# EXCAVATIONS OF A SAXON AND EARLY MEDIEVAL OCCUPATION SITE AT SAXON COUNTY SCHOOL, SHEPPERTON IN 1986

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## SUMMARY

*Excavations took place at the Saxon County School between 14 July and 26 September 1986 in advance of building works. Earlier work on the site by Roy Canham had revealed a cemetery and an associated settlement site occupied between the 6th and 12th centuries* AD.

*Some artefactual evidence for prehistoric activity on the site was found, with a scatter of worked flints, including a Mesolithic tranchet axe, and sufficient prehistoric pottery to suggest occupation in the near vicinity, perhaps of Iron Age date. It is, however, suggested that an earlier identification of an Iron Age hut was mistaken. Enough Roman pottery and tile was also recovered to indicate that a Roman site may lie nearby. No features of these dates were found.*

*The precise character of earlier Saxon occupation remains elusive, but a notable discovery was a substantial midden deposit of early Saxon date, which had probably been dumped in a natural hollow. Finds from this included plentiful animal bone and pottery (including stamped and decorated sherds of various types), as well as a number of bone artefacts, including two combs. The main period of occupation was represented by a number of ditches running parallel to those found by Canham; this confirmed his suggestion that the site had been regularly laid out and indicated that this had occurred in the later Saxon period. The site appears to have gone out of use in the 13th century, though a scatter of medieval pottery may be sufficient to suggest that occupation continued in the immediate vicinity, presumably at Shepperton Green, which is known to have existed by 1293.*



## PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Excavations took place at the Saxon County School between 14 July and 26 September 1986. The work was directed by the author for the Conservation and Archaeology Section, Planning Department, Surrey County Council and funded by the Education Department. Although some progress was made towards preparation of a report soon afterwards, its eventual completion has been assisted by a grant from the Countryside and Heritage Section, Surrey County Council.

A number of people helped with the work on site, but particular thanks are due to Graham Hayman and Giles Pattison. Thanks are also due to those who have contributed to the final report. Funding was not sufficient to do all that might ideally have been desired, especially in terms of the finds reports, but it has been felt preferable to present the results of the work in the present form rather than delay still further with no obvious prospect of further resources becoming available.

Jon Cotton would like to thank Mark Alexander of the Kingston Heritage Centre for making the flintwork from the earlier excavations available for study.


## INTRODUCTION

Saxon County School lies in the parish of Shepperton (Fig 1), in the district of Spelthorne, part of the modern county of Surrey, but formerly one of the hundreds of Middlesex. The

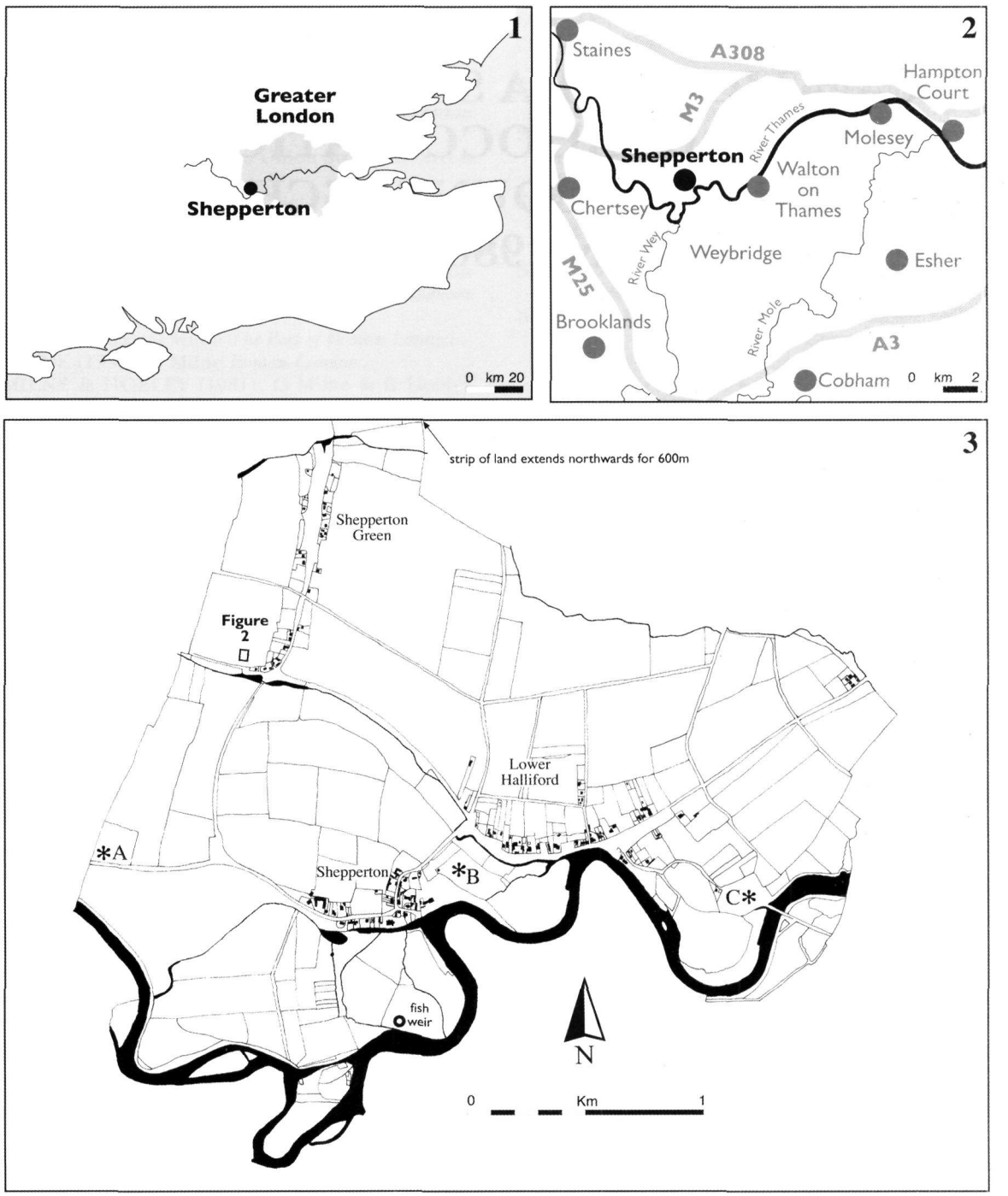


*Fig 1. Saxon County School, Shepperton: location of the site. Part 3 of the plan shows the area as it was in 1843, based on the Tithe map. A, B, and C are the (presumed or actual) early Saxon cemeteries at Upper West Field, War Close, and Walton Bridge Green. The fish weir is of late Roman or early Saxon date (Bird 1999)*

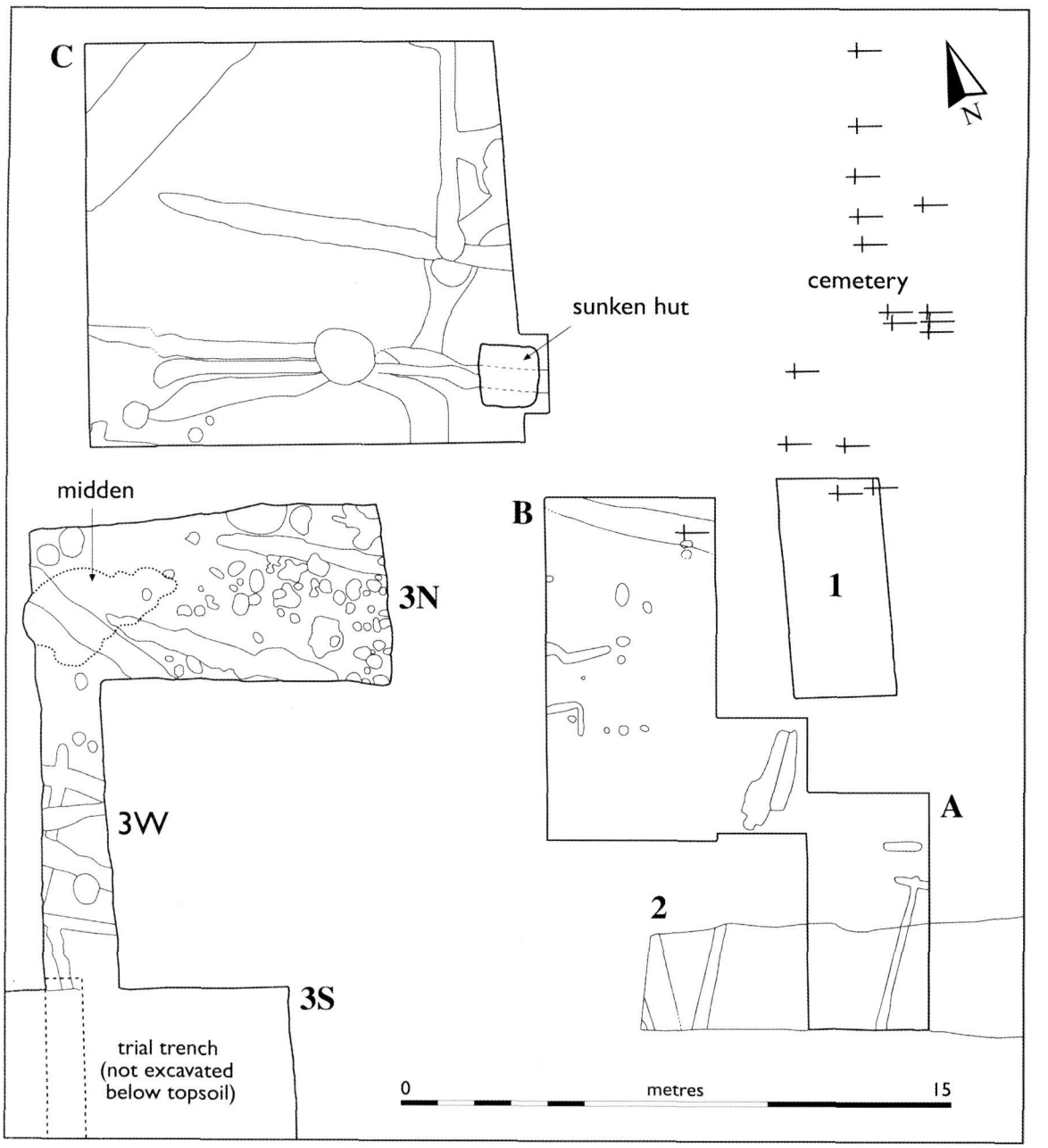


*Fig 2. Saxon County School, Shepperton: location of all archaeological work. A, B, and C are trenches excavated in 1967 and 1973 (Canham 1979), while 1, 2 (the east end of which is omitted, see Fig 3), and 3 are the 1986 investigations. All of the certain or probable 6th- to 12th-century features are shown*

excavation took place largely because previous work in 1967 and 1973 (Canham 1979) had revealed the existence of a cemetery and what was probably an associated settlement site, occupied between the 6th and 12th centuries AD. The present trenches were in the same general area (Fig 2) as those of Canham, and it is not surprising that they revealed a similar

range of occupation evidence, although no further burials were identified. The site lies on the Upper Floodplain terrace of the River Thames, and showed the common sequence in this area of brickearth, of variable depth, sealing gravels, which have been extensively quarried in the vicinity. Over much of Trench 3N (Fig 4) the brickearth was calcareous, a feature also observed on other sites in the vicinity, as for example in the excavation of the Neolithic henge at Staines Road Farm, Shepperton (Jones 1990). Inconsistencies and oddities in these natural deposits were identified at a number of points, and are, perhaps, due to periglacial conditions, as previously suggested by Canham (1979, 101).

The following pages present the results of the excavation work, including reports on the finds. This is followed by a more general discussion, which relates the present work to the earlier work by Canham, and sets it in context. It has seemed more natural to present the relevant archaeological background with the discussion, rather than in the more conventional position at the beginning of the report.

