

ARCHAEOLOGICAL NOTES FROM BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY MUSEUM

These notes include archaeological discoveries reported during 1995, 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* 1995. 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.

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 several sites in order to reduce the risk of looting. The use of these Notes as a guide for metal detecting inhibits future publication of information, something that is in nobody's long-term interest.

Michael Farley

PREHISTORIC

Aylesbury SP 8066 1491

Whilst putting in fence-posts in Holland Road, Mr B. Westgate discovered part of a perforated stone axe hammer with expanded cutting edge, of late Neolithic – early Bronze Age date.

Bletchley SP 8861 3455

Part of a Late Bronze Age socketed axe was found by Mr D. Flain.

Bletchley/Stoke Hammond SP 869 315 area

Fieldwalking of an 89 hectare site in the area of the former Newton Longville Brickworks was undertaken by BCMAS in advance of a planning application. No sites had previously been recorded within the area. A large flint assemblage was recovered. Two concentrations were identified; a main scatter towards the south of the area and a lesser one towards the northeast. Both were largely Bronze Age in date, although an earlier (Mesolithic and late Neolithic) date for some of the material is suggested.

Bow Brickhill SP 8934

A rectangular cropmark enclosure near Magiovinium, probably of Iron Age or Romano-British date, was photographed from the air.

Chalfont St Giles SU 9776 9185

A Palaeolithic flint handaxe of pointed form with flat butt, complete apart from slight end damage, was found by Mr J. Gilbert in a back garden.

Dinton SP 7730 1245 (area)

A fieldwalk by CMAG located a thin scatter of Neolithic/ early Bronze Age flints including one scraper.

Dinton
see Romano-British

Dorney SU 9278 (area)

The first season of excavation on this prehistoric landscape, was carried out by the Oxford Archaeological Unit under the direction of Mr T. Allen, in

advance of mineral extraction and the construction of a rowing course for Eton College. Two areas were examined, Areas 1/2A and Area 3; both were adjacent to a palaeochannel of the Thames. In the first area, the main gravel island contained tree holes and man-made hollows. No structures were identified although small pits, a burnt spread and flints of Mesolithic to Late Bronze Age date were present. Nearer to the palaeochannel were large well-preserved flint scatters including a burnt area 25–30m diameter of Neolithic date with animal bone, over a dozen leaf-shaped arrowheads and two fragments of polished stone axe. The debris formed an arc around a central space. The adjacent channel contained evidence of beaver (gnawed wood) with some Neolithic debris intermixed. In Area 3, incorporating part of the same palaeochannel, bankside activity was sparser but two timber structures of driven posts, possibly bridges, were discovered. Radiocarbon dating shows one to be Bronze Age, the other Iron Age. A wattle hurdle was found close to the latter and a human skull and femur adjacent just downstream. A fuller account of the work appears in *Current Archaeology* no 148 (1996), 124–7. Investigations of other areas will continue in 1996.

Drayton Beauchamp SP 903 111
A late Iron Age copper-alloy strap union, minus its enamel inlay, was found by Mr A. Irvine. (1995.74.1)

Great Marlow SU 8345 8485
An evaluation was carried out by Thames Valley Archaeological Services in advance of construct of a proposed reservoir. Ring ditches exist in the vicinity and the site appeared to lie on a gravel island – a favoured location for settlement in prehistory. Eight trial trenches were dug by machine. The underlying geology turned out to be in the main a fine alluvium. No features of archaeological interest were encountered. Twenty-one struck flints including two cores, not closely dateable, were recovered, the whole being insufficient to indicate occupation.

Hughenden SU 8860 9606
A side scraper and two flakes, of Neolithic/early Bronze Age date were found by Mrs J. Chaffey in a ploughed field.

Ivinghoe SP 942 176
Pottery of possible Late Bronze Age date as well as later Iron Age sherds including five rims, were collected by Mr B. Jones from the surface of a field. (1996.52)

Marlow
see Post-Medieval and Undated.

Milton Keynes, Brinklow SP 8937
A complex of late Iron Age or early Romano-British features was exposed during development and noted by Mr G. Heritage who also found a stater of Cunobelin. Pits, ditches and possible buildings were subsequently recorded by BCMAS. Some 'Belgic' brick was noted. (1995.84)

Moulsoe SP 895 412
Proposed modifications to the side roads near junction 14 of the M1 led to the assessment of an area near Moulsoe Buildings Farm. Geophysical Survey undertaken on behalf of BCMAS by the Bartlett-Clark Consultancy demonstrated the presence of ditches (including possible elements of enclosures) and pits. Fieldwalking by BCMAS did not produce any material which could be shown to be associated with the site. On grounds of form the site may be Late Iron Age to Romano-British in date.

