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**EXCAVATION OF A ROMAN FARMSTEAD  
ON LAND WEST OF GLAPTHORN ROAD  
OUNDLE, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE  
1999-2001**

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**EXCAVATION OF A ROMAN FARMSTEAD ON LAND WEST OF  
GLAPTHORN ROAD, OUNDLE, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**

**1999 - 2001**

by  
Anthony Maull and Peter Masters

with contributions by Trevor Anderson, Paul Blinkhorn, Wendy Carruthers,  
Karen Deighton, Brenda Dickinson, Rowena Gale, Tora Hylton, Dennis Jackson,  
Donald Mackreth, Ian Meadows and Jane Timby

***Abstract***

*An archaeological excavation and subsequent watching brief was undertaken on c 0.8 ha of land to the rear of the George Inn, Glapthorn Road, Oundle, Northamptonshire.*

*A few dispersed pits are dated to the late Bronze Age/early Iron Age. A roundhouse ring ditch marks the origin of a late Iron Age/early Roman settlement of the mid-1<sup>st</sup> century AD. The main period of activity occurred between the 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> centuries AD. By the early 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD a system of ditched enclosures, including an east-west trackway, had been created and through to the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD these underwent a complex sequence of sub-division and modification. In the earlier phase there is no evident domestic focus, but this may have lain in an adjacent area to the west. By the mid-3<sup>rd</sup> century a walled rectilinear enclosure or compound enclosed this western area, indicating that it was of substantial status. The excavated part contained a series of parallel fence lines and other domestic activity, including a stone-lined well, but the principal houses seem to have lain beyond the excavated area. The domestic compound was abutted to the east by two ditched enclosures.*

*A small Anglo-Saxon cemetery, containing 10 inhumation burials, occupied part of a former Roman enclosure. Radiocarbon dating and the artefact assemblages date the cemetery to between the mid-6<sup>th</sup> and mid-7<sup>th</sup> centuries AD. Later land-use comprises furrows of the medieval or post-medieval field system, and a series of recent land drains.*

**1 INTRODUCTION**

**1.1 Project background**

The excavation of the Roman settlement was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology in 1999 in advance of housing development to the rear of the of the George Inn, Glapthorn Road, Oundle, Northamptonshire (Fig 1; site centred on NGR TL 033 890). A watching brief was conducted during the spring of 2001 to the immediate east and south of the main excavation (Fig 3). The work was carried out on behalf of and was fully funded by Persimmon Homes (East Midlands) Ltd and special thanks are extended to Mr Evans of Persimmon Homes.

The first stage of site investigation had comprised a fieldwalking and metal detecting survey, which was undertaken during November 1996 (NA 1996). This survey identified a concentration of 1<sup>st</sup>- 4<sup>th</sup> century AD Roman pottery, building material and several metal items.

The next phase of work comprised a programme of geophysical survey and trial trenching, which was undertaken in September and October 1998 (Masters 1998). The geophysical survey covered an area of 1.8ha encompassing the principal artefact concentration recorded during 1996. The geophysical survey revealed traces of a complex enclosure system arranged either side of an east-

west aligned trackway. The subsequent trial trenches, located to intersect both anomalies and apparent blank areas, confirmed the results of the geophysical survey.

## **1.2 Acknowledgements**

The excavation was carried out under the direction of Anthony Maull with Peter Masters as site supervisor. Mark Holmes and Peter Masters observed the site stripping. The excavation team comprised Alistair Clarke, Sophie Edwards, Steve Hayward, Erlend Hindmarch, Pat Kent, Steve Morris, Isabel Parker, Denis Taylor, Alex Thorne, Steve Thorpe and David Salt. Helpful advice was given by Glenn Foard, former County Archaeological Officer, Sandy Kidd, former Archaeological Planning Officer at Northamptonshire Heritage (now NCCHET) and Dr Helen Keeley, who advised on environmental matters. Steve Critchley, who undertook a detailed metal detecting survey during all stages of fieldwork, also provided invaluable help.

The pottery has been studied by Dennis Jackson (late Bronze Age/early Iron Age), Jane Timby (Roman), Brenda Dickinson (Roman/Samian) and Paul Blinkhorn (Saxon); the archaeobotanical remains by Wendy Carruthers; the animal bone by Karen Deighton; and human bone by Trevor Anderson. Ian Meadows, Tora Hylton and Donald Mackreth studied the other finds and Rowena Gale the waterlogged wood. Jacqueline Harding, Hari Anne Jacklin, Alex Thorne and Mark Roughley drew the illustrations. Pat Chapman and Andy Chapman have carried out the final editing of the report.

## **1.3 Location, topography and geology**

The site is located on the northern fringes of the town of Oundle, to the west of the junction of roads leading to the nearby villages of Glapthorn and Cotterstock, which lie to the north (Figs 1 and 2). It is situated on a broad plateau within a generally flat field, at c 51m above Ordnance Datum, with the River Nene situated approximately 1km to the east and south. At the time of excavation, the field was given over to arable production with housing to the north and east, school playing fields to the south and further arable fields to the west.

The underlying geology comprises Kellaway Clays, Cornbrash and Great Oolite Clay (BGS 1974). The excavation exposed a natural substrate of stiff yellow brown clay with small flint pebble inclusions, while the watching brief zones also included areas with a high limestone content, probably part of a natural outcrop of Cornbrash. The underlying blue/grey Oxford Clay was observed in the bases of deeper archaeological features. This information would indicate that the mapped Kellaway Sand deposits lay at some depth below the Oxford Clay.

## **1.4 Archaeological background**

The site is situated within a area of Archaeological Priority as designated by Northamptonshire County Council (Foard 1979). Although there were no known archaeological sites within the immediate development area, two sites of national importance are known in the vicinity: Ashton Roman town, 1.4km to the east, and Oundle Saxon settlement, 1.2km to the south-east (Fig 2). At the former, excavation conducted during the early 1980's revealed a sequence of Roman deposits dating from the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD to the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD. The principal discoveries comprised mid to late 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD stone buildings aligned either side of a metalled street, developed over an earlier system of land division (Frere *et al* 1983). Occupation on the site was identified as continuing until the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, although by then at least one of the stone buildings had been dismantled and the stone re-used elsewhere within the town. Other features from the site included hearths containing hammerscale, interpreted as workshops utilised for smithing (*ibid*), and a 4<sup>th</sup> century inhumation cemetery.

A search of the Northamptonshire Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) has located a variety of other sites within the general vicinity of the Glapthorn Road (Fig 2). However, only sites and finds with significance to the archaeology at Oundle are considered here (SMR numbers in brackets).

The Bronze Age is represented by a number of round barrows and other settlement and funerary sites close to Glapthorn Road (2380, 2372, 2354 and 2412), as well as other sites within the parishes of Fotheringhay, Tansor and Warmington to the north-east and at Ashton Roman town.

Iron Age settlement has been noted within Oundle (2218 and 2377), as well as a possible funerary site at Ashton (2409). Other settlements have also been noted at Pilton (2236) and Thorpe Achurch (2242) to the south and a settlement and field system (2643) in Warmington to the north. However, it is apparent that the nearest site of immediate relevance to the activity noted at Glapthorn Road during the early Iron Age is that from the recently discovered ringwork at Thrapston (8589) some nine miles to the south, which contained comparable pottery types.

Roman activity in the area is similarly widespread with the principal landscape feature being a Roman road (1896) linking the small towns of Ashton, Water Newton (Cambridgeshire) and Irchester. A large number of settlements have been noted, mainly clustered around the river or the road, including sites at Warmington (2618) and Glapthorn (2808). Other sites within the area include a number of villas or farmsteads, notably at Barnwell (1312) and Cotterstock (2777). An aisled building with associated settlement remains and a funerary site has been recorded at Fotheringhay (1660). Within Oundle itself settlement remains and a possible temple have been discovered (2336, 4603 and 5685), while Ashton Roman town (2409) lies only a kilometre to the east.

Anglo-Saxon activity is less well represented in the area, with sites limited to Oundle parish, in particular the Blackpot Lane settlement and metal working site (2416). Other sites in the locality include a town with industrial and religious elements at Thrapston (1842).

## **2 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE**

### **2.1 Methodology**

The overburden was removed using a 360° tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.8m wide toothless ditching bucket (Plates 1 and 2). Archaeological features were then cleaned by hand, excavated and recorded (Figs 3 and 4). The post-medieval features, primarily consisting of furrows and land drains, were only subject to basic recording. The stripping operations were conducted during the early part of March 1999 and continued for approximately three weeks in a period of inclement weather. This resulted in slight damage to the underlying archaeological deposits, especially in the southern part of the site, although this did not prevent the identification and recording of the full pattern of the archaeological remains. A consistent level of feature sampling was undertaken, with all discrete features sectioned and fully excavated when they formed part of recognisable structures or contained significant artefact or environmental assemblages.

In summarising the excavation evidence the following group terms and abbreviations have been used. Ditch groups (DG) comprise lengths of probably contemporaneous ditches/gullies that have been assigned either to an enclosure (E), roundhouse (R) or other significant feature groups. Pit groups (PG) are clusters of physically associated and probably contemporaneous pits. Structural groups (SG) are collections of postholes, construction trenches, walls or wells that may have formed buildings, fence-lines or other similar features.

The feature fills were generally similar in composition, comprising light to mid grey brown clay silts with occasional small flint gravel, charcoal fragments and limestone inclusions. Where marked differences to the above occurred in the composition of the deposits they have been detailed.

## 2.2 Summary of site chronology

The site chronology is briefly tabulated and illustrated (Table 1 and Fig 5):

*Table 1: Site chronology*

Phase	Period	Activity/evidence
1	Late Bronze Age/ early Iron Age activity	Sparse and dispersed activity defined by a small collection of pits and postholes
2	Late Iron Age/ early Roman settlement (1 <sup>st</sup> century AD)	Settlement remains comprising ditch arcs forming two roundhouses, and other curvilinear arcs of ditch, which may have formed part of further roundhouses
3	Roman settlement (early 2 <sup>nd</sup> to late 2 <sup>nd</sup> / early 3 <sup>rd</sup> century AD )	Farmstead settlement remains comprising a palimpsest of ditches forming a discrete focus of activity primarily located within the south-west corner of the site. Comprised remnants of two enclosures, an additional series of ditches/gullies, postholes and a small group of pits
4	Settlement development (early 3 <sup>rd</sup> to late 3 <sup>rd</sup> century AD)	A larger system of three enclosures, one to the north and two to the south of a driveway. Other settlement features include postholes, pits, wells, hearths and walls
5	Settlement reorganisation (mid to late 3 <sup>rd</sup> to 4 <sup>th</sup> century AD)	Latest recognisable farmstead features. Comprises three enclosures, (2 ditched, 1 walled) and several linear and irregular postholes forming contemporary fence lines and/or relict buildings
6	Anglo-Saxon cemetery (6 <sup>th</sup> to 7 <sup>th</sup> century AD)	Inhumation cemetery represented by a tight cluster of nine inhumations and a single isolated inhumation (Burial 1) to the south
7	Medieval and post- medieval	Series of east-west and north-south aligned furrows, numerous land drains and a probable stone capped well

## 2.3 Phase 1: Late Bronze Age/early Iron Age

Features of this phase of activity, comprising two irregular oval pits and up to five postholes, were widely and sparsely scattered across the excavation area and the watching brief area to the east (Fig 6).

The two pits, [282] and [543], were sub-circular to oval in plan with steep to vertical sides and flattened bases, measuring 1.65-2.60m long by 1.40-1.80m wide by 0.60-0.72m deep. They contained primary deposits of mottled yellow brown clay, similar to the surrounding natural, with [282] containing a deposit of charcoal. The secondary fills were similar in composition comprising light to mid grey silt clays interspersed with occasional to moderate charcoal flecks. They contained up to 35 sherds of late Bronze Age/early Iron Age pottery, with the larger quantity from [282].

The postholes, two containing small pottery sherds, were circular to sub-circular in plan, 0.11-0.63m in diameter by 0.10-0.22m deep, with steep to vertical profiles and concave to flat bases.

## 2.4 Phase 2: Late Iron Age/early Roman settlement (1st century AD)

Evidence for this period is slight when compared with the later phases (Fig 6). A curvilinear ditch formed a near complete roundhouse ring ditch, 11m in diameter, located in the south-western corner of the site (**R1**), and a partial arc lay to the north-east (**R2**). Further short arcs of gully may suggest the former presence of other roundhouses, and a second near complete ring ditch was recorded by geophysical survey to the west.

The dating evidence for this group comprised 104 sherds of late Iron Age pottery dated to the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, with the occupation probably continuing into the early Roman period. Late Iron Age



features dated to the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD have been found at many other Roman sites across the country, including those at the nearby Roman town of Ashton (unpublished) and other similar sites (Burnham and Wachter 1996, 278).

**R1 (DG1)** comprised in its initial form a curvilinear ditch [567] with a slot-like recut [678] marking only the southern side of the roundhouse (Fig 12, Section 1). The two elements measured up to 1.75m wide by 0.90m deep. The fills comprised a primary deposit of yellow brown clay, similar to the surrounding natural, and secondary fills of mid grey brown silts and clays containing occasional mottling and rare charcoal flecks. The full circuit was defined by a smaller gully [508], 0.35-1.10m wide by 0.10-0.20m deep. There was a broad, 6.5m wide, entrance causeway to the east. A single posthole, 0.72m long by 0.60m wide by 0.28m deep, formed a possible surviving post for an entrance porch.

**R2 (DG2)** comprised the truncated northern side of a small curvilinear ditch or gully [139]. It was *c* 8m long by 0.35m wide by 0.06m deep, with a symmetrical profile and similar fills to **R1**. No finds were recovered.

The two other curvilinear gullies survived up to 3.5m long and measured between 0.35-0.40m wide by 0.07-0.16m deep.

## 2.5 Phase 3: Roman Settlement Enclosures (early 2nd to Late 2nd/early 3rd centuries AD)

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD a system of small ditched enclosures was created (Enclosures 1 and 2). There was much recutting and modification and sub-division of this system. This, and disturbance from the later enclosure systems, makes it impossible to fully resolve the individual enclosure forms (Figs 5 and 7). Enclosures 1 and 2 are evidently the origin of a long sequence of enclosure development in this area. A further ditch system, **DG9**, with a long, linear boundary to the east including a possible entrance, occupied the south-western corner of the site. An original domestic focus may have been established within this rectangular enclosure, in an area previously occupied by roundhouses and later to contain a more substantial walled enclosure. Other features that may have been contemporary were an L-shaped, stone-filled gully (SG1), and three nearby pits (PG1) that contained variable quantities of daub and charcoal.

**ENCLOSURE 1 (DG3 and DG4)** comprised two curvilinear ditch groups forming the southern side of a possible enclosure, measuring up to 21m east-west, with no traces of a northern boundary surviving. To the east the earlier ditch was a maximum of 0.4m wide and 0.05m deep, and the later recut, lying slightly to the south, measured up to 0.5m wide by 0.20-0.32m deep, with a steeper profile. Fills were of yellow brown to grey brown silt clays containing small flint gravel, some orange mottling and finds including pottery, bone, fragments of ceramic building material and occasional oyster shell fragments.

**ENCLOSURE 2 (DG5 - DG8)** was a sub-rectangular enclosure, measuring 24m east-west by 20m north-west. A series of modifications or sub-divisions lay within the southern part of the enclosure. There appear to have been entrances at the south-eastern side, with offset ditch terminals, and north-western corners. The enclosure ditches **DG5** and **DG6** measured between 0.60-0.78m wide and 0.20-0.28m deep, with a U-shaped profile, gradual to steep sides and a concave to flat base, and the internal ditches, **DG7**, were of similar dimensions.

Fills were similar to those of **E1**, but occasional to moderate charcoal flecks and limestone fragments were especially prevalent within the upper fill of the western arm. Finds included pottery, a large quantity deriving from the northern terminal of the initial western arm, bone and occasional fragments of ceramic building material.

Enclosure **E2** contained the remains of an L-shaped linear slot (**SG1**), 8.2m long by 0.40-0.50m wide by 0.25m deep, and its fills contained limestone fragments measuring up to 0.25m long. Pit Group **PG1**, comprised a line of three similar sized sub-rectangular to oval pits, with the longest axes east-west and measuring 1.0-1.08m long by 0.45-0.72m wide by 0.12-0.34m deep. Fills were of mid to dark grey black silty clay with scorched red clay and included small angular to rounded stones, occasional daub and limestone fragments and occasional to moderate charcoal flecks. The greatest quantity of charcoal was recovered from the lowest part of the matrix from the northern pit.

**DG9** comprised a sequence of north-south and east-west ditches to the west, with a northern boundary coincident with the northern arm of enclosure 2. The ditches measured between 0.41-0.89m wide by 0.13-0.32m deep. Primary fills comprised yellow brown silty clays, with occasional limestone fragments and charcoal flecks. The secondary and upper fills comprised darker grey brown silty clay with occasional limestone fragments, small pebbles, charcoal flecks and orange mottling. Finds included pottery, bone and occasional fragments of ceramic building material, the largest quantity of pottery was recovered from an east-west aligned ditch which was subsequently re-cut by the western terminal of the northern side of enclosure **E2**.

Other contemporary activity may have included up to four scattered pits.

## 2.6 Phase 4: Settlement Development (early 3rd to late 3rd century AD)

At some point during the 3<sup>rd</sup> century a more extensive system of boundaries and enclosures replaced the earlier system (Fig 8). There were two phases of rectangular enclosures to the south (**E3** and **E4**) and a single enclosure to the north (**E5**). They flanked a trackway that ran east to west, and the ditches adjacent to it (**DG10** and **11**) exhibited a complex sequence of recutting. A large pit/well lay within the trackway. To the south-west the enclosures were open, as if relating to another entity. The location of the ditch terminals would indicate that the linear ditch system of the previous phase, **DG9**, was the feature being respected. This would suggest that a south-western enclosure, most probably the domestic focus, was still in existence, and that its boundaries had not been redefined as this stage.

### *The southern enclosures*

The earlier enclosure (**E3**) was sub-rectangular, and in its initial form there was a broad opening on its western side, and there were multiple recuts at the north-eastern corner. It was subsequently subdivided by the insertion of up to five parallel ditches, aligned north-south. The function of these is uncertain. The number of ditches seems excessive to have merely provided drainage, and they may have formed control blocks similar to that expected within a crew yard. The later enclosure (**E4**) cut across this system and was elongated east to west.

The only other features of note are a cluster of pits (**PG2**) that truncated the eastern arm of the earliest enclosure (**E3**) and had been backfilled prior to the digging of the southern arm of the later enclosure (**E4**). The northernmost pit of **PG2** was cut through a bed of natural cornbrash and quickly filled with water once excavated, the cornbrash serving as an aquifer between the impermeable layers of clay. Whether this was the case during the Roman period is not known, but it may have functioned as a water pit.

### *The northern enclosure*

To the north enclosure (**E5**) was defined by external linear boundaries but within these there was a partial, parallel ditch system with curvilinear corners. Within the enclosure there were pit groups to both the west (**PG3**) and east (**PG4**), and a stone-lined hearth (Plate 3). **PG4** comprised four large pits that may have been post-pits forming the southern end of a timber building some 7.0m wide. The pottery recovered from this phase constituted the bulk of the material from the site, denoting the expansion of the settlement as this time.

The location of a pit or well within the trackway is somewhat problematical. However, the sterility of its fills might indicate that it was open only for a very short space of time, perhaps as a watering hole for livestock, with its irregular profile caused by livestock trampling.

**ENCLOSURE 3 (DG12 - DG16)** was a sub-rectangular enclosure, measuring 45m north-south by 38m east-west, with a 24m wide opening to the west between the semicircular terminals of **DG12** and **DG14**. The apparent size of the opening may be misleading as the area had suffered substantial truncation. The five parallel, north-south aligned ditches were generally evenly spaced with 5m gaps noted between them.

However, there was a 10m gap between the second and third ditches from the west, and only one extended the entire length of the enclosure.

Ditches **DG12** to **DG14** measured between 0.55 to 1.6m wide and 0.15-0.53m deep, with gradual to steep sides and concave to flat base. Ditches **DG15** and **DG16** were generally similar, measuring between 0.6-1.5m wide by 0.27-0.65m deep. Fills were similar to the fills of **E1** and **E2**, with occasional to moderate limestone fragments, especially prevalent within the ditch forming the north-east part of **DG13** and the three additional ditches to the east, **DG15**. The limestone was generally recovered from the upper surface and therefore probably relates to later activity, such as consolidation of the upper ditch surface. Finds included pottery, with a large quantity deriving from the recut of one of the north-south internal sub-divisions, animal bone, occasional ceramic building material and oyster shell.

Pit group **PG2** comprised up to four intercut pits. They were sub-rectangular to oval shape in plan and measured between 2.4-4.2m long by 1.5-3.5m wide by 0.28-0.85m deep, with shallow to gradual-steep sided profiles and concave to flat bases. The deeper, northern pit, truncated an underlying horizon of natural cornbrash. Fills were of light yellow to dark grey black silty clay with small angular to rounded stones, occasional daub and limestone fragments and occasional charcoal flecks. Finds included pottery and animal bone.

**ENCLOSURE 4 (DG17 - DG19)** was an open-ended rectilinear enclosure aligned east-west and measuring 54m east-west by *c* 16m north-south, with an 11m wide opening on its western side flanked by curvilinear ditches. There was at least one period of major recutting, and the later southern arm stopped 6m short of the original terminus. Further modification was also noted to the east, with the insertion of two east-west aligned gullies and a north-south gully. All the enclosure ditches measured between 0.64-1.10m wide and 0.28-0.70m deep, with gradual to very steep sides and concave to flat bases. The largest ditches formed the eastern and southern sides of the enclosure.

Fills were of yellow brown to dark grey brown silty clays, containing small flint gravel, some orange mottling, occasional charcoal flecks and occasional to moderate limestone fragments. The limestone was especially prevalent towards the western side of the enclosure near to the entrance, however, as the majority was recovered from the upper surface of the infilled ditches it would indicate a much later date. Finds included pottery, animal bone and occasional ceramic building material.

**ENCLOSURE 5 (DG20 - DG25)** was a sub-rectangular enclosure, measuring 50m east-west, but only the southern part lay within the excavated area. The main enclosure ditches, **DG22** and **DG23**, the internal curvilinear gullies, **DG20** and **DG21** and the internal ditch **DG24**, measured 0.44-1.20m wide and 0.15-0.48m deep. Fills were the same as within the earlier enclosures and the finds included pottery, animal bone, occasional ceramic building material and a small quantity of slag.

Pit group **PG3** comprised a small group of shallow pits adjacent to the western side of the enclosure. They were sub-rectangular to oval in plan and measured between 1.55m long by 0.73-1.02m wide by 0.06-0.23m deep, with small angular to rounded stones and occasional charcoal flecks. Finds included pottery and animal bone.

Pit group **PG4** comprised four pits located within the eastern part of the enclosure. They were subcircular to oval in plan, between 1.00-1.32m in diameter by 0.72-0.96m deep, with steep sides and concave to flat bases. Fills were of yellow brown to dark blue-grey brown silty clay with small angular to rounded stones, occasional sandstone/limestone fragments and occasional to moderate charcoal flecks. Limestone fragments, measuring up to 0.35m long, were recovered from all of the features, with the south-western pit (Fig 12, Section 2, [650]) and the south-eastern pit containing blocks of stone towards the basal fill indicative of post-packing. Finds included pottery, animal bone, ceramic building material, charcoal and charred seeds.

A hearth or oven [130] was 2.70m long by 0.75m wide and 0.15m deep (Fig 11 and Plate 3). Its northern and eastern sides were defined by an intermittent course of flat laid or slightly inclined limestone pieces, up to 0.35m long by 0.32m wide and 0.12m deep. The adjacent shallow hollow contained a deposit of loosely compacted black soil mixed with clay. Finds included occasional pottery sherds and a quantity of burnt grain and charcoal, which suggests that this may have been part of a heavily truncated corn drier, perhaps originally T-shaped but with the elongated flue completely lost.

**TRACKWAY (DG11 and DG12)** lay between enclosures **E3/E4** and **E5**, with a spacing of *c* 11m between the flanking ditches. The northern and southern ditches, **DG11** and **DG10**, both post-dated the original

enclosure ditches and both had been recut and also terminated to the east in line with each other. The recut of the northern ditch, **DG11**, was 4.1m wide by 1.24m deep (Fig 12, Section 3, [8]). The southern ditch, **DG10**, which had also been recut, comprised a much narrower and steeper V-shaped profile, up to 2.0m wide by 1.56m deep towards the west. Fills were similar to the enclosure ditch fills, with limestone fragments especially prevalent within the upper fill of the latest ditch of **DG10**. As the majority of the limestone was primarily recovered from a discrete spread within the upper part of the matrix, it is probable that it was deposited after the date of the final ditch filling similar to that for some of the ditches forming enclosures **E3** and **E4**. Finds included pottery, a large quantity deriving from the probable later stone spread within the southern arm of **DG10**, and occasional animal bone fragments.

Additional activity comprised a single large pit/well and several smaller pits or large postholes, the former located close to the centre of the droveway, close to the eastern terminal of the northern ditch. The large pit/well was sub-circular in plan, measuring 2.8-3.1m in diameter by 0.7m deep, with gradual to steep sides and a concave to flat base. Fills ranged from a primary deposit of orange grey clay to secondary dark grey clay/silt, both of which were generally sterile, with few inclusions. Finds included pottery, animal bone and occasional ceramic building material.

Other pits within the trackway measured 0.5-1.1m in diameter by 0.10-0.35m deep, with fills of dark grey brown silty clay with occasional to moderate charcoal inclusions.

## 2.7 Phase 5: Settlement re-organisation (Late 3rd to 4th centuries AD)

It is only in the final phase of development that the plan form of the settlement can be fully resolved (Fig 9). The previous complex sequence of enclosure development was replaced by a single large sub-rectangular enclosure, measuring 47m east-west by 28m north-south (**E6**). To the east there was an entrance causeway surfaced with limestone, and a cluster of features including a large hearth and several pits lay in the north-eastern corner of the enclosure. To the south, the southern end of an earlier enclosure appears to have been retained or redefined to form a smaller annex, measuring 32m east-west by 15m north-south (**E7**). This enclosure contained a well pit.

The ditched enclosures were open to the south-west and west, respectively, where they joined a new rectilinear walled enclosure or compound (**E8**). This enclosure measured 50m north-south, and it appears to have contained the principal domestic buildings, but much of it lay beyond the excavated area (Figs 9 and 10). While the evidence is uncertain, this enclosure appears to have replaced a smaller ditched enclosure (**DG9**) formed in the late 2<sup>nd</sup> century (Phase 3) and probably retained through much of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century (Phase 4). A line of eleven post-pits aligned north-south (**SG6**) lay well within the Phase 5 enclosure, but run closely parallel to the eastern side of the earlier enclosure (**DG9**). They may therefore have been part of the definition of the eastern side of the domestic enclosure in Phases 3 and 4, but containing some later pottery, perhaps through contamination, which has suggested a later date of origin.

The boundaries of the new walled enclosure were therefore to the east and north of its postulated predecessor, presumably representing an enlargement of the domestic focus even though the contemporary enclosure system appears to have contracted in size.

Lines of post-pits alongside the northern wall and also continuing the line of the eastern wall of the new walled enclosure appear to have also formed substantial fence lines, either supplementing or, perhaps, preceding the construction of the compound walls. The domestic enclosure contained numerous small irregular pits, many of which contained deposits of burnt soils and limestone presumably as dumped hearth debris. To the east there was a stone-lined well (Plate 5), and to the north-east some lengths of stone footings of uncertain function. Three near complete Nene Valley Ware jars, dated to the 3<sup>rd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> centuries AD were recovered from the well (Fig 18, 41-43; Plate 6). The enclosure to the north of the trackway seems to have fallen out of use by this time.

**ENCLOSURE 6 (DG26 and DG27)** was a large sub-rectangular enclosure. Ditch **DG26** formed the northern arm and **DG27** the southern. The south-western corner was open, and there was a 3.6m wide entrance to the east. The enclosure ditches measured 1.55-2.55m wide and 0.44-0.94m deep, with both U- and V-shaped

profiles. The shallower widths and depths occurred towards the terminals. A short length of ditch, forming a north-south spur, lay close to the western terminal of the southern arm. There was a metalled surface, measuring 4.5m north-south by 2m east-west, within the eastern entrance comprising large limestone fragments, measuring up to 0.69m long by 0.44m wide by 0.10m deep. Another similar area of stone measuring up to 7.9m long by 5m wide lay at the south-eastern corner of the enclosure within ditch **DG27** and could have served a similar function.

The primary fills were yellow brown to blue grey silty clay whilst the secondary fills were dark grey brown silty clays with some orange mottling, occasional charcoal flecks and occasional to moderate limestone fragments, and all containing small flint gravel. The limestone was generally spread evenly throughout the upper fills, though larger concentrations were noted towards the two entrances. Finds included pottery, with large quantities noted throughout, animal bone, occasional ceramic building material and oyster shell. Ten of the 31 coins from the site were also recovered from the enclosure ditch, with a date range running from the mid-3<sup>rd</sup> century to barbarous radiates of the mid-4<sup>th</sup> century.

The north-eastern corner of the enclosure contained the possible remnants of a rectilinear posthole structure, an associated stone spread and a hearth (**SG2**). The ten postholes were sub-circular in plan, 0.30-0.53m in diameter by 0.04-0.40m deep. They encompassed an approximate rectangular area, measuring 7m north-south by 5.7m east-west. They also enclosed the remnants of a stone spread, possibly a floor surface, measuring up to 4m in diameter, comprising small to medium sized limestone fragments set within grey brown silty clay, with charcoal flecks. A sub-circular pit lay on the western side of the structure, 1.35m in diameter by 0.43m deep, with a fill of dark grey-brown silt clay. The recovery of two stakeholes at its base would suggest that it could have been utilised as a latrine pit. The hearth (Fig 11, 158 and Plate 4) lay 5.5m to the east of the structure. It was sub-square in plan, 1.8 by 1.96m, comprising a surround of large limestone slabs with a fill of brown/black silty clay containing up to 40% charcoal.

**ENCLOSURE 7 (DG28)** was defined by an L-shaped ditch, measuring 32m east-west by 16m north-south. The ditches were 0.7-1.0m wide by 0.15-0.52m deep and had gradual to very steep sides and concave to flat bases. Fills were similar to those of E6, with limestone fragments again noted throughout the upper fill of the deposits. Finds included pottery, with a large quantity from the southern arm, animal bone, occasional ceramic building material and oyster shell. The seven coins from this ditch spanned a broad time scale from the mid-2<sup>nd</sup> to mid-4<sup>th</sup> centuries, probably as a result of directly reusing the lines of earlier enclosure ditches.

A large sub-circular pit, 2.8m in diameter by 0.65m deep, with gradual sides and an irregular base contained a fill of dark grey clay silt with occasional medium sized limestone fragments measuring up to 0.2m long, and occasional charcoal flecks.

**ENCLOSURE 8 (SG3 and SG4)** was a rectangular enclosure or compound defined by linear stone walls, partly recorded in excavation and evident beyond this on the geophysical survey (Figs 9 & 10). The construction trenches for the lengths of the northern and eastern walls (**SG4 and SG3**) were 1.35-1.90m wide and 0.38-0.60m deep, with U-shaped profiles. The eastern wall was the best preserved with up to three courses of tightly packed pitched limestone set within a stiff yellow clay matrix, with two of the courses comprising blocks measuring up to 0.35m by 0.20m by 0.15m (Fig 12, Section 4, [490]). These two courses were separated by thin intermediate course of smaller limestone fragments measuring between 0.15m by 0.10m by 0.07m. This is in contrast to the northern wall where substantial robbing had taken place (Fig 12, Section 5, [575]). Here the matrix comprised a dark grey brown silt clay interspersed with limestone fragments measuring up to 0.25m by 0.20m by 0.05m. A large quantity of pottery was recorded from backfilled trench along the robbed northern arm

Running northward from terminal of the eastern wall, there was a line of ten post-pits, **SG5**, set between 2.0 and 2.5m apart. They were circular to sub-circular in plan, 0.50-0.70m in diameter by 0.08-0.36m deep, and filled with yellow brown silty clay with occasional charcoal flecks and limestone packing, set either vertically or horizontally. The packing in some of the pits (Fig 12, Section 6, [374]) indicates that they could have held timber posts measuring 0.2-0.3m in diameter.

To the south of the northern wall there was a parallel line of post-pits, **SG7**, set 2.5m apart and 1.2m south of the wall. They were circular, 0.49-0.90m in diameter by 0.10-0.25m deep, with gradual to steep sides, concave to flat bases and fills similar to **SG5** and **SG6**. The disposition of the packing material indicates that they could have held timber posts up to 0.3m in diameter (Fig 12, Section 8, [446]).

The ten post-pits forming a north-south line of within the enclosure, **SG6**, were 0.25-0.50m in diameter by 0.08-0.36m deep and were spaced 2.0-2.5m apart (Fig 12, Section 7, [404]). As there was no parallel line to form a building plan, they are presumed to have formed another substantial fence line, parallel to but 12.5m west of the eastern wall and fence.

Across the enclosure, but particularly to the north, there was a scatter of postholes and shallow pits, **SG9**. The pits were sub-circular to sub-rectangular in plan, 0.36-1.30m wide by 0.4 to 1.7m long by 0.04-0.36m deep. Nine of the pits contained fills comprising dark grey black silty clays with moderate to frequent charcoal inclusions, occasional to moderate burnt limestone fragments, probably as dumped hearth debris (Fig 10, H), although in some instances the excavators suggested the fills may have derived from in-situ burning. Finds included pottery, animal bone, charred grain and iron nails.

