

Test Pit	Iron Age		Romano-British		Early to mid Saxon		Medieval	
	Count	Weight	Count	Weight	Count	Weight	Count	Weight
1	0	0	134	1459	1	3	3	11
2	2	8	61	368	1	6	3	30

Table 1: Summary of Test Pit Pottery at Chimney

Conclusions

It had been hoped in 2020 to continue both the geophysical survey and the test pit programme but this has not been possible. Instead, it is hoped that this work will now continue in 2021. It is planned to continue the geophysical survey in a field to the north of the BBOWT buildings, while the test pit program may continue in the south-west in an attempt to locate medieval settlement.

Acknowledgements

We are very grateful to Lisa Lane, Louise King and Lucy Garrod of BBOWT for permission to excavate these test pits. The test pit excavation was organised by Leigh Mellor and supervised by Leigh Mellor and Lynn Amadio. The test pits were excavated by Leigh Mellor, Steve Nicholson, Ruth McLean, Lynn Amadio, Eileen Anderson, and BBOWT volunteers Chris Hughes and David Haynes. The pottery was analysed by Paul Blinkhorn.

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Appleton Area Archaeological Research Project (AAARP)

Test Pits and Geophysical Survey at Tubney Manor Farm (SP 4460 0093 centred)

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Introduction

The AAARP Project is researching an area around the village of Appleton which includes the settlements of Eaton and Besselsleigh, the deserted medieval village of Tubney and the deserted manor of Besselsleigh adjacent to the surviving church of St Lawrence. Fieldwork undertaken in 2017 and 2018 was summarised in Harrison and Rowley 2019 and the Appleton test pit campaign was described in Harrison *et al.* 2020.

This report provides an initial analysis of the pottery recovered from three test pits at Tubney Manor Farm together with the results of geophysical survey.

The Site

Domesday Book records Tubney as a small estate of one hide held by Rainbald from Abingdon Abbey. In 1086 the population consisted of two villeins, sixteen bordars and two slaves having arable land for six ploughs and 15 acres of meadow (Morgan 1979). Although the nature and location of this estate in the eleventh century is not known, it is probable it lay in north Tubney at what is now Tubney Manor Farm. The settlement survived the Black Death of 1348–49: in 1327 and 1332 there were 21 and 18 taxpayers respectively, while in 1394 there were still 18 tenants holding 20 of the

27 available holdings (Brooks 1984, 125). But no taxpayers are recorded in Tubney in the 1524 and 1525 lay subsidies (Brooks 1984, 126). Settlement desertion is confirmed by John Leland's description in the late 1530s which appears to relate to Tubney.

"I rode half a mile and came to Towkey where had been a village. The church or chapell yet remaineth, & ther by in a wood was a manor place, now clene down. It longethe now as a ferme to Magdalen College in Oxford." (VCH 1924, 379).

The reasons for the desertion of the village between 1394 and 1524 are unclear. Tenants may have left to obtain better holdings elsewhere, or the lord may have had a policy of engrossment and enclosure, forcing the removal of population (Brooks 1984, 127). Subsequently, the parish was repopulated but in a new location further south. Ten households contributed to the hearth tax of the 1660s and in 1801 a population of 79 lived in 13 dwellings (Brooks 1984, 128). As part of the re-population of Tubney from the seventeenth century a new farmhouse was constructed on the site of the former manor house and within the area enclosed by the medieval moat. This may have been an initiative of Magdalen College, possibly to house a tenant farmer. The construction of this new farmhouse may have used materials taken from the nearby abandoned church.

Tubney Manor Farm and the fields surrounding it are represented in a number of maps ranging in date from the 1750s to the 1870s of which two are discussed here. First, the Tubney tithe map of 1841 shows the farmhouse situated within three arms of the moat. To the south-east are some farm buildings and there are further buildings on the track to the south-west. Of considerable significance is the representation of a churchyard through dotted lines. The dots suggest there was no physical boundary around the churchyard although earlier boundaries or grave markers, may have been visible. There is no indication of the earlier church.

