

# BASINGSTOKE ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL SOCIETY



N E W S L E T T E R 109

November 1989

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## *CALENDAR*

Wed 22 Nov	"The Archaeology of Basing House" David Allen	B
Sat 2 Dec	O G S Crawford lecture by David Tomalin	H
Thurs 14 Dec	<i>CHEESE AND WINE SOCIAL</i> (see page 2)	*
	"Why do bishops eat raspberries and figs?" Frank Green, King John's House, Romsey 7.30 pm	H
Thurs 11 Jan	<i>FROM RAGS TO RICHES - THE NORTH HANTS PAPER INDUSTRY</i> Dr James Thomas	*
Sat 13 Jan	AGM 7.30 pm and New Year Party	B
Thurs 8 Feb	<i>MOORGATE SITE</i> Mr Drummond Murray	*
Tues 13 Feb	Visit to <i>MUSEUM OF ENGLISH RURAL LIFE</i> 7.30 pm	*

\* Society activity B Friends of Basing House  
H Hampshire Field Club

## *SUBSCRIPTIONS*

If your Newsletter is marked with a X in this box it means that you have not yet paid your subscription for 1989-90 which was due on 1st May. Regrettably no more Newsletters can be sent to you until this is paid. Subscriptions to: *John Horrocks, 5 Oak Close, Oakley. Items for Newsletters to Barbara Applin 138 Old Kempshott Lane, Basingstoke, RG22 5EN*



## CHEESE AND WINE SOCIAL

The focus of our Cheese and Wine Social, on Thursday 14th December at Chute House will once again take us away from wintry Basingstoke. John Horrocks will take us on what he calls "an Italian Ramble", including slides of Rome and Pompeii.

Cheese and wine and soft drinks will be provided, but if any members wish to make contributions, in cash or kind, a saucer will be put out for the first and any of your favourite delicacies will be welcome as usual.

## FROM RAGS TO RICHES

This is the title of our first lecture for 1990, on Thursday 11th January. Dr James Thomas of Portsmouth Polytechnic will be describing the history of the paper industry of North Hampshire. Perhaps the example best known to our members is Portal's paper mill at Laverstoke.

## MUSEUM OF ENGLISH RURAL LIFE

An advance date for diaries - we are arranging a visit to the Museum of English Rural Life in Reading on Tuesday 13th February, meeting there at 7.30 pm. More details and a map later.

## WHO'S FOR THE ORKNEYS?

Following his recent talk on *Cooking with Hot Stones*, John Hedges has volunteered to take a group to the Orkneys, if sufficient people are interested. This would probably be about July 1991. Please let Joy Needham know if you are interested (Basingstoke 55653).

## ORAL HISTORY

On 25th October, Barbara Applin and I went to an Oral History Workshop in the Castle, Winchester. It was organised by David Lee of the Wessex Film and Sound Archive to encourage amateurs to participate in making sound archives, especially in relation to wartime experiences in Hampshire.

Oral History is being collected by the three cities in Hampshire

and the Wessex Film and Sound Archive are currently interested in Oral History of World War II, especially the people who took in evacuees.

The basic points made during the day were:

- 1 Oral History gives an extra dimension; you gain the emphasis, accent and dialect.
- 2 Need to interview one person in a room on their own and away from noises and pets.
- 3 Interviewer needs to cultivate a nod and headshaking because uhm, uhm, yes etc come over on the tape.
- 4 Interviewer should not ask leading questions.
- 5 Division between speakers over the importance of a preliminary interview and research.
- 6 Ask for copyright.
- 7 Try not to get anecdotal.

We heard interviews of survivors of the Titanic, a pilot involved in the Berlin airlift and a woman trapped in a cellar during a blitz in Southampton. All were very moving and immediate (and frighteningly professional).

The use of Oral History together with artifacts for both sheltered housing inmates and in education was covered and proved equally fascinating. The children gain insights into recent history and older people start to relate to each other as a result of the stimulation. This was all very encouraging, although the official use of this material has been stopped due to lack of funds.

The whole purpose was to enthuse delegates to go out and do interviews and we were shown the various equipment which was recommended. We all enjoyed the day and were convinced of the use of Oral History, and found the standard of the tapes we heard very high. Anyone who would like to know more, please ask me or Barbara.

JOY NEEDHAM

### MR MAYO'S BOOKS

Mrs Mayo has kindly donated to the Society a collection of archaeological and historical books which her husband had built up. Until his death last year Frank Mayo was a keen member of the

Society, and contributed many interesting articles to the Newsletter, on topics ranging from Roman Roads to Alexandria. Please let me know if you would like to borrow any of the following (ring Basingstoke 465439):

