

**Gazetteer of Romano-British
archaeological sites in Ewell**

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This paper is reprinted from Surrey Archaeological Collections Volume 84, 1997 with permission of Surrey Archaeological Society. Since 1997 there have been significant archaeological excavations in Ewell including work to establish more accurately the route of Stane Street. As reports on some of these excavations are not yet available, it has been decided to issue this reprint rather than wait until an updated edition of this gazetteer can be produced.

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A Gazetteer of Romano-British archaeological sites in Ewell

CHARLES ABDY and GRAHAM BIERTON

with an introduction by
CLIVE ORTON

Foreword, by Charles Abdy

Work on this Gazetteer of Romano-British archaeological sites in Ewell started in the Roman Villa Group of the Surrey Archaeological Society. Mr Graham Bierton, a long-standing member of the Group, became responsible for the collation of the information that was available, and was well on the way to completing the Gazetteer when he was overtaken by an illness that seemed likely to prevent him from organizing publication for a considerable period.

The Nonsuch Antiquarian Society has undertaken a considerable amount of archaeological work in Ewell and, as co-ordinator of their Archaeology Group, I agreed to prepare the Gazetteer for publication. In the process I have added material relating to recent archaeological work in Ewell and compared the information given on the sites listed in the Gazetteer with the Surrey Sites and Monuments Record, updating the Gazetteer as appropriate. I have also been responsible for the preparation of the maps and associated material.

Mr Clive Orton, MA, Reader in Archaeology at the Institute of Archaeology, University College, London, who has written the report on the excavation of the King William IV site, Ewell, in the present volume (pages 89–122) has contributed the introduction to the Gazetteer.

Introduction, by Clive Orton

Ewell is situated some 21km south-west of London (see King William IV, fig 1). The earliest reference to Ewell in the antiquarian literature is by John Aubrey (1718), who stated that many human bones had been unearthed in Ewell, near the Epsom Road on the west side of the village. Although there is no direct evidence for the date of these bones, subsequent findings suggest that they are likely to be Saxon. Reports of finds of Roman coins were made in the early 1840s (Anon 1841), but the first mention of definitely Roman features is Diamond's account (1847) of 'ritual' shafts cut into the chalk, observed during quarrying. More were found later in the century (Warne 1861), and shafts and/or wells of the Roman period have been a regular feature of Ewell's archaeology. Chance finds in the village have been abundant since the 1930s, particularly of coins, but also of pottery, building debris and other finds.

Archaeological excavation in Ewell started in the 1930s with a campaign by Lowther, Winbolt and, later, Frere, which ended in the early 1950s. The initial focus was the route of the London–Chichester road (Stane Street) through the area. Once the existence of a Roman settlement had been established (eg by Winbolt 1936), questions of its origins, extent, nature and chronology also received attention. The formation of the Nonsuch and Ewell Antiquarian Society following the nearby Nonsuch Palace excavations in 1959 led to a second campaign of excavations (and site-watching) in the 1960s and 1970s, mainly directed by Pemberton, but also by Barfoot, Caws, Morris, Mortimer, Nail, Nelson and Temple. The main research aims were to determine (i) the exact route of Stane Street through the area, (ii) the nature and extent of the Romano-British settlement, and (iii) the nature of the transition from a series of Iron Age farming communities to an apparently more nucleated Romano-British settlement. Excavations have continued through the 1980s and 1990s, partly carried out by the Society, now known as the Nonsuch Antiquarian Society, and partly by the Surrey County Archaeological Unit.

The first attempt at synthesis was by Winbolt (1936, 225–36), who summarized the evidence and attempted to reconstruct the boundaries of the ‘township’. Building on what he admitted was very little evidence, he set out his conjectured Roman Ewell (*ibid.*, 232): a rectangular embanked enclosure 440 yards by 330 yards, oriented north-east–south-west. Two main roads cross in the centre, dividing the town into four quarters, each with perhaps nine *insulae*. He suggested that parts of the perimeter survived in the modern roads West Street, Church Street and Spring Street (the north-west part). He further suggested that Stane Street changed direction to go in at right angles in the centre of the south-east side (ie at about the High Street/West Street/Church Street crossroads), but that it left the north-east side at an angle. From the coin evidence he deduced that there had been occupation throughout the whole Roman period, but especially in the 4th century. It is now thought that Roman coins were generally more abundant in the 4th century, so an increase in their number does not imply an increase in population. He clearly saw his ideas as a working hypothesis to provide a frame for further research, rather than as a definitive statement. His interpretation would give the settlement an enclosed area of 30 acres (12 ha), putting it firmly in the category of Roman small towns. Webster (1975, 59) listed Ewell in his survey of small towns without defences and ascribed to it an area of some 70 acres (28 ha).

Later writers have been less sanguine about the size and importance of Roman Ewell. In an interim statement, Pemberton (1973b) plotted the locations of eight buildings, three wells and several rubbish pits, spread on both sides of the Stane Street alignment, mostly within 200m of this, for a length of some 900m. He also identified a possible enclosure ditch on the south and west sides of a central area; this does not correlate in any way with Winbolt’s perimeter. He suggested that the most extensive occupation was in the late 1st and 2nd centuries, but that it also continued into the 4th century.

Sheldon & Schaaf (1978), in a survey of Roman sites in the Greater London area, compared Ewell with other sites similarly located around Londinium, such as Brentford, Crayford, Enfield and Staines. They considered these sites to be more adequately described as roadside villages than small towns (*ibid.*, 63), and estimated the area of Ewell to be about 15 acres (6 ha). They suggested that such sites may have originated as *mutationes* (changing stations) which attracted a cluster of civilian settlement, and may have been centres of local administration. They saw such sites as developing with the road system in the mid–late 1st century, but confess to ignorance of their history in the later Roman period.

Bird showed Roman Ewell as a minor town and described it as less developed than Staines (1987, 169). Using Sheldon & Schaaf’s plan (1978, fig 7) he suggested that the settlement had no true centre and consisted merely of buildings straggling along the road for over 1km. He considered that the local *mutationes* were more likely to have been in the Merton and Dorking areas, and discounted Pemberton’s boundary ditch (Bird, 1987, 171).

There are also theoretical arguments against including Ewell among the small towns. Hodder & Hassall (1971, 391–407) showed that, in central England, Roman small towns tended to be located mid-way between larger centres (the cantonal capitals). A modified pattern may be seen in the London area, with Rochester between London and Canterbury, Chelmsford between London and Colchester, and perhaps Braughing north of London. St Albans is too close to London for a small town to fit between, nor are there such sites between London and Silchester and (excluding the possibility of Ewell) between London and Chichester (perhaps because of unfavourable locations in the Surrey heath and the Weald respectively). The settlements ringing London at a distance of 10–15 miles might then be seen as ‘third-level’ market centres of a central-place hierarchy, located between London and the ‘second level’ of small towns. This would fit with what little is known of such sites, but more specialized functions, such as religious or industrial centres, cannot be ruled out. It is therefore important to understand the function(s) of such sites, and not just to give them convenient labels. The first step in understanding is to draw together the evidence by means of a gazetteer.

