

A HIDDEN LANDSCAPE REVEALED: ARCHAEOLOGY IN THE LAKES AND STREAMS AT WEST WYCOMBE PARK, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

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During the summer of 2005, following a prolonged period without rainfall, the chalk springs forming the source of the River Wye above West Wycombe Park dried-up. As a consequence, important archaeological remains in the lake and in the ornamental streams 're-appeared', having first been recorded during previous droughts of 1991 and 1996. The opportunity was taken to undertake further recording and reassessment of these remains after excavations to remove silt from the lake and streams. A series of brick and chalk block footings, some lined externally with clay and timber, provide evidence of an early attempt at water management pre-dating the designed landscape created by the 2nd Sir Francis Dashwood during the 1730s. Samples taken for dendrochronology dating suggest a date range of between 1711 and 1716 for at least one of these features. This article describes and interprets the various threads of evidence. It also describes a number of significant finds recovered during two metal-detecting sweeps of the streams and lake-bed. The finds include Roman pottery, coins, brooches and an imported quern stone, and suggest that a significant Roman settlement or villa remains to be found in the Wye Valley on the southern edge of West Wycombe village.

INTRODUCTION

In 1706 Francis Dashwood, 1st Baronet, acquired his brother's half-share in West Wycombe. The property had previously been settled jointly on Francis and his brother, Sir Samuel, by Alderman Thomas Lewis in 1698 (Knox, 2001, 46). Now sole owner, it is likely that Sir Francis began transforming the property, possibly demolishing the small 17th century house occupied by the previous owner, Sir Robert Dormer, and replacing it with a new building on an elevated location overlooking the gardens he was in the process of creating. The large lake and network of streams were probably created during this period by damming and diverting the course of the River Wye.

The enigmatic evidence recovered during the archaeological investigations suggests, however, that Francis Dashwood may not have been solely responsible for the creation of this partially flooded landscape. He may have adapted an earlier system of water management, which ran through a more formal designed landscape. Brick footings have

been found within the southern margin of the lake and in the south stream. Though now heavily truncated, they were almost certainly once connected and part of an earlier channelled watercourse following a slightly different configuration to the south stream. A second eroded channel emerges from the west edge of the lake near to the north stream. Within the bed of the north stream is a substantial brick wall footing 160 metres long, which appears to be the remnant of a garden wall. Footings have appeared at several other locations in the lake and in two locations downstream. The evidence for the pre-Dashwood water management is unfortunately badly truncated and, with one or two exceptions, undocumented. This article aims to locate and describe the evidence and provide an interpretation that can be accepted, discussed and modified if fresh evidence comes to light.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The gardens and park at West Wycombe lie at a point where the valley of the River Wye turns from

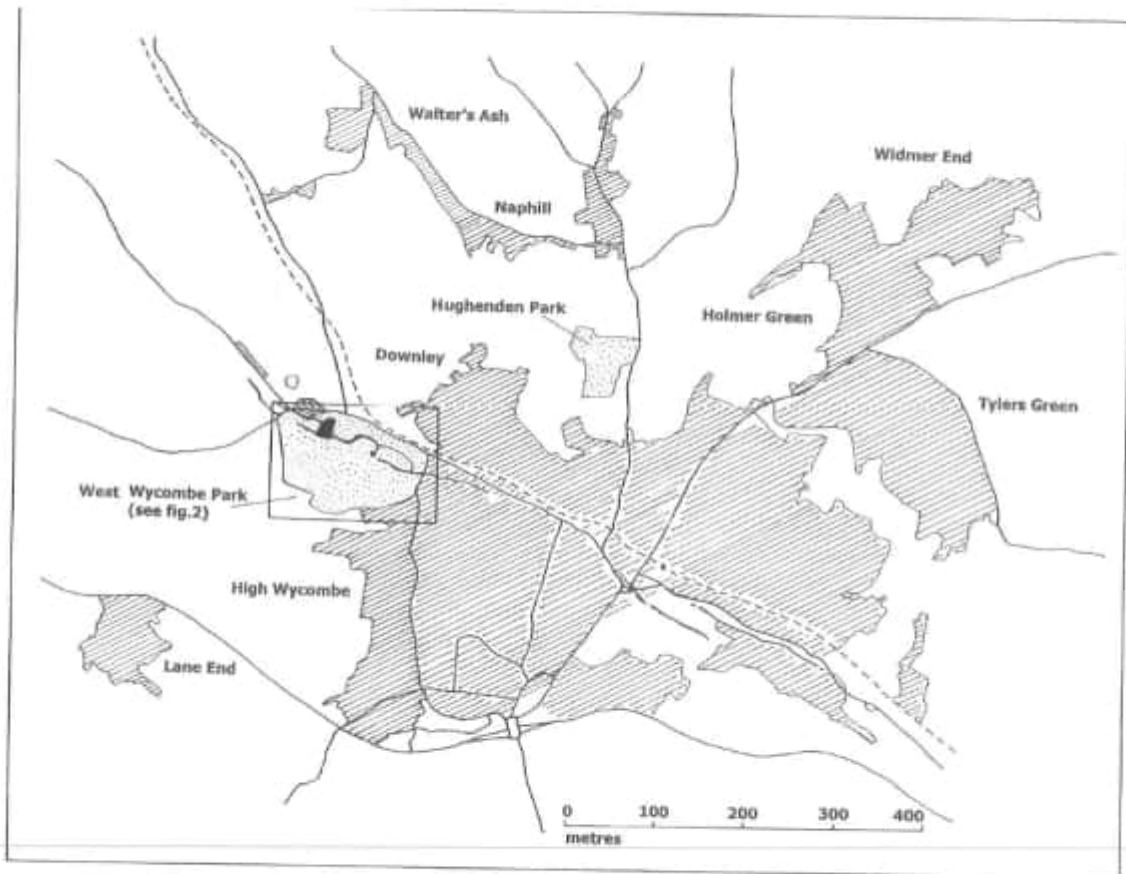


FIGURE 1 Location of West Wycombe Park

an approximately north-south orientation to one aligned on a more east-west axis, as it flows eastwards to join the River Thames at Bourne End some seven kms distant (Fig. 1). The valley is broad and flat in the vicinity of the park and reaches a maximum width here in excess of 600m. The original course of the Wye as it runs through the village is now hard to discern because of the effects of canalisation undertaken in the 18th century as part of the development of the gardens. It is likely that one of the main tributaries rose on the valley floor close to the house. Within the park itself, there are numerous palaeo-channels, suggesting that the river along this stretch was slow-flowing and prone to flooding (McComish, Tuck, Went, 2001, 5-6).

Perhaps the biggest alteration to the drainage

pattern of the area was made during the construction of the park in the early 18th century, when an extensive area of former arable was enclosed and converted into an ornamental landscape. At this time, the Wye appears to have been diverted from a course that originally took it parallel to, though outside, the park boundary. Two branches of the river emerge close to the north-western corner of the Pleasure Grounds; both flow east (Fig. 2). The southernmost (referred to hereafter as the 'south stream') follows a sinuous course to its outflow into the lake after a distance of 200m. The northern watercourse (the 'north stream') mirrors the line of the park boundary for a short distance, but after some 300m it makes an abrupt change in direction. The nature of the stream thereafter is markedly different, being wider, deeper and more

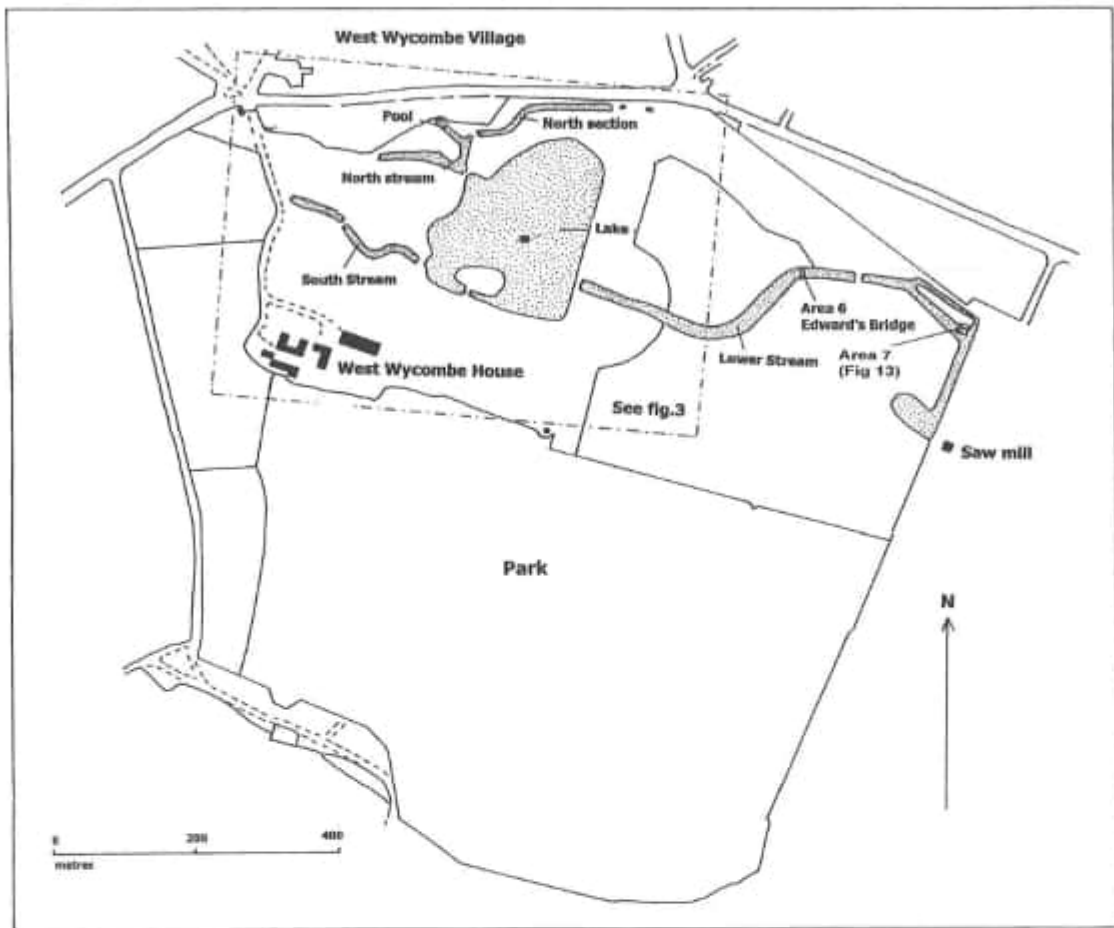


FIGURE 2 Plan of the gardens and park showing areas referred to in the text

heavily ponded. This stream also feeds into the lake. A second branch issues to the north (hereafter referred to as the 'north stream, north section') and perhaps represents an attempt to control the flow of water into the lake. Close to the intersection with the main watercourse, a formal rectilinear pool has been created and from here the main water channel follows a course parallel to the main park boundary and joins the Wye further to the east.

The lake is dammed along a straightened eastern face and also has a straight south bank. The west and north banks, however, assume gentle curves. The river emanates over a cascade from close to its south-eastern corner and below this has been

canalised (hereafter referred to as the 'lower stream') to create an ornamental water feature. Eastwards, the river meanders in a wide loop, with a short projection towards Sawmill House where it forms a substantial mill-pond.

RECORDING HISTORY

It is perhaps surprising that, prior to the dredging carried out in 1991, nothing appears to have been known of these remains. Map evidence provides few clues to their existence, although several structures – two bridges and a projecting bastion on Boat House Island – can be reconciled with evidence on a map drawn by Morise Louis Jolivet

(Fig. 15). This map, owned by the Dashwood family, shows the configuration of the lake and streams almost as they are today, so it seems certain that the present garden design was laid out by the time that the map was completed in 1752. The submerged evidence found in the lake and stream-beds, however, almost certainly dates to an earlier period.

There is an earlier map for the estate (Fig. 14), dating to sometime between 1698 and 1710, but this is less detailed and of little value for illustrating the layout of the gardens at the turn of the 18th century. The large two-and-a-half storey red brick house is shown disproportionately to the rest of the buildings of the village and to the large enclosure in which it sits. Nevertheless its central location suggests the possibility that it was situated at the core of the gardens in the valley bottom, rather than on the valley side, where the present house is located. The issue about the site of what appears to be an earlier house is crucial to the interpretation of the archaeological evidence and will be returned to later in this article.

The bulk of the evidence relating to the lake's previous history, resurfaced during the dredging of the lake and streams between March and May of 1991. The National Trust's archaeologist, Angus Wainwright, was responsible for the rescue excavation and rapid recording of these structures, which were excavated sufficiently to reveal their outline and construction. On the north side of the lake-bed, several silt-filled ditches and hollows were explored by careful troweling. The recovery of a large amount of Roman pottery from these features suggests a settlement and/or villa in close proximity. Further recording was carried out by the author of this article during the 1996 drought, when an additional, small, brick structure was observed and recorded close to the east margin of the dam.

During the recent period of drought in 2005, dredging of the lake silts was again carried out, leading to the discovery of a short length of brick-lined channel in the lower stream at the lower end of the park. Metal detecting surveys of the lake-bed and streams were carried out by South Bucks Metal Detecting Group in 1991, and again in January of 2006 when the lake was still empty of water. The artefacts recovered provide some clues to the interpretation of the archaeological remains and suggest significant Roman activity, possibly associated with a body of water existing at this time.

Between April 2000 and June 2001 English Her-

itage undertook an extensive archaeological survey within the grounds and the hinterland of West Wycombe Park (McOmish, Tuck, Went, 2005). This involved a combination of historical research and mapping of earthwork features, some of which have a bearing on the features described in this article. The maps arising from this survey have also formed the basis of some of the plans presented in the article.

