

SOMERSET ARCHAEOLOGY 1982

EDITED BY IAN BURROW, STEPHEN MINNITT AND BRIAN MURLESS

1982 was an interesting year in Somerset. Trial excavations carried out at two threatened sites produced evidence so spectacular as to ensure that the sites were preserved. At Northover, Ilchester, Peter Leach (for the Western Archaeological Trust) established the existence of a major late-Roman cemetery containing important graves and other structures. Its proximity to the Saxon minster and its similarity to the Poundbury cemetery in Dorchester make this a prime candidate for an early Christian site. The cemetery is now scheduled as an Ancient Monument.

Daw's Castle, an interesting little earthwork at Watchet, was ploughed by its then owner, despite the use of powers under the old Ancient Monuments Acts to prevent this. It is a timely reminder that however safe we may believe sites to be they can be destroyed virtually overnight. Excavations here by the DOE Central Excavation Unit had a happy result. The site is now shown to be the tenth century A.D. *burgh* of Watchet and a major addition to our knowledge of such sites. It is now in state ownership and *should* be safe for the future.

Somerset County Council published *The Archaeology of Somerset*, edited by Mick Aston and Ian Burrow, to generally favourable reviews both local and national. The book emphasises again the richness of the county's archaeology and the need to make more people aware of it.

Another new publication was *Bristol and Avon Archaeology* (replacing *BARG Review* in a much smarter format), published by the Bristol and Avon Archaeological Research Group and edited by Rob Iles. It includes an annual review of Avon Archaeology similar to this compilation.

The respective editors have agreed to exchange information for those areas of South Avon that lie within historic Somerset. In order to avoid the unnecessary expense of full repetition of entries, records which will be published in full in Bristol and Avon Archaeology are noted briefly here in this format:

Bath Roman Baths ST 750647
Excavations in temple precinct
(See BAA 2 1983, 123)

Thanks are extended as usual to all contributors.

PREHISTORIC

Bathampton, Bathampton Down ST 770650

Earthwork survey of hill fort and field system. (See BAA 2 1983, 58-49)

Chard, NGR unknown

Four hand axes and one Levallois core were given to SANHS by Avebury Museum. The precise findspot and date of discovery are unknown.

(S. Minnitt)

Cheddar, Bats Combe cST 461548

A flake from a neolithic polished flint axe was given to SANHS by Avebury Museum. The date of discovery is unknown.

(S. Minnitt)

Cheddar, Middle Down cST 4952

Sixteen flints including cores and scrapers were given to SANHS by Avebury Museum. The exact findspot and date of discovery are not known.

(S. Minnitt)

Cheddar, Tynings cST 4656

One flint and scraper and a flake were given to SANHS by Avebury Museum. The provenance and date when found are unknown.

(S. Minnitt)

Exford, Westermill Stone Setting SS 822224097

Excavation of the SW half of this stone setting (see *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.* 125, 94) was carried out with a grant from the Maltwood Fund. No finds or structures were identified. The fallen SW stone was re-erected in the stone hole which was identified and excavated

(I. Burrow and R. McDonnell)

Ilchester, Heave Acre ST 522222

Following the identification from aerial photographs of a large, severely degraded, semicircular earthwork in fields immediately to the south of Ilchester, an opportunity to section it was provided by excavation for a Wessex Water Authority pipeline. With the support of the DoE and Wessex Water the Western Archaeological Trust were able to cut a controlled section across the north eastern portion of this earthwork in June 1982. Although of limited width, this section revealed the slumped remains of a broad rampart made of alluvial clay, and faced by a low drystone revetment. A broad waterlogged ditch fronting the bank could not be bottomed but appeared to be contemporary. A buried occupation deposit behind the rampart tail and within the enclosure incorporated sherds of local Iron Age Durotrigian pottery. The alluvial clay structure of the rampart may itself have obscured any clear evidence of original morphology, and probably accounts in part for its extreme degradation. A further factor was the effect of prolonged subsequent alluviation, the build-up of which had obliterated the ditch and partially submerged the remains of the bank.

Fieldwork and aerial photography indicate part of an oval enclosure, whose south eastern side is formed either by the Bearly Brook, or has been totally erased. From its form, structure and associated dating material, it is tempting to interpret this earthwork as a form of late pre-Roman Iron Age *oppidum*, more familiar in south east Britain, but so far unique in this form, and somewhat unexpected in Somerset. Further excavation would be required to confirm or amplify this hypothesis, a daunting task in view of its low-lying waterlogged position, scale and the mantle of alluvium

(P. J. Leach.

Kelston, Manor Farm ST 694666

Palaeolithic chert tools.

(See BAA 2 1983, 49)

Mendip Area

A Neolithic greenstone axehead; the front half of the blade polished, the butt not finished off with polishing, was offered for sale in the October 1983 issue of *Seaby's Coin and Medal Bulletin*, p. 278, ref. V320, for £75.

(L. V. Grinsell)

