1 Introduction

Nature of the county; geography and geology; contact zones and longer-distance connections; the importance of the university; development and the historic environment.

Unlike some counties, post-1974 Oxfordshire has a natural integrity as an important element of one of Britain’s major river systems, the basin of the Upper Thames and its enclosing uplands. Where the main river has in earlier periods acted variously as a boundary or as a unifying agent, for most of the last 1000 years and certainly for the post-medieval period it has unified the extensive catchment area of the Thames and its tributaries; inclusion of the Vale of White Horse from former Berkshire from 1974 added the valley of the river Ock to those of the Cherwell and Thame, and recognised the long-standing existence of a coherent region with its centre at Oxford.

The region is defined geologically by the vales of Oxford and Kimmeridge clays which run diagonally across the centre of the county, separated by the hard Corallian ridge each side of Oxford, and enclosed on the north and west by the Lias and Oolitic limestone uplands of the Cotswolds and North Oxfordshire Heights, and on the south and east by the younger chalk of the Downs and the Chiltern Hills (Powell 2005). With extensive deposits of sands and gravels from Pleistocene glacial and river action, and with a mantling of clay-with-flints over much of the Chilterns, the county has a complex geology which, despite the overall coherence of the region, has produced with human activity a wide variety of landscapes. It has also
provided historically a great range of local materials for domestic and other buildings, in locally-derived stone, timber and clay (Martin & Steele 1954). Around the edges, the county naturally has affinities and close functional relationships with neighbouring counties (Phythian-Adams 1993). On the west the high limestone uplands are an indivisible part of the Gloucestershire Cotswolds and their towns and smaller settlements shared the same historical experience of medieval wealth from wool, as for example at Burford, and the same subsequent stagnation. On the north a sense of independence and closeness to the South Midlands rather than the Thames Valley led to the concept of ‘Banburyshire’ including the town and its wider market area. On the east the Chilterns created a barrier between Upper and Middle Thames which made Henley a natural local centre, emphasised in the late-medieval and early post-medieval period by its significance as river port and as the effective limit for navigation for the shipping of cargoes, with stronger contacts with the riverside towns downstream and with London (Peberdy 1996) than with Oxford.

The clay vales also create zones of contact with neighbouring areas - the Vale of Aylesbury encourages Thame to look to Buckinghamshire’s county town as a focus as much as to Oxford, and the same effect operates in the southwest corner of the present-day county, where the attractions of Swindon as a major modern centre can make Oxford seem remote. These relationships have been underlined by developments over the post-medieval and modern period, due partly to dramatic changes in transport through road improvements, the building of railways and latterly the creation of motorways. In the last century and a half, connections have been emphasised with the east to Reading and London, the west to Bristol and the north through Banbury to Birmingham. One effect of these improvements has been to make the county effectively a hinterland to London (as areas of Buckinghamshire were from the early 20th century), with a resulting pressure on housing. The effect has been greatly increased by the presence in the county town of the historic university, which makes Oxford not only an internationally important city architecturally and educationally, but a form of political and social extension to the capital (evoking its role as royalist capital in the Civil War of the 1640s), with far-reaching implications for the city and county. In particular it has encouraged latterly the growth of nationally important scientific research and development facilities, as at Harwell and around the edges of the city.

Despite its early foundation and long-standing role as the county town, Oxford has been very much dominated during the medieval period and afterwards by the presence of the collegiate university. This has had two major effects: the degree to which the university has overshadowed the character and identity of the town and led to its own historic interest being undervalued, and the potent part played by the university in recording the contemporary town and county and gathering valuable evidence for its study throughout the post-medieval period.

‘If you except the Colleges and Halls, the City of Oxford, in relation to building, is a very inconsiderable place, and no better than an ordinary Market Town’ (Antony Wood). This domination has had a powerful influence on the attitudes of the Oxford community and local government to indigenous character and protection of the historic environment - university and college buildings are valued and protected, town buildings and areas have tended to be repeatedly given up to university or commercial requirements (Phythian-Adams 1993). This has led in recent years to the loss (often without adequate record) of many aspects of Oxford’s historic environment, whether large-scale clearances such as historic St Ebbe’s in the 1960s and 70s or the more targeted demolition or conversion of particular buildings and features:
the 1850's LMS station, Morland’s ancient brewery in St Ebbe’s, and major industrial sites such as Lucy’s Eagle Ironworks (demolished 2005) or the massive area of Morris’s motor works at Cowley, cleared away virtually without record in the 1980s.

In the county at large, development for new building has been concentrated on the market towns of Banbury, Abingdon, Witney and also on Didcot, but all the historic towns have seen new house-building or pressure for conversion of old buildings. So far Oxfordshire has not experienced major new settlements in open country (with the exception of the new village of Berinsfield in the 1960s) though plans for a new town in South Oxfordshire are mooted from time to time.

Conversion of existing buildings for housing in the towns and countryside results in pressure on agricultural buildings, particularly barns, on modest domestic buildings in the market towns, and on industrial sites: the Henley Brewery, closed in 2003, is undergoing conversion to apartments, as Morland’s Brewery in Oxford already has been. The largest recent example of wholly new uses for historic buildings is the conversion of Oxford’s medieval Castle and post-medieval Prison, closed in 1996, to a complex of hotel, shops and restaurants, apartments and a heritage centre, opened in 2006.

