

# Archaeology in Leicestershire and Rutland 1983

by *Peter Liddle*

## An Excavation at Narborough (SK 531978) — Interim Report

In May 1983, during the construction of a new school in Copt Oak Road, Narborough, a spread of Roman tile and pottery was discovered over a wide area by the consultant engineer Ian Glenn, whose report to the Leicestershire Museums' Survey Team resulted in a watching brief being carried out by the local fieldwork group led by Bob Jarrett. The extension of the site into an area scheduled to be levelled for the school playing field led to a small excavation, carried out with the co-operation of the builders, Shand, and the County Council's Education and Property Departments, in July and August by the Leicestershire Museums Archaeological Unit directed by Terry Pearce and John Lucas.

The ridge and furrow that still survived was reflected in the plough damage to the site, but despite this, sufficient evidence survived to show that the area was originally used as a working area in approximately the late second to mid-third century. The evidence was provided by two small bowl furnaces, the backfill of one containing some fragments of Roman chimney pot. The other seemed to have been well used, as it was refloored twice, using walltile both times. Later in the same period a heated structure was built over one of the furnaces. This was a rectangular structure measuring 5 metres by 2.5 metres and had foundations consisting entirely of clay-bonded tile. The outer walls were constructed largely of roof tile, mainly tegulae with a few imbrices, and also some walltile; the inner walls used solely walltile. The stokepit did not survive but was positioned in the long side to the north. The flues followed the outer walls and entered the central chamber in four places, where baffles incorporated in the long outer wall directed the heat into the central chamber. Tiles were probably laid across the floor of these entrances either to direct the heat upwards or to keep the ash out. The use of long flues does imply a low heat requirement, which suggests a function along the lines of a corn drier or malting oven, but until further research is carried out its exact function cannot be determined. The slightly burnt limestone found at the very bottom of its backfill is probably not associated with the use of the structure, for it could not have produced a sufficiently high temperature to burn lime, but the presence of a lime kiln close by could be indicated. Within this working area a series of narrow channels formed a regular pattern on the same alignment as the heated structure, and were backfilled at a roughly contemporary date using quantities of tile which could have come from a demolition of the heated structure. These could represent a drainage system which would have been necessary for a working area situated on sloping ground.

The large amount of re-used tile suggests an earlier substantial building in the vicinity but no evidence for this was found in the excavation, but it would seem that the heated structure was demolished and solidly consolidated to make way for a later substantial building. This was dated provisionally to the middle or late third century and had granite and rubble footings that survived to a maximum depth of 0.6 metres. This rubble consisted of both tile and stone roofing material, with large pieces of tegula being used to form

courses in the wall and smaller fragments together with broken stone roof tiles being used as rubble infill. The layout of these foundations suggests that this was the south-west corner of a building that consisted of a series of rooms with a corridor on their east and south sides. Only one room was identified but the presence of a corridor suggests there were more. In that room were the remnants of a solidly constructed floor of opus signinum lying on a finer, white mortar base. In the rubble overlying this floor was a scattering of tesserae from both coarse tessellated and fine mosaic paving, but there was no definite proof that this room was paved. The fragmentary survival, in situ, of the very bottom of a plastered wall with fragments of red, blue and white striped, painted wallplaster immediately adjacent to it, shows that the room was plastered and probably painted in the typical Roman panelled style. With over a hundred Swithland roof slates also lying in the rubble it can be more definitely stated that the roof consisted of these. In the corridor neither floor levels nor any debris survived the medieval ploughing.

Later this building was extended over six metres to the west taking it right up to the large ditch that ran north to south along the western side of the building. Within and presumably contemporary with the extension was an oven and a hearth, the latter formed by a layer of clay-bonded walltile. The bottom of the oven survived and consisted of a shallow rectangular depression with two separate sections of granite foundation along the east side. A thin accumulation of ash and charcoal had been covered by a backfill of loam and roof tile, consisting of tegula and imbrex. This may indicate the nature of the roof in the extension, and if so, interestingly contrasts with the slate roof of the original building, but bearing in mind the abundant re-use of the tile on the site, the tile could be from the superstructure of the oven.

The whole building was demolished in the fourth century and rubble from it spread into and helped backfill the large ditch. This ditch was about 1.25 metres deep and had been recut once, and as there was no trace of any building immediately beyond it, it probably marked the start of the adjacent field system. There was no dating evidence for either the original ditch or its recutting.

With a southerly aspect, lying on rising ground just below the crest of a hill a quarter of a mile north of the Fosse Way and only five miles south-east of Leicester, this well constructed building may well have been part of a larger complex. More evidence was revealed by the watching brief which located six sections of footings, all round a metre wide and consisting mainly of granite, together with a concentration of tesserae. Roman material, mostly tile with some pottery was found over an area that stretched 50 metres east and 70 metres north-east of the excavated area. Some of the material came from a half metre thick layer of dark loam. The tile was mainly roof tile but a few fragments of flue tile suggest the possibility of a central heating system. The pottery included a sherd of Samian inscribed on the inside with the graffito 'DEO'.

Thus the excavation has shown that in one small area there was a substantial building, possibly containing rooms with tessellated pavements and painted walls, which had been built over a working area in which relatively commonplace rural industrial activities had taken place. The presence of residual pottery, some dated as early as the first century, and the extensive re-use of tile suggests that outside the area of the excavation there were earlier activities that may have included some substantial buildings. The watching brief has reinforced this picture by suggesting a more extensive area of buildings and even pavements and central heating systems. Although the sum of this evidence provides a rather incomplete and somewhat speculative view of this site, in what seems to be a rural Roman context there is potentially a building complex along the lines of a villa.

