

Archæological Notes

ARCHÆOLOGICAL NOTES FROM READING MUSEUM

The following objects have been dredged from the River Thames by the Thames Conservancy Board and are now in the loan collection in Reading Museum.

Iron spear-head, 6th–7th century A.D. with crescentic hollows cut in alternate wings. $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches long. Found approximately six hundred yards downstream from Sonning Bridge, on the Berks side, by C. Eggleton.

Iron spear-head with imperfect socket topped by bronze/brass band and a hollow at the base of the blade on both sides. Age uncertain. Found by F. Lee, approximately seven hundred yards downstream from Sonning Bridge on the Berks side.

Stoneware jug, 16th–17th century, perfect except for a hole in the base. Found by A. Lewendon, below Poplar Eyot above Marsh Lock, Sonning.

Ground flint celt, $7\frac{1}{4}$ inches long, found by W. East, one hundred feet above Staines railway bridge.

Bronze palstave with a medial ridge on both sides of the blade but poorly cast. Found by W. East on Riverbank Flats, Staines. Fig. No. 2.

Bronze spear head with basal loops, $7\frac{3}{4}$ inches long. Found at Staines, about one hundred feet above the railway bridge by A. Whitman. Fig. No. 7.

Lower part of blade of bronze rapier found by A. Whitman about one hundred feet downstream of Staines railway bridge. Fig. No. 9.

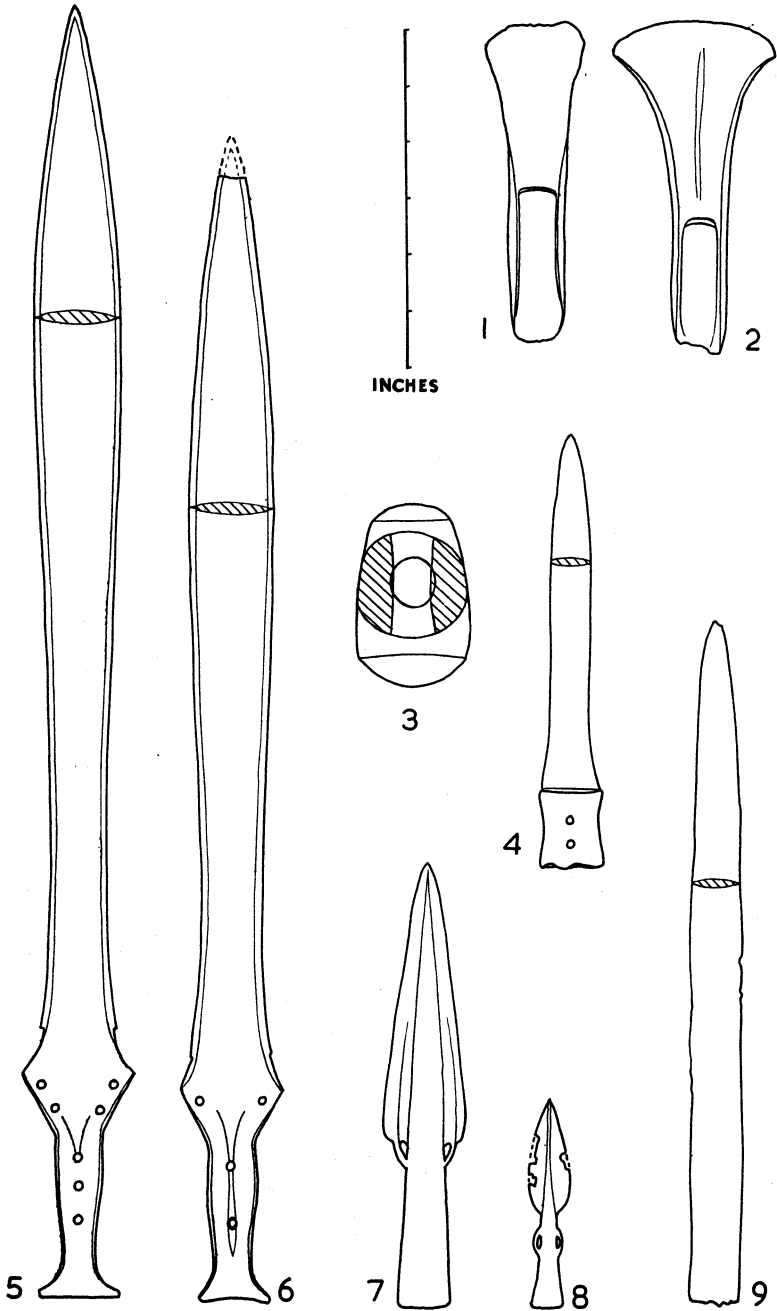
Small iron lance head of Roman type, found by W. East near Riverbank Flats, Staines.

