

SOMERSET ARCHAEOLOGY, 1999

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DEPARTMENT

COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGICAL OFFICER'S REPORT

Each year the round of development-led archaeological reporting continues to dominate much of the work of the archaeological team within the County Council Environment and Property Department. The effectiveness of PPG 16 and its influence upon the County Structure Plan and other Local Plans continues to provide a valuable platform upon which development control advice is given to local planning authorities to protect the heritage of the county. Many of the reports given in the round-up section are a direct result of the effectiveness of archaeological policies in land use planning. As part of the response to the increase in planning related enquiries (now almost 2000 a year) a dedicated post was set up to deliver development control advice and Steven Membery joined the team from Boston, Lincolnshire. In addition to providing a service to the District Councils in the county we continue to deal with an increasing demand from other bodies and agencies such as water companies (Wessex Water and Bristol Water), the Environment Agency, the Forestry Authority and the Farming and Rural Conservation Agency. All of these demands have stretched the resources within the department to deliver accurate and reliable advice on the heritage impacts of certain schemes and agri-environment matters such as Countryside Stewardship applications that are becoming increasingly important in helping to manage the farmed landscape better.

The use of metal detectors and the finding of various metal objects and coins continues to attract a lot of attention around the county and Somerset has teamed up with Dorset to join in with a pilot project which will monitor, record and identify a wide range of archaeological objects and finds over the next couple of years. The Heritage Lottery Fund and the county councils fund the project and Chris Webster is working with Steve Minnitt to ensure that the archaeological records are added to the County SMR. Ciorstaidh Hayward-Trevarthen was appointed as the Finds Liaison Officer and will split her time between the two counties. The scheme is called the Portable Antiquities Initiative and it will add valuable information to the archaeological map of the county. This is a pilot project and it is hoped that additional funding will be made available from the HLF and elsewhere to ensure the continuation of the project over the next couple of years. Liaison with metal detector users across the county is usually very productive and a number of new sites are discovered every year. If used responsibly metal detecting and more importantly the associated recording, can be a very valuable technique to help with archaeological research. Although not part of the scheme's work, the reporting as Treasure of the Roman silver hoard from Shapwick is a prime example of detectorists and archaeologists working together (see below).

We are fortunate in the county to have several archaeological research projects such as the long-running Shapwick project inspired by Mick Aston of Bristol University but now largely

organised by Chris Gerrard, Nick Thorpe and Keith Wilkinson of King Alfred's College Winchester. The results from this landscape and excavation project, which finished this year, are beginning to change our understanding of the development of a 'typical' Polden/wetland edge parish. In the south of the county Richard Tabor and Peter Leach of Birmingham University continue to run The South Cadbury Environs Project (concentrating on the prehistoric period in particular). Their work has greatly extended our knowledge of the area around South Cadbury hillfort and identified a number of sites and archaeological features. A third but smaller research and training excavation is run by Mark Horton of Bristol University at Carscliffe near Cheddar. This project is looking at the growth and development of small largely deserted Mendip-edge settlement and confirms that there is potential for many of these marginal sites to reveal evidence of farming and settlement expansion in this part of the county in the early medieval period. Each of these projects has added a great deal to our local knowledge and shows how valuable small-scale research excavations can be to help us to understand our local and countywide heritage. During the year a research group was set up to consider the archaeological records and potential of the Bishop's palace at Wells and reports should appear in future issues of the *Proceedings*.

The Sites and Monuments Record continues to grow and 406 new records were added in 1999. Discussions are underway with English Nature and their partners to consolidate the Peat Moors Centre as a key site in the visitor management strategy for Shapwick Heath and this part of the Somerset Levels and Moors. Members of the group organised seminars and talks at a variety of venues such as Dillington, Yeovil college, Langport and Bridgwater and numerous papers were given at local, regional and national conferences by members of the team. The Dillington Conference, held in October 1999, marked the 150th anniversary of the Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society. Professor Philip Rahtz introduced the conference and an audience of 150 people were treated to 25 papers covering a wide range of Somerset topics from Palaeolithic cave studies to industrial archaeology. Publication of the papers is in preparation.

The increasing interest in archaeology and local cultural heritage continues to put pressure on our service to bring some of the heritage information to life and ensure that our archaeological heritage is passed on in good measure to our successors.

(R. A. Croft)

SURVEY, FIELDWORK AND EXTENSIVE SITES

Brean, Axe West Tidal Banks, ST 305585

A watching brief was undertaken during maintenance works and heightening of the existing riverbanks south of Brean Down Farm. The original intention was to relocate the banks in order to increase the size of an area of salt marsh, involving complete demolition of the existing banks, but this programme was abandoned in favour of simple maintenance.

Although no complete sections of any of the river banks were seen, sufficient stratigraphy within the banks was recorded to allow phasing to be carried out and alluvial deposits below and behind the banks were also recorded.

(C. & N. Hollinrake)

Closworth, Tollgate to county boundary, A37, ST 565113

A watching brief was carried out by AC Archaeology along the route of road improvements between March and May 1999. The principal aim was to determine the survival of, and record any deposits relating to, the Dorchester to Ilchester Roman road which was assumed to lie under the present A37 carriageway. The scheme measured approximately 1.6km long, with the stripped area ranging between 20m and 30m in width. No substantial archaeological remains were discovered. The only features recorded were a number of flint artefacts, including two scrapers of a late Neolithic to early Bronze age date. No evidence for the Roman road was

found, suggesting that it may have been destroyed by continuous use of the route since that period.

(John Privett)

Congresbury, ST 442632

A gradiometer survey was undertaken by GSB Prospection on behalf of Bryant Homes Ltd in advance of a proposed development. The site lies in the south west quadrant of a former deer park and ridge and furrow is visible on the surface. Although no other archaeological remains are known to exist within the application area, Roman kilns have been located nearby, most notably immediately to the south near Venus Street.

Although scanning identified a few anomalies of possible interest, the site was generally quiet with a scatter of isolated ferrous type responses, which are most likely to be modern in origin. Detailed gradiometry confirmed the generally quiet nature of the site, although several ferrous type responses are evident in the data and some responses have been noted for which an archaeological origin cannot be excluded.

Crewkerne to North Perrott, Wessex Water renewal pipeline

An archaeological watching brief on the renewal of a Wessex Water pipe line running for about 2.5km between the village of North Perrott and the eastern outskirts of Crewkerne, identified a number of archaeologically significant features and sites including large areas containing natural flint nodules in clay; an extensive area of Mesolithic and Neolithic activity identified by worked flint scrapers and blades; finds of late-Saxon and medieval pottery suggesting the location of a deserted settlement; and post-medieval finds connected with an abandoned mill site.

(C. & N. Hollinrake)

Merriott, ST 43661265 to ST 44291172

A watching brief was conducted by Cotswold Archaeological Trust on behalf of Transco during the construction of a gas main pipeline. An earthwork terrace, possibly a lynchet, of unknown date was identified at the southern extent of the scheme.

(M. Brett)

Shapwick, ST417380 area

A gradiometer survey was undertaken by GSB Prospection as part of the Shapwick project in several fields around the village. This located several sites of archaeological interest, though most were ephemeral in nature and their interpretation must be cautious. However, a major settlement complex indicative of possible Romano-British occupation was recorded on the western edge of the village. It comprises a complex of enclosures and ditch systems occupying an area of approximately 3ha and appears to represent multiple phases of occupation activity. Part of an enclosure and possible occupation features have also been identified a short distance to the north of the Roman road along the Polden ridge.

(Dan Sheil)

South Cadbury Environs Project

This report summarises the results of excavations and geophysical surveys carried out within the project by teams from the Universities of Bristol, Birmingham, Glasgow and Sheffield. Further assistance has been provided by members of the South East Somerset Archaeological and Historical Society. There was less fieldwork than in previous years as analysis and reporting on existing data has assumed priority over all else¹.

Cadbury Castle perimeter survey. Only around a further two hectares have been surveyed by gradiometer in Milsom's Corner field, showing more of a multiphase farmstead with probable

Romano-British origins. Shovel pitting was carried out in The Moor, South Cadbury, an area south of the field at Castle Farm excavated in 1996 and 1998.

Milsom's Corner, ST 623 250. Post excavation work relating to the Milsom's Corner bronze-age shield continues. A paper establishing the shield's European context has already been published². A report on the metallography is being prepared by Peter Northover and is due to appear in the *Oxford Journal of Archaeology* with an analysis of associated pottery (Richard Tabor) and the radiocarbon dates (Stuart Needham). Funding has been sought for environmental testing of the soils retrieved from the microexcavation of the shield. It is pleasing to note that conservator Andy Wilson's work on the shield gained the national archaeological conservation award for 1999. The shield is now on display at Somerset County Museum.

The training excavations produced further important finds. The pelvis of a man, aged about 30, was found accompanied by a near complete Durotrigian beaded rim bowl in a ditch, a probable indication that the 1st century AD massacre noted at the South West Gate of Cadbury Castle extended several hundred metres westward.

