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Upton Deserted Medieval Village, Blockley, Gloucestershire, 1973

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Summary

A series of machine-cut trenches, totalling over 500 m in length, was dug in 1973 to improve the farm water-supply in the area of the medieval village of Upton, where extensive excavations took place in the 1960s. Forty-nine features (walls, postholes, slots, ditches, hearths, etc.) were located in the watching brief, some of which are possibly pre-medieval. At least two new structures were added to the plan (one of stone and one of timber) and a section was observed across a known medieval house and a possibly prehistoric mound. It is evident that there are many features at Upton not reflected in the earthwork plan. Finds were surprisingly few in view of the large numbers formerly recovered in controlled excavation.

Introduction

Between 1959 and 1968, excavations at Upton were carried out under the auspices of the School of History of the University of Birmingham (Hilton and Rahtz 1966; Rahtz 1969). FIG. 1 shows the village earthworks, and the 29 buildings or other features then defined.

In 1972, however, the DOE were notified that pipe trenches were to be dug through the site. At the request of the DOE, and with the kind co-operation of Mr Holder, the School of History of the University of Birmingham arranged a watching brief in May 1973. Most of the machine-trench digging was observed, and as good a record made of what was revealed as time and circumstances allowed. The value of the observations is rather more than it would have been if the trench had been the first exploration of the site, because they can be compared with the results of the extensive earlier excavations.

The work occupied about 20 person-days. The recording was done by Susan Hirst and Grenville Astill, with assistance from Ian Burrow, and under the general surveillance of Philip Rahtz. The finds and archive have been deposited in the Birmingham City Museum, which houses the material from the previous excavations at Upton.

The Trenches

Over 500 m of trench were dug by a JCB, making an irregular cut 0.6–0.8 m wide. The purpose was to maximize the water-supply from several springs (Hilton and Rahtz 1966, 88), which issue from the sides of the valley, to give a supply to two cattle-troughs, on the south side of Trench C–D and to the SE of points K and L (FIG. 2). Pipes were laid in the trenches to collect spring and ground water; four concrete inspection chambers were also made (one is shown in FIG. 5).

The trenches were roughly-cut on an irregular line from Lambs Cottage diagonally across the village earthworks; they were dug in a series of alignments, named here A–B, B–C, C–D, D–E, E–J, F–G, H–G, G–K, and L–M. The plan of them in FIG. 2 is diagrammatic and regularized –

