

EXCAVATION AT ST MARY'S ROAD, SOUTHAMPTON (SOU 379 AND SOU 1112)

By M F GARNER

With contributions by D M GOODBURN and L GRAY

ABSTRACT

The results of several archaeological investigations on land in the NW. part of the Middle Saxon town of Hamwic are presented. The main street of Hamwic ran along the E. edge of the site as a hollow-way delineated by stakes, superseded by a metalled thoroughfare. A low number of Middle Saxon features, mainly pits, concentrated in the south of the site. The features contained relatively few finds but included parts of a cask from a well shaft and evidence of iron working and textile production. The nature of the remains indicates that the site was close to the edge of the town.

INTRODUCTION

Project Background

Five investigations by the Archaeology Unit of Southampton City Council took place on the site, centred on SU 423125, over a 15-year period, as proposals for development were refined. In 1986 there was a watching brief on test-holes (SOU 251), followed in 1987 by a watching brief on boreholes (SOU 321). In 1988 further work on the S. part of the site (SOU 379) was directed by Rose Lindsey. Trench 1 (Fig. 3) was an excavation, some 42 m by 28 m, within the basement of 60–64 St Mary's Road. The area to the W. (Trench 2) was stripped by machine then briefly investigated and recorded. A short report was written (Lindsey 1988). In 1999 an evaluation of the N. half of the site (SOU 964) by seven trial holes was directed by the author (Fig. 2). The trenches were each about 10 m² and were up to 1.6 m deep. Natural or archaeologically-significant deposits were exposed by machine. The latter

were recorded but not fully excavated (Garner 1999a).

In response to the earlier work the remainder of the site was excavated in 2001 as SOU 1112. This phase consisted of two trenches, one on the W. side and one at the N. end of the site. Modern overburden was removed by machine, followed by hand excavation, apart from the base of a deep well that was mechanically excavated due to safety considerations. Trench 1 was 43 m long with a maximum width of 9 m. Trench 2 was 37 m long and 34 m wide (Fig. 5). Trench 1 generally coincided with Trench 2 of SOU 379 – the main difference was the S. edge (Fig. 4). This report contains no detailed plan of SOU 379 Trench 2 as almost all of the features found during that project were re-excavated and re-recorded as part of SOU 1112. Trench 2 of SOU 1112 covered the area of the SOU 964 evaluation.

The aims and objectives of SOU 1112 were to 'clarify the nature of human occupation and land-use at the site, especially, but not exclusively, in the Saxon period' and 'to 'sterilise' the site archaeologically and allow greater scope for development plans' (SCC 2001, 1). Archaeologically-significant remains were 'defined as remains and contexts relating to pre-17th-century human use of the area' (*ibid.* 2). Additionally there was a requirement to 'integrate into this post-excavation work the study and interpretation of the archives of SOUs 379 and 964' (*idem.*). Soil samples from Middle Saxon deposits in SOU 379 Trench 1 were processed in 2001. The Southampton City Council Archaeology Recording (SMART) system was used on all of these projects. Colours were recorded with the Munsell Soil Color Chart and these are used in this report (Munsell Color 1975).

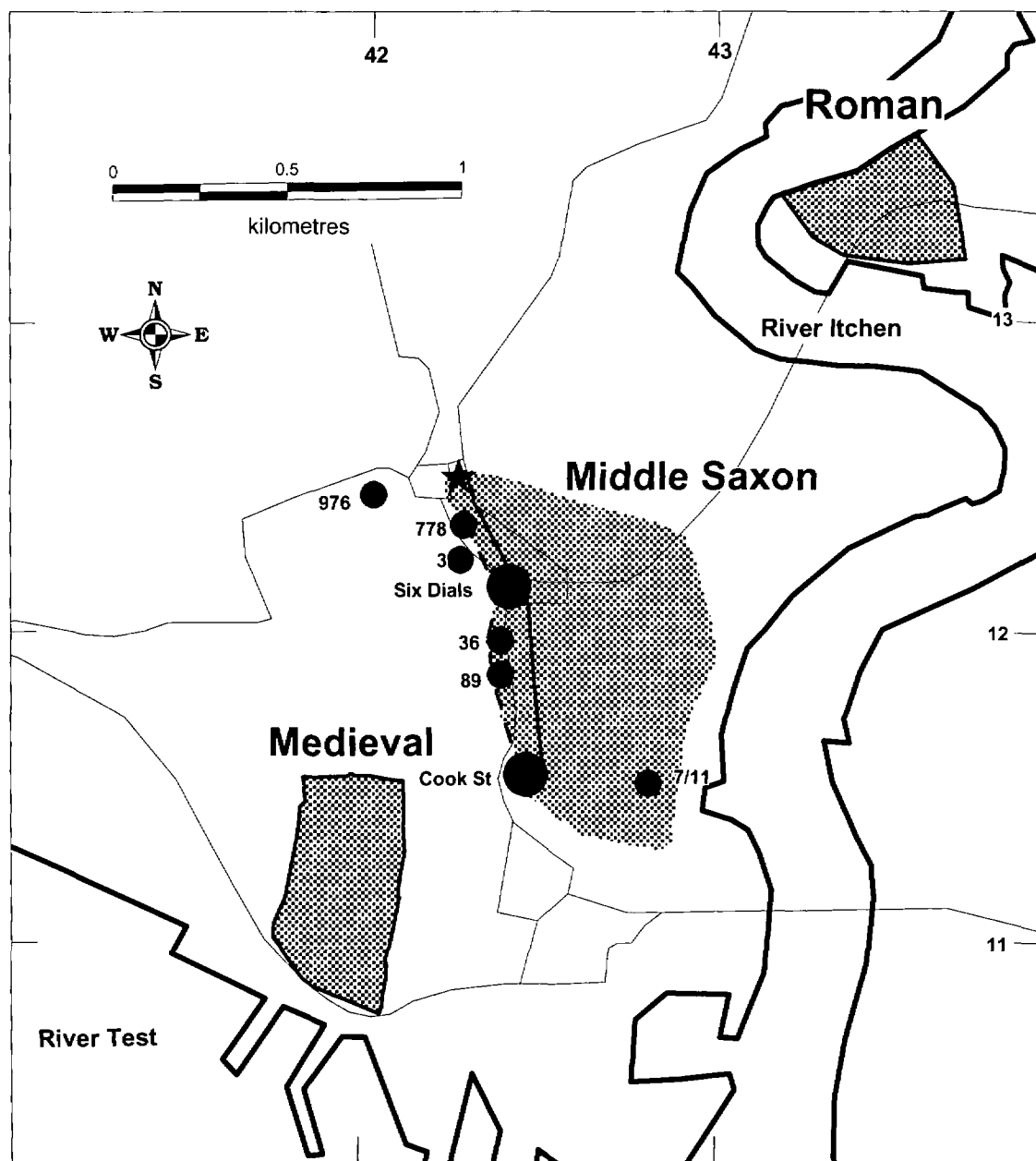


Fig. 1 Plan of central Southampton showing the Roman, Middle Saxon, and walled medieval towns (stippled). A star indicates the present site and other sites mentioned in the text are shown as solid circles (SOU prefixes are omitted). The continuous line marks a major Middle Saxon street and the broken line marks the possible line of a western ditch. The modern waterfront is shown as a bold line.

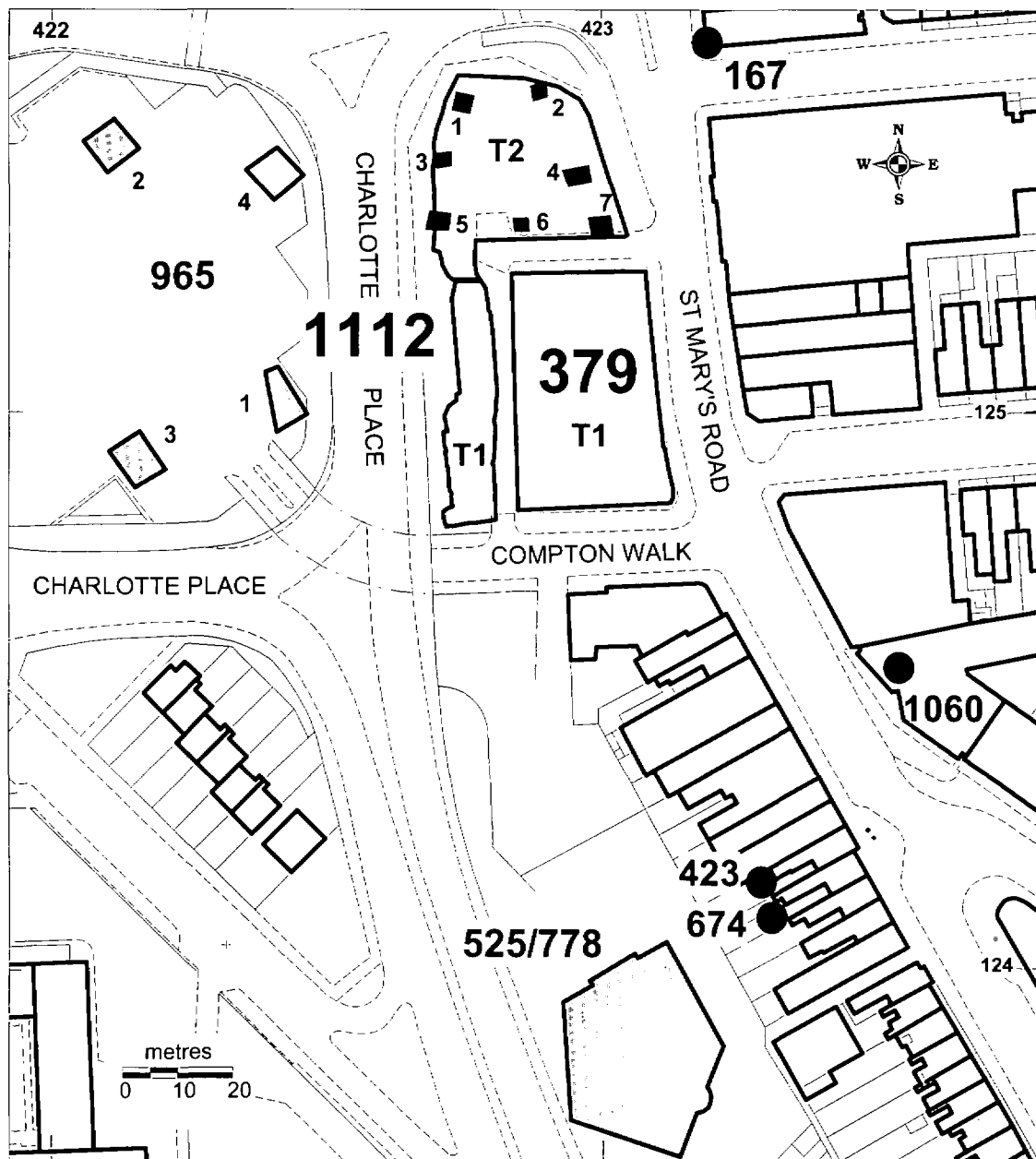


Fig. 2 Plan showing SOU 379 Trench 1, SOU 964 Trenches 1 to 7 (solid), SOU 1112 Trenches 1 and 2, and nearby sites. Solid circles indicate watching briefs and other sites are stippled. SOU prefixes are omitted from site codes.