The final episode of recording was undertaken in January of 2007 when, following an examination of trees uprooted by strong winds, a substantial brick wall was discovered in the roots of a large ash tree near to the Temple of Venus.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

For convenience the archaeological evidence is broken down into a total of seven 'areas' (Figs. 2 and 3), though this is a rather contrived system of referencing as much of the evidence was probably related. The description begins with the south stream (Fig. 3, area 1), then progresses around the lake in an anti-clockwise direction (Fig. 3, areas 2, 3 and 4). It then moves to a description of evidence found at several locations along the course of the lower stream (Fig. 2 – areas 6 and 7, Fig. 3, area 5). Certain features survived in sufficient detail to be drawn at a larger scale, in which case reference should be made to the area maps as these show the location of the enlarged drawings.

AREA 1

Area 1 – south stream (Figs. 3, 4 and 5)

Situated within the elbow of the south stream, close to the south bank, two parallel chalk block walls measuring just over 11 m long were excavated and recorded in 1991 (Figs. 4 and 5). The walls assume a gentle curve and are separated by an internal gap of 0.75m and measure 0.35m in thickness. Their continuation in a downstream direction can be assumed since there is a slight scarp within the stream-bed, coinciding with the outer face of the more southerly wall. The opposite upstream ends of the block walls terminate at a shallow cut filled with dark grey clay and rubble. This cut contains the remnant of a brick wall 0.46m thick aligned at 90 degrees to the chalk block walls. Two large wooden stakes 0.2 and 0.15m in girth about the

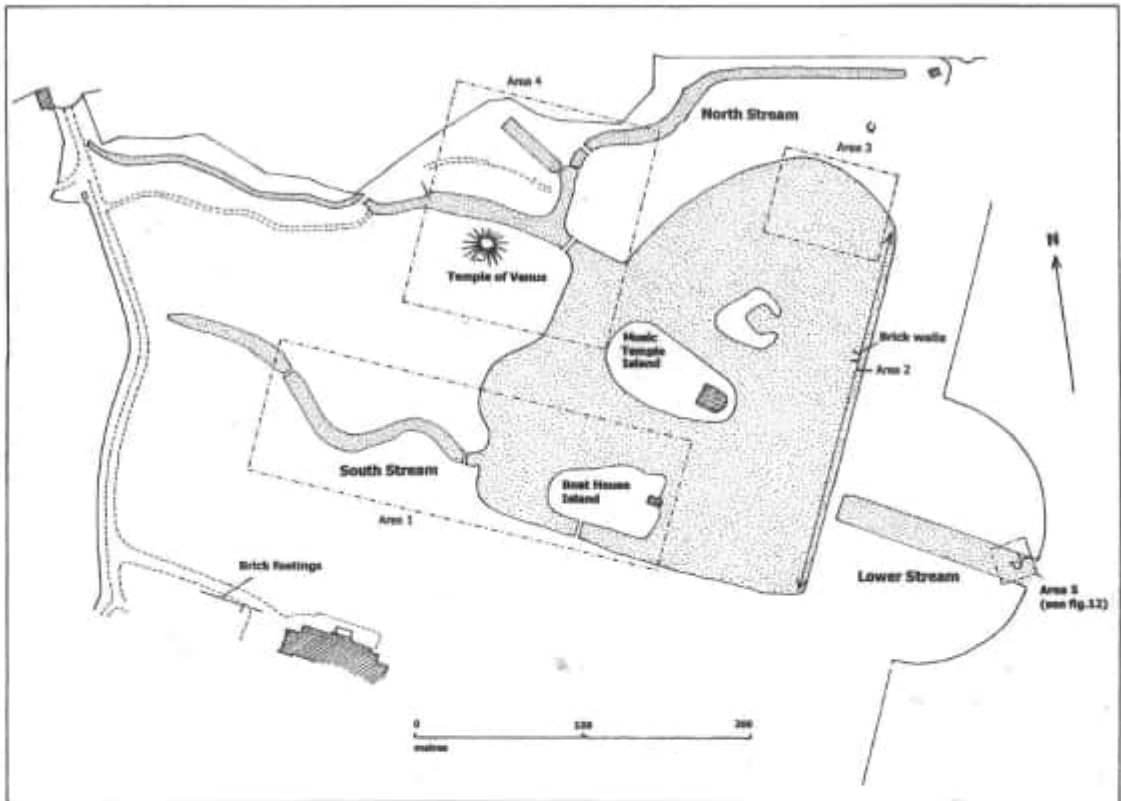


FIGURE 3 Plan of the lake and streams showing areas referred to in the text

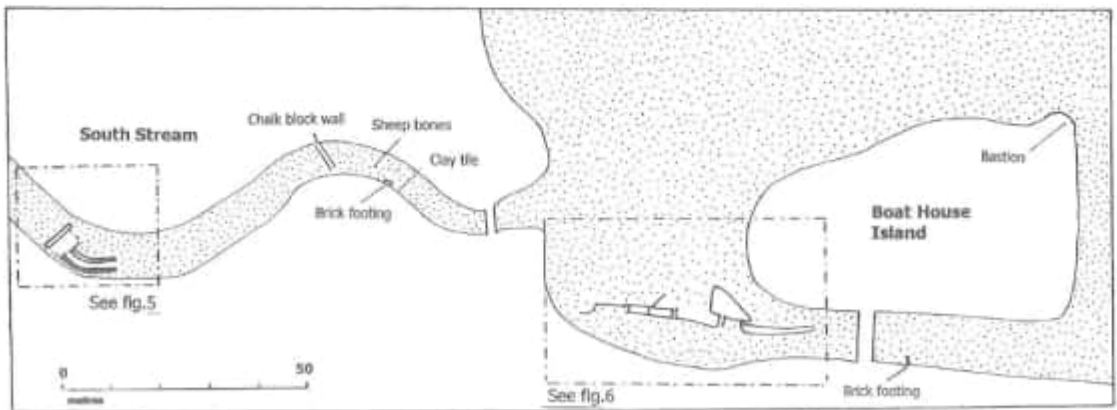


FIGURE 4 Plan of Area 1 showing features in the south stream and the lake

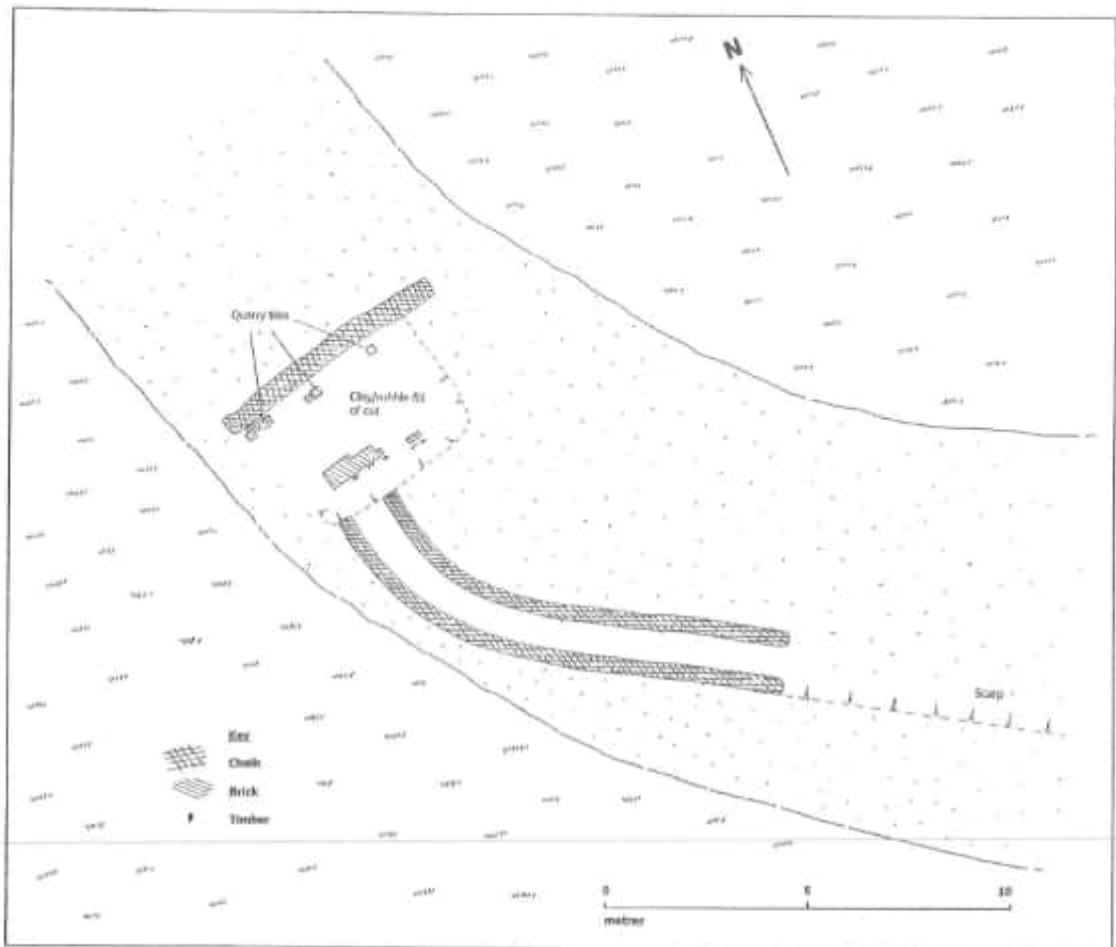


FIGURE 5 Area 1, plan of the chalk and brick footings in the south stream

downstream face of this structure, with two smaller 0.06m diameter stakes between. A second short section of brickwork slightly to the north, also abutted by three wooden stakes, suggests that this structure continued further across the width of the stream.

Situated 2m upstream of the brickwork a band of chalky white clay approximately 6 m long and 0.5m wide was noted running across the width of the stream. Three large quarry tiles measuring 21 inches square and 4 inches in thickness (0.53 x 0.1m) were recorded in front of this chalky clay, spaced at intervals of between 1.5 and 1.65m. Fragments of in-situ brickwork were noted around these tiles.

Fifty metres downstream, a single line of chalk blocks was noted crossing the width of the stream on a north-west to south-east alignment (Fig. 4). Slightly further downstream the remains of a truncated brick structure 2m long and 1m wide made up of orange sandy bricks (dimensions of 0.225 x 0.1 x 0.055 – 0.062m, one brick was recorded as being vitrified) project from the south bank of the stream (Fig. 4). The feature has side walls, which continue into the bank but are truncated in a northerly direction where they would otherwise run across the stream. A soft, orange, sandy lime mortar was evident in the construction of the walls. Between the walls there is a third section of brick

formed of bricks laid on edge.

A large unstratified dump of broken clay peg-tile, overlying and surrounding the wall, was observed on the south bank of the stream. Sheep bones were also found in the bed of the stream (Fig. 4).

Area 1 – South-west corner of the lake (Figs. 4 and 6)

In 1991 the remains of a complex of brick channels and timber sluices was revealed along the south-west margin of the lake bed during the process of removing the silts. An area measuring roughly 50m long and 10m wide was investigated and recorded, with the eastern margin of the feature continuing under the remaining silt within the lake. The western edge of the surviving evidence was recorded to within 6m of the lake bank (Fig. 6) but it seems almost certain that this linear feature continues beyond the lake margin in a westerly direction. It appears to be roughly in alignment with the double-section of chalk block wall previously described (Fig. 4), suggesting that the two features may well have been connected. Evidence, presented later in this article, seems to confirm this conclusion. In an easterly and northern direction the complex appears to have badly truncated when the lake was formed.

At the core of this linear feature lies a channel 7.5m long, running east-west and parallel with the lake edge, but 6.5m into the bed of the lake (A on Fig. 6). The channel measures between 0.8 and 1.1m wide between walls of brick, surviving to a height of 0.2m above a brick floor. The brick floor remains only within the west section, between two timbers crossing the width of the channel. The south wall, buttressed on its external face, is set on a slightly projecting plinth and continues uninterrupted for the full length. The north wall is built in two sections; the east section measures 4.1m and forms a short return to the north at its east end, while the west section incorporates an angle of about 55 degrees to the north-east and has buttresses on part of its north face. A timber sill was noted running beneath the inner face of the east section. Timber boards were also noted lining the inner faces of the west ends of both the north and south walls.

The ends of this channel are terminated by timbers laid at 90 degrees to the brickwork (shown enlarged on Fig. 6). At the west end (B on Fig. 6) there is a single timber incorporating a mortise for

a tenon at either end – part of the tenon for an upright timber still remained within one of the mortises. Two short sections of timber were recorded leading away from the south face of the channel at this point (C). At the opposite (east) end, two timbers of similar length were noted (E). The more westerly of this pair continues under the brickwork and is held in place by an iron nail driven into an underlying timber that was not exposed. It is given additional support by short timber posts driven against its west face. A mortise at the north end, matching the timber at B, suggests the presence of a vertical timber, now lost. The east timber of the pair is much narrower and still retains the bark. It is similarly anchored by driven posts. The remains of several timber planks nailed to its upper surface, remained in-situ.

The presence of a fourth timber within the channel (D), corresponding with the diagonal return on the north wall, has already been noted. This is notched on its east face and carries a small off-centre mortise, together with a second mortise at its north end.

The central channel is flanked at either end by further sections of brick wall, continuing the alignment of the central channel. To the west, continuing to the south-west corner of the lake, there is a section surviving to a height of three courses (F). This measures 6.2m long and is separated from the end of the central channel by a gap of 1.05m. At the west end of this section, there is a truncated remnant of a northerly return (G), while on its south side there is a curved section of brickwork measuring 2.5m (H) that appears to have been buttressed on its south face. The curved section of brick has been laid within a cut and is set in a distinct orange clay containing flecks of chalk. The fill of the cut is contemporary with the brickwork and consists of a dark-grey clay, gravel, brick rubble and garden soil. Several detached sections of brickwork lie to the north, and appear to be associated with a cluster of timbers consisting of a short length of plank and four posts arranged to form an approximate rectangle (J).

