

## Notes and News

### THE CENTENARY OF THE SOCIETY

The Oxford Architectural and Historical Society will be one hundred years old next year. The Society was founded in 1839 in the hey-day of the Oxford Movement as a society for promoting the study of Gothic architecture, and because it met in Oxford the word 'Oxford' was prefixed to its title. In 1848 it incorporated the 'Oxford Heraldic and Archaeological Society.' In course of time it came to be known as the Oxford Architectural Society, and its present name was not adopted until 1860.

It is proposed to celebrate the centenary in the summer term of 1939, when all the meetings of the society will in some way commemorate the event. One paper will be read on the history of the Society, for which there is ample material in minutes, accounts, reports, and correspondence, much of which is both interesting and amusing. A second paper will be on the Oxford Movement, out of which the Society arose. The third and last paper, in June, on the Gothic revival in architecture, will be combined with an exhibition of drawings, books, portraits, and other material illustrating the history of the Society and what it has stood for, and will be followed by an evening party in the Ashmolean Museum. One or two half-day excursions and one whole-day excursion will also be arranged. Finally a permanent record will be published in a small centenary number of *Oxoniensia* to be issued in June with the volume for 1939.

It is a modest programme, but it is the utmost the Society can do without embarking on expenditure which it cannot afford.

### MEMBERSHIP

The number of private members in the Society is at present 339, of whom 203 subscribe to *Oxoniensia*. For a county like Oxfordshire, which is so rich in antiquities of every age, and whose historical associations are so strong and so interesting, these numbers are far from encouraging. If neighbouring counties can bring the membership of their societies to over 400, and in one instance to nearly 600, there is no reason why Oxfordshire should not do the same. An increase of 200 or even 100, if it could be accomplished, would enable the Society to play its part far better in every branch of its activity.

Its journal *Oxoniensia* could be enlarged, for there is no lack of first-class material awaiting publication: the Editorial Committee has promises of no less than twenty articles of considerable size, some of which, through lack of funds, cannot be published for some time. The Society constantly has to refuse appeals for financial help towards the preservation of antiquities and historical monuments in Oxfordshire; and the money available for the up-keep of the Society's library is far from adequate.

The Committee hopes that the Centenary celebrations will bring the existence of the Society to the knowledge of a wider public, and it intends, during the Centenary year,

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to strain every effort in a campaign for recruiting new members. To ensure success an appeal is here made to all members to take an active part in this campaign, and the honorary secretaries will be pleased to supply copies of a prospectus setting forth the aims, activities, and terms of membership of the Society for distribution.

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL NOTES

During the past year the following discoveries have been made in the Oxford district, either in excavations under the auspices of the Oxford University Archaeological Society and other bodies, or as chance finds:<sup>1</sup>

1. *Eynsham (Foxley Farm), Oxon.* Further finds in the beaker-cemetery of the Early Bronze Age recorded last year (*Oxoniensia*, II, 201) have brought the total of graves up to 18, eight of which contained beakers (pp. 21 ff.).

2. *Eynsham (Twelve Acre Farm), Oxon.* During gravel-digging in Messrs. Bolton Bros. pit in August 1938 an inhumation-burial of Early Bronze Age date was found. The skeleton (Univ. Museum E.11.3/280), female, 25-30 yrs., ceph. index 86, stature 5 ft. 3 ins., was crouched on r. side, arms and legs flexed, l. hand to face, orientation 205°. Laid on the arms of the skeleton between face, knees and ribs were the incompletely cremated remains (knees and feet unburnt) of a female child, 2-6 yrs., embedded in soft green sand. The burial was in a circular hut, 6 ft. diam. and cut 1¾ ft. into the gravel subsoil, on a hard, packed floor of earth and gravel about 3 ins. thick, in which were a few small flint flakes, charcoal, and one bead(?). There were no grave-goods and no sign of burning round the skeleton, such as occurred in most of the graves in the Foxley Farm cemetery (p. 25) less than half a mile away.

3. *Stanlake, Oxon.* During gravel-digging in Messrs. Sanders' pit opposite the 'British Village' (O.S. 1 in.) in March 1938 an inhumation-burial presumably of Early Bronze Age date was found. The skeleton (Univ. Museum E.11.3/281), female, about 40 yrs., ceph. index 78, stature 4 ft. 11 ins., small, but fairly muscular, teeth very worn and attacked by caries and abscesses, is reported to have been crouched in a shallow grave excavated about 2 ft. into the gravel subsoil, head to NW. The bones were collected by workmen: no grave-goods were noticed.

A number of bag-shaped pits were reported near by, in the direction of the 'British Village,' one of which (Nov. 1938) yielded interesting sherds of Iron Age A pottery.

4. *Abingdon (Northcourt), Berks.* Gravel-digging in a pit belonging to the Cowley Concrete Co., Ltd., Radley Road, produced three Bronze Age skeletons (June, 1938) and one beaker (May, 1937: see PLATE III, F and p. 26) some 100 yds. away from the skeletons. Details of the graves and skeletons will be published in the *Berkshire Archaeological Journal*.

5. *Radley (Wick Farm), Berks.* The O.U. Archaeological Society completed the excavation of ring-ditch no. 16 and partially excavated ring-ditch no. 11 in Barrow Hills field. For a full account of the finds see pp. 31 ff.

6. *Adlestrop Hill, Glos.* A barrow of oval shape in a copse some 400 yds. west of Chastleton Camp was excavated and planned under the direction of Miss H. E. Donovan and Capt. C. Musgrave, with the assistance of members of the O.U. Archaeological

<sup>1</sup> Notes 2, 3, 4, 8 and 13 are based on information supplied by Capt. C. Musgrave who salvaged and recorded the finds.

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Society. The central cist was known to have been disturbed in recent times by unscientific digging and the excavations proved that it had been disturbed anciently as well. A full report will be published elsewhere.

7. *Oxford (Crick Road)*. Mr. R. T. Lattey reports that in making improvements in the front garden of No. 6, Crick Road, in September 1938 he uncovered a portion of an Iron Age occupation-pit (FIG. 18), which appeared to be roughly oval, 5 or 6 ft. across by at least 8 ft. long and sunk about 1 ft. 6 ins. into the gravel subsoil. The north-western



FIG. 18

IRON AGE OCCUPATION-PIT  
in the front garden of No. 6, Crick Road, Oxford,  
from the east.

edge was destroyed before the nature of the pit was realized. In the filling were bones of ox (*bos longifrons*), a jaw of sheep or goat, some sherds of coarse Iron Age A pottery and one sherd of a bead-rim bowl. Laid on the gravel at the bottom were two red-deer antlers from one of which the tines have been sawn away: the other may have been used as a pick but has not had any tines removed though there are indications of an attempt to cut one of them. The objects have been presented to the Ashmolean Museum. (*Oxford Mail*, October 4, 1938).

Considerable finds of pottery of similar and slightly later date were made many years ago less than a quarter of a mile westwards in the garden of Wykeham House (No. 56, Banbury Road).

8. *Cassington, Oxon*. In the gravel-pits W. of Cassington village on the north side of the Oxford Northern By-pass Road several Early Iron Age pits, on which it is

PLATE XIII



A



B

PUDDLING-HOLE III, DORCHESTER, OXON.

A. The wooden framework. B. General view showing the large stones found in the upper filling.

*Phot. G. W. G. Allen.*

PLATE XIV



A



B



C



D

- A. Alvescot, Oxon.    B. Kencot, Oxon.    C. Sutton Courtenay, Berks.  
D. Bampton, Oxon.

POLISHED STONE AXES FROM THE OXFORD DISTRICT

*Phk. Ashmolean Museum.*

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hoped that a comprehensive report will be published in a later volume, were excavated in advance of the gravel-diggers. The Romano-British cemetery yielded several more graves, and is now worked out, the total number of graves recorded being upwards of 110 (*Oxford Mail*, February 24, 1938).

