

## Notes

### BONES AND SHELLS FROM DOMESTIC ACTIVITY IN OXFORD: EXCAVATIONS AT 23-26 QUEEN STREET AND ST EBBES STREET 1960

Reports on excavations at the corner of Queen Street and St. Ebbes Street have been published<sup>1</sup> but lack a record of the animal remains. A modest collection of bones and shells from the early dated deposits is preserved at the Ashmolean Museum and provides extra information on late Saxon and early medieval life in Oxford, supplementing previous publications on bones and shells.<sup>2</sup>

Available remains have been examined, most material coming from the Queen Street frontage, viz. Areas A, B and C.<sup>3</sup> Overall data are assembled in Table 1 in two chronological groups, as outlined by earlier post-excavation work.<sup>4</sup> In Table 2 the data are treated as a chronological whole. Results could be affected by recovery bias and sampling difficulties, e.g. the smallest bones of sheep such as phalanges were not abundantly encountered during recording.

From previous work with other bone groups of comparable period from Oxford,<sup>5</sup> the bones appear to be derived from domestic sources, presumably from inside buildings, but possess some degree of coarseness that suggests mixing with larger bone refuse such as would typically accumulate outside buildings, e.g. as a result of house cleaning. This is consistent with the occurrences of these bones in pits, perhaps less so in 'cellar pits', e.g. in A1.

In the percentages of carcass parts, little difference from most other site bone groups is observed. Thus there is no evidence of separation of butchery sites from normal domestic sites during this period, in contrast with the trend occurring from the late medieval period in regional towns. Waste from occupations associated with Saxon butchery appears spread widely, with the exception of cattle head debris, especially horn cores, some sawn, from pit 36 at 44-46 Cornmarket Street.<sup>6</sup> Of worked bones, two horse metapodials from C12 and D15 were trimmed for use as skates.

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<sup>1</sup> D. Sturdy and J. Munby, 'Early Domestic Sites in Oxford: Excavations in Cornmarket and Queen Street, 1959-1962', *Oxoniensia*, 1 (1985), 47-94.

<sup>2</sup> E.M. Jope, 'Late Saxon Pits under Oxford Castle Mound: Excavations in 1952', *Oxoniensia*, xviii/xviii (1952-1953), 77-111; E.M. Jope et al., 'The Clarendon Hotel, Oxford', *Oxoniensia*, xxiii (1958), 2-83; T.G. Hassall, 'Excavations at 44-46 Cornmarket Street, Oxford, 1970', *Oxoniensia*, xxxvi (1971), 15-33; B. Durham, 'Archaeological Investigations in St. Aldates, Oxford', *Oxoniensia*, xlii (1977), 83-203; C. Halpin, 'Late Saxon Evidence and Excavation of Hinkey Hall, Queen St., Oxford', *Oxoniensia*, xlviii (1983), 41-69; and T.G. Hassall, C. Halpin and M. Mellor, 'Excavations in St. Ebbes, Oxford, 1967-1976: Part 1', *Oxoniensia*, liv (1989), 71-277.

<sup>3</sup> Sturdy and Munby, op. cit. note 1, Fig 15.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 84-7.

<sup>5</sup> Op. cit. note 2.

<sup>6</sup> B.J. Marples in T.G. Hassall, op. cit. note 2 (1971), 28-31.

TABLE 1: OVERALL FRAGMENT FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES AT 23-26 QUEEN STREET, OXFORD, 1968

	<i>Early pits:</i>	<i>Later pits:</i>	<i>Site Total:</i>	
	<i>10th-11th century</i>	<i>11th-12th century</i>		%
Cattle	195	149	344	38
Sheep/goat	209 <sup>a</sup>	175	384	42
Pig	122	61	183	20
Horse	1	1	2	0.2
Dog	1	—	1	0.1
Cat	1	—	1	0.1
Red deer	1	—	1	0.1
Roe deer	—	1	1	0.1
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<i>Identified mammals (n)</i>	530	387	917	
Unident. fragments	454	288	742	
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Total	984	675	1659	
				% index of n
Domestic fowl	27	5	35	3.5
Domestic goose	4	—	4	0.4
Other bird	1 <sup>b</sup>	—	1	0.1
Oyster shells	29	18	47	5.1
Burnt bones	3	1	4	0.4

a Excluding 1 horn core of goat.

b Mallard bone identified by Alison Locker.

Note: Less stratified groups contained bones of hare and cod.

TABLE 2: FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF CARCASS BONES

	<i>Cattle</i>	<i>Sheep</i>	<i>Pig</i>
<i>n:</i>	344	384	183
%	%	%	%
Head	26	25	47
Foot	22	21	11
Body	53	54	42

## AN ANGLO-SAXON SILVER HOOKED TAG FOUND NEAR BAMPTON

The object illustrated in Fig. 1 was a casual surface find at SP 3435 0085, about 4 km. south-south-east of Bampton and 750 metres north of the present course of the Thames.<sup>1</sup> It lay in the ploughsoil over a depression and rubble scatter, in the northern part of a field which contains, further south, a group of prehistoric crop-marks.<sup>2</sup> The depression may be the remains of a ford crossing a former stream, and the most likely reason for the location of the find is that it was a traveller's casual loss.

The object is a 'hooked tag' made from a thin sheet of silver, consisting of a round plate with a hook and two perforated lugs. The front face bears incised ornament, originally nielloed. Beaded borders surround the circle and divide it into three fields. The two larger fields contain panels of foliate interlace, that on the left comprising a figure-of-eight with leaf-like protuberances within its ends. The small field at the top contains an indeterminate triangular motif. The back is plain, but bears two small patches of niello.

Hooked tags are common Anglo-Saxon dress-fasteners, but the Bampton example is of unusually high quality. It relates to a group of 9th-century tags and strap-ends with Trewhiddle-style ornament, most notably to a nielloed silver tag from east Kent which is structurally similar and provides an almost exact match for the figure-of-eight foliage.<sup>3</sup> Another example has recently been published from Buckinghamshire,<sup>4</sup> and the type seems to be emerging as a characteristic item of high-status equipment. The complete lack of animal ornament on the Bampton tag suggests that it may be rather later than the others, perhaps in the last quarter of the 9th century or the early 10th.<sup>5</sup>

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Fig. 1. Silver hooked tag found near Bampton. Photograph (left) and drawing (right). Scale 1:1

<sup>1</sup> Acquired by the Ashmolean Museum in 1991. For help in connection with the reporting of the find I am extremely grateful to Sally Crawford, Tony Hulbert and Michael Shott.

<sup>2</sup> D. Benson and D. Miles, *The Upper Thames Valley: an Archaeological Survey of the River Gravels* (1974), 39, map 13.

<sup>3</sup> J. Graham-Campbell, 'Some New and Neglected Finds of 9th-Century Anglo-Saxon Ornamental Metalwork', *Medieval Archaeology*, xxvi (1982), 144-51, especially Fig.2(1). Cf. L. Webster and J. Backhouse (eds.), *The Making of England* (Cat. of British Museum exh., 1991), Nos. 196-8.

<sup>4</sup> M. Farley, 'A Trewhiddle-Style Hooked Tag from High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire', *Medieval Archaeology*, xxxv (1991), 107-9.

<sup>5</sup> I am grateful to the following for their respective opinions: James Graham-Campbell ('high quality 9th-century workmanship'); Leslie Webster (probably 'in the last third of the 9th century'); Martin Biddle and Birthe Kjølbjæ-Biddle (probably after 900 because of the round shape).

## A COIN OF OFFA FROM RADCOT BRIDGE?

The papers of the Victorian antiquary and folklore enthusiast Percy Manning, preserved in the Bodleian Library, include numerous field-notes made during the 1890s by his indefatigable collector T.J. Carter. One sheet (Bodl. MS Top. Oxon. d.192, f.187), mainly devoted to Bampton folklore, notes the cutting of a new, straight channel by Radcot Bridge, and the discovery there of finds including a stone axe and 'a large coin or medal larger than a 5/- piece'. Against this phrase Carter has written in the margin a brief and cryptic note: 'Mans name is Offa'.

Excluding the unlikely possibility that the finder or informant was called 'Offa' (though 'Offer' does occur as an Oxfordshire surname), this must surely relate to one of the objects found. It is, in fact, an entirely plausible comment on one of Offa's pennies (which bear the legend OFFA in very large, clear letters beside the king's head) from an uneducated observer who had never heard of him. Offa's pennies are not, of course, anywhere near the size of a crown piece, so unless the object found was something wholly exceptional, it must be assumed that the marginal note refers to a find additional to those listed.

The discovery is of some relevance to the antiquity of the route from north to south via Radcot Bridge and Faringdon. In the time of Offa merchandise from western Mercia could well have crossed the Thames at this point, bound for the West Saxon port of Hamwic. A comparable find is the Offa penny from the site of the Martyrs' Memorial in Oxford, on the ancient cross-Thames route down the Woodstock Road, Cornmarket and St. Aldates to the 'oxen-ford'.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> J. Blair, 'St. Frideswide's Monastery: Problems and Possibilities', *Oxoniensia*, liii (1988), 223 and Fig. 90.

