Archaeological Investigations at *Little Stiances,* Sharpsbridge Lane, Newick, East Sussex

A Community Archaeology Project
Involving the pupils of Newick Primary School

NGR 543323 120001

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Abstract

A Community Archaeology project was organised under the auspices of Archaeology South-East (ASE), a division of University College London Centre for Applied Archaeology (UCLCAA).

A 3.7ha field called *Little Stiances*, Sharpsbridge Lane, Newick, East Sussex was investigated using a number of archaeological techniques including geophysical prospection, topographical survey and the manual excavation of test-pits. There was also a public Open Day.

The geophysical and topographic surveys confirmed the location of a cottage known from cartographic sources and allowed the targeting of test-pits at that location. Finds from the test-pits included pottery dating from the 15th to the 19th centuries, large quantities of brick and tile from the fabric of the cottage itself and an assortment of other artefacts, including a group of datable clay pipes and a scatter of prehistoric flintwork. Finds of particular interest to the children included a half penny of George III (dated 1770-5), a Victorian clay marble and a heavily corroded padlock.

The topographical survey of the entire field revealed a range of earthworks including enclosures and trackways, and the possible location of other buildings.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Background

1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE), a division of University College London Centre for Applied Archaeology (UCLCAA) undertook a community archaeology project involving the pupils from Newick (C of E) Primary School, Newick, East Sussex. The site was a field called *Little Stiances*, Sharpsbridge Lane, Newick, East Sussex (NGR 543323 120001) (Fig. 1).

1.2 Geology and Topography

1.3.2 The 3.7ha field lies in open countryside to the south-east of the village of Newick, between Broomlye Farm and Coney Hall Cottage, to the east of Broomlye Wood, at a height varying between *c.*35mAOD and *c.*50mAOD (Fig. 2). The field is currently given over to pasture (Fig. 2).

1.2.2 According to the British Geological Survey 1: 50 000 map of the area (Sheet 319, *Lewes*) the underlying geology at the site is Grinstead Clay overlying Ardingly Sandstone.

1.3. Background

1.3.1 Permission was given by the landowner, Mr John Sclater for the investigation of the field using a variety of archaeological techniques. To this end a *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) was produced by ASE (ASE 2010) and was submitted to Greg Chuter, Assistant County Archaeologist, East Sussex County Council (ESCC) for approval.

1.3.2 The document listed the techniques to be used at the site, which included a geophysical survey, a full topographical survey and the manual excavation of a number of test-pits. The terms of the document were duly approved by ESCC.

1.4 Aims and Objectives

1.4.1 The primary aim of the project was to provide an introduction to archaeology to the school children and to members of the local community. A number of site specific aims were also listed in the WSI (*ibid.)*

1. *When was the earliest activity at the site? Is there evidence of prehistoric activity?*

2. *Is there a coherent pattern to the earthworks in Little Stiances? If so, how can this be interpreted? i.e. Are they house platforms? Or related to industrial activity?*

3. *Similarly, do the workings in Broomlye Woods fit any known pattern? Does the local geology suggest which material was extracted and for what possible function?*

4. *Can any or all of the Stiances earthworks be dated? Is there a connection with the Broomlye Wood extraction?*

5. *Given the presence of a stream, and the suggestion of a possible pond, could the activity/occupation be related to medieval and/or post-medieval ironworking?*

6. *Although it is known that a cottage at the site was occupied into the early 20th century, when did occupation cease in the other areas? Are there any indications of reasons for the abandonment of the site?*

1.5 Scope of Report

1.5.1 The current report provides results of the archaeological programme at the site, including the geophysical survey, topographic survey and manual excavation of the test-pits. The project was undertaken by a team comprised of Simon Stevens (Senior Archaeologist), Nicola Bettley, Kathy Grant, Chris Russel, (Archaeologists), Lesley Davidson and Rob Cole (Archaeological Surveyors), and pupils, parents, teachers and helpers at Newick C of E Primary School. The project was managed by Darryl Palmer (Project Manager) and by Jim Stevenson (Post-Excavation Manager)

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 The archaeological potential of the field was recognised by the Wealden Iron Research Trust (WIRG) in the 1970s, and reference was made to it in a published work by Fred Tebbutt in the early 1980s, in which it was stated that the field contained, *'at least four platforms, and possible small moated enclosure. Scatter of medieval pottery. Cottage survived until recently'* (Tebbutt 1981, 115). Local histories of the area published since have added little to the description (e.g. Lindsey 1983; Mayes 2002), and according to the landowner, there has been no archaeological fieldwork undertaken in the field or in the vicinity (John Sclater *pers. comm.*). The former estate manager also confirmed that metal detectorists have never been granted authorised access to the field (Paddy Cumberlege *pers. comm.*).

2.2 Extensive cartographic and documentary research suggests that elements of the cottage to which Tebbutt referred were in existence by the time of the earliest known plan of the area, published in 1739 (Turk 2009). The cottage had been demolished by the time of 1910 Ordnance Survey map of the area. Tebbutt's notes on the site are held at the library of the Sussex Archaeological Society and include his field sketch of the earthworks, which include the cottage site, the three other 'house platforms' and other anomalies. All of these earthworks (and others) survive in the field. Reconnaissance of the site shows possible earthworks on the opposite side of a local stream to the south, leading to the tentative interpretation that a pond may once have existed in the immediate vicinity of the site.

2.3 Immediately to the west of *Little Stiances*, in Broomlye Woods there are a number of substantial pits, clearly evidence of extraction of some kind of material on an industrial scale. There is no record of them in the East Sussex Historic Environment Records, and they have apparently never been surveyed archaeologically (John Sclater *pers. comm.*). Their date and purpose remain a mystery, although local tradition suggests that they were for clay (marl) (Paddy Cumberlege *pers. comm.*).