In the SE. angle made by the by-pass road with the road from Cassington to Eynsham a new gravel-pit was opened during 1938. Part of the field in which the pit lies is known from Major Allen's photographs to be rich in material of prehistoric date, but the gravel-digging has not touched these yet. It is intended that extensive excavation shall be accomplished here in advance of gravel-digging.

In Messrs. Tolley's gravel-pit, eastwards of the last site, a Saxon hut was excavated by workmen in January 1938. A quantity of pottery, both decorated and plain, an iron knife, and a heddle-stick and spindle-whorl of bone were recovered.

9. *Frilford, Berks.* The O.U. Archaeological Society has carried out extensive excavations in the field behind the Noah's Ark Inn at Garford bridge, where the Oxford-Wantage road crosses the River Ock. The plan of a Romano-Celtic square temple has been recovered, beneath which is a series of post-holes belonging to an earlier, Iron Age structure. Near by was a group of Iron Age storage-pits and drainage-ditches, yielding haematite-coated and other interesting Iron Age pottery; and in one of these Iron Age pits was a burial of a male Saxon with scramasax and knife presumably of late 6th or 7th century date. Mixed in the earth filling of the grave was a group of 50 or 60 late 4th century coins, which must have formed part of a hoard discovered and partly re-buried unwittingly by the Saxon grave-diggers. The excavations are still in progress and a full report will appear in a forthcoming number of *Oxoniensia*.

10. *Bloxham (Clay Cross Ironstone Co.'s pit), Oxon.* Further finds of burials in the Romano-British cemetery occurred during the year (p. 44, note 1).

11. *Dorchester (Allen's pit), Oxon.* Further finds, including considerable quantities of Roman pottery, have occurred during gravel-digging near the site of the potters' kilns (*Oxoniensia*, 1, 83 ff., fig. 13). Of chief importance are two potters' puddling-holes, similar to the one found in 1936, marked P on the plan (*L.c.*).

Puddling-hole II,<sup>1</sup> which lay a few yards SW. of puddling-hole I, was only reported after half of it had been removed by the gravel-diggers. At the surface (FIG. 19) it was probably nearly circular, and about 15 ft. in diameter. The sides sloped at an angle of about 40° downwards to a depth of 5 ft., and then became almost vertical. This lower part of the hole was 3½ ft. deep and oval—6 ft. by 4 ft.—in section, with its longer axis running E.-W. The normal depth of the natural gravel was 1½ ft.

The upper filling consisted of ordinary occupation-earth with much Roman pottery. At the top of the vertical lower portion was a hard layer of iron formation ½ in. thick, which had to be broken through with a pick, and in which were embedded some Roman sherds. Below was a further 5½ ins. of clay impregnated with iron. The main filling was a fairly uniform agglomeration of black matter composed of twigs, grass and other vegetable refuse, and sticky black earth full of blue vivianite, containing many snail shells and also a certain amount of Roman pottery, including Samian fragments. Here was also some wood, including one stake, 1½ ins. diam., laid vertically, and one plank at least 2 ft. long and 4 ins. by 2 ins. in section, laid horizontally. At the bottom of the hole was a 9 in. layer of grey, slimy puddling clay, and on the very floor was a large

<sup>1</sup> Excavated and recorded by members of the O.U.A.S. in December, 1937.

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fragment of Romano-British hard grey ware. On the S. and W. sides the hole appeared to have been lined with turves of which the grassy nature was well preserved; the same lining may have existed on the E. and N., but no trace of it remained, as this half of the hole was removed by the gravel-diggers down to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  ft. from the bottom.

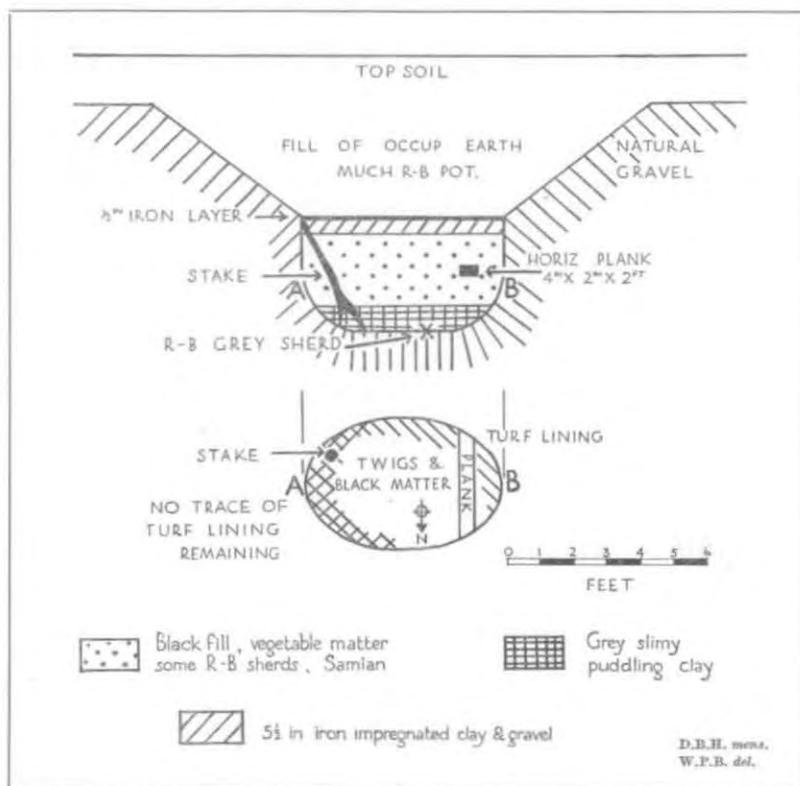


FIG. 19

Vertical and horizontal section of puddling-hole II  
DORCHESTER, OXON.

Puddling-hole III (PLATE XIII)<sup>1</sup> lay some 20 yards W. of hole I. At a depth of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  ft. from the surface was a mass of clay  $3\frac{1}{2}$  ft. in diameter and  $3\frac{1}{2}$  ft. deep containing about 40 large stones distributed through it at random with a small amount of gravel and some Roman pottery and animal bones, including the skull of an ox. It is probable

<sup>1</sup> Excavated and recorded by Major G. W. G. Allen in June, 1938. The following note is based on his report.

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that the approach to the hole was by stone steps as in hole I (*Oxoniensia*, 1, 90) and that the stones were thrown into the hole when it fell into disuse.

Below this mass of clay was a wooden framework approximately 15 ins. by 13 ins. and 14 ins. deep, constructed partly of flat planks and partly of round timbers. The flat planks had clearly been used for some other purpose before lining this hole, as one piece had a hole  $1\frac{1}{4}$  ins. square through it, and two others were joined at a corner of the structure by a triangular fillet which was nailed to both and pegged to one by a wooden peg. One of these pieces showed saw-marks  $\frac{1}{8}$  in. wide. This wooden box, which contained clay with much vivianite but without any admixture of gravel, had been placed in a hole in the gravel  $4\frac{1}{2}$  ft. in diameter, and was packed round the outside with clay and rubble and supported internally by stakes placed at the corners and about midway on each side. Originally these projected some 6 ins. above the box. The bottom of the box lay at present water-level, and about 2 ft. below the level at which the water stood before gravel-digging began.

In the note on puddling-hole I (*l.c.*) it was suggested that 'There is no reason to assume that the water-level has changed appreciably here since Roman times; if any change has occurred it is probably in the nature of a rise rather than of a fall, owing to the construction of locks and weirs on the rivers.' On this Major Allen remarks: 'I doubt if it is correct to say that locks and weirs on the river would affect the water-level on a hill near by. Before we started to dig gravel in the pit the water-level there was 2-3 ft. higher than it is now. It was, I think, held up by impermeable walls of clay in the gravel, and as these have been broken down the water can get away down hill. The water must have been held up in some such manner as the pit is some 30 ft. above the river. Possibly evaporation from the exposed surface helps the process.'

