

## Preface

### *Thames Valley Landscapes*

Since its formation in 1973 the Oxford Archaeological Unit has carried out major excavations on sites in the Thames Valley ranging in date from the Neolithic to the Early Modern Period. Several of these, for example the excavations at Ashville and Barton Court Farm, Abingdon, and the Farmoor Reservoir, were published by the Council for British Archaeology.

As the scope of our investigations increased it was decided to launch a new series, *Thames Valley Landscapes*, in co-operation with English Heritage and the Oxford University Committee for Archaeology. In this way it is hoped that the complex story of human activity in the Thames Valley will emerge.

The reports are grouped into various sub-regions. The first to be published was Tim Allen's Watkins Farm site (Northmoor), near the Thames/Windrush confluence. For many years archaeologists from Oxford have salvaged archaeology from the huge gravel pits around Northmoor and Stanton Harcourt in the Windrush Valley, and in the near future the OAU will publish the results of work in this area at the Devil's Quoits henge monument, the Iron Age enclosure at Mingies Ditch, and the Gravelly Guy prehistoric and Roman settlement.

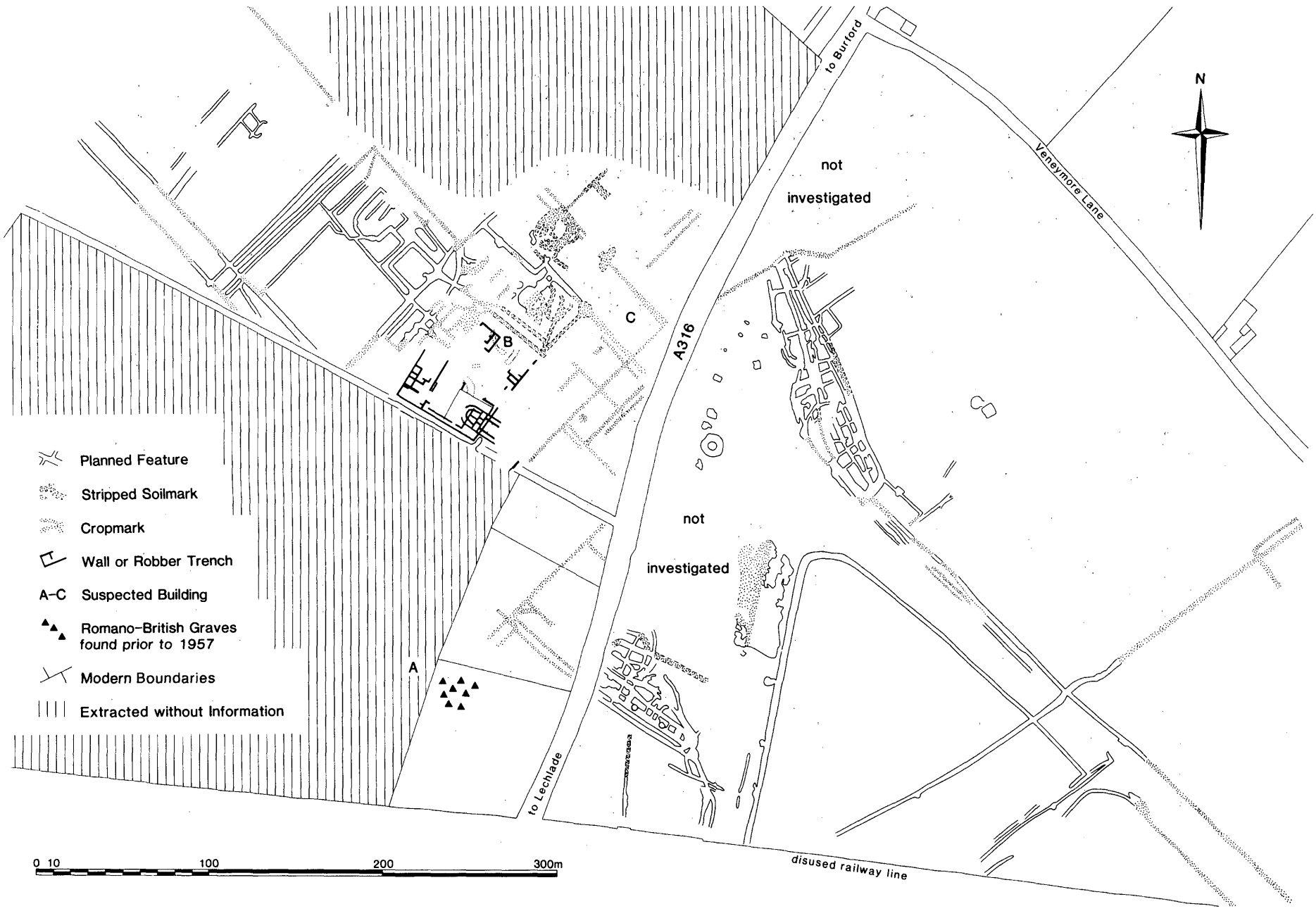
In 1978 the main area of unrecorded destruction of archaeology in the Upper Thames Valley was in the Cotswold Water Park in Gloucestershire. With the financial help of ARC, the main gravel company working in the area, and then major support from the Department of the Environment (now English Heritage), the OAU began a ten year programme of investigation into a block of landscape centred on the Late Prehistoric and Romano-British settlements at Claydon Pike and Thornhill Farm (Lechlade and Fairford). Two kilometres to the east was Roughground Farm. This site was part of the mythology of Thames Valley archaeology. It was here that, between 1957 and 1965, Margaret Jones had undertaken what was, in 1978, still the largest rescue excavation in the region. As usually happened in the 1960s, no sooner had Margaret Jones finished battling the bulldozers of Lechlade than she was called elsewhere. Her destination was Mucking in Essex, and what became one of the classic rescue excavations of the 1960s and 1970s.








As a result Roughground Farm remained unpublished — a major gap in the archaeological record of the Upper Thames Valley.

When the OAU's new project began in the Cotswold Water Park we suggested to Margaret Jones that we should co-operate in publishing her site. She was immediately enthusiastic and, thanks to English Heritage's commitment to publish 'backlog' sites, their financial support was forthcoming. In 1990, just as the report was finished, the last part of the site was redeveloped and the OAU carried out a final season of excavation on the villa, 23 years after work began. The results of all these investigations are published in this volume.

I am very pleased that thanks to the energy of Tim Allen and his co-authors Roughground Farm has at last entered the ranks of the fully published. It should soon be joined by its neighbours, Thornhill Farm, Claydon Pike and the Butler's Field Anglo-Saxon cemetery, to form one of the most thoroughly investigated archaeological areas in Britain.

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-  Planned Feature
-  Stripped Soilmark
-  Cropmark
-  Wall or Robber Trench
- A-C** Suspected Building
-  Romano-British Graves found prior to 1957
-  Modern Boundaries
-  Extracted without Information

0 10 100 200 300m

Figure 1 Overall site plan