

Archaeology in Leicestershire and Rutland 1992

INTERIM REPORTS

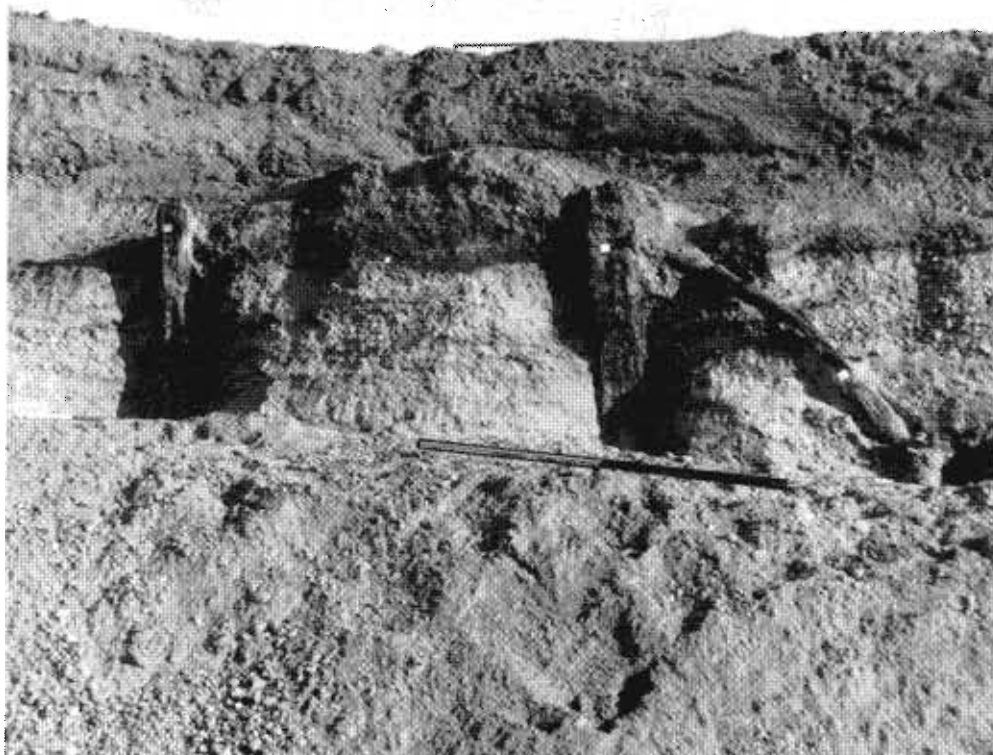
An early 12th century mill wheel float and more news of the Norman Bridge at Hemington Fields, Castle Donington (SK 4595 3024) C.R. Salisbury

Since the Norman mill dam was excavated in 1985 by the Leicestershire Archaeological Unit and the author (Clay and Salisbury 1990), surveillance at the site has continued (Salisbury 1991).

In 1990, a double row of massive oak posts was interpreted as the rotted-off piers of a bridge over either the Trent, or the tail race of the mill (Salisbury 1991, pp.96-97). Quarrying in 1991, 45m to the north, revealed four almost identical posts directly aligned with this 'bridge'. The two posts on the west had been disturbed by quarrying but the easterly posts were *in situ* (as they still are) and 2.5m apart. The posts were made from complete trunks of oak, squared to give sides of 0.30m - 0.35m, but still showing waney edges at the corners. The disturbed posts were 2.59m and 2.72m long, of which approximately 2.00m had been driven into the ancient river bed. The rest of the post was distinctly waisted due to abrasion by sand and gravel in a fast flowing stream. The top of the posts had rotted off level with the water table, either before or after the palaeochannel had completely silted. One of the eastern piers, still *in situ*, has a small post on the same alignment but sloping towards it, suggesting a brace, but unfortunately the area where the articulation between them would have been has rotted away. (illus. 1).

All four posts were suitable for dendrochronology and were measured by Robert Howard of the Nottingham University Tree Ring Dating Laboratory. The heart/sap-wood boundary was identifiable at the waney edges, and an arbitrary 30 sap-wood rings were added on to this measurement to obtain the felling date. The western posts gave dates of A.D. 1128 and 1124 while both the eastern posts were A.D.1066. The post dated to 1128 was probably re-used, as it had a dowel hole with no obvious use .

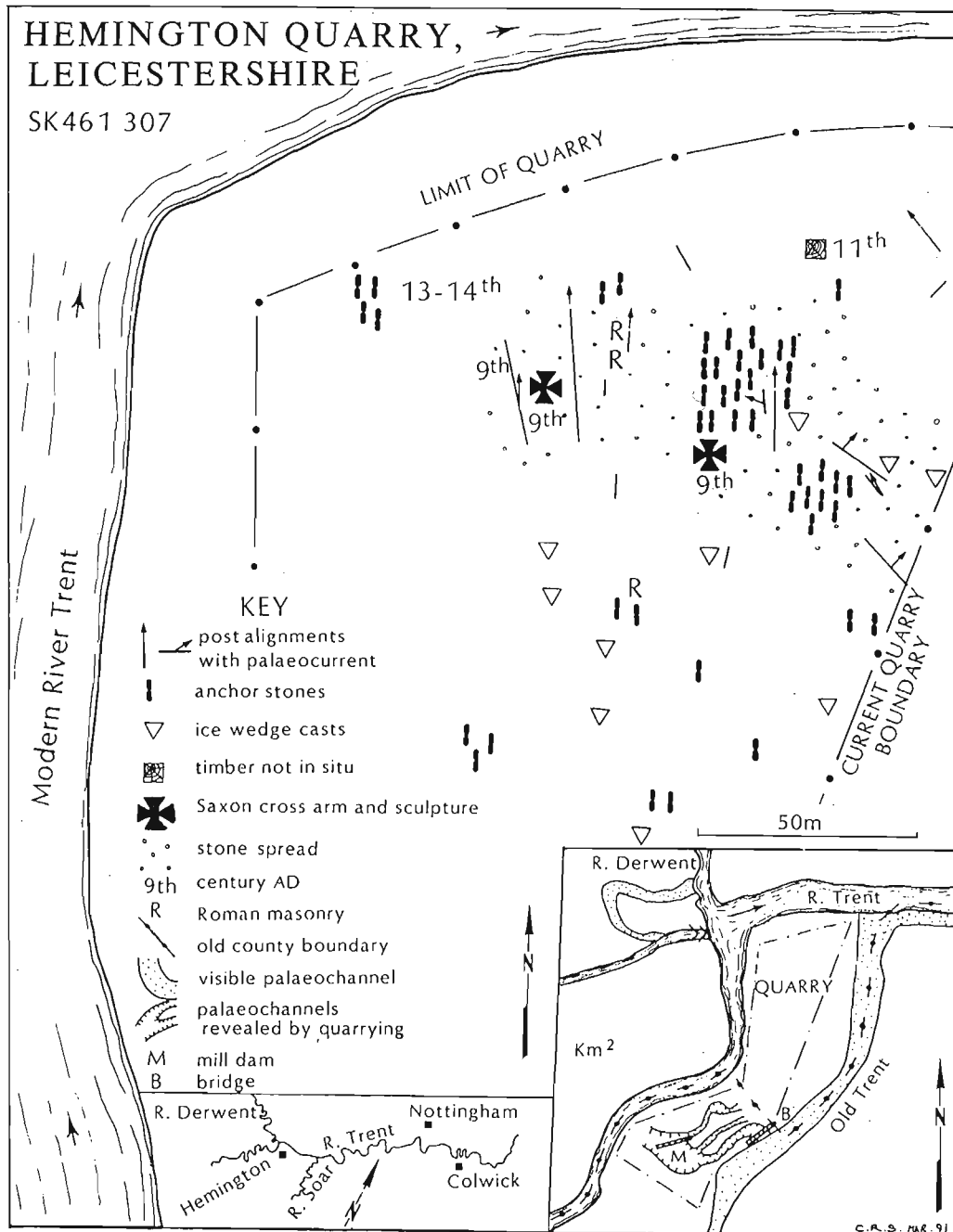
The four posts that could be dated from the section of bridge found in 1990 using the heart/sap-wood measurement, gave dates of A.D. 1213, 1217, 1219 and 1222. None of these appears to have been re-used. Bearing in mind that there is a 95% chance that the total number of sap-wood rings of any oak sample will be between 15 and 50, with the average of about 30 rings, the range of felling dates covered by the whole bridge is over 150 years. The gap of 45m between the two sections of the bridge was probably due to destruction, as the palaeochannel seemed to be continuous between the two. Frequent repairs would have been needed after spring melt-water floods and this, together with the re-use of timber and the gradually changing course of the Trent, could account for the range of felling dates. The bridge, as excavated, is 70m long and 6m wide and no more is expected to be revealed. (illus. 2).



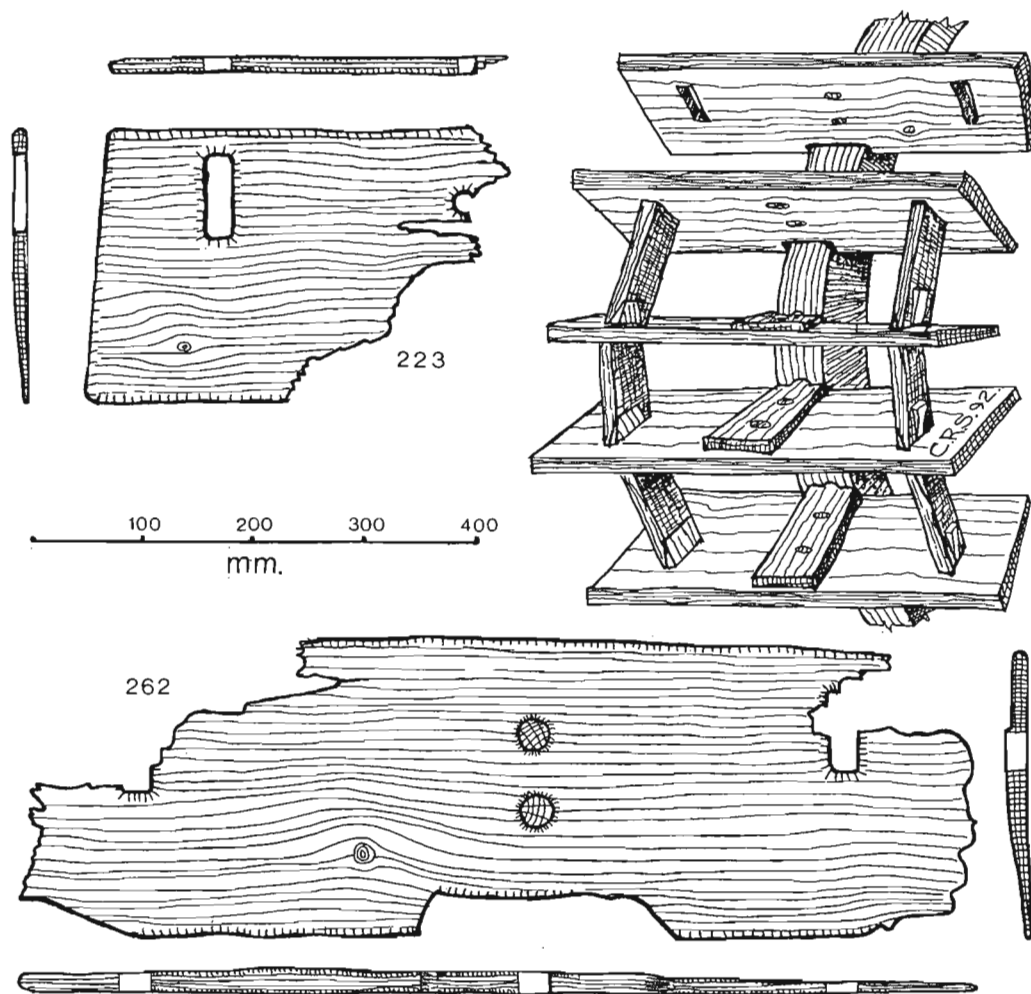
1. Two posts and a brace of the 12th century oak bridge spanning a now silted channel of the Trent at Hemington. Scale: 2 metres.

In March 1992, gravel quarrying produced the stray find of a vertical water wheel paddle float (262 in illus. 3). This is a most unusual find as it comes from a wheel with only one rim. Conflict arose between conservation and the need for a sawn section for dendrochronology. Since it was made of radially split oak there was every hope of a large number of rings, so a single cut was made through the float resulting in a count of 116 rings and a last measured ring date of A.D. 1061, with the unusually high confidence (t) value of 7.4. Since no heart/sap-wood boundary was seen, the felling date must be speculative, but *c.* A.D.1100 seems reasonable. The illustration shows the two central dowel holes, a small recess for the felloe and two slots near the ends which would have carried stabilising struts. These struts or laths would have been scarfed together for easy repair. This interpretation is based on most helpful advice from G. Astill, who has found similar floats from a 12th century mill at Bordesley Abbey. A few surviving mills in Denmark and Holland still have this type of single rimmed wheel. An unrecognised fragment found at Hemington in 1987 (223 in illus. 3) can now be interpreted as a similar float. These floats came from wheels respectively 0.90m and 0.70m wide. The Hemington mill had a wheel pit to accommodate a 1.2m wide wheel, which was probably double rimmed. Further quarrying has increased the total number found of fish weirs/revetments to 29 and fishing gear stone anchors to 86. (illus. 2).

I especially wish to thank Harry Gasson, foreman of Hemington Gravel Pit (Ennemix).



2. The Norman bridge at Hemington showing its relationship to braided palaeochannels and the mill dam. Fish weirs, stone fishing gear anchors and the spread of rubble from the destroyed bank revetment are also illustrated.



