

## SOMERSET ARCHAEOLOGY, 2007

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### SOMERSET COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGICAL OFFICER'S REPORT FOR 2007

As predicted, 2007 saw the arrival of a government White Paper looking at the management and protection of Heritage. One of the key proposals is to merge the Scheduling of monuments and Listing of buildings into a new protection regime where all the important features of the historic environment are called 'heritage assets'. A further proposal suggests that decisions on a range of these important assets will be passed to local authorities to deal with rather than the existing situation where English Heritage is the only body who advises on Scheduled Monuments and grade I and grade II\* Listed Buildings. The White Paper also proposes that it will be a statutory requirement that every local planning authority will need to have access to a local historic environment record. The implications of this will be wide-ranging for the SCC Historic Environment Service (HES) and we will discover more of the government's proposals in 2008.

One of the key functions of the HES is the monitoring and recording of changes to the Historic Environment of the county. During any year changes that require planning permission, listed building consent, conservation area consent, or work on the highway in conservation areas requires the involvement of the specialist officers in the HES. In order to secure consistency of advice across the county the HES has secured a service agreement with all the District Councils to provide archaeological advice to the local planning authorities. In 2007 over 2400 applications were referred to the team for archaeological advice. As a direct result of these consultations over 50 investigations took place.

Much of the archaeological work is co-ordinated by Steve Membery and it is estimated that developers contributed several hundred thousands of pounds towards archaeological recording work in the county in 2007. Somerset continues to be dissected by new service trenches and pipelines, and work by Wessex Water, Bristol Water, Transco, Western Power and others continues to be monitored by the HES. One of the most exciting discoveries made in 2007 was the discovery of a Bronze Age farming complex near Monkton Heathfield in the Vale of Taunton. This new site gives us an insight into the prehistoric settlement pattern around Taunton. An interim report is given in the summaries section.

Roger Hagley and Nic Wall monitor improvement works by the SCC Highway Authority in Conservation Areas and continue to support Sedgemoor District Council and West Somerset District Council on heritage planning matters. The Conservation team continues to carry out Conservation Area appraisals in Taunton and a report is expected next year. The County Council has extensive landholdings around the county in the form of county farms, school sites, social services buildings, libraries and a range of other property in its care such as the public highway, roadside furniture and numerous historic bridges. SCC has agreed that one of its corporate priorities is to carry out a study of the heritage property in its care. This is a somewhat daunting task but it was ably tackled by Talya Bagwell who has undertaken a detailed mapping exercise of part of the heritage assets held by County Council. This work forms an important part of understanding what exists where and from that knowledge it will be possible to recommend how it is best managed in the future.

The HES regularly works with English Heritage on a wide range of projects around the county. Work continues on compiling a revised register of the Buildings at Risk for Somerset and this should be published in 2008. This study is part of a national initiative coordinated by English Heritage and regular reports are published highlighting the range of important listed buildings that are neglected around the county. English Heritage, with advice from HES, completed a similar study for Scheduled Monuments at Risk in Somerset and a full report will be published in 2008. One of the most active and productive survey projects in the county is the English Heritage field survey and National Mapping programme of the Mendip AONB area. The local authorities and the Mendip AONB service support this programme of work and the results of the survey should be published in three years time.

Protecting and conserving the changing rural landscape requires a range of advice. The HES through Jan Grove continues to work with Natural England to provide heritage advice on agri-environment subsidy schemes around the county. Government is encouraging farmers and landowners to protect the historic environment by entering into Higher Level Environmental Stewardship schemes but the take-up by farmers has not been as extensive as was first hoped. Recent changes in farming practices along with higher prices for wheat is starting to affect a number of archaeological sites that could be protected through the environmental stewardship route. SCC continues to provide advice around the county on forestry schemes, *Miscanthus* planting, hedgerow removal, drainage works and flood defence by bodies such as the Environment Agency.

In addition to providing advice to landowners and farmers, SCC, with support from English Heritage, provides practical site management and repairs to scheduled monuments around the county. In 2007 Andy Stevens and Ian Lewis have repaired several sites, notably Glastonbury Abbey barn and outbuildings at the Rural Life Museum, the 19th-century boundary walls that surround the site of Ilchester Roman cemetery and a new paving scheme around Dunster Priory barn.

The Somerset Historic Environment Record maintained by Chris Webster and Talya Bagwell, continues to be the first port of call for professional and local researchers interested in finding out more about their local archaeological heritage. At the end of 2007 the Somerset HER contained 19,975 archaeological sites and 11,612 Listed Buildings. This information is available on line at

[www.somerset.gov.uk/heritage](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/heritage) and the on line HER continues to be one of the most user-friendly HERs in England.

It was a memorable year in the life of the Peat Moors Centre when in December 2007 the original roundhouse constructed in 1992 collapsed. Part of the outer wall supporting the main rafters had been moving during the year and the roundhouse had been closed to visitors. After a particularly wet autumn and winter the house wall gave way and the building moved sideways with the roof resting upon the rafters. The building has been left to decay gracefully and this work is monitored as part of the archaeological reconstruction project. Eddie Wills continues to provide a wide range of events and activity days for schools and the public and over 7000 people visited the site. During the year Natural England have confirmed that they are planning to redevelop the former tea-rooms and offices into a new Avalon Marshes Centre – to explain the story of the natural and cultural landscape. A corporate objective of the County Council is to develop the idea of getting the Somerset Levels and Moors onto a UNESCO World Heritage Site tentative list as a Cultural Landscape. The HES continues to lead on this initiative, and a wide range of potential partners and stakeholders have met during the year and further work is planned for 2008. The proposed *Waterlinks* project noted in the previous annual report did not win the Big Lottery Funding but it did raise the profile and importance of wetland heritage in Somerset. English Heritage continues to support the production of a detailed survey of archaeological sites preserved in Somerset wetlands and Richard Brunning is coordinating the production of a detailed report on the Monuments at Risk in Somerset Peat due for publication in 2008.

Work continues on the South West Archaeological Research Frameworks study funded by English Heritage and all local authorities in the South West. Chris Webster has continued to co-ordinate and edit a wide range of papers and comments from numerous partners and stakeholders. Over 150 organisations, authorities, groups and individuals have contributed to the project. A substantial volume covering the Resource Assessment and Research Agenda will be published in 2008. A Research Strategy will follow this. The working documents present a very valuable overview of the current state of knowledge in the region and they can be viewed on line at [www.somerset.gov.uk/swarf](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/swarf).

The European Garden Heritage Network ([www.eghn.eu](http://www.eghn.eu)) continues to go from strength to

strength and SCC has coordinated a range of projects in Somerset and the South West region. Work on the various educational programmes were coordinated by Rachel Shaw and SCC Education IT section and this resulted in a pioneering new websites tracing the history of gardens and how they can be used in schools. The project is due for completion in 2008 and further information is available at [www.somerset.gov.uk/heritage](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/heritage)

An important partnership project funded by SCC, Mendip AONB Service and English Heritage through the Aggregate Levy Sustainability fund continued to provide further support for the detailed mapping of the archaeological landscape affected by aggregate extraction in the county. Krystina Truscoe took this on in the National Monuments Record Office in Swindon, and as a result of her work several hundred new sites across Mendip are now mapped onto the Historic Environment Record. The results from this survey will be used to influence and inform future aggregate extraction in the county. Krystina completed her work in 2007 and left SCC to take up a full-time post with English Heritage working in London. One of the biggest achievements from the Aggregate Levy fund was the publication of a collection of over 200 photographs in *Mendip from the Air*. This volume was compiled by Hannah Firth and over 6000 copies of the book were produced and made freely available to schools and communities in the aggregate producing areas of Somerset. Hannah also completed a survey of flint finds from the aggregate areas and this report was submitted to English Heritage. At the end of the year Hannah left SCC to take up a new post as an archaeologist for Bedfordshire County Council.

The programme of training excavations established at Dinnington villa site jointly with Professor Tony King of Winchester University and Alan Graham for SCC came to an end in 2007. Investigations revealed much more of the plan of the main villa building confirming that the villa was a very large and well appointed site when it was occupied in the late 4th century. The key task now is the writing up of these excavations and the production of a detailed report. The final excavations also revealed a number of new and exciting fragments of mosaic, part of a stone statue depicting Hercules and Anteus and a wide range of coins and other objects including a fine bone spoon and a small bronze phallus.

Further work continued at Fairfield house near Stogursey where Lady Gass has given permission for a research and training excavation on the site of the moated manor house. Rachel Shaw and Richard

Broomhead directed a joint project with Kilve Outdoor Education Centre with support from Somerset County Council and the Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society. A number of young archaeology students were involved with training on the site and a training day was organised for members of local archaeological societies. John Gater of GSB carried out a geophysical survey of the site and this survey has provided a useful guide for future research in 2008.

The development bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the Museum of Somerset project continued through the year and Russell Lillford and Chris Webster co-ordinated work assessing the impacts of the proposed changes on the historic fabric and the archaeology of the site. As part of this work Chris Webster directed archaeological evaluations of parts of the courtyard area, and a range of additional information on the history and archaeology of the castle was gathered to inform the development plans. The fieldwork provided an opportunity for local volunteers to get involved with the project and receive some training in archaeological excavation methods. The project will move forward in 2008 into the development stage with a new Museum of Somerset set to open in 2010.

Alongside the development plans for the museum, proposals to move the County Record Office and Archive Service along with the Somerset Studies Library, the Historic Environment Service and museum stores to one site are well advanced. This development will establish a one-stop heritage shop for Somerset. The work of the HES continues to develop and continues to fulfil the important function of providing stewardship, outreach and interpretation of the rich heritage of the county through planning advice, open days, public lectures, guided walks and publications.

(Bob Croft)

## SURVEY, FIELDWORK AND EXTENSIVE SITES

### *Hemington, Blacklands*

Bath and Camerton Archaeological Society have continued with the training excavations at Blacklands, opening two new trenches in 2007. Trench 2900 was located to investigate some magnetic anomalies, seen on the geophysical survey, at the end of the previously excavated track leading to the gatehouse and villa. Surprisingly, these proved to be Bronze Age storage pits which had been sealed

with a deposit of small stones, apparently the remnants of a yard, possibly associated with farm activities. The yard may have been enclosed by a shallow ditch containing late Romano-British finds. The pits were filled with a dark-brown silty deposit which, after sieving, was found to include environmental evidence including bread wheat, apple pips and hazel nuts. Only one small body sherd of possibly late Bronze Age pottery was recovered along with a few flakes of worked flint.

The main area of excavation was in Trench 3000, located next to the previous year's excavation to help understand the complex sequence of occupation in this area. A narrow extension was also dug to the east to investigate the ditches shown on the geophysical survey.

The timber slot building found in 2006 was found to continue into the new area, although its full extent was not clarified, as neither the west side nor the south walls were clearly seen. The building had been truncated by a later Romano-British ditch that had completely destroyed its south-west corner. It would appear that the rectangular building could not be later than the 3rd century AD and was probably one of the farm buildings related to the villa, as little domestic rubbish seems to be associated with it. The building overlay a large roundhouse, which was difficult to interpret because of later activity on the site, but it appeared to have a double ditch and at least two hearth or oven areas were found within it. Dating the occupation of this building remains difficult as few finds have been clearly identified with its construction; further work is needed to establish a secure chronology.

The trench extension to the east provided an opportunity to investigate what appeared to be the main access road to the occupation area enclosed by a sub-circular ditch. The road had a ditch on the eastern side but this appeared to be much earlier. Other ditches were found to the east, possibly belonging to earlier features that did not show clearly on the geophysical survey due to the strong signals of later features. The south-west corner and a section of the southern ditch of the trapezoidal enclosure were found in this trench. The enclosure had a stone and timber revetted bank, the ditch survived to a depth of about 1.5m. A newborn infant, in a crouched position aligned north to south, had been buried in the very top of the ditch beneath a few stones. Evidence of a second infant burial was also found in this area, but the bones had been scattered by later activity. These are the first human burials identified on the site.

The excavations have shown that this complex site was probably used for many hundreds of years from the Bronze age through into the Romano-British period.

(Jayne Lawes)

#### *Hemington, Upper Row Farm*

Geophysical surveying has continued in the vicinity of Upper Row Farm, Hemington, such that discrete areas are now merging into a single large area. In the west of the area, Hammer Lane appears to cut through farmsteads which are assumed to be of medieval date. It also cuts a wall line further south, and would thus appear to be quite recent, despite cutting deeply into the hillside just south of Charlton Farm. The medieval 'vill' of Charlton, recorded in 1316, is in the small square field immediately east of Charlton Farm. A number of features, presumed medieval, are located to the west of Upper Row Farm.

In the far south-east, a small Roman farmstead was located, which backs on to a wall that continues west towards Upper Row Farm. There is an ancient field just to its west that appears to have drainage/irrigation channels, with a building underlying these. This ancient field is bisected by a field boundary present in 1840, so this drainage must be of some antiquity.

The principal excavation site, Blacklands, lies towards the north of the survey area where a ring ditch and rectangular enclosures are very evident in the magnetometry results. The ring ditch continues south into Hillbrow.<sup>1</sup> The resistance survey also shows some of the ring ditch and a large rectangular enclosure which lies diagonally in relation to an overlying group of strip fields. Just to the west of these strip fields is a small farmstead, assumed to be Roman in origin. At the east end of this enclosure, in the southern strip field, are a number of short faint lines forming rectangular spaces, which may be a Roman villa site.