## AN ANGLO-SAXON LANDMARK REDISCOVERED: THE STANFORD/STANBRIDGE OF THE DUCKLINGTON AND WITNEY CHARTERS

*Introduction*

It is a rare pleasure for the perambulator of charter-boundaries to come upon physical evidence for a structure which has been forgotten since it was described by an Anglo-Saxon scribe. This note describes such a discovery, a paved causeway across a stream in West Oxfordshire. It is of some general interest for the light which it throws on 10th- and 11th-century uses of the terms 'bridge' and 'ford'.

*The evidence of the boundary descriptions*

A 'stone ford' and a 'stone bridge', which from the contexts are clearly the same feature, are mentioned as a boundary marker in the Ducklington and Witney charters of 958 and 969 respectively.<sup>1</sup> Both sets of boundaries have been elucidated sufficiently to show that

<sup>1</sup> P.H. Sawyer (ed.), *Anglo-Saxon Charters: an Annotated List and Bibliography* (1968), Nos. 678 and 771. Texts of the bounds are printed by M. Gelling, *The Place-Names of Oxfordshire* (1954), ii. 486, 489-90.

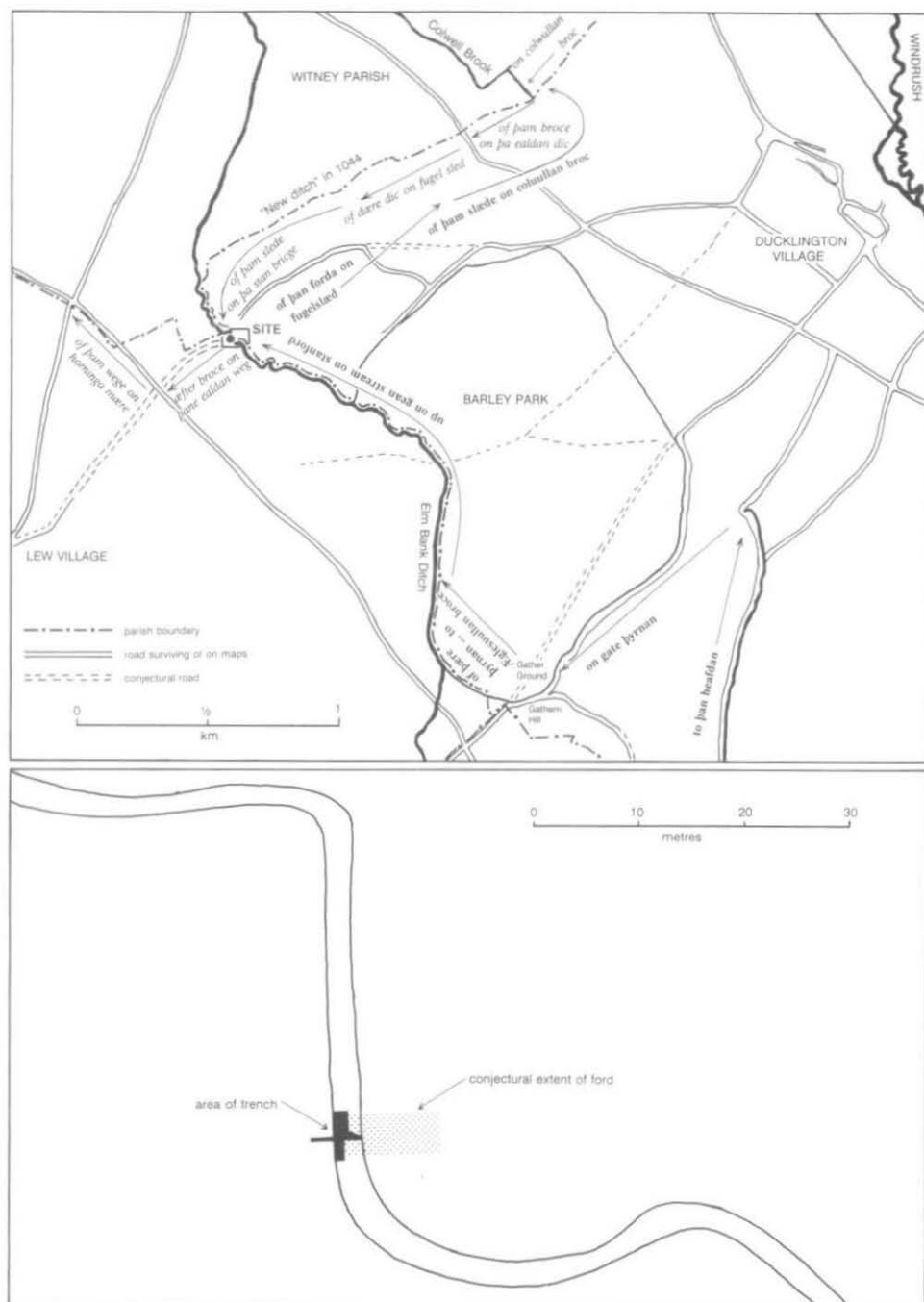


Fig. 1. Solution of the charter-boundaries and location of the site. (Terms from the 958 Ducklington bounds in bold type; terms from the 969 Witney bounds in italics.)

the estates were roughly (though by no means perfectly) coterminous with the later parishes.<sup>2</sup> The perambulations proceed clockwise, though since the section common to the two estates lies on the south boundary of Witney and the north boundary of Ducklington, the descriptions of it run in opposite directions. The suggested courses of the boundaries are marked on Fig. 1, which shows the roads and other main topographical features in their pre-inclosure state.<sup>3</sup>

The relevant section of the Ducklington charter runs around the west and north-west sides of the estate: ... *on gate þyrnan*; [eight unidentifiable steps omitted]; *ðanon to æglesuallan broce*; *up on gean stream on stanford*; *of þan forda on fugelslæd*; *of þam slæde on coluallan broc* ... The *gat-þorn*, 'goat-thorn', was clearly at the southern tip of Barley Park near SP 344 056, where the boundaries of Ducklington, Lew, Claywell and Aston still meet, and where the field-names 'Gathern Hill' and 'Gather Ground' are recorded.<sup>4</sup> The next eight stages (omitted in the above transcript) are unidentifiable; it is clear from what follows that they traverse a very short though very tortuous section of the boundary, twisting and turning through ploughland with tree-marked hedges and ditches. The survey then comes to 'the brook of Ægel's well', and continues up-stream to the 'stone ford'. The 'brook' can only be the watercourse now known as Elm Bank ditch, which forms the western boundary of both Ducklington parish and Barley Park, and then flows on southwards to Yelford ('Ægel's ford'). From the stone ford we go to the unidentified 'bird-slade' (*fugelslæd*), and thence to Colwell Brook (*coluallan broc*), the stream which flows southwards out of Curbridge to meet the later parish boundary between Witney and Ducklington at SP 345 083.

The section of the Witney charter which partly coincides with Ducklington reads: ... *on coluallan broc*; *of þam broce on þa ealdan dic*; *of ðære dic on fugel sled*; *of þam slede on þa stan bricge*; *æfter broce on þane ealdan weg*; *of þam wege on horninga mære* ... The first four steps clearly cover the same ground as the Ducklington boundary (with the addition of an 'old ditch' between Colwell Brook and the 'bird-slade'), but after the 'stone bridge' the Witney boundary takes a different course: across the brook, to the 'old way', and thence to the 'boundary of the Horningas' (*horninga mære*). Tithable land at Lew in 1317 included 'Hornynghmere',<sup>5</sup> and a later description of the Witney boundary (in 1044) takes it from *horninga mære* to *hlaewan slæde* ('Lew-slade').<sup>6</sup> Here, therefore, the boundary must be running north-westwards, somewhere near the later boundary between Curbridge (which belonged to Witney) and Lew (which was part of late Anglo-Saxon Bampton); the 'old way' may be Abingdon Lane, which the parish boundary follows.

It is clear from the Ducklington text that the 'stone ford/bridge' was on Elm Bank Ditch, so if the charter and parish boundaries were identical for the whole course it would have to be located at the north-west corner of Ducklington (SP 3311 0735). The north boundary seems, however, to have changed slightly between 969 and 1044: the later Witney charter specifies merely a 'new ditch' for the whole course from Colwell Brook to *horninga mære*, and this must surely be the long, straight ditch which now marks the parish boundary between Witney and Ducklington. The sequence from the

<sup>2</sup> For earlier solutions see G.B. Grundy, *Saxon Oxfordshire* (O.R.S. xv, 1933), 31–2, 80; M. Gelling, 'English Place-Names Derived from the Compound *Wichām*', *Medieval Archaeology*, xi (1967), 87–104; T.C. Cooper, 'An Analysis of the Saxon Boundary of Witney', *Record of Witney*, vii (1980), 3–10 and ix (1980), 15–23. New commentaries, which form the basis of the present argument, will be published in due course by the West Oxfordshire Charter-Boundary Group.

