

## Notes

### A SURVEY OF THE CONDITION OF OXFORDSHIRE LONG BARROWS

A survey of Oxfordshire long barrows was undertaken during the winter and spring of 1977. Using the Sites and Monuments Record of the Oxfordshire County Museum as a base for study a gazetteer was drawn up and a distribution map made which embodies up-to-date information (Fig. 1). In addition many sites were visited and one newly-observed long barrow at Ascott-under-Wychwood was recorded (Fig. 2). An unfortunate picture of ignorance, negligence and lack of concern is revealed. Of 22 possible sites fewer than a quarter are under government protection. Even scheduled barrows, such as the Lyneham long barrow, have been irreversibly damaged, often recently. Most Oxfordshire barrows are unprotected and have been so heavily ploughed that what remains is not considered worth saving.

These sites, however, are worth recording. Some like the barrow at Drayton (No. 18) will be invisible to the naked eye within a few years. Others which have not been damaged by the plough have often been subject to antiquarian 'excavation', to tree plantation, and to vandalism.

A record of their presence is essential to a study of their distribution and their relation to the topography (Fig. 1). Notable groups of long barrows occur, such as the group of three at Ascott-under-Wychwood, and Shipton-under-Wychwood (Nos. 6, 7, 8) and those at Shipton on Cherwell (Nos. 15, 16, 17).

Perhaps a greater awareness of the extent of damage in Oxfordshire may help to prevent further deterioration.

- (1) PRN 2252 (Scheduled)      SP 29933084      Rollright  
Part of the Rollright Stones group 'Whispering Knights'. Five stones survive. No apparent earthworks. N. Thomas, *Guide to Prehistoric England* (1960), 168.
- (2) PRN 3403      SP 26652668      Cornwell  
'A very cursory examination of this site left no doubt that it was a long barrow. It has been planted with young beech and fir'. Field investigation, D. Benson, 1971.
- (3) PRN 1271      SP 33712592      Enstone  
Earthen mound. Uncertain whether long or round. Ploughed. Seen during O.S. revision. Field investigation, J. Baird, 1973.
- (4) PRN 3893      SP 35702502      Enstone  
Definite long barrow but destroyed. Five oolite slabs, said to have been in 'box-like' formation, moved by bulldozer in late 1960s after farmer had repeatedly struck them with plough. May still be useful information buried. Market gardening on site means there are no useful cropmarks. *Oxoniensia*, xxxv (1970), 103. Field investigation, M. Aston, 1970.
- (5) PRN 2275 (Scheduled)      SP 297210      Lyneham  
Monolith and long barrow of late date. Partially excavated 1894. Field investigation by M. Aston, 1971, revealed that farmer was ploughing close to surviving mound, destroying part of structure. Numerous large stones (0.75 m. x 0.75 m.) had recently been pulled out of mound or from close to it by plough. Standing Stone is separated from mound by wide gap, and it is likely that much of this area is being eroded. Field examination in January 1978 by L. Brown and P. Davenport confirmed earlier observations. Recent ploughing had come to within inches of the monolith and right up to edge of mound.

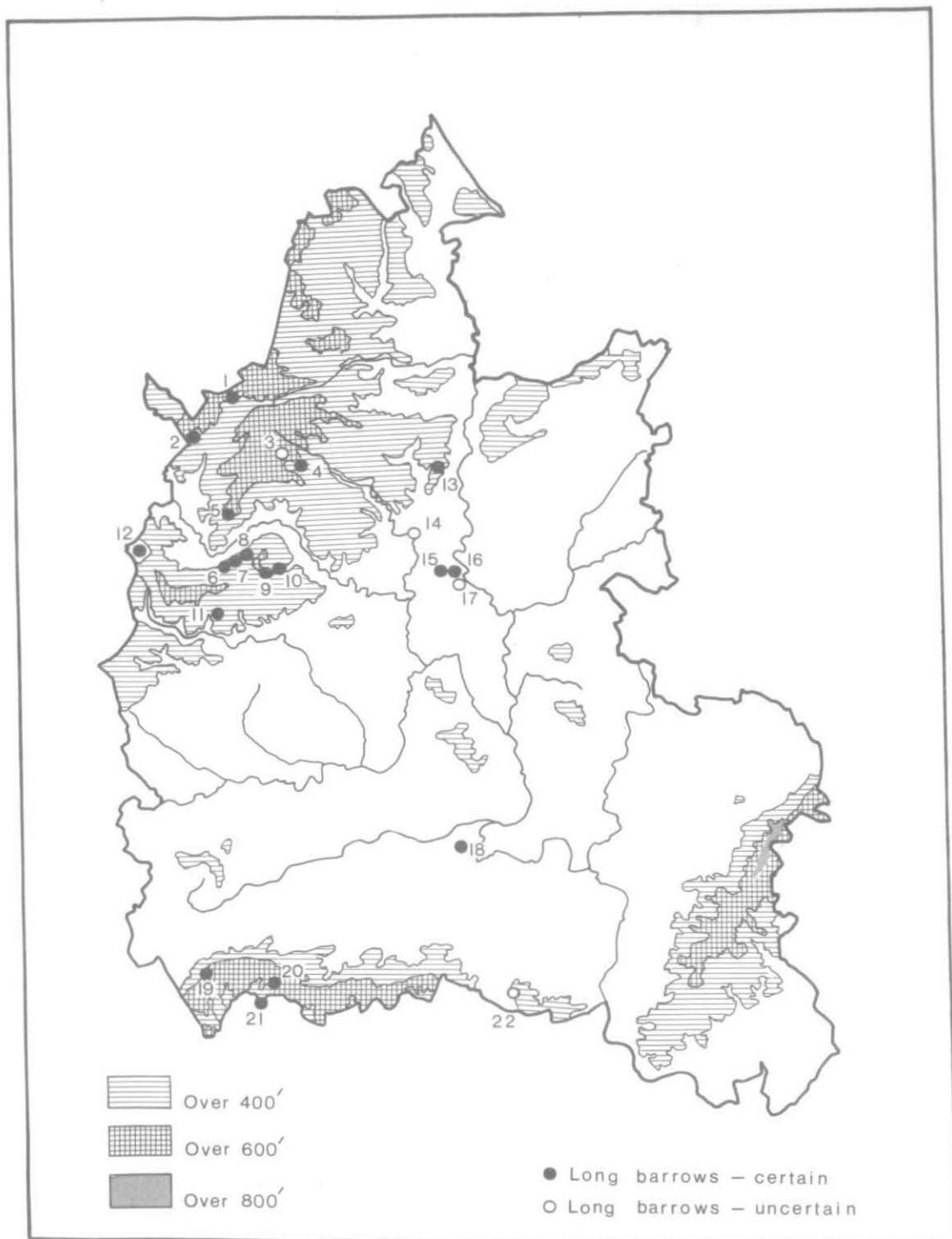


Fig. 1  
 Long barrows in Oxfordshire. For numbers, see text.

(6) PRN 3281 SP 29751745 Shipton-under-Wychwood

The mound, 57 metres across, has been much reduced by ploughing and the slope is difficult to distinguish from that of natural crest on which it lies. Small slabs of coarse limestone have been ploughed from edges of mound, but no dressed stone recovered. At present under grass, with possible threat of damage by cows. Field investigation by J. Steane, J. Campbell and L. Brown, April 1977. *Oxoniensia*, xxxii (1967), 72.

(7) PRN 4102 SP 30011755 Ascott-under-Wychwood

Excavated by D. Benson, 1965-70, and cist stones removed to museum at Woodstock where they now form part of a display. Barrow was 44 m. long and had features characteristic of the Cotswold Group such as extra-revetment and double stone wall with coarse stone backing. Evidence of pre-barrow Neolithic and Mesolithic occupation. *Oxoniensia*, xxxi (1966), 152; *Oxoniensia*, xxxii (1967), 72.

(8) PRN 10,925 SP 31411852 Ascott-under-Wychwood

First noted by J. Campbell and surveyed in April 1977 (Fig. 2). Sits on spur facing NW and jutting into Evenlode Valley. Located on junction between the Inferior oolite and Upper Lias. Both limestone and a smaller amount of ironstone found scattered over the area of the mound and similar material had slipped down the side of the spur, especially at the western end. Mound itself about 55-60 m. across with ditch most clearly visible to north. Not possible to determine whether all of mound material quarried from ditches. Plough damage extensive, having almost totally destroyed any signs of the west end of the mound. Field investigation and survey, J. Steane, J. Campbell, L. Brown, April 1977.

