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**Bradley Moat and fishponds, Wotton-under-Edge**

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while on display in the *Gods and Goddesses of the Roman Cotswolds* exhibition at the Museum in 1984. The illustrations were kindly provided by Nick Griffiths.

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## BRADLEY MOAT AND FISHPONDS, WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE

A measured survey (FIG. 5) was recently carried out of the earthworks around the moated site of Bradley Manor (ST 746941). These earthworks were briefly discussed by one of us in a study of North Nibley (Poplewell 1981, 39). The site is just within the northern boundary of Wotton-under-Edge parish in a field known as Moat Field. Bradley Manor lies in a shallow valley at the foot of the Cotswold escarpment on heavy Lias clay.

Bournstream, running along the northern side of the earthworks, was known as 'Hwingles Burna' in a Saxon charter of AD 940 and it is still the parish boundary. The stream issued from a nearby spring (ST 75009455) known as 'Aewylme' in the Saxon charter (Grundy 1935, 283). Bradley is not named in the Domesday Book but was probably part of the manor of Vutune (Wotton) in the Hundred of Berkeley. Bradley's early manorial history is obscure although Smyth (Berkeley Mss III, Hundred of Berkeley, 107–113) makes numerous references to it. The moated manor probably dates from the tenure of a de Bradley in the reign of Richard I. By 1320 it was occupied by a younger branch of the Berkeley family and it was here that Thomas Lord Berkeley claimed to be lying sick on the night that Edward II was murdered at Berkeley Castle. This is not substantiated by the steward's accounts for the relevant dates; nevertheless, Thomas was later completely exonerated by Edward III.

The main features of the earthworks are three large dams, up to 3 m high, lying across the bottom of the valley. The sides of the valley have been cut back to make a level base for the two ponds and moat. The moat occupies the depression behind the lowest dam and at first sight appears to be just another pond. However, closer examination shows there is a very slight platform, only 0.2–0.5 m high, surrounded by a shallow flat-bottomed ditch. The moat has not been excavated but Lindley described finding stones there which he considered to have been derived from a building (Lindley 1962, 308). Close to where the stream now goes through the lowest dam there are the remains of a stone sluice.

Above the moat are two fishponds. The lower pond is 70 x 70 m, unusually large for a medieval fishpond in this area (Iles and Dennison forthcoming). Just off-centre in this pond is a low mound, which would have been apparent as an island only if the pond was half-full. Another feature of interest is the overflow leet running from the stream around, and to the south of, the

