Evidence for a Stephanic Siege Castle at the Lister Wilder Site, The Street, Crowmarsh Gifford

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SUMMARY

In 2011 an archaeological investigation on the former Lister Wilder Site, The Street, Crowmarsh Gifford was commissioned on an area thought to be the location of a twelfth-century Anarchy period siege castle known as 'Stephen's Mount'. Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA) excavations uncovered the remains of a 20- to 25-metre wide medieval ditch and associated demolition elements which indicate that this was the site of such a castle. The large assemblage of predominantly twelfth-century pottery and other finds recovered from the ditch and associated features offers further evidence of the site's date and use. Evidence for later activity on the site was recovered from several field boundaries and drainage ditches.

Wallingford and its surrounding area has been the subject of intensive study in recent years thanks to a large collaboration of academics and volunteers in the 'Wallingford *Burh* to Borough Research Project'.[1] The project has examined the archaeological and historical evidence for the beginnings and growth of the town between *c.*600 and 1250. This article is the result of a separate piece of work, undertaken by Museum of London Archaeology on behalf of Croudace Homes Ltd, which provides a timely contribution to ongoing research.

Wallingford was established as a *burh* during the late Anglo-Saxon period as part of the larger burghal system developed by Alfred the Great (849–99). The *burhs* created stable economic and defensive sites across Alfred's domain in the face of potential Viking attack.[2] Wallingford castle was built shortly after the Norman Conquest and by the twelfth century (and possibly much earlier) there was a bridge linking Wallingford and Crowmarsh Gifford. The area saw a great deal of activity during the civil war of 1139–53 when Wallingford castle was held by Matilda's forces, and King Stephen set up several siege castles in the area to counter her stronghold. The Treaty of Wallingford which ended the civil war was negotiated in or near the town and its agreement probably resulted in the destruction of the siege castles.[3] The strong possibility of one of the twelfth-century siege castles being located at the eastern end of Wallingford bridge required investigation prior to development of the Lister Wilder site (hereafter referred to as 'the site') in the form of archaeological monitoring.

The site lies at NGR SU 6130 8940 near the western edge of Crowmarsh Gifford and the eastern edge of Wallingford bridge (Fig. 1). Between April and May 2011, Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA) carried out an evaluation in seventeen trenches and a small area of

1 http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/archaeology/research/projects/wallingford/, accessed August 2012.
2 J.C. Crick and E.M.C. Van Houts (eds.), *A Social History of England 900–1200* (2011), pp. 158–60.
3 K.S.B. Keats-Rohan and D.R. Roffe (eds.), *The Origins of the Borough of Wallingford: Archaeological and Historical Perspectives*, BAR BS, 494 (2009), p. 1.

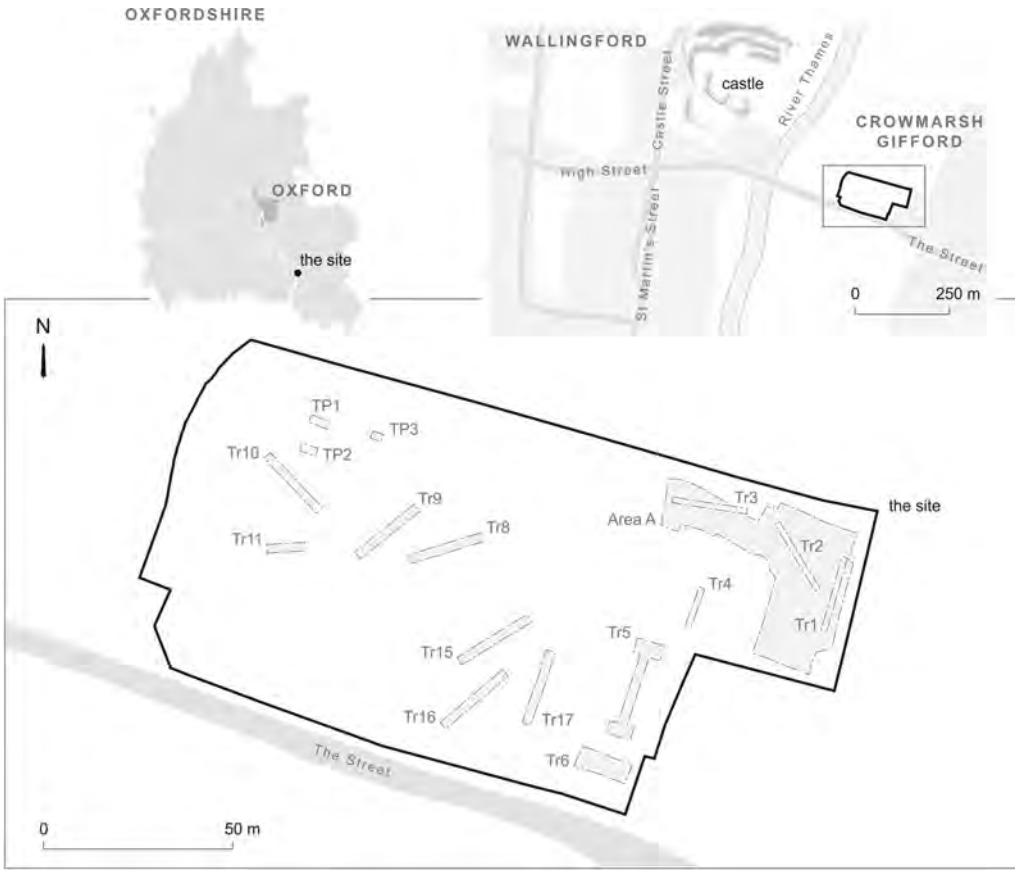

Fig. 1. Site location and plan of excavation trenches. Scale 1:2000.

excavation (Area A). The construction work for the development required that the archaeological investigation was undertaken in stages. Initially four trenches (Trenches 1–4) were excavated in the north-east corner and revealed a number of possible ditches, several pits and an area of chalk hard standing. The features produced a significant amount of medieval pottery, metal finds and ceramic material. This prompted the County Archaeologist to recommend the area around these features (Area A) to be stripped back and recorded. This revealed a number of other ditches and pits, and showed the extent of the chalk hard standing.

Trenches 5, 6 and 8–11 were then excavated, and a large ditch (S1) was observed in Trenches 5 and 6. At this stage it was felt that the significance of the archaeology required further mitigation. Terram was laid in the excavated trenches to preserve significant archaeology in situ and a less invasive system of piling was planned to be used during construction. The newly adopted piling levels in the area of Trenches 7, 12, 13 and 14 made their excavation unnecessary. Due to this, the locations of Trenches 15, 16 and 17 were changed in order to investigate ditch S1 (Fig. 1).

All archaeological activities were carried out in accordance with the MOLA Archaeological Site Manual.[4] Land-use entities consist of Structures (S), such as ditches and pits, and Open

[4] Museum of London, *Archaeological Site Manual*, 3rd edn (1994).

Areas (OA), such as fields. Context numbers cited in the text appear in square brackets [1]; accessioned find numbers in angled brackets <1>, and sample numbers as curly brackets {1}. Illustrated pottery has been given a unique publication reference number <P1> etc. and a concordance table citing its stratigraphic location is provided. The basic unit of reference in the research archive is the sitecode (OX-STW11) and context number.

DISCUSSION

This site at Crowmarsh Gifford, close to Wallingford, has been a peripheral area of marginal pasture and farmland for most of its history, with the exception of a brief period in the middle of the twelfth century when it became a focus for intense activity. This short period of activity included the digging of a large defensive ditch, the construction of a central platform area for building, associated building and occupational activity around the outside of the ditch, and the subsequent rapid backfilling of the ditch, all within the span of probably no more than twenty-five years. It then reverted to its original use as pasture and farmland until the mid nineteenth century when the Lister Wilder Foundry began manufacturing nearby.

There is no conclusive proof that this site was the location of one of King Stephen's siege castles, but several pieces of evidence taken together suggest that it probably formed part of a ringwork siege castle constructed at the time of the Anarchy. The *Gesta Stephani* supplies the first piece of evidence that a siege castle might be located at this site. It describes one of Stephen's siege castles situated on a high mound with only the river between it and Wallingford; the account also describes the king quickly building two castles, 'a work of wondrous art and vast labour'.[5] This site, located almost directly east of Wallingford and east-south-east of Wallingford castle, is a good geographical match for this description. It is possible that this site and that found as part of the *Burh* to Borough project, 200 metres to the south, represent the two siege castles. Although the exact specifications of the castles are not mentioned, the construction of a 20-metre wide ditch at a depth of at least 2 metres and the associated mound this would have created does seem to match the description of 'vast labour'.

Ordnance Survey maps mark the central part of the site as the location of Stephen's Mount, which is assumed to be a reference to one of Stephen's siege castles. The first edition OS map has a cross and 'site of fort' label in the area of the site.[6] The same area of the site on the 1914 edition OS map is labelled 'Stephen's Mount' and shows an oval mound, several ditches and another square feature within the area.[7] The oval mound is of particular interest as it matches up well with the central location of the proposed oval or circular ring ditch. The name 'Stephen's Mount' is seen again on the 1938 OS edition mapping but this time the oval mound is replaced by a new subdivision of the land.[8] The Ordnance Survey mapping suggests that in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century these features were considered to be physical evidence for the location of Stephen's Mount.

The archaeological evidence produced several key features which support the interpretation of this site as a ringwork castle. The large ditch (S1), with a curve that suggests a circular or oval plan, is hard to interpret as anything other than a defensive work. The lack of silt accumulation in the base of the ditch suggests that the feature was not open for long and that the fills were deposited in relatively quick succession. The primary fills of the ditch appear to be a mixture of occupation waste and buildings material thrown in from the inner edge. On top of these is a thick layer of redeposited backfill comprising alluvial material mixed with

[5] N. Christie et al., 'The Wallingford *Burh* to Borough Research Project: 2003 Fieldwork', *Medieval Settlement Research Group Annual Report*, 18 (2003), pp. 9–13.
[6] OS Map 1:10,560, Berkshire XVI SE (1876–7 edn).
[7] Ibid. (1914 edn).
[8] Ibid. (provisional edn with 1910 revision and 1938 additions).

gravels, stones, charcoal and other anthropogenic materials, indicative of occupational material used to fill the ditch after abandonment of the site.

