

## Notes

### A CROUCHED PIT BURIAL AT CASSINGTON MILL, OXON. 1976

Small-scale gravel extraction at the edge of the Iron Age ditched enclosure at Cassington Mill<sup>1</sup> disturbed a crouched, adult female inhumation at the bottom of a pit (SP44811001).<sup>2</sup> The grave was excavated by the writer on behalf of the Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the land-owner, Mr. Partridge, for reporting the find and his general help.

The grave was that of a young woman (FIG. 1) laid supine, arms folded over abdomen and legs hunched up, left over right. An extremely thin layer of charcoal covered the feet and lower legs and traces extended westwards over the bottom of the pit. A tiny fragment of bronze wire came from above the left hip and two small, broken flint blades, one with secondary working, were found beneath the abdomen. The oval burial pit, 1 m. deep from the present ground surface, was filled with clean, loose gravel. Gravel digging had sectioned the pit and disturbed the skull which was retrieved from loose spoil below.

There was nothing within the grave to indicate when it was deposited although it may be compared with other crouched Iron Age burials in the Upper Thames Valley,<sup>3</sup> especially an adult woman and child crouched within the primary fill of the main enclosure ditch at Cassington Mill itself. However, the presence of earlier prehistoric settlement at Cassington Mill must cast some doubt as to the real age of this latest contracted burial.<sup>4</sup> The pit appears to have been excavated purposely for this burial and it was then immediately back filled presumably with its own gravel. The general cleanliness of the gravel fill points to a much thinner layer of topsoil over the gravel subsoil than at present.

#### THE HUMAN REMAINS. By MARY HARMAN

This skeleton was extremely well preserved and almost complete, missing the cervical vertebrae and four thoracic vertebrae, some ribs, the left scapula, clavicle and upper part of the humerus, and the mandible.

The conformation of the skull and pelvic girdle and the size of the bones indicate that the skeleton is that of a female.

Light wear on the teeth and the fact that the epiphyseal fusion line is still visible on the proximal end of the tibia suggest an age of between twenty and twenty-five years, based on the criteria published by Brothwell.<sup>5</sup> The regression formulae of Trotter and Gleser, also published by Brothwell, allow the height to be calculated as 5 ft. 2½ in. (158.1 cm.) from the lengths of humerus, femur and tibia.

Dental health was excellent, all the teeth in the upper jaw being present, with no sign of caries or abscessing in the bone.

R. A. CHAMBERS

### A ROMAN BRONZE MODEL SHOVEL FROM OXFORDSHIRE

The subject of this note is a Roman cast bronze model of a shovel (FIG. 2, PL. XI, B) which was recently brought into the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, for identification.<sup>1</sup> The object has no exact provenance within Oxfordshire and, indeed, there is no direct evidence that it is Romano-British at all. The miniature implement came to light in the

<sup>1</sup> D. Benson *et al.*, *The Upper Thames Valley, an archaeological survey of the river gravels* (1974), Fig. 13 and 84-7.

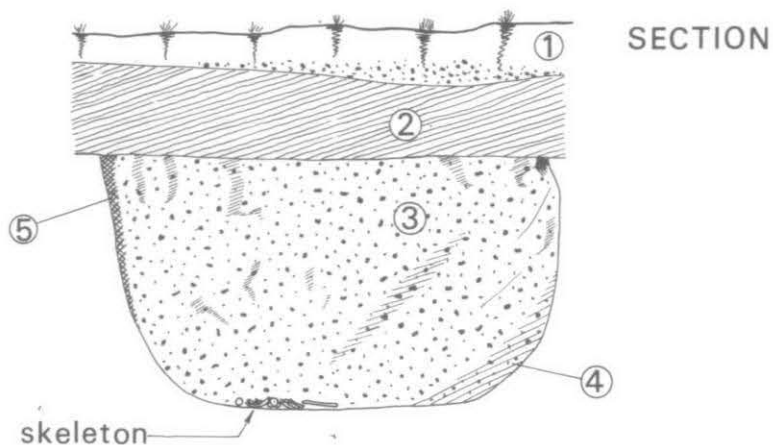
<sup>2</sup> The finds and excavation records will be housed with the Oxfordshire County Museum, P.R.N. 8052.

<sup>3</sup> D. W. Harding, *The Iron Age in the Upper Thames Basin* (1972), 68-9; and M. Parrington, 'Human burial from Queen Street, Abingdon', *Oxoniensia*, XL (1975), 102.

<sup>4</sup> Benson *et al.*, *op. cit.* note 1, 84-7.

<sup>5</sup> D. R. Brothwell, *Digging up Bones* (1965), 60, 69.

<sup>1</sup> The writer is indebted to Mr. David Brown, Assistant Keeper of Antiquities at the Ashmolean Museum, for bringing the model shovel to her attention.



- ① Dumped soil and gravel, later 20th. century
- ② Former topsoil
- ③ Clean gravel fill with root marks
- ④ Gravel in reddish-brown clay
- ⑤ Dark loam

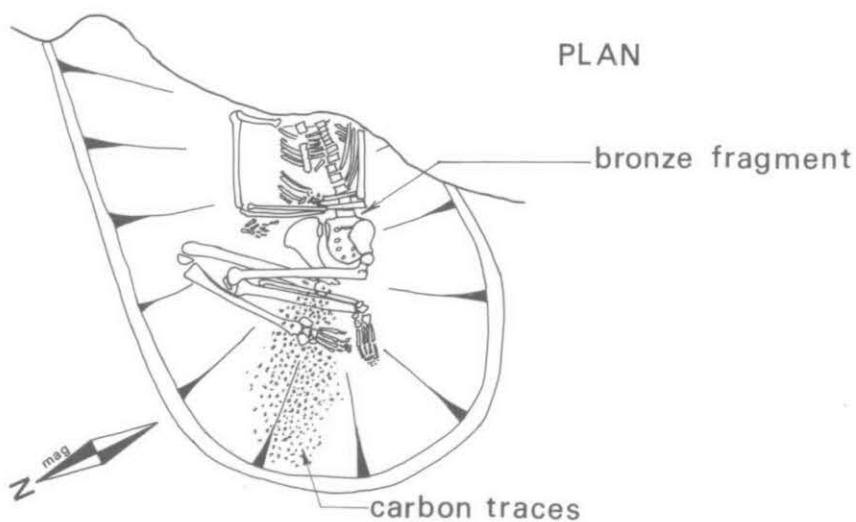


FIG. 1  
Burial at Cassington, Oxon.

History Cupboard at Sibford School near Banbury, together with other bronzes, including a bucket, three weights and a circular-bowled scoop. The inference is that the shovel comes from the Banbury area, and there are stylistic points in favour of its being British.

The model shovel is bronze, well-preserved, with a stable uniform dark-green patina. There is a modern break where the handle is bent and the overall surviving length is 33 mm. The shovel has a widely splayed, undecorated blade the upper surface of which is flat, while the lower surface has a bevelled edge. The handle has a flat upper surface, which is decorated with three grooves across but slightly aslant to the handle, and a 'St. Andrew's Cross' between the top and second grooves. The break occurs at the point of the topmost groove. The rear surface of the shaft is undecorated and curved, giving it a semi-circular or D-shaped cross-section.