The second map is the first edition 2.5" to the mile Ordnance Survey map published in 1876. Between the 1840s and the 1870s the western arm of the moat has been filled in. Unlike the Tithe Award map which showed the outline of the churchyard but not the location of the church, the Ordnance Survey map provides a location for the church but does not show the churchyard. It is unclear on what basis the Ordnance Survey has provided the location of the church. The position of two stones are marked to the south-west and north-east of the site of the Church. If the outline of the churchyard, as taken from the Tithe Award map, is added, it seems these stones mark the northern boundary of the churchyard. The Ordnance Survey location of the church seems to have been chosen as the midway point between these two stones.

Oxfordshire

The outline of the churchyard as mapped by the 1841 tithe map and the position of the church as suggested by the Ordnance Survey are shown on figures 3 and 4.

Tubney Manor Farm Test Pits (2017 and 2018)

Three test pits (TP23, TP24 and TP25) were excavated near Tubney Manor Farm, the original manorial complex of Tubney. A post-medieval farmhouse now stands within the moated enclosure, adjacent to the deserted medieval village and lost church. Two test pits (TP23 and TP24 in 2017) were placed in an open area of grassland to the west of the farmhouse which may form part of the deserted medieval village. The third test pit (TP25 in 2018) was located further west, in a small field to the north of modern housing. The locations are illustrated in figures 33 and 34.

The pottery was analysed by Paul Blinkhorn who provided counts and weights per fabric type. Figure 32 provides an overview of the counts and weights for each pottery ware. It has a simple colour coding of orange (pre-medieval), yellow (medieval) and green (post-medieval). The vast bulk of the material recovered is medieval with only very small amounts of pre- and post-medieval pottery.

Table 1 summarises the counts and weights of the medieval pottery in these three test pits. The figures for TP23 and TP24 are largely identical and although TP25 has fewer sherds the overall assemblage is predominantly medieval. These results can usefully be compared with Appleton where 29 test pits produced 77 medieval sherds with a total weight of 598g. The three test pits at Tubney Manor Farm have produced about 70% more medieval sherds and only a tiny amount of post-medieval material. This difference is perhaps not unexpected, as Appleton remains an occupied village, where continued demolition, alteration and new building have damaged or removed medieval contexts and provided large quantities of post-medieval material. The substantial quantity of medieval pottery found in the three test pits at Tubney Manor Farm confirm the existence of a deserted medieval settlement, with TP25 perhaps near its edge.

Test Pit	Count	Weight
TP23	58	369
TP24	64	366
TP25	11	57
	133	792

Table 1: Medieval Pottery by Test Pit

Although the geophysical survey has identified a number of ditches it has not provided conclusive evidence of settlement. Figure 32 provides useful chronological information. In all three test pits the most common fabric type is OXBF, dated to AD 1050–1400. This, together with the very small amount of fabric type OXAC (AD 975–1350) does not provide strong evidence for pre-conquest settlement. There is a reasonable amount of fabric type OXAM (AD 1200–1600) but the historical evidence suggests the site was deserted before the 1520s. The pottery evidence is consistent with occupation from the eleventh to the fifteenth century.