<sup>1</sup> We are grateful to John Gater, GSB Prospection, for the survey of this field.

(Jayne Lawes)

#### *South Cadbury Environs Project, ST 640 234 and ST 656 277*

Fieldwork continued during 2006 and 2007 on the South Cadbury Environs Project. Five trenches were excavated in Spring 2006 at Sigwells, Charlton Horethorne, to investigate a roughly rectangular geophysical anomaly in the south of the field and

nearby, possibly related, linears. The rectangle was a ditch, probably enclosing a small farmstead, dating to the mid or later decades of the 1st century AD. After a period of abandonment a small industrial area developed. This area was accessed by a backfilled causeway and was dated to the 2nd or early 3rd century AD by distinctive sherds of Severn Valley ware, generally rare in the South Cadbury area. The other linears provided little datable material but are likely to be roughly contemporary with the enclosure.

The principal SCEP survey work in 2006–7 focused on Woolston Manor Farm and this is reported on separately (pp. 83–96).

(Richard Tabor)

## MULTI-PERIOD

### *Batcombe, Spargrove Manor, ST 670 379*

A watching brief was required during building alterations and conversion of a mid 18th-century stables, located within the north-east corner of the moat enclosing Spargrove Manor, part of a Scheduled Monument (Somerset no. 438, HER 23098). Removal of existing floor levels and service trench excavations revealed the substantial foundations of a similarly aligned stone building set a few metres west of the stables built in 1749. The demolition levels of the earlier building contained some 17/18th-century ceramics, glass and other domestic refuse. Although incompletely exposed, its form and location suggest that this earlier building may be a forerunner to the present stables. Part of an extensive spread of redeposited clay with some stone beneath both buildings incorporated occasional 13/14th-century pottery sherds. This probably represents the truncated base of an inner bank that originally backed the moat surrounding Spargrove Manor, the date of which was suggested by a dendrochronological date of around 1289 from timber belonging to its earliest bridge crossing found in 2000.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Webster, C.J. 2003. 'Somerset Archaeology 2001', *SANH* 145, 144

(Peter Leach)

### *Bath, SouthGate Redevelopment, ST 7510 6447*

The SouthGate redevelopment site covers an approximate area of 35,500m<sup>2</sup>, lying immediately south of the city wall and north of the River Avon. It is bounded by Southgate Street to the west, Manvers Street to the east, New Orchard Street/Henry Street

to the North and Dorchester Street to the south. Parts of the site were evaluated by Bath Archaeological Trust in 1997 and the remainder by Museum of London Archaeology Service from December 2006 to March 2007. A phased program of controlled excavation and watching brief began in June 2007, and is likely to continue until August 2008.

Geoarchaeological investigations have focused on understanding the sequence of Late Devensian/Late Glacial river terrace deposits on the site, and modelling the early Holocene land surface. The terrace gravels were cut by a later channel, whose bedded sand and silt fills produced preliminary Optically Stimulated Luminescence (OSL) dates of c. 17,000 (base) and 14,000 (top) ±1,000 BP, indicating that these deposits date to the Late Devensian/Early Holocene interface. To date, no Palaeolithic artefacts have been identified on the site. It is hoped to date the terrace gravels during work planned for 2008 and, as work progresses, the project is expected to make a significant contribution to knowledge of the development of the Avon river system and the local Late Glacial/Early Holocene environment.

In the south-west of the site, the channel deposits were overlain by a soil horizon containing flint-working debris of probable Mesolithic date (principally evidence of small blade and bladelet production). The flint scatter examined in 2007 was diffuse and disturbed, as the soil horizon had remained exposed until sealed by overbank flooding from the Roman period onwards. It is thought that further, better preserved flint scatters exist in the area to be investigated in 2008, particularly towards the south-east corner of the site, where they have been previously reported by Bath Archaeological Trust.<sup>1</sup> Evidence of later prehistoric activity currently consists of a single gully which produced sherds of Iron Age pottery.

There is no evidence for significant Romano-British activity on the site, a Roman predecessor of the medieval south gate, nor for any of the postulated southern roads out of the town. The site was low lying and prone to flooding and may have been suitable for little other than grazing, but the lack of any visible form of suburban activity has implications for the nature of the town and its civic/religious nucleus. Only small quantities of residual Roman pottery and building material occur in later features.

A large ditch some 10m south of, and parallel to, the known line of the medieval and presumably Roman town wall may represent a Roman defence

cleared in the Late Saxon period, or a newly dug feature, part of Alfred's re-ortification of Bath. A peat layer in the primary filling of this ditch produced a radiocarbon date of 770–970 cal AD.

The Southgate suburb was developed after the Norman Conquest when extensive reclamation dumps raised ground levels above the contemporary floodplain in advance of construction. A sequence of limestone cobble road surfaces was recorded along a c. 70m long section of Southgate Street. Localized gravel quarrying took place to provide additional raw materials. Several ditches and pit alignments indicate setting out of burgage plots running east from the street to a north–south aligned stream, which formed the rear boundary of the Southgate properties. Contemporary with the earliest road surface was the stone setting for a lead pipe which brought water from the south side of the river across the medieval bridge to a fountain or conduit house beside St James church, just inside the South Gate.

Parts of several stone-built houses fronted onto the east side of the road. The backlands of these houses contained a range of cesspits, wells and ditches, but little in the way of refuse pits. The stream was revetted in stone and wattle and was presumably used for the disposal of most household waste. Its western edge was progressively reclaimed, with evidence that it became increasingly slow flowing and foul – known from documentary records as the Bum Ditch. Part of a masonry structure close to the northern site boundary is thought to have been part of the head race or wheel pit of the documented Isabelle mill.

Further work on the finds assemblage is needed to resolve the dating of the medieval phases. While it is possible that the development of the Southgate suburb will prove to be directly related to the Norman development of the cathedral in the south-eastern part of the walled area, initial indications suggest a slightly later date, perhaps in the later 12th or 13th century.

Post-medieval developments include the progressive narrowing and culverting of the Bum Ditch, a 17th-century watermill which probably powered a fulling operation, evidence for iron-working (as well as clay tobacco pipe and pin manufacture) and several phases of 18th and 19th-century domestic, industrial and commercial buildings. Processing of finds and environmental samples will continue through 2008, while further evaluation and excavation will focus on the flint scatters in the eastern part of the site.

<sup>1</sup> Brooks, I.P. 1997. 'The flint assemblage', in R. Bell, *Southgate Development: Archaeological Field Evaluation*, unpub client report, Bath Archaeological Trust

(B. Barber, R. Bluer, B. Eaton, C. Halsey, M. Lewcun, N. Lyons and B. Watson)

*Bridgwater, 42 Market Street, ST2958 3703*

A watching brief was conducted during groundworks prior to the erection of a block of flats. The natural gravel was sealed by a substantial build-up of cultivation soil, which contained abraded fragments of 13th to 15th-century pottery. Towards the Market Street frontage of the site the cultivation soil was cut by night-soil pits of late 18th-century date, which in turn were sealed by the sandstone foundations of a building which appeared to have been re-built on the same foundations later in the 19th century.

(James Brigers)

*Cheddar, Bath Street, ST 457 531*

An evaluation by trial trenching was required for a site proposed for residential development at Saxon Place, behind premises on the south side of Bath Street. The plot is bordered to the west by the grounds of the Kings of Wessex School, occupying the site of the royal Anglo-Saxon and medieval palace at Cheddar,<sup>1</sup> and less than 100m north of St Andrews church and vicarage – site of a suspected Roman villa.<sup>2</sup> Both sites are protected as a Scheduled Monument (No. 29673). The eastern end of the present site was crossed by a series of ditches, a stone rubble spread, and occasional postholes, sealed beneath almost 1m of garden soil and deep hardcore make-up for an existing car park. Most of the buried features were associated with 2nd/3rd or 4th-century Roman pottery, relatively abundant animal bone, charcoal, burnt stone and occasional iron objects. These remains are interpreted as a continuation north of the Romano-British 'villa' settlement focus identified within the vicarage garden.

The western half of the site was sealed beneath over 1m of 20th-century landfill, capped by a modern hardcore and car park surface. This also buried an 18th-century stone wall foundation aligned with existing property boundaries extending south from the Bath Street frontage. At one point the wall abutted deep foundations for a small rectangular stone building of slightly earlier 17th/18th-century construction, possibly part of an out-house set towards the rear of the plot on the east side of the boundary wall. The latter was found at two locations

to be set into the fills of a 2m wide ditch on a similar alignment, the bottom of which was not reached due to considerations of site safety and a high water table. Occasional sherds of 11th and 12/13th-century pottery, with a little animal bone, were recovered from the excavated ditch fills. This long-established boundary, apparently of medieval origin, is interpreted as marking the eastern boundary ditch to the later medieval palace site, separating it from the contemporary village properties of Cheddar.

<sup>1</sup> Rahtz, P.A., 1979. *The Saxon and Medieval Palaces at Cheddar: Excavations 1960-2*, BAR 65.

<sup>2</sup> Hirst, S.M., and Rahtz, P.A., 1973. 'Cheddar vicarage 1970', *SANH* 117, 65–86

(Peter Leach)

*Cheddar, Station Road, Kings of Wessex Community School*, ST 4561 5313

Context One Archaeological Services Ltd carried out an excavation at The Kings of Wessex Community School. Groundwork excavations across the site revealed four undated features – two ditches, a pit and a posthole. Comparison of the ditches with those of Late Iron Age/Roman date excavated c. 60m to the south during earlier fieldwork, showed a marked divergence in alignment, suggesting that they may not be contemporary. The site is in close proximity to the trial trenches opened during excavation of the royal palaces at Cheddar in 1960–62, and comparison of the drawings for the palace excavation indicate similarities of alignment with some of the pre-Conquest features though this common alignment may be coincidental.

(Fay Robinson and Richard McConnell)

*Cheddar, Station Road, Kings of Wessex Community School*, ST 4568 5307

Context One Archaeological Services Ltd undertook a watching brief of the groundworks for a new classroom block and extensions to the existing music block at the Kings of Wessex Community School during 2005–6. Numerous linear ditches and pits, most probably dated to the late Iron Age–Roman period, were excavated. The first phase of activity appears to span the 1st and 2nd centuries AD and accounts for the majority of the dated excavated features; the second can be dated to the 3rd and 4th centuries and consists of five features, including two inhumation burials, cut into features from the first phase. Radiocarbon dating of the inhumations

returned calibrated dates for the 3rd to 4th centuries AD. Pottery recovered from features attributable to the first phase included sherds typical of the transitional phase between the late Iron Age and early Romano-British period.

(Fay Robinson and Richard McConnell)

*Drayton to Long Sutton Somerset Spine Main*, ST 4052 2520 to ST 4633 2550

Archaeological monitoring, associated with the construction of the replacement Somerset Spine Main by Wessex Water between Drayton and Landmoor Lane, Long Sutton, was undertaken by AC *archaeology*. In addition three areas of archaeological interest were investigated by excavation during pipeline construction.

East of Drayton, near Park Triangle Plantation (ST 4105 2554), a small group of Bronze Age cremated burials was investigated along with a complex of ditched enclosures of later Iron Age and Romano-British date. These range in date from the 1st century BC to 3rd century AD. A probable early medieval structure was also present to the west. A second area investigated, comprising later Romano-British settlement features, included a stone-built structure and inhumation burials (ST 4130 2568). The third area comprised a small group of medieval pits and later medieval to post-medieval structures south of Huish Episcopi Church (ST 4268 2648). A full report for publication is being prepared

(Peter W. Cox)

*Whitestaunton, Whitestaunton Manor*, ST 27996 10467

Refurbishment of Whitestaunton Manor, including extensive repair of the 19th-century roofs, has continued throughout 2007, accompanied by archaeological observations and building recording. The work has revealed, inter alia, mortar floor structures c. 1m below the present kitchen floor, classic tripartite openings in the kitchen walls at the east end of the medieval range, coffered ceilings over the 17th-century wing and dais window corridor, extensive rebuilding and alterations to the walls of the medieval (15th-century) hall and the full extent and form of the hammerbeam roof. The work has also revealed that much of the interior decorative detail including one of the 'baroque' friezes, is of early 20th-century installation. Observations will continue throughout 2008, when the refurbishment is planned to conclude.

(Michael Heaton)

## PREHISTORIC

*Ashwick, Beacon Hill Wood, ST 636 460*

In continuation of research into the archaeology of Beacon Hill Wood, near Shepton Mallet, excavations were focused upon two earthwork mounds near the north-western end of the wood.<sup>1</sup> This local community-based project is undertaken through the Beacon Hill Society, with the support of the Woodland Trust (owners), the Somerset Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund, the Maltwood Fund of SANHS, and with local volunteers and members of other groups including the Bath and Camerton Archaeological Society, Charterhouse Environs Research Team, Frome Local History Society and students from Strode College, Street. In addition to its objectives of involving local people with their archaeology, the project has developed to investigate the character and survival of a wide range of remains surviving within the wood, to enhance their appreciation and management, and that of the wood as a whole.