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 A Bartington Grad 601-2 Fluxgate Gradiometer was employed during the geophysical survey of the site. The site was surveyed using 1m traverses with samples at every 0.25m within a 30m grid or part thereof as appropriate. This was a standard traverse and sample strategy for fluxgate gradiometer surveys. Detailed magnetic survey will not normally detect Palaeolithic activity nor will it detect other very ephemeral prehistoric activity. However the fluxgate gradiometer will detect areas of burning (e.g. Kilns and hearths), ditches and other cut features, larger pits, brick walls, dumps of ceramic/tile and other large scale archaeological activity.

3.2 The topographical survey control was provided by Differential Global Positioning Systems (DGPS) survey grade equipment worked to an accuracy of typically +/-10mm positional accuracy and a +/-20mm height accuracy. ASE use the Leica System 1200 DGPS configured as a reference station and a RTK rover. The reference station is set up over a station marker and remains static as it collects satellite data. The RTK rover, which is carried across the survey area and acts as the survey data logger, also collects satellite data. The RTK position is corrected by the local reference station which is in contact with the RTK by means of a radio modem.

3.3 The position of the reference station was corrected using post-processing software. The RTK is used to set out a number of control stations. A Leica 1205 TCRA Total Station was used to survey the detail and to set out additional control. The 1205 TCRA has a 2mm +2 ppm error when measuring to a prism (standard speed measurement) and a 5” Hz and V angle measurement error. The 1205 TCRA is a full one person operating system.

3.4 The survey provided a detailed characterisation of variations in the surface appearance of the site. Elevation measurements were taken at 5m intervals and at 0.5m intervals where deemed appropriate. The test-pits were surveyed by using coding and extra elevation readings to define their extent. Extra stations were set out from control points established by DGPS. In all cases the Orientation program was used to provide a means to determine the error of each station set up.

3.5 The test-pits were manually excavated by pupils, teachers, parents and helpers from the school under supervision of personnel from ASE. Excavation was taken down to the top of the ‘natural’ geological deposits, or to the top of any recognisable archaeological deposits, whichever was the higher. Care was taken not to damage archaeological deposits through excessive use of excavation. Revealed surfaces of the ‘natural’ were cleaned in an attempt to identify individual archaeological features. Spoil was sieved for the presence of artefacts, resulting in a high recovery rate of artefacts. The children were also involved in activities such as site reconnaissance and finds identification.

3.6 All encountered archaeological deposits, features and finds were recorded according to accepted professional standards, and to East Sussex County Council standard practice (ESCC 2008).using standard Archaeology South-

East recording methods. Deposit colours were recorded by visual inspection and not by reference to a Munsell Colour chart. All test-pits were levelled to the Ordnance Datum.

3.7 A full digital photographic record of the work was kept and will form part of the site archive. The archive (including all finds) is presently held at the Archaeology South-East office in Portslade and will be deposited at the school in due course. It consists of:

Number of Contexts	23
No. of files/paper record	1
Plan and sections sheets	-
Bulk Samples	-
Photographs	*c.*250 digital images
Bulk finds	1 box
CBM Samples	1 box
Registered finds	-
Environmental flots/residue	-

Table 1: Quantification of Site Archive

4.0 RESULTS - The Geophysical Survey (Fig. 3)

4.1 Although it was not possible to survey the entire *Little Stiances* field given the available level of funding for the project, the concentration of the survey in the corner of the field formerly occupied by the cottage paid rich dividends.

4.2 The survey clearly pinpointed the presence of surviving masonry in that part of the site, apparently reflecting the location of buried elements of the former cottage and garden, which clearly replicate the layout shown on the 1875 Ordnance Survey map of the field.

4.3 The sunken lane leading from Broomlye Woods towards Broomlye Farm (again clearly marked on the 1875 map) was also picked in the survey. The identification of its alignment was aided by the presence of dumped masonry to partially level the ground, carried out to stop injuries to livestock (Paddy Cumberlege *pers. comm.*). Similar dumping of material from demolition work was also highlighted by the geophysical survey to the east of the cottage site, to the north of the pond, again an activity remembered by Paddy Cumberlege.

4.4 More enigmatic signals were recorded to the south of the pond, perhaps representing demolished buildings not shown on the later cartographic sources, although hinted at in early plans which show ?barns at the site (Turk *op. cit.*). More enigmatic still are faint linear features to the west of the pond, although their correspondence to features picked up during the subsequent topographical survey suggest they are buried features associated with the earthwork enclosures at the site (see below)

5.0 RESULTS – The Topographical Survey (Fig. 4)

5.1 The topographical survey (which is presented with the heights exaggerated to highlight the earthworks) added measured detail to Tebbutt's sketch plan of the field (reproduced in Turk *op. cit.*). Clearly there are enclosures to the south of the cottage site, which shows clearly as cottage and sub-divided garden, with the partially infilled sunken lane from Broomlye Woods running past the bottom of the garden (cf. the 1875 map).

5.2 The topographical results also clearly mirror those of the geophysical survey to the south of the pond too, and appear strongly indicative of the location of more demolished buildings (?barns), linked to the cottage site by another sunken lane, a feature not immediately apparent on the ground. The rectilinear enclosures between the cottage and 'barn' site first recorded by Tebbutt are also particularly striking. One appears to contain a small rectangular earthwork, with no corresponding geophysical signal, which is worthy of attention.

5.3 The substantial bank which runs eastwards away from the 'barn' site and turns northwards is also clear from the survey. It would appear to result from the action of the local stream at a time when it was clearly considerably wider. However, it might also represent the edge of the sandstone outcrop which forms the underlying geology of the western half of *Little Stiances* and

extends into Broomlye Woods. There was no obvious evidence for Tebbutt's possible moated site (see Paragraph 2.1 above).

6.0 RESULTS - Test-Pits (Fig. 5) (including finds descriptions by Luke Barber)

6.1 Test-Pit 1

6.1.1 Test-Pit 1 measured 1m by 1m and was manually excavated to a maximum depth of 210mm (31.56mAOD) at which the 'natural' was encountered and excavation ceased.

