



Society News

The Bulletin of the Enfield Archaeological Society



A glazed earthenware bowl from the Elsyng drain, summer 2005 – see Excavations at Elsyng Palace

Society News is published quarterly in March, June, September and December.

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MEETINGS of the Enfield Archaeological Society are held at Jubilee Hall, 2 Parsonage Lane, Enfield (*near Chase Side*) at 8pm. Tea and coffee are served and the sales and information table is open from 7.30pm. Visitors, who are asked to pay a small entrance fee of £1.00, are very welcome.

Friday 20 January

Enfield Archaeological Society – The First 50 Years

Geoffrey Gillam

The Society came into being as the result of classes arranged by the WEA where Dr John Kent was the tutor and who suggested that members should form the Enfield Archaeology Society. The first public meeting was held at the end of 1955. Since then the Society has arranged over 450 lectures, many visits to places of interest and, of course, several excavations. Excavated sites include the prehistoric earthworks at Bush Hill, believed to be of Iron Age date, three years work on a medieval manor house site in Hertfordshire, attempts to locate the line of the Roman road known as Ermine Street, and, notably, the important excavations on the site of Elsyng Palace, as well as work on several other sites.

As far as I am aware, I appear to be the sole surviving member with continuous membership from 1955 and I shall therefore attempt to dredge up some memories of the activities of the Society during the past 50 years and give an illustrated account of the highlights (and perhaps some lesser incidents) during the life of the Society.



EAS visit to Richborough in the 1950s – Dr John Kent as guide

Forthcoming events

Friday 17 February

Antioch to Zeugma: The Archaeology of South Eastern Turkey

Ian Jones

The area where the Mesopotamian Plain joins the Anatolian Highlands has been a centre of human civilization since the end of the Ice Age. At Gobekli Tepe hunter gatherers established a settlement famous for its unique carved megaliths after 9000 BC, and a thousand years later it was still occupied by farmers. In the 2nd millennium BC the late Bronze Age site of Alalakh flourished near the Mediterranean coast while in the next millennium the iron using Hittites expanded south leaving monuments like the palace at Karatepe and the quarry and sculpture workshop at Yesemek.

Some Persian states survived here after the conquest of Alexander, among them Commagene where in the 1st century BC Antiochus built his spectacular funeral complex on Mt Nemrut. The area flourished under Rome, as the splendid mosaics of Zeugma and Antioch show, and under the Byzantines despite increasing pressure from the Islamic world. This culminated in the occupation of Anatolia by the Seljuk Turks from AD 1071 which in turn led to the Crusades and a long period of frequent chaos which finally ended with the rise of the Ottomans in the 14th century.

Friday 17 March

Industrial Enfield

Bernard Eastwood

Enfield has an impressive and fascinating industrial heritage, and we are delighted to have EAS member Bernard Eastwood to speak about this, and particularly the invention of the Radio Valve and how it came to be developed and manufactured here in Enfield by Edison Swann, a firm with which Mr Eastwood has had many years service and involvement.

Meetings of other Societies

EDMONTON HUNDRED HISTORICAL SOCIETY

7.45 for 8pm unless otherwise stated in the Jubilee Hall,
Parsonage Lane, Enfield

18 January

The Invasion 1940: Operation Sealion • *Geoffrey Gillam*

16 February

2 for 2.30pm Ordnance Road Methodist Church Hall
Cinema Entertainment in Edmonton, Enfield and
Southgate 1899-1997 • *Geoffrey Gillam*

22 March

7.45 for 8pm Jubilee Hall, Enfield
AGM and Three London Suburbs • *Graham Dalling*

WEST ESSEX ARCHAEOLOGICAL GROUP

7.45pm, 6th Form Unit, Woodford County High School,
High Road, Woodford Green

16 January (7.30pm)

Social Evening – Fun and Games

13 February

Smelting and Casting –
More About Ancient Metallurgy
Paul Craddock, British Museum

13 March - (7.30pm)

A.G.M followed by Presidential Address –
Harvey Sheldon, Birkbeck College

WALTHAM ABBEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

8pm in the Victoria Hall, Greenyard, Waltham Abbey

27 January

The Treasures of the Saxon King – Excavation at
Prittlewell • *Ian Blair*

23 February

The History of Gardens • *Marilyn Hemmings*

23 March

Puddephatt Memorial Lecture – Waltham Abbey's
Inns & Taverns • *Ray Sears*

HENDON AND DISTRICT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

7.45 for 8pm Avenue House, 17 East End Road, Finchley

10 January

Conservation & Archaeology • *Jon Finney (LB Barnet)*

14 February

Archaeological landscapes in Central India
3rd cent BC – 5th cent AD • *Julia Shaw*

14th March

The Queen of Sheba • *Nadia Durrani*

HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION NORTH LONDON BRANCH

7.45 for 8pm, Jubilee Hall, Parsonage Lane, Enfield

10 January 2006

Lord Beresford & Portugal's role in the Peninsular War -
Professor Malyn Newitt

14 February 2006

Poverty in Victorian London: Charles Booth's Surveys -
Professor Ifan Shepherd

14 March 2006

The Transportation of Convicts to Australia
Professor Carl Bridge



A recent discovery sent my pulse racing while field walking in northern Enfield, when I picked up off the surface of a recently rolled field the beautiful barbed and tanged flint arrowhead of early Bronze Age date which adorns the cover of this Bulletin. The field in question has produced a scatter of random worked flint scrapers and flakes in the past but nothing to compare with this. This find will be registered on the Sites and Monuments Record and it is hoped to conduct a more detailed survey of this field in the future.

Considering the fragility of this artefact it is nothing short of a miracle that it has survived largely intact except for the loss of one barb for well over 4,000 years! When these arrowheads were found in the past the locals called them 'elf shot' because they believed that only tiny hands could fashion such a delicate object and I must admit I am really chuffed to have been the first person to handle it for so many millennia.

MIKE DEWBREY

SOCIETY MATTERS

Membership subscriptions due

Please remember these fall due for renewal on 01 January 2006.

