

ARCHAEOLOGICAL NOTES FROM BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY MUSEUM

These notes include archaeological discoveries reported during 1983 and a few earlier finds not previously noted. Discoveries in the Milton Keynes Development Corporation (MKDC) area are included by courtesy of D. C. Mynard and fuller accounts of these sites appear in *South Midlands Archaeology* (CBA 9). The assistance of many informants is gratefully acknowledged; other discoveries are by Museum staff. The compiler would be pleased to learn of any errors or omissions. Findspots are recorded under civil parish.

Some selection of material has been necessary; single struck flakes for instance have not

normally been included, nor field scatters of medieval pottery unless of sufficient quantity to indicate settlement, nor single Roman coin finds. Abbreviated grid references have unfortunately to be given for a number of sites to prevent looting.

Numbers in brackets are accession numbers of material at the County Museum. The initials BCM indicate that the material is in the Museum, but no accession number has yet been allotted. The County Museum Archaeological Group is abbreviated to CMAG, and the Air Photo Unit of the RCHM(E) as NMR.

Michael Farley

PREHISTORIC

Amersham SU 9845 9845
Ten crude flakes, Neolithic-Bronze Age, and a core were collected by the Chess Valley Archaeological Society during fieldwalking.

Beachampton SP 776 381
A possible ring ditch with hints of others, not previously recorded here, was photographed as a cropmark by the NMR in 1975.

Chalfont St Peter TQ 0195 9040
A buried soil containing four flakes and a core, and a pit containing six flakes, were discovered sealed by ploughwash on the sloping floor of a valley and sectioned by pipe trenches laid transversely to the course of the M25 (under construction). The flakes may be Neolithic-Early Bronze Age. (BCM)

Chalfont St Peter TQ 0108 9195
The discovery of further struck flakes of Neolithic-Early Bronze Age (?) date by Mrs. M. Putt was reported by Mrs. B. Stainton.

Chesham SP 9599 0145
Omitted from last year's 'Archaeological Notes' was a record of the work undertaken by Mrs. B. Stainton with the Chess Valley Archaeological Society at Stratfords Yard. In 1969 an excavation revealed the presence of stratified Mesolithic flints and animal bone. A 1 m sq. excavation in 1982 together with a watching brief during construction clarified some outstanding issues. A further twenty-eight microliths were recovered, twenty-three cores and several other flints as well as organic material. For a fuller account see *South Midlands Archaeology* (1983) 10-13.

Denham TQ 0477 8667
A polished stone axe, minus butt and cutting edge, was found by Mr. P. Jones among dredged material from Mill Stream. (295.1983)

Ellesborough SP 8326 0709 (Centre)
Twelve Late Neolithic - Bronze Age flakes, also two St Neot's ware sherds, were found by Mrs.

Y. Parminster in a ploughed field. (255.1983)

Fawley SU 7657 8477 - 7678 8469
A peat-filled former river channel was cut by a new gas main and recorded by Mr. D. Start. Some contained flints were of Late Mesolithic - Early Neolithic date. Dr. M. Robinson sampled the peat for further study.

Gerrards Cross SU 9927 8812
Miss L. Harris found a round flint hammerstone whilst gardening. (278.1983)

Gerrards Cross SU 0157 8800
In a field known to have produced Neolithic-Bronze Age flakes Mr. and Mrs. Bridbury dug a trial hole in advance of construction of the M25, and encountered Mesolithic flints. A subsequent small scale excavation by BCM with DOE support exposed a substantial tufa deposit, in the lower part of which and in the gravel beneath were late Mesolithic flints and animal bones. There was clearly on-site knapping with much fresh flint including cores. Some microliths were recovered but few other tools. The finds have not yet been fully studied. (BCM)

Gerrards Cross TQ 0155 8785 (area)
During construction of the M25 an unaccompanied cremation burial was recorded in the eastern roadside ditch, also a ditch containing a barb-and-tang arrowhead. (BCM)

Gerrards Cross TQ 015 883
A flint scraper and twenty flakes, Neolithic-Early Bronze Age, were collected by Mrs. H. Bridbury during fieldwalking.

Hughenden SU 8761 9773
A flint fabricator of Neolithic-Bronze Age date was found by Mrs. D. Waterton in a vegetable garden.

