Notes

TWO BELGIC CREMATIONS FROM KINGSTON BLOUNT, OXON. 1975

Two late Iron Age cremation vessels were discovered in a pit at 'Elizabeth Villa', Kingston Blount, by Mr. A. B. Collett whilst digging a sewer pipe trench (SU 73939946). Mr. Collett described the vessels as lying separately within a pit about 2 ft. down, and said that the darker fill of the pit stood out against the lighter subsoil. The finds are now on loan to the Oxford City and County Museum, Woodstock (PRN 9505, accession nos. 75, 110, 1-2).1

Each vessel contained a cremation, the larger vessel, a jar (FIG. 1, A) that of an adult. A small bead-rim bowl (FIG. 1, B) appeared to contain the remains of a young child. In jar A were a pottery rim sherd (FIG. 1, C), and several small pieces of flint, both burnt and unburnt, including a single, unburnt, brown flint chipping with slight evidence for secondary working or wear along two edges. I am grateful to Mr. M. Jones of the Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit for examining the remainder of the fill of each vessel by flotation. He reported that the bulk of each sample comprised charred wood and straw with minute fragments of burnt bone, whilst jar A also contained two seeds, one of barley and one of wheat, species not established.

FIG. 1
The Pottery. (‡).

Descriptions

FIG. 1, A. Jar, complete and unbroken; 145 mm. high x 165 mm. max. diam. Sandy micaceous fabric, dark reddish grey with large black reduced patch on lower half of body and footring. Wheel made. Two wide, regular grooves forming a false cordon round the neck and two irregular lightly incised lines, one around the girth and one lower down. Small footring, slightly irregular. Pot stands slightly lop-sided.

It has proved difficult to find good parallels amongst published material.2 Jar A is a late Belgic shape reflecting the low footring and high shoulders of the later Belgic necked bowls.3 Comparing the decoration with that of a necked bowl in a hard, pinkish fabric from the Watlington cremation group5 dated to the first half of the first century A.D.6 is

1 This article has been produced by the writer for the Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit.
3 Cf. S. S. Frere, 'Excavations at Dorchester on Thames', Archaeological Journal, CXXIX (1962), 132, Fig. 12, 44. C is incorrect.
5 H. Case, 'A Late Belgic Burial at Watlington', Oxoniensia, XXIII (1958), 139-41. The footring of Fig. 44, C is incorrect.
6 Harding, op. cit. note 4, 122. Harding suggests a date in the second quarter of the first century A.D.
helpful. The Watlington bowl likewise exhibits a false cordon at the base of the neck and lightly incised grooves below the shoulder, although more than on jar A. This suggests a local tradition.

**FIG. 1, B.** Small, bead-rim bowl with irregular rim, of which three-quarters is missing; 52 mm. high by 88 mm. max. diam. Similar fabric to last with part of both inside and outside oxidized to reddish browns and the remaining third reduced to black. Exterior bears extensive traces of a thin, flaking, dense black, roughly burnished coating; interior plain.

**FIG. 1, C.** Cavetto rim sherd; thin, plain, fine, buff, slightly soapy fabric with area of secondary reduction on exterior, perhaps a fragment from offering placed on the pyre.

**THE CREMATED BONES. By E. W. EDWARDS**

**Jar A.** Fragmentary remains of cremated material consisting of pieces of upper and lower limb bones, ribs, frontal cranial bones, hand bones—plus a number of mineral fragments and flint splinters. No dental fragments were present to allow a more definitive diagnosis. High temperature cremation is indicated by the distortion of some of the fragments, which also contained traces (blue) of incompletely combusted organic material. Readily identifiable fragments consisted of humerus head, a proximal epiphysis of a tibia, and the heads of mature metatarsal bones of the foot. The epiphyses of the metatarsals unite between the ages of 12 and 22, but due to the fairly large size of the head of this particular bone the upper limit has been opted for. On this basis it has been concluded that this individual was a young adult. A lateral portion of the body of a thoracic vertebra showed no evidence of pathology or erosion on the articular surface with the disc, which also suggests that this individual had not reached an age where joint changes could be expected to occur. Other bone fragments indicate that the individual in life may have been fairly robust and this possibly indicates male sex.

**Bowl B.** Cremation consisting of a few fragments of bone, small stones and debris. Such little evidence, especially as no teeth were available, makes a conclusive diagnosis virtually impossible. However, due to the gracile nature of the fragments and the existence of what appears to be a mandible fragment, it is tentatively suggested that this individual was either a small child or even an infant between the ages of 1 and 2 years.