Iron spear-head, sixteen inches long with a flattish blade and an imperfect open socket. Late Saxon or Viking type. Found by W. East near Riverbank Flats, Staines.

Iron spear-head with badly-bent socket. Late Saxon. Found by A. Lewendon, below Marsh Lock, Sonning.

Poppy-head beaker of second century A.D., complete except for modern dredge break involving half the rim. Smooth, fine, hard grey ware with a high rim and cordon at the base. Found near Wheatsheaf and Pigeon Lane, Staines, by W. East.

Grey-ware olla of second century A.D., complete save for old break involving quarter of rim. Found by W. East near Wheatsheaf and Pigeon Lane, Staines. Also from this site were found a small, grey-ware bulbous beaker of 3rd–4th century A.D., fragments of four Roman pots, a small green-glazed jug with handle (15th century?), two pottery bottles and four fragments of mediaeval pots, three more or less complete human crania and remains of four other skulls.



Recent Bronze Age Finds (See Archæological Notes from Reading Museum).

Small iron spear-head, probably a mediaeval hunting weapon, found by A. Lewendon, Jnr., near Upper Lashbrook Ferry, Shiplake.

Iron spear-head of winged "Carolingian" type. Found by W. East, one hundred feet downstream of Staines Road Bridge.

Greenstone axe. A fine specimen of a Neolithic ground axe found by W. East below Bell Weir Lock, near Staines.

Late Bronze Age Sword found by A. Whitman above Bell Weir Lock, near Staines. Fig. No. 5.

Perforated rectangular slab of chalk rock, presumably a prehistoric loom weight or net sinker. Found by A. E. Jones at Wargrave.

Iron spear head, late Saxon period, found by A. Lewendon at Wargrave.

Flange-hilted bronze sword, Late Bronze Age, found by F. Kalatursky at Wargrave. Fig. No. 6.

Sword, Early Iron Age, found by A. Lewendon at Wargrave.

Dupondius of Vespasian, found by G. Stockwell in the sump of the new slipway at Reading yard.

Narrow-necked Roman flask, 2nd-3rd century A.D., complete save for piece of rim broken in dredging. Found by S. Palmer at Whitchurch Toll Bridge.

Partisan or pike head, 17th-18th century, found by Lock Keeper Collins during the reconstruction of Cookham Lock.

The following objects have been presented to the Museum or brought in for examination:

PALAEOLITHIC

Emmer Green. A rolled, Middle Acheulian hand axe was found by Keith Willis of Emmer Green on the site of the old Black Horse Pit.

Caversham. A finely-made Middle Acheulian hand axe in sharp condition was found by Mr. Woolley of Caversham in the old pit at the top of Balmore Drive during clearance for making tennis courts. Although this pit has yielded palaeoliths in the past, the quantity of imported ballast on the site makes its provenance suspect.

Earley. A sharp, well-made linguat Middle Acheulian hand axe was found by S. Smith in gravel thrown up from a drainage trench in Crookhamwell Road, Earley.

