

A Romano-British aisled building and associated settlement south of Ampthill Road, Shefford

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Other contributions by Peter Guest (coins) and Felicity Wild (samian)

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SUMMARY

Between 1993 and 2006, Albion Archaeology undertook an intermittent series of investigations at Ampthill Road, Shefford. They were located in an area where Romano-British artefacts and structural remains had been found for the past 200 years. A small late Bronze Age/early to middle Iron Age pottery assemblage, all residual within later features, suggests late prehistoric occupation. However, the majority of the evidence derives from a Romano-British settlement.

The settlement was established prior to the Roman conquest and comprised a large ditched enclosure which continued to function throughout the 2nd century until the late 3rd century. The original enclosure contained a possible roundhouse and other settlement-type features. A substantial aisled building was constructed in the 2nd century along with two rectangular, timber buildings. The aisled building was subject to repairs before it was effectively rebuilt in the same location. Evidence from antiquarian investigations suggests that its south end contained a substantial suite of rooms which featured hypocausts. The buildings may have been linked by cobbled yards and paths.

A routeway to the west of the enclosure may have provided access through the settlement to the floodplain of the River Flit to the north. To the west of the routeway was a large area of intercutting quarry pits and, identified by antiquarian investigations, a cemetery which may have been replaced by a walled enclosure.

The presence of 3rd- and 4th-century pottery indicates continuing settlement, which comprised a new enclosure that was established in roughly the same location. A small number of artefacts from the antiquarian investigations suggest Saxon activity but the recent work produced no such evidence.

INTRODUCTION

Mike Luke and Tracy Preece

This article presents the results of a series of developer-funded investigations at Ampthill Road, Shefford, carried out between 1993 and 2006 by Albion Archaeology (formerly Bedfordshire County Archaeology Service). Evidence for a Romano-British site in the area had emerged sporadically over the previous 200 years. The Historic

Environment Record (HER) of Bedfordshire County Council records all discoveries made in this part of Shefford as HER 379. The recent work comprised a series of watching briefs and, most significantly, two open area investigations: in 2002, part of the gardens to the rear of 77–81 Ampthill Road was developed for housing (project code ASH773); and in 2004, a number of new classrooms and extensions were built at Shefford Lower School (project code SLS893).

SITE LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

The recent work was centred on TL 137 387 to the south of Amphill Road on the western side of Shefford (Fig. 1). It covered a total area of *c.* 1.7ha. The site is situated on the north-facing slope of a low east–west ridge between the River Flit (to the north) and a tributary stream to the south, at a height of *c.* 40m OD. The underlying geological strata comprise river gravels overlying clay and Greensand.

PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISCOVERIES IN THE VICINITY

Inskip's discoveries

The first reported Roman finds were made in the summer of 1826 by men digging gravel to the south of Amphill Road, then known as Campton Road (Dryden 1845, 10). A local antiquarian, Thomas Inskip, became aware of their discoveries; an account of his talk to the central committee of the British Archaeological Association represents the earliest published account of the site: 'it appears that for a long time this locality has been productive of vast quantities of interesting objects of art, of the Romano-British epoch, most of which, discovered previous to Inskip's researches, have been either lost or dispersed' (Anon. 1844, 395).

Inskip initially worked in conjunction with the quarrying, but after a short time employed the men to look for further remains in and around their pits. The talk and a later published note (Inskip 1850) represent the only accounts written by Inskip himself. However, Sir Henry Dryden published an article in 1845 on Inskip's discoveries. His description of the remains was clearly based on an intimate knowledge of the site and was later used as the basis for the account of the site in the Victoria County History (Page 1908, 11–13). The following summary is based on these three accounts; the significance of the discoveries is addressed in the discussion at the end of this article.

Cemetery

On the basis of very dark ground which contained ash, bones and artefacts, Inskip interpreted the discoveries made around the quarry pits as part of a Romano-British cemetery. He investigated this in and around 1826, but also returned to the cemetery area ten years later (Dryden 1845, 11). The

cemetery is described as being situated in 'two fields and a garden' (Dryden 1845, 9). When the plan published by Dryden (1845, 10) is compared to the 1883 25-inch OS map, it is clear that the cemetery lay in the vicinity of present-day 93 and 95 Amphill Road (Fig. 2). Inskip sought to define the extent of the cemetery and subsequently found a 'rough wall about 3 feet [0.9m] in thickness' of sandstone, with 'little mortar and no bonding tiles' to the west, south and east (Dryden 1845, 10). Although it is unclear how much of the walls was actually exposed, they were considered to enclose an area '150ft square' (45m x 45m).

On the basis of Dryden's account, the existence of at least eight graves can be postulated, although it is clear that he only described those with significant quantities of grave-goods. He indicates that cremated bone was found (without using that term) but makes a point of stressing that none was contained within pots. In an apparent contradiction, however, he does use the word 'urn' (Dryden 1845, 10–12) on numerous occasions. It is therefore unclear whether all the graves contained un-urned cremated bone or not. Perhaps unsurprisingly, given its distinctive appearance, the majority of the recovered pots were samian ware vessels. The numbers from each grave ranged from none to eleven. A number of other pots are described as 'whitish earthenware bottle', 'amphora' and 'coarse black'.

A range of other artefacts were discovered, although not all were necessarily grave-goods. They included glass and 'brass' vessels; two 'brass' brooches; an iron lamp, hammer and knife; an ivory pipe; a silver pipe; 'copper moulds for pastry'; and coins. Dryden suggested that the two brooches might be Saxon (Dryden 1845, 12–3); this was confirmed by Kennett who believed them to be of 6th-century date (1970, 203).

In the vicinity of the cemetery

Neither during his initial investigations nor when he returned to the site ten years later did Inskip restrict his work to the area of the cemetery. He reports 'digging round the outside of the cemetery' (Inskip 1844, 397), where he found further remains and artefacts. The accounts given by Inskip (1844) and Dryden (1845) are slightly different but not necessarily contradictory.

Inskip reports that in the vicinity of the cemetery he found a 'trench or cist, about twelve feet [3.6m] in length, filled with the usual deposit of ashes, burnt bone, and charcoal; over this were

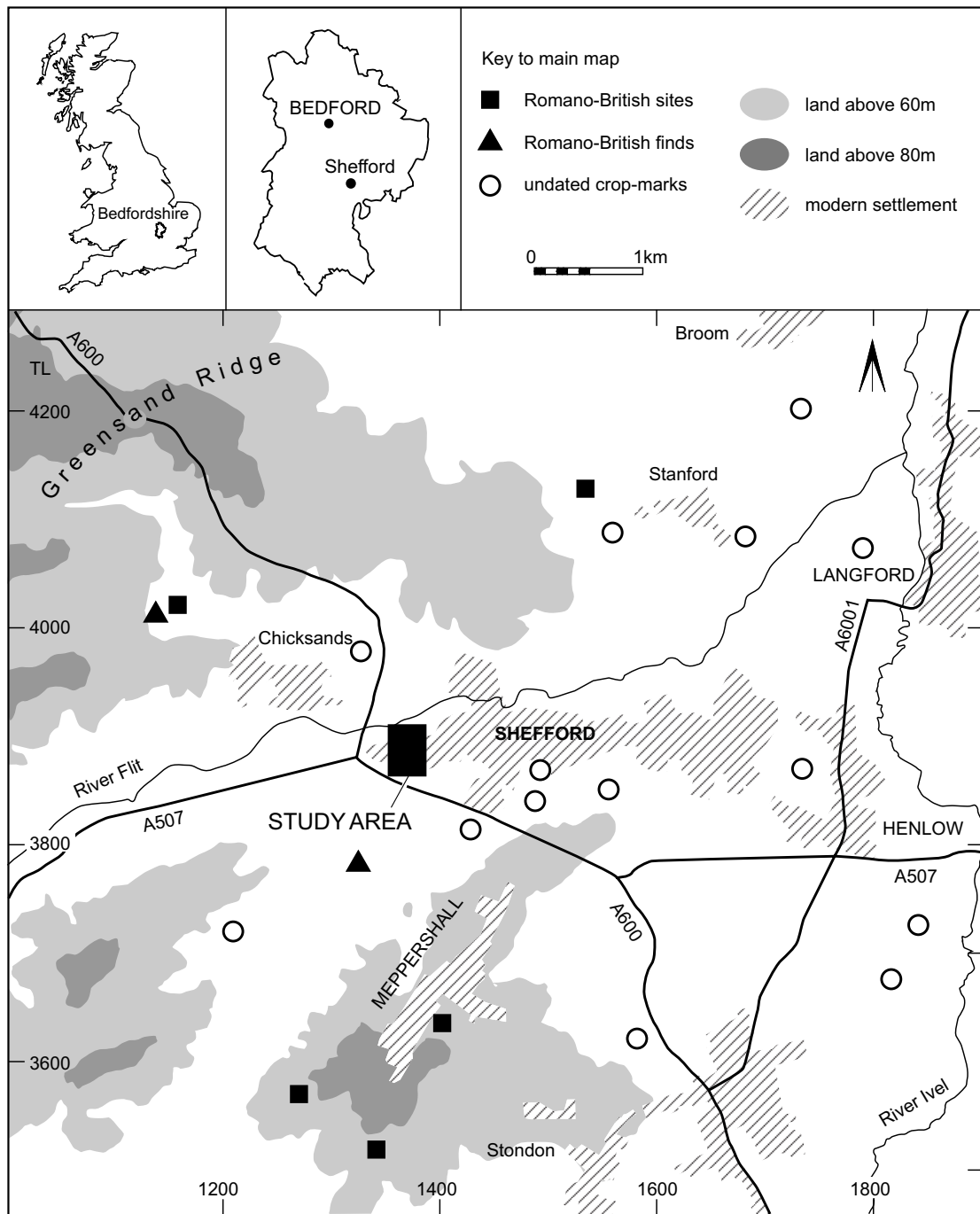


Figure 1: Location of study area, topography and known Romano-British sites in the vicinity

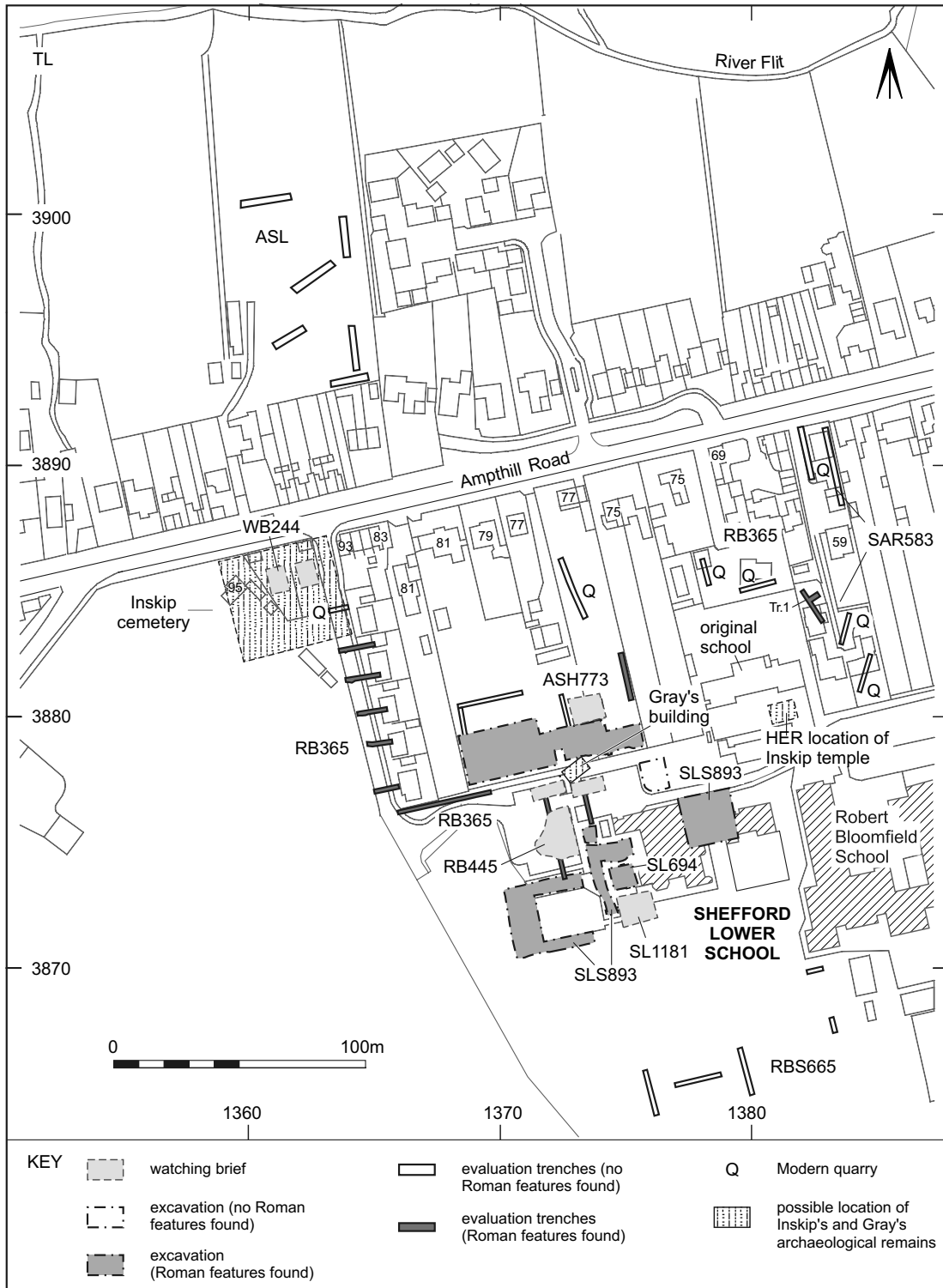


Figure 2: Location of all known archaeological investigations within the study area

placed Roman tiles leaning against each other at the top, so as to form an angle and protect the dust beneath' (Inskip 1844, 397). Associated with this structure or in its vicinity were found a small/miniature silver trumpet, an iron object and a coin of Greta. Simco (1984, 117) interprets this structure as a hypocaust channel but wrongly locates it in the vicinity of the 'temple' (see below). While a hypocaust channel is a possibility, Inskip does not mention any evidence for buildings and, therefore, this structure might equally have been a drying oven. Other finds reported by Inskip 'at some distance' from the structure, but not specifically described as being within the cemetery, were another coin of Greta and 'copper moulds for pastry'. These were found in deposits that contained 'abundant evidence of cremation' (Inskip 1844, 397).

Dryden reports that at this time Inskip found 'the bones of a man burnt to ashes, the bones of a horse, a silver pipe and an iron instrument resembling a hammer' (Dryden 1845, 12). Interestingly, these were associated with two coins of Greta, possibly suggesting a link with Inskip's account. In addition, the silver pipe may be the object described by Inskip as a trumpet. Dryden also mentions that several large urns were found in the 'eastern field'. If this location is correct, they would lie outside the 'walled cemetery'. They contained ashes but no bones, but are still described as urns. One contained an S-shaped hook, another nails, and another pieces of iron. The large urns were apparently surrounded by three small ones.

Temple

Approximately ten years after his original discoveries, Inskip 'dug in various directions outside the cemetery' (Dryden 1845, 11). He found a Romano-British building which he presumed to be a temple associated with the cemetery. It is described as being at a distance of 'half a furlong [201m]' (Inskip 1844, 397) or '250 yards [229m] S.E.' (Dryden 1845, 11) of the cemetery. These measurements place the building in the vicinity of the original Robert Bloomfield School and this is the location shown on maps in the HER (see Fig. 2). However, the plan published by Dryden (1845, 10) does not show the school or any existing boundaries near it (as shown on the 1799 map of this area). An alternative interpretation of his plan would place the building in his 'eastern field', *i.e.* the former back garden of 77 Amphill Road (where the ASH773 investigations took place).

Although there is no specific description of the building, its foundations occupied an area 30 feet (9m) by 20 feet (6m) (Inskip 1844, 397; Dryden 1845, 11). It is also mentioned that there was 'deposited a great quantity of mutilated remains of Samian pottery, and other coarse ware' (Inskip 1844, 397).

Gray's discoveries

The levelling of a school field in the summer of 1940 uncovered further Romano-British remains, which prompted investigations by a Mr Edgar Gray. Although the results were not published, a brief summary and plan were produced by a Mr Davis (copy in the HER). The plan shows a building to the south of the gardens of the houses fronting on to Amphill Road. When compared with the 1937 OS map, it appears that this was located to the south of number 77 (see Fig. 2). Some of the older residents of Shefford have confirmed that this was the area subject to investigation.

Gray appears to have initially excavated two trenches. Within Trench A he located a Roman building, measuring 20 feet (6m) by 30 feet (9m). It is described as disturbed but it is unclear if this was purely the result of the levelling of the school field or due to previous investigation. The side walls comprised 'disturbed sandstone foundation' which was at least 1 foot (0.3m) high. There is some suggestion that the foundation was mortared. Within the building and at a depth of 4 feet 9 inches (1.44m), Gray's description states that the 'floor of the building revealed hypocaust tiles' which he also describes as 'floor of hypocaust'. This appears to have comprised cement 1½ inches (38mm) thick and tiles 12 inches (0.3m) square. Charcoal was present and some of the tiles were burnt, but no other details are given. If the 'floor' is the area shown on the plan, it would be *c.* 2m by 3.5m and would be central within the building. There are other references to 'surfaces' within the building but these are unclear and not described in detail. Although Trench B is shown on the plan to be outside the building, Davis's account contains enigmatic references to 'remains of pillar? tiles, cement and sandstone'.

It is clear that Gray believed he had located a hypocaust, and, given the references to 'pillar? tiles' and depth of the so-called 'floor', this seems likely. Simco believed this building was the same as that previously claimed by Inskip as the temple (1984, 117).

Other discoveries

Other artefacts found in this area of Shefford include unconfirmed reports of Romano-British armour uncovered during the construction of the original primary school in 1872 (as recorded in the HER). References in the HER suggest that further Romano-British artefacts were found in 1976 during the construction of a school extension.

THE RECENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS

Three types of projects were undertaken in the area between 1993 and 2006 (Figs 2–3):

Evaluations

Projects RB365, SL694, SAR583 and SLS893 (BCAS 1993, 1999 and 2000b and c; Albion Archaeology 2001 and 2003) all produced some evidence for Romano-British activity. Only ASL (Roberts and Kier 2004) RBS665 (BCAS 2000a) produced no such evidence.

Watching Brief

Projects WB244, RB445 and SL1181 (Albion Archaeology 2006) were undertaken during construction work. The circumstances of these investigations — an archaeologist was in attendance but unable to control machining levels or investigate features — means that their limited results are unreliable. A watching brief was also undertaken at the end of ASH773 during the digging of trenches for wall footings, to the north of the open area excavation.

Open area investigation

Projects ASH773 and SLS893 were undertaken immediately in advance of building work. Earth-moving down to archaeological levels was undertaken under archaeological supervision (Albion Archaeology 2005).

STRUCTURE AND TERMINOLOGY OF THIS REPORT

During contextual analysis of the results of field-work, the following structural hierarchy was defined:

G (*group*) numbers: interpretative entities, *e.g.* buildings, ditch lengths, concentrations of pits;
L (*land-use area*) numbers: collections of broadly contemporary and spatially coherent groups, *e.g.* a settlement focus, a field system;

Phases: broad, chronological divisions, *e.g.* late Iron Age/early Romano-British, later Romano-British.

The results of the investigations are presented within a phased chronological framework, the site narrative. This is further subdivided by land-use area (L prefix) and group (G prefix). A decimal suffix is used to indicate non-primary major fills within both G and L numbers. Decimal points are also used for G numbers to indicate different elements of the buildings. Fill descriptions are only given where they are considered useful; *e.g.* if none is given for a posthole, then no packing material or evidence for a post was present.

Along with describing the archaeological features, the site narrative includes a summary of key artefactual and ecofactual evidence. Pottery in this section is described as ‘contemporary’ if it is dated to the same chronological period as the phase under discussion. The artefactual and ecofactual evidence is presented more fully in stand-alone sections, with further technical detail in the appendices. The report concludes with a discussion of the results of the investigations.

Throughout the article, letters preceding registered artefact numbers indicate the projects from which they derived, *i.e.* **R** = RB365 and **S** = SLS893. Artefacts with no prefix, which constitute the bulk of the assemblage, are from ASH773.

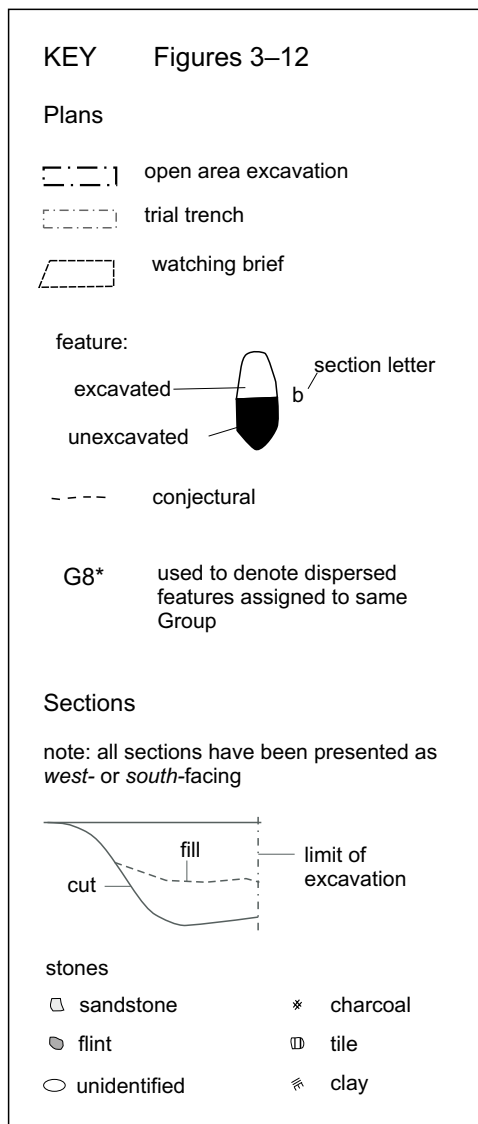
RESULTS OF THE INVESTIGATIONS

Mike Luke and Tracy Preece

The majority of the evidence from the investigations relates to Romano-British settlement. Although a small number of prehistoric flint flakes and sherds of late Bronze Age/early to middle Iron Age pottery within the Romano-British features may indicate previous activity on the site, they do not warrant detailed discussion.

PHASE 1: LATE IRON AGE/EARLY ROMANO-BRITISH SETTLEMENT (FIGS 4–5)

The earliest firm evidence for settlement was identified on the basis of stratigraphic relationships with later features and a late Iron Age/early Romano-British pottery assemblage. It comprised a large ditched enclosure L1, subdivided by an internal boundary ditch L20 which was re-cut on a



number of occasions. The majority of the enclosure underlies the present-day Lower School. However, three areas L2, L3 and L33 produced evidence for concentrated activity. L2 and L3, located c. 20m apart in the northern part of the enclosure, were probably associated with domestic occupation. The latter included a possible roundhouse, while L2 included hearths/ovens, structural features, pits and a ditch. Another area of activity L33, comprising two small ditches, a structural slot and a pit, was located in the vicinity of the possible continuation of the subdivision ditch. Approximately 95m to the northeast of L2, a ditch and a posthole L34 were also identified.

The presence of oysters demonstrates that this phase of activity continued after the Roman conquest, and it has tentatively been dated to the early 1st to early 2nd century. Although ceramic building material and coins were recovered from features within this phase, they are considered to be intrusive from later phases. This is particularly the case with the enclosure ditches, where it was very difficult to distinguish between the original ditch and later ditch fills, resulting in significant contamination by later artefacts. The pottery assemblage is characterised by domestic vessels such as storage jars and cooking pots. Moderate quantities of animal bone, dominated by cattle, were recovered.

Enclosure L1 (Fig. 4; Pl. 1)

Only the southwest (G10/G100) and northwest (G27) boundary ditches of enclosure L1 were clearly identified. These suggest it was aligned NW–SE and was rectangular in shape, covering at least 4,500m². However, ditch G216 assigned to L34 c. 80m to the east, within SAR583 evaluation trench 1, was on a similar alignment but located in an area which was not subject to extensive investigation (Fig. 2). If it does represent the northeast boundary, then the enclosure would have covered an area of at least 1.2ha. The fills of ditch G100 appear to have derived from the east and could suggest the presence of an internal bank (Fig. 4g). Although only non-contiguous lengths of ditches G10/G100 and G27 were revealed, they are believed to have been the same boundary because of their similar size and shape and because the absence of ditch G10 from a trial trench to the north suggests that it turned east.

The southwest enclosure ditch produced a large quantity of pottery (including samian), ceramic building material and animal bone, including a partial dog skeleton. Where the earlier ditch fills were well defined, they produced only late Iron Age/early Romano-British pottery. An ecofactual sample from the main ditch fill contained charred cereal grains.

Southwest enclosure ditch G10/G100

Enclosure ditch G10/G100 was revealed in both of the open area excavations. To the north, G10 was c. 2m wide and 0.6m deep (Fig. 4a) while to the south, G100 was up to 2.5m wide and 1m deep (Fig. 4g). Their shared alignment and similar concave profile indicate that they were part of the same boundary.

The c. 0.2m thick primary fills comprised yellow-brown sandy clay with occasional small stones and charcoal flecks. This was overlain by a 0.15–0.4m thick lower fill G10.1/G100.1 of light yellow-brown sandy clay with occasional small stones and chalk flecks. Ecofact sample 15 from this fill

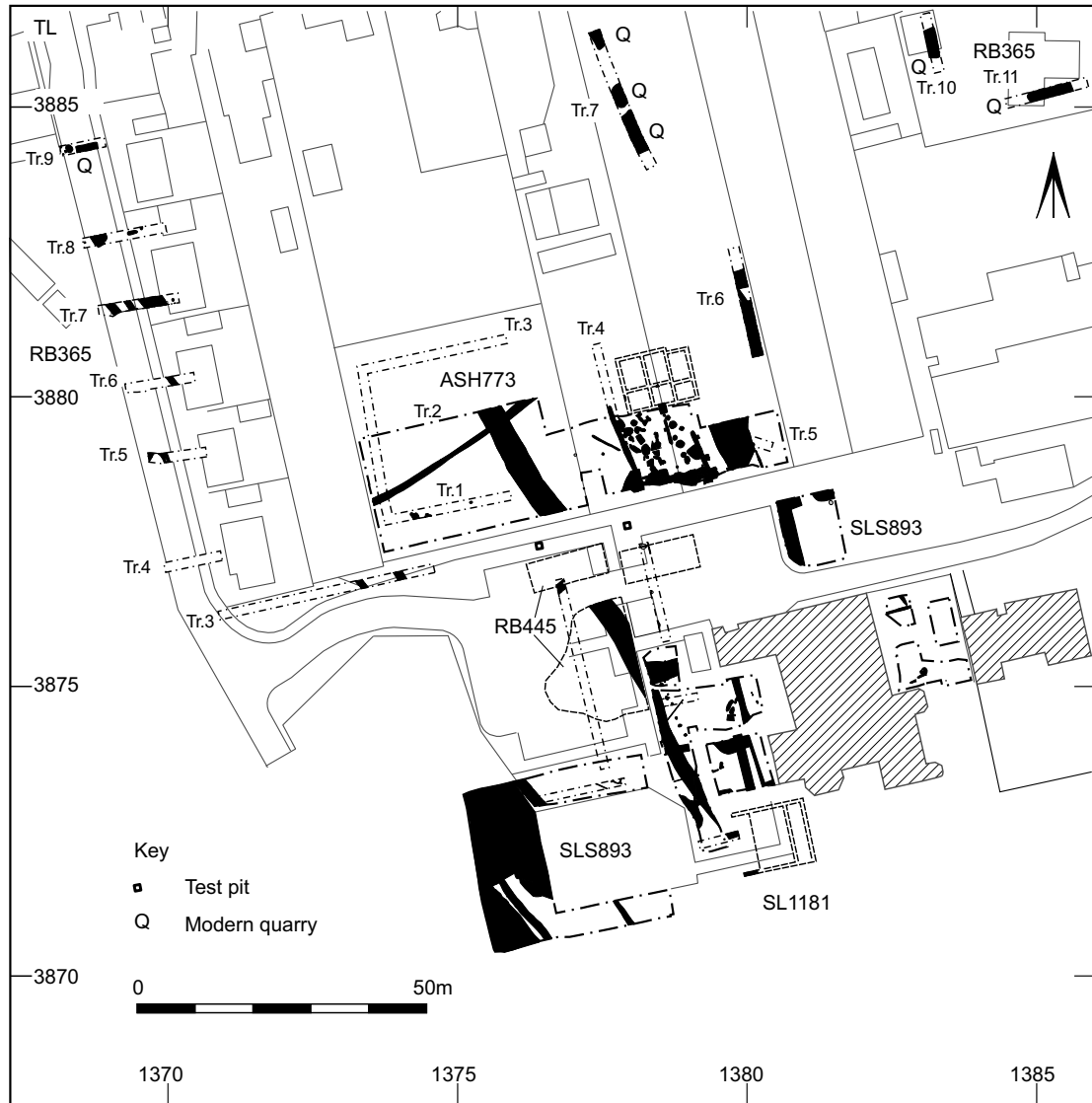


Figure 3: All features plan of central area

contained small quantities of charred wheat and barley grains. The main infilling G10.2/G100.2 comprised mid-grey-brown silty clay with patches of yellow-brown clay and inclusions of occasional small to medium stones and charcoal flecks. A varied artefact assemblage is dominated by late Iron Age/early Romano-British pottery. Metal detecting during a watching brief (RB445) recovered two late 3rd-century coins, one of Victorinus, and two 4th-century coins of Constantine from the uppermost part of the ditch.

Northwest enclosure ditch G27

Ditch G27 was only revealed in evaluation trench 6. It was 3.2m wide and 0.85m deep with sides sloping at 45 degrees; it appeared to have a flat base (Fig. 4b).

The primary fill comprised a 0.5m thick mid-grey-brown sandy silt with occasional small to medium stones and charcoal flecks. This was overlain by mid-yellow-brown sandy silt with moderate small stones and occasional charcoal flecks.

Possible northeast enclosure ditch and associated feature L34

Two features, a ditch and a posthole, were located in SAR583 evaluation trench 1, c. 95m to the northeast of domestic focus L2. Their significance and date are not fully understood because this area was not subject to open area excavation. The ditch

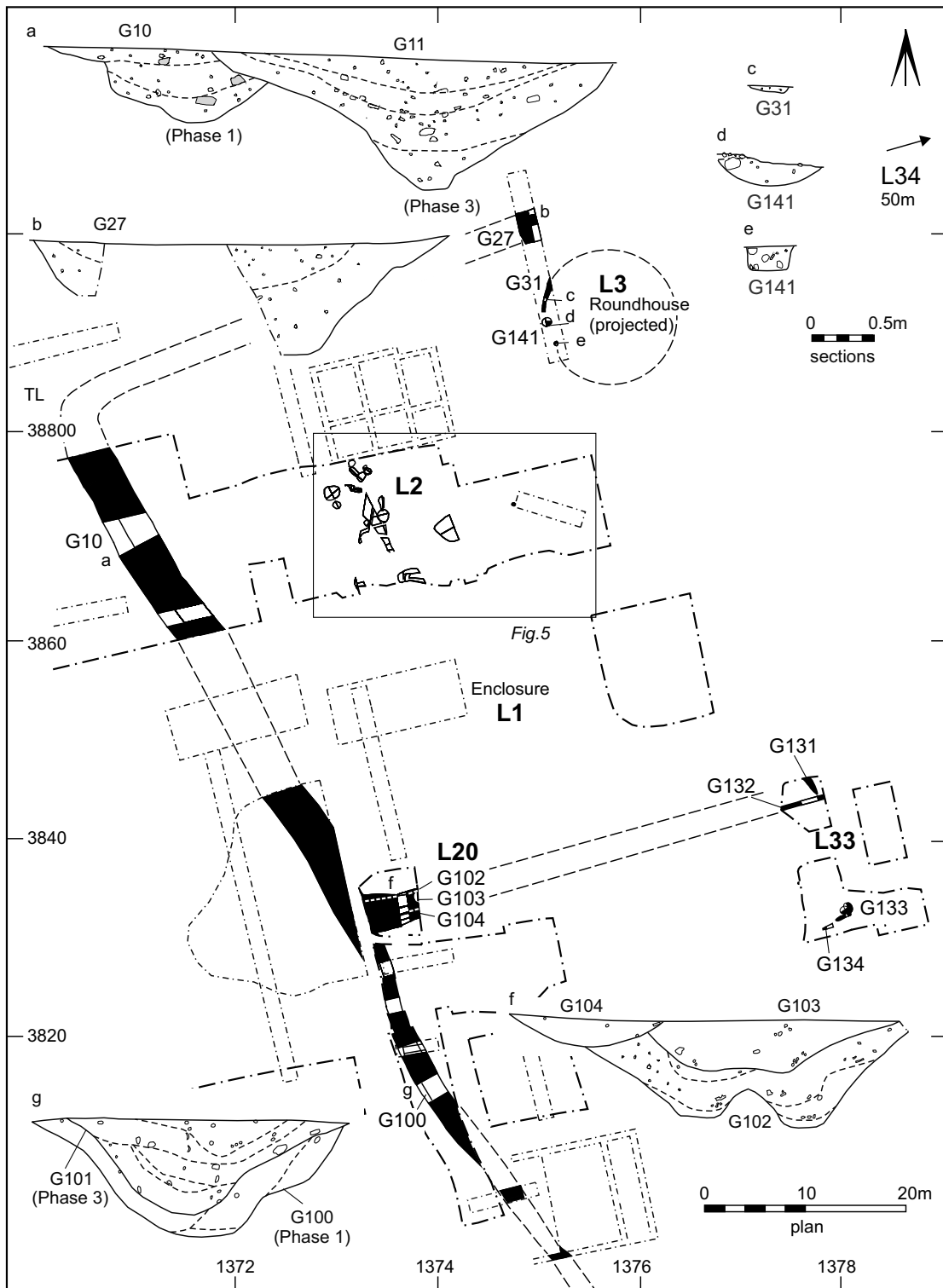


Figure 4: Phase 1: Late Iron Age/early Romano-British plan, with sections



Plate 1: Phase 3 enclosure ditch G100/G101 from north, with 1m scales

may represent the northeast side of the large enclosure L1. Neither feature produced any firm dating evidence.

Ditch G126

Ditch G126, aligned NW–SE, had a concave profile and was 2m wide and 0.48m deep. Its alignment, profile and dimensions are closely comparable to the southwest enclosure ditch G10/G100, suggesting that it may have been the northeast side of the same enclosure. It was filled by mid-green-brown clayey sand with occasional small stones and frequent flecks of charcoal.

Posthole G136

A single, sub-oval posthole was located *c.* 1m west of ditch G126 and, therefore, possibly inside enclosure L1. It was *c.* 0.3m in diameter and 0.15m deep.

Internal division L20 (Fig. 4)

Although it was only observed for 5m, ENE–WSW aligned ditch G102 represents the earliest version of an internal division L20 within the large rectangular enclosure. It was re-cut on at least two occasions as G103/G104. The ditch fills produced a relatively small quantity of contemporary pottery and fragments of animal bone.

Original ditch G102

Ditch G102 had a W-shaped profile, suggesting it was actually two intercutting ditches. Together, they were 2.65m wide, at least 0.8m deep and both had flat bases (Fig. 4f). Both the primary and secondary fills comprised an orange-brown sandy clay with occasional chalk flecks. The tertiary fill (G102.3) comprised dark brown-grey sandy clay.

Re-cuts G103/G104

The two re-cuts were considerably shallower than the original ditch. The first (G103) was located centrally within the original ditch. It was 1.95m wide and 0.4m deep with a U-shaped profile and slightly uneven base. The second (G104) was located on the south side of the original ditch. It was 1.2m wide and 0.2m deep with a shallow, concave profile (Fig. 4f). The fills of both ditches comprised a single deposit of mid-yellow-brown sandy clay.

Domestic focus L2 (Fig. 5; Pl. 2)

Domestic focus L2 was located in the northwest corner of enclosure L1. As revealed, it covered an area of *c.* 12m by 18m, although it may have extended beyond the limit of excavation to the south. No buildings were identified but there was evidence for a hearth G4, two possible ovens G5 and associated scoops G7, a structural slot G18, a posthole G15, a ditch G17 and pits G6, G13 and G20. Although all of these features were sealed or truncated by Phase 2 deposits, they were not all contemporary with one another.

