

Chapter IV

The Roman occupation

IV.A Introduction

IV.A.1 Excavation and post-excavation methodology

The manner of excavation and the techniques of site-recording employed largely dictate the level at which analysis is possible and influence the conclusions drawn from it. A brief resume of the site-recording adopted in each area, and of the consequent post-excavation strategy, is therefore given below.

The basis of the recording was the finds notebook, a day-by-day listing of the principal finds bagged from each excavated trench, box, cutting or individual feature. Due to the use of untrained labourers for most of the excavation work, who could not distinguish between features, there was however no unique context numbering system, and description of the provenance of the finds varied considerably.

In the Early Roman area (see Fig. 34) and the western enclosures (see Fig. 59, Fig. 131 on Fiche 1#35) features were numbered individually and separate cuttings distinguished by letter. Within features layers were sometimes distinguished, or the depth given below surface.

In the 1957-59 villa excavations finds were attributed to trench or box on the grid, and were given a depth below surface, usually accompanied by a brief description of the soil, *eg* Trench S, brown soil below black, 2'6" down. The position within the trench was sometimes indicated, *eg* W side. One or more plans of each trench was drawn, usually either at the level of undisturbed gravel or, within a building, at floor level, and at least one section of each trench was usually drawn. It was thus often possible to attribute finds to a particular context. Some trenches, particularly in the villa courtyard, were not however drawn, and others were only sketched.

Only very limited areas were opened up due to the shortage of resources (see Fig. 37 and Fig. 42, Building III); no overall phasing linking the various deposits between separate trenches was undertaken on site, and no levels were taken. Where the sections on opposite sides of a trench differed, the relationship between them was often not stated. Understanding of the complex stratigraphy was thus limited.

Both sets of enclosures east of the villa were stripped to gravel prior to excavation (Fig. 1; 138 on Fiche 1#44;

142 on Fiche 1#48) and the excavation strategy was aimed at obtaining an overall plan and on excavating the intersections between features to clarify the chronology. The site was gridded in 10' squares on an alpha-numeric grid, and the excavated intersections were labelled by grid square, not according to the features involved, which were not distinguished. Finds were not separated between the intersecting features; the intersections were excavated and the most significant finds recorded and planned in spits. Sections of the relationships were drawn after excavation.

Using the sections and the plans of the spits it was possible to number features individually and separate some of the finds between them, and this was carried out in order to date the broad sequence of development. Many of the enclosure ditches were frequently recut, but in most cases no attempt was made to distinguish the individual recuts.

Ernest Greenfield, who excavated the SE half of the northern enclosure group, adopted a different strategy. Having recorded an overall plan he excavated only the discrete features, which he numbered individually, but drew very few sections. The sequence of enclosures in this part of the site is thus not as clear.

The areas east of these enclosure groups were stripped and salvaged. Features were given grid references and were distinguished individually. Only very limited excavation was possible with the resources available.

In ordering the site information for publication a choice had to be made between full description, often involving lengthy discussion of the doubtful validity of particular pieces of evidence, or more summary description, based around whichever interpretative framework best fitted the available data. The second approach has been adopted here; the description of the Roman stratigraphy is thus only a summary of the evidence, and for reasons both of brevity and clarity much of it is presented through an interpretative rather than a purely descriptive framework. This is drawn from a fuller description of the stratigraphy, which can be found in the Archive.

Where stratigraphic evidence is lacking, the dating of the sequence of Roman occupation is based upon the finds. Where coins occur they are mentioned in the description, but these were few (see Ch. V.3), and dating relies largely upon the pottery. Because of the problems of attributing pottery described above, and because some of the pottery was discarded (see Ch. I.4), the pottery is not presented in phased sequence or by context groups (see Ch. V.2),

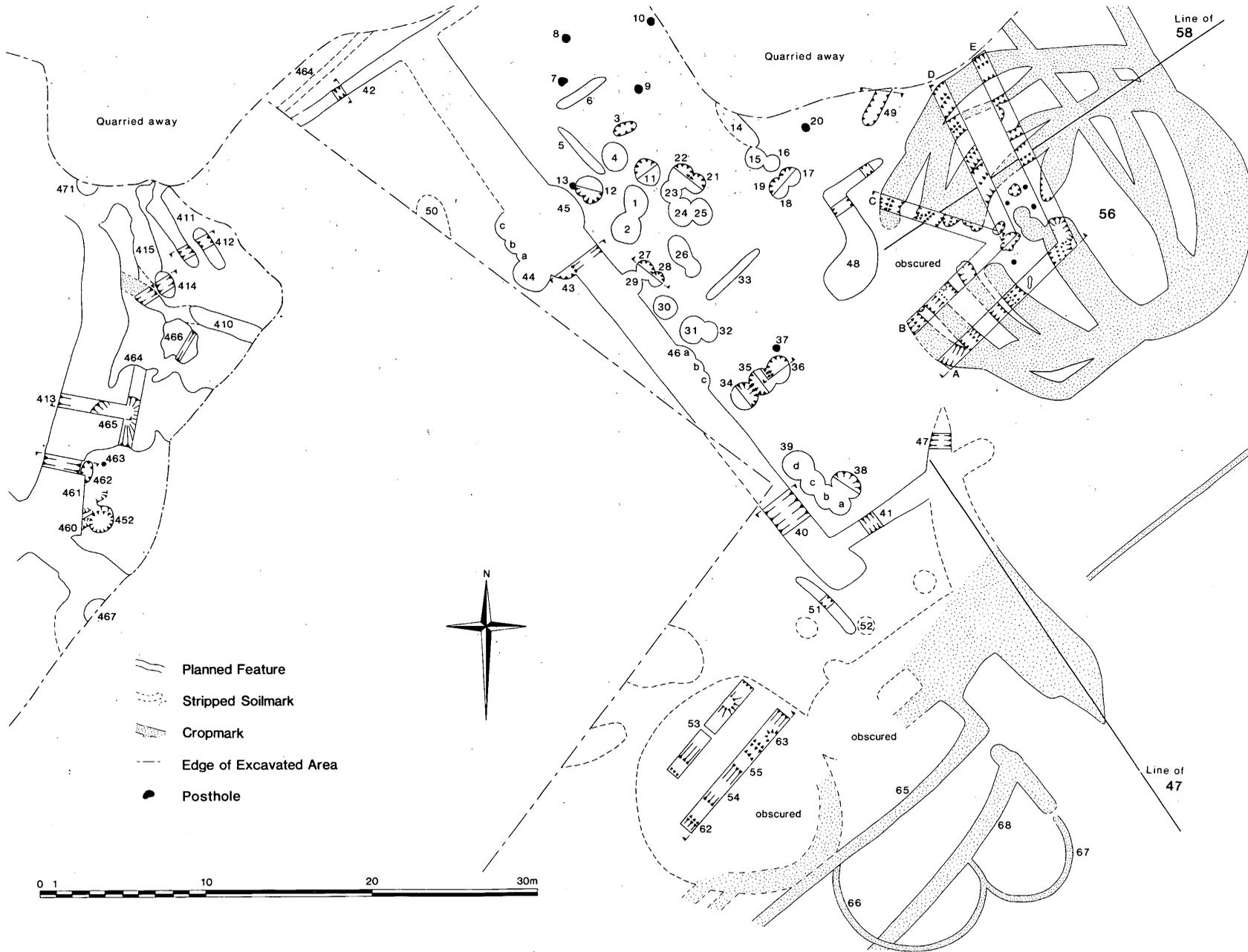


Figure 34 Early Roman occupation: plan of House-enclosure 56, pits and ditches

and only brief information as to the pottery from crucial contexts is given in the site description. A full breakdown of the pottery from individual contexts will however be found in Table 79 on Fiche 3#16.

IV.B The Early Roman occupation

Plans: Figs. 33, 34. Sections: Figs. 122 on Fiche 1#26, 123 on Fiche 1#28, 124 on Fiche 1#29, and 125 on Fiche 1#29

IV.B.1 Introduction

The overall distribution of Early Roman features is shown on Fig. 33. A large area photographed after topsoil stripping shortly before excavation began (Fig. 3) shows the circular or oval enclosures, pits and ditches characteristic of Iron Age or early Roman settlement. Part of this area was excavated (Fig. 34); the rest was extracted before excavation began. North of enclosure 56 virtually nothing is known, although local reports hint that occupation was thinning out, and that only the linear ditches of a later Roman field system were present. Another cluster of pits and gullies was found further west (Fig. 34 features 410 etc), and these represent the limits of early occupation in this direction. Further south early Roman pits and ditches also occurred below the Roman villa buildings (Figs. 129 on Fiche 1#33, 127 on Fiche 1#31, and 130 on Fiche 1#34), and continued south beyond the excavation area. The eastern limits of this occupation lay in the extracted area west of the Lechlade-Burford road; no early settlement was encountered in the excavations east of this (Fig. 33).

The middle of this settlement was extracted without record (Fig. 1 and Ch. I), and only small trenches were dug into features below the villa, so these do not form a coherent whole. Characterisation of the settlement is therefore based upon only a small sample.

IV.B.2 A ditched compound containing House-enclosure 56, pits and pen

An oval enclosure, 56, whose ditches were recut many times, was occupied from the mid-1st to the mid-2nd century AD. The ditches contained domestic refuse and the enclosure probably surrounded a house; a short arc of postholes on the inner lip of one ditch circuit may have been part of this. The size of the enclosure varied from 9 m to over 20 m from front to back, but it was not possible to establish the sequence of the ditches. One or two of the ditches could have held a wall or fence slot (Fig. 123 on Fiche 1#28). Outside the entrance was a group of pits contemporary with it, mostly filled with dark occupation soil including charcoal and domestic refuse (Fig. 124 on

Fiche 1#29). The pits could have been used for storage, and one or two may have been lined with stones. One or two pits contained only Iron Age pottery, and may have been prehistoric.

Most of the pits were contained within a rectangular enclosure formed by ditches 40, 41 and 42. Ditch 40 cut some of the pits, but contained no finds later than the mid-2nd century, and was probably contemporary with 56 and the later pits. Ditch 41 was in line with the south-east side of 56, which was thus probably incorporated within the rectangular enclosure. A dump of raw clay was found in 40, and smaller lumps of the same in the pits; this may have been intended for constructing ovens, of which numerous fragments were found in this area. What was probably the stoking end of an oven, feature 49, was found on the quarry edge just north of 56. Alongside ditch 40 a group of short shallow slots, 5, 6, 33 and 48, defined a rectangular pen adjacent to 56.

This area formed a coherent domestic compound with house, pits, a pen and ovens. It went out of use by the mid-2nd century AD, and was cut across by the ditches of a regular enclosure system 58 and 47 (Fig. 34).

IV.B.3 'Well' 54 and adjacent features

South of this compound was a large deep pit 54, which may have been a contemporary unlined well (Fig. 124 on Fiche 1#29). Around 54 were a series of gullies, some cut by it, others possibly surrounding it. These appear to have formed a small enclosure, possibly sitting inside the corner of another compound bounded by ditch 40 and its return, ditch 65 (Fig. 34). Just south-east of this corner was another circular enclosure 66, 6 or 7 m across, with an annex 67 on the east, but this was not investigated.

IV.B.4 Pits, postholes and gullies to the west

West of this area shallow gullies, postholes and deep pits were found. These included 465 and 471, two pits much deeper and larger than the majority of those close to 56 (Fig. 125 on Fiche 1#29). Another pit had a primary charcoal fill overlaid by a layer of stones, possibly indicating firing to sterilise the pit after storage and then laying a secondary floor of stones. However, this group of pits and gullies did not have the dark fill of features adjacent to 56, and may have belonged to a more peripheral area of settlement. 465 had fragments of several rotary querns and complete gate-pivot stones in its backfill, implying a major reorganisation when it was backfilled in the early to mid-2nd century.

Yet further west well 470 was excavated to the level of the water table 2.4 m down. (Fiche 4#62; Fig. 128 on Fiche 1#32; Fig. 133 on Fiche 1#37). The well was silting up by the end of the 2nd century, so may have been dug during the pre-villa phase of occupation.

IV.B.5 Features below the villa buildings and courtyard

South of this early features were seen only beneath later buildings and in narrow trenches. The terminals of another 1st and 2nd century enclosure ditch lay below Building I south of 54 (Fig. 127 on Fiche 1#31). Other deep curving ditches south-west of these (Fig. 43, 48, 130 on Fiche 1#34) may have belonged to one sub-rectangular enclosure up to 22 m across; these had many recuts with gravelly fills and few finds, and dated to the 1st century AD. Similar enclosures of the same date excavated at Claydon Pike and Thornhill Farm, Fairford, nearby (Miles and Palmer in prep.) have been interpreted as stock enclosures.

West and east of this enclosure were further pits, post-holes and gullies, most of which had clean gravelly fills with few finds. One deep pit 320 (Fig. 53) had a black charcoal-impregnated fill and much early 2nd century pottery, but this dark fill generally only appeared in later features in

this area. Further north-west however a couple of hearths or ovens 365 and 372 (Fig. 58) lay on the edge of the unexcavated area within what may have been the corner of another larger enclosure. These features went out of use soon after the mid-2nd century AD.

IV.B.6 Features east of the main settlement

Fig. 33

There were a few features adjacent to or beneath the linear boundary ditch 959/960 (Fig. 126 on Fiche 1#30). Two lengths of gully and a few pits or postholes ran parallel to it (Fig. 74 Stage 1; Fiche 4#74 and 88) and both at its north-west corner and down its eastern arm pits were cut through by the ditch (Fiche 4#66-7 and 98). These features contained early-mid 2nd century pottery, and their coincidence with the ditched boundary probably implies that the boundary, if not the ditch, was in existence when they were dug.

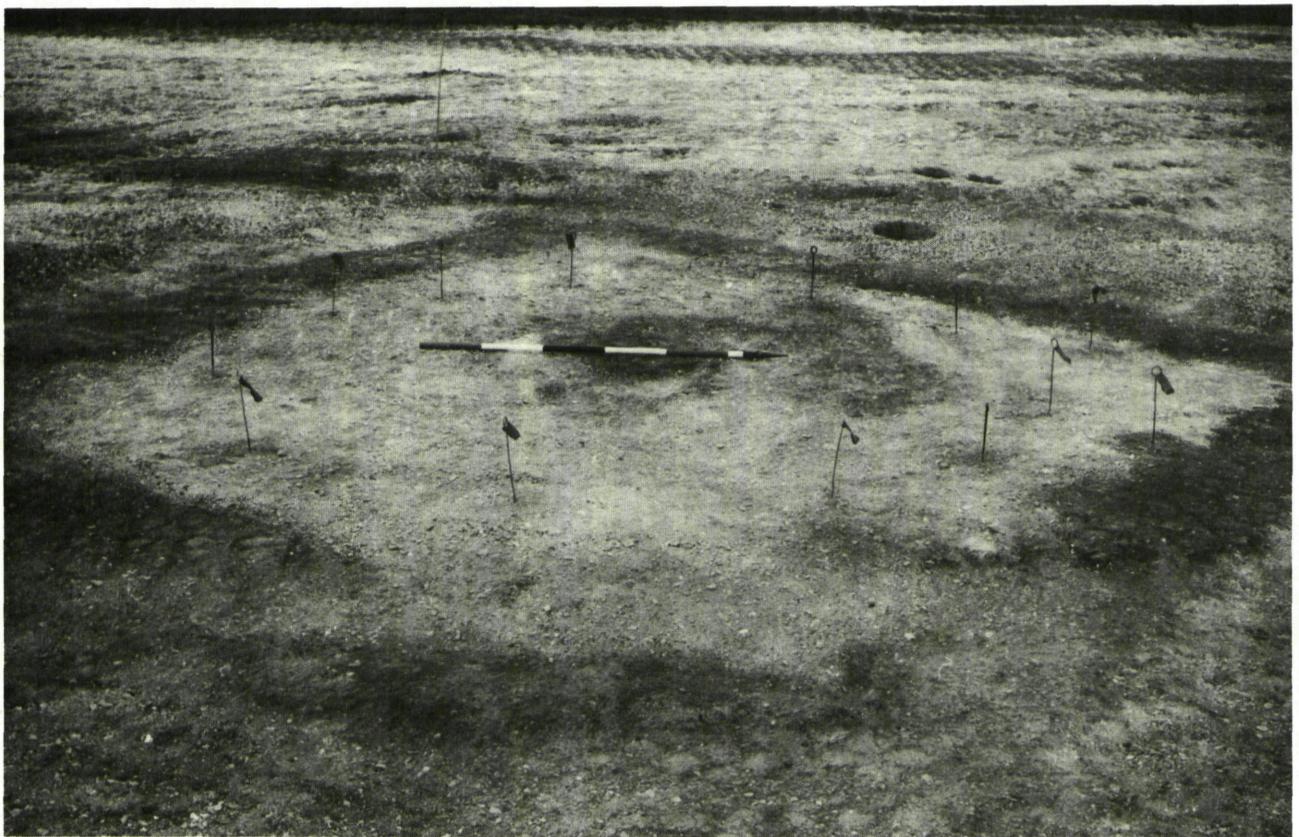


Figure 35 Early Roman square-ditched cremation burial 1137, from the east (photographed by W T Jones)

IV.B.7 Early Roman cremation within square ditched enclosure

Plans: Fig. 30, Fig. 33, Fig. 69, Fiche 4#42

A square enclosure 1137 c 6 m across was found some 250 m east of the Early Roman settlement, with the cremation of an adult (1140) buried in an upright grey-ware jar in a pit at its centre (Fig. 30; Fig. 35). The ditch was

continuous, shallow and flat-bottomed; a slightly deeper channel at the north-east corner may indicate a recut. There were slight circular depressions along the bottom on the south, north and the southern part of the east side. It is not stated whether these were visible in the fill, but were probably sealed by it; they were very faint, and may simply have been undulations in the gravel.

Within the square was an oval of postholes whose long axis was aligned between the south-west and north-east corners of the square, and which surrounded the burial pit 1138 and one other feature 1139. Outside the oval on either side of the north-east corner were two slightly larger postholes on the inner edge of the ditch. Inside the oval was a line of four postholes along its long axis, with between two and four more parallel to them on the north-west side. The burial pit 1138 lay slightly north-west of the long axis within the central four postholes, 1139 at right angles to it and overlying the two most north-easterly postholes. 1138 had a dark soil fill with charcoal and burnt clay in it, 1139 brown loam. Dark soil spread out from the top of both features, surrounding posthole X and apparently Z adjacent to the end of 1139.

Probably these soil spreads lay within shallow features around the pits, but just possibly they may indicate that the interior of the enclosure was cleared down to gravel when the features were first dug. The dark soil could then represent burning of the posthole structure around the burial. It is not certain that the dark soil was fill of 1139, which may have been an earlier feature cut by the postholes.

For details of the cremation see Ch. V.16. The cremation urn is of early 2nd century date, and pottery of similar date came from the surrounding ditch. This appears to be an isolated burial, not part of a cemetery. The burial belongs to a tradition originating in the Marnian region of France (see for instance Brisson & Hatt 1955 and Stead 1979) and present in Eastern Britain in the 1st centuries BC and AD (see also Discussion, Ch. VI.1).

IV.C The villa buildings and courtyard

IV.C.1 Introduction

Parts of four stone buildings were excavated (see Fig. 36). For none of these however was a complete plan recovered. Most of the buildings were very thoroughly robbed.

IV.C.2 Building I

Plans: Fig. 37, 127 on Fiche 1#31; Sections: Fig. 38

Parts of three rooms at the east end of Building I were stripped (see Fig. 36). Room 1 was L-shaped and only 2.1 m wide, running the whole length of the east side

and continuing along the S, Room 2 was *c.* 2.4 m wide and Room 3 some 3.0 m wide. Room 1 was possibly a corridor. Foundations of pitched stones survived in places, and although floors had been ploughed out there were make-up layers of pitched stones with a layer of mortar in between in Room 1 (Fig. 38 layers 87–85), and loose grey and white tesserae overlying them from a tessellated floor. Rooms 3 and 2 also had traces of mortar make-up or flooring (Fig. 38 layers 76 and 75). Painted plaster, plaster pilaster fragments and a quarter-round moulding came from the debris, as well as *opus signinum* flooring (see Ch. V.12 and Ch. V.13). The roof was probably of tiles, though stone slates were also recorded.

One wall of this building was traced westwards (Fig. 37 features 112, 116 and 115). Building I was thus 11.1 m wide and at least 14.4 m long, but this may not have been its full extent. A dark rectangle shows up on the cropmark photographs just west of this, which may indicate a hypocausted room (Fig. 3; Fig. 1); flue tiles found amongst the debris may have derived from here.

Alongside the south wall and the wall between Rooms 1 and 3 were postholes (Fig. 37), one of them (96) sealed by the make-up in Room 1; there were no associated floors to suggest an earlier phase of building, and they were probably scaffolding-holes. Two larger postholes outside the south wall (102 and 103) may have been separate, perhaps for a porch.

Building I overlay ditches and gullies dating up to the mid-2nd century (Fig. 127 on Fiche 1#31), and since the upper parts of these ditches were backfilled the building was probably constructed soon after this. East of Building I was a deep ditch 132 whose lower fills contained high-quality pottery and glassware of the mid 2nd century (see Microfiche Pottery Catalogue, Fig. 101, Samian report Ch. V.2 and Glass Ch. V.7). This probably came from the villa, and the ditch was probably an enclosure ditch around Building I. (Fig. 41; Fig. 59).

IV.C.3 Building II

Plans: Fig. 37; Section: Fig. 41

Building II lay east of Building I, and consisted of several rooms alongside a boundary wall traced for 22 m (Fig. 36). Most of the trenches were only taken down to the destruction levels and the robber trenches then excavated. The excavated plan thus probably reflects only the latest phase of this building. Room 1 appears to have been long and thin, *c.* 6 m by 2 m, Rooms 2 and 3 wider but of unknown length. A short length of wall 153 survived, faced with small roughly-squared blocks infilled with smaller rubble; in other trenches pitched foundations survived. Mortar flooring or make-up covered Rooms 1 and 3, and *opus signinum* flooring, painted wall-plaster and tesserae were found in the debris (see Ch. V.12 and Ch. V.13). The last two were concentrated in Room 3. The roof was