A 2m wide trench (Trench 4) was cut for 18m south from the centre of a flattened circular mound, approximately 18m in diameter and 1m high. This was heavily scored by forestry plantation ploughing and old animal burrows but is identified as the remains of a prehistoric round barrow (Somerset HER 23062; Ashwick 5 in Grinsell's 1973 Somerset Barrows catalogue). The trench identified the outer edge of a truncated turf-built mound and a buried soil below, resting upon natural weathered sand. There was no evidence of an outer surrounding ditch or other features in the 8m of trench extending beyond the southern edge of the mound. At the centre of the barrow was the base of a truncated pit cut into the turf mound, more than 2m across and containing many tumbled blocks of the local Devonian Beacon Hill sandstone. These sealed a larger slab placed horizontally above a complete, coarse pottery, cinerary urn, stood upright within a small cut in the base of the pit. Analysis of the urn and its contents by Wessex Archaeology at Salisbury have identified a 220mm high jar with applied cordons of Middle Bronze Age, Deverel Rimbury type. Cremated bone contained within the vessel is identified as the remains of a young woman, aged 18–25, with no other accompaniments surviving apart from remains of the pyre charcoal (principally oak). Arrangements are in hand for the conservation of the urn and its eventual display in the new Museum of Somerset. A radiocarbon date is being obtained from the cremated human remains, and analysis of organic samples from

remains of the buried soil and turfs of the mound should provide information relating to the local environment at the time of the barrow's construction. The urn appears to represent a secondary burial within the body of the mound, and the remains of a suspected Early Bronze Age primary interment may well still survive at a lower level.

Less than 100m to the south a second trench (Trench 5) was excavated 10m long and 2m wide, east–west across a much lower mound, heavily disturbed by forestry ploughing (PRN 23063). Although claimed by some previous researchers as a possible round barrow, excavation revealed part of two sides of a rectangular setting of local sandstone blocks at its centre. These were associated with scattered charcoal, remains of a cobbled surface, occasional sherds of Romano-British coarse pottery, and a few iron nails. The remains appear to represent the south-west corner of a rectangular building, perhaps originally of timber construction with some stone packing to define and support its foundations. Although not closely dated, it may be the first recognised dwelling or working site associated with the evidence for the Roman and Iron Age stone quarrying attested on Beacon Hill and investigated previously by this project.

<sup>1</sup> Bagwell, T.S., and Webster, C.J., 2007. 'Somerset Archaeology 2006', *SANH* 150, 208–9.  
(Peter Leach)

*Banwell, Broadleaze Farm, Eight Acres, ST 4176 5855*

A circular feature was identified by resistivity survey, comprising a central area of high resistance 16m in diameter surrounded by a ditch approximately 2m wide and a bank 4m wide (N Somerset SMR 47332). It is probably a ploughed-out Bronze Age round barrow. A flint side scraper and a number of small flakes have been found in the vicinity. Several similar but less well-defined circular features have been identified in the north of this field, and another, 25m in diameter, in the south of the next field north, Broadleaze, at ST 4167 5870 where there is also a scatter of Roman pottery.

(John Matthews)

*Chilcompton, Old Down, ST 630 512*

In August 2007 excavations were undertaken by the University of Worcester at an oval mound in a field at Old Down. The site has variously been suggested to be a long barrow, two round barrows and a modern spoil heap. The excavations revealed the mound to



be two round barrows, with a complex sequence of activity, which included enlarging the mounds. Primary cremated burials were found in both barrows and a secondary cremated burial in one of them. Grave goods, including pots, metalwork, flint artefacts and beads, were also found. The barrows preserved the old Bronze Age land surface, which has been sampled for environmental analysis. Work at the site is ongoing.

(A. Barber)

*Exmoor, Lanacombe, SS 7811 4272 & SS 7861 4301*  
A programme of geophysical survey and small-scale excavation was undertaken in conjunction with Exmoor National Park Authority in advance of the reinstatement of damaged standing stones at two of the later Neolithic/early Bronze Age stone settings located on Exmoor. In each case the geophysical survey revealed little in the way of structural information but confirmed a close affinity between setting location and zones of shallower bedrock.

At the site of Lanacombe I a single trench was excavated centred upon the fallen stone (stone H).<sup>1</sup> Directly beneath the turf, to the immediate south-west of H, was a spread of stones that included a line of four, notably larger, flat stones aligned on the setting. These were conspicuous in terms of size and the linearity of their placement, the latter not corresponding to the east-west bedding/weathering planes evident in the bedrock. Rather than dug in any traditional sense, the settings appear to have been fashioned by the expedient removal of weathered outcropping rock to create a north-east/south-west aligned oval 0.37 x 0.28m in extent and reaching a depth of 0.18m below the current surface. At the base of the resultant hole was a thin layer of relatively clean brown soil upon which were placed small flat stones that served to provide a level base to the otherwise irregular hollow. The stone was then placed hard against the northern edge of outcropping rock, and the resultant void to the south was filled with more of the brown soil. The suggestion is of a rapid, rather than punctuated, process with a single deposit of soil used to prepare and then pack the stonehole. The presence of vertical and sloping stones in this fill, set directly against the southernmost face of the stone, is strongly suggestive of the deliberate use of small packing stones as part of this infilling process. The only artefactual material to be recovered from the primary fill of the stonehole was an irregularly shaped lump of quartz (70 x 70 x 50mm) displaying evidence of deliberate working (removal of a flake or chunk) on one edge. This had

been pushed down into the top of the packing soil in contact with one end of the standing stone.

At the Lanacombe III setting a single trench was once again centred upon the fallen stone (stone C). Unlike Lanacombe I there was no evidence of any surface settings, and a very different approach appears to have been taken to the erection of this standing stone. A small oval posthole had been dug with an asymmetrical ramped base and the pillar-like stone placed upright against the vertical face. It had then been pushed down and bedded into place (in a manner analogous to the erection of a wooden post). This was then packed into position using carefully selected stones and the upcast from the digging of the stonehole. An upper layer of loose grey silt with further packing stones served to level the stonehole. Aligned north-east-south-west the stonehole was 0.35 x 0.17m in extent, reaching a depth of 0.25m below the present surface. The contrast with Lanacombe I stone H is striking and the suggestion is of a much more pragmatic and expedient process. No artefactual material was recovered. At the conclusion of the excavations both stones were fully reinstated.

A detailed report is available at [http://www.le.ac.uk/ar/school/staff/staff\\_mg41.html](http://www.le.ac.uk/ar/school/staff/staff_mg41.html).

<sup>1</sup> Quinnell, N.V., and Dunn, C.J., 1992. *Lithic Monuments within the Exmoor National Park: A New Survey for Management Purposes*, unpub RCHME report.

(Mark Gillings, Jeremy Taylor and Joshua Pollard)

*Monkton Heathfield, Hartnells Farm, ST 2562 2744*  
An evaluation of the southern 11ha out of 17ha of land at Hartnells Farm was undertaken by Wessex Archaeology Ltd. This confirmed the presence of significant archaeological features, most notably two possible ditched enclosures, along with a number of other ditches, pits and possible postholes. These remains are largely undated, but most are likely to represent prehistoric (possibly Bronze Age) occupation and farming of the Tone Valley.

(Julie Gardiner)

*Pawlett, Walpole Landfill Site – Northern Extension, ST 310 433*

Two small areas were excavated to the north and to the south of the 2006 excavation area (Somerset HER 14335), towards the western edge of the buried Lias island. The buried soil deposit was present to the south of the 2006 area but was absent to the north.

Pottery sherds recovered from this soil ranged from later Bronze Age through to the Iron Age in date. Several flint flakes and broken tools were recovered, as well as small fragments of fired clay and bone. A 60m long trench was opened in the adjacent field to the east of the 2006/2007 areas but this immediately flooded and, due to the waterlogged ground, it was never possible to drain it for more than a few hours and was thus abandoned. It will be reopened after a suitable period of dry weather.

There were no construction or excavation works for new landfill cells during 2007. Construction works will recommence during 2008.

(C. and N. Hollinrake)

*Taunton, Land at Cambria Farm, ST 259 246*

Context One Archaeological Services Ltd carried out an evaluation on land to the east of Cambria Farm, Taunton, following the discovery of a ditch and a quantity of bone and Roman pottery in geotechnical test pits, dug as part of the development proposal for a new Park and Ride scheme.

The evaluation revealed 14 ditches/gullies, all in the southern half of the site and which probably relate to a network of field boundaries and/or enclosures. Five ditches/gullies produced dating evidence. One ditch produced a late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age (2500–2000BC) chert scraper or piercer and a piece of burnt imported flint in its fill. Based on pottery evidence, the four remaining ditches/gullies were dated to the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age (1100–400 BC). A small quantity of residual Romano-British pottery sherds was also found in one of the ditches.

Although the majority of features could not be dated, it is clear from the diversity of ditch/gully alignments and dimensions that these reflect multi-phased activity. This represents the first record of activity from the prehistoric period in the immediate area. The Romano-British evidence, albeit from a minority of finds, adds to a growing corpus of evidence for the environs that attest to some degree of occupation.

(Fay Robinson and Richard McConnell)

*Winscombe, Part Wortice (Cemetery Field), ST 417 584*

A geophysical survey by resistivity and magnetometer, by the ALERT geophysics team of an area designated to be an extension of Winscombe Parish cemetery, identified clear evidence of at least two circular ditches of 28m and 25m diameter respectively. The larger circle shows a rectangular feature in the centre – probably part of an Iron Age

settlement extending into the field to the west.

(John Matthews)

*Winscombe, The Great Ground, ST 4157 5835*

A resistivity survey of a possible round barrow, identified from a cropmark in an aerial photograph (1985) and visible as an earthwork, suggested a central mound 14m in diameter and showed inconclusive evidence of a surrounding ditch and bank.

(John Matthews)

ROMAN

*Ashwick, Beacon Hill Wood, ST 636 460*

See under Prehistoric

*Banwell, Great Wortice, ST 4152 5853*

A resistivity survey identified a probable Roman building (19m by 8m) with three rooms set across the entrance to a curvilinear enclosure. Inside the enclosure is an indication of an Iron Age roundhouse. The survey also showed the presence of other structures probably associated with the building but much of the enclosure has since been destroyed by recent pipeline work. An extensive scatter of pottery in the field dates from late Iron Age to 4th century AD. Two coins of Magnentius were found by a metal detectorist in the same field, and a 3rd-century barbarous radiate in the field to the west.

(John Matthews)

*Banwell and Shipham, Banwell to Rowberrow Water Main Water Main, ST441 586*

A targeted watching brief was undertaken by Bristol and Region Archaeological Services during the installation of a new water main between Banwell and Rowberrow. A discontinuous, linear stone alignment was recorded, possibly the surviving core of a Roman road surface. In a second area, several post-medieval features were recognised and recorded, and a small pit, which may originate from a much earlier period. No other features or archaeological deposits were noted.

(Nick Corcos and Rachel Heaton)

*East Coker, Burton, Broadacres, ST53281353*

Archaeological observations were made during the erection of a detached bungalow adjacent to 'Silverthorn'. The reduction of levels revealed a general spread of post-medieval, medieval and Romano-British material whilst excavations for footings produced evidence for a curvilinear ditch

of the Romano-British period underlying the building. A Romano-British gully and several further undated features were also observed.

(R. Broomhead)

*Ilchester, West Street, Old School House, ST 520 225*

A watching brief was maintained during building extension works for the Old School House. Foundation excavations in the western part of the site encountered a large pit containing burnt material, occasional animal bone and some 2nd-century Roman pottery. Two other shallow ditches cut from the same level were undated, but could be beam slots for broadly contemporary buildings. This group of features appear to belong to the more extensive remains of a suburb of the Romano-British town of Ilchester that extended out beyond its south-west gate along the north side of the Fosse Way. Very similar remains were partly excavated in the paddock immediately behind the Old School House in 1985 (Somerset HER 55877).<sup>1</sup> Further east was located the western edge of a steep-sided cut that follows approximately the alignment of Almshouse Lane and probably lies partly beneath it. This should be the west side of a medieval mill leat that took water away from the mill known to have been located by the west gate of the medieval town. Occasional finds of 18th and 19th-century ceramics and animal bone suggest that it was infilled before the school was built here in the 1870s. Some disturbed stone foundations beneath those of the school may relate to an earlier post-medieval building occupying this corner plot, as depicted on William Stukeley's 1723 map of Ilchester.

<sup>1</sup> Leach, P., and Ellis, P., 1985. 'Ilchester Archaeology', *SANH* 135, 13–84.

(Peter Leach)

*Priston, Great Croft, ST 6940 6065*

A full geophysical survey of the field known as Great Croft, to the north of Priston village, was undertaken between October and November 2007. This consisted of resistance and magnetic surveys with a contour survey of the field using an EDM. The survey was undertaken for Priston Civil Parish as part of a Millennium Project. The field was chosen because of the discovery of a Roman coffined burial in 1917. In 1953 William Wedlake of the Bath & Camerton Archaeological Society undertook a small scale evaluative excavation, though a complete report was never produced. In recent years some information about this excavation has been found in

Bristol Museum and this helped with interpretation of the recent work.

