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**EXCAVATIONS AT THE PRIORY, ST IVES,
CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

PROPOSED PUBLICATION REPORT

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NGR: TL 3145 7115	Report No. 1333
District: St Ives	Site Code: HAT 268
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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details			
Project name	<i>Excavations at the Priory, St Ives, Cambridgeshire. Proposed Publication Report.</i>		
<p><i>Hertfordshire Archaeological Trust carried out an archaeological evaluation and excavation at the Priory, St Ives, Cambridgeshire. Fieldwork revealed evidence for activity from the prehistoric period onwards, although the main phases of occupation date to the Romano-British, Saxon, medieval and post-mediaeval periods. A complex of Romano-British agricultural enclosures was present. The enclosures were succeeded by an early Anglo Saxon grubenhaus and ancillary features during the 6th or 7th centuries. A substantial ditch was constructed across the site during the 13th or 14th centuries and may have been the western ditch of St Ives Priory.</i></p> <p><i>A ubiquitous post-medieval 'garden' soil was identified sealing earlier archaeological features/deposits. This material contained a high density of mixed finds from the underlying archaeology.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	<i>September 1997 and January 1998</i>		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	<i>Y</i>	Future work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>
P. number	<i>P709</i>	Site code	<i>HAT 268</i>
Type of project	<i>Post-Excavation</i>		
Site status			
Current land use	<i>Tarmac/ concrete hardstanding, landscaped grounds, disused warehousing and a burnt-out timber structure</i>		
Planned development	<i>Residential</i>		
Main features (+dates)	<i>Roman – enclosure system Anglo Saxon – grubenhaus Medieval – ?Priory precinct ditch Post medieval – buried 'garden' soil</i>		
Significant finds (+dates)	<i>Roman – smith's punch, knife blade fragment (possibly intrusive), fragment of glass bottle or jug Anglo Saxon – Cu and Fe sheets, double-pointed pinbeater, rubbing stone Medieval – hipped bone pin, small fragment of lava (possible quern) Post medieval – various</i>		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Cambridgeshire</i>	<i>St Ives</i>	<i>St Ives CP</i>
HER/ SMR for area	<i>Cambridgeshire SMR</i>		
Post code (if known)			
Area of site	<i>c. 2000m²</i>		
NGR	<i>TL 3145 7115</i>		
Height AOD (max/ min)	<i>c. 7m (essentially level)</i>		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	<i>Cambridgeshire County Council County Archaeology Office</i>		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	<i>Jon Murray and Mike Trevarthen (fieldwork), Tom McDonald (Project Manager)</i>		
Funded by	<i>AMA Developments Ltd</i>		
Bibliography			
Full title	<i>Excavations at the Priory, St Ives, Cambridgeshire. Proposed Publication Report.</i>		
Authors	<i>David Fell, D., McDonald, T., Murray, J. and Trevarthen, M.</i>		
Report no.	<i>1333</i>		
Date (of report)	<i>November 2001 (Revised August 2012)</i>		

EXCAVATIONS AT THE PRIORY, ST IVES, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

PROPOSED PUBLICATION REPORT

by David Fell, Tom McDonald, Jon Murray and Mike Trevarthen

with contributions by Sue Anderson, Ian Baxter, Donna Cameron, Hilary Cool, Jane Cowgill, Nina Crummy, Val Fryer, Peter Guest, Tora Hylton, Iain Soden and Cathy Tester

Summary

Hertfordshire Archaeological Trust carried out an evaluation and excavation at the Priory, St Ives, Cambridgeshire. Fieldwork revealed evidence for activity from the prehistoric period onwards, although the main phases of occupation date to the Romano-British, Saxon, medieval and post-mediaeval periods. A complex of enclosures indicative of agricultural practices was present on the site during the Roman period. These enclosures were then succeeded by an early Saxon grubenhaus and ancillary features during the 6th or 7th centuries. A substantial ditch was constructed across the site during the 13th or 14th centuries and it may be the western enclosure ditch of St Ives Priory.

Introduction

A new residential development was constructed at The Priory, Priory Road, St Ives, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 3145 7115) (Fig. 1). St Ives first appears in the written records of Ramsey Abbey, which acquired the area in the 10th century. However, evidence for occupation in the area dates back to the prehistoric period. Due to the town's archaeological and historical interest, and an archaeological evaluation and subsequent excavation were undertaken prior to the redevelopment as part of a local authority planning condition (Murray 1997, McDonald and Trevarthen 1998). The site was believed to have been part of the former Benedictine Priory Cell of St Ives, though the exact location of the Priory is unknown. All that remains of it today are the partially demolished walls of one of its outbuildings, the Priory Barn, which stands beside a Victorian house called 'The Priory'.

The site lies in the valley of the river Great Ouse and was located c.100m from the north bank of the river, on the east side of St Ives town centre. The river flows east to west here and generally delineates the southern extent of the town. A former course of the river (*Old River*) defines an earlier meander to the south of the site. The present river runs c. 500m to the south and west of the old course. The local drift geology comprises the first gravel terrace of the river Great Ouse. Until recent years, the low-lying position of the site has made the general area susceptible to periodic flooding.

The site is rectangular in plan and the eastern edge fronts onto Priory Road (Fig. 2). The northern boundary is formed by the back of plots fronting Market Hill (the wide market place of St Ives), and the western and southern sides by the gardens of

buildings on Birt Lane and Market Hill. The site is essentially flat and lies at an elevation of c. 7m OD.

Archaeological and Historical Background

Evidence of prehistoric activity in the area largely comprises isolated finds: a number of Palaeolithic flints, including Levallois axeheads (SMR 1685 and 1697), have been recorded on the south-eastern side of St Ives, between the river and the site. A third Palaeolithic handaxe was recorded on the north side of St Ives, on Cemetery Road (SMR 1698). Evidence for Neolithic occupation in the area is limited to a circular scraper, found on the north side of the river, south and east of the site (SMR1925 and 7903). The river valley witnesses extensive occupation during the Bronze Age (Knight 1984). Two bronze spears have been recorded to the west and east of St Ives respectively (Cambridgeshire SMR 2030 and 11857). A third example (SMR 11857), recovered from the river during dredging operations (SMR2031), and a ring ditch of probable Bronze Age date (SMR3692) was located close to the north bank of the river. No Iron Age material has been recorded in the town of St Ives though pottery sherds of this period were located during gravel working immediately south east of the town (Cambridgeshire SMR 1916 and 3879).

The Ouse valley was extensively occupied during the Roman period and the site is situated 7km east of the fort and Roman small town at Godmanchester (Burnham and Wachter 1990, 122-9). Pottery finds have been noted at various locations within St Ives including sherds of the 1st to 4th centuries AD recorded during previous excavations at the priory (see below). Excavations on the Priory barn in the 1940s substantial quantities of Roman pottery (Green 1958), and an evaluation to the south of the site in 1981 also revealed 1st century pottery sherds in some quantity.

The mediaeval town of St Ives developed from the village of Slepe on a crossing point of the Ouse, on lands acquired by Ramsey Abbey in the 9th century (Burn-Murdoch 2000). The site itself is believed to have been occupied by a Benedictine Priory cell, established prior to the Norman Conquest. In 974 an estate at Slepe was given to the monks of Ramsey Abbey (Bigmore 1979, 107). The remains of St Ivo, a Persian bishop (buried in a stone coffin, possibly of Roman origin), were reputedly found near the site around 1001 AD, prompting the foundation of the Priory. The Abbot of Ramsey moved the remains to Ramsey Abbey, and a shrine was constructed over the burial place at Slepe. Shortly afterwards Earl Adelmar granted land for the construction of the priory, priory church and secular buildings. The priory was eventually established in 1008 by Bishop Adnoth of Ramsey (Green 1958, 35). At the time of the Domesday survey (1086 AD) Slepe had a priest and a church and developed into a centre for pilgrimages. The town subsequently developed into an important market centre and the Abbot had 70 customary tenants in 1279. The priory church and offices burnt down in 1207 and were rebuilt and extended in 1238 (*Ramsey Cartulary*). The chapel was rededicated by Henry III in the same year.

Practically nothing is known of the layout of the priory, although a barn and dovecote survived until the mid-19th century. The foundations of a stone wall were discovered at the cattle market to the north-west in 1869 and were interpreted as part of the chapel. Following the Dissolution, the land passed to Thomas Audley, who built a

new house on the estate during the late 16th century. It is likely that most of the buildings had been removed by this time and the priory is not referred-to by William Camden. Audley's building was demolished in the mid-19th century and the building currently known as 'The Priory' constructed in 1870. A number of human bones were discovered during the construction of the new house (Hudson, 1989). The large Priory barn was finally pulled down in 1858, after a variety of public uses. A stone wall, believed to be part of the Priory barn, still stands in the south eastern part of the Priory site.

Archaeological Excavation

The archaeological excavation was undertaken in two phases (Fig. 2):

An archaeological evaluation comprising three trial trenches (Trenches 1-3), located across the western side of the development area and within the footprint of the proposed building (Murray 1997).

An open area excavation comprising two separate trenches (Trenches 4 and 5), again within the footprint of the proposed building (McDonald and Trevarthen 1998).

A sequence of seven activity phases on or adjacent to the site was identified, though the prehistoric and late Saxon/ early mediaeval phases revealed no definite structural evidence.

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| 1 | Prehistoric |
| 2 | Roman |
| 3 | Early Anglo-Saxon |
| 4 | Late Saxon/early mediaeval |
| 5 | Medieval |
| 6 | Late Medieval |
| 7 | Post-Medieval and Modern |

Recording system

Features recorded during the evaluation phase are identified by three digit numbers (Trenches 1-3). A four-figure numbering sequence was used in the main excavation phase (Trenches 4 and 5) commencing with L1000.

Phase 1: Prehistoric

A reddish brown silty sand and gravel (L1004, L1200) lay directly above the river gravel. No prehistoric features were present on the site and the basal soil probably formed during a period of alluviation in the first millennium BC. Evidence for prehistoric activity was minimal, comprising a few residual sherds of handmade pottery only. A sherd of flint-tempered pottery was present within modern pit F1144, and four further prehistoric sherds were located across the site, in a layer of late medieval/early post mediaeval soil (L1102).

Phase 2: Roman (Figs. 3-4)

An enclosure was made during the Roman period and a regular pattern of ditches, aligned north-south and east-west, were present on the eastern and western sides of the site. These formed further enclosure or field boundaries. A concentration of pits and post holes on the western side of the site provides evidence for the presence of lightly-constructed structures and occupation.

Enclosure 1

An enclosure was located in the central area of Trench 4. It was defined by ditches and the ditch (F1267=F1372) on the north side followed an east-west alignment, with a corner immediately to the north of Trench 4. The ditch (F1341) on the west side was aligned north-south and extended across the central area of Trench 4.

The enclosure ditch had been recut twice during the 2nd century. The original ditch F1267 (=F1341, F1372) was 1m deep, but had been badly truncated, by the recuts, where it traversed the east side of the site (F1267, F1372), but was better preserved to the west (F1341). Four separate segments were excavated through the ditch, which had concave edges and a slightly rounded base. It was filled with yellowish brown sandy or silty loam. The more truncated eastern and central segments were aceramic (F1267, F1372), but three separate fills were identified on the better surviving western side of the enclosure (F1341). The fills on the western side contained sherds of Roman pottery, ranging in date from the 1st to 3rd centuries in the lower fill (L1341), and from the 2nd to 4th centuries in the upper two fills (L1342, L1343).

First recut

The enclosure ditch was recut during the 2nd century. The ditch recut F1197 (=F1265, F1339) largely followed the line of the original enclosure ditch and was c. 1.03m wide and 0.82m deep. It truncated the eastern edge of the original western ditch and the northern edge of the original northern ditch. At the eastern end of the trench, the relationship between the original ditch, F1372, and the recut ditch, F1197, was obscured by a later ditch recut, F1273 (=F1271, F1314, F1329, F1374). The fills comprised yellowish brown, silty sands containing pottery sherds dating between the 2nd to 4th centuries AD. Three sherds of medieval pottery from fill L1198 were intrusive. Fragments of ceramic building material were found within the fills including a tessera and a fragment of millstone grit (SF57) in fill L1345, within the western ditch alignment. The millstone grit may be a fragment of building stone, cut from a quern stone (Fig. 9 No. 1). A fragment of flue tile was found within the northern ditch, in fill L1266. Isolated horse teeth were found in the ditch fills of Enclosure 1, and a shorthorn bull horn core was found in F1197.

Second recut

The new recut of the ditch, F1271 (=F1273, F1314, F1329, F1374), followed the line of the earlier enclosure ditches. Along the western side of the enclosure, the second recut truncated the eastern edge of the enclosure ditch and on the north side of the enclosure it cut the north edge of the first recut. The second recut had the same

width as its predecessors but, at 0.4-0.63m, was significantly shallower than the earlier ditches. The fills comprised mid grey to orange brown sandy silts. Pottery from the fills generally comprised sherds dating between the 2nd and 4th centuries AD - including Greyware, Painted ware and Nene Valley Colour Coated ware. Fill L1315 contained a single sherd of Terra Sigillata. The fills also contained brick and tile fragments, two iron nails and an iron blade (SF49).

The latest recut ditch, on the north side of the enclosure F1271, truncated an earlier ditch F1312 (Fig. 3). Due to the proximity of the northern baulk of the excavation trench, only a small area of ditch F1312 could be excavated. It contained mid orange brown silt L1313 but no finds. This feature may be a separate ditch and may have intersected with the earlier enclosure ditches, or may have been an irregularity at the edge of the latest enclosure recut F1271. A small section of a Roman ditch, F129, was excavated during the evaluation in Trench 1, c. 5m west of ditch F1312. The ditch was located in a test pit within Trench 1 and was filled with grey brown clayey silt. Ditch F129 may be a continuation of ditch F1312, or part of the last recut ditch of Enclosure 1 (F1271).

The ditches of all three phases of the enclosure were truncated by a larger medieval ditch F1184 (=F1229), which was aligned north-west/ south-east (see below).

Enclosure 2

The ditch system was more complex at the north-eastern corner of Trench 4 and continued into Trench 5 (Figs. 3-4). A ditch aligned north-south, F1349, was located at the south-eastern corner of Trench 5. It was 0.76m wide and 0.5m deep and was filled with a deposit of brown coarse silt, L1350, containing an assemblage of mainly late 3rd to early 4th century pottery. Five sherds of 11th to 14th century pottery present within the fill are intrusive. Ditch F1349 was cut by enclosure ditch F1376 and an undated feature, F1368. Other finds from Enclosure 2 included an iron knife blade and nail fragments and also a smith's punch from F1349.

The line of ditch F1349 continued to the south, beyond the limit of Trench 5 and was perpendicular to a ditch located in the north-eastern corner of Trench 4, F1225 (=F1354), perhaps forming the corner of a second enclosure. Ditch F1354 (=F1225) was badly truncated, by the cutting of later ditches, but the surviving length had an irregular profile and was c. 0.44m wide and c. 0.8m deep. The dating evidence for this ditch is unsatisfactory and comprises a sherd of grog-tempered pottery of the generally the late 3rd to early 4th century and a probably intrusive sherd of mid to late Saxon quartz tempered pottery.

Enclosure 3

A third enclosure was located in the north-east corner of Trench 5 F1376 (Figs. 3-4) following the same alignment as Enclosure 1. The ditch was 0.47m deep and c. 1.75m wide, and was filled with two deposits of greyish brown silty clay, L1377 and L1378, which contained 2nd to 4th century pottery sherds. The upper fill (L1377) contained two intrusive pottery sherds dating between the 13th and 14th centuries AD. Enclosure 3 post-dated Enclosure 2 and may be contemporary with Enclosure 1, probably infilled in the late 3rd-early 4th century AD.

Other Roman Features (Figs. 3 and 4)

Two intercutting ditches, F1190 and F1244, were located on the extreme western side of Trench 4 (Figs. 3-4). They were aligned north-south and were parallel and located 7m west of the west of Enclosure 1. The earlier ditch F1244 had an irregular profile (Fig. 5) and was 0.74m deep and 1.75m wide. A post hole, F1277, was located at the base of the ditch and it contained a dark brown sandy fill (L1278). Ditch F1244 contained four separate deposits of orange brown, sand (L1245, L1250, L1346 and L1347). These contained pottery sherds of the 2nd to 4th centuries AD, and L1250 contained fragments of tile and mortar.

Ditch F1244 was cut by ditch F1190. The latter was 0.9m deep and traced for 1.45m (Figs. 3-4). It was filled with three layers of grey to orange brown silt (L1191, L1235 and L1243), which contained sherds dating between the 2nd and 4th (generally late 3rd to 4th) centuries AD. Two intrusive sherds of 13th or 14th century pottery were present in the upper fill L1191.

Ditches F1190 and F1244 were approximately perpendicular to ditch F1193. The latter could not be fully excavated due to the proximity of the south-west corner of Trench 4. The ditch was filled with greyish brown silt (L1194), and contained late 3rd to 4th century AD pottery.

Two curvilinear ditches, F1223 and F1180, were located on the north side of Enclosure 1. Ditch F1180 truncated Enclosure 2 and may have followed the northern edge of Enclosure 1. The ditch was 0.6m deep and 1.06m wide and was filled with four layers of orange/ brown silty sand (L1181, L1186, L1187, L1188), which contained a large group of pottery sherds of the late 3rd to 4th century. The upper fill, F1181, contained three tile fragments and three intrusive sherds of medieval pottery.

Ditch F1180 was truncated by ditch F1182. The latter followed the east side of ditch F1180 and represents a recut of the original ditch. It was 0.42m wide, 0.3m deep and was filled with dark grey silty sand L1183, containing sherds of 1st century pottery only and a fragment of iron chain or hoop.

Curvilinear ditch F1223 (=F1352) was located on the east side of ditch F1180. This ditch ran parallel with part of the line of ditch F1180, before curving to the west, towards Enclosure 1. It was 0.18m deep and 0.79m wide and was filled with mid orange silty clay (L1224, L1353) containing a range of 2nd to 4th century AD Roman pottery sherds and handmade Saxon sherds of the 7th to 10th centuries. The ditch truncated Enclosure 2 and its' intersection with Enclosure 1 has been truncated by medieval Ditch F1184 (=F1229). These ditches could possibly represent eaves drip gullies, features often associated with Iron Age settlement in the area. However, due to a lack of Iron Age material this cannot be substantiated.