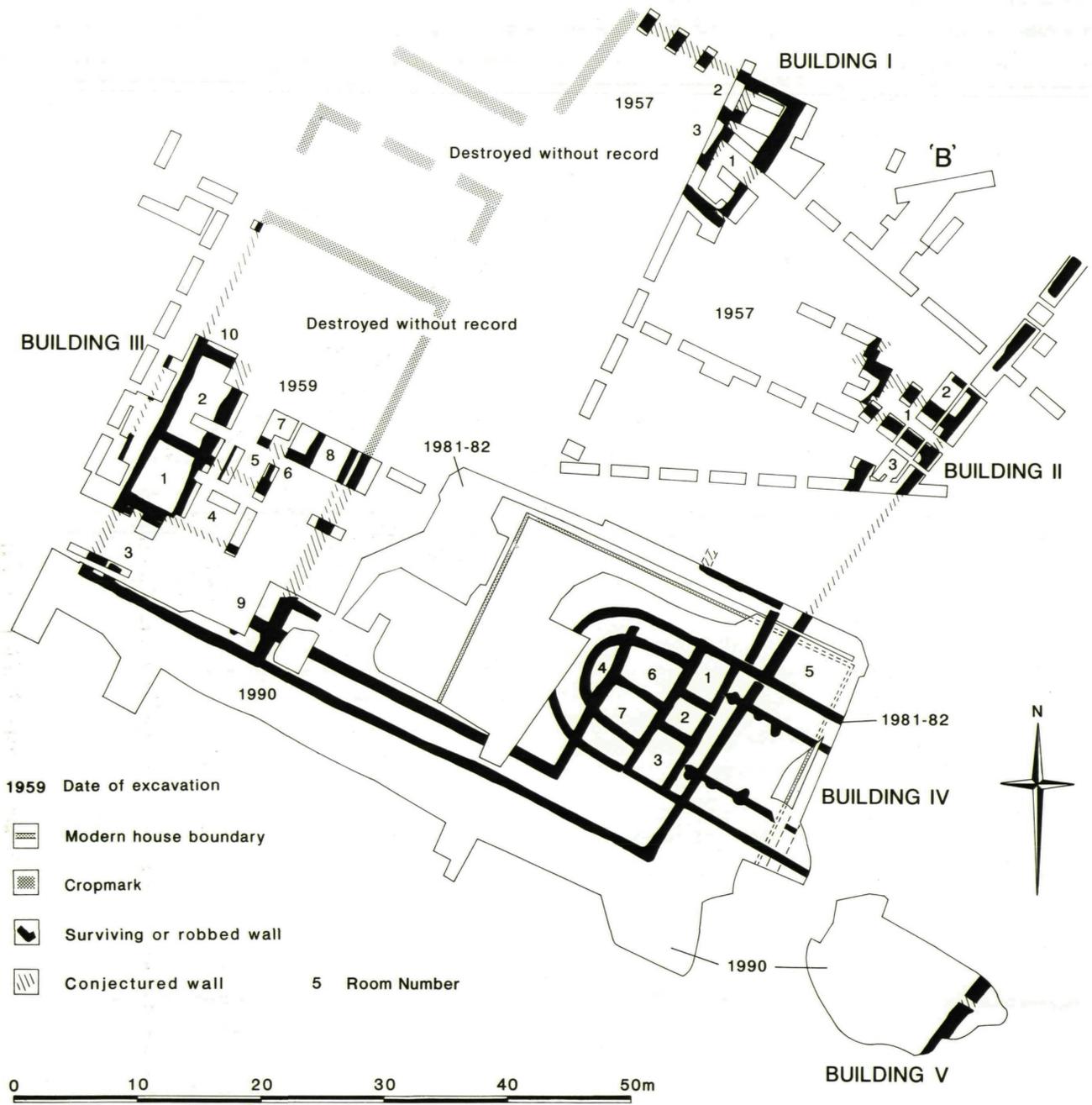


Figure 36 Plan of layout of trenches and villa buildings

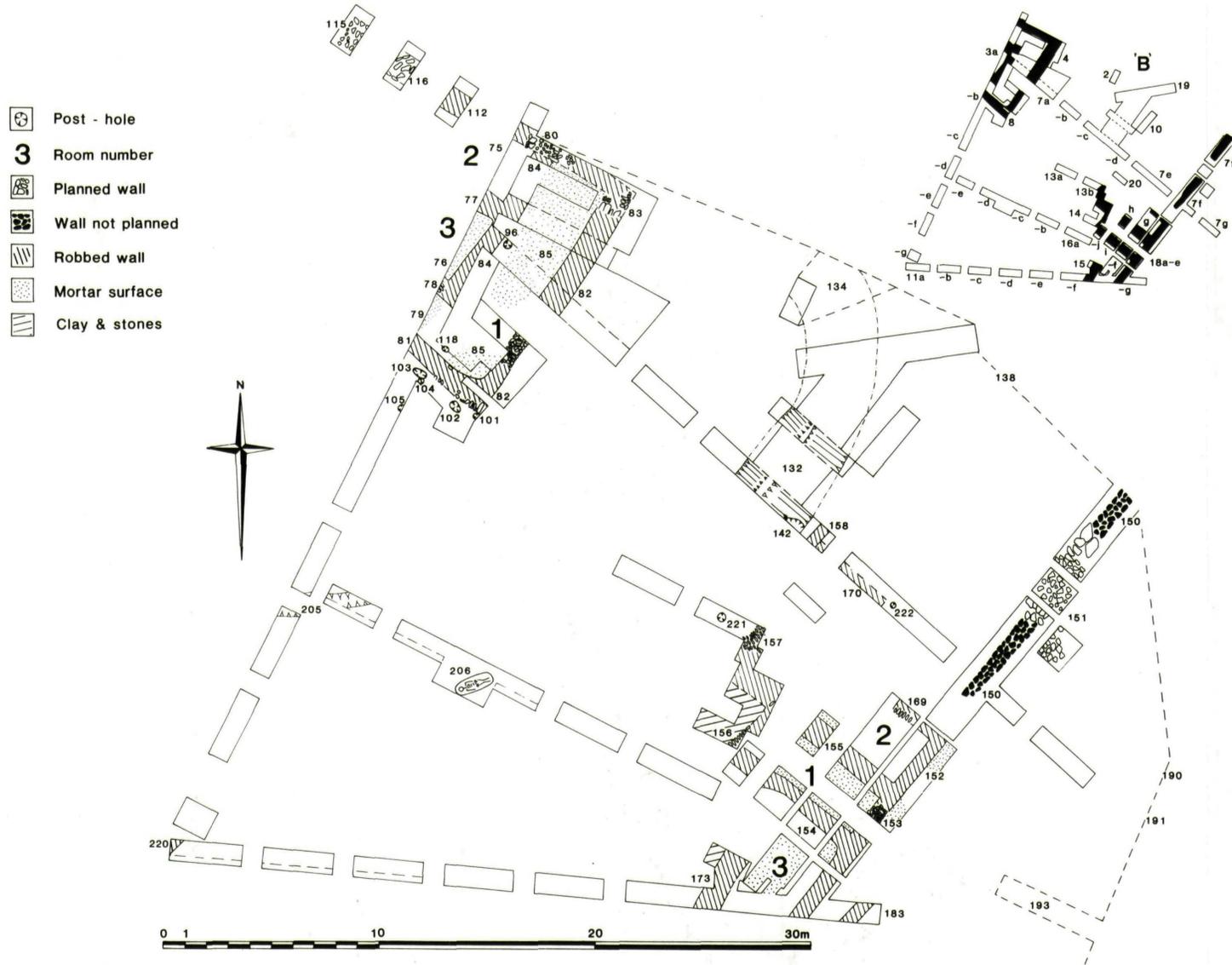


Figure 37 Plan of Buildings I and II

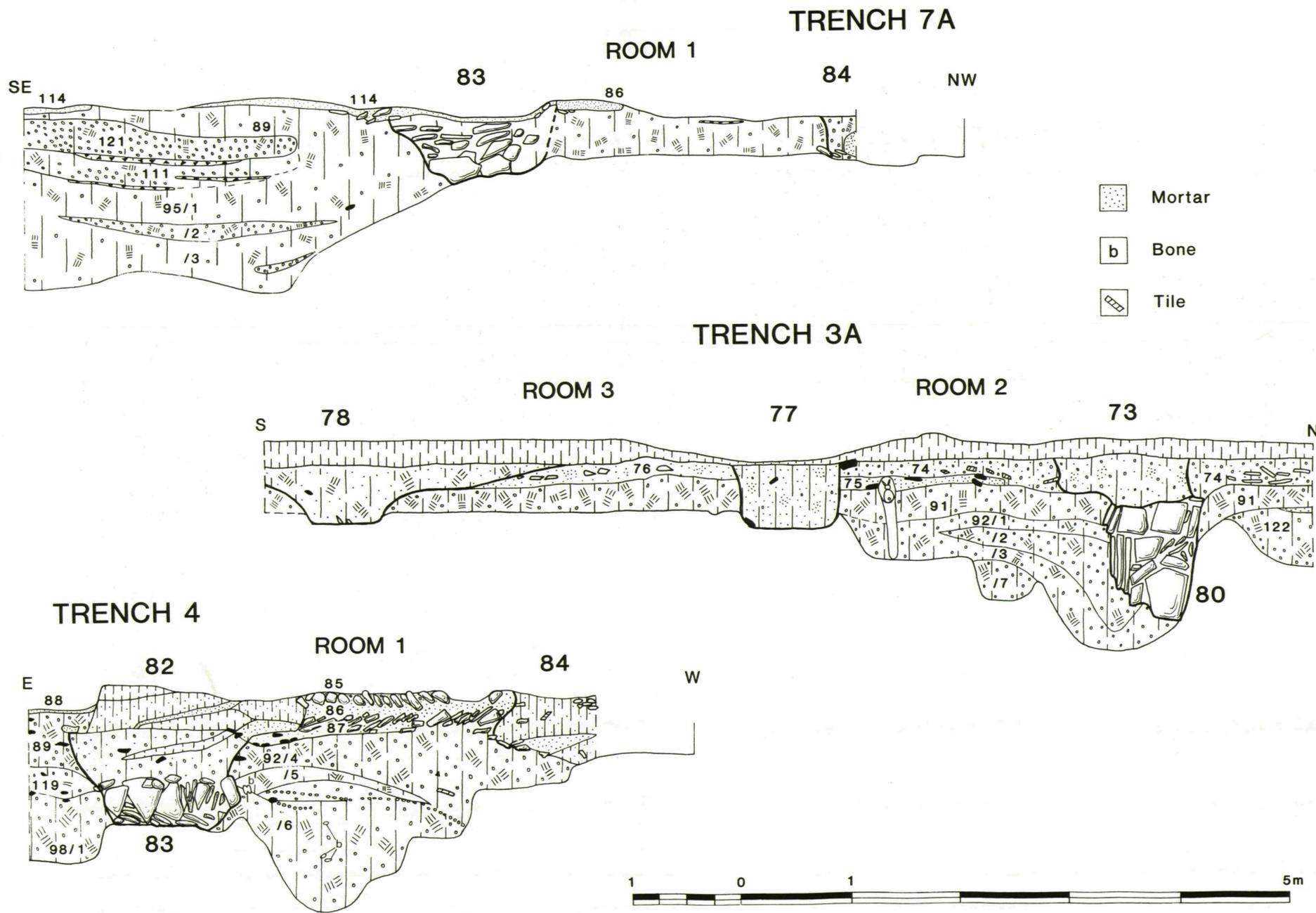


Figure 38 Building I: sections



Figure 39 Building I: Trench 7a from the south-east, showing the floor make-up layers 85–87 overlying posthole 98 and pit 94, with wall 83 in the foreground



Figure 40 Building II: Wall 153 and trenches from the east

probably of tile. East of Building II there may have been a corridor or an earlier wall, as a possible robber trench (183) was recorded 2 m east of the boundary wall (Fig. 37).

No pre-building features were found in the limited excavation to date the construction of this building. The plan as recovered probably dates to the 4th century AD, as 2496, the southern continuation of boundary wall 153, cut through Building IV and abutted Building III (Fig. 49 and below). The pre-villa subsoil alongside the robber trenches contained mid-2nd century pottery, and mixed with the 4th century sherds in the debris were many later 2nd century ones. It is possible that the building was first constructed in the late 2nd century.

To the north there was possibly an entrance between the building and the boundary wall 150, which continued north into the quarry face. Halfway along this was another entrance paved with flat stones 151, which led into a stone-floored yard between it and the ditch. The northern limits of Building II are uncertain; possible robber trenches 158 and 170 were seen along the east side of the ditch parallel to the boundary wall and at right-angles to it in Trench 7e (Fig. 37). These may have bounded the yard on the west and south sides.

IV.C.4 Building 'B'

Fig. 37

In the 4th century the upper part of 132, the large ditch just west of this yard was filled with charcoal and black soil, probably from a hypocaust (Fig. 41). *Pilae* tiles found on the very north edge of the area, some apparently *in situ*, together with painted plaster and *opus signinum* flooring, suggest that another Roman building lay just outside the excavated area. This is labelled B (Fig. 37). Demolition material from the yard's west wall, layer 131, overlay this charcoal.

IV.C.5 Quarry hollows 190–193 east of the villa buildings

Plan: Fig. 37; Section: Fig. 41

East of the boundary wall several very large hollows were salvaged. These are similar in character to the extensive area of gravel quarries further east (see Ch. IV.F.8), and were probably dug for the same purpose. One was backfilled with dirty sand and stones, another had a primary fill of charcoal containing much smelting slag: both were probably connected with metalworking (see microfiche report Ch. 5.15 on Fiche 2#82). They appear to range in date from the later 2nd century to the late 3rd or early 4th century.

IV.C.6 Building IV

Plans: Figs. 42, 43, 47 and 49; Sections: Fig. 44, 46 and 48

Building IV was discovered in 1981 when a narrow archaeological trench was dug around the perimeter of a modern house south of Buildings I and II (see Figs. 36, 46, and 48). When the house was demolished and the site redeveloped for housing in 1990, area excavation became possible, resulting in a fairly full plan of the west part of this building. Due to the omission of any archaeological condition in the planning consent however the excavation was carried out in salvage conditions, and it was not possible to link the 1981–2 trenches fully to the new area, nor to integrate the development of Buildings III and IV. In addition, there was not time to investigate the pre-building deposits thoroughly.

IV.C.6.a Pre-building deposits

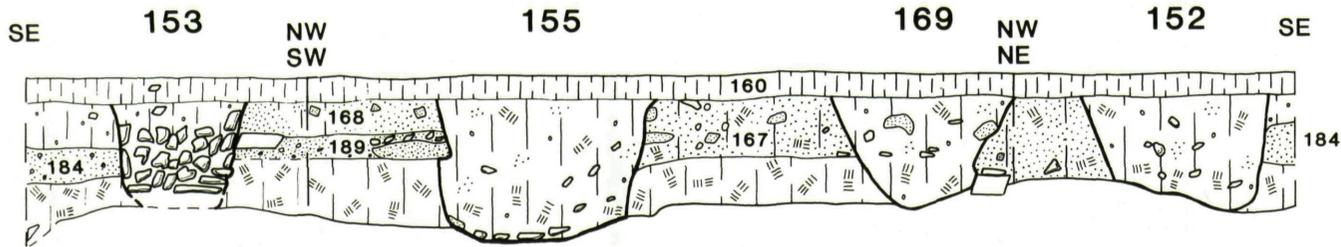
Throughout the area of Building IV Pleistocene gravel was overlaid by an orange-brown silty clay subsoil, 2488. One early Iron Age pit 2019 underlying Building III appeared to have been truncated at the surface of the gravel and was overlaid by 2488 (Fig. 55), implying that this was a ploughsoil of Iron Age or Early Roman date, but 2488 contained very little gravel, and the absence of a clear worm-sorted gravel horizon on the interface between the pit and the layer above suggests that ploughing was only of short duration.

The top of 2488 was mixed, containing finds dated to the late 1st or early 2nd century AD. Pre-villa features cut this subsoil: pits 1467, 1492 and 2432 and ditches 1481 and 2503. 1467 cut 1492, and 2503 also cut an Early Iron Age feature 2504. Few finds came from these features, but 1481 contained 1st century AD pottery, and the finds from 2488 clearly represent contemporary occupation around them.

Overlying 2488 was an occupation layer containing charcoal; numbered variously 2480, 2491, 1465, 2502 and 1559. 2502 was dated to the 2nd century. Pit 1485, pit 2463 and feature 2432 were cut into 2480. 1485 was circular and was backfilled with large limestone slabs set on edge, 2463 was small, dated to the early-mid 2nd century and was overlaid by the north-west corner of Building IV phase 2. 2432 was large and irregular, underlying the west end of Building IV. Its north limit was not established, but it appears to have extended at least as far as wall 2452, since no subsoil was encountered in the slot dug between walls 2420 and 2452 (Fig. 129 on Fiche 1#33). Feature 2432 silted up until the top was backfilled with clean gravel (2507).

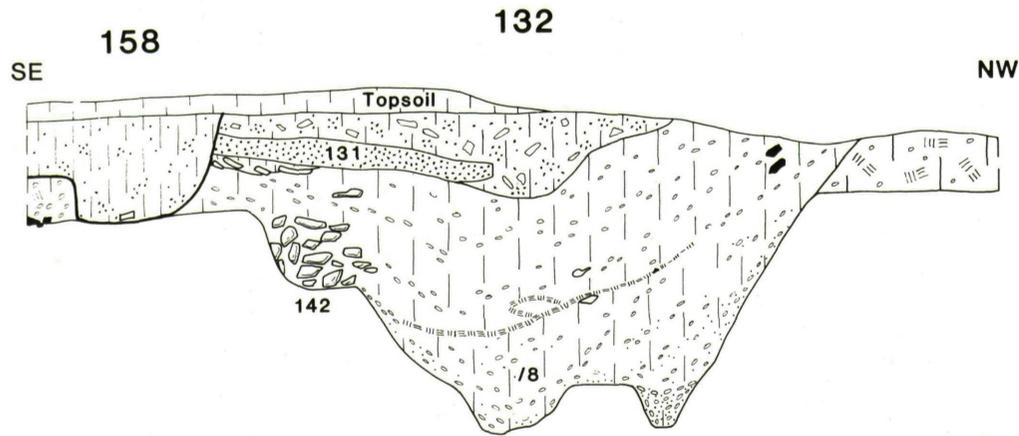
Pottery from 2432 dates to the first half of the 2nd century AD. None of the finds from any of the pre-building contexts need be any later, with the exception of three small joining sherds from layer 2491, which are late 3rd or 4th century. These are however thought to be intrusive, derived from a

TRENCH 16B

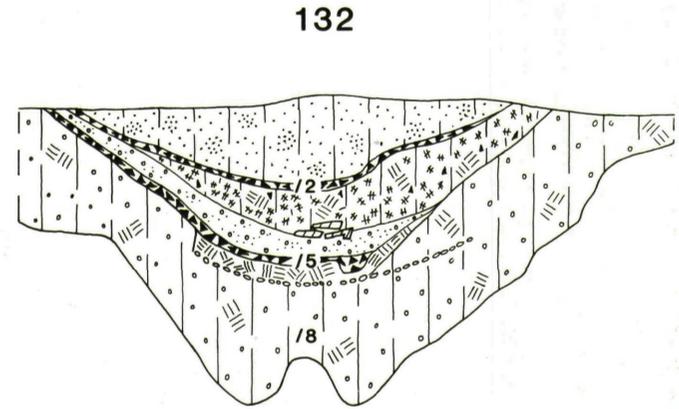


- Mortar
- Sand and gravel
- Tile
- Wood ash

TRENCH 7C-D SOUTH



TRENCH 7C-D NORTH



TRENCH 7C-D EAST

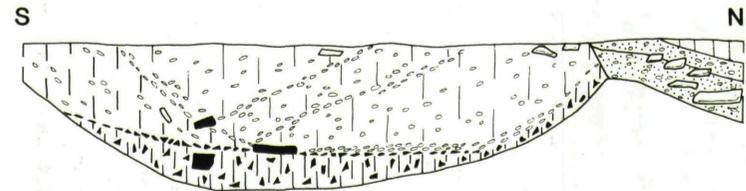


Figure 41 Building II and courtyard: sections

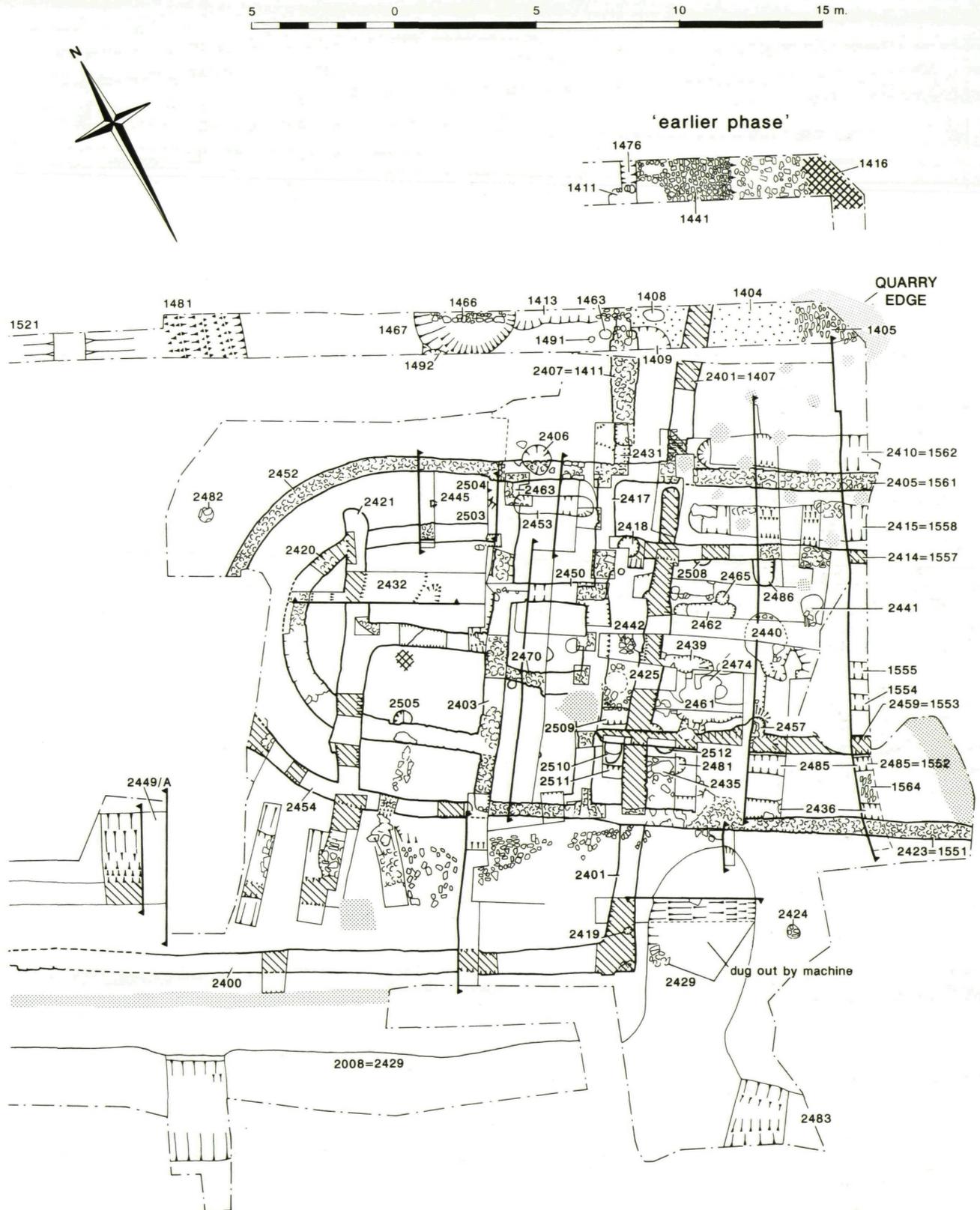


Figure 42 Plan of Building III and Building IV

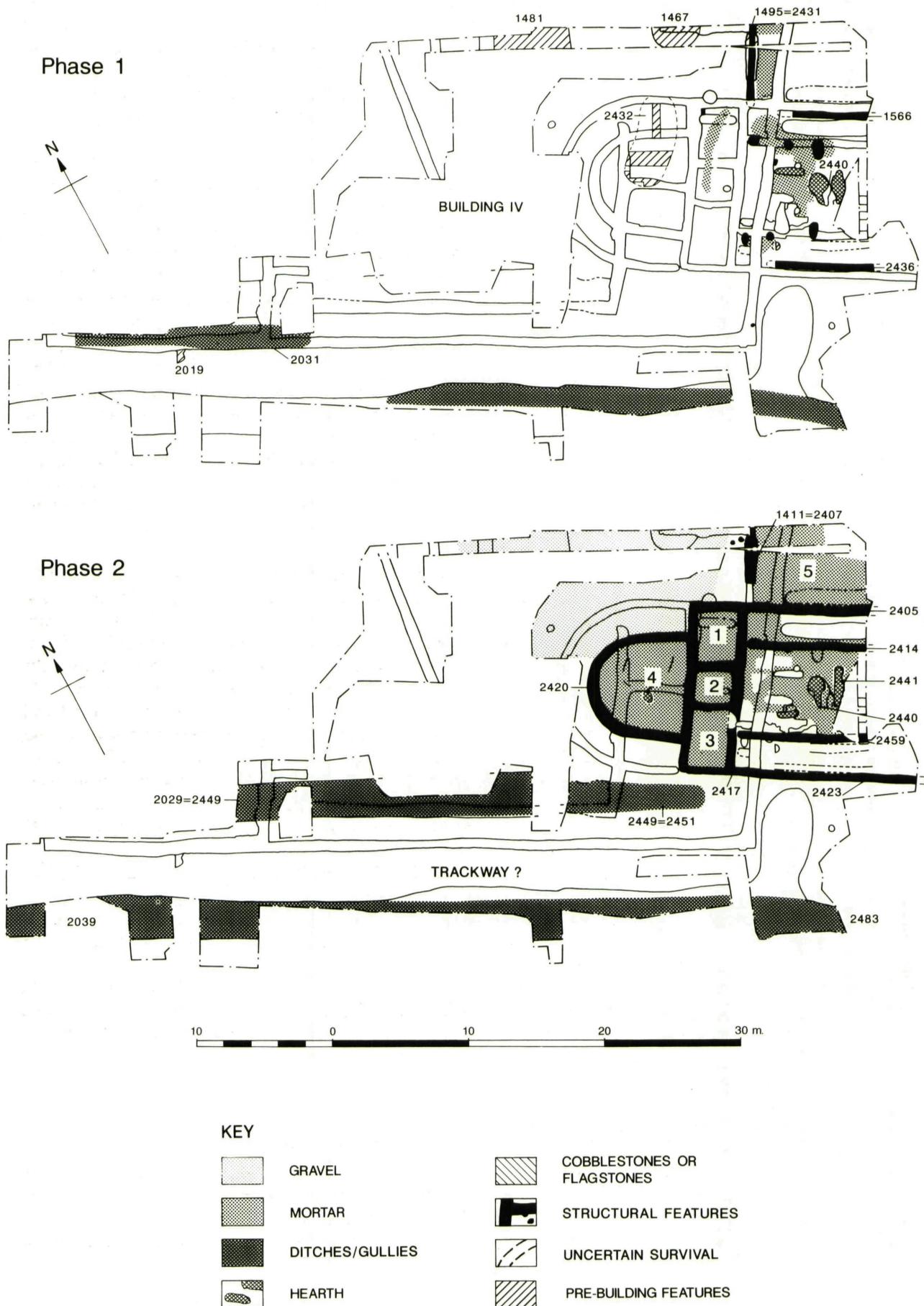


Figure 43 Building IV: phases 1 and 2

posthole 2516 which cut through the floors of Building IV from higher up (see also phase 6 below).

IV.C.6.b Phase 1

This consisted of an aisled rectangular structure aligned east-west. The east end of the building was destroyed without record by gravel extraction in the 1950s (see Fig. 42).

The aisles were supported on posts in oval postholes 0.75 m deep and with post-pipes *c* 0.6 m across. Only the three westernmost pairs of postholes were uncovered; these were not exactly opposed, the posthole centres in each row being spaced between 1.75 and 3.0 m apart. The posts were surrounded by a thin mortar floor 2464=1563 in both the aisles and the main hall of the building.

The form that the outer walls took in this phase is uncertain. The excavated external walls were of masonry, but no direct relationship was obtainable between the aisle postholes and these outer walls, since the mortar floor did not survive up against them (Figs. 44 and 46). The aisle posts may have been surrounded by these walls (see below Phase 2), but the westernmost pair of aisle posts lay immediately adjacent to the west wall of the aisled part of the stone building, which is structurally unlikely. In other aisled buildings the first aisle posts occur either within the end wall or at the end of the first bay. The posts are thus thought to predate the stone walls.

Just inside the north wall 2405 the subsoil was directly overlaid by 1566=2521, a band of large flat limestones up to 0.8 m wide and in places two courses deep (see Figs. 44 and 46). These extended for several metres east-west, and no mortar floor existed over these stones. In the 1990 excavation the cut for these stones was obscured by later ditch 2415, but 1566 is shown on Fig. 46 drawn in 1982.

A similar feature 2436 ran east-west parallel to it just inside the south wall 2423 for over 6 m. 1566 and 2436 may have contained the sleeper walls of the first phase aisled building. The overall width in this phase would then have been 10.5 m internally, and the aisles *c* 1.5 m wide (Fig. 43 phase 1). Both 1566 and 2436 however end 1.5 m short of the westernmost pair of aisle posts, and it is unlikely that this represents an entrance, since the posts closest to their ends are not opposite one another. This may suggest that 1566 and 2436 in fact belong with phase 2 (see below), and that no trace of the phase 1 outer wall survived.

The western end of the building in this phase was not recovered; this presumably lay below the phase 2 masonry building, Rooms 1–4. Feature 2463 lay in line with 2521 and was sealed beneath the phase 2 building, so may have been connected with the west end (see Fig. 43). Below Room 3 pre-villa occupation 2480 was overlaid by dark soil and charcoal, possibly equivalent to 1461 (see Fig. 48), below Rooms 1 and 2 pre-villa occupation soil 2491 was overlaid by an intermittent thin floor of yellow sand

surfaced with white mortar (Fig. 44). This was covered by dark ashy soil 2492, and was overlaid by a further thin floor of clean compact clay 2493, laid on a sand bed and surfaced with white mortar and small stones. This layer was cut by the foundation trenches of the phase 2 walls 2450 and 2405, and these floors are believed to belong to the first phase aisled building.

Beneath the apsidal Room 4 the top of 2432 was filled with gravel 2507. This was overlaid by soil 2444 containing lenses of charcoal and fired clay and fragments of burnt limestone. This may be equivalent to layer 1461 further north, charcoal overlying pre-villa occupation 1480 etc, and probably created during phase 1 of Building IV. 2444 was followed by 2443, a thin spread of mortar, plaster lumps and gravel (Fig. 129 on Fiche 1#33), which is interpreted as debris from the phase 1 demolition prior to Phase 2 (see below). Layer 2443 was dated to the early to middle 2nd century, as were finds from the aisled building floor 2464.

Within the aisled hall were several ovens. Both of those dated to the 2nd century, 2440 and 2441, were oriented north-south; all those backfilled in the 3rd or 4th centuries lay east-west, and so all the north-south ovens are attributed to the early phases (see Fig. 43). The floor was also cut by posthole 2468, dated tentatively to the first half of the 2nd century.

North of the building finds from 1461 date to the early to middle 2nd century, and this is interpreted as occupation contemporary with phase 1 (see Fig. 48). Cutting 1461 and running at right angles to Building IV was slot 1495=2431. This continued north into the quarry and south up to the phase 2 wall 2405, which cut it. This slot and wall 1411 which overlay it followed exactly the same alignment, and it is possible that 1495 represents the west side of a phase 1 timber building attached to the north side of Building IV (see also below Phase 2). 1461 was directly overlaid by the first gravel mortar layers adjacent to wall 1411, the earliest of which may in fact have been contemporary with 1495 (see also Phase 2).

South of Building IV was a large boundary ditch 2008, which cut a smaller ditch on its north side. This earlier ditch was only seen in a single section, but the soilmark suggests that it ended just south-west of the building (see Fig. 42).