Much of the evidence matches well with other siege castles thought to be from the same period. Both Dane's Castle in Exeter (Devon) and The Rings in Corfe (Dorset) are of similar size and have large circular ditches surrounding them. Another interesting feature shared by all three is that they are located approximately 200–300 metres away from the targets they were designed to besiege.[9] It has been suggested that this put them outside of effective longbow range.[10]

Further support is provided by the finds. The pottery is all dated to a very short period of time (1100–1200) matching well with the chronology of the siege, of which three periods have been identified: 1139–40, the first siege, 1146, the second siege, and 1152–3, the third siege, Angevin counter siege and truce.[11] The pottery finds cannot be dated precisely to any one of these three siege periods, but all phases directly related to the construction and backfilling of the defensive ditch (S1) are dated by similar types of pottery, suggesting only a very short period of time elapsed between these two events. This supports the historical evidence that the castle was built and destroyed within a period of probably no more than twenty to twenty-five years.

The finds from the site are generally high status and many are possibly military. There is an emphasis on horse-fittings (a harness fitting, horseshoes, horseshoe nails), knives (blades), dress accessories (a strap-end, a mount from a strap or belt and a small circular brooch) and lighting (a stone cresset lamp). These remains support the idea that King Stephen and members of the nobility would have occasionally spent time here with their retinues.

The animal remains do not, however, suggest high status, in contrast to castle sites in general. This may be because the castle's short history provided insufficient time for the accumulation of leftovers from feasting. In fact, the bone finds and environmental data can be paralleled with similar remains from other castles of the same type and period. Animals seem to have been supplied from amongst the livestock of surrounding rural settlements and processed wheat was brought to the site. This supports the idea that the people manning the castle would not have been producing or processing much of their own food and would have relied on supplies from elsewhere.

Overall the various strands of evidence support the identification of the site as the likely location of a Stephanic siege castle. The MOLA excavations studied only a very small part of the area, much of which is preserved under the new development. As a result, future investigations will be required to reveal the exact nature of this important site. Nonetheless, the excavation and analysis contribute to a better understanding of the Wallingford and Crowmarsh landscape in the Middle Ages, and it is hoped that the work undertaken may open up further avenues of research on the subject.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION

The phasing of the site has been determined through a combination of artefactual evidence and stratigraphic relationships (Fig. 2). The natural geology and topography of the site (Period 1) was the basis for three phases of human intervention (Periods 2–4).

Natural Geology and Topography (Period 1)

The western edge of the site lies 200 m from the bank of the Thames and its underlying terrace gravels. In most areas a thick band (1–2 m) of alluvial clay and silt was observed with archaeological features truncating it in many areas. The level of the alluvium apparently rose to a natural high point near the centre of the site, from which the ground sloped gradually down to the river.

[9] C.G. Henderson and R.A. Higham, 'Danes Castle, Exeter: Excavations 1992–3', *Proceedings Devonshire Archaeological Society*, 69 (2011), p. 151.

[10] O. Creighton, *Castles and Landscapes* (2002), p. 56.

[11] Christie et al., 'Wallingford *Burh* to Borough Research Project'.

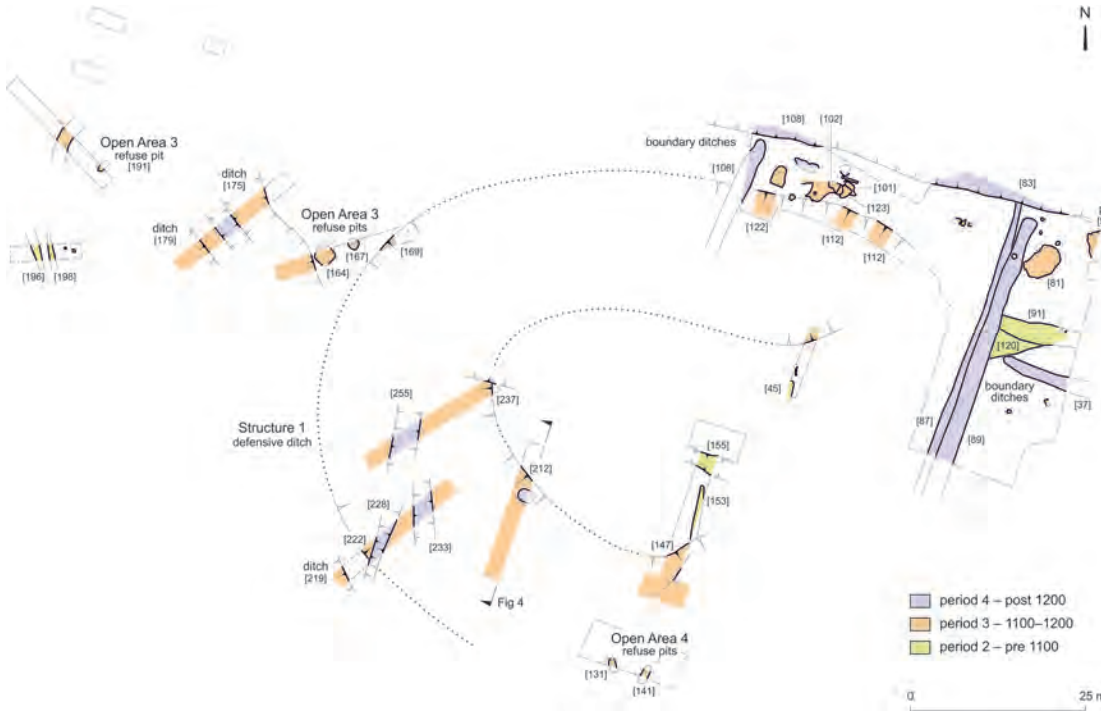

Fig. 2. Site plan showing the later three periods of activity (Periods 2–4). Scale 1:800.

The Thames is prone to breaching its banks in this area, and a major flood covered parts of the site and much of the area around it as recently as January 2003. Although now the Thames has been confined to its course by artificial banks, it is highly likely that the site and the surrounding fields would have been marshy throughout much of their history.[12]

Early Medieval Field Boundaries, Pre 1100/1125 (Period 2)

Wallingford's status as a *burh* implies a sizable population in the late Anglo-Saxon period, and it has been suggested that the bridgehead on the Crowmarsh Gifford side of the river may have been part of the defended perimeter of the *burh*.[13] The proximity of the crossing and bridgehead to the site indicates an upswing of activity on the site at this time, probably in the form of traffic using the bridge and of people working the land close to the town boundary. It is from this late Anglo-Saxon period that Crowmarsh Gifford gets its name: apparently the area was known both for its crows and its marshy terrain.[14] Shortly after the Norman Conquest a motte and bailey castle was installed in the north-east corner of Wallingford. This suggests another upswing in activity and probably population growth in the immediate area, something that again may have resulted in increased activity on this site. An increasing demand on land could have instigated the construction of drainage ditches to turn the marsh into pasture or cultivated land. Domesday Book states that the manor of Crowmarsh Gifford had meadows, arable land for twelve ploughs, two mills and woodland.[15]

The first signs of activity on the site are several drainage or boundary ditches and cultivation layers which may have been associated with a Saxo-Norman/early medieval phase of pastoral agriculture. These ditches are scattered across the site. In the centre of the site is an east–west ditch [155], 2.6 m wide, which

[12] B. and D.E. Pedgley, *Crowmarsh: A History of Crowmarsh Gifford, Newnham Murren, Mongewell and North Stoke* (1990), pp. 23–41.
[13] D.A. Hinton, *Alfred's Kingdom: Wessex and the South, 800–1500* (1977), p. 37.
[14] M. Gelling, *The Place-Names of Oxfordshire*, vol. 1 (1953), p. 48.
[15] J. Morris and C. Caldwell, *Domesday Book: Oxfordshire* (1978).

was partly excavated to a depth of 1.20 m; it contained two sherds of Wallingford-type ware (WA38) and one of reduced sandy ware (OX162) dated to *c.*1125–1200. Just to the south, coming to a terminus 1.50 m from ditch [155] was a north–south ditch [153] 0.20 m deep. In the north-eastern corner of the site (Area A), ditches [120] and [91] were likely to be the cut and recut of a drainage ditch. Two further north–south shallow ditches [198] and [196], on the west side of the site, appeared to be drainage ditches. The pottery in the fill of ditch [155] suggests that these features may have remained open until *c.*1125.

Defensive Ditch / Siege Castle 1125–1175 (Period 3)

Period 3 is defined by the construction of a large circular ditch (S1) seen in several trenches across the site (Fig. 2). This period also includes the use and subsequent backfilling of ditch (S1). All of these episodes seem to have taken place within a short time frame.

During the civil war of 1139–53 several important historical events occurred in and around Wallingford and Crowmarsh Gifford. One of the chronicles from this period, the *Gesta Stephani*, records that in 1139 two siege castles were hastily constructed somewhere in the vicinity of Wallingford but their precise location is unknown. In 1152 the *Gesta* provides another description of two castles being hastily built, but this time they are described as being 'a work of wondrous art and vast labour'. In 1153 it describes 'a castle rising on a very high mound in front of Wallingford with only the river in between.' From these descriptions it is impossible to know if these references are to one and the same castle or to determine the exact location(s). However, recent work carried out by the *Burh* to Borough Research Project in Riverside Meadows may have located one of these siege castles 120 m south of the east end of Wallingford bridge and 200 m south-west of the MOLA site.[16]

Construction of the early medieval defensive ditch and platform (S1).

On the MOLA site, the presence of a second siege castle was suggested by a defensive ditch (S1) seen in Trenches 5, 15, 16 and 17 and possibly in Trench 8 and Area A. The complete profile of the ditch was not exposed in any one trench, although the inner edge was seen in Trenches 5, 15 and 17 and possibly Trench 4 and the outer edge in Trench 16 and possibly Trench 8 and Area A (Fig. 2).

The inside edge of the ditch (Fig. 3; contexts [212], [237] and [147]) was cut at a 35 to 45 degree angle and was between 1 m to 2 m deep. The edge cut through the alluvium and generally stopped at the gravels with a flat base. The ditch was estimated at between 20 m to 25 m wide if measured between the inner edge in Trench 17 [212] and the outside edge [222] in Trench 16. The outer edge was both steeper, around 60 degrees, and more irregular, with a convex shape and flat base. The outer edge was possibly seen again in Area A where ditch cuts [122] and [112] had approximately a 45 degree angle before coming to a flat base. Context [169] in Trench 8 was also possibly part of the outer edge of the defensive ditch (S1) as it fits with the conjectured outline of the ditch.

