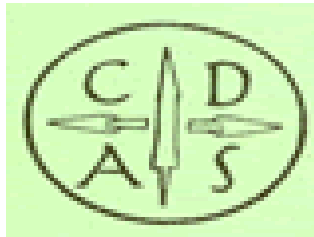


CHICHESTER DISTRICT ARCHAEOLOGY SOCIETY

Report of an archaeological field walk carried at Manor Farm, Didling.

Field walk leader Alan Stanley



Project Background

This field walk is part of a programme of linked but independent archaeological activities undertaken by Chichester and District Archaeology Society (CDAS) to investigate the landscape around the village of Didling. The objective of this project was to undertake a systematic *field walk* to, collect and plot concentrations of artifact spreads so as to gain an indication of past land usage and the possible location of any surviving archaeology that may be present in the field.

Prehistoric, Roman and medieval pottery and prehistoric worked flints have been found in a field immediately north of Gaia Cottage, west of Ingram's Green Lane, bounded on the west side by public footpath. This field is number 9189 on the Woolbeding Estate map mid-field NGR ref. SU4839 1181 and was the subject of this field walk (Figure1).

The methodology used for the field walk was as directed in the CDAS Field Walking manual dated February 2006. The site was given the code of ES 08. The field walk was conducted over three day in late March 2008, the artefacts were washed and identified during April and May and this report is based on the results obtained.



Figure1: Aerial Photograph of site showing targeted field

Methodology

The baseline was laid out south to north and marked alphabetically every 20 metres, walking restricted to the ploughed area. Right angled transects were fixed using a right-angle prism, each pair of walkers picking up artefacts within two metres either side of their transect lines, giving a 20 per cent sampling (Figure 2). The artefacts are later washed, dried and examined by experts who classify and date the archaeological fragments. The fragments which include such artefacts as worked flint, pottery, ceramic building materials and metal items will give clues to what has been happening in the landscape in the past.

