

Notes and News

ARCHAEOLOGICAL NOTES, 1951

A. PREHISTORIC, ROMAN AND SAXON

Bampton, Oxon. Mr. F. W. Shallcross reported the discovery of sherds of Romano-British coarse pottery and one fragment of Samian ware (Drag. Form 18/31) during building operations in the village. The site has since been concreted in.

Cassington, Oxon. (Smith's Pit II. Nat. Grid 42/450099.)

A fragment of tusk and a tooth of mammoth were dredged from the clay underlying the gravel, and presented to the Department of Geology together with similar past finds from this pit.

An Anglo-Saxon iron spearhead, with traces of the wooden shaft in the socket was found in top-soil. It is in the Ashmolean Museum (1951.126).

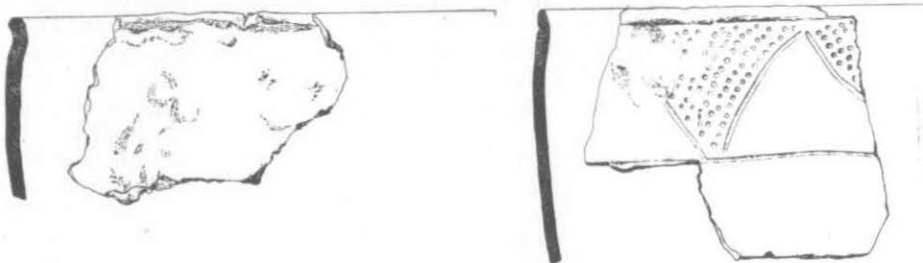


FIG. 17

COMPTON BEAUCHAMP, BERKS.

Sherds of Iron Age A 2 pottery from Knighton Hill (p. 80)

Scale : $\frac{1}{4}$

In June and July, Mr. H. J. Case and Mr. J. H. Hedgely excavated the area of the gap in the big enclosure-ditch (PL. IX, A, and see *Oxoniensia*, VII, 106-7) leading to the ford over the Evenlode just downstream from the present mill. There was no made-up road or any gate structure. Finds in the lowest filling of the ditches, besides the contracted burials of a woman and a child, included a few pieces of the latest non-Belgic local Iron Age pottery; stratified above was Belgic pottery. Then came Late Belgic corresponding to some of the finds from Alchester; this layer was post-conquest, and represented a prosperous period with plentiful food refuse. Above was 2nd-century Roman, and finally 2nd- and 3rd-century Roman pottery. This deep stratigraphy is unique for the district.

Two pits with Late Neolithic grooved ware, flints, and animal bones were found in the neighbourhood. All the finds are in the Ashmolean Museum.

Compton Beauchamp, Berks. (Knighton Hill.)

Sherds of Iron Age A 2 pottery, chalk loom weights, and fragmentary animal

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bones were collected by Mr. A. J. Baxter from the talus of ditches and pits in the face of a chalk pit (Nat. Grid 41/284859) lying on the north slope of the downs in sight of Uffington Castle. Several sherds were haematite slipped. The restorable forms were tub-shaped, and there were no situlates. One vessel had chevron and dot ornament (FIG. 17). The finds are in the Ashmolean Museum (1951.460). Other finds from this pit are reported in *Ant. J.*, VII, 517, and *Man*, XXVIII, 97-101.

Dorchester, Oxon. (Allen's Pit.) Peat was observed to be stratified between the terrace gravel and the Oxford clay. According to the gravel-pit workers, it lined a channel in the Oxford clay with its edge about 100 yards from the present bank of the Thames and parallel to it, deepening towards the Abingdon-Dorchester road. Specimens from the feather edge (at about Nat. Grid 41/570949) are preserved in the Ashmolean Museum. Other specimens were taken by Mr. A. J. Clarke on the occasion of finding hand-axes in the terrace-gravel. (One find is reported in *Oxoniensia*, XIV, 75.) In the same area (Nat. Grid 41/570949) many sherds of Belgic pottery were found in the top-soil heaps and the filling of pits destroyed by gravel-digging. They are in the Ashmolean Museum (1951.418).

Dorchester, Oxon. (Amey's Pit.) Further excavations were carried out during 1951, under the direction of Mr. R. J. C. Atkinson and Mr. N. Thomas. A large area was stripped at the northern entrance of Site XIII, the 'Big Rings' henge monument (Nat. Grid 42/571954), in the hope of finding internal post-holes or other structures. The structure of the two ditches and intervening bank was clearly revealed, but no internal works were found. Finds consisted of sherds of Beaker pottery, some in stratified position in the ditches. A report will be published.

Great Tew, Oxon. Mr. N. Thomas carried out a week's excavation on the site of the Roman villa at Beaconsfield Farm (Nat. Grid 42/405275; *V.C.H. Oxon.*, I, 310). Four parallel walls representing at least two periods ran north and south. There was a hypocaust which had been badly damaged by debris from the previous excavations in the early 19th century, and a mosaic floor on which lay large quantities of painted wall-plaster. The pottery was mainly 3rd to 4th century A.D., but datable material from beneath the walls suggested that occupation may have started in the late 2nd century. It is hoped to continue work in 1952.

Hatford, Berks. Sherds of early Iron Age pottery were picked up in a sand-pit around Nat. Grid 42/335953, by Mr. J. S. P. Bradford.

