Proc. Hampsh. Field Club Archaeol. Soc. **46**, 1990, 73–89

EXCAVATIONS AT OTTERBOURNE OLD CHURCH, HAMPSHIRE

By DAVID A HINTON

with a contribution by D F WILLIAMS

ABSTRACT

Excavation of the demolished church at Otterbourne, Hampshire, revealed that the bases of its chancel walls survived, but that even the footings of the nave had been removed except in two places. There had been a small post-medieval south porch. The walls are attributed to c. *1200, and no evidence for an earlier building was found. Floor-tiles are probably from a local kiln, closely dated to the 1390s/1400s. The medieval pottery assemblage differs from that to be expected from an occupation site.*

INTRODUCTION

All that now remains as a visible record of the medieval church at Otterbourne are a fragment of the south wall of the porch and the stones in the graveyard in Kiln Lane (SU 466 227). The present-day church on the A33 road was begun in 1837 and consecrated in 1839; its site was chosen both to be closer to Cranbury Park and all the village houses except the Moat House – still at that time used by Magdalen College on the President's visitations – and Otterbourne Farm, and to avoid the anticipated noise from the new railway line (Fig 1; Yonge *c.* 1888, 23–25). The nave was demolished, 'a pointed arch of two orders enriched with dog-tooth ornament' being removed to the school built in the new churchyard (illus. Yonge 1891, 6) but the chancel was left standing (VCH III, 443). It was used as a mortuary chapel while the old graveyard remained in use, but became increasingly derelict after services were discontinued in or soon after the Second World War. In the 1960s the Advisory Board for Redundant Churches commissioned an evaluation by Mrs E Baker of the surviving traces of wall-paintings: two thirteenth-century figures were recognisable on the jambs of the east window, and the south wall had a Doubting Thomas, repainted in the fifteenth century. (Those found in 1839 above the chancel arch described by the local author Charlotte M Yonge (*c.* 1888, 7) had already been destroyed by the time that she wrote.) A piscina was uncovered in that wall and is now stored in the present church. By July 1970 vandals had destroyed substantial parts of the east wall, and many roof tiles had gone. The building was therefore demolished in November, 1971; Winchester City Museum unsuccessfully attempted to salvage some of the plaster and paintings from the east wall, and the Hampshire County Museum Service obtained one of the two mass dials and the arches of the two niches in the chancel-arch wall (Winchester City Museum files; Devenish 1972). Meanwhile, the 1839 school was demolished in 1968 and it proved impossible to preserve the doorway from the old church nave because the soft stone had deteriorated.

The only illustration of the old church to have been recognized is an elevation on an estate map of *c.* 1740, by William Burgess (now in Hampshire Record Office). There is a brief description of the building by Duthy (*c.* 1839, 323–24) and a rather longer one by Yonge, written from her memory of fifty years before (*c.* 1888). There is an illustration of the chancel, already ivy-mantled and lacking roof-tiles, in the second edition of her book (1891, opp. 32), and several photographs of the chancel taken in 1945 and later are in the archives

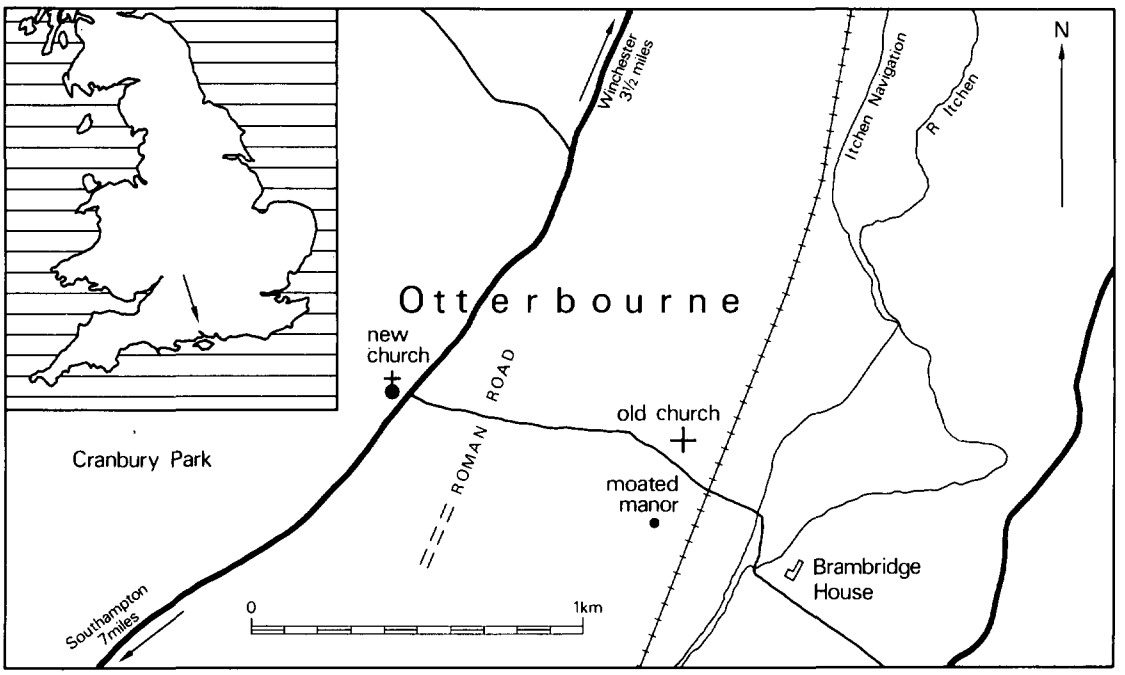

Fig 1. Otterbourne, location map.

of the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments and of Winchester City Museum (Fig 2). It was built of flints with dressed stone quoins, laid roughly side-alternate, but of irregular size – and surprisingly unweathered. The structure had been patched with brick at the west end and the south-east corner, and the south-west and south-east corners had been buttressed. The photographs show an east window which had been much damaged, but may have been of two lights with quatrefoil head (cf. Charlton-on-Otmoor, *c.* 1240: Parker 1877, 128). The north and south walls each had two single-light lancet windows. The roof was of three bays, with arch-braced collars, two rows of purlins and two tiers of wind-braces, perhaps fifteenth-century; a tie-beam had been inserted. The most interesting feature was at the west end, where the chancel arch was flanked by arched niches with attached columns in the angles and roll mouldings on the capitals. These were probably for nave altars; a triple arrangement in the chancel arch wall is a local feature, seen at Ashley and Littleton, Hampshire ('I.H.P.' 1846, 299–302). Two mass-dials were on the south-west corner. Architecturally, a late twelfth- or thirteenth-century date for this work seems likely. The nave doorway removed to the school in 1839 had similar columns, capitals and mouldings. The dog-tooth ornament was set under a hood-mould in the pointed arch, and would have been consistent in date with that suggested for the chancel.

