

OXONIENSIA

Oxoniensia is issued to members of the Oxfordshire Architectural and Historical Society for a subscription price of £12. Copies of some back numbers are available and *Oxoniensia* is also accessible in digital format. Please refer to the journal website for further information (www.oxoniensia.org).

Intending contributors to *Oxoniensia* are asked to submit an electronic copy of their work to the editor, Dr Stephen Miles, no later than 1 December each year (editor@oahs.org.uk). The editor will be pleased to advise on preliminary drafts. 'Notes for Contributors' are available on the website.

EDITORIAL NOTICE

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OXFORDSHIRE ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Society, formed in 1972 by the amalgamation of the Oxford Architectural and Historical Society (founded in 1839) and the Oxfordshire Archaeological Society (founded in 1852), exists to further the study of the archaeology, topography, architecture, and history of Oxford and Oxfordshire. In addition to publishing *Oxoniensia*, it provides a programme of winter lectures in Oxford and organizes excursions to places of architectural, historical, and archaeological interest. Through its Listed Buildings Committee and associated Victorian Group, the Society makes representations to public bodies, both on its own behalf and for the Council for British Archaeology, to safeguard historical buildings and monuments. The Society also convenes the Oxford City and County Archaeological Forum, which fosters liaison to discuss and advise on issues concerning archaeology and museums, monitor cases and on occasion make representations on matters of concern.

The Society's website can be found at www.oahs.org.uk. In 2010 OAHS launched two new initiatives to promote digital access to studying Oxfordshire's past: past volumes of *Oxoniensia* are now available online (the last five years only to members) at <http://oxoniensia.org> and the OAHS online guide to resources and societies for studying Oxfordshire's past is to be found at <http://oxfordshirehistory.modhist.ox.ac.uk>.

Subscriptions (£12 individual, £17 family membership) should be sent to the Membership Secretary, 15 Harding Way, Marcham, Abingdon, OX13 6FJ, who will be pleased to supply further information about the Society.

THE GREENING LAMBORN TRUST

The Greening Lamborn Trust's objective is to promote public interest in the history, architecture, old photographs and heraldry of Oxford and its neighbourhood by supporting publications and other media that create access to them. It supports scholarly works and smaller publications of local interest. The Trustees make grants, and occasionally loans, to help with publication costs and expenditure on the display to the public of historic artefacts in local museums and industrial heritage sites. Whilst the Trustees cannot support research costs, they can help with the expense of publishing the research when the publication will be available for general purchase. Sometimes the Trustees will meet the cost of including additional illustrations, historic photographs etc. which would otherwise be omitted. Further information can be obtained from clerk.greeninglamborn@hmg-law.co.uk.

OXFORDSHIRE RECORD SOCIETY

The Oxfordshire Record Society publish transcripts, abstracts and lists of the primary sources for the history of Oxfordshire and work to stimulate interest in archives relating to the county. The annual subscription, currently only £12, supports the Society's work and

entitles members to receive each volume published and a free visit to an historical site at each AGM.

Recent volumes issued by the Society include:

An Historical Atlas of Oxfordshire, ed. K. Tiller and G. Darkes;
Oxfordshire Friendly Societies, 1750-1918, ed. Shaun Morley;
The Life and Times of a Charlbury Quaker, ed. Hannah Jones.

Applications for membership should be sent to Paul Gaskell, 28 Bulan Road, Headington, Oxford, OX3 7HT (oxfordshirerecordssociety@gmail.com). New members receive a volume of their choice from those still in print. Further information can be obtained on the Society's website: www.oxfordshire-record-society.org.uk

OXFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Founded in 1884, the Society publishes editions of historical records relating to the City, University, and Colleges of Oxford. To date over 140 volumes have been issued, of which almost 100 are still in print (available to non-subscribers from Boydell & Brewer Ltd: <http://www.boydellandbrewer.com>). Works published by the Society include Cordeaux and Merry's bibliographies of the City of Oxford (1976), Oxfordshire (1950), and a supplementary volume on Oxfordshire (1981). The Society's latest publication is *Early Records of University College*, edited by R.H. Darwall-Smith. Enquiries about subscription to the Society's publications should be addressed to: Dr E.M.P. Wells, 24 Tree Lane, Iffley, Oxford, OX4 4EY (elizabeth.wells@bodleian.ox.ac.uk). Subscribers may purchase previous publications at reduced prices.