A large quantity of pottery, along with smaller amounts of ceramic building material, fired clay and animal bone were recovered, mainly from the ovens and ditch. Charred cereal grain and chaff were identified in several ecofactual samples from these features.

Ditch G17

Ditch G17 was aligned NW–SE, parallel to and *c.* 18m from the southwest side of enclosure L1. It may have formed an internal division within the enclosure. The ditch was heavily truncated by later features. It was at least 8m long and 0.65m wide, increasing to 2m wide and possibly terminating to the northwest. It had a concave profile (Fig. 5g) and was 0.25–0.55m deep.

The ditch was infilled with a light grey-brown sandy clay G17.1, overlain by a dark grey-brown clay silt G17.2 with inclusions of moderate charcoal flecks and small stones. Its moderate artefact assemblage is dominated by late Iron Age/early Romano-British pottery and fired clay.

Hearth G4

Sub-circular hearth G4 was 1.6m long, 1.3m wide and 0.25m deep with a concave profile and base (Fig. 5a and b). The sides and base of the feature exhibited evidence for *in situ* burning. Its upper fills comprised dark red-brown to mid green-grey sandy silt with occasional charcoal flecks. These contained several sandstone slabs which may have derived from the superstructure.

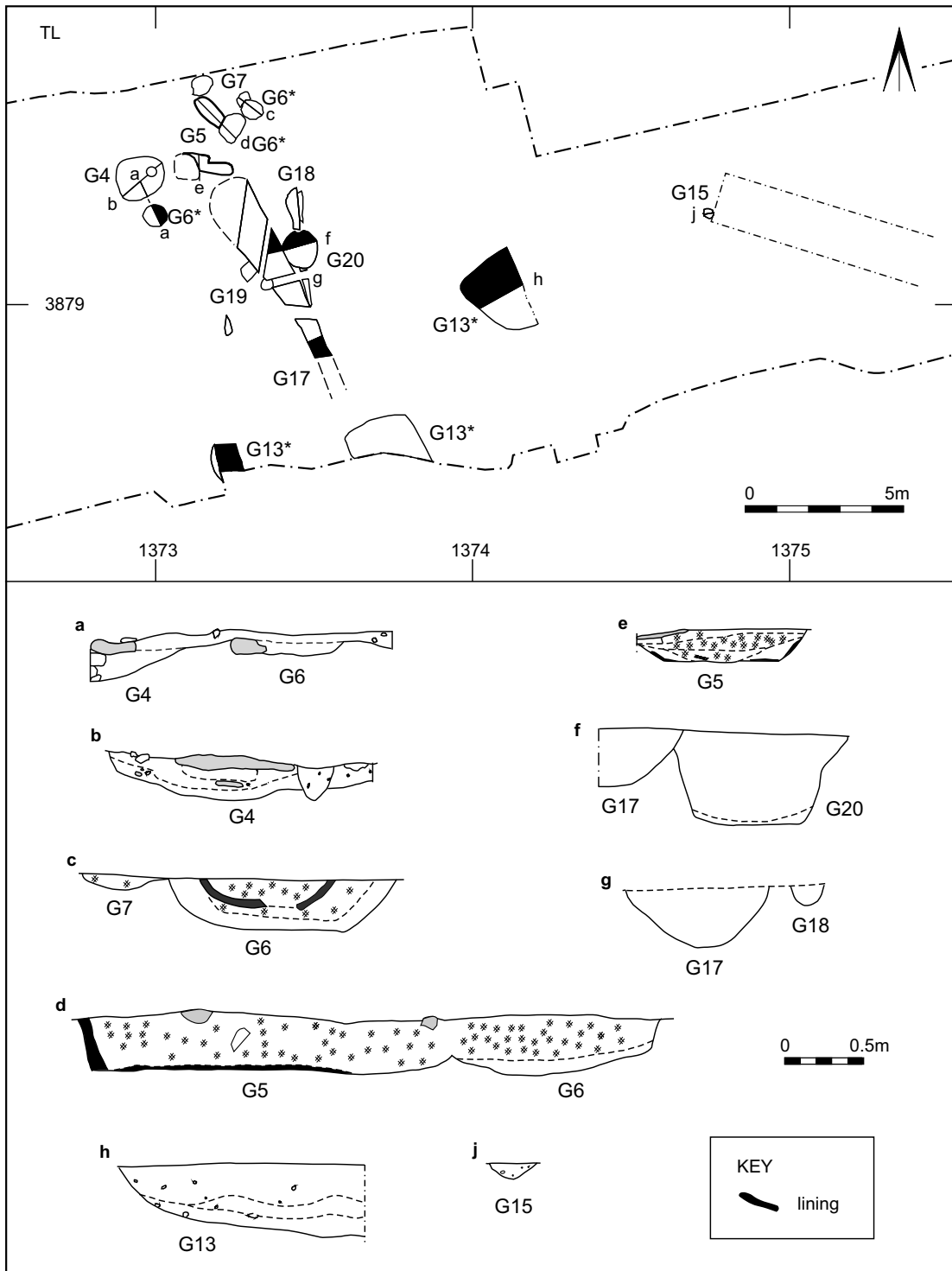


Figure 5: Detail of Phase 1 domestic focus L2, with sections



Plate 2: Ovens G5 from south, with 1m scale

Ovens G5 and associated scoops G7

Adjacent to hearth G4 were two keyhole-shaped ovens G5, 1.1m long, 0.3m wide and 0.2m deep with nearly vertical sides and flat bases (Fig. 5d and e). These were aligned east–west and NW–SE, both with stoke holes to the west. Their sides and bases preserved traces of a burnt clay lining.

The primary fills of the ovens comprised 50mm of mid orange-red clay with inclusions of charcoal. A moderate pottery assemblage is dominated by late Iron Age/early Romano-British sherds. Their secondary fills G5.1 comprised dark grey-brown and dark grey-black silty clay with frequent flecks of charcoal. Ecofactual samples 8/9 and 10/11 from these deposits contained small quantities of charred wheat and barley grains, along with larger quantities of charred wheat chaff. Also present were hawthorn stones, perhaps indicating that freshly cut branches were used as fuel.

Two c. 50mm deep scoops G7, to the north of the ovens, contained a similar fill to that of the ovens. It is unclear whether they represent the truncated remnants of further ovens or of features associated with them.

Possible structural slot G18

North–south aligned slot G18 was 3.8m long and varied between 0.25m wide towards the south and 0.5m wide towards the north. It was 0.15m deep throughout, with steep sides and a slightly concave base (Fig. 5g). The length and profile of

this feature suggest that it served a structural purpose. It was truncated by pit G20, and its proximity to ditch G17 suggests that they were not contemporary.

Posthole G15

Circular posthole G15 was located c. 12m to the east of ovens G5. It was 0.3m in diameter and c. 0.1m deep (Fig. 5j).

Postholes G19

Three postholes G19 were located within 1.5m of each other and may have been associated with slot G18. Like the latter, two of the postholes were truncated by ditch G17. They were oval or sub-square in plan, measuring 0.3–0.5m in diameter and 0.1–0.3m deep.

Pits G6

Three pits G6 were located adjacent to hearth G4 and ovens G5. Two were sub-circular and one circular in plan. They were c. 0.9m in diameter, 0.1–0.2m deep with irregular concave sides and slightly concave bases (Fig. 5c). Two of the pits could have been contemporary with ovens G5 but one of them was stratigraphically later.

The 50mm thick light yellow-brown silty clay primary fill was overlain by a mid red-brown sandy clay G6.1. Both contained inclusions of charcoal flecks and ecofact sample 18 had high quantities of ash charcoal.

Pits G13

Three large pits G13 were located on the southern periphery of the cluster of features L2. Two were sub-oval and one was sub-rectangular; they were 0.9–2.1m long and 0.2–0.45m deep. All three had U-shaped profiles with irregular, concave bases (Fig. 5h).

The 50mm–0.15m thick primary fills varied from light grey-brown to mid-brown-grey sandy silt with frequent flecks of charcoal and occasional small stones. One pit contained a 0.1m thick lower fill of mid-orange-red sandy clay G13.1 with occasional patches of green-grey clay and burnt stones.

The main pit fills G13.2 were 0.1–0.3m thick and varied from mid-yellow-grey to dark black-brown sandy silt with occasional small stones and moderate charcoal flecks. They contained intrusive finds derived from later activity which truncated the pits. Ecofactual sample 4 contained moderate quantities of charred wheat grain, no chaff but much Pomoideae (apple, hawthorn *etc.*) charcoal.

Pit G20

Circular pit G20 was 1.1m in diameter and 0.6m deep, with nearly vertical sides and a flat base (Fig. 5f). Its profile and size suggest it might have been a storage pit. It was stratigraphically earlier than ditch G17, but truncated slot G18.

The pit contained a 0.3m thick primary fill of light yellow-brown sandy clay with occasional charcoal flecks. This was overlain by mid-grey-brown sandy clay G20.1 with inclusions of small–medium burnt stones.

Roundhouse L3 (Fig. 4)

A possible roundhouse was located just within the northwest edge of the enclosure. It was only investigated within an evaluation trench and is, therefore, poorly understood. It comprised a possible drainage gully G31 and two postholes G141 tentatively interpreted as door posts. Only a small quantity of mainly contemporary pottery was recovered from the gully.

Gully G31

The gully was on a curving SW–NE alignment and was at least 3.5m long; it continued beyond the limit of the evaluation trench. It was 0.3m wide and 50mm deep with a flat base and a projected diameter of *c.* 12m. (Fig. 4c). Its fill G31.1 comprised a mid grey brown sandy silt to a dark grey clay silt with occasional small stones and charcoal flecks.

Postholes G141

The postholes were 1.8m apart and sub-circular in plan. One was 0.35m in diameter, with vertical sides and a flat base (Fig. 4e); the other was 0.8m, with a concave profile (Fig. 4d). Both were 0.2m deep.

Activity focus L33 (Fig. 4)

Activity focus L33 was located in the vicinity of the major subdivision L20, *c.* 40m from the southwest enclosure ditch. All the features in this area — two ditches G131 and G132, structural slot G134 and pit G133 — had been subject to substantial modern truncation. Ditch G132, although

significantly truncated, is likely to have been a continuation of subdividing ditch L20. Only a small assemblage of contemporary pottery, fired clay and animal bone was recovered from these features, perhaps as a result of truncation rather than indicating that they were not in the proximity of domestic activity.

Possible enclosure subdivision ditch G132

Ditch G132 was on a similar alignment to ditch G103 (L20) and is likely to represent its continuation. It was only 0.4m wide and 0.1m deep, with a shallow, concave profile. It was filled by mid-brown silty clay with occasional small stones and charcoal flecks.

Ditch G131

NW–SE ditch G131 terminated on the north side ditch G132 and may have been contemporary with it. It was at least 2m long, continuing beyond the excavation limit to the northwest. It was 0.65m wide and 0.15m deep with a concave profile, and was infilled with mid-brown silty clay containing occasional small stones.

Structural slot G134

Slot G134 was located 11m south of ditch G132. It was 0.35m wide and 0.15m deep, with concave sides and a flat base. Its fill comprised mid-brown silty clay with occasional small stones and charcoal flecks.

Pit G133

Oval pit G133 was located adjacent to the north of slot G134. It was 1.4m long, 0.8m wide and 0.3m deep, with nearly vertical sides and a flat base. Its mid-brown silty clay primary fill was overlain by a darker brown silty clay containing occasional small stones and moderate charcoal flecks.

PHASE 2: PRE-BUILDING DEPOSIT (NOT ILLUSTRATED)

Within the ASH773 investigations, a *c.* 0.2m thick deposit of mid-brown-grey clayey silt L11 covered an area *c.* 9m long and *c.* 7m wide. It was confined to the site of the Phase 3 aisled building. Its interpretation is uncertain but it appeared to seal Phase 1 features and may represent the remains of a soil that had formed before the building was constructed. Its small artefact assemblage contains both residual and intrusive elements, and does not provide a reliable date for its formation.

PHASE 3: MID-2ND TO 3RD CENTURY (FIGS 6–9)

During this phase, the late Iron Age/early Romano-British ditched enclosure was retained. The entire length of the original southwest boundary was

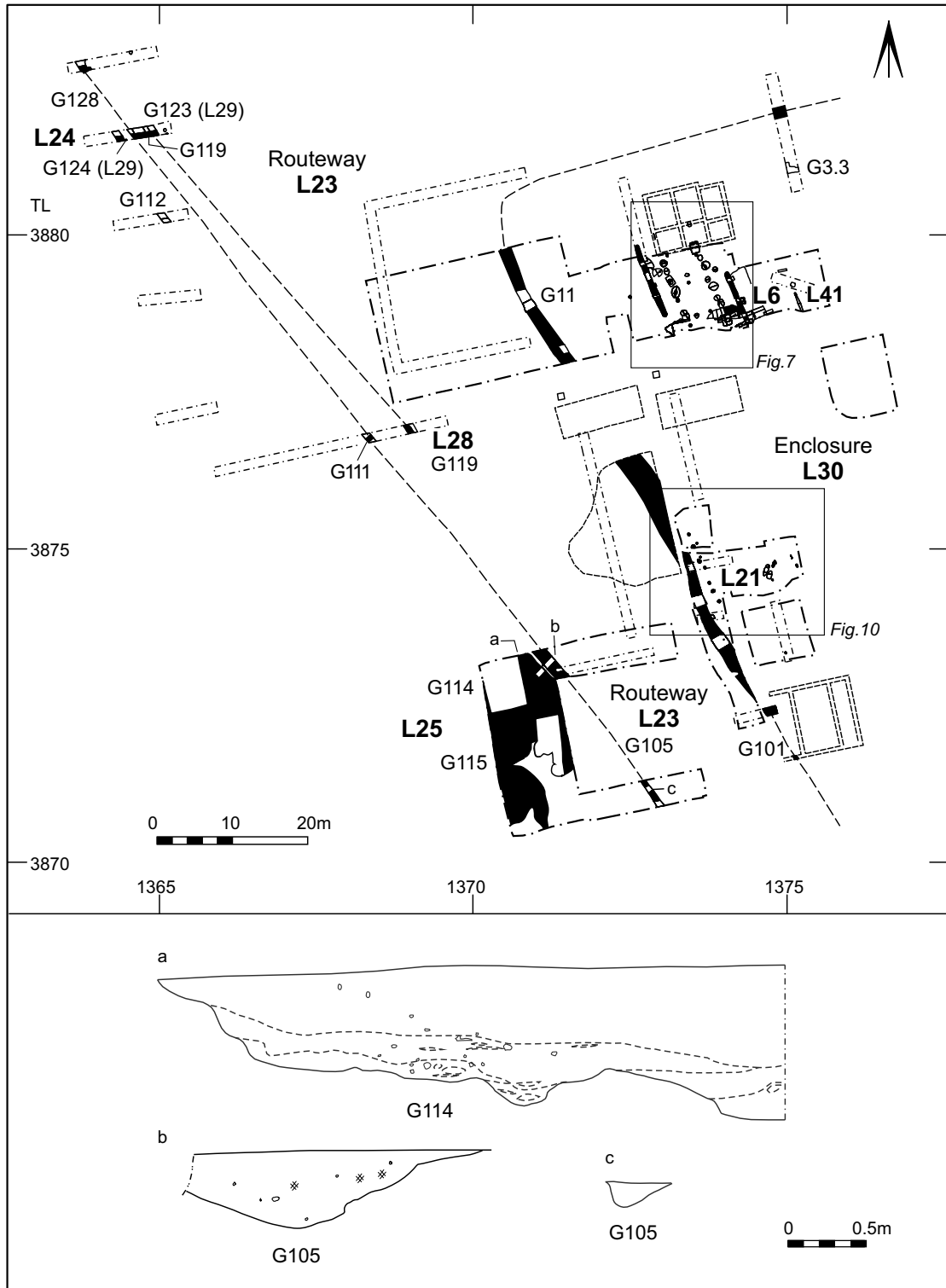


Figure 6: Phase 3: Early Romano-British plan, with sections

re-cut (L30); however, the internal subdivision was not retained. Within the enclosure, aisled building L4 was constructed in the same location as one of the Phase 1 domestic foci, with a cobbled yard L6 to the east. A series of minor alterations (L5) to the original structure was followed by a major phase of rebuilding (L12). Some 30m to the south, another post-built building L21 was constructed.

A probable trackway L23 was situated to the west of the enclosure. Its western ditch appears to have been replaced on a number of occasions (L28/L29). Excavation to the west of the trackway revealed a large area of intercutting quarry pits L25, probably dug to extract sand for use in the construction of the buildings within the enclosure. Further north, near the western boundary of the trackway, a number of postholes L29 were found in evaluation trenches. Their significance is not fully understood but the relatively large quantity of artefacts in the nearby trackside ditches suggests another focus of domestic occupation.

Not all the evidence within this phase was contemporary — the aisled building was subject to alteration, the quarry pits were intercutting and the western side of the trackway was redefined on a number of occasions. Overall, however, the significant proportion of 2nd- to 3rd-century wares in the pottery assemblage provides a broad date for this phase of activity. Contemporary pottery includes white wares from Verulamium (St Albans) and smaller quantities of samian and amphorae. However, the assemblage is dominated by sand-tempered coarse wares which can only be broadly dated to the Romano-British period. The large assemblage of building material is dominated by brick and tile, but stone roof tile, tesserae, opus signinum, painted plaster, mortar and window glass are also present. Much, but not all of this, was found in the vicinity of the aisled building, suggesting it had a tiled roof and some well appointed rooms. A range of personal objects were also found, along with domestic artefacts indicating craft activities.

Enclosure L30 (Fig. 6)

Only the western ditch of the enclosure (G11/G101) was clearly identified. No comparable, direct evidence for re-cutting of the northern Phase 1 enclosure ditch was recovered. However, its size would suggest that this is a possibility. The ditch fills contained a large quantity of pottery (including samian ware dated to the second half of the 2nd century) and other artefacts. The presence

of moderate quantities of building material suggests that the enclosure was maintained until the aisled building (see below) had gone out of use. Cattle bones from the ditch, derived from the same animal, are likely to represent butchery waste.

Ditch G11/G101

The southern length of the re-cut (G101) was c. 1.6m wide and 0.7m deep (Fig. 4g), positioned centrally within the original ditch. To the north, G11 was 1.8m wide and c. 0.6m deep (Fig. 4a), centred slightly to the west of the original ditch. The ditch had a U-shaped profile, with slightly convex sides in places.

The 0.1–0.2m thick primary fills comprised mid-yellow-brown sandy clay with occasional small stones and charcoal flecks. The 0.3–0.5m thick overlying fills G11.1/2 and G101.1/2 comprised light brown to dark brown-grey clayey silt, with occasional small to medium stones and charcoal flecks. Both the lower and main fills produced a relatively large assemblage of 2nd-century pottery, providing a *terminus post quem* for the infilling of the ditch.

Initial construction of aisled building L4 (Figs 7–9; Pl. 3)

Aisled building L4 was situated in the northern part of the enclosure, c. 15m from the western boundary and c. 10m from the postulated position of the northern boundary. The building was 12.5m wide and at least 18.5m long, continuing beyond the limit of excavation to the north and south. Its principal surviving elements were footings for two external walls G1.1/G1.6 and two parallel rows of internal post-pits (G1.2) for the timbers which supported the roof. The actual posts were in pairs, at a fairly regular c. 3m spacing, except for the northern pair (see below). This arrangement created 2.5m wide aisles and a 6m wide nave. No definite entrances were located, although a possible gap in the western wall footing and an area of stones G3.2 adjacent to the eastern wall footing may have been associated with doorways. No internal surfaces or firm evidence for internal activity survived. An area of stones G1.5 within the western aisle of the building may represent a levelling deposit.

The overall pottery assemblage does not give a precise date for the construction and use of this building. However, the samian ware recovered from constructional elements indicates that a date in the mid-2nd century is likely. A large quantity of ceramic and other building material was recovered from the building and features in its vicinity; this is discussed in the relevant artefact sections.

External walls G1.1/G1.6

The side walls G1.1 of the building survived for c. 9m on both sides but had been heavily truncated, and their apparent ends to the north are, therefore, not genuine. However, the c. 1.4m gap



Plate 3: Western external wall G1.1 of aisled building L4 from south

between G1.1 and G1.6 of the western wall may represent a genuine doorway.

The construction trench for the western wall was *c.* 0.8m wide and 0.3m deep. It contained a single course of cobbles, along with occasional pieces of sandstone, which ranged in size from 30 to 100mm (Fig. 8a and b). The southerly continuation of the wall line G1.6 was heavily truncated by a later robber trench G2.4. The construction trench for the eastern wall was *c.* 0.7m wide and 0.4m deep, and contained two courses of stones (Fig. 8c). The lower course of 50–150mm cobbles was similar to those in the western wall trench, while the upper course comprised 50–100mm thick sandstone slabs.

Both trenches contained mid-orange-yellow silty clay which appears to have been used to bond the stones. The trenches produced a mixed assemblage of finds, but none were securely contemporary with the stone footings.

Post-pits G1.2

Within the building, eleven post-pits G1.2 in two rows were identified (Fig. 9). They were in pairs, *c.* 6m apart, although only one of the southernmost pair fell within the excavation area. The pairs of post-pits were spaced at *c.* 3m intervals, except for the northernmost pair: they were only identified in a watching brief but were measured on site at *c.* 4.2m from the next pair. The majority of the post-pits were roughly oval in plan and *c.* 1m in diameter. Two rectangular pits (not a pair) were identified; they measured up to 1.2 by 1.7m. The post-pits were generally *c.* 0.9m deep with vertical sides and either flat or concave bases (Fig. 8d–m). The two identified within the

watching brief were only recorded as *c.* 0.7m in diameter and 0.2–0.7m deep, but had clearly been truncated by earthmoving associated with the building work.

All the post-pits had evidence for post-pipes, 0.3–0.75m in diameter, except for the two found in the watching brief. In one instance, the post-pipe extended beyond the base of the post-pit (Fig. 8m; Pl. 4). The packing around the post-pipes comprised light blue-grey to mid-orange-brown clay and stones. The latter usually comprised 50mm–0.5m fragments of sandstone and, more rarely, 200mm flint cobbles, with the larger stones positioned nearer the post-pipes. In several of the post-pits, the stones were tightly packed together (Fig. 8g, k, and m).

The post-pipes were filled by either mid grey brown clay silt or dark grey orange sandy silt. Several contained fragments of sandstone and flint cobbles presumably derived from the packing material when the posts were removed. At least four of the post-pipes had stones or tiles placed horizontally on their base (Fig. 8d, k, l and m).

A large and varied range of artefacts were recovered from the post-pits. However, the majority cannot be securely associated with the building's construction. Some may have derived from earlier, pre-building deposits as well as the various other layers that survived within the building, others may have been introduced during the repair/replacement of the posts. However, the majority of the pottery assemblage is 2nd century in date and includes seven sherds of central Gaulish samian of probable early to mid-2nd-century date. Ecofactual sample 24 from one of the post-pits contained charred wheat grain. Other samples, not subject to analysis, consistently contained

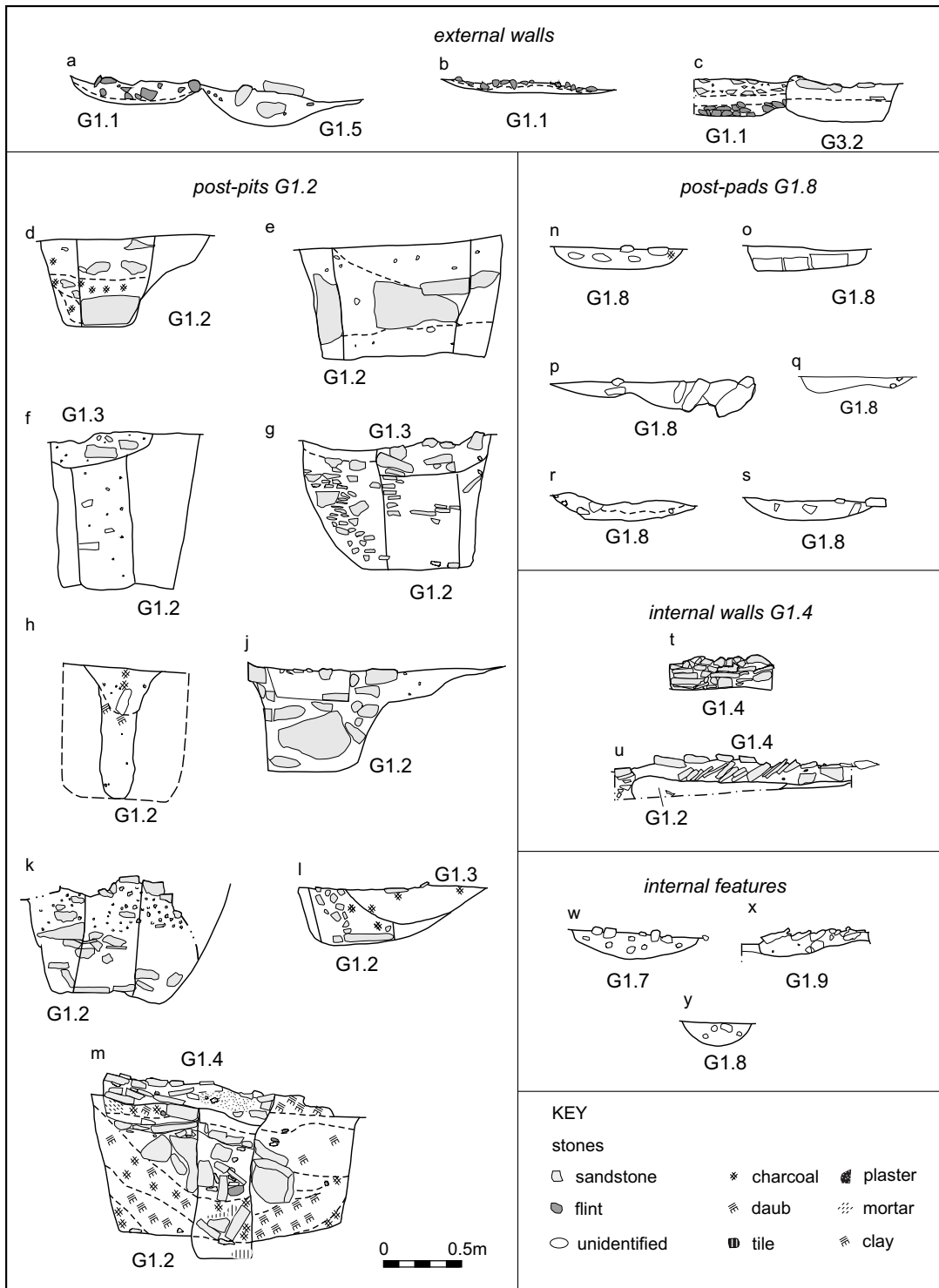


Figure 8: Sections of walls, post-pits, post-pads and other post settings associated with aisled building L4/L12 and alterations L5

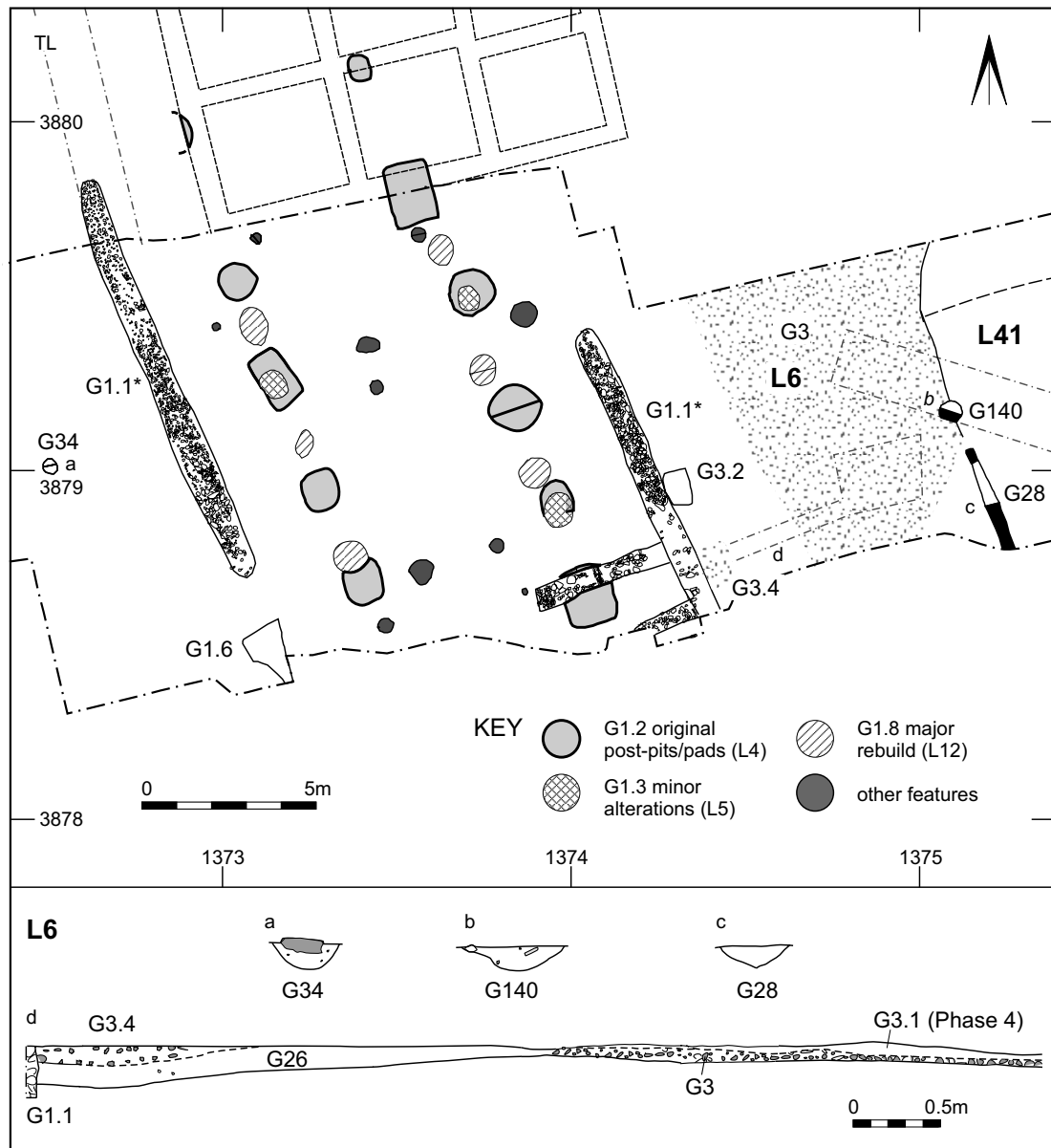


Figure 9: Interpretative development plan of aisled building L4/L12 and adjacent cobbled surface L6

oak charcoal, perhaps indicating the type of wood used for the aisle posts.

Levelling deposit G1.5

Two patches of stones G1.5 were identified within the building's western aisle (Fig. 7). They comprised several large slabs of sandstone, laid flat in a shallow scoop, along with some flint cobbles. They covered an area c. 4m long and 1.2m wide and were less than c. 0.15m thick (Fig. 8a). Some of the stones clearly overlay Phase 1 features and it is possible that they were used to level uneven ground.

Alterations L5 to the aisled building (Figs 7–9?)

For three of the original aisle posts, the post-pits were replaced by post-pads. It is presumed that the original posts had been removed, because the post-pads sealed the infilled post-pipes. It is not possible to date these alterations. They appear to represent localised repairs, probably carried out with the roof still in place.



Plate 4: One of the G1.2 post-pits, with post-pipe clearly visible adjacent to internal wall G1.4, with 1m scale

Post-pads G1.3

The three post-pads G1.3 truncated the upper part of the original post-pits G1.2 (Fig. 8f, g and l). Although they overlay the original post-pipes, they were not central to the original post-pits (Fig. 9). They were sub-circular in plan, c. 0.7m in diameter and 0.2m deep with a concave profile. Two of the post-pads featured courses of 0.25–0.55m sandstone slabs (Fig. 8f and g).

Reconstruction L12 of the aisled building (Figs 7–9; Pl. 5)

The original aisled building appears to have been substantially rebuilt — possibly in the early 3rd century, although the artefact assemblage does not provide a precise date. Some building material from the original structure was reused to infill the post-pits and to create new post-pads.

All the original post-pits went out of use; ecofactual samples suggest that some of the original posts may have been burnt *in situ*. The new aisle posts were set on post-pads G1.8, positioned between the original post-pits; this might indicate that the original roof remained in place while the new posts were inserted. There is no evidence to suggest that the external walls G1.1 were altered.

However, these only survived as footings, so any changes may not be visible in the archaeological record. Two new internal stone walls G1.4 were built on to the eastern wall of the building, which appear to have defined a corridor.

A variety of other post settings — two post-pads (G1.7 and G1.9) and eight postholes (G8 and G30) — were found within the aisled building, mainly in the nave. It is not clear whether these were associated with the original or the rebuilt structure. They produced late Iron Age/early Romano-British artefacts — probably from the earlier Phase 1 features that they truncated — and one was sealed by Phase 4 activity.

There is sufficient evidence from Gray's earlier excavation to suggest that the rooms to the south of the new corridor were more luxurious. The *tesserae*, *opus signinum* and painted plaster found during the recent investigations probably derived from this part of the building. Such material was present in the infilled original post-pits, suggesting that, from the outset, the building featured these more well appointed rooms. However, the



Plate 5: Northern wall G1.4 of possible internal corridor from west, with 0.2m scale

insertion of the corridor does suggest that they too were subject to significant modification during the major rebuild.

Infilling G2.7 of original post-pits

The original post-pipes and post-pits G1.2 were infilled with a mix of stones and/or clay. Many contained frequent charcoal flecks, sand, and occasional small stones. They also contained building material, dominated by daub but including small quantities of brick, roof tile, nails and mortar, presumably derived from the original aisled building. Ecofactual samples 1 and 2 contained relatively high quantities of oak charcoal.

Post-pads G1.8

Six paired post-pads, at c. 3.5m spacings, were located between the original post-pits. They were circular or oval in plan, c. 0.85m in diameter and 0.2m deep, with concave bases (Fig. 8n–s). The post-pads usually comprised one layer of irregular 50–350mm fragments of sandstone, brick and tile, probably derived from the original aisled building. This material was set in a dark orange-brown or mid-grey-brown silty clay with occasional flints. The sandstone was generally laid flat (Fig. 8o), although some was more jumbled and may have been disturbed (Fig. 8p).

Possible internal corridor G1.4

Two internal stone walls G1.4 were located within the east aisle at the south end of the excavated area. The northern one was more recognisable, partly because it was fully exposed. The

walls were perpendicular to the main axis of the building and appeared to abut the external wall. The north wall sealed one of the infilled original post-pits G1.2 (Fig. 8m).

The two walls were 1.4m apart and may have defined a corridor. Both had clearly been disturbed, probably by previous excavation (see Phase 6). The north wall only extended for c. 4m, after which it had been completely removed. It was c. 0.65m wide and 0.3m deep and comprised two courses of 50–200mm sandstone slabs (Fig. 8m, t and u). The stones of the lower course were placed flat, while the upper part of the wall displayed a slight herringbone pattern. The stones were bonded with a mix of yellow and grey clay but no obvious mortar. The south wall was only partially exposed; it was 0.4m wide and 0.6m deep and comprised two courses of 70–200mm sandstone slabs. Although some white mortar was present, they appeared to be primarily bonded with a light grey-brown sandy silt.

Internal layer G33

Layer G33 was located both between the two internal walls G1.4 and along the northern side of the north wall. It covered an area c. 5m long and c. 1.2m wide and was 50–150mm thick. It comprised a light green-grey clayey silt with occasional charcoal flecks and small stones. The interpretation of this layer is uncertain: it may predate the building but have become mixed with construction debris, or may even indicate the site of an earlier excavation.

Postholes G8 and G30

Eight postholes were located within the aisled building. The majority (G8) were 0.4m in diameter, but one (G30) was only 0.2m in diameter. All were 0.15–0.4m deep with either concave or flat bases (Fig. 8y).