3. Two vertical mill wheel paddles from Hemington. 262 dated to the beginning of the 12th century.

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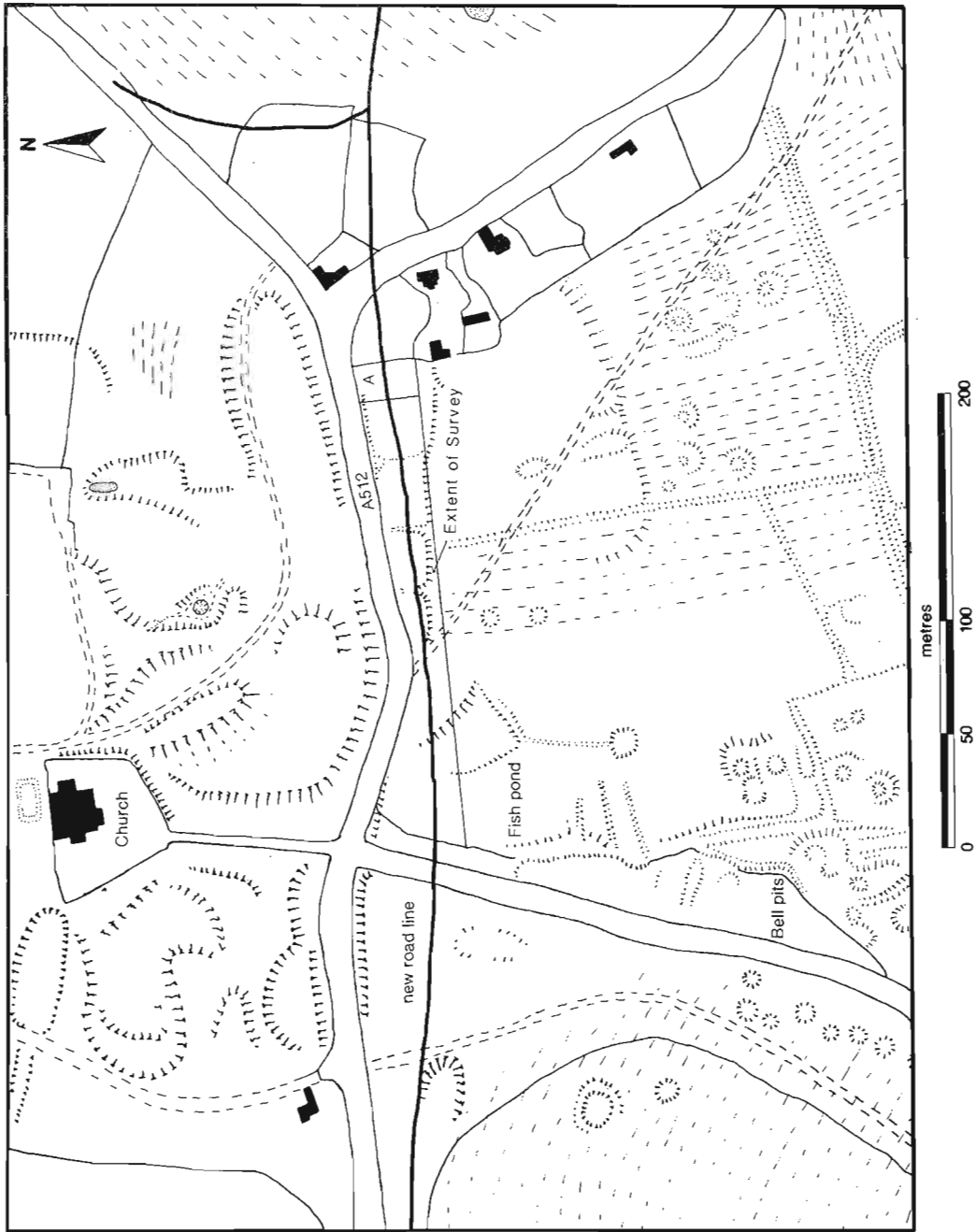
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Salisbury, C. R., 1990
Salisbury, C.R., 1991

A Norman mill dam and other sites at Hemington Fields, Castle Donington, Leicestershire', *Archaeol. J.*, 147, pp.276-307
'A possible 13th century bridge over the Trent at Hemington Fields, Castle Donington', *TLAHS*, 65, pp.96-97

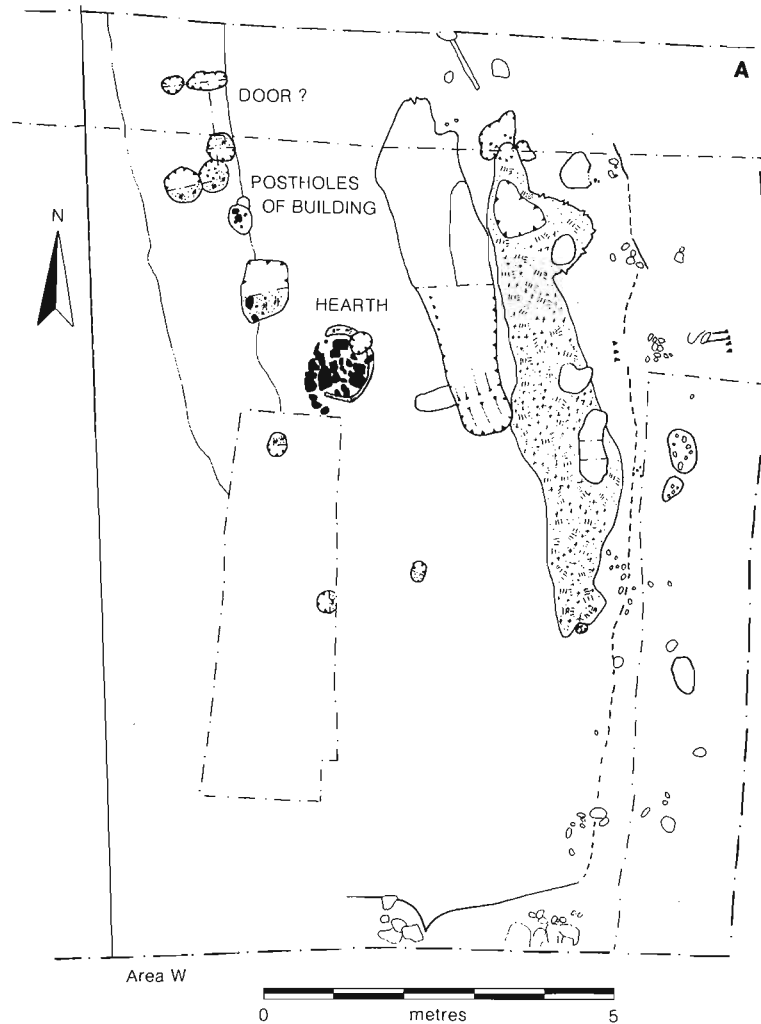
Excavations at Coleorton (SK 382 172)

Matthew Beamish

Following an evaluation, excavation was undertaken of earthworks south of the Ashby-Loughborough road at Coleorton in advance of road widening (illus. 4). This work was funded by Leicestershire County Council, Department of Planning and

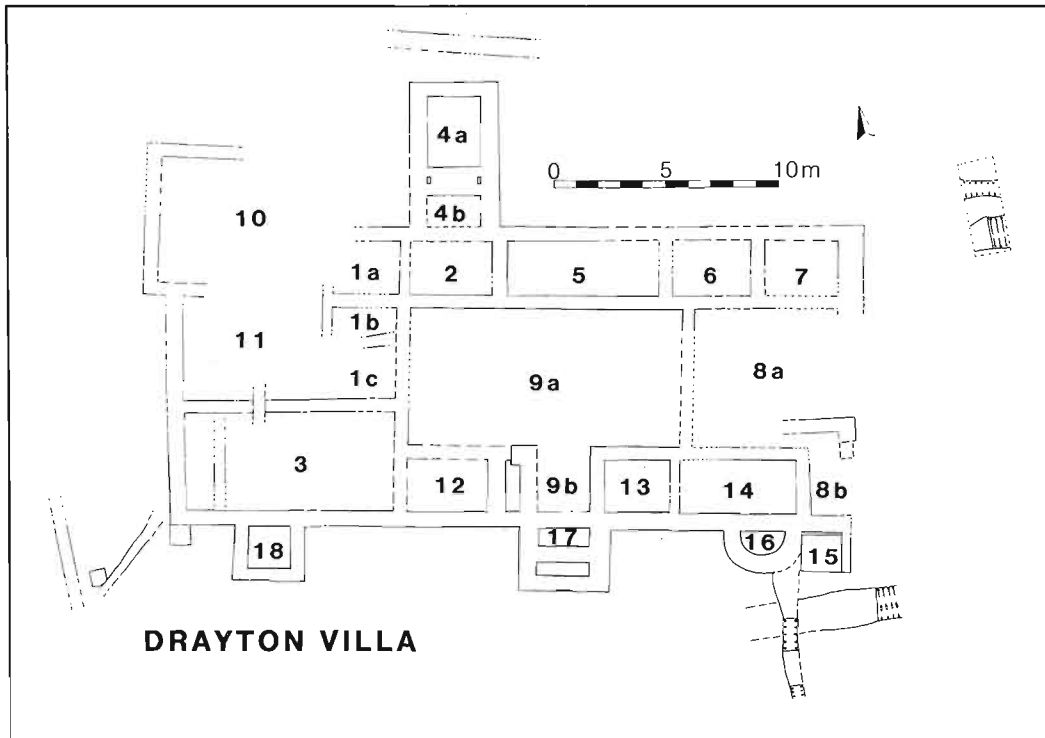


4. Coleorton: plan of the area examined in relation to the earthwork survey (after R.F. Hartley).



5. Coleorton: 12th century features to the east of the excavation (illus. 4A)

Transportation (Highways). Occupation between the 12th and 18th centuries was identified, with three broad periods of activity suggested by the dating of the pottery. Evidence of medieval timber buildings and associated earthworks of 13th century date were present to the east of the site (illus. 5). From the presence of hearths and domestic pottery, it can be inferred that the buildings were used, at least in part, as dwellings and represent houses in medieval Coleorton. There is no evidence of activity from between the 13th and 17th centuries, other than the re-cutting of a north-south aligned ditch to the east of the site. During the 15th-17th centuries, the area was levelled up by various make-up deposits. The finds and archive are with Leicestershire Museums, accession no. A32.1992.



6. Drayton Roman villa.

Drayton II Roman Villa (SP 817 918)

Aileen Connor

Work continued on this site, during the months of May to December 1992 for the fifth consecutive season, and was undertaken by the Leicestershire County Council Employment Training Scheme, and students of the School of Archaeological Studies, and the Department of Adult Education of the University of Leicester. The project was managed by Richard Pollard, and directed by Aileen Connor, both of Leicestershire Archaeological Unit. Supervision was carried out by Ian Hind and Jon Coward for the Employment Training Scheme and Nick Cooper for the School of Archaeological Studies. Finds and records are with Leicestershire Museums, accession no. A90.1988.

The objectives set out in 1992 were to establish the extent and preservation of the building and to undertake an assessment of its immediate environs.

The Excavation (illus. 6)

The main method of excavation, as in previous seasons, was the removal of topsoil by hand to expose the latest archaeological features. In the fourth season an area 14m x 6m was opened to the east of the bath house to join up with the stokehole uncovered

in 1990, this was excavated by hand to expose building debris. In addition two areas each 3m by 2m, each were excavated to the east and west of the bath to investigate collapsed walls, which had also been partially exposed during the 1990 season. In 1992, an area immediately to the south of the 1991 excavation was chosen. The second objective was achieved by using a machine to remove the topsoil in fourteen 3m by 10m trenches, placed at intervals to the west, south and north of the building in a sampling grid. These trenches were then cleaned, recorded and sampled, prior to backfilling by hand.

A near complete floor plan of the building is now available. The basic plan is rectangular, with a central hall area surrounded by suites of rooms on all sides, and with various annexes. These irregularities in the plan suggest a building which underwent several modifications during its period of use. A total of 19 rooms or elements have been identified. These range in size from the largest at 6m by 12m, a central room or hall, to a number of small annexes found along the southern wall of the building, the smallest measuring only 1.80m by 1.90m. Of these rooms, six contained tessellated pavements, two of which were mosaics in a simple geometric pattern. A further eight rooms (at least) had hypocausts. Four rooms had *opus signinum* flooring and one room had a flagged floor.

The bath (4a)

The room projecting to the north of the building, first exposed in 1990 and thought to be a bath, was re-opened and partially excavated in 1991. Removal of building debris revealed parallel east and west walls built from ironstone with a rubble core, which were lined on their internal faces with successive layers of *opus signinum*, tiles and decorated wall plaster. Tiles set in *opus signinum* covered the floor of the bath. There was no evidence for a tile lining on the southern wall of the bath although the *opus signinum* continued to cover it in patches. The south wall is interrupted by an *opus signinum* lined channel; this originally contained a lead pipe (a fragment of which was found in 1990), which had left an impression. The position of the channel and the direction of slope suggests that it was used for draining rather than feeding the bath. The channel continued beneath a raised platform to the south of the bath and then on under a mosaic floor (4b), the area beneath which was shown to be hollow following an act of vandalism. Tapping of the bath floor suggests that the area beneath it is also hollow. The remains of an internal chimney or flue on the east wall of the bath (constructed from tufa and *opus signinum*) and situated above a hole in the bath floor suggests an exit for gases or hot air accumulating in a hypocaust. The raised platform is constructed from rough ironstone masonry built around two rectangular pilasters, and surviving to one course above the bath floor. The south wall of the platform is roughly faced and plastered, with the latest plaster layer overlying the mosaic.

The walls

The building was constructed almost entirely from ironstone, which is readily available locally, with the remains of old workings visible very close to the site. Evidence from collapsed walls to the east and west of the bath (4a) shows that they were originally at least 2m high. The upper levels may have been constructed from stone or timber. Either are viable options, though further work, particularly on the foundations of the building could give a better indication. Limestone only occurs very infrequently in the

structure of the building. A concentration of squared tufa blocks around the bath suggests their use in the superstructure or vaulting of that suite.

A number of construction methods were used in the building of the walls. Pitched, unmortared stone was used in several of the foundations, while alternating herringbone and dressed stone with a rubble core, usually bonded with mortar, has been identified for the superstructure. The walls vary in thickness from 0.60m to 0.80m, and several are standing at one or two courses above floor level, with those containing the bath to the north standing at 4 courses (c.0.5m high) above the floor level.

Some interesting features have been noted on the internal walls, in particular the south and north walls of the large central hall (9a). The north wall has a number of pillar bases incorporated into its fabric at regular intervals, which consist of large flat blocks of dressed stone with no rubble core, slightly wider than the wall itself. These may have been used to support pillars possibly forming a colonnade along the north side of the hall (9a). Along the southern side of the hall (9a) the wall foundations are deliberately intermittent, again suggesting a pillar construction.

Annexes (15-18)

The small annexes to the building are all constructed against the southern wall. The most westerly of these (18) gave no indication as to purpose; it is very small, and floor levels do not survive. The construction of the walls is very similar to those in the main building. The central annexe (17) includes limestone in its construction, and is again very small, but its location and construction technique suggest it was used as the foundations for steps to a southern entrance into the building. The most easterly annexe is constructed in two phases: a rectangular room (15) and an apsidal room (16), both with *opus signinum* floors. The rectangular room may be the later of the two, although further excavation is needed to confirm this. One or both of these may have been used as a plunge pool, since water was being drained away from the rooms to the south. The drain is 0.85m wide narrowing to 0.48m as it gets further from the building, and 0.38m deep. It was filled with tile and building materials, which probably collapsed into the drain as the building fell into disuse.

The mosaics

Fragments of several tessellated pavements survived including two mosaics. The first was found in room 4b in 1990 (Pollard 1991), and the second was found during 1992, in room 10 in the north-west corner of the building. A fragment some 1m x 2m was uncovered, and is thought to be somewhat larger as its eastern and southern edges were concealed under the baulks of the excavation, and its northern extent was obscured by a layer of collapsed wall plaster. The pattern is a simple geometric design of interlocking circles in red tile within a field of grey limestone *tesserae*. This design has been observed at a number of places, including Blackfriars Street and Norfolk Street in Leicester (Haverfield 1918, pl. VIII, Fig.8), Great Casterton in Rutland (Corder 1951, pl. 1b and Smith 1954), Bancroft in Milton Keynes (Mynard 1987), Brantingham in North Humberside (Smith 1973, room 1), and Winterton in South Humberside (Smith 1976, mosaic B). The mosaics and tessellated pavements are all similar in the way that they have been constructed on successive layers of gravel topped by a smooth concrete or mortar into which they were set. It is not known how thick these bedding layers were.

Roofing

There is considerable evidence to show that the roof, or at least parts of it, was covered with tile and slate. A thick deposit of roof tile has been located in the central hall (9a) which may have slid off the roof or collapsed in as the roof timbers rotted and gave way.

