

# ARCHÆOLOGICAL NOTES FROM THE BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY MUSEUM

PREVIOUSLY this list has included all archaeological finds brought to the attention of the Buckinghamshire County Museum during each year. From now on, due to the increasing quantity of material being reported, it is intended to list only a selection with more emphasis being placed on *sites* rather than individual *finds*. Where relevant the Museum accession number is given in brackets at the end of the entry.

Grateful acknowledgement is due to all those who have supplied the information.

## PREHISTORIC

In future it is not intended to publish finds of flint implements or waste flakes unless: (1) they come from areas or sites distant from the occurrence of natural flint (i.e. river gravels and the Chalk), (2) they are outstanding or rare examples of their type, (3) they comprise collections sufficiently large to be classed as an industry, and (4) they are stratified. Almost any ploughed field along the Chiltern scarp, and many in the dipslope valleys yield flint implements. For surface finds to be meaningful they must comply not only with one or more of the above conditions but be related to the general distribution of finds in an area, to the soil type and to the distribution of field monuments. Ideally, though difficult to achieve in practice, the numbers of flakes, cores and tools should be high enough for them to be treated statistically as well.

The importance of stratified sites should also be stressed. It is perhaps not generally appreciated how recent much of the present-day land surface is. For instance, along the Chiltern scarp (an important cultural corridor since Neolithic times) a number of valleys and coombes are filled with up to 3 m. (c. 10 ft.) of hillwash of Iron Age or later origin, so that sites of earlier date may be buried and preserved. An example of this was demonstrated at Chesham during the excavation of a seventeenth-century cottage in 1969. The foundations of the cottage rested on a hillwash deposit 0.6 m. (c. 2 ft.) deep and at the base of this, in a well-preserved soil, Mesolithic flints were discovered. In addition to hillwash, river alluvium and peat may be instrumental in burying and thus preserving sites, particularly those of Mesolithic and Neolithic age.

### *Aldbury, Herts*

A shallow pit containing a circular flint scraper retouched round the entire circumference, a flint flake, fragments of bone and sherds of coarse pottery was found by Don Levy after topsoil had been stripped preparatory to quarrying. The sherds and scraper are possibly Middle Bronze Age (SP 944141) (72. 70).

### *Bow Brickhill*

Flint implements, probably Mesolithic, were recovered by P. Wescombe and the Museum staff from sandpits in the vicinity of Bow Brickhill Church. The imple-

ments include two scrapers, one core and a number of waste flakes (SP 908341) (373. 69). As the only known Mesolithic site in the county north of the Chilterns, this would be worth further investigation, particularly as some of the flints were recovered from a stratified context at the base of the modern soil.

#### *Chenies*

A scatter, mainly of waste flakes, from the surface of a field adjacent to Mount Wood was collected by W. Filby. The collection includes two scrapers and a few heavily stained massive flakes which could be Palaeolithic (TQ 025987).

#### *Chesham*

Mesolithic flints including microliths, scrapers and a quantity of working debris, together with a few fragments of coarse prehistoric pottery, were discovered by the Chess Valley Archaeological and Historical Society buried beneath 0.6 m. (c. 2 ft) of hillwash during the excavation of a seventeenth-century cottage (SP 960015). As with the Bow Brickhill site, this too would probably repay further investigation.

#### *Great Linford*

The excavation of a supposed ring ditch (SP 860429) was done by the Museum on behalf of the Milton Keynes Research Committee. The ditch showed up clearly on an air photograph, and resistivity survey and augering likewise suggested its presence; but on excavation, no ring ditch was found. However, beneath the surface of the soil a ring of fungal hyphae, 36 m. (c. 120 ft.) in diameter was located, and this was identified by Sandro Limentani (University College Hospital) as *Marasmius oreades*, the fairy-ring fungus. It is disturbing that the resistivity survey should have seemingly confirmed the air photograph evidence in indicating the presence of a site where none existed. Both anomalies were due to the fungus and greater care will clearly have to be taken in future in distinguishing archaeological features from natural ones. The patchy distribution of Pleistocene loam deposits was an added complication, confusing the augering data.

#### *Great Missenden*

A Neolithic chipped and ground flint axe was found by Gordon Sanderson during the building of a school at Prestwood (51. 70).

#### *Grendon Underwood*

A fine Neolithic stone axe was dug up in the garden of Mary Oak, High Street, Grendon Underwood by Mrs. B. W. Fosh.

#### *Haddenham*

A barbed-and-tanged flint arrowhead was found in the garden of Grenville Mead, Aston Road, Haddenham by Miss E. Rose.

#### *Long Crendon*

A collection of flints comprising two scrapers and a number of flakes from Long Crendon was donated by the Oxford City and County Museum (105. 70).

#### *Ravenstone*

A crouch inhumation burial with a small comb-stamped beaker was found in the face of a gravel pit and excavated by R. W. Griffiths and D. C. Mynard (SP 849489).

### *Stokenchurch*

A round barrow, almost totally levelled by ploughing, was discovered from an air photograph by R. P. F. Parker. The barrow showed as a crop-mark with a central turf-stack and surrounding ditch. This barrow is possibly one of two originally recorded by the Rev. T. Delafield (Bodleian Library MS. Gough 166 v. 47) (SU 769969).

### *Stokenchurch*

A Neolithic leaf-shaped flint arrowhead was found by R. P. F. Parker in a vegetable plot at Wheeler's Farm, Water End (SU 783958) (68. 70).

## ROMANO-BRITISH

### *Aylesbury*

An AE 2 of Arcadius was found by S. M. Fox during the building of an office block in Church Street (SP 817138).

### *Bledlow-cum-Saunderton*

Sherds of Romano-British coarse ware were discovered by Mrs. Joyce Woodhouse in the garden of Piggotts, Church End, Bledlow (SP 782023).

