

(PRN 10546)

PRN 27950

TRIAL EXCAVATIONS AT JACKSON'S LANE, CARMARTHEN. FEBRUARY 1990.

The Excavations

A 2m wide, 24m long trench was excavated immediately to west of the lower (northern) end of Jackson's Lane, Carmarthen.

The upper deposits, comprising layers 1 and 4, were removed by machine. These deposits consisted of a hardcore and rubble car park surface make-up, 1, of about 0.20m thickness over a 0.50m thick black garden soil, 4. At the northern end of the trench within 1 were traces of brick foundations and concrete floors belonging to the buildings that formerly stood on the site. These remains were very disturbed and were not investigated. A small pit, 3, containing quantities of 19th century pottery and glass, lay beneath the rubble, 1, and cut through layer 4. All the following features and layers were excavated by hand.

Immediately below the garden soil 4 were pits 6, 8, 10, and 15. Pit 6 was the largest of these at about 1.75m diameter, 1m deep. It seems to have been a rubbish pit of the late 17 - 18th century, and contained sherds of fine quality Delft ware and broken onion-shaped wine bottles. Pits 8 and 10 were quite shallow, 0.34 and 0.10m deep respectively, with fills and finds of little diagnostic value. The lower portion of pit 3 cut the top fill of pit 15. The latter had clearly functioned as a cesspit or soak-away as a drain led into the pit from the west. This pit was 1.60m in diameter and 0.65m deep and judging from the finds from its fill was of 19th century date, perhaps associated with the buildings that formerly stood on the site.

The shallow pit 10 cut an elongated soil filled pit or trench, 13. No function can be ascribed to this feature, though the pottery from it would seem to indicate that it silted-up or was back-filled in the 16th-17th century. This pit/trench cut a very large pit, 17. This feature was 3m wide and at least 2m long with vertical sides, it was not bottomed, but was over 1.60m deep. The character of this pit suggests that it had been a well, and the subsoil nature of its lowest excavated fill, 30, indicates that it had been deliberately back-filled. Above 30, layer 16 seems to represent natural silting of the pit. A single sherd of Samian ware and Medieval body sherd were found in layer 30. Large quantities of Medieval pottery were discovered in layer 16.

Layer 18, 21, 22, cut by pits 15 and 13, lay at the northern end of the excavation trench. This layer was excavated in spits, hence the three context numbers, but it essentially consisted of a soil horizon that had accumulated over a considerable period of time. This interpretation is confirmed by stratigraphic location of pit 20. This pit did not become apparent until the removal of the upper spit, 18, but it was found to cut through the lower spits, 21, 22. The soil 18, 21, 22 filled a slight hollow, 34, scooped out of the surface of the subsoil. Large quantities of 14th-15th century pottery were found in the soil 18, 21, 22 and in the pit 20.

The soil horizon 18, 21, 22 had formed over a deposit of gravel with clay and charcoal lenses. This deposit was assigned the context numbers 23-6,

31. It is apparent from the sections that this layer was continuing to increase in thickness at the northern end of the excavations. Along the eastern side of the excavations the gravel filled a elongated, shallow pit. A single sherd of Medieval pottery was found in the upper levels of the gravel deposit.

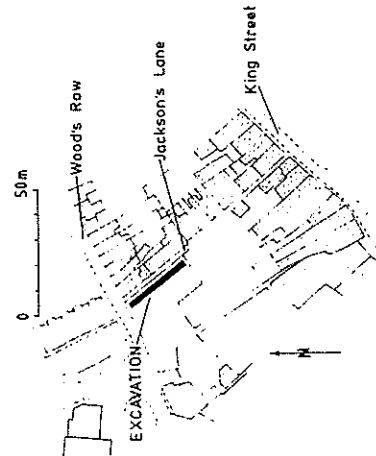
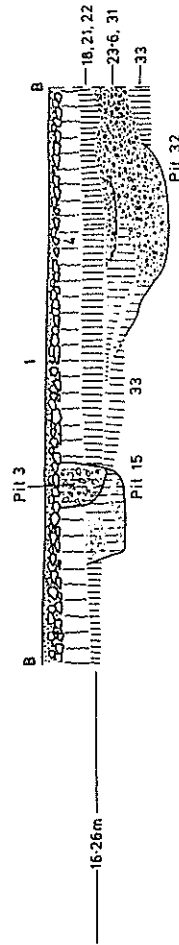
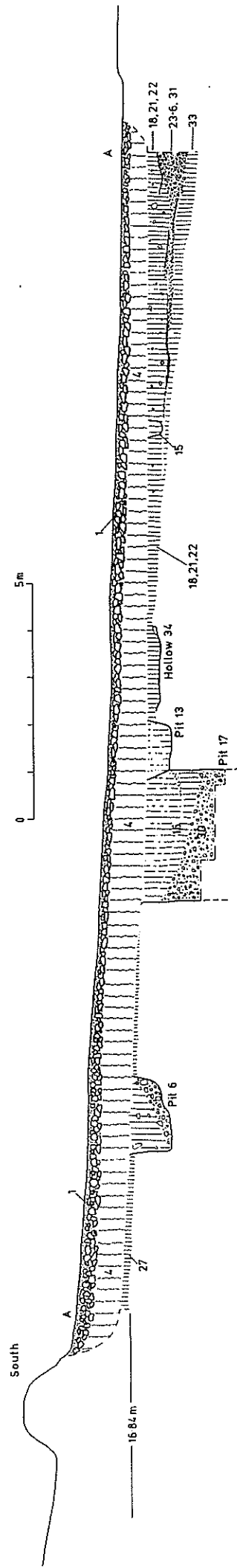
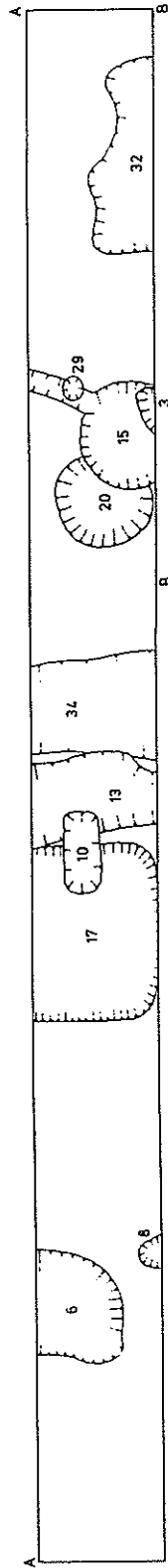
A smooth, silty-loam buried soil, 33, lay beneath the gravel deposit 23-6, 31. This soil was very distinct below the gravel, less so where the gravel thinned out; eventually, to the south, it merged with the soil horizon 18, 21, 22.

After the removal of the buried soil, a small, circular post-hole was discovered cut into the subsoil.

Interpretation

The gravel 23-6, 31 would seem to be part of a much larger layer. It seems likely that the excavations touched upon the southern edge of a gravel bank/causeway that had been constructed for the road on which Wood's Row now stands. A soil, 18, 21, 22, then formed - washed down the gentle slope - against the southern side of the bank. On the basis of the pottery found in the soil, it is possible to suggest a 14th or 15th century date for the construction of the gravel bank.

Few interpretative comments are offered for the other features on the site. The only item of interest is the possible well which appears to have been back-filled in the later Medieval period.



CARMARTHEN · JACKSONS LANE · plan and sections