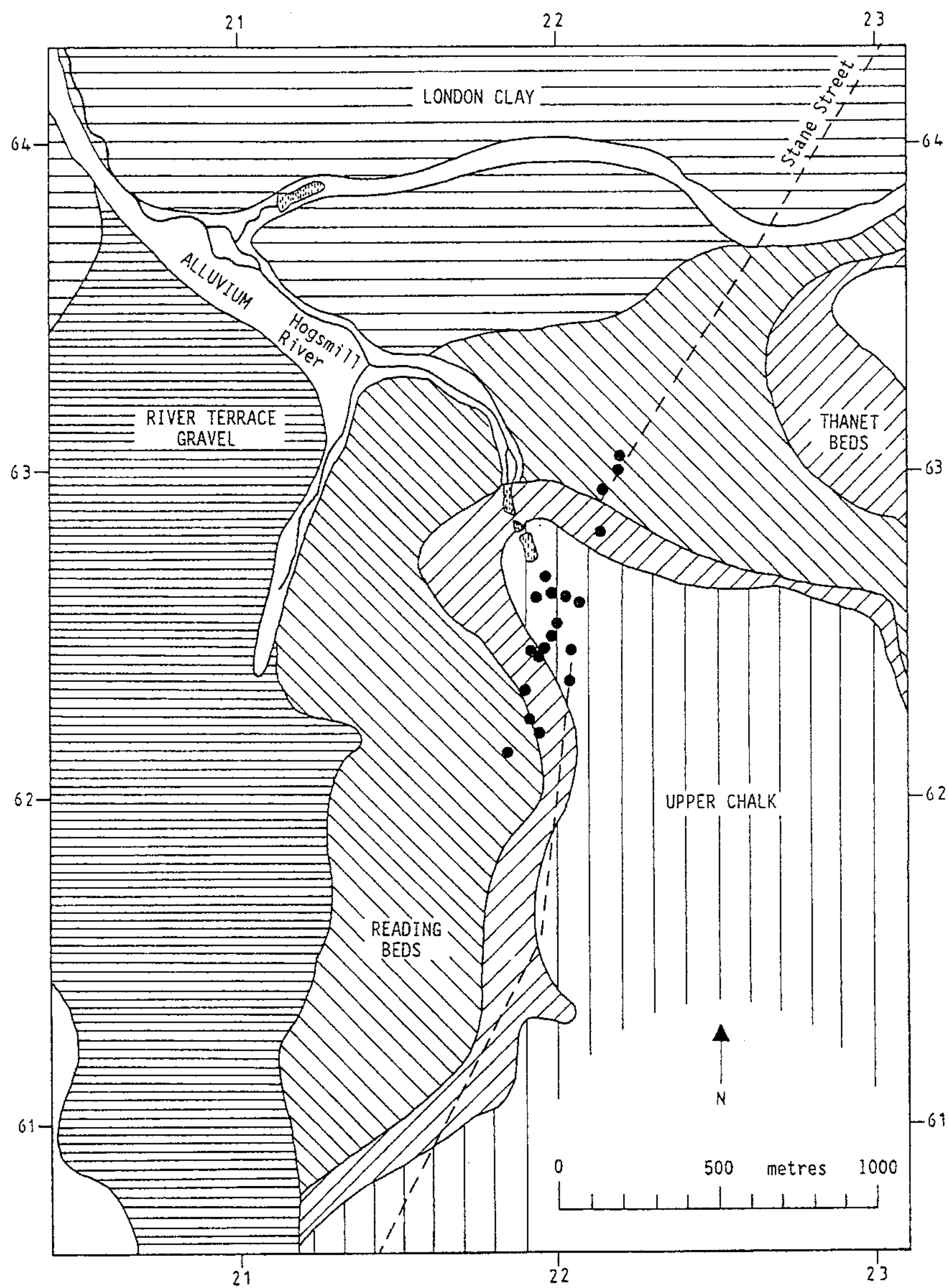


Fig 1 Geology of the Ewell area. The dots indicate sites on which foundations of buildings or substantial amounts of building material have been found.

1 The nature of Ewell

1.1 THE GEOLOGY OF THE EWELL AREA (fig 1)

Ewell is on the spring line where the Upper Chalk and the London Clay are separated by the more porous Reading and Thanet Beds. The dominant feature is the Hogsmill river which has its origin in springs near the centre of the village. Until recent times the water could be seen gushing up in the Dipping Place at the junction of High Street and Spring Street. By tradition, when Queen Elizabeth I was staying at nearby Nonsuch Palace, she insisted on a daily supply of fresh spring water from Ewell.

In 1991, during archaeological investigations in Bourne Hall Lake, which was dry at the time, channels in the Thanet Sand of the lake-bed and an associated area of gravel were assumed to be the site of one of the springs. Many of the coins found were nearby, suggesting the possibility that they were votive offerings.

The Hogsmill river flows north from Ewell in an alluvium-bottomed valley through areas of London Clay and Taplow Terrace gravel before joining the Thames at Kingston.

Much of Ewell village is at an altitude of between 35m and 45m. Going south there is a gradual rise over the chalk to a height of 155m on Epsom Downs, and just over 5km farther south the summit of the North Downs is reached at around 200m (fig 2).

1.2 THE DEVELOPMENT OF EWELL

Following the withdrawal of the Romans early in the 5th century there was Saxon settlement in the area, as evidenced by the extensive cemetery in the Grove and Ewell House locality. By medieval times the village was at the centre of a 6km long strip parish running approximately north-south, extending from the London Clay to the chalk of the Downs. By 1618 the village was sufficiently developed to be considered a town and was granted a market. During the next few centuries many London merchants had large houses built in the town; however, by the end of the 19th century the parish was still largely rural, in spite of the arrival of the railway at the middle of the century.

Development increased after the First World War, since when many big houses in large grounds have been replaced by a multitude of small houses and blocks of flats. The heart of the village suffered particularly in the 1960s by the destruction of a number of interesting old buildings, some dating back to the late medieval period. Today, most of Ewell Village is under bricks and mortar, except for the grounds of Bourne Hall, Glyn House and Ewell Castle School, together with the graveyards and associated land.

2 Scope, arrangement and maps

2.1 SCOPE

The gazetteer lists the finds of Roman material in and around Ewell Village. In a few cases there is mention of material from other periods that has been found in association with Roman.

2.2 ARRANGEMENT

A list of sites for which map references can be specified is followed by a list of sites without such references.

Where a report on a site can usefully be quoted the entry gives the author and date of the report and the page number. The bibliography gives further information.

