

## Notes and News

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL NOTES, 1946

The removal of war-time restrictions has enabled excavations to be undertaken in 1946 on a larger scale than hitherto. These, and chance finds resulting from building operations during the year, are reported briefly below:

1. *Abingdon, Berks.* During the digging of foundations for new houses a burial was disturbed on the E. side of the road leading to Wootton, opposite Fitzharris Farm. The find was not reported in time for it to be inspected *in situ*, but sufficient bones were preserved to show that the body was that of an adult female. With it were a few Romano-British sherds of the second or third centuries A.D. and a bronze bracelet, said to have been found on the left wrist. The bracelet (now in Abingdon Museum) is of thin wire of circular cross-section, the ends overlapping and secured one on the other so as to form an expanding joint. Another bracelet of identical type from Woodeaton, Oxon., is in the Ashmolean Museum.

2. *Aves Ditch, Oxon.* A preliminary survey of this earthwork (*V.C.H. Oxon.*, I, 275; *Oxoniensia*, II, 202) has been undertaken by members of the O.U. Archaeological Society. The position of the surviving fragments and the general course of the earthwork, as marked on the O.S. maps between the villages of Kirtlington and Fritwell, have been confirmed, but further search both on the ground and from the air in the area between Fritwell and King's Sutton has not so far revealed any northwards extension of the earthwork. It is hoped to continue the survey and to supplement the field observations by excavation.

3. *Dorchester, Oxon.* Gravel-digging on a large scale in the field N. of Dorchester containing the great 'henge' monument and numerous other sites (*Oxoniensia*, III, 169) has necessitated the excavation of two monuments threatened with immediate destruction.

During the Easter Term and Vacation the 'circle in a square' close to the Dorchester-Abingdon Road at the N. end of the field (*loc. cit.*, fig. 20) was excavated by a party of volunteers under the direction of Mrs. C. M. Piggott. The site was found to be a 'henge' monument consisting of a horse-shoe of post-holes enclosed within a circular ditch, the whole being surrounded by a square ditch. Pottery in primary associations included Abingdon (Neolithic A) and Grooved Wares; Peterborough (Neolithic B) sherds indicated a secondary occupation of the circular ditch; while a later re-dedication of the monument was suggested by four secondary cremations.

During the Long Vacation a second circular site lying a short distance to the NE. of that just described was excavated by another volunteer party under the direction of Mr. R. J. C. Atkinson; it is marked on the map (*loc. cit.*) by two rings of dots. The monument consisted of three concentric causewayed ditches, each representing a separate phase of construction. The almost complete absence of pottery and the presence of twenty-one cremations suggests that it was a cemetery site, probably of the Early or Middle Bronze Age.

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4. *Kennington, Berks.* When the Cold-Store at Kennington was built during the war a Romano-British site of some importance, possibly a potters'-field, must have been disturbed. A load of soil from the site, delivered to Mr. J. N. L. Myres for the Manor House garden, contained quantities of Romano-British pottery, including some wasters, and a fragmentary two-edged comb of box-wood (now in the Ashmolean Museum : 1946.1). A fuller report will be published later.

5. *Oxford (Bayswater Hill, Headington).* During the year new building sites have been developed on the E. and W. sides of Bayswater Hill, Headington, which leads northwards downhill from the London Road roundabout to the Bayswater brook. Early in the year an adult skeleton was discovered on the W. of the road, close to the bottom of the hill, and was recorded by Mr. P. L. Shinnie ; there were no associated finds, but the burial, which was extended, was perhaps of Romano-British date.

During the autumn, work on the site to the E. of the road, through which runs the N.-S. Roman road, has revealed numerous traces of Romano-British occupation, but the nature of the building operations has hitherto prevented the recovery of any plans of huts or of the course of the road itself. Chance finds include the skeleton of an elderly female and other unrecorded burials, coins, Samian ware, and much coarse pottery, chiefly of the third and fourth centuries A.D.

6. *Oxford (Port Meadow).* During Trinity Term site 7 (*Oxoniensia*, VII, 28, figs. 3 and 4) was excavated by members of the O.U. Archaeological Society. The site, thought before excavation to be a small round barrow, proved to be an Iron Age habitation-site. It consisted of a small gravel mound surrounded by four successive concentric ditches, presumably for drainage, with an entrance on the S. side. From this entrance an irregular paved way led towards the centre of the mound. Near the centre were four shallow depressions about two feet in diameter, and in the NW. quadrant two patches of cobble-stones ; the purpose of these structures is uncertain. The presence of pottery and animal bones attests occupation, but the absence of any trace of a permanent hut-structure suggests that this was seasonal in character. A detailed report will be published in a future volume of *Oxoniensia*.

R. J. C. ATKINSON ; A. MCKENZIE.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL NOTES, 1947

The following discoveries in the district were reported during 1947 :

1. *Abingdon, Berks.* Several skeletons were disturbed during the digging of drainage-trenches on a new housing-site to the E. of the Wootton Road, at the point where it leaves the town. No associated objects were found, and it was not possible to examine the site further. The burials were apparently of adults, lying extended in shallow graves, and are likely to be of Romano-British or mediaeval date.

2. *Asthall, Oxon.* During March and June volunteers under the direction of Miss P. M. M. Crouch examined the area of a new housing-site immediately S. of the village and W. of Akeman Street. Considerable remains of Romano-British buildings were discovered, consisting of one long wall and several rough floors ; there was evidence of a potter's kiln in the vicinity. A detailed report will appear in a future volume of *Oxoniensia*.

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3. *Cassington, Oxon.* During the Easter Vacation volunteers under the direction of Mr. J. S. P. Bradford examined sites on the N. edge of the field adjoining the S. boundary of Smith's Pit II (*Oxoniensia*, v, 3, fig. 1), which were threatened by an extension of the gravel-pit. The chief sites excavated were a ring-ditch which contained a small empty pit near the centre; a rectangular ditch enclosing one of oval shape, which yielded primary Romano-British pottery; and a double burial of the Beaker period, enclosed within a roughly circular ditch. The lower and earlier burial had been accompanied by a beaker of type B1, with cord ornament, which had been broken and scattered by the digging of a later grave, partly overlapping the first, and containing a crouched burial accompanied by a beaker of type A. It is hoped to do further work on the latter two sites at some future date.

During the Michaelmas Term members of the O.U. Archaeological Society under Mr. K. G. Ritherdon examined the NW. sector of the great enclosure ditch (*Oxoniensia*, vii, 106) during its final destruction by a mechanical excavator. Several partial causeways across the ditch were found, suggesting that its construction had been abandoned before its completion.

4. *Chinnor, Oxon.* During August a large cutting was made transversely across the Icknield Way about 400 yards S. of the Chinnor Cement Works, to facilitate the construction of a tunnel linking the main chalk-pit to an extension on the E. side of the trackway. The Way appeared in section as a broad depression, about 30 ft. wide and 3 ft. 6 in. deep at the centre, filled with a mixture of brown soil, abraded chalk rubble and rainwash. There was no sign of any metalling or of flanking ditches; owing to the great depth of the cutting and the crumbling condition of the edges it was impossible to make accurate measurements.

5. *Dorchester, Oxon.* During the Long Vacation the following sites were excavated by volunteers from Birmingham, London, and Oxford Universities, under the direction of Miss A. McKenzie, Miss N. K. Sanders, and Mr. R. J. C. Atkinson. *Site V* and *Site VI* were causewayed cremation-cemeteries, consisting of a causewayed ditch with external bank and an entrance-gap on the NW. Each segment of the ditch had a post-hole cut in its floor. They contained 21 and 49 cremated burials respectively, and probably belong to the late Neolithic or Early Bronze Age. *Site VII* was a much-weathered Middle Bronze Age round-barrow, probably originally of bell form, which covered two cremated burials in separate pits (one being accompanied by a small urn of overhanging-rim type and a fragmentary bronze awl), and an empty pit. There were 9 secondary Saxon burials round the periphery of the barrow, from which in most cases the body had entirely disappeared.

Preliminary excavations were made in the W. ditch of the Dorchester Cursus (*Oxoniensia*, iii, 169; there referred to as 'parallel lines') close to Sites V and VI; two causeways were found, one natural and the other artificial; no dating evidence was discovered.

*Site IV* was excavated by members of the O.U. Archaeological Society during the Michaelmas Term, under the direction of Mr. R. J. C. Atkinson. It proved to be a cremation-cemetery very similar to Sites V and VI, with a ditch consisting of eight separate but contiguous pits, with an entrance gap on the south; it contained 25 cremations. A report on these three sites, together with Sites I and II, excavated in 1946 (*v. supra*, p. 162), will be published by the Ashmolean Museum during 1948.