Archaeological and Historical Background

Several archaeological investigations have been carried out in the area (Figs 1 and 2). SOU 3 revealed evidence of Iron Age occupation including a cobble floor and a gully (Hassall 1971). SOUs 51 and 52 were observations in St Mary's Road and Brinton's Road respectively, both roughly to the SE. of the present site. Rubbish pits, probably Saxon, were observed at both sites (Kell 1859, 1860, and 1866). At SOU 259 an E.-W. gravel surface similar to a Saxon street was observed (Morton 1992, 32). At 138 St Mary's Road (SOU 401) evidence of prehistoric and Saxon occupation was observed (Morton 1990, 36). At the SOU 423 watching brief a (possible prehistoric) ditch and a Saxon pit were exposed (Smith 1991, 21). At SOU 518, to the NE. of the present site, a possible ploughsoil but no features or Saxon finds were observed (Shuttleworth 1992). An evaluation excavation in Rowlands Car Park (SOU 525) exposed a possible Middle Saxon pit, earlier undated features, and a scatter of prehistoric pottery (Smith 1993). At the SOU 674 watching brief possible Saxon features were identified (Smith 1995). SOU 778 was a watching brief and excavation at the new Mosque site. Several layers and features possibly were of Iron Age date. A N.-S. ditch, linear feature, and a layer were Roman to Middle Saxon (Vincent 1997). Four pits in SOU 965 Trench 1 probably were Middle Saxon (Garner 1999b). Middle Saxon features including a pit, four post-holes, and a probable beam slot were observed in East Park (SOU 976) to the W of SOU 1112. It was 'likely that the Middle Saxon activity was restricted to a small area' (Smith 2000, 44).

At many of the above sites features and deposits of uncertain date were exposed. The uncertainty is due to the nature of the investigation or a lack of datable finds. However, evidence from these sites indicates that there were settlements of uncertain size of Iron Age and Roman date about 100 m to the S. of the present site. The Saxon evidence suggests that the NW. edge of Hamwic is close to the site.

Surviving documents and maps indicate that most of the area was fields in the Middle Ages. Some of these fields were bounded by ditches (Blake

1981, 35). Medieval evidence at the above sites comprised a few finds and possibly a ploughsoil.

The area around the site was the subject of an early suburban development in the 1820s. Three E.-W. streets with terraced houses were built between what became St Mary's Road and East Park Terrace. The southernmost street was Compton Walk. A Wholesale Co-operative Society building stood in the SE. part of the site from the 1930s to the 1980s.

Geology and Topography

The site and surrounding area generally slope down to the SE. There has been much landscaping following the demolition of 19th-century houses as part of the creation of the Charlotte Place gyratory system and car park. The approximate height of the modern ground surface is 13.8 m OD in the NW. corner of the site and 9.3 m OD in the SE..

River Terrace Deposits (brickearth above gravel) overlie laminated clays and sands of the Wittering Formation (British Geological Survey 1987). Gravels were present on the S. edge of the site and at the higher points in the NW. area. The latter were iron-rich and contained lenses of ferruginous sandstone. Clays and sands were exposed over much of the site and brickearth was present in only the SE. area. The surviving surface of the brickearth was at 9.4 m OD. The surface of the gravel was 10.8 m OD in the SW. corner and up to 12.8 m OD in the NW. area.

RESULTS

Prehistoric

Prehistoric evidence comprised a few, mainly residual, finds and early features and layers. Several contexts were of uncertain date and may have been prehistoric.

Features 186 and 188 (SOU 1112 Trench 1 - Fig. 4) were shallow and had been damaged by modern features. They contained burnt flints and flecks of daub and were sealed by two layers (128/181 and 99) of leached loam with worked and

burnt flints. The worked flint is not distinctive but indicates a later prehistoric date. The layers occupied a natural depression and were similar to a layer at Six Dials that was associated with early ditches. It was interpreted as 'probably colluvium or hillwash which accumulated following the abandonment of the site in the Late Iron Age / Early Roman period' (Andrews 1997, 5).

Four flint-tempered pottery sherds of Bronze or Iron Age date were recovered from Middle Saxon features in SOU 379 Trench 1. A total of 66 worked flints was recovered from the site but most were residual. They comprised waste flakes (including core-preparation flakes and blades), a scraper, two utilised flakes, five cores, and a Mesolithic tranchet axe. Most of the material was rough and derived from river pebbles. The assemblage, with the exception of the tranchet axe, is not easily dated – probably it is a mixed group comprising mainly later prehistoric material.

Roman

No secure Roman features or deposits were identified but several contexts of uncertain date may have been Roman. Ceramics were recovered from Middle Saxon and later contexts across the site and comprised 14 fragments of brick and tile, and 9 pottery sherds, including flagon, samian, flint-tempered, and grog-tempered examples.

A damaged and fragmentary copper-alloy binding (item 3) from a Roman shield was recovered from Middle Saxon pit 377 (SOU 379 Trench 1). It was roughly gutter-shaped in section, 96 mm long, 7 mm wide, 4 mm high, and less than 1 mm thick. At one point there is a pair of opposing semi-circular lugs with a radius of 7 mm and central holes, probably for rivets. Originally the binding was curved and probably came from an oval wooden shield (used by cavalry and infantry). A fragmentary example from a pre-AD-60 context in Colchester is slightly larger and thicker, and has a surviving rivet (Crummy 1983, 130–1).

It is uncertain whether the Roman material was residual or had been collected from a Roman site in the Middle Saxon period.

Middle Saxon

SOU 379 Trench 1

Early contexts. Pit 116 was 1.9 m long, 1.8 m wide, and 2.1 m deep. It was rounded in plan and had vertical sides. The primary fills (438 to 442) were cess-stained and contained few finds but small fragments of mammal bone, four flint flakes, and a sherd of samian were recovered from soil samples. Finds from secondary fills included Middle Saxon pottery (mainly Group III – sandy); iron objects and slag; bird, fish, and mammal bones; lava quern fragments; worked flint; and daub.

Pit 320 was rounded in plan and had vertical sides. It was 1.6 m long, 1.5 m wide, and 1.1 m deep. The primary fills (345, 346, 349, 501 to 504, 506, 507, and 509 to 513) contained few finds and were mainly redeposited natural layers. Fill 349 contained coprolites, cess, seeds, fish bones, and small-mammal bones. Fill 346 contained a complete cat skeleton. Finds were more numerous in the upper fills (325 to 328, 342 to 344, 500, and 505) and included mammal, bird, and fish bones; seeds; cess; iron slag; iron nails; a copper-alloy strap end; and Roman and Middle Saxon pottery.

Stake-hole 196 contained fill 197, was cut by pit 179, and was 0.3 m deep. Four small fragments of bone were recovered.

Pit 179 was 1.7 m long, 1.2 m wide, 0.34 m deep, and had three fills. The finds comprised several mammal bones, three seeds, and two pin-beater fragments. It was cut by Middle Saxon hollow-way 49/158.

Gravel layers 5 and 6 were above natural brickearth and were cut by pits 33 and 354. They were excavated by machine and their extent is unknown. They survived in section along the S. edge of the trench for a length of 13 m. Layer 5 was above layer 6 and its surface was at 10.2 m OD. Layer 5 was 0.3 m thick and layer 6 was 0.6 m thick. The excavator suggested that layer 5 was a street surface.

Hollow-way. A linear feature (49) was partly exposed along the E. edge of the trench and measured 39 m long, 2.9 m wide, and up to 0.62 m deep (Fig. 3). The excavated parts were numbered separately as contexts 222, 612, 186, 158, and 522,

from S. to N. Most parts of the feature were about 0.3 m deep and cut only natural deposits but the central part (feature 49/158) cut pit 179 (see above). The linear feature has been interpreted as a hollow-way (see below).

Several presumed stake-holes cut natural layers in the base of most parts of the hollow-way (49) and were sealed by its fills. Although possibly cut by the hollow-way, more probably they were created after the hollow-way had formed. Six sub-circular features (243, 246, 248, 601, 602, and 603) were present in the base of hollow-way 49/222. Probably the small features were stake-holes and the larger ones post-holes. They formed a roughly straight line and might have been part of a structure. Four stake-holes (187, 189, 191, and 193) in the base of hollow-way 49/186 were up to 0.2 m deep. All but stake-hole 187 formed a straight line.

Nine stake-holes (161, 163, 165, 167, 169, 171, 173, 175, and 177) were in the base of hollow-way 49/158. Most were up to 0.07 m in diameter and 0.12 m deep but stake-hole 175 was about 0.12 m in diameter and 0.22 m deep. Stake-holes 531 to 537 and features 521 and 526 were scattered around the base of hollow-way 49/522. The stake-holes were filled by fills of the hollow-way, and were up to 0.08 m in diameter and 0.07 m deep. Feature 526 contained fill 527 and was 0.28 m long, 0.2 m wide, and 0.04 m deep. Feature 521 had five fills and was 0.46 m long, 0.35 m wide, and 0.48 m deep. A sherd of Iron Age pottery and several small fragments of bone were recovered.

Gravel Layers in the Hollow-way. Most of the (eight) lower fills of hollow-way 49/222 were moderately stony, very dark greyish brown, silty clay loam. Their finds were few and comprised mammal bones, small fragments of iron, and a piece of iron slag. Most of the (eight) upper fills were very stony, black, clay loam, and they were below modern deposits. Their finds were more numerous and included mammal bones, fragments of iron, iron slag, hammer scale, hearth lining, fragments of lava quern, and two sherds of Middle Saxon pottery.

Most of the lower fills (616 to 622) of hollow-way 49/612 were gravel in a matrix of very dark greyish brown, silty clay loam, and their finds included iron nails, iron slag, mammal

bones, a flint core, and a sherd of Roman pottery. They were cut by N.-S. linear features (613, 614, and 615) that were about 0.35 m wide and at least 1.7 m long. They were on the same alignment as the hollow-way and were interpreted as wheel ruts. Features 614 and 615 were only 0.05 m deep and contained fill 611. Feature 613 was 0.21 m deep and contained fill 608. Fill 611 contained quern fragments, a piece of iron slag, daub, and a fragment of (intrusive) slate, and fill 608 contained animal bones. Fills 605, 606, 607, and 623 (of hollow-way 49/612) were above fills 608 and 611 and were below modern contexts. They were also very stony and contained iron slag, mammal bones, and a sherd of Middle Saxon pottery.