FIG. 2

Roman bronze model from Sibford School, Oxon. Scale 1 : 1.

Although model bronze objects are by no means uncommon finds in Roman provinces, as is demonstrated below, miniature shovels are extremely rare; only one other example from Britain is known to the writer, a shovel from Cirencester (Glos), which was a stray find from within the Roman town.<sup>2</sup> The Gloucestershire miniature bronze is complete and has a terminal knob on the end of a long handle. The blade is of a very different shape from the Sibford shovel, in that it is narrower, less splayed, and generally more elegant and non-functional looking than the Oxfordshire example. The blade of the Cirencester implement is also ornamented with intersecting diagonal lines dividing up the surface into diamond or lozenge-shaped sections.

Although there is no exact evidence that a Romano-British origin should be assumed for the Sibford model, the decoration on the handle argues for its having had a provenance within the province. The incised grooves and the St. Andrew's Cross are paralleled, for instance, on a bronze ceremonial rattle or *sistrum* found at Milton near Peterborough (Cambs);<sup>3</sup> the cross is used also as a motif on the handle of a bronze sacrificial knife from the Roman temple-site at Muntham Court near Worthing (Sussex).<sup>4</sup> It is tempting to think of the crosses on the Sussex knife-handle and on that of the Sibford shovel as being themselves of ritual significance. It has been suggested<sup>5</sup> that the diagonal cross as an emblem had a cult-symbolism for historical Celtic peoples. However, several model axes from Romano-British sites bear incised linear markings or designs, and it has been suggested

<sup>2</sup> British Museum, *Guide to the Antiquities of Roman Britain* (1951), 72; M. J. Green, *A Corpus of Religious Material from the Civilian Areas of Roman Britain*, British Archaeological Reports, No. 24 (1976), 174, Pl. XXVIII, 8.

<sup>3</sup> M. J. Green, *A Romano-British Ceremonial Bronze Object found near Peterborough*, Peterborough City Museum Monograph, No. 1 (1975).

<sup>4</sup> Green, *op. cit.* note 2, 220, Pl. XXV, g; G. Holleyman and P. Burstow, 'Excavations at Muntham Court', *Archaeological Newsletter*, Vol. 6, No. 4 (1957), 101 ff. The object is in Worthing Museum.

<sup>5</sup> E. Linkenheld, *Stèles Funéraires en Forme de Maisons chez les Mediomatriques* (1927).

elsewhere by the writer<sup>6</sup> that these may merely be skeuomorphs of haft-binding with thongs or cords; if this is the case, then the incised decoration on the miniature shovel could represent the same theme.

The function and significance of miniature implements in general and of this particular model object should be considered. Neither this shovel nor that from Cirencester has any kind of site-context yielding clues as to its purpose. It could be argued that the little bronzes were manufactured as children's 'dolls'-house' toys, but this interpretation is thought by the writer to be doubtful.<sup>7</sup> The Oxfordshire shovel is one of a group of more than a hundred model objects from Roman Britain, excluding the rather different phenomenon of miniature pots.<sup>8</sup> The most frequent articles fashioned as miniatures are axes, spears and wheels, but numerous items were copied in model form, the weirdest perhaps being a model bale-of-goods from Skye.<sup>9</sup>

Romano-British miniature implements have a marked south-easterly distribution, clustering in the Home Counties, Oxfordshire, where the majority come from the Romano-Celtic temple-site at Woodeaton,<sup>10</sup> and Sussex, where a large group of models is believed to have come from a Roman barrow.<sup>11</sup> Fewer miniature bronzes occur in the relatively unromanized areas of northern Britain, although Iron Age examples are recorded, for instance at Long Wittenham (Oxon)<sup>12</sup> and Arras (Yorkshire).<sup>13</sup> Models of all kinds are frequent finds in the Romano-Celtic provinces of the Continent.

A major clue as to the function of models in Britain is their site-context. Many examples from Romano-British sites are either definitely or probably from religious contexts. In this connection it is interesting that whereas the area of south-east Britain defined above is rich in this particular type of find, the region occupied by the western British tribe of the Dobunni has a virtual dearth of such objects, although extremely wealthy in other finds of cult-significance.<sup>14</sup> With regard to shrines associated with models, Woodeaton, a site which has produced over a dozen model objects, has already been mentioned;<sup>15</sup> to this site should be added temples such as Caistor-by-Norwich,<sup>16</sup> Frilford (Oxon),<sup>17</sup> Worth (Kent),<sup>18</sup> Harlow (Essex),<sup>19</sup> Farley Heath (Surrey),<sup>20</sup> and Wycomb (Glos).<sup>21</sup>

Models are recorded not only from shrines but also from graves. A miniature spear found at Welwyn (Herts)<sup>22</sup> comes from a cemetery-site, as does the axe associated with a bronze hanging-bowl at the Poundbury Roman cemetery outside Dorchester (Dorset).<sup>23</sup>

Apart from site-context, there are other indications that models have a ritual significance. Three of the six miniature spears from Woodeaton appear to have been deliberately bent almost in half, an act which is hard to explain on other than religious grounds. Perhaps the most striking evidence, however, is the group of Continental model

<sup>6</sup> M. J. Green, 'Romano-British non-ceramic Model Objects in south-east Britain', *Archaeol. J.*, 132 (1975), 54 ff.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* (see appendix I for full list).

<sup>9</sup> National Museum of Antiquities, Edinburgh.

<sup>10</sup> J. R. Kirk, 'Bronzes from Woodeaton', *Oxoniensia*, xiv (1949), 1 ff.

<sup>11</sup> W. H. Manning, 'A Group of Bronze Models from Sussex in the British Museum', *Antiq. J.*, 46 (1966), 50 ff.

<sup>12</sup> H. N. Savory, 'An Early Iron Age Site at Long Wittenham, Berks', *Oxoniensia*, II (1937), 3.

<sup>13</sup> Kirk, *op. cit.* note 10.

<sup>14</sup> Green, *op. cit.* note 2, 65-107.

<sup>15</sup> Ashmolean Museum.

<sup>16</sup> Norwich Castle Museum.

<sup>17</sup> Ashmolean Museum.

<sup>18</sup> Ashmolean Museum.

<sup>19</sup> Harlow Museum.

<sup>20</sup> British Museum; Guildford Museum.

<sup>21</sup> M. J. T. Lewis, *Temples in Roman Britain* (1965), *passim*.

<sup>22</sup> W. P. Westall, 'The Romano-British Cemetery at the Grange, Welwyn, Herts', *St. Alban's & Herts Architectural & Archaeological Society Transactions* (1930), 37 ff.