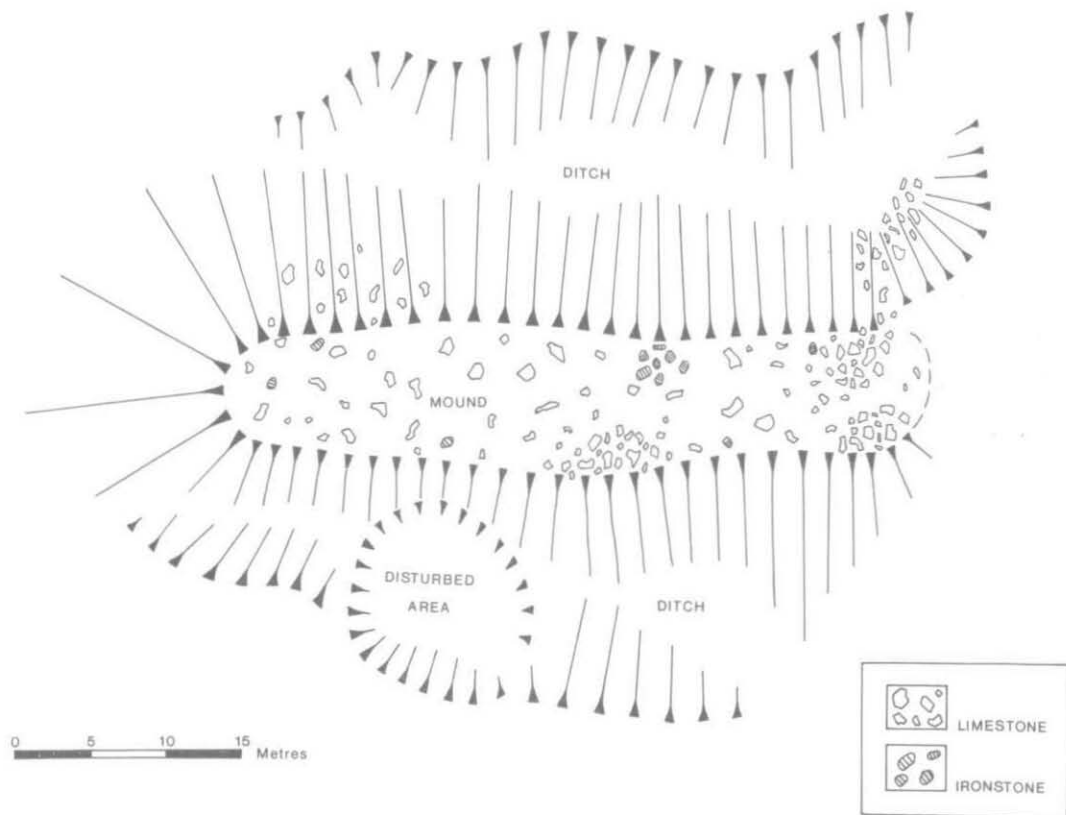


Fig. 2

Ascott-under-Wychwood, long barrow II.

- (9) PRN 1536 (Scheduled) SP 32891651 Cornbury and Wychwood  
Remains of a long barrow with signs of portal and blocking stone. Noted as in good condition by O. G. S. Crawford in 1930 on O.S. 6 in. map. 99 ft. long and 6 ft. high, oriented EW. *V.C.H., Oxon., I, 266a.*
- (10) PRN 1534 SP 33191688 Wychwood  
In Churchill Copse, '24 paces long... has been dug all around middle, no ditches or big stones'. (O. G. S. Crawford on 1930 6 in. O.S. map). Height 3 ft. 4 in., oriented EW. *V.C.H., Oxon., I, 266a.*
- (11) PRN 2247 SP 29151385 Swinbrook and Widford  
On Southlawn, Pollard's Common, near Hengrove. Field investigation by D. Benson, 1971: at least 70 m. long and possibly 25 m. wide. Trench across it probably result of antiquarian exploration and has divided the site into two unequal parts. Mound mainly of stone with thin topsoil cover. Stands to height of at least 2 m. EW alignment. Broader end has circular shape which may indicate multi-phase monument. Site is at present planted with young conifers, and plantation is damaging. Field investigation in January 1978 by L. Brown and P. Davenport confirmed earlier observations. Plantation continues.
- (12) PRN 1450 (Guardianship) SP 217186 Fifield  
Now included in Rissington R.A.F. station. No public access. Shows as low grass-covered mound with several hawthorns growing on it. In centre is a depression with several large stones showing in the side which must be robbed chamber. Field around on three sides ploughed, but wide margin of land around barrow untouched. Runway within a few yards of mound.
- (13) PRN 4682 SP 46452472 Steeple Aston  
Long barrow and 'hoarstone'. Broken stones at east end probably remains of burial chamber. About 50 ft. long. Hoarstone said to have been partly broken up by farmer in occupation in 1843, but stopped by landowner. Associated with site known as Maiden Bower. G. Daniel, *Prehistoric Chambered Tombs of England and Wales* (1950), 218. *Kelly's Directory of Berkshire & Oxon.* (1891), 888.
- (14) PRN 3268 SP 44291975 Wootton  
Not definitely a long barrow. Notes by Mrs. V. Wickham-Steed, 1957: an egg shaped clump of trees, dug into, surrounded by stony bank, never ploughed. No signs of cist stones. Field investigation by L. Brown and P. Davenport, January 1978: trees are being chopped down and burnt. Appears to be part of an old field boundary rather than a barrow, with root action and natural slope accounting for mound.
- (15) PRN 1710 SP 46731825 Shipton on Cherwell  
Field investigation by H. Lilley, 1954: 'Remains of a long barrow are still plainly visible here, consisting of a low mound highest at E end. Length approximately 70 paces'. Oriented ENE-WNW. Soil oolite. Field investigation by L. Brown and P. Davenport, January 1978: recently ploughed, dense concentration of limestone on mound now rising to no more than 2 or 3 ft. Shown on Whitehill Estate Plan of 1605, described as 'Longe Banke', Grundy, *Saxon Oxfordshire*, Oxon. Record Society (1933), 58.
- (16) PRN 1711 SP 47091807 Shipton on Cherwell  
H. Lilley, 1954: Width 15 ft, length 63 paces, 2 ft. high, rather more at S end. Axis 15° west of true north. Field investigation by L. Brown and P. Davenport, January 1978. Newly ploughed, definite barrow but reduced to under ½ m. by ploughing.
- (17) PRN 1305 SP 47341803 Shipton on Cherwell  
Certainly a barrow, possibly long. Ploughed almost flat, and recently ploughed in January 1978. No visible ditches or concentration of stone. Field investigation, H. Lilley, 1954, and L. Brown and P. Davenport, 1978.
- (18) PRN 5254 SP 48289495 Drayton  
From J.K. St. Joseph Air Photograph (AFT 78 and 87) side ditches clearly visible. Field investigation L. Brown and P. Davenport, January 1978: in recently ploughed ground, seen as a very low long mound, with soil slightly darker than surrounding soil. No concentration of stones or ditches visible from ground. Stands to no more than 2 ft.
- (19) PRN 7306 (Guardianship) SU 28088539 Ashbury  
Wayland Smith's Cave. Excavated in 1919-20 by Peers and Smith, who found 8 burials. Excavated in 1962 by S. Piggott and R. Atkinson for Ministry of Public Buildings and Works. Found centre of mound to be covering earlier small tomb of sarsen slabs and boulders. D-shaped pit at east end contained 12 disarticulated skeletons and one crouched burial. Later barrow, Wayland Smith's II, is 185 ft. × 43 ft, oriented NW-SE. South end contains burial chambers. *Antig. J.*, I (1921), 59-60, 71, 164, 183-98; *Antiquity*, I, 423; III, 185-6; H. Peake, *Archaeology of Berkshire* (1931), 41-3; L. Grinsell, *Berkshire Archaeol. J.*, XL, 28, and XLII, 108; *V.C.H. Berks.*, I, 179, 276; IV, 503; V, 80.

(20) PRN 7496

SU 335842

Sparsholt

Alleged site on Moss Hill of small chambered long barrow. Partially excavated by Martin Atkin 1852. Three burials found. Field investigation, D. Pitcher, 1963 : no sign on ground or on R.A.F. Air photographs. *Berkshire Archaeol. J.*, 55 (1956-7), 16.

(21) PRN 7181

SU 32328338

Scary Hill

Lambourne Long Barrow. Rescue excavation in 1964 by John Wymer for Inspectorate of Ancient Monuments. Situated to NW of the Seven Barrows. Core of small sarsen boulders placed along centre of mound on original ground surface. Extensive plough damage. Apparent height of mound of about 4 ft. found to be result of differential weathering. Quarry ditches produced small amount of Windmill Hill type pottery. Structure of small boulders at head of mound containing a contracted human burial. Field investigation, A. Upton, 1977 : 'Oxfordshire side in good condition'. J. Wymer, *Bulletin of the Berks. Field Rescue Group No. 3*, 1965 ; *Berkshire Archaeol. J.*, 55 (1956-7), 16 ; *Berkshire Archaeol. J.*, 40 (1936), 59-62.

(22) PRN 7615

SU 52018351

Blewbury

Field investigation, O. G. S. Crawford, 1921 : notes long barrow, 135 ft. x 60 ft., 3 ft. high. No visible ditches. Not certainly a long barrow. Field investigation, A. Upton, 1977.

