



ARCHAEOLOGY ROUND-UP

Work by dedicated volunteers on the original site near the church has revealed a new Roman building, previously hinted at by the appearance of large masonry blocks and an extensive spread of mixed grey clay. These resolved into a large building, more than 10m long and about 4m wide, divided into at least two spaces. One space was provided with better flooring than the other, and may have contained a furnace or oven. The building was timber framed, with stone post-pads to support the uprights. It is nearly parallel to the stone walled building first identified on site in 2008, but could not have existed at the same time as they overlap. The timber framed structure is probably earlier.

This brings the number of buildings on site to three: the large stone walled building; this new timber building; and a robbed-out stone-walled building, again known from the earliest stages of the dig. The robbed out foundations of this building have been further investigated this year, and a corner has been uncovered and possibly a third wall parallel to one visible in the trench since 2008. A heap of stone tiles may represent its collapsed roof. More work in September should clarify this aspect of the dig. How this building relates to the other two is still unresolved, but a coin of the early -mid fourth century AD was found in a ditch that cut the debris of its demolition. The domestic material from the site, including Samian pottery, central heating flue tile fragments, broken ceramic roof tiles and a single tessera (mosaic cube) suggest there is a more substantial building in the vicinity, but not in the area we have open.

On the second site, to the east along the ridge, opened this year to examine the context of the 2008 hoard, we have found that the coins in their pot were buried inside a polygonal or circular building, in a pit dug down beside the wall, possibly near an east facing door. Several coins from the hoard scattered by the plough have been found, and will no doubt be declared Treasure as part of the hoard in due course. The building's shape strongly suggests it was a shrine or small temple. Similar polygonal temples are known from the tribal area to the north east. So far there is no evidence which god or gods may have been worshipped here, but the building is very heavily plough damaged, and its northern half has been completely erased, so what evidence may have been there is probably lost. If it was a temple then the hoard may have been a votive offering, as may have been a pit containing sheep's bones, near the hoard pit.

The wall has a number of very burnt stones randomly built into it, suggesting there was some activity on or near the site before it was built. What this was is not known, but another pit about a metre from the hoard pit (still within the Roman building) was filled with small burnt stones and the fragments of a 'beaker' 4,000 years old - about 2,000 years before the Romans arrived in Britain. This raises interesting questions about a continuity of sacred identification at this spot, as the beaker deposit has all the signs of a ritual act. Was there an early bronze age barrow on this site which survived into the Roman period either as a physical mound or as a memory, which was the focus of iron age veneration and a later Romano-Celtic temple?

The work has progressed so successfully as a result of the dedication of many people who have laboured in rain, wind and latterly in sunshine, some from groups outside the village, and who travel some distance to participate. Many thanks to you all, and please keep coming, there is more to do! Always! **(David Freke)**



Alec and Chris open the trench extension at the hoard site. In the foreground is the wall of the Roman polygonal or circular building.



The results of August's weather



Fragments of the 4,000-year-old beaker as they came out of the ground.

Don't forget, we are always happy to hear from our members and friends if they have any research or articles for the newsletter or website - www.warmingtonheritage.com - just email alecnewman@btinternet.com