Little Milton, Oxon. Mr. S. Applebaum reported the discovery of sherds of Romano-British pottery in a field at Ditch End Barn (Nat. Grid 42/625002), south-east of the village, and just north of the site of a Roman villa discovered from the air by Dr. J. K. St. Joseph in 1949.

Little Rollright, Oxon. A 'B' beaker (see PL. IX, B) was found in a limestone quarry at Nat. Grid 42/284307, probably in 1943, and has been bought by the Ashmolean Museum (1951.379). The finder described it as resting a few feet below top-soil in a pipe in the weathered rock. No bones or other relics were with it. The find is most interesting, being the first beaker from this region, and within half a mile and in sight of the Rollright stone circle.

Longworth, Berks. Mr. Gordon Drew reported further discoveries in his Nurseries around Nat. Grid 41/388995, of flints, sherds of medieval pottery and a glass bottle-stamp of the Crown Tavern, Oxford. The stamp has a crown and the letters WAM, i.e. William and Anne Morrell, licensees 1660-1679 (*Oxoniensia*, VI, 47-8). The stamp is now in the Ashmolean Museum (1951.414).

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Mr. C. J. Farmer has been collecting flints for many years around Nat. Grid 42/390000, with great skill. Collections presented to the Ashmolean Museum

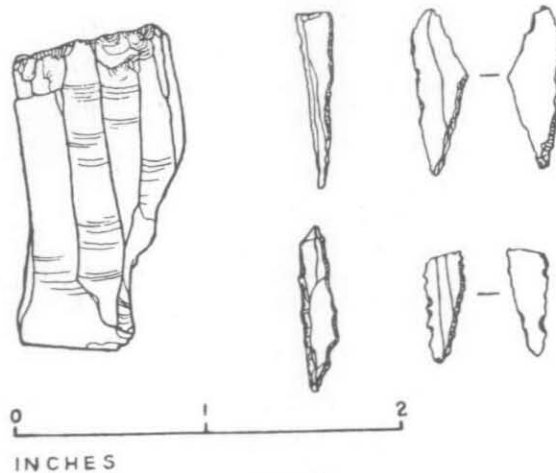


FIG. 18
LONGWORTH, BERKS.
Microlithic implements and core (p. 80)
Scale : $\frac{1}{2}$

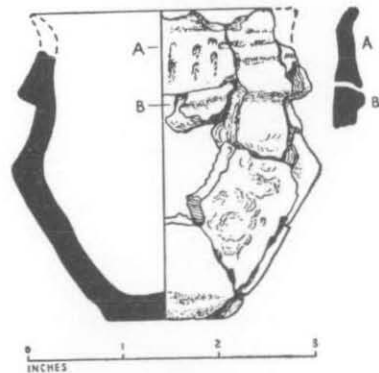


FIG. 19
NORTH STOKE, OXON.
Miniature cinerary urn (p. 82)
Scale $\frac{1}{2}$

(1942.283, 1945.133, 1951.378) include arrow-heads (barbed and tanged, leaf-shaped and chisel-shaped) many scrapers and microliths and microlithic cores (FIG. 18).

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North Stoke, Oxon. Mr. H. J. Case continued work at the south end of the Cursus (*Oxoniensia*, xv, 107, no. 9). Floods prevented examination of the deepest layers of the ditches; but the U ditch was seen by its upper filling to have been re-cut in antiquity. Within its area and on the central axis of the Cursus ditches, a pit had been dug and contained fragments of a skull of a young person and a restorable miniature cinerary urn with well marked profile (FIG. 19). All finds are in the Ashmolean Museum, where the urn is numbered 1951.461.

Stanton Harcourt, Oxon. (Partridge's Pit.) Mr. N. Thomas and Mrs. B. de Seyssel carried out a rescue excavation in September on sites in Vicarage Field (Nat. Grid 42/402057) where removal of top-soil for gravel-digging had revealed a complicated system of pits and ditches, already known from air-photography (see above, pp. 5ff.). Sections were cut across as many of these as possible. One pit contained half of a large vessel with applied and grooved decoration. Most of the remaining sites yielded large quantities of Romano-British pottery of the 1st and 2nd centuries A.D. (*Archaeol. News Letter*, vol. 4, no. 6 (Feb. 1952), p. 92). Further work in this field continued in 1952.

(Dix's Pit.) Gravel-diggers reported the discovery of several skeletons. These, together with all possible finds, except 3 sherds of coarse, brown gritty ware (Anglo-Saxon), had been destroyed, but the site was perhaps that of a Saxon cemetery.

Wallingford, Berks. Mr. A. E. P. Collins made a trial excavation in August on an area of the right bank of the Thames (Nat. Grid 41/600880) where prehistoric bronzes had been found associated with Iron Age sherds. Much Iron Age pottery as well as many animal-bones and some worked flints and scraps of bronze were found. This site was first reported in *B.A.J.*, LI, 65-6. A report will be published.

Oxford (Shotover). Romano-British sherds and tiles were dug up in the garden of No. 4 Caravan, Shotover. There was no trace of any buildings. The sherds are in the Ashmolean Museum.