There is little documentary evidence about the church. In 1086, Ralf de Mortemer held Otterbourne, where there was 'a church, and six serfs, and fifty acres of meadow' (VCH I, 489), implying a village church below the status of a minster. As the estate had previously been held by a tenant of the bishop of Winchester, it may well have been the bishop's

Fig 2. Otterbourne, the chancel from the south-west in 1945. This photograph shows the niches flanking the chancel arch leading from the nave demolished in or immediately after 1839. *Photo: Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society, negative housed National Monuments Record, Royal Commission on Historical Monuments for England.*

interest that caused the church to be built in the first place, as elsewhere in Hampshire (Hinton & Oake 1983, 114). Norman Barber, whose death not long after completion of the excavations was a cause of great sadness, had located references in the surviving Church Accounts which indicate refurbishment at the end of the seventeenth and early in the eighteenth centuries, but do not give the date of the building of the porch described by Charlotte Yonge.

The location of the churchyard is first shown on a map in the archives of Magdalen College, Oxford, drawn by Lewis Andrewes in 1678 (Maps 16: pers. comm. C M Woolgar). This shows Kiln Lane and various streams; the only other significant feature in the area is the moated site on the other side of the lane. This has recently been extensively refurbished, and a full report is to be published (Barber & Soffe, forthcoming). Mr Barber conjectured that the moat was constructed by one of the de Capella family, whose names occur from *c.* 1212–13, and that the family rebuilt the church: certainly this would be consistent with the date suggested on architectural grounds. The low-lying site would never have favoured occupation, and it is unlikely that the church had a village around it.

A complete survey of the graveyard, with a record of the inscriptions on the head-stones, was carried out by Mr P I C Payne and Mr Barber, who also transcribed the parish registers; copies are deposited in the Hampshire

County Council Planning Office. Vandalism of the stones became depressingly frequent, and the graveyard a source of concern to those responsible for it. To facilitate a management plan, it was decided that an assessment was needed of the degree of survival of what remained of the church below ground level. Consequently the Department of Archaeology, University of Southampton, was invited by the County Council to undertake an excavation, and this was done for three three-week seasons from 1982 to 1984 as a summer-term training exercise for first-year students. As this was an evaluation, walls were not demolished during the excavation, nor were graves emptied. Some *in situ* floor-tiles in the porch were lifted because they were breaking up; the post-medieval chancel floor was removed; and part of the nave floor was trenched: otherwise everything was left in place and re-covered at the end of the excavation, only debris being removed. After a period of further neglect, the churchyard was taken in hand by the Otterbourne Conservation Group in 1989.

THE EXCAVATION

The Chancel (Figs 3–6)

Excavation of the chancel showed that the walls had been taken down to just above the level of the internal floor in 1971. It was confirmed that the walls were almost entirely flint-built apart from dressed stone quoins: on the south-east corner the top surviving stone is chamfered and had split and slipped, but on the north-east a large flint serves as the corner stone, though it has a squared stone below it. The brick patching in the south-east corner did not show in the walls at the level of the excavation, unlike that at the south-west; the only other interruption to the structure is in the interior of the north wall near the east end, where bricks had been inserted, probably as part of a monument. They do not penetrate through the wall, and it may be noted that the excavation did not find, nor do the photographs of the standing wall show, any traces of the north door and vestry referred to by Charlotte Yonge (*c.* 1888, 16); nor had the external ground been disturbed by footings for a vestry. The north and east walls have vertical faces throughout, but the south wall has a marked external plinth at the eastern end, dying westwards. All three appeared to be co-eval. Some of the white plaster on the interior of the chancel walls survives, indicating that the medieval floor was lower than the 1971 floor level by at least twenty cm, and there may have been only a shallow step, if any, up from the nave into the chancel. Unfortunately no remains of any medieval floor except possibly for a very narrow strip against the north wall survive, for the chancel had been completely filled with vaults: these had been covered over with a rough brick and stone flag floor, with a large grave slab repositioned in front of the chancel arch, but even this floor did not extend right up to the east end – possibly because that area had underlain altar steps, supported above underlying vaults by brick pillars of which the bases partly survived.

An open brick gutter surrounded the chancel, bedded into soil (Fig 4): a line of bricks at 90° to the north wall may have been associated with the drainage arrangements, though no down-pipe is shown on that wall in the photographs. No construction trenches could be recognised below the gutters. There was a concentration of medieval pottery on the north side outside the west end. The wall footings were not fully exposed, but below the eastern quoins, no differences in soil colour or texture could be seen from what abutted them, though flints appeared to have been trodden into the ground against the north-east corner. The chamfered south-east quoin had a layer of flints underlying it.

The west wall of the chancel had been much disturbed by in-filling (Figs 2, 5 and 6). Furthermore, diagonal brick buttresses over what had been the north-east and south-east corners of the nave obscured the junction of the chancel and nave. As a result, it was not possible to be certain of relationships without completely dismantling what survived.

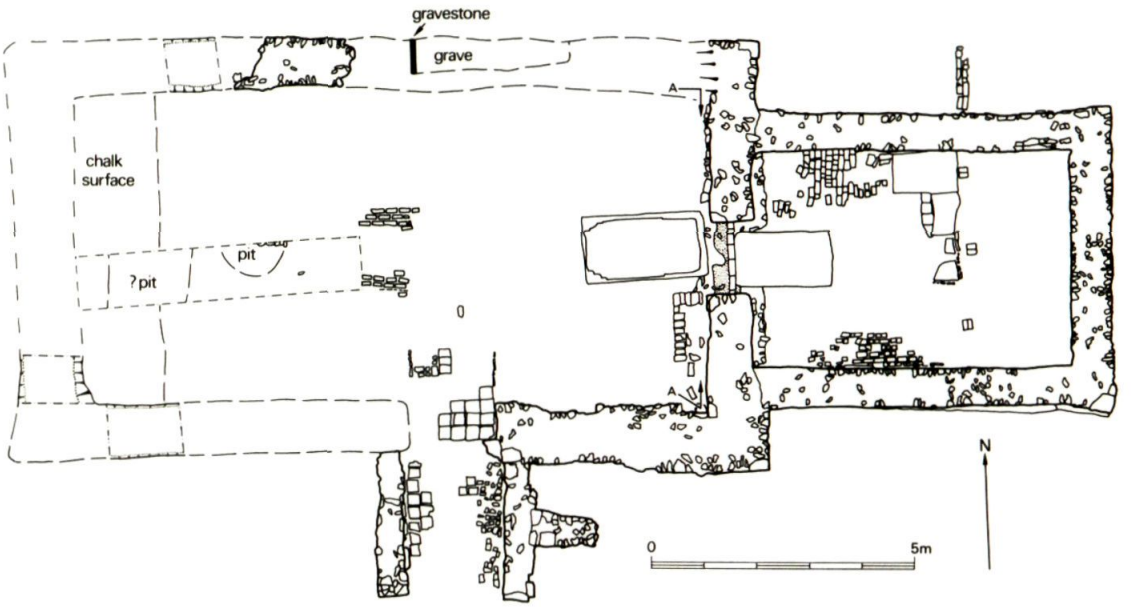

Fig 3. Ground plan of Otterbourne church as excavated 1982–84: all dressed stones are shown, but only flints more than *c.* 15 mm long. The chancel shows the floor as it was left in 1971. Dashed lines outlining the nave indicate robber trenches of the late 1830s/1840s. There was probably a tower in the unexcavated area west of the nave.