OXFORDSHIRE LOCAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION

The Association was founded in 1980 to further the study of local history in the County, and in particular to promote links between amateur local historians and academic and professional bodies involved in local history. The Association organizes twice-yearly study days and publishes a regular newsletter and a journal, *Oxfordshire Local History*. Further details at: www.olha.org.uk

Enquiries about the Association should be addressed to the Hon. Treasurer and Membership Secretary, Liz Woolley, 138 Marlborough Road, Oxford, OX1 4LS (membership@olha.org.uk).

BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Society publishes volumes of records relating to Banbury and its neighbourhood, including parts of Northamptonshire and Warwickshire as well as Oxfordshire. Thirty volumes have been published to date. These include all pre-General Registration Banbury Parish Registers, 1558—1838, now mostly out of print, but available on microfiche from Oxfordshire Family History Society, c/o Oxfordshire Studies, Central Library, Westgate, Oxford OX1 1DJ.

Recent volumes, available from Banbury Museum, include:

An Alphabetical Digest of Rusher's 'Banbury Trades and Occupations Directory', 1832-1906, ed. J. Gibson;
Victorian Squaron: The Diaries of William Cotton Risley, of Deddington, 1, 1835-1848, 2, 1849-1869, ed. G. Smedley-Stevenson; *Banbury Past through Artists' Eyes*, S. Townsend and J. Gibson

In preparation:

Life (and Death) in Georgian Banbury.

The Society's magazine, *Cake and Cockhorse*, is issued to members three times a year. Those from 1959 to 2003 are available to buy on a CD-ROM or free online at www.banburyhistory.org.

Subscriptions (£13) are payable to the Hon. Secretary, c/o Banbury Museum, Spiceball Park Road, Banbury, OX16 2PQ.

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Abbreviations

Abbreviated titles are used in each article after the first full citation. In addition, the following are used throughout the volume or in particular articles:

BAR	British Archaeological Reports (Oxford, 1974–)
BAR BS	British Archaeological Reports, British Series
BAR IS	British Archaeological Reports, International Series
BCA	Balliol College Archive
BL	British Library, London
Bodl.	Bodleian Library, Oxford
BRO	Berkshire Record Office
CBM	ceramic building material
ECA	Exeter College Archive
EPNS	English Place-Name Society
EVE	estimated vessel equivalent
Fig./Figs.	figure/figures
f./ff.	folio/folios
FLO	Finds Liaison Officer
HER	Historic Environment Record
IoAO	Institute of Archaeology, Oxford
JMHS	John Moore Heritage Services
KC(A)	Keble College (Archive)
MCA	Merton College Archive
MCR	Merton College Register
<i>MedArch</i>	<i>Medieval Archaeology</i> (London, 1958–)
MOLA	Museum of London Archaeology
MS	manuscript
n.	note
NCA	New College Archive
n.d.	no date
ns	new series
OA	Oxford Archaeology
OBR	Oxfordshire Buildings Record
OD	Ordnance Datum
<i>ODNB</i>	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> (Oxford, 2004)
OHC	Oxfordshire History Centre
OHS	Oxford Historical Society
ORS	Oxfordshire Record Society
OS	Ordnance Survey
os	old/original series
OU DCE	Oxford University Department for Continuing Education
OUSA	Oxford Union Society Archive
OXCMS	Oxfordshire County Museum Service
PHA	Pusey House Archive
QCA	Queen's College Archive
r.	recto
<i>SMidA</i>	<i>South Midlands Archaeology</i> (Oxford, 1983–) [formerly CBA Group 9 Newsletter]
TNA: PRO	The National Archives, Public Record Office, Kew