Most of the fills (181 to 185) of hollow-way 49/186 were moderately stony, very dark greyish brown, silty clay loam. These fills were below layer 208 and were cut by modern features. The lowest fill (185) was less stony and contained a fragment of iron, part of a ceramic loomweight, mammal bones, and a fragment of a human skull. Finds from the other fills included a flint flake, iron slag, mammal bones, loomweight fragments, and a Roman pottery sherd.

Most of the fills of hollow-way 49/158 were moderately stony, dark brown, silty clay loam. The lower fills (157, 159, 160) contained mammal bones and seeds. The upper fills (152 to 156 and 204) had similar finds plus quern fragments, iron nails, a sherd of Iron Age and a sherd of Middle Saxon pottery. These fills were below layers 151 and 208.

Most of the fills of hollow-way 49/522 were gravel in a matrix of dark brown, silty clay loam, and they were below layer 515. Finds included fragments of iron nails, mammal bones, quern fragments, and a sherd of Middle Saxon pottery. Small fragments of post-medieval copper-alloy pins presumably were intrusive.

At the N. end of hollow-way 49/522 its edges were not defined. Redeposited brickearth layer 60 was above natural brickearth (layer 61), cut by wheel rut 138, and probably was a fill of the hollow-way. No finds were recovered but it was not definitely excavated. Feature 141 and wheel ruts 136 and 138 were within the area of hollow-way 49/522 but no relationships between them were recorded. Feature 141 was 0.58 m

long, 0.45 m wide, and at least 0.1 m deep, and had a gravel fill with no finds. Wheel rut 136 was 1.2 m wide, 0.44 m deep, and at least 1.6 m long, and contained gravel fill 137. Wheel rut 138 was 0.7 m wide, 0.14 m deep, and at least 1.7 m long, and contained gravel fill 59. Fill 137 contained small fragments of animal bone, a sherd of Middle (or Late) Saxon pottery, and a piece of (intrusive?) modern concrete, and fill 59 contained an iron nail. Both fills were below Middle Saxon layer 139.

In the NE. corner of the trench two layers (300 above 301) were cut by Middle Saxon pit 311 and were below modern deposits. Layer 301 was moderately stony, yellowish brown sand, and was 0.12 m thick. Layer 300 was gravel in a matrix of dark greyish brown, silty clay loam and was 0.08 m thick. No finds were recovered from them but it is not certain that they were excavated (shown as unexcavated on Fig. 3). These layers have been reinterpreted as fills of hollow-way 49.

In the SE. corner of the trench a greyish brown layer (no context number but recorded on plan) with an irregular boundary was present along the E. trench edge (shown as unexcavated on Fig. 3). Layer 102 was recorded at the base of the adjacent section so was above or the same as the unnumbered layer. It was moderately stony, very dark grey, silt loam and was 0.55 m thick. These two layers were not excavated but probably were fills of hollow-way 49.

Gravel Layers outside the Hollow-way. Immediately to the W. of the S. part of hollow-way 49 several gravel layers overlay natural deposits (Fig. 3). The layers were variously recorded as cut by or filling the hollow-way but (at least) parts of them were shown on plans to the W. of the W. edge of the feature. The plans also indicate that the W. edge of the gravel was formed by modern truncation. The main gravel layer was numbered 45, 624, and 391 in different areas (from S. to N.) and was about 0.15 m thick. The matrix varied in character but generally was dark brown, clay loam and the flint pebbles were up to 60 mm long. It was recorded as similar to and the same as some of the gravel fills of the hollow-way. Other gravel layers were below the main layer. Layer 444 was below layer 45, layers 392 and 393 were below layer 391, and a sequence

of five layers (625 to 629 – thickness not recorded) was below layer 624. Few finds were recovered and included plant remains, and mammal bones, but layer 392 contained 244 mammal-bone fragments, two bird bones, two iron-nail shanks and a fragment of iron, a flint scraper, and a loomweight fragment.

Discussion of the Hollow-way, Gravel Layers, and Structural Features. Hollow-way 49 was not completely exposed by the trench and its full size is unknown. The feature has been interpreted as a street that formed a hollow-way due to heavy use and then was metalled with local gravel. The gravel layers sealed several structural features, some in N.–S. alignments. These features could have been the remains of buildings constructed when the hollow-way went out of use but more likely were parts of fences that marked the edges of the street.

The interpretation of the gravel layers to the W. of the hollow-way is problematic. They may have been part of the metalling of the N.–S. street, but the absence of Middle Saxon pits (or other deep features) to the W. and NW. of the gravel indicates the possible location of a shallow, early, and long-lived feature. A street oriented SE. to NW. with a width up to 5 m could have occupied the gap between the known Middle Saxon features.

The Middle Saxon main street at Six Dials was particularly wide but other details of the street system there have parallels at SOU 1112. The main N.–S. street had a maximum width of 20 m and the 'side' streets were generally about 5 m wide. 'There are no examples of buildings or pits sealed beneath the streets, though some small post-holes and stake-holes have been found. Initially the streets may have been unmetalled, and the stake-holes and post-holes may perhaps have marked fence lines delineating these unmetalled streets' (Andrews 1997, 31).

Although the dating evidence is not conclusive it is suggested that the hollow-way was eroded early in the Middle Saxon period (but it could have had earlier origins), stakes and posts were inserted close to its W. edge, then the hollow-way was metalled with several gravel layers later in the Middle Saxon period. The gravel layers to the W. were part of a side street that was contemporary

with the Middle Saxon use of the main N.-S. thoroughfare.

Pits and other Features. Pit 250 was partly excavated and the base was not reached. It had at least nine fills, was sub-circular in plan, and was 1.16 m long, 1.13 m wide, and at least 0.76 m deep. Finds included mammal bones, fish bones, insect remains, seeds, cess and coprolite fragments, two small pieces of vessel glass, a copper-alloy fragment, and Middle Saxon pottery (groups II and IV).

Pit 319 had 11 fills, was sub-circular in plan with undercut sides, and was 2.2 m long, 2.1 m wide, and 1.09 m deep. Little cultural material was present in the lower layers. Fish bones, mammal bones, and a sherd of Middle Saxon pottery were recovered from fill 338. The upper fills contained more cultural material including bones (mammal, bird, and fish), cess fragments, plant remains, iron nails, a fragment of Roman tile, and Middle Saxon pottery (groups II, III, and IV).

Pit 377 had 13 fills, was sub-circular in plan, had cess-staining in the base, and was 1.1 m long, 0.65 m wide, and at least 0.47 m deep. Finds were recovered from most fills and included bones (mammal, bird, and fish), iron slag and hammerscale, three fragments of mineralised textile, cess and coprolite fragments, insect remains, seeds, a Roman copper-alloy fitting (see above), and a few sherds of Middle Saxon pottery (groups II, III, and IV).

Pit 455 was truncated by a Victorian cellar. It had eight fills, was oval in plan, and measured 1.59 m long and 1.3 m wide. The section was not drawn nor the depth recorded. Finds were recovered from five of the fills and included mammal bones, fish bones, hazel-nut shells, a small fragment of whetstone, six tiny pieces of glass, and 20 sherds of Middle Saxon pottery (group II).

Pit 363 was sub-circular in plan, 1.6 m long, 1.3 m wide, and 0.35 m deep, and had eight fills. The finds included two Middle Saxon pottery sherds; iron fragments; bird, fish, and mammal bones; seeds; insect remains; and cess fragments.

Features 62 and 64 cut layers 66 and 67 in the W. part of the trench. Layer 66 was stoneless, dark yellowish brown, sandy clay, and contained an iron nail. Layer 67 was above layer 66 and was stoneless, pale brown, sandy clay. Gulley 62 was

0.25 m wide, 0.3 m deep, and at least 4.2 m long. Fill 63 was very stony, brown, silty clay, and contained ten burnt flints and a flint flake. Feature 64 was 0.5 m long, 0.38 m wide, and 0.17 m deep. Fill 65 was stoneless, pale brown, sandy clay, and a tiny flint flake and two possible whetstone fragments were recovered from a soil sample. Pit 200, to the NW. of features 62 and 64, was not excavated or recorded in any detail. A sherd of Middle Saxon blackware pottery and a fragment of lime mortar were recovered from the top of fill 201.

Pit 33 was partly exposed in section and was not excavated. It was recorded that the top fill (25) of ten contained small fragments of charcoal, bone, and 'brick'. A sherd of Middle Saxon pottery was recovered during cleaning.

Features without Finds. Features 130, 311, 354, 373, and 426 were not excavated and no dating evidence was found. Features 55 and 450 were excavated but contained no finds. They cut natural layers and were below modern deposits. Despite an absence of clear evidence probably they were Middle Saxon.

Pit 130 was sub-circular in plan had four fills, and was 2.5 m long and 2.4 m wide. Two of the fills contained charcoal flecks and burnt clay or daub, another was described as 'ash'. Pit 311 cut fills 300 and 301 of hollow-way 49, and contained five fills. It was at least 1.58 m long and 1.46 m wide. No cultural material was recorded except for charcoal flecks in one fill. Pit 354 cut layer 5 on the S. edge of the trench. It was at least 0.7 m long and 0.5 m wide, and one fill was exposed. Pit 373 was 1.9 m long and 1.5 m wide, and one fill was exposed. Feature 426 was sub-rectangular in plan, cut natural layer 519, and contained one fill. It was 0.34 m long and 0.28 m wide.

Pit 450 was sub-circular in plan, had four fills, and was 1.6 m long, 0.8 m wide, and 0.3 m deep. The fills were mainly redeposited natural layers and no finds were recovered. Feature 55 was partly excavated but its edges were not defined. It was at least 1.7 m long, 1.2 m wide, and 0.44 m deep, and had at least five fills. The fills were mainly redeposited natural layers and contained charcoal flecks.

Layers above the Hollow-way. Several layers of uncertain date overlay the fills of the hollow-way.

Layer 139 was above the fills of wheel ruts 136 and 138, and hollow-way 49/522. It was gravel in a matrix of dark brown, silty clay loam, and was at least 0.03 m thick. Layer 515 was above the fills of hollow-way 49/522 and below medieval layer 516. It was slightly stony, yellowish brown, sandy clay and was 0.11 m thick. Neither layer contained cultural material.

Layers 151 and 208 were above the fills of hollow-way 49/186. Layer 151 was very stony, dark yellowish brown, silty clay loam, and was 0.15 m thick. Layer 208 was slightly stony, yellowish brown, silty clay, and was 0.13 m thick. Layer 151 contained mammal bones, fragments of lava quern, and a piece of daub. Layer 208 contained a flint flake, mammal bones, and a cereal grain.

SOU 1112 Trench 1 (and SOU 379 Trench 2)

South End. Pit 20 was partly exposed by the trench and was at least 2.0 m long, 1.0 m wide, and 1.2 m deep, and had steep sides. It had six fills (22, 38, 42, 43, 44, and 46) with finds that included daub, animal bone, Roman ceramic building material, Middle Saxon imported and local pottery, a fragment of lava quern, iron slag, a fragment of iron sheet, stone rubble, and a ceramic loomweight.