In 1996 it had been noted that a Middle Iron Age (Cadbury 7) roundhouse on the south side of the spur had been slighted prior to the development of a terrace. In 1999 one of two 2m-wide machine cuttings extending south from the main trench provided clear evidence for the deliberate construction of a clay platform, stabilised by footings of alternating gravel and silty clay. Amongst the very few finds were Cadbury 8 or 9 pot sherds. The platform was sealed below a hillwash which had formed during the Late Iron Age suggesting that it was constructed in the 1st century BC or the first half of the 1st century AD.

A broad shallow depression containing few finds may be the floor of a building predating or contemporary with the earlier phases of the Middle Bronze Age ditch in which the shield was placed several centuries later.

Two further Early Neolithic pits were found, one forming an alignment of three with two excavated previously. The fourth was perpendicular to the middle pit of the three. Both contained burnt material, including hazelnuts, and pottery of a form analogous to Hembury Ware. A saddle quern was found in the pit set back from the line. Although used, the stone was far from worked out. The excavation has now been backfilled and any plans for further work will be based on analysis of the existing archive. An interim report is in preparation but a summary of work up to Easter 1999 has appeared in a popular journal³.

¹ Tabor, R., and Johnson, P., forthcoming. 'Sigwells, Somerset, England: regional application and interpretation of geophysical survey', *Antiquity* 284

² Coles, J., Leach, P., Minnitt, S., Tabor, R., and Wilson, A. 1999. 'A Later Bronze Age shield from South Cadbury, Somerset, England', *Antiquity* 279, 33-48

³ Tabor, R., 1999. 'South Cadbury: Milsoms Corner', *Current Archaeology* 163, 251-5

(Richard Tabor)

Yeovilton, Royal Naval Air Station, new wardroom, ST 549242

Plans for the construction of a new wardroom in an area of known cropmarks¹ led to a programme of archaeological work, which commenced with a geophysical survey by Stratascan. Two test areas were surveyed by magnetometry and resistivity, following which the entire 5ha area was surveyed by magnetometer. The results showed clearly that the field system, known from the aerial photographs, continued into the development area where it was overlain by ridge and furrow. Several areas were identified as relating to occupation, with some evidence of stone walls. A full excavation is planned in advance of construction. See also under Prehistoric.

¹ Horner, W. S., and Griffith, F. G., in *Somerset Archaeology 1996, SANH 140*, 135-7, fig. 2, 138.

The area concerned can be seen at the bottom of fig. 2 adjacent to the running track.

(Chris Webster)

MULTIPERIOD

Keynsham, Retail Park, ST 653687

A large area was evaluated by Avon Archaeological Unit which located a trackway or surface of Roman date together with an occupation layer and structures of the 12th to 15th centuries. Several 19th-century buildings shown on the tithe map were also located. A later watching brief located a fragmentary wall associated with the Roman material.

(Jonathan Erskine)

PREHISTORIC

Athelney, Baltmoor Wall, ST 340 292

Archaeological monitoring was undertaken by the Cotswold Archaeological Trust, during the removal of badger setts from the medieval flood bank known as the Baltmoor Wall. No significant archaeological deposits were encountered, most of the work taking place within material dumped against the wall in the 1960s and 1990s. The stone wall dating to 1883 which encased the original bank was recorded. A test excavation was undertaken in an area of soft ground which recorded 1.3m of silt overlying a layer of peat. A radiocarbon date of 2760 ± 50 bp was obtained (1046-1042, 1011-804 cal BC at 2 sigma) from the peat.

(Chris Webster)

Bleadon, Whitegate Farm, ST33995692

Excavation, by the Avon Archaeological Unit, of an area proposed for residential development located an area of Late Iron Age ritual pits containing two adult interments - the female with an iron penannular brooch. Other pits contained horse skulls and a complete sheep. Most of the pottery can be dated to the Early-Middle Iron Age but there was also some residual Bronze-age material. Medieval boundary ditches reflected garden or tenement plots of the 12th or 13th century.

(Jonathan Erskine)

Cross, Old Coach Road, ST 41605467

An evaluation was carried out of land on the south of Old Coach Road by the Cotswold Archaeological Trust in the area where a gold torc was discovered in 1898. Layers of peat interleaved with, and capped by, alluvium were exposed in several of the trenches and one fragment of struck flint was recovered from the base of the peat deposits. Two radiocarbon dates were obtained which indicate that the peat started to develop in the Bronze Age, and that this process continued into the early Iron Age. A further trench revealed deep layers of colluvium, sealing a charcoal-rich former ground surface, which can be dated to the Bronze Age on the basis of one radiocarbon date.

(D. Kenyon)

Douling, Douling Quarry, ST 65134350

An archaeological watching brief undertaken when topsoil was removed during construction of a new bund south of the existing quarry at Douling, recovered prehistoric flint flakes and tools and small quantities of late-medieval and post-medieval pottery sherds. The remains of a demolished 19th-century mineral railway line were also recorded. See also under Roman.

(C. & N. Hollinrake)

Glastonbury, Chalice Well, ST 50753856

An archaeological watching brief at Chalice Well was undertaken during construction of an extension to the east side of the existing domestic buildings. The remnants of a relatively large

ditch and associated post holes situated north and north-east of the existing buildings were investigated and recorded. An accelerator radiocarbon date from the lowest colluvial layer in the ditch was 3790±50 BP, which calibrates to 2402-2038 cal BC (at 2 sigma).

(C. & N. Hollinrake)

Norton Fitzwarren, Longland's Farm, ST 18552769

See under Roman.

Stoney Littleton, Long Barrow, ST 735 572

A geophysical survey (using both magnetic and resistivity techniques) was carried out by GSB Prospection as part of an archaeological response to repair work on the monument. The survey took advantage of the dismantling of the fence around the monument prior to the repairs. It was hoped that the survey would provide information on the presence of side ditches, quarry scoops or other archaeological features within the environs of the long barrow. The work was part of larger archaeological works involving the Cotswold Archaeological Trust and was undertaken on behalf of Cliveden Conservation. The magnetic data are dominated by the response from the monument itself, although some pit-type anomalies have been found. By contrast, the resistance data are more variable, with many individual anomalies and broad trends apparent within the survey. Despite the increased variation, few definite archaeological features can be defined. It is suggested that a broad quarry 'scoop' may be present slightly upslope and to the north of the mound.

Yeovilton, Fleet Air Arm Museum, ST55402450

A watching brief and limited area excavation conducted during the construction of the new museum storage building confirmed the existence of a complex, multi-period landscape previously observed on aerial photographs¹. Clearly visible rectangular enclosures and trackways would appear to be primarily of Romano-British origin. However excavation of a circular Middle Iron Age enclosure with possible ritual function located within later rectangular boundaries indicated some respect for earlier features. Several Bronze Age pits were also recorded together with a beam slot structure which may possibly be of post-Roman or Saxon origin. See also under Survey.

¹ Horner, W. S., and Griffith, F. G. in *Somerset Archaeology 1996*. *SANH* 140, 135-7, fig. 2, 138.

(R. A. Broomhead)

ROMAN

Banwell, Roman Villa, ST 39845920

A watching brief, by the Avon Archaeological Unit, on the erection of a post and rail fence located a possible unmortared stone wall of uncertain date. Six sherds of Roman pottery were recovered together with one possible Saxon sherd.

(Jonathan Erskine)

Castle Cary, Manor Farm, ST642323

See under Medieval.

Cheddar, Kings of Wessex School, ST45705305

An archaeological watching brief was conducted during the construction of a new classroom block immediately south of the existing school buildings at the Kings of Wessex Community School, Cheddar. The watching brief confirmed the findings of a previous evaluation, which had indicated the presence of widespread Romano-British remains in the area and demonstrated more fully their nature. Evidence was produced for the existence of a substantial building,

probably an aisled barn, showing several possible phases of construction. The existence of a broad east - west ditch was also confirmed. Observations of minor groundworks in the playing fields to the south of the construction site indicated that Romano-British features might continue for some distance beyond the area of development.

(R. A. Broomhead)

Cheddar, Kings of Wessex School, ST 4585 5296

Topsoil stripping for the construction of a new cycle path along the east side of the playing fields of the Kings of Wessex School was monitored, by Wessex Archaeology, as a condition of scheduled monument consent. The exposed surface was cleaned and planned but no excavation of features undertaken and it was thus difficult to date the features. However, the presence of quantities of Roman pottery suggests that most of the features are associated with the site to the north and east. Early Roman (1st and 2nd century) deposits were located at the north between two walls. One of the walls, which followed the line of the present vicarage wall, may have been post-medieval on the basis of surface finds. Running south was what appeared to be the remains of a rutted track following the wall. Medieval (12th-13th century) finds were recovered from a stone spread to the south and beyond this occupation appeared to cease - the only other feature was a field drain.

(Chris Webster)

Cheddar, Kings of Wessex ST 45765285

Documentary evidence suggested that a prominent, irregular bank and ditch to the south of the Kings of Wessex Community School may comprise the original boundary of the previously excavated Saxon palace complex. The excavation by machine of two trenches through the embankment failed to provide any reasonable dating evidence for its construction and indicated substantial modern disturbance. It was however noted that the bank would appear to have been constructed on the line of an earlier, possibly Romano-British ditch.