Please send the enclosed Renewal Form, together with the appropriate sum, to the Secretary, David Wills, 43 Millers Green Close, Enfield, EN2 7BD.

We have reluctantly had to increase the subscriptions this year (see the Vice-chairman's note below). The new rates for 2006 are:

Ordinary Members:	£ 9.00
Joint Memberships:	£13.00
Junior Members:	£ 4.50

Please note that Joint Membership is defined as any number of named persons residing at one address and receiving a single copy of *Society News*.

New members who joined the Society after 30 September 2005 need take no action, as their subscriptions are valid until 31 December 2006.

Please note that it is necessary to have current valid membership of the Society before taking part in any excavation or fieldwork, in order to provide adequate insurance cover.

Note from the Vice-Chairman

At the 2005 AGM an increase in subscription rates was agreed.

The additional research the Society has been doing makes this action necessary. Without the vast amount of voluntary work put in by the Committee and other members of the Society, far larger sums than those we are asking for would be necessary to carry out even a proportion of the work we currently do.

During the last few years the amount of excavation and post-excavation work undertaken has increased considerably. In addition to the continued investigations into Roman Enfield, most recently at Leighton Road, there has been, for example, work undertaken at Forty Hall; in the grounds of Myddleton

House and Capel Manor and on the site of Henry VIII's palace at Elsyng. This has been a combination of research work initiated by the Society and work we have done on behalf of other organisations, both local and national. This work has given us much valuable information but it does not come cheap! Although Enfield Council has provided considerable funding for aspects of major projects like Elsyng, we still have to find the money for tools and other consumables including storage boxes for the many finds made and we will also have to find money for the conservation of some items. Specialist finds and environmental reports have to be paid for, as does the production of the final archive reports plus accounts to be sold to members and the public. The backlog of material that needs publication is considerable and although we have money set aside for this purpose it could only pay for a small part of this. Major publications which we hope to produce include one on the current work at Elsyng Palace and its outbuildings plus one on Roman Enfield bringing together all the work done over the last 50 plus years.

In addition there are the various costs involved in the day-to-day running of the Society which, like everything else, continue to increase. A substantial part of our subscription income goes to producing *Society News*, though we are trying to reduce this while maintaining its present quality. As the September edition showed, the more work the Society does the larger, and more expensive, some editions become. We would be reluctant to reduce the frequency of *Society News* both because of the amount of material we need to publish and because of the reputation it has outside the Society.

The lecture programme is also becoming more expensive as almost all speakers now require at least expenses and often a fee on top of this. This expense is common to all organisations who run lecture programmes; we have been fortunate over the years to have a good relationship with the Museum of London and MOLAS which has benefited us in this regard. Despite the costs and work involved we do not wish to reduce the scale of the lecture programme because it enables members to get together and be updated on many aspects of archaeology. We are fortunate that room hire costs are reasonable compared to what other organisations I am familiar with have to pay. Long may this last!

Considering what the Society does we feel the new rates represent good value for money and are a small price to pay for advancing our knowledge of the early history of this area.

IAN JONES

Meeting Reports

The new Medieval Gallery at the Museum of London

16 September: **Hedley Swain, Museum of London**

Hedley Swain, the Head of Early London at the Museum of London, has been the project manager for the development of the new Medieval gallery at the Museum.

It had been calculated that to read every word in the old Medieval gallery would take 1½ hours. On average visitors only spent 3 minutes there and this, combined with the wide variety of visitors, shows the challenge faced in designing a new gallery to get over a feel of Medieval London – of which little remains after the Fire.

The curator Jon Clarke has chosen to tackle this by presenting a narrative based around four traumatic moments from the period.

The first of these is the departure of the Romans, when the reasons for the existence of Londinium disappeared. This sets the scene for evidence of early Anglo-Saxon settlement and the great discovery of the last 20 years, the trading settlement of Lundenwic.

The second event is the re-founding of the city by Alfred in 886, perhaps because of the surviving walls. Evidence of occupation re-appears in the City and regression of the street layout suggests a grid pattern along the river from Canon Street to Cheapside. There is evidence on the waterfront of a trading town and of a huge Anglo-Scandinavian isled hall.

Event three is the Black Death – Hedley talked about the evidence of East Smithfield cemetery, where graves gave way to trenches as the death rate rose, but victims were still neatly laid out, not tumbled in as the popular imagination suggests.

The last of the four traumatic events is not surprisingly the Reformation and the break in the dominant role the monasteries had played in many aspects of London life. Memorable items included illustrations of the scandalous activities of priests, and

complaints about the 'louts' of the day, teenage apprentices, running amuck.

The new gallery opened on 25 November, although when Hedley came to give us our sneak preview that still seemed quite a challenge! I will certainly look forward to seeing it next time I visit.

JEREMY GROVE

Royal and Monastic Sites in West London

21 October: **Bob Cowie, MoLAS**

The Twickenham-Richmond area of west London is home to a remarkable collection of royal and monastic sites, many of which Bob Cowie has been closely involved with both as a Senior Archaeologist with the Museum of London Archaeology Service and as a member of Richmond Archaeology Society.

The area owes this heritage largely to its location halfway between Windsor and Westminster on good river (Thames) and road routes, in the midst of attractive countryside.

Edward III was first on the scene, establishing a palace at Richmond (then known as Sheen) in the 1370s. A key player was Henry V, who rebuilt the palace and established, as an act of penance for the death of Richard II, the Carthusian priory at Sheen and Bridgettine abbey at Twickenham (the "two chantries" mentioned in Act IV, Scene I of Henry V).

The original Sheen Palace was pulled down by Richard II after his wife died there, but it was refurbished by Henry VII, who renamed it Richmond, and largely complete by 1501. Henry VIII preferred Hampton Court, but Elizabeth liked to spend winters there. It was the nursery of James I's children, and he gave it to his son Henry in 1611, who died a few years later before further planned works by the Italian architect Costantino de Servi could be carried out. Only a few of the buildings survive – principally the lower part of the gatehouse and the wardrobe.