### *Bletchley*

Third to fourth-century sherds of coarse and plain Samian wares and a coin of Constantine I were found in spoil from G.P.O. excavations by R. W. Griffiths and B. Hill (SP 866342).

### *Bow Brickhill*

Rescue excavations conducted by H. W. Pengelly and the Bletchley Archaeological Society at the north angle of the Galley Lane crossroads established at least five main phases of occupation. Features included post-holes, a clay floor, ditches and two pits. Associated pottery and other finds, including a bronze stud-headed brooch and a bronze terret ring, date from the late-first to the mid-second century. The remains of a masonry building and a pit associated with late third to fourth-century pottery were also found. In the eastern angle of the cross-roads (SP 893334), a group of third to fourth-century sherds and building debris were found.

### *Chenies*

Romano-British coarse-ware sherds were found on the surface of a ploughed field adjacent to Mount Wood by W. Filby (TQ 025988).

### *Iver*

Romano-British native pottery was recovered by C. C. Stanley from the fill of a ditch revealed in a gas-pipe trench in Slade Lane (TQ 038783) (106. 70).

### *Little Brickhill*

Finds and features located along the south-west verge of Watling Street by R. W. Griffiths, H. W. Pengelly and P. Tilson, as follows:

(1) A section through the South-east sector of the mid-fourth-century defensive ditch of Magiovinium, 6.5 m. (22 ft.) wide and fronted by a row of upright stakes. The fill contained building debris and mid-third to fourth-century pottery. Depth not determined (SP 891335).

(2) Pits, ditches, post-holes and wall-footings with a date range of mid-first to mid-fourth century. A coin of Valentinian I (c. A.D. 364-75), another of similar date and a bronze finger ring were recovered from one of the ditches. Features occurred between 265 m. (c. 870 ft.) and 510 m. (c. 1,679 ft.) from Galley Lane (SP 891335-887338).

(3) Two slots for timbers and a post-hole containing mid-first-century sherds were sealed by deposits containing Neronian to early Flavian Samian and some native wares (SP 888337).

#### *Marsworth*

The foundations of a Roman building, a well and ovens in an area enclosed by ditches were revealed by the stripping of topsoil preparatory to quarrying. Small excavations were done by the Manshead Archaeological Society (who also planned the site), and by the Pitstone Local History Society (SP 933142).

#### *North Crawley*

Sherds of Roman coarse ware were found on the surface of a field by Mrs. J. Creaser and R. W. Griffiths (SP 931459).

#### *Tattenhoe*

Sherds of first and second-century coarse ware and a fragment of undecorated Samian were found on the surface of a field by R. W. Griffiths (SP 836333).

#### *Tattenhoe*

Sherds of coarse ware and of late-second century Samian were found by B. A. Kettle at the football ground in Tattenhoe Lane.

#### *Walton*

A small excavation of a Roman site at Walton was done on behalf of the Milton Keynes Research Committee by the County Museum (SP 888367). The site lay beneath 0.9 m (c. 3 ft) of plough soil, probably of medieval origin, and comprised a scatter of roofing tiles, sherds of coarse ware, three Samian sherds and some animal bones (mainly ox), over an area of 80 sq. m. There were a few paving slabs and an area of cobbling, but no wall footings or foundation slots (107.70).

### MEDIEVAL AND POST-MEDIEVAL

#### *Aylesbury*

A bronze seal matrix was dug up in the garden of 167 Buckingham Road by Mrs. J. Thorpe. The matrix is ecclesiastical, probably early fourteenth century in date and possibly of central European origin.

#### *Bradwell Abbey*

A small trial excavation of the area between the railway and the chapel of Bradwell Abbey was done by the County Museum on behalf of the Milton Keynes Research Committee. Three sides of a possibly cloistered area about 15 m. square were located and a number of glazed tiles from a later dump recovered (SP 827397).

#### *Buckingham*

Thirteenth to fourteenth-century sherds were recovered from foundations in Well Street by S. O. Meadows (SP 695438).



### *Fleet Marston*

Platforms of the deserted medieval village of Fleet Marston were seen in section and sherds of the thirteenth to fourteenth centuries were found by A. T. Jeffs and C. C. Stanley during road works (SP 777160) (143-145, 69).

### *Little Horwood*

Moats and platforms of a shrunken medieval village were found by T. Bull and R. W. Griffiths (SP 788307).

### *Medmenham*

A medieval iron spearhead was found by R. Balkwell while digging a hole in the garden of Redroofs, Wood End (SU 820873) (108, 70).

### *Newport Pagnell*

Thirteenth-century sherds were found during dredging operations on the bank of the Ouse (SP 879439); and twelfth to thirteenth-century sherds were found in an allotment at 7 Abbey Terrace (SP 880439). Both finds were made by Mrs. J. Creaser and R. W. Griffiths.

### *Newton Longville*

Two thirteenth-century pits, the remains of a fourteenth-century cottage and twelfth to seventeenth-century sherds were found by R. W. Griffiths in the garden of Baytree Cottage (SP 848314).

### *North Crawley*

Moats and house platforms were found at Gumbrills Farm (SP 929455) and twelfth to thirteenth-century sherds on the surface of a field (SP 931459) by Mrs. J. Creaser and R. W. Griffiths.

### *Stoke Hammond*

Twelfth to thirteenth-century coarse ware sherds were found by R. W. Griffiths in the garden of 6 Fenny Road (SP 881298).

### *Tattenhoe*

Thirteenth to fourteenth-century sherds were found on the surface of a field by R. W. Griffiths (SP 836333).

### *Wolverton*

Thirteenth to fourteenth-century sherds were found on the surface of a ploughed field by H. H. Oak-Rhind (SP 799416).