Another ditch lay north-west of this below the south wall of Building III, and it is tentatively suggested that these may have been contemporary (see Fig. 43, phase 1). Neither ditch was dated.

IV.C.6.c Phase 2

The external walls of the aisled building were rebuilt in masonry, set on foundations of unmortared limestones laid in rough courses between vertical edging stones; the foundation trenches were 0.5 to 0.6 m wide and bottomed on gravel. One course of wall proper survived in places,

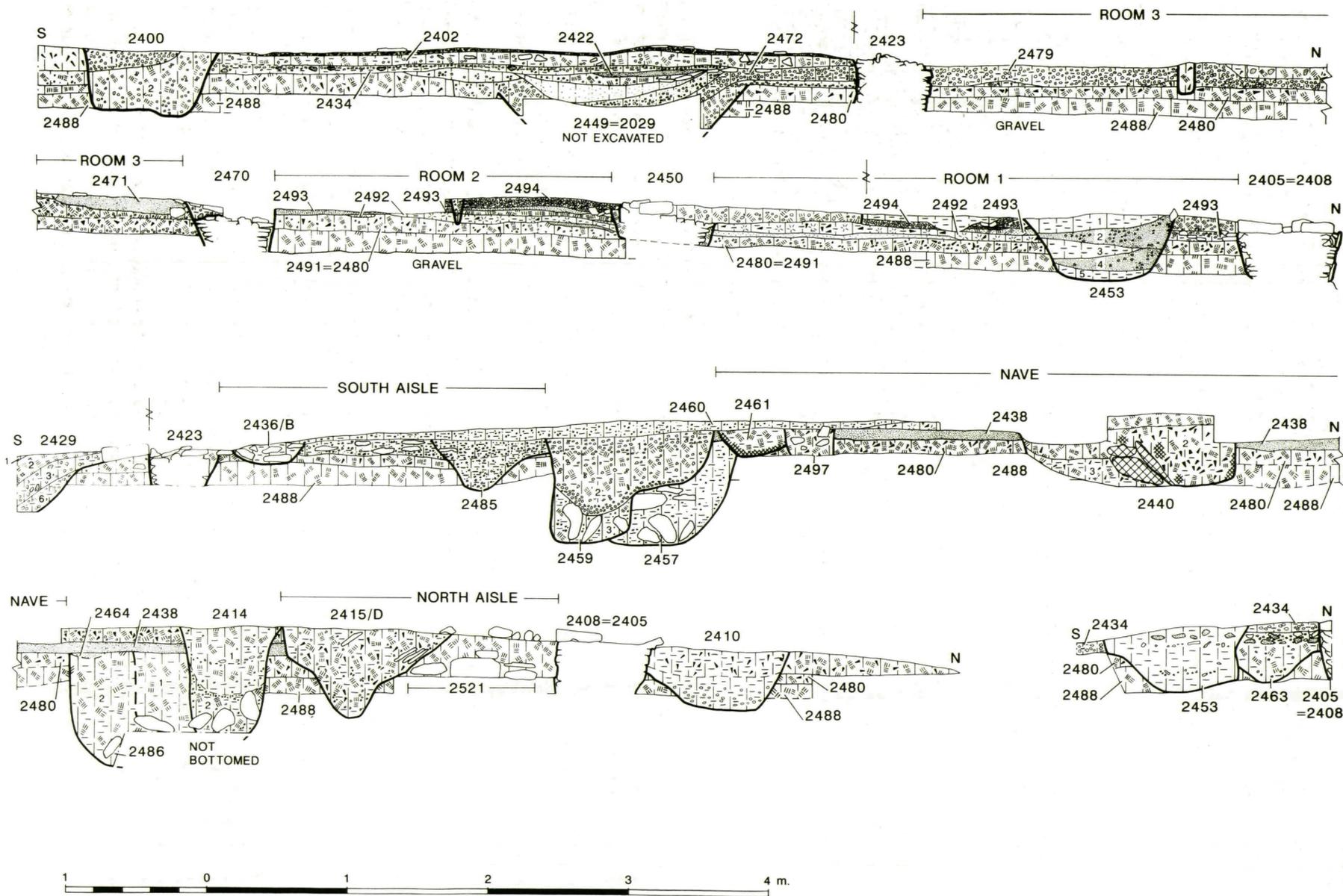


Figure 44 Building IV: N-S sections



Figure 45 Building IV from the north-west showing the apsidal west end

and consisted of roughly-squared limestone blocks bonded with cream gravel mortar. The north, south and west walls of the rectangular aisled block, 2405, 2423 and 2403, were between 0.6 and 0.7 m wide, the curving apsidal wall 2420 was wider, 0.85 m across. The aisles were 2.25 m wide, the central hall 7.0 m wide. A little pottery, dated early to middle 2nd century, was recovered from the foundation trenches of 2403.

It was probably at this stage that the aisle postholes were replaced by aisle slots, 2459 on the south, 2414 on the north. Both were completely robbed, but both had been dug up to 0.2 m into gravel, showing that they had been intended to take a great weight (Fig. 44 and 46). These slots cut through the former aisle postholes, so that the width of the central hall and aisles remained much the same. Both slots ended on the west just short of wall 2417.

The central hall was refloored with cream mortar 2438; this either overlay 2464 directly or sealed charcoal from the phase 1 ovens. In places it had a clay make-up layer 2466, pottery from which was entirely 2nd century. Some of the phase 1 ovens were not overlaid by floor 2438, continuing in use in phase 2. 2438 extended across the north aisle but not the south aisle.

The west end of the main rectangular block was divided off by wall 2417 parallel to 2403, and the 3 m wide strip between them was subdivided by cross-walls 2450 and 2470. The cross-walls were symmetrical, creating

rooms 4 m long on the north and south (numbered 1 and 3 respectively) and a central area 2.5 m across between them (Room 2). Room 2 was probably an ante-room or passageway into an apsidal room to the west, Room 4.

Within Room 3 phase 1 charcoal and ash was covered by a mortar floor 2479, which gave way to a white mortar 2471 on the north. In Rooms 2 and 1 a gravel floor 2494 was laid overlying both 2493 and the wall foundation trench of 2450.

Unlike 2470 and the other walls of Building IV 2450 had shallow foundations, bottoming upon the subsoil 2488 rather than on gravel (Fig. 44). Its method of construction was however the same, and it was bonded into 2403 and 2417 at the west and east ends.

In the apsidal Room 4 a spread of gravel and plaster specks 2443 from the phase 1 structure was covered by levelling-up layer 2499 overlain by a gravel and mortar floor 2506. Similar mortar also continued north of 2420; this too was mixed with plaster specks and was cut by Phase 3 wall 2452 (see Fig. 129 on Fiche 1#33). Near to the centre of Room 4 a circular area of 2506 was reddened and blackened by burning; this was perhaps where a brazier had stood.

The date of the rebuilding is uncertain, as few finds came from the floors and most of the walls were robbed out. Early to middle 2nd century pottery came from the phase 1 debris 2443, from the construction trench 2403 and from

beneath floor 2438 overlying one of the aisled postholes. The pottery from the trackway ditches to the south (see below) suggests that activity began *c.* 130–140 AD; it is not however possible to establish whether this material is derived from Building IV phase 1, phase 2 or from both. There is however no appreciable difference between the dating offered by the finds for the start of phase 1 and for phase 2, and the occupation spreads relating to the first phase of Building IV are thin, perhaps implying that the duration of the timber phase 1 was relatively short.

About 1.4 m north of the main building and at right angles was wall 2407=1411. This had similar foundations in a trench 0.3 m deep and 0.7 m wide. 1411 ended only 4.6 m from 2405 over pit 1485, which had been backfilled with large limestone slabs set on edge when the wall was built. The wall also overlay slot 1495=2431, exactly following its alignment. At the south end the construction trench of 2407 ran on 0.75 m further than the wall; this was perhaps a mistake in construction.

East of 1411 was a series of thin mortar layers interspersed with sandy clay loams, the latest of which was 1410 (see Fig. 48). These layers continued north of 1411, stopping against a slot 1476, which continued north along the projected east edge of the wall. This slot may have been for the threshold of a doorway into the yard to the west, perhaps associated with postholes 1463 and 1491 (see Fig. 42). Away from wall 1411 there was only one layer of mortar, 1418. This floor continued east and north into the quarry. The area between 1411 and 2405 may have been an open yard, but the mortar flooring, which was replaced by further floor surfaces in later phases, suggests that part if not all was covered.

This may therefore have been a 'fore-building' with a room at least 8.5 m east-west and 5.5 m north-south abutting the aisled building on the north side.

Overlying 1410 was a limestone cobbled floor 1441 (see phase 3). This was cut on the east by 1416, a shallow hollow filled with burnt clay, charcoal and sandy loam, probably a hearth of sorts. In the south part of the room there were few stones over 1418, so possibly this area was not cobbled.

Pottery from the cobbling 1441 suggests a date no later than the late 2nd century, so the 'room' may have been built contemporarily with the phase 2 reconstruction.

West of Building IV was an extensive gravelled surface 1473. This overlay features 1467 and 1481. As their fills settled the floor subsided into them, and in the shelter of the resulting hollows fires were lit. The hollows were overlaid by a second gravel surface 1497. Like 1473 this began several metres west of 1411 and ran up to and over 1481, but was patchy and eroded in places. Finds from 1473 and the soils overlying it below 1497 were all 2nd century.

South of the building was ditch 2449=2451. This cut pre-villa occupation 2480 etc, and silted up, containing pottery dating to the early to middle 2nd century. The

east terminal was not excavated, but was evident from the slumping of later gravel and cobbled surface 2472. This ditch was traced west in a straight line for 34.5 m, and was overlaid by Building III (see Fig. 52 below).

Parallel to 2449 and 6 m to the south was ditch 2039=2483. This was traced for 62 m, and continued beyond the excavated area both east and west. It deepened from 0.8 m on the east to nearly 2 m on the west. This ditch also cut the pre-villa occupation layer and contained early to middle 2nd century pottery.

2449 and 2483 probably formed a trackway leading to Building IV, alongside which 2449 ended. The continuation of 2483 however suggests that the track continued. 2483 was not visible in the trench which revealed Building V further east (see Fig. 36); it may have curved slightly southwards and missed this, or may have ended (see Fig. 128 on Fiche 1#32).

IV.C.6.d Phase 3

The apsidal room was surrounded by a parallel wall 2452=2454, abutting wall 2403 and creating an ambulatory the full width of the aisled building (see Fig. 45). This wall had similar foundations to those of phase 2; the foundation trench was 0.6 m wide and bottomed on gravel. The wall proper had been completely robbed out.

There was no direct relationship between 2420 and 2452=2454; for most of the apse area nothing survived above layer 2506. A possible floor 2501 in the north-east corner overlay 2420 but appeared to respect 2452 (Fig. 129 on Fiche 1#33), and a patch of mortar flooring 2477 on the south overlay 2506 and 2420 (Fig. 47); neither however produced any dating material, and both may have belonged instead to phase 4 (see below). The first course of wall 2420 was found still standing on the west side; if 2452=2454 replaced 2420 the floor must have been raised to cover this, and it is more likely that 2420 remained in use (see also phase 4 below). The gap between 2420 and 2452=2454 was 1.6 to 1.9 m wide, and may have been an ambulatory. While it is possible that 2420 was replaced by 2452=2454, this would have created a room 11.5 m wide north-south and over 8.5 m east-west, which would have been difficult to roof.

The floor of the original apse was cut into by a small pit 2505 against the south wall containing fragments of burnt and unburnt animal bone. This was dated late 2nd century or later.

Ovens were now constructed on an east-west alignment. Most of those that were investigated were fire-reddened to a considerable depth around the sides, showing that they were used for some time. Some, such as 2461, were secondarily lined with slates set vertically on edge along the sides of the chamber, others such as 2462 were recut and extended at one end. No detailed sequence of the ovens was established.

Within both aisles stone-filled gullies or trenches were

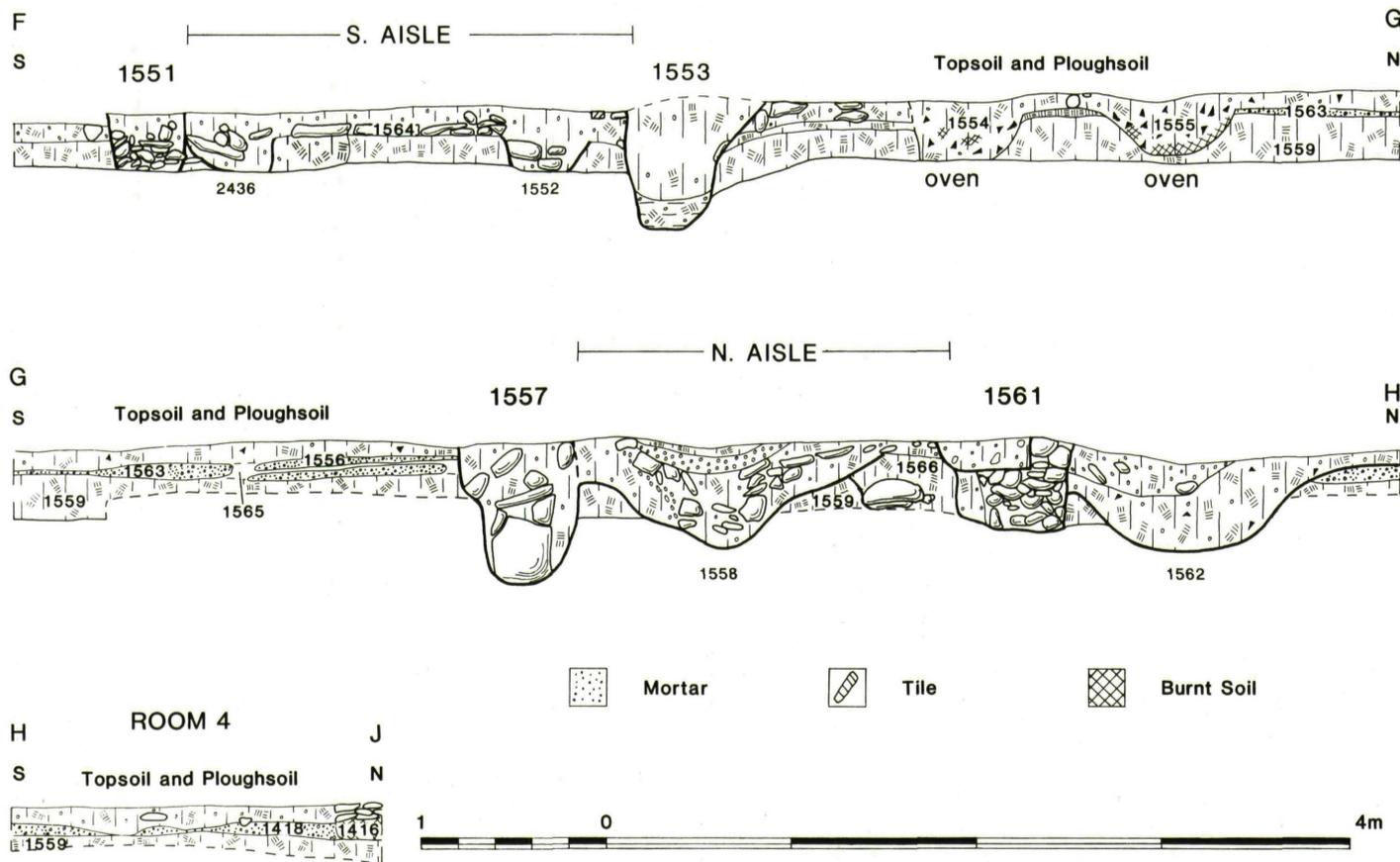


Figure 46 Building IV machine-cut trench: N-S section drawn in 1982.

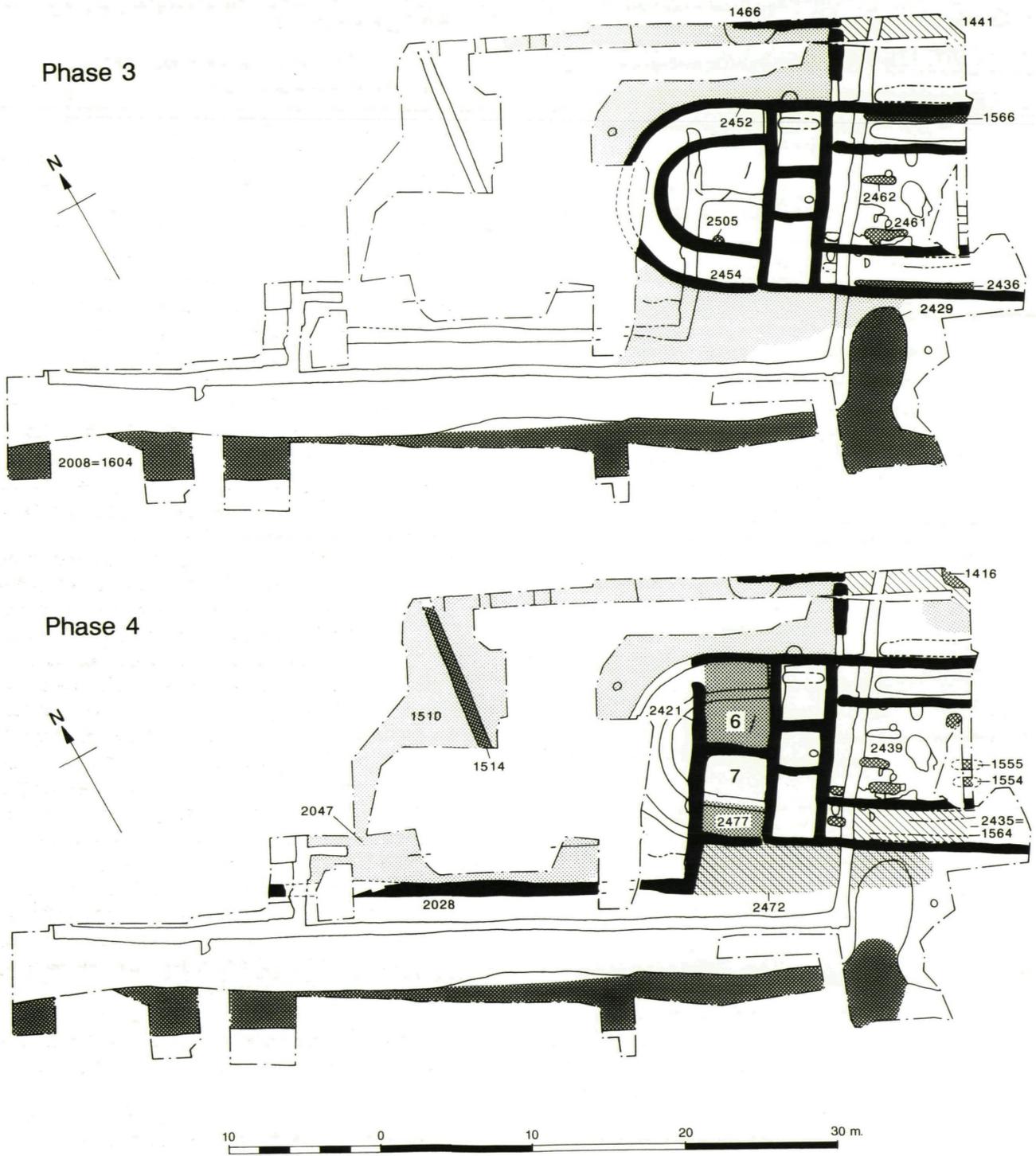


Figure 47 Building IV: phases 3 and 4. For key see Fig. 43.

found alongside the walls, 1566 on the north, 2436 on the south. These features lay right up against the foundations of the outer walls, but were not of the same construction, so were not contemporary with the phase 2 rebuilding. It is suggested (see above) that they were the sleeper walls of the phase 1 building. Alternatively however they may have been dug within the masonry building, although exposing the foundations of both north and south outer walls would have endangered the stability of the building. 2436 was overlaid by stone paving 2435 (see phase 4), but may either have cut through or have been abutted by soil overlying the first mortar floor 2464, and there was no relationship with either mortar floor 2464 or 2438. They might have functioned as drainage gullies, the stones belonging to the backfilling. These two features ended on the west opposite one another just over 2 m short of wall 2417, possibly to allow access to the building at this end; it is noticeable that the terminal of ditch 2429 just outside (see below) is in line with the ends of 2436 and 1566.

South of the building ditch 2039=2483 was recut as 2008=2429, which turned north opposite Building IV and terminated close to it, blocking the former trackway alongside. The northern trackway ditch 2449 was backfilled and overlaid by a layer of gravel (Fig. 44), probably when the ambulatory was added around the apsidal room. This gravel respected the south wall of Building IV, 2423, and skirted the end of 2429. As the backfill of 2449 settled, this surface slumped into its top. Finds from the lower silting of the terminal of 2429 were Antonine. Late Antonine pottery was recovered from the upper fills of 2483 east of the new ditch terminal, suggesting that where not recut the earlier ditch continued in use.

No direct dating evidence is available for the addition of the peristyle or ambulatory; there are no occupation deposits surviving on the floor of the original apse and no finds from the construction trenches. The infilling of ditch 2449, which may have been connected, and the recutting of 2483, can be dated to the late 2nd century. The peristyle may however have been added as late as the early third century (see also Ch. VI.2).

North of the aisled building a western extension was added to the 'fore-building'. Wall 1466 was built, without foundations, upon the courtyard gravel surface 1497, running west for 7 m. Two courses of limestones bonded with yellow mortar survived in places, elsewhere the wall had been robbed by feature 1413. The north face of 1466 had been removed by the quarry, but a bedding layer of sand survived to indicate its former width. At the east end 1466 ran over the possible threshold-slot 1476 as far as the inside edge of 1411, and may have continued onto 1441 inside the building. This area was much disturbed by a later pit 1409 and by posthole 1408, but a ridge of mortar continued for 1 m eastwards across the floor in line with the south edge of 1466, and could represent its continuation.

Wall 2466 was built directly onto gravel surface 1497,

which may have been laid in preparation for this extension. Finds from below 1497 are exclusively 2nd century, and a date at the very end of the 2nd or early in the 3rd century seems likely for 1466.

IV.C.6.e Phase 4

The apse was converted into two rectangular rooms of equal size (Rooms 6 and 7) by building wall 2421 parallel to 2403 across the end of the apse 2452=2454, and an east-west wall joining 2421 to 2403 along the central axis of the building. At the north end there was an entrance just over 1 m wide between 2452 and 2421, which ran south through 2420, 2432 and 2454 and over ditch 2449 before turning at right angles to continue west. The construction of the east-west wall right down the middle of the former access from Room 2 suggests that access from the aisled building was no longer possible, and Room 7 must presumably have been entered either from Room 6 or from the south-west.

Where the wall passed over 2449 the ditch was dug out and infilled with pitched limestone slabs. 2421 was robbed out throughout its length, but bottomed on gravel, and the robber-trench was 0.7 to 0.95 m wide; the robbing of the western arm of 2421 was numbered 2028.

The first course of the original apse wall 2420 survived west of (and outside) 2421, but the wall was robbed to foundation level east of 2421, suggesting that 2420 was only robbed out when 2421 was built. The robbing of 2420 contained a few sherds dated late 2nd century or later.

There were no floors that must stratigraphically belong to this phase, but it is likely that both 2501 adjacent to 2403 and 2477 which overlay 2420 belong here (see Figs. 47 and 129 on Fiche 1#33). Both floors survived only in small areas (see also phase 3). South of 2452 the hollow overlying infilled ditch 2449, into which the gravel yard surface had slumped, was filled in, and a new gravel make-up surfaced with cobbling 2472 was laid over it (Fig. 44).

This cobbling ended against wall 2421, and the gravel make-up extended east over the end of ditch 2429 and slumped into the ditch (see Fig. 55 layer 2429/A/3). This perhaps implies that the ditch was backfilled immediately before laying the cobbling, and the fills then settled. The backfilling, which included building debris that could have resulted from the phase 4 alterations, was dated to the later 3rd century AD, and finds from upon the cobbling to the late 3rd and early 4th centuries.

The Building IV phase 4 alterations are only dateable in relation to earlier and later stratigraphic events. The phase 3 alterations are tentatively assigned to the very late 2nd century AD (see above), and the phase 4 villa boundary wall 2028 was abutted by mortar 2029/B/7 laid after 250 AD, and overlain by the extension of Building III (see Figs. 49 and 52), which was built by the last quarter of the 3rd century. Cobbling 2422, laid in the later 3rd century, certainly respects 2421, but need not have been

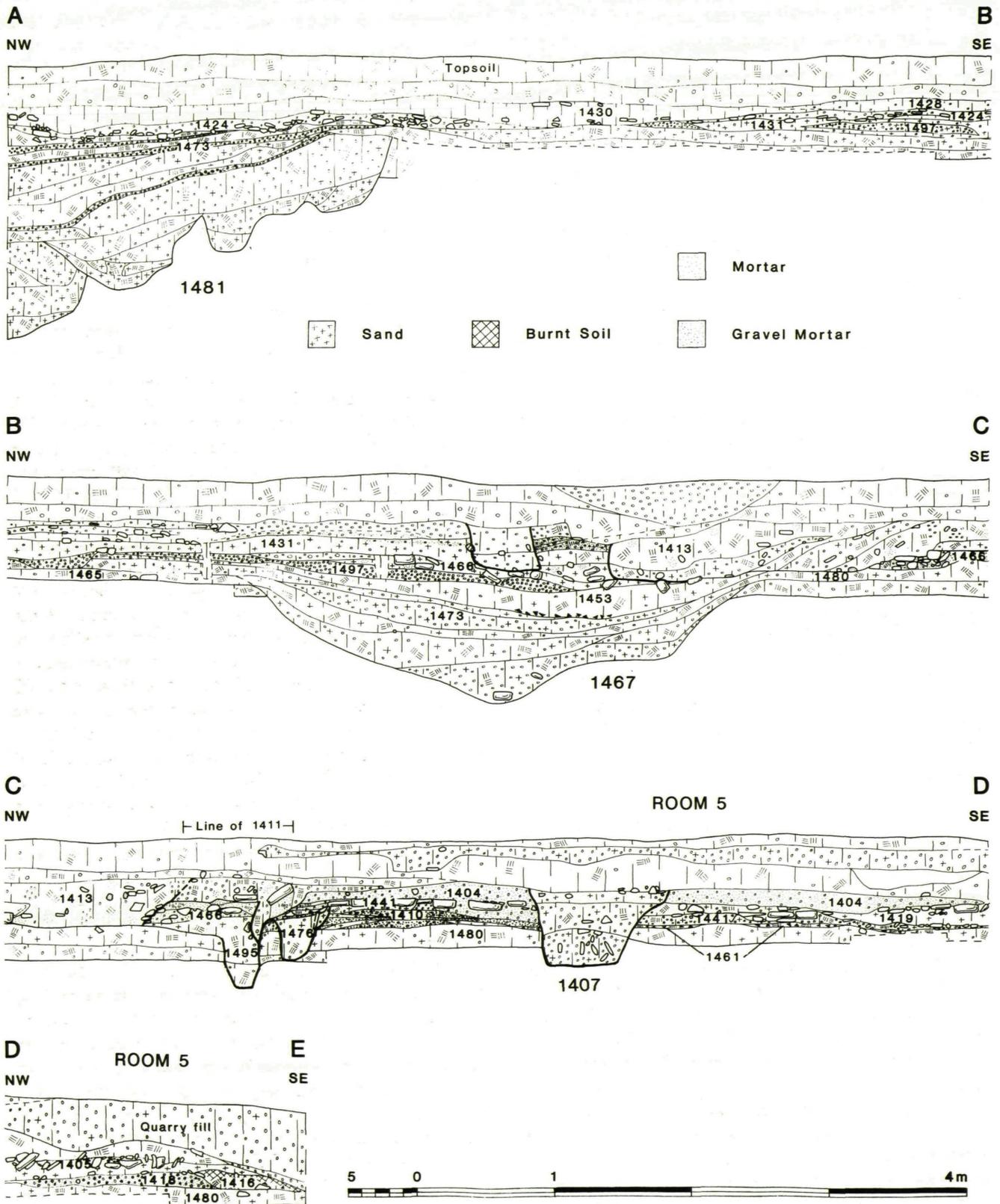


Figure 48 Building IV: NW-SE section

laid until some time after the wall had been built. Allowing for use of the phase 3 apse, phase 4 most likely dates to the middle of the 3rd century.