A number of more substantial features were also present, **SG10**. To the north-east there were three lengths of shallow gully aligned roughly west-east, measuring up to 9.0m long by 0.55m wide by 0.4m deep. Limestone fragments, some pitched, were set within the dark grey silty clay fills, as if these may have formed stone foundations. Two of these lay immediately south of a sub-square arrangement of four postholes, **SG8**. The postholes were circular to sub-circular, 0.43-0.75m in diameter by 0.12-0.38m deep, and contained packing stones similar to those recovered from **SG5-SG7**. The stone-filled gullies and the four-post structure may therefore have been related, and one possibility is that they may have formed a southern access to the enclosure **E6**.

A stone-lined well lay at the western terminal of the southern arm of enclosure **E7**. The construction pit [643] was rectangular, 3.7m long by 2.32m wide at the top, narrowing to 3.1m long by 1.5m wide at the base, which was 4.3m deep (Fig 10 and Fig 13, Section 9). The construction pit fill comprised a mixed deposit of yellow brown to dark grey-brown clay silt interspersed with limestone fragments. The shaft of the well was constructed slightly off-centre, and was built of large roughly squared blocks of limestone (Plate 5). The well shaft measured 0.55m in diameter at the top and 0.80m at the base.

The fills of the shaft comprised primary and secondary deposits of dark blue-grey clay silt containing waterlogged organic wood. The majority was roundwood with tool marks observed on a number of the pieces. The only manufactured object retrieved comprised three fragments of square-sectioned oak with inserted dowel rods spaced along it at irregular intervals of 20-35mm (Fig 21.18). Other finds included three near complete Nene Valley Ware jars (Fig 18, 41-43 and Plate 6) and the remnants of a wattle lining. The waterlogged soils produced a wide range of plant remains including waterlogged cereal chaff, weeds of cultivated and disturbed places, flax seeds, imported spices and grassland taxa.

## 2.8 Phase 6: The Anglo-Saxon Cemetery

Part of an inhumation cemetery lay in the northern part of the excavation area, and it is possible that some further burials lie unexcavated to the north (Figs 14 and 15). The cemetery group comprised nine burials with a single isolated burial (Burial 1) 25m to the south. Several of the burials within the principal group were accompanied by grave goods, including bone combs, glass beads, a large polychrome melon bead, a bone amulet and iron knives, indicating that they were of Anglo-Saxon date. Bone from three of the burials has been radiocarbon dated: Burial 1 to 545-645 cal AD (68% confidence, 1481 $\pm$ 49 BP, WK11237); Burial 3 to 540-640 AD (68% confidence, 1481 $\pm$ 49 BP WK11235) and Burial 8 to 605-690 AD (68% confidence, 1378 $\pm$ 51 BP, WK11236). This dating, together with the date and style of the associated graves goods, indicates that use of the cemetery spanned around a hundred years from the mid-6<sup>th</sup> century to the mid-7<sup>th</sup> century AD.

The principal group of burials (Burials 2-10) occupied an area measuring 13.5m east to west by 10m north to south. Six were aligned north-south and three east-west. They were laid supine, either extended or in a semi-crouched position. The graves were generally steep-sided, flat bottomed pits, tapering towards the foot end, 1.6-2.4m long by 0.6-1.0m wide and up to 0.3m deep. Two graves were partly cut into Roman features. Given the narrowness of the grave cuts and the body postures it is most likely that they were buried clothed, and perhaps shrouded, but not in coffins.

The isolated female burial (Burial 1) to the south was laid in a prone position, in marked contrast to the others, perhaps indicating that she had been deliberately kept apart from the main group as an outcast, she had no accompanying grave goods.

The ages at death provide some evidence that female life expectancy was shorter than male and the stature of the individuals ranged from 1.482m (4' 10½") to 1.754 (5' 9¼"). One female (Burial 1) displayed marked tibial flattening (platycnemia), possible evidence of strain due to walking over rough terrain. Evidence of squatting was noted in four of the burials (4, 5, 8 and 10). Apart from minor spinal degeneration, there was very little bone pathology. Apart from Burial 1, which displayed ante-mortem tooth loss and large carious cavities, all of the remaining burials had a good standard of oral health.

*Table 2: Characteristics of burials*

Burial	Sex	Age (years)	Stature	Posture	Special characteristics	Grave goods (residual finds)
1	Female	Adult 35-45	1.643 (5' 4.75")	Prone	Displayed signs of walking over rough terrain or prolonged squatting	
2	Male	Adult 30-40	1.754 (5' 9.25")	Crouched	Displayed signs of possible over-use in the shoulders	(Fe objects) (Residual Roman coin)
3	Female	Adult 20-25	1.667 (5' 5.75")	Supine		Two pots bone comb copper alloy rings and objects
4	Female	Adult 35-45	NA	Supine	Evidence for prolonged squatting	Fe knife
5	Female	Adult 40-50	1.482 (4' 10.5")	Supine	Evidence of prolonged squatting	(Fe object)
6	Female	Adult 23-28	1.698 (5' 7")	Crouched		(Fe nails)
7	Male	Adult 35-45	1.736 (5' 8.5")	Crouched	Signs of possible over-use in the shoulders	Bone comb Fe knife
8	Female	Adult 20-25	NA	Supine	Evidence of prolonged squatting	A pot melon bead Fe knife and objects
9	NA	NA	NA	NA		Fe blade
10	Male	NA	NA	NA	evidence of prolonged squatting	(Fe nail)

## 2.9 Phase 7: Medieval and post-medieval activity

Truncated plough furrows were present across the excavated site and the watching brief areas, aligned both north-south and east-west (Fig 5). Later activity comprised land drains, dating from the 18<sup>th</sup> century to the present day. On the eastern side of the excavated area there was a post-medieval field boundary, aligned north-south. Other features included a brick-lined well in the north-east corner of the excavated area, fenced off by an L-shaped arrangement of postholes.



### 3 THE FINDS

#### 3.1 The late Bronze Age/early Iron Age pottery by Dennis Jackson

A total of 98 sherds (307g) of late Bronze Age/early Iron Age pottery was recovered from the site. The material derived from scattered pits. In two instances the material was residual in features of Roman date, but in three cases the late Bronze Age/early Iron Age pottery was the only material recovered. As some of the groups include sherds from single vessels it is likely to be either in situ or, if it has been disturbed and redeposited, it has probably moved no great distance.

##### *Fabric and form*

The pottery was very weathered but the size and nature of voids in the sherds suggest that fine shell was the dominant inclusion. Some soft limestone grits survived and grog occurred in around 10% of the sherds.

Sherds from a carinated bowl were recovered from pit 282, and other thin walled sherds may have come from similar vessels. There were only five rim sherds in the assemblage and no rim to shoulder profiles survived.

##### *Colour and surface finish*

Most of the sherds were originally smooth faced with colours ranging from red-brown to buff externally, and commonly black or dark grey in the core and internally. No decoration has survived.

##### *Date and conclusions*

The only recognisable forms are thin-walled carinated bowls and these occur principally between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries BC. However, the thin walls, colour and general appearance of the assemblage suggests that it dates to the earlier part of this period. The sherds have much in common with material from a recently excavated circular ditched enclosure at Thrapston, some nine miles to the south of Oundle, which has associated radiocarbon dates from the 9<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> centuries BC (Hull 2000-01).

The absence of specific late Iron Age forms and the small quantity of early Roman forms tend to suggest that this episode of activity had been fortuitously coincidental with the later Roman settlement, with no evidence for direct continuity from the middle Iron Age to the later Roman period.

#### 3.2 The Roman pottery by Jane Timby with Brenda Dickinson

Pottery was recovered from some 230 individual contexts, representing some 196 individual features, with the archaeological work resulting in the recovery of 6749 sherds of Roman pottery (1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> century AD) weighing 102.4kg. The condition of the assemblage was variable with some exceptionally well-preserved material, but also a number of very fragmentary groups containing smaller, more abraded sherds. There were frequent examples of multiple sherds deriving from single vessels allowing a number of vessel profiles to be reconstructed. The overall average sherd size is quite good, at around 15g, suggesting a generally well-preserved assemblage although not exceptional. Surface preservation was generally good although some of the softer colour-coated wares had lost their surfaces.

The size of the individual groups varies considerably. Of the 230 contexts with pottery, 26% produced between one and five sherds which has some ramification on the dating of these particular contexts. At least 14 contexts produced in excess of 100 sherds.

### ***Methodology***

The pottery was sorted into fabrics based on macroscopic observation of the type and frequency of inclusions in the paste. Where relevant the defined fabrics were coded according to the National Roman reference collection codes (Tomber and Dore 1998). More local but unsourced wares were coded according to the character of the pastes. A concordance was made between these and the fabric system developed for the nearby site at Ashton (Aird and MacRobert nd) (see Table 3). A sherd count and weight was made for each recorded context. Rim sherds were coded to vessel form and sub-divided according to vessel/ rim morphology. The data was entered onto a spreadsheet, a copy of which is deposited with the site archive.

Following a brief description of the fabrics and associated forms the pottery is discussed by stratigraphic phase. A small number of vessels, particularly the better-preserved examples, have been selected for illustration (Figs 16-18).

### ***Description of fabrics and associated forms***

Despite an apparent quite long chronology the assemblage is quite conservative in terms of the range of fabrics present with the distinctive products of the Nene Valley industries, perhaps not surprisingly, dominating the group from the early-mid 2<sup>nd</sup> century onwards. The fabrics are overwhelmingly dominated by three main wares, local shell-gritted ware (SHELL), Lower Nene Valley grey ware (LNV RE) and colour-coated ware (LNV CC). These respectively account for 20%, 29% and 15.3% by sherd count of the total assemblage. The only continental imports present are 130 sherds of Gaulish samian and 19 sherds of Dressel 20 olive oil amphorae from South Spain. Regional imports are limited to Dorset black burnished ware, Oxfordshire colour-coated ware and Verulamium whiteware (flagon and mortaria).

### ***Continental imports***

#### *Samian*

The samian includes around 25 sherds of South Gaulish ware with potentially some pre-Flavian sherds (Dragendorff (Drag.) forms 15/17, 18, 24/25, 27 and 29). Most of the remaining sherds appear to be Central Gaulish. Of particular note is a complete Central Gaulish bowl (Drag.37) from a gully [489] forming part of **DG6** (Phase 3) which bears the mould-maker's mark (Fig 16.1 and Plate 6) and a vessel from pit [529], **SG9** (Phase 5) which appears to be an unusual variant of a Drag. 46. There are at least three stamped pieces present. A vessel from ditch [461], **DG9** (Phase 3) has been repaired using lead rivets.

#### *Amphorae*

Dressel 20 olive-oil amphorae (BAT AM) (Tomber and Dore 1998, 84-6). Just 19 sherds of amphorae were recovered. Dressel 20 amphorae, imported from Southern Spain between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries, are the most frequently occurring amphora to be found in Britain. Sherds were recovered from Phases 4 and 5.

Unassigned amphora. A single amphora bodysherd from **DG27** (Phase 5) is probably a Spanish fabric but the form is uncertain.

### ***Regional imports***

*Verulamium white ware (VER WH)* (Tomber and Dore 1998, 154). A small amount of Verulamium white ware is present from Phase 3 onwards. Vessels include 2nd-century ring-necked flagons and mortaria (Fig 16.3-4).

*Dorset black burnished ware (DOR BBI)* (Tomber and Dore 1998, 127). Restricted to just four sherds including a straight-sided dish from Phases 4 and 5.

*Oxfordshire colour-coated ware (OXF RS)* (Tomber and Dore 1998, 176). Limited to a single bodysherd from Phase 5.

*Notes on selected samian sherds*

by Brenda Dickinson

Phase 3 contained several forms including Forms 18, 30 and 37.

Form 18 sherd from **DG9**, South Gaulish, stamped [SV]LPICI: Sulpicius of La Graufesenque, Die 8c. Like many of Sulpicius's stamps, this one occurs at Domitianic foundations (Wilderspool and the Saalburg). The die was used on form 37 moulds in styles suggesting Flavian-Tranjanic manufacture *c* 80-110 AD.

Form 30, from **DG9**, South Gaulish, in the standard style of Germanus I of La Graufesenque. The ovolo and bifid wreath below it occur on his stamped bowls, the ovolo on one from Nijmegen (Mees 1995, Taf. 69, 3) and the motif in the wreath on one form Colchester (ibid 4) *c* 70-85 AD. Form 30 or 37 rim sherd from **DG9**, South Gaulish. The flat rim with barbotine decoration was a variant of the form used at Les Martres-de-Veyre, where this cup was made. Tranjanic or early-Hadrianic.

Form 37 complete decorated central Gaulish Drag. 37 bowl bearing the mould maker's name QUINTILIANIM retr below the decoration: Quintilianus I of Lezoux, Die Ib (Stanfield & Simpson 1958, pl.169) (Fig 16, 1 and Plate 6). The decoration comprises a series of 8 panels, repeated once, thus: 1) seated figure (variant of Déchelette. 530 = 0.547). 2) Kneeling doe (Oswald.1752A) over a harpy (variant of Déchelette. 530 = 0.863). 3) Saltire, with peacock (Déchelette, 1027 = 0.2365) in the upper quadrant and seven-beaded rosettes (Rogers C282) in the rest. 4) Leaf-cross (Rogers L2) over a double medallion. 5) Another seated figure (variant of Déchelette.528 = 0.138). 6-8) = 2.4. The decoration also includes a single bordered ovolo (Rogers B28), wavy-line borders (Rogers A23) and eight-beaded rosettes (Rogers C281). All the details apart from the two seated figures are known for Quintilianus, and those occur on bowls by Libertus and Butrio, who had some figure-types in common with the Quintilianus group. The stamp on the Oundle bowl comes from a die, which the potter used, mainly on decorated moulds. On plain samian it occurs in the 'pottery shop' at Castleford, destroyed in the 140s (Hartley & Dickinson 2000, 59, 839-42) and at South Shields *c* 125-150 AD.

*Phase 4* contained several forms including Forms 15/17 or 18/31 and 31, their forms and dates is indicative of residuality within this phase.

Form 15/17 or 18/31, two sherds from a dish in **DG16**, Central Gaulish, probably from Les Martres-de-Veyre and early 2<sup>nd</sup> century.

Form 18/31 or 31, rim sherd from **DG16**, Central Gaulish. Hadrainic or early Antonine.

Form 31, rim sherd from a posthole within **E5**, Central or East Gaulish. This is either in one of the later fabrics of Les Martres-de-Veyre or in a standard La Madeleine fabric. Although there is some doubt about the origin of the piece, it is certainly Hadrianic-Antonine.

Rouletted dish from **DG10**, stamped AG[: almost certainly a stamp of Agedillus ii of Central Gaul (Die uncertain 1). The potter worked at Les Martres-de-Veyre and then at Lezoux. The style of lettering and the fabric of the pot suggest that this comes from Les Martres and is Tranjanic.

*Phase 5* contained three forms 18, 29 and 46, their forms and dates is indicative of residuality within this phase.

Form 18, three sherds two adjoining from a pit within **E6**. South Gaulish, Neronian.

Form 29, two joining flakes from **DG28**, South Gaulish, Neronian or early Flavian.

Form 46, rim sherd from **SG9**, **E8**, Central Gaulish. The flat rim with barbotine decoration was a variant of the form used at Les Martres-de-Veyre, where this cup was made. Trajanic or early-Hadrianic.

*Phase 7* contained form 15/17 or 18/31, its inclusion within this phase indicating residuality.

Form 15/17 or 18/31, from topsoil layer. Stamped PATE[RCLOSEFE]; Paterclos ii of Les Martres-de-Veyre, Die 10a (Romeuf 2001, pl. 35, 125). The die form, which this stamp comes, was later modified twice, and stamps from the final version occur in the London Second Fire groups and at Corbridge, Chesterholma and Nether Denton. Impressions of the original die are relatively few and it was probably modified by 110 AD at the latest *c* 100-110 AD.

***Fine wares******Fine black ware (BWF) (Ashton C7).***

A very fine black ware with a silky texture. Often quite micaceous with occasional red iron inclusions. Vessels in this fabric are often decorated with incised, stamped or rouletted designs including compass drawn semi-circles (Fig 16, 2 and Fig 17, 17 & 23). Often referred to as 'London ware' after the style of decoration it is likely that this pottery was made at a number of centres in the later 1<sup>st</sup> and early 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries and belongs to quite a widespread tradition found across eastern England (Rodwell 1978). The ware is quite well represented here although many of the sherds appear to be redeposited. Most of the forms are beakers or bowls.

***British glazed ware (GLAZE).***

A very hard, almost vitrified fabric, dark grey with red margins covered with a dark brown, glossy metallic-like, glaze. Similar sherds from Ashton are suggested to be from Staines. A small jar was present in Phase 4 (Fig 17, 26).

***Lower Nene Valley colour-coated ware (LNV CC) (Tomber and Dore 1998, 118) (Ashton D1/D2).***

One of the commonest fabrics found in the assemblage and with the most diverse range of forms including beakers with various forms of decoration, bowls/ dishes, boxes, flagons and jars (Fig 17, 19-20, 22 & 29 and Fig 18, 39, 41 & 43-4).

***Mica-slipped ware (MICA).***

A hard, oxidised ware with a golden mica slip. Represented by three sherds from Phase 4. Source unknown but probably British.

***Fine oxidised ware (OXIDF).***

Very fine oxidised sherds with no visible inclusions. Forms probably include flagon. The earliest sherd first occurs in Phase 1 with further examples from Phase 3 onwards.

***Fine white ware (WWF).***

Represented by 23 bodysherds, probably mainly from flagons. Source unknown.

***Coarsewares******Lower Nene Valley reduced ware (LNV RE) (Ashton C1).***

The commonest fabric in the assemblage, accounting for 29% by sherd count, and probably in production from the early-middle 2<sup>nd</sup> century. With a single exception, all the sherds occur from Phase 3 onwards. A diverse range of forms were made, starting with necked, everted rim, jars and flat rim bowls in Phase 3. Jars, beakers, lids, flagons, jugs, plain-sided dishes occur in Phase 4, with an increased incidence of bowls and jugs in Phase 5 (Fig 17, 25 & 27 and Fig 18, 40). The beakers include some similar to the colour-coated forms with applied barbotine decoration.

**Black sandy wares:*****BW1: black sandy ware (Ashton C).***

A medium to fine black sandy ware with a grey core often with red-brown margins. Some vessels have a burnished finish. No macroscopically visible inclusions apart from fine quartz sand, rare limestone and black iron. Vessels include plain-sided dishes, flanged rim and flat rim bowls, jars with triangular rims, platters, lids and girth beakers (Fig 16, 6 & 7 and Fig 17, 16 & 18). Decoration includes burnished line lattice. Sherds occur from Phase 2 onwards.

***BW2: black speckled ware (Ashton C10).***

A black ware with a distinctively gritty feel. The paste contains a mixture of fine quartz sand and limestone the latter creating a fine speckled appearance. A moderately small group which includes plain-walled dishes and everted rim jars.

**Grey sandy wares*****GW1: a grey, medium-fine, sandy ware (Ashton C7).***

A grey ware with a smooth, finely micaceous fabric and fine quartz sand. A rare fabric represented by just five bodysherds.

***GW2: a light grey, fine, sandy ware (Ashton C4).***

Vessels include everted, thickened rim jars, necked cordoned jars, cornice rim beakers and flat rim dishes (Fig 16, 10). Sherds occur from Phase 3 onwards.

*GW3: a fine, grey ware with sandwich effect core (Ashton C2).*

Represented by just 11 bodysherds from Phases 4 and 5.

*GW4: a grey sandy ware (Ashton C11).*

The commonest of the grey sandy wares. Vessels of note include a small carinated cup (Fig 16, 8), flat rim bowls, everted, thickened rim jars and at least one beaker. Again present from Phase 3 onwards.

*GW5: gritty grey ware with limestone (Ashton C6).*

AS BW2. Forms include beakers, necked jars and a plain sided dish. Both rusticated and burnished lattice decoration was used on this ware. One vessel is decorated with impressed rosettes (Fig 18, 45).

*GW6: grey gritty ware (Ashton C10).*

A gritty ware similar to GW5 but without any obvious limestone. No featured sherds.

#### ***Oxidised sandy ware***

*Orange medium-fine sandy ware (OXID) (Ashton D).*

This group probably subsumes wares of more than one source but are too infrequent or indistinctive to warrant individual descriptions. Forms include flagon, jar, tankards and bowls/dishes (Fig 17, 15 & 28).

*Oxidised ware with limestone (OXIDLI) (Ashton BD).*

A rare fabric represented by just five bodysherds.

*Micaceous oxidised ware (OXIDMIC).*

Only three sherds are present one of which comes from a bowl imitation a samian Drag. form 30.

*Blackened white ware (BWW) (Ashton D9).*

A fairly hard white sandy fabric, occasionally pinkish with blackening on the rim and upper body. Mainly jars including channel rim types (Fig 16, 9).

*White ware (WW) (Ashton D).*

A medium to fine white ware of slightly different character to the Lower Nene Valley range but possibly from the same locality. Forms include flasks, jars and flat-rim bowls. Present from Phase 3 onwards.

*Lower Nene Valley white ware (LNV WH) (Tomber and Dore 1998, 119), (Ashton D2/E1).*

These white wares account for just over 1% of the total assemblage. Over half the sherds derive from mortaria (Fig 17, 21 & 32); the only featured non-mortarium sherds are jar or flask (Fig 17, 24 & 30). Only present from Phase 5.

*White-slipped ware (WSLIP).*

Restricted to just two sherds this includes one oxidised and one reduced medium-fine sandy ware. Forms are likely to be flagons.

#### ***Native wares***

*'Belgic' grog-tempered ware (GR1) (Tomber and Dore 1998, SOB GT) (Ashton A).*

Predominantly features as necked jars or bowls, often with a burnished finish and in at least one case vertical combing. Rimsherds include one lid and one beaker. Sherds occur from Phase 1 onwards.

*Local grog-tempered ware (GR2) (Ashton A1):*

A moderately hard, fine textured, fabric ranging from dark grey through pinks and oranges to white in colour. The paste contains angular grog occasionally accompanied by sparse limestone and quartz sand. The forms mainly include channel rim jars, thickened everted rim jars and bowls (Fig 16, 11-13 and Fig 17, 14 & 31). The source of this fabric is unknown, but it commonly occurs on late 1<sup>st</sup>-mid 2<sup>nd</sup> century sites in the Northamptonshire area. Recently discovered kiln material at Brackley Hatch on the line of the A43 road falls within this range (Timby 2001) and it is likely that other producers were operating in this general area. This ware accounts for around 4.5% of the assemblage featuring from Phase 3 onwards.

*Pink grogged storage jar (PNK GT) (Tomber and Dore 1998, 210) (Ashton A2).*

Used almost exclusively for large handmade storage jars. The fabric is quite a widely distributed one and probably originates in the Midlands (Booth and Green 1989). Not common here with only four sherds.

*Grog and shell-tempered ware (GRSH) (Ashton AB).*

Similar to GR1 but with added shell. Not common with just one rimsherd, a jar.

*Sandy ware with grog (GSI) (Ashton AC/AD).*

A fine sandy textured ware with sparse grog. Occurs as both oxidised and reduced vessels, almost exclusively jars. At least one vessel, from ditch [343] **DG9** Phase 3 is a second.

*Mixed shell and limestone-tempered ware (L1) (Ashton B1).*

A generally oxidised ware with a grey core. The paste contains a moderate to common frequency of fossil shell and limestone. Most of the sherds occur in Phase 4 and feature as large jars.

*Sparse shell and limestone-tempered ware (L2) (Ashton B5).*

A hard shelly ware with uniform black surfaces with sparse, large, flecks of shell and occasional limestone. At Ashton the fabric appears to date from the mid 2<sup>nd</sup> to early 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries.

*Oolitic limestone-tempered ware (L3) (Ashton B).*

A distinctive ware but represented by a single sherd from Phase 5.

*Shelly ware (SHELL) (Ashton B2).*

A moderately soft, soapy ware with moderate to common shell inclusions. The high frequency of the ware in the assemblage suggests a relatively local source. The fabric mainly occurs as jars, both handmade and wheel made and including large storage vessels. Rims are either channel-rim, triangular or expanded rounded types (Fig 16, 5 and Fig 18, 35 & 42). Some vessels have horizontal scoring or rilling on the upper body. The only other form recorded was a lid from pit [538] **SG9** Phase 5. This is one of the commonest wares in the assemblage accounting for 20% by sherd count, 25% by weight. The same fabric is used for tiles.

***Phase 2: Late Iron Age/early Roman (1st century AD)***

The features belonging to Phase 2 only produced 104 sherds of pottery (weighing 1.095kg). Ditch group **DG1** produced 94 sherds, mainly coarsewares but also including a sherd of a South Gaulish samian cup (Drag, type 27). The coarsewares were mainly jar forms and comprised a mixture of shelly, limestone-tempered, grog-tempered and reduced sandy ware. Pit [495] produced 36 shelly ware sherds potentially of late Iron Age date. Single grey ware sherds came from gullies [577] and [587], the latter a LNV RE type, which is generally a fabric, which appears from the second quarter of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century.

Table 3: Roman pottery types (concordance with Ashton)

Type	Fabric	Ashton	Description	No	%	Wt (g)	Wt %
Imports	SGSAM		South Gaulish samian	25	*	247	*
	CGSAM		Central Gaulish samian	105	1.5	1721	1.7
	BAT AM		Dressel 20 amphora	19	*	1054	1
	SPANAMP		Spanish amphora unspecified	1	*	35	*
Regional	VERWH	D6	Verulamium white ware	30	*	294	*
	VERWHM	E2	Verulamium white ware mortaria	9	*	1667	1.6
	DOR BB1	C8	Dorset black burnished ware	5	*	36	*
	OXF RS	D4	Oxfordshire colour coat	1	*	3	*
Finewares	GLAZE		British glazed ware	2	*	12	*
	LVN CC	D1/2	Lower Nene Valley colour coat	1065	15.8	16528	16
	BWF	C7	Fine black ware	61	1	638	*
	CC		Miscellaneous colour coat	2	*	5	*
	MICA		Mica-slipped	3	*	12	*
	OXIDF		Fine oxidised ware	4	*	28	*
	WWF	D7	Fine white ware	23	*	261	*
<b>Sandy wares</b>							
Grey wares	LVN RE	C1	Nene Valley grey ware	1946	29	25142	24.5
	BW1	C	Black sandy ware red colour coat	323	4.8	4604	4.5
	BW2	C10	Black speckled ware	32	*	371	*
	BW	C	Other black sandy wares	20	*	252	*
	GW1	C7	Grey black sandy ware	5	*	144	*
	GW2	C4	Light grey fine sandy ware	92	1.4	830	*
	GW3	C2	Fine grey ware, sandwich	11	*	114	*
	GW4	C11	Grey sandy ware	220	3.3	2526	2.5
	GW5	C6	Gritty grey ware with limestone	103	1.5	927	1
	GW6	C10	Grey gritty ware	12	*	74	*
	GREY	C	Other grey wares	208	3	1876	1.8
	Oxidised	OXID 1	D	Hard sandy oxidised ware	129	1.9	1407
OXIDLI		BD	Oxidised with limestone	5	*	70	*
OXIDMIC		D	Micaceous oxidised ware	3	*	75	*
BWW		D9	Blackened white ware	21	*	228	*
WW		D	Miscellaneous white wares	139	2	1229	1.2
LVN WH		D2	Lower Nene valley white ware	56	*	575	*
LVNVWHM		E1	Lower Nene valley mortaria	67	1	3427	3.3
WSLIP			White slipped ware	4	*	42	*
<b>Native ware</b>							
Grog and shell	GRSH	AB	Grog and shell tempered	12	*	263	*
Grog	GR1	A	Belgic type grog tempered	65	*	991	*
	GR2	A1	Pink/orange	249	3.7	4599	4.5
	PNK GT	A2	Pink grogged storage jar	4	*	220	*
	GROG	A	Other grog tempered wares	20	*	268	*
Grog and sand	GS1	AC/AD	Sandy with grog	160	2.4	2569	2.5
Limestone	LI	B1	Mixes shell and limestone	24	*	654	*
	L2	B5	Wm sparse shell/limestone	59	*	392	*
	L3	B	Oolitic limestone tempered	3	*	10	*
Shell	SHELL	B2	Shell tempered	1353	20	255634	25
Misc	MISC		miscellaneous	49	*	361	*
<b>Total</b>				<b>6749</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>102415</b>	<b>100</b>

**Phase 3: Early 2nd to late 2nd/early 3rd century AD**

The system of enclosures marking Phase 3 are accompanied by a significant increase in the amount of discarded pottery and some 1546 sherds (weighing some 21.5kg) were recovered. **DG4, 5** and **9** produced comparable ranges of material with an overall average sherd size of between 9.3 and 13.5g, below the assemblage average. **DG6, 7** and **8**, however, contained larger less fragmented material with an average sherd size slightly above the site mean, at around 16.5-17g.

**DG4** produced a total of 115 sherds weighing (1.202g). Amongst this group are five colour-coated sherds (LNV CC) which are unlikely to date before the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century. Also present is a Nene Valley white ware mortarium, two sherds of fine black ware and a sherd from a Central Gaulish samian dish (Drag. form 31), the latter being the only import in the group. Shelly wares and grey sandy wares dominate the assemblage, again largely jar forms, but with at least two plain-walled dishes. Slightly less material came from **DG5** and this comprises exclusively coarsewares. **DG6** with 207 sherds produced further Nene Valley colour-coated sherds, all from beakers and again likely to date from the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century. A single Verulamium ring-necked flagon sherd and a mortarium sherd with a worn stamp (Fig 16, 3) (VER WH) also featured in this group along with a piece of incised decorated London-type ware (Fig 16, 2). A join was observed between the VER WH stamped mortarium from **DG6** and a sherd from **DG16** also with a worn stamp. A complete Central Gaulish samian bowl, a decorated Dragendorf form 37 carrying the mould makers name (Fig 16, 1) and with a production date in the period 125-50 AD (see Dickinson above), also came from gully **DG6**.

**DG7** produced a better preserved assemblage of 71 sherds (1362 g). Several joining sherds were present. Imports include samian, a Verulamium white ware mortarium and one sherd of Dorset black burnished plain-sided dish. Nene Valley grey wares are also well represented with necked everted rim jars, necked, cordoned jars and a flat rim dish. The colour-coated wares and the LNV RE certainly put the group as a whole into the mid to late 2<sup>nd</sup> century although several of the sherds are potentially earlier.

**DG8**, like **DG7**, produced a sizeable, well-preserved assemblage within which there were several joining sherds. The fabric profile was also fairly similar. Only one sherd of samian was present, a residual South Gaulish cup Drag. 24. Shelly wares dominate the group accounting for 25% by sherd count. The latest wares again appear to be four sherds of Nene Valley colour-coated ware putting the group as a whole into the latter part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century.

The largest collection of wares from Phase 3 came from **DG9**, some 698 sherds. This group is quite similar to that from **DG7** with several samian sherds, both South and Central Gaulish and fine black decorated ware (Fig 17, 17). One of the South Gaulish sherds shows a rivet repair. Nene Valley products are well represented with colour-coats, grey wares, white wares and mortaria. Again there are the substantial parts of single vessels present. The colour-coated wares are again mainly from beakers, one of the earlier products of this industry. The pottery evidence would suggest that all the Phase 3 boundaries had fallen out of use or been backfilled in the later 2<sup>nd</sup> or early 3<sup>rd</sup> century. A small amount of pottery came from other features within this phase. In particular, **SG1** yielded just three sherds for which a 2<sup>nd</sup>-century date would be appropriate. Similarly, pit group **PG1** produced a small collection of 21 body sherds again of 2<sup>nd</sup>-century currency.

**Phase 4: Early 3rd to late 3rd century AD**

A substantial collection of pottery was recovered from Phase 4 features amounting to some 1859 sherds weighing 31kg. Again the sherd fragmentation is variable, with large sherds being a marked feature of **DG13, 15-18** and pit group **PG4**. In all these examples the average sherd size ranged between 18.3g and 21g. By contrast, **DG10, 11** and **21**, and **PG2** contained more fragmented material perhaps indicative of a higher residual component or suggestive of a different source of material, for example, a midden, before incorporation into the ditch fills. Across the ditch groups collectively there is quite a marked presence of both South and Central Gaulish samian, 34 sherds in total, although only 2% of the total Phase 4 assemblage. Sherds of Dressel 20 olive oil amphorae appear for the first time. Other imports include a small amount of Verulamium white ware, particularly from **DG16** and two sherds of Dorset black burnished ware, both from **DG13**. Other finewares include: a single sherd of British glazed ware from **DG17** (Fig 17.26); ten sherds of fine black ware; two sherds of mica-slipped ware; and a much higher incidence of LNV CC wares compared to Phase 3, accounting here for nearly 15% by sherd count compared to 2% in Phase 3. Colour-coated forms include beakers, some with barbotine decoration or applied scales, straight-sided dishes, flat rim bowls, jars, grooved rim bowls, boxes, flagons and, flanged rim and flanged wall bowls. The latter two forms, probably dating to the second part of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century came from **DG16** and **DG23** only. Within the coarse wares shelly ware is very marked as is LNV RE each accounting for 23.5% and 27.5% respectively of the Phase 4 assemblage. Although jars still dominate a number of bowls/dishes, tankards, beakers, lids, flasks, jug and mortaria are present. One LNV RE base from ditch 191 has been deliberately holed and one jar rim bears an



incised batch or other identifying mark (Fig 17, 27). Some later contamination is present in **DG11**, **DG20**, **DG21** and pit [78] in the form of odd sherds of medieval or post-medieval pottery.

