

Chellington Field Survey

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SUMMARY

Three deserted earthwork settlements and their associated trackway systems were surveyed, and the whole of the available arable area systematically fieldwalked. The collation of this evidence suggests a landscape which underwent change slowly from the late Iron Age onwards, with considerable stability in the general pattern of settlement and a trackway system which is probably prehistoric in origin.

INTRODUCTION

The parish of Carlton and Chellington lies on the southern side of the River Ouse, opposite the villages of Harrold and Odell. This paper is concerned only with the eastern, Chellington, portion of the parish, which was the subject of earthwork surveys by the authors during the period 1980-81, and detailed fieldwalking by one of us (AEB) during 1988-90, on both occasions with the assistance of students of the Department of Adult Education of the University of Leicester. It is divided into three parts: an assessment of the earthwork field evidence, a description of the fieldwalking results, and finally an attempt to pull the various strands of evidence together to assess the contribution Chellington might make to the landscape history of this part of Bedfordshire.

HISTORICAL AND TOPOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND (Figs 1 and 3)

The parish of Carlton and Chellington has a very complicated settlement pattern. The western, Carlton, part of it has an isolated church, a rather straggling settlement known as Carlton, that part of it lying close to and along the road running due south from Harrold Bridge being known as Bridge End; and a scatter of farms, at least one of them, the moated site of Carlton Hall Farm, undoubtedly on an ancient site. In the eastern, Chellington, part of the parish, settlement consists of a row of houses set along the eastern side of the road from the bridge, opposite Carlton Bridge End; this is the place which today is thought of as the village of Chellington. There is also an isolated church and a farm close to it, known as Hill Farm.

There is no doubt that in medieval times Carlton and Chellington were two separate parishes. Their tenorial history was also different until 1359-60, when the Trailly family, lords of Chellington, obtained one of the manors of Carlton. This manor carried with it the right of presentation to the church of Carlton, and so the advowson of both churches came to be vested in the same family; the two rectories were consolidated by Act of Parliament in 1769 (VCH 1912, 49-56). The civil parish of Carlton and Chellington was formed under the North Bedfordshire Review Order of 1934 (Kelly's Directory 1940, 85)

Chellington was always the smaller of the two places and as early as 1279 was being described as a hamlet of Carlton (Thompson 1990, 55). Post-medieval sources show that the boundary between the two townships was not known with certainty. A boundary is shown on a pre-enclosure map of 1798 but is not the same as that given on the Enclosure Map of 1806 which was fixed by the Enclosure Commissioners (Beds. CRO: X 1/79, MA 51). The doubt over the boundaries was of long standing, for a glebe terrier of 1710, while noting that the tithes of Chellington were separate from those of Carlton, found it necessary to give 'an account what homes and families belong to Chellington parish for Carlton and Chellington are so intermingled that no stranger can possibly imagine it should be so' (Beds. CRO: ABE 2). This confusion is easy to understand when it is appreciated just how often farms came to have land in both townships; it is possible that the two townships were being operated together as one field system in the 18th century (Beds. CRO: GA 1023, 1212, 321, 328, 1124 (1-15), Jeays 339; also Linnell 1950, 101).

This field survey has shown just how complicated the settlement history of the Chellington part of the parish is. In addition to the present village of Chellington, there were three quite separate settlements in other places in the parish, all of which are now deserted.

EARTHWORK SURVEY (Fig 2)

The three deserted settlements, their associated road system and adjacent ridge and furrow occupy a long

