# A ROMAN MILITARY SITE AT MAGIOVINIUM?

CHARMIAN WOODFIELD

During January, 1976, Sir Philip Duncombe drew the attention of Bradwell Abbey Field Centre to the cutting of a water main trench by the Anglian Water Authority along the verge of Watling Street at Galley Hill crossroads, in the parish of Little Brickhill, at NGR SP 892334., 250m. south east of the walled area of the Roman town of MAGIOVINIUM. This area has in the past yielded abundant traces of Iron Age and Roman occupation including traces of timber and stone buildings, iron working (areas of x, y and z fig. 2) and in 1967 a hoard of 296 denarii[1] (at z). An aerial photograph published in 1971[2] showed the presence of a double or treble ditched enclosure of uncertain date in the field in the south west quadrant of the crossroads adjacent to the planned line of the pipe trench. In view of the fruitfulness of the area, the proximity of the crop mark, and the lack of published material for Magiovinium, the Department of the Environment financed a watching brief, and the writer was delegated by Dennis Mynard to undertake the work. The Department also kindly made a grant towards the cost of publishing this paper.


Fig. 1. Magiovinium, Location and mid first-century context.

1.The latest was of Commodus, AD183 (RIC 66) *Records* XVIII, pt.5, p.439-440; XVIII, pt.2, p.166.
2.*Records* XIX./pt.2. p.I: VIII, p47.

SUMMARY

A water-pipe trench laid in January and February 1976 clipped the corner of a 5½ acre ditched enclosure south east of the Roman town of Magiovinium. The profile and construction of the ditches indicates, though not conclusively, that it is military work, and finds suggest a construction in the Neronian period, probably related to military consolidation after the Boudiccan rebellion. The military structure was apparently deserted in the Flavian period, and deliberately backfilled, in the area sectioned at least. There are indications of either alterations to the main enclosure, or possibly a second ditched enclosure on the same site.

Civilian occupation of the site from the conquest, or just before, to the second century is also attested.

*The trench*

The pipe trench – indicated by a dotted line (fig. 2) – was cut to an average depth of 1.650 m. and was observed for a total length of 375 m. Snow, ground water, and the cut and fill method adopted by the contractor did not provide ideal conditions at all times for observation, and for part of the distance the trench re-excavated earlier service trenches. The re-entrant route to cross Galley Lane brought the trench into the projected line of the two outer supposed ditches of the crop mark feature, but the inner ditch was thought not to have been sectioned.[3]

*The site*

The cropmark occupies a rather indistinct plateau 79 m (260 ft.) above sea level, formed by a tongue of Upper Lias overlain by sands, clays and gravels of river terrace and glacial origin. To the west the land falls gently to the Ouzel Valley, 400 m. distant and 15 m. below, and to the north and south there is a slight but immediate slope of 3–4 m. Tó the south east, however, the land continues to rise gently, and then abruptly on to the greensand to an elevation of 170 m. (558 ft.). Here, at a distance of 2¼ km. lies the 3.43 ha (8½ acre) hillfort of Danesborough. Beyond the Roman town Watling Street fords the River Ouzel to the north west, and, across the river, finds also indicate a considerable Belgic and early Roman presence in the area of modern Bletchley.

Watling Street here runs south-east – north west, and presumably represents the later consolidation of the assumed Claudian advance. It was also a vital artery in the Boudiccan revolt.

*Findings from the pipe trench*

This was cut from east to west and apart from stray finds, the first feature met with was in the bellmouth verge immediately north of Galley Lane, where the pipe trench sectioned indications of a 4–5 m. wide ditch, underlying the tarmac of the old line of Galley Lane. On its return to Watling Street, it sectioned the same ditch a second time (fig. 3, lower left hand section) the pipe trench having apparently bisected the more or less right angled course of a ditch presumably associated with the crop mark, and thought to be the middle ditch of that feature.

3.In view of the possibility of deep medieval furrows having been wrongly interpreted as ditches on the aerial photograph, and the impossibility of precise interpretation of cropmarks, the feature here called "middle ditch" may in fact be the inner ditch of a double-ditched enclosure.