### 2 Nature and scope of the evidence base

**Scope of the evidence; early recorders: writers, artists and photographers; the county society; major published sources; museums, SMR and study groups; voluntary study and recording groups**

**The evidence base**

As the last of the historical periods, the scale and range of evidence for the post-medieval and recent past is potentially bewildering. It seems necessary to confine the scope for post-medieval and post-medieval studies, to the above ground structures (monuments), below-ground archaeology (sites) and landscapes which represent the period, but what of the great range of other primary sources which, uniquely for this period, supply detail and animation - the documentary sources and records of transactions; drawn maps, plans and surveys; the printed material in books and newsprint, the great variety of illustrative and pictorial material including photographs and film; sound recordings, the availability of oral evidence etc etc? The field of study needs to be restricted, to the material evidence for past activity and to the related sources which explain or illuminate the physical evidence and artefacts, rather than extending it to the more general scope of the non-material processes of historical or cultural change. This will still mean that a strategy for research for the period needs to be concerned with a greater range of materials and methodologies than earlier periods.

**Early recorders**

The assembly of evidence for post-medieval studies has a long antiquity in the county, encouraged by the scholarship of the university. From the dissolution of the monasteries which marks the beginning of the period c.1540, a succession of antiquaries and others celebrated the ancestry of the university as well as recording contemporary events and impressions. Amongst writers and diarists Anthony Wood and John Aubrey represent the 17th century (Wood 1674 and 1691-2; Aubrey, for Oxford, *Brief Lives, ed.* Lawson Dick 1949) with the first published study of the whole county by Dr Robert Plot in 1677, and then a long succession of Oxford antiquaries including Thomas Hearne, William Fletcher, J H Parker, Herbert Hurst, H E Salter, W A Pantin, and their successors who flourish in the more
Alongside the writers, topographical artists recorded the appearance, buildings and antiquities of the town and county in a series of drawings, paintings and prints of unparalleled value, the earliest John Bereblock’s drawings of university and college buildings in 1566 (Durning 2006), followed by Loggan, Burghers, Malchair, McKenzie, Michael Angelo Rooker, William Turner (of Oxford), Buckler, and others. Oxford itself has been well covered by a regular succession of map-makers from Ralph Agas in the 1570s to the appearance of the Ordnance Survey in the 1870s. Among prolific photographers have been Henry Taunt and Henry Minn in Oxford and many other studios in the smaller market towns, especially Blinkhorns in Banbury, and Packer of Chipping Norton, whose large collection from the 1920s onwards is now in the Centre for Oxfordshire Studies.

The county society
In line with the university’s interest in local topography and antiquities, the county society was founded early (in 1839) as the Oxford Society for Promoting the Study of Gothic Architecture, renamed the Oxford Architectural Society in 1848, and with its present title The Oxford Architectural and Historical Society (OAHS) from 1860. Its current journal series Oxoniensia began in 1937, becoming one of the best of the county journals and the vehicle for wide-ranging articles and notes on prehistoric and later archaeology, and for historical studies. In the earliest journals, pioneering studies of the post-medieval period were also published, with Pantin’s work on the buildings demolished to make way for the New Bodleian and Bruce-Mitford’s studies of the below-ground archaeology and artefacts (Pantin 1937; Bruce-Mitford 1939). This tradition of post-medieval building and artefact studies has been continued, with regular publication in Oxoniensia of investigations of major and minor domestic buildings in Oxford and the county and innovative work on ceramics, glass and tobacco pipes (Leeds 1941; Biddle 1988; see also references to Pantin in Section 7 Built environment). The activities of the university in the pattern of excavation and fieldwork has been as important for post-medieval studies as for the earlier archaeology of the region. In the north of the county the Banbury Historical Society has had a distinguished record of publication through its journal, latterly entitled Cake and Cockhorse.

Professionals and amateurs in recording and publishing.
The 1930s also saw publication of the first major study of Oxford’s buildings in the Royal Commission volume of 1939, including secular and domestic buildings inside and outside the university (before 1714). Volume I of the Victoria County History for Oxfordshire was also published in 1939, the only previous county volume (Volume II) having been published in 1907. All the Berkshire volumes had been published by 1927 which makes them less useful than the more modern studies. Oxfordshire volumes recommenced in 1954, with a further thirteen mainly area-based studies to date (the most recent being Vol XV (Carterton and Minster Lovell in September 2006), and a number of volumes still to come, including volumes on other parts of West Oxfordshire and on Henley, being worked on concurrently (www.oxfordshirepast.net).

Future work by VCH will allow for extensive treatment to modern standards of research, and has also created opportunities for volunteer involvement, with the Oxfordshire Buildings Record working with VCH staff on a major buildings recording project at Burford as an England’s Past for Everyone project (HLF funded), which will contribute to the eventual
Burford volume, and a similar exercise in Henley. This has revived the practice of volunteer involvement in serious research relied on when the Sites and Monuments Record was being established at the new Oxford City and County Museum at Woodstock in the 1960s as the very first of its kind, and a Study Group worked on gathering the available information (Benson 1972). The group also carried out studies of post-medieval topics (transport, parks, crafts and industries, etc., for publication by the museum), a tradition which is now being continued by the OBR, with work on recording houses and agricultural and other buildings and involvement in the broad-based KelMSCott Environment and Landscape Project (The Oxon Recorder, various dates). In the interim, during the 1970s/80s staff of the City and County Museum and colleagues carried out and published multi-disciplinary studies of areas of life and activity in the county, including housing, and major industries: brick- and pottery-making, brewing and malting (see Section 11, Crafts, trade and industries).

