

T V A S



SOUTH WEST

**Bracelands, 48 Silver Street, Midsomer Norton,
Bath and North East Somerset**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Mariusz Paszkiewicz

Site Code: SMW18/209

(ST 6635 5344)

**Bracelands, 48 Silver Street, Midsomer Norton,
Bath and North East Somerset**

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for Armour Heritage Ltd**

by Mariusz Paszkiewicz

TVAS South West

Site Code SMW 18/209

December 2018

Summary

Site name: Bracelands, 48 Silver Street, Midsomer Norton, Bath and North East Somerset

Grid reference: ST 6635 5344

Site activity: Archaeological Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 11th December 2018

Project manager: Agata Socha-Paszkwicz

Site supervisor: Mariusz Paszkiewicz

Site code: SMW 18/209

Area of site: 0.36 ha

Summary of results: The evaluation revealed five rectangular pits and a ditch. However, all five pits produced modern glass or coal as dating evidence. The ditch produced no artefacts but is also considered to be of modern date. The site is considered to have no archaeological potential

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at TVAS South West, Taunton and will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service in due course.

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Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford ✓ 09.01.19
	Steve Preston ✓ 10.01.19

Bracelands, 48 Silver Street, Midsomer Norton, Bath and North East Somerset An Archaeological Evaluation

by Mariusz Paszkiewicz

Report 18/209

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Bracelands, 48 Silver Street, Midsomer Norton, Bath and North East Somerset (ST 6635 5344) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Ms Sue Farr of Armour Heritage Limited, Foghamshire Timber Yard, Foghamshire Lane, Trudoxhill, Frome, Somerset, BA11 5DG on behalf of the client.

Planning permission (18/00354/FUL) has been issued by Bath and North East Somerset Council for the construction of four dwellings following the demolition of the existing property. The consent is subject to Condition 8 and (part of) Condition 9, which required a trial trench evaluation to further assess the archaeological potential of the site. This is in accordance with the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2018), and the Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Richard Sermon, Senior Archaeological Officer for Bath and North East Somerset Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by Mariusz Paszkiewicz and Piotr Wrobel on the 11th December 2018 and the site code is SMW 18/209.

The archive is presently held at TVAS South West, Taunton and will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located at the southern edge of the small town of Midsomer Norton, to the south of Bath (Fig. 1). The site is currently occupied by single dwelling set within mature garden with a tennis court at the western end. It is bounded to the south by school playing fields, to the east by the B3355, to the north by residential properties, and to the west by a further residential property and the dismantled Somerset and Dorset railway line (Fig. 2). The land slopes down gently from a height of approximately 136m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) at the east end to 133m aOD at the western end. The underlying geology is Langport Member and Blue Lias Formation – Mudstone and Limestone (BGS 2000).

Archaeological background

Evidence of prehistoric activity in the area surrounding the site is limited to a small number of chance finds. The route of the Fosse Way, a major Roman road linking the Roman towns of Bath (*Aquae Sulis*) and Ilchester, is believed to follow the course of the current A367 (Fosseway) some 600m south-east of the site. A rectangular enclosure to the immediate south of the site was recorded by geophysical survey (PCAG 2017) and shown by subsequent investigations to be of Roman date (1st to 4th century AD) and likely to reflect settlement of relatively low status (CA 2018). Two small possible Roman roadside settlements are recorded adjacent to the Fosse Way at White Post and Norton Down, c. 450m and 650m to the south-east of the site respectively. The Church of St John the Baptist, c. 1km to the north of site, contains features of Norman date indicating that a settlement was already established in Midsomer Norton by the 11th century, although it is not mentioned under this name in Domesday Book (AD1086). However, as the site lies away from the core of Midsomer Norton it was probably part of the agricultural hinterland of the medieval settlement. In more recent times, an upturn in coal mining during the late 18th and 19th centuries led to rapid expansion. Historic mapping evidence indicates that the current site remained in agricultural use throughout this period and was occupied by a single field.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits within the area of development.

Specific aims of the project are;

To determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on this site.

To determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present.