LISA BROWN

### A BRONZE AGE SOCKETED TOOL FROM BLEWBURY

The bronze tool published here was found in December 1974 by Mr. B. Lewis while walking an area of Mesolithic flints on Church Farm, Blewbury (SU 518832), formerly in Berkshire, now in Oxfordshire ; it is now in the possession of Mr. Martin Green of Down Farm, Woodcutts, Dorset, who has kindly facilitated its publication through the good offices of Mr. Richard Bradley.

The tool is a light socketed axe or chisel with the mouth broken off. Its body is rectangular in section with parallel sides which bear casting seams ; the edge has been expanded by resharpening. It is 7.6 cm. long, the body is 1.8 cm. wide and the edge 2.5 cm. wide ; the bottom of the socket is c. 4 cm. from the edge.

Despite its fragmentary condition, the slender outline and rectangular section of this tool relate it to the Taunton-Hademarschen type of socketed axe current during the

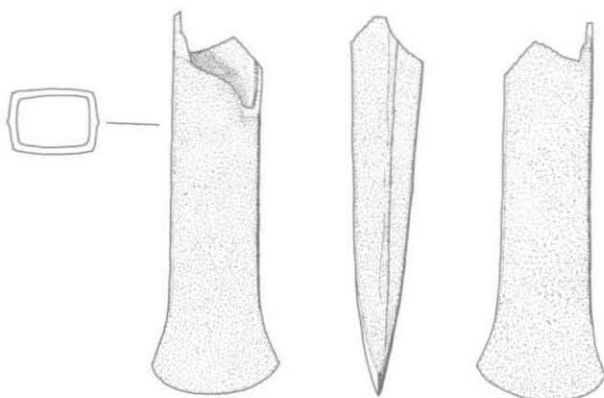


Fig. 3

Bronze socketed tool from Blewbury. Scale  $\frac{1}{2}$ .

Taunton and Penard phases of the British Bronze Age, the late first millennium B.C.<sup>1</sup> However, the edge is narrower than that of any Taunton-Hademarschen axe listed by Rowlands<sup>2</sup> and the parallel sides are not characteristic of these axes, whose sides usually diverge towards the mouth. A more exact comparison is the unlooped axe or chisel from Rymer Point, Barnham, Suffolk, in Moyses Hall Museum, Bury St. Edmunds;<sup>3</sup> this object is almost identical to the Blewbury fragment in form and outline. Rowlands records only four 'socketed chisels' of this form in southern Britain<sup>4</sup> and none has been found in a hoard, though their resemblance to Taunton-Hademarschen axes suggests that they were in use during the Taunton and Penard phases. In northern France, where Taunton-Hademarschen axes are unusual, unlooped *ciseaux*, more slender than the British examples, occur in the hoards from Kergoff en Noyal-Pontivy, Morbihan,<sup>5</sup> and Manoir, Logonna-Quimerch, Finistère;<sup>6</sup> these hoards belong to the Rosnoën phase, contemporary with the British Penard phase. A more massive example was found in the upper fill of a ring-ditch at Pontavert, Aisne.<sup>7</sup>

The Blewbury tool is probably an unlooped socketed axe/chisel of the Penard phase of the British Bronze Age.

BRENDAN O'CONNOR

### THREE BRONZE AGE IMPLEMENTS FROM THE THAMES

This note deals with three Middle Bronze Age implements dredged from the Thames in recent years. The dagger (Fig. 4, No. 1) was dredged from the river between Abingdon and Sutton Courtenay, Oxfordshire in 1976. The rapier (Fig. 4, No. 2) and the palstave (Fig. 4, No. 3) were recovered in 1972 in material from between Abingdon and Radley.

#### *Descriptions*

1. Dagger, slightly corroded and with some damage to the hilt. 19.5 cm. long. The hilt of this weapon would originally have been trapezoidal in shape and is slightly convex in cross-section. There are two rivet holes which retain their rivets: these are about 1.4 cm. long, vary in cross-section from rounded to polygonal and have slightly expanded convex heads. The blade cross-section is lozenge-shaped with bevelled edges.

2. Rapier in fine condition, with some slight damage to the blade edges. 53 cm. long. The hilt is trapezoidal in shape and is flat in cross-section, with two rivet holes (now broken) on the butt line. One rivet survives—it is circular in cross-section, short and convex-headed. There is a small raised triangular moulding on each face of the hilt-plate. The blade of the rapier is of flat mid-rib cross-section with concave edges.

3. Palstave in good condition with some slight damage to the butt end. 16.5 cm. long. The palstave has leaf-shaped flanges which are curved in below the stop-ridge to produce the 'shield' motif. The septum is straight-sided and the stop-ridge is raised level with the flanges. The blade is slightly thicker below the stop-ridge than at the septum floor.

<sup>1</sup> C. Burgess, 'The Bronze Age', in C. Renfrew (ed.), *British Prehistory* (1974), 203 n. 244; M. J. Rowlands, *The production and distribution of metalwork in the Middle Bronze Age in southern Britain*, B.A.R., 31 (1976), 41-4, 347-9, Map 11, Pl. 34.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 347-9.

<sup>3</sup> A. R. Edwardson, *Bronze Age metal work in Moyses Hall Museum* (n.d.), Pl. 3, No. 176; Rowlands, *op. cit.* note 1, 353, No. 1126, Pl. 34.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 45, 350-3, Nos. 1101, 1103, 1104, 1126.

<sup>5</sup> J. Briard, *Les dépôts bretons et l'Age du Bronze atlantique* (1965), 157, Fig. 52, 4.

<sup>6</sup> 'Informations archéologiques: Circonscription de Bretagne', *Gallia Préhistoire*, XVIII (1975), 525-6, Fig. 21.

<sup>7</sup> 'Informations archéologiques: Circonscription de Nord et Picardie', *Gallia Préhistoire*, XVII (1974), 439-40, Fig. 22.

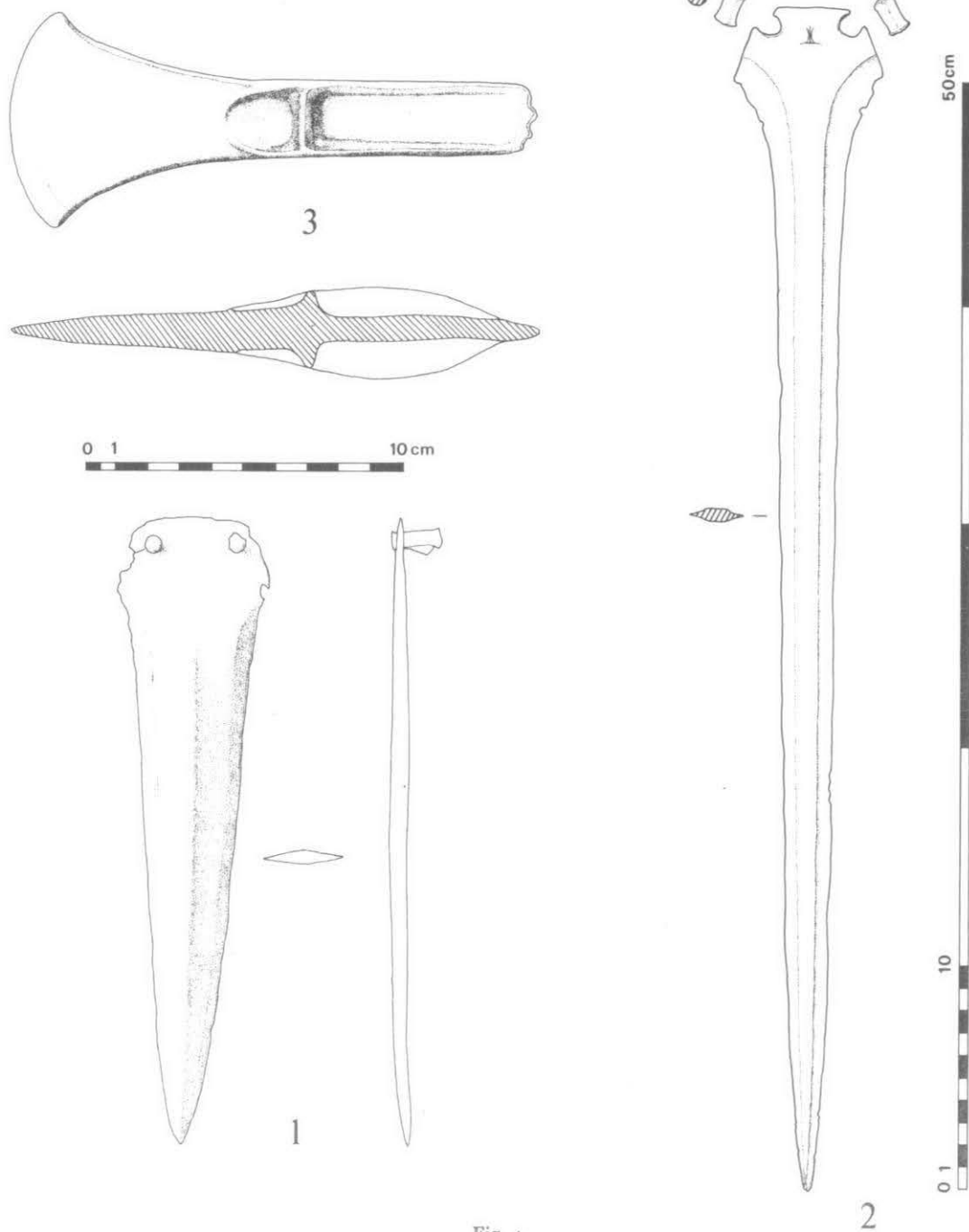


Fig. 4

Bronze Age dagger (1), rapier (2) and palstave (3) from the Thames. Scales as shown. Drawing by Wendy Lee.

