

MOATED SITES IN BUCKINGHAMSHIRE—A LIST

County Museum Archæological Group

A MOAT for the purpose of this gazetteer is defined as one or more islands artificially created by digging a ditch. Commonly the island so formed is rectangular and the ditches were normally intended to hold water, even if they do not now do so.

Moats are a widespread phenomenon. An interim distribution map published by Roberts¹ showed them to be essentially a feature of lowland Britain and commonest on heavy clay soils. Recently an effective classification scheme for moats has been evolved², but it is necessarily morphological, as without excavation it is rarely safe to be too precise about function. Only three moats, for instance, have been excavated in Buckinghamshire, a very small proportion of the 159 noted here, and this is fairly typical of the country as a whole.

Their commonest function, however, was clearly perceived by Allcroft³, who described them as "homestead" moats. Excavation has shown many to have once contained buildings of medieval date, often manorial. A number of moats still contain buildings, although these are often secondary in date.

The main period of moat construction seems to have been the thirteenth century, although rare twelfth century moats are known and others were constructed later. Sometimes moats were thrown up in areas where there had already been occupation; in other cases the moat seems to have been the primary structure. The reasons for this burst of moat building activity have been much discussed, a convenient summary being by Le Patourel⁴. It has been observed that their defensive function is limited and, as they often seek out water, construction for drainage is not an adequate explanation; nor is the conjecture that they were a response to late medieval climatic deterioration satisfactory, for a number were constructed before that deterioration commenced. Some may indeed represent colonisation of new land, but others are sited in villages recorded in Domesday.

The most forceful explanation is the suggestion that an element of fashion was involved⁵. In date they follow the construction of a number of small mottes; castles were in vogue and the moat was in its way also a statement of

¹ Moated Sites in Midland England, B. K. Roberts. *Trans. B'ham. Arch. Soc.* 80 (1965) 26-36.

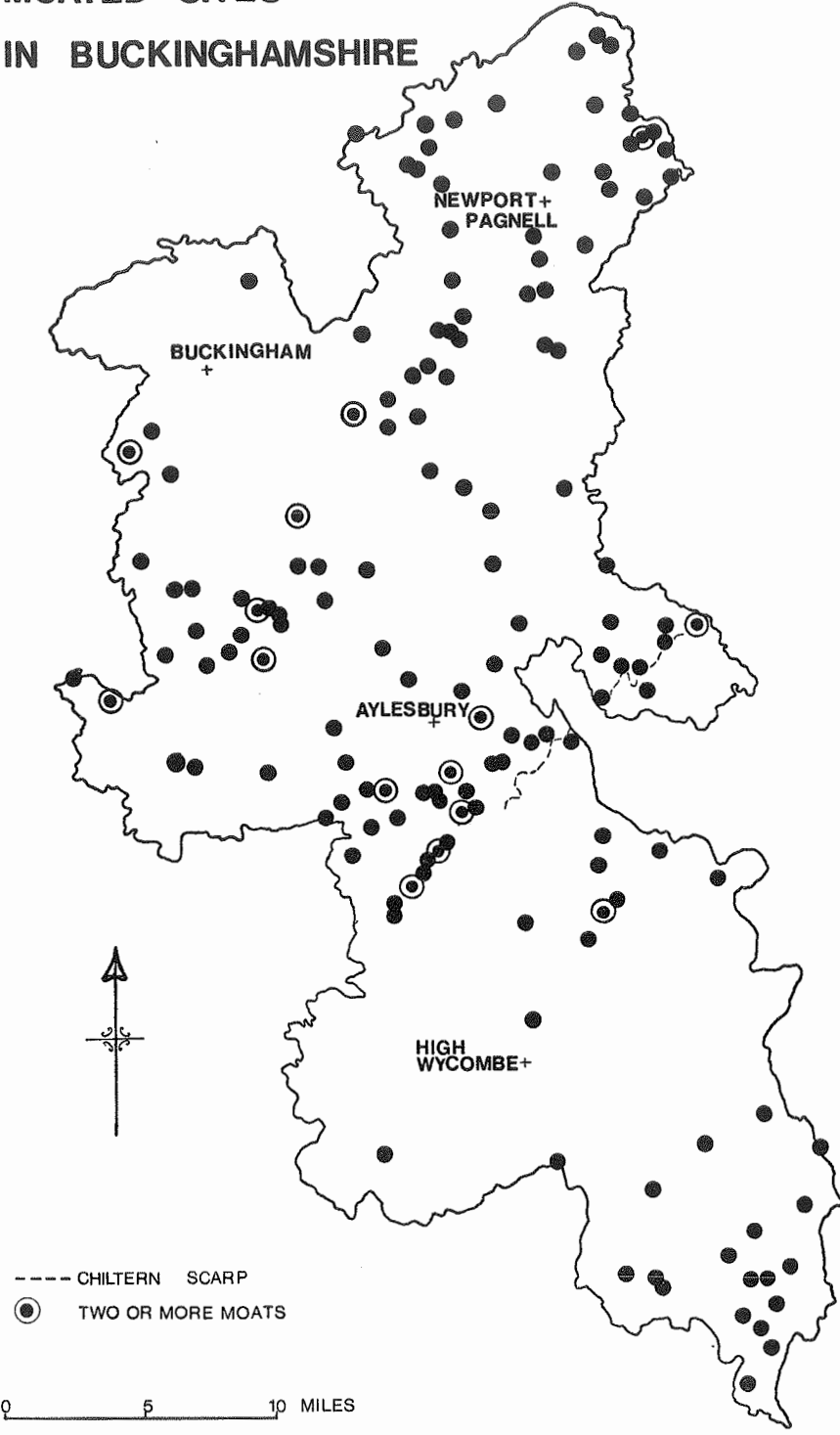
² *Inventory of Historic Monuments in the County of Cambridge 1. West Cambridge.* R.C.H.M. (1968) lxi.