Connecting the known parts of the ditch from the inner and outer edges it is possible to conjecture the size and shape of the defensive ditch (S1), except at its eastern extremity (Fig. 2). If we assume the ditch was oval or circular in plan we can calculate that the centre would have had a inner area of 50 m east–west and 35 m north–south, similar in both shape and size to structures such as The Rings in Corfe and Danes Castle in Exeter,[17] which are from the same period.

The remains of a central earthen mound or platform was recorded in Trench 5 where similar material [146] lay both within the base of the ditch (S1) and as upcast on the inner bank where it lay on top of layer [151], creating an artificial rise. The central mound or embankment as recorded seemed to have been created from the upcast from the ditch (S1), but was also partially used to backfill the ditch (S1) upon the slighting of the castle. Further to the north deposits [150], [159] and [158] were interpreted as layers of upcast created while digging the large defensive ditch [147], and moved to this location to create a motte or raised central platform. Contexts [146] and [150] both contained single sherds of Wallingford-type pottery (WA38) dated to 1125–1200, supplying a *terminus post quem* of 1125 for the construction of the central platform.

In Trench 9, a wide ditch [175] was recorded running north-west to south-east with a gently sloping north-east edge similar to the defensive ditch (S1). Its primary fill [173] was a thick layer of light bluish-grey silty clay with occasional charcoal and daub flecks, interestingly including a substantial deposit of medium-sized chalk blocks along the north-eastern slope similar to the primary fills [210] and [235] of the defensive ditch (S1). The upper fill [172] was also similar to the secondary fills of defensive ditch (S1), and contained pottery dated 1125–75/1200. This ditch is therefore similar in many respects to the

[16] Christie, et al., 'Wallingford *Burh* to Borough Research Project'.
[17] Henderson and Higham, 'Danes Castle', pp. 125–51.

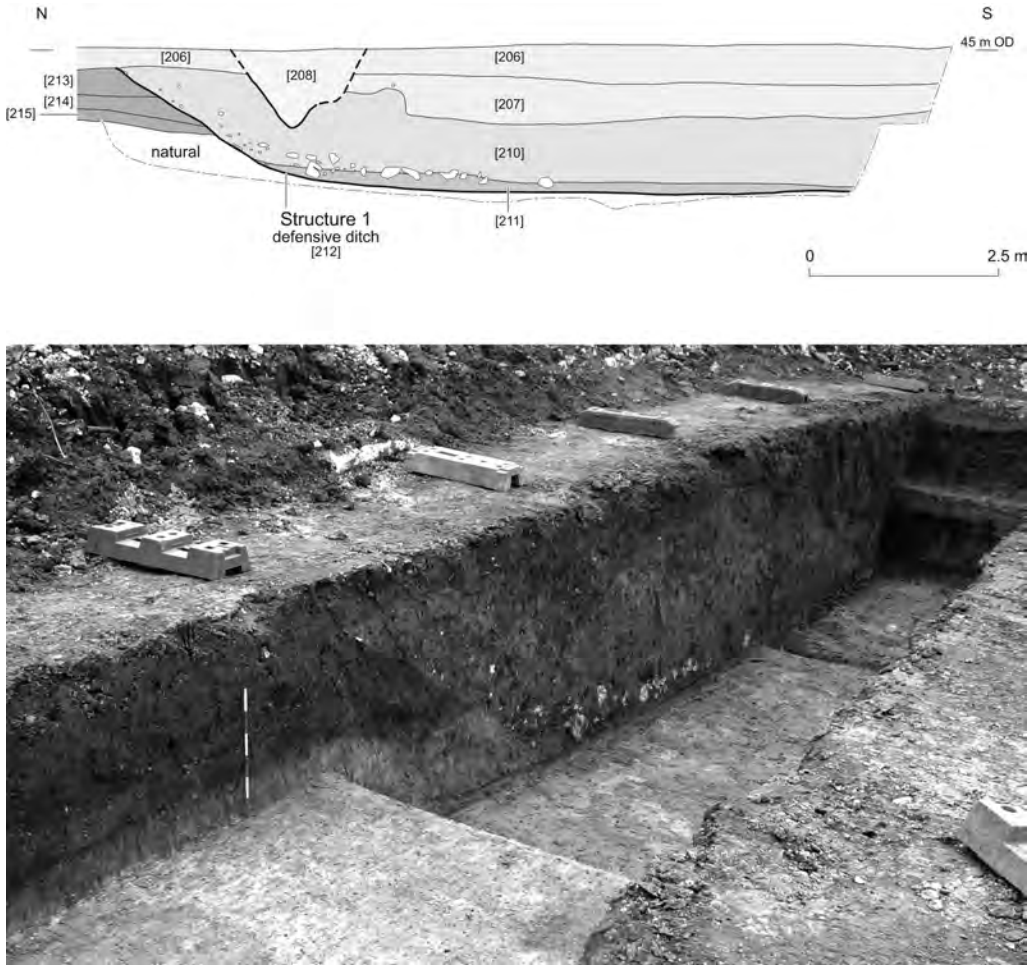

Fig. 3. Photo and section drawing of Trench 17 showing the cut and fills of the large defensive ditch (S1). Scale 1:100; scale on photo 60 cm.

defensive ditch (S1), particularly in the inclusion of chalk blocks along the northern edge of the primary fills. If it was contemporary with the defensive ditch (S1) it may have been a secondary ditch joining S1 and used to enclose a bailey. Another possibility is that it was a channel connected to the Thames to bring water into the larger defensive ditch (S1).

Another ditch [219] at the south end of Trench 16 (Fig. 2) was thought to be contemporary with the ditch (S1). It is possible that this represents a double defensive ditch, though its exact function remains uncertain since it produced no dating evidence and only a small part was visible in the excavation.

In Trenches 5, 15, 16 and 17 the defensive ditch (S1) cut through occupation layers [151], [244], [245], [246], [220], [213], [214], and [215] (Fig. 3). Some of these deposits ([151] (Trench 5) and [213] and [214] (Trench 17) were datable by one of three sherds of Wallingford-type ware (WA38) as 1125–1175/1200 suggesting that these layers were deposited in the twelfth century. In Trench 17 the same sequence of fills [213], [214] and [215] were cut by the large defensive ditch (S1) (Fig. 3) providing a *terminus post quem* of 1125 for the digging of defensive ditch (S1).

Backfilling of the ditch (S1). Several fills (such as [211] Trench 17, Fig. 3) at the base of the ditch (S1) were generally thin deposits of between 0.05 m to 0.10 m. These appear to be either a natural silting up of the ditch or material churned up in the construction of the ditch.

The primary ditch fills in Trenches 5, 6, 15, 16 and 17 ([235], [230], [231] Trench 15; [223], [231] Trench 16; [210] Trench 17; [146] Trench 5; [128] Trench 6) appeared to be redeposited alluvium mixed in with some anthropogenic material (charcoal, small pieces of brick, chalk and daub). These layers were substantial and ranged from 0.30 m to 1.00 m thick. In fills [235] and [210] (Fig. 3) chalk blocks and charcoal lay at the base of the fills, and these are likely to represent a structural element mixed with occupation waste thrown back into the ditch during the initial slighting process. Fill [128] contained one sherd of Wallingford-type ware pottery dated to 1125–1200 but also a gilded copper-alloy crescent-shaped pendant with incised decoration (Fig. 7 <16>) for which the only known parallel is from a fourteenth-century context (see below). The primary fills produced pottery of 1125–1200 giving a *terminus ante quem* of 1125 for the construction of the ditch (S1) and raised central platform.

Secondary fills of ditch S1 in Trenches 5, 15, 16 and 17 were generally between 0.20 m and 1.00 m thick. One fill [234] in Trench 16 contained five sherds of pottery (5 ENV, 47 g), of which four are from Wallingford-type ware (WA38) cooking pots and jugs of 1140–1175/1200 date, while one is of East Wiltshire fabric OXAQ which started to come into use between *c.*1150 and 1175. Fills [207] and [238] are dated to *c.*1125–1175/1200 by one and three sherds of WA38 respectively. These fills had similar characteristics to the primary layers below but were distinct in generally having a darker colouring. They represent a second backfilling using a different material deposited after 1140/50. Both the primary and secondary fills could have followed in quick succession and date from *c.*1145/1150.

In the north-east corner of the site (Area A) a single 0.35 m thick fill at the base of the defensive ditch (S1) was similar to those seen in other trenches. Evidence of apparently tipped material ([110] and [109]) from the northern edge included pieces of chalk, daub, burnt material and pottery. Thirteen sherds from six cooking pots and jugs in Wallingford-type ware (WA38) dated to 1140–1175/1200 were recovered from fills ([109], [111], [128]) giving a *terminus post quem* of *c.*1140 for the infilling and levelling of this part of defensive ditch (S1).

The fills of the defensive ditch (S1) give us the best evidence for the likely construction and use of this area. One of the conditions in the Treaty of Wallingford, which effectively ended the civil war, was the demolition of King Stephen's castle at Crowmarsh,[18] which would have included the backfilling of the defensive ditch. This would explain the relatively small amount of silting within the ditch as well as the large layers of redeposited alluvium at its base. The character of these fills were similar to those in the ditch at Danes Castle, where very little silt had accumulated at the base and the primary fill comprised material thought to have come from the earthen ramparts located on the inside of the defensive ditch (S1).[19]

Occupation features in Open Area 3 (OA3). Occupation features to the outside of the defensive ditch (S1) included a number of refuse pits and the platform for a building which were contemporary with the occupation of the siege castle. Open Area 3 produced the second largest assemblage of pottery (250 sherds, 96 ENV, 2.268 kg), although widely scattered across the site.

Three similar refuse pits were recorded in the north-west part of the site (OA3). One [164] was a square pit with rounded corners. Its primary fill [163] comprised large pieces of burnt chalk, concentrations of charcoal and burnt daub. Dumped deposits along the sides of the pit possibly represented the burial of demolition debris. These materials were similar to the primary ditch fills ([210] and [235]) in defensive ditch (S1) suggesting that the pits were probably in use at the time the ditch was filled. The upper fill [162] was probably a capping layer made from redeposited alluvium. To the north–east another possible refuse pit [167] was similar to [164], though slightly rounder and probably served the same function; its primary fill [166] consisted mainly of charcoal with moderate amounts of medium-sized chalk lumps and occasional pieces of daub. It was capped by what appeared to be redeposited alluvium [165].