The main evidence until recently came from a 1561 view by Wynegarde and a parliamentary survey of 1650 – no plan was known. John Cloake has studied the palace since the 1970s and in 1996 published a plan reconstructing its appearance in 1563. Various digs have been carried out – Dixon investigated the moat wall and in 1990 Richmond Archaeological Society identified timbers of Crane Wharf which were dendro dated to 1584-85. Time Team in 1997 were very unlucky with a series of trenches which mostly missed their targets. Much

more fortunate was the discovery by Canadian architectural historian Sabine Eiche of a plan of the Palace by de Servi in the State Archives of Florence, just in time for Cloake and Cowie to include a new conjectural plan of the Palace in their publication on the Palace.

The Bridgettine abbey of Twickenham moved to a new site at Syon (Isleworth) after a few decades, and thanks to its royal patronage was the tenth richest religious house in England by the Dissolution. The history of the buildings is not clear but they were evidently demolished fairly soon and replaced with the Duke of Somerset's Syon House, which has been in the hands of the Earls of Northumberland since 1594.

Geophysics seemed to show the remains of the abbey and formal gardens, and a Time Team dig was spectacularly successful in establishing the extent of a massive church (probably the widest medieval church in England at some 37m externally) and other monastic buildings. Since then two seasons of work by Birkbeck College have provided further detail of the church foundations (see *Society News* 174) and have begun to show other ancillary buildings of as yet uncertain function. It is hoped that further seasons of work will be possible.

Bob's lecture was both very informative and entertaining, and it is to be hoped that there will be many more discoveries from this fertile area in the future.

References:

Current Archaeology 192: Syon Abbey

Current Archaeology 196: Richmond Palace

JEREMY GROVE

Prehistoric London

18 November: **Jon Cotton, Museum of London**

Our second lecture this autumn on a new Museum of London gallery was not so much a preview, as it has been open for a couple of years, but a fascinating insight nevertheless.

As curator of Prehistory, Jon faces an uphill task – the Museum is the world's largest 'urban history' museum and London was founded by the Romans, while market research shows most visitors associate prehistory with dinosaurs. Some of the ways this is being tackled is to try to get across the 'Ray Mears' type skills of prehistoric peoples, to relate to them as individuals (for example with the cast of a potter's thumb taken from the decoration on a pot), and by

focusing on the Thames as a key feature in the lives of both prehistoric and modern Londoners.

The new prehistory gallery is the third since the Museum opened in 1976. The first was dependent largely on artefacts found over the last two centuries – often flint tools found during gravel extraction or ritual metal offerings dredged from the river. There was relatively little available from full digs of prehistoric sites. An outstanding feature of the original gallery was the imaginative presentation of the Thames finds in a timeline.

By the time the next gallery came along in 1994 increasing recognition of prehistory meant more evidence was available from prehistoric sites, including hunter gatherer sites and Bronze Age trackways, and it was possible to reconstruct scenes such as roundhouses. Another innovation was introducing objects which visitors could touch.

For the latest gallery Simon Thurley offered double the space for an improved display. Today the increased scale of developer-funded archaeology offers evidence not just of sites but landscapes, such as Heathrow Terminal 5 where 95 hectares were excavated, and field systems in the Lee Valley and East London.

The new gallery is based around 4 themes – climate (mainly landscape change), river (importance thereof), people (their ingenuity etc.) and legacy (i.e. continuity). There is also a 'landscape wall' running round the gallery, intended to convey some of the possible spiritual aspects of prehistoric life, and a 'river wall' – an updated version of the 1976 timeline.

The climate display includes the pick of objects from the Natural History Museum collection. Later there is the reconstructed head of a woman whose teeth showed that she came from at least as far away as the Penines or Derbyshire, and the skull of a man who survived at least a year after a trepanning operation. Evidence of beads made from broken Roman glass vessels recovered from roundhouses under Gresham Street (the famous water wheel site) are taken as evidence of continuity of culture into the Roman period. A more modern parallel to the objects 'offered' to the Thames in prehistory are a growing collection of Hindu ornaments recovered from the river in modern times.

Museum visitors it seems have an inbuilt tendency to turn left rather than right – the huge video playing at the entrance to the gallery is an attempt to entice us around two right turns. It is well worth it!

JEREMY GROVE

Excavations at Elsyng Palace 2005: the East Wing of the Palace (Site code ENB05)

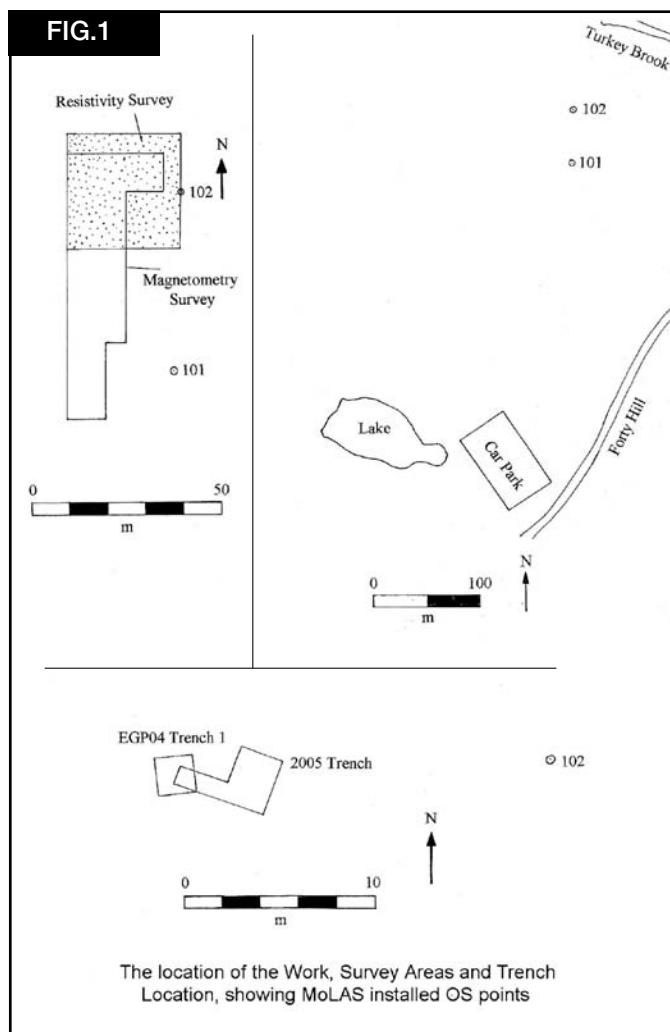
By Martin J. Dearne

INTRODUCTION

Following the rather limited findings of the test pits cut in 2004 to check earlier magnetometry results which seemed to indicate the location of the gatehouse and an east range to the outer courtyard of Elsyng Palace in the grounds of Forty Hall (*Society News* 176), further work was undertaken in June and July of 2005.

