

Below is a compilation of excavation notes from the Journal of the Society for Medieval Archaeology. I have only included sites listed in the Pre-Conquest sections. Volumes 1-50 are available on Archaeology Data Service. There are no references to any excavations in Romsey in the later volumes.

Volume 29 (1985)

80. **KINGS SOMBORNE** (SU 361310). Excavation by F.J. Green for Test Valley Archaeological Committee in advance of an extension to the school adjacent to the site of John of Gaunt's Palace revealed two ditches parallel with the street filled with middle/late Saxon material. Evidence of iron-smelting and probable glass-working was recovered. The faunal remains are closely paralleled at Hamwic. Finds of Saxon material in the adjacent churchyard, during excavations for an electricity cable trench, and in excavations 400 m to the S. on the other side of the palace, suggests extensive Saxon settlement. All finds will go to Hampshire County Museum Service after publication in Proc. Hampshire Fld. Club.

82. **NURSLING** (SU 358165). Excavations by S. Cooper with Lower Test Valley Archaeological Study Group and P. Blackman with an M.S.C. team for Test Valley Archaeological Committee revealed a series of 12th-century ditches and associated timber structures and occupation. The site lies next to the parish church, possibly a successor to the monastery of St Boniface. A watching brief in the gravel quarry to the N. of the site resulted in the retrieval of a Saxon coin. Excavations continue, all finds to go to the Hampshire County Museum Service.

ROMSEY. Excavations for Test Valley Archaeological Committee.

84. At Angel Hotel, Bell Street (SU 352 210) excavations by F.J. Green in advance of building work at the rear of this Victorian building above a medieval undercroft revealed a succession of stream deposits. This is the first archaeological evidence of the channel known as the Shitlake in medieval documents. Far from being a channel associated with the abbey it appears that it was open in the late Roman period; evidence from the excavations conducted in 1982 on a site 50 m to the S. of the Angel suggest that it dates back at least into the Bronze Age. This stream course appears to have formed the boundary to the Roman and middle/late Saxon settlement as well as the Abbey.

85. At 29-31 Church Street (SU 352 213) excavations behind 18th-century buildings adjacent to the site where medieval structures were uncovered in 1972 (cf. Medieval Archaeol., XVII (1973), 200) revealed further 13th-century rubbish pits overlain by the bases of tile-built hearths of ovens/furnaces probably associated with the late medieval cloth processing trade known from documentary evidence. Similar structures were found on the opposite side of the street in 1977.

Volume 30 (1986)

90. **KING'S SOMBORNE** (SU 361 310). F. J. Green for Test Valley Archaeological Trust reports that work funded by Hampshire County Council, Test Valley Borough Council and M.S.C. in advance of building work (supervised by R. Cameron) and as part of an evaluation exercise to establish the extent of the non-scheduled part of the site of John of Gaunt's Palace (directed by P. Blackman) has revealed that occupation extends S. of the scheduled monument (cf. Medieval Archaeol., XXIX (1985), 181). Multi-period occupation, including prehistoric, was found, but more importantly a scatter of late Saxon pottery suggests that this area was most likely the edge of the Saxon occupation. An extensive scatter of domestic refuse dating from the 16th century onwards and associated with the decline of the site and its subdivision into orchards and meadow as part of Palace Farm was recorded. The work to date suggests that occupation of the village centre around the church and the John of Gaunt Palace site took place in the mid Saxon period and expanded as the nucleus of a major royal estate, within which the later borough of Stockbridge was established. Linear features extending beyond the scheduled area have been shown to be post-medieval field and orchard boundaries. Analysis proved the possible glass slag to be ironworking residue.

91. MICHELMERSH, MANOR FARM (SU 352 264). The final excavations for Test Valley Archaeological Trust directed by F. J. Green and associated with the modernization and renovation of the medieval grange of Winchester Cathedral revealed details of the structural sequence between the various surviving buildings. The excavations have been particularly useful in providing archaeological evidence which can be linked to the surviving building accounts and other records and to the detailed drawings of the standing structure.

92. NURSLING (SU 358 165) Excavations and survey by S. Cooper for Test Valley Archaeological Trust funded by M.S.C. and Test Valley Borough Council in advance of further gravel quarrying revealed parts of a medieval field system and isolated pits and other features of medieval date. The 'Saxon' coin (cf. *Medieval Archaeology* XXIX (1985), 181) is now considered to be late Roman. Work (supervised by R. Cameron) continued on the site adjacent to Nursling church. A large number of post-pits has been located, with virtually no dating evidence. It is possible that these may be associated with the monastery at which St Boniface studied in the 8th century. Recent examination of the adjacent church has revealed elements of pre-Conquest architecture that could not be observed by O. G. S. Crawford since the walls had previously been rendered. It is reasonable to assume that the bulk of early monastic or ecclesiastical occupation lies within the present churchyard.