*Discussion*

Recent classifications of daggers, dirks and rapiers have been evolved by Burgess and Rowlands.<sup>1</sup>

The dagger falls into Rowlands' Class 1 of early MBA daggers. The shape of the blade is thought to be influenced by EBA II ogival daggers and the trapezoidal hilt with two rivets is a feature derived ultimately from the Irish EBA daggers.<sup>2</sup> On the basis of blade cross-section this weapon is a member of Burgess' Group II, current in his Acton Park phase of the 15th-14th centuries B.C.<sup>3</sup>

The flat mid-rib blade cross-section of the rapier puts this weapon into Burgess' Group IV, current in his Penard phase.<sup>4</sup> On the basis of hilt shape and cross-section it is in Rowlands' Class 2, Group 2 developed trapezoidal hilted rapiers. The combination of flat hilt cross-section and flat mid-rib cross-section is thought to indicate a late variant of the developed trapezoidal hilted rapier, intermediate between these and the later notch-hilted rapiers.<sup>5</sup> Since British production of notch-hilted rapiers began in the 10th-11th centuries B.C.,<sup>6</sup> this weapon probably falls into the later part of the Penard phase. The distribution of these weapons clusters markedly in the Thames Valley, though mainly in the lower reaches.<sup>7</sup>

The palstave falls into Rowlands' Class 1, Group 1 of early 'Shield-pattern' palstaves.<sup>8</sup> However it lacks the ridge on the side of the blade which seems to be a usual feature of this type of palstave. The ridge is a less common feature on later developed 'shield-pattern' palstaves (Rowlands' Class 1, Groups 2-4), so its absence from this example may indicate a later variant of the early 'shield-pattern' palstave. The early 'shield-pattern' type is dated to the early MBA in Southern Britain.<sup>9</sup> A concentration of palstaves of this type in the Upper Thames valley is noted by Rowlands.<sup>10</sup>

Accidental losses and erosion of riverside settlements as at Wallingford<sup>11</sup> must account for some of the large quantity of Bronze Age metalwork found in the Thames and other rivers. However the possibility of ritual deposition of metal-work into rivers in the Bronze Age must also be considered. Burgess<sup>12</sup> shows that 80% of the dirks and rapiers known from the British Isles come from rivers and other 'wet' findspots and suggests that this may be the result of votive deposition. Certain types of spearheads, possibly of ceremonial function, commonly occur in the Thames, which may again suggest ritual offerings.<sup>13</sup>

It is therefore quite possible that these Abingdon implements were not accidentally lost but intentionally deposited in the Thames.

ROGER THOMAS<sup>14</sup>

<sup>1</sup> C. B. Burgess, 'Bronze Age Dirks and Rapiers as illustrated by examples from Durham and Northumberland', *Trans. Architect. Archaeol. Soc. Durham and Northumberland*, 1 (1968), 3-26; M. J. Rowlands, *The Organisation of Middle Bronze Age Metalworking*, B.A.R., 31 (1976).

<sup>2</sup> Rowlands, *op. cit.* note 1, 66.

<sup>3</sup> Burgess, *op. cit.* note 1, 12; also C. B. Burgess, 'The Gwithian Mould and the forerunners of South Welsh Axes', in C. B. Burgess and R. Miket (eds.), *Settlement and Economy in the Second and Third Millennia B.C.*, B.A.R., 33 (1976).

<sup>4</sup> Burgess, *op. cit.* note 1, 15.

<sup>5</sup> Rowlands, *op. cit.* note 1, 68.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 76.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, Map 18.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 28 and Map 15.

<sup>11</sup> M. R. Ehrenberg, *Bronze Age Spearheads from Berks, Bucks and Oxon*, B.A.R., 34 (1977), 18.

<sup>12</sup> C. B. Burgess, 'The Bronze Age' in C. Renfrew (ed.), *British Prehistory* (1974), 196 and note 201.

<sup>13</sup> Ehrenberg, *op. cit.* note 11, 23.

<sup>14</sup> Thanks are due to Messrs. H. Dymore-Brown and W. Skellington of Abingdon and Mr. R. Lorenz of Kennington, the finders of the dagger, palstave and rapier respectively, and to the Curator of Abingdon Museum for permission to study the implements. The dagger and palstave are now on permanent loan to Abingdon Museum, and the rapier has been retained by the finder.



## ROMAN TRINKET-RINGS FROM OXFORDSHIRE

This article summarizes a complete corpus of the bronze and copper alloy Roman finger-rings from new (1974) Oxfordshire, complete copies of which have been deposited in the Ashmolean Museum and the Department of Museum Services, Woodstock. Rings of gold, silver, jet, glass, bone, signet rings and intaglios are excluded.

The rings are divided into nine types :—

*Type 1* Simple hoops and bands without ornamentation. Examples from Abingdon (3), Alchester (6), Charlbury (2), Curbridge Coral Spring (1), Ditchley (1), Shakenoak (4) and Woodeaton (13). (Fig. 5, Nos. 1 and 2).

*Type 2* Ornamental rings without bezels, some probably made from bracelets. Examples from Abingdon (2), Alchester (1), Ditchley (1), Shakenoak (1) and Woodeaton (8). (Fig. 5, Nos. 3-9).

*Type 3* Spiral twists of wire or strips. Examples from Alchester (1), Shakenoak (1) and Woodeaton (4). (Fig. 5, No. 10).

*Type 4* Wire knot rings, contractile rings and rings made of strands of twisted wire. Examples from Woodeaton (4). (Fig. 5, No. 11).

*Type 5* Serpent rings. Example from Abingdon (1). (Fig. 5, No. 12).

*Type 6* Key rings. Examples from Woodeaton (3).

*Type 7* Rings with plain or engraved bezels. Examples from Abingdon (1), Oxford (1), Shakenoak (2) and Woodeaton (3). (Fig. 5, Nos. 13-15).

*Type 8* Rings with enamel paste or glass settings. Examples from Alchester (1), Ditchley (1), Shakenoak (1) and Woodeaton (10). (Fig. 5, Nos. 16-19).

*Type 9* Polygonal rings. No example from county.

Although there has been recent work on intaglios and signet rings,<sup>1</sup> and on jet rings at Silchester,<sup>2</sup> little work has been done on the commonest types of ring found in the Roman Province of Britain, although Dr. Henkel's magnificent catalogue of rings from the Rhineland<sup>3</sup> is, of course, relevant here. This catalogue of rings from Oxfordshire attempts to remedy this deficiency at least in part, and may be useful beyond the purely local area.

Towards the end of the 1st century A.D., or the beginning of the 2nd, the Celtic-speaking peoples of lowland Britain began to come under the influence of Roman civilization, and remained romanized throughout the Roman occupation. This is exemplified by the large measure of correspondence between objects (including finger-rings) found at the native Romano-British site at Lowbury Hill, Berkshire,<sup>4</sup> with others found at the civitas capital of Silchester.<sup>5</sup> This would argue against Joan Kirk's hypothesis that the finger-rings from Woodeaton were not made for ordinary use.<sup>6</sup> The many low quality rings with glass or paste settings are in imitation of the rings set with gems and owned by the Roman upper and middle classes. Type 8 rings are examples.

<sup>1</sup> M. Henig, *A Corpus of Roman Engraved Gemstones from British Sites*, B.A.R., 8 (1974). I would like to thank Dr. Henig for all his advice and help.

<sup>2</sup> A. J. Lawson, 'Shale and Jet Objects from Silchester', *Archaeologia*, 105 (1975), 241-75.

<sup>3</sup> F. Henkel, *Die Römischen Fingerringe der Rheinlande* (1913).

<sup>4</sup> D. Atkinson, *The Romano-British Site on Lowbury Hill, Berkshire* (1916).

<sup>5</sup> G. C. Boon, *Silchester. The Roman Town of Calleva* (1974).

<sup>6</sup> J. Kirk, 'Bronzes from Woodeaton, Oxon', *Oxoniensia*, xiv (1949), 5-7.

The earliest Roman rings seem to have been either simple rings, Type 1,<sup>7</sup> or the spiral twist of bronze ribbon, Type 3. These were the normal Iron Age finger and toe-rings,<sup>8</sup> and this type had a long life, from prehistoric times well into the Roman period, perhaps gradually evolving into the serpent rings (*e.g.* Fig. 5, No. 12).