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6. *Oxford (Bayswater Hill, Headington)*. Further work on the Barton no. 4 housing estate to the E. of Bayswater Hill has revealed more evidence of Romano-British occupation and two unaccompanied burials of adults (not seen *in situ*), probably of the same date; no sign of masonry or timber buildings, or of the N.-S. Roman road, whose course traverses the site, has been found (see also p. 163).

7. *Radley, Berks.* During October pits were dug from E. to W. across Barrow Hills Field (*Oxoniensia*, III, 32, fig. 7) for the erection of electricity supply posts. One of these pits was dug through the ditch of barrow 14; the remainder showed nothing of archaeological interest, beyond demonstrating the extreme hardness of the local gravel conglomerate, through which many of the barrow-ditches have been dug.

8. *Sutton Courtenay, Berks.* During the year a trench was dug for a pipe-line from Sutton Courtenay southwards to the Atomic Energy Research Establishment at Harwell. The section thus exposed revealed nothing of archaeological importance.

9. *Wittenham Clumps, Little Wittenham, Berks.* During the autumn Mr. P. P. Rhodes, of Brightwell, made a small trial excavation on a site discovered by him earlier in the year on the S. slope of the Clumps, about 100 ft. N. of the road from Little Wittenham to Wallingford. Here tesserae, wall-plaster, fragments of tiles and quantities of Romano-British pottery can be picked up over a wide area. A trial cutting 10 ft. square revealed a spread of mortar and wall plaster, presumably from the outer side of an adjacent Romano-British building; at a lower level was found the rectangular corner of a floor of compacted chalk rubble and cobbles, adjacent to which were two post-holes. On the floor were numerous fragments of Iron Age pottery of a type similar to that found at Mount Farm (*Oxoniensia*, II, 12); the Iron Age and Roman levels appeared to be separated by a sterile layer. A detailed report will be published later by Mr. Rhodes.

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## RECENT MEDIAEVAL FINDS IN THE OXFORD DISTRICT

1. *Excavations at the 12th-century castle at Ascot-D'Oilly, Oxon., 1946.*

In the Evenlode valley in the orchard of the present manor house of Ascot D'Oilly is a small mound 8 ft. high, which was chosen for excavation in 1946 as it represents with some certainty the keep of the *Castellum* apparently built here between 1129 and c. 1150 (cp. F. M. Stenton, *English Feudalism, 1066-1166*, pp. 195-6). The east wall of the present house incorporates the east wall of a 13th-century chapel, the successor to the *capellam in castello Estcote* of the 12th-century charters, and traces of enclosure banks remain (FIG. 23).

The mound was found to contain remains of a detached stone tower, 35 ft. square, of mortared local rubble walls 8 ft. thick with Taynton ashlar quoins. This tower is built on a knob of lias clay protruding through the gravel, and the stone work rests on the original clay surface, with a foundation-trench cut into an apparently pre-existing bank. Clay had been piled against the rising walls to give the appearance of a tower on a mound. The whole tower, which has been cleared, was filled inside with clay and loamy gravel, mortared over to form a floor, on which was found much pottery, horseshoe nails and other iron work, some bronze, and an iron key with silver inlaid bands. The walls survive for 2 ft. above this floor all round, and, there being no sign of a door, it was evidently the floor of a basement. The entrance was probably to the floor above, and a small exterior projection

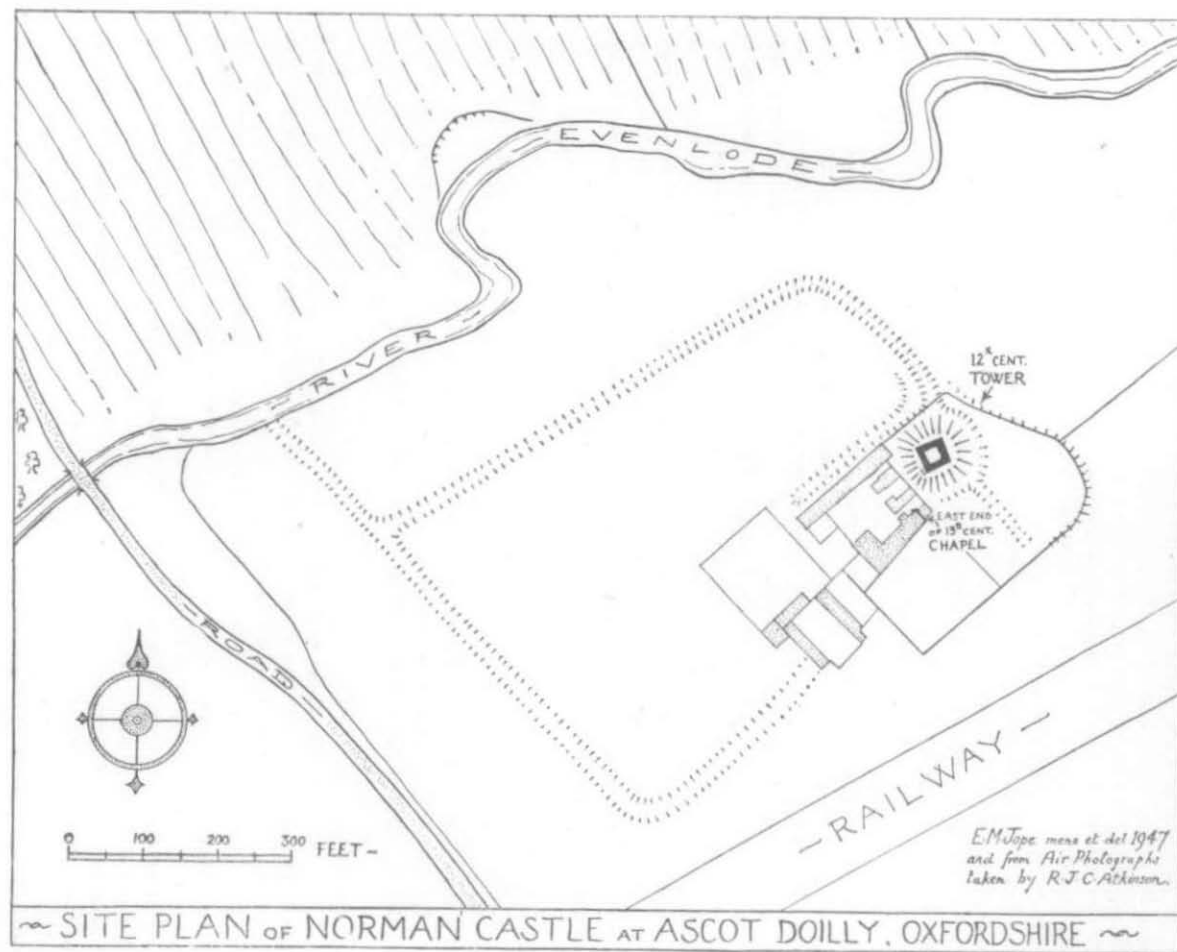


FIG. 23

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on the SW. corner probably carried an external wooden stair. There was only one floor level, and the filling above this, of stone, clay, loam, etc., contained only 12th-century pottery exactly similar to that on the floor. Lying in the rubbish pits outside the NW. corner of the tower and in the secondary silting of the ditch, were some large blocks of Taynton ashlar, some from batter courses. This evidence suggests that the tower had been deliberately dismantled, the good stone being used in other buildings, before the end of the 12th century, and possibly under the general order from Henry II.

In the primary silt of the ditch at the NW. corner of the mound lay much woodwork (well preserved, as it was usually well below the water-table), hazel twigs and nuts, fresh-water mussels and some pottery. In the secondary silting there was much similar pottery, all like that of the tower itself, and the dressed stone mentioned above. Work still remains to be done on these ditches, and between the chapel and tower, and on the outer banks, which appear to contain no masonry.

The value of the work so far has been twofold. First, the correlation between excavation and documentation has been good, and a general date in the second half of the 12th century can be given to many pottery types, notably the fine glazed tripod jugs so typical of the Oxford region (*Oxoniensia*, IV (1939), pp. 115 etc., and below p. 170). Secondly, the finding of such a stone tower in such an insignificant mound makes us view similar slight remains of mound and bailey castles with a new importance in the topography of 12th-century history. It could not, however, be suggested that the Ascot tower was of much military importance, two arrowheads being the only recognizable weapons found in the whole tower. Its proximity to Wychwood forest may provide a clue to its function, and a study of the animal bones may give some information about the forest fauna of the 12th century.

The whole village setting is of great interest, being in the early Middle Ages made up of settlements of two manors. The present church, itself containing good 12th-century work, lies on the other manor of Ascot Earl, and about 300 yards SW. of the church are remains of what looks suspiciously like another mound and bailey castle, which must at some time be excavated.