12. *Ramsden, Oxon.* (a) At the NW. corner of the junction of the Charlbury-Witney and Leafield-Finstock roads, at the north end of Ramsden Heath, during the building of a new reservoir, the ditch and bank of Grim's Dyke were laid bare. In a pipe-line trench the bank appeared as a line of stones a few inches thick over the clay subsoil. The find was reported to the Ashmolean Museum by Mr. A. G. L. Rogers of Mount Skippet, Ramsden, who has in his possession portions of a Romano-British olla of grey ware said to have been found whole in a pit in the subsoil about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  ft. deep, and to have been broken and partly lost by the workmen.

(b) At the E. end of Ramsden village immediately N. of the supposed line of Akeman Street the foundations of a small isolated building, 10 ft. 6 ins. by 12 ft. 10 ins. and standing 9 ins. to 1 ft. 6 ins. high, were exposed a few inches below the surface by Mr. K. E. Pembrey of The Grange, Ramsden, in September, 1938. The walls are about  $2\frac{3}{4}$  ft. thick at the base and the floor within is covered with large cobbles. Both Romano-British and mediaeval pottery occurred in the covering soil, mostly close against the outside of the walls, and the date of the structure is at present uncertain, though the masonry resembles closely that of the Roman villas at Ditchley and elsewhere in the neighbourhood. The unevenness of the turf in the field suggests that there are other masonry remains near by.

13. *Eynsham (Newland Street), Oxon.* In a gravel-pit being worked by Messrs. Partridge in a field N. of the street were found in June 1938 a ditch containing Romano-British pottery and some Saxon hut-floors with a considerable amount of pottery and one bone needle.

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14. *Dean, Oxon.* 300 yds. E. of Grove Lane (O.S. 6 in. Oxon. xx SE.) and 750 yds. S. of the road from Chadlington to Spelsbury in a gravel-pit belonging to Mr. R. J. Hobbs of Chadlington a Saxon hut-floor occurred in January 1938, about 12½ ft. long by 8 ft. wide with a post-hole at each end of the long axis. The finds include fragments of pottery, both decorated and plain, and one bone spindle-whorl.

15. *Oxford (Radcliffe Infirmary Grounds, N. side).* Early in 1938 workmen digging a foundation trench unearthed, at a considerable depth below the surface in a layer of ashes, a heddle-stick of bone, probably Saxon (Ashmolean Museum, 1938.330).

16. *Seacourt, Berks.* The Oxford University Summer Camp for Unemployed in 1938 drove an exploratory trench from west to east across the site of the mediaeval village (p. 174 below).

17. *Wallingford (The Pavilion), Berks.* During 1938 further Anglo-Saxon graves have been excavated by Mr. F. Snow. The material from the cemetery will shortly be published in full by Mr. E. T. Leeds in the *Berkshire Archaeological Journal*.

18. *Sunningwell, Berks.* Foundation trenches for some new cottages that are being built for Mr. A. C. Pilkington (architects, Messrs. Nuttall Smith and David Booth, A.A.R.I.B.A.) on land west of the village yielded considerable quantities of mediaeval pottery (13th century onwards) and small objects, and some traces of wall foundations. The finds have been presented to the Ashmolean Museum by Mr. Pilkington.

### FOUR POLISHED STONE AXES

Three of the axes here recorded are recent discoveries, the fourth has been known for some time.

1. Grey schistose rock; thin-butted; oval in section with narrow flat lateral edges; the butt slightly damaged. L. 6⅜ ins. W. 3 ins. T. 1⅝ ins. Weight 1 lb. 9 ozs. (PLATE XIV, D).

Found in May 1938 on the bank of the Thames immediately below Rushy Weir, Bampton (6 in. O.S. Oxon. 37 SW.). Communicated by the finder and owner, Mr. W. A. Ellement of the National Provincial Bank, Golders Green, London.

2. Green schistose rock; thin-butted; oval in section with flat lateral edges, poorly executed. L. 4½ ins. W. 2½ ins. T. 1½ ins. Weight 8½ ozs. (PLATE XIV, A).

Found on March 3rd, 1938, on the surface of the field immediately east of Bedwell Pool, Alvscot (6 in. O.S. Oxon. 36 NE.). Communicated by the finder and owner, Mr. John Hewett of Kencot, Oxon.

3. White patinated flint; thin-butted; oval in section with flat lateral edges; in the preliminary process of chipping the surface at the butt end had been so reduced that it was not possible thereafter to grind it down to correspond with the rest of the axe. L. 4½ ins. W. 2½ ins. T. 2¼ ins. Weight 6¼ ozs. (PLATE XIV, B).

Found during the summer of 1938 on the surface at the extreme northern point of the parish of Kencot, Oxon., in the field which is enclosed by the road leading to Shilton out of the main Kencot-Burford road (opposite Vicarage Farm) and the boundary between the parishes of Kencot and Alvscot (6 in. O.S. Oxon. 30 NE.); 25 in. O.S. field 102). Communicated by the finder and owner, Mr. Frank Innocent of Lechlade, Glos.



CROP-MARKS NEAR DORCHESTER, OXON.

The great rings (p. 169), parallel lines and other enclosures between the Abingdon and Oxford roads.