## THE EXCAVATION

### Introduction

Three trenches (Fig 2), whose location was determined by the areas of the proposed building and landscaping works, were opened up. Trench 1 was within the tarmacadamed area of the school playground. After machine removal of the tarmac, and other recent deposits below, it was clear that construction work associated with the building of the school in 1967 had removed any archaeological features that may have originally been present, leaving only clean brickearth at a level well below its upper surviving level elsewhere. Trench 2 was similarly located but the modern disturbance was shallower, and, after its machine removal, a number of 'features' were exposed, cut through brickearth, but with gravel also exposed at the same level (Fig 3). Trench 3 was sited within the grass play area and construction of the school had not damaged it to any significant degree. Although Trench 3 was excavated as a single unit, it falls naturally into three parts. The northern (3N) and western (3W) parts had their turf and topsoil removed by machine down to a point at which the vague outlines of features could be seen against the brickearth. The area had evidently been ploughed at some date and artefacts of all dates were present in the topsoil. Some of the medieval and earlier pottery was later recovered from the spoilheap. The area was then carefully trowelled in successive spits, with the position of all potsherds and other finds marked on a plan, until the outlines of the numerous cut features could be clearly discerned. It was evident from this that the bottom few centimetres of topsoil contained only pottery dating from earlier than *c.*AD 1250. It seems reasonable, therefore, to treat all features sealed below this as belonging to occupation before that date. The southern portion (3S) of Trench 3 differed from the rest in that machine removal of turf and thin dark soil cover revealed predominantly gravel deposits which were at first believed to be of geological origin. Subsequent work demonstrated that they were the result of recent infilling and levelling (possibly when the school was established in 1967) and were relatively deep (0.5m+). A trial trench on the north-west side of 3S (Fig 2) showed that the natural deposits had been dug out to a considerable depth (context 266), at a date subsequent to the infilling of the early medieval feature 298 (Fig 5). It is presumed that the feature extended over the whole of 3S, and it is suggested that it was a gravel quarry. It is not clear at what date it was open as the lower fill layers in the trial trench did not yield any finds. No quarry is marked on earlier Ordnance Survey maps, or on the Tithe Map of 1843 (Fig 1), or on John Rocque's map of Middlesex of 1748. Since time was limited and the proposed landscaping would have little effect below the level of recent disturbance it was decided to discontinue excavation of Trench 3S.

The excavated contexts of Saxon and medieval date are described below. They have been divided into three main groups: (1) linear features; (2) pits and postholes; and (3) midden deposits. The descriptions are preceded by comment on features believed to be of geological origin, and a note on how the features were dated.

None of the other features that were recorded require detailed comment. They include a layer (termed subsoil layer) immediately overlying the ancient features. This graded into the overlying topsoil, but seems to have been largely free of any post-13th-century material (Tables 3–4). A few contexts of modern date were noted, but no features of Roman or earlier date were identified with certainty.

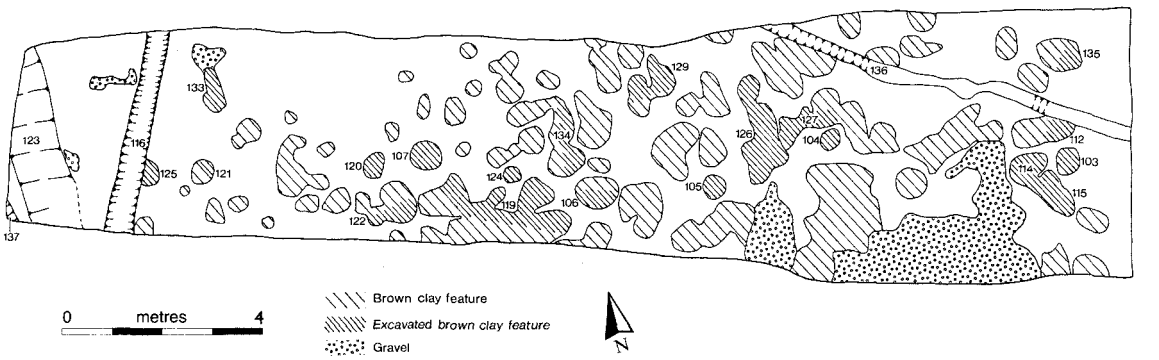


*Fig 3. Saxon County School, Shepperton: plan of Trench 2*

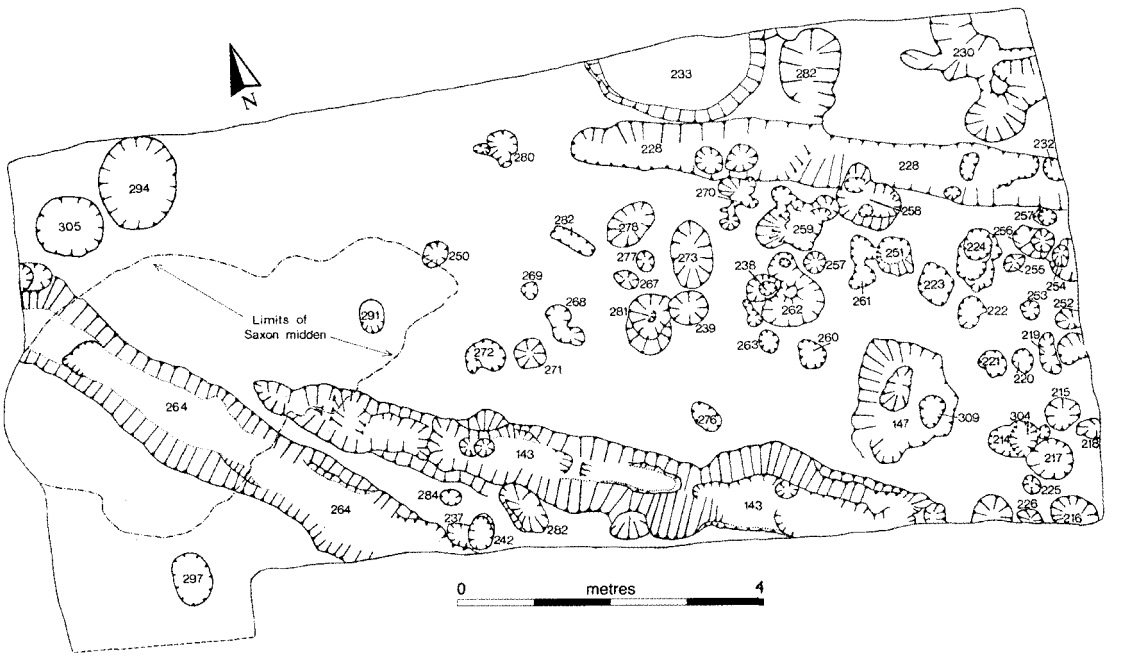


*Fig 4. Saxon County School, Shepperton: plan of Trench 3N*

## Contexts of probable natural origin

A series of features, in plan resembling small pits or postholes, was observed everywhere on site except in Trench 1 (where they may already have been removed in building the school) and Trench 3S (also probably disturbed to too great a depth). Only in Trench 2, however, were they systematically exposed and a proportion of them excavated (Fig 3; note that these features of natural origin are not shown on the plans of other trenches (Figs 4–5)). Here, and elsewhere, such features were found to be cut by traces of Saxon or other occupation wherever the latter was identified. In Trenches 3N and 3W a number of them were clearly sealed by a thin layer of reddish brown sand (through which Saxon and other features were cut), which itself was very irregular and contorted in relation to the brickearth, and was, perhaps, as Canham (1979, 101) noted, the product of periglacial conditions (neither the layer or these features are shown on the published plans (Figs 4–5)). The fill of these features was everywhere identical, consisting of an orangey-buff clay, distinguishable only in colour from the surrounding brickearth. None had any finds within them, if one excepts very rare fragments (*c.*4mm in diameter) of soft red clay, resembling lightly fired daub. The range of size and shape is indicated on Fig 3. It was often difficult to define a satisfactory base to these features as they merged with the surrounding brickearth, but depths were generally of the order of 5–15cm.

The absence of finds, the irregularity of shape, and the difficulty of defining satisfactory limits (on occasions) to the features, combine to suggest that they were not a direct product of human intervention. They do not seem to conform to the better known periglacial effects, but it is nevertheless suggested that such is the most likely cause of these features.

## Dating the features

The dating of features on sites where there is evidence for several periods of occupation, or continuous occupation over a long period, is often difficult, and the present site is no exception. The dates are generally based on the pottery recovered (Tables 1–4), but are occasionally influenced by other finds or by indications in the context sheets that obviously modern material had been discarded on site.

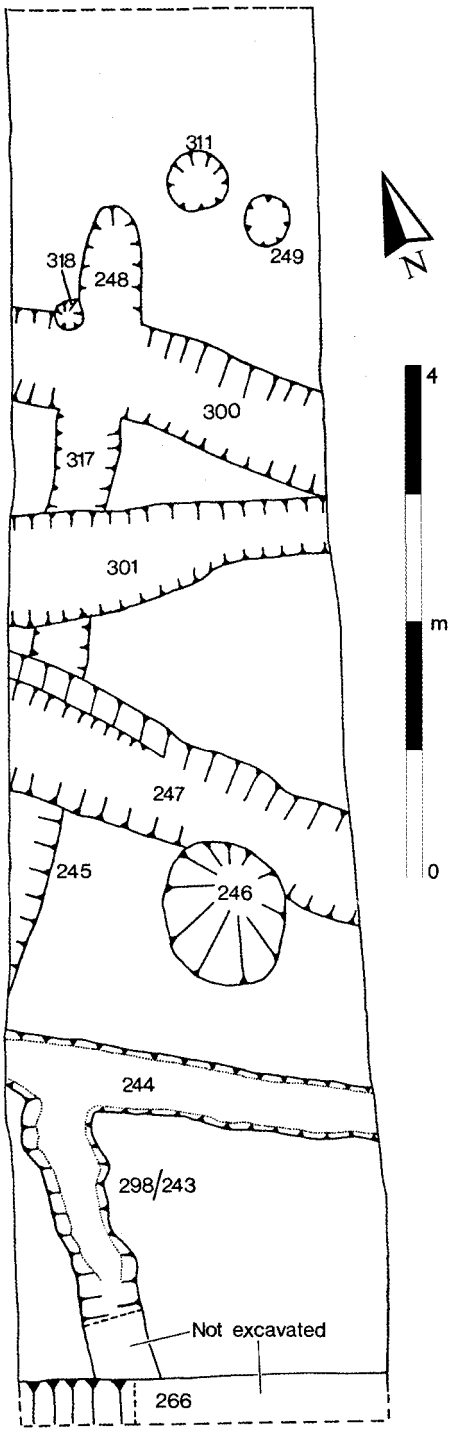


*Fig 5. Saxon County School, Shepperton: plan of Trench 3W*

Where quantities are small, there is always a high degree of uncertainty. Many features produced no datable finds. Those features that were only identified below the subsoil layer have been regarded as of earlier medieval or earlier date (see the comment on the subsoil layers above).

## The linear features

A number of linear features were identified. They seem to have been cut at several periods, although where the quantity of finds is small it is difficult to be certain of the date. This applies to most of the features with the exception of 143 (Trench 3N), where it is reasonably certain that its final infilling occurred in the late Saxon period. Many of the other ditches share the general alignment of the ditches excavated by Canham (1979; Fig 2). There can be no doubt that these form a coherent system, which is further discussed below. It seems probable that those ditches/gullies which do not have this broad alignment are of earlier or later date, and the evidence for an early medieval or high medieval date for 247 (Fig 5), 264 (Fig 4), and 301 (Fig 5) hints at developments either towards the end of the main period of settlement, or, less probably, at some time after, since it is just possible that the 13th-century or earlier finds from them could be entirely residual. The difficulty in dating these features with confidence is well shown by ditch 264 (Fig 4). This yielded a total of 70 potsherds (Table 3), of which around 60% are of Saxon date. The 14 sherds (20%) that are of early medieval date may be a better indication of its date, but only if it is assumed that the three high medieval sherds are intrusive. It is at least as probable that the latter are the indicators of the date of the feature, cut at a period when settlement had shifted away from the present site (see p 73).

There is very little to comment on with regard to the individual features. The linear feature in Area A (Fig 2) was identified by Canham (1979, 104) as a probable beam slot, forming part of an early medieval rectilinear building. This was not detected during the excavation of Trench 2, presumably because it had been removed in work associated with the creation of the school playground. Feature 116 (Fig 3) was identified, however, and runs exactly parallel to Canham's beam slot, and is of similar width. Despite this, its rounded profile and greater depth seem to make it unlikely that it is the western beam slot of the same building. Another possibility is that it is an eaves-drip trench outside a now vanished beam trench. This would give a width of about 6m for the suggested building. The few sherds from contexts 116 and 117 (which belong to the same feature) are of Saxon and late Saxon date, but could be residual in a later feature.

## Pits and postholes

The quantity of finds from almost all of these features was small, and hence they cannot be dated any more precisely than early medieval or earlier. It is possible that one or two are of later date, but, despite the fact that two produced only odd sherds of prehistoric pottery and one only a sherd of Roman pottery, it is not believed that any predate the earlier Saxon period.

These features are concentrated in the eastern part of Trench 3N (Figs 4 and 6). The great majority are bounded by ditch 264 and by a line drawn from it through features 291, 250, and 280 to the edge of the trench. These features might represent posts in a genuine fence line, but it is difficult to be certain, given that 280 had been disturbed by animal burrowing, and might have been created by that activity. The features in 3N, beyond these limits, were all very shallow, as were the few such features in 3W. No pits or postholes were identified in Trench 2. This may have been due to modern truncation, but Canham (1979, 109) noted the general reduction in activity in this area, and the possibility that occupation only extended to it in the early medieval period.

