

# A Romano-British Cemetery and Farmstead at Lynch Farm

By Richard Jones

Among the various sites excavated in 1972 in advance of the creation of the Nene Park Lake was the edge of an extensive series of features revealed by aerial photographs. It was intended by the Department of the Environment that the whole complex should be preserved as an Ancient Monument, but a slight miscalculation of its area meant that the zone of destruction in fact encroached upon its southern limits.

The main features seen from the air on the edge of the complex were revealed in our excavations as the ditches of a Romano-British farm. A surprise, however, came in the discovery during stripping of the topsoil of a substantial inhumation cemetery, showing possible Christian characteristics. It was contemporary with the farm and probably contained its inhabitants.

Unfortunately many burials had been much damaged by ploughing, down to a depth of about half a metre. As a result, only about 21 out of a total of at least 51 burials could be regarded as complete. All but one of the burials were inhumations. The single cremation was contained in two, almost complete, colour-coated pots, which were probably placed inside a wooden casket, since some iron nails were found with them.

The cemetery had a clear nucleus, where about 35 burials were laid out in at least four rows. They lay mostly on an east-west alignment with heads to the west. The other graves were spread over the site, and two were actually in the ditches. Generally, there was very little overlapping of graves, which suggests that there was a system for marking them. In four cases there seemed to be some special attraction to particular spots, perhaps family plots. In one pit were the remains of six adults and a baby, with each interment ruthlessly cut through the earlier ones. Evidence for wooden coffins came from 16 graves. Grave-goods, however, were rare. Only three graves contained them; one a bronze finger-ring, one a bone bracelet and bone comb, and one a small colour-coated beaker. Only the beaker need have had a specifically funerary purpose. The skeletal remains themselves are at the time of writing being analysed by Dr. D.H. Fulton of Kings Cliffe.

The amount of plough damage meant that only the lowest parts of the farm's pits and ditches had survived. Nevertheless, there was enough evidence to confirm the suggestion (Taylor (1969), 32) that the main feature was a 'courtyard' enclosure. This was defined by ditches much larger than the others, up to 3 metres wide, and it contained signs of quite intensive activity in the form of pits and small ditches. In contrast, on the east was what seemed to be an extension of the main courtyard. In the south-west corner of this annexe lay the cemetery nucleus, but otherwise it was barren and featureless, and may perhaps have been a stockyard. Many animal bones were found in the ditches, but little more can yet be said about the kind of farming undertaken here.

Apart from one pit producing Late Iron-Age pottery all the features appeared to be of roughly the same period, that is, from the third until well into the fourth century. It seems clear that the farm and the cemetery were in operation at the same time and we may assume that it was the people from the farm who were buried there. Perhaps the cemetery began in the nucleus, but then such orderliness was given up and the burials spread across the whole area.

The scarcity of grave-goods may reflect the poverty of peasant farmers, but the predominance of east-west alignments makes it more likely that Christian burial fashions had been adopted by the local community; for Christians were traditionally buried without the grave-goods which the pagans felt they might need in the afterlife.

This site appears to be broadly contemporary with the aisled barn and fishpond to the east across Ham Lane. However, it seems clear that the two sites formed distinct foci of settlement, the cemetery lying between them. Thus despite their close proximity their relationship must remain a matter for further research.

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# The Roman Fishpond at Lynch Farm

By John Peter Wild

Documentary records relating to the Abbey of Ely show that in the eleventh century the monks were liberally supplied with eels from the monastic manors in the surrounding Fenland. The figures quoted suggest that eel—smoked, stewed or in pies—must have been served in the refectory with monotonous regularity!

It would be odd if the Romans had not tapped the same ready source of food, but until 1972 we had no indication that they did. Roman authors mention artificial ponds linked to the sea in which wealthy Italians raised fish for the table, but they do not refer to Roman Britain. However, emergency excavations by the Nene Valley Research Committee in 1972 near Lynch Farm, Orton Waterville, brought to light an extensive Roman agricultural settlement which boasted a large fishpond.

The fishpond and the establishment to which it belonged were discovered in May 1972, as the contractors' machines were stripping topsoil in preparation for the new Nene Park Lake. Thanks to the good offices of the Peterborough Development Corporation and the kind forbearance of the contractors a respite was granted during which G.B. Dannell and the writer could organise an excavation to record the remains before destruction. In the event, the Development Corporation decided to preserve the part of the site which contained foundations of an aisled barn, with the intention of laying it out for public exhibition after excavation has been completed. The rest of the site, including the pond, was removed on schedule by the contractors.

The site was found to have three main elements: a network of drainage channels, a timber aisled barn on stone foundations and a large stone-revetted fishpond.

## The Drainage Channels

The drainage channels were first noticed when the contractors' box-scrapers sank into them. They cover an area of at least 7 acres, and represent a systematic attempt by Roman farmers in the second and third centuries to drain large tracts of water-meadow. The grid pattern of channels was modified as frost played havoc with the ditch sides, although they were often revetted with timber shuttering and clay. The dimensions of the channels varied, but the largest, an outfall to the Nene, was 1.50 metres wide and 60 centimetres deep.