Some of the simple rings, Type 1, appear to begin to show an idea of ornamentation, being made thicker in the front of the hoop, etc. (*e.g.* Fig. 5, No. 2). Type 2 shows the use of simple ornamentation, two rings (*inc.* Fig. 5, No. 7) having a ring-and-dot motif, also found on bracelets.<sup>9</sup> This may also have Iron Age antecedents.<sup>10</sup>

Some rings attempt to copy jewelled settings in glass, *e.g.* an example of Type 8, Corpus No. 53, which has a glass setting perhaps imitating nicolo.

Dating of rings is difficult because of lack of well stratified examples, nevertheless Types 1 to 3 would appear to be early, while the rings with enamel settings, Type 8, need not post-date the 2nd century.<sup>11</sup> However it is very probable that many of the rings from the temple site at Woodeaton can be dated to after the middle of the 2nd century when Period II<sup>12</sup> starts at the site. The published Coin List<sup>13</sup> catalogues a significant number of 3rd-century Antoniniani, bronzes of the house of Constantine, and sheet-metal impressions from similar coins. The brooches have mainly been assigned to the 2nd century;<sup>14</sup> on the other hand the bracelets have been given a 4th-century date.<sup>15</sup> At Nor'Nour<sup>16</sup> the brooches are again assigned to the 2nd century. The similarity of the enamelling on brooches and rings should be significant but the coin list<sup>17</sup> is once again later.

In general it would seem that most trinket-rings date from between the middle of the 2nd century, and the late 4th century.<sup>18</sup>

## SITES

Abingdon—Barton Court Farm, Abingdon, Oxon.  
Alchester, Oxon.  
Charlbury, Oxon.  
Curbridge Coral Springs, Oxon.  
Ditchley—Watts Wells Villa, Ditchley, Oxon.  
Hambleton—Yewden Villa, Hambleton, Oxon.  
Oxford, Oxon.  
Shakenoak—Shakenoak Farm, Nr. Wilcote, Oxon.  
Woodeaton, Oxon.

MONICA ROBINSON

<sup>7</sup> R. E. M. Wheeler, *Maiden Castle, Dorset* (1943), 278, Fig. 92.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 265, 266.

<sup>9</sup> R. Bradley and A. Ellison, *Rams Hill* (1975), 137, Fig. 3.

<sup>10</sup> Sir Cyril Fox, *Pattern and Purpose, a survey of early Celtic Art in Britain* (1958), 129, Pl. 70.C.

<sup>11</sup> D. Dudley, 'Excavations on Nor'Nour in the Isles of Scilly, 1962-66', *Archaeol. J.*, 124 (1967), 1-19; M. R. Hull, 'The Nor'Nour Brooches', *Archaeol. J.*, 124 (1967), 28-30; S. A. Butcher, 'Enamels from Roman Britain', in M. R. A. P. D. Gilyard-Ber and A. D. Saunders (eds.), *Ancient Monuments and their Interpretation* (1977), 41-5.

<sup>12</sup> R. Goodchild and J. Kirk, 'The Romano-Celtic Temple at Woodeaton', *Oxoniensia*, xix (1964), 24.

<sup>13</sup> C. H. V. Sutherland, 'The Coins', in Goodchild and Kirk, *op. cit.* note 12, 34-7; J. G. Milne, 'Woodeaton Coins', *J. Roman Studies*, 21 (1931), 101-9.

<sup>14</sup> Kirk, *op. cit.* note 6, 7; M. V. Taylor, 'Woodeaton', *J. Roman Studies*, 7 (1917), 98-119.

<sup>15</sup> Kirk, *op. cit.* note 6, 7.

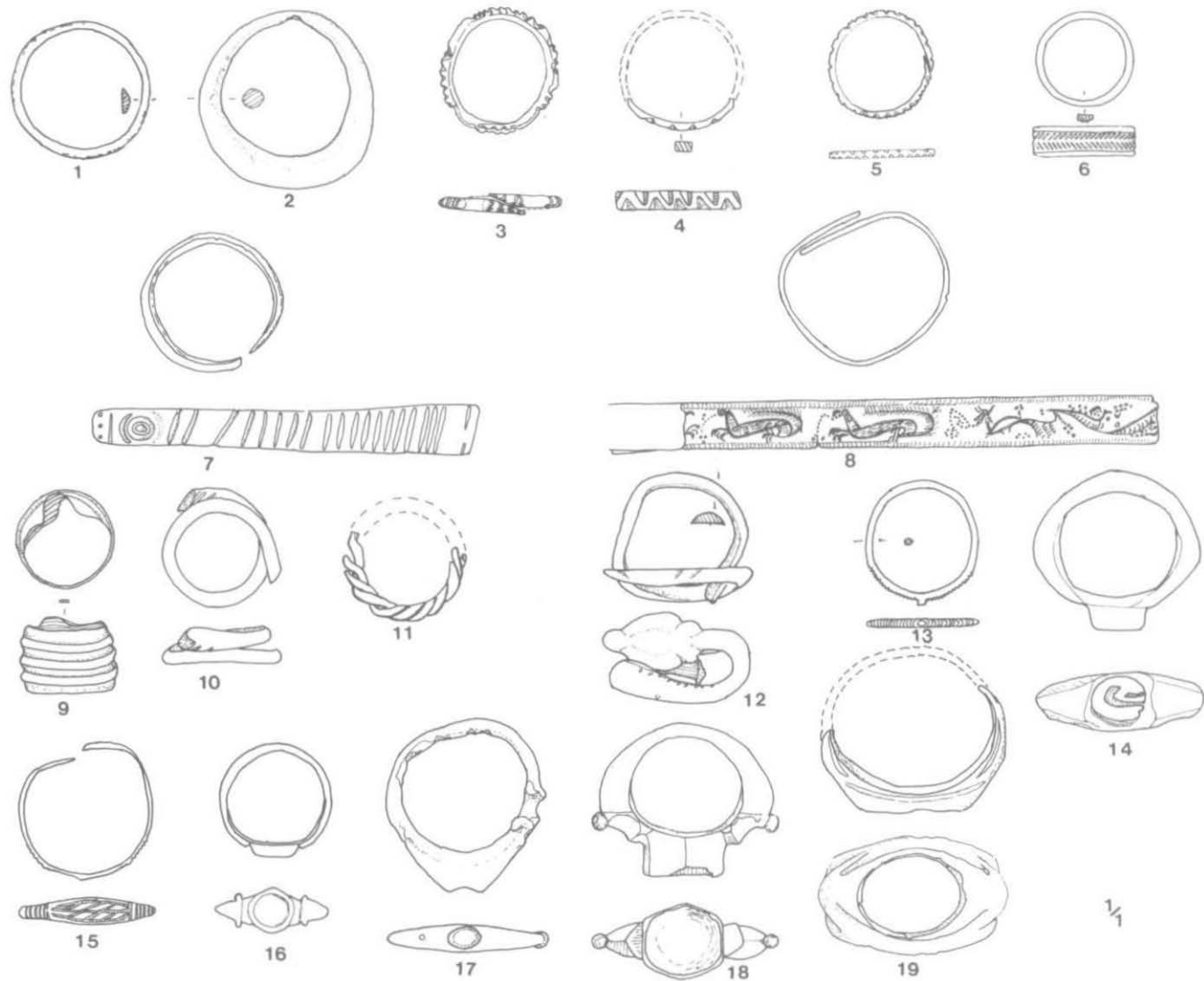
<sup>16</sup> Dudley, *op. cit.* note 11, 1-19; Butcher, *op. cit.* note 11, 41-5.

<sup>17</sup> R. A. G. Carson, 'The Coins', in D. Dudley, *op. cit.* note 11, 27-8.

<sup>18</sup> Henig, *op. cit.* note 1; F. H. Marshall, *Catalogue of the Finger Rings, Greek Etruscan and Roman in the Departments of Antiquities, British Museum* (1907).

## Fig. 5 right

Roman finger-rings. 1-2 : Type 1 (Woodeaton, Charlbury); 3-9 : Type 2 (Woodeaton, Woodeaton, Abingdon, Woodeaton, Woodeaton, Abingdon, Alchester); 10 : Type 3 (Woodeaton); 11 : Type 4 (Woodeaton); 12 : Type 5 (Abingdon); 13-15 : Type 7 (Abingdon, Oxford, Woodeaton); 16-19 : Type 8 (Woodeaton, Alchester, Woodeaton, Woodeaton). Scale 1 : 1.



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## TWO RADIO-CARBON DATES FROM THE ROMANO-BRITISH CEMETERY AND SETTLEMENT AT CURBRIDGE, OXON.

The cemetery lay within a part of the Romano-British settlement discovered and excavated in 1975 during the construction of the Witney bypass. Since the publication of the excavation report<sup>1</sup> radio-carbon dates have been obtained from the human bone in grave F8 (A.D.  $310 \pm 70$  yrs.)<sup>2</sup> and grave F27 (A.D.  $110 \pm 80$  yrs.).<sup>3</sup> At present these two dates indicate F27 as somewhere in the first half of the Roman period and F8 as somewhere in the second half of the period.

The original report suggested that the settlement features over which the cemetery lay were the result of occupation from the 1st or early 2nd century A.D. until the 4th century. However, the radio-carbon dates suggest that the cemetery came into use earlier than was originally thought, indicating that this part of the underlying settlement was deserted before the 4th century. Occupation undoubtedly continued for a while longer on the eastern half of the excavated area from which there was more substantial dating evidence.