It is possible, then, to suggest that the concentration of small features reflects an activity area, within one of the plots that the gullies/ditches seem to mark out (see below). The putative fence line passes through the eastern terminal of 143, and that feature might have been the original southern boundary, which would support a late Saxon or earlier date for this activity.

The nature of the activity is obscure. Many of the features are relatively shallow (10–15cm deep); their shape is quite variable, tending to round or oval, with a high proportion of the right general size for postholes, but with an almost complete lack of examples with clearly diagnostic features (such as packing or distinctive fills where the socket formerly existed). There are no obvious patterns in the features that would suggest the plans of structures, nor does the artefactual evidence provide any clues.

*Fig 6. Saxon County School, Shepperton, Surrey: view of Saxon features in Trench 3N, looking west with midden at far end (see Fig 4)*

The features outside this area are generally larger. Most are quite shallow, to the extent that the less regular examples, such as 230 (Fig 4), might not be deliberately dug. Only 286 (filled by 233, 285, 287, and 289) (Fig 4) is distinctive enough to require further comment. It was about 2.5m in diameter and 0.6m deep, with near-vertical or steeply sloping sides and a flat bottom directly on the natural gravel. Dirty, gravelly, clays formed the primary silting, which had a level upper surface. The main fill was a homogeneous silty soil, which included nothing of later than early Saxon date. The feature could have functioned as a soakaway, kept clean while in use, which would explain the thin, level, primary silting. This is a suggestion previously made by Canham for features in his Area C, just to the north.

## The midden

At the west end of 3N an irregular area of greenish-grey silt (292) eventually proved to be the final fill of an amorphous feature. The edges of this feature, which had a maximum depth of 0.6m, proved very hard to define satisfactorily,

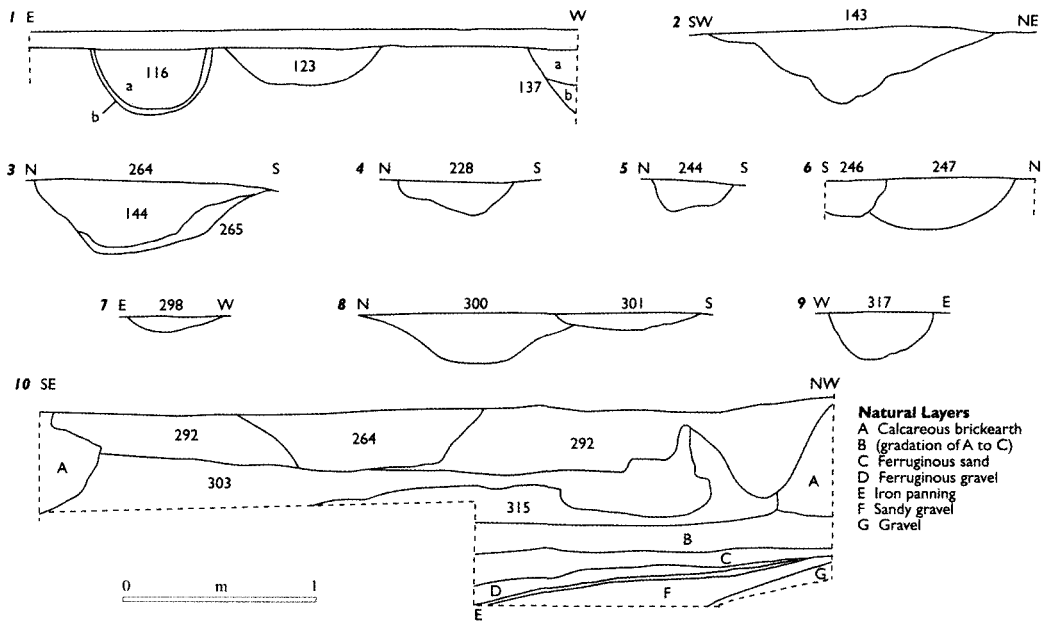


*Fig 7. Saxon County School, Shepperton: sections of linear features and the midden (No. 10)*

and were apparently steeply undercut in places. The subsoil was also distinct in this area, with a thick deposit of calcareous brickearth, which became increasingly chalky with depth, until its lowest level was almost pure chalk. The bottom of the feature (or rather the base of the layers containing artefacts) was at the same level as this, which might suggest that the hole was dug to remove it. It is thought more probable, however, that this was not an artificially created hollow. Fig 7, No. 10, shows that below layer 315 a series of sterile layers was identified, the lowest of them, G, extending deeper at a marked angle. This looks like the edge of a palaeochannel, and it may be that the hollow formed naturally above it. Whatever the mechanism of its formation, it is clear that quite early in the Saxon period the hollow was taken advantage of for the dumping of domestic refuse (mostly animal bone and pottery, but with a few other finds), a process that fairly rapidly resulted in its complete infilling. The layer of occupation debris may have extended beyond the hollow since similar material was found over a wider area in the spits of the subsoil layer. The concentration of finds in the subsoil was, however, much greater in the spits over the hollow, suggesting that the artefacts mostly derive from it.

## THE FINDS

The notes on the flintwork and the Saxon stamped pottery were both prepared in 1987, and have not subsequently been updated.

### The flintwork

*Jon Cotton*

In all, 45 pieces of struck flint were found during the excavation. Of these, 17 were recovered from the subsoil layer sealing the 13th-century and earlier features (including Fig 8, Nos 3–7), 11 from the Saxon midden (including Fig 8, No. 2), one from the natural ground surface (Fig 8, No. 1), and the remainder from the pits and ditches. All were therefore in disturbed, secondary, contexts.

A large proportion of the raw material which comprises this small mixed collection appears, not surprisingly, to be derived from the local gravels of the flood plain terrace, and the number of pieces bearing cortex (21) suggests that much of it was in the form of small nodules. However, several pieces of cherty, mottled, or pearl-grey flint, together with a fragment of a ground axe of banded grey flint (Fig 8, No. 7), may have been won from the chalk outcrops

which skirt the Thames valley, and through which the main channel has to pass at Goring; a further spall with distinctive greenish cortex is of Bullhead Beds flint, which is to be found at the junction of the Reading Beds and Upper Chalk. The nearest outcrop of the latter deposit upstream from Shepperton occurs at Windsor, some 14km away.

Much of the flint in the collection is in its pristine state, sharp and unpatinated. Exceptional therefore are a handful of some six pieces, including the small tranchet axe (Fig 8, No. 1), which have a pronounced milky-blue patination. One piece in particular, the sub-triangular end scraper (Fig 8, No. 2), has a densely white and somewhat worn surface. Although it has been shown that this effect is produced through contact with alkaline solutions in the surrounding soil (and deposits of calcareous 'tufa' were found to underlie parts of the site), there are usually difficulties in automatically assuming a greater age for the pieces thus affected. However, in this instance the general condition and morphology of the scraper in question suggest that it is genuinely older than the remainder of the collection from the site. Finally, three flints, including one of the patinated pieces, show traces of contact with fire.

The bulk of the collection consists of small spalls and waste pieces, including the proximal ends of two snapped flakes/blades. Recognisable tools include the tranchet axe, several scrapers, a burnt scraper fragment, a denticulate, and two small flakes/spalls from ground flint axes. Several otherwise nondescript waste pieces show traces of utilisation along their lateral edges. The few complete flakes recovered tend to narrowness; cores are absent, although the facetted butt of one broken narrow flake/blade indicates that it had been struck from a prepared core.

The following pieces merit illustration and further description:

1. Small core axe/adze 76mm in length. The dorsal face has been neatly radially-flaked, while the ventral face bears the traces of the removal of a large transverse sharpening flake. Subsequent damage during use has resulted in the loss of a further shallow flake at right angles to the cutting edge. The artefact has an attractive milky-blue surface patina, and its diminutive size suggests that it was probably inserted

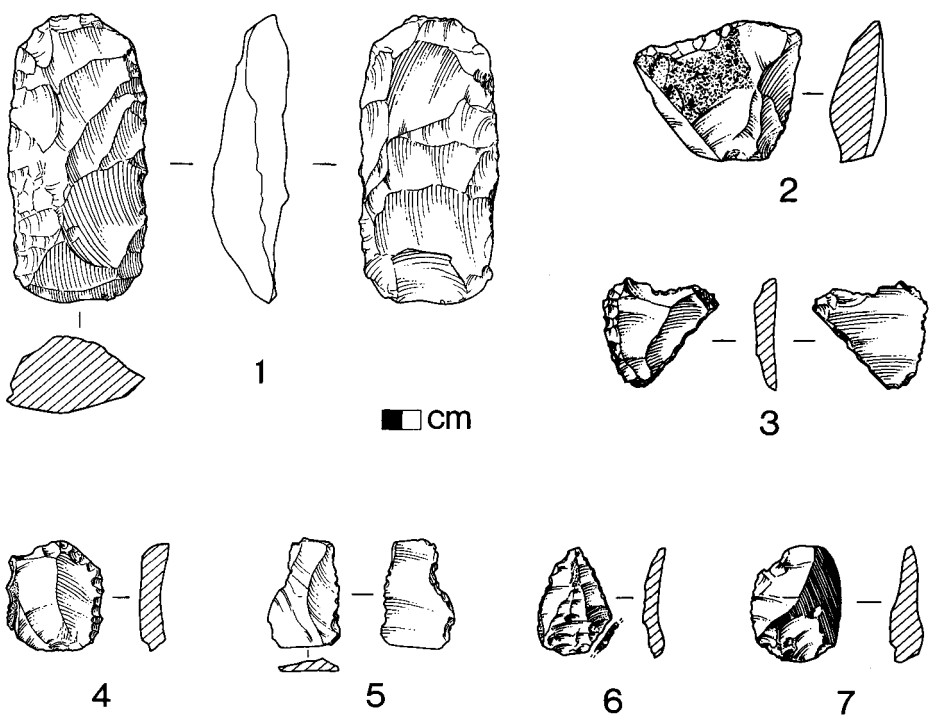


*Fig 8. Saxon County School, Shepperton: worked flint (scale 1:2)*

in an antler sleeve. From layer 290, cleaning of the natural ground surface.

2. End scraper made on a thick, squat, cortical flake. The generally worn condition and dense white patination of the piece is quite distinctive, and sets it apart from the rest of the collection. In terms of its patination it can be compared with an unstratified narrow flake/blade recovered from the site in 1967 (Wooldridge 1979, fig 14, no. 9). From Saxon midden 292.
3. Triangular flake-segment of glossy, smoke-brown flint with steep retouch along all three edges. This tends to rule out its use as a transverse arrowhead, as such artefacts usually retain unadapted one edge of the original flake from which they were made, and suggests rather that the present piece should be regarded as an atypical tanged scraper. From layer 163 immediately over the 13th-century and earlier features.
4. Small scraper of poor, mottled grey-brown flint retaining a small patch of cortex on its dorsal face, which has shattered on the unillustrated, ventral, face. A combined function as a borer is also possible. From layer 211 immediately over the 13th-century and earlier features.
5. Notched and denticulated flake/blade segment of cherty, opaque pearl-grey flint. From Saxon gully 248.
6. Small leaf-shaped flake of transparent smoke-brown flint, with delicate retouch along both long edges, and on the ventral face adjacent to the bulb of percussion. Two small patches of nodular cortex survive on the dorsal face. From layer 179 immediately over the 13th-century and earlier features.
7. Flake from a ground flint axe of attractively-banded light grey/dark grey flint. From layer 177 immediately over the 13th-century and earlier features. (A spall from a second ground axe of orange-brown flint was recovered from Saxon gully 248.)

*Discussion*

Though small the collection — together with that recovered during the earlier work (Wooldridge 1979) — is of interest because of the scarcity of comparable recorded finds from the steadily diminishing areas of undisturbed floodplain terrace gravel in the locality (Longley 1976). Typologically, the collection comprises material attributable to both Mesolithic and Neolithic/Bronze Age knapping technologies though, as noted above, the deeply patinated and worn scraper (Fig 8, No. 2) could be older still. Most diagnostic here, however, is the diminutive tranchet axe (Fig 8, No. 1), which has clear Mesolithic affinities, and which can be related to the few others dredged from local reaches of the Thames (Wymer 1977, 271, 284–5, 287–8). Land finds of Mesolithic material from the area are, by comparison, virtually unknown. Similarly diagnostic are the two fragments of ground axes which, together with the broken leaf arrowhead from the earlier work and (probably) the majority of the scrapers and the denticulate, can be attributed to the Neolithic period. Again, further stray finds of this date have been dredged from the river upstream of Kingston in the past, and are now increasingly recognised in both commercial and archaeological excavations on the adjacent banks (*eg* Needham 1985; Phil Jones pers comm).