6.1.2 The only contexts encountered were a friable mid-greyish brown silty clay topsoil, context [01/01], which directly overlay the 'natural' brownish orange clay with pockets of manganese oxide, context [01/02]. A small assemblage of artefacts was recovered from the test-pit.

Pottery

6.1.3 This pit produced eight quite fresh sherds of hard-fired oxidised or reduced fine/medium sandy earthenware, one of which has internal glaze. These could be as early as the mid 15th century though are perhaps more likely to be of 16th- to early 17th-century date. The only other pottery consists of a yellow ware sherd of 19th- century date.

Ceramic Building Material

6.1.4 All the brick and peg tile from this pit are well formed and fired types, tempered with sparse fine sand and some iron oxide inclusions, and typical of the mid 18th to 19th centuries.

Other Finds

6.1.5 The only other significant find from this test-pit consists of a heavily corroded iron padlock of post-medieval date. Small quantities of coal and chalk were also recovered from this test-pit and from all of the others (not retained).

6.2 Test-Pit 2

6.2.1 Test-Pit 2 was extended from the original 1m by 1m extent in an attempt to define an area of rubble encountered in the original test-pit. It eventually measured 2.18m by 1.06m. The maximum depth was 230mm (31.80mAOD) at which excavation ceased on the last day of the Archaeology Week.

6.2.2 The surface of the 'natural' was not revealed in the test-pit and the only encountered deposit was context [02/01], which consisted of a mid-greyish brown silty clay topsoil with a *c.*30% content of brick, tile and stone rubble and other artefacts. The building material showed no evidence of bonding, and although the concentration of this material was clearly indicative of the presence of the cottage wall, its exact alignment could not be ascertained.

Pottery

6.2.3 This pit produced 18 hard-fired oxidised or reduced earthenware (hereafter HFE) sherds from jars (some internally glazed), and at least one sparsely glazed jug, of late 15th- to mid 17th- century date. However, some 36 sherds of definite 17th- to mid 18th- century date were also recovered. Some of these sherds are quite large and unabraded. Most consist of local glazed red earthenwares (hereafter GRE), including a handled bowl, jar and a chicken feeder but five sherds of green glazed buff Wealden earthenwares

(WEAL) are also present including a plate and cup.

6.2.4 Single sherds of possible brown glazed Border ware (BORD) and Frechen (FREC) stoneware are also present. There is also a sherd from a London stoneware tankard (LONS) and a single sherd of white salt-glazed stoneware (SWSG), both of which probably date to between 1730 and 1770. All in all it is likely most of the sherds in this group can be placed in a later 17th to mid 18th century bracket.

6.2.5 The pit also produced a large assemblage of later post-medieval pottery: 73 sherds. Although the presence of creamware (CREA) (x4 sherds), pearlware (PEAR) (x1) and a moulded matt black basalts teapot (BAS) (x1) sherds suggest some later 18th- to early 19th- century activity most of this late assemblage dates to between c.1860 and 1910. A typical range of domestic wares is present including unglazed earthenware (UE) (flower pots), glazed red earthenware (GRE) (jars), English stoneware (ENGS) (ink bottle), transfer-printed ware (TPW) (plates and cups) and plain refined white earthenware (REFW – china) (plates).

Clay Pipe

6.2.6 Clay pipes from this pit include seven early/mid 18th- century stems as well as a complete bowl and fragment of another of similar date. The complete bowl has the maker's initial 'I/C' (possibly John Collis of Horsham). The only other fragment is of a decorated mid 18th- to 19th- century stem.

Ceramic Building Material

6.2.7 The brick consists of a quite crudely made example measuring 47mm high (partly glazed) of later 16th- to 17th- century type, and a better formed example, measuring 55mm high and probably of 17th- to mid 18th- century date. Most of the peg tile is also quite crudely made and hard fired with square peg holes suggesting a mid 17th- to mid 18th- century date. A few better formed examples, probably of mid 18th- to 19th- century date, are also present.

Glass

6.2.8 A small assemblage of glass was recovered. Most of this is from late 17th- to mid 18th- century wine bottles though a few later 19th- century bottles are also represented.

Other Finds

6.2.9 Metalwork consists of a number of iron nails, though a knife blade and bucket handle are also present. Copper alloy objects include a George III half penny (1770-5), a late 19th- to early 20th- century four-hole dome-backed button and a .22 fired cartridge case. A single piece of 19th- century Welsh roofing slate was also recovered – the remaining stone consisting of local Wealden sandstone pieces. A couple pieces of post-medieval blast furnace slag are also present in the assemblage. The earliest find consists of a possible Mesolithic flint core fragment.

6.3 Test-Pit 3

6.3.1 Test-Pit 3 was also extended from the original 1m by 1m size owing to the high concentration of artefacts encountered. It eventually measured 1.82m by 1.29m. The maximum depth was 290mm (31.94mAOD) at which excavation ceased on the last day of the Archaeology Week.

6.3.2 The surface of the 'natural' was not revealed in the test-pit and the only encountered deposit was context [03/01], which consisted of a mid-greyish brown silty clay topsoil.

Pottery

6.3.3 The earliest pottery from this pit consists of five sherds of hard-fired sandy earthenware (hereafter HFSE) and HFE the most notable of which consists of the rim of a jar with horizontal applied thumbed strip on the shoulder and internal green glaze. A mid/late 15th- to mid 16th- century date is likely for this jar though the other sherds could be as late as the early 17th century. There are also a couple of GRE sherds (brown and green glazed) of probable 17th- to mid 18th- century date.