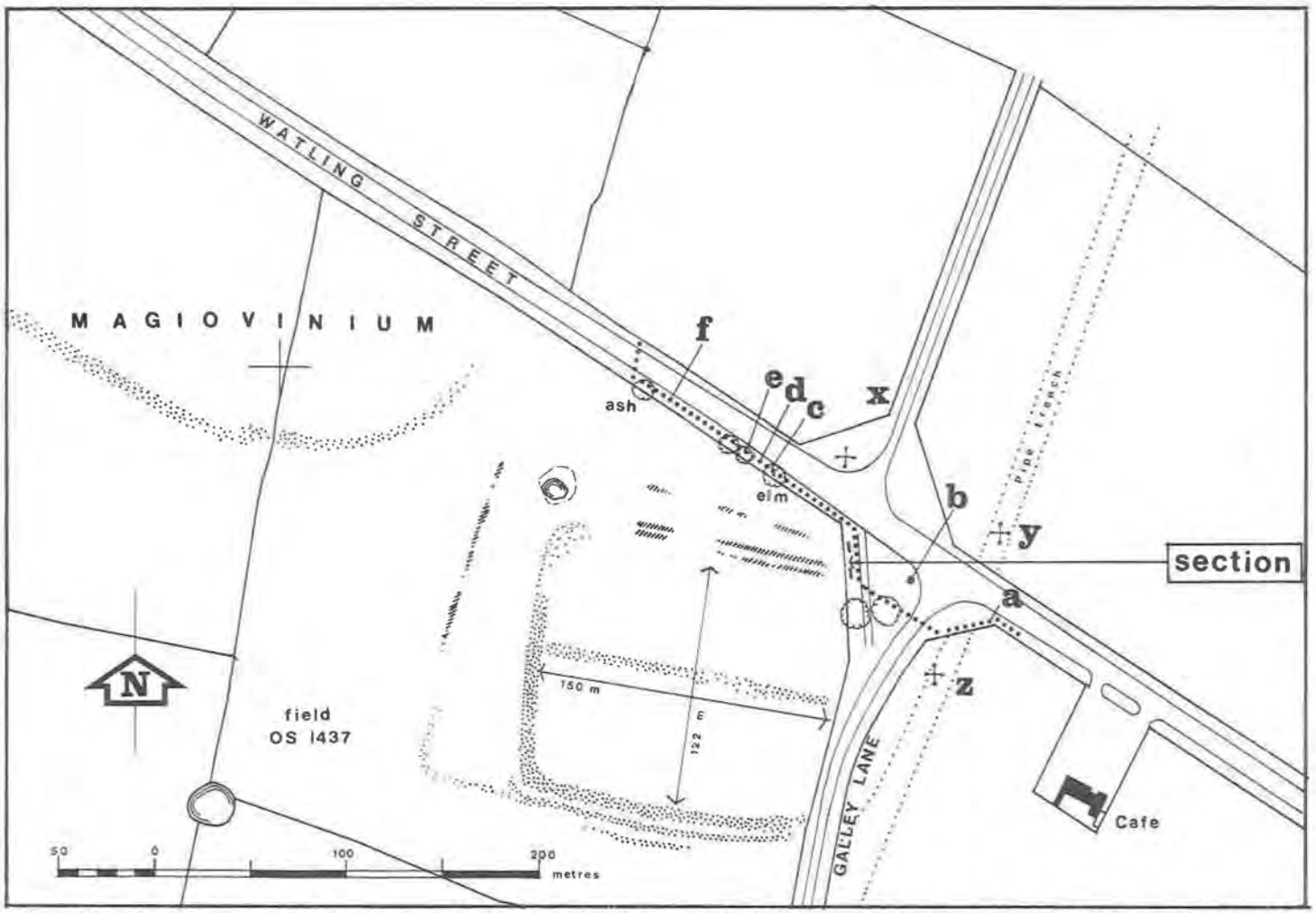


Fig. 2. Site plan and interpretation of cropmark (Based on Pl. VIII, *Records* XIX, Pt. 1, and B.K.S. negative 146588 at Bucks County Museum

Having passed this ditch lip the pipe trench entered, at just over 8m., a second of similar dimensions. This was not originally identified on the aerial photograph but on further scrutiny a possible indication of a different cropmark on a slightly different alignment may be discerned. On regaining Watling Street, the pipe trench continued along the south west verge and cut two further non-military ditches at some distance from the cross roads, at points marked by the ash tree and elm tree (fig. 2). Although most of this length was dug in old service trenches and drainage ditches, these Roman ditches were recovered close to trees where the earlier trenches had deviated from the straight line taken by the present pipe line.

In view of the importance of the section containing the two military ditches, this was recut 1½m. west of the pipe trench to enable the section to be drawn and some stratified material to be recovered.

*The middle ditch*

This was drawn twice, the contractors' programme allowing it to be drawn additionally in the main pipeline trench. (Fig. 2). The greater width shown in the latter section is presumably due to the turn for the corner. This, and the oblique angle of the trenches, will, of course, have produced some distortion. The dotted line on the top left hand section represents the profile of the ditch as seen on the east face of the same trench. The inner ditch of the excavation (? middle ditch of the three shown on the aerial photograph) was 3.95 m. wide at the westernmost of the faces exposed by the cuttings but as much as 5.5 m wide on the easternmost face of the east cutting where this clearly sliced across the fort corner. (Fig. 3). The ditch filled very rapidly with water, and was not traced beyond an estimated Roman working depth of some 1.40 m. It was estimated that the true depth in Roman times must have approached 2.00 m. It was cut through a varying natural subsoil of some .5m of orange gravel overlying yellow clay in the pipe line trench, and conversely through clay overlying orange gravel in the ancillary trench. There was a distinct clay lining some 10 cm. thick laid over the inner face of the ditch still in position in the ancillary trench, but this feature was not observed elsewhere. The shape of the ditch was very variable due presumably not only to the angle at which it was sectioned but also to subsequent movement of the natural subsoil (the varying nature of the subsoil would present difficulties to the military engineers) but this ditch is likely to have been Punic in form.

Any silting that may have taken place in this ditch would have been below the modern water table, and the ditch fill as observed was a conspicuous jumble of material – mixed clay and gravel, with dark patches in which it was possible to pick out what appeared to be decayed turf. There was no doubt that this represented a deliberate fill. The top levels of fill, however, as in the outer ditch, were of different material, here being of a dark brown sandy earth, and may represent silting and build up of a ground surface after the main filling had taken place. There were indications of stake holes pushed through this dark earth level into the underlying clay and gravel fill. Pottery from the deliberate ditch fill indicated a mid to late 1st century date, and included a scrap of South Gaulish ware, probably Flavian (L on section). A clenched nail from the same position was the only hint of timber building.

*The outer ditch*

The water came into this ditch rather more slowly than into the middle ditch making it possible to ascertain somewhat more of the profile, but it was unfortunately still not possible to bottom it (Fig. 3). It was 5.2 m. wide as drawn, the true width, allowing for the oblique angle at which it was cut, perhaps being nearer 4 m. The ditch was traced down to 1.60 m. below the water level, giving an operative Roman working depth of at least 2.1 m. It was cut into the natural subsoil which, on this part of the site, was blue clay, and it had been deliberately filled with clean compact orange gravel with ironstone, apparently redeposited natural. There were no finds. The profile was traced down by rapid hand digging in a small area below the water table, but the gravel continued as shown to a point where, assuming a reasonably symmetrical profile for the ditch, very little space was left where silt could have accumulated. The impression was gained that the ditch had been filled in either at a point hard upon the end of its working and maintained life, (but no traces of cleaning out or recutting were observed) or very shortly after it was dug. It was assumed that the filling was derived either by a process of deliberate digging elsewhere on the site to produce fill, (as opposed to filling back with the remains of a standing defensive bank) as the fill was extremely clean; alternatively the ditch could, perhaps, have been dug on a more or less virgin site, and filled in before occupation material could accumulate. What could be seen of the profile appeared more symmetrical than that of the middle ditch, presumably because it was not here on the turn.