Differences in mortar colour may not signify different dates: the chancel north wall appeared to butt against the nave's west wall, but a piece of malmstone bridges the two. That could conceivably have been rammed into the former, but more probably the walls were not fully integrated during building, although constructed at the same time. Chamfered stones at the eastern corners of the nave are not obviously different from the south-east corner of the chancel, and there are flints trodden into the ground round the north-east corner of the nave as there are at the north-east corner of the chancel. Both dressed quoins have flints below them, as has the south-east quoin of the chancel.

The finest piece of dressed stone is at the base of the south-east corner of the chancel arch – that on the north-east corner had probably matched it, but had been chipped. The moulding (Fig 6) is not repeated on the western corners, on which simple rectangular rebates had sufficed (Fig 7). The chancel opening's floor-level had been raised by some 20 cm, and had been tiled, probably at some time in the post-medieval period; it had been blocked subsequently by a single skin of brick, up to the level of the chancel floor that existed in 1971. The east side of the chancel wall has a slight chalk and flint plinth which presumably would not have been visible as it underlies the bottoms of the dressed stone jambs. This wall has narrower, tapering plinths on its west side (Fig 7). The chancel arch opening has rammed flints in it at the level of these plinths, which were probably immediately below the original floor level. A grave (which was left undisturbed) had been dug through these flints, and had caused the later tile floor to subside. In the nave, a large post-medieval vault had been inserted against the north side of the chancel opening and its

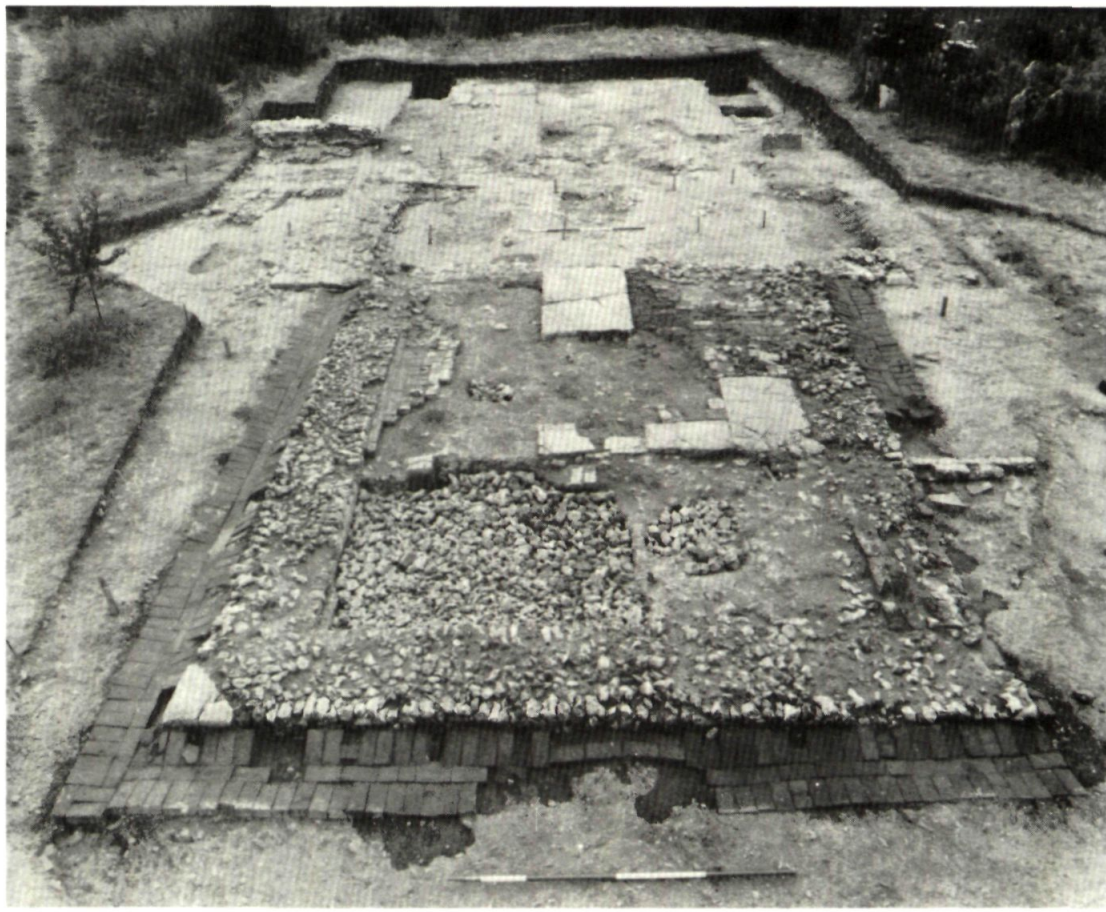

Fig 4. Otterbourne chancel and nave from the east, at the end of the 1983 season. Inside the chancel, the south-east part of the floor had been removed by that time, and was refilled with flints for the photograph. Otherwise, only part of the brick guttering on the north side had been taken up. The robber trench of the west wall of the nave was subsequently found just beyond the end of the trench.

jamb, obscuring details. The chancel wall has almost no foundations at its north and south ends, but deeper footings had been dug for the chancel arch. Below the footings is gravel: this was excavated down to a depth of a metre on the northern side of the vault in the nave, but it appeared to be undisturbed, i.e. the church was built on a low natural 'island' or peninsula in the river valley.

The Nave (Figs 3 and 4)

The north wall of the nave had been almost completely robbed out, but some of its flint foundation survives in one part (Fig 3). The back-fill had been cut through by a grave of the 1850s (recorded by Mr Barber before its head-stone had been broken off by vandals: visible in Fig 4). Where sectioned, the back-filled

Fig 5. The chancel at the end of the 1984 season, showing how various inter-cut vaults had completely destroyed the medieval floors.