Post-pads G1.7 and G1.9

Two sub-circular post-pads were offset by c. 1.1m from the aisle posts. G1.7 was in the east aisle, G1.9 was in the west part of the nave. They were c. 0.8m in diameter and 0.2m deep, with concave bases (Fig. 8w and x). G1.7 was the only post-pad in the building constructed solely out of cobbles, which ranged in size from 100 to 200mm. The other post-pad comprised irregular 50–250mm sandstone slabs, which appeared to be roughly coursed. In both post-pads the stones were bonded with a dark orange-brown sandy clay.

External activity L6 (Fig. 9; Pl. 6)

Evidence for activity adjacent to the aisled building was concentrated on its east side; only a single posthole was identified to the west. Although truncated in places, a cobbled surface G3/G3.3/G3.4 appeared to occupy the space between the aisled building and a possible further building L41 to the east. Stone setting G3.2 may have been associated with a doorway into the aisled building. A moderate artefact assemblage was recovered, including samian dated to the second half of the 2nd century.

Cobbled surface/yard G3/G3.3/G3.4

Three areas of cobbles were located east of the aisled building. They comprised tightly packed, rounded 30–100mm cobbles, set usually in a single layer within a grey clay-silt matrix (Fig. 9d). The most extensive area (G3) was over 8m long,



Plate 6: Part of cobbled surface/yard G3

continuing beyond the excavation limit to the north and south. Although it survived to a width of 6m, only its eastern limit, which coincided with structural slot G28 (see L41 below), is thought to be a genuine edge. A small area of similar cobbles (G3.4), c. 1.8m by 0.9m in extent, suggests this surface may have originally extended up to the east wall of the aisled building — nearer to c. 8.5m wide (Fig. 9d). An additional area of cobbles G3.3, at least 2m wide, was located c. 13m to the north in evaluation trench 6 (Fig. 6). It may have been part of, or at least connected with, the G3 surface.

A mixed artefactual assemblage including pottery, building material and a rotary quern was recovered. Much of it came from the upper part of the surface and is, therefore, not securely associated with its construction or use.

Stone setting G3.2

Stone setting G3.2 abutted the east side of the aisled building, c. 1.5m north of cobbled surface G3.4 (Fig. 7). It was set in a construction trench that was 1m long, 0.7m wide and 0.25m deep, with vertical sides and a flat base (Fig. 8c). The lowest fill comprised a mix of chalky white and yellow-grey mortar, 0.15m thick. Two large flat tiles, a large piece of sandstone, and several smaller stones (some of which showed signs of burning) were partly set in the mortar.

This stone setting could have served a variety of purposes. It might represent the position of a buttress, although the absence of similar features along the east wall make this unlikely. Given its position just south of an aisle post, it is perhaps more likely that it was associated with a doorway.

Layer G26

Layer G26 was investigated in a single box section to the east of the aisled building. It clearly underlay cobbled surface G3.4 but its precise relationship with G3 was not established, although it was probably earlier (Fig. 9d). It comprised mid-green-grey clayey silt with moderate inclusions of clay, sandstone and charcoal. It was thickest (0.3m) next to the building. It probably represents localised levelling of uneven ground prior to the construction of the building and the cobbled surface. The latest pottery from a varied finds assemblage dates to the 2nd–3rd centuries.

Posthole G34

Circular posthole G34 was located c. 3.5m west of the aisled building. It was 0.4m in diameter and 0.15m deep with a concave base (Fig. 9a). Its fill comprised a dark grey-brown clayey silt, containing two large pieces of sandstone which may have been the remains of disturbed post-packing.

Possible post-built building L41 (Fig. 9)

Building L41 was located c. 8.5m east of the aisled building. The principal evidence for its existence was the way that cobbled surface G3 stopped abruptly on the line of structural slot G28, which, with posthole G140, represented the building's west wall. A complete ground plan could not be recovered because the building extended beyond

the limit of excavation. However, it was at least 7.5m long and 5m wide. Although the features contained no datable artefacts, their location and the absence of debris from the demise of building L4 suggest that building L41 is likely to have been contemporary with the original aisled building L4.

Structural slot G28

Structural slot G28 was at least 3m long. It continued beyond the limit of excavation to the south and may have been truncated to the north. It was 0.4m wide and 0.1m deep, with a concave base (Fig. 9c).

Posthole G140

A circular posthole G140 was located on the projected alignment of slot G28. It was 0.6m in diameter and 0.1m deep, with a concave base (Fig. 9b).

Possible post-built building L21 (Figs 6 and 10)

Building L21 was located adjacent to the south-west enclosure ditch, *c.* 30m south of the aisled building. A complete ground plan could not be recovered because of heavy truncation. However, its west wall line G107 was *c.* 12m long and a possible opposing wall line G108 was located *c.* 13m to the east. There is some evidence, in the form of three postholes that were slightly offset from the main alignment, to suggest that the west wall had once been rebuilt. Between the two rows of postholes was a small concentration of features G109/G110.

In terms of dating, one of the postholes truncated a Phase 1 ditch. The majority of the small pottery assemblage is dated to the 2nd century, with several of the sherds recovered from post packing. Along with the absence of significant quantities of building material, this suggests that the building was contemporary with the original aisled building L4 rather than its replacement.

Possible walls G107/G108

The west wall was represented by a *c.* 12m long alignment of six postholes G107, the east wall by a *c.* 2.3m long alignment of three postholes G108. The postholes of the west wall were generally spaced *c.* 1.5–2.3m apart; a 3.9m gap may indicate the position of a doorway. Three smaller postholes, 0.3–0.6m in diameter and 0.1–0.3m deep (Fig. 10a and b), were situated *c.* 0.4m to the east of this alignment. Two of the main line of postholes contained post-pipes and associated packing. The post-pipes were 0.15–0.2m in diameter and 0.2–0.25m deep, with vertical sides and flat bases (Fig. 10a). The packing comprised 50–150mm stones and pottery sherds set in a mid-brown silty clay. Three further postholes contained large stones which, although not *in situ*, probably represent post packing material (Fig. 10b).

The postholes of the east wall G108 comprised one sub-rectangular and two sub-oval postholes, all heavily truncated. The former was 0.5m long, 0.25m wide and 0.2m deep, with

nearly vertical sides and a flat base (Fig. 10f); the two sub-oval postholes were only 0.2m in diameter and *c.* 0.15m deep, with a V-shaped or concave profile. The close proximity of these two postholes may suggest that one was a replacement for the other. None of the postholes contained evidence for post-pipes or packing material.

Pits G109 and postholes G110

A cluster of five features were present within the east part of the possible building — three sub-oval pits G109 and two postholes G110. The pits were oval in shape, 1.2–2.1m long, 0.6m wide and under 0.3m deep. One of the pits had a concave profile and flattish base (Fig. 10c); the others had more rounded, V-shaped profiles (Fig. 10d and e). Postholes G110 were sub-circular in shape, less than 0.4m in diameter and 0.3m deep, with V-shaped profiles.

Trackway L23 (Fig. 6)

Trackway L23 lay immediately west of the main settlement enclosure L30. It was defined by the enclosure ditch itself and ditches G105/111/128, which together formed a *c.* 24m–30m wide corridor. The west ditches were only revealed in a number of evaluation trenches but extended for a distance of at least 145m. To the north, the ditch was re-defined on a number of occasions by L24/L28 (see below). A moderate quantity of artefacts was recovered, including a large assemblage of mainly 2nd–3rd-century pottery.

Ditch G105/111/128

NW–SE aligned ditch G105/111/128 was 0.8–1.9m wide and 0.35–0.5m deep. The smaller dimensions to the south are the result of truncation (Fig. 6c). The ditch typically had an asymmetrical, U-shaped profile (Fig. 6b), and was filled with a deposit of dark orange-brown clayey silt with occasional small to medium stones and chalk flecks.

Re-establishment (L24/L28) of west ditch of trackway (Fig. 6)

The west side of the trackway was re-defined by a series of NW–SE aligned ditches. They were adjacent to, and parallel with, ditch G111/128, but because they were only located in evaluation trenches it was impossible to establish their precise sequence. The pottery from the ditch fills mainly comprises 2nd–3rd-century types, hence their assignment to this phase. Despite being at least 70m from the aisled building, the ditches produced a large quantity of domestic debris, suggesting another domestic focus in this area. However, with the exception of postholes L29, no features indicative of settlement were found.

Ditch G112

Ditch G112 was revealed in two evaluation trenches. It was 1.3–1.7m wide and 0.35–0.5m deep with a flattish base, and

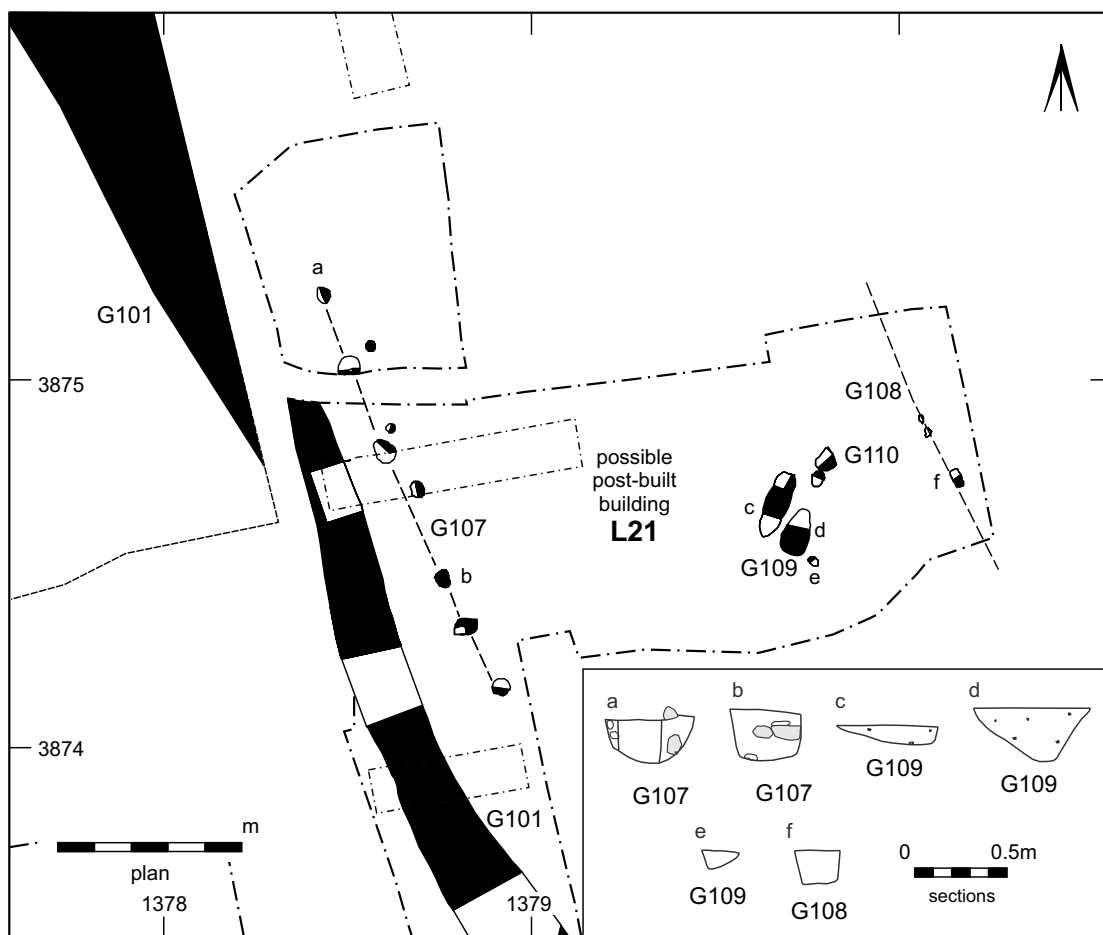


Figure 10: Detailed plan of possible post-built building L21

extended for at least 18m. Its fill comprised mid-grey-brown sandy silt that contained occasional small stones.

Ditches G119

Three intercutting parallel ditches G119 were revealed in two evaluation trenches. They were 0.45–1.55m wide and 0.25–0.4m deep, with either concave or V-shaped profiles. They were infilled with either mid-yellow-brown silty clay or orange-brown sandy silt, with occasional small stones and charcoal flecks.

Postholes L29 (Fig. 6)

Four postholes L29 were revealed in two evaluation trenches in the vicinity of the west trackway ditches. Three of the postholes (G123) were located to the east of the ditch, apparently within the routeway, while one (G124) was situated between two of the trackside ditches. Given their small size, it is surprising that these postholes produced a moderate quantity of domestic debris,

supporting the idea that a domestic focus was located in this area. The majority of the mixed pottery assemblage dates to the 2nd–3rd centuries.

Postholes G123

Postholes G123 were 0.4–0.5m in diameter and up to 0.6m deep, with vertical sides and slightly concave bases.

Postholes G124

Circular posthole G124 was 0.25m in diameter and 0.25m deep, with nearly vertical sides and a slightly concave base.

Quarrying L25 (Fig. 6; Pl. 7)

A series of intercutting quarry pits G114/115 were located to the southwest of trackway L23, respecting its western boundary. They extended over an area of at least 28m by 11m, continuing beyond the limit of excavation. The pits had been dug into sand, which was presumably required for building. Their fills derived from both natural silting and



Plate 7: Excavation of quarry pits G114 from north-west

episodes of rubbish disposal, suggesting that they remained open for some time. Only a small quantity of building material was recovered, possibly suggesting that the pits had been largely infilled by the time the aisled building went out of use. The small pottery assemblage is dominated by Romano-British types. A dog skeleton, complete but for the skull, was found within the main fills.

Quarry pits G114/115

A series of intercutting quarry pits were identified. They were 0.5–4m across and up to 1.2m deep, with steep sides and either flat or uneven bases (Fig. 6a). The quarry pits were initially filled with mixed yellow-grey silty sand and brown-grey clayey silts, 0.2–0.7m thick, while the main fills comprised a mix of mid-yellow-brown clayey silt and mid-grey-brown silty clay.

PHASE 4: EARLY 4TH CENTURY (NOT ILLUSTRATED)

By the early 4th century, the main settlement enclosure, including the aisled building L4, was no longer in use. It is possible that a hiatus in occupation occurred. However, the remains of the aisled building became the focus for the robbing

(L8) of building material. The final infilling of the enclosure ditch (L30.3) and the quarry pits (L25.3) also contained large quantities of building debris, hence their assignment to this phase. These deposits contained a small quantity of late 3rd- to early 4th-century pottery, alongside large quantities of residual material. Although it is not possible to date precisely the activity assigned to this phase, the absence of post-Romano-British artefacts and stratigraphic relationships with Phase 5 features suggests an early 4th-century date. Cattle appear to have remained the dominant animal species, although it is likely that residual material has biased the assemblage.

Aisled building disuse L8

Evidence for the disuse of the aisled building comprised several deposits of mixed building debris both inside (G2.1, G2.2, G2.3 and G2.5) and outside (G3.1) its walls. The only robber trench identified (G2.4) was located to the south of the west wall. Before it was fully backfilled, it was utilised as a convenient hollow for the burial of a dog.

Large quantities of building material were recovered, including fired clay roof tiles and bricks, stone roof tiles, mortar, painted plaster and *opus signinum*.

Deposits of mixed building debris G2.1/G2.2

Two areas of mixed building debris G2.1 and G2.2 were located c. 1.4m apart in the west aisle of the building. Both were less than 2m in extent, up to 0.2m thick and contained mortar, tile and brick.

Deposit of mixed building debris G2.3

Another deposit of mixed building debris G2.3 was located in the southern part of the building. It lay partly within the area of disturbance probably associated with previous archaeological investigations, by which it may have been contaminated. It extended over an area of at least 7m by 3.5m, continuing beyond the limit of excavation, and comprised a 0.1–0.2m thick deposit of light green-grey sandy silt and dark grey-brown silty clay, mixed with large quantities of building debris. The latest pottery comprises 3rd–4th-century types.

Robber trench G2.4

It is presumed that trench G2.4 was dug to remove masonry from the west wall G1.6. It was 1.3m wide and 1m deep, and therefore is unlikely to reflect precisely the dimensions of the wall itself. It was filled by a light brown to dark black-brown silty sand with inclusions of mortar flecks, moderate quantities of small flints, and sandstone. Large quantities of building debris were found along with 3rd–4th-century pottery. The absence of modern artefacts and the presence of a dog skeleton are the main reasons that this has been interpreted as a robber trench rather than an antiquarian one.

Internal wall debris G2.5

G2.5 was located in the southern part of the building, next to the more northerly internal wall G1.4. It contained a large number of sandstone slabs and painted wall plaster mixed with a light grey clayey silt. It appeared to be derived from the collapse or dismantling of the internal walls.

Infilling of post-pads G2.6

The stones within several of the post-pads G1.8 were sealed by a mid-orange-brown to dark grey-brown clayey silt G2.6, containing frequent charcoal flecks and small quantities of building debris. Ecofactual samples 6 and 22 contained high quantities of oak charcoal, which may suggest that some of the timbers were burnt *in situ*.

Deposit of mixed building debris G3.1

Layer G3.1 was located to the east of the aisled building over the Phase 3 cobbled surface G3. It produced sherds of 3rd–4th-century pottery, along with moderate quantities of building debris.

Final infilling of the ditched enclosure (L30.3)

The upper fills L30.3 of the ditch defining the enclosure comprised dark brown-grey and mid-yellow-brown silty clay, with inclusions of occasional small to medium stones and charcoal flecks. Large quantities of building debris were present —

a further indication that the aisled building was no longer in use.

Final infilling of quarry pits (L25.3)

The upper fills L25.3 of the quarry pits comprised dark yellow-brown or dark black-grey silty clay. They produced building material, metal artefacts and a large number of cattle bones, the majority of which appear to belong to one animal and do not exhibit any evidence of butchery.

PHASE 5: LATER ROMANO-BRITISH (Fig. 11)

A new ditched enclosure L9 was established in broadly the same area and on approximately the same alignment as the earlier enclosure L30. Although there were no buildings or obvious domestic foci, three clusters of internal features (pits, gullies *etc.*) were identified. Cluster L10 was in the same location as the Phase 3 aisled building, while L16 was c. 30m to the west and L22 c. 20m to the south.

Features were assigned to this phase because they were stratigraphically later than Phase 3 or 4 features and/or because they contained later Romano-British artefacts, including 3rd–4th-century pottery and 4th-century coins. The majority of the finds from Phase 5 features are likely to be residual: most of the building materials, including nails, mortar, window glass, wall plaster and stone roof tiles, were probably derived from the earlier buildings. A range of domestic artefacts and a small quantity of animal bone, dominated by cattle, were also recovered.

Enclosure L9 (Fig. 11)

Segments of ditch representing three sides of a probable rectangular, NW–SE aligned enclosure were located during three separate investigations. It was c. 80m wide and may have been up to 130m long. The ditches produced small quantities of domestic debris; this suggests that either the enclosure was not intensively settled, or the main domestic foci were away from the ditches. Ditch G120 represents a possible internal subdivision, partitioning off an area c. 28m wide at the north end of the enclosure.

Enclosure ditch G9/G23/G106

Segments of ditch were identified on the northwest (G9), northeast (G23) and southwest (G106) sides of the enclosure. The northwest ditch G9, 1.1m wide and up to 0.4m deep, had steep, straight sides and a flattish base (Fig. 11a and b). The northeast

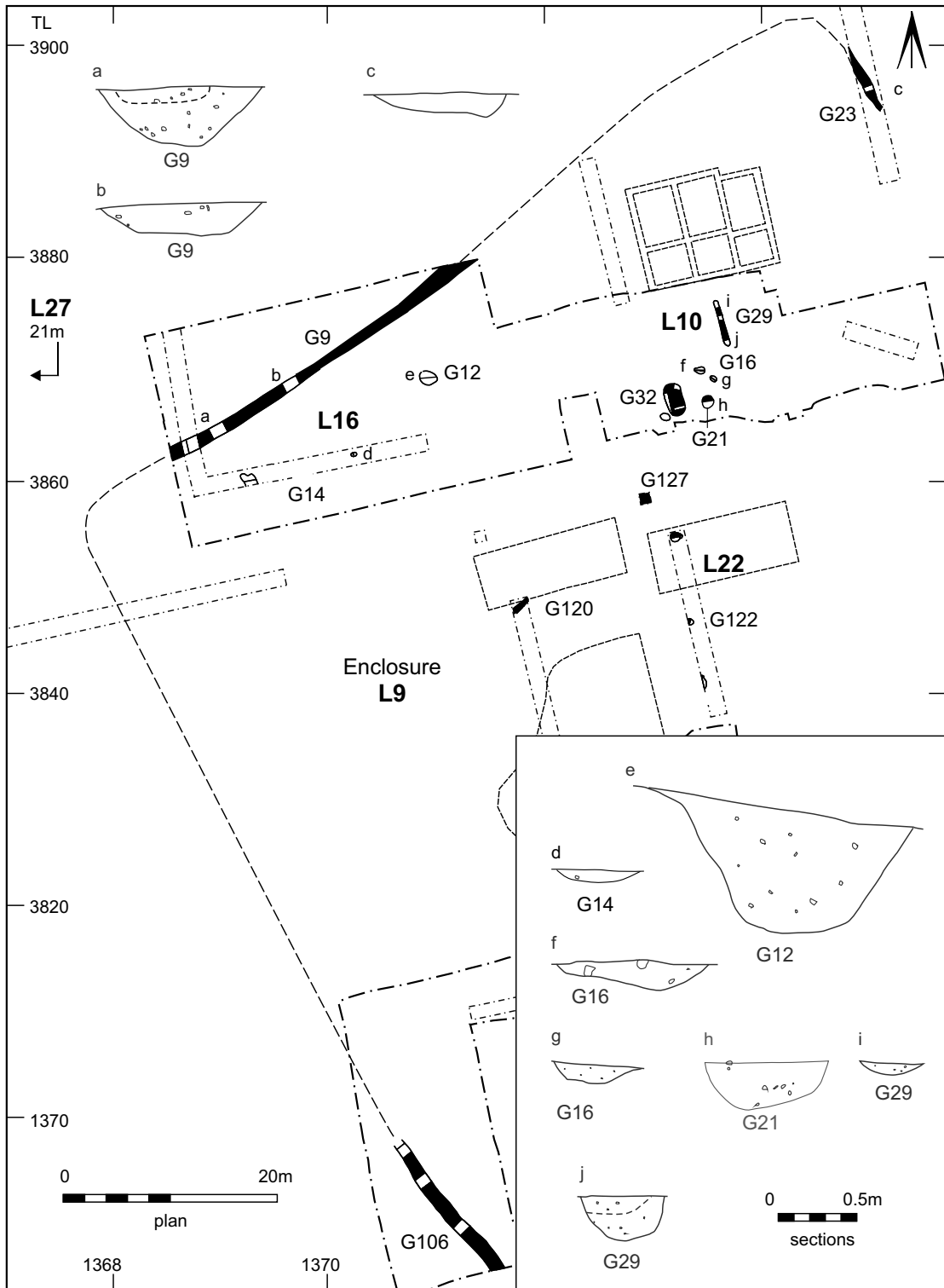


Figure 11: Phase 5: Late Romano-British plan, with sections

ditch G23 was 0.85m wide and 0.1m deep, with a similar profile (Fig. 11c). The southwest ditch G106 was c. 1.3m wide and 0.45m deep, with steep, concave sides and a slightly irregular, flattish base.

The sole fill G9.1 of the enclosure ditch mostly comprised brown-grey sandy silt and silty clay. A similar primary fill was also identified in ditch G106.

Internal subdivision G120

Ditch G120 was only revealed in an evaluation trench. It has been assigned to this phase purely on the basis that it was parallel to enclosure ditch G9. It was 0.6m wide and 0.15m deep, with a broad, concave base. Its fill was similar to that of the main enclosure ditch.

Activity focus L10 (Fig. 11)

L10 comprised a possible structural slot and a cluster of pits that were c. 13m south of the projected line of the northwest enclosure ditch. The pits comprised two large examples (G21 and G32) to the south and a number of smaller ones (G16). The majority of the finds assemblage is probably residual and derived from earlier activity associated with the aisled building.

Pits G16

Two sub-circular pits G16 were located 0.7m apart. They were 0.65–0.95m long, 0.45–0.6m wide and no more than 0.2m deep, with concave sides and irregular, concave bases (Fig. 11f and g). Their main fills G16.1 comprised dark grey-brown clayey silt.

Pits G21/G32

Three pits were located within 1.5m of one another. The largest pit G32 was oval, 3m long, 1.5m wide and 0.2m deep, with steep, concave sides and a flat base. G21 comprised two pits: one was sub-oval in plan, 0.9m long, 0.6m wide and 0.2m deep, with an irregular, concave profile and base. The other was sub-circular in plan, 1m in diameter and 0.35m deep, with a U-shaped profile (Fig. 11h).

The main fills of these pits (G21.1 and G32.1) ranged from dark brown silty sand to dark grey-brown clayey silt. Amongst a varied finds assemblage, largely derived from the earlier aisled building, were a few sherds of mid-3rd- to 4th-century Oxford and Nene Valley wares, together with a late 4th-century coin of Valens (RA 76).

Possible structural slot G29

North-south aligned slot G29 was located to the northeast of pits G16. It was 4.3m long, with steep-sided terminals to the north and south, perhaps suggesting a structural function. It was c. 0.4m wide and 0.1m deep to the north (Fig. 11i) but increased to 0.6m wide and 0.3m deep to the south (Fig. 11j).

Activity focus L16 (Fig. 11)

A dispersed cluster of pits L16 was located within c. 5m of the northwest enclosure boundary, to the west of L10. It comprised two pits (G14) that were revealed in an evaluation trench and an isolated pit (G12) that was dug into the Phase 3 enclosure

ditch. A very small quantity of contemporary pottery was recovered, and one of the pits produced a considerable amount of charcoal.

Pit G12

Sub-circular pit G12 was 1.5m in diameter and 0.95m deep, with a U shaped profile (Fig. 11e). Its main fill G12.1 comprised a mid-grey-brown silty clay. Much of its varied finds assemblage probably derived from the Phase 3 aisled building, although it also produced two sherds of mid-3rd- to 4th-century Oxford ware. Ecofactual sample 13 produced a large quantity charcoal, principally hazel with some Pomoideae (hawthorn, apple *etc.*).

Pits G14

G14 comprised two pits located 8m apart; one was oval in plan while the other was more irregular. The oval pit was 0.5m long, 0.3m wide and 50mm deep (Fig. 11d); the other was at least 1.2m long and 0.15m deep with steep, concave sides and a flat base. The main fills (G14.1) of the pits comprised a mid-grey-brown clayey silt and a sandy clay.

Activity focus L22 (Fig. 11)

Located to the south of the internal boundary was a cluster of four pits and a single posthole (G122), identified in an evaluation trench. A large unidentified feature G127, possibly a pit, was found in a nearby test pit. These features, especially G127, produced the largest Phase 5 assemblage of contemporary pottery.

Pits and postholes G122

G122 comprised four pits and one posthole that were all located within 12m of each other. The posthole was circular in plan, 0.25m in diameter and 0.25m deep, with steep sides and a flattish base. The pits were all sub-circular in plan, 0.5–1m in diameter and 0.1–0.7m deep, with either concave or nearly vertical profiles. Not all of these features were contemporary, as the posthole was truncated by one of the pits and two of the pits were intercutting.

One of the pits contained a 0.4m thick lower fill G122.1, comprising mid-yellow-brown clayey silt with frequent charcoal flecks. Overlying this was a dark yellow-brown clayey silt with occasional small stones and frequent charcoal flecks. The remaining features were filled by yellow-brown clayey silt with occasional charcoal flecks and moderate small stones. Sherds of mid-3rd- to 4th-century Nene Valley colour coat ware were found.

Feature G127

This large feature occupied the whole of a small test pit. It was 1.3m deep but its profile and width could not be determined. Its primary fill comprised a 0.5m thick yellow-brown clay, which produced few finds. The overlying fills of dark yellow-brown silty clay (G127.2 and G127.3) produced a relatively large finds assemblage, including residual building material. The latest pottery comprises shell-tempered wares and grey wares, together with twelve sherds of mid-3rd- to 4th-century Nene Valley colour coat ware, complemented by a late 4th-century coin of Gratian (RA R3).

Boundary L27

Boundary L27 was identified in two of the RB365 trial trenches *c.* 60m northwest of enclosure L9. The projected alignment of the boundary would have been parallel to and *c.* 20m from the southwest side of enclosure L9. The boundary ditch (G113) had been re-cut on at least one occasion. It produced a small pottery assemblage.

Ditch G113

The original ditches of G113 were at least 0.7m wide and 0.1m deep, with shallow, concave sides and a flat base. The re-cut was 1.15m wide and 0.25m deep, with a concave profile. They all appeared to be on a NW–SE alignment. The fills G113.1 comprised mid-grey-brown clayey silt that contained occasional small stones.

PHASE 6: MODERN

The recent investigations identified 19th-century quarry pits L26 (Figs 2 and 3) and the backfilled trenches (L15) of 19th/20th-century archaeological investigations (Fig. 12). In addition, the topsoil, parts of which were excavated by hand (L17 and L18), was assigned to this phase to assist in analysis of the large residual assemblage of building material and other objects that were recovered.

19th-century quarry pits L26 (Figs 2–3)

Quarry pits were identified in several evaluation trenches adjacent to Amphill Road. Their full extent could not be accurately determined within the narrow trenches; they generally appeared to be sub-circular in plan, measuring at least *c.* 8m in diameter with steep sides. They were often filled by sterile grey-brown sandy loam and clean yellow sand. More rarely, deposits of domestic debris were identified. Although small quantities of Romano-British artefacts were recovered, the

assemblage of 19th-century domestic debris, including china, brick, metal and glass, provides a more accurate date for the quarrying. Their significance derives from the fact that the earliest finds reported in this part of Shefford were found in 19th-century quarry pits.

Possible archaeological trenches L15 (Fig. 12)

The nature and location of several features/deposits in the vicinity of the aisled building hint at an association with earlier archaeological investigations. They comprised trench-like features G22, located both to the north and south of a 1937 boundary and an associated area of disturbance G24.

The trenches to the north of the boundary were all situated within the aisled building. They had steep sides, flat bases and were 0.3–0.6m deep and *c.* 0.8–4m wide. To the south of the property boundary, several larger possible archaeological trenches were observed during watching brief RB445. These would have been situated both inside and outside the aisled building.

An area of disturbance (G24) within the aisled building — a mix of dark brown to yellow-brown silty clays — produced large quantities of Romano-British artefacts, especially building material, but also 20th-century material including porcelain and flowerpots.

Layers L17 and L18

The majority of the overburden within the investigations was removed by machine. However, its remnants within and immediately outside the Phase 3 aisled building were excavated by hand, and are designated L17 (G35 and G37) and L18 (G36) respectively. The interior of the building produced large quantities of Romano-British artefacts, especially building material. A few 20th-century artefacts were also recovered.

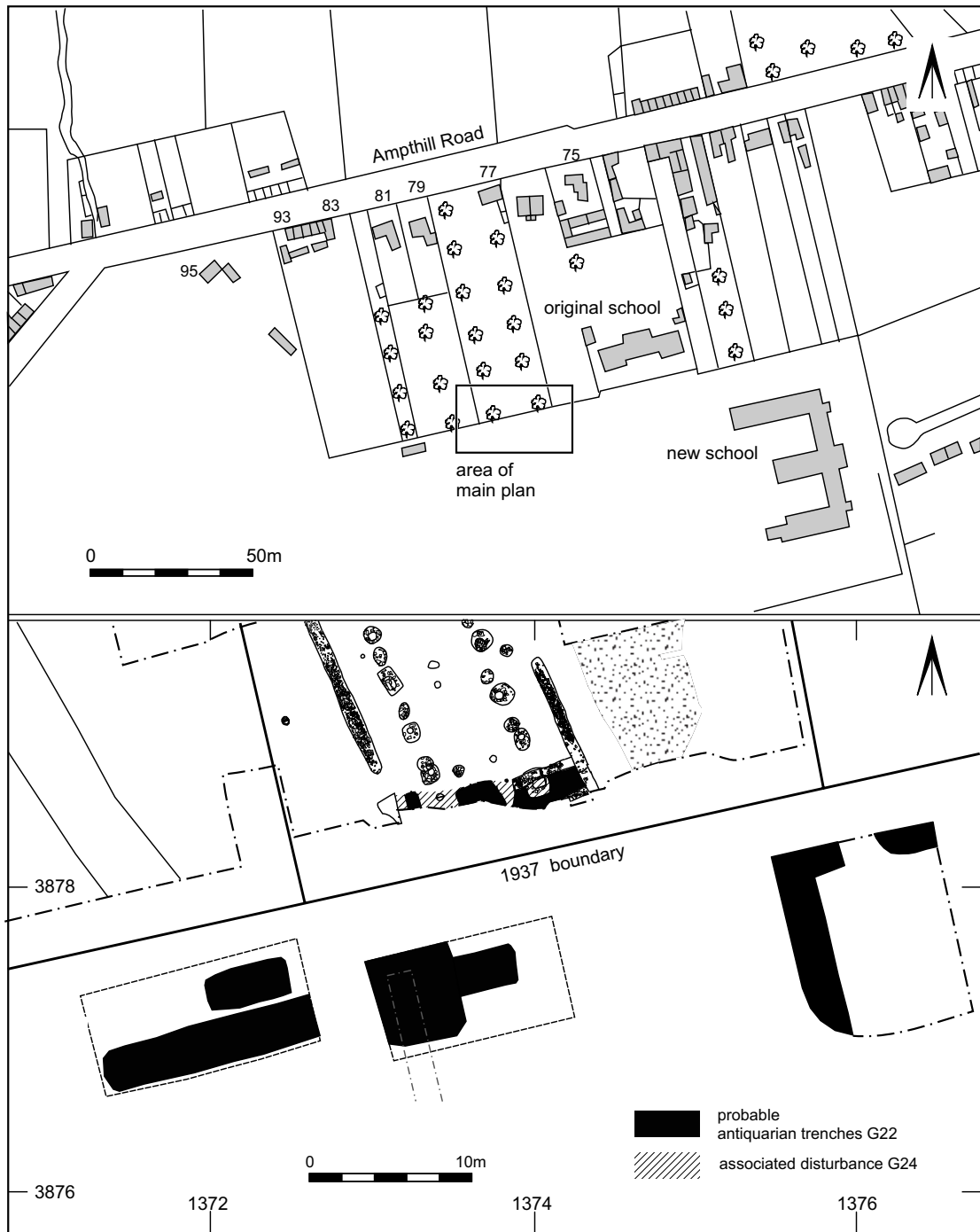


Figure 12: Phase 6: Archaeological/antiquarian trenches with 1937 OS map

POTTERY

Jackie Wells, incorporating report by
Felicity Wild (samian)

INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

Phased deposits produced 2,834 sherds of pottery, representing 1,735 individual vessels, weighing 46.7kg. The pottery was examined by context and seventy-three fabric types (defined either by type and quantity of inclusions, or by finish) were identified (see Appendix 1) in accordance with the Bedfordshire Ceramic Type Series. Form codes were assigned and catalogued by fabric type. Quantification was by minimum vessel and sherd count, and weight. Sherds belonging to the same vessel, but deriving from separate contexts, were quantified as a single vessel. The attributes recorded include decoration, manufacturing techniques, levels of abrasion, and evidence of use, such as the presence/absence of residues, sooting and wear marks.

A sample of the pottery has been illustrated (Figs 13–14). As the assemblage mainly comprises common late Iron Age and Romano-British forms, it was not considered necessary to illustrate many examples. Standard drawing conventions have been used, with vessels shown at one-quarter size, external view on the right and a section and internal view on the left. Hand-made vessels are illustrated with hatched sections and wheel-thrown vessels with solid sections. The pie diagram at the base of each illustration indicates the proportion of the vessel recovered. Omission of the pie diagram indicates illustration of all surviving sherds.

CHRONOLOGICAL DISCUSSION

The pottery is discussed below by chronological period, and by phase. The proportions of fabric types within each phase and land-use area are presented in Table 1. For clarity, fabric type divisions have been amalgamated where appropriate, and are tabulated using a generic type code. Pottery recovered from unstratified and unphased contexts, including residual sherds pre-dating the late 'Belgic' Iron Age, are not considered in the following discussion.

