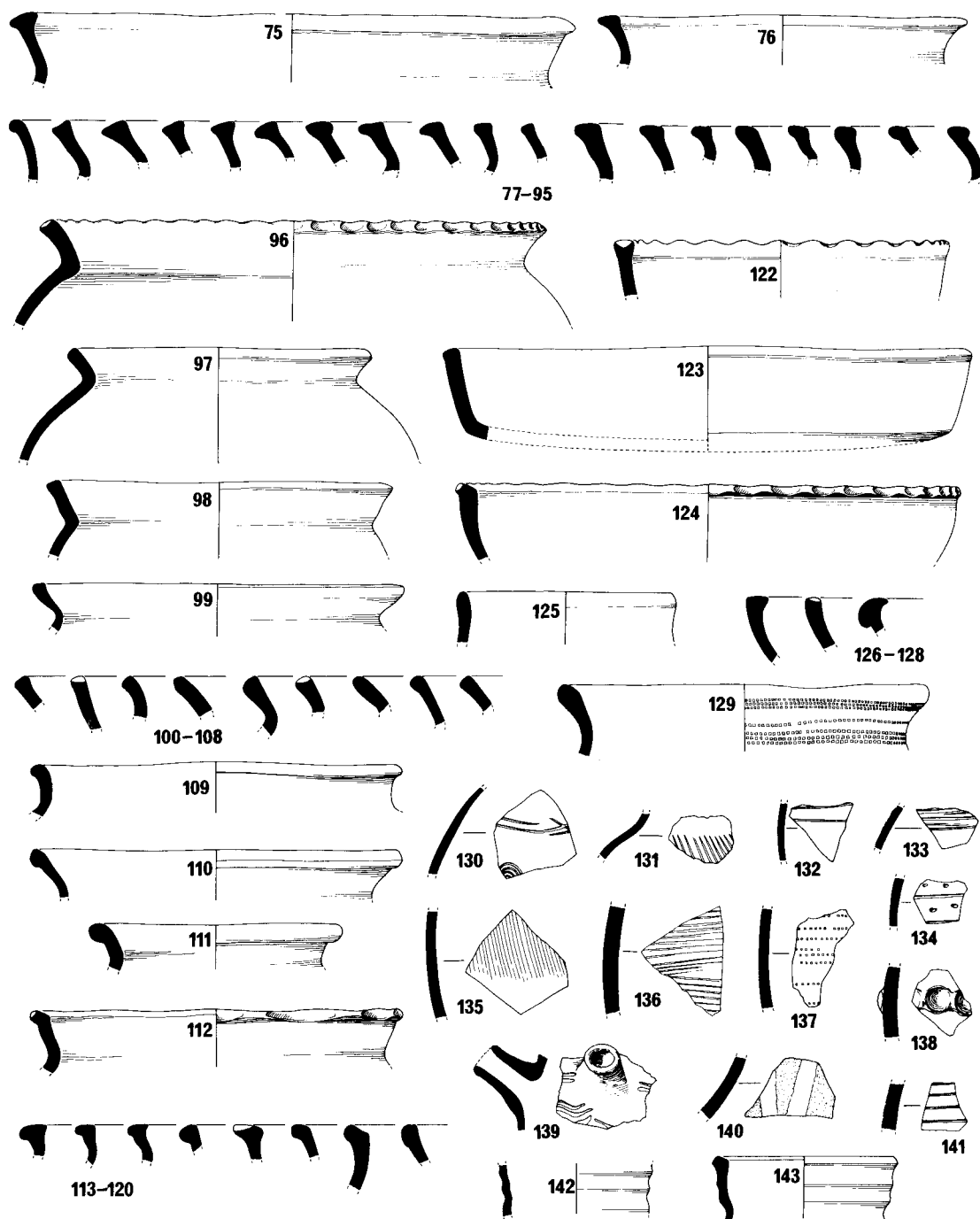


Fig. 6. Staines: Saxo-Norman pottery (1/4).

the 12th-century pits of Y although the fabric was present in similarly-dated pits on Z, V and W. A total of 173 sherds.

Dating: This fabric-type, generally of a homogenous nature although occasionally found with rather more quartz than the Staines examples, is common within this part of the Thames valley. Of sites known to the author, it has been found at Old Windsor, Yeoveney, Wraysbury, Chertsey, Apps Court, Shepperton Green and Brooklands along the river and in neighbouring districts at Fulmer, Bucks; Northolt, Middlesex; and Reigate, Surrey.<sup>7</sup> Although plentiful at these sites in late 11th and 12th-century contexts, it may have been produced earlier as a development of MD 1 (Staines CAD Pit 20 where associated with sherds of MD 1 and MF 1 fabrics). It is generally more thin-walled than MD 1 and was manufactured occasionally on a fast wheel. Probably late 11th and 12th century.

## ME: SAXO-NORMAN IMPORTED WARES

### ME 1 RED-PAINTED WARES

Fast-wheeled; very hard with metallic ring when stuck; clay ground almost fused. Pale buff to cream.

Inclusions: QUARTZ freq., well-sorted, *c.* .01–.03mm, subrounded, white/opaque. IRONSTONE sparse, well-sorted *c.* .005–.01mm, subrounded, occasionally larger grains.

Comments: Only 3 sherds positively identified from excavated material, 2 of which have been published from Z (Jones and Shanks 1976, Fig. 20 Nos. 162 and 163), and the other is to be published from Y (Jones in Crouch, forthcoming). Most probably from wine amphorae imported from the Continent.

### ME 2 'ST. NEOTS'—Type Ware

2 rim-sherds were described in the Elmsleigh House report as being of 'Developed St. Neots-type' (Jones and Shanks 1976, 102–3, Fig. 17 Nos. 45 and 47) based on similarities with examples so described at Northolt (Hurst 1961, 258).