2.3 ABBREVIATIONS

NAS	Nonsuch Antiquarian Society (formerly NEAS)
NEAS	Nonsuch and Ewell Antiquarian Society
SMR	Sites and Monuments Record
SyAC	Surrey Archaeological Collections
SyAS	Surrey Archaeological Society

2.4 THE MAPS

Key Map 1 shows finds near the centre of Ewell Village, while Key Map 2 shows those in the surrounding area. Numbers within squares rather than circles indicate sites on which foundations of buildings or substantial amounts of building material have been found. Such sites are marked

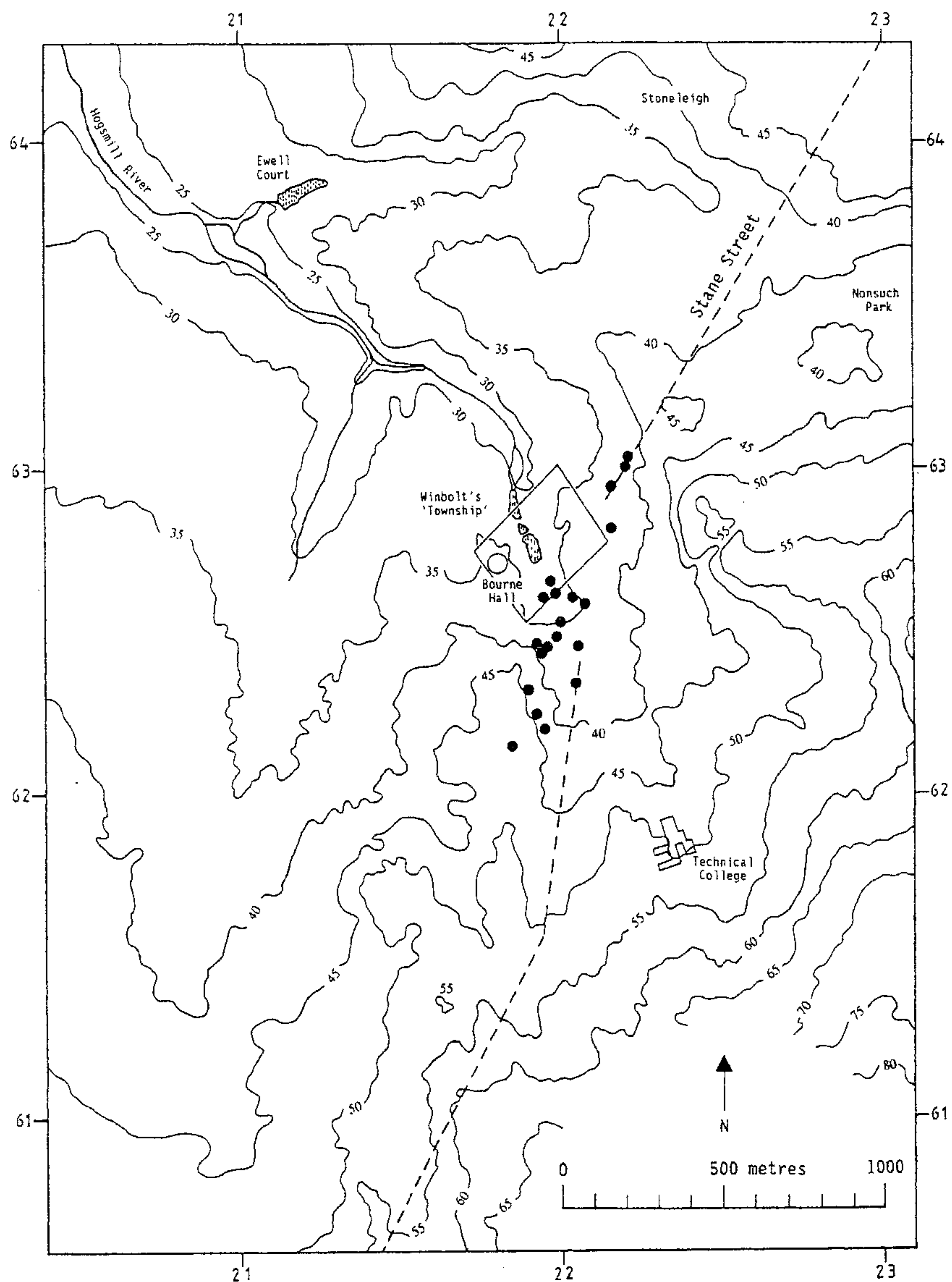


Fig 2 Topography of the Ewell area (contours in metres). The dots indicate sites on which foundations of buildings or substantial amounts of building material have been found. Some modern features are marked to give orientation. The boundaries of the 'township' suggested by Winbolt (1936) are also shown. (Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey 1:10000 scale map with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown copyright 87175M)

on figures 1 and 2 in order to relate the settlement to the geology and the terrain. There are twenty of these sites, eight of which provided evidence of foundations of buildings, ie sites 11, 41, 43, 50, 60, 69, 71 and 72.

Most of these sites lie on the Upper Chalk, but there are sites on both the Reading Beds and the Thanet Beds (fig 1). The Reading Beds consist of pale coloured and mottled clays and sands while the Thanet Beds are sands of varying particle size. In the area in question these beds cover the underlying chalk in thicknesses varying from a few centimetres to many metres, depending on the distance from the junction with the chalk at the surface. The lowest land is along the

Hogsmill river, where it drops below the 25m contour line; the majority of the sites marked lie between the 30m and 45m contours (fig 2).

2.5 MAP REFERENCES

Most of the map references are as given in the reports on excavations or finds. However, in a few instances reference to a large-scale map has shown that the figures quoted are not appropriate to the spots described, and the necessary corrections have been made. It has to be borne in mind that even an 8-figure reference as used for most of the sites can seldom give a precise location, since a unit change in the final figure represents a distance of 10m, ie the spot defined can be up to ± 5 m from that indicated by the map reference.

3 The sites and the finds

3.1 ARRANGEMENT OF THE GAZETTEER

The sites are given in order of map reference from south to north and are shown on Key Map 1 unless the figure (2), indicating Key Map 2, appears after the OS map reference.

3.2 FINDS FROM SPECIFIED SITES

1 *North Looe* Centred TQ 2280 6080 (2)

Pits, ditch and 'working hollows' noted and partially excavated during period 1946-9; Early Iron Age pottery; Iron Age/Romano-British transition pottery, 1st-4th century pottery (with 1st-2nd century concentration); fragments of loomweights, quernstones, hones, spindlewhorl; two infant inhumation burials; two cremation burials, one accompanied by bone gaming counters (Cotton 1978). Gaming counters published in detail (Frere, Hassell & Tomlin 1977, 445, 447). (SMR 1101)

2 *Priest Hill Farm* Area around TQ 2280 6120 (2)

Pottery fragments found over area during period 1945-9. (SMR 2555)

3 *Priest Hill Farm* Area around TQ 2265 6145 (2)

Pottery fragments found before 1963 (Nail 1963, 3).

4 *Priest Hill Farm* Area around TQ 2250 6160 (2)

4th and 5th century pottery and burials (cremation and inhumation) found when trenches dug across field in 1940. (SMR 1106)

One 4th century coin found somewhere on the farm (Frere 1946).