*Ph. G. W. G. Allen.*

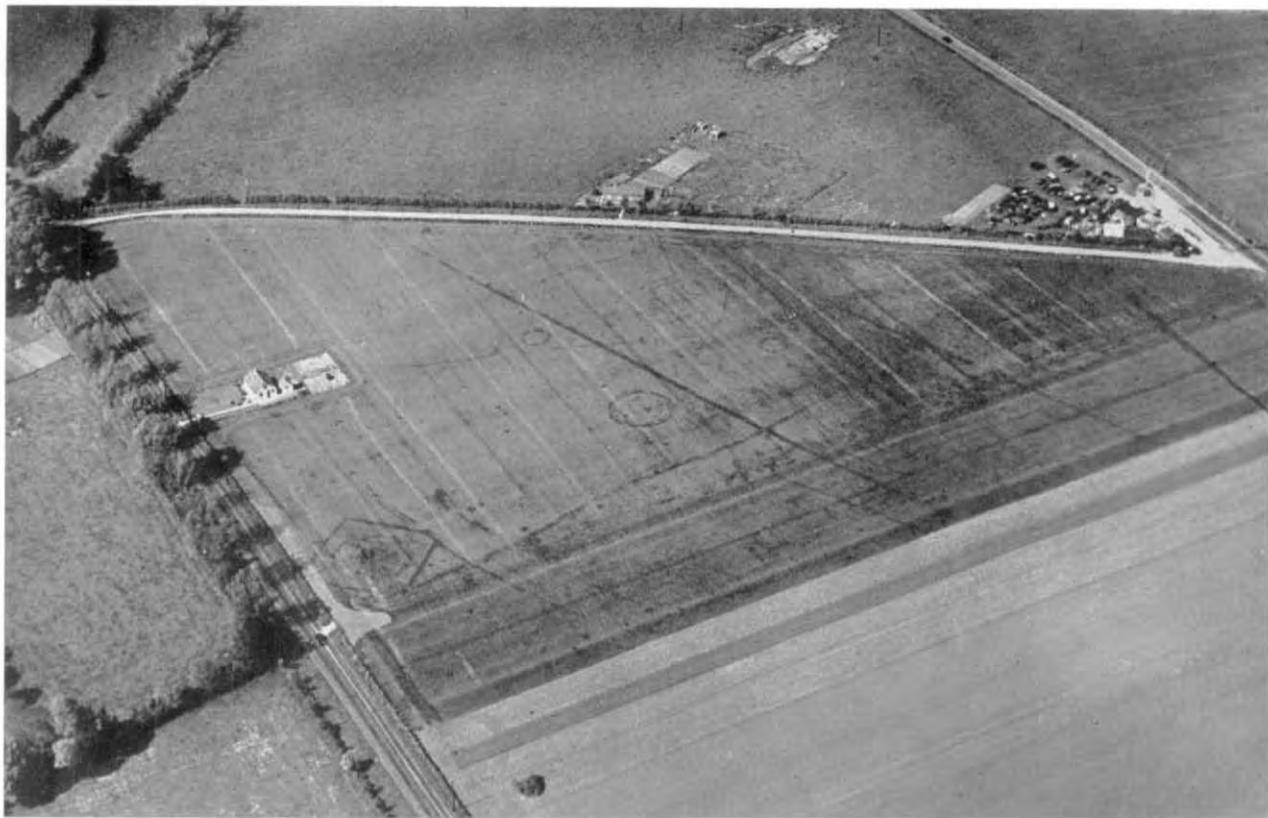
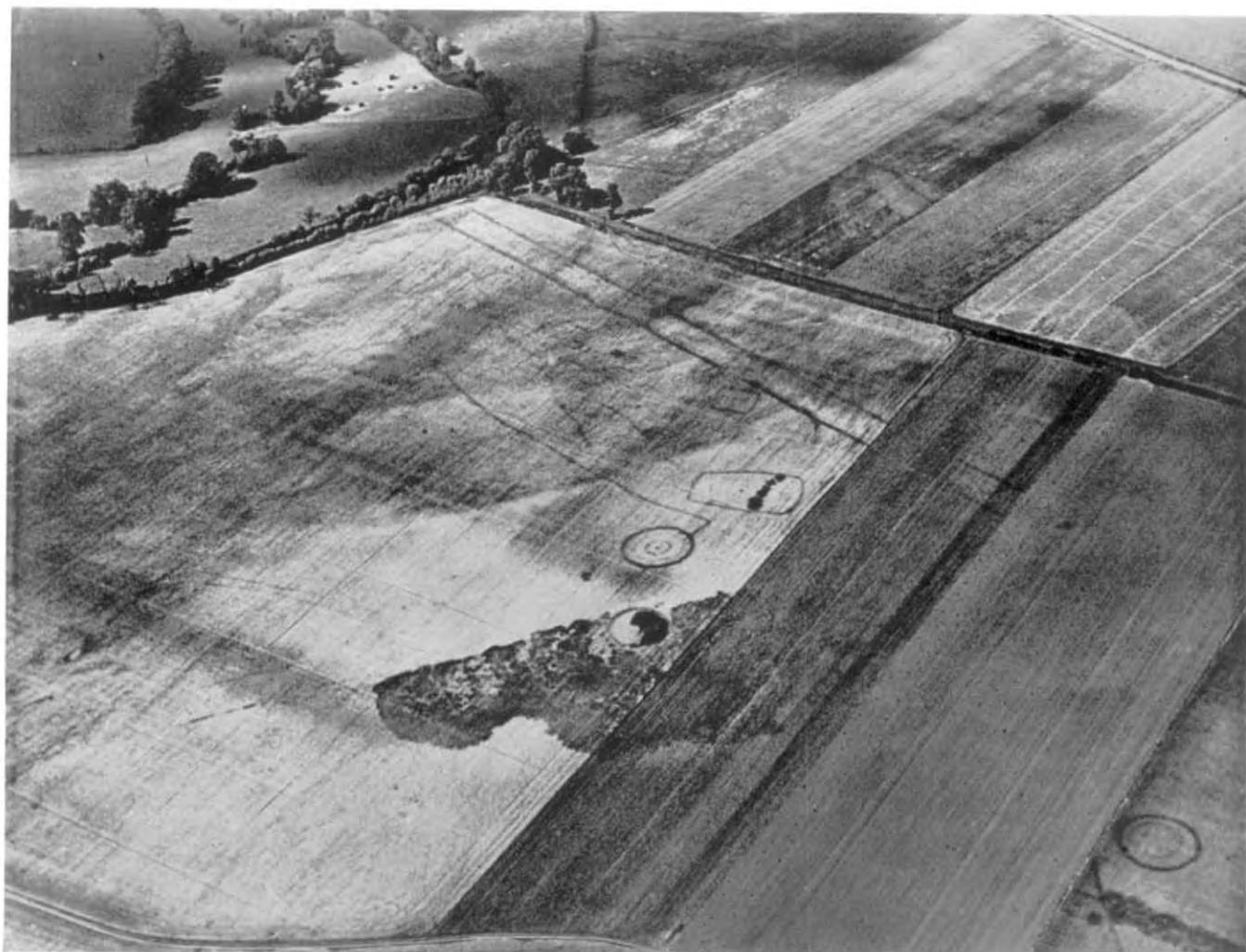


PLATE XVI

CROP-MARKS NEAR DORCHESTER, OXON.

Parallel lines, interrupted ring-ditches, circles (one within a square), pits and other markings in the field north of the great rings (pl. xv).