Microscopic examination of these rims however, has shown an even closer visual match with St. Neots-type ware itself as described by Hunter (Hunter 1979, 230–240) and from my own analyses of examples from Hertford and Aylesbury Museums. More examples have been found since 1975 in Staines and share with St. Neots-type ware similarities of manufacture, finish, texture, colour, and frequent inclusions of crushed shell and less common fossil Bryozoa. There is in addition the form of cooking-pot/jar with everted and externally-beaded rim typical of St. Neots-Type ware assemblages.

Despite all these similarities it is probable that most, if not all sherds of this fabric-type in Staines were manufactured in the Late Roman period. Where found securely stratified it has always been accompanied by other Roman coarsewares and never with any Saxon sherds. The range of forms is limited to the cooking-pot/jar which is also typical of Late Roman shelly wares locally, and none of the turned-rim bowls that characterise St. Neots-type ware assemblages have so far been

found in Staines. Of at least 5 or 6 late to sub-Roman shelly ware fabrics identified within the town, this type was probably introduced via the Thames from a manufacturing area somewhere above Oxford, from where derives the fossil bryozoa fragments. St. Neots-type ware vessels from a similar source or from the north-East via Hertford and St. Albans may eventually be found in Staines as examples have been identified within Middlesex at Northolt and London. Where the evidence is solely based on body sherds these will be difficult to distinguish from the earlier Roman fabric. Several excavated Saxon sites around Staines were also occupied during the late Roman period and caution should therefore be expressed over future identification of St. Neots-type ware when the evidence is insubstantial.

## MF AND MG: LATE SAXON/EARLY MEDIEVAL GRIT-TEMPERED WARES

The only common characteristic of these fabrics is the abundance of coarse flint temper. Whereas MF 1 may be regarded as a specific ware-type with little variability in the proportions of its inclusions, MG fabrics are much more diverse and seem similar to the transitional MH fabrics.

### MF 1 LATE SAXON GRITTY WARE (Fig. 5 Nos. 42–50)

Handmade and slow-wheeled; hard; coarse-textured; shiny pimpled surfaces; variable thickness; dark grey with black or oxidised muddy brown surfaces.

Inclusions: FLINT frequent, ill-sorted, up to .50mm, angular. QUARTZ frequent, ill-sorted, *c.* .03–.15mm (average .05–.08mm) subrounded. QUARTZ sparse, ill-sorted, up to .15mm, angular. CHALK sparse, ill-sorted, *c.* .02–.06mm, subrounded. SHELL rare to sparse, ill-sorted, long curvilinear plates. IRONSTONE rare to sparse.

Vessel forms: Cooking pots—5 with gently curving everted rims (Nos. 43, 45–47, 49), one of which has a fairly long and thin collar with an external step at the neck (No. 43). A similar rim has a thickened rim tip and internal bevel (No. 45) and another has an external bead (No. 44). 2 rims have an unusual lenticular cross-section (Nos. 42, 48). These vessels have strong neck angles with little or no shoulder, and angled sagging bases. Decoration included diagonal combing down the body from below the neck, or rough horizontal scratch-marking of the same area (Nos. 42, 45, 50).

Distribution: A total of 42 sherds positively identified from amongst the similar gritty fabrics MG A and MH 2. Small quantities found in several 12th century and later features within the town, but on CAD associated with other fabrics of possible late Saxon type in Pit F2.

Dating: Diagonal combing down the body is a typical 12th century decorative trait within the southern Chilterns (Hinton 1973, 183) with Staines here presented as the extreme south and east point of distribution. Scratch-marking was commonly employed in Hampshire