Shenley Brook End SP 8373 3470
A small area of badly damaged features at Emerson Valley, thought to be Late Iron Age in date, was noted by Mr G. Heritage during levelling for football pitches. The remains, which extended over an area c.20 × 30m, which were briefly recorded by BCMAS during earthmoving, included lengths of gully associated with at least one round-house, together with other ditches. The site may have been more extensive. No dating material was recovered during the visit.

Wendover SP 8508
Pottery collected from a field surface by Mr J. Ley included some probable mid Iron Age material, also Belgic and Romano-British sherds and a bow brooch.

Wendover
see Romano-British

ROMANO-BRITISH

[Buckinghamshire]

A hoard of late Roman pewter, the first to be found in the County, was discovered by Mr T. Clark, and promptly reported to the Museum. Two vessels still in the ground were lifted by BCMAS, and a small area excavated in order to record the hoard's immediate context. The hoard was recovered from a known Romano-British settlement site. It consisted of two plates and at least four cups, all severely damaged. No two vessels were the same, as is usually the case with hoards of this type. An iron chisel appears to have been associated with the pewter vessels. It is possible that the hoard was a votive deposit. At the request of the finder and the landowner (who have donated the material to the Museum) details of the findspot are not given here, in order to avoid unauthorised trespass. (BCM)

Bradenham SU 830 979

An area of iron smelting slag, similar to others previously noted in the area and possibly of Romano-British date, was reported by Mrs J. Chaffey, and Mr W. Mathews of the National Trust. (1995.92)

Dinton SP 7711

Romano-British pottery and coins were discovered by Mr T. Clark, also a round-ended flint scraper, two Celtic coins, and pottery of eleventh or twelfth century date.

Fleet Marston

Mr T. Clark and Mr H. Robinson report the discovery of Romano-British pottery and coins from a known site. (BCM, part)

Great Marlow SU 830 851

The discovery by a machine driver of Roman pottery and animal bone during construction of a bunker on Harleyford golf course, was reported by Mr J. Dixey. BCMAS staff visited the site, but no features were noted and the material appears to have come from ploughsoil. (BCM)

Haddenham SP 7310

Roman pottery including six greyware rims, brooches, coins and a late Saxon stirrup mount were found by Mr J. Thurstan.

High Wycombe SU 874 924

During the erection of goal posts, contractors found three plain Roman tiles stacked on top of each other, possibly indicating a hypocaust. The discovery was reported to Wycombe Museum and was surveyed by BCMAS. The discovery is helpful in defining the extent of the Rye villa. Finds at Wycombe Museum.

Hogshaw SP 751 248

Romano-British sherds including five rims, probably second to third century, were recovered from an arable field by Messrs E. J. Bull and N. Saving. (1995.108 and 1995.140)

Hughenden SU 848 987

Following the reported discovery over a period of several years, of Roman sherds in an allotment by Ms S. Bradley, the area was visited by BCMAS. No further pottery was recovered, nor were any noted in adjacent arable land. (BCM)

Little Horwood SP 7830

Twelve sherds of Roman pottery were found in a garden by Mr P. McCowen and reported by Mr E. J. Bull.

Shenley Brook End SP 836 358

An excavation undertaken by Ms. D. Enright of BCMAS for Westbury Homes, in advance of a housing development, followed an evaluation undertaken in 1994. The area lies south-east of a medieval moated site. The semi-dispersed deserted medieval settlement of Westbury, excavated by Dr Richard Ivens in the late 1980's, lies a short distance west. Three areas were investigated on the basis of the results of the evaluation.

Area P produced evidence for a rectilinear Romano-British enclosure c.18 x 15m, together with gullies, pits and postholes. No internal structures were identified. The main enclosure ditch was possibly for livestock; the functions of the other features are unknown. Area R contained ditches, gullies, pits and post-holes, all apparently Romano-British. The remains of two possible timber buildings were identified. In both instances the structures appeared to lie partially beyond the excavated area. The features in P and R probably represent a farmstead, apparently of more than one ceramic phase.

Area Q contained a medieval boundary ditch and numerous other features, mainly west of the ditch. A group of substantial postholes formed part of a large building, probably of more than one phase. Preliminary work on the finds suggests a date in the 11th or 12th century. The site may represent the focus of one of the two landholdings at Shenley Brook End referred to in Domesday.