6.3.4 The earlier material is over-shadowed by the 143 sherds of late post-medieval pottery present. Although there are two to three creamware (CREA) and pearlware (PEAR) sherds of late 18th- to early 19th- century date the vast majority of this assemblage can be placed between 1830 and 1890. Wares include unglazed earthenware (UE) flower pots, GRE jars, yellow ware (YELL), Sunderland-type slipware (SUND), Rockingham (ROCK) (teapot) and various transfer-printed wares (TPW) including a number of willow-pattern plates.

Clay Pipe

6.3.5 The three clay pipe stem fragments and two decorated bowl fragments from this pit are all of 19th- century date.

Ceramic Building Material

6.3.6 There is a single brick, measuring 54mm high, which is quite crudely made and self glazed probably suggesting a 17th- to mid 18th- century date. There are also a few tiles of similar date. However, the remainder of the brick and tile can be placed between the mid 18th and 19th centuries.

Glass

6.3.7 With the exception of a corroded early/mid 18th- century wine bottle fragment all of the glass from this pit is of 19th- century date. Pieces include fragments of window glass as well as wine and poison bottles and a blue glass vase.

Other Finds

6.3.8 Worked flint from the pit includes one waste flake and a shattered piece, neither of which are closely datable. The ironwork consists mainly of nails though there is a fragment of cast iron pipe. All are of 19th- century date. There are two lead cams from leaded windows which are of a general post-medieval date. Other finds include two pieces of Welsh slate, a clay marble and a selection of animal bones (mainly sheep).

6.4 Test-Pit 4

6.4.1 Test-Pit 4 measured 1m by 1m and was excavated to a maximum depth of 210mm (32.69mAOD) at which the 'natural' was encountered and excavation ceased.

6.4.2 The contexts encountered were a friable mid-greyish brown silty clay topsoil, context [04/01], which directly overlay the 'natural' brownish orange sandstone, context [04/02]. A small assemblage of artefacts was recovered from the test-pit.

Pottery

6.4.3 The earliest pottery from this pit consists of a further four sherds of HFE of later 15th- to early 17th- century date. Early post-medieval material is represented by a sherd of buff Wealden earthenware (WEAL) (*c.*1575-1700), a sherd of tin-glazed earthenware (TGW) (*c.*1650-1750) and a sherd of salt-glazed white stoneware (SWSG) (*c.*1730-1780).

6.4.4 There is notably more pottery of the late post-medieval period. A single sherd of creamware (CREA) (*c.*1760-1820) as well as a piece from a relief-decorated matt basaltes teapot (BAS) (*c.*1750-1820) are present though most of the pottery of this period can be placed between *c.*1830 and 1890. Wares include UE (flower pots), GRE (jars/bowls), YELL (bowl), TPW (plates/cups), plain white china (REFW) and a probable piece of Normandy stoneware.

Ceramic Building Material

6.4.5 All of the CBM is of later 18th- to 19th- century date, consisting of well formed and fired brick and peg tile fragments, the latter with diamond peg-holes.

Glass

6.4.6 There are two fragments of late 17th- to mid 18th- century wine bottle though the majority consists of aqua bottles of 19th- century date.

Other Finds

6.4.7 All the worked flint consists of undiagnostic shattered pieces. The only ironwork consists of post-medieval nails.

6.5 Test-Pit 5

6.5.1 Test-Pit 5 measured 1m by 1m and was excavated to a maximum depth of 130mm (33.40mAOD), at which point the test-pit was abandoned on the last day of the Archaeology Week.

6.5.2 The only encountered deposit was context [05/01], the familiar friable mid-greyish brown silty clay topsoil. A very limited assemblage of artefacts was recovered from the test-pit.

Pottery

6.5.3 The only two sherds of pottery from this pit consist of sherds of GRE and

YELL, both of 19th- century date.

Ceramic Building Material

6.5.4 All of the brick and tile is of later 18th- to 19th- century date.

Other Finds

6.5.5 Other finds include a flint pebble and two post-medieval iron nail fragments.

6.6 Test-Pit 6

6.6.1 Test Pit 6 measured 1m by 1m and was excavated to a maximum depth of 180mm (32.02mAOD) at which the 'natural' was encountered and excavation ceased.

6.6.2 The contexts encountered were the 'usual' friable mid-greyish brown silty clay topsoil, context [06/01], which directly overlay the 'natural' brownish orange sandstone, context [06/02]. A small assemblage of artefacts was recovered from the test-pit.

Pottery

6.6.3 With the exception of two late CREA sherds *(c.*1780-1820) all of the pottery from this pit can be placed between 1820 and 1880 and consists mainly of plates, cups and saucers in TPW.

Clay Pipe

6.6.4 There is a single 19th- century decorated stem fragment.

Ceramic Building Material

6.6.5 The pit produced a complete brick (226mm x 107mm x 57mm) which could date to anywhere between the later 17th to 18th centuries. The remaining pieces are all of mid 18th- to 19th- century date.

Glass

6.6.6 All of the glass is of 19th- century date, mainly consisting of aqua and blue (poison) bottles fragments.

Other Finds

6.6.7 The test-pit produced a piece of local Wealden sandstone and a selection of post-medieval iron, mainly nails although a linking ring is also present.

6.7 Test-Pit 7

6.7.1 Test Pit 7 measured 1m by 1m and was excavated to a maximum depth of 200mm (32.17mAOD) at which the 'natural' was encountered and excavation ceased.

6.7.2 The contexts encountered were the 'usual' friable mid-greyish brown silty clay topsoil, context [07/01], which directly overlay the 'natural' brownish orange sandstone, context [07/02]. A very limited assemblage of artefacts was recovered from the test-pit.

Pottery

6.7.3 Only two tiny chips of CREA were recovered from this pit (*c.*1760-1820).

Ceramic Building Material

6.7.4 All is of mid 18th- to 19th- century date.

Other Finds

6.7.5 The pit also produced a 20th- century copper alloy shotgun cartridge case, a local Wealden sandstone fragment and a sheep tooth.

