

ARCHAEOLOGICAL NOTES FROM BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY MUSEUM

These notes include archaeological discoveries reported during 1994 and a few earlier finds. The assistance of several informants is gratefully acknowledged. Further information on sites investigated by BCMAS will be found in J. Parkhouse's report on fieldwork in *South Midlands Archaeology 1994*. The reader will note that extensive archaeological work in the County is now being carried out by commercial archaeological contractors in advance of development proposals. This has come about, in part, as the result of a government advisory note on 'Archaeology and Planning' PPG 16. The character of most of this work is normally determined by briefs set by the County Archaeologist on behalf of the District and County planning authorities, which work is then monitored on behalf of these bodies. Since contractors are often selected by developers on the basis of a quotation this can lead to situations, as at Walton

and Wolverton, where different contractors have excavated adjoining sites.

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 been recorded, nor single Roman coin finds, nor field scatters of medieval pottery unless of sufficient quantity to indicate settlement. Bracketed numbers indicate that the material is with the County Museum (BCM). The County Museum Archaeological Group is abbreviated CMAG and Buckinghamshire County Museum Archaeological Service as BCMAS. Abbreviated grid references have unfortunately had to be given for some sites in order to reduce the risk of looting. The use of these Notes as a guide for metal detecting inhibits its future publication of information, something that is in nobody's long term interest.

Michael Farley

PREHISTORIC

Aylesbury, see Saxon and Medieval

Dinton with Ford and Upton SP 7711

A Celtic silver Trinovantian coin (Van Arsdell, 1546-1) was found by Mr T Clark, together with c.20 Romano-British sherds, medieval pottery including two eleventh to twelfth century rims, also three struck flints – one a round-ended scraper fragment of probable Bronze Age date (pottery etc, BCM 1995.43)

Dorney SU 9278 (area)

In 1994, following a public inquiry held in 1993, the Secretary of State gave Eton College consent to construct a rowing course on the flood plain of the Thames at Dorney. Oxford Archaeological Unit had previously carried out evaluation trenching on the site in 1987 and 1990; following the decision, further trenching was done in 1994 by Mr T Allen. Evaluation has not yet been com-

pleted over the whole of the area which will be affected. The site was known initially from cropmark evidence which indicated a Bronze Age field system, a Romano-British enclosure and several ring ditches. The area is traversed by palaeochannels. The trenching so far has demonstrated in situ Mesolithic deposits on the edge of one of the palaeochannels, Neolithic activity, several 'burnt mounds', and worked timbers of Late Bronze Age date within one of the channels. An extensive programme of excavation is likely to commence in 1995.

High Wycombe SU 8692

An evaluation undertaken by Ms. D Enright of BCMAS for Wycombe Abbey School, in advance of building work on the floor of the Wye valley, failed to reveal any prehistoric activity apart from two struck flakes.

Ivinghoe SP 974 169
Mr C Damant noted on an air photo the presence of two previously unrecorded adjacent ploughed-out round barrows.

Little Marlow SU 871 878 (area)
The evaluation of approximately 25 hectares of land for which consent has been granted for mineral extraction, was carried out by Tempus Reparatum – Archaeological and Historical Associates Ltd, on behalf of Redland Aggregates Ltd. Sixty-six trenches were excavated, a 2.5% sample of the total area. The underlying geology consisted of gravels on the highest ground to the north-east of the site, which towards the Thames are overlain with brickearths of 2m or greater depth. Several areas of archaeological significance were identified, of which the principal were: an area of worked flints of Upper Palaeolithic date within brickearth; an extensive dark-soil layer of Bronze Age date adjacent to a stream which contained burnt flint, worked flint and pottery; two areas of pits and post holes probably of Bronze Age date; the site of a 16th to 17th century building.

Longwick-cum-Ilmer SP 757 058
A small group of flint and grog tempered sherds, probably of Iron Age date, were found by Mr P Dewey in a field. (1994.117.P1,P2)

Longwick-cum-Ilmer see Romano-British

Loughton see Saxon and Medieval

Medmenham SU 807 847
Mr C O'Sullivan discovered a crude bi-facial pointed palaeolithic flint axe in old gravel workings. (1994.112.1-2)

Newport Pagnell SP 852 446
As part of motorway widening proposals a series of evaluation trenches were dug for Acer Consultants by Ms. D Enright for BCMAS on potential

sites identified in earlier stages of study of the route (*see* other accounts of work in the area elsewhere in these Notes). At this site, site E, a combination of trenches and test pits were dug confirming the presence of a ring ditch of late Neolithic or early Bronze Age date. One cremation was encountered. There was little artefactual material in the area as a whole.