<sup>3</sup> Based mainly on Davis's *Map of Oxfordshire* (1797) and the maps listed in note 4 below.

<sup>4</sup> 1773 Aston map, B.L. MS Add. 31323 HHH; 1840 Ducklington tithe map, O.R.O. Misc. Duck.II/1.

<sup>5</sup> Exeter Cathedral, Dean and Chapter archives, MS.2931.

<sup>6</sup> Sawyer, *op. cit.* note 1, No. 1001; Gelling, *op. cit.* note 2, ii. 490.



Fig. 2. West elevation of the stone bank, after cleaning.

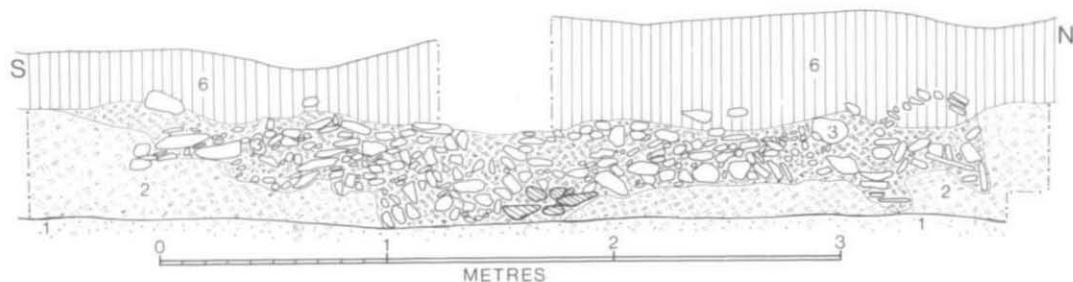


Fig. 3. West elevation of the stone bank (= N-S section on Fig. 4b).

'bird-slade' to the 'stone bridge' and thence to the 'old way' must therefore mark a now-lost boundary which ran either to the north or to the south of the later line. The correspondence of both previous and subsequent landmarks suggests that the divergence was not very great, and it may be that the 'new ditch' was merely a straightening-up of a more tortuous boundary on essentially the same course. Later evidence shows that this boundary divided Ducklington heath from Curbridge heath;<sup>7</sup> the 'new ditch' might well relate to the apportionment of previously intercommoned heathland.

On the evidence of the charters, therefore, the 'stone ford/bridge' was a crossing of Elm Bank Ditch which lay either a little way to the north or a little way to the south of the later north-west corner of Ducklington parish.

#### *The archaeological evidence*

The possibility that remains of the *stan bricg* might survive was first realised during a perambulation of the boundary in 1990, when a concentrated scatter of rubble in the

<sup>7</sup> Ducklington tithe map (note 4 above); Witney estate map, Bodl. (E) C17:49(151).

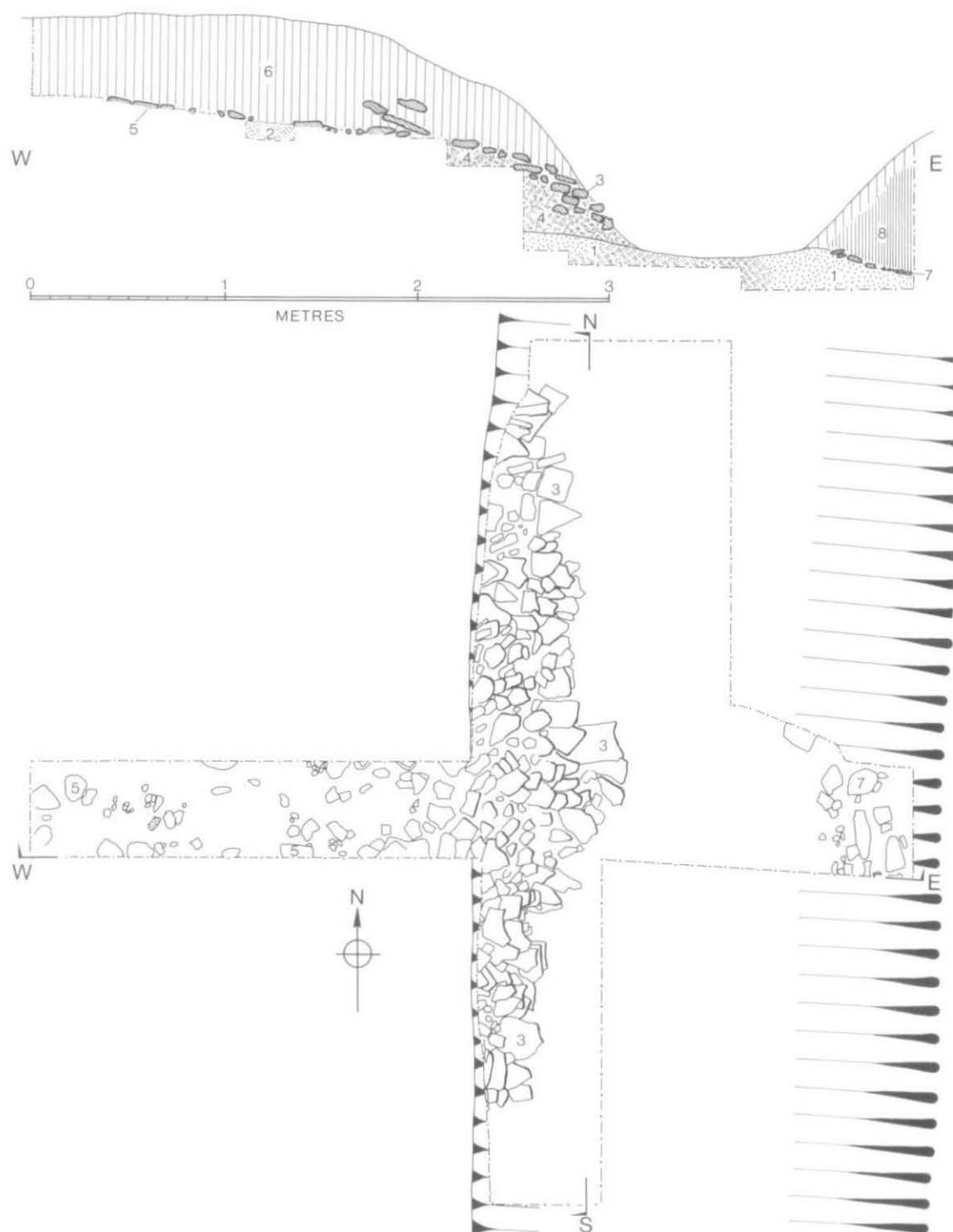


Fig. 4. (a) W-E section and (b) plan of the bank and paved ford.



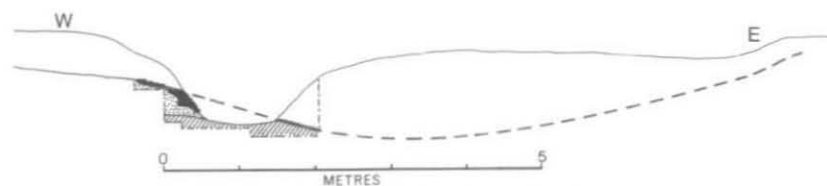


Fig. 5. Reconstructed sketch section (W-E), to show how the profile of the ford shown in Fig. 4a might have related to that of the original water-course.

ploughsoil was observed at a point on the west bank of Elm Bank Ditch (SP 3324 0712). Examination of the side of the ditch revealed several courses of rubble protruding through the field-wash and undergrowth, overlain by about half a metre of ploughsoil.

Limited excavations to clarify the remains were carried out during two days in August 1991. The bank of stones facing the west side of the ditch was cleaned and exposed, a trench was cut westwards from the ditch-edge into the field to investigate the back of the feature, and a small sondage was dug in the opposite bank to test the conjecture (which proved well-founded) that there might be a ford continuing further eastwards. Apart from the removal of displaced stones and the cutting of a small section the stone bank was not disturbed, and after recording it was covered by a protective bank of clay and stones.

The natural subsoil (1), a grey-orange clay containing lenses of clayey yellow gravel, was overlain on the west side of the ditch by a deposit of clean medium-brown sticky clay (2) over which the rubble bank (3) had been constructed. The bank was built of courses of irregular Cornbrash rubble fragments, on average *c.* 4 cm. thick, which as originally laid sloped down slightly towards the ditch. The original width of the rubble-built structure was probably *c.* 2.5 metres, but it had been much spread and disturbed both in the centre (possibly by watering cattle) and at either edge. In these places the stones were displaced and mixed with dark-brown silty clay, in which several fragments of 19th-century Leaffield Ware pottery were found. The west-east section (Fig. 4a) unfortunately bisected one of these disturbed places and thus gives a slightly distorted profile, though it does show that the stones were originally set against a bank of sticky dark-brown clay (4).