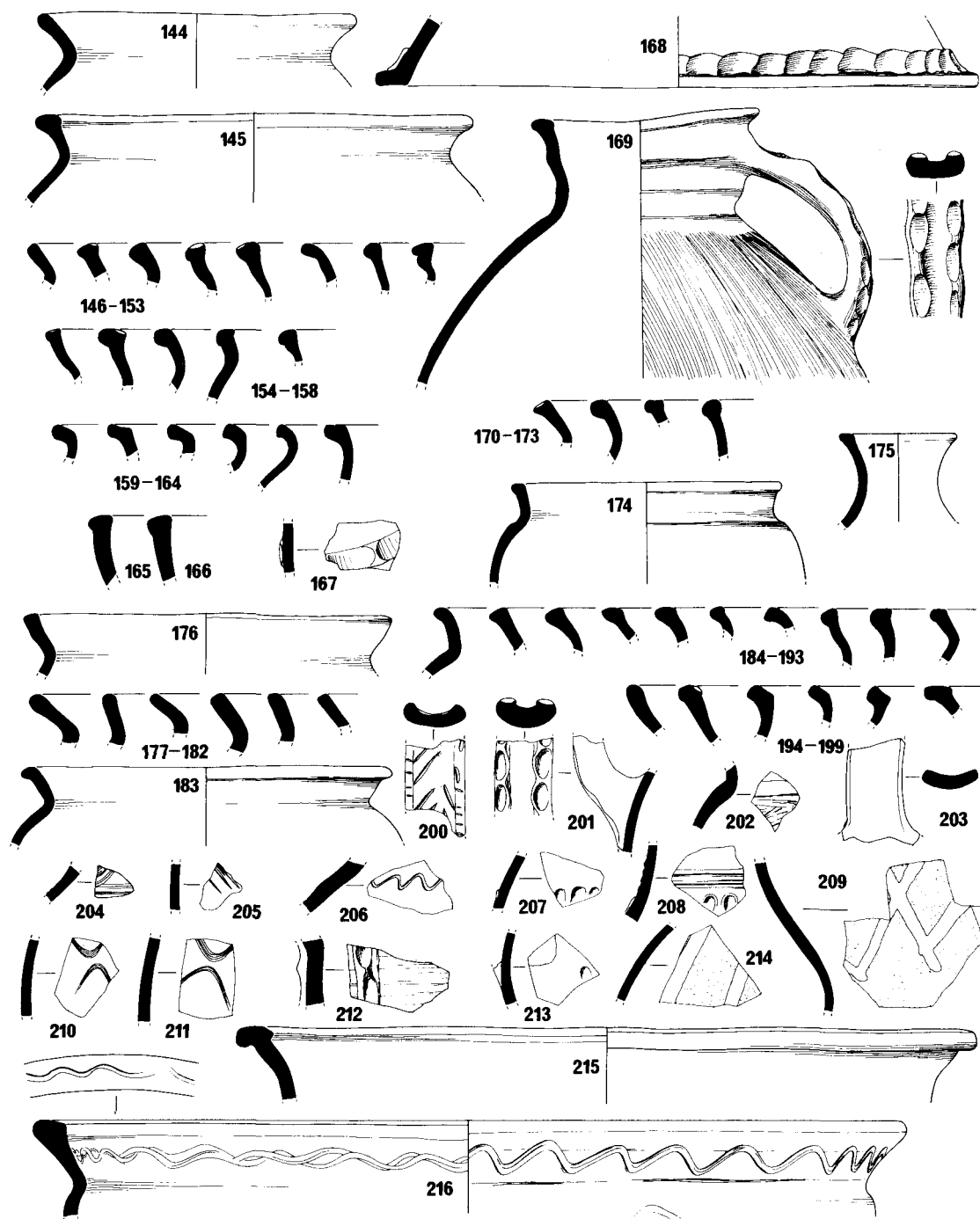


Fig. 7. Staines: Early medieval pottery (1/4).

during the later 11th century as were gritty fabrics with flint, chalk and quartz sand temper at Southampton (Platt and Coleman-Smith, 1975 Figs. 137 and 138) and Old Sarum (Stone and Charlton 1935, 184–188). Although both types of decoration continued to be used through the 12th century at Staines and elsewhere, those of this fabric type are considered to be contemporary with, or earlier than vessels found in Period 1 c. 1100 at Abinger motte in Surrey with similar forms and scratch-marking (Hope-Taylor 1950, 34). Probably 11th/early 12th century and possibly earlier (a small cooking pot in this ware found on the recently excavated County Sports site (H), was burnished inside the rim—a frequent occurrence on MA 1 rimsherds from the town).<sup>8</sup>

## MG SAXO-NORMAN AND MEDIEVAL FLINT TEMPERED FABRICS

### MG A (Fig. 7 Nos 168–75)

Slow and fast-wheeled; hard; coarse gritty feel; variable thickness, fabric and colour. Generally dark grey with patchily oxidised brown external surfaces, occasionally wholly grey.

Inclusions: QUARTZ frequent, illsorted, c. .03–.07mm, subrounded, greys/black/browns. FLINT mod to frequent, illsorted, generally over .15mm, angular. IRONSTONE rare to sparse, illsorted, c. .03–.08mm, subrounded.

Vessel forms: Cooking-pots—1 simple everted and thumb-impressed rim (No. 170), 1 everted rim with external bead and a stepped angle at the neck (No. 174) and other beaded and everted rims (Nos. 171–173).

Jugs—several sherds forming the upper part of a jug with a cordon on the collar, thumb-impressed handle and diagonal combing of the body (No. 169). A smaller jug (No. 175) was predominantly tempered with crushed FLINT.

Curfew—Rimsherd with horizontal thumb-impressed strip immediately above the squared rim. Soot-blackened interior (No. 168).

Cistern—A tubular bung-hole prepared for insertion into the wall of a large vessel (not illus.).

Distribution: Found in late 12th and 13th century or later deposits from most excavations in Staines. A total of 66 sherds.

Dating: A number of different wares are included within MG A that are similar only in that they contain frequent FLINT but no calcareous inclusions. The cooking-pot fabrics may only represent the extremes of other variably tempered pottery such as MF and MH types. The stepped neck of (No. 174) was used in Hampshire and Sussex during the late 11th and early 12th century, as at Chichester (Down 1978, Fig 11.1 Nos. 11–14) and Southampton (Platt and Coleman-Smith 1975, Fig. 136 No. 21), on coarse flint-gritted types of cooking-pot. On the basis of their finish and firing, the 2 jugs each represent a different ware-type. The squat shape and impressed handle of (No. 169) would seem to indicate a late 12th/13th-century date and the decoration

of the body by diagonal combing continues the tradition of an 11th/12th-century cooking-pot fabric (MF 1). The cistern and curfew could be specialised products manufactured in this coarse fabric much later in the medieval period, possibly as late as the 14th century.

### MG B (Fig. 7 Nos. 144–164)

Generally fast-wheeled; hard; coarse feel. Three possible sub-divisions:— (i) as MG A, gritty texture, dark grey and patchily oxidised for external surfaces; but now more often fastwheeled. (ii) Black, glossy surfaces with occasional red exterior patches (iii) red-brown with black surface skin, generally fastwheeled.

Inclusions: QUARTZ frequent, illsorted, c. .03–.07mm, subrounded, greys/dark browns. FLINT sparse, illsorted, generally over .10mm, angular. IRONSTONE rare to sparse.

Vessel Forms: Cooking-pots—3 simple everted rims, 1 with rounded tip in subtype ii (No. 144); one with squared-end (No. 146) and another slightly wedge-shaped (No. 148) both in subtype i. 11 everted and thickened rims with beads (Nos. 147, 149–159) of which 5 were finger-impressed, both subtypes (i) and (iii) represented. 6 squared-club rims (Nos 159–164) most of which were in subtype (iii).