<sup>23</sup> R. A. H. Farrar, 'A Bronze Hanging-bowl & model Axe-head from the Roman Cemetery at Poundbury, Dorchester', *Proc. Dorset Nat. Hist. and Arch. Soc.*, 74 (1952), 98 ff.

axes in Berne Museum which are actually inscribed with the names of Roman deities.<sup>24</sup> Model objects are known to have a ritual function in cults other than those of Roman or Celt. Far away in space and time, Egyptian funerary customs for many centuries involved the burial of model tools with the dead, together with small figurines known as shwabtis, placed in the tomb in order to do the work of the deceased in the afterlife.<sup>25</sup> It seems to the writer that the likeliest interpretation of the function of model objects is that they were votive items offered in temples or buried in graves, as propitiation to the gods.

Finally the precise function of a particular type of implement, such as the Sibford shovel, should be discussed. It is very possible that different kinds of miniature reflect the occupation of the devotee. Thus a soldier might dedicate a model spear, shield or sword to a war-god as an object more economical and convenient to offer than a full-size article; or a woodman might dedicate an axe—although axes may have had a general good-luck talismanic significance.<sup>26</sup> Wheels, as the writer has argued elsewhere,<sup>27</sup> appear to have been specifically associated with a particular deity. In the case of the Sibford and Cirencester shovels, however, we may be dealing with examples of model temple-furniture. There are various types of miniature bronze which can only be interpreted thus. In this category would come the enigmatic, beautifully-enamelled, sometimes multi-tiered 'stools', the column from Felixstowe (Suffolk),<sup>28</sup> the miniature cauldron from Ancaster (Lincs)<sup>29</sup>—witness to an entirely Celtic cult—and the three inch high perfect Roman bronze altar from Colchester.<sup>30</sup> In the case of shovels, their symbolic function would perhaps have been the tending of sacred fires in shrines.

If the shovel found in the cupboard at Sibford School is Romano-British, then it fits very well into the major group of model objects defined by the writer.<sup>31</sup> Oxfordshire is part of the main distribution-area of Roman miniature implements; the linear incised decoration is matched on other British bronzes of Roman date and of a ritual nature; the particular article has a specific, though not exact, parallel at Cirencester. Finally it is extremely likely that the find is of religious significance and may in fact be from a temple-site in the Banbury area.

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### A GLASS RING FROM SHAKENOAK

One of the most interesting small objects of Roman date from the villa at Shakenoak Farm, is a ring made by heating a rod of opaque yellow glass to a malleable flux and then bending it into annular form. At the point where the two ends were luted together a little cameo in the form of a youthful male head was created by means of a stamp.<sup>1</sup> Subsequent strains have resulted in the ring snapping apart at the weakest point, across the cameo; the device is thus rather difficult to see and the illustration in the published report on the site is far from adequate. However, through the good offices of Mr. P. D. C. Brown and the Ashmolean Museum, I have been able to obtain a plaster of paris copy of the bezel, and this shows the head remarkably well (PL. XI, C; FIG. 3, drawn by Mrs.

<sup>24</sup> Information from Professor J. M. C. Toynbee.

<sup>25</sup> British Museum, *Introduction to the Egyptian Collections* (1969).

<sup>26</sup> I am indebted for this suggestion to Dr. Graham Webster.

<sup>27</sup> Green, *op. cit.* note 6; M. J. Green, 'A Symbol of the Romano-Celtic Jupiter from Northamptonshire', *Northampton Museums Journal*, 10 (1974), 2 ff.

<sup>28</sup> Norwich Castle Museum.

<sup>29</sup> Anon. (1957-8), *Lincolnshire Architectural & Archaeological Society Reports & Papers*, 7 (1957-8), 99-101.

<sup>30</sup> Colchester & Essex Museum.

<sup>31</sup> Green, *op. cit.* note 6.

<sup>1</sup> D. B. Harden in A. C. C. Brodrick, A. R. Hands and D. R. Walker, *Excavations at Shakenoak Farm, near Wilcote, Oxfordshire*, II (1971), 106 f., No. 153 and Fig. 45, No. 70. The ring has an external diameter of 21 mm; internal diameter, 15 mm.; Width across bezel, 6 mm.; Width across hoop, 3 mm. It is now in the Ashmolean Museum, Acc. No. 1972.1679.

Lorna Wallace). Dr. Harden made reference to the 'puffed-out cheeks', but the most prominent feature is a curl just above the forehead which relates the head to Cupid or Satyr masks on various cameos and phalerae, in chalcedony, onyx, plasma and other materials.<sup>2</sup> The coiffure is certainly assumed by Cupid in a number of representations, but Stuveras makes the point that it merely follows the prevailing fashion in infant hair-style.<sup>3</sup>

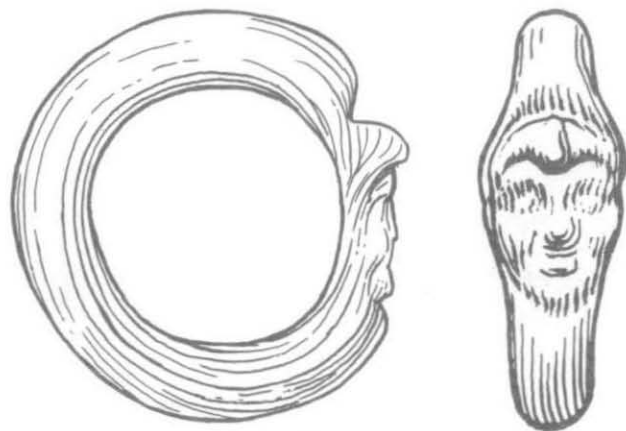


FIG. 3

Roman glass ring from Shakenoak, Oxon. Scale 3 : 1.

Some indication of date is provided by the absence of glass from the part of the site which produced the ring, later than the third century.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore a cameo of green glass, similar but without the top-knot, set in a bronze ring has recently been excavated at Staines: both the form of the ring and its archaeological setting are suggestive of the latter half of the 2nd century A.D.<sup>5</sup>

Apart from this, other rings from Britain with projecting busts or masks appear to be entirely of bronze.<sup>6</sup>

The colour of the ring is highly suggestive of amber and it is very likely that it was intended to imitate a ring cut in this rare and valuable commodity.<sup>7</sup> Although no amber rings with relief-busts are recorded from British sites, a number of examples have been published on the continent. These depict women and thus do not directly parallel our little ring, but they were probably manufactured in the second century when the production of amber objects at Aquileia was at its height.<sup>8</sup>

MARTIN HENIG

<sup>2</sup> P. Fossing, *The Thorvaldsen Museum. Catalogue of the Antique Engraved Gems and Cameos*, Copenhagen (1929), 267 f. and Plate xxiv, Nos. 1978, 1979, 1982; M. Gramatopol, *Les Pierres Gravées du Cabinet numismatique de l'Académie Roumaine*, Coll. Latomus cxxxviii, Brussels (1974), 90f and Plate xxxiii, Nos. 692-694; F. Eichler and E. Kris, *Die Kameen im Kunsthistorischen Museum, Wien*, Vienna (1927), 88 and Plate xviii, Nos. 105-107.

<sup>3</sup> e.g. H. J. H. van Buchem, 'Barnsteen in Onze Oudheid', *Numaga*, xxii (1975), 214 f., Figs. 9 and 10; R. Stuveras, *Le putto dans l'art romain*, Coll. Latomus xcix, Brussels (1969), 171; 176, Fig. 86; 186, Fig. 80.