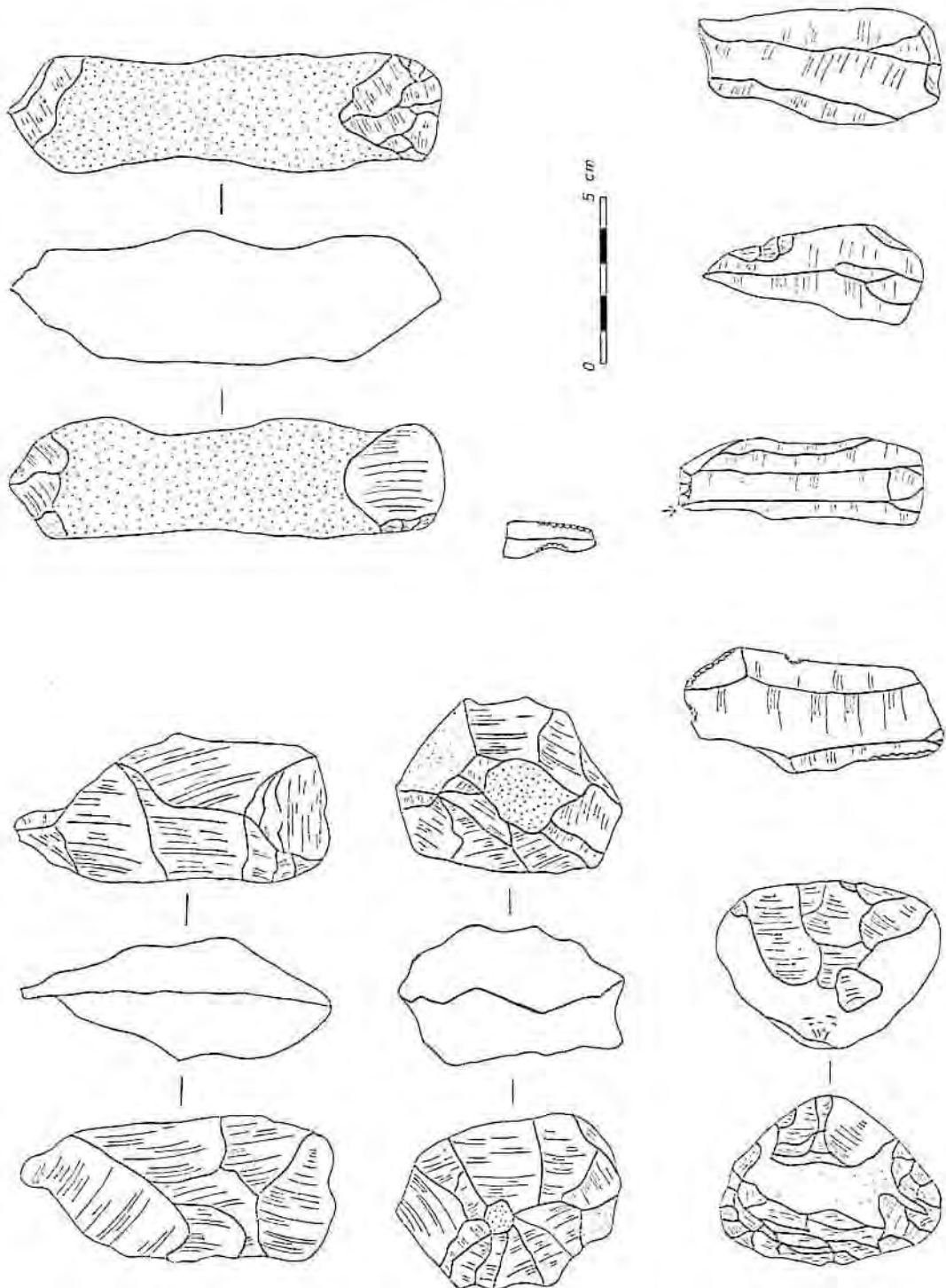


Fig. 1 Priddy: Mesolithic Flints (drawn by B. Hack)

Over Stowey, Cockercombe Castle ST 18423614

A watching brief was carried out for the DoE at the southern corner of the Iron Age hill-slope enclosure during construction of an access track by the Forestry Commission. The outer side and base of the ditch were exposed. The ditch was about 1 m deep with a flat base and side sloping at about 70°. The fill consisted of pale brown friable clay with rounded stones above a primary silting of angular blocks of stone. No finds were made. (I. Burrow)

Portbury, Windmill Hill ST 506739

Flints

(See BAA 2 1983, 49)

Priddy Mr B. Hack has contributed the following on prehistoric finds in the parish: ST 51185188

A 'Mousterian' biface of slightly patinated good-quality flint was found on ploughed land. The blocking out has been achieved by the alternate flaking method using the baton technique. The implement is typical of the discoidal core tools associated with material assemblages of the later middle palaeolithic or 'Mousterian' period. It resembles a biface from Oldbury Camp, near Ightham, Kent, displayed in the British Museum collection. The occurrence of this type of implement on Mendip may be of special interest because of its rarity.

ST 53334942

A 'Mousterian' flint implement was found on the surface of arable land 500m NE of Ebbor Gorge. It is of a form midway between a side-scraper and a point. It has been made on a 15 mm thick sidestruck flake. A small notch has been formed in both edges at opposite points furthest from the tip. The outer surface has secondary working on the edges, and in addition one edge bears some inverse working at the point.

ST 512530

The following Mesolithic assemblage has been collected over the last 7 years from a 4-a (1.6-ha) site lying at 850 ft. (260 m) O.D. Collecting was undertaken after ploughing and cultivation (Fig. 1).

- 1 A typical tranchet core axe of triangular section made from honeycoloured chert. The ancient longitudinal break terminating in a hinge fracture may have been deliberate.
- 2 A tranchet core axe made from a rough, cylindrical nodule of flint. As shown in the drawing the original tranchet flake scar has been partially removed by some later flaking onto the opposite face.
- 3 A 'chopping tool' crudely flaked bifacially from a nodule of honeycoloured chert. This implement was found on the same occasion as item 1, and approximately 100 m from it. The marked macroscopic similarity of the material suggest the implements could be contemporary.
- 4 An unusual, bifacially worked side-scraper or knife made on a 20 mm thick side-struck flake of brown flint. The edge of one face has been obtained by step flaking.
- 5 A single graver on a straight truncated flint blade.
- 6 A flint point with some low angle flaking on one edge, and inverse retouch on the opposite edge near the tip.
- 7 A truncated chert blade with some edge re-touch.
- 8 A flint blade with re-touched edges and two small worked notches.

