



CHAPTER 5
Epilogue and prologue

by John Lewis

and practice. Within the Iron Age settlement we can detect from the different size of the houses and their finds assemblages differences in use and perhaps status of their inhabitants.

Whilst the Roman occupation of Britain in the 1st century AD resulted in the adoption by the Perry Oaks inhabitants of different forms of architecture and artefacts, the fundamentals of the small agricultural settlement seem to have continued. However the settlement was now tied into the economic, legal and political construct of the Roman Empire, and the effect of these much wider forces can be seen in the construction of the driveway and associated enclosures which overwrote the ancient fields of prehistory,

and were concerned with linking agricultural production with towns which in turn were linked by the road network. Of course, the Romano-British world was in constant flux, and the lead front is a perfect illustration of this. The mere existence of this object is testament to the profound effect on spiritual and political life that Christianity had on the Roman Empire. Its destruction and burial in a pit in the late 4th or early 5th century AD is a strong metaphor for the end of the Roman world in Britain.

The historical themes we have explored in this volume have been deliberately broad: we have not focused in the published text on detail, much of which is available on the accompanying CD-Rom. Primarily, this is because we were conscious that although the area excavated at Perry Oaks was large, many key components remained unexcavated.

the deposition during the middle of the 2nd millennium BC of wooden and stone artefacts that refer to the past in waterholes ringing the Neolithic H&I enclosure.

Sometimes, the choices and solutions people adapted to particular circumstances had unforeseen but profound consequences. For instance we have argued that it is unlikely that anyone could have foreseen that the first land divisions of the early 2nd millennium BC would produce that patchwork pattern of fields, lanes and settlements which has characterised the southern English countryside ever since.

It is clear that even when major changes such as land division are adopted to achieve a new social equilibrium, social relationships exert forces that lead to imbalances in the equilibrium and thus require new adjustments. At Perry Oaks this process can be seen in the change from dispersed to nucleated settlement at the end of the 2nd millennium BC, with an increase in the use of communal feasting to hold the community together. The most visible manifestation of a large community living in a nucleated settlement is the Iron Age settlement of the mid- 1st millennium BC. Here we see people living in a single settlement which developed adjacent to its predecessor in the late Bronze Age, and was accommodated within a landscape of fields and boundaries that were already 1000 years old. Of course, over

sometimes replacing them with new alignments as old tenures and methods of agricultural working were replaced by new forms of tenure

This chapter is intended as both an epilogue to this volume and a prologue to Volume 2, which will include the results of the excavations undertaken at Terminal 5 from 2002 to 2007.

Epilogue to Volume 1

This volume has looked at the historical processes and the choices that people have made during the period from the late Mesolithic, c 6500 BC, to the end of the Romano-British period at the start of the 5th century AD.

The first two chapters took as their underlying theme the major concern of access to land and resources, and how this affected the relationships between individuals, family groups and the broader community. We have tried to show how at various points in history (for instance between 3600 and 3300 BC) people adopted new solutions to conditions which required a rebalancing of the tensions between components of society to achieve a new equilibrium (for instance the construction of the C1 Stanwell Cursus). Often these new solutions appear to us to have created a landscape which was radically different to that which went before (eg the monumental landscape of the late 4th millennium BC), but which in many ways was a logical result of the traditions and tensions which were the products of history. We have shown how sometimes people looked to the past as a mechanism which would maintain bonds between family groups at times when such groups had greater importance than the overarching community. Perhaps the best example here is

Prologue to Volume 2

For instance:

- the north-eastern terminus of the Neolithic C2 Cursus was undetected

- we had excavated a comparatively small length of the C1 Stanwell Cursus

- our understanding of the 3rd and the early 2nd millennia was extremely thin

- we did not have a complete middle or late Bronze Age settlement

- the field system was obviously far more extensive and complex than the small area captured by the Perry Oaks excavations

- the middle Iron Age and Romano-British settlement clearly extended into unexcavated (and destroyed) areas

- very little Saxon or medieval evidence for human use of the landscape was recorded at Perry Oaks

Whilst this volume was being written, excavations in advance of the construction of Terminal 5 were being undertaken, which covered a much larger area on and around the Perry Oaks sludge beds. Some of the data recovered in these excavations has been alluded to in this volume, but it will be integrated fully with the current data set and published in Volume 2.

The second volume will use the additional data to re-evaluate some of the interpretations expressed here, as well as explore different historical themes and different periods of human inhabitation. Further excavation of the C1 Stanwell and C2 Cursus, together with that of a third cursus shows that their constructional histories are more complicated than first thought.

A handful of new circular monuments, pit groups and finds will be used to consider in more detail the period of the late 4th and 3rd millennia BC, when people lived in a world shaped by these monuments and their associated ceremonies.

A scattering of artefacts and features dated to the late 3rd and early 2nd millennia BC will provide a little more detail on the period just prior to the construction of the first major land boundaries.

A greatly expanded map of the 2nd millennium BC field system will allow us to more fully understand how society developed the concept of land tenure, and how agricultural production and processing was undertaken. It will also allow us to reconsider the validity of the model of family

versus community presented in this volume.

The excavation of a complete settlement and the identification of a few new 2nd millennium BC settlements provide the opportunity to look in some detail at how family groups organised

their domestic space and architecture. This theme will be continued into the Iron Age and Romano-British settlements that are now more fully excavated.

The post Romano-British landscape can now be considered, with the Saxon origins of the present Village of Longford being revealed. On the main Terminal 5 site, excavation of a small rural medieval settlement will allow us to consider this aspect of the site's history.

Volume 2 will be fully integrated with the Perry Oaks data and inevitably there will be differences between the data sets presented in Volumes 1 and 2. Volume 2 will take a similar form to Volume 1, and the entire digital archive will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) in York. A Web-based version of the dataset, hosted by ADS, will be made available. The web interface to this data will be similar to that provided by the Freeviewer software on the CD-Rom which accompanies this volume, with similar levels of functionality.

It is intended that the finds and the physical archive will be deposited with the Museum of London.