ROMSEY. Excavations for Test Valley Archaeological Trust.

93. At Church Street (SU 352 210) evaluation, funded by Hampshire County Council and M.S.C., of part of the Church Street car park was directed by P. Blackman in advance of full scale excavations before redevelopment. Previous excavations on part of the site revealed a range of medieval evidence (cf. *Medieval Archaeol.*, XVII (1973) 200). The current work produced evidence from the late Saxon period onwards, including shallow slots for timber buildings. It was possible to excavate one of the major property boundaries and to establish continuity from at least the 14th century. The site is reasonably well documented, having been acquired by Richard III as part of his endowment of St George's College, Windsor. The fact that all the structures and boundaries located are aligned on the adjacent Holbrook rather than the Church Street frontage has enabled this artificial water channel, the borough and hundred boundary, to be assigned a pre-late 11th-century date. The site produced a useful range of artefactual and environmental data.

94. At Latimer Street (SU 354 213) observation work directed by F. J. Green revealed that most of the site had been destroyed by large rectangular pits containing little domestic refuse. Recent work on this and other sites in the street indicates that the 'Lortimere', which is thought to have existed in this area in the 14th century, may simply have been a foul drain in the middle of the street.

95. At Portersbridge Street (SU 352 214) an evaluation excavation directed by P. Blackman in advance of the redevelopment of part of the Whitbread Brewery site was undertaken for H.B.M.C. A trench 2 X 20 m, at right angles to the street frontage, revealed a sequence of deposits from the late Saxon period onwards. The site was unusually (for Romsey) bounded on the S. by a boundary ditch running parallel to the street. Work on the site is continuing and a trench adjacent to the Fishlake Stream should provide dating evidence. Observation work has revealed a substantial boundary ditch at right-angles to Church Street, a continuation of the Horsefair. It is possible that full-scale excavation in 1986 will reveal that this is the N. boundary of the mid to late Saxon settlement.

96. At Romsey Abbey (SU 351 212) renovation work in part funded by H.B.M.C. and Hampshire County Council necessitated detailed archaeological recording both inside and outside the structure where repairs to walls and stonework were taking place. Recording has included photographing all ornamental stonework, in particular the badly decayed capitals to the clerestory on the N. side. Badly eroded corbels, many of 19th-century date, in the corbel table below the N. parapet walls have also been photographed. The removal of rendering on the W. end of the S. aisle and elsewhere revealed flint rubble walls which have been photographed. All freestone was drawn and identified (by A. D. Russel) before the walls were repointed. A small blocked cupboard was revealed and is now visible. It is similar in construction to the one adjacent to the large Saxon Rood on the W. face of the S. transept. It is obvious that this has been inserted into the wall, and it may be that it originally functioned as a relic cupboard in another part of the abbey. That the cupboard is largely composed of the type of stone used only in the late Saxon and earliest Norman phases of the present building may support this hypothesis.

Volume 33 (1989)

111. NURSLING, CHURCH LANE (SU 359 164). As part of the continuing programme of work under F.J. Green for the Test Valley Archaeological Trust in advance of gravel extraction an area on the opposite side of Church Lane from St Boniface's church was examined. Work was largely funded by M.S.C. The topsoil was stripped to expose a number of property boundaries and other features, including a possible building.

113. ROMSEY. At The Abbey Church of Sts Mary and Aethelfleada (SU 351 212), a watching brief and small-scale salvage excavation, funded by English Heritage, was undertaken by the Test Valley Archaeological Trust during the repaving of the N. side of Romsey Abbey. Three major features were investigated.

(1) The packed chalk footing of the N. aisle of the former parish church of St Lawrence was fully exposed and planned. No excavation was carried out. A section through the footing had been cut in excavations in 1975, but the limited nature of the excavations at that date did not allow a plan to be recovered.

(2) The footings of the original 13th-century abbey porch were located and planned. This lies partly under the present porch, constructed in the early 20th century. Built onto one side of the original porch was a small room, subsequently infilled with mortar and limestone rubble and large quantities of human bone and 14th-century pottery. The footings of the outside wall of this room were built over the footings of the Abbey N. wall.