- The Penguin Dictionary of Archaeology* 1972  
*Archaeology in Britain: new views of the Past* 1986 (British Museum)  
*British Prehistory* ed Colin Renfrew 1974 (Duckworth)  
*Time Stands Still* (New Light on Megalithic Science) Keith Critchlow (Gordon Fraser 1979)  
*The Iron Age and its Hillforts* 1971 (University of Southampton)  
*The Celts* Nora Chadwick 1970, 1985 reprint (Pelican)  
*The Roman Invasion of Britain* Graham Webster 1980 (Batsford)  
*Hadrian's Wall* James Forde Johnston 1977 (Book Club Associates)  
*Roman Society* Donald Dudley 1970 (Pelican)  
*Roman Roads in Britain* Ivan Margary 3rd ed 1973 (John Baker)  
*Roman Britain* Peter Salway 1986 (Clarendon Press)  
*Ancient Trackways of Wessex* Timperley & Bull 1965 (Phoenix House)  
*The English Settlements* J N L Myres 1987 reprint (Clarendon Press)  
*Anglo-Saxon England* Sir Frank Stenton 3rd ed 1971, reprint 1987 (Clarendon Press)  
*The Warrior Kings of Saxon England* Ralph Whitlock 1977 (Moonraker Press)  
*The Beginnings of English Society* Dorothy Whitelock 1952, 1979 reprint (Pelican)  
*Dark Age Britain* Henry Marsh 1970 (David & Charles)  
*The Vikings in England* - exhibition catalogue 1981  
*The Vikings* Johannes Brondsted 1960, 1970 reprint (Pelican)  
*Domesday Book: Hampshire* 1982 (Phillimore)  
*English Place-Name Elements* A H Smith Pt 1, Pt 2 1970 (CUP)  
*The Origin of English Surnames* R H Reaney 1967, reprint 1987 (Routledge)  
*Hampshire Harvest* Robert W F Potter 1977 (Phillimore)  
*History of Hampshire* T W Shore 1892, 1976 reprint) EP Publishing  
*Southern England* James Dyer 1973 (Faber)  
*Hampshire Countryside Heritage* booklets:  
    1 *Ancient Lanes & Tracks*  
    2 *Ancient Woodland*  
    5 *Historic Parks & Gardens*  
    8 *Man in Landscape*  
    9 *Meadows*  
*Looking for Dilmun* Geoffrey Bibby 1972 (Penguin)

These books are at present in my spare bedroom but should be amalgamated with the small "library" which is provisionally kept with our finds-processing equipment. As Bob and I bring the projector to meetings, and various books for sale, we can't take on bringing the "library" too, so would any member be prepared to take charge of it and record loans and returns of books? Not a Committee member, if possible.

BARBARA APPLIN

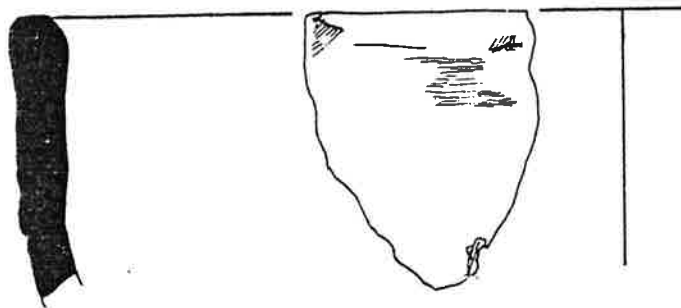
## BEECH DOWN SITE

Pack Lane, Basingstoke

One of the first sites recorded by the recently formed "watch committee" was at Pack Lane, close to our Wednesday evening meeting place at Kempshott Village Hall. The groundwork for an HCC special school was being carried out by Luff Holdings Ltd and, as it was on chalk, the tell-tale signs of disturbance were noticed. The contractors kindly allowed a small group of Society members onto the site during May and June last year to record the visible features, which proved to be the remains of four pits. Because of trenching and the removal of soil, it was not possible to get the full dimensions of any of the pits, but it appeared that they were roughly circular and between 4 and 6 feet in diameter. No depth measurements could be taken, but the position of the pits on the site and relative to each other was accurately plotted (page 6). As building operations were delayed, it was possible to visit the site again in the Spring, and another pit (5) in a deep pipe trench was plotted. The full section of the pit, albeit not the desired true vertical, was visible, with the usual mixture of chalky earths and rubble commonly found in pits (page 7).

