



Newsheet of the Northamptonshire Archaeological Society

Northamptonshire
County Council

19 MAR 1999

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
HERITAGE

RICHARD HOLLOWELL 1916-1998

The death occurred on November 26th, at the age of 82, of Richard Hollowell, a well known market gardener and field archaeologist. Dick Hollowell, as he was known to his friends, was one of the first modern field archaeologist in the county and in the 1950's and 60's revolutionised our knowledge of the archaeology of the region at that time.

He lived in Cogenhoe and was especially interested in the parishes to the east of Northampton. He walked the ploughed fields looking for pottery or other signs of ancient settlement, and in a booklet published in 1971 he listed no fewer than 47 sites found on the ground or photographed from the air in the parishes of Brafield, Cogenhoe and Little Houghton alone. In the 1960's, he became particularly interested in aerial survey and photographed archaeological sites all over the county, much of this work being at his own expense. His pioneering work was much appreciated by Professor Hawkes at the Institute of Archaeology in Oxford, where he gave regular accounts of his latest fieldwork.

Dick Hollowell was instrumental in forming the Upper Nene Archaeological Society, and in 1966 helped to call an inaugural meeting to launch the Federation of Northamptonshire Archaeological Societies. This body subsequently became the Northamptonshire Archaeological Society of which he was a vice president for 25 years. Dick was a parish councillor and had many interests apart from archaeology. He had been in poor health since 1992.

Dennis Jackson

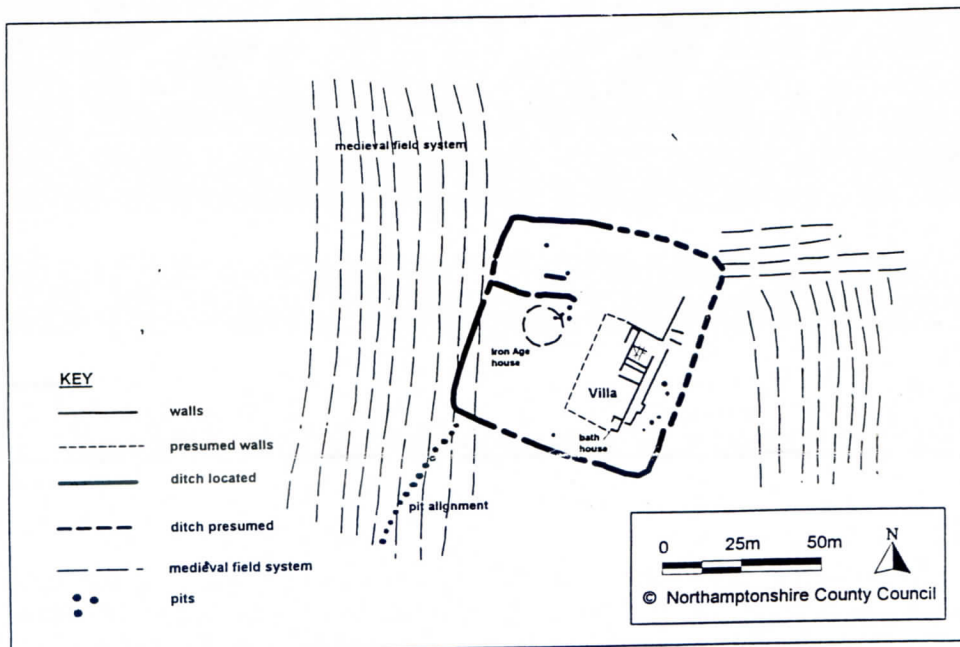
A ROMAN VILLA DISCOVERED AT WOOTTON

The volunteer network scheme, which has now been running for 5 years, proved its worth in January with discovery of a previously unknown Roman villa in the middle of a housing development. As soon as the discovery was made, the developers agreed to suspend work in the area so that the site could be recorded. A team of 25 volunteers, many of whom were NAS members, spent the weekend working with professional archaeologists from the County Council. Financial assistance from English Heritage allowed a team from the Northamptonshire Archaeology Unit to complete the cleaning and recording of the site and carry out a geophysical survey of the surrounding area.

A large area of the stone walls of the main building were uncovered revealing a hypocaust at one end which provided underfloor heating for the principal living room. At the other end of the building a smaller hypocaust was uncovered which heated the concrete floor of a sunken bath. Pottery from the site indicates that the villa was occupied between the 2nd and 4th centuries.

Investigation around the building has shown that it stood within a rectangular enclosure formed by a timber palisade and a ditch. In addition, pits, ditches and a roundhouse dating from the late Iron Age (1st century BC) have been found (See plan).

The site has now been reburied to protect it from weathering and accidental damage. In the longer term, the developers are in discussion with Northampton Borough Council and it is hoped that the development plans will be amended so that the villa remains will be preserved.



NAS MEMBERS ON EXCAVATIONS

The involvement of NAS members on the excavation of the Wootton villa came about by a number of phone calls being made from those in the know to those known to be interested. While this use of the old grape vine proved remarkably effective, it is possible that some of the newer members who would have liked to participate, may have been overlooked. Given that the Society is already committed to future excavations within the county, it would be useful to have a list of all members who would like to be involved. Therefore, attached to this newsletter is an Excavation Volunteer Form. If you would like to take part in any future excavations (no previous experience necessary) please fill it in and return it to :- Martin Tingle, The Dial House, High St, Creaton, Northants, NN6 8NA.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE HERITAGE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AXED

Despite pleas from numerous quarters, including the NAS, Northamptonshire County Council has decided to close the Education Department of Northamptonshire Heritage. This is a deplorable decision considering the excellent work for which the education department has been responsible in the past, particularly with the Young Archaeologist Club. It may be too late to save the department however, with council elections in prospect, NAS members are invited to express their displeasure by writing to their local councillors

ARTICLES WANTED FOR NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY

1999 may include a total eclipse and the end of the second millennium, but it also marks the 25th anniversary of the publication of Northamptonshire Archaeology in its current form. To mark this event we are planning a day conference on the development of archaeology in Northamptonshire, to take place in conjunction with the Societys' AGM. We are also hoping to include a special section within the next volume of Northamptonshire Archaeology for Society members to write about any aspect of archaeology that is of general interest. This need not be specifically related to the county or to the distant past. If you would like to contribute a short article, send it to the editor (Dial House, High St, Creaton, NN6 8NA) before the end of April.

A NEW POST IN THE COUNTY

In order to promote the voluntary recording of archaeological finds in the county, Northamptonshire now has a FLO (Finds Liaison Officer) Rhiannon Harte has just taken up the post which forms part of a pilot scheme funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. Details of the scheme are on the enclosed sheet entitled RECORDING OUR PAST. Rhiannon is currently based with Northamptonshire Archaeology at 2 Bolton House, Wootton Hall Park, Northampton NN9 8BE. Tel: 01604 702 493 Fax: 01604 702822

WANTED BY THE UPPER NENE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

The Upper Nene Archaeological Society have a serious shortcoming in their archaeological library. A copy of Volume 14 of Northamptonshire Archaeology. If you have a copy and would be prepared to part with it, phone Roy Friendship-Taylor on 01604 870312