Late Iron Age/early Romano-British (25.8%)

The late Iron Age/early Romano-British assemblage comprises 733 sherds from 382 vessels, weighing 11.5kg. The material is fairly frag-

mented, with an average sherd weight of 15g and a vessel:sherd ratio of 1:2. Approximately 85% (by sherd count) of this assemblage comprises sherds containing grog tempering or grog/sand, the latter natural to the local clay sources. Shell/grog- or shell-tempered sherds constitute 12% of the assemblage, and entirely sand-tempered types the remainder. Given the local geology, sources for the former are likely to lie at a greater distance from the site, a possible provenance being the shelly ware kiln sites located in the vicinity of Clapham and Stagsden (Tilson 1973; Slowikowski 2000).

The vessels are in the 'Belgic' tradition and represent a standard range of domestic pottery characteristic of the region, as defined in Thompson's Zone 7 (1982, 15–6). Although most sherds are reduced, ninety-seven type F06 and F09 examples are totally oxidised, presumably in an attempt to replicate oxidised Gaulish imports.

Most of the vessels are wheel-thrown; a small proportion are handmade with a wheel-finished shoulder and rim, and approximately 4% are entirely handmade (mainly shell-tempered lid-seated and large coarse grog vessels, types F07 and F06C respectively). Other forms are wheel-thrown lid-seated bowls and jars (Fig. 13 no.1), everted rim, bead-rim and narrow-necked jars, cordoned jars and bowls (Fig. 13 nos. 3, 8), storage jars, and single examples of a butt beaker, pedestal urn, bowl with suspension loop (Fig. 14 no.10), and a miscellaneous foot-ring base. The forms recorded represent table wares, storage jars and cooking pots. Use for cooking is indicated by the presence of external and internal sooting and black residues (263 sherds). A single sherd has a thick, internal, white residue, possibly representing an accumulation of limescale, and seventy-three sherds have pitted internal surfaces resulting from long-term use. The only wear marks recorded are on the underside of three grog-tempered base sherds.

Decoration comprises incised horizontal and vertical grooves (Fig. 14 no.11), horizontal and vertical combing, random combed patterns, fingernail impressions, scoring, burnishing, rouletting, cordons, and burnished horizontal lines and diagonal strokes. Two vessels have been modified by the addition of post-firing holes to neck and body sherds.

Romano-British (71.7%)

Romano-British pottery comprises 2,030 sherds from 1,287 vessels, weighing 33.1kg. A similar degree of fragmentation to the late Iron Age

Phase	L	Late Iron Age			1st century			Late 1st–2nd century				C1–3		C1–4		
		F05	F06	F07	F09	F34	R01B	R07	R02	R03*	R10B	R33	R18	R08	R19	R13
5	9.1		2:2	1:1	4:4											3:4
	10.1		2:2	1:1			1:1	1:1	2:2							9:9
	16.1		1:1		1:1											1:1
	22.1				1:1			1:1								
	22.2						1:1	5:6								1:1
	22.3		1:1		1:1			10:10		1:1					1:1	14:15
	27.1				1:1											
27.2	1:1															
4	8		11:12		16:17		1:1	12:16	1:2	1:1	3:4		1:2			18:33
	25.3		3:3					6:9								
	30.3		5:6		6:9			34:50			2:2	1:1				10:13
3	4		4:6		4:4		1:1	7:7	1:1	1:1	1:1		1:1	1:1		4:11
	6	1:1	2:3				2:5	9:13		1:1		1:1	0:19	1:1		6:8
	12	2:2					1:1	3:3	1:1	3:7	3:4		1:2			6:21
	12.1		1:1		1:1					1:1						
	21															
	21.1							1:1								1:1
	23.1		2:2					7:85		2:3			1:1			4:19
	25.1															
	25.2				1:1											1:2
	28.1				1:1			3:9								2:27
	29.1															
	30		2:2		2:3											
30.1		15:25	1:4	12:35	1:1		14:20		2:2			1:1			6:9	
30.2	1:1	3:5		2:2			31:40		3:10		1:1	2:13			9:18	
2	11	2:2	9:13			2:6	1:1									
1	1	1:1	25:49	3:14	11:35		1:1	2:2				1:2				2:2
	1.1	5:10	45:101	6:17	28:59	1:25		43:61	1:1			2:2		2:2		27:30
	1.2	5:7	26:42	3:14	19:45			4:12								10:16
	2				1:1			0:2					1:3			1:1
	2.1	3:6	23:46	4:5	22:31			2:14				1:1				4:6
	3.1				1:1											
	20.2		7:13	1:1	4:11							1:1				
	20.3		6:16	1:1	3:3											
Total		21:31	195:351	24:61	139:264	2:26	10:17	196:363	3:4	17:29	8:10	4:4	13:27	2:23	4:4	139:247

Shaded areas represent contemporary fabric types.

R03* includes types R03A, B, C and E.

R11* includes types R11C, D, E and F.

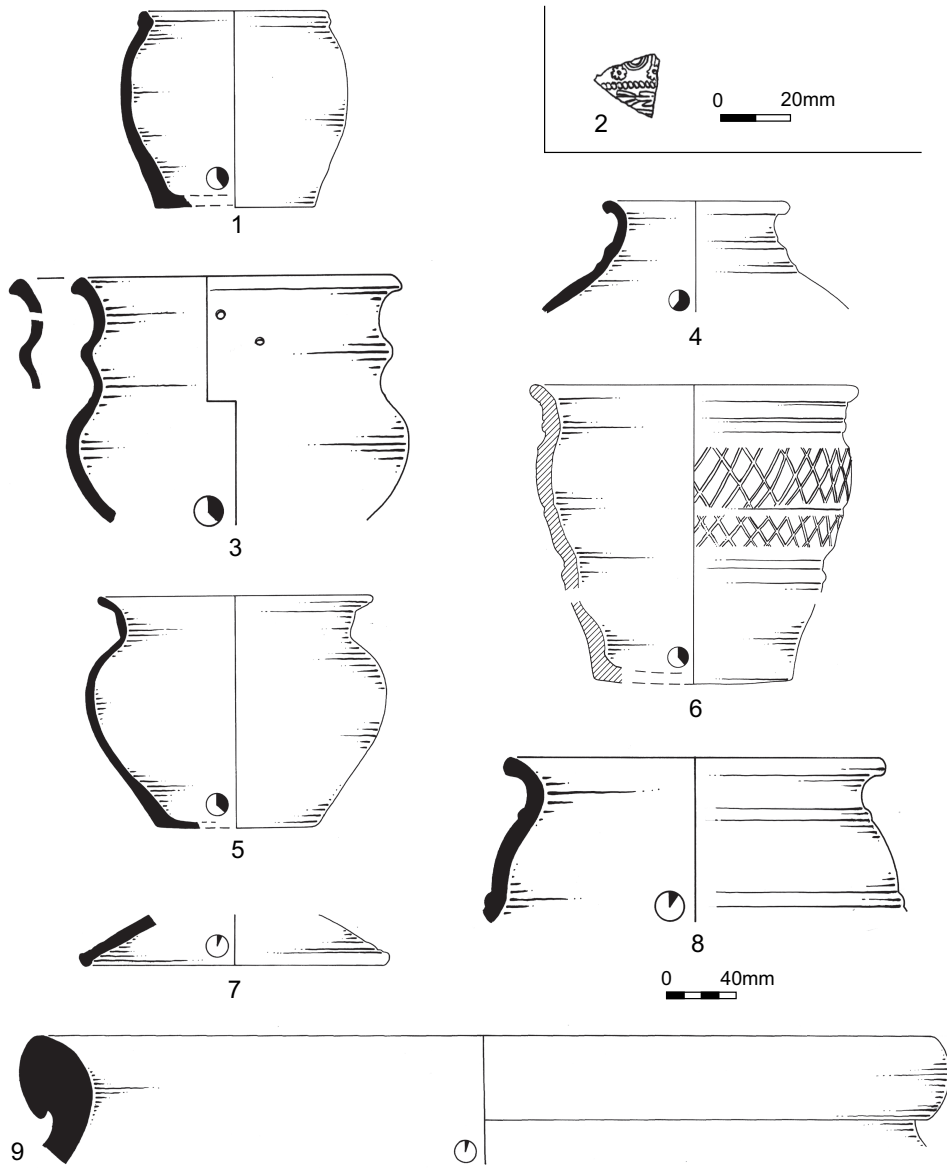
2nd century+**: excludes types R22A (1 vessel : 1 sherd) / R01C (1:1) / R09A (2:3).

Roman**: excludes types R21 (1:1) / R38 (2:3).

Table 1: Provenance of the pottery fabric types (vessel:sherd count)

2nd century		2nd century +**				2nd-3rd century			Roman**					Mid-3rd-4th century			Total
R01A	R10A	R06	R07C	R11	R07A	R06A	R05	R03	R14	R24	R30	R35A	R11*	R12A	R12B		
	1:1	14:16	1:3				1:1									29:34	
		15:31	1:2						4:4				1:1		2:2	41:58	
1:1		1:1		1:2					1:2							11:14	
	1:1	1:1														3:3	
1:1		12:18				1:1			1:1				2:2		2:3	28:36	
1:1		30:31	2:2	1:1			2:2		3:3				1:1		4:4	72:74	
																1:1	
		1:1														2:2	
2:3	2:3	88:113	5:5	1:1		1:1	1:1		7:9			0:2			8:9	183:239	
2:2		3:3		1:1												17:20	
		55:94	1:1	1:2		0:1	3:4		13:18			0:1	1:1		5:5	139:210	
1:1		55:74	4:4						6:6						1:1	93:121	
2:3		29:44		1:1												57:103	
	1:1	57:104	6:7		2:3	1:2	2:2		6:6			1:1			1:1	99:170	
		1:1														5:5	
		3:3														4:5	
	1:1	7:7							2:3							13:14	
		14:36	2:3	1:2			2:3						1:1			38:157	
									1:1							1:1	
		2:3					1:6								1:1	6:13	
	2:2	14:22					1:1		1:1	1:3				1:1	1:1	27:68	
		2:2														2:2	
		1:8											1:1			6:14	
	1:1	56:86				2:4	3:3		4:10				1:1		4:5	126:210	
3:4		45:76					1:2		4:5						3:3	109:181	
		1:1	1:1						2:2						3:3	24:32	
	1:1	6:9					1:2									60:127	
4:4	1:1	55:68	8:17	2:2			2:4	1:2	20:29			1:2	7:7		8:8	272:456	
3:3		31:48	2:7				1:5		2:2						3:5	113:206	
		1:1			1:5											5:13	
		33:52	3:3				1:1		5:6						1:1	113:185	
		1:1					1:1		1:1	1:2	1:1					6:7	
		1:1														19:32	
																10:20	
20:23	11:12	635:956	36:55	9:12	3:8	5:9	23:38	1:2	81:107	1:3	1:2	3:7	15:15	1:1	46:52	1,735:2,834	

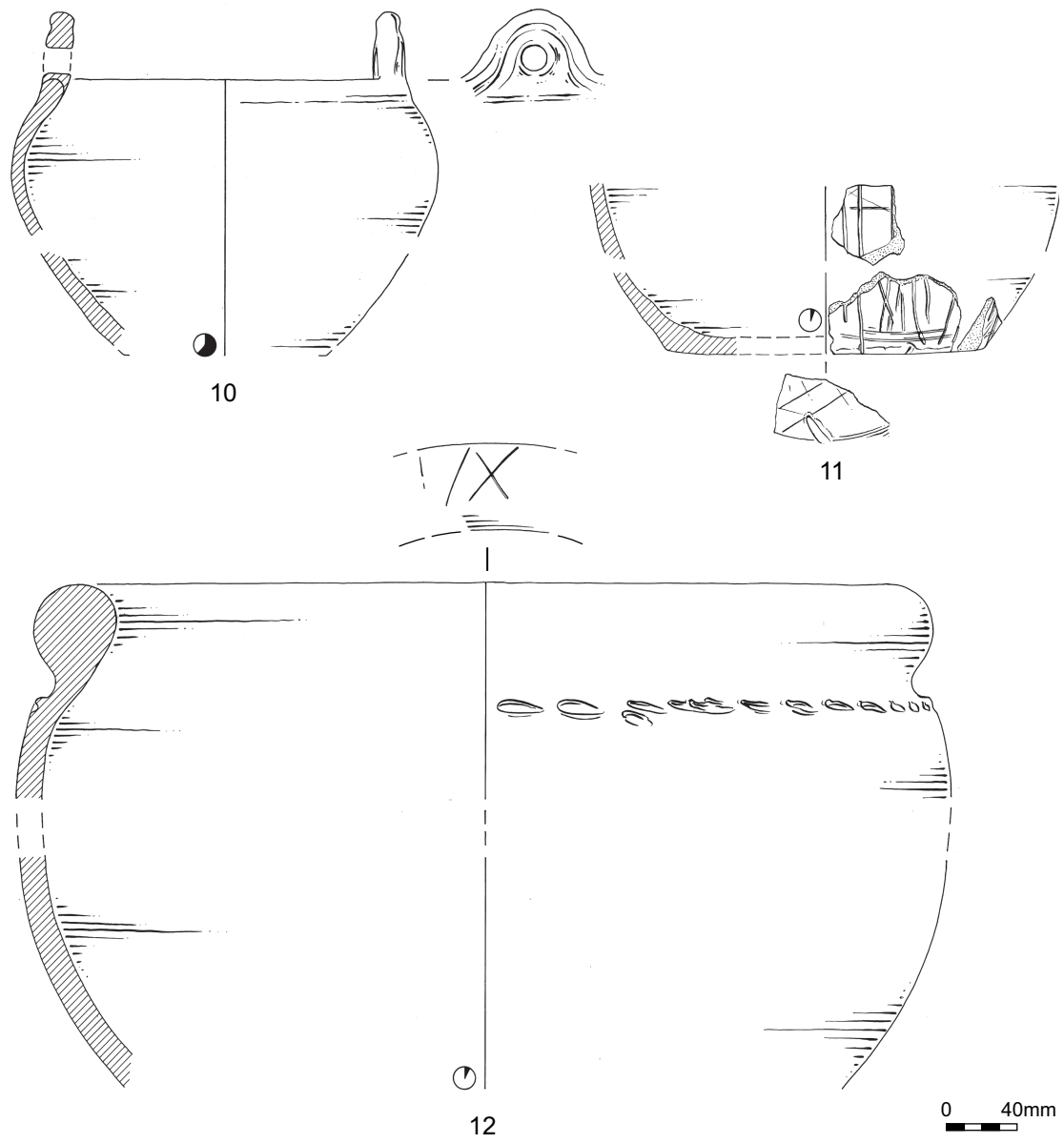
Table 1: continued



Illust.	Fabric	Description	Phase	L	G	Context*
1	F06B	Lid-seated jar	1	2.1	17.1	(253)
2	R01B	Form 37 bowl	6	15.1	22.1	(120)
3	F09	Cordoned bowl with two post-firing holes drilled in the neck	1/3	1/30.1	10.1/10.1/11.1	(128), (130), (133), (134)
4	R06C	Cordoned jar	5	22.2	122.2	RB (109)
5	R07B	Bowl	1	1	10.1/10.2	(206), (207)
6	R07B	Jar with incised lattice decoration	3	23.1	128.1	RB (146)
7	R06B	Lid	1	2.1	17.1	(321)
8	F09	Cordoned jar	1	1.1	10.1	(207)
9	R13	Large jar with undercut rim	4	30.3	11.2	(124)

* ASH unless otherwise stated

Figure 13: Selected pottery (1-9)



Illust.	Fabric	Description	Phase	L	G	Context*
10	F06C	Jar with suspension loop	1/3	1/30.1	10/10.2/11.1	(126), (128), (130), (134)
11	F06C	Vessel with incised decoration	1/3	1/30.1	10/10.1/11.1	(126), (133), (134)
12	R06F	Storage jar with tally/batch mark or graffito on the rim	1/4/6	3.1/8/17	31.1/2.3/35	(65), (102), (111)

* ASH unless otherwise stated

Figure 14: Selected pottery (10–12)

material is indicated by a comparable sherd weight of 16g and vessel:sherd ratio of 1:2.

The Romano-British assemblage is dominated by sand-tempered, reduced and oxidised coarse wares (fabric groups R05, R06, R07, R10 and R14), which constitute 76% of the pottery and reflect the exploitation of raw materials deriving from the Greensand Ridge. As their period of use spans the entire Romano-British period, dating is only possible where diagnostic forms occur. Numerous sources are likely for these types, especially during the earlier Romano-British period, when small scale, localised manufacture would have been the main means of production. Shelly coarse wares constitute 12% of the assemblage, a proportion of which may be products of the Harrold kilns (Brown 1994), located approximately 19km northwest of Shefford.

Diagnostic forms constitute 20% of the assemblage. They date predominantly to the early Romano-British period and are representative of a utilitarian assemblage, comprising a range of storage, kitchen and table wares. Forms include lid-seated jars and bowls; flanged, cordoned (Fig. 13 no. 4), reed-rim, rectangular, triangular and plain-rim bowls; jars with triangular, undercut (Fig. 13 no. 9), beaded and everted rims; cordoned, narrow-necked and neckless jars; storage jars; platters; folded and plain-rim beakers; dog dishes; ring-necked and plain-necked flagons; wide-mouthed bowls (Fig. 13 no. 5); lids (Fig. 13 no. 7); *mortaria*; *amphorae*; and a carinated jar. Many vessels possess elements similar to the preceding 'Belgic' tradition, in the form of cordons and corrugations. In contrast with other contemporary sites in the vicinity (*cf.* Norton Road, Stotfold (Albion Archaeology in prep. a) and Haynes Park (Wells 2004), both Beds.; Holwell, Herts. (Albion Archaeology in prep. b)), there is no evidence for the specialised use of shelly pottery as cooking pots or kitchen wares, nor for grey wares as table or storage vessels. One hundred and sixty-two vessels (113 grey ware and forty-nine shelly) have external and internal sooting and/or black residues; twenty-two have thick, internal, white residues; twenty-one have pitted internal surfaces resulting from long-term use; and wear marks are present on five base sherds. Two body sherds have been modified by the addition of a post-firing perforation, and one storage jar has a tally/batch mark or graffito on the rim (Fig. 14 no. 12).

Decorated pottery constitutes 12% of the assemblage and comprises a standard range of types,

including sherds with burnishing, rouletting, painting, barbotine, roughcasting, stamped motifs, slipping, horizontal rilling, vertical combing and combed patterns, horizontal grooves, burnished vertical lines, zig-zags and lattice motifs (Fig. 13 no. 6), cordons, incised herringbone and circle motifs, stabbing, and embossing.

Regional and continental imports are poorly attested. This is perhaps surprising, given the proximity of the Baldock–Sandy–Godmanchester road and the settlement at Baldock, located approximately 10km southeast of Shefford. Regional imports constitute 4% of the assemblage, and are represented by 2nd-century Verulamium-region wares, black burnished wares, Nene Valley grey wares, and pink-grogged vessels, the latter likely to derive from Caldecotte, Bucks. Later Romano-British regional imports of mid-3rd- to 4th-century date include vessels (mainly fine wares) from the Oxfordshire and Nene Valley industries. Continental imports are represented by miscellaneous *amphora* sherds and a small quantity of samian ware (2% of the total assemblage), the latter ranging in date from the 1st to the late 2nd centuries.

Samian includes plain and decorated (see Appendix 1) sherds of south, east and central Gaulish origin (twenty-two, one and twenty-five sherds respectively). Forms are mainly bowls (forms 18, 18/31, 18/31R, 30, 31 or R variant and 37; Fig. 13 no.2), cups (forms 27, 33 and 35), and carinated bowls (form 29), with single examples of a *mortarium* (form 43 or 45), platter (form 15/17) and dish (Ludowici Tg). No stamped vessels occur. Although the quantity is too small for definitive conclusions to be drawn, the presence of forms 29 and 15/17 suggests that small quantities of samian, including decorated ware, were arriving on the site from the early Flavian period (AD 69+). A trickle of material continued to arrive throughout the first half of the 2nd century, though with less arriving thereafter. Most of the earliest pieces occur residually within later features, suggesting a certain degree of disturbance.

DISCUSSION BY PHASE

The greatest pottery concentrations derive from features within Phases 1 and 3, which yielded respectively 41% and 48% of the total assemblage. The incidence of residuality is most evident in later Romano-British Phases 4 and 5 (see Table 1).

Phase 1

Features assigned to Phase 1 yielded 1,046 sherds (598 vessels), weighing 19.2kg. The majority of the assemblage derived from main ditch fills G100.2 (5.2kg) and G10.2 (3.8kg) of enclosure L1. Despite containing a large amount of pottery, the fragmented nature of this assemblage is evidenced by a low vessel to sherd ratio of 1:2. Ovens G5 within domestic focus L2 yielded 2.8kg; all other deposits contained less than 1kg.

Late 'Belgic' Iron Age pottery constitutes 47% of the assemblage and early Romano-British material 51%. Vessels from each period share a comparable average sherd weight and vessel to sherd ratio. The Phase 1 assemblage attests both the continuity of late Iron Age traditions and a transition to the use of fully Romanised wares. This is consistent with the established regional pattern, where the longevity of 'Belgic' form and fabric has been demonstrated, in some instances, to extend into the early 2nd century (*cf.* Haynes Park (Wells 2004, 90–1), Stagsden Bypass (Slowikowski 2000) and Biddenham Loop (Wells forthcoming)).

The lower ditch fill G100.1 contained a sherd of south Gaulish samian of Flavian or Trajanic date (AD 69–117), although the material from the main fill (G10.2, G100.2) is exclusively central Gaulish and datable to the Hadrianic or Antonine periods (AD 117–192).

Residual early to middle Iron Age pottery constitutes less than 1% of the Phase 1 assemblage. Approximately 2% comprises intrusive later Romano-British material.

Phase 2

A small assemblage (thirty-two sherds, weighing 413g) derived from layer L11. It comprises late Iron Age grog-tempered sherds (175g) and early Romano-British pottery (224g). The latter includes locally manufactured sand-tempered coarse wares, and six sherds of south Gaulish samian, the latter dating from *c.* AD 81–117. The assemblage is fairly fragmented, indicated by a low average sherd weight of 8g, and a low vessel:sherd ratio of 1:1. Intrusive material comprises three sherds (14g) of late Romano-British Nene Valley colour coat. Two residual sherds of early to middle Iron Age date were also present.

Phase 3

Features assigned to Phase 3 yielded 1,064 sherds (586 vessels), weighing 20.7kg. The majority of the assemblage derived from the fills of the

enclosure ditch re-cuts G11.1 and G101.1 (L30.1) and G101.2 (L30.2), trackway ditch fill G128.1 (L23.1) and fills of features G1.8 and G2.7 associated with the rebuilding of the aisled building L12.

There exists a degree of overlap and continuity between the Phase 1, 2 and 3 assemblages, evidenced by their similar composition. The most notable difference is the reduced quantity of late 'Belgic' Iron Age pottery, which in Phase 3 constitutes 9% of the assemblage in comparison to 88% early Romano-British material. Coarse ware forms are similar to those identified in preceding phases, but also include forms of 2nd-century and later date, such as flagons, jars with undercut and triangular rims, and vessels with developed lid-seating. The low proportion of diagnostic forms among the dominant coarse wares prevents a more detailed dating of many of the Romano-British vessels. Samian ware from features associated with the construction of the aisled building includes four south Gaulish sherds of Flavian date (AD69–96), thought to be residual, and seven central Gaulish sherds, of probable early to mid-2nd-century date, suggesting likely construction in the middle of the 2nd century. Cobbled surface G3, adjacent to the aisled building L4, and the secondary fill G101.2 of the re-cut ditch (L30.2) both produced sherds datable to the second half of the 2nd century.

Residual early to middle Iron Age pottery constitutes less than 1% of the Phase 3 assemblage. Intrusive later Romano-British material comprises approximately 2%, and post-Romano-British sherds less than 1%.

Phases 4 and 5

The Phase 4 assemblage comprises 469 sherds (339 vessels), weighing 6.9kg. Sherds are generally small, and few vessels are represented by more than one sherd. The majority of the pottery derives from accumulations of building debris (L8) associated with the disuse of the Phase 3 aisled building, in particular deposit G2.3 and robber trench G2.4, which each contained over 1.0kg of pottery. A further 2.4kg was recovered from the tertiary fills G101.3 of the enclosure ditch which originated in Phase 1. Twenty sherds (272g) derived from the upper fills of quarry pits G114.3 (L25.3).

Features assigned to Phase 5 yielded 222 sherds (187 vessels), weighing 3.3kg. As in the preceding phase, sherds are small (average sherd weight 10g)

and few vessels are represented by more than a single sherd. The majority of the assemblage derives from activity focus L22, particularly fills G127.2 and G127.3, which respectively contained 956g and 939g of pottery.

Contemporary late Romano-British fabric types include regional fine ware imports from Oxfordshire, Essex and the Nene Valley, and a proportion of late coarse ware forms in sand- and shell-tempered fabric types. Residual late Iron Age and earlier Romano-British material constitutes approximately 15% and 78% of the Phase 4 and Phase 5 assemblages respectively, although the lack of diagnostic forms hinders accurate dating. Intrusive Phase 4 material totals less than 1% of the assemblage and comprises four sherds (14g) of medieval and post-medieval date. No intrusive material occurred in Phase 5.

CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL

Jackie Wells

BRICK AND TILE

Introduction and methodology

The investigations produced 1,733 fragments (254.7kg) of Romano-British brick, roof tile and hypocaust tile. The assemblage comprises large, unabraded fragments (average fragment weight 146g) with over 85% constituting recognisable forms. An additional fifty-nine fragments (5.1kg) of late medieval/post-medieval brick and tile were recovered, which have not been included in the following discussion.

The material was examined by context and sorted into fabric and form types. Quantification was by fragment count and weight. Although no complete examples were recovered, measurements were taken where possible on larger fragments and on those retaining a finished edge (after Zeepvat 1987).

Six fabric types were identified and are detailed in Appendix 2. Local manufacture is likely, given the logistical difficulties of transporting heavy, breakable brick and tile, although no sources are documented. Sand- or predominantly sand-tempered tiles, which constitute over 99% of the assemblage, are likely to contain quartz sand derived from the Greensand Ridge. It is interesting that the small proportion of shell-tempered forms comprise mainly flue tiles, although sand-tempered examples also occur.

Phase 3 and 4 features, associated with the construction and disuse of the aisled building L4/L12, produced 40% and 24% of the assemblage respectively (Table 2). Phases 5 and 6 each yielded 11% of the material, and Phase 2 less than 1%. There are no apparent concentrations or distinctions between the distributions of tile types, with all forms occurring across the main investigation area.

Types of brick and tile

Tegulae

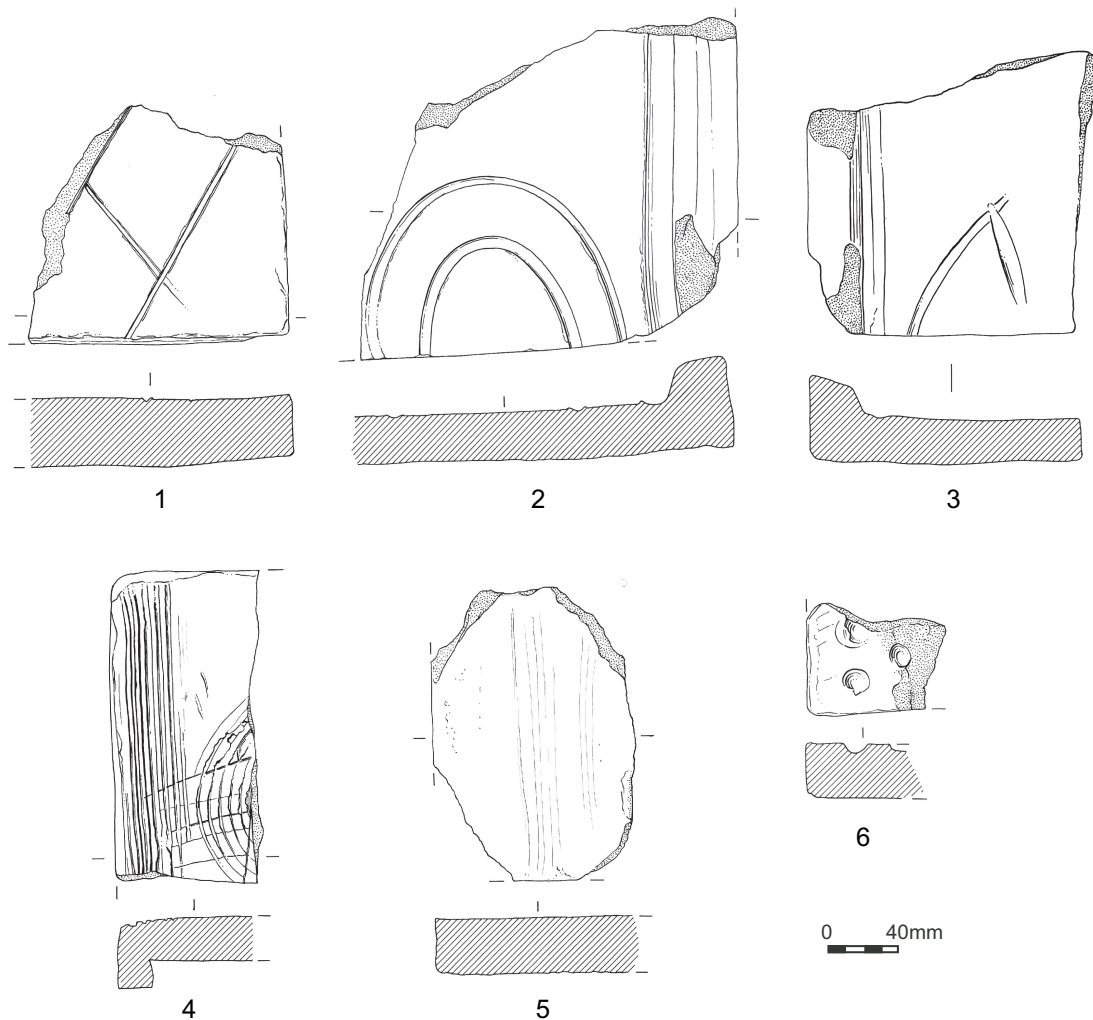
Tegula fragments number 512, weighing 121.4kg, and constitute 58% (by weight) of the diagnostic assemblage. The vast majority were found in deposits in the vicinity of the aisled building L4/12. They occur in all fabric types, with sand-tempered examples predominating. No complete *tegulae* survive, although most fragments are sufficiently intact for some dimensions to be recorded; the length of one tile was noted at 335mm. Body depth ranges from 15–37mm (average 23mm), external flange depth from 30–57mm (average 43mm), and flange thickness from 12–33mm (average 21mm). Flanges display considerable variation in shape and thickness. Eight flange types were recorded (Fig. 16); types 3 and 5 are commonest (twenty-four and nineteen examples respectively). Five rebate forms were noted (Fig. 16), with types 2 and 4 the commonest (eight and ten examples respectively). Both knife-cut and moulded rebates are present.

Thirty-two percent of *tegula* fragments are knife-trimmed, either on the flanges, or on the underside, towards the edges. Eighty-one sand-tempered fragments have a single finger-impressed groove in the angle between the inside of the flange and the tile face. Eleven have a double groove, and a single example has a triple groove. The purpose of such grooves is obscure; it has been suggested that they aided the outflow of rain-water (Brodrigg 1987, 16), although their absence from most *tegulae* suggests this may not have been the case.

Signatures occur on thirty-three fragments and comprise single and double concentric rings, or symmetrical semi-circles of varying size, made with the fingertips (Fig. 15 no. 2). One fragment is marked with freehand swirls, a second has a faintly combed surface and a third has a scored lattice pattern (Fig. 15 no. 1). The surface of one fragment has a finger-impressed V-shape, which may represent a signature or graffito (Fig. 15 no. 3). No *tegulae* bear any evidence of stamps or tally marks.

Phase	L	G	Tegula	Imbrex	Flue	Brick	Fragment	
6	15	22.1	60:12,872	16:2,062	5:595	14:4,296	55:2,348	
	17	35, 37	46:7911	10:1258	54:2376	10:2,584	41:1,638	
	18	36				1:1,442		
5	9.1	9.1	8:1,035	2:233	5:58	2:517	5:317	
		9.2		1:50			1:37	
		23.1					1:6	
		9.2	106.2	4:165				
		10	29.1	1:232				
		10.1	16.1			1:227	1:46	
			21.1	29:9,488		5:609	2:197	33:754
		16	12	1:870				
		16.1	12.1				3:447	7:1,113
		22.1	127	3:275				
		22.2	122.2	4:361			2:282	
			127.2	10:2,086	7:859		5:554	15:487
		22.3	127.3	14:3,257	6:533	3:173	4:431	22:599
	4	8	2.1	7:2,204		3:604	9:5,415	12:3,172
			2.3	3:780	2:168			2:126
		2.4	17:3,982	4:295	22:2,579	5:2,653	79:6,703	
		2.6	10:1,444	4:376		3:2,373	23:1,060	
		3.1	19:4,683	1:225			17:1,780	
		25.3	114.3	13:4,270	4:315	2:448	3:1,623	16:1,107
		30.3	11.2	47:10,350	2:236	1:102	2:512	11:519
			101.3		27:4,114	1:192	4:1,642	58:3,331
3		4	1.1			1:16		2:22
			1.2	21:8,072	1:343	2:688	9:5,771	10:1,477
		1.5	13:4,975			4:1,113	1:7	
	6	3	4:722	1:425	1:110	1:342	19:737	
		3.2			1:33	5:1,955	2:90	
		26					6:186	
	12	1.4	16:3,544	1:128	8:619	2:572	61:1,947	
		1.8	3:684	3:269	1:225	13:2,831	3:461	
		2.7	16:6,867	3:763	1:60	3:2,967	8:469	
		33	2:293	2:43	4:195	1:133	15:367	
		1.7	3:313			1:149		
		21.1	107.1					2:2
		23.1	105.1	2:1,181	1:71			3:98
			111.1	2:383				
			128.1		2:182		8:976	
		25.1	114	3:318		1:367		
		25.2	114.2	2:605				
		28.1	119.1	4:1,062	3:182		2:58	1:10
	30	11	12:1,226	4:352			7:362	
		101	2:338	1:87	1:225	4:1,060	1:39	
	30.1	101.1	15:1,871	5:386	1:9	2:670	57:657	
		11.1	9:1,806			2:1,059	7:498	
	30.2	101.2	13:2,132	13:1,467	2:781	4:401	19:1,674	
2	11	25					2:22	
1	1	100.1	1:655	3:282			9:877	
	1.1	100.2	34:11,283	22:5,628	1:273	11:2,589	60:3,492	
	34	126.1				1:133		
	1.2	10.2	25:5,804	12:2,129	5:936	5:2,929	15:2,441	
	2	5	17:2,778	1:218		5:940	22:729	
		6					1:36	
	2.1	4.1	3:1,892	1:144			2:57	
		5.1	18:1,862					
		13.2	7:869	1:52	2:41		11:1,465	
		17.1					5:97	
	17.2	1:476			9:1,999	2:86		
		512	152	144	134	791	45,052	
		121,459	23,005	14,410	50,808			

Table 2: Provenance of the brick and tile (fragment:weight (g) count)



Illust.	Description	Phase	L	G	Context*
1	Tegula with scored lattice pattern	3	12	1.4	(514)
2	Tegula with finger-impressed decoration	3	24.1	112.1	(150)
3	Tegula with finger-impressed V-shape representing a signature or graffito	1	1.1	100.2	SLS(1077)
4	?Half-box tile with combed and scored decoration	3	4	1.2	(468)
5	Reused tegula which appears to have been deliberately shaped	3	12	2.7	(215)
6	Tegula with finger prints	3	28	119	(124)

* ASH unless otherwise stated

Figure 15: Selected ceramic building material (1-6)

Accidental impressions are not common, and consist of three separate paw prints and a group of three finger prints (Fig. 15 no. 6).

Three circular nail holes of 5mm, 9mm and 10mm diameter were recorded in sand-tempered

fragments. These are broadly consistent with the average hole dimensions recorded by Brodribb (1987, 10). All were pierced pre-firing.