*Implication studies and the establishment of the county excavating unit.*

The City and County Museum also published one of the first implications surveys as a response to the threat of wide-scale redevelopment in Oxford City (Benson and Cook 1966). The approach and subsequent work of excavation, under the aegis of the Oxford Archaeological Excavation Committee, led to the establishment in 1973 of the Oxford Archaeological Unit with its own sequence of surveys, including an implications study for Wallingford (Simpson 1973) and a survey covering all the historic towns in the new county (Rodwell, ed. 1974). This included the implications of development for buried archaeology, medieval topography and for standing (mostly post-medieval) buildings.

The current Sites and Monuments Record is now administered outside the county museum service and is housed in the Central Library, Westgate as an aspect of the County Archaeological Service. Its primary concern now is with buried archaeology and the protection of buried sites through the development control process, including the drawing-up of briefs for investigation and recording as a condition of consent. Liaison is maintained with the Conservation Officers of the Districts over the protection and recording of standing buildings, and completed evaluations and other assessments are deposited in the SMR.

**CORE HEADINGS AND TOPICS**

### 3 Inheritance

*Dissolution of the monasteries; changes in land-ownership and land-use; navigation and communications; decline of Oxford and other market towns; county government*

The progression from medieval to post-medieval, not easily distinguished archaeologically, is marked historically by the momentous events which took monastic religion out of national and local life and transferred vast swathes of land and buildings from religious to royal and eventually to secular hands. In Oxfordshire as elsewhere the period from 1540 begins with a legacy of greater and lesser monastic establishments awaiting demolition, sale or re-use, and much land in royal hands ready to be distributed as rewards to faithful public servants or sold to a new breed of land-speculator. The county’s stock of former religious houses (VCH 2, 1907) underwent the common pattern of disposal, with examples of buildings passing into secular hands for domestic conversion (Thame, Wroxton, possibly Studley, Littlemore,
Eynsham for a while), retention of the church for parochial use (Dorchester), stripping of
saleable materials from major buildings with slow decay or partial re-use of the remainder
(Abingdon, Eynsham and most of the rest). In Oxford the church of the great Cistercian
Abbey of Oseney served for a short time (1542-6) as the cathedral of the new post-
Reformation diocese, before the seat was transferred to the new college begun by Wolsey and
taken over by Henry VIII, and thus came to occupy at Christ Church the rescued and retained
church of St Fridewide’s Priory, and Oseney fell into a long decay. Suppressed monastic
colleges in Oxford could also be rescued and re-used, as were Durham College, re-founded as
Trinity, and St Bernard’s, re-founded as St John’s, both in the 1550s.

Most formerly monastic lands were fairly quickly alienated by the crown and passed into the
hands of those who in turn often sold on to others, with a high degree of mobility in the later
16th century and many new entrants into land-ownership; a good number of new owners in
Oxfordshire and Berkshire came from the merchant or professional class in London (Collins
and Havinden 2005). The late-medieval legacy of land-uses, of open field agriculture with an
emphasis on grazing for sheep, both in the villages of the vales and on the high open pastures
of the Downs, continued into the late 16th century, with evidence for enclosures for sheep (as
in monastic times) as the most profitable use (OAU 2000). Lying across the county were the
remains of medieval woodland and of royal forest: the forests of Stowood with Bernwood and
of Wychwood remaining for the moment royal, with the palace at Woodstock retained for
royal use. Much woodland outside royal hands had been in monastic possession and passed
with the rest into secular ownership for continuing exploitation. On the Chilterns the areas of
woodland between settlements, much of it formerly monastic, continued to be exploited for
timber and for firewood, some traded down-river to London through wharfs at Henley.

By the early 16th century Henley was the effective limit of navigation from London and the
county’s major river port. The river had deteriorated from its high level of use in the earlier
middle ages when stone from Cotswold quarries went downstream from Eynsham, and
already by the late middle ages barge traffic was practicable only as far as Culham. It was not
until the early 17th century that there was a revival in river trade, with improvements in
navigation and the re-opening of relatively easy access as far as Oxford (Peberdy 1994). Until
this happened the transport of goods to and from Oxford relied on re-shipping in smaller
boats from Henley, or on road transport.

The main medieval E-W land route through the county for travel and transport was broadly on
the line of the old A40, from London via Wycombe and Tetsworth to Oxford and onwards to
Witney, Burford and eventually Gloucester; a second road ran from Oxford via Faringdon and
Malmesbury to Bristol. In national terms, neither of these were as important as the great
western route passing to the south of the region, through Reading, Hungerford and
Marlborough to Bristol. Of more importance than any of them for the Upper/Middle Thames
valley, however, was the road north from Southampton, through Winchester and Newbury to
Oxford, and on to Banbury and the Midlands. This road, though not shown on the mid-13th-
century Gough Map, linked the Channel and the Solent with the Thames valley and beyond,
and remained of significance to the Oxford region throughout the post-medieval period and
up to the present day.