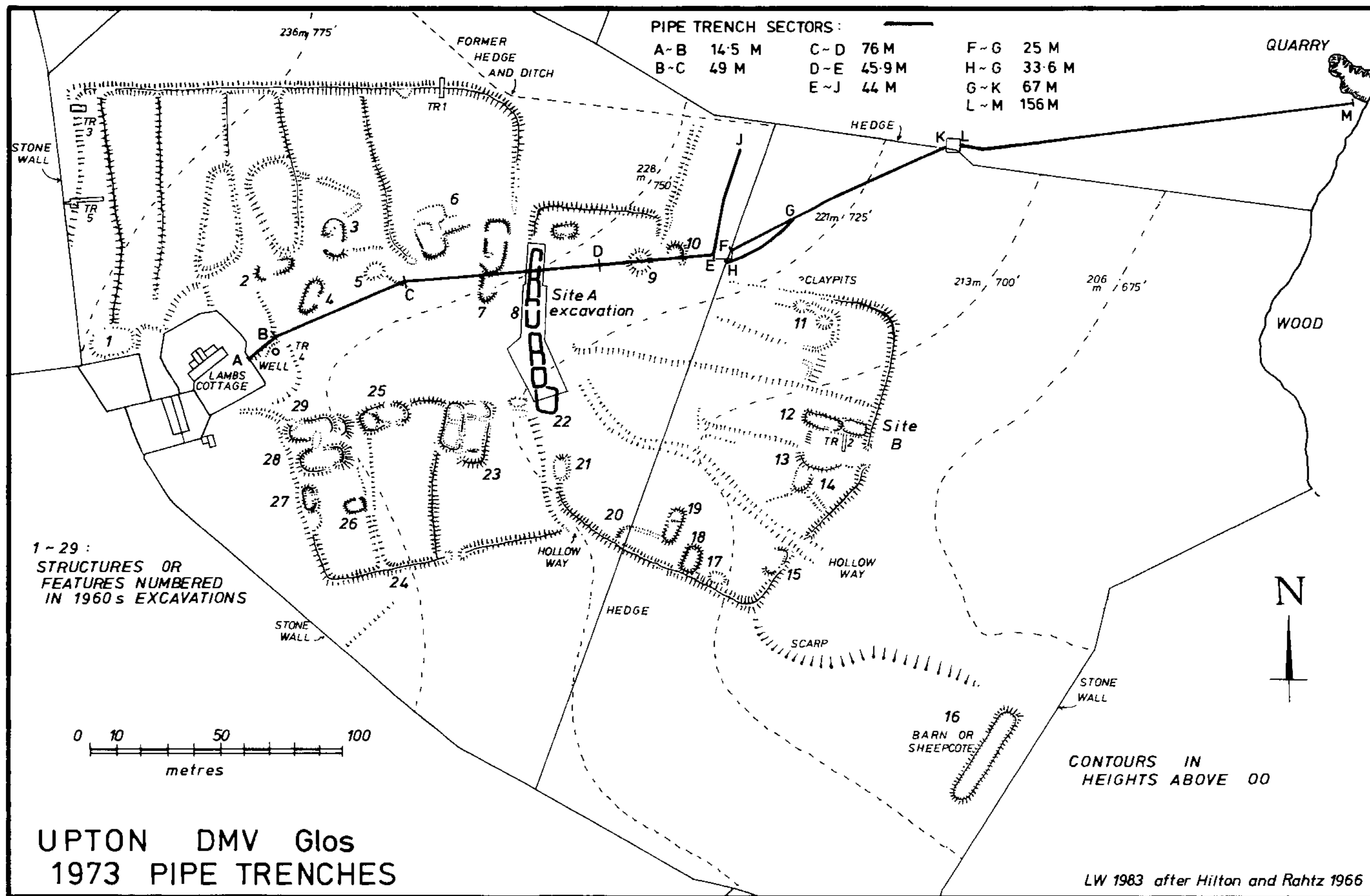


FIG. 1

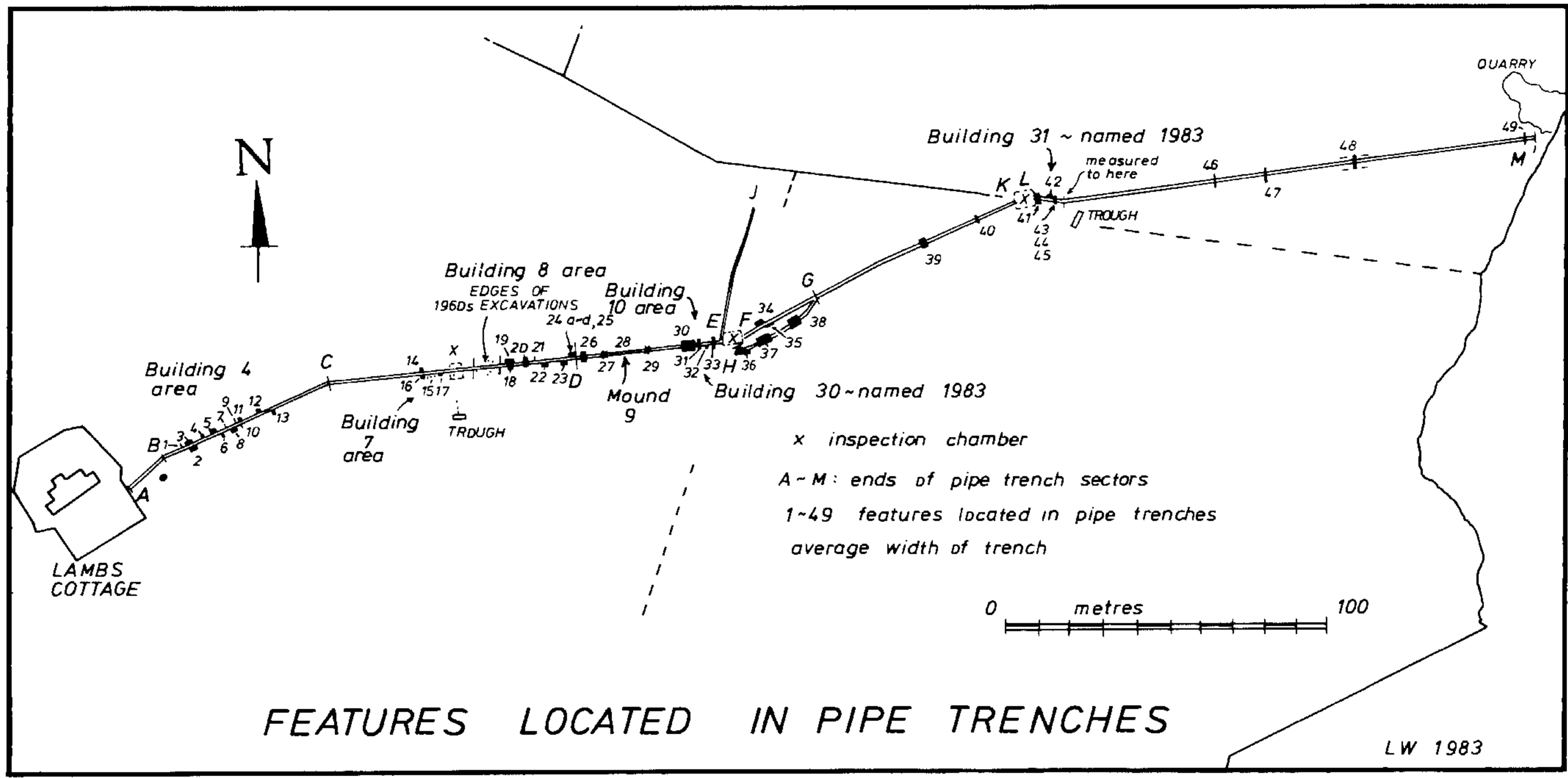


FIG. 2

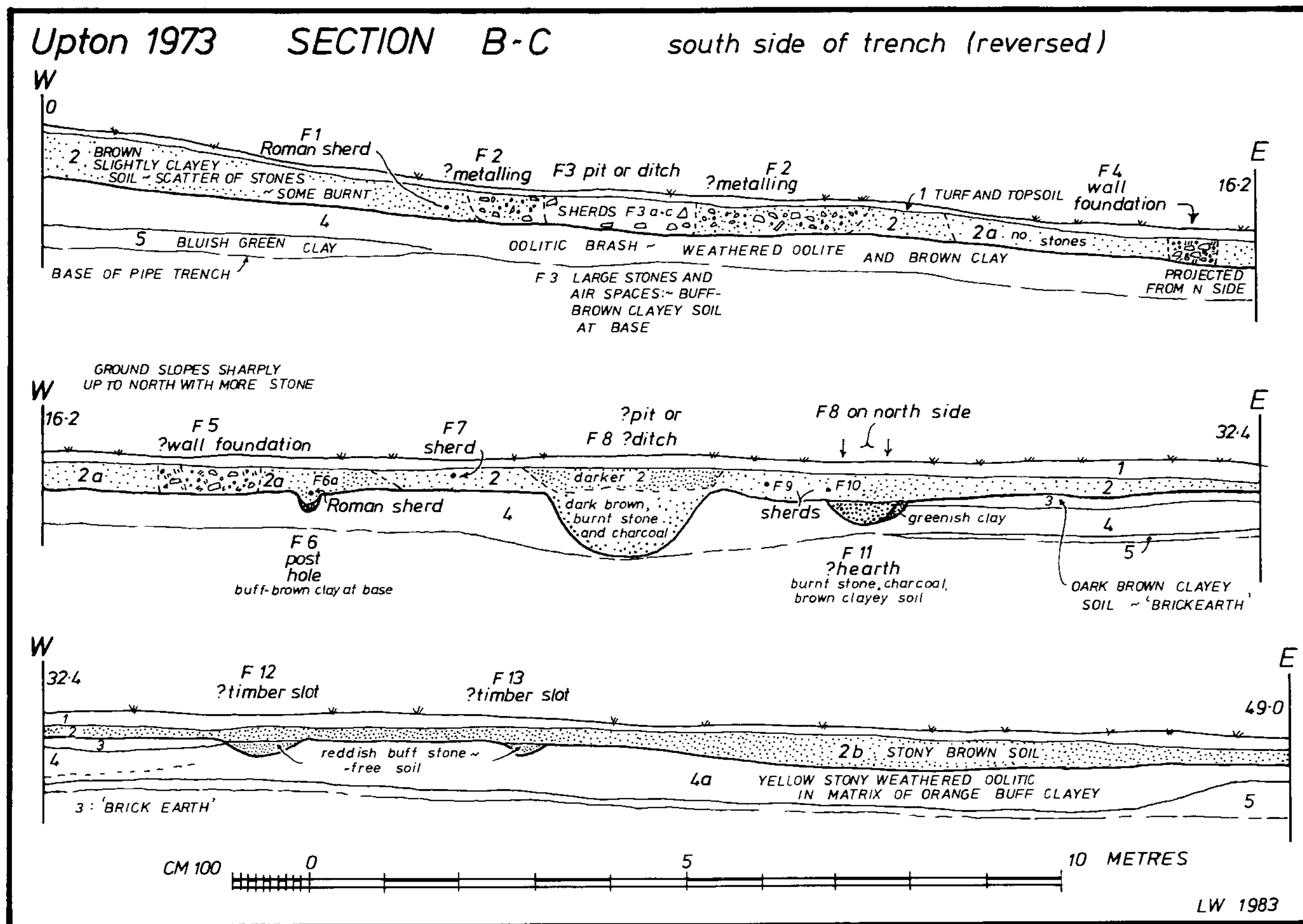


FIG. 3

no reliance should be placed on precise location. Observations were made of the machine-digging, the sides of the trenches were roughly dressed back, and sections were drawn of most of them, usually of the south side. Under these conditions, survey and observations were of a low quality, only the most obvious features being seen. They are now numbered sequentially from west to east, F1–49. The only finds recovered were those found in clearing back the trench edges, and these finds were surprisingly few.