A wide, shallow deposit [81] in Area A was the possible fill of a tree bole or small pond and was probably contemporary with the primary fills of ditch (S1), dated to 1125–75 by several pieces of pottery.

In the north-east corner of the site a large feature [95], measuring 3.90 m north–south and 1.40 m east–west and 1.20 m deep, was probably a refuse pit but this was unclear because it ran beyond the site limits and was therefore only partially excavated. The pit had several fills: silt at the base [96], a possible domestic dump [94] above this and alluvial spreads [93] and [92] capping it. Fills [96], [94] and [92] together yielded 44 sherds of Wallingford-type ware cooking pots and jugs/pitchers dated to *c.*1140–75/1200. However, the highest capping layer [92] contained a piece of peg roofing tile dated to *c.*1200–1500, which may be associated with thirteenth- to fourteenth-century activity known to have occurred at the site 20 m to the east.[20] Finds from pit [95] include the base of a stone cresset lamp <97>,

[18] J. Bradbury, *Stephen and Matilda: The Civil War of 1139–53* (1996), p. 184.
[19] Henderson and Higham, 'Danes Castle', p. 134.

a square slightly domed copper-alloy harness or strap mount with a single central rivet <7>, a corroded fragment of iron blade <13> and two pieces from a small tubular iron object <2>.

Environmental data from this feature were taken from fill [94] (see Sample {3} below) and a large number of animal bones were collected. Most of the bones are of sheep/goat (Table 4), with upper limb bones and vertebra prevalent, representing at least three sheep. Epiphyseal fusion data suggest the remains are mainly from young adults. Butchery marks were noted on three vertebra, all of which had been split longitudinally to create joints of meat. The cattle and pig remains consist mainly of upper limb bones and mandible fragments also from young adults. Overall the remains from the pits appear to consist of elements with a high meat value, suggesting they represent consumption waste of animals butchered elsewhere.

In Area A, a compact deposit of chalk blocks [101], measuring 8 m east–west, 3 m north–south and with an average thickness of 0.25 m, may represent a building platform for a structure. A single square post hole [100] cut the chalk platform at its western end. On top of the compacted chalk platform were two patches of burning ([102] and [123]) containing similar groups of fragmented pottery (54 sherds, 34 ENV, 424 g); most sherds are of Wallingford-type ware (WA38), but both deposits also produced sherds of Ashampstead ware (ABA), while [102] also contained three sherds of late Saxon/early medieval south-east Oxfordshire ware (OX162) dated 1150–1200. The environmental assemblage from Sample {8}, taken from [123] contained charred cereal grains of a type used for domestic consumption (see Stewart below). The pottery dating and character of the building platform suggest that this building was contemporary with the secondary fills and deconstruction of the defensive ditch (S1).

A rectangular 0.15 m deep hollow [114], near the chalk platform, contained a large quantity of burnt material in its fill [113]. It was possibly a rubbish pit and its location in the stratigraphy and the burnt material within it suggests it was contemporary with the slighting of the earthworks.

Final stages of occupation in Open Area 4 (OA4). Two large refuse pits [131] and [141] were significant features for dating the latest occupation of the site. These pits were excavated in Trench 6 where they cut into both primary and secondary fills ([133], [136] and [128]) of defensive ditch (S1). Together they contained the largest concentrations of datable pottery (1150–1200) and finds found on the site, represented refuse discarded in the final stages of occupation.

Table 1. Comparative quantification of the fabrics and forms in pits [131] and [141]

Fabric	**Form**	**Pit [131]**			**Pit [141]**		
		Sc	*ENV*	*g*	*SC*	*ENV*	*g*
Saxon?		-	-	-	1	1	9
WA38	Bowl	-	-	-	1	1	37
WA38	Cauldron	2	1	107	-	-	-
WA38	Cooking pot	120	54	1920	44	28	327
WA38	Dish	2	2	52	-	-	-
WA38	Jar	1	1	11	1	1	1
WA38	Jug/spouted pitcher	22	13	422	53	27	1706
OX162	Cooking pot	26	18	347	8	7	54
OXAG	Cooking pot	2	2	41	4	4	39
OXAG	Jug/spp	4	4	67	-	-	-
OXAQ/WA37	Bowl/dish	2	1	98	-	-	-
OXAQ/WA37	Cauldron	6	1	303	-	-	-
OXAQ/WA37	Cooking pot	54	22	1336	15	15	152
OXAQ/WA37	Curfew	-	-	-	2	1	42
OXAQ/WA37	Dish	2	1	127	-	-	-
?OXBB	Cooking pot	16	11	174	10	5	94
OXBF	Cooking pot	3	3	30	-	-	-

[20] S. Ford, 'Walter Wilder Foundry, Crowmarsh, near Wallingford, Oxon. An Archaeological Evaluation', unpublished report (1993).

Pit [131], contained four distinct fills, all probably deposited in rapid succession. It survived to a depth of 1.17 m, its upper part having been truncated. This pit contained a large pottery assemblage (262 sherds, 134 ENV, 5.035kg) dated 1150–1200. The pottery mainly comprises Wallingford-type ware (WA38) with 147 sherds (71 ENV) from pitchers <P 1> and cooking pots <P 4> (Fig. 5), but also 64 sherds (25 ENV) in East Wiltshire fabric OXAQ (<P 5>, <P 6>, <P 7>, Fig. 6). Finds from this pit include a copper-alloy brooch <17>, two iron blades <21>, <22> and a bone pin <28> (Fig. 7).

Pit [141] was 0.70 m deep and had four distinct fills. These contained 139 sherds of pottery (90 ENV, 2.461 kg) of the same date as the assemblage in [131], with a similar range of fabric types, but including one possible Saxon sherd (Table 1). Again fabric WA38 is the most common (99 sherds), followed by OXAQ (17 sherds); also present are a few sherds of OX162, OXAG and group 1a/1b calcareous ware. Most sherds are from Wallingford-type ware cooking pots (60 ENV), but there are also sherds from up to 27 jugs/pitchers (including <P 2>, <P 3>), a bowl, a curfew and a jar. Finds from this pit include a copper-alloy sheet <18>, copper-alloy strap-end <19>, an iron horseshoe nail <24> and an iron object which is possibly a blade fragment <25>.

Environmental data were collected from several of the fills. Samples {10–13} were taken from fills [137], [138], [139] and [140] respectively (see Stewart below). In total 264 fragments of animal bone were recovered from these two refuse pits, 168 bones from pit [131] and 96 from pit [141]. The assemblage of both pits was very similar and is considered here as one.

The most common remains recovered were those of sheep/goat followed by cattle. A small number of pig, chicken, goose and fish bones are also present (Table 4). The fish remains consist of eel, herring and smelt vertebra. The smelt and probably eel remains represent fresh water fish, but the presence of herring suggest either the site's occupants or those charged with deconstructing the castle had some access to marine resources. The herring vertebrae may represent smoked or cured fish which been traded inland.

In total, the sheep/goat remains represent at least nine individual animals. Fragments of mandible, metapodial, tibia and skull are the most common sheep/goat elements. In contrast to the remains from OA3 group [51] the sheep/goat elements appear to mainly represent butchery waste. Butchery marks are visible on a number of the bones, for example two skulls had been split in half to access the brain cavity, and there is also evidence of vertebrae and lower limbs having been chopped into joints. Tooth wear data is present for nine sheep/goat mandibles, all of which come from animals between three and four years old.[21] The mandible wear stages are closely clustered, which could indicate all the sheep were culled at the same time. Perhaps these represent the occupants of the siege castle, or those taking part in its demolition, taking specific animals from local flocks.

The cattle remains show a similar pattern with head elements the most common, and a small number of limb and foot bones. Like the sheep remains the cattle all appear to be young adults. The small sample of pig remains shows a mix of head, long bone and foot elements. All of the chicken and goose remains are from wing or leg elements.

These pits were covered by deposit [132] which may represent slightly later agricultural activity or occupation that is datable by several pieces of pottery to 1150–75. Also contained in this deposit was a single residual piece of Roman tessera dated *c.*40–400 AD.

Occupation after 1200 (Period 4)

During Period 4 all major activity on the site ceased. At this point it is thought that the fields went back into agricultural use (Fig. 2). The 1845 tithe map of Crowmarsh Gifford shows that the fields within the area of the site were used as meadows and in part as an orchard.[22] It is assumed that these fields had been used in a similar way since the early post-medieval period and probably earlier. Several layers which have developed over the backfill of the medieval defensive ditch (S1) and elsewhere around the site have been interpreted as later cultivation or pastoral layers.

A number of ditches [127], [145], [226], [228], [233], [209], [251], [255], [257] cut through the fills of the defensive ditch (S1) in Trenches 5, 15, 16 and 17. Many of these were probably parts of the same ditch but without an observable physical link. They were between 0.40 m and 1.50 m deep. Some contained possibly residual twelfth-century pottery. These were most likely to have been boundary or drainage ditches making use of the softer ground associated with the backfilled defensive ditch (S1) and perhaps a lower ground level.

A group of ditches in the north-east area of the site ([37], [87], [89], [106], [108] and [83]) were all of a similar size, 1.6 m to 2.5 m wide and around 0.80 m deep. These ditches were aligned either east–west

[21] E. Hambleton, *Animal Husbandry Regimes in Iron Age Britain* (1999).

[22] Oxford Archaeology, 'Land at The Street Crowmarsh Gifford Oxfordshire: An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment', unpublished report.

or north–south, perpendicular or parallel to The Street. Ditches [37], [89], [108] ended less than 1 m from the edge of other similar ditches. Ditch [87] was likely to be a recut of ditch [89]. Along the northern edge of the site ditches [83] and [108] were two separate parts of the same ditch seen on the 1914 OS map of the area marked as 'Ditch'.[23] It may have been part of the earthworks from the Anarchy period, but it may just represent a long-lived drainage ditch. Many of these ditches truncate older ditches and are all likely part of a grid of boundary and drainage ditches re-establishing agriculture to the site. A similar pattern of ditches were recorded during an archaeological evaluation undertaken on adjacent land to the east, but here produced pottery and finds dating to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. These ditches also ran perpendicular and parallel to The Street.[24]

A small group of fragmented and eroded bones were recovered from ditch [106] which consists of fragments of cattle radius, cattle-sized rib, sheep/goat radius and horse scapula. The horse scapula has knife marks on the lateral aspect of the scapula neck which are likely to be associated with dismemberment of the carcass. In ditch [87] a small group of bones was present, some heavily fragmented. These consisted of cattle scapula, humerus and third phalanx, and horse humerus and metacarpal. Chop marks were noted on the distal shaft of the metacarpal and may have occurred during the removal of the animal's foot.