(3) A soakaway trench originally measuring 2m square was excavated by hand a few metres N. of the N. wall of the Abbey. Beneath a series of gravel floors was sealed evidence for two or three phases of timber building predating the present Norman Abbey.

114. - - . At New Vicarage (SU 351 212), excavations and a subsequent watching brief were undertaken in advance of and during the construction of the new Romsey Vicarage, which lies on low ground W. of the old vicarage and of Romsey Abbey, located (1) the medieval abbey fishponds and (2) the W. wall and N.W. corner of the abbey precinct. Excavations on the fishponds were funded by M.S.C. and took place prior to building work. The fishponds lay on the flood plain of the River Test W. of Romsey Island.

The watching brief on the new vicarage driveway, which runs E.-W. on the S. side of the old vicarage, located the line of the W. wall of the abbey precinct. The wall was possibly built in the 12th century at the time of the construction of the present abbey. The wall lay on the western edge of Romsey Island. Originally the ground dropped away sharply to the W. towards the abbey fish ponds. The discovery of the precinct wall drew attention to slight cracking of window sills on the S. elevation of the former vicarage vertically above the newly discovered wall. It is clear that the rear portion of the old vicarage was built on made ground, and that the precinct wall ran under the vicarage, and that these two facts were responsible for the cracking. Investigation of the beaten earth floor of the cellar in the old vicarage revealed the survival of the return of the wall at the NW. corner of the precinct. The line of the N. wall of the precinct if projected would meet the NW. corner of the Abbey.

115. - - . At 11 The Hundred (SU 353 211) excavations were carried out by the Test Valley Archaeological Trust supervised by N. Campling in advance of a shop development. Work was funded by the developers, Holbeck Properties Ltd. A Saxon ditch was traced over 22 m. Medieval pits included some containing cess. Post-holes suggested a medieval building fronting onto The Hundred.

116. - - . At 35 The Hundred (Waitrose extension) (SU 354 211), staff of the Test Valley Archaeological Trust directed by K. White excavated land E. of the existing Waitrose store in Romsey. Work was funded by the John Lewis Partnership in advance of development. Narrow ridge-and-furrow was possibly early medieval. The plough soil contained pottery of the 10th century and later.

Volume 35 (1991)

143. ROMSEY, ABBEY UNITED REFORMED CHURCH (SU351211). A small excavation was carried out, in advance of the construction of an extension to the church hall of the United Reformed Church, in the summer of 1989 by staff of Test Valley Archaeological Trust directed by N. Campling. The fieldwork was supported by a donation from the Romsey United Reformed Church. The development site lay c. 70 m S. of Romsey Abbey just to the N. of the watercourse called Abbey Water, which it is thought formed the S. boundary of the precinct of the medieval nunnery.

The excavation revealed part of a medieval cemetery, and the original N. bank of Abbey Water, c. 10m N. of the present stream. Four substantially complete in situ burials, and a small number of largely destroyed graves were excavated. In addition groups of bones, which had apparently been partly sorted with long bones bundled together, were recovered, suggesting perhaps the reburial of disturbed inhumations. The cemetery was clearly in use over a long period. Preliminary assessment of the recovered human skeletal material indicates that the majority of the individuals were male. The remains of only one female have been identified this far. These may be the burials of servants and, possibly, lay brothers attached to the nunnery. However, it is possible that the cemetery relates to an earlier ecclesiastical establishment separate from the abbey. One of the complete in situ graves was a 'charcoal' burial, which could date as early as the 9th century. In this connection, it should be noted that there was no evidence from the cemetery site of the iron smelting debris, which has been found in deposits up to 1m thick to the E.,W.,NW., and S. of the site. This suggests that the cemetery site was occupied for some purpose other than industrial use by the middle Saxon period, when iron smelting began.

Volume 39 (1995)

108. ELING, ST MARY'S CHURCH (SU 367 125). Archaeological work in advance of the liturgical reordering of Eling church was undertaken by F. Green of Test Valley Archaeological Trust, assisted by staff of Southern Archaeological Services. The work was funded by Eling P.C.C. The work involved an extended watching brief and the excavation of archaeological features and deposits that had to be removed to accommodate new structural elements or as a requirement of the structural engineers. The objective was to minimise such intervention and to leave wherever possible vaults and their contents intact. The work involved recording the removal of the pew and choir-stall platforms which had been constructed in 1863 at the direction of the architect's (Benjamin Ferrey) from timbers salvaged variously from the 18th- and 19th-century galleries and the medieval roof of the original S. aisle, which was rebuilt in a larger form at that time. Various recognisable roof components were recorded.