By 1540 Oxford had been in economic decline for 200 years - in 1377 it was the 14th in
population size after London, in 1523-4 it was 29th in taxable wealth. Stagnation continued till
c1580, when revival gathered pace from an expansion of the university (Stone 1974). Agas’s
map of 1578 shows a relatively empty town with very few houses on many of the streets and large areas of gardens and orchards. This situation was observable also at other of the county’s market towns, which either failed to expand in the late medieval period or, like Wallingford, contracted (Rodwell ed., 1974). By the 1520s the wealthiest of the Oxfordshire towns, after Oxford, were Burford, Deddington, Henley, Witney, and Abingdon. Oxford differed in the presence of the university (already occupying through its colleges a great deal of the available space within the walls), and its position as centre of county administration. In 1540 administration was still exercised through the Old Sessions Hall in the Castle bailey, until the Black Assize of 1577 led to its abandonment and the transfer of functions for nearly three centuries to the City’s Guildhall in St Aldate’s, rebuilt in the 1750s.

4 Landscape and land use

The progress of enclosure and disafforestation; growth of landscape archaeology; parks and gardens; Oxford college gardens.

The history of changing land-use in post-medieval Oxfordshire is comprised in three main elements: the enclosure of the old open fields and areas of common beginning in the late-medieval/early modern period and not effectively completed until the mid 19th century; the disafforestation of the belt of formerly royal forests accomplished at about the same time; and the later transformation of the open upland areas of grazing on the Downs by enclosure and conversion to arable. Alongside these economic land-uses, and following on the historic pattern of medieval forest and parkland, is the powerful character of the county as an area of landed estates, based on great and lesser country houses and their associated parks, with the growth of designed landscapes and gardens.

At the commencement of the period the central vales of the county were characterised by large open arable fields, centred on the villages, with areas of common often contiguous to those of neighbouring parishes, and in addition extensive stretches of common alongside the Thames. The Thames and its tributaries also provided areas of hay meadow, especially in the curves of the river like those above Oxford, and fisheries also represented a specialist type of land use associated with mill dams and weirs along the river (Aston 1988). Away from the rivers there were extensive areas of waste, on the high ground of the Downs and the large space of Eynsham Heath. Despite early enclosures and the acceleration of enclosure by agreement through the 18th century, the Oxfordshire of Davis’s map in 1794 (and the associated areas of Berkshire in Roque’s map in 1760) shows an area much of which was still unenclosed. Much enclosure happened in the following 50 years, creating the familiar landscape of rectilinear hedged fields and, with the enclosure of commons and wastes and the disafforestation of what remained of the forests of Shotover and Wychwood, very little genuinely open territory.

These major changes in the pattern of the landscape were extensively studied until the 1960s primarily as an aspect of agricultural history and chiefly by documentary means, until the growth in the study of landscape through field- and map-work after Hoskins (Hoskins 1955 etc.). No small amount of the later work of developing and refining the techniques of landscape archaeology took place in the county through the activities of Mick Aston, James Bond and Trevor Rowley at the City and County Museum and University Department of External Studies in the 1970s-80s, closely linked to the teaching of Local History at the Department by Kate Tiller. In consequence, much new work in landscape studies locally was
done through adult education classes and volunteer study groups, some individuals from which have moved on since to the establishment of village- and town-based research groups.

**Agrarian change**

Following the historical or general studies of agriculture in the county, 19th or 20th-century (Young 1809; Read 1854; Hammond 1974; Wordie 1984), and of the open fields and their enclosure (Havinden 1965; Sutton 1964-5), work in the last 20 years has tended to concentrate on the more restricted area of the single or group of parishes, or on particular aspects of landscape development. Enclosure and tithe awards have been studied by professionals and by a now-large number of locally-based groups (some with their own magazine and/or website) to help establish the historical geography of the local landscape and its present-day manifestations, relating map-work to historic buildings surveys, field investigations, hedgerow dating (McDonald 1997) and the changes in farm occupancy, farm size and the physical evidence to be found in farmhouses and other buildings of the farmstead. Patterns of land tenure within individual estates or villages have been investigated by local and agrarian historians (eg. Rickard 1945; Schumer 1975; Bendall 2000) and the overall picture has been recently set out in outline for the county over most of the post-medieval period up to 1914 (Collins and Havinden 2005).

The continuity of management of the great areas of royal forest inherited from the medieval period had already been interrupted by a slackness in administering the regulations and by illegal grazing or clearings (Steane 1985), but it was as late as the 1850s before Wychwood was disafforested by parliamentary act, and a rump of woodland cleared and replaced by a new regular layout of farms and enclosed farmland (Watney 1910; Tyzack 2003). Recent work has been done in charting this process on the ground at Kingstanding Farm, Leafield (Steane, forthcoming).

**Parks and gardens.**

Early study of the historical parks and gardens associated with the county’s great houses established Oxfordshire as one of the best centre for observing the surviving work of the major practitioners of landscape design (summarised in Woodward 1982): from 16th- and 17th-century remnants at Wilcote or Cornbury, through the work of Sanderson Miller (Wroxton), William Kent (Ditchley, Shotover, Rousham), Capability Brown (Kirtlington, Rycote, Blenheim - see Bond and Tiller 1997), Sanderson Miller (Wroxton - Wood and Hawkes 1969), the sequence of park and landscape changes at Nuneham Courtenay (Batey 1968 and 70), Repton (Sarsden and Great Tew) and the woodland planting along the reaches of the Thames above and below Goring to Mapledurham, and again from Caversham to Henley.