With the benefit of the Ordnance Survey fixed points which the borough had installed in 2004 the Colchester Archaeological Group very kindly repeated part of their earlier magnetometry survey so that we could more precisely 'target' our excavation on the most promising of their features, and HADAS also surveyed much of the same area with resistivity equipment.

With funding from the borough and permission from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (as this is a scheduled ancient monument (LO59)) we then partially reopened one of our 2004 trenches (EGP04 Trench 1) over the presumed east wing and then successively extended it in an L shape to examine what still from magnetometry appeared to be a rectangular room in the wing (compare *Society News* 176 p6, with Fig. 1). The work took place on two successive weekends and some intervening days (9th to 17th July), culminating on the weekend of National Archaeology Week when progress reports were broadcast across London by LBC radio who were in attendance.



THE FINDINGS

Some 87 cm below the current turf surface we found what may be the undisturbed natural of the site, a deposit of rounded pebbles and cobbles in clayey silt (14), at +29.43m OD. Running at an angle right through the trench this had been cut by a large construction trench (20) holding an in tact Tudor arched brick and mortar drain (12). Though no part of this was removed, we uncovered nearly all of the top of it and part of the inside, which we could examine where a later chute had fed into it (Fig. 2). Internally it was 0.63 m high and c. 0.52 m wide with two lines of spacer tiles running its length near the apex, probably strengthening walls along its outer sides, a flat brick base and a fall of 1 in 38 to the north east (towards the presumed moat round the east side of the palace). After only the lower parts of the top of the drain and the strengthening walls had been covered by a grey, stony clayey silt (13), part of the roof of the drain had been removed and a rather crude mortared brick foundation (17) built round the hole, almost certainly for a wooden chute into the drain to sit on.

This means that the outer courtyard east range which the chute served was part of the same construction phase as the drain (? during the initial building of the palace in 1540), but the details at least of its sanitation had not been pre-planned (or had been misplanned).

Unfortunately the west wall of the range which must have crossed our trench was not found. It was evident on the magnetometry survey north and south of the trench but just here the presence of the drain probably ruled out substantial foundations, and this may have been where a door was located. However, the line of the wall was given by the meeting of contexts (5) and (11) (Fig. 3).

Context (5) was what in 2004 we had thought was a clay landscaping dump dating to after the demolition of the palace, but a full section through it showed it had been dumped straight on top of the drain, so it almost certainly formed the surface of the outer Tudor courtyard running up to the east wing. (The in situ smashed tiles in it in 2004 may have been surplus building materials from the wing.) Context (11), dumped over the rest of the length of the drain and round the chute into it, was by contrast a very clayey stony material probably dumped as floor make up inside the wing. However, the floor that had existed above it had been largely removed during demolition and much of (11) itself had been cut away or mixed with demolition deposits. Only approximately on or just behind the wall line where more of (11) was intact did a short length of dwarf brick wall survive (16). This was built within (11) and capped by large terracotta tiles which probably formed the floor surface (perhaps in the vicinity of the door threshold which could have had steps up to it).

Unfortunately this meant that nothing of the internal structure of the wing survived either, rather what we found was evidence for the demolition of the building, probably in 1657. On top of the dump forming the courtyard (5) was brick demolition rubble while to the east where (11) was cut away the void where the timber chute was removed had been filled in with dumps. Elsewhere (2 LOWER), consisting of a mixture of disturbed (11) and rubbish from the building, and probably demolition material, had been deposited to try to bring this area up to the same level as the courtyard surface. (2 LOWER) produced animal bone, the neck of a German salt

glazed 'bellarmine' wine jug (Fig 5 No. 4.6) and a good deal of fairly fine pottery, much of it white or blue and white Southwark tin glazed earthenware ('delft ware') (Fig. 5 Nos 4.28 – 32) including half of a porringer (breakfast bowl) (Fig. 5 No. 4.29) as well as a clay pipe bowl (Fig. 5 No. 5.3) and a glass wine bottle (Fig. 5 No. 6.2) all dateable to the mid seventeenth century or earlier. The most useful dating evidence was however a jetton or Nuremburg Token (gaming piece) showing Louis XIV of France and the French royal arms issued at Nuremburg by Wolf Lauffer III between 1650 and 1670.

The finds in the dumps filling the chute and drain below were even more interesting. The floor of the drain had an original sterile silt (19) on it, but above it was filled to the top by a soil dump (7) and then the chute void by another (6) which incorporated a large dump of brick and tile rubble (10). Between them they produced further wine bottles (Fig. 5 No. 6.2) and animal bones, nearly complete clay pipes probably broken in situ (Fig. 5 Nos 5.1 – 2), about a third of a glazed earthenware handled bowl (Fig 5 No. 4.16), part of a second large bowl (Fig. 5 No. 4.18), some window and vessel glass, iron nails, dressed flint and limestone blocks, a cut brick from an elaborate chimney (Fig. 5), pieces of glazed and polygonal floor tile (also found elsewhere), a variety of brick and tile fragments including grey 'glazed' ones perhaps from decorative diaper work and part of a moulded brick showing a bird's wing and clawed foot probably from an internal multi section armorial (Fig. 6).

After demolition (Fig. 4) we found that the area of the former courtyard had been covered with a rammed pebble surface (2 and 2 LOWER) (as found in 2004), while within the building, still lower than the courtyard surface to the west, further dumping to raise it up was represented by a soil (3) before it too was covered by the rammed pebble surface (4), though at one point either an area had been left uncovered or more likely it had disappeared through heavy wear. Eventually this probable promenading surface of the second half of the seventeenth century went out of use to be covered by topsoil (1), subsequently in one area then disturbed by a later twentieth century pit (9 filled by 8).