The detailed watching brief was compiled by Bob Jarrett, and he must be thanked

together with Ian Glenn, and Graham Morgan of Leicester University who analysed the limestone. All the finds have been deposited with the Leicestershire Museums (accession number A20.1983).

John Lucas

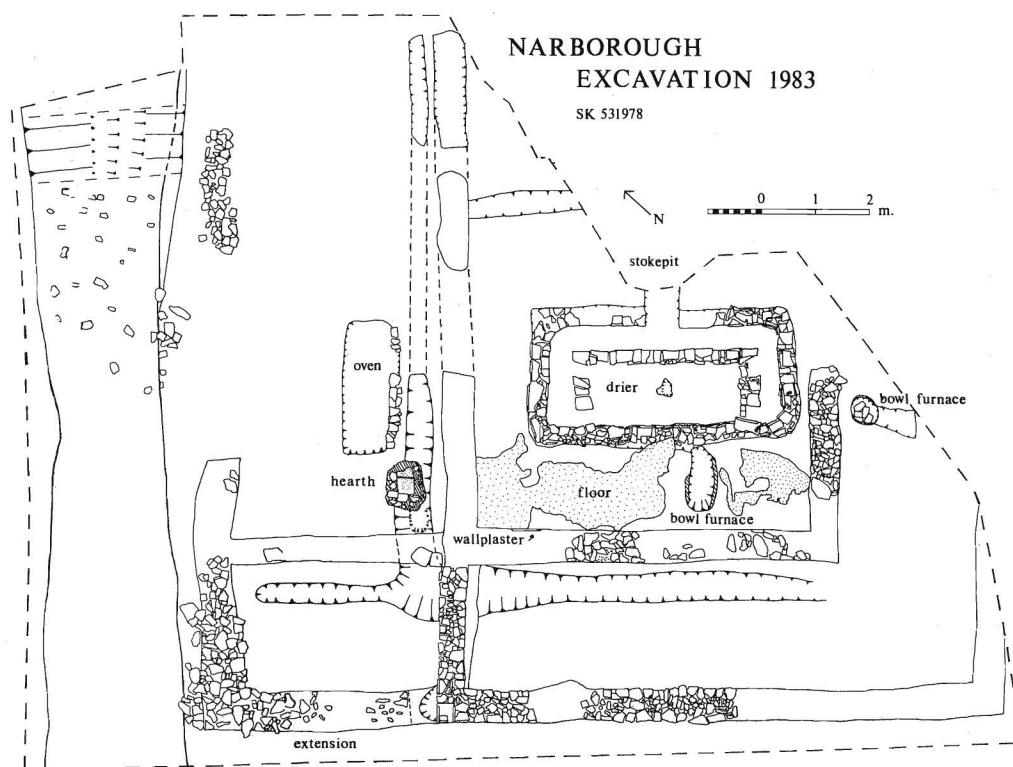


Fig. 1 Narborough Excavation: site Plan 1983

#### An Excavation at Enderby (SK 551002) — Interim Report

Planned development threatening a cropmark site at Grove Farm, Enderby has instigated a programme of fieldwork by Leicestershire Museums. This culminated with an excavation carried out between June and September 1983 by Leicestershire Museums Archaeological Field Unit in co-operation with the University of Leicester's Department of Archaeology.

The cropmark photographed by Dr J.K. St. Joseph and Mr J. Pickering is situated on boulder clay over Keuper Marl, 5km south-west of Leicester and 1½ km north-east of Enderby. It is on the side of a ridge at 69m. O.D. overlooking the confluence of the Lubbesthorpe Brook and its tributary streams flowing into the River Soar, one km to the east. The sub-circular cropmark is *circa* one hectare in area with possible internal features including two parallel linear ditches. To the south-east and north-east of the cropmark other possible features are discernible. Other similar sites of probable Iron Age origin are known near the Leicester Forest and other areas of the county. Recent fieldwork suggests that the Leicester Forest remained wooded from the Iron Age and Roman periods, indicating that the site may have been close to a forested area. Fieldwalking conducted by

Mrs Anne Cookson produced material of possible prehistoric origin, while a proton-magnetometer survey was carried out, although with inconclusive results.

In view of the proposed development and considering the lack of information about prehistoric settlement on the Midland claylands and possible forest edge settlements, it was decided to excavate some areas of the site. This was made possible by the kind co-operation and assistance of the landowners, Penwise Properties Ltd., and the farmer, Mr J. Kirk. Excavation was also made feasible by the University of Leicester who provided student help as part of their archaeology field course.

Approximately 2,200 square metres were excavated in five main areas in an attempt to sample locations both inside and outside the cropmark (see Fig. 1). Area 1 consisted of *circa* 1200 sq. m. opened at the centre. This revealed evidence of two house areas consisting of circular ditches, which possibly served as eaves drip trenches, and some post holes. House area 2 showed many different phases of rebuilding. Examination of more of these areas to the west was prevented by the proximity of a high pressure gas main. At the northern end of this area the two linear ditches indicated by cropmarks were located. In addition, various other features were revealed including a hearth, post holes and drainage gulleys. The main enclosure ditch was also located to the south of the area.

Areas II, III and V were opened to examine the main enclosure ditch and its relationship with the two linear ditches. This revealed that the main enclosure ditch was later than the southernmost linear ditch probably indicating an enlargement of the enclosure. The enclosure ditch, 2.5m wide by 1.5m deep, had silted up over a long period of time, and drains had been inserted during the post-medieval period, possibly in an attempt to prevent waterlogging due to the high water-table. This waterlogging may possibly explain the presence of cropmarks on the normally inconducive boulder clay.

Area IV to the south-east examined features outside the enclosure ditch. These include an interrupted ditch system, a palisade trench, possibly connected with cattle kraaling, drainage gulleys and shallow pits.