- 9 A microlith.
- 10 An atypical six-faceted dihedral flint graver, with tang.
- 11 A fabricator made from an irregularly shaped flint fragment.
- 12 Four flake knives with obliquely truncated finger platforms.
- 13 A graver on a flint flake.
- 14 Sixteen flint implements with re-touch or secondary working.
- 15 Four flint flakes with worked notches.
- 16 Ten cores, nine of flint and one of chert.
- 17 One serrated flake.
- 18 Six fire-crackled pieces.
- 19 Five utilised flakes.
- 20 Twelve pieces of rolled flint showing no artificial working or utilisation. It is noted that these flints occur at several places in the Priddy area.
- 21 Two small, attractive, foreign pebbles. The occurrence of these pebbles on Mendip sites is not unusual. Possibly their utilisation might be compared to the present day use of pebbles by Australian aborigines for ritual purposes.

Thanks are due to Messrs A. Harris and H. J. Sheppard for permission to collect at the site. The material will be given to a local museum.

ST 514534 Neolithic material has been collected over a 2-a (0.8 ha) area at 850 ft. (260 m) O.D. The site has produced some unusual implements and lies 50 m south of a possible long barrow. The area has been used for commercial turf removal and is now arable. Occupation of the site is indicated by the occurrence of the following:—

- 1 A complete quern resembling an artist's palette in outline, the ground face of which still shows some glossy patches. Overall length 295 mm, breadth 200 mm, thickness 50 mm, weight 4.5 kg. Material red sandstone.
- 2 A 'polissoir' of pinkish coloured quartzite. This implement, now broken, once formed the 110 mm long centre portion of a longer original. The breaks are ancient. It is of rectangular section and each of the sides has longitudinal concavities. The main surface has a regular, beautifully ground concavity 20 mm deep by 120 mm wide. These very rare implements were possibly used as the beds on which flint or stone axe tools were honed to their final finish using a cutting agent such as oil and sand.
- 3 A large smooth ivory-coloured pebble the convex surface of which shows some glossy patches. These pebbles were possibly used in the preparation of skins or hides. Weight 620 gm.
- 4 The tip of a ground flint chisel. One other implement of this type has been found by the writer on another site at Priddy.
- 5 A large, irregularly shaped, core implement made from an unusual cherty flint material. It has one flat surface, two converging edges of which have been utilised, probably in a scraping capacity. These implements are sometimes referred to as push-planes. Weight 500 gm.
- 6 A large pebble with a flat ground face. Material red sandstone. Weight 575 gm.
- 7 A hone with two concave faces.
- 8 A small grey beach pebble.
- 9 A broken, reddish coloured quartzite pebble. These reddish pebbles are found on other sites in the Priddy area.
- 10 A nodule of haematite.

Flint material from the site may be summarised as follows:—

- Flake scrapers of various forms 55.
- Core scrapers 18.
- Cores 22.
- Gravers 8.
- Notched flakes 23.
- Worked points 21.
- Serrated flakes 2.
- Arrowheads, 2 leaf and 2 transverse.
- Polished flakes 1.
- Trimming flakes 42.
- Bifacially worked scraper 1.
- Worked flakes 20, including one well made knife, and one knife made from beach pebble flint.
- Utilised flakes 20, including one of Portland chert.
- Fire-crackled cores and flakes 35.

A considerable scatter of flint trimmings and waste was noted but not collected. The use of a local metallic ore, possibly manganese, for the forming of a graver and a core is of interest. The flanged rim and part of the neck of a pale blue glass bottle/flask of Roman type was found on the site. A similar find was previously made some 300 metres to the South.

Thanks are due to Mr H. J. Sheppard for his permission to collect at the site. The material, which is currently in the possession of the writer, will be given to a local museum.

ST 5218 5233

An inscribed disc of greenish/grey slate or shale was found in April 1977. The disc is of irregular outline, 38 mm across by 4 mm thickness. It has an hour glass perforation at its centre of 3.5 mm internal diameter and 7.5 mm external diameter. On one face eleven lines have been incised from the perforation edge to the perimeter edge. The lines are incised free-hand, and no line is diagonally opposite another. The other face is incised in the same manner, only on this face ten lines appear. Lines marked radially from a centre hole seem to suggest that the original outline was circular. The find was made on the surface of a partially ploughed down barrow, Priddy No. 7. Its occurrence here is probably fortuitous. However, the disc appears to be ancient. The writer is indebted to Mr Paul Robinson of Devizes Museum for information regarding similarly designed chalk discs from All Cannings Cross. Shale and slate do not occur naturally in Wiltshire. The purpose of these discs is not known, but they are not spindle whorls. The design, 'rayed circle' motif, is common, and is described in S. Piggott, *The Neolithic Cultures of the British Isles* (Camb. Univ. Press 1954). Thanks are due to Mr A. Harris for allowing the writer to search and collect in the area. The disc will be given to a local museum.

Priddy ST 5337 5447

A concentration of Mesolithic flints was found including cores, blades and 3 microliths of rod form.

ST 5382 5457

Mesolithic flints, including cores and blades, were found concentrated within a shallow depression in the field.

The area produced a general scatter of flints of Neolithic-Bronze-Age date. The finds will be deposited in Axbridge Museum. (R. G. J. Williams)

Somerset Levels Project

In 1982, excavations at *Meare Village East* were undertaken, and post-excavation work has continued throughout the year. The report is now in press. Negotiations with M. Avery of Belfast continue over the publication of earlier work. The Somerset Levels Project also excavated along the Neolithic *Sweet Track*, in three sites; this programme is now concluded, with the arrangements for the continued watering of the Shapwick Heath Nature Reserve. Extensive field survey on Sedgemoor was continued, and small excavations in the *Brue Valley* were undertaken as discoveries mount due to peat extraction. A Somerset Levels Museum was opened at Westhay in mid-1982. A reconstruction of part of the *Abbot's Way*, a late Neolithic structure, was undertaken for public display. Environmental work was carried out in Exeter and Cambridge, tree-ring studies in Sheffield, beetle studies in London, and general post-excavation work in Exeter. The Project established its conservation laboratory in a new location, and obtained a new office from Fison's plc. Sites will be reported in *Somerset Levels Papers* 9, 1983, and a special issue is planned for late 1983.