The ditches were filled for the most part with sticky black organic deposits, all that survives of the household rubbish which was dumped into them in the fourth century when they had fallen into disuse. The great quantity of locally-produced pottery, colour-coated wares and grey wares, together with some pieces of fine metalwork, give an indication of the high standard of living enjoyed by the local farming community in the later Roman period.

The prime purpose of the channels must have been to drain land for pasturing sheep and cattle. The 'fields' between the channels (only a few metres across) were surely too small for growing cereals. Many parallels for the drainage system can be quoted from Roman sites in the Fenland, and in a sense the Lynch with its high water-table and seasonal flooding is a typical fen site.

## The Aisled Barn

On higher ground west of the drained land a series of farm outbuildings was revealed. The latest and most impressive structure, which overlay more

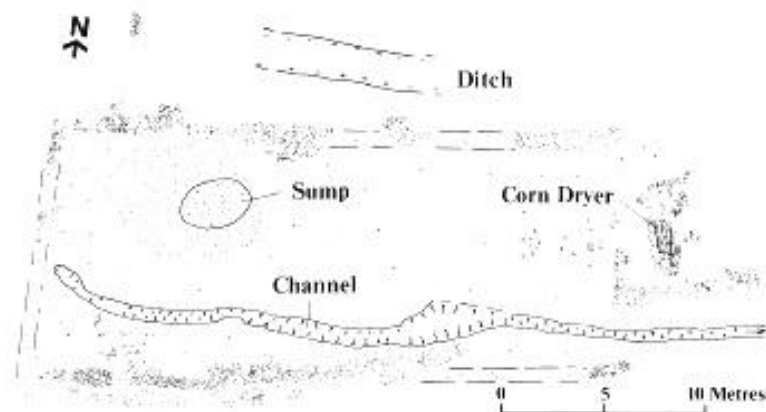
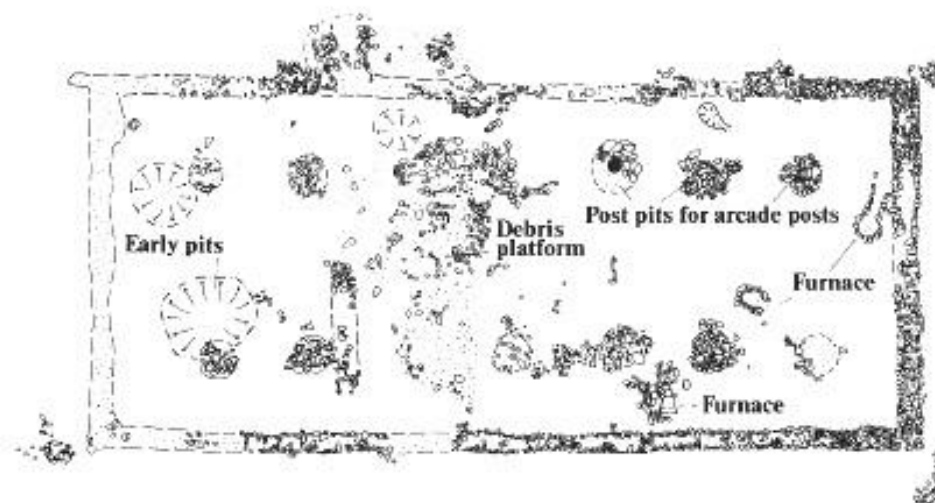


Fig 10 The Roman Fishpond at Lynch Farm



**Fig 11 The aisled barn at Lynch Farm**

modest predecessors, was an aisled barn, measuring overall 26 metres long by 11.6 metres wide. It had been of timber on stone footings (fig.11) and inside the weight of the roof was carried on two rows of arcade-posts which divided it into a nave and two aisles.

The most striking internal features, apart from the stone-packed pits for the arcade-posts, were small furnaces of various shapes and sizes, mostly situated at the eastern end of the barn. They were probably used for the final stages in the production of domestic and agricultural ironwork. The tools discussed by W.H.Manning (on p.29) were found on the floor of the barn, and could well have been made in these furnaces.

Other buildings which can be traced on the ground north of the aisled barn will be investigated, it is hoped, at a later date.

## **The Fishpond**

Eighteenth-century farming manuals recommend that marshland for which no useful agricultural purpose could be found should be turned into fishponds. The Romans practised this already. At Lynch Farm a stone-revetted tank, probably a fishpond, was laid out over the north-west corner of the drainage system during the early third century (fig.10). Its edges were marked by a low wall, and the pond was a rectangle measuring 35 metres by 13 metres. An outflow channel at its western end was carefully lined to prevent the water undermining an existing—and functioning—corn-dryer. The pond was shallow, but the naturally high water-table would have kept it topped up, except in the driest summers.

The fishpond complex now being excavated at the Roman villa of Shakenoak near Oxford provides a welcome parallel to the Lynch Farm pond. At Shakenoak commercial fish-rearing has been presumed, but at Lynch Farm the fish were probably for the local community's own consumption.

## **The General Picture**

The barn, the fishpond and the drainage scheme uncovered in 1972 must relate to a larger farming settlement; for there were no living quarters there. The cemetery excavated by R.F.J.Jones (see p.13) may have been the last resting place of these people. A few months ago traces of substantial buildings were noted some distance north-west of the cemetery and fishpond. They may not amount to a traditional villa, but the whole complex must spread over many acres.