Feature 23 was cut by pit 64 and was 1.7 m long, 0.1 m deep, at least 0.9 m wide. Its fill (24) was stony, light olive brown, silty clay loam with no cultural material. Pit 64 had steep sides, and was sub-rectangular in plan, 3.0 m long, 2.8 m wide, and 1.7 m deep, and had 24 fills (61, 65, 67, 76, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 93, 101, 102, 109, 110, 117, 118, 119, 121, 124, 126, 127, 133, and 134). It contained a wide range of finds but in small quantities – a flint flake, daub, a sherd of glass, animal bones, Middle Saxon imported and local pottery, fragments of lava quern, iron slag, hearth lining, and a fragment of ceramic loomweight.

Feature 8 contained fill 9 and was cut by pit 10. It was 1.2 m long, 0.08 m deep, and at least 0.28 m wide, and no cultural material was present. Pit 10 was partly exposed by the trench. It was at least 1.1 m long, 0.5 m wide, and 0.65 m deep, and contained three fills (11, 32, and 36). The finds comprised local Middle Saxon pottery, fragments of lava quern, and a piece of burnt chalk.

Pit 18 was 1.5 m long, 1.3 m wide, and 0.3 m deep, and had a rounded profile. Few finds were recovered from its fills (19, 57, 58, and 59) – burnt flints and local Middle Saxon pottery. The upper fill (19) was the same deposit as fill 061/065 of pit 64. Feature 14 was 0.5 m long and 0.2 m deep, contained fill 15 but no finds. Possibly it was a truncated post-hole. Pit 157 was truncated by a modern feature and little survived. It was at least 1 m long, 0.2 m wide, and 0.18 m deep, and its fill contained flecks of charcoal and daub.

Features 4, 6, and 25 were shallow, had one fill each, and were of uncertain function and date. Feature 6 was the deepest at 0.17 m deep. Only feature 6 contained finds – two pieces of iron slag. Possibly features 6 and 25 were truncated post-holes.

Well 115 was sub-rectangular in plan, with a shaft off centre to the SE. The well pit was 2.5 m long, 2.3 m wide, and 4.5 m deep. Towards the base the pit was roughly circular with a diameter of about 1.5 m. The upper part of the NW. side of the pit was stepped. A horizontal square slot was cut into the SE. side at a depth of 0.8 m. It was 0.36 m long and about 0.32 m square. Near the top the shaft was sub-circular with a diameter of about 0.7 m and lower down it was rectangular – 0.45 m long and 0.35 m wide. The bottom 1 m of the well was waterlogged and over 80 fragments of wood (see below) including a possible lining were recovered. Middle Saxon imported and local pottery, daub, Roman brick and tile, hearth lining, iron slag, iron objects including a tooth from a wool comb, sherds of vessel glass, and animal bones were also recovered from the shaft. Finds from soil samples included seeds, insects, bird bones, and hammer scale. The only finds recovered from the fills of the pit were two large pieces of iron slag from fill 149. The upper fills (116 and 144) went across the shaft and pit and probably were deposits that filled the collapsed well. They contained iron slag, baked clay, cattle teeth, and Middle Saxon pottery.

Central Area. Many of the features in this area had been identified on SOU 379 Trench 2. Features 664 and 667 were recorded on SOU 379 but were not exposed by SOU 1112 Trench 1. Most features cut

natural deposits, but pits 068, 078, and 112 cut prehistoric layer 128/181.

Features 664 and 667 were partly exposed by SOU 379 Trench 2 but no finds were recovered. Feature 664 was at least 0.5 m long and 0.35 m wide, and feature 664 was at least 0.62 m long and 0.48 m wide.

Pit 28 contained (from top to bottom) fills 29, 37, 39, 40, 41, 45, and 49, was sub-rectangular in plan, 1.8 m long, 1.5 m wide, and 0.7 m deep. No finds were recovered from the two lowest fills but fill 49 contained charcoal flecks and was cess-stained. Finds from the rest of the pit included Middle Saxon imported and local pottery, daub, fragments of lava quern, and animal bones. Previously (as SOU 379 pit 642) a similar range of finds was recovered with the additions of two iron objects and a ceramic lamp. Feature 30 cut fill 41 of pit 28 and contained three fills. It was sub-circular in plan and was 0.9 m long, 0.8 m wide, and 0.2 m deep. The top fill (31) contained Middle Saxon pottery, daub, and animal bones. The top fills of features 28 and 30 were contaminated by modern finds due to the previous investigations.

Feature 54 was sub-rectangular in plan, 0.5 m long, 0.4 m wide, and 0.18 m deep, and contained two fills (55 and 56). The only find was a fragment of mortar from the top of the upper fill (55). A depression in the centre of fill 56 was surrounded by large flints indicating the position of a post. Feature 50 was 0.47 m long, 0.30 m wide, and 0.16 m deep, and contained fill 51 but no finds. Possibly features 30, 50, and 54 were post-holes although only feature 54 had a post-mould. They were roughly in a straight line but were not equidistant.

Pit 161 was truncated by a modern feature and the surviving part was 1.47 m long, 0.46 m wide, and 0.53 m deep. Fill 162 contained flecks of daub, bone, and charcoal but no artefacts were recovered.

Pits 68, 78, and 112 cut prehistoric layer 128/181. The top fills of pits 68 and 112 were contaminated with modern finds from the previous investigations. Pit 68 was sub-rectangular in plan, 1.3 m long, 1.1 m wide, 1.4 m deep, and had seven fills. The fills were very stony and contained animal bones, Middle Saxon pottery, daub,

lava-quern fragments, and a fragment of ceramic loomweight. Pit 78 was heavily damaged by modern features and the surviving dimensions were 1 m long, 0.6 m wide, and 0.28 m deep. Its two fills contained charcoal flecks, daub, five pottery sherds, and a sherd of vessel glass. Pit 112 was sub-rectangular in plan, 1.5 m long, 1.4 m wide, 0.53 m deep, and had six fills. Few finds were recovered – they included a Middle Saxon pottery sherd, two animal bones, a fragment of Roman brick, and an iron knife blade inlaid with braided copper-alloy wire.

Northern Half. Few Middle Saxon features were exposed by the N. half of Trench 1. No features were recorded in this area at SOU 379 except for pit 671 but the plan does not make its precise location clear. It was sub-circular in plan and was 1.8 m long and 1.66 m wide, but was not excavated. Possibly it was the same feature as pit 52 (Fig. 4).

Features 168 and 305 were heavily truncated by modern disturbance. Pit 168 was at least 0.95 m long, 0.5 m wide, and 0.9 m deep, and contained five fills. Finds included animal bones, Middle Saxon pottery, daub, fragments of lava quern, and a loomweight fragment. Feature 305 was at least 3 m long, 1 m wide, and 0.7 m deep, and contained three fills. The lowest fill was cut by stake-hole 309 that was circular in plan with a V-shaped profile. No cultural material was present in features 305 and 309 except burnt flint. The function of feature 305 is uncertain.

Pit 52 was sub-circular in plan, 1.3 m long, 1 m wide, 0.36 m deep, and had five fills. Most of the fills had charcoal flecks but very few finds. A sherd of Middle Saxon pottery, burnt mammal bones, a piece of daub, and iron slag were recovered.

Pit 136 was sub-rectangular in plan, 1.8 m long, 1.4 m wide, 0.43 m deep, and had seven fills (137 to 143). Middle Saxon pottery was recovered from two of the lower fills (141 and 142). Most of the fills contained charcoal flecks.

Feature 184 was 0.8 m long, 0.5 m wide, 0.1 m deep, and contained fill 182. Feature 178 cut fill 182, contained two fills, and was 0.8 m long, 0.4 m wide, and 0.1 m deep. Both features contained redeposited natural layers but no cultural material – perhaps they were natural features.

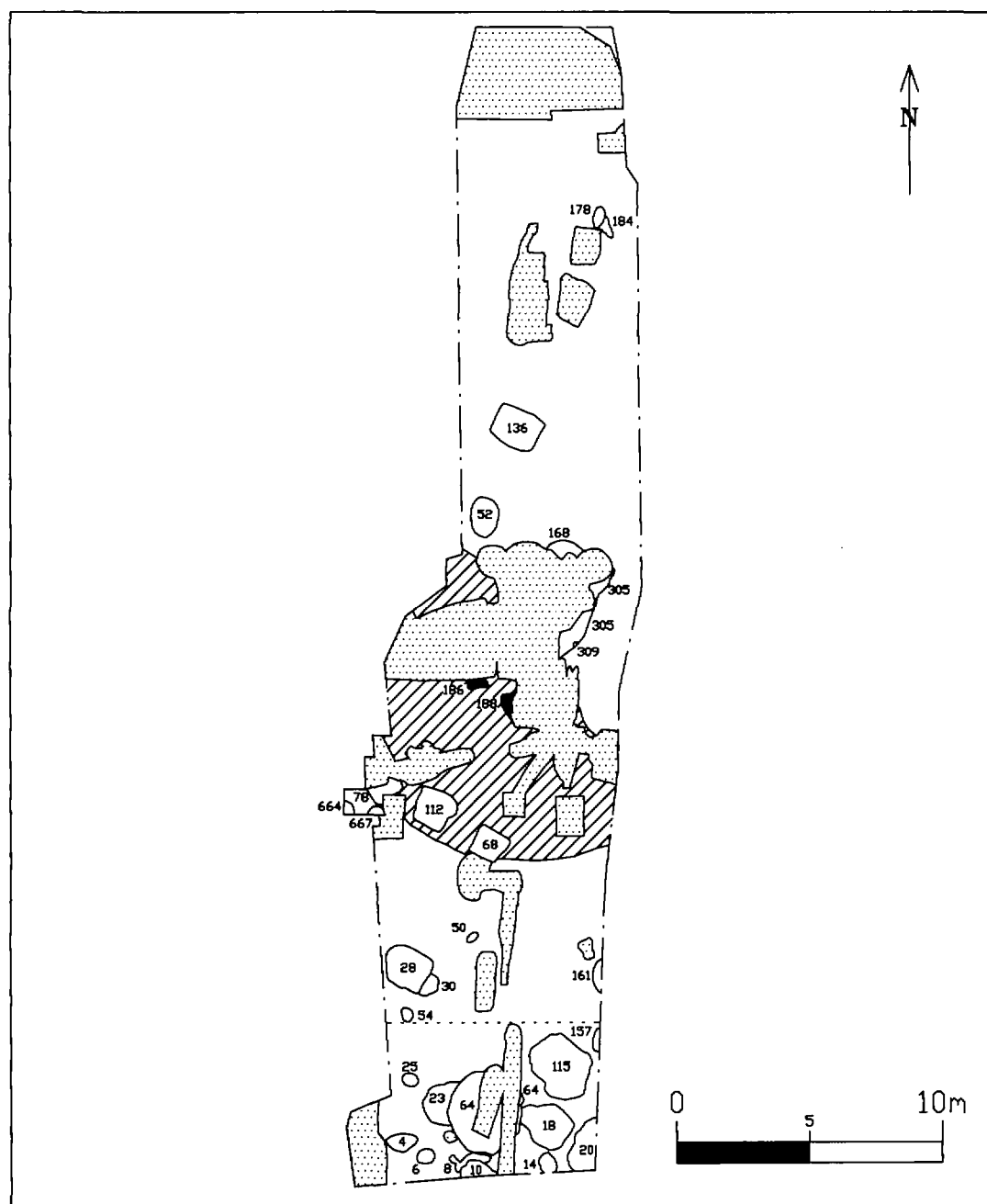


Fig. 4 Plan of SOU 1112 Trench 1 showing prehistoric (solid) and Middle Saxon features. An early layer is hatched and modern disturbance is stippled. Features 664 and 667 were exposed in SOU 379 Trench 2 and the broken line marks the southern limit of that trench.