Description of sections (FIGS. 3–7)

A detailed description of the individual features recognized will be found in the Appendix.

SECTION A–B (15 m; FIG. 1)

This length was dug and filled in before any observations could be made, except for a hole close to A, on its east side at the foot of the ?lynchet east of Lambs Cottage (FIG. 1), where an inspection chamber was being put in. A profile was seen here to a depth of 1.80 m. The top 0.7 m was similar to that in the top left of FIG. 3. Below this was more clayey material, unlike Layer 4 in FIG. 3; that this was humanly disturbed was shown by the observation of burnt stone at 1.50 m.

This is just a few metres north of the spring or 'well' (as shown on the 25-inch O.S. map; FIG. 1) though no well is now visible. An excavation was attempted here in 1965, but was abandoned because of the depth of modern disturbance (Hilton and Rahtz 1966, 88; Rahtz 1969, 98).

SECTION B–C (49 m; FIG. 3)

Layer 2 contained burnt stone and one Roman sherd (F1). The remaining features are medieval and appear to be associated with buildings south of Building 4 (FIG. 1). In the 1960s this area was waterlogged, and is evidently in a wetter state now than it was when there were buildings here in medieval times, when the water from the spring was better controlled or less copious. There appear to be both timber and stone-based structures in this area, and also a hearth (F11) or other features associated with burning. The ?ditch F8 was narrowing to the north, and appeared to be orientated NE–SW, nearer the line of Building 4.

SECTION C–D (76 m; FIG. 4)

The tail of the occupation Layer 2b appears to mark the west edge of a sterile area, the topsoil lying directly on Layer 4a (?truncated). From 15 m the occupation Layer 2 begins again, as Building 7 is approached. Metalling or path F14 marks its environs, but there appears to be an associated cut below this (F15), where the natural has been removed or worn away to the level of the base of the west wall foundation F16; this is perhaps to drain the area on this side of the building, 2e being a silt layer. F16 was seen clearly as a wall only in the north section, but a more confused area on the south side marks a break in the stratification – there may have been an entrance here (see earthwork plan FIG. 1). Under the interior of the building, and to the east, was a layer of yellow clay, probably a make-up layer. Inside the building this was succeeded by a floor level (2d); 2c above that may be a post-abandonment silting.

Moving beyond the site of the Building 8 excavations (FIG. 1), there are two more wall foundations, a major one F18, which seems to have been robbed and spread about, and a smaller one F20. Neither was visible as an earthwork, but may have been associated with the Building 8 complex.

F20 appears to have been set near the west edge of a cut-away area (filled with 2h and 2g) with a possible bank (on a natural rise?), and a pit or ditch (F22) beyond to the east. A sherd (F21) shows these layers to be medieval or later. These features may mark an eastern limit to the whole Building 8 complex on this side (but see earthwork in FIG. 1).

The sequence in this section of the trench continues with another wall foundation (F23), beginning another area of occupation, with hearth F24, which will be discussed in the next section.

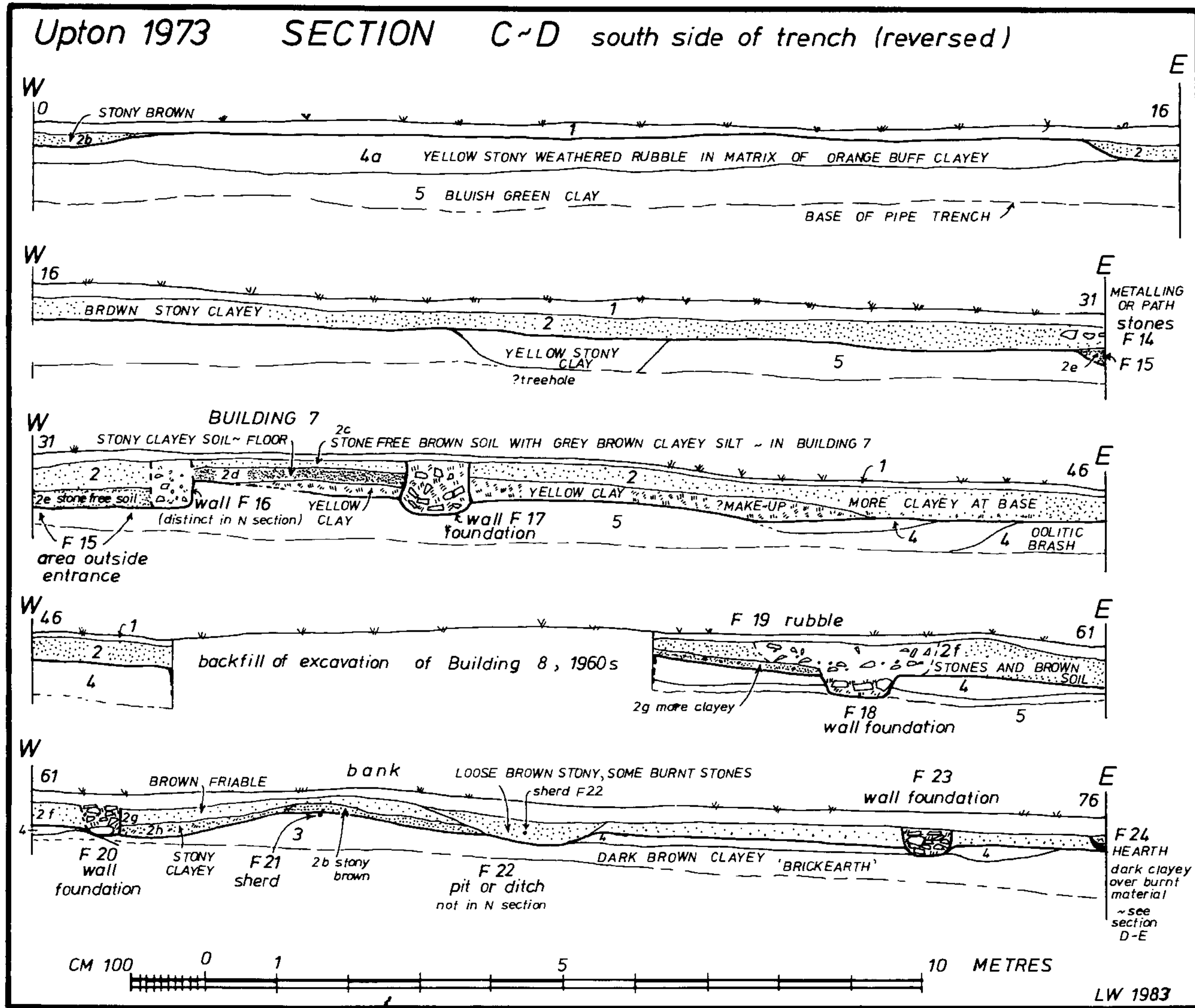


FIG. 4

SECTION D-E (45.90 m; FIG. 5)

The first part of this section encountered a hearth (F24) and an earlier (?Roman) wall (F26). The trench then passed more or less centrally through Mound 9, the stony core of which is now named F28. The section is rather difficult to interpret. It was suggested in 1960 that the mound might be a barrow or a mill-mound. The section looks more like a cut through a very large pit or area of subsidence that has been filled up with stones and mounded-up slightly. In support of it being a mound, however, is the presence of a ditch, seen in the trench in four sections (27 and 29). It is most likely that this feature is prehistoric.