<sup>4</sup> Harden, *op. cit.* note 1, 108.

<sup>5</sup> Information from Mr. K. R. Crouch. This, like most other glass gems, was probably made in a mould.

<sup>6</sup> R. Merrifield, *The Roman City of London* (1965), 188 and Plate cxxxvii, 9 (London: bearded head); also cf. note in *Records of Bucks*, xvii (1961-5), 128 and Plate xv (Stone: bust of Zeus Sarapis).

<sup>7</sup> cf. H. Chapman, on 'Part of a necklace of Amber Beads', *Trans. London and Middlesex Arch. Soc.*, xxv (1974), 273 f. on the rarity of amber in Britain.

<sup>8</sup> M. Abramčić and A. Colnago, 'Untersuchungen in Norddalmatien', *Beiblatt—Jahreshefte des Österreichischen Archäologischen Institutes*, xii (1909), cols. 96-102 and Figs. 65 and 66 (Starigrad); F. Henkel, *Die Römischen Fingerringe der Rheinlande*, Berlin (1913), 152 and Plate lxii No. 1676 (Regensburg); L. Bertacchi, 'Recenti Acquisizioni di Ambre nel Museo di Aquileia', *Aquileia Nostra*, xxxv (1964), cols. 60-62 and Figs. 8 and 9 (Aquileia).

# A FLORIATE CROSS SAUCER BROOCH FROM LONGWORTH, OXFORDSHIRE

In 1975 Mr. R. Hayden of Lechlade, as a result of a lecture given there by one of the authors (D. Miles), produced a Saxon saucer brooch (FIG. 4), ploughed up in the winter of 1961-2 and found by Miss Helen Wheatley, immediately south of Home farmhouse, Longworth (approximately SU 389993). This area was converted from nurseries to arable at about this time.

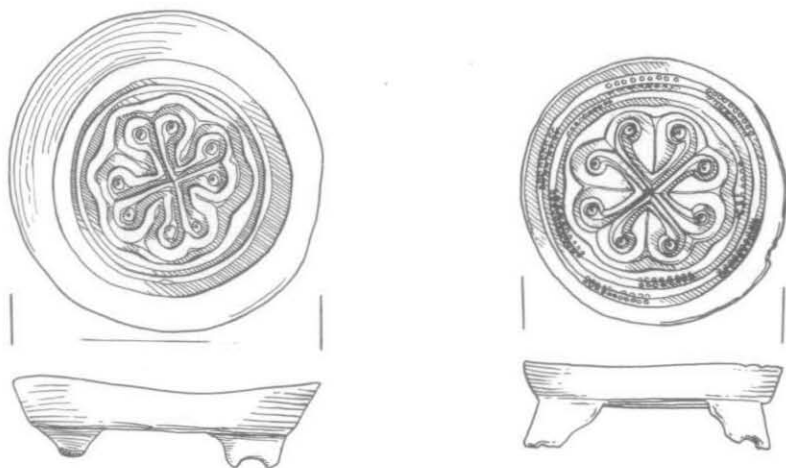


FIG. 4

Saxon saucer brooches from Longworth, Oxon. (left) and Highdown, Sussex (right). Scale 1 : 1.

Longworth, as its name implies, is a long, rectangular parish running from the Thames in the north up onto the Corallian Ridge and falling away gently down to the River Ock in the south. The village straddles the crest of the ridge, the highest point of the parish at just over 300 feet. Like its neighbours, Hinton Waldrist and Buckland, Longworth village is situated about 400 m. north of the old Faringdon-Oxford road, which a charter of 959 refers to as the 'Portwege'.<sup>1</sup>

The Corallian Ridge has received relatively little attention from fieldworkers in the past and its potential interest is not reflected in the number of known sites. A scatter of finds from Longworth suggests that the site of the village has been occupied from prehistoric times. Flints diagnostic of the mesolithic, neolithic and Bronze Age, Iron Age, Roman, late Saxon and medieval pottery indicate the range of settlement within this ancient land division. The find spots are not accurately recorded but most of this material seems to have been collected in two nurseries, one east of the village at SU 388994, and the other possibly the same site which produced the Saxon brooch.<sup>2</sup>

Longworth has two particularly interesting Saxon boundary charters, dating to A.D. 958 and 959, their lines coinciding with the present parish boundary.<sup>3</sup> The later charter describes the western boundary as running from the Ock, around the 'and-

<sup>1</sup> M. Gelling, *The Place Names of Berkshire, Part III*, English Place Name Society, LI (1976), 707.

<sup>2</sup> *Berks. Archaeol. J.*, LI (1948-9), 67; *Oxoniensia*, XIII (1948), 69; *Oxoniensia*, XVI (1951), 81; *Oxoniensia*, XVII/XVIII (1952-3), 12.

<sup>3</sup> M. Gelling, *op. cit.* note 1.

heafdan' and 'heafod aecere' or headlands to the 'haednan byrgelse' (heathen burial place) before proceeding to the 'portwege', the old Faringdon road. It is not possible to pinpoint the 'heathen burial place' precisely but it probably lies about 600 m. south-west of the modern village, above the 300 ft. contour and halfway between the villages of Longworth and Hinton Waldrist. The reference here to a 'burial place' may indicate a prehistoric barrow upon which the parish boundary was aligned and which has been subsequently ploughed down. Alternatively a pagan Saxon cemetery might exist in this area; the parish edge siting would fit the model proposed by Bonney.<sup>4</sup>

The condition of the Longworth brooch suggests that it was ploughed up from a grave immediately south of the village. This may indicate an isolated burial or a cemetery near to the village as at Long Wittenham. The parish church is isolated from the village, standing next to the Manor 600 m. west of the village centre.

#### THE BROOCH (FIG. 4)

This gilt-bronze saucer brooch (4 cm. diameter) is decorated with a floriate cross encircled by two plain rings. No trace of the pin survives and the pin-catch and spring-holder are damaged. The central design is precisely matched on a pair of saucer brooches from the cemetery at Highdown, Ferring in Sussex (Worthing Museum Catalogue 3411-2). The execution of the cross design has greater fluency on the Highdown pair, however, and these also show alternate plain and cross-nicked sections on the surrounding double circle, an effect known as 'light and shade' decoration. On the other hand, the Longworth brooch possesses a much broader and deeper saucer rim. While it is clear that the Longworth and Highdown brooches were not cast in one-off clay moulds made from the same model or prototype,<sup>5</sup> it is possible that they are products of the same workshop. This should cause no surprise in view of the marked similarities in the decoration of applied, saucer and great square headed brooches found in Sussex cemeteries and their counterparts in the Thames valley from Gloucestershire to West Kent and Essex.