Bowls—2 with slightly curved walls and beaded rim, both in fabric subtype (i).

Decorated sherds—one with a curvilinear applied and finger-impressed cord on subtype (iii); 2 sherds with diagonal combing in subtypes i and ii; and a scratch-marked sherd in subtype (i).

Jugs—part of a centrally-depressed handle pierced at intervals along its spine. Subtype (iii) fabric.

Distribution: commonly found within deposits of the 12th and 13th century. A total of 146 sherds of which more than half were of the variable subtype (i) fabric. All but 26 of these sherds came from Y and Z.

Dating: As with MG A this fabric-type probably includes several different wares, which for the moment can only be divisible into 3 sub-groups according to kiln-firing techniques and similarity of cooking-pot forms. Sub-group (i) includes all sherds that do not fall within the 2 other, more easily recognisable sub-groups. They seem closest to MG A and have the same simple everted, or everted and beaded rims with occasionally, finger-impressed edges. It is variously fired but is more often fast-wheeled than MG A; 12th to early 13th century. Sub-group (ii) is part of what was once called 'Early Medieval ware' (Hurst 1961, 259) exemplified by MG B, MH A and MF 1 fabrics with characteristic glossy, pimpled surfaces, black fabric, simple everted rims, and of hand or slow-wheel manufacture. These may have been produced during a relapse period of south-east English pottery that probably occurred towards the end of the 11th century, or else represent later aspects of Late Saxon MF ware. Both share the use of scratch-marking and diagonal combing.

Sub-group iii is almost certainly the product of a local 13th-century industry. The rim forms, fast-wheeled manufacture and constant firing procedure are typical of the period.

## MH: SAXO-NORMAN TRANSITIONAL FABRICS

Of these fabric-types, a number of different wares may eventually be recognised. They are described here only as 2 extremes MH A and MH B of a loose tradition of pottery manufacture, and several forms suggest that this was a long-lived phenomenon that probably continued in use until the 13th century at least.

The more calcareous examples of MH A may be the sandier sherds of fabrics MD 2B, MD 3B and MD 4 or *vice versa*. MH A is arbitrarily separated from MH B on the basis that the amount of sand and calcareous filler is roughly equal in the former, whereas quartz sand becomes the dominant inclusion in MH B. The more coarse and flinty types of MH B probably include at least some sherds of MG fabric, with the only apparent difference being an absence of calcareous inclusions.

The fabrics MH A, MH B and MF 1 are linked by the common use of diagonal combing of the body although in MH B this style of decoration was only employed on jugs. Scratch-marking, occasionally found on MH B sherds, was more commonly used on MF 1 pottery. There was therefore a continuum in the pottery manufacturing trends of Staines between calcareous, flint-gritted and sand tempered wares that merge towards the extremes of their fabric range. In addition, the common potters' practice of preparing clay mixes for those parts that require strength such as bases and handles, should induce caution about the possibility of defining 'type series'—of pottery fabrics when the sample is of a mixed tradition rather than specific and easily identifiable wares.

### MH A (Fig. 6 Nos. 96–143)

Generally fast-wheeled, occasionally slow-wheeled; hard; sandy feel variable colour, generally grey with patchy oxidised and reduced surfaces although more of the former. Some glazed sherds.

Inclusions: QUARTZ moderate amounts, illsorted, .03–10mm (average .04–0.06mm) subround. CHALK sparse to mod; c. .02–0.08mm, angular, illsorted. SHELL sparse to mod; c. .05–10mm. IRONSTONE sparse; c. .03–0.08mm subrounded, illsorted. FLINT rare to sparse; c. .05–20mm, angular, illsorted.

Vessel forms: Cooking pots—14 with simple straight-

everted rims, 4 of which are finger-impressed (Nos. 96–108); 4 everted and externally beaded rims, 1 of which was finger impressed (Nos. 109–112); 5 everted and clubbed rims, 1 of which was finger impressed (Nos. 113–117); and 2 squared-club rims (Nos. 118, 119). 25 angled-sagging bases were found of these and other vessels.

Bowls—3 simple and straight-sided, 2 of which were finger-impressed (Nos. 122, 123, 127); 1 with squared and finger-impressed rim (No. 124) and 2 with slightly inturned rims (Nos. 126, 128).

Jugs—1 with simple squared-end rim and corrugations of the neck (No. 143) and sherds from a similar vessel (No. 142). Both of these were externally green-glazed. Other jug sherds have white slip decoration of the body probably of lattice-work design, covered with a thin, clear to green glaze, rendering the stripes yellow (No. 140).

? Pitcher—a short tubular spout from the upper part of a vessel with curvilinear incised decoration of the body (No. 139).

? Pitcher/Cooking-pot—a rim and body sherds of the same vessel, both with horizontal series of square rouletting extending over the collar and down the body. The everted rim is slightly bulbous (No. 129).

Other decoration of unglazed sherds include diagonal combing down the body (5 sherds mostly from J and C including Nos. 131, 135), horizontal zones of stab-marks separated by grooved lines (No. 134), other horizontally grooved lines (5 sherds including Nos. 132, 133, 136, 141) or curvilinear and intersecting grooves and combed curvilinear designs (No. 130). 1 body sherd has a horizontally applied strip with regular and rounded finger-impressions (No. 138).

Distribution: commonly found within deposits of the 12th/early 13th century within Staines. A total of 241 sherds of which 10 were glazed, and four were slip-decorated and glazed.