Material from the excavations confirmed its main occupation as being during the early-middle Iron Age. A very few flint artefacts and a polished stone axe suggested some nearby early Neolithic activity but without associated features. The bulk of the pottery consisted of buff-orange coarse wares sometimes with scored decoration, similar to material found on sites in the Trent Valley. Contemporary with this was a smaller group of a finer reduced ware which included some pedestal based forms. Other material included a beehive quern, an Iron Age inlaid glass bead and slag indicating some industrial activity. A very few sherds of Romano-British pottery were present, probably introduced by later ploughing or manuring. Large quantities of charcoal were found in many of the features and carbon 14 dates should be possible from this material. The high water-table may have helped the survival of environmental information in the deeper features and various samples were taken.

Although the excavations were limited to only part of the whole enclosure, three main phases of development can be suggested. The site appears to have originated as an open, unenclosed settlement including house area 1. This was then superseded by a small enclosure including one or both of the linear ditches. Finally the main ditch was excavated recutting in part the first enclosure to form the sub-circular site. This probably had an internal bank and was partially defensive in function. Further work should provide more information on this sequence of development.

The site therefore shows a gradual evolution probably all within the Iron Age period. The information gained from the different house and enclosure types should be of importance to Iron Age studies in the Midlands. A ceramic group with associated C14 dates had been

badly needed for this period in this area and this should now be possible. A study of the animal bone from this possible forest edge enclosure may also be of value. It is hoped that this work can be continued with an examination of the western and northern areas of the enclosure.  
 Patrick Clay

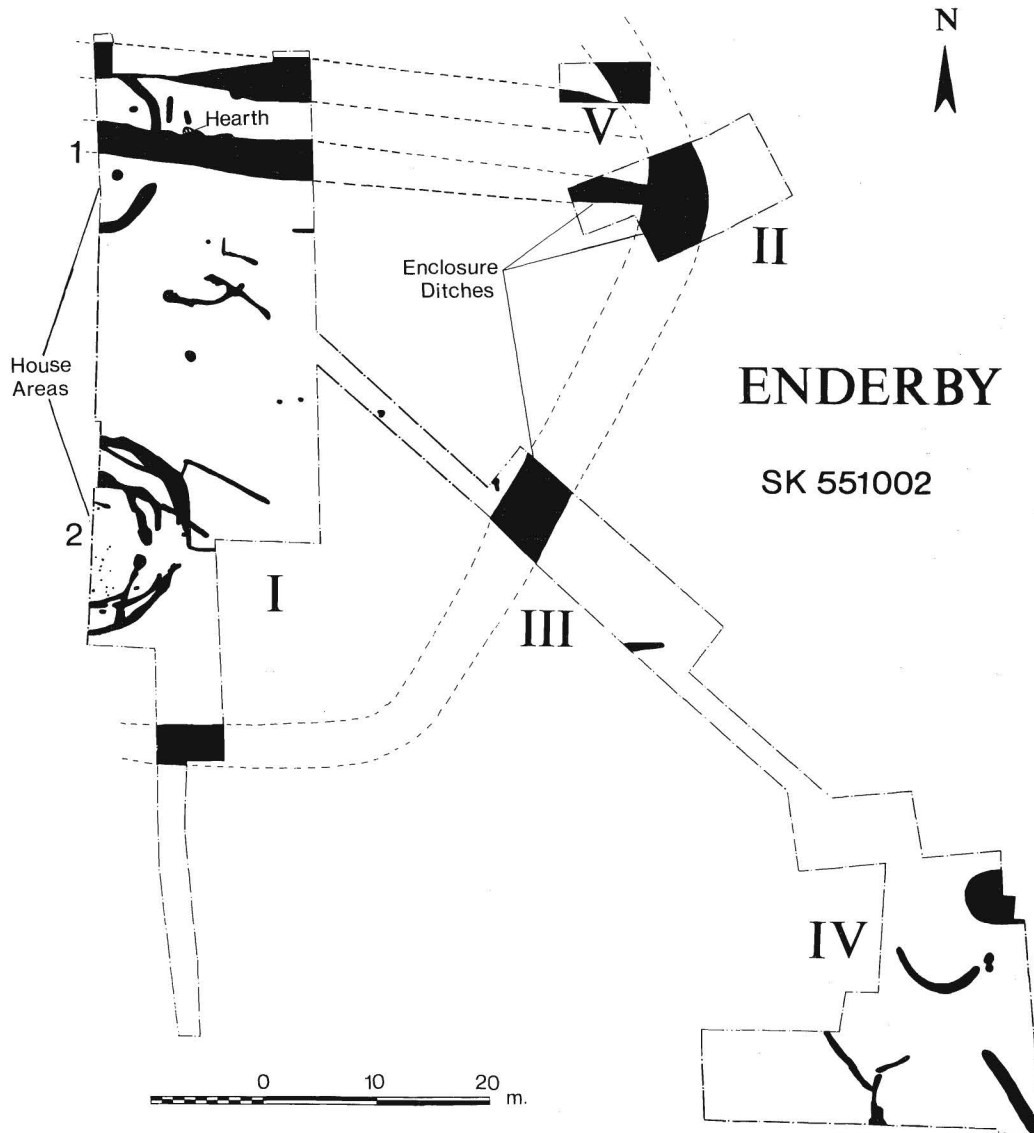


Fig. 1 Enderby Excavation: Site Plan

### Long Whatton Moated Site — Interim Report

Excavation by the Loughborough and District Archaeological Society continues on the medieval moated site. Investigation of the causeway area has shown that the moat was dug in two sections, each of which would have held water on the sloping site. Sections across the platform have shown that the house was constructed prior to the digging of the moat the upcast material spreading up to the outer walls on the South and West sides of the building.