#### ***Phase 5: Late 3rd to 4th centuries AD***

Deposits dated to the latest phase of Roman activity yielded a total of 2529 sherds, weighing 39.8kg. The range of fabrics is very similar to the preceding phases with slight changes in emphasis. Lower Nene Valley colour-coated ware accounts for 24.5% by sherd count of the total Phase 5 assemblage (27% by weight). Forms include a greater number of flanged bowls and jars compared to the Phase 4 range. Imported sherds featuring in Phase 5 clearly represent redeposited or curated material. There are 23 sherds of samian, mostly Central Gaulish, but with three sherds of South Gaulish, six sherds of Dressel 20 amphorae and one sherd of a Spanish type, form not identified. Other imports include two Verulamium mortaria, two sherds of Dorset black burnished ware and one sherd of Oxfordshire colour-coated ware. As before the coarse wares are dominated by LNV RE and SHELL accounting for 35.5% and 16% by sherd count respectively.

Generally speaking the ditch groups show a higher level of fragmentation compared with earlier phases with the average sherd size ranging from 9.5g in **DG28** to 15.9g in **DG27**. The pits are variable, ranging from 14.2g to 28g. The sherds from the well [515] are exceptional with an average sherd size of 40g, suggesting direct deposition of material. The well produced the substantial part of a complete LNV CC flagon (Fig 18, 43), a complete LNV CC jar (Fig 18, 41), the lower half of a second jar and the substantial part of a shelly jar and flanged bowl, both with signs of sooting (Fig 18, 42 & 44). It is suggested that these may have formed some form of deliberate closure deposit placed in the well once it had ceased to be functional, although they are quite widely scattered in the fills.

#### ***Phases 6 and 7: Anglo-Saxon to post-medieval activity***

The Anglo-Saxon burials produced 62 sherds of re-deposited Roman pottery from their fills. The average sherd size at 11.5g is a reflection of the residual nature of these pieces. The composition of the assemblage reflects the overall trend seen from the Roman contexts with a dominance of LNV CC, LNV RE and SHELL. The same is true of the material from Phase 7, which produced some 175 Roman sherds weighing up to 2.819kg. Of particular note is a bowl with impressed rosette decoration (Fig 18, 45).

#### ***Conclusions***

The assemblage is dominated by local Nene Valley products whose broad chronology has recently been outlined by Perrin (1999). The earlier phases of the industry are poorly understood, but it is currently suggested that Lower Nene Valley grey ware (LNV RE) first makes an appearance in the first quarter of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century and Lower Nene Valley colour coat (LNV CC) from the mid 2<sup>nd</sup> century. The earliest contexts at Glapthorn road do not contain either of the above wares but generally show a mixture of shell-gritted ware and various grog-tempered wares. The presence of a few sherds of pre-Flavian South Gaulish samian are also indicative of some early (1<sup>st</sup> century) Roman activity in the locality.

Most of the assemblage appears to date from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century continuing into the 3<sup>rd</sup> century. Much of the dating hinges on the presence of LNV RE and LNV CC and the different forms these wares occur in, where these can be recognised. The samian also provides a useful dating indicator although fine wares of this type may well have been curated for longer periods compared to the coarse wares. And it is clear that many of the sherds are either redeposited or are entering the discarded rubbish some time after their manufacture period. Shell gritted wares have a very long chronology extending from the Iron Age through to the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD and are difficult to date closely.

Whilst there is clear evidence of 4<sup>th</sup> century activity, it is difficult to determine at present how far into the 4<sup>th</sup> century this extends. One of the later groups appears to be that from well [515].

The assemblage from Glapthorn road shows very similar overall trends to that displayed by the considerably larger group of material analysed from Ashton (Aird and MacRobert nd). Ashton, like Glapthorn road, has a relatively small imported component to the assemblage and these mirror those seen at Glapthorn road, with samian, Dressel 20 amphora, Verulamium white ware and Dorset black burnished ware (DOR BB1). A few sherds of lead glazed ware are also present from both sites. This suggests similar trading mechanisms were in place serving the settlements in this area from the 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> centuries.

*Catalogue of illustrated pottery*

(Fig 16)

- 1 Central Gaulish bowl (Drag.37) which bears the mould-maker's mark. Ditch [489], **DG6**, Phase 3
- 2 Fine, black ware bowl with incised decoration in the 'London style', Fabric BWF. Ditch [489], **DG 7**, Phase 3
- 3 Verulamium white ware mortarium (VER WHM). Very worn single line stamp either side of spout. Ditch [489], **DG7**, Phase 3
- 4 Ring-neck flagon, Verulamium white ware (VERWH). Ditch [489], **DG7**, Phase 3
- 5 Handmade necked jar with a blackened exterior. Irregular incised horizontal lines on the upper body. Fabric: SHELL. Ditch [619], **DG8**, Phase 3
- 6 Necked, cordoned squat jar. Fabric BW1. Ditch [619], **DG8**, Phase 3
- 7 Girth beaker with burnished line decoration. Fabric BW1. Ditch [619], **DG8**, Phase 3
- 8 Small carinated cup. Fabric GW4. Ditch [341], **DG9**, Phase 3
- 9 Jar with a thickened, grooved rim. Sandy white ware with a blackened rim, Fabric BWW. Ditch [673], **DG9**, Phase 3
- 10 Dish with a triangular rim. Decorated with a lightly incised wavy line on the exterior. Originally burnished. Fabric GW2. Ditch 673, **DG9**, Phase 3
- 11 Small necked, cordoned squat jar. Fabric GR2. Ditch [408], **DG9**, Phase 3
- 12 Necked jar with a slightly hooked rim. Fabric GR2. Ditch [673], **DG9**, Phase 3
- 13 Large bowl with a rounded, thickened rim. White grog-tempered ware, GR2. Ditch [673], **DG9**, Phase 3

(Fig 17)

- 14 Storage jar decorated with lightly scored diagonal lines. White grog-tempered ware, GR2. Ditch [673], **DG9**, Phase 3
- 15 Straight-sided dish with a flat, slightly beaded rim, Fabric OXID. Ditch [345], **DG9**, Phase 3
- 16 Campanulate dish in black sandy ware, fabric BW1. Ditch [414], **DG9**, Phase 3
- 17 Fine black ware bowl decorated with impressed concentric circles. Fabric BWF. Ditch [414], **DG9**, Phase 3
- 18 Flanged rim bowl. Fabric BW1. Ditch [408], **DG9**, Phase 3
- 19 Necked bowl. Fabric LNV CC. Brown colour-coat. Ditch [100], **DG13**, Phase 4
- 20 Small dish with brown colour-coated surfaces. Fabric LNV CC. Ditch [100], **DG13**, Phase 4
- 21 Wall-sided mortarium. Fabric LNV WH. Ditch [100], **DG13**, Phase 4
- 22 Flanged bowl with a brown colour-coated surface. Fabric LNV CC. Ditch [100], **DG 13**, Phase 4
- 23 Small straight-sided beaker with impressed combed and incised line decoration. Fine, black, micaceous ware. Fabric BWF. Ditch [191], **DG15**, Phase 4
- 24 White ware flask. Fabric LNV WH. Ditch [433], **DG16**, Phase 4
- 25 Large greyware bowl with beaded rim. Fabric LNV RE. Ditch [156], **DG17**, Phase 4
- 26 Small jar or beaker with a sharply everted rim. Well-fired ware with a metallic dark brown glaze. Fabric: GLAZE. Ditch [156], **DG17**, Phase 4
- 27 Bowl with a ridged upper wall. Marked with three incised lines on the rim made after firing. Fabric LNV RE. Ditch [156], **DG17**, Phase 4
- 28 Small carinated bowl in an oxidised sandy ware with fine white specks. Fabric OXID. Ditch [534], **DG19**, Phase 4
- 29 Beaker with a brown colour-coated surface. Fabric LNV CC. Pit [265], **PG2**, Phase 4
- 30 Small jar with a bifid rim and ridged upper body. Fabric LNV WH. Pit [265], **PG2**, Phase 4
- 31 Lid seated jar, white grogged ware with black exterior. Fabric GR2. Pit [265], **PG2**, Phase 4
- 32 Flanged rim mortarium. Fabric LNV WH. Worn interior surface. Pit [265], **PG2**, Phase 4
- 33 Wall-sided mortarium. Fabric LNV WH. Pit [265], **PG2**, Phase 4.

(Fig 18)

- 34 Grey ware bowl. Fabric LNV RE. Pit [265], **PG2**, Phase 4  
 35 Wheelmade, necked jar with slightly thickened rim. Fabric SHELL. Pit [265], **PG2**, Phase 4  
 36 Large necked jar with rolled rim. Dark grey rim and neck, red-brown body. Fabric SHELL. Pit [102], Phase 5  
 37 Necked bowl with a brown colour-coated surface. Fabric LNV CC. Pit [102], Phase 5.  
 38 Necked jar. Fabric LNV RE. Pit [102], Phase 5  
 39 Dish with a worn red colour-coated surface. Fabric LNV CC. Pit [102], Phase 5.  
 40 Grey ware wide-mouthed jar. Fabric LNV RE. Pit [102], Phase 5  
 41 Complete red-brown colour-coated jar. Thrown on a fast wheel with finely spaced throwing lines. Fabric LNV CC. Well [515] context 645, Phase 5  
 42 Small jar with sooting on the upper body. Fabric SHELL. Well [515] context 645, Phase 5  
 43 Almost complete handled flagon with finely executed white barbotine decoration. Brown colour-coat. Fabric LNV CC. Well [515] context 645, Phase 5  
 44 Flanged brown colour-coated bowl, burnt. Fabric LNV CC. Well [515] context 645, Phase 5  
 45 Grey ware dish with impressed rosette decoration. Fabric GW5. Furrow [545], Phase 7

### 3.3 The Roman finds

by Tora Hylton, Donald Mackreth and Ian Meadows

#### *Introduction*

In total 117 individual or group recorded small finds were recovered from Roman deposits (Table 4). Small groups of finds were recovered from deposits pre-dating the mid-late 3<sup>rd</sup> century (Phases 3-4), while the majority were from enclosure ditches dating from the mid-3<sup>rd</sup> century through to the 4<sup>th</sup> century (Phase 5). Some residual finds were recovered from deposits post-dating the Roman period, and a small number were recovered during the trial trench evaluation (Masters 1998).

*Table 4: Roman finds by material type*

<i>Material</i>	<i>Total</i>
Silver	1
Copper alloy	39
Iron objects	61
Lead	2
Stone	7
Bone/antler	4
Glass	3
<b>Total</b>	117

The assemblage comprises a small range of domestic related artefacts, together with a quantity of structural debris. The presence of personal items of jewellery and brooches reflects the proximity of occupation, but the absence of any tools and the small number of structural fittings perhaps suggests that the principal occupation focus did not lie within the excavated area. The small amount of lead and the occurrence of only short nails prompt a similar suggestion. The tile, although derived from a structure, was not related to any suggested structure in the excavation area and may even have been imported to the site as hardcore. There are a large number of coins and, as is typical of coin finds on rural sites, the assemblage is biased to the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries when small bronze coins were lost in large numbers.

Each object has been described and measured and a descriptive catalogue is retained in archive. Bulk finds include fired clay, tile and slag, which have been recorded under the bulk-finds system. The majority of artefacts were recovered by hand, but the use of a metal detector at regular intervals during the excavation increased the recovery of metal objects. A total of 41 iron objects were submitted for X-ray, which was undertaken by David Parish of the Buckinghamshire County Museum Conservation Service. This provided a permanent record, enabled identification and revealed details not previously visible.

The finds are published as individual types within functional categories. Only small groups and the miscellaneous and unidentified objects have been considered by material type. The categories are tabulated below and quantified by phase (Table 5).

*Table 5: Roman finds by functional category*

<b>Functional category</b>	<b>Phase</b>		
	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Personal Possessions</b>			
Costume and jewellery	4	3	9
Personal equipment			1
<b>Equipment and furnishings</b>			
General ironwork			2
Nails	5	19	20
Worked stone			1
Household equipment		1 (glass)	2 (glass)
Querns	1		4
Knives	1	1	1
Hones/sharpeners			1
<b>Coins</b>			21
Copper alloy			4
Iron	2	3	9
Lead			2
Stone	1		
Bone		1	
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>77</b>

*Personal Possessions*

A small number of items of jewellery were recovered from the site. These include eight Roman brooches, one silver finger ring and seven pins (four manufactured from copper alloy and three from bone), together with a fragment of a bracelet and a looped fitting.

**The Brooches** by Donald Mackreth

Eight brooches were recovered from the site (Fig 19, 1-8), of which five were found in stratified Roman deposits, one from Phase 3 (**DG9**), one from Phase 4 (**DG14**) and three from Phase 5 (**DG 26** and **DG27**).

## Colchester Derivatives

- 1 A rearward-facing hook behind the head of the bow held the chord of a separately made spring. Each wing has or had two wide flutes and there is a bead-row next to the bow. This is long with three flutes, the four ridges so formed have cross-cuts down them. Recent discussion indicates that Rearhooks, no matter what the design of the bow may be have a date range of *c* 40-60/65 AD (Jackson and Potter 1996, 300).  
SF9, Ditch [61], Phase 7
- 2 The wire pin had been wound round the axis bar inserted in a slot cast behind the wings. Each of these is plain, apart from a small moulding at the end. The upper bow has a ridge above an elongated triangular boss whose pointed end touches another cross-ridge about half way down the bow. Beneath this is a fantail foot with a ridge across the bottom under two dot-and-circle motifs. Mainly found in the Nene Valley and in the lands around the head waters, there is a variety of designs based on a limited repertoire (Jackson and Potter 1996, 301, fig 9, 10). The date-range is late 1<sup>st</sup> - later 2<sup>nd</sup> century (ibid).  
SF14, Ditch [120], **DG 27**, Phase 5
- 3 The hinged pin of the normal kind had been inserted in a cast slot as in Brooch 2. Each wing has a minor moulding at its end. Only the very top of the bow survives and has a rounded front between ridges. Possibly related to brooch 2, but not necessarily running so late.  
SF100, topsoil, Phase 7

## Headstud

- 4 The axis bar of the hinged pin is housed in a half cylinder running along the back of the wings, each of which has a ridge next to the bow and the end. Between these is a vertical line of three lozenge cells once enamelled. The damaged stud has a deep conical hollow for a missing setting. A ridge above the stud lies on the axis of the bow. The bow below the stud has a groove on each side with, down the middle, a line of lozenge cells filled with a pale blue, opaque enamel. The foot has two cross-mouldings above a flute and ends in a conical setting for enamel now missing. (cf Esmonde Cleary and Ferris 1996, 132, fig 46,4). This type is found mainly on the east side of Britain between the Thames Estuary and middle Yorkshire, they hardly ever occur in the West or North. The dating is markedly later 1<sup>st</sup> century into the earlier 2<sup>nd</sup> century.  
SF61, Ditch [284], **DG4**, Phase 3

## Late La Tène

- 5 The four-coil-internal-chord spring is missing. The section of the bow is circular and there is a slight foot-knob. The chief feature is the fairly sharp right-angled bend in the profile of the bow. The one type which can be described as being military, German Limes and dating there points to late 1<sup>st</sup> century plus (e.g. Böhme 1972, 13, Typ 14, Tafln. 3-4, 49-310).  
SF5, Ditch [587], **DG27**, Phase 5

### Aucissa Series

Earlier than the standard named type, it is still likely to have arrived after the conquest and to have passed out of use by 55/60 AD. The heads of both brooches are rolled over to house the axis bar of their hinged pins.

- 6 Damaged with much of the original surface missing, the bow section has a buried ridge down the centre of a rounded front and a ridge on each edge. The head-plate seems to have had a cross-ridge top and bottom and there is a pair of eyes in the form of pits between. The foot-knob is the usual two-part separately made form. SF23, Ditch [69], **DG16**, Phase 4
- 7 The head-plate seems to have had a flute between the two cross-ridges. The bow has a central flute and there are traces of a chevron in relief in the smaller flute on each side. The foot-knob is damaged, but may have been much more like a bead than of the usual form like that in Brooch 6. Deriving from a type running parallel with the later stages of the Aucissa series, it is repeated in a family of Hod Hills. The date is probably 35/40 to 55/65 AD. SF106, Ditch [160], **DG26**, Phase 5
- 8 The pin is hinged. Originally shaped like a crescent, the central circular recess, with a central hole and an annular ridge round that, survives in part. Each point would have ended in a bifurcated terminal each part ending in a circle. There is a projecting subcircular boss on the outside about halfway between the recess and the missing terminal. (cf Hattatt 1982, 148, fig 63, 141). A member of a well-established family whose chief features are the bifurcated terminals and the sunken circle, the date-range is from the conquest at least to about 60/65 AD. SF11, furrow, Phase 7

### Finger ring

A silver finger ring came from the northern boundary of enclosure **E4 (DG 17)**. The ring is penannular and terminates in stylised snakes head terminals, the hood of the snake/cobra is emphasised by a marginally placed stamped motif (Fig 19, 9). Snakes and serpents are a symbol of health and healing, rebirth and the spirits departed (Johns 1998/2000, 7 and Johns 1996).

- 9 Finger ring, silver. Complete but broken. Diameter 23mm, height 2-5mm, SF19, context 657, **DG17** Phase 4

### Pins

There are four metal pins from Phases 3 and 5. Three of these conform to types identified by Hilary Cool (1990), Types 1, 8 and 11. The Type 11 pin was retrieved from an early-late 2<sup>nd</sup> century ditch (**DG5**) (Fig 20, 10). Types 1 and 8 were found in a mid-late 3<sup>rd</sup> century ditches (**DG 26, 27**). Type 1 has a knob head and, like Cools sub-group E, the shank expands part of the way down (Fig 20, 11). Hairpins of this type have a wide distribution, although they appear to be concentrated in the East Anglian region (ibid 1990, 151). The Type 8 example is incomplete with part of the head and the tip of the stem missing, it has a multiple hemisphere and cordoned head. Type 1 was common from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century onwards whilst the other two types seem to be in use predominantly in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century.

A copper alloy pin recovered in the evaluation is distinctive, the head terminates in a perforated disc finial (incomplete) above a curved unit of oval outline (Fig 20, 12). It displays similarities to Cools Type 9, referred to as a triple unit standard head (Cool 1990, fig 6, 6-7), although it does not have the cross-hatched cylindrical drum below. The only dated example is from the Walbrook deposit, London and this suggests that pins of this type were in use by 125 AD (ibid 160).

Fragments from three bone pins were found. Two fragments of circular sectioned shaft, measuring 39mm and 69mm respectively, came from Phase 3 (**DG9**) and a fragment of shaft with head attached, measuring 36mm, came from Phase 5. The pin resembles a Crummy Type 3 pin with a slightly mushroom shaped bead head, which are predominantly later Roman in Colchester (Crummy 1983, 22).

- 10 Pin, copper alloy. Cool Type 11. Incomplete, end of shank missing and heavily corroded. Head comprises angular block decorated with a single diagonal cross on each face surmounted by a terminal knob with incised decoration. Length 80mm. SF118, **DG5**, Phase 3
- 11 Pin, copper alloy. Cool Type 1. Complete. Flattened spherical head, circular sectioned shank expanding towards the centre and then tapering. Length 96mm, SF16, **DG26**, Phase 5
- 12 Pin, copper alloy. Incomplete, part of head missing. Circular sectioned shaft (damaged) tapered to a point. Shaft terminates in a double curved unit surmounted by a crescent-shaped finial (most probably incomplete). Length 95mm, SF2, Evaluation Trench 9

### **Jewellery**

A fragment from a copper alloy bangle came from Phase 5 (**DG26**). It comprises a circular sectioned rod, twisted in a clockwise direction. It is similar to a complete example recovered from a 4<sup>th</sup> century context in Colchester (Crummy 1983, 38-9 no 1602).

A copper alloy wire object, recovered from a Phase 4 ditch (**DG16**), comprises a small loop, formed by bending the wire back and tightly winding it around the other side below a now bent hook. It was probably part of an earring that would have supported a pendant or glass bead on the loop. It is a Type 17 (Allason-Jones 1989) and is similar to an example from Wroxeter (ibid no 550).

### **Toiletry implements**

Two ligulae, both bent and incomplete, and a short fragment of a shaft surmounted by an elongated tapering narrow drum were the only cosmetic/medical type objects recovered. One of the ligulae was unstratified, the other was within **SG2** Phase 5.

### ***Building equipment***

#### **Fittings**

Few objects reflect the nature of structures that would have been in existence. Pieces of architectural ironwork include a split spike loop and a hinge pivot, the latter is paralleled by an example from Gadebridge Park Roman villa (Neal 1974, fig 75, No's 525-8), both are small enough to have been part of a shutters suspension. These pieces came from Phase 5 (**DG 26, 28**).

#### **Nails**

Forty-four nails were recorded, they include three hobnails presumably from footwear. Five came from Phase 3, 19 from Phase 4 and 20 from Phase 5. The majority of the identifiable nail types were Manning types 1A and B (Manning 1985, 134ff), they ranged in recorded length from 16-70mm, but the majority clustered between 40-55mm. The nails were presumably used in furniture or light structural fixings but the generally short length would preclude their use fixing major timbers, which would probably have been held, by means of pegging and carpentry joints. There are a further 10 fragments of rod with a square section which could have been fragments of structural nails or hold fasts for box tiles or even fragments of joiners dogs.

#### **Tile**

There are 148 pieces of ceramic tile, weighing 20.6kg. The assemblage comprises fragments of roof tile (tegulae, imbreces), box tiles and indeterminate fragments; there are no complete examples. Tile fragments came from Phases 3, 4 and 5. Phase 4 (66 fragments) and Phase 5 (74 fragments) produced the greatest quantity. Within Phase 4, the largest amounts derived from the trackway ditches (**DG10**) and an internal sub-division within Enclosure 3 (**DG16**), while within Phase 5 Enclosure 6 (**DG 26 and 27**) produced the greatest quantity. Almost half the material from Phases 4 and 5 comprised undiagnostic fragments. Tegula made up about a quarter of both assemblages with box tile making up a sixth.

The tiles were mostly of a sandy orange fabric that was presumably locally produced although no tile kilns are known in the immediate area. It is unfortunate that the lack of complete examples prevents the recognition of 'makers marks', which could be compared to other contemporary sites in the vicinity.

The presence of the tile in late Roman contexts is possibly a reflection of the demolition of a structure in the vicinity, tile is generally removed and re-used as was shown by the paucity of the material from the nearby small Roman town at Ashton (unpublished). No substantial structure that would have had a tiled roof or need for box tiles was identified during the excavation, but one may lie just beyond the excavation area.

### *Household equipment*

There is a small collection of artefacts that may have been for domestic use. These include a copper alloy fitting, a fragment of a spoon handle, a copper alloy spoon bowl, a bone handle, fragments of vessel glass and querns (Fig 20, 13-15).

A copper alloy fitting, probably a furniture fitting, comprises a cast hollow cube surmounted by a solid sphere (Fig 20,13). Two stylised feet rest on the sphere, but the remainder has been lost. There is a tinned spoon handle with a twisted stem and a pear-shaped spoon-bowl (Fig 20, 14). The spoon-bowl resembles Crummys Type 2 (1979, fig 73, 2014) which date from the first half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century.

A single lathe turned handle fragment came from Phase 4 (**DG17**). It was originally 70mm long and about 30mm diameter at each end, but one end had been deeply incised creating a bead end from which the grip of the handle slowly flared out again (Fig 20, 15). The surface of the bead bears three incised lines whilst the grip has a further three.

There are three sherds of glass. They include two pieces in the characteristic transparent blue glass, a probable fragment of a square mould blown bottle from Phase 4 (**DG24**) and a small fragment of possible window glass from Phase 5 (**DG28**). That so few glass fragments were recovered is not unusual on rural sites of this nature.

There are four fragments from rotary querns, all from Phase 5. Two are fragments of lava quern whilst the other two are from an upper and a lower stone of Millstone Grit, 0.5-0.6m in diameter.

- 13      Fitting, copper alloy. Base cube is 20mm long by 15mm high; in two faces a perforation was present which presumably contained the remains of a copper alloy rivet that had fixed this piece onto an organic material such as wood. SF12, **DG27**, Phase 5
- 14      Spoon, copper alloy. Incomplete, no handle, pear-shaped bowl only. Broken at point where handle joins bowl. Measurements: 24 x 40mm. Metal detector find, Evaluation Trench 3
- 15      Handle, bone. SF56, context 155, **DG17** Phase 4,

### *Tools*

There are three knives and one whetstone. The earliest knife is from **DG9** (Phase 3), but only the tip of the blade survives, although this small fragment appears to be furnished with a double blade, suggesting that it may be a fragment of a dagger. The other two knives were found in Phase 4 (**DG17**) and Phase 5 (**SG2**) deposits. Both have tangs which are in line with the back of the blade, Manning (1985, 108ff) Types 11 (Fig 21, 16) and 12b (Fig 21, 17).

The single whetstone is a fragment of fine-grained sandstone, from a Phase 5 deposit.



- 16 Knife, iron. Complete, back of blade inline with tang and is straight. The edge steps down from the tang; cutting edge straight but rises to tip. Blade length 111mm, width 25mm, thickness 3mm; Tang length 72mm. SF36, **DG17**, Phase 4
- 17 Knife, iron. Incomplete, part of tang missing. Blade is broad in comparison to its length. The back of the blade is inline with the tang and slopes to the tip. The edge of the blade steps down from the tang and the cutting edge is straight but raising slightly to the tip. Blade length 66mm, width 27mm, thickness 3mm; Tang length (incomplete) 15mm. SF26, **SG2**, Phase 5

### Coins

Thirty-one coins were found by excavation, trial trenching and metal detection. Of these 21 were stratified within Roman deposits, mainly from enclosures **E6** (10 coins) and **E7** (7 coins) of Phase 5, and one was residual within the fill of a Saxon grave. With the exception of a mid-2<sup>nd</sup> century coin of Antoninus Pius (138-61AD) from **E7**, the assemblage dates from the mid-3<sup>rd</sup> to mid-4<sup>th</sup> centuries, with the latest coin attributed to Valens (364-78), the period copper alloy coin finds typically peak on many rural sites.

Table 6 Catalogue of Roman Coins

Phase	Identification	Date	Context description	
5	Claudius II Gothicus	268-270 AD	Enclosure 6: DG26	
	Theodora,	337-340 AD		
	Barbarous radiate	mid 4 <sup>th</sup> century		
	Barbarous radiate	mid 4 <sup>th</sup> century		
	5	Philip I	244-249 AD	Enclosure 6: DG27
		Tetricus I	270-273 AD	
		Tetricus II	270-273 AD	
		Constantine I	330-346 AD	
		Illegible – minim	3 <sup>rd</sup> /4 <sup>th</sup> century	
		Illegible	late 3 <sup>rd</sup> -mid 4 <sup>th</sup> century	
5		Antonius Pius (sesterius)	138-161 AD	Enclosure 7: DG28
		Tetricus I	270-273 AD	
		Constans (pre-reform issue)	337-348 AD	
		Valens	364-378 AD	
	Illegible	late 3 <sup>rd</sup> century		
	Illegible	late 3 <sup>rd</sup> century		
	Illegible (barbarous radiate)	late 3 <sup>rd</sup> century		
	Illegible (Ae 4 module)	mid 4 <sup>th</sup> century	SG2 demolition deposit	
	Illegible	early-mid 4 <sup>th</sup> century	SG5: Posthole (476)	
	5	Claudius II Gothicus	268-270 AD	Stone Spread (151)
Illegible		late 3 <sup>rd</sup> /4 <sup>th</sup> century	Pit (434)	
6	Barbarous radiate	late 3 <sup>rd</sup> century	Anglo-Saxon burial 2	

<i>Phase</i>	<i>Identification</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Context description</i>
7	Allectus	293-296 AD	medieval ploughing
	Constantine I (comm)	330-346 AD	
	Barbarius radiate	mid 4 <sup>th</sup> century	
	Commodus (radiate head)	177-192 AD	natural horizon
	Constantine I	307-337 AD	
	Carausius	287-293 AD	topsoil
	Illegible:Barbarous radiate	late 3 <sup>rd</sup> century	Subsoil
Evaluation 1998	Claudius I	c.270	Trench 3
	Crispus	317-326 AD	Trench 9/12

### ***Lead***

Only two pieces of lead were recovered from Roman contexts. A piece of folded thin lead sheet and part of a substantial lead weight (weighing 2600g but incomplete) which originally had an iron suspension ring extending from a pyramidal top. A large weight such as this would have functioned on a steelyard for weighing heavy items. A possible, but lighter, parallel is a weight from Porchester Castle (Webster 1975 in Cunliffe).

The paucity of lead fragments on the site is surprising as it was such an important material in building and usually evidence for its recovery by re-melting following its stripping from an abandoned site is found. Its near complete absence here perhaps denotes that only timber structures stood on the site.

### ***Waterlogged wood***

Waterlogged wood was recovered from the stone-lined well [515] (Fig 10, Fig 13, Section 9). The majority was roundwood, largely unworked although tool marks were observed on a number of the pieces. There is part of a single manufactured object comprising three fragments of square-sectioned oak, bored laterally with five dowel holes, 3-4mm in diameter and irregularly spaced at 20 to 35mm intervals (Fig 21, 18). The holes still retained vestiges of the dowels, which were manufactured from blackthorn and hazel. A similar beam, also of oak, came from a well at Dalton Parlours, Yorkshire (Morris 1990, no 87), and a further example from a well in Rothwell Haigh (unpub). It was suggested that the piece from Yorkshire was part of the mechanics or structure of the well, and the presence of similar pieces in two further wells lends support, although its exact function is unknown.

- 18      Worked wood, oak, Length 205mm, width 48-26mm, sample 46, Well [515] context 645, Phase 5

### 3.4 **The Anglo-Saxon grave goods** by Tora Hylton, Ian Meadows and Paul Blinkhorn

The small inhumation cemetery contained nine burials in a group, five females, three males and one indeterminate, and an isolated female, buried prone and not accompanied by any grave goods, lay some distance to the south (Figs 14 and 15). It is possible that the group may represent the members of a small family interred over a period of about 100 years, between the mid-6<sup>th</sup> and mid-7<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The northernmost burials were furnished with the greatest number and range of artefacts (Burials 3, 7 and 8), and two of these (3 and 8) were also accompanied by pottery vessels placed near the head, which may have contained food and drink offerings (Lucy 2000, 51). The others generally possessed only a knife.

#### ***The pottery vessels*** by Paul Blinkhorn

The vessels accompanying Burials 3 and 8 are an interesting addition to the small corpus of Anglo-Saxon pottery from the Oundle area. The fabrics are typical of those of other handmade Anglo-Saxon pottery noted at sites in the town, such as Stoke Doyle Road (Pearson 1994a), Black Pot Lane (Pearson 1994b) and St. Peter's Church and churchyard (Blinkhorn 1994; Pearson 1994c).

Applying a chronology to the vessels on form alone is somewhat difficult. The vessels with Burial 3 (Fig 22, 3 & 4) cannot be dated other than to within the early Anglo-Saxon period, i.e. the 5<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> centuries. They are unlikely to date to later than that time, due to the end of the practice of furnishing graves (other than those of the highest status) during the early 7<sup>th</sup> century. This conclusion is broadly confirmed by the radiocarbon dates, which indicate that the cemetery was in use between the mid-6<sup>th</sup> and mid-7<sup>th</sup> century.

The decorated vessel with Burial 8 (Fig 25, 21) is worthy of some consideration. Decorated handmade pottery is again largely 5<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> century in date, with plain horizontal linear schemes said by Myres (1977, 17-18) to be amongst the earliest Anglo-Saxon pottery known from England. However, this vessel, with concentric cordons on at least the lower body, has no exact parallels in the Myres Corpus, and it is not impossible that the missing upper body had stamping or other forms of decoration, which would mark it out as later.

#### ***Other grave goods*** by Tora Hylton and Ian Meadows

In contrast to the richly endowed graves of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries, this small group appears to be poor in terms of the artefacts accompanying the buried individuals. The paucity of grave goods, together with the type and range of artefacts is consistent with 7<sup>th</sup> century burial practises. This is supported by the presence of a knife (Fig 23, 11) and annular brooch (Fig 23, 5), both stylistically dating to the 7<sup>th</sup> century, although the radiocarbon dates provide a range from the mid-6<sup>th</sup> to mid-7<sup>th</sup> centuries. However, in general, the evidence does indicate that this small cemetery conforms to what Leeds (1936) called "final phase" cemeteries. Features of this type of cemetery have been outlined by Hyslop (1963) and Geake (1992, 84). Hyslop provides a list of characteristics and those noted at the Oundle cemetery include the lack of 5<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> century burials, the high proportion of graves containing just a knife and the presence of a single annular brooch and a pendant.

The grave goods are items that would have been worn as part of everyday dress (brooches, a pendant, beads and a mount) and personal equipment (knives and combs). Burial 3 produced a single annular brooch, located near to the right shoulder, and this appears to reflect the stylistic changes that took place in dress fashion during the late 6<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> centuries (Lucy 2000, 25). Prior to that, two brooches were worn, one on each shoulder. The brooch is distinctive, furnished as it is with stylised back-to-back birds' heads (Fig 23, 5). Leslie Webster (British Museum) has dated this piece to the 7<sup>th</sup> century (pers comm). It displays similar zoomorphic traits to an example from Faversham, Kent (Speake 1980, fig 11, n). The Oundle brooch was found together with a smaller, plain, copper alloy

ring (Fig 23,6), and ferrous corrosion deposits on the latter, probably from the pin on the brooch, suggest that the ring may have been used in conjunction with the brooch.