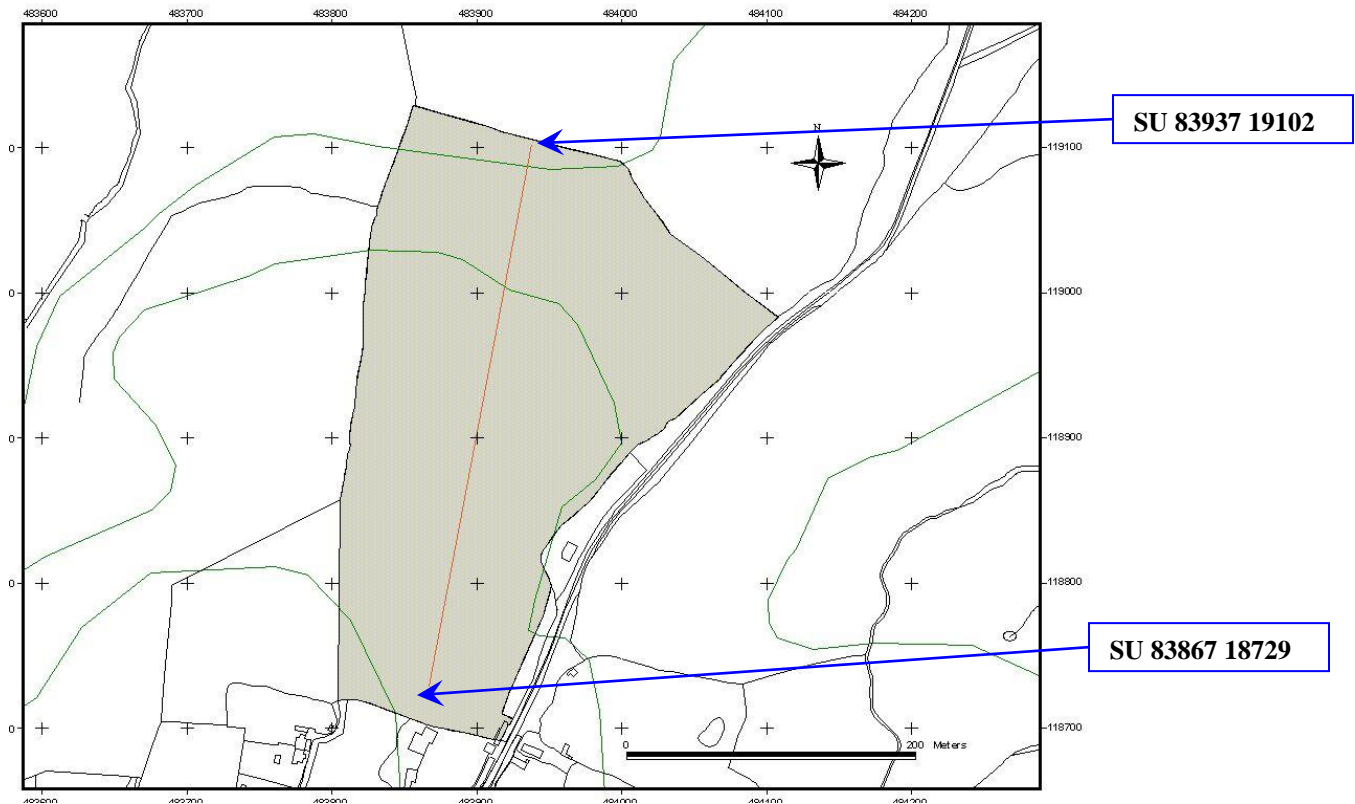


Figure2: Field 9189 with base line shown in red

Results

Fire-cracked flint made up the bulk of finds as can be seen from Table 1. The geology is Upper Greensand hard pieces of which outcrop along a ridge in the field. The Upper Greensands produce an acidic silty loam soil which may have been limed over the years, a process that reduces the acidity of the soil. There is evidence of an old chalk quarry and at least one brick-built lime kiln to the south of the church which may have been the source of the lime. The chalk is burnt to produce lime and any flints within the chalk will show the characteristic signs of fire-cracking. There were 863 pieces of fire-cracked flint collected and 79% of the grids contained fire-cracked flint suggesting that this was probably a result of liming.

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	8E	7E	6E	5E	4E	3E	2E	1E	1W	2W	3W	4W
A						3	6	4	1	10	19	
B						3	1	1	11	11	7	
C						7	1	10	2	16	12	
D						14	8	9	10	9	10	
E						8	23	12	16	13	10	5
F						-	12	11	3		1	-
G						-	3	4	15	15	8	4
H					4	10	5	2	7	6	8	6
I					6	6	9	10	9	7	7	4
J				5	3	2	3	-	-	-	-	-
K				-	2	-	1	1	3	-	-	-
L		15	18	5	-	-	4	5	6	-	8	5
M		14	15	4	10	4	2	-	5	2	5	6
N	3	9	12	10	11	6	3	3	5	10	8	7
O	1	6	7	7	4	3	2	1	1	-	-	-
P	2	-	2	4	-	6	2	1	8	13	-	12
Q			4	3		5	5	16	6	-	1	3
R				10	8	10	6	-	-	-	4	-
S					-	-	1	-	4	1		-

Table1: Distribution of Fire-cracked flint

There was a spread of 77 pieces of *Medieval pottery* recovered (Table 2). The majority of the pottery (79%) was close to the northern entrance to the field and can be assumed to be the result of manuring. This is a processes were the farmyard manure is distributed over the field to improve its fertility. Amongst the manure it was normal to include kitchen waste including broken pottery. The distribution of the manure on the fields therefore also distributed the pottery.

