



# Durobrivae

A Review of Nene Valley  
Archaeology: 4  
1976



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## Editor's Note

The Editor firmly resisted suggestions when this journal was in the planning stage to name it *Nene Valley Treasures*. Treasure, after all, is *not* what archaeology is all about. But 1975 must surely rank as Nene Valley Treasure Year — see the contents of this number of *Durobrivae*! Nevertheless, sound, if less sensational, progress has been achieved in the field of excavation and this is recorded, too, in the following pages.

John Peter Wild

Nene Valley Research Committee

*The cover shows a silver plaque with gilt roundel, and the title page shows a decorated silver jug, part of the Waternewton silver treasure (see page 7).*

## Acknowledgements

The Nene Valley Research Committee wishes to record once more its thanks to the Peterborough Development Corporation Design Group for practical help with the design and layout of the Review. Credit should also be given to: P. Compton for fig. 2; the Trustees of the British Museum for figs. 3, 4, 5; Miss S. Lunt for fig. 7; the Oxford Institute of Archaeology for fig. 12a; Miss Marion Cox for fig. 12b; the Verulamium Museum, St. Albans, for figs. 9, 10, 11; the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England) for figs. 20a, 20b.

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# The Year's Work: 1975

by John Peter Wild

The upsurge in building development during the last ten years and the accompanying threats to archaeological monuments have resulted in a marked increase in the number of posts open to field archaeologists. Archaeology, however, has now to face a serious recession. In the reappraisal of priorities which is taking place, British archaeologists have one advantage over their continental colleagues: the immense — even embarrassing — public interest in their achievements. This is surely healthy, and should not be overlooked by the grant-giving public authorities.

The need to husband resources and to weight the archaeological priorities with unusual care has been the keynote of 1975 in Nene Valley archaeology.

The Director of Excavations, Mr Donald Mackreth, has completed his excavations at Hall Farm, Orton Longueville, and has been able to spend more of his time in the preparation of excavation reports. Inevitably, his burden of administrative tasks has grown, too. The Assistant Directors, Miss Carolyn Dallas and Mr Adrian Challands, have been concerned with the publication of their recent excavations, but have been active in the field when the need arose.

The backlog of untreated small finds from recent excavations has been substantially reduced by Miss Sarah Jennings, the Finds Research Assistant. She has been able to conserve metalwork and other finds most in need of first aid.

Mrs Gay Wilson, Palaeobotanist to the Committee, has been studying and reporting on botanical samples from Fengate, Longthorpe and Barnwell. Her investigation of Nene Valley material will, happily, form the basis of her research leading to Ph.D.

In *Durobrivae* 3, 1975, 10ff. Mr Robert Carson reported on an important find of Roman gold coins made at Waternewton in February 1974. This find was eclipsed by two more discoveries of 'treasure' in 1975, one made in the course of routine excavation, the other by chance.

Mr Peter Donaldson's continued excavation of the barrow at St Martins-Without near Barnack revealed a central burial pit with an undisturbed Beaker burial. The grave furniture included a fine Beaker, a bronze dagger and a gold-studded wrist-guard (p. 16). Through the kindness

of the Marquis of Exeter the finds are now in the British Museum.

The second discovery was even more spectacular (p. 7). A collection of Roman silver vessels with strong Christian overtones came to light within the Roman town of Durobrivae (noted briefly in *Durobrivae* 3, 1975, 30). Their significance for the history of the early church in Britain and for our understanding of late Roman society in the Nene Valley is immense. At a coroner's inquest held on September 10th 1975 the find was declared Treasure Trove and claimed by the Crown. It is at present undergoing treatment in the laboratories of the British Museum, but should be ready for display in time for the opening of the British Museum Silver Exhibition on April 1st 1977.

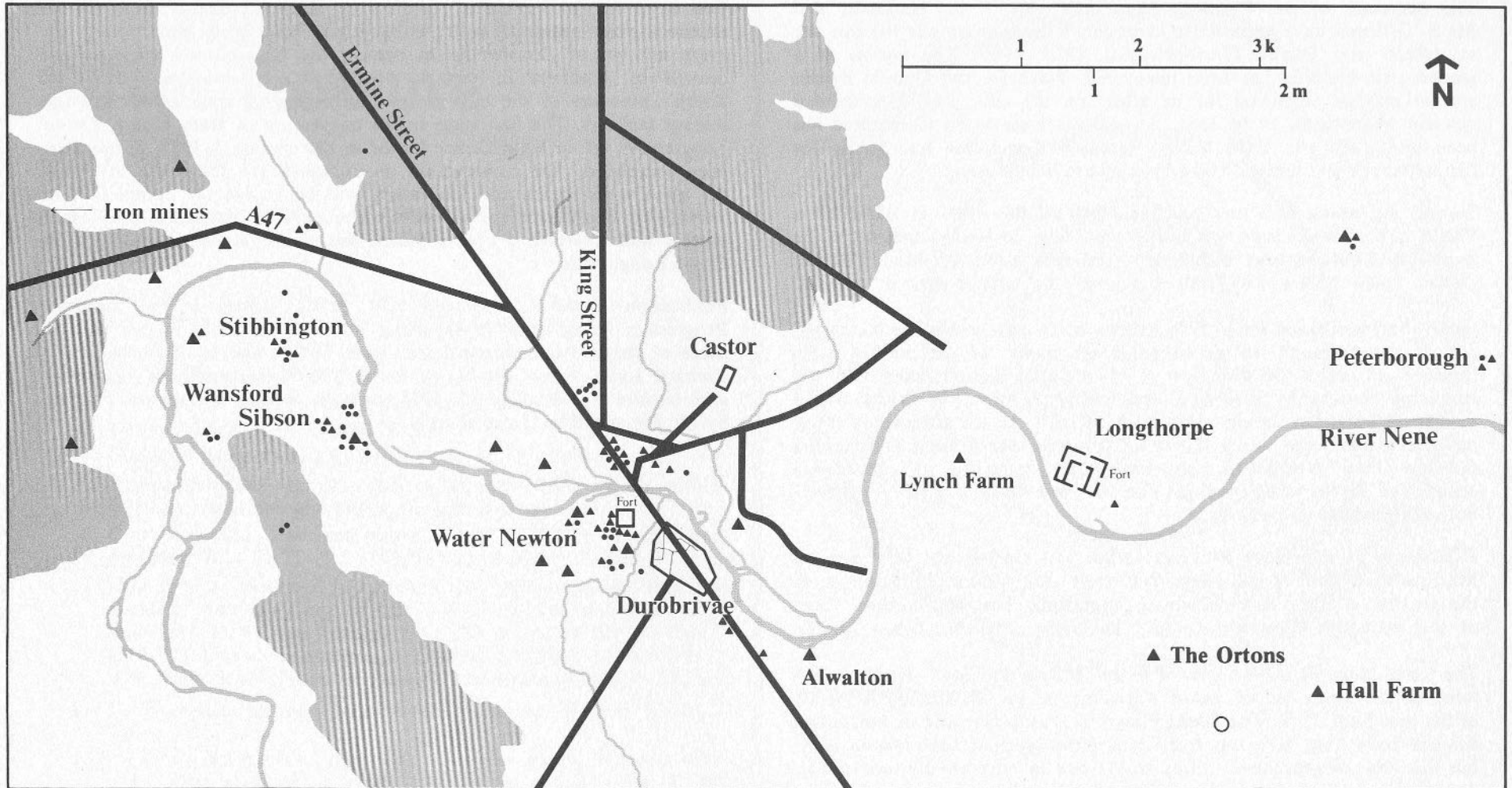
The Royal Ontario Museum's expedition under Mr Francis Pryor prepared itself for the excavation of a Roman farm at *Fengate*, east of Storey's Bar Road (*Durobrivae* 3, 1975, fig. 2E). In the event, the outlying ditched enclosures examined in 1975 proved to belong to an Iron-Age farm and to contain a striking series of round houses (p. 10).

In the winter of 1974-75 Mr Peter Donaldson continued excavation near *Barnack* of a ploughed-out barrow over the rich Beaker burial noted above (p. 14). More burials were found to have been made in a secondary phase.

The long-term excavation of the Roman farm buildings and overlying Pagan Saxon settlement at *Hall Farm, Orton Longueville*, directed by Mr Donald Mackreth, closed in 1975 (p. 24). The net result is an unusually complete picture of the workings of a later Roman farm. The Saxon features, however, pose more questions than they answer!

A second season's investigation of a proposed sewer-line in Norman-gate Field, Castor, was more rewarding than the directors (Mr G. B. Dannell and the Editor) had anticipated. A group of enclosures, perhaps animal pens, indicated agricultural use of this part of the site in the second and third centuries (p. 26).

Construction of the flyover across the A1 at *Kate's Cabin*, Alwalton, began early in 1975. Trial-trenches cut by Mr Richard Jones in 1973 (*Durobrivae* 2, 1974, 6) revealed Roman building remains on the spot; but inspection by Mr Adrian Challands as the contractors moved in suggested that the site would not repay major work.



- Iron Age or Roman Farm
- ▲ Roman building
- Potter's kiln
- Land over 100 feet (height)
- Roman roads

Fig 1 Map of the archaeological sites in the Nene Valley

The Secretary of the Research Committee, Mr J. A. Hadman, and Mr S. G. Upex have been active throughout the year on the Roman site at *Ashton* near Oundle (*Durobrivae* 3, 1975, 13ff.). The outline of a second strip-building has been uncovered. Plans for the Oundle bypass are far enough advanced for its effect on the site, now a Scheduled Ancient Monument, to be seen. An Ashton Excavation Committee has been set up by the Nene Valley Research Committee and funds for further survey and limited trial-trenching are being sought.

During the laying of a new pipeline north of the A605 at *Alwalton* a Pagan Saxon *Buckelurne* was brought up close to what appeared to be a ploughed-out barrow. Subsequent test-excavation by Miss Carolyn Dallas could throw no fresh light on the archaeological context.

Excavation was called for in 1975 on two main sites within the mediaeval city of Peterborough. In *Exchange Street* north of the market place trenches cut under the direction of Miss Dallas demonstrated that the surviving stratigraphy here is disappointingly shallow. In *Bridge Street* mediaeval buildings dating to at least as early as the fifteenth century have been uncovered along the street frontage. Mr Francis O'Neill, the director, has established an impressive sequence of mediaeval occupation levels which provide for the first time a guide to Peterborough's mediaeval pottery.

Excavation as a prelude to conservation was carried out this year by Mr Francis O'Neill at the Holy Well grotto and ponds, Longthorpe, at the request of the Development Corporation. The architectural form of this attractive eighteenth-century landscape was established (p. 34).

The foundations of the Roman barn and 'temple' at Lynch Farm underwent conservation before being displayed as an archaeological focus of the new Nene Park. The Roman town of *Durobrivae* and its immediate suburbs have long been scheduled under the Ancient Monuments Acts, but this has not prevented looting of the site by treasure-hunters (p. 36). An interim preservation order on the site has recently been signed by the responsible minister in the Department of the Environment. This is a first step towards protecting the prime archaeological site in the Lower Nene Valley.

Recent aerial photography, backed up by fieldwalking and, where appropriate, by a magnetometer survey, has given greater precision to the forward planning of excavations. In this number Mr S. G. Upex reviews some of his successes from the air (p. 32). On the ground Mr Mackreth's reports to the Committee on the archaeology of the Castor Township and on the archaeological potential of mediaeval Peterborough have already proved their value.

The need for a permanent field-centre to accommodate all facets of archaeological research and publication has been emphasised in every number of *Durobrivae*. At present the Committee's activities are centred on 'Jandfield' in Newark Road, Fengate, while the old W. H. Smith's premises in the city centre and Helpston Old School provide storage facilities. The first stage in the conversion of Ham House, Orton Longueville, into a Field Centre (noted in *Durobrivae* 3, 1975, 6) has now been completed. The construction of an annexe to the north in which the main work-rooms and laboratory will be is due for completion in July 1976. Permanent storage of finds cannot be catered for at Ham House, and alternative accommodation for them has been arranged in Orton Longueville.

Publication is the Committee's main preoccupation at the moment. Progress is being made in reporting on recent excavations as well as those of the embarrassingly distant past. In the course of the year Mr Richard Jones' report on Lynch Farm, Site 3, has appeared in *Northamptonshire Archaeology* 10, 1975, and the second interim on Fengate by Mr Pryor will be issued shortly.

# The Waternewton Silver Treasure

by Kenneth Painter

In February 1975 a treasure of one gold and 27 silver objects was found at Durobrivae. The group includes 28 objects, of which 9 are vessels and 19 are plaques:

1. Plain bowl; broken, diameter c.16cm.
2. Mouth and neck of a spouted jug. Height 10.5cm.
3. Large dish with Chi-Rho and omega in the central roundel (fig. 2). Diameter, 27cm.
4. Bowl decorated with facets. Diameter c.10cm.
5. Decorated jug (fig. 3). Height 20.3cm.
6. Cup with two detached handles (fig. 4). Height 12.5cm.
7. Strainer with handle; decorated at the end of the handle with a Chi-Rho and alpha and omega. Length 20.2cm.
8. Cup, partly lost, inscribed round rim: "(Chi-Rho with alpha and omega) INNOCENTIA ET VIVENTIA... RVNT". Height c.12.4cm.
9. Cup or bowl, inscribed in same style of lettering on the base and round the rim: (a) on base: "PVBLIANVS"; (b) round the rim: "(Chi-Rho with alpha and omega) SANCTVM ALTARE TVVM D (Chi-Rho with alpha and omega) OMINE SVBNIXVS HONORO". This inscription forms a dactylic hexameter. Height 11.5cm.
- 10-19. Triangular plaques, with veins like leaves. Heights 3.8cm — 7.8cm.
- 20-26. Triangular plaques, each with veins like leaves, and also with a Chi-Rho stamped in relief in a central roundel (fig. 5). All except one have in addition an alpha and omega. One has an inscription at the top: ". . . AMCILLA VOTVM QVO(D) PROMISIT CONPLEVIT". Heights 4.9cm-15.7cm.
27. Gold disc with Chi-Rho and alpha and omega. Diameter, 4.9cm.
28. Fragments of undecorated silver plaques or sheet.