(R. A. Broomhead)

Cheddar, Kings of Wessex School, ST 45755295.

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during construction of new playing fields and service trenches south of the main school block following inconclusive geophysical survey. Relatively large amounts of Romano-British coins and large quantities of lead scrap and melted lead were recovered, as was Romano-British pottery.

(C. & N. Hollinrake)

Cheddon Fitzpaine, Nerrol's Farm, ST 2395 2680

As a condition of planning permission an excavation was undertaken by Bristol and Region Archaeological Services (BaRAS). The aim of the excavation was to further record and define evidence for Romano-British activity identified by the Cheddon Field Group (CFG) during their field survey and excavation at the northern edge of the development area¹.

An area at the northern edge of the site was stripped by mechanical excavator, with subsequent trenches placed to try and relocate the eastern site excavated by the CFG in 1993², although most of the archaeology proved to have been removed during the course of that excavation. Although the excavation indicated that the main CFG site continued to the north and south, only the western limit was defined by a boundary ditch. This suggested the site was part of a larger enclosure or field system.

The excavation revealed two phases of Romano-British activity, an east-west ditch feature, possibly a field boundary, which was superseded by a late 3rd/4th-century north-south ditch. The latter ditch appeared to define the western extent of a compound containing the poorly preserved remains of a

building with stone foundation, bounded to the east by a stone spread, interpreted as a courtyard. The eastern edge of the courtyard was defined by a north-south drainage gully with branches extending eastward. These drained east-west into the gully, indicating the possible presence of further buildings or a courtyard to the east. A shallow pit to the north of the building produced evidence of metal working on the site. This was fully excavated, and a sample sent for metallurgical analysis.

The remains were interpreted as a small agricultural settlement compound, possibly part of a larger hamlet or village associated with Phase 3B of the settlement excavated at Maidenbrook Farm in 1990³. BaRAS are currently preparing a full report on all the work at Nerrol's Farm, incorporating the work of Richard McDonnell, the Cheddon Field Group and AC Archaeology but this will not be completed until after the watching brief on the final phase of the development, due to begin in January 2000.

¹ Clements, C. F., 'Somerset Archaeology 1992', *SANH* 136, 168

² Luckett, J., 'Somerset Archaeology 1993', *SANH* 137, 138

³ Ferris, I. M., and Bevan, L., 1990 'Excavations at Maidenbrook Farm, Cheddon Fitzpaine, in 1990', *SANH* 137, 1-40

(Simon Cox)

Chilton Trinity, ST 29703928

A small-scale site evaluation together with a limited desk-based study was undertaken to provide an assessment of the likely archaeological implications of proposals to develop land to the east of Holy Trinity Church. The desk-based study revealed local knowledge of archaeological features in near proximity to the site and found that Romano-British finds had been recovered in an adjacent development. The field evaluation identified two ditches of Romano-British date on the western margins of the site but, in general, demonstrated that the primary archaeological features within the application area were limited to former medieval or post-medieval boundaries depicted on existing maps, and also to post-medieval pitting and gullying almost certainly related to the adjacent Marsh Farm. Although of interest with regards the landscape history of the area, none of the identifiable features could be considered as being of major archaeological importance. Subsequent archaeological observations made during the development of the site produced further evidence of medieval activity together with an additional small quantity of Romano-British material and a single prehistoric flint.

(R. A. Broomhead)

Douling, Douling Quarry extension, ST 653154380

An archaeological watching brief undertaken during ploughsoil stripping for a quarry extension north of the existing works, recorded a number of archaeological features cut into natural clay or bedrock. Subsequent excavations investigated a number of gullies, ditches, pits or postholes, ranging in date from the Romano-British period through to the medieval and post-medieval periods. Flint flakes and tools were common finds although there were no obviously prehistoric features. Many of the Romano-British pottery sherds were small, and abraded greywares suggesting occupation in the late-Roman or sub-Roman periods. The gullies and ditches are assumed to define a system of paddocks near to a Romano-British farm or settlement. The medieval sherds and features, including a few sherds of possible Late-Saxon date, might be connected with quarrying activity.

(C. & N. Hollinrake)

East Brent, Sycamore Lodge, ST 34485185

A small scale intrusive site evaluation together with a limited desk based study was undertaken to provide an assessment of the likely archaeological implications of proposals to develop land to the rear of Sycamore Lodge. The desk-based study produced no evidence of any documented

development of the assessment area in historical time but indicated that medieval and Romano-British finds had been recovered from adjacent sites. The field evaluation indicated that substantial archaeological features survived within the assessment area comprising elements of a probable Romano-British building or other structure underlain by extensive Iron Age occupational remains. A subsequent watching brief produced further evidence of the extent of Romano-British activity on the site.

(R. A. Broomhead)

Greinton, Coate's Barn, ST 41163638

A single evaluation trench was excavated, by Peter Leach, to the rear of Coates's Barn in advance of a proposed house construction. The earliest features appeared to be beam slots; some containing abraded Roman pottery and some containing both Roman and medieval sherds. Later occupation was confined to two phases of 19th or 20th-century occupation.

(Chris Webster)

Ilchester, New Sports Pavilion, ST 51902225

The archaeological watching brief, which was begun in 1998, carried on into 1999. Results included the recording of structural foundations and settlement features of the later-Roman period including stone and timber buildings and the recovery of large quantities of Romano-British pottery and building materials and substantial amounts of Late Iron Age pottery; this latter group is assumed to be linked to the 'oppidum' situated some 100m to the south-east of the watching brief area.

The southern suburbs of Ilchester have now been proved to extend further south of the town and east of the Fosse Way than had previously been assumed. In addition, some deposits which contained late 4th-century coins, had been cut through by later features, possibly suggesting occupation into the 5th century. The archaeological deposits and features in this area, including those of the late-Roman period or later, appear to be exceptionally well preserved below medieval alluvial deposits and ridge and furrow earthworks.

(C. & N. Hollinrake)

Keynsham, Durley Hill, Cemetery, ST 646694

Observation of test pits and a sample excavation, by the Avon Archaeological Unit, in advance of plans to extend the cemetery located well-preserved remains of the Roman villa. These comprised a wall and a sequence of flagged floors associated with a previously unknown north corridor. A possible hexagonal room was located at the end of the south wing. Other features included a possible boundary wall, postholes and possible Roman garden soil. Pottery recovered confirmed a 4th-century date for the villa.

(Jonathan Erskine)

Norton Fitzwarren, Longland's Farm, ST 18552769

An archaeological evaluation by Foundations Archaeology identified ditches, pits and possible postholes, which contained Iron Age (Glastonbury ware) and late Roman pottery.

(Chris Webster)

Shapwick, Roman villa, ST424 395

Following the discovery of a large hoard of silver denarii by two metal detectorists, SCC archaeologists excavated the immediate area and fieldwalked the surrounding area. Following this a geophysical survey was undertaken by the Ancient Monuments Laboratory of English Heritage which suggested that the hoard had been deposited in one room of a Roman courtyard villa. Six areas were subsequently excavated to test this hypothesis and gain further information about the date, nature, extent and preservation of the remains. These excavations confirmed the

presence of a multi-phase courtyard villa complex and suggested occupation in the area between the 1st and 4th centuries AD. Evidence for Late Iron Age occupation has been found to the north of the villa, possibly connected with a large circular cropmark enclosure known from an aerial photograph. The courtyard villa was built in the 2nd century AD but appears to have been substantially demolished in the 3rd century at some time after the deposition of the hoard (c. AD 230). Activity continued until at least the end of the 4th century but no buildings of this later period have been identified. A full report on the hoard is in preparation¹ and a full report on the excavations will be prepared for this journal.

¹Abdy, R., Brunning, R. A., and Webster, C. J., 2001. 'The discovery of a Roman villa at Shapwick and its Severan coin hoard of 9238 silver denarii', *Journ Roman Archaeol* 14, 358-72

(Richard Brunning)

MEDIEVAL

Blackford, The Grove, ST 4134 4784

Trenches excavated for The Visitors to Hugh Sexey's Hospital revealed stratified archaeological deposits, possibly structural, containing pottery of 13th/14th-century date and other, complementary, materials within an otherwise undisturbed natural soil sequence.

(Michael Heaton and David Murdie)

Bridgwater, Friarn Meadows, ST 2960 3665

Proposals to develop a narrow paddock known as Friarn Meadows situated between a housing estate and the Bridgwater YMCA resulted in a small archaeological evaluation. Friarn Meadows is situated in the extreme southern margins of Greyfriars, a medieval Franciscan Friary on the western edge of Bridgwater, and is probably the last part of the Friary to remain largely undisturbed. Archaeological deposits and layers relating to the destruction of the Friary were recorded in two 5m long evaluation trenches. The finds suggest that the Friary was established on this site around the mid-13th century and was extensively robbed for building stone in the 16th and 17th centuries. The inner edge of the precinct bank was recorded and archaeological deposits and features were proved to survive in the area of the trenches.

