

8. SOUTH-WESTERN COUNTIES

By JOHN P. SALVATORE

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

(1) **Blockley**, *land at Draycott Lane* (SU 1702 3532): an evaluation confirmed the results of previous work and identified a possible Roman settlement with evidence for domestic and agricultural activity. There was also possible evidence for the ritual use of animals, in the form of bone scorched at a high temperature, perhaps on a pyre, and the remains of a horse, possibly butchered.¹

(2) **Bourton-on-the-Water**, *Primary Academy* (SP 1667 2098): a very small quantity of Roman pot sherds and a Roman copper-alloy penannular brooch were recovered from a site of otherwise dense Iron Age occupation.²

(3) **Chedworth**, *Church of St Andrew* (SP 0517 1212): a watching-brief recovered over 500 fragments of human bone within charnel soil. Roman, medieval and post-medieval pottery and Roman and post-Roman ceramic building material were recovered.³

(4) **Cheltenham**, *land at Elms Park* (SO 9271 2542): an evaluation identified a Late Iron Age/Early Roman enclosure (from which a currency bar was recovered), a probable agricultural D-shaped enclosure and a horse burial. These were replaced by further enclosures associated with a probable droveway. Remains from these later enclosures comprised domestic material dating to the first to fourth centuries.⁴

(5) **Cheltenham**, *Monkscroft Primary School* (SO 9220 2244): an evaluation comprising both geophysical survey and trial-trenching appeared to demonstrate that the site contains some small-scale prehistoric land use (identified through residual artefacts) but mainly has a focus of Romano-British rural settlement, alongside medieval and post-medieval agricultural

¹ Work by A. Thomson of Cotswold Archaeology, J. Cook sent information.

² Work by L. Stafford and S. Roper for Rubicon Heritage. R. Morgan sent information.

³ Work by C. Harward of Urban Archaeology for Chedworth Parochial Church Council. C. Harward sent information.

⁴ Work by T. Havard of Cotswold Archaeology. J. Cook sent information.

remains. The majority of the Roman features corresponded to geophysical anomalies and a number were of considerable size, producing a good assemblage of artefacts and animal bone. This predominantly comprised pottery dating to the first to early second century, but later material was also recovered. The features also demonstrated an archaeological component to the site beyond that shown on the geophysical survey.⁵

(6) **Cirencester**, *The Old Kennels, Cirencester Park* (SP 0138 0144): an evaluation identified several Roman inhumation graves.⁶

(7) **Cirencester**, *20 Church Street* (SP 0282 0128): an evaluation revealed a layer of demolition material consistent with disuse and collapse of the Roman settlement. The demolition layer was covered by post-Roman 'Dark Earth' and garden soil deposits which contained Roman, medieval and post-medieval ceramics.⁷

(8) **Dymock**, *The Harrow* (SO 6991 3144): excavations revealed the remains of the western side of a curvilinear Roman enclosure ditch to the inside of which were four pits and a post-hole (although only a small internal area of the enclosure was available for excavation). Pottery retrieved from the ditch and pits dated from the second to third centuries A.D. Tap slag from a bloomery furnace was recovered from the ditch but no evidence of *in-situ* metalworking was found. Roman Dymock is characterised as a largely rural settlement with a significant industrial element related to metalworking and appeared to have lasted from the late first to the second century A.D.⁸ The enclosure ditch could have formed part of the boundary of a plot for a linear roadside settlement or it may represent an enclosure on the periphery of the main settlement some 500 m to its east.⁹

(9) **Gloucester**, *Gloucester Bus Station* (SO 8346 1860): a watching-brief and excavation identified a potential earlier course of the river Twyver which was sealed by at least two phases of early to mid-Roman suburban occupation, comprising walls and associated surfaces.¹⁰

⁵ Work by R. Bradley, C.J. Evans and E. Pearson of Worcester Archaeology for Gloucestershire County Council. J. Brewer sent information.