No precise indication of date is available from within the group. The approximate date of manufacture of certain of the objects, however, can be ascertained by comparison with other discoveries: No.4, bowl decorated with facets, late third century A.D.; no.5, decorated jug, late

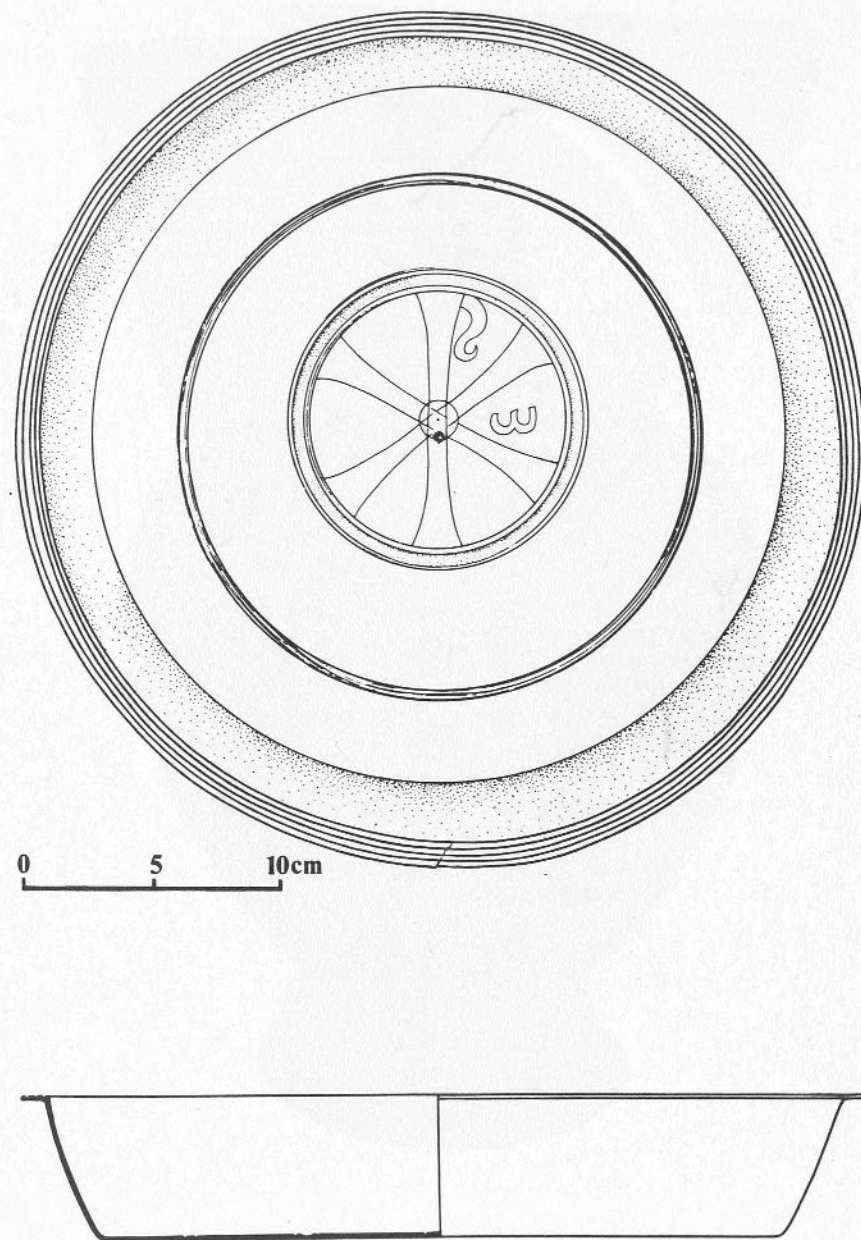


Fig 2 Silver dish with Chi-Rho and omega in the central roundel (diameter 27cm)





Fig 3 Decorated silver jug (height 20.3cm)

third or early fourth century A.D.; no.6, cup with two handles, third century A.D.; no.7, strainer, third century A.D.; nos.10-27, votive plaques, third century A.D. in type. The earliest possible date of deposition of the group is the latter part of the third century or the early part of the fourth century. The group was not deposited later than some time in the fourth century; for it does not include types of vessels found in the outstanding fourth-century silver hoards, while types found in these latter hoards are represented in fifth-century depositions.

There is evidence that the vessels were not simply abandoned. First the finder described how the vessels lay, carefully arranged in the large dish, and his evidence is confirmed by markings on the large dish. Second, laboratory examination of the broken edges of the objects shows that the majority of the breaks are recent and are likely to have occurred during ploughing or the removal of the objects from the soil. All the objects, therefore, were probably in a usable condition when they were put away in antiquity. The combination of these two factors suggests that the objects were deposited with the intention of being recovered. The reason for putting away the Waternewton Treasure could have been protection against theft or confiscation, or perhaps to keep objects safe in a period of danger. One of the earliest occasions when such hiding might have been necessary is the Great Persecution of Diocletian in A.D.303-304; but there are many other possibilities and the particular reason is not now likely to be known.

In character the Treasure is religious, Christian and not secular. The use of the Treasure, however, is problematical. The plaques were clearly votive, payments to God for requests fulfilled. The group of vessels, however, must be compared with those in other major hoards of the period. They resemble those in the important religious hoard from Berthouville in France in that they have dedicatory inscriptions. The vessels from Berthouville, however, were old and more or less worn when the dedications to Mercury were added in the third century A.D. The major secular hoards, however, were all usable when deposited. It seems likely, therefore, that the Treasure was in the possession of, and being used by, a practising Christian group, perhaps for *refrigeria* or for baptisms or for communion. No matter where this group lived, it is clear that they had a religious meeting-place; for one of the inscriptions refers to the *altare*, not an altar, but a sanctuary or sacred area, which must have been contained within a shrine or larger building.



*Fig 4 Silver two-handled cup (height 15.7cm)*

Before the discovery of the Waternewton Treasure, the two earliest known Christian treasures were those of Canoscio in Italy and of Kumlucu in Turkey, both of the sixth century A.D. The Waternewton Treasure is not later than the fourth century A.D. This new discovery is the earliest group of Christian religious silver from the whole Roman Empire and is a discovery of international importance.



*Fig 5 Silver plaque with gilt roundel (height 15.7cm)*

# Fengate, 1975

by Francis Pryor

In 1975 we had intended to concentrate our efforts on a Roman farm which we had reason to believe was in use between the first and the later third century A.D. As a first step, during the previous season, a team from the British Museum Research Laboratory conducted a soil-phosphate survey of the farm site, before we removed the topsoil. It has been shown that minute changes in soil-phosphate level reflect aspects of ancient settlement activity, since manure and household debris tend to deposit phosphates in the ground, where they remain for many hundreds of years, given suitable conditions. The survey showed that there was a very high soil-phosphate concentration just to the north of the farm, but outside the farmyards themselves. Close scrutiny of aerial photographs showed two indistinct ditches in this area, but that was all. There seemed no reason to expect such an anomalous phosphate count.

At the time I was inclined to put it down to the known frailties of the method. However, when the earthmoving machines arrived on the site, instead of directing them to the centre of the farm, I had them strip the area to the north. Once the topsoil had been removed, it became apparent that much of the site was covered by a deposit of flood-laid clay. We carefully removed this and were astonished by the number of archaeological features which lay beneath it and had been hidden from the aerial camera by the clay. The soil-phosphate survey, however, had used an auger which penetrated beneath this.

In *Durobrivae* 3, 1975, 7ff. I gave a condensed history of ancient settlement at Fengate in which I noted that the years immediately preceding the Roman occupation of the area saw very little activity. This was strange, given the fact that the preceding 500 years had seen a gradual, but noticeable, increase in population over the site as a whole. Our hidden settlement was the answer to this problem; for there could be little doubt that it was the immediate forerunner of the Roman farm just south of it.

The new settlement (fig. 6) is important to our appreciation of Nene Valley archaeology because it appears to be slightly earlier than the Belgic farmstead at Orton Longueville (*Durobrivae* 3, 1975, 26f.). Fengate and Orton have provided us, therefore, with a large selection of finds and features which date to the decades immediately before the Roman conquest. Both sites have many points in common, including the circular gullies which were dug to catch water dripping off the wide

eaves of round huts (fig. 6). Gullies of this type were a standard feature of the Iron Age along the whole length of the Nene Valley.

One of the Fengate houses (fig. 6, no. 7) still preserved traces of the actual wall foundations intact. They consist of closely set posts arranged around the inside of the eaves-drip gully, but separated from it by 90cm of clear ground. This clear ground represents the width of the overhanging eaves, which would have reached to within almost a metre of the ground to protect the clay-smearred wattle walls from damage by rain. Sarah Lunt's reconstruction (fig. 7) is based on our findings at Fengate, coupled with her own experience gained while working on the experimental Iron-Age farm at Little Butser, Hampshire. We do not yet know, however, whether all the building plans recovered at Fengate represent houses for people, as opposed to animals and/or grain supplies. We have therefore taken a series of phosphate samples from inside each building in the hope that animal byres would have a higher phosphate concentration than grain stores or peoples' homes.

Visitors to the site were always struck by the number and size of the Iron-Age ditches and we were often asked why they were dug in the first place. A possible explanation was provided by the ditch between houses 5 and 6 (fig. 6) which was found to have had two bundles of carefully arranged parallel twigs laid along its bottom. They had been preserved by a combination of dampness and clay, and there can be little doubt that they were the remains of an Iron-Age brushwood land-drain, of a type much used locally until the early years of this century. Indeed, a modern two-inch clay pipe-drain ran precisely parallel to, and 50cm away from, the Iron-Age drain, clearly demonstrating that this part of the site had been a problem to farmers for at least 2000 years! The twigs would conduct water like a pipe, and I am told that drains of this type could remain open for many years.

The final surprise of the season came in the last two weeks. We were cleaning down the sides of a smaller Iron-Age settlement ditch, when we came upon a multiple burial in one large grave (fig. 6). An adult man lay on his side in a crouched position and at his feet were the remains of a baby. Beyond the baby lay the disarticulated remains of two other individuals which had presumably been pushed aside to make room for the young man and (his ?) child. Unfortunately, however, there was no means of dating this group, other than the fact that they must be earlier than the Iron-Age ditch which cut through the grave-filling.

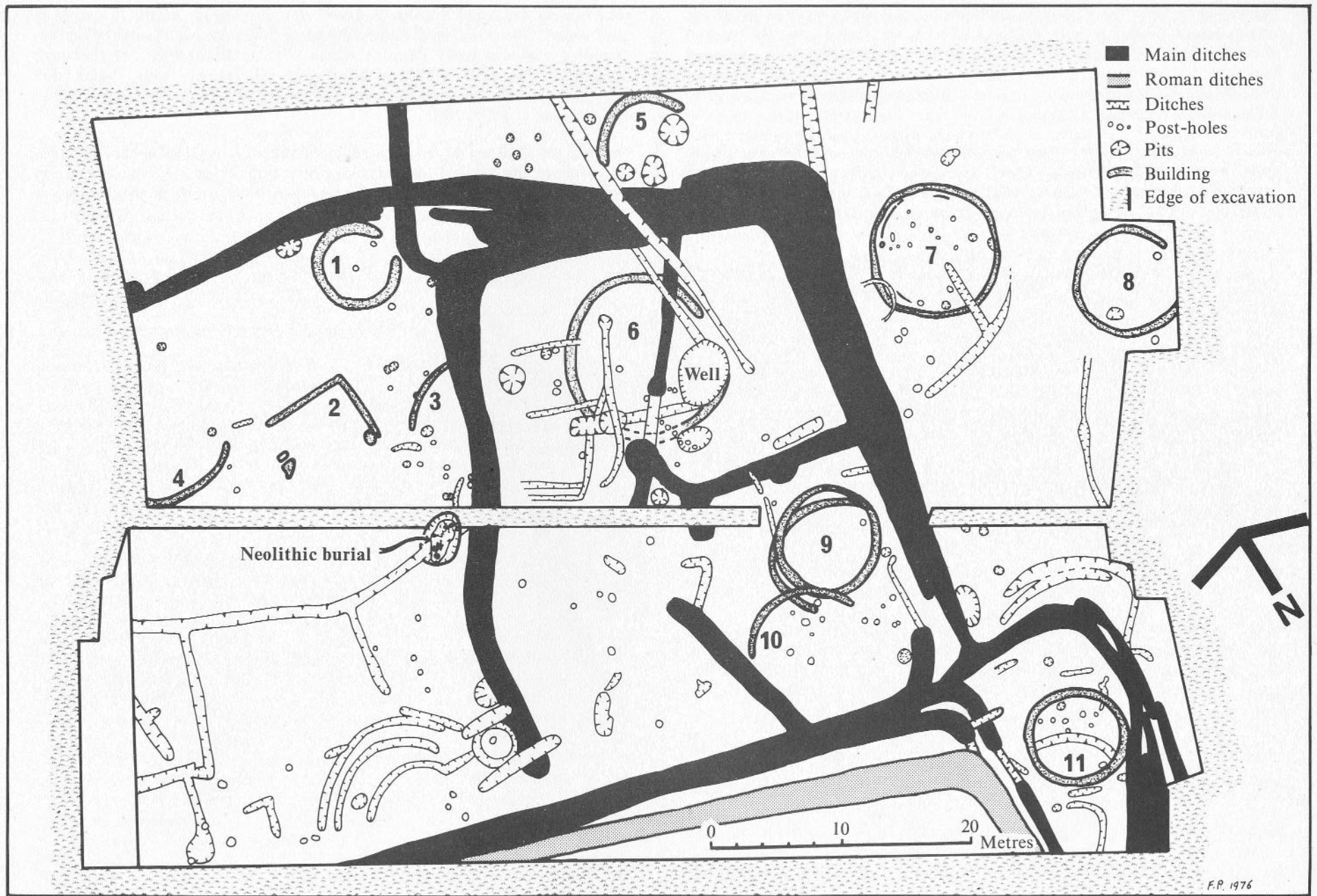


Fig 6 Plan of the Iron-Age farm at Fengate, 1975

We began to raise the bodies, bone by bone; but when we had lifted the young man's head, an arm and several ribs, we found a finely worked neolithic flint arrowhead of leaf-shaped type protruding from between two ribs. This was clearly the cause of death. It was of great archaeological interest; for there are only two other well-authenticated neolithic arrow-deaths known in England.

We contacted Cambridge University who very kindly sent Mr Pat Smith and Mr Bernard Denston. Their knowledge and experience proved invaluable when we lifted three of the bodies intact, in blocks. The baby, however, had to be raised bone by bone in the conventional manner.