A brooch/buckle was also found at the left hip (Fig 23, 8), together with eight other items lying together in a group, suggesting that they had either been retained within a bag or pouch, or that it had been suspended from the waist as part of a chatelaine. The brooch is incomplete, but it may have been a penannular brooch with coiled terminals. Similar examples have been recovered from Sewerby, East Yorkshire (Hirst 1985, Grave 17, 2 and 3). The other items include a bar mount/belt stiffener (Fig 23, 9), a knife (Fig 23, 11), links from a chain (Fig 23, 12), three beads (Figs 23, 13-15) and a pear-shaped pendant, manufactured from the burr end of an antler and decorated with ring-and-dot motifs (Fig 23,16 and Plate 7). The latter is of particular interest because such pendants are often associated with female burials, and it is thought that they served as protective amulets. Other examples are known from Polhill (Philip 1973, fig 53, 490) and Spong Hill (Hills 1977). Two examples from Burwell, Cambridgeshire (Lethbridge 1931) were associated with chatelaines (see MacGregor 1981, 108). A similar example has also been recovered from an Anglo-Saxon burial close to Wootton Fields Roman Villa, Northampton (Plate 7) (Chapman and Thorne forthcoming), and this burial has also been radiocarbon dated to the first half of the 7<sup>th</sup> century (600-670 cal AD, 68% confidence, 1403+/-48BP, Wk-11232)

Knives are the most common objects in Saxon graves, and seven of the graves at Oundle contained knives (Burials 2-5 and 7-9), but it is difficult to determine and compare forms as they are in very poor condition. One knife is furnished with an incised groove just below the back of the blade; a feature noted on knives from Buckland Cemetery, Dover (Evison 1987, 114) and Portway, Andover (Cook and Dacre 1985, fig 58) and generally found on knives of 7th century date (ibid 1985, 93).

The positioning of the knives indicates that on females it was usually worn at the waist, either on the left or the right side. The knife with Burial 3 lay near the left hip together with a number of other objects, suggesting that it may have originally been in a bag/pouch. Two male burials had knives lying the left side of the body and in close proximity to the arm (Burials 2 and 7). This suggests that they had either been placed in the grave, like Grave 17 at Portway, Andover (Cook and Dacre 1985) or that the knife had been attached to the left forearm, as with burials from Buckland, Dover (Evison 1987,115).

Two combs were recovered, one adjacent to the left shoulder of a female (Burial 3, Fig 23, 7) and the other close to the left hip of a male burial (Burial 7, Fig 25, 20). The combs are both elongated, double-sided composite combs, 120mm and 180mm long, decorated with simple incised motifs on the connecting-plates (Galloway 1990, 669). The most complete example comprises four individual tooth-segments and two end-segments, held in place by two connecting-plates and secured by iron rivets placed centrally through the tooth-plates and end-plates. The connecting plates have D-shaped sections and taper slightly towards each terminal, both also have regular incisions along the edges created in the cutting of the teeth on the fully assembled blanks.

### *Catalogue of burials and finds*

#### **Burial 1** (Fig 22)

This burial was separate from the main group. A female, aged between 35 and 45 years, lying west-east and prone, with the head turned to the left and the lower legs bent to the right. There were no grave goods.

#### **Burial 2** (Fig 22)

A male, aged between 30 and 40 years old, lying west-east, with the body on its left side. A knife lay close to the left arm (Fig 22, 1). A coin, a late third century barbarous radiate, lay to the right of the right shoulder (Fig 22, 2). It was severely corroded around the edges although it is probable that one of the irregular indentations is the surviving part of a perforation (not illustrated).

- 1 Knife, iron. Incomplete, end of tang and tip of blade missing. Tang central to blade with sloping shoulder, back of blade and cutting edge parallel. One side of the blade is ornamented with a single groove set just below the back of the knife. Mineral preserved organic remains survive on tang, probably remains of handle. Blade length (incomplete) 133mm, width 21mm, thickness 4mm. SF2.

**Burial 3** (Figs 22 and 23)

A female, aged between 20 and 25 years of age (Plate 8). The body was supine and extended, aligned south-east to north-west, with the right arm and leg bent outwards. Two pottery vessels lay just to the south of the head. They had been damaged, probably by ploughing. Other grave goods comprised a copper alloy brooch and ring (5 & 6) near the right shoulder and a comb lying close to the left shoulder (7). At the left hip there was a small group of associated items comprising a copper alloy brooch/buckle (8), a bar mount/belt stiffener and copper alloy rivet (9 & 10), a knife (11), together with links from a chain (12), three beads (13-15) and an antler amulet (16). Although it is difficult to ascertain the relationship between the objects, it is possible that the brooch/buckle, belt stiffener and rivet may have been part of a belt fitting, while the knife, beads and amulet may have been within a bag or pouch.

- 3 Pottery vessel. Rounded body, flat base, upright and slightly everted rim. Fabric mainly black, although light brown areas on outer body below shoulder. Outer surface "wet-hand" finished and unburnished. Inclusions sparse to moderate oolitic limestone, up to 2mm. Rim diameter 130mm (32% complete). SF32, adjacent to head
- 4 Pottery vessel. Rounded body, flat base, rim missing. Uniform black fabric. "wet-hand" finished surfaces. Inclusions sparse to moderate sub-angular quartz up to 1mm, sparse shelly limestone fragments up to 2mm, SF32, adjacent to head
- 5 Brooch, copper alloy. Cast annular brooch, zoomorphic, with stylized back-to-back birds heads with long beaks, slightly open; a dimple denotes the eye. D-shaped section and waisted at the point where the pin (now missing) would have been attached; patches of corrosion indicate that the pin was of iron. The terminal of the pin would have rested where the heads meet. The brooch is also ornamented with groups of transverse lines. External diameter 24mm, internal diameter 18mm, height 2mm. SF34, adjacent to right shoulder
- 6 Ring/brooch, copper alloy. Cast ring with circular section. Plain, small patch of iron corrosion possibly from pin on brooch. External diameter 18mm, internal diameter 12mm, height 2mm. SF34, adjacent to right shoulder
- 7 Comb, bone/antler. Double-sided composite bone comb. Two end-segments with squared terminals, four tooth-segments, numerous loose teeth and a single surviving connecting plate. There are 5 teeth per centimetre on either side of the comb, they appear to be slightly worn and measure up to 14mm in length. The end-segment shows graduation of the teeth, a universal characteristic in composite combs. The comb would have been secured by 7 iron rivets (two extant), and as the tooth segments are different sizes the rivets are not equidistant. The connecting plate is ornamented with a marginal incised line and transverse grooves. Length 180mm, width 40mm. SF33, left shoulder
- 8 Brooch/buckle copper alloy. Fragments of a penannular brooch, 20mm diameter, with circular section, 1.5mm diameter. Coiled terminals, up to 3mm across, formed by the rolling back the flattened ends. Pin still attached, 17m long, circular section and terminal folded around the ring. SF35, left hip
- 9 Mount, copper alloy. D-sectioned bar mount with terminal lobes pierced by rivets, one with rove still attached. The surface is decorated with shallow incised grooves. Width 23mm, length 3mm. SF35, left hip
- 10 Rivet, copper alloy. Circular section with domed head. Length 12mm, diameter of head 4mm. SF35, left hip
- 11 Knife, iron. Incomplete, part of tang and tip of blade missing. Back of blade in line with tang and slightly curves to tip. Cutting edge straight. Blade length c 75mm, width 12mm, thickness 3mm. SF105, left hip

- 12 S-shaped link and loop, iron. Formed from circular sectioned rod, the link passes through the loop. May be part of belt arrangement. Loop length 23mm, width 10mm. SF105, left hip
- 13 Bead, rhyconellid fossil shell, elements of a copper alloy ring survive in the perforation. Fossils do occur in grave contexts, probably because of their unusual appearance (an echinoid was found in the hand of burial 48 at Westgarth Gardens, Suffolk (West 1988, 32 & 55). SF104, left hip
- 14 Bead, glass, annular and manufactured from opaque greenish blue glass, Diameter 17mm, hole 7mm, thickness 5mm. SF177, left hip
- 15 Bead, glass, sub-spherical polychrome bead. Yellow onto which a wave motif of criss-crossing lines of red and green had been marvered. A similar sized bead but with a different colour combination occurred in grave 23 at Portway (Cook & Dacre 1985, 29 fig 28). Diameter 15 mm, hole 4mm, height 12mm. SF178, left hip
- 16 Pendant/amulet, antler. Tear-shaped with large central perforation and perforated for suspension (now broken). Rings of closely spaced ring-and-dot motifs run around the outer edge and the central perforation and seven pairs of ring-and-dot motifs link the main rings, although one face is worn. (Plate 7). Length 62mm, width 46mm, thickness 4mm. SF176, left hip

**Burial 4** (Fig 24)

Possible female, aged between 35 and 45 years, lying south-north, supine and extended. An iron knife lay on the right, above the waist.

- 17 Knife, iron. Incomplete, tip of blade and end of tang missing. Back of blade and tang in line and cutting edge parallel. Blade length (incomplete) 60mm, width 9mm, thickness 3mm. SF37

**Burial 5** (Fig 24)

A female, aged between 40 and 50 years, aligned south-north, supine and extended. A knife lay on the right side, close to the pelvis.

- 18 Knife, iron. Incomplete, tip of blade and end of tang missing. Stepped shoulder, back of blade and cutting edge parallel. Blade length (incomplete) 60mm, width 13mm, thickness 3mm, tang length (incomplete) 20mm. SF38

**Burial 6** (Fig 24)

A female, aged between 23 and 28 years, aligned west-east, lying on right side with the legs flexed and hands resting on the knees. No grave goods.

**Burial 7** (Fig 25)

A male, aged between 35 and 45 years, aligned south- north, lying on the left side with the legs flexed, and the left arm extended towards the knees. A knife lay on the left hand side hand and a comb was by the left hip.

- 19 Knife, iron. Small blade comprising three-non joining pieces (tip, central part of blade and tang). Tang central to blade, sloping shoulder. Blade width 13mm, thickness 3mm. SF73
- 20 Comb, bone/antler. Incomplete, double-sided composite comb, only connecting plates and small fragments of the tooth segments and broken teeth survive. The connecting plates are D-sectioned, tapering towards the terminals. The connecting plates are ornamented with an incised linear motif of transverse grooves and crosses. Side plate length 120mm, width 13mm. SF59

**Burial 8** (Fig 25)

A female, aged between 20 and 25 years, aligned south-north, supine and extended. Grave goods comprise a decorated pottery jar (21), an iron knife at the waist (22), a large bead at the neck (23), two iron objects

adjacent to the right arm (Fig 25, 24 & 25) comprised a fragment possibly from the blade of a small knife (not illustrated) and a binding strip folded along one edge (not illustrated).

- 21 Pottery vessel, base of jar. Very dark grey fabric with darker patches on the smoothed outer surface. Decorated with incised concentric cordons. Moderate to dense calcite-cemented sandstone up to 2mm, many free sub-angular quartz grains with cement adhering.
- 22 Knife, iron. Tang central to blade sloping shoulder, back of blade and cutting edge parallel and taper to tip. Blade length 73mm, width 14mm, thickness 3mm, tang length 34mm. SF74, waist - left side
- 23 Bead, glass. Large, dark green glass bead with marvered white lines representing the most extreme form of the melon bead with only five ribs. A similar sized example was found in grave 25 at Portway (Cook & Dacre 1985, 30 fig 50). This type of bead has a long life from pre-Roman to Viking times (Guido 1978, 100) SF75, collar bone/neck area

**Burial 9** (Fig 26)

An adult of unknown sex, apparently aligned south-north. An iron knife on the right side (Fig 26, 26) comprised only a fragment of blade heavily encrusted in corrosion (not illustrated).

**Burial 10** (Fig 26)

A possible male, aligned south-north. No grave goods.

**3.5 The radiocarbon dates**

Radiocarbon dates were obtained from three of the Anglo-Saxon burials. Two of these were from the main cemetery (Burials 3 and 8) and the other was from the isolated burial (Burial 1).

*Table 7: Radiocarbon determination*

Lab no's/ burial	Sample details	d13C d15N	Conventional radiocarbon age BP	Cal AD 68% confidence 95% confidence
Wk-11237 Burial 1	Bone collagen	-20.34 11.00	1467+/-48	545-645 430-670
Wk-11235 Burial 3	Bone collagen	-20.17 10.91	1481+/-49	540-640 430-660
Wk-11236 Burial 8	Bone collagen	-20.30 12.05	1378 +/-51	605-690 560-780

Radiocarbon dating laboratory: University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand  
 Method: AMS measurement by IGNS [NZA-15977]  
 Calibration: OxCal v3.5 Bronk Ramsey (2000)

**3.6 Medieval and post-medieval finds** by Tora Hylton

A small number of medieval and post-medieval artefacts were recovered. Medieval objects include a copper alloy cinquefoil mount (Egan 1991, fig 117, 944); a forked spacer-plate with collared knob (Pritchard 1991, fig 94, 680); and a trapezoid buckle frame. In addition, there is a small fragment of a silver hammered penny that may be part of a cut quarter. Post-medieval finds include lead musket balls, a stud with domed head, a strap-slide and a hooked mount for use with a sword belt (Margeson 1993, fig 22, 257-258).

## 4 FAUNAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

### 4.1 The human bone by Trevor Anderson

Of the ten Anglo-Saxon burials only one (Burial 3) is practically complete; two are reasonably complete (Burials 2 and 6) and two are represented by incomplete limb bone fragments (Burials 9 and 10). Apart from the complete example, the burials are fragmented and required a great deal of repair. The remains have been aged and sexed by accepted criteria, including cranial and pelvic morphology and dental attrition (Bass 1987; Brothwell 1981; Ferembach et al 1980). Stature assessment, based on long bone length, follows the regression formulae of Trotter and Gleser (1958).

All the skeletons are adult and their characteristics are catalogued in Table 2. Mean male stature was 1.745 (5' 9") and the female mean was 1.616m (5' 3¾"), with a range of 1.482m (4' 10 ½") Burial 5, to 1.698m (5' 7") Burial 6. The metrics and indices that could be taken on the fragmented material fall within the bounds of normality.

#### **Non-metric variants**

Three females (Burials 3, 4 and 8) display a unilateral (left side) septal aperture, a trait first mentioned in 1815 by Meckel (Hrdlicka 1932). The female and left-side bias seen here is well established in the literature (Glanville 1967; Hrdlicka 1932; Slomann 1926; Trotter 1934). Apart from an article by Schinz (1922) there is no evidence for a familial relationship in this trait. Indeed, it appears that the aperture is largely developmental. In a very large sample (n3354) of mixed white material an overall frequency of 6.9% was obtained (Hrdlicka 1932).

Two individuals (Burials 2 and 3) display calcaneus secundarius. The trait, an accessory ossicle located at the antero-medial angle of the dorsal calcaneal surface, was first described by Steida in 1867 (Biermann 1922). It is largely asymptomatic and its true prevalence in modern material is uncertain. Earlier sources (quoted in Sarrafian 1983: 94) gave occurrences of 0.14 - 2.5% in 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe. An examination of 750 British calcanei revealed three cases, 0.4% (Laidlaw 1905). The few reported osteo-archaeological cases suggest an incidence of 3.4 - 4.8% (Anderson 1988, Mann 1989).

Four individuals (Burials 4, 5, 8 and 10) display evidence of prolonged squatting. The trait was first referred to by Thomson (1899), who noted that it was more marked in "savage races". High frequencies of the trait are known to occur in populations which habitually squat; whereas the trait is uncommon in modern European material (Wood 1920).

An adult female (Burial 1), with the lower legs missing, had an estimated stature of 1.643m (5' 4¾") (Trotter & Gleser 1958). Both tibia are platycnemic, a term coined in 1863 by Busk to describe the medio-lateral flattening of the upper tibial shaft in the inhabitants of Gibraltar (Lovejoy et al 1976). The condition is more frequent in pre-industrial and modern primitive societies (Brothwell 1981, 89). Buxton suggested that the flattening occurred as the result of mineral deficiency and decreased bone quantity (Buxton 1938). More recent work has shown that there is no significant reduction in the amount of bone present and that the flattening develops due to repeated antero-posterior bending strain (Lovejoy et al 1976). Such strain would occur when walking over rough terrain or in individuals who habitually squat. Both humeri display septal aperture. Pathology was restricted to lumbo-sacral osteophytes and a single Schmorl's node.

#### **Demography Anatomical Variants**

Two females (Burials 3 and 4) display attempted sacralisation of the fifth lumbar vertebra and reduced or absent twelfth ribs. Both variants represent examples of cranial border shifting and are not that rare (Barnes 1994, 79-122).



### **Pathology**

There was very little evidence of bone pathology. Five individuals display minor vertebral degeneration, none of which was widespread. The only other evidence of pathology involves possible over-use of the shoulders in two males. Burial 2 displays a well-developed right conoid tubercle and Burial 7 displays an enlarged trapezoidal ridge. Both are sites for the attachment of the coraco-clavicular ligament, which limits the anterior and posterior movements of the scapula (Plastanga et al 1989, 162).

### **Dentition**

Seven individuals presented with dental remains, although in Burial 5 only two loose teeth were recovered. All the dentitions display minimal amounts of calculus. Only two individuals, a male (Burial 2) and a female (Burial 4) had lost teeth (mandibular molars) during life. Caries experience was restricted to a small occlusal cavity on the left third mandibular molar of a young adult female (Burial 6). A single abscess was noted in another female (Burial 4). Enamel hypoplasia, a single defect of both lower canines, occurred in an adult male (Burial 2) and a young adult female (Burial 8). An adult male (Burial 7) presented with rotation of a mandibular second premolar. Congenital absence of third molars was noted in two males (Burials 2 and 7) and a female (Burial 8). In Burial 1 oral health was poor. Caries had destroyed the right upper first molar crown and the left tooth presented with a large mesio-occlusal cavity. The lower right third molar displayed a medium sized mesial cavity.

## 4.2 Animal bone by Karen Deighton

A total of 1242 fragments of animal bone and five partial skeletons, weighing 56.165kg, was recovered and examined. Where possible bone was identified to species level with the aid of Schmid (1972) and quantified using minimum anatomical unit after Halstead (1985). For each identifiable element the following was recorded: element, species, proximal fusion, distal fusion, side, modification, butchery and fragmentation. Butchery and gnawing were identified after Binford (1981). Pathologies were noted after Baker and Brothwell (1980). Ribs and vertebra were noted but not included in the quantification. Skeletons were also recorded separately to avoid species bias. Tooth wear follows Payne (1973) for ovicaprids, Halstead (1985) after Payne for cattle and Grant (1982) and Bull and Payne (1982) for pigs. Sexing of pig canines follows Schmid (1972).

Canid gnawing was low, at 10.5 % of identified fragments, a single incidence of rodent gnawing was noted. Fragmentation was average, at 38.4%, and butchery was low, at 3%. Surface abrasion was moderate. Only three examples of burning were noted, suggesting that this was not a preferred method of disposal. Bones from the Phase 5 well [515] showed brown/black staining consistent with waterlogging.

### The species present

Due to the small numbers of fragments in several phases only overall Roman results are presented.

*Table 8: Animal bone fragments per phase*

<i>Phase</i>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
Period	Late Iron Age	Roman	Roman	Roman	Saxon
Fragments identified	15	136	260	239	18
Indet	5	55	97	75	43

*Table 9: Summary of major domesticates by phase*

<i>Phase</i>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<i>Bos</i> (cattle)	2	30	103	91	8
<i>Ovicaprid</i> (sheep/goat)	10	90	129	120	9
<i>Sus</i> (pig)	2	15	16	11	1

Table 10: Animal species by element (Phases 3, 4 and 5)

<i>Element</i>	<i>Equus (horse)</i>	<i>Bos (cattle)</i>	<i>Ovicaprid (sheep/goat)</i>	<i>Sus (pig)</i>	<i>Cervid (deer)</i>	<i>Canis (dog)</i>	<i>Gallus (chicken)</i>
Scapula	2	13	5	4			
P.humerus	1	14	18	5	1		
D.humerus	1	15	25	6	1		
P.Radius	1	12	18	4		1	1
D.radius		11	14	3		1	
Ulna		3	1				
P metacarpal	1	5	14				
D.metacarpal	1	7	15				
Pelvis		5	10	2			
P.femur		12	15	1			
D.femur		15	17	1			
P.tibia		23	34	1			
D.tibia	1	21	40	2			
Pmetatarsal	3	4	22				
D.metatarsal	2	4	20				
Calcaneum	1	3	1				
Astragulus		3	2				
Phalanx1	1	10	13				
Phalanx2		2					
Phalanx3							
Mandible	1	8	23	9		3	
Teeth	2	6	14	4			
P.metapodial		1	2				
D.metapodial		2	3				
Atlas		2					
Axis		2	2				
Occipital Condyle		3					
Horncore			2				
Carpometacarpus							1
Tarsometatarsus							1
Tibiotarsus							1
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>
<i>Percentage</i>	<i>2.8</i>	<i>38.1</i>	<i>51</i>	<i>6.3</i>	<i>0.3</i>	<i>0.7</i>	<i>0.5</i>

Key: D Distal; P Proximal; Ov/Cc Ovicaprid/Capreolus

### **Sexing**

For pigs an investigation of the mandibular canine suggests 13.6% were female, 9% were male and 77% were indeterminate. The sexing of cattle and ovicaprid was not possible due to the lack of suitably complete pelvises.

### **Neonates**

Only four examples of neonatal bone were noted, three cow and one ovicaprid.

### **Skeletons**

Two partial cattle skeletons were noted from the mid-3<sup>rd</sup> century to 4<sup>th</sup> century AD Roman well [515] (Phase 5). Both animals were horned. No evidence of butchery was noted. The bones were well preserved with black staining associated with waterlogging. Two partial pig skeletons with some evidence of butchery indicative of dismembering were also present.

A partial sheep skeleton was noted from a Phase 4 ditch fill, **DG16**, where some evidence for butchery was noted, with the tooth wear suggesting an animal of between 6 and 12 months.

### **Butchery**

The small amount of butchery appeared to be consistent with chopping and dismembering. Several contexts contained ribs, which had been chopped into short lengths. It has been suggested this practise indicate their use in stews and soups.

### **Pathologies**

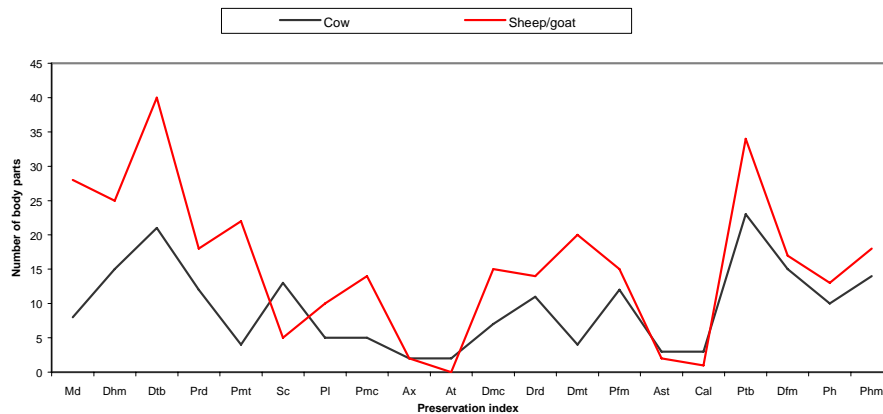
Three fragments from Phases 3, 4 and 5 were recovered showing evidence of pathologies. These include: a Bos mandibular molar with 3<sup>rd</sup> cusp absent, possibly congenital, from **DG9**; an ovicaprid mandible with roughening of the buccal surface, possibly the result of an abscess, from **DG21**, the eastern arm of **E5**; and a Bos phalanx 1 with excess bone growth, possibly the result of arthritis, from **DG26**, forming part of **E7**.

### **Discussion**

The Roman material from Phases 3, 4 and 5 was dominated by sheep/goat followed by cattle with much smaller numbers of pig, horse and dog. Birds were only represented by chicken, and wild species by very low numbers of deer, the bone size suggests red deer. The lack of wild species indicates no dependence on wild resources. The presence of horse and dog is no doubt due to their use as work and companion animals.

Toothwear analysis for the major domesticates is cursory due to the lack of mandibles. However, data from sheep (11 mandibles and teeth) suggests a predominance of animals of 8-10 years of age and an absence of animals under two months (this corresponds with the low numbers of neonates). For cattle only seven of ten mandibles and teeth could be allocated to a single age class. Again, a predominance of older animals is suggested and no animals under the age of eight months were recovered. For pigs only two mandibles could be allocated to an age class, both suggest sub-adults. However, it would be unwise to draw any conclusion concerning animal husbandry and stock maintenance from such a small amount of evidence.

Table 11: Preservation of body parts for cattle and sheep/goat



Comparisons of cattle and ovicaprid bones with a preservation index (Brain 1981) show an over-representation of fragile bones with high meat yields (Binford 1978) (e.g. proximal tibia, proximal femur and proximal humerus) and a relative under representation of low meat yielding bones (e.g. astragalus and calcaneum). The data set would therefore suggest that not only were carcasses butchered on site, but also that the consumption of choice meat cuts was favoured. No change in the dominance of species is evident throughout the Roman period, although a slight increase in the relative abundance of cattle for Phases 4 and 5 is seen (See Table 9). The dominance of sheep suggests a continuation of subsistence farming from the late Iron Age, as a dominance of cattle would be expected for a more Romanized site. A similar pattern is seen at Maxey (Pryor et al 1985), with sheep numbers dominating those of cattle into the 2<sup>nd</sup> century and again from the late 3<sup>rd</sup> century.

Although an increase in cattle numbers is seen the species never becomes dominant, as was observed at Lynch farm, Peterborough (Jones 1975) and Werrington, Cambs (Mackreth 1988). This could suggest trade with Romanized settlements such as Ashton was more restricted here. The preference for better cuts of meat also suggests trade was not the main concern of animal exploitation here, since if this were the case better meat joints would be sold off leaving a predominance of poor meat yielding bones, as at Werrington.

### Conclusion

The assemblage is typical to that expected of a native farmstead with an economy geared towards subsistence rather than trade. The assemblage confirms for this site at least the continuing importance of subsistence (Condrón 1995) during the Roman period.

### 4.3 The charred and waterlogged plant remains by Wendy Carruthers

#### *Introduction and methodology*

Environmental samples were taken from a range of features dating from the 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> centuries AD. One litre sub-samples from twenty-four 20 litre soil samples were processed using standard methods of floatation. A 500micron mesh was used to retain the flots. Karen Deighton assessed the flots and recommendations were made as to which samples should be submitted for full analysis. In addition, three waterlogged samples from a Roman well [515] were wet-sieved and the residues were kept wet.

The author was sent eight of the charred flots and the three waterlogged well residues for full analysis. The charred and the smaller of the waterlogged samples were fully sorted and quantified, but two of the well samples were so large that a 50% sub-sample from each residue was analysed (samples 30 and 35). Charred sample 21, context 492 (fill of stakehole [493]) was found to contain only modern Chenopodiaceae seeds and a single charred dock (*Rumex* sp.) seed, so this sample was omitted from the results.

The results of the analyses are given in Tables 12 (charred) and 13 (waterlogged). Nomenclature and most of the habitat information are taken from Stace (1991).

#### *The Charred Plant Remains*

##### *Late Bronze Age-early Iron Age activity (Phase 1)*

Sample 14 from a Phase 1 pit, [282], produced only 6 charred remains consisting of grain, chaff and weed seeds. This material represents low-level background waste, and is probably contamination from the Roman deposits.

#### *The Waterlogged Plant Remains*

##### *Roman activity (Phase 5)*

Sample 44, well [515], context 676, basal fill. The sample produced the lowest species diversity of the three examined (30 taxa). Most of the remains were from weeds of cultivated and disturbed soils, particularly weeds of nutrient-enriched soils, such as stinging nettle (*Urtica dioica*) and orache (*Atriplex patula/prostrata*). There was little evidence that domestic waste, faecal waste or crop processing waste had been deposited in the well at this time, although a few seeds of cultivated flax (*Linum usitatissimum*) and fragments of sloe/cherry/plum (*Prunus* sp.) stone were recovered. These remains may represent plants that were growing around the well at the time of use, in addition to a few food remains dropped by people using the well.

Sample 35, well [515] context 645, middle fill - This sample produced higher concentrations of remains and a few additional taxa, but again contained primarily waste ground weeds. Thistle (*Cirsium/Carduus* sp.) achenes were particularly numerous, suggesting that the plants were growing locally. Thistles often dominate overgrazed pastures. It is possible that the predominance of plants of nutrient-enriched soils in these lower deposits, in particular stinging nettles, was due to livestock grazing around the well.

Sample 30, well [515] context 645, upper fill - this sample produced more than twice as many taxa as the lower sample, though not as many remains as the middle one. It contained evidence for the dumping of crop processing and domestic waste in the well, though not human faecal waste. Hay or dung was probably present, since meadow taxa such as meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), yellow rattle (*Rhinanthus* sp.) and fairy flax (*Linum catharticum*) were recorded. The economic plants represented included spelt chaff, opium poppy (*Papaver somniferum*), cultivated flax, coriander (*Coriandrum sativum*), cotton thistle (*Onopordum acanthium*) and possibly dill (cf. *Anethum graveolens*). In addition to these imported spices, a few native hedgerow fruits such as bramble and elderberry were represented. However, the number of fruit remains was far less than is usually found in human sewage, and no imported fruits were represented, as is typical in Roman faecal deposits. It is likely that this deposit was derived from waste being dumped in the well soon after it had gone out

of use - the cereals and spices are typical of the Roman period but are rarely recovered from later deposits.

The wide range of plant remains from the well include waterlogged cereal chaff, weeds of cultivated and disturbed places, flax seeds, imported spices and grassland taxa. The types of waste represented by these assemblages might include:

Cereal processing waste - emmer/spelt glume bases, cereal grains, straw fragments (cereal-sized culm nodes), seeds from arable weeds and weeds of cultivated soils

Waste hay, bedding or dung - grassland taxa such as yellow rattle (*Rhinanthus* sp.), fairy flax (*Linum catharticum*), meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*) and common meadow-rue (*Thalictrum flavum*).

Domestic waste - other types of crops, food plants, flavourings and possible medicinal plants such as coriander (*Coriandrum sativum*), opium poppy (*Papaver somniferum*), flax (*Linum usitatissimum*) and cotton thistle (*Onopordon acanthium*).

There was no clear evidence that human cess had been deposited in the well, as is sometimes the case, since bran fragments were not recorded and fruit remains were sparse. No imported fruits such as fig or grape were identified. The local vegetation, consisting of weeds of disturbed and damp soils was well represented, particularly perennials of nutrient-enriched soils such as stinging nettles, thistles and docks.

All of the imported spices have been recovered from other Roman sites in Britain (e.g. London; Willcox 1977). Cotton thistle is an interesting plant that is rarely found in deposits earlier than the Roman period, although Iron Age deposits at Farmoor, Oxon (Robinson 1979) produced a large enough number to indicate cultivation or collection. Several uses for this plant are documented; the thistle down can be used (e.g. to stuff mattresses and pillows), the large seeds provide oil for cooking and lighting, and the stems can be peeled, boiled and eaten (Readers Digest 1981). Pliny and medieval texts also list medicinal uses for the plant, ranging from curing a crick in the neck to convulsions and rickets. Other economic plants such as opium poppy and flax also have a variety of uses including extracting oil from the seeds, and all of these aromatic seeds have a wide range of medicinal uses that are still acknowledged today.

#### ***Comparisons between the assemblages, and with other sites***

Some references have already been made to the differences between the charred and waterlogged assemblages. Cereal remains are clearly favoured by charring, because of human intervention in this process, and most other categories of plant material are favoured by waterlogging. Thus, the charred assemblages have provided information about the arable crops grown, their weed contaminants and the types of soils cultivated, whilst the well deposits have given some information about the local environment and different types of waste deposited in the well. Fortunately, some food plants, cereal processing waste and possibly hay was included in the material dumped, so these deposits have added to the understanding about diet and agricultural practices on the site. The results from this analysis suggest that the site economy and environment was very similar to other sites of the period, with the principal arable crop being spelt wheat, but smaller amounts of bread-type wheat, barley and possibly oats being grown. Flax was being grown, possibly for both oil and fibre. Other possible oil plants were opium poppy and cotton thistle. Spices and medicinal plants were being imported or grown from imported seeds in gardens, including coriander and dill. There was no evidence for imported fruits, and the few fruit remains recovered indicated continued gathering of native hedgerow fruits.

This picture is similar to the results from Prickwillow Road, Ely (Carruthers forthcoming), although no waterlogged deposits were excavated at Prickwillow Road so the range of taxa preserved was more limited. In addition, the arable weed flora at Prickwillow Road provided evidence for the cultivation of the local fenland soils, so differences were observed in the weed species recovered.

One similarity of note was the occurrence of a particular grass caryopsis (seed) in relatively high numbers in one or two samples from both sites. This long (3mm), thin grass seed with a faint hilum has been tentatively identified as *Lolium* cf. *perenne*, perennial rye-grass, a common grass of rich, heavy soils that has long been valued for grazing and hay production (Hubbard 1954). It may have been growing on as a weed in soils recently ploughed up for arable cultivation, or been growing along the field margins.

