



OXFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT NEWSLETTER INCLUDING
OXFORDSHIRE PARISH SURVEY NEWS

No 2 - February 1979

Anyone wishing to send contributions to the Newsletter should send details to the above address before the last Tuesday of each month.

LITTLE FARINGDON (Purton to Brize Norton Oil Pipeline)

R A Chambers continues to write up the results of this watching brief and also of the excavation of the scheduled cropmark site.

MIDDLETON STONEY, further finds from Aves Ditch area - E Leggatt

Since reporting considerable quantities of Roman pottery and other finds from the field east of Aves Ditch near the Lower Heyford road, Middleton Stoney, Mr G Rawnsley has continued to collect surface finds from the ploughsoil (OAU Newsletter No 11, November 1978). The new finds include flints, Roman pottery, a minute amount of medieval pottery, post-medieval pottery and a small bronze tip of a sharp instrument or weapon.

The Roman pottery weighed 2.4 Kg and comprised Greyware, 0.45 Kg; coarse storage jars, 0.45 Kg; Whiteware from Oxford kilns, 0.6 Kg; Colour-coated ware, 0.02 Kg; Oxidised local wares, 1.14 Kg; and Black-burnished ware, 0.03 Kg. Besides two non-local mortarium rim-sherds there was a Nene Valley Colour-coated sherd and one possibly from the New Forest. A few sherds were of Belgic-type fabric and showed similarities with the pottery of that kind found in the Middleton Stoney farmstead excavations (Trevor Rowley, Middleton Stoney Excavations 1970-77). Lisa Brown has kindly looked at the pottery and agrees that it appears to cover a fairly long time span, and suggests occupation from the mid-first century until the fourth, or possibly slightly later. There is a scarcity amongst the Roman pottery of anything very luxurious, or many imported sherds, and the lack of find tableware would seem more appropriate to a humble farmstead than a villa. Six Samian sherds (0.14 Kg) included an imitation Samian wall-sided mortarium rim.

Maureen Mellor kindly helped to assess the medieval and post-medieval pottery and considered that most of it was locally made in the Oxon/Bucks area. Although minimal in quantity, the medieval pot was dateable to the period which lasted from the late C13, through C14 and into the early C15. It consisted of parts of two pitcher handles and two rims. The curved strap handle was slashed and rod handle had stab marks; one rim was undercut and very abraded, and the other was probably from a tall jug which was partially glazed. These four pieces were of similar fabric containing the local ironstone. They may be earlier than the glazed slashed strap handle mentioned in the

November Newsletter, which was thought to be C13-14 in date, but on account of the dark mottled glaze is probably late C14 or early C15. The post-medieval pottery altogether weighed 0.38 Kg and included sherds from glazed storage jars, white earthenware, porcelain and stoneware. Two rims of Brill slipware with green and yellow glaze, C18-19, resembled the bowls or platters found in Oxford Castle Moat, described in Oxoniensia XLI (1976), 263, T G Hassall, Excavations at Oxford Castle, 1965-73. There was also an external rim-flange which had internal green copper glazing, a local C16-17 product. It is interesting that most of the local pottery comes from the Oxon/Bucks area. The fabric shows little variation, but the glazes differ, possibly due to changes in the copper and lead market.

All these finds were found in the same area as the previous collection, but the little bronze tip was found further over towards Aves Ditch. The pottery has been recorded at OCC Dept of Museum Services, Woodstock, in the Field Section. The bronze object, which appears to have snapped clean off the end of the blade of some weapon, either a knife, sword or dagger, has been given the PRN 11744.

Mr Rawsley also noted that during foggy weather he could follow the lines of old field divisions not normally apparent. These appeared to conform with the divisions of the Moore Closes, enclosed in the late C17.