The Curbridge cemetery appears to have developed at the edge of the then settled area. The cemetery plan reflects the disordered layout<sup>4</sup> of burial commonly encountered on rural settlement sites<sup>5</sup> and the cemetery certainly lacks the formal layout common in town cemeteries such as Queensford Mill, Dorchester.<sup>6</sup> In common with other rural sites such as Owslebury<sup>7</sup> the Curbridge cemetery contains a broad mixture of ages and sexes and a general lack of archaeologically detectable, non-perishable grave goods and coffins.

At Curbridge, with the possible exception of grave F3, and also F5 which may have been bound hand and foot, there were only two types of burial to differ noticeably from the normal, supine, coffinless inhumations. These two types were burials containing hobnails, and burials of decapitated bodies with the skull placed in the lower half of the grave.

The N.-S. graves form a broad N.-S. line across the site, suggesting that these burials may have been influenced by a pre-existing boundary on the outskirts of the settlement. Unfortunately, a hedge, fence or unmetalled path, on this site at least, would be impossible to detect.

Of the six W.-E. and E.-W. orientated graves, F8 and F11 may be demonstrated stratigraphically to be later than the N.-S. graves F27, F3 and F13<sup>8</sup> and all six W.-E. and E.-W. graves may represent a second, later phase in this cemetery. If this change in orientation is the result of the spread of Christian ritual it is clear from the occurrence of hobnails (F14) and a decapitation (F19) amongst the four E.-W. burials, and hobnails (F8) included in one of the two W.-E. graves, that at Curbridge only the more readily acceptable aspects of Christian ritual had been absorbed by a seemingly continuing pagan settlement, just as three centuries earlier, indigenous Britons appear to have accepted and accommodated the new Roman deities introduced to Britain following the conquest.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> R. A. Chambers, 'A Romano-British Settlement at Curbridge', *Oxoniensia*, xli (1976), 38-55.

<sup>2</sup> A.E.R.E. Harwell sample No. HAR-2006.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, sample No. HAR-2005.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.* note 1, 40, Fig. 12.

<sup>5</sup> J. Collis, 'Owslebury (Hants) and the Problems of Burials on Rural Settlements', in R. Reece (ed.), *Burial in the Roman World*, C.B.A. Research Report, 22 (1977).

<sup>6</sup> B. Durham and R. T. Rowley, 'A Cemetery Site at Queensford Mill, Dorchester', *Oxoniensia*, xxxvii (1972), 36, Fig. 3. See also this volume.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

<sup>8</sup> *Op. cit.* note 1, 46, Grave 11: for this grave cut the earlier graves 3, 27 and 31, read . . . graves 3, 27 and 13.

<sup>9</sup> A. Ross, *Pagan Celtic Britain* (1974), 40.

The radio-carbon dates for this cemetery further illustrate that decapitated burials<sup>10</sup> and inhumation burials associated with hobnailed boots commence before the late Roman period. Recent excavation at Winchester has revealed similar decapitated burials from a 2nd-century context,<sup>11</sup> whilst Maiden Castle has provided a 1st-century inhumation burial with hobnailed boots.<sup>12</sup> Hobnail clusters are also present in earlier Romano-British cremation graves, with examples from Avisford, Funtingdon<sup>13</sup> and Cirencester.<sup>14</sup>

R. A. CHAMBERS

## A SECONDARY BURIAL ON SHIPTON BARROW, OXON. 1976

Following an anonymous report that human bones had been disturbed by unknown persons a double burial was excavated before the remains incurred any further damage.<sup>1</sup> The writer, on behalf of the Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit, would like to thank Mr. G. B. Woodin on whose land the barrow lies, for granting access to the barrow and also to the volunteers from Burford School who assisted with the excavation, especially the headmaster, the Rev. R. A. Moody.

Shipton Barrow<sup>2</sup> is an impressive round barrow some 52 m. across by 2 m. high and lies at the top of Shipton Down in the south-west of the parish of Shipton-under-Wychwood. The grave was situated on sloping ground to the west of the barrow's summit, the original ground surface having been much altered by fox sets and other animal burrows, some of which had badly disturbed the grave. There were two skeletons, some 0.6 m. beneath the turf, in friable orange-brown loamy subsoil which concealed the edges of the grave pit. They were oriented north-south and both appeared supine, legs straight, knees together, one skeleton upon the other, and both pinned down with a limestone slab placed over the pelvic region (Fig. 6). Chests, arms and shoulders had been destroyed by burrowing animals. Teeth and skull fragments were found between the tangled roots of an elder tree at the head of the grave. An iron buckle was recovered from a position immediately beneath the stone and may have belonged to the upper skeleton. That there may have been further metal-work in the region of the knees is suggested by the hole dug into the grave by robbers following a reading from their metal detector.<sup>3</sup>

### THE HUMAN BONES. By MARY HARMAN

The two skeletons were poorly preserved, and some of the bones could not be definitely attributed to one particular skeleton.

1. A few fragments of an adult, probably male; parts of the right leg, the femur shaft, distal end of the tibia, ankle and foot, the distal ends of the radius and ulna and a few metacarpals.

<sup>10</sup> The practice of decapitation in which the head was placed in the lower half of the grave appears to have reached its peak in the 4th century A.D. although of the majority of the sixty-plus examples known to the writer, only a few are precisely datable to within this century.

<sup>11</sup> Pers. Comm., K. E. Qualmann. Hyde Street Cemetery, Winchester.

<sup>12</sup> R. E. M. Wheeler, *Maiden Castle, Dorset*, Report of the Research Committee, Society of Antiquaries of London, XII (1943), 350 and Pl. L.

<sup>13</sup> H. Smith, 'An Account of Certain Sepulchral Remains Lately Discovered at Densworth, in the Parish of Funtingdon', *Sussex Archaeol. Coll.*, x (1858), 176-8.

<sup>14</sup> Pers. Comm., R. Leech.

<sup>1</sup> Shipton Barrow is a scheduled monument in the care of the Department of the Environment from whom permission to excavate was formally obtained by the writer. The finds and excavation records will be deposited at the Oxford County Museum, Woodstock, P.R.N. 4448.

<sup>2</sup> Grid Reference SP 269155.

<sup>3</sup> It was stated in an anonymous letter that the metal detector had given a false reading. An interesting coincidence that it was directly over a grave!

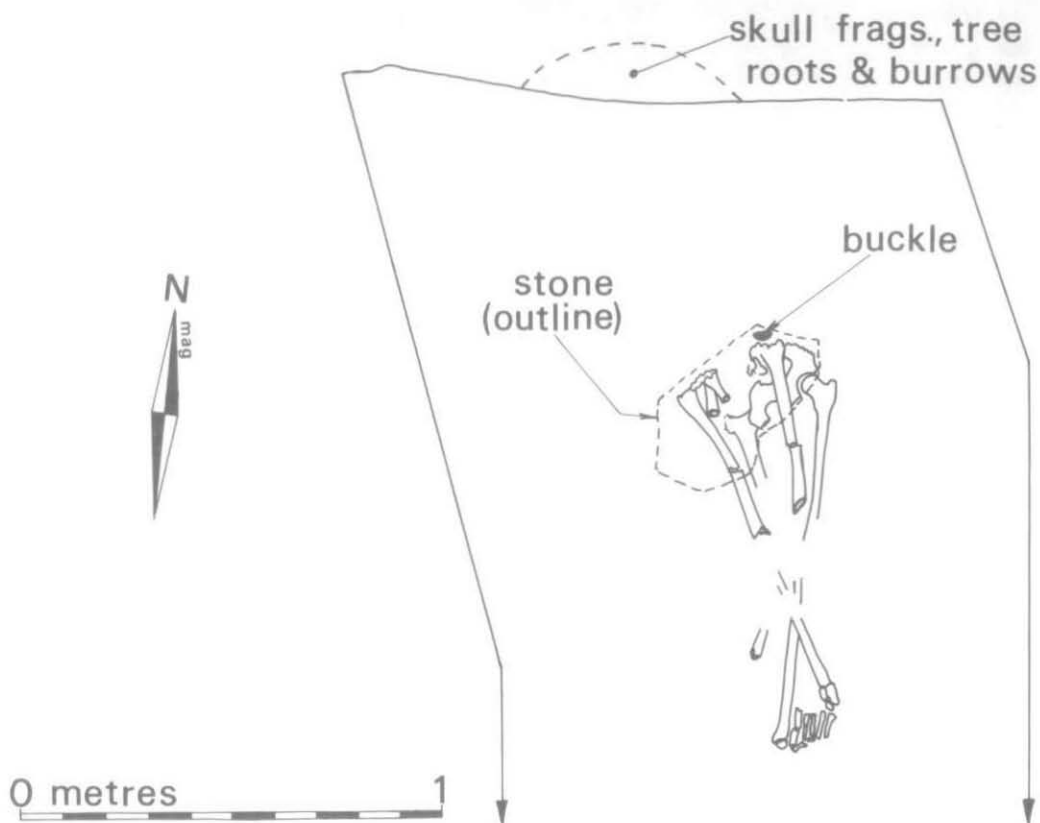


Fig. 6  
The double burial.