Further east, three well-defined timber features suggest a timber building in this area (some three metres wide?); it could be Roman, but there is no associated dating evidence. This is now numbered Building 30, to continue the sequence defined in 1960 (Hilton and Rahtz 1966, 89-92 and fig. 3).

SECTION F-G (25 m; not illustrated, but cf. FIG. 2)

This section was also negative except for a land drain trench (F35) with a ceramic pipe, and an area of laid metalling to its west (F34). The latter was of more than one layer of small stone slabs, extending for two metres along the trench, within the thickness of Layer 2, and 0.1 m thick. None of the large features encountered in Trench H-G extended into F-G.

SECTION H-G (33.60 m; FIG. 6)

The normal profile in this trench below the topsoil was an orange-brown clayey layer with sparse stones, merging into a yellow clayey subsoil (Layer 4b). However, there were in this trench three major features, from which the only find noted was a Roman sherd; all may therefore be pre-medieval.

The first (F36) was filled with a similar material to the general layer, but extended down into an area with a shallow-sloping eastern edge (the west edge was beyond H), with a depth greater than that of the trench. On the eastern slope there were many pieces of oolite in the clayey soil, including some burnt pieces, and a Roman sherd (F36a) at the lowest level reached. The whole area here was very confused in an angle of the pipe-trench and it was impossible to see the orientation of this feature.

F37 was another large ditch going deeper than the trench, but roughly at right angles to it; the fill was rather browner than the layer above, with some weathered oolite, capped by darker soil, probably the result of ponding.

The last feature (F38) was enigmatic. An area of oolite rubble was found in a cut-away area; and to its east, in a deeper, irregular cut was a layer of yellow-brown soil and weathered oolite, capped by a deep topsoil. Although the yellow clayey material below this appeared the same as that under the rubble to the west (4b), there may be a deeper cut here, perhaps a big ditch, as indicated in FIG. 6; the eastern continuation was not observed. If this is so, the rubble may be seen as the foundation for a large bank, associated with a ditch to its east (and possibly partly levelled into it). Such a bank and ditch would be protecting or enclosing an area to the west; but it was not seen in F-G or E-J. Its size makes it likely to be pre-medieval.

SECTION E-J (44 m; not illustrated)

This section was not recorded in detail; however, nothing was seen except turf and topsoil lying directly on a mixture of bluish-green clay and yellow oolitic brash to the full depth of the trench.

SECTION G-K (67 m; not illustrated, but cf. FIG. 2)

This section was observed and drawn, but it is not illustrated as it was largely negative. Turf and topsoil and a stony Layer 2 extended throughout the whole 67 m. From 0-c.44 m the depth of the trench below Layer 2 was wholly in yellow-brown clay as in section H-G, but beyond this a lower layer of orange sandy clay appeared in the lower part of the trench.

The only features encountered were a small wall foundation F39, of two courses of stone 0.4 m wide, in the upper 0.15 m of Layer 2, and a plastic water-pipe trench F40. The former did not appear to be associated with any occupation dirt, and was probably the boundary of an enclosure.