(C. & N. Hollinrake)

Castle Cary, Manor Farm, ST642323

A programme of excavation and watching briefs during the summer and autumn of 1999 was instituted in response to residential development and followed an evaluation of the site by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit in 1998¹. Further sections of the defensive ditches around the western perimeter of the early 12th-century castle were located and their courses plotted. A good sequence of structures and occupation horizons was investigated in the later medieval moated annex on the west side of the inner bailey, identified in 1998 as the site of the manorial centre which succeeded the slighted castle from the later 12th century. A large stone-founded building of the 13th century was located, containing the remains of hearths, an oven and mortar-based floors. A smaller building with stone foundations lay to the west. Following demolition of these structures, later medieval occupation was marked by further floors, cobbled yards, rubbish pits and at least one other stone-founded building to the north west.

There was little archaeological evidence for post-medieval occupation, although the remains of the manor and its surviving outbuildings were not finally cleared away until late in the 18th century, when the present Manor Farm house was built and its farmyard laid out. Manor Farm almost certainly occupies the site of the medieval manor house; parts of its surrounding moat

being still represented today by Park Pond to the south, and by the Horse Pond to the west.

An unexpected discovery, surviving close to the foot of the former inner bailey mound, was a Roman limekiln, cut partly into the side of what had been a steep natural sand slope. Of suspected later 2nd-century date, this preserved not only much of its structure and the remains of its last firing, but also a small bronze statuette. This is identified as a *Lar* - a household god, and was associated with what had been a deliberate slighting of the upper superstructure of the kiln. The figurine is finely modelled and of high artistic quality, possibly the finest recorded from Somerset, but of perhaps equal interest was its context. The limekiln and the figurine itself, imply a Roman stone building of some status in the locality, although there is no record of such remains at Castle Cary; while the apparent ritual associated with the deposition of the *Lar* is intriguing.

¹Leach, P., in Somerset Archaeology 1998, *SANH* 142

(Peter Leach)

Cheddar, Carscliff, ST 4775 5253

Two lynchets, were examined by John Davey, as part of a University of Bristol training excavation. In addition to features associated with the lynchets a quantity of flintwork was recovered of probable Bronze Age date.

The two lynchets were seen to comprise one negative (where the plough cut into the hillside) and one positive (where material was deposited). Pottery from the soil in this accumulation was 14th century at the latest and sealed 11th-century pottery beneath, suggesting a life for the lynchet between these dates. A small amount of residual Saxon pottery suggests that the area was cultivated prior to the lynchet formation. A small drainage gully had been dug at the foot of the positive lynchet. The evidence seems to suggest a limited period of cultivation of this area of the Mendip slopes ending in the 14th century.

(Chris Webster)

Crewkerne, Easthams, Wessex Water renewal pipeline, ST 45500960

A spread of Late Saxon and medieval pottery sherds was recovered from around the above location in Easthams, formerly an independent manor, now split between Crewkerne and Merriot parishes. South facing slopes immediately north of the above grid reference contain possible earthworks and building terraces, which may indicate the site of a deserted Saxon and medieval settlement.

(C. & N. Hollinrake)

Curry Mallet, The Manor House, ST 32852184

Foundations for a conservatory against the east side of the north-east wing of the building known as the Manor House were observed. In the base of the excavations, a single substantial feature was revealed cutting into the natural clay. This was 2.9m wide and aligned east-west, but investigation of the feature was not possible; it may be a ditch or trench. A single sherd of pottery from the infill was late medieval, being the neck and rim of a baluster jug. Field records and a report have been deposited with the Somerset Record Office; the sherd remains with the landowner.

(Alan Graham)

Ditchat, The Church of St Mary Magdalene, ST62603632

Archaeological observation and recording was carried out during all stages of a programme of alterations to the church.

The work involved the moving of the pulpit and a wooden readers' desk from the crossing to a position at the east end of the nave. Groundwork involved was minimal and no deposits

beneath the present floor level were revealed. The opportunity was taken, however, to examine and record the two pieces of church furniture. The woodwork of both is thought to be Jacobean, being the only surviving elements of the church of that date to survive the extensive 19th-century restoration. Little more can actually be said about them. The present stone base of the pulpit was clearly, however, not original, the position of an earlier, broader base being apparent on the floor in the form of mortar lines and scribe marks. It would appear that to install both pulpit and readers' desk into the crossing, the (medieval?) stone benches around the base of the western crossing pillars were removed or altered.

During works at the threshold of the south door of the nave, parts of a stone floor of Douling stone were revealed, buried beneath the present floor of lias slabs. Heavily worn in the doorway, this was presumably a surviving part of the paved gangways of the pre 19th-century church.

The field record, being a detailed record of elements of the church fabric prior to the recent changes, together with a detailed report has been deposited in the Somerset Record Office.

(Alan Graham)

Downhead, Manor Farm, ST 69184625

An evaluation was carried out to the north of a courtyard of 19th-century farm buildings in advance of construction work in order to test the position of a medieval moated manorial site known from documentary records. Two sherds of 12th-13th century pottery were found, but no evidence for the moated site.

Post-medieval tile fragments and occasional ironwork were found, as well as evidence that this area was formerly an undisturbed hillslope that had been cut back for the construction of the farm buildings. A contemporary stone drain culvert was found in one trench. A watching brief during subsequent soil removal located fifteen unstratified potsherds of 12th-13th century date and five potsherds of mid to late 19th-century date. To the west of the courtyard of farm buildings a brick-built feature was located during the machine digging of a pipe trench. The full extent and nature of the feature were not ascertained because of the limited width and depth of the pipe trench but the bricks appeared to form an arched passageway with a height of at least 2.13m. It is most likely to have been an icehouse of later 19th-century date.

(L. and R. Adkins)

Farrington Gurney, Manor House, ST 633556

Sample excavation, by the Avon Archaeological Unit, showed that recent ground-reduction had removed most archaeological deposits but an earlier phase of boundary wall and a well were located.

(Jonathan Erskine)

Glastonbury, Archers Way Car Park, ST 5005 3907

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken when foundations for the new library were cut through the Archers Way car park. Features recorded included an undated ditch oriented north-east to south-west containing many fragments of fired clay which ran through the southern end of the site at a different alignment to recorded property or field boundaries. The earliest pottery on the site was of 14th or 15th-century date, confirming the conclusions after an evaluation on this site in 1988, which had suggested that this location was outside the core of the planned medieval town.

(C. & N. Hollinrake)

Glastonbury, 6-8 Benedict Street, ST 4979 3890

An archaeological watching brief undertaken during construction of two small cottages on a vacant plot towards the eastern end of Benedict Street was curtailed when strip foundations were replaced by raft foundations for technical reasons. Nevertheless, the foundations of the

adjacent properties were recorded and indications of surviving archaeology below the new floors was noted.

A small quantity of 11th to 13th-century pottery was recovered and a large, deep and disused culvert was recorded running below the road frontage of the plot and tentatively identified as an old sewer outlet, possibly of medieval date.

(C. & N. Hollinrake)

Ham Green, St Katherine's Park, ST 53007547

A watching brief, by the Avon Archaeological Unit, recovered a large collection of medieval pottery dating from the 12th to the 15th centuries but found no evidence of kilns from the medieval industry. The only structural remains were associated with the 19th-century hospital.

(Jonathan Erskine)

Hinton St. George, St. George's Church, ST41821268

During general repairs to the top of the tower all the fabric was inspected for evidence of construction phases. The tower itself dates to around 1500, though the decorative parapet has a carved date of 1731 and it was presumably added or rebuilt at that time. There was no evidence of more than one period of construction of the tower generally, though earlier repairs were evident.

(Alan Graham)

Ilminster, St Mary's Church, ST36041460

An inspection of the 15th-century tower in advance of restoration work showed no evidence of more than a single period of construction, though earlier periods of repair were evident.

(Alan Graham)

Kingsbury Episcopi, St Martin's Church, ST4365 2110

The west end of the south aisle was observed following the removal of the suspended timber floor. The exposed surface lay at 0.4m below floor level and comprised made ground; probably including the infill of graves predating the construction of the aisle. The proposed works involved no disturbance of the deposits, which were not, therefore, investigated further.

(Alan Graham)

Long Load, Manor Farm, ST4658 2325

Observations made during the construction of a house in the south-west part of the former farm, revealed two foundations of stone rubble, aligned with the main road through the village. The eastern of the two appeared to be the base of a pier. The structure, possibly a cart shed open to the east, may be late medieval or early post-medieval. Ground disturbance to the north-east prevented the full dimensions of the structure from being established. The field archive and report have been deposited with the Somerset Record Office.

(Alan Graham)

Long Sutton, Bineham Farm, Knole, ST 491 251

An archaeological watching brief undertaken during construction of a new pond at Bineham Farm, recovered a few sherds of medieval pottery. Medieval pottery was also recovered from the area of a deserted medieval settlement adjacent to the farm.

(C. & N. Hollinrake)

Lopen, All Saints' Church, ST4271 1449

The replacement of two areas of late 19th-century wooden flooring in the west end of the nave was monitored. Archaeological cleaning of the exposed surface following the removal of the

timber revealed a complex sequence of archaeological deposits; the construction specification was therefore changed to preserve these *in situ*.