TS	typescript
TVAS	Thames Valley Archaeological Services
v.	verso
VCH	<i>Victoria History of the Counties of England</i> (London, 1900–) [<i>Victoria County History</i>]
vol.	volume

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Archaeological Work in Oxfordshire, 2015

The County Archaeological Service, having undergone some minor changes as a result of Council reorganisation, is now part of the Infrastructure Planning Team. Our work continues as normal and, despite the economic climate, we were consulted on approximately 1,300 planning applications between April 2015 and April 2016. In addition, the service scanned in the region of 6,700 applications and appraised a further 900 applications from the weekly planning lists. The service also produced seventy-six design briefs for archaeological work including thirty-six for archaeological evaluation. Not all archaeological contractors request a design brief and many produce a written scheme of investigation directly and therefore the number of investigations is slightly higher.

SELECTED PROJECTS

Dukes Meadow, Banbury

Excavation undertaken by TVAS recorded two Bronze-Age ring ditches and a large post-medieval ring ditch. All three features were identified on a geophysical survey and a trenched evaluation, also by TVAS. The Bronze-Age features are almost certainly barrows although no human remains were recovered. The larger circular feature was assumed to be another barrow from the geophysical survey but appeared to be post-medieval in date from the evaluation. Excavation has confirmed this later date and it is likely that it represents the remains of a windmill tump mentioned in the VCH.

Hanwell Fields, Banbury

MOLA Northamptonshire undertook an excavation of four areas of archaeological interest identified by geophysical survey and evaluation at this site, which is immediately north of Dukes Meadow. The excavation included a Bronze-Age barrow, which yielded beaker fragments, as well as an area of Iron-Age settlement consisting of an enclosure and areas of pitting. An area of Roman settlement was also located that included hard standing, three corn driers and a probable metalled roadway (Fig. 1). Excavations are ongoing. It has long been assumed that Banbury has no significant prehistoric presence. These works, along with others in the immediate vicinity, clearly contradict this long-held assumption.

Thame Site F

Fieldwork has now been completed on the first phase of Site F at Thame. The work has been undertaken as a joint venture by OA and Cotswold Archaeology, coordinated by Nexus Heritage. The post-excavation assessment of the site is currently underway and a report will be produced in due course. Evaluation had highlighted archaeological features dating to the Iron Age and Roman period. The excavation recorded an Iron-Age and Roman settlement as well as eleven sunken featured buildings. The largest of these Anglo-Saxon buildings contained a number of burnt timbers probably related to the main structure and 56 loom weights and several bone pins.

In addition to the Iron-Age, Roman and Saxon settlement site a series of Neolithic features were identified during the fieldwork. These features were initially masked by the later features and were identified during the process of excavation. Five separate clusters of Neolithic pits were identified along with three circuits of a causewayed enclosure. Within the inner circuit two possible henges were recorded. In total approximately one quarter of the enclosure was encountered.



Fig. 1. A Roman corn dryer at Hanwell Fields, Banbury.

An extensive program of environmental sampling was undertaken within the Neolithic monuments. Bulk samples, monoliths for both pollen and soil micromorphology, and OSL dating samples were taken from all three causewayed enclosure circuits, the henge monument and the potential buried soil deposits.

Great Western Park, Didcot

The second phase of the development at Great Western Park, Didcot, south of Wantage Road is underway and a programme of archaeological investigation has been undertaken by OA. Five discrete sites have been encountered dating to the Bronze Age, Iron Age and Roman period, including two large enclosures and a number of possible roundhouses. These are on a much smaller scale than the settlements identified during the first phase, as was expected from the original evaluation results.