Heating

A number of rooms were heated by a hypocaust system, those at the east end of the building were fed from a stoke room (7) on the north east corner of the building, whilst the single heated room (3) so far identified on the west end of the building must have been fed from a stoke room as yet unidentified. The hypocausts are of two types: pillared and channelled. The channelled hypocausts (in rooms 13, 14, 8a, 1b, 1c and 3) consist of a series of narrow channels with ironstone walls capped with large flagstones, providing a solid base upon which to lay a floor. The spaces between the channels are filled with soil or gravel. The pillared hypocausts (in rooms 5 and 6) are constructed from tile *pilae*. It is very likely that rooms 4a, 4b and 2 also contained hypocausts, although this has not been confirmed. The details of exactly how the heating system functioned in the building are as yet unknown.

The machined trenches

Of the 14 trenches excavated by machine, eight provided evidence of Roman occupation; a further two contained only evidence of Iron Age occupation; three contained no archaeological material, and one produced finds of Roman date but the soil had been so discoloured by the presence of a muck heap lying directly above it that it had become impossible to recognise any archaeological features.

The ditch

Three of the trenches excavated to the west of the building revealed a large ditch about 3m wide and at least 1.20m deep on a north-south orientation, with Roman material in its fills. The ditch followed the slope down towards the River Welland, and it may have acted as a drainage and boundary ditch for the Roman building, possibly to keep out cattle or other livestock. Time did not allow further investigation to the east of the building, but it is likely that a similar ditch exists. It is hoped to test this proposition in 1993.

A second stone building?

A fourth trench, excavated some 15m to the north-west of room 10, revealed three ironstone walls enclosing an area 3m by 2m. The alignment of the walls was similar to that of the main building, but it is not known at present whether they represent an extension to it, or a second, completely separate building. The evidence may be obscured by a layer of hill-washed clay which was observed in this area.

The garden?

The fifth trench to reveal evidence for Roman occupation was situated approximately 18m to the north-east of the main building. This revealed a dark loamy soil, apparently rich in organic material, and containing many finds of Roman date. It was sealed

beneath hill-washed clay, suggesting that preservation may be very good. This has been sampled to retrieve environmental and other finds. The character of the soil and its proximity to the building suggest that it may have been a garden soil or midden, and as such has great potential for producing evidence about living conditions within the building and the nature of the local environment.

Summary

After five seasons of work on the Drayton II Villa, we are now much more confident about the extent of the main building, and know that there is at least one other stone structure close by. We also know that the extent of the grounds belonging with the building extend 30m to the west, and that the preservation of ephemeral evidence, such as organic materials is good, and possibly excellent. The evidence has also highlighted the fact that there are many questions which have not been answered and investigation and research needs to continue if a detailed account of the site's history is to emerge. Further excavation will be undertaken during the summer of 1993.

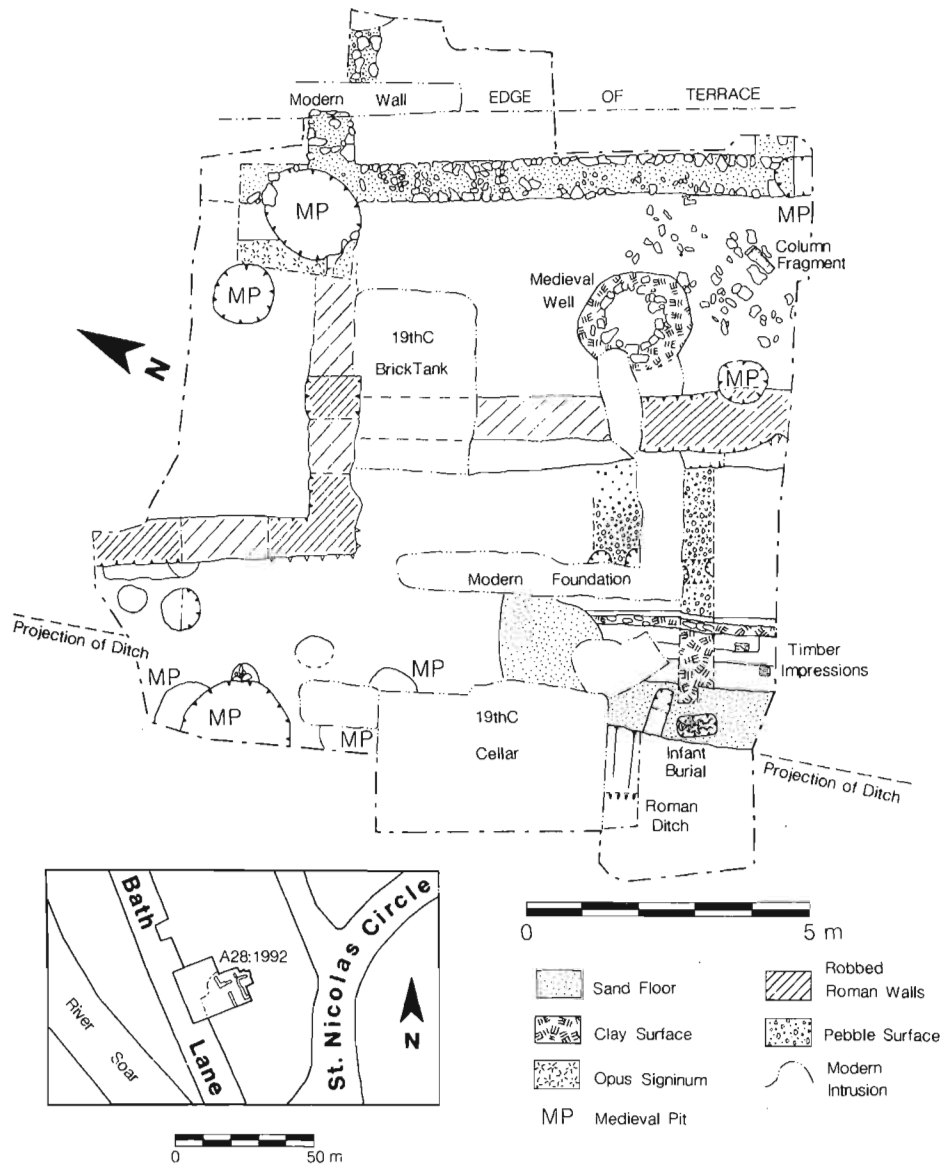
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An archaeological evaluation at Bath Lane, Leicester (SK 581 044)

Lynden Cooper

An evaluation was undertaken by Leicestershire Archaeological Unit at the southern end of Bath Lane, Leicester between 22nd April and 15th May 1992 under the direction of Lynden Cooper (illus. 7, A28. 1992). The objective was to assess the



7. Bath Lane, Leicester: location and site plan.

archaeological potential of the site in advance of possible re-development. Following the discovery of important archaeological remains, a mitigation strategy was adopted which included the design solution of raising the ground level to prevent disturbance of archaeological levels, thereby allowing the development to proceed. A small area to the east of the site, threatened by the re-designed development, was excavated between the 2nd and 13th November 1992 under the direction of Neil Finn.

Previous work in the Bath Lane area has demonstrated pre-Roman Iron Age activity in the form of residual pottery and metalwork, with some indication of structural activity observed at Blackfriars Street in 1977 (Clay and Mellor 1985, p.18). An Iron Age presence was attested by the recovery of two copper alloy brooches and a number of pottery sherds from later contexts, mostly in the primary fills of ditch. Several unexcavated gullies and a revetted ditch were observed in the sides of later features, and probably belong to this period. A ditch of similar date, dimensions and alignment was observed at Newarke Houses Museums Gardens (SK 583 041) and is thought to represent the western boundary of the late Iron Age settlement (Clarke 1952, Fig 4.1; Clay and Pollard, forthcoming).

A number of features of mid first century date were observed in the south-western corner of the site. These comprised a tamped pebble surface, a scorched clay surface, post holes, a timber beam slot, plank impressions, a ditch and an infant burial. The timber structure could represent a building or a boardwalk associated with the ditch. These early Roman features have some parallel with those observed at the Bath Lane excavation of 1968 (SK 580 045), where the structures were thought to be "consistent with their belonging to a phase of military occupation" (Clay and Mellor 1985, p.9). The profile of the ditch is also suggestive of military activity, exhibiting a slope and cleaning channel comparable to the Punic ditch of the Roman military (Johnson 1983, p.47).

Following the clearance of the timber structure a stone building was constructed in the late first century, orientated upon the Roman street grid. The building had at least three rooms evident from the surviving walls to the east and the robbed construction trenches to the west. The eastern room(s) had raised floor levels, at least 1.70m above the western rooms. It would seem that the building was terraced due to its position upon the steep eastern slope of the Soar Valley. The survival of floor levels was very limited, though the overlying demolition deposits provided some indication of internal fittings. High proportions of *tesserae*, fragments of painted wall plaster, possible *pilae* and box flue tile suggest a tessellated floor, decorated wall rendering and a hypocaust system. Roofing slate and tile indicate the existence of pitched roofs. The building fell into disrepair and was partly demolished in the early fourth century.

The next episode of activity was not until the 12th-13th century when several of the earlier Roman walls were robbed of their stone. The excavation to the east of the surviving Roman wall revealed evidence for timber structures also dated to the 12th-13th century, apparently respecting the Roman wall. Presumably these features represent medieval 'back yard' activity for buildings fronting onto Talbot Lane to the east. The absence of contemporary domestic activity to the west of this wall may indicate its use as a boundary; however in the later medieval period, several 14th-15th century cesspits to the west of the Roman wall, suggest that it no longer served this function.

All archaeological work and subsequent post-excavation analysis has been generously funded by the developers, City Styles Ltd. It is intended to publish a full

report in *TLAHS* in due course, following the completion of post-excavation analyses of finds, environmental data and records. All finds and records are with Leicestershire Museums, accession no. A28. 1992.

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John of Gaunt's Cellar, Leicester castle (SK 582 041)

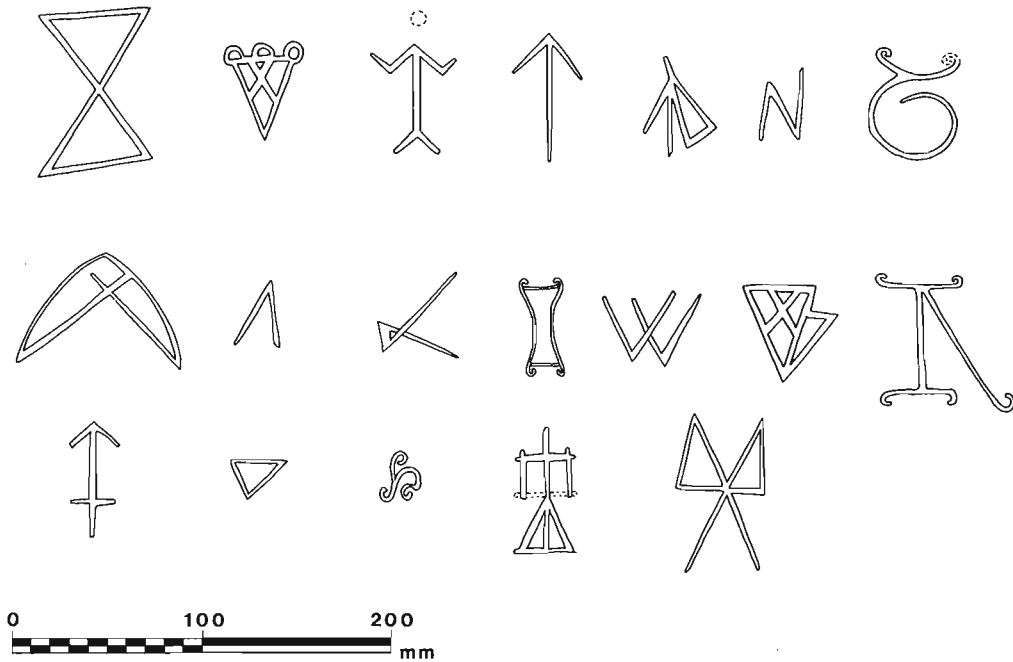
Richard Buckley

Between 18th May and 12th June 1992, Leicestershire Archaeological Unit carried out an architectural survey and archaeological evaluation at John of Gaunt's Cellar, to the south of the Great Hall of Leicester Castle, in advance of a proposed scheme of repairs and protective works. The archaeological work was directed on site by David Mackie, and funded by the Department of Property, Leicestershire County Council.

Removal of modern overburden outside the southern entrance revealed evidence of two polygonal towers flanking the doorway, and ashlar wall facing with a chamfered plinth course. The remains of the bottom step of a newel staircase survived in the western tower, whilst the eastern tower was filled with mortared sandstone rubble. Adjacent to the wall, were extensive spreads of crushed sandstone and mortar which probably represent debris derived from sandstone dressing during the construction of the building. A small test pit was excavated through garden terracing on the line of the west wall of the undercroft, which showed the latter to be of mortared, undressed sandstone, indicating that it was never intended to be exposed.

Scale drawings of all interior and exterior elevations of the building were drawn and any surface features on the masonry, such as staining, graffiti, traces of fixtures and masons' marks were recorded.

The results of the work support Thompson's observation that the walls and vault of the undercroft are of two phases (1859, p.47). The original building may have measured a minimum of 10.16m (33.3ft.) long by 5.53m (18.14ft.) wide, with walls of between eight and nine courses of bonded and mortared Dane Hills sandstone masonry, at least 2m (6.56ft.) in height. The masonry of this phase is generally in much poorer condition than that of phase 2, hence no details of stone dressing or masons' marks survive. This building may have been the undercroft to a chamber block communicating with the southern end of the Great Hall, and could date from the 12th century. The alignment of the walls, at an angle to the Great Hall, respects the line of the bailey ditch thought to have been disused by the early 13th century (Buckley and Hagar 1992, p.180).



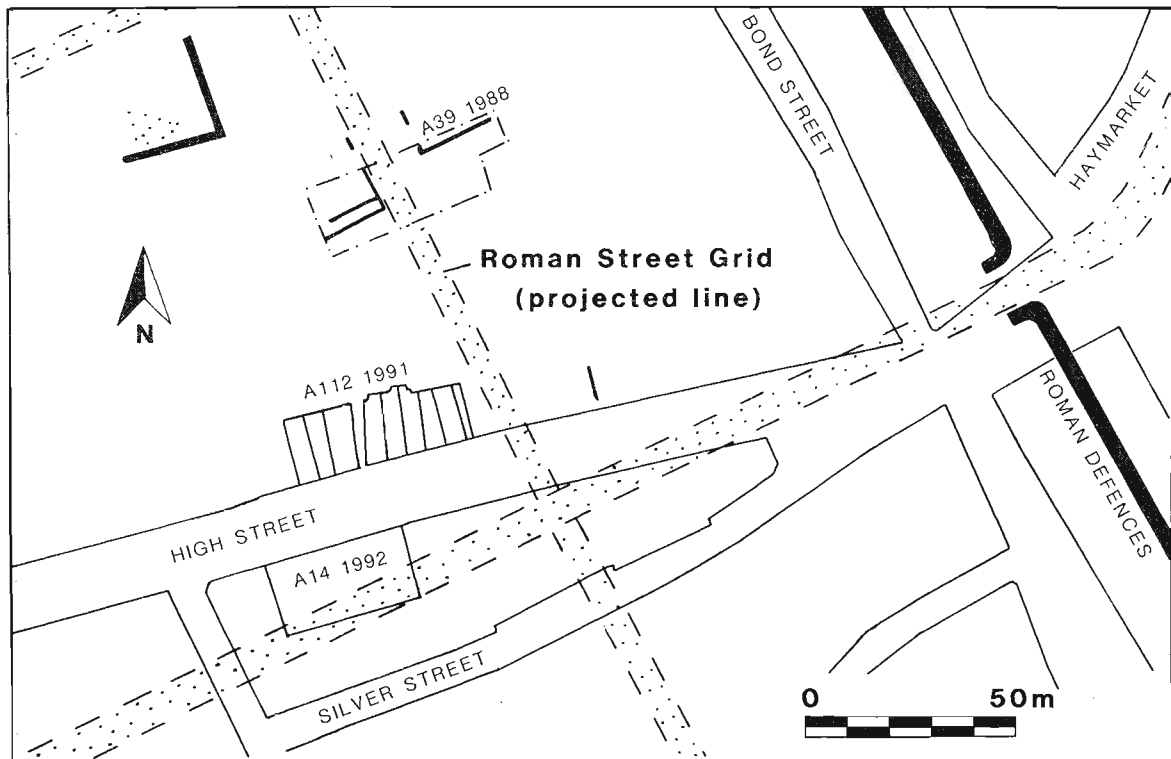
8. John of Gaunt's Cellar, Leicester Castle: masons' marks (drawn by D. Mackie).