The bodies are quite undisturbed and the arrowhead is still in position, untouched. These will provide the focus of a permanent display of earlier neolithic material from Fengate which will be housed in Peterborough Museum. The rest of the display will consist of finds, plans and photographs of the earlier neolithic house (c.3000 B.C.) described in *Durobrivae* 1, 1973, 18ff.

In 1976 we shall try to find the edges of the Iron-Age settlement in order to estimate the size of the contemporary population. We shall also try to dig as much as we can of the Roman farm, the north ditch of which is shown on fig. 6.



Fig 7 Sarah Lunt's impression of the Iron-Age village at Fengate, 1975

# The Death of the Ailsworth Witch

by David Hill

A short aside in a longer Saxon charter recounts an exchange between Aethelwold, bishop of Winchester, and Wulfstan Ucca, in which land at Washington, Sussex, was exchanged for an estate at Yaxley, Huntingdonshire, and an estate at Ailsworth, Northamptonshire. The exchange can be dated A.D. 963-975 and is recorded in a later cartulary of Peterborough (Sawyer (1968), no.1377).

The entry has been translated (Whitelock (1955), 519):

'Then the bishop gave the land at Yaxley to Thorney and that at Ailsworth to Peterborough. And a widow and her son had previously forfeited the land at Ailsworth because they drove iron (?) pins into Wulfstan's father, AElfsige. And it was detected and the murderous instrument dragged from her chamber; and the woman was seized and drowned at London Bridge (*adrencte hi aet Lundene brigece*) and her son escaped and became an outlaw. And the land came into the king's possession, and the king gave it to AElfsige, and his son Wulfstan gave it to Bishop Aethelwold.'

In any modern discussion of late Saxon London this is regarded as the earliest documentary source for the existence of London Bridge (Biddle (1973), 23).

Can we take the matter further? Must the reference imply the existence of London Bridge in a period immediately before 948, the date at which AElfsige received Ailsworth (Sawyer (1968), no.533)? The text tells us that the widow was seized after evidence of witchcraft had been found in her chamber. There can be little doubt that this bower was at Ailsworth in Northamptonshire and it is here that the widow was seized. It seems incredible that a woman taken for witchcraft in northern Northamptonshire should be dragged 82 miles to London to be drowned. Witchcraft usually engendered an immediate hysterical reaction, and it would seem most likely that the widow's execution was at the hands of her rustic neighbours.

Why should she be taken to London? Perhaps there was some sort of court of appeal in London. Possibly King Eadred was in London at the time and the widow was taken to him for judgement. But at that time

the Danelaw was still responsible for much of its own law; the case does not appear to be regalian; and one would expect the church to be active in it. So we are free to discount the need to go to London.

Why then London Bridge, if not in London? Many Anglo-Saxon charters refer to roads, streets and ways by names which indicate their destinations. Generally these destinations are only defined as *Port* or *Wic*, thus giving rise to *Portweg* and *Wicweg*. Less frequent are combinations such as *ceaster herpad*, apparently the road leading from Enford, Hampshire, to the *ceaster*, Winchester (Sawyer (1968), no.427). In Sawyer (1968), no.692 the bounds for Evesty on the Cam brook in Somerset include *pone baep herpad*, the Bath armypath, and the bounds in the charter for Easton near Winchester (A.D.961) (Sawyer (1968), no. 695) has a *lunden Weg*, a London Way. The many bridges in charter bounds have descriptive names as well: 'Wood', 'Black', 'Plank', 'Stone', 'Woodford Bridge'. To this day roads, streets, lanes and bridges named after London are found in many towns and villages.

Is it not probable, then, that the widow was dragged from her bower at Ailsworth, not the 82 miles to London, but to the river Nene, which forms part of the Ailsworth boundary, or to a place of some note as a law centre at the period?

The borough of Stamford was an important centre at this period with judicial functions. It is eight miles from Ailsworth and stands astride the mediaeval route from London to the North. It is probable that Edward, in his campaign of 918 when he constructed a southern, twin, fortification on the south side of Stamford, built a bridge to join the two parts. Here, on the road to London, the river Welland is quite deep enough to provide a miserable end for the widow of Ailsworth.

In Ailsworth itself stands another candidate: the bridge which carried Ermine Street, the Great North Road, across the river Nene. Built by the Romans, it may have been ruinous by late Saxon times; but it must have been a well known landmark, and very close to hand.

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# A Multiple Round-Barrow at Barnack

by Peter Donaldson

Aerial photography has shown an extensive complex of cropmarks along the valley of the River Welland in the parish of Barnack. In 1974 the investigation of the double ring ditch (fig. 8, A) was carried out in advance of gravel extraction. No previous excavations had been made in this area, except for salvage work in 1971, during actual quarrying operations, to rescue two Bronze-Age burials possibly from the ring ditch (fig. 8, B) (Pryor (1974)). Land which contained the greater part of the feature became available in November 1974 and excavations then commenced by kind permission of the Trustees of the Burghley Estate and with the helpful co-operation of the farmer, Mr R. W. G. Burbridge, and of the Nene Barge and Lighter Co. Ltd. In January 1976, when the adjacent strip of land was cleared of crops, the excavation of the remaining part was completed.

The site was funerary, consisting of three distinct phases of round-barrow construction, each sited approximately concentrically within its predecessor. The first was a Disc barrow with a small inner ditch and a Beaker shaft burial, the second a Bowl barrow, and the third a revetted mound. A total of seventeen burials was found, four of which had grave goods. The primary inhumation (P) contained a very fine Beaker group, which is reviewed below. An overall plan of the site is shown in fig. 8.

The first phase, a Disc barrow, consisted of an outer ditch (Ditch 1 in fig. 8), 40 metres in diameter and 1.3 metres deep, with an outer bank. In the centre was a small ditch (Ditch 3), 11.5 metres in diameter and 0.6 metres deep. The latter did not show up on the aerial photograph. Near the centre was a grave-pit, 2.5 metres long by 1.75 metres wide by 1.8 metres deep, in which was found a male skeleton lying in a flexed position. At the feet was a Beaker and at one side a bone or ivory pendant, a bronze dagger and a stone wristguard with associated gold caps. The wristguard had been ritually broken.

The second phase was a Bowl barrow with a ditch (Ditch 2), 24 metres in diameter and 1.4 metres deep, dug concentrically between the two earlier ditches. The probable secondary burial was a complete cremation deposited in a pit cut into one side of the top of the shaft grave of phase 1.

The third phase consisted of a double circle of stakes which had been driven into the inside edge of the partially silted-up ditch of the Bowl barrow to form a revetment for a mound. These stake circles were not quite concentric with the earlier ditch. The material for this mound could have been derived from a series of quarry pits dug on the periphery of the outer ditch of the Disc barrow of phase 1. The probable tertiary burial was cut into the pit of the secondary burial.

In addition to the three burials mentioned above, there were fourteen others. Four of these were of infants. One at the bottom of the inner ditch was accompanied by a small plain Beaker and could have been contemporary with the primary burial. Another was accompanied by an undecorated miniature Food Vessel, whilst the remaining two had no grave goods. Two adult inhumations were each in a crouched position inside coffins, both identically oriented. One grave contained the skeletons of two people interred at the same time, one a male in an extended position and the other, possibly female, in a flexed position. The latter lay beside the lower part of the extended male skeleton with her head by his feet. A bone point, two flint scrapers and a flake were found beside the flexed skeleton at the bottom of the grave filling.

Of the remaining six burials, three were in a flexed, and three in a crouched position, none with grave goods. All the burials were situated within the area of the revetted mound, some cutting earlier graves or the inner ditch. There was considerable variation in the orientations and positions of the bodies, but they can be broadly categorised as: (a) crouched, (b) flexed, (c) within a coffin. It is not possible to assign stratigraphically any satellite burials to particular phases, as ploughing has removed most of the mound.

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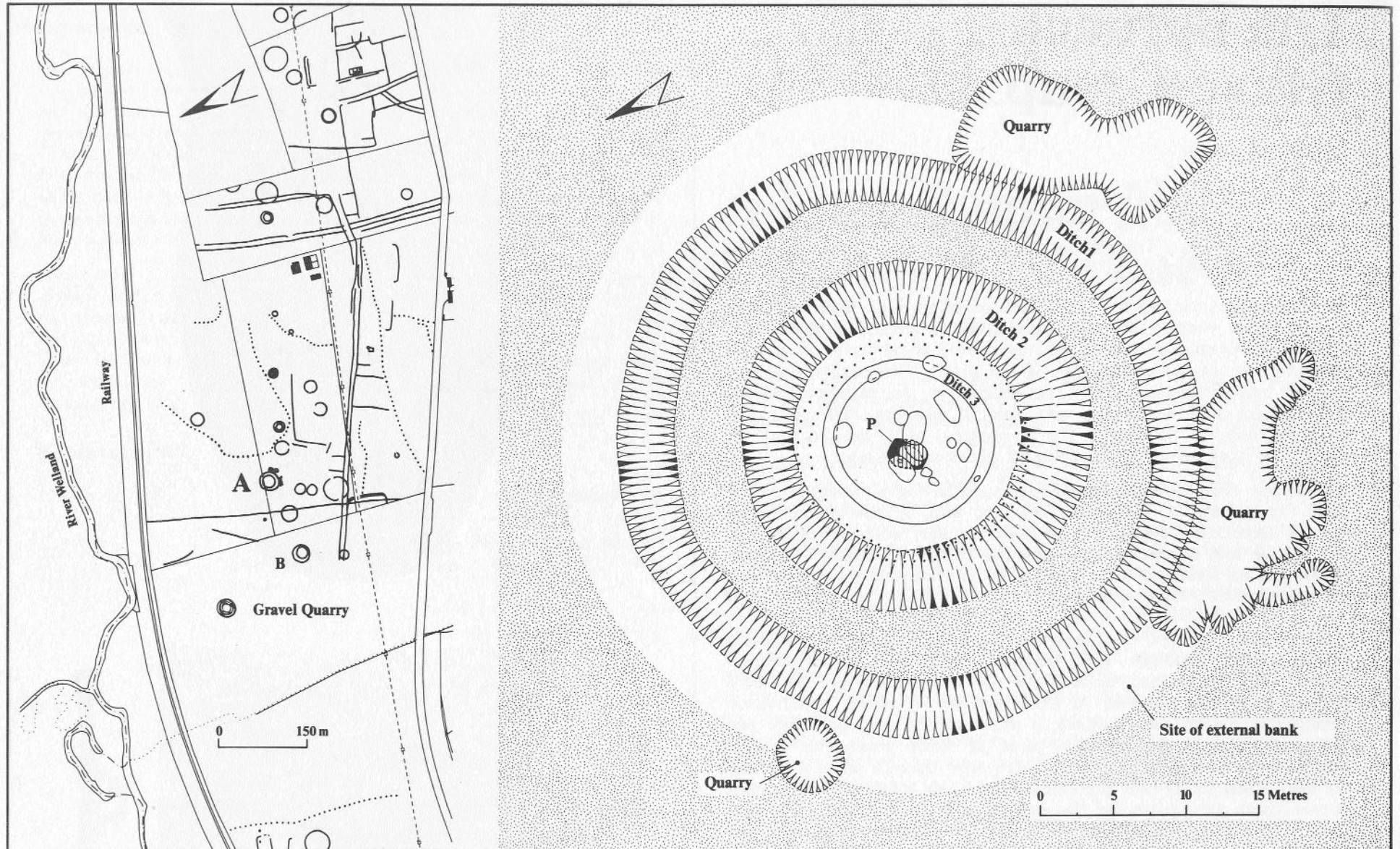


Fig 8 Barnack: location of the barrow (A) with other crop-marks and plan of excavated barrow



# The Barnack Grave-Group

by Ian Kinnes

The Beaker grave-group from Barnack is among the most important discoveries of its kind in this century. By the generosity of the Trustees of the Burghley Estate Trust it now forms part of the national collections in the British Museum.

The objects accompanied the flexed skeleton of an adult male in a large primary grave beneath the multi-period barrow described above. The burial circumstances can be briefly described. Some form of wooden structure was located at the base of the grave. The Beaker stood by the feet and the dagger beside the skeleton in the expected fashion. The pendant and wristguard were not in position, but had been deposited beneath the body. The wristguard had been broken, the major part lying face-down, the smaller above and face-up.

The Beaker (fig. 9) is of exceptional size, having a height of some 24cm. The fabric is hard and well-fired with a smooth red-brown surface. Decoration consists of zones of regular toothcomb stamping. The profile and decorative style ally the Beaker to Clarke's Wessex-Middle Rhine series, or steps 2/3 in the Lanting and van der Waals scheme (Clarke (1970); Lanting, van der Waals (1972)).

The wristguard (fig. 11) is of exceptional interest. In form it is a broad slightly-waisted rectangle with bevelled edges, and almost flat in section. The fine-grained stone is as yet unidentified, but has been finished by careful grinding. At either end are 9 conical perforations, arranged in zig-zag pattern. Each is well-made on the upper face and occupied by fitted hemispherical caps of sheet gold. The original method of attachment is not clear. There is no trace of metal rivets and the caps would surely have prevented thonging or stitching. Gold-capped copper rivets are known on the wristguard from Driffield (Mortimer (1905)), but the present example is so far unique in Europe. The number of perforations is unusually high, but the overall form can be linked to Bohemian wristguards of Sangmeister type C.

The dagger (fig. 10) can be assigned to an early local development of the West European tanged series. The pointed tang cannot be readily matched elsewhere, but the form is otherwise not exceptional. Although



Fig 9 Barnack: the beaker

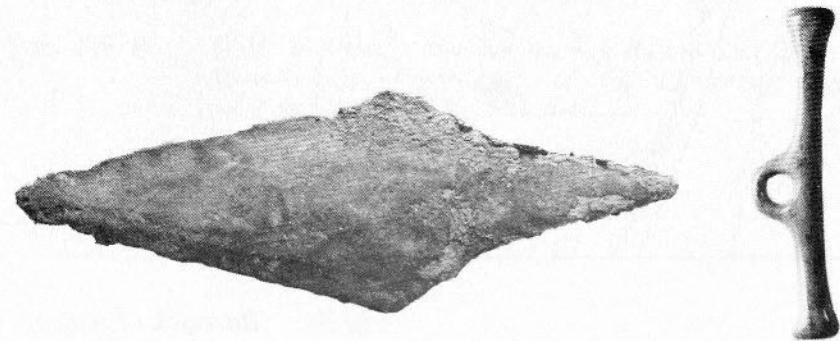


Fig 10 Barnack: the dagger and pendant

presumably of copper, its fragility has rendered detailed analysis impracticable.