The section of brickwork on the east side of the central channel (K) consists of several short lengths of brickwork. The first part measures 3.8m long and is buttressed on its south face; it is also buttressed at its west end around a large block of sarsen stone measuring 1x 0.5m. Close to the south face there is a post. The central part measures 2.1m

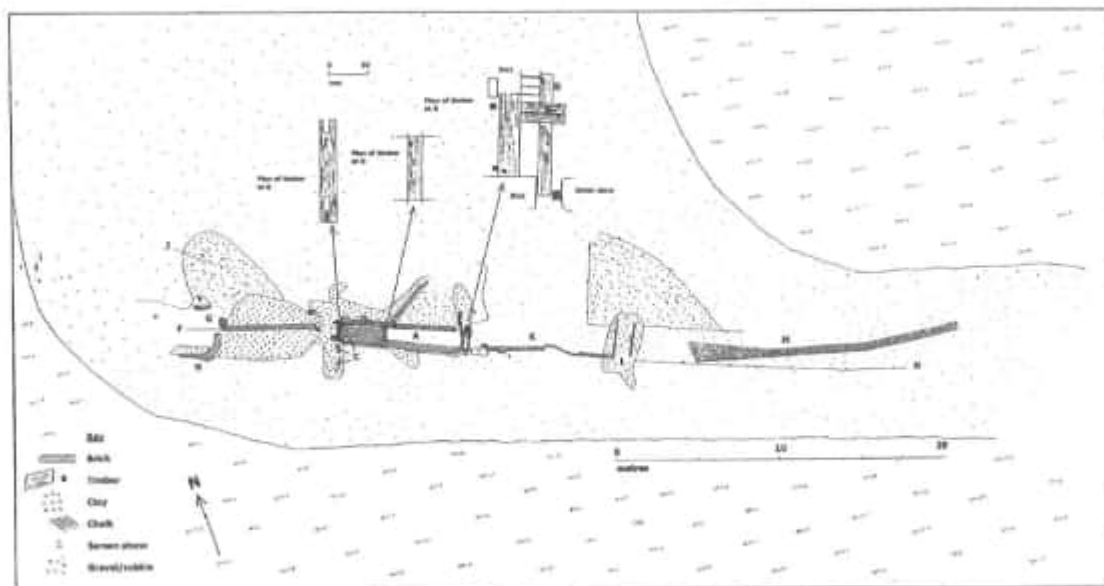


FIGURE 6 Area 1, plan of the brick channels in the south-west corner of the lake

long and assumes a kink in its alignment. The third part measures 2.2m long. It is abutted by one of a pair of timbers (L), measuring respectively 2.3 and 2.1m long and 0.18 and 0.15m in girth, which extend at right angles to the north face of the wall. These two timbers were sampled for tree-ring dating; the results are described subsequently.

The final section of the construction of the channel consists of a foundation formed of chalk blocks measuring at least 16m long (M). This feature measures 0.5m wide but increases in size at its west end where it widens out to a maximum width of 1.2m. Running roughly-parallel with the south face of the blocks there is a slight scarp (N), which continues the line of the easternmost section of brickwork.

A further small section of brickwork, possibly associated with this feature, was noted 6.5m east of the bridge to Boat House Island. The structure emerges from under the south bank of the lake (Fig. 4). Its northerly continuation has clearly been truncated, the surviving section measuring 1.5m long and 0.6m wide. The structure may have been truncated by the construction of the channel.

Area 1 – Boat House Island bastion

This feature was exposed just below the waterline

of the main lake, emerging from the turf on the north-east corner of Boat House Island. It has five visible sides faced with brick, the two outermost sides disappearing under the turf of the island (Fig. 4). Each complete side measures 2.3m long, the total length of the feature measuring about 6.5m. Behind the brick face there is a core of mortared rubble.

AREA 2

Area 2 – the dam and east margins of the lake (Fig. 3)

Linear clay features within the structure of the dam on the east side of the lake appear to be layers – possibly laid over a gravel base – forming a waterproof membrane to the dam. Several of these bands of orange and white clay, measuring up to a metre wide, were noted between 2 and 7m from the waterline over the dam in 1991. The complete lengths of clay banding were not revealed, as in some areas the clay remained buried under gravel and silt overburden. The difference in material used probably reflects different quarry sources rather than chronological development. Isolated patches may represent repairs where leakage was noticed.

During the 1996 drought, two short lengths of

brick wall appeared within the construction of the west face of the dam just below the waterline (Fig. 3). These two structures are separated by a gap of 1.5 and 2.2m but arranged to form a funnel-shaped configuration, the gap narrowing towards the higher end of the dam. Each measures just over 2m long and 0.48m wide, although they appear to have been truncated in both directions. They extend to a depth of at least 5 courses.

AREA 3

Area 3 – North edge of the lake (Figs 3 and 7)

Several distinctive cut-features, filled with dark grey silts, were observed within the northern section of the lake bed in 1991. Wainwright recorded these, applying a feature numbering system (F1-F8, F16, F17, F18), which was continued to include

finds spots elsewhere in the gardens and park. These features had all been cut into the natural clay and flint forming the base of the lake. They produced a significant assemblage of Romano-British pottery, amounting in total to about 8 kgs in weight, (see Description of Finds). Together with a substantial number of coins found in the north-east corner of the lake, this suggests that the northern area of the gardens must have been the focus for Roman occupation, associated with a villa or settlement. The largest of these features consisted of a roughly oval, silt-filled hollow, measuring 12.5 m long and 9.3m wide (F5 on Fig. 7). Several smaller pits were noted to the west of this oval. F1 is a circular cut 1.6m in diameter and 0.3m deep, filled with dark-grey silt, containing a large amount of charcoal. 3.4 kgs of Roman pottery were recovered from this feature. F16 is a square cut, measuring

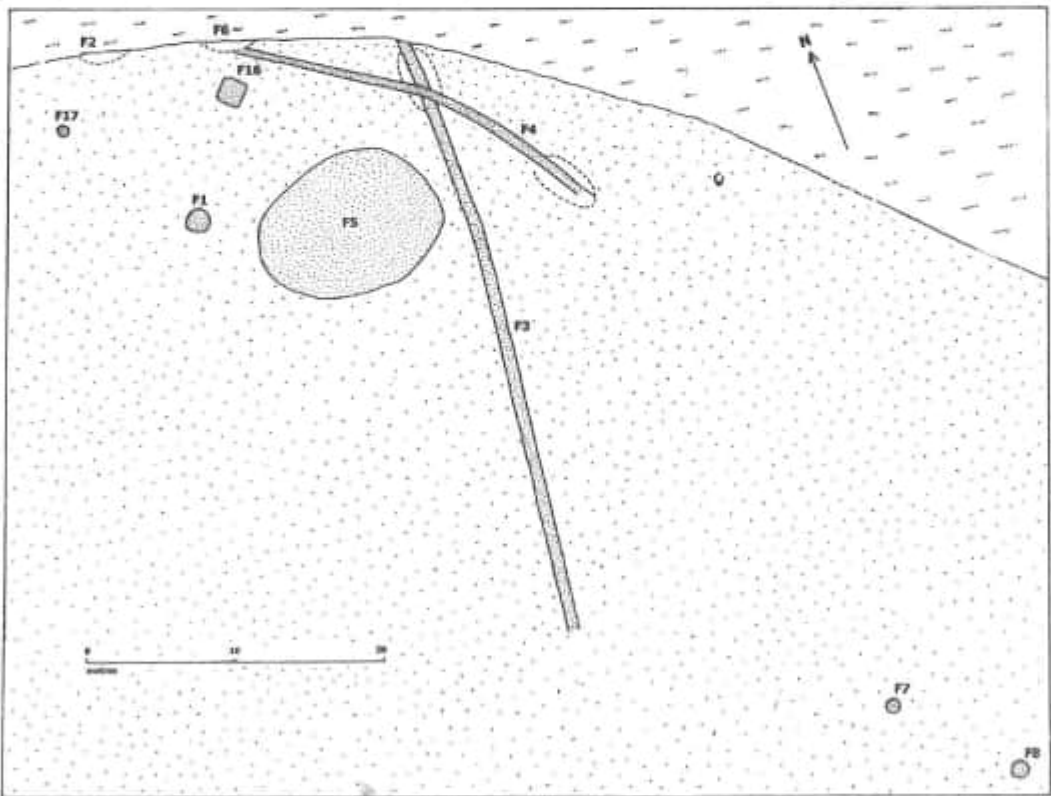


FIGURE 7 Area 3, plan of silt-filled features in the northern part of the lake

1.7 x 1.7m. F17 is a small circle 0.8 m in diameter and 0.15m deep.

Two further cuts (F2 and F6), filled with dark grey clay, were noted in the north bank of the lake. F6 was recorded as a cut 0.35m deep and at least 3.6m wide, continuing into the lake bank. The grey clay fill contained a large amount of charcoal. Only the outline of F2 was recorded.

These cuts are almost certainly associated with two silt-filled ditches emerging from the north bank of the lake. The larger of these two (F3) was recorded over a length of 39m and measured 0.7m wide and 0.3m in depth, continuing in a southerly direction towards the centre of the lake. The second ditch (F4) assumes a curved alignment and continues in a south-easterly direction for a distance of 26.5m. It measures 0.6m wide and 0.35m in depth and the fill consists of a grey clay containing a large amount of charcoal. The junction of the two features was obscured by a later oval-shaped cut 5 m, 2m wide and 0.3m in depth (F18). A second cut was noted at the south end of F4.

Two isolated, circular pits, 0.85m and 1m in diameter (respectively F7 and F8) were observed 26m south of the north bank of the lake (Fig. 7).

AREA 4

Area 4 – West side of the lake (Figs 3, 8, and 9)

A cluster of features on this side of the lake (Fig. 8) was recorded as part of the work carried out in 1991. An area of peat 2.5m square was noted in the bed of the lake, 9m east of the bridge across the east end of the north stream. This area of peat (Fig. 9) lies adjacent to the remains of what was, at one stage, evidently a well-engineered stream channel emerging from the south bank of the north stream and continuing towards the centre of the lake. This feature was traced over a length of 30m (Fig. 9). The surviving evidence consists of a series of planks laid on edge, supported externally by timber posts forming two sides of a channel 1.5m wide. A series of chalk blocks appeared to have been laid to form the floor of the south side of the channel, the north side consisted of grey silt, flint gravel and rubble, placed perhaps to in-fill the channel after it had gone out of use.

On the south side of the channel, two parallel brick walls emerging from the lake bank appear to be the remains of a culvert 0.75m wide emptying into the channel. These two walls survived to a

height of 0.3m, retaining evidence for the English bond used in the construction of the brickwork. The interior was noted as being filled with gravel and silt.

An isolated section of brick walling 1.5m long backed by rubble and chalk, was noted slightly to the north of the channel.

Ten metres south of the culvert, a second brick structure was recorded emerging from the bank of the lake (enlarged drawing, Fig. 9). A brick wall 0.35m wide and projecting 0.54m into the lake-bed terminated with a brick structure resting on a large irregular block of sarsen stone 0.65m long. The south side of this terminal formed an angled buttress. This was not mirrored on the opposite side due to the partial erosion of the feature, although a number of bricks laid on edge were noted, together with a core of mortared brick rubble. Some of the bricks forming this feature were noted to be vitrified. The mortar forming this feature consisted of a white lime mortar with a coarse sharp grit aggregate. Chalk rubble was visible in the bank to the south of the structure for a distance of 5m. The sarsen foundation may suggest a fairly substantial structure and the chalk might be a floor, but the structure was too damaged to allow further interpretation.

Area 4 – South-west of the Temple of Venus (Figs 8 and 10)

During January 2007, strong winds felled two large ash trees on the north side of the 'Broad Walk', 100 metres south-west of the Temple of Venus (Fig. 8). The smaller tree, nearest to the temple, pulled up in its root plate the footings of a substantial brick wall, measuring 0.65m wide and at least 2.5m long (Fig. 10). The north end of the wall remained within the ground, thus truncated from the uprooted section. The orientation of the wall was difficult to determine due to the rotation of the fallen tree but it appeared to be aligned roughly north-south. Five courses of the wall were evident, the bricks arranged in a predominantly header bond, though with occasional bricks laid edge on within the face of the wall. The bricks had an orange to light red fabric and appeared to be hand-made with dimensions of 0.23–24 x 0.10–11 x 0.055–6m. Part of a glazed header in the loose soil and further evidence of a vitrified header in the actual wall construction, might suggest that the wall incorporated some sort of chequered or