More recent work has centred on field and documentary evidence for smaller and more complex histories, including the park at Stonor (Steane 1994) and lesser-known gardens such as the intriguing water gardens at Tackley (Whittle and Taylor 1994). The establishment of the Oxfordshire Gardens Trust in 2003 provided a focus for historic garden studies, and the existence of the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens is an encouragement to seek protection and recording of other significant gardens as a condition of planning consent (eg. Walcote Manor, Charlbury, OA 2005). On the more restricted but extremely rich stage of Oxford College gardens, early work (Batey 1982) is being extended by individual college studies from medieval to modern (Magdalen College gardens, Steane 1998 and other work in progress) and specific client reports generated for planning purposes (New College Mound, OA 1994).
Possible future research agenda

- Continuing map- and fieldwork by parish groups to trace and confirm the development of village landscapes, land-use and field patterns, possibly linked with building studies of associated farmsteads and other buildings etc., and of other land-uses such as quarrying.
- Encouragement through the Oxfordshire Gardens Trust of identification and detailed studies of significant gardens and parks, and continuing studies of the historical development of college gardens. The Trust should provide a good forum for disseminating information and encouraging synthesis.

5 Social & administrative organisation

Town halls; Oxford Castle and Prison; almshouses, workhouses and hospitals; the university; schools, libraries and museums; entertainments and sport.

The archaeology of administration and community activity is represented in Oxfordshire by some splendid public buildings, including those for education at all levels, a variety of provisions, public and private, to meet social or personal needs, and some interesting examples of places for entertainment, sport and games.

Among town halls, Abingdon has perhaps architecturally the finest in the country (1678-82, by Christopher Kempster) with other good 17th century examples at Watlington, Wallingford and the modest example at Eynsham, an 18th century example by Sir William Chambers (at Woodstock, though not among his most distinguished buildings) and a range of 19th century designs including neo-classical at Chipping Norton (1842), neo-Gothic at Banbury (1854), Queen Anne at Henley (1900) and Oxford’s exuberant Jacobethan of the 1890s (Norbury 2000). Most of these except the latest have (or had originally) the conventional arrangement of an open-sided market area below a court house, of which an early example is the 16th century Tolsey at Burford, which also had a gaol attached. Witney had a separate covered market area in the early 17th century Butter Cross.

The most substantial and (archaeologically and historically) significant administrative centre, however, is represented by the Oxford Castle complex, centre of county government almost without break from at least the 11th century to the present day and location for the county gaol from the early 13th century until the 1990s. A series of city maps and of drawings show the changes in the post-medieval period, with the gradual loss of most medieval buildings (including the old Sessions House for the sheriff’s court and the assizes), and the arrangements for the gaol, grouped around St George’s Tower. Recent investigations by Oxford Archaeology, below and above ground, before conversion of the site, have contributed a great deal of new evidence on the development of the site (including the Saxon defences of the shire town) and some chilling detail on the administration of justice in the burials of executed and anatomised felons discovered in the ditch of the mound (Oxford Archaeology Client report 2006). The new facilities now share the site with more ancient uses, in Old County Hall (1840) still partially in use as courtroom, the County Council Offices of 1914,
and those of the 1960s (Macclesfield House) and 1970s (New County Hall). There are other examples of gaols surviving, at Abingdon (1805-11, by the energetic Daniel Harris, keeper and part-builder of the County Gaol) and a number of village lock-ups, at Wheatley and Stonesfield among others. Well-preserved courtrooms with fittings survive, with two (City and County) in Oxford, and merit more extensive investigation and recording. Related also, and also meriting further study are police stations, with an example recently recorded by the OBR at Abingdon (OBR 2002).

Related in some senses to punishment are the buildings which demonstrate attitudes to poverty and the care of the sick and elderly. The county has a very good range of early almshouses from late-medieval Ewelme to a fine group in Abingdon from 15th to 18th century, and good individual buildings in many of the market towns and some villages: Thame, (16th century) Mapledurham and Horton-cum-Studley (both early 17th), Wantage and Wallingford (both late 17th), Chipping Norton (mid-17th), Henley (16th and 17th century foundations, both rebuilt), Goring Heath (early 18th century), Witney (early 19th). For the later poor law provision, Oxfordshire until recently had a good crop of union workhouses from the 1830s though a number of these have been lost mostly unrecorded in recent times (eg.Banbury). Related to workhouses in terms of surviving buildings are the hospital foundations, of which Oxfordshire retains a good number and representative sample from the large philanthropic foundation of the Radcliffe Infirmary (1757-70 and later) downwards; the imminent conversion of the Radcliffe to new university uses prompts a major investigation and recording exercise. Hospitals generally merit more attention than they have received, with the identification and possible protection of significant buildings and features, and studies to build on the valuable work of the RCHM, on both hospitals and workhouses, would be desirable (RCHM 1998 and 1999). An extension of work into the whole area of private and public provision for health and welfare, water supply, drainage, lighting and paving and other utilities and improvements is to be encouraged, with documentary studies helping to identify the structures and other physical evidence for such a socially significant topic with, in Otho Nicholson’s Carfax Conduit of 1615-17, an early and iconic representative.