The pendant (fig. 10) is again unique in this context. Broadly comparable side-looped forms are known associated with Food Vessels in Britain (see Driffield C38 in Mortimer (1905)). The expanded terminals and perhaps the transverse incisions might indicate some affinity with the Central European pendant series recently interpreted as composite-bow models (Piggott (1971)). The material awaits analysis, but seems to be bone or perhaps sperm-whale or walrus ivory. Surface coloration is comparable with that of a patinated bronze, but the reason for this is again still unknown.

Apart from its aesthetic qualities, which reinforce the sense of personal display evident in contemporary grave assemblages, the group invokes the international character of Beaker cultures in a most striking fashion. Although at present there is no reason to doubt that each piece is an insular product, the Rhenish and Bohemian background must be emphasised as a formative component. The typological details would suggest a conventional date around 1800-1700 B.C.

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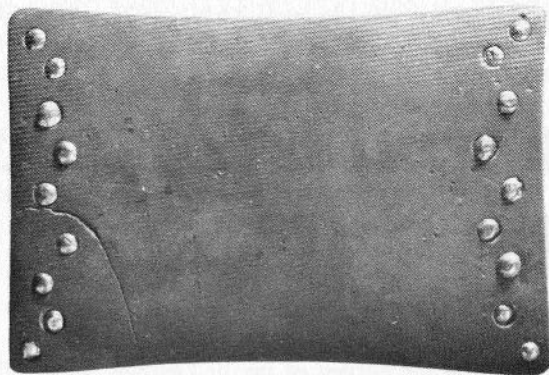


Fig 11 Barnack: the wristguard

- Mortimer (1905) J. R. Mortimer, *Forty Years' Researches in the British and Saxon Burial Mounds of East Yorkshire*, 1905.
- Piggott (1971) S. Piggott, 'Beaker bows: a suggestion', *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society* 37, 1971, 80-94.

# A Late-Roman Nail-Cleaner with Peacock

by Sonia Chadwick Hawkes

This important little bronze (fig. 12) was found in August 1972 on the extensive late Roman agricultural estate at Lynch Farm, Orton Longueville, in the general demolition layer over the fourth-century aisled barn (*Durobrivae* 1, 1973, 20-1). This deposit was not sealed, but the latest coins in it, of the House of Valentinian, accord with the late date one would expect for such an object. From its broken suspension-loop it seems to have been a toilet instrument of the type commonly (but probably erroneously) called a nail-cleaner. In its form and decoration, however, it closely resembles a class of strap-tag made in the late fourth century by the Romano-British workshops which also manufactured the buckles, with long decorated plates, of my types IA and IB (Hawkes, Dunning (1961), 21ff, 41ff.; Hawkes (1973)). These strap-tags have the same elongated pear-shaped profile, often with the same bifurcated tip, and some of the best have flanking birds' heads which may have inspired the projecting mouldings on the neck of the Lynch Farm nail-cleaner (Hawkes, Dunning (1961), fig. 8). The tags usually have punched and/or engraved geometrical ornament, sometimes of great delicacy; but sometimes there is representational ornament of simple, but apparently symbolic, kind. This is what we have on the piece from Lynch Farm.

The basic form, together with its 'chip-carved' border decoration, was produced by casting. Except for file marks the back is plain. On the front a punch has been used on the cold metal to produce a pair of 'eyes' below the loop, a simple dotted border and the outline of a peacock standing in profile, also carried out in dot-work. The bird is simply, but effectively, rendered, with enough detail to make its identity unmistakable.

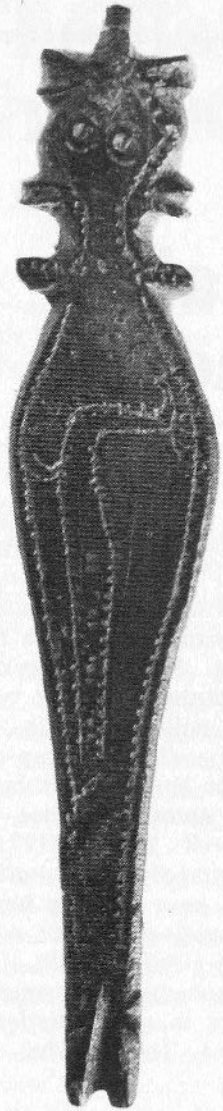


Fig 12a Photograph of the Lynch Farm nail-cleaner

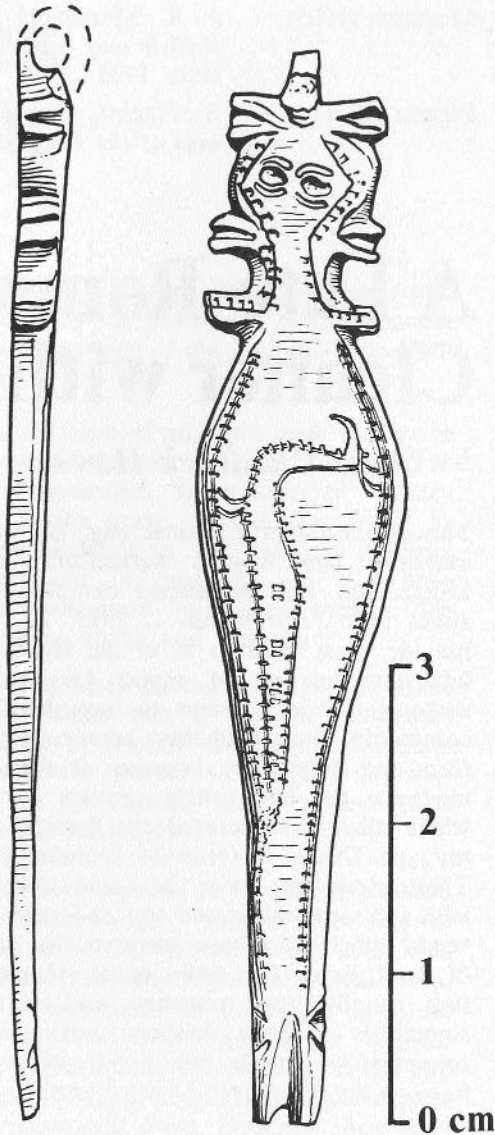


Fig 12b Drawing of the Lynch Farm nail-cleaner

Peacocks occur elsewhere on metalwork of this type and date. Peacocks paired and confronting the tree of life appear on type IB buckles from Stanwick, Yorks., and Tripontium (Caves Inn), Warwicks., and with tree of life and griffin on a strap-end or nail-cleaner from Rivenhall, Essex (Hawkes (1973), fig. 3). In publishing the Tripontium buckle I discussed the meaning of the peacock in some detail, concluding that by the end of the fourth century this denizen of the Orphic paradise was being taken over as a symbol of life eternal by Christians. The peacocks on the buckles and strap-tags which were the latest personal jewellery to be made and worn in Roman Britain might therefore be interpreted as crypto-Christian symbolism. That Christianity was current amongst the makers or wearers of this late metalwork seems certain now that a strap-tag or nail-cleaner, similar to that from Lynch Farm, has turned up at Beadlam villa, Yorks., engraved with a naturalistic fish (Stead (1971), 178ff., fig. 5, 2).

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## Industrial & Vernacular Architecture, 1975

by Richard Hillier

In January a photographic survey of no.10 Deacon Street, Peterborough, was completed. This is a pre-1721 stone-built malting 39 metres long. It has additions of c.1800, and a kiln of c.1850. The roof is of butt-purlin

construction with fourteen bays delineated by massive cambered collar beams.

During March, no.90 Bridge street and its outbuildings were surveyed. The frontage of this property was built symmetrically: the shop is set almost equidistant between its carriage entrance and no.88 (also an integral part of the building), and there was also an unnecessary fifth dormer which lighted no attic room. The two shops (nos.88 & 90), the large granary and the stables behind 90, and the small cottages behind 88, were all built c.1790. Part of the rear of 90 contains the remains of its timber-framed predecessor.

The old workhouse on the west side of Cumbergate was surveyed in June (p. 27). Following this, Mrs Susan Butler, the landlady of the Greyhound, Cathedral Square, kindly allowed me to photograph the exterior, the extensive cellars and parts of the interior of her premises. This building is late eighteenth-century with additions of c.1830 and later. Remarkably, the stables at the rear, once used by the London to Lincoln Coach, still retain their stalls.

No.78 Bridge Street, built of brick with stone courses, was surveyed in December. This is an early eighteenth-century building with a mansard roof. The stairs on the top floor have turned balusters and square newels (like the Royal Hotel, Westgate). No.50. Westgate, a house of late eighteenth-century date, and no.38 Queen Street, a Roman Catholic chapel built in 1856, were also investigated.

Demolitions during 1975 include: the 1834 Workhouse School, Thorpe Road; Deacon's School and no.20 Westgate (see *Durobrivae* 3, 1975, 29); the Park Laundry, Park Road (c.1890); nos.43-47 Queen Street, (c.1880); nos.19-25 Queen Street, (pre-1721 malting, later kiln and c.1860 Drill Hall); nos. 65-89 Westgate with the remaining street frontages to the south (pre-1850 cottages, pre-1821 Independent Chapel, an Elementary School of 1823 and a Confectionery of 1898 surveyed in 1973). In July the outbuildings and yards behind nos.76-90 Bridge Street were demolished and levelled. The demolition behind nos.84 and 90 removed identical cast-iron baking ovens made by two local black-smiths: Southam (c.1830) and Amies (c.1875), respectively.

# Roman Iron Working at Longthorpe

by Judith Todd and James Cleland

Evidence of iron production from ore-roasting, through smelting, to smithing was found in the works-depot of the vexillation fortress at Longthorpe.

The roasted ore was present in the form of typically magenta-coloured and slightly magnetic nodules of c.30mm diameter, which readily broke into 3mm chips. Analysis of this roasted ore showed that the iron oxide content and the distribution of gangue minerals were such as to make this material ideal feedstock for the bloomery process. Calculations on the analyses indicated a low liquidus temperature of c.1140°C for the resultant slag, which agreed well with the figure of 1135°C derived from analyses of tap slag found on the site.

The tap slag had the smooth underside, prilled surface, entrapped gas bubbles and the dense amorphous purple structure, representative of a slag which had been tapped from a furnace and solidified in the open by rapid cooling. The presence of roasted ore and tap slag are indisputably diagnostic of iron smelting.

Smelting cinder (the waste formed in the upper zone of the bloomery) was also present. It was characterised by a light-brownish colour, open structure and entrained particles of charcoal, unreduced ore and gangue. Evidence of smithing was provided by samples of slag which, although visually similar to smelting cinder, were recognisable on analysis as smithing slag.

A well-preserved iron nail 102.5mm long with a square tapered shank and a circular head, 20.6mm in diameter and 2.4mm thick, was examined under the microscope. It was seen that both the carbon content and grain size varied in a regular manner across the nail, indicating that the nail had been formed by sequential reheating and forging at c.950°C. Additionally, the shape and distribution of entrapped slag stringers indicated that the head had been forged after the shank.

A fuller account of this material will appear with the final report on the excavation of the Longthorpe potters' kilns and works-depot.

# A Significant Findspot for a Penny of Harold I

by Professor Michael Dolley

An Anglo-Saxon silver penny (fig. 13) of the eleventh century was found recently in hoeing sugar-beet on the north-east outskirts of Southwick, some three miles to the north-west of Oundle. It has proved to be of some significance.

A description of the types and legends is as follows:

## HAROLD I (1035-1040)

Fleur-de-lis type (Hild. B = BMC v.c. = Brooke 2 = North 803 = Seaby 681)  
Obv. + HAR//OLD(R)I+C: Rev. + PIL/GRI/(O)NS/TANF  
Weight 0.74g (= 11.4 grains)—broken and chipped. Die-axis: 270°.

The coin clearly is one struck late in the reign of Harold I, nicknamed 'Harefoot', the eldest son of Cnut (1016-1035) by his superseded English 'wife' AELfgifu of Northampton. Two pennies of the mint, moneyer and type are recorded by B. E. Hildebrand on p.371 of the second edition of his *Anglosachsiska Mynt* (Stockholm, 1881). One (fig. 14) is numbered 921 and has a partially illegible obverse beginning + HAR//OLDR. . . ., but is from the same die as the new coin from Southwick. The other (fig. 15) is numbered 922 and has a somewhat irregular obverse legend + HAR//OLDRIX and a reverse reading + PIL/: GRI/ONS/TAF, the 'S' being retrograde and 'F' inverted. We may suppose this indecipherability in the one case and the degree of blundering in the other to underlie the curious fact that Wilgrim, a perfectly normal and attested Old English name (= Old Danish Vilgrim; cf. O. von Feilitzen, *The Pre-Conquest Personal Names of Domesday Book* (Uppsala, 1937), 415, where three Lincolnshire occurrences are cited), does not figure in the list of 'at least nine' names of 'recorded Stamford moneyers coining in this type' appearing in *British Numismatic Journal* XXIV, 1941-44, 172. Both coins in fact are admitted to the *corpus* that follows, where they are numbered 95 and 96 respectively on p. 174. The reference is to the fourth, and in the event final, part of the late W. C. Wells' never completed monograph *The Stamford and Peterborough Minis*, which appeared in irregular instalments in that journal between 1934 and 1944.

Only the second of the Stockholm coins is recorded (as no.216) on p. 235 of the first (Stockholm, 1846) edition of Hildebrand's *Anglosachsiska*

*Mynt*, and the most likely provenance for the coin that can be linked with the new find from Southwick is therefore the great hoard discovered in 1880 at Espinge in the parish of Hurva to the north-east of Lund in Southern Sweden (cf. most recently *Numismatic Chronicle* 1973, 127). The hoard contained English coins of the second of Wells' two coinages in unusual quantity, but also present were a number of local (Scanian) imitations of English pence from the 1040's. In the conditions that obtained when Wells was writing a degree of caution was understandable, even if not perhaps entirely justified.

To this day Wilgri(m) coins of the issue are of the greatest rarity. No example is recorded in H. A. Grueber's relevant volume of the *British Museum Catalogue* (1893), and in fact no specimen has been acquired by the English national collection in the intervening period. Similarly there is no example recorded by Dr G. Galster in the fourth of the *Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles* (1972) fascicules, embracing the Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman coins in the Royal Coin and Medal Collection at Copenhagen. Even more important, there is not a specimen in the unrivalled private collection of coins of the Stamford mint which formed part of the princely benefaction made to the City of Lincoln by Sir Francis Hill in 1974. Coins of Wilgri(m) are likewise absent from the wide range of public cabinets recorded in Mr A. J. H. Gunstone's Midlands Museums fascicule of the *Sylloge* (1971).