A much truncated ditch, F1269, was located in the centre of Trench 4 (Figs. 3-4). It was orientated east/ west and terminated with a butt end to the west. The eastern extent of the ditch was truncated by medieval ditch F1184 (F1229), but it may have been continuous with ditch F1223 (F1352). The ditch was 0.5m deep and 0.50m wide, and was filled with orange brown silt (L1270) containing pottery sherds dating

between the late 2nd to late 3rd centuries AD.

Further ditches, dating to the Roman period, were located across the site. Two ditches, F1262 and F1288, orientated east/ west, were located at the west end of Trench 5. Ditch F1288 was located in the south-western corner of Trench 5. It was 0.37m deep and c. 1m wide and was filled with orange brown sandy silt, containing generally late 3rd to 4th century pottery sherds. Ditch F1262 was located north of ditch F1288. Due to the proximity of the north-western corner of Trench 5, the ditch could not be fully excavated but it contained three layers of greyish brown silty sand, which contained brick and tile fragments and pottery dating between the late 2nd to late 3rd centuries and (intrusively) 11th to 13th centuries AD. Both ditches F1288 and F1262 were truncated by medieval ditch F1184 (= F1229).

A ditch (F1379), aligned north/ south, was located towards the western side of Trench 4 (Figs. 3-4). This ditch was perpendicular to Ditch F1193 and the two features may have been associated, but the intervening area had been disturbed by later features. Ditch F1379 was 0.7m deep and 0.8m wide, and was filled with reddish brown silt, L1380. No finds were located within the fill, but the ditch was likely constructed during the Roman period and had been cut by post hole F1458 (below).

An irregular, curvilinear ditch, F1381, was located southwest of ditch F1379. The ditch was 0.3m deep and c.0.6m wide, increasing in width towards the south. The fill comprised orange brown silty sand, L1382, containing three lumps of ironstone and sandstone. The stones may have had a structural function or be a deliberate dump of material. The ditch contained a sherd of terra sigillata dating between the 1st and 3rd centuries AD. The southern end of ditch F1381 had been truncated by later features.

The terminal or corner of a ditch F119, aligned east/ west, was located during the evaluation, at the western end of Trench 1 (Fig. 3). It was 0.5m wide and 0.24m deep and was filled with greenish brown clay, L1020. Four 2nd-4th century pottery sherds were present in the excavated fill, along with an imbrex tile.

An alignment of four postholes, F1320, F1324, F1358 and F1252 was located between Enclosure 1 and ditch F1244 (Fig. 3). The alignment ran east/ west and the post holes were spaced at intervals of c.0.7m. A fifth post hole F1322 was located 0.5m north of post holes F1320 and F1324 and may also have formed part of the alignment. Posthole F1358 cut ditch F1379. The postholes were roughly circular in shape and varied in depth between 0.6m (L1322) and 0.25m (L1358). Their fills comprised grey to yellowish brown clayey or silty sand, containing pottery sherds dating between the 2nd and 4th centuries AD. The post alignment may have been a fence line, or formed part of a timber, post-built, structure.

The post alignment was situated within an area which contained a concentration of postholes and ten further postholes F1280, F1302, F1306, F1308, F1316, F1318, F1326, F1356 and F1383 were located adjacent to the post alignment (Figs. 3-4). They were generally sub-circular in plan, were between 70mm (F1326) and 300mm (F1356) deep and the fills comprised yellowish brown silty clay. No dating evidence was obtained, but Posthole F1356 had been cut into the western boundary ditch of Enclosure 1, and Pit F1316 had been truncated by a later pit (F1286) (below). They

were located close by Roman 'fence line' (F1320, F1324, etc.; see above) and may have formed part of a Roman period structure. The presence of later features south of the posthole cluster hinders further interpretation.

A sub-circular pit F1286 was located towards the north-western side of Trench 4, immediately east of ditch F1244. It was 0.15m deep and cut post hole F1316. The pit was filled with orange brown silty sand, which contained an assemblage of pottery sherds dating predominantly to the late 3rd century. A single intrusive early Saxon sherd was also present. The fill also contained two fragments of painted wall plaster, which may indicate the presence of a building in the area.

Phase 3: Anglo-Saxon (Figs. 3 and 4)

The Roman enclosure (Enclosure 1) had gone out of use by the 7th century and the site was reused for settlement during the Saxon period. A Saxon sunken floored building (*grubenhaus*; F1248) was constructed on the line of the ditches which had formed the northern corner of Roman Enclosure 1 (Fig. 3). Occasional sherds of middle Saxon quartz tempered pottery in the fills of the Roman ditches and pits suggest that they may have remained visible, as sunken features, into the Saxon period.

Grubenhaus F1248 was located on the northwest side of Trench 4 (Fig. 4). Approximately 50% of the building was excavated and the north-western end lay beyond the edge of the trench. The sub-rectangular building measured c. 4.3m by 3m. The base of the building was flat and had been cut c. 300mm into the underlying soil, truncating the upper part of the underlying Roman enclosure ditch, F1329. The building had been disturbed during the construction of medieval and later features. No structural features were located within the building, although a posthole (F1246) was located on the north-west side of the building. The posthole was undated and its stratigraphic link with Building F1248 could not be determined.

The base of the building was filled with a deposit of grey to orange brown silty sand (L1249, L1257 and L1328). The fill contained a variety of pottery sherds, the earliest of which were Roman types, including Nene Valley ware and Terra Sigillata. Early Saxon (5th to 7th century) and medieval sherds were also found within the fill. These included, notably, five sherds of Charnwood Forest Ware and an assemblage of domestic cooking pots. A single sherd, dated between the 13th and 14th centuries, was intrusive from overlying layer L1102. An undiagnostic copper alloy sheet (SF45), broadly dated to the Saxon period was present, as was an undated laminated example (SF50). A fragment of sandstone (SF42), perhaps reused from a quern, was also present.

A group of postholes (F1205, F1207, F1209, F1241, F1282, F1304 and F1331) was located south of *Grubenhaus* F1248. Postholes F1205 and F1331 truncated the former Roman enclosure ditches, and posthole F1241 cut Roman Pit F1239. The postholes ranged between 0.4m and 0.19m in depth and were between 0.21m and 0.3m in diameter. They were filled with brown sandy loam and Posthole F1304 contained a single sherd of handmade early Saxon pottery of the 5th to 7th centuries. Postholes F1331, F1205, F1207, F1209 and F1241 formed an alignment

and may have represented two sides of a post-built structure.

The east side of Trench 4 contained two sub-circular pits, F1219 and F1221 which, similar to the Saxon sunken floored building (F1248), cut the ditches of the former Roman enclosure. Pit F1219 was irregular in plan and was 0.46m deep and c. 1.8m wide. It contained a single fill of orange brown sandy silt (L1220), containing a varied assemblage of Roman (3rd-4th century) and early Saxon (5th-7th century) pottery sherds, as well as sparse intrusive early mediaeval sherds. A few horse bones were found in the pit. Pit F1221 was smaller than Pit F1219, being 0.1m deep and 0.6m in diameter. The former was filled with an orange brown silty clay (L1222), containing five sherds of residual 2nd to 4th century pottery, derived from the underlying Roman enclosure ditches. Two stone architectural fragments were also present.

A group of four pits was located on the southern edge of Trench 4 (F1215, F1217, F1237 and F1239). They were sub-circular in plan and varied between 0.15m (F1217) and 0.37m (F1239) in depth. Pit F1215 contained three separate fills, comprising a lower fill of orange brown silty sand (L1233). An intermediate fill of very dark brown silty sand, L1232, yielded fragments of charcoal and nine pieces of daub. Upper Fill L1216 comprised orange brown silty sand. The remaining pits, F1217, F1237 and F1239, contained single fills of orange brown silty sands. The pits contained small quantities of Roman pottery and handmade early Saxon sherds and also sparse late Saxon sherds, and likely belong to the main early Saxon phase, though clearly a different phase than the possible post-built structure.

Phase 4: Late Saxon/ early medieval

No structural elements of this phase were identified, and it appears that the site reverted to agricultural or waste land. Sparse pottery from the middle Saxon period (in particular Ipswich ware) was certainly present, as were late Saxon wares such as Thetford and St Neots types, along with early mediaeval material (see Anderson, below). Some of these ceramics may be derived from field manuring, but still suggests occupation close by during the middle/late Saxon and early mediaeval periods.

Phase 5: Medieval (Figs 3 and 4)

The character of the site altered radically during the medieval period. Substantial Ditch F1184 (=1229, 1402) was recorded on the eastern side of Trenches 4 and 5 is interpreted as the boundary ditch of St Ives Priory. Two smaller ditches (F1258 and F1296) on the west side of Trench 4 and Pit F1260, in the south-east corner of the same trench, were contemporary.

A pit or ditch terminal (F1260) was located against the southern baulk at the south-eastern corner of Trench 4. The full dimensions of this feature could not be established and it was filled with orange brown silt (L1261), which contained a sherd of 13th or 14th century pottery. The pit had been truncated by the cutting of the priory boundary ditch.

Posthole F1335 in the north-eastern part of the site probably also dated to the mediaeval period (containing residual 2nd-3rd century sherds and also two sherds of mediaeval coarseware).

The boundary ditch of St Ives Priory was located in Trenches 4 and 5. It was orientated north-west/ south-east and truncated the ditches of the earlier Roman enclosure. The ditch was 6.8m wide, had slightly irregular edges (Figs. 3-5) and was c. 1.2m deep.

The basal fills, L1251, 1256 and 1385, comprised grey and greenish silty clays and represented primary silting at the base of the ditch. The deposits contained sherds of residual Roman and Saxon pottery and probably dated to the 12th or 13th centuries. Fragments of painted plaster and tile were also present. A layer of dark grey burnt clay (L1236) overlay the primary silts. The deposit was thicker on the east side than on the west and was deliberately deposited, from the east side. It contained concentrations of ash and charcoal, a variety of brick, tile and daub fragments and four iron nails. The pottery assemblage was smaller than other deposits and comprised residual Roman sherds and possible early medieval sherds. A single sherd of 13th to 14th century pottery was also present. Layer L1236 was a dump of demolition debris, deposited from the eastern side of the ditch, probably from within the compound of St Ives Priory. The majority of the ditch profile was filled with greyish brown sandy silts (L1185, L1189, L1192 and L1234), formed by gradual infilling after the deposition of 'destruction' debris L1236. Pottery within the upper fills comprised a wide range of sherds, dating from residual Roman and Saxon sherds, with the latest material in upper Fill L1185 dating from the 16th century. A bone pin (SF32) was present in Fill L1185. This was manufactured in the 12th century and is a high status item. Tile fragments and two residual struck flints were also present in Fill L1185. Of interest is the relatively high proportion of pig (*Sus Scrofa*) bone fragments from the ditch, suggesting some manner of preference for this species.

Two smaller ditches, F1258 and F1296, were located at the western end of Trench 4. Both terminated within the trench and cut earlier Roman Ditches F1244 and F1193 respectively. Ditch F1296 cut an undated Pit F1300. Ditch F1258 was orientated east/ west and was 0.45m wide and 0.45m deep and was filled with a deposit of greyish brown sandy silt (L1259). The silt contained five residual sherds of Roman pottery, derived from the underlying ditches and a single 13th-14th century sherd. Three fragments of brick and tile and a residual Roman *tessera* were also present. Ditch F1296 was orientated north-west/ south-east and was 0.5m wide and 0.22m deep. It was filled with dark grey brown silt (L1297), containing a fragment of tile, residual Roman and Saxon sherds and four sherds of late 12th/ 13th century origin.

The priory enclosure ditch and all other Roman and medieval features had become completely infilled by the 15th/ 16th century, when a layer of garden soil, L1102, formed over the site (see below). Soil L1102 also sealed two undated pits in the southern corner of Trench 4 (F1254 and F1300; Fig. 4). A third feature (F1275) may be a medieval pit or intrusive animal burrow.

Phase 6: Late medieval (Figs. 3 and 4)

A layer of garden soil (L1102) developed over the site during the 15/ 16th centuries. It comprised dark brown sandy loam, which varied in depth between 0.3m and 0.7m. Fourteen test pits were excavated into the soil, revealing that it comprised reworking of underlying deposits. The remainder of the soil was then removed by a mechanical excavator, to reveal the underlying archaeology (see above).

All artefacts from Soil L1102 were derived from the underlying features or from the reworking of the soil during modern cultivation. An assemblage of pottery sherds was present, which ranged from the prehistoric period to the 20th century. A variety of brick, tile, architectural fragments and *tesserae* were also present. Other artefacts included two pieces of struck flint, iron nails, quern stone fragments and a variety of metal items, including pins, rings and wire. These were generally made of copper alloy and were in poor condition.

Three large rubbish pits, F1119, F1227 and F1365, had been cut into Garden Soil L1102. Within all three, the generally latest material dated to the 15th-16th century, suggesting that the garden soil had accumulated by the time of the Dissolution. Two of these pits (F1119 and F1365) had been disturbed by later features. Pit F1119 was located on the eastern side of Trench 4. It was sub-rectangular in plan, measuring c. 2.5m by c. 1.7m and was 0.27m deep. The base was filled with a deposit of grey brown silty clay (L1132) which contained a wide range of pottery sherds dating from the Roman period. The latest sherd was a piece of Cambridge Sgraffito, dating to the 14th or 15th century. The upper part of the pit contained brown Sand L1120. This fill contained a dump of mussel shells and an assemblage of pottery sherds manufactured between the 2nd and 15th centuries. The 15th century material comprises 35 slipped and glazed sherds from a single jug. Pit F1227 contained some 580 animal bone fragments, including the articulated skeletons of two dogs (*Canis familiaris*), horse (*Equus caballus*) bone, cattle (*Bos taurus*) ribs and a virtually complete boar skeleton; the pig was not butchered. The pottery assemblage from the pit comprised residual Roman, Saxon and medieval sherds, as well as sparse 15th/ early 16th century examples.

Pit F1365 was an irregular feature, measuring c. 1.65m by c. 0.85m and was c. 0.85m deep. It had vertical edges, but had been disturbed by later intrusions. The basal fill, L1363, was aceramic, comprising reddish brown sand, formed as a result of natural infilling. The upper fills (L1294, L1295, L1362 and L1366) comprised grey to orange brown silts, with a dump of building rubble (L1367). Fill L1295 contained a residual tessera and a sherd of 15th or 16th century Cistercian type ware.

Phase 7: Post-medieval/ modern (Figs. 3 and 4)

A variety of post-medieval and modern features were present on the site. They comprised a number of miscellaneous pits and four lazy bed trenches and are not archaeologically significant. The distribution of these features is presented in Figure 4.

FINDS REPORTS

The Pottery

Sue Anderson and Cathy Tester

Introduction

A total of 2344 sherds of pottery weighing 32,618kg were collected from the site during the evaluation and excavation stages. The assemblage ranges in date from the prehistoric period to the modern era. Table 1 shows the total quantities of pottery identified in each period group. Quantification by context is included in the site archive.

Pottery group	No.	% No.	Weight (g)	% Weight (g)	EVE	% EVE
Handmade and unidentified wares	11	0.5	135	0.4	-	-
Roman wares	1209	51.6	15141	46.4	16.7	61.4
Early Saxon wares	107	4.6	953	2.9	0.28	1.0
Middle Saxon wares	5	0.2	118	0.4	-	-
Late Saxon wares	42	1.8	319	1.0	0.58	2.1
Early Medieval wares	96	4.1	495	1.5	-	-
Medieval coarsewares	213	9.1	2376	7.3	1.11	4.1
Medieval glazed wares	59	2.5	566	1.7	-	-
Late Medieval wares	213	9.1	3334	10.2	2.23	8.2
Post-medieval wares	364	15.5	8736	26.8	5.49	20.2
Refined wares	25	1.1	445	1.4	0.82	3.0
Totals	2344		32618		27.21	

Table 1: Pottery by ware group

Pottery by period

Prehistoric and unidentified wares

Heavily abraded body sherds with sand and sparse calcareous tempering (1102 TP3 and TP6), sand, ironstone and grog tempering (L1185, L1216) and coarse sand and calcitic inclusions (L1218) were assigned to this group. The latter may be early Saxon rather than prehistoric. Flint-tempered Iron Age pottery was found in Fill L1102 TP4 and TP19, and L1146.

Two unidentified sherds consisted of a very hard thick-walled redware with thin white slip on the exterior (L1004), similar to but finer than Bourne D ware, and a very small greyware sherd (L1345 sample [17]). Both are undated.

Roman wares

1209 sherds of Roman pottery weighing 15,141kg were collected during the evaluation and excavation. The ditches contained large quantities of Roman pottery, the largest coming from the sections cut through the enclosure ditches and recuts of Phase 2 (F1341=1404, F1339=1406, F1314=1408, F1267=1410, F1265=1412 and F1271=1414).

Thirty-seven Roman fabrics were identified in this assemblage. The most common

fabrics recovered were Miscellaneous Sandy grey wares (26%), Late Shell-tempered wares (18.5%) Lower Nene Valley wares (15.4%), Miscellaneous Black-surfaced wares (8.8%) and Black-Burnished ware 1 (5.3%).

Miscellaneous Grey wares and Black-surfaced wares

Grey wares equal 28% of the sherd count, 26% of the weight and 27% of the EVEs. Forms include jars and dishes.

Black-surfaced wares have been grouped together because of their common superficial appearance. This fabric grouping is derived from Essex (Martin, *forthcoming*) where an East Anglian preference for black-surfaced vessels has been observed. Black-surfaced wares account for 14% of the sherd count, 8.8% of the weight and 10% of the EVEs.

Lower Nene Valley wares

The Lower Nene Valley wares account for 19% of the sherd count, 15% of the weight and 23% of the total EVEs in the Roman pottery assemblage.

Late shell-tempered wares

Shell-tempered wares account for 15.3% of the sherds, 18.5% of the weight and 11.2% of the EVES in the Roman pottery assemblage. Forms represented are medium mouthed jars, large thick storage jars and a flanged bowl.