Highlands, Henley. Further to my recent investigations of the high level gravel of the ancient channel at Highlands, Henley (Wymer P.P.S. Vol. XXII, p. 29f.), several palaeoliths have been recovered from sites in the locality where loads of the gravel from the pit had

been tipped, mainly for road-mending purposes. Mrs. Cake of Russell's Water has a small pointed hand-axe of Middle Acheulian type and two ovates of later form. Mr. Insell of Shiplake has found a medium-sized ovate hand-axe. Commercial excavations in this pit are under observation by this museum and it is hoped that some of the archaeological problems may be solved.

Bath Road, Reading. The excavation of a drainage tunnel beneath the Bath Road near Parkhurst Lodge revealed the junction of undisturbed well-bedded gravel of the 75 ft. terrace of the Kennet. The bench level of this gravel can now be recorded as 65 ft. above the present level of the Kennet. In the gravel spoil from the tunnel were several Clactonian flakes and a bi-conical core.

MESOLITHIC

Pangbourne. A large flint blade-like flake of mesolithic appearance was found by E. Vernon on the bank of the Thames below and near the weir at Pangbourne.

Thatcham. Messrs. Collins, Sheridan and Barber of Newbury have shown that the mesolithic site at Thatcham as excavated by Peake (Peake and Crawford, P.P.S.E.A., 1922, Vol. III p. 499f.) is more extensive and important than was thought. The finding of a 'Horsham point' microlith is extremely interesting and suggests a connection with the Surrey and Hampshire mesolithic areas. Another mesolithic site under examination by D. B. Connah at *Woolton Hill*, near Newbury, may also contribute to our knowledge of Berkshire during this period and it is hoped that both sites will be excavated in the near future in conjunction with Newbury Museum.

NEOLITHIC

Katesgrove, Reading. A ground flint axe, $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, was found near the Kennet by C. Smith of Reading.

Caversham. A few flint flakes and a double-ended core were found in clearing the top of Balmore Drive, Caversham, for tennis courts, by the Museum Director. The provenance is suspect, however, because of imported ballast upon the site.

Winnersh. A finely-made sickle or knife blade of poor, cherty flint was found on allotments near the Loddon Bridge by Mrs. Barrett of Little Hungerford, Near Winnersh.

Reading. A ground celt of grey flint, one end damaged but originally about $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, was found by Mr. Bicknell of Reading on the South side of the Bath Road near Brunswick Street.

BRONZE AGE

Dorney Wood. A Late Bronze Age socketed knife was found by Mr. Matthews of Wargrave one foot below gravel at Brookend, near Dorney Wood, Bucks. Fig. No. 4.

Eversley. A bronze palstave of the Middle Bronze Age in poor condition was found by Mrs. Burton of Eversley on the surface at Lower Common, Eversley. Fig. No. 1.

Sonning, Thames. A fine specimen of a cylindrical, perforated mace head of fine-grained rock of Early Bronze Age date was presented by J. M. Jones & Sons, Ltd., Maidenhead. It was found (apparently in use!), in a plumber's kit of tools at Winnersh. The plumber had found it on a load of ballast delivered to a site at Coley Park, Reading. This ballast was traced to a well-known supplier who bought the gravel from the Thames Conservancy who dredged it from the River Thames, within quarter of a mile from Sonning Lock! Fig. No. 3.

Aldermaston. A small, leaf-shaped, looped bronze spear-head of Late Bronze Age type was found by Miss L. Pedwell of Gerrards Cross, in a gravel pit at Aldermaston near Padworth Mill. Fig. No. 8.

IRON AGE

Burghfield. For details of the cremation burial found at Burghfield see the paper in this volume by Boon and Wymer, pp. 46-53.

ROMAN

Sonning Eye. A narrow-necked coarse-ware jar with all the rim missing was found by Messrs. Folley Bros. in their gravel pit at Sonning Eye, apparently from a silted meander of the Thames.