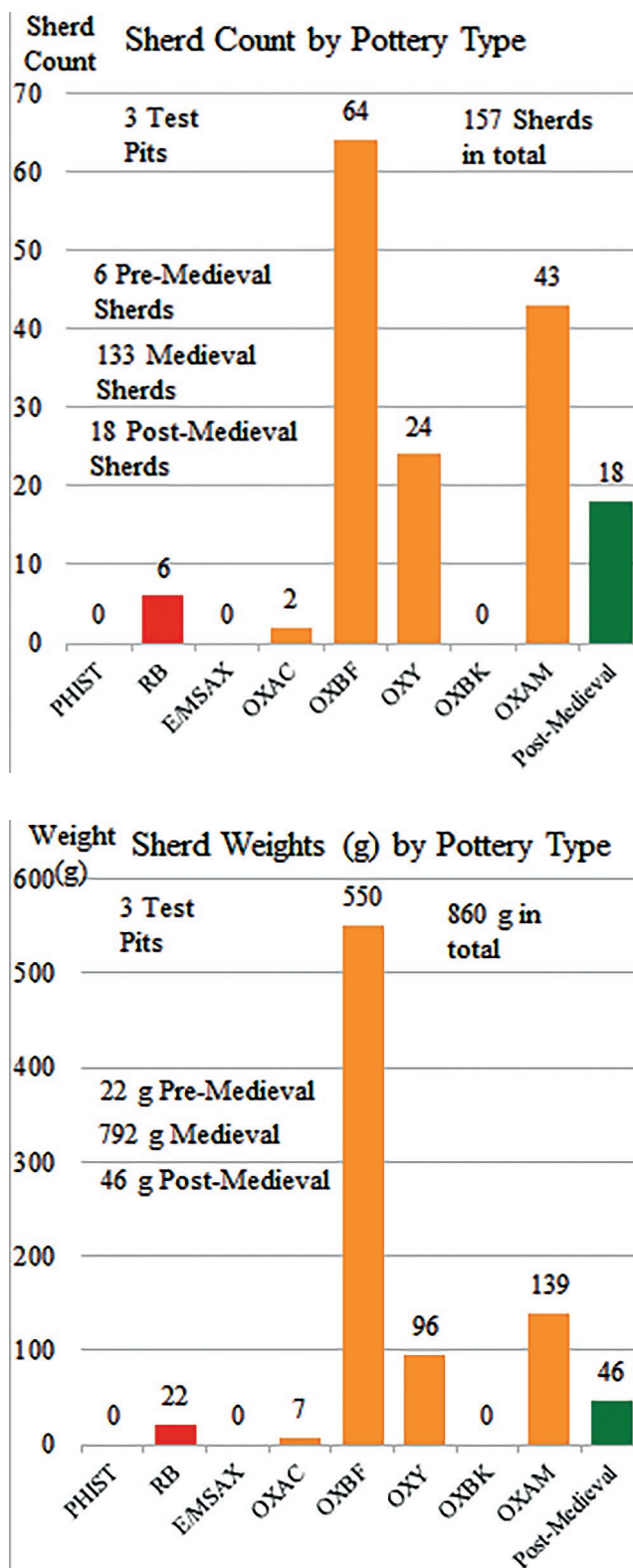


Figure 32: Tubney Manor Farm, Test Pit Pottery by Type (Counts and Weights)

Geophysical Survey at Tubney Manor Farm (2018)

The location of the geophysical survey lies to the west of the farmhouse in an open area of grassland which may form part of the deserted medieval village and is a possible site of the medieval church. An initial magnetometer survey covered all the field and was subsequently followed by an earth resistance survey in the southern part of the field.

The magnetometer survey was performed using a dual sensor Bartington Instruments GRAD601-2 gradiometer. The grids were thirty-metre squares and were walked in a clockwise “zig-zag” pattern with traverses one metre apart and readings taken four times a metre along each traverse. The results have been processed by TerraSurveyor and are presented as block-shaded images using a grey scale in figures 2 and 3.

Four approximately linear positive magnetic anomalies, shown as dark lines, run from the western boundary into the field, but only perhaps the one in the south may reach the eastern field boundary. Such positive magnetic anomalies are usually interpreted as ditches and this seems a reasonable assumption here. An alternative interpretation could be a path. Test pit TP23 lies on one of these probable ditch features. The homogenous nature of the spits excavated from the test pit supports the assumption that it was located on the fill of a ditch. This ditch may have been filled in around the time the village was abandoned.

There are large numbers of ferrous metal objects represented by dipoles, i.e. adjacent points of black and white. In some cases they appear to follow linear alignments but it is not clear whether this has any significance. The intensity of these features, and also features suggesting ground disturbance, increases towards the south-eastern boundary. However, they do not appear to resolve themselves into any archaeological features. In this area is test pit TP24 which exposed an undisturbed, stone cobbled surface, possibly a yard, path or outbuilding rather than a domestic internal floor surface. However, the geophysical survey does not add any further information to this.

