

ARCHAEOLOGICAL NOTES FROM BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY MUSEUM

These notes include archaeological discoveries reported during 1987 and a few earlier finds not previously noted. Discoveries by the Milton Keynes Archaeology unit (MKAU) are included by courtesy of Mr D. C. Mynard, and fuller accounts of these sites appear in South Midlands Archaeology (CBA 9). 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. Findspots are recorded under civil parish.

Some selection of material has been necessary; single struck flakes for instance have not

normally been included, not field scatters of medieval pottery unless of sufficient quantity to indicate settlement, nor single Roman coin finds. Abbreviated grid references have unfortunately to be given for a number of sites to prevent looting.

Numbers in parentheses are accession numbers of material at the County Museum. The initials BCM indicate the material is in the Museum, but that no accession number has yet been allotted. The County Museum Archaeological Group is abbreviated CMAG.

Michael Farley

PREHISTORIC

Aylesbury See Saxon & Medieval.

Aylesbury No NGR
A polished stone axe, found in or near Aylesbury c.1925 by Mr W. F. T. Barrett, was given to the Museum. (8.1987)

Bierton with Broughton See Romano-British.

Bledlow-cum-Saunderton SU 7999
Contractors digging a pond at Lodge Hill Farm disturbed human burials. A rescue excavation by Mr M. Collard exposed remains of two adults, a child and a baby, all aligned east-west with head to east. One adult had a small bone comb at its waist. Close to one of the graves was a cremation burial of two Belgic pots, one of which contained a melted glass bead. A further five pots, also of Belgic form, had been recovered by the contractors and an iron brooch and a stone pendant recovered from the contents of two. The relationship in date between inhumations and cremations is not known; the former may be connected with a Roman villa in the vicinity.

Hartwell SP 810 118
A Neolithic polished flint axe fragment was recovered by Aylesbury Past Project during field walking. (301.1987)

High Wycombe See Saxon & Medieval.

Hughenden SU 8496 9681
Three Mesolithic blades and a number of Neolithic/Bronze Age flakes were collected by Mr T. Hussey from an allotment. Previous finds of the same period had been made here.

Olney SP 8945 5245
A triangular flint arrowhead, possibly of re-touched barbed and tanged type, was found by Mrs C. Knight along a footpath.

Radclive cum Chackmore SP 6835 3515
Part of a ?ring-ditch and a possible square enclosure were photographed from the air by Mr G. Foard during 1986.

Shenley Brook End SP 8476 3522
Mr R. J. Williams of MKAU carried out a four

month season of excavation on a Late Iron Age settlement complex. Area 'A', initially noted on RAF air photographs by Mr A. R. Pike, had been trial trenched in 1985. This year the whole area was stripped to reveal a substantial rectangular enclosure 54 × 45 m with eastern entrance and V-ditch of 2 m or more on the east side. A second 'reversed D' shaped enclosure lay to the north and between this and the first lay two lesser ones. Excavation conditions on clay were difficult, but no internal features were located, perhaps suggesting use for stock. Traces of occupation external to the enclosures in the form of penannular gullies, and several clay lined 'boiling pits' were found, but no pits. In the

ditch of the rectangular enclosure a small number of semi-complete pots of Late Iron Age form and two substantial fragments of red deer antler were found. Area 'B', 400 m to the north-east, lying within the boundary of a balancing lake under construction, had been partially destroyed but proved to be another sub-rectangular enclosure 35 × 37 m. Lying close to the adjacent brook it would have been liable to flood.

Stone SP 7885 1115 (area)
A Neolithic polished flint axe was recovered by Aylesbury Past Project during fieldwalking. (308.1987)

ROMANO-BRITISH

Aylesbury See Saxon & Medieval.

Bierton with Broughton SP 8315
During systematic fieldwalking by the Aylesbury Past Project, prehistoric, Roman and Saxon sherds were recorded in a location previously producing Roman material. (292.1987)

Bow Brickhill SP 894 334
Excavation of part of the southern suburb of Magiovinium, directed by Mr M. Collard, took place prior to construction of a petrol station and restaurant. Although the site fronted Watling Street, an eighteenth/nineteenth-century roadside ditch had removed any direct relationship between site and road. Wet weather and high ground-water levels hindered progress but the stratigraphic sequence proved similar to that observed by Mr D. Neal during work on the A5(D). In the late first to early second century drainage gullies and curvilinear gullies, possibly indicating round houses, were present and the area developed in the second century as an industrial suburb with some twenty hearths, mostly of bowl form. The function of these is uncertain; there was little ore or slag but samples taken from the area will aid identification. Late in the second century the area was levelled with a deposit of sand and loam, perhaps 'slum clearance' and in the third, a series of well-laid metalled tracks with cobbled yards at right angles to Watling Street were constructed. The associated buildings were ephemeral but one, a

small rectangular workshop, contained a hearth possibly for smithing. Notable among the finds from the site was a complete triangular clay loomweight.