5 *Hook Road, Epsom* TQ 2107 6166 (2)

One 2nd century coin found on allotment in 1932. (SMR 1126)

6 *Stone's Brickfield* Area around TQ 2130 6170 (2)

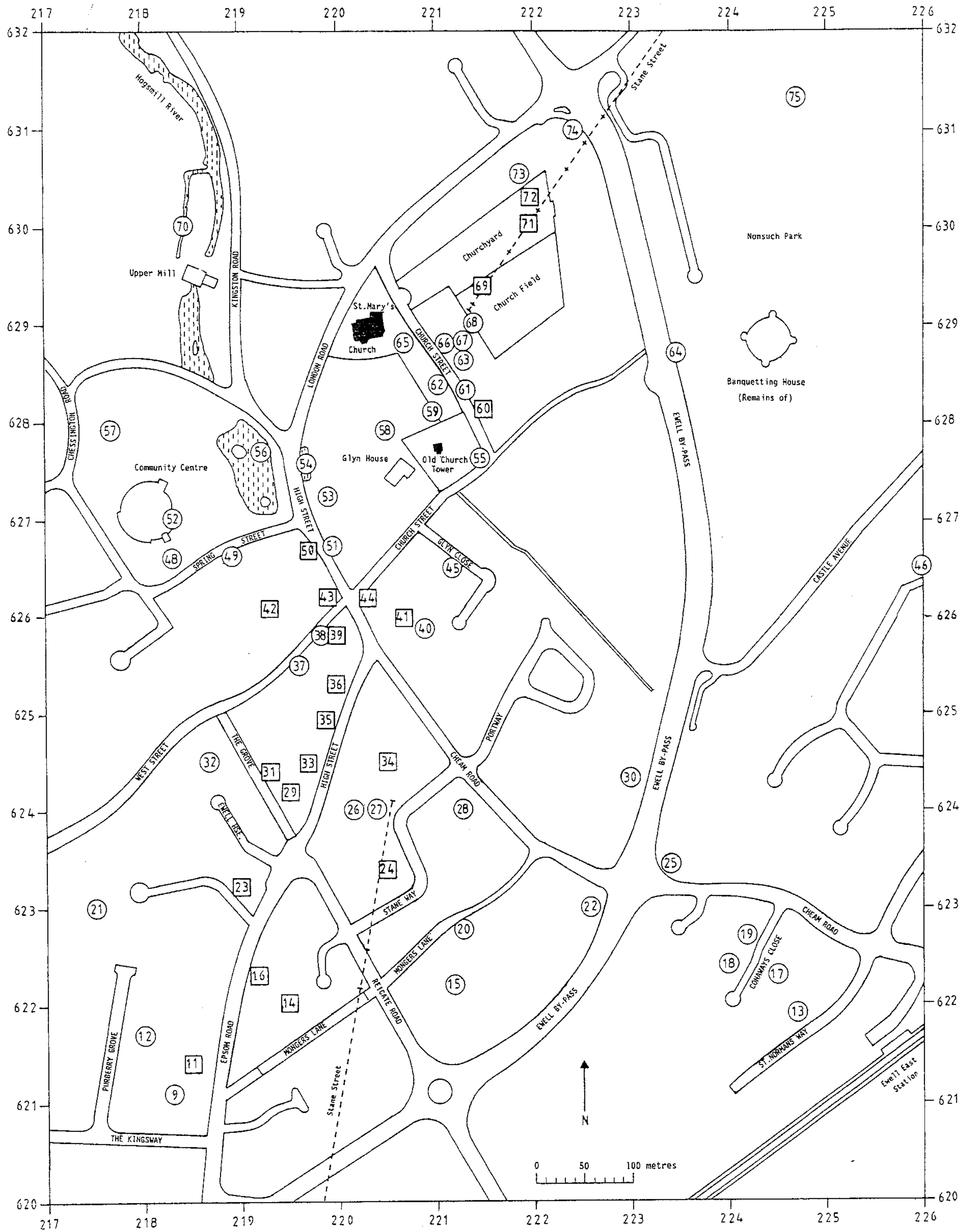
Three cremation burials in a line at approximately 8m intervals found in 1923, two cinerary urns containing other urns, one containing glass vessel; 'a few brass coins' of which one indicated as 1st century and one as 2nd century (Hills 1924). (SMR 1105)

7 *Priest Hill Farm* TQ 225 618 (2)

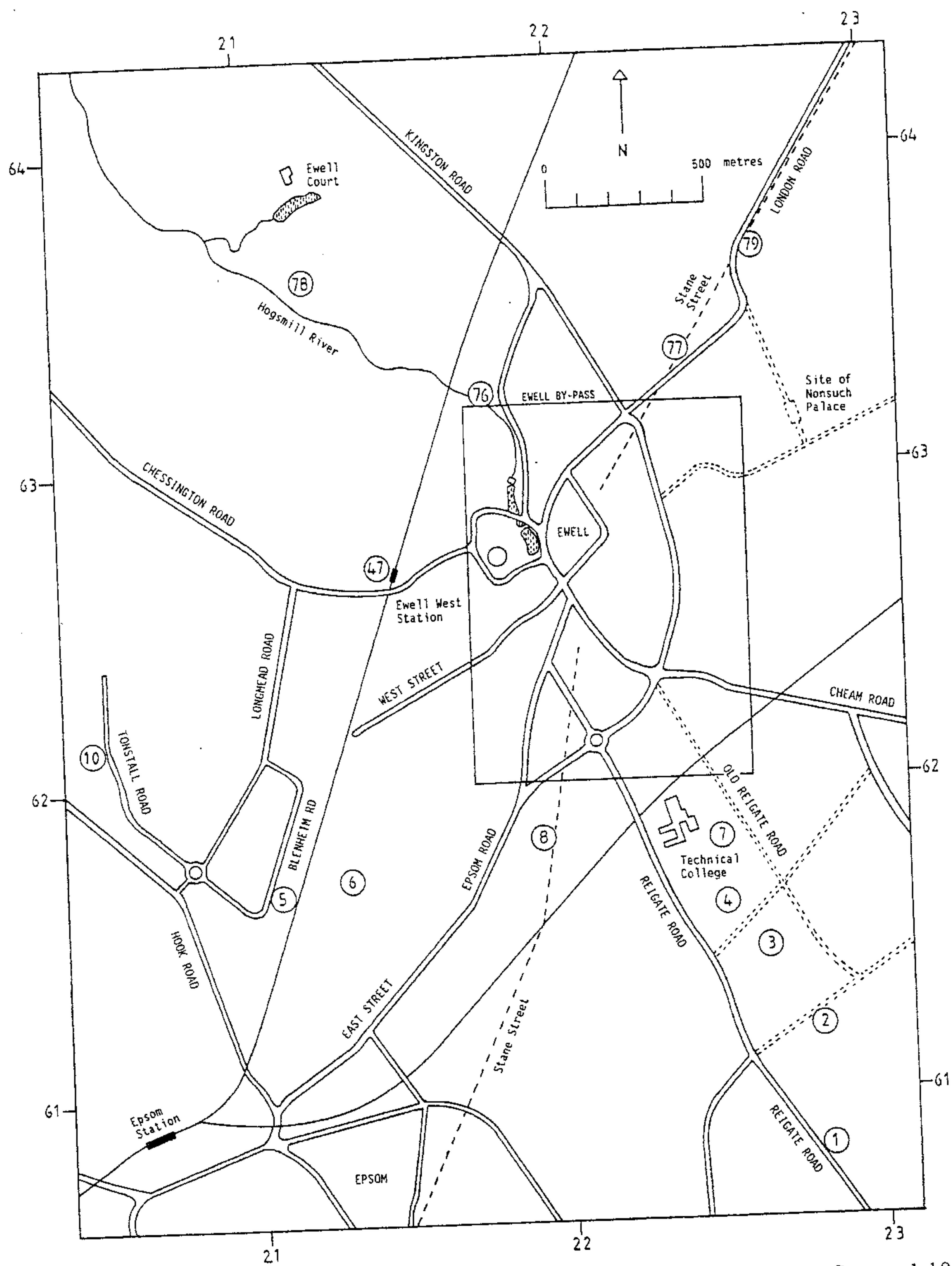
One 4th century coin picked up before 1946 (Frere 1946). (SMR 1124)

8 *Hampton Grove, Ewell* Area around TQ 2192 6181 (2)

Nine 'Roman coins' found (NAS 1968).