A small flint knife, 41mm in length, was found in the medieval plough soil beneath the moat upcast. This has been dated by the Museums Service to *c.*2000 BC. A perforated coin has been identified as an early English jeton from the reign of Edward I (1272-1307).

Anne Tarver

### Leicester: St. Martin's Redevelopment (*c.* SK 586044)

Leicestershire Museums Archaeological Survey Team carried out a watching brief on this area to the rear of properties on St. Martin's, Cank Street, the Malcolm Arcade, Silver Street and Loseby Lane (Insula XXX in the SE area of the Roman city) with the co-operation of W.M. Moss Construction Ltd. Later disturbance had already destroyed the archaeology over most of the site, but two areas proved of interest. To the rear of Nos. 19 and 19a Cank Street, a group of late 1st century AD pottery was recovered from a shallow feature cutting into the natural sand overlying the Keuper Marl, while beneath the former No.5, St. Martin's, a block of Roman occupation layers survived 1.5m deep, surrounded by cellars whose clearance enabled sections on three faces of these deposits to be recorded. Above the red Keuper Marl and the overlying yellowish sand with cobbles, a probable ploughsoil 0.5m deep containing only a few abraded undateable iron and fired clay fragments represented the earliest activity on the site. In the late 1st or early 2nd century AD this ploughsoil and the underlying sand were cut away down to the red Keuper Marl over an area at least 10m by 8m in extent, apparently for the construction of a major stone building, one wall foundation of which remained, aligned north-west to south-east, 9m in surviving length and approximately 1m wide, made of granodiorite boulders averaging 300mm in width. The superstructure of the building to which this belonged had been robbed away. Numerous occupation layers were recorded, containing such features as ovens or hearths, and painted wall plaster with a border design in red, yellow and white, lying where it had fallen face down. Modern disturbance truncated these deposits 1m from the present surface.

Finds of Roman pot and tile, shell, bone, stone, plaster and iron included one Samian fragment with the mould-maker's initials, mortaria fragments of the Hartshill-Mancetter type, and Dressel II type amphora fragments. Stray finds from elsewhere on the site, otherwise postmedieval, included a 4th century AD bronze coin of Magnentius. Pile foundations for the new buildings on the site, and service trenches, have now been cut through the few surviving archaeological deposits. Site notes, drawings and finds are in the Jewry Wall Museum (A21.1983).

A.P. Cookson

### A Watching Brief at St. Peter's Church, Gaulby (SK 695010)

In the course of drainage work during August 1983 the nave and chancel foundations were uncovered, all in very disturbed ground. On the North side of the chancel modern brickwork had interfered with the foundations, but under the nave North wall largish

rough stones packed in clay formed a platform protruding at least 0.9m from the wall line. On the South side, the nave foundation was deeper and narrower, and consisted mainly of pebbles of varying sizes packed in earth. The clear differences between the two sides of the nave are consistent with the South wall having been built at a different period from the presumably medieval North wall, and tend to reinforce the hypothesis that the South wall alone dates from the restoration of 1741.  
David Parsons

**Eighteenth and Fourteenth Century Stone and Post Bank Revetments of the River Trent at Castle Donington. (SK 442292: SK 437285: SK 440292)**

For one and a half miles upstream of Shardlow (SK 442292) a record has been made of the Eighteenth Century stone and post river bank revetments, and a short canal, that were built to improve navigation following the 1699 Trent Navigation Act. For short lengths, these coincide with the modern river banks and consist of courses of large, dressed stones built into a slightly battered wall 2m high. In most places, the river has eroded behind these walls but they remain in situ as double rows of posts and a tumble of masonry running down the middle and even crossing to the opposite side of the river.

Near the apex of the meander below Castle Donington Power Station (SK 437285) were found the remains of two, free standing stone walls, or 'shots' jutting obliquely into the river forming baffles to prevent erosion of the river bank.

128m south of the modern Trent, a buried river bank revetment tentatively dated by Dendrochronology to AD 1365, has been traced for 10m on the line of the northern bank of the 'Stener', an ancient river channel of the Trent at Castle Donington (SK 440292). Two lines of wattled oak posts, separated by 80cm, support a tumble of large Keuper water stones. Its purpose was probably to prevent bank erosion and maintain the property and County boundaries.  
Dr Chris Salisbury

**A Further Pot from the Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Thurmaston (Fig. 1)**

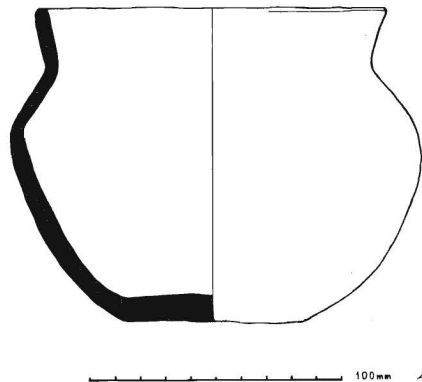


Fig. 1 Pagan Saxon Urn, Thurmaston

During the excavation of a trench for an extension to 210 Humberstone Lane, Thurmaston, Adam and Mark Sperry discovered a pagan Saxon cremation urn. The vessel when uncovered contained about ten fragments of what was almost certainly cremated bone but these

were subsequently thrown away. The vessel was located about 75cms below the present ground surface at a point corresponding to the western trench of the 1954 excavation and about one metre from the southern corner of the bungalow (see the site plan, fig. 3, in Williams 1983).

The vessel is a well-made undecorated shouldered bowl with slightly flared rim. It is well fired coarse grey ware, quite highly micaceous with very common angular quartz grits c.1-2mm in diameter.