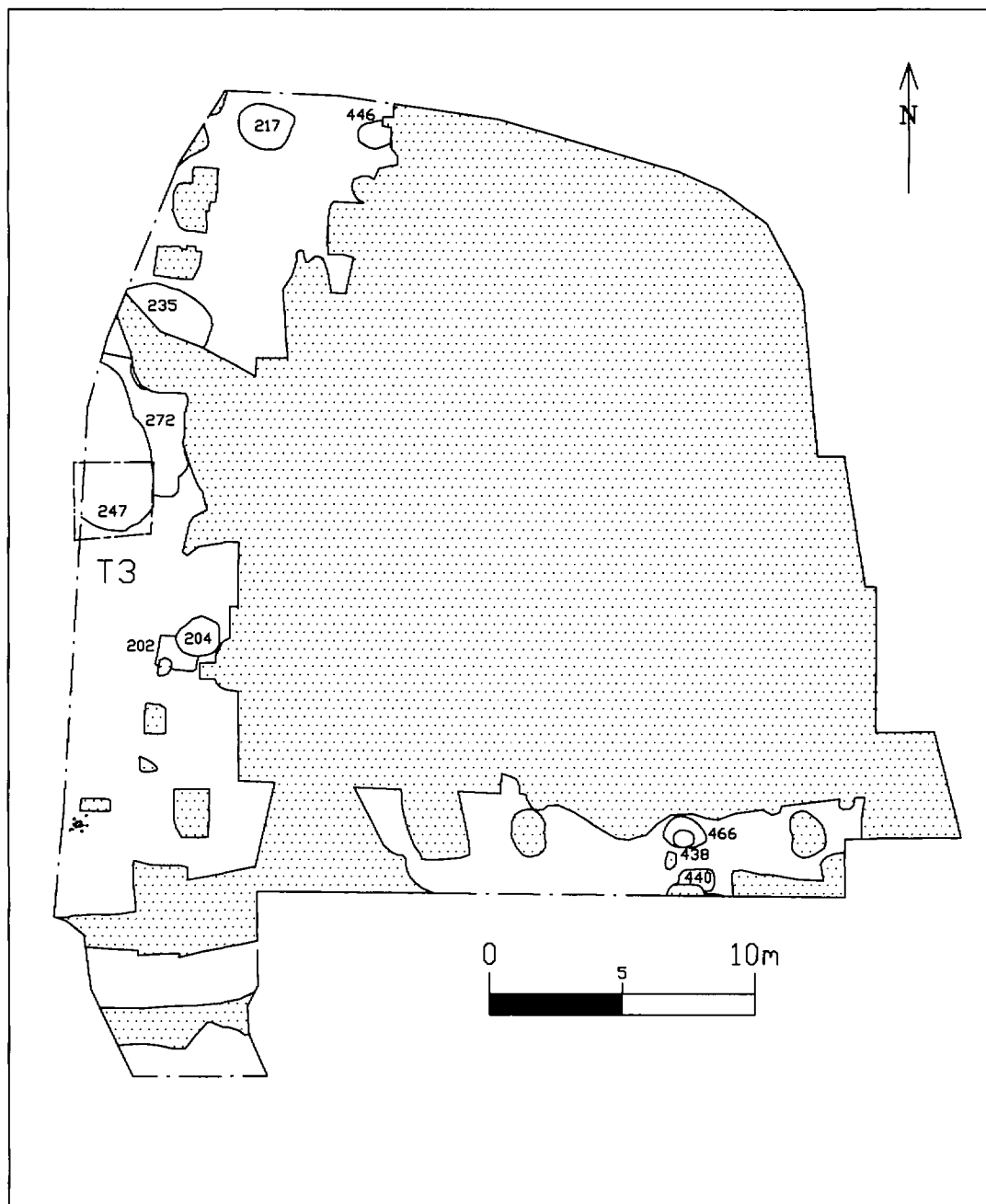


Fig. 5 Plan of SOU 1112 Trench 2 showing Middle Saxon features and modern disturbance (stippled). Trench 3 (T3) was part of SOU 964. Stake-holes are not numbered.

SOU 1112 Trench 2 (and SOU 964)

South-East Corner. Three Middle Saxon features survived in a relatively undisturbed strip of natural deposits in the SE. corner of the trench (Fig. 5). Pit 440 was sub-rectangular in plan, 1.3 m long, 0.9 m wide, and 0.28 m deep, and had two fills. No finds were recovered but the fills contained flecks of charcoal, burnt clay, and bone. Pit 466 was sub-circular in plan, 1.6 m long, 1.2 m wide, and at least 1.65 m deep. Only one of the eight fills contained finds – a piece of daub, a sheep's tooth, and six Middle Saxon pottery sherds. Post-hole 438 cut the top fills of the pit. It was 1.1 m long, 0.7 m wide, and 0.8 m deep, and had three fills. All of the finds came from the fill (439) of the post-pipe – a piece of Roman brick, animal bones, and lava-quern fragments.

West Side. Several Middle Saxon features survived in a relatively undisturbed strip along the western edge of the trench. Most of them cut natural deposits. Few finds were recovered so the dating is uncertain.

Twelve small features (298, 300, 402, 404, 406, etc) in the SW. part of the trench had one fill each and contained no finds. Most were circular in plan and the maximum dimensions were 0.09 m in diameter and 0.12 m deep. The fills were stoneless, light olive brown, sand. Probably most of the features were stake-holes but some may have been natural.

Feature 202 was sub-rectangular in plan, 1.5 m long, 1.2 m wide, and 0.13 m deep. The single fill (203) contained charcoal flecks. Pit 204 cut fill 203, was sub-circular in plan, 1.6 m long, 1.5 m wide, and 1.35 m deep. Finds were recovered from six of the 21 fills. The lowest fill (250) contained flecks of charcoal and bone. The six fills above fill 250 were mainly redeposited natural layers and contained no cultural material. Fill 244 contained a fragment of human skull. Finds recovered from the upper 11 fills included animal bones, daub, fragments of lava quern, a piece of Roman brick, and Middle Saxon pottery sherds.

Three large features (235, 247, and 272) were partly exposed on the W. edge of the trench. Most of the fills were redeposited natural layers and they contained few finds. Probably they were

quarry pits for sand and clay. Feature 272 was irregular in plan and was at least 5.8 m long, 2.1 m wide, and 0.55 m deep. No cultural material was present in the six fills. It was cut by the other two features.

Feature 235 was at least 4 m long, 3.6 m wide, and 1 m deep, with stepped sides and depressions in the base, and had 16 fills. Finds were recovered from two fills. Several of the primary fills contained flecks of charcoal and fill 262 was mainly charcoal with burnt clay inclusions. Fill 287 contained a sherd of Middle Saxon pottery. The upper fill (236) contained animal bone, daub, and five sherds of Middle Saxon pottery.

Feature 247 was at least 6.4 m long, 2.7 m wide, and 1.2 m deep, and had 15 fills. Finds were recovered from only the two upper fills: small fragments of mammal bone and a small piece of lead. The S. half of feature 247 coincided with SOU 964 Trench 3 – 'three features (46, 48, and 50) cut natural layer 56, and were below modern deposits' (Garner 1999b, 8). Probably all were parts of feature 247. Their finds (from fills 45 and 47) included daub, iron slag (probably a hearth bottom), animal bone, a sherd of imported Middle Saxon pottery, and two fragments of an iron knife blade.

Two shallow features (217 and 446) were the furthest N. of the pre-modern features at the site. Feature 446 was 1 m wide, 0.1 m deep, and at least 1.3 m long. Fill 447 was redeposited natural sand with no cultural material. Feature 217 contained two fills (218 and 223), was sub-circular in plan, 2.1 m long, 1.8 m wide, and 0.15 m deep. The lower fill (223) contained small fragments of animal bone. The upper fill contained two Middle Saxon pottery sherds and small fragments of animal bone. Possibly both features were the bases of truncated pits.

Middle Saxon Finds

Pottery. A total of 341 sherds of Middle Saxon pottery was recovered, almost all from features. Most of the sherds were small and vessel forms were not always apparent, but the few recognisable forms among the local wares fit the jar and cooking pot types well known from other assemblages from Hamwic (Timby 1988). One local ware sherd, of Group III (sandy) from SOU 1112

Table 1 Number of sherds of Middle Saxon pottery by fabric and trench

<i>Fabric</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>SOU 379</i>			<i>SOU 964</i>		<i>SOU 1112</i>		<i>All</i>	<i>All</i>	<i>Hamwic</i>
<i>Group</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>T1</i>	<i>T2</i>	<i>T1-7</i>	<i>T1</i>	<i>T2</i>	<i>T1</i>	<i>T2</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>
I	organic	2	—	—	3	2	3	2	7	2	6
II	chalk	44	2	—	14	4	14	4	64	19	17
III	sandy	64	—	2	70	11	70	11	147	43	31
IV	mixed grit	15	7	1	53	8	53	8	84	25	27
VI	flint	1	1	—	8	—	8	—	10	3	2
IX	imports	4	2	1	20	2	20	2	29	9	15
Total	—	130	12	4	168	27	168	27	341	100	98

pit 466, has a pierced rim. The wheel-made imports (Group IX) in Hamwic have a 'preponderance of handled and spouted vessels' (*ibid*, 108) but only one spout and no handles were identified in this assemblage.