The most tantalising feature of the 1972 excavations was the hint of earlier occupation under the later farm buildings. Two pits yielded a group of mid first century pottery, and three cremation-burials in pots made in the Longthorpe military kilns (see p.11) were found nearby. This does not add up to military occupation—yet. But it starts an interesting line of thought.

# The Lynch Farm complex: the prehistoric site

By Adrian Challands

The construction of an artificial lake for recreational activities within a northerly meander of the Nene impinged in 1972 on Ancient Monument No.101, known as the Lynch Farm Complex (Taylor (1969), 18f.). It spreads from the parish of Alwalton into Orton Waterville and Orton Longueville, and is by any standard an exceptional monument. Fortunately, its core is to be preserved.

Emergency excavation to meet the current threat has been concentrated on the linear ditches described by Christopher Taylor on the southern, landward, side of the Complex. In addition, we have examined a small area at the most northerly point of the settlement zone.

The main linear ditches run parallel NE-SW for 900 metres, and are 11 metres apart, centre to centre. They average 2.5 to 3 metres wide by approximately 1 metre deep, but the most southerly of the four is only 1.5 to 2.25 metres wide by 0.5 metres deep. Great variation in profile was noted. The ditch-system here effectively defends the landward approach to the meander.

Few finds were made in the ditch fillings, with the exception of certain areas of our Layer (1), the top 0.3 metres. Here, late Iron-Age pottery was found in some quantity and appeared to represent a deliberate infilling of the partially silted ditch.

Cut into the upper filling of each of the two central ditches was a cremation burial within a rectangular pit measuring 1.50 by 1.65 metres and approximately 0.25 metres deep. Pottery associated with both cremations was of the same type and fabric as that made in the military pottery kilns at Longthorpe (see p. 11) dated to A.D. 50-65. A fragmentary 'thistle-brooch', also recovered, fits this dating. The only other small finds were a plain bronze ring and a hob-nail. Around the lip of one pit the ditch filling was burnt; perhaps the final stage of the cremation rite took place over the pit and the remains fell into it.

Another set of quadruple linear ditches butts up against the main ditches at the centre of their run. They are considerably less impressive than the main ditches, being between 0.75 and 2 metres wide by an average of 0.3 metres deep. However, they display greater complexity; for no less than 7 entrances were noted, most of which were staggered and in- or out-turned.

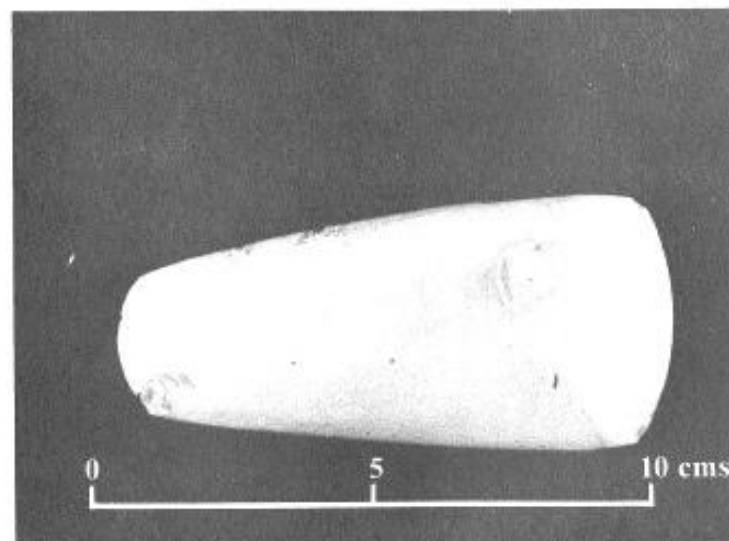


Fig 12 The polished greenstone axe from Lynch Farm

One of these entrances had an outward crank of 2 metres, then continued in the same direction for 5 metres and ended with a slight inturn. On the old alignment after a gap of 1.50 metres was a beam-slot 0.3 metres wide and 11 metres long. This arrangement perhaps comprises a 'baffle' entrance.

Little dating evidence was recovered from these ditches, but there is no reason to suggest a constructional date much later than that of the main ditch-system. They may represent a 'town expansion' or give additional protection to grazing land. A certain number of pits and post-holes was excavated near the ditches. Many of them proved to be natural silt-filled hollows, a proportion of which contained charcoal, pot-boilers and in one instance a small fragment of Beaker pottery in a pit cut by a linear ditch.

Work is at present continuing on the most northerly section of the settlement zone where there is less plough-damage to features. The area contains a complex sequence of pits, ditches and post-holes. Towards the centre is what appears to be an oval gully, measuring 20 metres by 15 metres. A short ditch runs from it into a soak-away. Several hearths lie within the oval, which may therefore represent a hut-emplacement. Further work should clarify this. Pottery recovered from some of the excavated pits is of Late Iron-Age date, but certain finds—notably a greenstone polished axe (fig.12) and some rusticated neolithic pottery—indicate earlier occupation on the spot.

In 1973 it is hoped to concentrate on the settlement areas and try to determine their relationship with the linear ditches.

