

## NOTES

### SAMPLE EXCAVATION OF A MESOLITHIC FLINT SCATTER AT WHISTLEY COURT FARM

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An area to the east of the river Loddon at Whistley Court Farm, Twyford, was examined (prior to mineral extraction) as part of the East Berkshire Archaeological Survey (Ford 1987). Surface material collected included Mesolithic finds (including a handaxe). The surface distribution was subsequently (1988) sampled by excavation (by the Trust for Wessex Archaeology, funded by Berkshire County Council and English Heritage). Mesolithic to post-medieval material was inter-mixed within the alluvial deposits (see Barnes and Hawkes, 'Archaeological excavations at Broadwater, Hurst', this volume). All stages of flint working from blank production to tool manufacture are represented in the flint assemblage, which is of later Mesolithic date. (A full report is deposited with the County Sites and Monuments Record, and the site archive with Reading Museum.)

Ford, S, 1987, *East Berkshire Archaeological Survey*, Berks Co Counc Dept Highways Planning Occas Pap, 1.

### A LATE IRON AGE-EARLY ROMAN SITE AT STREATLEY

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#### Introduction

At Streatley and Goring, the Thames, flowing south in a deep gorge, breaks through the bold escarpment of the Upper Chalk. From its right

bank, meandering dry valleys extend roughly westward into the chalk plateau. High on the steep south-facing side of one of these valleys, approximately 1250m south-west of Streatley parish church, fieldwalking has revealed the occurrence over an area measuring roughly 100 × 75m of thinly dispersed pottery fragments, a piece from a rotary quern, and a few fire-fractured pebbles. The pottery sherds are small and, with a single exception, much weathered and abraded. Excepting a very slight concavity on the sloping field, which may represent a hut platform, no associated earthwork features were found surviving. We briefly report below on the pottery (69 sherds) and on the quern fragment.

#### The pottery

Three main ware-groups are represented. The pottery of the *flint-tempered group* is divisible into a finer and a coarser fabric. The latter, represented by 12 sherds, recalls Timby's (forthcoming) F1 ('Silchester Ware') at Silchester (*Calleva*), and includes two rims of large, everted rim jars. Also of this fabric is a fresh sherd from the rim of a jar or bowl, with well-executed, oblique-stroke burnishing on the exterior. Most abundant is the *grog-tempered group*, represented by 32 sherds. As with Timby's G1 ware at Silchester, some sherds have occasional flint temper. The *sand-tempered group* of some 20 sherds in grey and black, sandy fabrics, includes two rims of small bowls or jars. Four sherds, including one of a bead-rimmed jar, in a sand-and-flint-tempered fabric, represent Timby's GF series at Silchester. One imported sherd, a fragment of an amphora (Spanish?), was found.

The assemblage can be well paralleled with the Late Iron Age/early Roman material

from the basilica excavations at Silchester (Fulford forthcoming). As at Streatley, the Silchester material is dominated by grog- and flint-tempered wares (F1 and G1). The likely date range spans the mid- to late first century BC and the mid- to late first century AD.

### The quern

The quern is a fragment from an upper stone measuring 67mm in height at the outer edge and about 380mm in diameter. The outer margin was finished by pecking or with a chisel. Locally, the upper surface is flattened and almost polished, as if the stone had been used occasionally for smoothing or sharpening. The lower surface converges so rapidly on the upper that the stone had either been manufactured with a wide feed pipe or become badly worn by the time it was discarded.

The rock is a pale greenish brown, tough, very well sorted, medium-grained, quartzose quartz sandstone, with a slightly sugary texture and abundant, dark green to black grains of glauconite. Dispersed through it are subparallel swirls and streaks up to 15mm in length of dark grey, microcrystalline chert. The chert outlines at least two well-defined 'worm' burrows up to 8mm in diameter, and there are diffuse patches which may also represent bioturbation.

The quern almost certainly was made at the Lodsworth (West Sussex) quarries (Lower Greensand, ?Hythe Beds), for the stone is indistinguishable from Peacock's (1987) described lithology. In terms of the series of Lodsworth-stone querns from Owslebury (Hampshire), which decline in maximum thickness with diminishing age (Peacock 1987, fig 4), the Streatley quern is not younger than the second century AD, and could be as old as the mid-pre-Roman Iron Age.