The Society of Antiquaries of London has voted a research grant towards the excavations and a full report will appear in the *Antiquaries Journal*.

### 2. *Excavations at Deddington Castle, Oxon., 1947.*

Early in 1947 the first operations of the Deddington parish council's scheme for making tennis courts in the inner bailey of the earthwork known as Deddington Castle revealed quantities of mediaeval pottery and roofing materials, and we undertook to examine the site on behalf of the Ashmolean Museum. In spite of extensive stone-robbing in the 19th century, and probably earlier, much structural stone work has been found, and as a satisfactory result of this preliminary work the parish council propose to put the tennis courts elsewhere, thus leaving this inner bailey free for some measure of preservation.

The Castle, to the SE. of the town, consists of a large outer enclosure of  $8\frac{1}{2}$  acres, with an imposing bank and ditch, in the S. corner of which is the inner bailey of about 1 acre. Field survey suggests that this was inserted into the outer bailey, though it is difficult to reconcile this conclusion with recent finds beneath the bank of the outer bailey at the W. side. The polygonal inner bailey proved to be surrounded by a wall of mortared local ironstone rubble 7 ft. 6 in. thick, datable from



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the finds in its foundation-trench to the first half of the 12th century, and possibly the work of William de Chesney (*Eynsham Cart. I* (O.H.S., XLIX, 1906-7), 411-422). Against this curtain wall a hall was subsequently built (c. 1160) of mortared rubble 4 ft. thick with fine diagonal-tooled Taynton ashlar quoins; below this hall floor (probably that actually of an undercroft) were the post-holes and wattle-and-daub of an earlier structure. Later still a solar was built against the curtain wall to the E. of the hall. Between the hall and solar, against the outer face of the curtain wall, there was a latrine pit of the early 13th century, containing a brown glazed pottery urinal, a large jug, a gourd-like vessel, remains of eleven cooking-pots, a gold ring with uncut emerald, the skeletal remains of a peregrine falcon, a small harrier and several other small birds of prey, and one of the earliest black rat skulls known in Britain.

N. of the hall the 12th-century kitchens were found with a stratified succession of deposits belonging to seven successive floors and hearths, all within the 12th century, and overlain by a building of about 1200. To the N. again the stone-lined Castle well was found, just inside the gatehouse. E. of the solar a large chapel was found, a building as it stands probably of the 13th century, and in use in the 14th, as shown by the painted glass found: the Canons of St. George's, Windsor, owned the site from the later 14th century, and possibly they kept the chapel in use. There may be remains of an earlier chapel beneath it. In a small mound to the E. of the inner bailey a small rectangular tower was found with a fine ashlar battered outer face.

The northern half of the inner bailey was occupied with a sequence of rather poor buildings, mostly later than the solid structures such as the hall. The latest finds on the site appear to be of the 14th century, and this fits well with the known documentary history of the Castle (see, for instance, E. Marshall in *Proc. N. Oxon. Arch. Soc.*, xiv (1879), 1-42). There appear to have been no improvements in the defences after the 12th century, and the excavations suggest that when Piers Gaveston was imprisoned here in 1312 it is little wonder he was easily captured by the Earl of Warwick. Already in 1277 it is called 'the old castle' (Inq. P.M., 5 Edw. I) and in 1310, 'a weak (*debile*) castle in which is a chamber' (Inq. P.M., 4 Edw. II). By the 1530's Leland could merely say 'ther hath been a castle here'.

Although these excavations were only preliminary, it has been possible to illuminate with a few material remains the last days of Piers Gaveston, and to fill in some details of the Castle throughout the 12th century—it does not appear at all in documents until 1204. The extensive stratification has given invaluable evidence for the dating of mediaeval pottery in this region, and the finding of pottery made in the Brill kilns, 12 miles away, throws further light on the mediaeval economic geography of the region. The history of the building industry has been enriched by the finding of excellent ashlar and carved work of the 12th century in stone from Taynton, 20 miles away, and of the fine stone slats with drilled holes and iron nails—'presents' from the local Oolites (W. J. Arkell, *Oxford Stone* (1947), pp. 147-9) obtained possibly from near Croughton, which supplied Adderbury church and Bicester priory. Much pottery of the 11th century has been found on the site, though so far not related to any structures, and it is hoped that further work will reveal its significance—whether there was here one of Odo of Bayeux's castles, or whether the pottery is merely from an earlier settlement on the site (a coin of Offa, 759-795, was said to have been found here c. 1842: Gardner, *Hist. and Directory of Oxfordshire* (1852), p. 324. Work is continuing in 1948.

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### 3. Pottery from Enstone, Filkins, and Great Milton, Oxon. (FIG. 24.)

Mr. R. T. Lattey has given to the Ashmolean Museum three interesting pieces of pottery found in his garden at Enstone in 1947 (A.M. 1947.370). Two are rims of vessels with steep sides and clubbed rim without the more usual everted flange (FIG. 24, nos. 1-2). Both are of shell-filled fairly hard black fabric, no. 2 having a 'digestive biscuit' appearance due to the dissolving out of the lime particles. An example of a similar vessel (FIG. 24, no. 11) is in the Reading Museum from Great Milton (Monkery Farm), Oxon., and sherds representing at least five such vessels (FIG. 24, nos. 5-9) came to the Ashmolean from Filkins, Oxon., where they were found together in building the Institute. No. 12, from Great Milton, illustrates the infinite gradation of forms between this and the more usual cooking-pot with everted flange rim (e.g. FIG. 24, no. 15). The restorations, nos. 1 and 5 are based on complete sections of such vessels from Bourton-on-the-Water, Glos., and Ascot D'Oilly and Deddington, Oxon. The type is characteristic of the Oxford-North Cotswold area and is rarely found outside it. It can be securely dated to the 12th century by the finds at Deddington, Ascot-under-Wychwood and Hinton Waldrist (*Berks. Arch. Journ.*, XLIV (1940), 58-59), and though it may have earlier ancestors (e.g. FIG. 24, no. 14, from Benson, Oxon., in smooth shelly brown fabric) it probably does not extend much into the 13th century. (See also *Oxoniensia*, x (1945), 97-99; *Berks. Arch. Journ.*, L, in press).

The other piece from Enstone (FIG. 24, no. 3) is the base of a handle shown by the hole to have been part of a lid, in black ware similar to no. 1. Such large pan lids are not common, but are known from Oxford, and Avebury (Wilts.), and there is one (FIG. 24, no. 4) among the 13th-century pottery from the kiln found in the last century at Hunts Mill, Wootton Bassett, Wilts. (*Wilts. Arch. Mag.*, xxviii, 263) some of which is in Devizes Museum.

The sixth vessel in the Filkins group (FIG. 24, no. 10) is a large pan in fabric similar to nos. 5-9 of a type common in the 12th and 13th centuries. Also in the Great Milton group is the rim of a dish with inturned rim, of hard purplish shell-filled fabric with grey core, a 12th century piece, derived from late Saxon prototypes (*Oxoniensia*, v (1940), 45-49; *Berks. Arch. Journ.*, L, in press).

### 4. St. John's College.

Excavations for foundations on the south of St. John's College in 1947 have revealed extensive rubbish-pits of mediaeval and later periods. Most important was a 12th-century unlined well cut in the gravel, of which unfortunately only the filling down to within about 7 ft. of the bottom (cp. the wells on the site of the Bodleian extension, *Oxoniensia*, iv (1939), 94-6) could be excavated. The lowest 4 ft. of this represented a homogeneous filling containing a worn coin of Henry II and much pottery, notably several good glazed tripod pitchers. The deposit, and therefore the filling up of the well, must have been about 1200, so the well must have been in use for some 60 years before this. The site as a whole yielded some 12th-century pottery, as did the Ashmolean site on the other side of St. Giles's. Archaeological evidence is now accumulating to show, as the charters also show, that habitations were springing up in this northern suburb outside the walls by the middle of the 12th century, though there is so far no evidence from archaeology to suggest habitations here earlier than this. A full account of these St. John's College finds will appear in a forthcoming volume of *Oxoniensia*.