On the top of the clean fill was a layer of more gingery gravel, with small quantities of iron slag and with a lens of dark gravelly earth, and above this again other industrial dark sandy levels with some mortar, and slag-containing levels. No material was found to date these, but in view of their position it seemed likely that they represented the upper fill of the ditch in the Roman period, as they were not present on the platform between the two ditches. Evidence for iron working in the Roman period has been recovered from the Galley Lane area.[4]

The difference in character of this ditch, both in profile, fill and its appearance on the aerial photograph' raises the possibility that it may be of different date to the middle ditch.

It is possible that the sandy clay overlying natural on the south side of this ditch is the remains of an upcast bank 2.5 m. wide and some 20 cm. high as surviving. It overlay a small gulley 40 cm. wide and 10 cm. deep, which may just represent a laying-out line. There were no finds from these features. In front of this lay a pocket of dark earthy sand which might just represent a turf front to such a bank.

*The platform between the two military ditches*

The other feature here was a small shallow ?V ditch or gulley at most some 1.5 m. wide, (but probably narrower as the trench appeared to cut it obliquely.) and probably some 20–25 cm. deep, though only the bottom 15 cm. were clearly defined. (Fig. 3). It was clearly visible where it cut into the natural clay, and had a somewhat gravelly fill, but it was not possible in the machine cut trench to determine whether it was contemporary with the cutting of either ditch, or represented some feature of an earlier or later date, and the excavators were unable to clarify its upper profile. This small

4.*Records* XVIII, pt. 5, 439, 440.

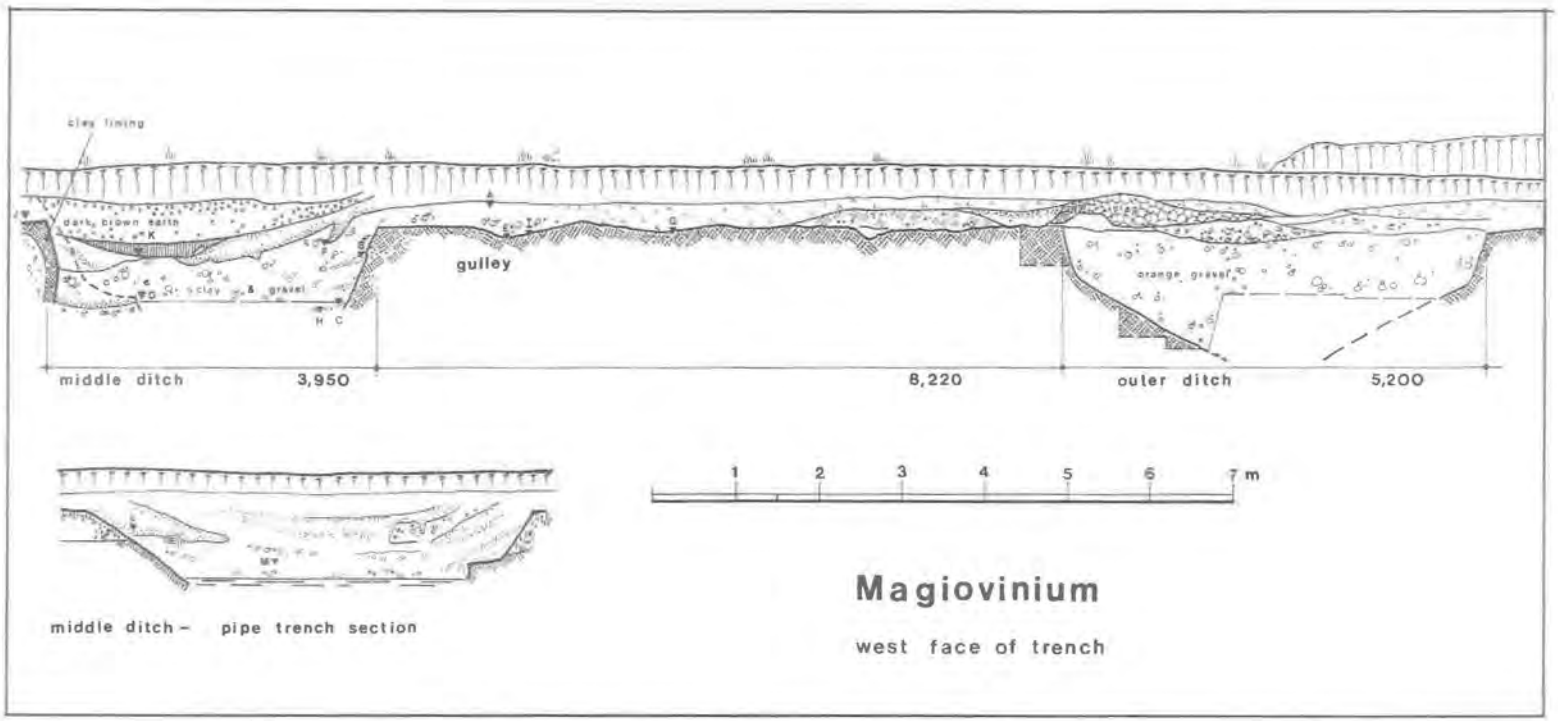


Fig. 3. Section through the military ditches, west faces.

ditch or gulley produced one Roman wall sherd from its fill (I on section), one possibly associated (at A) and the rim sherd of a South Gaulish Dr. cup of Neronian date – E on section. It is possible that this represents a marking out ditch or trial cut, for a fort of Neronian date.