Figure 33 contains an interpretation of the possible archaeological features. The north-east of the survey area is dominated by a very strong linear anomaly shown as alternating black and white areas and this is almost certainly

a metal pipe, probably for water. It may be leading towards the Tubney Manor Farm buildings, or to water troughs in the adjacent fields. Also present in this figure are the location of the two earlier test pits (TP23 and TP24), the outline of the churchyard in the south-east as taken from the Tithe Award map, and the location of the church as suggested by the Ordnance Survey.

The earth resistance survey was performed by two groups of OUDCE MSc Applied Landscape Archaeology students using a Geoscan Research RM-15D resistivity meter. The grids were twenty-metre squares and were walked in a clockwise “zig-zag” pattern with traverses one metre apart and readings taken two times a metre along each traverse. The resistivity meter was configured as a twin probe array with the mobile probes 0.5 metres apart. The results have been processed by TerraSurveyor and are presented as block shaded images using a colour scale in Figure 4. Low resistance readings are represented by dark green, high resistance readings as red, and various shades of green, yellow and orange indicate intermediate resistance values.

Figure 34 clearly shows a rectangular, high resistance feature in the south-west of the survey area and two parallel linear features running south-west to north-east to the east of the rectangular feature. The ends of these two parallel features are not easy to determine and they may converge in the west. In the east they disappear into a low resistance feature. If this is their eastern end it aligns well with the eastern boundary of the churchyard from the Tithe Award map. The visible length of the parallel features is approximately 45 metres.

The rectangular feature measures 10 to 11 metres on its longer axis and about 7 metres on its shorter axis. It appears to represent the rectangular foundations of a building whose interior floor has been removed. The high resistance would indicate stone or rubble foundations. This is how a ruined or demolished church might be expected to appear in an earth

