

## EOXP TEST PIT 8 KL

68 Kelburne Road, Oxford OX4 3SH

Date of Excavation: 28 and 29 May 2011

Area excavated: 1.0m x 1.5m in rear garden

Weather conditions: mild, intermittent light rain

Excavators: Jane Parkinson, Sue Cooke, Jane Harrison, Anne Grimm, Nick Swift, Pete Banks,  
Susan Harrison

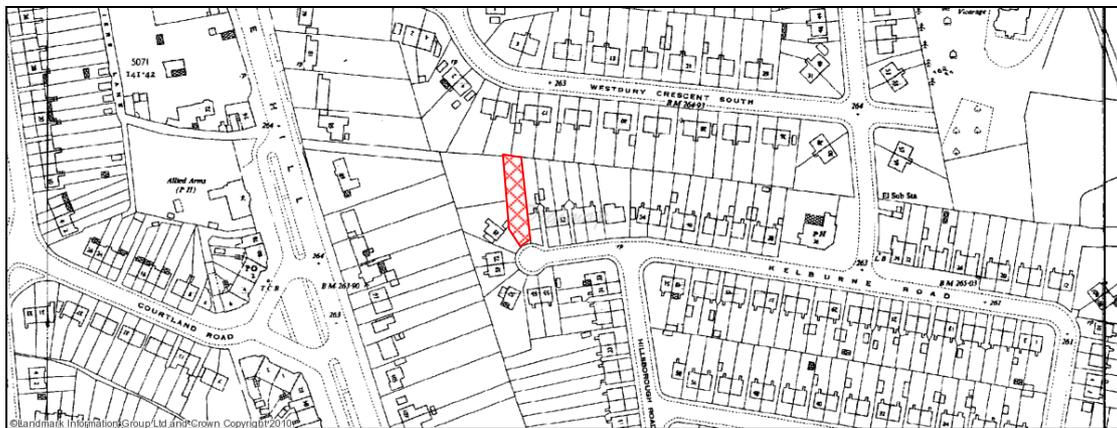
Report by: Jane Parkinson

GPS location and height above sea-level: SP 5372 0356, 82m OD

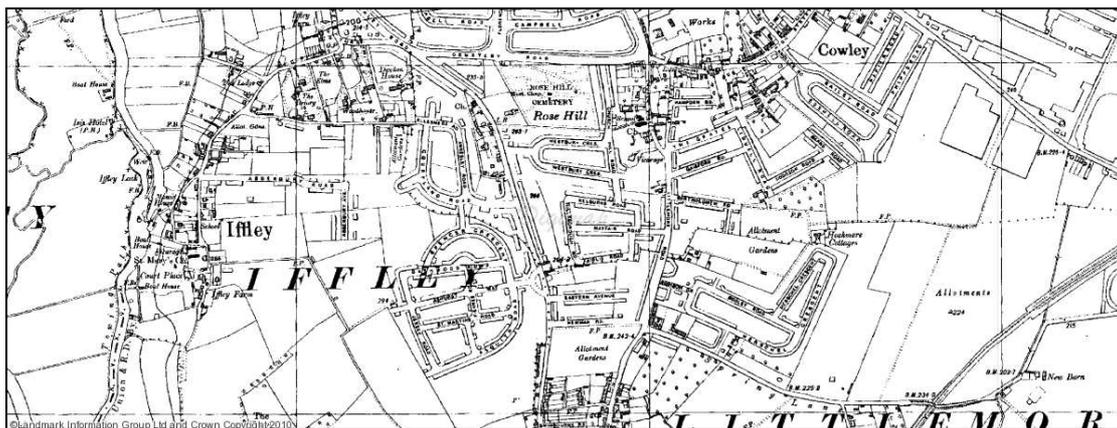
### Introduction

**Victoria History of the County of Oxfordshire, Volume 5, pages 77-8**

Hockmore Street, chief settlement in 1086, referred to as 'Cowley'. Hockmore no longer exists – covered by Templars Square and car parks. Between Towns Road runs between Temple Cowley and Hockmore/ Church Cowley; the survey site lies between Hockmore and Rose Hill.