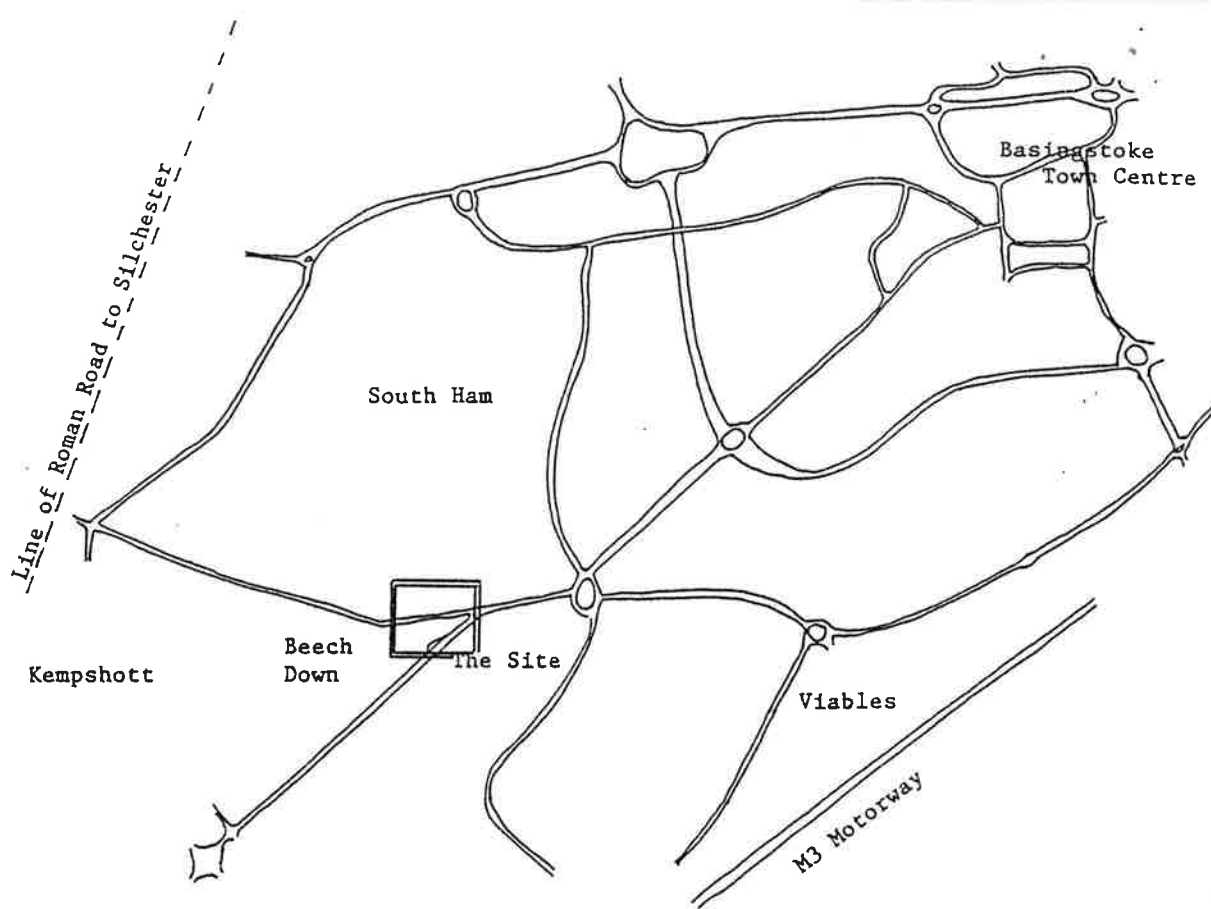
Only a very small quantity of finds was gathered from cleaning up the features, but they were sufficient to indicate a date, as a few fragments of pottery were found. They were all hand made, some with sand temper, some with flint, and with a couple of rim fragments, one with the suggestion of finger tip ornament. They all fit comfortably in the earliest Iron Age tradition, sometime between 800-400 BC, (see Winklebury and Cowdery's Down for comparable material).

Scale 1 : 1

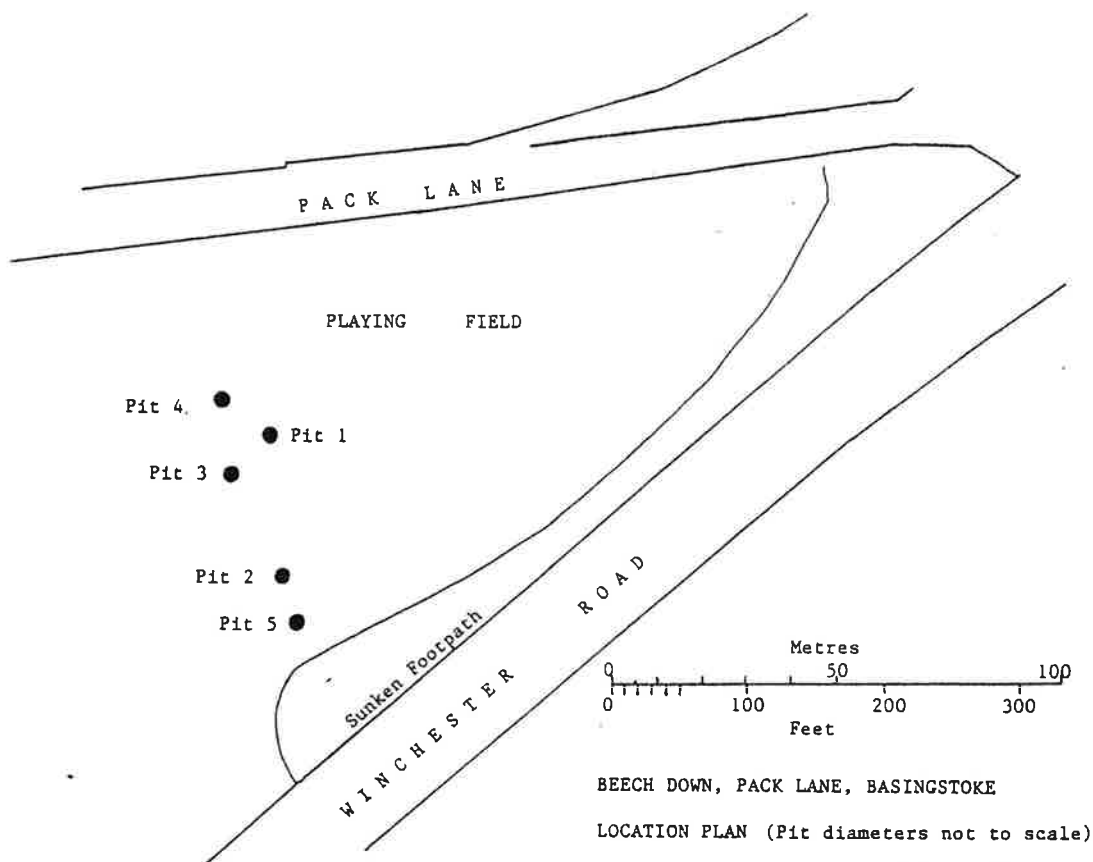


The other finds, fragments of animal bone from food debris, tiny bones from mice or shrews which fell into the pits, calcined flints used for heating food or water, burnt daub and a flint flake, are all commonly found in rubbish deposits.