Wickham Bushes. Five small fragments of a metallic black slip vase with applied decoration (Déch. form/74, decoration consisting of a Bacchus leaning upon a Pan, Déchelette, 1904, p. 208, no. 57) manufactured in Gaul in the second century were found in disturbed ground beside a ploughed track at Wickham Bushes, near Caesar's Camp, Crowthorne, by myself. Also from this site were two coins found by Mr. Lightfoot of Crowthorne: a sestertius of Commodus and a coin of Constantine I.

Toker's Green. A much corroded as of Pius was found at Toker's Green, near Caversham, by D. Urley of Reading.

Earley. An illegible fourth century coin was found on the Dixon Meadow Allotments, Wokingham Road, Earley, by Mr. Chapman of Reading.

Reading. An antoninianus of Claudius II was found in the garden of Miss Goodland, Greenfields Road, Reading.

Maidenhead. A sestertius of Aurelius was found on Maidenhead Thicket by D. Brown, Moneyrow Green, Holyport.

Nettlebed. An as of Vespasian was found in the garden of the School House, Nettlebed, by P. Thompson.

Caversham. A corroded sestertius of Pius was found on Woodcote Way by Mrs. Cook of Caversham.

Caesar's Camp, Crowthorne. An as of Philip I was found within Caesar's Camp by A. Tiley of Camberley.

Southcote. A sestertius of Commodus in excellent condition was found on the North bank of the Holy Brook at Southcote by R. Brazelle.

SAXON

Lowbury. A late Saxon iron spear-head with a baluster-moulded junction was found on the surface of ploughed ground on the downs near Lowbury by Mrs. Strange of Streatley.

Wargrave. A late Saxon spear-head with inlaid copper-bronze decoration was found on gravel dumped at Bracknell by the Chief Engineer's Department of Bracknell Development Corporation. This gravel was traced to Thames Conservancy dredgings at Wargrave.

Winkfield. A late Saxon spear was dug up in the garden of W. W. Babbage, Orchard House, North Street, Winkfield, and presented to the Guildhall Museum, Windsor. The weapon was cleaned at Reading. It is $12\frac{3}{4}$ " long and is a good example of Saxon metalwork, having a pronounced mid-rib, distinctive baluster mouldings and a closed, welded socket. The condition is good.

MEDIAEVAL

Reading. Building excavations on the East side of the Market Place, Reading, exposed a long ditch or elongated pit from which was recovered a large amount of mediaeval pottery of various dates. Much of the material is 14th–15th century, glazed and unglazed wares.

An interesting finial of a roof tile in the form of a crude face, c. 17th century, was found on the same site by A. Dick, of Reading.

Bracknell. A hoard of silver coins, apparently deposited in the reign of Charles I, was found at Bracknell by workmen engaged on digging footings. Most of these coins were unfortunately dispersed.

Southcote. A shilling of Edward VI was found on the allotments, South of the Holy Brook, opposite the new estate at Southcote by A. E. Saunders of Reading.

J. WYMER.

NO. 21 STERT STREET, ABINGDON

(formerly the Bear Inn)

In the last days of September, 1957, a late medieval building in Abingdon, No. 21, Stert Street, was demolished. It was formerly known as the Bear Inn and stood on the east side of the street, its back yard extending to the precinct wall of Abingdon Abbey. The

walls were oak-framed and from the shape and construction of the house, it would seem that it originally included No. 19, which still stands. No. 19 and the north part of No. 21 had gables towards the street and were joined by the south part of No. 21, the roof of which ran parallel to the street from North to South. The eaves level was the same throughout but the ridge of the wings (which were wider than the centre) was higher than that of the middle roof. The roofs of both parts of No. 21 were formed of oak rafters, coupled and halved together at the ridge and strengthened with wind-braces, but with no other framing except, perhaps, the ceiling joists which may have tied them in. The centre roof was composed of eight coupled rafters, the end ones being filled and plastered as if they were the ends of an open roof. It appeared to me that at the northern end the plaster filling was smoke-stained, but from some observations by Mr. D. Sturdy, it seems there was evidence that the first floor oversailed the ground floor and if this were the case it would rule out the existence of a central hall.