As to the provision of education, in Oxford the university and its colleges naturally dominate and have been extensively studied in terms of their buildings, history and personalities (RCHM 1939; Stone 1975; Green 1984; Prest 1993; VCH, 3 1954; Catto et al. 1984-2000, plus individual college histories). As to the detail of the buildings and their physical features it is clear that much remains to be investigated and illuminated in terms of new building, reuse of features or spaces, and the detail of decoration, furnishing or use, as Colvin showed for Canterbury Quad, St John’s (Colvin 1988) and as other investigations, excavations and documentary studies are confirming (Whyte 2001; Lawrence 2005; Steane and Ayres 2006; see also Munby 2003, 6-8). In the broader general field of education, schools are well represented in the county, with good examples of most types and providers from 15th century Ewelme, through early grammar schools and small village foundations to the numerous board schools and local authority provision of the 19th and 20th century. Some documentary studies have been done and buildings identified in the field and associated with surviving records (such as the extensive collection of photographs taken of Oxon elementary schools on 1905) but the opportunities for locally based studies of town and village schools are substantial; many have disappeared or been converted without adequate record.

Education also covers libraries and museums, which are exceptionally numerous in Oxford itself. There have been studies of the building, arrangement and furnishing of libraries both
inside and outside the university (Graham 1978), and of museums, for which Oxford provides some of the earliest and most internationally significant (in the old and new Ashmoleans) and examples of the most innovative (in the University Museum and Pitt Rivers: see Acland and Ruskin 1859). Current extensive works at the Ashmolean and Pitt Rivers will have provided opportunities at least for recording and possibly for discoveries, and it will be interesting to see what comes out of it. The early archaeology of museums was well-illuminated by the below ground extension works at the Old Ashmolean (Museum of the History of Science) in 1999 (Bennett et al. 2000).

In the field of social activity and entertainment there remains much to be done, both in documentary studies and in identifying and recording the physical manifestations of clubs and social organisations, and entertainments such as cinema and theatre. Oxfordshire has some notable examples of places of entertainment (like the Kenton Theatre, Henley, 1805 and one of the country’s earliest theatres) and some work of documenting and recording has been done, as at the Regal Cinema, Henley, before demolition (Munby in Moloney 1997; see also Ranger 1989), but more is needed to identify and assess what remains and what deserves some degree of protection and study. Work has also been done in the field of sport, though of a rather restricted kind, with a number of real tennis courts providing occasional opportunities for investigation as at Oriel College (S, Midlands Archaeology 1995) and at Wadham College. Even more restricted, a cockpit was discovered and recorded in Holywell in investigations in 1993 (OAU 1993). The archaeology of rowing, documentary and in terms of the buildings, structures and material culture may be candidates for further studies, as for all aspects of earlier river craft and river uses; work has been done on the Henley Regatta (Dodd 1989).

The archaeology of conviviality and catering, with the whole broad field of inns, hotels, eating houses and coffee houses is covered partly by building studies and partly by material culture, and some consideration will be found in Sections 7 and 10.

**Possible future research agenda**

- More detailed study and recording of buildings of administration and justice, especially town halls, courtrooms, prisons, police stations.
- Identification, study and recording of almshouses and hospitals in the county, including more modern examples at threat from extensive remodelling or replacement. A particular need will be the recording of the Radcliffe Infirmary, Oxford - preferably before closure - with opportunities for a broad-based exercise involving photography and oral recording as well as documentary and architectural studies. Smaller hospitals in the county would benefit from a similar approach.
- Much more work is needed to identify and evaluate for recording the surviving good examples of theatres, cinemas and other social monuments of the county.
- A thorough survey and listing of school buildings would be valuable, identifying and recording representative types from early to modern.

### 6 Settlement

*Historic towns in the county; Oxford and its suburbs; growth, decline and rebuilding in the market towns and countryside; open, closed and model villages*
All the present Oxfordshire towns were in existence by 1540, with something close to their current relative importance, and most of the villages which had survived the disasters and contractions of the 14th century have continued through until today. Oxford, Wallingford and Abingdon are the earliest towns, with Saxon urban beginnings, with most of the others showing degrees both of planned expansion in the central middle ages and of organic growth (or in some cases contraction) since. These processes, in terms of settlement growth and of individual buildings, were set out in the study of Oxfordshire’s historic towns in the 1970s (Rodwell 1974) and have only in a few cases seen very much additional study since, mostly through the work of the VCH. There are no new town developments in the area in the period though Didcot, a 19th century creation of the railway age, and Kidlington, as a greatly expanded 20th century satellite of Oxford, are now of local urban scale, bigger than many of the historic towns. A small number of new planned and model villages appeared from the 18th to the 20th century, including Nuneham Courtenay (18th century new replacement village), Carterton and Minster Lovell (Charterville) as planted 19th century settlements, Berinsfield as a wholly new 20th century village. Most new modern development has taken place around the edges of the historic towns of Oxford, Abingdon, Banbury, Bicester, Thame and Witney.

Oxford is a highly unusual county town, its development distorted by the university, though the studies, illustrations and mapping encouraged by its presence allow early topographical development to be traced in some detail, with the appearance of additional houses between Agas’s plan of 1578 and Loggan’s of 1675 indicating renewed prosperity. H E Salter’s work reconstructing the topography of the medieval town (Salter 1936; 1960 and 1969) demonstrated the way in which the basic street pattern (though with some major developments such as New Road - Munby and Walton 1990) then accommodated the expansion of existing colleges through the taking over of areas of housing, though most of the later medieval and post-medieval colleges grew up outside the walls in areas of early suburb. The detailed topographical development of the area of St Ebbe’s within the walls from 16th to 19th century was possible following the extensive excavations and additional documentary work in the 1960s and 70s (Hassall et al. 1984).