2. Parts of the pelvis, the proximal half of the right femur and part of the right tibia of an adult male.

A few pelvic fragments and parts of a sacrum could belong to either body.

Parts of a left tibia, a fibula shaft and some other long bone shaft fragments probably belong to skeleton 2.

A few cranial fragments and 19 teeth probably belong together and may be associated with either skeleton. The teeth appear to belong to a single set, are not carious, and are lightly worn, indicating an age of between 20 and 25 years.

Probably not more than two individuals are represented, both adults, one aged between 20 and 25 years ; one was certainly a male, the other probably also.

#### THE IRON BUCKLE (Fig. 7)

Circular, with straightened edge for attachment to belt. Heavily corroded ; 39 mm. overall diameter. Iron buckles of this type appear regularly from the later Saxon period onwards (*cf.* D. M. Liddell, 'Excavations at Meon Hill', *Proc. Hants. Field Club and Arch. Soc.*, xii, part 2 (1933), Fig. XV, No. M8 ; N. Gray Hill, 'Excavations on Stockbridge Down 1935-36', *Ibid.*, xiv, part 3 (1937), Pl. I and p. 249).

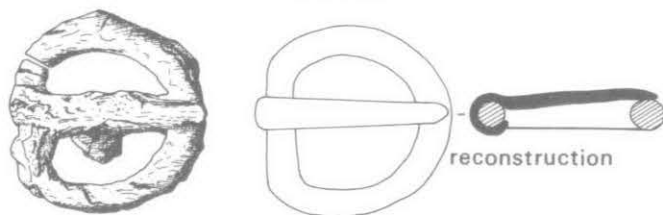


Fig. 7

Iron buckle and reconstruction drawing. Scale  $\frac{3}{4}$ .

## CONCLUSIONS

Pagan Saxon burials in prehistoric burial mounds are well documented in Wiltshire,<sup>4</sup> Dorset<sup>5</sup> and also from the Lyneham long-barrow in Oxfordshire.<sup>6</sup> However, the late Saxon or early medieval character of the iron buckle from Shipton Barrow suggests the possibility of an execution site, like those in Hampshire cited above, and in secondary burials of a medieval character in three Wiltshire barrows.<sup>7</sup> Another 'cwealmstow' has recently been excavated at the Bran Ditch site in Cambridgeshire.<sup>8</sup>

R. A. CHAMBERS

## A SAXON CHURCH AT COTTISFORD ?

That there was a church at Cottisford at the time of the Conquest is known from the writings of Ordericus Vitalis, who cites a charter of William I dated 1081 which confirmed to the Monastery of St. Evroul in Normandy lands and tithes given to that house by the Norman barons; King William had granted to Hugh de Grantmesnil in 1066 certain manors; and Hugh gave to the Monastery, of the property he held in England, the 'church at Cotesford, with the tithes and one hide of land'. In 1167 St. Evroul transferred its Cottisford property to the Abbey of Bec Hellouin, who retained it until, two and a half centuries later, after the suppression of alien priories, Henry VI granted it to his new foundation at Eton.

It has been assumed that the existing church dates from the 13th century, and was built by the Abbots of Bec. However, examination of the fabric raises a strong likelihood that its unaisled nave is that of the original Saxon church. Characteristically long and narrow and tall, its four corners exhibit a type of quoin frequently employed in later Saxon times. Though most of the walling, of limestone rubble and formerly plastered, must be contemporary with the cornerstones, there is evidence of a good deal of rebuilding in the eastern half, and all the architectural features are insertions of the 13th century or later. The nave is two and three quarters as long as it is broad, with side walls rather taller than the breadth between them, and a gabled west wall reaching half as high again. The only entrance is by a south porch. In the early 19th century the church was described as a 'low mean structure consisting of a tower covered with slates, a nave and chancel'. Buckler's drawing of 1825, reproduced in the Victoria County History, shows that the western portion of the nave then had a steeply pitched roof—the 'tower'—which is known to have housed two bells since the 16th century, but the rest of the nave

<sup>4</sup> *V.C.H. Wilts.*, I (part i), 242-3.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 242-3.

<sup>6</sup> *V.C.H. Oxon.*, I, 358.

<sup>7</sup> *V.C.H. Wilts.*, I (part i), 245. In at least one of these, the victims had apparently been bound.

<sup>8</sup> B. Hope-Taylor and D. Hill, 'The Cambridgeshire Dykes', *Proc. Camb. Ant. Soc.*, LXVI (1975/6), 126-8.

and the chancel had low sloping roofs. J. C. Blomfield, in his publication (*History of Cottisford, Hardwich and Tusmore*) of 1887, but clearly referring to a period before the restoration of 1861, states that the church 'remains to the present day the same in size and form as it was at its foundation, a small building consisting of tower and one aisle, which is divided into a nave and chancel. A wooden screen, surmounted by a rood loft, originally divided the latter. The staircase to the rood loft still remains. The screen was in recent times plastered over, with the gateway only left open; but in 1835 it was removed and the present arch substituted'. In 1861 the church was restored and assumed more or less its present appearance; the nave was reroofed, retaining, as the wood-work of the bellcage shows, the pitch of the 'tower' throughout its length.

The nave is a parallelogram,  $17 \times 7\frac{1}{2}$  m. externally and  $15\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{3}{4}$  m. internally. Its four corners are similar, which shows that the original plan has remained unaltered. The original quoins reach almost to the top of the wall except at the south-east, where the upper part was rebuilt in late medieval times. These quoins, the features most suggestive of Saxon workmanship, are built of dressed blocks of limestone, some forming long flat slabs, up to 0.77 m. in length, others tall and narrow, the tallest 0.64 m., but not laid in the regular alternation of 'upright and flat'. Each stone is carefully dressed, with its exposed edge absolutely vertical, neatly jointed above and below to its neighbour, but with the inner side which adjoins the rubble walling unshaped, as it would originally have been hidden by plaster. The quality is not quite up to that of the excellent masonry, in a similar limestone, of the regularly placed 'upright and flat' quoins at the not far distant Northamptonshire churches of Green's Norton and Pattishall.

The westernmost windows of the north and south walls are opposite each other, and like the one in the west wall they are placed high up; if they replace earlier ones there may have been a row of three evenly set on either side of the original nave.

The porch is entered by a 13th-century arch, and the church by a 14th-century doorway, which must be a replacement of an earlier one. The most puzzling feature is a blocked arch low down on the east wall, crudely constructed of uneven stones, but having a close resemblance to the small deeply recessed windows on the north and south sides of the Saxon tower at Caversfield about four miles away. If this is a Saxon arch—and this is a big 'if', for its construction is so rough that it might be unskilled work of any period—the important deduction must be made that this was the wall of a porticus, an opinion that I put forward not without hesitation.

It is unfortunate that plaster effectively conceals the masonry of the interior walls of both nave and porch; that the old chancel arch was cleared away more than a century ago; and that no architectural features remain earlier than the 13th century. But the proportions of the building and the character of its four corners do give a fair presumption that the nave is basically that of the church which was in existence in 1066.

H. MILNES-WALKER

#### SOME RECENT MEDIEVAL ACQUISITIONS BY THE OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL MUSEUMS

1. Seal die from Donnington Bridge, Oxford.

S' . RADULFI . DE : SANDVYM + (Seal of Ralph of Sandvym)

Tonsured bust facing left, surmounted by a hand pointing with two fingers downwards.

The die is of bronze, vesica-shaped, with a single suspension loop on top back, with no central ridge. It is similar to R. B. Tonnochy, *Cat. of British Seal Dies in the British Museum*, No. 816, Pl. XVIII, and is probably of about the same date, c. 1300.

The place-name Sandvym could be Sandwich, Kent, but is otherwise not identified. 3.1 cm.  $\times$  2 cm. Acc. No. 77.124.1.





Fig. 8

Bronze steelyard weight from Drayton (Scale  $\frac{1}{2}$ ), and ampulla from Wantage (Scale 1 : 1).

2. Seal die from Oxford Hill, Witney.

This die is of iron plated both sides in bronze, vesica-shaped with a single loop on the top back and an axial ridge. Much of the bronze face has corroded away, making a rough, incomplete impression. It appears to be an *agnus dei* facing right surmounted by a flag on a staff whose cross finial reaches into the inscription around the edge.

No letters can be read. Date : c. 1300. 2.8 × 1.5 cm. Acc. No. 78.1.1.

3. Ampulla from Charlton Road, Wantage (Fig. 8)

The ampulla, of lead, is flask-shaped with two rounded handles at the neck. One face is decorated with a scallop-shell motif, roughly executed. The reverse shows a crown surmounted by two quatrefoils and a central fleur-de-lis. The motifs place it in the scallop-shell (type II) group described by B. Spencer as probably originating from The Shrine of Our Lady at Walsingham, Suffolk. 5 cm. × 3 cm. Acc. No. 77.102.1.