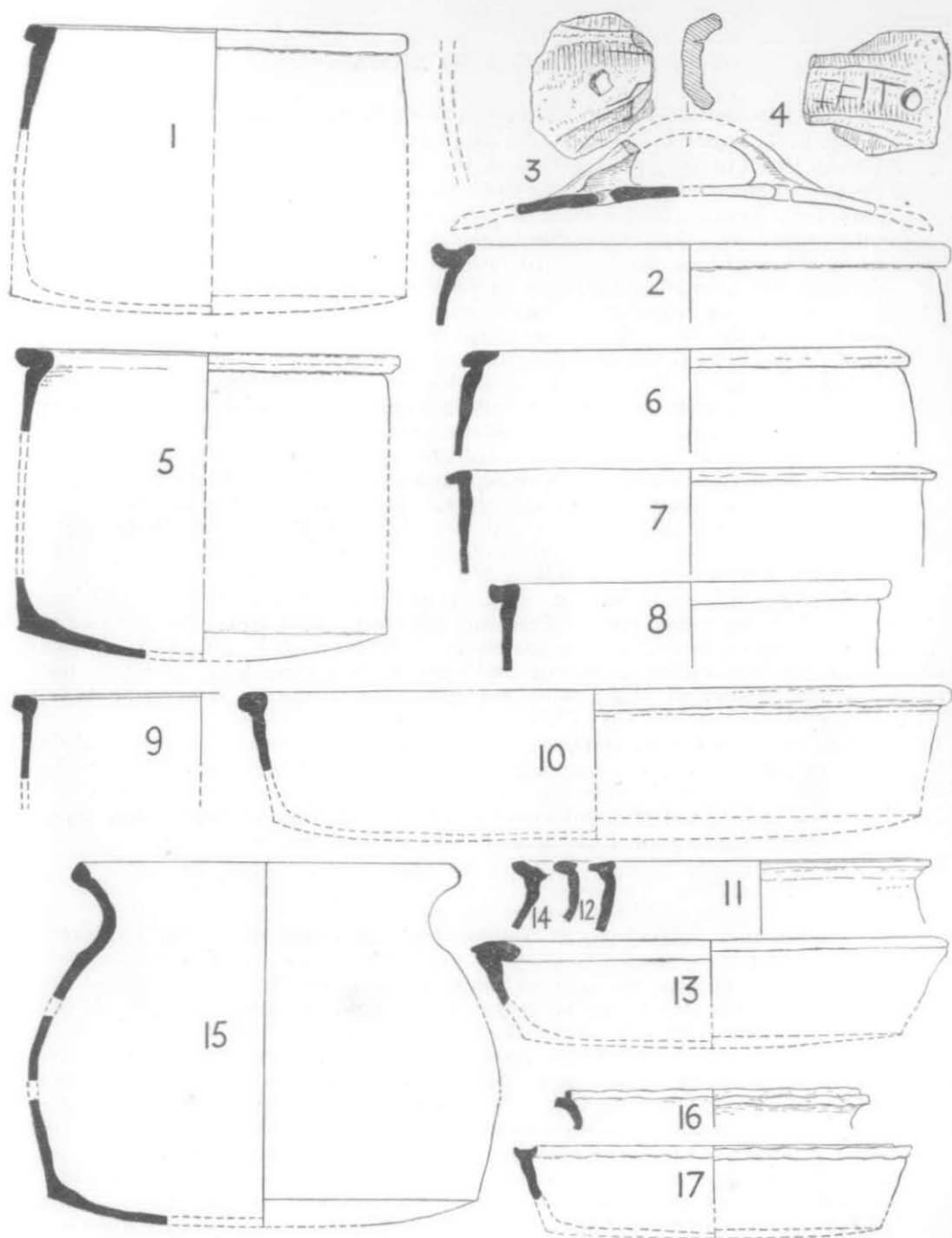


FIG. 24

EARLY MEDIAEVAL POTTERY FROM THE OXFORD DISTRICT.  
 Enstone (1-3); Wootton Bassett (4); Filkins (5-10); Great Milton (11-13);  
 Benson (14) and Cornmarket, Oxford (15-17).

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### 5. *The Introduction of Sandy Fabrics in Local 12th-century Pottery.* (FIG 24).

FIG. 24, nos. 15-17 are three vessels found associated together with many bones at the bottom of a pit about 4 ft. deep during building operations on the east side of Cornmarket, opposite Barclay's Bank, near Carfax. They are of dark grey sandy fabric, which recent finds at Deddington (p. 168) have shown to be coming into use towards the middle of the 12th century, supplanting to some extent the earlier shell-filled fabric. Such forms as these from Oxford show that here too this sandy fabric was in use by mid-12th century, and the same is true lower down the Thames valley, at Dorchester (*Oxoniensia*, II (1937), 60-62, fig. 17, no. 13) and Wallingford (*Berks. Arch. Journ.*, XLII (1938), 67-71). It must be emphasized, however, that such a criterion of dating, while of great service in a particular area, may nevertheless be of very localized significance. To the west, in the Cotswolds, Vale of the White Horse, and the Chalk Downs, these sandy wares are much more infrequent, and the 13th century forms appear in a harder version of the shell-filled fabric, which is also very persistent in the Bedford area. On the other hand in the lower Thames, and the Norwich area, for instance, shell-filled wares are hardly ever found even in Late Saxon forms (*Berks. Arch. Journ.*, I, in press).

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### THE TREACHER COLLECTION OF MIDDLE THAMES PALAEOOLITHS

In February, 1946, Mrs. M. S. Treacher, of Uporchard, Twyford, presented to the Department of Geology, University Museum, Oxford, the whole of her late husband's immense collection of palaeolithic implements. The collection arrived in Oxford during the summer of 1946 and some of the choicest specimens have been temporarily exhibited in four show-cases in the court of the museum, but it has not yet been possible to unpack the rest of the collection, which is variously estimated to comprise 4,000 to 6,000 implements. They were collected over a period of about fifty years, from the late 1880's to the 1930's, chiefly from the gravel-pits along the Thames valley between Reading and Slough. This is unquestionably the most important collection of Middle Thames palaeoliths in existence, and it is made almost priceless by the falling into decay of most of the small gravel-pits and the introduction of modern methods of working into those that remain. With this collection in Oxford and the O. A. Shrubsole and G. W. Smith collections in Reading Museum, the student of palaeolithic industries and Pleistocene chronology now has conveniently to hand the fullest body of data ever likely to be assembled from the Middle Thames area.

The story of how this collection came to be formed has never been written, and this opportunity is therefore taken to put on record some biographical notes supplied by Mrs. Treacher.

Llewellyn Treacher, F.G.S., was born at Twyford, on 9 February, 1859, and died there on 14 February, 1943. His interest in geology having been kindled at an early age through summer holidays spent in the Isle of Wight, his attention was drawn to palaeolithic implements and the great questions that lie behind them by Dr. Stevens, a retired doctor, at that time Honorary Curator of Reading Museum. Treacher was then about thirty years of age. Dr. Stevens' enthusiasm worked on fertile ground. A few days after his visit to the museum Treacher found a palaeolith in his own orchard, which adjoined the site of what later became Ruscombe brick-pit. 'To go through his hedge into the gravel workings which preceded the

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brickworks at Ruscombe', writes Mrs. Treacher, 'was an easy step. Here he found an important, informative, and prolific site. He began to realize that the valley of the Middle Thames, unexplored and unknown, lay open to him. He went on to Furze Platt, one of the most famous palaeolithic sites in this country, which has yielded thousands of implements, some of wonderful beauty and perfection, as well as the largest known British palaeolith.' This giant specimen Treacher presented to the Natural History Museum at South Kensington.; there is a coloured plaster cast in his collection at Oxford, and duplicate casts were distributed to a number of museums. It gave Treacher a special interest in 'giants', which he kept together in his collection. He obtained the greatest number from Baker's Farm pit, between Farnham Royal and Slough, but they were always rougher than those from Furze Platt. Such immense implements raise fascinating problems. It is generally supposed that they were made for ritual purposes: perhaps to be carried in religious processions.

Treacher was a sound geologist and his mind was always occupied with the geological implications of the implements, but his realization of the many difficulties, ambiguities, and complications of the subject produced in him what some regarded as an excessive caution in publishing his discoveries. He published two brief but important papers,<sup>1</sup> but for the rest his observations appeared, if at all, only piecemeal in reports of excursions of the Geologists' Association (of which he directed twenty-five). Some of his observations are of great interest and importance. For instance, as early as 1896 he published the inference that large unrolled fresh flints found in the bottom of the gravel at Ruscombe could not have been brought there by rolling along the river bed, but were presumably dropped from ice floes. Again, at Furze Platt he used to point out that all the best implements, including the giant specimen, were found within about a year in a small area in the middle of the field, and he inferred from this that they were probably the work of one craftsman; and such a craftsman can hardly have been the ape-like savage to which Lower Palaeolithic man has been so often likened.