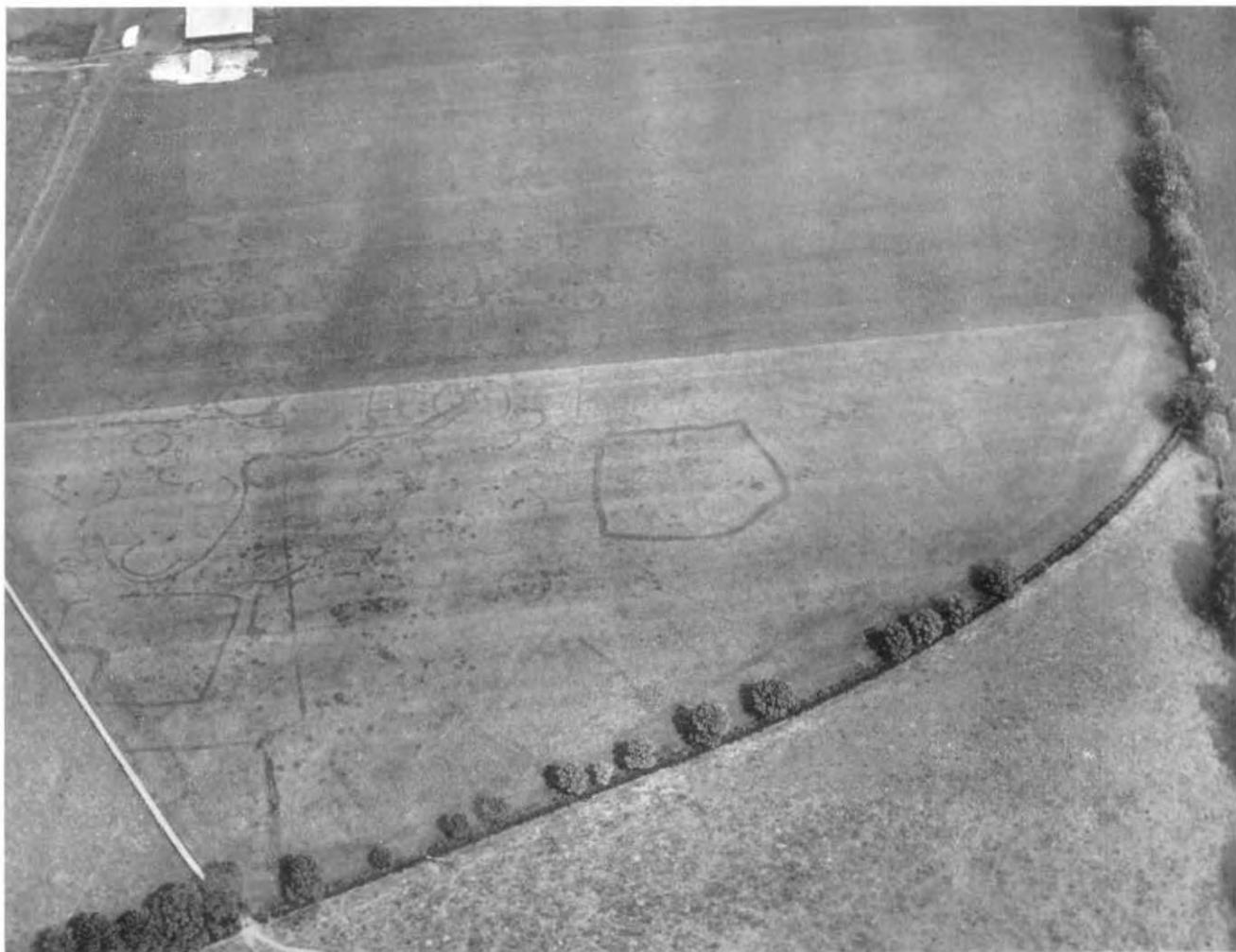
*Ph. G. W. G. Allen.*



CROP-MARKS NEAR DORCHESTER, OXON.

The supposed 'timber circle' (p. 170), parallel lines, a double circle, and other markings in Overy field, S. of the river Thames.

*Ph. C. W. G. Allen.*



CROP-MARKS NEAR DORCHESTER, OXON.

The presumed Iron Age village between the Dyke Hills (top left-hand corner) and the river Thames.

*Ph. G. W. G. Allen.*

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4. Green schistose rock ; thin-butted ; the butt is actually blunt, since elimination of a flaw in the stone on one face by grinding would have involved shortening the axe ; flat oval section with only faintly defined facets leading to the cutting edge. L. 4 ins. W.  $3\frac{1}{8}$  ins. T.  $1\frac{1}{4}$  ins. Weight 13 ozs. (PLATE XIV, C).

Acquired by E. T. Leeds in 1928 from the finder living at Drayton, Berks., who said he had found it while working in the gravel-pit on the site of the Bronze Age settlement and Saxon village of Sutton Courtenay, Berks. (6 in. O.S. Berks. 10 SW.).

E. T. LEEDS.

### MARKS SEEN FROM THE AIR IN THE CROPS NEAR DORCHESTER, OXON.

For some years past observation has been made and photographs taken from the air of the marks which appear in the crops near Dorchester and it is now possible to give a fairly complete survey of them (FIG. 20).

These marks, the appearance of which is dependent on the suitability of the crop and weather conditions, appear generally as lines, rings or dots of a darker green in the crops and are due to ancient disturbance of the subsoil. If at some time a ditch or pit penetrating the subsoil has been dug in a field and later has been levelled, the filling will be of a different nature to the soil it replaces and have a beneficial effect on that part of the crop which grows directly over it. By means of these marks the position of buried works can be located.

Attention was first drawn to crop-marks near Dorchester by the discovery by two officers of the Royal Air Force of the great rings to the north of the village. At the same time marks were seen on and near the Minchin Recreation Ground and on Bishop's Court Farm.<sup>1</sup>

Since 1933 I have watched this area in all seasons of the year and have taken many photographs of it from the air. From year to year as crop conditions changed more marks have been visible in the same field as the great rings (PLATE XV). Several small circles (PLATE XVI) lie at the northern end of this field, three of them with interrupted ditches, apparently similar to those discovered in the Neolithic settlement at Abingdon, Berks.<sup>2</sup> Near the Dorchester-Abingdon Road there is a small square enclosure which apparently contained a round barrow, and there is a slight mound on the ground at this spot. A similar square enclosure on Limlow Hill, Litlington, Cambs., contained a round barrow.<sup>3</sup> Other circles, apparently showing the ditches of levelled round barrows lie near the great rings, one inside their annulus, and two small square enclosures lie a little farther to the south. The great rings themselves are not truly circular and each has two entrances, one towards the north and one towards the south.

The purpose of the nearly straight parallel lines which pass to the east of the great rings is as yet unexplained. Several other similar pairs of lines, some forming square-ended enclosures, have been found within a few miles of Dorchester.<sup>4</sup> These lines are continuous so far as it has been possible to trace them, with the exception of a small break towards the northern end of the field and a wider break farther south. This latter gap is partly filled by a double circle. The rectangular enclosure at Benson has a similar

<sup>1</sup> *Antiquity*, I, 469 ; O. G. S. Crawford, *Air Survey and Archaeology*, O.S. Professional Papers, new series, No. 7.

<sup>2</sup> *Antiq. Journ.*, VIII, 461 ff, fig. 1.

<sup>3</sup> *Proc. Prehistoric Soc.*, III, pt. II, 451.

<sup>4</sup> *Antiquaries Journal*, XIV, 414.

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break, and the same type of enclosure at Sutton Courtenay has one of the lines crossing a circle, but no break appears in the lines.

In the other examples these enclosures have been seen to have square ends to the parallel lines, but at Dorchester it has not been possible to trace their extremities. Their extension to the north-west is covered by a grass field and as grass does not readily produce crop-marks no signs of them can be seen in that direction. In a south-easterly direction they extend into a field near Queensford Mill and appear to end there, but a rather mixed collection of other lines occurs and confuses the issue. It may be found possible to trace them farther in this direction. If they did so extend they would lead to a point on the Thame from which another pair of parallel lines (PLATE XVII) leads towards a large enclosure near Warborough. The junction of this second pair with the enclosure was obscured by ploughing when this photograph was taken, and only a portion of one side of the enclosure appears in the lower right hand corner of the photograph. The lines are truly straight and parallel but more closely spaced than those associated with the great rings. Although they lead direct to the enclosure and have been traced no farther, there is no break in the enclosure at the point of contact. There is, however, an entrance to the enclosure towards its south-east corner.

The double circle within the enclosure (PLATE XVII, lower right-hand corner) is apparently the site of a round barrow which has been almost entirely levelled. Its outer ring is approximately 100 ft. in diameter and 10 ft. wide.

Westwards of this will be seen a triple circle with a wide outer ring within which there is a broken ring of dots, then a smaller continuous circle and centrally a dot. This does not seem to show the site of any of the common types of round barrow and, whilst it may be rash to anticipate the results to be obtained from excavation, one may make the suggestion that these marks may show the site of a 'timber circle'.<sup>1</sup> Leading from it towards the Thame is a right-angled line, probably evidence of a ditch which drained the outer circular ditch. Close by there is an elongated D-shaped enclosure which has a marked resemblance to another found in Allen's gravel-pit to the north of Dorchester, in the ditches of which were found quantities of Iron Age pottery.<sup>2</sup> The circle to the south of the 'timber circle' is probably that of a round barrow and the disturbed area in which it lies may show the activities of gravel-diggers in fairly recent times. Other cases have been noted at Radley (*supra*, pp. 31 ff.) and Langford near Lechlade, where the digging of gravel has ceased when the ditch of a barrow has been encountered. The diggers finding the increased depth of topsoil and being unaware that this extra depth of overburden is only of narrow extent, cease digging in that direction and thus the remains of barrows are saved from destruction.

Another small square, similar to those near the great rings, lies near the parallel lines.

The area between the Dyke Hills and the Thames is a mass of marks (PLATE XVIII). There are several bold enclosures with fairly straight sides, other less well-defined straight-sided enclosures, many circles both continuous and with gaps, and a multitude of dots. These marks seem to be characteristic of an Iron Age settlement of considerable extent and density of population, but from the way in which the marks are inter-mixed they would seem to indicate works extending over a considerable period of time.