6.8 Test-Pit 8

6.8.1 Test Pit 8 measured 1m by 1m and was excavated to a maximum depth of 290mm (31.96mAOD) at which the 'natural' was encountered and excavation ceased.

6.8.2 The contexts encountered were the 'usual' friable mid-greyish brown silty clay topsoil, context [08/01], which directly overlay the 'natural' brownish orange sandstone, context [08/02]. A small assemblage of artefacts was recovered from the test-pit.

Pottery

6.8.3 The earliest pottery from this pit consists of a body sherd of HFE, probably of late 15th- to early 17th- century date. Early post-medieval pottery consists of two sherds of GRE (one with applied decoration) dating *c.*1550-1700 and two SWSG sherds (*c.*1730-1780).

6.8.4 The majority of the pottery (54 sherds) is of late post-medieval date, the earliest of which consist of a few CREA sherds (*c.*1760-1820) though most other sherds probably belong to between *c.*1820-1880/90. These include GRE, YELL, TPW, ENGS and a single sherd of Chinese porcelain (CHPO).

Clay Pipe

6.8.5 All of the clay pipe is of 19th- century date and consists of five stem fragments and part of a bowl with oak-leaf seam decoration.

Ceramic Building Material

6.8.6 All is of mid 18th- to 19th- century date. Some of the peg tiles have diamond shaped peg holes.

Glass

6.8.7 All of the glass is of 19th- century date and includes a range of window, aqua bottle and wine/spirit glass fragments.

Other Finds

6.8.8 Worked flint included two waste flakes and two shattered pieces, none of which are closely datable. The pit also produced a copper/pewter alloy 18th-century button and a copper alloy strip fragment as well as a number of post-medieval iron nails. The only other ironwork consists of a tool/knife blade fragment. All of the stone consists of 19th- century Welsh roofing slate, the only other find consisting of a piece of mortar.

6.9 Test-Pit 9

6.9.1 Test Pit 9 measured 1m by 1m and was excavated to a maximum depth of 320mm (32.44mAOD). The 'natural' was not encountered and the test-pit was abandoned on the last day of the Archaeology Week.

6.9.2 The only recorded deposit was context [09/01] the familiar mid-greyish brown silty clay topsoil. The depth of the test-pit and the relatively high concentration of pottery encountered suggest that this part of the site may have been occupied by a midden of some kind. This is supported by the results from Test-Pits 10 and 12 (see below).

Pottery

6.9.3 The earliest sherd from this pit consists of a small CREA fragment (*c.*1760-1820) with the remainder dating to between 1820 and 1890. Wares include YELL, GRE, UE and TPW.

Ceramic Building Material

6.9.4 All of the tile from this pit is likely to be of mid 18th- to 19th- century date. Both square and diamond peg holes are represented.

Other Finds

6.9.5 A little bone is present, including a probable sheep tooth.

6.10 Test-Pit 10

6.10.1 Test-Pit 10 measured 1m by 1m and was excavated to a maximum depth of 330mm (32.04mAOD) The 'natural' was not encountered and the excavation of the test-pit was abandoned on the last day of the Archaeology Week.

6.10.2 The only recorded deposit was context [10/01] the mid-greyish brown silty clay topsoil. The depth of the test-pit and the relatively high concentration of pottery encountered suggest that this part of the site may have been occupied by a midden of some kind. This is supported by the results from Test-Pits 9 and 12 (see above and below).

Pottery

6.10.3 All of the pottery from this pit is of late post-medieval date. The earliest consists of two CREA sherds (*c.*1760-1820), two scratch blue stoneware sherds (SCRA) (*c.*1740-1790) and a PEAR sherd (*c.*1780-1830) with hand-painted decoration. The remaining pottery can be placed between *c.*1820 and 1890 and includes UE, GRE. ENGS, YELL and TPW sherds.

Clay Pipe

6.10.4 There are two 19th- century stem fragments, one impressed J. DRAPE BRIGHTON (John Drape of Brighton, working 1832-67).

Ceramic Building Material

6.10.5 All is of mid 18th- to 19th- century date.

Glass

6.10.6 The glass, including pieces of window pane, wine bottle and other clear glass bottles is all of 19th- century date.

Other Finds

6.10.7 Other finds from the pit include a copper/pewter alloy 18th- to early 19th- century button, two post-medieval iron nails and a few bone fragments (including sheep).

6.11 Test-Pit 11

6.11.1 Test-Pit 11 measured 1m by 1m and was excavated to a maximum depth of 490mm (31.59mAOD). The 'natural' was not encountered and the excavation of the test-pit was abandoned on the last day of the Archaeology Week

6.11.2 The only recorded deposit was context [11/01] the mid-greyish brown silty clay topsoil. The depth of the test-pit and the relatively high concentration of pottery encountered suggest that this part of the site may have been occupied by a midden of some kind, similar to that encountered in Test-Pits 9, 10 and 12.

Pottery

6.11.3 All of the pottery from this pit can be placed in an 1830-1900 date bracket and includes sherds of GRE, ENGS, TPW and one possible PEAR, the latter which could be of an 1820-1830 date range.

Ceramic Building Material

6.11.4 All is of mid 18th- to 19th- century date, consisting of well formed and fired examples.

Other Finds

6.11.5 A single piece of copper alloy was recovered: a cast terminal, probably a castor mount from a furniture leg. A late 17th- to 18th- century date is likely. The only other material consists of some oyster shell.

6.12 Test-Pit 12

6.12.1 Test Pit 12 measured 1m by 1m and was excavated to a maximum depth of 170mm (32.37mAOD). The 'natural' was not encountered and the excavation of the test-pit was abandoned on the last day of the Archaeology Week.

6.12.2 The only recorded deposit was context [12/01] the mid-greyish brown silty clay topsoil. The depth of the test-pit and the relatively high concentration of pottery encountered suggest that this part of the site may have been occupied by a midden of some kind. This is supported by the results from Test-Pits 9 and 10 (see above).