Celsea Place, Cholsey

An evaluation, undertaken by Foundations Archaeology, identified part of a relatively substantial Roman building along with a range of associated features. The building itself appeared to be rectangular in plan and comprised multiple external and internal walls and at least one floor surface. A significant amount of box flue tile was recorded along with roof tiles and fragments of painted wall plaster. A geophysical survey was subsequently undertaken by AB Heritage to help define the area of this building. The development has been altered to preserve the area of this building.

Earth Trust Visitor Centre, Long Wittenham

An evaluation in the Earth Trust Centre was undertaken by OA in response to proposals for the redevelopment of the site. The evaluation was partly informed by earlier investigations on the site, including a series of geophysical surveys. The evaluation recorded further aspects of the Iron-Age and Roman settlement on the site, including two possible Iron-Age roundhouses

and two Roman burials, as well as ditches, pits and trackways. The evaluation results along with the earlier work undertaken on the site will be used to inform the new proposals and a further scheme of investigation will need to be undertaken ahead of any development.

Graven Hill, Bicester

An evaluation has been undertaken by Waterman Infrastructure & Environment Ltd and OA as part of a staged programme of investigation. The evaluation recorded a number of archaeological deposits including the line of Akeman Street, the Roman road, north of Graven Hill. The evaluation also recorded that large parts of the site had been truncated by previous military development. A report is expected and further areas of archaeological investigation will be required ahead of any development.

Land West of Abingdon Road, Drayton

An archaeological excavation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in September and October 2015. Bronze-Age activity and Roman settlement identified during the course of the excavation seems to be concentrated on a gravel island. An enclosing ditch was dug in the Bronze Age that cut this gravel island off from the orange-grey silty clay natural of the alluvial flood plain, probably for drainage purposes. This was then re-cut in the Iron Age/Romano-British period. Despite the enclosure ditch appearing to have been established in the Bronze-Age, there was no evidence of Bronze-Age settlement within the excavation area itself. The only other Bronze-Age activity identified was a pit with a complete small collared-urn vessel that was recorded during the earlier evaluation to the east of the excavation area. The excavation confirmed the results of the earlier evaluation, identifying a small late Iron-Age/Roman settlement, with associated field systems. The dating of the ceramic assemblage recovered indicates a relatively short-lived settlement, with most of the pottery dating to between the mid first and middle second century AD. The artefactual evidence recovered from the ditches and refuse pits indicates domestic activity on the site, with pottery recovered consisting of domestic course and fine wares and central Gaulish imported wares. An Iron Age/Romano-British roundhouse c.15 metres in diameter was found in northern corner of the site. A possible Iron-Age roundhouse structure with a diameter of c.6 metres was also found in the centre of the site. It had been truncated by the later Roman field system. Two probable Iron-Age/Romano British four-post structures were also identified; these were probably used for grain storage or drying. The most recent activity recorded on the site was a system of parallel medieval furrows running north-west to south-east across the site.

Land South of Williams F1, Grove

During October and November 2015 OA carried out a trial trench evaluation on land south of the Williams F1 base in Grove. The earliest feature uncovered was a securely dated ditch of middle Bronze-Age date. Other prehistoric ditches were present within the western part of the site and dated from the middle to late Iron Age. The majority of dated features, however, belonged to the later Roman period, and from the amount of finds recovered are likely to indicate that a small settlement, perhaps a farmstead, was present within the central part of the site. Additionally a pit and several ditches were dated to the medieval period (twelfth to fourteenth century), representing agricultural activity. Many of the features uncovered, the majority of which were ditches, remain undated. The amount of finds recovered dropped noticeably within the eastern part of the site, where a greater number of late- or post-medieval plough furrows were present.