Six of Timby's ten Fabric Groups (Timby 1998, *passim*) were present. They are the commonest Groups across Hamwic with the other four Groups comprising less than 2% by sherd count (*ibid*, 77). Table 1 shows the number of sherds of each Fabric Group from the different parts of the site and from Hamwic as a whole. By comparison with the pottery from the rest of Hamwic, Groups I (organic) and IX (imported) were under-represented and Group III (sandy) was over-represented. Generally Group I wares occur in early contexts in Hamwic and Group III in early and mid contexts. Group IX occur throughout the sequence but 'blackwares tend to be more numerous than greywares in the earliest deposits and the greywares predominate later' (Timby 1988, 114). Stamped decoration and Groups V (shelly) and VI (flint) indicate later contexts but are absent at the present site except for ten Group VI sherds. Possibly some of the flint-tempered sherds were Late Saxon. Group IV (mixed grit) usually dominates later assemblages but is also present in the middle period. The overall distribution of Fabric Groups at the site indicates that activity was concentrated in the middle period that

'can be dated from the mid 8th to the mid 9th century' (Andrews 1997, 14).

It is convenient to divide the site into three areas – SE. (SOU 379 Trench 1), SW. (SOU 379 Trench 2 and SOU 1112 Trench 1), and N. (SOU 1112 Trench 2 and SOU 964). The assemblage from the latter area is just 31 sherds from 6 features. A small sherd from a crucible of uncertain date was recovered from a modern context.

For the SE. area nearly half of the sherds were recovered from soil samples and many of them weighed less than 1 g. The most productive features were pits 116, 319, 320, and 455 with 100 sherds between them out of a total of 130. Pit 116 produced 44 sherds whereas hollow-way 49 had only seven sherds. The imports (Group IX) comprised 1 whiteware and 3 blackware sherds.

Most of the sherds from this area were from just two Fabric Groups (II and III) with Group IV in third place, and small quantities of Groups I, VI, and IX. Pit 116 contained mainly Group III sherds (39), 2 Group II sherds, and 1 each of Groups I, IV, and IX. Pit 320 contained 1 Group I sherd, 1 Group II, 14 Group III sherds, 1 blackware import (Group IX), and 3 Roman sherds. The distributions of the Groups from pits 116 and 320 suggest a slightly earlier date. All 20 sherds from pit 455 were from Group II.

Hollow-way 49 contained few, small sherds with 57% from Group IV – this would indicate a later date.

The SW. area produced the largest group of Middle Saxon sherds – 180 in total, of which 18 were residual in later contexts. The pottery was dominated by Groups III (70 sherds) and IV (60), with Group IX (22) in third place, and there were small quantities of Groups I, II, and VI. Group IX included blackwares, greywares, whitewares, and one red-painted whiteware sherd. The assemblage suggests a later date range than that for the SE. area.

The features that produced most pottery were well 115 (67 sherds), and pits 20 (24), 64 (13), 68 (10), and 28 (9). The lower part of the well shaft produced 21 sherds all from Group III. Sherds from the upper part comprised 3 from Group II, 30 from Group III, 5 from Group IV, 4 from Group VI, and 4 from Group IX. Despite the dominance of Group III later types of pottery were present in the upper part as would be expected.

Only 12 of the 180 sherds were from SOU 379 T2 – they were Group II (chalk) (2 sherds), Group IV (mixed grit) (7), Group VI (flint) (1), and Group IX (imported) (2) including a spout. This pottery was recovered from the upper fills of several Middle Saxon features and fits with a late date for such fills. Many of the Group IV (mixed grit) sherds in the SW. area came from pits 20, 28, and 68. The mixed grit group dominated the assemblages from these pits, with a minimum of 80% (pit 68), so a late date is indicated. Only 9 sherds of Group VI wares were recovered from SOU 1112 Trench 1: 3 were from well 115; 2 were from pit 168; and 2 were unstratified. Pit 168 also contained 1 sherd from Group II and despite the small size of this assemblage a late date is suggested.

Fired Clay Objects. Loom-weights. Several small fragments of fired clay were recovered from Middle Saxon contexts and may have come from loom-weights. Four fragments with a combined weight of 9 g were found in samples from three contexts in SOU 379 Trench 1. Four fragments with a maximum weight of 37 g came from pits in SOU 1112 Trench 1

Lamp. A fired-clay object from pit 642 in SOU 379 Trench 2 (pit 28 SOU 1112 Trench 1) is

nearly half of a thick-walled thumb pot with an external diameter of at least 125 mm and a height of 53 mm. It has a sandy fabric with organic and flint inclusions. Despite a lack of soot it is best interpreted as a lamp. A similar form is shown by a Group XII (grog-tempered) sherd with a soot deposit around the rim from SOU 24 (Timby 1988, 88 and 90). A Group III (sandy) lamp from SOU 31 had a residue of fish oil (Evans 1988, 123).

Wood Summary by D M Goodburn (September 2001). About 112 fragments were recovered (as 54 itemised finds) from well 115. They were sent to MoLSS for examination, a selective drawn record, and the production of a short assessment report. All the clearly worked material was from radially cleft (deliberately split) oak 'board' type material, all probably from a cask. The 'stopper' and smaller rounded fragments were not obviously oak (see below). L Gray of MoLSS carried out species identifications of the smaller roundwood and a small number of larger pieces as a check on the visual identifications of species. Four of the more complete fragments were selected for detailed scale drawing (see archive).

Species Identification of Selected Wood Fragments by Lisa Gray (September 2001). Eleven items (35, 60, 66, 82, 87, 88, 90, 91, 93, 94, and 95) were selected for identification by Damian Goodburn. They were examined under a microscope using an atlas of microscopic wood anatomy to make identifications (Schweingruber, 1978). For each fragment, with the exception of the charred bead (item 35), slides were made of transverse, longitudinal, and radial sections. These slides were examined and identifications were made as closely as the quality of preservation allowed. The charred bead was examined under a low-powered stereo microscope where the transverse section only could be clearly seen. The results are given in Table 2.

The Cask. The radially cleft material was probably entirely derived from a coopered vessel – probably a cask rather than a bucket or tub. The maximum surviving dimensions of the fragments were 33 mm thick, 153 mm wide, and 630 mm long. The best-preserved items such as 45, 46, 47, and 48, had

Table 2 Wood from well 115, dimensions are for the largest fragment

<i>Context</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Wgt (g)</i>	<i>Frgs</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>Species</i>	<i>Length</i>	<i>Width</i>	<i>Thick</i>
311	35	1	1	Bead, half	Charred	cf Salix sp	9	6	3
311	56	253	1	ROFA			260	82	21
311	57	298	4	ROFA	All join		320	103	19
311	58	133	1	ROFAS			135	85	19
311	59	12	1	ROFA			100	25	17
311	60	13	1	Stopper	Drawn	cf Acer sp	61	25	20
311	67	91	1	ROFA			113	65	17
311	68	60	6	ROFAS			325	23	24
311	69	190	1	C			350	60	20
311	70	243	1	ROF			266	129	16
311	71	49	2	ROFAS			180	26	20
311	72	29	1	ROFAS			125	61	10
311	73	13	1	ROFAS			88	27	6
311	74	67	1	ROFAS			238	41	18
311	75	227	1	ROFAS			195	97	20
311	86	1	2	ROFAS			75	10	3
311	87	50	15	A		Quercus sp	11	7	4
311	88	9	2	Bark frags		Quercus sp	44	50	10
312	43	958	1	C			630	110	16
312	52	338	1	ROF			190	118	26
312	53	171	1	ROFAS			208	71	20
312	54	136	1	CS			222	57	18
312	55	203	1	ROFAS			177	100	27
312	76	28	2	ROFAS			55	70	12
312	77	15	1	ROFAS			190	13	10
312	89	12	1	ROFAS			70	30	14
312	90	94	15	A		Quercus sp	50	55	22
313	78	99	1	CS			60	90	20
313	79	33	1	ROFAS			73	38	19
315	46	444	1	C	Drawn		400	101	16
315	47	989	1	C	Drawn		490	98	17

Table 2 (cont.)

<i>Context</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Wgt (g)</i>	<i>Frgs</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>Species</i>	<i>Length</i>	<i>Width</i>	<i>Thick</i>
315	48	1006	1	C	Drawn		615	107	20
315	49	755	1	C			600	90	20
315	50	665	1	C			460	97	18
315	51	355	2	C both frags			510	43	18
315	61	344	1	CS			280	80	17
315	62	102	1	CS			180	42	18
315	63	50	1	CS			55	55	20
315	64	195	1	ROFAS			355	47	21
315	65	35	1	ROFAS			255	24	15
315	66	45	1	A oak frag		Quercus sp	175	27	20
315	91	3	5	Roundwood		cf Cornus sp	32	13	13
316	44	1017	1	C (widest stave)			491	153	17
316	45	776	1	C			502	87	20
316	80	410	2	C	Fit together		160	150	22
316	81	87	1	CS			55	98	26
316	82	89	1	CS		Quercus sp	88	65	20
316	83	90	1	ROFAS			127	52	33
316	84	191	1	ROFAS			232	90	16
316	85	323	1	C			331	58	22
316	92	3	1	ROFAS			13	8	6
316	93	8	8	A, twig frags		Salix sp	40	31	10
316	94	27	6	A, twig frags		Salix sp	70	37	22
316	95	4	1	Unworked twig		cf Corylus sp	37	2	2

Description key: ROF = radially cleft oak board frag; C = cooperage frags; S small; CS = small probable cooperage frags; A amorphous. Note – all cooperage fragments are radially cleft oak.

the clear traces of a 'croze' groove for holding the end boards (the 'heading') of a stave-built vessel. The 'howel' hollow leading down to the 'croze' groove was very small and unlike what is typical in either Roman or later medieval cooperage. Indeed

it is smaller than that recorded in Late-Saxon cooperage from sites like Bull Wharf (site UPT 90) in London. The lower ends of the staves where one might expect to find a bevelling of the inside of the stave end or 'chime' did not show any traces of it.

In all the cask was rather crudely made and may have been destined for semi-dry or 'slack' use holding thick liquids or dry goods. However, it may be wrong to use the standards of later cooperage to judge the work of this period, and perhaps the cask was a quickly made 'one-journey' cask for liquids such as wine.

The very base of the cask was just well preserved enough for a small number of tool-marks to survive. Slightly curved axe stop marks over 100 mm wide survived on the outside of stave item 47. The axe blade that produced them was clearly much wider, but probably a little more rounded and probably smaller than the very wide blades used in cooper's axes of the later medieval period where they might reach a width of 300 mm (like those of 20th-century English coopers). The edges of some of the staves were very smooth and true and had clearly been planed, with occasional 'chatter marks' surviving here and there. It appears that planes were only used on the edges of cooperage items and for smoothing weapon shafts in Anglo-Saxon England. No clear fragments of the hoops of the vessel were found. None of the fragments appeared to be end or heading boards, which are rarely left in casks reused in well linings, for obvious reasons.

Stopper. Item 60 was an abraded stopper-like object made by shaving a cleft section of cf *Acer* sp round. Surviving dimensions are 65 mm long and 26 mm in diameter.

Bead. Two charred fragments of cf *Salix* sp may be a bead.

Conclusions by D M Goodburn and M F Garner. Cooperage of the Middle Saxon period is relatively rare although casks have previously been found in Hamwic.

