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It has been through the interest and enthusiasm of the late Richard Phillimore in archaeology and local history that Shedfield House and its estate has become one of the most closely studied pieces of historical landscape in Hampshire. Work on Shedfield really started through Richard joining the South Hampshire Archaeological Rescue Group in the early 1970s and from 1973 onwards through the architectural, archaeological and documentary work carried out by myself on a part-time basis when time allowed.

In that year I also began a full-time career as an archaeologist with the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (RCHME). Much of the early architectural work on the house was carried out with friends such as Susan Page (nee Livingstone) and Ian Leith, who was also a colleague at RCHME. In addition to this, Susan and I spent many days working through the marvellous documents in the Hampshire Record Office tracing the history of the house and estate back to the 13th century and beyond. We are extremely grateful for all the help and encouragement given by the staff of the Record Office in those early days, particularly Miss Margaret Cash and her Deputy Archivist Dr Roger Davey.

During the 1950s and 60s, Shedfield became well known amongst archaeologists as a place where evidence of Mesolithic (Middle Stone Age/5000 – 8000BC) occupations had been found (*around holes 2 and 3 on Meon course*). It was through the work of experts such as Rankin and J.C. Draper, originally working on the Surrey heathlands, that large numbers of flint implements were recorded around the old sandpits near Sandy Lane, north of Shedfield House. Most of these tools were the tiny knives known as microliths together with the waste material associated with their manufacture. The Shedfield microliths are seen as quite distinct in character from those found in other areas.

Since 1973 it has also been possibly through Richard Phillimore's interest to carry out a series of archaeological excavations to investigate crucial aspects of the history of the estate. Some of these had to be carried out under rescue conditions in advance of bulldozers clearing topsoil and subsoil in the two phases of developing the Meon Valley Golf Course in 1975 and 1989. The course now covers much of the old farmland of the estate but at least this part of south Hampshire has been saved from the urban sprawl of Solent City which threatened to engulf the area between Portsmouth and Southampton.

But in the end it was the golf course that encouraged two important archaeological investigations into two of the earliest phases of Shedfield's history. In 1989 a series of late prehistoric (1500-2000BC) burnt mounds were discovered and investigated in Birlings Meadow, near Lyons Copse, where an old stream, the Shawford Lake, had once flowed (*near conservation area on 1st hole on Valley course*). These were the residue from the heating of water in troughs by the introduction of burnt flints, in the process of boiling meat for human consumption. These complex sites are known in various parts of West Europe but have been most closely studied in Ireland where they are more frequently found and known as *fulachta fiadh*. There it has been shown that they were used for a variety of other purposes such as boiling as well as cooking.

To the E of the house in the parkland known since the 18th century as the Lawn, we were able to carry out a rescue excavation of the main Winchester (Venta Belgarum) to Chichester (Noviomagus Regnensium) Roman road which has been known for some years to cross in a straight line from N to S. (*Evidence of Roman road can still be seen on surface crossing 16th and 17th fairways on Meon course*) This work took place in May 1973 with help from G Moore and L Tavender. This provided a magnificent section through the road's 11 metre width and showed that it was made up of a variety of layers representing continued repair from the 1st century AD onwards and probably well into the early medieval period, when it was known as Broadstreet. This information was brought together with a comprehensive study of other sections of the road (Route 420 and 421) elsewhere on the Shedfield estate and further afield in Hampshire, and published in 1974: *Route 421 and other Roman Roads in south Hampshire* by G Soffe and D Johnston in *Rescue Archaeology in Hampshire*, 2, 1974.

Although evidence of human occupation during the Roman period at Shedfield had long been suspected, nothing of a substantial nature had been found. However, Prof. J S Phillimore, Richard's uncle, had found Roman pottery in 1910 during the laying out of a grass tennis court in the grounds to the W of the house. In 1984 members from the disbanded South Hampshire Archaeological Rescue Group set about carrying out trial excavations to establish the nature of this occupation. A 1st to 2nd-century ditched enclosure was excavated but little evidence of buildings was found although their presence was known from other traces on the site. The site was rediscovered by Roger Phillimore, Richard's second son and eventually fully published by A G Holmes, who had directed the work, with contributions by G Soffe and N D Balaam: *A Romano-British Site at Shedfield, Hants* in the *Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club Archaeological Society*, 45, 1989.