## The pottery

*Phil Jones*

The 1986 collection is of several periods, with the majority of sherds being Saxon and of relatively early date. Of great interest is a small collection of later Saxon and Saxo-Norman material, and there are also some medieval sherds of the 13th and 14th centuries. Earlier pottery includes some Roman sherds, mostly of the later occupation, and a small collection of Late Bronze Age material. At least one sherd is of Mid- to Late Iron Age date.

In all, 1,321 sherds (11.12kg) were collected, of which 14% are prehistoric, 5% Roman, 56% early Saxon, 18% late Saxon and Saxo-Norman, and 6% of the high medieval period. Thirteen other sherds are of post-medieval date, of which nearly all came from the topsoil.

The report below mostly describes the assemblage of the early Saxon midden 292, but there are also summary accounts of the other Saxon pottery and of the other period collections.

*Midden 292*

261 sherds (3.29kg) were recovered, of which eleven each are of prehistoric and Roman fabrics, and the remainder are Saxon except for a tiny, intrusive medieval sherd (Tables 1–2). The greater majority were in the upper layer 292, with smaller amounts in the underlying contexts 303, 307, 308, and 315 (see Fig 7, No. 10). 33% of all Saxon handmade sherds from the site are from this midden, and, just as in the full assemblage, most are of a predominantly

*Table 1. Saxon County School, Shepperton: sherd count of pottery from the midden*

| | PREHISTORIC | | ROMAN | | | | | SAXON | | | | | MED | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Context | CALC/ q | CALC/ iron | 3A | 3C | 5 | 10A1 | 10A3 | GT | Q/gt | GQ/gt | Q | Tufa | M OXJ | **Totals** |
| 292 | 6 | - | 2 | - | - | 1 | - | 39 | 94 | 3 | 7 | 3 | 1 | **156** |
| 303 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | - | - | 21 | 48 | - | 5 | - | - | **82** |
| 307 | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | 6 | 7 | - | - | - | - | **16** |
| 308 | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | **4** |
| 315 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | 1 | - | - | - | - | **3** |
| **Totals** | **10** | **1** | **5** | **2** | **2** | **1** | **1** | **70** | **150** | **3** | **12** | **3** | **1** | **261** |

*Table 2. Saxon County School, Shepperton: weights (gm) of pottery from the midden*

| | PREHISTORIC | | ROMAN | | | | | SAXON | | | | | MED | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Context | CALC/ q | CALC/ iron | 3A | 3C | 5 | 10A1 | 10A3 | GT | Q/gt | GQ/gt | Q | Tufa | M OXJ | **Totals** |
| 292 | 41 | - | 9 | - | - | 3 | - | 716 | 990 | 43 | 137 | 69 | 1 | **2009** |
| 303 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 10 | 10 | - | - | 428 | 604 | - | 51 | - | - | **1111** |
| 307 | 2 | - | 1 | - | - | - | 15 | 54 | 47 | - | - | - | - | **119** |
| 308 | 8 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 7 | - | - | - | - | - | **15** |
| 315 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 40 | 5 | - | - | - | - | **45** |
| **Totals** | **52** | **3** | **14** | **10** | **10** | **3** | **15** | **1245** | **1646** | **43** | **188** | **69** | **1** | **3299** |

sand-tempered fabric, Q/gt. Next most common are sherds of grass/chaff-tempered ware, GT, and there are a few sherds of other fabrics. The illustrated pottery appears on Figs 9 (Nos 1–42) and 10 (Nos 43–54). Numbers in brackets in the following text refer to these figures.

## Q/gt sandy fabrics

The 150 sherds of these fabrics are predominantly tempered with abundant quartz sand grains, but they also include sparse to medium quantities of grass and/or chaff. Another three sherds of the GQ/gt variant are similar, but with much larger quartz sand inclusions. The principal vessel form is a jar with an everted rim; these were handmade and then externally burnished. Up to 20 rim fragments of these were recovered, although it is often difficult to distinguish them from other forms because of the similarities of their upper profiles (Nos 16–30). Usually, however, these plain jars are less well burnished than finer forms and are thicker walled. It was only possible to be certain of the diameters of two rims, both of about 16cm (Nos 16 and 21), and the correct orientation of nine others remains uncertain (those marked with 'OU' above the rim on Figs 9–10). Some rims appear to be upright or inward-sloping, but their small sherd size and the crude nature of their manufacture preclude any positive identification of such a sub-form (Nos 28, 29 and 32). Although some, perhaps most, of these jars could have had bag-shaped bases, three rounded base angle fragments (including Nos 35–36) may belong to some of them, although they could just as easily be from finer vessel types. One variant has a slightly beaded rim (No. 26).

The assemblage of Q/gt also includes a range of finer vessels including jars, bowls, cups, and carinated forms, of which some are plain, and others decorated. The rims of two plain small jars or beakers, both finely burnished inside and out, were recovered (Nos 37–38), and there is a similar rim of an even smaller form, perhaps a cup, unless its apparent diameter is wrong (No. 39). A thicker walled vessel, perhaps also a cup, with a slightly everted rim, qualifies as a fineware vessel because it, too, is finely burnished on both sides (No. 34). Yet another cup, or small bowl, has a simple, curving body wall (No. 42). Two carinated vessels are represented by body sherds

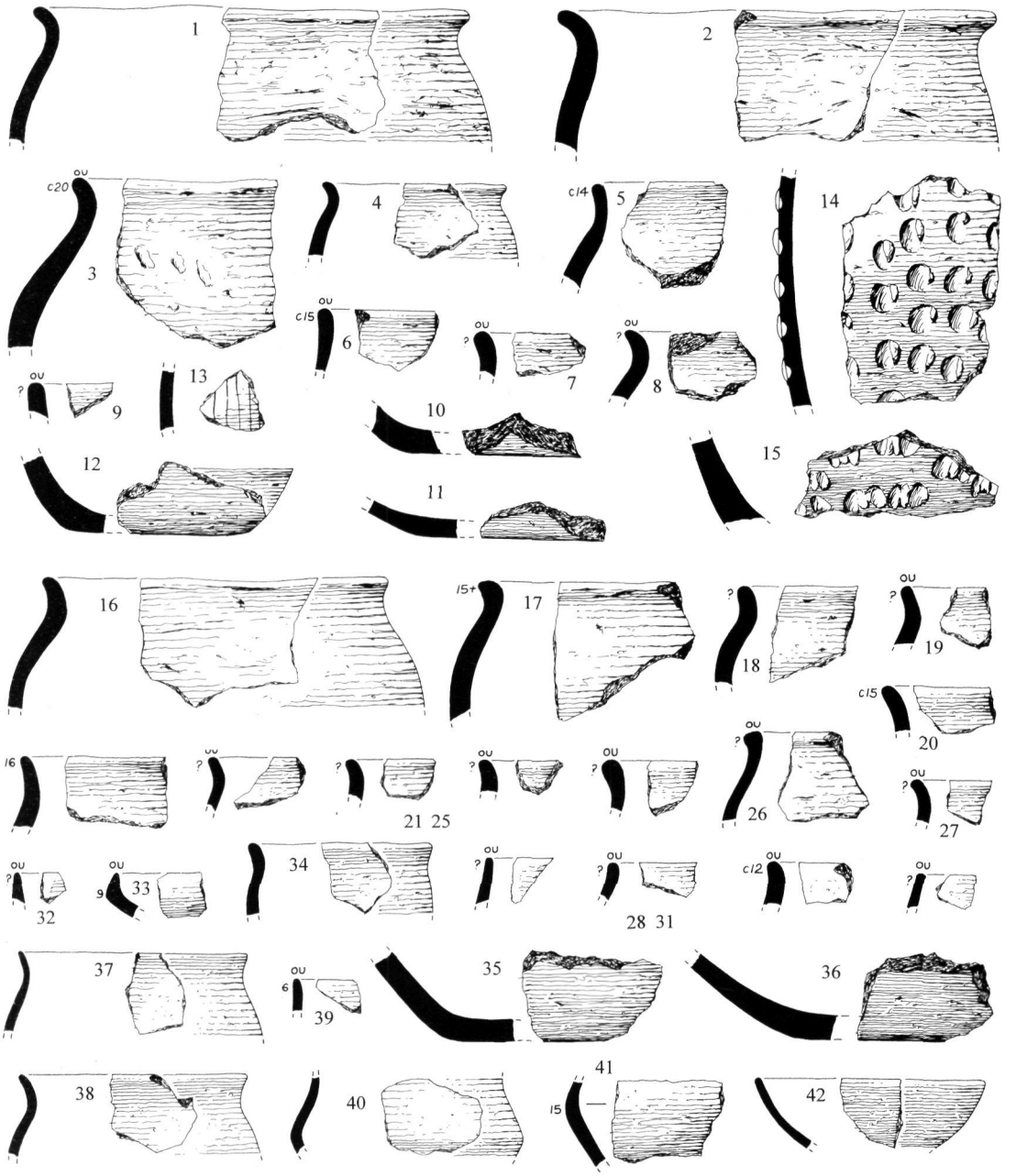

*Fig 9. Saxon County School, Shepperton: pottery from the Saxon midden, Nos 1–42 (scale 1:3)*

(Nos 40–41), of which the first shows the neck to have been concave.

At least five decorated jars are represented in the Q/gt fabric and, as far as can be established, all seem to have been carinated. Another of their characteristics is the multiple grooving of their upper parts (Nos 43–49), and in addition to those illustrated there are another 13 body sherds with such grooving. It is to be noted, however, that on some this is little more than shallow tooling (Nos 46–47, for example), whereas on others there are relatively broad,

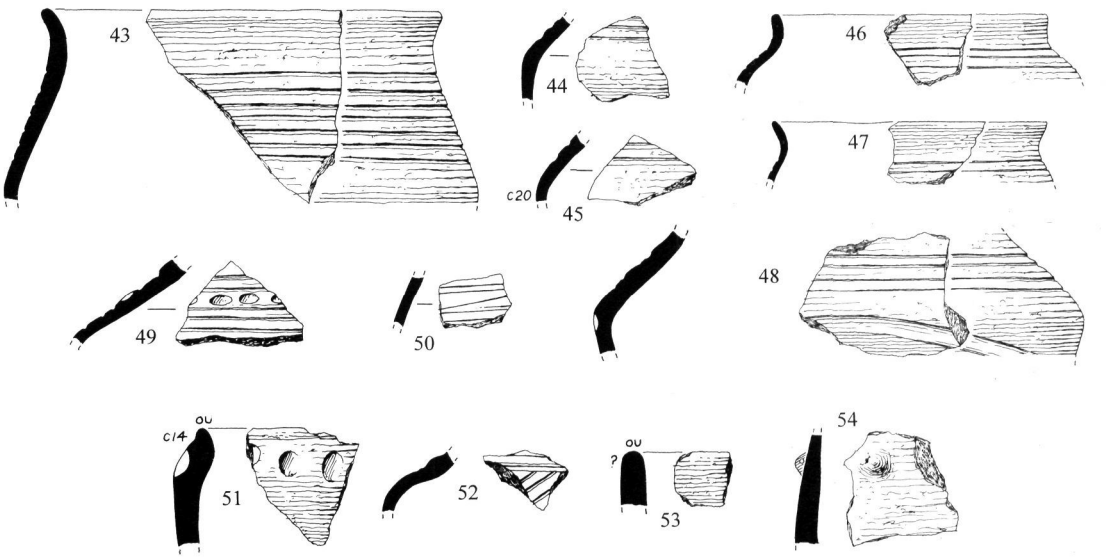


*Fig 10. Saxon County School, Shepperton: pottery from the Saxon midden, Nos 43–54 (scale 1:3)*

burnished grooves. Body sherds of two of these carinated jars have additional decoration. On one there is part of a broad, diagonal groove below the carination (No. 48); another body sherd from the same vessel, but from a later context (145), shows this to have been one of a series of such diagonally burnished strokes. The other decorated body sherd from a carinated form has a series of shallow, oval indentations on one of the cordons created by the multiple grooves (No. 49). All three rims of these vessels are simply everted, and all sherds from them are finely burnished inside and out. They varied in size, however, with two smaller examples (Nos 46–47), and at least one larger vessel (No. 43). One other decorated body sherd has a series of incised, rather than burnished, lines, but it is not known whether the vessel form was the same as the others.

## GT grass/chaff-tempered ware

There are about half as many sherds of this type as of Q/gt, but by weight the proportion is greater as the vessels are usually thicker walled. The temper is a profusion of burnt-out grass and/or chaff strands, and most vessels made from the ware were simple jars with everted rims, much the same as those of Q/gt, except even more crudely made (Nos 1–9). The burnishing, though extensive on outer surfaces, was also less well executed than for those of Q/gt. The rim diameters of only two of these jars could be accurately measured, and both are about 19cm (Nos 1–2), although some smaller examples are probably present (*ie* Nos 5–6). Whereas most may have been bag-shaped, two sherds with base angles may have belonged to the simple jars. They might, however, have belonged to decorated vessels, since there are 12 body sherds of GT from the midden that bear schemes of finger impressions. These include sherds with multiple series of single gouges (such as No. 14) and others with series of double finger-pinchings (such as No. 15).