B. MEDIEVAL AND LATER

Oxford (Cornmarket Street). During structural alterations to the 15th century building, no. 28 Cornmarket, an iron chisel with hexagonal wooden handle was found. It is certainly no later than the 18th century and may be earlier. It is now in the Ashmolean Museum (1951.133).

Oxford (New Marston). A glass wine-bottle stamp of the King's Head Tavern, High Street, Oxford, was found in a garden. It bore a bust of a king to right and I M F, i.e. John and Margaret Freeman, licensees from 1704 to 1724.

Oxford (New Road). Excavations were continued in March on the site of Nuffield College (Nat. Grid 42/509064) under the direction of Mr. K. Marshall. Work was concentrated on an endeavour to cut a second section across the medieval ditch discovered in 1950, running parallel to New Road (*Oxoniensia*, xv, 109). Owing to bad weather, the height of the water-table prevented deep digging, and the results were inconclusive. A report will be published.

Oxford (Osney Town). The footings of a wall running north-east and south-west and more than 3 feet broad were seen in a trial boring in the ground between Messrs. Munsey's Mill and the Cemetery (Nat. Grid 42/505059). A piece of glass and a sherd of Tudor yellow glazed ware lay directly on the footings. They are in the

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Ashmolean Museum (1951.75). Sections in the three bore holes showed that the ground had been dug and made-up to a depth of 7 feet in places. The subsoil appeared to be the Flood Plain terrace. The outbuildings of Osney Abbey probably covered all this area. (See, *In West Oxford*, ed. Thomas W. Squires (1928), 85-111 : the footings lay about 3 yards south-east of the letter M in pl. lxiv.)

Oxford (Pusey Lane). John Crapper, Ltd., reported that a well was found when the second petrol pump was installed in their garage in Pusey Lane (Nat. Grid 42/511067).

Oxford (St. Aldate's). A fragment of a bellarmine with date 1607, and other 17th-century pieces came from made-up ground behind the General Post Office (Nat. Grid 42/514060) (PL. X, A). Ashmolean Museum 1951.459.

Oxford (St. Giles's). Pulling down of an elm tree outside the *Lamb and Flag* (Nat. Grid 42/513068) showed that its roots covered what had once been the well of a public pump. It was circular, masonry-built with a corbelled roof, and about 9 feet in diameter ; 3 rectangular recesses about 1 foot from the top were presumably for the pump supports. Its depth to the floor of yellow clay was about 10 feet. Water lay about 1 foot underneath the clay, showing that the water table had fallen considerably since the well was sunk.

Oxford (Hall's Brewery, St. Thomas's). Mr. S. E. Rigold reports that between September, 1947, and June, 1948, remains of a medieval house were found at a depth of about 3 feet during digging of foundations for a warehouse beside the garage of Hall's Brewery, on the north side of High Street, St. Thomas's. From the pottery finds, the house would appear to have been in use during most of the 13th century, at the end of which it was burnt down. It lay obliquely to the road and was built on a 'cushion' of made-up clay and gravel, about 14 inches deep and extending 2 or 3 feet either side of the floor, which was disturbed by a 17th-century rubbish pit on the north-east side. Traces of a low dry-stone wall were clearly seen at the south-east corner, extending beyond the floor for a foot or so. No post-holes were seen at the examined corner, but in view of the length of the house (18 feet at least) and its relative narrowness (c. 9 feet), a reasonable reconstruction is that of a cruck with the main beams resting on the ground. There is a cruck-house standing as near as Thame, another at the Barley Mow, Clifton Hampden, and one was recently destroyed at Grove, Wantage. The roof was of 'stone-slates' (one of which still contained traces of the fixing peg charred in position in its drilled hole) with rather poor and weakly glazed ridge tiles with thumb-impressions like those from Deddington Castle hall (*op. p.* 86). The debris of burned wood contained pieces of oak poles which must have been at least 1½ inches in diameter. In the north-west corner was a hearth, once relaid with clay ; here the reddening of stones was most marked, but the charring of the whole area points to a fierce conflagration.

The material of the cushion contained a few fragments of sandy pale-glazed wares, some heavy, shell-filled unglazed sherds. Some slight traces of soil and planks were scattered under it. A ditch 7 ft. deep apparently running parallel to the road to Osney was probably intended to drain it. This contained several fragments of late 12-century tripod pitchers with pale green glaze and inky-blue lining and of sandy fabric. These seemed contemporary, or a little earlier than those worked into the cushion. It is known that Osney Abbey was developing this area in the later 12th century.

Oxford (Wadham College). Sections of remarkable interest were revealed by

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excavations for new buildings between the College and Holywell (PL. X, C). Foundations of early 17th-century walls and buildings had been set in made-up ground of earth, mortar, rubble, ash and food refuse, which lay partly on the natural gravel (Summertown/Radley terrace) and partly on the top-soil filling of an old gravel-pit. A brick tunnel was seen to run inside and along the foundations of the College boundary wall. The finds of 17th-century pottery are preserved in the College. Three pieces of painted tile from this site are of special interest. Mr. Bernard Rackham kindly reports that they can be dated with fair certainty between 1600 and 1620 and were made in Holland—almost certainly at Rotterdam, where there were potteries specializing in floor- and wall-tiles. Hence it would appear that these were most likely part of the original fittings of the College buildings erected in 1610-13. All three pieces are from the same tile, a chequer pattern of 1 cm. squares of white, bright orange and bright green, outlined in blue, the whole enclosed in a circular border of blue and purple lines. The white squares have four little flecks of blue, one in the middle of each side. The whole tile was originally about 14 cms. square.