The type of deposits exposed comprised finely laminated layers of loam, separated by thin bands of mortar and in some areas charcoal. They represent successive floors or surfaces within the west end of the nave, and the accretions on those surfaces, reflecting different types or periods of activity. The west end of a single grave was found, cutting through this sequence, and sealed by large stones along its length. All the deposits were preserved *in situ* beneath the replacement floors; elements of comparable deposits are likely to survive beneath the 19th-century floors in the rest of the church.

A full descriptive report and the field record have been deposited with the Somerset Record Office.

(Alan Graham)

Luccombe, Ley Hill, SS892450

The Ley Hill settlement was identified by Richard McDonnell during a survey of part of Horner Woods commissioned by the National Trust in 1994. He found seven buildings on an east-facing slope at 220m OD, about 140m above the Horner Water. Four of the buildings are now below the tree line, as the wood has encroached on the settlement. A holloway leads from the Horner Valley up through the hamlet and on to Ley Hill; it may have continued to Woodcock's Ley. The settlement was recorded by RCHME in 1997 (Fig. 1).

In 1998 the lowest building in the settlement was excavated because a permitted bridleway crossed it and erosion of the path had increased rapidly in the previous wet autumn, damaging the fabric of the walls. The work showed that it was likely to have been a barn, the few sherds of pot and a radiocarbon determination gave a 13th/14th-century date for the floor. A geophysical survey of the site had indicated possible buildings between those already identified, so it was decided in 1999 that a long trench 12m x 1.5m would be cut down the hillside below building 4 to test these results and obtain environmental samples. When excavated, no buildings or field boundaries were found and the features appearing in the geophysical print-out were seen to have resulted from geological slumping and resultant hollows. There was also tree root disturbance. At the top end of the trench, just outside the lower wall of building 4, there was a path apparently leading to building 5 and a drain from the lower end of building 4. Samples were taken for environmental examination.

The deer had begun to damage building 2 and this activity was decisive in concentrating further excavations on this building, which was set above the tree line on a platform cut along and back into the hillside. The earthworks indicated a building with at least one cross-wall and a doorway facing east. A magnetometry survey had indicated a possible hearth in the northern end of the building, so an L-shaped trench 7.5m x 4m plus 3m x 2m was cut. This included part of the interior, the front wall and possible doorway, part of the area (a yard?) in front and the suggested hearth area was included in the foot of the 'L'. The growth of bilberries indicated the positions of the walls, but only a low earth bank survived beneath them. There was one area of rubble stone but very little over the rest of the site, unlike the tumble in building 7. The stratigraphy was very shallow. Under the topsoil a hard concretion covered most of the site, and was thought to be the result of animal waste from penning stock on the area after the building had gone out of use.

The floor surface in the building had not survived, there was only a remnant in the northeast corner. The yard surface was compacted stone with three large postholes, and a post pit, in it; there were also ten stakeholes.

Many more sherds of pot were found, ten times more than in the previous year, some were similar to the 1998 finds and were 13th/14th-century in date. Other finds included part of a whetstone and some flints including a plano-convex knife.

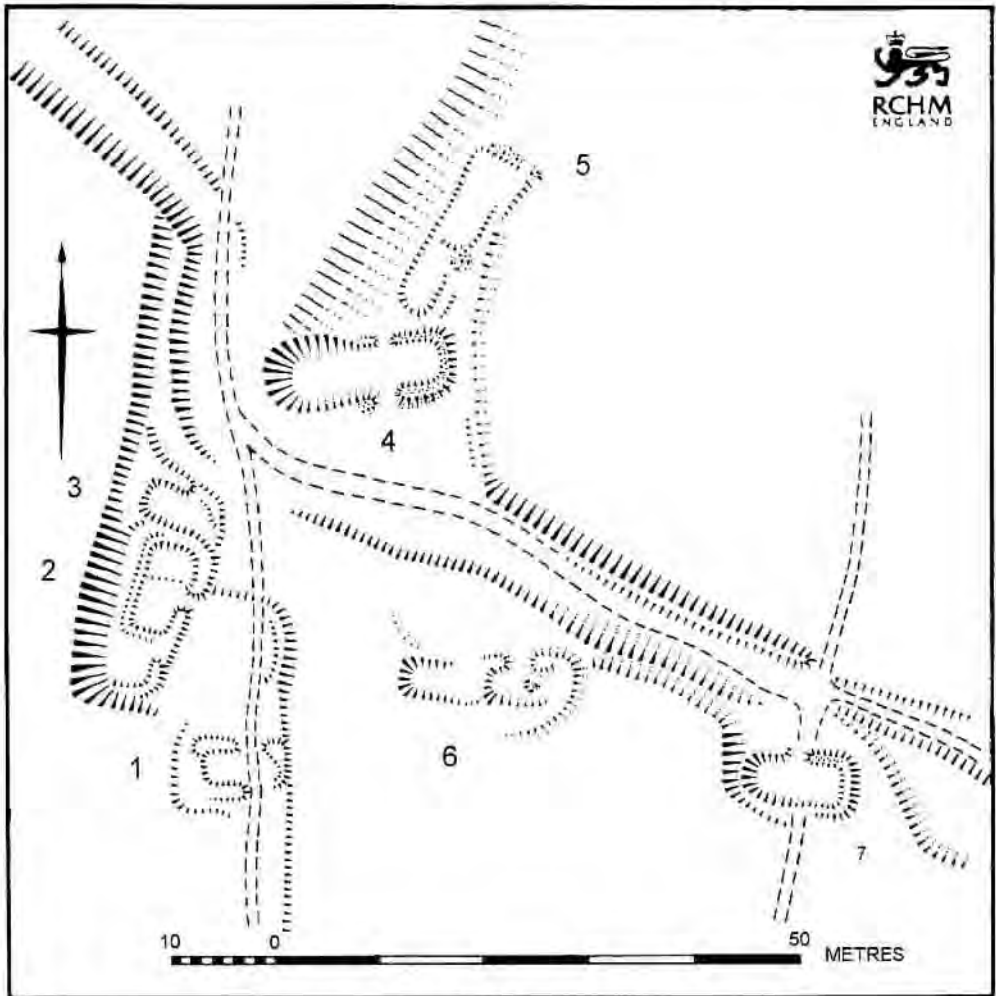


Fig. 1 Ley Hill settlement, Luccombe © Crown Copyright. NMR

The environmental samples are being examined and radiocarbon dates are awaited. Full publication of the site will follow when all results are to hand. These excavations would not have been possible without the commitment of our team of voluntary diggers, to whom we owe a great deal.

(Isabel Richardson and Nancy Grace)

Muchelney, Muchelney Abbey, ST 428 248

Archaeological excavation of electric cable trenches on the north side of the 'abbot's lodging' revealed medieval features including a wall, culvert and occupation deposits. The earliest finds and features were probably of 12th-century date. Post-medieval destruction and construction levels were also recorded including a series of modern land drains and a watching brief on cable trenches south and west of the abbot's lodging resulted in the recording of medieval layers and features.

Following the purchase of the reredorter building by English Heritage, a metal fence was erected around the structure. Prior to this a series of small evaluation trenches across the line of

the fence had resulted in the recording of medieval deposits and post-medieval destruction layers plus a medieval stone culvert. Romano-British pottery was also recovered. The purchase of a strip of pasture east of the reredorter from Abbey Farm and the construction of a new boundary fence resulted in a watching brief when the post-holes were cut. Layers and deposits within the field including the upper layers of the monastic precinct bank were recorded. The 1999 archaeological works at Muchelney were preceded by a comprehensive desktop survey of the abbey. One result of this was the commissioning of a geophysical survey of that part of the abbey and precinct under the care of English Heritage plus a geophysical survey of the paddock around the reredorter building. The survey was carried out by the Bartlett-Clark Consultancy and produced clear indications of buildings south, east and south-east of the abbey church and east of the reredorter building.

(C. & N. Hollinrake)

Nunney, All Saints' Church, ST 7375 4570

Archaeological observations maintained during rebuilding and refurbishment works at All Saints' Church, during the summer of 1999, recorded apparently undisturbed soil horizons beneath the floor of the north aisle, and fragmentary painted textual designs on the north wall of the north aisle, probably of 18th-century date. The small archive of drawings and photographs will, together with a copy of the report, be deposited with Somerset Museums Service and, in microfilm format, the National Monuments Record at Swindon.

(Michael Heaton)

Stoford, New Road, ST 565 134

An evaluation by means of trench excavation on the site of a proposed housing development was undertaken by AC Archaeology during September 1999. The total area of the site comprised c 0.2 ha and previous excavations had recovered significant quantities of medieval pottery¹. Three trenches were excavated, covering approximately 2% of the total site area. Each trench contained a similar sequence, comprising a topsoil and cultivation layer overlying natural subsoil. At this level archaeological deposits were encountered in each trench, comprising three ditches, a posthole and a pit, all of post-medieval date in Trenches A and C, and a burnt horizon in Trench B likely to be medieval in date. Small quantities of artefacts were recovered from most features, comprising principally post-medieval finds, although some medieval pottery and prehistoric worked flint were also present.