Little Brickhill SP 9061 3265
Mr D. Neal reported discovery of a quantity of Romano-British shelly ware sherds found in a garden, and while digging soakaways.

Lower Winchendon SP 7211
A few Romano-British sherds were found on a ploughed field by Mr J. Whiston.

Olney SP 8924 5232
A Romano-British storage-jar rim in shelly fabric, and a base were found whilst digging a swimming pool and reported by Mrs Bullard.

Stone
A scatter of Romano-British sherds located by the Aylesbury Past Project during fieldwalking, spread over an area of 2.5 ha, may indicate a small settlement. (295–296.1987)

Weedon SP 8178 1541
Bucks County Engineers reported the discovery of ditches during construction of a mini-roundabout for the Watermead development. Investigation by Mr C. H. Dalwood with Aylesbury Past Project members showed it to be two sides of a small Romano-British enclosure. (286.1987)

SAXON AND MEDIEVAL

- Aylesbury* SP 8221 1329
Excavation by the Aylesbury Past Project under the direction of Mr C. H. Dalwood, on the former Walton Street police houses site, located the northern boundary ditch of the manorial enclosure of Walton. A tenth-century boundary was also excavated and relates to boundaries observed in 1973-4 and at Croft Road. The excavated area was not occupied in the Early to Middle Saxon period. (287.1987)
- Aylesbury* SP 8248 1342
A watching brief was carried out by Mrs A. Hawkins of the Aylesbury Past project at Croft Road, Walton. Evidence of Late Iron Age occupation and a large Roman ditch were discovered. A two-post Early Saxon sunken-feature building was recorded, demonstrating the extent of the settlement probably recorded in 1973-4, and subsequently during excavations at Walton Lodge in 1985-6. Late Saxon ditches and gullies were also recorded and noted to be markedly rectilinear in plan, relating to present-day street patterns and property boundaries. (288.1987)
- Bierton with Broughton* See Romano-British.
- Bradwell Abbey* SP 8273 3958
Trial trenching was carried out by Mr R. J. Zeevat and Mr P. J. Hart in advance of construction of a new car park and access road. The bulk of the features located were of recent origin apart from a metalled trackway and a shallow bank. The former was aligned NNW-SSE following the present western boundary of the site. This does not appear on any plans or documents relating to the area but appears to have formed part of the medieval route from Wolverton to Loughton in use until the eighteenth century. The bank, on the E side of the trackway, produced no finds, but may be interpreted as the western and northern boundary of the medieval priory precinct.
- Hambleton*
During renovation of the nave, Ms J. Barksfield recorded details of the church walls beneath the plaster, and of the extension to the nave in the fourteenth century.
- Hartwell* SP 8013
A total of 37 Saxon sherds were found during intensive fieldwalking by the Aylesbury Past Project in an area due for development near Coldharbour Farm. Such material generally has a low survival rate in field scatter and the discovery indicates that the site may be of significance. (306.1987)
- High Wycombe* SU 847 933
An evaluation excavation was carried out by Mr M. Collard adjacent to the earthwork known as Desborough Castle, following a development proposal by Wycombe District Council. The surviving earthwork is thought to be within the circuit of an earlier rampart and ditch, perhaps a hilfort. The excavation demonstrated the existence of substantial unsuspected medieval features: one, a defensive hornwork, protected the eastern entrance to the castle. Further south a massive feature c.12 m wide and over 2.50 m deep was located. It may have a further defensive ditch cutting off the spur of the hill to form an outer bailey.
A lynchet which may mark the line of an earlier rampart was sectioned but no conclusive evidence as to its date or purpose was found. Pollen analysis currently in progress may give some clues. (BCM)
- Latimer, Ley Hill* SP 9868 0226
A footings trench for a new bungalow in the garden of 1, Joiners Close, cut through the end of a rectangular kiln made of roof-tile. The find was reported by Mrs M. Wells and subsequently the area around was excavated by the Museum, with the help of CMAG. The initial kiln was rectangular, 4.10 × 1.65 m internally, its floor being 1.65 m below ground level. It had a central spine with evidence for arch springing at intervals. Subsequently it was shortened and at a later date a sub-rectangular pottery kiln was inserted inside its west end, utilising features of the earlier structure. The Liberty Trust kindly funded archaeomagnetic dating by Dr A. J.

Clark who reports that the final firing took place 'within the date bracket of cal. AD 1460–1510 at 68% confidence level'. The ceramic from the

kiln has not yet been examined but appears to consist mainly of simple coarse-ware forms, bowls, jugs, etc.

POST MEDIEVAL AND UNDATED

Soulbury

SP 8826 2710

Inspection of a 30 m length of roadside wall-footing trench, fronting the Old Rectory, produced no evidence for a 'bury'. (260.1987)

Taplow

SU 9056 8910

Following woodland clearance the remains of a brick-built icehouse marked on an O.S. map of 1882, were revealed.