Key map 1: Finds near the centre of Ewell village. Numbers within squares indicate sites on which foundations of buildings or substantial amounts of building material have been found. (Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey 1:2500 scale map with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown copyright 87175M)



Key map 2: Finds in the area surrounding Ewell village. (Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey 1:10000 scale map with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown copyright 87175M)

9 Cedar Keys, Epsom Road Approximately TQ 2183 6211
 Two 1st century coins found in garden (Lowther 1949, 43). Pottery, probably 1st century, found in garden in 1965 (Jenkins file). (SMR 1136)

10 107 Tonstall Road, Epsom TQ 2046 6212 (2)
 Six 4th century coins found in garden in 1947. (SMR 1168)

11 Purberry Shot, Epsom Road Centred TQ 2185 6214
 Excavation 1939: Mesolithic, Neolithic, Bronze Age flints; Early Iron Age pottery; Iron Age/Romano-British transition pottery, pebble flooring of huts, indications of iron working; well

containing mainly late 1st century pottery in the filling and sealed by mid-2nd century road; two 1st century coins, stratified; one 3rd century coin, unstratified (Lowther 1949). (SMR 1136)

Road seen in sewage trenches in The Kingsway south of Purberry Shot (Pemberton 1987, 119).

12 *10 Purberry Grove* TQ 2180 6217

Rubbish pit found in 1948 containing 3rd century pottery and one 3rd century coin (Lowther 1949, 46). (SMR 1136)

13 *6 St Norman's Way* TQ 2247 6219

One 3rd century coin found in garden before 1956. (SMR 1142)

14 *27 Epsom Road* TQ 2195 6220

In garden in 1964 were found several areas of rammed chalk with flints, one containing one 3rd century coin, and scattered pottery sherds (Jenkins file). (SMR 1161)

15 *Staneway House/Pit House, Mongers Lane* Centred TQ 2212 6222

Traces of eight shafts found in chalk pit in 1847, four shafts varying between 0.6m and 1.2m diameter and between 4m and 12m deep thoroughly examined (Diamond 1847). Two further shafts each approximately 1m diameter and 6m surviving depth found and examined in 1860 (Warne 1861). Finds from the shafts included animal bones and other organic matter, metal objects and pottery. A large part of the pottery from these shafts is late 1st century (Lowther 1949, 36).

Numbers of coins have been found in the immediate neighbourhood, though most find spots were not detailed: two 1st century, two 2nd century, two 3rd century, one 4th century and 'many small brass coins of a late period' (Diamond 1847, 455); 'coins' (and pottery) found in digging house foundations in 1866 (Bidder 1934, 15); one 3rd century coin in garden before 1966.

(SMR 1137)

16 *Persfield, Epsom Road* Centred TQ 2192 6223

Surface finds recovered during housing development in 1962 included building materials (wattle and daub, mortar, roof tiles, bricks, window glass), 1st-4th century pottery (with 1st-2nd century concentration), nail cleaner, one 3rd century coin; Purberry Shot spur road not observed (Jenkins file). (SMR 1135)

17 *18 Conaways Close* TQ 2245 6223

One 4th century coin found in garden in 1962. (SMR 2552)

18 *3 Conaways Close* Centred TQ 2240 6224

One 3rd century coin, one 4th century coin (precise find spots detailed) and general scatter of pottery found in garden in 1960 and 1961 (Jenkins file). (SMR 1150)

19 *66 Cheam Road* TQ 2242 6227

One 4th century coin found in garden in 1965. (SMR 1158)

20 *Chalkpit House, Mongers Lane* TQ 2213 6229

One 3rd century coin found in old chalkpit in 1964. (SMR 1160)

21 *Tayles Hill* Area around TQ 2175 6230

Pottery, a buckle, a lead seal, dividers and a stylus found by T Walls pre-1963 (Jenkins file). (SMR 1145)

Excavation 1948: well preserved road, similar in construction to Purberry Shot spur road, encountered on north side of site (SyAS 1950, xiii).

22 *Staneway House, Cheam Road* TQ 2226 6230

Roman pottery and coins found when digging foundations in 1866. (SMR 2578)

23 *Ewell House, The Grove* TQ 2190 6232

Builder's trenches in 1932 revealed pottery and roofing tiles (Willis 1933).

Excavation 1934: V-shaped ditch, dated to second half of 3rd century, proved over distance of about 30m, originally about 3m wide × 1.5m deep; filling contained Early Iron Age pottery, 2nd–3rd century pottery and Roman brick with large proportion of wasters; ditch sealed by Saxon layers (Lowther 1935, 17–28). (SMR 2532)

One 3rd century coin, one 4th century coin found in garden 'many years' before 1966. (SMR 1162).

24 *Staneway Centred* TQ 2205 6234

Excavation 1934: trial trench located Stane Street in the Old Fair Field (now Staneway); four further trenches established the line between TQ 22026 62256 and TQ 22055 62410; postholes of timber structure found cut into chalk underlying road; fragments of brick, roof tile and flue tile, stratified; one 3rd century coin, one 4th century coin, pottery fragments, unstratified (Lowther 1935, 29–32; Winbolt 1936, 164–8, 229). (SMR 1133)

Further trench in garden fronting Reigate Road opposite Fair Field in 1935 also revealed road; 2nd century pottery, stratified and unstratified (Lowther 1936; Winbolt 1936, 168).

25 *Seymour's Nursery* TQ 2234 6234

Shaft or well about 4m deep located and dug out by treasure hunters prior to 1991 (Bird *et al* 1992, 148).

26 *16 Staneway* TQ 2202 6240

One 3rd century coin found in garden before 1946 (Frere 1946). (SMR 1141)

27 *14 Staneway* TQ 2204 6240

'Roman coins' found in garden before 1963. (SMR 1141)

28 *26 Cheam Road* TQ 2213 6240

One 4th century coin found in garden before 1963. (SMR 1144)

29 *82 and 84 High Street Centred* TQ 2195 6242

Builder's trenches in 1965 revealed pottery and building material. (SMR 1159)

30 *Hatch Furlong, Ewell By-pass Centred* TQ 2230 6243

One 3rd century coin and two probable 3rd century coins found on nursery land in 1965. Precise find spots detailed. (SMR 1170, 2580, 2581)

Two 4th century coins found with metal detector *c* 1990. (SMR 3898)

31 *Ewell Grove School grounds, West Street Centred* TQ 2193 6244

Excavation 1940 (trial trenches between air raid shelters): U-shaped ditch, dated to 1st century, proved over distance of about 30m, greatest depth about 1.5m; other ground features (channel, pit); ditch filling contained mainly 1st–3rd century pottery but included animal bones, metal objects and a fragment of glass (Frere 1943a). (SMR 1129)

Excavation 1970, 1971 (large-scale, prior to school extension): ditch relocated, about 3m wide × 1m deep; other ground features (channel, bank, posthole); 2nd–4th century pottery, animal bones (Pemberton 1987, 4–42; NAS 1991, 2–4).