## Q sandy fabrics

12 sherds contain only quartz sand as a temper, without any grass/chaff filaments. They include the rim of a probable jar, although it is difficult to be certain because of the uncertainty of its correct orientation (No. 51). It has a series of finger impressions just below a slightly beaded rim, and its surfaces are not burnished. Although the vessel might have been Saxon, it is possible that it belongs with the prehistoric material, as such a row of impressions would not be out of place in a Late Bronze Age assemblage. The same doubts might be expressed for the only

other featured sherd in a sandy fabric (No. 53). It could be the simple upright rim of a Bronze Age urn, but may possibly be of Saxon date.

### TQ tufa and sand-tempered fabric

Only three sherds were identified, in which a profusion of comminuted tufa grains are accompanied by sparse inclusions of quartz sand. It is possible that a fluvial clay was used, in which both tufa and sand were integral. All three are burnished body sherds, but one includes a cordon above a rounded shoulder or carination that carries three diagonally-burnished strokes (No. 52). This could be from a vessel related to the other decorated forms in Q/gt, but it remains possible that it is from an Iron Age form, since the type of fabric and the diagonal burnishing is known from some local Middle to Late Iron Age assemblages in the district. Those prehistoric vessels, however, do not usually carry cordons.

### Prehistoric and Roman sherds

Ten sherds tempered with calcined flint and some quartz sand and another with iron mineral inclusions instead of the sand are from prehistoric vessels, probably of Late Bronze Age date. The only featured sherd is in the majority fabric and includes part of a cordon or lug.

There are also 11 body sherds of Roman fabrics, including the only samian sherd from the excavations. The rest are of late Roman types, of which most are of 3A and 3C grey sandy fabrics of Alice Holt/Farnham type. Two sherds of Group 5 Overwey sandy fabric are from the same Surrey/Hampshire border district, but there is also a sherd from a bowl in 10A3 Oxfordshire red-slipped fineware. (Note: the fabric codes for Roman pottery used here relate to a Surrey type series, originally developed for the nearby Roman town of Staines (Jones & Poulton in prep).)

## *Other Saxon sherds from the site (Tables 3–4; not illus)*

### Q/GT sandy fabrics

Up to 12 more plain jars with everted necks are represented by rim sherds, but there are only three thinner walled and finer finished rims, including one with at least one groove along the neck (context 200); its diameter is about 13cm. There are, however, six body sherds with multiple grooving (contexts 144 X 2, 145 X 2, 153, 233) and four others with series of grooves (including contexts 145, 203, 297), although on one of the latter the grooves are vertical. Another sherd with multiple neck grooves is part of the vessel with diagonal fluting in the 292 assemblage (context 145). Two other forms are represented — both bowls. One is simple-walled (context 144) and the other has a flanged rim (context 233) that may be a copy of the late Roman Class 5B type (Lyne & Jefferies 1979). Other sherds of note include three with parts of multiple finger impressions (a modification that is only present on GT sherds in context 292); two sherds with parallel incised lines (contexts 102, 130); two pierced lugs (contexts 143, 247); a multiply-perforated sherd (context 300); and four base angles. Two other decorated sherds include one with hatched incised lines that separate grass stalk end (or similar) stamps (context 132), and one from the shoulder carination of a jar with cross-hatched burnished lines on the neck (context 293).

### GT grass/chaff-tempered ware

Other sherds of this ware from the 1986 excavations include another 15 everted rims from simple globular jars, and six more with multiple finger impressions (contexts 143 X 2, 145 X 2, 228, 235). There are also five body sherds with parts of multiple grooves (contexts 143, 145 X 3, 248) and two other decorated sherds. One includes several lines of comb impressions loosely surrounding an incised cross (context 143), and the other has two circular stamps, thought by Briscoe to have been done with an antler tip (see p 64).

## *Late Saxon and medieval pottery from the site*

### S1 Late Saxon coarse shelly ware

Amongst 90 sherds of this predominantly wheel-thrown type are the rims of seven vessels. Five with everted rims that have beaded ends are from cooking pots (contexts 100, 102, 143, 144, 247), of which one is of 13cm diameter, one of 17cm, and the others of between 22 and 25cm. Another rim is flanged and from a deep bowl (context 100), and there is also a full profile of another open form with a square-ended rim

*Table 3. Saxon County School, Shepperton: sherd count of pottery from all contexts other than the midden*

| | | PREHISTORIC | | ROMAN | | | | | | | | EARLY SAXON | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | CALC | Q/GLAUC | 1A | 3A | 5 | 7B1 | 7B2 | 8A | 10A1 | 10A3 | GT | Q/gt | Tufa |
| Modern | | 48 | - | - | 23 | - | 1 | - | - | - | 2 | 48 | 106 | 1 |
| Subsoil layer | | 34 | 1 | - | 7 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 38 | 50 | 1 |
| Natural clearance | | 23 | - | 1 | 6 | 2 | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | 18 | 36 | - |
| Ditch 116 | (116) | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 1 | 4 | - |
| | (117) | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Ditch | 123 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 1 | - |
| Gully | 136 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | - |
| Ditch 143 | (143) | 12 | - | - | 4 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | 18 | 21 | - |
| | (146) | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - |
| Pit | 147 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - |
| PH | 215 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| PH | 217 | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | - |
| PH | 220 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - |
| Gully | 228 | 6 | - | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 5 | 11 | - |
| Gully 244 | (244) | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | (296) | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 2 | - |
| PH | 242 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - |
| Gully | 245 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | - |
| Pit | 246 | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - |
| Ditch | 247 | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 4 | - |
| Gully | 248 | 2 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 3 | - |
| PH | 249 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 2 | - |
| PH | 250 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| PH | 251 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| PH | 259 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 3 | - |
| Feature | 260 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Ditch 264 | (144) | 4 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 11 | 30 | - |
| | (265) | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 2 | - |
| PH | 262 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - |
| PH | 271 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| PH | 272 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 2 | - |
| PH | 273 | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| PH | 277 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - |
| Pit | 281 | 3 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Pit 286 | (233) | 12 | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | | - | 1 | 4 | 17 | - |
| PH | 291 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 2 | - |
| Pit | 294 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 5 | - |
| Pit | 297 | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - |
| Ditch | 300 | 4 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | 4 | - |
| Gully | 301 | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | - | - |
| Pit | 312 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 3 | 3 | - |
| Gully | 317 | 3 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 8 | - |
| | 298 | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | *Totals* | *65* | - | *1* | *11* | - | - | *2* | *1* | - | *2* | *59* | *135* | - |
| | **Full totals** | **170** | **1** | **2** | **47** | **3** | **1** | **3** | **1** | **-** | **5** | **163** | **327** | **2** |

(context 143); it is about 25cm diameter and may be from a spouted variant.

### ?North French greyware

11 sherds from context 143 and another from context 145 are from the same wheel-thrown vessel, including part of its base angle and a lightly rilled upper body.

### St Neots ware

Two small sherds were identified, including part of the neck of a jar (contexts 144, 290).

| LATE SAXON | | | EARLY MEDIEVAL | | | | | | | HIGH MEDIEVAL | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S1 | StN | NFR | SNC | QFL | Q1 | FLQ | IQ | GQI | GQ2 | Q2 | WW1A | WW1B | PM | **TOTALS** |
| 30 | - | 1 | 15 | 24 | 1 | 1 | 45 | 3 | - | 20 | 36 | - | 11 | **416** |
| 7 | - | - | 2 | 2 | - | - | 3 | - | 3 | 4 | 4 | - | 1 | **158** |
| 1 | 1 | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | 2 | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | **95** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **7** |
| 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **1** |
| 1 | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **4** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | 2 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | **7** |
| 49 | - | 11 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | - | - | - | - | **118** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **1** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **2** |
| 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **1** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **4** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **1** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 4 | - | - | - | 1 | **29** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | - | - | - | - | |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | | 2 | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | - | **8** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **1** |
| - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **3** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | **3** |
| 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 4 | - | - | - | - | - | - | **12** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **7** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **3** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **1** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **1** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **5** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | **2** |
| 2 | 1 | - | 3 | 3 | - | - | 5 | 2 | - | 1 | 2 | - | - | **65** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | **5** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **1** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **1** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | **5** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **2** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **1** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **4** |
| 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **36** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **3** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **6** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **3** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **11** |
| 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | **6** |
| 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **7** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **11** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | **3** |
| *59* | *1* | *11* | *4* | *4* | - | *2* | *13* | *3* | *9* | *5* | *3* | - | *1* | **391** |
| **97** | **2** | **12** | **22** | **30** | **2** | **3** | **63** | **6** | **12** | **29** | **43** | **1** | **13** | **1060** |

SNC Saxo-Norman 'chalky' fabrics

The only featured sherds are both rims of cooking pots. One is a simply everted rim (144), and the other is also everted, but has a squared end (context 212).

QFL quartz sand and flint-tempered fabrics

Of two everted rim sherds of cooking pots, one is simple (context 132) and the other has a beaded end (context 132). There is also a body sherd with the diagonal combing (context 212) that is characteristic of the coarsewares of 12th- and

*Table 4. Saxon County School, Shepperton: weights (gm) of pottery from all contexts other than the midden*

| | | PREHISTORIC | | ROMAN | | | | | | | | SAXON | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | CALC | Q/GLAUC | 1A | 3A | 5 | 7B1 | 7B2 | 8A | 10A1 | 10A3 | GT | Q/gt | Tufa |
| Modern | Totals | 230 | - | - | 115 | - | 66 | - | - | - | 25 | 488 | 953 | 2 |
| Subsoil layer | | 154 | 2 | - | 20 | 10 | - | - | - | - | - | 261 | 262 | 1 |
| Natural clearance | | 74 | - | 2 | 32 | 8 | - | 27 | - | - | 2 | 136 | 376 | - |
| Ditch 116 | (116) | - | - | - | 6 | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | 1 | 30 | - |
| | (117) | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Ditch | 123 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 9 | 4 | - |
| Gully | 136 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 5 | - |
| Ditch 143 | (143) | 57 | - | - | 39 | - | - | 2 | - | - | - | 208 | 190 | - |
| | (146) | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - |
| Pit | 147 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 6 | - |
| PH | 215 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| PH | 217 | 8 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 16 | - |
| PH | 220 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - |
| Gully | 228 | 22 | - | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 21 | 43 | - |
| Gully 244 | (244) | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | (296) | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 7 | - |
| PH | 242 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | - | - |
| Gully | 245 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 4 | - |
| Pit | 246 | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - |
| Ditch | 247 | 21 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | 35 | - |
| Gully | 248 | 6 | - | - | 8 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | 5 | - |
| PH | 249 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 3 | 39 | - |
| PH | 250 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| PH | 251 | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| PH | 259 | 3 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 8 | 9 | - |
| Feature | 260 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Ditch 264 | (144) | 29 | - | - | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 49 | 240 | - |
| | (265) | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | 10 | - |
| PH | 262 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 10 | - | - |
| PH | 271 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| PH | 272 | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 4 | 2 | - |
| PH | 273 | 13 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| PH | 277 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | - |
| Pit | 281 | 8 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Pit 286 | (233) | 56 | - | - | - | - | - | 19 | | - | 4 | 16 | 139 | - |
| PH | 291 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 30 | - |
| Pit | 294 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 10 | 12 | - |
| Pit | 297 | 3 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 5 | - |
| Ditch | 300 | 15 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 13 | 29 | - |
| Gully | 301 | - | - | - | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 7 | - | - |
| Pit | 312 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 18 | 11 | - |
| Gully | 317 | 3 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 35 | - |
| | 298 | 5 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | *Totals* | *259* | - | *1* | *60* | - | - | *21* | *1* | - | *6* | *388* | *910* | - |
| **Full totals** | | **717** | **2** | **3** | **227** | **18** | **66** | **48** | **1** | **-** | **33** | **1273** | **2501** | **3** |

13th-century pottery production sites in Denham (Farley & Leach 1988).

### IQ ironstone sandy ware

There are four everted rims from wheel-thrown cooking pots amongst the 63 sherds of this ware.

### GQ2 'gritty' sandy ware

There are three everted rims from cooking pots, all simple-ended (contexts 161, 260, 296).