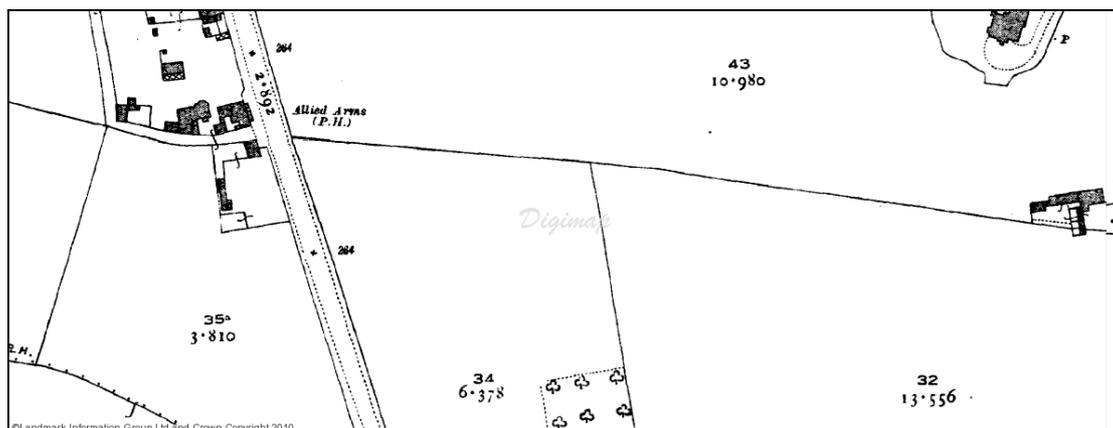
© Crown Copyright/database right 2011. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service.  
Figure 1: 1950s Ordnance Survey map. The property location of the survey is shown as the red hatched area.



© Crown Copyright/database right 2011. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service.  
Figure 2: 1940s Ordnance Survey map



© Crown Copyright/database right 2011. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service.  
Figure 3: 1930s Ordnance Survey map



© Crown Copyright/database right 2011. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service.  
Figure 4: 1920s Ordnance Survey map

### Back garden

1940s map shows Kelburne Road finishing at Hillsborough Road; between then and the 1950s map the road is extended to include a cul-de-sac of houses which includes the property of the test pit.

### Orchard

There are still trees in the majority of the local gardens which remain from the previous use of the land as an orchard. In a neighbouring garden to the east (no 66) there is a large, old walnut tree which traditional orchards included a few of (or hazels) <http://www.fruitexpert.co.uk/orchards-britain.html>

The 1920s map shows the area as under pasture, with a change in the 1930s to orchard. This is in addition to an existing larger orchard to the south.

The apples of the tree in the survey garden have been identified as Laxton's Advance by the Orchard Manager at Waterperry Gardens. The Laxton brothers produced thousands of cross-bred apples and a high proportion of them retained the Laxton name. Laxton's Advance dates from 1908 and is among the earlier varieties.

### Pasture

Prior to the orchard the 1920s map shows the area as under pasture.

### **Excavation summary**

All contexts were dug by hand (spade and trowel) and were friable. Contexts 101 and 102 were completely sieved, but 103 and 104 were not due to lack of time. Natural wasn't reached, again through insufficient time.

More modern material was found in lower layers which correlated with the terracing of the garden to raise the north end. The test pit was dug towards the north end and reverse stratigraphy was evident.

Context 101 was 0.2m deep; it was mid yellow brown, soft sandy silt (25% sand) with a fairly high organic content. It gradually became less sandy and siltier. There was very little modern material. There was evidence of burning with charcoal flecks, some burnt bone and plastic and numerous nails, so possible bonfire site on pasture or orchard soil.

Context 102 was 0.17m deep; it was light brown, sandy silt (limestone sand, not gritty) with lower organic content than 101. Its boundary was diffused then clear. It contained more modern material (from terracing) than 101 and also more nails and a door bolt (possibly from burning of unwanted timber).

Context 103 was a 0.6m x 1m sondage in the north end of the test pit; its depth was 0.05m – 0.11m. It contained light yellowish brown soft silty (25% silt) sand which was more homogenous than 104 and had limestone flecks. The boundary was clear with context 104 but the top layer was more disturbed and there was hollowing.

Context 104 was light yellowish brown, soft silty sand (25% silt). The spoil was mottled and variable with some clay lenses. The context was considered to be either a fill or a natural hollow created by the roots of bushes or small trees.

**Interpretation** – no evidence of settlement: the test pit located in an agricultural area between 'towns'; that is between Iffley/Rose Hill and Church/Temple Cowley.