Later, probably in the early 15th century, the original building was extended northwards, creating a room 15.53m (50.95ft) by 5.53m (18.14ft). Assigned to this phase are: the north doorway and staircase; two windows (one blocked); the four-centred vault; and the two polygonal towers and stone facing of the south facade. There are 19 different types of masons' marks (illus. 8) randomly distributed over the stones of the vault, which suggests that they were used as a tally of the number of blocks worked by individual masons, rather than as an aid to construction. Certain marks are more commonly found than others, perhaps indicating a core team of masons, supplemented by other workers as the need arose. One documentary reference may refer to this rebuilding work: between 1400 and 1409, a building variously described as a 'tower' or 'chamber' was built 'over the wine cellar at a cost of over £500' (work began in 1400-3, was resumed after an interval in 1406-7, and completed in 1408-9- (Colvin 1963, p.702).

Finds and records with Leicestershire Museums, accession no. A33.1992

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9. 40-50 High St., Leicester (A14.1992): location plan in relation to recent excavations (Little Lane, A39.1988, TLAHS, 64, p.95; 33-47 High St., A112.1991, TLAHS, 66, p.179)

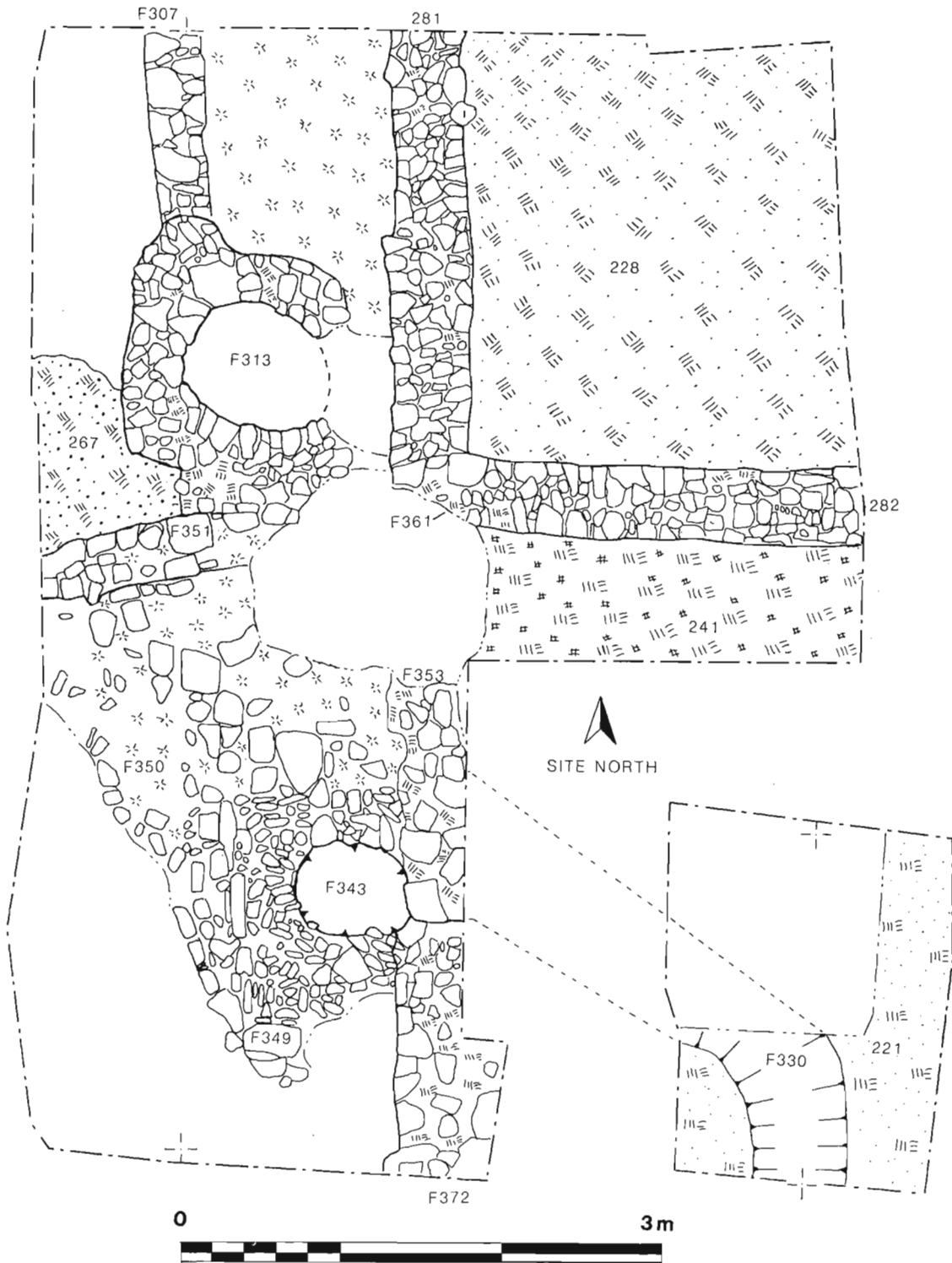
An evaluation and excavation at the Cameo Cinema, 40 to 50 High Street, Leicester (SK 5858 0455)

Lynden Cooper

An initial evaluation undertaken by the Leicestershire Archaeological Unit, directed by David Mackie, confirmed the survival of archaeological deposits. Further evaluation and subsequent excavation was undertaken, under the direction of the author, between 23rd March and 24th April 1992. The site is located within the Roman and medieval walled town, sited upon the principal east-west thoroughfares of their day, the Roman Fosse Way and the medieval Swinesmarket (illus. 9). The depth of excavation was limited to the depth of destruction anticipated by the proposed development, this generally being 1m below the modern ground level and 1.5m in trenches 2 and 3.

Deposits of Roman date were located in trenches 2, 4 and 6, with good potential for their survival beneath later deposits in the remaining trenches. Surfaces observed in trenches 2 and 4 are thought to represent the northern edge of the Fosse Way. There are some indications that the street was encroached upon by a timber structure some time before the late second century, and subsequently regained. Two pits of the late third/fourth century indicated further possible encroachment upon the street.

A single 11th century pit was located in trench 4, suggesting some activity in the area at this date. There is some evidence from this trench to suggest that Roman and



10. 40-50 High St., Leicester. Trenches 5 and 6: the late 13th century to early 14th century buildings.

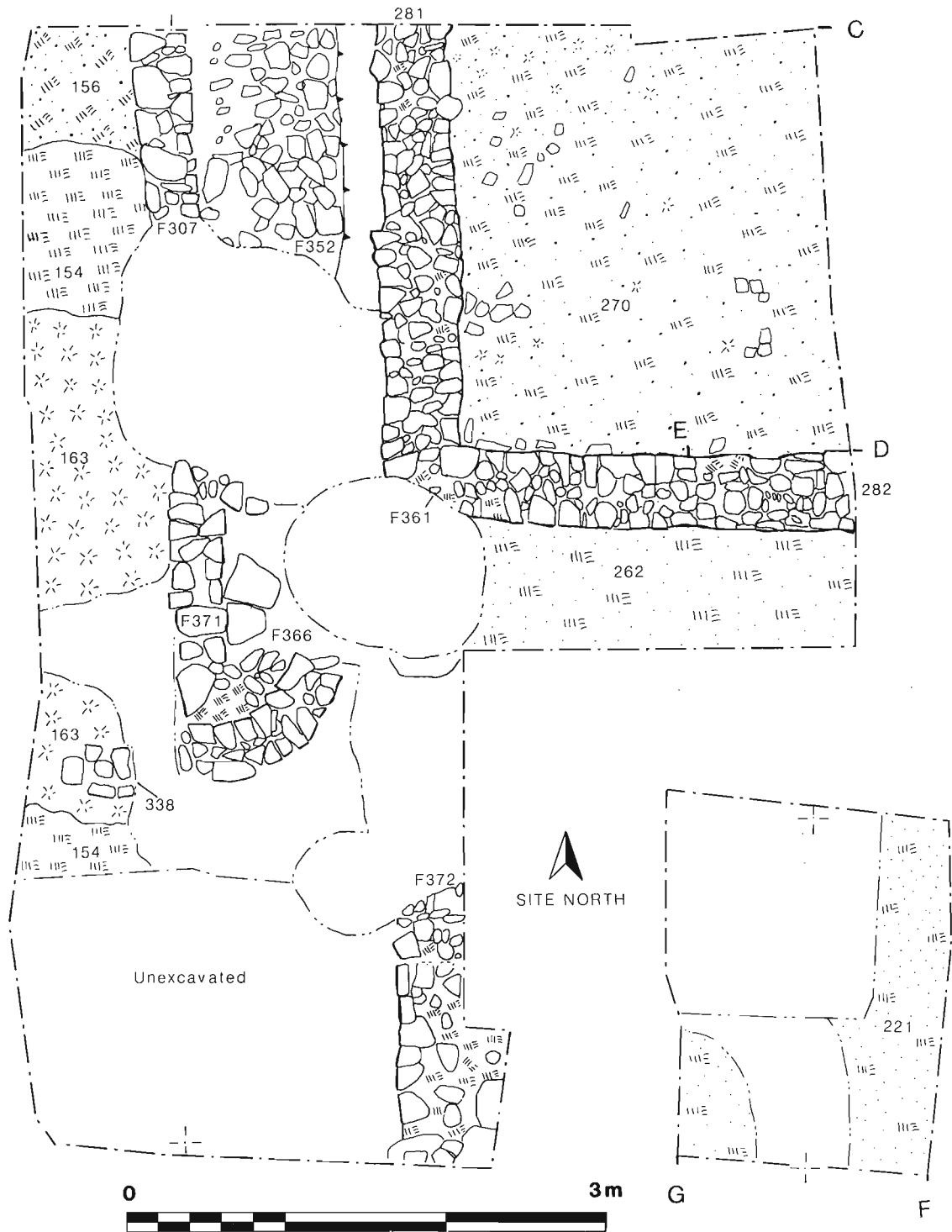
11th century deposits were truncated by a cultivation horizon of 11th to 13th century date, possibly representing ridge and furrow. A postulated north-south ditch in trench 6, identified by limited excavation and the linear slumping of later deposits, may relate to early plot boundaries for such cultivation activities.

A good sequence of structural evidence from the late 13th century to the post-medieval period was observed in trench 6, and is worth looking at in some detail. Two stone-founded buildings were constructed in the late 13th or early 14th century (illus. 10). The western building was constructed along the line of the earlier ditch, demonstrating continuity of plot layout. The structure was defined by a north-south wall F307/F371, a possible return wall and remnants of associated floors. The walls were composed of granite blocks bonded by clay, up to two courses deep. A semi-circular wall and associated flagged floor F366 may be interpreted as part of an oven. The eastern building was defined by walls [281] and [282] of F361, and a sequence of floor deposits. A southern continuation of wall [281] was observed as F372, though no distinct floor deposits were associated with this. The walls were constructed of faced granite blocks with a core of smaller granite fragments, bonded with red clay, built upon a granite rubble plinth foundation. The upper surface of the walls F361 was of a consistent level, suggesting that they may have been dwarf walls for a timber superstructure.

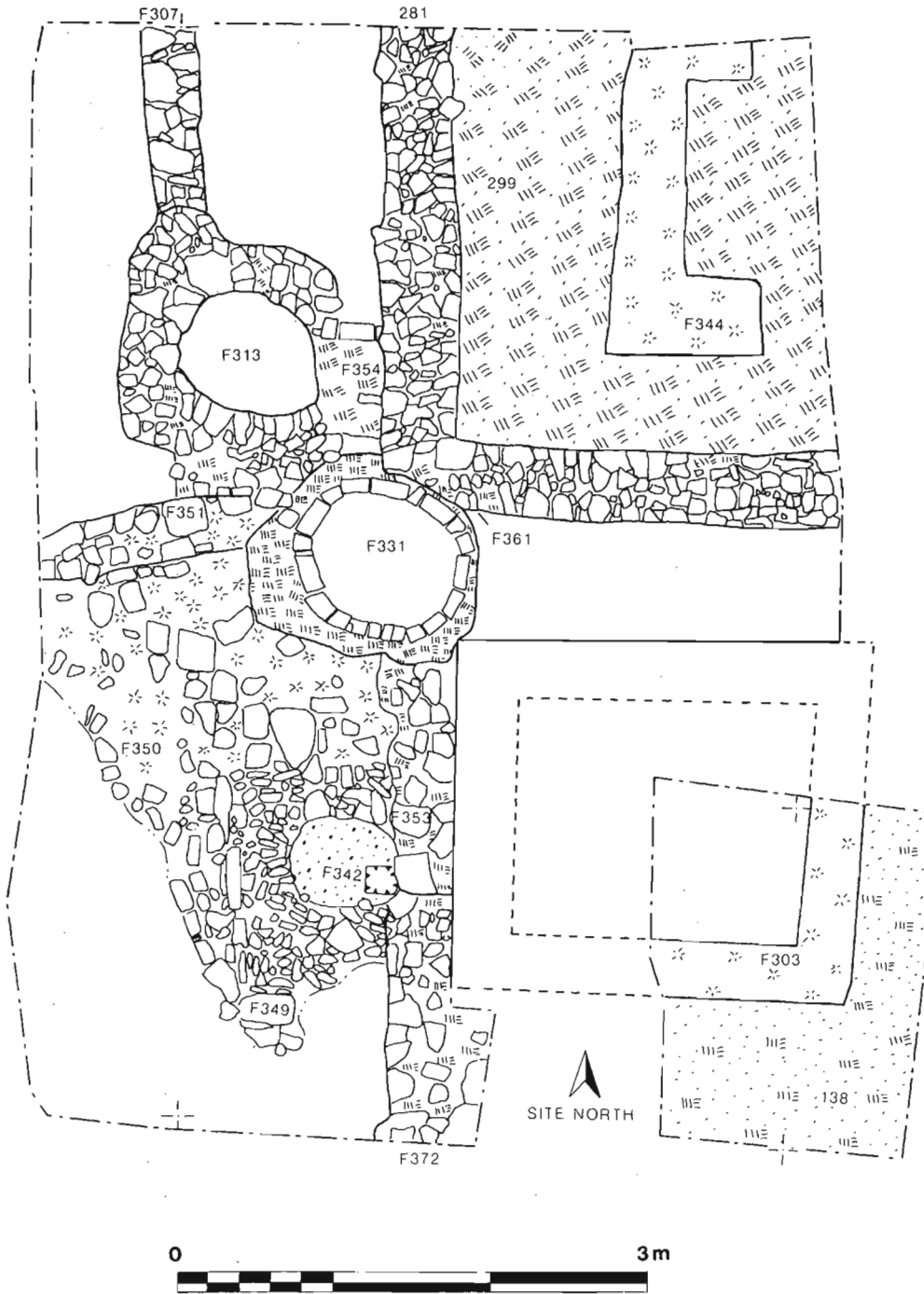
By the late 14th/early 15th century both buildings had undergone considerable modifications (illus. 11). The western building contracted to the north with the disuse of wall F371 and oven F366, and the addition of wall F351. A stone-lined well F313 was incorporated into the fabric of the building. The occupational continuity of the eastern building is confirmed by the addition of further floor layers and mortar rendering on both the internal and external faces of wall [282]. Further modifications in the late 15th/early 16th century are also evident. To the south of F351 was a cobbled area F350 formed by large pebbles and granite blocks bonded with mortar, with kerbstones along the western edge. The north-south wall F372 was partially robbed and rebuilt as F353 to allow for the passage of a drain channel F330. Immediately to the west of F353 was a square area of smaller cobbles F349, which surrounded a clay lined pit F343. It might be suggested that the cobbles and pit represent a privy or drain, served by the drain channel F330.