<sup>1</sup> *Antiquity*, 1, 92 and 228.

<sup>2</sup> *Antiquaries Journal*, xv, 39. Compare also a similar D-shaped enclosure seen from the air at Markshall, Norfolk; *Proc. Prehistoric Soc.*, II, pt. 1, 3, pl. II.



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Apart from two small circles near the Thame and a single squarish enclosure to the south-west of Dorchester one other site remains, the large rectangular enclosure, with a small rectangle within it, which lies close to a bend of the Thame (PLATE XVII, near the top). This would seem to be of later date than the other marks since a stone coffin was found thereabouts.

Thus far can air-photography carry us; further photographs in future years may help to clear up, or increase, the problems already presented, but the ultimate solution rests with those on the ground. There can be few areas which present such a wealth of early remains of a variety to suit the tastes of archaeologists no matter what period they may favour.

G. W. G. ALLEN.

### THREE ANCIENT BRITISH COINS FOUND IN OXFORDSHIRE

The three following coins (the first two found at Dorchester, and the third at Wood Eaton) have been added to the collection of British coins in the Ashmolean Museum:—

(a) Æ. 2.50 gm (=38.6 grains). Found sticking underneath a large flat stone at Home Close, Dorchester. Types similar to those of Evans, *The Coins of the Ancient Britons*, p. 266 f., and pl. viii, 5 thereto. The obverse shows a stylized and decorated form of the 'wreath' derived from the head on the Greek 'Philippus' (cp. Leeds, *Celtic Ornament, etc.*, pp. 63 ff.); but the treatment of the design is drier and thinner than is the case either with Evans's illustration on pl. viii, 5, or with the Ingram coin (formerly in the Bodleian; now in the Ashmolean) figured on Evans's p. 267. The reverse is very nearly similar to that of Evans's pl. viii, 5; and it may be noted that the legend VIR (correctly rendered on Evans's plate, but given as VER on his p. 266) is confirmed by the present coin. The occurrence of this and similar legends on coins bearing the name of Tasciovanus was regarded by Evans (*op. cit.*, p. 246) as evidence for the production of a semi-autonomous coinage at Verulamium in that king's time.

The weight of the new example is worthy of notice—2.50 gm., as against the 2.35 and 1.94 gm. quoted by Evans for Ruding, *Annals of the British Coinage*, pl. iii, 54 (Hunter Collection, Glasgow), and for his own pl. viii, 5 (this latter found at Amiens), and the even lower 1.63 gm. of the Ingram specimen in the Ashmolean.

The general type is of somewhat rare occurrence.

(b) Æ. 2.39 gm. (=36.9 grains). Dorchester: precise find-spot unknown. Types as those of Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 328 f., and pl. xii, 2 thereto. Unfortunately the coin is somewhat badly worn, so that the exact reading of the reverse legend cannot be determined, though CVNOBELINVS on the obverse is clearly legible.

(c) Tin: a fragment, perhaps one third of the original coin. 0.41 gm. (=6.3 grains). Found in Middle Hill field, Wood Eaton, and presented to the Ashmolean by Mr. W. H. C. Friend. Types as illustrated by D. F. Allen, 'British Tin Coinage of the Iron Age,' in *Transactions of the International Numismatic Congress . . . 1936*, pp. 351 ff., figs. 6, 7. The British tin coinage, which derived its types ultimately from the Massiliote bronze coins of the second century B.C., was chiefly remarkable for two features, first, the fact of its being cast and not struck, and, secondly, the extreme barbarity of style and treatment which it displays. In addition, the coins of this class, though they are distributed over the south-east and south of England, are distinctly rare. It has recently been suggested (Allen, *op. cit.*) that these curious pieces should precede (and not, as is

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usually supposed, follow) the main series of British coins, and that they should be assigned to the Iron Age 'A' pre-Belgic peoples of south-east England, in the first half of the first century B.C. This is the second of such coins to be discovered at Woodeaton,<sup>1</sup> and as a considerable amount of Iron Age 'A' pottery also occurs in South Hill field the site may have seen continuous habitation or business for something like five or six centuries.

C. H. V. SUTHERLAND.

### FINDS MADE DURING BUILDING-WORKS IN THE CITY OF OXFORD

The past year has seen considerable demolition and rebuilding within the boundaries of the city. The following notes are based largely on the work of Mr John Daniell of Trinity College, who has voluntarily spent a considerable portion of his time in watching excavations and collecting pottery and other small finds on behalf of the Ashmolean Museum.

1. *No. 36, Church Street, St. Ebbe's* (N. side). During the construction of Messrs. G. R. Cooper's new showrooms opposite St. Ebbe's church, at a depth of 12 ft., a stone wall of considerable thickness running north-south was found, as well as numerous rubbish-pits of mediaeval and later date. Much pottery of all periods, some glazed mediaeval ridge-tiles, and a bronze scale-pan were recovered.

2. *No. 41, Queen Street* (N. side). On the site of Messrs. James Squire's premises, which were reconstructed for Messrs. Timothy White, Ltd., a huge cess-pit was excavated which appeared to have been in use from mediaeval times till the early 17th century. The compressed black slime, in which leather shoes and harness were well preserved, resembled that in the City Ditch. The mediaeval pottery dated from the 13th century onwards, and included tripod-pitchers of dark green-glazed ware with ribbing in applied strips, baluster-jugs, glazed ridge-tiles, and a few fragments of encaustic tiles; the later pottery included a 16th century barrel-shaped store-jar of hard grey ware, 11 ins. high, green-glazed within. A worn shilling of James I was found near the top of the pit.

3. *Nos. 39-40, Hythe Bridge Street* (N. side). Excavations prior to the construction of new business premises occurred in April 1938. The ground here was made up considerably during the last century and nothing prior to that date was recovered except part of an encaustic tile (Ash. Mus. 1938.14) which may well have come from the neighbouring site of Rewley Abbey. Some plain, faced stones scattered in the filling perhaps came originally from the Abbey buildings.

4. *Nos. 117-8, St. Aldate's Street* (W. side). Excavations prior to the construction of the Oxford and District Gas Company's new show-rooms, which began in summer 1937 and were protracted well into 1938, produced some interesting finds of mediaeval and later date. The property (Salter, *Map of Mediaeval Oxford*, map 4) is that of Battes Inn, later the Fleur de Luce. Amongst the notable finds were:—

- (a) A fragmentary slab of limestone, H. 13 $\frac{1}{4}$  ins., W. 4 ins., T. 9 ins., on one face of which is carved a wavy design of uncertain significance. The carving resembles 11th century work, in the late Saxon manner, and will be illustrated in the forthcoming Oxford City volume of the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments for England.

<sup>1</sup> Another coin of this type, now in the Ashmolean Museum, was probably found at Dorchester.

PLATE XIX



B



A



C

- A. Fragment of arcading, late 13th century ( $\frac{1}{16}$ ).  
B. Green-glazed pitcher, 13th century ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ).  
C. Green-glazed handle, 13th century ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ).

MEDIAEVAL FINDS FROM Nos. 117-18, ST. ALDATE'S, OXFORD.



A



B

- A. Stone-ware flagon (handle missing), Netherlandish, late 17th-early 18th century (4).  
 B. Tin-glazed dish with polychrome decoration, Italian, 17th century (4).

POST-MEDIAEVAL POTTERY FROM Nos. 117-18, ST. ALDATE'S, OXFORD.