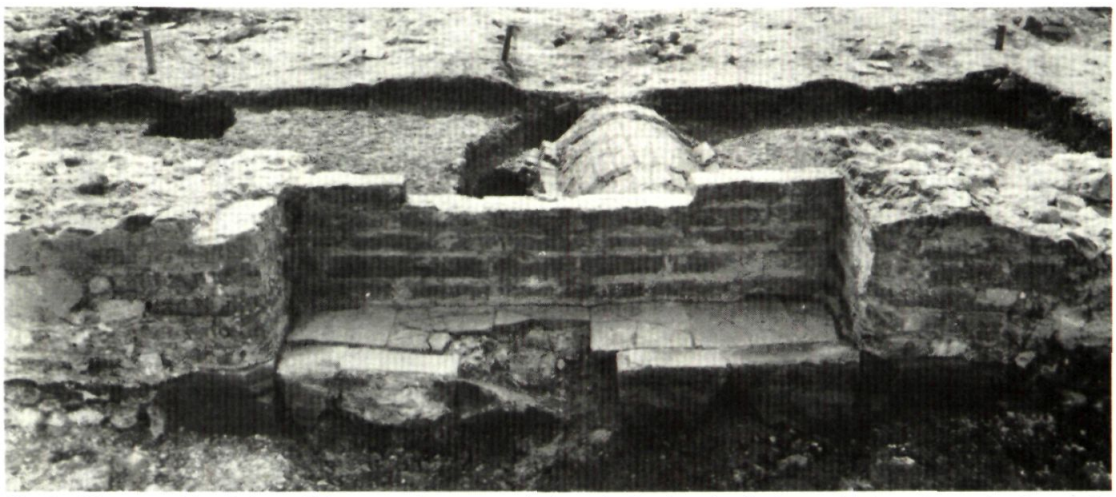

Fig 6. The east side of the wall between the nave and chancel, showing the finely moulded south-east jamb and the subsequent heightenings of the chancel arch floor level.

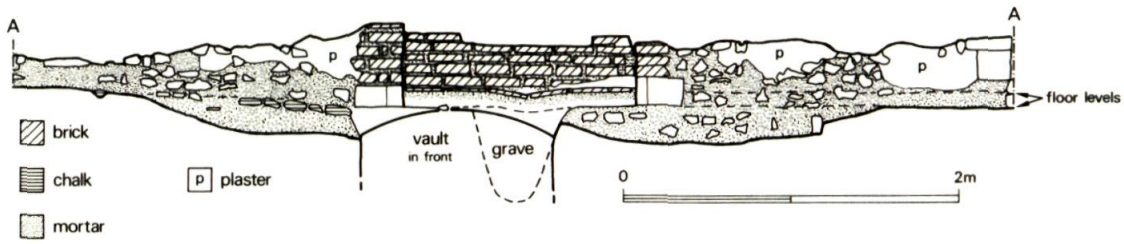

Fig 7. West side of nave/chancel wall and foundations.

trench was *c.* 0.3 m deep from the surviving nave floor level. The south wall's east end footings had survived: they are wider than those of the chancel, but not structurally different. In the internal south-eastern corner, dressed stones in both nave and chancel walls suggested contemporaneity. A very worn, chamfered quoin marks the eastern side of the south door. From the door westwards only the robber trench survives, as is the case with the west wall. The depths of the robber trenches were 0.55 m and 0.50 m respectively where excavated.

A vault had completely destroyed the approach to the chancel arch. Some very disturbed post-medieval flooring survived in the south-east corner, of rammed chalk and brick. Elsewhere, vestiges of brick and tile set in rubbly chalk and mortar may have denoted pew lines, but their level was quite remarkably distorted, as though crushed by heavy weights. At the west end, a chalky surface may have been the floor below the west gallery recalled by Charlotte Yonge. A half-metre wide east-west trench was cut along the centre of the nave to ensure that no wall east of the west wall's robber trench had existed, creating an originally shorter nave, but none was found. Small disturbances, some with metallurgical debris, were located, all but one pit probably post-medieval. The sondage was not widened to take in the full widths of these features. Excavation was not continued beyond the west wall, as there was over a metre of soil build-up at that end of the church. Consequently the area of the west tower, shown on the 1740 map and described by Yonge as a 'little square weather-boarded tower containing two bells' (*c.* 1888, 16), but not mentioned by Duthy (*c.* 1839, 323–24), was not investigated.

Before excavation began, a short length of north-south wall was visible above the ground surface, which proved to be the west wall of a small entry porch. The very battered remains of a tile floor were found and lifted: Charlotte Yonge recorded that the porch had timber seats along the walls, which probably protected the tiles which were located. The porch was buttressed on the east side, and butted the nave wall. Brick in its construction indicated a post-medieval date, largely confirmed by the discovery of a Purbeck or Sussex marble grave-slab which underlay its west wall and projected on both sides. Apparently medieval, this had been reused as a rough-and-ready foundation. In the ground outside the west wall of the porch, a quantity of late medieval pottery and some ridge-tile was found.

BUILDING MATERIALS

Stone

The principal building material was flint, which would have had to be brought the short distance from the Chalk-with-Flints deposits to the north-west, from Hursley and beyond, or from the east, where the Owslebury fields would have been the nearest source. That flint

was even occasionally used as quoins shows the scarcity of dressed stone. For this, malmstone from the Upper Greensand had to be transported overland from the Selborne quarries nearly twenty miles away. Malmstone seems to have been used in all the original quoins, jambs, columns and mouldings. A few fragments of Bembridge limestone, Dorset lias and Purbeck marble, the last also used in a tomb-cover still extant in the churchyard, show that sea-borne stone was subsequently available for fittings and perhaps for any new windows added to the nave. (I am grateful to my colleague David Peacock for these identifications.)

Ridge-tiles and Louvre

Several pieces of ridge-tile were found in general rubble layers, with knife-cut triangular crests. Two came from the ground outside the west wall of the porch, an area from which came a quantity of fifteenth-century pottery. This is probably the deposition date of the ridge-tiles, but they may of course have already been of some age when discarded. Two crests from rubble layers are illustrated, as their patterns do not appear to be quite like any recently published locally (Fig 8, 1–2).

Also from rubble came what seemed to be part of a finial, stabbed inside and out and curved as though for a chimney, although it was not smoke-blackened (Fig 8, 3).

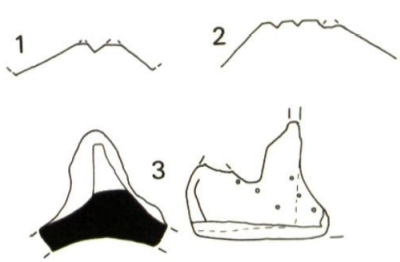

Fig 8. Ridge-tile crests and ?louvre. Scale 1:4.