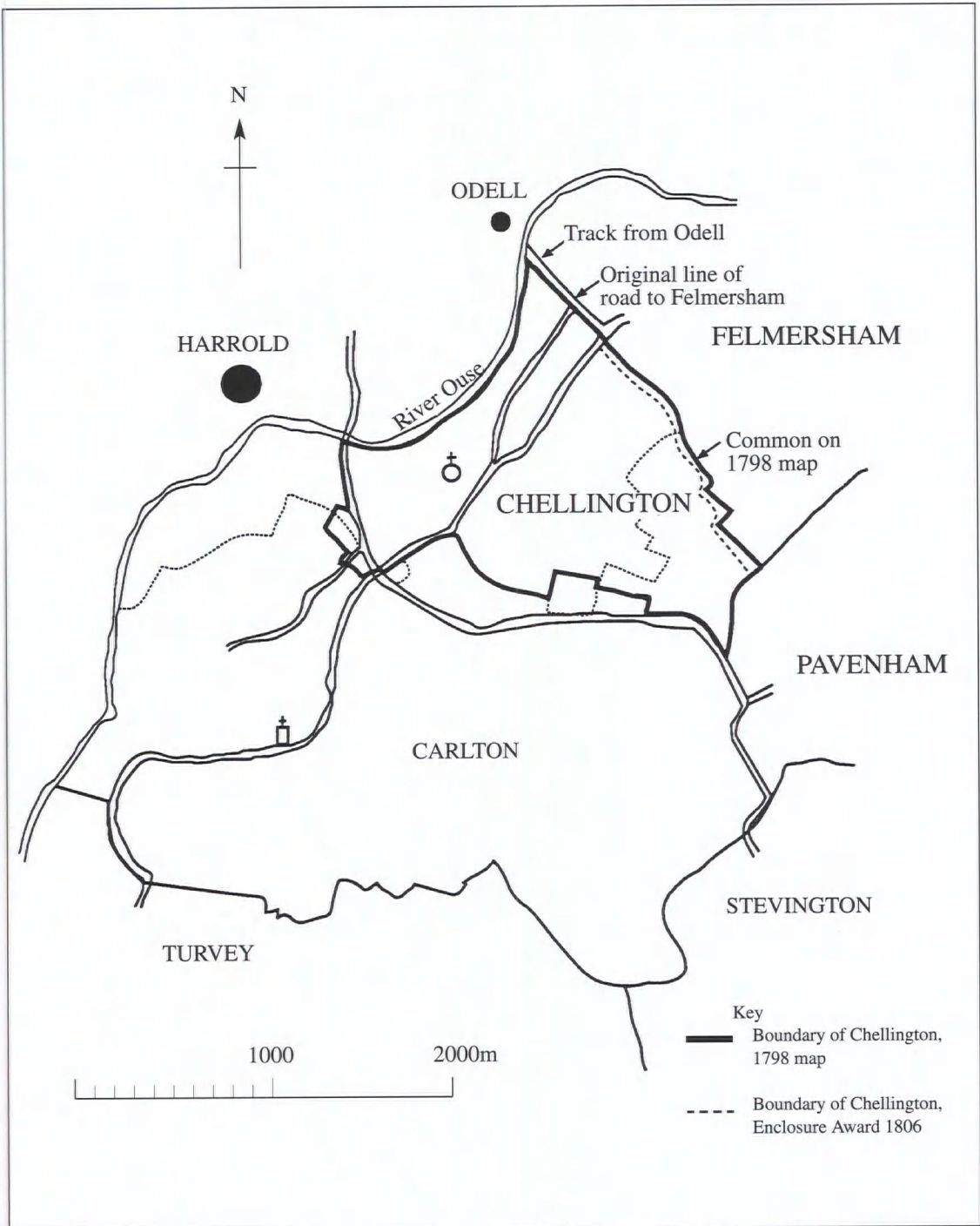


Figure 1 Carlton and Chellington: parish boundaries and road system

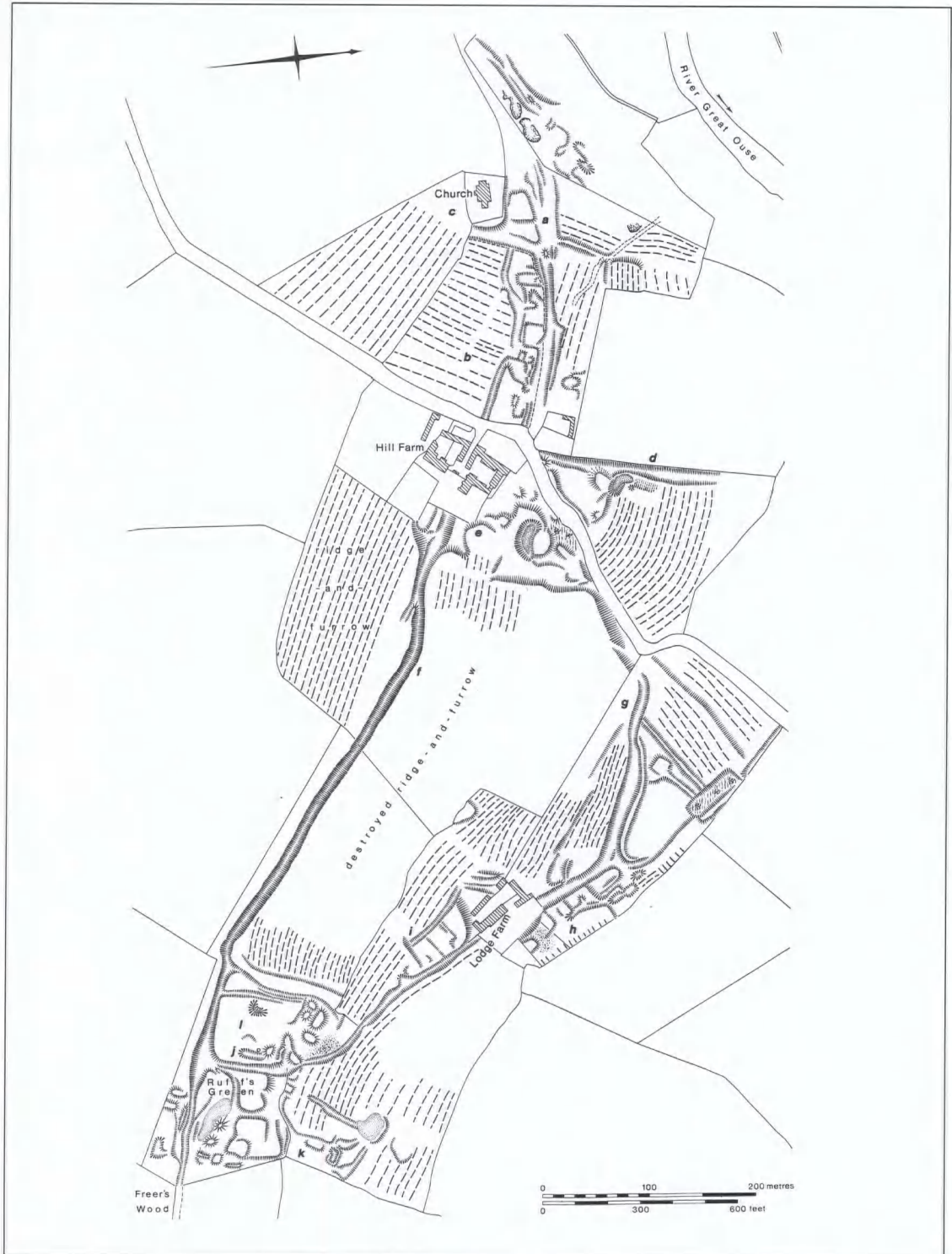


Figure 2 Chellington: earthworks

narrow strip of land in the centre of Chellington parish which is still largely grassland. It extends from the river cliff, near the now isolated Chellington church SE as far as the NW edge of Freers Wood. This area coincides almost exactly with that of Old Enclosures shown on the Enclosure Map of 1806. In the description which follows, comparison will be made between the earthwork remains and the landscape shown on the pre-enclosure map of 1798. The earthworks were planned by a tape survey using baseline and offsets, including the ridge and furrow.

CHELLINGTON CHURCH SETTLEMENT

The remains lie mainly between the isolated Chellington church and the existing Hill Farm to the E together with other earthworks N and E of the farm. In the area between the church and the farm the most obvious feature is a broad shallow hollow-way (a) running roughly E-W from the present road to a point just N of the church, where its line is continued by a wide hedged track leading E-W down the river cliff. The land immediately N of the hollow-way is covered by fairly low ridge and furrow. In the N E block the ridges run roughly NNW-ESE and run out on to the hollow-way itself. On the 1798 map most of this area was within an enclosed field called 'Glebe' though it is clear that the ridges extended beyond the irregular W end of this field for the line of the old hedge still survives cutting through the ridges. The W end of the ridges and most of the other blocks of ridge and furrow to the NW lay in 1798 in an open area called Midsummer Ground (Common) which was not part of the common fields at that time. However, one block of E-W ridge and furrow appears to relate to the southernmost strips in the furlong then called Behind Morgans.

On the S side of the hollow way are the mutilated but clearly identifiable remains of former buildings, consisting of a series of sub-rectangular platforms. To the rear of these platforms is a shallow sinuous ditch with ridge and furrow beyond. This ridge and furrow is, especially near the settlement remains, much damaged and there is a later headland a few metres to the S. Though most of the ridges are aligned through this headland, at least four are not and it thus appears that two stages of cultivation are represented; i.e. initially all the land was ploughed between the existing hedge and the settlement boundary ditch to the N. Later on the ridges were shortened by the insertion of a headland (b) to the S of the settlement, and the old ridges reploughed,

some on a new alignment. The land between the new headland and the settlement may have been incorporated into the settlement area. The 1798 map shows yet a third stage. Most of the settlement had gone and the ridge and furrow behind it was at that time divided into two enclosed paddocks called Watts Close and Knells Close. Between the two closes was a narrow strip of land, at the N end of which, lying parallel to the hollow way, was a single building. To the S of this strip were two small rectangular open field strips whose overall length was only between 30 and 40m.