As with the majority of undecorated pagan pottery this vessel is currently undateable typologically, though on the basis of the other vessels from the cemetery a date within the period from the late fifth to the mid sixth century is to be expected. P.W. Williams

#### REFERENCE

WILLIAMS, PW, 1983 *An Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Thurmaston, Leics* (Leics. Museums Arch. Report No.8)

#### A Discoidal Flint Implement from Thurcaston, Leicestershire

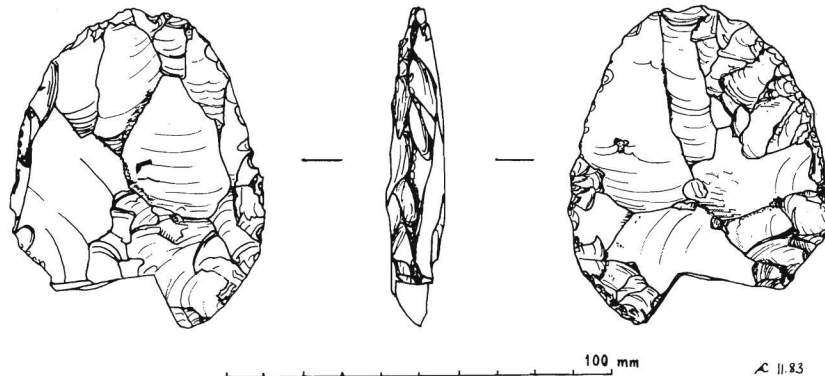


Fig. 1 Thurcaston: Flint Implement

A discoidal flint implement, probably the first of its type to be recorded in the county, was brought in to the Jewry Wall Museum for identification by Mr C.J. Sharp, a builder, of Barrow upon Soar, in whose possession the implement remains (Leics. Museums Id. No. M4428). He had noticed it amongst the contents of his lorry when taking a delivery of sand from the Swithland Sand and Gravel Pit near Rothley Station, in Thurcaston parish (SK 564122). This delivery apparently came from a layer of fine sand two metres deep, below a metre's depth of coarser gravel at the surface, but the exact findspot of the flint tool is not known.

It is made of dark yellowish-brown flint, oval in outline, and complete except for a break at the thickest part, seemingly made in antiquity. Apart from this, it is in very good condition, the surface being unabraded and having a glossy sheen. The surviving length is 85mm, the maximum breadth 68mm, and maximum thickness 16mm. It is a 'core tool', shaped initially by the removal of large flakes from both surfaces, and finished by removing smaller flakes alternately from each side of the edge around three-quarters of the circumference, producing an undulating, S-curved edge in profile (see fig.1). The break already referred to occurs on this alternately-flaked portion of the edge, perhaps implying, if the break occurred in use, that this was the functional part of the tool.



It is not, however, known what purpose these discoidal objects served. Suggestions have included choppers, in the case of those with S-curved edges with bruising, as at Arreton Down, I.o.W. (Alexander and Ozanne 1960, p.293, F33); knives, in the case of more carefully retouched examples, as at West Kennet Avenue, Avebury, Wilts. (Smith 1965 p.238, F210); and scrapers, as at Breach Farm, Llanbleddian (Grimes 1938 p.115, fig. 5, 6-8).

Although the present example has the S-curved edge associated with chopping tools, in its careful and extensive workmanship it seems more to resemble a knife.

The contexts in which these implements are found range from Neolithic to Early Bronze Age in date. The Bronze Age round barrow at Arreton Down (above) produced a very similar example to the present (Alexander and Ozanne 1960, p.292, F30), though admittedly in a secondary or disturbed context. The disturbed remains of a Bronze Age burial, including an almost complete urn, were recently found in the Swithland Sand and Gravel Pit within 200 metres of the area where the present find was made (McWhirr 1978, p.89-90; Vine 1982 p.36, figs. 531, 666; Leics. Mus. Acc. No. A4.1981), and an Early Bronze Age Collared Urn was found in a sand-pit to the east in 1904 (Winckley (ed.) 1905, p.239). These glacial sand and gravel deposits lie on the neck of raised ground above the 225 foot contour between the river Lin and the Rothley Brook, and the area was in fact used for burials through to the Roman and Saxon periods (Page 1907, p.216-7, 225-7). In view of the Early Bronze Age burials mentioned above, and the absence of any Neolithic finds in the area, it may be that the present knife was deposited as part of the grave goods of another of this group of Early Bronze Age burials.

## REFERENCES

- ALEXANDER, J and OZANNE, PC and A, 1960 'Report on the Investigation of a Round Barrow on Arreton Down, Isle of Wight', *Proc. Prehist. Soc.* XXVI (1960), p.263-302  
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A.P. Cookson

## Leicestershire Archaeological Unit Annual Report 1983

1983 has been an interesting and varied year combining two excavations, several watching briefs and much solid post-excavation work. For several weeks during the summer the Unit's resources were stretched to the limit when all these activities were in full swing at the same time.

The main excavation, of a crop-mark site at Enderby, was undertaken in co-operation with the Archaeology department at the University. Thus the Unit gained a labour force for six weeks and the University a field-course for the students; an exercise of mutual benefit, and one which we hope to see repeated. The Unit was also fortunate in obtaining the full co-operation of the developer and tenant farmer both of whom showed interest in the site and gave generous assistance.

The site at Narborough only came to light during construction work for a new school when Roman pottery, tile etc. was found in the foundation trenches. Once again the

co-operation of various local authority departments and the builders on the site made possible a small excavation in the area of the school playing field.

Both of these excavations took place during the height of the Summer in 'scorched earth' conditions which turned both sites to dust if not ashes. Despite this adversity, the excavations proved most rewarding; for interim, reports on both sites see above pp.75-8. After many delays, the St Martin's development finally got under way during the Summer and a watching brief was mounted, mainly by Anne Cookson of the Survey Team, but with advice and assistance from other members of the Excavation Unit. Despite pre-development surveys of the archaeological potential of this site it was to everyone's surprise when, in the area of No.5 St Martin's, undisturbed Roman levels survived to a height of c.1.5m above natural. Luckily Mrs Cookson's watchfulness and the helpfulness of the contractors meant that the deposits were recorded as fully as possible.