This apparent paucity of coins of the particular moneyer could be explained plausibly by supposing that he only began to operate quite late in the *Fleur-de-lis* issue when the great bulk of the coins of the type had already been struck by his established colleagues.

The weights of the two Stockholm coins, 0.96 and 0.92g (14.8 and 14.2 grains), give absolutely no cause for suspicion. The fact that coins are known from early in the reign of Edward the Confessor (eg. Hildebrand, (1881), 454, nos.700-703) by Stamford moneyers with names compounded with the same prototheme, namely Wileric (? = Old Danish Vilric) and Wilgrip (certainly = Old Danish Vilgrip, see von Feilitzen (1937), 405, with Domesday instances from Shropshire, Staffordshire and Suffolk) would be another argument in support of their authenticity. It is well-known for name elements to descend in the same family, and Mr R. S. Kinsey has shown (*British Numismatic Journal* XXIX, 1958, 12-49) how the office of moneyer could be hereditary, so that, whatever view may be taken of a spelling PILERIC with postulated *svarabhakti*, the likelihood is that Wilgrim, attested by two reverse dies at Stamford c.1040, is the father or at least the uncle of the Wilgrip impeccably evidenced at the same mint throughout the 1040's and 1050's.

G. C. Brooke (*English Coins* (1950), 76 (third edition)) and Mr J. J. North (*English Hammered Coinage I* (1963), 127) both felt able to override Wells' hesitations, even though North unnecessarily normalised Wilgrim's name to Wulgrim (= Old English Wulfgrim?).

The new Northamptonshire provenance provided by the Southwick find-spot may be said finally to have established Wilgrim's credentials as an undoubted Harold I moneyer of the Stamford mint.

All that remains is for the author of this note to acknowledge his indebtedness to Mr J. A. Hadman, the Secretary of the Nene Valley Research Committee, for bringing to his notice so interesting and even critical a single-find, and to the authorities of the Ulster Museum and of the Royal Coin Cabinet at Stockholm for the photographs. He may perhaps be permitted to express the hope that the day is not too distant when a central register will be kept of all such discoveries from England of coins of the Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman periods. The former series in particular was the subject of intermittent imitation, insular as well as continental, but the existence of a register of pieces of impeccable English provenance could provide a most serviceable touch-stone of individual authenticity.

### Postscript

It is pleasant to be able to record that the coin from Southwick has been acquired for the Sir Francis Hill Collection of Coins of the Lincolnshire Mints housed in the Usher Art Gallery at Lincoln.



Fig 13 *The Anglo-Saxon silver penny from Southwick (scale 3:1)*



Fig 14 *Hildebrand no. 921: a penny from the same die as the Southwick coin (scale 3:1)*



Fig 15 *Hildebrand no. 922: a silver penny (scale 3:1)*

# A Roman Limekiln at Helpston

by Adrian Challands

During the early summer of 1960, Mr Don Baxter, a machine operator at the Helpston Stone Quarry, brought to the attention of Peterborough Museum Society's Archaeological Field Section samples of Roman pottery which he had found during quarrying operations. Subsequent investigation revealed considerable traces of Roman occupation in a shallow, newly-cut, quarry face. Excavations commenced under the direction of the late Mr G. F. Dakin and Mr E. Standen which quickly indicated that a substantial stone-built structure was being investigated. This was later established as a limekiln (figs. 16, 17).

The site lies 1½ miles south of Helpston village and 270 metres east of the Roman King Street. A mere 36cm below the topsoil and subsoil lower Lincolnshire limestone is present, weathered at the top, but becoming increasingly solidly bedded with depth. The method of building the kiln appears to have been initially to quarry holes in this stratum, approximating to, but somewhat larger than, the basic shape of the kiln and stokehole. A reasonably level floor, deliberately sloped down towards the kiln from the stokehole, was also formed out of the solid limestone. Altogether the kiln survived to a height of 2.45 metres and consisted of an upper and lower section, divided by a ledge.

Very substantial masonry forms the kiln's upper section which had a diameter of 2.75 metres and seven courses of stonework remaining (fig. 16). The masonry was well mortared together and laid in panels of two courses of herringbone pitching with a horizontal stretcher course above and below. The two lower panels rest on a ledge cut out of the natural limestone. The space between the kiln wall and the edge of the quarried hole was solidly filled with limestone rubble and mortar. A lime and sand rendering about 3cm thick covered the upper walling and extended down to cover part of the natural limestone as far as the ledge.

The lower section was constructed of seven courses of horizontally bedded limestone blocks, laid in lime mortar and dressed to form a smooth curve. At the floor the diameter of the chamber was 2.1 metres and at the ledge 2.26 metres. The wall had a slight outward batter. The ledge was about 18cm wide and ran the whole way round the kiln,

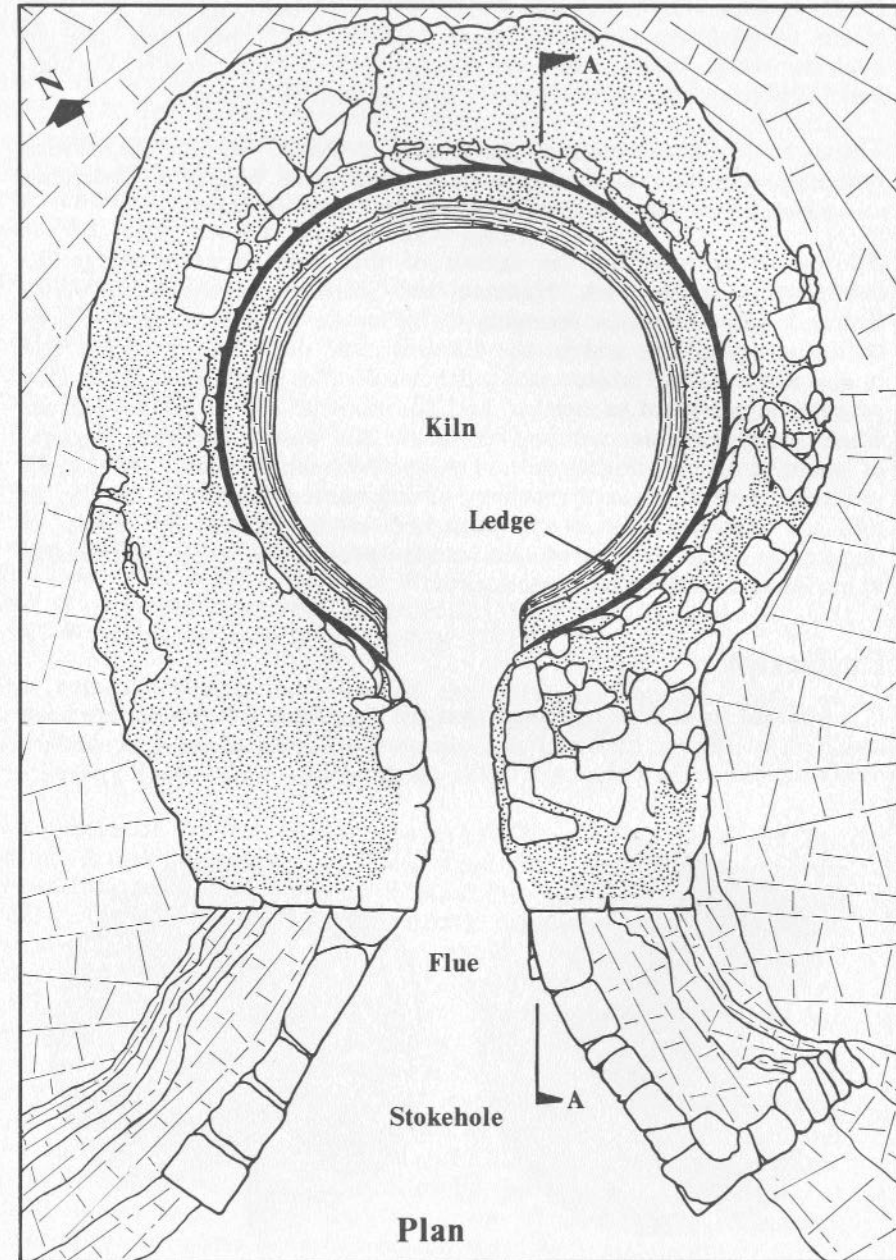


Fig 16 Plan of the Helpston limekiln

except at its junction with the flue. It had a mortar bed on top, similar to the rendering on the walls of the upper section.

The 1.37 metre long flue (fig. 17) was composed of horizontally bedded mortared blocks similar to those forming the lower section of the chamber. These extended up thirteen courses to a height of 1.52 metres. The top four courses were corbelled, and may have originally formed an arch. The well built flue-cheeks faced a V-shaped stokehole, 2.45 metres long, with low revetting walls. They abutted the natural rock as did the parts already described.

A clue to the methods employed in preparing the kiln for firing was given by unmortared limestone blocks, resting on the ledge, which corbelled out over the lower section. In places three courses still existed. This may have been the springing of a dome to support the limestone to be burnt in the upper section. Dr Norman Davey has suggested that this dome may have been constructed upon a charge of timber in the lower section to give it initial support. Above the dome alternate layers of limestone and timber were probably packed. He is of the opinion that the dome would not have collapsed once the timber fuel in the lower section had been consumed. The fact that 75cm of pure lime remained, resting on only a thin layer of charcoal, implies that the charcoal had been raked-out while the dome was still intact. After the firing, which may have lasted several days, the dome would have been broken and the lime removed through the flue and stokehole.

Most of the masonry of the kiln and flue had been subjected to burning and it is evident that a fierce heat was required to convert the limestone into lime. Samples of charcoal from the stokehole have been identified as mostly hawthorn with some blackthorn. Samples from the kiln itself were mostly too calcified to permit identification, although hawthorn and birch were represented.

Occupation layers containing pottery and coins of mid to late fourth-century date sealed and overlapped the kiln for a distance of some 12 metres. This suggests that the kiln was deliberately filled in with limestone rubble before the mid fourth century.

Whilst this is the only structural evidence for what must have been an important and extensive industry in the lower Nene Valley, other examples of similar kilns have been excavated in the middle and upper Nene Valley, such as at Weekley in Northamptonshire (Jackson (1973)).

### Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to Mr A. Crowson of the Maxey Gravel Works and Mr C. Goodfellow, the landowner, for permission to conduct the

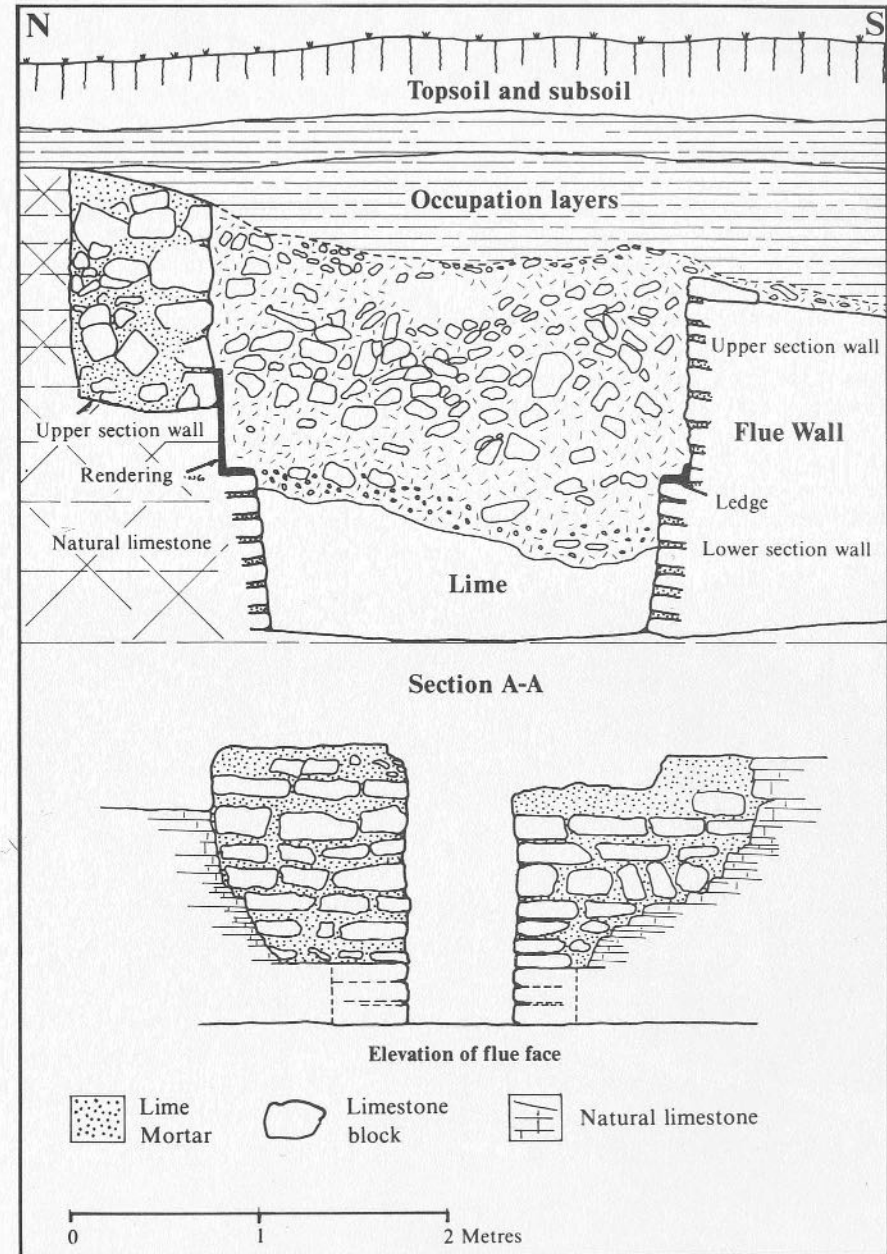


Fig 17 Sectional view of the Helpston limekiln



excavations; to Dr Norman Davey for his helpful comments on the production methods, and to Dr G. Taylor of the Royal Botanic Gardens for his analysis of the charcoal remains.

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Jackson (1973) D. A. Jackson, 'A Roman limekiln at Weekley, Northamptonshire', *Britannia* IV, 1973, 128-40.