Seacourt, Berks. The Oxford University Archaeological Society carried out some excavations during the Michaelmas Term on that part of the medieval village which lies in the upper field west of the Botley-Wytham road. Owing to bad weather, not enough digging could be done to yield results.

HUMPHREY CASE.

JOAN R. KIRK.

A CINERARY URN FROM STANTON HARCOURT, OXON.

On 26 June, 1951, the foreman of Partridge's gravel-pit at Beard Mill (Nat. Grid ref. 42/403057) gave the writer 29 fragments of an urn (Ash. Mus. 1951.409), and 11½ oz. of cremated bone which it had contained. They were found while digging gravel. The site of the discovery lies to the west of the area excavated in 1944 (see above pp. 5 ff. and PL. IV). Mr. D. F. B. Roberts of the Physical Anthropology Laboratory, Department of Human Anatomy, Oxford, reports that the burial was of a large middle-aged person, the sex being indeterminable. The base of the urn had a cereal impression, identified by Mr. John L. Harper, Department of Agriculture, Oxford, as wheat with the same outline as present-day *triticum vulgare*.

The urn is shown with profile restored on FIG. 20. The ware is of collared-urn type, with a coarse and fairly soft paste and rather small grits¹; the core of the paste is blue-grey and only the crust, about 2 mm. thick and with a network of cracks, is fired to an orange-brown colour. The potting was clumsy and uneven.

The shape represents a late stage of the collared urn. The function of the collar, presumably a handling aid, was here performed by the applied arc-shaped strips immediately under the rim. This arc lug has been found only once elsewhere in the upper Thames valley—on a cinerary vessel also representing a late stage of the collared urn.² Elsewhere in southern England^{2a} it occurs once or twice on cinerary urns in Deverel-Rimbury cemeteries, and on a few similar urns from barrows.

¹ 1 to 4.5 mm. range. Identified superficially by Mr. D. F. W. Baden-Powell, Department of Geology, Oxford, as flint or quartz and crushed pottery.

² Iffley, Oxford: *V.C.H. Oxon.*, 1, pl. VII, d (Ash. Mus. 1912.1139).

^{2a} A list is superfluous in view of the full treatment by Professor C. F. C. Hawkes forthcoming in *V.C.H. Wilts.* The term 'arc' or 'handle-arc' is his.

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A feature of some of these is their markedly metallic appearance.³ It seems likely that the clay pot with its arc lugs was a poor man's or funeral version of a lordly metal vessel with ring handles or handle-arcs.

HUMPHREY CASE.

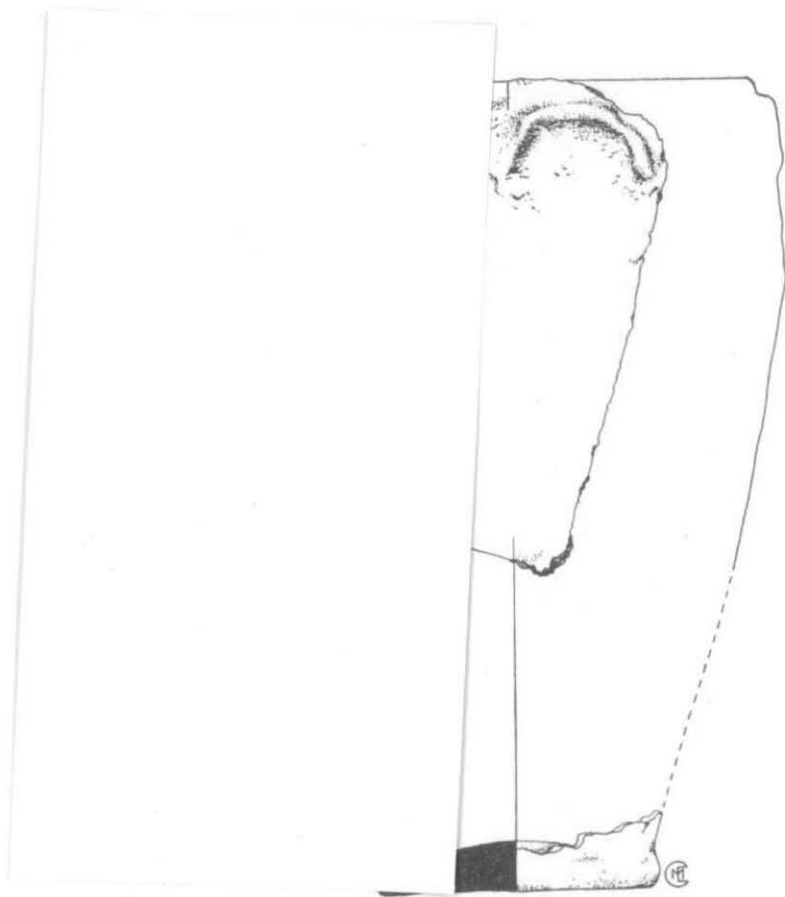


FIG. 20
STANTON HARCOURT, OXON.
Fragmentary cinerary urn from Beard Mill (p. 84)
Scale : $\frac{1}{4}$

³ e.g. Winterslow : Abercromby, *Bronze Age Pottery*, II, 356a (Ash. Mus. N.C. 505). The urn *ibid.*, no. 375 (Roke Down, Dorset) contained 'a cylinder of bronze leaf' (*ibid.*, p. 39).