The pottery from this area comprises one post-medieval sherd from surface [176] and 32 medieval sherds (25 ENV, 355g), which were found in ditches [87], [147], [209], [226], [228], [233], pit [25] and various surface deposits. Fabric WA38 is the most common, but layer [206] also contained three sherds from a slip-decorated jug in Ashampstead ware (OXAG), two sherds of fabric OX162 and one of Brill/Boarstall ware (OXAW2; Wallingford fabric 39). As usual most sherds are from cooking pots and

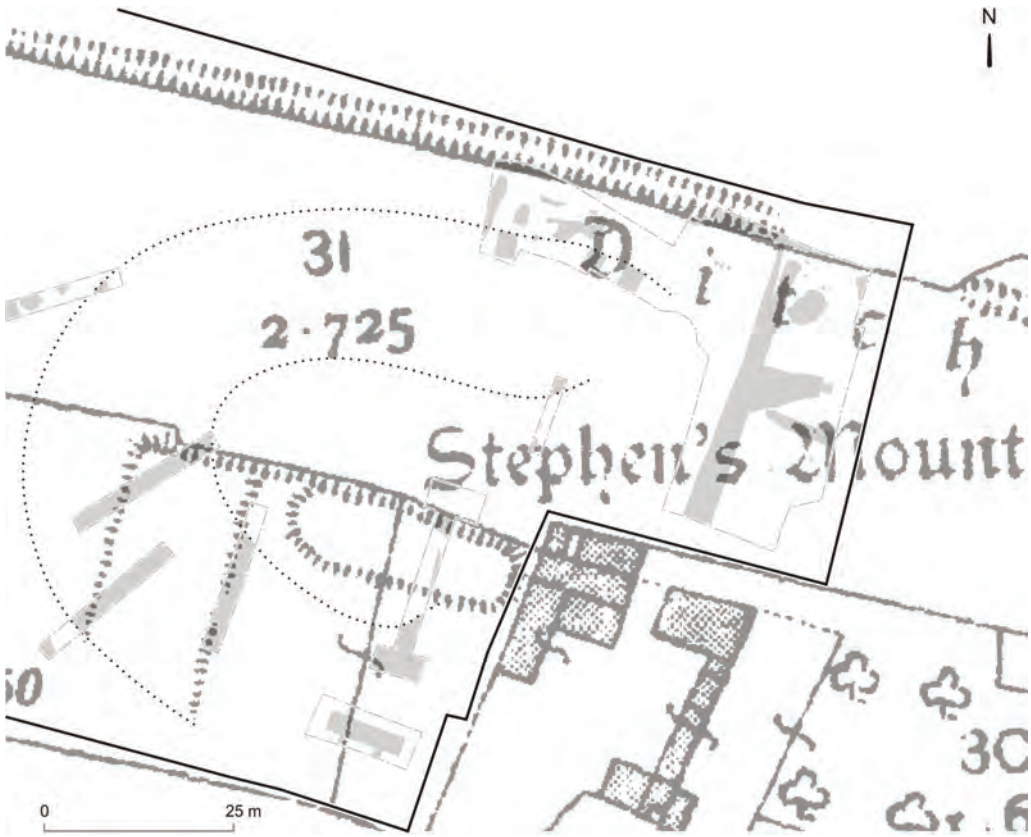

Fig. 4. Conjecture of defensive ditch (S1) overlain on 1914 OS map. Scale 1:1000.

[23] OS Map 1:10,560, Berkshire XVI SE (1914 edn).
[24] Ford, 'Walter Wilder Foundry, Crowmarsh'.

jugs/spouted pitchers, but two jars and a pipkin were also noted. Fabric OXAW2 is the latest of the medieval wares, present in contexts dated to before 1231 in Oxford but more common after this. Taking the other finds into consideration, it is unlikely that this material dates to much later than *c.*1225/1230.

A thick layer of foundry waste from the nearby Walter Wilder Foundry of *c.*1860 sealed all features and deposits on site to a depth of between 0.30 m and 2.00 m.[25] Up until the commencement of clearing activities the site had been used for commercial purposes with almost half of the site covered with hard standing.

POTTERY by LYN BLACKMORE

The pottery assemblage amounts to 710 stratified hand-collected sherds, and 18 from sieved samples (383 ENV, 10.761 kg); in addition there are 118 sherds (33 ENV, 1.329 kg) that are technically unstratified but mostly from known locations. One sherd of oxidised sand-tempered ware from OA4, pit [141] appears to have a slight external burnish and could be of Saxon date, while one sherd from Period 4, OA5 is a post-medieval black-glazed ware. The remainder of the assemblage, recovered from 55 contexts in 10 trenches, is of medieval date. The sherds were examined macroscopically and using a binocular microscope (x 20); they were initially sorted into broad ware types by Maureen Mellor, and the miscellaneous fabrics were later identified by the writer with John Cotter. The data were computerised using standard Oxford fabric codes,[26] and standard Museum of London codes for forms and decoration. The entire assemblage is quantified in Table 2; further comments on the different industries are available in the archive report.

The Medieval Wares

As shown in Table 2, the assemblage is dominated by locally made Wallingford-type wares (fabric WA38), which probably incorporate Lower Greensand for the temper. These wares comprise *c.*78 per cent of the total sherd count, and *c.*74 per cent of the total weight (666 sherds, 301 ENV, 8.958 kg). The Wallingford industry spans the early/mid eleventh to late thirteenth century;[27] as a whole the present collection appears to date to the mid twelfth century, but the more developed rims could possibly be of late twelfth-/early

Table 2. The composition of the total pottery assemblage by sherd count, estimated number of vessels and weight

Period	Fabric	SC	%	ENV	%	Gm	%
S	ESAN	1	0.1%	1	0.2%	9	0.1%
M	ABA	4	0.5%	3	0.7%	18	0.1%
M	OX162	42	5.0%	31	7.5%	446	3.7%
M	OXAG	14	1.7%	12	2.9%	182	1.5%
M	OXAM2	1	0.1%	1	0.2%	3	0.0%
M	OXAQ/WA37	85	10.0%	45	10.8%	2145	17.7%
M	?OXBB	27	3.2%	17	4.1%	315	2.6%
M	OXBF	3	0.4%	3	0.7%	30	0.2%
M	WA38	663	78.4%	300	72.1%	8926	73.8%
M	Clay waste?	5	0.6%	2	0.5%	15	0.1%
PM	PMBL	1	0.1%	1	0.2%	1	0.0%
	Grand Total	846	100.0%	416	100.0%	12090	100.0%

[25] For the foundry: 'Land at The Street Crowmarsh Gifford'.

[26] M. Mellor, 'A Synthesis of Middle and Late Saxon, Medieval and Early Post-Medieval Pottery in the Oxford Region', *Oxoniensia*, 59 (1994), pp. 17–217.

[27] Mellor, 'A Synthesis of Middle and Late Saxon Pottery', pp. 59, 63; P. Blinkhorn, 'The Pottery', in I. Soden, 'Archaeological Excavations at the former St Martin's Churchyard, Wallingford, 2003–4', *Northamptonshire Archaeology Report*, 10/157 (2010), pp. 51–7.

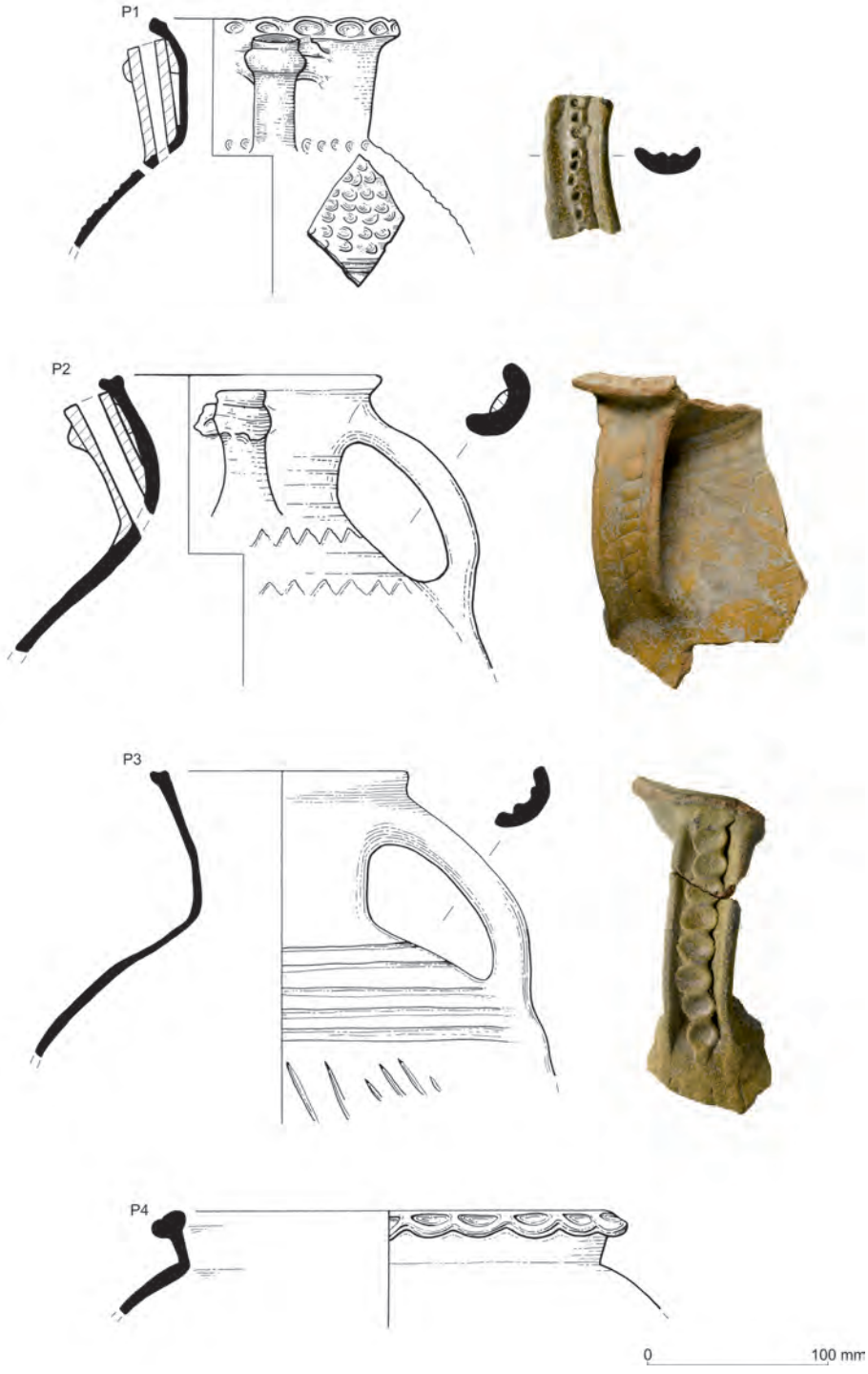

Fig. 5. Spouted pitchers<P1>, <P2>,<P3> and a cauldron <P4> in Wallingford-type ware (WA38). Scale 1:4.