Black burnished wares

Black-burnished ware category 1 (BB1) accounts for 5.3% of the weight and 8.3% of the total EVES. Perrin (1999) observed at Chesterton that BB1 came into the region at two separate periods. The first was during the second quarter of the 2nd century and the second was towards the end of the 3rd century and into the 4th. These coincided with the periods before and after the Nene Valley Grey wares “swamped the market” for the rest of the 2nd century until the end of the 3rd when it ceased to be produced. The same pattern is followed on this local ‘consumer’ site.

The BB1 sherds from this site fall into the later period. The most common forms represented are the conical flanged bowls which are characteristic of the late 3rd to 4th centuries.

Unspecified wheelmade Black burnished and BB2 type fabrics were also recorded but it is not certain if these were BB2 or local greyware industries copying BB2.

Other Late Roman Specialist wares

A small but significant quantity of other provincially-traded wares came from Much Hadham and from Oxfordshire. Hadham colour-coated wares include a flagon, a plain-rimmed dish and an imitation samian Dr 36/Curle15 dish.

Oxfordshire Colour-coated wares are represented by a copy of samian form Dr 38 and a jar.

Imported wares

Samian accounts for 1.1% of the weight and 3.8 % of the total EVEs in the Roman pottery. Examples include a Dr 18 platter from La Graufesenque (Flavian in date)

found in a small ditch F1381. There is also a Dr 18/ 31 from Les Martres-de-Veyre which is Trajanic. More than half of the samian is Central Gaulish from Lezoux with Hadrianic or Antonine dates, for example cup Dr 33 and bowl Dr 31. Late 2nd to mid-3rd century samian from East Gaul is represented by a Ludowici Tg and a Dr 38 from Rheinzabern and non-diagnostic sherd in Rheinzabern and Trier fabrics.

One rim sherd from a Pompeian Red ware platter was found, possibly from Central Gaul. Rhenish wares are represented by sherds from two rouletted beakers, most likely from Trier. Amphorae are represented by three sherds of South Spanish origin.

Early Saxon wares

Basic fabric descriptions are provided below. All the Saxon wares are handmade.

ESO2: Grass tempered but containing a high proportion of sand.

ESCQ: Coarse quartz tempering with few other inclusions.

ESFS: Fine sand tempering with few other inclusions.

ESSS: Sparse to moderate fine shell and sand tempering, shell generally leached out.

ESSM: Sand and abundant white mica, generally very fine.

ESCF: Charnwood Forest type, containing granitic tempering (dark mica, feldspar).

ESCL: Sand and sparse large limestone pieces.

The Charnwood Forest wares are the most common fabric by weight. However, taken as a group the sandy wares (ESCQ and ESFS) form the largest part of the Early Saxon assemblage.

The estimated vessel equivalent of 0.28 is based on only three measurable jar rims. All rims were plain upright or slightly everted types, with the exception of one slightly inturned example.

One body sherd of ESCQ has ring stamps and incised horizontal lines (L1220). Incised lines also occur on a body sherd of ESFS, in this case both horizontal and diagonal, and accompanied with stabbed dots, all above the carination.

Early Saxon sherds were found associated with *Grubenhaus* F1248, assigned to Phase 3.

A large group of pits in the centre of Trench 4 (F1215, F1217, F1237 and F1239) contained a number of Early Saxon sherds, dating these features to the 5th - 7th century.

Illustrated vessels

1 (Fig. 6.1) Early Saxon handmade jar. Basic ESFS fabric with occasional mica and sparse calcareous inclusions. Slight burnishing on exterior. Context F1248 L1249.

2 (Fig. 6.2) Early Saxon handmade sub-biconical jar. ESFS fabric, hard, well-fired. Incised decoration. Context L1102 TP13.

Middle Saxon wares

This is a very small group, and the single sherd of Maxey-type ware is uncertain. However, the Ipswich Ware does suggest some Middle Saxon activity on the site, even if it only occurred as household waste used in manuring of open fields.

Late Saxon wares

Late Saxon pottery was not common at this site.

Five jar rims and one bowl have been identified as Late Saxon or Developed St. Neots wares. The jars have wedge-shaped rims typical of Late Saxon wares but also found in some Roman fabrics. A bead-rimmed bowl was also identified, and a possible developed jug/ jar rim with a slight flange was also found.

Only one sherd of Late Saxon Stamford Ware was identified, a body sherd with light green Glaze 1 on the exterior.

Other possible Late Saxon wares include three sherds in a fabric similar to Thetford ware but with calcareous inclusions. Finally a redware jar sherd with a very square wedge rim is probably of this date and may be an import.

Illustrated vessel

- 1 (Fig. 6.3) Saxo-Norman jar (SXNO) in hard oxidised fabric. Heavily abraded. Context L1167 (F1166).

Early medieval wares

Only one identifiable vessel is present, a jar with a slightly thickened everted rim in a coarse shelly fabric.

Medieval coarse and glazed wares

Six un-provenanced coarsewares were identified; the fabrics are described below.

MCW1: Pale orange to red with mid-light grey core, hard with a hackly fracture and powdery feel. Contains common white, pink and black quartz (0.25-0.75mm, ill-sorted, sub-rounded), sparse calcareous fragments (0.5-1mm, ill-sorted, rounded) and very sparse ferrous pieces (up to 1mm, rounded). Vessels are wheelmade. The fabric is very similar to Ely and Mildenhall coarsewares, but is not as black or laminated. It probably has a fenland origin.

MCW2: Dark grey fabric with red or buff margins, hard with a laminated fracture and powdery feel. Contains moderate white, pink and black quartz (0.25-0.5mm, ill-sorted, sub-rounded). Wheelmade.

MCW3: Pale grey-buff throughout, occasionally with a dark grey surface, hard with a hackly fracture and harsh feel. Contains moderate clear, pink and black quartz (c.0.25mm, well-sorted, rounded), and occasional calcareous fragments (very coarse, ill-sorted, sub-rounded). Wheelmade. Similar to some Saxo-Norman and Roman material.

MCW4: Oxidised ware with buff-orange surfaces, orange-red margins and grey core, hard with a hackly fracture and harsh feel. Contains moderate clear quartz (up to 0.25mm, well-sorted, angular), sparse ferrous fragments (very coarse, ill-sorted, sub-rounded), and sparse limestone (very coarse, ill-

sorted, angular). Wheelmade.

MCW5: Dark blue-grey surfaces, buff/grey margin and grey core, hard with a laminated fracture and rough feel. Contains common clear quartz (0.25-0.5mm, well-sorted, sub-angular), and sparse calcareous fragments (0.25-0.75mm, ill-sorted, angular and rounded). Wheelmade and well-fired.

MCW6: Oxidised version of MCW2, with pale orange surfaces, dark red margins and orange core.

MCW2 is the most common fabric in the medieval coarseware group, comprising approximately one third of the total. The oxidised variant MCW6 occurs less frequently. Calcareous fabrics (ELCW, MCW1, MCW3, MCW5) are also common, and limestone tempered fabrics from the East Midlands (LSCW) occur in several contexts.

Identifiable vessels include nine jars, seven bowls, eleven jugs and two large storage vessels.

A few body sherds have stab marks or combed/ incised wavy lines, and one Grimston coarseware vessel, found in Pit F1260, has applied thumbled strips. One wide strap handle has slash decoration (L1185), and a rod handles has been impressed to give the appearance of scales (L1294).

One wide strap in Lyveden-Stanion coarseware had a deep cut which had been made after firing on the underside. Many sherds showed signs of use wear and soot.

Glazed wares form 21.7% of the medieval assemblage by count and 19.2% by weight. Identified fabrics include material from Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire, Buckinghamshire and Lincolnshire, as well as one possible import. Grimston and Ely green glazed wares are the most common types, between them forming over half the glazed group.

Six glazed wares were un-provenanced and these are described below:

UPG1: Very fine grey fabric, hard with smooth fracture. Contains sparse very fine sand and occasional ferrous fragments. Glazed with a thick dark copper green glaze. Possibly from Nuneaton or Nottingham.

UPG2: Fine buff fabric, hard. Contains common red and clear quartz, occasional mica and occasional calcareous fragments. Only one sherd was found, and this had lost its outer surface.

UPG3: Fine redware, hard, laminated fracture, smooth feel. Contains very fine quartz, sparse mica and occasional ferrous pieces. The two sherds are very poorly formed. Spots of uncoloured glaze. Possibly an Essex product, but not Hedingham Ware.

UPG4: Coarse sandy oxidised light pink fabric with calcareous and ferrous inclusions. Possibly Fenland, Lincolnshire or Brill/ Boarstall product.

UPG5: Fine sandy greyware with iron green glaze.

UPG6: Medium sandy redware, slightly micaceous, with possible red slip and uncoloured glaze.

The vessels are all jugs and the majority of glazed wares have iron green glaze, several with brown slip stripes. A few of the redwares have clear uncoloured glaze.

Decoration other than applied slip stripes included a hand and other applied decoration from Grimston face jugs (L1102 TP14, F1299), white slip applied lines and stamped pads on Lyveden-Stanion Ware, and narrow applied lines and brown slip on Brill/ Boarstall ware.

The basal fill of the Priory Precinct Ditch F1184 (=1229, 1402) contained a sherd of Ely coarseware, which ranges through the 12th - 14th centuries, but its association in this fill (L1251) and the one above (L1236) with early medieval ware and Saxo-Norman pottery could suggest a date in the earlier part of the range (12th - 13th century) for the lowest silt fills. Upper Fill L1185 produced the largest quantity of sherds and is consistent with deliberate backfilling using surrounding soil. The latest material found in this fill (LMTM, LMTc, BOUD, GRE) would indicate that this occurred in the 16th century.

Illustrated vessels

- 1 (Fig. 6.4) Medieval coarseware (MCW2) bowl. Context 1102 TP11.
- 2 (Fig. 6.5) Ely coarseware (ELCW) jug or jar. Oxidised surfaces. Context L1167 (F1166).

Late medieval wares

The local late medieval sparse calcareous fabric is the most common type occurring at the site.

Bourne D Ware is common, but the figures are artificially raised by the presence of a large part of a single jug (Fig. 6.6). This vessel is overfired and has a thin white slip and a small area of green. The handle has a long cross (†) incised lengthways close to the rim after firing, perhaps indicating the ownership of the vessel. Sherds of this vessel are scattered through several contexts (L1120 and L1132 [F1119], L1137 [F1112], L1167? [F1166], L1192 [F1229]).

Imported material includes stonewares from Germany and France, and two sherds of fine white ware which may be of French origin. One of these had copper green glaze inside and yellow glaze outside, the opposite of Dutch white wares of the period.

Vessel forms identified include mugs and tankards in Cistercian-type ware, one of which had a large applied white slip pad, and a small sherd of a 'Tudor Green' drinking vessel with a rilled body. In the local LMT fabric, there are three jugs, five bowls, five dishes or pancheons, three jars, a small conical lid and the pedestal base of a chafing dish.

Illustrated vessel

- 1 (Fig. 6.6) Bourne Ware Type D (BOUD) jug. Hard, overfired (large air bubbles and cracks) and reduced, with white slip over upper body and small bib of green glaze. Incised cross in handle. Context F1119 L1120.

Early post-medieval wares

This group forms the largest part of the post-Roman assemblage. Sherds are generally large and unabraded, and the group was collected from only a few features.

The majority of pottery consists of red earthenwares with various glazes, including blackwares and bichrome wares. Tin glazed earthenwares, slipwares and stonewares were also found.

The redwares (fabrics 6.10 to 6.16) include four jars, three large storage vessels, eleven bowls, nine dishes or pancheons, four pipkins, one jar or pipkin, seven jugs, a chamber pot, two lids, one mug, a cup, six tankards or tygs, and two unidentified hollow wares. Tin glazed earthenwares include a pedestal-based ointment pot (F1112), two 'drug jars' and a plate. Slipwares include two chamber pots, two dishes, three press-moulded flatwares and two hollow wares. Most of the stoneware vessels were probably bottles or jugs, and one probable Bellarmine is decorated with a moulded shield medallion.

There are also two dishes with all-over white slip on the upper surface and red and white trailed slip in an abstract pattern over this (Fig. 6.7-8). A red earthenware press-moulded plate is decorated with all-over white slip on the upper surface, and orange and brown slip was used to infill the raised borders (Fig. 6.9). Staffordshire-type slipwares are also present, and include the typical brown trailed slip decoration on a white body under yellow glaze.

Frechen stoneware is generally mottled brown glazed 'Tiger ware', but one sherd with a grey body and uncoloured glaze is also present.

Illustrated vessels

- 1 (Fig. 6.7) Local post-medieval slipware (PMSW) dish. All-over white slip on upper surface, decorated with trailed red and white slips and clear/green glaze. Context L1135 (F1134).
- 2 (Fig. 6.8) Local post-medieval slipware (PMSW) dish. All-over white slip on upper surface, decorated with trailed red slip and thick brown glaze. Heavily sooted underneath. Context L1135 (F1134).
- 3 (Fig. 6.9) Press-moulded slipware plate (PMSW). Redware with all-over white slip and moulded decoration under mottled brown glaze. Context L1135 (F1134).

Refined wares

This is a typical 18th/ 19th century assemblage. Vessel forms include cups, plates, a creamware chamber pot, an oval dish, a black basalt teapot and a stoneware inkwell. Decoration includes transfer printing, flow blue, hand painted blue decoration and industrial mocha-style yellow slipware.

Discussion

The small quantity of Iron Age pottery suggests that intensive occupation of the site did not occur until 1st century AD, when Roman pottery suggests uninterrupted occupation until the end of the Roman period. The range of imported wares indicates some high status occupation nearby. Pottery assemblages are dominated by the Lower Nene Valley grey wares and specialist wares. The late 3rd and 4th century assemblage include the widely-traded specialist wares from Oxfordshire and Much Hadham, Hertfordshire and Dorset, and the Late Shell-tempered wares that are characteristic of the late and latest Roman period.

Early Saxon wares were generally of local manufacture, but the presence of Charnwood Forest sherds suggests links with the Leicestershire region. Williams and Vince (1997) suggest that in Cambridgeshire this pottery was replaced by Maxey-type and Ipswich wares by the late 7th century. This end-date corresponds well with the general lack of diagnostically Middle Saxon pottery on the site.

Late Saxon pottery is not common, and the difficulty in distinguishing it from some Roman wares means that the quantity may be even less than suggested. However, there is certainly some pottery of this date. Early medieval ware is also rare. The lack of diagnostic pottery of 8th-12th century date appears to indicate a reduction in intensity of land-use on the site during the Middle Saxon to Saxo-Norman period.

Medieval coarse and glazed wares form almost a quarter of the total post-Roman assemblage. Most coarsewares were of local manufacture, although some other regions were represented. Glazed wares were dominated by pottery from Cambridgeshire and Norfolk, material from Northamptonshire, Buckinghamshire, the fen-edge of Suffolk, Lincolnshire and Surrey were present. Only one imported ware, a possible Saintonge sherd from southern France, was present. Diagnostic material suggests a spread of dates throughout the medieval period (12th-14th centuries).

Late medieval pottery is relatively common and consists of vessels from Cambridgeshire, the East Midlands and Lincolnshire. One sherd from the Surrey-Hampshire border, 'Tudor Green' Ware, was found. Imports of this date, in particular German stonewares, did not occur with the same frequency as is normally encountered in East Anglian ports and larger towns.

Early post-medieval pottery of 16th-18th century date consisted largely of glazed redwares, most of which were probably locally produced. West Norfolk Bichrome was also found. Several vessels of this date appear to have been discarded in the large pits assigned to Phase 7. Rather than suggesting an increase in human activity, it probably represents the high proportion of pottery of this date in the pottery assemblage.

Finds of modern refined earthenwares and stonewares probably represents composting and general rubbish dispersal in garden soil.

There is a high degree of residuality on this site. Roman-period disposal of rubbish into the wide ditches has resulted in re-deposition of large quantities of this material in later features. Intercutting has also produced some intrusion of later wares in the

upper layers of the Phase 2 (Roman) and Phase 3 (Saxon) features. Mixing and disturbance of finds in Garden Soil L1102 is particularly noticeable, and test pitting of this context produced nearly a quarter of the total pottery assemblage.

Evidence indicates that the main phases of activity on or near this site were in the Roman, Early Saxon and high/ late medieval periods. Small quantities of pottery in the middle-late Saxon and early medieval periods suggest a reversion to arable or wasteland following the abandonment of the early Saxon structures. The Dissolution period would appear to correspond with backfilling of the Priory ditch, followed shortly afterwards by the establishment and reworking of a garden soil layer which was later cut by post-medieval pits and other features. In all the main phases, people living on or near the site used pottery from local producers but also took advantage of their central position in relation to East Anglia, the Midlands and the South and were able to procure ceramics from a wide catchment as a result.

The Small Finds

Nina Crummy

This small assemblage contains a material dating from the Roman period to the 18th century. It is presented here in four groups: Roman, Anglo-Saxon, medieval, and post-medieval.

Roman

Most of the stratified Roman material consists of small fragments of iron from the Enclosure 1 and its successive recuts. No objects could be identified apart from a nail shaft (archive list). Also from the ditch is a fragment of building stone, possibly reworked from a hand-quern (Fig. 9, No. 1; F1339, L1345 SF57).

A smith's punch was recovered from Enclosure Ditch 2 (F1349; L1350) (Fig. 7, No. 1). Small-scale ironworking, at least, is likely to have taken place on any villa estate, and is most likely to be found sited away from the main building. The same ditch (Enclosure Ditch 2) also produced a fragment of an iron knife blade (Fig. 7 No. 2; F1349 L1350, SF48), a possible small blade, and three fragments of nails. The knife blade has a back which angles down to meet the edge at the tip. The shape that is not common in the Roman period, being more typical of Saxon knives, but it does occur on blades of Manning's Types 1 and 2 (1985, fig 28) which date to the 1st and 2nd century.

The only Roman finds are a few nails from two pits (F1182 and F1360) and a copper-alloy hairpin (Fig. 8 No. 1, SF40) found in the Garden Soil L1102 in association with late medieval finds. It may be that some of the nail fragments and small scraps of metal from Anglo-Saxon and later contexts may be residual Roman.