DISCUSSION

Whilst the results of the excavation are of course in themselves of importance in the ongoing process of understanding the layout, development and demise of the palace its particular aim was to check the nature of anomalies shown by magnetometry and resistivity and to what extent they can be used to 'map' the palace. This was fully achieved and the identification of not just the drain but also the dwarf wall on magnetometry plots allows increased confidence to be placed in the technique for this site (although resistivity survey was shown to be rather less applicable). Consequently the reality of the eastern wing of the outer courtyard, perhaps on magnetometry evidence as long as 38 +m and c. 6 – 7 m wide (*Society News* 167 p6), may be taken as confirmed while it is now apparent that the rectangular 'room' within it may be an illusion created by the passage of the excavated drain and possibly another further north across its line.

Unfortunately it is still unclear what function the east range served and whilst numbers of the finds imply a fair degree of architectural elaboration and internal fittings, as they were all from demolition contexts we cannot be sure that they derived from this part of the palace. Moreover almost all dateable material was early to mid seventeenth century and at best relates to the palace after it had passed from royal hands to the Earl of Pembroke, and some almost certainly to activity at the time of demolition.

ARCHIVE & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This summary is taken from the much fuller archive report on the site by the author which we hope to enable members to consult at lecture meetings and to obtain at cost if there is sufficient interest (please see a member of the committee if you are interested). It in turn is part of a larger formal site archive lodged at Forty Hall where it is hoped to display some of the finds in due course.

The work would not have been possible without the financial support and permission of the London Borough of Enfield and the practical help of various of its officers, notably Lorraine Cox, Bob Jennings, Grahame Pink, Val Munday, Jan Metcalfe, Gavin Williams and Suzanne Linsey; and the support and advice of English Heritage, especially Dr. Steven Brindle. The author is very grateful as well to David and Aline Black of the Colchester Archaeological Group and members of HADAS led by Christian Allen for undertaking the geophysical surveys, and to all the EAS members who undertook the excavation, especially Mike Dewbrey (site supervisor), Peter Spindley and Jeremy Grove (surveying team) and Neil and John Pinchbeck (assistant site recorders). Finally this report is dedicated to the memory of our late chairman, Prof. Dennis Hill who was so instrumental in reinitiating EAS work on Elsyng Palace.