Iver TQ 0394 8336
During construction of the M25, a new culvert, dug to channel the Alderbourne, exposed the infilled channel of the river itself. Extensive post-glacial deposits of peat and other sediments were recorded and sampled for further study. The tip of a driven wooden stake, likely

to be prehistoric, was recorded from near the base of the sequence. The whole lay adjacent to the trial excavation carried out by Mr. D. Allen for BCM in 1981 which produced Mesolithic flints. (BCM)

Iver TQ 044 823
Part of a rectangular enclosure with associated linear features, not previously recorded here, were photographed as a cropmark by the NMR in 1980.

Ivinghoe SP 96 15
Mr. R. Field discovered during 1982-3 a number of fragments of Late Bronze Age metalwork dispersed over 30 m or so. The find was brought to the attention of BCM by Mr. L. Matthews. The objects, which are all broken, consist largely of fragments of swords and spears and are datable to the Wilburton phase. The method of their recovery over several months coupled with the apparent spread of the finds makes it uncertain whether the whole was a hoard or not. The material is undergoing further study. (329.1983)

Lacey Green SP 81 03
A socketed bronze spearhead, now in the possession of Mr. P. Gregory, was found. In the same general area Mr. J. Swatton and Mr. D. Critoph found Roman and about six Celtic coins.

Medmenham SP 8168 8428 - 8171 8441
A shallow pipe trench dug through the southern part of Danesfield camp, a Scheduled Ancient Monument, produced three Neolithic-Bronze Age flint flakes, but no features were recorded. (206.1983)

Newport Pagnell SP 8749 4361
A small Neolithic flint axe with butt intact but cutting edge missing was found in a garden by Dr. E. Henderson. Polishing is present on both edges but partial only on the two faces.

Princes Risborough SP 80820 02876
Sqn. Ldr. and Mrs. Collins reported discovery of human remains, which were investigated at the request of the Coroner's Officer. They proved to belong to a crouched burial of late

Neolithic-Early Bronze Age date, which was accompanied by a flint knife of plano-convex form. The whole was presumably once within a barrow although no trace remained in the garden in which the burial was found. A full report appears on p. 142. (359.1983)

Princes Risborough SP 79 03

Four scrapers, a core and ten flakes of Neolithic-Early Bronze Age date were discovered by Mrs. Y. Parminter, and in the same area a scatter of 1st-4th century Romano-British pottery including an Oxfordshire mortarium and colour-coat sherds. (254.1983)

Stone SP 7842 1258

Further flints were found in an allotment by Mr. G. Lamb including seven Neolithic-Early Bronze Age flakes and a Mesolithic blade. (302.1983)

Stone SP 7860 1275
Two blades Mesolithic(?) and two flakes, Neolithic-Early Bronze Age were found at the edge of a ploughed field by Mr. G. Lamb. (301.1983)

Wendover SP 861 071
A small tanged bronze chisel, with stop-ridge, was found by Mr. D. Shelley.

Weston Underwood SP 871 518
A ring ditch and ?part of a rectangular enclosure were photographed as a cropmark by Mr. G. Foard.

Wooburn SU 8952 8670
A polished Neolithic flint axe found in the 1960s was notified by Mr. B. Wheals. Photo at BCM.

ROMANO-BRITISH

Amersham SP 947 977

Two seasons of excavation were directed by Mr. P. A. Yeoman for BCM & DOE in advance of construction of the Amersham by-pass, at Mantles Green Farm, Amersham. The site was believed to be near a villa possibly destroyed in digging Shardeloes Lake in the 18th century. A large cobbled courtyard was exposed with a substantial flint-footed building on the west and 'corn-drier' to the east. Beneath the courtyard lay a number of curving boundary and drainage ditches associated with a wheel-rutted metalled trackway which itself sealed an earlier timber building. Extensive deposits of burnt flint, slag and charcoal were found and many iron objects. It is hoped that investigations will continue in 1984.

Astwood SP 9535 4750

Romano-British sherds were recovered from a V-shaped ditch exposed during topsoil stripping for the Astwood by-pass. (166.1983)

Bledlo w-cum-Saunderton SP 795 002

A 1st-century 'Colchester' type bow-brooch was found by Mr. R. Sears. (101.1983)

Brill SP 6526 1393
Two 4th-century bronze coins were discovered by Mr. N. Govier during 1982 in a garden.

Buckingham SP 704 333
Two Roman coins were found by Mr. D. G. Shelley on a housing development.

Chepping Wycombe SU 894 893
A bow-brooch, Collingwood type Rii was found by Mr. J. Durham.