Pottery

6.12.3 The earliest pottery from this pit consists of two sherds of 17th- to mid 18th-century date: examples of GRE and WEAL. The pit produced a very large assemblage of late post-medieval pottery (244 sherds) though most pieces were notably small.

6.12.4 A wide domestic range of wares is represented, most being of 1830-1900 date range though a few could belong to the first three decades of the century. Wares include UE, GRE, ENGS (with Bristol glaze: post 1830), YELL and a range of dinner and tea wares in TPW decorated with willow and Asiatic pheasant patterns.

Clay Pipe

6.12.5 One early/mid 18th- century bowl fragment was recovered along with two stem fragments of 18th- to 19th- century type.

Ceramic Building Material

6.12.6 All of the brick and tile from the pit is of mid 18th- to 19th- century date. The brick includes a well formed example of a flooring brick, measuring 222mm x 105mm x 55mm, with a notably worn upper face. There are at least two other examples of flooring bricks with worn upper faces from this pit (measuring 52mm tall) as well as a 54mm tall example with no sign of wear (possibly as a result of being laid in a corner).

Glass

6.12.7 All of the glass is of the 19th century and includes fragments from wine bottles and miscellaneous aqua and clear glass bottles.

Other Finds

6.12.8 The pit produced a single waste flint flake and a piece of 19th- century Welsh roofing slate. There are also a few animal bones (sheep mainly) and a little ironwork. The latter consists mainly of post-medieval nails though some pieces of possible agricultural tools/machinery are also present.

6.13 Test-Pit 13

6.13.1 Test Pit 13 measured 1m by 1m and was excavated to a maximum depth of 200mm (32.02mAOD) at which the 'natural' was encountered and excavation ceased.

6.13.2 The contexts encountered were the 'usual' friable mid-greyish brown silty clay topsoil, context [13/01], which directly overlay the 'natural' brownish orange clay with sandstone patches, context [13/02]. A small assemblage of artefacts was recovered from the test-pit.

Pottery

6.13.3 The earliest pottery from this pit consists of two GRE sherds, including a jar rim, of probable later 17th- to mid 18th- century date. The remaining sherds are of late post-medieval date. The earliest of these consist of five CREA and one PEAR sherds suggesting some activity between 1760 and 1830. However, most can be placed in an 1820 to 1890 date range. Wares include

UE, GRE, ENGS, TPW and English porcelain (ENPO).

Clay Pipe

6.13.4 Two 19th- century stem fragments are present, including a decorated example from a probable later 19th- century figurehead pipe.

Ceramic Building Material

6.13.5 All is of mid 18th- to 19th- century date, including an example with a diamond shaped peg hole.

Glass

6.13.6 Window, wine bottle and aqua bottle fragments were recovered, all of 19th-century date.

Other Finds

6.13.7 A scatter of post-medieval iron nails was recovered, including a very large structural example. There is also the centre primer from a copper alloy 20th-century shotgun cartridge and a little bone, including a cow tooth, as well as a couple of pieces of fire-cracked flint (probably post-medieval burning).

6.14 Test-Pit 14

6.14.1 Test Pit 14 measured 1m by 1m and was excavated to a maximum depth of 170mm (33.19mAOD). The 'natural' was not encountered and the excavation of the test-pit was abandoned on the last day of the Archaeology Week.

6.14.2 The only recorded deposit was context [14/01] the familiar mid-greyish brown silty clay topsoil. Only a limited selection of artefacts were recovered from this test-pit, prompting its abandonment

Pottery

6.14.3 All of the pottery from this pit is of late post-medieval date. The earliest consists of one sherd of CREA (*c.*1760-1820) with the remainder being of probably post 1820 date: sherds of UE, GRE and TPW

Clay Pipe

6.14.4 Two 19th- century stem fragments were recovered, one of which is stamped ?WARRI?

Ceramic Building Material

6.14.5 All is of mid 18th- to 19th- century date.

Glass

6.14.6 A single piece of 19th- century embossed aqua bottle was recovered.

Other Finds

6.14.7 Two post-medieval iron nail fragments were the only other finds.

4.15 Test-Pit 15

6.15.1 Test Pit 13 measured 1m by 1m and was excavated to a maximum depth of 170mm (30.75mAOD) at which the 'natural' was encountered and excavation ceased.

6.15.2 The contexts encountered were the 'usual' friable mid-greyish brown silty clay topsoil, context [13/01], which directly overlay the 'natural' brownish orange clay with patches of manganese oxide, context [13/02]. A very limited assemblage of artefacts was recovered from the test-pit.

Pottery

6.15.3 Only two REFW sherds were recovered (c. 1850-1900+)

Clay Pipe

6.15.4 One abraded 18th- century stem fragment was recovered from this pit.

Glass

6.15.5 A single fragment of 19th- century wine bottle is present.

Other Finds

6.15.6 A probable Mesolithic microlith, in an orange flint, is by far the earliest find from this pit.

6.16 Test-Pit 16

6.16.1 Test Pit 16 measured 1m by 1m and was excavated to a maximum depth of 150mm (30.97mAOD) at which the 'natural' was encountered and excavation ceased.

6.16.2 The contexts encountered were the 'usual' friable mid-greyish brown silty clay topsoil, context [16/01], which directly overlay the 'natural' brownish orange clay with patches of manganese oxide context [16/02]. A small assemblage of artefacts was recovered from the test-pit.

Pottery

6.16.3 The earliest pottery from this pit consists of a body sherd of HFE (c. 1500-1650) with the remaining sherds being of late post-medieval date. These include one CREA sherd (c. 1760-1820) with the rest probably post-dating 1830. Wares include GRE, YELL and TPW.

Ceramic Building Material

6.16.4 All is of mid 18th- to 19th- century date.

Glass

6.16.5 All of the glass is of 19th- century date and consists of wine bottle and window pane fragments.

Other Finds

6.16.6 A few animal bone fragments are present, including probable examples of

cattle and sheep.