Mesolithic flints found by Frere and Pemberton; Bronze Age pottery and other objects found by Pemberton.

32 *Ewell House, The Grove* TQ 2187 6245

Two Roman coins found in garden 'many years ago'. One was 4th century. (SMR 1162)

33 *72 High Street (formerly Lord Nelson Public House)* Centred TQ 2197 6245

Re-development in 1964–6 revealed two pits, one with 1st and 2nd century pottery and animal bones, the other with 1st and 3rd century pottery, and both with shells. Spoil heaps produced 1st–4th century pottery (with 1st–2nd century concentration), building material (mainly daub with wattle impressions), one 2nd century coin, one unidentifiable coin; brooch (1st–2nd century type) found nearby (Jenkins file). (SMR 1148)

34 *Grove Cottage, Cheam Road* TQ 2205 6245

Excavation 1972: Stane Street located, alignment somewhat east of line suggested at Staneway; Purberry Shot spur road located; building materials (mortared flints, roof tiles, flue tile), pottery ranging from Iron Age/Romano-British transition to 4th century (with 3rd–4th century concentration), metal objects, animal bones (Pemberton 1987, 85–92, 97; NAS 1991, 8–10).

35 *56 and 58 High Street* TQ 2199 6249

Builder's trenches in 1965 revealed 2nd–4th century pottery and building materials including flue tile fragments (Jenkins file). (SMR 1164)

36 *46–50 High Street (formerly Goodship and Saunders)* Centred TQ 2200 6253

Small excavation after site had been cleared, and observation and minor excavations during each phase of the preparation of foundation trenches, during development commencing July 1994. Wide range of pottery types, including samian. Coins: one 2nd century, one 3rd century, two 4th century. Dress accessories of copper alloy and bone. Building materials included box flue tile (Hayman & Huson 1995).

37 *Ewell Grove School, West Street* TQ 2196 6255

Globular vessel found in preparing for the foundations of the school 'now building' (Warne 1861, 311).

One 1st century coin found before 1934 (Winbolt 1936, 225, 231).

38 *West Street* TQ 2199 6258

One 4th century coin found before 1934 (Winbolt 1936, 226, 231).

39 *32 High Street (known as Williams Newsagents)* Centred TQ 2200 6258

Excavations in garden at rear of shop at end of 1994 and beginning of 1995 revealed a large storage pit. The back filling contained coins, fragments of pottery and small pieces of building materials, as well as worked flints, suggesting occupation of the area from the Mesolithic to the end of the Roman period. Two of the coins were 4th century and two were unidentifiable (Brooks 1996a).

40 *Cheam Road* TQ 2209 6259

Roman pottery turned up in writer's garden 'at every digging'. (Warne 1861, 311).

41 *King William IV Site* Centred TQ 2207 6260

Extensive excavations over the period 1967–79 involving 26 trenches in main area plus ancillary investigations. Romano-British material throughout period from AD 70 to 4th century. Fragments of buildings and many wells and pits; wide range of pottery, also glass, metal and bone artefacts. Thirty coins, large proportion of which date from period AD 69–275, plus hoard of 120 3rd century coins in bronze flagon.

Non-Romano-British material from Neolithic, Bronze and Iron Ages, also Saxon, medieval, Tudor, early post-medieval and modern periods. See Orton 1997 (this volume 89–122).

42 *2-16 West Street* Centred TQ 2193 6261

Excavation 1985: cobbled surface, dated to late 2nd century; sealed by later Roman layer; 1st-4th century pottery, roof tiles, floor or pilae tiles, glass tessera, iron nail, bone pin, animal bones (Poulton & O'Connell 1987, 119-24). (SMR 3056)

43 *24/26 High Street* TQ 2199 6262

Excavation 1982: flint rubble foundations, post-pad of roof tiles (Nelson 1983). (SMR 3057)

44 *2 Church Street* TQ 2203 6262

Excavation 1982: cobbled surface, material beneath included pottery apparently later than accepted date of Stane Street (Nelson 1983). (SMR 3058)

45 *Glyn Close Area* around TQ 2212 6265

Excavation 1952: unsuccessful attempt to locate Stane Street discovered rubbish pit containing 4th century pottery and animal bones (SyAS 1954, xxvii; Jenkins file). (SMR 1131)

46 *37, 39 and 41 Aragon Avenue* Centred TQ 2260 6265

Builder's trench in 1959 revealed Iron Age material in ditch or pit and 1st-2nd century pottery (Morris 1962). (SMR 2570)

47 *34 Station Avenue, West Ewell* TQ 2144 6266 (2)

One 4th century coin found in garden in 1964. (SMR 1166)

48 *Bourne Hall* Centred TQ 2183 6266

Excavation 1963: ditches containing Romano-British pottery traced, one for distance of about 20m, another for distance of about 10m (Nail [nd]; Nail 1980). (SMR 1147)

49 *Spring House, Spring Street* TQ 2189 6266

One 1st century coin found in 1933 (Winbolt 1936, 225). Roman well found in 1990 (Nelson 1991).

50 *Market Parade, High Street* Centred TQ 2197 6267

Foundations of Roman building found under pavement before 1950 (Jenkins file). (SMR 1130)

51 *7 High Street* TQ 2199 6267

Excavation 1963: pottery, one 1st century coin (Nail 1963). (SMR 1149)

52 *Bourne Hall* TQ 2183 6270

2nd century cremation burial with associated pottery found in 1963 (Nail [nd]; Nail 1980). (SMR 1147)

Relatively complete 2nd century vessel found together with pottery and glass fragments at unrecorded location within grounds (Malden 1913, 148). The vessel may form part of a burial group (Cotton 1979). (SMR 1132)

53 *Glyn House, Church Street* TQ 2199 6272

1st-4th century pottery found over whole area of grounds during period 1959-63 with concentration at stated NGR; one 2nd century coin (Winbolt 1936, 225), one 4th century coin. (SMR 1134)

54 *Glyn House Pond* Centred TQ 2196 6276

Fragments of Romano-British coarse pottery, piece of box flue tile found in excavations in 1992 (Abdy 1992, 4-5).

