

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL NOTES FROM BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY MUSEUM

These notes include archaeological discoveries reported during 1993 and a few earlier finds. During the year substantial fieldwork took place on the routes of the proposed Wing and Lavendon bypasses, and within the proposed M1 widening corridor. Pressure of work has meant that the results of some fieldwalking remain to be processed and there has been some other slippage. The assistance of several 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 been recorded, nor single Roman coin finds, nor field scatters of medieval pottery unless of sufficient quantity to indicate settlement. Bracketed numbers indicate that the material is with the County Museum (BCM). The County Museum Archaeological Group is abbreviated CMAG. Abbreviated grid references have unfortunately had to be given for some sites in order to reduce the risk of looting. The use of these notes as a guide for metal detecting inhibits future publication of information, something that is in nobody's long term interest.

Michael Farley

## PREHISTORIC

*Aston Clinton, see Romano-British*

*Aylesbury, see Saxon and Medieval*

*Bledlow-cum-Saunderton* SP 7934 0238  
A flake from a Neolithic polished greenstone axe was found by B. Read.

*Bledlow-cum-Saunderton* SP 7959 0002  
The butt end of a polished stone axe was found by B. Read.

*Burnham/Slough* SU 9320 8090  
An evaluation was carried out by the Oxford Archaeological Unit prior to development. A number of linear features were identified and a single pit, perhaps of Bronze Age date, containing four struck flints and a burnt quartzite pebble.

*Coleshill* SU 962 947

A Neolithic flint axe/adze roughly flaked, 111mm long, was found by C. Damant. (1993.201.1)

*Iver, see Saxon and Medieval*

*Lavendon* SP 90 54  
Trial trenching preceded by fieldwalking and geo-

physical survey (the latter by the Bartlett/Clark Consultancy) in connection with a study of the proposed Lavendon bypass, confirmed the existence of an extensive Romano-British settlement, in part defined by enclosure ditches. A crouched inhumation was also located. A preceding early to mid-Iron Age enclosure was located to the north of the settlement. (1994.5, part)

*Lavendon* SP 922 527  
Trial trenching was undertaken in connection with the above study on an area thought to be significant on the basis of fieldwalking and geophysical survey. A low density of pits, ditches and layers was recorded which belonged to two periods, Neolithic and Late Bronze-Early Iron Age. The former produced flint waste including cores, pottery, part of a greenstone axe and carbonised hazelnut shells. Pottery came from the latter, and a fragment of carbonised 'bread'. (1994.5, part)

*Little Horwood* SP 8025 3238 (area)  
Fieldwalking by CMAG in advance of road improvements on the line of a known Roman road and near previous Romano-British finds, failed to locate any significant RB material, although 12 struck flint flakes of Neolithic-Bronze Age date,

well dispersed, were recovered. (1993.21)

*Princes Risborough* SP 8201 0474  
Two polished ?Neolithic axes, one of flint the other of a ?volcanic rock, were found by B. Jones in a rockery. They may be suspected to be collector's items. (1993.200.1-2)

*Princes Risborough* SP 804 035  
An evaluation and subsequent excavation were carried out by S. Ford of Thames Valley Archaeological Services, in advance of construction of a swimming pool in Wades Park. The area was initially suspected to contain medieval features associated with the adjacent moated site (the 'Black Prince's Palace'). The only significant deposit located was a ditch of prehistoric date, of which some 70m was traced. A few sherds present in the ditch indicate an early Iron Age date. Fragments of a human skull also came from the ditch.

*The Lee* No grid reference given  
A gold bracelet was found by D. Critoph in 1993. At a Coroner's Inquest held in February 1994 the find was declared Treasure Trove. The British Museum kindly gave the County Museum the op-

portunity to purchase the bracelet, which it subsequently did with the aid of the National Art Collections Fund and a grant also from the Museum and Galleries Commission/Victoria and Albert Museum. The bracelet, which is of Mid-Late Bronze Age date, consists of a rod of circular section, decorated with punched dots; both ends are also punched. It has been tightly coiled and would not have functioned as a bracelet prior to its deposit. The Museum carried out a small excavation around the findspot with the assistance of CMAG members, but found that the object had lain in ploughsoil. There were no associated archaeological deposits. (1994.56.1)

*Wendover* SP 89 07  
Various coins including 2 potin coins of 'Thurrock' type and 2 Trinovantian coins were recovered by J. Ley and P. Smith.

*Wing* SP 892 237  
Geophysical survey during the course of the study of the proposed Wing bypass located a possible Late Neolithic-early Bronze Age ring ditch. Fieldwalking in the area produced two flint cores.

## ROMANO-BRITISH

*Aston Clinton* SP 89 11  
An unidentified metal detectorist is said to have recovered some 60 Roman coins (?perhaps a hoard), from one area. Subsequent work in the locality by T. Clark located seven worn minims, a coin of Cunobelin, and a Saxon coin of Beornwulf (East Anglian mint). In the same general area the bronze core of a gold stater of the Corieltavi (VA 800-1) was found by Mr. Pennell.

