

Excavations at Orchard Hill, Carshalton, 1964–5

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with contributions by

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Excavation by the late Dennis Turner prior to a development close to the parish church in Carshalton recovered worked flint, including an important collection of microliths from the Mesolithic period, and pottery dating from Early Neolithic through to the medieval period. Owing to extensive disturbance few features were located and this paper primarily comprises a report of the finds assemblage.

Background

In 1964 the intention of Carshalton Urban District Council to redevelop land on Orchard Hill as elderly persons' residences came to the attention of the late Dennis Turner. The site involved the back gardens of a terrace of cottages that had already been demolished and permission to excavate was given by the Council (fig 1).

Excavations took place, under his directorship, with sponsorship from the Beddington, Carshalton and Wallington Archaeological Society, and financial support from the London Natural History Society and the Surrey Archaeological Society (SyAS), starting in the October 1964 and continuing, at weekends, for 9 months ending in August 1965. Two brief notes were published at the time (Anon 1965; 1966), but only an interim report of the full findings has since appeared (Turner 1966). The site archive was donated by the director with the wish that the full results should be placed in the public domain.

Geology, topography and present land use

The site lies at c 40m OD on the north-facing slope of Orchard Hill (TQ 279 644), overlooking Carshalton Ponds and the spring-line at the foot of the dip slope of the North Downs (fig 2). It is situated between two shallow dry valleys that are presumably former courses of headwaters of the river Wandle (Orton 1989). The surface geology of the site was found to comprise vestigial Thanet Sand overlying Upper Chalk (fig 3), while previous excavations at Queen's Well, a little to the north (Turner 1970), exposed the Bullhead Bed which usually occurs at the junction of the aforementioned strata (Dines & Edmunds 1933, 131).

Historical background

A considerable amount of historical research was undertaken around the time of the excavation by the late Sidney Totman, and the following précis derives from his work, and further research.

No documentary evidence was found of activity on Orchard Hill prior to the second half of the 18th century. On John Rocque's map of 1762 the site lay within a small patch of woodland at the northern margin of Carshalton Park and later in the 18th century the area was known as Grantham's Orchard.

By 1714 the Pound Street frontage had been occupied by a customary messuage called *le Greyhound* (SMHS: P5/15, p 645) which is described as an inn in 1736. The owner of the Greyhound Inn built a block of hunting stables, possibly the 'new stables' mentioned in an inventory of 1756 (TNA: PROB 31/401/82) with a right of way to the east of the inn to provide access.

Extracts from the Court Baron (SMHS: P5/15) show that in 1820 Daniel Tarling sold The Greyhound to William Tritton but retained some of the land to the south including the stables. An entry for 1833 reads 'James Tarling to Benjamin Brightling [...] surrender of [...]

all those new erected brick messuages or cottages with outhouses, yards and appurtenancies to the west side of a lane called Crooked Lane opposite the churchyard at Carshalton and all that small piece or parcel of land containing 19 poles situate on the south side of the cottages on which it has been proposed to build another cottage and also all those seven small brick cottages or tenements with the out-houses, yards, gardens and appurtenancies lying behind the last mentioned cottages and heretofore known as the Hunting Stables' (fig 4). The 'new erected' cottages are in what is now known as Church Hill, whilst those behind are the block whose back gardens formed the excavation site. It is not clear whether the hunting stables had been converted or demolished.

In 1834 The Greyhound was sold by William Tritton to Charles Young, brewer of Wandsworth and in 1847 an agreement was made between Young and Brightling on a new access road from Pound Street to the hunting stable cottages.

The inter-war years saw housing development, including Ruskin Road, over the northern portion of Carshalton Park, but the cottages remained and their back gardens, apparently undisturbed at least since the land was emparked by a member of the Scawen family between 1713 and 1781.

The excavation

Sixteen trenches, together giving an area of some 733 sq ft (68 sq m), sampled a total plot area of c 11,250 sq ft (134 x 84ft) (1000 sq m (38 x 26m)) in what had been the cottage gardens (fig 1). All appear to have been excavated to 'natural', but disappointingly the investigations revealed that the site had been heavily disturbed by gardening and, possibly, earlier ploughing. The only features found were two truncated gullies of possible medieval date and three pits in the southern portions of the gardens that contained only 19th century pottery, bones and a horse skull. In view of the level of disturbance, sketched sections and plans will not be reproduced here, but are available in the archive, part of which has been deposited with Sutton Museum and Heritage Service. The remainder of the archive is currently at Surrey Archaeological Society's Research Centre at Abinger pending arrangements being made for transfer or deposition with an alternative suitable repository.

The finds

Much 19th and early 20th century pottery came from the disturbed soil and has been discarded, but a number of sherds of medieval, Saxo-Norman, Saxon, Romano-British and prehistoric pottery together with a large assemblage of worked flint were recovered and have been subjected to further reporting.

WORKED FLINT, by Roger Ellaby

Prehistoric flintwork has been excavated in small quantities from many places in Carshalton (Orton 1989; Bird *et al* 1991/2, 1996, 215; Jackson *et al* 1997, 241; Howe *et al* 2000, 216; 2003, 368; 2004, 334; 2005, 295; 2011, 308; 2013, 228; 2014, 286), but that from Orchard Hill remains by far the largest accumulation recovered to date. Appearing consistently in all trenches some 15,000 pieces, at a mean density of c 220/sq m, were excavated, and this might suggest that similar flintwork extended well beyond the confines of the excavation plot and, indeed may have covered, in greater and lesser quantities, much of the hillside above the spring-line. Perhaps in confirmation of this, flints were recovered from excavations at Queen's Well c 70m to the north (Turner 1970), from utility operations at the adjacent Anne Boleyn's Well (Cotton 1987) and from excavations at 7–10 The Park, Carshalton, 300m to the south (Pryer 1974).

The stained and generally worn cortex remaining on many of the flints indicates that nodules for knapping were derived from secondary sources. The flint itself, with colours

ranging from pale grey through to black with cherty inclusions, is typical of the North Downs and there is no reason to suspect that material was not obtained locally from surface exposures on the hillside, valley deposits, stream beds and gravel terraces flanking the Wandle. Bullhead Bed flint, originally from the Thanet Sand/Upper Chalk boundary, with its green surface and underlying orange layer, is also much in evidence and this again suggests local collection. The majority of the flints are unpatinated (unrecorticated) and this is consistent with their deposition in the neutral or acid soils of the Thanet Sand.