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF POTTERY RIDGE TILES IN THE OXFORD REGION

The ridge tiles, or 'crests', of very plastic, hand-moulded form from the Hall's Brewery house (p. 83) are exactly similar to those which roofed the hall at Deddington Castle. Both sets of tiles are of a hard shelly fabric, with blackish core and red surface, and a poorly-fired thin wash of yellow-green glaze, and they have a hole between two of the three serrations, presumably for ventilation. Although the hall at Deddington Castle was probably built in the later 12th century, there is some reason to think that it was perhaps re-roofed in the early 13th century. Such a date for these hand-moulded 'crests' is consistent with their use here in Oxford on a house built over a layer containing tripod-pitcher fragments of the early 13th-century, a house which probably continued in use through the 13th century.

Ridge tiles of this form and shelly fabric came also from 41 High Street, Oxford (FIG. 21, no. 4), and a later variant of the hand-moulded type, in harder granular fabric, is illustrated from the New Bodleian tunnel (FIG. 21, no. 5: see *Oxoniensia*, IV (1939), 153 ff.). This probably brings the hand moulded series into the later 13th century. The type shown in FIG. 20, no. 1, is also found in Cirencester, and from the abandoned settlement-site at Hullasey, Glos., and a 13th-century site in Ascot-under-Wychwood, Oxon. The poorly fired wash of yellow-green glaze on these tiles has now been shown to contain a fairly high proportion of tin, thus bringing it into line with similar glazes on a type of early to middle 13th-century pottery in the West Country (*Trans. Bristol and Glos. Arch. Soc.* LXVIII (1949), 30-44; LXXI (1952), in press).

On the later ridge tiles the serrations are cut, not hand moulded. Little is yet known of the dating of ridge tiles, but Sir Cyril Fox and Mr. Radford observed the same change from hand moulding to cutting in South Wales (*Archaeologia*, 83 (1933), 119), and Burrow Mump, Somerset (*Proc. Somerset Archaeol. Soc.*, LXXXV (1939), 125-7), and the dating at Deddington agrees well with Sir Cyril Fox's conclusions on the Somerset series, rather earlier than those at Kidwelly. Certainly the Oxford and Deddington tiles seem stylistically earlier than those from Kidwelly. Ridge tiles with cut serrations were only used sporadically for repair work on the hall and nearby buildings at Deddington, but this shows at least that such ridge tiles were available in this region before the early 14th century (*Oxoniensia*, XI-XII (1946-7), 168) as the evidence there suggests that most of the buildings were going out of use at that date. The change from hand-moulded to cut serrations, therefore, must have taken place in the Oxford region about the end of the 13th century. It is not clear whether the ridge tiles with cut serrations from Hall's Brewery site were used on the excavated house, or are from some other building.

The Oxford series of cut serrated ridge tiles probably begins with the type from the destroyed church at Woodperry, Oxon., where the latest work seems to be of the later 13th century (*Archaeol. J.*, III (1846), 117-128), though the Deddington evidence shows the sharper serrated form (as nos. 7 and 8) to have been already available by about that date. No. 7, from a site in Oxford, indicates the next phase after the Woodperry type, and no. 8, in a hard grey fabric with green glaze, from Church Street, St. Ebbe's, and other examples of the type, probably came in the later 14th and 15th centuries. Plain ridge tiles with no ridge decoration probably remained in use well into the 16th century, as seen on the Manor House at Ascot d'Oilly, Oxfordshire.