6.17 Backfilling

6.17.1 Following the recording of the test-pits, they were manually backfilled, compacted as far as possible and returfed.

7.0 DISCUSSION

7.1 The Stiances Archaeological Project offered an all-too-rare opportunity for children to experience archaeological fieldwork in their own community. Although Community Archaeology is becoming increasingly popular as a concept, it is still a comparative rarity in Sussex (e.g. Manor Cottage, Southwick; Stevens 2006).

7.2 Given the clear cartographic evidence (Turk 2009) the presence of a large assemblage of 'domestic' post-medieval material was expected. However, the quantity and range of materials was particularly striking, ranging from building materials to toys, and from buttons to window glass. The assemblage of pottery and other datable artefacts offered a date range for occupation from as early as the 15th century right up to the abandonment of the cottage in the early 1900s (*ibid.*). The geophysical and topographical survey also highlighted the possibility that the masonry remains including buildings (?barns) probably survive elsewhere at the site.

7.3 The earliest pottery hints at the medieval occupation of the site championed by Tebbutt (1981, 115). The excavation of the test-pits did not find masonry in the form of recognisable 'walls', but arguably more detailed and widespread excavation in the field might produce results such as those from Faulkners Farm, Hartfield (*ibid.*) or from other medieval Wealden sites which have been investigated. These include Muddleswood near Hurstpierpoint which was occupied during the 12th and 13th centuries (Butler 1994) and a site at America Wood, Ashington, which produced pottery of a similar date range (Priestley-Bell 1994). Evidence for a farmstead occupied from the 13th to at least the mid-14th century has come to light near Polegate (Stevens 2007).

7.4 If the other enclosures identified by Tebbutt (*op. cit.*) and clearly shown in both the geophysical and topographic surveys are indeed medieval, Stiances forms part of a pattern of agricultural settlements doted across the Weald at that time (Gardiner 1996). Further fieldwork (including fieldwalking of the adjacent *Big Stiances*, an arable field) would be needed to unequivocally prove this, but the presence of 15th century pottery in the test-pits and Tebbutt's discovery of *'medieval'* pottery are in themselves significant.

7.5 Although obviously much smaller in size than the assemblage of pottery, the small group of Mesolithic flintwork is of equal archaeological significance. The evidence for Hunter-Gatherer activity at Stiances pushes the earliest indications of human activity at the site back to *c.*10 000BC (Mithen 1999, 35).

7.6 The topographical situation of the Stiances material corresponds to a long-recognised pattern of Mesolithic activity in the Weald, comprising flint scatters that are thought to be the surviving remnants of hunting activity closely related to the system of river valleys in the area (Tebbutt 1974): the concentration of Mesolithic material at the site is located on high ground overlooking a stream, a situation seen at other recently investigated sites in the Weald (e.g. Stevens 2009).

7.7 Recent fieldwork has highlighted the fact that such scatters can be associated with buried archaeological features (Butler 1997), and this may be the case at Stiances. It has been recognised since the 1930s that Mesolithic hunter-gatherers operating in the Weald were capable of building shelters (Clark and Rankine 1939), and work in the Horsham area (at Rock Common near Washington) has also shown evidence of hearths of this date (Harding 2000). Although no evidence of structures or hearths were identified in the test-pits, it is possible that they survive in the immediate area, as yet undiscovered.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

8.1 The research aims of the Stiances Archaeological Project were arguably somewhat ambitious. Certainly the question of the earliest detectable activity at the site was addressed by the discovery of Mesolithic flintwork, but none of the other research aims can be addressed with certainty from currently available data.

8.2 The virtual absence of ironworking slag or of any other industrial residues strongly suggests that the site was strictly agricultural/domestic in function, but given the small area examined in the test-pits (less than 0.001% of the field), perhaps it is unwise to draw any sweeping conclusions. Likewise the quarry works in Broomlye Wood remain unexplained, although quarrying for building stone still seems the most likely explanation (Turk *op. cit.*).

8.3 However, the success of such a project cannot be measured on these criteria alone. The level of enthusiasm shown by the child (and adults) during the work in the field, and subsequently, was particularly pleasing for all those involved in the organisation and realisation of the project. An assembly at school and the publication of results in the monthly Newick Parish Newsletter and elsewhere (Stevens 2010a; 2010b) has helped to reinforce continuing local interest.

8.4 Ultimately the success of the project should perhaps be measured by the large number of enquiries addressed to the author from children and adults alike as to when the next ‘dig’ will be held.

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Sussex Archaeological Society
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Appendix 1 – Finds Summary