## Results

Spit/ context	Type of deposit	Description	Soil sample	Comments
100	Turf and topsoil	Turf and topsoil removed by hand (spade).		Sketch plan
101	Layer below 101, over 103	<p>0.2m of friable, mid yellow brown, soft sandy (25%) silt, removed by hand (spade and trowel).</p> <p><b>Boundary:</b> gradually less sandy, more silty.</p> <p><b>Inclusions:</b> 3% small rounded pebbles, poorly sorted (10 – 40mm). 3% charcoal, small flecks to 40mm.</p> <p><b>Finds:</b> 6+ bone fragments, some burnt.            15+ burnt plastic            30+ Fe nails, mainly complete, some square, highly rusted            10+ CBM, piece tile            6 ceramic pieces,            4 pottery pieces (2 unglazed)            4 buttons, 2 shells            4 vitreous slag,            10+ glass fragments, some window            2 clay pipe pieces            modern material – plastic lids, metalwork</p> <p><b>Contamination:</b> roots (live and rotten), worms, mole run.</p> <p><b>Fairly high organic content.</b>  <b>Very little modern material. Under lawn, likely under grass before that. Evidence of burning (charcoal flecks, burnt bone and plastic, numerous nails) – possible bonfire site?</b></p>		
102	Layer below 101, over 103	<p>0.17m of friable, light brown sandy silt (limestone sand, not gritty) removed by hand (spade and trowel).</p> <p><b>Boundary:</b> diffused then clear.</p> <p><b>Inclusions:</b> 2% midsize irregular limestone stones, poorly sorted (50 – 70mm)            3% small pebbles, poorly sorted (10 – 40mm)            5% charcoal, small and midsize (40 - 50mm)            7% shallow, ashy lens, NW quadrant            1% shallow yellow, sandy lens, in south section</p> <p><b>Finds:</b> 28 Fe nails, round highly rusted            10 mortar pieces, various sizes            10mm x 60mm piece of rusted metal            1 metal door bolt, rusted            1 flat, thin Pb triangle            1 16 bore cartridge            1 sherd coal/clinker            7 CBM, mostly tile            12 terracotta pottery sherd, 4 white pottery sherds            3 animal bone, various            1 oyster shell, 2 snail shells            3 small sherds glass</p> <p>See Figure A</p>		

		<p><b>Contamination:</b> roots (live and rotten), worms.</p> <p><b>Low organic content.</b>  <b>More modern material than layer above (101). May mean reverse stratigraphy from effects of terracing the garden; lower terrace at southern end.</b></p>		
103	Layer below 102 in sondage	<p>0.05m – 0.11m of friable, light yellowish brown soft silty (25% silt) sand removed by hand (spade and trowel).  <b>Boundary:</b> clear with context, top layer more disturbed  <b>Inclusions:</b> &lt;1% stones and pebbles  &lt;1% charcoal flecks  <b>Finds:</b> 1 tile sherd  1 ceramic sherd  5 shell sherds (2 oyster) in NW corner  15 wood charcoal, variable sized  1 flint cortex  1 piece pipe  Lower layer 1 grey pottery sherd  <b>Contamination:</b> roots (rotten) See Figure B</p> <p><b>Disturbance and hollowing, more homogenous than 104, small flecks of limestone.</b></p>		Sketch plan
104	Fill below 102, above 103 in sondage	<p>0.06m of friable, light brownish yellow softer silty (25% silt) sand removed by hand (spade and trowel).  <b>Boundary:</b> clear with contexts above and below.  <b>Inclusions:</b> &lt;1% stones and pebbles, poorly sorted  &lt;1% charcoal flecks (less than 103)  <b>Finds:</b> 1 medieval pottery sherd  Numerous tiny shell fragments  1 worked flint, 30mm  See Figure C  <b>Contamination:</b> roots (rotten)</p> <p><b>Mottled spoil, variable, some clay lenses.</b></p>		Sketch plan
105	Cut of fill 104 or natural hollow (bush throw)	<p><b>Cut or natural worn hollow created by roots of bushes/small trees.</b></p>		



Figure A: Finds from context 102



Figure B: Finds from context 103



Figure C: Finds from context 104



Context 101 Looking N



Team at work



Context 102 looking N



Fully excavated looking N



S facing section



Sue at work