Table 12: The charred plant remains

Sample	14	18	27	28	7	9	19
Context/feature	281/282	344/345	638/639	640/641	128/130	142/141	444/435
Feature type	Pit	Ditch	Pit	Slot	Pit	Pit	Pit
Group		DG9	PG1	SG1		PG4	
Phase	1	3	3	3	4	4	5
<b>Cereals</b>							
<i>Triticum aestivum</i> -type (bread-type free threshing wheat grain)		1				3	
<i>Triticum dicoccum/spelta</i> (emmer/spelt wheat grain)	2	9			29	537	
<i>Triticum</i> sp. (indeterminate wheat grain)		12	1		2	8	
<i>Hordeum</i> sp. (hulled barley grain)					1	6	
<i>Avena</i> sp. (wild/cultivated oat grain)					2	21	
Indeterminate cereals		28	12		24	303	1
<b>Chaff</b>							
<i>Triticum spelta</i> L. (spelt glume base)			18	4	118	14	1
<i>Triticum spelta</i> L. (spelt spikelet fork)			1			3	
<i>Triticum</i> cf. <i>dicoccum</i> (cf.emmer glume base)			4		9	3	
<i>Triticum dicoccum/spelta</i> (emmer / spelt glume base)	1	1	39	5	249	83	8
<i>Triticum dicoccum/spelta</i> (emmer / spelt spikelet fork)			2	2	22	10	
<i>T. dicoccum/spelta</i> (emmer/spelt rachis frag.)			1	1	2		
<i>Hordeum</i> sp. (barley rachis frag.)		1	1				
<i>Avena</i> sp. (oat awn frag.)				+	++	+	
Cereal-size culm node		1					
Cereal sprouts			13				1
<b>Weeds</b>							
<i>Urtica dioica</i> L. (stinging nettle)					1		
<i>Urtica urens</i> L. (small nettle achene) CDn			2				
<i>Atriplex patula/prostrata</i> (orache seed) CDn	1						2
<i>Montia fontana</i> ssp. <i>minor</i> (blinks) dG			2				1
<i>Stellaria graminea</i> L. (lesser stitchwort) G		1					
<i>Fallopia convolvulus</i> (L.) A.Love (black-bindweed achene) AD		2					
<i>Rumex acetosella</i> L. (sheep's sorrel achene) CEGas					2		



GLAPTHORN ROAD, OUNDLE

Sample	14	18	27	28	7	9	19
Context/feature	281/282	344/345	638/639	640/641	128/130	142/141	444/435
Feature type	Pit	Ditch	Pit	Slot	Pit	Pit	Pit
Group		DG9	PG1	SG1		PG4	
Phase	1	3	3	3	4	4	5
<i>Rumex</i> sp. (dock achene) CDG		2	1		6	2	
<i>Trifolium/Lotus</i> sp. (clover/trefoil) DG		3	1	1		1	
<i>Vicia/Lathyrus</i> sp. (small seeded weed vetch/tare) CDG		8	1		1	20	
<i>Prunella vulgaris</i> ( <i>self-heal</i> )			1				
<i>Galium aparine</i> L. (cleavers) CDH						1	
<i>Odonites verna/Euphrasia</i> sp. (red bartsia/eyebright) CD			1				
<i>Anthemis cotula</i> L. (stinking mayweed achene) ADhd					13		
<i>Tripleurospermum inodorum</i> (L.)Schultz-Bip. (scentless mayweed achene) CD		1	1				
<i>Schoenoplectus lacustris</i>			1				
<i>Eleocharis</i> subg. <i>Palustres</i> (spike-rush nutlet) MPd	1	1			1		
<i>Bromus</i> sect. <i>Bromus</i> (chess caryopsis) ADG	1	2	17				
Poaceae cf <i>Lolium perenne</i> (cf. perennial rye-grass; 3mm, elongate) GD			17				
Poaceae (small seeded grass caryopsis) CDG		7	8	1	1	2	1
<b>Total charred remains</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>483</b>	<b>1017</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Sample size</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Fragments per litre</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>24.2</b>	<b>50.9</b>	<b>0.8</b>
<b>Grain:chaff:weed seeds ratio</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>17:1:9</b>	<b>1:5:4</b>	<b>0:6:1</b>	<b>2:16:1</b>	<b>34:4:1</b>	<b>1:9:4</b>

KEY: Habitat Preferences: A = arable; C = cultivated; D = disturbed/waste; E = heath; G = grassland;  
H = hedgerow; M = marsh/bog; R = rivers/ditches/ponds; S = scrub; W = woods; Y = waysides/hedgerows;  
a = acidic soils; c = calcareous soils; n = nutrient-rich soils; o = open ground; d = damp soils  
+ = occasional; ++ = several

Table 13: Waterlogged plant remains (Economic Plants) Roman well [515]

Sample no	30	35	44
Context	645	645	676
<b>Economic plants</b>			
<i>Triticum dicoccum/spelta</i> (emmer/spelt grain)	[1]		
<i>Triticum spelta</i> L. (spelt glume base)	6[2]	[1]	[1]
<i>Triticum dicoccum / spelta</i> (emmer / spelt glume base)	18	1	
<i>T. dicoccum /spelta</i> (emmer/spelt rachis frag.)		[1]	[1]
<i>Avena sp./Bromus sp.</i> (oat/chess)		[1]	
Indeterminate cereal caryopsis	6		
Cereal-sized culm node	2		
<i>Papaver somniferum</i> L. (opium poppy seed) *	1	1	
<i>Linum usitatissimum</i> L. (cultivated flax seed) *	3	1	2
cf. <i>Anethum graveolens</i> L. (cf. dill mericarp frag) *	2		
<i>Coriandrum sativum</i> L. (coriander mericarp frag.) *	2		
<i>Onopordum acanthium</i> L. (cotton thistle) *D	1	1	
cf. <i>Ammi majus</i> L. (cf. bullwort mericarp) *	1		
<b>Arable/cultivated ground weeds</b>			
<i>Papaver rhoeas</i> L. (common poppy seed) AD	3	1	
<i>Agrostemma githago</i> L. (corn cockle seed coat frag.) A	2		
<i>Fallopia convolvulus</i> (L.) A.Love (black-bindweed achene) AD	1		
<i>Thlaspi arvense</i> L. (field penny-cress seed) AD	2		1
<i>Brassica/Sinapis</i> sp.(carlock, mustard etc. seed) AD*	2		
<i>Anagallis arvensis</i> L. (pimpernel seed) AD		1	
<i>Odontites verna/Euphrasia</i> sp. (red bartsia/eyebright seed) AD	7	2	
<i>Anthemis cotula</i> L. (stinking chamomile achene) ADh	64[1]	4	1
<b>Grasslands, including damp soils</b>			
<i>Ranunculus repens/acris/bulbosus</i> (buttercup achene) DG	18	8	4
<i>Thalictrum flavum</i> L. (common meadow-rue) wB	2		
<i>Stellaria graminea</i> L. (lesser stitchwort seed) Gd	6	1	2
<i>Rumex conglomeratus</i> Murray (clustered dock achene & perianth) GP	2		
<i>Hypericum</i> sp. (St. John's wort seed) GD	1		
<i>Trifolium</i> sp. (clover calyx) GD	2		
<i>Filipendula ulmaria</i> (L.) Maxim. (meadowsweet achene) wG	31		
<i>Agrimonia eupatoria</i> L. (agrimony fruit) GH	1		
<i>Potentilla</i> sp. (cinquefoil achene) EG	2		
<i>Linum catharticum</i> L. (fairy flax seed) GdcsE	31	5	
Legume pod fragment	2		
<i>Torilis japonica</i> (Houtt.) DC. Upright hedge-parsley mericarp) GHWo	1		
<i>Torilis</i> sp. (hedge-parsley mericarp) AGHWo	2		
<i>Daucus carota</i> L. (carrot mericarp) DGc	1	1	
<i>Prunella vulgaris</i> L. (self-heal nutlet) GWOd	19	6	3
<i>Plantago major</i> L. (greater plantain seed) CGo	12	5	1
<i>Rhinanthus</i> sp. (yellow-rattle seed) AG	3	1	
<i>Cirsium / Carduus</i> sp. (thistle achene ) DGMWo	14	175	76
<i>Centaurea</i> sp. (knapweed achene) CDG	1		
<i>Leontodon autumnalis</i> L. (autumn hawkbit achene) G	14		1
<i>Picris</i> sp. (oxtongue achene) DG	2		1
<i>Taraxacum</i> sp.(dandelion achene) DG	2		1
<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i> Lam. (oxeye daisy achene) G	4		
<i>Eleocharis</i> subg. <i>Palustres</i> (spike-rush nut) MP	4		
<i>Carex</i> sp(p). (sedge nut) GM	11		2
Poaceae NFI (grass caryopses) CDG	13[3]	41[1]	15
<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> (L.) Kuhn (bracken pinnule frag.) EGWa	1		

Table 14: Waterlogged plant remains (General Weeds) Roman well [515]

Sample no.	30	35	44
<b>Context</b>	<b>645</b>	<b>645</b>	<b>676</b>
<b>Plants bordering streams, ditches and ponds &amp; damp soils</b>			
<i>Ranunculus flammula</i> L. (lesser spearwort achene) wBP	16	3	1
<i>Rumex maritimus</i> L. (golden dock achene) MP	1		
<i>Apium nodiflorum</i> (L.) Lag. (fool's water-cress mericarp) MP	1	27	9
<i>Berula erecta</i> (Hudson)Cov. (lesser water-parsnip mericarp) BPM	1		
<i>Conium maculatum</i> L. (hemlock mericarp frag.) BD	3		1
<i>Mentha</i> sp. (mint nutlet) BGPw	1		
<b>General weeds of cultivated and disturbed soils</b>			
<i>Fumaria</i> sp. (fumitory achene) CDH	2		
<i>Urtica dioica</i> L. (common nettle achene) DWon	99	>500	>500
<i>Urtica urens</i> L. (small nettle achene) CDn	39	14	7
<i>Chenopodium album</i> L. (fat-hen seed) CDn	1		
<i>C. rubrum</i> L. (red goosefoot seed) CDn	5	17	
<i>Atriplex patula/prostrata</i> (orache seed) CDn	21	58	22
<i>Stellaria media</i> (L.) Villars (common chickweed seed) CD	10	23	5
<i>Cerastium</i> sp. (mouse-ear seed)	19	18	1
<i>Polygonum aviculare</i> L. (knotgrass achene) CD	66	24	12
<i>Rumex</i> sp. (dock achene) CDG	58	41	19
<i>Rumex crispus</i> (curled dock achene & perianth) CD	7	4	
<i>Viola</i> sp. (violet seed) GWSH		2	
<i>Capsella bursa-pastoris</i> (L.) Medicus (shepherd's purse seed) CD	4	1	
<i>Coronopus squamatus</i> (Forsskaol) Asch. (swine-cress fruit) D	3	3	
<i>Aphanes arvensis</i> L. (parsley piert achene) Co	2		
<i>Aethusa cynapium</i> L. (fool's parsley mericarp) CD	1		1
<i>Hyoscyamus niger</i> L. (henbane seed) Dn	7	4	1
<i>Lamium</i> sp. (dead-nettle nutlet) CDHY	1	5	3
<i>Sonchus asper</i> (L.) Hill (prickly sow-thistle achene) CDY	4	1	
<b>Woods, Scrub, Hedgerows - includes edible fruits</b>			
<i>Rubus</i> sect. <i>Glandulosus</i> Wimmer & Grab. (bramble seed) HSW	1	1	
<i>Rosa</i> -type (rose-type thorn) HSW	2		
<i>Prunus</i> sp.(sloe/plum fruit stone frag.) HSW		3	1
<i>Prunus</i> -type (sloe-type thorn) HSW			1
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i> L. Jacq. (hawthorn seed) HSW*	2	1	
<i>Sambucus nigra</i> L. (elder seed) DHSW	1		
TOTAL	701[7]	>1010[4]	>694[2]
Number of taxa	73	40	30
Frag per litre			

KEY: Plant remains were waterlogged apart from [ ] = charred Habitats. A = Arable; C = cultivated; D = disturbed, wasteground; E = heath; G = grassland; H = hedgerow; M = marsh, bog; P = ponds, ditches, slow-flowing rivers; S = scrub; W = woodland; Wo = open woodland, woodland margins & clearings; Y = waysides. a = acid soils; c = calcareous / basic soils; d = dry soils; n = nutrient-rich; o = open; s = sandy; w = wet/damp soils \* = Introduced cultivated species

#### 4.4 Waterlogged wood by Rowena Gale

Wood fragments, preserved through waterlogging in the silty clay fills, contexts (644) and (645)), were recovered from a Roman well [515], (Phase 5) located at the western corner of E7. They include artefactual items, as well as narrow roundwood and twiggy material, some of which still retained bark. The small twiggy pieces probably occurred through natural deposits from fallen tree debris but the roundwood (some of which retained tool-marks) and worked wood are more likely to have accumulated accidentally or by deliberate dumping. Species identification was undertaken to indicate the type of wood selected for artefactual use, and to obtain environmental data and evidence of woodland management.

The wood structure was fairly firm and well preserved. Samples were prepared for examination using standard methods (Gale and Cutler 2001). Thin sections were removed from the transverse, tangential and radial surfaces and mounted on microscope slides. These were examined using a Nikon Labophot-2 microscope at magnifications up to x400. The anatomical structures were matched to reference slides.

The wood analysis is summarised in Table 15 and discussed below. Classification follows that of Flora Europaea (Tutin, Heywood et al 1964-80). In most respects the taxa are anatomically similar. The ray type sometimes allows the taxon to be named, however, this feature is not always a reliable indicator, particularly for juvenile wood, and has not been used in this instance. Where a genus is represented by a single species in the British flora this is named as the most likely origin of the wood, given the provenance and period. However, it should be noted that it is rarely possible to name individual species from wood features, and exotic species of trees and shrubs were introduced to Britain from an early period (Godwin 1956 and Mitchell 1974).

#### ***Conclusions***

The taxa identified included dogwood (*Cornus* sp.), hazel (*Corylus avellana*), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), oak (*Quercus* sp.) and willow (*Salix* sp.) or poplar (*Populus* sp.). Hazel and blackthorn twigs (diameter <5mm) were identified in sample 49 but the structure and morphology of other narrow roundwood (samples 36, 50, 51, 52 and 53) were more consistent with coppice stems. These ranged in diameter from 10mm - 25mm, and in age from 2 - 8 years, depending on the species. The structural similarity between some roundwood fragments (samples 36, 50 and 52) suggested a common origin, i.e. from the same stem. Tool-marks on some roundwood denoted areas of trimming or oblique felling cuts.

Worked wood included narrow pieces of oak (*Quercus* sp.), possible lathe turned (sample 41) and three squared lengths of oak with round wooden pegs still in situ (sample 46, Fig 21, 18). The pegs were made from narrow lengths of roundwood, as opposed to the alternative method of trenail production using narrow rods cut from more mature wood (i.e. with rays running parallel across the width of the peg). The exposed surfaces of the pegs were abraded and sat either flush with, or slightly below, the level of the squared wood surface. Given the difficulty of access to the pegs, it was only possible to examine three in detail, and these were identified as hazel (*Corylus avellana*) and blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*).

Table 15: Waterlogged wood remains from the Roman well [515]

Context	Sample	Cornus	Corylus	Fraxinus	Prunus	Quercus	Salicaceae	Comments
644	41	-	-	-	-	9h	-	Fragments from narrow ?lathe, cut obliquely across the grain
645	36	-	4r	-	-	-	-	Probably from the same coppice rod, Ø 25mm, AR 2 x 7, 2 x 8, felled late summer/autumn; ?coppice heel and tool-marks on longest piece (250mm)
	46	-	-	-	-	3	-	3 squared lengths of worked wood with round pegs <i>in situ</i> (see below)
		-	1r	-	cf. 2r	-	-	3 pegs examined, the remainder degraded and access very restricted
	47	-	-	1r	-	-	-	Half section of roundwood, Ø 600+mm, bark <i>in situ</i>
	48	-	1r	-	-	-	-	Stem fragment with base of lateral branch, branch Ø 15mm, AR 4
	49	-	2r	-	3r	-	-	Mass of narrow twigs plus bark from wider roundwood. 5 twigs randomly selected, Ø <5mm
	50	-	-	3r	-	-	-	Ø 1 x 20mm, 2 x 25mm, AR 4, probably from the same coppice rod
	51	-	2r	-	2r	1r	-	<i>Corylus</i> (AR 4) and <i>Prunus</i> (AR3) Ø 10mm, <i>Corylus</i> probably coppiced. <i>Quercus</i> : diameter 40+mm..
	52	-	-	7r	-	-	-	Ø 20 – 25mm, probably from the same coppiced rod, felled late summer
	53	3r	3r	-	4r	2r	1r	Roundwood of various diameters, probably mostly coppice stems. <i>Cornus</i> : Ø 18mm, 20mm, 23mm, AR 8 <i>Corylus</i> : Ø 1 x 12mm, 2 x 15mm, AR 5 <i>Prunus</i> : Ø 1 x 20mm, 3 x 25mm, AR 9, 10, 2 x 12 <i>Quercus</i> : Ø 50mm, 60mm, AR 13, 14 Salicaceae: Ø 11mm, AR 2, felled in autumn

Key: h = heartwood; r = roundwood; AR = annual rings; Ø = diameter  
The number of fragments identified is indicated.

### **Environmental evidence**

As the site was located on the upper slopes of the Nene Valley on clayey soils, it is likely that most of the wood examined derived from local sources. The range of taxa identified from the wood samples included large woodland trees, oak (*Quercus* sp.), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), and shrubbier species such as hazel (*Corylus avellana*), dogwood (*Cornus*), blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) and probably willow (*Salix* sp.). Poplar (*Populus* sp.) may also be implicated.

It is clear from the samples that most of the species identified originated from coppiced stems probably grown on a fairly short rotation, as suggested for example, by 4 year old hazel and ash stems. However, to obtain a more accurate assessment of coppicing regimes at the site it would be

necessary to examine a much wider spectrum of rods and poles. Wider oak roundwood, diameters 50mm and 60mm (excluding bark), were also relatively juvenile, with 13 and 14 growth rings respectively.

## 5 OVERVIEW

The excavations at Glapthorn Road, Oundle produced a wide range of archaeological features spanning the late Bronze Age/early Iron Age to the Anglo-Saxon period. However, the principal period of occupation was Roman in date and comprised part of a farmstead, presumed to be a non-villa settlement. Such settlements are recorded as the predominant type over much of the central midlands (Hingley 1989).

The late Bronze Age-early Iron Age activity (Phase 1) probably originated with a small, unenclosed settlement. The relict traces comprise a sparse scatter of pits, conforming to the pattern for the early Iron Age of the Great Ouse and Nene valleys, as identified by Knight (1984). This pattern is also noted in the Ouse catchment area by Dawson (2000), and is claimed to date from at least the beginning of the first millennium BC. The absence of sites of a similar date in the immediate Oundle area is principally due to the lack of large-scale fieldwork, and means that no local comparisons can be made. A site at Thrapston, some nine miles to the south of Oundle, has produced comparable pottery types to that recovered at Glapthorn Road (Hull 2000-01). However, the site differed in that the pits were associated with a large ditched enclosure.

The origins of the Roman settlement appear to have lain in a small late Iron Age farmstead of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD (Phase 2). One roundhouse was excavated, another was recorded by geophysics and some arcs of gully suggest the presence of at least another two smaller structures. These seem to have formed a small, unenclosed farmstead, perhaps occupied by a single extended family group. The location of the main roundhouses to the west, an area which can be shown in the mid-3<sup>rd</sup> century AD (Phase 5) to be the main focus of Roman domestic activity, suggests that there was probably continuity of settlement from the mid-1<sup>st</sup> century AD. However, this claim cannot be fully substantiated as it was not possible to demonstrate that this area had certainly been the focus for the domestic settlement through the 2<sup>nd</sup> century and into the 3<sup>rd</sup> century (Phases 3 and 4), as discussed below.

By the early 2<sup>nd</sup> century (Phase 3) the settlement consisted of a palimpsest of ditches best interpreted as forming a rectangular enclosure, with sub-divisions, and realignments, while linear ditches to the west may have defined the boundaries of a separate, but associated, rectangular ditched enclosure. This may have contained the domestic focus. In the early 3<sup>rd</sup> century (Phase 4) there was a major expansion of settlement, with the development of a larger and more complex enclosure system, with much internal re-alignment and sub-division. In addition a new northern enclosure was formed, with an east-west trackway running between the two enclosure systems. The open western end of the southern enclosure suggests that the western enclosure from the previous phase had been retained, indicating that there was no major redevelopment of the postulated domestic focus.

The main enclosure south of the trackway was probably used to manage livestock, functioning as a stock or crew yard. The multiple parallel internal ditches of the Phase 4 enclosure may have provided necessary drainage in the interior. Geological factors may also have played a part in the proliferation of ditches, with the intractable clay causing them to be re-cut or realigned on a regular basis to alleviate problems with waterlogging and accompanying silting processes.

In Phase 4 the new northern enclosure appeared to have formed a domestic focus, perhaps including a large post-built structure, but this may have been a secondary or separate focus rather than a relocation of the main domestic focus. No domestic activity in the western area can be dated to this phase alone, but this may be a result of the northern focus being abandoned before the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, while the western area continued in use and accumulated a predominance of 4<sup>th</sup> century occupation material.

By the late 3<sup>rd</sup> and into the 4<sup>th</sup> century, the final phase of development provides a more readily interpretable plan form (Phase 5). There were two open enclosures, a large rectangular enclosure and a smaller, abutting annex. These were presumably used for stock control, although one corner of the larger enclosure contained a cluster of domestic features, close to the eastern entrance, which

had been surfaced with stone. To the west the domestic compound was both enlarged and provided with a stone boundary wall. This would seem to imply continuing prosperity, if not an increase in the wealth of the settlement, although the retraction from the northern part of the site might otherwise be taken as resulting from a decline in prosperity. This may also denote a move towards adopting a more Romanised life-style. The settlement had been abandoned by the later 4<sup>th</sup> century, with the latest coin (of Valens, 364-378) suggesting that this happened no earlier than the 370s to 380s.

A similar courtyard or enclosure excavated at Lynch Farm, near Peterborough is dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> centuries AD. The courtyard had similar sub-divisions to the Phase 4 enclosure at Glapthorn Road, and these were interpreted as forming part of an animal compound (Jones 1975). The farmstead at Lynch Farm was an element of a larger agglomeration, which proliferated during the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries AD, and the Glapthorn Road settlement would appear to be a similar non-villa settlement or farmstead. Farmsteads are defined by English Heritage (1989) as "discrete groups of not more than four circular or rectilinear domestic buildings and associated structures, which sometimes lie within a rectilinear or curvilinear enclosures". One of the defining characteristics of farmsteads is the presence of sub-divisions within the "yard" area, taking the form of internal fences, walls or ditches. Where there are antecedents in the Iron Age, the surface area often contracted in the early Roman period and then expanded in the late 2<sup>nd</sup> century (English Heritage 1989). During the 3<sup>rd</sup> century there are signs of increasing wealth in the area, and at Lynch Farm there was a change in use from a stockyard to an open space enclosed by barns (Jones 1975). A similar transition can be suggested for Glapthorn Road in the evident expansion of the settlement in the early 3<sup>rd</sup> century (Phase 4).

However, it is difficult to be explicit about the nature of the Glapthorn Road settlement when the main domestic focus has not been excavated. The buildings typical of a farmstead for this period were generally rectangular in shape, c 10m long by 8m wide, either fully in timber or with dwarf stone walls and a timber superstructure. The only evidence for the nature of the buildings at Glapthorn Road comes from the survival of ceramic building material. This includes fragments of roof tile (*tegulae* and *imbreces*) which would be appropriate for a farmstead, but the presence of some box tiles suggests a building of some greater sophistication, although this may have come in from elsewhere, perhaps Ashton.

The site at Glapthorn Road conforms well to the English Heritage (1989) type B classification for Roman farmsteads, comprising (i) rectilinear enclosures with roundhouses, superseded by (ii) rectilinear enclosures with rectangular houses. These sites formed "the dwelling places and small-scale production and processing centres of individual families or small kinship groups involved in mixed farming, often at a subsistence level" (*ibid*). The inhabitants were probably part of a discrete family unit or small kinship group, with little evidence of individual wealth. Initially there may have been little aspiration to live a Romanised way of life, although this may be seen to be developing by the later 3<sup>rd</sup> century at Glapthorn Road in the final elaboration of the domestic compound and the provision of a walled enclosure.

The paucity of the recovered material evidence from the settlement at Glapthorn Road would tend to conform to the broad assumption of a lack of Romanisation, at least until the final phase of development. Indeed, the animal bone assemblage recovered from the site would seem to reflect a continuance of a late Iron Age subsistence economy, as opposed to any move towards a market economy. Waterlogged wood samples recovered from the well indicate that most of the wood examined derived from managed local sources and originated from coppiced stems probably grown on a fairly short rotation.

With reference to the wider archaeological context, particularly the nearby Roman town of Ashton, it is clear that the settlement at Glapthorn Road formed part of an organised Roman landscape within the lower Nene Valley. In Condron (1995) it is stated that much fieldwork had already been undertaken in the Nene valley during the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and late 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The latter prior to and during the development of Peterborough new town, major road building schemes and gravel and



sand extraction, though few sites had been excavated under modern conditions. Of the sites investigated, two in particular, Werrington and Monument 97 (Orton Longueville), can be described as similar to Glapthorn Road. All three lie towards the lowest end of the settlement scale, and were probably occupied by single family units.

Farmsteads such as the one at Glapthorn Road may have functioned as part of a rural estate or peripheral holding tenurially dependent on a villa. Many similar settlements, when excavated, are identified as having been created in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, corresponding directly to the growth of many of the small towns of Roman Britain (Millett 1990). The villas were possibly constructed as part of a consolidated holding for the new town-based elite. The villa, generally located within the town's hinterland, owned peripheral holdings, such as the Glapthorn Road settlement, where agricultural surpluses would be collected and sold to the local centres, such as Ashton. Limited evidence does exist for localised estates where non-villa sites appear in close conjunction with villa's, such as at Fotheringhay, Northamptonshire (Hingley 1989), and a number of villa sites have been noted in the vicinity of Oundle, such as Cotterstock to the north.

It has been noted at many sites that pottery is a low-value commodity and therefore would generally only travel over short distances, with imported wares such as Samian and Black burnished wares having a higher value (Millett 1990). The vast majority of the pottery at this site would generally tend to support this view, with local Nene Valley wares probably manufactured at Ashton or Water Newton (Durobrivae) further to the north-east dominating the assemblage. The relatively small imported component clearly is not only similar to that from many other farmsteads of the period but can also be mirrored at the Ashton, which comprised a much larger corpus of ceramic material. Though at the latter, "The impact of the Roman invasion on the settlement pattern is clearly seen with the military sites, and Ashton, Dubobrivae and Great Casterton all show superior access to luxury items relative to surrounding settlements" (Condrón 1995). Condrón goes on to say that the evidence for smaller rural sites participating in exchange to any degree is limited, so only a small section of the population would have been involved in the acquiring the goods and pretences of being Roman. Most people were either not able, or had no desire, to get involved in the Roman economy, relying on small, local networks, not operating through the urban market.

The Anglo-Saxon cemetery evidently served a nearby settlement, but no contemporary settlement evidence was recovered from either the excavated area or the watching brief areas. Presently only two sites of this period are known within the Glapthorn Road environs, both about 1km to the south. The first is located to the south of Blackpot Lane, Oundle where small quantities of largely residual 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> century pottery was recovered during excavations in 1985 (Johnston 1993/4). The second lies just beyond the western edge of the medieval town (Foard and Ballinger 2000), where early Anglo-Saxon occupation was recovered.

A causal reason for interment within the environs of the long abandoned Roman settlement could be that the Anglo-Saxon settlement population contained within their populace those who wanted to inter their dead on the Roman site, perhaps as decedents of the former inhabitants (Esmonde Cleary 1989, 203). This would fit with the pattern noted at Spong Hill, Suffolk where the cemetery was established on the site of a Romano-British farmstead and its accompanying enclosures with a new settlement located nearby (Carver 1992, 12). However, it is clear that at Spong Hill, and other sites in East Anglia, there is a demonstrable lack of direct evidence for Roman sites retaining their importance through the 5<sup>th</sup> century and rarely was there a continuity of settlement activity or occupation (*ibid*).

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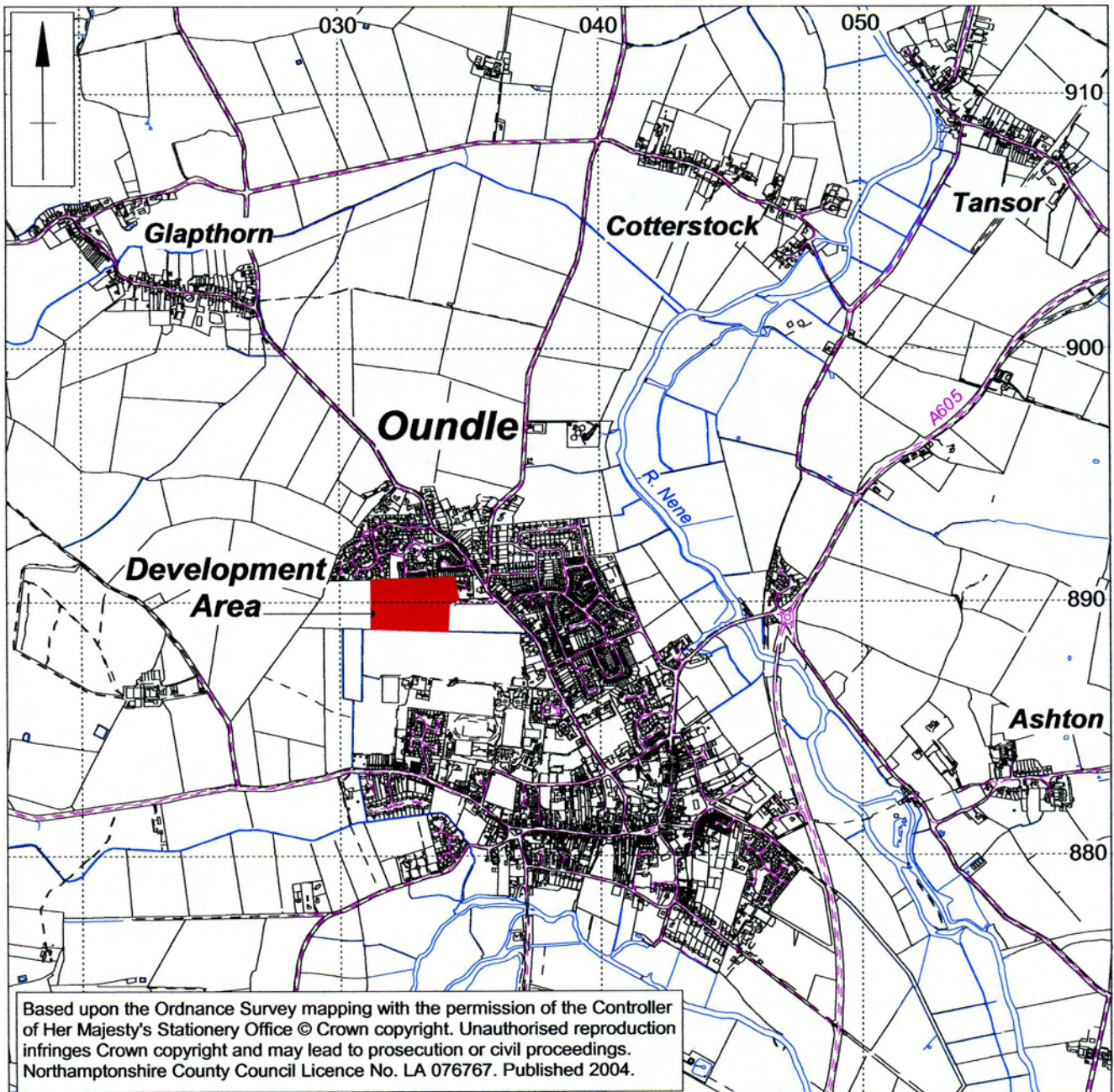
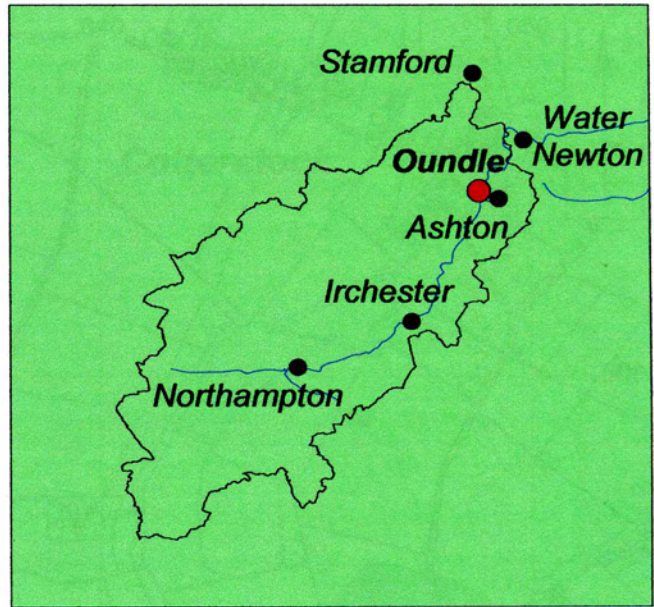
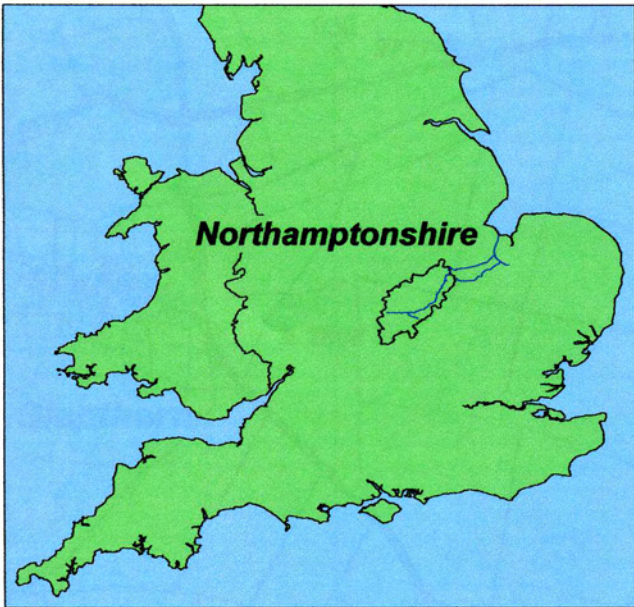
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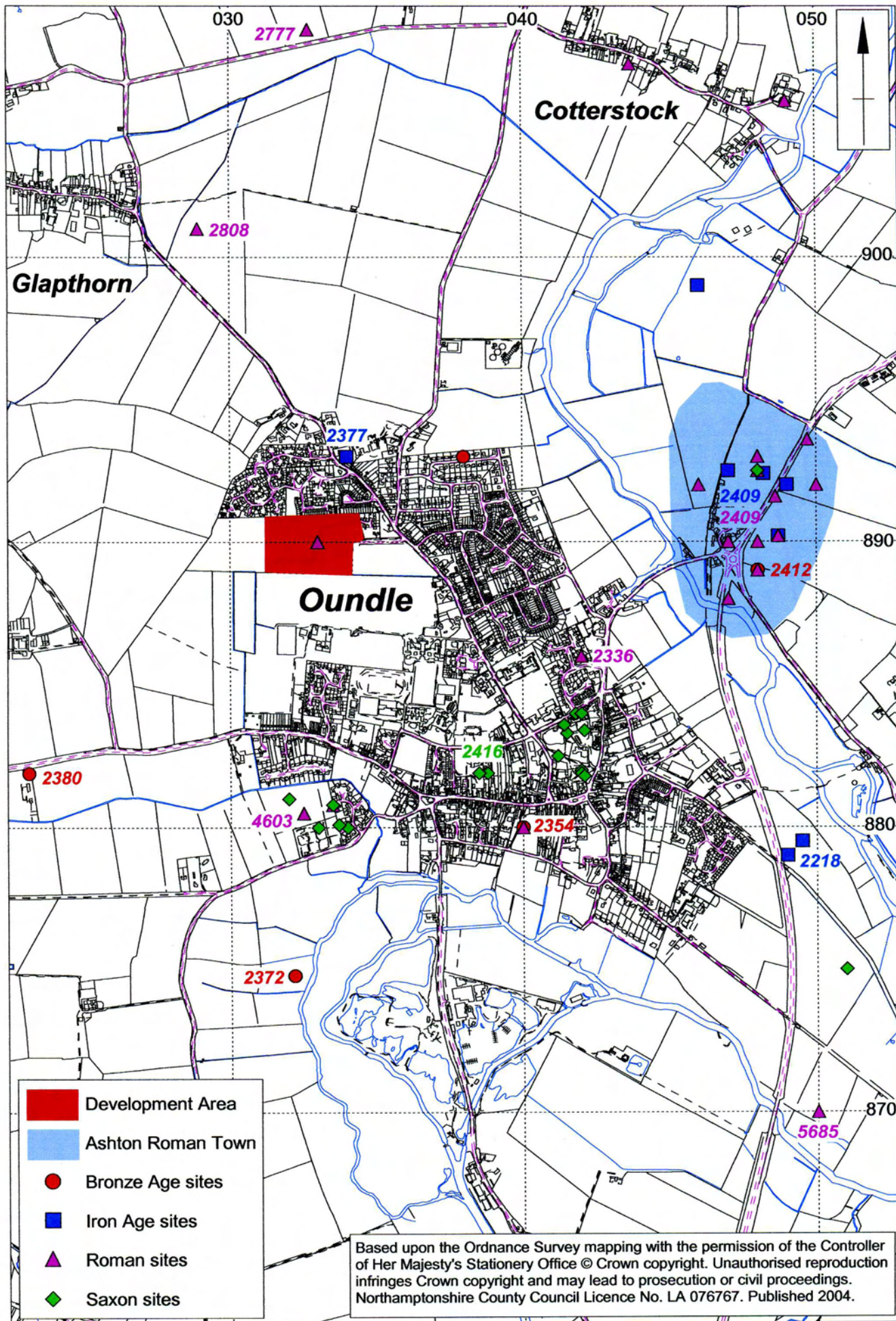