	8E	7E	6E	5E	4E	3E	2E	1E	1W	2W	3W	4W
A						3	9	2	-	1	5	
B						1	3	2	2	3	7	
C						3	-	-	3	2	1	
D						-	1	-	1	2	1	
E						-	1	-	4	2	2	-
F						-	-	-	-	-	-	-
G						-	-	-	2	-	-	-
H					-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-
I					2	2	-	-	1	-	-	-
J				-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
K				-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-
L			1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
M		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
N	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
O	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
P	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Q			-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
R				-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
S					-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table2: Distribution of Medieval Pottery

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There were 42 *worked flints* recovered (Table 3) the majority of which were waste flakes. There was no apparent pattern to the flints and as such probably represents a general scatter of flint napping material that has been distributed by the actions of ploughing over the centuries. A random find of a flint scraper and most of the worked flint, including a core were identified as late Neolithic. The HER records a Neolithic axe find at Didling

	8E	7E	6E	5E	4E	3E	2E	1E	1W	2W	3W	4W
A						-	-	-	-	-	-	-
B						-	-	-	-	-	-	-
C						-	-	-	1	-	-	-
D						-	-	-	-	-	-	-
E					1	1	-	2	-	-	-	-
F					-	-	-	2	-	3	-	-
G					-	-	1	-	3	1	-	2
H					-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-
I					-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
J				-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
K				-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
L		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
M		-	2	-	5	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
N	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1
O	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
P	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Q	1	-	-	-	1	1	2	1	-	-	-	-
R				-	-	2	-	1	-	-	-	-
S						-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 3: Distribution of Worked Flints

Pottery

The most prolific artefacts recovered were 467 sherds of *Romano-British pottery* (Table 4). Whilst there was some pottery found in over 46% of the grids, there was a clear concentration in the north-east corner of the field (Figure 3). This could represent some hidden archaeological feature. Most of the pottery showed typical plough soil abrasion with an average sherd weight of less than 5 grams, though there were some less damaged fragments, possibly broken through relatively recent ploughing activity disturbing a pit. The majority of the grey wares were either Alice Holt (dated mid second century to mid fourth century) or Rowlands Castle flanged bowls or jars. The majority fine wares were New Forest (mid third century to late fourth century) with one sherd of an Oxford Colour Coated vessel. There was a single sherd of very abraded samian and a sherd of an amphora possibly from a Dressel type 20 vessel.

Sufficient Romano-British pottery was recorded to justify further archaeological investigations on this field to establish if any archaeology was surviving beneath the soil horizon.

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	8E	7E	6E	5E	4E	3E	2E	1E	1W	2W	3W	4W	5W
A						-	-	1	-	-	1		
B						-	1	1	-	-	-		
C						-	1	-	2	2	-		
D						1	-	-	-	1	-		
E					-	1	2	-	-	3	-	1	
F					-	-	1	1	-	-	-		
G					-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	
H					8	7	1	-	3	5	-	3	
I					2	6	4	-	-	-	-	-	
J				1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	
K				2	3	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	
L		7	11	20	-	-	2	4	5	3	4	8	
M		19	45	20	17	-	-	-	-	-	-	13	
N	1	10	41	26	56	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	
O	-	6	3	12	4	7	2	2	-	-	-	-	1
P	1	4	3	10	3	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	
Q	-	-	-	4	-	1	1	1	-	2	-	-	
R				-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	
S						2	-	-	1	-	-	-	