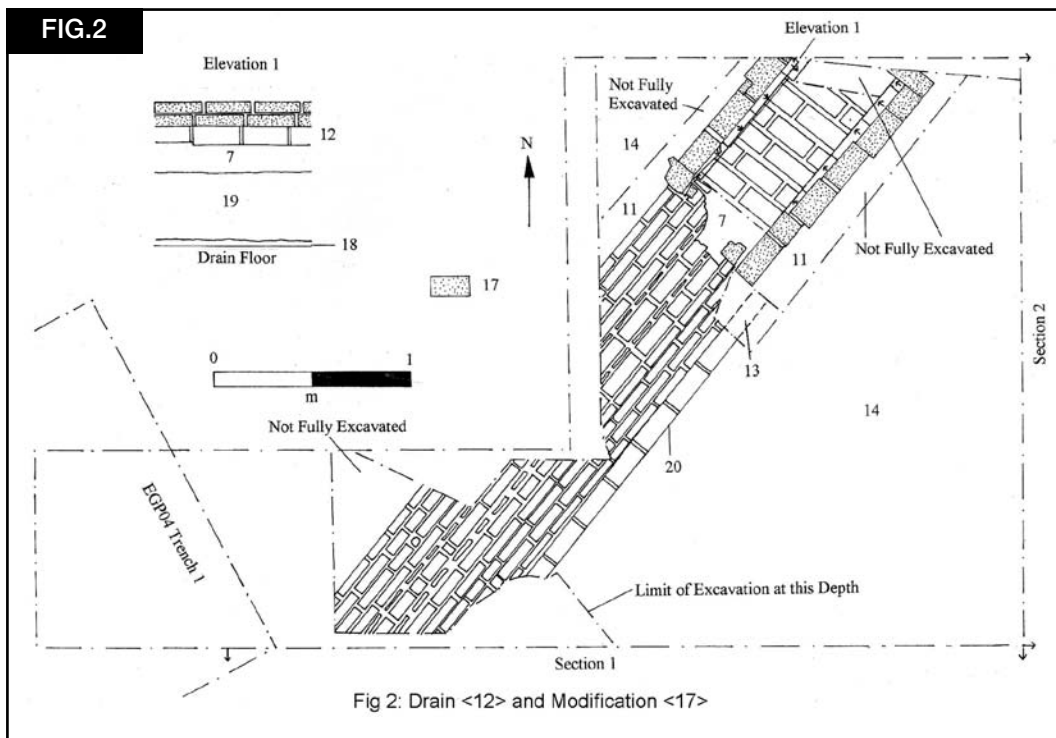


FIG.3

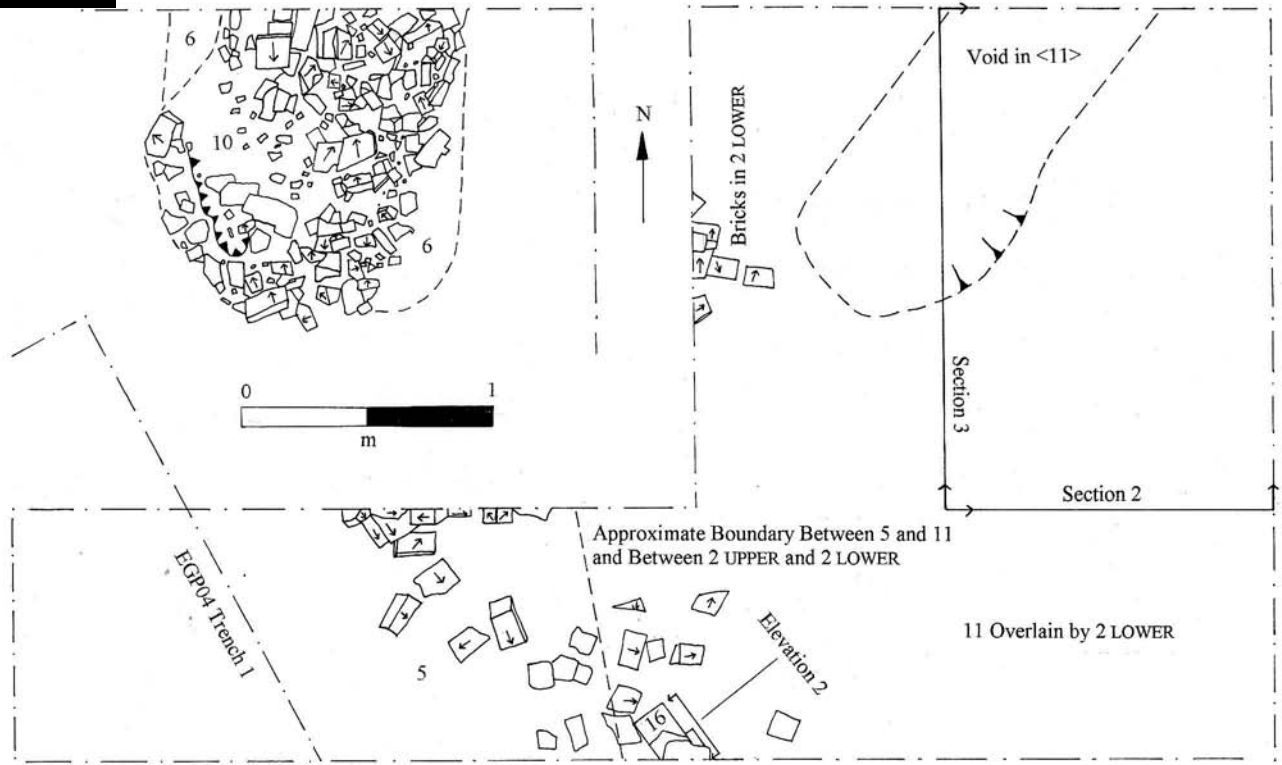


Fig 3: Features and Dumps Post Dating Drain <12> and (Inset) Dumps <6> and <10>

FIG.4

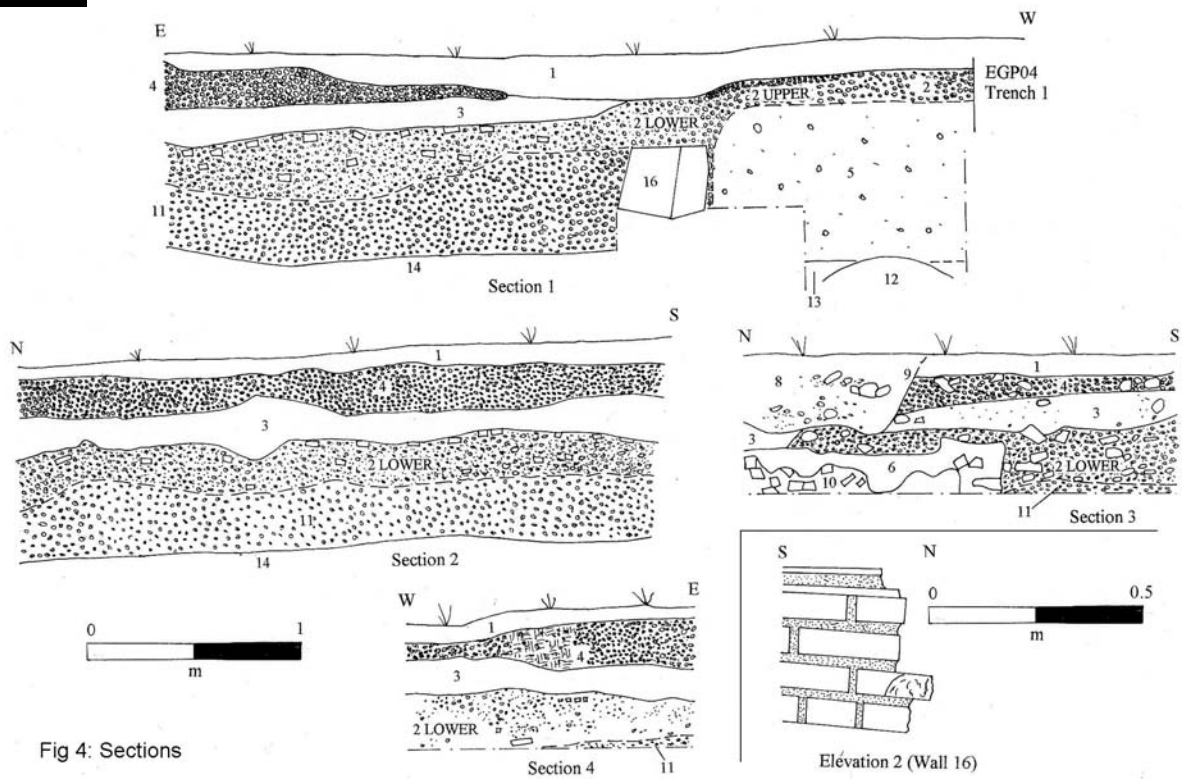
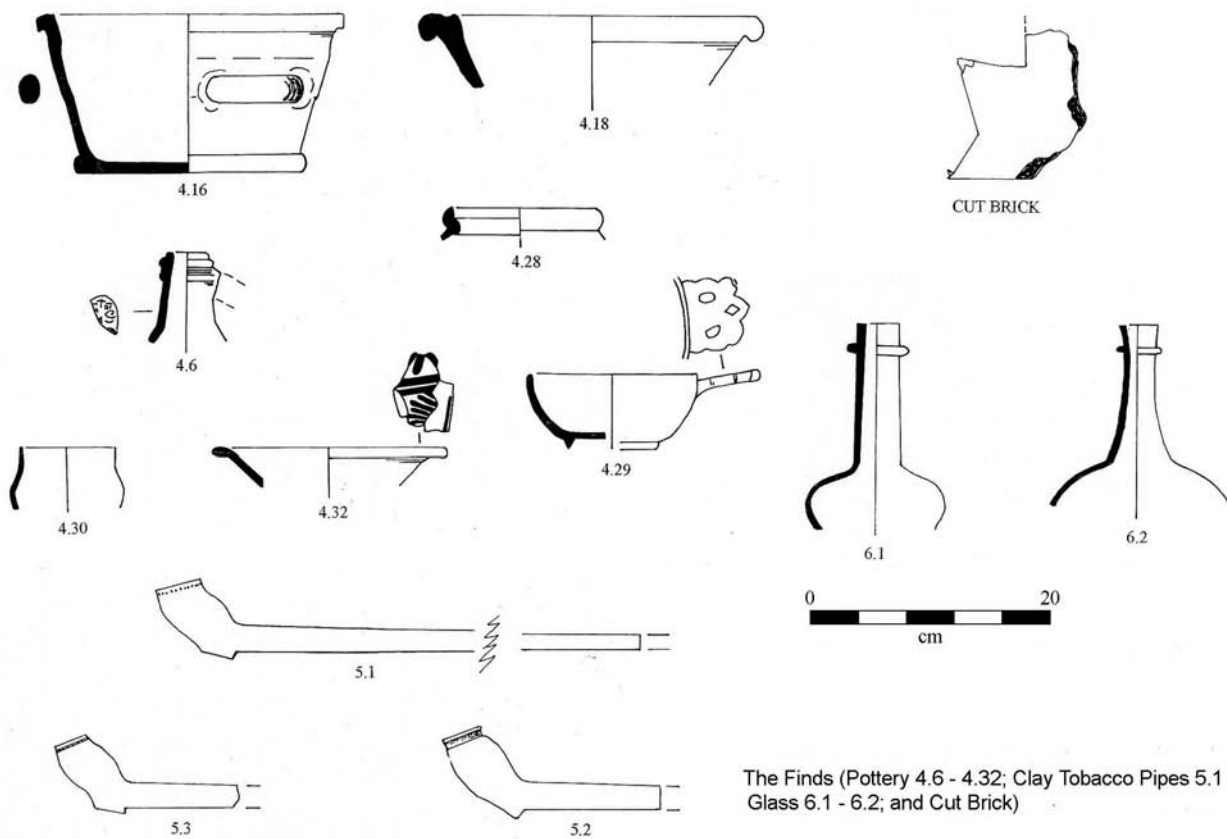