The presence of mortar and/or *opus signinum* was noted on fifty-eight *tegula* fragments (14%),

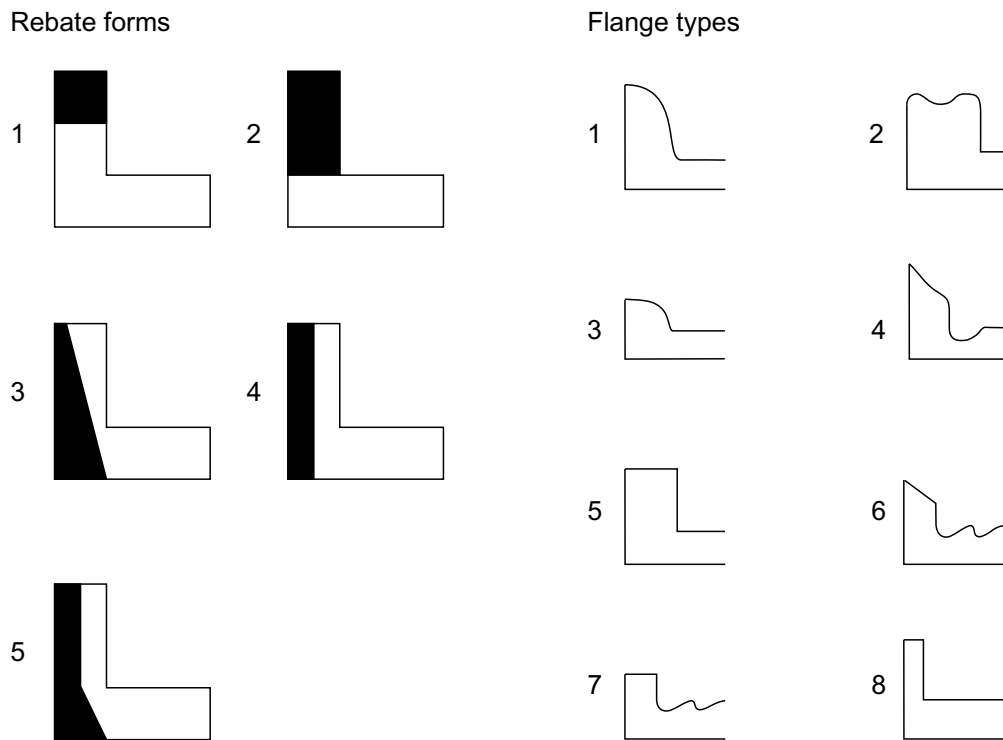


Figure 16: Tile rebate forms and flange types

the majority occurring along the flange tops and upper surfaces, where *imbrices* would have been attached. Six fragments have mortar along their broken edges, indicating either the reuse of broken *tegulae*, or the repair of tiles which had broken *in situ*. Reuse is also attested by one roughly octagonal fragment which appears to have been deliberately shaped (Fig. 15 no. 5).

Imbrices

One hundred and fifty-two fragments were identified, weighing 23kg and constituting 11% of the diagnostic assemblage. The majority were found in deposits in the vicinity of the aisled building L4/12. Two fragments of possible ridge tile were also noted, although their fragmentary nature makes certain identification problematic. Examples in all fabric types were present. As with the *tegulae*, sand-tempered types are prevalent: only three shell-tempered fragments (166g) were recorded. *Imbrices* in all fabrics display a consistency of thickness, ranging from 11–27mm, with an average thickness of 18mm.

Mortar is present on the underside of only two fragments, both over 17mm thick. Five pieces have

a patchy mortar spread on their upper surfaces, while three have mortar smeared along broken edges, indicating repair or reuse.

The occurrence of decorative features or accidental or deliberate markings on *imbrices* is rare. One *imbrex* has a wavy combed signature, and a second is marked with wavy finger impressions. Evidence for the smoothing and trimming of the tile sides is attested by the presence of rolls of clay along the bottom edges of many fragments.

Flue tiles

Flue tiles number 144 fragments, weighing 14.4kg, and constitute 7% of the diagnostic assemblage. The vast majority were found in deposits in the vicinity of the aisled building L4/12. Due to the incomplete nature of the examples, it was not possible to distinguish between box-flue and *voussoir* tile. Fragments are present in all fabric types except grog and sand. Thirty-three fragments have mortared surfaces, and eighteen have sooted interiors, indicating use.

Shelly flue tiles are more finely and carefully made than their sand-tempered counterparts. The former are 12–17mm thick (average 15mm), with

an average depth of 85mm, while the sand-tempered examples are slightly larger: 12–23mm thick (average 18mm) and 100mm deep.

Keying patterns noted on flue tiles were achieved by combing and scoring. No roller-stamped pieces were recorded. Fifty-seven fragments have combed surfaces forming either a wavy line or herringbone pattern; the number of prongs per comb varies from four to eight (average prong width 3mm), giving a combing width ranging from 30–50mm. One fragment, tentatively identified as a half-box tile, is combed and scored (Fig. 15 no. 4).

Brick

A total of 134 brick fragments were identified, weighing 50.8kg and constituting 24% of the diagnostic assemblage. The majority derived from deposits in the vicinity of aisled building L4/12. The dimensions of most examples cannot be determined, making identification problematic. One has a breadth of 275mm and is most likely to have been a general purpose brick; those with smoothed and worn upper surfaces may have functioned as floor tiles. Others may have been *bessales* (used to create *pilae*), although this cannot be conclusively demonstrated.

Brick fragments occur exclusively in sand- or predominantly sand-tempered fabrics. Thickness ranges from 35–60mm (average 43mm). All are moulded, evidenced by greater thicknesses of clay around the edge and ‘oozing’ around the undersides of many fragments. Forty-three fragments have knife-trimmed edges, and two have wiped surfaces.

Signatures occur on only three fragments and comprise finger-impressed semi-circles. No bricks bear any evidence of stamps, tally marks or graffiti. Accidental impressions — the paw prints of a rabbit and a cat — occur on a single fragment. Fifteen fragments (11%) have mortared surfaces and/or edges.

Fragments

A total of 791 undiagnostic fragments, weighing 45.1kg, were recorded. The vast majority were found in deposits in the vicinity of the aisled building L4/12. Although definitely of Romano-British origin, it is unclear whether they represent flue tile without keying patterns, thick *tegulae*, or thin bricks, and for this reason they have been recorded as unidentifiable.

DAUB, SLABS AND FIRED CLAY

Introduction and methodology

Over 500 fragments, weighing 25.4kg, were collected. Five fabric types were identified and are described in Appendix 3. As with the brick and tile, sand-tempered types predominate, constituting over 94% (by weight) of the assemblage, with organic and grog-tempered fabrics totalling 5% and less than 1% respectively.

Approximately 58% of the total assemblage derived from Phase 3 features, particularly the infilling of the post-pits G2.7 of the original aisled building which produced 11.7kg of material, mainly in fabric type A. Thirty percent of the assemblage derived from deposits L8 associated with the disuse of the Phase 4 aisled building. Smaller quantities (7%) were recovered from the fills of the Phase 1 enclosure ditch L1 and the structural features associated with domestic focus L2.

Daub and fired clay

Recognisable daub fragments are exclusively sand-tempered, either reflecting the exploitation of local resources or suggesting the unsuitability of other tempers for structural use. Most of the larger daub fragments retain impressions of circular wattles and/or laths, the former ranging in diameter from 8–27mm. The majority have one finished surface — the oxidised external wall face — with wattle impressions on the reduced sides and reverse. A high proportion have a skim of white-wash / lime coating on their surfaces. Fragment thicknesses mostly range from 10–45mm, with some pieces exceeding 55mm. Over 95% of the daub derived from Phase 3 and 4 deposits associated with the aisled buildings (Table 3).

Fired clay fragments occur mainly in sand-tempered fabrics and are largely amorphous. It is probable that much of the assemblage represents degraded daub — they are of the same fabric type and large quantities were recovered from features containing daub.

Clay Slabs

Fragments from approximately fifteen handmade, fired clay slabs were recovered, weighing 1.4kg. They range in thickness from 25–40mm and have finger-smoothed faces and edges. Twelve fragments occur in organic fabric type B, two are of type C (organic and sand) and one is of type E (grog and sand). Most fragments have clear grain

Phase	L	G	Daub	Fired clay	Slab	Total
6	15.1	22.1	43		98	141
	17	35, 37	271		143	414
5	10.1	21.1	305	110	57	472
	16.1	14.1		2		2
4	8	2.3	2,306	85		2,391
		2.4	93			93
		2.6	5,203	7		5210
3	4	1.2		22	44	66
		1.5		2391		2391
	6	3		15		15
	12	2.7	8,332	3388		11,720
1		33	611			611
	30.1	11.1		48		48
	1	27			56	56
		10.1	21	28	242	291
		27.1			55	55
	1.2	10.2		6	52	58
	2	13		29		29
	2.1	5.1		220	220	440
		6.1		11		11
		13.2	231	66		297
		17.1		103		103
	18.1		10		10	
	20.1			321	321	
			17,416	6,560	1,460	25,436

Table 3: Provenance of the daub and fired clay (by weight)

impressions on their surfaces, perhaps suggesting manufacture in the vicinity of cereal processing. The majority were recovered from Phase 1 features (Table 1). Although relatively common finds from sites of this period, the precise function of such slabs remains unclear. Suggested uses include pre-fabricated components for structures such as hearths, ovens or kilns, and as salt-licks for cattle (Rigby and Foster 1986, 187–8).

NON-CERAMIC ARTEFACTS

Jackie Wells incorporating report by Pete Guest (coins)

INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

The majority of the registered (*i.e.* excavated objects requiring more detailed recording and description in publication than ‘bulk’ finds such as pottery) and non-ceramic assemblage relates to the fabric and fitting of the aisled buildings. Other artefacts, although rather limited in range, indicate domestic/craft activities, including grain processing, food preparation and consumption, textile working, and small scale metalworking. The ubiquitous personal items and coinage represent casual

losses. All iron objects and seven copper alloy artefacts (191 in total) were submitted for x-radiography; the x-ray plates form part of the site archive.

Typologically datable artefacts span the whole Romano-British period, the majority being of 3rd-century or later date, although many long-lived, utilitarian types are not closely datable. Objects are discussed below by functional category and summarised in Table 4. For detailed catalogue entries see Appendix 5. The flint assemblage was entirely residual, and being irrelevant to the Romano-British settlement, is not discussed here.

NON-CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL AND FITTINGS

Stone roof tiles

Fragments of fifteen stone roof tiles, weighing 3.1kg, were recovered. The majority were found in deposits in the vicinity of the aisled buildings. The majority are made from medium-grained sandstone, although single fragments in limestone and Micaceous sandstone occur. These are locally obtainable from the Greensand Ridge and from limestone outcrops to the northwest of Bedford.

Thicknesses range from 10–19mm (average thickness 13mm). No fragments are complete enough for further measurements to be taken. One fragment from feature G127 (Phase 5) retains a partial nail hole perforation (diameter 6mm).

Tufa

Two fragments (953g) of calcareous tufa were collected from robber trench G2.4 (Phase 4) and archaeological trench G22 (Phase 6). One is an irregular block, approximately 170mm long, while the second retains a cut face. Due to its comparative lightness, tufa is known to have been utilised as a vaulting material, often in bath suites (Williams 1994, 241), but it rarely survives. No other recorded examples are known from excavated Romano-British sites in Bedfordshire, although its extensive use as a building stone and as floor make-up material is known from Bancroft, Milton Keynes (Williams and Zeepvat 1994, 241). Possible sources for both sites may include oolitic limestone outcrops to the northwest of Bedford or deposits in the vicinity of Milton Keynes (Williams and Zeepvat 1994, 241).

Painted plaster

Sixty-five pieces (1.1kg) of painted wall plaster were recorded. The vast majority were found in

Phase	L	G	Artefact summary
6	15.1	22.1	Bone handle (32); Fe nail (30, 37–40, 43); vessel glass (41); Cu alloy stud (44); Cu alloy pin (49); quern (114); <i>opus signinum</i> (90g); tufa (275g)
	17	35, 37	Cu alloy brooch (2, 23); Cu alloy coin (11, 15, 16); Cu alloy finger ring (18); Cu alloy ring (19); Fe nail (28, 29, 105–109); vessel glass (3, 7, 12, 31); window glass (137); mortar (159g); <i>opus signinum</i> (24g); <i>tessera</i> (104); wall plaster (45g); stone roof tile (41g)
	18	36	Cu alloy coin (13)
5	9.1	9.1	Fe nail (45); flint core
	10.1	21.1	Fe nail (48, 75, 77); Cu alloy coin (76); window glass (46, 47)
	16.1	12.1	Window glass (113, 124); vessel glass (122, 123); Fe nail (125)
	22.1	122.1	Wall plaster (20g)
		127	Mortar (34g)
	22.2	122.2	Wall plaster (161g)
		127.2	Fe handle (R7); mortar (355g); stone roof tile (620g)
22.3	127.3	Cu alloy coin (R3); Cu alloy bracelet (R4); Fe rod (R5); mortar (20g); vessel glass (R8); window glass (R9); Fe nail x3 (R6)	
4	8	2.1	Mortar (3,798g)
		2.2	Mortar (606g)
		2.3	Vessel glass (59, 97), Fe nail (57, 81–83, 85, 86, 96); Cu alloy tack (80); <i>tessera</i> (138); mortar (515g); <i>opus signinum</i> (140g); stone roof tile (276g); burnt stone (172g)
		2.4	Window glass (117); <i>tessera</i> (140); mortar (4,719g); <i>opus signinum</i> (650g); tufa (579g); wall plaster (7g); stone roof tile (46g)
		2.5	Mortar (26g)
		2.6	Mortar (183g); wall plaster (48g)
		3.1	Fe nail (71–73); Fe object (74); wall plaster (5g); stone roof tile (205g)
	25.3	114.3	Fe chisel (S3); Fe nail x5
	30.3	11.2	Fe nail (51, 52, 55)
		101.3	<i>Tessera</i> (S4); Cu alloy hair pin (S48); Fe nail x35
	3	4	1.1
4		1.2	Fe nail (67, 79, 87, 89–92)
4		1.5	Mortar (202g), <i>opus signinum</i> (37g); Wall plaster (353g)
6		3	Quern (1); Fe nail (95, 99, 100)
		3.2	Mortar (93g)
12		1.4	Fe nail (33, 102); ceramic unid (34); Fe nail (35); Pb spindlewhorl (36); <i>tessera</i> (139); mortar (809g); <i>opus signinum</i> (402g); wall plaster (37g)
		1.8	Fe nail (68, 69, 134); mortar (280g)
		2.7	Vessel glass (61, 119, 120); Fe nail (62–66, 94, 121, 131–133); mortar (226g); <i>opus signinum</i> (19g); wall plaster (401g); stone roof tile (427g)
		33	Fe nail (115); <i>opus signinum</i> (246g)
21.1		107.1	Fe nail x2 (S1)
23.1		111.1	Glass bead (R2)
25.1		114.1	Fe nail x1
28.1		119.1	Cu alloy toilet spoon fragment (R1)
30.1		101.1	Fe brooch pin (S49); Fe nail x28; mortar (4g)
30.2	101.2	Fe T-clamp (S5); Fe sheet fragment (S39); Fe nail x24; mortar (21g); wall plaster (13g); window glass (6g); stone roof tile (866g)	
1	1	27	Flint flake
		100.1	Fe nail x7; wall plaster (9g)
	1.1	10.1	Burnt stone (86g)
		27.1	Flint flake
	1.2	10.2	Fe nail (53, 54, 126, 127)
		100.2	Cu alloy coin (R10–13); Fe nail x5; mortar (22g); stone roof tile (112g)
	2	5	<i>Tessera</i> (R14)
	2.1	5.1	Fe nail (128); mortar (1g); slag (13g)
		6.1	Cu alloy sheet fragment (129); burnt flint (3g)
		13.2	Fe nail (93); mortar (111g); wall plaster (19g); stone roof tile (453g)
	17.1	Fe nail (112); mortar (1g); slag (20g)	
	20.1	Fe nail (130)	

Cu = copper, Fe = iron, Pb = lead. Bold figures denote registered artefact number.

Table 4: Summary of the registered and non-ceramic artefacts

deposits at the southern end of the aisled building; not all are necessarily contemporary. No fragments remained *in situ*, and all are fragmentary and abraded, although surviving in a stable condition. Three fabrics were identified, with type 1 being the most common (Appendix 4).

Fragments in all fabric types have a *c.* 1.0mm thick skim of whitewash underlying a white background, although in several cases this surface is faint and fragmentary. Most pieces are either plain white, buff, maroon, red or blue-grey in colour. A number of type 1 fragments from post-pads G2.7 have linear bands of red bordering white and/or blue-grey, although the small size of the fragments does not allow the width of border(s) to be estimated. This is suggestive of a plain linear pattern or a panel scheme. The surfaces of several of these fragments have been 'furrowed' by the painter's brushstrokes, indicating the application of pigments to damp plaster in the fresco technique (Ling 1985, 53).

One type 2 fragment from levelling deposit G1.5 bears a 16mm wide maroon stripe on a white background, and one from enclosure ditch G101.2 has a thin yellow stripe (4mm) on a red background, again indicating a linear or striped panel scheme. This decoration type represents the simplest kind of panel adornment, known to have been used in subsidiary rooms or generally where a client wished to spend less money (Ling 1985, 26).

A single type 1 piece from topsoil remnants G35 shows red underlying buff-white and maroon free-hand shapes, although it is impossible to determine what they represent. Wattle impressions on the underside of a type 1 fragment indicate the plastering and decoration of daub or cob walls.

Opus signinum

Forty-three fragments of *opus signinum*, weighing 1.6kg, were identified. All derived from features associated with the aisled buildings, with the majority from the southern end. They comprise a buff-pink matrix and coarse aggregate of crushed brick/tile, chalk, flint and quartz. Ten fragments retain surfaces, one of which has a skim of whitewash. Thicknesses range from 18–45mm.

Opus signinum was often used as floor material, *e.g.* in the temple-mausoleum at Bancroft (Williams and Zeepvat 1994, 94), but also in cold plunge baths such as Building 7 at Bancroft (Williams and Zeepvat 1994, 139). With its added crushed tile, it would have hardened faster and better than a lime mortar, and would have offered

some resistance to the penetration of moisture (Williams 1994, 252).

Mortar

Approximately 284 fragments (13.4kg) of lime mortar were collected, the vast majority in the vicinity of the aisled buildings. Again, not all of it is necessarily contemporary. The majority (10.4kg) derived from Phase 4 features, in particular robber trench G2.4 and building debris G2.1, which yielded 5.2kg and 3.8kg respectively. In addition, fragments were found in enclosure ditch G101 adjacent to building L21. Variations in aggregate size occur, with both fine and coarse aggregates present, the former being prevalent. A small quantity of mortar with a buff-pink matrix was also present, along with a coarse aggregate of red quartz, giving the appearance of *opus signinum*.

Tesserae

The six loose *tesserae* collected (RA 104, 138–140, R14 and S4) suggest the presence of a tessellated floor/pavement in a minimum of three colours: grey-white (limestone and clunch), red (ceramic tile) and brown (sandstone). The limestone and clunch *tesserae* are generally larger (*c.* 35 x 30mm) than the tile (22 x 17mm) and sandstone (19 x 18mm) examples, possibly suggesting a floor executed in grey-white, with a pattern defined in red and/or brown, although this is purely speculative. Four are associated with the aisled buildings, while single examples derived from the tertiary fill of enclosure ditch G101 (adjacent to building L21) and ovens G5 (Phase 1), although the latter is presumed to be intrusive.

Iron Nails

A total of 174 iron timber nails and nail fragments were recovered. The vast majority were found in deposits in the vicinity of the aisled buildings, in particular those associated with the enclosure ditch L30 and the second aisled building L12. In addition, a small number were found in enclosure ditch G101 adjacent to building L21.

Although only eight examples are complete, it was possible to classify thirty examples according to head form (after Manning 1985, 134–7). The remainder are too fragmentary, corroded or distorted through use to be positively identified. All but one are Type 1B examples, 58–75mm in length (average 68mm). This is consistent with the incidence of nail types on other Romano-British sites, where this form is most prevalent, reflecting its

general usefulness. Heads are flat and either circular, square or rectangular (eleven, twenty-two and fifty-three examples respectively). A single example was recovered of a Manning Type 2 nail with a triangular head and shoulders the same thickness as the shank. If the head is aligned with the grain of the wood, Type 2 nails can be completely driven in, making them invisible from a distance. All nails have square- or rectangular-sectioned shanks, tapering to a rounded tip. Nine are clenched, indicating use, and five retain traces of mineral-preserved and/or carbonised wood. Many are heavily encased in corrosion products.

T-clamp

A small, damaged, iron T-clamp, originally with an anchor-shaped head (RA S5), derived from enclosure ditch G101 (Phase 3). T-clamps are commonly recovered pieces of structural ironwork and are known to have fulfilled a variety of functions. Those with anchor-shaped heads are thought to have been most suitable for holding curved wood in place (Manning 1985, 132).

Window glass

Eight fragments of window glass were identified. The majority derived from deposits at the south end of the aisled buildings, in particular pit G21 (Phase 5). Single fragments were also recovered from enclosure ditch G101 (Phase 3), robber trench G2.4 (Phase 4) and topsoil remnants G35 (Phase 6). Seven are of 'matt-glossy' appearance, and are cast — a manufacturing technique known to have been in use until *c.* AD 300 (Allen 1994, 360). Colours are blue-green (six fragments) and pale green (one fragment); a colourless piece of 4th-century cylinder-blown glass (RA R9) derived from the tertiary fill of feature G127 (Phase 5). The fragment is thinner (1.3mm) than those made by casting (2.2–3.9mm).

HOUSEHOLD ITEMS

Quernstones

Fragments of two querns (RA 1 and RA 114) were recovered respectively from cobbled surface G3 (Phase 3) and possible archaeological trenches G22 (Phase 6). The former is an incomplete, flat rotary quern upper stone made from quartz conglomerate, likely to derive from the Forest of Dean. The latter is an abraded, undiagnostic fragment manufactured from imported lava

originating from either the Mayen quarries of Germany or from French lava outcrops found near Volvic (King 1986, 94).

Vessel glass

Of the thirteen vessel glass fragments, four are blue-green and eight colourless, suggesting a 1st- to 3rd-century date for most of the assemblage. Blue-green glass was the most common colour used to produce containers and tableware during this period, while colourless glass began production in the late 1st century, and was used almost exclusively for tablewares during the 2nd and 3rd centuries (Price and Cottam 1998, 15–6). One thin-walled colourless fragment (RA R8) with bubbles in the glass and shallow, horizontal linear decoration is likely to date to the 4th century (Fig. 17). Most of the forms cannot be identified due to fragmentary survival, but may include base (RA 97) and body (RA 12) fragments from two bottles and the shoulder of a possible cylindrical cup (RA 31). Vessel glass was present in Phases 3–6; two fragments (RA 122 and RA 123) from pit G12 (Phase 5) derive from the same vessel.

Handles

RA 32 (Fig. 17) is an incomplete one-piece bone implement handle, fashioned from a long bone shaft. The object is sawn and polished at one end, which has the remains of a transverse groove representing either decoration or a cut-mark. The object has been hollowed along its entire length, which, if for a tool or knife, would allow the tang to be clenched over. Similar examples have been recovered from the Romano-British settlement at Gorhambury, Herts. (Neal *et al.* 1990, fig. 141/975) and Colchester (Crummy 1983, fig. 110/2915), in features datable to the 2nd century. Although the object was recovered from the fill of a possible archaeological trench G22 (Phase 6), its association with securely dated Romano-British material suggests it may be of a similar date.

RA R7 (Fig. 17) is a damaged iron rod encased in a copper alloy sheet; it appears to be a bucket handle (*cf.* Neal *et al.* 1990, fig. 128/258). This utilitarian object is not closely datable, although parallels of 3rd-century date are known. The object was recovered from feature G127 (Phase 5).

Stud

A circular copper alloy stud head (RA 44) was recovered from possible archaeological trench G22 (Phase 6). The object is likely to have functioned

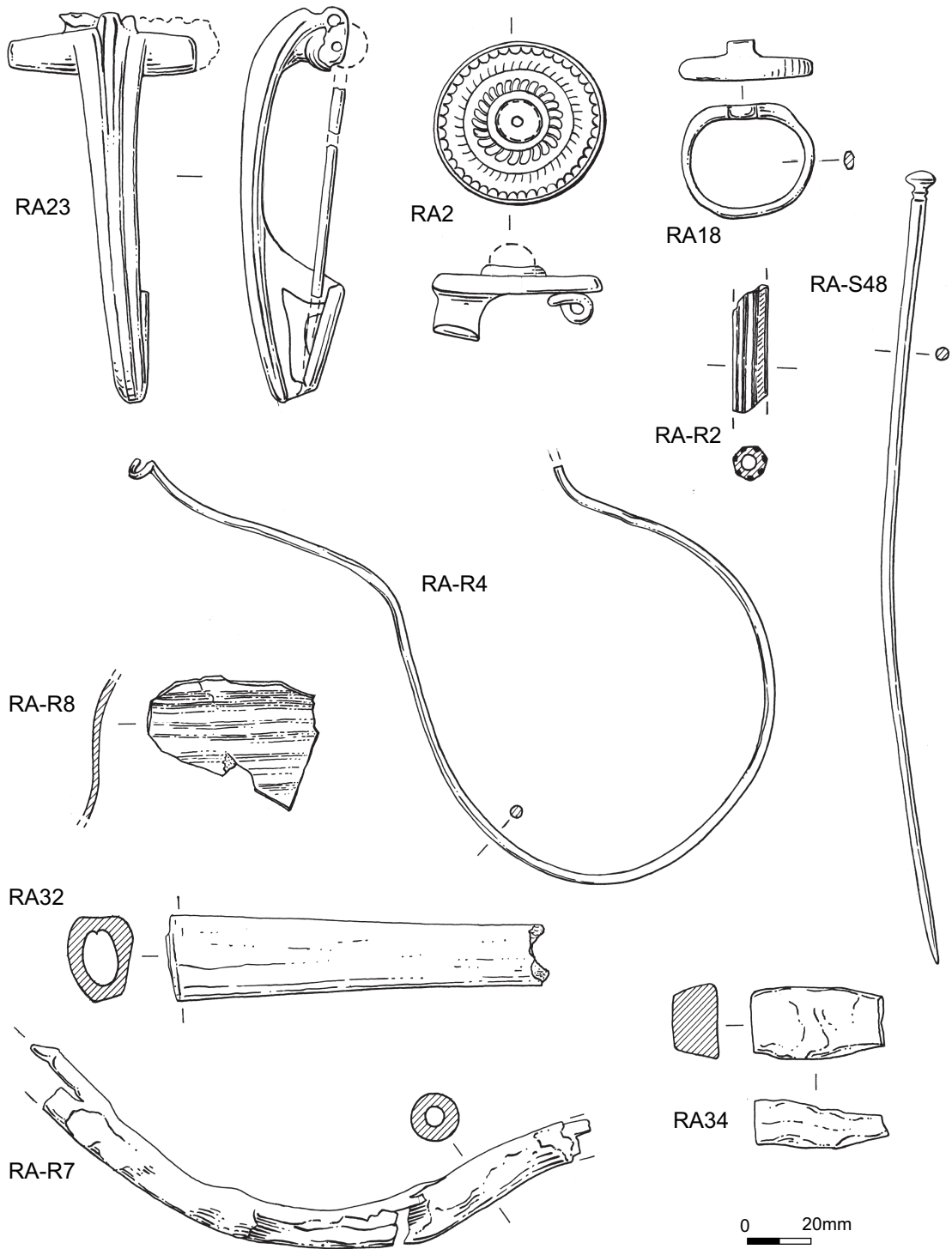


Figure 17: Selected non-ceramic artefacts

as an upholstery stud: its down-turned rim and perforated concave centre, in addition to being decorative, would have provided extra grip on the surface, presumably leather, into which it was set. Comparable examples are known from Gorhambury (Neal *et al.* 1990, fig. 129/286) and Colchester (Crummy 1983, fig. 120/3101).

CRAFT ITEMS

Spindlewhorl

An incomplete lead spindlewhorl (RA 36) derived from the internal walls G1.4 associated with aisled building L12 (Phase 3). The object is lathe-turned, with an estimated diameter of 40mm, but is highly degraded and survives in poor condition.

Mortise chisel

The mortise chisel is the most common form of Romano-British chisel, primarily intended for chopping mortises and for similar heavy work. RA S3 was recovered from quarry pits G114 (Phase 4).

Metalworking residues

A small quantity (39g) of redeposited ferrous slag was recovered, the majority deriving from ditch G17 and ovens G5 (Phase 1). The material is not indicative of a particular type of ironworking, but is more likely to be associated with small-scale smithing.

PERSONAL ITEMS

Brooches

Two incomplete copper alloy brooches (RA 2 and RA 23) were recovered from topsoil remnants G35 (Phase 6). RA 2 (Fig. 17) is a 2nd-century disc brooch with a central blue glass stud and punched decoration. The brooch has a sprung pin as opposed to a hinged pin, suggesting native British manufacture (Hattatt 1987, 187). RA 23 is an undecorated Colchester two-piece bow brooch datable to the late 1st century (Fig. 17). This is one of the most common types recovered from Romano-British sites, while the disc brooch, although less prolific, is also a well represented type. An incomplete iron hinged brooch pin (RA S49) derived from re-cut boundary ditch G101 (Phase 3).

Bracelet

An incomplete, single-strand copper alloy wire bracelet with notched decoration (RA R4) was

recovered from G127 (Fig. 17). The object is typical of the 4th century, and is similar to a find from Verulamium (Frere 1972, fig. 32 no. 35).

Bead

Trackway ditch G111 (Phase 3) contained an incomplete, cylindrical, opaque red glass/vitreous paste bead (RA R2, Fig. 17). The object is of unusual colour and manufacture. Opaque rust-red or terracotta cylinder beads are known from the late 3rd and 4th centuries (Guido 1978, 92), although cylindrical beads of this period are normally of green glass.

Hair pin

A complete copper alloy decorative hair pin (RA S48, Fig. 17) derived from the re-cut boundary ditch G101 (Phase 4). Dated to the 2nd century, this type is reminiscent of Type 2 bone pins which were also in production at that time (Crummy 1983, 30). Comparable examples are known from Colchester (Crummy 1983, fig. 30), Gorhambury (Neal *et al.* 1990, fig. 123/92) and Verulamium (Waugh and Goodburn 1972, fig. 34/60).

Finger Ring

Topsoil remnants G35 (Phase 6) yielded a cast copper alloy finger ring (RA 18, Fig. 17). The object is square-sectioned, and thickened on one side with a rectangular setting for a stone. Comparable examples are known from Gadebridge Park, Hemel Hempstead (Neal and Butcher 1974, fig. 60/117) and from a feature of 2nd-century date at Gorhambury (Neal *et al.* 1990, fig. 122/67).

Coins

Ten copper alloy coins of late Romano-British date were identified (Table 5). The small assemblage shows a 'normal' Romano-British concentration of coins from the late 3rd and 4th centuries. Four were recovered from topsoil remnants G35 and G36, with single coins from pits G21 and feature G127 (Phase 5). Four derived from enclosure ditch G100 (Phase 1) but are clearly intrusive.

MISCELLANEOUS OBJECTS

Ring

Topsoil remnants G35 (Phase 6) yielded a cast copper alloy annular ring (RA 19). The object is of sub-rounded section (37mm in diameter) and may

Phase	L	G	RA	Denom.	Date range	Comments
6	17	35	11	Radiate	268–274	Victorinus / Tetricus
	17	35	15	AE3	4th century	Illeg.
	17	35	16	AE3	4th century	Illeg.
	18	36	13	Radiate	260–268	Postumus
5	10.1	21.1	76	AE3	364–378	Valens
	22.3	127.3	R3	AE3	367–383	Gratian. Rev. GLORIA NOVI SAECVLI
1	1.1	100.2	R10	AE3 copy	353–364	as Hse of Constantine. Rev. FEL TEMP REPARATIO
	1.1	100.2	R11	AE3	347–348	Hse of Constantine. Rev. VICTORIAE DDNN AVGG QNN
	1.1	100.2	R12	Barb. radiate	270–290	as Victorinus
	1.1	100.2	R13	Barb. radiate	270–290	Uncertain emperor

Table 5: Provenance of the Roman coins

have functioned as a harness or cart ring, or a ring handle on furnishings. The object is typologically undatable and it is possible that it may be of post-Romano-British date.

Dress pin or sewing needle

A distorted section of a copper alloy tapering shank (RA 49) was recovered from possible archaeological trench G22 (Phase 6). As the object lacks both a head and tip, its precise function can only be suggested. It is likely to have been part of a dress pin or sewing needle, the shanks of which are of similar dimensions.

Toilet implement

Ditch G119 (Phase 3) contained a strip of folded sheet copper alloy (RA R1), possibly representing the shaft of a toilet spoon. RA R1 is similar to an example recovered from Colchester (Crummy 1983, fig. 64, 1898), although is too fragmentary to be fully identified.

Tack or nail

The lower portion of a square-sectioned, tapering copper alloy shank (RA 80) was recovered from building debris G2.3 (Phase 4). Recorded dimensions are comparable with those of small nails or tacks recovered from Colchester (Crummy 1983, figs 118 and 119), and it is possible RA 80 is an incomplete example.

UNIDENTIFIED OBJECTS

Iron

Phase 4 layer G3.1 yielded an incomplete artefact (RA 74) which may be part of a drill-bit. The object comprises a small portion of a square-sectioned, tapering iron stem, expanding into a lozenge-shaped terminal.

Ceramic

RA 34 (Fig. 17) was recovered from internal walls G1.4 (Phase 3) in association with a quantity of building material (mortar, *opus signinum*, wall plaster and a *tessera*). It is a small, wedge-shaped piece of fired clay, which has one smoothed face with a possible whitewash skim, and retains traces of mortar on all other faces. A suggested function may be as a spacer or wedge in a tessellated pavement, or even as a small *tessera* (dimensions 10 x 10mm).

ANIMAL BONE

Mark Maltby

INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

All the animal bones recovered from both hand-collected and sieved samples were examined as part of the post-fieldwork assessment. The small size of the assemblage from each phase restricted the analysis to a consideration of species representation in the different periods and comments upon other interesting aspects of the assemblage. The bone from all phased contexts was recorded on to a database, which is retained with the assessment and final report in the project archive.

QUANTIFICATION AND PRESERVATION

A total of 1,556 fragments were recovered (including 276 from sieved ecofactual samples), of which 738 (48%) could be identified to species. The identified specimens include 235 from associated bone groups representing six partially preserved skeletons or other discrete depositions.

Most of the assemblages survive in a moderate state of preservation, although it does vary slightly

across the different projects. Over 14% of the ASH773 assemblage shows evidence of surface erosion and nearly 4% can be described as weathered. The assemblages from the other projects are slightly better, particularly from SLS893. The highest incidence of erosion and weathering was found on the Phase 1 assemblage, reflecting greater surface damage.

Gnawing damage was recorded on 10% of the identified specimens. This is in fact a relatively low incidence of damage compared with many sites. The discovery of a number of partial skeletons undamaged by gnawing indicates that these belonged to animals probably buried shortly after death.

Burnt fragments form almost 9% of the ASH773 assemblage. Higher percentages of burnt fragments from Phases 1 and 3 largely reflect the greater incidence of calcined and charred bones amongst the sieved samples. Unsurprisingly, the highest concentrations of burnt bones were found in contexts associated with the fills of the Phase 1 ovens G5.

SPECIES PRESENT

Species present in the main assemblage include cattle, sheep/goat, horse, pig, dog, red deer, roe deer, hare, and bird, including domestic fowl (Table 6). Among the fragments identified to

species, cattle remains are the most abundant (52%), followed by sheep/goat (25%), horse (9%), pig (8%), then dog (3%). The majority of the bird assemblage is represented by domestic fowl, and, together with other species such as small mammals, deer, hare and frog/toad, represents 3% of the identified species.

PROVENANCE

The bone assemblage comprises material from contexts within all the identified phases (Table 6). The bulk of the material is of Romano-British date with the majority (291 fragments) coming from Phase 3 deposits (mid-2nd to 3rd century) associated with the aisled building. The later Romano-British period (Phases 4 and 5) produced a total of 259 identified fragments with the smallest sample (186 fragments) from Phase 1 (late Iron Age/early Romano-British).