Although only five pits were located and imperfectly examined, it is possible that other features of an occupation site - ditches, gullies, post holes, more pits - representing huts, granaries, enclosures, animal pens, looms, hay-stacks etc - were destroyed with the initial clearance or earlier house building, or they .pa

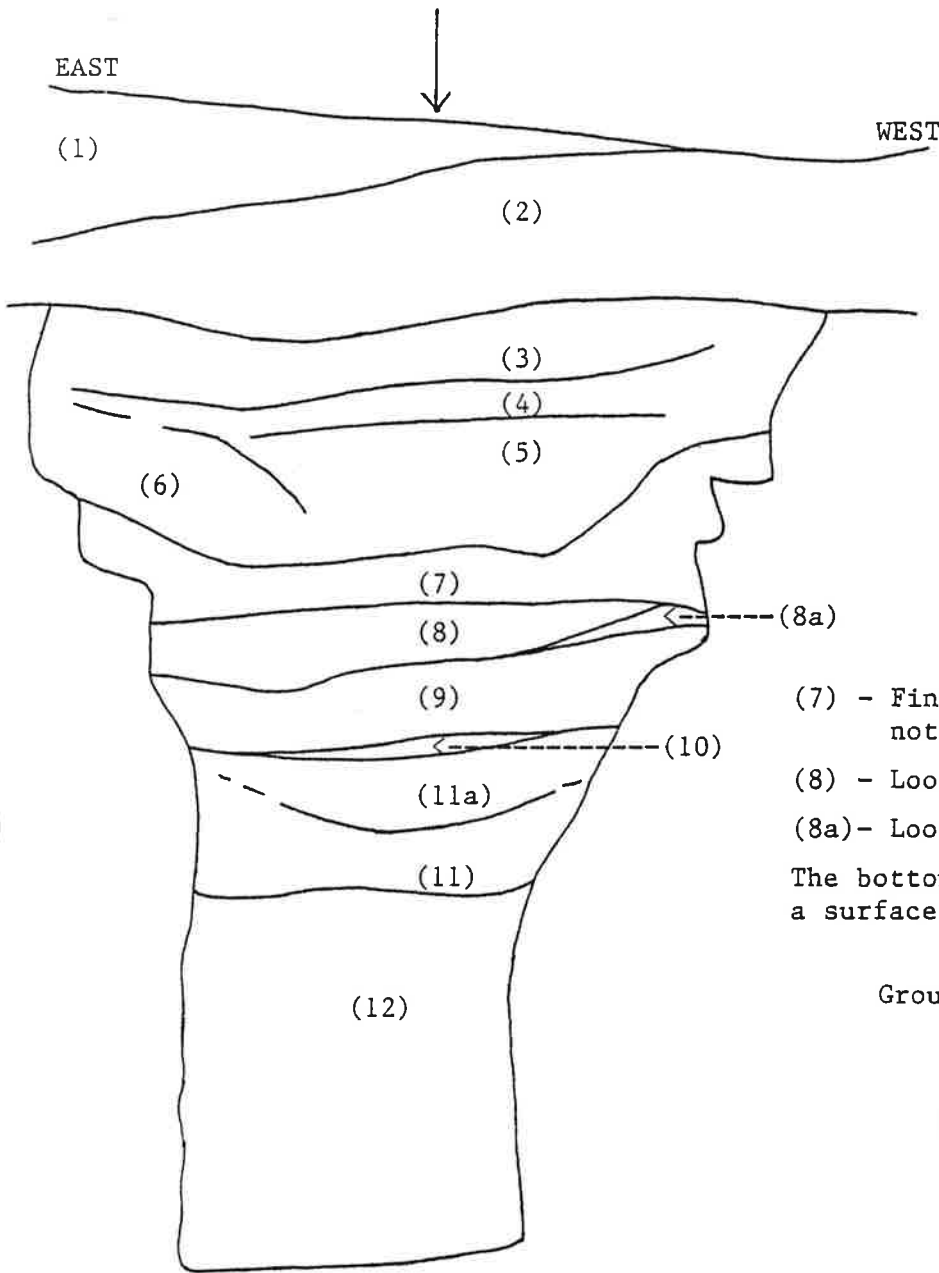


SOUTH WEST BASINGSTOKE - GENERAL LOCATION PLAN - NOT TO SCALE



MO / MM Nov 1989

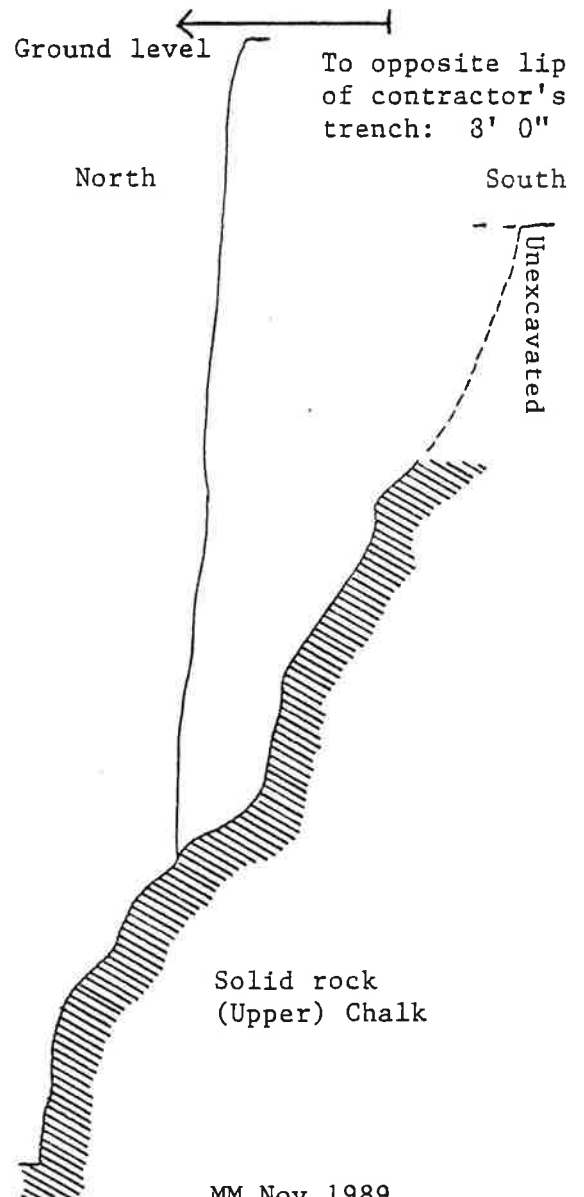
BEECH DOWN, PACK LANE,  
BASINGSTOKE - PIT 5



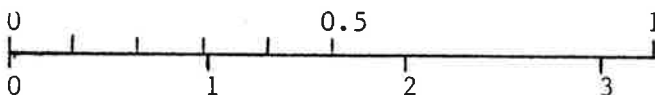
LAYER

- (1) - Modern builder's dump
  - (2) - Modern topsoil
  - (3) - Clean brown soil, some chalk chips & rounded flint pebbles
  - (4) - Indeterminate layer: chalky brown earth, mainly small rounded pieces of chalk
  - (5) - As (3) but chalky
  - (7) - Fine & medium chalk rubble dump, not much earth at all
  - (8) - Loose brown earth with chalk rubble
  - (8a) - Loose chalk rubble
- The bottom of (8) & (8a) breaks away like a surface

- (9) - Loose earthy chalk rubble
- (10) - Compacted brown earth
- (11) - Loose medium chalk rubble - no earth at all
- (11a) - As (11) but smaller chalk fragments
- (12) - Loose chalk rubble and brown earth. Rubble quite large. Some specks of charcoal. Lies against back of pit.