Shenley Church End SP 831 364

Mr G. Heritage reported the presence of infilled ditches noted during soil stripping prior to house construction at Oakhill Road/Holy Thorn Lane. Romano-British material recovered from the site included a Romano-British enamel brooch and a bow brooch. The ditches are likely to be of this date; however a copper-alloy stirrup mount and a silver strap-end of Late Saxon date were also found. On a BCMAS visit a ditch c. 17m long was noted but no associated finds were recovered.

Stowe SP 6650 3655

Mr G Marshall, National Trust, recorded two ditches in a pipe trench. Much Roman pottery and two pieces of tegula were recovered from the associated spoil heap. (1996.15)

Stowe SP 6615 3605

A suspected minor Roman road was noted by Mr G. Marshall, National Trust, in a pipe trench sec-

tion adjacent to Stowe Avenue, which runs approximately on the course of a Roman road. The 'road', whose base was of limestone, ran obliquely to the main alignment. There was no associated dating evidence.

Thornborough SP 729 331

Earthmoving was monitored during soil stripping for a car park by Mr D Bonner for BCMAS. The subsoil was found to be much disturbed and no archaeological features, apart from a single Romano-British sherd, were recorded.

Wendover SP 854 080

A fieldwalk by CMAG recorded Romano-British pottery and some tile (BCM)

Wendover SP 8709

A fieldwalk by CMAG located a spread of Romano-British pottery including third to fourth century Oxfordshire and Nene valley wares; also part of a quern. Some twenty-four struck flints of Neolithic to early Bronze Age date were also found. (BCM)

Wendover SP 8605

A Hod Hill-type brooch and the foot of another bow brooch were found by Mr W. Proctor; also a damaged stater.

SAXON AND MEDIEVAL

Bledlow cum Saunderton SP 7801

A Late Saxon decorated copper-alloy strap end was found by Mr F. Brooks. (1995.119.1)

Bledlow cum Saunderton SU 7999

Mr F. Brooks found the foot of an early Saxon great square-headed brooch, a close parallel to one excavated at Dinton.

Bradwell Abbey SP 827 395

A geophysical survey was undertaken at Bradwell Abbey by Drs R. Ivens and A. Aspinall around the site of the church and in an area to the west of the present standing buildings. The survey appears to indicate a large rectangular building west of the extant chapel and other possible buried structures.

Chearsley SP 72 10

The head of a early Saxon small-long brooch with trilobate head was found by Mr R. Thurstan.

Dinton

see Romano-British

Ellesborough SP 8306

Part of a copper-alloy strap end of late Saxon date and other items, mainly medieval, were found by Mr T. Clark. (BCM 1995.42.1)

Great and Little Kimble SP 825 066

A late Saxon closed-socket copper-alloy strap end with animal head terminal and traces of hatched decoration on one side was found by Mr D. Critoph.

High Wycombe SU 867 931

Two stages of evaluation were undertaken by Dr R. Roseff for BCMAS and Dunthorne Parker Architects and Designers, in advance of redevelopment at 33-43, Castle Street. The site lies close to the former edge of the churchyard. Two medieval pits were investigated adjacent to the street frontage, but the greater part of the site has been subjected to considerable landscaping during the post-medieval period. It seems likely that originally the ground began to slope steeply upwards a short distance from the frontage.

Loughton SP 840 378

Mr and Mrs P. Woodfield reported the discovery by Mr D. Harling of a gold ring made of two strands of twisted gold wire. The find was made during removal of a hedgerow on a development site. Rings of this form are known from Viking contexts but the type may continue into the twelfth century.

Poundon SP 6447 5275

The discovery of a lead disc *c.* 5.5cm diameter, perhaps a box lid, depicting the royal arms of *c.* 1405, was reported.

Soulbury SP 8827

A cemetery of unknown extent was revealed during quarrying. Some seven burials were noted, associated with two iron knives, bone comb fragments and early Saxon pottery. It is hoped that

further investigations will take place at this site. (BCM)

Stewkley SP 852 261

A watching brief was undertaken by Mr R. Williams of the Oxford Archaeological Unit when a French drain was laid around the external walls of St Michael's church. Only nineteenth-century features were revealed except in the churchyard where deeper trenches and soakaways disturbed an eighteenth-century brick-lined grave.

Stone SP 7825 1198

Mr T. Clark reported a pit with ashy layers exposed on the edge of a new parking area. A single medieval sherd was retrieved from its fill.