(J. M. Coles and B. J. Orme)

Taunton, ST 20902365

A pointed Lower Palaeolithic hand axe was found by Mr D. Knapman in the garden of 33 Comeytrowe Lane in 1981. Made from Greensand chert, it is complete but for the tip. It has undergone a degree of rolling resulting in smoothing of the surfaces. On one face a patina has begun to form. Length: 16 cm, breadth: 11.5 cm, and maximum thickness: 4.8 cm.

(S. Minnitt)

Westbury-sub-Mendip, ST 5147 (Fig 2)

Following ploughing during 1977-79 and after the removal of 150 mm of top soil during 1981-82, material of Mesolithic type was collected from NGR ST 51475020, 850 ft. OD. All the material was located on the surface, and within an area of approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ a. The assemblage was unadulterated by material of later type and is in the main typically Maglemosian. It may be considered significant by virtue of its axe element. A transect core axe was also found approximately 200 m to the North (*Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, 122, 120-1). The site has now been returned to long term grass. The material will be donated to a local museum.

Implements:

- 1 Microlith type B.1.
- 2 Microlith type C.2.
- 3 Microlith type D.1a.
- 4 Microlith, unclassified.
- 5 Notched unfinished form.
- 6 Atypical transverse arrowhead with small worked tang.
- 7 Blade segment with 4 small worked notches.
- 8 Graver on a small blade.
- 9 Blade with area of inverse working.
- 10 Broken blade, probably a knife.
- 11 Irregularly worked tool with some inverse working.
- 12 Irregularly shaped combination tool.
- 13 Pointed tool with worked notch.
- 14 'D' section fabricator.
- 15 Double-ended scraper.
- 16 Steeply undercut end scraper on a thick cortical flake.
- 17 Similar to 16 above, fire-cracked.

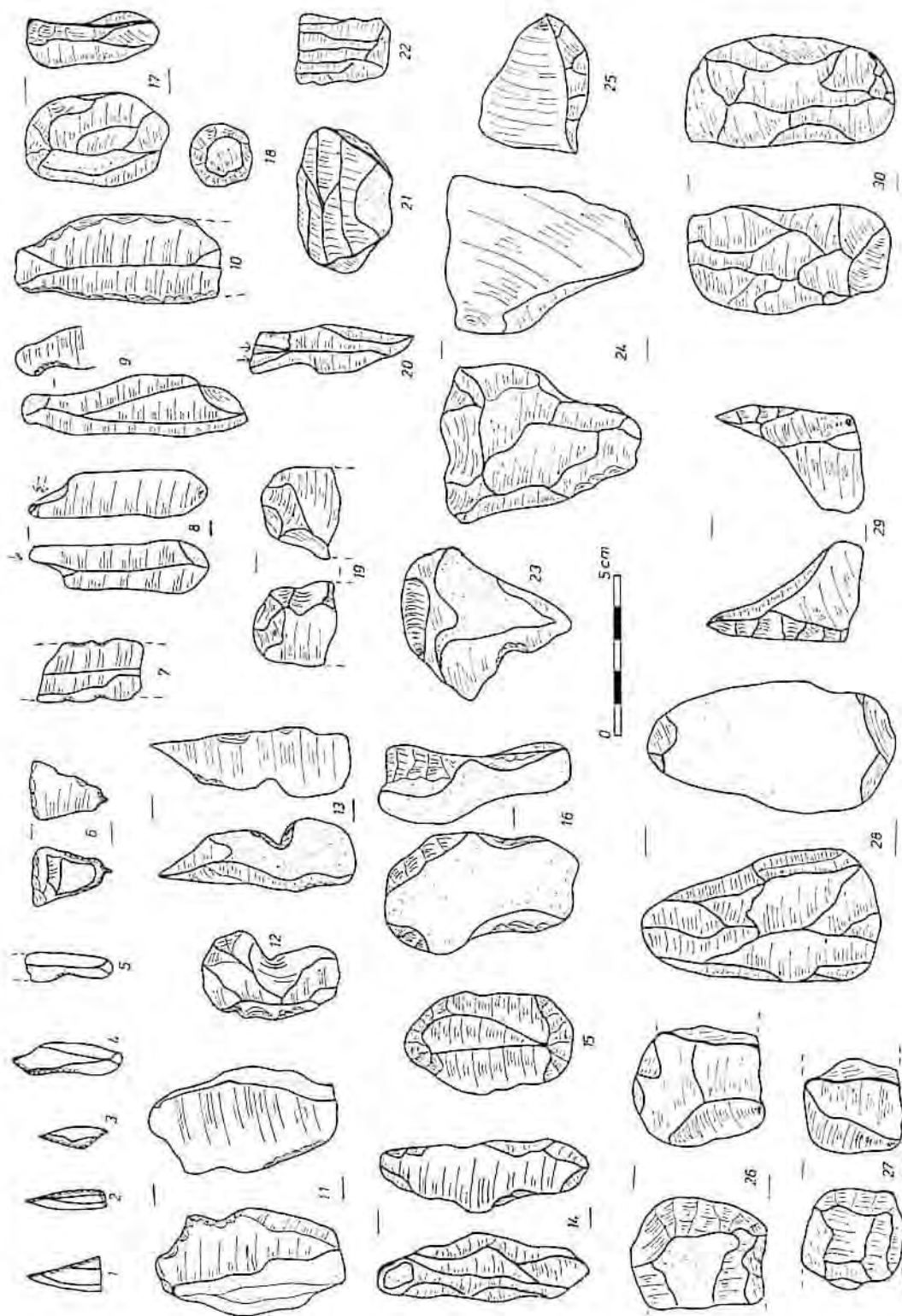


Fig. 2 Westbury Sub Mendip; Mesolithic Flints (drawn by B. Hack)