Table 4: Distribution of Romano-British Pottery

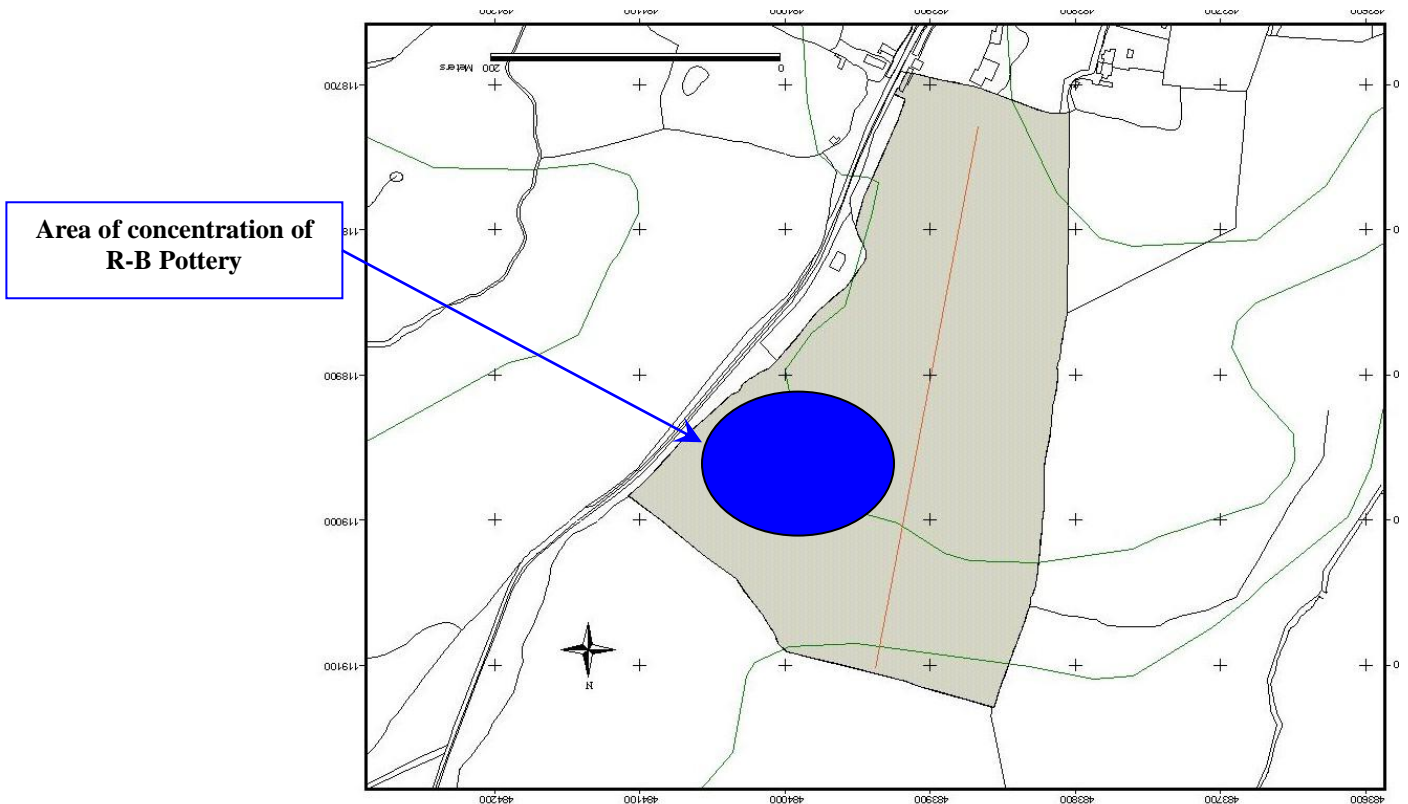


Figure 3: The blue area indicates the high concentration of R-B pottery

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Conclusions

The archaeological finds illustrate human activity in this field from the pre-historic period, through the Romano-British occupation, and the medieval period. Among random finds were conjoining portions of a sturdy medieval or post medieval cooking pot and, close by, another of thinner fabric of similar period, the latter of coarse sandy ware of a type made locally, possibly at Graffham.

It was significant that there were a lack of any building material of any period. It would have been perhaps expected to have recovered some Romano-British building material considering the relatively large amount of Romano-British pottery. This would seem to indicate that if there were a Romano-British villa or farmstead in the vicinity. It may be possible to locate the structure(s) with further non-invasive work, and it is planned to return to Didling to complete topographical and geo-physical surveys in the autumn of 2008.

Acknowledgements

CDAS would like to thank the Woolbeding Estate (Mr. Jeffery) for the opportunity to walk this field, and the Didling Farm and Flock manager Martin Blythe, for practical help. CDAS would also like to acknowledge the much valued practical help and hospitality generously given by local resident, Delphine Star of Gaia Cottage.

Technical and quality assurance to this archaeological program was provided by James Kenny, the Chichester and District Council Archaeologist, to whom CDAS is most grateful.