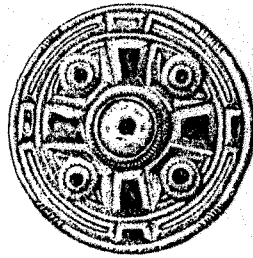


ARCHAEOLOGY FIELD OFFICE
FULBOURN COMMUNITY CENTRE
HAGGIS GAP, FULBOURN
CAMBRIDGE CB1 5HD TEL 081814
Fax 081678



OFFICE COPY.

Archaeological Field Unit

**Sewer Diversion Works:
Norman Cross Prisoner of War Camp, Yaxley.**

S.N. Kemp AIFA

1995

Cambridgeshire County Council

Report No. A53

*Commissioned By
Anglian Water Services*

**Sewer Diversion Works:
Norman Cross Prisoner of War Camp, Yaxley.**

S.N.Kemp AIFA

1995

Editor Tim Malim
Illustrator Carol Fletcher

Report No A53

Archaeological Field Unit
Cambridgeshire County Council
Fulbourn Community Centre
Haggis Gap, Fulbourn
Cambridgeshire CB2 5HD
Tel (0223) 881614
Fax (0223) 880946

SUMMARY

An archaeological recording brief was undertaken within the Scheduled Ancient Monument of the Norman Cross Prisoner of War Camp (SAM 268). Work was carried out by the Archaeological Field of Unit, Cambridgeshire County Council for Anglian Water Services Ltd following recommendations by English Heritage and Huntingdonshire District Council.

The trenching disturbed an area of ridge and furrow external to the main camp. The landscape morphology of this area has been shown by documentary research to represent a series of complex land use changes which occurred during the late medieval and post-medieval periods. The Prisoner of War Camp was constructed over this early sequence of land use alteration, arable to pasture. The land reverted to pasture following the end of the Napoleonic wars.

Burials associated with the camp were expected following information supplied by the Sites and Monuments Record for Cambridgeshire, however, no traces of these remains were recovered during the course of this work. Documentary research indicates that a number of cemeteries exist within the camp, with an external cemetery close to Venetian Lodge. Until recently the site was overlooked by 'the Monument', a bronze eagle perched on a column; erected in 1916 to commemorate the French prisoners who died at the camp. The Monument is presently held by the Transportation Department, Cambridgeshire County Council having been knocked over during the late 1980's.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Archaeological Field Unit of Cambridgeshire County Council was commissioned by Anglian Water Services Ltd to undertake the recording of trenching within the Scheduled Ancient Monument of The Barrack Grounds, a Napoleonic Prisoner of War Camp at Norman Cross, Cambridgeshire (TL 161910).

2.0 BACKGROUND

Location and Description of Works

As a result of the A1 Widening Programme it has been necessary for Anglian Water Services Ltd to redirect the existing sewer system at Norman Cross. This work affected the Scheduled Ancient Monument at Norman Cross (SAM 268), with trenching occurring along the east side of the Crest Hotel at the junction between the A1 and the London road (A15) (Fig.1).

The work entailed the excavation of a trench up to 0.50m wide and 1.6m deep into which a polyethylene pipe was laid. Trenching occurred over two days within a two week period; first stage, a northwest- southeast aligned trench was excavated by a mechanical trenching and pipelaying machine; second stage, an east-west aligned trench between the new pumping-station and inspection hole was undertaken with a wheeled digger-loader (JCB) with a standard toothed bucket.

Archaeology; prehistoric and historic perspective

The area of disturbance lay outside of the main Prisoner of War Camp complex, defined on the basis of the enclosing ditches, however, it was recognised that other activity areas could have been external to the main complex. Furthermore, the Prisoner of War Camp was constructed over a medieval field system which had already been laid to pasture. It was observed that a series of complex land-use changes dating from the late Middle Ages to present are preserved by this fragment of historic landscape. These changes resulted from alterations in land use and tenure during the post-medieval period and are related to the development of the Great North Road as a toll road, and the importance of the routeway for droving (Way unpub.).

