



**Grove Cottage  
Walterstone Common,  
Herefordshire.**

*A report on evaluation and watching briefs.*



**September 2002**

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*A report on the watching brief.*

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**November 2002**

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# Grove Cottage Walterstone Common, Herefordshire. (NGR SO 3505 2507)

## *A report on the watching brief.*

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### 1. Summary

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*The project followed in response to proposed building work to Grove Cottage, Walterstone Common (NGR SO 3505 2507), by Mr & Mrs R Jenner in September 2002. The extension comprised a workshop and patio area to the west of the main building and a double garage and tool store to the north.*

*The site of the cottage lies at the base of a small, class 5, Welsh prehistoric hill fort, Walterstone Camp. This location was thought to be archaeologically significant, and so complying to Planning Policy Guidelines note 16, section 30, the planning authority advised that a program of archaeological work should be undertaken. This took the form a watching brief, monitoring machine excavations of the proposed extension as carried out by the building contractors and an evaluation trench.*

*The main aim of the archaeological operation was to identify, record and date any features of archaeological interest, assess the survival, quality and condition of any archaeological remains and to produce a record of any findings. This information could then be used to further both local and national knowledge of the archaeology of the area.*

*Through both the watching brief and evaluation trench no archaeological features were present except a small, late cut containing several modern brick fragments to the west of the main building.*

*The fieldwork was carried out during September 2002.*



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## 2. Introduction

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The site of Grove Cottage is located in the Village of Walterstone Common approximately 24km southwest of the city of Hereford, at grid reference NGR SO 3505 2507 (Fig. 1). This is at the base of (using the Welsh classification) a class 5 prehistoric hill fort known as Walterstone Camp (RCAHMW, 1986).

The project followed in response to planning application submitted by Mr & Mrs R Jenner for extension work to an existing cottage (Fig. 2). Due to its location close to a prehistoric hill fort, Walterstone Camp, the area was deemed to be possibly archaeologically sensitive.

Archaeological Investigations Ltd was contracted to carry out the archaeological work during the excavation process for the building extension. The fieldwork was carried out by suitably qualified and experienced staff during September 2002.

The proposed extension work comprised a double garage and tool store to the north of the main building and a workshop and patio area to the west of the main building. An archaeological evaluation trench, running east-west, was also excavated to the north of the main building close to the double garage.

The underlying geology of the area comprised Old Red Sandstone and clay.

At present the land around Grove Cottage that will be affected by the extension work is used as a domestic garden and patio area.

The land lies at the on the slope of a small hill.

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## 3. Historical Background

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The earliest known phase of activity around the site belongs to the prehistoric hill fort at the top of the hill to the east of Grove Cottage. This hill fort, Walterstone Camp, is similar to a class 5 hill fort as identified by the RCAHMW Brecknock survey. This is due to its size, close to 1.2 hectares, and its multivallate form. Hill forts of this type are thought to belong to the last stage of Iron Age hill fort building. No other prehistoric remains have been recorded near the cottage.

The name of the village derives from Walter de Lacy, and is included in the manor of Ewyas. The earliest lords of the manor are not positively known, as they have been obscured by following lords who wanted to boost their own importance.

The Cecils or "*Sisylts*" are not recorded as being knights or sheriffs of their local shire, which has led some historians to doubt their self claimed importance. It is only with later generations of Cecils that they appear to take on any importance with Richard Cecile, who becomes forester of the Royal Manor in 1458. However, it is Richard's grandson Philip Cecil who furthers the family name most, when he marries Maud, daughter and heiress to William ap

Phillip Vaughn of Tiliglas. The great grandson of Philip and Maud becomes Queen Elizabeth's "most sagacious statesman".

The church at Walterstone was formerly attached to the Abbey at Llanthony, however after the dissolution fell into the hands of the Arnolds of Llanvihangel and the Harleys. By the time of the 1841 tithe map the site of a chapel can be seen at the entrance of the hill-fort (Fig. 3).

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#### **4. Previous archaeological work at Grove Cottage**

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No previous archaeological work had been carried out around the cottage.

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#### **5. Aims and Objectives**

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The main aims of the archaeological work fall into three parts.

1. To identify the date and nature of any archaeological features appearing during the investigation
2. To assess the survival, quality, condition and relative significance of any archaeological features, deposits and structures identified within the study area.
3. The production of an archaeological report to record any findings.