The small number of objects from this period, and the absence of small personal, domestic and recreational items such as beads, brooches, toilet instruments, spoons, and gaming counters appears to suggest a low status community without the purchasing power for even cheap items. The copper-alloy hairpin strikes a different note, as metal hairpins must have cost more than bone, and its recovery

from a post-Roman context may be an indication that it has travelled some distance from its original point of deposit. It may be, therefore, that the lack of variety in the stratified group is simply caused by the distance of this area from the main centre of occupation on the farmstead.

Illustrated finds

Fig. 9 No. 1. SF 57 (F1339 L1345). Roughly rectangular fragment of gritty sandstone, probably millstone grit. Maximum dimensions 146 by 80 by 47mm. One wide surface is roughly pecked. There are traces of sandy mortar on most of the faces. One end is stepped and weathered, and one contiguous long side is also weathered. The other sides are broken and present a cleaner section, showing much haematite among the inclusions. The thickness tapers slightly away from this end. Building stone, possibly cut down from a hand-quern.

Fig. 7 No. 1 (F1349 L1350). Small smith's punch with the head burred from hammering. Length 70mm.

Fig. 7 No. 2 SF 48 (F1349 L1350). Two fragments of an iron knife blade. Length 96mm, width 26mm. Back and edge are straight, with the back angling down to the tip.

Fig. 8 No. 1 SF 40 (L1102). Copper-alloy hairpin. The head is a small flattened sphere above a cordon formed by two grooves in the shaft. Length (bent) 73mm. This belongs to Cool's Group 6, which dates from the mid-1st century into the 2nd century (Cool 1990, 157).

Anglo-Saxon

Grubenhaus F1248 produced three small finds: a thin sandstone slab, a fragment of copper-alloy sheet, and a fragment of laminated iron sheet. The stone slab may be a reworked fragment of a quern lower-stone, possibly used as a rubbing-stone (Fig. 9 No. 2, F1248, L1249, SF42). Also probably belonging to the middle or late Saxon period are a double-pointed pinbeater (Fig. 8 No5, SF17), residual in the post-medieval lazy bed (F1160; L1161), and a rubbing-stone from the cultivated late medieval garden soil (Fig. 9 No. 3, L1102, SF58). However, both may also be rather later in date, the former possibly 11th century, the latter any date up to late medieval.

Pinbeaters are weaving tools frequently recovered from Saxon settlements of all dates (e.g. West 1985, table 59; Mann 1982, fig. 24; Rogerson and Dallas 1984, figs. 191-3; Riddler 1996, 135-6). The rubbing-stone is paralleled at late Saxon Southampton and medieval Colchester, and its date here must remain uncertain. It was probably used for smoothing bone or wood, though it may also have been suitable for use in the production of leather goods.

Illustrated finds

Fig. 9 No. 2; SF42 (F1248; L1249). Fragment of a thin slab of coarse gritty sandstone as SF57 (Fig. 9 No. 1). One flat surface has many irregularly-placed peck holes, the other is quite smooth, with some random grooves. There is part of a hole

on the inner edge. The other edges are broken, though the outer edge has been smoothed off slightly. Its distance from the central hole varies from 131 to 70mm. Thickness tapers slightly from 25.5mm at the outer edge to 22mm at the hole. Probably a fragment of a lower-stone from a hand-quern, possibly reused as building material or as a rubbing-stone.

Fig. 8 No. 5 SF17 (F1160; L1161). Double-pointed bone pinbeater of circular section, length 63.5mm, maximum diameter 7.5mm. This is a weaving tool, used to separate the warp threads between throws on a vertical warp-weighted loom (Brown 1990, 226-8). First appearing in the pagan Saxon period (e.g. West 1985, Table 59, 148-50), pinbeaters continue to occur until the early medieval period, disappearing with the introduction and spread of the much faster horizontal loom in the 11th century. The St Ives pinbeater derived from the fill of a post-medieval 'lazy-bed' and probably dates, with residual pottery in the same feature and with the sunken-featured buildings on the site, sometime between the 7th to 10th centuries.

Fig. 9 No. 3 SF58 (L1102). Smoothing stone made from a fragment of Mayen lava, almost certainly a fragment from a hand-quern, worked into a more or less oval form, with slightly dished underside and flattened convex top. Maximum dimensions 90 x 77 x 45mm. They were probably used for smoothing or polishing bone, wood, or leather items.

Medieval

The ditch marking the western limit of the Priory (F1184=1229) produced only two small finds and eight nails. The earliest datable object is part of a hipped bone pin of a type occurring from the late 11th to the mid-12th century (F1184; L1185; Fig. 8 No. 6). This is a female object, and possibly indicative of high status. It need not necessarily be associated with the Priory, but rather perhaps with patrons or other visitors, or with occupation beyond the precinct. A small fragment of lava from the ditch cannot be dated. The import of lava querns from the Mayen quarries in the Eifel Hills of Germany flourished almost unbroken from the 1st century through to the medieval or early post-medieval period.

Apart from the residual Roman and Saxon objects described above, late medieval Garden Soil L1102 contained 12 nails or nail fragments, two unidentified iron fragments, two small fragments of lava, probably from broken querns, a single copper-alloy pin with wound wire head (Fig. 8 No. 2, SF18), and part of a sharpening stone (Fig. 9 No.4, SF35). None of these objects can be closely dated.

Illustrated finds

Fig. 8 No. 6 SF32 (F1184; L1185). Hipped tip from a Norman bone pin. Length 31mm. These are usually between 30 and 40mm long, so only the head would be missing from this example. A large assemblage of these pins was recovered from well-dated contexts at Castle Acre Castle, Norfolk, enabling a date range of between c. 1085 to the 1140s to be established. The function is less clear, though it is likely that they were used in the hair, possibly to fix a head-dress (Margeson 1982, 249).

Fig. 8 No. 2 SF18 (1102). Bent copper-alloy pin with wound wire head of basic type,

where the wire head is not shaped (Caple 1985, 47, Type A; Crummy 1988, 7, Type 1). Straight length about 63mm.

Fig. 9 No. 4 SF35 (1102). Fragment of a very dense hard limestone cylinder with a square pivot hole, chamfered at each end. The outer surface is scored from sharpening the edges of knives. Part of one side has broken off. Diameter 158mm, thickness 90.5mm. It is small for a knife-grinder's stone, and the quality of the material suggests that it may originally have been architectural, though it is equally small for part of a pillar.

Post-medieval

A large proportion of the total assemblage derived from post-medieval pits and ditches. Some objects appear to be early in the period, possibly even late medieval, such as the knife (Fig. 7 No.3, SF37), drape ring (Fig. 8 No.4, SF15), and pin (Fig. 8 No.3, SF54), and these may be residual in their contexts.

The range of object types, as well the number, also increases in this period. Many, such as small pins and lace-end fragments, are dress accessories, others like the knife, scissors, and tile roundel (Fig. 7 No. 3, SF37; Fig. 7 No. 7, SF6; Fig. 7 No. 8, SF60; Fig. 8 No. 4, SF15, Fig. 7 No.10, SF62) are household items. The iron buckle (Fig. 7 No. 4 SF36) is rather wide for a belt, and may be from a harness strap, though the frame seems rather delicate. The key, rectangular 'handle', and drape ring are fittings from furniture and furnishings (Fig. 7 No. 5; Fig. 7 No. 6, SF59; Fig. 8 No. 4, SF15). A large number of iron nails was also recovered (archive list). An unusual item is the fragment of a stout iron bar (Fig. 7 No. 9, SF1) from Pit F1293. The density and weight (263g) of this piece suggest that it is bar iron for smithing, as the pit predates the production of cast iron. The feature contains both residual Roman and Anglo-Saxon material, and it may be that the iron fragment should be seen as belonging to iron-working in one of these periods, as indicated by the Roman smith's punch from Ditch F1349 and the furnace lining and slag from Anglo-Saxon Pit F1219.

Illustrated finds

Fig. 7 No. 3 SF37 (F1195; L1196). Iron knife blade and scale tang with two holes for rivets and broken across a third. Both edge and back appear to be straight for most of the blade's length, with the edge curving gently up to form the tip. Length approximately 166mm. The absence of a bolster between blade and tang suggests that this knife is probably of late medieval or early post-medieval date.

Fig. 7 No. 4 SF36 (F1195; L1196). Iron D-shaped buckle in many fragments. Length approximately 38mm, width approximately 44mm. The frame is narrow, 4mm, and of D-shaped section.

Fig. 7 No.5 SF- (L1013). Corroded iron key with heart-shaped bow. The shank, probably hollow, ends level with the asymmetrical bit. Length 77.5mm. This form of key was used to open plate-locks on chests (Moorhouse and Goodall 1971, 41). The bow form suggests a date in the 16th or 17th century (Geddes 1985, fig 55, 10).

Fig. 7 No. 6 SF59 (F1134; L1135). Fragment of an iron strip bent into a rectangle. One long side is wider than the rest. The other long side dips slightly in the centre. After completing the rectangle, the narrow part of the strip is bent to run parallel with the wide side. There is no apparent means of attachment to a surface. Length 75mm, width 39mm. A very similar piece from Battle Abbey was tentatively identified as a handle (Geddes 1985, fig 57, 25), with another, slightly different in form, as a possible window catch.

Fig. 7 No. 7 SF6 (F1134; L1135). Very corroded iron scissors, with the lower ends of the oval finger loops and the tip of one blade broken off. Length 101mm.

Fig. 7 No. 8 SF60 (F1134; L1135). Fragment of a plano-convex blade and tang from a pair of iron scissors. A white-metal maker's mark is set close to the broken end of the blade. Length 75mm.

Fig. 7 No. 9 SF1 (F1293; L1295). Fragment from the rounded end of a slightly tapering iron bar. Length 70mm, maximum width 42mm, thickness 20mm. Weight 263g. Probably bar iron for smithing, and likely to be residual.

Fig. 8 No. 3 SF54 (F1141; L1142). Copper-alloy pin with wire head shaped to globular form (Caple 1985, 47, Type C; Crummy 1988, 7-8, Type 2). Length 55mm.

Fig. 8 No. 4 SF15 (F1141; L1142). Copper-alloy ring, internal diameter 20.5mm. The section is more or less circular, 4mm by 3.5mm, with internal and external casting flanges.

Fig. 7 No. 10 SF62 (F1166; L1167). Very roughly trimmed tile roundel. The fabric is fine and sandy, fired to a pale with a wide grey margin. Maximum diameter 63mm, 16mm thick. Precise function is unknown. They may have been 'mats' for protecting surfaces from hot cooking pots (Addyman and Priestley 1977, 139), counters for games, perhaps played on roughly chalked or scratched 'boards' on the ground, or jar stoppers (MacGregor 1978, 33).

Fig. 9 No. 5 (L1102). Limestone roof tile, with one bottom corner and most of the upper end broken off, the latter across a large worn peg hole. Maximum surviving length 213mm, width 172mm, thickness 18mm. Probably from the quarries at Collyweston, Northamptonshire.

The Architectural Stone

Nina Crummy

The three recovered fragments are probably facing from internal walls. Two have slight mouldings, the other is a simple slab with one face marked by pecking. The simplicity of the pieces makes allocating them a position within the building difficult, though their date is undoubtedly medieval. They may have formed part of the Priory Barn which existed on the site until 1858, or may be from the demolished Priory Church or adjacent offices. The single moulding on (1102) suggests it may be a horizontal string course, probably serving to link or frame architectural features, such as sedilia and window sills.

Plate 5 No. 1 (L1006). Fill of a post-medieval soakaway. Fragment of limestone from an internal wall, with a chamfered edge and a pair of low mouldings on the outer face. Maximum dimensions 350 by 250mm.

Plate 5 No. 2 (L1102). Early post-medieval layer. Fragment with limestone with a single low moulding. Maximum dimensions 270 by 160mm.

Plate 5 No. 3 (L1102). Early post-medieval layer. Fragment of ?sandstone with one face bearing long peck marks. The surviving edge has a mason's mark of two plain upright lines and a plus sign.

Glass

Hilary Cool

Vessel glass

Fragments from four different glass vessels were recovered during the excavations. No. 1 (SF27, not illustrated) is from a jug or bottle of Roman date. Unfortunately, little of the handle attachment survives to allow a more accurate identification. Dated 1st to 3rd century based on colour.

The other three fragments come from post-medieval vessels. No. 2 is part of the stem of a 17th century winged goblet or wine glass (Fig. 8 No. 7). Such '*vetri a serpenti*' or '*verres à serpentes*' were the products of virtuoso glass blowers who delighted in fantastic elaborations of the stems (see for example Tait 1979, 85 nos. 135-41; Klesse and Reineking-von Bock 1973, 155 nos. 307-19; and in colour Tait 1991, 171 pl. 223). They were made both in Venice and in the glass-houses of the Low Countries that specialised in the *façon de Venise* glass. It is generally thought that the plain cylindrical stems below the 'serpents', as on no. 2, were a feature of the glasses made in the north (Tait 1979, 50). These vessels were expensive, costing five times the amount of an ordinary wine glass to produce (Tait *ibid*), the presence of such a glass in St Ives casts an interesting sidelight on the wealth and taste of at least one of its inhabitants in the 17th century.

The other two vessels would have been far more mundane. No. 3 is the body fragment of 17th to 18th century wine bottle (not illustrated). The blue/green fragment No. 4 is most likely to come from an 18th or 19th century flask (not illustrated). The blue/ green fragment No. 4 came from a test pit where pottery dated from the Roman period to the 14th century, but it would be difficult to place this piece as early as that. It has the type of iridescence that is seen on 18th to 19th blue/green glass flasks and apothecaries bottles.

- 1 Jug or bottle; handle fragment. Blue/green; fragment from folded upper handle attachment. Dimensions 23 x 14mm. L1102 TP17; SF 27
- 2 Fig. 8 No. 7 Winged goblet; stem fragment in 2 pieces. Colourless twisted cane with ribbed surfaces coiled into tear-shaped spiral; upper part of colourless circular-sectioned stem attached to lower edge of spiral. Thin wings of lightly green-tinged deep blue glass applied to sides of spiral; wings

pinched out and tooled to form frills and volutes. Present length 58mm. L1142 (F1141); SF55;

- 3 Bottle; body fragment. Yellow/ green glass with blackened surfaces. Dimensions 37 x 15mm. L1228 (F1227);
- 4 Flask; neck fragment. Blue/green with dulled iridescent surfaces. Cylindrical neck broken at edge of turned-out rim. Dimensions 20 x 9mm. Wall thickness 1.5mm. L1102 TP18.

Window glass

The window glass can be assigned to two periods. Nos. 5 and 6 are made in the semi-durable glass of the late medieval period (14th-16th century). Nos. 7 to 9, by contrast are post- medieval of the 17th to 18th century (none are illustrated).

- 5 1 fragment green; semi-durable with mottled iridescence surfaces. Fragment retains fire-rounded edge. Area 2cm²; thickness 2mm. L1165 (F1164);
- 6 1 fragment green; semi-durable glass with blackened flaking surfaces. Area 4cm²; thickness 2mm. L1159 (F1158);
- 7 1 fragment blue/green; durable with iridescent surfaces. Area 1cm²; thickness 2mm. L1159 (F1158);
- 8 1 fragment blue/green; durable with iridescent surfaces. Area 5cm²; thickness 1mm. F1134 L1135;
- 9 2 fragments light green; durable with iridescent surfaces. Area 4cm²; thickness 1.5mm. L1135 (F1134).

Glass object

The small fragment of a polychrome glass bead No.10 found in late medieval Garden Soil L1102 originated from the Anglo-Saxon occupation on the site (Fig. 8 No. 8). The combination of opaque yellow trails on an opaque red ground is frequently observed in polychrome beads founds in late 5th to 7th Anglo-Saxon graves (see for example Evison 1994, table 6; Drinkall 1998, table 16). The tiny faceted bead (No. 11) is difficult to date typologically, and the redeposited material it was found in provides no additional clues. Though the diamond and triangle faceted shape is a well-known one for late Roman glass beads (see for example Guido 1978, 99), both the colour and size of No. 11 argues against a Roman date. It clearly does not belong to the tradition of Anglo-Saxon beads that produced No. 8, and small decorative beads are not a feature of medieval material culture. It seems most likely to be of relatively modern date.

- 10 Fig. 8 No. 8. Cylindrical bead; fragment. Opaque red decorated with opaque yellow marvered trails wound around cylinder. Diameter c. 6mm. present length 11mm. L1102, TP13; SF52;

- 11 Faceted bead. Dark red brown translucent. Cube with corners faceted to produce diamond and triangle faceted surface. Length 2.5mm, section 3mm. L1179, TP16; SF31.

Slag and Associated Finds

Jane Cowgill

Discussion

All of the slag recorded was produced by iron smithing. The forms present suggest that these were probably generated by more than one smith working at different forges. Most of the individual pieces are quite small and glassy but many are encrusted with soil or sands masking surface details. Only two pieces are very abraded (L1032 and Roman Enclosure Ditch 3 [F1376; L1378]) either by surface weathering or through frequent re-deposition. There were no large groups recovered from the site, the largest being composed of only twelve pieces of slag (Roman Enclosure Ditch 2 [F1349; L1350]) and two pieces of fired clay.

The majority of the slag is from the Roman Ditches F1349 and F1376, and Ditch F1360. The pieces from F1349 and F1360 are very similar in character, all being small, light and glassy with frequent sand and flint inclusions. Charcoal was the only fuel evident within these slags. The piece from Ditch F1376 (L1378) is very different being thin, black and dense with greater similarities to the pieces from F1229 (L1192), an upper fill of the medieval priory ditch F1184 and L1032 (Evaluation Trench 2). The latter piece has coal and charcoal incorporated within its matrix indicating that both were used as fuel. Coal is not commonly used as a fuel by Romano-British smiths but there are now a number of cases where it has been securely documented. Coal at this site was recorded in contemporary deposits (Ditch F1244 [L1250]).

The remaining three pieces of slag from the site are from medieval or post medieval features (one piece from Ditch F1184=1402, and two pieces from Pit 1258) but both features also yielded a quantity of re-deposited Romano-British pottery – 55 sherds (total 121) and 5 (total 6) respectively. The possibility therefore exists that all this material is Romano-British in date but, though a medieval priory is likely to have had a smithy attached to its complex to serve its needs.