### **A Neolithic Axe from Lynch Farm**

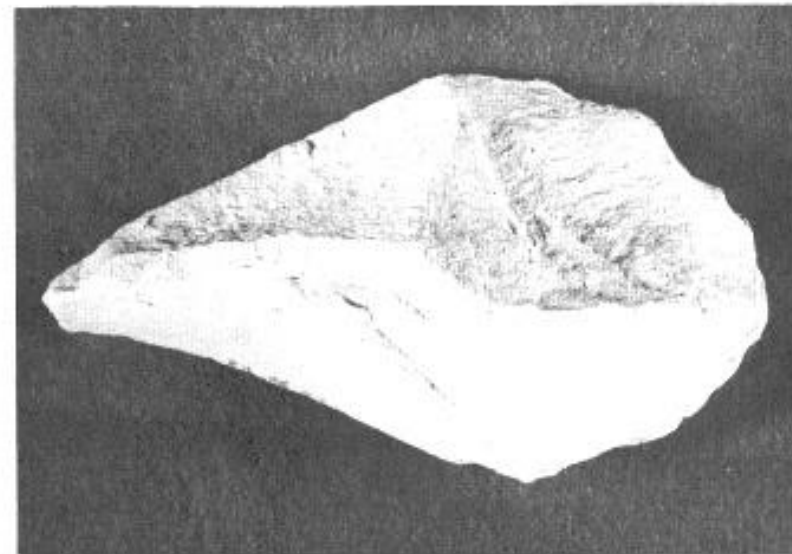
A polished greenstone axe of neolithic date (before 3000 B.C.) was found in a silt layer over the gravel at the most northerly point of the site (fig.12). Some 60 metres away an axe-polishing stone was recovered in a similar deposit (fig.13). Both implements fall within group VI, and are from the Langdale Pike 'axe-factories' in the Lake District.

The polishing stone is a coarse-grained variety of the same type of volcanic tuff as that from which the axe was manufactured. Perhaps the most interesting feature of these finds is the association, albeit loose, of a polishing stone and an axe, suggesting the possibility that they travelled from the Lake District to the Nene Valley together.

I am indebted to Dr W.A.Cummins of Nottingham University for the identification and petrological examination.

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**Fig 13 The axe-polishing stone from Lynch Farm**



# Three Iron tools from Lynch Farm

By William Manning

This small group of tools—a mower's anvil, a smith's cross-pane hammer, and an axe—were found in the fourth-century aisled barn during the excavations of 1972 (see p.21). In themselves the tools are typical of their types, but an added significance is given by the fact that they were found in a group. Hoards of ironwork are not uncommon in south-eastern England and East Anglia in the fourth-century A.D.; a large and important one comes from Sibson, near Peterborough (Peterborough Museum), and others are known from Lakenheath and Worlington (Suffolk), Great Chesterford (Essex), Sandy (Bedfordshire), and Dropshort (Bucks). But almost all of these are considerably larger groups and in most cases they can be shown to have been intentionally concealed, usually in wells or deep pits, probably as votive offerings (Manning (1972). The Lynch Farm group differs in being much smaller and in having been found within a building, both facts which suggest that it was not deliberately hidden but probably accidentally covered and forgotten, an only too probable event in an ill-lit workshop.

As a group, however, it has a certain coherence. The mower's anvil (fig. 18) is a tool taken into the field to rest the scythe on when hammering out dents in the blade caused by accidentally striking stones while mowing. In use it was pushed into the ground, with the side loops acting as stops to prevent it being driven too far. Similar tools were still being made in Birmingham at the end of the nineteenth-century. Although the cross-pane hammer (fig. 17) is primarily a smith's tool, it seems probable that here it formed a pair with the anvil. A stone would serve as a hammer in an emergency, but if the mower had the foresight to take the anvil into the field with him he would probably think of a hammer as well. In this context it is significant that the face of the hammer is badly damaged and would be almost useless to a smith, although still useable for such crude work as knocking out dents in the scythe. The axe (fig. 19), which is no more than a hatchet, too light for any heavy work, fits into this group as an obvious tool for a farm worker. It might be taken out at the same time as the others or it may merely have been kept with them, but there is no reason to doubt that they all belonged to the same man. The damaged face of the hammer and the dents in the edge of the axe show that they had been well used, but, while they may have been put aside as scrap, neither the anvil nor the axe are badly damaged and it is more likely that they were simply misplaced. It would certainly be most

unwise to suppose that they form a small votive hoard comparable with the others from this general region.

## Catalogue

*Mower's anvil* with a single pair of coils. The stem is separated from the head by an unusually pronounced neck. Both head and stem have a rectangular cross-section. The working face has the normal slight doming. Length 19.6 centimetres.

It is a common type which was probably introduced with the scythe into Britain by the Roman army. The earliest is probably from Newstead (c.A.D. 100+) (J. Curle, *A Roman Frontier Post and its People: The Fort of Newstead*, 1911, 284, pl. LXII.1), but they are particularly common in the fourth-century hoards from Sandy, Beds. (*Beds. Arch. Journ.* II, 1964, 55, fig. 3.8), Great Chesterford, Essex (five examples: *Arch. J.* xiii, 1856, 3, pl. 1.8), and Silchester, Hants. (1890 Hoard—four examples, two with four coils: *Arch.* LIV, 1894, 143, 1900 Hoard—eight examples: *Arch.* LVII, 1901, 246)

*Hammer.* Cross-pane hammer with a small round eye. The cross-pane is rounded and unworn, but the face is damaged. Length 22.4 centimetres.

