

2004 Excavation Results

5.1.1 Trench 28

Trench 28 was a 5.5m square excavated to establish whether the high level of archaeological remains present within Trench 26 was the same in the west of Area C. During machine excavation of the subsoil a sherd of Roman samien ware was recovered. This lay just above the stratified archaeological deposits which were identified at a depth of 0.5m below the modern ground surface. The features were located primarily to the south of the trench and seemed to represent a number of irregular inter-cutting pits containing pale grey silt fills. They gave a clear indication that the high level of archaeological survival seen in Trench 26 extended to this part of Area C. The archaeological features were recorded, drawn and photographed. However due to adverse weather conditions it was decided not to excavate any of them. Trench 28 was lined with plastic to define the archaeological levels and then backfilled.

5.4 Trench 29

Trench 29 was established to see whether the high level of archaeological remains present within Trench 26 was the same in the north of Area C. The trench was approximately 4.0m square. A number of archaeological features were revealed within Trench 29 including what appear to be small pits and postholes. They gave a clear indication that the high level of archaeological survival seen in Trench 26 extended to this part of Area C. The archaeological features were recorded, drawn and photographed. However due to adverse weather conditions it was decided not to excavate any of them. Trench 29 was lined with plastic to define the archaeological levels and then backfilled.

5.5 Trench 30

Figures: 16, 17, 18 and 19.

In 1998 a geophysical survey was carried out within Area E, to the east of the church car park, owned by Mr. L. Arundel. The survey appeared to indicate an anomaly running approximately east west and located *c.*25m into the field from the metal fence boundary. Excavation was conducted to determine the origin of the the geophysical anomaly and to establish if this was part of the outer enclosure ditch. An area 10.00m by 2.00m was manually de-turfed to a depth of approximately 0.2m a further 0.1m of dark brown friable loam (584) was removed. Within this was found a dark grey flint flake and a single flake of chert. Beneath (584) a layer of loose orangey brown sandy loam (583) was removed by towelling. This lay on top of the plated sandstone bedrock, which was frequently shattered due to the thin nature of the plates. In places the bedrock had decayed, resulting in a layer of coarse, loose orangey sand lying on the bedrock. A 1.80m wide ditch was located and subsequently excavated. The ditch [582] ran in an east west alignment consisting of steep sloping sides onto a flat base, 0.89m deep.

Discussion

Trench 30 showed that the anomaly was the result of human activity in the form of a ditch 1.65m wide and 0.83m deep similar in size and nature to the sections of outer enclosure ditch identified within the trenches excavated in Area B. At this stage any interpretation as to the date

and function of this feature is highly speculative. However it is tempting to see it as part of the same Iron Age ditch system as the enclosure ditch in Area A. The discovery of the ditch in Trench 30 was very exciting and it is tempting to associate it with the enclosure ditch in Area B. If it is part of the same Iron Age ditch system it would mean that nearly all the hill at Mellor is enclosed. This would have significant implications on the role that Mellor played within the Iron Age society in the region. However it is too early to draw any firm conclusions regarding the date and function of this ditch.