¹Gittos, B. & M. 'Archaeological unit report'. *Chronicle* 6/3 (1994) 78-79.

(John Valentin)

Stanton Wick, West Wansdyke, ST 609655

Observation and recording, by the Avon Archaeological Unit, of the installation of field drains across the West Wansdyke Scheduled Ancient Monument recorded the upper layers of the bank and the upper fill layer of the ditch to the north. The spread bank was at least 10m wide but no diagnostic finds were recovered.

(Jonathan Erskine)

Stawell, Ford Farm, ST 3675 3864

Bridgwater and District Archaeological Society excavated a medieval longhouse which had been located by geophysical survey which also suggested that the site was part of a larger settlement.

The site had been severely damaged by ploughing but was revealed to be a long house 22m by 7m constructed in the mid to late 15th century which continued in use until the 17th century. To the west of the chimney and cross passage, a central gully was evidence of animal stalling. This area had been built on an infilled (?13th century) marl pit and had subsided into it.

(Chris Webster)

Somerton, ST 495 283

An extensive programme of water pipe renewal was monitored, by Stuart Prior for C & N Hollinrake, throughout Somerton. Most of the work involved the examination of pits dug at intervals for access to the pipework and only in the Market Square were any archaeological features or finds recorded. These show that *in situ* medieval deposits survive in the square but because of the limited nature of the pits it was not possible to draw many conclusions as to their significance.

(Chris Webster)

Taunton, Billetfield, ST 22982425

A small-scale intrusive site evaluation was undertaken to provide an initial assessment of the likely archaeological implications of plans to erect a house and garage on land to the rear of No. 8 Billetfield. The evaluation demonstrated that an embankment which probably formed part of the medieval town defences survived within the proposed development area and that other medieval and post-medieval deposits also existed. These other deposits comprise a late medieval soil horizon cut by post-medieval pitting and post holes, the latter features appearing to predate the available cartographic evidence relating to the development of the site. A subsequent watching brief produced no significant evidence of any additional archaeological activity on the site.

(R. A. Broomhead)

Taunton, Corporation Street, ST 2259 2450

Shallow cable trenches were monitored during the erection of new road signs. Below the paving slabs was a layer of sand, which in most places lay directly on hard red clay. In view of the location, this clay is likely to be the remains of the outer bailey bank of the castle.

(Chris Webster)

Taunton, 16 East Street, ST 229 245

A planning application to erect an annex to the standing structure resulted in a small archaeological evaluation to the rear of 16 East Street, in the centre of Taunton. Evidence for medieval occupation was recorded below deep post-medieval deposits. Medieval features included a ditch, postholes and occupation spreads. The earliest pottery on the site is probably 10th/11th century in date. The annex was later built on a raft above the medieval horizon and a watching brief on a new mains service trench recorded only post-medieval deposits.

(C. & N. Hollinrake)

Taunton, Mill Lane, ST 22682467

An archaeological watching brief was conducted in accordance with Scheduled Monument Consent during the excavation of piles and footings for an extension to Millers Wine Bar across the assumed width of the former moat of Taunton Castle. Observation of material extracted during the piling operations demonstrated both prior disturbance and the possible maximum width and depth of the Castle Moat at this location. The reduction of levels and the excavation of trenches to accommodate ground beams upon which the new building was to be constructed was also monitored and indicated some survival of undisturbed archaeology including further evidence of the medieval mill leat observed during excavations in 1980¹.

¹Burrow, I. in Leach, P. *The Archaeology of Taunton* (1984), 53-8.

(R. A. Broomhead)

Taunton, St Augustine Street, ST 2310 2495

Two evaluation trenches were excavated, by Exeter Archaeology, to assess the presence and preservation of deposits relating to the priory. The southern trench located a deep (>0.9m) layer of organic material overlain by 0.35m of water deposited clay. This suggests that the area

was waterlogged and then sealed by a flood deposit, sometime before the medieval period. Above this was a layer of demolition rubble, including roof slates, probably associated with the destruction of a nearby priory building. Above this, a soil developed which was covered by dumped material upon which another soil developed before being buried under recent rubble.

The second trench recorded a similar sequence at the base although more detailed examination of the peaty layer suggests that this may not be as deep as first thought. No demolition layer was present but the upper sequence of dumps and soil formation conformed to that seen in trench 1. The dumped material contained pottery of c 1450-1550 and was cut by a substantial ditch (1.2m wide and deep). It is likely that this was a field boundary which had been filled by redepositing its bank material.

The evaluation suggests that priory buildings lay nearby but that they were demolished before the dissolution, after which the area was used for agriculture.

(Chris Webster)

Wedmore, Combe Batch, ST 4388 4775

Work on the cottage and garden at the top of Combe Batch, on the north side of the Wells road at its junction with Combe Lane, has exposed two extremely large blocks of Wedmore stone, both approximately 0.3m thick and lying horizontally. One slab was lying, apparently loose, in the garden, where it was found, the other was discovered immediately under the extension, probably post-1914 in date, at the back of the east end of the cottage; it is unclear whether this second huge stone was used as a foundation because it was there, or was moved into position, which would have been a considerable undertaking.

The two stones would seem to be examples of the very large stones said to have been unearthed when the houses on the Combe Batch Rise estate, immediately north of the cottage, were being built in the late 1960s¹. The Combe Batch Rise stones were reported as being like a great wall or steps, which suggests that they appeared to be deliberately laid, to the north of the two present stones; but they were reburied before they were reported or seen by any archaeologist, so that any consideration of them has hitherto been dependent on hearsay. Most of the people who actually saw the stones in the 1960s are now dead.

The blocks are of Wedmore stone², the nearest outcrop being about 400m away, at the top of Mutton Lane, opposite the site. Getting them to the site would involve shifting them downhill, steeply. Wedmore stone occurs in shallow horizontal layers; and these slabs would represent something like a complete layer in thickness; normally the layers are quarried to be broken up into stones of more usual size for building. Only part of the stone still under the cottage extension is visible, but it would seem to be much the same size and thickness as the one lying loose in the garden. This is approximately 1.37m x 1m x 0.3m thick, and roughly dressed to a straight edge on two sides.

¹ Hudson, H. in Dennison, E., 'Somerset Archaeology 1988', *SANH* 132 (1988), 213.

² Dr R. Bradshaw, University of Bristol Department of Geology, retired, kindly examined the stones.

(Hazel Hudson and Frances Neale)

Wells, 35 High Street, ST 549 456

A watching brief was conducted by Cotswold Archaeological Trust during shop refurbishment. Several mortared walls were noted on alignments parallel to the narrow tenement plots running back from the High Street, whilst a series of associated stone and clay floors alluded to the presence of former structures set back from the frontage rather than simple boundary walls. No artefactual material was recovered but given the location within the historic core the remains may include medieval as well as later structures.

(A. Barber)

Wells, Wells Cathedral, Mary Mitchell Garden and Masons' Yard, ST 5530 4585

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at Wells Cathedral in areas due to be disturbed by new construction projects. Five test pits were excavated in the Mary Mitchell Memorial Garden, situated immediately west of the west cloister walk, and one evaluation trench was cut against the north wall of the Masons Yard in the south-east corner of the Camery.

Features recorded within the Mary Mitchell Memorial Garden included a probable Late-Saxon cobbled spread, possibly part of the atrium immediately west of the Saxon cathedral; an 11th or early-12th century ditch or gully and a medieval stone drain or culvert. Other deposits investigated and recorded include 19th-century destruction deposits connected with the remains of the Chorister's House and a series of redeposited clay layers containing prehistoric flint flakes and residual Romano/British and early-medieval pot sherds.

The trench in the Camery exposed the surface of a deep deposit of stone dust and waste material emanating from the pre 18th-century Masons' Yard.

(C. & N. Hollinrake)

Wookey, Court Farm, ST 5185 4572

Two trenches were excavated, by Peter Leach, across the line of the moat at Court Farm. The line of the moat was located but not excavated deep enough to obtain any dating evidence for the primary cut. None of the excavated fills appeared to predate the 19th and 20th century infilling and drainage of the moat.

(Chris Webster)

Wookey, St Mathew's Church, ST 5185 4580

An archaeological watching brief, undertaken when new drain trenches were cut around the north and west sides of St. Mathew's church, recovered a few fragments of carved medieval stonework and post-medieval pottery. The area had been disturbed previously when earlier drains had been laid.

(C. & N. Hollinrake)

Yeovil, Town House, ST 55751585

An archaeological watching brief was conducted during the excavation of footings for an extension to Town House adjacent to and within the possible medieval plot of the former Portreeve's Almshouses, which are thought to have been founded in the 15th century. The watching brief indicated the survival of undisturbed natural sands cut by post-medieval pitting and a septic tank but produced no evidence of activity upon the site earlier than the 18th century.

(R. A. Broomhead)

POST-MEDIEVAL

Ashwick, Pondsmead Nursing Home, Oakhill, ST 6350 4725

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken when foundations for a northern extension to the nursing home were excavated. No medieval finds or features were recorded but post-medieval finds and features suggest that occupation on this site commenced in the 18th century, possibly connected with the founding of Oakhill Brewery.