The cross-pane was the common hand hammer of the Roman smith; of the thirteen hand-hammers in the two fourth-century hoards from Silchester, for example, only one was not cross-paned. This example differs slightly from the majority in having a relatively slight expansion about the eye (although this can be paralleled in the hammers in the Great Chesterford hoard), and in having an unusually short stem between the face and the eye, which makes the head distinctly unbalanced. The eye is usually placed at the centre of the head for obvious reasons, and this imbalance and the rough, broken edges of the face (which are in marked contrast to the well-formed cross-pane), suggest that this is not the original face, but a secondary one formed after the head had broken, perhaps as a result of a flaw in the welding.

Cross-pane hammers of this general type come from the two Silchester hoards (fourth-century) (*Arch.* LIV, 1894, 145; *Arch.* LVII 1901, 246); the Great Chesterford hoard (fourth-century) (*Arch. J.* XIII, 1856, 6, pl. 1.3-6);

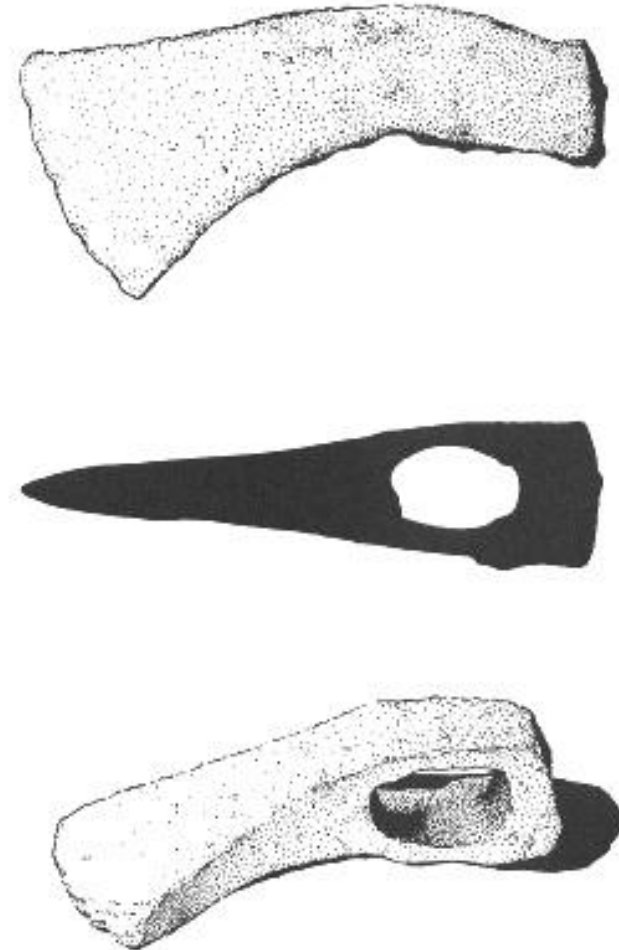
Caerwent, Mon. (undated, Newport Museum); Hockwold, Norfolk (undated, Norwich Museum); and the Eckford, Roxburghs. hoard (first—second century) (P.S.A.S.LXXXVII, 1953, 27, fig.6. E13).

Axe with a strongly curved blade and oval eye. Length 14.0 centimetres. Weight 1 lb. 3 oz.

Fourth-century axes frequently show this degree of curvature, although it is not common in the early Roman period; the type is clearly related to the Saxon *francisca* or throwing-axe. The rear of the edge shows two marked dents, the result of misuse. Axes of generally similar size and shape come from the fourth-century hoards from Dorchester, Oxon. (*Arch.J.CXIX*, 1962, 114) and Silchester (*Arch.LIV*, 1894, 147-8), while two more from the Saxon Shore fort at Burgh Castle (Norwich Museum) have a similar curvature but slightly wider blades.

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**Fig 19** Iron tool from Lynch Farm  
An axe

# The Lynch Farm Complex: Recent Work

*By Adrian Challands*

Work on the site has been continuous throughout 1973 on the main 'defensive' quadruple linear ditches (*Durobrivae* 1 (1973), 22f.) and the areas immediately surrounding them. The aim was to locate an entrance and determine the period of construction.

On all four ditches, 5 metre sections were carefully cut by hand over a distance of 50 metres close to the centre of their 300 metre run. As in the case of those ditches dug previously, great variation in profile and filling was noted. The layers making up the top 0.30 to 0.50 metres appeared to be deliberate filling and contained a significant proportion of pottery of Belgic Iron-Age style. Mixed with this was a small percentage of Roman pottery dated to the mid-second century. Thus it may be assumed that partially silted ditches were open in the mid-second century, although they had lost their effectiveness. Lack of dating material from the lowest layers again prevents our making an estimate of their period of construction.

The profile of the ditch was gradually reduced in size as it drew nearer to the existing central hedge. It soon became obvious that an entrance was located at this point. The strip was extended to take in the terminals, where slight inturns were noted in plan. Sections are at present being cut through these, and we are paying special attention to the possibility of finding traces of timber gateworks. The failure of crop-markings to indicate the entrance is probably due to the close proximity of the hedge line.