Dating: the predominance of Saxo-Norman forms and decoration suggest that most of these fabrics were in decline by the early 13th century. Spouted pitchers and jugs were made, and of the former, at least 2 vessels have the rilling of the neck that is characteristic of 12th-century tripod pitches as found in more western parts of the Thames Valley (Biddle 1961–2, 142–149, Figs. 19 and 20). Other sherds with slip decoration recall 'West-Kent'—style jugs. (Thorn 1975, 118). Rouletted decoration of the type displayed on the cooking-pot or wide-mouthed pitcher No. 129, is a common Saxo-Norman trait over SE England in the 11th and 12th century, and is frequently seen on tall pitcher forms in the Upper Thames Valley (Jope 1947, 56). The probable date for most vessels of these fabric-types is from the 11th to the 13th century.

### MH B (Fig. 7 Nos. 176–216)

Much the same characteristics as for MH A. Generally fast-wheeled; hard; sandy feel. Variable in colour but generally grey with patchy oxidised and reduced surfaces. Most of the jug sherds are grey with red/brown surfaces.

Inclusions: QUARTZ frequent, illsorted, c. .03–10mm (average size .03–0.05mm) subrounded. FLINT moderate, illsorted, c. .05–15mm, angular. IRONSTONE sparse,

c. .03–.08mm, subrounded, illsorted. CHALK/SHELL rare to sparse, c. .01–.04mm, illsorted.

Vessel forms: Cooking-pots—8 with simple straight-everted rims (Nos. 176–182, 194) and one similar with slightly thickened end (No. 185). 10 everted rims with external bead (Nos. 183, 184, 186–193) and 1 similar with finger-impressed rim (No. 195). Four squared-club rims, 3 of which are inward-sloping (Nos. 196–198) and 1 is flat-topped (No. 199). Decorated sherds probably from cooking-pots include a stepped neck with scratch-marking of the shoulder (No. 202); combed curvilinear and horizontal patterns (No. 204); and diagonal combing of the body (No. 205) which is also present on some jug sherds.

Jugs—35 glazed sherds probably from jugs, nearly all in a red-brown fabric with a grey core. The green or clear glaze is usually thin and so the sandy feel of the underlying surface inclusions is retained. Some sherds, like MHA, were decorated with cream-slip trellis-work on the body rendered yellow by the glaze cover (5 sherds including Nos. 209 and 214) or more rarely have overall cream-slip (2 sherds not illustrated). There are 4 strap-handles; one with slashed decoration and a white slip dribble down the centre, and thin green glaze on the upper surface (No. 200); another with thumb-impressed decoration down each side of the handle, a diagonally-combed body and thin clear glaze (No. 201); a flatter strap handle unglazed (No. 203); and the stub of another with deep impressed decoration on the body and overall green glaze (No. 213). Similar deeply impressed rows are present on sherds (No. 207) with a thin green glaze and (No. 208) also with grooved horizontal lines and a clear glaze that shows orange due to the surface colour. Other decorated sherds include one with a grooved wavy line below a pitted green glaze (No. 206); and two sherds with combed wavy line zones below a thin pale green glaze (Nos. 210, 211). 1 sherd from V may be a waster and has a green glaze spot (not illustrated).

Curfews—1 rim fragment with interior sooting (No. 215). Another sherd, thick, with a vertical thumb-impressed strip may be from a curfew or a storage-jar (No. 212).

? Pancheon—a large rim fragment from a vessel with an external rim diameter of c. 52cms. Wavy line grooved decoration on the interior, exterior and top of the rim and on the shoulder (No. 216).

Distribution: common within deposits of late 12th/early 13th century and later within Staines. A total of 132 sherds of which 27 were glazed and a further 8 were slipped and glazed.

Dating: Although the cooking-pot rims are similar to those of MHA, most could have been produced during the later 12th and 13th centuries to be sold alongside the more closely-datable jug forms also in these pottery fabrics. These included glazed and unglazed jugs with either plain, thumb-impressed, or slashed strap handles and sometimes a combed body; 'West Kent'—style slipped and glazed wares; and others with horizontally combed zigzag patterns or impressed rows. All of these types may have been in concurrent use until superseded by the products of the Surrey white-ware industry.

Curfews, pancheons and storage jars are vessels which

would always have required a coarser (more refractive) mix of temper to withstand stress during firing and use, so these may be of much later date.

Considered overall, the date for most of these fabrics is probably later 12th and early 13th century, whilst some specialised forms may have been manufactured as late as the 14th century.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

Most of the reasons for the growth of the Roman small town of *Pontes* during the 1st and 2nd centuries AD can also be cited for the marketing centre of Staines which came to occupy the same site during the Saxo-Norman period. The site is at the confluence of 2 rivers where a major road to the south-west could best cross the Thames. The brickearth and loams provided good arable land and there was abundant pasture. The town would only decline if the holders of the land on both sides of the Thames were in conflict; during raids by foreign aggressors; or in times of flood. Evidence from both literary sources and excavation suggest that all of these threats were realised at various times between the later Roman period and the 11th century.<sup>9</sup>

There was serious flooding in the period after c. AD 400 at a time when it is at least possible to conjecture a British survival in the Staines area<sup>10</sup>, and further flooding during the early years of Saxon settlement which was perhaps as early as the late 5th or 6th century on the evidence of an early Saxon spearhead and typically decorated pottery from stratified deposits. Some of the ditches dug along the southern riverbank could date to this or a later period up to the 9th century. Their abandonment may coincide with Danish raiding and the demise of the minster. There is, however, no definite evidence that these features were part of a defensive circuit and a high bank would have been unattainable in the gap between the ditch lines on sites W and Z. A rampart of box construction however would have been



quite feasible. The narrow, inclined ramp on site Z between 2 lines of curving gullies may have served as a beaching-point for craft in the channel.