From the early extra-mural expansions (see for example Andrews and Mepham 1997; Cotswold Archaeology, 2004) the growth of Oxford’s suburbs continued into Jericho and St Ebbe’s, Beaumont and St John’s Streets (Osmond 1984) and eventually Victorian North Oxford (Fasnacht 1969; Saint 1970; Hinchcliffe 1992), before extensive expansion of the built-up areas with industrialisation in the late 19th and 20th centuries (Graham 1990; Nash 1998) joined Oxford to its surrounding villages of Headington, Iffley, Cowley, Littlemore and Hinksey.

On a smaller scale, other towns witnessed similar growth and development, particularly Banbury, where a good deal of study has taken place to chart its growth (Lobel 1969; Stacey 1960; Trinder 1982) and also Witney, Henley and (now outside the county) Caversham (Dils 1999). Most towns merit more study than they have received on their medieval and post-medieval topography and patterns of growth associated with economic development. Some towns of course scarcely grew if at all during the period: Burford became relatively stagnant with the decline of its wool trade, preserving its early post-medieval form and buildings, and towns like Deddington, Eynsham and Charlbury too remained largely static until new building for housing in the later 20th century.
Even these largely static towns shared in the period of rebuilding which characterised the early post-medieval period, with re-fronting of houses and the introduction of more fashionable materials. The organised investigation and analysis of historic buildings in towns has a considerable role to play in the study of urban topographical history, as well as in the furtherance of vernacular building studies alone. The co-operation of the VCH team with the Oxfordshire Buildings Record in an extensive study and record of the buildings of Burford is such an organised exercise, which will feed through into the eventual VCH volume for Burford and perhaps set the style for future studies.

This urban renewal was matched also in the countryside, with the transformation of many rural settlements by rebuilding in the post-medieval period (Wood-Jones 1963; Portman 1960). Again some villages declined or disappeared through economic change and early enclosure (including probably eg. Hampton Gay - OAU 2000) but most which had survived the dislocations of the late medieval period to 1540 went on to continue to the present day. The greatest transformation however was brought about by the long process of enclosure, with early post-medieval enclosure by agreement (for grazing or consolidation of farm units) up to 1730 and then increasingly by parliamentary act, a process accelerating after 1800 until by mid 19th century the land was completely enclosed (Emery 1974). The pace of this long process, and its topographical and social repercussions for each settlement were very varied and more detailed work on individual parishes is needed to help establish the overall picture, even on a county scale. One major effect, in addition to the creation of a new landscape of hedged and usually rectilinear fields, was the change in the village itself, with the building of new farmsteads away from the village at the centre of the newly consolidated farm holdings, and the re-use of the old farmsteads remaining in the village. Both these effects should be important elements in the much-needed survey of agricultural buildings in the county (See Section 7, Buildings).

Among special types of village, some work has been done on the pattern and origins of open and closed villages (Emery 1974, 170-6) and on industrial villages such as those dependent on quarrying or textile manufacturing (ibid 176-81; Mason 1989) but there is still much scope for examining the complex interrelationships of estates and country houses and of specialised agricultural or industrial activity, in studies of village morphologies and social structures. Model villages are represented in the county by the interesting example of Charterville, established by the Chartist Land Company in 1847-8 as a new way of life for urban working people (Hadfield 1970; Tiller 1985) and by estate villages, such as those at Nuneham, Ardington and Lockinge (Havinden 1966), Middleton Stoney and the interesting 19th century growth of Freeland under the influence of Eynsham Hall and Freeland Lodge.

As in the towns, a combination of individual building with broader topographical studies is likely to be most productive and is being pursued, through the ongoing studies of the VCH and through more broadly based projects. A group of organisations including the Society of Antiquaries, VCH and the Oxfordshire Buildings Record is currently engaged in such a study in the parish of Kelmscott.

In terms of below-ground archaeology, there remain the opportunities identified in the Historic Towns Survey (Rodwell 1974) for helping to answer questions about historic urban change and development, especially from larger scale re-development where this has taken place. It is noticeable however that, especially for post-medieval levels, much of the potential is negated in some towns by the widespread loss or disturbance of the ground, not only by
early cellars but by removal of levels within garden areas and back plots, perhaps by gravel digging or the regular removal of rubbish.

Possible future research agenda

• Continue to encourage surveys of the character of the built environment, but they should be linked with promotion of the importance of the below-ground archaeological potential and of the study of individual buildings.
• Means to continue the valuable practice of voluntary working by groups in association in VCH in studies of individual historic towns.
• Promotion of individual studies of selected villages as representative of settlement types, through techniques of landscape archaeology and documentary work (especially specialist industrial and model villages and those which have a particular relationship with e.g. a major country house).
• Consideration of the updating in more detailed and extensive form of the Oxfordshire Historic Towns Survey of 30 years ago, with new studies on the pattern of recent work at Wallingford and with due attention to post-medieval topography, buildings and archaeology.