Most of the post-16th century deposits were lost as a result of the ground preparations for the 20th century cinema. However, there is evidence for the continuity of the eastern building into at least the 18th/19th century (illus. 12). The eastern side of well F313 was removed to allow access to the slumping adjacent portion of wall [281]. The wall was underpinned with a brick pier and the well was refurbished with a thick clay lining in the affected area, thus allowing for continued usage. An un-dated floor layer of silty clay [299] may also date from this period. The refurbished well was short-lived, evident from the backfilling and the construction of the replacement brick-lined well F331.

The medieval sequence recorded in trenches 2 and 4 was somewhat different. Following the 11th to 13th century cultivation episode, the area was used for rubbish disposal, evident by intercutting pits. Structural evidence occurred from the 14th/15th century, though it was short-lived with the walls being mostly removed in the 15th/16th century. Medieval activity was also observed in trench 1, as a possible wall of post-14th century date and possibly in trench 8, as a cellar wall of assumed medieval date.



11. 40-50 High St., Leicester. Trenches 5 and 6: the late 14th century to early 15th century buildings.



12. 40-50 High St., Leicester. Trenches 5 and 6: the later medieval and post-medieval levels.

Although there was considerable destruction of archaeological deposits by post-medieval activity, such as cellar construction, the surviving islands revealed important Roman and medieval sequences. The dearth of archaeological evidence from the fourth to tenth century, could be the result of destruction of the evidence, but the lack of any residual material from this period suggests there may have actually been little occupation in the area examined here. A principal axis road such as the Swinesmarket, was a probable focus for activity in that period and the lack of evidence here should not discount the possibility that there could be occupation right on the street frontage. The medieval structures observed in trench 6 suggest continuous occupation from the late 13th century, possibly into the 19th century. Both buildings were absent on the 1887 OS map, though their property lines survived.

All archaeological work and subsequent post-excavation analysis was generously funded by the developers, Amicable Estates Establishment. It is intended to publish a full report in *TLAHS* in due course, following the completion of post-excavation analyses of finds, environmental data and records. All finds and records are with Leicestershire Museums, accession no. A14. 1992.

**An archaeological evaluation at 71-95 Sanvey Gate,
Leicester (SK 5826 0502)**

Neil Finn

In response to the proposed development of the above site, an archaeological evaluation was carried out between the 10th and 21st August 1992 by the Leicestershire Archaeological Unit under the direction of the author, and financed by Travis Perkins (Properties) Limited. Finds and records are with Leicestershire Museums, accession no. A61.1992.

The site lies on the north side of Sanvey Gate, 50m from the northern limit of the historic core of Leicester, as defined by the town's Roman and medieval defences, within the area of the known medieval suburb and suspected Roman occupation. It has also been postulated that the significant Anglo-Saxon and Danish occupation of Leicester may have been centred on an extra-mural area such as this. The seven machine cut trenches were located with the aim of evaluating the archaeological potential of a representative sample of the area affected by the development, but with an emphasis on the southern section of the site where the threat was greater (illus. 13).

The results outlined here reflect the restricted scope of the evaluation, in that defining the depth and nature of the archaeological levels was the prime objective and no substantial investigation of individual features was carried out. The post excavation analysis was also limited and the dates provided were all based on provisional dating of the pottery.

At the northern extreme of the site, in trench 1, three ditches and a possible pit, were revealed at a depth of 1.30m below the present ground level (illus. 14). One ditch may date to the 12th century. They were all sealed by a field soil dated to the 13th century, which in turn was sealed by a similar layer dated to the 15th century. In the central area, in trench 4 at 1.58m below the present ground level, a small pit and ditch, both of 15th century date, were identified. They were sealed by a late 15th to early 16th century field soil.

The other trenches were all located close to the Sanvey Gate street frontage. In trench 6 the earliest feature was a foundation, dated to the late first to early second century A.D., at 1.15m below the present ground level. It was cut by a pit of similar

date, which itself was sealed by an undated spread. This was cut by two pits and a post hole of second century date. Further, apparently archaeological, deposits were seen in the east section to a depth of 0.60m below the ground surface.

Trenches 2, 3, 5 and 7 were all adjacent to one another. The trench closest to the street frontage, trench 3, revealed natural sand and gravel at 1.46m below the present ground level, which was overlain by a series of 12th century make ups. These were sealed by a 0.64m thick layer of alternate, make up, floor and demolition debris, of medieval date. Close to the street frontage, trench 5 had an undated spread at 0.8m below the present ground level. This was cut by two second century pits. A late 12th century post hole was also located and this was sealed by a post medieval loam containing demolition debris. Trench 2 revealed a series of pits, wells and a single post hole, which all cut natural from a depth of 1.60m below the present ground level. Four of these were dated to the 12th century. They were sealed by a series of cultivation horizons dating through to the post medieval period. Trench 7 contained early archaeological deposits that cut natural from a depth of 1.80m below the present ground level. Several post holes [714], [716], [720], [721] and [809] and a beam slot [715] may represent one phase of an early second century timber building, possibly associated with floor layers. A further beam slot was of a later second century date, and a possible ditch was undated. Three post holes, a pit and robber trench [811] were dated to the late 12th or early 13th century, although it is possible that the robber trench relates to a Roman building. Above these, other features indicated one or more phases of stone founded construction and numerous intercutting pits and layers which indicate intensive archaeological activity.

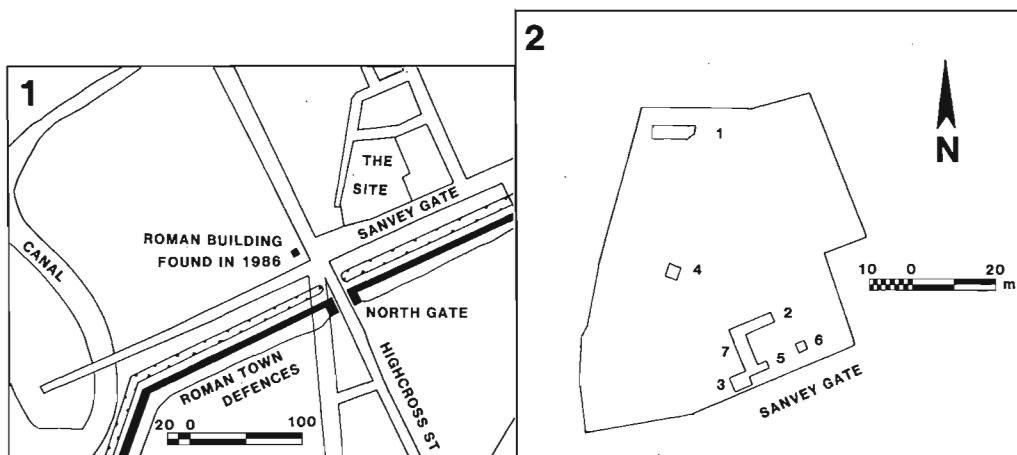
This evaluation has shown that two periods of intensive occupation occurred on the site in the mid first to late second century and the late 12th to early 13th century. No Roman occupation post-dating the erection of the town defences was identified, and it is possible that once the site was rendered extra-mural, this provided the impetus for the relocation of settlement to areas within the new town limits. The existence of a northern suburb in medieval times is well documented, and of particular interest are the deeply stratified deposits in the south of the site which indicate buildings fronting onto Sanvey Gate during the early medieval period. Such deposits are extremely rare in Leicester.

An archaeological evaluation in Welles Street, Leicester (SK 5817 0453)

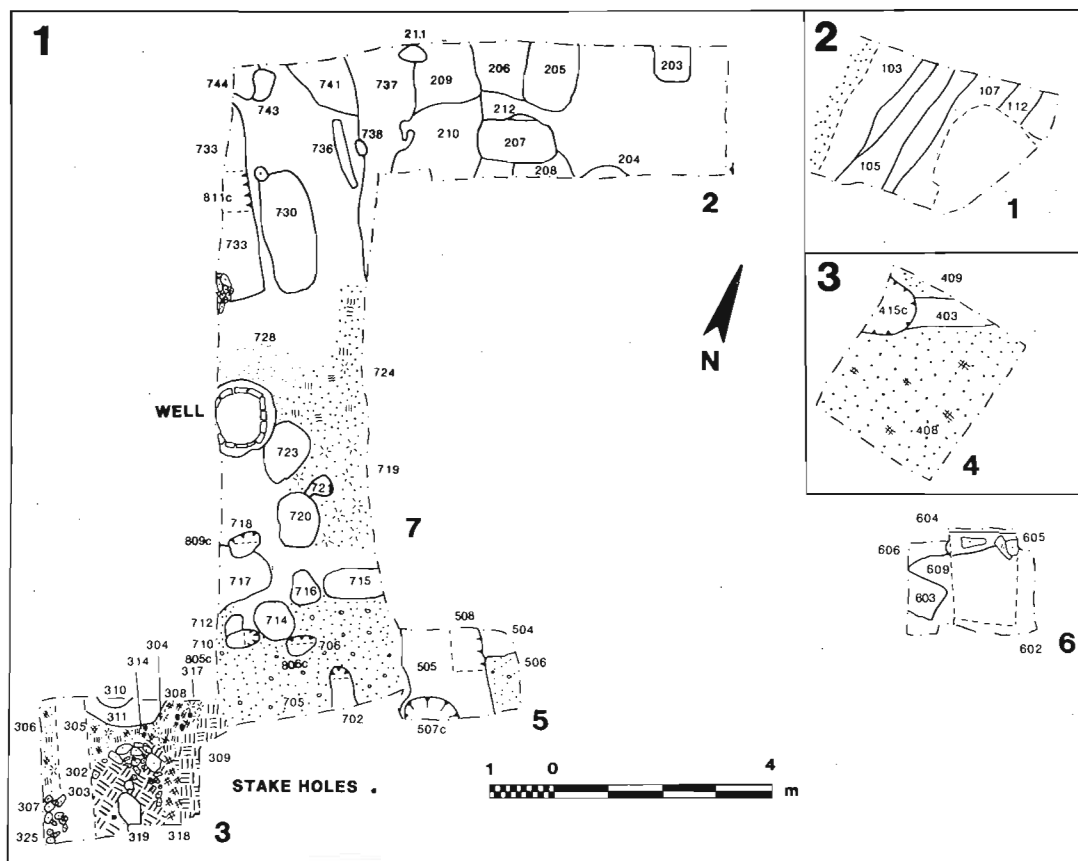
Neil Finn

In advance of proposed redevelopment at the Guru Nanak Gurdwara Temple, an archaeological evaluation was carried out between the 7th and the 11th of September 1992 by members of the Leicestershire Archaeological Unit, under the direction of Lynden Cooper. Funding was provided by the Temple. The finds and records are with Leicestershire Museums, accession no. A66. 1992.

The evaluation was situated just north of the Jewry Wall site, near the centre of the historic core of Leicester and consisted of a single trench, approximately 2.0m square. The earliest archaeological evidence encountered was at a depth of 1.54m below the present ground level and consisted of a 0.75m thick unexcavated layer of demolition debris with a considerable amount of Roman tile. This was cut by a large pit or well, containing pottery of a late 12th to early 13th century date, which was sealed by a possible cultivation layer of a similar date. This was cut by two small features, possibly



13. Sanvey Gate, Leicester. Location plan.



14. Sanvey Gate, Leicester. Trenches 1 to 7.

pits or large post holes, dated to the 13th and the 15th to 16th centuries, respectively. Overlying these was a layer of post-medieval garden soil 0.65m thick, and above this modern deposits.

Thus intensive occupation occurred on the site between the 12th and 16th century. From the large amount of residual Roman pottery and tile, and the considerable amount of structural material seen in the unexcavated Roman layer, it would seem likely that undisturbed levels of a second century date, and earlier, exist beyond a depth of 2.05m below the present ground level.

An archaeological evaluation at Wanlip (SK 597 111)

Matthew Beamish

An evaluation was undertaken at Fillingate, Wanlip in advance of road construction for the A46 Leicester Western Bypass. The area examined consisted of a square enclosure and its environs, identified as a cropmark and photographed by Dr. J.K. St. Joseph for the University of Cambridge Aerial Photography Committee. Trial trenches were excavated within the road line to include the enclosure and areas to the south and south-east. The evaluation revealed evidence of middle-late Iron Age occupation in the form of pits and post holes, both inside and outside the enclosure (illus. 15). Sections across the enclosure ditch revealed at least five phases of ditch cutting. To the south-east, features were located cutting into a colluvial (plough wash) deposit. At its deepest, this deposit was *c.*1m thick and sealed further prehistoric features. In view of the potential of this site, a full excavation commenced in December 1992. The evaluation was funded by the Department of Transport and the finds and archive are deposited with Leicestershire Museums, accession no. A50.1992.