- 18 Small round scraper.
- 19 Broken bifacially worked flake tool.
- 20 Graver formed on a microlithic core.
- 21 Two platform microlithic saddle core.
- 22 Single platform microlithic core.
- 23 Small flake axe showing tranche scar sharpening.
- 24 Small flake axe on thick side-blow flake.
- 25 Axe trimming flake.
- { 26 Both implements were originally longer and formed the cutting edges of axe
- { 27 tools. The tranche sharpening scars are obvious on both items.
- 28 A rough double-ended axe or adze tool formed on a "D" sectioned cortical core.
- 29 An axe trimming flake. The bottom right of the right hand drawing shows an unsuccessful attempt to resharpen the original tool by the removal of a tranche flake.
- 30 A small, roughly oval sectioned, core axe.

A stone anvil of quartzite, roughly resembling a 'Hovis' loaf in size, shape, and colour, was also collected, together with part of a sandstone rubber. A very small quantity of waste material was noted but not collected. (B. Hack)

Westbury-sub-Mendip ST 493497

A Durotrigian coin was deposited with Axbridge Museum (M. Roberts)

Wraxall, Old Hill ST 727504

Flints. (See BAA 2 1983, 49)

Yeovil, NGR unknown

A small pointed chert handaxe, recorded as having been found at Yeovil in 1883 but with no details of provenance, was given to SANHS by Avebury Museum. (S. Minnitt)

Roman Bath, Roman Baths ST 750647

Temple precinct excavations. (See BAA 2 1983, 50)

Bath, Walcot St ST 752656

Trial trenches found Roman buildings and pottery. (See BAA 2 1983, 50)

Hechester, Northover ST 522229

An evaluation by the Western Archaeological Trust on behalf of the DoE in September 1982 revealed an extensive late-Roman cemetery in the grounds of Northover House. Although approximately located by casual discoveries over many years (Gray 1934), a more thorough evaluation by machine-cut transects, subsequently investigated and recorded, revealed both the scale and extent of this cemetery. Within a ditched enclosure of approximately 5000 m² up to 1500 inhumations are estimated, apparently laid out in rows, and with a common, if somewhat variable, approximate east-west orientation. A small number of both lead and Hamstone coffins was located among the overwhelming majority of presumed wooden coffins, or in some instances stone slab cists. At least two buildings with stone foundations lay within the enclosure, while burials continued eastwards beyond its bounds towards the road frontage. A very few graves were excavated as a sample, although many were located. The object was to determine the scale and extent of the cemetery. Artefacts in association with burials or the enclosure were predominantly of 4th-century date, and the whole

cemeterly gives the impression of a relatively late, planned layout, located immediately behind the northern Fosse Way roadside suburbs of Roman Ilchester (Leach, 1982). Traces of earlier field boundaries, some containing Iron Age pottery, suggest pre-cemeterly fields and enclosures which related to these Northover suburbs.

Only more extensive examination could ascertain better the morphology, status and significance of this important Romano-British urban cemeterly. The indications so far invite comparisons with Poundbury (Sparey Green, 1982), where a cemeterly of the late Romano-British Christian community of Dorchester is strongly suspected.

Ilchester, Limington Rd ST 52282249

A second patterned mosaic was located 5 m north of that located in 1981 (*Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.* 125, 116-118). This second elaborate mosaic was drawn by I. Burrow (records in County Planning Department, ref 53040). Reconstruction and publication under preparation by D. Neal. (I. Burrow)

Keynsham, Charlton Bottom ST 62886830

RB pottery.

(See BAA 2 1983, 50)

Norton Fitzwarren, Manor Farm ST 1920 2590

Sherds of RB pottery were found incorporated in cob walls of outbuildings.

(A. L. Cornish)

Priddy, ST 53005144

RB pottery, including Samian and colour coated wares, were found in an area centred on the above NGR. They were discovered during regrassing of the field. The finds have been deposited at Wells Museum. (R. G. J. Williams)

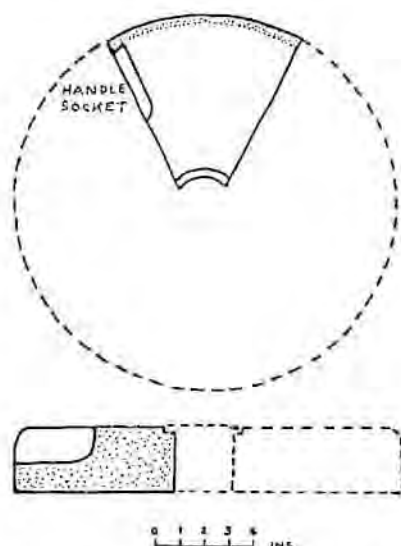


Fig. 3 Priddy: Roman rota quern (drawn by B. Hack)

Priddy, ST 50855248 (Fig 3)

A part of the upper stone of a rotary quern with part of the handle socket and counter-bore for hopper, was found on the surface of ploughed land. The original diameter was $15\frac{1}{2}$ " , max thickness is $2\frac{5}{8}$ " , the diameter of the spindle hole was $2\frac{1}{4}$ " , the diameter of the $\frac{1}{4}$ " deep counter-bore was $3\frac{3}{4}$ " . The quern closely resembles one

recorded from the Chew Park excavations, with the addition of the counter-bore feature. The quern is made of ortho quartzite, silica cemented, Devonian sandstone.