Conclusion

The small quantity of slag recovered and the apparent absence of hammerscale suggest that this assemblage was generated away from the excavated area. The heterogeneous nature of the material indicates that it was probably produced by more than one smith, in a number of forges quite possibly over a long period of time. The quantity of re-deposited Romano-British pottery in all the features from which slag was recovered cannot, however, rule out the possibility that it was all generated during that earlier period.

Clay Tobacco-pipes

Tora Hylton and Iain Soden

A small group of 129 clay tobacco-pipe fragments was recovered from 23 separate contexts. The assemblage comprises 37 pipe-bowls and 92 stem fragments, dating from the mid-17th to early 19th century. The largest number of fragments (41) was recovered from Pit F1134. The shape of the bowls (Oswald 1975, 37-41) indicates a date range of c. 1640-1740. With the exception of one example, all the datable bowls are ornamented with a partial or complete linear band set just below the lip of the bowl, a common motif until c. 1710 (Moore 1980, 6).

There is only one example (a fragment) of a relief-moulded bowl, from F1149 (L1150; Fig. 7 No. 11). The bowl is fluted, a type of decoration which seems to have been common in the 19th century (Mann 1977, 28).

Conclusion

This small assemblage is unremarkable, containing generic types of clay tobacco-pipes of the period (mid-17th to early 19th century). None is distinctively decorated and only two bear makers' marks, neither of which is known. Given that the clay tobacco-pipe was a short-lived item, the occurrence of types on the site might suggest a peak in post-medieval activity on the site in the period 1660-80.

The Animal Bone

Ian L. Baxter

Introduction

The total assemblage from the site weighs 26kg. Over 2,000 fragments were hand-collected and a further 393 fragments were recovered from samples. Just less than 79% of hand-collected fragments could be identified and 65% of the sample bone was identifiable.

With such a relatively small assemblage little information is available for any period of occupation regarding husbandry regimes, but some information could be gathered concerning diet and status during different phases.

The following information has been recorded: taxon, bone element, symmetry, sex, ageing data, measurements, butchery, pathology, and number of indeterminate fragments. Tables held in archive include NISP for different types of features, withers heights for the domestic species, ages of horses (based on tooth wear and epiphyseal fusion), together with the Mandible Wear Stages of the cattle and sheep/goats. Also held in archive are tables detailing the teeth of the major domesticates in approximate order of eruption and epiphyseal fusion data for those species. Other archive tables include comparison of proportions of skeletal elements for the major domestic species from Ditch F1184 (=1402) and post-medieval Pit F1134, in addition to animal bone measurements.

Notes on the species

Horse (*Equus caballus*)

Two groups of associated remains were recorded. Isolated teeth from Phase 2 Romano-British Enclosure Ditches F1197, F1410 and F1223 (=F1416) derived from animals between five and eight and a half years old. A scapula fragment with unfused supraglenoid tubercle and proximal metatarsal II to IV fragments were found in Phase 3, Anglo-Saxon Pit F1219 (L1220). These probably belong to a single individual aged five to six months. A lower P4 from Phase 6, late medieval Pit F1227 (L1228), came from a horse aged approximately six years.

In the same pit were five thoracic vertebrae, six lumbar vertebrae and 18 ribs belonging to a single adult animal. A proximal tibia fragment from the same context has been chopped off and has a cut mark on the anterior medial shaft.

Cattle (*Bos taurus*)

Cattle were the main source of meat at the site during all phases of occupation, accounting for 49% of fragments identified to species in Phase 2 (Roman), 51% in Phase 3 (Anglo-Saxon), 30% in Phase 5 (medieval) and 28% in Phases 6 and 7. A horn-core from Phase 2 Ditch F1197 (L1198) came from a shorthorn bull aged 3-7 years, a horn-core fragment from Phase 5, priory Ditch F1184 (=1402; L1385) came from a probable female aged over 10 years, and another fragment from Phase 6, late medieval pit F1227 (L1228) derived from a young adult cow or ox. Little can be said about age structure in the various phases of occupation. However, teeth and epiphyses from Phase 2 features suggest that mature adults form the bulk of the assemblage during the Romano-British period. The Saxon features of Phase 3 contain a higher proportion of prime beef animals, medieval Phase 5 and late medieval Phase 6 a mix of prime beef and mature beasts, with an increase of younger animals in Phase 7, post-medieval, particularly calves' heads in pits. Cattle fragments are absent from the lazy beds of Phase 7, post medieval.

Mandibles recovered from Roman features exhibited cut and chop marks resulting from removal from the skull, of meat from the cheek, and of the tongue. A proximal humerus shaft and a distal radius have chop marks. In Phase 3 (Anglo-Saxon) a metatarsus was longitudinally split and a proximal radius chopped across the medial articulation. Phase 5 (medieval) remains include a longitudinally split metatarsus, and chops across a distal femur, femur shaft, and distal metatarsus. More bones from Phases 6 and 7 have butchery marks, affecting the hyoid, scapula, humerus, ulna, pelvis, femur, tibia, astragalus and calcaneum. Vertebrae are bisected. No pathologies were recorded, but deposits of metallic calculus were noted on three isolated teeth from features in Phase 7 (Pits F1012 [L1013] and F1134 [L1135]).

Pig (*Sus scrofa*)

Pig remains account for 10.6% in Phase 2 (Roman), 16.8% in Phase 3 (Anglo-Saxon), 19.7% in Phase 5 (medieval), 5.3% in Phase 6 (late medieval) and 4.7% in Phase 7 (post-medieval). Only male canines were recovered from features in Phases 2, 3 and 6, but of three found in Phase 5 deposits two are female. Very little

information is available regarding the ages of the pigs from any phase, but it is unlikely that many survived beyond two years. Pig remains are more common in the ditches of Phase 2 (Roman) than other features, 6.1% of identified species compared with 2.9%, but the non-ditch sample is very small. Possibly more significant is the relatively high proportion of pig fragments in Priory Ditch F1184. Here, pig accounts for 13.5% of identified fragments and 28% of fragments from the main domestic food species. Occasional fragments of very young animals suggest that pigs were kept adjacent to the site throughout its history, but pig meat seems to have been particularly popular with the medieval friars and may have constituted a greater proportion of the diet than mutton. The virtually complete skeleton of a boar aged between nine and twelve months was found in Phase 6 Pit F1227 (L1228). This beast does not appear to have been butchered and may have been a victim of a virus such as swinepox (Baxter *forthcoming a*). The only butchery marks seen on pig bones were on a cervical vertebra fragment from a Phase 2 context which had been transversally chopped.

Sheep/ goat (*Ovis aries/ Capra hircus*)

The remains of sheep/ goat comprise the second most frequent assemblage from the site, accounting for 29.8% in Phase 2 (Roman), 25.7% in Phase 3 (Anglo-Saxon), 35.2% in Phase 5 (medieval), 40.4% in Phase 6 (late medieval) and 25.6% in Phase 7 (post-medieval). Sheep/ goat fragments are more common than those of cattle in medieval Phases 5 and 6, although the contribution to diet will have been less due to the considerable difference in carcass weight. Of the 28 fragments identifiable to species, 5 or just less than 18% were identified as goat. Of these fragments, two were cranial and/ or horn-core fragments. A goat horn-core from Phase 5, Priory Ditch F1184 (=1402; L1185) probably came from a female based on comparison of basal circumference with specimens from Saxon Southampton (Bourdillon and Coy 1980; Fig. 17, 19). All sheep horn-cores from pits in Phase 7 had been removed and a hornless animal was represented by a cranial fragment from Phase 2, Roman Ditch F1190 (L1243). The limited numbers of teeth and epiphyses available suggest that most of the sheep/ goats from Phase 2 were aged between one and three years, with a higher proportion of younger animals in Phase 3. In phases 5 to 7 more mutton was consumed than lamb. Sheep heads, and to a lesser extent the heads of cattle and pigs, seem to have been a popular source of food in Phase 7. In Pit F1134, 43.5% of all sheep/ goat fragments derived from the heads of five sheep. In Pit F1012 (L1013) a further three sheep heads are represented.

Butchery marks are less common on sheep/ goat bones than those of cattle, probably because sharp knives were used more than axes and cleavers. As noted above, the horn cores of sheep and goats were characteristically removed to provide raw material for working. The pelvis was chopped through and vertebrae bisected. Knife marks caused during disjointing occur on distal tibiae and skinning marks on metapodials. Cut marks on hyoids, which also occur on cattle hyoids, may result from throat cutting.

No pathologies were noted affecting the sheep/ goat remains, but four maxillae, three mandibles and two loose teeth from Phase 7 Pits F1134 and F1012 have deposits of metallic calculus. This is undoubtedly caused by diet, though there is

probably a genetic predisposition; the precise cause is unknown.

Fallow deer (*Dama dama*)

Isolated postcranial fragments of fallow deer occur in Phase 6 and 7 features: a radius and proximal ulna fragment with cut marks in Phase 6 (medieval) Pit F1119 (L1120), and a radius shaft fragment in Phase 7 (post-medieval) lazy bed Trench F1162 (L1163). Two metatarsal fragments and an antler fragment were found in F1166 (L1167), a modern soakaway which cut post-medieval Gully F1381 from which they were probably derived. Of particular interest is a very large fallow deer right antler fragment found in post-medieval Pit F1134 (L1135). This derives from a mature stag and, as preserved, has been cut off above the anterior tines. Three holes, with diameters of 5.0mm, 6.4mm and 7.0mm, have been drilled into this antler, one cut into the anterior beam and two cut into the posterior palm anterior to the 1st posterior tine. There is evidence of two further holes drilled into the beam from the posterior side parallel to and proximal of that remaining in the beam. These holes would seem to have nothing to do with antler working and it seems more probable that the antler was once attached to something, possibly a wall as attested from buildings associated with feasting and/ or hunting (Sadler 1990).

Dog (*Canis familiaris*)

The remains of domestic dog are relatively common in the Romano-British and medieval phases, including several partial skeletons, and accounting for 3.8% of fragments identified to species in Phase 2, 5.6% in Phase 5 and 6.4% in Phase 6. Roman specimens include a very stout and robust femur (from a small dog) from Phase 2 feature F1262 (L1263). This animal seems to have closest affinities to short-legged dachshund-like dogs that were common throughout Western Europe during this period (Baxter *forthcoming* b). A tibia from Phase 2 feature F1368 (L1361) came from a larger, medium sized dog. At least five individuals were recovered from Phase 5 deposits. Particularly noteworthy are associated remains of a tall and lightly built ?hunting dog found in Ditch F1184 (=1402; L1251). The partial skeletons of two small dogs were found in Phase 6 Pit F1227 (L1228). The lower carnassial of a much larger mastiff-like dog was recovered from Pit F1119 (L1120), and a 1st phalanx of another large and heavy dog in Pit F1365 (L1366) also of Phase 6. A distal humerus from Phase 7 Pit F1108 (L1109) has a cut mark on the lateral/ posterior shaft.

Cat (*Felis catus*)

Domestic cat remains are quite common in the medieval and post-medieval phases on the site, and include the complete skeleton of a kitten from Phase 7 (post-medieval) Pit F1134 (L1135). All the cats were small compared with modern reference specimens. The upper dP3 of the kitten from F1134 (L1135) is set at 90°, possibly a result of facial foreshortening.

Lagomorphs

A proximal ulna fragment of rabbit (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) was found in Phase 6 (late medieval) Pit F1119 (L1120). The meat of rabbit, which was exclusively a

domestic species in the Middle Ages, was much more expensive than that of chickens (*Gallus gallus*; Davis 1987:194).

Small mammals

One cranial fragment and an anterior mandible fragment, belonging to either a mouse or small vole, was found in a sample from Phase 6 (late medieval) Pit F1227 (L1228). This fragment is likely representative of a domestic or agricultural/horticultural pest.

Birds

Domestic fowl (*Gallus gallus*) are the most common bird species at the site, accounting for just under 3% of fragments identified to species in Phase 2, nearly 4.5% in Phase 3, 5.5% in Phase 5, 6.4% in Phase 6 and just under 2% in Phase 7. Spurred tarometatarsi from male birds were found in Phase 5 Ditch F1184 (=1402; L1236) and Phase 6 Pit F1119 (L1120). All the birds were quite large and no bantam sized specimens were recovered. Isolated goose (*Anser/ Branta* sp.) remains occur in Phases 3 and 5, becoming more common, perhaps in preference to chicken in Phase 7. All goose remains are referable to the domestic species. The ulna of a crow, either carrion crow (*Corvus corone*) or rook (*Corvus frugilegus*) was found in Phase 5 ditch F1184 (=1402; L1185). The claw bone of a small wild bird of indeterminate species was found in a sample from Phase 2 enclosure ditch F1349 L1350.

Amphibians

The bones of frogs (*Rana temporaria*) were found in features of Phases 2, 5, and 7, including a partial skeleton in post-medieval Pit F1134 (L1135). A single toad (*Bufo bufo*) ilium fragment was recovered from a sample taken from Phase 5 Ditch F1184 (=F1402; L1236).

Fish

The remains of fish occur in Phases 2, 5, 6 and 7, and account for 0.5% of identified hand-collected fragments in Phase 2, 0.6% in Phase 6 and just under 2% in Phase 7; nearly 11% of identified sample fragments in Phase 5 and over 6.5% in Phase 7. Pharyngeal bones of Cyprinids (carp family) were identified in three cases: a gudgeon (*Gobio gobio*) from a sample from Phase 5 Ditch F1184 (=F1402; L1251), a large chub (*Leuciscus cephalus*) from Phase 6 Pit F1119 (L1120) and a smaller chub from Phase 7 Pit F1134 (L1135). Fish would have been an important dietary element during the medieval period, particularly at a religious establishment, and the occurrence of these freshwater fish remains suggests that the priory may have possessed well-stocked fishponds.

Summary and Conclusions

Cattle were the main species present during the Roman phase. Older cattle were most abundant during this phase. Domestic chickens were also kept, apparently as a food resource. Horses were kept, most likely as mounts and pack animals, and

both small and medium sized dogs were present. During the Anglo-Saxon occupation it seems probable a higher proportion of prime beef cattle were slaughtered, and more lamb consumed than in the earlier phase. In the medieval period beef continued to be the main (faunal) dietary element, and included both prime and mature beasts. Pig meat, chicken, and fish appeared to form much more important dietary elements during the occupation of the Priory than during earlier periods. More mutton was eaten than lamb. A number of dogs seem to have been maintained, possibly for stock control and/ or hunting. Following the Dissolution there is no discernible change between the proportion of prime beef and mature cattle or between lamb and mutton. However, pig becomes of less importance at the site, venison and rabbit become available and chickens are more common.

Large mastiff-type dogs were kept together with small 'lap' dogs. Cats were kept throughout the medieval and post-medieval periods. In the post-medieval phase there is an increase in younger cattle but not in sheep. The heads of cattle, pig and particularly sheep may have formed an important dietary element by the post-mediaeval period; they may however simply represent waste products. Venison continues to be consumed and goose remains outnumber those of chicken. Fish continues to represent a significant element of the diet. Horses and dogs seem to have reduced significance and/ or utility in the post-medieval period.

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Charred Plant Macrofossils

Val Fryer

Introduction

Fifteen samples were submitted for assessment. From these three were selected for quantitative analysis, one (sample 8) from the fill of a Romano-British Ditch F1180 (L1181), one (sample 6) from a fill of the Priory Precinct Ditch F1184 (L1236) and one (sample 1) from the fill of post-medieval Pit F1134 (L1135). These samples were chosen as all three were particularly grain and/ or chaff rich.

Methods

Samples were floated in a 500 micron mesh sieve. Sub-samples of the dried flots were sorted under a binocular microscope at low power (x10). Identifications were made by comparison with modern reference specimens. Nomenclature follows Stace (1991). Preservation of the material was by charring unless otherwise stated. Modern contaminants were rare but included some fibrous and woody roots. The plant macrofossils identified are listed in Table 6, in which counts of cereal grains refer to whole grains or embryo ends.

Sample composition

Sample 8 is a 'typical' rural Roman assemblage, dominated by wheat and with abundant spelt chaff (36% of the total assemblage). The cereal to chaff ratio of 1 : 27 implies that this assemblage is comprised primarily of cereal crop cleaning and processing waste. Grains are rare and the number of cereal sprout fragments recovered may suggest that these few grains are the residue of a crop partly spoiled by sprouting, possibly as a result of inappropriate storage conditions. The weed to chaff ratio of 1 : 17 may suggest that some primary winnowing to remove small weed seeds had already taken place, and it is of note that the bulk of the weed assemblage is made up of large seeds. These larger seeds could only have been removed by hand picking in the later stages of processing. Although there is contemporary evidence (Van der Veen, *in press*) for the use of spelt chaff as fuel for the parching and drying of crops and various other industrial processes, it would appear that the St Ives deposit represents the disposal of a moderate quantity of burnt processing waste and other cereal detritus in an available open feature.

The assemblage from the precinct ditch, F1184 (L1236), is dominated by wheat grains (89% of the identified grains recovered) and has a grain to chaff ratio of 4.7 : 1. Preservation of the grains, chaff and weed seeds is good and it appears unlikely that the grain rich composition of the assemblage is a result of differential preservation of macrofossils during charring. It would appear that they are indicative of the importation of grain to the site as a semi-cleaned prime product. An advanced stage of processing is implied by the low density of small weed seeds and chaff elements which would presumably already have been removed by winnowing. Larger chaff elements, including the rachis nodes, and large seeds could only have been removed by hand picking. The majority of the grains are probably present as the result of accidental charring, but detached embryos were noted and may indicate the inclusion of spoiled grains. The presence of rivet-type wheat chaff is of interest. The occurrence of this wheat was first noted in medieval samples by Moffett (1991) and it is now known from several thirteenth century deposits. The occurrence of rare spelt glume bases and other glume wheat chaff is probably the result of re-deposition of underlying Roman material during the excavation of the ditch.

Post-medieval Pit F1134 appears to have contained some cereal processing debris but the assemblage is dominated by fragments of black porous 'cokey' material and black tarry material. This, and the severely puffed and distorted condition of some grains and seeds, may suggest that the material has been subjected to repeated burning at high temperatures, and the assemblage may be indicative of hearth/ oven waste. It is assumed that the proportion of macrofossils in the sample which are well preserved are the residue of a final episode of combustion.