There is no evidence of Saxon settlement on the far west of the town island, and it seems likely that the central area was the focus of occupation during the Early to Mid Saxon periods. It should be noted however, that no features can definitely be dated to the Mid Saxon period. In the rare contexts where grass/chaff-tempered sherds (MA 1) have been found in association with other post-Roman pottery, it has been of early Saxon types, and there is none of the more sophisticated grass/chaff-tempered wares found in late 8th or early 9th-century deposits at Old Windsor. This would seem to suggest that the abandonment of most, if not all of the waterfront features containing this pottery is likely to have occurred during the period of contested lordship of these Thameside settlements that began in the mid 6th century and continued throughout the Mid Saxon period. If however, the grass/chaff-tempered pottery tradition in Staines continued to be crudely-made through the Mid Saxon period, then a later abandonment of the gullies is possible.

The minster at Staines alluded to in later documents seems to have been abandoned either before or during the first Danish incursions. Its authority, and probably that of its successor church, over a manor in South Buckinghamshire suggests that it held an important ecclesiastical role within the western area of ancient Middlesex even after the creation of Buckinghamshire in the late 9th/early 10th century. If St. Mary's parish church stands on the site of the pre-conquest religious foundation, then an area of settlement during the Mid Saxon period may have focussed on Binbury.

During the events of the Danish Wars

and until the peace of the mid 10th century Staines would have been of strategic importance. It lay on the Thames at its confluence with the Colne whose headwaters to the north lay within Danelaw; and at a major crossing point. From the late 9th century King Alfred and his successors embarked on an interlinked programme of defensive and commercial development across southern England. Riverborne trade was encouraged along the Thames by Alfred with grants of foreshore in London to important ecclesiasts and major river-crossings were fortified by Ethelred, Aethelfleda and Edward the Elder in the early 10th century. It seems likely that Staines gained its trading facilities in London at this time in return for playing its part in the defence of the realm. It is not unreasonable to assume that a specific aspect of this would have been the defence of the river-crossing but only further excavations on the High Street and Hythe banks would provide proof of this supposition. Saxon, Viking and Carolingian-type weapons found in the River Thames at Staines may indicate that some skirmishes took place here. In the late 9th century, Edward and Aethelred, in laying siege to the Danes at Thorney, may well have disposed troops to guard the southern flank through Staines by which the Danes could have escaped back across the Thames in avoidance of London.

In addition to its strategic position and minster, Staines was also the centre of a royal estate until the latter part of the 10th century, as was nearby Old Windsor which may have been a palace site even before that of Edward the Confessor.

During the renewal of Scandinavian hostilities in the late 10th and early 11th century, a Peace-Gild established throughout Middlesex partly for reasons of defence, may have had some effect on raiders. The area was avoided by the

Viking army of 1009 and although they are said to have crossed the Thames at Staines, it is possible that the town was held as a western bulwark of London and the Peace-Gild. Jurisdiction over the river to Staines when first recorded in the early 12th century resided in the Castles Baynard and Montfichet in London. Whether or not Staines was involved in the defence of the Thames Valley in the late Saxon period, there is no evidence of military dispositions on the town island or indeed of much occupation at all. The King's Manor or that of his reeve probably stood on Binbury, which may have continued as a settlement during this period.

During the early 11th century many members of the Royal Court who were of Danish stock, but there is little evidence for the settlement of Scandinavian peasantry in the Windsor-Staines area. The pottery of this period from Staines does not reflect obvious influence from products made within Danelaw, and continued for the most part as handmade wares of shelly (MD 1) and gritty (MF 1) fabrics although some of the fast-wheeled calcareous-tempered pottery (MD 2) may have been in production before the Norman Conquest.

Through the Kings' generosity to Westminster Abbey, Staines by the middle of the 11th century had become the focus of an important rural estate with sokeland and berewicks, London properties, burgesses and a reeve. A marketing centre had been established on the town island and goods were traded from as far as Northern Europe.

Until the late 12th century, Staines was probably affected by the growth of Old and New Windsor and Chertsey operating within its potential marketing area. A bridge at Staines was perhaps the advantage that secured its prosperity during the 13th and early 14th centuries. An earlier bridge seems unlikely as the com-

mercial interests of Chertsey Abbey and the King would have been seriously affected, but it probably remained an important crossing-point.

Large amounts of pottery discarded on the town island during the later 11th to early 13th century have been found in excavations. They show a diversity of fabric and decorative traits that have similarities with pottery of the Upper Thames (Oxford region) and the Hampshire/Old Berkshire chalklands. The production of fast-wheeled sandy wares came to dominate the market by the beginning of the 13th century, culminating in the near-monopoly of the Surrey white-ware industry from as early as 1250. At this time some parts of the town underwent some replanning, a market and fair were granted, and the bridge was definitely in use prior to 1222.

Staines became the focus of the affairs of the Kingdom in the summer of 1215, for it was here that the Barons and Bishops awaited their parliament with King John, and it may also have been here that Magna Carta was signed, according to the medieval author of the 'History of the Kings of England' (Richardson 1968). At this important event when Staines was for a few brief months centre-stage of English history, this summary is concluded.

#### NOTES

1. Archaeological work in Staines began in 1969 with a series of small excavations undertaken by Maureen Rendell for the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society. Since 1974 a small professional team funded by the Department of the Environment have excavated a series of sites in the Central Area Development of the town with the assistance of the Spelthorne Archaeological Field Group. In 1980 the administrative responsibility for archaeological work in Staines passed to Surrey County Council which was already responsible for the rest of Spelthorne Borough since local governmental reorganisation in 1965.
2. There remains some doubt as to the derivation of the place-names Binbury, first recorded in the 14th century, and Budbury south of the town, transcribed as Budbury Hill Field on maps of the 19th century. The suffix '-bury' may originally have described either a fortified enclosure (OE *burg*) or a hill or mound (OE *beorg*). The prefixes 'Bin-' and 'Bud-' may be abbreviated forms of personal names although another possible derivation may better accord with the topography of Staines. 'Bin' may have come from OE *binnan* meaning 'within' and 'Bud' from OE *butan* meaning 'without', for whereas the former was part of the demesne farm, Budbury lay in the common fields.