Two rim sherds of Romano-British pottery, representing two separate pots were found at the site on separate occasions. These together with the quern may be dated to the second half of the first century AD.

Thanks are due to Mr N. Cook for identifying one of the rim sherds, and to Mr J. Walmsley for identifying the material from which the quern is made.

(B. Hack)

Puckington, Puckington Hill ST 377183

A deposit of charcoal and burnt clay was noted at a depth of 1.8 m below a lynchet riser on the boundary of Puckwell and Tower Hill fields during work on a gas main. The find is in close proximity to RB material at ST 37691832 reported in *Proc Som. Arch. Soc.*, 57, 91 ff.

(E. Ellerington)

Steep Holm, ST 220600

Pottery and tiles

(See BAA 2 1983, 50)

MIGRATION AND EARLY MEDIEVAL

Ditchet and West Camel, Wicham Place Names

Examples of this early place-name element, thought to relate to very early Anglo-Saxon settlement, have been identified at:—

Ditchet ST 651347 — Wkymansyle (1308); Wickham Ash (Tithe Map)

West Camel, ST 582237 — Wickham (2 fields Tithe Map). (M. D. Costen)

Watchet, Daw's Castle ST 062433

Trial excavations demonstrated that this site was probably the late Saxon *burh* of Watchet. Two excavations through the bank revealed two phases of defences:

(i) A shallow ditch fronting a low mortared lias wall, probably intended as a foundation for a timber superstructure;

(ii) A massive masonry wall 1.44 m wide with a bank at the rear and a ditch 8.50 m from the front face, 1.50 m wide. (F. McAvoy, DoE Central Excavation Unit)

MEDIEVAL

Brompton Regis, SS 95193148

A grotesque medieval sandstone corbel head was found in the garden of the Vicarage. Probably 15th century. Now preserved in the church. (I. Burrow)

Charlton Musgrove, Stavordale Priory ST 736320

A second season of research (see *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.* 126, 75–76) examined a two-phase water supply system bringing water to the S. range. A complex fishpond system was surveyed. Structural analysis of the church building revealed that a short length of the southern part of the E. wall of the E. range survives. (I. Burrow)

Cheddar, Batcombe Hollow, ST 47785175 — ST 48385208

A well-defined ditch or holloway has been noted on the east side of Batcombe Hollow, which marks the early parish and manor boundary between Nyland cum Batcombe and Rodney Stoke. Three stones (named 'Leaping Stones') are extant, set on the W. side of the feature. It is suggested that this is the 'Voxway' or 'Foxway' of the Royal Forest Bounds of Mendip (AD 1219–1300). Various features in the area, including the sites of three buildings of the Medieval to 18th-century period are discussed in a note in the Axbridge A.L.H. Soc. *News Sheet*, No 46 (January 1981).

(B. Williams)

Cleeve, Bickley ST 451650
12-13th century building and assart. (See BAA 2 1983, 53)

Easton-in-Gordano, Pill ST 527754
Ham Green pottery. (See BAA 2 1983, 53)

Englishcombe, Culverhay Castle ST 18630
Survey of castle. (See BAA 2 1983, 54)

Freshford, Woodwick, ST 779603
Survey of village earthworks. (See BAA 2 1983, 54-55)

Keynsham, Keynsham Abbey ST 655688
Excavations of chapter house and novices' room. Late Saxon burials. (See BAA 2 1983, 54)

Newton St Loe, St Loe's Castle ST 694639
Excavations. (See BAA 2 1983, 54)

Steep Holm, ST 220600
Priory excavations. (See BAA 2 1983, 55)

Taunton, 18 Fore St ST 2267524450

This timber-framed building, formerly Adcocks, chemist, which stands at the E. entrance to Bath Place, was recorded during alterations by E. H. D. Williams and R. G. Gilson. Excavation, undertaken to resolve problems arising from the interpretation of the standing structure, exposed earlier extensions at the back. A 12-13th-century rubbish pit was sealed by a 14-15th-century floor of edge-set stones incorporating a well and hearth. Subsequent building phases occurred in the 16-19th century before the site became an open yard in modern times. The pottery assemblage includes decorated medieval roof tiles and 16th-century bricks.

Taunton, Priory of SS Peter and Paul, ST 23002491

Research with documentary and other sources, by R. J. E. Bush, to locate the position of the medieval priory identified the Vicarage of St James, Priory Avenue, Taunton, as a site of potential importance. When the Vicarage was sold for conversion to flats, permission was obtained for an exploratory excavation in the grounds. This revealed the extensively robbed-out foundation trenches of a rectangular building, 12 m × 7 m, incorporating substantial ashlar footings and a stone water conduit. Finds included medieval and post-medieval pottery and encaustic floor tiles. Since post medieval documentary sources contain no reference to a building on this site, the structure can be interpreted, with confidence, as part of the priory complex. It stood 50 m south of the surviving, late-medieval structure known as Priory Barn.

Taunton, Vivarium ST 27752405

A new sewer trench cut through Vivary Park and golf course exposed the silty, organic deposits of the medieval fish ponds. Entries in 13th and 14th-century Pipe Rolls confirm that bream, pike and eels were supplied by the *vivarium* to Taunton Castle and, on occasion, to the royal household. These sources refer to two ponds, the *magnum vivarium*, or great pond, which probably occupied the low lying part of the golf course, and the *parvum vivarium*, or little pond, probably the one located in Vivary Park. The latter, being elongated in shape, may have been constructed by widening an existing water course. It was about 40 m wide and 4.5 m deep.