Assessment of the flints by this author in the 1980s (Ellaby 1987, 65) and the Lithics section of the Prehistoric Group of the Surrey Archaeological Society in 2013 concluded that a large part of the collection clearly belongs to the Mesolithic period by virtue of the presence of characteristic microliths, microburins, bladelets and bladelet cores, truncated blades, burins, an axe and axe-sharpening flakes. There were, however, two barbed-and-tanged arrowheads of the Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age tradition, while a further considerable part of the flintwork comprises what one might call a 'heavy industry' of hammerstones and crudely struck flakes and indeterminate randomly worked tools that would not be out of place in Middle and Late Bronze Age contexts. This later flintwork is not described in detail.

The microliths

The most interesting artefacts from the flintwork are 41 microliths of which 37 are sufficiently complete for illustration (fig 5). While unstratified and apparently derived from an original palimpsest of occupations it is possible, via the isolation of specific forms, to suggest that all three phases of the Mesolithic in south-east England are represented, and thus the site joins with other venues in Surrey as a 'persistent place' where springs, headwaters and abundant supplies of flint were apparently the main attraction (Jones 2013). Because of the severely disturbed nature of the site little can be said about details of Mesolithic visits but the microliths become important in establishing intermittent activity over a prolonged period. The following paragraphs discuss the microliths which are generally accepted as being the tips and barbs of hunting arrows and whose evolution can assist in the crude dating of their appearances within the three stages of the Mesolithic period.

The Early Mesolithic

Early Mesolithic flintwork assemblages in southern Britain are characterised by the presence of elegant bladelets together with axes and axe-sharpening flakes, truncated blades, microdenticulates, burins and particularly microlithic points manufactured by the microburin technique. The microliths are normally relatively large, the most common being the obliquely-backed point. These may be accompanied, albeit more rarely, by triangles of isosceles outline, bitruncated trapeze and rhombic shaped points and long convex backed pieces (Jacobi 1978, 15–19; Ellaby 1987, 59–61). Microliths of some of these types were excavated at Orchard Hill, especially the long trapeze shaped point (fig 5, 1) and the broken probable long convex backed piece (fig 5, 7). The obliquely-backed points (fig 5, 2–6) are all broken but nevertheless have lengths >30mm, which should place them firmly within the Early Mesolithic as the same forms in 'Horsham' and Later Mesolithic assemblages are normally considerably smaller (Pitts & Jacobi 1979, 169–70). That Early Mesolithic visits were made to other places in the vicinity is suggested by the presence of a long obliquely backed point from the Vinamul site in Butter Lane, Wallington c 800m north-north-east of Orchard Hill (Bishop 2005, 18, no 14). The point was one of two microliths recovered from an excavation yielding over 1000 flints of probable mixed periods.

The Early Mesolithic industries probably appeared in Britain in the early 9th millennium cal BC in the warming climate a few centuries after the end of the last Ice Age, and possibly evolved from the so-called 'long blade' technology of the Terminal Palaeolithic, straddling the

Pleistocene/Holocene boundary (Cooper 2006, 88–90). The Early Mesolithic ended *c* 8000 cal BC to be replaced, at least in south-east England, by the ‘Horsham’ period.

The ‘Horsham’ period

The microlithic technology of the Early Mesolithic in south-east England is followed by an apparently short-lived industry which, from excavated examples in the western Weald (Jacobi 1978, 20–1), consists of small obliquely-backed points in combination with isosceles triangles, bitruncated points and concave basally retouched points of which a distinctive assymetric form has become known as the ‘Horsham Point’ after the Sussex town near which it was first recognised (Clark 1933; Jacobi 1981, 12). At Orchard Hill ‘Horsham Points’ (fig 5, 17–18), bitruncated points (fig 5, 19–20) and isosceles triangles (fig 5, 21–2) can be ascribed to the ‘Horsham’ period while also may be some at least of the smaller obliquely-backed pieces (fig 5, 8–16).

Hollow-based points have been found in small numbers throughout mainland Britain but are most common in the Weald. In mainland north-west Europe basally retouched microliths, some resembling ‘Horsham Points’ have been found in countries nearest to south-east England with radiocarbon dates that suggest an innovation for them close to or a little after *c* 8000 cal BC (Jacobi 1978, 20–1), a date seemingly confirmed in Britain, which was still attached to the Continent at this time, from a ‘Horsham’ site at Longmoor Inclosure 1, in east Hampshire (Gillespie *et al* 1985, 238; Reynier 2002, 226).

The duration of the ‘Horsham’ period remains, however, uncertain. Ellaby (1987, 61–3) suggested a chronology to *c* 8000–*c* 7000 cal BC based purely on the two radiocarbon determinations from Longmoor, Hampshire and two from Kettlebury Site 103, near Churt, Surrey with dates close to *c* 7000 cal BC (Gillespie *et al* 1985, 239). This ‘long chronology’ was supported by Reynier (2002, 225–9) with two further dates for Kettlebury 103 again close to *c* 7000 cal BC. In retrospect, however, the ‘long chronology’ is at odds with evidence that a Later Mesolithic microlith technology (see below) comprising scalene microtriangles and narrow ‘rods’ had spread throughout Britain by *c* 7600 cal BC (Jacobi 1976, 75), while a mean date of *c* 7500 cal BC was obtained from three samples of wood charcoals in association with ‘rods’ and triangles at the base of Pit III at Broom Hill, near Romsey, Hampshire only 56km (35 miles) from Kettlebury (O’Malley & Jacobi 1978). ‘Horsham Points’ elsewhere on this site suggest that the Later technology had replaced the ‘Horsham’ by this time. Implicit in this is the possibility that the samples for radiocarbon assay at Kettlebury 103, four fragments of carbonised hazelnut shells, were not coeval with the ‘Horsham’ occupation of the site. In the zeal to collect short-life nutshells, seemingly from what appears to be the periphery of the site (Reynier 2002, 215, fig 4), the concentrations of wood charcoals marking probable hearths at the centre of the site, and which might have provided more reliable dates, were apparently ignored by the excavator, Roger Jacobi.