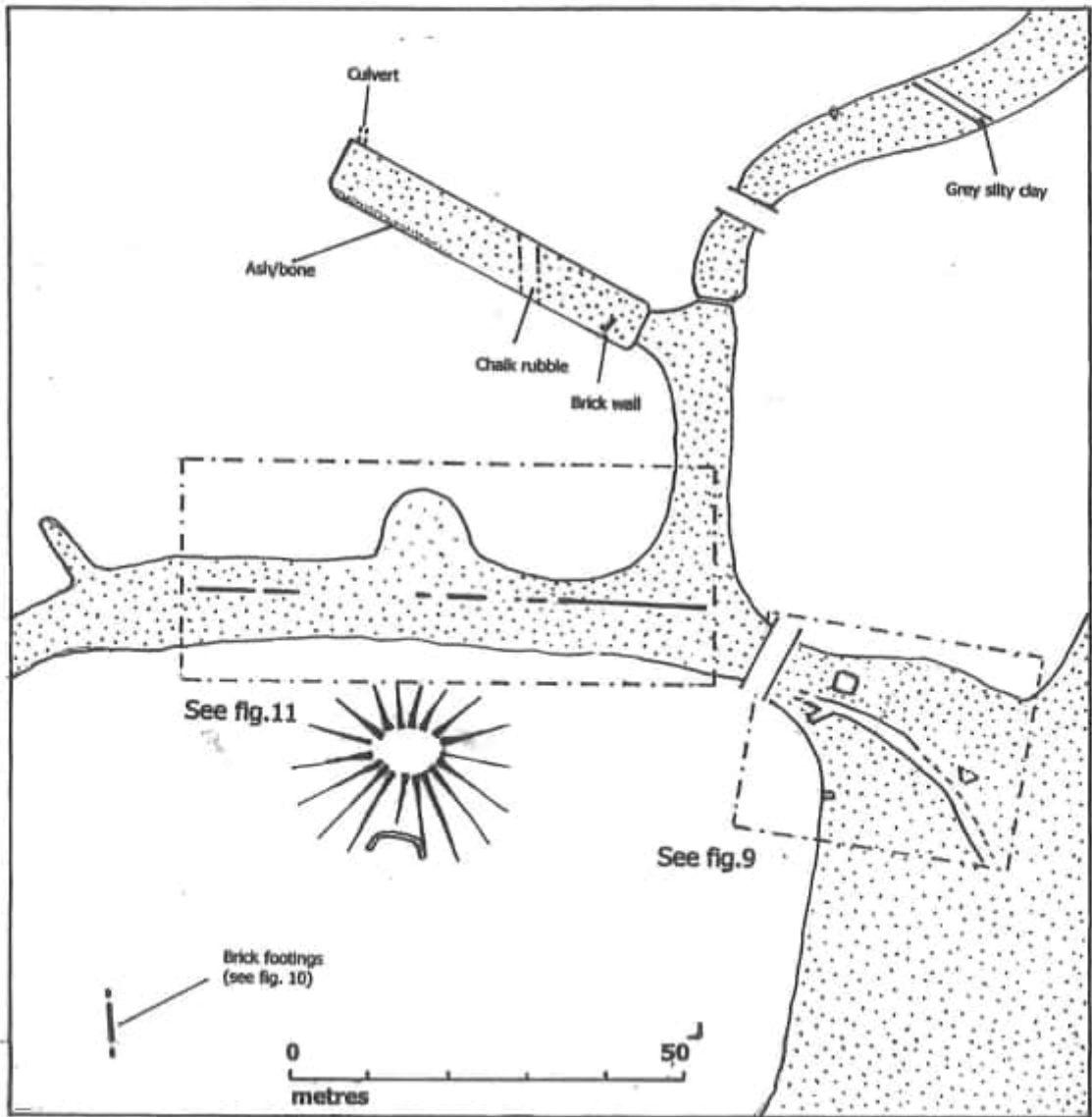


FIGURE 8 Area 4, plan showing features in the north stream and west edge of the lake

diaper pattern, though this evidence remains inconclusive. The nature of the bricks and the light creamy-coloured lime mortar used in the construction of the wall, suggest a late 17th or early 18th century date.

Evidence that this may have been a substantial garden wall comes from a moulded coping brick subsequently found loose in the soil at the base of

the wall. The coping has a half-round projection along its upper surface (see Description of Finds) and gently sloping shoulders, though unfortunately it is quite badly damaged. One end has been crudely tooled to form a 60 degree bevel, suggesting that it formed a mitred joint with an upright coping. Identical copings – probably of 18th century date – survive on the retaining walls of the

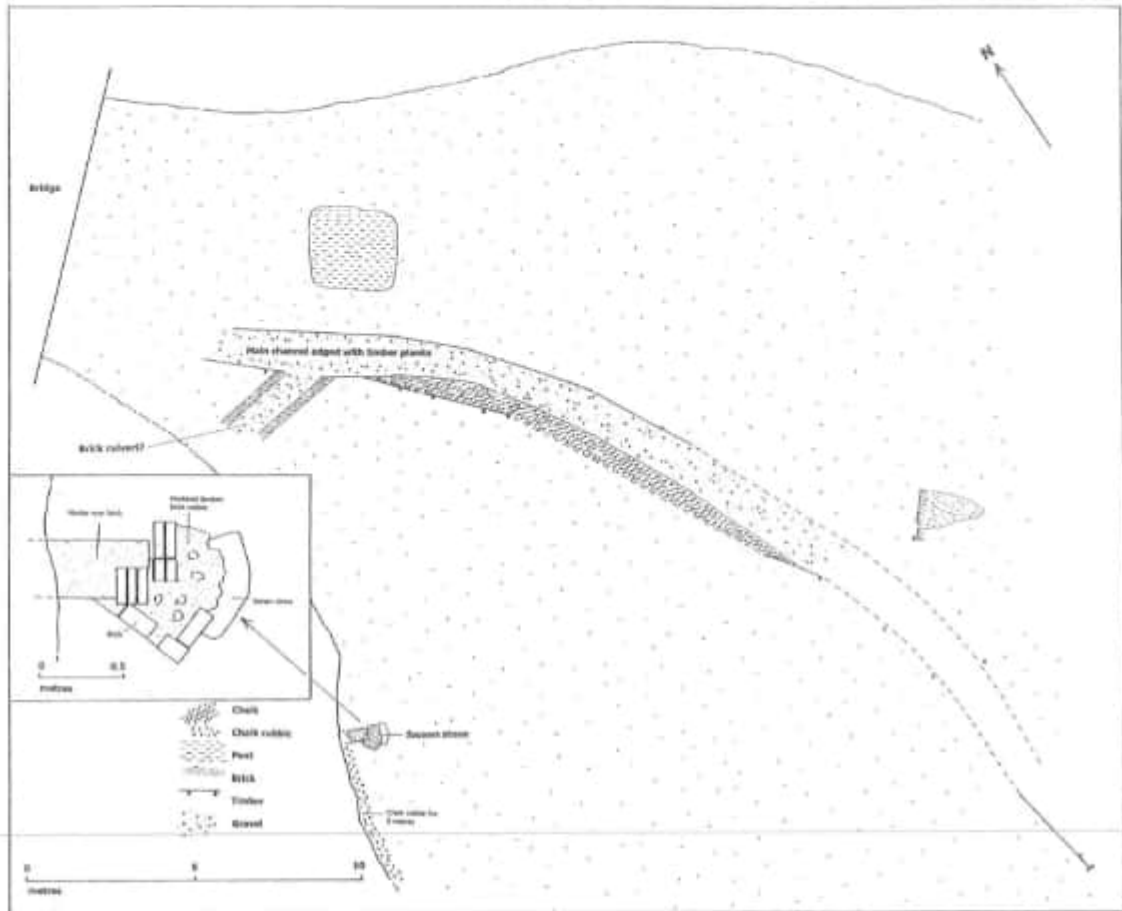


FIGURE 9 Area 4, plan of the timber-edged channel on the west side of the lake

nearby gardens at Bradenham Manor.

Area 4 – North stream, south section (Figs 8 and 11)

Two separate structures – the first of brick construction, the second brick and flint – were excavated and recorded in 1991. The largest is a substantial length of brick wall running parallel with and along the centre of the stream channel. The total recorded length of the wall amounted to 66m, beginning 12m west of the bridge and continuing in 5 broken sections, the longest measuring 20m long (Figs.8 and 11). A large block of limestone 0.6m long and 0.33m wide was noted at the westerly tip of the westernmost section in 2006,

perhaps suggesting an end or corner to the wall. The wall measured 0.57m wide and was built of orange to deep red bricks measuring 0.23 x 0.115 x 0.055m and laid with a gritty white lime mortar. At least two courses survived.

The second structure within the south bank of the stream is on a parallel alignment to the first section of brick wall. It consisted of a brick face 4.5m long built up against a section of mortared flint set into the embankment. The brickwork acted as a facing wall against the flintwork, which in turn acted as a retaining wall.

Dredging of the roughly semi-circular inlet in the north bank of the stream revealed several features within the bank of the head of the inlet. Two



FIGURE 10 Area 4, plan of the brick footings beneath the fallen ash tree

ditches filled with silt were exposed, the more easterly ditch measuring 2.7m wide, the west ditch 2.5m. Adjacent to the west ditch a length of chalk rubble 1.5m wide was exposed in the bank.

Area 4 – Pool north of the north stream (Fig. 8)

An area of chalk rubble between 2 and 3m wide, running across the width of the pool on a north-south alignment, was exposed in the base of the pool in 1991 (Fig. 8). It was suggested by Wainwright that this might possibly be the foundations of a path.

Towards the southern end of the pool a brick wall 1.3m long and 0.23m wide was observed, set into a band of orange clay. The brick dimensions were recorded as 0.22 x 0.102 x 0.06m.

An exposure of ash and bone was also noted in the south bank at a depth of 0.3m.

At the most northerly tip of the pool, a brick-built arched culvert was recorded as entering into

the pool. The culvert measured 0.64m high and 0.55m wide (both dimensions taken externally).

Area 4 – North stream, north section (Fig. 8)

A bank of grey silty clay, 1m wide and 5.2 m long, was observed in 1991 emerging from the south bank and crossing the width of the north stream (Fig. 8). It overlies the natural orange clay and gravel. Eighteen pieces of Roman pottery were recovered from this feature (see Description of Finds).

Area 5 – Lower stream (Figs.3 and 12)

Located 110m downstream of the outfall of the lake, a structure projecting from the north bank into the stream marks the site of a bridge shown on the 1752 Jolivet map (Fig. 15). The structure has splayed walls and therefore decreases in width from 4.5m to 2m (Fig. 12). It is made of hand-made red bricks (0.22 x 0.1 x 0.062m, some of the bricks

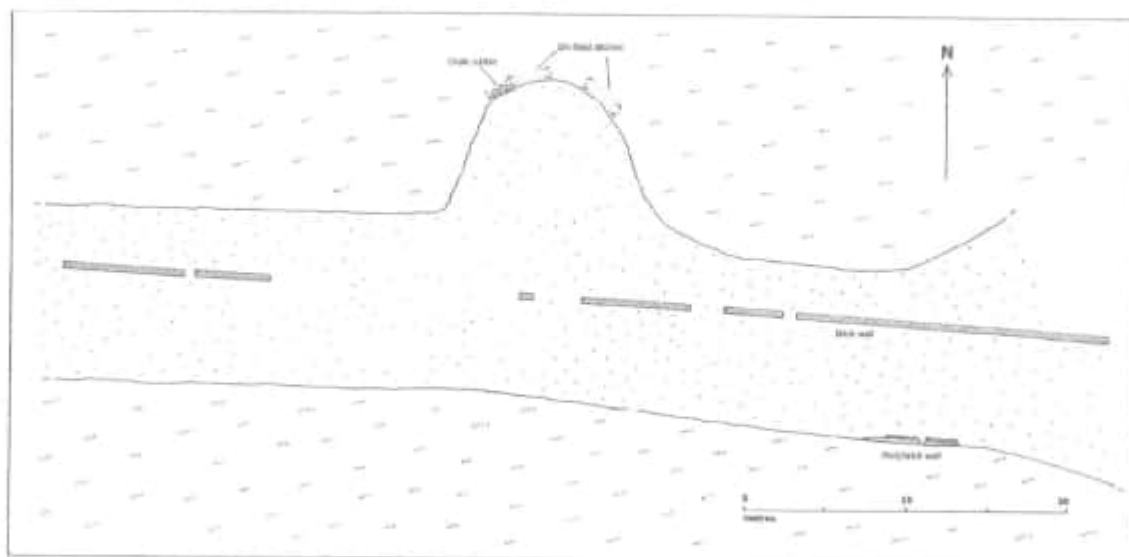


FIGURE 11 Area 4, plan of features in the north stream

frogged), white clay, flint rubble, planks and staves. Within the bed of the stream, there is an area of white clay retained by planks and wooden stakes, forming a triangle with sides 2m long, the point of the triangle facing upstream. Downstream of this feature, separated by an area of flint rubble, there is a rubble and brick wall 3.6m long running across the stream between the splayed brickwork in the north bank and a group of boards running along the stream bed.

The wooden boards, each measuring 2.9m long and 0.2m wide, were observed aligned with the course of the stream. The boards are attached to underlying anchor timbers with square-headed iron pins. This part of the overall structure was interpreted in 1991 as forming a lining to the bed of the stream at the point where its flow is likely to have been constricted between two of the bridge abutments.

Area 6 – Edward’s Bridge (Fig 2)

In 1991, several small assemblages of Romano-British pottery were recovered from the stream bed either side of Edward’s Bridge, (Fig. 2, see Description of Finds). A cut feature with a black sandy-fill 10m long was noted by Wainwright outcropping from the south bank of the stream. A narrow ditch 0.5m wide, 22m long and 0.1m deep

running almost parallel with the stream was also noted (not illustrated).

Area 7 – Lower stream, near the saw mill (Figs 2 and 13)

This feature was first noticed in 2005 after drought again resulted in the stream system drying up. The process of mechanically removing the silts from the stream-bed led to the exposure of this brick-built structure 20m upstream from the retaining wall forming the dam for the mill-pond (Figs. 2 and 13). The structure lies in the centre of the stream-bed, with its longest axis lying at an angle of about 20 degrees to the current course of the stream. It measures 3.5m long and 0.9m wide between the inner faces of the two single-skin side-walls. The outer face of the two walls has been strengthened with a series of paired projecting buttresses, and the maximum width measures 1.7m.