(C. F. Clements)

Taunton, High St ST 22742426

Excavations by Taunton Deane Research and Excavation Committee and Somerset County Council produced two clusters of medieval and later features. The earliest features were 12th century and suggest that High Street was already in existence at that time.

(I. Burrow)

Washford, Cleeve Abbey ST 048407

The E. end of the monks' reredorter, the W. end of which was partially excavated in 1980 and 1981, was found as well as the start of a building extending further to the E. The reredorter building is 19.7 m long and 7.80 m wide with walls just over 1 m thick. The main drain runs through the southern part of the building. To the east of the reredorter the drain is in a cut 2.40 m wide and the width of the channel was probably c 1.10 m. W. of the reredorter the drain channel is c 75 cm wide with a floor of slate and after 6 m curves slightly towards the S. In the 15th century a new branch of the drain was constructed which ran NW. towards the new frater and part of the main drain was rebuilt at the same time.

The N. ground floor section of the building was 17.25 m long and 3.60 m wide. In the earliest phase there appears to have been a corridor along the S. side leading to a room at the E. end which contained a hearth. This corridor was blocked by a wall which was then robbed and the corridor and rooms were refloored. To the E. of the reredorter there was a building c 3.15 m wide and at least 3.90 m long. In the 14th century a drain was inserted along the S. side of the N. section of the reredorter. This left the main drain immediately E. of the reredorter and rejoined it to the W. E. of the reredorter it was capped with lias slabs but elsewhere it was open. At the same time a passage was constructed along the N. side of the W. section leading to a room at the E. end. In the 15th century the whole range was remodelled. New walls were built running E. from the reredorter and a wooden floor inserted in a room 4.20 m wide and at least 3.90 m long. The passage along the North side of the western section appeared to be continued further E. It is possible that a doorway was cut in the E. wall of the reredorter as postholes on the same alignment were found in the room to the E. Perhaps at the same time a building was constructed to the W. of the reredorter which butted the S. end of the E. range and appeared to be built over the main drain.

Following the dissolution of the abbey in 1536 the lias floor of the main drain was robbed and rough rubble soakaways were constructed in its place. The building was then demolished and the walls were extensively robbed. There were traces of post-dissolution activity but nothing substantial was constructed in the area.

(C. Guy for DoE)

Wedmore, Mudgley ST 44334528 — ST 45194541

The moor-edge bank called 'Counsell's Walls' in 1327 and 1558, which was first reported in *Archaeological Review No 3 for 1968* (1969) p. 32, has now been traced over a zigzag course for a considerably longer distance, from ST 44334528 to ST 45194541.

(H. A. Hudson)

Withypool, Ashway SS 87053047

A small medieval deserted farm site and enclosure was identified on the south bank of the Barle. The site has been excluded from agricultural improvements in the area.

(I. Burrow)

POST MEDIEVAL

Backwell, Downside ST 500665

Glebe farm site

(See BAA 2 1983, 51-52)

Wedmore, Stoughton Windmill ST 41964871

The site of Stoughton Windmill, which appears on 1811 drawings for the first edition 1" O.S. (British Library) and on the 1817 1st edition 1" O.S. itself, has been precisely located in the south angle of the crossroads at Eastfield Farm, Stoughton. A small mound, with no identification, is shown on the 1886 25" O.S. map. This survives as a low but definite oval mound with a slight dent in the centre and a possible ramp to the SW. There is no record of the windmill on parish maps of 1791 or 1805. It was therefore presumably built between 1805 and 1811. It had ceased to function, and been demolished, by 1886 (25" O.S. noted above; also S. H. A. Hervey, *Wedmore Chronicle* Vol. 1 (1887) p. 123). It is now the property of Limekiln Farm (Sexey's Estate).

Wellington, Cornhill, ST 13842063

Excavations at the rear of 18 Fore Street by Taunton Deane Research and Excavation Committee produced no evidence of occupation before the 18th century.

(I. Burrow)

West Huntspill, Sea Wall ST 294465

During rebuilding of the sea wall between the Brue and Huntspill Rivers a number of round 'Dole Stones' carved with arabic numerals from 10 to 120 were noted. These relate to the owners of 'Auster' land in the early 19th century who were responsible for the repair of the wall.

(M. Langdon)

Wincanton, Tunnel Survey

South-East Somerset Archaeological Society have undertaken a survey of cellars and tunnels in the town. There are records of tunnels found before 1939 in the High Street and a tunnel has been located running obliquely from the Greyhound Inn in the Market Place. This was 1.7 m high and 0.4 m wide built of regularly coursed stone. It was traced for 3.5 m.

(R. M. Keynes)

INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY

Bridgwater, Telescopic Bridge ST 300375

During the conversion of this former railway bridge across the River Parrett into a fixed road bridge, S.I.A.S. members examined the traverser pit at the structure's eastern end (Murless, 1983). The rails on which the sections of the bridge travelled were measured and photographed, along with a selection of iron artefacts from the ballastbox of the bridge's retracting portion. These items included broken castings and miscellaneous wheels which were placed there in 1907 to provide counter-weight.