### Q2 grey/brown sandy ware

There are two everted rims from cooking pots

| LATE SAXON | | | EARLY MEDIEVAL | | | | | | | HIGH MEDIEVAL | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S1 | StN | NFR | SNC | QFL | Q1 | FLQ | IQ | GQI | GQ2 | Q2 | WW1A | WW1B | PM | **TOTALS** |
| 280 | - | 4 | 71 | 174 | 8 | 5 | 359 | 38 | - | 139 | 328 | - | 100 | **3385** |
| 39 | - | - | 6 | 10 | - | - | 10 | - | 11 | 13 | 18 | - | 26 | **843** |
| 12 | 1 | - | 11 | - | 10 | - | 2 | - | - | - | - | 9 | - | **702** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **39** |
| 6 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **6** |
| 1 | - | - | - | 3 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **17** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | 5 | 8 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | **19** |
| 511 | - | 111 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 18 | - | - | - | - | **1136** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **1** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **7** |
| 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **2** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **24** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **1** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 21 | - | - | - | 1 | **110** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | - | - | - | - | |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | | 40 | 9 | 5 | - | - | - | - | **63** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **2** |
| - | - | - | 13 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **17** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | **3** |
| 20 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 65 | - | - | - | - | - | - | **143** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **21** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **42** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **1** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **2** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **20** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | **2** |
| 26 | 3 | - | 17 | 10 | - | - | 37 | 29 | - | 1 | 22 | - | - | **465** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 8 | - | - | - | - | **21** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **10** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **1** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 6 | - | - | - | **14** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **13** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **2** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **9** |
| 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **235** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **31** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **22** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **8** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **58** |
| 5 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | - | - | **16** |
| 5 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **34** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **38** |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 230 | - | - | - | **235** |
| *577* | *3* | *111* | *30* | *13* | - | *5* | *150* | *38* | *53* | *239* | *24* | - | *1* | **2890** |
| **908** | **4** | **115** | **118** | **197** | **18** | **10** | **521** | **76** | **64** | **391** | **370** | **9** | **127** | **7820** |

that have beaded ends (contexts 139, 156), and there is also the full profile of a shallow open form, probably a frying pan (context 298).

WW1A coarse white sandy ware

Amongst the 43 sherds are the everted rims of five cooking pots that have beaded ends (contexts 100, 102, 132 X 2, 145), and there is also a body sherd with part of an applied ribbon strip (context 132) and another from a glazed jug with combed decoration (context 212).

*Other Roman pottery (not illus)*

Amongst the 3A greyware is the rim of a later Roman Class 3B jar (Lyne & Jefferies 1979) and the flanged rim of a jar (both from context 143); there is also a body sherd from a jar with cross-hatched burnished lines (context 235) and another with part of the cordon from a Class 2 jar. The only mortarium sherd of 7B1 Verulamium district buff sandy ware is the rim of a 2nd-century form (context 138), but there are also two other mortaria rims in 7B2 Oxfordshire colour-coated fineware (contexts 233, 290). In the same fabric (but designated 10A3 since they are not from mortaria) are a ring base and a rim from bowl forms (contexts 102, 130), and a rouletted sherd from a beaker (context 310).

*Other prehistoric pottery (not illus)*

Most of the 170 sherds of calcined flint-gritted pottery from the excavations are probably of Late Bronze Age date. They include the thick, simple rounded rim of an urn-like form (context 130), two other tiny rim sherds of indeterminate forms (contexts 145, 247), and a thick base angle (context 132). There is also a finger-impressed rim of another large jar form (context 247), in addition to the cordon or lug from context 292.

The only identified sherd of Q/Glauc, with its temper of sand and glauconite grains, is from the neck of a jar that has alternating series of diagonally-burnished lines on the shoulder (context 149). The same fabric and similarly decorated jars are known from local Mid to Late Iron Age sites.

## Stamped sherds

*Teresa Briscoe*

The three sherds were found so close together that it would seem likely that they come from one pot. One sherd, from context 199, immediately above the midden, appears to be from the upper part of the pot going into the neck. The decoration consists of small stamps of concentric rings (Briscoe type A2di). It is a well cut stamp and was probably made from an antler tip, as is an example from Briswell Suffolk. This type of stamp has a widespread distribution, but is not of itself a common type. An example comes from Mucking where it is used on Crem 444 and on a sherd from the reference 760x640, this is very similar to the present example. The second sherd also carrying this stamp comes from the immediate vicinity, midden context 292, and quite likely belonged to the same pot. It is a very small sherd but shows two stamps on it.

The third sherd, from midden context 292, shows two impressions made by the knob of a cruciform brooch. This would appear to have been a large example — there is no trace of any spring attachment. The cruciform brooch is usually associated with East Anglia, but the use of the knob from one of these as a die is more frequently found at Sancton. The author knows of 11 examples from this site, one from Loveden Hill, and one from West Stow, Suffolk. The Thurmaston example is atypical and belongs to another type of finial. The Shepperton Green stamp is therefore the most southerly to appear to date.

## Building materials

*K Ayres and Rob Poulton*

The building materials have previously been quantified but no other work has been carried out upon them. Therefore, only a brief mention of the materials present can be made.

*Ceramic building material*

315 fragments of Roman tile (weighing 7142g) and one fragment of medieval or later tile (40g) were collected during the excavations. The Roman tile is very fragmented. The largest piece is approximately 70mm by 65mm, and 43mm thick, but almost all other pieces are very much smaller. Where thickness is measurable, 40mm or a little more is most common, suggesting that these are fragments of floor or structural tiles rather than roof tiles. There is only one definite roof tile fragment, the angle of a *tegula*, although a few other pieces with diameters of 30mm or less may well have been such.

*Baked clay*

A total of 200 fragments of baked clay, in total weighing 1659g, were collected. Of these, 46 were recovered from early Saxon (625g), 21 from late Saxon (115g), and 117 from early medieval (842g) features. The remainder were recovered from modern features or natural clearance. A number of fragments were clearly shaped or smoothed, and several bore wattle impressions.

*Other*

A fragment of possible *opus signinum* was recovered from early Saxon midden 306

## Other finds

*K Ayres*

The small finds recovered dated from the Saxon period onwards. In general, the finds are indicative of a small Saxon and early medieval occupation site, with personal artefacts made of worked bone, domestic tools for food preparation and weaving made of stone and bone respectively, and refuse such as food remains.

The finds assemblage from the early Saxon and late Saxon periods was concentrated in two main features, with the majority of the early Saxon finds being recovered from the midden, and those of late Saxon date from ditch 143. Both include a number of items for personal and domestic use made of worked bone. Two composite bone combs were recovered from the Saxon midden and a triangular dress pin from ditch 143. A number of other bone pins were recovered from both periods, some of which could be identified as weaving tools, with the others being too fragmented to be identified as either hairpins or weaving pins. Metal finds were few and consisted mainly of structural items.

Many of the finds from contexts dated as 'early medieval or earlier' were recovered during subsoil clearance and included a copper-alloy pin and lace tag and a possible rubbing stone. Finds recovered from the modern clearance layers include another copper-alloy pin, and a post-medieval clay pipe.

Few other Saxon settlement sites in this area have been excavated. Earlier excavations on this site produced similar bone points used in weaving, together with copper-alloy and bone dress or hairpins (Clark 1979, 118–21). The site at Duncroft (Robertson 1996) in Staines also produced little metalwork, with weaving tools produced from worked bone being common finds.

Elsewhere in the south of England larger Saxon sites have been excavated, including that of *Hamwih* (Saxon Southampton) (Addyman & Hill 1969). At *Hamwih* the quantity and range of worked bone finds and metalwork were far greater than at Saxon County school, but within the assemblage were parallels to the combs, dress and weaving pins identified at the Surrey site.

The finds are discussed below by material. They are listed by context number, followed by small find (SF) number (if applicable), followed by the catalogue description.

*Copper alloy*

Few copper-alloy items were recovered. Personal items included the lace tag which was discovered during subsoil clearance and cannot be dated exactly, and the oval-headed pin (SF2). Although the latter was recovered from a modern clearance layer, a similar example was retrieved from a ditch dating to *c.*1050–1150 in the earlier excavations on this site (Clark 1979, fig 13, no. 5) and they have been noted at a number of other sites including *Hamwih.*

116. SF1. Small roughly made ring, of unknown function. D 17mm; Th 2mm.
130. SF2. Pin with ovoid head. Only small portion of shaft survives; D head 6mm (*cf* Addyman & Hill 1969, fig 26, no. 2).
145. SF4. Lace tag, crushed and bent at one end. Made by rolling sheeting into tube shape; decorated with small depressions, with each row alternating to form a diamond pattern. L (bent) 29mm; W tapers from 4mm to 1mm.
145. SF6. Thin pin shaft, in two pieces. L 28mm; W <1mm.
292. SF55. Three small fragments of copper sheeting. Th 2mm.

*Iron*

None of the iron objects have been X-rayed which, together with their poor condition, has made the identification of many impossible. Those items which could be identified include a knife blade from an early medieval context and a buckle frame (modern clearance layer). The majority of the iron objects were nails.

102. Possible hinge fitting.
102. Unidentified object.
138. Thin length of iron with square cross section. L 84mm.
139. D-shaped buckle frame (or distorted ring). D 23mm.
296. Knife blade with fragment of whittle tang. L 89mm.
213. SF20. Object of roughly rectangular shape, and unknown function. L 57mm; W *c.*23mm.
143. SF26. Semi-circular shaped fragment, probably originally part of a ring. Flat, oval cross section. W 8mm; Th 3mm.

143. SF27. Object of unknown function, very corroded. Possibly a hook.
144. SF45. Iron rod of oval cross section. Bent back on itself at one end. L 57mm.

Nails

138. Circular head. Surviving L 49mm.
139. Large circular head, square cross-sectioned shaft. L 68mm.
139. Small circular head, circular cross-sectioned shaft. L 51mm.
139. Circular head, circular cross-sectioned shaft. L 104mm.
140. Small circular head, circular cross-sectioned shaft. L 52mm.
140. Surviving L 21mm.
212. Square cross-sectioned shaft. L 68mm.
266. Square cross-sectioned shaft. L 100mm.
198 SF18. Circular head and cross section. Surviving shaft L 11mm.
143. SF29. Surviving shaft L 55mm.
143. SF38. Surviving shaft L 71mm.
213. SF48. Surviving shaft L 28mm.
300. SF49. Surviving shaft L 21mm.
292. SF53. Surviving shaft L 27mm.

Lumps

145. Unidentified x5.
211. Unidentified x5.
212. Unidentified x2.
235. Unidentified x5.
298. SF50. Unidentified x3.

*Lead*

Two of the objects of lead (SF62, SF70) were recovered from the Saxon midden. One was reminiscent of a fragment of window came (although this is unlikely in a context of this date), whereas the other was an irregular shaped fragment of sheeting, the function of which could not be determined.

292. SF62. Bent and broken strip of lead. Reminiscent of part of a window came. W 7mm.
301. SF73. Offcut of lead sheeting. Circular shapes punched out; score marks.
303. SF70. Irregular sheeting fragment, possibly originally semi-circular. Th 1–2mm.

*Worked bone*

The worked bone assemblage consisted of combs and pins from the Saxon midden 306 (contexts 292, 303) and pins from a late Saxon ditch (context 143). The possible implement handle (or hinge fragment) came from a modern clearance layer.

Combs

The combs were double-sided composite examples, with partially surviving teeth and fragments of side plates; SF74 was decorated. Combs are one of the most common classes of finds on Saxon sites as they were utilised by all levels of society on a daily basis (MacGregor 1985, 73). Typologically, they are difficult to date as they have a long life (Addyman & Hill 1969, 76) and there is little to differentiate Saxon combs with simple plano-convex side-plates from examples from the early medieval period (MacGregor 1985, 94).

It is thought that there was a preference for antler rather than bone for producing combs in the 8th–11th centuries, with a shift back to the utilisation of bone in the 11th–13th centuries (MacGregor 1989, 107, 113). It must be remembered that, although less common, bone was still utilised throughout the period, and cannot of itself be taken as an indicator of date.

292. SF65. Fragment of double-sided composite bone comb. Teeth survive on one side only (14 complete, 2 partial) and taper towards the tip. Fragment of plain side plate with two rivets survives, as does one of the end plates. Surviving L 50mm; H side plate 11mm; Th 3mm (Fig 11).
303. SF74. Fragment of single-sided composite bone comb. Two complete and two partially surviving teeth on one side, which taper towards the tip. Fragment of side plate exists on one side only, and is decorated with a ring and dot pattern and incised lines which run parallel to the plate as well as diagonally. Surviving L 27mm; H side plate 22mm; Th 5mm (Fig 11).

Pins

In the Saxon and early medieval periods pins were used for fastening clothes (such as loose cloaks or tunics) and as hairpins, but also made up a class of object frequently used by craftsmen. Double-ended pins such as that recovered from the Saxon midden (SF54) are thought to have been used by weavers as thread lifters or beaters (Wilson 1976, 271–2; MacGregor 1985, 186). They have been found at all dates within the Anglo-Saxon period (Addyman 1964, 64).