Two trenches were proposed to be dug measuring 25m long and 1.60m wide and third measuring 10m and 1.60m wide. These were to be dug using a JCB-type machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision. All spoilheaps were to be monitored for finds. Where archaeological features were certainly or probably present or where the archaeological potential was uncertain, the stripped areas were to be cleaned using appropriate hand tools and sufficient of the features exposed were to be excavated or sampled to satisfy the aims outlined above.

Results

All of the evaluation trenches were opened as planned (Fig. 2). The trenches ranged from 11m to 22.80m in length and from 0.25m to 0.30m in depth. All were 1.6m wide. A list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and description of stratigraphy and geology is given in Appendix 1. All trenches revealed potential archaeological features which are summarized in Appendix 2.

Trench 1 (Figs 2, 3 and 4; Pls 1 and 3)

Trench 1 was aligned S – N and was 21m long and 0.3m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.25m of dark brown topsoil above yellow/brown limestone natural geology. At 3m from the southern end of the trench was rectangular pit 1. This was 2.6m long, at least 0.72m wide and 0.25m deep and filled with brown silty sand (51) with frequent limestone debris, a small amount of coal and a fragment of modern window glass (not retained). Approximately 6m to the north was another rectangular feature similar to pit 1. This pit (5) was 2.2m long and at least 0.92m wide again with coal and modern glass observed in the surface layers. This was left unexcavated.

Trench 2 (Figs 2, 3 and 4; Pls 2 and 4)

Trench 2 was aligned SW - NE and was 22.8m long and 0.25m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.2m of topsoil overlying, same as in Trench 1, limestone natural geology. At 8m from the south-west end of the trench was rectangular pit 2, filled with deposit (52) similar to that found in Pit 1 from Trench 1. This pit contained a frequent coal and a fragment of modern window glass. Approximately 4m further to the south-west was another rectangular pit (6) of modern date similar to pit 2 in shape, size and fill, which was left unexcavated.

Trench 3 (Figs 2, 3 and 4; Pls 3 and 5)

The trench was aligned W – E. It was 11m long and 0.25m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.2m of topsoil overlying limestone natural geology. At the very west of the trench was ditch 3. It was orientated SE-NW, 1.10m wide and 0.10m deep. It was filled with brown silty sand (53) with a medium amount of limestone debris. The ditch produced no datable artefacts. Approximately 6m to the east of ditch 3 was pit 4. This was 0.86m wide and 0.18m deep and filled with brown silty sand (54) with medium amount of limestone debris and frequent coal.

Conclusion

The evaluation has successfully investigated the site as intended. No deposits of archaeological interest were revealed. All three trenches revealed pits and a ditch, all except the ditch containing dating evidence of modern window glass and/or coal debris. Although the ditch revealed no datable artefacts its infill was similar to the nearby modern pits. The site is considered to have low archaeological potential.