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#### **6. Methodology**

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Due to the nature of the archaeological work to be carried out, the excavation for the workshop and patio areas as well as the evaluation trench was to be carried out by a small 360° digger.

Phase 1 was the excavation of the patio area to the west of the building, located south of the new workshop area. The area was excavated by 360° digger to a depth of 1 meter below present ground level at its westernmost corner.

Phase 2 was the excavation of the workshop area north of the patio and to the west of the main building. This excavation reached a depth of 1.6 meters below the present ground level at its westernmost corner.

Phase 3 comprised the excavation by 360° digger of a narrow evaluation trench 0.6m wide by 8 m long which was excavated down to natural at a depth of approximately 0.8m.

Trenches and excavations were located in relation to the main cottage building.

All archaeological features were recorded. Sections were drawn at a scale of 1:20. Location plans for the trenches and areas of excavation were drawn at a scale of 1:100.

The code of conduct of the Institute of Field Archaeologists was adhered to at all times.

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## **7. Results**

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### **7.1. Part 1. Patio area. (Fig. 2, Fig. 4 cross section 1 & Plate. 1)**

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The patio area is located to the southwest of the main cottage butting the original patio area and cut into the sloped grass area of the garden to the west of the main building. The trench was excavated to a depth of 1 m below present ground level at its westernmost corner.

The excavation area was of a square plan 3m wide by 4m long with an orientation of northwest – southeast. A layer of topsoil 0.2m in depth covered the surface of the excavation area. This was a well defined layer with grass roots running through its entirety. The topsoil was dark brown in colour with small stony inclusions making up less than 20 percent of the context.

Below the topsoil a modern cut, cut 1, was identified to the east of the trench. This was close to the main building and contained a recent, loose fill of dark brown matrix and modern debris. This extended 0.15 m below the base of the topsoil and extended to the west 1.2 m.

Also below the topsoil to the western edge of the patio excavation a second modern cut can be seen. This second cut is a flat based pit with steep sloping sides filled with a dark brown fill, builder's debris and modern rubbish. The cut extends 0.5 m east from the western corner of the excavation. The base of the cut is 0.3m below the base of the topsoil.

Both cuts, 1 and 2, are cut into the natural orange brown clay silt deposit, which the topsoil also sits above. This natural clay was a clean sterile layer that showed some root activity and animal burrows. The top of this deposit was directly below the topsoil at 0.2 m below present ground level and extended beyond the base of the trench that lay at a depth of 1 m below present ground level.

Both cuts are modern features and as show no archaeological significance.

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### **7.2. Part 2. Workshop area. (Fig. 2, Fig. 4 cross section 2 & Plate. 2)**

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The workshop excavation area was located to the west of the main building and north of the new patio area. This butted up against the existing building and the excavation for the patio area. The trench was excavated to a depth of 1.6m below present ground level at its westernmost corner.

The excavated area was 4 m wide by 5m long and had an orientation of northwest – southeast. A layer of topsoil covered the area to be excavated and had a depth of 0.3m below present



ground level. The context comprised a dark brown loose humic matrix with some small stony inclusions and grass roots throughout.

Below the topsoil lay the natural deposit of orange brown clay silt with some manganese flecks. This natural deposit continued to a depth of 0.8m below present ground level.

A narrow layer of gley, 0.18 m in depth, lay below the orange brown clay silt. This context contained some iron flecks of a pale orange brown colour. This gley sat directly on top of the local bedrock, Old Red Sandstone.

No archaeological features were identified in this excavation area.

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### **7.3. Part 3. Evaluation trench. (Fig. 2 & Plate. 3)**

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The evaluation trench was located to the north of the main cottage building within the garden area aligned to pick up a boundary. Its westernmost point was located 7 m to the northwest of the northern corner of the existing house. The easternmost corner was located 6m north of the northern corner of the existing house. The trench was 8 m in length and 0.6 m wide and was excavated to a depth of 0.8 m below present ground level.

The top of the trench was covered by a thin layer of topsoil 0.2m in depth. This topsoil was dark brown in colour and contained small stony inclusions and grass roots.

Below this topsoil natural orange brown clay silt was identified. This context was clean and sterile only containing some manganese flecks and extended down below the depth of the trench at 0.8m in depth.