**Jar A** suggests a date centering on the first half of the 1st century A.D. The Kingston Blount cremations are yet more evidence for a late, westerly penetration of Belgic burial practice into the Upper Thames region. Harding has pointed out that dating evidence for a late spread of Belgic customs or people into this region was formerly indicated only by the Watlington burial and although not so easily dateable, the Kingston Blount cremations represent only the second example of the spread of Belgic burial practice in the region. It is also significant that the Watlington and Kingston Blount burials are only 7 km. apart, both on the highly fertile and easily workable soils of the Chiltern Plain and close to the Chiltern escarpment.

R. A. CHAMBERS

EYNSHAM, OXON. 1975

Mechanical excavation for a 9.5 m. X 4.5 m. swimming pool at the rear of the Shrubbery, High Street, Eynsham, (SP 43410921), revealed late Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon pottery. The swimming pool cut into the underlying gravel at a depth of approximately 1 m. and many post- and stake-holes were revealed cutting into the gravel in the

sides of the trench. The eastern end of the trench revealed a buried turf line at a depth of 0.5 m., which at 0.8 m. sealed a shallow, broad depression filled with a mixture of loamy burnt debris and ash from which some animal bone, late Romano-British coarse wares, two fragments of grass-tempered pottery and a doughnut-shaped baked clay loomweight of 491 grams (FIG. 2) were found in the excavated spoil. A rim sherd, possibly of late Saxon St. Neots type ware, was also identified.

FIG. 2
Eynsham: Clay loom-weight. Scale ¼.

This site is approximately 55 m. north of excavations carried out within the precincts of Eynsham Abbey by Margaret Gray in 1971, when Prehistoric, Roman, Saxon and Saxo-Norman pottery was discovered. Roman pottery, including a bronze coin of Constantine I and Saxon grass-tempered ware has also been recently recovered 300 m. to the north, on the south side of Tanner’s Lane (P.R.N. 9788, 8878). The site was recorded by the writer for the Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit and the records and sections have been deposited in the Oxford City and County Museum, Woodstock (P.R.N. 9506).

R. A. CHAMBERS

CONFLICTS BETWEEN OSENEY AND THE BOROUGH IN THE EARLY 15TH CENTURY

Oseney Abbey did not become engaged in so many disputes with the burgesses as St. Frideswide’s Priory. St. Frideswide’s was situated within the walls of the borough, whereas Oseney lay outside the walls. In the early 15th century, however, Oseney was inexorably drawn into conflicts with the burgesses, partly because of its acquisition of burgage property and partly, it must be assumed, because of the clash of two corporate bodies—convent and borough.

There had been isolated conflicts, mainly over taxation of the house’s burgage

1 I am grateful to Dr. Bolsover for permission to observe and record these features and to Mrs. J. Mitchell who recovered the pottery.
property, in 1272, 1374 and 1376.\(^5\) In the early 15th century, there occurred a succession of conflicts. A prolonged dispute from 1415 was only finally resolved in 1419, but the peace established in November 1419 proved to be shortlived. The conflict began nominally over the burgesses' refusal to accept an attorney of the Abbot in the hustings court in October 1415.\(^6\) It had become customary for religious houses to be represented in the borough courts by the mayor's serjeant,\(^7\) but the Abbot attempted to introduce an attorney of his own choice. The dispute was exacerbated in 1417 by the taxation issue. John Gloucester, the collector of tenths in the borough, distained upon the Abbey's borough property to compel the house to contribute to the subsidy. In retaliation, two canons of Osney led a band of 'yomen', or retainers, in an attack on Gloucester and John North, one of the bailiffs of the borough. Gloucester and North were dragged out of St. Mary's church. The canons who organized the raid were Henry Norwode and John Aas, who, as will be seen below, subsequently led another violent attack to intimidate a burgess. In revenge for the canons' attack, some burgesses smashed the Abbey's weirs, drove off 9 of the Abbot's horses valued at 40 marks, and carried off chattels worth £70. Both the Abbey and the burgesses sued out writs of oyer and terminer, but the action was temporarily compromised.\(^8\)