Within the aisled building stone paving 2435=1564 was laid in the south aisle over a build-up of loam dating to the late 2nd and early 3rd centuries. This abutted aisle-slot 2459 and overlay linear feature 2436 alongside wall 2423.

IV.C.6.f Phase 5

The structural alterations of this phase refer to Building III to the west (see Ch. IV.C.8.d). Building IV continued in use; within the aisled block ovens 2439 and 2425 were not backfilled until the 4th century. In the south aisle gully 2485=1552 was dug through paved floor 2435 roughly parallel to the walls of the building (Fig. 44). An east-west trench 2453 was dug right across the north side of Room 1, ending just short of 2403 and 2417 (Figs. 49 and 44). Finds from both 2485 and 2453 date to the late 3rd or 4th century AD.

In Room 5 north of the aisled building hearth 1416 contained a 4th century colour-coated sherd. This was overlaid by a sandy make-up layer 1419 in preparation for a tightly-packed floor of pitched stones 1405 (Fig. 48). At the west end of the room cobbling 1441 had been resurfaced, and was probably in use together with 1405. Both this resurfacing and 1405 were in turn overlain by a gravel mortar floor 1404, which was limited to a band 4.5 m wide running down the west side of the room. The absence of much soil or debris upon 1405 below 1404 suggests that there was not a long interval of use between them.

South of Building IV soil accumulated upon cobbling 2472, which was eventually replaced by another cobbled surface 2422. This too was confined east of wall 2421.

IV.C.6.g Phase 6

Room 5 and the aisled building were cut across by wall 2517=2496 on a north-north-east alignment. This was almost entirely robbed out by trench 2401, but unmortared pitched limestone foundations survived just north of the aisled building. South of Building IV and just north of ditch 2008=2429 the wall turned west, running up to abut the south-east corner of Building III. This wall too was mostly robbed by trenches 2400 and 2020, but short lengths 2024 and 2006 survived, constructed of squared limestone blocks bonded with cream gravel mortar on a foundation of unmortared limestones. The surviving wall was 0.55 m wide. The foundation trench bottomed on gravel, except at the west end, where the bottom course of wall 2024 was laid directly onto the bottom of the construction trench.

The construction trench of wall 2517 butted up to the foundations of the north wall of the aisled building 2405, implying that 2405 was still visible at this date, and 2517

presumably overlay the foundations of the earlier wall. The robbing of wall 2517 cut all other features except the north aisle slot 2414, whose robbing cut through 2400. 2414 was completely robbed for most of its length, but at the east end vertical slabs were set across the trench bottom (see Fig. 46), and two courses of unmortared limestone slabs ran along the top of the trench. These are not likely to belong to the original walls, which were probably robbed when the building went out of use, but may represent a wall built out of the rubble which was later robbed in its turn.

Wall 2517 runs obliquely across Building IV, which must have gone out of use; ditches 2415=1558 and 2410=1562, both starting just east of the wall, were dug alongside the former walls 2405 and 2414. 2415 cut the mortar floors in the north aisle, 2410 exposed the foundations of 2405 in its south side. Both ditches had dark occupation-rich fills, 2410 dating to the late 3rd or 4th century, 2415 to the first half of the 4th century. 2410 also contained a radiate coin of Tetricus II minted 270–274 (see Table 21 No. 1411). It is unlikely that both ditches were open contemporarily, so 2415 probably succeeded 2410. 2415 deepened as it ran east, and the upper part was filled with limestones which appeared to have tumbled in from the north side. The absence of mortar however seems to indicate that this stonework was not derived from the walls of Building IV.

Dug into the floors of Building IV were postholes 2437, 2465, 2467, 2473, 2516, 2518 and 2519. These do not form any recognisable structure. 2437 was cut by 2400, the robbing of 2517, and 2516 may have contained late 3rd or 4th century sherds (see pre-building contexts above), the other postholes were undated. A shallow pit 1409 and a large oval posthole 1408, which was packed with limestones around a square post-pipe, cut the latest mortar floor 1404 in Room 5. 1409 was undated, but the fill of the post-pipe of 1408 contained a coin dated 350–360 AD (Table 21 No. 23). This feature also contained fragments of human skull (see Ch. 5.16 on Fiche 2#84).

West of Room 5 wall 1466 was robbed by 1413 and overlain elsewhere by a thick sandy loam 1431. This in turn was overlaid by a layer of shattered slates 1424, with patches of mortar from the destruction of the building (Fig. 48).

1424 is probably equivalent to layer 2042=2048 west of Building IV, representing the latest courtyard surface, the slates possibly derived from the roof of the demolished building (see Fig. 52). These stone spreads were however part of an extensive yard surfacing, as similar layers were recorded in various trenches across the courtyard south of Building I and west of Buildings II and IV. Overlying 1424 was a thick build-up of dark loam containing much occupation debris and charcoal (layers 1428, 1430 and 1503) and a coin of 348–360 (Table 21 No. 28), demonstrating that occupation was still continuing in the latter half of the 4th century.

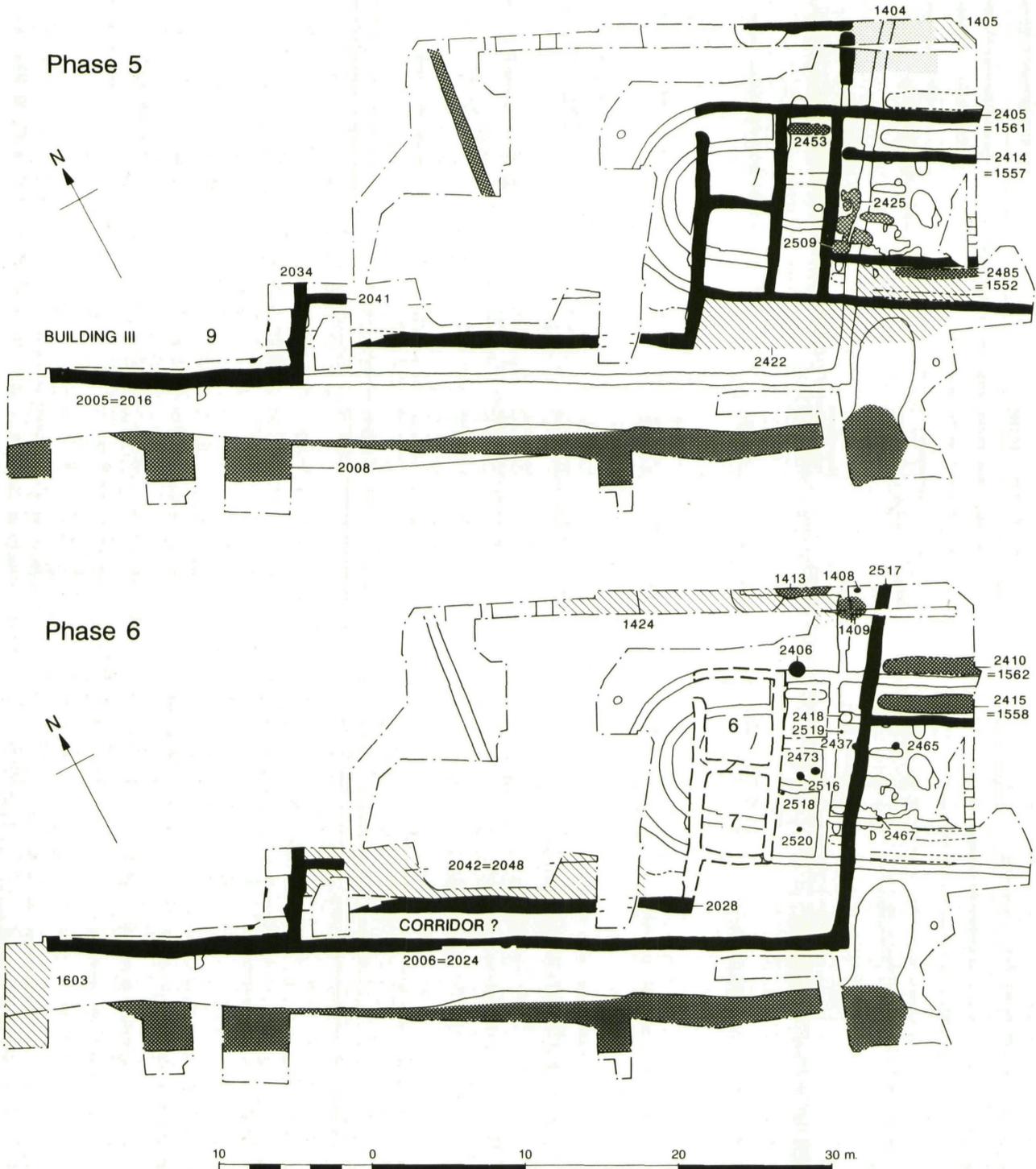


Figure 49 Building IV: phases 5 and 6. For key see Fig. 43.

IV.C.7 Building V

Fig. 128 on Fiche 1#32

South-east of Building IV was a north-south wall, 2610 (see Fig. 36). This wall was very substantial, 1.0–1.1 m wide with a foundation-trench dug 0.35 m into gravel. No trace of any associated floor survived. Pottery from the robbing of the wall dates to the late 2nd century. This wall is likely to have belonged to a building rather than simply to a boundary wall; none of the other three villa enclosure walls were similarly massive. Whether a building or a boundary wall, this may indicate that trackway ditch 2483 ended before reaching this trench; the trackway was possibly heading for this structure.

IV.C.8 Building III

Plan: Fig. 36, 42; Sections: Fig. 55, 50, 53, 52, 58

IV.C.8.a Introduction

From separate seasons of excavation in 1959, 1981–2 and 1990 an outline plan of the southern half of this building has been recovered. The building was not well-preserved however, as both floor and wall-robbing had been extensive. It consisted of a rectangular block oriented north-north-east, 16.5 m wide and at least 33 m long, with a verandah on the west and what seemed to be a paved yard on the east (see also Fig. 115). Parts of ten rooms were uncovered, two along the west side being excavated completely. The northern limits are unknown, as the building was first picked up on the quarry face of the area west of Building I.

The topsoil was removed by machine, but below this all trenches were dug by hand. In 1982 and 1990 areas were opened up by machine east of the building, but in neither case was there time to excavate these to natural.

IV.C.8.b *The hypocausted rooms on the west: Rooms 1, 2, 3, 9 and 10*

Fig. 51

The foundations of the west outside wall 240 consisted mostly of small pitched stones (Fig. 50), with up to four courses of roughly dressed blocks bonded with yellow mortar surviving above. The wall proper was 0.67 m wide. Inside along the west was a series of hypocausted rooms. Rooms 1 and 2 had mortar sub-floor and masonry piers. These were probably stoked from Room 10, which had thick layers of ash on its earth floor, but the wall containing the flue arch (292) was robbed out. Charcoal and ash among the flues in Rooms 1 and 2 was directly overlaid by destruction debris, and from the fact that some piers were robbed the raised floors had clearly been deliberately removed. Mosaic fragments were recovered from the flues of Room 2, which had apparently been floored with a

geometric mosaic in three colours (Ch. V.12 and Fig. 151 on Fiche 2#71). No sections of Room 1 or Room 2 were drawn.

Below the sub-floor in Room 2 was an earlier wall 265, at right angles to 240 and in line with wall 294 (Fig. 42); this was not planned by the excavator. It was bonded into 240 at the north-west end, demonstrating that the channeled hypocaust in Room 2 was secondary; there was possibly also masonry below the floor in the north-west corner of Room 1, whose hypocaust may thus not have been original. Walls 241 and 242 however appeared to be contemporary with 240, so that much of the original building was retained in the later phase. No trace of floors associated with the earlier phase of this building survived; these had presumably been removed by excavation for the hypocausts, but an infant burial 343 lay beneath the sub-floor adjacent to 265.

South of Room 1 in the south-west corner of the building was Room 3, another hypocausted room. At the north end this contained a narrow sleeper-wall 269 and a layer of ash at the level of the sub-floor in Room 1 adjacent. The sub-floor appears to have been of earth. Further south a narrow trench into the west side of the room revealed a mortar sub-floor upon which was a masonry pier 1393 (see Fig. 50). At both ends the main west wall of the building surrounding this room was 1.3 m wide, incorporating a sleeper wall for the raised floor. The sleeper walls were bonded into the main wall, showing that these rooms were hypocausted from the start, unlike Rooms 1 and 2. Along the west side of Room 4 there was apparently another sleeper wall, and elsewhere within it mortar and stone spreads at the level of the sub-floors, so this room may also have had an hypocaust. This was presumably fed from the east side of the building like Room 9 (see below).

The full length of the south wall, numbered 2005 on the west and 2016 on the east, lay within the excavation. Most of this wall had been robbed down to foundation level or below (see Fig. 55), but at the west end 4 courses of the wall proper survived. 2005 was 0.6 m wide, built of roughly squared limestone blocks bonded with cream mortar, and survived 0.4 m high; the foundations were of unmortared small flat limestones laid in rough courses, and the foundation trench generally bottomed on gravel. At the east end the wall overlay an earlier east-west ditch or large pit 2031 (Fig. 52), and at the south-east corner of the building the foundations were 0.3 m deeper. 2031 contained sherds of black-burnished pottery, and so dates to the 2nd century or later. The east wall 2034 was again badly robbed, but was traced northwards for 5.3 m before it was destroyed by the quarry. Its alignment corresponds to that of wall 301 further north. This wall was 0.65–0.7 m wide and ran over both ditch 2449=2029 and wall 2028. Where it crossed 2029 the upper part of the ditch had been dug out and refilled with large limestone slabs 2036 to provide a firm foundation.

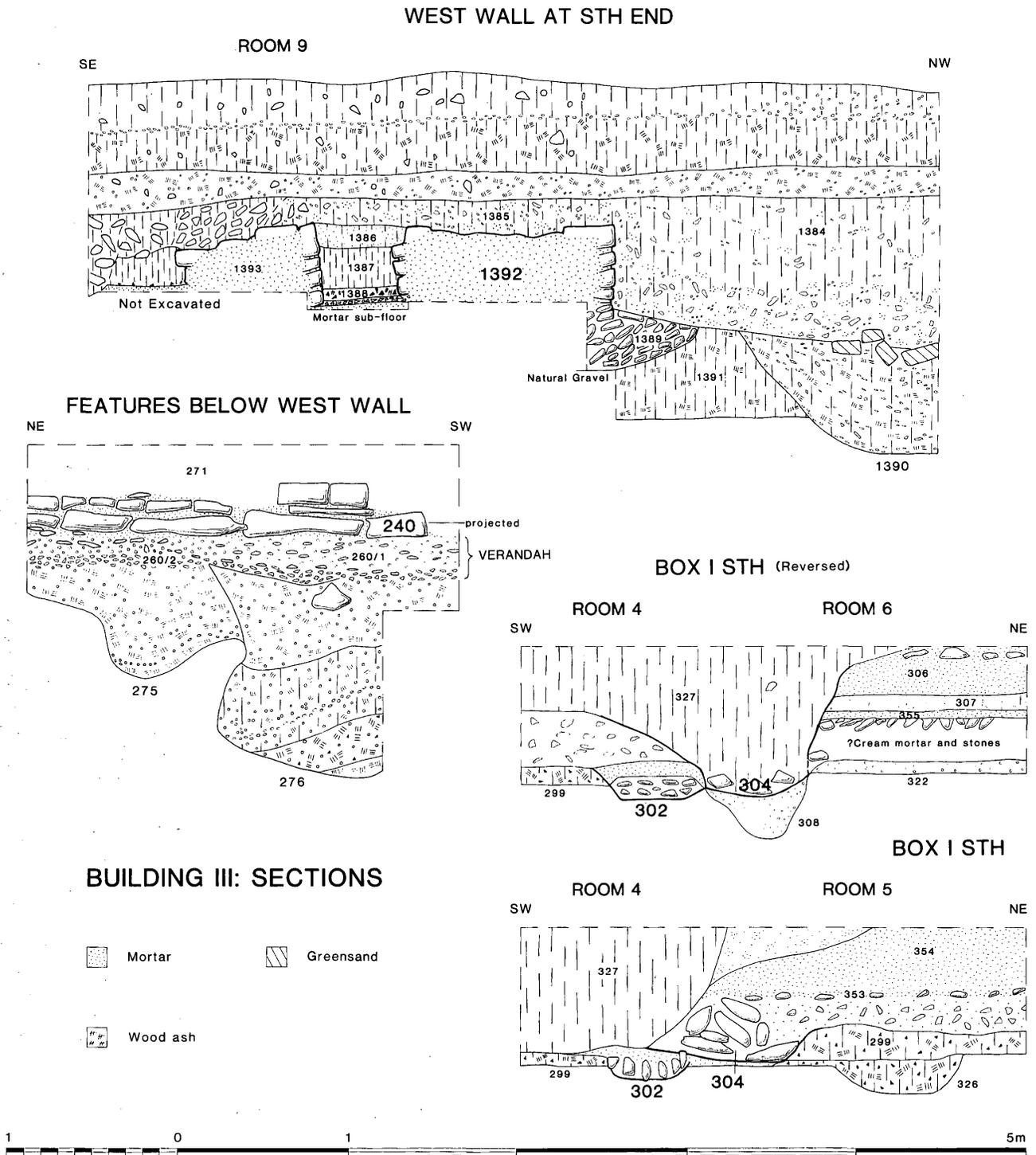


Figure 50 Building III: sections of west wall at the south end, of Box I, and of features below the west wall



Figure 51 Building III: Rooms 1 and 2 showing the channeled hypocaust from the south-west

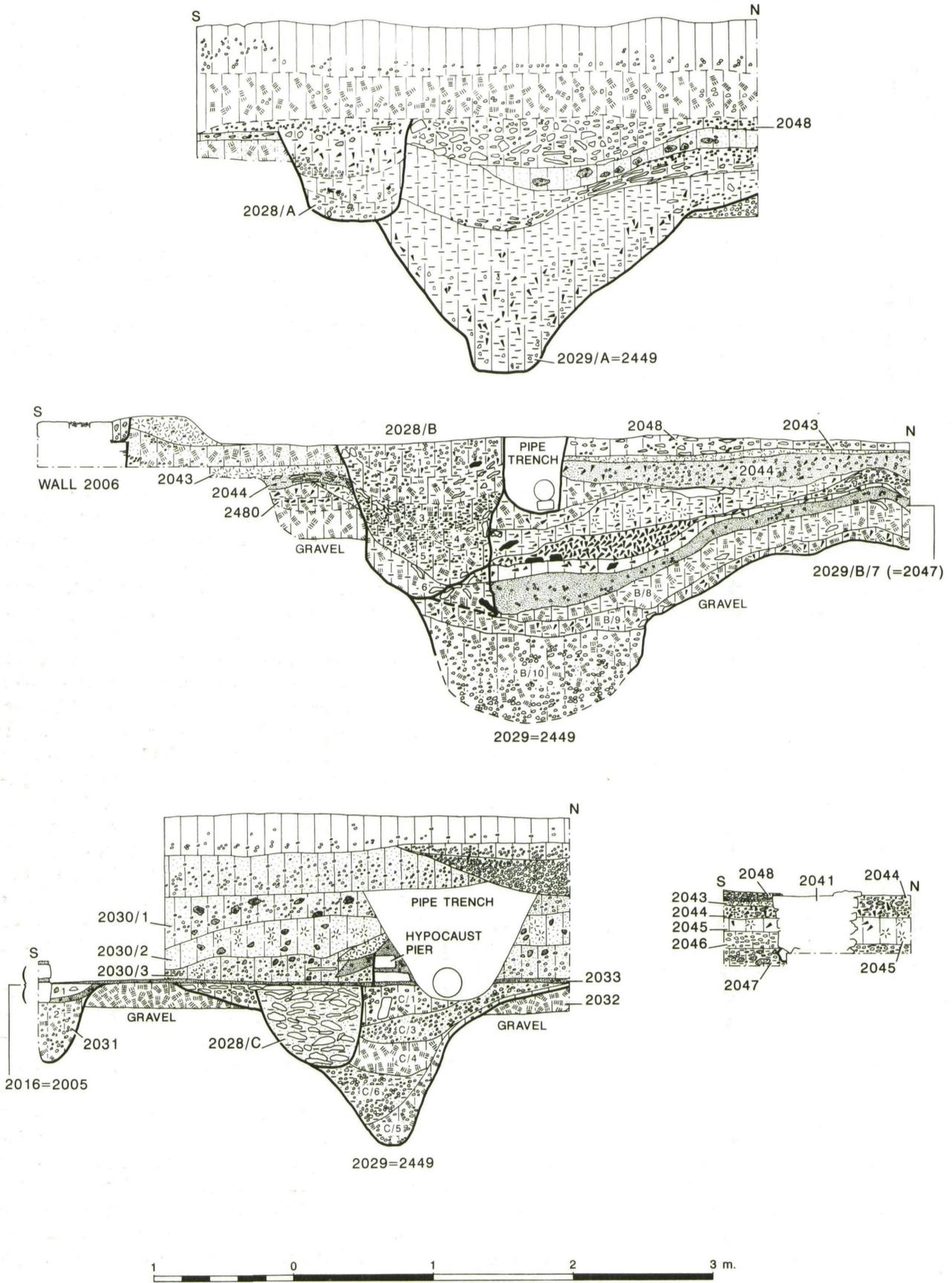


Figure 52 Building III: sections across ditch 2029 and wall 2028

Projecting from the east wall 2034 was a short length of wall 2041. This was 2.4 m long and 0.65 m wide, was built of squared limestones and survived 5 courses and 0.42 m high. The wall had pitched limestone foundations set into a gravel mortar surface 2047 (Fig. 52); the lower courses were bonded with yellow gravel mortar, the upper ones with a cream mortar. The deposits of soot and ash adjacent to 2041 perhaps suggest that it was connected with a stokehole for the hypocaust in Room 9 (see below). 2047 probably corresponds to 2029/B/7 further east (see Ch. IV.C.8.d below), which is equivalent to the make-up for the rebuilding of Building III further north. It therefore appears that 2034 must correspond to the later east wall 301 further north.

Inside Building III the room at the south-east corner (Room 9) was hypocausted. A thin mortar sub-floor 2035 overlay subsoil 2032 and ditch 2029, wall 2028 and ditch 2031. Upon the sub-floor triangular mortared limestone piers were built, 2037 surviving up to 0.37 m and 4 courses high; alongside the east wall was a narrow sleeper-wall, courses of limestones overlying pitched mortared masonry (Fig. 54). As in Rooms 1 and 2 the piers and sleeper wall were part of a channeled hypocaust supporting the floor, nothing of which survived; overlying the sub-floor was a layer of grey ash and charcoal, and this in turn was covered by mixed destruction layers. This hypocausted room extended for at least 5.5 m east-west and 4 m north-south. A modern pipe-trench which destroyed the north edge of 2005 made it impossible to find the western limits of this room, but it presumably adjoined Room 3, also hypocausted, which lay in the south-west corner of the building.

IV.C.8.c *The rooms on the east side: Rooms 5, 6, 7 & 8*

These had solid mortar floors. In Rooms 5 and 6 stone and mortar make-up was overlaid by pitched stones surfaced with mortar, layers 353 and 355. In Rooms 7 and 8 clean mortar floors 309 and 312 were bedded only on a thin layer of gravel or soil and pebbles. Beneath the make-up in all these rooms was a layer of black soil 299, which infilled earlier pits and postholes and overlay subsoil and gravel between them. It also seems to have lain beneath the mortar sub-floor in Room 1. This may have been an extensive clearance layer before building, like that in Building IV, but its depth and extent suggests it was dumped, possibly from a hypocaust.

There were two phases of the east wall of Building III, the later 301 being the outer and more substantial wall (Fig. 53). 302, the south wall of rooms 5 and 6, and 303, the wall between them, were also replaced by wider walls 304 and 305, and a second phase of mortar floor (306, 310 and 354) was laid in all four rooms. The surface of this did not survive, but the mortar make-up was over 0.3 m thick. In this phase the stratigraphic sequence in Rooms 6 and

8 was identical, and these may have been parts of one L-shaped room. Similarly Room 7 appears to have extended right from Room 2 to Room 8. The sections on the east side of Room 5 and just east of Room 2 are however dissimilar, and a shallow trench 348 parallel to the east wall of Rooms 1 and 2 suggests that there was later a narrow corridor dividing Rooms 5 and 4 from Rooms 2 and 1 (Fig. 42). It is not known how this might have related to the supposed hypocaust in Room 4.

The debris from Building III included both *opus signinum* flooring and yellow mortar surfaced with crushed tile in imitation of it. The painted wall plaster of the later phase showed a wide range of colours and of designs, and its distribution suggests that Building III was brightly painted throughout (Ch. V.13). Shattered limestone slates from the roof were common all along the west side of the building; ceramic roof tiles in the debris may have been reused (see also Ch. V.14).

IV.C.8.d *The yard east of the building and the boundary ditches to the south*

The yard was examined in two areas, east of Rooms 6 and 8 and alongside Room 9. East of Room 8 the mortar make-up for the later floors (here numbered 1510) had a flat level surface; one or two slabs found upon it suggest that it was originally paved. Cutting across it was a gully 1514 filled with fine silt, probably a drain (Fig. 42). Sealing both the gully and the mortar layer was a deposit of painted plaster with some *opus signinum* and tiles; this was not in situ collapse, but material dumped from the adjacent building, perhaps in robbing the floors. Overlying this debris was a dark loamy soil containing coins (Table 21 Nos. 24, 27 and 28) and pottery dating to the mid-4th century. This soil was probably equivalent to layers 1428–1430 overlying the destruction of Building IV (Fig. 48, Ch. IV.C.6 above).

The mortar make-up 1510 contained a little painted plaster in simple colours, indicating that the earlier phase of Building III had had some painted walls. Below this were successive gravel and mortar layers of the construction and the earlier floors. The latter probably corresponds to the second courtyard floor 1497 further east towards Building IV.