The trench running westwards into the field encountered a disturbed layer of rubble (5), lying directly on the brown clay (2) and overlain by the ploughsoil (6). Layer 5 probably represented the tail of the bank, but it contained 19th-century pottery and had clearly been totally disturbed by the ploughing which had brought the rubble scatter to the surface.

The sondage in the east bank of the ditch encountered a flat, even layer of rubble fragments *c.* 1–1.5 cm. thick (7), forming a paving laid directly on the surface of the natural clay and sloping gently downwards towards the east. This was overlain by the bank material (8), a fine medium-brown silty clay which had evidently been water-laid.

### Conclusions

The excavated structure is compatible with the descriptions 'stone ford' and 'stone bridge', and its location is compatible with the evidence of the boundary descriptions analysed above. It can therefore be identified with some confidence as a stream-crossing which was in use in the mid 10th century, presumably on the line of an east-west route from Ducklington to Lew and thence to Bampton.

The excavation revealed the profile of a stone-paved surface, sloping downwards from west to east and with a rubble bank on its western side, which the existing ditch has cut through. This ditch is narrow, straight-sided, and clearly not ancient in its present form. A projection of the profile (Fig. 5) makes it obvious that when the causeway was constructed the watercourse must have been at least three or four times its present width; the geological survey shows an alluvial floodplain 100 metres wide.<sup>8</sup> In its natural state, therefore, this was a broad, sluggish stream, shallow and fordable; alluviation during the Middle Ages, followed by the cutting of a new drainage channel in the inclosure period, would have brought about its transformation into the present narrow ditch. This fact is strong evidence that the causeway, relating to such different geological conditions, is relatively ancient.

At first sight the different terms *ford* and *bricge* might suggest that between 958 and 969 a ford was replaced by a bridge. In fact it is far more likely that the two words are here synonymous, and should both be translated as 'causeway'. Support for this is provided by the poem *The Battle of Maldon*, in which both words are used to describe the causeway which still links Northey Island to the Essex mainland: we are told that Wulfstan was commanded to 'hold the bridge' (*healdan þa bricge*), and a few lines later that the Vikings asked to be allowed 'to cross over the ford' (*ofer þone ford faran*).<sup>9</sup> The chief interest of the Ducklington discovery is that it suggests the likely form of other recorded 'stone fords' or 'stone bridges'. In surviving English charter-bounds 'stone ford' is a more common term than 'stone bridge', with 24 occurrences as against 11.<sup>10</sup> Oddly enough, two of the 'stone bridges' are in the immediate vicinity of Ducklington: one over the Thames at Shifford, the other apparently near Aston Bampton.<sup>11</sup> One of the 'stone fords' evidently refers to a much more important crossing of the Thames, from Abingdon across the alluvial floodplain to the south end of the great Oxford causeway.<sup>12</sup> Rubble-built causeways may have been a familiar feature in the late Anglo-Saxon landscape of the Upper Thames, with its broad floodplain and numerous tributaries and branches.

#### *Acknowledgements*

The excavation was carried out by kind permission of the landowner, Mr. Edmund Strainge. We are also extremely grateful to Christopher Day, who first noticed the rubble scatter in the field during a walk by the West Oxfordshire Charter-Boundary Group, and who helped with the excavation.

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<sup>8</sup> Institute of Geological Sciences, 1:50,000 series, Solid and Drift edn., sheet 236 (Witney) (1982).

<sup>9</sup> Lines 74, 88. For the most recent discussions of both the text and the site see papers in D. Scragg (ed.), *The Battle of Maldon, AD 991* (1991).

<sup>10</sup> We are extremely grateful to Joy Jenkyns for this information, derived from her data-base of terms in charter-boundaries. These totals exclude duplications, but include the two Ducklington references.

<sup>11</sup> Sawyer, op. cit. note 1, Nos. 654, 673 (bounds of Longworth); M. Gelling, *The Place-Names of Oxfordshire* (E.P.N.S. xxiv, 1954), 484 (bounds of 'Cyngbrycge', identified as Bampton).

<sup>12</sup> Sawyer, op. cit. note 1, No. 567 (bounds of Abingdon); B. Durham, 'The Thames Crossing at Oxford: Archaeological Studies 1978-82', *Oxoniensia*, xlix (1984), 59, 90-1.

## PRAUNCE'S PLACE (MANOR FARM), OLD WOODSTOCK

Manor Farm (SP 4420 1708), on the E. side of the street which runs downhill through Old Woodstock to the river-crossing, has long been known to contain a medieval chimney.<sup>1</sup> A survey in 1983 further elucidated its development, and showed that not merely the chimney but also the whole range to which it belongs dates from the 13th century. It also revealed that another part of the building, a small tower-like structure, probably dates from the late Middle Ages.

The house stands on a steep, S.E.-facing hill. The original range and the structures to its N.W. are aligned N.W. – S.E., fronting on the street. Attached to the S. end of these is a large post-medieval range, with an imposing main front facing S.E. towards the river. The house rises up the hill-slope, with the result that its internal levels are complex: the ground floor of the post-medieval range is roughly on a level with the semi-basement of the 13th-century block, and with the cellar of the late medieval tower to its N.

*Late 13th century*

The earliest range was always of two storeys, comprising a chamber raised over a semi-basement; the attic storey is a post-medieval insertion. Only the N.W. and S.W. walls (both c. 85 cm. thick) survive, but the central position of the chimney in the N.W. gable (Fig. 4, left) shows that the internal width was originally, as now, c. 8 m. The other



Fig. 1. The earlier range of Praunce's Place, viewed from S.W. Late 13th-century chamber-block in centre-right, with facsimile chimney-pot indicating the position of its original N.W. gable; late medieval 'tower' to far left.

<sup>1</sup> M.E. Wood, *Thirteenth-Century Domestic Architecture in England* (*Archaeol. Jnl.* cv suppl., 1950), 60–1.

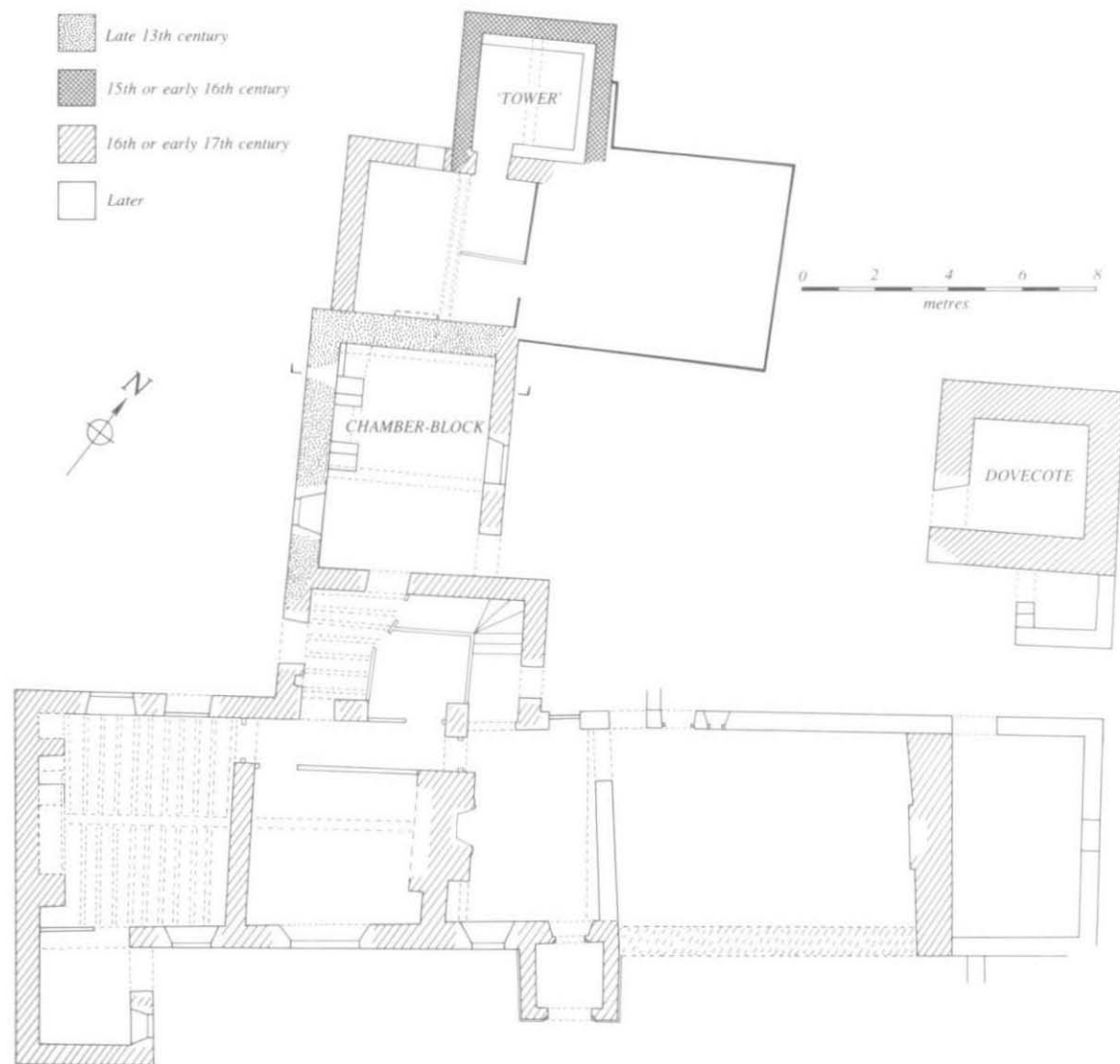


Fig. 2. Praunce's Place: plan of lowest level (ground floor in S.E. range, basement at N.W. end).