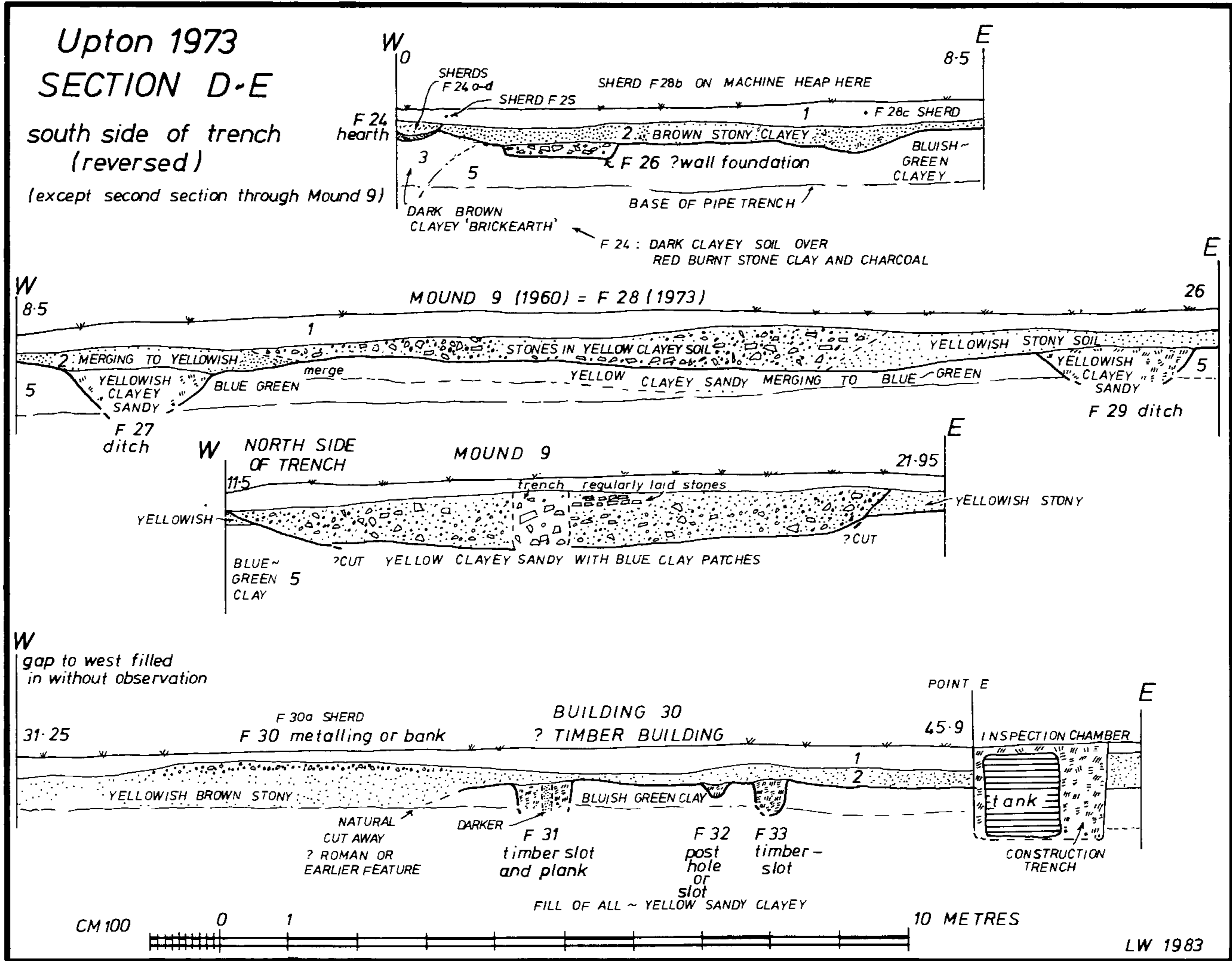


FIG. 5

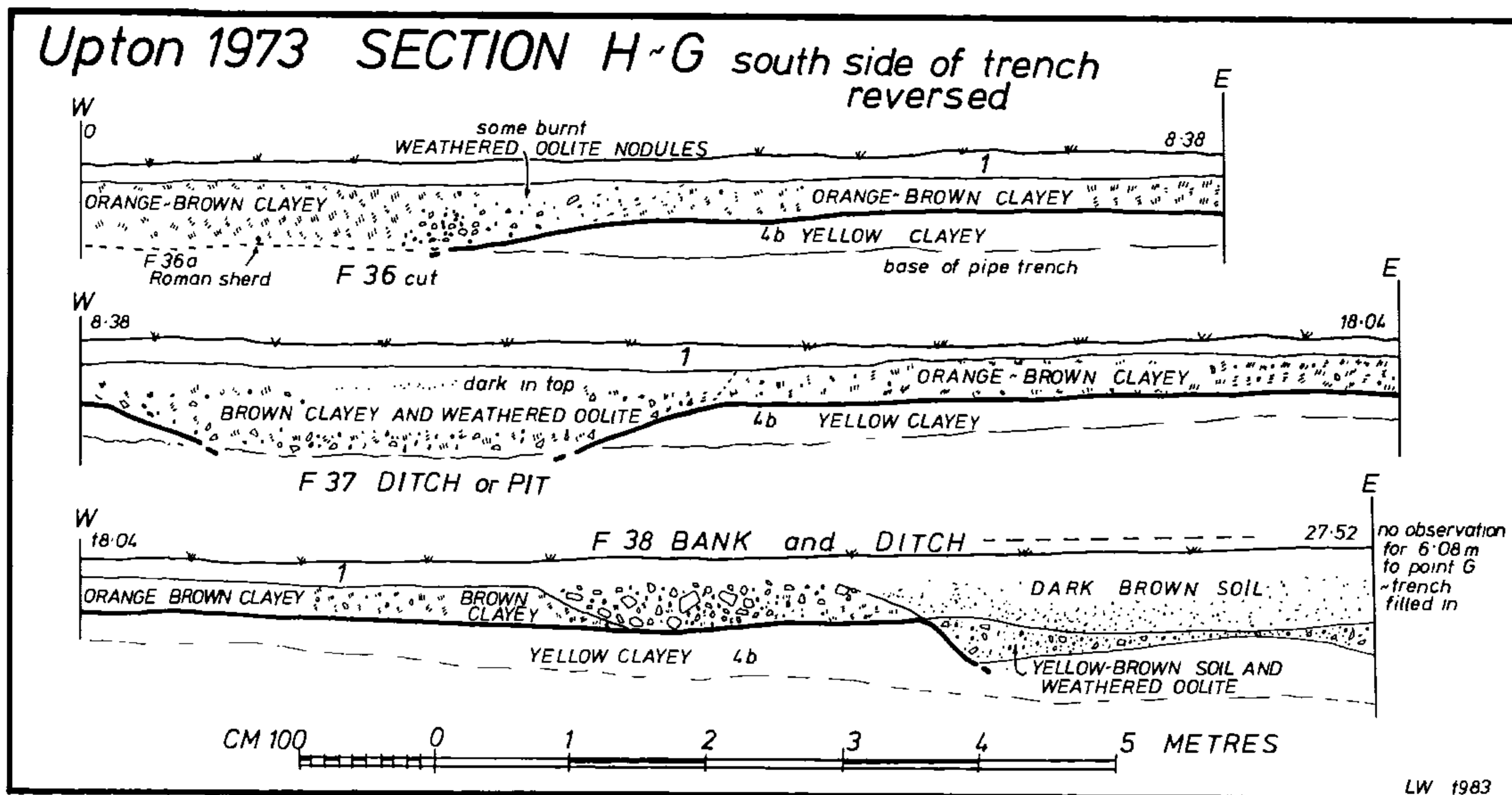


FIG. 6

SECTION L-M (156 m; FIG. 7 for western end)

Only the first 8.66 m are shown in the figure; the remainder of this trench was negative.

F41-F43 are components of a building complex now named Building 31; their discovery in the first part of this trench is surprising, both in that they did not appear as earthworks on the surface; and that the area was otherwise quite negative archaeologically for considerable distances to west and east. The wall foundations encountered are not only apparently of separate structures, but also possibly of two or three periods, since they appear to be mutually exclusive in plan. No finds were recovered to date the walls, but they are very similar to those found in the 1960s excavations of Site 8.

To the east was another large ditch (F44) of unknown date; the whole area was sealed by 'modern' metalling around the gateway (F45).