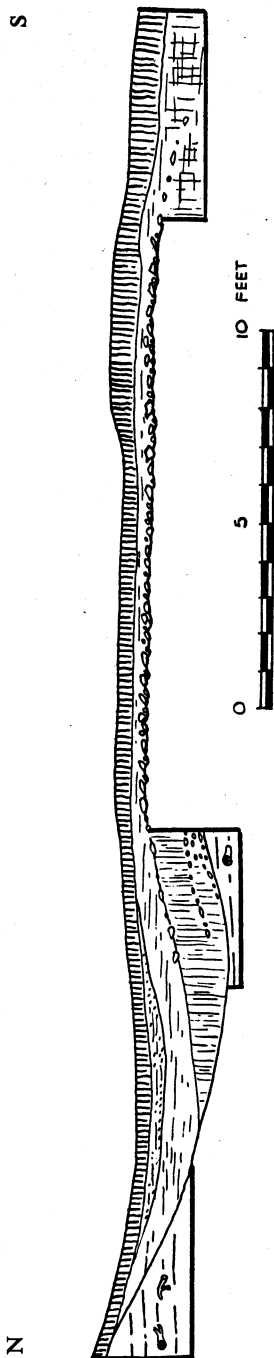
The framing had braces to the posts and plates of the rear wall, and the beam at first floor level between the two parts of No. 21 had a good solid bracket let into the rearmost post. It is unfortunate that the building was being demolished before any notes could be taken, but some sketch plans and photographs by Mr. Sturdy and some photographs by Mr. P. S. Spokes have been deposited with the National Buildings Record. With them are a set of Mr. Sturdy's photographs of No. 19 Bath Street, the construction of which was revealed at the same time, when an outside wall was being rebuilt. Both the Bear Inn, Stert Street, and 19, Bath Street, were probably constructed in the first quarter of the 16th century. I am indebted to Mr. Sydney Cullen for the identification of the inn since he at one time held the property before it passed to the Abingdon Corporation.

WALTER H. GODFREY.

LONG LANE, WHITLEY

Long Lane, a narrow grass-covered strip in the parish of Whitley, is to be ploughed. It is known locally as a Roman Way so a trench was dug across it by Reading Museum in May, 1957 to examine any possible road surface. The trench was sited at right angles to the apparent direction of the road, 200 yards E.N.E. from the main Basingstoke Road (national grid reference: 716684).

As the section shows, a thin flint gravel road metalling was found a few inches beneath the surface, resting on a flood loam which covered an earlier, thicker but partly washed-out flint gravel metalling. The ditch fillings on the North side corresponded to the two periods but those on the South were obliterated, presumably



Section through Long Lane, Whitley, 1957.

by constant ditch-cleanings as this ditch represents the parish boundary. The bed-rock was a stiff, buff flood loam containing a few saturated broken branches. A roadway across such a badly-drained flat area would need to be slightly raised and have adequate ditches on either side. Neither of the road surfaces revealed were raised, but were in fact sunken. Both could originally have been higher, however, and have sunk on the plastic mud base. No dating evidence was found.

Boring showed that the upper metalling, at least, was consistent along Long Lane in both directions for at least a hundred yards. Whether Long Lane is a continuation at an angle of Woodcock Lane on the other side of the Basingstoke Road and whether either have any connection with "Camlet Way" is only speculation. "Camlet Way", the supposed road linking Calleva with Verulamium, has been traced in part by H. E. Bannard (B.B. & O. A.J. Vol. XXX, p. 76-8) and the suggested route is through Stratfield Saye and not Long Lane.

J. WYMER.