The conflict was resumed, however, when an action was brought in the portmoot against the Abbot by a burgess, Nicholas Bishop.\(^9\) This action (which was terminated in 1432) was upon an assize of nuisance\(^10\) concerning a boundary wall in 'colesbornelane'. The Abbot's reaction was to browbeat both Bishop and the court. Norwode and Aas organized a raid, and another canon, John Garsingdon, led an attack on Bishop's property with a band of Welsh scholars from Gloucester, Hinksey and Haberdashers Halls. For his part, Garsingdon was subsequently appointed manciple (with responsibility for borough property) by Abbot Wendover, and co-opted to the Abbot's Council. This Council was introduced into the court when the assize finally commenced after all the essoins and delays. The Council was directed in court by the steward of the Abbey, William Fermysham, and the 'Abbotes man of law', John Tredyf. The suit was so protracted, however, that the steward was changed during the proceedings, John Westburn replacing Fermysham. Although Tredyf and the stewards are named in Bishop's account of the proceedings, the remainder of the council remains obscure. Bishop merely describes them as 'with other of the Abbotes countey' and 'et alis de consilio dicti domini Wilhelmi Abbatis'.

It is, however, this anonymous element of the council which may have been the most significant. It seems that the council may have included civil lawyers,\(^11\) who were enlisted to oppose and frustrate the working of the hustings court. Two such civil lawyers had been retained by the Abbot in c. 1412.\(^12\) Henry Fowler was a B.C.L. of the University, and

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\(^6\) *Munimenta Civitatis Oxonii*, 280–1.


\(^9\) 'De diuersis querelis erga . . . Willemnum Wendouere Abbatem Oseney': C(Ubridge) U(niversity) L(ibrary) MS. Dd. 14.2, fo. 32v. For a description of this MS., see the following note.

\(^10\) The following is taken from Bishop's own account of the proceedings at C.U.L. MS. Dd. 14.2, fo. 32v–53v. The MS. volume is the 'Register of Nicholas Bishop', and, according to an inscription by Brian Twyne on the flyleaf, may have been compiled in 1432. For the assize of nuisance in English boroughs, cf. H. M. Chew and W. Kellaway (eds.), *London Assize of Nuiscanse*, (London Record Society, 10, 1973), xi.

\(^11\) For the use of civil lawyers in baronial councils to frustrate the customary procedures of manorial courts, see A. E. Levett, *Studies in Manorial History* (1938), 21–40.

\(^12\) Bodl. Libr. MS. Roll Oxon. Osney 46.
significant had acted as a proctor in the common law courts in and around Oxford, and in the
hustings court from 1404 to 1411. He had also acted as Official of the Chancellor of
the University. Henry Corbrigge was also a B.G.L. Oxon., had been employed as
commissary of the Bishop of Salisbury, and as clerk of Queen’s College. The careers of
both men illustrate how easily such civil lawyers of University education could move be­
tween the Roman laws (civil and Canon) and the common law. Both men had also leased
halls from Oseney, which is undoubtedly how they came to be associated with the Abbot.

DAVID POSTLES

MEIEVAL POTTERY FROM IKO. 7 MARIKET PLACE, WOODSTOCK

No. 7 Market Place, Woodstock (PRN 9798) is a building with a date stone of 1688
and two original gabled dormer windows, but a Late Georgian shopfront. The eastern
and western boundaries represent original burgage boundaries, but the southern boundary
has been truncated so that the property now no longer reaches the back lane, Rectory
Lane. Woodstock was a planned foundation of the late 12th century and its plan with its
burgage plots, like No. 7 Market Place, and back lane is still clearly defined. No. 7
would have faced the large triangular Market Place which was largely colonized by the
16th century. Today the building faces the Town Hall, built in 1766, which is the last
reminder of Woodstock's function as a market town.

During 1975 the owners of No. 7, Mr. and Mrs. Keith Vickers, demolished a small
outshot and replaced it with a much larger stone-built extension. During the building
work a small quantity of medieval pottery was recovered. Although virtually unstratified,
this pottery has some interest since it is virtually the first recorded from the town, which in
the 13th century had a documented pottery industry.

The construction of the new extension involved excavating an area in the garden down
to the natural bedrock to provide a firm foundation. Where the new building joined the
old the bedrock was only 1 m. deep but it was over 2 m. deep at the rear of the plot, because
considerable quantities of medieval and later refuse had been dumped there. Fissures in
the bedrock may also have been used as cess-pits, a local practice. A stone-lined cess-pit
and various stone walls and a drain were also observed.