(C. & N. Hollinrake)

Bridgwater, 54 High Street, ST 2961 3700

The archaeological and historic potential of the building at No. 54 High Street was assessed by reference to publicly available cartographic, documentary and photographic sources, and evaluated by way of a site inspection and measured survey, during September 1999, ahead of determination of

Listed Building Consent for refurbishment and modification. Whilst the building does encompass fabric of 18th or possibly 17th-century date, the archaeological potential and historic integrity of it has been severely compromised by destructive interventions associated with 19th-century extensions.
(Michael Heaton)

Chard, Old Wesleyan Chapel, ST32250858

Twenty-one identical clay smoking pipe bowls and a number of stems were found in the soil under the floor. The flat heel was marked EC/IN CH/ARD, (die 11mm diameter, heel to top of bowl 34mm, stem thickness at base of bowl 10mm.) There was no rouletted decoration or wasters.

The chapel was built *c.* 1850 and Wood's map of 1840 shows that this was the property of Saml. Chorley. The property to the east was the Angel Inn, now The Dolphin. The George Webb pipe factory lay some 160m to the east but these pipes were made by Edward Collins whose factory closed in 1699. His more usual stamp type is just EC.

(Roger W. Carter)

Cricket St Thomas, Cricket House, ST372085

A watching brief, led by Martin Dyer of Exeter Archaeology, during development work at Cricket House revealed a number of archaeological structures and features mostly relating to the 19th-century estate. The base of an icehouse was discovered, as was the base of a circular brick structure. This is of unknown function, although a horse-engine house is suggested in relation to the estate gas works. The structure is shown on maps of 1887. At ST3721 0853 the foundations of a building were located, possibly one depicted on the 1831 Tithe map, which consisted of mortared flint and rubble walls, with pottery dating from the 14th to 18th centuries. Several wells, pits and walls were also recorded but at the supposed site of the medieval manor house and village, only 19th-century garden features were seen.

(Chris Webster)

Frome, The Crown Hotel, ST 7765 4808

Archaeological and historical analysis of the structure and fabric of the Crown Hotel in the Market Place combined with an assessment of documentary and cartographic sources, suggest that the structure today is the result of linear extensions (towards the Market Place) of a late 17th/early 18th-century building of three storeys. Successive extension has created an asymmetric elevation to the north and the isolation of at least one former gable stack within the interior of the building. Whilst much of the fabric of the building has been altered, the uppermost rooms at what is now the rear of the building appear to display largely undisturbed carpentry of late 17th-century date, as well as 18th-century features.

(Michael Heaton)

Ham Green, The Grove, ST 53007547

Excavation of the site, by the Avon Archaeological Unit, prior to development located an extended period of activity from the 17th to the 19th centuries together with residual Roman and medieval material. A boundary ditch and infilled cellar were dated to the late 17th century and these were overlain by the construction of 'The Grove' which was demolished in the 1930s.

(Jonathan Erskine)

Pensford, Post Office, ST 36181638

A watching brief, by the Avon Archaeological Unit, recorded 4 foundations of several phases, associated with adjacent buildings, notably the 18th-century 'Gratton House'. No evidence of earlier occupation was recovered.

(Jonathan Erskine)

Taunton, 18A-19 East Street, ST 2300 2450

The Oxford Archaeological Unit carried out a watching brief at 18A-19 East Street in Taunton, during August 1999. The work was commissioned by the Maslen Brennan Henshaw Partnership who were redeveloping the property. The watching brief revealed the remains of a wattle and daub wall and of a stone-lined well. A separate building survey was undertaken to record the wall. From the regularity of the timbers and their relatively well-preserved nature it appears likely that they dated from the 16th or 17th century. The exposed wall contained evidence from several other phases, including one of lath and plaster and two phases of brickwork probably from the 19th and 20th century. The building would appear to have been a moderate-sized single-storey structure.

The well was cut into the natural red clay and was located within the back yard of 19 East Street. This location did not conform with the 1890 1st Edn 1:500 OS map, which shows a well in 18A East Street. The well shown on this map was not identified during the watching brief.

The site (especially the western edge) had been heavily truncated during the Victorian period by cellars. Behind the brick wall of one of these cellars was an earlier stone wall, which has not been dated beyond its relationship to the cellars.

(Emily Edwards)

Winscombe, Nippors Way, ST 42005750

A sample excavation, by the Avon Archaeological Unit, located a post-medieval cobbled surface but no remains of the 18th-century Lamb Inn.

(Jonathan Erskine)

INDUSTRIAL

Chard, Canal Basin, Furnham Road, ST3290092

Recording of the buildings of the old Dalgety Feed Mill during their demolition provided information on the 19th-century canal wharves. These were enclosed by a stone wall and the compound was divided into four, by the canal basin and crosswalls, with apparently no inter-connection. The two northern wharves had warehouses on the crosswalls and southern wall of the compound is irregular at a similar location, which may suggest that two more were planned. The warehouses survived within the later steel-framed mill buildings and were exact mirror images across the canal basin. The E warehouse was recorded in detail. Only one of the original open sheds remained (W side) but the former presence of the other was visible as a cut for the roof-line in the E warehouse. Only the wharf-keeper's cottage in the NW wharf survived but blocked windows for the other three survived. During later foundation works the canal basin was seen to have been 3m deep with double thickness brick-faced rubble walls. A full report on the building recording appears elsewhere in this journal. A photographic survey was undertaken by Chard History Group and Chard Camera Club prior to the site clearance and will be deposited in Chard Museum as will be a fluted iron pillar (with no maker's mark), a pulley block and a wall slate from the east warehouse.

(Alan Graham and Roger W. Carter)

Nailsea, Glassworks, ST 477709

Observation, by the Avon Archaeological Unit, of engineer's test pits located the edge of a 19th-century quarry and some masonry walls relating to the glassworks beneath a modern garage.

(Jonathan Erskine)

Taunton, The Mount, ST 2218 2495

An archaeological watching brief undertaken during redevelopment works at The Mount, Taunton, recorded one old brick culvert and layers of modern make-up. Buildings connected

with the early 19th-century barracks complex were photographed prior to demolition and a full photographic archive has been compiled.

(C. & N. Hollinrake)

Wells, The Bishops' Palace, ST 5526 4588

Six small trenches were excavated, by N. Payne & R. Hoggett of Bristol University, in the gardens of the Bishops' Palace. These suggested that the northern boundary wall was of 17th or 18th-century date and that the area had remained as garden since. There was evidence of dumping of medieval and post medieval domestic waste on the west side and the raised platform to the south was seen to be 19th-century landscaping.

(Chris Webster)

Yeovil, The Mermaid Hotel, ST 5560 1600

An archaeological watching brief undertaken during renovation works to the rear of the Mermaid Hotel, situated between High Street and Princes Street in the centre of Yeovil, recovered large quantities of animal bone, 17th/18th-century pottery and other refuse from pits and from a culvert. The pits and animal bones may be the remnants of pre 18th-century tanning on the site whilst the pottery sherds form an important early 18th-century assemblage, as they are all assumed to be broadly contemporary.

(C. & N. Hollinrake)

OTHER REPORTS

Aller, Longstone Drove, ST 396 290

An archaeological watching brief on a Wessex Water pipeline trench recorded peat deposits between the village and church and recovered part of an oak timber pile sunk into the peat. A section of the oak pile was sent for dendrochronological dating but no match was found.

(C. & N. Hollinrake)

Blackford, The Old Bakery, ST 41104774

A small scale site evaluation together with a limited desk based study was undertaken to provide an assessment of the likely archaeological implications of proposals to erect a bungalow on land to the south of the Old Bakery. The desk-based study revealed that the standing property adjacent to the site was extant in the 19th century but that no archaeological features or finds were known from the immediate vicinity. The field evaluation failed to identify any significant archaeological activity.

(R. A. Broomhead)

Castle Cary, Hazel's Flowers, ST 63983224

An archaeological watching brief was conducted during the excavation of footings for the construction of a new storage facility adjacent to Hazel's Flowers, Lower Woodcock Street. Documentary research indicated the presence of buildings on or adjacent to the site from at least the 18th century. Field observation however indicated surviving archaeology to have been subject to considerable disturbance caused by the excavation of a 19th or early 20th-century cesspit, the insertion of drainage pipes and the construction of toilet facilities.

(R. A. Broomhead)

Castle Cary, South Street, ST 6360 3170

Trial trenches located within a paddock immediately south of The Countryman Inn revealed natural soil sequences across much of the site, a single linear feature in one trench corresponding

with slight earthworks, and possible structural remains at the street front. Artefacts were recovered only from the street front, but comprised only a relatively small and very mixed assemblage of pottery ranging from 13th to 20th-century in date, all recovered from an amorphous feature possibly resulting from animal activity.

(Michael Heaton and Rebecca Montague)

Chard, Land adjacent to 83 High Street, ST31840850

Excavation of trenches for a new building revealed no archaeological features in the clay beneath the modern topsoil.