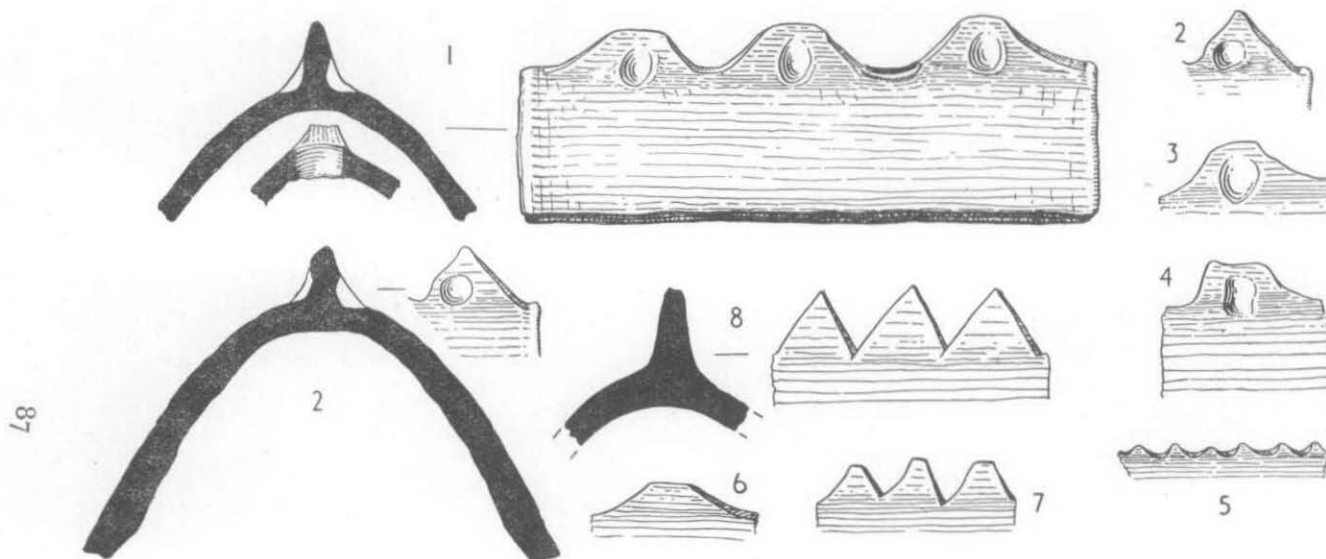


FIG. 21

MEDIEVAL RIDGE TILES FROM THE OXFORD REGION (p. 86)

1. Deddington Castle, type used on the hall (fragments of exactly similar tiles came from Hall's Brewery site, St. Ebbe's, p. 83)
2. (illustrated twice) and 3. Carfax, Oxford (A.M. 1937-863a, b)
4. 41 High Street, Oxford
5. New Bodleian tunnel, Oxford
6. Woodperry, Oxon.
7. Oxford (unknown site)
8. Church Street, St. Ebbe's, Oxford

Scale : $\frac{1}{4}$

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No kiln making ridge tiles has yet come to light in the Oxford region. Documentary evidence shows that they were being made at Penn, Bucks., in the late 13th century (Earldom of Cornwall Accts., *Camden Soc.*, LXVI (1942), 19) and at Nettlebed in the 14th and 15th centuries, whence tiles of some sort certainly reached Oxford and Abingdon. But there must have been other sources of supply at least for north Oxfordshire, perhaps Brill, which was evidently supplying pottery to Deddington and Bicester in the late 13th and early 14th centuries. The early 13th century ridge tiles from Deddington and Oxford look as though they came from same source, exactly as do the tripod-pitchers of the late 12th- early 13th century from these same sites; it is not yet possible to say where these ridge tiles were made, and though they might be among the earliest products of the industry developed at Brill (*Oxoniensia*, x (1945), 96), their fabric and distribution do rather suggest an origin west and not east of Oxford.

E. M. JOPE.

GLASS BOTTLE-STAMP OF THE KING'S HEAD TAVERN, FROM WALES

A stamp of the King's Head Tavern, High Street, Oxford, was found on a farm three miles from Llandovery, Carmarthenshire (PL. x, B). It bears a king's head to right, to the right of the head the letters I M F, and below, the date 1705. The letters I M F stand for John and Margaret Freeman, licensees 1704-24, and this is the earliest dated seal of the Freemans so far discovered (see *Oxoniensia*, vi, 50-51). The stamp is now in the Ashmolean Museum (1951.18).

JOAN R. KIRK.

BUILDING STONES OF BLENHEIM PALACE

Documentary evidence discovered by Mr. David Green in his researches into the archives at Blenheim make it probable that the puzzling stone described by me (*Oxoniensia*, xiii (1948), 50) as 'Bath stone or some stone with all the visible characters of Bath stone' is really an unfamiliar variety of Taynton stone. Mr. Green having informed me that he had found records of larger quantities of Taynton stone going to Blenheim than would have been likely to be used in backing and interior work or dressings, I re-examined parts of the building in May, 1951. I then noticed that the fine-grained oolite, full of watermarks, indistinguishable from Bath stone, is exactly co-extensive with the rusticated masonry of the south-west projecting corner block, not dovetailed at random into the Cornbury stone as might be expected if it were refacing. Closer re-examination of two of the other rusticated corner blocks revealed that they consist at least in part (probably wholly) of the same stone, though it is there much more difficult to recognize owing to the growth of lichens. On first inspection the change of stone in these other corner blocks was missed on account of the fact that a wide band of Cornbury stone runs at eye level all round the building. With the help of a ladder, however, I satisfied myself that above this band the rusticated parts of the building on the corners are substantially if not entirely of the fine-grained watermarked oolite, and that this is an original feature. The stone contains more numerous watermarks than any other Taynton stone known to me,

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but Mr. Green's researches seem to make it necessary to accept that it came from Taynton quarries. In that case, so too did the stone used for Glympton Park.

At Blenheim considerable quantities of large blocks of ordinary Taynton stone can be seen used as dressings.⁴

W. J. ARKELL.

'HILLWORK'