Both surveys were entirely complementary. The magnetic survey showed that the field was divided into a series of enclosures whereas the resistance survey showed only the stone banks and some very faint traces of buildings. The banks are visible on the ground, but continuous cultivation of the field is making them much less distinct. The clearest ditched enclosure is that of Bank 2 curving south into Bank 8 and meeting Bank 6 to the north (Fig. 1). The Bank numbers have been used from Wedlake's excavation records and this work has enabled this information to be related to the surveys. This area was investigated by Wedlake and he concluded, from the finds, that the activity was related to early Romano-British occupation. His excavations did not reveal any positive buildings, but the survey does show three possible buildings (b1–3). These are clearer on the magnetic survey and may be of timber origin although the corresponding areas are indicated on the resistance survey, which may indicate ploughed out footings.

The location of the coffined burial was resurveyed using the original measurements given by Chas. J. Calvert. It was apparently located within a small enclosure to the east of the activity around b3. There may be more burials here as there are a few magnetic anomalies in this enclosure. From this enclosure there is a wide double-ditched track leading north-east to another possible building and a narrow track running north. All these features are suggestive of Romano-British occupation, supported by Wedlake's evidence. The only other site of a possible building lies at the northern extremity of a road that runs alongside Bank 6. This road was excavated by Wedlake and had a metalised surface and was enclosed by walls on either side – these can be seen on the resistance survey.

In the south-west corner of the field there appears to be the corner of a double-ditched enclosure. This was not investigated by Wedlake, although it is visible on the ground as a slightly raised platform. This may be the site of earlier occupation and may help to explain why Wedlake found a number of residual Early Iron Age pottery sherds in his excavations.

The banks and ditches running from east to west, but shown very faintly, are of later date and are probably associated with medieval field boundaries. There are many well-preserved strip lynchets in the Priston area.

(Jayne Lawes)

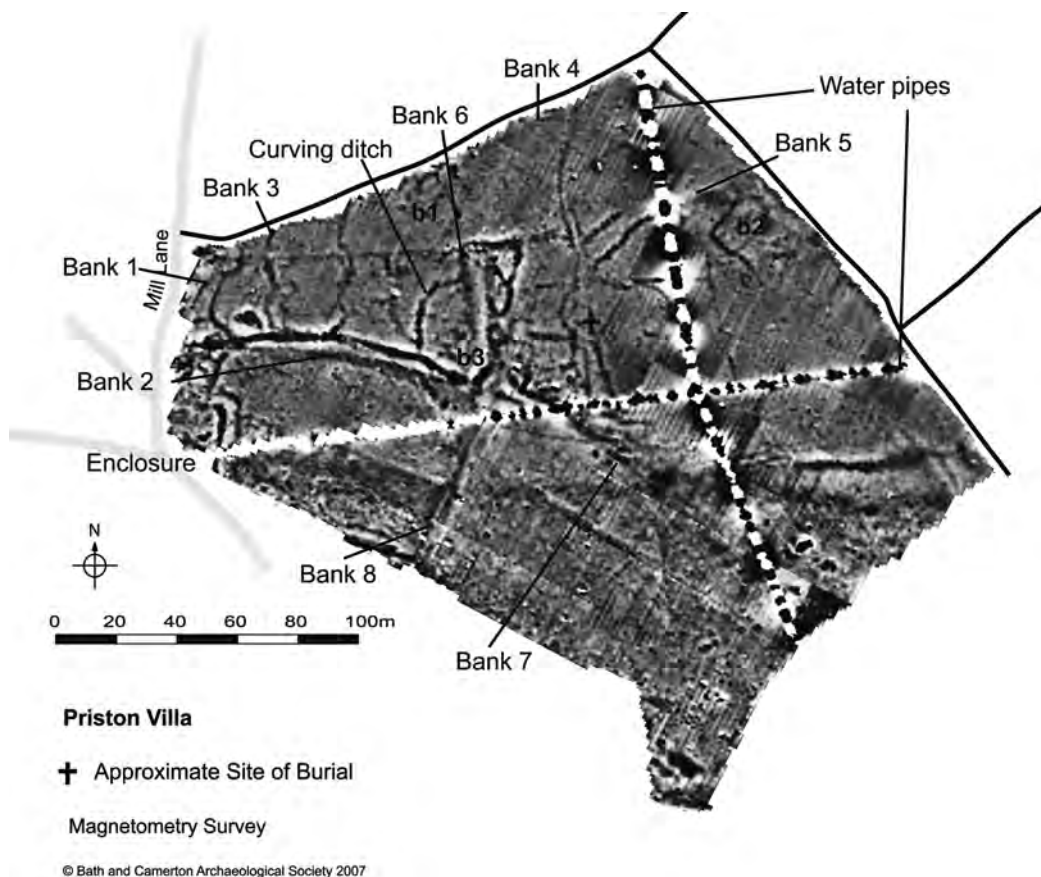


Fig. 1. Magnetometer survey at Priston (Jayne Lawes)

*Winscombe, Ox House Ground, ST 4160 5825*

A probable Roman building, 12m by 10m with one internal wall, was identified during a resistivity survey. There is a clear indication of a road leading from it towards the trackway that passes west of Mooseheart. The dating is supported by a scatter of surface finds, which include Severn valley ware, black burnished ware and greyware. A fragment of Baetician amphora has also been retrieved. Metal detectorists claim to have found spindle whorls in the vicinity and at least one coin.

(John Matthews)

## MEDIEVAL

*Bower Hinton, Back Lane, The Rockery, ST 4543 1797*

A watching brief was carried out during construction

work for a new house on the site of the old village pond. The work recorded a 13th-century boundary ditch that was replaced by a boundary wall in the post-medieval period. A small quantity of medieval and post-medieval pottery was recovered. There was no evidence for occupation prior to the 13th century. (C. and N. Hollinrake)

*Bridgwater, Albert Street, ST 2944 3661*

A watching brief was conducted during the excavation of groundworks in advance of the construction of a number of bungalows and detached houses during June and July 2007. Throughout the site natural alluvium and Mercia Mudstone bedrock were found to be overlain by an uninterrupted sequence of apparent cultivation soils, one of which contained abraded sherds of medieval pottery. This sequence was subsequently sealed by up to 1.5m of dumped material of 19th century and later date,

presumably the result of dredging of the mid 19th-century extension to the Bridgwater & Taunton Canal which formed the eastern boundary of the site. No evidence of previous direct habitation was revealed and it appears that site may have been used throughout the medieval period as gardens within the precinct of the Franciscan friary (Somerset HER 12435), which was most probably centred in Friarn Meadow some 250m to the east.

(James Brigers)

*Burtle, Burtle Priory, ST390433*

Human remains were discovered during the excavation of an electricity cable trench at the supposed site of Burtle Priory (Somerset HER 10942). Brief examination of the work showed the narrow trench had cut through six cut features (pits or ditches), one of which produced 12th to 14th-century pottery in its fill. In addition one or more graves had been disturbed and human bone recovered by the landowner. These proved to be from at least two different individuals. One bone has been sent for radiocarbon dating.

(Richard Brunning)

*Charlton Mackrell, Lytes Cary Manor House, ST 5325 2650*

The roof structure of the south range of Lytes Cary manor house was recorded during major repairs undertaken in the winter of 2006/7. Three truss forms and evidence of extensive historic repair were revealed. The principal roof form (a wagon roof of collar-tied common rafter trusses) is of 14th-century date and is possibly one of only two known in the county.

(Michael Heaton)

*Dunster, Priory Green, The Tithe Barn, SS 9905 4371*

In January 2007 a watching brief was conducted during groundworks to facilitate a new disabled access and drainage at the recently renovated tithe barn. Two substantial clay-bonded sandstone foundations on north-south and east-west alignments were located immediately to the west of, and beneath, the existing barn. These probably represent the western exterior wall and an internal division of a substantial medieval building of some pretension, probably part of the northern range of the priory. The presence of a decorated floor tile and glazed ridge tile fragments in overlying demolition strengthens this suggestion. To the west a weathered surface, constructed of lias slabs, was revealed,

possibly representing an exterior yard surface contemporary with the medieval walls. Further sandstone wall remains and yard surfaces of pitched sandstone cobbles, overlying the medieval walls, probably relate to known, post-medieval, farm ancillary buildings.

(James Brigers)

*Evercreech, Evercreech Junction Station, ST 6390 3655*

A programme of desk-based research, evaluation and excavation was undertaken by AC archaeology on land formerly occupied by Evercreech Junction railway station, located approximately 1.6km south west of Evercreech village. Excavation uncovered the remains of a medieval settlement, which contained a timber posthole building and a small, stone-built circular structure within a ditched enclosure, in addition to a number of discrete features. The medieval site dated to the 12th-13th centuries and overlay earlier prehistoric features. This area of occupation was bisected by the 19th-century railway, which ran through the monitored area. A detailed publication is in preparation.

(P. Evans)

*Flax Bourton, Gatcombe Cottage, ST 5248 6984*

A watching brief was undertaken within the garden of Gatcombe Cottage during the excavation of footings for an extension. Prior evaluation had demonstrated the existence of a single medieval feature upon the site. Further medieval pitting was recorded during the watching brief but no clearly definable structures could be identified

(R. Broomhead)

*Glastonbury, 11 High Street, ST 4990 3895*

An excavation was undertaken by AC archaeology on the site of proposed new dwellings and shop premises during October 2006. The work comprised the machine-excavation of an area covering approximately 90m<sup>2</sup> on the northern part of the development and followed an evaluation undertaken in 2005, which had identified medieval and later activity on the site. The investigations have revealed evidence for continuous activity on the site from the medieval period until at least the 17th century.

The earliest components on the site are three clearly defined buried soil horizons probably representing buried topsoil and agricultural soils. Remnants of medieval buildings comprising at least two wall foundations were present directly below later medieval foundations. The main focus of

activity on the site dates to the later medieval period, and comprised of a series of walls, foundations and associated deposits.

(S. Robinson)

*Glastonbury, Glastonbury Abbey, ST 5006 3880*

Two small excavations were undertaken to investigate and remedy a waterlogged area immediately south-east of the cloisters. The boggy ground was found to be caused by the breakage of a relatively modern drainage pipe which was replaced.

Due to the removal of later deposits by 20th-century landscaping projects the medieval archaeological horizon lies only *c.* 0.3m to 0.5m below the modern surface. An undated stone chamber, backfilled with post-medieval rubble, was revealed as well as the remains of a medieval culvert and drains. Mortar-bedding deposits, forming the floor of the east cloister walk were also recorded. An unrecorded but substantial east-west wall was uncovered between the chapter-house and the refectory. The work also identified and re-excavated trenches dug by Bligh Bond in 1910–1912. Removal of the backfill from one of these trenches revealed a section through the bedding deposits. A thick band of charcoal, sealed between two bedding deposits, was assumed to have resulted from the fire of 1184 and ash charcoal samples were sent for radiocarbon dating. The date obtained, 1150–1270 cal AD, would seem to confirm this as a possibility.

(C. and N. Hollinrake)

*Hillfarrance, Church of the Holy Cross, ST 1674 2463*

A watching brief was undertaken during works relating to the construction of a new kitchen adjacent to the mortuary chapel at the Church of the Holy Cross. External observations noted many unmarked burials including child and infant burials in the area beneath the new extension, and recorded a number of rebuilds visible in freshly exposed stonework. Internal works, notably the reduction of floor levels within the mortuary chapel, were not recorded in their entirety, however the breakthrough into the new build was observed and recorded.

(R. Broomhead)

*Kingsbury Episcopi, Church Street, The Cottage, ST 4354 2106*

An evaluation within an overgrown garden to the rear of The Cottage was undertaken in advance of development. The work recorded a ditch, possibly a boundary, dating from the 12th or 13th century and

a late-medieval or early post-medieval ditch. Pottery recovered from these features, and from deposits elsewhere within the trench, suggest that occupation on the site had probably commenced by the 11th century.

(C. and N. Hollinrake)

*Marksbury, Hunstrete Grand Mansion, ST 645 621*

A geophysical survey was carried out by GSB Prospection Ltd to locate any remains associated with Hunstrete Grand Mansion. The work formed part of a wider archaeological assessment carried out by Channel 4's *Time Team*. Survey methods used were resistance, ground penetrating radar (GPR) and gradiometer. Remains of Hunstrete Grand Mansion are still standing. The first written evidence of a building in Hunstrete is a survey dated to 1258. In 1994 an archaeological assessment was carried out by Bath Archaeological Trust, in which a substantial revetment wall was discovered.

Both resistance and GPR surveys detected remains of the mansion, which was confirmed by excavation, however neither technique provided a clear plan of the walls due to the large quantities of demolition debris. The GPR data do show a clear building footprint in the deeper slices. Magnetic survey away from the main complex failed to find any definite archaeological responses associated with another possible building shown on early maps. However, resistance survey did reveal what may be the edge of a rectilinear structure.