East of Room 9 below wall 2041 and cut by its foundations was a layer of gravel mortar 2047, which may correspond to layer 2029/B/7, a mortar surface in the top of ditch 2029 (see Fig. 52). This appears to be a continuation of mortar surface 1510, which here had slumped into the ditch top and which abutted the bottom of wall 2028 on its north side. It was separated from the uppermost ditch fills by a substantial depth of clay loam, implying a considerable time gap between the infilling of 2029 and the construction of wall 2028 and the laying of the adjacent mortar floor. Finds from this mortar further north date to the later 3rd century. Wall 2041 was built from the surface of this layer,

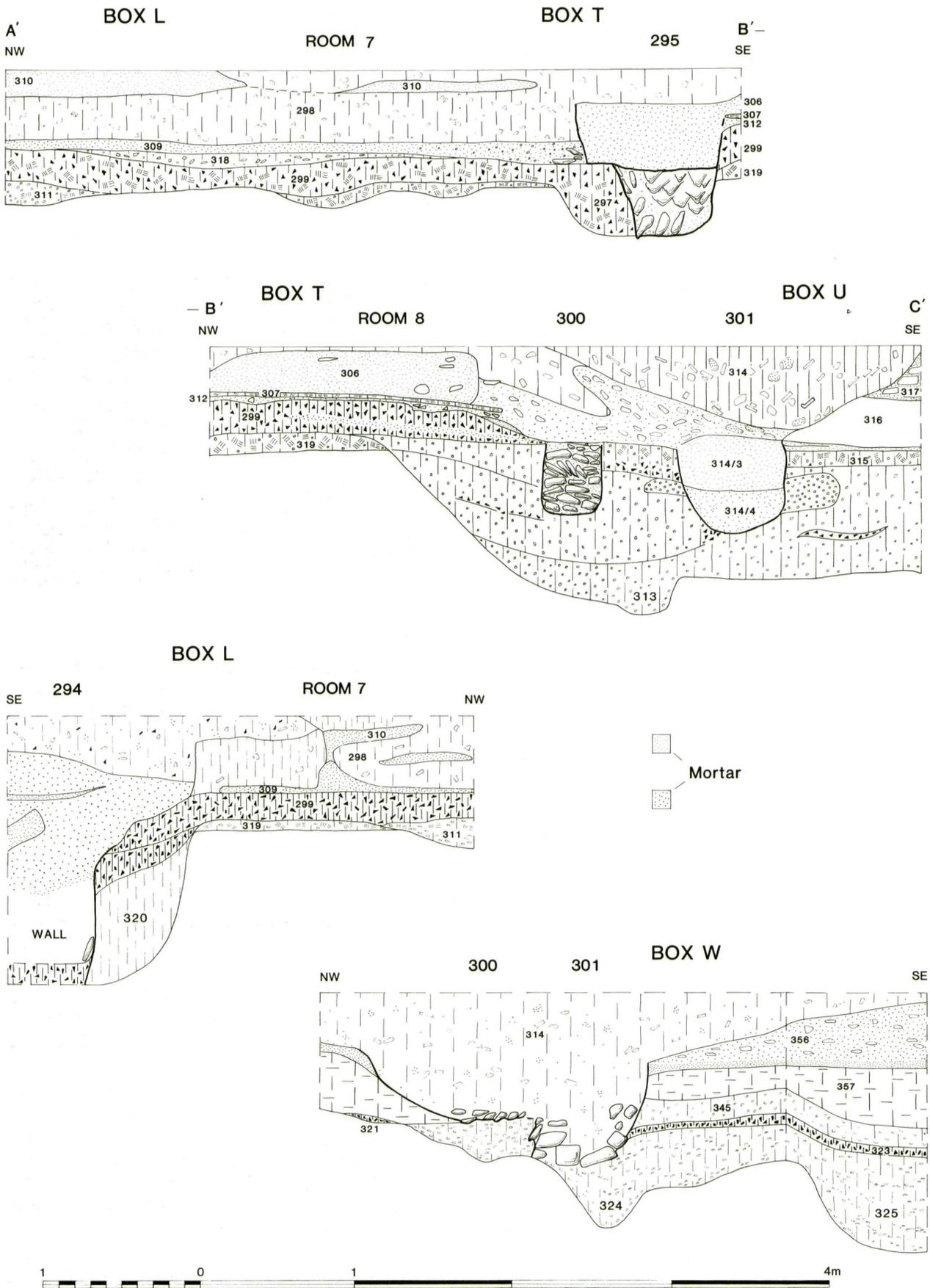


Figure 53 Building III: sections of Boxes L, T, U and W



Figure 54 Building III: Room 9 showing sub-floor and hypocaust piers

showing either that the rebuilding of Building III followed close upon construction of 2028, or that the mortar floor surface was kept clean.

Surrounding the wall was a substantial build-up of successive layers of loam mixed with limestone rubble, ash lenses and mortar, 2044–2046. 2046 may correspond to 2029/B/5 and 2045 to 2029/B/3. The last of these 2044 had a level surface, and may well have been a courtyard floor; it was overlaid by an extensive ash and charcoal layer 2043. The soils infilling the top of 2029 at this point, and even more so those overlying floor 2029/7, were full of ash, coal or charcoal deposits, and suggest raked-out material from an hypocaust flue nearby.

2043 was in turn overlain by limestone and Stonesfield slate rubble, 2042=2048, which overlay wall 2041 of Building III. This was levelled off to an even surface and was probably another courtyard hard-standing, corresponding to the upper courtyard surface further east, which occurs at a similar level overlying 2029 and is cut by the robbing of wall 2028. Since both wall 2041, which appeared to be contemporary with Building III, and wall 2028 further east, are abutted by 2048, it is clear that the Building IV phase 4 boundary wall 2028 had remained in use outside Building III, although the western part of the wall was overlain by the building. Robber-trench 2028 was visible through all the Roman deposits, and its wall may still have been in use alongside the phase 6 wall 2006=2024, forming a portico

along the south side of the villa enclosure. 2006 ran up to the south-east corner of Building III, which it abutted. It cut ash layer 2043 on the north side (see Fig. 52), but no stratigraphic relationships survived above this.

Building III lay just 7.5 m north of boundary ditch 2008=2429. Both were cut through 2018, a probable ploughsoil overlying both gravel and Iron Age feature 2019, and through 2015 which overlay it (Fig. 55). 2018 may belong to the same episode of ploughing observed west of Building III (see Ch. IV.C.9 and Fig. 58), but may be earlier. 2015 was a similar soil but contained Early Roman occupation debris. The level from which the earliest phase of the boundary, 2039=2483, was cut was not ascertained, as its recut 2008=2429 removed this. The later ditch cut was nearly 4 m across. This contained two horizons of building debris, one on the interface of layers /9 and /6, the other in layers /4 and /3. The earlier may relate to the construction of Building III, the later to its destruction.

A small trench dug into the boundary ditch at the west end of the excavated area and just opposite the southwest corner of Building III in 1982 showed that it was overlain by a deposit of limestones laid horizontally, probably to form a yard surface. The ditch here was numbered 1604, the limestones 1603. 1603 incorporated a little-worn coin of 310–312 (Table 21 No. 25), implying that the ditch went out of use during the first quarter of the 4th century. Further east however there was no sign of the limestone layer, and

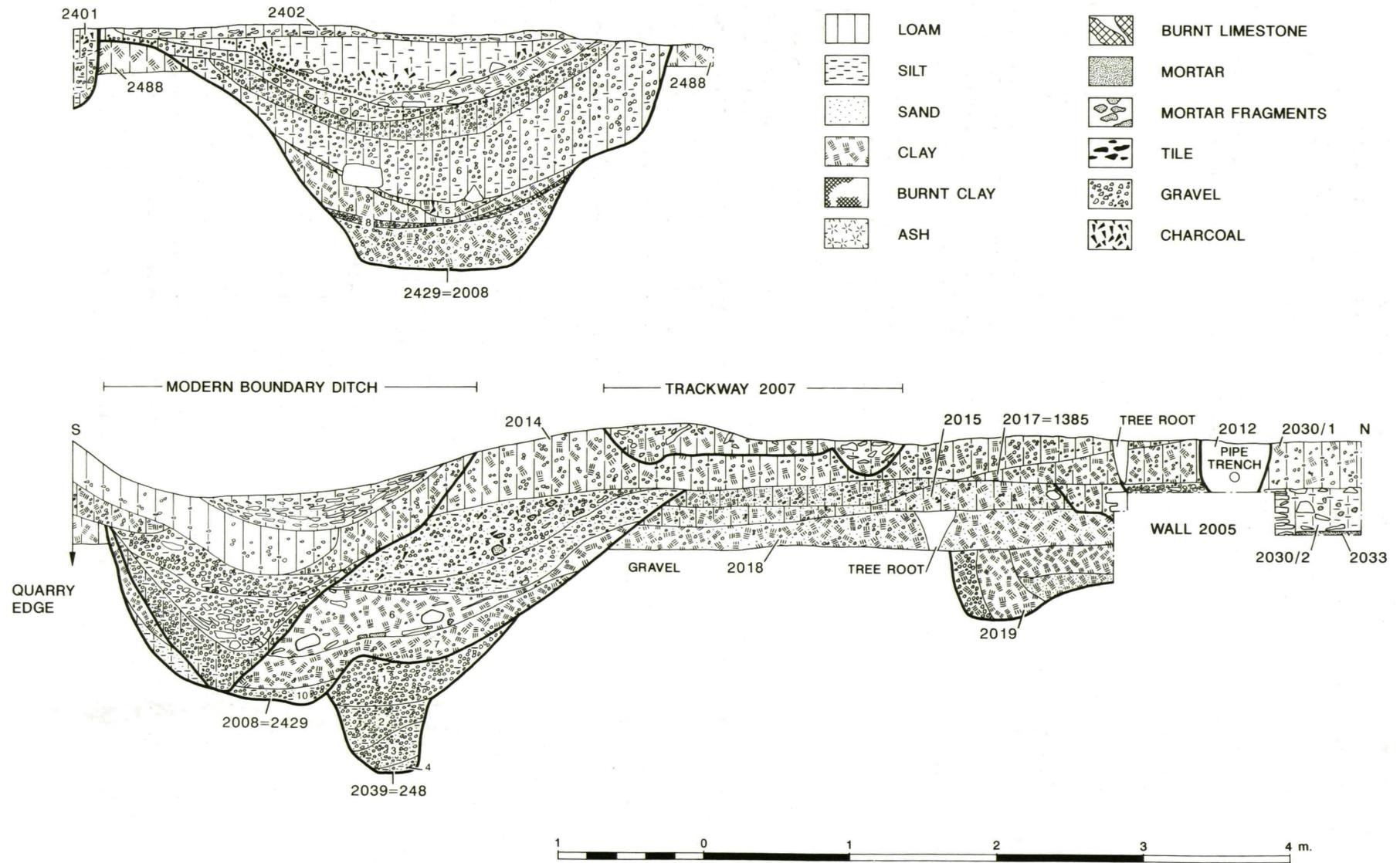


Figure 55 Building III: section to south across boundary ditches

pottery from the upper fills of 2008 continued to accumulate until the mid-4th century. Possibly the limestone was a localised infilling for access down the west side of Building III (see Fig. 49).

Destruction debris adjacent to the building is represented by 2017, after which the building and the ditches were overlaid by a gradual soil accumulation 2014. The robber trench of 2005 is cut from some way up, demonstrating that parts of the walls remained standing for some time after the building was disused, and were only robbed thereafter. On the east wall 2041 was overlaid by the slate rubble surface 2042. Further north this was overlaid by dark occupation soils 1428, 1430 and 1503, which also sealed layers of painted wall-plaster from Building III.

The post-Roman build-up was overlaid in the post-medieval period by a narrow trackway 2007 leading to Roughground Farm. South of this the Roman boundary ditches were cut by a field-boundary dug alongside this track (see Fig. 55).

IV.C.8.e *The verandah on the west*

Figs. 42, 56 and 57

West of the building was a verandah or passage. The floor consisted of a layer of greenish sandstone chippings 260, probably from final wall-dressing, overlaid by a layer of gravel, and this was bounded by a line of postholes 261–264. In between the postholes were traces of a dry-stone wall 258. Later the verandah was narrowed slightly, and a continuous dry-stone wall 259 built on top of the gravel floor (Fig. 57) leaving a walkway 1.2 m wide. The verandah did not apparently continue south alongside Room 9. The excavation-boxes west of this were only cleared down to destruction level, so it is not known what happened beyond it.

Ten metres further north the west wall (240) was picked up again, and outside it an extensive spread of painted plaster 0.3 m thick, apparently derived from a different set of rooms to the fragments found further south. Like the plaster east of Building III, this was probably dumped, but most likely indicates that there were further rooms and not simply a boundary wall here. The verandah floors did not appear here, but a horizon composed variously of stones (376) and *opus signinum* (362) may have been an alternative flooring at some stage (Fig. 58). This was apparently bounded by a narrow dry-stone wall (375).

IV.C.8.f *Pre-building features*

Plan: Fig. 127 on Fiche 1#31; Sections: Figs. 50 and 53

The west wall and the verandah overlay deep pits 276 and 279 of the later 2nd century AD, and 276 cut a gully of the 1st century AD, 275 (Fig. 50). Other pits were found in Boxes L and T, 296 being a series of intercutting features all filled with black soil 299, whereas 320 contained a dump of

early 2nd century pottery in its top sealed by 299. Smaller pits and postholes, mostly filled with more of 299, occurred beneath the mortar sub-floor in Rooms 1 and 2 and in Boxes I north and I south. A large 1st century ditch, frequently recut, was found beneath the east walls of the building (Fig. 53). This is numbered 313 and 324 in separate boxes, but was probably one feature, possibly part of the same enclosure as 1481 further east (Figs. 42 and 48). Other large ditches 293 and 1390 were clipped further south, but their full dimensions were not established nor were they dated.

IV.C.8.g *Dating*

The extensive black layer 299 just beneath the building contained only 2nd century finds with the exception of one Oxford colour-coated sherd. Pits 276 and 279 beneath the verandah may have been as late as the early 3rd century, and the verandah floors (260) included definite early 3rd century sherds. This suggests a date after 225 AD for construction; the Oxford colour-coated sherd would imply a date after 250, but may be intrusive.

More than one phase of construction has been recognised in various trenches. On the west rooms 2 (and probably 1) overlay original cross-walls, on the east the outer wall was replaced by another alongside, and in between several other walls were rebuilt either on the same line or immediately adjacent. It is not possible to link up these alterations stratigraphically nor, from the limited dating evidence, to show whether they were contemporary or piecemeal, but the close correspondence between the earlier and later walls in most cases argues that they all represent modifications to a single building rather than successive independent structures.

At the south end the east wall 2034 had been robbed out, and there was no evidence for the two phases of east wall, 300 and 301, seen further north. Based upon the evidence of the 1959 excavation plan the main west and south walls appear to be original, so that Building III was built over boundary wall 2028 from the first, but the alignment of 2034 and the fact that 2041 overlay 2047, which almost certainly equals 1510, strongly suggests that this is the second phase east wall. Possibly the earlier east wall 300 stopped at the north side of Room 9. Alternatively, since 300 and 301 would have coincided by this point, 301 may have overlain 300. It is possible that 300 returned not as 2005 but as 2028; the width of their construction trenches was similar. The first phase of Building III may thus coincide with Building IV phase 4, or may belong a little earlier.

The make-up of the later mortar floors on the east side included Oxford colour-coated sherds, but gully 1514 in the yard to the east, which was cut through this make-up, contained large unabraded sherds of the early 3rd century. The building was thus probably re-floored and enlarged during the third quarter of the century, AD 250–275.



Figure 56 Building III: verandah from the east-south-east with ranging rods in the first phase postholes



Figure 57 Building III: verandah from the north-east alongside the west wall 240, showing the second phase dry-stone wall sitting upon the first phase floor

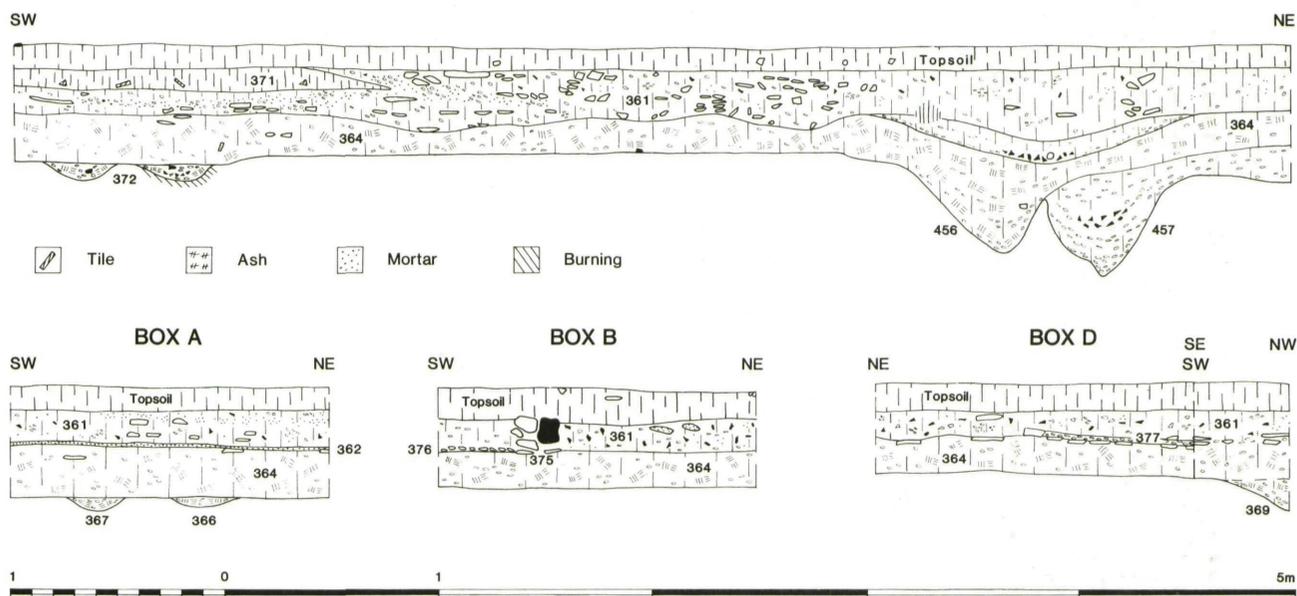


Figure 58 Trenches north-west of Building III: sections

A coin of 355–360 came from the debris among the flues in Room 3 (Table 21 No. 21), another from an occupation soil overlying destruction debris in the yard to the east (Table 21 No. 28), and later 4th century pottery from debris over the verandah. There was also a clipped siliqua of Honorius in the upper debris (Table 21 No. 16), but it is not certain that this was deposited when the building was first destroyed. More than one phase of robbing may be represented within the debris.

North-west of the recorded limits of Building III further spreads of gravel or flat stones were recorded (Fig. 58). Beneath these and extending southwards just west of the building was a plough or garden soil (364) truncating the early Roman features. This probably dates between the mid-2nd century and the 4th century, since the overlying surface (362) and dry-stone wall (375) were apparently contemporary with Building III.

IV.C.9 The villa courtyard

Plans: Figs. 36, 37; Sections: Figs. 44 and 58

The courtyard surrounded by the buildings was only investigated by narrow trenches, and except in the trench west of Building IV only sketch sections were drawn. Two layers of gravel mortar and stone were recorded south of Building I, the lower probably construction spread from it, and gravel or stone spreads occurred in most other trenches. Possibly these layers linked up with those west of Building IV, but were not traceable far as continuous horizons, and there were no spot-heights to help compare levels.

Cut through both surfaces in the middle of the courtyard was an east-west grave 206 containing the body of an adult female, with a piece of gravel conglomerate by her feet (see Table 26). A horse astragalus also came from the fill, but there was no dating evidence. An infant burial was also found in the courtyard beneath a stone (Table 64 on Fiche 2#84), but its precise location is not known.

IV.D The enclosures west of the villa

Plans: Fig. 59; Fiche 4#16, 17, 29–33, 43–8, 58–9 and 61–2; 131 on Fiche 1#35; 135 on Fiche 1#39. Sections: Figs. 132 on Fiche 1#36, 133 on Fiche 1#37, and 134 on Fiche 1#38

IV.D.1 Introduction

This area showed on air photographs as a trackway with a parallel field boundary 110 m to the north, subdivided into fields and with a group of smaller enclosures along the north edge close to the villa buildings. This was stripped to gravel using John Deere scrapers, removing between 0.2 and 0.35 m of stratigraphy below ploughsoil, which was not recorded.

Only a small sample of the ditches was excavated; many intersections were not investigated and finds were few. Fig. 131 on Fiche 1#35 shows the excavated trenches and the position of the illustrated sections.

IV.D.2 Development

Fig. 59 illustrates a likely sequence:

1. A trackway 433–434 with parallel boundary 387 was laid out on a northwest alignment. Cross-ditches were then dug between 433 and 387 at right angles, creating large rectangular fields. The north ends of the cross-ditches 426 etc lay outside the excavated area, but cropmarks do not continue as far as 387, so access between fields was probably on this side. There are no gaps along 433, although changes in fill hint that these may have been dug through.

Within the easternmost field was a well 470 and an enclosure, 422–430, with one entrance from the track alongside 387 and another at the rounded end.

Ditch 413–417 cut across pits of the mid-2nd century (Fig. 125 on Fiche 1#29), and its continuation 439 across ditches slightly later. The field-system thus probably post-dates AD 160, but since the pottery from it was also 2nd century it was probably laid out soon after this. The relationship of this system to the ditches surrounding the villa buildings, 2449, 2429 and 132, which are on a different alignment, is not clear (see Ch. IV.C.2 and Ch. IV.C.6).

2. A square field made up of ditches 440, 421 and 436 was created south of enclosure 422 and 430, defining the other sides of trackways alongside 413 and 426. Access to this from enclosure 422–430 was facilitated by an entrance created across the south side of 422. The track alongside 387 may have been blocked by 423 and alternative access provided across 433.
3. The entrance between 422 and the field south of it was modified by the addition of ditch 435 to create a three-way junction with gateways of equal size. Further north-west it was possibly at this stage that cross-ditch 391 was replaced by a parallel ditch 392. Neither ditch was however dated.
4. Ditch 421 was extended, blocking access from the small enclosure to the square field. A new ditch 424 was dug alongside 423 curving to meet 387. This prevented direct access between fields alongside 387. A small blocking ditch 479 across the line of trackway 433–434 may have been dug at this stage, and a curving ditch 386 dug to replace 434 was probably added soon after (see Stage 5). Entry to the fields further north was now via the gap between 433 and 479 or following 426 and 424.
5. A new rectangular enclosure 403 etc was tacked onto the north of the field 421, and cut across 430, the east side of the round-ended enclosure (Fig. 133 on Fiche 1#37). 421 was perhaps shortened to allow access from the field both to this new enclosure and to 422, which continued in use. The north side of 430 presumably continued in use, as without it 422 would not make

an effective enclosure. Probably at this stage 416 was dug, using the disused well 470 as a sump at the west end. This cut across the former track alongside 413. Cropmarks suggest (Frontispiece and Fig. 3) that 416 may have joined 132 at its east end, modifying the villa enclosure on the north side.

6. At the northern end of the field closest to the villa ditch 426 was replaced by a pair of parallel ditches 425 and 427 forming a trackway. These cut across trackway 433–434 and access between the small enclosures and the fields further north-west. The former entrance between 424 and 426 was blocked off by ditch 432; unlike 405 ditch 424 was not recut.

A new enclosure 402 was dug respecting ditches 421 and 401, and joined onto a new south-eastern boundary to the fields, ditch 419. Access to 402 was probably at the east corner, where the line of 402 was offset from that of 416. There was no direct access from the villa buildings; and the recutting of 416 and digging of 419, both as deep V-profiled ditches, probably represented the creation of a more substantial enclosure ditch around the villa (Fig. 134 on Fiche 1#38). This would presumably have joined ditch 1604=2008 on the south side of Building III.

Later ditch 418 was added continuing the line of 419 across the end of enclosure 402, and 416 and 419 were recut.

7. A stone culvert was built within 418, probably to support a bridge to maintain access to enclosure 402. The sides of 402 and 418 at their junction were revetted with rough stone walling (Figs. 62 and 63; Fig. 135 on Fiche 1#39). Ditch 420 and a large shallow hollow 409, measuring 16.75 m × 3.95 m × 0.60 m deep, were dug along the north-east side of 402 (Fig. 60), 420 running into 418.

409 was filled with black soil and charcoal, which also occurred in the lowest fills of 420 and the north corner of 402 adjacent (Fig. 134 on Fiche 1#38). There was no sign of *in situ* burning in the cuts across 409, but these were too few to be certain that burning did not occur within it. There was similarly no sign of any postholes or other structural traces. Sunken features like 409 have been interpreted as structures with turf walls, particularly animal pens (Neal 1978, 48–9 and Fig. 15) but there was no indication that the floor had been trampled, or was covered in manure. Possibly 409 was a repository for hypocaust-ash, which was later mucked out onto the fields.

At some stage a dry-stone wall was built at the junction of ditches 422, 408 and 405, and 405, 408 and 432 were backfilled behind it with gravel and grey silt while 422 was deepened (Fig. 133 on Fiche 1#37). It is possible that the enclosure consisting of 403, 401 and 406 was backfilled at the same time, as this also contained grey silt, but there was a large quantity of building debris

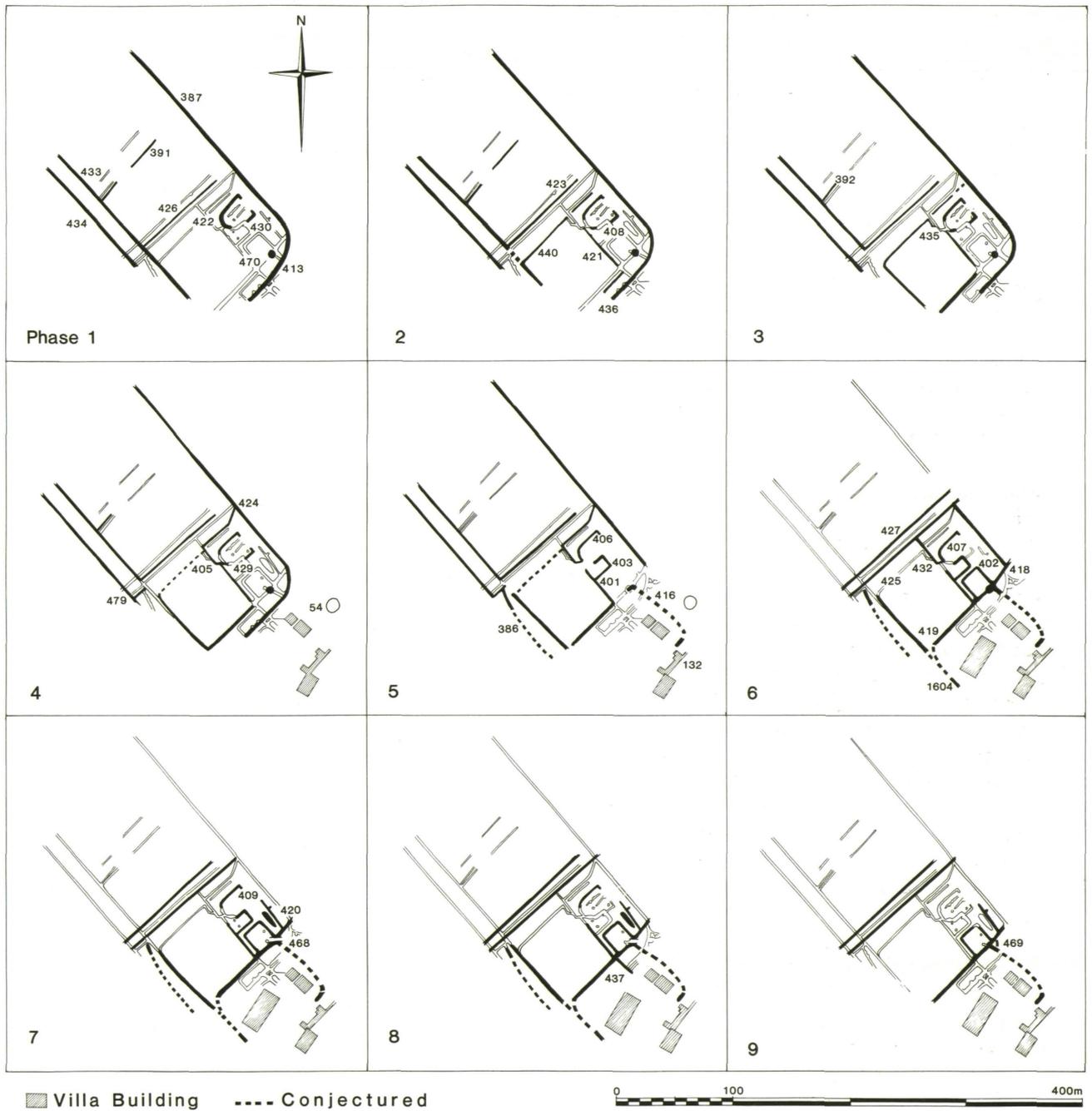


Figure 59 Phased plan of the development of the western enclosures (2nd-4th centuries)



Figure 60 Enclosures west of the villa: Pit 409 from the north-west



Figure 61 Enclosures west of the villa: 'Comdrier' 469 from the north-east



Figure 62 Enclosures west of the villa: Culvert 468 and 'Corndrier' 469 from the west, showing how 468 was cut away by recutting ditches 402 and 416

in this, and this enclosure was probably backfilled later on.