There is an increase in the presence of cattle in Phase 3 compared to Phase 1 along with a slight increase in the relative abundance of sheep/goat. Horse was found in Phases 1, 3, 4 and 5 and its representation is fairly typical of rural Romano-British assemblages (Maltby 1994). There was a decrease in the presence of pig after Phase 1, although the samples are too small to confidently suggest a genuine decline in importance over time. This pattern of species representation is fairly

	Phase					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Cattle	74	1	107	102	28	312
Sheep/Goat	39	-	35	32	10	116
Pig	17	1	13	2	5	38
Horse	5	-	20	12	6	43
Dog	45	-	99	24	9	177
Red Deer	2	-	1	-	1	4
Roe Deer	-	-	-	2	1	3
Hare	-	-	-	3	1	4
House Mouse	-	-	1	-	-	1
Shrew	-	-	-	-	1	1
Small Mammal	-	-	3	1	9	13
Frog/Toad	1	-	3	-	1	5
Dom. Fowl	1	-	7	3	4	15
Duck	-	-	1	-	1	2
Goose	1	-	-	-	-	1
Wader	-	-	1	-	-	1
Corvid	1	-	1	-	2	4
Unid. Mammal	188	1	341	190	93	813
Unid. Bird	-	-	1	2	2	5
Total	374	3	597	90	174	1,556

Table 6: Animal species by Phase (fragment count)

typical of Romano-British rural settlements, which are usually dominated by sheep/goat and cattle with a low incidence of pigs (King 1999) and tend to have horse occurring more commonly than on urban settlements (Maltby 1994). The relative species abundance in the Romano-British phases is similar to other assemblages of this date from the region, *e.g.* Milton Keynes (Mynard 1987, 180–91), Luton Road, Wilstead (Luke and Preece, this volume) and, in particular, Marsh Leys Farm, Bedfordshire (Albion Archaeology 2002).

Cattle

Cattle bones are the most commonly identified species in Romano-British assemblages, and provide over half of the identified fragments in each phase. This evidence could suggest that beef was the most important component of the meat diet.

Five cattle vertebrae and a rib from the same animal were found in the Phase 3 enclosure ditch G11 (L30). The final infilling of one of the quarry pits G114 (L25, Phase 4) contained sixty-seven cattle bones, many of which appear to belong to the remains of one adult animal. No evidence of butchery was identified on these assemblages and although it is possible that the cattle remains from the enclosure ditch may be butchery waste, the bones from the quarry pit appear to be from a single carcass that was originally buried elsewhere.

Out of the seventeen cattle mandibles and maxillae that provided tooth eruption evidence, six (five from Phase 1 and one from Phase 3), were killed prior to the full eruption of the second molar and belonged to cattle under eighteen months of age. Another Phase 1 specimen belonged to a slightly older animal with early wear on the second molar. A Phase 3 mandible also has only the first two molars in wear and another from the same phase has only early wear on the third molar. Eight (three from Phase 1, three from Phase 3 and two from Phase 4) have fully erupted tooth rows and belonged to adult cattle. This is an unusually high incidence of immature cattle for a Romano-British settlement; however, this is based on a small sample. The epiphysal fusion data confirm that both immature and mature cattle were present.

Metrical data include a fairly complete cattle humerus (G13, Phase 1), which provides a withers height estimate of 113cm (von den Driesch and Boessneck 1974). This falls within the range of measurements obtained from contemporary sites in the region. A metacarpal from the Phase 1 enclosure ditch G100 was of a similar size (114cm)

while a radius from Phase 3 ditch G119 belonged to a substantially larger animal with an estimated withers height of 138cm.

Sheep/Goat

Sixteen of the 116 sheep/goat bones and teeth were positively identified as sheep, whereas only four bones were tentatively identified as goat. Therefore, most of the sheep/goat assemblage can be assumed to have belonged to sheep. Five of the seven mandibles with toothwear evidence belonged to relatively old animals, all having heavy wear on their first molars. One mandible still possesses its deciduous premolars and belonged to a sheep under eighteen months old. A lamb of about 3–4 months old is also represented.

Butchery marks were recorded on four sheep/goat bones. Two humeri (one each from Phases 3 and 5) bear knife cuts on their shafts. Another humerus (from Phase 5) was chopped through the distal end in a similar way to a radius from Phase 4. Only six sheep bones provided measurements, all of which fall within the range of measurements from contemporary sites. Two sheep horn cores were recovered. There is no evidence for the presence of hornless sheep.

Horse

Horse was found in Phases 1, 3, 4 and 5. The proportion of horse to cattle (15% excluding associated bone groups) is relatively high and is fairly typical of rural Romano-British assemblages (Maltby 1994). No butchery marks were observed on any of the horse bones. Estimated withers heights of 152cm and 144cm were derived from lateral length measurements (245mm and 230mm) of metacarpals (Phase 3 and 4 respectively). A Phase 3 radius and tibia with greatest lengths of 333mm and 342mm respectively also belonged to quite large individuals of about thirteen hands. A mandible from Phase 3 belonged to an adult animal. A second mandible from Phase 4 still possesses some of its deciduous teeth and belonged to a male animal that died around 3–4 years of age. The limited fusion data indicate that nine of the bones came from adult animals whereas two belonged to immature beasts under four years of age.

Pig

Although pig was represented in all phases, their relatively low percentage is typical of most Iron Age and Romano-British samples from

Bedfordshire. They are better represented (13%) in Phase 1 deposits but this and later samples are too small to be confident that they declined in importance in the subsequent phases. Only four mandibles (three from Phase 1 and one from Phase 3) provide tooth ageing data; they all belonged to immature animals probably culled in their second year. Knife cuts were observed on the distal end of a humerus and a proximal end of a radius (both Phase 1), made during disjuncting.

Dog

Apart from the partial skeletons described below, dogs are represented by only fifteen bones. A left femur, tibia and fused fibula of a fairly small, stocky specimen were found in Phase 5 enclosure ditch G106. No butchery marks were noted on any of the dog bones.

A partial dog skeleton, of which forty-three bones were recovered, was found in the Phase 1 enclosure ditch G100. However, most of the small bones and the head are missing. Epiphysial fusion data indicate that the skeleton belonged to an immature animal that died in its second year. Ninety-two bones of a dog skeleton were recovered from a Phase 3 quarry pit G115. The skeleton survived largely articulated, although the head and upper part of the neck were absent. A further twenty-two bones from the skeleton of an adult dog were found in the Phase 4 robber trench G2.4 and five bones from the jaws and skull of another dog were found in a Phase 5 pit G12.

The presence of these dog skeletons indicates that this species was not exploited for food as their carcasses were buried shortly after death, nor do any of the dog bones exhibit evidence for butchery or gnawing. However, as only two of the dogs were found to have the head associated with the body there is a possibility that the others may have been decapitated. This could just be a coincidence, but the idea that these dogs were associated with ritual deposition cannot be ruled out.

Domestic fowl

Fifteen of the twenty-two bird bones recovered were identified as domestic fowl. Although represented by only a few bones, the percentage of domestic fowl in this sample is high compared with many rural Romano-British assemblages. The sample includes three bones of immature fowl, implying they were being kept at the settlement. Five bones provided measurements, all of which confirm that the fowl were quite small, typical of the period.

Wild species

Bones of at least five other avian species were recorded. A corvid femur, probably from a crow, was found in the Phase 1 enclosure ditch G10, while a scapula and coracoid of a smaller corvid (*cf.* jackdaw) were recovered from Phase 5 enclosure ditch G106. A tibiotarsus of a duck was found in one of the post-pits G2.7 of the Phase 3 aisled building. The bone is incomplete, so it was not possible to identify it to species, although its size suggests it is either from a small mallard or a slightly smaller species such as widgeon. A duck tarsometatarsus was found in Phase 5 pit G122; its length (47.3mm) indicates it probably belonged to a mallard or domestic duck. A tarsometatarsus of a grey lag or domestic goose was recovered from Phase 1 ditch G102. A segment of a tibiotarsus of a wader was found in a post-pit G1.2 of the Phase 3 aisled building; again, it was not possible to identify this to species. No evidence of butchery was noted on any of these bird bones.

Four bones of red deer were identified, one of which comprises the distal end of a metacarpal from the Phase 1 enclosure ditch G11. The bone has been sawn transversely through the shaft and the marks suggest that it is an offcut from bone-working. Other specimens identified as red deer consist of a first and second phalanx and a metatarsal shaft. Three bones were identified as roe deer and two small fragments of roe deer metatarsals were recorded from Phase 4 and 5 deposits. A sieved sample from Phase 4 quarry pit G114 produced a fragment of roe deer antler, along with two lumbar vertebrae of a hare.

The mandible of a house mouse was recovered from one of the post-pits G2.7 of the Phase 3 aisled building. A mandible of a shrew was recovered from Phase 5 pit G122 and five frog/toad bones were recovered, including four from sieved samples. Frog was positively identified in a Phase 5 sample.

HUMAN BONE

Mark Maltby

Two fragments from a human femur and a tibia were recovered from the Phase 4 robber trench G2.4 associated with the aisled building. Both are unfused and very porous and almost certainly belonged to the same individual. The femur has a diaphysial length of 78.6mm and a distal diaphysial breadth of 21.2mm. The length provides

an age estimate of 39.5 +/- 2.08 weeks. The diaphysial length of the tibia is 69.1mm, providing an age estimate of 40.5 +/- 2.12 weeks (Scheuer & Black 2000). In addition, comparison with published length measurements suggests that these bones are the size of, or slightly larger than, those in a ten-month foetus (Fazekas & Kosa 1978). Therefore, these remains appear to belong to a perinatal mortality.

CHARRED PLANT REMAINS

Jenny Robinson

INTRODUCTION

A total of twenty-nine ecofactual samples were taken for charred plant remains. Although control samples were taken, the low number reflects the small number of deposits that visibly contained charred remains. Following assessment, fifteen samples were subject to further analysis and are reported on below.

METHODOLOGY

Samples were processed by bulk flotation on to a 0.25mm mesh, dried and then scanned under a binocular microscope. Macroscopic plant remains other than charcoal were identified at up to x50 magnifications. The results are presented in Tables 7 and 8, nomenclature following Clapham *et al.* (1987). Charcoal from these samples was broken transversely and examined at up to x50 magnifications. If necessary, it was also sectioned radially and tangentially and examined at up to x40 magnifications using a petrological microscope.

DISCUSSION

Phase 1: Late Iron Age/early Romano-British

The majority of the late Iron Age/early Romano-British samples examined were associated with ovens G5 and associated pits G13. Ecofactual samples 8/9 and 10/11 from one of the ovens contained glumes of *Triticum spelta* (spelt wheat), which may have been waste from the de-husking process. A single grain of *Hordeum* sp. (hulled barley) was also present. The oven also contained seventeen stones of *Crataegus* cf. *monogyna* (hawthorn). It is possible that their occurrence was the result of

hawthorn branches with berries on them being used as fuel rather than representing food being processed. Only a small quantity of charcoal was recovered.

Ecofactual sample 4 from two of the pits G13 contained cereal grain including *T. spelta* (spelt wheat). A few weed seeds commonly associated with cereal cultivation and a nut shell fragment of *Corylus avellana* (hazel) were also present, along with a high quantity of charcoal of Pomoideae (hawthorn, apple *etc.*). Ecofactual sample 15, taken from enclosure ditch G10, contained cereal grain including *Hordeum* sp. (hulled barley) and a single *Triticum* sp. (wheat). Charcoal of *Fraxinus excelsior* (ash) was found in one of the G6 pits (ecofactual sample 18).

Phases 3 and 4: Romano-British

Ecofactual samples 1, 2, 5, 6, 22 and 24 (not all analysed) were taken from the post-pits/pads G1.2 and G1.8 and their subsequent infilling G2.7 and G2.6, respectively, of the first and second aisled buildings. All contained large quantities of *Quercus* sp. (oak) charcoal, but no other species were present. This suggests that the wood used for the aisle posts was oak and that some had been burnt *in situ*. Only sample 24 contained cereal grain, including *T. spelta* (spelt wheat).

Phase 5: Late Romano-British

Only ecofactual sample 13 from pit G12 was analysed. It contained a large quantity of *Corylus avellana* (hazel) charcoal and some of Pomoideae (hawthorn, apple *etc.*).

MOLLUSCS

Jenny Robinson

Marine mollusc shells of *Ostrea edulis* (oyster) and *Mytilus edulis* (common mussel) were recovered by both hand excavation and from ecofactual samples. They were mainly identified in Romano-British deposits (Phases 3 and 4), a period when there was a large-scale trade in oysters from the coast. However, both oyster and common mussel shells were also found in late Iron Age/early Romano-British deposits (Phase 1). Their presence in this phase would support the view that the Phase 1 settlement continued in use after the Roman conquest.

			Phase 1		Phase 3	
	Sample	4	8/9	10/11	15	24
	Land-use area	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.2	4
	Group	13.2	5.1	5.1	10.2	1.2
	Volume (litres)	20	23	45	30	10
CEREAL GRAIN						
	<i>Triticum spelta</i> L.	spelt wheat	8	–	–	1
	<i>T. dicoccum</i> Schübl. or <i>spelta</i> L.	emmer or spelt wheat	35	–	3	4
	<i>Triticum</i> sp.	wheat	7	–	1	–
	<i>Hordeum</i> sp. — hulled	hulled barley	–	1	–	7
	<i>Hordeum</i> sp.	barley	–	–	2	–
	Cereal indet.		59	4	1	11 7
CEREAL CHAFF						
	<i>Triticum spelta</i> L. — glume	spelt wheat	–	31	–	–
	<i>T. dicoccum</i> Schübl. or <i>spelta</i> L.— glume	emmer or spelt wheat	–	38	–	–
OTHER SEEDS						
	<i>Vicia</i> or <i>Lathyrus</i> sp.	vetch or tare	3	–	–	–
	<i>Crataegus</i> cf. <i>monogyna</i> Jaq.	hawthorn	–	–	17	–
	<i>Corylus avellana</i> L.	hazel	1	–	–	–
	<i>Galium aparine</i> L.	goosegrass	1	–	–	–
	<i>Bromus</i> cf. <i>secalinus</i> L.	brome grass	–	1	–	–
	weed indet.		3	–	–	1
Total			117	75	21	21
					21	13

Table 7: Charred Plant Remains (excluding charcoal) from analysed samples

		Phase 1		Phase 3			Phase 4		Phase 5
	Sample	18	4	5	1	2	6	22	13
	Land-use area	2.1	2.1	12	12	12	8	8	16.1
	Group	6.1	13.2	1.8	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.6	12.1
	Volume (litres)	15	20	8	25	20	8	10	40
Pomoideae indet.	apple, hawthorn, etc.	–	+++	–	–	–	–	–	++
<i>Corylus avellana</i> L.	hazel	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	++++
<i>Quercus</i> sp.	oak	–	+	+++	+++	+++	+++	+++	–
<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> L.	ash	+++	–	–	–	–	–	–	–

+ present, ++ some, +++ much, ++++ very much

Table 8: Charcoal from analysed samples

DISCUSSION OF THE ROMANO-BRITISH SETTLEMENT

Mike Luke and Tracy Preece

INTRODUCTION

The majority of the recently uncovered archaeological remains reported on in this article are associated with a late Iron Age/Romano-British settlement (Phases 1–5). They correspond with discoveries made in this part of Shefford in the 19th and 20th centuries — unfortunately not all published in detail. The most significant of these was

made by Thomas Inskip in the first half of the 19th century, when he identified in two separate locations what he believed to be a walled cemetery and temple (Inskip 1844 and 1850; Dryden 1845). Investigations undertaken by Mr Gray in the 1940s also located a building (Davis, undated).

Where relevant, the results of the earlier investigations are incorporated in the following discussion. It should be borne in mind that the information on the earlier work is limited, and that the more recent investigations were undertaken in a piecemeal fashion, as part of several different building developments.

ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT

Despite the presence of late Bronze Age/early to middle Iron Age pottery, the earliest firm evidence for settlement is late Iron Age/early Romano-British in date (Phase 1). It comprised a large ditched enclosure which contained a possible roundhouse and domestic foci. The 'Belgic' pottery assemblage which it produced is characterised by wheel-thrown vessels tempered with grog or grog/sand. The settlement originated prior to the Roman conquest, although the longevity of 'Belgic' forms and fabrics makes precise dating impossible, as on other sites in the area, *e.g.* Haynes Park (Wells 2004, 90–1). Some of the samian, including decorated material, appears to have been arriving on the site by the early Flavian period (AD69+), and early Roman influences are further indicated by the presence of oyster and common mussel shells, which became much more common after the Roman conquest.

During the 2nd century AD (Phase 3), the original enclosure remained in use and may have been part of a larger enclosure system that included a trackway. An aisled building and two other timber buildings were constructed within the original enclosure. Notably less 'Belgic' Iron Age pottery was recovered; the assemblage spans the entire Romano-British period, suggesting the enclosure continued in use until the late 3rd century (Phase 4), but diagnostic forms are predominantly datable to the late 1st and 2nd centuries.

In the later Romano-British period (Phase 5), a new enclosure was established on a similar alignment to that of the earlier system. Probable domestic activity is indicated by the presence of pits and postholes, although no buildings were identified. The pottery assemblage does not provide a precise date for this activity, but does include imported late Roman regional fine wares and characteristically later forms amongst the coarse wares. Other than noting their presence, nothing can really be said about the recovery from the 1820s investigations of two gilt bronze saucer brooches of the Anglo-Saxon period (Kennett 1970, 203).

SETTLEMENTS AND ROADS IN THE VICINITY (Fig. 1)

At the time of Simco's survey of the Roman period in Bedfordshire, published in 1984, very few remains were known in the vicinity of Shefford. The evidence was dominated by the antiquarian

discoveries discussed here and the site of Stanfordbury, the latter comprising mid 1st-century burials, including vaults, which were presumably associated with a high status settlement (Simco 1984, 116–7). The nearest site with evidence for settlement throughout the Romano-British period was in Meppershall; like Shefford, its origins lay in the pre-conquest period (Wilson 2003). However, many of the nearby undated crop-mark enclosures, visible on aerial photographs, may also be contemporary settlements. The most dramatic evidence for possible settlement densities in this area was found in the vicinity of extensive investigations at Broom, where crop-marks have identified a series of Romano-British settlements spaced at *c.* 400m intervals along the River Ivel floodplain (Cooper and Edmonds 2007, fig. 6.4).

A brief mention should be made of the Roman roads proposed in this area by the Viatores (1964). They suggested that Shefford was on a crossroads between west–east road 176 (Viatores 1964, 288 and map on 446) and north–south road 210 (Viatores 1964, 252 and map on 456). However, the majority of their road layout has been convincingly dismissed by Simco (1984, 78–9): much of their evidence comprised straight roads, tracks and hedgelines which 'were only created at the time of Enclosure and could not be Roman in origin' (Simco 1984, 78). The Viatores also suggested that another road, 223, headed north from the area of Inskip's and Gray's discoveries (Viatores 1964, 262 and map on 482); this would be broadly in the position of trackway L23 within the investigations. Again, however, their evidence, at least south of the River Flit, was based on a straight hedgerow which was not shown on the 1799 map and is therefore likely to be later in date. It is more probable that L23 was a trackway providing access through the settlement to the floodplain to the north, and not part of a larger road system.

EXTENT AND NATURE OF THE SETTLEMENT (Fig. 18)

The combined results of the antiquarian and recent archaeological investigations suggest that the settlement was probably *c.* 3ha in extent. Evaluation trenches have established the limits of the settlement to the north, east and south but not to the west. Only 0.22ha, *c.* 7% of the probable settlement area, has been subject to open area excavation, with some additional evidence from

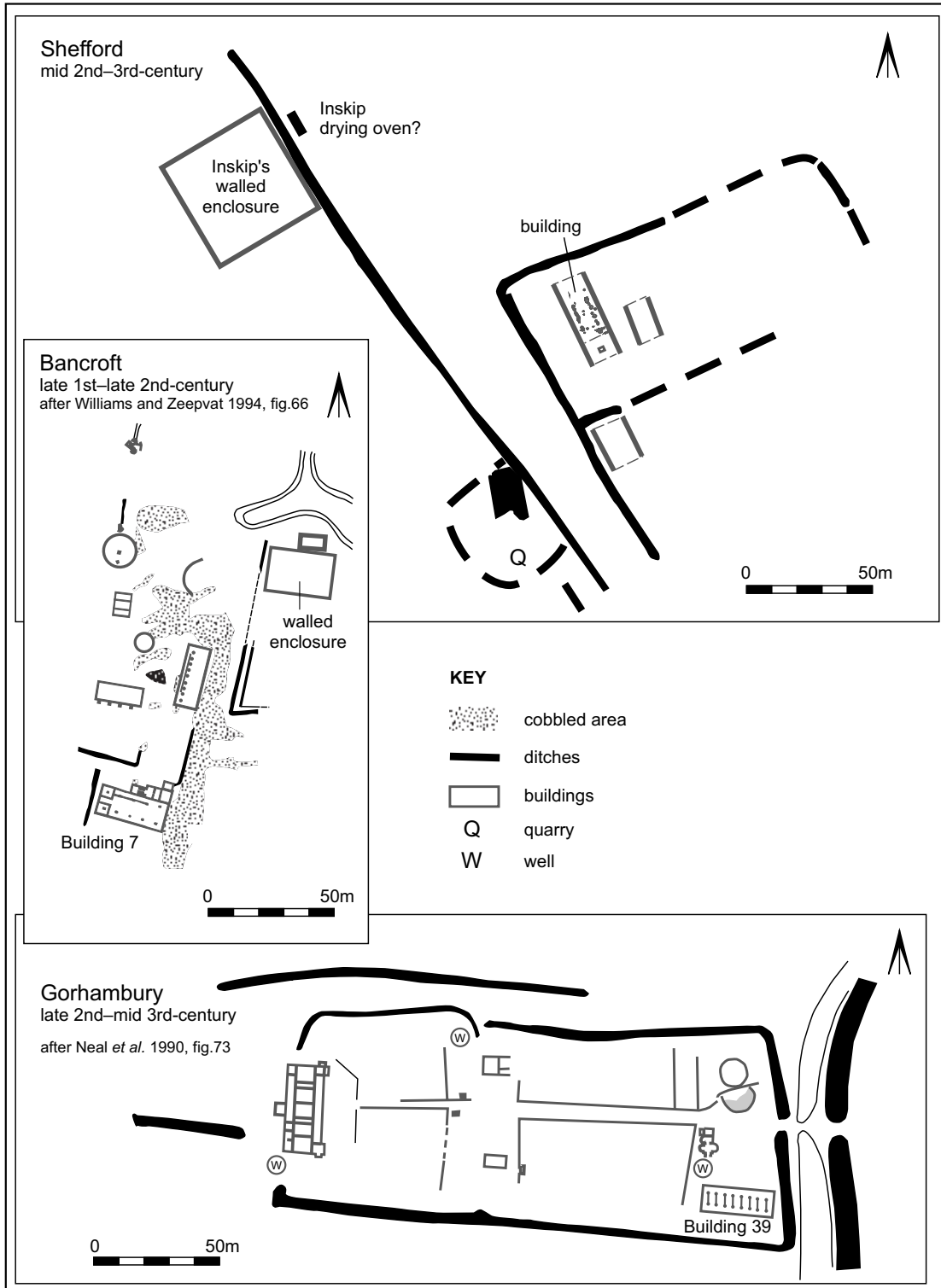


Figure 18: Comparison of settlement plans for Shefford, Bancroft and Gorhambury

evaluation trenches. These limiting factors should be borne in mind in the following discussion.

The precise nature and date of the Phase 1 late Iron Age/early Romano-British ditched enclosure L1 is uncertain because only two sides were identified with any degree of confidence. If the identification of a third side in an evaluation trench is correct, an area of 126m SW–NE by at least 100m NW–SE would have been enclosed. This is comparable to the enclosures at Gorhambury, Herts., which also originated in the late Iron Age (Neal *et al.* 1990, 11–14 and fig. 12). No gaps or any other evidence for entranceways were identified in the Shefford enclosure ditches.

The large enclosure at Shefford featured an internal subdivision, approximately 55m from the northern ditch. This part of the enclosure contained domestic activity foci L2 and L3, c. 15m apart, which included a possible roundhouse, a hearth, ovens and pits. The internal division was maintained for some time as its ditch was re-cut at least twice. The absence of other ditched subdivisions within the enclosure is comparable to Gorhambury (Neal *et al.* 1990).

Evidence for activity within the Phase 3 early Romano-British enclosure L30 is dominated by the construction of an aisled building L4. Separating this from the adjacent possible timber building L41 was a cobbled yard L6, with another possible post-built building L21 situated 30m to the south.

A trackway L23 was defined by the western ditch of the large enclosure and several other ditches c. 24m to the west. It was considerably wider than trackways associated with other farmsteads in the vicinity, e.g. Biddenham Loop (Luke 2008), and no surfacing was identified. However, the absence of contemporary features between the ditches does suggest that this land was used as a routeway. Similarly sized examples associated with the Roughground Farm (Glos.) villa complex were interpreted as droveways (Allen *et al.* 1993, 199 and fig. 115). At Shefford, this routeway may have provided a means to move animals onto and off the floodplain to the north. Such an arrangement has been identified at numerous late Iron Age/early Romano-British settlements adjacent to river floodplains, e.g. Biddenham Loop (Luke 2008) and Broom (Cooper and Edmonds 2007, fig. 6.4). The land to the west of the routeway at Shefford was utilised for quarrying and, on the evidence of Inskip's investigations, for burial. There is also sufficient domestic debris in the western

routeway ditches to suggest additional buildings may have been located in this area.

Settlement continued into the later Romano-British period (Phase 5), when a new enclosure L9 was established. It was situated in the same location as the earlier one, and on approximately the same alignment. Only the northern part of the enclosure, in the vicinity of the earlier aisled building, produced evidence for contemporary activity, which comprised pits, postholes and gullies L10, L16 and L22.

COMPONENTS OF THE SETTLEMENT

All the components of the settlement, e.g. buildings, cobbled surface/yard, ovens/hearths, quarry pits, other pits, postholes and Inskip's walled enclosure, are discussed below, irrespective of their phase assignment.

Aisled buildings L4 and L12

An aisled building and its replacement were the most substantial buildings to be identified (Fig. 19). The main surviving evidence comprised stone footings for the two side walls and two rows of internal post settings (pits in the earlier building, pads in the later). The front cover shows a representative illustration of how the later building may have appeared.

Layout

The building and its successor were orientated NW–SE, and were 12.5m wide and at least 18m long. Their full length could not be accurately determined because they continued beyond the limit of the ASH773 excavation. However, there is some evidence to suggest that the posts settings located within the ASH773 watching brief defined the northern end (see below). The evidence from the antiquarian investigations to the south extends the length of the building by at least 6m (based on their published measurements) but more probably by at least 10m (based on their plan) (Fig. 19). Therefore, with a length of at least 28m, the Shefford building is comparable to building 7 at Bancroft (Fig. 20), which was 29m by 12.5m (Williams and Zeepvat 1994, 135–40), and building 39 at Gorhambury, which was 29m by 11m (Neal *et al.* 1990, 61).

The Shefford building featured external walls, of which only the foundations survived, and substantial internal posts which would have supported

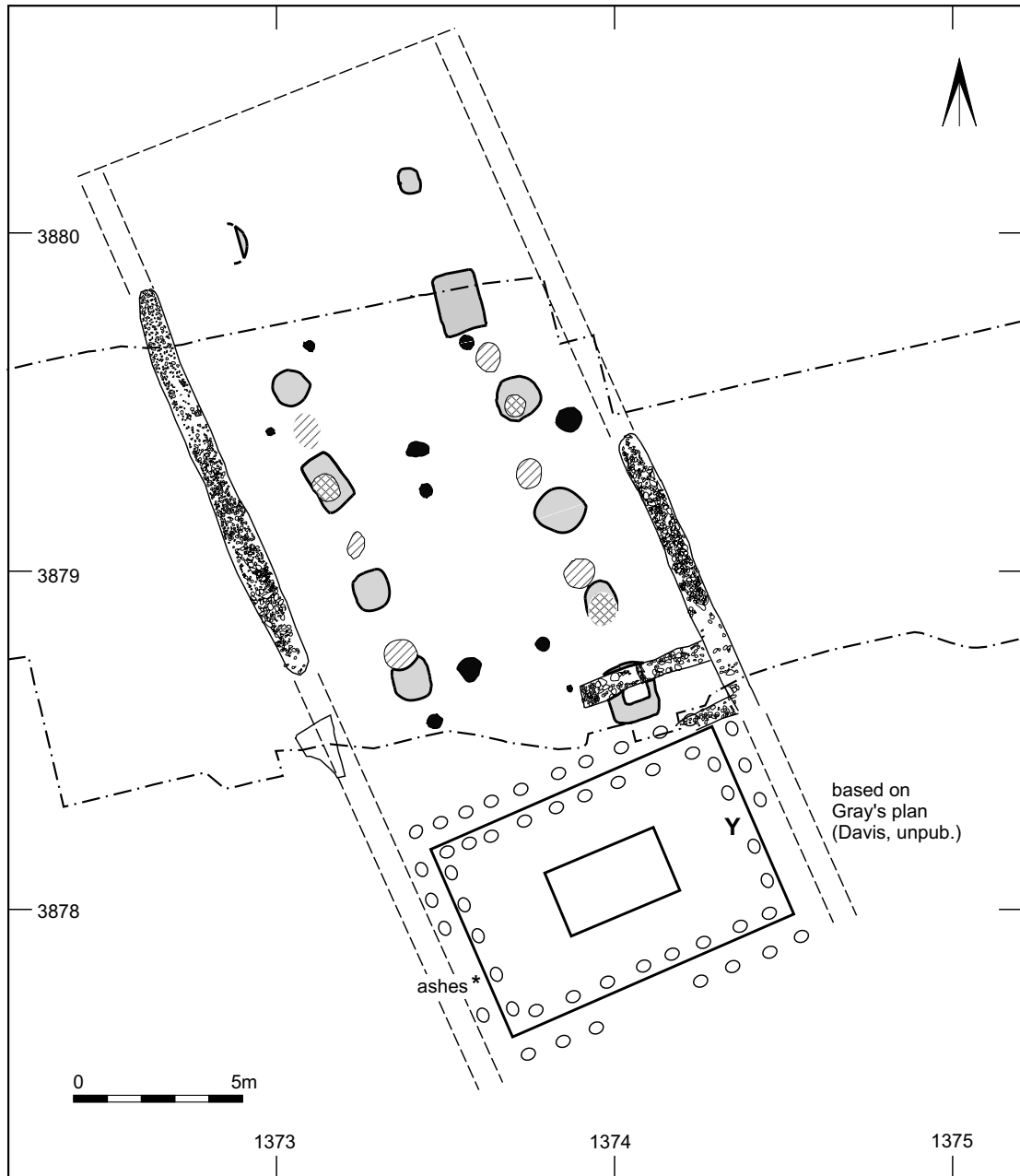


Figure 19: Combined plan of aisled building showing antiquarian information

the weight of the roof. It was a 'classic' aisled building, of which many are known from Roman Britain (Morris 1979, 66–70; Hingley 1989, 39–45), although this is the first from Bedfordshire. The posts divided the interior into a *c.* 6m wide central nave and two *c.* 2.5m wide aisles. A nave that was at least twice the width of the aisles is

common to the majority of aisled buildings known in Britain (Morris 1979, 64).

As revealed within the ASH773 excavation, much of interior of the Shefford building comprised a large, apparently undivided room. This is common to most aisled buildings, *e.g.* building 7 at Bancroft (Williams and Zeepvat 1994, 135 and fig.

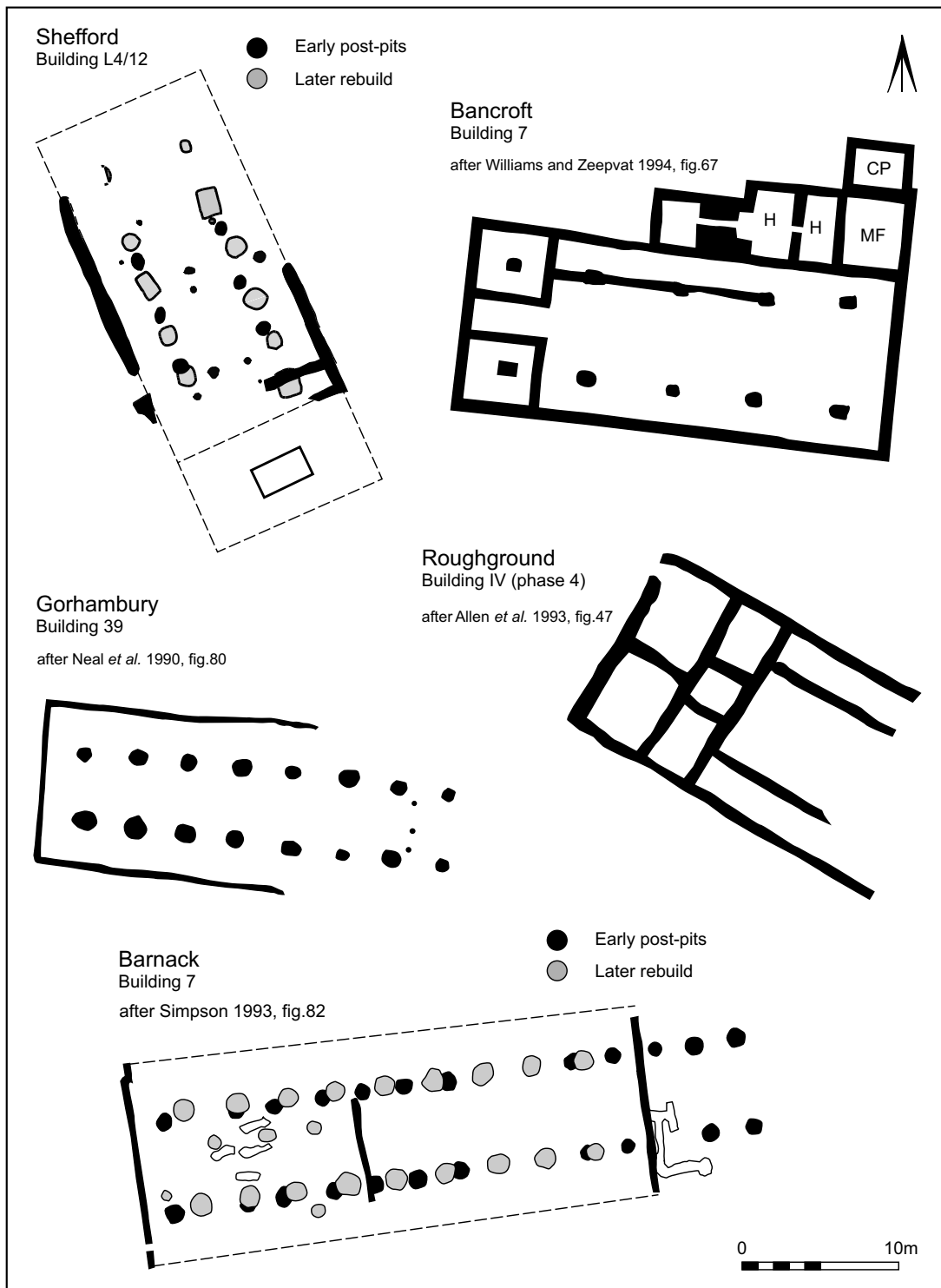


Figure 20: Comparison of aisled building plans for Shefford, Bancroft, Barnack, Gorhambury and Roughground

67), building 39 at Gorhambury (Neal *et al.* 1990, fig. 80) and Barnack, Cambs. (Simpson 1993, figs 81 and 82) (Fig. 20). Stone footings are evidence for an internal partition towards the south of the building, while a number of small postholes also survived. However, the floor levels did not survive, and it is possible that evidence for further wooden partitions might have been lost through truncation.

The southern part of the building appeared to have been disturbed by the earlier investigations of Inskip and Gray. The results of both their work and the recent investigations suggest that the southern part of the building was significantly different to the northern part (see below).