The floriate cross is a late Roman motif adapted in North-west Germany to decorate applied brooches in the first half of the fifth century. One of us has argued elsewhere that the chronology of floriate cross applied brooches in England begins around the middle of the fifth and continues into the second half of that century.<sup>6</sup> The use of this motif on cast saucer brooches takes place in England, but not apparently on the Continent. It often takes the form of a human mask peering out between each arm of the cross, though other derivative versions occur. An example of the floriate cross with masks type in Abingdon (Berkshire) Grave 188 has associations which suggest a date in the first half of the sixth century.<sup>7</sup> In stylistic terms the Longworth brooch and its Highdown parallels can be seen as transitional between the floriate cross design found on applied brooches, such as the example in Mitcham (Surrey) Grave 201,<sup>6</sup> and the cross with masks and other derivative designs on saucer brooches. On these grounds a date in the late 5th and early 6th centuries is proposed.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> D. Bonney, 'Pagan Saxon Burials in Wiltshire', *Wilts. Archaeol. Mag.* LXI (1966), 25-30.

<sup>5</sup> K. Lamm, 'The manufacture of jewellery during the migration period at Helgo, in Sweden', *J. Hist. Metall. Soc.*, 7, No. 2 (1973), 1-7.

<sup>6</sup> M. G. Welch, 'Mitcham Grave 205 and the Chronology of Applied Brooches with Floriate Cross Decoration', *Antiq. J.* LV (1975), 86-93; 'Liebenau Grave II/96 and the dating of the Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Mitcham', *Medieval Archaeology*, xx (1976), 134-6.

<sup>7</sup> A saucer brooch with whirligig design and milled border, twenty-two amber and one rock crystal beads, a bronze scale pan, iron buckle and knife; see E. T. Leeds and D. B. Harden, *The Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Abingdon, Berkshire* (1936), 54 and Pl. XVII.

<sup>8</sup> We would like to thank R. Hayden for bringing the brooch to our attention; Helen Wheatley for information about its discovery; and Wendy Lee and Pat Clarke for the drawings.

## A MISSING BRASS FIGURE FROM CAVERSFIELD IDENTIFIED

The brass of John Langston (died 1506) and his wife Amice Danvers at Caversfield, Oxon.,<sup>1</sup> is now a wreck. The male figure and some other portions are lost. There remain in the church the female figure, the two groups of children, the foot inscription, three shields, and fragments of the marginal inscription. The text of this last was transcribed in expanded form.<sup>2</sup> With the contractions of the extant bits, it reads:

'Orate pro aiabus Johis Langston armigeri et Amisie consortis sue qui quidem Johes obiit nono die Septebri anno dni millesimo CCCCC VI. Quorum aiabus p'picietur deus amen.'

The foot inscription, in indifferent Latin, is:

'O pater excelsa miserere p'cor miserere / Johis Langston et coniugis Amisie / Atq' sue sobilis qui te in terra coluere / Hosse velis oro Jungere celicolis'

The surviving pieces of the brass are now mural in the north aisle, except for the foot inscription, which has been on the back wall above a table tomb (ascribed variously on the basis of its heraldry to the John Langston who died in 1487 or the one who died in 1548<sup>3</sup>) on the north side of the chancel since at least 1858.<sup>4</sup> Ralph Griffin's note<sup>5</sup> that the fragment of marginal inscription bearing the words 'deus amen' just fits the indent of the chamfered edge of this table tomb, is incorrect: the fragment is identical in size and lettering to the others from the brass, and the indent on the chamfer is not wide enough to have held it.

In the British Museum is a loose brass of an armoured figure, bought at a sale in a North London house in 1861.<sup>6</sup> During a survey of the styles of brasses around 1500, it became clear that the British Museum figure and the Caversfield brass were closely contemporary products of the same workshop.<sup>7</sup> A rubbing taken at Caversfield in July 1820, before the disappearance of the figure of John Langston, was then consulted.<sup>8</sup> It shows that this figure is the one now in the British Museum.

Can the whole composition be reconstructed? The slab with its indents has disappeared. The 1820 rubbing shows the principal figures, the foot inscription and two shields: a note on it describes them as 'all . . . loose', and they were rubbed on separate pieces of paper. Haines' rubbing of 1858 gives only the position of the two groups of children in relation to each other: at that time the upper part of the slab was covered by pews which extended to half-way down the children. Haines could rub only their lower half, and the daughters still bear the marks made by the edge of the pew. It is possible, however, to determine the size and shape of the marginal inscription by the arrangement of words on the surviving plates, in conjunction with the recorded text.<sup>9</sup> Within it the other bits, including the rediscovered male figure, can be approximately placed (see PL. XII, A).

When did the figure of John Langston disappear? Haines in 1858 thought it was still in the slab under the pew, but since it was already loose in 1820, and was in London by 1861, this may be discounted. It probably vanished before 1847, since Lipscomb, although he illustrates it, comments:

'There is now remaining a sepulchral slab in the floor, almost entirely covered by a pew, with part of two small brass plates and representations of the feet of many children. There

<sup>1</sup> I am grateful to the Hon. Mrs. E. H. Wyndham and to the Vicar, the Rev. M. Scott-Joynt, for their help and interest when I visited the church. The brass is no. II at Caversfield in Mill Stephenson's *List of Monumental Brasses in the British Isles* (1926). The parish was transferred from Bucks. in 1844.

<sup>2</sup> Sir H. Dryden in *O.A.S. Reports for 1893-4* (1895), 20.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 19; F. N. Macnamara, *Memorials of the Danvers Family* (1895), 130, 134.

<sup>4</sup> Note on Haines' dated rubbing in the coll. Soc. Antiq.

<sup>5</sup> Note on dabbling dated 1920, in the coll. Soc. Antiq.

<sup>6</sup> No. 8 in the British Museum, in Mill Stephenson, *op. cit.* note 1.

<sup>7</sup> A workshop which developed out of J. P. C. Kent's Series D: cf. his article 'Monumental Brasses—a New Classification of Military Effigies', *J. Brit. Archaeol. Assoc.*, xii (1949), 70-97. I tentatively call it Workshop G.

<sup>8</sup> In the coll. Soc. Antiq.

<sup>9</sup> Quoted above.

were also two well-preserved figures of a man and woman, on brass plates, lying detached, on the floor.<sup>10</sup>

The London workshop in which the Caversfield brass was made clearly contained more than one engraver. Close parallels are provided by the brass of William (died 1506) and Alice Croke, at Great Gaddesdon, Herts., and that of Margaret Ashefyld at Chipping Norton, made after the death of her husband in 1507.<sup>11</sup> Since the workshop's conventions for armour seem to have been changing at this time, precise parallels for that on the figure of John Langston are difficult to find—closest are probably Sir Thomas Grey and Richard Lewkenor (1505) at East Grinstead, Sussex. The spiked tasset-hinges, the vertical ridges of the fauld, and the arrangement of plates in the sabatons, are almost a trademark of this workshop. By the low standard of brass-design in London at this period, the Langston brass is quite well-drawn, and may perhaps mitigate the verdict of Browne Willis on Caversfield, that 'Tis a mean Fabrick, and has nothing memorable in the whole church.'<sup>12</sup>

ROBIN EMMERSON

### A MEDIEVAL BRONZE MOUNT AND PENDANTS FROM OXFORDSHIRE

Three independent chance finds of heraldic medieval bronzes occurred in the county in 1976 and were brought to the Ashmolean Museum for identification.