The sources of material from which the implements were made likewise interested Treacher. It is well known that some crude hand-axes found in the gravels of the Middle Thames are fashioned from quartzite brought into the Oxford area by the first ice-sheet, which produced the Northern Drift, and probably carried on through the Goring Gap by the Thames. Treacher maintained that the fine specimens of advanced Acheulian workmanship could have been made only from the large flint nodules of the Coranguinum Zone of the Upper Chalk. These nodules are in plentiful supply close to Furze Platt, and Treacher believed that the flint had been mined by Acheulian man from the sides of a small dry valley followed by Nightingale Lane. Much later the Abbé Breuil on a visit to Furze Platt expressed the opinion also that the implements were made from mined flint. Treacher could never make up his mind whether the rich Furze Platt deposit was a fan gravel or a river terrace. 'He seemed often more inclined to believe in fans than in terraces. But the Thames had been there, he said, and *just* turned the implements over.'

For generations to come no doubt this magnificent collection of man's earliest handiwork will be consulted and disputed by experts on typology, physiography,

<sup>1</sup> 'Palaeolithic Man in East Berks.' (1896), *Berks. Bucks. & Oxon. Arch. Journ.*, n.s. II, 16-18, 39-43; 'On the Occurrence of Stone Implements in the Thames Valley between Reading and Maidenhead', *Man*, Feb., 1904, 17-19, pl. B.

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and Pleistocene chronology. If it contributes, as it surely will, to the ultimate solution of the many riddles that remain it will fulfil the aim of, and be a fitting memorial to, the man who, when these subjects were in their infancy, realized the importance of salvaging the evidence and devoted his life to building up the collection and a store of field knowledge always at the disposal of fellow-workers.

W. J. ARKELL.

### MORE PALAEOOLITHS FROM THE WALLINGFORD FAN-GRAVELS

Since publication of the paper on this subject in *Oxoniensia*, VIII/IX (1943-44), I ff., a further collection of forty-three specimens has been presented to the Museum and Art Gallery, Reading, by Dr. Guy Hind of Stoke-on-Trent. They were collected many years ago by Mr. G. S. Morgan of Wallingford and acquired by the late Dr. Wheelton Hind of Stoke-on-Trent, the distinguished geologist,<sup>1</sup> father of Dr. Guy Hind. They were received at the Reading Museum in October, 1946. I am indebted to Mr. W. A. Smallcombe, B.Sc., Curator, for sending me the collection on loan for study, and to Mr. A. E. P. Collins, Archaeological Assistant, for drawing my attention to it and for help.

The only documentation is (1) a letter to Dr. Wheelton Hind from G. S. Morgan, dated Thames Cottage, Wallingford, 19 Nov., 1919, in which he states that 'nearly all the flints came from Turner's Court gravel pit', and (2) an unsigned note written in 1919 by Dr. Wheelton Hind's sister-in-law, Miss F. E. Manfield, stating that a few also came from Gould's Grove and Blenheim, and adding 'Mr. Morgan says the smaller palaeolithic implements were found from 15 to 20 ft. below the surface—this is a rough guess on his part—they came chiefly from Turner's Court pits'. All have now been labelled Turner's Court.

The collection comprises forty-five implements, all registered with the serial number 147.46, and each with a specimen number, 1 to 45; but one (no. 44) bears an old label 'St. Acheul, Amiens, 1883', and is of flint unmatched in colour by any of the others; it seems to have been added to the collection for typological comparison with no. 35, which it closely resembles. Another (no. 40) is now excluded because it is a white, unworn, surface specimen with rusty arêtes, different in patina and condition from all the rest, and probably neolithic. This leaves forty-three palaeoliths from the gravels, all of flint except one (no. 43), which is a pointed hand-axe of quartzite.

Typologically the collection adds nothing to the material at Oxford, already described. There is a fine series of fourteen pointed hand-axes, one (no. 2) and perhaps another (37) crude Early Acheulian ('Chellean'), the rest mainly typical Middle Acheulian, ranging from large (no. 1) to miniature (27). Two (13, 15) are markedly plano-convex, and one of them (15) is acutely pointed, and retouched on the convex face, and belongs with the Wolvercote Channel 'later Acheulian' group. Formerly this group was believed to be Upper Acheulian and to date from the Riss-Würm interglacial, but it is now almost certain that it dates from the end of the Great Interglacial and may be a late development of Middle Acheulian; wherefore it is best for the present to term it non-committally Later Acheulian (see Arkell, 1947, *Geology of Oxford*, p. 220).

<sup>1</sup> Wheelton Hind, M.D., F.R.C.S., F.G.S., 1859-1920. Obituary and bibliography, *Geol. Mag.*, lvii (1920), 476-480.

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The bulk of the collection, as of the earlier ones from the same locality, consists of ovates and ovoids of various kinds, among which the following types may be distinguished :

1. Symmetrical, elongate, pointed, well made ovates, transitional to pointed hand-axes : 3, 5, 7, 9, 21, 34. Cf. nos. 5 and 16, the latter plano-convex and here classified as a pointed hand-axe. No. 3 seems to be made from a large flake. These are all unrolled or only slightly rolled. Middle Acheulian.

2. Symmetrical, slender, oval, twisted ovates, well made, ranging from large (4) to medium (33) and small (28, 35). These are unrolled or slightly rolled. Middle Acheulian. Cf. nos. 12, 13 figured in the previous paper.

3. Symmetrical, untwisted, plano-convex or disc-like ovoids of various shapes : 23 (cf. no. 10 figured in previous paper), 19, 32, 45 (cf. no. 15 figured in previous paper). These are slightly rolled (23, 32) or heavily rolled (19, 45).

4. Asymmetric crude ovoids grading into side choppers. At one end this group comprises small but crudely made rather shapeless but always asymmetric ovoids linking on with group 3 (11, 14, 25, 30, 42), at the other, crude side-choppers of various sizes, but unquestionably Abbevillian workmanship (6, 17, 22). In between come various gradations tending to a foliate (12) or kite (24, 29) shape. One amorphous specimen (25) is reminiscent of no. 16 figured in the previous paper. This group are all heavily rolled except nos. 12 and 14, which are rolled.

In a class by itself is no. 18, an unrolled Early Levalloisian tortoise-core.

Groups 3 and 4 contain some specimens which individually would be assigned to the Middle Acheulian, and this was done in the previous paper. The wealth of material in the Treacher collection and the publication by Mrs. Treacher of the geological milieu, however, reveal that these groups are characteristic of the 150 ft. terrace of the Thames below Reading and are the principal components of the Abbevillian and Early Acheulian industries of that terrace.

In the new light of Mrs. Treacher's publication it is evident that the Wallingford fan-gravels incorporate much material derived from the 150 ft. terrace of the Thame or a parallel tributary, and that the bedded sands and sandy gravels observed below the fan-gravels in some of the pits (see previous paper, p. 5), with their contained implements of these same types, represent relics of the 150 ft. river terrace. They are at the right height, for the 350 ft. contour passes within a few yards of (above) Gould's Grove and Rumbold's pits and the bedded deposits lie below 15-20 ft. of fan-gravels, while at Blenheim Farm pit the surface height is about 310-315 ft. O.D. The height at Turner's Court is uncertain, since there are several pits. The large quantity of Turner's Court material now known, however, makes it probable that the chief source was the large overgrown pit in Oakley Little Wood, NW. of the farm, where the surface-height is probably about 330-340 ft., though no spot-heights are shown very near it on the maps. These heights accord closely with the Three Pigeons plateau on the one hand and the 'Ancient Channel' of the Thames, between Caversham and Henley, on the other. The idea that this terrace represents the Hanborough or 100 ft. stage of the upper Thames, and the interglacial Paxford Gravels of the upper Evenlode, has been expounded elsewhere (*Geology of Oxford* (1947), pp. 202-4).

The suggestion that the heavily rolled implements attained their present condition in travelling down the coombes off the escarpment was never satisfying. On the new interpretation they can be accepted at their face value as the typical

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ingredients of an ancient river gravel which was largely reconstructed and mixed with surface gravel by solifluxion.

W. J. ARKELL.

*Note.* In December, 1947, after the above had been sent to the Editor, three more palaeoliths from near Wallingford were received at the Ashmolean Museum through Mrs. Walker, The Castle, Benson. In a letter to the writer, dated 2 January, 1948, Mr. E. Town, the gravel worker who supplied palaeoliths to the late William Newton of Benson (see *Oxoniensia*, VIII/IX, 1) states that they were found by him in 1945 and 1946 at Rumbold's pit, Ewelme, 'the depth about 14 ft. down'. The implements are as follows:

A.M.1947.352. Pointed hand-axe, butt missing, Early Acheulian or rather crude Middle Acheulian. Almost unrolled.

A.M.1947.353. Medium-sized ovate, symmetrical, straight-edged, unrolled.