Dating

The pottery assemblage from packing within the post-pits is dominated by 2nd-century material. More specifically, seven sherds of central Gaulish samian of probable early to mid 2nd-century date were recovered from secure and uncontaminated packing deposits, suggesting a construction date in the middle of the 2nd century AD. Building 7 at Bancroft was dated to the late 1st to late 2nd century, and building 15 at Gorhambury to the early Roman period (Neal *et al.* 1990, 32 and 34). Hingley believes that, while aisled buildings were known in 1st- and early 2nd-century Britain, they did not become common until the second half of the 2nd century (Hingley 1989, 39).

There is no conclusive artefactual dating for the alterations to the aisled building. However, it was probably abandoned by the late 3rd/early 4th century, as no artefacts of a later date were recovered.

External walls

Although the side walls of the building were located, the end walls did not fall within the ASH773 excavation. The surviving stone footings within the wall trenches G1.1 were 0.8m wide (Fig. 7). They comprised a lower course of closely packed flint cobbles and, in the eastern wall only, a second course of sandstone slabs. The surviving footings were not mortared, although fragments of mortar were found in the vicinity of the building. The absence of large quantities of stone rubble in and around the building might suggest that the walls were mainly wooden. The side walls of many aisled buildings often appear to have been insubstantial: building 40 at Gorhambury displayed 'impressions of sleeper beams' (Neal *et al.* 1990, 61), while no obvious trace of the side walls

survived at Barnack (Simpson 1993, 107 and 109). The external walls of those buildings were probably not load-bearing, but the more substantial nature of the Shefford footings suggests that they may have been.

Possible entrances

Although two entrances into the Shefford building are postulated, neither is particularly convincing. An apparent 1.5m gap in the west wall trench could indicate the position of an entrance (Fig. 7); however, the north stretch of the trench narrows and shallows towards this point, suggesting that the gap may be the result of truncation. It would certainly be unusual for a gap to be left in a foundation trench in anticipation of the later construction of a doorway. The evidence provided by stone setting G3.2, adjacent to the eastern wall, is slightly more credible (Fig. 7). It was 1m long by 0.7m wide and contained fragments of sandstone and tile set in mortar. Similar features have been found elsewhere, *e.g.* building 30 at Gorhambury (Neal *et al.* 1990, fig. 64), and they may be the foundations for external steps associated with doorways. Where comparable settings occur in pairs, *e.g.* Rapsley, Surrey, they have been interpreted as projecting doorposts (Hanworth 1968, 23 and fig. 6). The building at Rapsley also featured similar, regularly spaced settings that were interpreted as buttresses. The presence of only one makes this interpretation unlikely in the case of the Shefford building.

Aisle posts of building L4

Eleven post-pits G1.2 are interpreted as part of the original roof support (Fig. 9). They were spaced at 3m intervals, a significantly smaller distance than the 5m spacings of building 7 at Bancroft (Williams and Zeepvat 1994, 135–40) (Fig. 20). This may reflect the fact that the Shefford building had less substantial external walls. Although investigated within a watching brief, it may be significant that the northernmost pair of aisle posts were 4.2m from the next pair; at Barnack, the last pair of posts at one end of the building were 'almost twice the usual distance from their neighbours' (Simpson 1993, 124).

The Shefford post-pits were mostly oval in plan and around 1m long. It is unclear why two were rectangular, *c.* 1.2m by 1.7m in size; they may originally have been dug as inspection pits or they may indicate the replacement of original post settings. All the post-pits were *c.* 0.9m deep with

nearly vertical sides and fairly flat bases. The oval pits were closely comparable in shape, profile and size to those at Barnack (Simpson 1993, 107).

The post-pipes were typically 0.4–0.5m in diameter, larger than both the 0.3m posts of building 40 at Gorhambury (Neal *et al.* 1990, 61) and the *c.* 0.4m posts at Barnack (Simpson 1993, 107). At least four of the post-pipes at Shefford had evidence for stones or tiles at their base. This is likely to have been deliberate and was also noted at Barnack, where they were interpreted as ‘levelling-up stones’ (Simpson 1993, plates XXVI and XXVII). They would also have helped to preserve the posts by slowing down rotting of the base. The substantial nature of the Shefford posts again suggests that they were designed to support virtually the whole weight of the roof.

The packing material comprised clay, sandstone and some flint, all of which would have been available locally. Clay and stones were also used to pack the posts of building 40 at Gorhambury (Neal *et al.* 1990, 61) and at Barnack (Simpson 1993, 107).

Amendments to the aisle posts of building L4

At least three of the original posts (including one pair) were subject to alteration, with stones G1.3 being placed over the post-pipes (Fig. 9). The arrangement of the stones — especially in the pair, where there was evidence for rough coursing — suggests that they were post-pads. It is possible that the original posts had been completely removed, with the pair perhaps indicating major changes to a cross-beam. However, it is also possible that the posts had simply been sawn off at ground level and the stones packed in underneath. At Barnack, stones were ‘piled on top of’ posts that had been sawn off, but no explanation is suggested (Simpson 1993, 109).

Aisle posts of the reconstructed building L12

The aisle posts of the original building L4 were replaced by posts set on stone pads G1.8 (Fig. 9). The dating and reason for the rebuild is uncertain, but there is evidence to suggest that some of the original posts were burnt *in situ*.

The overall plan and dimensions of the building remained the same, and it is possible that the side walls, at least at foundation level, were unaffected. Two rows of paired post-pads were constructed at 3.5m intervals in between the original post-pits. The pads were typically circular, *c.* 0.85m in diameter and 0.2m deep. They contained at least one

course of sandstone, generally laid flat and set in a silty clay. One of the post-pads had a stratigraphic relationship with an original post-pit, demonstrating that it was later in date. The fact that the original positions of the posts were not reused could suggest that they, along with the roof, remained intact in some form while the new posts were inserted.

Rebuilds of aisled buildings have also been identified elsewhere. At Barnack, the original aisled building was replaced by a shorter version with new, deeper post-pits and thick gable walls. It was suggested that this was an attempt to make the new building more stable than the original (Simpson 1993, 124). Building 15 at Gorhambury was rebuilt on numerous occasions; two of the rebuilds required the digging of new post-pits (Neal *et al.* 1990, 32–3 and fig. 41). However, in contrast to Shefford, the replacement post settings at Barnack and Gorhambury usually truncated the earlier post-pits.

The post-pipes and pits of the original Shefford building were infilled with a mix of domestic and building debris. It is possible that the presence of building materials indicates a more extensive re-build, perhaps affecting the walls, roof and individual rooms.

Internal features/activity within the aisled building

A variety of post settings, presumably contemporary, were found within the Shefford building, although it is not clear with which phase of the building they were associated (Fig. 20). They comprised two post-pads and eight postholes, the majority of which were in the nave (Fig. 9). They do not form any obvious wall lines in their own right. It is possible that the two on the same alignment as the aisle posts are either extra roof supports or part of a partition. Two of the post settings to the north of internal wall G1.4 lie between a pair of aisle posts, perpendicular to the building, and could also have been part of a partition.

Post settings are frequently found within aisled buildings but, as at Shefford, it is often difficult to be certain that they were contemporary. Some of the internal postholes within building 39 at Gorhambury were believed to have been associated with stalling animals, although this was largely based on evidence from other sites (Neal *et al.* 1990, 63). The buildings at Barnack contained two groups of postholes, three regularly spaced within the nave and five smaller ones in the

south aisle, which were interpreted as being associated with 'subsidiary structures' (Simpson 1993, 109).

Ovens are frequently found within aisled buildings, *e.g.* building 39 at Gorhambury (Neal *et al.* 1990, 63 and fig. 80) and Barnack (Simpson 1993, 109–15 and fig. 81). No such features could be firmly identified at Shefford. Two ovens G5 and a hearth G4 were situated within the area of the buildings; however, these are thought to be late Iron Age/early Romano-British because they were sealed by deposit G25, which is considered to pre-date the building (Fig. 5). One was also clearly truncated by one of the post-pads of the later building. If the ovens were actually contemporary with one of the aisled buildings, they would lie on the west side of the nave towards the north end of the building. The ovens were keyhole shaped, 1.1m long, 0.3m wide and 0.2m deep, with nearly vertical sides and flat bases.

Ovens within aisled buildings are often considered to be associated with drying crops, metal-working or cooking. Although not conventional drying ovens, such as that at the east end of the Barnack building, those at Shefford did contain small quantities of charred grain and glumes, possibly waste derived from the de-husking process.

Southern part of the building

The building clearly continued beyond the southern limits of the ASH773 excavations but it was not located in the RB445 watching brief to the south (Fig. 3). However, possible archaeological trenches and disturbance were located both south and north of the present hedgeline (Fig. 12), which are likely to be associated with Inskip's and Gray's investigations.

The southern part of the building was defined by an internal wall G1.4, identified within the ASH773 excavation (Fig. 7). It survived as two courses of sandstone, the upper course exhibiting a slight herringbone pattern. A possible second parallel wall, *c.* 1.4m to the south, lay largely beyond the limit of excavation. Both walls may have been later additions: they abut the eastern external wall; and one overlay an original post-pit G1.2. These walls may have defined a room, stairway or even a corridor.

Both Inskip and Gray record finding a building 9m by 6m in extent. Although the longer measurement is slightly short, it probably correlates to the width of the aisled building (now known to be 12.5m). The shorter measurement may correlate to

the dimensions of a room or suite of rooms defined by one of the internal walls G1.4. The account of Gray's investigations does not specifically state that the 'building' was defined by walls on all sides; however, there are enigmatic references to 'sandstone foundations' (labelled Y on Davis's plan, see Fig. 19) and it is stated that at least one wall was 0.3m high. It is therefore probable that this description does relate to the southern end of the aisled building.

Davis's account states that Gray located the 'floor of hypocaust', 'tiles forming floor' that were 0.3m square and 'pillar? tiles'. All these descriptions would be consistent with the presence of *pila*, which are used to support floors within rooms with hypocausts, *e.g.* Rooms 9 and 10 in building 7 at Bancroft (Williams and Zeevat 1994, 139). The Shefford tiles would match exactly the dimensions for *pedales* given by Brodrigg (1987, 36). No clearly identifiable *pilae* tiles were recovered from the ASH773 excavations, but it is quite possible that, due to the fragmentary nature of the assemblage, some of the pieces identified as brick are actually *pilae* tiles. Davis's mention of charcoal and burnt tiles also hints at the presence of a hypocaust.

Davis describes 'cement' which was 15mm thick. Given he uses the word 'mortar' elsewhere, it might reasonably be assumed that he is here referring to *opus signinum*. Forty-three fragments of which were found in association with the aisled building during the ASH773 excavations. Although Davis's phrasing is ambiguous, he seems to suggest that the *opus signinum* was in situ and at the same depth as the *pilae*. If this is correct, one possible interpretation is that the *opus signinum* was used in the cold plunge of a bath suite. Inverted tegulae were laid in *opus signinum* within Room 2 (the cold plunge) of building 7 at Bancroft (Williams and Zeevat 1994, 139). It is uncertain if the probable hypocaust extended over the entire area of Gray's building; a central rectangular area is shown on both of Davis's plans, but this would be only *c.* 2m by 3.5m in extent (Fig. 19). Although labelled 'hypocaust', if this actually referred to the 'cement' then it would correlate quite well with the size of the cold plunge bath at Bancroft which was 3.1 by 2.4m.

Teasingly, a label on Davis's close-up plan, apparently near the west wall, states 'ashes here' and could, therefore, indicate the location of a stokehole (Fig. 19). Also confusingly, a series of sub-circular shapes shown on the close-up plan appear to define the extent of the 'building'. It is

uncertain what, if anything, they represent. Although they could indicate the position of *pilae*, it is perhaps more likely that they are meant to be representative of stone wall foundations.

What is clear from Davis's account of Gray's work is that the southern part of the Shefford aisled building was more richly appointed and contained rooms with hypocausts. This accords with Morris's conclusion that 'the main domestic rooms were usually grouped at one end of the building' (1979, 56), e.g. building IV at Roughground Farm (Allen *et al.* 1993, 58–71). However, with regard to the tentative suggestion of the existence of a bath suite within the nave in the southern part of the Shefford building, it is clear that this would not have been in the preferred location suggested by Morris. He believes that 'the baths are often in one aisle at the furthest end from the living rooms' (1979, 56).

Building materials

A wide range of building materials was recovered, principally in the vicinity of the aisled building. It is assumed that they were associated with this building, rather than with another, as yet undetected one. If so, they provide an insight into the nature of the roof, walls, windows, floors and interior of the building. It is impossible to determine whether this material was used in the original building L4 or its rebuild L12.

The presence of *tegulae* and *imbrices* could suggest that at least part of the roof was tiled. This would appear to be supported by the presence of mortar on 14% of the *tegulae*, mostly along the flange tops and upper surfaces where *imbrices* would have been attached. As described above, *tegulae* are sometimes used in floor construction; this is a possibility at Shefford, particularly as some of the *tegulae* retain traces of a material similar to *opus signinum*. Only a small proportion of the *imbrices* have mortar on their undersides and, therefore, uses other than for roofing are possible.

Approximately 11% of the bricks have mortared surfaces and/or edges. While these might have been used in wall or floor construction, it is also possible that some were *pilae* within hypocausts. The presence of flue tiles, some sooted on the interior, supports the other evidence for the existence of a hypocaust.

Stone roof tiles, like those found at Shefford, could have been used either in selective parts of the roof or for repair purposes. The latter is perhaps more likely, given the small quantities recovered.

Stone roof tiles were present at Bancroft (Zeepvat 1994, 225), although mostly in limestone rather than the sandstone which occurred at Shefford.

More direct evidence for flooring comes in the form of a small number of *tesserae* and fragments of *opus signinum*. With the exception of one *tessera*, all this material was found within the aisled building. The *tesserae* occurred in a minimum of three colours, possibly suggesting a floor executed in grey-white, with a pattern defined in red and/or brown. Although *opus signinum* could be used within cold plunge baths, as discussed above, it was also commonly used as floor material, e.g. the temple-mausoleum at Bancroft (Williams and Zeepvat 1994, 94).

Window glass was found in small quantities. Most came from the south end of the building, suggesting that at least some of the windows there were glazed.

Although small in number, the presence of two fragments of tufa is significant. Because of its comparative lightness, this material is typically used for vaulting, often in bath suites (Williams 1994, 241). Both fragments were found at the south end of the building.

A relatively large quantity of mortar was recovered from features in the vicinity of the building, but sometimes also from deposits assigned to later phases. It may have been used in the floor, external walls or roof. The presence of painted plaster suggests that some of the walls of the building were decorated in white, buff, maroon, red or blue-grey. The majority of the fragments comprise plain linear or striped panel schemes, the former representing the simplest kind of panel adornment (Ling 1985, 26). Wattle impressions on the underside of one fragment indicate the plastering and decoration of daub or cob walls.

The function of the aisled building

Aisled buildings appear to have been used for both domestic (Hingley 1989, 39–45) and agricultural (Morris 1979, 55–65) purposes. Interpretation of function is often based on layout, internal features and flooring, and associated artefacts. At Barnack, the lack of domestic features was used to suggest an agricultural function (Simpson 1993, 124), which was supported by both the absence of rooms and the types of artefacts recovered. Although many of the aisled buildings at Gorhambury were interpreted as barns, some like Building 39 contained ovens, a quern and other items of domestic rubbish (Neal *et al.* 1990, 63).

It is clear that at least the southern part of the Shefford building was domestic in nature. Hingley considers that 'the majority of aisled buildings had a domestic function' (Hingley 1989, 39). Unfortunately, the aisled building at Shefford only survived at foundation level, and much of the information on its south end, which contained rooms with hypocausts and possibly even a bath suite, is derived from early investigations. The presence of *opus signinum*, *tesserae*, painted plaster and window glass suggests that some rooms were well appointed. The majority of the building at Shefford appears to have comprised an open area, in common with most aisled buildings; Morris suggests that this was 'presumably for some communal activity' (1979, 57).

Household items recovered from the Shefford building include storage pots, kitchen- and tableware, and glass vessels. Personal items such as brooches, a bracelet, hair and dress pins, a finger ring, and a toilet implement were also found. These complement the other evidence for domestic use of at least part of the building.

The Shefford building would, therefore, fall into Hingley's category of 'developed aisled building', where 'a distinct suite of rooms had been defined at one end of the building' (Hingley 1989, 41). He compares an aisled building to a medieval hall house with an upper (hypocaust and mosaics) and lower (open) end. The former, he proposes, 'represented the private apartments of the Roman equivalent of a medieval lord'; the latter was where 'family, guests and servants lived and slept' (Hingley 1989, 42).

Summary

The Shefford aisled building is, therefore, comparable to others found in Roman Britain. Aisled buildings of its type can occur in a range of settlements: as villa buildings; as outhouses associated with villa buildings; at local centres; and in non-villa settlements (Hingley 1989, 39). Although fragmentary, the evidence from Shefford suggests that the aisled building was part of a larger settlement, perhaps comparable to the villa complexes at Bancroft (Williams and Zeevat 1994, fig. 66) and Gorhambury (Neal *et al.* 1990, fig. 73).

Other buildings

Three other buildings were identified within the interior of the large enclosure: a possible late Iron Age/early Romano-British roundhouse L3 (Phase

1) and two Romano-British timber buildings L21 and L41 (Phase 3). In addition, a number of possible structural features were identified, *e.g.* structural slot G18 (Phase 1).

Roundhouse L3

Roundhouse L3 (Phase 1) was identified on the basis of a curvilinear gully G31, probably for drainage, and two postholes G141 in a gap in the gully, which may indicate the position of a door (Fig. 4). The projected diameter of the building is *c.* 12m. Unusually, the doorway faces west; Hill (1995, 54) and others have suggested, for the Iron Age at least, that houses were normally entered from the direction of the rising sun, *i.e.* east to southeast. The pottery from the drainage gully of the Shefford building suggests that it continued in use into the 2nd century. Hingley (1989, 31) believes that roundhouses may have been very common throughout lowland Britain during the 1st and 2nd centuries AD; examples include Stagsden Bypass G2, G5 and G6 (Dawson 2000, 33–6), Gorhambury B5, 6, 23 and 24 (Neal *et al.* 1990, 25–6; 40) and Marsh Leys Farm (Albion Archaeology 2002).

Timber buildings L21 and L41

Two possible timber buildings, *c.* 38m apart (Fig. 6), were assigned to Romano-British Phase 3. The evidence for both is slightly tenuous, and, if genuine, they would appear to exhibit different building techniques.

Possible building L21 was identified on the basis of two rows of parallel postholes G107/G108, although the eastern one was heavily truncated (Fig. 10). They appear to have defined a large building, 13m wide and at least 12m long. Romano-British buildings of this size usually feature aisles, *e.g.* building L4/L12 at Shefford (see above) and building 15 at Gorhambury (Neal *et al.* 1990, 32). However, this seems unlikely in the case of building L21 because the post-pipes indicate that the posts were only *c.* 0.15m in diameter, and there was no evidence for large post settings within the interior.

Three postholes offset from the main western wall line suggest the wall was repaired or replaced. The small concentration of shallow pits G109 and postholes G110 in the eastern part of the building may have been contemporary but they did not produce any dating evidence. However, similar features have been observed in some of the buildings at Gorhambury (Neal *et al.* 1990, 32).

Small quantities of *imbrex*, brick, unidentified tile or brick, mortar and nails were found in enclosure ditch G101 adjacent to the building. However, it is uncertain what (if any) of this material might have been used in a building of this type.

The assignment of the Shefford building to the 2nd century is based on its pottery assemblage and because some of the posts were dug into the earlier enclosure's subdivision ditch. There is no indication of function, although the limited artefactual assemblage and absence of features in the vicinity could suggest it was a barn or storehouse rather than a domestic building.

Direct evidence for building L41 is limited to two features that may have defined its western wall: shallow structural slot G28, which would have held a ground beam, and posthole G140. However, the way that cobbled surface G3 stops abruptly at the slot is strongly suggestive of the presence of a building (Fig. 9). It would have been at least 7.5m by 5m, but it is impossible to determine if it was parallel or perpendicular to the adjacent aisled building L4/L12. Ephemeral slots, sometimes associated with postholes, are often interpreted as foundation trenches for walls set on or in beams, *e.g.* building 22 at Gorhambury (Neal *et al.* 1990, 39 and fig. 49).

Cobbled yards or paths

A cobbled surface G3, interpreted as a yard or path, was located between aisled building L4/L12 and building L41 (Fig. 9). It was 8m long, continuing beyond the limit of the ASH773 excavation to both north and south. Another area of cobbles G3.3 was located to the north. Although on a different alignment, it was probably contemporary. Similar surfaces, albeit in limestone, were identified within the villa complex at Bancroft (Williams and Zeepvat 1994, 156–7 and fig. 82), where a major cobbled routeway, in places defined by a ditch, linked most of the buildings, the farmyard and smaller yards (Fig. 18).

Ovens/hearths

Inskip's 19th-century investigations provide tentative evidence for the presence of a drying oven in the vicinity of his 'cemetery', near the western ditches of trackway L23 (Fig. 18). Although his description (see introduction) is inconclusive, it would match the flue of a drying oven like structure 48 at Gorhambury (Neal *et al.* 1990, 74 and fig. 98).

Quarry pits

An area of quarrying L25 was located to the west of the possible trackway L23 (Fig. 18). It covered at least 28m by 11m and comprised a series of sequential, intercutting pits rather than one large pit. They were dug to extract sand, possibly for use in the construction of the buildings to the east. Areas of similar intercutting quarry pits (for gravel) were associated with a farmstead at Marsh Leys Farm (Albion Archaeology 2002). Gravel quarry pits were also located at Roughground Farm adjacent to a field boundary c. 150m from the main villa buildings (Allen *et al.* 1993, 109–10).

Inskip's walled enclosure

Inskip located a walled enclosure which he considered to define a cemetery. However, it is clear that at least one grave lay outside the walled area. While it is of course possible that burials took place outside the cemetery, it is equally possible that the occurrence of graves and the walled enclosure was nothing more than a coincidence.

There appear to be many similarities with the walled enclosure at Bancroft (Williams and Zeepvat 1994, 154 and fig. 80), which was located on the periphery of the villa complex, c. 100m from the main house, next to a stream (Williams and Zeepvat 1994, fig. 66). A similar, peripheral setting could be argued for the Shefford enclosure (Fig. 18). Where located, the walls of the Bancroft enclosure were 0.9m wide without substantial footings – again, not dissimilar to Shefford where the 'rough wall' was 3ft (0.92m) wide (Dryden 1845, 10). At Bancroft, the interior 'was covered with a dark humic soil, varying in depth between 400–600mm' (Williams and Zeepvat 1994, 154), which again accords with Dryden's description. Finds from the enclosure at Bancroft included artefacts spanning the entire period that the villa was occupied. The main difference between the two enclosures was that the Bancroft one was rectangular, not square, and, at 27m by 18.3m, much smaller. Environmental samples from the Bancroft enclosure produced evidence for 'brassicacae, celery, mustard, coriander, summer savory and caper spurge', leading the excavators to conclude that it was a kitchen garden (Williams and Zeepvat 1994, 154). A similar interpretation is possible for the Shefford enclosure, with the presence of the cemetery either coincidental or representing a reuse of the enclosure.

RITUAL AND RELIGION

The majority of the evidence for ritual and religion within the Shefford settlement derives from the cemetery located by Inskip. Although the cemetery and its associated grave-goods are referred to in several publications (*e.g.* Page 1908, Fox 1923, Simco 1984, Philpott 1991), they have never been discussed in detail since Dryden's report of 1845. They form the bulk of this section, although evidence for other human and animal burials from the more recent investigations are also considered.

Inskip's cemetery

The 19th-century investigations located a cemetery to the west of trackway L23, *c.* 120m from the aisled building (Fig. 18). Unfortunately, neither the more recent watching brief nor the trial trenching in the vicinity produced any additional information. Therefore, we are dependant on the descriptions provided by Inskip (1844 and 1850) and Dryden (1845).

On the basis of Dryden's description of Inskip's investigations, all the graves appear to have contained cremation burials. Although only eight graves can be clearly identified from Dryden's description, it is likely that the actual figure was much higher because he only described those with significant grave-goods. It is also unclear how many were destroyed by the quarrying before Inskip was in attendance.

All the graves contained pottery vessels, although Dryden states that none of them held cremated bone. A similar occurrence was noted at Walls Field, Baldock (Stead and Rigby 1986, 61–75), *c.* 10km from Shefford. The range of vessels recorded by Dryden comprises 'samian', 'whitish earthenware bottle', 'coarse black' and 'amphora', which is also similar to that recorded at Walls Field. There is no suggestion that the amphora at Shefford was an urn, and Philpott argues that incomplete vessels often served a largely practical role, protecting cremated remains and grave furniture (Philpott 1991, 25). The majority of the Shefford graves contained two or three samian vessels, but one contained eleven bowls; several at Walls Field had up to four samian vessels, and one, burial 6, contained eight. Given the presence of grave-goods within both cemeteries, the unurned nature of these Roman burials is likely to be a reflection of tradition rather than wealth. Philpott believes this type of unurned burial 'echoes the wealthy cremations of Welwyn type' (1991, 47).

At least five of the graves at Shefford contained glass vessels, variously described by Dryden as 'jugs', 'bottles', 'vases' and 'funnels' (1845, 11–13). The graves typically contained a single vessel, although one may have contained a 'jug', a 'funnel' and a 'lachrymatory'. Also known as phials, lachrymatories are usually believed to have contained luxury products such as perfumes, oils or cosmetics (Philpott 1991, 117). The only glass vessel illustrated by Dryden (1845, pl. I, 2) is similar to a globular jug from burial 5 at Walls Field, Baldock (Stead and Rigby 1986, 61–3 and fig. 27, 3). The presence of glass vessels is thought by Philpott to be an indicator of wealth.

One grave contained a bronze 'dish', which may be the object referred to by Philpott as 'a two-handled bronze bowl' (Philpott 1991, 124). However, the illustration in Dryden's article clearly shows that it was a dish or saucer with one obvious handle (1845, 12 and pl. I, 3). The presence of bronze jugs and skillets is often considered to be an indicator of high status (Philpott 1991, 123). Although two bronze brooches were discovered by Inskip, they are not explicitly identified as grave-goods and appear to be Saxon in date (Kennett 1970, 203). Other probable grave-goods, as opposed to residual or intrusive objects, include an iron lamp, hammer and knife, an ivory pipe, a silver pipe and 'copper moulds for pastry'.

The presence of samian and glass vessels suggests a Roman date for the cemetery because it was only then that they became much more widely available. Philpott believes that glass vessels become increasingly common in cremation burials from the late 1st century (Philpott 1991, 115). There is also very little evidence for glass phials in pre-Roman Britain (Philpott 1991 117), and very few examples postdate AD 200. Therefore, the cemetery is likely to have been in use during the late 1st and 2nd centuries, making it contemporary with the original aisled building. The cemetery fits into the La Tene/early Roman tradition of small, unenclosed cremation cemeteries (Whimster 1981). Such graves, with large numbers of pottery vessels and other grave-goods, may be regarded as outlying examples of the group of relatively richly furnished La Tene III burials found in the North Thames area, particularly Essex and Hertfordshire.

Inskip believed that the cemetery was enclosed by a wall, delimiting an area 45m x 45m in extent (Dryden 1845, 10). While cemeteries or family groups within ditched enclosures are known, *e.g.*

King Harry Lane (Stead and Rigby 1989, 80), walled cemeteries are rare in Roman Britain, hence the suggestion that the walled enclosure is more likely to have been a kitchen garden.

Other human remains

No formal human burials were identified within the recent investigations. However, two fragments of human bone, probably from the same individual, were recovered from a robber trench G2.4 (Phase 4) associated with the aisled building. They appear to represent the remains of a 10-month old foetus. Infants, including foetuses, were rarely buried in formal cemeteries and were disposed of in a variety of locations; at Baldock, for example, infants were found in quarry pits, gullies and pits (Stead and Rigby 1986, 393). Philpott notes that 'a recurrent feature of infant burials throughout the Roman period is their association with buildings' (1991, 97). Although the Shefford burial had clearly been disturbed, it could have been placed within the foundation of the west wall of the aisled building; however, it is impossible to be certain whether or not it represents a 'foundation burial' (Philpott 1991, 100–1).

Ritual animal burials

The identification of three separate, partial dog skeletons, two of which had missing skulls, and a partial cattle skeleton is of interest. No evidence of butchery was identified on these bones. The dog skeletons occur in different phases and in different feature types: enclosure ditch G100 (Phase 1); quarry pit G115 (Phase 3); and robber trench G2.4 (Phase 4). The robber trench, which produced some dog skull fragments, also contained remains of a human foetus (see above). Pit G12 (Phase 5) contained fragments from the same dog skull but no other bones. The partial cattle skeleton derived from the upper fill of quarry pits G115 (Phase 4).

It is always difficult to determine whether deposits like these are the result of burial within convenient hollows or religious practices. However, rituals involving animals, including sacrifices, are known to have taken place in the Romano-British period (Woodward 1992, 78–9). At Shefford, the relative completeness of the skeletons and the absence of butchery marks or gnawing indicate that the dogs were not exploited for food or their pelts, and were buried shortly after death. Although dogs were not the most common animals to be sacrificed (Woodward 1992, 78–9), they do occur in deposits suggestive of, at the very

least, ritual activity. For example, two dogs, one 'perhaps skinned', were found associated with a partial sheep skeleton in an early Romano-British pit at Stagsden, Beds. (Roberts 2000, 122). Although no cut marks indicative of decapitation were observed on the Shefford bones, there is plenty of evidence from other contemporary sites that this occurred; the 'head of an old dog' was found within a late Iron Age pond at West Stagsden, for example (Roberts 2000, 122).

Inskip's temple

In the mid-19th century, Inskip located a Romano-British building which he believed to be a temple. He made this interpretation purely based on its apparent proximity to the cemetery described above. However, it is now clear that the 'building' he located was in fact the southern end of the aisled building L4/L12 and did not serve a religious function.

ECONOMY

The topographical location of the Shefford settlement — just above the floodplain of the River Flit — was ideal for a mixed farming economy. Much of the adjacent land would have been suitable for cultivation, while the floodplain would have provided both hay meadows and grazing for livestock. The small assemblages of charred plant remains and animal bone add a little detail to this general picture.

Cultivation

Evidence for cultivated cereals is indicated by the presence of charred wheat and barley grain and chaff. These principally derive from late Iron Age/early Romano-British (Phase 1) and, albeit in smaller quantities, Romano-British (Phase 3) deposits. The ovens G5 (Phase 1) contained glumes of spelt wheat that may have been waste from the de-husking process. Inskip's description of a structure in the vicinity of the cemetery could suggest that he found a drying oven (Fig. 18). The processing of cereals within the settlement is also attested by the presence of two rotary quernstones (RA 1 and RA 114). Ovens G5 also produced stones of hawthorn — possibly a result of the burning of branches with berries on. Charcoal of Pomoideae (hawthorn, apple *etc.*) and hazel were also found in later Romano-British pits G12 (Phase 5).

Although it has been suggested above that Inskip's walled enclosure might have been a kitchen garden, like that at Bancroft, no evidence for the cultivation of garden plants was recovered from the Shefford investigations.

Animal husbandry

The majority of the animal bone assemblage comprises cattle and sheep/goat. It is likely that the proximity of the floodplain would have provided excellent conditions for the raising and pasturing of cattle. Access to the floodplain through the settlement was probably one of the main functions of trackway L23, which was positioned perpendicular to the River Flit: the trackway would have prevented animals from straying into domestic enclosures or arable fields. Overall, the assemblage is fairly typical of the kind found on other Romano-British rural sites (Maltby 1994). However, an unusually high incidence of immature cattle was detected. This may imply an increase in the intensity of meat production, with a consequent decrease in the importance of cattle for traction purposes. In addition, at least one substantially larger cow was identified in Romano-British Phase 3; this appears to be evidence for the introduction of improved stock.

Pigs were present in relatively low numbers, which is again typical of this period in Bedfordshire. Horses and dogs were kept, but there is no evidence from butchery marks to suggest that either was exploited for meat. Domestic fowl were quite well represented when compared with contemporary rural sites; the presence of bones of immature birds suggests they may have been reared within the settlement.

Some exploitation of wild mammals and birds is suggested by the presence of red and roe deer, hare, jackdaw, duck and goose. The numbers and types are greater than those observed on contemporary farmsteads in Bedfordshire, *e.g.* Luton Road, Wilstead (Luke and Preece, this volume) and at Biddenham Loop (Luke 2008) *etc.* This may indicate that the inhabitants of the Shefford settlement had a relatively diverse meat diet perhaps a reflection of higher status (see below). However, the assemblage is small and the absence of fish is noticeable, when compared to sites such as Gorhambury (Locker 1990).

Craft

As is so often the case, there is little evidence for non-agricultural activities. Craft items include a

spindlewhorl, a mortise chisel and a possible drill-bit. The presence of ferrous slag in the late Iron Age/early Romano-British ovens G5 (Phase 1) is indicative of small-scale smithing.

STATUS/WEALTH

Throughout its history, the settlement appears to have had relatively high status, at least in parts. This is clearly indicated by the wealth of grave-goods from Inskip's cemetery and by the well appointed south end of the aisled building. Both these themes have been discussed in detail above. Additional evidence for status comes from a number of sources, but does not all lead to the same conclusion.

The occupants had a slightly more diverse meat diet than is usually found on Romano-British farmsteads in Bedfordshire, perhaps indicating a high degree of access to wild resources. However, the pottery assemblage from the settlement is utilitarian in nature and, unlike that from the cemetery, does not suggest a particularly high status. It predominantly comprises locally made types with few regional (4%) or continental (2%) imports. These percentages are comparable to sites interpreted as low-status farmsteads, *e.g.* Luton Road, Wilstead, where regional imports represent 8% and continental imports 3% of the assemblage (Luke and Preece, this volume). A wide range of other everyday objects were also recovered from the Shefford settlement, including brooches, a finger ring, a bracelet, hair and dress pins, a bead, a toilet spoon, glass vessels, a bone handle and ten coins. Again, these are all objects found more commonly on low status farmsteads such as Luton Road, Wilstead, rather than on villa sites such as Gorhambury (Neal *et al.* 1990, 113). The range and quality of artefacts at Shefford is perhaps surprising, given the proximity of both the Baldock–Sandy–Godmanchester road and the large Roman settlement, presumably with markets, at Baldock, *c.* 10km distant.

CONCLUSION

Mike Luke

The results of the investigations reported on in this article, especially the aisled building, are important in their own right. However, they have also allowed the intermittent discoveries made over the

last two hundred years in this part of Shefford to be placed in the context of a Romano-British settlement, which is now known to cover at least 3ha. There is no basis to the suggestion by Inskip that he had located a temple; in fact, it is now clear that the Roman building investigated by both Inskip and Gray was the same as that located in the recent ASH773 investigations.

Evaluations in the vicinity appear to have identified the limits of the settlement to the north, east and south. However, its full extent to the west is still uncertain. The settlement comprised a large rectangular enclosure divided from quarrying and a cemetery by a trackway. The large enclosure contained at least three buildings – one of them the aisled building – and may represent the domestic core of the settlement (Fig. 18). However, evaluation trenches near the cemetery contained significant quantities of domestic debris, suggesting that additional buildings may have existed in this area.

The nature of the cemetery and the aisled building suggests that the settlement was of relatively high status. It could be characterised as a villa complex but, if so, it was perhaps less wealthy than other regional examples, such as Bancroft (Williams and Zeepvat 1994) and Gorhambury (Neal *et al.* 1990). Comparison with the latter does, however, indicate that only a small area of the Shefford settlement has been examined; there is a high probability that further buildings and enclosures await discovery.

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APPENDIX 1: POTTERY TYPE SERIES

Jackie Wells

Fabrics are summarised below by chronological periods, using type codes and common names in accordance with the Bedfordshire Ceramic Type Series, held by Albion Archaeology. Full fabric descriptions are given only for those types not previously published. Bracketed figures after each fabric type denote a percentage (by sherd count) of the total excavated assemblage. Percentages are only noted for fabric types constituting over 1% of the total assemblage.

Pre-late 'Belgic' Iron Age

The pre-late 'Belgic' Iron Age pottery assemblage comprises fifteen undiagnostic sherds from twelve late Bronze Age/early Iron Age vessels (40g) and twelve undiagnostic sherds from eleven early to middle Iron Age vessels (90g). The pottery was entirely residual in Roman features within the ASH773 investigations. It is described in the site archive.