Shenley Brook End SP 830 347
During 1993, metal detector users reported the discovery of mid to late Saxon metalwork during the development of a Safeway store at Westcroft. Archaeological features were also reported. There were considerable difficulties in arranging both access and labour, but eventually Thames Valley Archaeological Services were invited by BCMAS to endeavour to salvage what information was left on the site. Only a small proportion of the area had not already been machine stripped, tracked over, or quarried away, but what was left was rapidly evaluated under archaeological control. A range of pits, ditches, gullies, post holes and charcoal patches were recorded; however few features produced pottery and then only one or two sherds. Most of the retrieved material consisted of handmade sherds, on balance thought to be Iron Age rather than Saxon in date; however one sherd was from a Neolithic 'Peterborough ware' bowl and a sherd from a Late Bronze Age urn was also present.

Stoke Hammond SP 8828
A flint scatter containing 35 pieces of debitage and a core may indicate Neolithic to early Bronze Age occupation.

Weedon SP 825 347
A fieldwalk by CMAG, encompassing a prominent ridge, located a sparse scatter of Neolithic to early Bronze Age flints but no significant concentrations. (BCM)

ROMANO-BRITISH

Aylesbury, Bedgrove SP 8393 1271

Aylesbury see Saxon and Medieval
An evaluation was carried out by Dr.R.Roseff for BCMAS in advance of development, on a small

area of grassland at Jansel Square adjacent to excavations carried by BCM in 1965-66. Ditches associated with the medieval settlement were revealed and also two small ditches probably of Romano-British date indicating a small settlement and giv-

ing a clearer context to earlier discoveries of Romano-British pottery in the area.

Bow Brickhill SP 8873 3391

A geophysical survey was carried out by the Bartlett-Clark Consultancy on land at Belvedere Nursery, Fenny Stratford, adjacent to the Roman town of Magiovinium, and in advance of the proposed development of the land as a garden centre. The survey showed extensive linear magnetic anomalies representing rectilinear ditched enclosures and boundaries. In some areas stronger magnetic anomalies may represent hearths or ovens. The alignment of many of the features probably relates to a presumed road leaving a NW gate of the defended area of the town.

Gayhurst SP 848 451

Following a magnetometer survey by Mr A Bartlett an evaluation was carried out by Ms D Enright on a settlement of late Iron Age to Romano-British date – Site F (see prehistoric, Newport Pagnell for background). This revealed a number of pits and ditches including a probable enclosure, traces of a round house, and quantities of ceramic of the first century AD.

Gayhurst SP 838 459

Geophysical survey followed by evaluation trenches by Ms. D Enright revealed ditches of Iron Age and Romano-British date – Site I (see prehistoric Newport Pagnell for background). The ditches may be field boundaries but the quantity of associated pottery suggests nearby settlement.

Hambleden SP 7885

Mr R Piercey located a hoard of 30 coins, all copper alloy and mainly imitations of fourth century AD date, which were identified by Dr C King of the Ashmolean Museum

Longwick-cum-Ilmer SP 7805

A scatter of Romano-British sherds was found by Mrs V Kempster. A subsequent fieldwalk by CMAG defined the extent of occupation more closely. Some 31 rims, and 127 sherds including Oxford colour-coat were recovered, also five flint flakes and a scraper of Neolithic or early Bronze Age date. (BCM)

Lower Winchendon, see Saxon and Medieval

Newton Blossomville SP 9151

The upper stones of two beehive querns were reported by Mr B Martin, to have been found adjacent to a known site.

Shenley Brook End SP 8357 3585 (area)

An evaluation carried out by Ms. D Enright for BCMAS in advance of housing development south-east of a scheduled medieval moated site, revealed evidence for Romano-British, Late Saxon and medieval occupation. The site lies at the eastern end of the Westbury medieval complex excavated by R Ivens.

Soulbury SP 8828

Fieldwalking and geophysical survey were undertaken by Ms N Smith of BCMAS and Alister Bartlett, for Buckinghamshire County Council and Pell Frischmann, Milton Keynes, on two possible Stoke Hammond bypass routes. On one route a sparse scatter of Romano-British pottery coincided with geophysical survey data indicating ditches, pits etc.

Stoke Hammond SP 891 287

Following evaluation of a potential Romano-British site by Wessex Archaeology in 1992 (*Recs Bucks 1991*), Thames Valley Archaeological Services were commissioned by the owners to carry out excavation of that part of the site which would be disturbed by extension of a lake and construction of additional golf course features. The work revealed an extensive area of Romano-British metallurgy, field and trackway ditches, and pits together with a moderately large assemblage of pottery of mid to late second century through to the later fourth-century AD date, Roman coins, and metal objects including a rare side-axe thought to be of Roman date. Cattle dominated the animal bone assemblage. The work represents only partial excavation of a much larger site whose focus may be to the north-east.