The hollow way itself is shown on the 1798 map as part of a through road which left the present Harrold-Carlton road at the S end of the bridge over the River Ouse at Harrold and ran up the valley side and through the Midsummer Ground Common. Just before it reached the church, a side road ran S and then turned round the SW corner of the churchyard. No trace of this exists on the ground. On the S side of the churchyard it met another side-road (c) running S from the through road between the E side of the churchyard and Watts Close. This does survive as a broad shallow hollow way. The combined road then ran S roughly along the modern track to the church until it met the present road from Carlton.

The through road continued E passing along what is the main village hollow way until it met the modern road. Here, and immediately W of the present Hill Farm, was a major road junction. The existing road formed part of this junction with the extension of the village hollow way crossing it and then bending SE to pass through the area where the present farm now stands. Another road (d) ran NNE as the then road to Felmersham. This latter road still remains as a hollow way for some 200m before it disappears into modern arable. On its E side is a block of ridge and furrow which in 1798 was part of an old enclosure with, to the S of it, a small triangular area set in the angle between the hollow way and the present road. This area was another small paddock in 1798.

The area to the N and E of the present Hill Farm has extensive if incoherent earthworks. NE of the farm and SE of the present road is a large pond and numerous banks and scarps (e), separated from the adjacent ridge and furrow to the E by a large scarp except on the S. Here a secondary headland exists with traces of earlier ridge and furrow running on for a few metres towards the settlement area. The earthworks by themselves cannot be interpreted, though they suggest some form of occupation.

However, on the 1798 map four buildings are shown in this area, two probable houses along the modern road, a long block along the road running ESE and two buildings to the SW and NW of the pond. No garden closes are shown around these buildings. The site of the present Hill Farm is shown as occupied by what appears to be a group of farm buildings and a presumed farm house, the latter parallel to the through road. This through road has been completely destroyed by the present farm, but immediately SE of the garden there, a massive hollow-way up to 3m deep appears and runs SE (f). At this point the hollow way has subsidiary depressions and scarps on either side of it and those on the S appear where either one or both of two buildings shown on the 1798 map lay.

Though extensive, these earthworks were in poor condition, but they have a number of points of special interest. First, the fact that the earthworks are in this condition is a reflection of the late and gradual decay of the village. It has become obvious from examination of deserted villages over many parts of the Midlands that those villages with well preserved house sites and clear layouts tend to have been abandoned in the late medieval period. The more recently abandoned settlements are characterised by incoherent earthworks resulting from the demolition of stone and brick buildings rather than the slow decay of stone or timber ones. The evidence of the 1798 map suggests this at Chellington, where a number of houses appear to have survived into the 19th century.

Secondly, even where the house sites are reasonably well preserved, as on the S side of the main hollow way E of the church, there are in fact only house sites and relatively small tofts. There is no indication of long crofts behind the houses which is the normal pattern in the Midlands. What this means is unknown though it may be a reflection of the unplanned gradual development of settlement as opposed to corporate or individual planning.

A third feature worth commenting on is the lack of house sites on the N side of the main hollow way to the E of the church. It is possible that there were once houses there which have been destroyed by the subsequent ridge and furrow. Excavation could confirm or deny this. However, such a 'one-side' settlement is not unique and a number have been recognized in Northamptonshire e.g. Mallows Cotton in Raunds parish and Braunston Cleves in Braunston (RCHM(E) 1975, 81; 1981, 23)

As noted above, in 1798 two roads ran NE and SE from the road junction W of the present farm. One is

the existing road to Felmersham but where the road now takes a double bend and commences its long run NE, in 1798 this bend was only an access way into the adjacent fields. Then, a loop road continued E and then SE towards the present Lodge Farm. Its line still survives as a broad shallow hollow way (g), passing between various blocks of ridge and furrow separated by low scarps and ditches. Most of the latter appear to be on the lines of hedges which, in 1798, divided the area into four fields, Rudds Close, Busby Close, Boons Close and Long Close. On the N side of Rudds Close and Busby Close there was, in 1798, a track, but this no longer survives in the modern arable. A long rectangular pond does exist which is not shown on the map. The main hollow way continues SE and runs into:

LODGE FARM SETTLEMENT

The present Lodge Farm, now mainly demolished, was a late 18th century building and some of its out-buildings are shown on the 1798 map on the SW side of the road running from the Chellington church settlement. Opposite the farm house the map shows a side road extending NE into the common fields. On the ground neither the main road nor its side road exist at this point but to the NW and SE of the farm the main road survives intact.

To the NW of the farm the hollow way is up to 2m deep. On its SW side are two blocks of ridge and furrow. On the NE side, which in 1798 was the SE part of the Busby Close, is a series of house platforms (h), surviving as a group of rectangular terraces cut back into the rising ground and separated by scarps only 0.25m high. There is no evidence of any former closes behind them and indeed short lengths of ridge and furrow cut by the modern hedge terminate within a few metres of the house sites. This ridge and furrow is of considerable interest for it appears to run NE – SW. Yet on the 1798 map a track existed a few metres further NE and beyond it was a furlong with plough ridges running NW – SE. These ridges thus presumably represent an older field system unrelated to the fields and track layout of the late 18th century. Of the house platforms the south easternmost and about half of the adjoining one to the NW have been ploughed over.

To the SE of the farm buildings, the hollow way emerges running SE, now only a shallow depression containing a stream. To the NE is an area of ridge and furrow, in 1798 lying within Tolls Close and Grundons, while to the SW are three more level

platforms cut into the hillside (i), presumably house sites. These, together with ridge and furrow to the SE, lay in Jills Hall in 1798.

The Lodge Farm settlement thus consists of at least eight house sites, plus the existing farm, with the odd feature of the houses being only on the SW side of the main street in the SE and only on the NE side on the NW. No explanation can be offered for this. One other feature is worth noting here. The house platforms are very well preserved and if the argument noted earlier is valid, this should indicate abandonment at an earlier date than at the settlement near Chellington church. The discovery of only medieval pottery on the ploughed-out house sites supports this (see below), as does the 1798 map which shows only the existing farm there.