Roof-tile

Quantities of clay roof-tile were found, but no complete specimens. Dating is uncertain, but the fragments were not as thick as might be expected of medieval tiles. Despite local tile production, the church may have had a thatched roof, or one with timber shingles and a clay-tile ridge, until the fifteenth century or later. There was no blue slate in medieval contexts.

Brick

Brick was used as post-medieval flooring in the nave and in the patching of the porch floor. It was not used structurally, except in the porch, and in the buttressing and patching of the chancel, presumably after the nave was demolished.

Window glass

A number of small fragments of window glass were found, some medieval, mostly much pitted. Some was painted, but no patterns could be assembled. Lead window cames were also found in demolition layers, fewer than might have been anticipated from the amount of glass.

Floor-tiles

The floor-tiles from Otterbourne were potentially of great interest because the late-fourteenth-century Winchester College account rolls contain references to tile-making at Otterbourne in 1395–96. In the event, only a few two-colour patterned tiles were found, none *in situ*. The medieval tiles were all, however, identifiable as having been made by William Tyelere of Otterbourne. His products have been recognised in Winchester both at the college, where six different designs were used (Norton 1974), and in Bishop William of Wykeham's chantry chapel in the cathedral

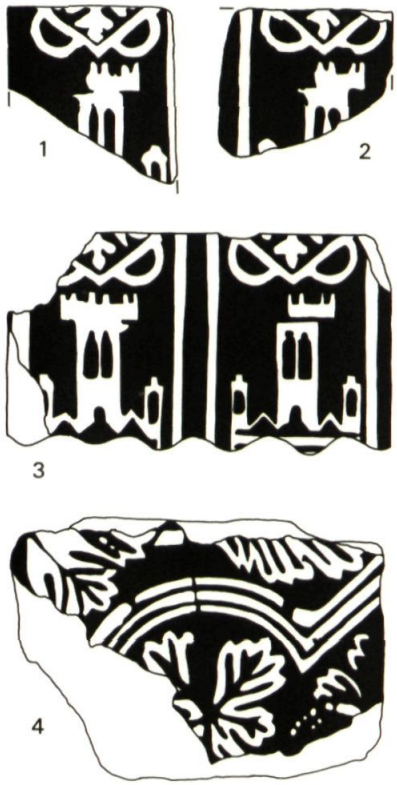

Fig 9. Floor-tiles. 1–3, Norton 1983, design 2 = 16.4 (upper part only shown here); 4, design 1 = 16.2. Scale 1:3

completed by 1404, where only four designs occur (Norton 1983, 87–88). At Otterbourne, examples of all six designs used in the college were found – and no other decorated tiles. (As all have been published recently, only two designs are reproduced here (Fig 9). It might therefore be assumed that this was indeed the full range made by William Tyelere, but Dr Christopher Norton is inclined to attribute counter-relief tiles, such as were found in Winchester in the Broadway, to him, and also some larger tiles found in the area (Norton 1983, group 18, page 90). At the college, purchases of Flemish tiles, which would have been plain, are recorded and survive in some numbers. None of these were found at Otterbourne, nor had any tiles been scored and broken for use in borders.

Norton has pointed out that flaws in the patterns of the Otterbourne-made tiles suggest that the stamps from which they were produced were already old and worn (1983, 88). Certainly those found in the excavation had the faults noticed at Winchester: part of the battlement of the right-hand tower is missing (Norton 1983 fig 5, 2 = 16.4; here Fig 9, 1–3) and there are breaks in the oak-leaf design (Norton 1983 fig 5, 1 = 16.2; here Fig 9, 4). Norton has pointed out that there are examples of the former in Winchester which have complete battlements and that the condition of the oak-leaf design seems to have become worse between its use in 1395–96 in the college, and its pre-1404 use in the cathedral. The Otterbourne church example of the latter seems to have all but one of the faults – the central line on the right side is not broken through, though the crack was beginning to appear. This suggests that the stamps did indeed get worse during their use at Otterbourne. Other tile designs were too incomplete or worn for similar signs of damage to be identifiable.

The Otterbourne tilery has not been located. The age of the name Kiln Lane for the road which runs past the church is not known, and no tile waste has been recorded. The 1740 map shows a kiln at SU 458 238, west of the main road (*pers. comm.* G Soffe) but there was a brickworks in the seventeenth century in Dell Copse, on the north side of Kiln Lane, which might have occupied the earlier tilery site (Yonge, *c.* 1888, 9). That the tilery was not far away may be shown by a single tile which had been smeared with plaster and whitewashed on one edge, suggesting that it had been built into a wall. It also had a firing scar on its face, the only one that had. It could conceivably therefore have been a waster used as building rubble, but if so, there is no evidence of where it would have been used, as no evidence of late-fourteenth-century structural work was found.

The Winchester College 1395–96 accounts include an item 'To Richard Porteur of Farnham for having clay dug there and carted to Otterbourne for the making of tiles' and it is

thought that this would have been white clay, needed for two-colour designs but unobtainable in Otterbourne where only red was available (Norton 1974, 30–32). To test this, a piece of tile was submitted to Dr D F Williams for petrological analysis, and his report is summarized below.

Floor-tiles were found *in situ* in the porch and adjacent parts of the nave. These were nearly all broken, mostly very worn. All were unpatterned red clay, some white-slipped and yellow after glazing and firing, others fired to dark purple after glazing. They had probably been laid in chequer-board fashion, but this had been disrupted by patching. The tiles were much bigger than William Tyelere's, being between 225 and 240 mm square, and 30–35 mm thick. Their date is uncertain, but the porch itself is thought to have been post-medieval and the tiles are therefore probably sixteenth- or seventeenth-century. Otterbourne bricks were used in St John's Hospital, Winchester, in 1506/07, and an Otterbourne tile-maker was hiring labour in the city in 1539, so these tiles could have been made locally (Keene 1985, 174, 176).

A note on the petrology of a medieval inlaid tile from Otterbourne, Hampshire by D F Williams

The tile is in a hard, sandy fabric, with a light red body (Munsell 10R 6/8) and creamy-white inlaid decoration (5Y 8/1). A thin section was taken from the body of the tile and also one from the white inlay, and these were both studied under the petrological microscope. This showed that the fabric of the body of the tile consists of a groundmass of sub-angular quartz grains, below 0.15 mm in size, with a scatter of larger grains in the size-range 0.40–0.70 mm. Also present are some small pieces of chert, iron ore and a few flecks of mica, all set in an anisotropic matrix of baked clay. In contrast, the white inlay contains angular silt-sized quartz grains and plentiful small flecks of white mica, set in an anisotropic matrix of baked clay.