Scale of Metres



Scale of Feet

may remain safely buried beneath the adjoining playing field. It would be nice to have more evidence to confirm that the site was occupied throughout the Iron Age. Its position, beside the east-west prehistoric trackway, the Harroway, and its relationship with other Iron Age sites known from excavation or aerial photographs and field work - Battledown, Kite Hill, Buckskin, South Ham, Viables, Hatch Warren - all about one mile away, make this extremely likely. It is important to watch for opportunities of further evidence on this site.

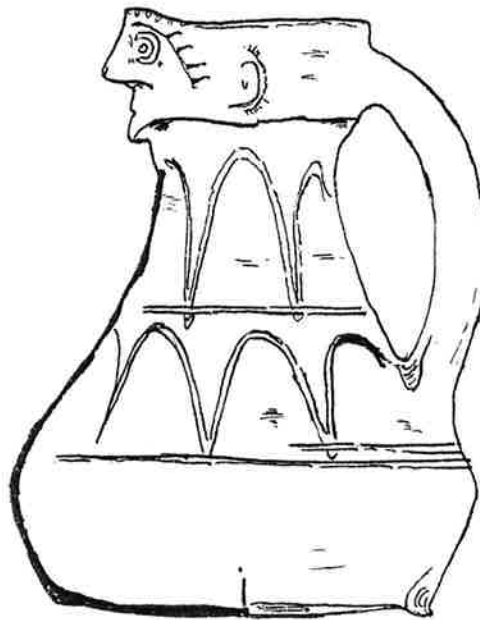
The finds and records are with the Hampshire County Museum Service, and the County Planning Department have received a note for the Sites and Monuments record. Thanks are due to all those who helped on site - and with the finds; also to Luff Holdings.

MARY OLIVER  
(Illustrations: Martin Morris)

### A WALK ROUND ROMSEY Sunday 3rd September

We met Steve Cooper by Palmerston's statue in Romsey market place, and my education began to be improved immediately. The "sey" part of Romsey means island, very appropriate because Romsey is surrounded by rivers and streams and is in effect cut off from the mainland.