While the mean of all four radiocarbon dates on the nutshell fragments is indeed close to 7000 cal BC (*ibid*, 226) in reality the earliest and latest dates could imply that the fragments may have arrived separately within a period of several centuries, possibly as winnowed detritus from nearby Later Mesolithic sites. That such sites were in the vicinity is suggested by the presence of a scalene microtriangle on Kettlebury 103 (*ibid*, 218 no 29) while Jacobi (1981, 14) lists as from Kettlebury eight ‘Horsham’ and four Later Mesolithic sites suggesting takeover of favoured hunting grounds by Later hunting parties.

If the dates from Kettlebury 103 do not relate to the ‘Horsham’ flint scatter, then the ‘long chronology’ for the ‘Horsham’ period must be abandoned in favour of a ‘short chronology’ of perhaps a few centuries within the first half of the 8th millennium cal BC. Only more radiocarbon dates from ‘Horsham’ sites and indeed from those of the earliest part of the

Later Mesolithic will finally resolve the dilemma (for further discussion on this important matter see Conneller *et al* 2016, chs 8 and 11).

The Later Mesolithic

The beginning of the Later Mesolithic in Britain is marked by the presence of microlith assemblages dominated by scalene microtriangles and narrow straight-backed bladelets or 'rods' with only rarer obliquely-backed points. The technology apparently arrived *via* a narrowing land bridge connecting northern Britain to Holland where near identical microlith sets are known (Jacobi 1976, 71–3). Recent radiocarbon dates from northern England, Scotland and Northern Ireland suggest an introduction of this technology certainly within the first quarter of the 8th millennium cal BC and more dubiously within the latter half of the 9th millennium (Bayliss & Woodman 2009, 117–18). In southern England the same industry appears, ostensibly from the north, by *c* 7500 cal BC as indicated by the dates from Broom Hill mentioned earlier.

Scalene microtriangles persist throughout the Later Mesolithic and are represented at Orchard Hill (fig 5, 21–25) while straight-backed microliths or 'rods' (fig 5, 25–30) seemingly become much reduced in numbers at some time in the 7th millennium cal BC and are largely replaced by convex-backed and lanceolate forms (Ellaby 1987, 64; Jacobi 1987, 164) of which figure 5, 23–24 at Orchard Hill are possible examples. At the same time the Later Mesolithic appears to have entered a 'geometric' phase wherein small four-sided rhombic and trapezoidal microliths may be included, while later, perhaps in the 6th millennium cal BC, there may also be microcrescents and microequilateral triangles together with boat-shaped and microtranchet tip pieces. All these microliths are, however, generally rare on most sites and this probably explains their absence at Orchard Hill as, statistically, the small collection of microliths apparently spanning the whole of the Mesolithic period would be unlikely to contain any examples. Also, they can be extremely small and, like the scalene triangles, can be easily missed especially if, as at Orchard Hill, there was no sieving undertaken.

Microlith suites of the final centuries of the Later Mesolithic down to the appearance of a Neolithic technology at *c* 4000 cal BC are poorly known, but it may be tentatively suggested that scalene microtriangles remained dominant along with a few 'geometrics'. However, there may also be included distinctive points with their bases retouched to a rounded, pointed or tanged outline. These points are steeply finished, normally on their right-hand edge, and may also be inversely retouched at the base and/or tip. They are represented at Orchard Hill (fig 5, 36–37) and occur frequently at Wawcott Site XXIII, Berkshire with a radiocarbon date of *c* 5000 cal BC (R Froom, pers comm; Ellaby 2004, 18) and at Charlwood Site 1, Surrey with two dates in the 5th millennium cal BC (*ibid*, 17). More recently, identical microliths have been excavated on sites at Bexhill, East Sussex again with dates in the 5th millennium cal BC (M Donnelly, pers comm).

POTTERY

The great majority of the pottery from the site was recovered from superficial, disturbed levels and is dated to the 19th and 20th centuries – it is not further described here. However, the prehistoric pottery has been subjected to report by Mike Seager Thomas and assemblages of Romano-British, Saxon and medieval sherds were assessed by the late Phil Jones.

Prehistoric pottery, by Mike Seager Thomas (MST) and †Phil Jones (PJ) as indicated

Early Neolithic (PJ)

This period is represented by a single rim sherd most probably of the earlier Neolithic Southern Bowl tradition, in a predominantly sand-tempered fabric with some calcined flint (fig 6, 2). Its

apparent diameter appears to be smaller than most examples, although that of the sherd may not be representative of the whole, and the upper part of the vessel had a near-upright wall and a slightly 'hooked' and externally expanded rim. All surfaces are burnished, and the rim flange has a barely perceptible series of slightly diagonal burnished grooves. A similar, though more distinctive, series of lightly impressed linear grooves are present on the internal surface.

Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age (MST with input from PJ)

One body sherd in a predominantly grog-tempered fabric that is augmented with some calcined flint bears a deeply incised herringbone pattern decoration, possibly made with a flint blade (fig 6, 2). This is most likely to derive from a later Neolithic bowl or Early Bronze Age urn form (Gibson & Woods 1990, 181).

Middle Bronze Age (MST)

The Middle Bronze Age pottery belongs to the Deverel-Rimbury tradition. It consists of a single, very coarsely flint-tempered rim sherd from a straight-sided vessel: probably a 'bucket urn' (6, 3). Below its squared rim is a pre-firing perforation. Such vessels, though occurring further afield, are typical of Thames Valley Deverel-Rimbury traditions (eg Barrett 1973) and should date to around 1500 BC.

Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age (MST)

The Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age pottery belongs to the post-Deverel-Rimbury tradition. It comprises a suite of eight sandy and flint-tempered fabrics, ranging in texture from fine to coarse. Most are small and many are abraded but there are a handful of feature sherds, which are sufficiently well preserved to be diagnostic of the tradition. These include the rim and shoulder of a small shouldered-jar (fig 6, 4), the rim of a possible hemispherical bowl and an externally slashed or fingernail/fingertip-impressed rim.

Chronologically, post-Deverel-Rimbury pottery spans the Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages. Individual sherds within the present assemblage could belong to either or both of these periods, but considered as a whole, the post-Deverel-Rimbury assemblage should be *later rather than earlier*: Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age (c 800–700 BC) or Early Iron Age.