Fig 4: Sections

FIG.5



The Finds (Pottery 4.6 - 4.32; Clay Tobacco Pipes 5.1 - 5.3; Glass 6.1 - 6.2; and Cut Brick)

FIG.6

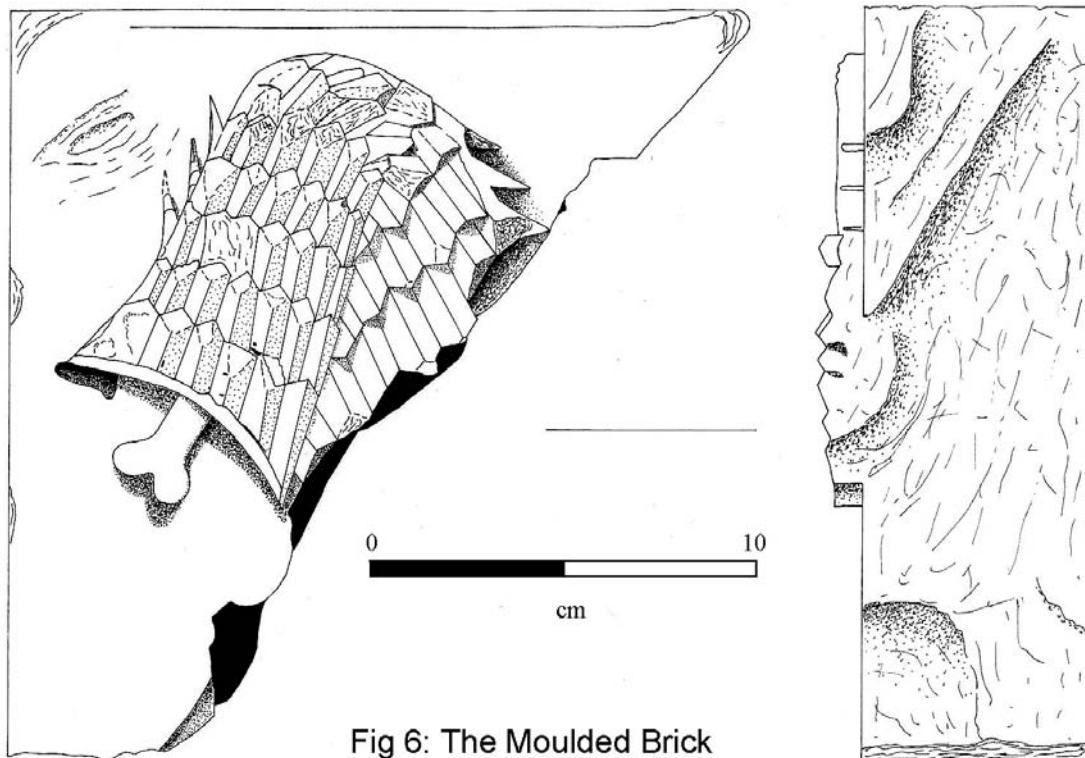


Fig 6: The Moulded Brick

Enfield Palace and the IKEA 'Crannog'

In response to members' requests for information on any archaeological finds related to the former Enfield 'palace' (the manor house that once stood in the centre of Enfield Town in the area of Pearsons and what was until recently Millets) during the redevelopment of the town centre English Heritage tell me that no significant remains of the 'palace' were encountered in areas where excavation was practicable and earlier twentieth century construction work had not intruded. As yet the only archaeological features we have been informed about are sections of prehistoric and medieval ditches further south.