(GSB Prospection)

*Middlezoy, Main Road, Jones Farm, ST6475461885*

An evaluation was carried out in advance of development of the site in August 2007. The archaeological strata in the centre of the site had been severely truncated by levelling activity in recent times and only the bases of pits of 17th to 19th-century date were encountered, at least one of which was probably dug for the purpose of stone extraction. A much higher level of preservation was encountered adjacent to the frontage with Back Lane. Here two large intercutting pits were identified alongside a substantial north-south aligned ditch which retained the remains of a probable bank against its southern edge. One of these pits contained only pottery of possible 12th to 13th-century date. The remainder of these features were broadly contemporary and represented the remains of probable quarries and boundary features dating from the later 17th century. In the region of the frontage on Main Road, to the west of the main farmhouse, a surprisingly deep

sequence of deposits was encountered composed of a sequence of dumps and cultivation build-up which contained pottery of the 13th to 15th centuries and a small scythe blade.

(James Brigers)

*Midsomer Norton, 25 Wellow Brook Court, ST 668 549*

An evaluation by Bristol and Region Archaeological Services revealed a rubbish pit/ditch-terminus that contained pottery dating from the 11th to the 13th century. Little else of interest was found.

(Stuart Whatley)

*Podimore, Lower Farm, ST 545 252*

A watching brief was maintained and recording undertaken during topsoil stripping, in advance of the construction of a traffic sound bund, in fields between the A303 and Lower Farm at the northern end of the village. A set of earthworks, to be buried by the bund, were recorded and material collected from the surfaces exposed by topsoil removal. Part of a rectangular platform, ditched on its south and west sides, was recorded immediately behind the buildings of Lower Farm, and a significant quantity of pottery ranging from the 11th–12th and 13th–15th centuries to some post-medieval types was recovered from the topsoil and upper subsoil surface, where charcoal spreads and indistinct traces of earlier features were also seen. This platform is interpreted as part of a house plot to the north of Lower Farm and fronting the east side of Higher Farm Lane and belonging to the medieval village. Similar earthworks survive further south within the village centre alongside Church Street. Two more differently aligned boundary bank and ditch earthworks further west were associated with a relatively abundant scatter of post-medieval ceramics; mainly 17th to early 19th-century glazed earthenwares, glass, and some animal bone, which became progressively much sparser to the west. These boundaries evidently represent post-medieval fields or paddocks, though at variance to the layout of the modern fields here.

(Peter Leach)

*Stawell, The Old Apple Store, ST 3675 3825*

An evaluation was undertaken on a previously disturbed site close to the centre of the village in advance of proposed development. Three trenches were excavated and a series of ditches and gullies, possibly plot boundaries, were recorded. Pottery sherds found within these features ranged in date from the 11th to the 14th century. There was no

evidence for occupation during the later medieval period but pottery sherds from the 16th or 17th century onwards were relatively common. No finds or features were recorded predating the medieval period.

(C. and N. Hollinrake)

*Stogursey, Fairfield House, ST 1879 4294*

The aim of a geophysical resistance survey undertaken by GSB Prospection Ltd was to identify responses of archaeological interest associated with Fairfield House, with particular reference to former buildings, defences and garden features depicted both on early maps and on paintings. The work formed part of a wider archaeological assessment being carried out by the Fairfield Project.

The survey succeeded in mapping a complex of remains in the grounds of Fairfield House. While some of these clearly relate to earlier building foundations, formal garden features and buried services, many of the responses are difficult to interpret. A number of responses may be associated with a former moat and a possible pond feature but such an interpretation, based on the geophysics results alone, is at best tentative. Rectilinear anomalies to the east of the present house may represent the structural remains of previously unknown buildings.

(GSB Prospection)

*Watchet, West Street, Lorna Doone Caravan Park, ST 0669 4339*

Context One Archaeological Services Ltd carried out an evaluation as part of an investigation in mitigation of development at Lorna Doone Caravan Park. The evaluation revealed features in three trenches, although only those in one trench could be dated; artefacts recovered from this trench suggest an 11th or 12th-century date for the features recorded. These included a stone spread (perhaps an external yard, or alternatively an internal floor level for a timber-built structure) and a ditch and its recut (possibly a contemporary property boundary), which may be domestic in character. On the basis of the excavated evidence, there are no indications that the site contains remains associated with the Saxon minster, which is thought to be located in fields to the west of the site.

(Fay Robinson and Richard McConnell)

*Wells, 66 High Street, ST 5478 4567*

Archaeological observations were made during the excavation of drainage and service trenches for a

new building to the rear of 66, High Street. Prior evaluation had demonstrated the presence of demolition rubble, derived from a medieval building, together with a series of medieval pits, a wall and cobbling (Somerset HER 16265). The recent work identified a wall noted on early maps of the area and a possible medieval culvert. However, it also demonstrated that the site is dominated by disturbed made ground of the post-medieval period lying directly upon underlying natural gravels. The made ground produced no conclusive evidence regarding the origins or the possible existence of earlier occupation upon the site.

(R. Broomhead)

*Wells, Cathedral Church of St Andrew, Mary Mitchell Garden, ST 551 458*

A watching brief was maintained during the construction of a new visitor centre and restaurant within the Mary Mitchell Garden, situated immediately south-west of the West Cloister. The garden contains the ruin of the 15th-century Choristers' House, formerly part of the Cathedral School, which was demolished during the 1870s. Historically the garden had been terraced into an upper (to the north) and a lower level. Supervised removal of the garden soil was undertaken down to the level of the archaeological horizon, above which the new foundation slab was to rest.

Within the southern half of the garden a medieval culvert that runs from St. Andrew's Well into the town was revealed and recorded, as were fragmentary wall foundations and several small, medieval drains associated with the old school. Several 19th and 20th-century drains were also revealed, some of which emptied into the medieval culvert. Much of this culvert appears to have been rebuilt during the 19th century, probably associated with landscaping works, and two inspection chambers of that date were found.

Archaeological deposits within the northern half of the garden were better preserved than in the south. Two phases of a cobbled courtyard were recorded, the latest dating to the 13th century and later, whilst the earliest appeared to date to the later Anglo-Saxon period. A line of probable post-pads, dating from between the 10th and 13th centuries, was recorded immediately south of the north wall of the garden; these appeared to be associated with wall stubs, the whole possibly representing a lean-to structure associated with the masons working on the West Front construction. No masons' waste was seen within the garden, which implies that there was a wall on the line of the existing north wall prior to

construction of the West Front during the 12th and 13th centuries. Fragments of worked stone were recovered from redeposited, clay make-up layers. These included fragments of worked Douling stone from various construction and repair episodes on the West Front and a fragment of carved Bath Stone, probably of late-Saxon date, which had been converted into a bird bath or trough at a later date. Two almost complete, but broken, spandrels, probably of 13th-century date, were recovered below a post-medieval cobbled path in front of the original West Porch in the West Cloister. These appear to be part of the series of spandrels recorded during the 1980s.<sup>1</sup> Occasional prehistoric flint flakes were found within redeposited clays and pottery recovered during the excavations included some residual Romano-British sherds although most sherds were dateable from the 10th century onwards.

A photogrammetric survey of the West Cloister wall was carried out and has been enhanced by coloured drawings showing stone types, building phases and other details.

<sup>1</sup> Rodwell, W., 2001. *Wells Cathedral: Excavations and Structural Studies, 1978-93*, London: English Heritage.

(C. and N. Hollinrake)

*Wincanton, Balsam House, ST 717285*

A watching brief was undertaken in the grounds of Balsam House, a Grade II\* Listed Building of early/mid 17th-century date on the south-east corner of the town, during the excavation of deep service trenches (Somerset HER 14325). This was linked to a residential development of derelict gardens north of the house that were the subject of an evaluation in 2006.<sup>1</sup> Details of garden features including walls and terracing were recorded, occasional finds of clay pipes and pottery suggesting that most of the garden layout around the house is probably attributable to the 18th century. Terrace make-up deposits south of the house sealed a buried soil and occupation deposits including spreads of charcoal, animal bone and 12th/13th-century coarse pottery sherds. No other associated features were seen but the remains suggest a phase of medieval occupation close to the site of Balsam House, although no supporting evidence was recovered in the earlier evaluation of the adjoining site to the north.

<sup>1</sup> Bagwell, T.S., and Webster, C.J. (eds), 2006. 'Somerset Archaeology 2006', *SANH* 150, 230.

(Peter Leach)



## POST-MEDIEVAL

*Barwick, Newton Surmaville, ST 5652 1539*

Preparation of a conservation plan and on-going archaeological analysis of the structure of Newton House has revealed that, contrary to received architectural history, the house is not a 'largely untouched' 17th-century house, but one that was substantially modified during the 19th century and, to a lesser extent, the 18th and 20th centuries, and which contains evidence of pre 17th-century fabric. Archaeological observation and recording will continue during the new owners' refurbishments of the house and gardens.

(Michael Heaton)

*Bridgwater, 3 Blake Street, ST 3000 3691*

Exeter Archaeology carried out an assessment of a large group of buildings located towards the fringe of the medieval town. These had previously been regarded as being of late 17th-century origin. Substantial fragments of a grand late 16th-century mansion were identified, including a gable end of its main range of two tall storeys with an attic above, with a three-storey range of lower rooms at right-angles, set back from the Blake Street frontage, and a stair tower in the angle between the two ranges, rising above them both and interpreted as a prospect tower. Sketches showing present understanding of the building's development are shown in Fig. 2. After 1874 the house became the home to a series of educational establishments, for whom the major local practice of A.B. Cottam and C.H. Samson carried out building work between 1891 and 1914. Numerous plans, sections, and other documents relating to the latter works survive.

(J. Allan and R.W. Parker)

*Bridgwater, 31 Friarn Street, ST 2973 3678*

A watching brief and evaluation, undertaken by Wessex Archaeology Ltd, recorded approximately 0.55–0.8m of modern overburden overlying archaeological deposits or natural geology over much of the site. In the central area tanning pits were encountered almost immediately below a mixed rubble horizon left after the earlier removal of concrete from this area. Some of these had been noted during the removal of the overlying concrete pads during an earlier watching brief. The Durleigh Brook flows east–west across the site and effectively bisects it. Foundations for an 18th-century building were encountered to the north of the river, including part of an external cobbled yard. Most archaeological

remains on the site were to the south of the river and originally outside the town's boundary. These comprised the fairly extensive remains of the tanning pit complex.

All of the features identified were of post-medieval date, mostly relating to the 19th-century tanning industry. Very few finds were identified and the lack of animal bone encountered must be attributed to the fact that, after the tanning process, horn cores and leg bones were completely removed.

(Julie Gardiner)

*Bridgwater, Church of St Mary, ST 2978 3699*

A watching brief was undertaken in August 2007 when trenches were excavated for the installation of drainage to serve proposed new toilet facilities in the west tower of the church. Features revealed by the excavations included a large vault and stone culvert, both of the 18th or 19th century and both of which were left undamaged. The excavation west from the tower revealed the full elevation of the medieval tower foundation and exposed its base where it cut into the natural gravel. A third and final trench largely followed the line of early 20th-century drainage to the north of the church. This produced little of archaeological interest, apart from a stone and brick foundation at the eastern end which probably represented the remains of a 19th-century wall defining an entrance passage to the churchyard, as shown on the 1886 Ordnance Survey map. In order to run a pipe out of the tower, a hole was drilled through its northern wall, cores from which indicated that the internal structure of the 14th-century wall was a lias, slate and sandstone rubble.

(James Brigers)

*Cheddon Fitzpaine, Hestercombe Gardens, ST 242 288*

Archaeological investigations continued at Hestercombe as part of the ongoing restoration of the Georgian landscape garden.