Chilton SP 698 108
Nineteen further sherds were collected by Mr. O. J. M. Lee from a previously recorded Romano-British site. (277.1983)

Dorton SP 682 139
A 1st-2nd-century flagon base was found during 1982 by Mr. J. Faulkner. (350.1983)

Little Horwood SP 79 30
In an area from which Romano-British pottery had previously been reported, Mr. D. Shelley found many Roman coins and a model axe in copper-alloy. The latter has been donated to

BCM. (127.1983)

Little Missenden

SU 8981 9703

A pottery lamp, Cypriot, 2nd century AD, was found by William Long whilst digging a hole behind a barn. The area of the discovery had been considerably disturbed by a 20th-century rubbish pit but the finder thought that the find lay in relatively undisturbed clay and not with the modern pit material.

Milton Keynes

SP 8878 3916

In lowering the level of the churchyard and digging soakaways and new drains at All Saints Church, a considerable number of Romano-British sherds and some roof tile was recovered by Mr. R. J. Williams of MKDC, and may indicate the presence of a substantial building nearby. A Late Saxon bar-lip lug in St Neot's type fabric was also found.

Princes Risborough see Prehistoric.

Stantonbury

SP 8433 4030

An early Roman site was reported by Mr. J. Stephenson to MKDC.

Wolverton

SP 8076 4148

Roman pottery including Samian, also a fragment of keyed flue-tile, was recorded in a Service trench by Mr. R. J. Williams of MKDC.

Wolverton (Bancroft)

SP 827 403

The 1983 season at the Bancroft villa directed by Mr. R. J. Zeepvat for MKDC was in preparation for the site's display as a feature in a linear park. The villa had been previously excavated between 1973-1978. The following note summarises the results to date:

The earliest features present were ditches and gullies containing 1st-2nd-century pottery but lacking any other structural evidence. The earliest structure was an aisled building aligned east-west with limestone walls, the weight of the roof being carried by ten substantial posts. The building was subsequently partitioned into rooms with an internal corridor on the north. An L-shaped bath suite was constructed against the north side of the building. In the

late 2nd-early 3rd century the first house was replaced by a new building aligned north-south and partly overlying the first at the north end. The second house, although slightly smaller, was more soundly constructed. It had two wing rooms. The main entrance appears to have been in the centre of the east side. The south end was occupied by a bath suite. Occupation of the house continued through the 3rd into the 4th century, by which time there is evidence of disrepair. Around AD 340 a number of improvements were carried out; a corridor with porch was added to the front and mosaics were laid in all rooms except the wings (see D. S. Neal, *Roman Mosaics in Britain*, Britannia Monog. Ser. 1, 1981), and the bath suite was substantially modified and enlarged. A second smaller bath suite was added to the west wall of the building. Concurrently other improvements took place including the laying out of a formal garden with a large rectangular pond. Also attributable to this period is an octagonal shrine or summer-house lying south-east of the main house, and a mausoleum (see next entry). Occupation of the complex into the 5th century, at least, is likely.

Wolverton (Bancroft)

SP 825 405

Mr. R. J. Williams for MKDC excavated a previously identified site (*Recs. Bucks* 24, 172) lying 300 m north-west of the Bancroft villa. A substantial stone-built mausoleum, a circular shrine, a later cemetery and an underlying Iron Age settlement were examined. The square mausoleum consisted of an ambulatory with small portico on the east side overlooking the Bradwell Brook. It enclosed a central tower, 6 m sq., raised above an underground vault which survived to a depth of 1.5 m below the stripped level. Robbing of the footings of the south wall/tower had been almost complete but the vault was floored with a well preserved *opus signinum* floor with quarter-round mouldings along the line of the walls. Traces of the positions of two sarcophagi were still visible on the floor, as was the impression of a timber staircase. A substantial stone-lined culvert drained the vault and another to the north drained the uphill slope. The mausoleum was probably constructed in the second quarter of the 4th century. Late Roman-5th

century demolition was carried out with the aid of a ramp cut down to the vault base.

A small circular stone building 30 m north-west of the mausoleum was excavated. From ploughsoil above had come a group of eight small votive iron spearheads. Internally a shallow pit contained the semi-articulated skeleton of a young pig. A group of mid to late 4th-century coins was also found, and the whole was probably a shrine. Eight east-west inhumation graves were found in a north-south line between the two buildings; two graves contained architectural fragments. A tra-

pezoidal late Iron Age enclosure was also excavated. At least three penannular house ditches were found within it and two outside. One house ditch had been cut by the enclosure ditch and the other two inside had been recut and were not contemporary.