Oval pits north of the ditches produced substantial fragments of iron slag, sealed beneath well-stratified late Iron-Age pottery. Iron ore within the gravels may well have been exploited during the latter part of the first century B.C. or more probably the early first century A.D.

Future work will be concentrated on the extreme western portion of the site where pit alignments and hut circles may be revealed.



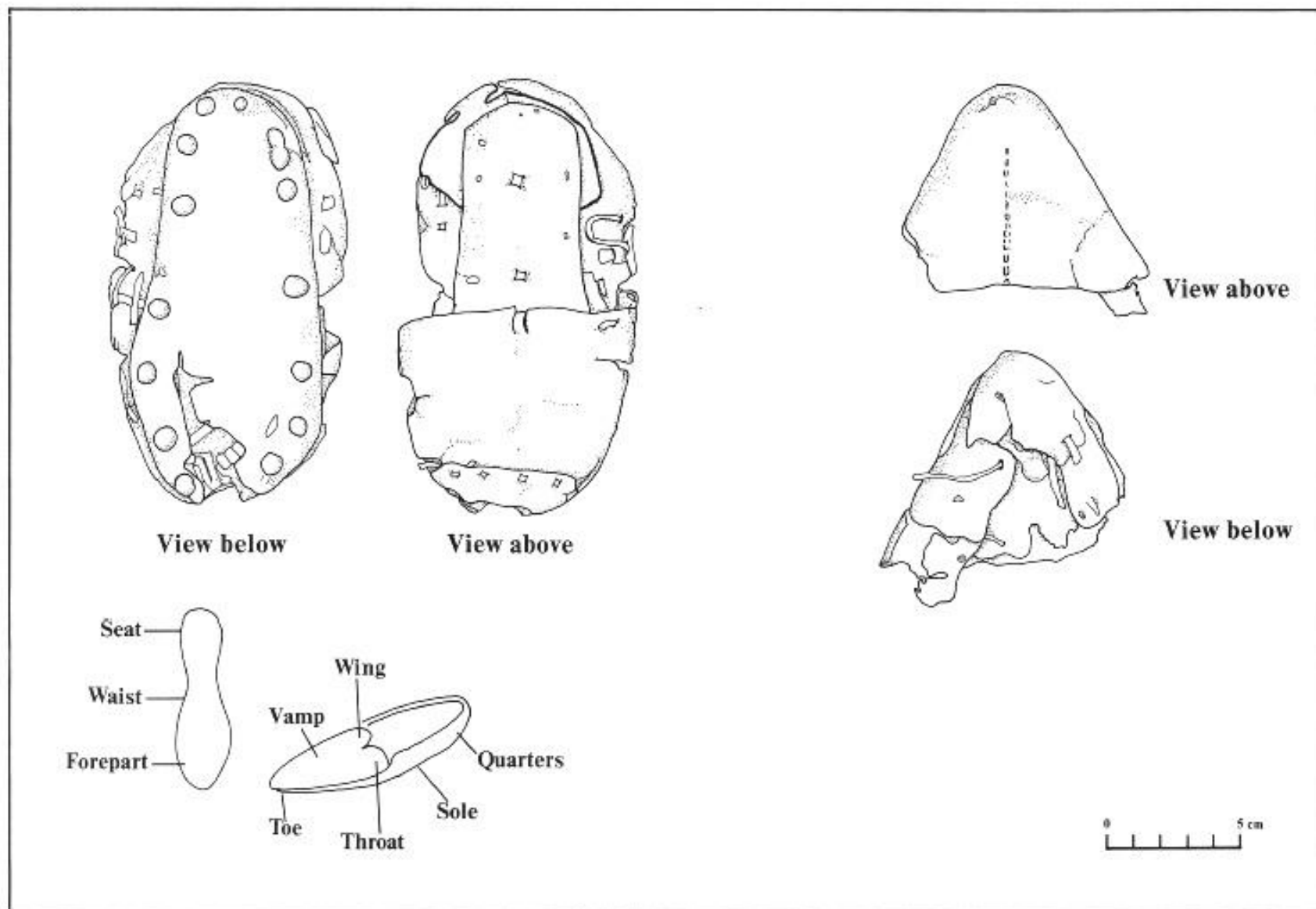


Fig 12 Fourth century leather shoes from Lynch Farm, Orton Longueville

# A Late-Roman Nail-Cleaner with Peacock

by Sonia Chadwick Hawkes

This important little bronze (fig. 12) was found in August 1972 on the extensive late Roman agricultural estate at Lynch Farm, Orton Longueville, in the general demolition layer over the fourth-century aisled barn (*Durobrivae* 1, 1973, 20-1). This deposit was not sealed, but the latest coins in it, of the House of Valentinian, accord with the late date one would expect for such an object. From its broken suspension-loop it seems to have been a toilet instrument of the type commonly (but probably erroneously) called a nail-cleaner. In its form and decoration, however, it closely resembles a class of strap-tag made in the late fourth century by the Romano-British workshops which also manufactured the buckles, with long decorated plates, of my types 1A and 1B (Hawkes, Dunning (1961), 21ff, 41ff.; Hawkes (1973)). These strap-tags have the same elongated pear-shaped profile, often with the same bifurcated tip, and some of the best have flanking birds' heads which may have inspired the projecting mouldings on the neck of the Lynch Farm nail-cleaner (Hawkes, Dunning (1961), fig. 8). The tags usually have punched and/or engraved geometrical ornament, sometimes of great delicacy; but sometimes there is representational ornament of simple, but apparently symbolic, kind. This is what we have on the piece from Lynch Farm.