Test-Pit No.	Pot: mid C15th – 16th	Pot: 17th – mid 18th	Pot: mid 18th – 19th	Clay pipe	Brick	Tile (post-med)	Glass	Worked flint	Metal	Bone	Shell	Other
U/S	-	-	2/16g	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
TP1	8/32g	-	1/2g	-	1/24g	4/136g	-	-	Fe 1/58g	-	-	
TP2	18/160g	38/574g	74/652g	12/46g	2/2,235g	20/2,500g	12/436g	1/20g	Fe 15/178g Cu Al 3/12g	-	-	Stone 4/252g Slag 2/346g
TP3	5/82g	2/6g	143/702g	5/6g	10/1,2,10g	67/3,301g	33/95g	2/50g	Fe 20/179g Cu Al 2/8g	14/43g	-	Stone 2/17g Clay marble 1/6g
TP4	3/15g	4/15g	24/129g	-	5/101g	19/736g	7/17g	2/13g	Fe 3/32g	1/1g	-	
TP5	-	-	2/5g	-	5/136g	5/78g	-	-	Fe 2/16g	-	-	Stone 1/13g
TP6	-	-	8/7g	1/1g	32/2,830g	18/244g	4/3g	-	Fe 4/13g	-	-	Stone 1/30g
TP7	-	-	2/1g	-	5/10g	5/50g	-	-	Cu Al 1/3g	1/2g	-	Stone 1/11g
TP8	1/8g	4/14g	54/237g	6/10g	8/122g	30/1,570g	30/214g	4/18g	Fe 16/120g Cu Al 2/5g	4/7g	-	Stone 5/33g Mortar 1/179g
TP9	-	-	8/29g	-	-	6/1,460g	-	-	-	3/8g	-	
TP10	-	-	33/127g	2/4g	1/4g	1/6g	4/8g	-	Fe 2/17g Cu al 1/4g	4/18g	-	
TP11	-	-	7/136g	-	3/150g	19/2,152g	-	-	Cu Al 1/24g	-	1/12g	
TP12	-	2/5g	244/1,456g	3/8g	7/5,412g	13/796g	16/101g	1/1g	Fe 7/350g	7/17g	-	Stone 1/4g
TP13	-	2/47g	23/62g	2/5g	-	6/351g	7/10g	-	Fe 6/150g Cu Al 1/1g	1/11g	-	Fire-cracked flint: 2/11g
TP14	-	-	10/82g	2/1g	7/132g	4/83g	1/1g	-	Fe 2/7g	-	-	
TP15	-	-	2/6g	-	-	-	1/12g	1/1g	Fe 1/4g	-	-	
TP16	1/3g	-	10/103g	-	-	4/157g	3/4g	-	-	8/65g	-	

Quantification of assemblage (count/weight in grams) (Fe – Iron, Cu Al – Copper Alloy, Pb – Lead)

HE R Summary Form

Site Code	SAP 10					
Identification Name and Address	Little Stiances, Shortbridge Road, Newick					
County, District &/or Borough	Lewes District, East Sussex					
OS Grid Reference.	543323 120001					
Geology	Grinstead Clay overlying Ardingly Sandstone.					
Arch. South-East Project Number	P89					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval. ✓	Excav.	Watching Brief	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field ✓	Shallow Urban	Deep Urban	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval. May 2010	Excav.	WB.	Other		
Project Manager	Darryl Palmer/Jim Stevenson					
Project Supervisor	Simon Stevens					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.✓	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED ✓	PM ✓	Other		

100 Word Summary.

A Community Archaeology project was organised under the auspices of Archaeology South-East (ASE), a division of University College London Centre for Applied Archaeology (UCLCAA).

A 3.7ha field called *Little Stiances*, Sharpsbridge Lane, Newick, East Sussex was investigated using a number of archaeological techniques including geophysical prospection, topographical survey and the manual excavation of test-pits. There was also a public Open Day.

The geophysical and topographic surveys confirmed the location of a cottage known from cartographic sources and allowed the targeting of test-pits at that location. Finds from the test-pits included pottery dating from the 15th to the 19th centuries, large quantities of brick and tile from the cottage itself and an assortment of other artefacts, including a group of datable clay pipes and a scatter of prehistoric flintwork. Finds of particular interest to the children included a half penny of George III (dated 1770-5), a Victorian clay marble and a heavily corroded padlock.

The topographical survey of the entire field revealed a range of earthworks including enclosures and trackways, and the possible location of other buildings.

OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-85830

Project details

Project name	The Stiances Archaeological Project
Short description of the project	A Community Archaeology project was organised under the auspices of Archaeology South-East (ASE), a division of University College London Centre for Applied Archaeology (UCLCAA). A 3.7ha field called Little Stiances, Sharpsbridge Lane, Newick, East Sussex was investigated using a number of archaeological techniques including geophysical prospection, topographical survey and the manual excavation of test-pits. There was also a public Open Day. The geophysical and topographic surveys confirmed the location of a cottage known from cartographic sources and allowed the targeting of test-pits at that location. Finds from the test-pits included pottery dating from the 15th to the 19th centuries, large quantities of brick and tile from the cottage itself and an assortment of other artefacts, including a group of datable clay pipes and a scatter of prehistoric flintwork. Finds of particular interest to the children included a half penny of George III (dated 1770-5), a Victorian clay marble and a heavily corroded padlock. The topographical survey of the entire field revealed a range of earthworks including enclosures and trackways, and the possible location of other buildings.
Project dates	Start: 24-05-2010 End: 30-05-2010
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	P89 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	SAP 10 - Sitecode
Type of project	Research project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Grassland Heathland 2 - Undisturbed Grassland
Monument type	COTTAGE Post Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Post Medieval
Significant Finds	FLINT Mesolithic
Significant Finds	COIN Post Medieval
Investigation type	'Full survey', 'Geophysical Survey' ,'Test-Pit Survey'

Prompt	Research
Solid geology	WEALD CLAY
Drift geology	CLAY WITH FLINTS
Techniques	Magnetic susceptibility

Project location

Country	England
Site location	EAST SUSSEX LEWES NEWICK Little Stiances, Sharpsbridge Lane
Postcode	BN8 4SA
Study area	3.70 Hectares
Site coordinates	TQ 43323 20001 50.9610180476 0.04109921812730 50 57 39 N 000 02 27 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 35.00m Max: 50.00m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	Archaeology South-East
Project design originator	Archaeology South-East
Project director/manager	Darryl Palmer
Project supervisor	Simon Stevens
Type of sponsor/funding body	Charity
Name of sponsor/funding body	Various Bodies

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Newick Primary School
Physical Contents	'Worked stone/lithics', 'Ceramics', 'Glass', 'Industrial', 'Metal'
Digital Archive recipient	Newick Primary School

Digital Contents	'other'
Digital Media available	'Geophysics', 'Images raster / digital photography', 'Survey'
Paper Archive recipient	Newick Primary School
Paper Contents	'other'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet', 'Map', 'Report', 'Survey ','Unpublished Text'

Project bibliography 1

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