SOU 36 was excavated in 1946–1950 and revealed two wells with timber-lined shafts. At the base of pit 11 'were preserved the remains of 14 'boards' in an incomplete circuit. When complete, the circuit probably had been made up of 22 'boards'. The shaft may have been constructed ... from a reused cask or barrel' (Morton 1992, 197). The shaft of pit 17 'had been formed (at least in the bottom 0.3 m) from perhaps 15 vertically set

staves or planks, the remains of eight of which survived *in situ* ... this lining may have been constructed from a reused cask or barrel' (*ibid*, 201).

Feature 62 at SOU 11 contained 'a collapsed wooden cask and a turned waste core' (Morton 1992, 112). '[Carole] Morris ... describes the cask found in the bottom of the pit as having been made out of probably 11 oak staves, nine of which survive, and two caskheads, one of which (of oak) survives. The head fitted into roughly cut grooves in the staves, which were held together by a single band of hazel. The cask was small, with a capacity of only about 8.5dm³' (*ibid*, 112–13). 'The wooden object found with it ... may have been used as a bung in the missing caskhead' (*ibid*, 113).

The best parallel with the cask at the present site was found at SOU 7. A cask, re-used as well-shaft lining in feature 53 survived as wood lower down and as a continuous stain above. It was 'built from 17 staves, 10 mm thick. A groove had been cut into each to hold a caskhead' (Morton 1992, 81). The cask was 0.7 m in diameter and at least 1.47 m tall. 'Where the wood survived, 'stains of a timber binding' ... were noted outside it. Estimating its capacity at 566dm³, [Carole] Morris ... remarks that it is the largest Anglo-Saxon cask yet discovered, and suggests that it had been intended to hold either a liquid or a mixture of liquid and solid matter such as fish' (*ibid*, 84). A 'preliminary dendrochronological date ... indicated that the oak used had been felled soon after 704. Unfortunately, the timbers have now all disintegrated and a further examination of the cask is impossible' (*ibid*, 85).

A Middle Saxon barrel head was recovered at Medmerry in West Sussex (Goodburn 1987). The wood from the cask had been radially cleft from logs cut from large slow-growing wildwood-type trees, a common raw material in Anglo-Saxon England but unknown in England after about AD 1250. It is possible that the cask may have been imported.

Iron Objects. SOU 379 Trench 1m. A total of 54 iron objects was recovered. Small fragments of two objects (context 379, item 76; context 430, item 79) were tentatively identified as blades. Six complete nails, 16 shanks, 6 heads, and 8 fragmentary nails were recognised. A nail (context 66, item 10) from a Middle Saxon context is 65 mm long, and five unstratified

nails (items 26–9, and 52) range from 46 mm to 154 mm in length. Three small miscellaneous objects were recovered from contexts 185 (item 69; 39 mm long), 326 (item 75; the point of a pin, 10 mm long), and 460 (item 83; 42 mm long). Thirteen small fragments (items 32, 37–39, 41, 54, 70–73, 77, 80, and 90) of uncertain type from several contexts have a maximum dimension of 32 mm.

SOU 379 Trench 2. Three miscellaneous fittings or plates of uncertain function were recovered from Middle Saxon pits. Item 40 (context 661) is a plate fragment and 46 mm long. Item 61 (context 643) is a plate fragment with rivets and 46 mm long. Item 62 (context 643) is a U-shaped fitting and 80 mm long.

SOU 964. A knife blade (context 47, item 3) in two fragments with a width of 17 mm and combined length of 48 mm was recovered.

SOU 1112. Thirteen objects came from Middle Saxon contexts in Trench 1 (including seven from well 115) and item 1 was unstratified. Four miscellaneous fragments of uncertain type (context 196, items 38 to 41) have a maximum dimension of 32 mm. Two nails are 52 mm (context 114, item 4) and 115 mm (context 146, item 17) long. A shank (context 146, item 16) is 67 mm long. A pointed tooth (context 146, item 18) from a wool-comb (heckle) has extant dimensions of 93 mm long and 5 mm wide.

Two knife blades are 99 mm (context 1, item 1) and 117 mm (context 114, item 3) long. The latter is inlaid with perhaps four braided wires of copper or copper-alloy along one side of the back. Two fragments of a blade (context 171, items 31 and 32) have a combined length of 55 mm.

Two miscellaneous fittings are of uncertain function. Item 2 (context 19) is 87 mm long and 24 mm wide, with two iron rivets. Item 12 (context 44) is two fragments with a combined size of 57 mm long and 46 mm wide.

Iron Working Debris. SOU 379. The excavations recovered 3.5 kg of iron-working debris from Middle Saxon contexts. All of it derives from smithing and comprises almost entirely smithing slag. This includes three complete or near-complete hearth bottoms; the largest (context 226, hollow-way 49/222) weighed 1.3 kg and measured 140 × 130 × 60 mm. Hammerscale was recovered from three soil samples (of 5 dm³ each) and totalled

approximately 500 fragments weighing 6 g. The debris came from eight features (the hollow-way and pits 116, 259, 319, 320, 363, 377, and 455) across Trench 1 but was concentrated in the SE. corner. The features with the greatest weight of slag were pit 377 and hollow-way 49 (parts 222 and 612). In addition, fragments of hearth lining of burnt clay were recovered from most of the features with slag.

SOU 964. An incomplete hearth bottom weighing 0.27 kg was recovered from fill 45 of Middle Saxon feature 46.

SOU 1112. The excavations recovered 9.8 kg of iron-working debris from Middle Saxon contexts. All of it derives from smithing and comprises almost entirely smithing slag. This includes seven complete or near-complete hearth bottoms; the largest weighed 0.9 kg and measured 140 × 120 × 50 mm. Hammerscale was recovered from two soil samples (of 5 dm³ each) and totalled approximately 800 fragments weighing 15 g. The debris came from six features (6, 20, 64, 115, 168, and 208) in Trench 1 and was concentrated in the SE. corner. Most was from well 115 (8.44 kg) with the next most productive feature (pit 64) yielding 0.85 kg. Three of the five contexts with hearth bottoms and both contexts with hammerscale were fills of well 115. In addition, eight fragments of hearth lining of burnt clay were recovered from the well.

Non-ferrous metal. Copper alloy. Item 4 (context 326, pit 320 SOU 379); Type D strap-end (Hinton 1996, 43) with two rivet-holes (one broken), split end, and waist, 53 mm long and 9 mm wide. Black organic material in split may be leather.

Item 84 (context 253, pit 250 SOU 379); sub-circular with organic material attached, 12 mm long, 11 mm wide, and 4 mm thick. Possibly it is the head of a stud or tack.

Lead. Item 36 (context 248, pit 247 SOU 1112); a fragment of lead sheet, 17 mm long, 10 mm wide, and 1 mm thick.

Glass. Thirteen sherds of Middle Saxon glass were recovered from the site. Although small, all appeared to be fragments of vessels and fall within the range of material from Hamwic (Hunter and Heyworth 1998). The sherds from SOU 379 weighed less than 1 g each.

Item 85 (SOU 379, context 253) is a (dull) blue sherd with an applied yellow trail, and is 8 mm long. Item 86 (SOU 379, context 253) is a light blue chip with a maximum dimension of 4 mm.

Item 87 (SOU 379, context 459) is three (bright) blue chips, the largest of which is 9 mm long.

Item 88 (SOU 379, context 459) is three green sherds, the largest of which is 8 mm long.

Item 9 (SOU 1112, modern context 80) is a light green rim sherd, weighs 4 g, and has a maximum dimension of 48 mm. It is a tubular rim with cavity from a decorated funnel beaker.

Item 10 (SOU 1112, context 79) is light green, weighs 3 g, and is 47 mm long. It is a body sherd of a beaker, possibly a funnel beaker.

Item 11 (SOU 1112, context 84) is a light blue body sherd with a maximum dimension of 17 mm.

Item 20 (SOU 1112, context 146) is a light blue trail, 29 mm long, 6 mm wide, and 2 mm thick.

Item 37 (SOU 1112, context 146) is a light blue sherd with applied reticella rod, and is 6 mm long.

Worked bone. 'The debris from the working of bone and antler is a fairly common find in Hamwic' (Morton 1992, 56) but none was found at this site. Generally bone was poorly preserved but this cannot completely explain the paucity of material. Two pin-beater fragments were recovered from adjacent fills in pit 179 (SOU 379 Trench 1). They do not join but have modern breaks and perhaps belong to one pin-beater that was broken and splintered on excavation. The size of this example, although broken, indicates that it belongs in the smaller of the two sizes of pin-beater, less than 100 mm (Riddler 1993, 117–9). Item 9 (context 195) is 46 mm long, 8 mm wide, and 6 mm thick. It is generally oval in cross section, although it is flattened towards the point. The entire surface has a high polish and bears many fine scratches. Item 81 (context 212) is 35 mm long, 8 mm wide, and 6 mm thick. It is also oval in section with a flattened point, and is scratched and polished.

Human bone. Small fragments of human bone were recovered from SOUs 379 and 1112. Two fragments of cranium came from fill 185 of hollow-way 49/186. At SOU 1112 three joining fragments of cranium were in fill 244 of pit 204 and two small fragments came from modern pit 208.

Stone. Lava querns. The most numerous stone fragments were of lava from the Eifel region in Germany (Parkhouse 1976). Many of these fragments were small and featureless but some exhibited a flat worn surface. 'The vesicular lava does not survive well, and weathering often renders the stone extremely friable' (Andrews and Philips 1997, 240). It is likely that most, if not all, derived from querns. At SOU 379 lava was recovered from the hollow-way and pits 116 and 646. The most productive context was fill 204 of hollow-way 49/158 with 44 fragments weighing 604 g. At SOU 1112 lava was recovered from features 10, 20, 28, 64, and 68 in Trench 1 and features 204, 208, and 438 in Trench 2.

Grindstone. A fragment of sandstone grindstone was recovered from a modern context in SOU 1112 Trench 1. The outer surface is curved and smooth. When complete the diameter of the grindstone would have been about 220 mm and the thickness at least 78 mm. Grindstones are rare in Hamwic but it is possible that this object was Middle Saxon. At Six Dials a circular grindstone came 'from a pit within the SOU 24 smithing complex, and is likely to have been associated with the iron-working activity in that area' (Andrews and Philips 1997, 241).

Whetstones. Small fragments of stone, each with a flat surface, were recovered from soil samples from SOU 379. It is possible they came from whetstones. Two fragments of sandstone (context 65) weigh 7 g. A fragment of fine-grained grey stone (context 252) weighs 1 g. A fragment of sandstone (context 462) weighs 1 g.

Rubble. Various fragments of stone showed no evidence of working. Types included ironstone, ferruginous sandstone, boxstone, quartzite, Bembridge limestone, and chalk. The iron-rich types probably derived from natural deposits on the site.