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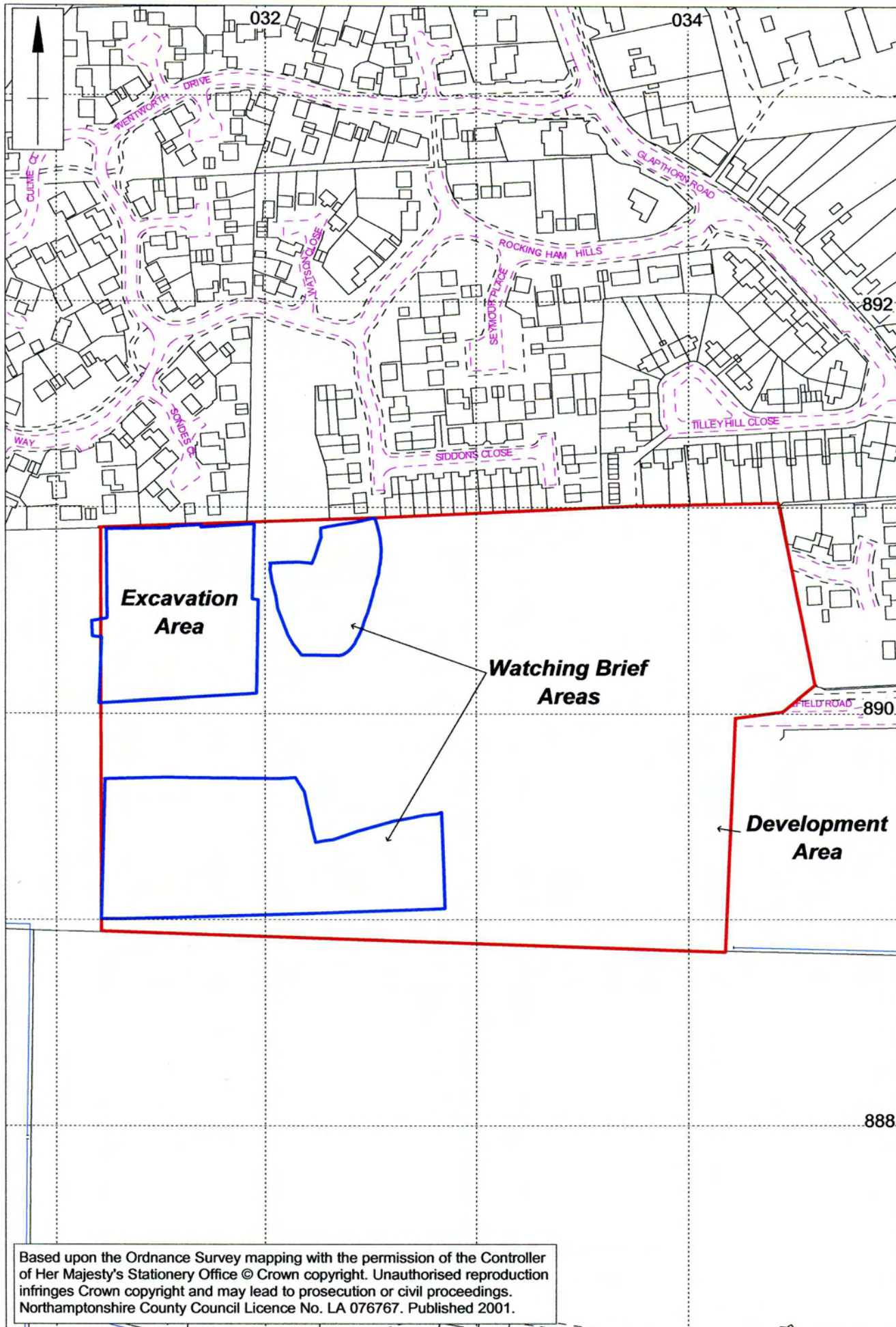
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Fig. 1



Scale 1:18,000

Fig. 2



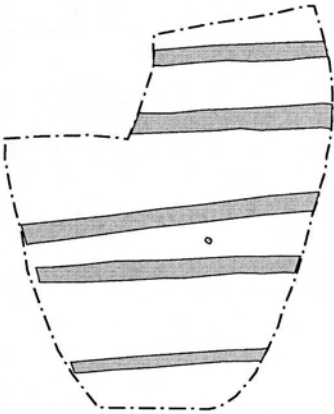
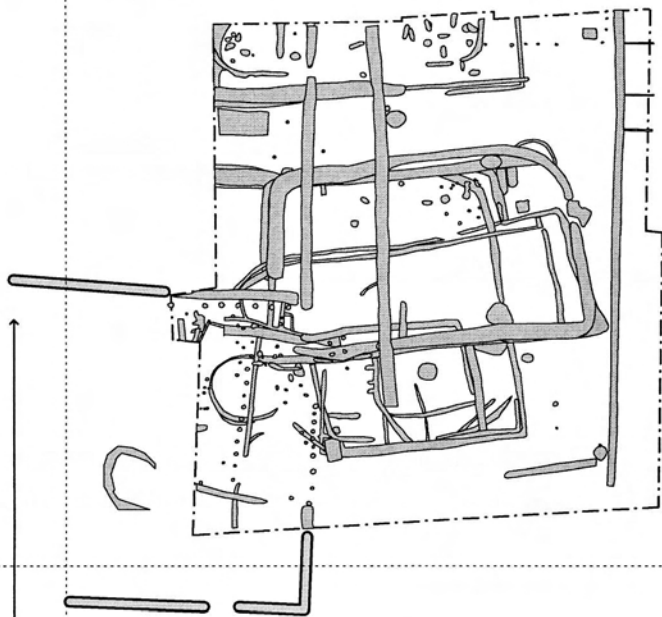
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Fig. 3

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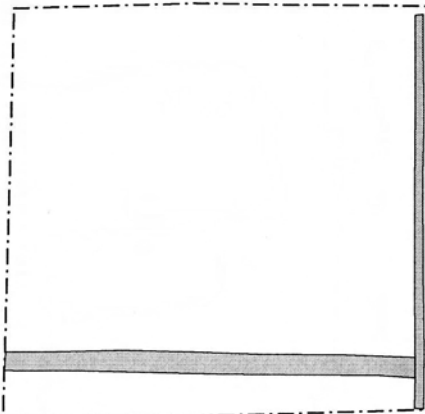


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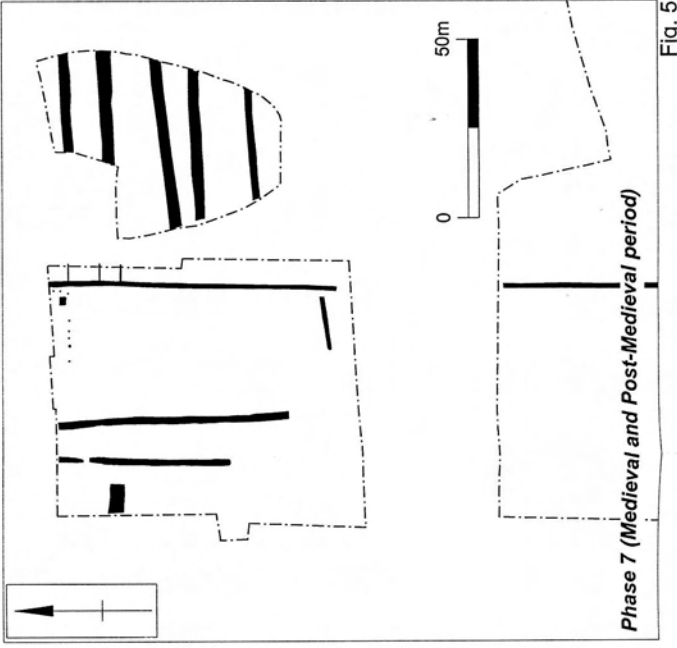
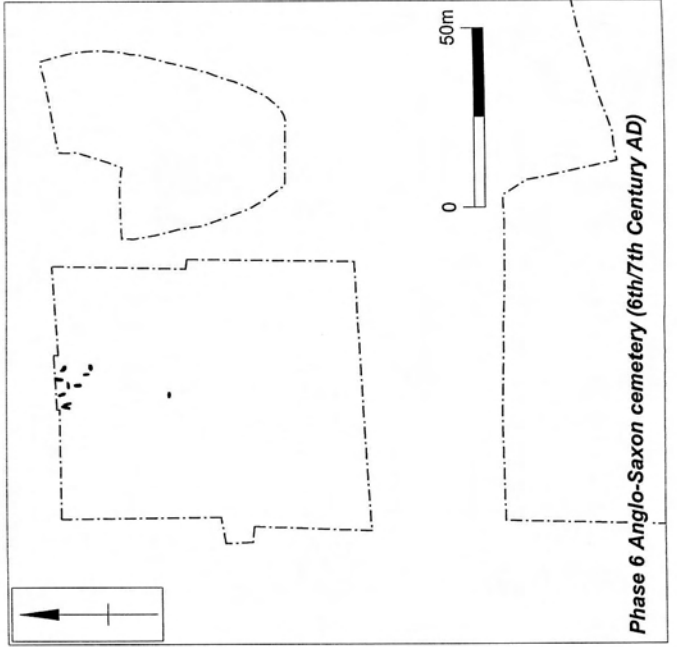
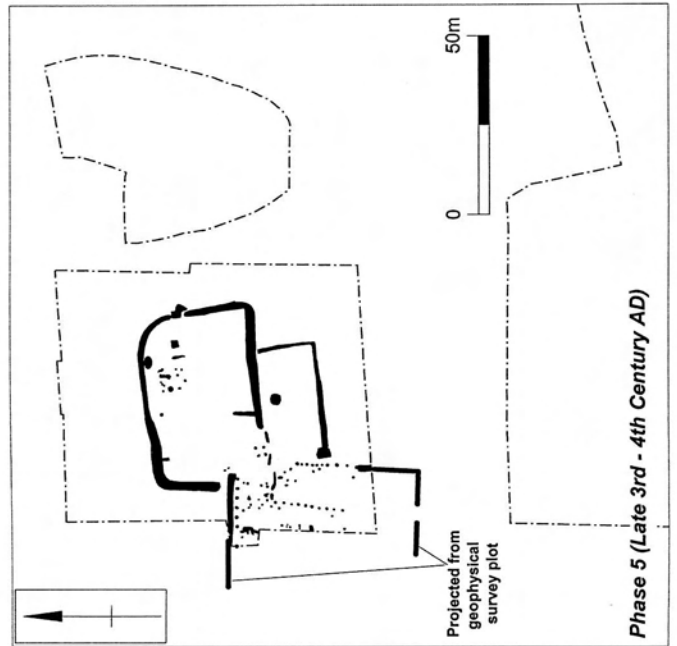
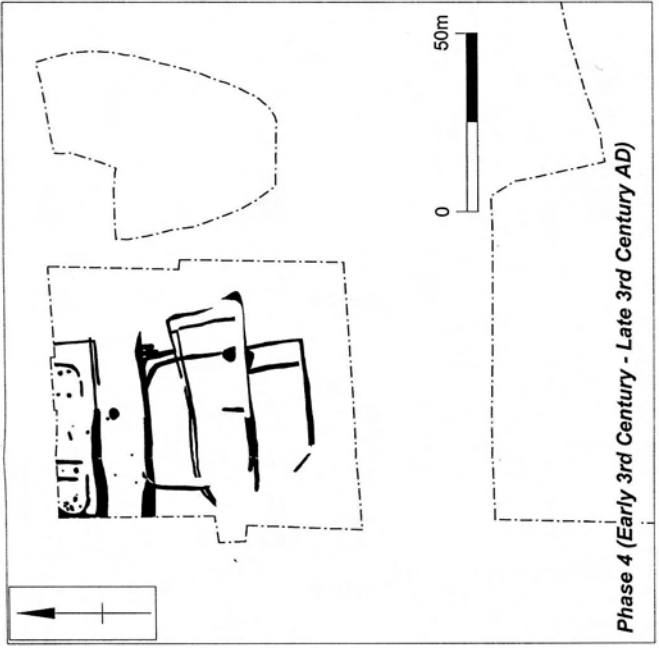
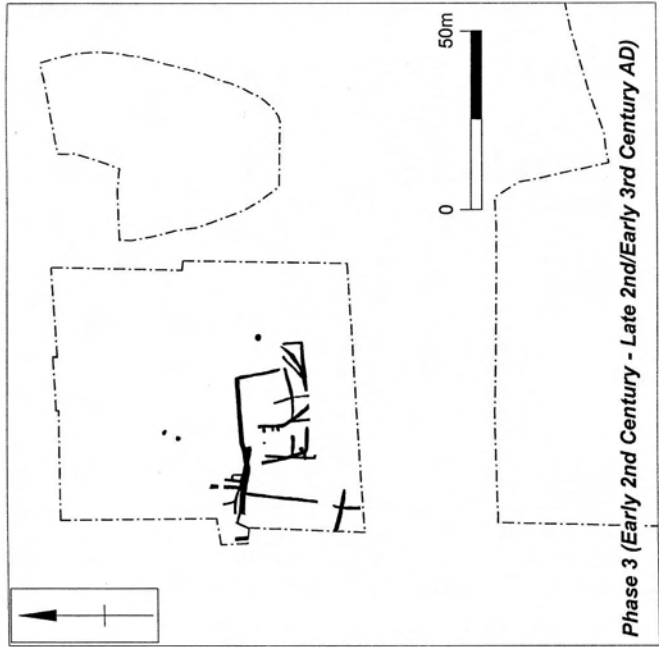
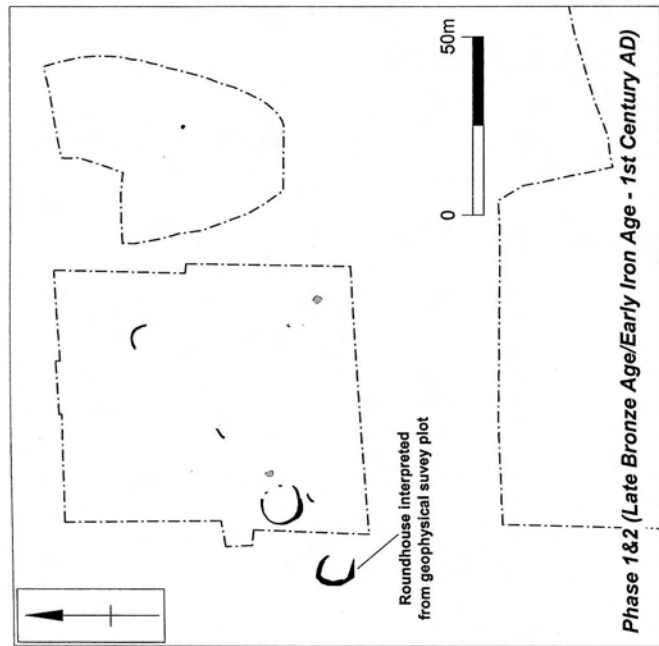
Projected from Geophysical survey plot



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Fig. 4



**Phase 1&2 (Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age - 1st Century AD)**

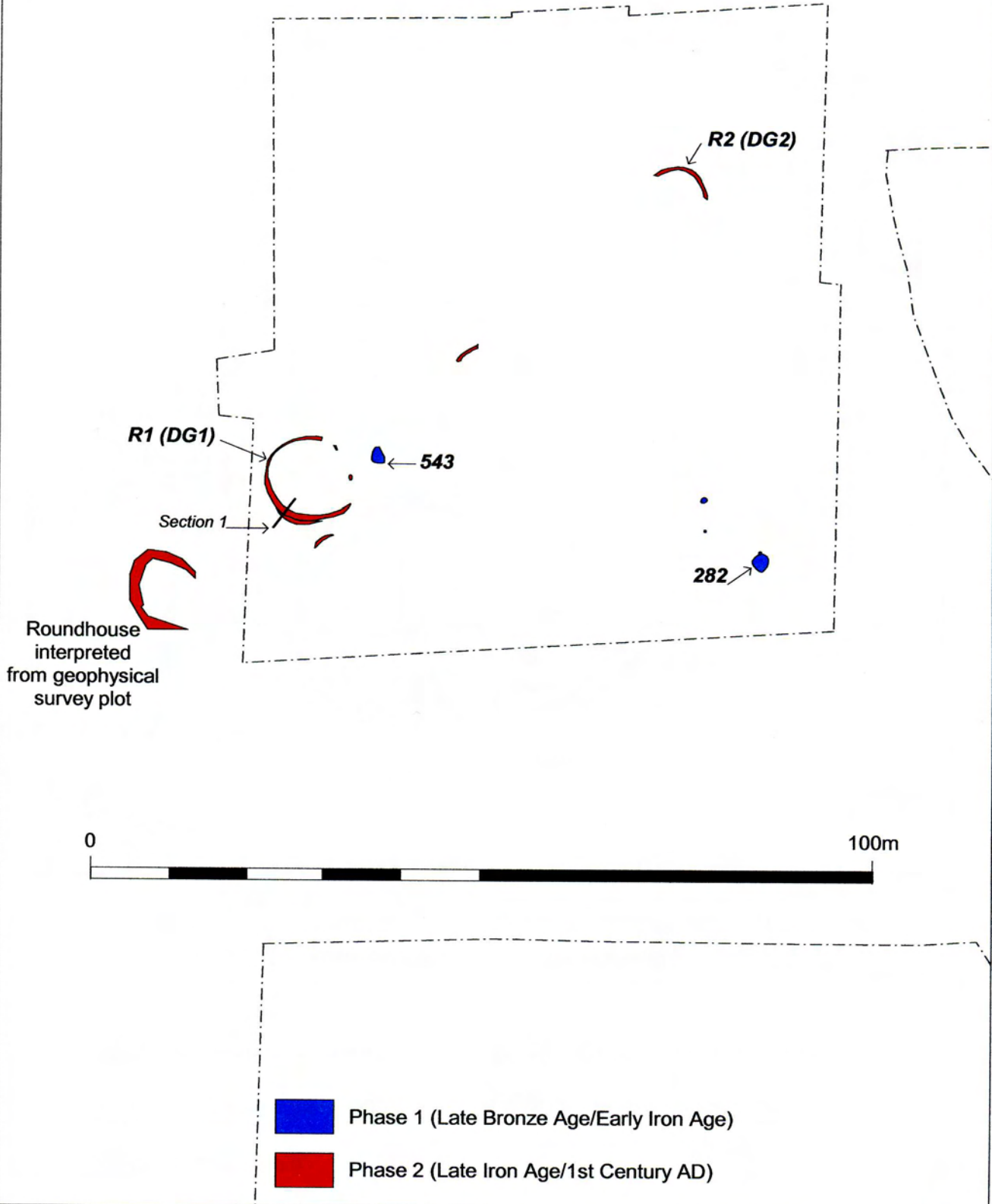
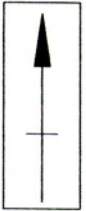
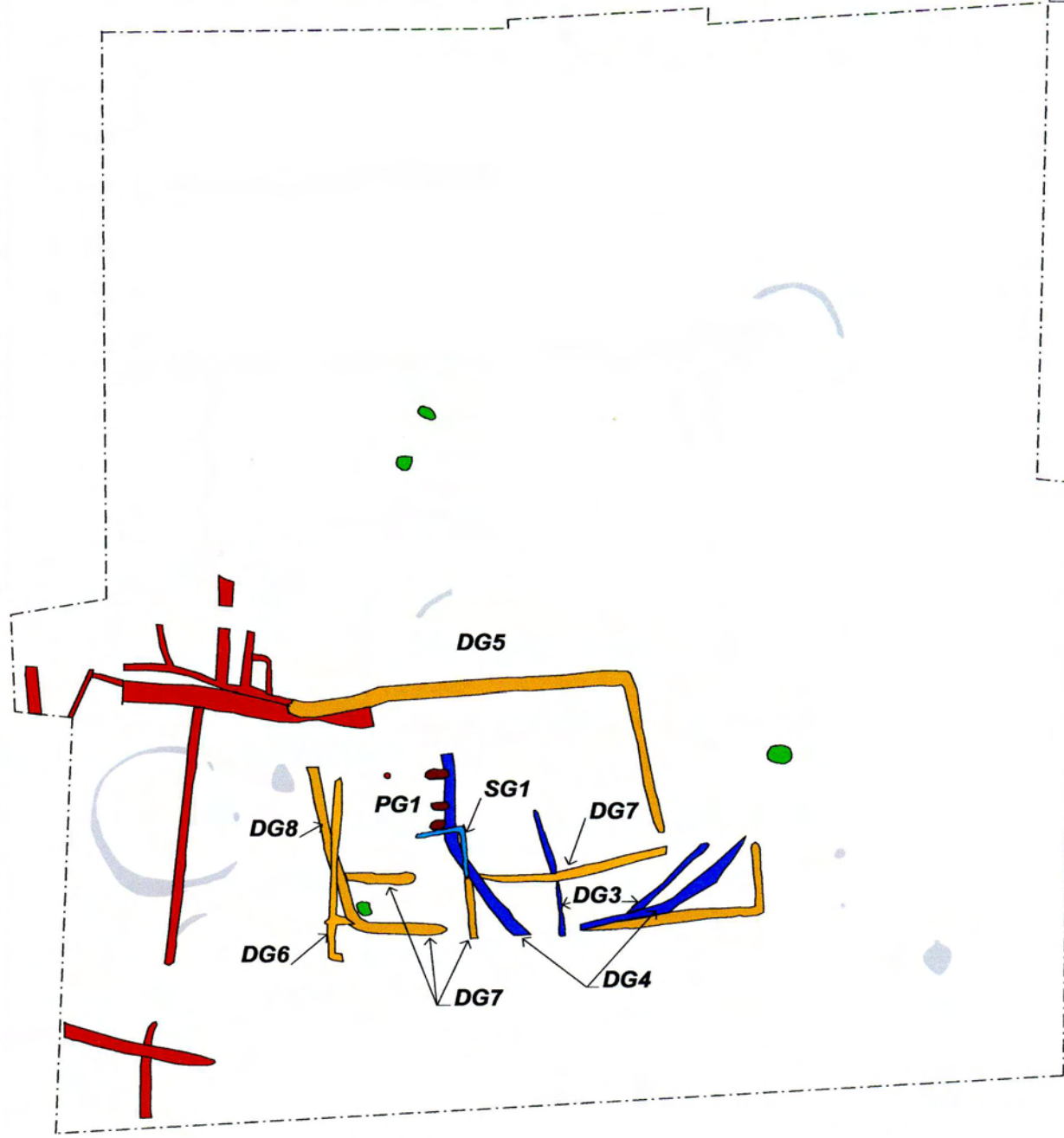


Fig. 6

**Phase 3 (Early 2nd Century - Late 2nd/Early 3rd Century AD)**








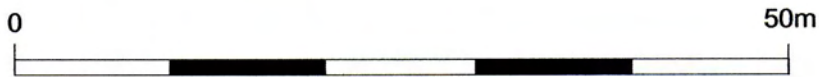
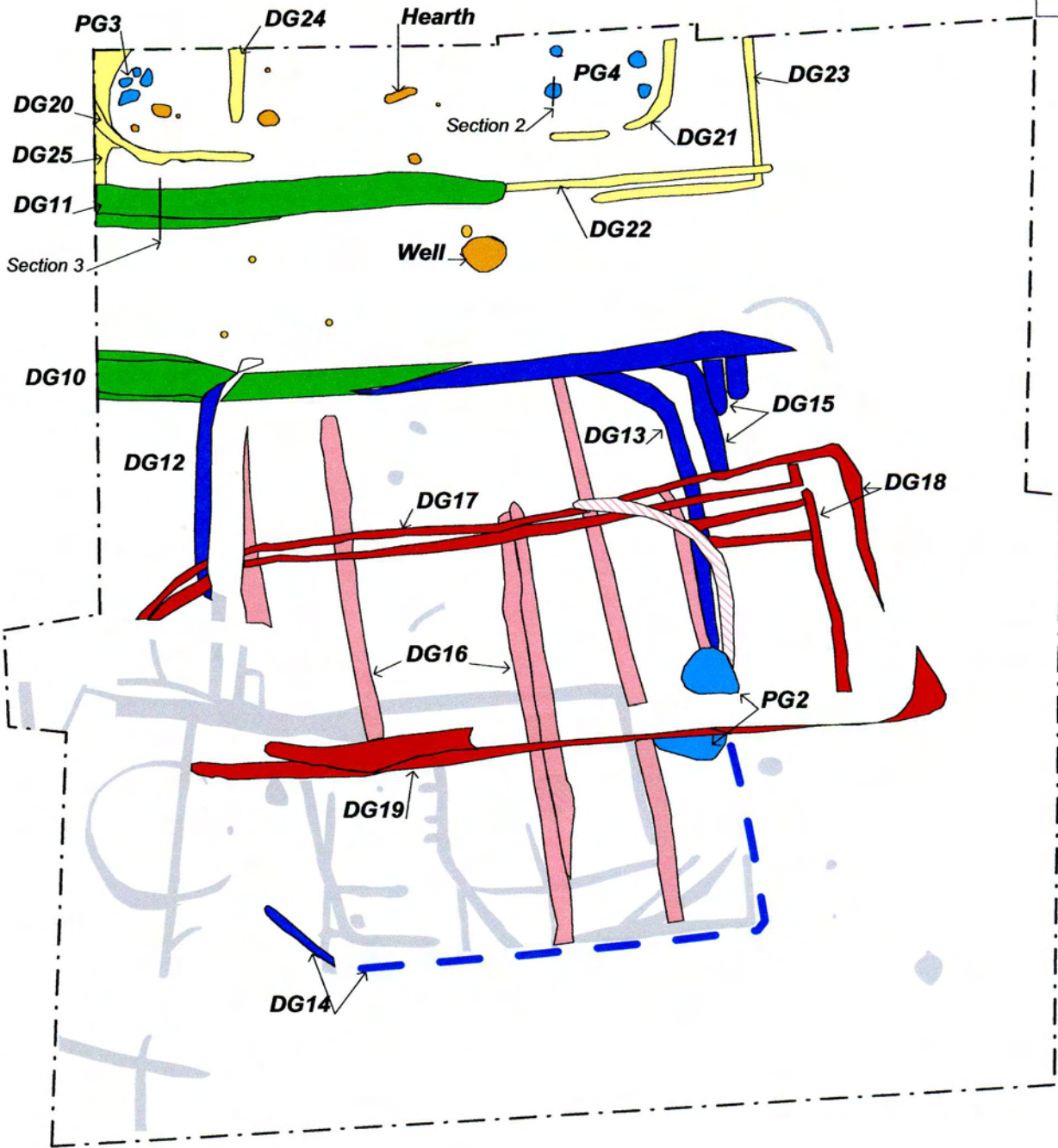
- |                                                                                     |                       |                                                                                     |                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
|  | Enclosure 1 (DG3 & 4) |  | Pit Group 1 (part of Enclosure 2) |
|  | Enclosure 2 (DG5 - 8) |  | Possible associated activity      |
|  | Ditch Group 9         |                                                                                     |                                   |

Fig. 7



# Phase 4 (Early 3rd Century - Late 3rd Century)










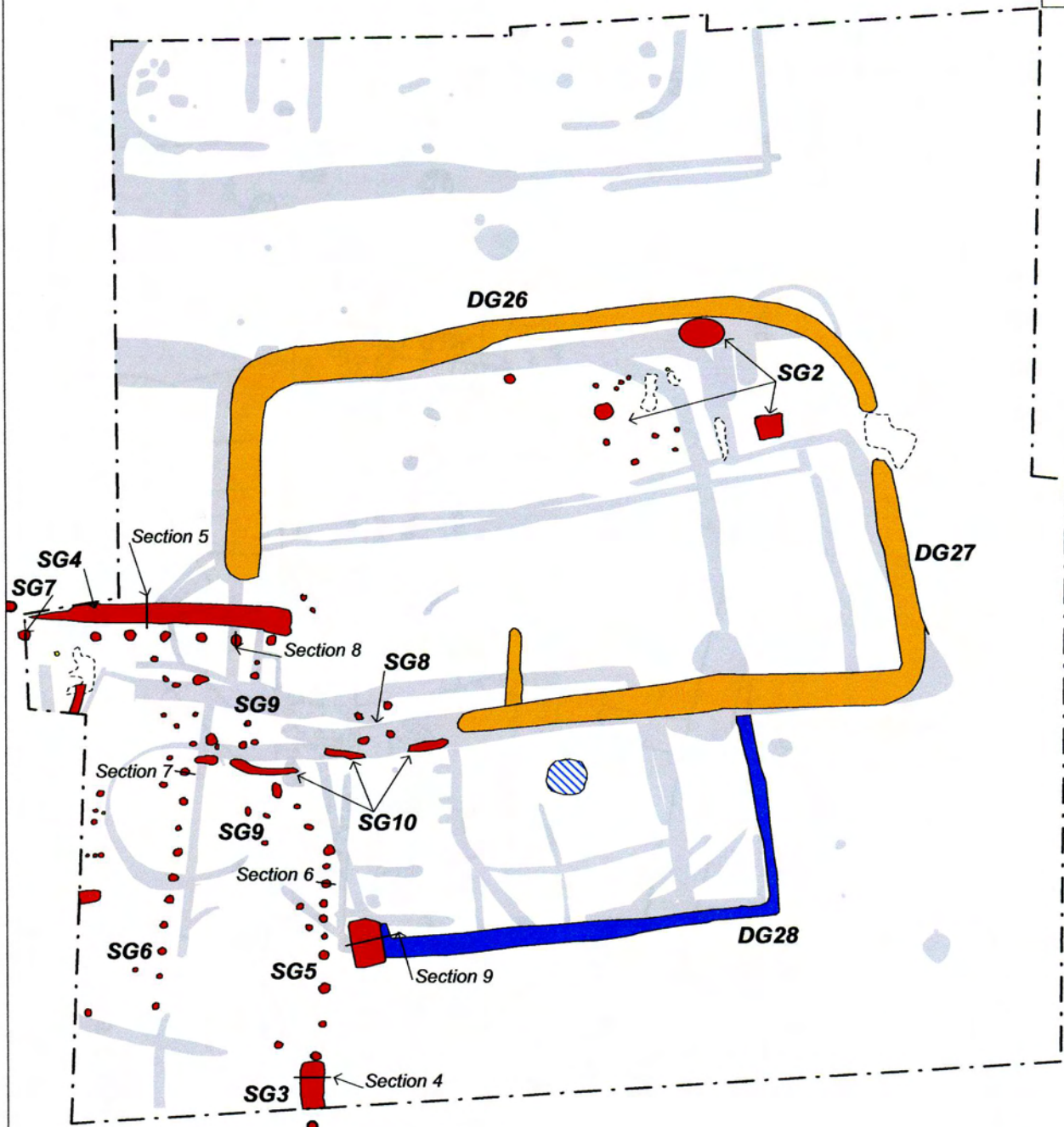
- |                                                                                     |                         |                                                                                     |                                           |                                                                                       |                     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
|  | Droveaway (DG10 & 11)   |  | Enclosure 5 (DG20 - 25)                   |  | Associated activity |
|  | Enclosure 3 (DG12 - 16) |  | Internal sub-divisions (Enclosures 3 & 4) |    | Pit groups          |
|  | Enclosure 4 (DG17 - 19) |                                                                                     |                                           |                                                                                       |                     |