The word *hillwork* is not in the dictionary. The word occurs in Wychwood Forest between 1298 and 1642, and it has been assumed by O. G. S. Crawford to imply an earthwork.⁵ It also occurs on the Chiltern escarpment, but there it does not seem to have this meaning. It has been used at Chinnor and Aston Rowant, but apparently it does not occur in the voluminous records of Shirburn, Stokenchurch and Pyrton. What does it mean? In 1241 Andrew le Blunt, the eponymous hero of Kingston Blount, claimed six one-horse cart-loads of wood as fair estover from Roger de Quenci's wood at Chinnor. Only three cart-loads weekly were conceded for mending buildings at Kingston, for firewood and fencing, to be collected on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.⁶ In 1610 an estate of six yardlands was allowed six loads of wood from the hillworks of the manor of Kingston Blount annually.⁷ In 1631 rights to six cart-loads and five cart-loads of estovers in Kingston Blount were called *Hillworkes*.⁸ In 1579 *hylworke* and *hegginwood* were used synonymously at Aston Rowant,⁹ in 1658 certain common woods at Kingston Blount were called *hyll works*, in which the holder of a certain cottage had common rights;¹⁰ and in 1711 'common of estovers' at Kingston Blount was called *hillwork*.¹⁰ But some *hillwork* was privately owned, for in 1771 John Caillaud, the lord of Aston Rowant, bought a small property in Kingston Blount which had included certain 'parcels of wood wast and hillwork lying above the hill'. These had been described in the same terms in a deed of 1690.¹¹

At Chinnor a strip of woodland was described as in *Le Helwerk* as early as 1388.¹² In 1579 a tenant at Chinnor was allowed 'a lode of wood in ye common of hylwarkes when it is felled',¹³ and in 1664 a settlement mentioned eight loads of wood 'to be taken every third year foreth of the wood called the hill warke of Chinnor'.¹⁴ In the court of the Honour of Ewelme there were orders in 1717 not to 'cut or take away any of our common wood or *Hillwork* belonging to Chinnor . . . cutt or carry away any burne of Hillworke . . . except it be for repairing of ye Highwaies of Chinnor'¹⁵ and in 1718 against 'cutting Hillwork'. A conveyance of 1735 mentioned 'eight

⁴ Since this note was in print, Mr. David Green's great work *Blenheim Palace* (London, Country Life, Ltd., 1951) has been published. It contains much information on the building stones used for the Palace and on their sources.

⁵ 'Grim's Ditch in Wychwood', *Antiquity*, iv, 307.

⁶ H. E. Salter, *Feet of Fines for Oxon.*, p. 116.

⁷ Bodl. Libr. MS. DD. Sale c.1 (1-4) cf. (13-4) and c.2 (37).

⁸ P.R.O., Chanc. inq. p.m. misc. 1534, no. 114.

⁹ County Record Office, Aston Rowant court roll, 1579.

¹⁰ Papers of Mr. John Clerke Brown recently deposited in the Bodleian Library.

¹¹ Papers of Mr. W. Wykeham Musgrave recently deposited in the Bodleian Library.

¹² Deed of Mr. T. Cottrell-Dormer.

¹³ id., M.42.

¹⁴ R. Hoveden to J. Holloway; misc. papers at Shirburn Castle.

¹⁵ MS. DD. Ewelme Honour, 8/2/1.

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loads of wood to be had and taken every third year out of the wood called the *Hillwork* of Chinner.¹⁶

In 1800 'one load of *hill work* in Lady Lots' was included in a lease to a labourer by a yeoman at Kingston Blount and a mortgage of 1805 mentioned as the accompaniment of twelve acres of arable in the open fields 'one load of *hill work* in a certain hill work called Lady Lots'.¹⁶ In 1860 the Charity Commissioners¹⁶ learnt that 'the wood is cut by any person out of work and occasionally by a few others . . . any persons out of work goes up and cuts it to sell', but the situation made it useless to the old and infirm. A proposal was made to sell the wood and this aroused a protest which was signed by eight householders at Aston Rowant, eight at Kingston Stert and fifty-nine at Kingston Blount.¹⁶ The name of *Hillwork* had fallen into disuse, having been corrupted into 'the Hillock'. On 8 December, 1864, the Lord of the Manor of Kingston Blount obtained 'the Poors' Hillock' in exchange for land for allotments more conveniently situated near the village. These allotments are still called 'the hillock gardens' and a hill covered with brushwood on the Crowell boundary is still called 'the hillock'.

Inconveniently distant from the hamlet as the *hillwork* was, it at least lay on the Oxfordshire side of the Chiltern ridge. The original parish of Aston Rowant in which Kingston Blount lay included Stokenchurch and reached as far as the top of the slope above West Wycombe. Such a pattern was opposed to all rational, geographical and economic considerations and the incorporation of Stokenchurch into the county which contains High Wycombe (a town to which it is related in every way) was such a reasonable change that one can only suppose that the inclusion of Stokenchurch in Aston Rowant (like the inclusion of Stonor in Pyrton) was the arbitrary act of an arbitrary Saxon conqueror at some date between the isolation of the Chilterns from the Celtic West in 571 and the appearance of the 19th century Pyrton boundaries in the 8th century.¹⁷ The customary explanation of the long parish boundaries as designed to provide each manor with all varieties of soil is invalidated by the fact that Pyrton and Aston Rowant were in fact divided into a multiplicity of manors. The location of the *hillwork* is of general importance because it shows that the part of the parish beyond the watershed was not in fact used for estovers.