*The non-military ditches*

The earliest of these, under the ash tree (see Fig. 2 for position) was cut during the illness of the writer, and there are no records of its dimension or alignment. The workmen had, however, saved the pottery, and from their description it appeared more likely to have been a ditch than a pit. 65% of the pottery was of native type, and 50% of all the material was of well made beakers. However the 33% of Romanized pottery made it clear that it was a post conquest feature.

The later ditch – the elm tree ditch – (Fig. 2) was briefly observed in section and on plan. Its western profile was badly disturbed by tree roots, but it appeared to be about 1.5 m. wide, but may have extended further to the west. It was dug into the natural, (here orange sand and gravel) had widely sloping sides, and was only about 30 cm. deep in its present form. The fill was dirty sand and gravel. This ditch appeared to be later than the fort, with 80% of the pottery in a Roman fabric, a sharp drop off in the native-derived storage jar, and a total absence of the Belgic girth and butt beaker. The angle at which it ran, more or less north/south, although it related oddly to the Watling Street, raises the question whether the levelling of the fort, apparently on the north side only, might have been not so much for military reasons, but instead related to the spread of buildings and back yards along the Watling Street. The pottery rather suggests a date in the last quarter of the 1st century, or perhaps the early 2nd for the ditch fill. 2 pieces of tegula were the only indication of building material.

The cutting of the Watling Street revealed a mass of modern service trenches, and what appeared to be layers of natural sand under about 1 m. of 1930's concrete road and later tarmac surfaces. There was nothing that could be recognised of the Roman road.

No late Roman, medieval or post medieval pottery prior to the 17/18th centuries was recovered anywhere on the site.

*Interpretation*

The enclosure appearing on the air photograph measures approximately 122 m. x 150 m., has double or treble banks (represented by close-set small dots on the plan, Fig 2) or ditches (represented by parallel shading) with rounded corners, and thus accords with the general type of Roman auxiliary fort; the size, 2.2 ha (5.5 acres) would also fit for example with a garrison of *cohors equitata* 500 strong. This impression is to some extent strengthened by a feature extending across the centre, apparently the via praetoria, although the centre area would normally be occupied by the principia in the standard plan.[5] The position is moreover the type of location frequently selected for a military site, being an elevated platform in a river valley affording both good visual monitoring and easy control of a river crossing. The ditches as revealed in the pipe trench are of military dimensions and type, with clay lining on the inner face, and the middle ditch contains mid to late 1st century material not at variance with this interpretation of the crop marks. Much more tenuous than the main crop mark are

5.See however the fort at Forden Gaer for an apparently continuous *via praetoria*. *Roman Frontier in Wales*, fig. 43, p.87, V. E. Nash Williams and M. G. Jarrett.

indications of another feature, possibly a second, larger enclosure or possibly alterations to the main enclosure on a different alignment; this appears to relate to the outer ditch (Fig. 3) which produced no dating material.

The aerial photograph also gives an indication of what may be a transverse road on the north side of the fort visible only where it apparently obliterates the ditch systems in forming a crossing (fig. 2). A connection here to Watling Street may reasonably be anticipated.

(The presence of a large ditch, 12ft. wide and 8ft. deep, with first century pottery in the fill, at y (Fig. 2)[6] indicates that greater complexities than any discussed here probably exist.)

Confusion further arises from the observed fact that the medieval ridge and furrow appears to respect the southern and central (now ploughed up) banks of the crop mark. The ridge and furrow itself changes direction on the central "road" feature, and the selions in each half of the supposed fort are abnormally short. Outside the fort enclosure the furlongs are of more normal dimensions, but again are curtailed against the curve of the known Roman town defences. The problem raised cannot be easily answered, for it stretches credulity to accept that the Roman fort, as well as the town defences, was standing sufficiently to determine the medieval field layout, yet the enclosure cannot readily or convincingly be explained otherwise or in terms of medieval field systems *per se*[7].

## THE COARSE POTTERY

Only a small quantity of pottery was recovered, 110 sherds in all, (not including the Samian) of which only 24 sherds were stratified although the find place of the bulk was not in real doubt and the percentages include this. However, in view of the importance of the possible implications of the site and the scarcity of published pottery from Magiovinium virtually all illustratable pottery has been drawn.

The bulk of the material is Belgic or Romanized Belgic in character but there was a small proportion, some 9%, of hand made or partly hand made sherds, including vessels 7, 11 and 12, which appear to be archaic Iron Age types. 4 main fabrics are represented as follows:–

*Mid to late 1st century* *Fabric A*

Ash Tree

Ditch 10% Fort 10% Elm Tree Ditch 2% 9% of total

Shelly native ware, usually black with black and brown to brick red external surfaces. Associated with *pre-Belgic Iron Age forms*. The pots appear to have been made by coiling, but to have had the rims and shoulders turned on some sort of turntable. The two rims are slashed, and in one case channelled apparently by smoothing round with a wooden implement. There is considerable variation in the quantities of shell.

6 File at Bucks. County Museum, recorded by Richard Griffiths.

7 For an aerial photograph of a fort still with fields tucked inside it, and divided transversely, see *The Roman Frontier in Wales*, Breeon Gaer, pl. IIIA.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | *Fabric B* | |
| 5% | 33% | 16% | 16% of total<br>Note high% for fort and persistence of type | A native rather soft grey ware, with inclusions of darker grey material, apparently pre-fired crushed clay. Small quantities of other possible tempering materials are present (fine white quartz grits) but these are probably present naturally in the clay. Occasionally very small quantities of shell occur. This fabric, which fires orange to brownish on the outer surface is used for *storage jars*, which appear to be wheel thrown. |
| 50% | 5% | 0% | *Fabric C*<br>11% of total | A native fabric – a finer, harder version of B. It still contains the pre-fired crushed clay, but the particles tend to be smaller. It appears to be used for *beakers* and *bowls*, and fires buff to brown on the external surfaces. These vessels appear to have been thrown on a fast wheel. There is some overlap between Fabric C and Fabric D. |
| 33% | 50% | 80% | *Fabric D*<br>50% of total | A hard grey to black sandy ware with occasional white quartz and black grits. The distinctive feature is the frosted sparkle of the fabric when sherds are examined in a good light, caused by the presence of large numbers of minute white quartz grits. These are often sparsely present in the other fabrics, but are normally not as noticeable. It is assumed that fabric D is using a local clay source but one different from that used by the native potters. This ware fires usually grey to black on external surfaces, but sometimes a more reddish finish occurs. This ware is used for *Romanized native* and *Roman* wares. |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | Flagon Sherds | |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | Roman Shelly | |