At the West Terrace (ST 2421 2881) path surfaces first recognised in 2005 were excavated, revealing the extent of the southern terminus of the 18th-century terrace. The surfaces consisted of crushed slate. These were flared to the south to define a trapezoid plan, delineated to the west by landscaping dumps which contained fragments of building debris, pottery and glass of late medieval to 18th-century date. This suggested that the soil used in the dumps had been derived from elsewhere on the estate. A rock-cut gully, identified by previous excavations in 2004 and 2005 (Somerset HER 16980 and 19754),

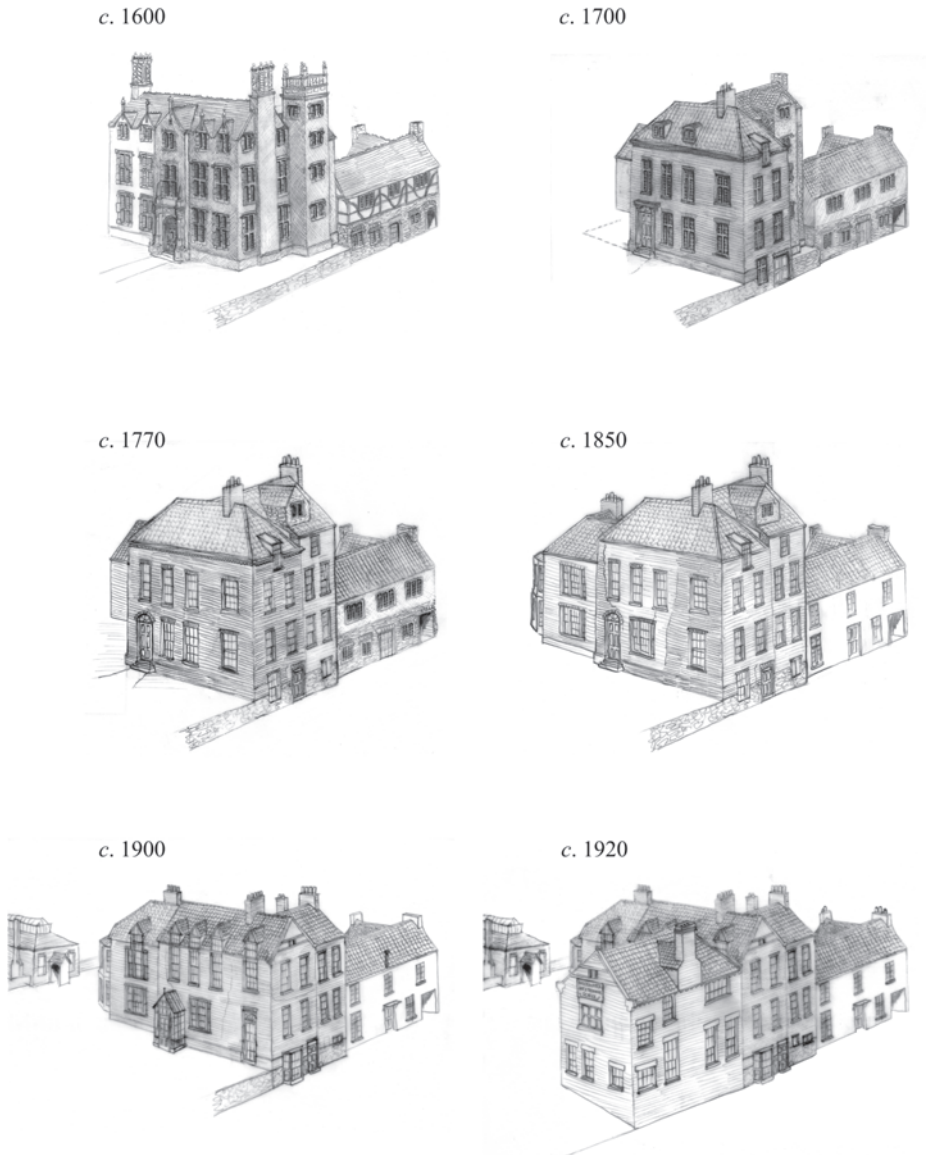


Fig. 2. No 3 Blake Street, Bridgwat: interpretation of structural history (R. Parker, © Exeter Archaeology)

was found to curve to the east and appears to represent a planting trench, probably for a hedge, which formed part of an earlier phase of landscaping, tentatively linked with the tenure of Francis Warre in the late 17th century. The earliest features identified were two postholes to the west of the path surface, one of which contained pottery of 12th or

13th-century date. The presence of these features strongly suggests that a timber structure stood in the vicinity of the terrace during the medieval period.

An excavation at ST 243 290 in the base of the valley to the north-east of the Great Cascade revealed a considerable quantity of dumped soil and slate rubble presumably forming a stable base for an 18th-

century landscaped 'lawn' in an area that was naturally marsh. This material sealed an undated pit cut into colluvial deposits. To the east a section was excavated through a large north-south aligned ditch, visible as an earthwork for a considerable distance. The ditch fill suggested that it had been deliberately filled following a prolonged period of silting. No evidence was found to allow the date of either the feature or its contents to be determined. Excavation of three further trenches in the base of the valley to the east of this ditch revealed the remains of surfaces and retaining dumps, possibly the remains of the original path that linked the Cascade area to the Box Pond to the north.

Between ST 2433 2928 and ST 2435 2938 a watching brief was conducted during the construction of a footpath to the west of the 'Box Pond' (PRN 14498). Well-preserved and clearly defined linear deposits of crushed slate and clay were identified. These are almost certainly the remains of the original north-south path in the area, although the date at which this was created remains uncertain.

Three trenches were excavated along the line of a visible terrace earthwork between ST 2441 2936 and ST 2454 2945 to the east and north-east of the Box Pond. Here the terrace apparently originated as a ha-ha with an internal stone retaining wall. Later the feature was infilled and a path laid along the surface of the resulting terrace which ran between a probable footbridge to the north and the Sybil Temple Platform to the south. Investigation of a rock-cut alcove towards the southern end of this terrace revealed nothing but undifferentiated rubble backfill.

Further excavation was carried out in the immediate vicinity of the remains of the Octagon Summer House centred on ST 2422 2879. This focused on the steep slopes surrounding the foundation remains excavated in 2005 (Somerset HER 18684) and revealed evidence of a shallow terrace running from the direction of Hestercombe House and curving around the east and north sides of the remains. It is probable that this represents the location of a spiral path forming a characteristically indirect access to the 18th-century garden building. The excavations here also produced substantial quantities of building rubble which has provided further information as to the nature of the superstructure of the building.

(James Brigers)

*Chedzoy, Front Street, ST 3368 3723*

Evaluation and subsequent excavation on the proposed site for a single dwelling revealed the

presence of a large number of features dating from the 13th to 19th centuries. Features of probable medieval date included large pits and an alignment of postholes that may define the location of a timber structure, although evidence of immediate occupation in the form of contemporary artefacts was scarce. In the 16th century the site was dominated by two large pits, one of which was in excess of 17m long, which were probably dug for the extraction of sand for building or other uses. Following the gradual infilling of the larger of these, which occupied the entire eastern portion of the site, an extensive surface of pitched lias was laid, probably during the latter part of the 16th century, which gradually subsided into the soft material beneath forming a broad depression into which considerable quantities of material were deposited during the early part of the 17th century. The deposits within the depression produced a wide array of items including large amounts of pottery (including imported stonewares), clay tobacco pipes, metal tools, fittings and utensils and, importantly, glass tableware and fragments of decorated floor-tiles. The quantity, and more significantly the quality, of the finds is strongly suggestive of occupation by persons of some social standing with, presumably, a dwelling equal to their status, the remains of which are still to be located. In the mid 18th century the deposits in the hollow were sealed by a single final dump of material seemingly derived from the destruction of a nearby building and containing glazed floor-tiles and high quality glass tableware. Also during the 18th century ditches aligned to Front Street were created forming elements of the pattern of property boundaries still visible surrounding the existing houses to the north east and south west of the site.

(James Brigers)

*Crowcombe, Delmore, ST 1387 3679*

As a condition of planning consent a watching brief was carried out during groundworks in preparation for the erection of two dwellings, garage, boundary wall and access. Cob and stone foundations and mortar floor surfaces found throughout much of the eastern area of the site probably represent the remains of two cottages and ancillary buildings shown on 19th-century maps and a photograph of c. 1910. Pottery evidence indicate that the cottages are unlikely to have been built prior to the early 18th century. To the south of the site, close to the road frontage, the truncated remains of a buried soil produced three sherds of 13th-century pottery but no further evidence of medieval occupation was

encountered. A sequence of three intercutting ditches was identified running into the site from the west. While these remain undated, it seems possible that they represent a post-medieval water-management scheme designed to draw surface water away from the rear of tenements to the west and into a more extensive system associated with water meadows to the north and south of the site.

Elsewhere on the site extensive 18th and 19th-century cultivation soils were cut by various pits one of which contained the complete skeleton of a horse. In the south-western corner of the site the natural gravel was cut by an undated boundary or drainage ditch.

(James Brigers)

*Dunster, Dunster Castle, SS 9919 4349*

Detailed recording of the southern roof structures of Dunster Castle, ahead of major repairs and refurbishment (ongoing), together with dendrochronological analysis, has revealed a multi-phase roof of early 17th to 20th-century construction. The earliest phase (c. 1608) was a flat roof covered with lead sheeting that, on the basis of published evidence, appears to be one of the earliest in Britain. It was modified in the early 18th century (c. 1728) by the addition of king posts fixed with forelock bolts, and then again in the 1870s. Observations are continuing.

(Michael Heaton)

*Ilton, Church of St Peter, ST 352 174*

Monitoring and recording was undertaken following removal of part of the floor on the south side of the nave in advance of its restoration. Exposure and cleaning of an area approximately 4m x 1.5m revealed traces of a possible earlier stone floor foundation and the upper fill of at least one grave. No further excavation was required but the investigations demonstrated that the flagstone floors of the nave were laid as part of a mid-19th century restoration of the church.

(Peter Leach)

*Kilmersdon, Babington, Babington House, ST 702 509*

A watching brief was carried out by Bristol and Region Archaeological Services at Babington House. Medieval activity was recorded in the north-eastern corner of the walled garden. A colluvial deposit, containing sherds of Roman and medieval pottery, extended across the area and had been cut by several features of post-medieval date, and by an isolated

pit containing cattle bones and several sherds of medieval pottery. Also revealed were the remains of a network of Blue Lias dry stone culverts predating the building of the garden wall in the late 18th century, as well as the foundations of several later structures and associated garden soils.

(Matthew Law)

*Milborne Port, North Street, Milborne Port County Primary School, ST 6777 1883*

Context One Archaeological Services Ltd carried out a watching brief at Milborne Port County Primary School. Investigation revealed several features including two truncated postholes, the foundations of three walls and two areas previously used to quarry stone. Based on artefactual evidence, the postholes appear to be the earliest features on site, broadly dated from 11th to 13th century. The relationship between the three walls and their phasing is unclear as they were all on different alignments. It is most likely that the east-west wall and the north-south wall are associated with a building shown on the 1839 Tithe map. Given the location of the structure formed by these walls, it was probably an outbuilding or small barn. Whatever its function, this building was still visible on the First Edition Ordnance Survey of 1889. Metal, brick and pottery recovered from a fill associated with the earliest phase of disuse of the stone quarry has been dated as post-medieval and is not thought to predate the 18th century. Another possible stone quarry was uncovered during the excavation of a soak-away which may have formed part of the same quarry.

(Fay Robinson and Richard McConnell)

*North Petherton, School Fields, North Petherton Junior School, ST 291 329*

Context One Archaeological Services Ltd undertook a watching brief on land at the rear of North Petherton Junior School. The archaeological features identified by the watching brief comprised two, possibly 18th-century, ditches: one a field drain and the other a probable field boundary ditch. Neither feature yielded any datable artefacts. The vast majority of the features and deposits revealed were associated with the former Board School, which was constructed on the site from the 1870s. These consisted of a brick wall foundation, a stone-lined culvert and a series of 13 large cess pits (utilised for outdoor earth closets or privies at the rear of the Board School prior to the installation of mains sewerage and drainage).

(Fay Robinson and Richard McConnell)

*Norton Fitzwarren, former Taunton Cider Factory, ST 1966 2568*

Three historic buildings that formed part of the former Taunton Cider Factory at Norton Fitzwarren were subjected to historic building recording and analysis by Wessex Archaeology Ltd before their demolition for housing development. The survey consisted of measured recording, digital photography, cartographic and documentary research.

Research into Morse's House produced extensive historic archives, this combined with the survey and fabric analysis of the surviving elements of the building provided a detailed history of this interesting building. Documents of Thomas Morse the younger and his wife Anne contain the first references to Morse's Farm. It is assumed that Thomas senior had built the farm in about 1600. Various legal documents, including mortgages and leases spanning the next 250 years, provide a detailed record of the farm's history. The building itself was constructed in traditional style from cob and timber framing. Historical features identified include a cross passage with evidence of timber screening; a hall and inner room; two newel staircases; and extensive areas of surviving floor timbers. Excavation beneath existing floors also revealed surviving beaten earth floor surfaces dating to the early house.

Documentary information relating to Home Place/Edith Mead was scarce but cartographic and later early 20th-century photographic records suggest that the original building was constructed in the 17th century. The rectangular plan form that existed on the early 19th-century maps suggests that it was built to a much earlier building tradition typical of Somerset farmhouses. Unfortunately most of the historic fabric, fixtures and fittings were lost in a large fire at the beginning of the 20th century. The building underwent an Edwardian rebuild including a new roof and internal floors. The original front door and frame did survive, but were subsequently repositioned during Taunton Cider works refurbishment of the building in the 1970s.

Cartographic evidence indicates that the Doll's House was constructed in the late 19th century when Home Place was undergoing a period of agricultural expansion. This small building was probably erected as either a stable or produce store, perhaps related to cider production or a dairy. It was later converted by Taunton Cider, removing original features.

(Julie Gardiner)

*Othery, Fore Street, land to the east of The Firs, ST 3835 3158*

A single trench was excavated as a condition of planning consent to erect a dwelling on the site. The excavation revealed a number of features, many of which were found to contain 19th and 20th-century land drains, modern services and concrete foundations. Features of potential archaeological interest were limited to the remains of a single, truncated and undated posthole and a narrow slot which was probably the foundation for a fence of 19th-century date. At the eastern end of the trench the heavily eroded remains of a surface of pitched stone was investigated that probably represents a yard surface relating to an existing farm building of probable 18th or 19th-century date to the east. The scarcity of archaeological material and the poor preservation of the remains would appear to be the result of the recent reduction of the site to accommodate the makeup for a hard-standing.