- 55 *Church Street* TQ 2215 6276
Excavation *c* 1933 revealed a piece of Roman road (Bidder 1934, 15).
- 56 *Bourne Hall Lake* TQ 2192 6277
Archaeological investigations in 1991 yielded sherds of Romano-British pottery and 38 coins dating from 1st–3rd centuries in area of lake presumed to be site of original natural pond. Range of dates suggests religious or casual deposition (Harte & Waterhouse, 1992).
- 57 *Bourne Hall* TQ 2177 6279
Concentration of 1st–2nd century pottery found during period 1959–63; undated building foundations encountered when ground was ploughed (Jenkins file). (SMR 2540)
- 58 *Glyn House, Church Street* TQ 2205 6279
Human remains found 1906, undated; here a conical mound, lying approximately on the line of an old trackway, revealed Romano-British pottery (not detailed), when partially dug away. (SMR 1140)
- 59 *Glyn House, Church Street* TQ 2210 6281
Excavation 1953: rubbish pit excavated to depth of approximately 3m without reaching bottom; pottery (not detailed), five 4th century coins; 1st–2nd century bronze mask and one 4th century coin found nearby (Jenkins file). (SMR 1134)
- 60 *Holman Court, Church Street* TQ 2214 6281
Tiled Roman floor discovered during roadworks in 1929; one 4th century coin and one coin of uncertain date found nearby in 1933. (SMR 1146)
- 61 *Church Street Centred* TQ 2213 6283
Six coins dating from 1st–4th centuries found during 1933 when trenches were dug to establish line of Stane Street. (SMR 2571)
- 62 *St Mary's No 3 Churchyard* TQ 2211 6284
Rubbish pit found in 1934 at unstated location contained pottery and animal bones; one 1st century coin, two 3rd century coins, and one 4th century coin found between 1933 and 1936 at various locations (Winbolt 1936, 225–7). Re-opened grave in 1963 revealed large quantity of pottery and part of pit at stated NGR; one 4th century coin found nearby. (SMR 1139)
- 63 *16 Church Street Centred* TQ 2213 6286
Two 4th century coins found in garden in 1962. Precise find spots detailed. (SMR 1163)
- 64 *Ewell By-pass* TQ 2234 6287
Samian and quern fragments found during construction of air raid shelters in 1939. (SMR 1143)
- 65 *St Mary's No 2 Churchyard* TQ 2207 6288
One 4th century coin found by sexton in 1965. (SMR 1116)
- 66 *Church Street* TQ 2211 6288
Builder's trench in 1965 revealed rubbish pit containing pottery. (SMR 1157)
- 67 *Barn House, Church Street* TQ 2213 6288
Excavation and site watching 1982: some pottery sherds, no features (Nelson 1983). (SMR 3059)
- 68 *Church Street* TQ 2214 6290
Builder's trenches in 1965 revealed part of Stane Street, 1st–2nd century pottery, flue tile fragment, bronze object identified as probable Roman harness (Jenkins file). (SMR 1157)

69 *The Church Field (St Mary's Meadow)* TQ 2215 6294

Excavation 1976–8: Stane Street located; flint floor; building material; open-air hearth; pit; 1st century pottery; postholes (Pemberton 1987, 117; NAS 1977; Temple 1978); late 2nd–early 3rd century intaglio seal (Goodman 1979); 34 coins (1st–4th century) (Bourne Hall Museum List).

High readings along suspected alignment of Stane Street given by resistivity survey between TQ 22137 62915 and TQ 22175 62975 (Barfoot *et al* 1974).

70 *Hogsmill River* TQ 218 630

One 4th century coin found in dredging river *c* 1989. (SMR 4048)

(TQ 21846300 is a more likely location).

71 *St Mary's No 4 Churchyard Area* around TQ 2220 6300

One 3rd century coin found near lych gate in 1933, 'grey Roman rims' found in churchyard in 1936 (Winbolt 1936, 226–7). (SMR 1138)

One 3rd century coin found during grave digging — 'Roman pottery occurs frequently in this graveyard' (Frere 1943b, 154). (SMR 1138)

Excavation 1952 exposed Stane Street and late 1st century ditch (SyAS 1954, xxvii; Lowther file). (SMR 1138)

Grave digging in 1959 exposed part of flint floor with embedded flue and flue tiles, pottery, glass fragments, roof tile fragments, nails, animal bones (Likeman 1960, 102). (SMR 1138)

Grave digging in 1961 exposed furnace pit adjoining the flint floor found in 1959, 1st–2nd century pottery, quernstone fragments, indications of ditches, one 3rd century coin, one 4th century coin. (SMR 1138)

Grave digging in September 1995 exposed part of flint floor and many sherds of coarse pottery mostly of Alice Holt type. Also fragment of strainer of Hoo type fabric with zoomorphic design (Brooks 1996b).

72 *St Mary's No 4 Churchyard* TQ 2220 6303

Excavation 1971: Stane Street located with foundations of two buildings; building 1 with associated pavement and pit dated to 1st–2nd century by pottery; scatter of abraded 3rd century pottery indicated some local activity; building 2 dated to 4th century by pottery; animal bones, whetstones, metal objects (Pemberton 1973a, 1–26). (SMR 1171)

Excavations 1974–5: Stane Street located with spur road or yard; 2nd–3rd century pottery, animal bones, two 1st century coins, one 2nd century coin, 23 3rd century coins, thirteen 4th century coins (Pemberton 1987, 55–83; NAS 1991, 4–8).

73 *Woodgate, London Road* TQ 2219 6305

Excavation 1976 in garden in advance of development revealed scatter of 1st–4th century pottery, seven coins and fragments of metal. No evidence of structures (Myatt-Price 1995).

74 *Castle Parade, Ewell By-pass* Centred TQ 2225 6310

Stane Street encountered during construction of row of shops in 1934, both in foundation trench at rear and stanchion pit at front; further trace observed in construction works on opposite side of by-pass; one 1st century coin (Lowther 1935, 32–3).

2nd century pottery and three brooches (one each of 1st, 2nd and 3rd century) found in 1955 in general area during pipe-laying operations (Pemberton 1987, 108, 111–12).

Three 3rd century and two 4th century coins found over a period and donated in 1956. (SMR 1154)

75 *Cherry Orchard Farm* TQ 2247 6313

4th century coin found in field in 1964. (SMR 1169)

76 *The Lower Mill* TQ 2177 6322 (2)

1st century coin found in garden (Stephenson 1913, 135). (SMR 1093)

77 *Ewell Park* TQ 2241 6334 (2)

Stane Street encountered, presumably in gardening or landscaping activities (Winbolt 1936, 171–2).

78 *Ewell Court Area* around TQ 2120.6360 (2)

Pottery, some indicated as 2nd century, found on allotments. (SMR 2564)

79 *London Road Plantation* TQ 2264 6372 (2)

Trench 90m long × 7.5m wide dug across raised mound on presumed alignment of Stane Street; two small sherds of Roman coarseware were the only objects found in the filling, which stands on silty layer indicative of waterlogged ground; mound presumed to be core of the causeway that carried Stane Street across this ground (Lowther 1936, 143–6). (SMR 2563)

3.3 FINDS FROM UNSPECIFIED SITES

80 Three 4th century coins found in a garden (Manning & Bray 1804, 1, 666).

81 One 1st century coin, three 2nd century coins, seven 3rd century coins, and fifteen 4th century coins collected throughout Ewell (Stephenson 1913, 135–8).

82 Barbaric imitations of Roman coins found before 1934 somewhere in West Street (Winbolt 1936, 226).

83 1st century pottery found in 1937 during digging of cable trench somewhere in Church Street (Lowther 1949, 39–40).