Palmerston was at one time owner of Broadlands. His statue was designed by Matthew Noble and made in London. The shops on one side of the market place had encroached into its boundary and were built over a stream that still ran part of its way over-ground. In the basements of some shops were loos which were situated over, and open to the stream. A story is told of a boy found fishing through one of the loos, so considering its uses the stream must have been fairly clean.



13<sup>TH</sup> CENT 'FACE JUG'  
FOUND 1972

On another side of the market place was the Town Hall, a rather nice Victorian building built in 1866, and further down the road



is the Corn Exchange, a similar building of the same era but slightly better looking. On the corner of Bell Street is a fairly tall building constructed of what appeared to be brickwork but which Steve said were "mathematical tiles", and now you know more than I do.\*

The Working Men's Conservative Club is housed in an old half-timbered building, the Swan Inn, dated pre civil war. During the civil war, Romsey suffered visitations and discomforts from both sides. In one incident several soldiers robbed some civilians who were on their way to Romsey. The soldiers were followed to an inn and arrested. Subsequently two were hanged outside the Swan Inn from a bracket similar to the one that is on the wall now. We continued down the road to have a closer look at the Corn Exchange, surrounded by pubs, although fewer now than in the past. One or two were recommended by Steve for closer inspection some other day perhaps.

On the way to King John's House, Steve pointed out a wall with Tudor timbers and jettying that could be seen through a shop window.

King John's House, or a hunting lodge used by him around 1210, was a merchants' house during the 13th century and is now noted for its 14th century graffiti carved by various members of the aristocracy, and also for the original roof timbers. During the Black Death it was used as an isolation hospital and later it was Romsey's first workhouse. The house is open to the public except on Sundays, and the Test Valley Archaeological Trust hold their meetings there - and the Hampshire Field Club will be holding a meeting there on 14th December (Frank Green on "Seeds and Archaeology"). Steve Cooper extends a hearty welcome to anyone who wishes to visit. Adjoining the house is a Tudor cottage with timbered walls bulging alarmingly outward but still standing. I did wonder if any of Basingstoke's modern buildings will look like that in 600 years' time.

Passing on to the Church Street excavations, undertaken by the Test Valley Archaeological Trust, Barbara Burbridge gave us a brief description of the documentary history of the area. It was shown to be a town property of the Manor of South Wells which is part of the parish of Romsey Extra. The first known owner of the manor was the abbess of Romsey Abbey (1294) and it passed through various other owners to John the Younger (Greenfield), MP for Melcombe Regis and Constable of Winchester in Henry VI's time. About 1483 it was transferred to Richard III, who probably transferred the property to St George's Chapel, Windsor. Eventually the entire manor of South Wells was sold to Lord Palmerston and it became part of the Broadlands estate. It was sold by Lord Mountbatten to Hampshire County Council in 1962, when the buildings on the site were demolished and replaced by a car park.

Steve then gave us some archaeological details. The site is within a hundred yards of the Abbey and about as close to the

Saxon and Mediaeval town centre. It has been a car park for more than twenty years and is now to be revamped - sorry, redeveloped.

Minor excavations in 1972 and '85 showed the archaeological importance of the site. The earliest evidence is late Roman from 3rd to 4th century AD, and the items may have come from rubbish spread on fields. Parts of a Saxon building with a cess pit have been discovered and a group of post holes, and evidence that a grain store may have existed on the site. It seems to have been built on continuously from the 13th century, with possible evidence of cordwainers' shops at each end of the site and a clothier's near the middle. From 1859 a private school founded by F J Osborne was moved to a building on this Church Street site, and the school continued as such in Osborne House until 1939.

We then had a look at the exhibition which included some of the finds from the site and various pictures from the area, one showing the Rev Berthon in his boatyard behind Osborne House, with his collapsible lifeboat.

Steve pointed out William Petty's house; a man of many parts, he produced the first map of Ireland, supposedly restored a hanged woman to life, and invented a letter-duplicating machine and the catamaran.

We progressed along to the site of the brewery of Strong & Co. of Romsey; now mostly vacant, the building is to be put to other uses, but because the building is so high there will be restrictions on the type of use and it will possibly be used as flats. Strong's used water from wells for brewing, the river water being polluted by dyers further upstream. However, the streams were still used for domestic purposes. An area named Horse Fair raised questions, but there was no evidence to show that it had been used as such.

On to Narrow Lane, where around 650 AD there was an iron smelting industry which occupied about 5 acres. Although it does not appear to have produced any articles, it was an important industry, possibly supplying iron to the settlement at Hamwic (Southampton).

Steve pointed out a thatched cottage that used to be an ale house; another house was originally the "Delve Inn" with a bar for ladies, a very radical innovation in bygone days. In fact there used to be so many pubs in Romsey that it gave rise to a saying "So drunk he must have come from Romsey". Through Church Lane we arrived at the Abbey and sat in the sun, listening to Steve recount a brief history.

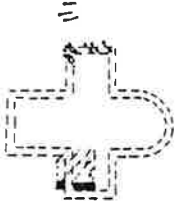
The Abbey was founded by King Edward the Elder, 907 AD, first as a wooden building; it was raided by the Danes in 1004 but rebuilt. The present building was started in 1120 and took over 100 years to complete; some of the old building was left standing to accommodate the nuns until the new one was finished.