Evidence for the height of the church floor at various periods was noted, and the damage caused by the creation in 1863 of two subterranean boiler houses for a gravity-fed central heating system were clearly observed. Single brick-lined graves or vaults were recorded throughout the central nave aisle and in other parts of the building; these had almost destroyed all the earlier archaeological and stratigraphic relationships. One very large vault on the N. side of the nave in front of the chancel arch was recorded photographically, and a similar vault was recorded to the E. of the chancel arch on the N. side of the chancel. Nowhere was it possible to assign names to families or individuals buried in these vaults. With few exceptions the contents of the vaults were badly preserved and in most cases, where cloth and wood and even botanical materials had survived, bones had simply turned to an ashy granular material. The archaeological work revealed the base of the responds to the chancel arch and the arch between the N. nave aisle and the N. choir aisle, obscured by the 1863 reordering. At the W. end of the S. aisle the foundations of the original S. aisle were located within the confines of the present building. Significantly, prior to the construction of the present S. aisle arcade, a sequence of slab-lined burials, probably constructed on the ground surface, had taken place. These burials had been cut by the 19th-century foundations of the W. wall of the S. aisle and disturbed at that time. Whilst working on the site it became obvious that the voids within the slab-lined graves regularly filled with water when it rained, and structural problems, not least damp, needed to be resolved. The dismantling of these tombs revealed that they had been constructed from reused monolithic blocks of quarry limestone, and that two of these blocks had remains of simple Greek-style crosses in relief on their surfaces. The blocks clearly had come from earlier grave markers, possibly of 10th or early 11th century date, and other architectural fragments may have originated from door jambs, windows or even in one case possibly a stone chancel screen.

The archaeological evidence suggests that the church may have been a minster church, and is certainly of Saxon origin. The present nave walls probably represent at least the second masonry structure on this site; it certainly had a N. and probably also a S. transept. Quantities of Roman pottery were found beneath the nave floor, associated with a burnt soil containing animal bone and other organic refuse which seems to have been used to raise the floor level when the present nave was constructed. A wide range of other information was revealed including ledger slabs of 17th to 18th century date concealed during the 1863 restoration.

111. MOTTISFONT ABBEY (SU 326 269). F. Green and E. Wilson, for Test Valley Archaeological Trust, undertook various watching briefs, excavation and building recording work during renovations for the National Trust, funded by the National Trust and Test Valley Archaeological Trust as part of the planning requirements for the current conversion of the property for increased public access and use. The present building incorporates remains of the early 13th century priory and phases of its conversion to a mansion in the 16th century by Lord Sandys (more famous for his work at The Vyne) and its subsequent radical alteration in the early 18th century. Excavations inside the building have uncovered in situ an area of inlaid decorated medieval floor tiles from the floor of the S. transept which are to be left in place. Several E.-W. burials have also been excavated in the nave of the priory church, two of which contained copper-alloy belt buckles. Outside the building, several foundations of previously unknown medieval and post-medieval structures have been located. Large quantities of monastic and later architectural masonry have been recovered and will be subject to detailed study. The renovation has exposed sections of 13th-century arcading and painted line work on the N. side of the nave. Sections of Tudor brickwork, and also timber partitioning including two moulded wooden door frames, have also been exposed, and a small area of Tudor wall painting has been recorded on an upper floor wall. Of considerable interest is the recognition of a principal chamber, on the first floor of the building, which originally had a four-centred arched plaster ceiling. This room would have been entered from the NW. corner of the former cloister by a stair vice (now converted in part to a cupboard) in the centre of its S. wall. The room would also have been approached from a further stair on the N. wall of the building, also central to

that wall, which probably gave direct communication to the service rooms beneath. These Tudor features seem to have been removed in the early 18th century. The N. wall of the monastic church will be subject to further study since it is now clear that at least one of the buttresses may be of 18th-century date, and all but one of the remainder probably of Tudor date. The evidence is particularly interesting in suggesting that the conversion by Lord Sandys, or his son and grandson, did not involve a great hall and that the rest of the nave of the priory church was divided into apartments. Other evidence suggests that what has previously been interpreted as the original nave roof of the monastic church may well be part of the 16th-century work. For instance, to construct the great chamber ceiling would have required at least partial dismantling of the earlier roof. Also, the wooden internal frames that form the 16th-century partitions are integrally linked to the roof, which is of one plan, as indicated by the carpenters' marks. It is hoped that dendrochronological dating may resolve some of these issues.

