

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS ON HILL TOP, ALCONBURY WESTON

Hill Top, Alconbury Weston - located behind Hill Top Cottages off Vinegar Hill, has been the subject of a number of archaeological investigations since the early 20th Century. The first of these was carried out by Dr Garrood (of Alconbury) in 1932, whilst between 1990 and 1996, two commercial investigations were undertaken in relation to the subsequent widening of the A1. Since 2017, Sawtry Archaeology have conducted two geophysical magnetometry and five geophysical earth resistance surveys, one fieldwalking survey and two evaluation excavations.

The Sawtry Archaeology investigations have revealed what the investigations of Dr Garrood and the A1 widening commercial archaeology could only evince; an extensive Romano-British site ranging from the east boundary to approximately 100m west of the Vinegar Hill cottages and from the north boundary track into Long Nines - an area of some 425m x 200m. Direct evidence of two buildings, one dating to the second century and the other dating to the fourth century, was revealed during the evaluation excavation, whilst results of the various geophysical surveys revealed strong evidence to suggest more buildings and/or complexes.

Furthermore, finds from the fieldwalking survey and the evaluation excavations, in conjunction with Dr Garrood's findings, provide strong evidence for continued occupation on Hill Top from circa 100 BC to at least AD 410. There is sufficient evidence in the form of coloured tesserae, painted wall plaster, hypocaust flue tiles, fine table ceramics, fine glass-ware, and window glass, that at least one building was of a high status.

Sawtry Archaeology is a Sawtry History Society activity and, as such, are very much community minded and keen to involve the Alconbury communities in our investigations. You can learn more about our Hill Top archaeological investigations and Sawtry Archaeology by visiting our website at <https://sawtryarchaeology.wixsite.com/my-site>.

Image #1 - Google Earth Image of Hill Top and Long Nines (Sawtry History Society)
Image #2 - End of Excavation, Drone's Eye View of Trench 1 (Rex Gibson, Fane Road Archaeology Group)
Image #3 - Trench #1 Looking South, Showing Foundation Footing and Post Hole of Substantial Stone Wall of 4th Century Building (Sawtry History Society)
Image #4 - Fragment of 'Hunt Cup', Nene Valley Colour Coated Fine Table Ware (Sawtry History Society)
Image #5 - Glass Vessel Handle (Rex Gibson, Fane Road Archaeology Group)
Image #6 - Glass Vessel Sherds (Sawtry History Society)
Image #7 - Window Glass Sherds (Sawtry History Society)