The basic form, together with its 'chip-carved' border decoration, was produced by casting. Except for file marks the back is plain. On the front a punch has been used on the cold metal to produce a pair of 'eyes' below the loop, a simple dotted border and the outline of a peacock standing in profile, also carried out in dot-work. The bird is simply, but effectively, rendered, with enough detail to make its identity unmistakable.

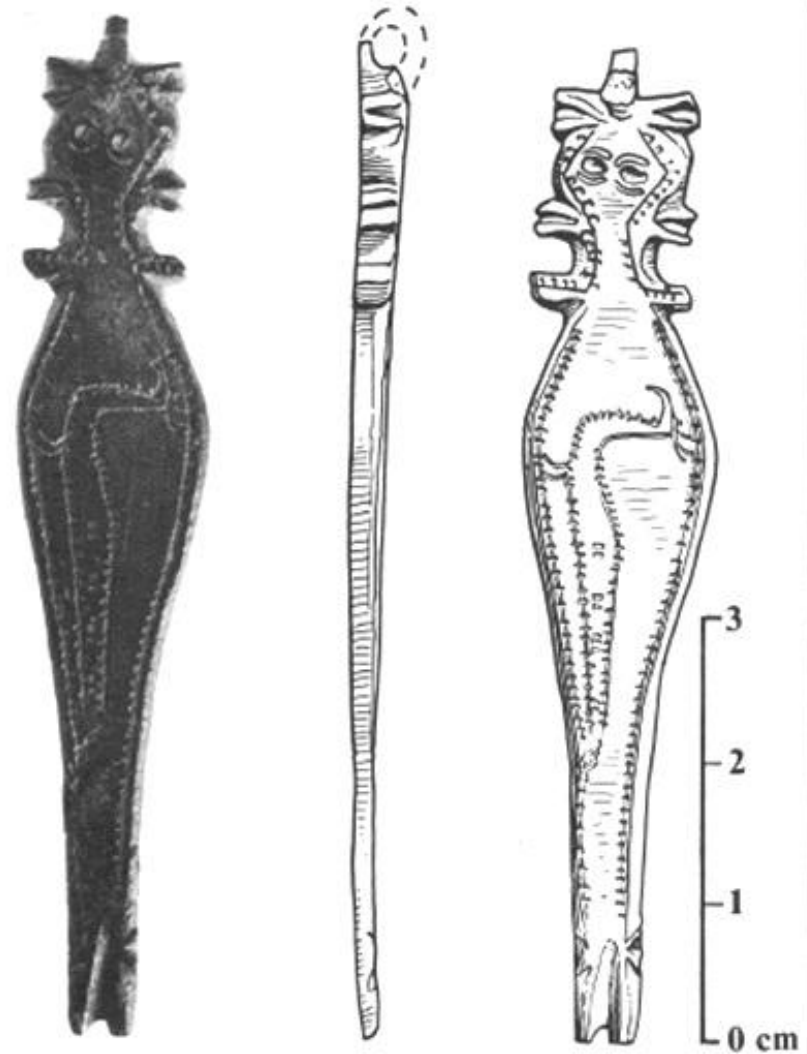


Fig 12a Photograph of the Lynch Farm nail-cleaner

Fig 12b Drawing of the Lynch Farm nail-cleaner

# The Stone of Group VI Rock from Lynch Farm: a Reconsideration

by Stephen Briggs

Two artefacts, one a polished greenstone axe, the other a large flake described as an axe-polishing stone, were found 60m apart during rescue excavations at Lynch Farm (*Durobrivae* 1 (1973)). They were recovered from an indeterminate silt layer above the gravel. Both were examined petrographically by Dr W. A. Cummins and ascribed by him to Group VI. The possibility was advanced that these artefacts had 'travelled from the Lake District to the Nene Valley together', but there was no discussion of the mode of transport which carried them.

Finds of axe-polishing equipment are not common in Britain. At least a handful of concave sandstone blocks and one hone have come to light, but the polishing activity is generally believed to have been effected most commonly with quartz-rich sand or small portable sandstone rubbers, which would escape archaeological detection. Outside the Lake District discoveries of artefacts other than axes in Group VI rock are virtually unknown. The discovery of a Cumbrian stone believed to have been used in polishing axes therefore merits fuller discussion.