*Fleet Marston* SP 77 155  
F. Huitson recovered part of a Hawkes Type 1B buckle of late fourth century date, also a copper alloy handle and part of a stamped samian sherd of Dr.31.

*Lavendon, see Prehistoric*

*Little Brickhill* SP 8878 3366 approx  
Two human skeletons, presumably of late Roman

date, were recovered from a slumped piece of river bank by S. Humphries and S. Thorpe. A small piece of iron, perhaps the end of a knife tang, was recovered from the right-hand pelvis of one. There is reported to have been Roman pottery in the fills of the graves. Burials apparently of similar date were recovered during excavations of the adjacent 'Bathing Station' site during the 1960's.

*Little Kimble* SP 82 06  
A watching brief, carried out during laying of a cable trench, confirmed the existence of a Roman structure. Small pieces of wall plaster and other building material were recovered.

*Newton Longville* SP 91 51  
Excavations, not previously noted here, took place in 1990 and 1991 under the direction of A. Noble with the Ousedale Archaeology Group. B. Martin reports the discovery of Romano-British material

and the curving stone footings of a structure with diameter c.4.4m.

*Stone*

SP 79 11

In the course of digging and probing in a paddock in 1992-3, T. Clark located Late Iron Age ceramic

material including 'Belgic brick', Romano-British pottery, a Langton Down brooch and coins of fourth-century date. (1993.14 part)

*Stone, see Medieval*

## SAXON AND MEDIEVAL

*Aylesbury*

SP 817 138

Prior to construction of a new art gallery at the County Museum, excavations were carried out by D. Bonner on a L-shaped area surrounding the former muniment room basement. Three ephemeral Iron Age features were identified, but much of the area was taken up by large medieval pits, a well and graves, apparently also of medieval date. Evidence of post-medieval activity pre-dating the existing museum buildings was also noted. The frequency of pits, graves and wells was such that the builders of the early eighteenth-century structure were obliged to found all of their walls on relieving arches.

*Aston Clinton, see Romano-British*

*Buckland*

SP 902 104

A scatter of medieval pottery including three rims, in sandy fabric, was noted by T. Clark. (1993.130.P)

*Burnham*

SU 930 804

During building work at Burnham Abbey part of a doorway, perhaps a night stair, was uncovered at first floor level in the north wall (choir end) of the former church. The door is now visible in an external gable end. The position of the former south wall of the church was also established. Half of a small millstone was recovered during the works. Recording was undertaken by Sister Jane Mary SPB and Mr. and Mrs. D. Miller.

*Castlethorpe*

SP 796 443

A programme of work was undertaken by A. Hunn and D. Bonner for Anglian Water in advance of sewer-pipe laying and as a condition of Scheduled Monument Consent, on the rectangular enclosure earthworks south of the railway line. The bank was

sectioned. Although no internal structural features were apparent, the bank sealed a possible old ground surface and a number of cut features including a one-metre-deep ditch aligned at right angles to the bank, perhaps a drain. The external ditch was found to be only 0.4m deep; of insufficient scale to have provided all of the bank material.

*Chetwode*

SP 648 299

A lead personal seal c 1270-1350, "the seal of Robert the Son of DVLFII" was found by J. Thurston.

*Drayton Parslow*

SP 8373 2848

An evaluation by test pitting was carried out by the Oxford Archaeological Unit north of Holy Trinity church in advance of development. No features were located but a few sherds of mid-late Saxon and medieval date were recovered. (BCM)

*Ellesborough*

SP 85 07

A Saxon button brooch, with face mask, was found by F. Huitson.

*Great and Little Kimble*

SP 82 06

A coin, probably of Coenwulf c. AD 805-810 was found by C. Lawson.

*Iver*

TQ 0282 7830

Selective evaluation by trial trenching was carried out, by Thames Valley Archaeological Services, of areas which would be disturbed by the proposed construction of a golf course in Richings Park. The principal discovery was of an area of medieval occupation, perhaps a farmstead, adjacent to the M4 (NGR above). A few struck flakes were identified over the site as a whole; in the NW of the park, adjacent to Sutton Lane; seven later prehis-

toric body sherds were recorded although they were not associated with any feature, and elsewhere a small group of medieval sherds was recovered.

*Little Woolstone* SP 8756 3928  
Two trenches were excavated under the direction of P. Carstairs on behalf of Milton Keynes Borough Council adjacent to the chancel of Little Woolstone church in order to inspect the foundations. The present chancel is nineteenth century but replaced a medieval one. Inhumations were found beneath the chancel wall, but no trace of the earlier chancel.

*Long Crendon* SP 715 093  
Three hand dug trenches were excavated on behalf of English Heritage in order to examine the foundations of Notley Abbey Dovecot. Parts of the north, south and west walls are at present shored. Housed within the dovecot are a number of stone architectural features, perhaps originating from the abbey. Of these, fifteen which had mouldings or other detail were drawn and photographed by N. Smith and D. Fell for BCM.