No archaeological features were identified within the evaluation trench.

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## **8. Discussion**

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The only evidence of human interference identified within the excavated areas were all of modern cuts relating to activity associated with the present, modern cottage. These did not interfere with any other archaeological remains and no archaeologically significant features were present, disturbed or otherwise.

The boundary must have been a hedge because no cut was observed for a ditch and the workmen had said that they had removed part of a hedge when asked.

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## **9. Conclusions**

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The aims of this project were to record, date and assess any archaeological features discovered during the excavation works for the extension to Grove Cottage. These aims were satisfied by

the lack of archaeological features. It has been determined that there was no human activity that left any traces in the study area before the present cottage was constructed.

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## 10. Site Archive

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1. 18 exp. colour film
2. 2 section drawings on perma trace at 1:20
3. 25 pages of site notes including scale drawings
4. Correspondence file

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## 11. Bibliography

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### *Books and Articles*

Woolhope Naturalists Field Club. 1971, *Herefordshire: its natural history, archaeology and history*

Robinson, C. J. 2001, *A History of the Manors of Herefordshire*

The Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales. 1986 *Brecknock Hill-forts and Roman Remains*

### *Maps and Plans*

OS Landranger 161 1:50 000

Tithe Map for the area, 1841



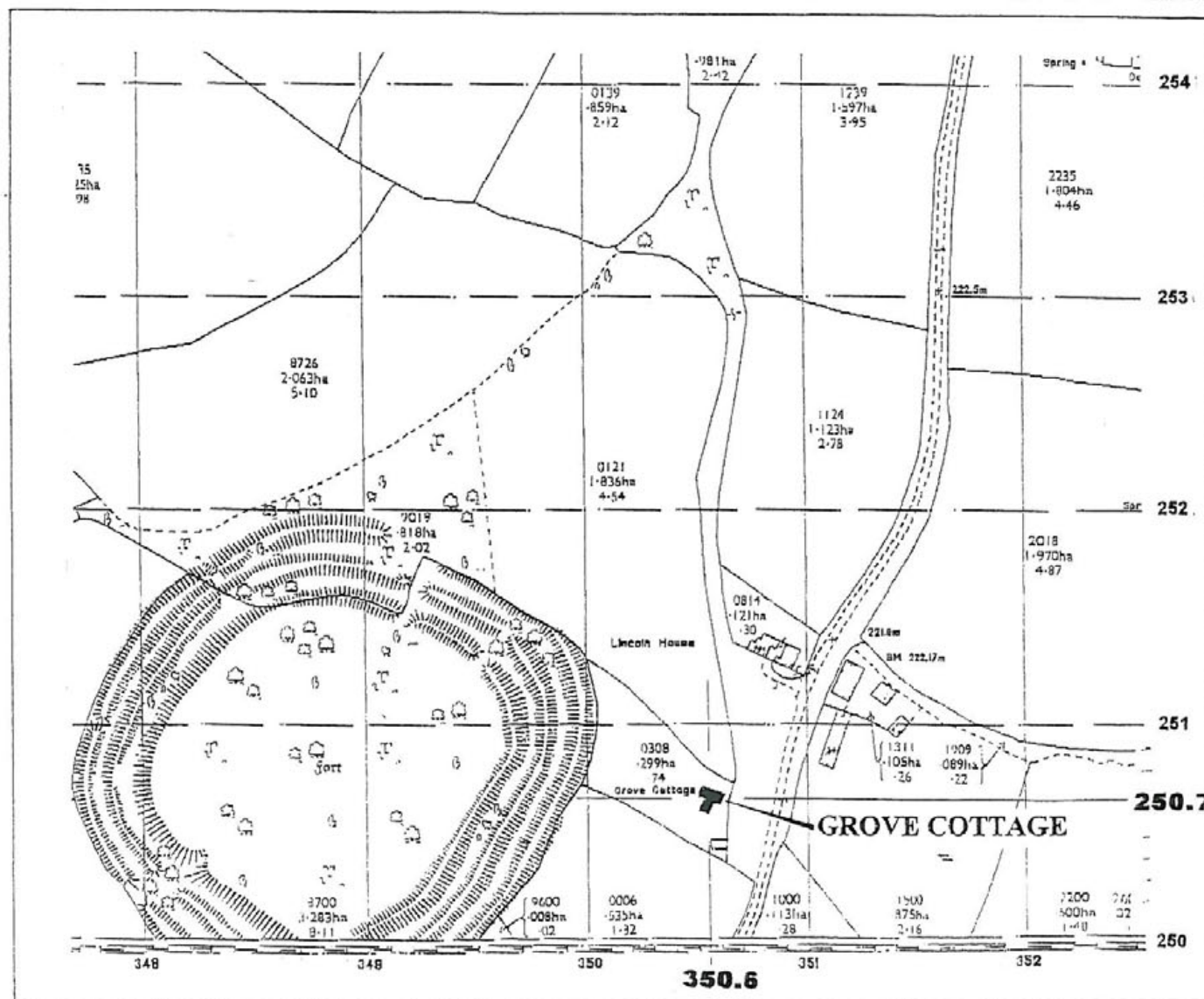
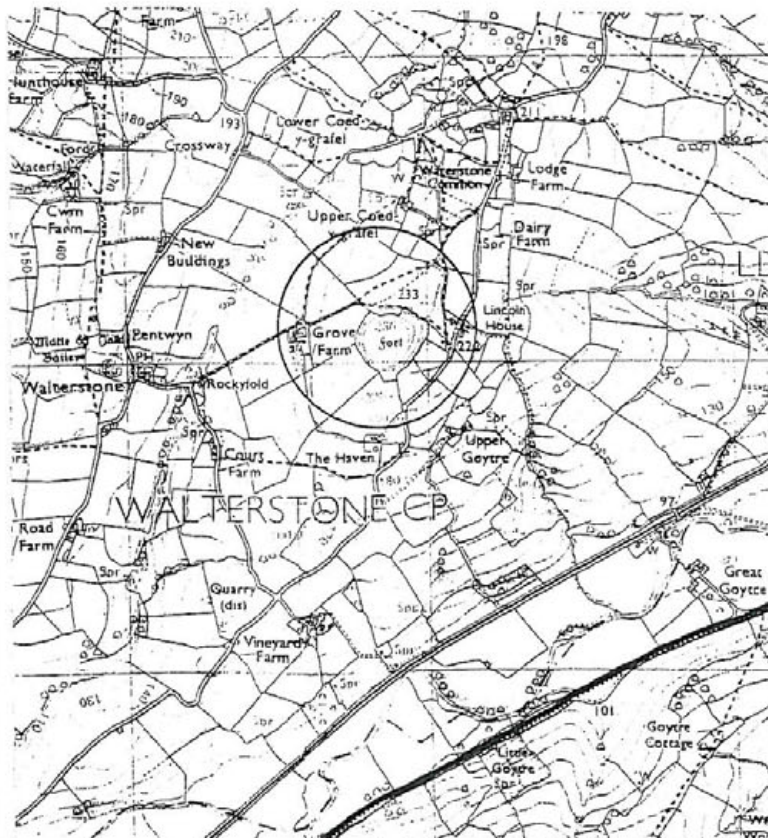
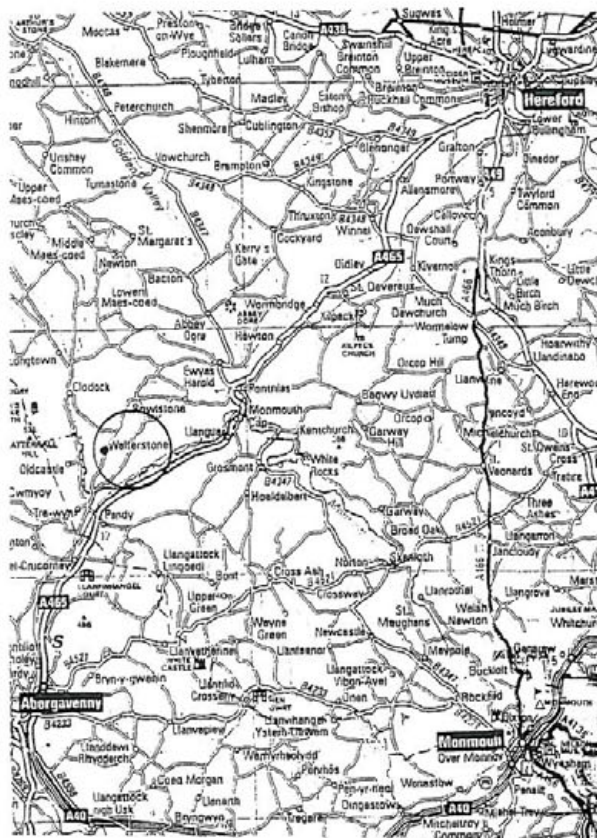