Work is still in progress and recent discoveries include a possibly medieval monastic well in the nave, and the remains of the beginnings of the cloister roof in the SE. corner of the building.

113. ROMSEY, ABBEY MEAD, ABBEY MEAD HOUSE (SU 350 213). A watching brief was undertaken by T. Havard for Test Valley Archaeological Trust, on the land to the rear of Abbey Mead House during the digging of foundation trenches for two houses and garages. The work was funded by Dr P. G. Gale of Abbey Mead House. The site was adjacent to the Vicarage where Test Valley Archaeological Trust had previously excavated old watercourses which were probably associated with the abbey fish ponds. The footing trenches were dug by J.C. B. to a width of 0.6 m, and to varying depths depending on the complex underlying geology. A number of features were observed which were almost certainly old man-made watercourses. A considerable amount of medieval and post-medieval pottery was found, almost entirely from the silt of these former water channels.

115. , MIDDLEBRIDGE STREET, KENT'S ALMSHOUSES (SU 350 207). A watching brief financed by Westmarch Developments Ltd was carried out, by C. Matthews for Hampshire Archaeology Ltd, prior to the building of new houses on this site. Almshouses had occupied the Middlebridge Street frontage until they were demolished in c. 1965. J.C.B. stripping of the topsoil from the area up to a depth of c. 0.2 m, and excavation of footing trenches, revealed evidence both for the original 1699 almshouses and the later 1881 replacements. Archaeological features pre-dating the 1699 almshouses were recorded. Finds consisted largely of post-medieval domestic waste, although some medieval pottery was found. Conditions on site were at times unfavourable for watching brief observations.

116. , 29-31 LATIMER STREET (SU354 213). An archaeological evaluation funded by Worktown plc, by means of test pits, was undertaken by R. Davis for Hampshire Archaeology Ltd prior to development on the E. side of Latimer Street. Medieval and Saxon features had previously been found in the immediate area. Seven trenches were dug, all of varying size. Several linear features and pits were found, ranging from late Saxon to post-medieval in date according to their associated ceramic contents. These features, together with a lack of stratigraphic build-up, but a deep garden soil, on the site, would suggest that the Saxon and medieval occupation was not urban in nature. It was noted that No. 30 is a timber-framed building of 17th-century date and that the bulk of the street frontage has in the past been excavated to create cellars.

117. , LA SAGESSE CONVENT (SU 351 210). A watching brief was undertaken by C. Matthews for Test Valley Archaeological Trust at the Convent, funded by the Daughters of Wisdom in order to observe the digging of foundation trenches for an extension. These trenches were 80 cm wide and up to 1.2 m deep. The trenches cut into a former watercourse, probably connected to Abbey Water. Roman, medieval and post-medieval pottery was found, the earlier material coming from basal stream silts, possibly having been washed into position from elsewhere.

115. MOTTISFONT, MOTTISFONT ABBEY (SU 326 269). Building recording and watching-brief work by Test Valley Archaeological Trust was undertaken as part of a two-year programme of building renovation by the National Trust. Six sections through the building were drawn and a series of service trenches were recorded. The footings of the early 13th-century chancel were identified along with other medieval and post-medieval features. Analysis of tile section drawings enabled a detailed interpretation of the Tudor conversion of the priory to a private house to be made. A program of dendrochronology conducted by D. Miles indicates that the main roof of the building was replaced after the suppression in 1536.

Volume 43 (1999)

121. KINGS SOMBORNE, CAMPS FIELD (SU 3640 3103). An archaeological evaluation was ordered by Hampshire County Council Archaeology Section on behalf of Test Valley Borough Council in advance of a residential development. CKC Archaeology carried out the work on behalf of the owners.

An absence of medieval ceramics on the evaluation site seemed to contradict previous expectations that the area was the site of shrunken settlement within the medieval village of Kings Somborne. Earthworks in the field were shown by excavation to be the remains of a Second World War army camp, and not part of a shrunken medieval village as previously thought. Published in the Hampshire Field Club & Arch Soc newsletter, 30 (1998), 24-26.

Volume 45 (2001)

130. KINGS SOMBORNE, LAND ADJOINING FROMANS, COW DROVE HILL (SU 3602 3120). An evaluation followed by area excavation of 565 sq m, by J. Pine of Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd, uncovered well-preserved Late Saxon to early post-Conquest features comprising building foundations, floor layers, buried soils, pits, postholes, gullies, and a large well. The majority fall into the 12th and 13th centuries. A significant pottery assemblage was recovered, along with smaller assemblages of animal bone and environmental remains. The site's potential is currently being assessed.