## Description

The large stone flake (figs. 7,8) is at present 14.6cm long, 8.3cm wide and 3.5cm thick. One face (possibly the bulbar) is fairly flat, the other bifacially ridged. Across the flatter face extremely fine striations run lengthwise. Close to the left-hand side of the broader end of this face are deeper, fresher scratches, running at a slightly different angle, but still lengthwise. The colour here is brown, and at the bottom left a broken edge gives the depth of the colour, demonstrating the scratching to be across a relict patina surface. There are certain small black granules, perhaps of iron pan, still adhering to this surface. Examined under a low-power binocular microscope, it was difficult to ascertain whether they belonged to a pre-working or to a post-Neolithic patina, or to both. On the edge of the artefact are at least two chips which could have resulted from damage during recovery. On the other, bifacial, surface, which in the main appears fresh and chalky-green, there is again very slight iron

staining, mostly toward the wider part of the flake. It appears to be post-Neolithic, but again may not be so. A clear feature of the artefact is that polishing has taken the edge off almost 2cm of the steep ridge immediately below the pointed end. It is however clear that the flake was patinated brown to some depth on what may have been the bulbar face of the flake before the bifacial surface was exposed. The inference is that the flake was detached from a larger rock which was patinated. It is not clear whether man or nature detached it. Neither is the function or chronology of the two sets of striations clear, although they may be glacial in origin. A more detailed microscopic examination is clearly desirable.

## Function

The polishing of axes fashioned from hard metamorphic and igneous rocks demands suitable abrasives. Their availability may dictate the ultimate form of the artefact. It is probable that some rough-outs from Cumbria and elsewhere are not polished; for abrasives are lacking in those localities. The Nene Valley is well served with sandstones, and

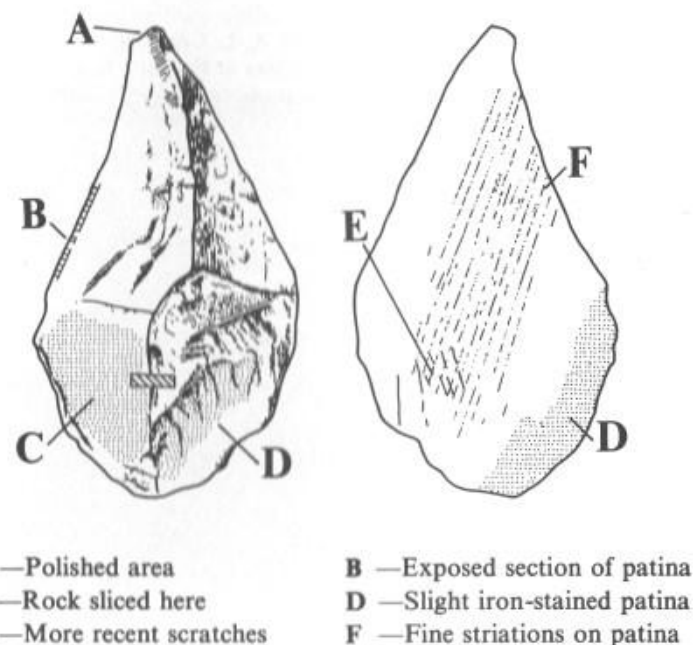


Fig 7 Drawing of the stone flake from Lynch Farm

boasts an extremely wide range of sands and gravels in superficial deposits, which would have provided adequate abrasives for most purposes. The finely polished stone and flint axes in the area are testimony to that. It is extremely unlikely that stone poor in silicates and lacking abrasive qualities, as is Borrowdale Volcanic, should ever have been used for polishing axes. Indeed, the presence of a Group VI axe of the same material and only about 9.5cm long upon the same site leads one to ask why the 'axe-polishing stone', itself a good 5cm longer, should not also have been made into an axe. Such smoothing as is visible upon the bifacial ridge is likely to have occurred from contact with an abrasive rather than through friction against a metamorphic or igneous stone implement. The most likely function for this stone flake therefore seems to the writer to have been that of an axe. For some unknown reason it was discarded soon after the work upon it had begun.

### Mode of Transport

The presence of ice-borne Lake District rocks in eastern England was slowly established by geologists towards the end of the last century. Rastall and Romanes ((1909), 256) identified Borrowdale Volcanics as far south as Kingston Lodge and Cambridge. Sir Cyril Fox could see no reason why greenstone or other polished stone axes should not have been produced in the locality ((1923), 11). In the Nene Valley the



Fig 8 The stone flake from Lynch Farm

abundance and variety of metamorphic and igneous rocks in the drift was demonstrated by Dr P. A. Sabine ((1949), 256-8). He recognised one specimen of the Borrowdale Volcanic series and other Cumbrian rocks, as well as material derived from North Wales, northern Britain, the Midlands and the Southwest. Early observers of Nene Valley geology were quick to note that axes could be made from boulders. Those from Edenham and Kate's Bridge were 'formed of a dark-green slate or hornstone, and neatly polished' and still showed 'portions of the original weathered surface of the boulders' (Skertchley (1877), 204-6). The availability in eastern England of Cumbrian stone is therefore an established fact (*pace* Cummins (1978)), and archaeologists have for long believed that this or other local rock was used in axe manufacture.

The uncertain nature of the rough-out axe in prehistoric 'trade' and the extensive presence of re-cycled Borrowdale Volcanics in northern, midland and eastern Britain (Briggs (1977); (1978)) brings into question the necessity for, or likelihood of, long-distance movement of unworked stone or finished implements in that material. At Lynch Farm we can perhaps for the first time recognise an attempt at axe making from such re-cycled rock. We are thus provided with some tangible evidence which supports the view that the economy of Neolithic Britain was geared to the utilisation of local raw materials.

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