References

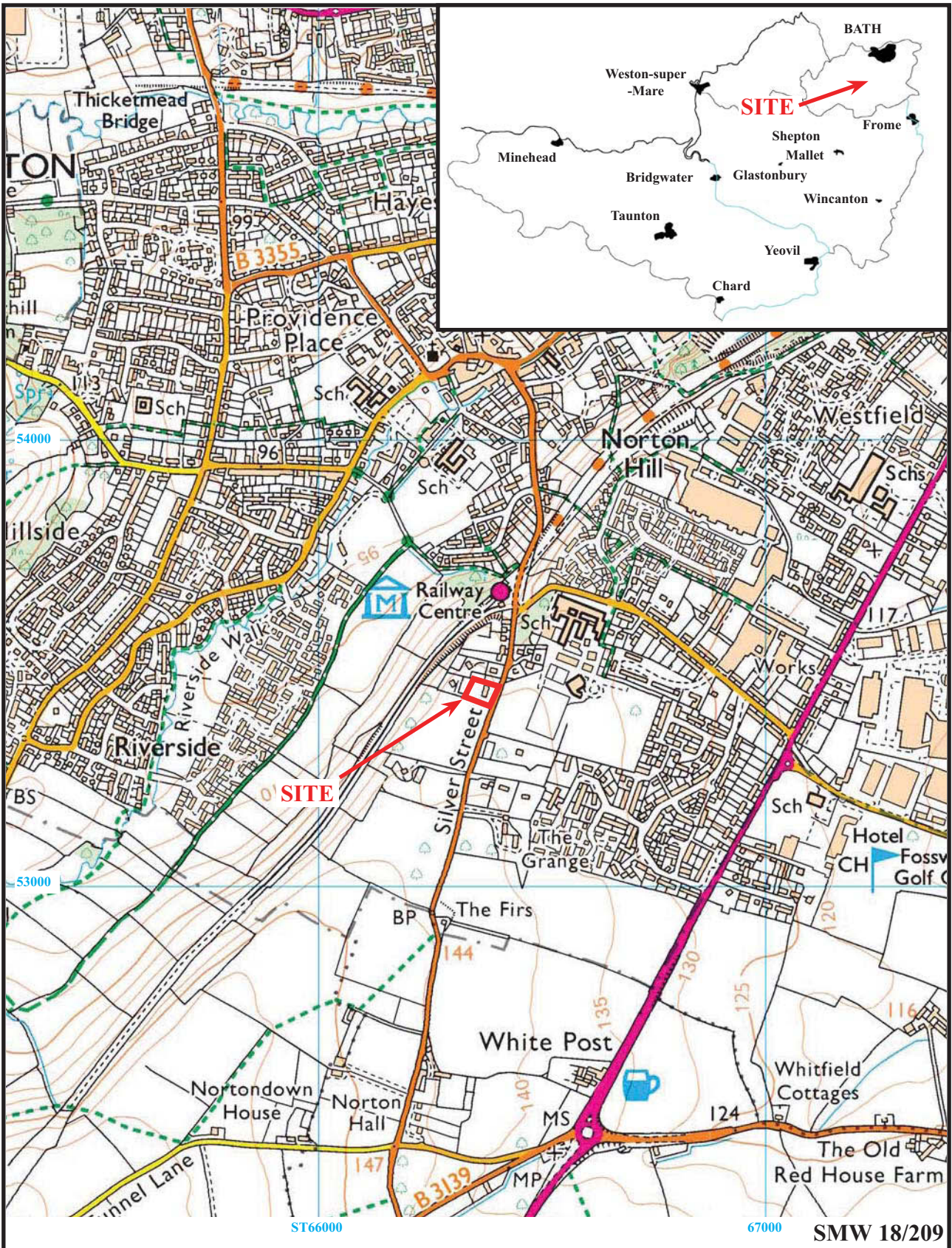
- BGS, 2000, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50,000, Sheet 281, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
- CA, 2014, 'Land at Silver Street, Midsomer Norton, Bath and North East Somerset: Archaeological Evaluation', Cotswold Archaeology report 14412, Kemble
- CA, 2018, 'Land West of Silver Street, Midsomer Norton, Bath and North East Somerset, Archaeological Evaluation', Cotswold Archaeology report 18104, Kemble
- NPPF, 2018 National Planning Policy Framework
- PCG, 2017, 'Land to the West of Silver Street, Midsomer Norton, Bath and North East Somerset Geophysical Survey', Pre-Construct Geophysics, Lincoln

APPENDIX 1: Trench details
 0m at West or South end

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	21	1.6	0.30	0–0.25m Topsoil; 0.25+ yellow brown white limestone - natural geology. Pits 1, 5 [Pls 1 and 4]
2	22.8	1.6	0.25	0–0.20m Topsoil; 0.20+ yellow brown white limestone - natural geology. Pits 2, 6 [Pls 2 and 5]
3	11	1.6	0.25	0–0.20m Topsoil; 0.20+ yellow brown white limestone - natural geology. Ditch 3 and pit 4 [Pls 3 and 6]

APPENDIX 2: Feature details

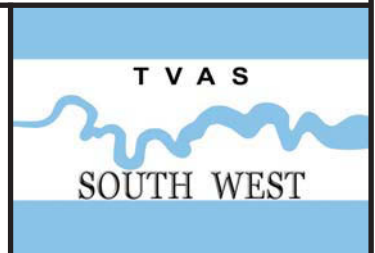
<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill (s)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
1	1	51	Pit	Modern	Modern Glass; coal
2	2	52	Pit	Modern	Modern Glass; coal
3	3	53	Ditch	Undated/Modern	
3	4	54	Pit	Modern	Coal
1	5	55	Pit (unexcavated)	Modern	Modern Glass; coal
2	6	56	Pit (unexcavated)	Modern	Coal



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Figure 1. Location of site within Midsomer Norton and Bath and North East Somerset.