Fig. 8

**Phase 5 (Late 3rd - 4th Century AD)**



Projected from geophysical survey plot




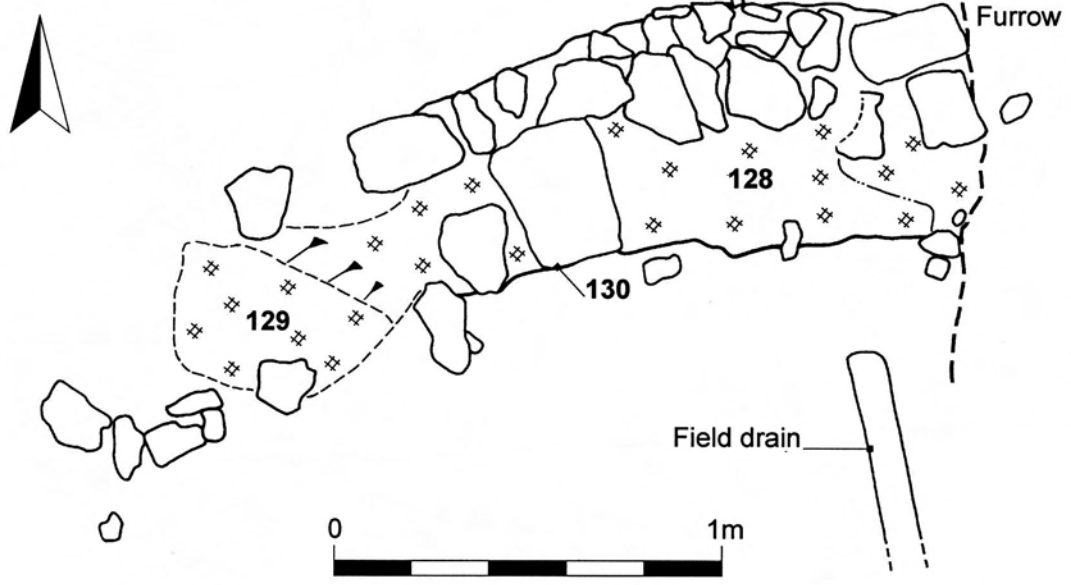
-  Enclosure 6 (DG26 & 27)
-  Enclosure 7 (DG28)
-  Enclosure 8 (SG3 & 4)

Fig. 9



**Phase 4**



**Phase 5**

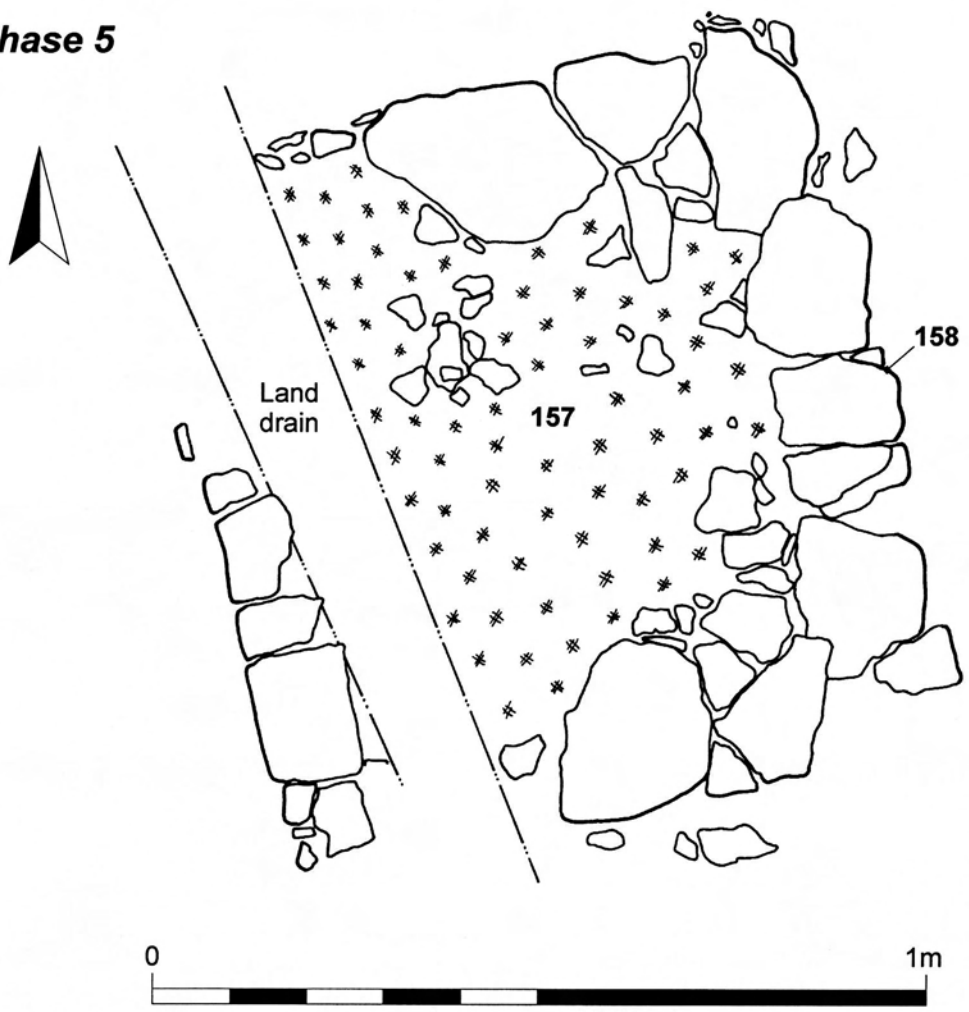


Fig. 11

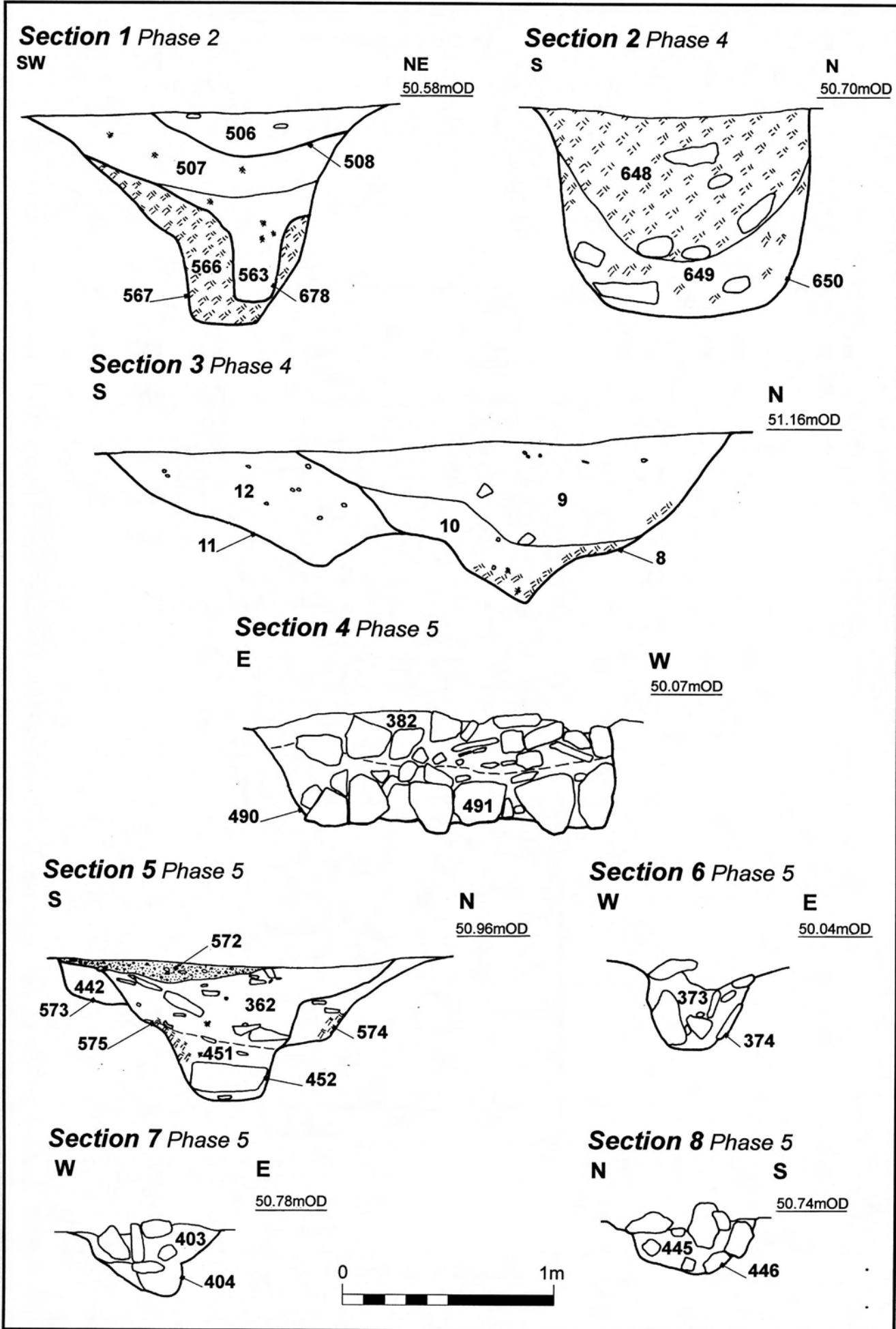
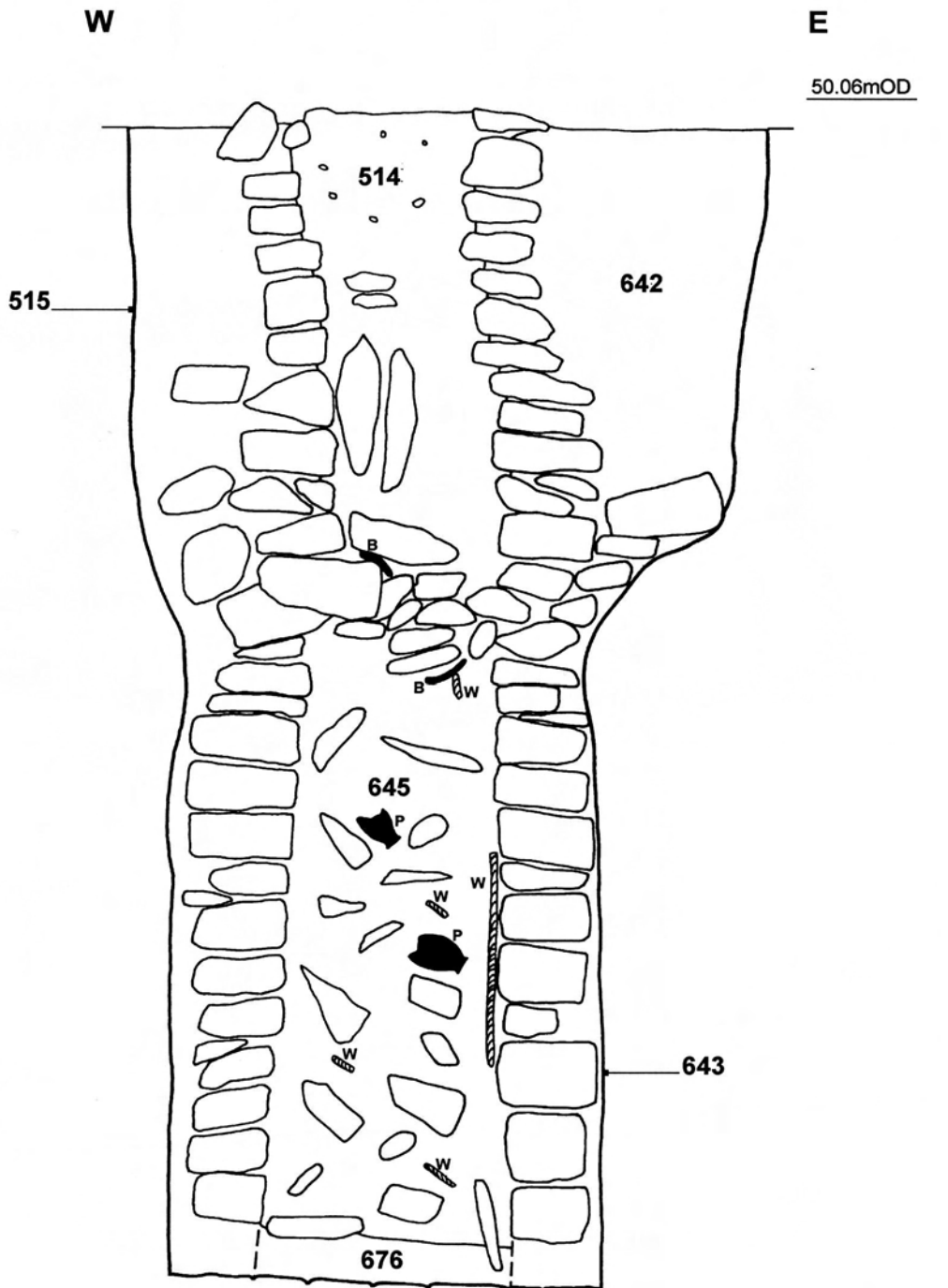