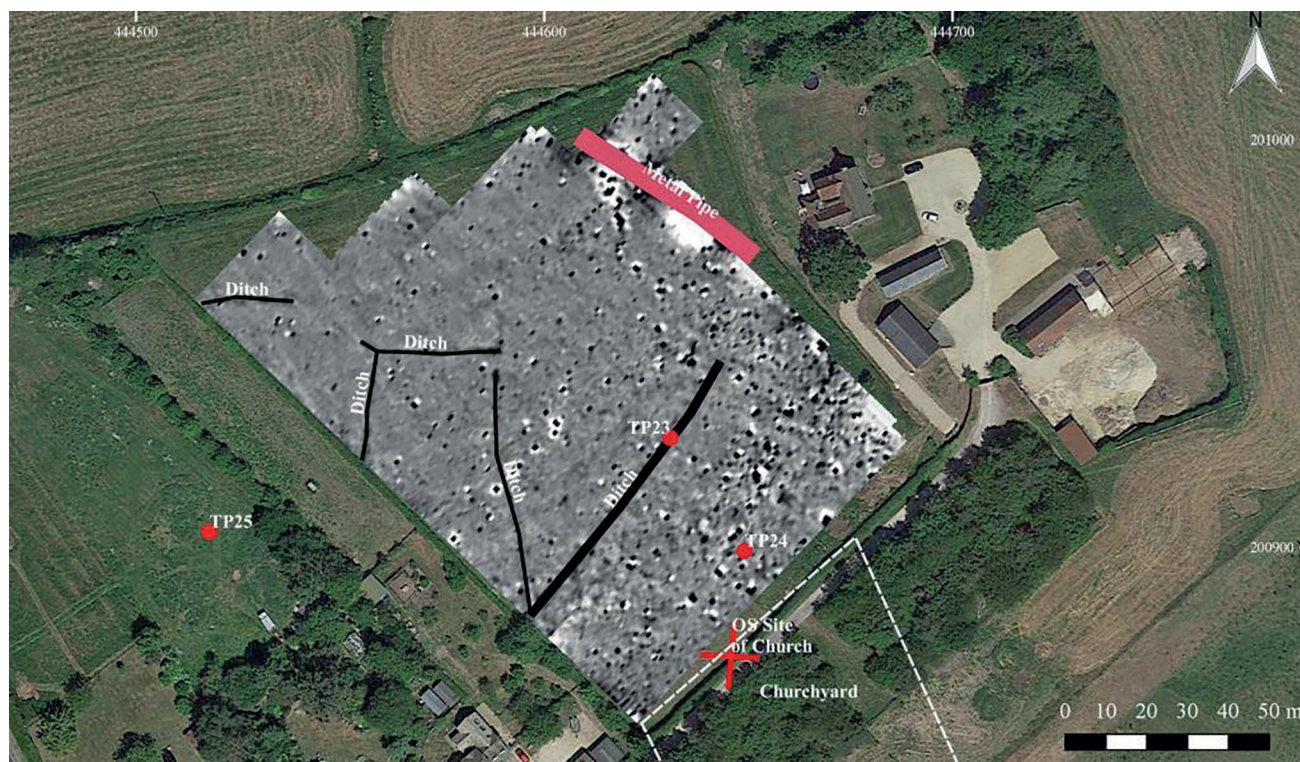


Figure 33: Tubney Manor Farm, Magnetometer Survey Interpretation

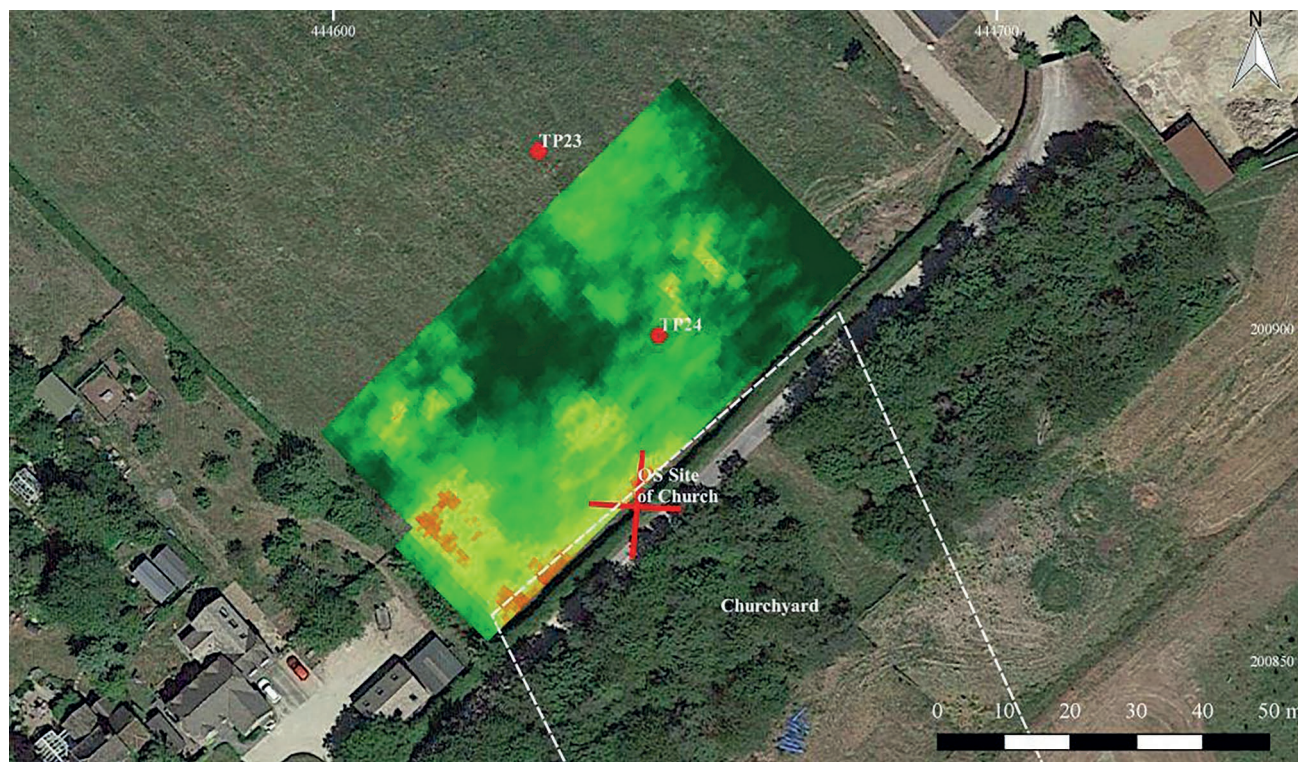


Figure 34: Tubney Manor Farm, Earth Resistance Survey

resistance survey. In addition, it is close to the area where a church was likely to be. But there are at least two problems with interpreting the feature as a church. Firstly, the building is quite small: at 11 metres by 7 metres it is about half the size of the church at Besselsleigh. By itself this is not an insurmountable problem. More importantly, the building is not aligned on or near to an east-west axis as would be expected for a church.

There are further high resistance readings along the south-eastern boundary of the survey, one of which corresponds, probably fortuitously, almost exactly with the Ordnance Survey location of the church. These high resistance areas are more difficult to interpret as they are incomplete – they may be parts of archaeological features or alternatively they may relate to the construction and maintenance of the track to the south-east. In the east of the survey area are two small, irregular areas of ‘highish’ resistance. Test pit TP24 is close to one of these. The area with the lowest resistance is in the centre-north of the survey area. There are irregular areas of higher resistance to the east and west of this low resistance area.

Discussion

An extensive area to the south-east of Tubney Manor Farm was excavated by Oxford Archaeology (OA) between 2001 and 2009 (Simmonds *et al.* 2011). The north-west limit of this excavation approached the south-eastern boundary of the churchyard as represented on the 1841 Tithe Award map. Medieval features, primarily ditches, were found in this north-western area. Just within the excavation limit a major ditch was located, aligned south-west to north-east and largely parallel with the presumed south-eastern boundary of the churchyard. This ditch appears to have been recut several times and its fill contained pottery dating from the late twelfth to the early fifteenth centuries. Short lengths of other ditches were found, one of which contained pottery dated from the eleventh to thirteenth century. A further