³ *Earthworks of England*, A. Hadrian Allcroft (1908).

⁴ *The Moated Sites of Yorkshire*, H. E. Jean Le Patourel. *Soc. Med. Arch. Monograph* No. 5 (1973).

⁵ Moated Medieval Sites, P. J. Atkins. *The Local Historian*, Vol. 10, No. 3, (1972).

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social status. It cost money to dig and maintain, and provided a modicum of security and privacy against casual intruders. Moreover, moats were a useful source of water for family and stock, and of fish, although a supply of the latter was in many cases provided by auxiliary fishponds.

A number of apparent "homestead" moats have been found on excavation to contain no buildings; some are garden features, others fishponds, and a few in Bucks could be Civil War works. It is by no means always possible to distinguish between these from surface inspection. For the sake of completeness, all moats have been noted here, including those filled in or destroyed, without any attempts at classification. The list which follows can only be an interim one, for within the last year four new moats have been discovered and more can be expected to be located through further fieldwork.

The main research leading to the compilation of this list has been undertaken by the County Museum Archaeological Group, and foremost in this particular project have been Mrs. P. Holt, Mrs. J. Uren and Mrs. Y. Parminster, who also drew the map. Much useful work has been contributed by other members of the Group, and thanks are due also to D. C. Mynard and R. W. Griffiths for assistance. The sites are listed alphabetically under civil parish and are accompanied by their NGR and County Antiquities Survey number. The latter number refers to an index card held at the County Museum.

Michael Farley.

PARISH	N.G.R.	C.A.S. No.	PARISH	N.G.R.	C.A.S. No.
Ashley Green	SP98640425	0021	Chetwode	SP65153067	0551
Aston Clinton	SP86471273	0129	Chetwode	SP63952975	0319
Aston Clinton	SP87651221	0131	Chicheley	SP90684580	0506
Aston Sandford	SP75520783	0324	Chilton	SP67751048	0101
Astwood	SP95454743	0474	Cholesbury cum		
Astwood	SP94654865	0475	St. Leonards	SP95000584	0248
Beachampton	SP77183715	0436	Cholesbury cum		
Beaconsfield	SU93589145	1411	St. Leonards	SP91880660	0132
Bierton w. Broughton	SP83501510	0408	Clifton Reynes	SP93284973	0518
Bierton w. Broughton	SP84651374	0124	Clifton Reynes	SP91315019	0519
Bledlow c. Saunderton	SP79440238	0307	Datchet	TQ00057790	0526
Bledlow c. Saunderton	SP79620181	0367	Denham	TQ04708805	0300
Bletchley	SP88453593	0667	Denham	TQ03778463	0304
Boarstall	SP60311592	0320	Dinton with Ford	SP77980969	0325
Boarstall	SP62421420	0317	Dinton with Ford	SP79050952	0326
Boarstall	SP62641470	0318	Dinton with Ford	SP78130728	0327
Bow Brickhill	SP89103545	0442	Dinton with Ford	SP76300874	0180
Bradwell	SP83003960	0431	Dinton with Ford	SP76611085	0330
Buckland	SP88441262	0136	Drayton Beauchamp	SP90011201	0035
Burnham	SU93008050	0522	East Claydon	SP73932565	0338
Burnham	SU94938021	0523	East Claydon	SP73862567	0339
Burnham	SU94618567	0524	Edlesborough	SP97471926	0469
Chalfont St. Peter	TQ01239008	0305	Edlesborough	SP95491910	0470
Chartridge	SP92500280	0385	Edlesborough	SP97221933	0471
Chearsley	SP72071022	0337	Ellesborough	SP82300880	0391
Cheddington	SP91781748	0466	Ellesborough	SP84300840	0392
Chetwode	SP63862966	0382	Ellesborough	SP83700825	0393
Chetwode	SP63922956	0383	Ellesborough	SP83570805	0394