Little is known of the earlier archaeology of the area. The maintenance of the area as pasture means that sub-surface remains are not receptive to traditional, non-

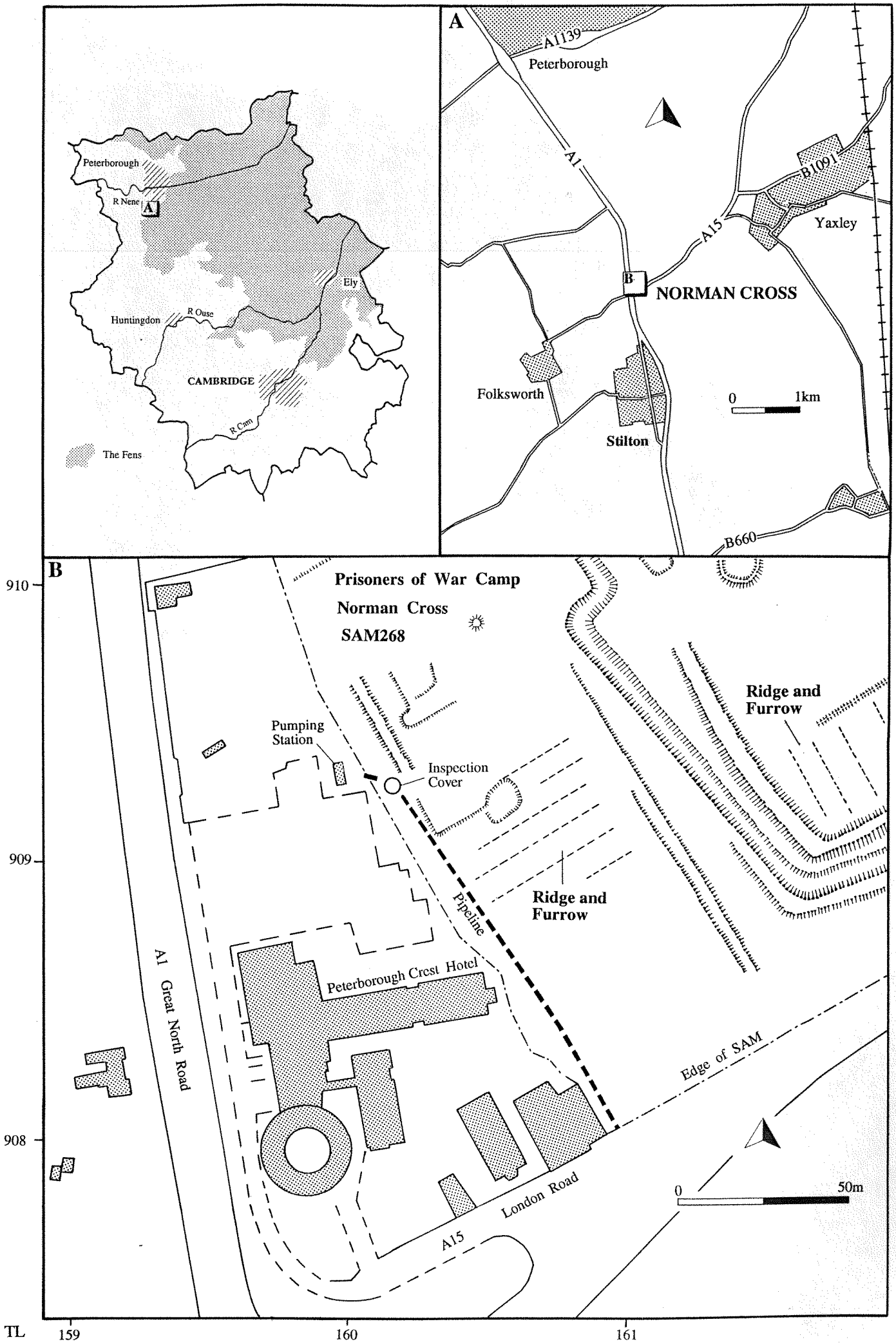


Figure 1 Site Location

penetrative archaeological reconnaissance techniques such as aerial photography, fieldwalking and earthwork survey and it is therefore likely that earlier sites in the area have gone unrecorded. The proximity of the site to the Roman Road of Ermine Street suggests the possibility of remains from this period. Recent excavations by the Archaeological Field Unit at Sawtry imply a prehistoric antecedence to the Roman Road, which may also have acted as a focus for settlement (K. Welsh 1994). The place name of Norman Cross derives its origin from an Anglo-Saxon Hundred meeting place the exact location of which remains unknown (Meaney 1994).

3.0 RECORDING BRIEF

Methodology

Two members of staff were on-site at all times during the course of trenching to monitor and record archaeological remains on behalf of Anglian Water Services Ltd.

Machine trenching was undertaken by pipelaying machinery and wheeled vehicle JCB (4 wheel drive digger-loader). The first method provided limited access to the stratigraphic sequence; however, spoil was searched for finds with artefact location recorded. The second method of trench excavation provided access to the section, but, the depth, 3m, precluded detailed recording.

Results

This level of archaeological involvement was required due to the possibility of burials near the entrance way of the main camp, and the potential for external activity close to the west gate. Furthermore, being close to the Roman Road of Ermine Street Roman remains were anticipated.

No archaeological remains were found during the course of the trenching. The only observable disturbance by this trenching was to the ridge and furrow. Documentary research (Way unpub.) shows that the morphological elements indicate a complex landscape history of this locality, with the medieval agricultural system preserved as ridge and furrow, its subsequent alteration to pasture and later replacement by the Prisoner of War Camp and reversion to pasture. Such land use changes reflect changes in the local economy influenced by improved communications resulting from tolls being used to maintain the road system and particularly the importance of this routeway for droving.