The bronze disc mount decorated with heraldic beasts (PL. XII, B, top) was discovered on the Hurst, Cumnor by Mrs. K. Dawe. It is dished and lacks decoration on the back suggesting that it was originally mounted in a circular frame. The two holes drilled through the central design probably indicate later reuse, possibly as a button rather than as a mount. It is in the possession of the finder.

The bronze rectangular pendant fitting decorated with an heraldic crowned lion (PL. XII, B, centre) was found in two inches of water below the old ford opposite Cokethorpe School, Witney (SP 065375) by Mr. G. Jenkinson, a pupil at the school and is in the possession of the finder. It is in excellent condition and its weight is 10.235 gms.

The shield-shaped pendant (PL. XII, B, bottom) is decorated with the three lions of the Royal Arms of England. It was found by Mr. R. D. Evins in one of his fields immediately east of Stonesfield village (SP 398174) and is now in the Ashmolean Museum.

All three belong to well known types described in the *London Museum Medieval Catalogue* (1954, reprinted 1967), 118–22.

MARTIN WELCH

### POTTERY FROM PECKWATER QUADRANGLE, CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD

During three summer vacations, 1974–6, Christ Church have been re-furbishing the basements of the quadrangle, involving the removal of c. 0.30 m. from the earth floor, and the digging of some service trenches. There were pits under staircase 2, severe disturbance, presumably pits, under staircases 3 and 4, and extensive areas of soft organic fill over 1 m. deep under staircase 7, assumed to be the backfill of cellars of the seventeenth-century quadrangle replaced c. 1705. Stratified pottery was recovered from the last context; the builders kept pottery from other locations, and were often able to describe exact provenances. It is therefore justifiable to add the following pottery forms to the corpus of published types from Oxford.

<sup>10</sup> G. Lipscomb, *History and Antiquities of the County of Buckingham* (1847), II, 598. The italics are mine.

<sup>11</sup> No. VI at Chipping Norton in Mill Stephenson, *op. cit.* note 1.

<sup>12</sup> Browne Willis, *History and Antiquities of the Town, Hundred and Deanry of Buckingham* (1755), 169.

The pottery salvaged from staircase 4, F1, included some unusual pitchers and a lobed dish of a probable late fifteenth- to early sixteenth-century date. The most noteworthy was an entire, slender baluster-type jug with a peculiarly splayed base and strap handle luted on askew; the fabric, containing coarse grog (Fabric BX), was poorly wedged and partially glazed with mottled green (FIG. 5, P1/0/1). A mark, reminiscent of the Roman numeral, II, roughly incised above the belly of the jug is unparalleled amongst Oxford pottery. A small jug with partial green glaze was also found (Fabric BX) (FIG. 5, P1/0/3); together with the body of a jug (Fabric AM, Oxford Late Medieval Ware),<sup>1</sup> well glazed with mottled green. The two deeply incised motifs on the neck and belly were connected by a vertical groove; the jug had subsequently fractured along this groove and only half of the motif survived (FIG. 5, P1/0/4). This decoration may have been a merchant's mark or possibly a ritual design.<sup>2</sup> A similarly well glazed jug with regular external rilling was recovered from another site in Oxford, decorated with a stamped initial letter.<sup>3</sup> The base of a cylindrical jug in a fabric similar to the baluster type jug and partially glazed with mottled green was also noted. This coarse fabric (Fabric BX) was absent from the fifteenth-century, 79-80 St. Aldates assemblages.<sup>4</sup> Finally a well made lobed dish probably a Surrey type (Fabric BN), glazed internally with yellow and externally with mottled green, was found with this group (FIG. 5, P1/0/2). A late fifteenth- to early sixteenth-century date was attributed to this vessel.<sup>5</sup>

Pottery from the backfilled cellar under staircase 7 included sherds of a Surrey type, Fabric BN and the base of an unglazed jar (Fabric AP); a similar jar was recovered from layers associated with Wolsey's building, in 1964, and was dated to the sixteenth century.<sup>6</sup> The neck and upper part of a large globular jug with strap handle and thick black glaze was also recovered. This jug can be paralleled with a jug from Broad Street<sup>7</sup> and with another from the Greyfriars (Trench IV, F72) where it was found in association with white tinglaze and local slipware.<sup>8</sup> This jug must just pre-date the replacement of the quadrangle c. 1705.

B. DURHAM and M. MELLOR

#### A MEDIEVAL POTTERY GROUP FROM 18 WALTON STREET, OXFORD

A storage vessel and the sherds from two other pots (FIG. 6) were discovered in the front garden of 18 Walton Street close to the basement window. It appears to be the first recorded find of medieval pottery in this area. Unfortunately the builder employed smashed the complete storage jar, but the house owner recovered sufficient of the larger sherds to reconstruct it. Many of the sherds were put into the dustbin, however, and are presumably now on the rubbish dump in Port Meadow.

The storage vessel is unglazed except for a few spots accidentally sprinkled on it. The vessel is decorated with parallel horizontal grooves below the neck and vertical applied strips on the body. The other sherds are also unglazed. Maureen Mellor of the Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit has examined the fabrics which give a date range between the mid 13th and the mid 15th centuries. This pottery is now in the Ashmolean Museum.

MARTIN WELCH

<sup>1</sup> B. G. Durham 'Archaeological Investigations in St. Aldates, Oxford', this volume.

<sup>2</sup> G. C. Dunning, 'Late Medieval Jugs with Lettering', *Medieval Archaeology*, xi (1967), 240-241, and 'A Late Medieval Jug with Lettering from Canons Ashby, Northamptonshire', *Medieval Archaeology*, xvii (1974), 163.

<sup>3</sup> T. G. Hassall, 'Excavation at Oxford, 1968', *Oxoniensia*, xxxiv (1969), Pl. IIB, Fig. 3, No. 2, 13.

<sup>4</sup> Durham, *Op. cit.* note 1, Phase 11.

<sup>5</sup> G. Lambrick and H. Woods, 'Excavation on the Second Site of the Dominican Priory, Oxford', *Oxoniensia*, xli (1976), 'The Southern Area of the Domestic Buildings'.

<sup>6</sup> For form only see D. Sturdy, 'Thirteenth Century and Later Pottery', *Oxoniensia*, xxiv (1959), Fig. 14, No. 3, 29; A typescript of Helena Sutermeister's excavations is available at the Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit.

<sup>7</sup> R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford, 'The Archaeology of the Site of the Bodleian Extension', *Oxoniensia*, iv (1939), Pl. XIV, No. 5, 139.

<sup>8</sup> Pers. comm. Mrs. J. de Goris.