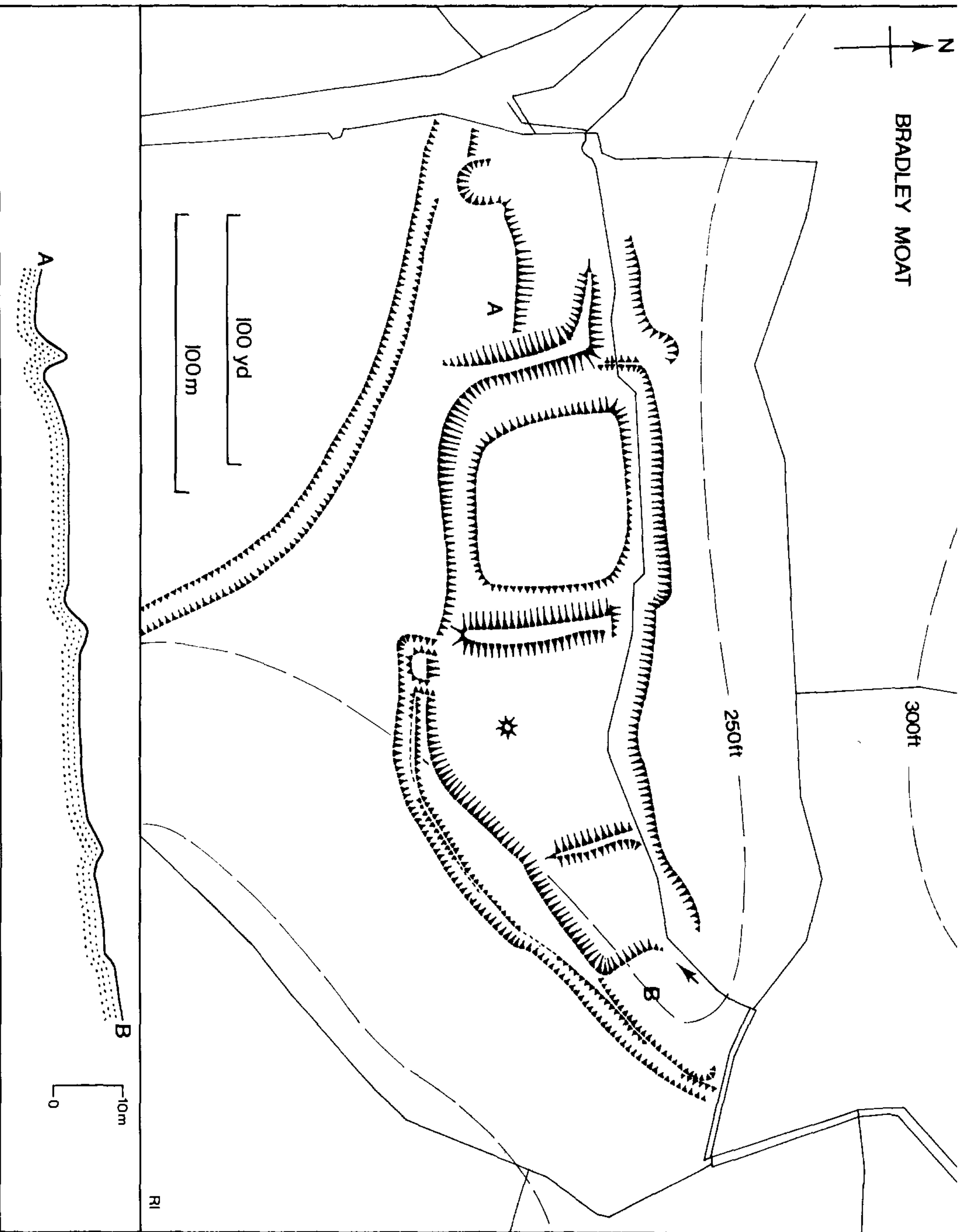


FIG. 5 Bradley moated site, Wotton-under-Edge: earthwork survey. Scale 1:2500.

two fishponds. West of the lowest dam, around A on FIG. 5, are some amorphous earthworks not shown on the plan and possibly quite recent. The hollow-way to the south runs towards Wotton-under-Edge passing behind Bradley Court, which was built in 1568 and was the successor to the moated medieval manor.

The site is now a scheduled ancient monument. The National Trust was given a covenant over the land by Dame Joan Evans in 1970, following a proposal to use the area as a council tip.

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### FINDS FROM A PIPE-TRENCH AT FROCESTER COURT

In December 1984 a watching-brief was maintained during the laying of a water-pipe (FIG. 6) to cattle-troughs in OS 79 and 81 (field nos. from OS 25-inch map, 1922 edition), and evidence of earlier occupation was recorded. A 0.4 m-wide trench was dug *c.* 0.6 m deep from OS 82, where it cut a known wall-footing of 19th-century date, along a farm track for *c.* 85 m. Atrocious weather and a resulting high water-table did not allow more than a brief examination of each feature as it was uncovered. All features predated the 19th/20th-century track metalling; a disused water-pipe cut features 5 and 6; and mid/late 19th-century land-drains postdated features 2, 3, and ditch 'a'. The opportunity has been taken here to include information (features 12 and 13) recorded on an earlier occasion from the stream between OS 79 and 82.

Features 1–3, 5, 8, and 12 were sections of stone wall-footings related to otherwise unknown structures. Features 4, 6, and 9–11 were vertical-sided rubble-filled sections, all except 11 appearing only on the north side of the trench. They were probably early land drains. Feature 7 was a stone-built drain that probably emptied into ditch 'b', and 13 the wheel abutments of a mill derelict before 1623 (Glos R.O., D340a–F19/1). These remains comprised two short lengths of stone walling set opposite each other in the banks of the stream, connected at each end by the remains of a heavy plank set on edge at right-angles across the stream bed. Feature 14 was a pre-19th-century posthole and 15 an area of hard standing on which was found the deposit of medieval pottery described below. Three ditch sections, 'a–c', were located, of which the first two probably represented the same ditch. Romano-British pottery and tile fragments were recorded, some from under feature 15. Similar material has been found in the vicinity on several occasions, possibly relating to some feature of the villa complex *c.* 270 m to the south-west. Details of the features and the finds have been deposited at Stroud Museum. We are indebted to Mr F. Richmond for his pottery drawings.