A.M.1947.354. Asymmetric, elongate ovoid chopper, well rolled (a common type in the Ancient Channel, Caversham-Henley).

W. J. ARKELL.

### A RING-DITCH AT LONG HANBOROUGH, OXON.

Some years before the war, the late Major G. W. G. Allen noted and photographed from the air (PLATE XVIII, A),<sup>1</sup> a ring-ditch in a grass field on the south bank of the river Evenlode, north of the Great Western Railway line from Oxford to Worcester, and about 350 yards east of Combe Bridge, which carries the railway over the river.

The ring-ditch is clearly visible on the ground as a shallow depression with a low bank on both sides (PLATE XVIII, B), and has recently been visited again by Dr. W. J. Arkell, who reports that the sub-soil is low level Evenlode gravel (1st terrace).<sup>2</sup> The diameter of the circle, measured from the middle of the ditch, is 138 feet and at its nearest point the ditch is 165 feet from the wire fence of the railway embankment.

So far as is known, the field has not been ploughed in recent times and no finds of pottery or small antiquities have been reported from it, but it is clear from its shape and appearance that this is a typical ring-ditch of Bronze Age date. Ring-ditches, and indeed prehistoric sites in general, are sufficiently rare in the Hanborough and Stonesfield area to make this particular monument worthy of record. This ring-ditch has recently been scheduled as an Ancient Monument.

D. B. HARDEN.

### IRON AGE POTTERY FROM YARNTON, OXON.: FURTHER NOTES

Mr. J. S. P. Bradford's account of Early Iron Age pottery from the Oxford district (*Oxoniensia*, VII, 53, Appendix) calls for certain comment as regards his treatment of the pottery from Yarnton (p. 56, and fig. 12).

It is made quite clear that this pottery consists of the haphazard gatherings of various persons over a long period of time and from an extensive area. There is

<sup>1</sup> This photograph and two others of the same site, which Major Allen also took, show faint traces of what is perhaps a second, smaller, ring a few yards west of the one here described. No trace of this second ring, however, is visible on the ground and its archaeological significance must remain suspect.

<sup>2</sup> Not alluvium, as indicated on both the Oxford Special Sheet (1908) and the Witney Sheet (1938) of the Geological Survey 1-inch map.



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therefore no claim that it is likely to represent the product of a single period, nor does the illustration (unfortunately unaccompanied by a detailed description) suggest this. On the contrary most of the pottery in this group seems (judging solely by the illustration) to be of a very early Ultimate Bronze Age character and far from supporting the statement (paragraph 4) that this series 'demonstrates the characterless level to which Iron Age pottery in this area could ultimately sink'.

I would call the writer's attention to the pottery from a similar gravel site near Farnham, Surrey. This is the so-called Green Lane site on the Shortheath Ridge (*Survey of the Prehistory of Farnham District*—Surrey Arch. Soc., 1939—pp. 183-202) an occupation-site which produced a large amount of pottery associated with saddle querns and cylindrical loom-weights.

The Yarnton vessels represented by nos. 36-47 and 49-51 can all be matched among the material from the Farnham site, with its crude bucket urns and vessels with rudimentary rims (*cf.* Farnham, figs. 77-80; especially nos. 14, 19 and 24, with Yarnton no. 41; F. 17 with Y. 39, and F. 6 with Y. 51; also the various bucket urns, such as F. 1, 4, 13 and 25, with Y. 36, 37, 38 and 44).

Briefly, it seems clear that the Yarnton material belongs to two separate periods of occupation. The one Late (or Ultimate) Bronze Age, and the other (represented by fig. 12, nos. 48, and 52-61) an Early Iron Age culture fitting in to the whole scheme for the Oxford region, as so ably set out by Mr. Bradford, and which (except for a few sites, such as that at Wisley) differs considerably from that of Surrey sites of this period.

A. W. G. LOWTHER.

I accepted the opportunity of discussing Mr. Lowther's observations on the Iron Age pottery from Yarnton, not merely because his ascription of 'a very early Ultimate Bronze Age character' to it seemed to be distinctly unconvincing, but mainly in order to draw attention to some implications (of wider interest for the study of the Iron Age) that are involved.

Firstly, to deal with the Yarnton sherds (*Oxoniensia*, VII, p. 55, nos. 36-47, 49-51) that are the cause of debate. Most archaeologists would agree that the bandying about of arguments hingeing on pottery excavated under 'salvage conditions' is an unsatisfactory business, and can become no more than an exercise of battledore and shuttlecock. Only *local* parallels that are precise, and not superficially alike, can usually be used with safety.

Reference to my article in question (pages 49 and 53) will show the opinion there stated that our knowledge of the Iron Age peoples, their settlements, and the sub-divisions (cultural and chronological) of their pottery, is still painfully incomplete in the upper Thames Valley. When all is said and done, evidence obtained by scientific excavation is the only reliable arbiter. The use of material vicariously collected calls for particular care. The publication of the pottery from Allen's Pit and the other sites, all obtained under salvage conditions, was a passing expedient, because I felt that a 'picture gallery' of local Iron Age forms and decorations, even if not closely dated, would serve usefully as an identification parade from which familiar faces might be picked out in the future. In fact they were judiciously and successfully used, in exactly the manner intended, by Mr. Sheppard Frere (*Antiq. Journ.*, xxvii, 37 ff.), when tracing the elements of Iron Age 'Wessex A' cultures existent in Surrey, some of which may have been received via the Upper Thames.

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A few moments reference to the published pottery from Iron Age sites in the Oxford region will quickly provide forms that are indistinguishable from these Yarnton sherds which are questioned by Mr. Lowther; such parallels without doubt fall within the period's later phases and probably belong to the last two, or three, generations before the Roman conquest. Indeed, the forms of the vessels were such a commonplace of the local pot-styles of the area at that juncture, that detailed comment with references to parallels was judged superfluous and editorially undesirable. But this deliberate omission can be made good without difficulty; thus, for example:

Yarnton no. 41:	<i>cp.</i>	Mount Farm, <i>Oxoniensia</i> , II,	fig. 8, A VII 2.
Yarnton no. 50:	<i>cp.</i>	" "	fig. 10, A VII 28.
Yarnton no. 44:	<i>cp.</i>	Frilford, <i>Oxoniensia</i> IV,	fig. 6, no. 42.
Yarnton no. 46:	<i>cp.</i>	" "	fig. 6, no. 32.
Yarnton no. 47:	<i>cp.</i>	" "	fig. 6, no. 38.
Yarnton no. 51:	<i>cp.</i>	" "	fig. 7, no. 69-70.

The examples might be multiplied. The resemblances are exact and not general.

My description of the undistinguished style and lack of character in the disputed sherds would seem in fact to be justified, when the claim is made that they can equally well be attributed to a Late Bronze Age context 500 years or more earlier!

In dealing with prehistoric cultures one is normally concerned with survivals rather than the deliberately archaistic re-creation of old methods, although innate conservatism may produce a very similar result; as can be seen for instance in the peculiar finger-printing added to Roman pottery of 'Patch Grove' type, in Kent (Ward Perkins, *Arch. Cant.*, LI (1939), 178, fig. 17), which appears to have persisted oddly '*à la recherche du temps perdu*' throughout the second half of the 1st century A.D.

Mr. Lowther has invoked comparison with the Green Lane site on the Shortheath Ridge (Surrey) to clinch his point. This choice does not seem to me to be a very happy one. The site was very far from being a 'closed' deposit for dating purposes, and was examined under salvage conditions during 'intermittent visits' (*Survey of the Prehistory of Farnham District*, 1939). Indeed, so far from the site being unequivocally and purely of an L.B.A.—transitional to Iron Age A character, Mr. Lowther himself pointed to the pottery as showing that 'it was still occupied in La Tène II' (*op. cit.*, p. 188), and even suggested that the life of the settlement continued 'possibly to about 200 B.C. or later' (*op. cit.*, p. 190). He is, of course, correct in discerning a strong element of L.B.A. forms among the material; but, as a *riposte*, it would be just as possible to make out as a reasonable case that some of his coarse pottery, assigned to a very early phase of the Iron Age A culture, may in fact equally well be an archaic survival of quite a late date. Such a manifestation has been frequently recognized (as we shall see) elsewhere in Surrey and Kent. There does not appear to have been anything in the conditions of recovery that would preclude this; but, naturally, without handling the sherds it would be impossible to say more. Not only did the occupation at the Shortheath Ridge site admittedly extend over several centuries, well down into the Iron Age, but it is also 50 miles away from Yarnton, and the pronounced regionalism of prehistoric communities would have the effect of increasing the measure of this separation and of decreasing the effectiveness of parallels drawn between them.