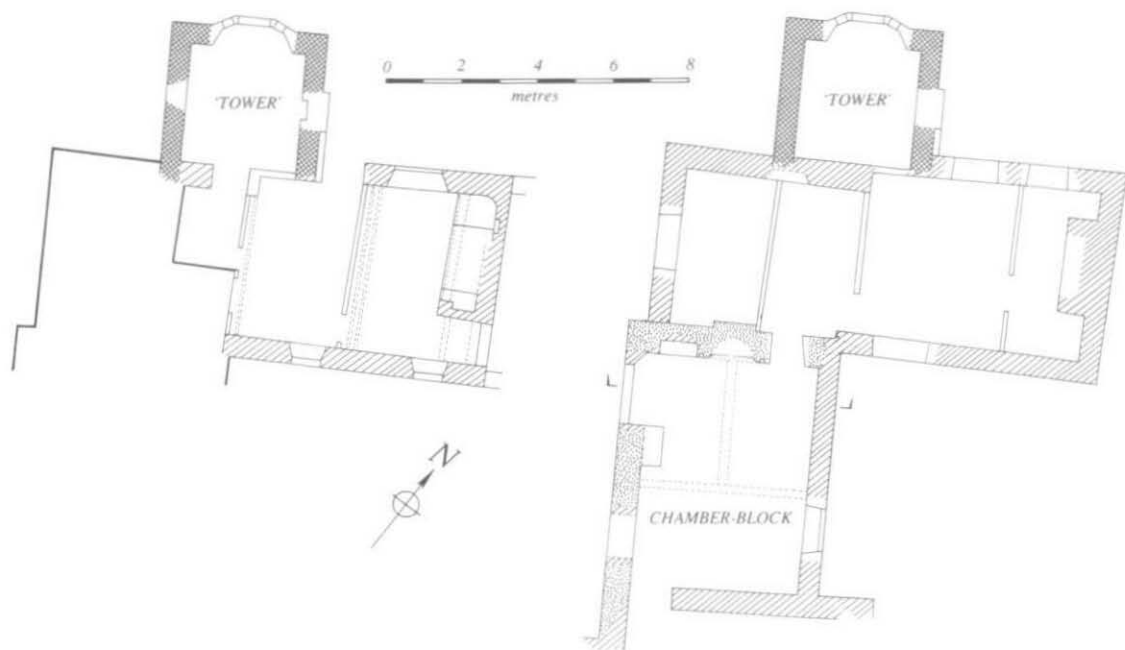


Fig. 3. Praunce's Place: plans of middle level (left) and upper level (right). (Conventions as Fig. 2).

two walls are apparently 17th-century, which is probably the date of the floor-joists. The only original architectural features are a blocked basement window on the S.W. front, comprising a simple rectangular opening,<sup>2</sup> and the chimney which served the upper room.

The chimney-stack, built into the outer face of the gable wall, is at first-floor level only, being corbelled out on a quarter-round moulding of finely dressed ashlar (visible in the basement of the adjoining range). The fireplace (Fig. 4, left),<sup>3</sup> also of good ashlar, has a shouldered lintel and a narrow quarter-hollow edge moulding; a horizontal scroll-moulding above originally formed the top of a hood which has been roughly hacked away. Flanking the opening are a pair of small oblong lamp-recesses. This seems to have been a standard type of late 13th-century fireplace, closely similar for example to one in Charney Basset manor-house.<sup>4</sup> Capping the chimney was the house's most notable feature (Fig. 4, right): an original octagonal stone chimney-pot with a conical top, a row of small gables and a vent-slit in each face. Sadly, this collapsed in the mid 20th century and is now represented by a replica.

This is a typical example of the rectangular storied ranges, widely built in the 12th and 13th centuries, which were known to contemporaries as 'chamber-blocks' (*camerae*) and which modern architectural historians have erroneously termed 'first-floor halls'.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Compare the windows in the 13th-century service-block at Cogges Priory: *Oxoniensia*, xlvii (1982), 80-1.

<sup>3</sup> Illustrated Wood, op. cit. note 1, Pl. Xa.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. Pl. Xb.

<sup>5</sup> For the most recent discussion of the general context see J. Blair, 'Hall and Chamber: English Domestic Planning 1000-1250', in G. Meirion-Jones and M. Jones (eds.), *Manorial Domestic Buildings in England and Northern France* (Society of Antiquaries of London Occasional Paper xv, forthcoming 1993).

Such a building was the main domestic component of the typical manor-house, and would have been accompanied by a conventional open hall at ground-floor level. By the late 13th century the hall and chamber were normally linked, so the hall at Praunce's Place is likely either to have extended north-eastwards from the chamber-block, across the present courtyard, or to have occupied the site of the post-medieval S.E. range and abutted the chamber-block corner-to-corner. In view of the second possibility, it is worth noting the very thick N.E. and (destroyed) S.E. walls of this range (Fig. 2): a 13th-century date for them is conceivable, though quite unprovable.

*15th or early 16th century*

The northernmost component of the house is a small square structure, now of two stories over a cellar. This is now linked to the chamber-block by a post-medieval range inserted between them, but was once free-standing: its original external S. corner can be seen in the cellar of the inserted range. Visible externally in the S.W. wall is a small blocked window with an angular four-centred head and deep splays, at a level which does not conform to the present floors inside the building. The blocking conceals any mouldings, but the general shape and appearance of this window suggest a date in the 15th or early 16th century.

There is insufficient evidence on which to interpret this structure with any confidence. It has clearly been drastically remodelled, either by lowering the floor over an existing cellar or by digging out the cellar within it, and it is possible that originally it was only of one storey. A small late medieval kitchen or similar domestic building is perhaps the best guess.

*Late 16th and 17th century*

Between c. 1550 and c. 1620 the house was greatly enlarged, assuming a courtyard plan. These extensions are hard to date precisely, and may represent a number of phases: they comprise both the very simple work in the N. and W. parts of the house, and the more elaborate E. part of the S.E. range (now largely destroyed but known from illustrations).

In the former category are the range which is inserted between the 13th- and 15th-century buildings and extends to form the N.W. side of the courtyard, and the W. part of the S.E. range. Some of this work can probably be ascribed to a known remodelling of c. 1560,<sup>6</sup> but some could well be later: most of the windows and doorways were replaced in the 19th century, and the few original ones which survive are largely featureless. The massive square dovecote on the N.E. side of the courtyard, still with its inner skin of slab-built nesting-boxes, probably also dates from the early post-medieval period.

The E. part of the S.E. range was a much more elaborate affair, with a three-storey porch (forming the centre of the whole facade) and symmetrical mullioned windows with drip-mouldings.<sup>7</sup> Of this only the porch remains: the rest of the front had been demolished by 1876 after a fire, and the other three walls now enclose an open courtyard. As noted above, the thickness of the front wall (deduced from the scars of its two ends) suggests that it may have been retained from an earlier period. The details of the surviving porch suggest a date not long after 1600.

<sup>6</sup> *V.C.H. Oxon.* xii, 426.

<sup>7</sup> Illustrated *ibid.* facing p. 348, from a watercolour of 1821.