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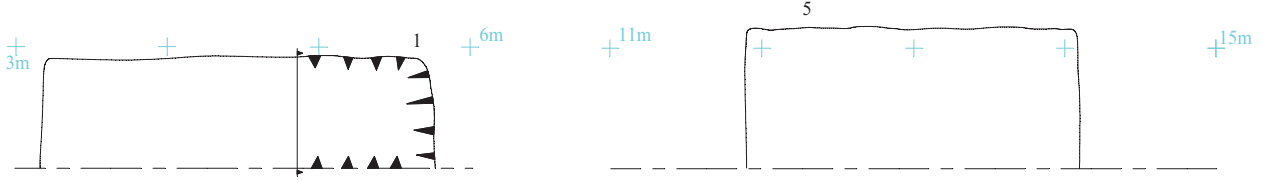
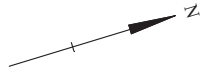


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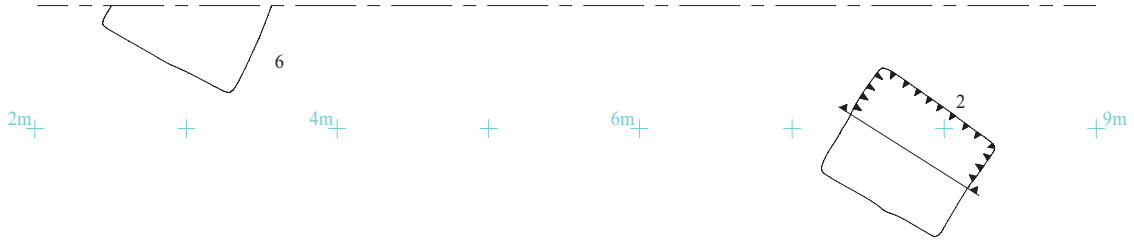
Figure 2. Site plan.



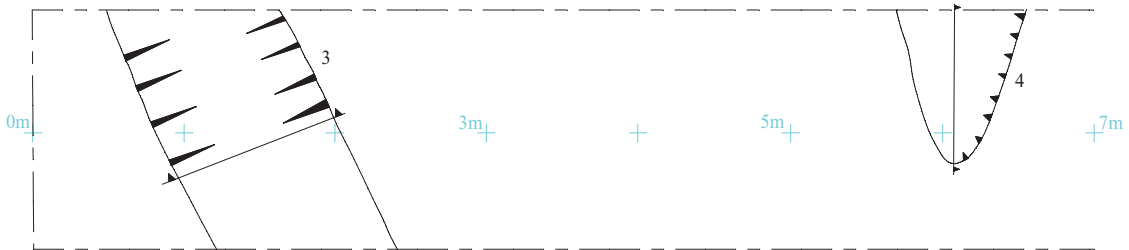
Trench 1.



Trench 2.



Trench 3.