This is suggested by, first, a high proportion of sandy fabrics, which in Greater London and elsewhere is often associated with late post-Deverel-Rimbury assemblages (cf O'Connell 1986, 61–2; Barclay 1995, 10); secondly, a parallel between some of the very highly burnished sherds and pottery in the early Iron Age assemblage from Hawk's Hill, Leatherhead (Cunliffe 1965, fig 12.1); and, thirdly, the presence among it of a single haematite-coated sherd, another late feature.

Romano-British pottery (PJ) (Fabric codes as in Jones 2010)

Fifteen sherds (0.06kg) including ten of standard sandy 3A fabrics and one of orange/brown 3B type, as well as two of 9A fine greyware and single examples of samian and Oxford red/brown-slipped fineware. Though few, the collection appears to include both early and later Roman pottery types.

The 3A greyware mostly comprises small, featureless body sherds, but there is a fragmentary rim, perhaps of a bowl with an incipient flange, that would more likely be of later Roman date, and one of the body sherds includes part of a horizontal band of combed wavy lines that is also more likely to be of 3rd or 4th century date. The samian piece is part of the rim of a late 1st or 2nd century Drag 33 campanulate cup from southern Gaul.

Saxon pottery (PJ) (Fabric codes as in Jones 1998)

Of 35 sherds (0.3kg), sixteen are of the typical grass/chaff-tempered pottery of the region (GT), one has some additional quartz sand (GT/q) and another fourteen are similar, but with significant, though sparse, amounts of iron mineral inclusions (GT/iron). Three more, including a strongly rounded base angle are predominantly tempered with quartz sand, but with sparse to moderate amounts of grass/chaff (Q/org) and another sherd is fine, with only rare strands of organic matter (FINE/org). All but two sherds are from handmade jars with roughly burnished surfaces.

The GT sherds include the everted rims of four jars (one illustrated fig 6, nos 5 and 6), but they are too fragmentary to determine their diameters. There is also a fragment from the central piercing of a bun-shaped loomweight. The single sherd of GT/q is also the everted rim of a jar, but is thicker-walled than the other examples (fig 6, 7), of which there are two more in Q/org. Another, and better-finished, vessel in the Q/org fabric is a carinated cup with a long tapering neck and a rim diameter of 8.5cm (fig 6, 8). Fabric GT is unfortunately very poorly dated, occurring at any time between the 6th and, in northern Surrey, the early 11th century (Jones 1986). However, where it is predominant in an assemblage as it is here, an Early to mid-Saxon date should probably apply (Jones 2018).

Medieval pottery (PJ) (Fabric codes as in Jones 1998)

Most sherds are of 12th and early 13th century types, with very few that might be earlier or later. The three most common fabrics are those of coarse shelly ware S2, with 115 sherds (0.8kg), the standard grey/brown sandy type Q2 with 39 sherds (0.27kg) and a predominantly quartz sandy fabric with sparse crushed flint QFL, with twenty sherds (0.2kg). Sixteen other sherds are represented among the other 27 sherds, of which a base angle in a chalk/tufa and sand-tempered fabric (SNC 4/5) may be of later 11th or early 12th century date. There are only three sherds of whiteware fabrics of mid-13th century and later date and one of a later medieval buff sandy ware (BQ).

The S2 shelly sherds include rim fragments from ten vessels, of which most appear to be jars with ‘clubbed’ rims of developed form that suggest a later date within the currency of the ware. On this basis it seems unlikely that any belong to the Late Saxon emergence of the ware as exemplified at Reigate *Cherchefelle* (Jones 1986), and all could belong to the later 12th or early 13th century. One of the jars of large diameter is finger-impressed along the inside of the rim. One thick-walled vessel with a squared end is likely to be from a fire-cover, as may a body sherd with part of a horizontally-applied ribbon strip, although it could as easily be from a storage jar. There is also the flanged rim of a bowl.

Among the 39 sherds of Q2 sandy ware are two rims of jars, including one with a finger-impressed termination and the other with a squared end, and there is a simple everted rim in the coarser GQ2 variant that is only 9cm in diameter and likely to be from a skillet. Of two sherds of the finer FQ2, one is a body sherd, but the other is the upper spring of a jug with a rod handle, a pair of applied ‘spurs’ and a splashed green glaze.

Only body sherds are represented among the twenty sherds of QFL, but the five sherds of the poly-tempered sandy types Q1 include three rim sherds. Two of a variant with rare flint are both simply everted and probably wheel-thrown jars with diameters of 18 and 22cm, and another with sparse flint and rare chalk is of similar simple form and a diameter of 21cm.

There are only four sherds of East Surrey orangeware, with three of the standard OQ2 and one of the finer FOQ2. The latter is the lower spring of rod handle from a jug with splashed green glaze and the OQ2 sherds include the squared rim of a jar, the rim and upper spring of a jug that is externally white-slipped and glazed and pin-punctured along its probable strap handle and another slipped and glazed body sherd from an Earlswood-type jug.

There are two sherds of grey coarseware, including the rim of a jug in a sandy fabric that is more likely to be of LIMP from the Limpsfield area than London/Kingston or further north. It has a distinctive, upright collar. A much finer greyware fabric is represented by the squared rim of a jar and may have been made at a later stage of the Limpsfield industry.

Of only three sherds of whiteware, two are plain and probably from jars, including one of the coarser WW1A and one of the finer WW2 type. The other sherd of WW2 is part of the base angle of a Cheam-type jug.

Discussion

Activity throughout the Mesolithic period is attested from the variety of forms of microlith recovered and finds from the later prehistoric periods, particularly the large quantity of worked flint, suggest continued, though not necessarily continual, interest in the light soils of the area. The lack of any evidence of structures precludes discussion of the nature of land use but some activity over the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age is clear. The small amount of Romano-British pottery suggests that Orchard Hill was peripheral to settlement areas throughout the period.

Of greater importance is the finding of Early/Middle Saxon pottery and Orchard Hill joins the list of sites in the area that have produced finds of this period (see below). The lack of Late Saxon and Saxo-Norman pottery may indicate a hiatus, but activity resumed in the late 12th/early 13th centuries. However, it appears to cease, on this part of Orchard Hill at least, around the end of the 13th century.