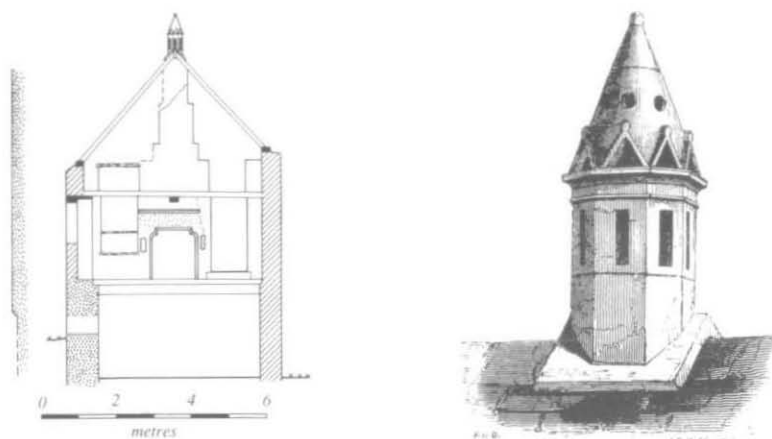


Fig. 4. *Left:* Cross-section (= section line on Figs. 2 and 3) looking N.N.W. through the 13th-century chamber-block, showing the original fireplace and chimney (chimney-pot not to scale). Same scale as Figs. 2 and 3. *Right:* The chimney-pot, reproduced from J.H. Parker, *Some Account of Domestic Architecture in England from Edward I to Richard II* (1853), 90.

#### *The origins of the house*

The descent of the property has recently been discussed by the *Victoria County History*, and need only be outlined here.<sup>8</sup> The first reference is in 1342, when Henry Praunce sold the house to John of the Park. After passing through various gentry families it was divided into two tenements, of which Balliol College acquired the eastern in 1522 and the western in 1615. It is therefore likely that the ambitious early 17th-century work was carried out by Balliol when the two halves were re-united.

This history fails to explain why such a high-status house should have been built on the property in the 13th century. The scale and quality of the chamber-block would be consistent either with a normal rural manor-house, or with a substantial burgess's town-house. However, Praunce's Place had no farmland attached to it when first mentioned in 1342, and Old Woodstock was much smaller than the towns in which such houses would normally occur.<sup>9</sup> An obvious possibility, given the close proximity of Woodstock Park, is that the building had some connection with the royal palace there under Henry III or Edward I. Did it perhaps house a park official or manorial bailiff, of sufficient status to have a house built for him by the royal works staff?

JOHN BLAIR and IAN BAXTER

<sup>8</sup> *V.C.H. Oxon.* xii, 425–7.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* 423–4.

## AN INVENTORY OF OXFORDSHIRE WELLS: ADDITIONS

Since the first list of Oxfordshire's ancient and holy wells was published in *Oxoniensia* lv, a number of new sites have come to light. Most are based on information forwarded by readers after the list appeared, and my thanks are accordingly due to Miss N. Aubertin-Potter of All Souls College, Oxford; Mr. A. Millard, of Trinity College, Oxford; and Mr. R. Mann of Moreton-in-Marsh.

BEGBROKE: St Begga's Well, lost. 1726. 'A little village called Begbrook, from a famous Well dedicated to St Begga, w<sup>ch</sup> was in old Time much resorted to, as other wells of the same nature were, and a little House or Covering was erected over it for the better Security of the Water' (*Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, ed. H.E. Salter, ix (Oxf. Hist. Soc. lxxv), 238).

CHARLBURY: Baywell, SP 357188. 1972 (*V.C.H. Oxon.* x, 131).

DUCKLINGTON: Cooper's Well, approx. SP 354073. 1850 (inf. from Mr. A. Millard).

KINGHAM: Holwell Spring, SP 273254. 1640. Probably from O.E. *holh*; still used for public supply. Iron Age/Romano-British settlement nearby, and Etruscan brooch discovered in 1929 (inf. from Mr. R. Mann). Stocks Well, SP 262242. 1957. By stocks, used for supply; pump fitted 1887 to celebrate Jubilee (inf. from Mr. R. Mann; E.J. Lainchbury, *Kingham, the Beloved Place* (1957), 263).

NORTH LEIGH: Madley Well, approx. SP 385121. 1300. Pond on south boundary of village (*V.C.H. Oxon.* xii, 215; B. Schumer, 'An Elizabethan Survey of North Leigh', *Oxoniensia*, xl (1975)).

Mr. Millard has also provided more information on the wells of Curbidge. Kettle Well was on the parish boundary at SP 321100 and may have been identical with the 'Aegelswellan' of the 958 Ducklington charter. Coral Spring was at SP 338089, and a Romano-British settlement and cemetery was nearby (R.A. Chambers, in *Oxoniensia*, xli (1976) 17-20; 38-55).

JAMES RATTUE

## A SACRED OR ROYAL MARRIAGE? THE IDENTIFICATION OF FIFTEENTH-CENTURY STAINED GLASS FROM GREAT ROLLRIGHT

A stained glass window from the church of Great Rollright, now in the Bodleian Library, has been variously identified as the sacrament of marriage from a series of the seven sacraments, and as the marriage of King Henry VI with Margaret of Anjou. The former identification is currently in favour, but, as I intend to demonstrate, the glass in its original form was not iconographically consistent with this.<sup>1</sup> The present window conforms more closely, but this is a result of alterations made to the original design, probably in the late 18th century.

Seven-sacrament windows were a peculiarly English iconographical development of the 15th century, and sprang directly from the growing devotional interest in the person of Christ and his passion as expressed in the cults of the five wounds and of the blood of Christ. Channels of red blood flow from the wounds of a large central figure of Christ and link with individual scenes illustrating the seven sacraments. Theologically, this development makes the grace of the sacraments dependent on Christ's suffering and redemption of mankind and downplays the significance of the Old Testament origins of the sacrament of marriage. Portrayals of the seven sacraments are found chiefly in

<sup>1</sup> P.A. Newton, *Corpus Vitrearum Medii Aevi - County of Oxford* (London 1979), pp. 103-4.





Fig. 1. Marriage scene in stained glass from the church of Great Rollright, now in the Bodleian Library. (Reproduced with permission of the Bodleian Library, Oxford.)

stained glass, although the survival of one wallpainting of the subject suggests that it may also have been widespread in this medium.<sup>2</sup>

The possibility that the Great Rollright window has been wrongly identified as the sacrament of marriage is suggested by some significant iconographical inconsistencies between this representation and other known portrayals of the sacraments. Two points in particular need further attention: the depiction of the channels of Christ's blood and the wearing of a crown by the bride.

The channels of red blood are perhaps the most distinctive characteristic of the iconography of the seven sacraments and they are commonly taken as the first hint that a fragment of old glass is part of a sacrament series. However, the Great Rollright window is unusual in having two channels of blood descending towards the hands of the principal participants. In other examples only one channel of blood is shown, as at

<sup>2</sup> G. McN. Rushforth, 'Seven Sacrament Compositions in English Medieval Art', *Antiq. Jnl.* ix (1929), pp. 83-100. Examples in stained glass occur at Cadbury, Doddiscombsleigh (Devon), Melbury Bubb (Dorset), Buckland (Glouc.), Cartmel Fell (Lancs.), Crudwell (Wilts.), Great Malvern (Worcs.) and Llandyrnog (Clwyd). The wallpainting of this subject survives at Kirton in Lindsey (Lincs.). The examples from Cartmel Fell, Llandyrnog and Kirton in Lindsey differ slightly in arranging the scenes around a central image of the Crucifixion. Fragments of seven-sacrament glass remain at Frampton on Severn (Glouc.). Bequests for seven-sacrament windows also occur in the wills of the vicar of All Saints, Bristol (1434) and Sir Robert Throckmorton of Coughton (Warw.) (1518).

Doddyscombsleigh (Devon), Buckland (Gloucestershire), Cartmel Fell (Lancashire) and Llandyrnog (Clwyd). On occasion two channels of blood are shown linked to an individual sacrament scene, but this is the case only with the scene positioned at the feet of Christ, which is typically the sacrament of penance.<sup>3</sup>

Depictions of marriage, whether in the iconographical form discussed here or on the seven sacrament fonts found mainly in East Anglia, normally show the bride with her head covered whilst the groom stands bareheaded.<sup>4</sup> The bride's head-dress follows contemporary fashions and in no example does it resemble a crown. The crowning of the bride was an integral part of the wedding ritual of the Eastern Church of the period and the custom also appears to have been followed in parts of Germany. However, since there is no evidence, either liturgically or iconographically, for its adoption and use in England, the crown worn by the bride would seem to indicate royal status.<sup>5</sup>

The peculiarity of the representation of the channels of blood and the bride's crown in the Great Rollright glass suggests that the 18th-century identification of the scene as the marriage of Henry VI and Margaret of Anjou may, in fact, be more appropriate. Parts of the present composition are clearly the results of re-assembly, with the female figure on the lower left of the picture being only the most obvious example, and it is fortunate that 18th-century drawings provide a more accurate view of the original composition.

The 18th-century watercolour reproduced by Newton does not illustrate the original composition completely.<sup>6</sup> The piece of glass depicting the lower part of the priest's vestments is evidently a rather clumsy later insertion. However, for our purposes this is unimportant. Of greater significance is the fact that there is no sign of the channels of blood indicative of a sacrament scene. Instead, the artist shows rather thick lines of leading, which were later to provide room for their introduction.