feature produced pottery indicating a thirteenth to fourteenth century date. (Simmonds *et al.* 2011, pages 123, 139 and 164). These pottery dates are in good agreement with those from the three test pits.

The OA excavation appears to confirm the south-eastern boundary of the churchyard and may provide evidence for the south-eastern limit of the medieval settlement. The alignment of the main ditch confirms the medieval date of the south-west to north-east alignment of the south-eastern boundary of the churchyard. This same alignment is seen in the track which leads from Tubney Manor Farm to the Appleton road, and by the two parallel features observed in the earth resistance survey. These two parallel features may indicate a ditch (or ditches) marking the north-western boundary of the churchyard in the same way that the ditch excavated by OA marks the south-eastern boundary. Figures 2 and 3 demonstrate that the alignments of the ditches detected in the magnetometer survey do not share this south-west to north-east alignment. Closest is the southernmost ditch, in which test pit TP23 was located.

The three test pits have provided significant quantities of medieval pottery and confirmed the site as a deserted medieval village. Test pit TP23 appears to have been located on a ditch and test pit TP24 provided evidence of a cobbled surface. The character of the excavated spits in both test pits suggests layers have been virtually undisturbed since the desertion of the village.

A plausible location for a church would be somewhere within the churchyard and therefore south of the trackway to the Appleton Road. The earth resistance survey examined the area to the north of the trackway and located a rectangular structure probably having rubble or stone foundations. It is unlikely this is the church or chapel at Tubney as its small size and orientation argue against it. It may instead represent some other building within the village. In this case it might be expected that more of these features remain to be detected within the medieval settlement.