A more detailed consideration of the importance of the site during the Mesolithic period is given above – what follows relates to later periods.

The Late Bronze Age ringwork discovered during construction of Queen Mary's Hospital in 1903 (Robarts 1905; Groves & Lovell 2002) attests later prehistoric use of the light soils and plentiful water supply on the downland dip slope. Analysis of findings from developer-funded interventions has shown a landscape of extensive Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age field systems in the Wandle valley north of Orchard Hill providing a hinterland to the ringwork (Yates 2007, pl 6). Although there may have been a hiatus in use of the ring work during the Early Iron Age more recent work has located an open settlement of Early/Middle Iron Age date immediately outside the Scheduled area and by the end of the Middle Iron Age this had been enclosed and was to continue into the Late Iron Age/early Romano-British periods (Wessex Archaeology 2008; Powell 2017). The Early Iron Age pottery from Orchard Hill should be seen as part of this continuing activity.

A continuing presence into and through the Romano-British period is shown by the Iron Age and early Romano-British farmstead located at the War Memorial Hospital, Carshalton (Killock 2012), the insecurely dated but probably 1st and 2nd century AD building at Davis Yard, West Street (Howe *et al* 2003, 368) and the villa excavated at Beddington Sewage Works some 4km to the north-east (Howell 2005) among other locations. The slight evidence of Romano-British activity at Orchard Hill therefore adds little to the recognised later prehistoric and Romano-British use of the area.

Use of the area clearly continued: a probable Early Saxon inhumation cemetery found during road widening in 1906 (Clinch 1910; NMR 400701; TQ 2704 6424) is one of a number suggesting settlement on the higher slopes of the North Downs (Blair 1991, 45). By the mid-Saxon period arable use of the chalk is implied by a grain render of 30 ambers owed by the estate of Farleigh, on the downs east of Croydon (*ibid*, 45). Saxon pottery was reportedly found at Bunkers Field (Major 1925; NMR 400577; TQ 2888 6502), Queen's Well (Turner 1970) and at St Mary's Cottage, Church Hill (Howe *et al* 2004, 334; TQ 279 649), while pottery and spindle whorls were recovered from plough-soil at St Philomena's Catholic Girls School (Howe *et al* 2000, 216; TQ 274 646), and later work at the same site produced further pottery and three Saxon worked soil deposits (Howe *et al* 2013, 228). Other findspots of possible Saxon

pottery include Ruskin Road (Cotton 1979; NMR 966200; TQ 284 643) and Colston Avenue (NMR 400689; TQ 275 648); a few sherds were also found at the former site of Queen Mary's Hospital (Wessex Archaeology 1999). Closer dating of the finds from these sites is not given in the records and no comment can be made on their contemporaneity with the probable Early to Middle Saxon date of the pottery from Orchard Hill.

Carshalton (*Æuualtone*; the farm by the springhead) is mentioned in charters relating to Chertsey Abbey ostensibly dated to 727 and 933 but considered spurious (Sawyer 1968, 347, 173). However, Rumble (1976) considered that, although the charters are unlikely to have originated at this date, the information they contain may well date to the pre-Conquest period. The prefix *cærse* (cress) was not added until the late 12th century (Gover *et al* 1934 [1982 edn, 41]). This place-name is one of a number similarly containing the element 'ton', not thought to have been widely used prior to *c* 730 (Cox 1976). Although the Saxon pot recovered on Orchard Hill may pre-date these records it was sufficient to suggest settlement in the immediate vicinity.

A large, royal estate at Carshalton is mentioned in the Domesday Survey (Morris 1975, 25) which, during the reign of Edward the Confessor, had comprised five manors, each held by free men, and totalling 27 (or 26) hides, with a church and a mill. The present All Saints is considered to be an early example of churches built post-Conquest by Norman lords (Blair 1991, 120–3); either it was constructed in the two decades after the Conquest or the Domesday record is of an earlier church, probably, though by no means certainly, on the same site. Given the location of Orchard Hill close to the church it is surprising both that there appears to be a lack of pottery post-dating the GT ware and before that of the late 12th/early 13th century and that the sequence ends in the late 13th century. In 1963 Dennis Turner excavated a site at Queen's Well, Carshalton that resulted in the recovery of evidence of occupation from about the 14th century onwards (Turner 1970) and he suggested possible settlement movement between the two sites. Without further excavation in the general area, this possibility cannot be confirmed and, realistically, the chances of finding sufficiently undisturbed contexts providing structural evidence are remote.

Both documentary and archaeological evidence appear to suggest that the site remained open from the 14th to the 18th centuries, when cottages were erected behind the Greyhound Inn. From a letter dated 22 December 1964 from P W Goddard, Clerk to Carshalton Urban District Council (SMHS) it appears that the cottages were not provided with mains drainage until 1890–1900 or with refuse collection until after 1894. The pits found in the southern parts of the gardens and containing large amounts of 19th century pottery probably therefore relate to refuse disposal over the early decades of the cottages' existence.

Despite the level of disturbance and the relatively small area sampled, a remarkable story of activity over a number of periods during the prehistoric, Romano-British and Saxon and medieval periods was recovered, confirming the attractions of the springs and light soils of the dip slope of the North Downs.