(Alan Graham)

Cloford, Leighton, ST 69634368

An evaluation trench was dug on farmland to the east of the possible promontory fort at Stubbs Wood to investigate geophysical anomalies. One anomaly proved to be an amorphous layer of charcoal-stained soil 0.7m long and 80mm deep associated with one flint flake and three pieces of flint débitage, as well as with a very small Roman potsherd and a brooch pin of Roman date. Modern finds at the same depth (baler twine and plastic cup fragments) elsewhere in the trench indicate a degree of disturbance.

A large number of other trenches were excavated in the area prior to an application to extend the quarry but none of these produced significant results. A detailed report on all the work has been lodged with the Somerset SMR.

(L. and R. Adkins)

East Lyng, Church Farm, ST33192886

A watching brief, by C. J. M. Whitton of Exeter Archaeology, on the construction of 3 houses along the road frontage of the demolished farm recorded several linear features and a post-hole. There was no evidence of the Saxon burh and all the features appeared to be of recent origin.

(Chris Webster)

East Pennard, All Saints' Church, ST59713745

A water pipe trench around the south-east side of the graveyard uncovered nothing of archaeological significance, though clearly it cut across the top of numerous graves for most of its length.

(Alan Graham)

Fivehead, St Martin's Church, ST35282287

Shallow trenches to the west of the church revealed nothing of archaeological significance.

(Alan Graham)

Glastonbury, Church of St. John, ST 49993901

An archaeological watching brief was conducted during excavations across the former graveyard for the installation of a new power supply cable into the Church of St John, Glastonbury. The excavations revealed heavy disturbance caused by the insertion of an earlier cable and no indication of any archaeological activity. The route of the new cable was recorded for future reference.

(R. A. Broomhead)

Keynsham, Sewage Treatment Works, ST 684666

A trial excavation, by the Avon Archaeological Unit, failed to record any features or finds of archaeological importance.

(Jonathan Erskine)

Ilchester, Bearley Farm, ST49502190

No archaeological deposits were observed during the construction of a slurry lagoon.

(Alan Graham)

Kingsbury Episcopi, Dudmoor, ST43382092

Observation of foundation trenches for a new house on the south-east side of the present village, revealed no archaeological deposits beneath the former farm yard.

(Alan Graham)

Lovington, St Thomas a Becket Church, ST59703084

Inspection of the internal fabric of the top of the tower during the refurbishment of the bells revealed nothing of archaeological significance. The whole upper part of the tower appeared to be a Victorian rebuild.

(Alan Graham)

Lucombe, SS910444

Pipeline construction was monitored, by Stuart Prior for C & N Hollinrake, where it crossed open fields behind the houses of Lucombe. No archaeological features were recorded and the only finds were a concentration of post 17th-century sherds at the rear of 'Aydon'. These are likely to represent dumping from the houses.

(Chris Webster)

Montacute, Ham Hill, ST48071671

Two holes excavated by machine for the foundation of two sculptures revealed only natural strata, as they lay in the base of one of the quarried areas of the hill.

(Alan Graham)

North Curry, The Pavement, ST 31882513

An archaeological watching brief was conducted during the excavation of footings for four new dwellings on land previously occupied by a shop and workshop at 6 The Pavement, North Curry. Documentary evidence indicated the presence of buildings on the site in the early 19th century however the watching brief failed to demonstrate any archaeological activity earlier than that date.

(R. A. Broomhead)

Norton St Philip, Bell Hill Garage, ST 7726 5595

The potential archaeological impact of building and landscaping works proposed for the rear of Bell Hill garage in Norton St Philip, were evaluated by way of machine-excavated trenches augmented by background documentary assessment. No early features were recorded.

(Michael Heaton and Rebecca Montague)

Puriton, The Rye, ST 32134170

An archaeological watching brief was conducted during the excavation of footings for three new dwellings on land previously occupied by several barns at The Rye. Documentary evidence indicated the presence of buildings on the site in the early 19th century, however, the watching brief failed to demonstrate any archaeological activity earlier than that date.

(R. A. Broomhead)

Sharpham, Sharpham Park Farm, ST 467 374

An archaeological watching brief undertaken during excavation of foundation pits for a new agricultural building situated to the west of Sharpham Park House, recorded natural bedrock

and clays and post-medieval deposits. One small sherd of medieval pottery was recovered.

(C. & N. Hollinrake)

Sharpham, Sharpham Valley Farm, ST 468 387

An archaeological evaluation/inspection of new peat workings at Sharpham Valley Farm failed to notice any prehistoric finds or features. Measured sections of the peat profiles were recorded.

(C. & N. Hollinrake)

Shepton Mallet, Whitstone Corner ST 62724134

Observations made during the excavation of trial pits in advance of the development of a new road junction at Whitstone Corner just to the south of Shepton Mallet produced no evidence of any archaeological activity. Fieldwalking of the proposed development area led to the recovery of a small number of flint flakes and a single tool but no particular concentrations could be noted. A subsequent watching brief made during the removal of topsoil and the reduction of levels across the site produced no additional evidence of any archaeological activity.

(R. A. Broomhead)

Somerton, Ashen Cross Quarry, ST 496 273

An archaeological watching brief undertaken during construction of haul roads and bunding at a new quarry site, recovered post-medieval pottery plus small amounts of Roman and medieval pot sherds. A series of post-medieval lias stone land drains was also recorded.

(C. & N. Hollinrake)

South Petherton, Lightgate Farm, ST43451700

Trial holes and foundation trenches for new houses revealed no archaeological deposits.

(Alan Graham)

Street, Millfield School, ST 4900 3631

Monitoring of ground levelling, by Stuart Prior for C. & N. Hollinrake, for a new dining hall showed that the area had previously been truncated. No features or finds of archaeological interest were recorded.

(Chris Webster)

Tatworth, Primary School, ST 3285 0540

Apart from a recently capped-off well, nothing of archaeological significance was observed during the rebuilding and extending of the school. Field record and report have been deposited with the Somerset Record Office.

(Alan Graham)

Tatworth, Chard Junction Quarry, ST 344 472

Four evaluation trenches were excavated, by AC Archaeology, in the field at the rear of Broadbridge Farm in advance of an application to extend the quarry from Dorset into Somerset. Three of the trenches contained no features and only small quantities of prehistoric worked flint/chert which appeared to have originated from higher up the hill. The trench nearest the farm contained three linear features. One was probably a post medieval field boundary but the other two may have been prehistoric. In the absence of any occupation evidence, these may similarly be boundaries.

(Chris Webster)

Taunton, former Nurses Home, East Reach, ST 2352 2458

An archaeological watching brief undertaken during redevelopment of the former nurses home at East Reach failed to record any archaeological finds or features due to widespread truncation of the natural ground surface.

(C. & N. Hollinrake)

Watchet, Watchet Outfall, ST 063 429

From February to November 1999 AC Archaeology conducted intermittent archaeological monitoring along the route of a new sewer pipe through the town. No archaeological remains were encountered, and the majority of the work affected only ground that had already been disturbed in recent times. Only one short stretch of the route passed through undisturbed farmland, but no archaeological deposits or finds were noted.

(Stephen Leach)

Wellington, Twyford Place, ST 137 203

A new water main laid by Wessex Water in central Wellington, was inserted by moling from a series of access pits. Most of the line of the new main was along the route of existing services. Few features were observed, all of 18th or 19th-century date, although some small fired-clay cones, probably associated with the 18th/19th-century brick and tile works, were recovered.

(C. & N. Hollinrake)

Wells, Black Dog Yard, ST 445 459

Four 1m square test pits were excavated, by Keith Faxon, but the earliest finds were 19th-century and all other layers appeared to be either natural or redeposited natural. It is possible that the latter relate to the levelling of the area in the 12th/13th centuries for the Bishops' Garden. No evidence of Roman material (as found in the Camery excavations to the west) was located.

(Chris Webster)

West Camel, West Camel Farm, ST 580 244

An evaluation was carried out, by AC Archaeology, in advance of a residential development during December 1999. This comprised four machine-dug trenches in areas previously occupied by farm buildings and yard surfaces. No archaeological features or artefacts were recovered.

(Astrid Hudson)

Woolavington, Lower Road, ST 3437 4167

A small-scale site evaluation together with a limited desk-based study was undertaken to provide an assessment of the likely archaeological implications of proposals to develop for a single dwelling, land to the west of 26 Lower Road Woolavington. The desk-based study revealed that the standing property adjacent to the site was extant in the 18th century but that no archaeological features or finds were known from the immediate vicinity. The field evaluation identified an east-west ditch not shown on early cartographic sources and which may of medieval origin. No evidence of any further significant archaeological activity was however observed.

(R. A. Broomhead)

Yeovil, Middle Street, ST 558 159

AC Archaeology carried out a watching brief prior to the construction of an extension to a domestic property, during August 1999. The initial lowering of the ground surface removed mainly the remnants of recently demolished buildings and modern building debris. Reduction of the ground surface exposed a clean yellow sandy clay natural subsoil layer across the majority of the site. No archaeological deposits or structures were evident and there was no evidence for pre-modern archaeological activity on the site.

(Simon Hulka)