8. Enclosure 401, 403 and 406 was filled in, together with adjacent pits 451 and a slot 431 to the north. It may have been at this time that ditch 437 was dug running south-east from 419 parallel to 416. If this ditch continued it would have divided Building I from Building III.
9. Ditches 418, 416, 419 and 402 were recut, cutting through the west wall of the culvert, now silted up (Fig. 62 and 63). All these ditches and 420 silted up with a distinctive grey silt. The north corner of 402 contained building rubble, and may have been backfilled to provide access into this enclosure; this may alternatively have occurred earlier when enclosure ditches 401, 403 and 406 were backfilled. At the corner of 416 and 418 two parallel narrow stone walls were built, feature 469, with a channel cut into the gravel leading from one end down into 418. This was presumably for drainage (Fig. 135 on Fiche 1#39 and 61).

This channel cut the gravel infill behind the culvert walls, but it is not known whether it was contemporary with the culvert or the later recut. However since 469 lay across the line of access it is considered to be later. 469 was interpreted by Margaret Jones as a corndrier, but there was no evidence of burning inside the walls or at either end. Possibly the walls supported a water-trough or similar container.

IV.E The enclosures north and immediately east of the villa

Figs. 34 and 112

A regular grid of small rectangular enclosures was visible as cropmarks in this area (Fig. 2), and the cropmark evidence was partly confirmed by soilmarks seen from the air after stripping (Fig. 3). Only two of the ditches lay within the excavated area, 47 and 58, and these cut early Roman enclosures 56 and 40-41, so date after the mid-second century (Fig. 34). At the south end cropmarks suggest that the system was tied into the boundaries of the southern enclosure group (Frontispiece and Fig. 112), which were in use from the late 2nd century until the 4th century AD.

Two phases of the ditches around the villa are visible both on the cropmarks and in the stripped areas photographed from the air in 1957. These are on different alignments some 5-10 degrees apart, but the relationship of these two ditch systems was not tested by excavation. One of these alignments, to which 47 and 58 belong, clearly matches

that of the trackway and fields west of the villa, and these probably originated in the later 2nd century (Ch. IV.B.2 and Ch. IV.D.2). This enclosure system does not however match the orientation of the early villa buildings I and IV. The other alignment corresponds closely to that of these buildings and of the mid-2nd century villa enclosure ditches (see Ch. IV.C.6 etc), and this may be the original alignment.

The basic unit of the layout was approximately 27 m (90') long and 16.3m (54') wide, and multiples of this also occurred in the ditch system west of the villa. The cropmarks did not extend east of the road, and stripping confirmed that the enclosures did not extend this far. Attached to later Roman enclosures north-east of the villa however (Fig. 73 Phase 11) were 3 parallel ditches forming two more of these strips of standard width. Further strips may have existed south of the later Roman enclosures south-east of the villa (see Figs. 112 and 115 and Ch. VI.3). These ditches were later 3rd or 4th century AD.

The northern limit of the regular enclosures is not known; recollections by local amateurs of stripping prior to 1957 indicate parallel ditches running from north-east to south-west. Some radical change must have occurred where the regular grid met the boundary ditches 532, 719 etc running north-west (see Ch. IV.F.5).

IV.F The Later Roman enclosures and droveways east of the villa

IV.F.1 Introduction

(see Figs. 1 and 66)

East of the small rectangular enclosures around the villa buildings was an open area at the junction of two ditched droveways approaching from the south and south-east. The northern boundary ditch of the south-eastern trackway and the western boundary ditch of the south one, which turned north-west, formed the north and south limits of the open area. These ditches were overlaid by a succession of small ditched enclosures, forming two groups facing one another across the open area. Alongside the eastern boundary of the open area a gravel-pit developed, and north of this at the junction of the droveways were pens or timber buildings. In the middle of the open area a small circular enclosure was dug.

When excavation resumed in 1961 two areas had already been extracted, one next to the modern road north of the enclosures and another between the two enclosure groups. The air photographs, which show the enclosure groups very clearly, do not indicate anything substantial in these areas. In contrast to the field in which the villa buildings lay this field had been disturbed by medieval ridge-and-furrow, and preservation above gravel was poor. By the



Figure 63 Enclosures west of the villa: Culvert 468 and 'Corndrier' 469 from the north-east, showing the channel running from 469 into 468 and the south wall of 468 cut away by the recut of ditch 418

time excavation began the western part of the northern enclosures had already been stripped. Sections on the edge of the stripped area show that 0.15 m of subsoil at most had survived beneath the ridges, and that the furrows came right down onto gravel. The remaining part of these enclosures was stripped down to gravel and excavated as before.

The southern group of enclosures was trial-trenched before stripping. The trenches were only 3 m × 0.9 m, but it appeared that ridge-and-furrow had again left only 0.15 m of subsoil surviving beneath the ridges. The trial trenches showed that the cropmarks were of ditched enclosures similar to the northern group, and that there were no substantial Romanised stone buildings, so the southern enclosures were also stripped to gravel before excavation.

In 1963 during Margaret Jones' absence the eastern end of the northern enclosure group was excavated by Ernest Greenfield. The surviving evidence from both enclosure groups suggests a similar range of features and functions, and both seem to have been active in the later 3rd and 4th centuries. The ditches themselves are numerous, usually recut, and their interrelationships complicated and often unclear. It has therefore been decided to treat certain classes of feature common to both enclosure groups together, and then to discuss the development of the ditched enclosures separately. Discrete features such as the circular enclosure 481 and the gravel-pit area (660 and following) will be described last.

IV.F.2 'Corndrier' and ovens

Distribution: Fig. 64.

Plans: Fiche 4#10, 24, 38–9, 53–4, 77, 91; Fig. 133 on Fiche 1#37 and 134 on Fiche 1#38.

Sections: Figs. 136 on Fiche 1#40, 137 on Fiche 1#41, 139 on Fiche 1#45, and 144 on Fiche 1#50

One T-shaped 'corndrier' 590 was found in the northern enclosure group, oriented with the bar of the T to the north-west and parallel to the linear droveway ditch. The raised floor did not survive; the unmortared walls of limestone survived two courses deep (Fig. 136 on Fiche 1#40). A sample was taken from the burnt soil in between the walls (see Ch. 5.16 on Fiche 2#84).

Within the enclosures there were 33 features with red-dened gravel sides (Table 41 on Fiche 1#42). These were of two types, 7 circular or oval pits and 26 linear features. At the simplest the linear type consisted of a trench, one half of which was burnt, eg 822 and possibly 781 (Fig. 137 on Fiche 1#41), but most were 'tadpole-shaped', with a bulbous and usually deeper 'head' and a narrower and generally longer 'tail'. Burning almost always occurred around the bulbous end, especially at its junction with the narrower channel; the head was the chamber, the tail the flue and the stoke-hole. The high degree of burning suggests frequent use.



Figure 64 Late Roman enclosures: distribution plan of ovens and 'corndrier' east of the villa

The largest group surrounded the 'corndrier'. The 'tadpoles' in this group were all from 1.2–2.00 m long with the chamber about 0.6 m wide and 0.20–0.35 m deep. Some had wide flues with stone slabs at the junction of the flue and chamber (Fig. 137 on Fiche 1#41 Nos. 778 and 780), presumably to increase draw as at Winterton (Stead 1976, 32–5 and Fig. 18). This probably reflects a different method of stoking. The narrow tadpole flues were too small to stand in and were presumably worked from the ground surface, the wider-flues by standing in the stokehole. Some chambers were rectangular, and that of 601 was larger than its short flue. 593 (Fig. 137 on Fiche 1#41) apparently consisted of three chambers in series, and may have been stoked from two ends at once.

The absence of pottery wasters or of ironworking debris makes it unlikely that these features were kilns or furnaces, and their concentration around 590 probably indicates a connection between it and them. Soil samples from them contained hardly any grain or chaff (Ch. V.18); possibly they were bread ovens.

Other features without reddened sides but with burnt fills and the characteristic 'tadpole' shape are also listed in Table 41 on Fiche 1#42. Given the low temperature at which reddening occurs (Stead 1976, 30–35) however, they were probably not ovens.

There was a stone lining around the chamber in, for example, 521 and 598, and one oven was possibly clay-lined. Layers of burnt stones might have been from collapsed floors, but no supports for such floors were found in situ. One possible clay pedestal fragment was recovered (Ch. 5.11.j on Fiche 2#68), and temporary floors using clay plates like the fragments from the early Roman occupation (Ch. V.11) may have been employed. However, most of these ovens did not appear to have raised floors; in 598, 781, 530 and 594 charcoal and ash on the oven bottom was directly overlaid by collapsed oven superstructure.

Fired clay was found in most 'tadpole' ovens, though samples were only kept from 781. The superstructure seems to have consisted of a criss-cross vertical framework of wattles plastered thickly with clay (see also Ch. 5.11.j on Fiche 2#68). Oven walls were at least 90mm thick. Layers of burnt clayey soil could indicate superstructures made of turves, as in surface-built pottery kilns of the early Roman period in the Nene Valley (Woods 1974, 262–281). Burnt stones in the top of one oven may have come from a stone superstructure. These materials are suitable for temporary rather than permanent structures.

The circular pits also contained fired clay and were possibly roofed with clay domes. 647 was lined with flat stones and fired clay surrounding a circular Stonesfield slate (Fig. 65; Fig. 106 No.131). Pit 494 was oval and burning was concentrated at the deeper end. It had a secondary lining of stones, which may have divided the pit into a small circular chamber with a stokehole to the south-west. Elsewhere however vertical stones were probably simply to

stabilise the side where ovens were cut into earlier features.

The ovens in the south-eastern enclosures of the group were more varied. Two were simply lengths of trench burnt at one end, such as are known at Winterton (Stead 1976, 30–35 and Fig. 18). 782, 783 and 787 were extremely small with very short flues, sometimes wider than the chambers (Fig. 137 on Fiche 1#41). 697 apparently had a narrow small chamber and a very broad stokehole, which is unusual for this site, although the type is common enough at Winterton.

The majority of the ovens were orientated with the head to the north-west (Table 41 on Fiche 1#42), probably in response to the prevailing wind direction. The gullies forming a circular enclosure 12–13 m across around corndrier 590 (Fig. 73 Phases 6–9) may however have held windbreak fences; at the Churchill pottery kilns a circular stone building was built around a pottery drier (Young 1977, 24–6). The ovens further east had a much greater range of size, shape and orientation. One closely-spaced group (697–699 and 772) were all oriented in different directions, and may have been roofed over.

The ovens around 590 included several intercutting groups, and were thus in use for a long time. 609 contained only 1st/2nd century finds, which would accord with the first phase of enclosure, while the corndrier was not abandoned until the later 3rd or 4th century. These ovens too could well have continued into the 4th century.

The southern enclosures contained only four ovens, two 'tadpoles' and two simple circular pits (Table 41 on Fiche 1#42). Unusually one 'tadpole' had a stone lining, as did oval pit 860. 860 cut ditch 836 and was probably late 3rd or 4th century, and 884 was also probably late. There were no large groups of ovens, suggesting that activities connected with ovens were concentrated in the northern enclosures (Fig. 64).

IV.F.3 Pits and hollows

All pits and hollows are listed in Table 76 on Fiche 3#2. Those in the northern and southern enclosure groups can be divided into three groups, large shallow hollows with a characteristic grey silt filling (3a), deep pits (3b) and an assortment of smaller pits and scoops. The last category is dealt with in describing the development of the two enclosure groups, Ch. IV.F.5 and Ch. IV.F.6.

IV.F.3.a The silt-filled pits

Distribution: Fig. 66.

Plate: Fig. 67.

Plans/Sections: Figs. 68, 141 on Fiche 1#47 and 143 on Fiche 1#49

This was a distinctive group of large shallow hollows with one homogeneous clayey silt fill. Five lay roughly in line north of circular feature 481, and several others close

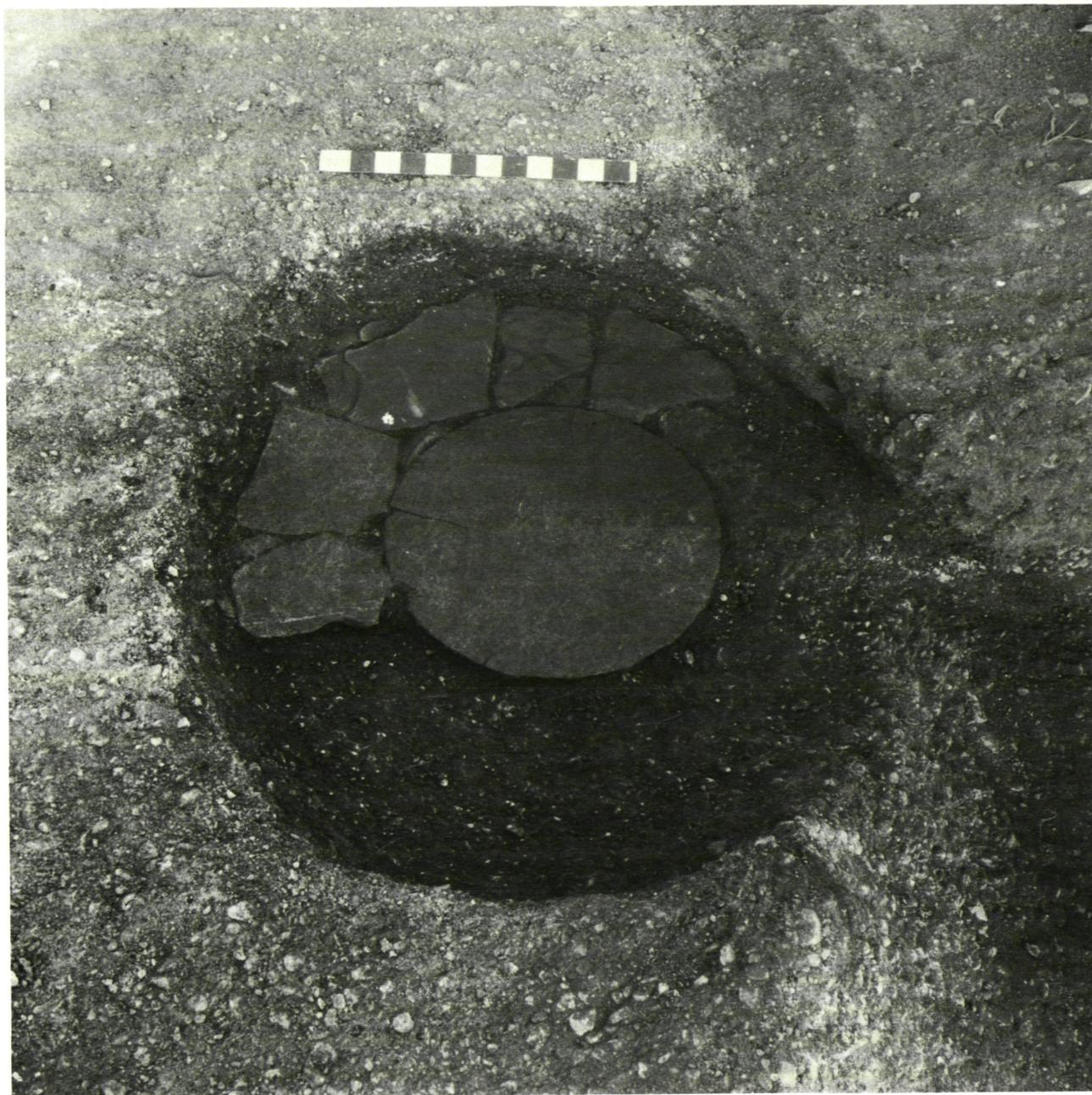


Figure 65 Enclosures east of the villa: oven-base of Stonesfield slate in 647 from the south

to or overlying the ditches of the northern and southern enclosure groups (Fig. 66). They were approximately sub-rectangular, and most had steep sides and flat bottoms, but some had deeper areas or scoops in the bottom or cut-outs in the sides (Fig. 68; Fig. 67). 550 and 558 had a small circular pit in the middle, containing the same fill as the rest of the feature, and there were single postholes at one corner or side in others. Layers of flat stones commonly occurred towards the top of the fill, and in the southern enclosures pitched stones (876) had been laid over pit 873 and were covered by an occupation layer (875).

Almost all these hollows contained 4th century finds, often in very large quantities, and 560 and 855 were dated by Constantinian coins to after 337AD and 350AD respectively (Table 21). None were cut by Roman features, but the pitched stones and subsequent occupation over 873 shows that they were part of the late Roman settlement.

The homogeneity of their fills and the absence of gravel spills suggests that these features were backfilled. This is supported by the character of the finds, which included small quantities of building debris, painted plaster and tesserae in particular, and bits of worked stone. The worked stone and occasional tesserae perhaps suggest that this is the residue sorted out from robbing but later discarded. Alternatively, in view of the large quantities of pottery, it may have come from middens.

The function of these features is difficult to determine. None of them contained the two opposing postholes characteristic of Anglo-Saxon sunken huts, and the majority are rather irregular for buildings. Postholes in the corner of 877, 560 and 873 may however indicate a structure over these pits, and the central deeper hollows in 550 and 558 could have been for a central post. Alternatively these might have been sumps for drainage. The deliberate recesses in the sides of some of these pits suggest steps down into them. Sunken-floored structures are attested on other Roman sites, and have already been discussed in relation to feature 409 (Fig. 131 on Fiche 1#35; Fig. 134 on Fiche 1#38; Fig. 60); they may have been underground stores, perhaps connected with dairying, for which sunken structures were in use until quite recently in France (Chapelot & Fossier 1985, 120–121). Other interpretations such as gravel pits are possible in some cases, but others of these pits were only cut a little way into gravel.

IV.F.3.b Deep pits

Plans: Figs. 73, 74, Fiche 4#24–5, 39–40, 54, 90–92;

Sections: Fig. 139 on Fiche 1#45; Fig. 144 on Fiche 1#50

Five deep pits (579, 582, 611, 763 and 764) were excavated in the northern enclosure group and two (837 and 868) in the southern group, some of which were not bottomed. An equal number of large soilmarks were not investigated.

Those that were fully excavated were not above 2 m deep (Fig. 139 on Fiche 1#45), and since they were

largely backfilled with occupation debris were probably rubbish pits. 837 contained six unused joiner's dogs and usable rotary querns, perhaps thrown out during a major reorganisation (see Ch. V.6 and Table 51 on Fiche 2#58). One or two had little debris in their lower fills, and their use for rubbish may have been secondary. A cluster (579, 582 and 611) in the same enclosure as the 'corndrier' and ovens may possibly have been storage pits of Iron Age type, as this area seems to have been connected with grain processing. One of the partly excavated pits in each enclosure group (763 and 837) had vertical and undercut sides and may have been a well. There is no other evidence for a water supply in these enclosures.

Most of the pits were dated by coins or pottery to the 4th century (see Table 21 and Table 79 on Fiche 3#16). This late date is also emphasised by their stratigraphic positions, almost all of them overlying intermediate or late phases of the enclosure ditches, viz. 579, 582, 763, 764, 837 and 868. One or two however were overlaid by ditches (eg 611 by 612).

IV.F.4 Later Roman burials

IV.F.4.a Distribution

Figs. 69–72 and 30

Seventeen extended inhumation burials were found during the 1957–1965 excavations, all but one in and around the enclosures east of the villa. Six others had previously been hastily recorded south-west of the southern enclosures in 1928, and a seventh was found further south in 1984. There were also three neonatal infant burials, two in the villa and one in the northern enclosures. A more detailed description of the burials by Mary Harman will be found in Ch. V.16 and a summary of the age, sex, orientation and other information is given in Table 26. The full tables of the skeletal information (Table 64 on Fiche 2#84 and Table 65 on Fiche 2#87) are included in the microfiche report.

IV.F.4.b Burials in the villa

Grave 206 lay in the middle of the villa courtyard (Fig. 37). It was cut through the latest laid gravel surface, and its position suggests a very late date in the occupation. Fragments of skull probably belonging to another such burial were recovered from pit 1408 cut into the corridor of Building IV. This feature is dated by a coin to after AD 350 (Table 21).

IV.F.4.c Burials in the northern enclosure group

Ten burials were found in two groups, four in one enclosure towards the west end and five within the southernmost enclosure 825, with one more just outside it. 584 was a double burial. 584 and 585 were adjacent and in line, lying in a shallow ditch 586 parallel to the enclosure boundary