(James Brigers)

*Priddy, Charterhouse, Lower Cowleaze, ST 500 558*

Charterhouse Historic Environment Research Team, under the direction of Peter Leach, continued its researches at Lower Cowleaze, focusing on the site of a building identified from previous survey to the east of the stone-lined pond. Using precautions to avoid heavy metal ingestion, a two-week excavation was undertaken in May 2007 that revealed that the building was constructed *c.* 1680 and demolished *c.* 1720. There was no indication of any buildings before that date and although the Roman town was within 100m, the only Romano-British finds were occasional stray potsherds.

The building was about 5m wide, roofed with Cornish slate with a flagstone floor and mortared stone walls that were plastered and lime-washed inside. A large quantity of small diamond-shaped thin window glass was found, but the lead came and all reusable building material had been removed.

The building would have been occupied during the rigours of the Little Ice Age and was contemporary with the nearby silver cupellation furnace. The weather and the pollution may have driven out the inhabitants. It is hoped to assay the associated animal bone to determine the level of lead contamination. Archival research has failed to find any record of any building or occupation at this site (historically in the parish of Blagdon).

A second trench revealed a stone-built conduit still carrying water, and parallel to it 5m away were twin stone rubble filled 'French drains'. Their date of

construction is uncertain but post-medieval pottery was found immediately over these features. They are visible on aerial photographs and were previously thought to indicate a holloway in a deserted medieval village (as recorded on the Somerset HER 23038).

(Steve Tofts)

*Somerton, Market Place, Freeman House, ST 4913 2852*

A watching brief was maintained during renovation works on a barn behind Freeman House, a 17th and 18th-century listed building. The works uncovered a stone-lined chamber measuring approximately 1.7m<sup>2</sup> and up to 2m deep. Pottery within the backfill deposit was dateable to the early 18th century and included two complete glazed earthenware vessels, one with the date 1720 inscribed on the inner base. There was also a complete glass sack or wine bottle and a small complete tin-glazed pot. An associated clay tobacco pipe was made by George Webb of Chard.

(C. and N. Hollinrake)

*South Petherton, Palmer Street, Hardings Court, ST 4304 1705*

Context One Archaeological Services Ltd carried out a watching brief during groundworks for the construction of two detached dwellings and garages in May 2006. Monitoring of development excavations revealed six archaeological features including an undated ditch, the foundations of three limestone rubble walls (probably 19th-century in date) and two pits containing modern refuse. One of these pits was used as a bottle dump and contained 65 bottles, many of which were complete with some bearing impressions of local place-names such as Ilminster, Yeovil and Bristol.

(Fay Robinson and Richard McConnell)

*Taunton, North Street, Head Post Office, ST 2273 2467*

A watching brief was maintained during redevelopment works in October 2007. In both of the areas penetrated by the groundworks, considerable disturbance to the surviving archaeological remains by recent construction and services was noted. To the east of the building possible undisturbed natural subsoil was overlain by a layer of stiff grey clay and a substantial dump of slate rubble and mortar, both of which were of probable late or post-medieval date. A limited area of archaeological material was exposed to the north

of the building which consisted of mixed dumps of clay, gravel and slate rubble sealed by an upper layer of red-brown clay. This latter material contained flecks of blackened sand which may be the abraded remains of casting waste possibly associated with the industrial site observed in 2000 beneath the former telephone exchange in Whirligig Lane to the east (Somerset HER 44987).

(James Brigers)

*Wedmore, Combe Batch, The Pound, ST 437 477*

A watching brief was maintained during terracing operations for a residential development on the site of the village pound. Surviving remains of the pound, including a cobbled floor, two of its enclosing walls and stone-lined drains were recorded, probably attributable to a recorded early 19th-century refurbishment of the structure. Upslope to the rear of the pound was a ditch, containing some 12/13th-century pottery and animal bone, set parallel to the unmortared foundations of a stone wall, undated but cut by a small pit containing 17/18th-century pottery. Another larger pit nearby contained some animal bone but was undated. No evidence of a structure predating the early 19th-century pound was found on its site, unless some of the features outside its bounds to the south relate to an earlier layout. Alternatively these are evidence of medieval domestic occupation on a village plot.

(Peter Leach)

*West Buckland, Buckland Hill, ST 1741 1752*

Archaeological monitoring was undertaken during the preparation of the ground in advance of the erection of a barn in February 2007. Identifiable archaeological evidence on the site was limited to a single east-west aligned ditch associated with an enclosure bank which now forms the northern boundary of the field in which the site was located. This feature probably dates from the enclosure of this part of Buckland Hill in the 18th century.

(James Brigers)

*Westbury Duck Decoy, ST 4788 4846*

A desktop assessment and archaeological survey was undertaken of a former duck decoy to the east of Barrow Wood Lane. This was in support of a planning application and at the request of English Heritage. The desktop assessment established that a duck decoy probably existed upon the site prior to 1637 but had almost certainly gone out of use by the early 19th century. Archaeological survey suggested that an early decoy may have been replaced and

largely destroyed by the excavation of a later decoy upon the same site.

(R. Broomhead)

*Westonzoyland, Sewage Treatment Works, ST 3463 3522 to ST 3507 3596*

Context One Archaeological Services Ltd coordinated a controlled metal-detecting survey on land to the north of Westonzoyland Sewage Treatment Works, where the route of a proposed sewage pipeline passes through the area defined as the site of the Battle of Sedgemoor in 1685. There were a total of 115 metal objects recovered from the survey. These comprised: 32 lead bullets, 27 horseshoes, 11 buttons, 6 buckles, 5 coins, 4 nails, 2 decorative clothing disks, 1 lead toy, 1 wrist watch, 1 book clasp, 1 key plate cover, 1 stud/cufflink, 7 miscellaneous implement pieces and 16 unidentified objects. Perhaps not surprisingly, the largest category of artefacts comprises lead bullets, most of which are likely to relate to the battle. This assemblage includes case shot, carbine, musket, hailshot and pistol shells. The remaining artefacts largely date to the post-medieval and modern periods although the earliest dateable object is a Saxo-Norman horseshoe. Possible medieval items include two buckles, a book clasp and two late-medieval decorative clothing disks.

(Fay Robinson and Richard McConnell)

*Whitestaunton, Whitestaunton Manor, ST 2800 1062*

A watching brief was maintained during the removal of stone piers and walling in the stream bank to the north of well known Romano-British remains. The piers were probably the remains of a sluice of 18th or 19th-century date, designed to manage the level of the stream and provide flow into a leat (the entrance to which survives c. 20m to the south). Further alterations to the profile of the eastern stream bank revealed more of the dump of Romano-British demolition debris, first noted in 2006 (Somerset HER 24555), and produced a fragment of moulded Greensand which appears to be part of a column base, probably originating from the site of the nearby remains and deposited here during the 19th-century clearance of the site.

(James Brigers)

*Wincanton, Ireson Cottage, ST 716 288*

Further investigations by Hamish Cole, David Dawson and Oliver Kent at Ireson Cottage, established the survival of the substructure and part of the superstructure of a kiln at the former delft-

ware works established by Nathaniel Ireson. The ware-chamber is square, in common with other such early 18th-century kilns recorded from London, in this case 8 feet (2.35m). Stubs of brickwork within the base of the kiln indicate that the floor was supported over the firebox by three substantial arches. The vertical walls of the ware-chamber almost certainly supported a pierced tunnel vault, which in its turn was probably surmounted by a pyramidal chimney. Fragments of kiln furniture collected included shelves, supports and saggars. Recording is continuing. Our thanks to the owners, Paul and Alison, for their indulgence.

(David Dawson and Oliver Kent)

*Wraxall Village Cross, ST 6012 3644*

Archaeological observations were made during the dismantling and re-erection of Wraxall Village Cross also known as The Tree Cross, located at the junction of Wraxall Hill with the B3130 in the parish of Wraxall and Failand. Despite uncovering minimal stratigraphy, secure evidence was located indicating that the structure as it currently exists probably dates from the early 18th century and can be no earlier than 1699. Additional documentary evidence, mortar samples and a recovered coin show that much of the structure was rebuilt in the early 20th century. Although the capping stones are well weathered and may be derived from an earlier structure, no evidence of such a structure could be determined.

(R. Broomhead)

## INDUSTRIAL

*Backwell, Backwell Common, Meadow Lodge, ST 486 698*

A watching brief was carried out by Bristol and Region Archaeological Services on the site of a 19th-century coal mine and tip. The groundworks revealed a concrete cap, probably covering a disused mine shaft, and associated walls.

(Jocelyn Davis)

*Castle Cary, Fore Street, White Yard, ST 6414 3231*

Context One Archaeological Services Ltd carried out an evaluation that revealed two large ditches and two smaller ditches, possibly garden features, and a building. A small assemblage of artefacts was recovered, consisting of a single sherd of possible medieval pottery, post-medieval pottery, post-medieval and modern glass, iron and animal bone. The building consisted of two attached stone-built

structures, which together may be the remains of a latrine, draining into a stone-capped cess-pit or culvert. A 19th-century date is most likely for this building, and indeed a small square building is shown on the Tithe Map of 1838 and again on the OS 25 inch map of 1886. Both structures were demolished and backfilled in the 1960s.

(Fay Robinson and Richard McConnell)

*Ilchester, Mill House, ST 5215 2291*

Context One Archaeological Services Ltd carried out an watching brief during groundworks for a new replacement sewer. The c. 30m long pipe trench was located directly above the western wing of the Ilchester County Gaol, as shown on a map of 1821. This part of the gaol was demolished some time after 1846 but structural remains were revealed at a depth of 1.3m below the modern ground surface beneath deep Victorian demolition layers and subsequent make-up layers. A small assemblage of artefacts, consisting of post-medieval and modern pottery, glass, metal, clay tobacco pipe and leather were recovered.

(Fay Robinson and Richard McConnell)

*Long Sutton, Langport Road, Long Sutton Motors, ST 4663 2603*

Context One Archaeological Services Ltd carried out an evaluation and watching brief at the former Long Sutton Motors. The investigations revealed a limited number of archaeological features. At the south-western end of evaluation trench 1, a 19th-century wall foundation, consisting of uncoursed limestone blocks aligned north-east to south-west, was exposed. Map regression analysis showed no structures on this part of the site from the early 19th century onwards. It is possible that the foundations are of a building constructed and demolished between map editions or are the remnants of minor structures such as a garden building; perhaps relating to the grounds of the mid 19th-century house, or the late 19th or early 20th-century structures that stood immediately west of the trench. Beneath the foundations a substantial east-west aligned ditch was seen. A single sherd of 17th or 18th-century pottery was recovered from the lower fill providing an earliest possible date of construction. A posthole was revealed immediately to the north of the ditch. In the absence of artefactual data and on the basis of its position in the archaeological deposit sequence this feature is likely to be no later than the late 19th century in date.

A profile recorded south of trench 1 revealed a soil horizon very similar in nature to the ditch fills, suggesting a continuation of the same ditch. A shallower and narrower ditch with similar orientation was also found. Both ditches might represent the vestige of post-medieval boundary ditches or drainage channels.

(Fay Robinson and Richard McConnell)

*Wellington Without, Rockwell Green, Westford Mills, ST 114 198*

Exeter Archaeology recorded a textile mill complex prior to its demolition (Fig. 3). The earliest mill, constructed c. 1800, suffered from a fire in 1821 and was subsequently repaired. A new wing using fireproof construction techniques was added afterwards, incorporating a massive two-storey wheelhouse. In the late 19th century a detached mill was added. In 1887 a separate dyeworks was added, and was later extended to the north. A watching brief on the groundworks is underway, and has so far recorded a series of open soap pits.

(A.J. Passmore)

## OTHER REPORTS

*Axbridge, Houlgate Way, The Surgery, ST 4284 5440*  
Archaeological observations were made during initial groundworks, the excavation of service trenches and excavations for ground beams to support an extension to The Surgery. The site comprised disturbed post-medieval made ground to a depth of between 0.5m and 0.8m. No distinct archaeological features were definable and no artefactual material was recovered.