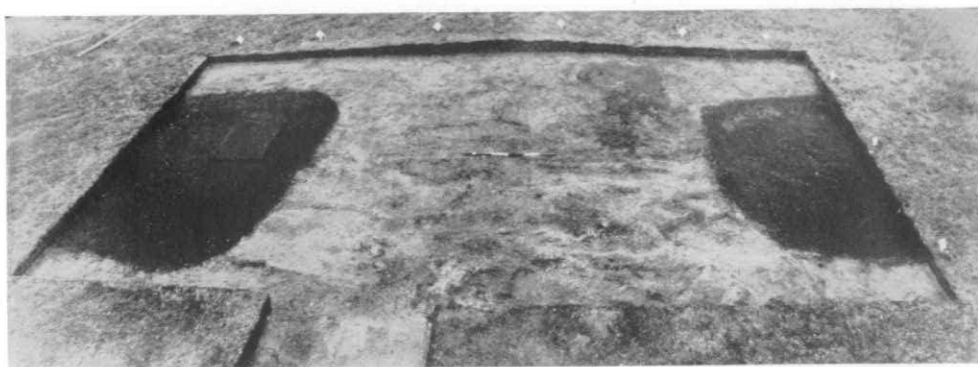
The bad men of Stokenchurch preferred to be caught poaching in the woods of the Dashwoods of West Wycombe rather than in the woods of the Fanes, the Parkers or the Clerke Browns because sentences from their relatives the master chairmakers of Wycombe were lighter than those of the preserving J.P.'s of the Oxfordshire valley whose 'underhill' tenants they despised as mates. They were the heirs not only of the highwaymen of the notoriously lawless Chilterns, but of Free Britons to whom depredation of the Saxon lowlands might have seemed righteous and whose natural allegiance would have been more naturally paid to a power centred on Desborough Castle near Wycombe than to some distant Midland monarch whose men were sodden and unkind.

W. O. HASSALL.

¹⁶ Papers of Mr. John Clerke Brown recently deposited in the Bodleian Library.

¹⁷ *Oxoniensia*, xiv (1949), 89.

PLATE IX



A



B

- A. CASSINGTON, OXON. : entrance-gap in big enclosure-ditch, showing butt-ends of ditch after removal of top-soil (p. 79)
 B. LITTLE ROLLRIGHT, OXON. : 'B' beaker, found c. 1943 in limestone quarry (p. 80)

Scale : $\frac{1}{2}$

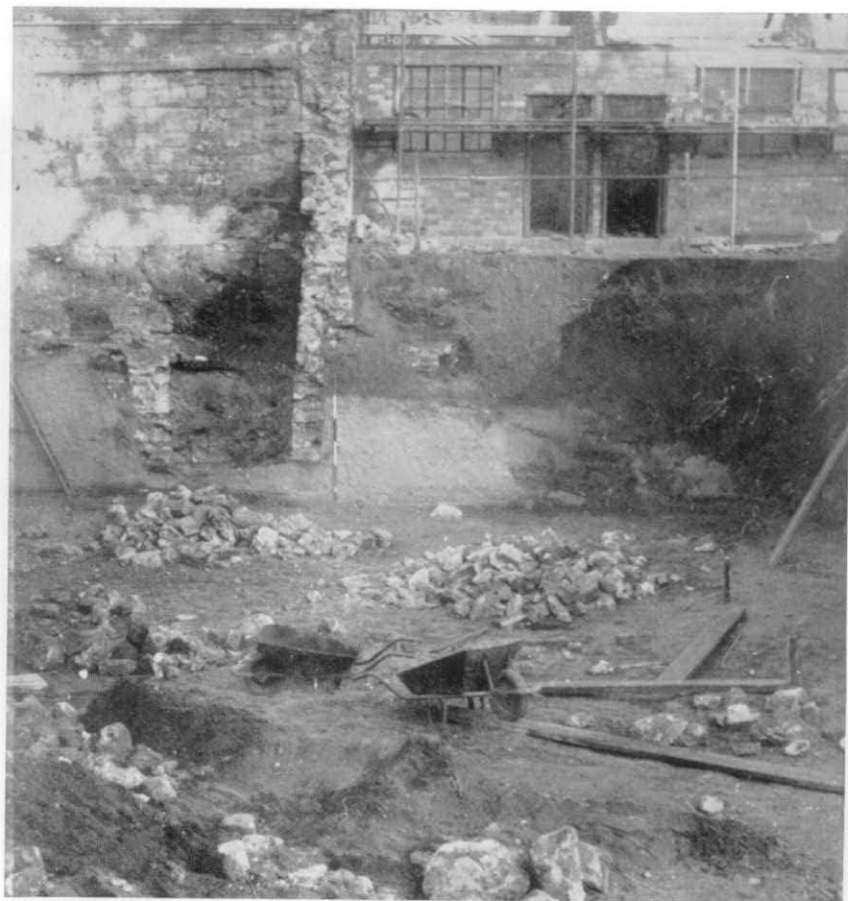
*Phh. : A, H. J. Case
 B, Ashmolean Museum*



A



B



C

- A. ST. ALDATE'S, OXFORD : fragment of bellarmine dated 1607 (p. 83). Sc. $\frac{3}{4}$
 B. NR. LLANDOVERY, CARMARTHENSHIRE : Bottle-stamp of King's Head Tavern, Oxford, dated 1705 (p. 88). Sc. $\frac{1}{4}$
 C. WADHAM COLLEGE, OXFORD : view of excavations on site of new buildings, Holywell from the east (p. 84). Centre, boundary wall ; left, tunnel ; right, filling of old gravel-pit.

Phh. : A, B. Ashmolean Museum
 C, H. J. Case