Other fabrics are only sparsely represented, but include light coloured to white Roman flagon sherds, 5%, Roman shelly fabrics, 4% (light grey fired buff to red externally), a soft pinkish Roman ware apparently originally dusted with mica, 1 sherd, and colour coated wares – 1 sherd.

There are virtually no published dated groups of relevant pottery from the immediate area. Reference is made to the following reports:–

| | |
|---|---|
| Saffron Gardens & Terrick | "Some Iron Age Pottery from Mid to North Bucks,....", by Helen Waugh, Dennis C. Mynard and Robin Cain. *Records* XIX, Part 4, 1974. |
| *Richborough I* | *"First Report of Excavation at Richborough, Kent"* by J.P. Bushe-Fox. Society of Antiquaries. |
| *Verulamium* | *"Verulamium Excavations, Volume I."* Sheppard Frere. Society of Antiquaries, 1972. |
| Baginton, 1969 | "A Neronian-Vespasianic Military Site at "The Lunt", Baginton, Warwickshire" by Brian Hobley. *Transactions of the Birmingham Archaeological Society*, Vol. 83, 1969. |
| Camulodunum | *"Camulodunum,"* C. F. C. Hawkes, and M. R. Hull. Society of Antiquaries, 1947. |
| *Stoke Goldington* | "Excavations at Stoke Goldington" by D. C. Mynard. *Wolverton & District Archaeological Society Newsletter,* No. 10, March 1966. |
| *Hardingstone* | *Excavations at Hardingstone, Northants 1967–8* by P. J. Woods, Northants County Council, 1969. |

*The sections cut through the Fort Ditches* *Deliberate fill of Middle Ditch*

The material suggests a late 1st century date for this.

1. Shoulder sherd of large storage jar, in fabric B, here a comparatively hard grey ware with dark fired clay tempering, and orange external and internal surfaces. A Belgic type, c.f. *Saffron Gardens*, p.397, fig. 8, but the more controlled decoration and better firing suggest a Roman date. From the top of the deliberate ditch fill. "L" on section. Mid to late 1st century.
2. Rim fragment of ? wide mouthed bowl or dish in fabric D, a hard grey sandy ware, here with dark grey external surfaces. Slight burnishing on rim. Parallels have not been closely looked for in view of the smallness of the sherd, but it may be a wide-mouthed carinated bowl, c.f. *Richborough* I, pl. XXI no. 23, there dated late 1st century. The wide mouthed bowl, however, is a native type occurring at Camulodunum in Romanized fabrics during the early years of the Conquest. "L" on section.
3. Dish or bowl with flat out-turned rim in fabric D – hard grey ware with darker grey surfaces, c.f. *Verulamium* type 344, there dated late 1st century. "H" on section.

4. Dish or bowl with triangular rim in fabric D – hard grey ware with darker grey surfaces. c.f. Baginton, 1969, fig. 15, no. 66, there dated to the Flavian period. "F" on section.
5. Cordoned sherd, presumably from a butt or girth beaker, in black sandy ware, burnished black externally. Probably fabric D, and therefore a Romanized version of this Belgic type. "C" on section.
Unillustrated sherds from the deliberate ditch fill were in addition a fragment of Flavian Samian (see below) "L" on section, a flagon sherd and also some half dozen wall sherds of fabrics A, B and D. "B" "K" & "M" on section. A further sherd of fabric B came from the initial clay lining of the ditch "D" on section.
*The gulley on the platform between the two main ditches* produced 2 sherds of fabric D, "I" on section, and in addition a Samian sherd of Neronian date (see below) "E" on section.
*Old ground surface – presumably pre-fort ground level*, possibly pre-conquest occupation.
6. Shoulder sherd of large native storage jar in fabric B, soft soapy grey, the internal surface reddish grey, the external orange. The pot has been roughly decorated by being wiped diagonally with the fingers or some soft material. There has been a row of stab decoration now virtually eroded away. c.f. Saffron Gardens, pp. 396–7, nos. 69 and 73. "J" on section.
Unillustrated from old ground surface. 1 sherd very similar to 6 and a sherd of fabric C. Both late Iron Age in character. "J" on section. Also a sherd of fabric A, "G" on section.
*Machine dug spoil over central ditch* (Unstratified) Mid to late 1st century.
7. Cooking pot in fabric B, but with the addition of small quantities of shell. The pot appears to be basically hand made and subsequently turned. It is fired light brown internally, brown grey externally, with soot incrustation. c.f. Saffron Gardens, p.396, no. 62. Presumably mid-1st century and in the tradition of nos. 11 and 12 below, but more Belgicised.
8. Rim sherd of cooking pot or jar in grey shelly fabric with light brown internal and external surfaces; of late 1st century type.
*Machine dug spoil from fort section general area.* (Unstratified)
9. Rim of dish in fabric D, hard grey body, darker grey surfaces, of late 1st century type.
10. Sherd of fabric D – hard, well-made pot with browny-grey external surfaces, originally decorated with incised curvilinear designs or roundels.
Fort area unstratified and unillustrated.
Base of vessel in fabric A, light grey ware fired brick red to brown on the external surfaces. The 10 cm. diameter base shows clear signs of coiling.
*Ditch 2 (Ash Tree Ditch) Material recovered by workman.*
Nos. 11–18 appear to form a group of the period 40–60 AD. but it is not stratified.
11. Cooking pot of archaic Iron Age form in fabric A, but with only small amounts of shell tempering, fired brown externally and brick red to black within. There are traces of external soot. The pot appears to be basically handmade with traces of coiling showing externally. The rim appears to have been finished on some sort of turntable. A stick has been run round the internal rim to make a groove. c.f. Saffron Gardens, p.396, no. 56.