Very little of it survives, i.e. only two courses of brickwork over the underlying clay and flint. A section dug across the east end of the structure revealed that the channel is filled with a layer of dark-grey silt, containing broken brick rubble that overlies a coarse flint gravel in a gritty, grey, sand matrix. The bricks forming this structure are bright orange to red in colour, hand-made with dimensions of 0.225–0.23 x 0.11 x 0.055–60m. A gritty,

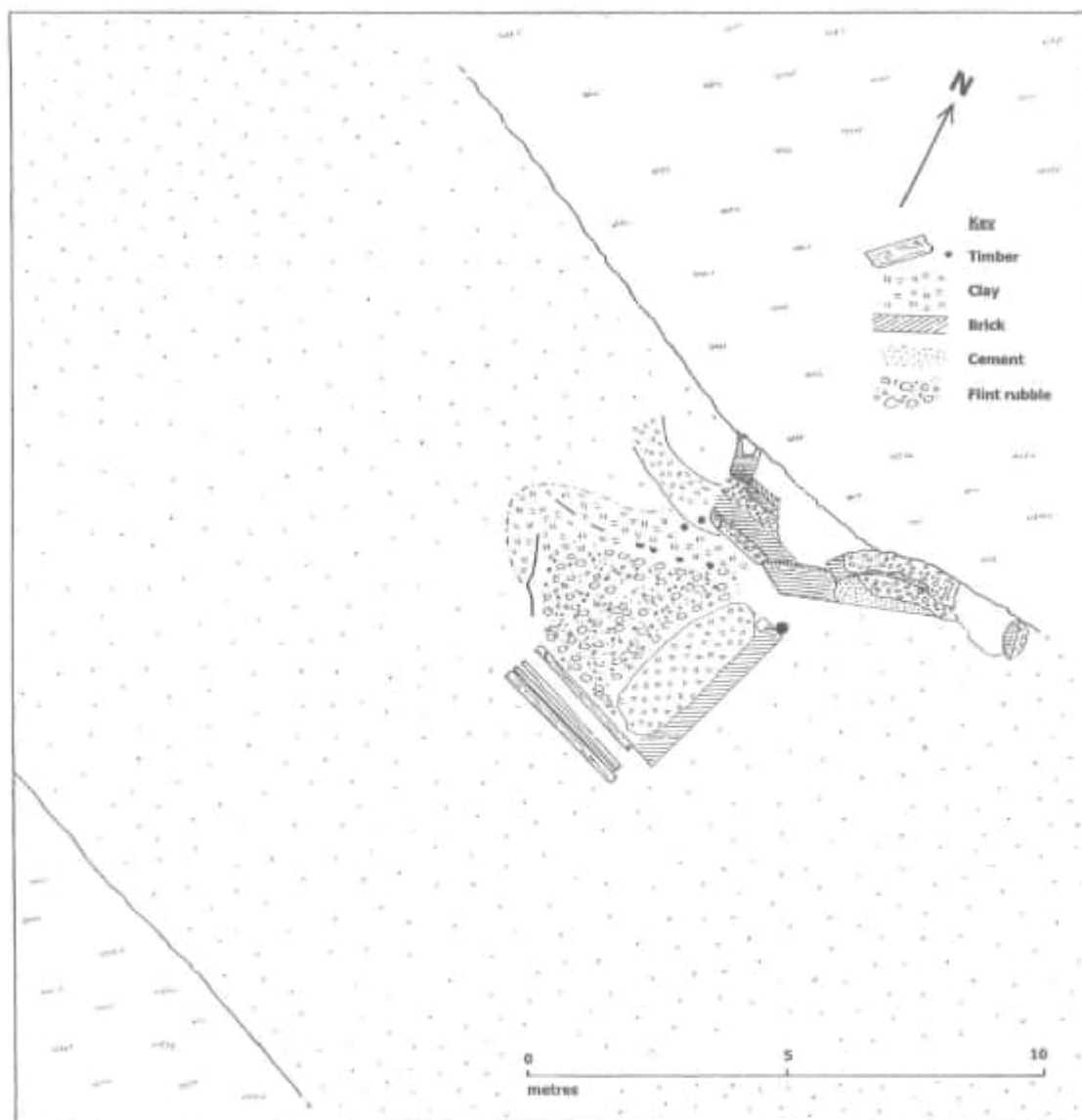


FIGURE 12 Area 5, plan of the bridge footings in the lower stream

grey lime-mortar was evident between the brick courses. Though far from conclusive, the two ends of the structure appeared to be complete, suggesting that the recorded length of this feature represents its full extent.

DISCUSSION

Evidence for Romano-British occupation

The assemblage of pottery, coins, metalwork and quern stones recovered from the lake and stream beds adds to the growing volume of evidence held by the Bucks SMR suggesting a significant Romano-British presence in the vicinity of West Wycombe village. This suggestion was first made in 1934 – by a local historian, who claimed that the

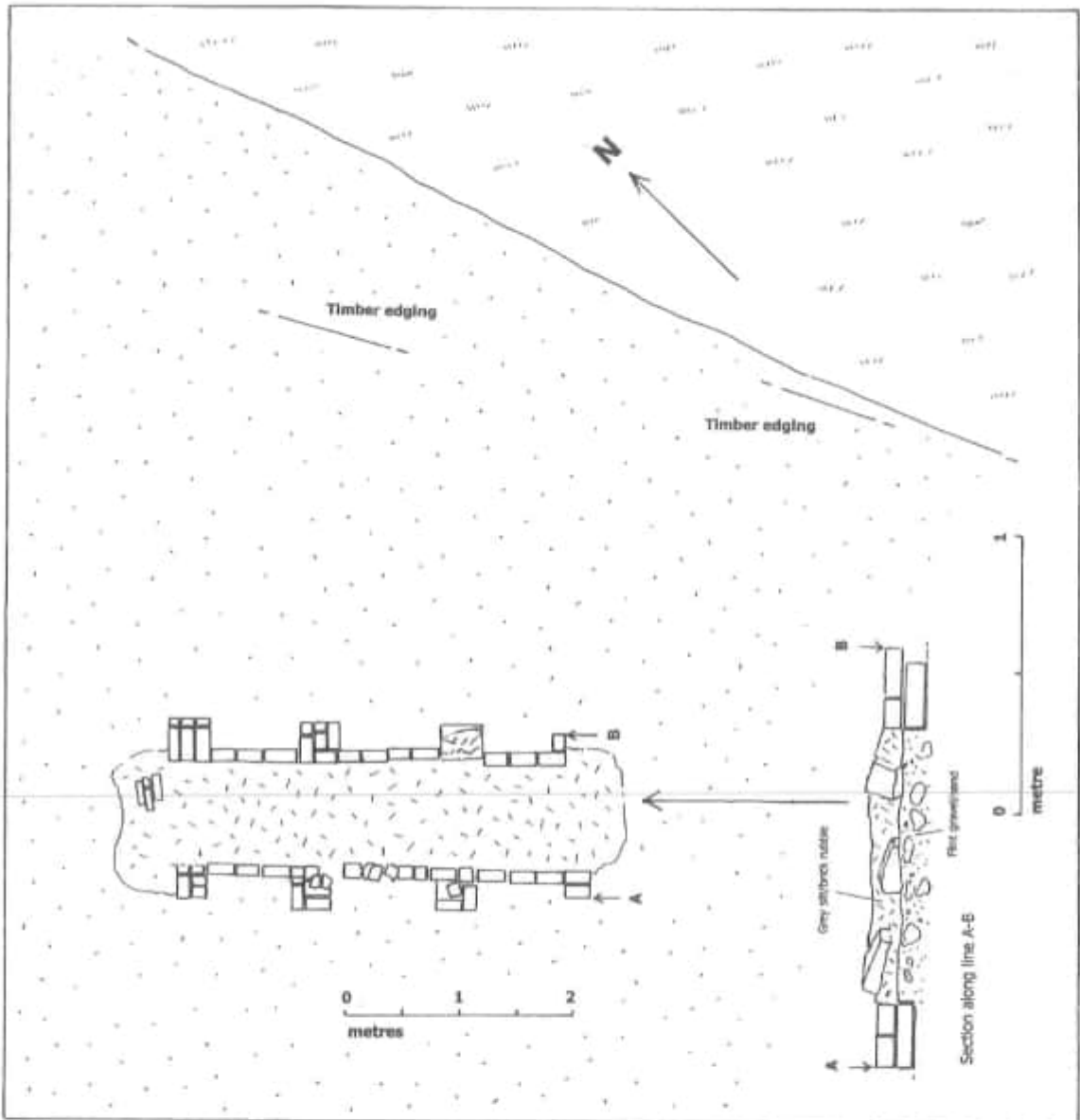


FIGURE 13 Area 7, plan of the brick channel in the lower stream

village was built over the site of a Roman villa (Harman, 1934). Harman may have been persuaded by knowledge of local finds of pottery and building materials reported since the mid 19th century. These show a widespread pattern of distribution within and along the sides of the valley and on the

north side of West Wycombe Hill, possibly with the site of the present village as a focal point.

The problem with much of this evidence is that it has arisen from chance finds and metal detecting of arable fields where ploughing has removed contextual evidence. Several large hoards of coins and

items of jewellery have been recovered from north-east of Cockshoots Wood west of the village, suggesting what may have been a single hoard or several hoards disturbed by ploughing. A group of 13 coins recovered from a field north-east of the hill fort suggests a further hoard. Two separate cemeteries have been recorded, one of which has good contextual evidence. During the construction of St Paul's Church at the east end of the village, a number of bodies, laid in an irregular manner, were unearthed in 1845. Further down the valley, thirteen inhumations, forming part of a 2nd or 3rd century AD cemetery, were excavated outside the northern edge of the park, prior to a housing development in 1978. Based on their east-west orientation and the absence of grave goods they are thought to have been buried with Christian rites (Farley and Wright, 1979).

The discoveries described in this article provide additional evidence for a Romano-British presence centred on West Wycombe village, though again the evidence is widely dispersed. Pottery and finds of coins and metalwork have come from two main areas of the gardens, first the northern part of the lake, and secondly, in the mid-section of the lower stream around Edward's Bridge. A handful of finds, including part of a quern stone, were also recovered from the south stream. From the northern part of the lake, 237 coins of this period were recovered by metal detecting from the lake bed silts in 1991. Silt-filled ditches and hollows in this area of the lake (area 3) also produced a large assemblage of pottery dateable to the 2nd to 4th centuries. As these features continue into the north bank of the lake, it is likely that important buried evidence survives between the lake and the north section of the north stream. In the second location, in the lower stream, pottery was recovered from either side of Edward's Bridge (see Description of Finds, F10, F12, F14), although Wainwright dismissed the suggestion that these finds may have been associated with two cut-features within the stream bed.

These two locations hint at a strong association between Roman occupation and water, either a standing body of water, or the course of the Wye. Yet metal finds of this period – almost exclusively discovered by metal detecting of arable fields – show a widespread distribution along the valley. Scattered finds of Roman coins and metalwork were discovered in the park south of the house in 2004. Further up the valley discoveries of Late Iron

Age and Roman coins west of West Wycombe Hill may suggest a centre for trade or ritual activity associated with the hillfort. Two separate coin hoards have been found and these may hint at continuity with earlier activities – perhaps the ongoing importance of a religious focus or even the existence of a Romano-British temple complex.

A villa complex would not have been out of place since the valleys of the Chilterns were favoured areas for Romano-British settlement (Branigan, 1967). Evidence has been cited for a Roman road running along the ridge above the southern edge of the park (Hargreaves, Morris, Parker 1970), which may have provided a communications for a villa in the valley bottom. The only certain villa in the Wye valley is the well-known villa on the Rye in High Wycombe (Hartley, 1959), [although excavations at Saunderton in 1938 found evidence likely to have been associated with a villa]. Until in-situ buried remains are discovered, the true nature of Roman occupation in this part of the Wye Valley must remain a matter of speculation and the conclusion of this article can only be to suggest that the garden landscape of West Wycombe House still holds great potential for determining the nature of occupation and settlement.

Evidence for the Dormer House and associated landscaping

In the absence of detailed evidence from maps and written sources, interpretation of the archaeological evidence recorded in the lake and stream channels must remain largely conjectural. The evidence is difficult to date and only one timber has been securely dated by dendrochronology. It is hard, therefore, to associate the works with any particular owner, although the 1711–1716 date range for the sampled timber suggests it was the work of the 1st Baronet. The earliest available large-scale map is thought to date from c.1698, when the 1st Baronet acquired the property and his name appears at several places on the map (Fig. 14). Its style is simplistic and conveys little detail, but it does show the house situated within a large hedged enclosure populated by trees. Tree-lined avenues run to the south and north-east and there appears to be a third north-south orientated avenue to the west. The south avenue shown on this map incorporates two sets of gates and may have lain within an enclosed forecourt. The builder of the house remains uncertain,



FIGURE 14 Plan of West Wycombe Park and Village c.1698 [with additions] showing the house possibly sited in the valley bottom (reproduced courtesy Sir Edward Dashwood). North is to the bottom of the illustration

and it is not clear whether it was the work of the Dormers or the 1st Baronet. It is out of scale to the rest of the detail on the map, and while this might be fortuitous for its depiction of architectural detail of the house, it is less helpful for determining its precise location. The only account of the house comes from Langley (1797), who describes it as 'built of brick, of no great extent'.

Several possibilities can be put forward for the location of the house. The late Sir Francis Dashwood suggests that it stood where the Temple of Venus now sits, though no evidence is cited (Dashwood, 1987). The English Heritage survey suggests, based on earthwork evidence, that it was sited close to the north bank of the south stream. Evidence to support this suggestion comes from the c.1698 map, as this shows the river running alongside the house (as indicated on Fig. 14). A more likely candidate-site may be the area of

brick and roof tile exposed on the opposite (south) bank of the stream in area 1. This structure appears to have been truncated when the south stream was remodelled to its present outlines (prior to 1752). A third possible site, away from potential flooding, is the valley slope on which the present house lies. The present house is thought to have been built by 1st Baronet, but it does incorporate extensive brick cellars, perhaps originating from an earlier building. It is also worth noting that immediately west of the present house, a gas pipeline trench in 1999 exposed a substantial brick wall beneath the gravel forecourt and west lawn (Fig. 3). The problem with this third location is that it cannot be reconciled with the c.1698 map evidence, as it would lie within or even beyond the enclosure containing the avenue south of the house. The English Heritage survey concluded that the boundary between these two enclosures

corresponds with a substantial break of slope that now defines the garden terrace immediately in front of the house.

Each of these sites merits further investigation through geophysical survey, excavation and close examination of the structure of the present house. The house's location is an important issue to resolve as there must have been a contemporary garden landscape and the archaeological evidence described here may form traces of this. The early map shows the house closely surrounded by a patchwork of fields and the substantial enclosure in which it sits probably represents the extent of the garden at that time. There is no body of water corresponding with the lake shown but this does not provide firm evidence that a lake was not in existence. If it did exist it is likely to have had a more formal outline, possibly in the form of an octagon (Knox, 2001). The existence of a detached walled garden is suggested by the wall noted beneath the

fallen ash tree in area 4, since the moulded coping brick recovered at its base matches those on the garden walls at nearby Bradenham Manor. This wall points in a northerly direction towards the north stream, where there is a longer section of wall within the stream-bed, possibly at right angles to the aforementioned wall. The section in the stream must pre-date the formation of the stream channel, but it is difficult to suggest why it lies more than a metre below the stream banks. Either the wall had very deep foundations, or, more likely, the previous ground level was considerably raised when the present outline of the stream was created prior to 1752.