The small group of pottery found at No. 7 Market Place suggested a late 13th- to
late 14th-century date by analogy with Oxford fabric and style types. The pottery
comprised 24 sherds in six fabrics. The wares represented were Fabric AC (Oxford Early
Medieval Ware) 89%, Fabric Y (Oxford Medieval Ware) 21%, Fabric AM (Oxford Late
Medieval Ware) 58%, together with wares in Fabrics A7, AW, and BB (Gloucester type
44).

Oxford Late Medieval Ware (Fabric AM) was the dominant ware during the 14th and
15th centuries in Oxford but more precise dating is still difficult. However, five sherds
including the baluster type base were more finely levigated and sherds in this finer fabric
were also noted from 14th-century contexts at Blackfriars. It is similar to wares used in
the post-medieval period and is typified in the bung-hole jars of local origin. As yet,
however, it is not clear when these finer wares were first produced and whether their

11 A. B. Emden, A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford, II (1957-9), 713 ; Cartulary of Oseney Abbey,
III, 174, 193, 208, 211.
12 A. B. Emden, op. cit. note 11, I, 484 ; Cartulary of Oseney Abbey, III, 177, 184.
13 J. Sherwood and N. Pevsner, Oxfordshire, 858.
15 H. E. Jean le Patourel, ‘Documentary evidence and the medieval pottery industry’, Medieval Archaeology,
xii (1968), 104, 109.
16 B. G. Durham, St. Aldates sites forthcoming. Description of Oxford Medieval Fabric Types and Styles.
17 G. Lambrick, ‘Excavations on the second site of the Dominican Priory, Oxford’, Oxoniensia, xii (1976),
18 The Southern area of the domestic buildings’, p. 168.
19 Mrs. Jo de Goris, forthcoming, * 31–34 Church Street, St. Ebbes, F2504 *. 
présence is of chronological significance. Sherds in Fabric BB (Gloucester type 44) included a jug or pitcher rimsherd with traces of transparent glaze on the exterior and one cooking pot rimsherd (FIG. 3, 1 and 2) and are known from late 14th- to mid-15th-century contexts in Oxford, but the fabric was common in the Oxfordshire Cotswolds from the 13th to 15th centuries. It would therefore not be surprising to find these wares in earlier contexts at Woodstock.

T. G. HASSALL and M. MELLOR

A SUGGESTED DATE FOR THE JACKS OR QUARTER BOYS ON CARFAX TOWER

There were few public clocks with modern time reckoning in English towns before the second half of the 14th century, but during the 15th century town clocks began to play an important part in the lives of the citizens. Even before the early 14th century there had been clocks designed to strike by means of jacks, and these became increasingly popular.

The Churchwarden’s Accounts for St. Martin’s church at Carfax only begin in 1540, by which date there were already a clock and clock keeper and, though the jacks are not mentioned till 1592, it is evident that they and the clock were in existence much earlier. This clock and its jacks can therefore be dated with probability at least to the first years of the 16th century.

The clock at Carfax did not then, as now, occupy a position in the centre of the east external wall of the old church tower. Until 1819 it was housed in a special clock turret above the east end of the south aisle (PL. xiv, A) where it overlooked a public place which was for generations the centre of civic life in Oxford. After the church was demolished in 1819 the jacks with their clock were taken down and stored in the Town Hall. Later, metal replicas were erected in their present position and the old jacks are now exhibited in the City Museum.

The Churchwarden’s Accounts show that by the early 17th century the whole mechanism needed constant minor repairs, and the chimes were much decayed. Money for redecoration and repairs could not be raised from parish funds, and it was not until 1621 that the City Council, who used the church on frequent civic occasions, decided to cooperate in raising it. On December 20th of that year, the Council Acts record: It is agreed as touching the proposition for contribution towards repaying, making and furnishing of the clock, jacks, dyall and chymes at Carfax, in regard of the inhabilitie of the (inhabitants of) St. Martyn’s to doe the same and for that it is a common church wherein the mayor and his brethren and the rest of the citizens do resort . . . There shall be taxation made viz : the Thirteen 10s. each, those with Bailiffs’ places 6/8d, chamberlains 5s. common council 3/4 and a reasonable taxation for this work shall be laid upon the commons that be of ability . . . This resolution implies a considerable sum of money towards the repair and
refurbishing of the clock and its appendages, and it is clear that the City Council as well as the parishioners of St Martin’s were ashamed of its neglected appearance in contrast to the newly-erected Carfax Conduit. But it seems that the money was collected with difficulty and that the sum raised was less than had been envisaged, for the mechanism of the clock continued to give trouble for many years and the chimes were in constant need of attention until they were renewed in 1660. On what, then, was the money which had been collected spent? Presumably on the refurbishing of the dial and the remaking of the jacks to render them fit neighbours for the Conduit carvings, for no further reference to the repair or repainting of these items occurs in contemporary accounts; moreover, a 19th-century reference records that the Carfax clock was taken down and re-erected in the same position in 1624, and this may well refer to work on the dial and jacks.