Earlier in the year Unit and Survey teams mounted another combined effort recording an Iron Age site at Ryhall in Rutland, revealed during pipe-laying operations.

Meanwhile the less spectacular process of post-excavation work continued back at the Humberstone base. Although much of this work is slow and painstaking yet it too has its moments of excitement or flashes of enlightenment.

Dr. Pollard and Deborah Sawday have devoted most of their energy this year to the preparation of reports and archive on the Romano-British and post-Roman pottery respectively, from sites excavated in 1971 and 1973 on St. Nicholas Circle. In both cases the amount of material is large and the work is time consuming but points of interest are emerging. During the Roman and Medieval periods the diversity of sources on which Leicester drew for its pottery supplies is becoming even more apparent, as forthcoming reports will demonstrate.

Dr. Pollard has been able to give some attention to other sites within the city and the study of inter-site assemblage variability makes some interesting observations possible — in contrast with sites on the west side of the city the 'forum' sites exhibit a very low incidence of 'late Iron Age' and 'Gallo-Belgic' pottery — the 'forum' pottery groups also include an unusually high proportion of flagons and amphorae.

Unfortunately only some half-dozen sherds of Saxon material have been identified in the post-Roman collection from these sites. Evidence for this period in the city still remains elusive. However, the Saxon-Norman period is well represented and the pottery complements the later medieval material from the Austin Friars both in fabric and the range of vessel types. Besides the usual range of kitchen equipment the medieval pottery group from the 'forum' sites includes curfews, lamps, distilling equipment, a mould, perhaps for a metal cauldron, and an elaborately decorated aquamanile.

In addition to the demands of urgent post-excavation work, it has been possible to examine some field-walking finds. This exercise provides useful information for the amateur groups but also enables the 'pot people' to keep an eye on the distribution of various types of pottery.

In both Roman and post-Roman periods close contact and liaison with archaeological Units in neighbouring counties and regional and national study groups has been maintained.

Another area in which advances have been made this year is in the study of Roman wall-plaster from Norfolk Street. A further 150 boxes have been examined and other wall designs identified including a possible cornice frieze consisting of a simple repeating pattern of lines of red and blue leaves arranged to form squares with yellow and green leaves forming diagonals. All these fragments are curved and the curve is too steep for a ceiling vault so a cornice frieze at the junction of ceiling and wall seems indicated. Other features

identified include window mouldings and it has been possible to recognise the identical design on fragments of plaster from different areas of the site. It is also possible to suggest broad contemporaneity for several designs where the same 'roller die' has been identified on the back of the plaster. The same firm of contractors decorating several rooms also seems indicated. Patrick Clay has completed the research on the cheekpiece of a Roman cavalry helmet found in Bath Lane in 1978. The finished article should appear in *Britannia* XV (1984). Progress has also been maintained on writing up the South Croxton and Bath Lane sites, the Roman and medieval defences of Leicester as well as the forum sites and the Norfolk Street Villa. Several of these projects are programmed for publication in 1984 and work is on schedule. Preliminary post-excavation work has been started on a group of sites on the west side of the city excavated in the late 1960's and further evidence of pre-Roman occupation in this area is being studied. Progress towards the publication of the Roman and medieval defences has been speeded up by the work of Rosemary Woodland and Elizabeth MacRobert on the post-Roman and Roman pottery respectively.

During the year conferences have been attended on Prehistoric Wetlands in Europe and Roman Urban Topography and the Unit has been represented at National Slag Day, an Iron Age Pottery seminar, a Neolithic seminar and at meetings of the Finds Research Group. Talks have been given to CBA group 14, Friends of Leicester Museums, Leicester University Archaeological Society, the Museum Fieldwork Group, the Leicester Ceramic Circle and Birstall Methodists Thursday Group. Terry Pearce master-minded another course for the blind, this time on Medieval archaeology.

The Senior Field Archaeologist has continued as Chairman of the East Midlands Committee of Field Archaeologists and has also taken over as Lecture Secretary for the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society. Patrick Clay has continued as Secretary of the Leicestershire Committee for Archaeology in Schools which now publishes a termly newsletter. The Unit as a whole took part in a most successful open evening at the Jewry Wall Museum where various techniques of excavation and post excavation were demonstrated.

Despite the phased withdrawal of DOE support for staff salaries the Unit has continued to enjoy good relations with the area inspector Philip Walker, and with other members of the Department's professional and administrative staff.

During this year the Unit has enjoyed and benefited from the help and co-operation of a wide range of people and organizations, perhaps to a greater extent even than usual. Rather than attempt to single out anyone for particular mention we should like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have been in any way concerned with our activities and to look forward to continuing progress in 1984.

J.E. Mellor

### Report of the Leicestershire Museums Archaeological Survey Team 1983

The Survey Team have continued their work in the fields of planning, liaison sites and monuments records, accessioning, publication, work with volunteers, earthwork surveying, fieldwalking, site-watching and aerial archaeology.

Anne Cookson has largely been responsible for the planning work. Policies for the protection of archaeological sites are now being written in to Local Plans and archaeological provision is now sometimes imposed as a condition of planning permission. District Councils, the National Coal Board, the Severn-Trent Water Authority and Mineral Operators have all consulted on planning matters during the year.

Work on up-grading the Sites and Monuments Record continues. The backlog of

information has largely been dealt with and design of a computerised index for all museum site data is near to completion. Accessioning of material into the museums' collection on the new computerised system also continues to take up a great deal of time, but the help of John Harrison, Jo Anne Lewis and Suzanne Stapley is gratefully acknowledged.