Woolstone-cum-Willen SP 8758 3929

Archaeological investigations were undertaken by Dr R. Roseff of BCMAS around the outside of the chancel of Little Woolstone Church, the interior of which was investigated by the Milton Keynes Archaeological Unit prior to the building's conversion into a community centre. The work was necessitated by underpinning the chancel. A number of burials were recorded and subsequently re-interred, also possible traces of an earlier phase of chancel, probably that which preceded the rebuilding of the present chancel during the nineteenth century. A brick vault was recorded on the north side of the chancel. St Neot's type pottery of late Saxon date was recovered.

POST-MEDIEVAL AND UNDATED

Amersham SU 9596 9737

Following the reported discovery of suspected human remains in a test pit dug during clearance at the site of the former Amersham gasworks, a visit was paid by BCMAS. The bones proved to be animal. Various alluvial deposits were recorded to a depth of 1.3m.

Aylesbury SP 8183 1375

A rock-cut well was discovered during modification to 20-22, Temple Street.

Brill SP 65480 13963

Mr N. May reported the discovery during building work of a stone-lined well at 2, Temple Street;

also a brick-vaulted water tank.

Drayton Parslow SP 837 284

A watching brief was maintained by BCMAS during the early stages of building on a site directly opposite the Church. The total absence of archaeological features and material was surprising given the site's location. The presence of periglacial features indicated that there had been no previous earthmoving on the site.

Hambleden Centred on SU 790 853

Monitoring of a sewage pipeline which passed close to the Yewden and Mill End villas was undertaken for Thames Water Utilities Ltd by

BCMAS; no archaeological deposits were encountered.

High Wycombe SU 8674 9326

During demolition of a wash house adjacent to High Wycombe Museum, and the subsequent digging of test pits and the excavation of new footings, a watching brief was carried out by Dr R. Roseff of BCMAS since the area lay within the scheduled area of the motte. There was a possibility that the ditch of either motte or bailey might be encountered. This proved not to be the case. Solid chalk proved to lie between 3 and 14m below ground level, however the 'fill' above this was considered to be either a solifluction deposit or solution pipe fill. A post-medieval well was recorded.

Latimer SP 9896 0194

Mrs M. Wells observed, during preparation of an area to be paved, at Ley Hill, a tightly packed layer of pottery and tile of Tudor date, including wasters. The whole clearly indicates a kiln or kilns in the vicinity.

Marlow SU 8466 8627 (centre area)

An evaluation was carried out by Hertfordshire Archaeological Trust prior to a proposed development proposal. The site was divided between gravels to the north and finer alluvial sediments to the south, indicating the location of a former river bank. Few features of archaeological significance were recorded, but three struck flints were recovered from one point on the bank. Towards the south of the site a substantial post-medieval ditch 20 metres long with vertical sides over 1.6m deep was located. Preserved timbers at its base were not fully investigated as they were under water. The whole may have been a garden feature associated with a pond to the SW. Some small late post-medieval features were located near Portlands Alley.

Olney SP 8897 5126

Some recording of post-medieval features in the garden of the Cowper and Newton Museum was undertaken through probing and excavation, by Messrs B. Martin and D. Holmes and Ms A. Noble.

Olney etc (proposed bypass)

Following an earlier assessment of four route options, further studies were undertaken along two of the routes by geophysical survey undertaken by the Bartlett Clark Consultancy, on behalf of BCMAS. Five previously unknown areas of archaeological potential were noted, none of which can be certainly dated at this stage:

Clifton Reynes SP 89 51

A ditch-like anomaly, perhaps a former boundary, together with some possible pit-like features.

Clifton Reynes SP 89 52

Linear features including distinct ditches and probable pit clusters.

Emberton SP 8749

Distinct anomalies suggestive of silted pits.

Tyringham with Filgrave SP 8848

A rectilinear enclosure, linear features and pits.

Tyringham with Filgrave SP 8749

Linear and pit-like anomalies, some of which may represent an old boundary feature.

Geophysical work was also undertaken on four possible flood compensation areas associated with the proposed routes. Archaeological information was recovered in respect of three of the areas:

Clifton Reynes SP 9052

A complex of archaeomagnetic anomalies, including linear features, pits and enclosures. Among the features is a late Neolithic/early Bronze Age ring ditch, previously known from aerial photography.

Weston Underwood SP 87 50

Irregularly-shaped ditched enclosures containing anomalies indicative of pits and other settlement remains.

Weston Underwood SP 8750

Complex pattern of ditches, pits and other features.

Padbury SP 7157 3054

Mr Dickens reported discovering a stone-lined well in a front garden.

Whaddon SP 8134

A possible double-ditched enclosure was photographed from the air.