Colton Road, Shrivenham

In late 2015 and early 2016 Foundations Archaeology undertook an excavation off Colton Road, Shrivenham. Previous evaluation had revealed the presence of later prehistoric and

Romano-British activity. The excavations revealed multiple phases of ditched boundaries and enclosures, which were located in the eastern half of the site. A substantial east–west aligned ditch, which was up to 9 metres wide, was also present. This major landscape boundary terminated at the west, within the site area. An egg-shaped enclosure located immediately to the north of the substantial ditch was likely to be contemporary with it. Other features included a clay-lined stone-built well, numerous quarry pits, circular vertical-sided flat-based pits, small clay-lined pits and dispersed postholes. There was no evidence for on-site occupation or settlement. A fairly substantial pottery assemblage was dominated by Iron-Age wares, with some Roman. Other recovered artefacts included an iron sword (recovered from the fill of the substantial ditch), loom-weights, animal bone, a piece of Roman box-flue tile (recovered from the latest re-cut of the substantial ditch) and a small amount of struck flint. The site appears to be situated at the western edge of a large area of fairly intensive Iron-Age to Roman industrial activity with evidence for multiple phases of ditched and presumably formalized demarcations of space.

Land South of High Street, Drayton

Excavations by OA have revealed evidence of medieval settlement, including a palisade with postholes dating to between 1150 and 1350. The area of medieval settlement appears to be concentrated immediately south of the High Street. The area is also interspersed with eighteenth-century farm buildings and cobbled surfaces.

Valley Park, Harwell/Didcot

A planning application for a development here of approximately 4,500 dwellings with associated infrastructure has been made. An initial geophysical survey has been undertaken. This revealed a number of discrete features. Further to this an evaluation has been undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology and is now almost complete. This has identified a wide area of field systems dating to the later prehistoric and Romano-British periods. Three distinct sites have been identified. One is adjacent to the A34 and dates to the Romano-British period. Substantial linear features pit and post holes have been identified and these have contained substantial quantities of pottery, much of high status. The topography suggests the bulk of this site was removed by the construction of the A34. A second site of Romano-British date has also been found and this appears to be a small farmstead, although the quantities of higher-status pottery are clearly significant. A third site comprises of a substantial double-ditched enclosure with internal features, including hut circles. The pottery provides a middle Iron-Age date. We hope that the latter might be incorporated into the public open space to enable preservation in situ. The report of the evaluation is awaited.

Colton Road, Shrivenham

Subsequent to archaeological evaluation undertaken in December 2012, excavation of the site has just commenced, undertaken by Foundations Archaeology. Stripping has revealed a wide spread of features including ditches, clay lined pits, quarry pits and postholes. The initial dating evidence suggests that most features date to the later prehistoric and Romano-British periods. Although the site has been truncated by later ploughing there is possibly evidence of industrial activity. Loom weights that appear to be Anglo-Saxon have also been recovered from a pit.

South of Steventon Road, East Hanney

A geophysical survey of the application area was initially undertaken. This revealed a number of slight discreet features within an area of ridge and furrow. Evaluation was then requested and undertaken by Headland Archaeology. This revealed middle to late Bronze-Age features across the site beneath the medieval and post-medieval cultivation identified by the geophysics. Two distinct areas of activity were identified. In the southern part of the site ditches, gullies, post holes,

pits and a possible hearth were found. Some of the features may form part of domestic structures although this is difficult to discern purely on the results of the evaluation. In the northern part of the site the features were mostly ditches, although they still contain dating evidence. These appear to form part of a field system associated with the settlement. Some sparse environmental deposits were encountered including abraded carbonized seeds. Some animal bone was also recovered. Considerable truncation has, however, occurred due to later cultivation.