Two publications — *A Guide to Twenty Archaeological Sites in Leicestershire*, by Peter Liddle and *The Medieval Earthworks of Rutland: A Survey*, by Fred Hartley — have appeared this year. Three others — a survey of the earthworks of North-West Leicestershire, aerial archaeology in Leicestershire and Community Archaeology — are all in preparation and should appear in 1984.

The Community Archaeology Groups continue to undertake a large amount of fieldwork. Seven editions of *The Fieldworker* have appeared during the year and speakers at full group meetings included Glen Foard, Ian Evans, Harold Fox, Fred Hartley, Pete Liddle, Patrick Clay, and John Lucas. The usual September day-school for new field-walkers was again held at Jewry Wall Museum and introductory lectures were given at Oakham and Market Harborough.

Fred Hartley has continued to survey earthwork sites around the County. These have included: Dishley (village, and grange), Glooston (village earthworks), Knaptoft (village and garden), Nevill Holt (village and garden), Hungarton (Quenby village and gardens), Wistow (village and gardens), Newton Harcourt (village), Carlton Curlieu (village), Whatborough (village), Freeby (Stapleford village), Staunton Harold (village and garden), Stretton-en-la-Field (village), Clipsham (village) and Ketton (village).

Peter Liddle and Anne Cookson have continued to fieldwalk in the Medbourne and Tixover areas, while Fred Hartley has fieldwalked in Leighfield. Watching briefs and preliminary site work have been undertaken at Syston, Enderby, St. Martin's Leicester, Thurmaston, the Soar Valley, Cotes, Kibworth Harcourt, Leicester Castle, Rothley, Kirby Muxloe and Ryhall. Fred Hartley has continued to process information from Jim Pickering's aerial archaeological work and has made some flights.

The Team has continued to command considerable space in the local media, and has given a considerable number of lectures. The enthusiastic help of the Community Archaeological Groups, the co-operation of the farming community and the encouragement of museum colleagues is gratefully acknowledged.

Peter Liddle, Anne Cookson and Fred Hartley

## Reports of Fieldwork 1983

### Fieldwork in Leicestershire 1983

#### CLAYBROOKE PARVA (SP 798992)

The Lutterworth Archaeological Fieldwork Group have made a preliminary visit to High Cross Roman Town. Much pottery, tile and a coin were noted. A full survey is planned in 1984. (LM A4.1984)

#### COALVILLE (SK 406125)

Fieldwalking by A. Hurst and P. Sanders has revealed a small group of flint artefacts including two scrapers, three cores, and three blades. (LM A 19.1983)

## EAST NORTON (SP 798992)

J.R. Branson has defined the extent of a small Roman rural site on a high sharp ridge overlooking the valley of the Eyebrook. The pottery is predominantly of the third and fourth centuries AD, with a small number of earlier sherds. Pottery was noted from this area in 1966 (see these *Transactions* XLIII, 86) (LM A5.1984)

## EATON-PIPER HOLE 4 (SK 759273)

A tanged flint arrowhead, blade core, blades and flakes were found by Melton Fieldwalking Group in the same field as the flint scatter reported in these *Transactions* vol. 56 and the Roman pottery reported in vol. 57.

## EATON-PIPER HOLE (SK 762267)

A scatter of flint, including 'thumbnail', side and end scrapers, found by Melton Fieldwalking Group, seems to be of Neolithic to Bronze Age date.

## EATON-PIPER HOLE (SK 757265)

Two 'thumbnail' scrapers of Early Bronze Age type were found by Melton Fieldwalking Group.

## EATON-PIPER HOLE (SK 761265)

Fieldwalking by the Melton Fieldwalking Group in the same field as the excavated barrow (these *Transactions* vol. 53) has produced a small group of flints, including a possible Mesolithic element, and a broken plano-convex knife and scale-flaked knife which could possibly be from further burials of the same period as the excavated barrow.

## FROLESWORTH (SP 496910)

D. and R. Wassell have collected a small group of flints in fieldwork. It includes possible scrapers, a blade core and several utilised flakes. More work is to be undertaken to define the size of the site and its date.

## GLENFIELD (c.SK 537054)

Continuing fieldwork in 1983 has resulted in two further bronze implements being recovered — a socketed axe and a small knife blade. Potsherds from the site now number about 1500 and six further flint scrapers have been found. See these *Transactions* LVII, 81-2, for an account of earlier work on the site (LM A8.1983)

## GLENFIELD (SK.550071)

Fieldwalking carried out by E. Tura and the Glenfield Archaeological and Historical Society at the rear of County Hall produced Roman pottery and two fragments of a perforated clay slab for which the best parallels lie in the Late Bronze Age.

## GREAT EASTON (SP 844936)

The Great Easton Fieldwork Group has found a scatter of Roman pottery, including colour-coated wares, grey wares, mortaria and amphorae. The Assemblage has been examined by Dr R. Pollard who suggests a Late Roman, and predominantly fourth century, date. Slag was associated with the scatter but no building stone, suggesting a peasant site undertaking iron-working.

**GREAT EASTON (SP 851935)**

Great Easton Fieldwork Group have found a broken Neolithic flint chisel. In the same area were twelve flint flakes suggesting the possibility of occupation.

**GREAT EASTON (SP 860937)**

Fieldwalking by Great Easton Fieldwork Group in the area of two ring ditches revealed from the air has produced a flint scatter including a barbed and tanged arrowhead, an axe/chopper fragment, a scraper, cores, blades and flakes.