⁶ Work by C. Leonard of Cotswold Archaeology. J. Cook sent information.

⁷ Work by C. Harward of Urban Archaeology for Peter Alford. C. Harward sent information.

⁸ 'Roman Dymock: Archaeological Investigations 1995–2002', *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeology Society* 125 (2007), 131–245.

⁹ Work by R. Morgan, N. Wells and S. Roper of Rubicon Heritage. R. Morgan sent information.

¹⁰ Work by D. Sausins and L. Brannlund of Cotswold Archaeology. J. Cook sent information.

(10) **Gloucester**, *Bishop's College, Estcourt Close* (SO 8410 1976): an excavation was carried out 400 m north-east of the early Roman fort of Kingsholm and just west of a second- to fourth-century Roman cemetery. Four Roman features were recorded including three pits and a ditch terminus.¹¹

(11) **Quedgeley**, *Parcel J, Kingsway* (SO 8101 1331): an evaluation identified a ditch, containing a single sherd of abraded Roman pottery, which was interpreted as part of a possible droveway or field boundary. This feature may be connected with Roman remains identified on Parcel G, a site previously investigated in the immediate vicinity to the east of the site, or widely distributed boundaries identified in an archaeological evaluation of the site as a whole.¹²

(12) **Quedgeley**, *Hunts Grove, Parcels R23–R29* (SO 8100 1210): an excavation revealed details of the northern enclosure ditch of a sub-rectangular enclosure with two smaller enclosures projecting southwards at either end (identified in geophysical survey); it was 3–3.5 m wide and was up to 2 m deep, and was of two phases. The earlier phase may have begun in the late Iron Age, the second was certainly of early Roman date (A.D. 50–120). Part of the western boundary of the smaller adjoining south-eastern enclosure consisted of a succession of slighter ditches of later Roman date. Outside the large enclosure was a system of ditched trackways and enclosures or fields, bounded on the south by an east–west ditch just north of the Shorn Brook that contained environmental remains. On the south a tadpole-shaped waterhole was found, accessed by a curving and sloping ramp, and containing a group of seven waterlogged timbers and further environmental remains. Several poorly-preserved inhumation burials were found, two in small pits suggesting crouched inhumations, and one extended skeleton in a north–south-aligned grave. One cremation was also found. None of these were dated by finds, and radiocarbon-dating is now in progress.¹³

¹¹ Work by K. Smith of Oxford Archaeology for CgMS Heritage. K. Smith sent information.

¹² Work by E. Iliff and L. Griffin of Worcestershire Archaeology for CgMs Consulting. J. Brewer sent information.

¹³ Work by T. Allen of Oxford Archaeology for AECOM on behalf of Crest Nicholson and David Wilson Homes. K. Smith sent information.

SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE

(1) **Charfield**, *land at Churchend Lane* (ST 7223 9144): an evaluation identified a Roman road and flanking ditches correlating closely to the projected course of the Bitton to Berkeley Roman road, with evidence that this remained in use into the medieval period.¹⁴

(2) **Over**, *The Wave, Washingpool Farm / Over Court Farm* (ST 5814 8296): an excavation identified a natural combe which had filled with alluvial deposits, possibly during the Middle Iron Age. Evidence of Middle Iron Age to early Roman ground consolidation was identified at the eastern end of the combe. A circular ditch enclosing pits also dated to this period, as did two areas of intercutting sub-circular ditches. To the north-west, several early Roman ditches pre-dated an intensification of activity in the third to fourth centuries represented by boundary ditches, enclosures, a sub-rectangular industrial feature and two inhumation burials.¹⁵

(3) **Winterbourne**, *land to the south of Filton Road* (ST 6321 7805): an evaluation and excavation identified a paleochannel and two phases of Roman peripheral settlement activity in use between the first and fourth centuries A.D., comprising enclosures, field boundary ditches and the remains of a ring-ditch associated with a roundhouse. Deliberate ground consolidation between the enclosures and the course of the palaeochannel was potentially related to stock management.¹⁶