thirteenth-century date. Most sherds are to some extent oxidised but there is a wide variation in this group, the fabrics ranging from fine to coarse and from low-fired to highly fired; a few sherds have distinctive large rounded black inclusions that could be grog or iron (for example, [111], [207]).

Pitchers and tripod pitchers are well represented, with 228 sherds from up to 84 examples. It is likely that several had tripod bases, although only two examples were found (both unstratified). Four tubular spouts secured by collar-like straps were recovered from [130], [138]/[139] and [217] (<P1>, <P 2>, Fig. 5). They mainly have deep flaring necks, but a few are carinated or corrugated; several rims are thumbed or milled, and the same decoration appears on the jugs and jug handles, several of which have applied thumbed strips or inlaid twisted strips giving a cabled effect. Decoration on the body mainly comprises incised horizontal lines alternating with bands of vertical or wavy lines, but one has rouletted decoration ([217]). A range of forms and decoration is shown in Fig. 5 (<P1>, <P2>, <P3>) and by Mellor;[28] the pitcher forms are similar to those made in Oxford fabric OXY.[29] The other sherds are mainly from cooking pots/jars (<P4>, Fig.5), but include three possible cauldrons, a bowl and a dish. Some forms are typical of the early medieval period (*c.*1080–1150), notably the deep everted rims and thumbed decoration. Most vessels appear to be wheel-made, but some are knife-trimmed.

Two other groups of sand-tempered wares are probably also from south/south-east Oxfordshire. The first comprises a range of reduced wares that were recorded as late Saxon/early medieval south-east Oxfordshire ware (OX162; 42 sherds, 31 ENV, 446 g). The earliest ware within this tradition is Wallingford fabric WA27, first recognised in late eleventh-/early twelfth-century contexts at Wallingford castle.[30] The tradition continued into the late-medieval period but the present forms (jars and cooking pots) are all typical of the twelfth century. A smaller number of oxidised wares are finer than WA38 and were recorded as Ashampstead-type ware (fabrics ABA and OXAG).[31] It is possible that more sherds of the latter are included within the WA38 group.

Three twelfth- to thirteenth-century ware types are from sources outside the county, probably in east Wiltshire or the Kennet valley. These include the flint-tempered ware OXBF (three sherds) and the mainly oxidised limestone and flint-tempered ware OXAQ, also known as WA37[32] (85 sherds, 45 ENV, 2.145kg), which equates with Mepham's Newbury fabric KVB[33] and Newbury group B (fabrics 4, 39).[34] Most sherds are from the fills of pits [131] and [141] and layer [132] (all in OA4). These include cooking pots with well-defined rims (Fig. 6, <P5>), a large cooking pot/cauldron with pronounced thumbing on the rim and finger impressions around the shoulder, two large dishes with inverted rims (Fig. 6 , <P6>, <P7>), similar to Mellor, fig. 42, nos. 1–4,[35] and part of a curfew. The earliest datable occurrence of this ware in Oxfordshire is from a well in Oxford where it was associated with a coin of 1168–80.[36] While it may be expected earlier in the southern part of the county, it seems to have become more popular in the thirteenth century. The third group comprises 27 sherds (17 ENV, 315 g) in a reduced fabric with moderate limestone/chalk but no flint or only minimal flint (provisionally recorded as possible Minety-type wares, ?OXBB) of unknown origin but probably from the same general Kennet valley source as OXAQ. Most of these sherds are from cooking pots but a curfew handle is also present. The latest find, from layer [206], is a sherd of Brill/Boarstall ware from Buckinghamshire which dates to the thirteenth century (fabric codes OXAW2/WA39).[37]

Summary

Medieval pottery has been found on several sites in Wallingford, but this is the first major ceramic assemblage from a site on the opposite bank of the Thames. Apart from one possible Saxon sherd, the dating of the pottery appears to be quite homogeneous, with no contexts standing out as significantly

[28] Mellor, 'A Synthesis of Middle and Late Saxon Pottery', fig. 16, nos. 8, 12, 14–24.

[29] Ibid. figs. 21–2.

[30] T.J. Weare, 'Excavations at Wallingford 1974', *Oxoniensia*, 42 (1977), pp. 204–15; Mellor, 'A Synthesis of Middle and Late Saxon Pottery', p. 85.

[31] Mellor, 'A Synthesis of Middle and Late Saxon Pottery', pp. 71–80; L. Mepham and M.J. Heaton, 'A Medieval Pottery Kiln at Ashampstead, Berkshire', *Medieval Ceramics*, 19 (1995), pp. 29–43.

[32] Mellor, 'A Synthesis of Middle and Late Saxon Pottery', p. 100.

[33] L. Mepham, 'Enborne Street and Wheatlands Lane: Medieval Pottery', in V. Birbeck, *Archaeological Investigations on the A34 Newbury Bypass, Berkshire/Hampshire, 1991–7*, Wessex Archaeology (2000), pp. 52–66.

[34] A.G. Vince, 'Pottery', in A.G. Vince et al., *Excavations in Newbury, Berkshire, 1979–1990*, Wessex Archaeology Report, 13 (1997), pp. 51–2, 64, 118.

[35] Mellor, 'A Synthesis of Middle and Late Saxon Pottery', fig. 42, nos. 1–4.

[36] Ibid. p. 106.

[37] Ibid. p. 111.

Fig. 6. A cauldron <P5> and bowl/dishes <P6>, <P7> in East Wiltshire fabric OXAQ. Scale 1:4.

Table 3. Concordance of illustrated sherds

<P>	Fig	Per	LU	cxt	Fabric	Form	SC	Comment
<P 1>	5	3	OA4	[130]	WA38	SPP	10	spouted rim, handle, base; thumbed and stabbed decoration
<P 2>	5	3	OA4	[139]	WA38	SPP	11	whole spouted rim and handle
<P 3>	5	3	OA4	[138]	WA38	JUG/ SPP	3	rim, handle with applied thumbed strip; incised decoration on body; thin green glaze
<P 4>	5	3	OA4	[130]	WA38	CAUL	2	everted rim with broad thumbing; glaze spots
<P 5>	6	3	OA4	[185]	OXAQ	CP	13	profile
<P 6>	6	3	OA4	[130]	OXAQ	BOWL/DISH	2	inturned rim
<P 7	5	3	OA4	[130]	OXAQ	DISH	2	profile

earlier or later than others, and the bulk of the material appears to date to the mid/third quarter of the twelfth century, although some of the Wiltshire fabrics could potentially be as late as the early thirteenth century.[38] Thus contexts with only WA38 have been dated from *c.*1125, 1140 or 1150 (depending on form type) to 1200, while those with sherds recorded as OXAG, OXBF and OXAQ have been placed at 1150–1200; the most varied assemblages are from the two pits in OA4. Most vessels are large and the number of substantially complete forms with large sherds suggests the primary deposition of rubbish, rather than redeposition from middens. All would be consistent with the use of the siege castle, which was occupied sporadically over fourteen years (*c.*1139–53), although some material may date to the demolition period. As a whole, the composition of the pottery assemblage is quite consistent with the pattern observed on sites in Wallingford itself, but the relatively high number of jugs and pitchers (*c.*22 per cent of the estimated number of vessels, 28 per cent of the total sherd count) is of interest, reflecting the royal connections of the site, and suggesting a certain amount of communal dining, at least during the earlier years of the civil war between Stephen and Matilda.

REGISTERED FINDS by BETH RICHARDSON

There are twenty-five individually registered finds, twenty-two of which are from the defensive ditch (S1) and associated features or pits dug into its backfill. The majority are metal (copper-alloy, iron and lead); there is also a bone implement, possibly a pin or an awl, and part of a stone cresset lamp. Many of the metal objects are fragmentary undecorated medieval fittings and blades which are hard to date with precision but all are securely stratified and almost certainly contemporary with the mid twelfth-century siege castle and its immediate disuse.

The finds most closely associated with the use of the castle were retrieved from the defensive ditch (S1) and related features. The two finds from the fill of the defensive ditch (S1) include the most decorative item in the assemblage, a gilded copper-alloy crescent-shaped pendant with incised decoration (Fig. 7, <16>). It is unusual, but very similar to a harness pendant from Winchester, found in a fourteenth-century context.[39] The pendant was found with a corroded round-headed 'fiddle-key' horseshoe nail <20> of a type used on horseshoes dating from the eleventh to the fourteenth centuries.[40]

Finds from a pit [95] in Area A include the base of a stone cresset lamp <97>, a square slightly domed copper-alloy harness or strap mount with a single central rivet <7>, a corroded fragment of iron blade <13> and two pieces from a small tubular iron object <2>. Stone cresset (open oil) lamps are rare finds, associated with large Norman buildings like castles and religious establishments.[41]

Also in Area A two horseshoes <3>, <4> from a nearby feature [81] are of typically narrow twelfth-century shape, with rectangular nail holes and wavy 'lobate' edges.[42] Other finds in Area A include the most complete knife blade from the site, a straight iron blade with slightly sloping shoulders and a central whittle tang <1>, part of an iron pintle (a hinge for a gate or door post or window-frame) <12>, and a triangular-sectioned fragment of lead <27>.