(R. Broomhead)

*Bridgwater, Albert Street, former St John's Ambulance Divisional Headquarters, ST 2955 3677*

Context One Archaeological Services Ltd carried out a watching brief during redevelopment groundwork within the precinct of the Franciscan Friary (Somerset HER 12435), founded in 1243 and dissolved in 1538. A series of large gravel extraction pits were observed at various points across the site, the largest of which were seen towards the centre, running in a roughly north-west/south-east alignment. Three more similar pits were observed to the north-east of the quarried area. Structural remains dating to the late 19th or early 20th century were also observed and are likely to be associated



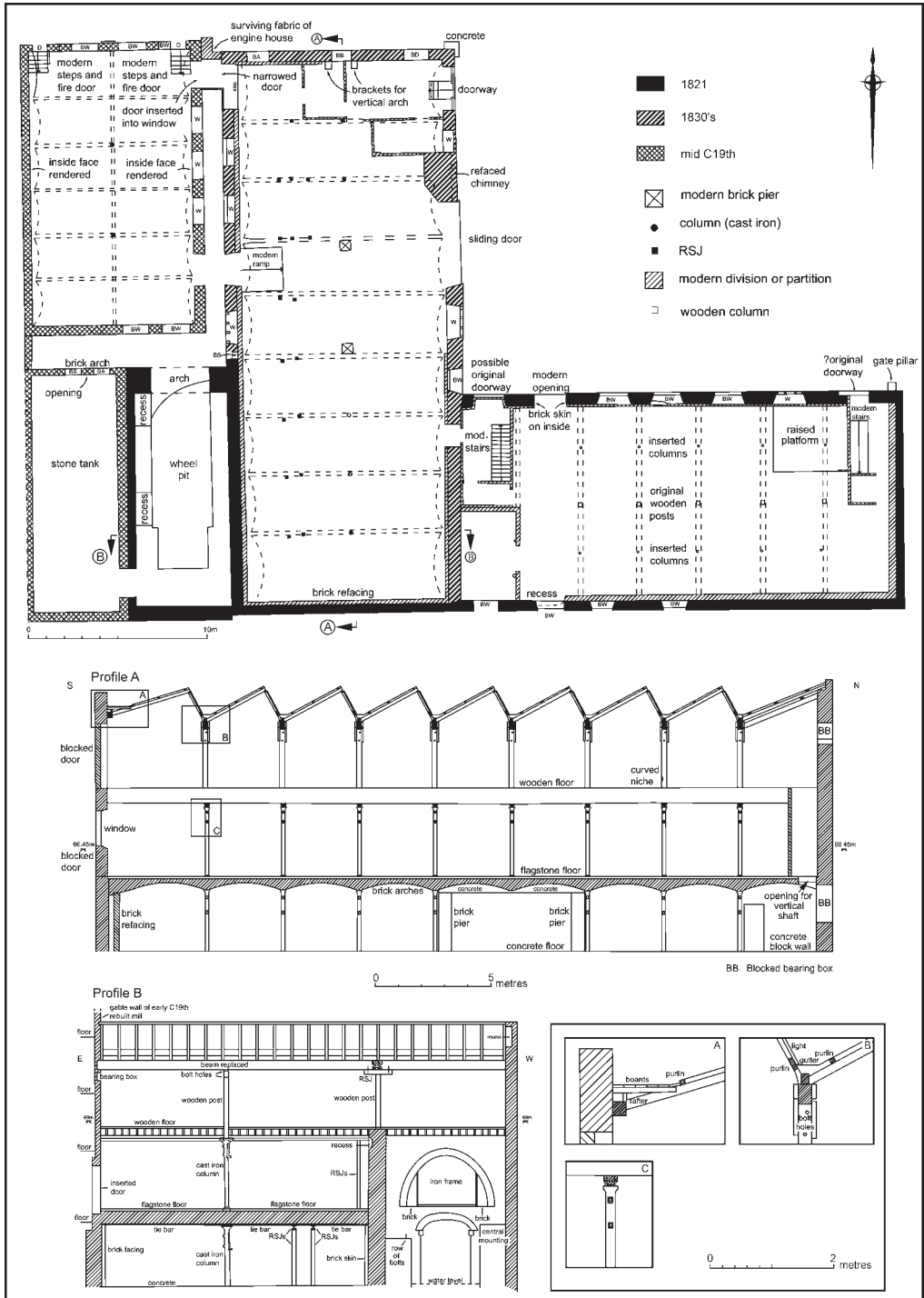


Fig. 3 Westford Mill, Wellington; ground plan and sections (A. Passmore/T. Ives, © Exeter Archaeology)

with domestic outbuildings in the back gardens of the houses that once fronted Albert Street.

(Fay Robinson and Richard McConnell)

*Bridgwater, Friarn Street, former Garage Site, ST 2973 3683*

A watching brief was undertaken by Wessex Archaeology Ltd which identified a pit, a brick-lined well filled with broken unfrosted bricks and a brick-lined feature with a concrete base. The pit contained 19th/20th-century stoneware, post-medieval coarse redware and the neck of a green glass wine bottle, probably of later 17th or early 18th-century date. The three features were excavated by the contractors to depths of 2m or more. The unstable trench sides meant that they could not be examined closely. They are thought to have been associated with the houses along Silver Street shown in this area on 19th and 20th-century maps and subsequently demolished in the 1960s when the garage was built.

(Julie Gardiner)

*Cannington, Cannington Bends, ST 2772 4082*

A watching brief was undertaken by AC archaeology during the excavation of three trial pits on the south bank of the River Parrett. No archaeological features or deposits were observed. A review of borehole logs from investigations undertaken at the same time revealed the presence of a thin band of silty peat at 12m below ground level.

(N. Morris)

*Combwich, Quay, STW Storm Storage, ST 2620 4215*

Context One Archaeological Services Ltd undertook a watching brief during the setting up of a temporary compound for the construction of storm storage equipment on the existing sewage treatment works in 2006. Monitoring of soil stripping operations revealed no visible archaeological features or artefacts.

(Fay Robinson and Richard McConnell)

*Cranmore, Land south of Moons Hill Quarry, ST 6680 4558*

A watching brief was carried out during topsoil stripping of a field to the south of the quarry that was to be the site of a spoil dump. Several flint flakes, including worked tools and cores were recovered. Pottery sherds found were all post-medieval, dating from the 16th century onwards.

(C. and N. Hollinrake)

*Crewkerne, 9 Market Street, ST 4414 0973*

An evaluation was carried out by AC archaeology which revealed two stone culverts and three postholes, all of which are likely to date to the 18th/19th centuries. The construction of the culverts and modern disturbance of the site would have displaced any earlier artefacts/features if they had been present on the site. No features predating the post-medieval period were revealed during the evaluation.

(P. Evans)

*Crewkerne Flood Alleviation Scheme, ST 4434 0974 to ST 4506 0965*

Context One Archaeological Services Ltd carried out a watching brief along the route of a new pipeline as part of the Crewkerne Flood Alleviation Scheme. Groundworks revealed eight postholes that probably represented a post-medieval fence line. The possible remains of a redundant post-medieval/modern water meadow or drainage system was also observed. In the same area as the possible drainage system rectilinear lines of stone were observed that may have once related to the foundations for a minor agriculture structure. The remains were ephemeral and likely to be modern in date.

(Fay Robinson and Richard McConnell)

*Doultling, Church of St Aldhelm, ST 6460 4314*

Archaeological observations were made during the excavation of a drainage trench and pit for the insertion of a large cesspool in the churchyard of St Aldhelm, Doultling. No archaeological features were recorded, however a number of in situ burials were disturbed.

(R. Broomhead)

*Evercreech, St Peter's Church, ST 6493 3867*

A watching brief was undertaken during the excavation of trenches to facilitate drainage in June 2007. Bedrock of blue lias limestone was found to be overlain by a layer of homogenous, though occasionally thin, dark soil – 'grave earth' – which contained scattered fragmentary human bone. No further features or deposits of archaeological significance were observed.

(James Brigers)

*Glastonbury, 22 Benedict Street, Millers Hardware Shop, ST 4978 3888*

A watching brief was undertaken during redevelopment of the plot behind Millers Hardware Shop. The work recovered pottery dating from the

12th to 13th century onwards, as well as post-medieval pottery sherds. Due to the relatively shallow depth of the excavated area, no unambiguously medieval features were recorded.

(C. and N. Hollinrake)

*Glastonbury, 71 High Street, ST 5022 3903*

Archaeological observations were made during the excavation of foundations for the erection of a single-storey dwelling on land immediately to the rear of 71 High Street. The excavations indicated the present western boundary of the site lay upon an earlier medieval boundary and produced slight evidence of medieval and later activity.

(R. Broomhead)

*Glastonbury, churchyard of St. John the Baptist, ST 4999 3900*

A watching brief was undertaken during the construction of a turf maze but no archaeological features or graves were disturbed.

(C. and N. Hollinrake)

*Keynsham, Nos 92-94 Temple St, Cranmore House, ST 645 692*

Seven trenches were excavated by Bristol and Region Archaeological Services at Cranmore House, Temple Street. Most were sterile but a pit of late post-medieval origin, cobbled surface and limestone wall were recorded.

(Kevin Potter)

*Long Ashton, Old Angel Inn, ST 5528 7098*

A small scale evaluation was undertaken to assess the archaeological implications of proposals to construct a two-storey dwelling on land to the south of the Old Angel Inn. The evaluation indicated only that the area may have been utilised since the medieval period but demonstrated extensive post-medieval pitting.

(R. Broomhead)

*Mells, St Andrew's Church, ST 7279 4928*

A watching brief was undertaken during the relocation of the Horner Memorial in St Andrew's Church. The removal of an existing floor and excavations for a foundation pad to support the statue in its new location in the north-west aisle exposed a previously unknown Victorian burial vault which was recorded and then resealed. A possible structural feature was also observed.

(R. Broomhead)

*Middlezoy, King's Sedgemoor, Hook Rhyne, ST 3921 3394*

An evaluation for a proposed water-level management scheme involving the construction of a new by-pass pipe, was carried out by AC *archaeology* during August 2006. A single trench measuring 15 x 1.6m in plan was positioned to confirm an alignment for the construction of the pipe. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 2.5m revealing a sequence of peat deposits underlying a layer of clay and modern redeposited material. No archaeological features or deposits were present in the trench.

(S. Robinson)

*Milborne Port, Bathwell Lane, Cannon Court, ST 6763 1849*

Context One Archaeological Services Ltd undertook a watching brief at Cannon Court. Monitoring excavations of the foundation and service trenches revealed a large undated pit cutting the natural oolitic limestone, that may represent small-scale quarrying activity.

(Fay Robinson and Richard McConnell)

*Milborne Port, South Street, ST 6783 1849 to ST 6785 1848*

Context One Archaeological Services Ltd carried out a watching brief on a replacement sewer pipeline at South Street, Milborne Port. No archaeological features were observed.

(Fay Robinson and Richard McConnell)

*North Cadbury, Home Farm, ST 6336 2719*

A watching brief was undertaken by AC *archaeology* during the excavation of footings for houses on land at Home Farm. No archaeological features or finds were noted.

(P. Martin)

*North Perrott, Downclose Lane, ST 4739 0888 to ST 4806 0879*

Context One Archaeological Services Ltd carried out a watching brief during groundworks for a new water main replacement during 2006. No visible archaeological remains or significant deposits were identified.

(Fay Robinson and Richard McConnell)

*Nyland, Rookery Farm, ST 4615 5051*

A small scale evaluation was undertaken on land to the south of Rookery Farm where permission to build

a detached house and garage had been granted. The evaluation produced no evidence of any activity upon the site.

(R. Broomhead)

*Paulton, Church Street, Paulton Builders Merchants, ST 650 565*

An evaluation by Bristol and Region Archaeological Services revealed that much of the site had been reduced to the underlying geology. Cut features truncated the bedrock at the north end of the site and a possible medieval agricultural deposit was identified in the centre east of the site.

(Kevin Potter)

*Paulton, Former Polestar Printing Works, ST 6475 5684*

In May 2007 the Museum of London Archaeology Service excavated ten evaluation trenches on land formerly part of the Polestar Printing Works. No archaeological features were observed but a small number of 18th-century finds were recovered from the lower levels of the topsoil.

(Charlotte North)

*Priddy, Charterhouse Outdoor Activities Centre, ST 5029 5575*

A watching brief was undertaken during the machine excavation of a pit designed to accommodate a large septic tank plus ancillary trenches, all within the paddock immediately east of the Charterhouse Activity Centre. The work recovered only modern pottery and artefacts and occasional lumps of vitrified lead slag.

(C. and N. Hollinrake)

*Shepton Beauchamp, The Shambles, The Duke of York, ST402 172*

Observations were made during building work in the garden behind the public house in September 2007. The garden sloped up from south to north following the natural slope of the hill to the north of the village. Strip foundations over an area of c. 20m by 5m along the eastern boundary of the plot revealed a consistent depth (0.5m) of dark garden soil, characterised by coal and cinder fragments throughout and dating to the Victorian period. This

overlay clean Yeovil sands, the surface of which was seen to undulate in the north–south section. The lower parts of these hollows was filled with a paler brown loam and it is thought likely these are remnants of earlier gardening or agricultural activity.

(Alan Graham)

*Somerton, Acre Lane, The Millands, ST 34946 12861*

A evaluation was undertaken by Wessex Archaeology Ltd on land south of Acre Lane. The work comprised the excavation of three trenches within the footprint of the proposed new General Practice Surgery and housing. No archaeological features or deposits were encountered.

(Julie Gardiner)

*Trudoxhill, Ashfield Close, ST 7495 4372*

Archaeological observations were made during the excavation of foundation trenches for two detached dwellings on land off Ashfield Close. With the exception of a former boundary and modern drainage features no distinct archaeology was definable and only limited artefactual material was recovered.

(R. Broomhead)

*Wells, 33 Priory Road, ST 5464 4530*

Archaeological observations were made during the reduction of levels and the excavation of footings for a small development to the rear of 33 Priory Road, Wells. The site comprised well-cultivated soils which contained a small number of medieval and later pottery sherds together with one probable Romano-British sherd. However no distinct archaeological features were definable.

(R. Broomhead)

*Woolavington, Woolavington Bridge, ST 3454 4372*

Observations were made during the excavation of a short length of trench to accommodate a new water main adjacent to the Huntspill River immediately to the north and east of Woolavington Bridge. Apart from some modern disturbance at the western end of the trench, no archaeological features were observed and no artefactual material was noted.

(R. Broomhead)