Fig. 1 Site location plan





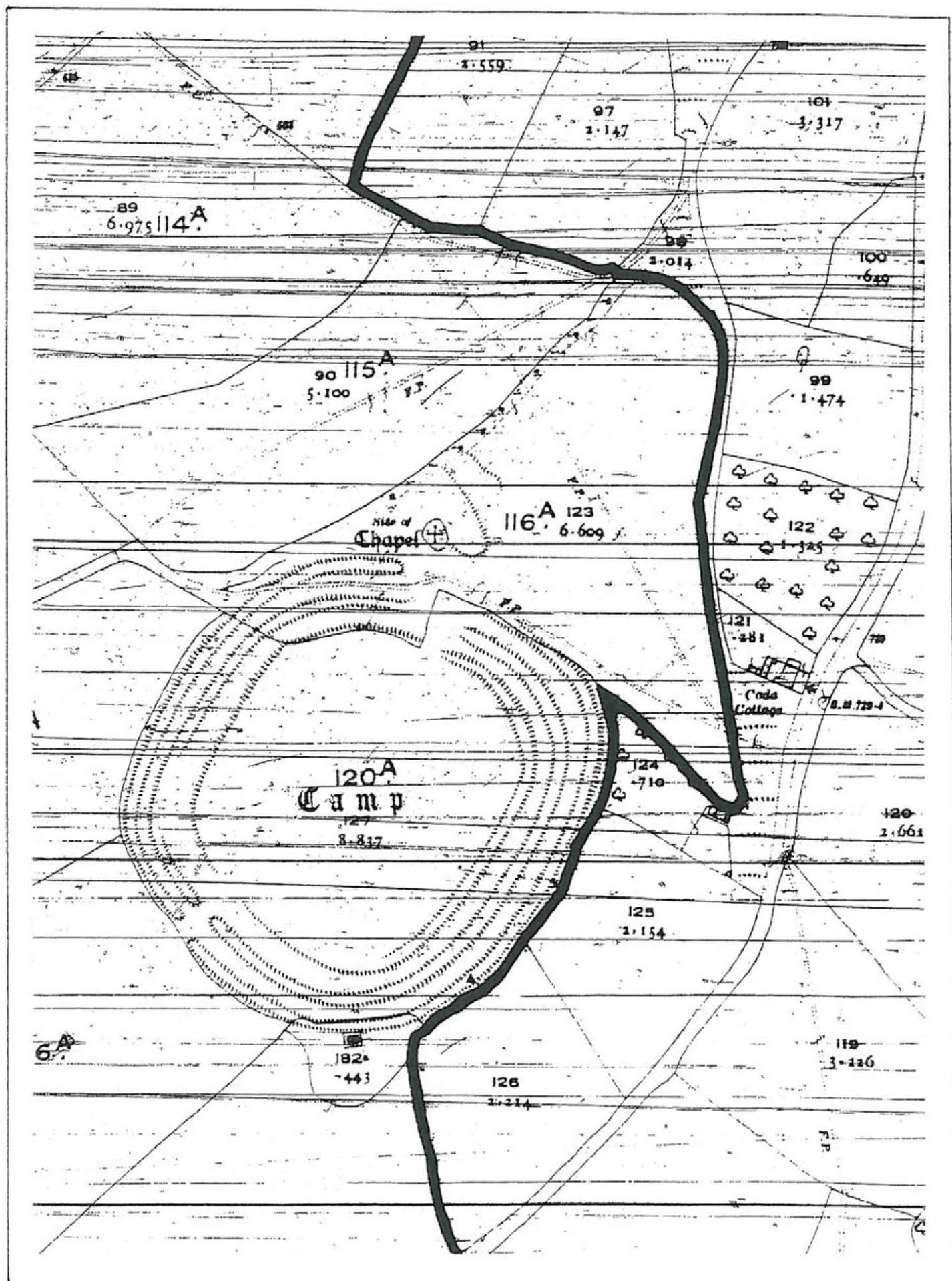