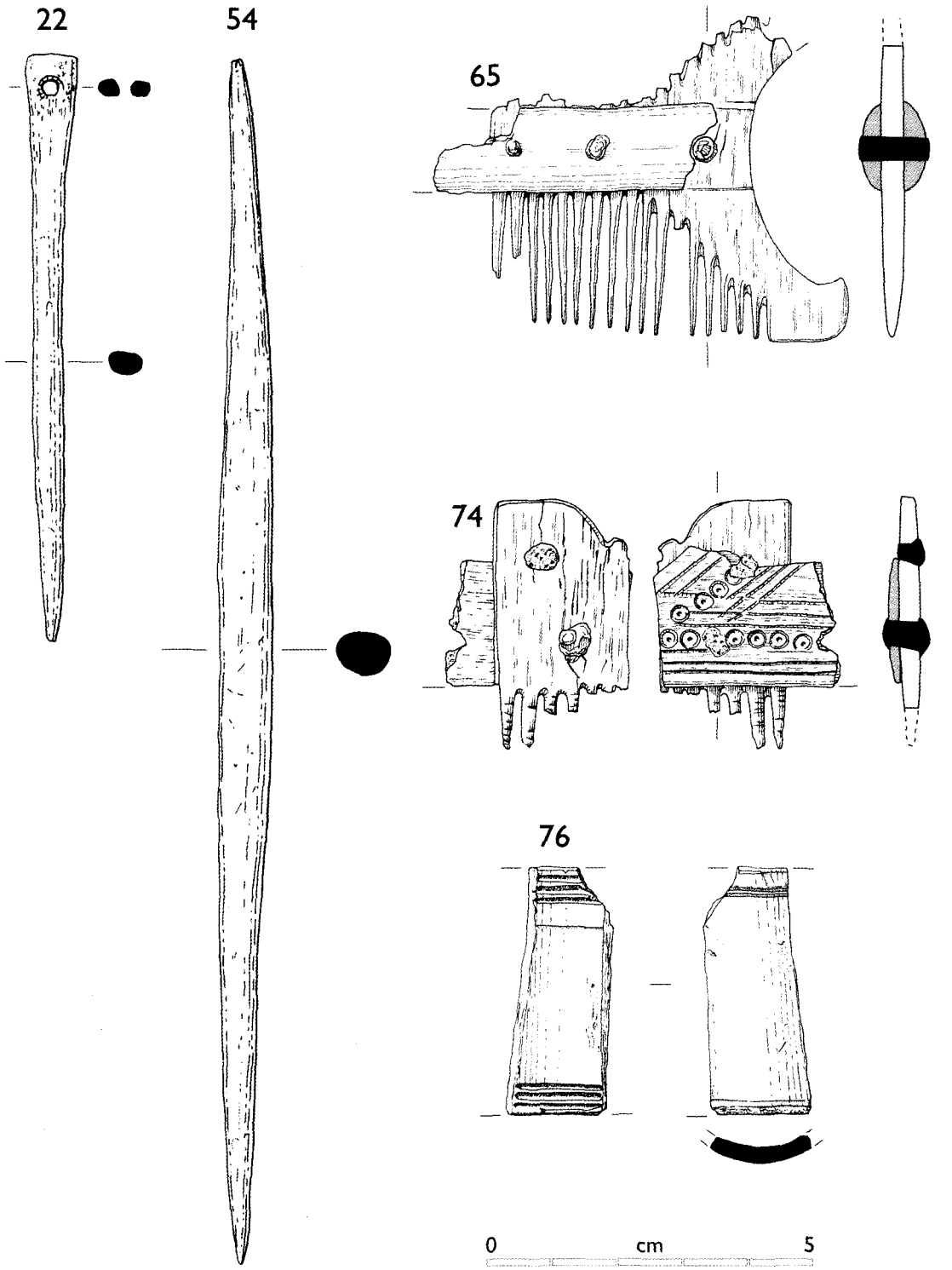


*Fig 11. Saxon County School, Shepperton: small finds of bone (pins SF 22 and 54; combs SF 65 and 74; handle or hinge fragment SF 76)*

One of the pins from the late Saxon ditch (SF22) had a triangular head which had been perforated. Such pins are often created from pig fibulae (as their shape lends itself easily to this). Again, these were popular during this period with examples from *Hamwih* (Addyman & Hill 1969, 76, pl 6(b)), Shepperton Green (Clark 1979, fig 13, no. 20), and Portchester (Cunliffe 1976, 219, fig 140, no. 66). Suggested purposes have been as dress pins (with a thong or cord secured to pierced head and tied to point once passed through fabric) (Margeson 1983, 13; Clark 1979, 121) or possibly needles for coarse-work or netting (Margeson 1983, 187).

None of the other pins had heads and their exact function cannot be determined.

143. SF5. Bone pin, broken into three fragments. Head does not survive. Subangular cross section, widening at centre. L 103mm; widest 6mm.
143. SF22. Bone dress pin/needle. Possibly fashioned from a pig fibula. Flattened, triangular head which has been perforated. Oval cross-sectioned shaft. L 91mm. Head W 8mm (Fig 11).
292. SF54. Double-ended bone pin. Swelling in centre, tapering to each end. Slightly oval cross section in centre. L 189mm; widest 8mm (Fig 11).
292. SF60. Bone point. Broken from pin or similar object. Rectangular cross section. Surviving L 24mm.
292. SF66. Bone point. Broken from pin or similar object. Oval cross section. L 55mm.

### Other

139. SF76. Implement handle (or possibly hinge fragment, *cf* MacGregor 1985, 204, fig 110, a). Curved fragment of bone object. Grooves cut at each end internally (three each end) and externally (one at one end, two at other end) (Fig 11).

#### *Stone*

Both objects of stone were recovered from the subsoil clearance and dated as early medieval or earlier. SF12 may have been a polishing stone, used for the finishing process of textile preparation.

138. SF3. Short length of slate rod, worked into shape and smoothed or polished. Five-sided cross section. L 22mm; D 4mm.
145. SF12. Possible smoother. Pebble of triangular cross section with one smoothed and ?polished face. L 94mm; W 44mm; H 30mm.

#### *Clay*

143. SF25. Fragment of baked clay with smoothed, curved face, possibly from a loomweight.

#### *Other*

As with the building materials, other categories of material had previously been quantified but, due to budget constraints, these have not been studied further. A brief mention of each material follows.

### Stone

Eight fragments of stone weighing 1205g were collected on the site. Preliminary inspection suggests that all are sarsen or other sandstone fragments; none have been utilised and they probably represent naturally occurring pieces which have become incorporated into features.

### Charcoal

Charcoal was recovered from the early Saxon midden 306 as well as from late Saxon ditches.

### Burnt flint

36 fragments of burnt flint, together weighing 353g, were collected from early and late Saxon as well as early medieval and modern features.

## Animal bone

*K Ayres*

#### *Methodology*

Fragments were recorded using a zoning method following Serjeantson (1991), zones being recorded when over 50% was present. Those fragments which could not be identified to species level were classified as 'cattle-size', 'sheep-size', or 'unidentified'. The total number of fragments (NISP, Table 5) was calculated for all species, but the minimum number of individuals (MNI) was not calculated for this assemblage due to the small number of bones recorded from each phase.

Wear stages were recorded for the permanent lower molars of cattle, sheep, and pig using Grant (1982) and grouped into age stages following the methods of Halstead (1985), Payne

*Table 5. Saxon County School, Shepperton: number of identified species present (NISP)*

| Period | Cattle | Sheep/goat | Pig | Horse | Dog | Hare | Domestic fowl | Bird | Rodent | Amphibian | Fish | Cattle-size | Sheep-size | Unidentified | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Early Saxon | 111 | 105 | 96 | 4 | 1 | 6 | 7 | 12 | 1 | 4 | 6 | 184 | 195 | 664 | 1396 |
| Late Saxon | 21 | 21 | 25 | - | - | 1 | - | 3 | - | - | - | 45 | 24 | 150 | 290 |
| Early Med | 35 | 48 | 64 | 2 | - | 2 | 4 | 5 | 2 | - | 3 | 67 | 56 | 385 | 673 |
| **Total** | **167** | **174** | **185** | **6** | **1** | **8** | **11** | **20** | **3** | **4** | **9** | **296** | **275** | **1199** | **2359** |

(1973), and O'Connor (1988). The fusion stage of post-cranial bones was recorded and related age ranges taken from Getty (1975). Pig canines and alveoli were sexed.

Full tables and data relating to ageing, butchery, and taphonomic processes can be found in the archive.

*Condition*

The condition of the bones was rated on a scale of 1 to 5, where bone graded as 1 was in excellent condition, and that graded as 5 could be identified only as 'bone'. Table 6 sets out the bone graded by contexts and, as can be seen, it is in relatively good condition. Much of the taphonomic information such as gnawing and butchery marks had been retained.

*Table 6. Saxon County School, Shepperton: condition of bone by context*

| Condition | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| No of contexts | 10 | 31 | 31 | 21 | 8 |

*Introduction*

A small assemblage of just over 2,700 fragments of bone was recorded, and 48% of the pieces were identifiable. They were retrieved from a variety of features and were grouped into three date bands: early Saxon, late Saxon, and early medieval. The latter band covers many features which have been dated as 13th century or earlier and therefore could contain bones of the early or late Saxon periods. Approximately half the bones were recovered from early Saxon features, 11% were dated as late Saxon, and almost a quarter to the early medieval period. The remainder of the bones were from modern or unstratified contexts and are not considered further in this report.

*Early Saxon*

The assemblage of early Saxon bones (1,396 fragments) was dominated by the main domestic species, cattle, sheep/goat, and pig. Although cattle bones were the most abundant in the assemblage (Table 5), the difference in the counts of the three species was minimal.

Bones from all areas of the cattle skeleton were present, with a high proportion of teeth and the main meat-bearing bones (limb bones, scapula, and pelvis) with fewer extremities. Although the number of teeth present was high, only two jaws were available for ageing, representing an adult animal and a slightly younger one of 30–36 months. The fusion data indicated a range of ages, from under 2 years to over 4 years, suggesting the use of cattle for a variety of purposes such as meat, traction, and possibly milk.

A larger proportion of meat bones were present for sheep/goat, although head and feet bones were again recorded in small numbers. Ageing data combined to give a range of ages, from under 2 to 8–10 years, suggesting that the sheep would also have been kept for a variety of uses such as wool, meat, or possibly milk.

The ageing data from the pig bones gave a closer range of between 2 and 4 years, from juvenile to early adulthood, the time at which the animal would have reached its maximum weight (Grant 1988, 158). There were also a number of neonatal piglet bones which may indicate an early death, a liking for suckling pig, or both. There were similar proportions of head and torso bones with far fewer from the feet. This scarcity of feet bones, which can

be noted for all three species, may be due to recovery bias as the phalanges are very small and can be easily overlooked in the ground. Seven male and four female canines were recorded as was a particularly large metacarpal. Size is often used as a criterion for distinguishing wild and domestic pigs but many postcranial elements do show considerable sexual dimorphism (Payne & Bull 1988), and it cannot be said whether this bone was from a wild boar, or merely a large domestic male pig.

Horse and dog were both identified, although few bones were recovered from either. Seven bones of domestic fowl were identified, and twelve other bird bones which could not be identified to species. Wild species were rare with six hare bones present, indicating trapping or hunting, but no deer. Six fish bones were identified but again could not be speciated. The rodent and amphibian bones were probably intrusive.

*Late Saxon*

Far fewer bones were recovered from features dated to the late Saxon period: 290, of which only 140 were identifiable. Few bones were therefore available for ageing or sexing. The three main domestic species again dominated and were recorded in almost equal numbers. The few cattle bones which did provide ageing evidence were of animals under 3 years. Sheep could be aged to over 2 years and the assemblage again mostly constituted limb bones with fewer head and feet parts. Pig bones were aged to under 4 years; some limb bones and other torso parts were identified but it was mostly teeth which survived, including two male and one female canine. A very large femur was also collected but, as with the metacarpal in the early Saxon period, it could not be identified as wild boar with any certainty. Wild species consisted of one hare bone and three bird bones.

*Early medieval*

673 bones were collected of which 385 (57%) were identified. Of these, pig was the most abundant, followed by sheep/goat. The few bones of cattle could be aged to between 1 and 4 years, and mainly consisted of teeth and torso parts. The sheep ranged from under 1 to over 4 years and included high proportions of body and teeth. The high proportion of teeth for all species may be due to the fact that they are enamel and are harder than bone and therefore survive better.

64 pig bones were recovered, 44 of which were from the head, mainly teeth which led to the identification of three subadult and two adult individuals, with seven male and six female canines recorded. All bones which could be aged were from animals less than 4 years, with one aged to under 1 year.

Horse, dog, and domestic fowl were identified and wild species included hare, bird, and fish. The rodents are most likely to have been intrusive.