**GROBY (SK 505075)**

Groby Archaeological Society have found 61 flints grouped tightly near to Martinshaw Wood. 37 were from a blade-type industry suggesting a Mesolithic date (LM A2.1984)

**LEICESTER — BEAUMONT LEYS (SK 564090)**

Roman pottery, flints and hand-made (possibly Prehistoric) pottery were found by E. Tura in a field earmarked for future development adjacent to Castle Hill.

**LOUGHBOROUGH (SK 518187)**

Anne Tarver reports that the examination of a linear earthwork has shown this to form one bank of a sub-rectangular enclosure of possible Iron Age/Roman date. A nearby find of pottery from the 1930's (at SK 522187: LM A581.1963) has been re-assessed as belonging to the first to third centuries AD. Public co-operation has been sought to check the area of distribution of this material in nearby gardens. A small resistivity survey has been carried out within the area of the enclosure and this will continue during the summer.

**MEDBOURNE (SP 794935)**

Fieldwalking by Leicestershire Museums Archaeological Survey Team revealed a concentration of flint blade-cores, suggesting a flint-working site of early Prehistoric date (LM A25.1983)

**MISTERTON (SP 558835)**

Fieldwork by Lutterworth Archaeological Fieldwalk has revealed a scatter of flints at Shaft Hill. It includes a discordal implement, scrapers, an end-scraper, blades, flakes, a transverse arrowhead and blade cores. (LM A17-1983)

**MISTERTON (SP 580838)**

Lutterworth Archaeological Fieldwork Group have located a scatter of worked flints near Walcote Fields Farm. It includes a leaf-shaped arrowhead, scrapers, flakes, blades, cores (LM A12.1983)

**MISTERTON (SP 575838)**

The Lutterworth Archaeological Fieldwork Group have found a group of worked flints near Gilberts Farm including two transverse arrowheads, a knife, scrapers (including end-scrapers and thumbnail scrapers), flakes, blades, and cores (including blade-cores). (LM A3.1983 and A18.1983)

**NARBOROUGH (SP 537997)**

R.P. Jarrett reports that two-trial trenches were excavated in advance of building development to attempt to locate the Fosse Way. Some stone was located but it was not

possible to conclusively identify a road surface. Notes and plans have been deposited at Jewry Wall Museum.

#### RAVENSTONE (SK 404114)

A.J.K. Hurst has continued to survey the area near to the Roman site excavated in 1981 (these *Transactions* LVI, 104-7). To the south-east of that site another concentration of Roman pottery was located, including grey-ware, colour-coated wares, samian ware and mortaria. Three sherds of Anglo-Saxon pottery were concentrated about 100 metres to the north-north-west.

#### SCALFORD (area of SK 763253)

A flint scatter found by the Melton Fieldwalking Group includes blades and a blade core of possible Mesolithic type.

#### SPROXTON-BESCABY (SK 827261)

A flint scatter including blade cores and blades was found by Melton Fieldworking Group.

#### SPROXTON-BESCABY (c. SK 827257)

In the same field as the barbed and tanged arrowhead reported in these *Transactions* vol. 56, the Melton Fieldwalking Group have reported a flint scatter including possible Mesolithic blades, as well as scrapers, 'thumbnail' scrapers, a bifacial core tool and a plano-convex knife, probably dating to the Late Neolithic or Early Bronze Age.

#### SPROXTON-BESCABY (SK 819259-819255-821256-823255-825256)

Re-walking by the Melton Fieldwalking Group of the extensive flint scatter reported in volume 57 of these *Transactions* has produced several knives, including one of the plano-convex variety, in addition to many other implement types.

## Fieldwork in Rutland 1983

#### EXTON

A complete bellarmine was found beneath the hearth of a house during alterations. The liquid contents were extracted for analysis at the University of Leicester, and a report is awaited (per RCM).

#### GREETHAM, 44 Main Street

A medieval bronze scutiform heraldic pendant, decorated with an enamelled representation of a peacock in his pride (calling to mind the Manners family) was found in the garden (F. Halliday, per RCM).

#### LEIGHFIELD (SK 828040)

Fieldwork by Leicestershire Museums Archaeological Survey Team and Rutland Fieldwork Group has defined the limits of Leighfield deserted village in the ploughed land around Leigh Lodge. Pottery recovered is of Early Medieval date and includes Lyveden/Stansion and Stamford-type wares (RCM 1983.35).

**LEIGHFIELD (SK 835035)**

On a terrace above the River Chater a small scatter of struck flints and some Roman sherds were recovered. The flints are predominantly the products of a blade-type industry (including four prismatic cores, two core fragments and nine blade-type flakes) suggesting a possible Mesolithic date. Nearby a concentration of slag suggested a small iron-working site but there was no dating evidence (RCM 1983.35).

**LUFFENHAM, NORTH, Primary School**

Part of a Frechen stoneware bellarmine with (incomplete) coat of arms, found several years before during construction of new school (Mr Branson, per RCM).

**LYDDINGTON, 115 Main Street**

Sherds of medieval glazed jug, and 19th century pottery, found while digging foundations (RCM 1983.28)

**LYDDINGTON (SP 875970)**

The Central Excavation Unit of the Department of the Environment have undertaken a small excavation close to Lyddington Bedehouse. Stone buildings, forming part of the Medieval palace of the Bishop of Lincoln, were revealed.

**RIDLINGTON (SK 837031)**

Half a rotary quern topstone, found during field drainage near Frog Hall (RCM 1983.9).

**RYHALL (TF 048109)**

A double-ditched, sub rectangular, crop-mark enclosure was photographed from the air by Jim Pickering in 1965. Julian Temple watched the site during the stripping of top-soil for a gas pipe-line and recovered Iron Age pottery. Subsequently Leicestershire Museums Archaeologists undertook small-scale rescue excavations and recorded the boundary ditches and a possible circular house. The pottery suggests a Middle Iron Age date. (RCM 1983.32)