It is difficult to be sure from only one small sample, but the non-plastic inclusions present in the white inlay of the Otterbourne tile do bear a striking resemblance to Vince's fabric description of the untempered white-firing clay of Surrey Whiteware pottery (Pearce & Vince 1988, 11). To be certain, chemical analysis would need to be done and compared with the results already carried out on the white-firing clay used for the Surrey Whitewares (Pearce & Vince 1988, Appendix 4). Reading Beds do occur in the vicinity of Otterbourne, but these are described as a 'mottled clay', varying in colour from red, to yellow to dark brown (1" Geological Survey Map of England, sheets nos 299 and 315). Presumably good white-firing clays from these beds are not to be found in the immediate area.

The fabric of the body of the Otterbourne tile is less easy to tie down due to the range of common non-plastic inclusions present. However, the top of the local Reading Beds and the basement Bed of the London Clay have in the past been used for brickmaking at Otterbourne, and in all probability one of these sources was also used to make tiles in the medieval period (Shore 1890, 30). The difference in the size-range of the quartz noted in this section points to the larger-sized grains being deliberately added as temper. Presumably the clay was too stiff to be used on its own.

OBJECTS

Pottery

As might be expected, pottery was not plentiful, but medieval sherds were found in many contexts. There were two concentrations, however, a fifteenth-century group outside the church in the angle between the west wall of the porch and the south wall of the west end of

the nave, where soil had apparently been piled up, and a late thirteenth-/fourteenth-century group outside the north wall of the chancel, below and adjacent to the brick guttering of the final phase. (I am grateful to Mr Duncan Brown for looking through the pottery: identifications are based on his comments.)

Most of the sherds were locally made, and cannot be attributed to particular kilns. Cooking-pottery includes types frequently found in Southampton from the late thirteenth century onwards: one or two sherds might be earlier in date, but there is nothing actually characteristic of the eleventh or twelfth centuries. Many of the unglazed sherds are sooted on the exterior and many of the sherds in the external groups are very water-worn, probably from rain coming off the roof.

The glazed wares are more eclectic. Hampshire Sandy Red ware of the late thirteenth to fourteenth century is well represented, but only by sherds too small to illustrate. There were at least two jugs of Laverstock, Wiltshire, type (one illustrated, Fig 10, 1), also of the late thirteenth or fourteenth century. Later in date were Hampshire – Surrey white wares of the fifteenth century (Pearce & Vince 1988) represented by at least four different vessels (Fig 10, 3 and 4, the former from the group outside the porch wall). Contemporary with these were an

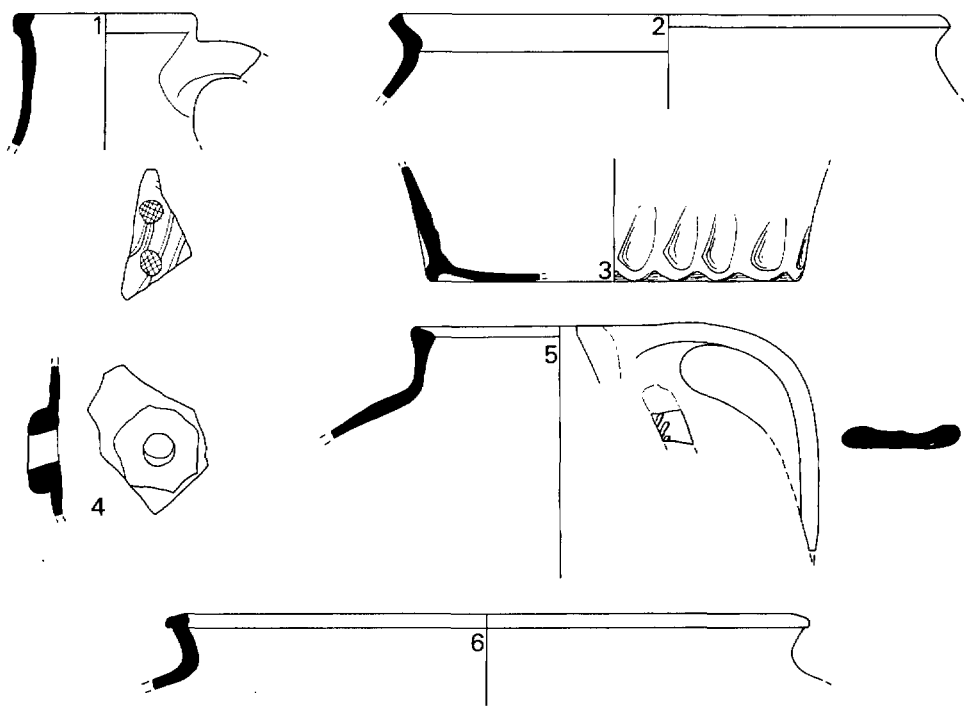

Fig 10. Pottery. See text for further descriptions and contexts. 1, Stabbed rod handle and body sherd with applied white clay strips and dark red (chequered) pellets. Red sandy body fabric. Oxydised. Probably Laverstock (Chancel exterior group). 2, Cooking-pot rim with internal lip. Hard sandy fabric with flint inclusions. Typical of south Hampshire, early fourteenth century (unstratified). 3, Thumbed base from jug. Coarse white ware, a North-East Hampshire/Surrey fifteenth-century product (Porch exterior group). 4, Bung-hole, similar (Unstratified). 5, *Pégau* (spouted pitcher) handle and rim. Fine white ware, partly glazed. Saintonge, fifteenth century (Porch exterior group). 6, Cooking-pot rim. Hard sandy fabric, late medieval (Unstratified). Scale 1:4

import from the Saintonge area of south-west France (Fig 10, 5 and 10 from the same group as Fig 10, 3), and at least one Rhenish stoneware flagon (not illustrated), as well as locally-made organic-tempered ware, some painted and grooved (not illustrated).

Although imported pottery is generally commoner in the fifteenth century than at any other time in the Middle Ages, it is nevertheless surprising to find examples in such a small group as that from outside the porch, which weighed only 1310 g altogether: of that total, 1060 g were sherds from vessels that were clearly not merely unglazed cooking-pottery. That is less surprising, as fifteenth-century groups generally contain a lower proportion of cooking vessels, as at Foxcotte in north Hampshire; there, however, there were no overseas imports at all (Matthews 1985, 190–93). The figures for decorated and unglazed sherds in the smaller, earlier group outside the chancel were 310 g and 565 g respectively; although unglazed wares predominate, it is out of the ordinary to have over a third of the pottery glazed and decorated at that time – around 20% or less is more usual. Foxcotte again provides an appropriate parallel; nearly 70% of the thirteenth-/fourteenth-century pottery was a single fairly coarse, unglazed fabric (Matthews 1985, 166–72). At Popham, another Hampshire village, the ratio of glazed sherds increased from *c.* 10% to *c.* 20% during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries; imports were also absent, but as there was no fifteenth-century material a contrast to Otterbourne's later group cannot be maintained (Hawkes 1987, 117–18). The ratio of medieval unglazed to glazed wares on the whole Otterbourne site is unexpected also: a total of 2405 g to 2415 g.