Fig 18 *The Helpston limekiln*

# Hall Farm, Orton Longueville

by *Donald Mackreth*

Excavation of the Roman farmstead at Hall Farm (TL 176956) (*Durobrivae* 2, 1974, 19) has finished. The remains were principally ditches and fragmentary buildings and the area excavated was about 4 acres. The site was badly damaged by mediaeval ridge and furrow, and modern ploughing had flattened the ridges and begun to remove the small amount of stratigraphy which had been preserved under them. This was a major disadvantage, but the total plan of the site could be recovered without too much distortion.

Unfortunately it is not possible to produce a single plan showing all periods: there are too many of them. The layout of the late Roman farm is of buildings loosely arranged on three sides of a rectangle, with the east side being open. The longest range of buildings was on the north. At the east end there was an aisled barn (22 metres by 10.5 metres) separated from the next square building (21 metres by 24.5 metres) by a small yard 12 metres wide. The next two buildings were narrow (17.5 metres by 9 metres; 37 metres by 11 metres). They ranged down the side of the yard and butted against a building (24.5 metres by 8.5 metres) north of a walled yard (25 metres by 37 metres), itself attached to a large aisled barn (25 metres by 13 metres) at the south end of the west range. From here a courtyard wall continued 13.5 metres to a corner where it turned east for 27.5 metres and joined the back wall of the only building found on the south side of the site, another aisled barn (21.5 metres by 11 metres).

It seems clear that the site was deliberately placed on the line where a water table broke out as one or more springs and ran away downhill to the north. The eastern part of the site seems to have been concerned both with animals and with corn. From the north a large droeway entered the main farm and led into a series of enclosures associated with ponds. The arrangement of the enclosures and some entrances to them suggest animal control, the animals themselves being kept mainly out in the watered fields to the north. The east barn, however, was sited at the end of a track leading into the farm from the south. The track was narrow and would only have taken a cart or pack animals. The only corn-dryers found were in the three versions of the east barn. It was also from this end of the site that millstone fragments were

recovered. Presumably the major arable area of the farm was on the better drained land to the south, lying on the slowly rising slope.

These arrangements belong to the major re-organisation of the farm which probably took place in the latter part of the third century. There were few buildings at first, but as the farm prospered others were added until there was an almost continuous range along the north side of the main yard. The closing of the driveway does not necessarily imply that animal husbandry became less important; there were indications that the enclosures were re-sited outside the north range, but the stripped area did not extend far enough to make this entirely clear.

The area of the earliest occupation lay mainly outside the stripped area to the north-west. It was here that any Iron-Age occupation should have been located. It was from this area that the material of the later first century A.D. came.

No satisfactory traces of buildings earlier than those belonging to the late farm were located; but it is clear that there was at least one substantial timber building belonging to the second century, possibly demolished in the third to make way for the new developments. Fragments of its daub with a fine plaster finish were found in the deliberately filled ditches under the west barn and its courtyard to the north. It is clear, however, that the emphasis of second-century occupation had moved east to the west part of the stripped site and that the farm which we uncovered almost completely belonged essentially to the fourth century.

The almost complete absence of floor levels in any of the buildings makes identification of their functions difficult. The corn-dryers in the successive versions of the east barn would seem to indicate that in all three periods there the barn was given over to work concerned with corn. Of the other two barns, little can be said.

The other buildings which made up the north range also present problems. A roughly square structure (21 metres by 24.5 metres), which had a double portal leading in from the main yard, had evidently been floored. The rubbish suggests that there was some form of domestic occupation in it but, embarrassingly, there was no evidence for roof supports. The building next on the west, which was not wide enough to warrant internal roof supports, contained three carefully prepared rectangular pads (a fourth one could have been swept away by a furrow), which were in line, but not on the central axis of the building. It is possible to reconstruct this as a mill-house, but the evidence is entirely circumstantial.

No mention has been made of the living accommodation; for none was certainly identified, and, with the exception of the rubbish from the large square building, none can properly be deduced. The best preserved barn was on the south and this had a small room attached to its west end; unfortunately most of it had been ploughed away by a mediaeval furrow.

The date for the end of the Roman occupation is difficult. The coin sequence ends with Arcadius and the latest pottery assemblages are virtual repeats of the late corn-dryer filling and the barn destruction deposit at Great Casterton. It seems clear that the Roman occupation should be taken into the fifth century; but it also seems clear that by this time the farm, while the area of the lands under its control was not necessarily contracting, was either being run down (the east barn was greatly reduced and other buildings were being cut by late features) or was actually falling into disuse.

The relationship of the early fifth-century Saxon occupation on the site with these late phases is reasonably clear in physical terms; but what part the Saxons had in the apparent reduction of the scale of the farm buildings is almost certainly beyond reasonable argument. The Saxon occupation outlasted any Romanised presence, but seems not to last itself beyond the early years of the sixth century. This will be dealt with in *Durobrivae* 5, with an overall plan of the late Roman and Saxon features.

# A Roman Farm at Castor, 1975

by John Peter Wild

A major sewer serving the Sutton industrial zone will pass one day through Ailsworth and Castor along the northern edge of Normangate Field. Excavations there in 1974-5 by Mr G. B. Dannell and the writer revealed a Roman farmyard and barn (fig. 19). They lie some 250 metres north of the core of the industrial complex known from our previous research (*Durobrivae* 2, 1974, 7, fig. 2).

We found evidence for three periods of Roman activity.

In the first period, before A.D. 150, a wide, but thinly metalled, drove-road with side-ditches was laid across the site. It led up from a network of minor roads linked to Ermine Street, and was flanked on either side by simple ditched enclosures.

In the second period (c. A.D. 150-200) the ditches were replaced by stout fences and a palisade. The western enclosure was divided to make two or perhaps three pens. Water tanks in the corners suggest that stock was kept there periodically.

Across the road at about the same time a timber barn was erected, measuring about 13 metres by 8 metres. Its weight was borne on six massive arcade-posts set in two rows of post-pits, which divided the interior into a nave and two aisles (fig. 19). This form of building was popular in the Nene Valley; for it was both cheap to build and infinitely adaptable (Wild (1974), 158ff.). Later ditches and a mediaeval furrow had removed the walls on three sides, but three post-holes of the southern wall remained. We might not have detected them, had we not guessed what kind of building we were dealing with.

The start of the third period (c. A.D. 200) was marked by the demolition of the barn and the fences. Very conveniently for us, when the posts were pulled out, a collection of datable household crockery was dropped down several of the empty post-holes.

During the third period, which spanned the third century, the only feature surviving in use was the road. Its surface was remetalled and its side-ditches cleaned out and re-dug. Our excavation was thin in terms of visual remains; but it gave us an insight into the pattern of

land-utilisation in the northern suburbs of Durobrivae.

Aerial photography by Mr S. G. Upex and Professor St Joseph shows that the land alongside Ermine Street and the minor roads was divided into allotments by a series of ditches (*Durobrivae* 2, 1974, fig. 2). The same picture emerges in greater detail from a magnetometer survey which was carried out down the projected axis of the 1975 drove-road. Our excavation indicates that at least part of this system of land-division must date to the earlier second century.

Who was behind this scheme of land-division, and why was it felt necessary? It would be reasonable to see the local council of the *vicus* of Durobrivae at work here, surveying, dividing and assigning plots of land. They may have been compelled to take this step because of disputes over property on the commercially attractive street-frontage of Ermine Street. Certainly, the plots here were in the hands of potters and metalworkers whose workshops we have found.

In 1970 and 1973 we learnt how religious buildings away from Ermine Street might become potter's workshops and that workshops might be converted into shrines (Dannell, Wild (1971), (1974)). Land-utilisation and building function were not static, nor in a thriving community could we expect them to be.

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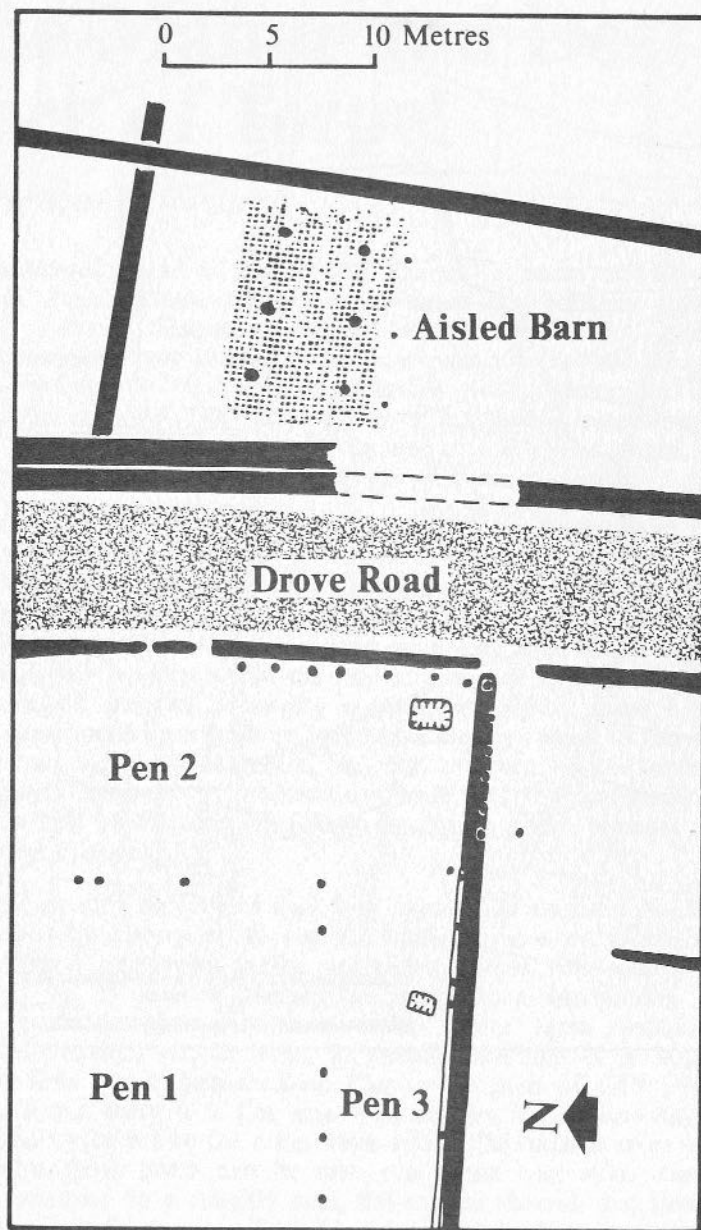


Fig 19 Plan of the 1975 excavations at Castor

## The Old Workhouse, Cumbergate, Peterborough

by Richard Hillier

The Old Workhouse, latterly Almshouses, lies on the west side of Cumbergate (TL 19109871) on a building plot aligned ESE-WNW. This property was obtained freehold in 1721 by the Peterborough Feoffees for use as the city's first workhouse. Their accounts for this period suggest five months of extensive building activity. By 1821 the buildings formed a U-shaped group: a range fronting the street and two wings. As a result of the beneficence of Miss Frances Pears in 1903, both the wings — except a short length of the north wing — were demolished. A new six-room north wing was added.

The main building was originally an early seventeenth-century domestic house, 13 by 6 metres in extent. It was probably timber-framed to the full height of the front elevation; the first floor is now under-built in stone. As a domestic house it contained two rooms on the ground floor, a hall and parlour, divided by a through cross-passage. A large fireplace in the west wall of the northern room is partly blocked.

The hall was reduced in size, probably in the early eighteenth century when the present stairs to the first floor were built. These stairs have square newels and turned balusters.

The front (east) elevation of the first floor is jettied out over the street, and is externally rendered, so that all timbers are obscured. Inside, however, the two principal corner posts and the internal faces of the bressumer and top-plate are all visible. The intermediate principal posts are braced to the tie-beams by concave braces rising from below the jowl heads on the posts.

The remaining part of the old north wing, also of the eighteenth century, was extensively altered in 1903. The south elevation is timber-framed, two principal posts — jointed to tie-beams — being evident on the inside of the first floor. Wattle and daub can be seen *in situ* on this floor.

The evidence in the attic over the front building is for a clasped-purlin roof with concave windbraces (between principal rafters and purlins) and slightly cambered collar beams which are also braced to the principal rafters. Oddly, only twice do the braced collar beam 'trusses' correspond to the tie-beams; it is probably therefore an 'unbound' roof.