NOTES

An archaeological evaluation at Anstey (SK 554 078)

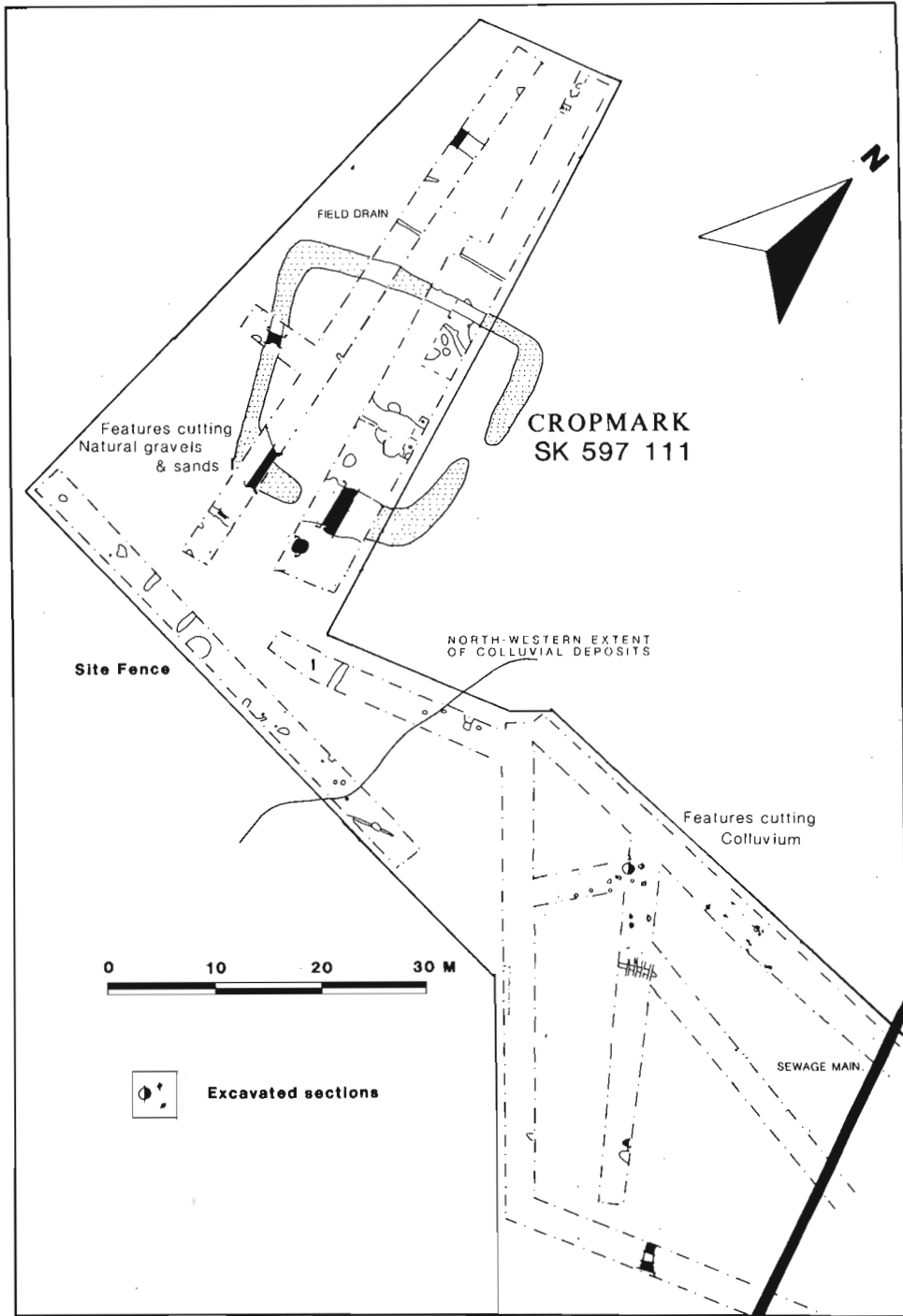
David Mackie

An evaluation was undertaken at Anstey in advance of road construction for the A46 Leicester Western Bypass. The evaluation was aimed at locating evidence of the origins of the post medieval house demolished in the early 20th century to the north of Gynsill Lane. No evidence of early origins was located and the earthwork features in the area may have been a product of landscape gardening. This work was funded by the Department of Transport and the finds and archive are deposited with Leicestershire Museums, accession no. A118.1992.

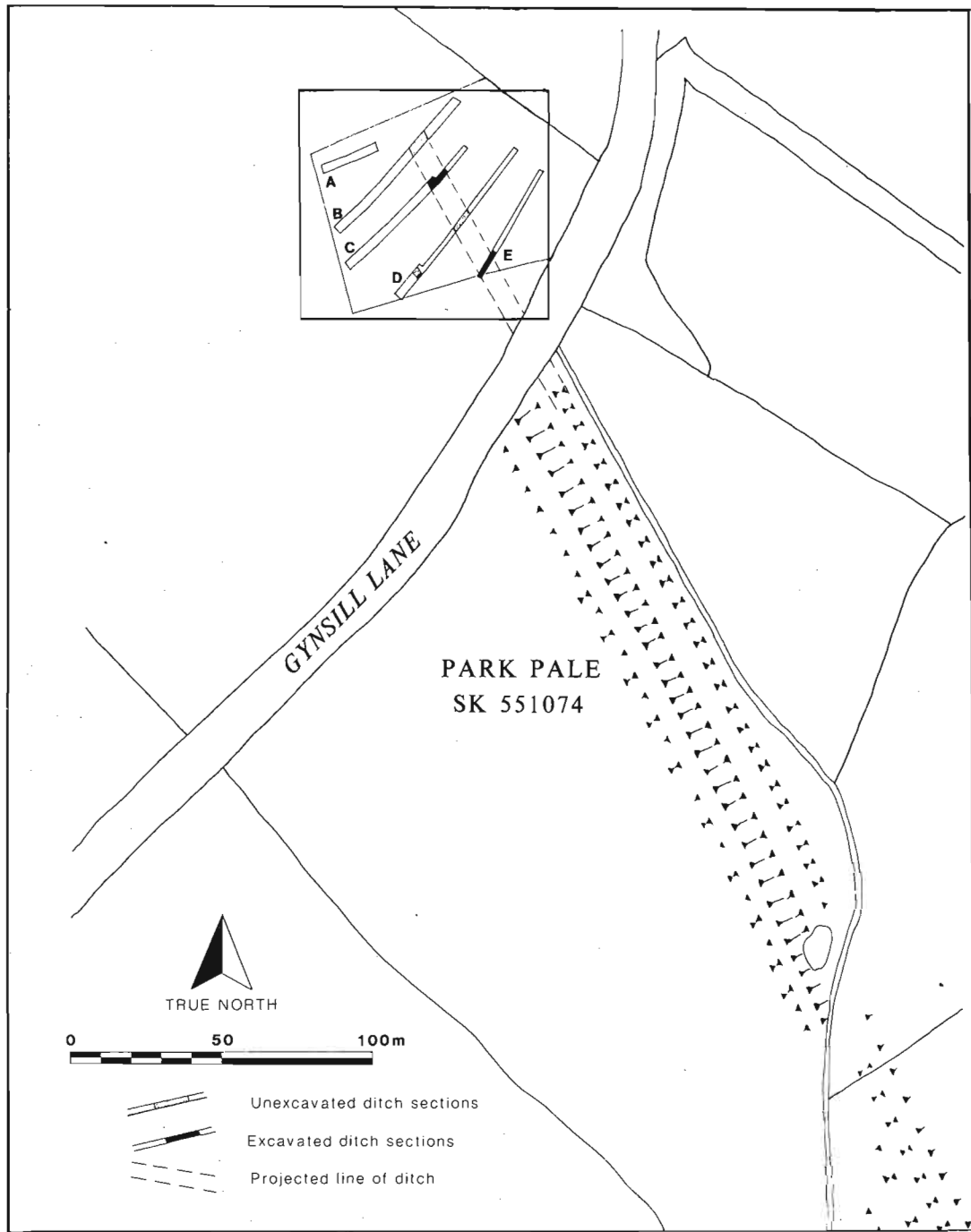
An archaeological evaluation and watching brief Gynsill Lane, Anstey (SK 551 074)

James Meek and Neil Finn

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken north of Gynsill Lane, Anstey in advance of the construction of the A46 Leicester Western Bypass. This consisted of three trial trenches across the line of the medieval earthwork known as the Park Pale, surviving *c.*100m to the south-east (illus. 16). This revealed two backfilled linear ditches along the same line as the Park Pale which contained some 13th century pottery. A watching brief to the north-west of the evaluation confirmed the continuation of the northernmost ditch. The finds and archive are deposited with Leicestershire Museums, accession no. A68.1992.



15. Wanlip: plan of the evaluation in relation to cropmarks.



16. Gynsill Lane, Anstey: evaluation trenches across the line of the Park Pale.

A watching brief at Manor School, Ashby-de-la-Zouch (SK 354 165)

Elaine L Jones

In view of its proximity to Ashby Castle a watching brief at Manor School, Ashby-de-la-Zouch was undertaken in advance of a new all weather sports surface. Although no archaeological deposits were located, it was noted that a wall to the north of the proposed new surface was erected with small 16th-17th century bricks, perhaps indicating the presence of a building of this date which had since been demolished. The watching brief was funded by Manor House School and the finds and archive are deposited with Leicestershire Museums, accession no. A79.1992.

A survey at Beveridge Lane, Bardon (SK 456 118)

Martin Shore

A survey by metal detector and fieldwalking was undertaken in advance of a business park development at Beveridge Lane, Bardon. No archaeological evidence was found in this area.

The 'Lounge' opencast coal mine, Coleorton (SK 388 183)

Fred Hartley

On the 'Lounge' opencast site, the site archaeologist Mark Nelson took up his appointment at the beginning of December 1992. Extensive areas of 16th century 'pillar and stall' mine workings have been recorded. The range of finds from the galleries demonstrates the remarkable conditions of preservation on the site, and include a coal corf (a kind of sledge used to move the coal underground), a candle, several leather shoes and some interesting pieces of cloth, including a 16th Century Coal Miner's tunic, currently being studied by the Textile Conservation Centre at Hampton Court and late medieval/early post medieval pottery. Oak pit props have been preserved for tree-ring dating. Other finds have included picks and wooden shovels. There are also some artefacts, including pottery, from later 'longwall' workings, probably of the 17th and 18th centuries and more is to be expected from similar contexts during 1993. All finds are being donated by British Coal to Leicestershire Museums, accession nos. A113.1992, A30.1992 and A87.1992.

An archaeological evaluation at Croft (c.SP 510 965)

Lynden Cooper

Three areas at Croft were evaluated in advance of a proposed extension to Croft quarry by English China Clay Construction Materials who funded the work. Area 1 consisted of Croft Hill itself, while Areas 2 and 3 were bounded by Thurlaston Brook to the east. The evaluation of Area 1 consisted of twenty eight 1 metre square test pits, four machine-dug trial trenches and a metal detecting survey, whilst the evaluation of Areas 2 and 3 consisted of thirty two machine-dug trial trenches. The test pits in Area 1 revealed two areas where concentrations of material were present. To the north of the summit, Roman and three sherds of Saxon pottery and some Roman coins were present. At the bottom of the slope, to the north-east, a medieval ditch on a north-west to south-east alignment was located. Area 1 has since been withdrawn from the proposed extension plans.

Area 2 to the west, included evidence of prehistoric activity in the form of flint scatters buried beneath c.0.5m of alluvium. An old river channel with potential for environmental information was also revealed. Area 3 to the north-west included evidence of enclosures and possible field systems. No dating evidence was recovered

from these features although a prehistoric date seems likely.

The finds and archive are with Leicestershire Museums, accession no. A4.1992.

An archaeological evaluation at Strawson's Yard, Great Casterton, Rutland (TF 001 089)

Matthew Beamish

In response to a series of planning applications, an evaluation was undertaken on this site between the 13th and the 24th of April 1992, by the Leicestershire Archaeological Unit under the direction of Matthew Beamish. The work was funded by the Trustees of the Cecil Family Estate Trust. The finds and records are with the Leicestershire Museums, accession no. A26. 1992.

Great Casterton was a small Roman town on Ermine Street, and this site of 0.5 ha was situated in the central area of the town. Seven 2m square boxes were excavated by hand and, except in one box, archaeological levels were identified at a depth of just over 0.25m. These consisted of both Roman and medieval features including make-up levels, pits and post holes. A stone foundation to a medieval wall, which tied in with the alignment of the current boundaries, and a Roman foundation for a timber building were also uncovered. Beyond the identification of these features no further excavation was carried out, as it was ensured that the proposed development would not damage any archaeological levels.

An archaeological evaluation at Castle Hill, Beaumont Leys, Leicester (SK 565 092)

Lynden Cooper

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at Castle Hill, Beaumont Leys in advance of the construction of the A46 Leicester Western Bypass. The area examined was within a flint and pottery scatter located during fieldwalking in 1985 (Tura 1986); late Bronze Age, Roman, early medieval and later pottery had been recovered. Twenty one evaluation trenches were excavated within the area of the roadline. No archaeological deposits of prehistoric date were recovered although some flint implements and prehistoric pottery suggests some activity in the area. A ditch of Roman date was located which may represent part of a field system. This evaluation was funded by the Department of Transport and finds and archive are with Leicestershire Museums, accession no. A78.1992.

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A watching brief in Craven Street, Leicester (SK 5827 0509)

John Lucas

In July and December 1992 a watching brief was carried out on the site at the junction of Craven Street and Berkeley Street, by John Lucas for the Leicestershire Archaeological Unit, and funded by Orion Sportswear. Traces of a medieval cobbled surface which sealed a north-south orientated medieval ditch were found at the northern edge of the site. Some 15m to the south, a denser pattern of both Roman and medieval activity has been identified, suggesting that this site lies beyond any focus of suburban activities. A ditch and related field soils were identified, presumably representing the fields absorbed by the expansion of the Victorian town. Finds and

records are with Leicestershire Museums, accession no. A62.1992.

An archaeological evaluation at the Guildhall, Leicester

Julian Hagar

In May 1992, Leicestershire Archaeological Unit carried out a small scale evaluation prior to the underpinning of the base crucks of the great hall. Eight small trenches mostly 1m by 0.6m were excavated next to the crucks which were to be refurbished: five immediately outside the north wall of the building on the pavement of Guildhall Lane; three inside the eastern half of the building; two on the north side and one on the south. The trenches showed that the crucks had all been underpinned with concrete, and the plinth wall had been extensively rebuilt, if not completely replaced, probably as part of the restoration carried out in 1926. This underpinning had caused extensive damage to the uppermost archaeological levels and the only significant deposits recorded were in the most easterly trench inside the Guildhall, adjacent to the north wall. Here, evidence of earlier clay-bonded stone footings (perhaps the original foundations of the plinth wall), and a possible stone floor level some 0.45m below the modern floor which may relate to an earlier building on the same site, were found. The work was funded by Leicester City Council. Finds and records with Leicestershire Museums, accession no. A29.1992.

An eagle skull from an excavation in High Street, Leicester

Ian L Baxter

Introduction

In January 1992, the Leicestershire Archaeological Unit completed excavations in the basements of numbers 33 to 47 High Street, Leicester (Lucas 1992, 179), a site within the Roman town defences, 50 metres north of the main east-west axis road, the Fosse Way.

The eagle skull was found in what may have been a well, dated to the mid third century. The animal bone in the feature was atypical of the site as a whole, containing a high proportion of wild species and immature individuals of domestic species. It included the skeleton of a foetal or neonatal piglet, fragments of a second piglet of similar age, partial skeletons of kittens and young dogs, and the partial skeletons of a crow and jackdaw. Most of the domestic cattle and sheep/goat fragments were from sub-adult animals and consisted most frequently of head and jaw elements. The most unusual bone fragments, however, consisted of a small goose tibiotarsus and an eagle skull, respectively (Baxter 1993). The goose has been tentatively identified as Barnacle goose, *Branta leucopsis* (Bechstein), chiefly on the basis of size after comparison with reference material housed at Leicestershire Museums and the British Museum (Natural History) at Tring. This is a non-breeding visitor from September to May, mainly frequenting western Scotland and Ireland in recent times.

The Eagle Cranium

The eagle skull consists of a beakless adult cranium (illus. 17) showing clear signs of having been decapitated in antiquity. Microscopic examination indicates that this was done with a very sharp blade, the blow coming from above and across the left occipital region. There is also a chop mark on the left side above the processus frontalis which may represent an earlier failed blow. No trace of the beak was found and there are no

fresh breaks to suggest it was lost at the time of excavation; in all probability it had been removed prior to deposition. No other eagle bones were recovered from this excavation and indeed, it is the only eagle bone found archaeologically, so far, in Leicestershire.