The largest group of finds was retrieved from pits cut into the backfill of the defensive ditch (S1) thought to date shortly after the siege castle's deconstruction (Open Area 4). In pit (131) they include a polished pointed bone implement with a roughly carved square pyramidal head, made from the curved mid-shaft of a long bone from a cow, horse or red deer (Fig. 7, <28>). This could be a hair or dress pin but these are rare at this date and also generally much more ornate. It could be an awl, but is rather well-finished for a functional tool. A small plain circular copper-alloy brooch in good condition (Fig. 7, <17>) and two small corroded fragments from iron knife blades (<21>, <22>) came from the same context as the bone implement. Circular brooches, often decorated, generally date to the fourteenth or fifteenth century but earlier stratified examples exist and it has been suggested that small plain circular brooches may be characteristic of the Norman period.[43] Finds from another pit (141) include a plain rectangular

[38] Personal communication from Maureen Mellor.

[39] D.A. Hinton, 'Harness Pendants and Swivels', in M. Biddle, *Object and Economy in Medieval Winchester*, Winchester Studies, 7.ii (1990), p. 1049, fig. 335, no. 3905. I am grateful to Steven Ashley and Helen Geake for drawing this to my attention.

[40] J. Clark (ed.), *The Medieval Horse and its Equipment, c.1150–c.1450*, HMSO Medieval Finds from Excavations in London, 5 (1995), pp. 86–8.

[41] A.G. Vince, 'Worked Stone', in Vince et al., *Excavations in Newbury, Berkshire 1979–1990*, pp. 43–5.

[42] Clark (ed.), *The Medieval Horse*, p. 86, fig. 62.

[43] D. Griffiths et al. (eds.), *Meols. The Archaeology of the North Wirral Coas*t, Oxford University School of Archaeology Monograph, 68 (2007), p. 140.

Fig. 7. Registered finds: crescent shaped pendant <16>, carved bone pin <28> and circular brooch <17>. Scale 1:1.

two-piece copper-alloy strap-end <19>, a small piece of copper-alloy sheet with a rivet <18>, a 'fiddle-key' horseshoe nail <24> and a possible blade fragment <25>. The horseshoe nail is an eleventh- to fourteenth-century type;[44] the strap-end is presumably late twelfth century.

Selected Finds Catalogue

<1> Iron knife blade
[23]; Period 3, OA3
Incomplete; whittle tang (incomplete) length 42 mm, blade (incomplete) 94 mm, width 18–15 mm. Parallel-sided blade, slightly sloping shoulders; central whittle tang. No obvious pattern welding.

<2> Iron object
[94]; Period 3, OA3
Incomplete; length 50 mm and 15 mm, width 6–4 mm. Two pieces from a corroded hollow tube-like object, wider at one end.

<3> Iron horseshoe
[81]; Period 3, OA3
Complete; length 100 mm, width 92 mm. Corroded and worn; narrow-webbed, three rectangular nail holes on each branch with all nails in situ; punched through to create characteristic 'lobate' wavy edge; calkins appear folded in X-ray; Clark type 2B, late eleventh to early thirteenth century.[45]

[44] Clark (ed.), *The Medieval Horse,* pp. 86–8.
[45] Ibid. p. 86, fig. 62.

<4> Iron horseshoe
[81]; Period 3, OA3
Incomplete; width approximately 100 mm. Narrow-webbed lobate branch with three rectangular nail holes, possibly one nail in situ; Clark type 2B, eleventh to early thirteenth century.[46]

<7> Copper-alloy mount
[92]; Period 3, OA3
Complete; 20x20 mm. Square, slightly domed plain mount; single central rivet (length approximately 6 mm).

<12> Iron pintle
[102]; Period 3, OA3
Incomplete; two corroded pieces from 'L'-shaped pintle, one end broken (separate piece), other end missing.

<13> Iron blade
[92]; Period 3, OA3
Incomplete; maximum width 20 mm (tapering). Corroded fragment from lower half of probable knife blade.

<16> Copper-alloy pendant (Fig. 7)
[128]; Period 3, S1
Incomplete; maximum height approximately 35 mm, maximum width 49 mm, thickness 1.5 mm. Flat, crescent- or pelta-shaped, with open central lozenge above small horn-like projections. A small central protrusion at the top may be the remains of a broken suspension-loop, but no physical evidence for a loop remains. Upper and lower faces gilded with traces of pale silver-coloured metal beneath the gilding; beaded borders, incised ladder-pattern and triangular decoration on upper face.

<17> Copper-alloy brooch (Fig. 7)
[130]; Period 3, OA4
Complete; diameter 11 mm. Plain, annular, circular-sectioned, with discontinuous frame. Very good condition, with grey-green patina.

<18> Copper-alloy sheet
[138]; Period 3, OA4
Incomplete; approximately 21 x 25 mm. Thin sheet with two parallel straight edges angled slightly towards a broken edge (possibly originally curved), fourth edge also broken; small square-headed repair or rivet, and (aligned) part of hole for another possible rivet.

<19> Copper alloy strap-end
[138]; Period 3, OA4
Complete; length 30 mm, width 18 mm. Two-piece strap-end composed of two thin rectangular pieces of copper-alloy, undecorated, with a rivet at each corner, fragment of leather strap.

<20> Iron horseshoe nail
[128]; Period 3, S1
Incomplete; head (width 20 mm) and part of shank from corroded 'fiddle-key' horseshoe nail; Clark, 1995, from Types 2–3 horseshoes dating from the eleventh to early fourteenth century.

<21> Iron (?) blade
[130]; Period 3, OA4
Incomplete; corroded; (?) blade fragment.

<22> Iron blade
[130]; Period 3, OA4
Incomplete; maximum width 18 mm (tapering). Corroded fragment from lower half of knife blade.

[46] Ibid.

<24> Iron horseshoe nail
[137]; OA4
Complete; 'fiddlehead' type head (width approximately 15 mm), shank bent with 'double-clenched' point; eleventh- to fourteenth-century nail type.[47]

<25> Iron object
[139]; Period 3, OA4
Incomplete; very corroded, possible blade fragment.

<27> Lead object
[172]; Period 3, OA3
Incomplete; length 20 mm, width 15 mm. Flattish triangular piece of lead with central ridge. Possibly a window came fragment, but unlikely from this building.

<28> Bone pin (Fig. 7)
[130]; Period 3, OA4
Complete; length 89 mm, width 10 mm tapering to 3 mm. Curved mid-shaft of long bone from cow, horse or red deer (identified by Alan Pipe). All surfaces polished; shaft carved to sharp point, head roughly carved to rectangular four-sided pyramid, two cut-marks on and just below head on one long side and one slightly oblique cut-mark in the same position on the other long side. Possibly unfinished or discarded. Exact function unknown but possibly a pin or awl.

<97> Stone cresset lamp
[94]; Period 3, OA3
Incomplete; base diameter 78 mm. Slightly waisted pedestal base rising to 'V'-shaped open lamp-bowl base; pedestal base has a central hole (outer diameter 23 mm) extending 38 mm; burning on one side; soft off-white fine-grained limestone or siltstone.

ANIMAL BONE by JAMES MORRIS

Methodology

The hand-collected animal bones and bulk environmental samples were processed following standard MOLA procedures. The material was recorded into the MOLA Oracle database. This included species, skeletal element, completeness, body side, epiphysial fusion, dental characteristics and modification. Identifications of species and skeletal element referred to the Museum of London Archaeology Osteology Section reference collection. When identification to species was not possible the categories 'cattle-sized' and 'sheep-sized' were used, as were 'unidentified bird' and 'unidentified small mammal' (rodent/vole size). Epiphysial fusion was interpreted following Amorosi and Schmid.[48] Dental eruption and wear for cattle, sheep/goat and pig was recorded following Grant.[49] Measurements of fully fused bones followed von den Driesch.[50] Full records are included in the site archive.

Summary

Faunal assemblages tightly dated to the Anarchy period and from siege castles are rare, making the small assemblage from Wallingford significant as an opportunity to explore aspects of this period.

One of the most striking features of the assemblage is the dominance of sheep/goat in Period 3. In this period, castle and other high-status sites commonly produce faunal assemblages with a high proportion of cattle, pig, deer and bird remains.[51] The remains from Wallingford are very different compared with

[47] Ibid. p. 86.

[48] T. Amorosi, *A Postcranial Guide to Domestic Neo-Natal and Juvenile Mammals: The Identification and Ageing of Old World Species* (1989); E. Schmid, *Atlas of Animal Bones for Prehistorians, Archaeologists and Quaternary Geologists* (1972).

[49] A. Grant, 'The Use of Tooth Wear as a Guide to the Age of Domestic Ungulates', in B. Wilson et al. (eds.), *Ageing and Sexing Animal Bones from Archaeological Sites* (1982), pp. 91–108.

[50] A. Von den Driesch, *A Guide to the Measurement of Animal Bones from Archaeological Sites* (1976).

[51] For example, see U. Albarella, 'Meat Production and Consumption in Town and Country', in K. Giles and C. Dyer (eds.), *Town and Country in the Middle Ages. Contrasts, Contacts and Interconnections*, 1100–1500 (2005), pp. 131–48; A. Grant, 'Animal Resources', in G. Astill and A. Grant (eds.), *The Countryside of Medieval England* (1988), pp. 149–87.