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In the case of no. 36 (from the site near Yarnton church) I would be prepared to make a solitary concession. This vessel could be fitted in among the flower-pot shaped forms found in the L.B.A. urnfield at Standlake, Oxon. (Stone, *Archaeologia*, xxxvii, pl. viii, facing p. 364; Riley, *supra*, p. 42, pl. iii); but, equally, there is a good Iron Age parallel for its simple profile at Radley, and, after weighing the alternatives, I finally quoted the latter on the strength of the hard gritty fabric.

It was pointed out in the paragraphs on Yarnton that 'the great majority of the forms illustrated' came from the Sandy Lane gravel-pit site. They were obtained during occasional excavations between 1935-38, in the course of which about ten storage pits, at least three 'huts', and several small ditches were examined. From them, sherds questioned by Mr. Lowther were recovered at the same time as the Iron Age AB and Belgicized ones that he accepts. The operations were not fully recorded, but I have seen photographs of two of the storage-pits in section (during excavation), and the pottery was collected with regard for stratification. There seems little reason to doubt that the material hangs together as a unity, giving the occupation a cultural character or flavour that can only be described as Iron Age ABC; that is to say, many forms and fabrics looked back to the old and well-established A traditions, combined with some incorporation of derivative B pot-styles (e.g. 49-52) and a stronger infusion of C fashions (nos. 53 ff.), smooth wheel-turned wares in black and buff, of which some individual sherds may be of post-conquest date.

But it is time to turn to a more general consideration. Every year's work increases the importance given to local variation<sup>1</sup> in our treatment of prehistoric cultures. The lines of the picture lose in simplicity but become more natural. Primitive communities appear more wayward and swayed by all sorts of motives, and less prone to manufacturing their chattels according to typological rules. The behaviour of prehistoric man does not fit neatly into pigeon-holes. Enclaves had an inconvenient habit of producing pottery that was, so to speak, out of date and 'behind the times'. This phenomenon deserves to be studied in many prehistoric periods, but is present in an interesting form at the end of the Iron Age, when, in spite of the superimposition of the B and C cultures, the submerged sub-stratum of A pot-types persisted with a dogged peasant conservatism. We have already mentioned, as examples, Frilford,<sup>2</sup> Mount Farm and Cassington, in Oxfordshire. In East Sussex,<sup>3</sup> nine sites have been noted that, at the end of the Iron Age, were producing pots with archaic girth bands having finger-printed and slashed ornament ('A' stigmata), which hark back to a remote ancestry, even perhaps Late Bronze Age. In Dorset, Dr. Wheeler (*Maiden Castle Report*) drew attention to several archaic A survivals

<sup>1</sup> Compare Ward Perkins's remarks in *Archaeologia Cantiana*, LI (1939), 164: 'The most striking feature of the later Iron Age in western Kent is the diversity of its apparently contemporary cultural groups.' He distinguished seven different elements in the pottery series.

<sup>2</sup> I revised and lowered my dating to 200-150 B.C. (see *Oxoniensia*, vii, 39, footnote 1) for the earliest occupation at Frilford to make allowance for the persistent survival there of haematite-coated bowls, situliform pots, etc., of Iron Age A, some of which appeared alongside AB forms. But it may have to be lowered by another half-century.

<sup>3</sup> See C. F. C. Hawkes in *Sussex Arch. Collections*, LXXX (1939), 259 and footnote 2. A remarkable comparison can be made between fig. 1, no. 1 (p. 270) of the Late Bronze Age, and its counterpart in the Late Iron Age, fig. 6, no. 7 (p. 289). Both come from Castle Hill, Newhaven.

The latest views on these questions of archaic survivals of Iron Age A in SE. England will be found set out by Mr. Sheppard Frere in *Arch. Journ.*, 1944, esp. p. 61 (distribution map) and p. 63. The upper Thames Valley and Wessex stand badly in need of similar analysis.

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at the end of the 1st century B.C. (*op. cit.*, vessels nos. 134B and 143-7), but especially remarked the singularity of no. 238 (p. 240 and fig. 75), a Belgicized form with haematite coating in the traditions of the A culture. This sherd, dated c. A.D. 25-45, 'is a notable illustration of the interlocking of different cultures'. Mr. Charles Green<sup>4</sup> has observed that 'evidence is fast accumulating to show that "A" culture persisted in Gloucestershire to the 1st century A.D.' In Cambridgeshire, we find survivals of raised band with slash decoration to a late date in the Iron Age, and flat-topped rims with slashes or finger-printing which continue alongside 1st century A.D. Romano-British wares.

In Surrey, Mr. Sheppard Frere, describing the sherds from an Iron Age storage-pit near Epsom, wrote recently (*Antiq. Journ.*, xxii, 126): 'It would indeed be possible to give them a date fairly early in the A culture on the strength of similarities to vessels from other sites'; but for the hollow moulded base and late Iron Age haematite which place them all in the first century B.C. If these two sherds had not been collected, our dating might have been several centuries too early. Mr. Frere discerned a similar situation at West Clandon (*Arch. Journ.*, 1944, p. 53, 11-12) where he found plain vessels of A-derivation that had persisted to at least the mid-1st century B.C., and says: 'It is becoming increasingly clear that Surrey and West Kent were areas which continued, largely unaffected by neighbouring developments in an unbroken declension of Hallstatt culture.' In Kent at Oldbury hill-fort,<sup>5</sup> Ward Perkins instances numerous survivals of A pot-types, dated to the first half of the 1st century A.D. (fig. 13, 15-16, and fig. 14, 1 and 3), or associated with the rebuilding of the rampart in A.D. 43. At Crayford<sup>6</sup> he pointed to the presence of a large proportion of degenerate Iron Age A forms in the coarse ware (illustrated on pp. 158-9) and wrote: 'There is little reason to question that the mass of the coarse pottery was itself roughly homogeneous and was contemporary with the other wares' (i.e. of Belgicized and South-Eastern B type, plus Gallo-Roman imports). The whole group, including the A pottery, fell within the last 75 years before the conquest. In Norfolk and Suffolk, the ample evidence for such survivals of pottery of A styles to the latest phase of the Iron Age was brought out clearly by Rainbird Clarke, in *Arch. Journ.*, xcvi (1939), 58, 61, 83, etc.

A more complete list could easily be compiled, but would only labour the point. The late survival of Iron Age A culture (as evidenced by the pottery) up to the Roman conquest, even in the hurly-burly of the last century before A.D. 43 in Southern England was recognized ever since Professor Hawkes virtually 'created' the British Iron Age, as an intelligible sequence of cultures, 20 years ago. Instances of slashed and finger-printed ornament on applied bands, haematite-coating, and other intrinsically A stigmata are piling up because they are, in a late context, comparatively obvious; but one wonders if there is not also a numerically important element of plain 'ugly ducklings' that often passes unnoticed—those aesthetically unattractive vessels of debased situliform pedigree that give pride of place in publication to the more expressive vessels of the B and C cultures, so useful for dating purposes. Every-one familiar with museum practice will know how difficult it is to prevent the exotic from monopolizing all the space, with the result that the less distinctive elements of a culture, which may even form its core, can remain almost dumb. Scientific truth

<sup>4</sup> *Antiq. Journ.*, xxii (1942), 217.

<sup>5</sup> *Arch. Cant.*, LI (1939), esp. pp. 156-176.

<sup>6</sup> *Proc. Prehist. Soc.*, 1938, pp. 151-168.

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must often be dull stuff in its details. But the survival to the last of an undercurrent of A-type pottery traditions in peasant memory, though lacking any merit as a style of art, remains a fact that should perhaps be given greater weight in the ethnology of the Iron Age in England.

J. S. P. BRADFORD.

After studying Mr. Bradford's rejoinder to my note on the apparent similarity between some of the Yarnton sherds figured by him, and the main bulk of the pottery from the Green Lane site near Farnham, I have only a few comments which I would like to make.

1. As regards the Green Lane site and the material found, there is no doubt (as I feel sure Mr. Bradford would agree if he were to inspect the pottery) as to its representing material of *one* period of occupation,<sup>7</sup> and the evidence favours an occupation of short duration. Not only was it restricted to a fairly small area, but the post-holes, pits, etc., were of no great density. I was able, personally, to salvage sufficient of the material from *in situ* stratified deposits to be able to affirm that the cylindrical loom-weights and saddle querns (the only objects found apart from the pottery) were in undisturbed contact with the pottery, and that the whole represented a Late Bronze Age culture rather than one of the Early Iron Age.

