

ARCHAEOLOGICAL NOTES

For many years these Notes have endeavoured to describe all of the fieldwork undertaken in the historic county over the course of a year, together with any significant individual finds which had been drawn to the attention of the County Museum and recorded in the Sites and Monuments Record. With the demise of the museum-based archaeological field team and the transfer of the county's Sites and Monuments Record to the County Council's Environmental Services Department this task is no longer so easy. The current position (1999) is that information can be supplied in an appropriate format from the Milton Keynes Archaeological Service but details of other finds and fieldwork are not currently available for publication from the County Archaeological Service. Clearly there is at present an information gap which it is hoped it may in due course be possible to fill. Meanwhile, since an account of some (but not all) of the fieldwork carried out by several archaeological field units operating within the county during the year appears in *South Midlands Archaeology* 29, this has been briefly abstracted here with acknowledgement (SMA); the full accounts should be referred to for more detail.

The enquirer may always seek further information from the relevant Sites and Monuments Record. The last full account in these Notes covered 1997. This account covers 1998.

Michael Farley

PREHISTORIC

Medmenham
see Post-medieval

Newport Pagnell SP 853 446
Northamptonshire Archaeology carried out an open-area excavation and watching brief in advance of the extension of Gayhurst Quarry by G.F.X. Hartigan Ltd. Seven ring ditches of a

Bronze Age round barrow cemetery were excavated, together with three small Iron Age enclosures and a pit alignment. The largest barrow in the group was double-ditched with two inhumations and three cremations within a central grave. Cut into this barrow were three in-humations, one of which was decapitated and probably dated from the late Roman period. A distinctive feature of the barrow was the presence of a large assemblage of cattle bones within the secondary fill of the inner ditch. Two barrows retained one urned and several unurned cremations but the remaining barrows had been heavily truncated by ploughing.

Taplow SU 907 823

An archaeological evaluation was carried out by Wessex Archaeology in the grounds of Taplow Court in advance of proposed redevelopment. Mesolithic flint was recorded, a possible ditch containing a comparatively large quantity of Late Bronze Age pottery and several other possible prehistoric features. Post-medieval features were also noted. (SMA) [Editor's note. In 1999 the subsequent full excavation which took place on this site revealed a major hillfort.]

ROMANO-BRITISH

Astwood SP 9499 4663

Surface finds of base and rim sherds by B Giggins.

Fenny Stratford SP 884 340

An evaluation of the site adjacent to Fenny Marina by Archaeological Services and Consultancy for Rialto Homes plc did not encounter any Roman burials. This was close to the site of the Roman burials found in 1857 behind the Saracen's Head public house. Traces of the 19th century canal basin were found.

SAXON AND MEDIEVAL

Chetwode SP 6405 2983

The Oxford Archaeological Unit carried out a watching brief during the removal of a suspended floor in the north chapel and reduction of the underlying material. A double-niched piscina was revealed in its south wall and two blocked doorways in the east wall. (SMA)

Dinton with Ford SP 7910 0950

Oxford Archaeological Unit carried out a watching brief during the excavations of footings for a cartshed at Moreton Farm. Natural clay was found directly beneath the topsoil. (SMA)

Edlesborough SP 9700 1905

A watching brief, carried out by Michael Farley Archaeology for the Churches Conservation Trust during the digging of six trial pits, recorded the footings of the church, a piece of re-sited moulded stone, and several burials. One burial, possibly of medieval date, had been laid in a grave with a chalk-cut head recess. Confirmation was obtained that the prominent mound on which the church is sited is of undisturbed natural chalk and not man-made.

Granborough SP 7625

A survey of house platforms and a probable east-west lane was carried out by the County Museum Archaeological Service. (SMA)

Little Woolstone SP 8762 3929

The Commission for New Towns contracted Northamptonshire Archaeology to carry out an evaluation of a building plot situated adjacent to the 17th century Mill House, which was demolished in 1940. The leat was located and found to be 850mm deep cut into blue/grey clay. No dating evidence was found.

Loughton SP 8363 3760

Northamptonshire Archaeology undertook an evaluation of a building plot in Leys Road on

behalf of the Commission for New Towns. Several pits and post holes produced Potterspury and Midland grey sandy ware, suggesting 13th century and later activity.

Olney SP 4890 2509

Oxford Archaeology Unit watched the construction of a French drain and two soakaways. No significant features other than buried graveyard soil found.

Shenley Church End SP 8303 3653

An evaluation of a building plot off Oakhill Road by Northamptonshire Archaeology for the Commission for New Towns identified a possible hollow way 20m long by 9m wide in a north-south orientation, with a pond at its south end. This lay to the east of Shenley Toot. The fills of the features only produced 19th century pottery.

Sherington SP 8910 4680

Proposals to extend St Laud's Church necessitated a field evaluation of parts of the graveyard by Oxford Archaeology Unit. No significant archaeological features were found because of disturbance by post-medieval grave digging.

Newport Pagnell SP 8831 4400

Archaeologica carried out a watching brief of alterations at Tickford Abbey on behalf of Greensleeves Homes Trust. There were three walls of medieval date identified, including part of the dorter range and a wide east-west wall.

