

EOAP Test Pit: 48

Location: To the rear of 22 Bedford Street

Date of Excavation:

Area of excavation: 2x2m

Weather conditions: variable – sunshine and showers

Excavators: Olaf Bayer, David Pinches

Report by: David Pinches (edited by Olaf Bayer)

Location and elevation: E452630 N204826 H62.55m OD

Introduction: Test pit 48 was excavated in the back garden of 22 Bedford Street. Bedford Street runs approximately east to west between Warwick Street and Meadow Lane. Number 22 is on a west facing slope overlooking the Thames flood plain (see figure 1). Test pit 48 was one of a series of investigations in the Iffley Fields area of East Oxford undertaken in 2012/13. It is in the approximate area of Mesolithic, Neolithic and Early Bronze Age activity identified at the beginning of the 20th century by Oxford antiquarian Alexander Bell (Nicholas and Hicks 2013). The area was open fields until the construction of Bedford Street at the turn of the 19/20th centuries (see figure 2).

Excavation Summary: Test pit 48 was excavated close to the boundary between 22 Bedford Street and Sisters of the Love of God convent. The area under investigation had previously been under the concrete base for a shed. This had then been removed to have a new shed built and the owners granted permission to excavate the area prior to the new concrete area being constructed. The test pit was roughly 2x2m in extent and by approximately 1m deep. 5 layers were encountered in the test pit.

Results:

Context	Type	Description	Soil sample	Comments/photo
100	layer	Matrix: Loosely compacted, mid-brown-black, clayey-sandy-silt (80%), with occasional sooty lenses. Inclusions: c.10% sub angular stone fragments (c.35mmx35mm). c.1% 20mmx20mm, sub-rounded quartzite. Within sooty lenses frequent charcoal and ash. Finds: post med ceramics, C.B.M, Cu and Fe objects Depth: 50mm Boundaries: distinct with 101 below Excavated: trowel and sieved	N/A	Make up for concrete shed base. Mixed with burning. Photo below shows (100) under excavation (facing south) 
101	layer	Matrix: Dry, light-greyish-brown, sandy (20%)-silt. Inclusions: As layer 100 above but less frequent. Less burning than 100 (5% rather than 10%). Finds: 19 th /20 th Century ceramics, sherd of possible mortaria, CBM,	N/A	Combination of 19 th /20 th century dumping (rubbish from the house?) and garden soil Photo below shows (101) facing south- brick edge of flower bed on southern edge of test pit

		<p>animal bone and glass. Struck flint. A single line of unbounded bricks were encountered cut into layer 101, probably representing the edge of a flower bed.</p> <p>Depth: 123mm</p> <p>Boundaries: Indistinct with 102 below</p> <p>Excavated: Trowel/spade/mattock</p>		
102	layer	<p>Matrix: Damp/compact, mid-orange-brown, sandy-silty-clay.</p> <p>Inclusions: 5% pebbles, CBM and shell <1%. Fine root intrusion <1mm.</p> <p>Finds: Similar to 101 above. Focussed in N/W abundant late 19th/early 20th century finds including 2 spoons, a mustard spoon and a tea spoon. 4 largely intact glass bottles/jars including Boots the Chemist and a jar from North and Co. Ltd. Also frequent animal bone and flower pot fragments. Single stuck flint.</p> <p>Depth: 450mm</p> <p>Boundaries: Indistinct with 103 below</p> <p>Excavated: Trowel and mattock</p>	N/A	<p>Combination of 19th/20th century dumping (rubbish from the house?) and plough soil</p> 
103	layer	<p>Matrix: Firm/wet, light-yellow-brown, slightly sandy silty clay.</p> <p>Inclusions: Similar to 102 above. Rounded quartzite pebbles ranging from 10mmx10mm to 35mmx20mm. Occasional flint gravel and small amounts of fossilised oyster shell.</p> <p>Finds: Much less than 102 above. Modern flower pot, small animal bone (not kitchen waste as in previous layers).</p> <p>Depth: 227mm</p> <p>Boundaries: Indistinct with 104 below, fine root and worm action through out</p> <p>Excavated: Trowel and mattock.</p>	N/A	<p>Pre late 19th century plough soil. Picture below shows (103) exposed in the sondage (facing south)</p> 
104	layer	<p>Matrix: Firm/wet, light-yellow-brown, slightly sandy silty clay.</p> <p>Inclusions: None</p> <p>Finds: None</p> <p>Depth: 200mm</p> <p>Boundaries: Indistinct with 103 above, only difference is the lack of finds and inclusions in 104. This deposit was not bottomed</p> <p>Excavated: Trowel and mattock</p>	N/A	<p>Natural deposits. Picture below shows (104) exposed in the corner of the sondage (facing north)</p> 