*Pathology*

The only pathology identified in the assemblage was a sheep jaw from the early medieval period which had overcrowded teeth resulting in an abnormal p4.

*Spatial distribution*

As the total assemblage (from all periods) was small, little analysis of spatial patterning of the bone can be carried out, although a few points can be noted on the distribution, particularly for the Saxon period. The majority of the bones had been deposited in either the midden or in ditches and gullies, with a much smaller number in pits and postholes. It was noted that larger fragments of limb and torso bones of cattle were recovered from the ditches, whilst the smaller cattle bones such as phalanges and teeth, as well as bones from smaller species such as pig, were collected from the midden. The pits and postholes also contained more of the bones from smaller species, including bird bones. This could indicate some differentiation in disposal according to size of the bones, which has commonly been observed on other sites, but a much larger assemblage would be needed to conclude this with any certainty.

*Taphonomy*

Butchery marks were identified in all three groups of bone and occurred solely on the three main domestic species, with both chop and cut marks being identified. The numbers involved were too small to indicate a preference of butchery technique but there is evidence that choppers were used more frequently than knives in this period, and bones were often split

down the length of the shaft suggesting that the extraction of marrow was important (Grant 1987, 56). It is also often the case that knife cuts are more commonly noted on sheep bones than cattle (Grant 1987, 56), and that saws may also have been used on all species (Hagan 1992, 35).

A high proportion of the bones were gnawed by canids, again indicating the presence of dogs on site. Although only one dog bone was found in the whole assemblage, they were often buried whole, away from the food remains, and, as canid marks were found on bones from all three periods, it is possible that such burials were in the vicinity but lay outside the excavated area. Only a few bones from each period showed signs of burning.

*Discussion*

Although the overall number of bones was not large, the lack of Saxon animal bone reports, particularly from this area, means that all information gathered is of interest. In the early Saxon assemblage, the three main domesticates were recorded in almost equal numbers, with the proportion of pig increasing by the late Saxon period. As the early medieval period may have contained bones from both these periods as well, it is possible that pig was actually plentiful throughout the whole occupation of the site.

It is known from documentary records that pigs were kept in great numbers during this period but their representation on sites as bones has often been poor. This has been attributed to the fact that as pigs are often killed when young, their bones are more porous and, apart from their teeth, do not survive well. They are often therefore present in fewer numbers than cattle and sheep, so it is interesting to note that they are present here in fairly equal, and in one group, greater numbers than either of these two species. Unlike cattle and sheep they are kept solely for their meat and lard, and do not fulfil any other function whilst alive, except perhaps the production of manure. However, because pigs were often left to roam the forests, whilst the cattle and sheep were penned, they were often available in the winter when other stock was low due to lack of fodder (Clutton-Brock 1976, 378). The meat was often boned, salted, and eaten as bacon (Clutton-Brock 1976, 378), which might also explain why the bones are often not found amongst other kitchen waste. Male canines were more frequently found than female in the assemblage, although at West Cotton this was suggested to be a result of male canines being sturdier and easier to see in the ground (and therefore collect) than female (Albarella & Davis 1994, 17).

No specialisation could be identified in the assemblage. The range of ages provided for both cattle and sheep indicated a variety of uses: some cattle killed whilst young for meat, others kept alive longer possibly for traction and milking, and the hides probably sold after their death. The older sheep would have been kept alive for their wool which grew into Britain's major industry in the Anglo-Saxon period (Clutton-Brock 1976, 380), whilst some were possibly used for milking and the younger ones killed for their meat. The place name Shepperton has Saxon origins, meaning the farm where sheep were raised, but there is no obvious link to the present site.

This emphasis on domestic animals with a mixed economy and little specialisation is typical of Saxon sites, with all three animals contributing, albeit in different proportions. Cattle tended to predominate at urban sites such as Norwich (Crabtree 1994), Ipswich (Crabtree 1994), *Hamwih* (Bourdillon & Coy 1980), and York (O'Connor 1991). At rural sites, however, there is no particular pattern. West Stow, a self-sufficient, rural producer site had a higher proportion of sheep, whilst Ramsbury (Coy 1980), Audlett Drive (Levitan 1992), and Yarnton (Ayres unpub) all had higher proportions of cattle. Two sites whose assemblage showed high percentages of pig were Wicken Bonhunt (Crabtree 1994) and St Albans Abbey (Crabtree 1994, 43). The local environment must also be taken into account. The region within which the Saxon County School site fell had moderate to dense tree cover in the past (Canham 1979, 97), and, as mentioned above, with pigs left free to roam the forests, it is likely that large herds were common in all woodland areas.

The poor representation of horse in this period may be the result of a decline in their importance as a producer of meat, with the consumption of horseflesh being forbidden in AD 732 (Simmoons 1994, 187). Although small numbers have been recorded on most Saxon sites, oxen were the primary animals used for ploughing, and it is likely that horses were kept chiefly for riding purposes. Dogs were frequently found and were valued for their hunting skills.

Whilst there was a variety of wild species

available to be hunted in Britain in this period, for example red and roe deer, hare and wild boar, the proportion here is low. This limited evidence for the exploitation of wild resources is also usual for Saxon sites. There were few recorded at West Stow, Melford Meadows (Powell unpub), and at the various other sites in East Anglia studied by Crabtree (1994, 43). It is very unlikely that no hunting took place at all, but perhaps wild species constituted a small proportion of the diet, only supplementing the meat obtained from the domestic stock.

A variety of domestic and wild birds and fish species were also available. Birds were eaten as well as used for sports such as hawking (Clutton-Brock 1976, 388) and both freshwater and marine fish have been identified from inland Anglo-Saxon sites (Clutton-Brock 1976, 389), including salmon and eel. The identification of a late Roman or early Saxon fish weir nearby (Fig 1; Bird 1999) is of interest in this connection.

## CONCLUSION

### Prehistoric

The earliest material from the site is of Mesolithic date, a period which is not especially well represented in the local area. Extensive excavations at Home Farm, Laleham (Hayman 2002) produced very little diagnostic flintwork of Mesolithic date and no features. In contrast Neolithic flintwork was more plentiful, much of it recovered from features indicating low intensity and shifting settlement through the period, in the manner suggested for the whole topographic zone (*eg* Barrett *et al* 2000). Similar activity may well account for the presence of this material at the Saxon County School, although the Neolithic hengiform monument identified at Staines Road Farm, Shepperton, lies only 750m to the north-east (Jones 1990).

Evidence for the later prehistoric period from the present excavations was confined to pottery, much of it small sherds and difficult to date accurately. Bronze Age and Iron Age material is present, with the possibility that most of the material is of late Bronze Age date. This agrees broadly with the evidence from earlier work (Canham 1979, 103, 115), with what was then suggested as early Iron Age now given an earlier date. The quantities are such as to imply occupation in the near vicinity. No features believed to be of prehistoric date were found in 1986, but Canham (1979, 103 and fig 4) suggested that he had identified posthole evidence for an Iron Age hut, in his Area B (Fig 2). The description and appearance of the features involved appears to be identical with those identified as of natural origin above (p 50), which were examined particularly in Trench 2 (Fig 3). A point which deserves special emphasis is the complete absence of any pottery from these features. This would, surely, be impossible if they were genuine Iron Age features, given the frequency with which such sherds found their way into all later features. It is just possible that a primary structure might have postholes free of cultural material, but the claimed structure can only be teased out by assuming that there is a sequence of features. It is concluded, therefore, that the identification of an Iron Age hut is mistaken.

### Roman

There is rather less Roman pottery than prehistoric, although there is also a scatter of tile fragments. The latter may have been reused in the post-Roman period, since there seems too much to have derived from material spread in manuring fields. It could come from the Roman site known to have existed in the vicinity of the Upper West Field Saxon cemetery (A on Fig 1.3; Frere 1943; Longley & Poulton 1982, 184), which is about 1km distant, or there might be a nearer site.

### Saxon and medieval

Canham (1979) gave a full and stimulating review of the evidence for Saxon settlement in the Shepperton area, and the significance of the results of work at Saxon County School. It is unnecessary to repeat his discussion here, but some comment on it in the light of the further excavation work, and with regard to other subsequent work, is appropriate.

Canham (1979, 109) was able to point to artefactual evidence for early Saxon settlement, but the midden identified in 1986 is the first feature clearly of that date. Two linear features are stratigraphically later, and one of these (143) was finally infilled in the late Saxon period. The remaining features are difficult to date with certainty, a situation equally true of the earlier work (Canham 1979, 109). The indications are that the ditched layout was established in the

mid–late Saxon period, a conclusion which echoes that of Canham (*ibid*, 109). The system continued to develop down to the earlier part of the 12th century, but must have been abandoned before the mid-13th century, in view of the paucity of Whiteware pottery, which becomes abundant in all local collections by that date (*cf* Jones 1998). No clear evidence for structures was found in 1986, and the evidence for these is still limited to the single sunken hut identified by Canham. Despite this, the quantity of miscellaneous features, and of finds, strongly suggests a flourishing settlement.

The relationship between the early Saxon settlement at Saxon County School and the remarkable evidence for early Saxon cemeteries in Shepperton parish is clearly of considerable interest (Fig 1). The cemetery in Upper West Field (Longley & Poulton 1982) lies adjacent to the parish boundary, and close to the Thames, and was a mixed rite cemetery in use in the 5th and 6th centuries, a description which might also fit the cemetery at Walton Bridge Green (Poulton 1987, 199; C on Fig 1.3). The third cemetery, at War Close (B on Fig 1.3) is more dubious, since its identification rests solely on 18th-century references to the discovery of 'spears, swords *etc*' and great quantities of human bones, although deep ploughing in 1960 failed to reveal anything of interest (Surrey County Council Sites & Monuments Record no. 550). Longley & Poulton (1982, 184) suggested that the Saxon County settlement was the successor to one associated with the Upper West Field cemetery, arguing that the former might not begin until the latter had ended, perhaps around the middle of the 6th century. Nothing identified in 1986 need contradict this, but there is, nevertheless, a reasonable possibility of overlap between the two.

An alternative possibility would be that Upper West Field is the cemetery for a community whose settlement was at the present site. There is considerable evidence for the Saxon preference for siting cemeteries on the boundaries of their estates, which were often co-extensive with later parishes (*cf* Canham 1979, 111–13; Goodier 1984; Poulton 1987, 213), and in many cases it is apparent that there was no adjacent settlement, as, for example at the Goblin Works, Leatherhead (Poulton 1989, 93).

Other explanations are possible. One (Poulton 1987, n 17) is that two distinct settlements were involved: a group of Saxon newcomers burying their dead at Upper West Field, and a surviving British population at Saxon County, burying their dead unaccompanied. In the absence of grave goods, the date of the Saxon County cemetery must remain uncertain, beyond the probability that the cemetery was out of use by *c*.AD 1000 (Canham 1979, 104). On balance, it may be more probable that it is contemporary with the mid–late Saxon settlement at the site, rather than belonging to the earlier period. This would fit with the identification of a pattern of unfurnished cemeteries appearing for a short while beginning in the early 8th century (Lucy 2000, 181–4), and need not imply that a chapel or church with burial rights existed somewhere close to the excavated area. The cemetery may, however, have gone out of use when a church was established in the area; Shepperton had a priest in 1086, but the earliest mention of a church is 1157 (Reynolds 1962, 10).

The character of this settlement was carefully discussed by Canham (1979, 110–11) who concluded that the ditch system pointed to a well laid out scheme, either similar to the 'toft and croft' arrangement of medieval villages, or with plots forming home fields attached to the settlement. The 1986 work has confirmed and extended the area of organised settlement. The comparatively frequent finds and the appearance of features, in varying quantities, within the plots would seem to argue that the 'toft and croft' interpretation is the more appropriate. Evidence of this type for mid–late Saxon settlement is now widely known, with good evidence for plots and other features, but often very limited evidence for buildings, perhaps because box-frame construction techniques had little below-ground impact. Local sites with similar evidence include Wraysbury, Berkshire (Astill & Lobb 1982; Lobb 1981–2) and Duncroft, Staines (Robertson 1996), which produced one and no clear building plans, respectively.

Both these sites resemble Saxon County School in that occupation continued down to the 12th or 13th century and then ceased. It is possible to see that the decline of settlement at Duncroft, which is on Binbury or Church Island, Staines, is matched by an intensification of settlement on the town island of Staines (Jones & Poulton in prep; Jones 1982). At Saxon County the end of occupation may well result from a refocusing of settlement around the green at Upper Shepperton, first mentioned in 1293 (Reynolds 1962, 2), later called Shepperton Green. It has been suggested (Poulton 1998) that in Surrey

there was frequent re-organisation of settlement in this era, with the emergence of new planned villages and towns, and it seems likely that there was a similar pattern of development in this portion of Old Middlesex.

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