A series of smaller recut ditches lay north-west of the main enclosure.

Woolstone-cum-Willen SP 8650 4013
An early Roman site was reported by Mr. J. Stephenson to MKDC.

SAXON AND MEDIEVAL

Amersham SU 9314 9873
During renovation work at Kennel Farm several carved limestone and sandstone blocks including parts of two column bases were discovered beneath floor levels. The stone may originally have come from Missenden Abbey.

Boarstall SP 6255 1400 (area)
Following the discovery by Mr. E. R. Kendrick of an extensive scatter of medieval pottery, the area was fieldwalked by CMAG and at least six discrete pottery concentrations located. Wasters are present and the whole indicates an extension of the Brill/Boarstall medieval pottery industry noted in *Recs. Bucks* 24 (1982). The finds are provisionally dated late 13th-early 16th century. The possibility of house sites along the west edge of the field may complicate the picture. (66.1983)

Boarstall SP 6230 1386
A scatter of later 15th-16th-century pottery was located by Mrs. J. Taylor. (34.1983)

Boarstall SP 6274 1470 (approx.)
A small quantity of medieval pottery including several glaze-blistered pieces, possibly but not certainly 'wasters', were found by Mrs. S. Read. (305.1983)

Bow Brickhill SP 89 34
A Late Saxon silver strap end with niello inlay was brought to the attention of the coroner by

Mr. and Mrs. Woodfield; an inquest was held.

Brill SP 655 141
A watching brief by Mr. P. A. Yeoman for BCM and DOE on a housing development at Temple Street, Brill, led to the identification of a ceramic production area.

Part only of kiln 1 survived, but the whole plan of kiln 2, which had a rectangular brick firing chamber 4.5 x 3.0 m and utilised the flue of the earlier kiln as a wicket (loading entrance). The design of kiln 2 was that of a roof-tile kiln, but although roof tile was present including crested ridge tiles, there was a far greater number of pottery wasters. The ceramic was late 15th-16th century and included large jars, pancheons, jugs and bung-hole pitchers. Saggars were used in firing small jugs and Cistercian type cups.

A large pit packed with 17th-18th century wasters was also found on this site, which a magnetometer survey carried out by the DOE Ancient Monuments Laboratory showed otherwise to be free of kilns. (BCM)

Burnham SU 930 804
Inspection of trenches dug for a new drainage system at Burnham Abbey by Mr. and Mrs. D. & D. Miller located medieval walls east of the infirmary. A section through the moat showed it to have been filled in the 19th century. A full

report is in preparation.

Chalfont St Peter SP 999 897
An enclosure defined by three sides was noted on an air photograph. Ground inspection suggests that it may be late- or post-medieval.

Chenies TQ 0153 9832
Part of the area lying over the undercroft at Chenies manor was cleared of soil prior to laying a polythene membrane intended to prevent water seepage. A plain tile brick floor possibly of early 19th century date was exposed, indicating that the undercroft, at one period at least, lay beneath a building.

Denham TQ 0180 8605
A limited further investigation was carried out by BCM on the Denham (north) pottery production area, previously noted on the line of the M25, and exposed a medieval clay pit and the base of a ?clamp. Earthmoving machinery had destroyed the probable kiln previously seen in section. (149.1983)

Denham TQ 0220 8543
The excavation of a further area of the medieval pottery production area (Denham South) exposed on the line of the M25 was carried out by BCM with DOE support. A third kiln with opposed flues and central pedestal was excavated, and the surviving fragment of a fourth. A large clay pit was exposed in a channel cut to re-route the Alderbourne north of the kilns. Pottery production was flourishing during the 13th century, the products consisting largely of cooking pots, unglazed jugs and bowls. Nearly a ton of ceramic was recovered and is now being studied. (BCM)

Ellesborough SP 83 06
A Late Saxon copper-alloy strap-tag with simple cross-hatched decoration was found by Mr. P. Eamus. From the same area come two finger rings, a strap-end and two buckles, all medieval.

Ellesborough SP 83 08
A Mid to Late Saxon strap-tag in copper-alloy was found by Mr. D. Shelley.

Great Linford SP 854 420
A Mid to Late Saxon copper-alloy strap end was found by Mr. J. Nightingale in 1980. (1003.1983)

Great Missenden SP 897 010
An excavation at Missenden Abbey was directed by Mr. P. A. Yeoman for BCM in advance of development. Four areas were archaeologically investigated. Building work at the Abbey will be monitored as internal alterations take place.