The date of this alteration is uncertain since the watercolour is not precisely dated. The glass itself was presented to the Bodleian Library by Alderman William Fletcher, a local Oxford antiquary who specialised in the collection of stained glass, in 1797, when it was described as the marriage of Henry VI and Margaret of Anjou. In 1868 W.D. Macray expressed doubts concerning the identification of the window, stating that it differed from the portrayal of the same royal marriage in a painting in Walpole's collection at Strawberry Hill. Macray did not detail these differences, but, since other commentators have pointed to the similarity of the disposition of the figures in the two scenes, it is possible that the key difference observed by Macray may have been the presence of the channels of blood.<sup>7</sup>

For this reason, it is worth trying to reconstruct the phases of repair and reconstruction that the glass has undergone. The most recent rearrangement occurred during repairs to the Old Library in 1955-62, when the glass was placed in its present position in Selden End. The glass was repaired by G. King & Sons of Norwich, and it was at this date that the left-hand figure and the head below it were introduced. This restoration

<sup>3</sup> G. McN. Rushforth, 'Seven Sacrament Compositions'; Canon J.T. Fowler, 'On the Painted Glass of St. Anthony's Chapel, Cartmel Fell', *Trans. Cumberland & Westmorland Antiq. & Arch. Soc.* xii (1912), pl. 4; S. Pritchard, 'Ancient Stained Glass in Gloucestershire Churches', *Trans. Bristol & Glouc. Arch. Soc.* xlvii (1925), pl. 10.

<sup>4</sup> A.C. Fryer, 'On Fonts with Representations of the Seven Sacraments', *Archaeological Jnl.* lix (1902), pp. 17-66; A.C. Fryer, 'Additional Notes on Fonts with Representations of the Seven Sacraments', *Archaeological Jnl.* lxxiii (1906), pp. 102-5. The bride's head is uncovered in only two of the 30 fonts depicting the seven sacraments.

<sup>5</sup> K. Stevenson, *Nuptial Blessing: A study of Christian Marriage Rites, Alcuin Club Coll.* lxiv (London 1982), pp. 16-31.

<sup>6</sup> P.A. Newton, *Corpus Vitrearum*, pl. 33; Bodl. Gough Maps 26, f. 72.

<sup>7</sup> W.D. Macray, *Annals of the Bodleian Library* (1868), pp. 29-30.



Fig. 2. *Top*: illustration of the Great Rollright glass in John Carter's *Specimens of the Ancient Sculpture and Painting* (1793). (Bodl. Gough Maps 54, 55 facing p. 48). *Bottom*: the earlier 18th-century drawing of the Great Rollright marriage scene (Bodl. Gough Maps 26, f.72). (Reproduced with permission of the Bodleian Library, Oxford.)

was the second modern repair of which we have record. The Bodleian inventory of 1939 notes that the window, then in the south range, had been repaired and set in that position by D. King. Unfortunately there are no records of the repairs carried out at that date.<sup>8</sup> However, consideration of another 18th-century drawing of the window suggests that we should place the insertion of the channels of blood at an earlier date.

Comparison between the 18th-century drawing described earlier and a drawing of the glass by John Carter, dated 1793, enables us to narrow down the date of the alteration.<sup>9</sup> The two illustrations reveal significant differences. The Carter drawing bears the closest resemblance to the present glass: the blue rosette panels and the lower portion of the priest's garment, for example, are identical. Compared to the other 18th-century drawing there are significant differences due to alteration or damage. Thus, the two heads at the extreme top right and left of the former picture are missing in Carter. The glass at the foot of the tunics of the bride and groom is also missing and has new lines of leading. Most importantly, only the Carter drawing shows the leading for the two channels of blood, although the red glass itself is not illustrated. Consequently, we must date the misleading introduction of the channels of blood to the period between the two drawings.

The Carter drawing was published, with an accompanying description by Gough, in 1794. Gough's comments suggest that the alterations to the glass were carried out shortly before the date of the Carter drawing:

When I first saw this glass painting it had a head in curled hair and a cap over the figure with the hawk, and a head with straight hair over the supposed nurse or mother.<sup>10</sup>

These missing heads match the earlier 18th-century illustration, and it seems likely that the introduction of the channels of blood occurred in the years immediately preceding the execution of the drawing by Carter in 1793.

Despite the complex history of alterations to the Great Rollright glass, it therefore seems that the original image was a representation of the royal marriage of Henry VI with Margaret of Anjou. Such a portrayal, although probably unique amongst the surviving stained glass from parish churches, is not implausible.<sup>11</sup> The religious cult of Henry VI lacked official sanction due to the failure of Henry VII to press hard enough for his canonisation. However, the cult possessed significant popular appeal. A manuscript of the healing miracles associated with the shrine of Henry VI details 174 miracles occurring between c. 1481 and 1500 in 34 English counties. The presence of the cult in Oxfordshire is also attested by this source, since five of the 138 miracles for which locations are known concerned people from the county.<sup>12</sup> The Great Rollright window further illustrates the vitality of the cult of Henry VI in Oxfordshire.

CHRISTINE PETERS

<sup>8</sup> P. Stokes, *Painted Glass in the Bodleian Library* (1973), pp. 2, 24, 57.

<sup>9</sup> J. Carter, *Specimens of the Ancient Sculpture and Painting now remaining in this kingdom from the earliest period to the reign of Henry VIII*, ii (London, 1794), pp. 48–50.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* p. 49.

<sup>11</sup> Standing figures of Henry VI occur on rood screens and in stained glass.

<sup>12</sup> Father R. Knox & S. Leslie, *The Miracles of Henry VI, being an Account and Translation of Twenty-Three Miracles taken from the Manuscript in the British Museum (Royal 13c. viii)*, (Cambridge, 1923), p. 23.

## THE CHADLINGTON SWORD – AND THE END OF THE SIEGE OF OXFORD?

In the 19th century the term 'mortuary' was applied to a series of 17th-century English basket-hilted swords, now well-known as the weapons of both Royalist and Parliamentary cavalry during the Civil War.<sup>1</sup> The bowl-shaped stool, which sweeps over the knuckles to the pommel, was chiselled in relief with portrait heads and other motifs apparently relating, in late examples, to the martyred King Charles I, although it is now recognized that similar swords were already in use in Charles' lifetime in the 1640s and earlier.<sup>2</sup> Motifs include coats-of-arms, cartouches and scrolls, and dolphin-head terminals to the side knuckle-guards and to the S-bars linking them to the stool.<sup>3</sup> A great variation in quality characterizes the group, which includes crude locally-produced guards at one end of the spectrum,<sup>4</sup> and at the other, pierced, silvered and gilded examples like one said to have been carried by Cromwell at Drogheda in 1649.<sup>5</sup>

A well-preserved example of a nicely-engraved 'mortuary'-hilted cavalry sword was discovered in the 1920s in Chadlington, Oxfordshire, in the course of re-thatching a cottage in the Brookend part of the village.<sup>6</sup> In the possession of the family of the finder for more than sixty years, the sword was brought to the attention of the Oxfordshire Museum Service following a public appeal for private material to illustrate an exhibition about the Civil War years in Oxfordshire.<sup>7</sup>

The sword (Figs. 1–2) has a double-edged blade probably of German manufacture,<sup>8</sup> about 4 cm. wide at the hilt end, and 82 cm. long. The fuller extends approximately 18 cm. down the centre of each side, and faint maker's marks appear at and around the terminal of each fuller; the marks are not identical (Fig. 3). The tip of the blade is rather blunt and seems worn. The tang of the blade projects through the pommel. The handle, probably of wood covered in leather,<sup>9</sup> is missing. Inside the stool, which rests at the top

<sup>1</sup> Anthony North, 'Seventeenth-Century Europe', in M.D. Coe et al, *Swords and Hilt Weapons* (1989), 74; A.V.B. Norman, *The Rapier and Small-Sword 1460–1820*, 377. The construction is well explained in Claude Blair, *European and American Arms c. 1100–1850* (1962), 11. I am indebted to Dr. Brian Gilmour of the Royal Armouries for help and advice with bibliography.

<sup>2</sup> P.R. Newman, *A Catalogue of the Sword Collection at York Castle Museum* (1985), 25. Examples of mortuary swords dated to the 1630s and 1640s in the collections of the Royal Armouries include IX.1378, dated 1634, and IX.956, IX.1387, IX.2024, IX.2590, IX.2781 and IX.3583, dated 1630–50: Royal Armouries, *Inventory*. I am indebted to Philip Lankester, Royal Armouries, for this information.

<sup>3</sup> Two good examples appear in Frederick Wilkinson, *Swords and Daggers* (1967), Plates 67 and 68.

<sup>4</sup> E.g. CA 718 in the York Castle Museum collection, a crudely-chiselled mortuary sword of c. 1620–50: Newman, op. cit. note 2, 27.

<sup>5</sup> North, op. cit. note 1, 74. Several mortuary swords in the Royal Armouries also retain traces of gilding: *Inventory*, IX.957 and IX.2222, both of the mid 17th century.