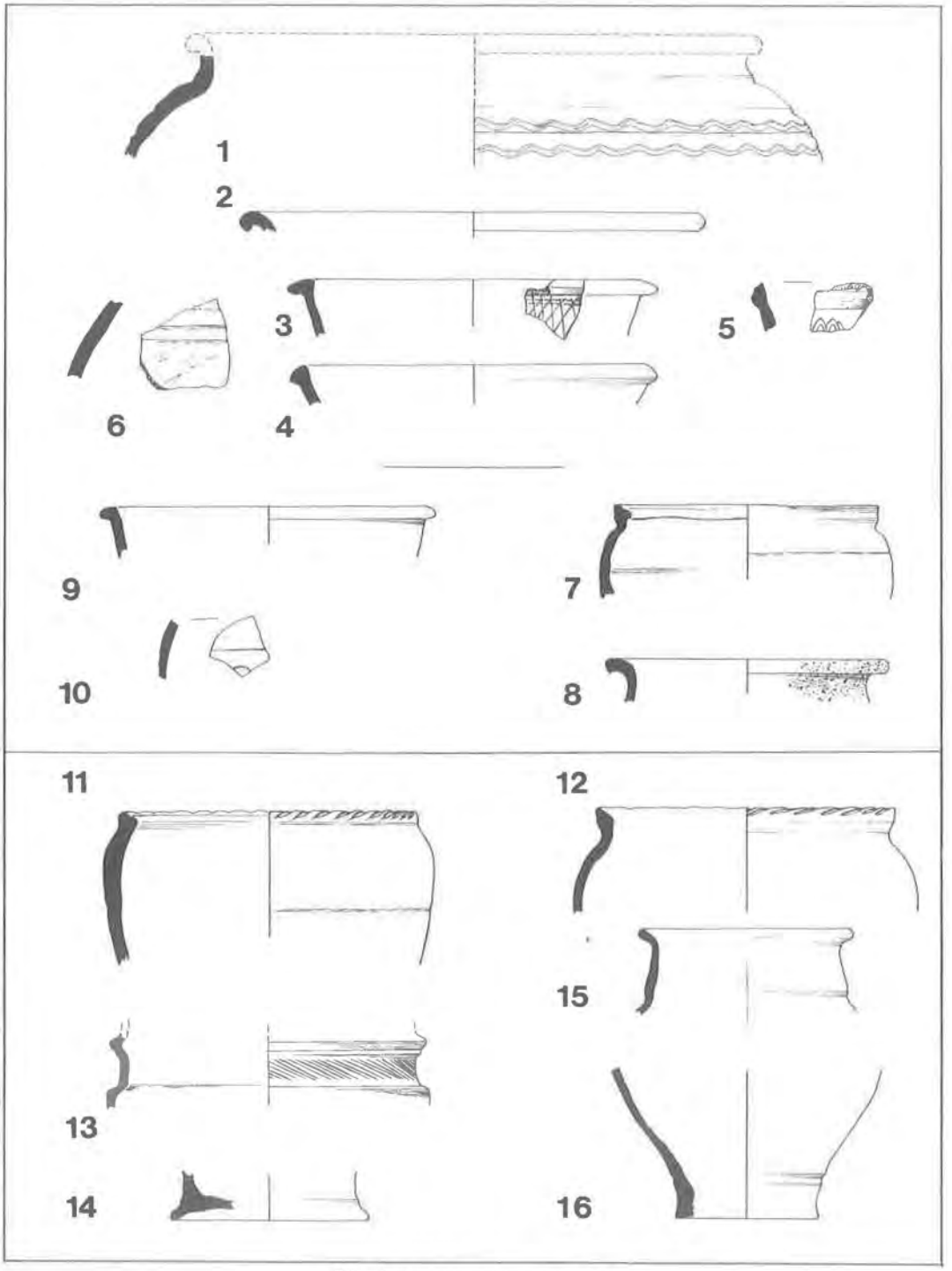


Fig. 4. Coarse pottery; scale ¼

12. Cooking pot or jar in fabric A, black and soapy with considerable shell tempering, fired black externally, with faint traces of rilling on shoulder; interior surface of pot reddish brown, rim decorated by slashing. c.f. Saffron Gardens. p.396, no. 60.
The existence of these two very different traditions of potting side by side raises many questions which have yet to be answered. Mr. Peter Woods (*Hardingstone*, p.8., and Rushden, Northants, unpublished) states that he believes the partly hand made vessels were "made by potters not yet competent in the use of the wheel, and finished off by more experienced potters".
13. Beaker sherd in fabric C, a fine hard grey ware fired light orange on external surfaces, c.f. Saffron Gardens, p.393, no. 17.
14. Base in similar ware to 13. Probably from a butt or girth beaker.
15. Neck sherd from beaker in fabric C – hard grey ware fired to dark orange on surfaces. c.f. Saffron Gardens, p.393, no. 17, but undecorated.
16. Base, presumably of beaker, in very similar ware to 15, perhaps the same vessel.
17. Bowl in fabric C, but rather a soft fabric in this case, grey, with brown to orange external surface, the interior remaining unoxidised except for a narrow strip inside the rim. Originally burnished but much eroded. Presumably Belgic, c.f. Saffron Gardens, p.394, nos. 34–37.
18. Rim sherd of beaker (or possibly bowl) similar to no. 13 above in fabric C with buff to grey external surfaces. c.f. Saffron Gardens, p.393, no. 17.
19. Jar rim in a very well fired grey fabric. Fully Romanized, and unlike any other material from this ditch site. (It need not, of course, be related). Exterior surfaces buff-grey coloured. The form is current at the conquest, but the ware suggests a late 1st or early 2nd century date. Rims of this type occur at Verulamium in grey wares in the early 2nd century. c.f. Verulamium. Type 481, there dated 105 to 130 A.D.