The hollow way or road continues from this settlement up the hillside until it reaches the third deserted settlement:

RUFF'S GREEN

This settlement lies on top of the rising ground on generally flat land. It is approached from the NW by the hollow way (f) which runs E from the SE end of the Chellington church settlement and which is now traceable from the SE edge of Hill Farm. This narrow hollow way, cut to a depth of 2.5 – 3m, probably by water as much as by traffic, climbs up the hillside from Hill Farm passing through and alongside large blocks of ridge and furrow which, in 1798, lay in Wrights Close, Franks Croft and Chellington Croft.

When the hollow way reaches the settlement site at Ruff's Green it continues past it on its S side and, at the corner of Freers Wood, becomes a modern farm track along the northern edge of the wood. In 1798 it was a through road and is shown continuing SE towards Pavenham.

Midway along the length of the hollow way, as it passes the settlement site, a subsidiary hollow way (j) runs off it at right angles to the N, which then turns NW to become the hollow way running down to the Lodge Farm settlement. There are also traces of another hollow way running off the last in an easterly direction, though this is badly mutilated by existing hedges and later activity. Both these hollow ways are shown as roads on the 1798 map. At the junction of the main through road from Chellington church to Pavenham with the road to Lodge Farm and extending as far as the junction with the subsidiary hollow way to the E the map shows a

roughly rectangular open space and names it Ruff's Green. In this area on the ground are some low banks, mounds, ditches and scarps of no coherent form (l) and, in addition, a small stone-lined well-head. To the W of Ruff's Green the 1798 map shows a roughly triangular paddock called Ruff's Close. The boundaries of this close survive on the ground, consisting of the hollow ways on the NE and S and slight ditches and scarps on the W. Within its S part only a small pond exists, but in the N is an area of uneven ground. The land to the E of Ruff's Green is part of what in 1798 was a large rectangular field called Sanders Closes. The eastern two-thirds is now incorporated in the modern arable but the western third is still grass and has earthworks on it. These include a large, probably modern, pond with spoil heaps of gravel around it, but also some slight and mutilated remains of a rectangular area edged by low scarps.

At the N end of Ruff's Green, as noted above, is a subsidiary hollow way running E. To the N of it, at the E end of the fields called Grundons and Tolls Close in 1798 is a small area of disturbed ground (k) which appears to have cut through pre-existing ridge and furrow. On the ground evidence alone this would be inexplicable but the 1798 map shows two buildings here.

The remains of the Ruff's Green settlement are in poor condition and little can be said about them. The map evidence and the pottery found there suggests that, as with the Chellington church site, desertion was slow. The possibility that the last surviving buildings lay on top of earlier ridge and furrow is of interest and indicates a phase of expansion at some period.

FIELDWALKING (Figs 3-9)

From November 1988 to December 1990 the available arable area of Chellington Parish was walked, mainly by extra-mural groups. In all some 135ha were surveyed by means of transects 10m apart. Fifteen visits were made, and in all cases the condition of the ground and the light were good. Some 2300 pottery sherds and tile fragments were found, as well as large quantities of iron smelting debris. The geology of the Ouse valley here is simple. The gently rising slope of the river valley passes in turn over deposits of terrace gravel, Great Oolite limestone and clay, a thin band of Cornbrash blue limestone and clay and, finally, at a height of c.300 feet around Freer's Wood, a spread of heavy Oxford clay.

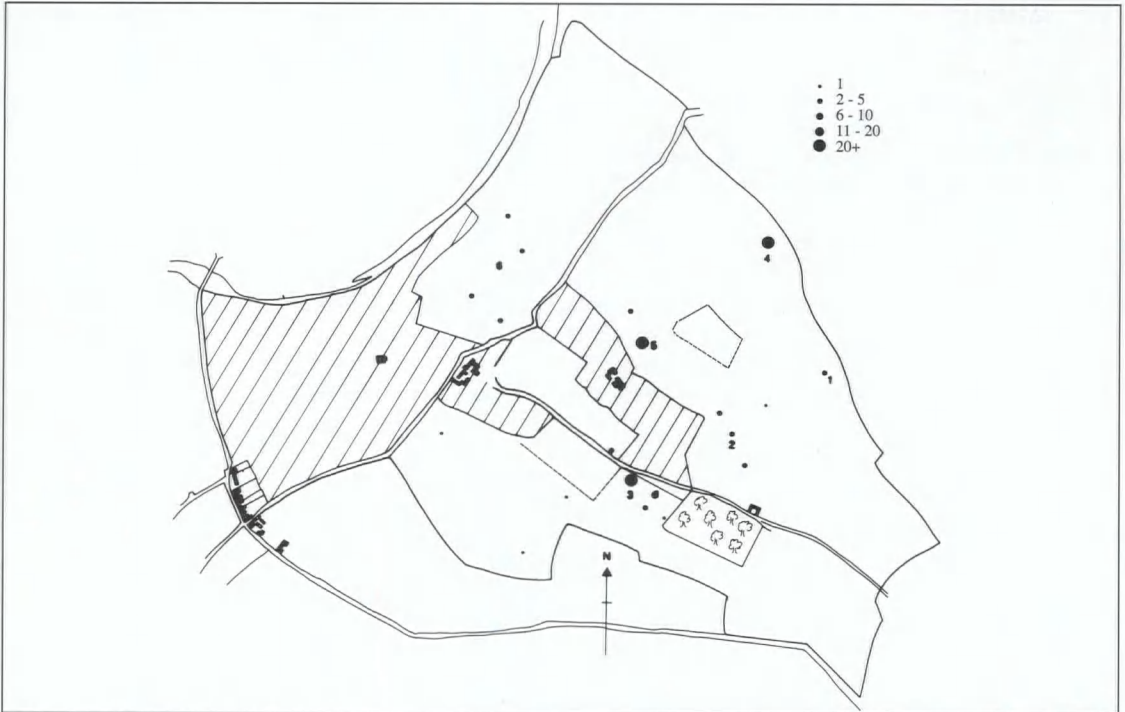


Figure 3 Chellington fieldwalking: Iron Age. The area walked is that contained within the parish boundary of 1798. Shaded areas grassland; areas within dashed lines unwalked. Chellington village is the group of houses on the western edge of the parish