Late Saxon and Medieval

A layer of dark soil, interpreted as ploughsoil of Late Saxon to post-medieval date, was above natural and Middle Saxon deposits and below early modern deposits in SOU 379 Trench 1 and

along the western edge of SOU 1112 Trench 2 (including SOU 964 trenches). No Late Saxon or medieval contexts were identified in SOU 379 Trench 2 or SOU 1112 Trench 1 but one unstratified pottery sherd was Late Saxon.

Two layers (101 and 516) of ploughsoil were identified in SOU 379 Trench 1 but an unstratified pottery sherd was the only definite medieval find from the trench. Layer 101 was above Middle Saxon layer 102 in the SE. corner. It was moderately stony, dark greyish brown, silt loam, 0.4 m thick, and at least 4.7 m long. Layer 516 was above the fills of the hollow-way and was moderately stony, very dark greyish brown, silty clay loam and was 0.14 m thick. A sherd of Middle Saxon pottery and nine mammal-bone fragments were recovered.

No datable finds were recovered from the ploughsoil in SOU 1112 Trench 2. Layer 7/17 (SOU 964 Trench 1) was stony, greyish brown, loam, and was 0.32 m thick. Several fragments of animal bone and a sherd of Middle Saxon pottery were recovered. Layer 82 (SOU 964 Trench 5) was stony, dark brown, sandy silt loam, with charcoal flecks, and was 0.4 m thick.

Post-Medieval to Modern (16th century onwards)

The only post-medieval contexts identified were in SOU 964 Trench 7. Feature 122 cut natural layer 124 and was cut by feature 136. It was a sub-rectangular pit and was at least 2.6 m long. Fill 123 contained Verwood pottery, glass, and tobacco pipes – all probably of 18th century date. Feature 136 may have been a small post-hole and it contained a fragment of limestone and a piece of peg tile of 18th- or 19th-century date.

DISCUSSION

Prehistoric evidence comprised a few, mainly residual, finds (pottery, worked flints, and burnt flints) and early features and layers. Most of the material is of Bronze or Iron Age date. A few Roman finds were recovered from Middle Saxon and later contexts.

Middle Saxon features were found across the site except in the large areas of deep modern dis-

turbance, particularly in the NE. The main feature on the site was a hollow-way that contained gravel layers and wheel ruts. The modern St Mary's Road is on the line, at least at the SE. end, of a Middle Saxon street (Andrews 1997, 31–45), and probably the hollow-way was part of that street. Maps of the 19th century show that St Mary's Road was more curved and ran further to the W. than the modern road. The W. edge of the hollow-way coincides closely with the W. edge of the 19th-century road.

It was argued above that a metalled side street had run NW. from the S. part of the hollow-way. The street may have continued across SOU 1112 Trench 1. Possible pit alignments in the S. half of the site had a similar orientation to this postulated side street, as did gully 62 in SOU 379 Trench 1.

Most structural features on the site were in the base of the hollow-way and may have been the remains of fences used to mark the edge of the street. Shallow structural features may have been lost in other areas to later disturbance. No buildings were identified.

Many of the features were of uncertain function. Feature 115 (SOU 1112 Trench 1) had the most obvious function of the Middle Saxon features, being a classic Hamwic well with a wood lining, including a probable cask near the base. Most of the pits may have been dug to quarry gravel, sand, or clay and were then used for rubbish disposal. The pits contained few finds and a limited range compared with those at Six Dials but were similar to assemblages from pits close to the edge of the Middle Saxon settlement such as those at Cook Street (Garner 2001). Three large features in the NW. part of the site most closely resemble quarry pits and contained almost no finds. The natural deposits in that area were laminated clays and sands and may have been used for making daub but have few other obvious uses. There was no evidence that the ferruginous sandstone present in parts of the N. area had been quarried, and no evidence for the smelting of iron was found.

The finds and features show that activities near the site were similar to those elsewhere in Hamwic but did not represent the full range. The three main industrial activities at Hamwic were iron working,

copper-alloy working, and the manufacture of items from bone and antler. At this site evidence only for iron working was found, although an unstratified crucible sherd, probably used for copper-alloy casting, may be Middle Saxon. Textile production is indicated by loom-weights and bone pin-beaters. Domestic rubbish included sherds from cooking pots, fragments of querns and whetstones, butchered animal bone, and knife blades. The presence of a few fragments of human bone suggests that a nearby cemetery was disturbed in the Middle Saxon period. The relative proportions of pottery Fabric Groups indicate that most activity was in the main middle period of Hamwic's existence, considered to be from the mid 8th to the mid 9th century.

Evidence from sites to the S. (Six Dials and SOU 778) might have suggested that a ditch would exist here but no ditch was found. It is just possible that a N.-S. ditch some 30 m to the W. of the hollow-way has been totally destroyed by the extreme amount of later disturbance on the site.

The number of features was low compared with Six Dials and appeared to reduce towards the N. The density of pits based on excavated areas free from major disturbance was about 11 per 100 m² at Six Dials and less than 3 per 100 m² at the present site. The difference is especially notable as the two sites are close to each other and have similar situations. Six Dials lies less than 250 m to the SE.; and both sites are adjacent to the same major street. In addition to the low density, the

pits contained relatively few finds. This might be the result of little activity that led to rubbish disposal. The main concentration of pits (and a well) was at the S end of SOU 1112 Trench 1. The absence of pits in some areas, particularly close to the hollow-way, could be explained by the presence of buildings the remains of which have been destroyed. The lack of evidence for a ditch such as that at Six Dials might suggest that the present site lies outside the main boundary of Hamwic. The low density of pits and occupation evidence indicate that the site had a marginal location or was of a rural nature.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The project was managed by Matt Garner, metal finds were X-rayed and conserved by Carol Edwards, the report figures were prepared by Nel Mead, and Andrew Russel edited the report. Phil Andrews identified the iron objects and waste, Damian Goodburn (MoLSS) the wood, Lisa Gray (MoLSS) the wood species, and Vince Allen and Andrew Russel the other finds. The excavation was a Single Regeneration Partnership project on behalf of Southampton City Council. Most of the fieldwork at SOU 1112 was carried out by Graham Dall, Brian Shuttleworth, and John Vincent. Alan Morton (Southampton City Council's Heritage Conservation Unit) monitored the project and provided useful suggestions and information. The SOU 1112 archive including the finds will be stored by Southampton City Council's Arts and Heritage Section with the accession number A.2001.106

REFERENCES

- Andrews, P (ed.) 1997 *Excavations at Hamwic Volume 2: Excavations at Six Dials* (CBA Res Rep 109), York.
- Andrews, P and Philips, H 1997 Stone in Andrews 1997, 240-1.
- British Geological Survey 1987, *Geological Survey of Great Britain, Southampton Drift, Sheet 315, 1:50000*, Ordnance Survey, Southampton.
- Blake, E O (ed.) 1981 *The Cartulary of the Priory of St Denys Near Southampton*, Southampton.
- Crummy, N 1983 Military equipment in Crummy, N, *Colchester Archaeological Report 2: the Roman Small Finds from Excavations in Colchester 1971-9*, Colchester, 129-40.
- Evans, J 1988 Report on the organic residues on two vessels from SOU 31, in Timby.
- Garner, M F 1999a *Report on the Field Evaluation at 'The Old Co-op', St Mary's Road (65-66B St Mary's Road and Land to the West), Southampton (SOU 964)*, Southampton City Council Archaeology Unit Report 236.

- Garner, M F 1999b *Report on the Field Evaluation at Charlotte place Car Park, Southampton (SOU 965)*, Southampton City Council Archaeology Unit Report 237.
- Garner, M F 2001 A Middle Saxon Cemetery at Cook Street, Southampton (SOU 823) *Proc Hampshire Field Club Archaeol Soc* 56 170–91.
- Goodburn, D M 1987 Medmerry: a Reassessment of a Migration Period Site on the South Coast of England and some of its Finds in *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology and Underwater Exploration* 16.3: 213–24.
- Hassall, J 1971 A Note on Excavations at the New Art College Site, East Park Terrace, Southampton 1971, in *Southampton City Museums Archaeological Society Spring/Summer Bulletin* 1971 22 13–16.
- Hinton, D A 1996 *Southampton Finds Volume 2: The Gold, Silver and other Non-Ferrous Alloy Objects from Hamwic*, Stroud.
- Hunter, J R and Heyworth, M P 1998 *The Hamwic Glass* (CBA Res Rep 116), York.
- Kell, E 1859 (untitled letter) *The Hampshire Independent*, 21/12/59.
- Kell, E 1860 (untitled communication) *J Brit Archaeol Ass*, 16, 330.
- Kell, E 1866 (untitled communication) *J Brit Archaeol Ass*, 22, 455.
- Lindsey, R 1988 *Report on the Evaluation at the Old Co-op site, St Mary's Road, Southampton (SOU 379)* Southampton City Council Archaeology Operations Unit Archive Report.
- Morton, A D 1992 *Excavations at Hamwic Volume 1: Excavations 1946–83, excluding Six Dials and Melbourne Street*, (CBA Res Rep 84), London.
- Munsell Color, 1975 *Munsell Soil Color Charts*, Baltimore.
- Riddler, I D 1993 Saxon Worked Bone Objects in Williams, R J (ed.) *Pennyland and Hartigans: Two Iron Age and Saxon Sites in Milton Keynes*, Bucks Arch Soc Mon Series 4, 117–19.
- SCC Southampton City Council, 2001 *Healthy Living Centre, St Mary's Road, Southampton: Excavation Scheme of Investigation*.
- Shuttleworth, B 1992 *Report on the Watching Brief carried out at 111 St Mary's Road, Southampton (SOU 518)*, Southampton City Council Archaeology Operations Unit Report 331.
- Smith, M 1991 49 St Mary's Road, (SOU 423), in Morton, A D (ed.) 1991 *Southampton Archaeology and Heritage Management Section Annual Report 1990–91*, Southampton, 21.
- Smith, M 1993 *Report on the Evaluation at Rowlands Car Park, Southampton (SOU 525)*, Southampton City Council Archaeology Operations Unit Report 337.
- Smith, M 1995 *Report on the Excavation/Watching Brief at 48 St Mary's Road, Southampton (SOU 674)*, Southampton City Council Archaeology Unit Report 41.
- Smith, M 2000 *Report on the Archaeological Watching Brief in the Central Parks, Southampton (SOU 976)*, Southampton City Council Archaeology Unit Report 416.
- Timby, J 1988 *The Middle Saxon Pottery in Andrews, P (ed.) Southampton Finds, Volume 1: the Coins and Pottery from Hamwic*, 73–124, Southampton.
- Vincent, J G, 1997 *Report on the Watching Brief and Excavation at the New Mosque Site: Land at Rear of 41–53 St Mary's Road, Southampton (SOU 778)*, Southampton City Council Archaeology Unit Report 108.

Author: M F Garner, Archaeology Unit, Arts and Heritage, Southampton City Council, Civic Centre, Southampton, SO14 7LP

© Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society