84 Pottery at Guildford Museum; 1st century urn donated in 1930 (SMR 1155); 1st century beaker donated in 1957 (SMR 1156).

85 Deep sewer trenches dug in 1957 somewhere in Kingston Road revealed 1st–4th century pottery and building materials (Lowther file).

86 Probable mid-2nd century flagon from unknown building site identified at Guildford museum (Bird 1989, 217–8). (SMR 4249)

87 2nd century coin found with metal detector somewhere in Nonsuch Park in 1993. (SMR 3903)

88 4th century coin found with metal detector somewhere in Ewell in 1994. (SMR 4142)

89 2nd century pottery found in 1959 in and around foundation trenches for new buildings 'behind Castle Avenue' (NEAS 1960).

4 Stane Street

4.1 PURPOSE, HISTORY AND ALIGNMENTS

The purpose, history and alignments of Stane Street have been thoroughly dealt with by Margary (1948) following Winbolt (1936). To quote Margary, 'The road connects Chichester . . . Noviomagus, the tribal capital of Roman Sussex . . . with London by the most direct route that the lie of the land allows; it is an extremely good example of the skill and thoroughness with which these roads were planned by the Roman engineers to secure the shortest route, with the greatest avoidance of natural obstacles.'

A straight line from Roman London Bridge (which was not far from the present bridge) to Chichester passes through Ewell village within 100m or so of the springs, and Stane Street is known to have followed this alignment as far as Ewell. In relation to Ewell it is known as the northern alignment. The road passes through the southern part of the village on a different alignment (the southern alignment), and there is a further deviation on the border with Epsom which puts the road on an alignment that takes it across the river Mole at Burford Bridge, and through the North Downs.

Ewell is 21km from London. Given the abundant water supply and the suitability of the area for a settlement, it would have been a good choice for use as a posting station, although so far there is no hard evidence that it was.

4.2 SIGHTINGS

A number of the reports that are summarized in the gazetteer claim sightings of Stane Street, the evidence offered being stronger for some sites than for others. Sites where there seems little doubt that the Roman road was found are listed below. Where map references were not given in the original reports they have been derived where possible from site plans or descriptions.

24 *Staneway*

TQ 22026 62256 to 22055 62410 (based on plan in Lowther 1935). During excavations in the Old Fair Field by Lowther and Winbolt in 1934, it was possible to examine sections through the road over a 150m length.

TQ 22020 62218. In 1935, it was proved also cutting through the western angle of the Mongers Lane/Reigate Road crossing.

69 *The Church Field (St. Mary's Meadow)*

TQ 22140 62920 (F Pemberton pers comm). A section across the road was taken during excavations by Pemberton in 1976–8.

TQ 22137 62915 to TQ 22175 62975. A resistivity survey by Barfoot, Temple and Pemberton in 1974 gave indications of the road over a length of approximately 70m extending into the adjacent churchyard.

71 and 72 *St. Mary's No 4 Churchyard*

TQ 22205 63020. The road was found 'in a well preserved state' in 1952, but the position was not specified. A section across the road was taken during the 1971 excavations by Pemberton.

TQ 22206 63028 (F Pemberton pers comm). A further section was taken during the 1974–5 excavations by Pemberton.

74 *Castle Parade*

TQ 22238 63060, TQ 22255 63087, TQ 22273 63115. The road was found by Lowther in foundation trenches dug in 1934.

79 *London Road Plantation*

TQ 2264 6372 (approximate centre point). A section was taken by Lowther across the agger that was visible for a length of 90m. The agger runs from approximately TQ 2262 6368 to 2266 6375.

4.3 STANE STREET ON THE MAPS

The course of Stane Street is indicated on the maps by a broken line and has been based on the map references given in 4.2 and the route postulated by Margary (after Winbolt and Lowther). However, between the positive sightings on the Old Fair Field (site 24, Staneway) and the Church Field (St Mary's Meadow) (site 69) there has to be doubt about the route. This is mainly

because it was not found on the King William IV site (41), through which the southern alignment would pass if it were extended in a straight line to intersect the northern alignment. Therefore the position of the road in the area in question has to be regarded as unproven until further work can be done.

The location on figures 1 and 2 of the sites on which foundations of buildings or substantial amounts of building material have been found suggests the possibility that the northern alignment was extended to pass through part of the built-up area before deviating to the east to join the southern alignment.

This arrangement would in fact be compatible with Winbolt's concept of a settlement within a rectangular enclosure entered by the road in the centre of the south-east side (ie at about the High Street/West Street/Church Street crossroads) and which left at an angle from the north-east side. However, it has to be borne in mind that when Winbolt put his idea forward in 1936 far less information was available on the location of Roman sites in Ewell. The large number now known which are outside his settlement must cast doubts on his boundaries.

Furthermore, the 2nd century cremation burial found at site 52 in 1963 comes within Winbolt's 'settlement', and this is an additional cause for doubt, since such burials would not have been allowed within a settlement. The only other sites at which burials were found, 1, 3 and 6, are well away from the probable boundaries of a settlement, and therefore do not help when it comes to setting the boundaries.

5 Roman coins

Many hundreds of coins are known to have been found in Ewell: there are references to more than 400 of them in this Gazetteer. In addition to the large quantities recovered during excavations, many have been casually picked up in gardens. Numerous finds will have been unrecorded. Sites yielding large numbers of coins have included the following:

- 41 King William IV (1967-79) 150 including c 120 from a hoard
(see Orton 1997, this volume, 104-105)
- 72 St Mary's No 4 Churchyard (1974-5) 39
- 69 The Church Field (St Mary's Meadow) (1976-8) 34
- 56 Bourne Hall Lake (1991) 38

References to isolated finds are scattered throughout the Surrey Archaeological Society's *Collections* and local publications. The present Gazetteer includes some of these but does not attempt to provide a comprehensive account of coins found in Ewell. So far, no one has compiled a definitive detailed list of coins. A provisional list of 145 coins put together by Jeremy Harte, Curator of Bourne Hall Museum, and Peggy Bedwell of the Nonsuch Antiquarian Society gives a distribution of the coins across Reece's periods (Reece 1972) as in table 1.

The list includes coins found in St Mary's No 4 Churchyard (site 72) in 1974-5, the Church Field (St Mary's Meadow, site 69) in 1976-8, Bourne Hall Lake (site 56) in 1991 and coins from a variety of other published sources. Coins from the King William IV excavations in 1976-9 (site 41) have not been included, as they are detailed in Clive Orton's report in this volume.

6 Conclusion

Since the work of Diamond and Warne around the middle of the 19th century much has been learned about Roman Ewell. Perhaps the two most significant excavations on the basis of published reports were those in the Old Fair Field (Staneway, 24) in 1934, and the King William IV site (41) in 1967-79. In the former, clear evidence of Stane Street was found over a length of 150m. In the King William IV excavation Stane Street was not found as expected, but fragments of buildings, many wells and pits, numerous coins and other artefacts were.

As the area in which the most interesting Roman remains have been found is so built up, the scope for future archaeological work to throw more light on what was clearly an important Romano-British settlement is limited. However, a few potentially interesting accessible sites