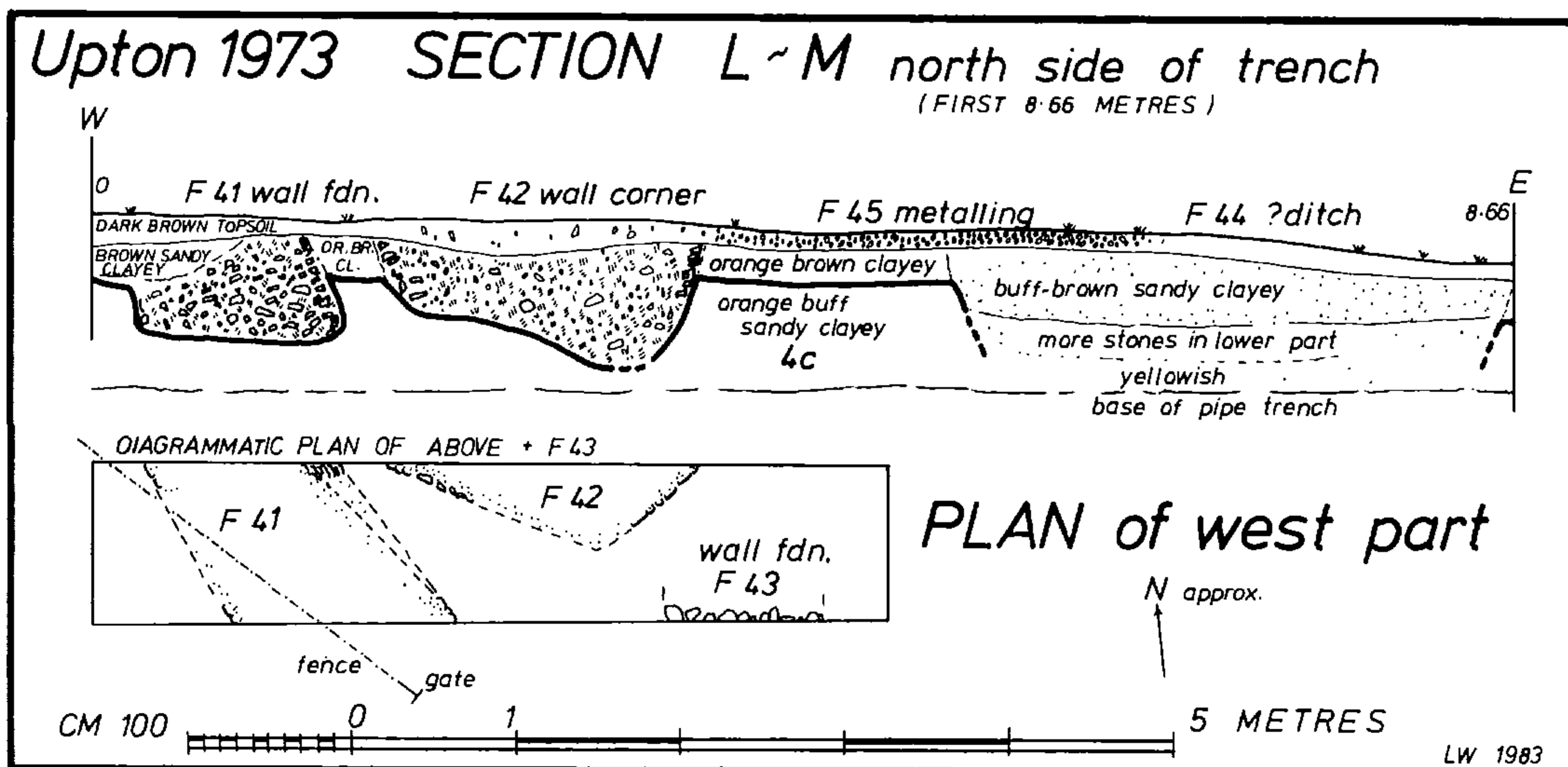


FIG. 7

THE FINDS

- F1 Sherd, hard fine orange with grey core; micaceous; Roman.
 F3a Sherd, soft fine reddish; Roman.
 F3b Sherd, soft grey-brown white-gritted, vesicular, Upton fabric A.
 F3c As F3b above.
 F6a Sherd, fine orange micaceous, grey core; Roman, cf. F1 above.

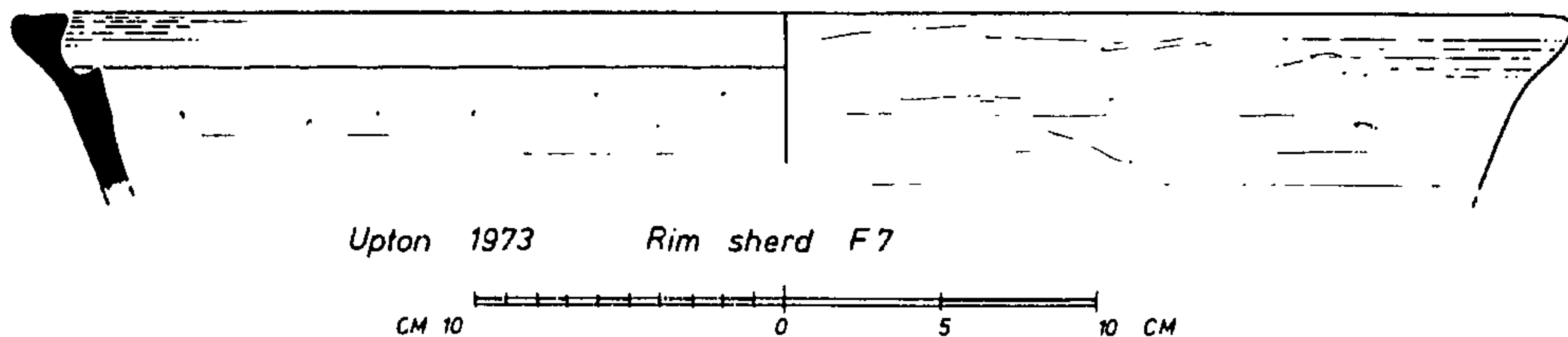


FIG. 8

- F7 Large rim sherd of bowl with deep lid seating; hard sandy brown, with dark grey-brown exterior surface; Upton fabric C (FIG. 8).
 F9 Rim sherd, hard sandy grey-brown, Upton fabric C; form similar to Hilton and Rahtz 1966, fig. 17, 35.
 F10 Sherd, hard reddish, with grey-brown exterior surfaces; Upton fabric C.
 F21 Rim sherd of cooking pot, hard grey-brown sandy; Upton fabric C, form similar to Hilton and Rahtz 1966, fig. 17, 31.
 F22a Sherd, hard dark grey sandy, with brownish margins, Upton fabric C.
 F24a Small rim and handle sherd of jug, soft gritty grey, reddish exterior surface; Upton fabric uncertain.
 F24b Sherd, hard sandy greyish-brown, Upton fabric C.
 F24c Sherd, hard sandy dark grey, brownish interior margin, Upton fabric C.
 F24d As F24c above.
 F25 Base sherd, hard coarse grey, brown margins; Upton fabric F.
 F28a Sherd, pale grey rough sandy, one dark grey surface; Upton fabric ?F.
 F28b Sherd, rough sandy orange; Upton fabric T or Roman?
 F28c Rim sherd, rough grey gritty, reddish exterior; Upton fabric C; form as F9 above.
 F30a Sherd, grey-buff vesicular, reddish-brown surfaces, glaze spots; Upton fabric B, but grit mostly leached-out.
 F36a Sherd, black sandy wheel-made; Roman black-burnished ware? (burnish not apparent).
 Total: 20 sherds. For the Upton fabric types referred to above see Hilton and Rahtz 1966, 126 ff, and Rahtz 1969, 110 ff.
 No finds other than pottery were made.

Conclusion

In the course of the 1960s excavations, and retrospectively, it was felt that, successful as the excavations had been, much had been learnt about one peasant property, but little about the origins and development of the site as a whole. There were glimpses of pre-medieval levels in the main site, and very complex sequences were sampled in the small-scale boundary excavations (Hilton and Rahtz 1966, 107–110; Rahtz 1969, 98–103). Had the excavations continued into the 1970s we might have explored other parts of the site, perhaps deliberately avoiding the kind of large area stripping of a building complex which characterized the excavations of the 1960s. A similar problem was faced at Wharram Percy, in eastern Yorkshire. On this well-known site, where excavation is now in its 34th season, two decades were spent on excavating peasant houses, an underlying manorial undercroft, and the church. It was only in the 1970s that extensive trenching showed the full implications of Wharram as a site, with all periods represented from early prehistory through Roman and Saxon to the medieval village.

The 1973 water-pipe trench at Upton, destructive though it was, and deplorable on a scheduled ancient monument of such importance, did give such a sample of the site as a whole. It was not a random transect, but by its purpose traversed some of the wetter parts of the site. Although, under the poor conditions of observation, a minimal proportion of the evidence destroyed was recovered, the results justified this salvage effort; new data were provided on the site to add to those recovered previously and there are also some useful pointers for any archaeologists who may dig at Upton in the future.