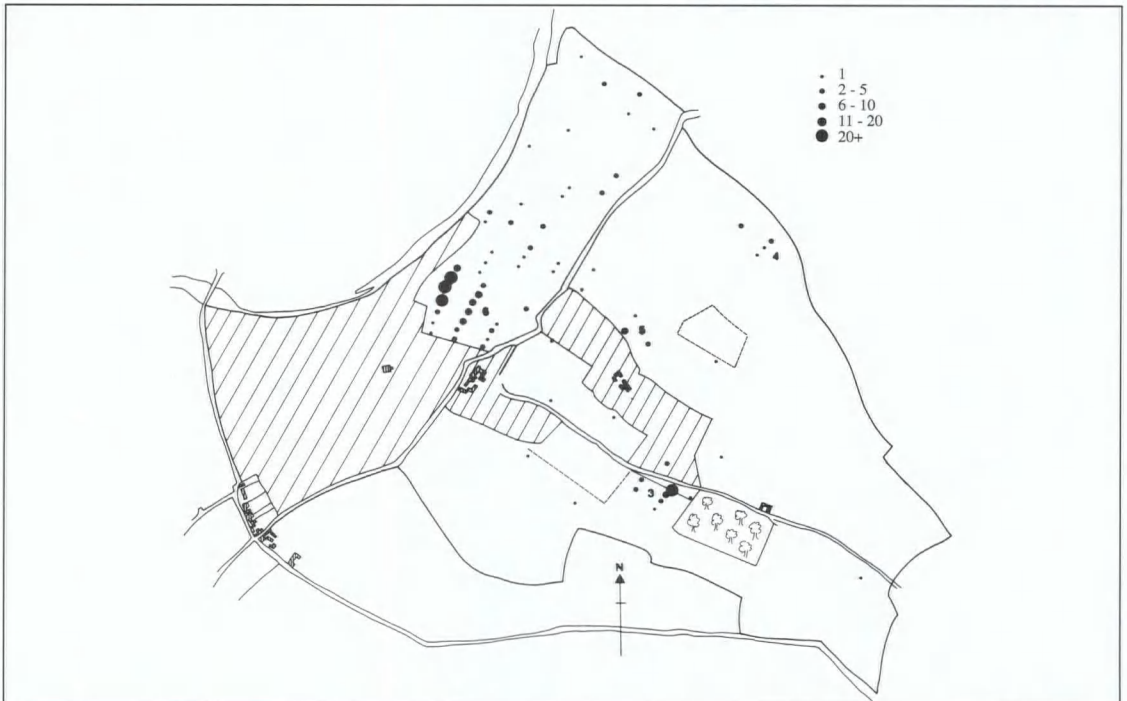


Figure 4 Chellington fieldwalking: Roman

IRON AGE (Fig 3)

There were two broad classes of Iron Age pottery, both represented by small fragments:

- (i) a type with reddish-brown or black surfaces and a thick black or grey core; the surfaces can be either hard or smooth to the touch and the vessels thick walled; sometimes a little shell is visible; and
- (ii) thinner vessels in a smooth, soapy leathery black fabric.

There were small but clear concentrations at 1, 2 and 3, at c.85m above sea level, on Cornbrash close to its junction with the Oxford clay. At 4 and 5 were two more, lower down at 70m on the Great Oolite near its junction with the Cornbrash. There was a thin scatter at 6 on the same geological formation but much lower still between 55 and 60m, just above the flood plain of the Great Ouse. None of these concentrations consisted exclusively of one pottery type only.

ROMAN (Fig 4)

The Iron Age sites 1 and 2 did not apparently survive into the Roman period. No 4 for a short time did; the pottery here included some pieces of a buff brown Belgic type which spans the late Iron Age – Romano-British transition and there are pieces of early Roman shelly wares of the kind made at the kilns at Harrold 4km away across the river. This site came to an end somewhere in the late 1st century AD.

The Iron Age site at 3 went on into the first half of the 2nd century, but perhaps not very far into it; in addition to early shelly wares there were grey and black sandy fragments of this period and a piece of Samian. The site at 5 went on longer since in addition to fragments of buff and black sandy wares, there were pieces of Nene Valley colour coated pottery. Around 3 and 5 was a thin scatter of grey and buff sandy pieces, mostly abraded.

The Iron Age scatter at 6 however went on to become a major occupation focus which spanned the whole Roman period. Here was a scatter of some 4ha containing Belgic buff wares and early Roman shelly pottery, some scored, 2nd and 3rd century grey, buff and black wares, shelly pottery of Harrold type in forms ranging from the 2nd to 4th centuries, Samian, and Nene Valley colour coated pottery. There were also fragments of shelly tiles. There was a thin scatter of Roman pottery in the fields northward of the site, to the west of the modern road to Felmersham.

EARLY-MIDDLE SAXON (c.450-800AD) (Fig 5)

Pottery of the period 450-800 AD fell into two broad fabric groups, a black or grey fabric of variable degrees of coarseness and with plenty of shiny sand visible; and a crude black or buff ware with rough shelly inclusions. Both groups were found together at 6 in much the same places as the Roman pottery. There was also a small concentration at 5, where it will be remembered that the Roman pottery also included late types; and two isolated sherds at 7, on the Cornbrash close to the Iron Age/early Roman site 3.

EARLY MEDIEVAL (c.800 – 1100AD) (Fig 6)

St. Neots ware came from the ploughed earthworks at 8 – part of the settlement near the church – and formed part of the thin medieval pottery scatter in the fields to the N of them; from the ploughed field E of Hill Farm (9) and from the ploughed edges of the earthworks of the Ruff's Green site (10). Some also came from the field to the N of the Lodge Farm settlement (5), where early-middle Saxon pottery had been found.

MEDIEVAL (c.1100 – 1500AD) (Fig 7)

The drawing shows how medieval pottery was abundant and evenly spread over the whole parish, with the exception of the SE corner. The types included shelly wares of the 12-14th centuries, and a variety of brown, black, grey and pinkish sandy wares, some with green-brown or honey coloured glazes. Later types included fragments of later Lyveden wares 1400 – 1500, late buff sandy wares with the same date range and late medieval reduced wares 1350 – 1600. There were three concentrations:

- (i) At 8 the ploughed-down earthworks of the settlement near the church produced a great deal of shelly and sandy pottery going down to the end of the 14th century but hardly any later pottery.
- (ii) At 5, near the Lodge Farm site, a concentration of similar pottery with however a few pieces of late reduced and sandy pottery and tile and a piece of Cistercian ware.
- (iii) Around the earthworks at 10 (Ruffs Green) mainly shelly wares going down to the later 14th century, but with a significant quantity of types of the 11th to later 12th centuries.