*Phh. Ashmolean Museum.*

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- (b) A fragment of arcading (PLATE XIX, A), of late 13th century Decorated work, H. 30 ins., W. 27 ins., T. 9 ins. It is difficult to guess from what mediaeval building this fragment may have come.
- (c) A fine 13th century pitcher (PLATE XIX, B), with three-tiered body, green-glazed with manganese-brown rosettes and stripes in relief. H. 17 $\frac{1}{4}$  ins., D. 8 $\frac{3}{4}$  ins.
- (d) A green-glazed handle, 13th century (PLATE XIX, C) in the form of a grotesque male figure. H. 3 ins.

Nos. (c) and (d) were found at a depth of *c.* 25 ft. in a well on the north side of the property, along with fragments of baluster-jugs, tripod-pitchers, and other pottery of comparable date.

Across the western boundary of the site stretched a long trench-like cess-pit which yielded several pieces of pottery of the late 16th and 17th centuries. Besides green or yellow lead-glazed pipkins, bowls, dishes and pancheons, soft blue tin-glazed Delft ware, and Staffordshire slip-ware, three pieces may be particularized:—

- (a) Bellarmine, H. 9 $\frac{1}{2}$  ins., D. 6 ins., light brown mottled stone ware with the arms of Cologne and the date 1594.
- (b) Flagon (PLATE XX, A), H. 16 $\frac{1}{4}$  ins., D. 8 $\frac{3}{4}$  ins., of partially blue-glazed grey stone-ware, of inverted pear-shape with tiers of relief-decoration on the neck and large medallions on the body. Handle missing.
- (c) Circular dish (PLATE XX, B), imperfect, H. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$  ins., D. 13 $\frac{1}{2}$  ins., Italian buff tin-glazed ware, elaborately decorated; a wide border of fruits and leafage in orange, dark blue and pale green surrounds a centre filled with a chequy pattern in which dark blue squares alternate with reserve quatrefoils. On the under side is an hour- or wine-glass-shaped mark roughly drawn in blue.

Earlier material from this part of the site was scanty; it included sherds of lead-glazed pitchers and the like, of the 12th to the 14th century.

5. Nos. 8-10, *Beaumont Street* (S. side). During the excavations for the foundations of the Oxford Repertory Theatre at least 15 skeletons of mediaeval date were found. The site was that of the burial-ground of the Carmelites or White Friars. A full account of the discoveries and of the skeletal remains will be published in a future volume of *Oxoniensia* (see also p. 174).

6. *Broad Street*. Excavations for the tunnel connecting the old Bodleian building with the extension on the north side of Broad Street produced numerous small finds, especially in the Clarendon Quadrangle, where the trench cut across the City Wall and Ditch. A full account, with a plan and section of the cutting through the Wall and Ditch, will be published in a future volume of *Oxoniensia*.

Nos. 48-9, *Broad Street* (N. side), with Bliss Court, which were rebuilt early in 1938 as an extension to Messrs. B. H. Blackwell's premises will also form the subject of an illustrated article in a future volume of this journal.

7. *The University Park*. The excavations for the new Clarendon Laboratory opposite Keble Road revealed several portions of the Civil War defence-works of Oxford (p. 177).

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### FOUR MEDIAEVAL BRONZE BUCKLES

During excavations for the new Repertory Theatre on the south side of Beaumont Street early in 1938 fifteen burials were exposed and carefully examined by Dr. L. H. Dudley Buxton and Capt. C. Musgrave. These, it is agreed, must belong to the burying-ground of the Carmelites or White Friars, to whom Edward II in 1318 granted his palace of Beaumont in fulfilment of the vow made by him after Bannockburn. Normally there is little evidence for dating such mediaeval burials closely; in this case they might fall anywhere between, say, 1325 and 1500, because by the time of the Dissolution the house and community were in sore straits and poverty. Among the burials were seven interred in a common grave: on two of the bodies three bronze buckles were found at the waist (FIG. 21, a-c). The first of these, lacking its tongue, is of figure-of-eight form:  $2\frac{1}{8}$  ins. wide, and of flat metal. It might well at first sight be regarded as an ordinary shoe buckle, and as late as the 18th century in date, but it is saved from so ignominious a fate owing to its undoubted association with the other two. These, found together on one body, have all the appearance of annular brooches, recalling some Celtic or Saxon

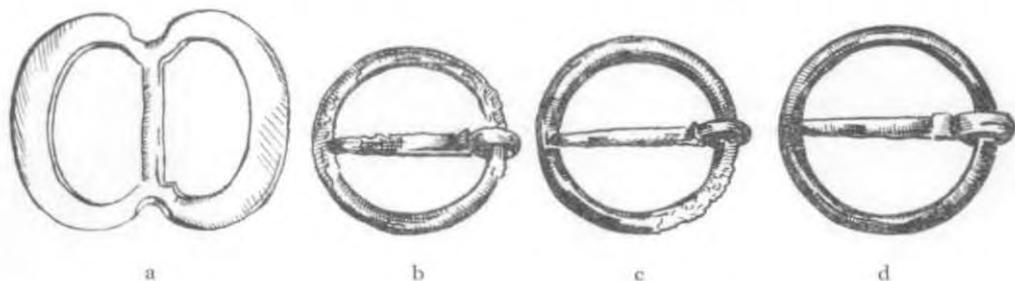


FIG. 21

### FOUR MEDIAEVAL BRONZE BUCKLES.

a-c, Beaumont Street, Oxford: d, Seacourt, Berks. ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ).

forms, but not only their position on the body, but the thickness of the tang reveals their true character. They are stout pieces,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  ins. in diameter, round in section, and their tangs have a moulding at the heel. There is nothing here distinctive for close dating: the only permissible surmise is that the common grave might be a gruesome relic of the Black Death or some similar epidemic, so allowing the burials to be placed about the middle of the 14th century.

A more substantial basis for dating the buckles has since become available. During July the Oxford Summer Camp for Unemployed drove an exploratory trench through part of the site of Seacourt, where in early mediaeval times there was a considerable village with its own church, and, according to Antony Wood, as many as twenty inns for travellers. It stood at the foot of Wytham Hill on the Berkshire bank of the Thames facing Binsey and not only served travellers to Oxford itself, but also the numerous pilgrims who visited St. Margaret's Well at Binsey. The excavations revealed extensive debris of buildings and amongst these were found much broken pottery, none of it apparently later than the 14th century, and one metal object. This was a circular bronze

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buckle in fabric and decoration identical with those from Beaumont Street (FIG. 21, d). The causes of Seacourt's decay are not entirely clear: in the main the construction of a causeway between Osney and Botley diverted most of the traffic from the ford at Seacourt, but even in the 16th century no more than two houses were standing. The Black Death again may have been in part responsible; but Mr. A. B. Emden has suggested to me that a more probable reason may be sought in the gradual cessation of well-cults during the Middle Ages. In any case there seem to be safe grounds for ascribing the buckle to a date not later than the 14th century. The Beaumont Street buckles must follow suit; and, on the Beaumont Street evidence, none of them can be earlier than 1318.

The question of the date of these buckles has been confused by the Saxon date assigned to one found by Canon Greenwell with a secondary interment in a barrow on Lambourn Down, Berks., and published as such by Mr. Reginald Smith.<sup>1</sup> Later, however, in connexion with another from Nottingham, he examines the evidence at length.<sup>2</sup> Unquestionably it weighs heavily on the side of a mediaeval date, and the new evidence tips the scales still farther.

E. T. LEEDS.

### THE ANCIENT CLOCK FROM COMBE CHURCH, OXON.

After a fire in the belfry of Combe church some years ago the clock was reduced to a twisted mass of old iron. This has recently been presented to the Museum of the History of Science in Broad Street, where it is being restored. In its last working stage the clock had been fitted, presumably in the 17th century, with a crown-wheel escapement and a short pendulum, but it is clear that the original escapement was of the very earliest balance arm type with weights.