3. Specific reference is made to the annals of the Parker Chronicle (A) for the year 893, and the Laud Chronicle (E) for the year 1009 as translated by Garmonsway in 1953.
4. Sawyer 1968. No. 774 Edgars charter of 969; No. 1141 King Edward grants *Windleora* (Old Windsor) and *Stana* (Staines) to the Abbot of Westminster in 1042; No. 1142 an expanded version of Edward's charter dated 1053; Nos 1040 and 1043, confirmations of the Staines estate to Westminster in 1065 and 1066.
5. This was an auspicious site for the *haege*, adjacent to the traditional Saxon palace site of Aldermanbury, and partly within the area of the Roman Cripplegate fort, on one of the highest points within the City walls.
6. Staines High Street excavated sites mentioned in the text: H 9–11 Market Square 1981; N Mumford and Lobbs 1972; R Reeves (Halifax car park) 1971; V Johnson and Clarks 1979; W Central Area Development 1977; Y Friends Burial Ground 1975–6; Z Elmsleigh House 1974–5. The site context numbers of features mentioned in the text and illustrated in Fig. 3 are as follows:
 

1 Z136, W39	13 Y110
2 W54	14 W32, W62, W690–2
3 W17	15 Z131
4 Z101	16 Z99
5 W	17 Z119
6 Y107	18 Z106
7 Z33	19 Y9, Y90
8 Z25	20 W72
9 Z25	21 Y5
10 Y91/4	22 Y1
11 Y111	23 Y3
12 000	24 Y2
7. Old Windsor, unpublished material in Reading Museum Yeoveney Lodge, Jones forthcoming; Wraysbury, Lobb and Astill forthcoming. Chertsey, R. Poulton forthcoming. Apps Court, unpublished material in Weybridge Museum. Shepperton Green, Canham 1979, 115 where described as St. Neots ware. Brooklands, Hanworth and Tomalin 1977, 60 Reigate Old Vicarage, R. Poulton forthcoming.
8. In late 1982 two areas of pottery production were discovered by the author and M. Farley of the Buckinghamshire County Museum Service, in the Alderbourne valley at Denham, Bucks. These were producing flint-gritted kitchen wares, some of which were diagonally combed. Whilst most wasters were of 13th/14th-century forms some may be earlier. Although there are broad similarities with both MF and MG fabrics, we must await detailed analysis of the finds from excavations directed by Mr. Farley.
9. Fig. 2. The topography of Staines: watercourses are as shown on an early 19th-century map (M.R.O. 809/Misc/58), roads and causeways are those most probably extant in the 11th century and were most likely in existence during the Roman period. Land liable to flooding is shown stippled and the remaining areas are the more permanent land surfaces of brickearth overlying gravels which is the Flood Plain Terrace. Their mapping is from the O.S. Geological Survey (Drift) Sheet 269 with some alterations in the Staines area as a result of recent excavations and site-watching. The watercourse running north of, and roughly parallel with the High Street is Sweeps Ditch which is fed from a stream by Hale Mill so that it runs both west to rejoin the Colne, and east then south to the Thames.
10. Several local place-names such as Chertsey, Walton, Bedfont, *Wealeshtiham*, *Wealesgate* and *Lodderlake* attest to the survival of sub-Roman elements in place-names of the area. In addition, there seems to have been some continuity in the use of settlement sites by Romans and Saxons as for example at Staines, Hythe, Yeoveney Lodge, Wraysbury, Old Windsor, Egham, Chertsey, Thorpe, Shepperton and Shepperton Green.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ASTILL (1978), G. Astill *Historic Towns in Berkshire: an archaeological appraisal* Berkshire Archaeol. Committee 2 (Reading 1978).
- BARROW (1976), V. Barrow *The Regio of the Sunningas—an early Saxon tribal area in the Mid-Thames Valley* Dissertation submitted for the degree of MA in English Local History, University of Leicester (1976).
- BIDDLE (1961/2), M. Biddle 'The Deserted Medieval Village of Seacourt, Berks' *Oxon.* 26/27 (1961/2) 142–149.
- CANHAM (1979), R. Canham 'Excavations at Shepperton Green 1967 and 1973' *Trans. London Middlesex Archaeol. Soc.* 30 (1979) 97–124.
- CHAPMAN AND JOHNSON (1973), H. Chapman and Tony Johnson 'Excavations at Aldgate and Bush Lane House in the City of London 1972' *Trans. London Middlesex Archaeol. Soc.* 24 (1973) 1–84.