For all periods, it is apparent that the cultivation, storage, processing and consumption of wheat (and possibly some other crops) was of prime importance to the local economy.

Wild flora

Seeds/ fruits of common weed species were noted at a low to moderate densities. The range of species from all three periods was similar and included: stinking

mayweed (*Anthemis cotula*), brome (*Bromus* sp.), medick/ clover/ trefoil (*Medicago/ Trifolium/ Lotus* sp.), indeterminate grasses, dock (*Rumex* sp.), scentless mayweed (*Tripleurospermum inodorum*) and vetch/ vetchling (*Vicia/ Lathyrus* sp.). Other segetal weeds included sterile brome (*Anisantha sterilis*), corn gromwell (*Lithospermum arvense*), field madder (*Sherardia arvensis*), mustard (*Sinapis* sp.) and cornsalad (*Valerianella dentata*). Seeds/ fruits of wetland plants including sedge (*Carex* sp.), spike-rush (*Eleocharis* sp.) and bog-bean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*) were present, but rare, and a single sloe (*Prunus spinosa*) fruit stone fragment was noted from post-medieval Pit F1134 (L1135).

Although the seed assemblages for each period may have become biased during the crop cleaning process, particularly by winnowing and sieving which remove many of the smaller seeds, the presence of seeds of stinking mayweed (a plant specific to heavy soils) in all three samples may imply that cereals were largely being produced on clay soils adjacent to the gravel terrace on which the site is situated. The common seeds of vetch and other leguminous weeds in the precinct ditch sample suggest that the soil may have become nitrogen depleted in the medieval period due to a limited supply of manure. A similar high frequency of pulse seeds has been noted at other 13th century sites, for example the Round Wood site, Stanstead Airport (Murphy 1990) and Boreham Airfield, Essex (Fryer and Murphy *forthcoming*), where it appears to be indicative of the use of nitrogen fixing leguminous plants in crop rotations.

Other macrofossils

Charcoal fragments were noted in all samples at a moderate density. Fragments of charred root, rhizome or stem and indeterminate buds, culm nodes and seeds were recorded.

Fragments of black porous 'cokey' material were present and are probably the residues of the combustion of organic materials including cereals and grass/ straw at very high temperatures. Other remains were very rare but included bone, fish bone and small mammal or amphibian bone fragments, hammer scale and metallic (ferrous) globules, small coal fragments and vitrified material.

Mollusc shells were only recorded at a low density from Priory Precinct Ditch F1184 (L1236). Open country species were predominant, suggesting that the ditch was largely kept clear of scrub and bushes, although the presence of *Oxychilus* sp. implies that shaded areas were present. The occurrence of *Lymnaea truncatula*, a marsh/ fresh water slum species, may suggest that the ditch was periodically waterlogged. In the absence of burnt specimens, it is not known whether these examples are contemporary with the context or modern contaminants.

Conclusions

Wheat appears to have been the staple crop of the area from the Roman period onwards. Other cereals are represented but at such a low density that they may be indicative of 'weed' plants within a wheat crop or remnants of earlier cultivation. For the Roman period, contextual and artefactual evidence suggests the existence of a well-ordered and well maintained settlement within an enclosed area, with a sub-

settlement beyond the enclosure. It appears likely that one or both were intensively involved with the cultivation and processing of predominantly spelt wheat, and the settlement was probably a major contributor to a well-established local agrarian economy serving, amongst others, the Roman town of *Durovigutum* (Godmanchester) to the west.

The establishment of the priory in the medieval period signals a change in the structure of the economy of the site. Wheat is still of prime importance, but the emphasis on production and processing has ceased and the priory is a consumer site, importing semi-cleaned grain from elsewhere. The final processing of the cereal still occurred on site with the processing debris being disposed of in the enclosure ditch. Other domestic and dietary refuse is not represented within the assemblage, suggesting that this area of the precinct was dedicated to cereal storage.

After the Dissolution of the priory, the land passed into private ownership, but evidence suggests that the consumption of wheat, possibly supplemented by barley and pulses, remained of importance to the occupants of the site and the surrounding town well into the post-medieval period.

The Coins (Table 2)

Peter Guest

Context 1102	U/S
16th-18th century	1650-70
Pb token	Farthing token
Obverse - crude star in relief	Obverse - WILLIAM WAGSTAFFE
Reverse - D (?) in relief within circle	Reverse - MERCER OF ELY
No mint mark	No mint mark Ref; BW: Cambs.122

Table 2: summary of coins

DISCUSSION

The excavation at the Priory, St Ives, produced evidence from a wide range of dates from prehistoric times onwards and the main significant elements of the site comprise the Roman enclosures (Phase 2), early Saxon structures (Phase 3) and a medieval precinct ditch (Phase 5), that may well represent the monastic precinct boundary.

The apparent pattern of human exploitation of the Great Ouse valley is closely linked to the pattern of alluvial deposition. Areas of alluvial silts, above riverine gravel, are a feature of the geology of the St Ives region and the absence of prehistoric features at the priory site may be explained by a period of alluviation of the general area. Residual abraded Iron Age pottery sherds were sparsely located across the site, suggestive of occupation in the vicinity.

The development of enclosures during the early Roman period, represents a period of agricultural and settlement expansion. Such expansion has been noted

throughout much of the region in the 2nd century (Browne 1978, 11) and the priory site, along with other sites in the Great Ouse catchment area, e.g. the riverside site at St Ives (Green 1959), form part of a regional pattern of early Roman expansion. Expansion and intensification of settlement seems to be a feature of the late 2nd century onwards.

Roman occupation at the priory site probably began in the 2nd century AD, and comprises a field or enclosure ditch. This was renewed at least twice, latterly during the late 2nd or 3rd century. The enclosure formed one element of a complex agricultural landscape and further enclosures and ditches, located across the site, attest to a landscape undergoing constant modification and expansion during the Roman period. The main infilling of these enclosures appears to have occurred in the late 3rd-4th centuries.

Fragments of flue tile, mortar and tessera have been found within many of the ditch fills and the post-built structure, on the west side of Trench 4, indicates the presence of buildings on and around the site. The post-built structure probably served as an agricultural building, similar to the wattle and daub building that was located at the riverside site and excavated by Green (1958). The tile roof of the latter building indicates the use of tile as a roofing material in minor buildings in the area. The presence of painted wall plaster, within Pit F1286, and the presence of tessera indicate that a substantial and perhaps high status building was located nearby and indicates that the minor buildings and enclosures likely formed part of a villa or agricultural estate centre. Building materials were not recorded in the fills of the first phase of Enclosure 1 and the stone buildings may have had timber or wattle and daub precursors. Villa estates have been excavated at comparable riverside locations, with examples known upstream in the Ouse valley. This indicates that substantial masonry buildings often developed from timber predecessors, and a similar pattern of settlement evolution may have taken place at St Ives. The small-scale finds evidence seems to support this. The finds would seem to indicate a relatively low-status community, due to a lack of personal items which suggests a more 'cultured' settlement. This evidence contrasts somewhat with the finer building materials that are present.

The character of Anglo-Saxon occupation differed significantly from its Roman precursor. The Roman enclosures went out of use and a sunken floored building, *Grubenhaus* F1248, was constructed in the north-west corner of Enclosure 1. The building had been substantially disturbed by later features, but measured 4.3m by 3m and was of comparable size to other examples excavated in the region (Rahtz 1976; Hamerow 1993, 11). No true end-posts were identified. A single posthole (F1246) was located towards the north-west side of the building. This was undated and its stratigraphic position is unclear. It is not known whether this post hole was contemporary with the *grubenhaus*, supporting an upright post within the building. The *grubenhaus* was located to the west of two contemporary sub-circular pits, which had also been cut into the top of the former ditches of Roman Enclosure 1. The *grubenhaus* and one of these pits contained sherds of Charnwood Forest pottery, manufactured during the 6th and 7th centuries (Williams and Vince 1997, 219), also present as residual material within a fill (L1185) of the later medieval boundary ditch. Further evidence of Saxon occupation including pits and a possible post-built structure were present close by the *grubenhaus*. The date of origin of the

Saxon township of Slepe is unknown but the *grubenhaus* clearly indicates the presence of 6th or 7th century occupation in the area of the town, further reinforced by items such as the residual polychrome glass bead found in late mediaeval Garden Soil L1102 (of a type often found in 5th-7th century cemetery sites).

The ceramic and stratigraphic evidenced suggests a change in land use in this part of the settlement during the late Saxon and early mediaeval periods (8th-12th centuries). The reasons for this are not clear, but it may support the suggestion of an early establishment of the priory close to the site (and the site itself to be a possible agricultural part of the complex), limiting more intensive occupation until after the Dissolution. The site clearly reverted to arable or waste land following the abandonment of the early Saxon structures, and the spread of high mediaeval (12th-14th century) pottery on the site is almost certainly derived from occupation of the precincts of the Priory. Though little early mediaeval ceramic material was located, a fine pin of 11th/ 12th century type was found in the precinct ditch, suggested by the specialist as being derived from loss by a wealthy patron of the religious house.

The general 'garden soil' (L1102) that sealed the mediaeval deposits probably derives from the time of the Dissolution, after the Priory precinct ditch had been infilled. The ceramic evidence from the precinct ditch suggests a probable 12th/ 13th century date of for the lower silts, followed by deliberate infilling of material containing many high mediaeval pottery sherds and suggesting intensive use of the areas close by.

The building that currently bears the name 'The Priory', is a modern building, constructed in 1870. Fragments of worked stone that may be derived from the medieval Priory have been recorded in various locations in St Ives, notably as part of a rockery in the grounds of 'The Priory' (RCHM) and, currently, in the grounds of the Norris Museum. The site of the medieval priory buildings, however, has not been established. Excavations on the site of the Priory barn, in 1949 (Green, 1958), revealed that the barn had been built on earlier medieval stone foundations and a stone wall, discovered in 1869, during construction of the cattle market, was considered to be part of the Priory church. The major ditch (F1184=1229) is almost certainly contemporary with the Priory, is aligned perpendicular to Market Hill and may well represent the precinct boundary. A deposit of ash, charcoal, brick and tile fragments (L1236) was located towards the base of the ditch. This deposit is significantly thicker on the east side of the ditch, suggesting that the material was inserted from the east and may be debris from one of the Priory buildings demolished in the mid-16th century during Audley's conversion of the Priory. The boundary ditch may mark the western limit of the Priory enclosure but further work is required in order to establish firmly the location of the church and the layout of the monastic enclosure.

The Priory is reputed to have developed as a result of the supposed discovery of the bones of St Ivo in 1001 AD, though no light could be shed on this legend during the current excavations. Human remains were reported during the construction of The Priory in 1870; these remains are undated although it is likely that a cemetery, possibly contemporary with the Roman enclosures, may have been located in the area. Such a cemetery would provide a context for the discovery of the saintly bones, though alternatively, the 19th century discoveries may be monastic burials,

indicating the presence of the monastic cemetery nearby.

The environmental evidence recovered during the excavations shows the dominance of wheat cultivation, processing and consumption on the site, particularly during the earlier phases. By the time of the establishment of the Priory, however, evidence from the fill of the precinct ditch suggests that, although consumption was still important, processing and cultivation were removed from the site. Faunal remains show a dominance of cattle, pig and sheep/ goat throughout the site's history, supported by domestic fowl, geese and freshwater fish. Interesting elements of the faunal assemblage include the possible prevalence of consumption of animal heads during the post-mediaeval period, though a more likely scenario might be the discard of these economically poor elements during the early stages of butchery. No direct evidence of on-site smithing was recovered, though metalworking slag was prevalent and a smith's punch was recovered from one of the Roman enclosure ditches (as may perhaps be expected on a villa estate, an activity situated in an ancillary area away from the main buildings).

Large 17th and 18th century pits on the site provide evidence of tableware and food products in use at this time, as well as an interesting example of a set of antlers that may have graced the wall of a nearby hall or dining room. Residual late mediaeval metal items were found in pits of the early post-mediaeval period, the latter derived from the household of Thomas Audley and his successors.

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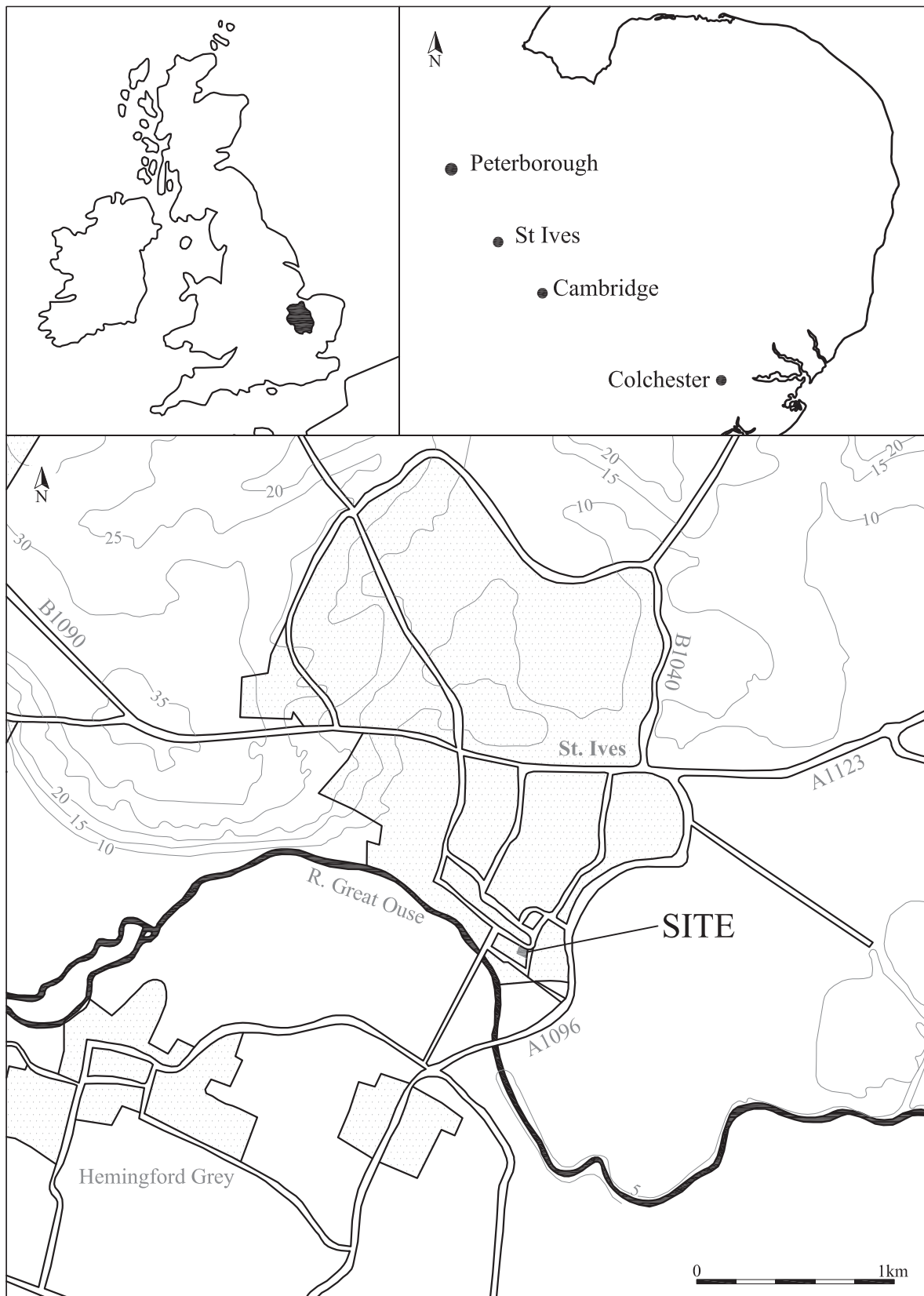