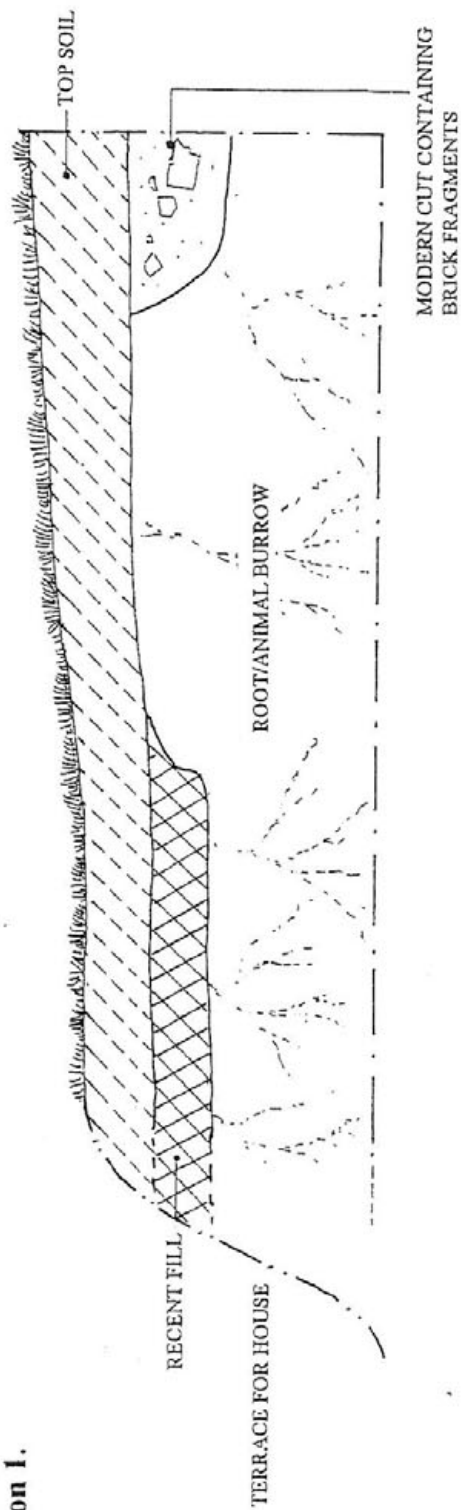