It is not possible to make very much of these figures as the number of sherds is small and there are no sealed groups – those outside the walls clearly extended into the unexcavated areas. The assemblage is dissimilar to a normal domestic one from household rubbish, however, and it is interesting to compare it to that from Wharram Percy, North Yorkshire, where a contrast has been drawn between the groups of pottery found in the church and churchyard, and those from the excavated village (Le Patourel 1987). There was a higher ratio of jugs to cooking-pots in the former than in the latter, and it is suggested that better pottery was brought for flower vases, for 'church ales', and even for urinals for bell-ringers and others; cooking-pottery may have been used to carry food to festivals, or as containers for products bought and sold, since trading took place in churchyards despite frequent bans. The comparison cannot be taken much further because Wharram had pottery stratified inside the church, unlike Otterbourne, and it had also had earth dumped to level up the ground surface, and this contained pottery. Wharram also had examples of what were probably cruets. Although it has often been suggested that these were specially made for church use, their frequency in e.g. Oxford raises doubts that they were not ordinary domestic sauce-bottles and the like. Similar but unhandled narrow-necked pots were used in France as containers for holy water in burials: signs of wear on them indicate that they had had previous use (Raynaud 1988, 44). There seems to be no evidence of this practice in England. On the other hand, there was very little imported pottery and no stoneware at the Wharram church, unlike Otterbourne.

Wharram had houses close to the church, and there was therefore always the possibility that some general rubbish would find its way into the ecclesiastical context. This was less likely at Otterbourne, which may have had only a single farm immediately adjacent. There is therefore a greater likelihood that the Otterbourne pottery was all brought deliberately, and that the jugs and the bung-hole are indeed representative of the different activities that took place in the churchyard. Further support for this comes from another ecclesiastical site, in South Humberside, where jugs exceeded cooking-pots by about two-thirds; there were also several late-medieval cisterns and a urinal (Hayfield 1986).

OBJECTS OF METAL

Numismata

A silver three-halfpence of Elizabeth I, 1575 and a copper token halfpenny of Charles I, 1625–35 were the only pre-twentieth-century coins, etc., recovered.

Copper alloy

Various post-medieval lace-ends, pins, buttons etc. were found. Only one object could be ascribed a date earlier than the seventeenth century (Fig 11).

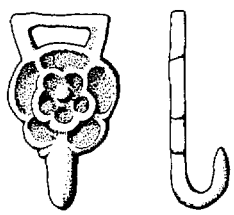

Fig 11. Dress-hook, copper alloy. Fifteenth/sixteenth century. A common late medieval object, cf. Goodall 1987, fig 191, no. 27. Scale 1:1.

Lead

Apart from the window cames, fragments of coffin fittings were the only lead-alloy items found.

Iron

Large quantities of nails, some roves and coffin handles were found, but only the few found with pottery outside the chancel and porch walls could be dated, by association. Structural items such as shutter latches in demolition layers appeared to be fairly recent.

CLAY

Pipe-stems were found in many contexts, but happily not in the pottery groups outside the chancel and the porch.

DISCUSSION

Most of the land in present-day Otterbourne parish is composed of clays, sands and plateau gravels, with valley gravels and alluvium along the River Itchen and a small patch of chalk in the north-east. The site of the old church of St Matthew is near the end of a patch of valley gravel, which was shown in the excavation immediately to underlie its foundations. The ground here therefore rose just enough above the surrounding streams to provide dry conditions for church and cemetery.

Nothing was found at the church site that could be dated to before the end of the twelfth century, although a church was recorded in Domesday Book as a property of the Otterbourne estate in 1086 (VCH I, 489). Excavations at Wharram Percy and other sites have shown that many twelfth-century and later stone churches like that at Otterbourne may have had timber predecessors (Hurst & Rahtz 1987, 55–57), but if any traces of a wooden church had survived rebuilding at Otterbourne, they would have disappeared subsequently in the destruction of the internal floors by vaults – although it is possible that removal of the chancel walls might have revealed post-hole bases or similar evidence below the stones. The total absence of pottery and other artefacts datable to the eleventh century or earlier amongst the small amounts recovered is hardly surprising.

Absence of evidence cannot therefore be taken to prove that a building earlier than the one excavated in Kiln Lane had not once existed there. Nevertheless, new church sites did sometimes come into use well after the Norman Conquest (e.g. Broadfield, Hertfordshire: Klingelhöfer 1974, 16–23), and it is perfectly possible that this was the case at Otterbourne, with a new church built by the creators of the near-by moated site, as the late Norman Barber suggested. A comparable transfer is documented in Lincolnshire, where

at some date before 1180 William, son of Ernis, gave 'three acres of land in Sutton . . . to build a parish church there. And . . . the earlier wooden church of the same vill, in place of which the new church will be built, shall be taken away and the bodies buried in it shall be taken to the new church' (Owen 1971, 5). If the church recorded in Domesday Book was elsewhere in Otterbourne, its most likely location would be the small zone of chalk which would have been the best agricultural land on the Saxon estate (assuming that its boundaries were much the same as those of the modern parish) and there the bishop of Winchester's tenant might well have chosen to have his house and his church, although some pre-Conquest organic-tempered pottery has been found at the moated site, where there is another gravel 'island' above the flood plain (*pers. comm.* G Soffe).

Although the churchyard itself was high enough to be drained, the ground around it is lower and would not have been suitable for settlement: Otterbourne Farm may always have been the church's only immediate neighbour. Apart from the chalk, the rest of Otterbourne's higher ground is of poor agricultural quality. It would have lent itself to a dispersed early medieval settlement pattern, of small hamlets and farms: if there was no focal centre at which it would have been logical for the church to be, there would perhaps have been little resistance to a subsequent change of site.

The church itself was unremarkable in scale or decoration, its only notable features being the south doorway and the chancel arch with its flanking niches. Any alterations made to it after its construction did not affect its plan or its foundations, until the porch was added. Building materials were flint and malmstone, the former half a day's cart journey away, the latter a more major proposition and kept to a minimum. The chancel-arch niches ('I.H.P.' 1846, 299–302) suggest local design and therefore local craftsmen: the dog–tooth ornament on the door shows that they could do reasonable work.