The skull has been identified as belonging to a white-tailed (sea) eagle, *Haliaeetus albicilla* (L.), after comparison with reference material at the British Museum (Natural History), Tring, on the basis of several morphological details, the most significant being the breadth of the pars nasalis of the frontale which is greater than *Aquila* specimens measured, but within the range of *H. albicilla*. The greater breadth of this region provides support for a more massive bill in white-tailed eagles (*cf.* bill measurements in Cramp 1980, vol II).

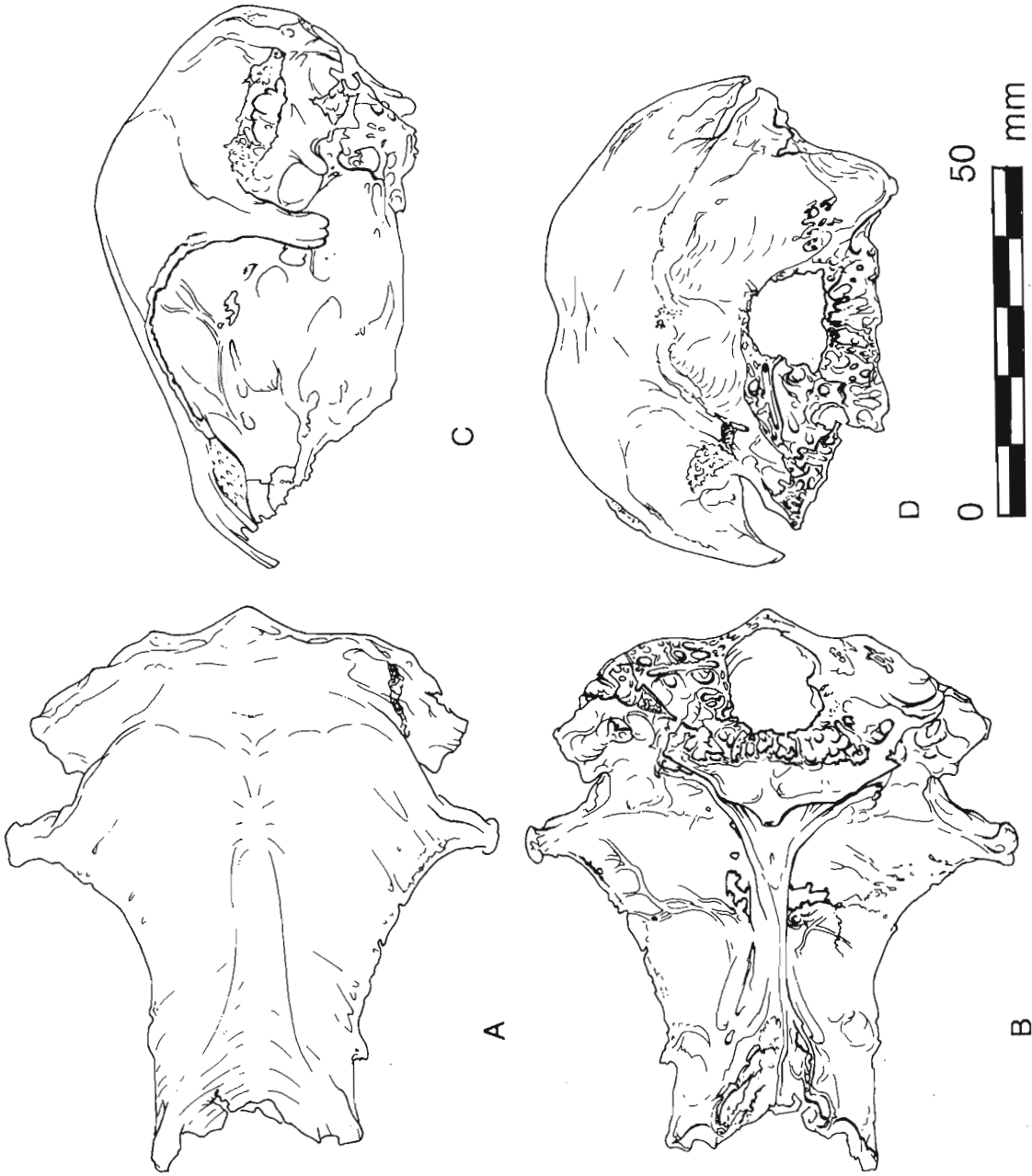
Archaeological eagles

The white-tailed eagle was present in Britain from towards the end of the penultimate (Wolstonian) glaciation until its extermination at the beginning of this century (Reid-Henry and Harrison 1988, p.78). Their remains are more frequently found on archaeological sites than those of the golden eagle (Cohen and Serjeantson 1986, p.2). The bones of around 14 white-tailed eagles were found in the chambered tomb of Isbister in Orkney (Bramwell 1983), and others have been found on prehistoric and historic sites in Wessex (Coy 1983). Their remains have also been found at six other Roman sites in Britain: Droitwich, Uley, Dunstable, Sheepen (Camulodunum), Southwark and Billingsgate in London. Three of these are urban contexts and three rural, including a Romano-Celtic temple site (Parker 1988, p.208, tables 1 and 2).

Habits and Habitat

It is possible that in pre- and early historic times, white-tailed eagles were more common inland than in the recent past and they do breed inland at the present day in Sweden, Germany and Finland (Brown 1978, p.86). Generally a sedentary species with a home range of c.600-800 hectares, they tend to be more sociable than other large birds of prey and may roost or feed in groups of five or six if food is abundant in a certain locality (Brown 1978, p.92). Fish constitute about two-thirds of their normal prey with diving birds, hares and carrion comprising most of the rest of the diet (Brown 1978, p.87). Frequently referred to as a companion of the wolf and raven at battlefields in Anglo-Saxon and Norse literature, even larger gatherings probably occurred on such occasions as happens with related species in Alaska during salmon spawning. Prior to 1871 as many as 40 white-tailed eagles could be seen together attracted by carrion on the Scottish coast (Bannerman and Lodge 1956, p.286).

The generally coastal preference of white-tailed eagles in north-western Europe (Cramp 1980, p.49) suggests that they may also have arrived in Leicester from the east coast. However, elsewhere they frequent large rivers and inland waters. Evidence provided by Anglo-Saxon place names would suggest the presence of white-tailed eagles at a number of wooded riverine and lacustrine inland locations in the 10th century, including sites near the rivers Thames, Severn, Mersey, Ribble and Don. The nearest to Leicester is Arley (Earn-leah = eagles clearing) in Warwickshire close to the Roman site of Mancetter (Gelling 1987; Baxter forthcoming). While there is a lack of data for the Roman period, it is known that the Soar in prehistoric (Shackley and Hunt 1985, p.10), medieval (Mellor and Pearce 1981, p.6) and recent times was a sluggish



17. The eagle skull from 33-47 High St., Leicester. A: dorsal; B: ventral; c: lateral; D: occipital.

river subject to extensive flooding with the creation of shallow ponds or lakes, marshland and reedbeds, close to the Roman and medieval city. Waterfowl, including diving birds, account for nearly 50% of wild bird species recovered from the excavation of the medieval Augustinian friary, situated by the river Soar, about 500m from the High Street site (Thawley 1981, p.173). The Soar may be expected to have supported many fish and the presence of domestic livestock in the farmsteads outside the Roman city would have provided a regular source of carrion, particularly during lambing and in winter. Urban slaughter yards would have provided similar opportunities, which ravens, kites and buzzards are known to have availed themselves of in Leicester and elsewhere.

The eagle may have been resident in the Soar valley or a visitor from the coast. Given the probable environment at the time and the sedentary habits of white-tailed eagles, an adult bird such as this was probably a resident. It may have been killed as vermin as it was in 19th and early 20th century Britain or to provide feathers for fletching.

The absence of any postcranial remains and of the bill leaves room for less prosaic speculation, however. The beaks and claws of eagles and other raptors seem to have been used as talismans in prehistoric Europe (Clark 1948, p.129-30), and it is well known that the Romans associated the eagle and the thunderbolt with Jupiter. Perhaps it is not entirely coincidental that a Neolithic polished stone axe was found in an earlier Roman pit on the same site only 15m away from that containing the eagle skull, but it is not possible on present evidence to establish any connection. The reasons for its presence in the backfill of a probable Roman well must remain problematic.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Jenny Coy, Jan Dawson of Leicestershire Museums and Jo Bailey of the British Museum (Natural History) at Tring, for arranging access to reference material in their charge; David Hopkins for his drawing of the eagle skull, Julian Hagar, Patrick Clay and John Lucas at the Leicestershire Archaeological Unit for their contextual information and support in the writing of this paper; and Terry O'Connor of Bradford University and Tony Gouldwell of Leicester University for their encouragement.

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An archaeological evaluation at Lutterworth (SP 546 839)

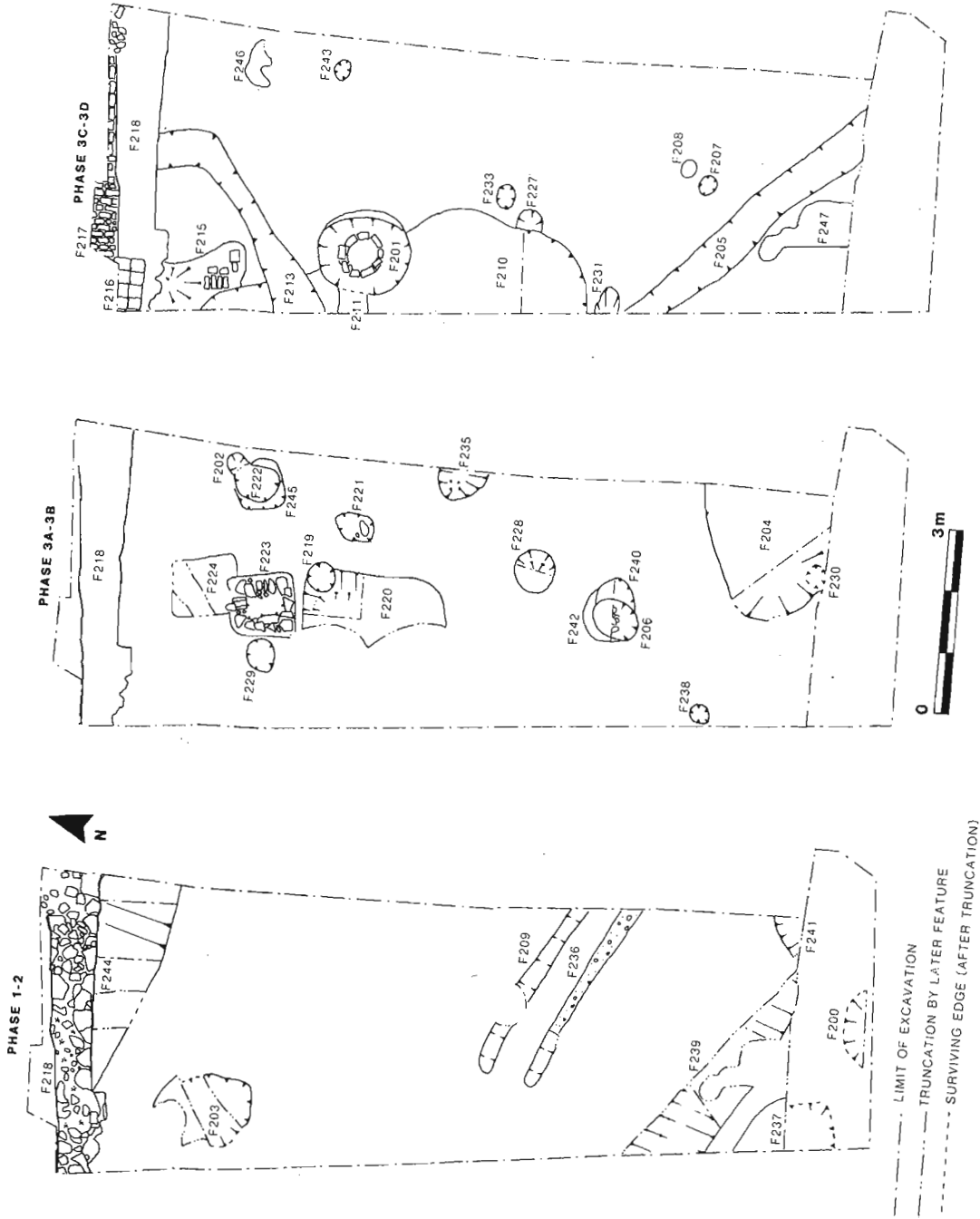
Lynden Cooper

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken in advance of a road junction development south of Lutterworth. Two areas of earthworks adjacent to the site of the medieval St. John's Hospital were examined. Following a detailed micro-contour survey by computer linked EDM theodolite, limited excavation revealed medieval enclosure ditches and field systems to the west of the hospital (illus 00). The earthworks to the south were identified as drainage features of probable 17th-18th century date. No evidence of structures was revealed. This work was funded by Gazeley Properties and the finds and archives are deposited with Leicestershire Museums, accession no.A49.1992.

An evaluation and watching brief at Market Harborough, the Cattle Market (SP 737 869) and St.Mary's Road (SP 735 872)

Lynden Cooper

An evaluation was undertaken by Leicestershire Archaeological Unit at the Cattle Market Lodge House between the 8th and 9th of July 1992 on the proposed site of a fuel tank. This formed part of the archaeological work undertaken at St.Mary's Road and the Cattle Market during 1991 (Pollard 1992). Archaeological features identified



18. King St., Melton Mowbray: The site by phase.

included two ditches of medieval date, thought to represent part of the field system, and a cobbled surface which could be a medieval predecessor of Springfield Street. A watching brief monitoring the development of this area was started in November 1992. This resulted in the location of a stone foundation of a medieval or early post-medieval wall to the rear of the Peacock Hotel, possibly part of a building identified during the earlier excavation. The work was funded by Slateplace Ltd, and the finds and records are with Leicestershire Museums, accession no. A44.1991.

Bibliography

Pollard, R.J., 1992 'Market Harborough, St. Mary's Road', *TLAHS*, **66**, pp.180-81).

An archaeological evaluation at King Street, Melton Mowbray (SK 753 192)

Lynden Cooper

This was carried out by the Leicestershire Archaeological Unit, under the direction of Lynden Cooper, between the 6th and the 17th January, 1992. The work was intended to assess the archaeological potential of the site in advance of possible development and was funded by the Leicestershire County Council's Estates Department. Melton Mowbray is situated some 15 miles north-east of Leicester in the valley of the River Eye and this site overlies the sand and gravel river terraces. Finds and records are with Leicestershire Museums, accession no. A1.1992.

The site by phase (illus. 18).

The following is an outline phasing based on interpretation of the features and spot dating of the pottery.

Phase 1a: First century A.D. - ditches: F239; F244.

Phase 1b: Roman? - shallow gullies: F236, F248; silty gravel layer: F209.

Phase 2: 15th century - wall: F218; truncated pits: F200, F203, F237, F241.

The wall survived as three courses of foundation and one of superstructure, built of mortar-bonded ironstone and limestone blocks with a central core of smaller fragments. In the adjacent plot this wall was observed to turn north to the street frontage and hence seems to represent the back wall of a building. It may possibly be the southern boundary of the 14th century manorial complex, but as medieval building materials are often reused, it could be of a much later date and may be the L-shaped building shown on the late 18th century map. The medieval pits, more definitely of a 15th century date, may represent small scale gravel extraction in the backyards.