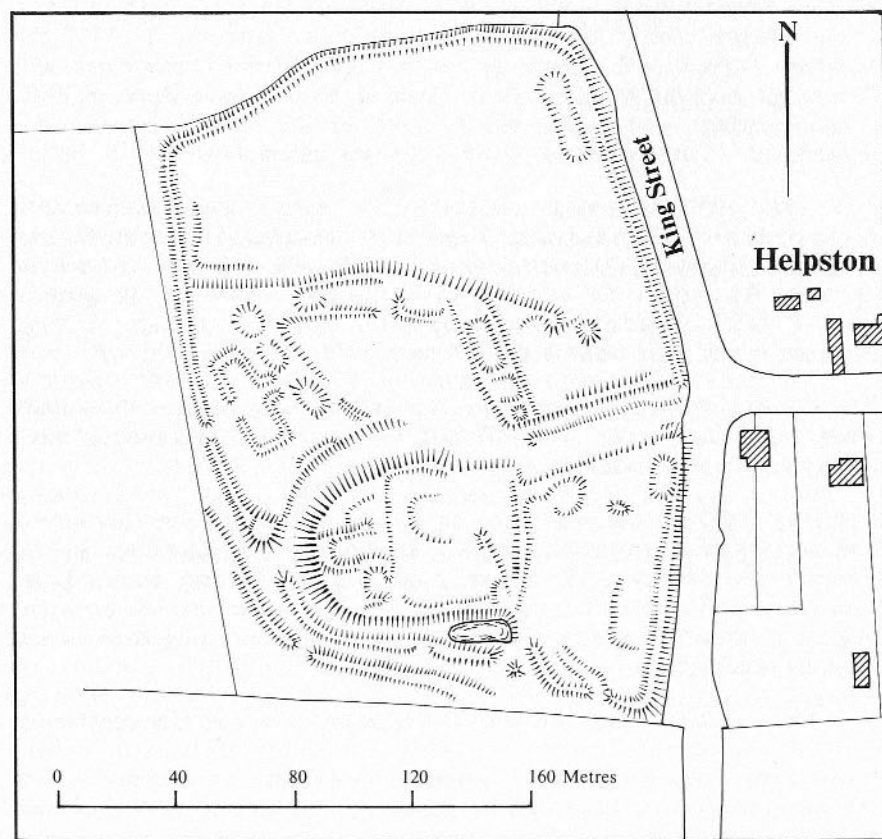


Fig 20a Plan of the manor of Torpel, Bainton

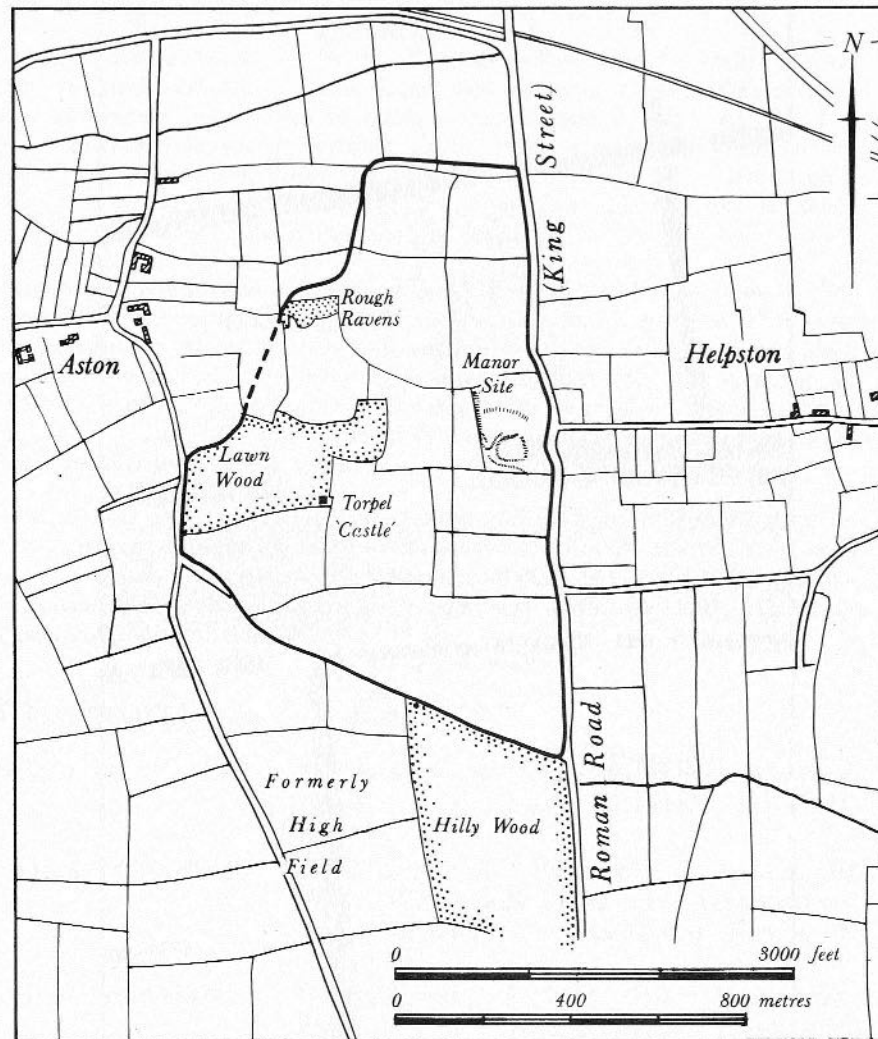


Fig 20b The manor and deer-park of Torpel, Bainton (park shown in heavy outline)

# The Manor and Deer Park of Torpel

by Frances Crowther

The mediaeval manor of Torpel was one of the most extensive in the Soke of Peterborough, comprising areas of the parishes of Bainton, Ufford, Ashton, Helpston, Maxey and Barnack. No place-name commemorates it and its exact location is unknown, but the name Torpel Castle has recently been given to massive stone foundations in Lawn Wood, Bainton (TF 10700525). However, earthwork-remains in a field to the east of this may represent the site of the manor house, and the bounds of the mediaeval deer park can also be deduced.

The earthworks (centred TF 111054; fig. 20a) lie on flat land south of the River Welland, just over 15 metres above OD. They were formerly in Ufford, but are now in Bainton parish, at a point where the line of the Roman Road, King Street, is distorted, apparently to accommodate the earthworks. The site is described as a ring and bailey on modern OS maps, but appears to be the site of a manor house with adjoining enclosures. It occupies a roughly rectangular field of some 4 hectares, and is surrounded by a bank up to 1 metre high. A break in this bank on the western side may be recent, but the entrance on the eastern side is probably original. A hollow-way leads to the earthworks in the southern half of the site. The bank on the southern boundary is also broken by trackways.

The interior may be divided into four areas. The northern third, which is bounded by a scarp up to 1 metre high, contains no visible features, apart from a depression in the north-east corner. The central part is occupied by at least 9 rectangular depressions surrounded by low banks, probably the remains of fairly recent farm buildings. The largest depression, to the west, is perhaps the site of a large barn, and the field was known as Barn Close on a map of 1799 (NRO). In the south-east there is a flat area bounded by the hollow-way on the north and by banks on the other three sides. The remains of at least one long rectangular pond can be seen along the east side. The south-west is occupied by a roughly oval, flat-topped mound, and foundations of a former building are still visible on top of it. It is bounded on the north, west and south by a scarp up to 2.5 metres high, with a flat-bottomed ditch some 5 metres wide and a bank up to 1.5 metres high outside it. To the south-west and south there is an outer bank and ditch,

beyond the main enclosure, mutilated by tracks entering the site from the south. Fragments of mediaeval pottery, including Stamford ware, have been found in the plough soil of the adjacent fields.

The deer park (fig. 20b) was made in 1198 when Roger de Torpel paid 100s. for enclosing his woods of Torpel, La Hage, Ravenesland and Cricklecroft. In the fourteenth century it is said variously to be of 60 and of 92 acres. Its limits may be detected from field boundaries on the 1799 map and from place-names. It contains Lawn Wood (TF 105053) and Rough Ravens (TF 106056), and is bounded on the east by King Street and on the south by Hilly Wood. The field in the south-east corner of this area was known as Old Parks on the 1799 map (TF 111050). Although the outline of the park is apparent from this, there is no trace of a boundary bank.

Within Lawn Wood (TF 10700525) are the remains of a stone building some 20 metres square, with walls 1.75 metres wide, still standing to a height of 1 metre. The dressed stone has been robbed out and all that remains is the limestone rubble core of the walls. At the south-west internal corner the lower part of a semi-octagonal attached shaft, probably for vaulting, remains. Immediately to the east (TF 10740525) there is a pond. The building, described as a lodge on the OS 1:2500 map, has become known as Torpel Castle. There are references to a lodge at various times, for example in a grant of 1554.

Within the deer park of Torpel there are thus two interesting sites, both possible locations for the manor house. Although the stone-walled structure in Lawn Wood is impressive, the earthwork site must also have been important, to judge both from its extent and from the fact that it stood on King Street. Local tradition states that the boundary stone which stands in the hedge between the remains of the manor house and King Street has been moved from its correct place. There are records of disputes during the sixteenth century over the boundary between Helpston and Torpel Manor in Ufford. Possibly the earthworks are the site of the original manor house while the building is the remains of a deer park lodge. Only excavation could make the position clearer.

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# Two Bronze Vessels from Stanground

by Carolyn Dallas

The two bronze vessels illustrated in fig. 21 were found in 1966 about three metres south of the present line of Cnut's Dyke at Stanground (TL 215967), when a pipe trench was being cut through the silt of the old dyke.

It is not possible from the remaining fragments of the cauldron to reconstruct the complete profile, although it was probably carinated. The upper portion illustrated in fig. 21b is virtually complete and is made of one piece of metal, including the rim and lugs. The intact lug shows that they were clipped into triangular shape and that the cord-hole has been punched through from the inside of the vessel. The metal thickness ranges from 2.5mm at the lug to 1.1mm on the body wall.

The bronze pan is complete except for some corrosion holes and missing handle(s) (fig. 21). It is also made from one piece of metal, up to 2mm thick on average. It has been patched three times in antiquity — once with solder and twice by rivetting sheet-bronze over the hole with small bronze rivets (as shown on fig. 21).

Bronze cauldrons with triangular ears occur among the grave-goods of Pagan Anglo-Saxon graves of the fifth and sixth centuries A.D., and have mainly a Midlands and East Anglian distribution (Thompson (1956); Kennett (1971)). This kind of vessel, however, was being made as early as the third century A.D. on the Continent (Hawkes (1951), 182; Kennett (1971)) and, becoming more common in the fourth and fifth centuries, was exported to Britain from the Rhineland in the Pagan Saxon period. It is, therefore, difficult to argue a closer date than A.D. 300-700 for an unstratified example such as this. Similar problems occur with larger groups of vessels, such as that from Halkyn Mountain in Flintshire (*Archaeologia* XIV, 1803, 275). Some pottery kiln-wasters of third-century date were found further along Cnut's Dyke on the same occasion on which the bronze vessels were recovered. Although this suggests that the Dyke may have been open in the later Roman period, it does not mean that the bronze vessels are of this date, as the dyke may have been open for several hundred years. The cauldron at least would seem more likely to have been discarded during the Pagan Saxon period; for a high proportion of known examples

come from contexts of this period and they are more likely to be imported or copied in Britain at a late stage of their Continental development.

The bronze pan is extremely difficult to date as such shallow examples with no rim are very rare. It is unlikely to have been a "frying pan" such as that from Sturmere in Essex (*Archaeologia* XVI, 1812, 364, pl. LXIX), as there is no handle attachment. Assuming that the pan was used for hot food, drop-handles soldered to the outside are most probable as on the very similar seventh-century Frankish vessel from Morken in the Rhineland (Lasko (1971), 49, fig. 40). It is also possible that there were no handles at all; for the vessel could have been used for cold food as well as hot. The pan has exactly the same rim diameter (28cm) as the cauldron, which is obviously a cooking vessel to be suspended over a fire, and the possibility of the two having been used in conjunction cannot be ignored. The pan will fit comfortably over the cauldron mouth, either right way up to heat food over boiling water, or inverted as a lid. However, until further examples are found, this must remain speculation.

I am grateful to Dr J. P. Wild and Mr G. B. Dannel for suggesting that I review the objects.

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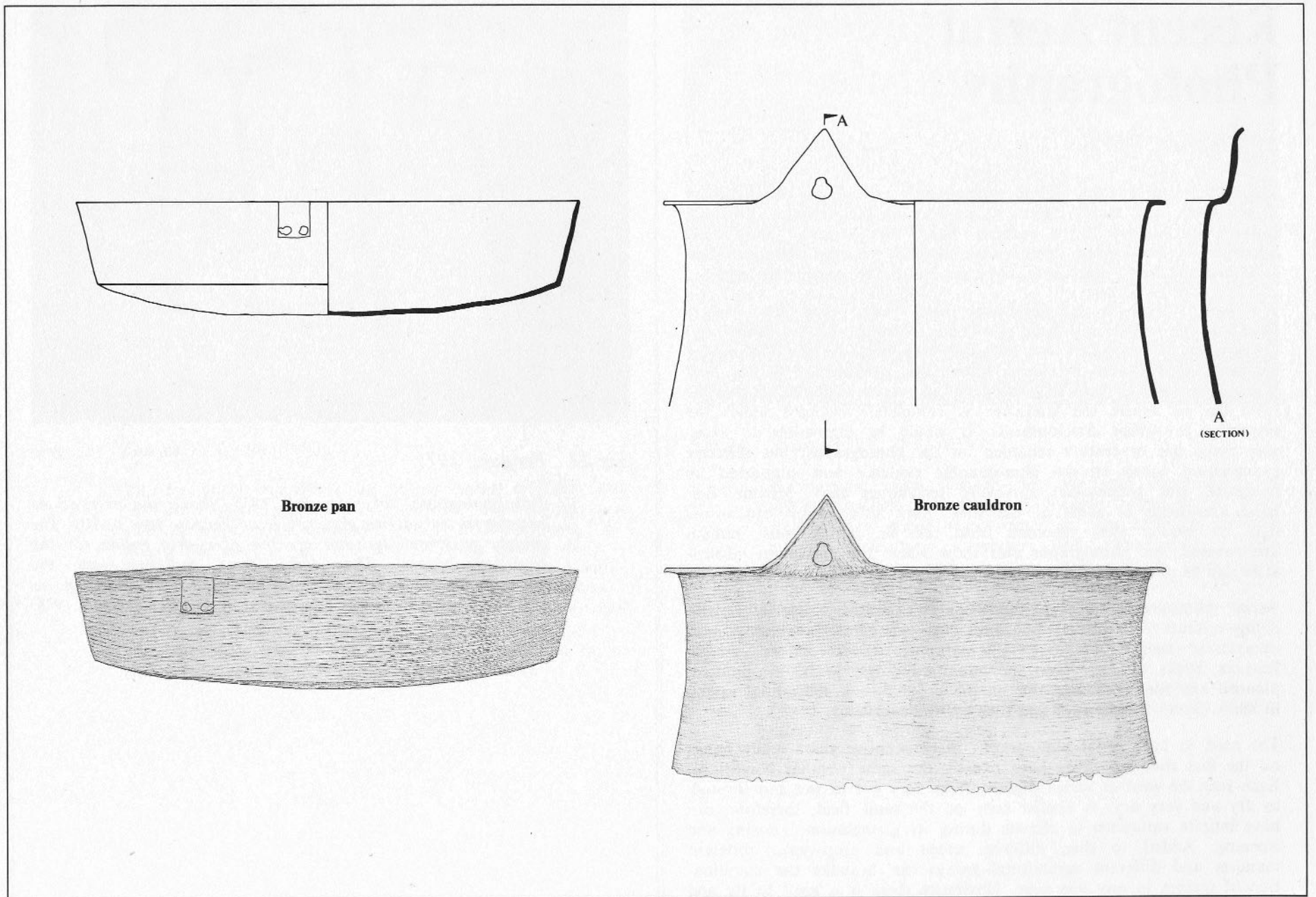


Fig 21a, b The bronze pan and bronze cauldron from Stanground



# Recent Aerial Photography

by Stephen Upex

The 1975 season was the fifth in which I have carried out aerial surveys in the lower and middle Nene Valley for the Nene Valley Research Committee. Almost thirty parishes have been covered and many hundreds of sites noted. Some sites already recorded have revealed additional features: other sites have proved to be completely new.