### Discussion

Although small and restricted, the assemblage points to the former presence of a small settlement at the Streatley site. The character

of the pottery present, with the find of a quern fragment of Lodsworth rock, suggests that the site lay within the economic influence of nearby (17km) Silchester (*Calleva*). Compatible dates are afforded by the quern fragment and the pottery, with the latter indicating a short occupation between the mid- to late first century BC and the mid- to late first century AD.

We thank Mr I R McNair and his family for the opportunity to examine the site on which we report.

Fulford, M G, forthcoming, *Iron Age and Roman Calleva: excavations on the forum-basilica at Silchester 1980-86*, Britannia monograph.

Peacock, D P S, 1987, Iron Age and Roman quern production at Lodsworth, west Sussex, *Antiq J*, 57, 61-83.

Timby, J R, The pottery, in Fulford forthcoming.

## EXCAVATIONS WITHIN THE MEDIEVAL HALL AT UPTON COURT, SLOUGH

J W Hawkes and M R Trott

Upton Court is a substantially mid-fourteenth-century open hall house, although the known history of the manor suggests the possibility of buildings back to the twelfth century (Chenevix-Trench 1979-80). Restoration work has allowed a detailed survey of the fabric of the building by the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England) (Thornes with Fradgley 1988). Small-scale excavations were carried out in 1987-9 (by the Trust for Wessex Archaeology) in an attempt to resolve questions prompted by the survey concerning the layout and development of specific interior features. The medieval open hearth was exposed and excavation provided some evidence for an earlier phase of the building not represented by *in situ* timbers. Three burials were excavated and are assumed to predate the construction of Upton Court and to be associated with St Laurence's church (in its present or an earlier

phase) to the north-east of the present house. (A full report is deposited with the County Sites and Monuments Record, and the site archive with Reading Museum.)

Chenevix-Trench, J, 1979–80, An aisled hall at Upton, Slough, *BAJ*, 70, 81–6.

Thornes, R, with Fradgley, N, 1988, Upton Court, Slough: an early-fourteenth-century open hall, *Archaeol J*, 145, 211–21.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS ALONG THE LINE OF THE PLUMMERY WALL, READING ABBEY

J W Hawkes

The Plummery Wall, the former north and east outer boundary of the precinct of Reading Abbey, takes its name from the abbey's lead workshops ('plummeries') built against the inside face of the wall and probably located some 50m east of the present Forbury Road/Vastern Road junction. Prior to widening and relaying of Forbury Road (whose course closely follows that of the Plummery Wall) as part of the Inner Distribution Road, a record was made of the only above-ground length of the Plummery Wall still surviving (on the north side of the Forbury Road – NCP car park site) and an *ad hoc* watching brief carried out during groundworks (1987–9, by the Trust for Wessex Archaeology, funded by Berkshire County Council). The base of the wall was exposed in contractors' trenches at several points north of Forbury Road and in the central island of the new roundabout at the west end of Forbury Road; a thirteenth-century sculptured stone head was found (Cram 1991). (A full report is deposited with the County Sites and Monuments Record, and the site archive with Reading Museum.)

Cram, L, 1991 (1994), A thirteenth-century sculptured stone head found in the precinct wall of Reading Abbey, *Antiq J*, 71, 223–6.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL NOTES FROM NEWBURY MUSEUM

A R Higgott and P Cannon

Archaeological discoveries selected from those reported to Newbury District Museum between 1979 and 1992.

### Palaeolithic

*Newbury* A small cordate handaxe found on allotments at Wash Common (A132). Another cordate handaxe from Wash Common (A693).

*Shaw* Long blade, incomplete (A763).

### Neolithic

*Inkpen* A very fine example of a flint knife cum scraper with delicate secondary working. It was found with a struck flake (A610).

### Bronze Age

*Lambourn* A diminutive haft-flanged axe identified as a woodworking chisel (A1019).

*Newbury* Side-looped spearhead with leaf-shaped blade (A293).

### Iron Age

*Hungerford* Atrebatian silver coin of Epaticus (A1014).

*Hampstead Norreys* Three uniface Atrebatian staters (1980:16). Bronze terret ring (1980:20).

*Kintbury* Silver coin of Tincommius and a Dobunnian silver coin (A39).

*Newbury* Bronze Wessex La Tène fibula.

*Winterbourne* Bronze Wessex La Tène fibula.