<sup>6</sup> The cottage is marked no. 327 on O.S. Map 1/2,500, Oxon. XX. 11 (1881). The sword was mentioned in J. Kibble, *Historical and Other Notes on the Ancient Manor of Charlbury and its nine Hamlets* (1927), 52; and recently by the present owner of the cottage, Mr. Collin Cowe, in *The Parish Magazine of Chadlington and Spelsbury*, July–September 1992, 13. The author is grateful to Mr. Cowe for this reference, and for his help in identifying the site of the cottage and for much other useful information. According to Mr. Cowe, the cottage was built c. 1600.

<sup>7</sup> 'Oxfordshire in the Civil War 1642–46', an exhibition at the Museum of Oxford and Banbury Museum, 12 September 1992 to 31 March 1993, by the Department of Leisure and Arts. The Department is grateful to the owner, Mrs. Kitty Gill, for contacting the Museum Service about the sword, and for making the sword available for display and study.

<sup>8</sup> The author is grateful to Mr. Frederick Wilkinson, Royal Armouries, for this and following suggestions and observations.

<sup>9</sup> The author would like to thank Mr. David Blackmore, Royal Armouries, for this information, and for general help and advice.

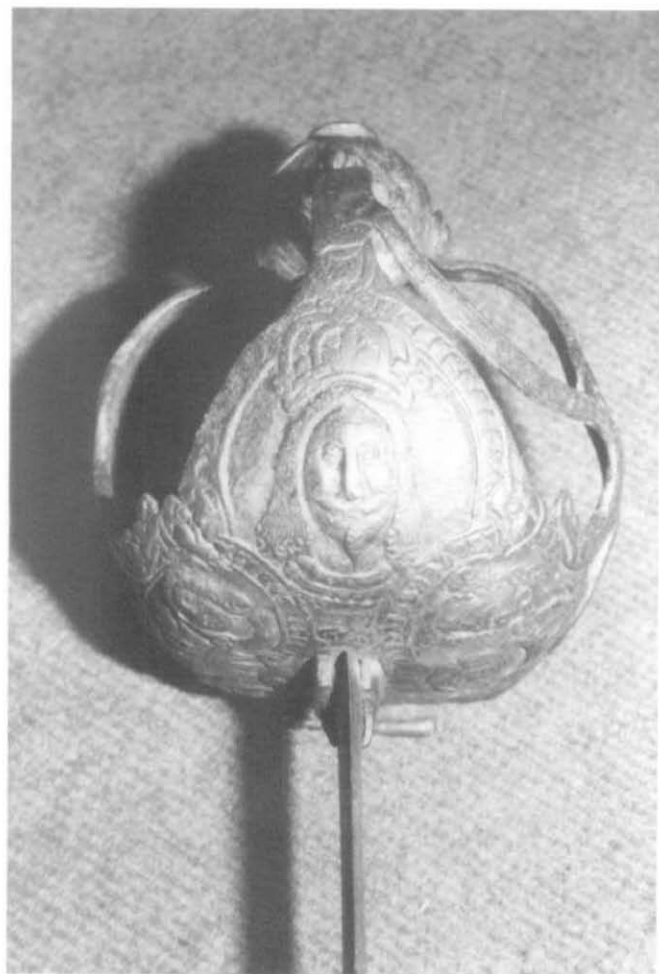


Fig. 1. 'Mortuary'-hilted sword found at Chadlington.





Fig. 2. 'Mortuary'-hilted sword found at Chadlington.

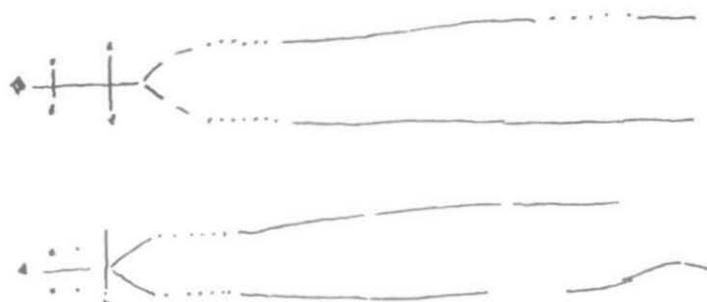


Fig. 3. The Chadlington sword : makers marks on outside (above) and inside (below) of blade. Scale 1:1.

of the blade, the join is strengthened by a 'boat' with pointed and grooved languets projecting below the basket down both sides of the blade.

The oval-shaped stool has been wrought to form a shallow bowl. The wristguard is rolled back; a plume motif has been chiselled on each side, with five plumes above and seven plumes underneath. Where the stool curves upwards to merge with the front knuckle-guard, a fine, long-haired, crowned head appears with goatee and moustache, within a decorative border (Fig. 1, left). On either side are decoratively bordered lozenge-shaped fields, each with a similar but smaller, uncrowned male head to the left and a female head and bust with curling, shoulder-length hair and low-cut bodice, to the right. On the inside the central motif between the heads consists of a crowned rose (Fig. 1, right), and on the outside, of three conjoined plumes; each central motif surmounts a double volute. The metalwork of the basket has split in two places on the outside, one of the splits showing signs of repair perhaps carried out in the course of manufacture.

Each of the two side knuckle-guards has a wider (2 cm.) central section chiselled with a grotesque bearded head, dividing downwards into two dolphin-head terminals overlapping with the edges of the stool (Fig. 2). On the inside, the left-hand dolphin terminal continues as an S-bar joining the front knuckle-guard (Fig. 2, left). All four guards show signs of separate forging onto the basket; the inside guard has begun to split just below the fantastic face, perhaps along the forging line. On the outside, signs of considerable corrosion suggest an outside S-bar here may have become damaged and been removed (Fig. 2, right).

The three knuckle-guards have flattened terminals fastened by screws to the pommel, a flattened sphere repeating the chiselled male and female heads, triple plumes and rose and crown. The tang-end emerging at the top of the pommel has been hammered flush.

Blade and hilt have areas of corrosion, but apart from the missing S-bar are in quite sound condition and appear to have been well-preserved in the thatch. While the sword shows signs of use and minor repair, there are no indications of major repair work or of replacement of parts, sometimes a feature of 'mortuary' type hilts and swords.

Mrs. Gill, daughter of the finder and former owner of the cottage, Mr. John Carlos Cluff, recalls being told that the sword was so positioned in the old thatch as to suggest it had been thrust upwards into the roof from the back bedroom of the cottage, apparently to conceal the identity of the owner at a time of threat, while allowing for subsequent retrieval when the danger had passed – presumably in the context of a sympathetic household.

The village of Chadlington, formerly a chapelry of Charlbury,<sup>10</sup> figures little in known

<sup>10</sup> *V.C.H. Oxon.* x. 127.



historic documents relating to the Civil War period, but according to village tradition as related by Kibble, on the morning before the battle of Edgehill in October 1642 troops 'were drawn up in Chadlington Street and given refreshment',<sup>11</sup> suggesting partisan sympathies in the village. Kibble does not specify the allegiance of the troops, but we learn from Anthony Wood's *Life and Times* of the Osballeston (or Osbaldeston) family of baronets of Chadlington, who were living in the manor house there 'called Nethercourt' from the 1660s; the Royalist officer buried at St Mary's, Oxford, is presumably of this family.<sup>12</sup>

Throughout most of 1642 and 1643 the king, based at Oxford, was often on the offensive, but from the second half of 1644 there were Royal losses both in the north and in the south; the Parliamentary siege of Banbury Castle was raised with difficulty.<sup>13</sup> During 1645 Fairfax began preparations for the siege of Oxford and Charles was routed at the battle of Naseby; by the spring of 1646 Oxford was isolated in a Parliamentary landscape, and on 24 June, after Charles's escape, the Oxford garrison surrendered. Three thousand men were allowed to march out with safe conducts home; Prince Rupert and three hundred gentlemen were allowed to leave, but with a safe conduct of ten days' duration only, before exile.<sup>14</sup>

The precise historic context of the hiding of the Chadlington sword cannot be demonstrated, nor is it even certain that this took place in the 17th century. But given the condition of the sword and the political situation in the part of the county lying northwest of Oxford during the 1640s, the possibility remains that the sword was thrust into the thatch by a Royalist cavalryman wishing urgently to hide his identity, at some time between 1644 and 1646, if not actually by a gentleman follower of Rupert in the aftermath of the fall of Oxford.

LAUREN GILMOUR

<sup>11</sup> Kibble, *op. cit.* note 6, 52.

<sup>12</sup> Wood's *Life and Times* (O.H.S.), i. 185; ii. 227, 364; iii. 41, 369; F.J. Varley, 'Oxford Army List for *Oxoniensia*, ii (1937), 148.

<sup>13</sup> A. Carter, J. Stevenson, *The Oxfordshire Area in the Civil War*, 15.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.* 18.