Evidence of 18th century landscaping and water management

The present appearance of the garden landscape at West Wycombe is attributed to the taste and exertions of Sir Francis Dashwood, 2nd Baronet, who is

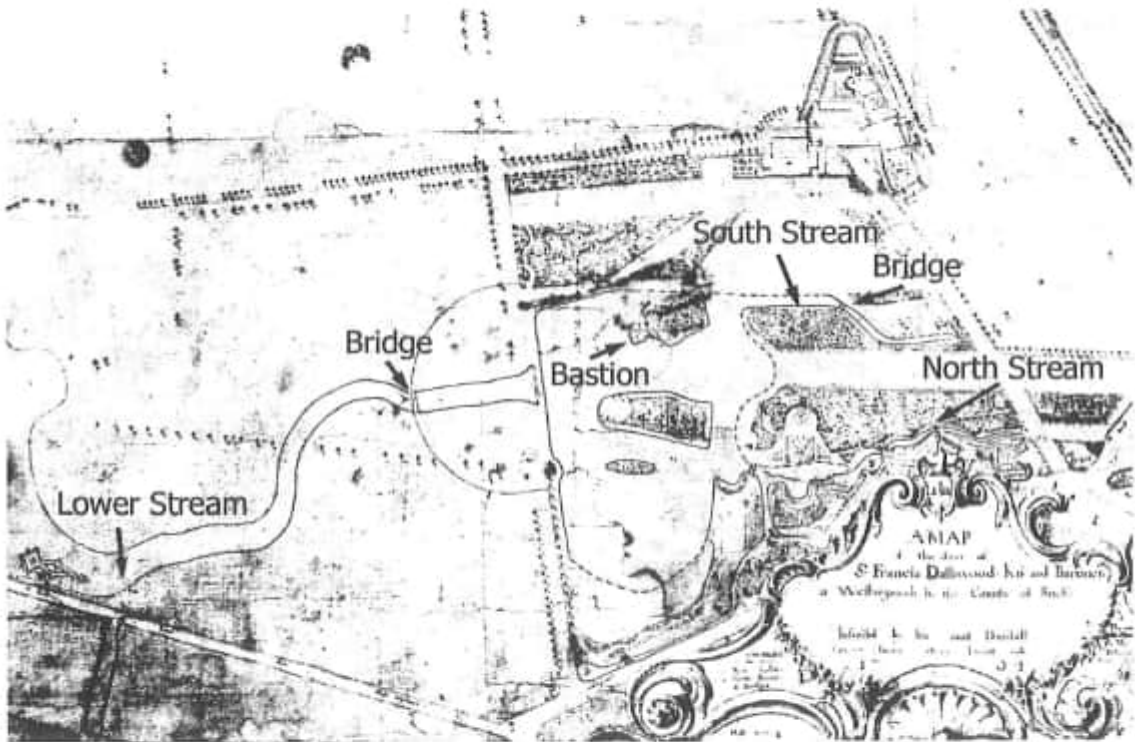


FIGURE 15 Jolivet's 1752 plan enhanced to show the outline of the lake and streams (reproduced courtesy Sir Edward Dashwood). North is to the bottom of the illustration

thought to have laid out the gardens in three distinct phases covering the formal, rococo and 'natural' styles. The period of development probably begins with his return from Greece in 1735 and continued until his death in 1781. Lord Grimston wrote of the:

small but pleasant park, part of which was laid out in 1739, into walks which are beautified with water and wood' (Knox, 2001)

The garden is depicted for the first time on Jolivet's map of 1752 (Fig. 15). Jolivet's map is one of two important visual sources – the other is Richardson's map of 1767 (Fig. 16) – the pair illustrating the development of the gardens and providing vital evidence for the interpretation of archaeological features. Jolivet portrays a more complex landscape compared to the present gardens, populated by temples and traversed by sinuous paths winding their way through plantations. The central section, portraying the lake, has unfortunately been affected by staining, nevertheless Jolivet's lake can be seen to conform fairly closely to the outlines of the present lake (the author has slightly enhanced the outlines on Fig. 15). The outline of the south stream differs somewhat as its eastern part forms a straight stretch of water to the lake. Its central section and westerly sections form a dogleg corresponding with the present outline of the stream. In the elbow of the dogleg, a bridge with three paired buttresses is shown on Jolivet's map; this must surely correspond with the brick wall, timber posts and chalky clay in area 1. The brick wall was recorded as being 0.46m thick and discontinuous, suggesting there were likely to have been two arches between the buttresses. A direct relationship between these and the parallel chalk block walls running downstream could not be proved but, since the downstream section is shown as wider than the channel formed by these blocks, it is tempting to suggest that they are not connected and the walls may be an earlier feature.

Further downstream, several features were recorded on the bend on the south stream. This bend was created after 1752 but before 1767, hence these must either post-date Jolivet's plan, or be earlier features truncated by the new course of the stream. The chalk block wall seems to sit more comfortably within the stream, suggesting that it is contemporary with the re-aligned stream, perhaps

forming a small weir or cascade within it. The fragment of brickwork and the dump of roof tile are less easy to explain and the suggestion has been made in the previous section that these may, somehow, be related to the house shown on the c.1698 map.

Two further structures can be reconciled with the map evidence. One of these is the five-sided bastion on Boat House Island. A similar structure, though with three projections rather than the single recorded projection, is shown on Jolivet's map and labelled as 'The Fort'. West Wycombe hosted fêtes champêtres in the mid 18th century and these would have included the firing of cannon at small boats sailing on the lake (Richardson shows a two-masted ship on the lake). A 50mm diameter cannon ball recovered during the metal detecting survey of 2006, provides a neat link with this past use of the lake. The other structures that can be reconciled with the maps are the timber-edged brick and chalk footings in the lower stream below the cascade (area 5). These correspond with a bridge shown on both maps. Little is known about this bridge, although the depiction of cutwaters on the 1752 map – one of which was confirmed by the excavated evidence – suggests that it was an ornamental structure with three arches. It must have served as a footbridge as the carriage drive is shown circling around the edge of the garden and traversing the stream below the bridge.

The remaining structures, the brick, chalk and timber-lined channels, appear to be associated with water management, although for what purpose remains uncertain. The most complete structure is that in the south-west corner of the lake (Fig. 6). It is highly likely that this is a continuation of the section of parallel chalk-block wall higher up the south stream depicted in Fig. 5 and corresponding with the straightened lower section shown on the 1752 plan. The plan suggests that this lower section had been widened, implying that the channel was no longer in use by this date, having probably been reduced to its present condition. Sometime between 1752 and 1767 it was partially concealed when the present curved outline was created by cutting a new channel and depositing the excavated material over the old course of the channel. The act of cutting the new channel led to the exposure of the section of brick wall, roof tile and sheep bone now evident in the south bank, implying these are the remains of earlier features, although the diago-

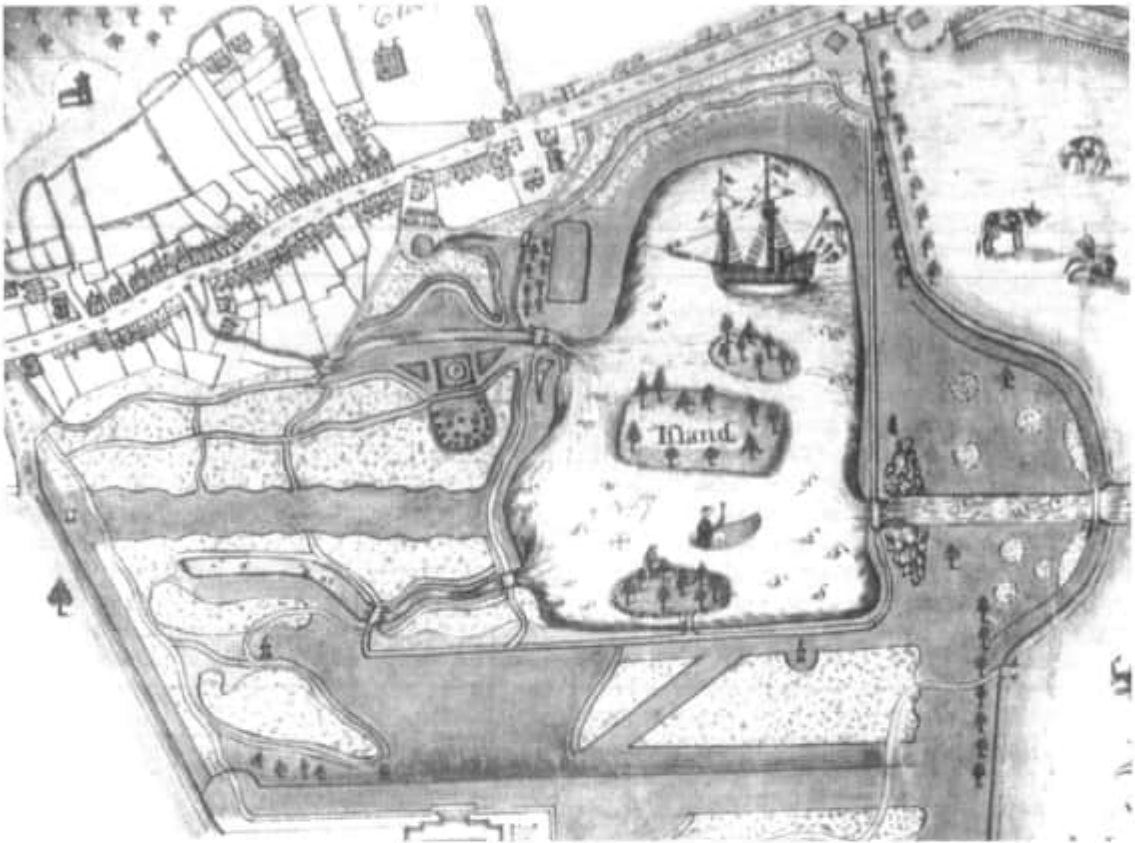


FIGURE 16 Richardson's 1767 plan of the gardens (reproduced courtesy Sir Edward Dashwood). North is to the top of the illustration

nal chalk-block wall in the bend of the stream is likely to be a later addition, perhaps forming a small weir or cascade in the stream.

The 1711–16 date range for the sampled timber, gives a strong indication of when the structure in the south-west corner of the lake was created, though it is possible that the timber was recycled at a later date. One can only hazard a guess as to why the structural evidence was configured in such a manner. The author's view is that the curved section (H) was designed to reduce the speed of the flow of water along the south stream before it entered the central section A. The system of sluices, implied by the crosswise timbers in section A, suggests that the flow of water could be controlled, with some of the water passing northwards against the angled section of brickwork, perhaps into the main body of

the lake, with the remainder passing along the continuation of the channel suggested by sections K and M. The chalk blocks at M presumably represent the floor of the channel, as similar chalk blocks between timber edging were found on the west side of the lake. The brightness of the chalk may have given clarity to the water flowing through the channels, although it is not clear whether these channels were covered over.

The timber edging to the channel on the west side of the lake suggests otherwise i.e. it implies that this was an open channel of water, although the brick channel feeding into it from the south may well have been covered. This open channel must have carried the water now flowing along the main section of the north stream. It must have already been redundant and reduced to its present extent by

1752 as the plan of this date shows the lake with its present outlines encroaching upon this structure. The south-eastern limit, recorded in 1991, may be the original end of the channel, suggesting that the water then fed the outlines of an earlier and slightly smaller lake.

Since the various channels lie within the current lake and stream-beds, they must predate the formation of the outlines of these bodies of water and must therefore be earlier than 1752. This conclusion also applies to the short length of brick channel found at the lower end of the lower stream (area 7). This is most likely to be the remaining lower part of a culvert supporting a path or track over the earlier outline of the lower stream, the top half having been removed. The implication is that the lake must have been smaller and the streams narrower and considerable landscaping must have taken place prior to 1752 to create their present outlines. Whether or not these structures were functional or formed part of an earlier designed landscape, remains unclear. There was certainly a precedent for milling in the locality as three mills located within the manor of West Wycombe are recorded in the Domesday survey and an eel fishery is mentioned. The names 'Wythditch Mill', 'Pitmill' and 'Margery Mill' appear in documents of the 13th to 16th century (Page, 1925, 136). The 1711-16 date-range of the sampled timber in the south-west corner of the lake, however, rules out the possibility that this particular structure was any earlier than the ownership of the first baronet. The author's view is that the channels were largely functional, built to the requirements of the 1st baronet to carry the water forming the two arms of the stream. They most likely fed into an earlier lake, the outlines of which have been lost but were perhaps similar to those of today, except on the west and south-west margin where a more serpentine outline had been added by 1752. The channel in the south-west corner of the lake appears to have been a complex and well-engineered structure, designed in such a way as to feed the lake but also carry away excess water, perhaps for an ancillary purpose.

CONCLUSION

The excavation and recording of submerged evidence in the lake and streams at West Wycombe Park has been an opportunistic exercise in 'rescue archaeology', providing a response to periods of

drought and the deliberate process of silt removal from the watercourses. Unfortunately, the fragmentary condition of the evidence prevents any firm conclusions from being drawn as to its date or purpose. However, what has been uncovered seems to be evidence of water management associated with the 1st baronet, and associated garden features, such as the wall in the north stream and the brick footings exposed in the south stream and on the south and west margins of the lake. Chalk and ash were materials regularly used as a dressing for garden paths and it may be that some of the chalk rubble features were laid for this purpose e.g. the chalk rubble in the north pool. The evidence has highlighted the buried archaeological potential within the gardens and the wider park landscape. It illustrates the importance that future survey, excavation and research can play in understanding the evolution of the designed landscape at West Wycombe and for determining the site of the earlier house associated with the Dormer family. There is also a potential for the understanding the early origins of occupation at West Wycombe, extending back to the Roman period, if not earlier.