The clock from Dover Castle, now in the Science Museum, London, is of this type and is attributed to the 15th century. A comparison of the two shows them to be the work of one hand, although the Combe clock is slightly the larger. They are identical in design, workmanship and method of construction, even down to the peculiar and rather puzzling cranking of the arm for carrying the lever that lifted the hammer.

Mr. H. Minn has pointed out that the connexion between the part of Oxfordshire in which Combe lies and Dover is not so remote as the distance suggests, for a number of manors in the Combe district were held by the Barons Arsic seated at Cogges, near Witney, and the fee under which they held their lands was that of providing 'Watch and Ward' at Dover Castle. But we do not know whether these clocks were made in Oxfordshire or in Kent. (See letter from Dr. R. T. Gunther in *The Times*, June 24, 1938).

### FURTHER NOTES ON DE GOMME'S PLAN OF OXFORD, 1644<sup>3</sup>

The date of the plan, if November 1644 is the correct date, suggests that it cannot have been used for the fortifications erected during 1644. The plan is not a representation of fortifications already in existence, but a working plan for the use of the engineers who had to superintend the actual construction in the field.

<sup>1</sup> *V.C.H. Berks.*, 1, 240 with fig.

<sup>2</sup> *V.C.H. Notts.*, 1, 204 with fig.: see also G. Baldwin Brown, *The Arts in Early England*, III, pl. I, 3-4.

<sup>3</sup> *Oxoniensia*, 1, 161-172: II, 207-8.

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During 1643 insufficient attention had been given to the really vital sector in the defences of Oxford, the north side between Cherwell and Thames, and a belated recognition of this is found in the speed-up initiated in March 1644, which could not possibly have remedied defects before Essex and Waller surrounded Oxford. Waller's report of July 1644 shows that between May and July the defences on the north side had been strengthened, but there is no suggestion of any double line of works, and he was evidently reporting on the original line before the elaborate scheme of De Gomme had been worked out. The scheme was probably put into execution during 1645 or possibly even later.

The Fairfax Survey in May 1646 shows that De Gomme's work was 'newly finished,' and the second or old line of works next the Colleges had by this time the very strong new line of works in front of it—unfortunately the report does not make it clear whether this was one of the 'many material alterations and additions of advantage since we were last before it' (*i.e.* in May 1645): but it very well may be, for the 'second siege' was raised in a hurry, and beyond raising a 'breast-work' east of the Cherwell the besiegers 'made no attempt or approach.'

The 'second siege' was dictated by the Committee of Both Kingdoms, and it is not surprising that it was prosecuted with little enthusiasm by the generals who had advised against it, and was abandoned as soon as permission to do so was given. It is significant that from 1644 to 1646 the list of Guards on this important sector varies little: Hollywell Mill, Hollywell, Wadham College, *North Port*, and to the West of North Port Rewley and Hollybush, taking in Gloucester College (in 1646).

This indicates that the Guards were located at the second or old line of works, and had not been moved out to the new or first line as late as 1646, so that it is probable that the new or first line projected on De Gomme's plan was not finished until shortly before the final siege.

There is a further indication that the original date on the plan is the correct one in the military situation at the end of 1645. Although no serious attempt to test the defences of Oxford had so far been made, it was obvious that in the coming campaigning season the Rebels would lay siege to Oxford in earnest, and the King, who came into winter quarters at Oxford on Nov. 5th, had already appointed Sir Thomas Glemham Governor. He arrived in Oxford on Nov. 8th, and his unrivalled knowledge of siege work was probably the reason for his appointment.

The opinion of military engineers on both sides was unanimous in regarding Oxford as 'approachable' only on the north side.

The available evidence suggests that up to the middle of 1645 this sector was defended by only one line of works, and it is likely that De Gomme in collaboration with Sir Thomas prepared his plan for a double line of works. This plan as laid out in the field and finally approved by the King must have formed the basis for Shirburne's Ichnography, or map of the actual fortifications, which Wood states was prepared for Sir Thomas, and on which the King himself wrote the names of the bastions. If this surmise is correct, the erection of the new front line works must have been carried on during 1645-1646, and I have suggested that it was only completed shortly before the final siege. It is significant that, during the hitch in the negotiations for a treaty, the Army Council at Marston on June 9th decided that the attack should be delivered on this sector: 'and this way (*i.e.* the north side) was only approved on by the Counsel of Warre, and yet this way there were two Lines and Works which in Reasons of Warre would have stood in no little cost and Blood' (Sprigge, *Anglia Rediviva*, 1647, p. 278).

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The Fairfax Lines on the plan correspond with the situation in June 1646, and must be a later addition. The difficulty of locating the site of these new works by evidence of subsidence in modern times is increased by the existence in front of and clear of the works of the several 'pits' dugged in the ground to prevent the assailants from approaching the counterscarp of the ditch (Fairfax Survey). These 'pits' were probably fougados or small mines made like a well, 8 to 10 ft. wide, and 12 ft. deep.

F. J. VARLEY.

### NOTE ON THE ROYALIST DEFENCES OF OXFORD

The new Clarendon Laboratory now building on the north side of the Electrical Laboratory in the University Park is on the site of a star-work shown on De Gomme's and other maps of the defences of Oxford (*Oxoniensia* 1, 161 ff. and fig. 26).

A watch on the trenches dug for foundations revealed sundry traces which were not inconsistent with a star-work, but it was unfortunately impossible to join up the observations into any coherent whole. A plan of what was noted is deposited in the Ashmolean Museum.

A large V-shaped trench 24 ft. wide and 12 ft. deep ran practically due north under the western side of the eastern extension of the new laboratory. The most remarkable feature of the sections under the western frontage was their vertical edges. As these trenches were 10 to 12 feet deep in gravel it is clear that some form of revetment must have been used and that this was left in place when the trenches were refilled as there was no sign of 'slide.'

It is unlikely that any of these excavations can be identified with the 'pits' or 'fougados' mentioned in the previous note. These would probably have been farther away from the main entrenchment of the star-work.

R. T. LATTEY.

### THE SUB-COMMITTEE FOR OLD HOUSES

The Committee has continued its survey of the outer part of the planning area of Oxford City and visits have been made to Old Headington, Marston, Church Cowley, Littlemore and Ifley. Plans and descriptions of certain houses have been made and it is hoped to complete a comprehensive report within the next year.

The Committee found that the fabric of the North Hinksey 'Conduit House' (built by Otho Nicholson about 1616 to supply water to the conduit at Carfax) was suffering in consequence of the growth of ivy over the walls and roof. The matter was reported to Viscount Harcourt's Agents.

At the request of the Cumnor Area Committee of the Oxford Preservation Trust, the Committee made a survey of the village and consulted with the local Honorary Secretary on the preservation of certain cottages.

The Plans Committee of the City Council invited the Committee's observations on the preliminary plans for the proposed Regent's Park College which involved the demolition of No. 53, St. Giles'. The house is included (*Oxoniensia*, 1, 198, no. 8) in the Committee's List No. 1 'Individual Houses especially worthy of preservation' as being a particularly good example of late 16th or early 17th century style of domestic architecture. It was therefore strongly represented that the old part of this building facing the street should be preserved and that any plans for the development of the site

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should be drawn up with this end in view. The Plans Committee of the City Council decided to raise no objection in principle to the plans for the rear part of the proposed building, but the architect has been informed that when the scheme is submitted for the frontage on St. Giles', particular regard should be had to the design, and to the preservation of existing buildings at No. 53, St. Giles'.

The Committee also had the advantage of discussing with the architect the draft plans for the reconstruction of the houses in Holywell immediately to the west of New College included in the Committee's list of groups of houses (*Oxoniensia*, 1, 200) specially worthy of preservation. A letter embodying the Committee's suggestions was sent to the Warden of New College, and in the final scheme the frontage of all these houses except one of little architectural interest will be preserved.