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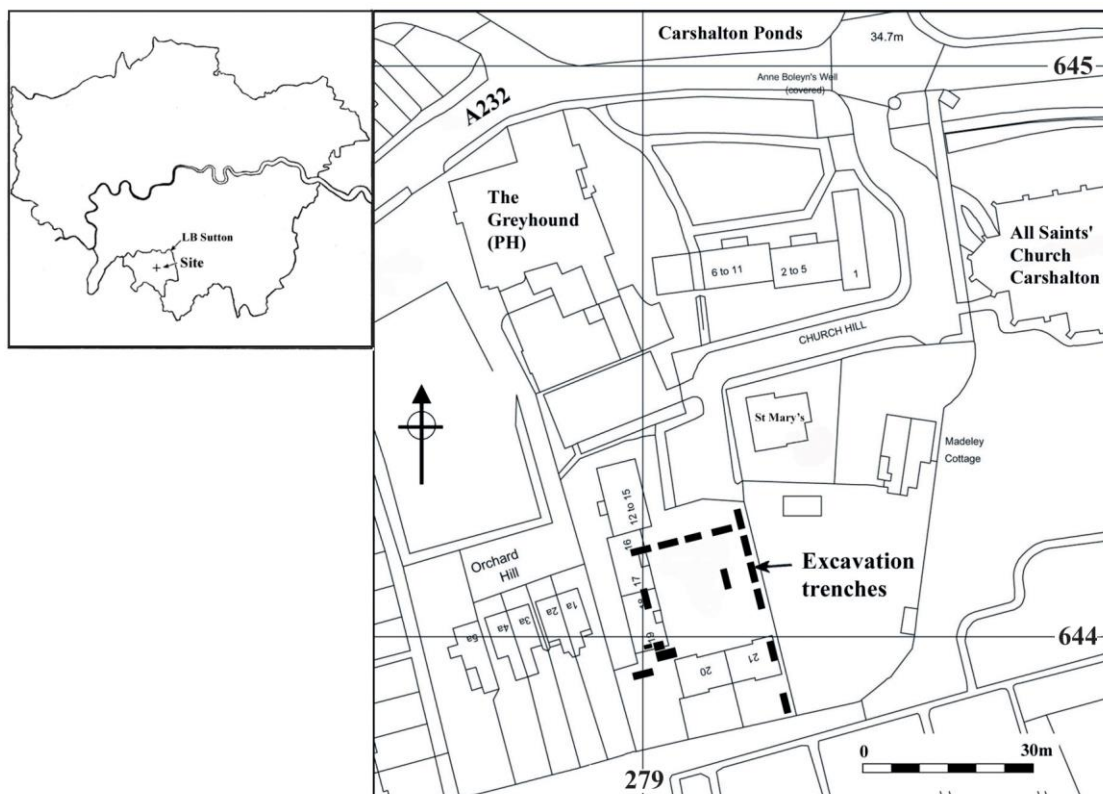


Fig 1 Orchard Hill, Carshalton. Location and plan of excavation (relative to modern map).

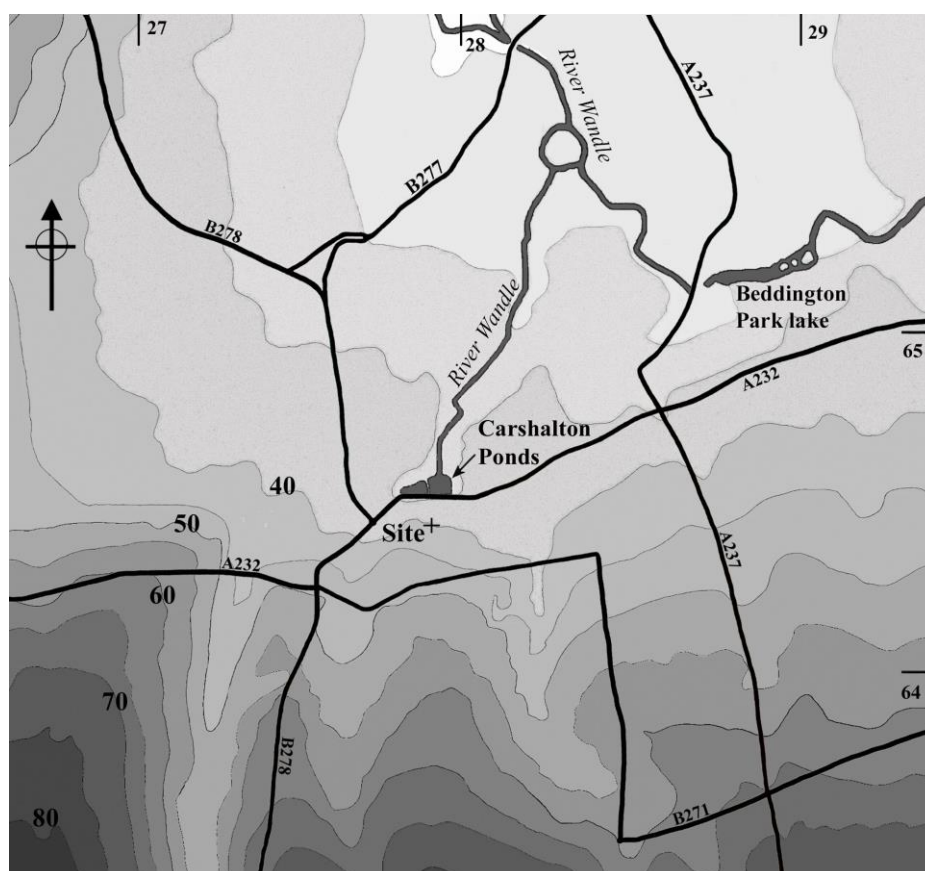


Fig 2 Orchard Hill, Carshalton. Topography of Orchard Hill. Contours at 5m intervals with the lowest land below 30m OD left in white.