Land off Summertown, East Hanney

The area of proposed housing here was previously the venue for several metal-detecting rallies. The results have been passed onto us by the Portable Antiquities Scheme. The rallies reveal that huge quantities of artefacts dating to the Roman, Anglo-Saxon and medieval periods have been found across the application area. These include coins, jewellery and other metal objects. The quantities of these artefacts are indicative of settlement and activity throughout these periods. An archaeological field evaluation has been undertaken by TVAS. All eighty-two trenches contained archaeological features. These mostly consisted of linear features, pits and postholes. All are dated by ceramic and numismatic evidence to the Romano-British period; no features dateable to other periods have been found. The greater concentration of features lies in the western part of the site towards the Letcombe Brook. The density of features drops in the eastern part towards the supposed route of a Roman road. Several inhumations have been found but like all the features these have been truncated through later cultivation. Although the site has been artefact rich there has been little evidence of definite settlement or structural features, possibly due to the truncation. A report is awaited.

Blenheim Hill, Harwell

An evaluation at this site has been undertaken by TVAS. The evaluation revealed that archaeological deposits have survived on the site, in some cases sealed beneath deep overburden. Almost all of the features revealed lay to the north of the small stream/ditch that traversed the site. The deposits revealed comprise a large concentration of probable late Roman linear features with associated pits, centred possibly on trench 3. A large number of features were recorded in that trench and the presence of postholes may be indicative of a structure in the area. The presence of Anglo-Saxon pottery in three excavated features could also suggest Anglo-Saxon activity in the vicinity. From the stream southwards only a single feature of possible archaeological interest was identified, possibly the remains of a furrow. Further investigation has just commenced.

Furze Platt, Blenheim Park

In January OA undertook a small evaluation to establish whether Akeman Street survived beneath the deserted farmyard here and to establish its state of preservation. The evaluation confirmed that the road survived between the farmhouse and an animal feed building. Cracks observed in the north-east corner of the animal feed building appear to be caused by the building subsiding into the northern roadside ditch. The road was found to be in a good state of preservation, showing two layers of stony material deliberately deposited and forming a notable agger. An associated roadside drainage ditch was also located on the southern side.

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD

The Historic Environment Record (HER) is the county's archaeological and historical data base. The number of HER consultations dropped slightly in 2015, with 107 requests for information from contractors, consultants and internal colleagues for projects ranging from desk-based assessments, heritage plans and transit schemes to footpath and bridleway diversions. These requests were dealt with despite the loss (now permanent) of the Assistant Archaeological Officer at the end of March.

Two projects initiated in April 2015 (a data audit funded by Historic England (HE) and a digitising project on hard copy files carried out by Oxford Archaeology) continued throughout the year. The data audit project, a self-assessment of the HER, involved looking at the data and archive systems, service provision and organisation, and the management of the HER within its host organisation, including forward planning and staffing. The project was completed in January 2016, after a meeting with HE staff in December 2015 which culminated in the submission of a data audit report and draft action plan. Both pieces of work were accepted by HE and will provide a working plan for HER development for the next three to five years.

The digitising project, which is designed to minimize the volume of paper records held by the HER, has focused on scanning of the retained detailed record files, some of which have been transferred to Oxfordshire History Centre as a more appropriate location for secure retention and public access. This project continues, benefitting from the days spent by the former County Archaeologist Paul Smith helping to sort out material for digitising and addition to the digital HER data base. At this stage, approximately eighty per cent of the detailed record files (DRF) have been scanned. In addition to scanning the DRF, data on designations (scheduled monuments, battlefields, and parks and gardens) have been scanned, and will be linked to the database. The final materials to be scanned will include PRN (Primary Record Number) cards and OS (Ordnance Survey) Record cards. The project will be completed in 2017.

Historic Landscape Characterisation Project

Although the officer responsible for this project left in May 2015, recruitment of a replacement was not completed until November when a new officer – Abi Tompkins – was appointed. She will begin in May 2016, and will be responsible for completion of the digitisation and characterisation of west Oxfordshire and the incorporation of Oxford City HLC data, as well as analysing, writing up and disseminating the project results by summer 2017.

HUGH CODDINGTON, RICHARD ORAM and SUSAN LISK, COUNTY
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES