

ARCHAEOLOGICAL NOTES FROM BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY MUSEUM

These notes include archaeological discoveries reported during 1978 and a few earlier finds not previously noted. Discoveries in the Milton Keynes Development Corporation area are included by courtesy of D. C. Mynard (DM) and fuller accounts of these sites appear in the CBA Group 9 Bulletins. The assistance of many informants is gratefully acknowledged: other discoveries are by Museum staff. The compiler would be pleased to learn of any errors or omissions.

Some selection of material has been necessary; single struck flakes for instance have not normally been included, nor field scatters of mediaeval pottery unless of sufficient quantity to indicate settlement, nor single Roman coin finds. The threat of looting by metal detector users continues unabated and has made abbreviated grid references necessary for certain categories of site.

Numbers in brackets are accession numbers of material at the County Museum; BAFC indicates material at Bradwell Abbey Field Centre. The County Museum Archaeological Group is abbreviated as CMAG.

Michael Farley

PREHISTORIC

Amersham

SU 946 976

Mr. W. Filby discovered part of a Neolithic polished flint axe, a rounded scraper and various flint flakes in a ploughed field.

Bow Brickhill

See Romano-British.

Bradwell

SP 8383 4016

A barb and tang arrowhead associated with flint blades and waste flakes was discovered during fieldwalking by R. Williams, MKDC.

Burnham

SU 9292 8271

Five struck flakes and a retouched blade of Neolithic – Bronze Age date were found by Mr. G. Cooper. (521.79).

Chalfont St. Giles

SU 9745 9175

Mr. and Mrs. G. Cooper found several flint flakes and two scrapers of Neolithic – Early Bronze Age date in a garden.

Chalfont St. Giles

SU 9713 9130 (centre)

In four separate areas, Mr. and Mrs. G. Cooper found a quantity of struck flakes, three scrapers and a ?plano-convex knife, of Neolithic – Early Bronze Age date.

Chalfont St. Peter

TQ 0145 9080

Several flint flakes, Neolithic – Bronze Age in date, were discovered by Mr. and Mrs. J. Edmonds during fieldwalking. (71.78).

- Chalfont St. Peter* SU 9971 9116
Mr. E. J. Briden found a small pointed Palaeolithic hand axe with a flat butt in a garden.
- Chalfont St. Peter* SU 985 910
Twelve flint flakes of Neolithic – Bronze Age date were found by Mrs. H. Bridbury.
- Chalfont St. Peter* SU 9770 9092
A number of flint flakes of Neolithic – Bronze Age date were found by Mr. and Mrs. G. Cooper.
- Chalfont St. Peter* SU 9771 8953
Two scrapers and two flakes of Neolithic – Early Bronze Age date were found by Mrs. and Mrs. G. Cooper, and recorded by Mrs. B. Stainton.
- Chalfont St. Peter* SU 9828 8968
A flint scraper of Neolithic – Early Bronze Age date was found by Mr. and Mrs. G. Cooper and recorded by Mrs. B. Stainton.
- Dorney* SU 9478
Two ring ditches, apparently adjoining a field system, were photographed by the National Monuments Record.
- Dorney* SU 9363 7748
A rounded flint scraper and two flakes of Neolithic – Bronze Age date were found by Mr. T. Lewis. (502.78).
- Dorton* SP 678 122
Two flint blades, probably Mesolithic and a Camulodunum type III brooch in two pieces, were found by Mr. O. Lee. (256.78 and 257.78).
- Ellesborough*
A small Late Bronze Age hoard consisting of a leaf spearhead, Thorndon type knife, socketed axe, small axe/chisel and an axe fragment was discovered by Mr. D. Critoph in Ellesborough parish. Published in *BAR* 67 (1979), 145–8. (L.298).
- Great and Little Hampden* SP 8449 0251
Seven flint flakes, Neolithic – Bronze Age, were found by Mrs. J. Mellor and Miss M. Whiteman.
- Great Marlow* SU 8285
A rectangular enclosure, perhaps Iron Age, was photographed from the air by the National Monuments Record.
- Haddenham*
Continuing fieldwalking by members of CMAG in this parish (earlier discoveries reported in the last *Records*), produced further evidence of extensive prehistoric utilisation of the area. NGR's given normally refer to centres of fields, which have been walked in strips.
- (a) SP 7313 0837
Five flint scrapers and a number of struck flakes. (500.78).
- (b) SP 7244 0876
Two flint scrapers, a Mesolithic blade core and a few flint flakes. (499.78).

- (c) SP 7182 0806
A damaged ovate hand axe and a number of struck flakes. (553.78).
- (d) SP 7424 1043
Two small round scrapers, Early Bronze Age. (69.78).
- (e) SP 7463 1048
A round scraper, a blade core, probably Mesolithic, and several flakes. (70.78).
- (f) SP 7438 0982
A scatter of flint flakes, also one round scraper and five cores. (127.78).
- (g) SP 7278 0849
A few flint flakes and a finely trimmed blade, Neolithic – Early Bronze Age. (126.78).
- (h) SP 7190 0475
A quantity of flint flakes, a bi-facially worked piece ?Neolithic arrowhead, a finely retouched blade and four cores. (160.78).
- (i) SP 7217 0782 – 7266 0831
Over a hundred flint flakes recovered from a large area, also three cores, four rounded scrapers, a transverse arrowhead, a barb and tang arrowhead and two rounded scrapers. (165.78).
- (j) SP 7073 0750
Several hundred flakes including 51 blades recovered from one field; also a ?microlith, transverse and barb and tang arrowheads, and many cores and rounded scrapers. Total assemblage of Mesolithic – Early Bronze Age date. (72.78).

Hambleton SU 7789
A large single ring-ditch has been recorded from the air by the National Monuments Record.

Little Horwood SP 7946 2999
A slim Mesolithic tranchet axe in blue-grey flint was found by Mr. E. J. Bull whilst fieldwalking. (363.78).

Long Crendon SP 700 088
A few Belgic sherds in soapy fabric, accompanied by some Romano-British sherds, were recovered from a water main trench by Mr. Hughes and reported by Mr. M. E. Davies.

Long Crendon SP 6990 0916
Middle Iron Age sherds were recovered from a water main trench by Mr. Hughes and reported by Mr. M. E. Davies.

Long Crendon SP 711 091
A ring-ditch was recorded, on a photograph by Professor J. K. St. Joseph.

Lower Winchendon SP 7318 1227
The butt end of a Mesolithic tranchet axe, also sparse Romano-British and Mediaeval sherds, were found in a back garden by Mrs. A. D. F. Simpson. (211.78).

Newport Pagnell SP 863 453
Newport Pagnell Police reported discovery of a human skull adjacent to the Ouse bank after it had been graded. Two pieces of femur were found at the same point. It seems likely that the bones came from a burial adjacent to the river, which had been disturbed. Study of the skull shape by R. Wright (*Recs. of Bucks*, forthcoming) suggests that it may be prehistoric. (613.79).

Newport Pagnell SP 8812 4270

A flint scatter discovered during fieldwalking in advance of construction of the Newport Pagnell by-pass, was excavated by MEF for BCM. No archaeological features were present to account for the scatter. (498.78).

Penn SU 9349 9206

A bi-facially worked flint tool was found by Mr. T. Stainton in a garden.

Penn SU 9295 9540

Several flakes of Neolithic - Early Bronze Age date were found by Mr. J. Hargreaves and reported by Mrs. B. Stainton.

Ravenstone SP 8535 4895

The excavation of a ploughed-out beaker round barrow (ring ditch) near Ravenstone took place during September and October. The site, discovered from the air by Ken Field, was excavated by David Allen on behalf of the County Museum and the Department of the Environment.

Excavation revealed that the circular ditch (12.0 m diameter) was not continuous, but was broken by four narrow causeways. Two graves were located at the centre of the monument. The primary grave was apparently a cenotaph, but the secondary grave contained the crouched inhumation of a woman. She was accompanied by a long-necked beaker, bronze awl, 'V' bored button, flint implements and a charred wooden object.

A four-post structure (3.60 m square) may have existed on the site prior to the barrow's construction. A substantial quantity of flint waste came from the excavated area and small pits contained pottery of ?Neolithic and Iron Age date. An illustrated interim account of the excavation is available from the Museum.

D.A.

Seer Green SU 9677 9191

A round ended scraper was found by Mrs. D. M. Cooper. (520.79).

Shenley Brook End SP 849 346 and 854 352

A new Belgic site was discovered during construction of a road and further details of a known Roman site recovered by MKDC.

Taplow SU 9082 8566

Three struck flakes were found in molehills. (73.78).

The Lee SP 8988 0391

Six flint flakes, including a broken blade, ?Mesolithic, were found during fieldwalking by Miss F. Stewart-Liberty. (164.78).

Wolverton SP 8115 3970

Pits and ditches of Belgic and Romano-British date were recorded by members of local archaeological societies on the line of the new A5D, in conjunction with M. Petchey for MKDC.

ROMANO-BRITISH

Aylesbury SP 795 151

Romano-British pottery including ten rims, also part of a bronze ligula, were found by Karl Read. (27.78).

Aylesbury

See Mediaeval.

Romano-British kilns were noted by Mr. J. Haynes during construction of a dairy building. Subsequent activity brought to light remains of an Iron Age stove-built tankard.

Excavations in advance of the construction of the A5 improvement scheme by the Central Excavation Unit of the Department of the Environment under Mr. D. S. Neal, on extra-mural settlement outside Magiovinium Roman town, was concentrated in three areas. The aim of the work, carried out between October and May 1977 – 8, was to establish the extent of the occupation along the line of Roman Watling Street, and to investigate more fully the nature of the occupation close to the town defences. Trial trenching was also carried out on a third site situated on Dropshort Farm, where it had been suggested a Roman fort lay. The results of work on the three areas can be summarised as follows:

1. Occupation of an agricultural and industrial nature was found to stretch south-east of the defences for almost ½ mile. The land on the north side of the road had been divided into a series of agricultural plots separated by gullies draining into a larger ditch system. Evidence was also found for huts and industrial activities, represented by furnaces and iron slag indicative of smelting and smithy work, alongside the road. The agricultural plots were of two phases – the earlier were not at right angles to Watling Street, but at right angles to a fort existing on the south side of Watling Street, lying outside the threatened area. A later phase of ditches ran parallel to Watling Street.

2. A larger scale excavation, closer to the defences revealed:

- (a) A sequence of gullies of mid-first century date running parallel to the fort and possibly representing extra-mural settlement.
- (b) A later first century ditch running parallel to the present A5 and probably to a drainage ditch bordering Watling Street
- (c) Early second century occupation consisting of simple huts, furnaces and general industrial activity over the infilled road ditch.
- (d) Abandonment of the Roman settlement and the deliberate levelling of same. This event may be related to the construction of the town defences.
- (e) Re-occupation of the site in the third – fourth centuries and the renewed spread of extra-mural settlement. A timber barn was built. The presence of furnaces attest continuity of earlier trades.

An area immediately to the north of this area was also plotted. The land use here appears to have been very similar to that further south-east. It had been divided into a series of rectangular agricultural plots separated by gullies draining north into a major ditch running east-west. Large quantities of animal bone, some articulated, were recovered from the ditches.

In the late fourth century the drainage system was abandoned and the area became a cemetery. Many skeletons, orientated north-south were found, including that of a mother and child. The graves contained no grave goods.

3. Trial excavations on Dropshort Farm outside and to the north of Magiovinium found no evidence for a fort, but instead evidence for agricultural activities of a similar nature to that excavated on other parts of the site. Many drainage gullies flowing into pits or larger deeper ditches were found, together with evidence for ephemeral huts alongside a Roman road leading towards the Roman town of Ichester about twenty miles away. Cremation groups of second century date were found on both sides of the road.

Owing to exceptionally poor weather and the high water table, excavation of the whole site was not possible. Sufficient evidence has been recovered to show that the alignment of the proposed road does not traverse significant archaeological traces.

D.N.

Bow Brickhill

SP 8907 3545 (area)

Fieldwalking followed by trial excavations in the late 1960's and early 1970's, aerial photography and a magnetometer survey, showed a large multi-period site to exist to the west of Caldecotte. As the whole area was threatened by construction of a lake, a three-year programme of excavation was started in 1978 under the direction of M. Petchey for MKDC.

Four areas were examined. The interior of the 70 m. square moat was completely excavated, but much had been destroyed by ploughing. The only structure located was a robbed out building 15 x 5 m. and a cobbled surface. An extensive spread of mediaeval pottery and tile was recovered. It is possible that the buildings the moat encompassed were agricultural rather than domestic. Elsewhere a rectangular Romano-British field system of small closes of first – second century A.D. date was recorded, a probable droveway and a large ditch which had been recut several times but without datable finds. The latter will be investigated further next season. Traces of buildings over infilled field ditches showed that the village had encroached onto its own field system.

A small single-flued up-draught pottery kiln was also excavated. The debris filling the kiln included a number of fire-bars suggesting a radial arrangement from a central pedestal. The kiln was producing butt beakers, girth-beakers, platters and pedestal-based forms together with thick storage jars, often decorated with incised wavy lines. The pottery has been dated to c. A.D. 20–60. A quantity of slag, away from the settlement focus, suggests ironworking on a small scale.

The only indication of Saxon occupation in the area excavated this year was Middle Saxon pottery from the top of earlier field boundaries.

Bradwell

SP 8361 3967

A large Roman ditch containing much iron slag was recorded by R. Williams for MKDC during construction of a school car park.

Broughton

SP 915 404

A Romano-British droveway with associated enclosures was recorded by M. Petchey for MKDC in conjunction with the Bletchley and Milton Keynes Archaeological Societies. Trial excavations were carried out.

Ellesborough

SP 844 081

Further Romano-British pottery including samian was collected by Mrs. M. Hall from this site, mentioned last year; also parts of two rotary millstone grit querns. (518.79).

Great Brickhill

SP 9037 3000

In digging footings for a porch, Mr. R. Dawson uncovered two urned Romano-British cremations, one accompanied by a poppyhead beaker of late first century – early second century A.D. date. (part, 578.79).

Great and Little Kimble

SP 813 092

About twenty sherds of Romano-British pottery, of second – fourth century date, were found during fieldwalking by Mrs. S. Gill and Mrs. D. Waterton. (39.78).

Haddenham

SP 7107

During fieldwalking by CMAG, Romano-British sherds were found associated with a scatter of limestone, perhaps indicating a ploughed-up building. (159.78).

Hedsor

SU 9086

A few Roman coins were reported by Mr. P. Trenfield to have been discovered.

High Wycombe SU 8394

A dozen Romano-British sherds and two pieces of tile were collected. (443.78).

Leckhampstead SP 7238

A stone scatter accompanied by pottery of late second – fourth century date were discovered by Milton Keynes and District Archaeological Society during fieldwalking. (BAFC).

Little Horwood SP 792 300, SP 789 299, SP 795 299

Three scatters of Romano-British pottery were found during fieldwalking by Mr. E. J. Bull. (3.78, 2.78 and 128.78).

Longwick-cum-Ilmer SP 759 050

A scatter of Romano-British sherds was found by Mrs. M. Hall during fieldwalking. (48.78).

Lower Winchendon

See Prehistoric.

Shenley Brook End

See Prehistoric.