Area I immediately north of the present kitchens proved to be within the body of the nave of the church. Two or possibly three phases of construction were identified. A number of floor surfaces were recorded and decorated tile found, although not *in situ*. Five graves ranging in date from late 12th to 14th century cut the floors, one containing a stone coffin. Area II contained traces of a timber barn cut through earlier flint cobbling. To the east lay a late medieval stone building. Area III produced evidence of a building to the north of the church. A JCB cut through the fill of a surviving pond showed it to have been much reduced in size by modern infill. The original pond may have been a medieval fish pond. (BCM)

Great Missenden SP 9070 0235
A slight rectangular enclosure two of whose sides coincide with field boundaries was identified by Mr. R. Smith. Medieval or later farmstead?

Hanslope SP 80 46
Mr. R. F. J. Kings and others located medieval and post-medieval coins, a copper-alloy dagger chape and other small finds on an area of ploughed house platforms.

Iver TQ 0403 8121
A single grass-tempered sherd, some medieval sherds, and some undated burnt daub were recorded whilst electric cables were being re-routed in connection with the construction of the M25. (BCM)

Milton Keynes see Roman.

- Milton Keynes* SP 8865 3905
Topsoil stripping in advance of gravel extraction on the site of irregular village earthworks, monitored by Messrs. R. A. Croft and R. J. Williams of MKDC, confirmed that they were medieval closes of roughly rectangular form.
- Oving* SP 7860 2186
A slight rise in the ground in a field named 'Mill Piece' appears to confirm the former site of a windmill.
- Princes Risborough* SP 80 04
A Mid to Late Saxon strap-end in copper-alloy was found by Mr. R. Sears and donated to the Museum. (275.1983)
- Stantonbury* SP 835 429 (approx.)
A medieval sword handle (LM Catalogue, type 8) with wheel pommel and long quillons was found by Mr. A. Smith. Traces of a wooden leather-covered scabbard were present. (1002.1983)
- The Lee* SP 9034 0610
A low mound visible in 'Bank Windmills' field suggests the former presence of a mill.
- Weston Turville* SP 8562 1040
Medieval pottery was collected from a housing development by Mr. C. Reid. (54.1983)
- Willen* SP 880 413
Re-examination of existing aerial photographs by MKDC revealed unrecorded village shrinkage on the eastern side of the village.

POST-MEDIEVAL AND UNDATED

- Amersham* SU 9272 9713
Possibly a boundary marker?
Subsidence revealed a man-made shaft, reported by CEGB and investigated by Mr. B. Tilbury. The shaft was 1.5-2.0 m in diameter. It was present to a depth of 6 m below present ground level and may be a 'chalk well' of the kind discussed in *Recs. Bucks* 21 (1979).
- Iver* TQ 038 794
Cropmarks, including a possible enclosure, not previously recorded here, were photographed from the air by the NMR in 1977.
- Biddlesden* SP 670 409
A square enclosure under grass (?) was photographed from the air by Mr. G. Foard.
- Iver* TQ 022 770
A small square enclosure and linear features, not previously recorded here, were photographed from the air by the NMR in 1980. Field system (?).
- Biddlesden* SP 662 402
An enclosure and field system showing as earthworks, possibly medieval, and not previously recorded here, were photographed from the air by the NMR in 1977.
- Maids Moreton* SP 708 346
The cropmark of a square enclosure (?), not previously recorded here, was photographed from the air by the NMR in 1972.
- Dorney* SU 91 80
A substantial curved cropmark, enclosure or natural (?), not previously recorded here, was photographed from the air by the NMR in 1975.
- Newport Pagnell* SP 889 422
A sub-circular enclosure, visible as a cropmark, was photographed from the air by Mr. G. Foard.
- Ellesborough/
Great & Little Kimble* SP 8288 0662
A low, roughly oval mound, was noted.
- Stoke Poges* SU 9753 8286
Construction of a new pavilion on the north side of the manor house exposed no medieval features. A trench dug adjacent to the north-

east corner of the house revealed an 18th-19th century brick culvert.

Taplow

SU 913 827

Linear features, not previously recorded here, were photographed as a cropmark by the NMR in 1980.

Wexham

TQ 000 825

An approximately rectangular enclosure with single entrance in the south side was photographed as a parch mark from the air by Mr. K. Keasley of the County Land Agents.