20. 2 rim sherds of a small reeded rim bowl, apparently carinated, with unusually an inward slope on the rim. In fabric D, particularly hard, black and sandy but possibly discoloured in cooking and originally buff/brown. Probably late 1st century, c.f. Baginton, 1969, Fig. 16, No. 113 – there in a hard grey ware, and Flavian.
21. Rim sherd in fabric D of cooking pot ?; rather distinctive everted rim, grey body, darker grey external surfaces, burnished rim.
Unillustrated from Ash Tree Ditch. 1 sherd only, and that apparently from pot 15.
*Ditch 1, Elm Tree Ditch*
Recovered from machine spoil, except 28 which was stratified. The material, nevertheless, appears to form a late 1st century/early second century group.
22. Rim of large storage jar of native type in Fabric B, orange surface. c.f. Saffron Gardens, p.397, no. 70. The general type of course, continues at Verulamium into the 2nd century.
23. Rim of beaker (or possibly bow), but here in fabric D, hard, grey and sandy. Presumably a Romanized native form,dating from 2nd half of 1st century.
24. Rim of bowl in soft pinkish fabric, buff external surfaces, apparently slipped, sparse surviving mica dusting on exterior. The rim is damaged, and both angle and diameter are approximate. Probably a copy of Dr. form 29 and 1st/early 2nd century.
25. Small bead rim beaker or cooking pot with lattice decoration, in fabric D, hard grey sandy, with darker external surfaces. Burnishing on rim and shoulder. The interior

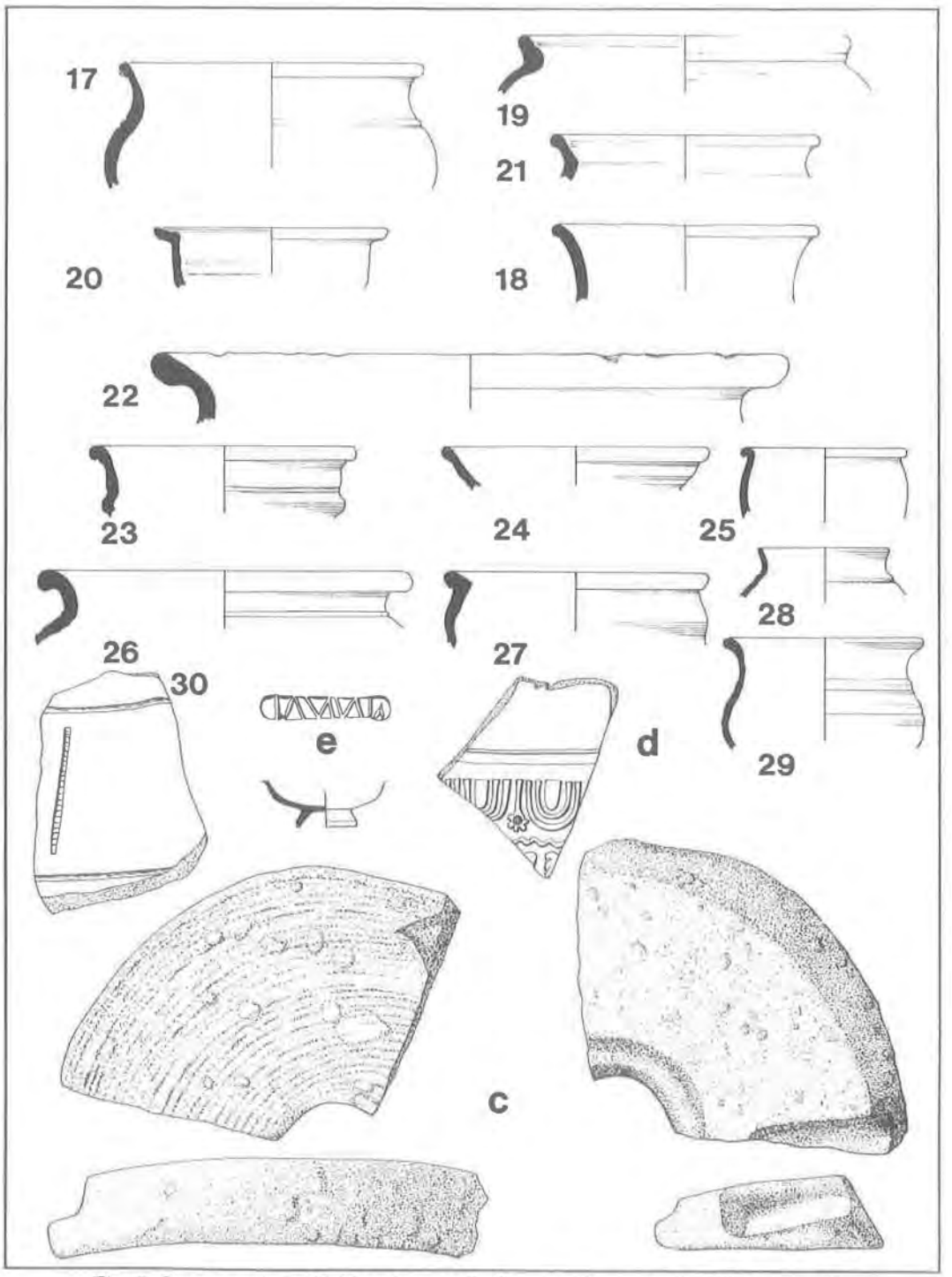


Fig. 5. Coarse pottery 17-29 and quern C, ¼scale; 30, samian L and stampe,1/1.