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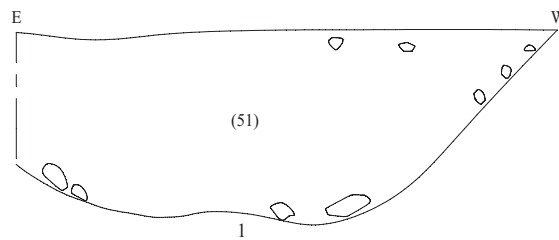
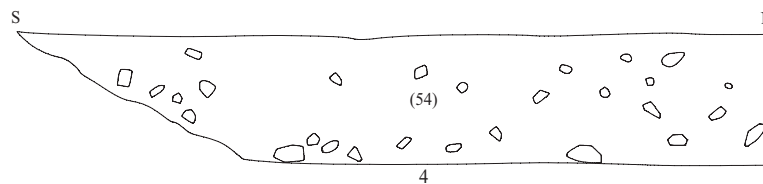
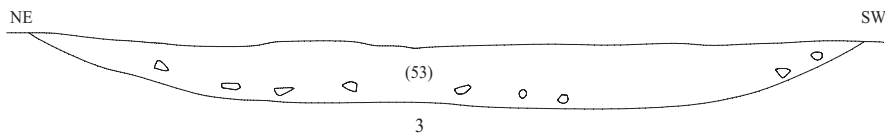
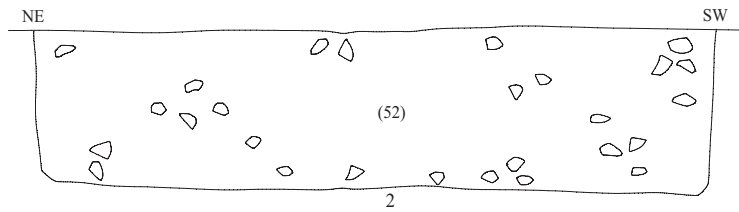
Figure 3. Details of trenches.



W *Trench 1* E 133.15m aOD

Topsoil

Yellow/brown/white limestone (natural gelygy) ----- base of trench



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Figure 4. Representative trench section and feature sections.

0 1m





Plate 1. Trench 1, looking north, Scales: 2m and 1m.



Plate 2. Trench 2, looking north east, Scales: 2m and 0.3m.

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**Bracelands, 48 Silver Street, Midsomer Norton,
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Plates 1 and 2.**

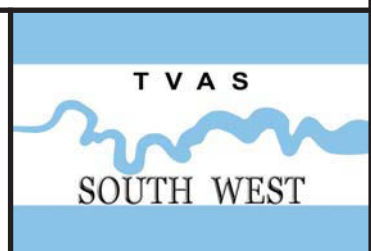




Plate 3. Trench 3, looking east, Scales: 2m and 0.3m.



Plate 4. Trench 1, Pit 1, looking south, Scales: 1m and 0.2m.

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Plates 3 and 4.**

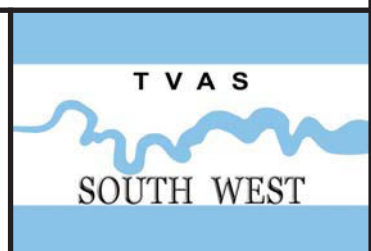




Plate 5. Trench 2, Pit 2, looking south, Scales: 1m and 0.3m.



Plate 6. Trench 3, Ditch 3, looking south east, Scales: 1m and 0.2m.

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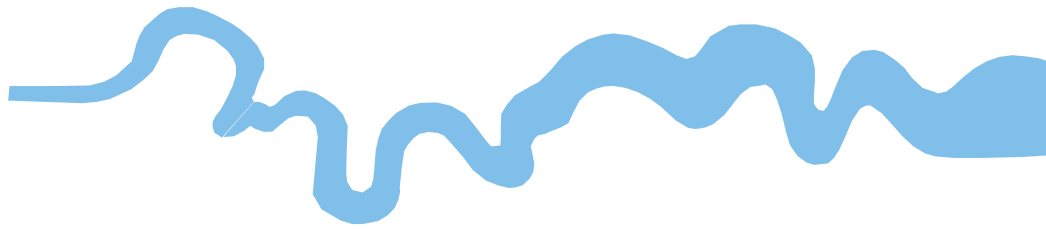
**Bracelands, 48 Silver Street, Midsomer Norton,
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Plates 5 and 6.**



TIME CHART

	Calendar Years
Modern _____	AD 1901
Victorian _____	AD 1837
Post Medieval _____	AD 1500
Medieval _____	AD 1066
Saxon _____	AD 410
Roman _____	AD 43 AD 0 BC
Iron Age _____	750 BC
Bronze Age: Late _____	1300 BC
Bronze Age: Middle _____	1700 BC
Bronze Age: Early _____	2100 BC
Neolithic: Late	3300 BC
Neolithic: Early	4300 BC
Mesolithic: Late	6000 BC
Mesolithic: Early	10000 BC
Palaeolithic: Upper	30000 BC
Palaeolithic: Middle	70000 BC
Palaeolithic: Lower	2,000,000 BC





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