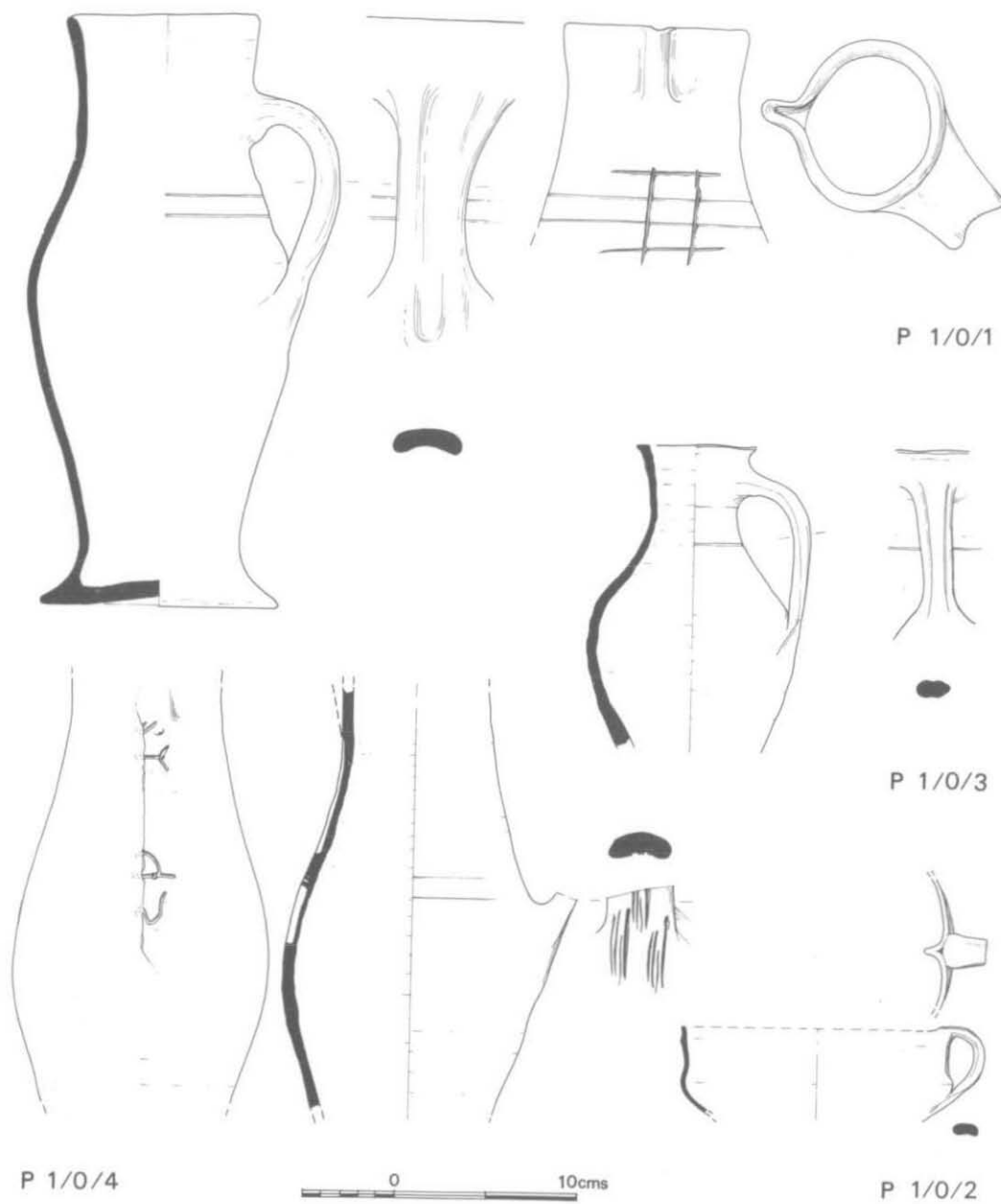


FIG. 5  
Pottery from Christ Church, Oxford. Scale 1 : 4.

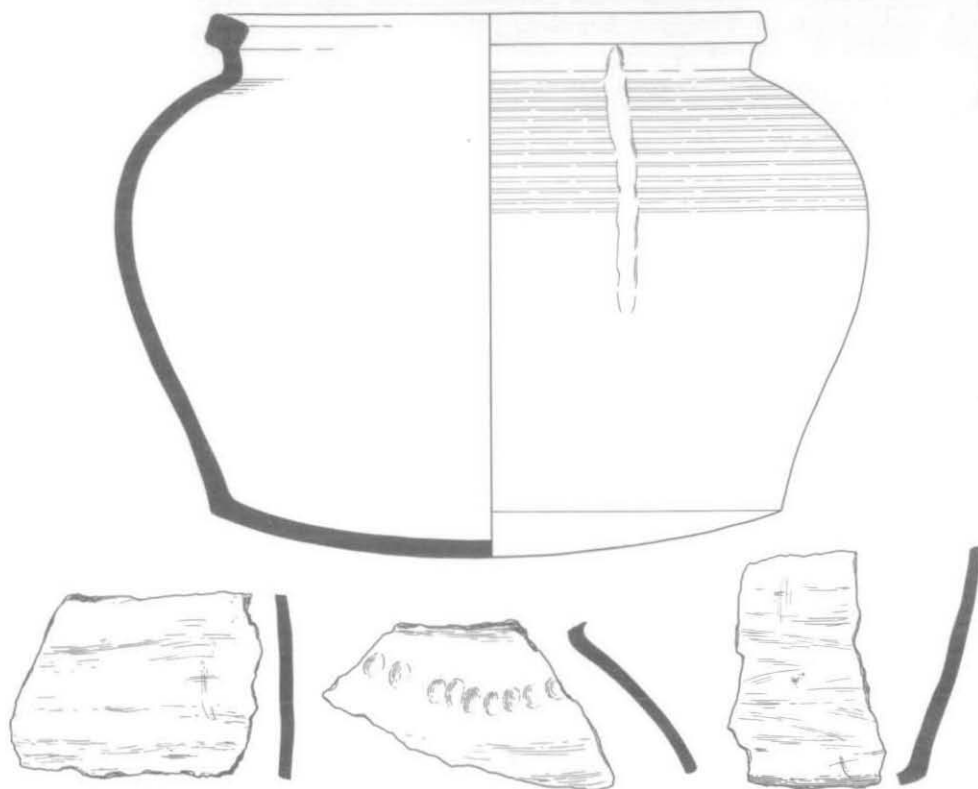


FIG. 6

Pottery from Walton Street, Oxford. Scale 1 : 4.

### A NOTE ON THE ST. SCHOLASTICA'S DAY RIOT

The story of the St. Scholastica's Day riot and its aftermath has often been told, but there is one hitherto unnoticed detail which corrects the amount of the fine paid by the town to the University. It is also an illustration of a rather unusual use of statute merchant procedure.