Fig. 1 St Ives Priory site location

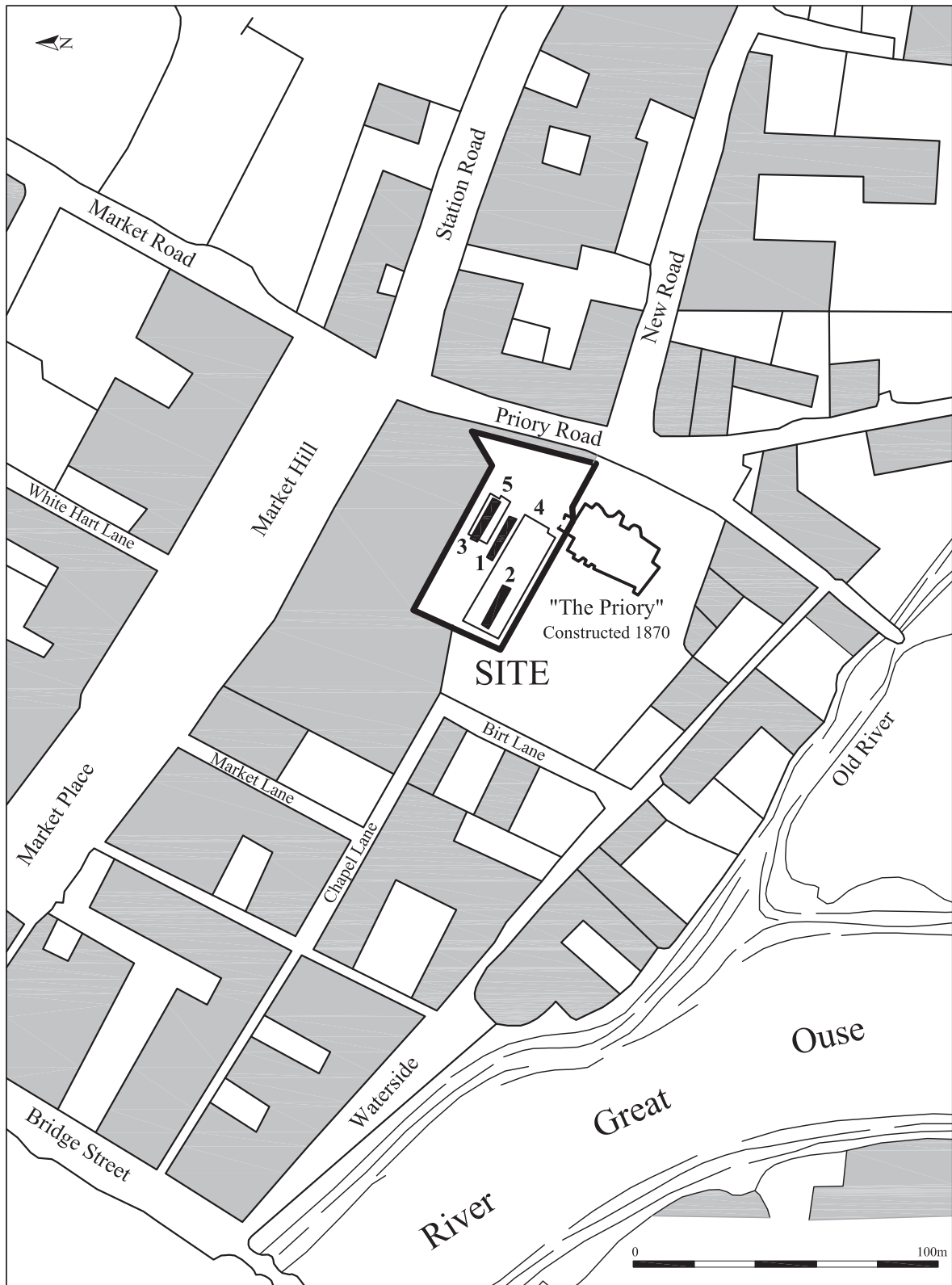
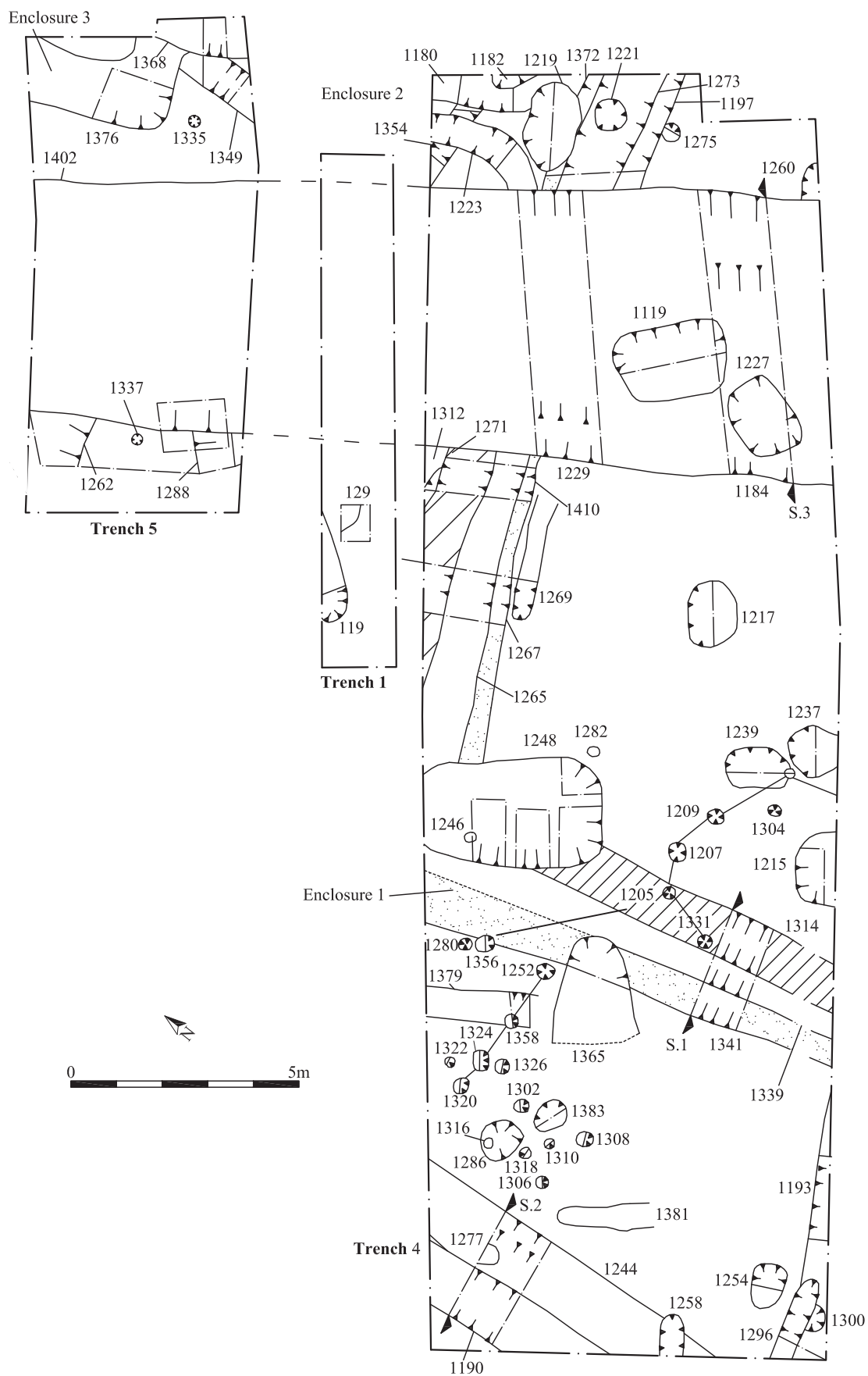