However, a significant find was made during the building of the new IKEA store in Edmonton on the west side of the Lea valley during 2004. Angus Stephenson of AOC Archaeology who directed the work kindly informs me that an excavation primarily to investigate the context of prehistoric finds in the area revealed Mesolithic flintwork and deer bones but also unexpectedly uncovered a very substantial

timber structure over and within a former stream channel of the River Lea (which once comprised a spread of shifting sandbars and channels, many of which are now silted up). Built of logs and stakes with a brushwood cover it was over 8.5 x 6.0m and stakes remaining where subsequent flooding had damaged it suggested it may have been c. 20m in at least one dimension, and so big enough to support buildings. Its 70 or so main timbers were not suitable for dendrochronological (tree ring) dating, but two have been carbon-dated to a range centred on the 5th century AD (340 – 540 and 430 – 650 AD), and show many typical Anglo-Saxon joints and fixings. Carved wooden objects, including a wooden trough and mallet, and animal bones found within the woodwork suggest that it was a domestic site built on an artificial platform within the river channel. If so, it would strongly resemble a crannog in the Celtic tradition of such sites in Scotland and Ireland but hitherto unknown in south-east England.

The suggested identification of the site as a crannog may prove controversial and other possibilities are that the find relates to a bridge or a dam, but whatever it is the paucity of evidence nationally for what used to be called the Dark Ages after the end of Britain as a Roman province makes this a significant discovery. Angus has kindly agreed to come and talk about the site as soon as we have a gap in our Friday evening lecture schedule.

MARTIN J. DEARNE



EAS FIELDWORK

The Society also regularly carries out fieldwork and other practical activities in the Borough. Please see the *Pastfinders News* column or the excavation reports overleaf for more details, and contact Mike Dewbrey on 01707 870888 (office number) if you are interested.



Christmas caption competition 2004

(A scene from the Elsyng 2004 dig. From left to right:

“Well, the hole is in the right place. It’s a shame the Palace isn’t!”

“I expect we’re 6 inches off to the west” (How right he was – see Fig 2)

“Keep your mobile on, we’re very busy up here but we’ll dig you out in no time”

“Must keep on looking thoughtful –

the first one to move will end up mattocking again”

“Ahh, the value of negative evidence”

The excavation nearing completion - from the North East



Jims new sieve in action

More pictures from the Elsyng Excavation 2005



Resistivity survey



Excavating the porringer

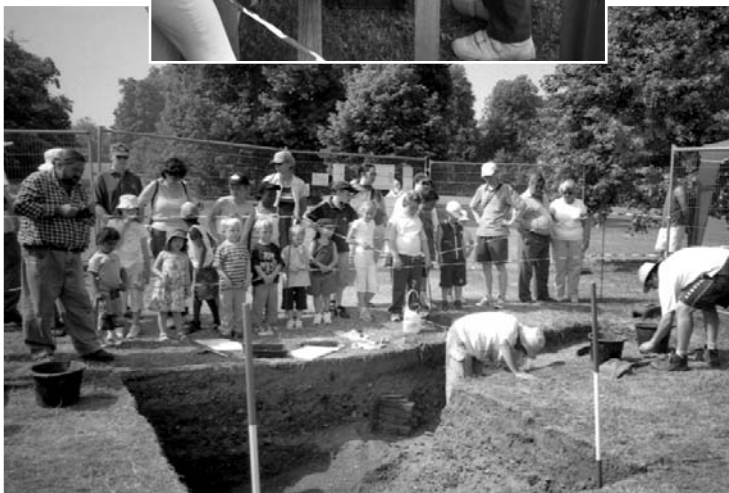
Pot Washing



LBC broadcast



Visitors



PASTFINDERS NEWS

News of the Excavation and Fieldwork Group



It hardly seems possible that 2005 is drawing to a close and another year is already on the horizon. I have had many phone calls from enthusiastic diggers asking when the next excavation is likely to be. In the early spring next year it is hoped to carry out some further evaluation work in the area of the 'Smithy' at Forty Hall and also to investigate a feature seen within the north wall of the Hall when the CCTV trenches were dug. So far the search for further evidence of the ice house by the lake has proved inconclusive but we have not given up yet!

A resident of Winchmore Hill contacted us in October wishing to donate a collection of worked flint tools that he had assembled, apparently found by walking his dog in the Forty Hall area. Of particular interest was a very nice example of a late Mesolithic scraper picked up on a gravel bank in Flash Lane and some flakes and wasters which are probably Neolithic. The artefacts are currently with the museum service awaiting further study. A rather cryptic phone call was received from a lady who lives in Oakwood to inform us that she had dug up what looked like a human jaw bone in her back garden! Needless to say we suggested that she report this particular discovery to the local police station.

A meeting took place between Martin Dearne and Christine White at the Civic Centre regarding protecting the Roman archaeology in Bush Hill Park. It was agreed that the society should be informed of any planning applications in advance so that we can approach the home owner with a view to carrying out a recording and watching brief when the construction trenches are dug. (Assuming that planning permission is submitted BEFORE the extension is built which is alas not always the case.)

We have been sorting out a lot of the material in our room at Forty Hall and have discovered that the society has quite a few duplicate copies of the 'London Archaeologist' that are surplus to requirements. Some of these magazines date back 25 years or more but nevertheless make riveting reading. If any members are interested in purchasing a little bit of archaeological history we

will be selling them at future meetings for a mere pittance!

A display of the artefacts recovered from the Elsyng Palace excavation in July will be on view in Forty Hall all through the Spring, so if you were unable to get along to the excavation make a note to call in and see some of the finds on show.

I would like to thank once again all our diggers and volunteers who have helped to make 2005 our 50th anniversary year such a success. Hardly a month has passed by without one of the local newspapers featuring an article on one of our projects. I personally feel that it is important that the people of the borough are aware of the work that we do and our thanks go to Suzanne Linsey, the council's press officer for all her hard work and to Val Munday and Jan Metcalf of the Museum Service who are great allies in our battle to preserve Enfield's past.

MIKE DEWBREY Tel: 01707 870888 (daytime)

IN THE NEXT ISSUE



Site report on Easter '05 dig at the 'smithy' ...
.. or was it?