The Statute of Merchants of 1285,<sup>1</sup> amending the Statute of Acton Burnell of 1283, set up a registry of debts and new methods of collecting them. Despite its title, it was used by non-merchants and for non-mercantile debts. The debt was acknowledged before the mayor of a town to which a statute merchant registry had been granted, and the clerk of the statute merchant appointed by the king. The bond, known as a statute merchant, written by the clerk and sealed with the royal seal, was enrolled on the statute merchant roll of the town. This recorded debt was considered a judgment, making the obligation to pay indisputable and the penalties for non-payment inevitable. These were imprisonment of the debtor and the transfer of all his lands and goods to the creditor until the debt was paid. A statute merchant was often used as a sanction for the performance of some other obligation, which was contained in a defeasance made privately between the parties after the statute merchant and seldom enrolled. It defined terms on which the statute

<sup>1</sup> *Statutes of the Realm*, i, 53, 98; T. F. T. Plucknett, *Legislation of Edward I* (1949).

merchant was considered valid by the parties. The statute merchant, which was the legal evidence for the amount of the collectable debt, was often made for a larger sum than that in the defeasance, possibly to assure the creditor of interest or as a greater threat against the debtor's person and possessions. This, with a difference, was the procedure resorted to by the university when damages from the town had been awarded by the council.

The dispute over the riot had ultimately been heard by the king's council, which, on 16 July 1355,<sup>2</sup> had ordered the town to pay £250, to be distributed as damages to those injured in the riot. If the 'men of the community and the suburbs who have offended' could not raise that amount, it was to be apportioned among others, unspecified. Both parties immediately protested the award on 17 July: the town because it was 'intolerable', the university because it was too small. The council, however, reiterated its decision and ordered the town to pay £250 or make security for payment before 25 July following.<sup>3</sup>

In the published muniments of the city there is a bond for £500, dated 24 July and a receipt from the university for £50 in *plenam solucionem quingentarum librarum* dated *die Veneris in octabis Nativitatis santi Johannis Baptiste*, 1 July, 1356.<sup>4</sup> The conclusion was drawn that the town was let off with the payment of £50 on an amount double that assessed by the council.<sup>5</sup> This, however, does not seem to have been the case and is only part of the transaction, as another, unpublished, entry in a Twyne manuscript shows.

Twyne<sup>6</sup> copied from the now lost mediaeval statute merchant rolls of Oxford the enrolment of a statute merchant made on 24 July by a group of nineteen prominent citizens of the town, binding them to pay to the chancellor, proctors, and four clerks of the university £250 in three instalments: £100 in the octave of All Saints, 1355; £100 in the octave of the Annunciation, 1356; and £50 in the octave of St. John Baptist following. This he properly connected with the riot and is the security ordered by the council. The receipt for £50 would be the acknowledgment of the third and final payment specified in the statute merchant and of the satisfaction of the statutory debt of £250, and of all obligations of the town. It was not necessary in statute merchant procedure to give receipts for instalments, or indeed for the payment of the whole debt.

How can we account for the bond of £500? It must have been an unusual defeasance in an amount double that of the real debt. Possibly because of the unusual circumstances in the case: because the amount had been set by the council, and because, in case of default, the imprisonment of so many debtors and the seizure of their lands and goods would have proved a lengthy, unprofitable, and self-defeating means of securing payment, the university, having caused the town to make the statute merchant, allowed it to make the defeasance to be collected, in case of default, by the less drastic action of debt but providing for the larger sum to include compensation for having to pursue legal action. The town, however, paid the statute merchant debt on time, nullifying the defeasance, and it was acquitted of both debts.

ALICE BEARDWOOD

### THE OXFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL COMMITTEE IN 1976

A full description of the Committee's Unit's work in 1976 can be found in CBA Group IX *Newsletter*, 7 (1977), 54-78. The Committee produces a Newsletter which appears approximately monthly, subscription £1 per annum, obtainable from the Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit, 46 Hythe Bridge Street, Oxford, OX1 2EP.

<sup>2</sup> *Cal. Close Rolls, 1354-60*, 146.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 147; *Mediaeval Archives of the University of Oxford*, ed. H. Salter (Oxford Historical Society, 1917), i, 158.

<sup>4</sup> *Munimenta Civitatis Oxonie*, ed. H. Salter (Oxford Historical Society, 1920), 135.

<sup>5</sup> *V.C.H. Oxon.*, iii, 10, n. 46.

<sup>6</sup> Bodleian Library, Twyne Ms. 23, p. 139.

1 *Surveys* (a) Published

G. Lambrick, *Archaeology and Agriculture, A survey of modern cultivation methods and the problems of assessing plough damage to archaeological sites* (reviewed below).

D. Miles, *Aerial Reconnaissance in Oxfordshire 1976*. (CBA Group IX Newsletter, 7 (1977), 57-60).

## (b) In preparation

A. Upson in association with J. Richards, Berkshire Archaeological Committee, *Plough Damaged Sites on the Berkshire Downs*.

2 *Field Surveys in Progress*

Oxfordshire Parish Survey (with Oxfordshire Department of Museum Services).

D. Hall, Shennington, part of a survey of the ironstone areas of North Oxfordshire.

3 *Excavations* (a) Published

M. Parrington and M. Mellor, 'First Century Finds from Benson, Oxon.', *Oxoniensia*, XLII (1977), this volume.

R. A. Chambers, 'A Burial at Cassington Mill', *Ibid.*

M. Parrington, 'Excavations at Barrow Hills Radley', *Ibid.*

B. Durham, 'Archaeological Investigations at St. Aldates, Oxford', *Ibid.*

(b) In preparation (\* indicates Interim report in CBA Group IX Newsletter, 7 (1977), 54-78).

*Abingdon*: Iron Age Settlement at Ashville Trading Estate\* (final text with CBA for publication); Roman villa and Saxon settlement at Barton Court Farm\*; medieval tenements at 42-44 Stert Street\*.

*Berinsfield*: Pagan Saxon cemetery.

*Farmoor*: Iron Age and Roman complex\*.

*Kidlington*: Late medieval moated site\*.

*Oxford*: All Saints medieval tenements at Church Street; the Greyfriars\*; the Hamel\*.

(c) Other sites recorded or dug: brief notes in CBA Group IX Newsletter, 7 (1977), 54-78; detailed information will be deposited in the Oxfordshire Department of Museum Services Sites and Monuments Record.

*Cumnor*: Dean Court Farm, medieval site.

*Oxford*: Churchill Hospital Roman kiln; Blackfriars; Frewin Hall (St. Mary's College);

Magdalen College (Hospital of St. John); medieval tenements at 6-7 Bear Lane;

Christ Church; 5 High Street; 13-18 Queen Street; 33-34 St. Giles.

*Thrupp*: Neolithic ring ditch.

*Southern Feeder Gas Pipe*: Sites of various dates in South Oxfordshire.

PLATE XI



A. Oblique air photograph by M. Aston of Somerton, Oxon., from the S.W., showing deserted medieval enclosures and a hollow street.

*Oxfordshire County Council*  
SOMERTON



B. (Left) Roman bronze model shovel from Sibford School, Oxon. Scale 1 : 1.

C. (Right) Plaster copy of Roman glass ring from Shakenoak, Oxon. Scale 3 : 1.

OXONIENSIA, XLII (1977)

*Phh.: Ashmolean Museum*  
NOTES



A. (Left) Reconstruction of the brass of John and Amice Langston (1506) from Caversfield.

Ph.: R. Emmerson

B. (Right) Medieval bronzes found in 1976 in Oxon.

Ph.: Ashmolean Museum