Fig. 3 1841 Tithe map for Walterstone Camp and Grove Cottage



Cross section 1.



Cross section 2.

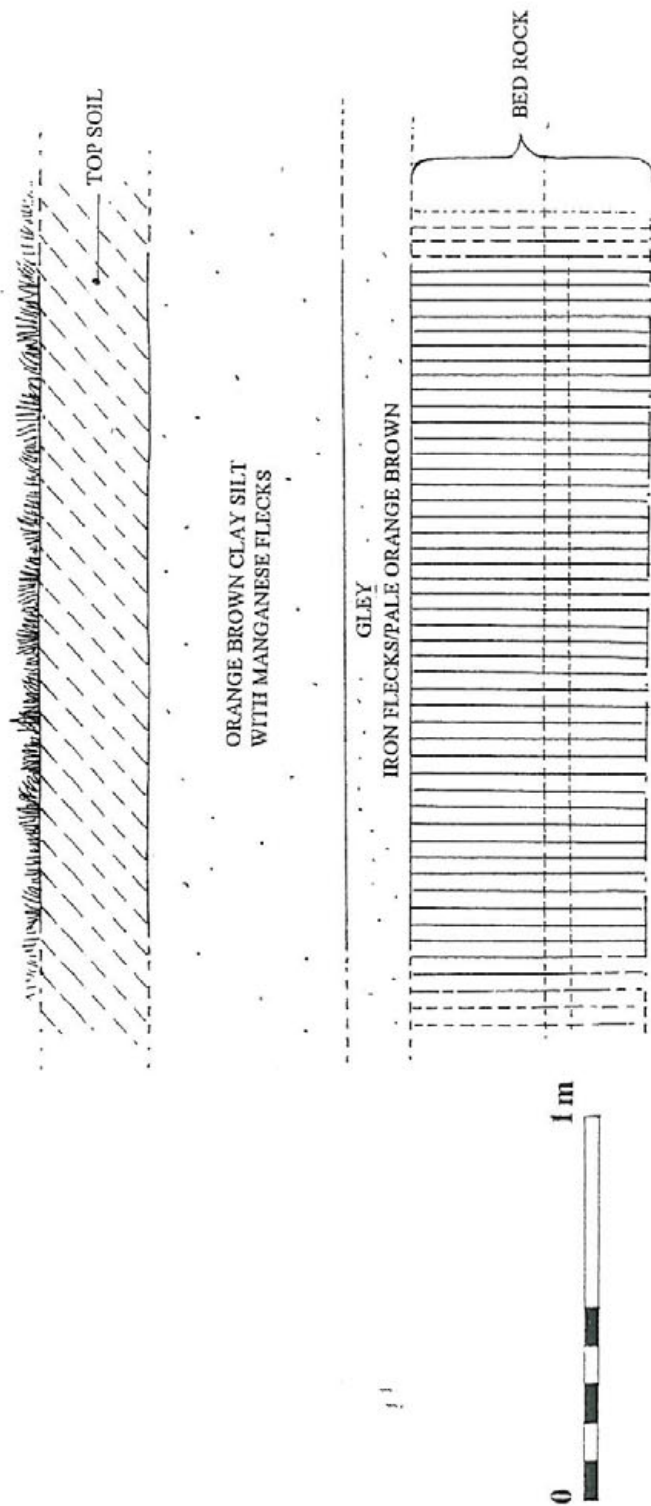
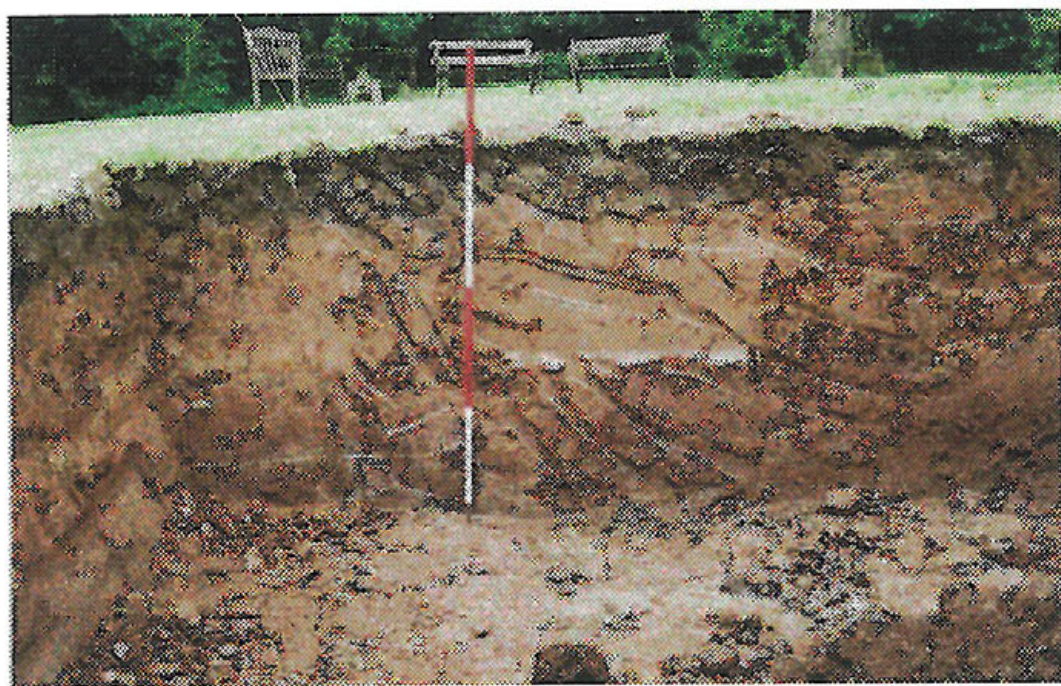


Fig. 4 Drawings of cross sections 1 & 2 (see Fig. 2)



**Plate. 1 Northeast facing section of cross section 1**



**Plate. 2 Southeast facing section of cross section 2**





**Plate. 3 Evaluation trench**