DESCRIPTION OF ARTEFACTS

All illustrations are by the author except for the Romano-British brooches (David Williams) and the lion's spout piece of samian ware (Alan Marshall).

(a) *The Pottery by Yvonne Parminter (Fig. 17)*

This report is based on one compiled in 1991 after a rapid scan of the pottery from the lake and stream dredging by Yvonne Parminter. Her report has been slightly amplified by the author and by Mike Farley, to include more quantification, etc. Any errors arising from this modification are not the responsibility of the original author.

The pottery recovered from the site, principally Romano-British, came from two main locations, the first from the northern section of the lake (Fig. 7, features F1-8), the second from the lower stream either side of Edward's Bridge. None of the finds were recovered from stratified contexts but some clusters of similar period material can be identified. Unless stated otherwise, all of the Roman pottery is in a sandy fabric but there has been no formal fabric analysis. The pottery recovered from F11 is post-medieval.

(F1) A total of 65 abraded body and base sherds of Oxford oxidised wares, some with red slip, 1 with roulette decoration, 1 mortarium sherd, 1 flagon and 1 bottle neck, rims from 10 bowls, 2 flanged bowl forms and several jars. In other fabrics, 1 Oxford white ware sherd and 1 pink grogged ware sherd; 9 straight-sided bowl sherds (8 vessels) of which 3 had single horizontal grooves; 9 grey ware jar rims; 3 pie dish rims; 4 rims (3 vessels), 6 bases (min. 3 vessels) and 10 sherds in calcareous fabric; 5 greyware bases, 1 button base in fine ware, 3 dec. sherds (1 combed, 2 with single horizontal grooves); 1 small sherd of an unidentified colour coat; 97 sandy greyware sherds. The datable material is of the mid-third to fourth century. There were also 3 pieces of tegula and 1 imbrex piece.

(F2) 1 late third to early fourth-century flanged bowl with white slip; 2 sandy body sherds and 1 samian body sherd.

(F3) 1 Oxford white mortarium sherd; 1 rim and 12 sherds of a grey storage jar, apparently burnt in a crude sandy fabric with flint inclusions; 1 samian sherd also burnt; 1 abraded pink grogged sherd; 1 calcareous jar rim; 4 greyware sherds; 2 sandy grey ware bowl rims with rounded flange, suggest a fourth century and later date. There were also 2 pieces of tegula.

(F4) 3 rims and 21 sherds of a large reduced fourth-century storage jar was on the examination of the fabric, in pink grogged ware (Fig. 17/1); 1 abraded Oxford oxidised mortarium base and the rim of a shallow dish or bowl, Oxford form C49; 1 jar base; 1 jar rim; 50 sherds mainly of heavy jars. The Oxford ware material gives a 4th century date. There were also 3 pieces of Roman tile.

(F5) 2 Oxford mortaria sherds; a parchment Oxford rim form P24 (Fig. 17/3); 1 Oxford parchment ware base; 1 Oxford ware handled sherd; a late third to fourth century grey flanged bowl and the rim of a decorated flanged shelly ware bowl (Fig. 17/2), paralleled at Harrold and dated to the late fourth, early fifth century; 1 sandy jar rim; 5 bases; 35 sherds. The Oxford parchment ware rim is dated c.AD 240–400+. There was also 1 Roman tile fragment.

(F6) 1 Nene Valley colour coat beaker body sherd;

14 sandy sherds. The Nene Valley piece is third to fourth century. There was also 1 piece of Roman tile.

(F7) 6 sandy sherds. Also 1 piece of box flue tile with combed decoration. Probably second to third century.

(F8) 2 fragments of samian ware; 3 sandy rims; 9 sherds. Possibly second-third century.

(F9) Bottom of a large earthenware vessel with thumb-pinched decoration to the base and a single spout-hole for pouring water or other liquid (Fig. 18/3). Recovered from disturbed ground between the south section of the north stream and the 'pool'.

(F10) 1 rim samian dish, form Curle 15, second century; a slightly unusual find, from the stream bed 10 m east of Edward's Bridge.

(F11, area 1, south stream) 1 dish rim and 3 sherds from same, clear glaze firing brown on bricky fabric. 17–18th century; 1 deep bowl (2 joining sherds), clear glaze int. firing brown and 9 sherds from same, 17–18th cent. In the post-medieval material there were many local kilns in the Buckinghamshire Chilterns producing wares such as these.

(F12, lake bed 115m east of Edward's Bridge) 1 samian lion-spouted mortarium sherd (Fig. 17/4), poorly made and probably late because of the 'bat-like' ears and face; 1 Oxford colour-coat flanged bowl, Oxford form C51 (Fig. 17/5); 1 Oxford colour coat footring base; 1 rim of a grogged storage jar and fine white and grey ware body sherds were more likely to be of second to third century date; 23 sherds. The Oxford C51 bowl is dated to the fourth century plus.

(F13) 1 rim and 17 sherds of a large grey narrow-necked jar (Fig. 17/7), this is likely to be a product of the Fulmer/ Hedgerley kilns (Tarrant 1972 and Stainton 1987); the base and rim of fine grey-ware beakers; 1 jar rim (Fig. 17/6). The narrow-neck jar and beaker date to the second century.

(F14, 20m west of Edward's Bridge) 1 samian bowl or dish rim; 1 footring base and a rim in fine sandy

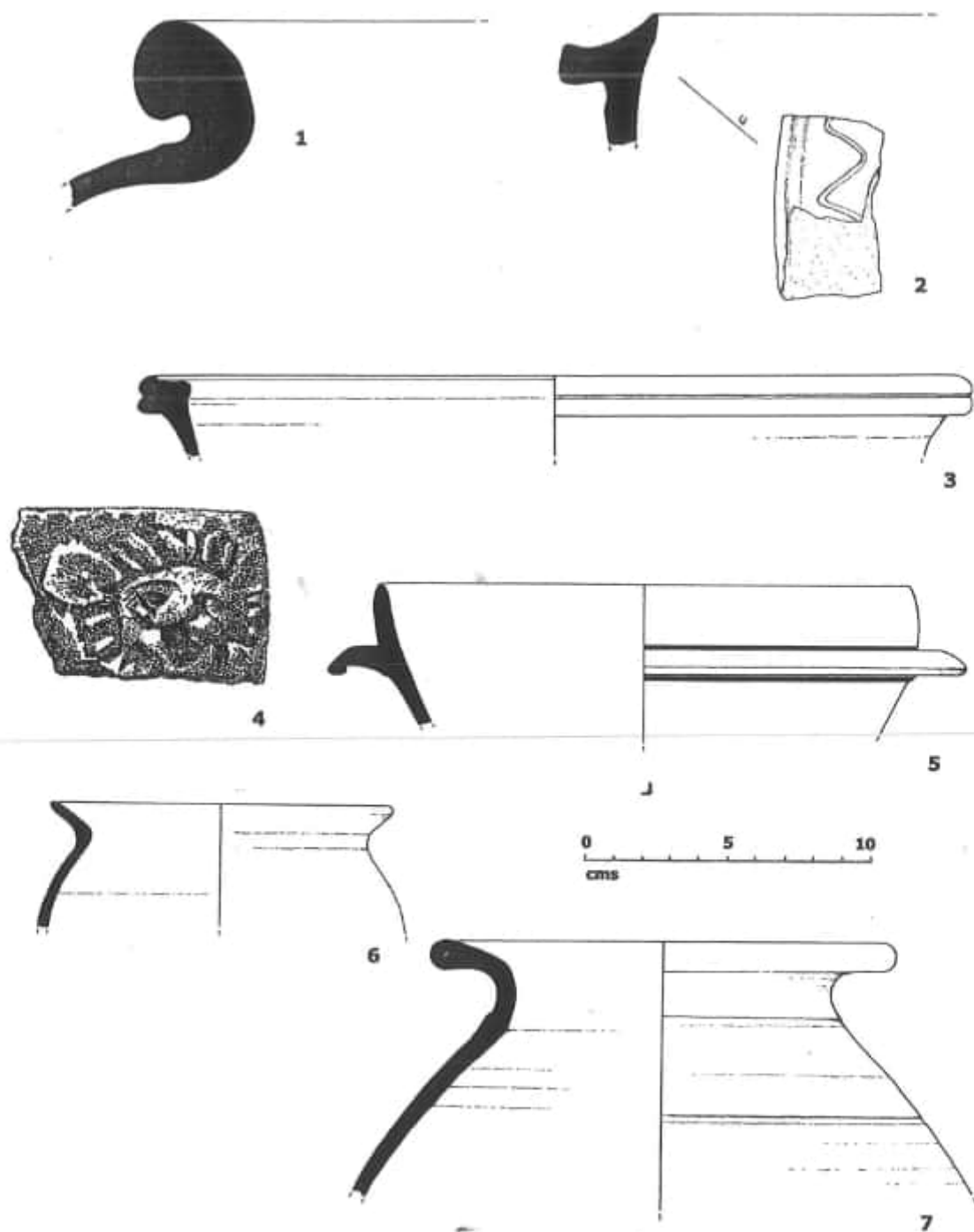


FIGURE 17 Romano-British pottery

greyware, 1 jar rim, 1 bowl rim, 4 bases, 47 sherds.
? Second century.

DISCUSSION

The majority of the Romano-British pottery dates from the third to fourth century and later, except F13 where the vessels were second century and F14 which was second to third. Most of the oxidised wares, other than the samian, and a few finer vessels, were products from the Oxford kilns. The sandy wares have not been more closely sourced apart from the possible Fulmer/Hedgerley product. There are a few late shelly wares similar to those from Harrold, Bedfordshire. There is nothing particularly distinctive about the assemblage as a whole, with the possible exception of the well-preserved samian sherd from F10 and the relatively large number of 'pie-dishes' from context F1, indicating some special function here. The dominance of Oxford wares in the later period is to be expected in Buckinghamshire. There was much of this pottery at the Rye Villa, High Wycombe just 3 miles down the valley (Hartley 1959, 246). The fragments of Roman tile from the site would not make one whole tile; small quantities of tile commonly occur on settlement sites.

(b) Glass (Fig. 18)

Base and neck sherds of a hand-blown wine bottle (Fig. 18/1) recovered from F9. It has a maximum diameter of approximately 135 mm and survives to a height of 130 mm. The squat body shape with steep sides and short broad neck suggest a date of c.1680 (Dumbrell, 1983).

A complete hand-blown bottle in light-green glass was recovered from the silt forming the fill of the brick channel in the south-west corner of the lake (area 1). The globe-shaped bottle (Fig. 18, 2) measures 103mm high, 76mm in diameter, the base has a deep kick-up and still retains much of the original glass where the pontil was attached to the bottle. It still retains the original cork. Probably a scent bottle? Probable date 1700–20.

(c) Metalwork (Fig. 18 and 19)

The metalwork was discovered during the metal detecting surveys undertaken in 1991 and 2006. In each instance detecting took place over the lake and stream-beds and also over the spoil heaps resulting from the silt dredging. During the 1991 survey two

Romano-British brooches and 237 Roman coins were recovered from the lake; unfortunately the detecting was not undertaken under archaeological supervision and the whereabouts of the coins remain unknown. The brooches were deposited with the County Museums Service. The 2006 survey was archaeologically supervised and though no contextual information was recorded the find spots for a number of items were recorded (hence grid refs have been added in the text). A number of interesting lead items were recovered from the lakes and streams, most of which are probably fishing weights, but several appear to be pump fittings or fittings associated with garden furniture. Nearly 2 kilos of iron slag were also recovered in 1991, hinting at the possibility of metal working in the valley bottom, most likely dating from the Romano-British period. The following description covers only the illustrated finds.

Openwork plate brooch in three fragments dating to 50–200 AD (Fig. 18/4). It has a central disc with 'rope' border supporting four diamond-shaped arms with terminal discs; the centre of each diamond has a circular cell filled with blue glass (glass present in two cells only), pin and three linking pieces missing.

Colchester type bow brooch dating to 40–70 AD (Fig. 18/5), 2 holes pierced in catch plate, pin and part of catch plate missing.

Copper alloy knife blade (Fig. 19/1), 63 x 23mm, broken at either end, probably Bronze Age, found at the foot of the dam forming the main lake (SU 83269448).

Lead token (Fig. 19/2), 23mm diameter, stamped on one face with eight radial arms dividing the token into eight segments, each segment containing a small raised circle.