OXFORD, 65 St Aldates

The entire picture has changed since the last newsletter was written. The large walls regarded as the base of a late medieval building have been shown to go down and down into black organic river silts. The silts run the full length of the trench and seem to be sloping gently to the north suggesting that this is a river channel running west-east under the middle of the garage forecourt and then under the line of the road. The channel may be natural or artificial, but either way it is fairly clear that the Saxon features found further north will not exist here. On the brighter side, however, there is plenty of early thirteenth century pottery coming out of the silts, and there is good reason to think that rubbish will have been accumulating here for as long as there has been a crossing of this channel. So it is possible that there will be Saxon material in the deeper sitting horizons of which there are at least a metre yet to be excavated. We are therefore continuing deeper in a small shored area.

A bonus is that one of the medieval walls seems to be revetting the fourteenth century river channel, and looks as if it may be the 'landstave wall' flanking the abutment of a bridge, probably of the second half of the thirteenth century.

CALENDAR

Didcot & District Archaeological & Historical Society

Meetings held in All Saints Parish Hall, Foxhall Road, Didcot at 8 pm on the first Wednesday of each month.

7 March - Members' Evening

4 April - Excavations at Mount Farm, Berinsfield by George Lambrick

Oxfordshire Architectural & Historical Society

Lectures in the Ashmolean Museum at 8.15 pm.

Thurs 8 March - Excavations in Oxfordshire 1978 by Tom Hassall

Abingdon Area Archaeological and Historical Society

Lectures held in lecture theatre of John Mason School, Wootton Road, Abingdon at 7.30 pm.

21 February - Excavation of an Iron Age Settlement at Hardwick, Oxon by T Allen

21 March - Place names and charter boundaries of Abingdon by Dr M Gelling

Oxford University Archaeological Society

Held in Ashmolean on Mondays at 8.15 pm. Admission by Card only.

19 February - Aulnat (France) and the Beginnings of Urbanisation in Temperate Europe by John Collis

26 February - The Pre-Dissolution Dominican Priory at Oxford by George Lambrick.

5 March - The Upper Palaeolithic of Britain - an Immigrants Viewpoint by Dr R Jacobi

Oxford University Department for External Studies

24 February - Anglo-Saxon Pottery Day School - to be held at Bradwell Abbey Field Centre

5-9 March - Planning and Conservation (Area Management) - Part I Rural; Part II Urban - in association with Oxford Polytechnic

16-18 March - The Anglo-Saxon Landscape - in association with Extra-Mural Department, Manchester

Further details of these courses are available from the Course Secretary, Oxford University Department for External Studies, Rewley House, 3-7 Wellington Square, Oxford OX1 2JA.

BRITISH ARCHAEOLOGICAL AWARDS - 1979

<u>BBC CHRONICLE</u>	For the best project carried out by volunteers.
<u>COUNTRY LIFE</u>	For the best contribution to archaeology by a Local Authority or Public Body.
<u>ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS</u>	For the best presentation to the public of an archaeological excavation or fieldwork.
<u>CBA/LLOYDS BANK</u>	For archaeological fieldwork carried out by secondary schools or sixth form colleges.
<u>THE TIMES</u>	For the best contribution to archaeology by a commercial, industrial or business firm or enterprise.
<u>YOUNG RESCUE</u>	For a project by a child between 9 and 16 years of age.

The LEGAL AND GENERAL Award(s) will be made to the entrant(s) in any one of the above showing the greatest initiative.

Closing date for entries:

<u>BBC Chronicle</u>	1st April 1979
<u>CBA/Lloyds Bank (Schools) and Young Rescue</u>	16th July 1979
<u>Others</u>	1st June 1979

Notes

- a) A competitor may enter for more than one award. However, the same project may not be entered for more than one award.
- b) Projects which have either won an award, or were in the final of the Chronicle Awards in 1977 and 1978, are not eligible.
- c) Finalists for the Chronicle Award will be selected in April or May. Other awards will be judged during the Summer.
- d) The Presentation of Awards will be made in Autumn 1979.

Full details and entry forms will be available from - British Archaeological Awards, 15A Bull Plain, Hertford, Hertfordshire SG14 1DX.