Wolverton SP 827 403

During the year, some 7,000 square metres adjacent to the Bancroft (formerly Bradwell) villa, were mechanically stripped for MKDC under the direction of J. Barnbrook. Further aspects of the villa and its perimeter were clarified. The whole site has now been backfilled whilst consideration is given to the possibility of eventually displaying part of the site beneath a purpose-built building. The villa is of the winged-corridor type with a projecting porch and two connected bath suites. An octagonal building, probably a shrine, stood south of the main building. This year a walled enclosure, perhaps a walled garden, was investigated. All of the mosaics have now been drawn by Mr. D. Neal.

Wolverton

See Prehistoric.

Woolstone-cum-Willen SP 8605 4001

A small Roman settlement was found to have been partially exposed at Down's Barn by construction of a new road and was recorded by R. Williams for MKDC.

SAXON AND MEDIAEVAL

Ashendon SP 7108 1464

The site of a windmill shown on a map of 1641, and perhaps the same as one referred to in 1334, was provisionally identified at the NGR given.

Aylesbury SP 8171 1391

As part of a major internal renovation of St. Mary's Church, thirteen more footings were to be cast at the west end of the nave and in the north transept. A watching brief was carried out with limited opportunity for excavation. There was no evidence of the religious foundation of seventh century legends, and the earliest structure found – the footings of the nave – are attributed to the late Saxon period on the basis of the span (8.4 m.) and the stone-saving material. The nave appeared to have been laid out along a bank of cultivated topsoil 1.40 m. deep, perhaps a field headland. The consequent depth to natural probably dictated the use of 'cob' footings, with stone reserved for the corners.

A tower seems to have been added to the west end, again using cob footings but with a course or

two of pitched stone. A robbed wall leading south from the tower is suggested to be the remains of a cloister which, considered with a length of 90 mm, base lead pipe, is perhaps evidence of a small twelfth-century monastic community enjoying a water distribution system similar to those at many 'great' churches. The tower seems to have been taken down well before the comprehensive rebuilding of the first half of the thirteenth century, when the nave was lengthened by two bays, and north and south aisles added to create the basic form of the existing church.

The work was carried out for Buckinghamshire County Museum by B. Durham of the Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit and was financed by the Department of the Environment. A full report will appear in a forthcoming issue of *Records of Bucks.* B.D.

Aylesbury SP 8389 1256

Dr. R. P. Hagerty collected a few Romano-British sherds and a quantity of mediaeval pottery from his garden including some St. Neot's type ware. The find is adjacent to the former mediaeval hamlet of Bedgrove.

Boarstall SP 6078 1449

Oxford City and County Museum reported the discovery by Mrs. Phipps of a quantity of mediaeval pottery of thirteenth – fourteenth century date, including wasters. A magnetometer survey revealed no significant anomalies, however the presence of wasters and accompanying dark soil makes it certain that this was a kiln site.

Bow Brickhill
See Romano-British.

Bow Brickhill SP 8903 3498

Fieldwork by R. Croft for MKDC located the site of a watermill at Caldecotte, first recorded in A.D. 1208.

Bradwell/Great Linford/Woolstone SP 8513 3018

Secklow Hundred Mound. An opportunity arose for further small scale excavation by M. Petchey for MKDC on the site of this mound before its restoration. This work showed that there was no central burial and a specialist report now confirms that the mound was built of turf.

Brill SP 6563 1421

As part of a research project on mediaeval pottery kilns being carried out by the Department of Archaeological Sciences, Bradford University, re-excavation of Brill Kiln E (Tite and Weaver, 1961, unpublished) was carried out under the direction of R. J. Ivens. This kiln had previously been dated to A.D. 1300 – 1350 (*Archaeometry* 5, 4–27). The 1978 excavation revealed a double opposed flue kiln, of the same form as Jope's, Type C (*Recs. of Bucks.* 16, 39–42), partially overlying a second though badly robbed kiln of the same type. A considerable quantity of pottery showing a wide range of forms was recovered. R.J.I.