Copper alloy cork-screw (Fig. 19/3), lower section ferrous, the upper part forming the handle copper alloy. The upper part forming the handle is a circular ring, which has an elaborate moulding along its upper edge, consisting of the heads of separate male and female classical figures with the hair merging at the centre to form a bunch of grapes. Within the ring there is a raised lip, presumably for removing crown caps from bottles, implying the

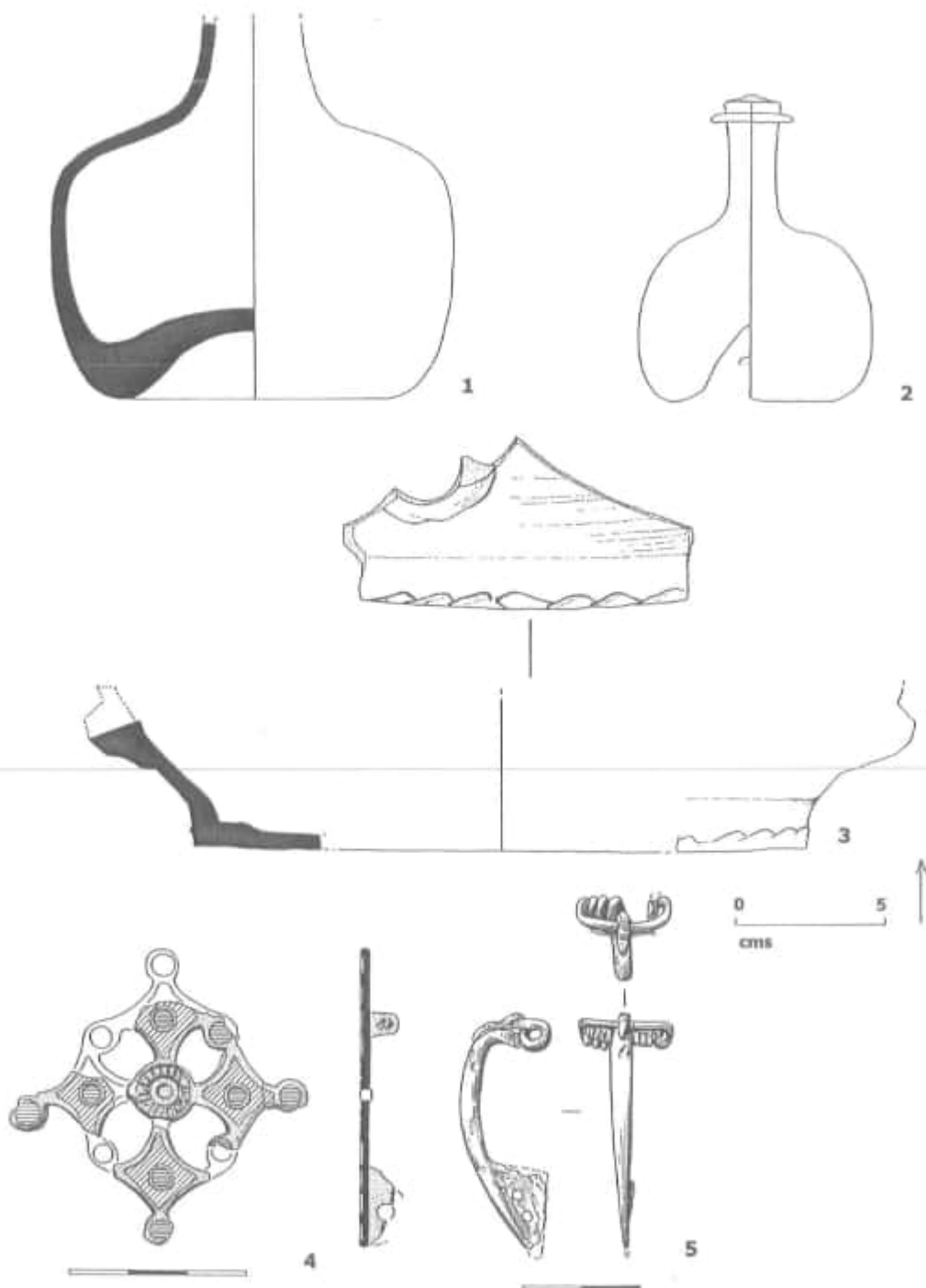


FIGURE 18 Glass, post-medieval pottery and Romano-British brooches

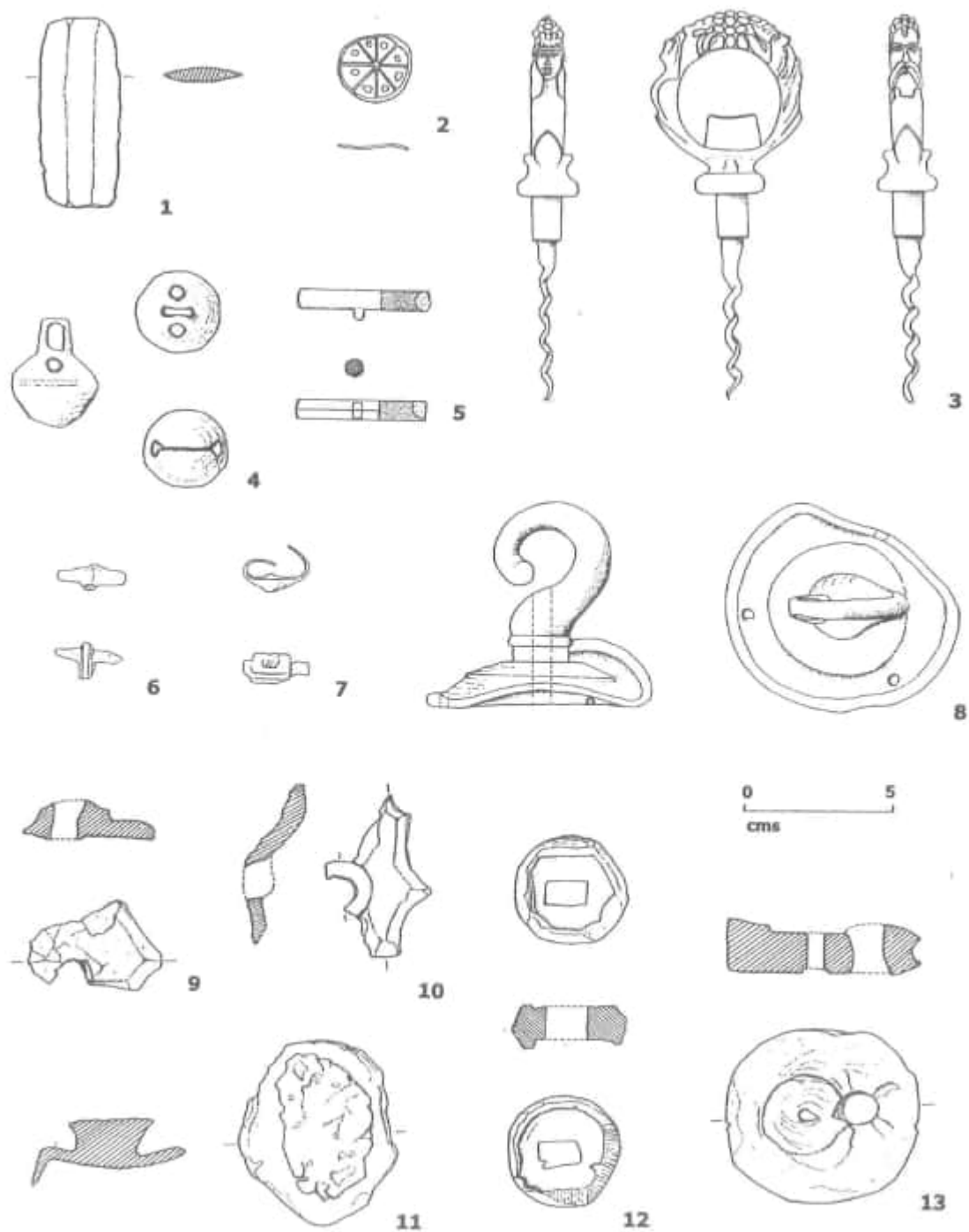


FIGURE 19 Metalwork

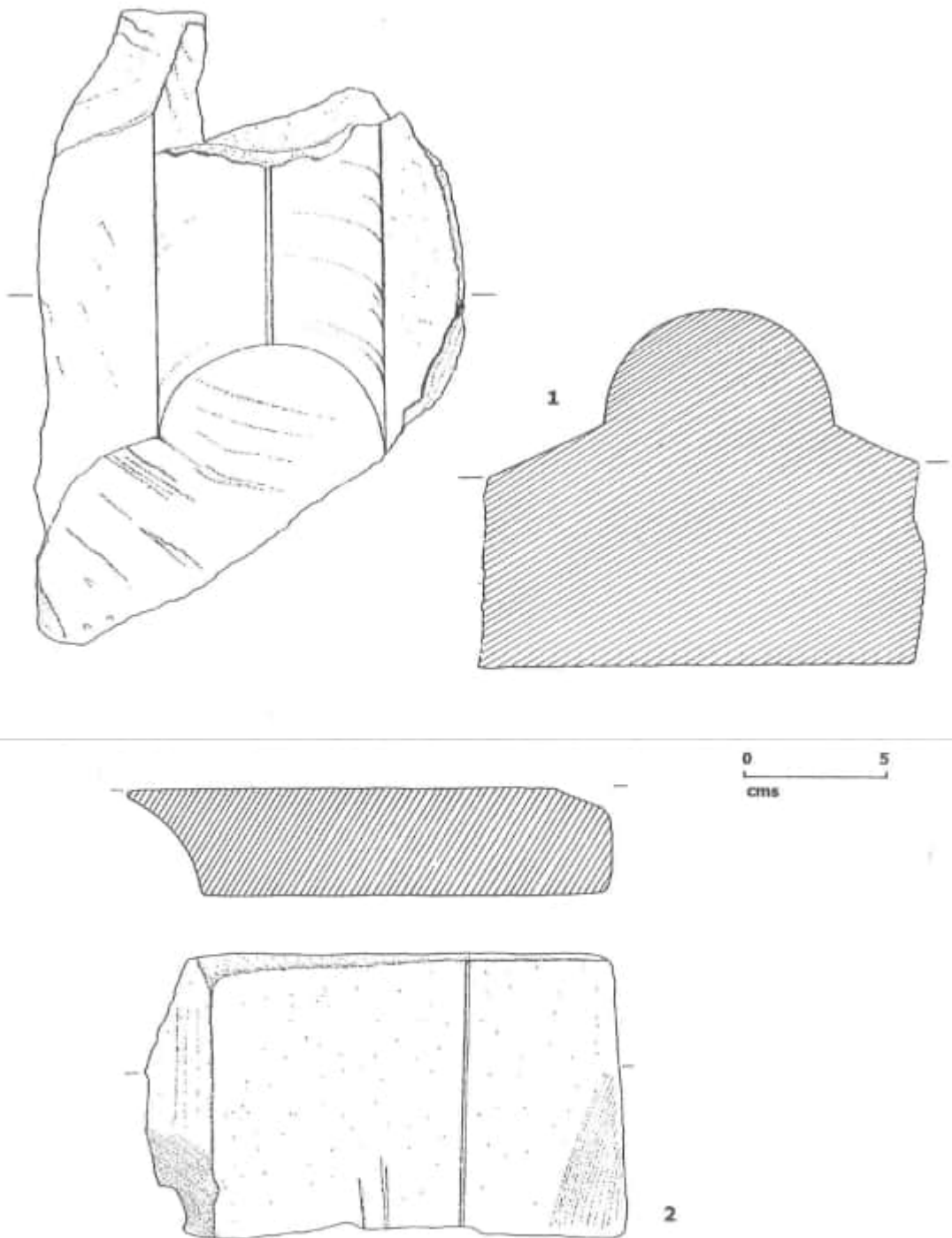


FIGURE 20 Moulded brick coping and moulded stone

item probably dates from the early 20th century. Found in the main lake (SU 83179442)

Small circular bell (Fig. 19/4), 28mm diameter with attached loop for hanging from a collar, spoil from main lake.

Lead cylinder (Fig. 19/5), 43mm and 6mm in diameter, lug on lower edge, painted white but with blackened tip, found in main lake.

Part of a Roman brooch (Fig. 19/6) 22 mm, lower stream near saw mill.

Small copper alloy fair ring (Fig. 19/7), raised decoration on central rectangular panel, lower stream.

Brass hook, 40mm diameter, attached to circular base plate 80mm diameter (Fig. 19/8). Base plate is pierced by three small holes. Possible fitting for hanging a chandelier, or alternatively boat fitting? Found in lake.

Lead fragment, a flat disk with chamfered edges and point on one end measuring 45 x 30 x 12.5mm (Fig. 19/9). At its centre there is a circular hole 10mm in diameter within a raised square panel. Found in lower stream.

Lead fragment, 55mm long 12-35mm wide and 6-10mm thickness (Fig. 19/10). There are two 'arms' each, with chamfered edges, and at the junction of the arms a raised point, also with chamfered edges. At its centre there is a circular hole 10mm in diameter set within a slightly raised panel. Found in the lower stream.

Lead object, oval in shape measuring 62 mm, 50 mm wide and 17mm in thickness (Fig. 19/11). On the front of the object is a central projection, also oval in shape, with slightly flared edges. The uneven shape suggests that it has been cast in-situ to form a stop or bung to an opening or aperture. East edge of main lake.

Circular lead disk, 39mm in diameter and 12-14mm thick (Fig. 19/12). The edges are slightly raised on one face. There is a rectangular hole 13mm x 7mm passing through the thickness of the object and slightly off-centre. Recovered from the spoil of the main lake.

Oval-shaped lead disk 58-64mm diameter and 14-18mm thick (Fig. 19/13). It is pierced by an off-centre oval hole and by a smaller hole within a slightly recessed panel. The edges are partially grooved, suggesting this may have been a leather-edged valve within a pump.

(d) Brick and stone (Fig. 20)

Moulded brick coping – found at the base of the fallen ash tree in area 4 (Fig. 20/1). Soft sandy pink fabric with large 'grog' inclusions, the brick measures 225mm (incomplete), 145mm wide (incomplete) and 125mm in depth (probably the full depth of the brick). One end has been cut back at an angle of about 60 degrees to form one half of a mitred joint – edge of tool marks can be detected across the mitred section. The upper surface of the brick carries a half-round projection and on the highest point of this projection there is a very narrow moulding mark 2mm wide and 1mm in height. This may have helped with the alignment of the copings when they were placed on the wall.

Part of a flat stone with a quarter round moulding was found on the south bank of the south stream in 2005. The stone measures 165 x 100 x 32mm and may be part of a stair tread (Fig. 20/2).

Parts of three quern stones have been recovered from the gardens. Part of a volcanic lava stone, almost certainly a Germanic import was recovered from the north bank of the south stream in 2005. The piece measures 175 x 155mm and 15-18mm in thickness. It is pierced centrally by a hole 23mm in diameter. The full diameter if complete can be estimated as 330mm (not illustrated). Part a large grit-stone quern was recovered in 1991 from the vicinity of Edward's Bridge (F15) measuring 50mm in thickness and with an estimated diameter of 600-700mm. It has deeply cut furrows on its lower face (not illustrated). A fragment of a grit-stone quern was recovered from F12 in 1991, 80 x 80 x 58mm, no identifiable features.

Part of a quartzitic sharpening stone was recovered from F11 in 1991, roughly square in section (28mm x 28mm) with rounded edges, 77 mm long though broken (not illustrated).

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