Fig. 12

**Section 9 Phase 5**

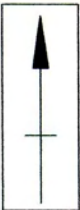


- B Bone
- P Pottery
- w Wood



Fig. 13

**Phase 6 Anglo-Saxon cemetery (6th/7th Century AD)**



**Burials 2-10**

**Burial 1**




 Saxon burials

Fig. 14

Phase 6: The Anglo-Saxon cemetery  
Burials 2-10

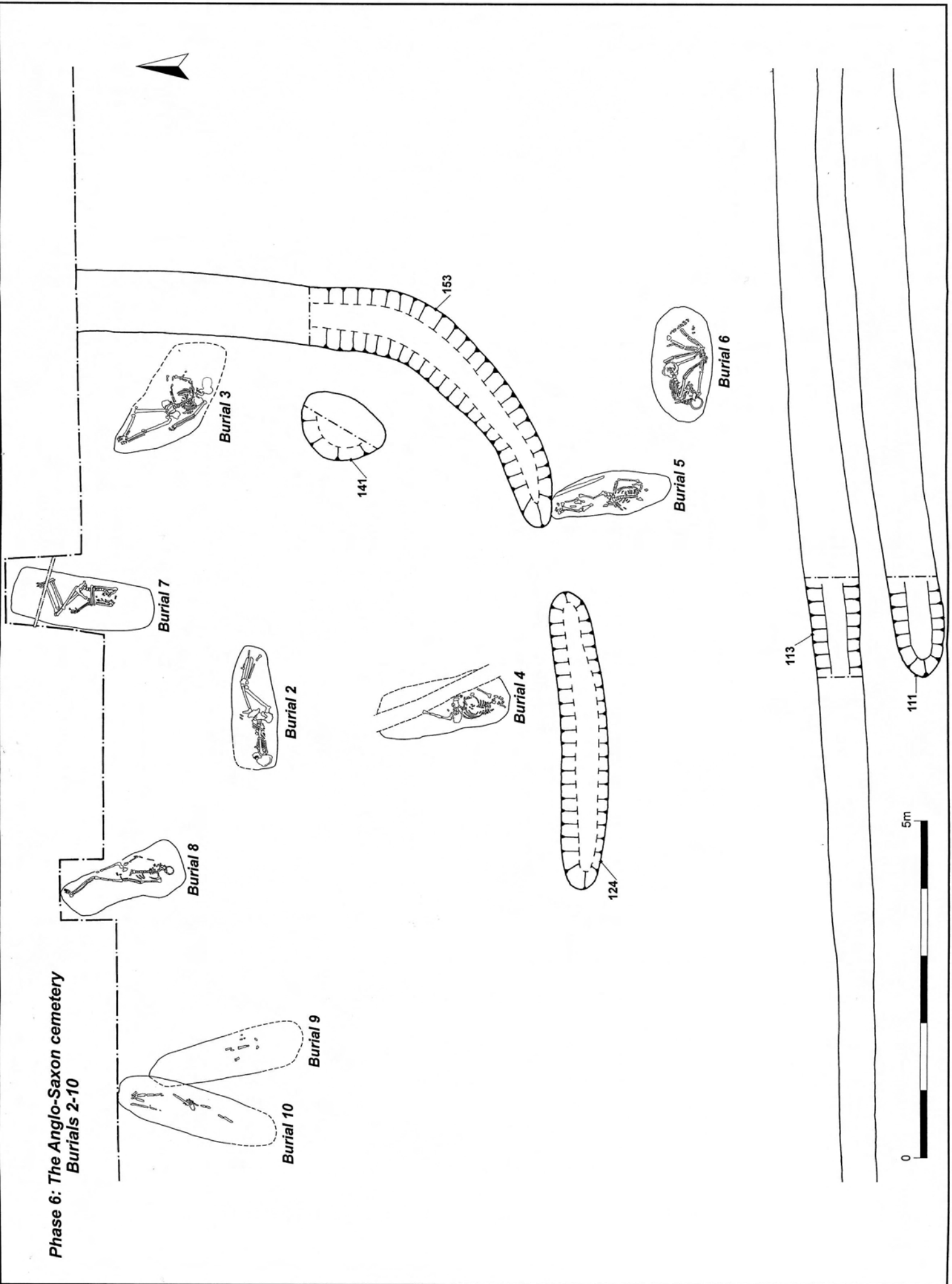


Fig. 15



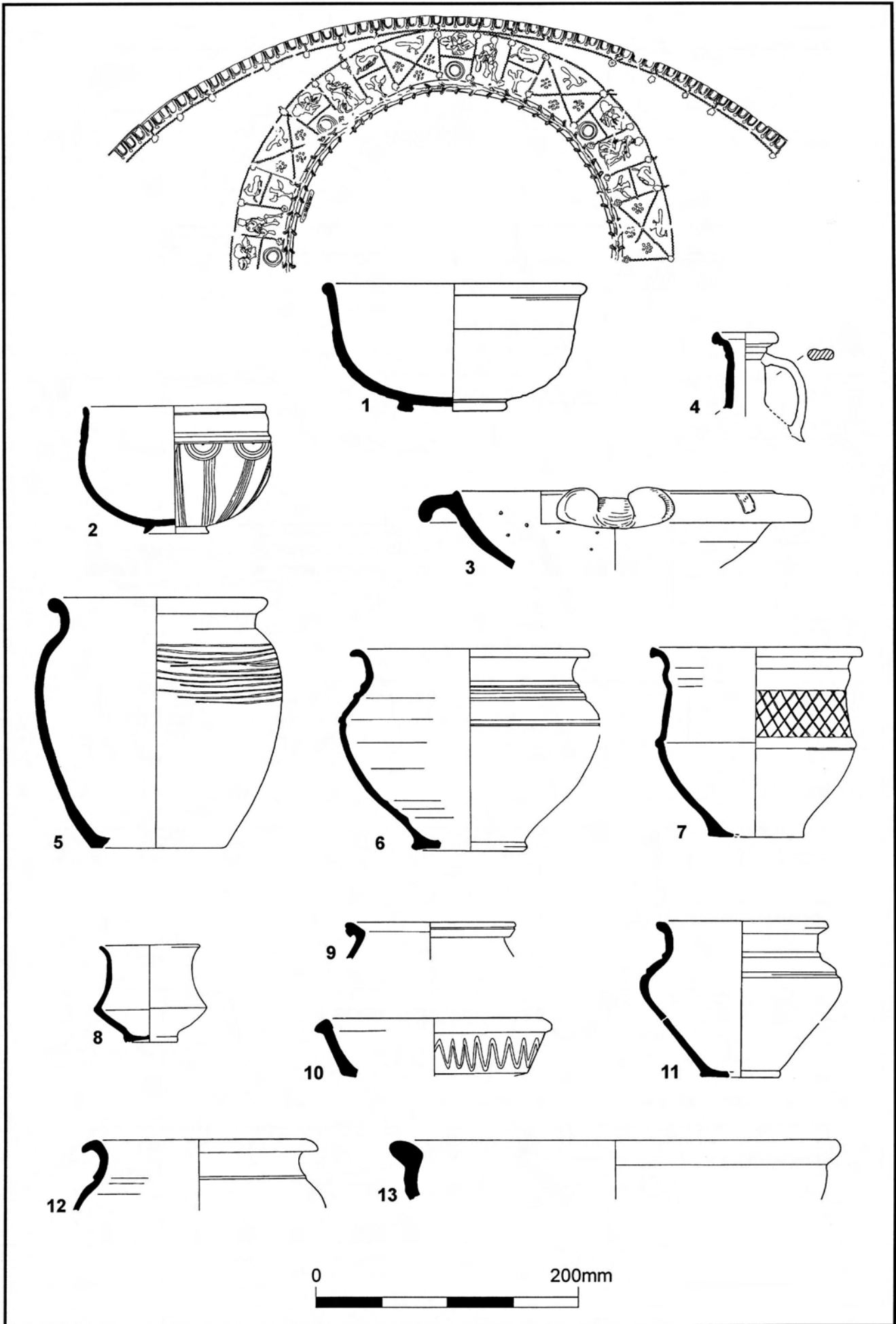


Fig. 16

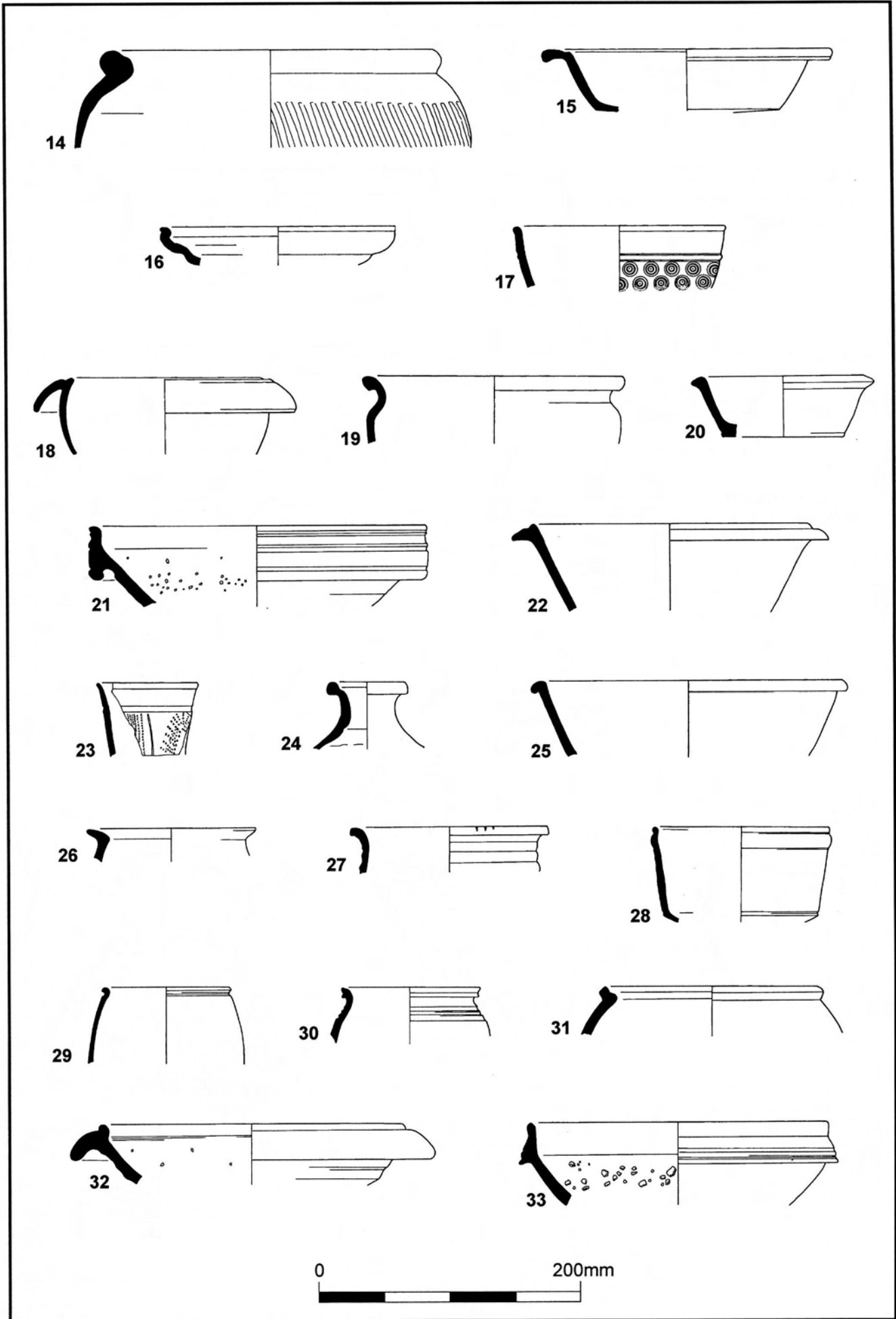


Fig. 17

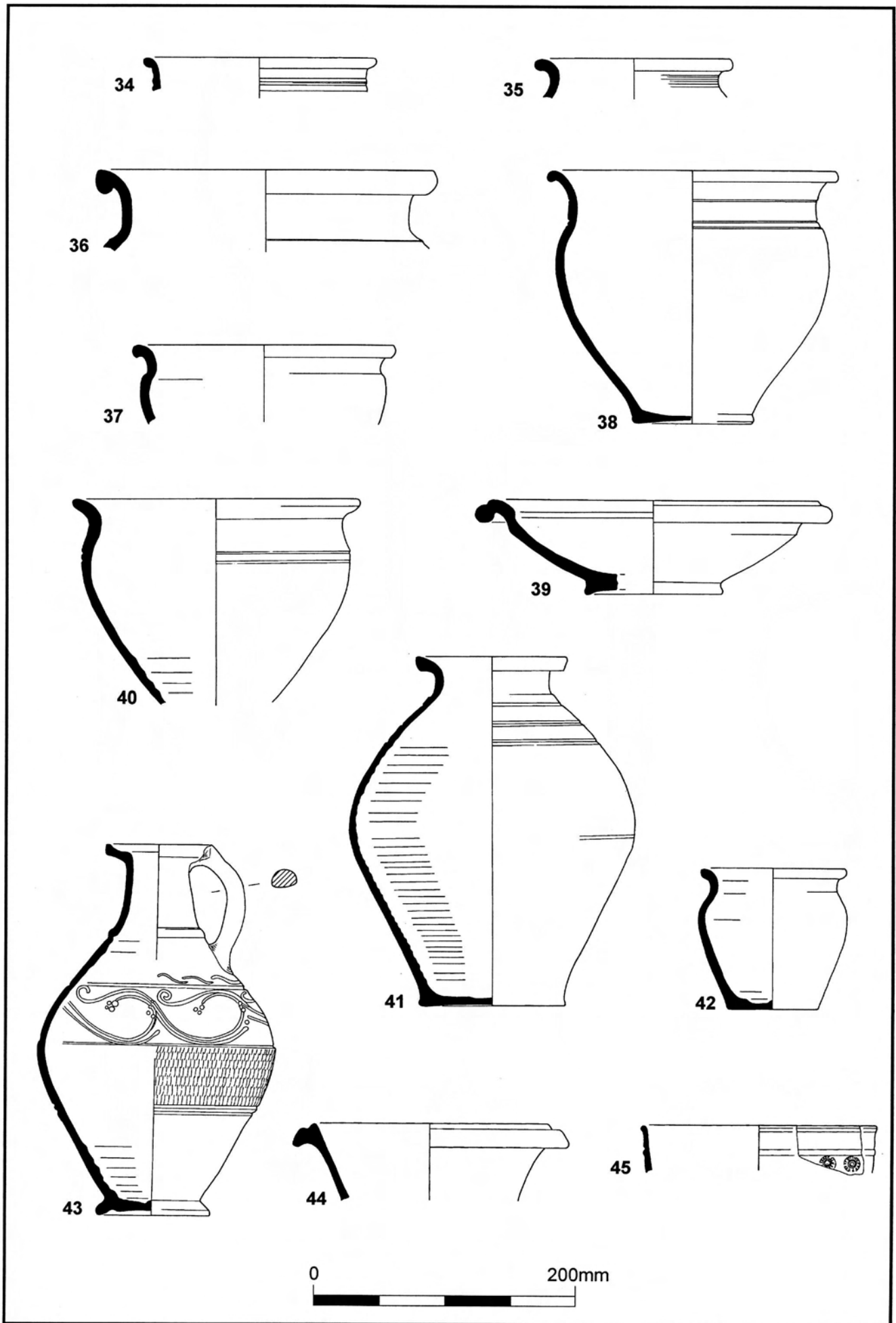


Fig. 18

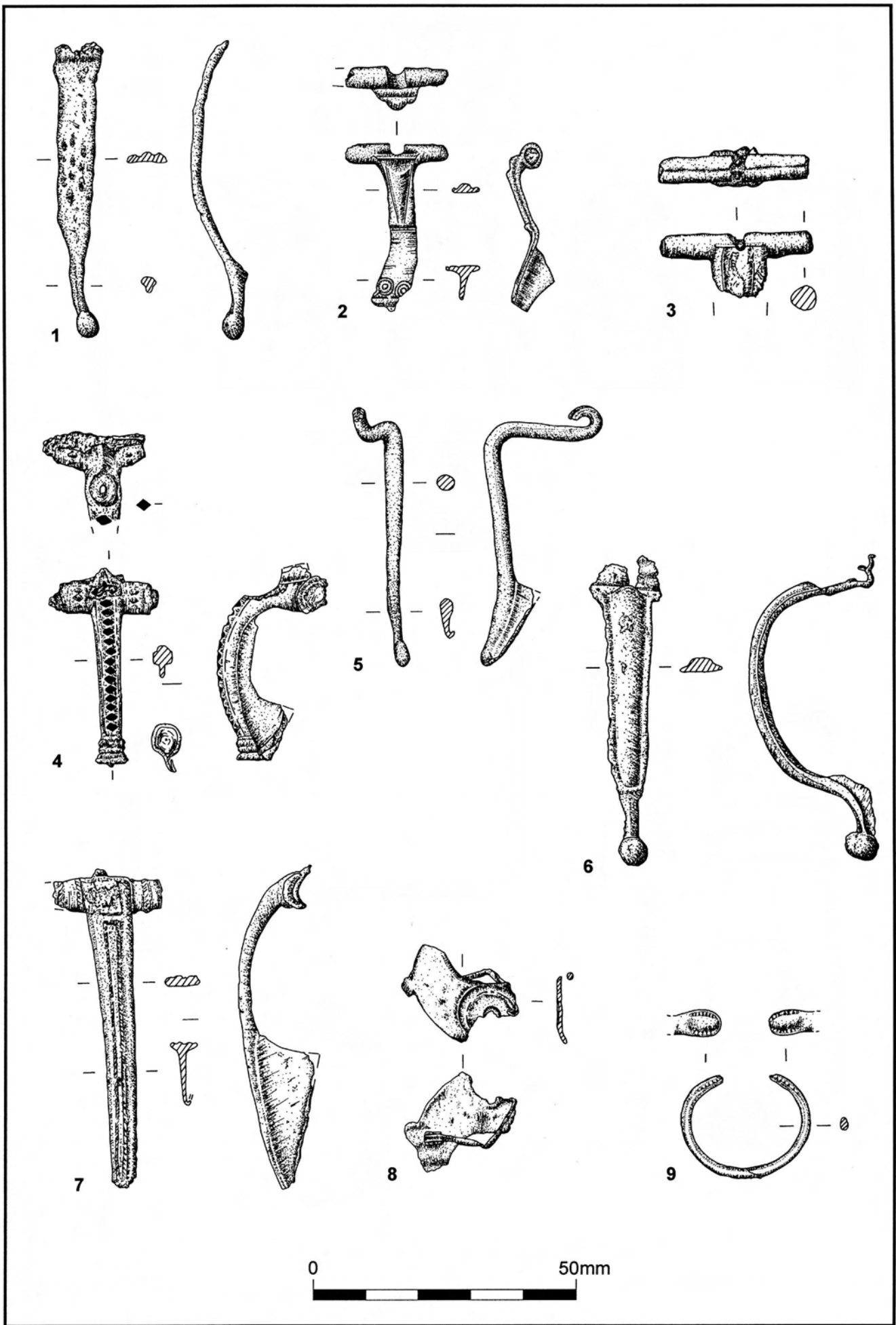


Fig. 19

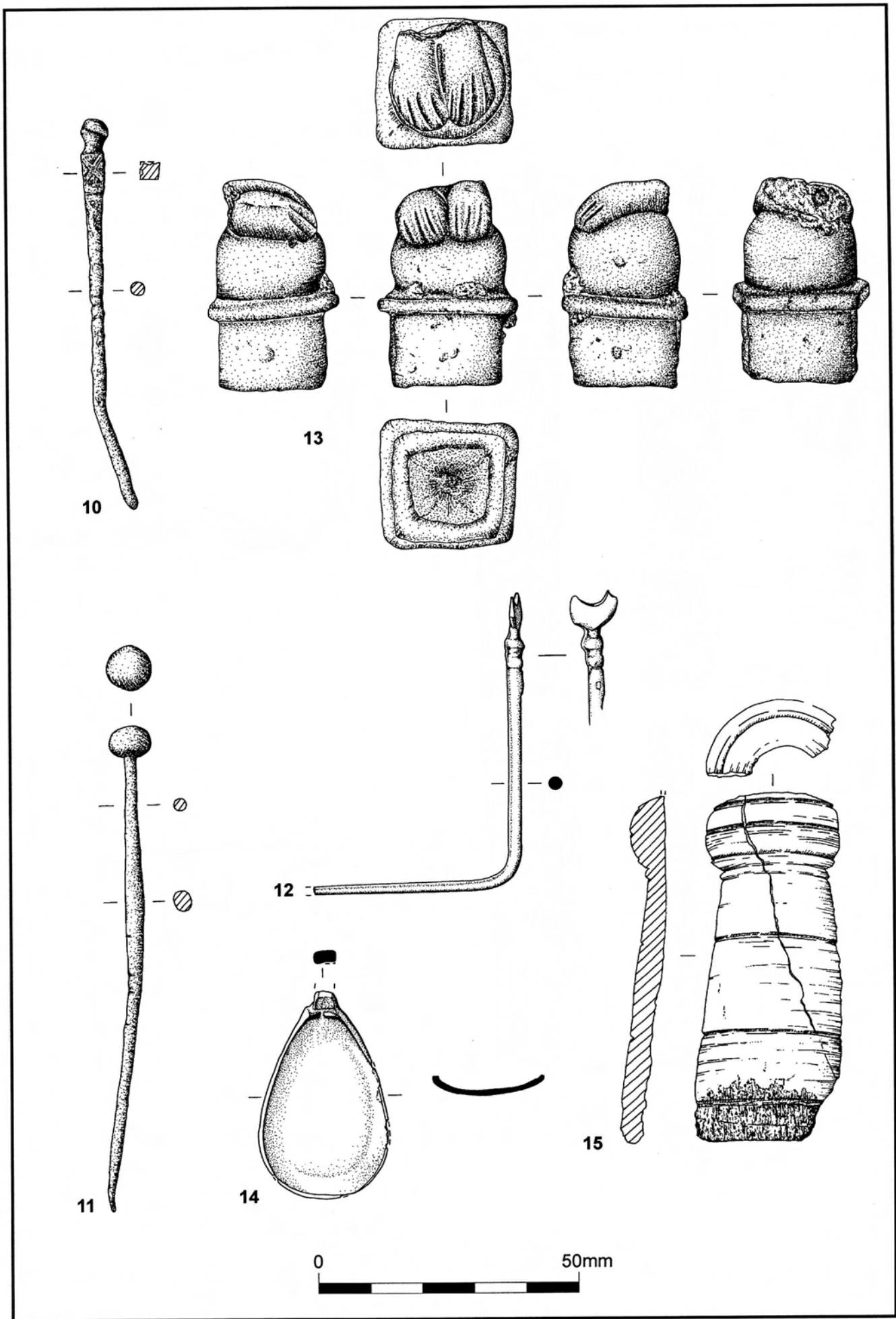


Fig. 20

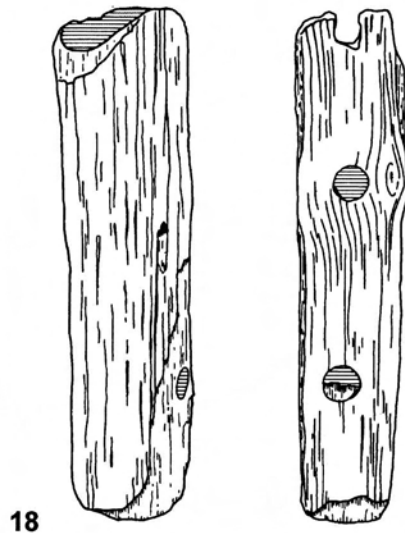
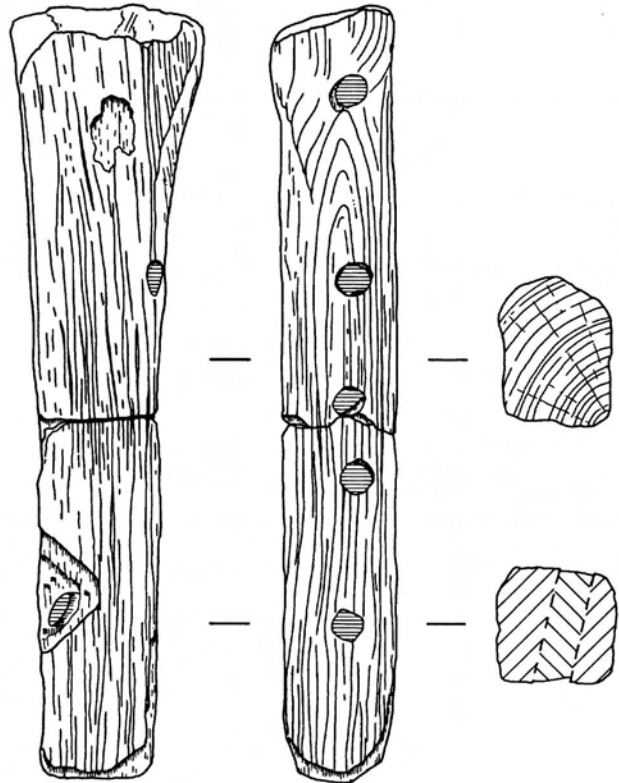
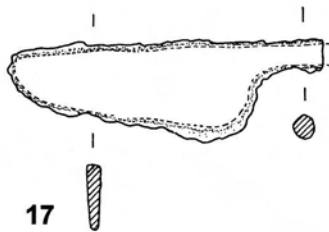
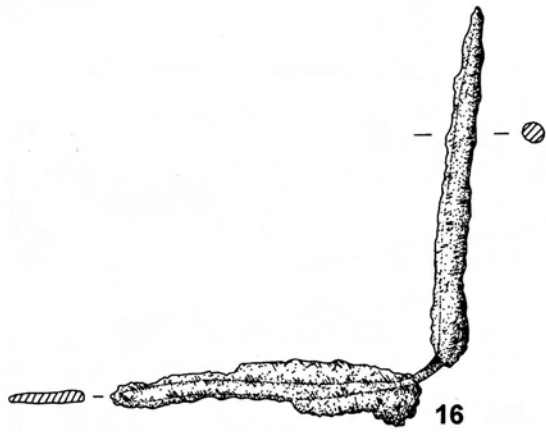
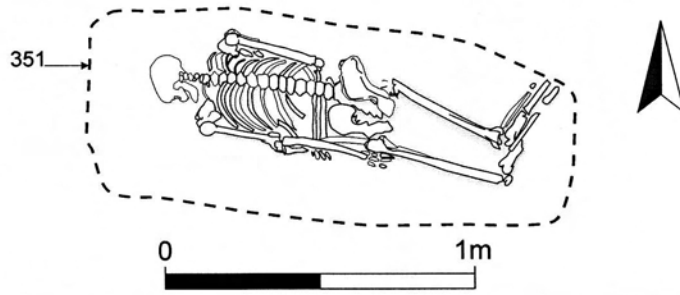
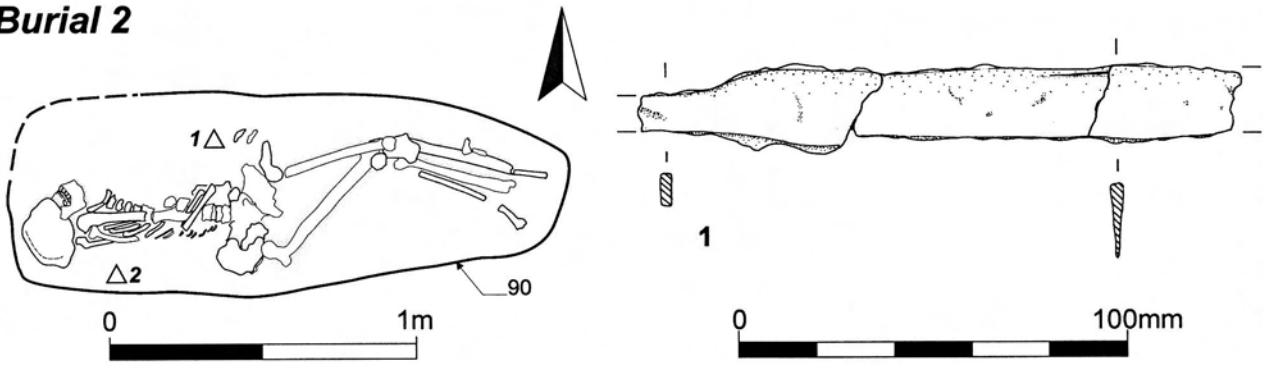


Fig. 21

**Burial 1**



**Burial 2**



**Burial 3: Pottery**

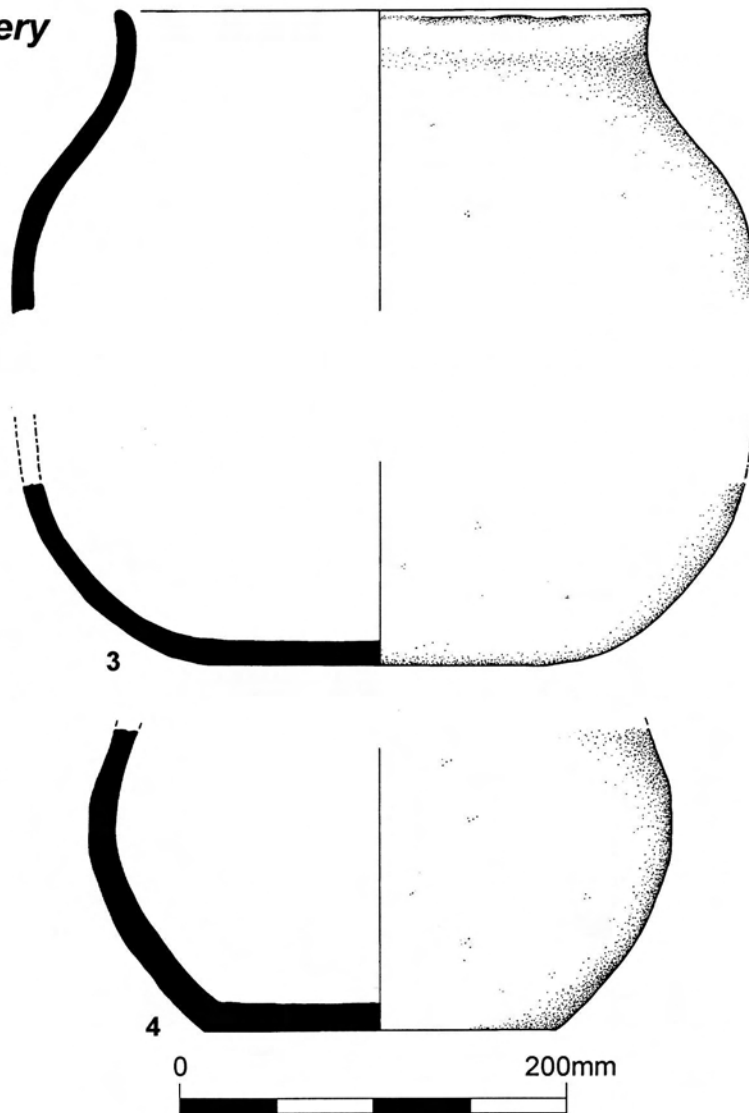
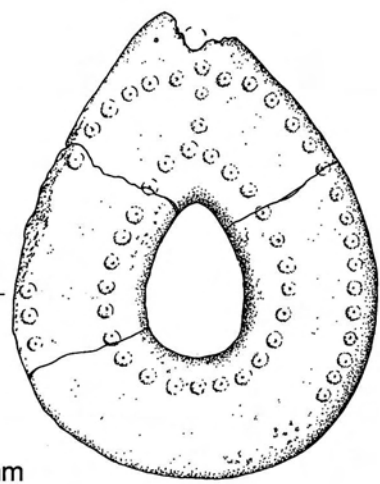
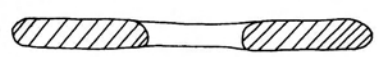
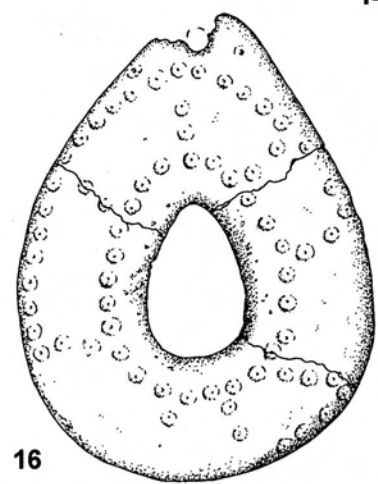
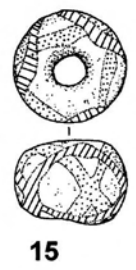
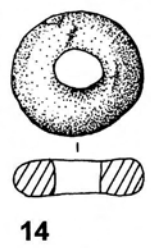
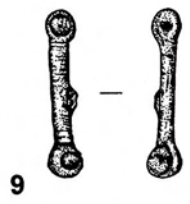
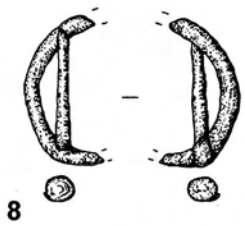
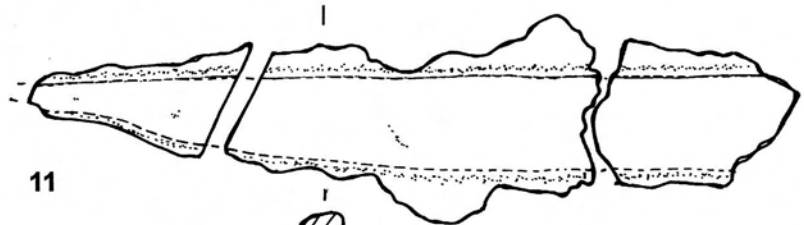
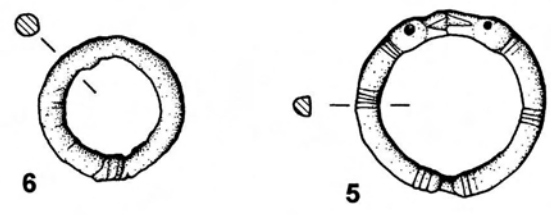
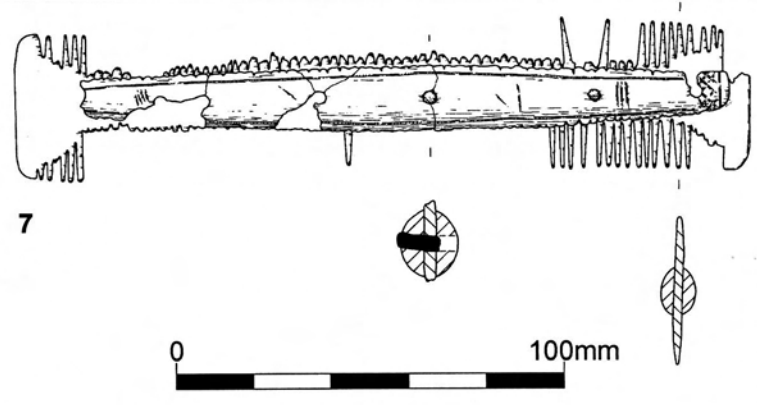
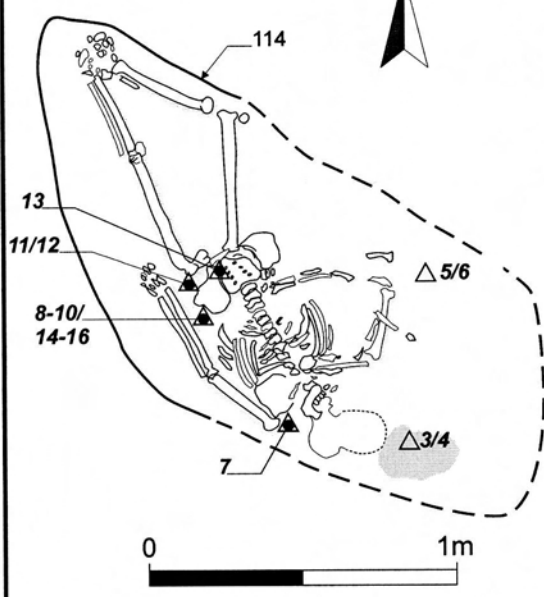


Fig. 22

**Burial 3**



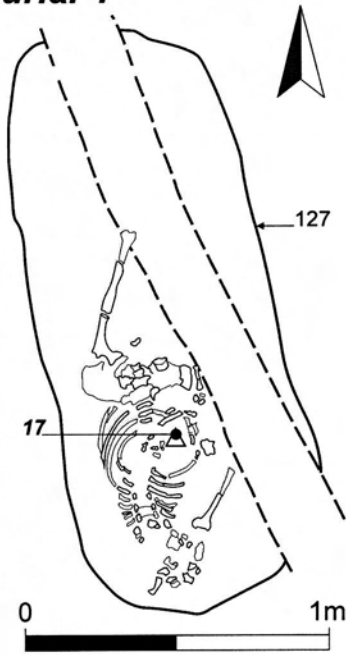
Red  
Green



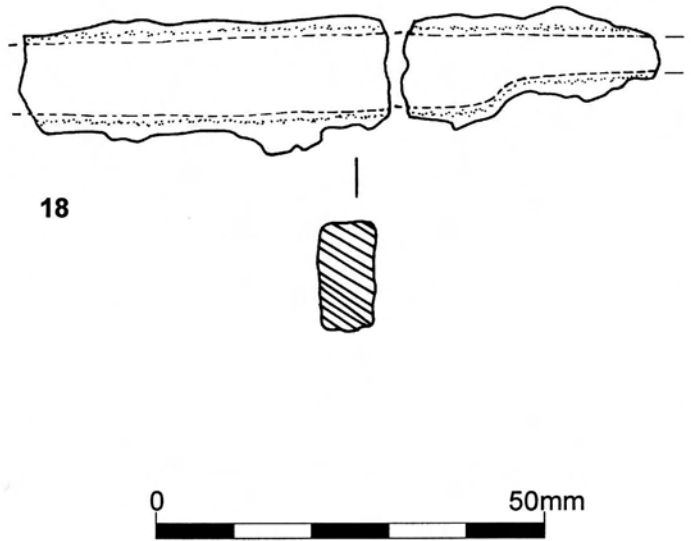
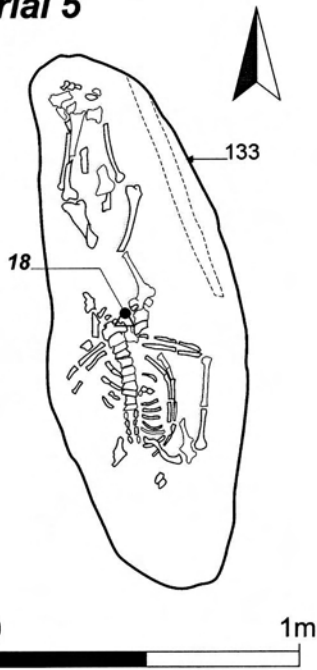
Fig. 23



**Burial 4**



**Burial 5**



**Burial 6**

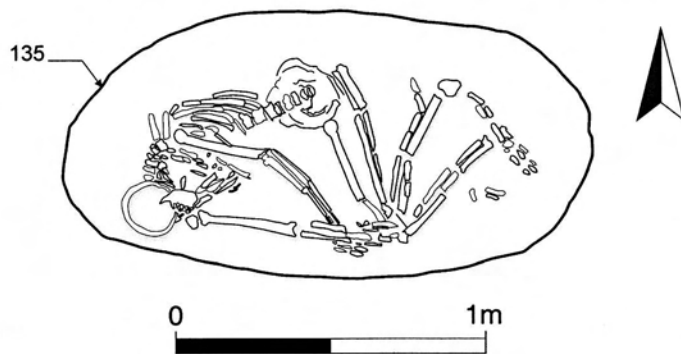


Fig. 24

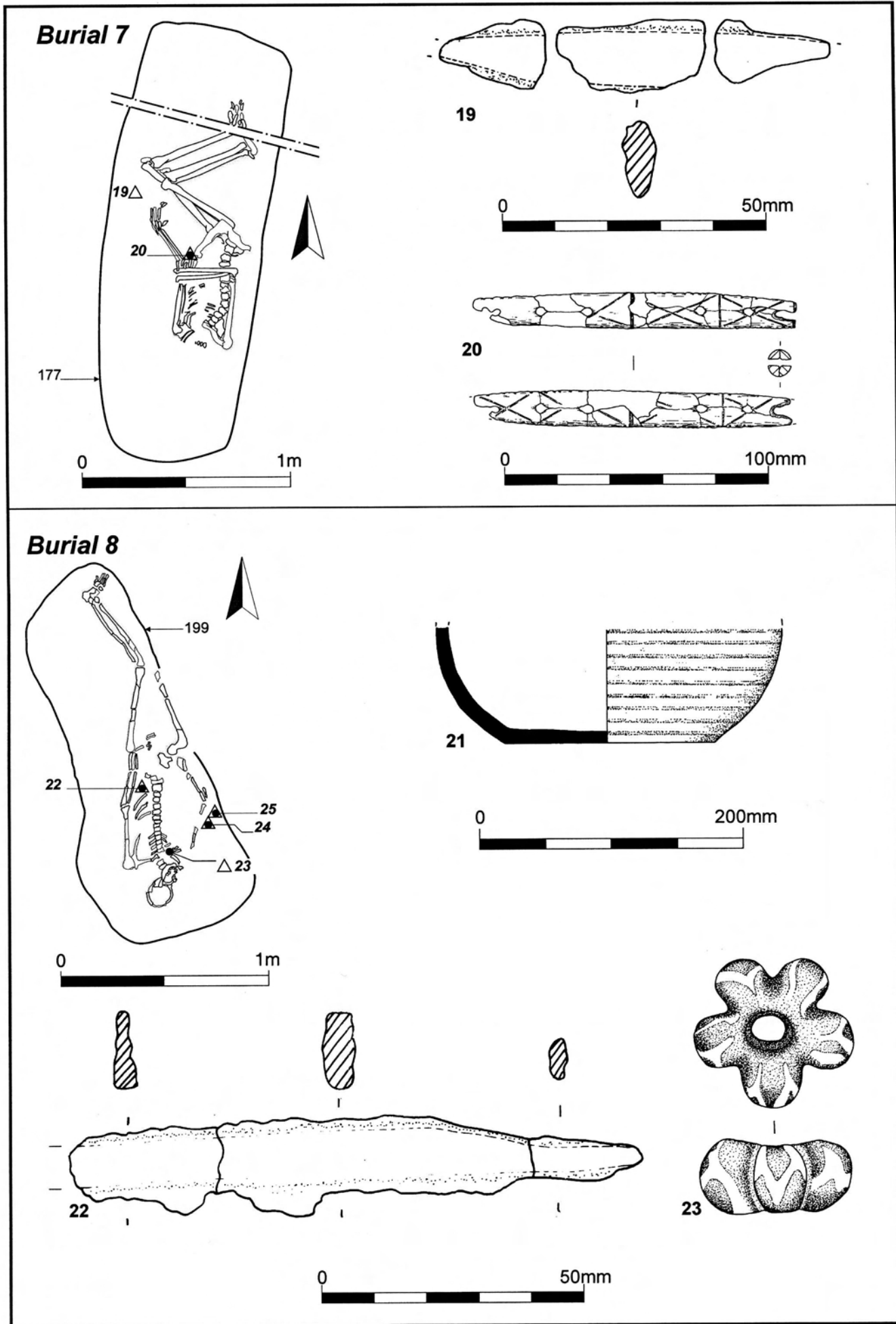


Fig. 25

**Burials 9 and 10**

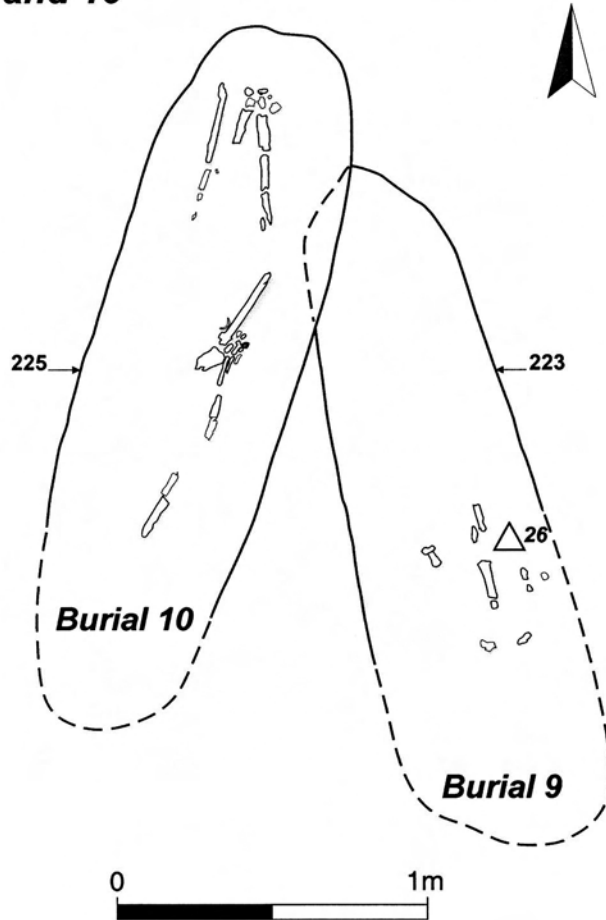


Fig. 26



Plate 1: General view of site, looking towards the south-west



Plate 2: General view of site, looking towards the north-east



Plate 3: Hearth (130): Phase 4

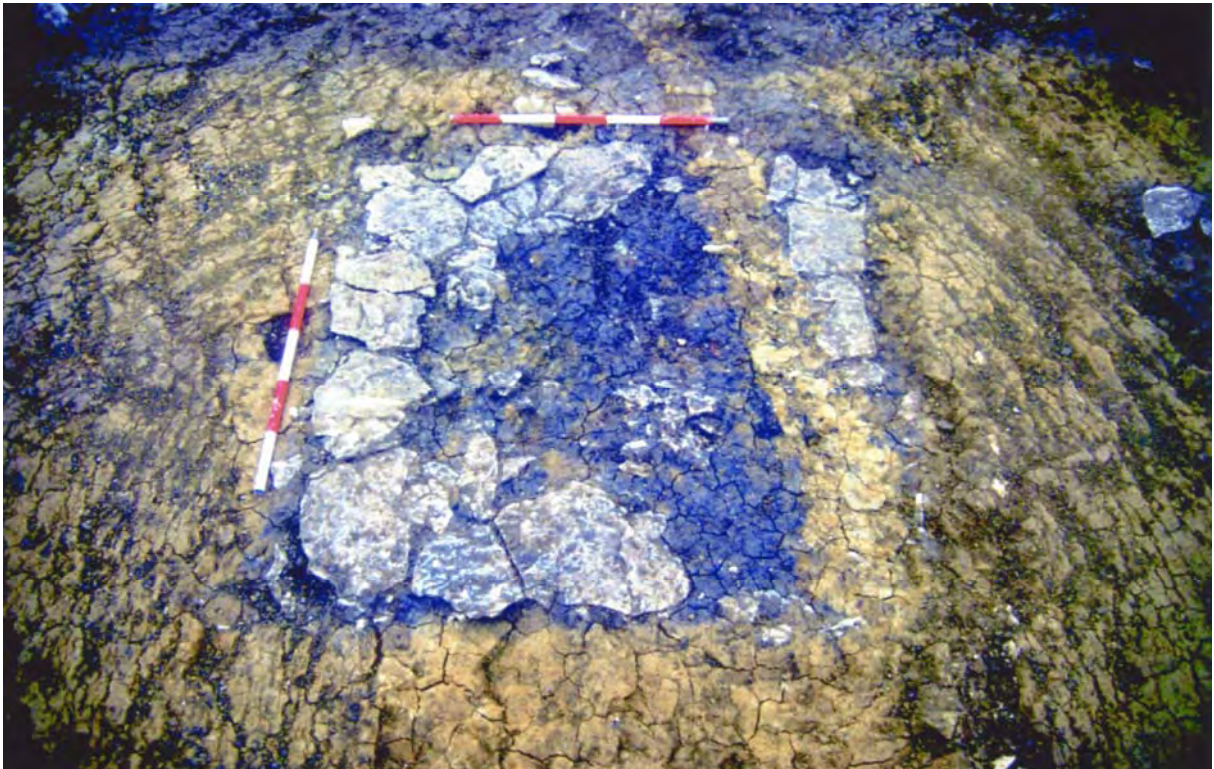


Plate 4: Hearth (158), Phase 5



Plate 5: Roman well (515)



Plate 6: Roman pottery (see Fig 16,1 and Fig 18, 41 & 43)

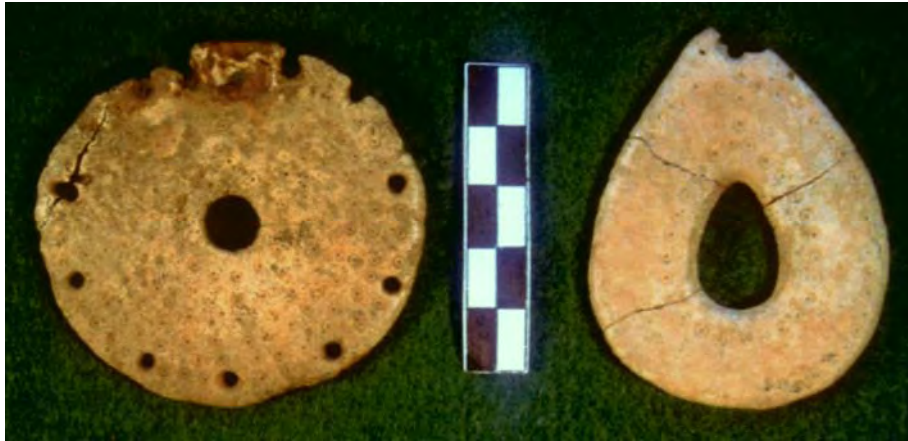


Plate 7: Antler pendants from Burial 1 (right) and Wootton Fields Roman villa, Northampton (left)

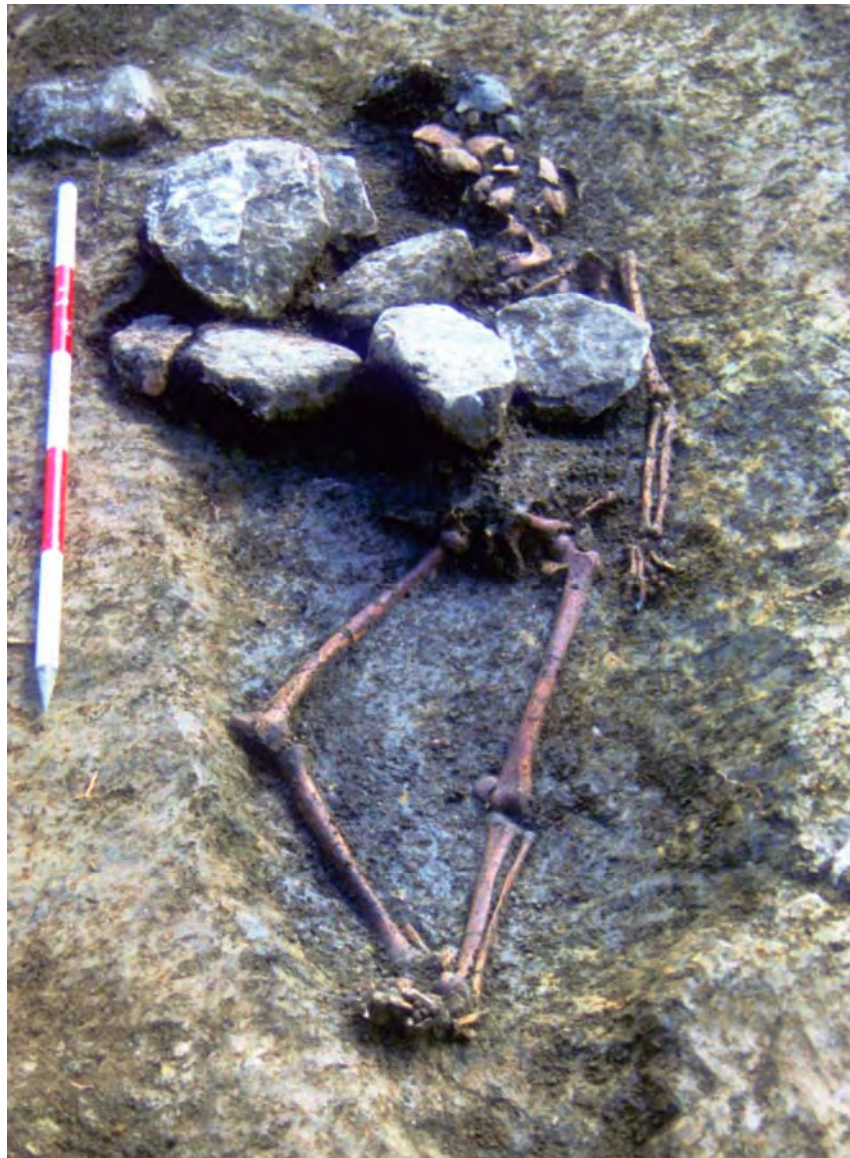


Plate 8: Anglo-Saxon Burial 3 (showing overlying stones)