Conclusions

The aim of the test pits and geophysical surveys at Tubney Manor Farm was to determine the extent of the medieval settlement and provide dating information. The test pit pottery supports a date range from the eleventh to the fifteenth century. It is possible the settlement began before the Norman conquest but clear archaeological evidence for this has not yet been found.

The settlement appears to have been quite extensive but its boundaries have not yet been located. To this end it is hoped that future test pits and geophysical surveys will more accurately delimit the settlement. The field to the north of the geophysical surveys and test pits TP23 and TP24 contains a number of depressions which Brooks (1984, 131) has interpreted as holloways within the medieval settlement. The area to the south of the trackway is more difficult to survey as it contains a belt of trees and then a fence. To the south-east of this fence is a narrow strip of land before the edge of the earlier excavation and sand quarry is reached.

It is also hoped to place a small excavation trench over the possible building foundations detected in the earth resistance survey.

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WALLINGFORD HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Crowmarsh Gifford, Coldharbour Farm SU625894

LINDSEY BEDFORD

In August 2020, The Wallingford Historical and Archaeological Society (TWHAS), revisited Coldharbour Farm in Crowmarsh Gifford, a site where 28 years previously a metal detectorist unearthed a Roman lead coffin. This led to an excavation by the group resulting in

the discovery of a small cemetery of 25 internments of men, women and children in one field and a corn drier in the field opposite. This was recorded in CBA South Midlands Group Newsletter No. 26. Pp 71–76.

The current long term project is being led and carried out by volunteers from TWHAS but also includes friends from our neighbouring societies. There is such a wealth of expertise and experience across the different societies, often restricted by modern county boundaries, that it is lovely when a project can disregard those boundaries and work in collaboration.

The project aims to survey all the fields surrounding the original investigation, to see whether we can reveal evidence for occupation. There are 9 fields in the survey area and 4 different survey methods will be carried out on each; magnetometry, resistivity (on targeted areas), metal detecting and fieldwalking.

The first field that became available after harvesting in 2020 was the one with the corn drier. Unfortunately, the magnetometry was not as conclusive as hoped due to ground conditions being very dry, relatively shallow topsoil over solid chalk and quite a lot of ferrous contamination. The resistivity picked up the previous archaeological interventions and several linear features, probably field ditch boundaries. It was clear from the geophysics that the focus for occupation was not in this field.

The fieldwalking collected a 20% sample across the whole field and recovered much ceramic building material and pottery. Being surface finds and subjected to weather and farming, much of the material was highly abraded. Nevertheless, the majority of the Roman pottery picked up was concentrated in the area of the field closest to the corn drier. The Medieval, Post Medieval and Modern sherds were scattered right across the field showing continuity of use for many years.

This continuity was also demonstrated with the metal detected finds. The earliest metal finds included a Roman snake ring (Fig. 35) and 15 Roman coins. There were also 5 Medieval silver coins (5 cut half pennies and 1 full penny). The 3 earliest are short cross cut half pennies dating from AD 1180–1272 and all bear the name HENRICVS. Unfortunately no more can be read of the inscriptions so the issuing ruler could be Henry II, Richard I, John or Henry III as the legend did not change across their reigns. One of the long cross coins (a cut half penny of Henry III), has a Carlisle mintmark. As this mint was only operational from AD 1248 – 1250 that makes this quite a rare coin.

In addition to the coins, there were many other finds. These included part of a sword belt hanger, lead tokens, part of a purse bar, a Georgian fob seal with CREDI inscribed in amethyst and a 13th century vesical seal (Fig. 36) portraying a pelican feeding her chicks with the blood from her breast. Around the edge of this was the inscription S' RADVL[F...] (the seal of Ralf....), unfortunately the rest is illegible.

We were lucky to be able to undertake this work between the 1st and 2nd Covid lockdowns. Although we obviously had to keep to strict and challenging guidelines, it was an enormously important event at a time when people's mental health was really suffering. Being able to work outdoors with friends old and new, doing what we love doing was a huge boost to everyone's wellbeing. Hopefully we will continue the work this year and for several more years to come.