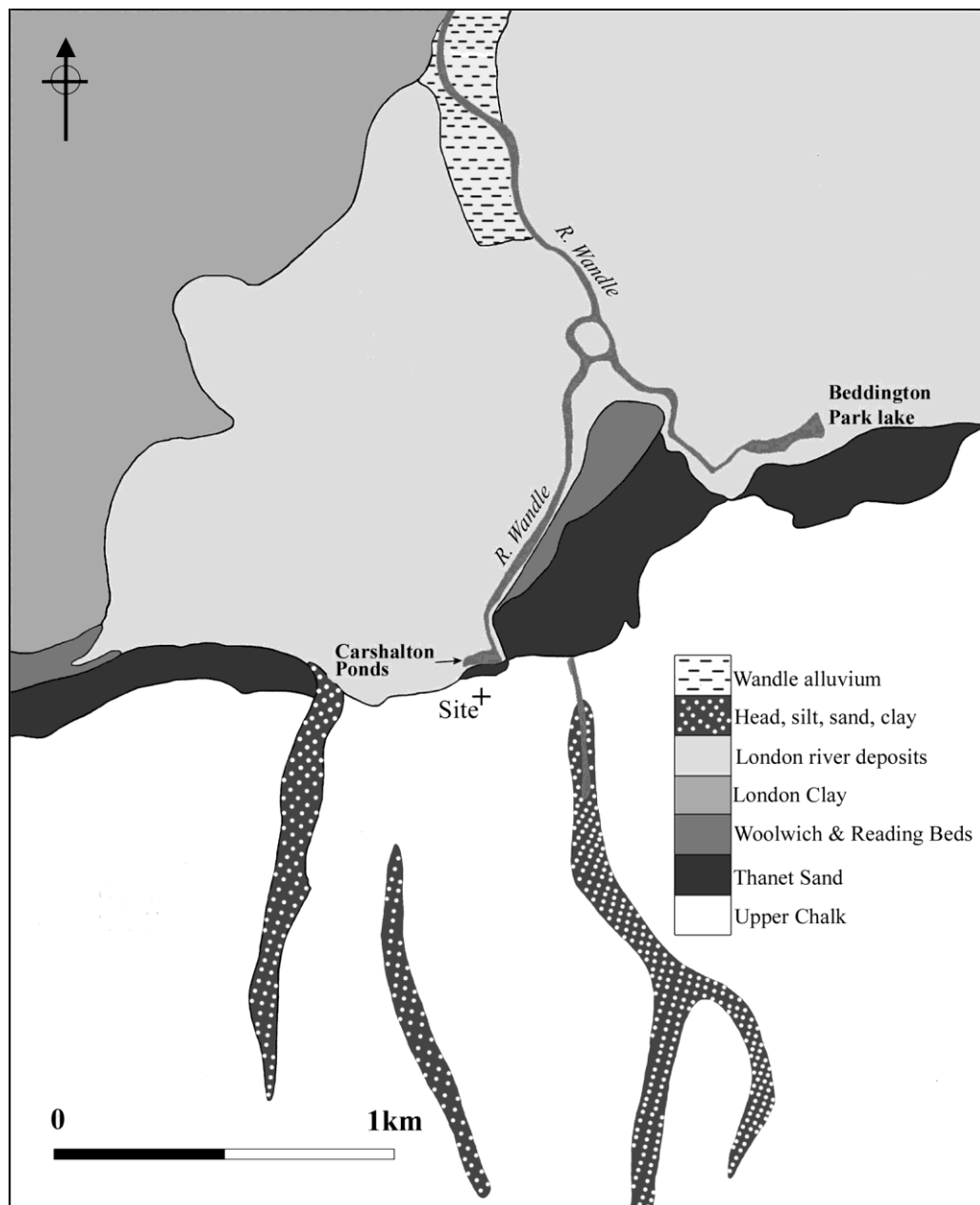


Fig 3 Orchard Hill, Carshalton. Geology map.

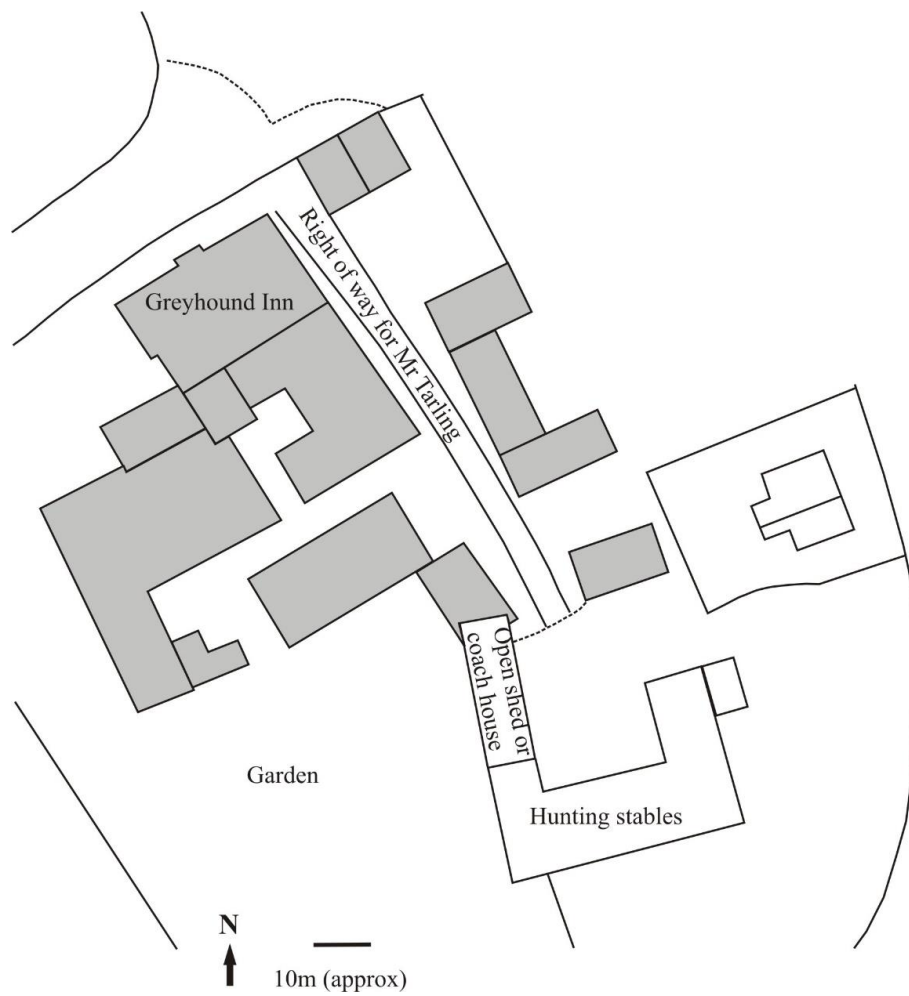


Fig 4 The area of the excavation in 1829 (redrawn from map in Sutton Library file SMHS P5/15)