Though I agree with Mr. Bradford that there is little to be gained by 'bandying' about arguments hingeing on pottery excavated under "salvage conditions", this particular 'bandying' has at least achieved something in producing some particulars, however brief, as to the situation in which the Yarnton sherds were discovered. His reference to 'huts' and 'several small ditches' makes one regret that it was not published in greater detail.

2. Mr. Bradford mentions the finding in Surrey, at several sites, of a red-coated ware which has, hitherto, been claimed as being haematite surfaced, and proving a Wessex connexion for the cultures with which it was associated.

At two recently discovered Iron Age sites (1947; Malden, and a site near Leatherhead) pieces of red-coated ware have been found accompanied by other Iron Age material including several lumps of red ochre, derived apparently from the local clay subsoil which underlies both these sites. Until chemical analysis (if it can so do) has established whether the Surrey vessels are coated with red ochre or haematite, it is clearly inadvisable to build any theories upon the finding in Surrey of pottery so coated. (I should add that at the Malden site, lumps of both red and yellow ochre were found with the Iron Age material, in stratified levels, and that some of the pottery has a yellow coating that, subject to analysis, may have been produced by use of this locally-found yellow ochre.)

Mr. Frere (*Antiq. Journ.*, xxii, 129) has already commented on the apparent difference in appearance between true Wessex haematite ware and the red-coated ware of Surrey, apart from the total difference of form, where sufficient of the vessel has survived for this to be determined (e.g. Wisley; *Proc. Prehist. Soc.*, 1945, 36, fig. 3, no. 46).

3. With the remainder of the arguments raised by Mr. Bradford, I am not

<sup>7</sup> It will be seen (*Prehist. Farnham*, pp. 201-202) that, out of a large quantity of pottery found at the Green Lane site, only two or three pieces were of a paste similar to that of some Iron Age A ware, while the number of vessels 'of forms showing Iron Age "A" features' is very small indeed. I have no doubt that the occupation at this site came at the extreme end of the Bronze Age and did not survive into the Iron Age for any appreciable length of time.



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in dispute. I have not questioned, and do not question, the claims regarding the persistence of A culture, and the fact that early forms of pottery, or types of ornament, persist and are found to recur, as yet quite inexplicably, in succeeding phases of culture. What I have questioned is, in the case of these specific Yarnton sherds, whether they are, in fact, all of one period, or represent a sequence of occupation extending from a much earlier period than, apparently, Mr. Bradford is prepared to admit. As I have not inspected these sherds, nor have I any knowledge of the stratification at this site, Mr. Bradford is obviously in the better position to decide the point, and I accept his conclusion.

A. W. G. LOWTHER.

### A ROMAN ALTAR FROM BABLOCK HYTHE, OXON. (FIG. 25.)

An uninscribed Roman altar of Forest Marble, 27 in. high, 10½ in. wide in the centre, and only 4½ in. deep, was dredged up at Bablock Hythe by the Thames Conservancy in 1932 and taken to their depot at Osney, Oxford. It was seen there by Miss E. R. Price in 1944. In the same year, having been identified as Roman, it was deposited on loan in the Ashmolean Museum by the Thames Conservancy (*Ashmolean Museum Report*, 1944, p. 5; *Journ. Roman Studies*, xxxv (1945), 84, pl. ii).

The front, though much damaged, shows a half-nude figure wearing a chiton and a veil or head-dress, holding in the right hand a patera which may have rested on an altar, and in the left apparently a cornucopiae, and probably represents a goddess. Above the figure are indications of a worked moulding and a *focus* between bolsters. The shallowness of the altar and absence of finish at the back suggests that it had been placed against a wall.

It could never have been a work of art, and no doubt stood in some rural shrine, but where that was one cannot even guess. Nothing of the period has been found in the immediate neighbourhood and the nearest hamlet or settlement at Linch Hill, Stanton Harcourt, lies 1½ miles to the west. The temple on the River Ock near Frilford, some 5 miles to the south, is perhaps too far away. If there had been an ancient ford at Bablock Hythe and a track connecting it with the suggested track or road crossing the Thames valley from SW. to NE. towards Oxford (by Frilford and over Boars Hill to the ford at North Hinksey) there might have been a shrine at Bablock Hythe itself; but the figure on the altar bears no indication of being a water deity and it has yet to be established that the ford existed in antiquity.

M. V. TAYLOR.

### THE ANCIENT CLOCK FROM COMBE CHURCH, OXON. : A FURTHER NOTE

In *Oxoniensia*, III, 175, a note on the Combe church clock taken from a letter to *The Times*, 24 June, 1938, by the late Dr. R. T. Gunther, compared that clock with the clock from Dover Castle in the Science Museum, London, and claimed that the two clocks must have been the work of one hand though 'we do not know whether these clocks were made in Oxfordshire or in Kent'.

In this connexion attention should be drawn to an article in the *Connoisseur*, cxviii (December, 1946), 118 f. by A. C. Kay, recording a well-attested tradition in Dover that the Dover clock is not a local antiquity, but was brought to England by an officer of a Highland regiment from France after the Waterloo campaign.

D. B. HARDEN.



## NOTES AND NEWS

### THE CENTENARY OF THE BUCKINGHAMSHIRE ARCHITECTURAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

It is a great pleasure to be able to record our congratulations to our sister Society, only eight years our junior, on reaching its centenary. Its foundation meeting was held in Aylesbury in November, 1847, and its centenary celebrations



FIG. 25.

BABLOCK HYTHE, NEAR OXFORD:  
UNINSCRIBED STONE ALTAR FOUND  
IN THE R. THAMES AND NOW IN THE  
ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM. Sc.  $\frac{1}{4}$ .

have just taken place in the same town. The original membership was fifty-five ; it now numbers 750, and the short account of the Society's history from the pen of G. Eland in the centenary volume of its publication *Records of Buckinghamshire* makes

## NOTES AND NEWS

it clear that despite some lean times in earlier years the Society has in general prospered and is to-day one of the foremost county archaeological societies in the land. Its history is indeed one to be proud of.

The *Records*, of which fourteen volumes have been published, though not always an annual publication, has had an unbroken run since 1854. Its centenary volume, unlike its predecessors, has nothing to tell us of Buckinghamshire archaeology—a regrettable omission in view of the importance of archaeology in the county—but it contains three important articles on architectural monuments. There are also (and this is a new departure) two articles on local natural history, a subject which the Society has always regarded as within its sphere, but which (as Mr. Eland remarks) 'has received very little attention in the *Records*'. The illustrations of buildings in Marlow and of renaissance tombs in Buckinghamshire churches are a delight, and special mention must be made of Mr. Lamborn's article on a lost table-tomb from Thornton church. The search for the tomb in a disused and overgrown grotto in the manor house grounds must have been a quest after Mr. Lamborn's own heart, and he is to be congratulated on the happy result of his detective work.

But the Society does not confine itself to local research and publication. It is also responsible for the very fine Museum and Muniment Room at no. 9 Church Street, Aylesbury, founded in 1908. Under the able guidance of its first curator, the late Edwin Hollis, who was in control for thirty-three years from 1908 to 1941, the Museum has consistently prospered. The Muniment Room, laid out on the most up-to-date lines, was added in 1934, and we look for further great advances in the future under the able guidance of the Society's present curator and its present archivist. We wish the Society and its officers many happy returns.

D. B. HARDEN.

### OXFORD REPLANNED

A volume of outstanding importance for all those interested in Oxford of the past and of the future has appeared in February, 1948, as this volume of *Oxoniensia* goes to press, namely Mr. Thomas Sharp's report on the planning and development of the city, entitled *Oxford Replanned*. The volume is published for the Oxford City Council by the Architectural Press, London, price fifteen shillings.

Fully illustrated and of absorbing interest not only for the suggestions it contains, but for the record of Oxford, past and present, which it provides, the book deserves to be studied with the greatest care and attention and with the minimum of preconceived ideas and inhibitions. It is hoped to give a full-scale review of Mr. Sharp's work and of his plan for Oxford in our next volume, but as that will not appear for several months this short preliminary notice is printed to draw attention to the book and urge all our readers not to lose the chance of obtaining a copy before the edition goes out of print.

D. B. HARDEN.

### OXONIENSIA: VOLUMES II-V

A limited number of surplus copies of volumes II, III, IV and V of *Oxoniensia* is available. The Committee of the Society has therefore decided to offer these at a special price of 7s. 6d. each, or £1 for the set of four. Applications should be addressed to the Secretary to the Editorial Committee at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

PLATE XVIII



A



B

RING-DITCH AT LONG HANBOROUGH, OXON.  
between the railway-line and the river Evenlode (p. 175)

A. Air-view looking SW.

*Ph. the late Major G. W. G. Allen.*

B. Ground-view looking N.

*Ph. D. B. Harden.*