POST MEDIEVAL (c.1500AD – recent) (Fig 8)

The pottery includes pieces with a fine reddish brown sandy fabric, with a brown, reddish brown

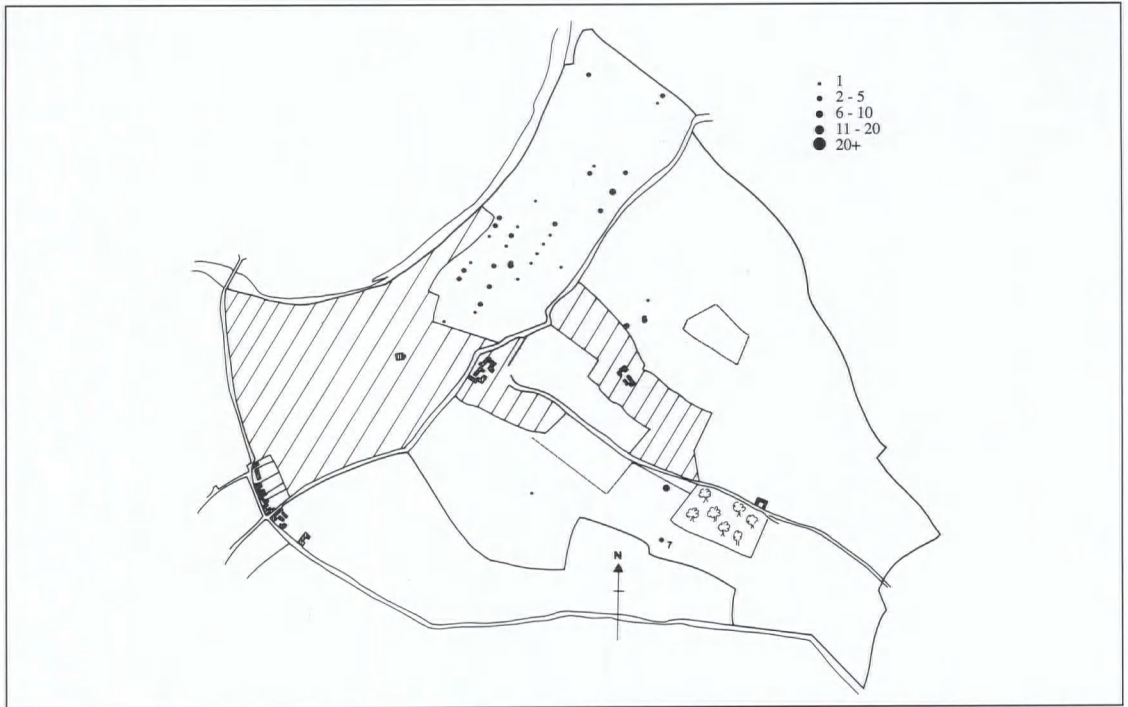


Figure 5 Chellington fieldwalking: Saxon

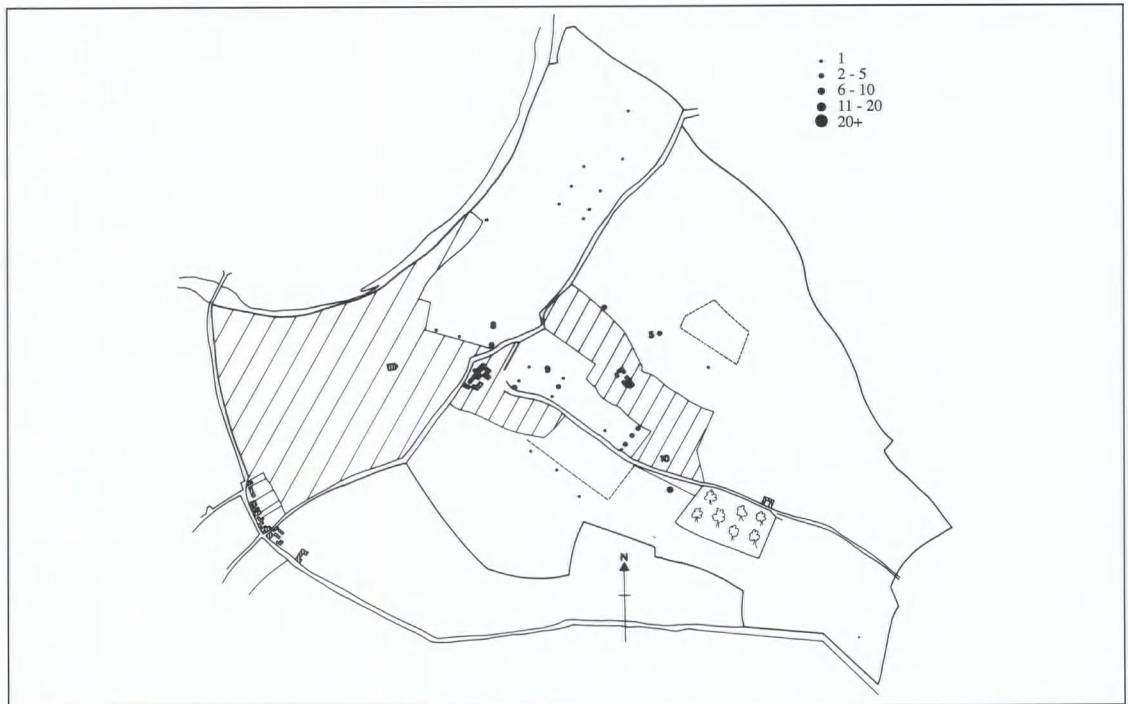


Figure 6 Chellington fieldwalking: early medieval

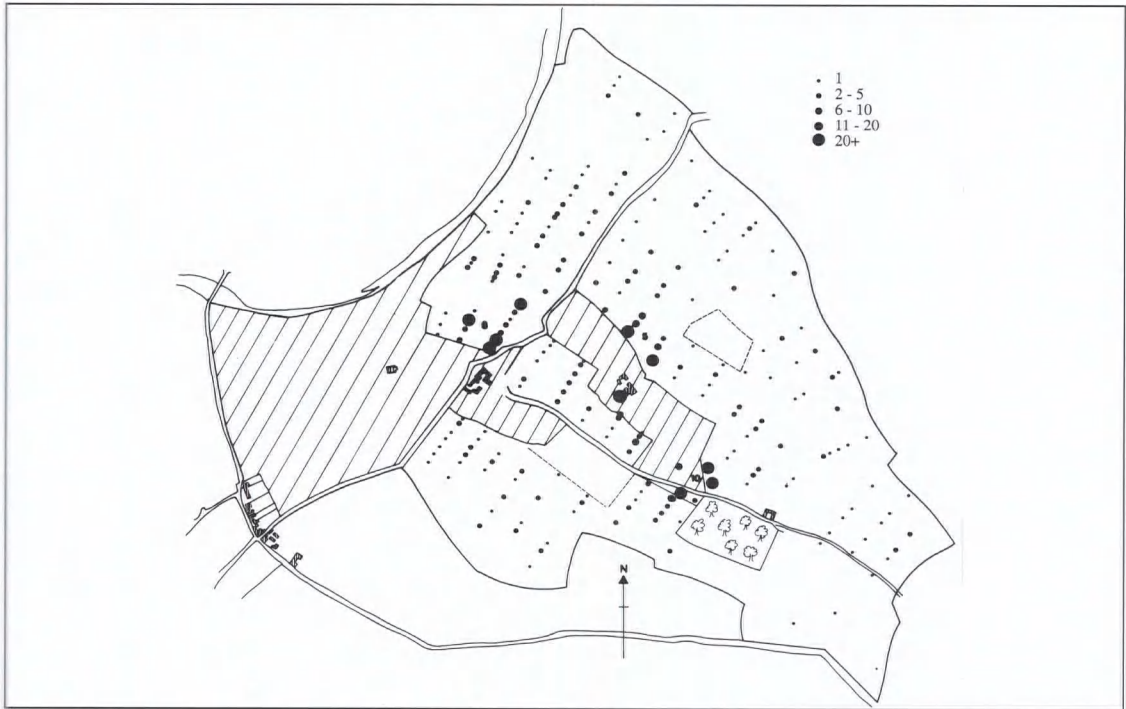


Figure 7 Chellington fieldwalking: medieval

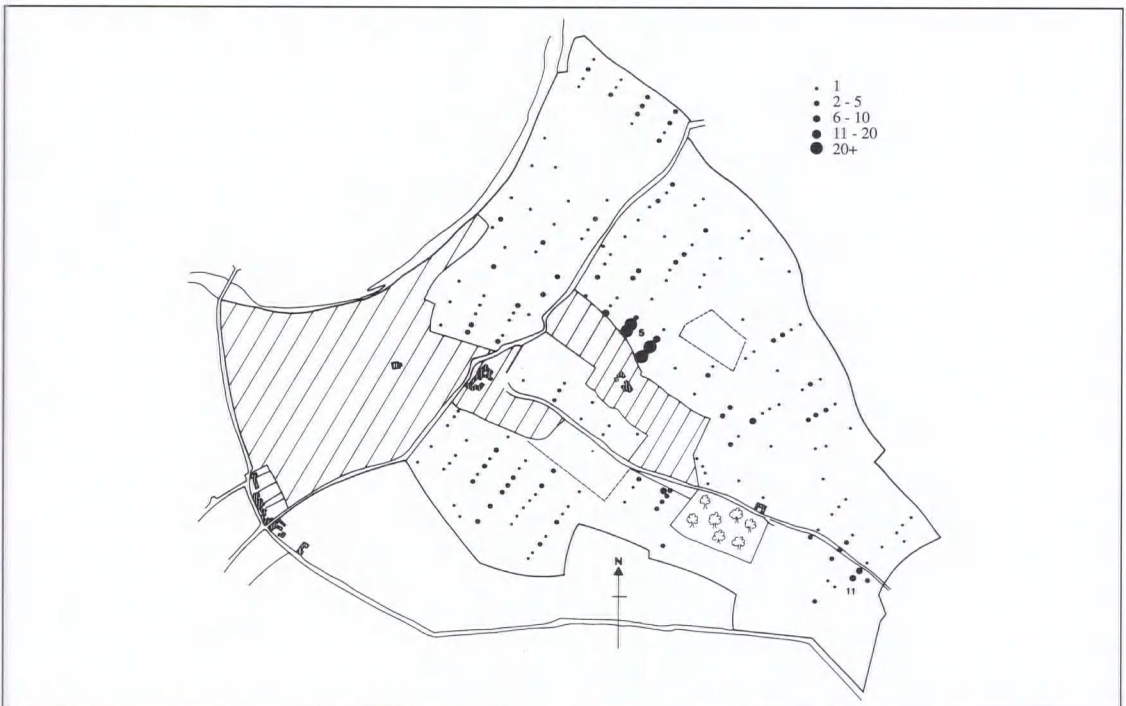


Figure 8 Chellington fieldwalking: post-medieval

and green glaze, of the kind made at Potterspur, Northamptonshire, in the 16th and 17th centuries; stonewares, black and yellow glazed and unglazed earthenwares of the 18th and 19th centuries, Staffordshire slipwares, willow pattern, and ceramic tiles of 17th to 19th century date or later. This material was as ubiquitous as the medieval pottery, but there were some significant concentrations:

North of the Lodge Farm site at 5, where the material ran through the 19th century and probably into the 20th – Staffordshire brown and yellow glazed pieces, many tile fragments and an 18th century wine bottle.

East of Freers Wood at 11 was a small concentration of pieces of limestone, with 17th century lead glazed Potterspur fragments, and black, brown and yellow earthenware of the 18th and 19th centuries; pieces of stoneware, ceramic tiles, and 17th and 18th century clay pipes. There was an inn here called the Chellington Fox on the 1798 map, and on Jefferys' county map of 1765. Also, in 1729, Mr Vere John Alston, having drunk too much, 'clapt spurs to his horse, and coming into the road at Chellington Fox, his horse fell into a Cart track and down he came' (Linnell 1950, 12).

IRON SLAG (Fig 9)

Pieces of iron smelting slag were picked up almost everywhere. There was a concentration of these at 6, where occupation of Iron Age, Roman and early-middle Saxon date was found. But in addition to this, slag occurred abundantly in concentrations 20-30m across, around the fringes of what became the medieval and later common fields, framing quite neatly the distribution of the St. Neots ware.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

To deal with the earthwork evidence first: the work has discovered evidence of three, quite separate and now deserted, small medieval settlements and these, together with the existing village of Chellington, means that in fact there had been four settlements within the township in the Middle Ages. Chellington therefore fits in with a widespread pattern of dispersed settlement now well known from northern Bedfordshire (Brown and Taylor 1991).