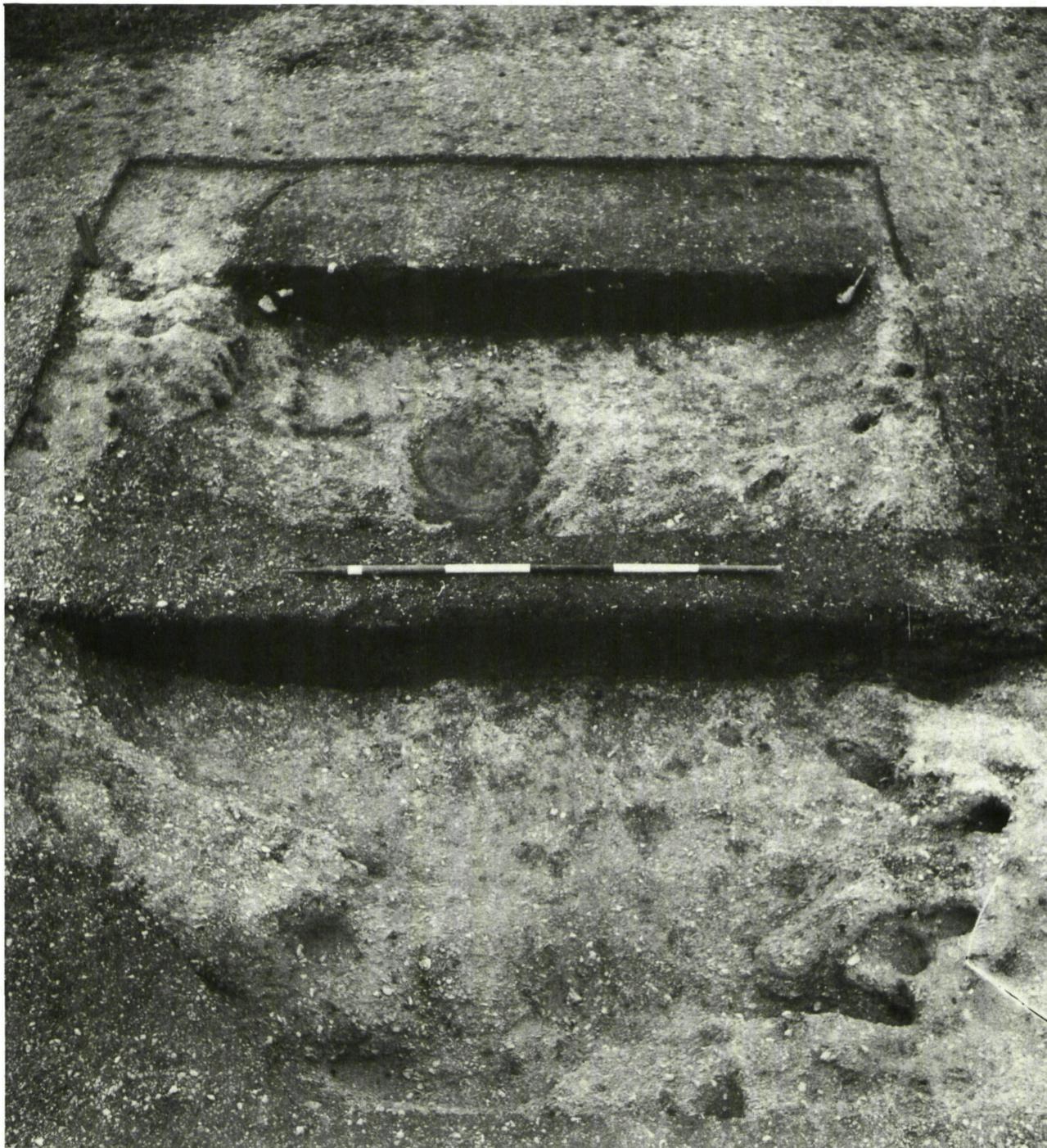


Figure 67 Enclosures east of the villa: Silt-filled pit 550 from the south-east

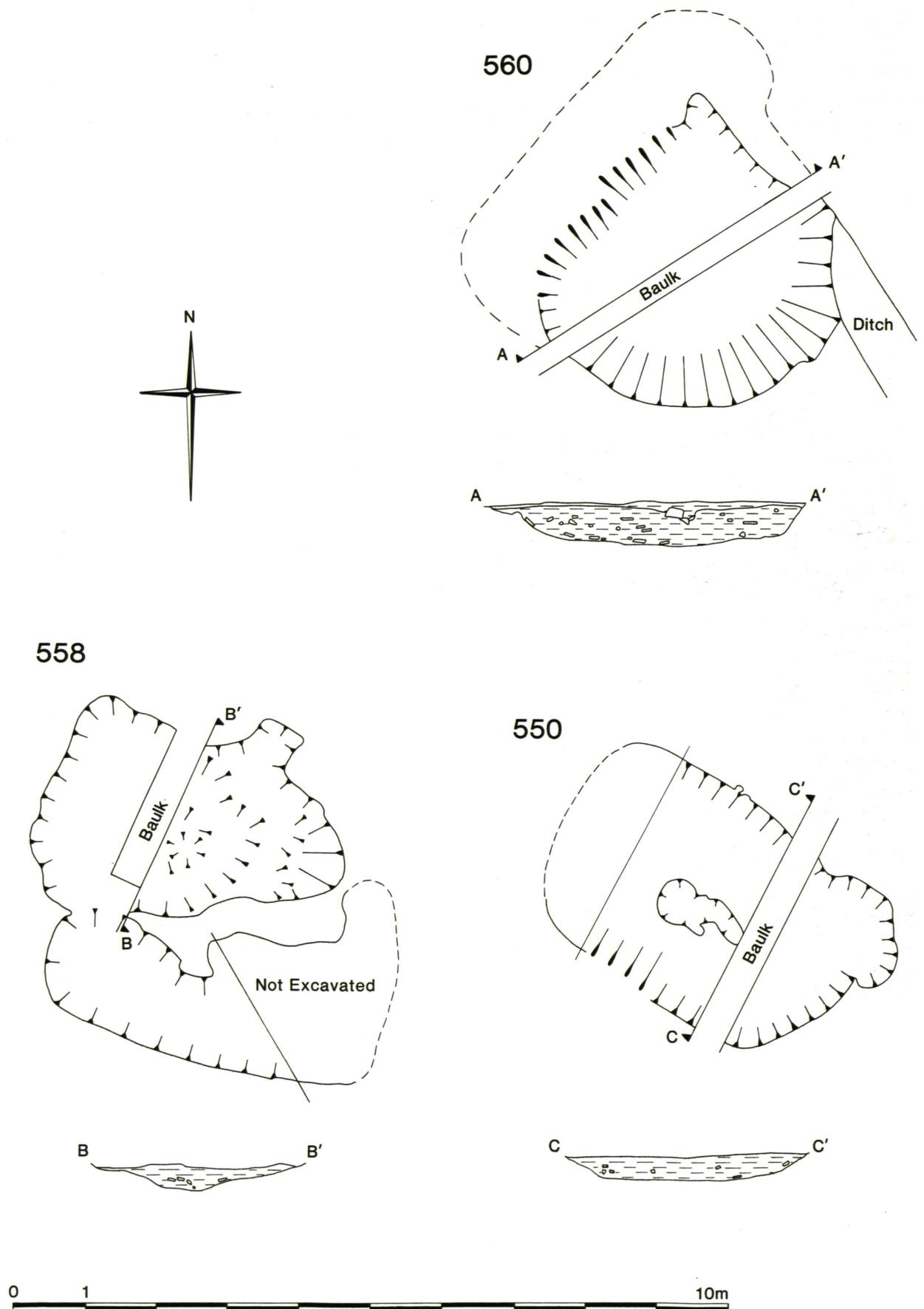


Figure 68 Late Roman silt-filled pits: plans and sections

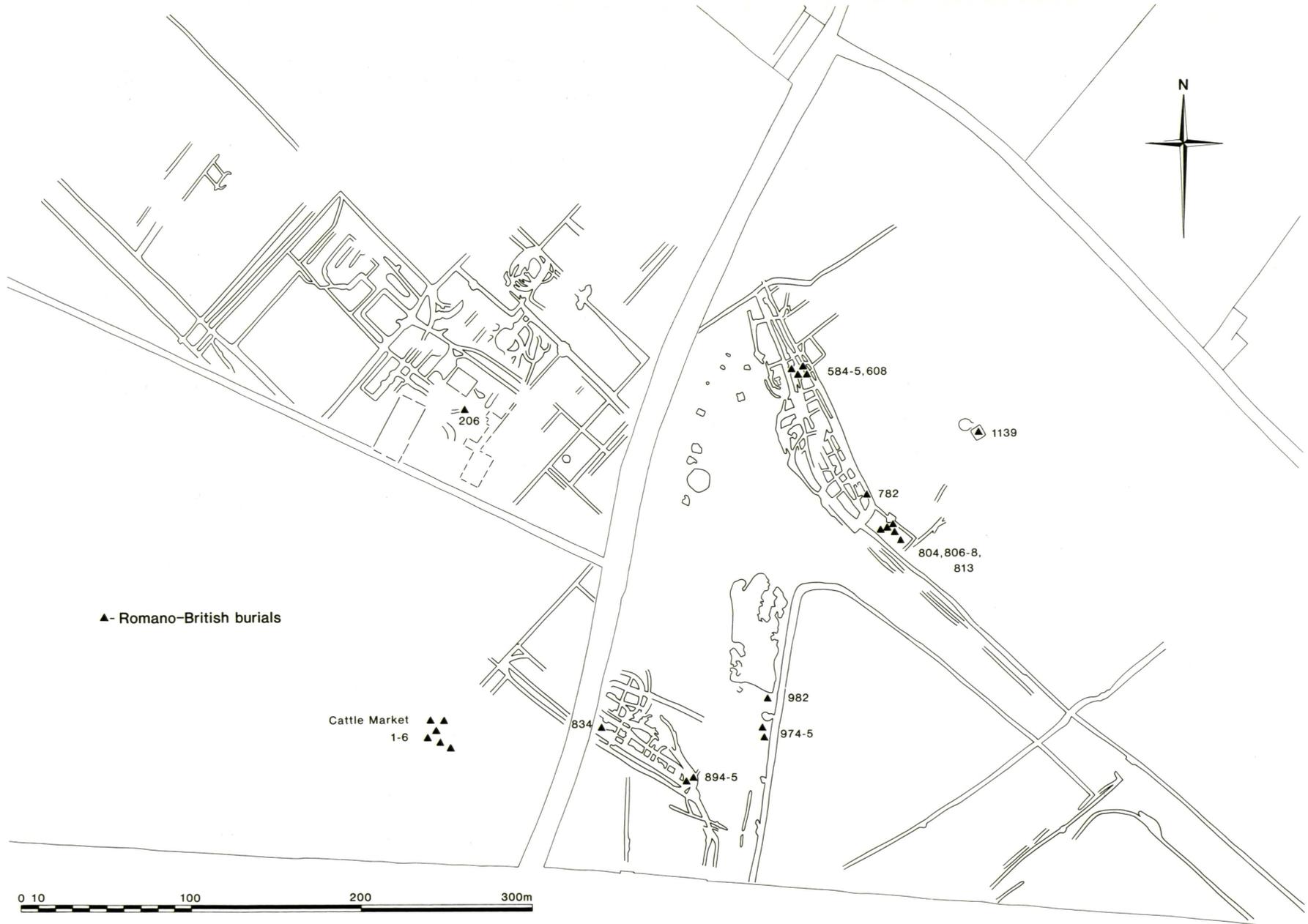


Figure 69 Distribution plan of Romano-British burials



Figure 70 Late Roman burial 206 found in the middle of the villa courtyard, taken from the east

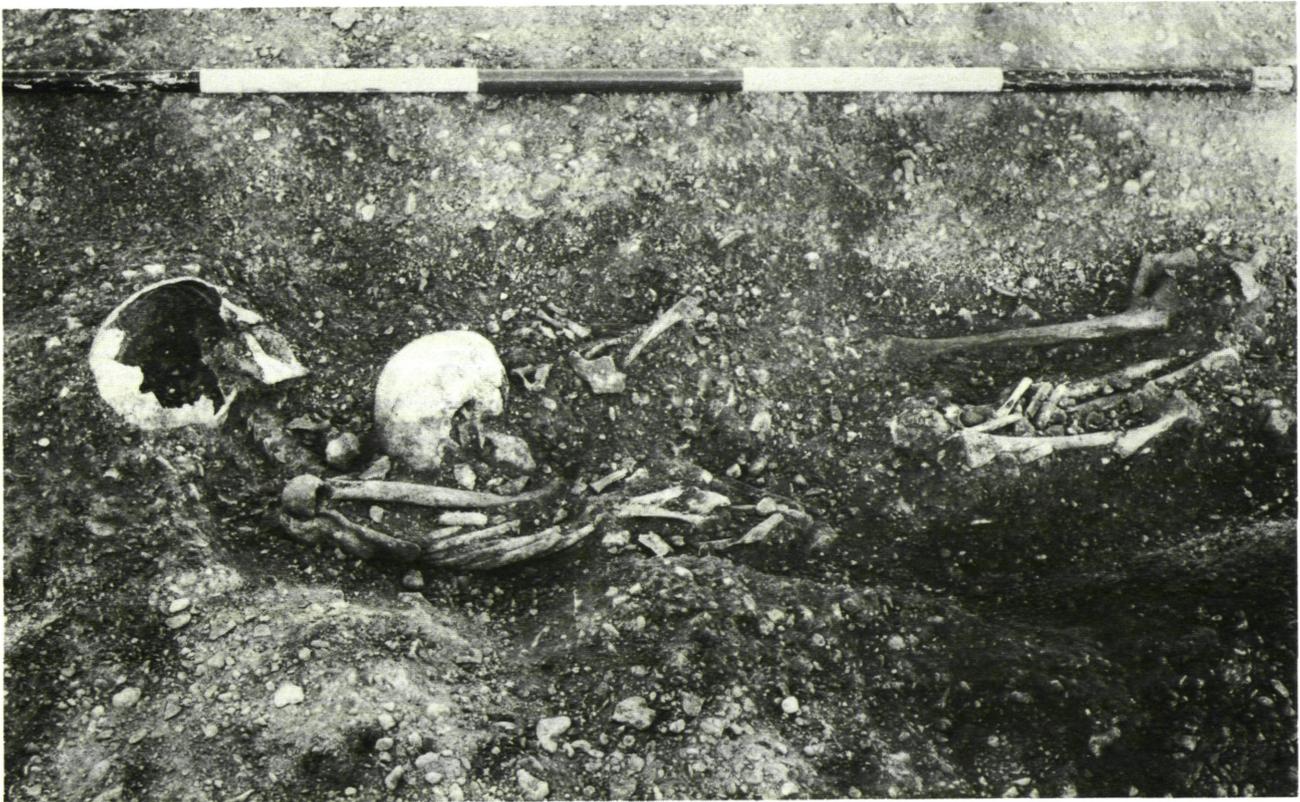


Figure 71 Late Roman double burial 584 in the northern enclosures, viewed from the south-west

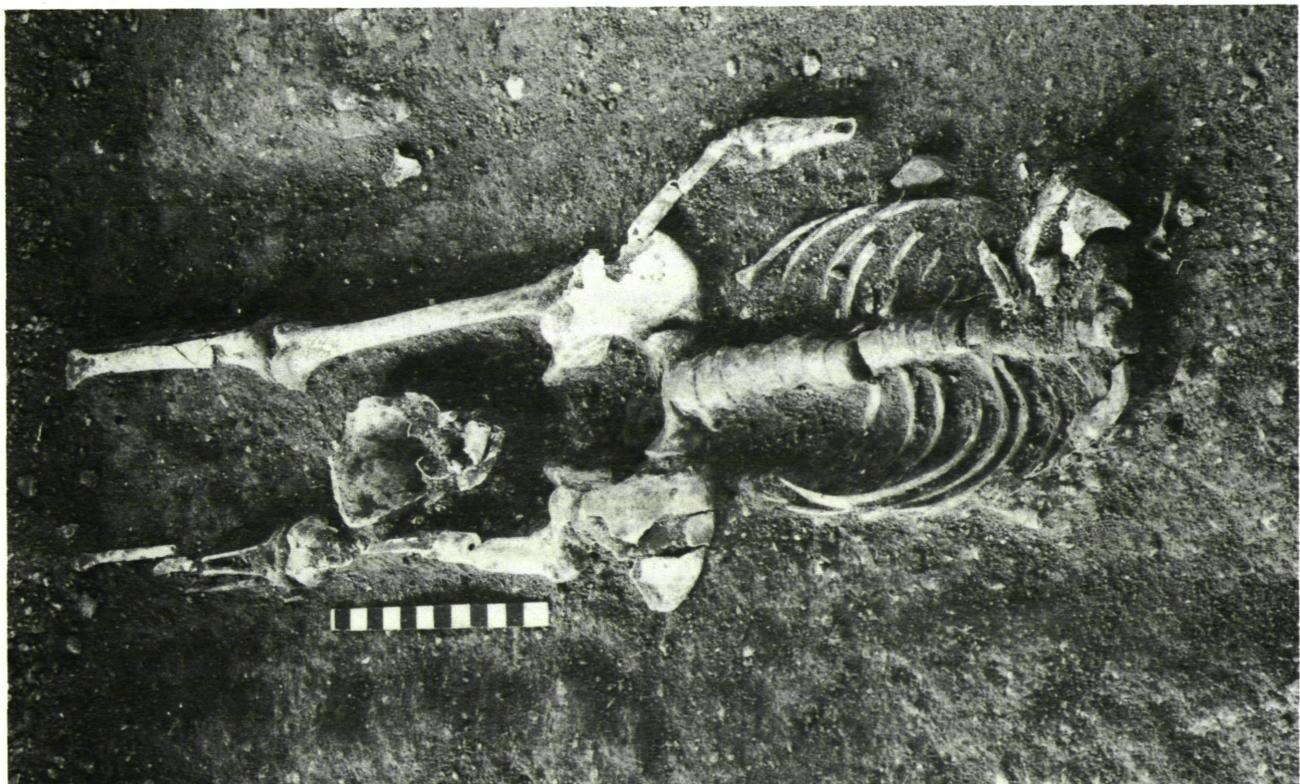


Figure 72 Late Roman decapitated burial 894 from the north-east. Skeleton damaged by scraper

ditches, 608 was parallel to 584 further south-west. Part of an adult was also found in 584, suggesting either that there had been further burials on top or that this grave had been reused.

Within 825 graves 804 and 807 were in line, and 806 parallel to 804. These and 813 formed a tight group with 808 a little further off. Between 804 and 806 and parallel was a grave-shaped feature 805, and another 809 lay further south-east, also aligned north-west. No bones were recovered from either, but it seems likely that they were graves whose bodies had been scraped away, making seven graves in this enclosure. Just outside the north-west corner of 825 was another grave 782. None of these burials had any grave-goods. They were mostly in line with the axis of the later Roman enclosures, not with the much earlier enclosure 825.

IV.F.4.d *Burials in the southern enclosure group and alongside the boundary ditch*

In the southern enclosures grave 834 lay within ditch 833 on the alignment of the enclosure boundaries, 894 and 895 in the tops of ditches at the east end.

Three further burials lay alongside boundary ditch 959/960. 974 and 975 were apparently adjacent and were aligned parallel to the boundary ditch, 982 lay further north and was oriented north-west.

IV.F.4.e *Other burials*

Six burials were recorded by Miss B M Blackwood during construction of the Lechlade cattle market in 1928, west of the southern enclosure group (Fig. 69). Two were destroyed before she arrived. The other four were cut c 0.6 m into gravel, and were orientated with heads to the north, three lying parallel to one another, the fourth north of these. No bones were recovered for examination, but one is noted as a young female, and the flexed burial as an old woman. One of these burials was accompanied by a greyware 'olla'. Further human burials were destroyed without record when gravel quarrying began in the field immediately to the W (letter of 2nd July 1930 to E T Leeds at Ashmolean Museum). No further details are given.

One more burial 1700, which was oriented west-east, was recovered south of the excavated area at No. 18 Hambridge Lane in builders trenches (not on plan). I am indebted to S Palmer for information concerning this burial.

IV.F.4.f *Points of interest*

One burial from the northern enclosures and one from the southern ones, both middle-aged women, were decapitated and the head placed between the legs. Two burials, one alongside the boundary ditch 959/960 and the other 1700 south of the main excavations, were prone. Grave 975

alongside 959/960 contained a bracelet (Fig. 93 No. 11), and several graves contained sandal studs, notably 585 and 974.

For discussion of these burials see Ch. V.16 and Ch. VI.5.

IV.F.5 *The northern enclosure group*

Plan: Fig. 73; 138 on Fiche 1#44; Fiche 4#3, 9-12, 22-26, 36-40, 53-5, *Sections:* Figs. 139 on Fiche 1#45, 140 on Fiche 1#46, 141 on Fiche 1#47

IV.F.5.a *Introduction*

The earliest features were Neolithic pits (see Ch. II). At the north end of the area ditch 484 was probably Early Iron Age (Ch. III.B.1.a). Several adjacent circular pits 505-507 may also have been Iron Age, but produced no finds (see Fiche 4#3 and Fiche 4#10).

The first Romano-British feature was the north boundary ditch of the 'green lane'. This was overlaid by a succession of linked enclosures which were sub-rectangular, often sharing a common boundary on the north-east, and which were frequently recut. The enclosures in the middle of the group shifted their limits several times, and constant recutting makes dating and elucidation of a development very difficult.

Fig. 138 on Fiche 1#44 shows the excavated trenches. Only 20-25% of the ditches in the western half of the group were excavated, and only some 10-13% of the enclosure group as a whole. Discrete features were dealt with more fully, almost all being half-sectioned at the least. Most of these ie pits, silt pits, burials and ovens, have been described already (Ch. IV.F.1-Ch. IV.F.4).

IV.F.5.b *The enclosure ditches*

The first addition to the linear boundary (hereafter 532-4) was probably enclosure 825 (Fig. 73 Stage 2). which had a four-post structure in one corner. Lengths of ditch approximately parallel to 532-4 may have formed a narrow trackway behind it leading down to enclosure 825 (Stage 2). These ditches contained only 2nd century finds.

The earliest enclosures south-west of the boundary probably had straight sides with right-angled corners like 825. One enclosed a corndrier (Stage 3); its ditches were cut by early 3rd century features (see Stage 6). Subsequently these enclosures cut across 532-4, running up to a new boundary north-east of it (Stage 4).

Most of the features in these enclosures lay south-west of the former boundary 532-4, and the few pits and burials north-east of this were all 4th century (Ch. IV.F.3-Ch. IV.F.4), perhaps suggesting that activity areas were established early on, and did not move when the enclosures

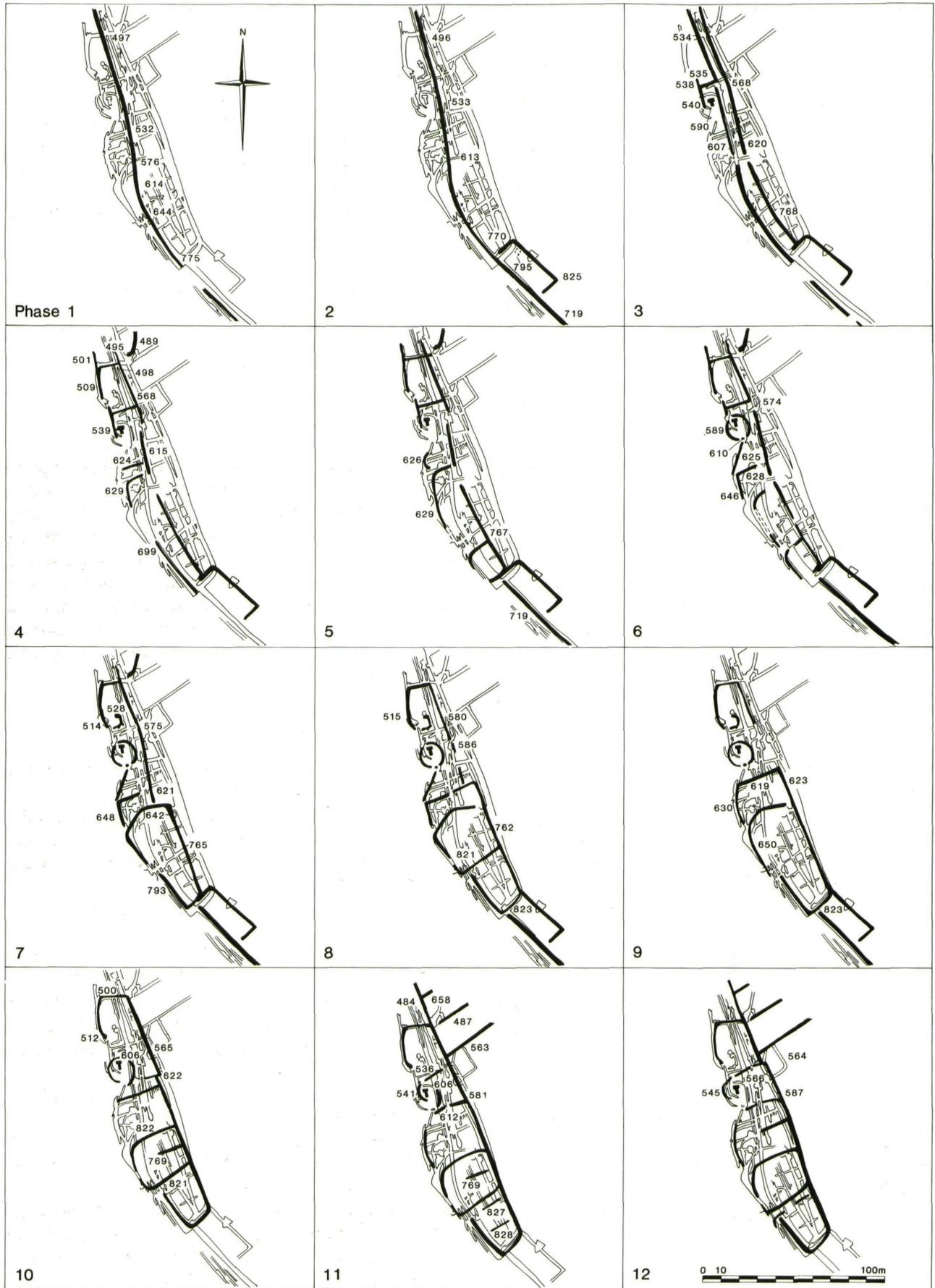


Figure 73 Development plan of northern enclosure group (2nd-4th centuries)

increased in size. However this difference could be due to different use of the rear part of these enclosures.

South-east of the corndrier ditched enclosures at this stage are few. Beyond 624 and 627 divisions, if present at all, were only delineated by narrow slight slots such as 698 and 824 (Stages 5 and 6). The northernmost enclosure 501 etc was frequently recut, the later cuts becoming deeper. The deep cuts can be dated to the later 3rd century AD. This enclosure contained three ovens, an assortment of small pits and postholes. At the back of the enclosure a partly articulated horse was buried in rectangular pit 573.

The T-shaped corndrier 590 was later enclosed by arcs of gully 574, 575 and 589, dating to the late 2nd/early 3rd century. 589 was cut by another curving gully 545 which contained late 3rd or 4th century material (see Stage 12). It is clear from the numerous gullies surrounding 590 that it had a long life. Clustered around it were many ovens (Fiche 4#24), which often intercut (see Ch. IV.F.2 above). This was probably a bakery.

At the southern end of the enclosure group the arrangement can only be inferred, as hardly any relationships were established. Ditches 765 and 642 (Stage 7) probably formed one large enclosure without subdivisions. Several pits which overlay earlier boundary ditches, among them a latrine-pit 771, may have been dug at this stage. This enclosure was enlarged again (Stage 8). The north-western boundary was probably an addition to 628, but was soon moved north (Stage 9). Within the enlarged enclosure groups of ovens were dug overlying the former boundary (see Fig. 64).

Following this came a major extension of the northern enclosures (Stage 10). At the back of the enclosure around the corndrier burials 584, 585 and 608 were cut into the earlier boundary ditches and large pits were dug (see Ch. IV.F.3 above).

825 was now used as a burial enclosure; seven graves were found within it and one just outside (Fig. 69 and Ch. IV.F.4). The southernmost enclosure was now divided by 821, with an entrance between 793 and 821. Both west and east of 821 shallow gullies sub-divided the enclosures; all these gullies belong to the late 3rd or 4th century AD. At the north end ditches 619 and 628 were cut into by silt-filled hollows 627 and 635 (Ch. IV.F.3).

The circular ditches around the corndrier were superseded; from 536 came a coin of 305–307 AD (Table 21). There were stones in the top of 541 and pit 544 adjacent, so possibly this area was surfaced with stone (cf 861 in the southern enclosures, Ch. IV.F.6 below). The stones were overlaid by an occupation soil, possibly Roman but more likely medieval. In the middle enclosures south of this there was a scatter of ovens (Fig. 64 and Ch. IV.F.2).

One or two more pits and short ditches were dug (Stage 12), but there is no dating evidence later than the mid-4th century.

IV.F.5.c Features behind the enclosures

Parallel ditches 487, 563 and 658 ran off north-east from 565 c 27 m apart. These were not at 90 degrees to 565, and were perhaps laid out from some other boundary. The distance between them was the same as the width of the rectangular cropmark enclosures immediately surrounding the villa buildings on the north and east (see Fig. 112 and Ch. IV.E above). Added onto the side of 563 was a small rectangular enclosure with an entrance at the south-west corner.

IV.F.6 The southern enclosure group

Plans: Fig. 74; 142 on Fiche 1#48; Fiche 4#71–4, 76–8, 86–7, 90–92.

Sections: Figs. 143 on Fiche 1#49; 144 on Fiche 1#50

IV.F.6.a Introduction

Small trial trenches were dug into this area before stripping (Fiche 4#91 and 92), and further sections afterwards, but this set of enclosures was much less thoroughly excavated than the northern group, and correspondingly fewer relationships were established. The stripped area comprised only one half of the enclosure group, which continued as cropmarks west of the Lechlade-Burford road (Fig. 1). The sequence was the same as in the northern group, a linear boundary later cut across by enclosures, which gradually expanded in size.

IV.F.6.b The enclosure ditches

The earliest features in this area were Later Bronze Age (Fig. 7; Fig. 119 on Fiche 1#19).

Ditch 1037 and ditches 978 and 979 were possibly the first ditches alongside a droveway, with entrances into the fields either side opposite one another (Fig. 74 Stage 1). This entrance was still apparently in use when 1036 replaced 1037 (Stage 2), but later 1036 was extended across this gap (Stage 3).

842 was probably a continuation of 1036. It was recut several times, always on the north side. 842 was traced west as a cropmark for c 70 m until it joined one of the ditches of the regular enclosures just east of the villa (Fig. 1 and Frontispiece). 843 contained Oxford colour-coated wares postdating 250 AD (Young 1977).

Ditches 842–3 were cut across by enclosures laid out from a new boundary 833 (Stage 3). Parallel to it was 843 and other lengths of ditch, 899 and later 849 (Stage 4), and cross-ditches 847 and 861 subdivided the enclosure into three. 833 was later replaced by 836 (Stage 5), which was recut several times. The cropmark of 836 continued west up to the regular enclosure ditch (Fig. 1 and Frontispiece), and possibly continued beyond it. The cross-ditches were modified, and 845 replaced 847 (Stage 5). These cross-



Figure 74 Development plan of southern enclosure group (2nd-4th centuries)



Figure 75 Northern enclosure group after stripping by machine, photographed by W A Baker in 1961

ditches contained no diagnostic sherds; 836 was cut by pit 837, and ditch 845 by pit 839. 849, 850 and 903 appear to have been yet more phases of the 848 boundary.

Ditches 889, 888 and 887 were the successive eastern ends of the enclosures. The ditches move progressively northwards, 889 cutting 843, 888 cutting 889 and 887 cutting 888 (Fig. 143 on Fiche 1#49), so that the enclosures were continually enlarged on this side. The relationship of 908, the northernmost boundary, to 887 or 888 was not established.