Stoke Mandeville SP 8311

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Lawson-Price to undertake the evaluation of a large area prior to possible development by Sainsbury's and others and which, on the evidence of fieldwalking, was thought to contain a Romano-

British settlement. The evaluation confirmed the existence of the settlement (Site 1) and dated it to the late first to early second century AD. No clear structural remains were found but black soil occupation horizons were noted and numerous ditches. On the east side of the site an unusual semi-crouched inhumation burial which had been laid on a bed of charred cereal grain and chaff was discovered. To the east of site 1 a second and smaller Romano-British site (Site 2) was discov-

ered. Elsewhere a few features probably of Bronze Age date were recorded.

Weston Underwood SP 8751

During pipelaying Mr T McClean recovered Romano-British material, including box flue-tile and a lion-handled key from near a known cropmark site. (1994.133.1 and 1995.25)

Weston Underwood see Saxon and Medieval

SAXON AND MEDIEVAL

Aylesbury SP 8246 1334

An excavation conducted by Mr D Bonner for BCMAS on land at Walton off Walton Road, to be developed for housing by Barratts North London, identified a Bronze Age house site, a first-century AD enclosure, six Saxon sunken-feature buildings and two halls, and features of later date. There was an absence of mid-Saxon features. Some 2,400 square metres were examined.

Aylesbury SP 8238 1328

An excavation on a former orchard site at Walton to be developed for housing commenced during the latter part of year. The work was carried out by Thames Valley Archaeological Services under the direction of Mr I Howell. A number of Saxon halls were exposed. Such halls have now been seen on three sites in Walton.

Aylesbury SP 8242 1326

A small area of land adjacent to Walton Lodge Lane, Walton, and the two sites above, which was to be developed by the Hardings Trust, was excavated by Mr D Bonner of BCMAS. Although the land was previously the site of a children's home and there had been substantial disturbance, a significant number of prehistoric features remained with associated flint and pottery. These included a buried soil containing small scale Bronze Age features and a group of cremations of similar date. Surprisingly, there was little Saxon activity here although it had been found on the adjoining sites of Walton Lodge and the orchard site reported above. Large pits of medieval date but unknown function were present. The hamlet of Walton can now be seen to have an extremely interesting and complex landscape history with evidence for occupation in the Neolithic, Bronze Age, late Iron Age/

early Roman period with almost continuous occupation from the early Saxon period onwards.

Aylesbury, Bedgrove see Romano-British

Aylesbury, Kings Head see post-Medieval

Ellesborough SP 8306

Various metal items including a Late Saxon copper-alloy strap end with animal head terminal were found by Mr T Clark. (Strap end 1995.42.1)

High Wycombe SU 8702 9280

An evaluation undertaken by Mr P Carstairs of BCMAS for Wycombe District Council on a car park adjacent to the medieval hospital of St John's, located two medieval pits and a ditch but no other evidence that the hospital or its anticipated cemetery extended to the east. (BCM)

Hughenden SU 857 987

Mr J Nuttgens reported the discovery of two medieval rims and some sherds in woodland, possibly indicating a farmstead. (1994.10)

Iver SU 0283 7829

During 1993 Thames valley Archaeological Services carried out an evaluation in advance of proposed golf course construction at Richings Park. A small medieval settlement was located at the south end of the site near the M4 consisting of ditches, a pit, a burnt layer and medieval pottery

Lathbury SP 875 451 area

Following ploughing Messrs Thorp, Humphries and Hollingshead collected from two areas, 3 St Neot's type rims and over 100 medieval sherds indicating the village's former extent on the NW side.

Lower Winchendon

SP 7312

Two sherds of Roman pottery, coins of Constantine I, a St Neot's 'T' rim and several sherds of Brill medieval pottery were collected by Mr H Robinson

Loughton

SP 8374 3789

A watching brief carried out by Mr. D. Bonner for BCMAS and Gerald Shenstone & Partners on behalf of the parish during construction of an extension on the north side of All Saints church, recorded over a hundred burials. Amongst the finds were a small assemblage of flint, pottery ranging in date from the Saxon to post-medieval periods, fragments of lava quern and an intact corked 17 or 18th century glass steeple bottle containing a liquid and several copper pins – a 'witch bottle'. (1995.48)

Shenley Brook End, see Prehistoric and Romano-British

Stone

SP 7812

From an area of previous discoveries, Mr T Clark collected during an earthmoving operation five Romano-British sherds, a St Neot's type rim, an 11th century rim, medieval pottery and an impressed floor tile. (BCM)

Swanbourne

SP 8010 2729

A fragment of lava quern (?Saxon) and a small quantity of medieval pottery was recovered by Mr.J.Parkhouse of BCMAS during a watching brief undertaken during drainage works on the northern side of the church.