SOMERSET

(1) **Bleadon**, *land at Wentwood Drive* (ST 3332 5807): an excavation targeted results of a prior evaluation. The earliest remains dated to the Middle/Late Iron Age period, consisting of a ring-ditch, post-holes and pits, located on an artificial terrace cut into the hillside. Contemporary inhumation burials were revealed to the north-west of the terrace and pits, some containing inhumation burials, downslope to the south-west. Following the Iron Age period, a flourish of activity spanning the entirety of the Romano-British period consisted of multiple small terraces cut into the hillside, interpreted as building platforms containing structural remains, working areas and gardens. Romano-British pits were revealed both within and surrounding the terraces. Romano-British inhumation burials were recorded, within distinct grave cuts and within reused

¹⁴ Work by D. Sausins of Cotswold Archaeology. J. Cook sent information.

¹⁵ Work by D. Sausins and T. Brindle for Cotswold Archaeology. J. Cook sent information.

¹⁶ Work by A. Barclay and J. Cook of Cotswold Archaeology. J. Cook sent information.

refuse, storage and quarry pits. A single ditch of probable Romano-British date was identified within the general area of the terraces. No indication of activity post-dating the Romano-British period was revealed. A second phase of work revealed 40 pits and 14 post-holes, predominantly of Middle/Late Iron Age date. Crouched burials were recorded within several of the refuse and storage pits.¹⁷

(2) **Congresbury**, *Cobthorn Way* (ST 4430 6399): excavations revealed small-scale mixed agricultural and industrial activity within a rural landscape. Three corn-driers and two areas for iron-working of Romano-British date were set within a landscape divided by boundary ditches forming enclosures and fields. A palaeochannel showed that the site had previously been situated adjacent to a small watercourse with a sequence of deposits radiocarbon dated to between the Romano-British and early medieval periods.¹⁸

(3) **North Petherton**, *Bridgwater Gateway* (ST 3000 3410): an excavation revealed a later Iron Age settlement on the brow of a low peninsula of land that overlooks the river Parrett coastal floodplain. This is a continuation of a settlement which had previously been excavated on the opposite side of the A38. It was replaced during the early Roman period by a complex of rectilinear enclosures which remained in occupation throughout the Roman period and was extended by the addition of further enclosures during the latter part of this period. No buildings or foci of domestic occupation were found, and it is likely that the enclosures formed fields and paddocks associated with a farmstead with its core lying beyond the excavation area. The pottery assemblage was dominated by black burnished ware; other finds included two whetstones and a segmented glass bead. Tile was absent. Five inhumation graves were located at the margins of the enclosure complex; no bone survived, but two of the graves contained the remains of hobnailed footwear.¹⁹

(4) **Sparkford**, *A303 Sparkford to Ilchester Dualling Scheme Ground Investigations* (ST 5844 2553): a watching-brief along a 5.2 km section of the A303 between Sparkford and Ilchester recorded only one trial pit (TP53) which was found to contain archaeological features, with deposits producing Iron Age and Roman pottery fragments. These archaeological remains are

¹⁷ Work by L. Powell, C. Mason, S. Flaherty and R. Krakowicz of Wessex Archaeology, for Heritage Planning Service Ltd on behalf of Coldharbour Land Ltd. L. Lichtenstein sent information.

¹⁸ Work by A. Farnell and V. Simmonds of AC Archaeology, for Strongvox Homes. P. Rainbird sent information.

¹⁹ Work by A. Simmonds of Oxford Archaeology for Bridgwater Gateway Limited. K. Smith sent information.

likely to be an extension of the activity on the northern side of the A303, where the scheduled Romano-British settlement on Camel Hill is located (NHLE: 1021260).²⁰

²⁰ Work by L. Lichtenstein of Wessex Archaeology, for Mott MacDonald Sweco Joint Venture, on behalf of Highways England. L. Lichtenstein sent information.