Soilmark ditches appear to join up the northern and southern enclosure boundaries, 891 linking 888 to 836 (Stage 5) and 909 later crossing 836 from 887 and 908 to 831 (Stage 7; see also Fig. 142 on Fiche 1#48; Fiche 4#92 and 73). 836 was cut by pits 837 and 868, 831 was not cut by later features, and the latest cross-ditch 841 ran beyond 836 up to 831 (Fiche 4#90 and 91). 831 was recut at least four times (Fig. 143 on Fiche 1#49), always on the south side, strengthening the hypothesis that the enclosures were continually enlarged (see Fig. 74). At the west end the cropmark of 831 curved to join the regular enclosure ditches, demonstrating that these were still in use into the 4th century.

One phase of 847 ran beyond 836 up to 905, so that 905 and 832 were probably intermediate in date between 836 and 831. The soilmarks suggest that the south side of individual enclosures may have been recut at different times, but were later subsumed into one

continuous boundary 831, just as was formed by ditches 581 and 587 in the northern enclosure group. At the east end 903 and 848 cut through an oven 862 (Fiche 4#91; see also Ch. IV.F.2).

Ditch 861 was overlaid by 912, a dark occupation layer, and this was overlaid by two probable stone hearths, 863 and 866, and by further stone spreads (Fig. 143 on Fiche 1#49). To the north was a silt-filled pit 873 with pitched and flat stones 876 in its top (Fig. 143 on Fiche 1#49 and Ch. IV.F.3), and sealing 876 was layer 875, probably more of this occupation soil. Outside the features this soil lay directly upon gravel, indicating either topsoil stripping during the occupation or complete mixing of the occupation and topsoil by dense activity. This Late Roman occupation layer covered most of the interior of the easternmost enclosure except where destroyed by medieval furrows such as 864.

North of 848 and south of 851 was a cluster of small pits, gullies and an oven 853. Just east of 857 were two silt-filled pits 911 and 859 (Ch. IV.F.3.a). Like 873, 859 contained flat stones at both the top and bottom.

On the north side of the enclosures the greatest area was enclosed by ditch 908. This ended opposite ditch 858, with which it was probably contemporary. 858 appears to have run across 851 to join ditch 856 (Fig. 74 Stage 9).

Ditch 851 was a curving enclosure boundary north of the line of three rectangular enclosures. A parallel curving ditch just east of it was presumably another phase of

boundary. These ditches demonstrate that the enclosures extended northwards, probably along the edge of the more regular layout just east of the villa.

The final phase of enclosure is represented by ditch 841, which turned a corner approximately in line with 858 (Fiche 4#77 and 90–91; Fig. 143 on Fiche 1#49). At the south end its broad soilmark ran as far as 832, and a narrower one continued into 831. 841 contained a Constantinian coin of AD 331–346 (Table 21 Ch. V.3). It was cut by silt-filled pit 855, which contained a coin dated AD 350–360. This was the latest feature from this enclosure group.

During salvage in 1990 ditches were observed in drainage trenches west of the Lechlade-Burford road. Three of these ran on a west-north-west alignment, another north-north-east at right angles to them. No finds were recovered from the exposed sections, but these ditches follow the alignment of the Southern enclosure group and are in line with 841, so are probably Roman.

Within this enclosure group there did not appear to be any specialised activity areas. Large pits (868) and possible wells (837) lay along the back of the enclosures, as in the northern group, and the ovens were fairly evenly distributed. Burials were placed in ditches towards the back and at the end of the enclosures (Fig. 69), which is also the pattern in the northern group.

IV.F.6.c Features behind the enclosures

Fiche 4#71–73; Fig. 115

South of the enclosure-group and west of 1036 were linear soilmarks on two slightly different alignments. Both sets may have been medieval furrows; one alignment was parallel to a medieval headland, but the other was parallel to boundaries 842 and 1054, and since these soilmarks were roughly 17m apart, may have been Roman, like ditches 487 and 563 beyond the northern enclosure-group. 882, the only one which was sectioned, had a V-profile and silt fill unlike a furrow, but was undated.

IV.F.7 Circular enclosure 481 and adjacent features

Plan and Section: Fig. 76, Fiche 4#36 and 37

Feature 481 lay at the centre of the open area where the trackways met, between the northern and southern enclosure groups (Fig. 66). It was a soilmark approximately 12.8 m in diameter consisting of a small central platform 3.45 m north-south by 3.2 m east-west surrounded by up to 14 successive ditch cuts. The ditches were excavated by trenches in spits, and cuts were rarely recognised within the upper levels of these, so that the sequence has had to be reconstructed from the sections. No attempt was made during excavation to link cuts around the feature, and in most cases they can only be traced for short lengths.

The innermost four cuts were shallow, and the outermost of these was almost invariably cut by a V-profiled deeper cut (Fig. 76). This deeper cut was recut up to ten times, usually towards the outside, though the very latest was often a little inside the outermost one or two cuts. The sections on the east and north-east are the most spread out, and so show the succession of cuts most clearly (Fig. 76 III and IV); those on the west and south are shorter, the ditch being recut on top of the previous cuts.

The central platform is not therefore central to the circumference of the whole feature, the centre of which lies towards the north-east of this platform. The circuit of one of the inner shallow cuts can be traced all the way round; this is roughly circular, and is centred upon the middle of the platform, while the innermost, and probably the earliest, deep cut is centred upon a point intermediate between the original centre and that of the circumference of the whole.

This suggests that the centre shifted gradually north-eastwards.

The shallow early cuts were filled with eroded clay subsoil and gravel. The deeper cuts became generally darker, the latest ones often having a grey silt fill, as in many 4th century features on the site. Finds also became more prolific as time went on. Limestone, often burnt, was common throughout the feature, as was tile. Both finds and stones were concentrated in Trench I along the latest cut; possibly this represents a final dump infilling the ditch. At various stages terminals or deeper scoops were evident in the gravel bottom (Fig. 76), but none were recognised during excavation. If these indicated entrances then their orientation varied, as they occurred on the south-west, south, south-east and north-east.

The deep cuts generally silted up right to the top before being recut, implying that each cut was open for at least 5–10 years. Spilling down the inner sides of the deep cuts were very gravelly layers which cannot have derived from the side, as these cuts were cut into earlier ditch fills on the inside, and must represent either backfilling or spill from upcast on the inside. In view of the tendency for ditches to be recut on the outside, upcast on the inner side seems more plausible.

If all the upcast was thrown out on the inside there would have been a mound inside the ditch. The volume of soil from one of the inner cuts would have covered the interior to a depth of 0.3 m. The spoil from the first deep cut added to this would have meant that its interior was covered at least 0.4 m deep, and with successive recuts the mound would have increased in depth. Evidence for spoil on the outer side of the ditch was largely removed by recutting, but where the outer side survived there was no strong evidence of upcast, and the outward progression of the cuts implies that there was little or no upcast on this side.

The fact that the cuts do not always progress outwards would suggest that spoil was not always dumped right up to

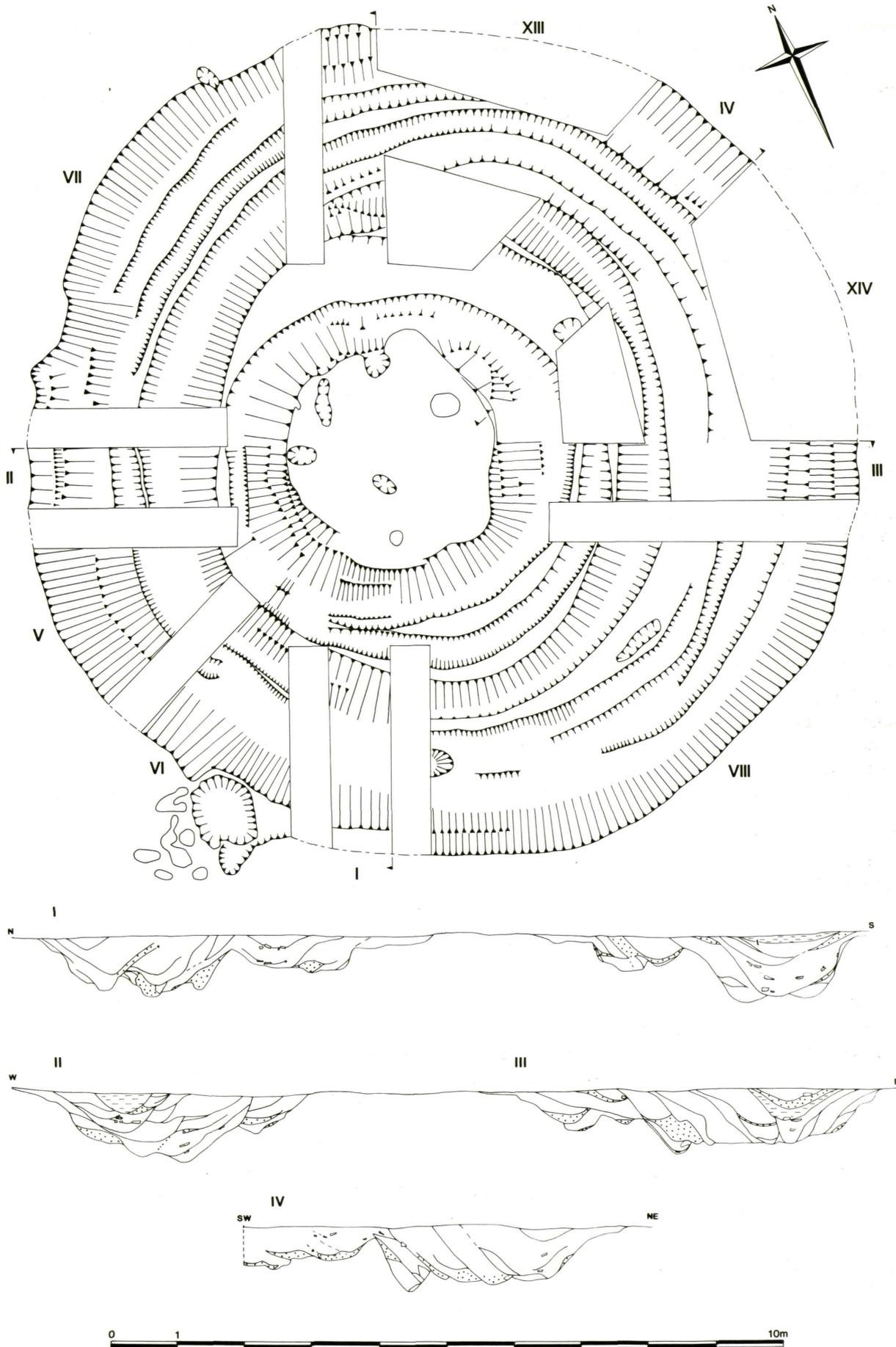


Figure 76 Circular enclosure 481, plans and sections

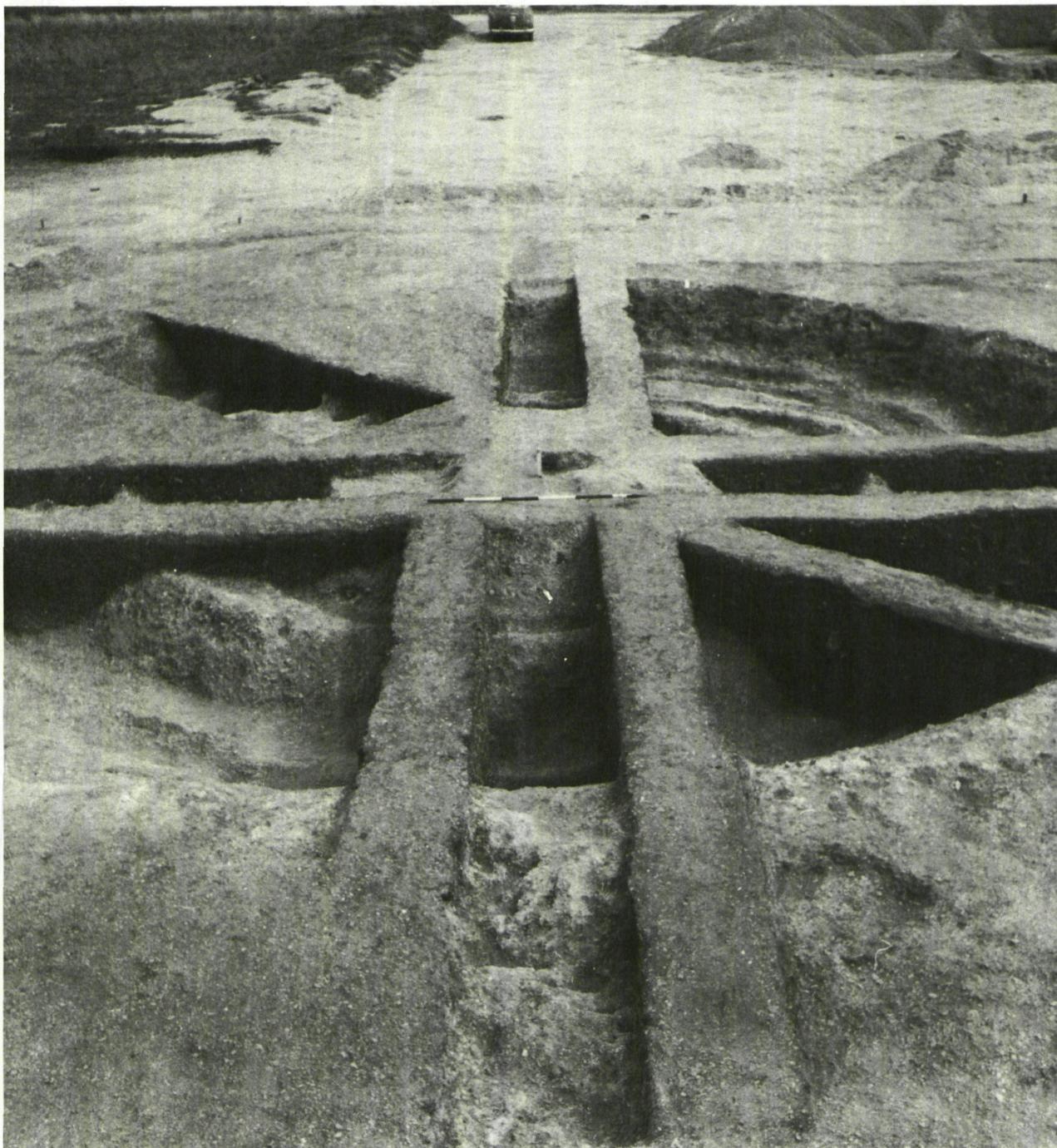


Figure 77 Circular enclosure 481 in the middle of the open area east of the villa, taken from the west

the edge of the ditch; one of the recuts of the inner shallow ditches lay slightly inside the original circuit, and the latest deep cuts up to 1 m inside the outermost. Because of this late shift inwards the mound was probably never more than 9 m in diameter. Since the outermost and innermost cuts cannot be related stratigraphically, it is possible that the outermost cuts predated or were contemporary with a whole succession of ones further in, creating a double-ditched monument. However, the fact that the outer and inner circuits were not concentric would argue otherwise, and the pottery also suggests that 481 had only one ditch in its later phases.

A mound would explain the shift in the centre of the ditch circuits, for as this spread it would obscure the original platform, and its differential settling would dictate the shape of further recuts. The central platform had only one stone-packed posthole and a scatter of irregularly-spaced and very shallow hollows in it. Most of the latter were probably due to animal disturbance. The one posthole is very close to the centre of the whole feature, and may have been a central marker in its last stages. There may have been other features, but if the interior was covered by a mound only those over 0.5 m deep would have penetrated gravel.

Precise dating is difficult; pottery ranges from the late 1st/early 2nd century to the late 3rd/early 4th century, but the method of excavation and frequent recutting makes only a broad division into early, middle and late cuts possible. The few finds from the inner shallow cuts included Oxford colour-coated ware, apparently dating the deepening of the ditch after AD 250. None of the pottery was diagnostically 4th century, but the number of recuts suggests that the ditch was active until at least AD 325. On the basis of the number of ditch cuts, the origins of 481 ought to lie at least as far back as the early 3rd century; the pottery suggests a 2nd century date.

Just south of 481 was feature 482 (Fiche 4#36), only the north-east part of which had survived quarrying. Two ditch cuts surrounded an irregular shallow feature 483; the inner ended just north of 483, the outer ran out of the excavated area at both ends. The outer side of the outer ditch was gently sloping, the inner side of the inner cut nearly vertical. Both cuts contained dark gravelly silt with domestic rubbish and building material; 483 was filled with darker silt containing brown gravelly patches, which was possibly backfill. 483 was perhaps another silt-filled pit like 558–560, and included pottery of the last quarter of the 3rd century. Finds from 482 were less diagnostic.

It is uncertain what function 481 performed. A class of unusual enclosures of similar size have recently been recognised at the Roman settlement at Gravelly Guy, Stanton Harcourt, Oxon (Lambrick and Allen in prep.), with ditches recut many times, but the interior of these was always sunken below the surrounding ground level, and the spoil apparently piled in a bank on the outside. 481 could perhaps have been a burial mound but there was no trace

of any burials, and it is unlikely that these would have lain entirely in the topsoil.

Possibly there was a structure on the mound, but if this was an original feature it would have been only c 3 m across and shallowly-bedded. There were not sufficient concentrations of rubbish to suggest domestic occupation within or immediately adjacent to it, nor deposits suggesting any more specialised building such as a temple. Nevertheless, the position of 481, in the middle of the open area between the two enclosure groups and at the meeting point of the trackways leading in from the east and the south, clearly made it a focal point. If it had a mound this would have been visible approaching the settlement down either droveway.

Its position between two sets of ancillary enclosures is reminiscent of circular structures which occupy focal positions in more classical layouts, as in the outer courtyards as at Winkel-Seeb or Darenth (JT Smith 1978, 154–8). These were interpreted as water-shrines; it is not suggested that there was such a structure inside 481, though this is possible, but that 481 acted as a landmark, possibly as a platform for overseeing culling, markets or estate meetings.

IV.F.8 The gravel-pit area

Plans: Fig. 66; Fiche 4#66, 79 and 80. Section: Fig. 145 on Fiche 1#51

Between the northern and southern groups of enclosures and just west of the long field boundary 959/960 was an irregular soilmark 70 m × 30 m in extent (Fig. 66). Part of this was destroyed without investigation, but sections were dug along the south-west side. These revealed a series of intercutting wide and shallow hollows (660–670), which had mostly been deliberately backfilled (Fig. 145 on Fiche 1#51). Primary fill was sometimes dark humic loam with charcoal, sometimes light and very sandy or gravelly, and this was overlaid by interleaved tips of gravelly soil and clean sand or gravel.

The latest fill in each group of hollows was a dark occupation soil containing abraded pottery and building materials.

Their dark primary fills suggest that these features were used for rubbish-dumping and possibly burning was carried out in them, though no evidence of in situ burning was found in the excavation area. The late occupation fill contained many abraded sherds and was probably backfill, possibly from a midden; joining sherds from separate hollows suggest that much of this occupation soil was dumped at one time.

The successive hollows or scoops were largely discrete, only intercutting at the edges. They were too extensive to be pits, and were not cut to a regular shape like the large hollow 409 (Fiche 4#48; 134 on Fiche 1#38) or even the silt-filled hollows (Fig. 68; Ch. IV.F.3.a). Their irregular edges suggest that they might have been gravel quarries.

There was however a high proportion of gravel and sand in the backfill, and these scoops are also shallow, cut only 0.5 m into gravel. A similar large area of Roman hollows was found at Ashville, Abingdon (Halpin 1983, 113–4).

Pottery from the hollows dates from the late first to the late 3rd century, and the vast majority is 2nd century. Even allowing for the abraded state of many sherds it seems likely that these quarries were in use from the mid 2nd century, and the very small numbers of Oxford colour-coated sherds suggests that the excavated area was largely disused by 250 AD. However surface finds from the eastern part of the soilmark apparently included 4th century mortaria sherds, so the quarrying may have shifted eastwards over time.

IV.F.9 The timber building, Building VI

Plan: Fig. 66; 78, Fiche 4#52 and 66

North of the gravel pit area and just west of the corner of 959/960 was a line of sub-rectangular pits 922 etc, running just east of south-north. These produced scraps of Early Iron Age pottery, and are described in Ch. III.B.1.c.

South of these pits were two lines of smaller pits or postholes between 0.45 m and 0.9 m in diameter. Most of these were spaced *c* 2.5 m apart, but there were also intermediates and at the north end they were only 1.5–1.8 m apart. These were aligned slightly more north-south than the rectangular pits, and most had a darker and more gravelly fill. Several had possible post-pipes or post-positions sunk into the bottom, but most contained homogeneous backfill.

Pits 939 and 940 had small postholes on their east sides with similar fill to those alongside the pits; 940 cut the posthole adjacent, and while the relationship between 939 and its posthole was not recorded, their markedly different fills suggest that they were not contemporary.

The two lines were parallel and of roughly the same length, with circular pits or postholes set at similar intervals. Only the more northerly features of the east line were excavated, but the size and fill of these was similar to those of the western line. 944 and 946 had possible post-positions, the others had all been backfilled.

Just west of these lines were further postholes, 951 and 950, and roughly parallel to the western line was a short length of gully 941 which contained two possible post-positions in its shallow fill. This gully lay 1.25m from the posthole line. There was also a possible rectangular outlier, 943, north of the eastern line.

From their similar size and positions the features in both lines were probably contemporary. There was very little dating evidence from either line, one Romano-British sherd from pit 953 and a scrap of Samian from 966=948. Their

relationship to the rectangular pit alignment seems too close for coincidence, and despite the Iron Age pottery from 933 this alignment too may have been Romano-British, like the rectangular sumps at regular intervals along the bottom of shallow ditches at Watkins Farm, Northmoor, Oxon (Allen 1990, 18–19, 27 and 31).

The parallel lines of pits or postholes were 16.9 m long. The eastern line consisted of two parts, the northern (9m long) being 6.8 m from the western line, the southern only 6m away, and the gap between the ends of the two parts was larger than that between the other postholes (Fig. 78). Possibly these lines represent an aisled building, and 941 the only remaining length of the outer wall. The nave of such barns is generally between 6m and 7m wide, and the length *c* 18 m (Morris 1979, 196–8). The posts are not all evenly spaced, nor do the postholes in the two lines all form pairs, but neither is this the case in Building IV (see Ch. IV.C.6). It is possible that two separate buildings are represented, but the even spacing of the western line suggests strongly that all its postholes were laid out at one time. Posthole 950 is in line with those further south in the eastern line, and 953, 950 and 949 may perhaps have tied the two elements together in some way.

Alternatively these may not have been roofed structures, simply pens, but the absence of intermediate posts along the shorter sides makes this unlikely. Since the dating evidence for this group of features is so scant, it is also possible that they are post-Roman. The irregular form of the building is more like that of Anglo-Saxon or Early Medieval structures, but there is no evidence of occupation in either of these periods to substantiate this.

IV.F.10 Post-Roman use of the site

There is no good evidence of Anglo-Saxon occupation at Roughground Farm, although Building VI (Fig. 78) has similarities with timber halls of this period at Radley, Barrow Hills, Oxon (R A Chambers pers. comm.) and elsewhere. A fragment of a circular loomweight (Fig. 108 No. 142) and one bone pin (Fig. 102 No. 98) may also be Anglo-Saxon, but are probably derived from the settlement visible on cropmarks just east of Butler's Field, some 800 m to the south. Stones from the villa were being re-used in the cemetery of this settlement in the 6th century (Boyle *et al* forthcoming).

The eastern half of the site was ploughed in the medieval period; the villa site itself and the Roman fields west of it did not show any traces of ridge and furrow, and were probably pasture; probably the villa buildings themselves discouraged this and gave rise to the name Roughground.

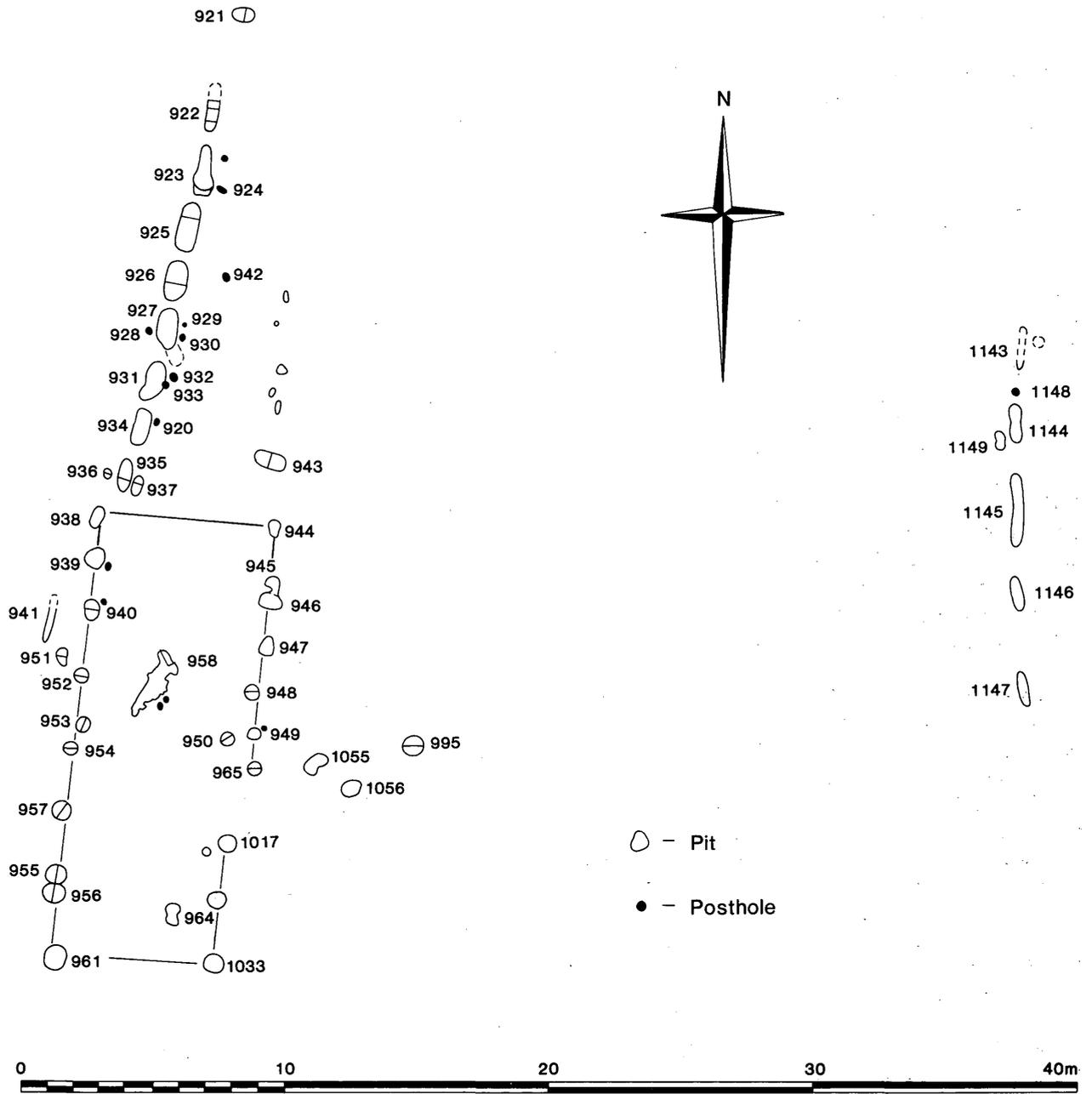


Figure 78 Plan of pit alignments and Building VI