### Roman

*Aldworth* Hoard of 72 first-/second-century silver coins (1985:47). Hoard of 29 fourth-century silver coins (1988:137). Bronze sceptre head in the form of a terminal for a ritual spear. Publication of this important object is forthcoming (1992:90). Hollow bronze bust of Diana (A803).

*Chieveley* Bronze appliqué bust of Venus (1991:68).

*Compton* Hoard of 281 fourth-/fifth-century silver coins (1982:55 and 1985:71).

*Eastbury* Bronze sceptre head in form of a male bust. See *Britannia*, 22, 1991, 208–10 (L173).

*Hampstead Norreys* Bronze mounts from a casket or box, including studs (1979:60).

### Saxon

*Donnington* Merovingian tremissis struck at Quentovic by the moneyer Dutta c AD 640 (A872).

*Farnborough* Silver halfpenny of Alfred; moneyer Cunehelm (1992:67).

*Lambourn* Decorated seventh-century strap-distributor later reused as a pendant (1992:32).

*Newbury* Silver sceat of south Wessex type c AD 750 (L46).

*Thatcham* Iron spearhead with baluster moulding. Late tenth century (1988:71).

### Medieval and later

*Eastbury* Bronze thirteenth-century personal seal: ...S'CVSTANCIE FIL' PETRI LE KYNE (1991:105).

*Newbury* Thirteenth-century lead alloy pilgrim's badge from the shrine of St Gilles in south France (L44).

*Sandleford* Bronze heraldic horse pendant decorated with a lion and fleur-de-lis; originally gilded and contained blue and red enamels (A434).

*Speen* Silver personal seal of late thirteenth- or early fourteenth-century date: +SIGILL: GALFRIDI:LE:BARBUR (1979:42).

*Thatcham* Bronze fourteenth-century personal seal: S'RADVLPHI COCI. Radulph Coke is known from the bailiff's accounts of Crookham manor for 1322/3 (1988:148). Lead thirteenth-century personal seal: +S' WALTER D'LA HVLLE. La Hulle was an estate which formed part of Inkpen (1989:70).

*Wickham* Bronze heraldic horse pendant with three crescent moons, red enamel (A169).

## NOTES FROM READING MUSEUM

Leslie Cram

Reading Museum and Art Gallery closed its doors to the public in September 1989 after being open since 1883. All displays were dismantled and, with the objects in store, were removed from the building to allow a complete refurbishment to commence. The first of the new galleries opened in September 1993 telling the story of the town from its Saxon beginnings with the museum being renamed 'The Museum of Reading'. The branch museum at Blakes Lock was closed in 1989 for the construction of a new entrance with access from Gasworks Road.

Details of recent excavations and surface finds are held in the Sites and Monuments Record held in the Planning Department of Berkshire County Council. A summary of these is given in the annual reports of the SMR.

Recent excavation material which has come into the museum and has been published in journals other than the *BAJ* is as follows.

*Excavations in the Burghfield area, Berkshire, developments in the Bronze Age and Saxon landscapes* by C A Butterworth and S J Lobb, 1992, Wessex Archaeology Report, 1, published by Wessex Archaeology, Salisbury.

*A closed-shaft garderobe and associated mediaeval structures at Jennings Yard, Windsor, Berkshire* by J W Hawkes and M J Heaton, 1993, Wessex Archaeology Report, 3, published by Wessex Archaeology, Salisbury.

*A Roman fourth-century lead liturgical tank with chi-rho monogram found during gravel extraction in Caversham*, published as a note in *Britannia*, 20, 1989, 319 and 333–4.

*Reading Business Park, a Bronze Age landscape. Thames valley landscapes – the Kennet valley, 1*, by J Moore and D Jennings, 1992, published by the

Oxford Archaeological Committee for the Oxford Archaeological Unit.

Biscuit tins and related ephemera from the firm of Huntley & Palmers with some material from the associated firms of Jacobs and Peak Freans have been donated to the Museum by Nabisco Ltd after being on loan since the 1970s.

New topographical pictures include 38 watercolour drawings with some pencil

sketches of views of Reading in the mid-nineteenth century by the local artist Henry Clarke Pidgeon. They include interiors of the Oracle workhouse shortly before its demolition.

Among additions to the photographic material is the collection made by Mary Southerton of the work of Reading photographers, mainly studio portraits 1860 to 1920.