- CROUCH (1976), K. Crouch 'The Archaeology of Staines and the Excavation at Elmsleigh House' *Trans. London Middlesex Archaeol. Soc.* 27 (1976) 71–134.
- CROUCH (forthcoming) K. Crouch 'Excavations on the Central Area Development site' forthcoming.
- CUNLIFFE (1964), B. Cunliffe *Winchester Excavations 1949–60* 1 (1964).
- DOWN (1978), A. Down *Chichester Excavations III* (Chichester 1978).
- DOWN AND RULE (1971), A. Down and M. Rule *Chichester Excavations I* (Chichester 1971).
- DUNNING (1964), G. C. Dunning 'Pottery imported from Normandy' in Cunliffe (1964) 125–6.
- DURHAM (1977), B. Durham 'Archaeological investigations in St. Aldate's, Oxford' *Oxon.* 42 (1977) 82–203.
- DYSON (1980), T. Dyson 'London and Southwark in the 7th century and late. A neglected reference' *Trans. London Middlesex Archaeol. Soc.* 31 (1980) 83–95.
- FARLEY (1976), M. Farley 'Saxon and Medieval Walton, Aylesbury: Excavations 1973–4' *Rec. of Bucks.* 20 pt. 2 (1976).
- GARMONSWAY (1953), G. N. Garmonsway *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (London 1953).
- GROVE (1938), L. R. Grove 'Norman Pottery from Wallingford Market Place' *Berks. Archaeol. J.* 42 pt. 1 (1938) 67.
- HARVEY (1979), S. P. J. Harvey 'Evidence for Settlement Study: Domesday Book' in Sawyer (1979) 105–109.
- HANWORTH AND TOMALIN (1977), R. Hanworth and D. J. Tomalin *Brooklands, Weybridge: The Excavation of an Iron Age and Medieval site 1964–5 and 1970–1* Res. Rep. Surrey Archaeol. Soc. 4 (Guildford 1977).
- HASSALL (1976), T. G. Hassall 'Excavations at Oxford Castle 1965–73' *Oxon.* 41 (1976) 232–308.
- HASSALL (1972), T. G. Hassall *Oxford—the City beneath your feet* (Oxford 1972).
- HINTON (1973), D. A. Hinton 'M40 Ware' *Oxon.* 38 (1973) 181–3.
- HOPE-TAYLOR (1950), B. Hope-Taylor 'Excavation of a motte at Abinger in Surrey' *Archaeol. J.* 107 (1950) 15–43.
- HOPE-TAYLOR (1958), B. Hope-Taylor 'Old Windsor, Berkshire' *Med. Archaeol.* 2 (1958) 183–5.
- HUNTER (1979), R. Hunter 'Appendix: St. Neots-type ware' in Williams (1979) 230–240.
- HURST (1961), J. G. Hurst 'The kitchen area of Northolt Manor, Middlesex' *Med. Archaeol.* 5 (1961) 211–299.
- HURST (1976), J. G. Hurst 'The Pottery' in Wilson (1976) 283–343.
- JONES AND SHANKS (1976), P. Jones and S. Shanks 'Saxon and Medieval Pottery' in Crouch (1976) 101–114.
- JOPE (1947), E. M. Jope 'Medieval Pottery in Berkshire' *Berks. Archaeol. J.* 50 (1947) 49–76.
- JOPE (1952), E. M. Jope 'Late Saxon pits under Oxford Castle mound: Excavations in 1952' *Oxon.* 17 (1952) 77–111.
- MAITLAND (1897), F. W. Maitland *Domesday Book and Beyond* (Cambridge 1897).
- MELLOR (1976), M. Mellor 'The Pottery' in Hassall (1976) 255–265.
- MELLOR (1980), M. Mellor 'Late Saxon Pottery from Oxfordshire: Evidence and speculation' *Bull. Med. Pottery Res. Group* 4 (1980) 17–24.
- MOORHOUSE AND JONES (1981), S. Moorhouse and P. Jones 'The Pottery' in Robertson-Mackay (1981) 119–123.
- PEACOCK (1977), D. P. S. Peacock *Pottery and Early Commerce, Characterization and Trade in Roman and Later Ceramics* (London 1977).
- PLATT AND COLEMAN-SMITH (1975), C. Platt and R. Coleman-Smith *Excavations in Medieval Southampton 1953–1969* (Leicester 1975).
- RAUP AND STANLEY (1971), D. M. Raup and S. M. Stanley *Principles of Palaeontology* (San Francisco 1971).
- RICHARDSON (1968), H. G. Richardson 'The Origins of Parliament' in Southern (1968) 146–178.
- ROBERTSON-MACKAY (1962), R. Robertson-Mackay 'The excavation of the causewayed camp at Staines, Middlesex. Interim report' *Archaeol. Newsletter* 7 (1962) 131–134.
- ROBERTSON-MACKAY (1981), R. Robertson-Mackay 'A group of Saxon and medieval finds from the site of the Neolithic causewayed enclosure at Staines, Surrey, with a note on the topography of the area' *Trans. London Middlesex Archaeol. Soc.* 32 (1981) 107–131.
- SAWYER (1968), P. H. Sawyer *Anglo-Saxon Charters* (London 1968).
- SAWYER (1979), P. H. Sawyer (ed.) *English Medieval settlement* (London 1979).
- SOUTHERN (1968), R. W. Southern *Essays in Medieval History* (London 1968).
- SPEED (1611 and 1623), J. Speed *The History of Great Britain* (London 1611 and 1623).
- STONE AND CHARLTON (1935), J. F. S. Stone and J. Charlton 'Trial excavations at Old Sarum' *Antiq. J.* 15 (1935) 184–8.
- STUKELEY (1724), W. Stukeley *Itinerarium Curiosum* (London 1724).

THORN (1975), J. C. Thorn 'Medieval Pottery' in Tatton-Brown (1975) 118–151.  
TATTON-BROWN (1975), T. Tatton-Brown 'Excavations at the Custom House site, City of London 1973—part 2' *Trans. London Middlesex Archaeol. Soc.* 26 (1975) 103–170.  
TURNER (1926), F. Turner, *Egham, Surrey. A history of the parish under Church and Crown* (Egham 1926).

WHITELOCK (1979), D. Whitelock *English Historical Documents, 500–1042* (London 1979).  
WILLIAMS (1979), J. H. Williams *St. Peter's Street Northampton. Excavations 1973–1976*. Northampton Development Corporation Archaeol. Monograph 2 (1979).  
WILSON (1976), D. M. Wilson (ed.) *Archaeology of Anglo-Saxon England* (London 1976).