There is thus considerable circumstantial evidence that the old jacks in the City Museum (pl. xiv, b) do not belong to the early period of the clock’s existence, but were carved between the years 1620–24 when the clock face was also renewed or refurbished. Any judgement based on style must be to some extent subjective but there is about these two sturdy and very ably carved little oaken figures ‘already a flavour of the Baroque which fits the mood of the 1620s rather well’5 Moreover, the jacks are clad in the dress of a Roman soldier and though Roman costume was used throughout the Renaissance for allegorical statues and for characters in masques, its extreme appropriateness vis-a-vis the Conduit carvings suggests a strong link with that monument. Again the statues on the Conduit were evidently outstanding for their paint and glittering gilt and before the jacks were last cleaned, they also bore what seemed to be very faint but extensive traces of gold paint, a fashion which culminated in Oxford in 1621 in the ‘double gilt’ group of carvings on the Bodleian tower which were so adversely criticized by King James.6

CATHERINE COLE

THE OXFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL COMMITTEE IN 1975

A full description of the Committee’s Unit’s work in 1975 can be found in CBA Group IX Newsletter, 6 (1976), 60–75. The Committee produces a Newsletter which appears approximately monthly, subscription £1 per annum, obtainable from its new headquarters at 46 Hythe Bridge Street, Oxford, OX1 2EP.

1 Surveys
(a) Published
(b) In preparation
G. Lambrick, ‘Archaeology and Agriculture, a survey of modern cultivation techniques and problems of assessing plough damage to sites’.

2 Field Surveys Undertaken
Wilcote.
Hagbourne Hill, West Hagbourne.

3 Field Survey in Progress
Oxfordshire Parish Survey (with Oxfordshire Department of Museum Services).

4 Excavations
(a) Published
D. Miles, ‘Excavations at Sugworth Farm, Radley’, Oxoniensia, xli (1976), this volume.
R. A. Chambers, ‘Excavations in the Witney Area’, Ibid.
M. Parrington, ‘Roman Finds and Animal Bones from Kingston Hill Farm, Kingston Bagpuize’, Ibid.

4 Beeson, op. cit. note 2, 56. Possibly a new dial also.
5 This phrase was used by Doctor Charles Avery of the Department of Architecture & Sculpture in the Victoria & Albert Museum to whom I submitted photographs of the Carfax jacks.
6 Oxoniensia, xxxiii (1968), 102. Will Davis, the Bodleian painter, who worked on the Conduit, had been made free of the City Guild and may even have had a hand in the production of the jacks, but this is, of course, pure speculation.
NOTES


(b) In preparation (* indicates Interim Report in CBA Group IX *Newsletter*, 6 (1976), 60–75)
Oxford: 79–80 St. Aldate’s; Church Street; All Saints; The Hamel. *
Abingdon: Iron Age Settlement at Ashville Trading Estate*; Roman Villa at Barton Court Farm; Stert Street (medieval)*.
Appleford: Iron Age and Roman Settlement.*
Farmoor: Iron Age and Roman Complex.*
Berinsfield: Pagan Saxon Cemetery.*
Warrington: Late Roman Cemetery.*

(c) Observations or trial excavations: brief notes in CBA Group IX *Newsletter*, 6 (1976), 60–75; detailed information will be deposited in the Oxfordshire Department of Museum Services Sites and Monuments Record.
Oxford: Christ Church, Greyfriars, Oseney Abbey, 14–15 St. Ebbe’s Street, St. John’s College (all medieval).
Dorchester: 7 Rotten Row (Roman burials).
Farmoor-Swinford Pipe Line: Roman site.
Great Milton: Roman site.
Wallingford: Milbrooke Development (? Roman); the Castle.
Wantage: Roman site.
A. St. Martin's Church with the clock at the east end, above Penniless Bench.

B. One of the two jacks.

OXONIENSIA, XLI (1976)