Buckingham SP 6958 3391

A trial excavation by the Buckingham Archaeological Society on a garden plot shortly to be developed showed stratified deposits to be present. An area to the south, which also lay within the presumed precincts of the *burh*, was then investigated by MEF for the County Museum in advance of development. Some 2 m. of archaeological deposit were excavated but the earliest features present were pits of thirteenth century date.

Chicheley
See Post-Mediaeval.

- Chilton* SP 6815 1055
A roughly circular mound, about 6 m. diameter, was identified by Mr. O. Lee accompanied by Mr. M. E. Davies. Adjacent field names, Mill Field and Mill Way, suggest that it was a post mill mound. It has now been levelled.
- Great Linford* SP 851 422
Prior to levelling of the stable yard of the present manor house, trial excavations were carried out and a substantial stone walled building revealed. North of this was a worn, well laid, limestone cobbled yard. Finds dating mainly to the seventeenth century suggest the structure to have been the preceding manor house shown on maps of 1641 and 1678.
- Grendon Underwood* SP 6775 2083
During site clearance for construction of a new estate, Mr. and Mrs. Pothergill and Mrs. J. Strong carried out a small excavation confirming the presence of a mediaeval house platform. (439.78).
- Ivinghoe/Pitstone* SP 9407 1627 (centre)
Mr. D. Levy reported earthworks including a house platform and probable fishpond. The site was surveyed by Mr. and Mrs. S. Cauvain.
- Oving* SP 7815 2134
Eleventh century and later pottery was collected from a ditch by Mrs. J. Taylor. (51.78).
- Steeple Claydon* SP 7172 2773
A circular mound, approximately 9 m. diameter, was identified as a probable windmill mound by Miss M. Whiteman and Mrs. J. Mellor with the assistance of Mr. Ball.
- Stone* SP 7908 1255 – 7940 1265
Earthworks noted on an aerial photograph consist in part of ?house platform but are largely the result of quarrying.
- Upper Winchendon* SP 7510 1241
A square fishpond with an outlet into the Thames was identified.
- Wendover* SP 8707 0745
Mrs. M. Hall collected a quantity of mediaeval sherds of eleventh – fifteenth century date, including four of St. Neot's type. (494.78).
- Woolstone-cum-Willen* SP 8739 3941
A mediaeval yard associated with a flimsy thirteenth century structure was exposed when house footings were being dug, and recorded by MKDC.

POST-MEDIAEVAL AND UNDATED

- Chicheley* SP 9068 4580
Moat formerly considered mediaeval, now suggested to be an eighteenth century garden feature by Mrs. P. Fenley. (*Moated Sites Research Group Report 5* [1978], 4).
- Dorton* SP 6757 1432
A roughly T-shaped earthwork with banks about 0.75 m. high and ditched externally was identified. Function unknown.

Long Crendon

SP 6844 0938

A rectangular banked and ditched enclosure was identified by Mr. M. E. Davies.

The Lee

SP 9005 0475

Earthworks reported by Miss F. Stewart-Liberty probably represent the site of buildings shown on Bryant's map of 1825. A measured survey was carried out by Mr. E. J. Bull and Mrs. J. Taylor.

Simpson

SP 8857 3565

One of three recently discovered mounds was examined by R. Adkins for MKDC. No clear stratigraphic relationship between the mound and ridge-and-furrow could be established. First century A.D. pottery was recovered from the mound.

Stone

SP 8079 0966

An elongated rectangular platform, about 1 m. high, was reported by Mrs. S. Gill and Mrs. D. Waterton. Initially suspected to be mediaeval, it is now thought that the mound might be connected with coprolite workings.

West Wycombe

SU 8363 9450

Fourteen east-west inhumations, accompanied by grave goods, were excavated by the County Museum with assistance from CMAG. (447.78).

Wing

SP 8685 2285

Cropmarks, including possible enclosures, were noted on an NMR photograph.