Equally important are the implications for documentary research. There is no hint in the published histories of any of this physical complexity. In tenurial terms Chellington was a

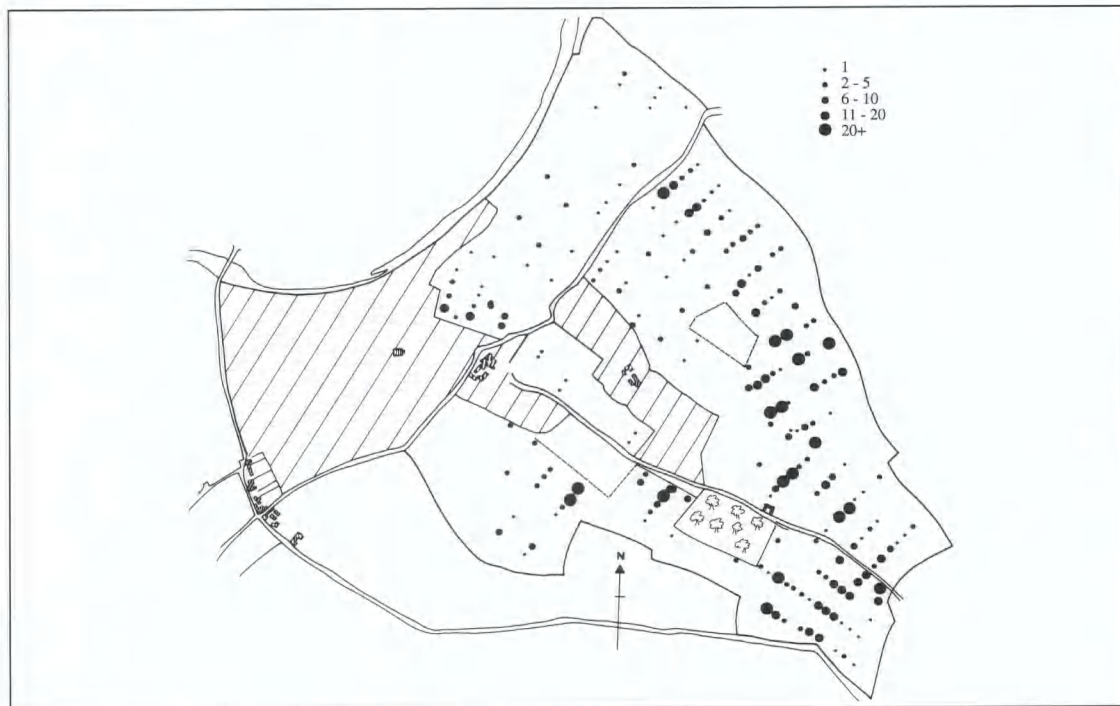


Figure 9 Chellington fieldwalking: iron slag

single four hide manor in 1086 held by the Bishop of Coutances, with a recorded population of 23. The single under-tenant was Geoffrey Trailly and the manor passed from father to son in a regular manner until the 15th century (VCH 1912, 54-6). It may well be impossible to discover from historical records alone exactly how this pattern of settlement developed or functioned in medieval times.

The earthwork survey has also pointed out other less vital but none-the-less interesting information. The apparently long drawn out process of abandonment of the settlements is one example and the possible difference in date between the abandonment of the Lodge Farm earthworks and the settlement near the church is noteworthy. Another is the evidence for alteration or relay of the common field system in at least two places.

Particularly interesting from the point of view of analytical field survey is the inability of a fieldworker to identify former house sites which were shown on the 1798 map, as well as the fact that while most of the 1798 boundaries survive and can be recognized and interpreted, some do not and could never be recovered using archaeological methods.

The addition of the fieldwalking evidence brings forward the importance of the system of roads and tracks of the township as the key to understanding the pattern of settlement. It is clear that the relationship between the road system and the settlements is very close – all the sites described here clearly relate to roads and tracks which are either still in use, which survive as earthworks or which can be shown from cartographic evidence to have existed. This true of the Iron Age and Roman scatters at 3 (Ruffs Green), 5 (Lodge Farm) and 6 (near Hill Farm); the track from the bridge at Harrold to Pavenham, the original road to Felmersham and the loop track to Lodge Farm on this evidence look prehistoric. The Iron Age sites 1 and 4, against the northern parish boundary, are not at variance with this since the pre-enclosure map shows a strip of common pasture along the edge of the parish here, which continues the line of a trackway which ran from Odell (Fig 1).

This is a pattern which continues into the Saxon period – the Iron Age and Roman site at 6 goes on apparently without a break, as does the Lodge Farm site 5. There is a break in occupation at Ruffs Green in the middle and later Roman period, but it does look as if the medieval earthwork sites described by us might well have early or middle Saxon origins on the basis of the fieldwalking evidence, with Lodge

Farm and the area of occupation near the church going back very much earlier.

The general picture is one of gradual change within the framework fixed by an ancient trackway system. There seem to have been two broad periods during which really fundamental change took place – the (probably) late Iron Age and earlier Roman periods, which saw the permanent demise of the sites along the northern edge of the parish and the end of site 3 at Ruffs Green, together with the development of a major focus near Hill Farm at 6. The second significant phase was the late medieval/earlier post-medieval period, during which the earthwork sites were abandoned, as a result of population decline and possibly changes in the pattern of communication. The present village of Chellington lies along a road which because of loops in the River Ouse is a more convenient route from Harrold bridge to Bedford than the track which runs due south from Hill Farm to Pavenham. But the evidence we have does not suggest that any of these changes was particularly abrupt.

The fieldwalking has shown up interesting changes in the extent of land under the plough at various periods. Bearing in mind that Sites 3 and 4 fade away, then the Roman manuring scatter shows if anything a contraction in the area under the plough, but with an apparent intensification of activity in the zone alongside the River Ouse. The earlier Saxon arable seems to have been concentrated here. The early medieval phase has pottery here as well, but shows an expansion onto areas in close proximity to the trackway system. In the medieval period the whole parish was under the plough, but the manuring scatter is thinner around the boundaries, and in particular on the Oxford clay in the eastern part of the parish. These zones coincide with the areas which produce patches of iron slag, evidence for smelting with locally produced charcoal and part of a pattern well known from the Bedfordshire claylands (Hall and Hutchings 1972). The slag was not in itself dateable but the distribution carries with it a suggestion of an early medieval date (although earlier periods cannot be entirely ruled out) – an excavated example at Easton Maudit in Northamptonshire produced a carbon 14 date of 1240AD±100 (Hall 1983). It would have been the expansion of medieval cultivation onto this presumably wooded land which brought this (possibly part-time) local industry to an end.

A quite unresolved problem, of course, is the origin of the row of houses known today as the

village of Chellington. This sits rather oddly on the ancient boundary of the parish of Chellington in the west, separated only by the road from the Bridge End houses of the ancient parish of Carlton. As Fig 3 shows, this group of houses has the appearance of a regularly planned settlement of medieval origin, but since it has proved impossible to relate any of the medieval documentation specifically to it, we have been unable to suggest when it came into being.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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