There is more evidence for the surface geology of the site, the variable material that underlies areas of human occupation. There are several new features cut deeply into these natural layers. Their size, filling, lack of finds, and general relationship to medieval stratification suggests they are pre-medieval. They could be prehistoric, but are perhaps more likely to be of the Roman period, in spite of the scarcity of Roman sherds. No evidence was seen to support any 'villa' interpretation of Roman Upton, but pre-medieval evidence has now been seen at many places over the whole of the northern half of the site, including the 1960s excavations of Trench 1, Trench 5, and Building 8; only area excavation could provide more evidence of layout and function.

Further information has been added to what is known of visible buildings, notably additions to the Building 8 complex excavated in the 1960s, to the area around Buildings 4 and 10, and a section right through Building 7. A section was also provided through the enigmatic Mound 9, but without clarifying its function or date.

What is made abundantly clear (and this is perhaps the most important result of the work) is that the surface earthworks of Upton are merely the surface, the top layer of a complex site. Such an impression had already been gained by the boundary excavations of the 1960s and is now heavily reinforced. The ground is dense in features; for every one seen in these conditions many others must have been destroyed without being noticed. It was salutary to see how little evidence was recorded by a section across Building 7. There is no reason to think this is any less complex or informative than the adjacent Building 8, which yielded such a massive data-set in controlled excavation.

There are areas which appear to be densely occupied, and others which appear to be relatively free of human occupation, though the last observation might well be confounded if area excavation took place.

The discovery of Building 31, over 100 m NE of the mapped earthworks, makes it clear that the medieval village was larger than previously supposed, if even a building with stone foundations (31) could be invisible on the surface. ?Earlier timber buildings (such as 30) would not be expected to provide surface indications; this one may in any case be Roman. Apart from these two new buildings, other features may represent as many as four more – a substantial addition to the buried potential of Upton, and to any demographic estimates based on surface indications.

Over 12,000 sherds of pottery were found in the earlier work, compared with a mere 20 recovered from the present trenches. This shows how misleading such observations can be about the absolute density of artefacts on a medieval village site – and this probably applies to structure density as well.

Finally we may hope that Upton will not again be subjected to such severe damage as that of 1973. The site is clearly even richer in buried prehistoric, Roman, and medieval settlement than had previously been supposed; as at Wharram Percy there is the possibility of continuity of rural settlement at Upton. Only large-scale excavation could demonstrate whether this was so. It is hoped that the site will henceforth remain intact for future generations to test this hypothesis.

APPENDIX: LIST OF FEATURES

This is a summary list of features located. The measurements are given in metres and indicate the distance from the first-named point in each length; thus in length D–E, the measurements are along the trench from D. Measurements are in most cases given only to the nearest 0.25 m; more precise (relative) locations in most cases are on the sections themselves. Information available on the sections is generally not repeated here.

The stratification consists normally of only two humanly-occupied layers: Layer 1 is the turf and topsoil, which contains some medieval and later material; Layer 2 is the general 'occupation level', whose variations are indicated on the sections and given sub-divisions of lower case alphabet. Layers 3–5 are 'natural' and normally undisturbed by human occupation. Layer 3 is a fairly stone-free 'brick-earth' type of subsoil, but not necessarily this in pedological terms. Layer 4 is a characteristic 'oolitic brash', a mixture of clay and weathered oolite. Variations of Layer 4 (4a, b, c) are described on the sections. Layer 5 is a bluish-green stiff clay (Snowhill Clay); for the general geology see Hilton and Rahtz 1966, 88. Layers 3, 4, and 5 are in varying relative positions, the material which characterizes each being interleaved. Other layers are described individually and are usually related to features.

Section B–C (FIG. 3)

- F1 At 5.5 m; sherd in Layer 2 (Roman).
- F2 5.75–11.00; concentration of stones within Layer 2; ?metalling; higher on north side.
- F3 6.75–10.75; pit or ditch cutting through F2; large stones and air spaces; buff-brown clayey soil at base; F3 a–c sherds (2 medieval, 1 Roman).
- F4 15.00–15.50; ?wall foundation, stones in clayey soil, in Layer 2a; only showing on north side of trench, projected onto section.
- F5 17.75–19.00; ?wall foundation, stones in clayey soil, in Layer 2a; both F4 and F5 are associated with Building 4 (see FIG. 1); more stones in north side of trench.
- F6 19.50–19.75; ?posthole; Layer 2a dips into it; some buff-brown clay at base as on section; F6a (Roman sherd) in fill.
- F7 21.75; sherd in Layer 2; large medieval rim (FIG. 8).
- F8 22.75–25.25; ?pit or ditch cut through Layer 2; only 0.5 m wide on north side, where it is further east; on orientation similar to Building 4 (FIG. 1).
- F9 26.00; sherd in Layer 2, medieval.
- F10 26.75; sherd in Layer 2, medieval.
- F11 26.75–27.75; ?hearth, below Layer 2, with burnt stone, charcoal, brown clayey soil and greenish clay.
- F12 33.25–34.00; depression below Layer 2 filled with reddish-buff stone-free soil, possibly timber slot.
- F13 37.00–37.50; as 12 but smaller as on section.

Section C–D (FIG. 4)

- F14 30.25–31.00; concentration of stones in Layer 2; ?metalling or ?path.
- F15 30.50–32.50; ?entrance area, below Layer 2, apparently cut or worn away, associated with Building 7 (FIG. 1); deep area of stone-free soil (Layer 2e) (?silt) with F14 above its west end; stops at west side of Wall F16.
- F16 32.50–33.00; projected wall foundation; seen clearly only in north section, but limiting F15 on both sides of trench; large stones in clayey soil; west wall foundation of Building 7 (FIG. 1).
- F17 36.00–37.00; east wall foundation of Building 7; large stones in clayey soil, not clear in north side; inside building a 'floor' (Layer 2d), and some silt above; ?make-up of yellow clay below.
- F18 57.00–58.00; wall foundation large stones in clayey soil; not obvious in north side of trench; apparently robbed; the more clayey soil (Layer 2g) to west found in 1960s excavations.
- F19 56.00–58.50; rubble over F18, probably destruction level of its upper part spread after robbing.
- F20 61.75–62.25; wall foundation; stones packed with clayey soil; the ground (Layer 3) in this area has apparently been cut away, some of the upcast (Layer 2b) being dumped to the east to form a slight bank (though Layer 3 appears to rise here anyway); F18 and F20 appear to be a building east of Building 8, but not visible as an earthwork (FIG. 1).
- F21 65.00; sherd in top of Layer 3 'brick-earth' (medieval); sealed beneath 'bank' of Layer 2b.
- F22 66.50–68.50; pit or ditch, in south section only; some burnt stones in loose brown stony soil; F22a medieval sherd; cuts possible bank to west (see F20 above).
- F23 73.25–74.00; wall foundation, stones in clayey soil.
- F24 75.75–76.00; hearth – see D–E below.