Phase 3a: 17th century - wall: F218; cesspit and soakaways: F220, and F223-4.

Phase 3b: 17th/18th century - wall: F218; pit: F204;
post holes: F202, F206, F219, F221-2, F228-30, F235, F238, F240,
F245.

The majority of the post holes form the corner of a 17th century timber building,

dismantled in the 18th century, whose alignment does not tie in with the plot depicted on the later maps. The building may have been ancillary to a house known as The Limes, whose gardens occupied much of this area in the 18th century. The high frequency of building debris found attests to structural demolition, on this site or in the near vicinity, of stone founded structures and timber buildings with wattle and plaster infill panels.

Phase 3c: 19th century - wall: F218; cat burial: F207; rubbish pit: F210; post holes (undefined structures): F208, F227, F231, F233, F243.

Phase 3d: 19th/early 20th century - wall: F218; brick and tile floors: F217 and F216; well: F201; water pipe: F211; misc. cut: F247; drains: F205, F212-5.

Though the construction date for wall F218 is uncertain, it did form the back wall of a building in this phase.

Conclusion

There is insufficient evidence from the Roman period to determine the nature of the occupation; the sparsity of finds suggests that this was not a major focus of Roman activity, although it could have been a very minor or short lived site. The earliest evidence of medieval occupation comes with the pits, but the date of the building represented by F218 is uncertain. It must have been erected prior to the timber building, at the latest in the 17th century.

A watching brief at 22 High Street, Oakham (SK 0871 8611)

Elaine Jones

In November 1992, the Rutland Field Research Group for Archaeology and History conducted a watching brief on development at 22 High street, Oakham. A pit containing 33 fragments of Stamford ware provisionally dated to the second half of the 11th century was found. The pottery is evidence of Saxo-Norman activity within what may be the historic core of the town. Finds and records with Leicestershire Museums, accession no. A102.1992.

An archaeological evaluation to the rear of 13-15 Mill Street, Oakham (SK 862 085)

Toby Catchpole

The Leicestershire Archaeological Unit carried out an evaluation of archaeological potential in Oakham during three weeks of February 1992, on a site south of the Crown Hotel yard, between Crown Street and Mill Street. It was directed by Toby Catchpole, with the assistance of James Meek and was carried out in advance of development by Renadell Ltd, who financed the archaeological work. Finds and records are with the Leicestershire Museums, accession no. A5. 1992.

Evidence of Saxon and early medieval Oakham is sparse. This site was close to the centre of Oakham, but it is thought that the focus of the medieval town was probably located to the north of the High Street. The John Speed map of 1611 shows that the plot which is partly included in the northern half of this site, appeared to have had a gateway leading to the south. The Cullingworth map of 1787 shows the site as being in the north-east corner of a triangular enclosure, which looks similar to a market place,

surrounded on all sides by either open space or streets. It suggests that a road may once have occupied the plot forming the southern half of this site. By the time of the enclosure act map drawn up in 1836, the streets and properties were laid out in their modern form.

The centrally-located main trench measured 6.0m by 18.0m. The removal of a 0.2 to 0.5m thick modern overburden exposed the natural deposits of sandy clay and limestone. Just two features were clearly medieval in date and these consisted of a small circular rubbish pit, which contained sherds of Stamford and Stanion/Lyveden wares, and a fragment of a drainage ditch that appeared to drain the land along the back of the High Street plots. Its lowest levels contained sherds of Stanion/Lyveden and Chilvers Coton wares. Both features were dated by the pottery to the second half of the 13th century. A stone lined culvert, which contained pottery made from 1780 onwards, was also identified. The other features excavated in the main trench were of unknown date and function.

Three small test boxes were dug, one to the west and two to the east of the main trench. In the western box an unmortared stone structure, of possible early post-medieval date, consisted of two courses of irregular blocks of local limestone. It appeared to have had a squared western end and could be a foundation plinth for the gateway shown on the 1611 map. The test box to the south-east contained a post-medieval stone-lined well, which had been backfilled in this century. The box to the north-east contained no archaeological levels.

The evidence for the earliest phases of the history of Oakham was restricted to residual sherds of Saxo-Norman, Stamford and Northampton wares. The dearth of medieval features suggests that this site, as anticipated, was probably peripheral to Saxon and medieval Oakham.

A watching brief at Cliffe Hill, Stanton-under-Bardon (SK 468 105) James Meek

Following field survey, a watching brief was undertaken of topsoil stripping at Stanton-under-Bardon in advance of proposed extensions to Cliffe Hill quarry. No archaeological deposits were located, however.

REPORTS OF FIELDWORK

Peter Liddle

Ashby Woulds (SK 32 15)

Leicestershire Museums Archaeological Survey Team (LMAST) has found a small scatter of Roman pottery during fieldwork.

Brighthurst (SP 84 91)

Great Easton Fieldwork Group has confirmed a scatter of Anglo-Saxon pottery.

Burton and Dalby (SK 74 15)

Ian Fraser reports a scatter of Roman pottery, mainly grey wares, and a Roman brooch.

Burton and Dalby (SK 75 12)

Ian Fraser reports a scatter of Roman pottery, brooches and a terret.

Catthorpe (SP 54 78)

LMAST has found a well spread scatter of flint (including the tip of a flaked axe) and Roman pottery.

Cossington (SK 60 13)

Tony Jackson reports a substantial flint scatter producing in excess of 10 scrapers, a transverse arrowhead, cores and flakes.

Cranoë (SP 76 94)

Leicestershire County Council Archaeology Employment Training Team (ET Team) has found a well-defined Roman pottery scatter.

Cranoë (SP 77 94)

The ET Team has found a possible Roman site.

Heather (SK 38 10)

Peter Riley reports a group of Roman coins and a brooch from a small area.

Kimcote and Walton (SP 62 86)

LMAST has found a scatter of burnt cobbles. This may be analogous to prehistoric 'burnt mounds' identified elsewhere in the country.

Kirby Muxloe/Glenfield (SK 53 04)

LMAST has found an Iron Age and Roman scatter, including kiln bars. Part of the site has been excavated in advance of the A46 Leicester Western Bypass.

Knossington (SK 81 09)

Ian Fraser reports a small scatter of Roman pottery.

Leicester (SK 55 08)

Leicestershire Archaeological Detector Society reports a small but concentrated group of Roman coins and brooches found on the line of the A46 Leicester Western bypass, which may represent an occupation site.

Leicester (SK 57 08)

Chris Massey reports a small group of Iron Age pottery on Mowmacre Hill. Local disturbance was noted and it is possible that the material could have been imported from elsewhere.

Leicester (SK 62 07)

Howard Ketteringham reports a group of 16 sherds of Iron Age pottery recovered from a building site on the Hamilton Development.

Leicester (SK 57 02)

LMAST has salvaged an inhumation burial disturbed by a house extension on Western Road. A penannular brooch was recovered, suggesting a Roman date.

Long Whatton (SK 48 21)

LMAST has found a closely grouped scatter of Iron Age pottery.

Long Whatton (SK 48 21)

LMAST has defined a Roman scatter cut by the M1 Motorway.

Lowesby (SK 72 07)

Carl Dawson and LMAST have defined Anglo-Saxon and Roman pottery scatters corresponding to metalwork scatters. The Anglo-Saxon material comes from an area of old gravel pits, now ploughed over.

Markfield (SK 48 08)

LMAST has found a Roman pottery scatter with kiln bars.

Melton Mowbray (SK 73 18)

LMAST have found a substantial Anglo-Saxon and flint scatter. Some 60 Roman sherds were also found, suggesting a Roman occupation site in the immediate vicinity.

Melton Mowbray (SK 75 19)

Melton Fieldworkers have found a group of prehistoric, mostly Iron Age, pottery from a watching brief.

Normanton-Le-Heath (SK 37 12)

Peter Riley reports a scatter of Roman pottery including grey ware, mortaria, colour-coat and Derbyshire ware and also several Roman metal objects.

Shepshed (SK 48 20)

LMAST has found a small group of Roman pottery.

Sileby (SK 61 15)

Tony Jackson reports a small number of Roman sherds and a few Roman coins and a brooch.

Slawston (SP 77 93)

The ET Team has found a possible Roman site.

Slawston (SP 77 94)

The ET Team has found a possible Roman site.

Slawston (SP 78 93)

The ET Team has found a well-defined flint scatter. Analysis of the material is continuing.

Somerby (SK 75 10)

Ian Fraser reports a small scatter of Roman grey ware.

Swinford (SP 56 79)

LMAST has found a small flint scatter.

Swinford (SP 56 78)

LMAST has recorded a small flint scatter.

Swinford/Catthorpe (SP 55 78)

LMAST has recorded a large flint scatter with material from Mesolithic through to Bronze Age covering an entire hilltop.

Swinford (SP 56 78)

LMAST has found a small concentration of Roman pottery, mostly grey ware. A faint rectangular enclosure is visible in this area on vertical aerial photographs.

Swinford (SP 56 78)

LMAST has found a small scatter of early flint material. Three sherds of hand-made pottery were also recovered and a possible sub-rectangular enclosure noted on vertical aerial photographs.

Thurcaston (SK 55 11)

Brian Kimberley reports a scatter of Roman pottery, coins and brooches.

Tur Langton (SP 72 94)

Paul Bowman has found a scatter of 5 early Anglo-Saxon sherds on a ridge of high ground overlooking the valley of the Lipping.

Tur Langton (SP 73 95)

Paul Bowman has found another concentration of late Iron Age and Roman pottery on the valley floor of the Lipping, a south flowing tributary of the River Welland (see TLAHS, 66, 191). Finds include a probable dupondius.

Tur Langton (SP 72 95)

Paul Bowman reports a concentration of some 125 sherds of late Iron Age and Roman pottery on ground rising from a stream draining into the Lipping.

ANNUAL REPORTS

Report of the Leicestershire Archaeological Unit 1992

Work proceeded on 58 projects during 1992; 14 of these were evaluations, 9 were watching briefs, 5 were preliminary surveys or recording work and 27 were post-excavation projects. One major excavation was begun following the results of the evaluation but in the majority of cases either design solutions were sought to protect the archaeological deposits or a decision has not yet been reached. The research and training projects continued at Medbourne and Drayton with students from the School of Archaeological Studies at Leicester University, from the Department of Adult Education and the County Council's Employment Training scheme. At Drayton, Aileen Connor took the field as Site Director this year and the benefits of a full time professional input were seen in the development of the site plan which was revealed this season (above p00).

In addition, negotiations were undertaken on a further 46 sites and most of these are still in progress. The implications of these figures are interesting and may cause concern among some archaeologists. For example, while the amount of archaeological activity in the county is probably greater than ever before and fewer sites are being lost without some record, much of the work is designed only to identify the date, character, extent and state of preservation of the archaeological deposits. This work is of great value and adds a much needed dimension to the Sites and Monuments Record, but it is also true that it brings its own frustration to archaeologists who, having demonstrated the potential of a site, cannot continue their investigations. Complete preservation - of what merits preservation - must surely be the preferred option, but without some investigation the resource may begin to lose its credibility not only for archaeologists but for the developer and the public at large. When the solution is only partial preservation, sometimes coupled with partial excavation, the argument becomes even more complex and this is not the place to pursue it in detail.

Moreover, despite the amount of work being undertaken, there are fewer and fewer opportunities for the volunteers and amateurs, who were once the core of the discipline to become involved. This is a real and a major dilemma and one to which a resolution must be sought.

The results of the evaluations and excavations are reported on elsewhere in this volume (above pp.73-109). Post-excavation analysis has proceeded on the Shires and Causeway Lane projects, and the reports on the work at Norfolk Street, Leicester; Burley Road, Oakham and even earlier work on several sites in Leicester are nearing completion. It has even been possible during this year to make progress with some other backlog sites as well as to tackle analysis left outstanding from previous developer reports.

The benefits of a Display and Publicity Officer for the whole archaeological service continued to make themselves keenly felt. Thanks to Julie Wigmore the Unit has been able to maintain a programme of temporary displays on the Unit's work not only at Jewry Wall Museum but at other museums throughout the county. The Newsletter, *Down to Earth*, begun as part of the Causeway Lane project in 1991 has gone from strength to strength under its joint editors Deborah Sawday and Julie Wigmore. The same team, with Jill Bourn, Assistant Keeper (Interpretation) in the Archaeology Section, has continued the collaboration with British Coal Opencast in the production

of a video based on the excavations at Normanton-le-Heath in 1990. This has been a long project but is now nearing completion.

The contribution of developer funding towards the understanding of the archaeology of the county was recognised in 1992 with the first in an annual presentation of the Leicestershire Archaeological Award. The winners, for work carried out in 1991, were British Coal Opencast with Anglian Water and the Inland Revenue as runners-up. British Coal Opencast also received an honourable mention and special commendation for this project in the British Archaeological Awards.

Terry Pearce's work with the blind and visually impaired continued and received royal recognition in being awarded a certificate in the Queen's Anniversary Challenge.

Against the background of reorganisation both within the Museums and the County Council and on a national scale in local government generally, 1992 has nevertheless been a busy and successful year for the Unit in all areas of activity: we hope that in 1993 we can continue to build on these foundations.

Report of the Leicestershire Museums Archaeological Survey Team 1992

The main functions of the Archaeological Survey Team are to undertake archaeological survey, stimulate archaeological survey by amateur archaeologists, curate the Leicestershire Sites and Monuments Record, provide advice on archaeological site interpretation and management, and help the public to appreciate archaeology through events, displays and publications.

In 1992 the Team's work developed in a number of directions. The results of Policy Planning Guidance Note No.16 on 'Archaeology and Planning', which gave archaeology increased standing in the planning process, continues to be felt. The planning service has needed increased resources and Richard Knox now assists Anne Graf in providing this. Work on roads and mineral applications have been particularly time-consuming. As a consequence of this activity developers have been increasingly commissioning the Team to undertake surveys to establish the archaeological potential of development sites. In 1992, 12 assessment reports were produced. Fieldwork was undertaken by Peter Liddle, Richard Knox and Samantha Middleton, who has joined the Team after being Graduate Trainee in the Archaeology Section. Negotiation with the British Coal Opencast Executive has led to the appointment of Mark Nelson as Site Archaeologist on the 'Lounge' opencast site near Coleorton. It is believed to be the first such appointment on an opencast coal mine.

The 'Community Archaeology scheme' continues to operate with regular meetings and newsletters for members with the Team providing advice and training for aspiring fieldworkers. Active local groups at Great Easton, Coalville, The Langtons, Lutterworth, Oadby and Wigston, Market Harborough, Rutland and Wymeswold continue to survey the archaeology of their own areas of the county.

Fieldworkers have also provided the core of helpers who make the annual event, 'Bringing The Past To Life', possible. This year there were more events than ever and some 2,600 members of the public attended making it one of the most popular archaeological events in the country. In November 'The Archaeological Detective Agency' was run with about 200 people attending.

The Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) map base has been completely renewed and Susan Ripper has completed both new record maps and new constraint maps for

development control use. This project was part-funded by the County Council Dept. of Planning and Transportation. A relatively large backlog of material is waiting to be added to the SMR but this will be cleared in Summer 1993.

Fred Hartley has continued his involvement in the development of displays at Snibston Discovery Park and is providing archaeological advice on the 'Countryside Stewardship Scheme' run by the Countryside Commission. He has also continued his aerial survey and has completed several earthwork surveys.

Peter Liddle

Archaeological Survey Officer