POST-MEDIEVAL AND UNDATED

Boarstall SP 6242 1425

A resistivity survey by the National Trust in the grounds of Boarstall Tower, revealed the outline of the Aubrey family house depicted in an engraving of 1695. Dendrochronological dates of 1312 and 1614 have been obtained for the ground floor ceiling joists and the roof joists respectively. (SMA)

High Wycombe SU 865 935

The Oxford Archaeological Unit carried out two phases of watching brief in the churchyard of All Saints. A previously unknown burial vault was recorded and a stretch of wall, possibly post-medieval, possibly part of a grave surround or mausoleum. (SMA)

High Wycombe SU 874 924

A watching brief was carried out at Bassetbury Manor by Michael Farley Archaeology during digging of 130m of lighting-cable trench adjacent to the house. No features of archaeological significance were observed. However, since the trench was dug by a toothed trenching-machine with a cut of only 0.15m, recording opportunities were minimal. A small amount of ceramic was recovered, none earlier than the 17th-18th centuries.

Marlow TQ 8495 8640

The Museum of London Archaeological Service carried out a watching brief during excavation of service trenches in the Brewery courtyard. Several sections of brick wall were recorded, in some cases possibly predating the late 18th century brewery, whilst others relate to buildings shown on the 1876 OS map. Assemblages of 16th-18th century pottery, glass bottles, clay pipe, etc, were found, apparently within the fills of pits cut into a cultivated soil. (SMA)

Medmenham SU 817 846

Trial excavation was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology at the site of the former RAF Medmenham [adjacent to Danesfield hillfort]. From the mid-17th century a series of residences were built at the site. One completed in c.1853 was demolished c.1901 and truncated remains of this were identified and of a contemporary ice-house. Remains of earlier buildings survived as robber trenches and the vestiges of walls. Medieval activity was limited to three residual sherds of pottery. Scattered pits and ditches of Iron Age date were also revealed. (SMA)

Middle Claydon SP 720 253

A watching brief carried out by the National

Trust at Claydon House during installation of a water main, revealed the brick footings for the north wall of the former ballroom constructed in the 1760s. (SMA)

Newport Pagnell SP8766 4375

A watching brief by Northamptonshire Archaeology for Kingfisher Construction of redevelopment in Waterhouse Close revealed a large ditch, possibly 'V' shaped, parallel to the River Ouzel. The ditch was infilled during the 19th century.

Princes Risborough SP 8064 0351

A watching brief was carried out by the National Trust whilst extensive repairs to the Manor House were undertaken. No evidence was found that the existing building (mid 17th century) contains earlier work, although an earlier building is suspected since it is partially surrounded by a moat. (SMA)

Shenley Brook End SP 838 363

Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd carried out an evaluation on behalf of Kingsmead Homes, of Shenley Lodge Site DD. This was on the site of the 'East Green' shown on a map of 1698 and a cottage built on the 'Green'. No trace of the cottage was found but sherds from the site had a date range of mid-late 17th century to early 18th century, suggesting a squatter's cottage. The lack of ridge and furrow within the 'East Green' area indicates that it remained as open grassland until relatively recently.

Shenley Brook End SP 836 356

A watching brief by Archaeological Services and Consultancy on behalf of Summerleigh Property Ltd on a development at the rear of 'Greenview', Church End Road, did not reveal any archaeological features.

Shenley Church End SP 830 363

Evaluation prior to development in Holy Thorn Lane was carried out by Thames Valley Archaeological Services on behalf of David Wilson Homes. A section was put across the north bound-

ary ditch of Shenley Park. This was 1.4m wide and 0.43m deep but lacked dateable finds and had no surviving evidence for a southern bank.

Shenley Church End SP 82 35

Archaeological Investigations carried out an evaluation of 22ha of Shenley Common Farm for David Lock Associates on behalf of Corran (Wakefield) Ltd and Welbeck Land Ltd. Over 823m of trenching in poorly-drained heavy clay with small outcrops of sand and gravel failed to identify any archaeological sites

Stowe SP 675 375

Geophysical survey by the National Trust and subsequent excavation relocated the original position of the column on which the George II statue was sited. The outline of several paths has also been traced and some recreated. (SMA)

Taplow SU 913 856

A watching brief by the National Trust during installation of a water main through the garden landscape and around the north front of Cliveden House led to the discovery of brick footings, perhaps of glasshouses, in the former stable yard, and also in the NW corner of the north lawn. (SMA)

Taplow SU 9070 8132

The Oxford Archaeological Unit recorded a 19th century ice-house associated with the former Berry Hill House, prior to its demolition as part of the Maidenhead/Windsor Flood Alleviation Scheme. (SMA)

Walton SP 8854 3698

A ground Radar survey carried out by Fugro Ltd on behalf of the Open University located the alignment of a post-medieval brick drain south-east of Walton Hall.

West Wycombe SU 837 942

A watching brief was carried out by the National Trust during modifications to the sawmill in West Wycombe Park. The original wheelpit and an arch carrying the headrace were recorded. It appears that the building may have been used as a corn mill before conversion to a sawmill in the 19th century. (SMA)

Wooburn SU 9098 8787

The Oxford Archaeological Unit carried out a watching brief at the Royal Stag Brewery prior to commercial redevelopment. The site lies adjacent to an area where medieval and post-medieval occupation had previously been recorded. All deposits encountered on site were of 19th–20th century date. (SMA)