*Medmenham* SU 8071 8386  
During March 1993, in the course of laying a duct for a central heating system along a roadway adjacent to Abbey House, parts of eight inhumation burials orientated east-west, came to light. The burials were laid between 0.3-1.0m below present ground surface. Those which would have been disturbed by the pipe were removed and the remainder left *in situ*. A series of possible foundations for buttresses or pillars were visible in section along one face of the trench, together with a length of chalk wall foundation. Another wall foundation crossed the trench at right angles. Although recording was carried out under rescue conditions the discovery is important since virtually nothing was previously known of the layout of the abbey, or indeed its precise location. The status of a single stone pier, patched with brick, which stands on the north side of the present roadway, is unclear.

*Newton Blossomville* SP 925 515  
A watching brief was carried out by the Oxford Archaeological Unit at St. Nicholas' church during drainage works adjacent to the south and east of

the church. Three walls not forming part of the present structure, two of which may be medieval in date, were identified.

*Quainton* SP 705 213  
Proposals to construct an access road from the A41 to Calvert led to the assessment and survey of a pond bay, which had been located by W. George in 1972, and was possibly associated with a medieval mill. The work was carried out by the Oxford Archaeological Unit. Eight test pits failed to produce any evidence for medieval activity, which would be expected were a mill to have stood here.

*Quarrendon* SP 8023 1584  
Following unauthorised works adjacent to a bridge and within the scheduled area of the deserted medieval village, recording of finds and exposed features was undertaken with the agreement of English Heritage. The unauthorised works were found to have destroyed a 45m NE-SW stretch of earthworks including a double trackway. Several features were exposed in the base of the trench including a stone spread associated with much pottery, mainly of thirteenth or fourteenth-century date, some of it from the Brill-Boarstall kilns. The whole suggests a house site. Earlier pottery, including two Late Saxon St. Neots-type sherds, was also present. (BCM)

*Radnage* SU 786 979  
In the course of replacing a gully around St. Mary's church, a single sherd of twelfth-century 'tripod pitcher' ware came to light.

*Stoke Hammond* SP 882 291  
Two Late Saxon copper-alloy items were recovered by G. Heritage in 1990 during construction of a housing estate. One, a triangular plate decorated with a relief animal in foliage, initially interpreted as a book mount has now been suggested to be part of a recently defined class of stirrup ornament; the other, an openwork frame 'cage' of copper alloy arising from a ring and containing dark glass, has possible Irish pre-Norman parallels. (1993.182.1-2)

*Stone* SP 784 120  
During observation of topsoil stripping and building works adjacent to Stonethorpe Farm in 1992-3, T. Clark recovered; Romano-British

sherds including samian, colour coat, and an Oxfordshire mortarium sherd; two handmade early Saxon sherds; a St. Neots-type rim; pottery of eleventh-century and later date. In the farmyard he noted a saucer-shaped 'skin' of compressed or fired brick 3m beneath modern ground level – perhaps the base of a lime kiln sited within an old quarry. (1992.139 and 1993.233.1)

*Wendover* SP 85 08  
A base-silver tag-end with interlaced animal ornament was found by F. Huitson. (BCM)

*Wing* SP 8844 2236  
Investigations in connection with the proposed Wing bypass included geophysical survey by Oxford Archaeotechnics and also test pitting on part

of the Scheduled Ancient Monument. The monument includes the house and gardens of the sixteenth-century Ascott House. Enhanced magnetic susceptibility was recorded in one corner of the field containing earthworks, including an enclosure, which would be affected by the road. Some 33 test-pits dug in this area recovered a significant number of medieval sherds, perhaps indicating the former extent of the village of Wing or a settlement associated with the manor of Ascott. The Royal Commission on Historical Monuments commenced a topographical survey of the whole earthwork complex. Recent study of Commission aerial photographs revealed the existence of two rectangular ponds or reservoirs in a field north of the scheduled area, with an outlet to the formal gardens.

#### POST-MEDIEVAL AND UNDATED

*Buckingham* SP 6925 3355  
An archaeological evaluation by P. Carstairs in advance of construction of a law library for the University, within the area of the suspected Late Saxon burh at Prebend End, revealed evidence of a tannery of eighteenth or mid nineteenth-century date. In contrast to the situation on the opposite site of Hunter Street, excavated in 1974, much of the ground had been made up. Nearest to the river the make-up was at least 1.7m deep. (BCM)

*Great and Little Hampden* SP 8610 0362  
A well, capped with a brick dome, flint lined, and with water at a depth of c.30m, was discovered whilst levelling rough ground adjacent to Manor Farm, Little Hampden.

*Thornborough* SP 7350 3257  
Two brick-built limekilns of late nineteenth-cen-

tury date were completely dug out by BCC Countryside Division in an area being developed for amenity use. Steps are now to be taken to consolidate these fragile exposed structures.

*Wing* SP 876 217  
During fieldwork in connection with the proposed Wing bypass, a scatter of stone and tile, indicating a building, was noted near Mill Cottages.

*Wingrave with Rowsham* SP 8685 1921  
An evaluation by means of trial trenching was carried out at Parsonage Farm Wingrave on a possible moated site in advance of development. Although further evidence for the extent of the 'moat', was found, no evidence for associated medieval occupation was discovered and it was concluded that the 'moat' was probably a post-medieval feature.