Historical documentary research shows that the cemetery known to be external to the camp lay close to Venetian Lodge (Way unpub.). Other cemeteries are located within the bounds of the main camp.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS

No burials or finds were recovered during the course of the recording brief, although the pipeline disturbed an important morphological component of the local landscape history; which in adjacent areas is also under threat from road development (A1 Widening Programme).

The landscape approach adopted by the Archaeological Field Unit has in the past emphasised the importance of all the morphological components and associated historical documentation to the construction and analysis of landscape history. It is therefore important that there should be no further encroachment on the scheduled monument and English Heritage recognises that the ridge and furrow forms an integral component of this monument.

Bibliography

Meaney A.L 1994 Gazetteer of Hundred and Wapentake Meeting-Places of the Cambridge Region. *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society* LXXXII pp.67-92.

Way H.T unpub. Documentary Historical Research for the Proposed A1 Widening scheme: Folksworth to Morborne Section. Held by Archaeological Field Unit, Cambridgeshire County Council.

Welsh K 1994 *Iron Age and Roman Settlement Remains near Tort Hill, Sawtry*. Archaeological Report No. 103. Cambridgeshire County Council

Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge the help and support of the Archaeological Field Unit employees, David Mitchell and Malin Holst who undertook much of the field recording. Many thanks are due to Dr. Twigs Way who researched the local historic landscape as part of the A1 Widening Programme.

I also wish to thank Anglian Water Services for funding these works, Stamford Construction for their co-operation, interest, and help during our time on-site and particularly to Mr Ken Linje of Huntingdonshire District Council.



Cambridgeshire
County Council

Archaeology

The Archaeological Field Unit
Fulbourn Community Centre
Haggis Gap
Fulbourn
Cambridge CB1 5HD
Tel (0223) 881614
Fax (0223) 880946