

OXFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT NEWSLETTER

INCLUDING OXFORDSHIRE PARISH SURVEY NEWS

No.2 -February 1978

Anyone wishing to send contributions to the Newsletter should send to 46 Hythe Bridge Street, Oxford OX1 2EP (Tel: 43880) before the last Tuesday of each month.

Subscriptions for the 1978 issues of the Newsletter are now due and if these have not already been paid we should be grateful to receive your cheque for £1.00 in due course.

ADWELL

Slight earthworks close to the M40 have been closely examined by the Lewknor Society. The conclusion reached was that the long, low platform effect was due to a late merging of several strips of ridge and furrow into one.

BERINSFIELD, Mount Farm

The excavation has been proceeding steadily though hampered by Frost, snow, rain and wind. The most interesting discoveries lately have been two waterlogged deposits, a large early - middle Iron Age waterhole and a late Iron Age - Roman? well. These should provide vital information about the natural environment of the settlement at these dates. In addition a possible round house represented by a circle of post holes c.7 metres in diameter has been found which may be associated with a pit containing neolithic - early Bronze Age flints, including some very fine saws. This is another important addition to the site's history.

DORCHESTER, 11. Rotten Row

During reconstruction of a cottage, Mr Patrick Johnson of the Dorchester Archaeological and Historical Group reports that Builders found a number of human skeletons beneath the floor of the building. The burials were only just below the surface, and had been disturbed, presumably when the cottage was first built (?17th-18th century). Not even an intact skull was found. Some Roman pottery, including the neck of an amphora, was found on the site, and Mr Johnson is given to understand that the builders also found some Roman coins.

HARDWICK, Mingies Ditch

The OUAS have begun the excavation of the southern corner of the field attached to the Iron Age double ditched enclosure. This area is due to be destroyed by gravel extraction in advance of the rest of the site; so far the top of one of the field ditches has been located.

HAMPTON GAY

Mr Whitfeld has also reported later medieval pottery and some worked flint from early field walking in this parish.

## HORSEPATH

Fieldwalking over the last couple of years by Mr Whitfeld for the Parish Survey has provided much material from Harrow ground, Horsepath. Within this field are several known kiln sites and occupation areas. One of the principal products of these kilns was mortared in an offwhite fabric. None of the many mortaria fragments collected appeared to have been produced before the 3rd century AD. Several wasters badly distorted during firing were also found.

## LEWKNOR

An afternoon was spent with the Lewknor Society examining a series of parallel hollow ways running up the chalk scarp from Lewknor to Christmas Common. The intensity of the usage of these trackways is yet another indication of the former occupation in the Chilterns even on the ridge, a fact which was not realized until the Iron Age, Roman, Saxon and Medieval sites were discovered by the M40 motorway in 1972. More sites presumably await discovery during woodland clearance and replanting schemes.

## OXFORD, Turl Street, the Former Church of St Mildred

A gang working on a gas main reported a skull and neck bones, apparently articulated, which must have been a burial associated with St Mildreds, suppressed in 1429 after the founding of Lincoln College. It was surprising to find it well out under the modern street, and scarcely more than two feet down.

## PARISH SURVEY INFORMATION

Following general requests at the last Parish Survey Progress Meeting Trevor Rowley has kindly agreed that the Oxford University Department for External Studies will put on three day schools for the benefit of the Parish Survey (for dates see Calendar). Details will be available as soon as the programmes are ready.

## CALENDAR for FEBRUARY/MARCH 1978

20th February

Peter Spufford MA. PhD FRHistS FSC will talk on Mobility of Pre-Industrial Population. The subject will be biased towards Oxon, rural enealogy. Talk arranged through Oxfordshire Family History Society 8.00 p.m. to 10.00 p.m. at British Council Building, 1 Beaumont Place, Oxford (off St John Street).

2nd March

The Lewknor Hundred Historical Soc., will be showing the film "Twenty-four Square Miles" at their meeting at 8.00 p.m. in Lewknor School.

6th March

Oxford University Archaeological Society present a talk by the Society's President on "The Vatican Excavations"

8th March

Oxford Archaeological and Historical Society present Mr Tom Hassall who will be lecturing on "Excavations in Oxfordshire 1977". Historical Association meetings are held in All Souls College, Oxford at 8.15 p.m.

15th March

Abingdon Area Archaeological and  
Historical Society present Prof.  
P Warret "The Bronze Age Settlement  
at Alcrofini, Thera."

18th March 1978

A Parish Survey day school on the  
identification of worked flints.