Figure 1. Test pit 48 location and topography

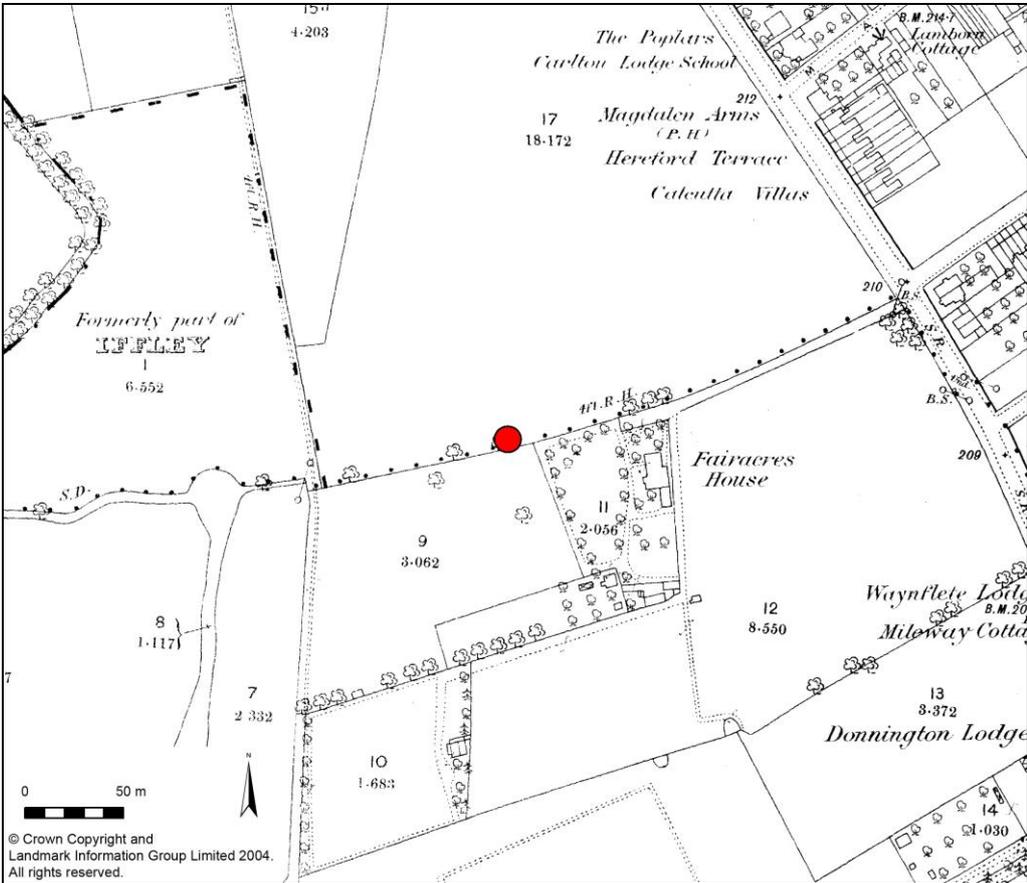


Figure 2. Test pit 48 c1880 (Ordnance Survey First Edition Mapping)