In 1960 Prof. Barry Cunliffe (*just retired as Professor of Roman Archaeology at Oxford*) had excavated and published a single Roman pottery kiln discovered in Hall Court Wood, Shedfield, some distance to the SW of the house. There was therefore great excitement when no less than a further 23 pottery kilns were found during the second phase of the golf course development (*by 8th hole and 9th fairway on Valley course*); one of

the largest complexes of Roman kilns to be found in southern England. These, like the settlement nearer the house were also found to be grouped in a ditched enclosure, but in this case adjacent to a clay pit. The kilns, which were in a variety of early forms with single and double-opposing-firing chambers, were shown by archaeomagnetic dating carried out by Dr Anthony Clark, to belong to the closing years of the 1st century AD. Indeed, the pots produced and exported from the site were mainly cooking jars with close affinities to late pre-Roman Iron Age forms. Work on this material is still taking place and students at King Alfred's College, Winchester are analysing the pottery. The excavation was directed by myself with help from Victoria Fenner, Dr Malcolm Lyne, Richard Stansbury, Elizabeth Birkett and many others who volunteered to give up over a week of their time in the hot May of 1989.

August 1975 produced the first major archaeological evidence for medieval settlement although we had by that time been able to show Shedfield's long medieval pedigree through our research in the archives at the Record Office. During phase 1 of the golf course SHARG members were able to give valuable assistance on a threatened site found next to a small pond at Hilten Copse (*near the start of the 13th tee on Meon course*). A 5-day deadline was given by the contractors so that again numerous volunteers worked hard in heatwave conditions to rescue the evidence before it was lost. The excavation showed that here had been a small farmstead consisting of a house and other buildings. The walls were originally of wattle and daub, built on flint foundations resting on clay platforms. Pottery was plentiful, much of it representing jugs, pitchers and cooking pots datable to the 12th and 13th centuries. Some pots were elaborately decorated with patterns and green glazing, and appear to have been made at the Laverstock kilns near Salisbury.

But what of Shedfield House itself? It was clear that the building had gone through a considerable number of phases of alteration and enlargement so that it presented an archaeologist's dream. The documentary evidence showed that there was a farmhouse here in the 13th century occupied by the atte Shamele family and that in the early 17th century the house was rebuilt and from that date expanded as successive copyholders became more wealthy and influential. Our early work therefore concentrated on the records.

In 1284 the manor of Droxford, of which Shedfield (*Scida felda*) was a tithing, came into the hands of the Bishopric of Winchester, one of the greatest landowners in western Europe at the time with a bureaucracy to match its status. The main source of information was the bishopric's official records of its central exchequer; these are some of the earliest, most detailed collections of documents of their kind to have survived from the Middle Ages. It was therefore possible to trace the fortunes of the single property which was to become the Shedfield Estate as we knew it to be in the 18th century. Before the 16th century evidence came from the Pipe and Account Rolls, after that time it came from the court books and up to 1733 all records were in abbreviated Latin.

Research into the documentary history in the Hampshire Record Office and other archives produced interesting information about the house for the post-medieval period. For example, in 1552 a Survey and Extent was produced for the whole manor of Droxford including the Shedfield tithing.

Some of the occupiers of the house have also proved to be of considerable interest. Perhaps the earliest of these is Hugh Grantham, in the 16th century, who was involved in a complex paternity suit which is described in graphic detail in the Consistory Court records. The estate was at its largest extent in 1731 under the control of Thomas Missing I, a very prominent local citizen and benefactor. For example, he was Mayor of Portsmouth, MP for Southampton and Chief Victualler to HM's Colonies at Gibraltar and Minorca.

Another interesting individual of the late 18th century was Adam Jellicoe, the ancestor of Admiral the Earl Jellicoe of Jutland, and the present Earl. He became Deputy Paymaster to the Royal Navy and had Shedfield as his country seat between 1767 and 1789. He invested vast amounts of Treasury money entrusted to his keeping in various projects such as the financing of Henry Cort's revolutionary iron foundries at Funtley and Gosport. However, at his death in 1789, probably by suicide, the scandal was exposed to public view and the Navy set up a Commission of Enquiry to investigate the matter. The hearings lasted for over 20 years and Cort and many others were financially ruined.

When the newly married Phillimores purchased the estate in 1866-7, the earliest photographs and reliable records of the house itself were made. From these we can see the appearance of the two main facades, then covered with off-white stucco. The front (W) side of the house gave a rather flat aspect of gables. To modernise the house the Phillimores added a lavatory and bathroom in 1879-81 which projected one gable by a single bay on the front but it was the huge School Room with a Dairy under it which was added to the W end of the N wing which rather unbalanced the facade. These alterations and additions are well documented by the late Victorian photographs which also show the number of servants bedrooms increasing in the attic with more dormer windows appearing on the E side of the main range. Eventually a few years after Augustus' death, his widow Lady Phillimore agreed to go ahead with the last major modifications to the house.

The history of Shedfield House and the estate remains now to be fully published. This remarkable building, through the care of the Phillimore family and in recent years, Richard himself, has acted as a great sleeping repository to a remarkable archive collection. The family and the house have kept that archive and added to it over the past 130 years or so, and now it is safely stowed in other great ships where it will be preserved for study by future generations as well as ourselves. The records became in a way an extension of Shedfield's archaeology and architectural history and it was through Richard's joining of the Hampshire Archives Trust that all three have come together to complete a complex and fascinating tapestry.