(Ref. : B. W. Spencer, 'A Scallop-shell Ampulla from Caistor and comparable Pilgrim Souvenirs', *Lincs. Hist. and Arch.*, 1. No. 6 (1971).

4. Ampulla from Longwall Street, Oxford.

This leaden ampulla is also flask-shaped, with rounded handles set at the neck. The design is an equal-armed cross within a compass-drawn circle. Sections of the background are hatched. On the reverse is a compass-drawn rosette of 8 petals, within a circle; the background is hatched. Because of the associations in common of the floral motif, the scallop shell, crown, and crowned W, this ampulla possibly also came from the

Shrine at Walsingham. (B. W. Spencer, pers. comm. Reference as above.) 5 cm. × 3.5 cm. Loan : Dorchester-on-Thames Museum.

*Acknowledgements are made to Dr. M. Henig of Institute of Archaeology, Oxford and J. Cherry, British Museum, for opinions on the seal dies, and to S. McDonald for drawing the ampulla.*

NANCY STEBBING

5. Steelyard weight from Drayton, near Banbury, Oxon. (SP 428419) (Fig. 8, top).

The weight (Acc. No. 77.15.1) is of spheroid form with a flattened top from which projects a pierced triangular lug. There is a small circular hole underneath. The weight is of latten, filled with lead. The shoulder is ornamented with a pattern of hatched triangles within incised lines, and round the circumference are three armorial shields cast with the weight by the *cire perdue* method.

The shields show a lion rampant, the arms of the Earl of Poitou, an eagle displayed biceps (for the Empire) and the three leopards of England. This combination of arms can be associated with Richard of Cornwall, second son of John, created Earl of Cornwall and Poitou in 1225 and elected King of the Romans in 1257. Similarly associated weights have been recorded from over 60 sites in the south of England, the south Midlands and East Anglia : the suggestion has been made that their use is connected with the trade of the merchants of the Hanse. Richard of Cornwall was influential in gaining a charter for the Hanse from his brother Henry III in 1260.<sup>1</sup> This weight can therefore in all probability be dated to between 1257 and Richard's death in 1272, and at any rate to the second half of the 13th century.

The nearest published parallel to the Drayton weight is one from Reading, which is, however, considerably larger and weighs 4 lbs.<sup>2</sup> A Wiltshire example has been published of the type of steelyard balance on which these weights were used.<sup>3</sup>

Diameter : 64 mm. ; Height (including lug) : 67 mm ; Weight : 2 lbs. 4 oz.

SARAH GOSLING

#### NUNEHAM COURTENAY—GOLDSMITH'S DESERTED VILLAGE

The desertion of the village of Nuneham Courtenay in the interests of 18th-century landscape improvement was discussed in *Oxoniensia*, xxxiii (1968), 107-23. Although all the evidence pointed to this incident as the inspiration of Goldsmith's *The Deserted Village*, a definite identification was not then possible. The recent discovery of an entry in the diary of Bishop Porteus has now produced confirmation of the theory.

August 20th. 1800 Paid a visit to . . . Lord Harcourt at Nuneham. The village was originally in the Park at no great distance from the House and consisted of pretty, white cottages, scattered round a small piece of water and shaded with a number of very fine trees. The late Lord Harcourt thinking the village too near the house, built a new one on the Oxford road, about a mile from the mansion house. But the poor people were very unwilling to leave their old habitation and several houses in the New Village remained for a long time uninhabited. And this was Goldsmith's Deserted Village—so Lord Harcourt told me. One poor old woman

<sup>1</sup> *Proc. Dorset Nat. Hist. and Archaeol. Soc.*, 47, 48, 52, 58, 64, 75, 78, 81 ; *Sussex Archaeol. Coll.*, LXVII (1926) ; *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 121 (1972).

<sup>2</sup> *Proc. Dorset Nat. Hist. and Archaeol. Soc.*, 58 (1936), 33.

<sup>3</sup> *Wilts. Archaeol. and Nat. Hist. Mag.*, 63 (1968), 66-71.

known by the name of Babs whose cottage was shaded by a tree of her own planting in a most beautiful situation begged she might be permitted to remain there during the remainder of her life. She was indulged in this request and died there. The tree (an elm I think) is now a very large one and there is a charming inscription upon it in verse by Whitehead.

(Porteus Notebooks, Vol. 4, 1800. Mss. 2101, p. 3. Lambeth Palace Library.)

It has often been stated that the subject of Goldsmith's poem was an Irish eviction. 'The country blooms a garden and a grave' is clearly an indictment of Lord Harcourt's type of landscaping which necessitated the removal of a village and the rebuilding of the 'decent' church as a garden ornament. The 'sad historian of the pensive plain' is not then an old Irish cress gatherer, as has been said, but Nuneham's Babs. As Professor Beresford has said, it is a real pleasure when reality and poetic imagination meet, as they do in Nuneham and 'sweet Auburn'.

MAVIS BATEY

### THE OXFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL COMMITTEE IN 1977

A full description of the Committee's Unit's work in 1977 can be found in CBA Group IX, *Newsletter*, 8 (1978). The Committee produces a Newsletter which appears approximately monthly, subscription £1.00 per annum, obtainable from the Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit, 46 Hythe Bridge Street, Oxford, OX1 2EP.

#### 1. *Surveys* (a) Published

R. Chambers, 'Finstock, Topples', CBA Group IX, *Newsletter*, 8 (1978).

A. Davis and A. Upson, 'New Archaeological Sites on the Berkshire Downs in Oxfordshire', CBA Group IX, *Newsletter*, 8 (1978).

#### 2. *Field Surveys in Progress*

Oxfordshire Parish Survey (with Oxfordshire Department of Museum Services).

#### 3. *Excavations* (a) Published

M. Parrington, *The Excavation of an Iron Age settlement, Bronze Age ring-ditches and Roman features at Ashville Trading Estate, Abingdon (Oxfordshire) 1974-76*, Council for British Archaeology Research Report 28 (1978). Reviewed, this volume.

(b) In preparation (\* indicates Interim Report in CBA Group IX, *Newsletter*, 8 (1978)).

Abingdon : Roman villa and Saxon settlement at Barton Court Farm.\*

Berinsfield : Iron Age and Roman site at Mount Farm.\*

Chalgrove : medieval moated site at Hardings Field.\*

Farmoor : Iron Age and Roman Complex (final text with CBA for publication).

Hardwick with Yelford : Iron Age circular, double ditched enclosure.

Kidlington : Late medieval moated site.\*

Oxford : All Saints Church ; medieval tenements in Church Street ; the Greyfriars ; medieval tenements in the Hamel.

(c) Other sites recorded or dug : brief notes in CBA Group IX *Newsletter* (1978) ; detailed information will be deposited in the Oxfordshire Department of Museum Services Sites and Monuments Record.

Abingdon : ring ditches at Wilsham Road ; Roman site at The Vineyard ; medieval cemetery at Spring Road ; post-medieval site at West St. Helen Street.

Bicester : Roman site at Kings End Farm ; tenement sites at 37-39 and 49-57 Sheep Street.

- Chalgrove : Roman and pagan Saxon finds ; second moated site.  
 Didcot : Roman site.  
 Faringdon : medieval tenement at 4 Market Place.  
 Fringford : medieval site.  
 Fulbrook : medieval site.  
 Marston : medieval Church.  
 Oxford : medieval tenement and water front at Paradise Street and Castle Mill Stream.  
 Salford : post-medieval site.  
 Shipton-under-Wychwood : medieval site.  
 Sutton Courtenay : possible extension of the Drayton cursus.  
 Tetsworth : deserted village at Attington.  
 Wallingford : medieval tenement at 5 Market Place.  
 Westcote Barton : Late Saxon/early Medieval church.  
 Wilcote : medieval site.

### ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, WALTON STREET, OXFORD

The church of St. Paul was built in 1836 by H. J. Underwood, and its Ionic portico is an important example of the Greek Revival style, best seen in Oxford at the Ashmolean Museum (C. R. Cockerell, 1839-48). St. Paul's has been redundant for thirteen years, and has decayed sadly. It is now planned to convert it into a Performance Centre for the performing and visual arts.

The Arts Council has prepared a short-term plan to put St. Paul's into use as soon as possible, at a cost of £70,000. This is to be followed by a phased development programme to an overall cost of about £200,000. The Arts Council intends to intrude upon the proportions and character of the present building very little by keeping the main structure intact and confining essential services and facilities to single-storey constructions at the edges of the site. It is hoped that the stained glass and the balcony will remain.

An appeal was launched in April 1977 by the Oxford Area Arts Council, and support has been widely received from Local Authorities, Colleges, professional and amateur artists and amenity groups ; £42,000 had been raised by June 1978. The Department of the Environment has made a substantial offer of grant, and the help of Oxford businesses is being sought. It is hoped that St. Paul's will be open in 1979, and the next phase of the appeal will then be in progress. All offers of assistance in any form, great or small, will be gratefully acknowledged by :—The Director, St. Paul's Appeal, Oxford Area Arts Council, 40 George Street, Oxford.

A. LITVINOFF