The church was presumably large enough to accommodate any expansion of pouplation that took place in Otterbourne in the thirteenth century: nor did it respond physically to any changes in liturgical demands. It did not at first have wealthy patrons: the de Capellas never achieved more than modest prosperity, nor did their successors the Wintons, although members of these families may be commemorated by the Purbeck marble tomb-covers in the churchyard and below the porch. Only when the manor was sold to William of Wykeham in 1386 did it acquire better-known connections, and it may have been because of Wykeham's ownership that the tilery was established from which the church received the means of its reflooring, the only substantial development attested in its surviving archaeology. At least one of the Wykehams was resident (VCH III, 441–42). If the chancel was reroofed in the fifteenth century as the photographs of the timbers suggest, the Wykehams or their successors the Fiennes family are perhaps more likely advowson-holders to have financed this work, and that of the wall-paintings observed by Mrs Baker, than Magdalen College, Oxford, which received the manor during the depression of the 1460s. (Full discussion of the manorial descents will be published in Barber & Soffe, forthcoming.) By that time, the nave's upkeep would have been the responsibility of the parish, to be financed by such activities as the church-ales which may be witnessed by the particular nature of the pottery assemblage. The church and its yard had a social role that went beyond the provision of religious services.

The building of the porch seems to have been the only major episode in the church's history after the fifteenth century. It became an example of an unrestored country church, nostalgically remembered by Charlotte Yonge many years after its truncation (*c.* 1888, 23–25), not uncared for, but not strongly enough held in its parishioners' affections as to cause them to strive for its retention. Richer families, such as the Yonges and the Soffes, who subscribed to the building of the Victorian church, chose to be buried at it, as were

the village school-masters (Yonge *c.* 1888, 25–26). Rural conservatism, however, meant that the old graveyard remained in use: the pull of family ties was still strong enough in death for many of the villagers to want to make their last journey one that took them to rest in the traditional burial-place, despite the convenience and modernity of the new facilities on the main road.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The work at Otterbourne was funded jointly by the Hampshire County Council Planning Department and the Department of Archaeology, University of Southampton: I am grateful to Michael Hughes for arranging access and the grant from the Council. The students were supervised by Nick Bradford, Rod FitzGerald, Martin Oake and Peter Stone, whose patience with them preserved harmony for at least most of the time. The drawings were done by Chris Webster, photographs by Nick Bradford.

The late Norman Barber took a great interest in the work, and his enthusiasm was an encouragement to us all. I am also grateful to Graham Soffe for his interest, for checking photographs in the National Buildings Record for me and for his many useful comments on the text. Geoffrey Denford of Winchester Museums Services and Kay Ainsworth of Hampshire County Museums Service were very helpful in dealing with my enquiries, as was Mr L H Morrant of Otterbourne. Mr S C Whitcher was also a valuable source of information: a copy of his photograph of the nave doorway is now in the National Buildings Record as well as with the archive of this report, which will be housed in the Hampshire County Museums Service. Duncan Brown's help with the pottery, Christopher Norton's with the tiles and David Williams's with the tile fabric analysis is also gratefully acknowledged.

REFERENCES

Barber, N D & Soffe, G, forthcoming. 'The moated manor of Otterbourne, Hampshire', *Proc. Hampshire Fld. Club Archaeol. Soc.*

Devenish, D C 1972 'Otterbourne old church', *Hampshire Archaeol. Local Hist. Newsletter*, 2 iii, 14.

Duthy, J *c.* 1839 *Sketches of Hampshire*. Jacob and Johnson, Winchester/Longman *et al.*, London.

Goodall, A R 1987 'Copper-alloy objects', 171–73 in Hurst and Rahtz (eds).

Hawkes, J W 1987 'The pottery', 111–19 in Fasham, P J 'The medieval settlement at Popham, excavations 1975 and 1983', *Proc. Hampshire Fld. Club Archaeol. Soc.*, **43**, 83–124.

Hayfield, C 1986 'The pottery', 51–56 in Coppack, G 'St Lawrence Church, Burnham, South Humberside', *Lincolnshire Archaeol. Hist.*, **21**, 39– 60.

Hinton, D A & Oake, M 1983 'The Anglo-Saxon church at Yateley', *Proc. Hampshire Fld. Club Archaeol. Soc.*, **39**, 111–20.

Hurst, J G & Rahtz, P A (eds) 1987 *Wharram. A Study of Settlement on the Yorkshire Wolds. Volume III: Wharram Percy: The Church of St Martin*, Soc. Medieval Archaeol., Mono. Ser. 11.

'I.H.P.' 1846. 'On some perforations in the walls of churches', *Archaeol. J.*, **3**, 299–308.

Keene, D 1985 *Survey of Medieval Winchester*, Clarendon Press, Oxford.

Klingelhöfer, E C 1974 *Broadfield Deserted Medieval Village*, Brit. Archaeol. Rep. Brit. Ser. **2**, Oxford.

Le Patourel, H E J 1987 'Medieval pottery', 154–65 in Hurst and Rahtz (eds).

Matthews, C 1985 'Pottery', 166–72 and 186–93 in Russel, A D 'Foxcotte: the archaeology and history of a Hampshire hamlet', *Proc. Hampshire Fld. Club Archaeol. Soc.*, **41**, 149–224.

Norton, E C 1974 'The medieval paving tiles of Winchester College', *Proc. Hampshire Fld. Club Archaeol. Soc.*, **31**, 23–42.

Norton, E C 1983 'The medieval tile pavements of Winchester Cathedral', *Medieval Art and Architecture at Winchester*, Brit. Archaeol. Assoc., 78–93.

Owen, D M 1971 *Church and Society in Medieval Lincolnshire*, History of Lincoln Vol. **V**, Lincoln.

Parker, J H 1877 *An Introduction to the Study of Gothic Architecture*, 5th ed. James Parker and Co., Oxford and London.

Pearce, J and Vince, A 1988 *A Dated Type-Series of London Medieval Pottery. Part 4: Surrey Whitewares*, London Middlesex Archaeol. Soc.

Raynaud, N 1988 'Le site antique et médiévale de la chapelle Saint-Jean à Bussière-Botty (Haute-Vienne)', *Travaux d'Archéologie Limousine*, **8**, 39–51.

Shore, T W 1890 'Clays of Hampshire and their economic uses', *Papers Proc. Hampshire Fld. Club*, **I iv**, 23–45.

VCH *Victoria History of the Counties of England: Hampshire and the Isle of Wight*, ed W Page, London, 5 vols., 1900–8.

Yonge, C M *c.* 1888 *Old Times at Otterbourne*, Warren and Son, Winchester.

Yonge, C M 1891 *Old Times at Otterbourne*, Warren and Son, Winchester/Simpkin and Co, London.

Authors: David A Hinton, Department of Archaeology, University of Southampton, SO9 5NH; D F Williams, PhD, FSA, HBMC Ceramic Petrology Project, Department of Archaeology, University of Southampton, SO9 5NH.