# ROMSEY ABBEY

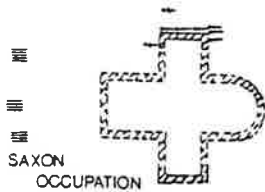
## MAJOR PHASES OF CONSTRUCTION



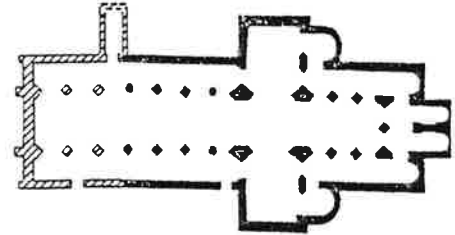
EARLY SAXON GRAVEYARD



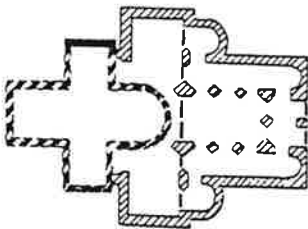
SAXON STONE CHURCH



13TH CENTURY WEST END AND PORCH



12TH CENTURY CHANCEL



### KEY

STRUCTURAL SEQUENCE  
NEW STRUCTURE



PROJECTED NEW STRUCTURE



EXISTING STRUCTURE



PROJECTED EXISTING STRUCTURE



STYLE 1 ◊

STYLE 2 ◊

STYLE 3 ◊

### BURIALS

PRE PORTICUS



CONTEMPORARY WITH PORTICUS



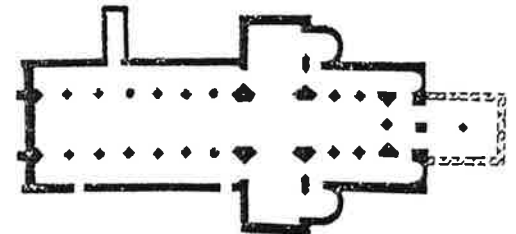
EVIDENCE FOR SAXON OCCUPATION



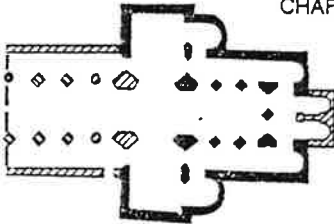
PROBABLE POSITION OF SCREENS



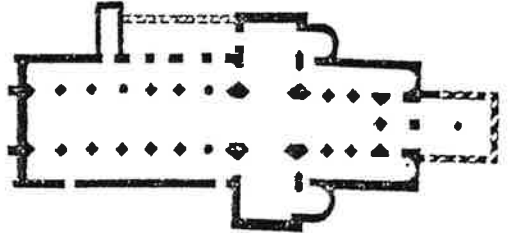
LATE 13TH CENTURY LADY CHAPEL



LATE 12TH CENTURY NAVE AND LADY CHAPEL



ADDITION OF 15TH CENTURY PARISH CHURCH

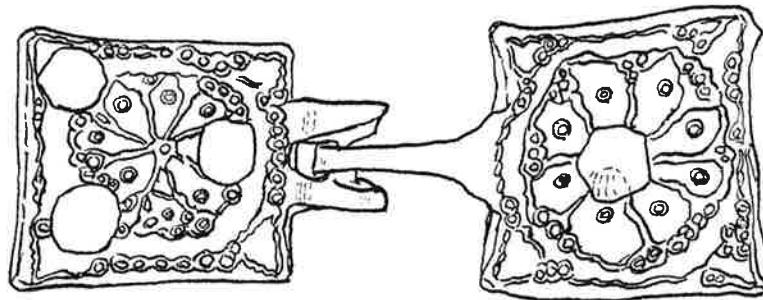


10 0 10 20 30 40 50  
METRES

In 1539 it was closed as a convent by Henry VIII. In 1544 it was purchased by the townsfolk for £100 and used ever since as the parish church. Inside, among many items of interest are an 18" long plait of hair found in Saxon coffin, and floor tiles in St George's chapel 700 years old, depicting the crusades.

On our feet again, we were led round to the north side, and beneath the existing north aisle wall can be seen part of the foundations of the Saxon north transept. On the south side was the site of the cloisters and domestic buildings of the nunnery. The west wall of the south transept shows an 11th century rood with Christ on the cross and the hand of God above him. From the site of the Lady Chapel demolished in 1539, we saw the Old Vicarage which is due to be put to other uses - and, to quote Steve "a passing look at the Doctor Who time machine?"

And so back past the open part of the stream which had been diverted from its original course, we said a very hearty thank you to Steve Cooper for a most interesting 2-hour walk and talk, and we headed out separate ways home after a very enjoyable afternoon in Romsey.



LATE 13<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY BOOK CLASP FOUND IN CHURCH ST. EXCAVATION 1972

GEORGE LANGRAN

Editor's note:

\*If George and anyone else is still puzzled about mathematical tiles, you can look more closely at some on the side wall of Goldings, the Planning Department in Basingstoke. They look like very flat bricks that fit together with a suspiciously "mathematical" exactness; in fact they are tiles, hanging on battens.

The saying "So drunk he must have come from Romsey" is the title of one of the many books published by the Test Valley Archaeological Trust.