Table 4. Summary of taxa present by period, land use and group using NISP (Number of Individual Specimens Present) counts

PERIOD	3				4		
LANDUSE	OA3			OA4	OA5		
GROUP	27	45	51	20	44	49	TOTAL
CATTLE		1	10	35	1	3	50
SHEEP/GOAT			24	59	1		84
PIG			7	7			14
HORSE					1	2	3
CHICKEN				4			4
GOOSE				3			3
EEL				5			5
HERRING				4			4
SMELT				1			1
VOLE				1			1
CATTLE SIZE	3	2	6	46	1		58
SHEEP SIZE			13	97			110
UNIDENTIFIED SMALL MAMMAL				1			1
UNIDENTIFIED BIRD				1			1
TOTAL	3	3	60	264	4	5	339

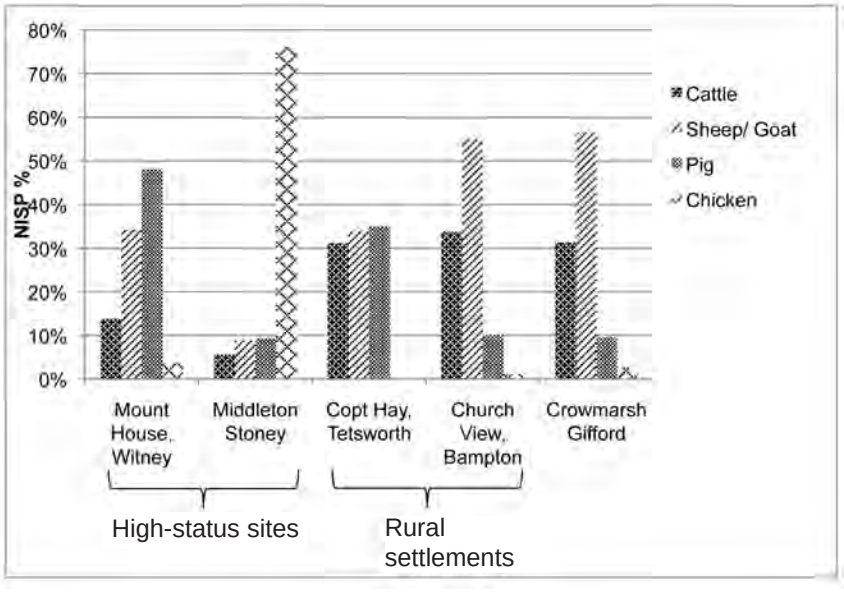

Fig. 8. Comparison of the proportion of species from the Wallingford assemblage with other sites in Oxfordshire. Proportions calculated using NISP counts of the four species shown, other species not included.

contemporary higher-status sites in the region such as Mount House and Middleton Stoney,[52] which produced assemblages dominated by pig and chicken remains respectively (Fig. 8). The species proportions from Wallingford are similar to those encountered on lower-status rural sites of this period such as of Church View, Bampton (Fig. 8).[53]

These differences between Wallingford/Crowmarsh Gifford and other castle sites are likely to be due to the nature of the site as a siege castle rather than a more established residence. The similarity with rural sites in the region suggests the site occupants, or those charged with dismantling the castle, were supplied by animals from the local environs, and the elements present indicate animals were butchered and consumed at the site. The age range of the domestic mammals, with a concentration on young adults, could be more indicative of a high-status site, with a concentration on meat rather than any secondary product. Later-medieval sources advise that young adult animals produce the best mutton and beef,[54] therefore the castle's inhabitants could be choosing or taking the best meat from local herds. The presence of both fresh and salt water fish also indicates the inhabitants had some limited access to marine resources. Fish remains where recovered from other high-status sites in the region and appear to be rare in rural settlements, although the data is limited and biased by sieving methodologies.[55]

The later Period 4 remains are poorly dated but it is interesting that butchered remains of horse were encountered. If the bones are redeposited from contexts associated with the castle then they could indicate horse being eaten during the siege. Horse consumption was banned by Pope Gregory III in 732, but Murphy has shown that dog and horse meat were consumed in the medieval period during times of stress such as sieges.[56] It is also possible the elements represent the knackering of horses to feed dogs. However, the lack of specific dating for the remains makes this purely speculative.

ENVIRONMENTAL DATA by KAREN STEWART

Seventeen environmental samples were collected for the recovery of archaeobotanical and other bio-archaeological remains in order to assess their potential to contribute to the interpretation of the site. All samples date to the period 1100–1200. Samples were taken on site by the excavators and processed using a Siraf flotation tank, with meshes of 0.25 mm and 1.00 mm, to catch the flot and residue respectively. Waterlogged flots were kept wet until analysis whilst charred flots were dried. Charred plant remains other than charcoal (and in one case cereal grain) have been quantified and recorded. All other material has been recorded using the following scale: rare (+); occasional (++); common (+++) abundant (++++). Identifications were confirmed using modern reference material and standard reference texts. Habitat information is taken from Stace.[57] All data were tabulated and are available in the site archive.

Results

Charred cereal grains were the dominant ecofact type from the processed samples. In all assemblages they were quite abraded and many of the identifying characteristics were obscured or removed. As such, many of the grains have been recorded simply as 'cereal' or assigned to a group, such as bread wheat/spelt (*Triticum aestivum/spelta*).

Sample {3} was taken from pit fill [94]. It contained a significant charred grain assemblage, which was dominated by free-threshing wheats (*Triticum aestivum/turgidum/durum*). Of these, bread wheat (*Triticum aestivum*) is the most likely represented. Some oat grains were also noted, but as none of the diagnostic oat chaff was present, it is impossible to know whether these are wild or domestic oat grains

[52] K. Ayres and D. Serjeantson, 'The Animal Bones', in T. Allen and J. Hiller (eds.), *The Excavation of a Medieval Manor House of the Bishops of Winchester at Mount House, Witney, Oxfordshire, 1984–92* (2002), pp. 169–80; B. Levitan, 'The Vertebrate Remains', in S. Rahtz and T. Rowley (eds.), *Middleton Stoney. Excavation and Survey in a North Oxfordshire Parish 1970–1982* (1984), pp. 108–50.

[53] B. Charles, 'Animal Bone', in A. Mayes et al. (eds.), 'The Excavation of Early Iron Age and Medieval Remains on Land to the West of Church View, Bampton, Oxon', *Oxoniensia*, 65 (2000), pp. 284–6. For Copt Hay see J. Pernetta, 'The Animal Bones', in M. Robinson (ed.), 'Excavations at Copt Hay, Tetsworth, Oxon', *Oxoniensia*, 38 (1973), pp. 112–15.

[54] S.J.M. Davis, 'British Agriculture: Texts for the Zoo-Archaeologist', *Environmental Archaeology*, 7 (2002), pp. 47–60.

[55] Personal communication from Matilda Holmes.

[56] E. Murphy, 'Medieval and Post-Medieval Butchered Dogs from Carrickfergus, Co. Antrim, Northern Ireland', *Environmental Archaeology*, 6 (2001), pp. 13–22.

[57] C. Stace, *New Flora of the British Isles* (1995).

represented. The low numbers suggest that they may be wild and contaminants of the wheat crop. Other wild species noted include stinking mayweed (*Anthemis cotula*), a common crop weed. Wood charcoal was also noted in the sample.

Sample {8} was taken from a burnt deposit [123]. It contained significant amounts of wood charcoal and a moderate assemblage of charred cereal grain. Free-threshing wheats again dominated the grain assemblage.

Sample {10} was taken from pit fill [137]. It contained a moderate charred grain assemblage, with a low diversity of wild seeds represented. Of the cereal, free-threshing wheats were the most common, with some hulled barley (*Hordeum vulgare*) also present in lower numbers. Grasses (Poaceae), vetch (*Vicia* spp.) and stinking mayweed were represented in the wild plant assemblage.

Sample {11} was taken from pit fill [138]. It contained a large charred grain assemblage, with over 200 grains counted from a 20 litre sample. Free-threshing wheats were the only cereals identified from this assemblage, though a significant proportion of the charred grain could not be identified to species. Two legumes were tentatively identified as lentils, but the abraded character of the remains made definite identification impossible.

Sample {12} was taken from pit fill [139], which contained nearly 800 grains. Two hundred and twenty-three of the identifiable grains were recorded as free-threshing wheats. Unfortunately the assemblage was so badly abraded that nearly double this number were recorded as unidentifiable. Most of these were unidentifiable due to being quite vesicular, which indicates high temperatures and exposure to oxygen during charring. Sixty grains were identified as being hulled barley. The wild seed assemblage in this sample was quite diverse, with stinking mayweed and goosefoots (*Chenopodium* ssp.) the most common of these. Also present were corncockle (*Agrostemma githago*) and corn gromwell (*Lithospermum arvense*), both very common weeds of cultivated ground.

Sample {13} was taken from [140], another fill of pit [141]. It had a smaller charred grain assemblage, but unlike the other fills it also contained chaff, in the form of stems/straw and wheat awns. Again free-threshing wheats were the most numerous grains noted.

Sample {14} was taken from [185], a fill of a refuse pit. It contained a very large charred grain assemblage, with well over 1,500 grains counted from a 20 litre sample. Unfortunately most of these were too damaged to be identified any further taxonomically. However, 466 of them were assigned to the free-threshing wheat group (*Triticum aestivum/turgidum/durum*). One hundred and six of the identifiable grains were recorded as hulled barley (*Hordeum vulgare*). Two rye (*Secale cereale*) grains were also noted in the assemblage, the only sample analysed from the site where this grain was identified with certainty. The very low numbers in comparison with the wheat and barley present may indicate that the rye is present as a contaminant of the wheat or barley crop. Two peas (*Pisum sativum*) were also noted in the assemblage. Fragments of cherry stone (*Prunus* sp.) were also present. The wild seed assemblage from sample {14} was quite diverse, with grasses the most common type, with 33 seeds identified. Thistles (*Carduus/Cirsium* sp.) as well as common crop weeds such as stinking mayweed were noted.

Summary

The free-threshing wheat grain at the site is most likely to represent grain brought to the site as there was very little chaff material found in association, as might be expected had processing been undertaken at the site. It is also likely to be for human consumption as wheat was generally seen as a higher-status grain and not often used for brewing or animal fodder. Free-threshing wheats are generally the most commonly occurring in archaeological assemblages of this period, and it was noted in similar ratios to oat and barley at the contemporary castle site of Radcot,[58] where *Triticum turgidum/durum* dominated the charred grain assemblage.

Legumes such as vetch were commonly cultivated in medieval England as fodder crops,[59] and their presence in the assemblage may be as a result of fodder being brought to the site. The peas and lentils may have been for human consumption. A similar small assemblage of legumes was found at Radcot.[60]

[58] Wessex Archaeology, 'Radcot, Oxfordshire: Archaeological Evaluation and Assessment of Results', http://www.scribd.com/doc/14674637/Radcot-Oxfordshire (2009), accessed June 2012.

[59] B. Campbell, 'The Diffusion of Vetches in Medieval England', *Economic History Review*, ns, 41:2 (1988), pp. 193–208.

[60] Wessex Archaeology, 'Radcot'.

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