The main target in reconnaissance has always been the Greater Peterborough expansion area; for here housing, factory and road development is eating fast into land that was formerly safe. During the summers of 1974/75 the areas within the parishes of Castor and Werrington were covered in great detail to record as much as possible from the air before the landscape is completely changed under the respective townships developments. It would be impossible to excavate every site or feature recorded on the photographs; but selective examination based on the photographic evidence and supported by fieldwork and geophysical surveying techniques may provide first hand knowledge of some of the sites. Such information can throw light on similar sites recorded from the air, which must remain unexcavated. Air photographs also show where the maximum information can be obtained with the least possible earth moving.

Aerial photography proves increasingly expensive, especially with rising aircraft fuel prices; but this cost compares favourably with excavation costs. Adequate photographic cover allows certain features, roads, ditches, even individual buildings, to be pin-pointed, planned and then measured out on the ground — a substantial saving in many cases of manpower and time for the excavator.

The need to take aerial photographs in consecutive years really hangs on the fact that few years have exactly the same weather conditions. Each year the weather varies slightly, from very wet to wet and through to dry and very dry. A similar crop on the same field, therefore, can have infinite variations in climate during its germination, growing and ripening. Added to this, different crops and crop-types, different manures and different agricultural sprays can broaden the combination of factors in any one year. Obviously there is a need to fly and record many different crop reactions to all these factors.

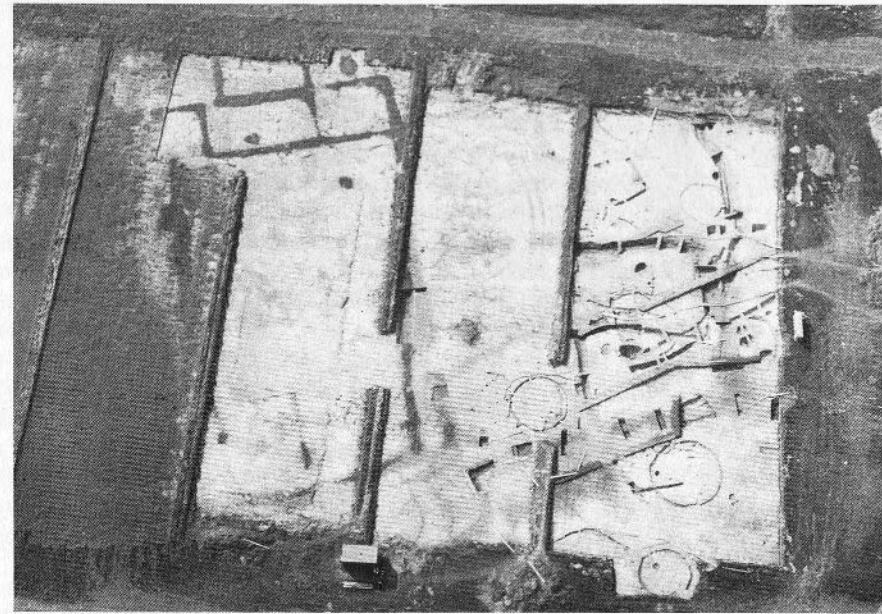


Fig 22 Fengate, 1975

*This photograph, taken in July 1975, shows the excavations in progress on an Iron-Age village at Fengate (see p. 10). The circular excavated trenches are the eaves-drip gullies for the Iron-Age houses. The dark linear markings are the unexcavated paddocks or stockyard ditches belonging to the Roman farmstead to be excavated by Frances Pryor in 1976.*



**Fig 23** *Tansor (TL 09066902)*

*This settlement area is situated east of Tansor on heavy soils with an underlying bedrock of cornbrash. Such geology and soil-type often prove unsuitable for aerial photography, but during the summer of 1972 approximately 80-100 acres of crop markings were photographed, revealing new features. The crop markings often show differing phases of enclosure-construction, with primary ditches and ditch recuts or new ditches on slightly different alignments. Some of the enclosures were large (3-5 acres) and shared common corner entrances, suggesting field groups, perhaps for stock.*



**Fig 24** *Castor (TL 19117979)*

*Normangate Field, Castor, has the rare combination of densely packed archaeological features situated on light, well drained gravel soils which in turn stimulate suitable modern agricultural techniques and crop-types. All these factors promote both negative and positive crop-growth markings, showing the Roman industrial suburbs with great clarity. Recent deep ploughing, however, is beginning to blur this image as the plough bites deeper into the subsoil. Soon only the bottoms of the pits and ditches will be left undamaged. The photograph (1974) show part of the Normangate Field complex, taken from the north-east. The clarity of the cropmarkings here is increased by the shadow effect of late evening.*

# Longthorpe Holy Well

by Donald Mackreth and Francis O'Neill

Direct documentary evidence referring to Holy Well is unfortunately scanty. The dating for the garden-remains arrived at from maps shows that the scheme was in being after *c.*1765 and before *c.*1800.

On topographical, archeological and documentary grounds (the last being a survey of the Old Manor), it seems clear that the complex of ponds and earthworks was not in existence before 1649. Oliver St John, Cromwell's Lord Chief Justice, acquired this land in Longthorpe in 1653 and began building Thorpe Hall in that year. On the death of the last St John, Mary, in 1793, the estate passed to the Earls Fitzwilliam. The evidence is that the St Johns were responsible for the pond complex.

As to Holy Well: there appears to be evidence for two schemes. The first is noted by J. Bridges, *c.*1720, who refers to it as lying 'in the park at some distance from the house' and he says that the water rises in a 'rock or grotto'. The second is shown on maps dated *c.*1765-85 and is a revitalisation of the area by the well. In 1756 Mary St John married Sir John Bernard and they had a son, Robert. Either of these baronets could have been responsible for the work; but on balance it was probably Sir John.

The form of the name Holy Well was Holwell in 1632 and 1649, and Bridges in 1720 calls it Hallywell. The meaning seems to be 'the well in the hollow'. The late eighteenth-century maps give Holy Well and divide the complex into Upper and Lower Holy Well.

The idea that the waters were medicinal probably encouraged the Rev. A. J. Skrimshire to build outside the grotto entrance a distillery for the production of peppermint water, oil of caraway and other items such as extract of Henbane and Belladonna.

The eighteenth-century garden, remodelled, consists of a Grotto lit by an 'eye' directly over a circular well into which the water is led rather than rises (fig. 25). The water ran under the floor of the Grotto and emerged to fall into a secluded pool, rectangular at one end and apsidal at the other. Around the pool was a walkway with a seat along the sides and round the apse. The water then ran along an open channel and down into a trough from which it splashed into the large pond. From here it was taken by a concealed exit into the rest of the pond complex.

The large pond was rectangular and had a relieved apse at the far end from the pavilion and terrace which gave access to the small pool and Grotto. The distribution of the water, the stone revetments for the two ponds and the terrace all mark this scheme off from the rest of the pond complex. The whole forms a water garden of markedly classical cast, most probably enhanced by statuary and possibly mock-ruin fragments. A plinth which could have supported a statue is still on the site.

Since the last war the garden-remains have suffered very badly and it is fortunate that photographs survive showing the stonework round the apse of the small pool. The style of this is Greek rather than Roman. A woodcut made in the middle of last century, which shows the distillery, reveals that the pavilion had columns in a version of Greek Ionic. The use of these features should date after the publication of the first volume of Stewart and Revett's *Antiquities of Athens* in 1762 which is usually taken to be the starting point for the use of Greek detailing in English architecture. Thus the stylistic date falls into the same time-bracket as the maps which show the large and small ponds. Failing family documents which would help to pin-point which of the Bernards commissioned the work, it would require a great labour to discover who the architect was; such a design would be accounted a minor work and all the drawings could easily have been discarded.

It is possible that the Grotto belongs to an earlier period, following Bridge's comment. Certainly the internal walls are secondary, inserted most probably to support the vault, which, as fig. 25 shows, has an irregular plan. By 1900 the site had become deserted and was well known earlier this century as a local picnic spot. If the Development Corporation's plans are successful, the site will become a local resort again and will preserve something of the form of the classical garden.

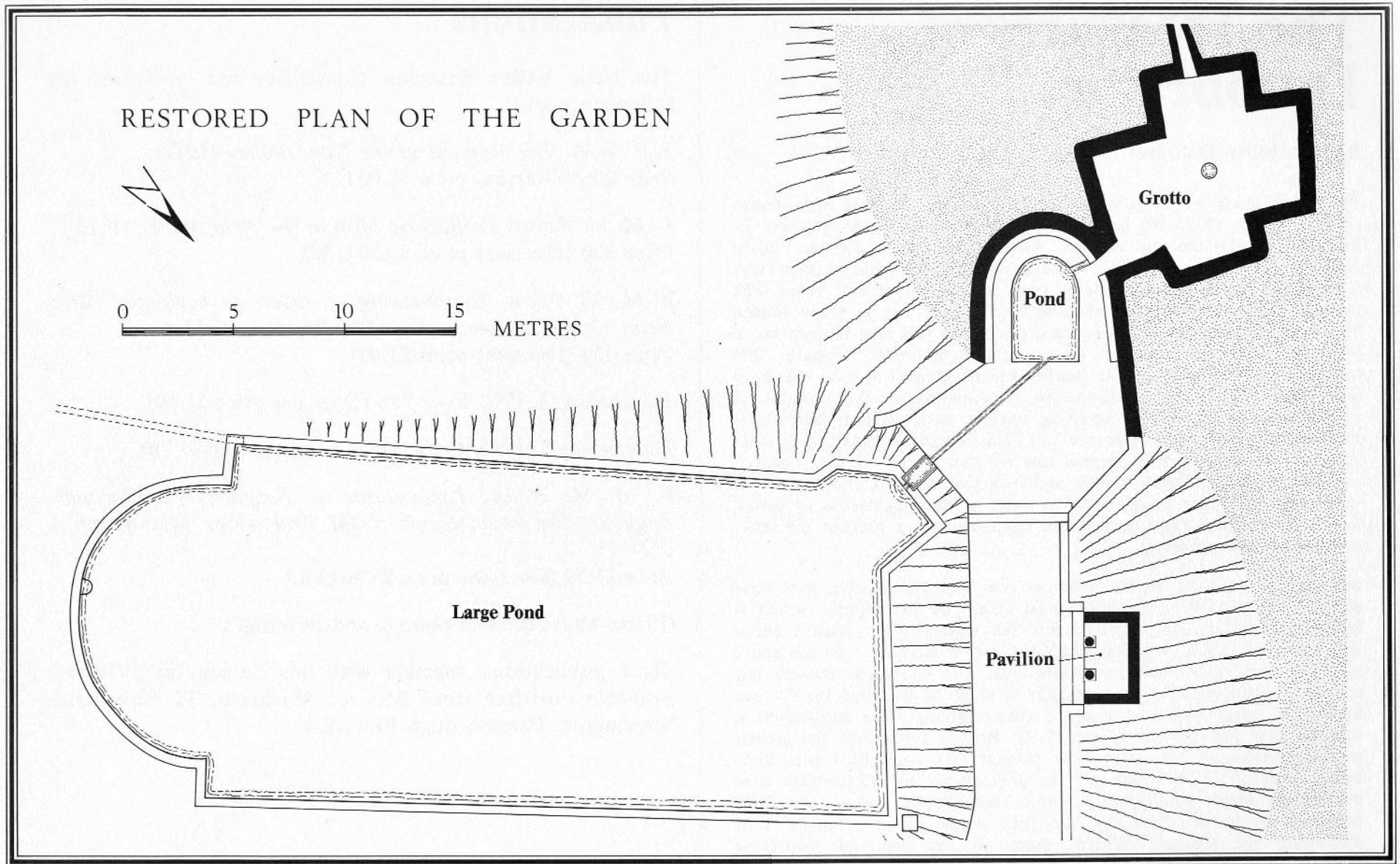


Fig 25 Plan of the ponds and grotto at Holy Well, Longthorpe

# The Treasures of Durobrivae

by Graham Webster

The recent finds of Christian silver (p. 7) and the gold coin hoard (*Durobrivae* 3, 1975, 10) have highlighted once more the problem of treasure and the treasure hunters. As the law stands anyone finding gold and silver when walking over land with the landowners' permission is likely to be rewarded by the Crown, almost to the full value. The treasure hunter sees here an exciting sport which has as much chance of hitting the jack-pot as the football pool! The fact that *Durobrivae* is protected under the Ancient Monuments Acts seems to have little relevance. While some of the hoards are of great historical value in themselves, the serious archaeologist is appalled at the thought of people with no knowledge scouring ancient sites, digging little holes and recovering artefacts from the soil. This wholesale ravaging of sites all over the country is a serious matter, since none of this material will ever be studied in its proper archaeological context and most of it vanish totally. There seems little prospect of new legislation or action by the government, and landowners seem unable to prevent the mass invasion of their property.

But who is really to blame? How do the treasure hunters spot their prey so easily? The real culprit must surely be the plough, which is biting more deeply and regularly into the layers of our ancient burial and occupation sites. A single ploughing over a Roman town can shave off three centimetres over the whole area. The Christian treasure was revealed by the plough, yet originally it must be assumed that it was buried for safety well over a metre below ground. The implication is that we have lost the top metre of the Roman town over the greater part of its interior. This is far more damage than could have been done by an army of treasure hunters. The only answer to the problem is to put all our major sites down to grass immediately, and to pay compensation to farmers for any loss they might incur. It might even discourage the treasure hunters, since no new material would be annually brought to the surface. We must encourage the government to think along this line and there may be then a faint possibility of saving what little is left of our early history.

## Publications

The Nene Valley Research Committee has published the following works:

J. P. Wild, *The Romans in the Nene Valley* (1972)  
Price 20p (Overseas price \$0.50 U.S.)

F. M. M. Pryor, *Prehistoric Man in the Nene Valley* (1973)  
Price 20p (Overseas price \$0.50 U.S.)

F. M. M. Pryor, *Earthmoving on Open Archaeological Sites, Nene Valley Archaeological Handbook 1*, 1974  
Price 45p (Overseas price \$1.00)

*Durobrivae* 2, 1974 Price 75p (Overseas price \$1.50)

*Durobrivae* 3, 1975. Price 90p (Overseas price \$1.70)

F. M. M. Pryor, *Excavations at Fengate, Peterborough, England: The First Report ROM Archaeology Monograph 3*, 1974  
Price £1.50 (Overseas price \$3.50 U.S.)

(Prices above include postage and packing)

These publications, together with this Review for 1976, are available post-free from Mrs C. Mackreth, 32 Hall Lane, Werrington, Peterborough PE4 6RA.

## Correction

In *Durobrivae* 3, 1975, fig. 12 read 'vampwing' for 'vamp' and 'wing' in the explanatory shoe-diagram.