Fig. 2 St Ives Priory trench location



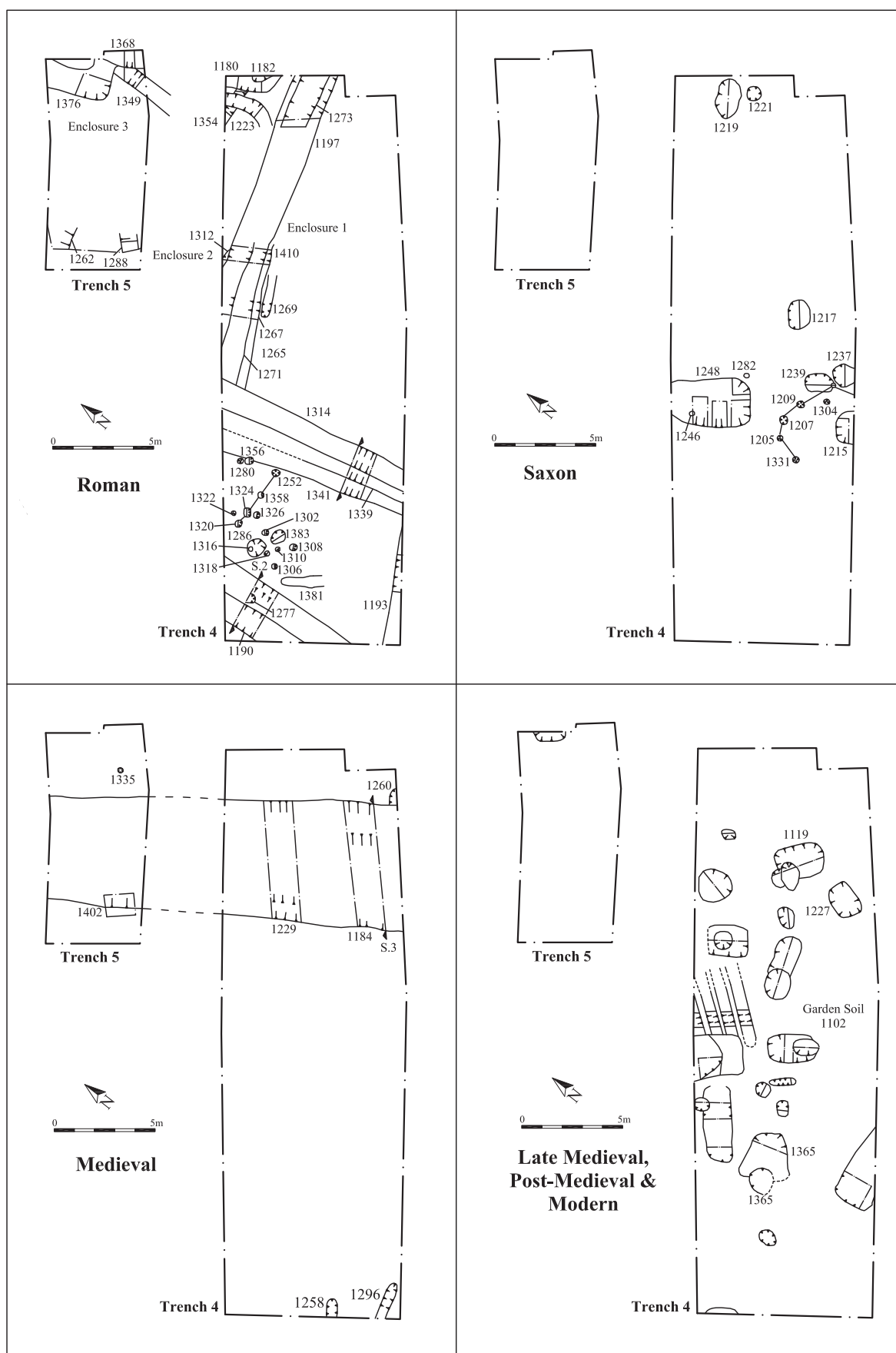


Fig. 4 St Ives Priory phase plan

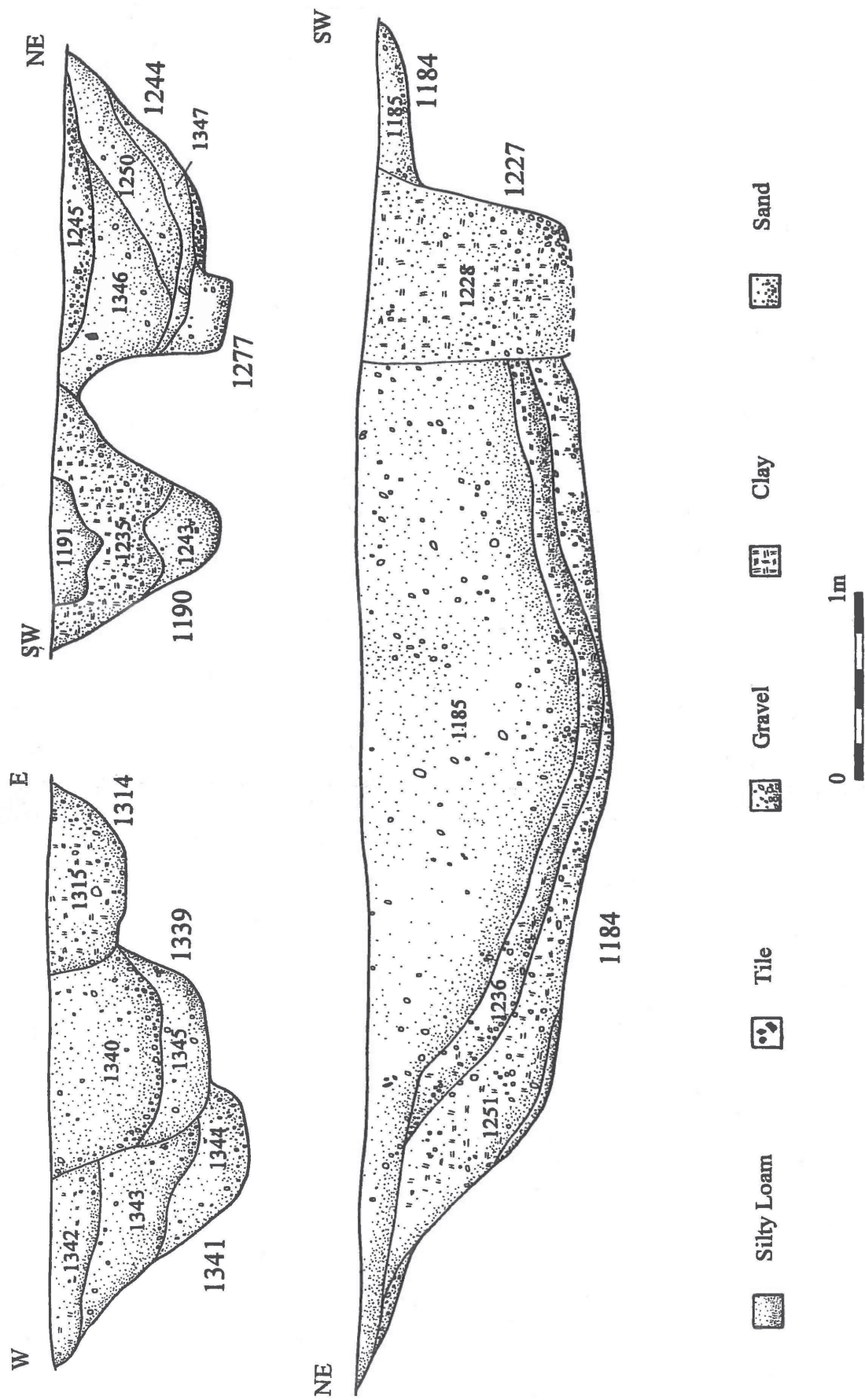


Fig. 5 St Ives Priory. Sections

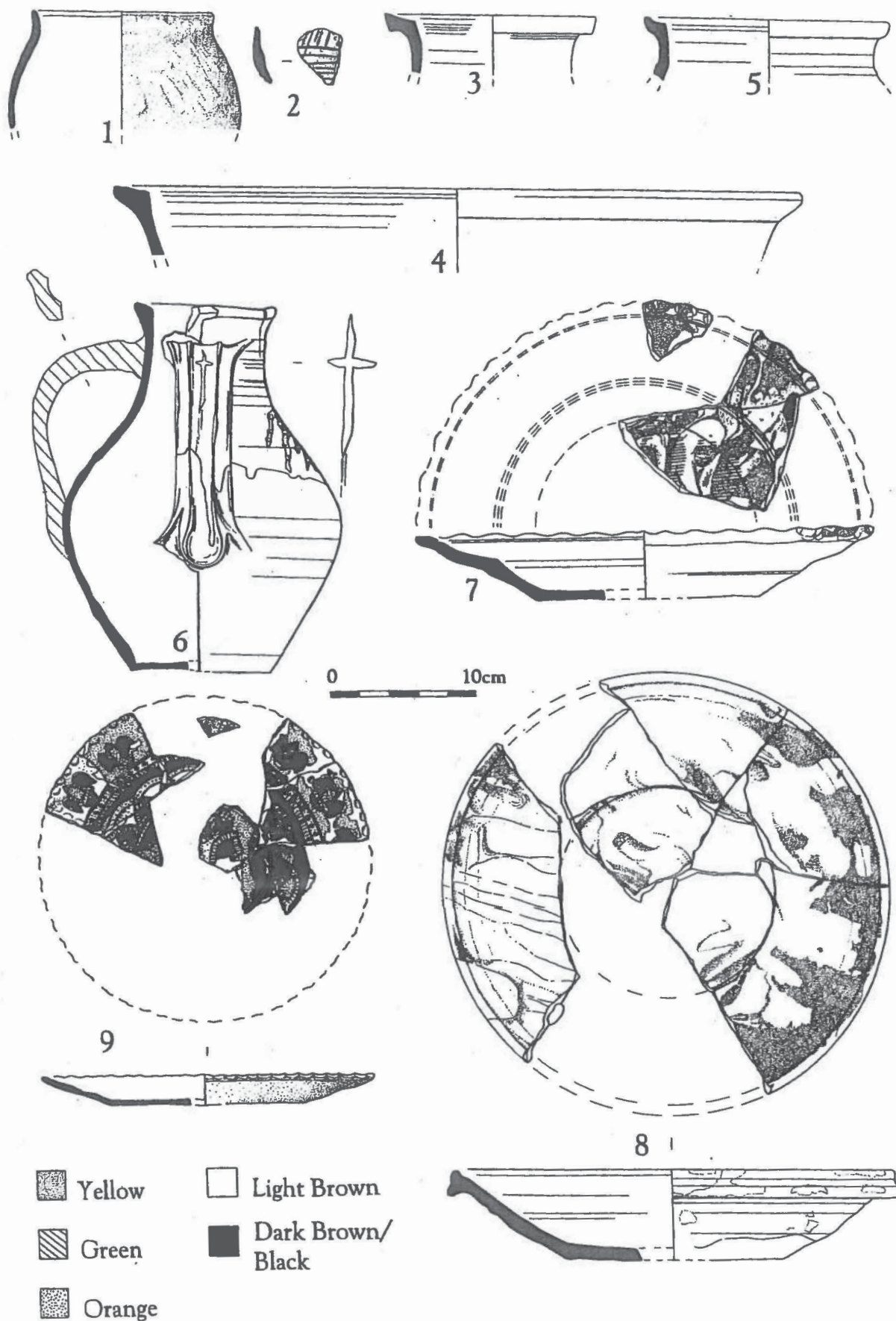


Fig. 6 St Ives Priory. Pottery

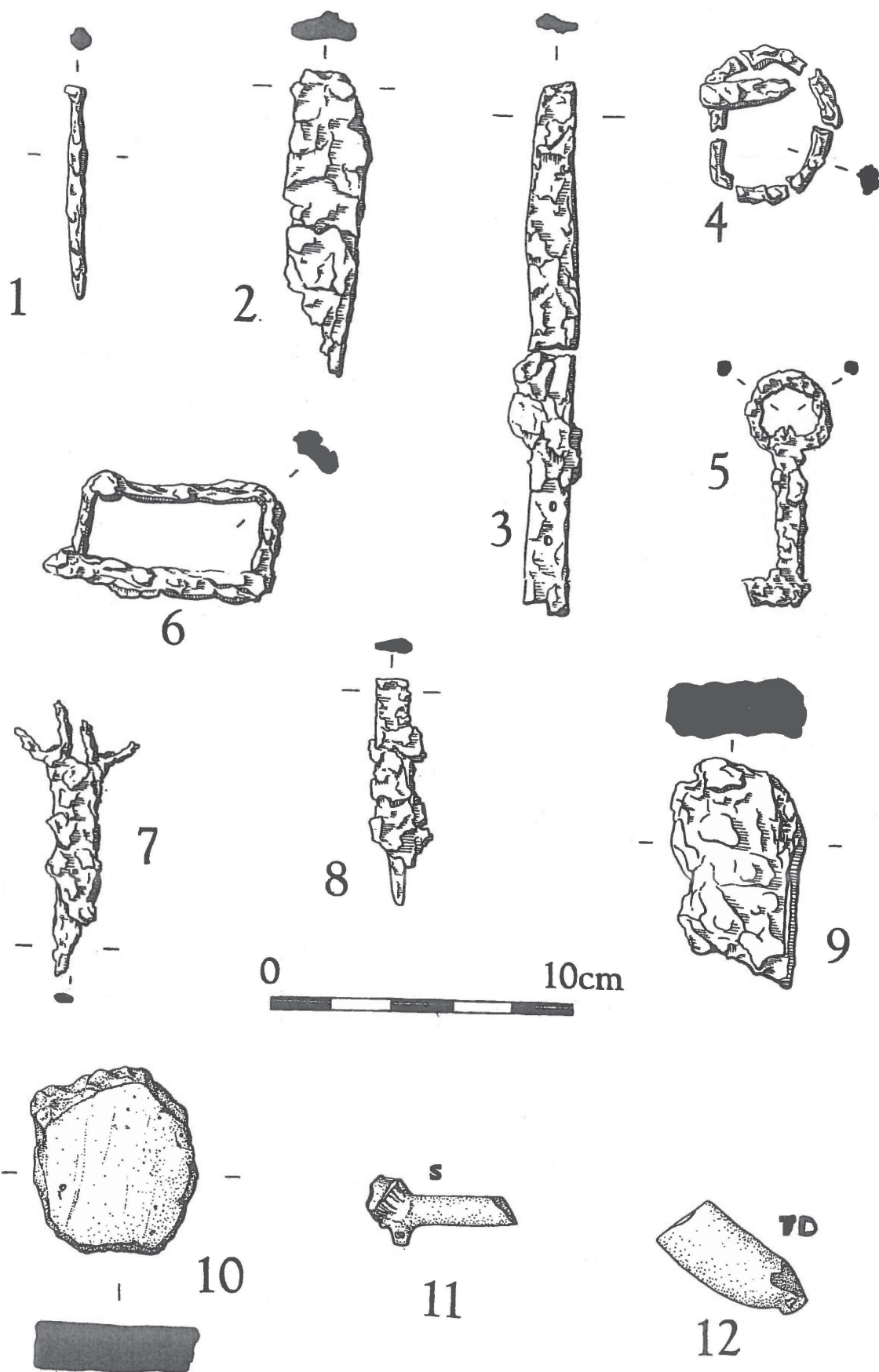


Fig. 7 St Ives Priory. Objects of Iron (1-9), Tile (10) and Clay Pipe (11-12)

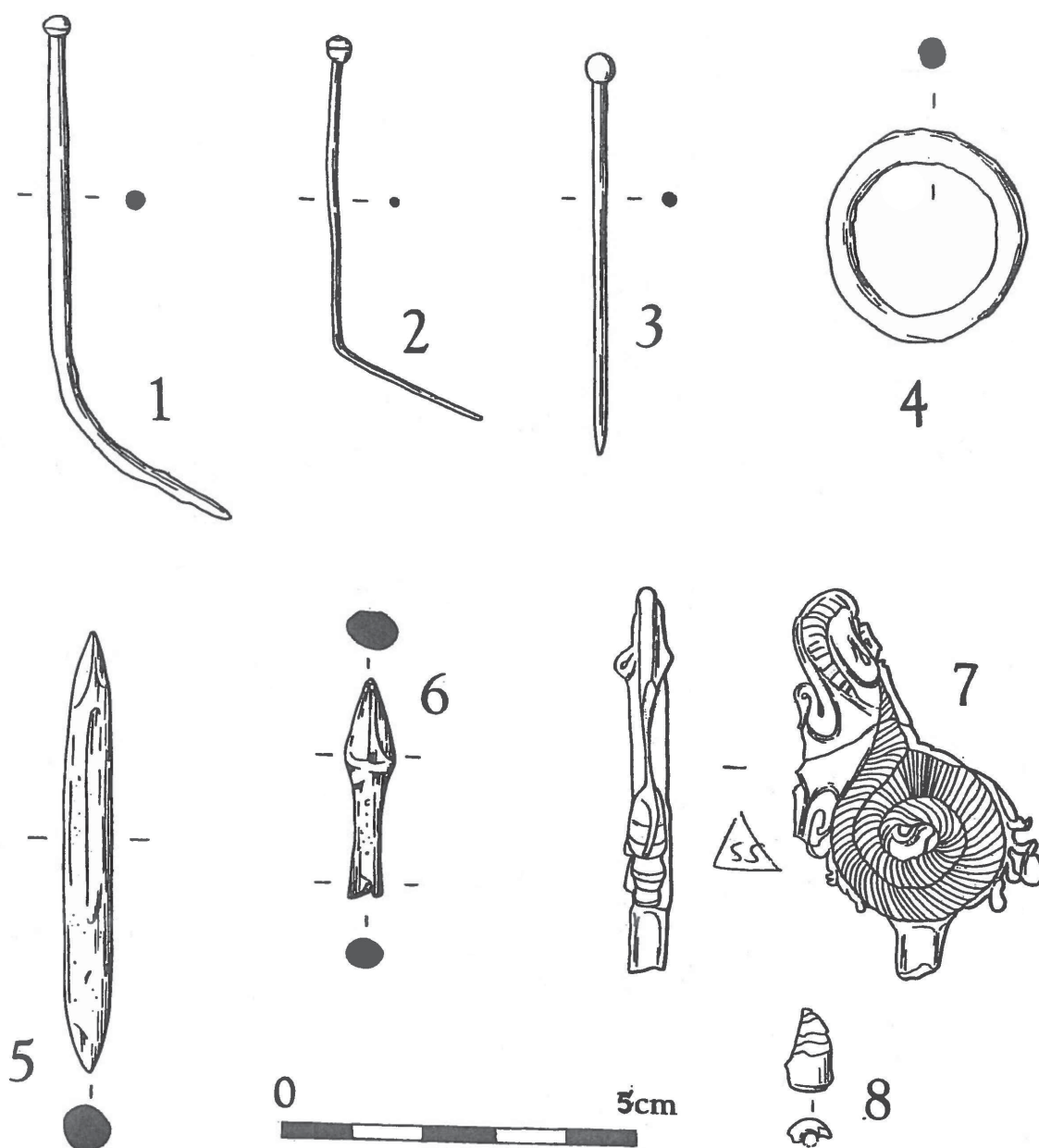


Fig. 8 St Ives Priory. Objects of Copper Alloy (1-4), Bone (5-6) and Glass (7-8)

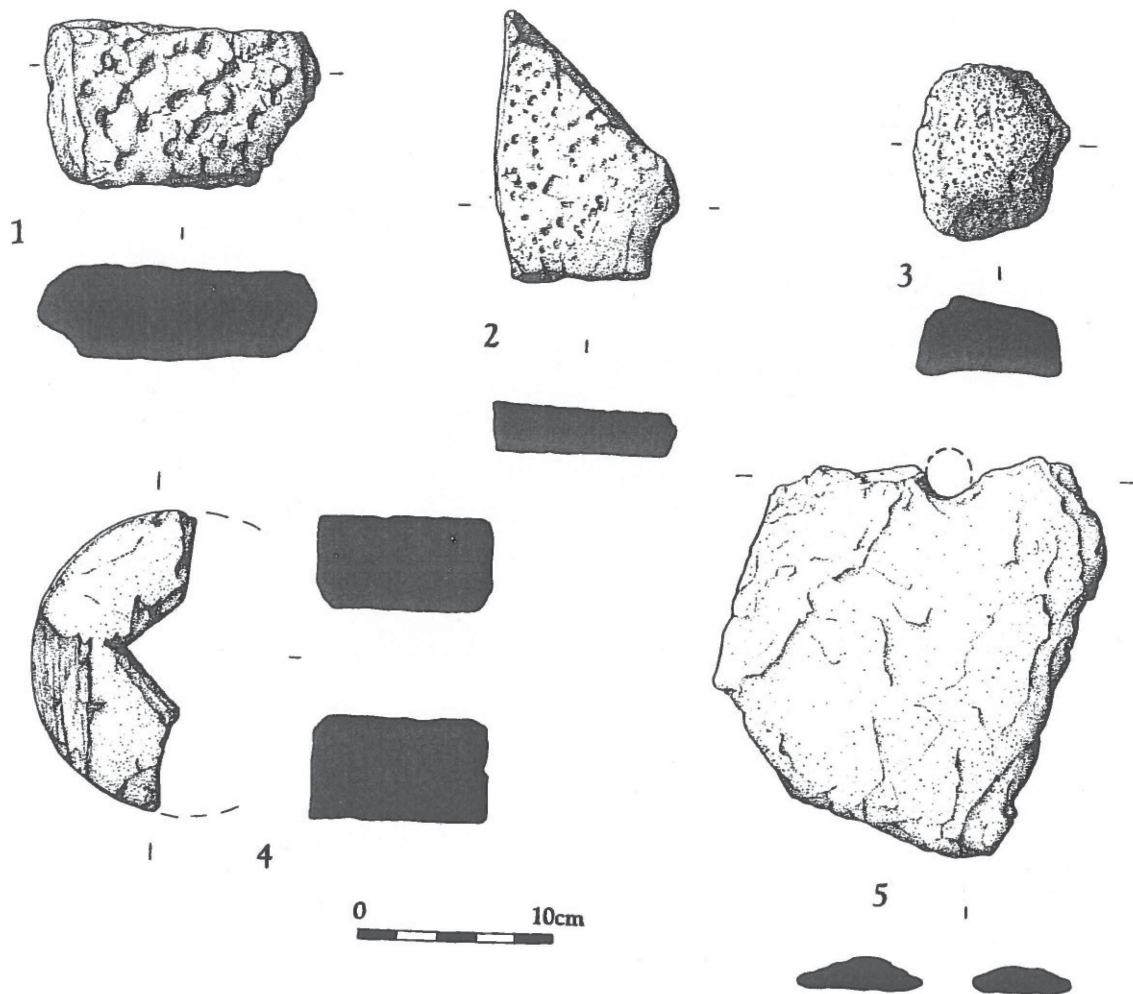


Fig. 9 St Ives Priory. Objects of Stone



Plate 1 Pig skeleton in medieval pit F1227



Plate 2 Saxon grubenhaus F1248

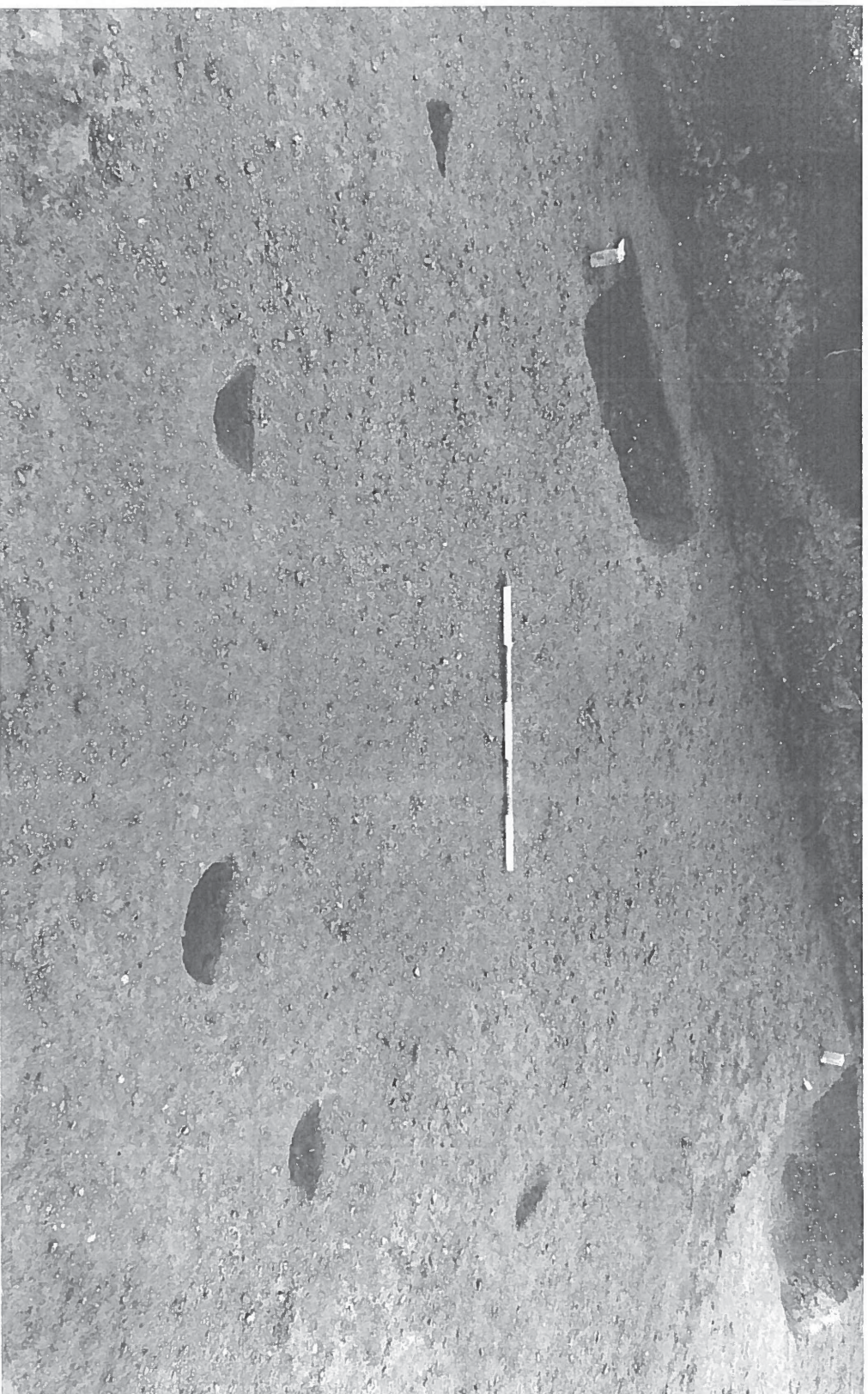


Plate 3 Possible Saxon post hole structure F1205, F1207, F1331 and F1241

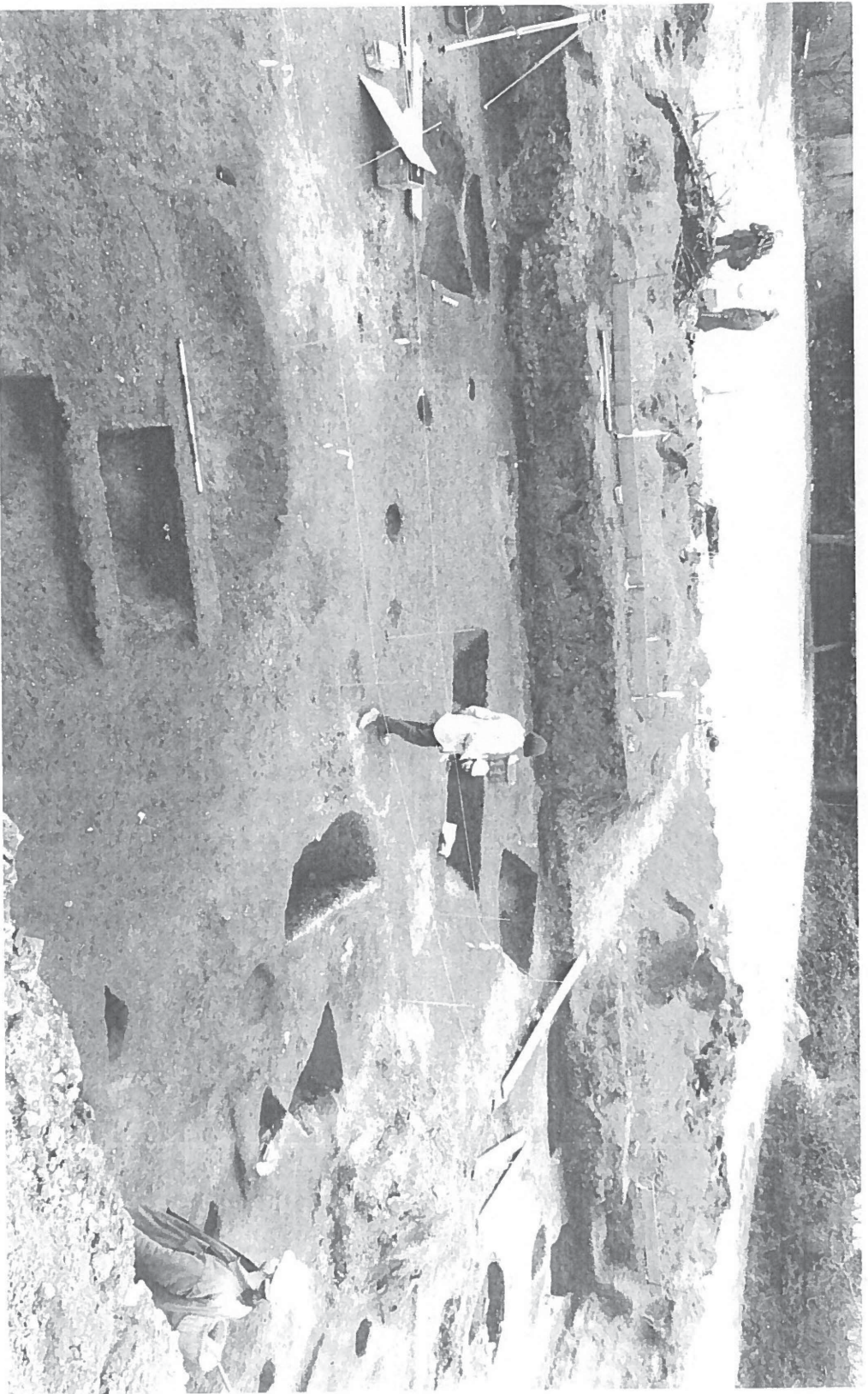


Plate 4 General site shot

Plate 5 Architectural fragments (Nos. 1-3)