Late 'Belgic' Iron Age

Type F05 Grog and shell (1.1%)

Fabric: Slowikowski (2000, 62).

Forms: everted-rim jar and lid-seated bowls.

Type F06 Grog (11.1%)

Fabric: Slowikowski (2000, 62); three subdivisions of this type have been defined, based on the size and frequency of the grog inclusions. All occur at Shefford.

Forms: *F06A*: (fine): bead-rim jar, undiagnostic vessels with incised horizontal grooves, cordons and burnishing.

Forms: *F06B*: (medium): cordoned jars and bowls, bead-rim and narrow-necked jars, lid-seated vessels with burnished horizontal lines, combed patterns and incised horizontal grooves. One body sherd is modified by the addition of a post-firing perforation. Some vessels appear to be deliberately oxidised.

Forms: *F06C*: (coarse): bead-rim and narrow-necked jars, storage jars and a bowl with suspension loop. Decoration comprises horizontal and vertical combing, incised horizontal grooves, scoring, burnished diagonal strokes and combed patterns. Some vessels appear to be deliberately oxidised. Predominantly wheel-thrown, although hand-made examples are known.

Illustrations: Fig. 13 no. 1; Fig. 14 nos 10, 11.

Type F07 Shell (1.8%)

Fabric: Slowikowski (2000, 62).

Forms: hand-made, sometimes wheel-finished, lid-seated vessels, with vertical and/or horizontal combing, random combed patterns and fingernail-impressed rims.

Type F09 Sand and grog (9.2%)

Fabric: Slowikowski (2000, 62), *cf.* also Milton Keynes fabric group 47 (Marney 1989, 193–4).

Forms: cordoned bowls and jars, bead-rim and narrow-necked jars, lid-seated bowls and jars, butt beakers and a pedestal urn. One bowl is modified by the addition of two post-firing holes in the neck. Decoration comprises horizontal and vertical combing, cordons, burnishing, combed patterns, incised horizontal grooves and burnished diagonal strokes. Some vessels appear to be deliberately oxidised.

Illustrations: Fig. 13 nos 3, 8.

Type F34 Sand-tempered

Fabric: Fine, hard-fired fabric with buff–orange surfaces and variable grey core. Contains sparse, well-sorted, sub-rounded quartz 0.1–0.5mm, and occasional mica.

Forms: cordoned jars.

Type F Non-specific Iron Age

Three sherds which could not be assigned a fabric type, but whose form or context suggest an Iron Age date. Described in the site archive.

Romano-British

Samian identifications by Felicity Wild.

Type R01A Central Gaulish samian ware

Fabric: Tomber and Dore (1998, 30–2).

Forms: bowls (forms 18/31, 18/31R, 30, 31, 31R and 37), cups (form 27), conical cups (form 33), mortarium (form 43 or 45) and a dish (Ludowici Tg).

Decorated ware:

1. Form 37, showing the ovolo (Rogers 1974, B144) and beaded borders of a panel with a small circle in the corner. The ovolo is that used by Cerialis and in the early style of Cinnamus, and it is to their style that this should be assigned. Rogers (1999, pl. 30, 14, 24) illustrates other examples of bowls in their style where the vertical border runs across the horizontal border and into the ovolo, as here. *c.* AD 135–60.
2. Form 30, small scrap showing part of a Venus (Oswald 1936–7, 281). Potters of this date who used the type and who made form 30 include X9 (*cf.* Stanfield and Simpson 1958, pl. 30, 355, 361) and the Quintilianus group. The fabric is possibly that of Les Martres-de-Veyre, suggesting X9 (*c.* AD 120–35). It is impossible to reliably assign a potter to so small a scrap, but the piece is likely to be Hadrianic.

Date: 2nd century.

Type R01B South Gaulish samian ware

Fabric: Tomber and Dore (1998, 28–9).

Forms: platter (form 15/17), plates (form 18), cups (forms 27 and 35), carinated bowls (form 29) and hemispherical decorated bowls (form 37, see below).

Decorated ware:

1. Form 37, small scrap showing the ovolo with large rosette tongue used by Frontinus and occurring in the Pompeii Hoard and on first century sites in Scotland. Beneath is a straight wreath of a trifid bud. The same ovolo occurs with a fractionally larger version of the wreath on a sherd from Inchtuthil (Hartley 1985, D19). *c.* AD 75–90. Illustration: Fig. 13 no. 2.
2. Form 37, small scrap showing part of a leaf arcade, probably containing the satyr with grapes (Oswald 1936–7, 597). These figures occur together on bowls by Biragillus (Mees 1995, Taf. 11,1) and C. Cingius Senovir (Mees 1995, Taf. 186, 10). *c.* AD 90–110.

Date: 1st century.

Type R01C East Gaulish samian ware

Fabric: Tomber and Dore (1998, 34–41).

Forms: body sherd from dish.

Date: mid- to late 2nd century.

Type R02 Mica gilded wares

Fabric: Slowikowski (2000, 64); Marney (1989, 185: fabric 34c).

Forms: undiagnostic body sherds, some embossed.

Date: late 1st to 2nd century.

Type R03 Unidentified white ware

Fabric: separately described in the site archive. Possible imports or long-distance traded wares.

Forms: narrow-necked jar and white-slipped body sherd.

Date: uncertain.

Type R03A Verulamium-region white ware

Fabric: Tomber and Dore (1998, 154).

Forms: flagon or jar base.

Date: late 1st to 2nd century.

Type R03B Gritty white ware (1.2%)

Fabric: Slowikowski (2000, 64).

Forms: flagons and a lid-seated jar.

Date: late 1st to 2nd century.

Type R03C Smooth white ware

Fabric: Hard-fired smooth fabric, cream–buff throughout. Contains common, well-sorted, sub-rounded clear or opaque quartz, 0.1–0.5mm, and occasional red iron ore.

Forms: undiagnostic fine-walled body sherd.

Date: late 1st to 2nd century.

Type R03E Fine white ware

Fabric: Hard-fired soapy fabric, cream–buff throughout. Contains common, well-sorted, sub-rounded clear or opaque quartz, 0.1–0.5mm. Similar to type R03C, but less smooth.

Forms: undiagnostic body sherds.

Date: late 1st to 2nd century.

Type R05A Orange sandy

Fabric: Hard-fired fabric, orange–buff throughout, although surfaces are often slipped white. Contains frequent to abundant sub-angular quartz inclusions, 0.5–1.0mm.

Forms: everted-rim jar, flagon and lid-seated jar with external white slip.

Date: 2nd to late 3rd century.

Type R05B Fine orange sandy

Fabric: Hard-fired fabric with buff–orange surfaces (often slipped white) and variable pale grey core. A finer version of type R05A, containing frequent, well-sorted sub-angular quartz inclusions, 0.1–0.5mm.

Forms: jar or flagon base.

Date: 2nd to late 3rd century.

Type R06A Nene Valley grey ware

Fabric: Marney (1989, 179: fabric groups 12 and 14).

Forms: burnished ‘dog’ bowls.

Date: 2nd to 3rd century.

Type R06B Coarse grey ware (18.3%)

Fabric: Harsh gritty fabric, with variable reduced core and surfaces, the latter often smoothed and/or burnished. Contains abundant, ill-sorted, sub-rounded quartz, 0.5–1.0mm.

Forms: lid-seated bowls and jars, triangular-rim bowls and jars, ‘dog’ bowl with upright rim, dishes, narrow-necked flanged bowls, storage jars, bead-rim cordoned and neckless jars, bowl with burnished zig-zag along rim, lids, and a single platter.

Decoration includes vertical combing, horizontal grooves,

cordons, overall burnishing and burnished lattice motifs.

Date: 2nd century+.

Illustration: Fig. 13 no. 7.

Type R06C Fine grey ware (10.7%)

Fabric: Hard-fired, smooth fabric with variable reduced surfaces and paler core. Contains frequent, well-sorted fine quartz, 0.1–0.5mm.

Forms: reed-rim, cordoned, rectangular and triangular-rim bowls, 'dog' bowls with upright rim, bead-rim, cordoned and everted-rim jars, lid-seated and triangular-rim jars, neckless and narrow-necked jars, plain rim beakers and a platter. One sherd is modified by the addition of a post-firing hole. One bowl sherd is totally oxidised and badly fired, suggesting a possible waster.

Decoration comprises horizontal grooves, burnished horizontal lines, arcs and lattice design, cordons and overall burnishing.

Date: 2nd century+.

Illustration: Fig. 13 no. 4.

Type R06D Micaceous grey ware (3.9%)

Fabric: Soft-fired fabric with mid-grey surfaces and paler core. Contains common, well-sorted, sub-rounded fine quartz, 0.1–0.5mm, and sparse inclusions of larger grains. Also occasional red iron ore.

Forms: flanged, triangular and rectangular-rim bowls, 'dog' dishes, bead-rim, cordoned and everted-rim jars, miscellaneous fine-walled vessels, and single examples of a plain-rim beaker, carinated jar, lid, and platter.

Decoration comprises burnished horizontal and vertical lines, stabbing, combed patterns, horizontal grooves, cordons, overall burnishing, overall external black slip and slipped bands / zones.

Date: 2nd century+.

Type R06E Calcareous grey ware

Fabric: Hard-fired fabric with variable reduced surfaces and core, characterised by a vesicular appearance resulting from the leaching or burning-out of calcareous inclusions, up to 0.5mm in size. Also contains abundant clear or opaque white quartz, 0.1–0.5mm.

Forms: burnished storage jar.

Date: 2nd century+.

Type R06F Grog and sand grey ware (1.1%)

Fabric: Hard-fired, dense fabric, smooth to the touch, with variable grey-brown surfaces and core. Contains frequent well-sorted sub-angular quartz, 0.1–0.3mm, powdery buff grog particles, 0.5–1.0mm, and sparse black iron ore.

Forms: storage jars, one with graffiti on the rim (?tally or batch mark). Decoration comprises horizontal grooves, stabbing, burnished lattice, cordons and overall burnishing.

Date: ?2nd century+.

Type R06G Silty grey ware

Fabric: soft-fired dense fabric, smooth and soapy to the touch, with mid-dark grey surfaces and paler core giving a characteristic sandwich appearance in break. Contains sparse, moderately sorted, clear rounded quartz 0.5–1.0mm (some up to 3.0mm), sparse, moderately sorted sub-angular shell 0.5–1.0mm and sparse, moderately sorted red iron oxide.

Forms: burnished 'dog' bowls, narrow-necked jar and miscellaneous fine-walled beaker.

Date: ?2nd century+.

Type R07A Black burnished ware

Fabric: Tomber and Dore (1998, 127).

Forms: burnished bead-rim jar and flat-rimmed bowl.

Date: late 2nd century+.

Type R07B Sandy black ware (11.6%)

Fabric: Hard-fired fabric, with black surfaces and grey-black core, often with red margins. Contains frequent well-sorted, sub-rounded fine quartz, 0.1–0.5mm, and sparse inclusions of larger grains.

Forms: flanged bowls, 'dog' bowls with upright rims, lid-seated jars and bowls, triangular-rim bowls, narrow-necked and neckless jars, cordoned jars, wide-mouthed bowls, miscellaneous fine-walled vessels, and a lid. Decoration comprises overall, zonal, linear and zig-zag burnishing, incised chevron and circle motifs, vertical combing, horizontal grooves and cordons.

Date: late 1st century+.

Illustration: Fig. 13 nos 5, 6.

Type R07C Gritty black ware (2.1%)

Fabric: Coarse, hard-fired fabric with black, often burnished surfaces and grey-black core. Contains abundant, ill-sorted, sub-rounded quartz, 0.1–1.0mm.

Forms: flanged bowls, 'dog' bowls with upright rims, narrow-necked jar and miscellaneous bead-rim vessel. Decoration is restricted to overall burnishing, horizontal grooves, and burnished horizontal lines.

Date: 2nd century+.

Type R07F Silty black ware

Fabric: Marney (1989, 177: fabric 9f).

Forms: undiagnostic body sherd.

Date: ?1st to 2nd century.

Type R08 Black micaceous

Fabric: Fine, smooth, hard-fired dark grey-black fabric, characterised by presence of abundant mica, particularly visible on surfaces. Also contains sparse poorly-sorted quartz 0.1–0.4mm. cf. Marney (1989, 180: fabric 15).

Forms: platter with horizontal groove, decorated 'London ware' copies.

Date: ?late 1st to 2nd century.

Type R09A Pink grogged

Fabric: Marney (1989, 174: fabric 2a).

Forms: storage jar.

Date late 2nd century+.

Type R10A Buff gritty

Fabric: hard gritty fabric, with buff surfaces and variable buff to grey core. Contains frequent, poorly sorted sub-angular quartz, 0.5–1.0mm (some up to 1.5mm).

Forms: lid-seated jar and miscellaneous everted-rim vessels with horizontal grooves.

Date: ?2nd century.

Type R10B Fine buff gritty

Fabric: fine smooth fabric with soft, often micaceous surfaces, generally buff throughout. Contains moderate, poorly sorted sub-angular quartz c. 0.1–0.3mm. Some vessels retain traces of a dark slip.

Forms: beaker, platter, bowl, triangular-rim jar, cordoned body sherd and burnished flanged bowl.

Date: late 1st to late 2nd century.

Type R11 Oxford oxidised ware

Fabric: Young (1977, 185).
Forms: flagon.
Date: late 1st century+.

Type R11C Oxford Parchment ware

Fabric: Young (1977, 80).
Forms: painted base sherd.
Date: mid 3rd to 4th century.

Type R11D Oxford colour-coat

Fabric: Young (1977, 123).
Forms: flanged bowl.
Date: mid 3rd to 4th century.

Type R11E Oxford white mortaria

Fabric: Young (1977, 56).
Forms: wheel-thrown body sherds.
Date: mid 3rd to 4th century.

Type R11F Oxford colour-coat mortaria

Fabric: Young (1977, 123).
Forms: wheel-thrown body sherd.
Date: mid 3rd to 4th century.

Type R12A Nene Valley mortaria

Fabric: Tomber and Dore (1998, 119).
Forms: wheel-thrown body sherds.
Date: mid 3rd to 4th century.

Type R12B Nene Valley colour-coat (1.5%)

Fabric: Tomber and Dore (1998, 118), Marney (1989, 176: fabric 6).
Forms: plain-rim and folded beakers. Decoration comprises rouletting, barbotine and horizontal grooves.

Date: late 3rd to 4th century.

Type R13 Shell-tempered (8.5%)

Fabric: Brown (1994) for products of the Harrold kilns. Also includes a small proportion of 'soapy' variants, which may derive from a different source.

Forms: range from the 1st century, with lid-seated, narrow-necked and bead-rim jars, to the 4th century, represented by jars with everted, triangular and undercut rims, large storage jars and bowls. All are wheel-thrown. Surface finishes range from simple smoothing or wiping, to combing or rilling, the latter being more common on vessels of later date. Decoration is rare, and comprises horizontal grooves.

Date: 1st to 4th century.

Illustration: Fig. 13 no. 9.

Type R14 Sand-tempered (red-brown harsh) (3.7%)

Fabric: Harsh, hard-fired fabric with variable orange-grey-brown surfaces and core. Contains abundant, fine, clear or opaque quartz, 0.3–1.0mm, and sparse red iron ore.

Forms: bead and everted-rim jars, cordoned, lid-seated and narrow-necked jars. Decoration comprises diagonal combing and horizontal grooves.

Date: uncertain.

Type R18A Pink Gritty

Fabric: Slowikowski (2000, 66).
Forms: plain-necked and ring-necked flagons.
Date: ?late 1st to 2nd century.

Type R19 Unidentified amphorae

Fabric: hard-fired fabric, pale buff-orange throughout. Contains frequent well-sorted, sub-angular quartz, 0.1–0.5mm, and white mica visible on the surfaces.

Forms: body sherds.

Date: ?1st to 3rd century.

Type R21 Unidentified mortaria

Fabric: hard-fired with buff surfaces and dark grey core. Contains abundant, well-sorted sub-rounded quartz, c. 0.2–0.5mm. Trituration grits are poorly-sorted opaque, grey-white quartz. Possibly from the Oxford region.

Forms: wheel-thrown body sherd.

Date: uncertain.

Type R22A Hadham oxidised

Fabric: Tomber and Dore (1998, 151), Marney (1989, 186: fabric 37).

Forms: undiagnostic body sherd.

Date: mid- to late 2nd century+, with the widest distribution occurring in the 4th century.

Type R23 Roughcast colour-coat

Fabric: hard-fired, occasionally powdery, pale orange-buff to cream fabric. The colour-coat is variable pale brown-orange matt, and often mottled in appearance. Contains sparse, well-sorted very fine sub-angular quartz, c. 0.1mm.

Forms: single beaker sherd.

Date: ?late 2nd to early 4th century.

Type R24 Red quartz

Fabric: hard-fired, gritty fabric with dark grey-black surfaces and core, the latter sometimes with red margins. Contains abundant well-sorted, sub-angular red quartz, c. 0.5mm and occasional red and black iron ore.

Forms: narrow-necked jar.

Date: uncertain.

Type R30 Fine micaceous

Fabric: hard-fired sandy fabric with smooth buff-orange surfaces and a grey core. Contains frequent well-sorted sub-angular quartz, 0.1–0.5mm, and abundant mica, particularly visible on the surfaces.

Forms: rouletted fine-walled beaker sherds.

Date: uncertain.

Type R33 Verulamium-region mortaria

Fabric: Tomber and Dore (1998, 154).

Forms: wheel-thrown body sherds.

Date: late 1st to 2nd century.

Type R35A Grog with mica

Fabric: hard-fired with hackly fracture, uniform grey surfaces and core. Characterised by abundant white mica visible on surfaces and in break. Also contains frequent poorly sorted angular grey/white grog, average size 0.5–3.0mm, some ranging up to 5.0mm, and sparse angular white quartz, 0.1–0.3mm.

Forms: storage jars and a lid-seated vessel.

Date: uncertain.

Illustration: Fig. 14 no. 12.

Type R38 Unidentified colour-coat

Fabric: separately described in the site archive. Includes single sherds possibly deriving from Colchester and the Nene Valley.

Forms: miscellaneous beakers, one rouletted with a metallic finish.

Date: uncertain.

Type R Non-specific Romano-British

Six sherds which could not be assigned a fabric type, but whose form or context suggest a Romano-British date. These are fully described in the site archive.

Post-Romano-British (73 sherds)

Post-Romano-British pottery comprises eleven early or high medieval sherds (60g), nineteen post-medieval sherds (116g) and forty-three modern sherds (117g). These are described in the site archive.

APPENDIX 2: BRICK AND TILE TYPE SERIES

Jackie Wells

Fabrics are summarised below using common names in accordance with the Bedfordshire Ceramic Type Series, currently held by Albion Archaeology. Bracketed figures after each fabric type denote a percentage (by weight) of the total excavated assemblage.

Sand (75.1%)

Fabric: fine- and hard-fired, orange throughout, turning to brick-red where over-fired. Generally finely tempered, although some fragments are coarsely made and contain angular quartz of up to 6.0mm in size. Contains frequent, well-sorted, sub-angular multi-coloured quartz *c.* 0.2–0.5mm and dark red and black iron ore *c.* 0.1–0.3mm. Also occasional angular flint inclusions of up to 5mm in size.

Forms: *tegulae*, *imbrices*, flue tiles and bricks.

Illustration: Fig. 15 nos. 1–6.

Source: although no production centres are known in the immediate vicinity, it is likely that the quartz inclusions found in sandy types derive from the Greensand ridge.

Sand and calcareous inclusions (0.3%)

Fabric: fairly hard-fired, often gritty fabric, with variable orange to light red–brown surfaces and core. Contains frequent, ill-sorted calcareous inclusions of up to 2.0mm, frequent, well-sorted, sub-angular multi-coloured quartz *c.* 0.1–0.3mm and dark red and black iron ore *c.* 0.1–0.3mm. Also occasional angular white flint inclusions of up to 5mm. Examples in this type are often characterised by a vesicular surface appearance, caused by the firing or leaching out of calcareous inclusions.

Forms: *tegulae*, *imbrices*, and bricks.

Source: as Sandy type.

Blue–grey-cored sandy (12.5%)

Fabric: hard-fired, fairly smooth fabric with bright orange to dark red–brown surfaces, and characterised by a distinctive blue–grey core. Contains variable multi-coloured quartz, 0.1–0.5mm, and unevenly sized red iron ore inclusions, 0.5–1.0mm.

Forms: *tegulae*, *imbrices*, flue tile and brick..

Source: as Sandy type.

Micaceous sandy (11.1%)

Fabric: fairly hard-fired fabric, orange–brown throughout, characterised by abundant, well-sorted gold mica visible on

surfaces and in core. Also contains frequent, well-sorted, sub-angular multi-coloured quartz *c.* 0.2–0.5mm, dark red and black iron ore *c.* 0.1–0.3mm, and occasional angular flint inclusions of up to 5mm in size.

Forms: *tegulae* and flue tiles.

Source: as Sandy type.

Grog and sand (0.6%)

Fabric: fairly hard-fired fabric, orange–brown throughout, characterised by frequent, ill-sorted sub-rounded buff–orange grog fragments of up to 3.5mm in size. Also contains frequent, well-sorted, sub-angular multi-coloured quartz *c.* 0.1–0.3mm and dark red and black iron ore *c.* 0.1–0.3mm.

Forms: *tegulae*, *imbrices*, and bricks.

Source: as Sandy type.

Shell (0.4%)

Fabric: Brown (1994).

Forms: *tegulae*, *imbrices* and flue tiles.

Source: Uncertain. However, the fabric is comparable to those from kilns at Harrold Lodge, Beds. Although these are *c.* 25km to the NW of Shefford, this kiln complex is known to have exported its shell-tempered building material and pottery widely within the Ouse Valley and its tributaries (Brown 1994, 104–5). Shell-tempered vessels within the Shefford pottery assemblage are also in a fabric comparable to those from the Harrold kilns.

APPENDIX 3: DAUB AND FIRED CLAY TYPE SERIES

Jackie Wells

Five fabric types were identified; all are likely to have derived from locally extracted clay. Bracketed figures after each fabric type denote a percentage (by weight) of the total excavated assemblage.

Type A Sand (90.9%)

Coarse, friable mid- to dark orange–red fabric with variable dark grey–black patches where reduced. Inclusions are abundant sub-rounded and sub-angular quartz *c.* 0.1–0.5 mm and occasional red iron ore *c.* 0.5 mm. Some larger fragments contain sub-angular / angular flint or chert pebbles ranging in size from 1–2 cm.

A finer sand-tempered variant was also noted, but does not occur in sufficiently large quantities to merit a separate fabric type.

Type B Organic (5.9%)

Soft buff–yellow fabric with soapy texture, containing frequent, poorly-sorted organic material (?straw), evidenced by elongated voids where the latter has burnt out. Also occasional, poorly-sorted red iron ore *c.* 0.2 mm. Mainly used for the manufacture of slabs and / or handmade bricks.

Type C Organic and sand (2.1%)

Fine pink–orange–buff fabric, dark blue–grey where reduced. Inclusions are moderate, poorly sorted, sub-angular, multi-coloured quartz *c.* 0.1–0.5 mm, occasionally increasing to 1.0 mm, and frequent organic material (?straw), evidenced by elongated voids where the latter has burnt out.

Type D Sand and calcareous inclusions (0.6%)

Coarse, friable pink–orange–buff fabric with variable dark grey–black patches where reduced. Inclusions are as type A, but the fabric is also characterised by the addition of moderate sub-rounded calcareous (?chalk) pieces *c.* 0.5–1.0 mm. Some larger fragments contain sub-angular / angular flint or chert pebbles ranging in size from 1–2 cm.

Type E Grog and sand (0.2%)

Hard orange–brown fabric with smooth texture. Inclusions are occasional, poorly-sorted, sub-angular multi-coloured quartz *c.* 0.1–0.5 mm and occasional orange–buff grog mostly *c.* 0.3–0.5 mm, up to a maximum of 4.0mm.

APPENDIX 4: PAINTED PLASTER FABRIC TYPES

Jackie Wells

Type 1: fine buff–pink matrix containing abundant, well-sorted, multi-coloured, sub-angular quartz, *c.* 0.1–1.5mm, occasional sub-angular black iron ore, *c.* 0.1–0.5mm and occasional, sub-rounded calcareous (?chalk) inclusions, *c.* 1.0–2.0mm. Also occasional degraded and friable tile inclusions. Fragments range from 8–15mm thick. Wattle impressions on the underside of one fragment indicate the plastering and decoration of daub or cob walls.

Type 2: coarse buff–white matrix containing abundant, poorly-sorted, multi-coloured, sub-angular quartz, *c.* 1.0–5.0mm, frequent angular flint, *c.* 0.3–6.0mm, and frequent, sub-rounded black iron ore, up to 10.0mm. Fragments range from 10–36mm thick.

Type 3: medium buff–white matrix containing abundant, well-sorted, multi-coloured, sub-angular quartz, *c.* 0.1–1.5mm, and frequent, angular and sub-rounded calcareous (?chalk) inclusions, *c.* 1.0–5.0mm. The single type 3 fragment is 17mm thick.

APPENDIX 5: REGISTERED ARTEFACT CATALOGUE

Jackie Wells

The catalogue is organised by Registered Artefact (RA) number. The 155 registered artefacts recovered were assigned broad terms and functional categories, in accordance with the Bedfordshire Artefact Typology. Only those objects relevant to the publication are listed, although individual descriptions are omitted for the iron carpentry nails, and for the copper alloy coins, which are discussed above. Full details of unstratified and post-Romano-British artefacts are contained within the site archive.

The coding which prefixes each catalogue entry contains the following information:

RA 112	G17.1	L2.1	Phase 1	Fig. 17
Registered Artefact no.	Group	L. No.	Phase	Illustration

Note: letters preceding the registered artefact number indicate the projects from which the artefacts derived, *i.e.* R = RB365 and S = SLS893. Artefacts with no prefix are from ASH773. In

all cases, measurements denote the maximum surviving artefact length unless otherwise stated.

RA 1 G3, L6, Phase 3. *Quartz conglomerate rotary quern.* Incomplete upper stone; approximately one-third of the central feeder survives, diameter 60mm. A 15mm band encircling the feeder appears to have been pecked, forming a slightly sunken channel. The current outer edge of the quern is slightly bevelled, diameter 320mm. Grinding surface convex and worn smooth. Thickness 40mm; weight 1.3kg.

RA R1 G119.1, L28.1, Phase 3. *Copper alloy toilet spoon.* Narrow sheet fragment with edges folded inwards along its length to form a strip. Both ends are broken off and the sheet is bent. Possible shaft of toilet spoon; *cf.* Crummy 1983, 59–60 and fig. 64, no. 1898. Length 46mm.

RA 2 G35, L17, Phase 6. Fig. 17. *Copper alloy disc brooch.* Cast with raised rim, central blue glass stud and punched decoration. Intact catchplate; missing sprung pin. Diameter 25.8mm. 2nd century.

RA R2 G111.1, L23.1, Phase 3. Fig. 17. *Glass bead.* Cylindrical opaque bead of rust-red vitreous paste with seven narrow rods of clear glass, trailed or threaded flush on to the external surface, forming stripes along the length. Both ends of the bead are missing. Central teardrop-shaped perforation running along the length. Length 20.5mm. Late Romano-British.

RA 3 G35, L17, Phase 6. *Vessel glass.* Colourless body fragment; tableware of indeterminate form. Thickness 0.7mm.

RA S3 G114.3, L25.3, Phase 4. *Iron mortise chisel.* Flat rectangular head, solid rectangular-sectioned handle, tapering in thickness; the edge of the chisel is formed by a bevel from one side of the blade. Length 90.6mm; head width 17mm; handle width 13mm. Romano-British.

RA R4 G127.3, L22.3, Phase 5. Fig. 17. *Copper alloy bracelet.* Single strand, copper alloy wire bracelet, one hooked terminal surviving, opposite end broken. The ends are decorated with closely spaced notches; six survive on the complete end and five on the incomplete. A series of broadly spaced notches decorate the length of the object. Oval in cross-section. Width 1.6mm, thickness 1.9mm. *cf.* Frere 1972 (Verulamium I) fig. 32, no. 35. 4th century.

RA S4 G101.3, L30.3, Phase 4. *Tessera.* Sub-rectangular ceramic block (reused tile) with abraded edges. Length 38.2mm; width 25.1mm; thickness 15.5mm

RA R5 G127.3, L22.3, Phase 5. *Unidentified iron object.* Curved iron rod, sub-triangular in cross-section, one end broken. Length 79.0mm.

RA S5 G101.2, L30.2, Phase 3. *Iron T-clamp.* Small clamp originally with anchor-shaped head, ends of head damaged. Tapering, rectangular-sectioned shank, lower shank bent at an acute angle. Heavily encased in corrosion products. Length 85mm

RA 7 G35, L17, Phase 6. *Vessel glass.* Colourless body fragment; tableware of indeterminate form. Thickness 0.8mm.

- RA R7** G127.2, L22.2, Phase 5. Fig. 17. *Iron handle*. Handle fragment comprising an iron rod of rounded cross-section encased in a copper alloy sheet, now damaged and sprung open. *cf.* Wardle 1990 (Gorhambury), fig. 128, no. 258. Length (straightened) 103mm.
- RA R8** G127.3, L22.3, Phase 5. Fig. 17. *Vessel glass*. Colourless glass beaker fragment, comprising a portion of the upper body and a slightly out-turned rim. The latter is damaged but appears to be knocked off and unworked. Numerous faint, shallow, horizontal lines have been cut into the external surface. The metal has 'pinhead' bubbles in it (and a series that follow along the cut lines) *cf.* Frere 1972 (Verulamium I) fig. 76 no. 61. Thickness 1.6mm. 3rd to 4th century.
- RA R9** G127.3, L22.3, Phase 5. *Window glass*. Fragment of clear, colourless window glass, sub-rectangular in plan, no original edges. Surfaces laminating and iridescent. Small, elongated bubbles present in the metal indicate the glass was cylinder-blown. Thickness 1.3mm. 3rd to 4th century.
- RA 12** G35, L17, Phase 6. *Vessel glass*. Blue-green ?bottle body fragment. Thickness 3.4mm.
- RA R14** G5, L2, Phase 1. *Tessera*. Rectangular ceramic block (reused tile), with abraded edges. Length 45mm; width 33mm; thickness 25mm.
- RA 18** G35, L17, Phase 6. Fig. 17. *Copper alloy finger ring*. Incomplete cast square-sectioned ring, thickened on one side with a rectangular setting for a stone. Diameter 20.3mm.
- RA 19** G35, L17, Phase 6. *Copper alloy ring*. Cast annular ring with sub-rounded section. Diameter 37mm; internal diameter 28.5mm.
- RA 23** G35, L17, Phase 6. Fig. 17. *Copper alloy bow brooch*. Colchester two-piece; plain tapering bow with undecorated central rib and wings; perforated catchplate. Pin, chord and spring fragments survive separately. Length 61.9mm. AD 50–70.
- RA 31** G37, L17, Phase 6. *Vessel glass*. Colourless body (?shoulder) fragment; ?cylindrical cup. Thickness 1.6mm.
- RA 32** G22.1, L15.1, Phase 6. Fig. 17. *Bone one-piece handle*. Modified long-bone shaft, sawn and polished at one end, broken at the other. Polished end has remains of a transverse groove representing either decoration or cut-mark. Length 59.1mm; diameter 12.4mm.
- RA 34** G1.4, L12, Phase 3. Fig. 17. *Unidentified ceramic object*. Wedge-shaped piece of fired clay, which has one smoothed face (10 x 10mm) with a possible whitewash skim, and retains traces of mortar on all other faces. A suggested function may be as a spacer or wedge in a tessellated pavement, or even as a small *tessera*. Length 20.5mm, width 10mm, thickness 3.5–10mm.
- RA 36** G1.4, L12, Phase 3. *Lead spindlewhorl*. Lathe-turned fragment; highly degraded and in poor condition. Estimated diameter 40mm; weight 5g.
- RA 41** G22.1, L15.1, Phase 6. *Vessel glass*. Colourless body fragment with large air bubble; tableware of indeterminate form. Thickness 0.9mm.
- RA44** G22.1, L15.1, Phase 6. *Copper alloy stud*. Circular stud head with concave perforated centre. Diameter 8.2mm.
- RA 46** G21.1, L10.1, Phase 5. *Window glass*. Blue-green cast 'matt-glossy' fragment with finished edge. Same as RA 47. Thickness 3.3mm.
- RA 47** G21.1, L10.1, Phase 5. *Window glass*. Blue-green cast 'matt-glossy' fragment. Same as RA 46. Thickness 3.3mm.
- RA S48** G101.3, L30.3, Phase 4. *Copper alloy hair pin*. Complete hair pin with groove and cordon below a flattened spherical head. Length 124mm. 2nd century.
- RA 49** G22.1, L15.1, Phase 6. *Copper alloy pin or needle*. Tapering shank of sub-rounded section, bent and broken at both ends. Estimated length (straightened) 61mm.
- RA S49** G101.1, L30.1, Phase 3. *Iron hinged brooch pin*. Curved in profile, narrow rectangular tapering brooch pin, tip missing. The opposing end retains about half of a small circular perforation. Length 24mm.
- RA 59** G2.3, L8, Phase 4. *Vessel glass*. Colourless body fragments x2 (joining); tableware of indeterminate form. Thickness 0.8mm.
- RA 61** G2.7, L12, Phase 3. *Vessel glass*. Colourless body fragment with greenish tinge; tableware of indeterminate form. Thickness 0.9mm.
- RA 74** G3.1, L8, Phase 4. *Iron object*. Small portion of square-sectioned, tapering stem, expanding in lozenge-shaped terminal. Length 81.0mm. Possible drill-bit terminal.
- RA 80** G2.3, L8, Phase 4. *Copper alloy tack or nail*. Lower portion of square-sectioned, tapering shank, broken at both ends. Length 15.3mm.
- RA 97** G2.3, L8, Phase 4. *Vessel glass*. Blue-green ?bottle base fragment. Thickness 5.5mm.
- RA 104** G37, L17, Phase 6. *Tessera*. Dressed ?sandstone cube, very worn. Length 19.1mm; width 18.1mm; thickness 16.6mm.
- RA 113** G21.1, L10.1, Phase 5. *Window glass*. Blue-green cast 'matt-glossy' fragment. Thickness 3.5mm.
- RA 114** G22.1, L15.1, Phase 6. *Lava quern*. Worn fragment retaining no diagnostic features. Weight 7g.
- RA 117** G2.4, L8, Phase 4. *Window glass*. Blue-green cast 'matt-glossy' fragment. Thickness 2.2mm.
- RA 119** G2.7, L12, Phase 3. *Vessel glass*. Colourless body (?shoulder) fragment with greenish tinge; indeterminate form. Thickness 1.7mm.
- RA 120** G2.7, L12, Phase 3. *Vessel glass*. Colourless body fragment with greenish tinge; indeterminate form. Thickness 0.9mm.
- RA 122** G12.1, L16.1, Phase 5. *Vessel glass*. Blue-green fragment; ?tableware of indeterminate form. Same vessel as RA 123. Thickness 1.5mm.

RA 123 G12.1, L16.1, Phase 5. *Vessel glass*. Blue–green fragment; ?tableware of indeterminate form. Same vessel as RA 122. Thickness 1.5mm.

RA 124 G12.1, L16.1, Phase 5. *Window glass*. Pale green cast ‘matt-glossy’ fragment. Thickness 3.1mm.

RA 129 G6.1, L2.1, Phase 1. *Copper alloy sheet*. Degraded sub-triangular fragment, probably broken off a larger object. Length 8.5mm

RA 137 G35, L17, Phase 6. *Window glass*. Blue–green cast ‘matt-glossy’ fragment. Thickness 2.9mm.

RA 138 G2.3, L8, Phase 4. *Tessera*. Clunch block with traces of mortar / *opus signinum* adhering to surfaces. Length 38mm; width 32mm; thickness 32.6mm.

RA 139 G1.4, L12, Phase 3. *Tessera*. Ceramic block (reused tile) with mortar adhering to all surfaces. Length 22.6mm; width 17.3mm; thickness 20.6mm.

RA 140 G2.4, L8, Phase 4. *Tessera*. Limestone block with one worn surface. Length 33.2mm; width 27.3mm; variable thickness ranging from 11.1–20.5mm.