PARISH	N.G.R.	C.A.S. No.	PARISH	N.G.R.	C.A.S. No.
Great Horwood	SP79273245	0219	North Crawley	SP94354460	0507
Great Horwood	SP77303156	0201	North Marston	SP77962248	1286
Great Horwood	SP77203156	0029	Oakley	SP66661104	1555
Great & Little Kimble	SP81300930	0387	Pitstone	SP94351517	0462
Great & Little Kimble	SP82000920	0388	Preston Bissett	SP66202800	0245
Great & Little Kimble	SP82220590	0945	Princes Risborough	SP80520345	0389
Great & Little Kimble	SP79780787	0404	Princes Risborough	SP80590360	0390
Great & Little Kimble	SP82020579	0405	Princes Risborough	SP81450525	0454
Great & Little Kimble	SP82790633	0954	Princes Risborough	SP81330440	0295
Great Missenden ..	SP87200137	0386	Quainton	SP72891918	0333
Great Missenden ..	SP91640205	0384	Quainton	SP72781966	0334
Great Missenden ..	SP91720203	0100	Quainton	SP71751991	0335
Great Missenden ..	SP90870043	0174	Quainton	SP75372053	0340
Grendon Underwood	SP67422110	0425	Quainton	SP71322003	0342
Grendon Underwood	SP67772125	0427	Quainton	SP72082013	0343
Hanslope	SP81004626	0355	Quainton	SP70572059	0344
Hanslope	SP82314545	0356	Quarrendon	SP78761785	0336
Hanslope	SP80434657	0357	Quarrendon	SP80301581	0407
Hanslope	SP81724759	0358	Shenley Brook End	SP83453600	0433
Hanslope	SP77504853	0360	Shenley Church End	SP82903650	0410
Hardmead	SP94134812	0476	Shenley Church End	SP82403660	0432
Hardmead	SP93484780	0477	Sherington	SP89004625	0453
Hardmead	SP94034812	0683	Slapton	SP92331937	0465
Hardmead	SP93184708	1493	Slough	SU95197978	0166
Haversham	SP82874258	0308	Slough	TQ02007880	1033
Hedgerley	SU97818833	0525	Soulbury	SP89632711	0552
Hogshaw	SP75002242	0341	Stewkley	SP85142594	0417
Hogshaw	SP73702257	0345	Stewkley	SP83742725	0418
Horton	TQ01877601	0297	Stoke Goldington ..	SP81634898	0045
Horton	TQ01197717	0298	Stoke Mandeville ..	SP82731040	0414
Hughenden	SU87649577	0275	Stoke Mandeville ..	SP83011021	0415
Hulcote	SP85381673	0003	Stoke Mandeville ..	SP83700946	0416
Iver	TQ01658043	0303	Tattenhoe	SP82853385	0269
Iver	TQ02828095	0550	The Lee	SP91520491	0175
Ivinghoe	SP92801673	0463	Waddesdon	SP75941294	0178
Ivinghoe	SP94081650	0464	Westcott	SP71821692	0444
Ivinghoe Aston	SP95461809	0184	Westcott	SP71761706	0331
Lavendon	SP92305360	0516	Weston Turville	SP86091086	0411
Lillingstone Lovell ..	SP71233965	0346	Weston Turville	SP85361079	0412
Little Horwood	SP79283092	0081	Weston Turville	SP84761353	0123
Little Marlow	SU88908774	0459	Weston Underwood	SP86575023	0461
Longwick cum Ilmer	SP77040540	0328	Wexham	SU99208152	0521
Loughton	SP83753750	0434	Wexham	TQ00688037	0301
Ludgershall	SP67801876	0321	Wexham	TQ01398025	0302
Ludgershall	SP65931711	0033	Whaddon	SP80723396	0266
Marsh Gibbon	SP64452287	0429	Whaddon	SP81143150	0221
Marsworth	SP91751485	0472	Wing	SP85202270	0409
Milton Keynes	SP88603920	0441	Wingrave	SP86831918	0406
Moulsoe	SP90774173	0682	Woodham	SP70451834	0332
Mursley	SP81832836	0530	Woolstone cum Willen	SP87403890	0440
Newport Pagnell	SP88024238	0458	Woolstone cum Willen	SP88104085	0457
North Crawley	SP92774530	1412	Wotton Underwood	SP69771752	0040
North Crawley	SP91804603	0478	Wotton Underwood	SP68461671	0236
North Crawley	SP92164509	0479	Wraysbury	TQ00357384	0299