shows no wheel marks. Presumably a Romanized form of a native type, e.g. Camulodunum 259. An end 1st century type.
26. Grey jar in fabric D, hard, light grey and sandy, fabric very similar to no. 23. Some burnishing on rim. c.f. *Verulamium*, types 66–69, there dated before 60 AD. See also Terrick, p.403, no. 59. Mr. Woods states that he would place it late 1st/early 2nd century in Northants.
27. Beaker, jar or bowl in fabric D, hard grey ware, black external surfaces, burnished on top of flat rim and down over shoulder. Presumably same date range as 23.
28. Small beaker in a distinctive fine grey ware of poppy head type, not fabric D. This sherd was stratified in the ditch. c.f. *Verulamium* type 142, there dated 60–75. Mr. Woods would put this later in the 1st century in Northants.
29. Small bowl or beaker in fine hard grey sandy ware, with a silvery grey slip or burnishing on rim and shoulder. A fully Romanized native type, c.f. *Verulamium*, type 67, but this example in a finer ware. Presumably late 1st/early 2nd century.
30. Sherd in fabric D, hard grey sandy ware, darker external surface. The sherd is decorated with incised lines parallel to the internal wheel marks, and therefore horizontal, and there is a line of vertical decoration made with a fine toothed implement. Mr. Dennis Mynard informs me that there is a similar unpublished sherd from Stoke Goldington. The date is likely therefore, to be late 1st century.

Unillustrated (Retrieved from digger spoil, probably, not not certainly, from Ditch 1).

Some 20 sherds of fabric D, decorated sherds including 1 with light rilling (rare on this site), 1 with very small pin head size barbotine decoration; 1 from a shouldered jar with an incised vertical band and parallel incised/vertical lines. There are approximate late first/early 2nd century parallels at Verulamium, but the rim form here is unknown.

## THE SAMIAN WARE

Hedley Pengelly

The letters refer to the find place as shown on the site plan. All are unstratified except 3.
1. "d" Form 37, Central Gaulish. Hadrianic. Further identification is not possible due to the smallness of the sherd.
2. "e" an illiterate potter's stamp giving ꟾꓥꓤꓤꓠꓥ on a small cup of form 27, Central Gaulish. Miss B. M. Dickinson informs me that no other examples of this stamp seem to be known. The piece is possibly from Les-Martres-de-Veyre and Trajanic.
3. Form 27, South Gaulish, Neronian. From gulley on platform between fort ditches. "E" on section.
4. A scrap from the base of a form 15/17 or 18, South Gaulish, probably Flavian. From the top of the ditch fill. "L" on section.
5. "f" Form 15/17 or 18 base, with a trace of the potter's stamp, South Gaulish, Flavian.

6. "b" Form 79 or 79R, burnt, Central Gaulish, late Antonine; not earlier than AD 170.
7. "a" Form 31, Central Gaulish, late-Antonine.

*Mortarium*

A wall sherd of a mortarium was found at "a". Mrs. K. Hartley reports that it was probably of Northamptonshire, Upper Nene manufacture, and might well date to the second century or first half of the third.

*Other finds*

Stone "c". Part of a *quern stone* was recovered from the Elm Tree Ditch area. I am grateful to Mr. Martyn Owen of the Geological Museum for the following note.

"The piece of quern is derived from a quartz conglomerate rock and from its general appearance and character it is likely to have come from the Upper Old Red Sandstone of the Eastern part of the Anglo-Welsh Basin, i.e., Herefordshire or Monmouthshire." It seems unlikely that this stone was worked and traded before the completion of Julius Frontinus' campaign against the Silures in 74–78. Unillustrated.

From the same area came a *rubber stone*, 16 cm. x 2.8 cm., in a micaceous sandstone: Mr. Owen comments "This is a reddish stained, fine grained silicaceous sandstone with some muscovite flakes visible on the bedding planes. We have compared it with specimens in our collection, but unfortunately we cannot find a suitable match." And in the same material a broken piece of an object resembling a saddle *quern*. This was 24 cm. x 17 cm. and appears to retain one original corner, being broken on 2 sides and part of a third. It is 4 cm. thick and does not appear to have been shaped on its unbroken surfaces. On the top face there is a worn polished hollow surviving in part, giving a minimum area of 6 cm. x 14 cm. The hollow is just over 1 cm. deep and has a very smooth well worn surface. The stone displays reddening.

*Tile*

A pila tile (incomplete) was recovered from "a", and 2 pieces of tegula from the Elm Tree Ditch area (all unstratified). One of these pieces of tegula had a 45 degree external chamfer.

*Metal and evidence for iron working*

Only one incomplete clenched nail (8 cm. long) was recovered, stratified, in the top of the ditch fill. ("L" on section). The point had been turned over and hammered flat, perhaps for weather boarding. The top fill of the outer ditch contained slag and other evidence of iron working.

The finds will all be deposited in the County Museum, Aylesbury.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are due to the Anglian Water Authority and their contractors for their co-operation, and to Dr. Peter Jarvis, Mr. Peter Westcombe, Mr. Cedric Hoptroff and other members of the Bletchley Archaeological Society for their help on site. Mr. Stephen Green, Ros Tyrell and Jill Paterson of Bradwell Abbey also visited the site and retrieved material. Buckinghamshire County Museum (Mr. Michael Farley) supplied background information and Mr. Hedley Pengelly not only reported on the Samian but both he, Mr. Peter Woods and Mr. Dennis Mynard put their extensive local knowledge at the writer's disposal. Mrs. June Burbidge drew the pottery, and Mr. Paul Woodfield drew the plans and sections. Mr. Martyn Owen and Mrs. Kay Hartley gave specialist advice. Dr. Graham Webster visited the site, and his help and advice, then and subsequently, were of much value.