Section D-E (FIG. 5)

- F24 0-0.50; hearth at junction of C-D and D-E; cuts Layer 2; fill of dark clayey soil above basal layer of red-burnt stone, reddened clay, and charcoal; possibly associated with Wall F23.
- F24a-d Four sherds in upper fill of F24 (all medieval).
- F25 Sherd in Layer 1 close to F24, as on section; medieval.
- F26 1.50-3.00; ?wall foundation spread; small stones in yellow clayey sandy soil; crossing trench at right angles; apparently sealed by Layer 2, and therefore earlier than F24; ?Roman.
- F27 9.25-11.25; ditch crossing trench at right angles below 2; fill yellow clayey sandy with small pieces of stone; ditch around F28 (as F29).
- F28 12.00-21.00 on south side of trench as in main section; 11.50-21.00 on north side as shown in subsidiary section; a mass of small-medium sized stones (a few burnt) in a yellow clayey soil matrix; up to 0.75 m deep, and apparently in a large depression cut through clean yellowish stony material on either side (similar to Layer 2 elsewhere, but yellower) though the edges were indistinct. Below F28 on the south side, the substratum appeared natural (yellow clayey), merging into the blue-greenish clayey natural (layer 5) on the other side. On the north side, however, the stratum below F28 was yellow sandy clayey with some blue clay patches, which appeared to be the lower fill of a large hole cut through the natural. On the north side, roughly in the centre, was a trench or hole in F28, filled with looser material; (some larger stones in this); to the east was a small area of more regularly laid stones on the surface of F28; neither was seen in the south section.
- This section is through a low mound, numbered 9 in the 1960 survey (Hilton and Rahtz 1966, 90); its profile was slight as seen in the disturbed condition of the machine trench. It was suggested in 1960 that the mound might be a barrow or a mill-mound. A gash in the NW part was interpreted in 1960 as a partly filled-up barrow diggers' trench, or the robbing trench of the timber cross-trees of a post-mill. The section as seen does not look like a cut through a mound, but more like a section through a very large pit or area of subsidence that has been filled up with stone and mounded-up slightly. The trench or pit seen in the north section is very likely that noted in 1960. In support, however, of it being a mound is the presence of a ditch (27 above and 29 below); the four sections of this seen were very similar in size and fill, and were both sealed by the clean stony yellow material (?spread from the 'mound') through which the cut filled with F28 was apparently made. The generally low amount of organic material in either F28, the yellowish stony layer, or the ditches, argues rather for a prehistoric date for this feature, whatever it may be; the trench in this case could well be by a barrow-digger, but the laid stones on one side cannot be explained. A medieval sherd (F28a) was recorded in 1973 from F28, but it was not pin-pointed, or remarked on in 1973, so it cannot be relied on as dating F28 - it might, for instance, have come from the trench, or the surface stones. Two other sherds were found to the west of the mound, F28b on the machine spoil (possibly Roman) and F28c (medieval) in Layer 1.
- F29 23.25-25.25; comments and fill as F27, to which this is very similar; crosses trench at right angles.
- F30 33.75-37.50; spread of stone below Layer 1; crossing trench; possibly metalling or bank; sherd F30a medieval; possibly associated with east side of earthwork of Building 10 (FIG. 1).
- F31 39.00-39.75; slot seen on both sections crossing trench at right angles; fill yellow sandy clayey, with flecks of green clay and stone; dark narrow patch in centre; feature suggested to be timber-slot, with plank slot in centre.
- F32 42.00-42.125; posthole or slot filled as F31; in south section only.
- F33 42.50-43.00; timber-slot crossing trench at right angles; fill yellow sandy clayey soil, with flecks of green clay and stone. F31-33 could all be associated as part of a structure, now named Building 30; apparently all sealed by layer 2, and possibly Roman.

Section F-G (not drawn; but cf. FIG. 2)

- F34 5.50-7.50; laid small slabs of stone, possibly paved area; cut by F35.
- F35 7.50-10.25; trench for land drain (ceramic pipe); cut obliquely.

Section H-G (FIG. 6)

- F36 0-5.00 approx; deep area of orange-brown clayey soil, a deepening of the general level in this area, with more small stone, including burnt pieces on its east side; a Roman sherd (F36a) suggests a possible date for this feature; possibly a ditch, extending deeper than the pipe-trench; but does not appear in Trench F-G.
- F37 8.50-13.00; large pit or ditch, base not reached; does not appear in Trench F-G; detailed as on section.
- F38 21.50-24.4; rubble in cut-away area, possibly associated with dip in strata to east; suggested to be bank and ditch, possibly levelled; not in F-G.

Section G–K (not drawn, but cf. FIG. 2)

- F39 37.00–37.50; ?structure of small rough stone slabs, crossing trench north–south; probably narrow wall foundation.
 F40 55.00–55.50; pipe-trench with plastic pipe.

Section L–M (FIG. 7)

Trench L–M was drawn only in its westerly 8.66 m; features seen in the remainder were recorded and measured but no section was drawn.

- F41 0.25–1.125; wall foundation crossing trench obliquely, on an orientation roughly NNW–SSE; parts of all facing stones seen; stones packed with brown clayey soil.
 F42 1.80–3.70; wall foundation as F41; this appeared to end in the middle of the trench, the edges shown in the drawn section converging into an obtuse angle, i.e. what is seen in section is the corner of a building with an angle of about 110°.
 F43 3.50–4.50; several large and small stones in yellow-brown sandy matrix seen only on south side of trench, and not therefore shown on drawn section; opposite to, but slightly east of F42; possibly wall foundation at right angle to trench, 0.6 m deep from surface. (F41–43 named as Building 31 in 1983.)
 F44 5.10–8.70; ?ditch; more stones in lower part; bottom not reached; sealed by F45.
 F45 3.70–6.00; small stones in topsoil; recent metalling round gate; sealed F44 and F42, latter more sparsely.

The remaining features are not shown in the drawn section; they are the only ones noticed in this largely negative area; there were no finds except modern rubbish at the east end of the trench.

- F46 *c.* 56; at this point the underlying natural stratum of yellowish sandy clay laps up over disintegrated oolite, here dipping sharply to the west into the valley.
 F47 *c.* 71; here 0.2 m of turf and topsoil lie directly on 0.3 m of oolitic gravel (up to hand-sized pieces); below this is loose disintegrated oolite extending down to at least 1 m; this becomes more disintegrated and soft-surfaced as it descends towards F46.
 F48 *c.* 100; this is the centre of a large depression *c.* 2 m wide, seen in both sides of the trench; possibly a shallow ditch or hollow-way, but could all be natural; profile in centre was 0.2 m of turf and topsoil, 0.2 m of brownish soil with small pieces of oolite; *c.* 0.6 m of reddish-brown clayey sandy extending down to base of trench at 1 m depth; the last two cut through the disintegrated oolite on a sloping edge.
 F49 The trench ends in a grass-covered old quarry about 2 m deep. The easterly 4 m of the trench cuts through a dump of modern rubbish. East of the trench end is a dry-built stone wall, so the quarry could be medieval.

The profile at *c.* 151 m from L (5 m from end of trench) is of 0.2 m of turf and dark brown topsoil, 0.4 m of yellow-buff sandy clayey soil with some stones, and below this loose hand-sized oolite in a matrix of yellowish sandy material extending at least to base of the trench, which here is 1.30 m deep.

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