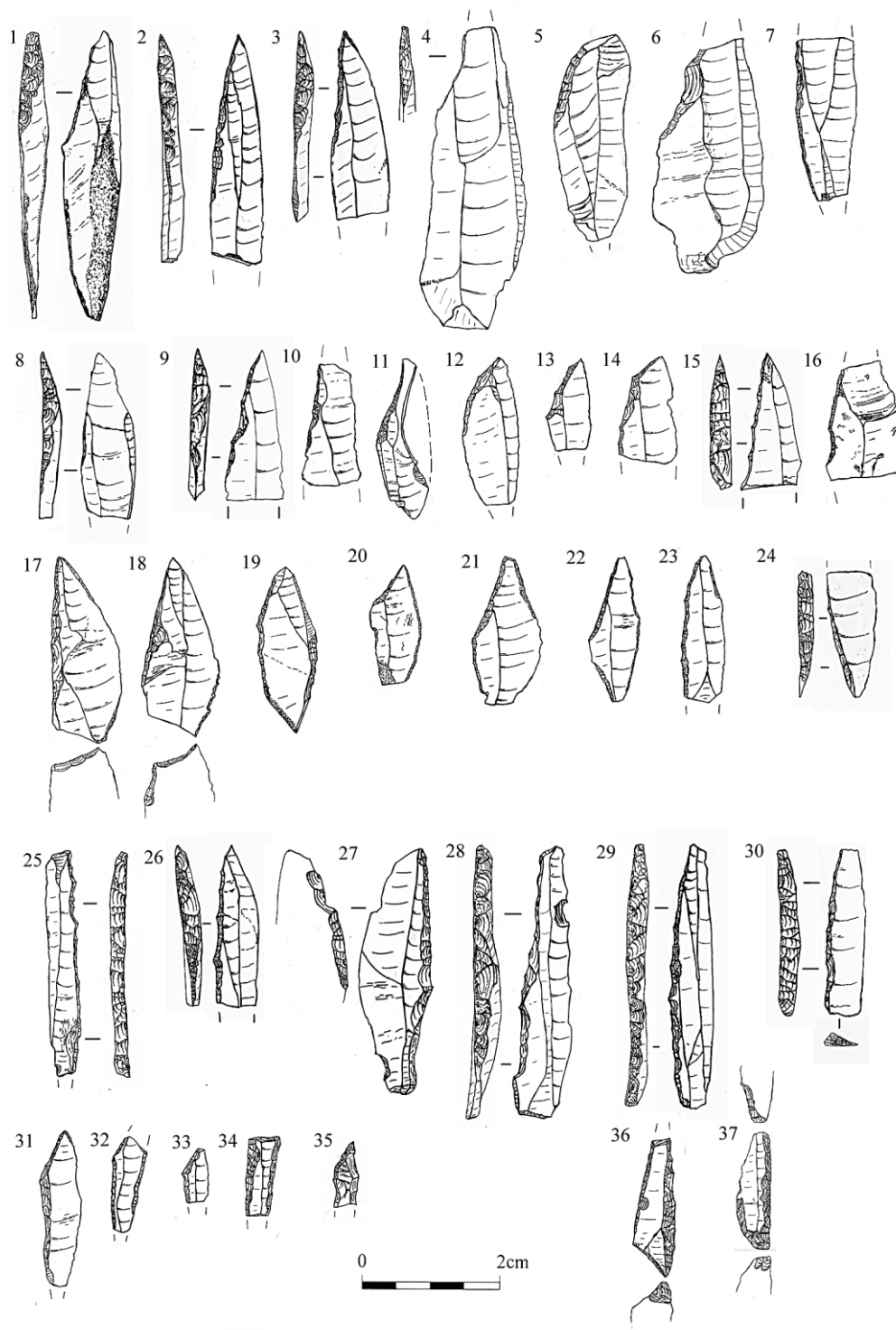


Fig 5 Orchard Hill, Carshalton. The microliths (drawn by Christopher Taylor).

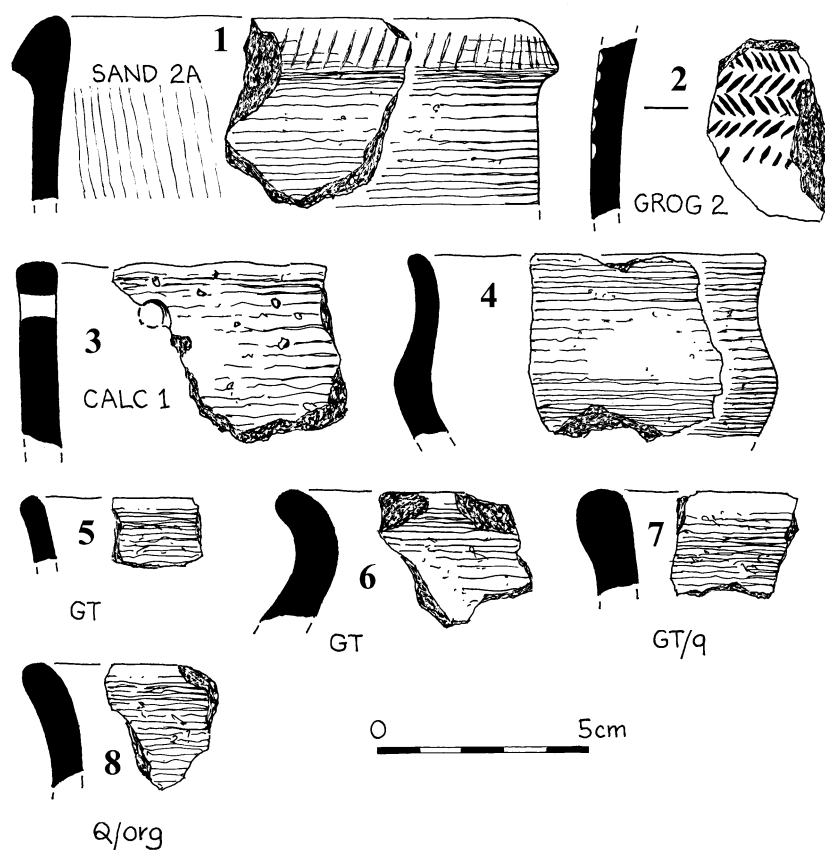


Fig 6 Orchard Hill, Carshalton. Selected pottery sherds (drawn by the late Phil Jones). 1: rim sherd probably of the earlier Neolithic Southern Bowl tradition; 2: body sherd most likely from a later Neolithic bowl or Early Bronze Age urn form; 3: upright rim of a Deverel-Rimbury-type bucket urn; 4: upper part of a small Late Bronze Age jar; 5–6: everted rims of jars of Saxon date in a grass/chaff-tempered fabric; 7: thickened rim of a probable large jar of Saxon date in a grass/chaff-tempered fabric with a little quartz sand; 8: everted rim of a jar of Saxon date in a predominantly fine sand-tempered fabric with some grass/chaff.