Fig. 4 Evercreech: limekilns during recording by Somerset Industrial Archaeology Society

Evercreech, Limekilns ST 644288 (Fig 4)

Three large kilns, two of which were of a different date to the third, were recorded by S.I.A.S. prior to their demolition. They were apparently constructed by Humphrey Mead of Drayton, who owned limekilns near Langport in the 1890s, the original company trading under the name of Mead & Sons until 1956. The lime was used principally in the making of mortar, only a small proportion being used as a fertilizer, and the kilns ceased operating in 1962. (SIAS *Bulletin*, 30 September 1982)

Orchard Portman, Limekiln in Thurlbear Wood ST 271210

In October, 1982, S.I.A.S. were asked to advise on the state of a limekiln in the reserve of the Somerset Trust for Nature Conservation. Thurlbear Wood lies in the SE. part of Taunton Deane, an area once economically important for the extraction of white lias limestone, known locally as Thurlbear Stone. Limeburning in the district dates from at least the 17th century though this particular structure was probably

erected in the 1850s when the wood formed part of the Portman estate. It is shown on an Ordnance Survey map of 1886 but had become disused by 1903. Of the low, squat type, and built of the local material, the kiln serviced a small quarry which is still visible on its NW. side. (SIAS *Bulletin*, 30 November 1982)



Fig. 5a Ilminster Turnpike: tollhouse at Hazelwell, Ilminster

Roadside Survey (Figs 5a, b)

The second systematic survey of part of Somerset's road network concentrated on roads of the former Ilminster Turnpike Trust. Milestones, composed of Hamstone and triangular in plan with cast-iron plates, survive along the principal routes to and from Ilminster; the modern A.303, A.358 and B.3168. Tollhouses range from the imposing structure at Hazelwell, Ilminster (Fig 5a, ST 34741513) to more modest examples at Old Way Gate, Ilton (ST 36511729) and at Kingstone (ST 37651355). Other features of note were cast-iron boundary posts of local authorities which ceased to function in 1974; one on the A.3037 (ST 35931351) bears the founder's mark 'DENING & CO., CHARD' (Fig 5b).

(J. N. Bentley and B. J. Murless)

VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE

Ron Gilson has selected the following list of buildings as being of particular interest, from the considerable number recorded in the County. Copies of all surveys are deposited at the Somerset Record Office and at R.C.H.M. (England) in London.



Fig. 5b Ilminster Turnpike: boundary post

Bicknoller, Ford ST 108392

Fiddington, Farm Estate ST 224418

Both have large chambers beside kitchen fireplaces, for corn drying or perhaps malting. The latter building, a fine small manor house, has exceptionally good late 17th-century plasterwork and fragments of a 17th-century or earlier painted wall.

Chard, Manor Farm, Tatworth ST 329059

Milverton, Blagroves Farm, Oake ST 145256

Wellington, Jurston Farm, ST 149204

All have late 17th-century brickwork. Jurston is a late-medieval jointed cruck house, cob built, with the front and one end rebuilt in brick. The service end fireplace is all brick with a brick curing chamber beside it. Blagroves is a most unusual house, very imposing, with a raised central entry to social rooms over a service basement. Manor Farm is a stone built, three room, cross passage plan house with the front face in brick but showing only headers, no stretchers.

Ditcheat, Hill Farm, Wraxall ST 605364

A medieval house built using both tree and jointed crucks. It was made two storeyed in the 17th century but with one room remaining open to the roof at that time. This was fitted with a mullioned and transomed bay window with ovolo mouldings, the window extending through two storeys.

Durston, Lodge Farm, ST 291282

This farm was much altered in the 19th century but retains its old roof, a remarkable structure for Somerset, the hall having closely spaced, common rafter trusses, all with curved braces. The porch and cross wing have similar structures but are plastered to form wagon roofs. A few other such roofs are known but this is the only known hall roof of this type which is smoke blackened. This was the manor house of Durston and documentary evidence suggests a mid 15th-century building date.

East Chincock, Weston Farm, ST 492134

A fine large farmhouse substantially modernised in 1637 by Richard Batt but which retains a medieval low partition in the cross passage.

Old Cleeve, Oatway Cottage, Roadwater, ST 032382

A good example of a small, jointed cruck house with at least one end half-hipped, the hip cruck still being visible. The building was improved and given front gables in 1700, possibly by William Oatway.

Pitminster, Leigh Farm, Angersleigh ST 197193

This building is a fine illustration of a larger jointed cruck built house with hipped ends using hip trusses rather than hip crucks; one hip truss is a later medieval shortening of that end of the house. One of the two centred wooden doorframes survives.

*Stoke Trister, Stoke Trister Manor ST 742287**Wells, 75 High Street ST 548457*

Both have examples of two tier trusses (the lower part in both cases perhaps, but not certainly, crucks). At Wells the trusses are in the former hall, at Stoke Trister, in the former detached kitchen. Fragments of the former hall roof of Stoke Trister can be seen and these are probably the most massive pieces of timber work yet found in a Somerset house. This is not surprising, perhaps, as the hall was exceptionally wide at over 30 feet. Most unusually, a drawing of the house in the 16th century survives, showing the hall single storeyed at that time, and clearly still retaining its open hearth, the louvre being shown in the roof.

West Bradley, Lottisham Manor, ST 575343

A larger, jointed cruck house of medieval date which was improved in the 17th century.

Wookey, Court Farm, ST 517457

This structure has within it fragments of decorative detail dating from the 13th century, at which time it was a residence of the bishops of Bath and Wells.

Building Survey

The S.S.A.V.B.R.G. is proceeding with a study of the buildings in the parishes of West Chincock and Haselbury Plucknett. Substantial variations in plan-types, historical background and tenure are being revealed. Documentary research and

detailed recording are also progressing into a number of farms and farmsteads; it is hoped that this work may be expanded into a more comprehensive survey of farms in South Somerset. (J. Dallimore)

The following buildings were also recorded in South Avon. For details see BAA 2 1983, 56-57.

BLAGDON, Gilcombe House, ST 505386, early 16C.

CHEW STOKE, Rectory, ST 558619, 15C (?)

CHEW STOKE, Yew Tree Farm, ST 557616, 15C (cruck framed)

CONGRESBURY, 26 Venus St, 16C.

LONG ASHTON, Chapel, barn and Linhay at Lower Court Farm, 15C and 16C.

SALTFORD, Brassmill furnace.

STANTON DREW, The Cottage, ST 598632