Thornton

SP 7536

During restoration work on the redundant church of St Michael, the floorboards in the north aisle were lifted to reveal a virtually intact medieval stone effigy. This is likely to be of Elias de Tingewick rector from 1315-1347 or his successor John de Chastillon, rector from 1347-77, and was probably placed here in the late eighteenth century.

Weston Underwood

SP 8650 (area)

Monitoring of a new sewerage scheme for the village was undertaken for Anglian Water by Mr A Hunn and Ms D Enright of BCMAS. The scheme involved substantial topsoil stripping which also affected an area of village earthworks. Evidence for Romano-British, early Saxon and late Saxon activity was exposed and also traces of a post-built rectangular structure, unfortunately undated.

Wolverton

SP 8020 4070

A second area, adjacent to one previously excavated by BCMAS, was excavated by Thames Valley Archaeological Services at Wolverton Mill on the former playing field of the Post Office Training College in advance of industrial development. The whole had been deeply buried by in the course of construction of the playing field. The return of the enclosure ditch known as the 'Wolverton Turn enclosure' was examined. Although little ceramic was recovered from the ditch, it included some mid Saxon 'Maxey type' wares.

Woburn Sands

SP 9235

A copper alloy trefoil-headed small long brooch of sixth century date was found by Mr M Howe. (1994.79.1)

POST-MEDIEVAL AND UNDATED

Aylesbury

SP 8188 1377

A programme of archaeological recording by Mr D.Bonner, Ms D Enright and Ms N Smith of BCMAS for the National Trust commenced during the year at the King's Head, Aylesbury. The cobbles covering the courtyard were recorded stone-by-stone and trenches hand dug on the lines of replacement service trenches. Pits and wells of medieval and later date were discovered and an earlier layer of courtyard surfacing. Some building

recording was undertaken during internal refurbishment.

Bletchley

SP 8534

An evaluation was undertaken by Mr B Mathews of BCMAS for Bruton Knowles on the site of the former Denbigh Secondary School. No archaeological features were revealed although the site lay adjacent to Roman Fields School during the construction of which Romano-British features had

been revealed.

Bletchley

SP 863 342

Wessex Archaeology undertook the evaluation of a potential development area on behalf of Lawson-Price Environmental at Bletchley Park not far from an area of known Romano-British occupation. Thirty-three trenches were excavated. No features of archaeological significance were revealed apart from a shallow ditch which contained no datable material.

Ellesborough

SP 8309 0916 area

A systematic fieldwalk by CMAG adjacent to an undated cropmark previously interpreted as a moat, found 5 flint flakes, 7 RB sherds and a few late post medieval sherds but with no significant concentrations. (1994.22)

Great Brickhill

SP 885 320

Mr R J Williams of MKAU reported the discovery by Mr J Spencer in 1990, of a child's skull, possibly with a sword cut, and part of an adult pelvis on the bank of the Ouse.

Great Linford

SP 851 421

An evaluation was carried out in advance of possible development in the grounds of the Old Rectory by Mr R J Williams of the Oxford Archaeological Unit. A backfilled pond, possibly a fishpond of medieval date and at least 27x 8x 3 m deep, was found south of the Rectory and east of an existing pond. This had a square pit dug through its north end in the late 17th or early 18th century. To the SW of the Rectory a circular stone-built oven with a flue at least 1.7m long, perhaps of medieval date, was discovered.

Hanslope

SP 8246

Evaluation trenching and test pitting of a series of enigmatic earthworks at Tathall End by Ms D Enright of BCMAS suggested that they are mainly the result of stone quarrying; however in the course of the work a small east-west aligned inhumation cemetery (at present undated) was revealed.

Leckhampstead

SP 7358 3868

Whilst monitoring a pipeline, Mr A Kidd, Northampton Heritage, noted a dense concentration of stone associated with late post medieval pottery, perhaps a ploughed-out building. Mr G Heritage reported a late 17th century token from the same site.

Little Marlow, see prehistoric

Upper Winchendon

SP 7457 1411

Traces of a lime kiln shown on the OS map of 1880 survive as a curved line of brick and limestone in the verge of a lane.

Weedon

SP 8115

Where a new sewage pipe was to be laid, advance topsoil stripping was undertaken by Mr R Zeepvat for BCMAS on behalf of Thames Water Utilities adjacent to Holmans Bridge. The area was reputed to have been the site of a find of numerous human burials whose discovery was reported in 1819, and traditionally associated with a 'Battle of Aylesbury' and once marked as such on Ordnance Survey maps. No burials or other archaeological features were noted. Although the original account of the discovery of burials is likely to be correct it is now believed that the location of the discovery had been wrongly sited.