Thanks to Kevin Stubbs, Diana Coldicott and Phillimore Press for permission to reproduce the plans of Romsey Abbey from *Hampshire Nunneries* by Diana Coldicott (Phillimore Press 1989). Thanks also to the Test Valley Archaeological Trust for permission to illustrate this article with objects found during their excavations.

## LUNT ROMAN FORT

The Lunt Roman fort is situated a few miles south of the centre of Coventry. Extensive Roman occupation of the area has been known since the 1930s, due to the large quantities of Roman pottery found during gravel working. Other artefacts indicated a military presence, and in 1960 excavations revealed the defensive ditches of a first century fort.

A large part of the plateau in the centre of the site was excavated between 1966 and 1973. The excavations showed four

periods of occupation. The first fort stood from 60-64 AD, this covered a large area and its full extent has not yet been determined. A notable feature of this fort is a 34m circular structure with double entrance gates. This has been interpreted as a gyrus - a cavalry training ring. It has been suggested that the Lunt was used for the breaking of horses taken from the Iceni following Boudica's defeat at nearby Mancetter.

The second fort was much smaller than the first and stood from 64-78 AD; this was the main subject of the excavations. This fort does not have the classic playing card shape but has a distinct bulge in the eastern defences, the ramparts being pushed out to avoid the earlier gyrus. The Praetorium (or headquarters) of this fort was much larger than would be expected for the number of troops normally housed in a fort of this size. This has led to the suggestion that the fort continued in use as a cavalry training centre, classical sources containing references to a small unit elsewhere involved in cavalry training being commanded by an officer of Prefect status.

The third fort, like the earlier ones, was of timber and turf construction and stood only from 78-80 AD. The site was then abandoned for 180 years before being reoccupied from 260 to about 280 AD. No structures have been identified from this period.

A three-week training excavation of the fort was organised by the University of Warwick in association with the Coventry Museums, who are responsible for the site. I was only present for the middle of the three weeks, missing the hard work of site clearance and having to leave before most of the planning was done. The area to be excavated had been opened and some work carried out last year. It formed part of the western defences. The digging team was made up of 10 sixth form students taking part in end of term activities, two French teenagers, here to improve their already good English, and four volunteers including myself, who are involved in various archaeology courses. The director of the dig was Margaret Rylatt, the Coventry Museums Field Archaeologist, but due to the NALGO industrial dispute and other factors we saw little of her, control being left in the capable hands of the supervisors, a recently graduated archaeologist from Sheffield and two students currently studying at York.

The first task of the week was to straighten and tidy a section through a sloping embankment stretching some 20m from the ramparts to beyond the outer ditches. This sounds very simple but was made much harder by the dig coinciding with the hottest, sunniest week since 1976. Attention was then turned to the fort's defensive ditches, three of which were known from the earlier work corresponding to the second, third and fourth periods of occupation; the first fort ditches are believed to be further out. I was working on removal of the fill from the largest ditch, which was from period 2. Each layer had to be removed individually by trowelling, with recuts in later periods and a pit cut into the fill as added complications. When dry, it was

impossible to detect the subtle colour changes distinguishing the various layers, making it necessary to spray the site with a hosepipe at frequent intervals (the sun's heat making it quite pleasant for the diggers to be sprayed as well). Within the ditch fill a number of sherds of pottery were found, the most pleasing coming from the pit where about six pieces of black burnished ware were recovered, which fitted together perfectly to form the side of a pot, including part of the rim. Inside the remains of this pot were some fragments of burnt bone and a section of jaw, suggesting that they were of a sheep or goat. This find was particularly important as no bone of any kind has previously been reported from the sandy soil of the Lunt site. Also within the ditch fill we located two square clay blocks believed to be post pads. The interpretation of these had still to be worked out when I left, but a possibility is that they may be part of a structure from the third century occupation?

The other major mystery remaining when I left the site was the identity of a large iron object in the period 4 ditch. The area around this was full of iron staining, but no matter how carefully we trowelled, recognisable objects could not be recovered. The large lump was still in situ awaiting lifting by a conservator and I hope to be given an update when it has been identified.

As a diversion to the Roman work on the excavation, I was also invited to join in with two other parts of the University's Open Studies Department's archaeological work. On the Thursday evening there was the final session of a class on aerial photography. Having been taught the theory and techniques, flights had been arranged from the nearby airfield for the class to try the practical, and the final session was devoted to viewing the results. Despite some horrendous tales of airsickness, a number of very interesting pictures were obtained, the very dry summer providing excellent conditions for crop marks. On Saturday we set off by coach for a day of Saxon studies, visiting Bury St Edmunds and its museum, the reconstructed Anglo-Saxon village at West Stow, and the excavations at Sutton Hoo. For those who went on the Society's recent trip to the latter site, you may be interested to know that the mound which we saw being sectioned has now been completely removed and is revealing a Bronze Age settlement, with the post holes of a round house and palisade showing in the undisturbed subsoil.

Overall, the week was hard work and very tiring, and I experienced the unusual pattern of sunburn which results from constant kneeling in a trench bent over a trowel. I would, however, recommend others to visit the Lunt, which is open to the public and includes reconstructions of the fort's gate, rampart and gyrus, and a small museum in a reconstructed granary. For the fitter members I would also recommend you to join future excavations there as, although the site is not easy to dig, it has some intriguing aspects to study.

ROBERT GUNN