7 Built environment

Growth of building studies in Oxford; Oxford houses; vernacular buildings in the market towns and countryside; recent and current work; agricultural buildings; country houses; buildings of the university; Oxford building firms

The study of vernacular buildings had early beginnings in Oxford, making it a key centre for the developing subject, linked with the study of post-medieval archaeology. An Old Houses Committee was established by the county society in 1914 and a set of pioneering studies, carried out in connection with the demolitions and site clearance for the New Bodleian Library in 1937, inaugurated the new subject, associating above-ground building surveys with below-ground structures and medieval and post-medieval ceramic assemblages (Pantin 1937; Bruce Mitford 1939). The allied approach continued in the study of the Clarendon Hotel in the 1950s (Jope and Pantin 1958) and has done since. Associated with the linking of buildings and below ground evidence, the study of internal decoration and furnishing is of similar antiquity, with the early publication of and study of inventories (see Section 10 Material culture), as is the consideration given to the effect of geology on local building materials and the resultant contribution to landscape (Arkell 1947; Aston 1974, Oakeshott 1975). Perhaps in consequence of these traditions, a good deal of work on the post-medieval period locally has concentrated on building studies, in Oxford and in the county at large.

Oxford houses

Houses in Oxford were selectively included in the 1939 RCHM inventory volume, demonstrating the range from modest to fairly grand, and Pantin’s work on Oxford produced a valuable summary of the lesser and still somewhat unregarded examples (Pantin 1947), with further studies of individual houses continuing into the 1960s (Pantin 1955; 1958; 1960). E M Jope concentrated on below ground evidence and E Clive Rouse studied the painted schemes found in a number of 16th and 17th century buildings (Pantin and Rouse 1955; Rouse 1972) (see Section 10, Material Culture). Detailed studies of buildings in Oxford continued and expanded from the 1960s onwards, particularly through the work of Sturdy and Munby
Further work has been directed to the recording of post-medi eval as well as medieval tenements, structures and below-ground evidence by the archaeolo gical agencies, especially in the areas of St Ebbe’s and St Thomas’s most affected by redevelopment (Palmer 1980; Hassall 1984; Cook 1999; see also Andrews and Mepham 1999; Walker and King 2000).

**Houses in the county; vernacular buildings and historic towns**

Outside Oxford, in the historic towns and the countryside, studies have tended to lag behind, both in the recording of individual buildings and in the establishment of local area studies or regional groupings encompassing medieval and post-medieval buildings. The exemplary study for the Banbury region (Wood-Jones 1963) has not been followed in other areas of the county, though relatively extensive work in the Vale of White Horse from the 1950s onwards (Currie, 1985 and 1992) provides the basis for such a study there, and some towns (Banbury, Burford) were studied 30 or so years ago (Laithwaite 1973). In the 1970s, through the county museum’s field section and latterly through the production of historic building surveys as a requirement of planning consent, recording has accelerated, though here too activity in the Vale of White Horse, especially in Abingdon, has perhaps been more extensive than in other districts. The work of the contracting archaeological agencies and of individual building historians, together with that of the Oxfordshire Buildings Record, mean that there is a regular flow of buildings records, though it is in most cases responding to immediate need rather than planned or co-ordinated research; there seems little time for synthesis, even on a local scale, though a useful study on a village scale has been done for Ducklington (Pacey 1987). The cooperation on buildings recording and eventual publication of the OBR with VCH at Burford, through the England’s Past for Everyone project, and the similar project in Henley where Geoffrey Tyack is also working with a local group, may be valuable models for future work and the necessary training. But work, if uneven, is at a generally active level and produces a considerable body of published notes, with more extensive studies appearing in Oxoniensia and South Midlands Archaeology (eg. OAU 1995 and 1999, listing recent building studies in city and county) and with a fair amount of work taking place in Henley (TVAS Client report 1997; Moloney 1997; Pine 1999). Individual studies of larger houses have also been done; for the county museum at Fletcher’s House, Woodstock (Grundon 2000) and at the medieval/post-medieval complex at Cogges (Rowley and Steiner 1996). As to particular categories of small house, principally in the countryside, there have been studies of workers’ housing (Paine et al. 1978, Paine and Rhodes 1979) including the model housing of the 1840s at Charterville (Tiller 1985).

**Agricultural buildings**

Related to vernacular domestic buildings in the countryside is the range of agricultural buildings which again, have been only very partially and randomly surveyed and where much work is necessary, both to record and to synthesise. Until there is a better understanding of local patterns and variations it will be difficult to establish priorities for recording or protection of categories of buildings which are threatened and vulnerable. Barns in particular have been a source of concern for the district’s conservation officers, and the subject of numerous client reports. Such studies have allowed a better understanding of regional carpentry techniques to be developed, with the county emerging as a border region: to south and east of Oxford, for example, are roofs with purlins supported by curved inner principals; to north and west, in the Cotswold stone zone, are purlins attached to rafters with free tenons into which they are slotted. Further understanding will need to come by bringing together the records of what has been done to date and developing a better overall understanding of
agrarian change and building development, helping to identify and prioritise buildings for future recording, but meanwhile a vulnerable resource is being depleted. The OBR is active in promoting such a project, and is already carrying out building studies (OBR in SMA 2001;2002;2002;2003).

Country houses
While there is still no overall survey of lesser, vernacular buildings in the countryside or market towns, Oxfordshire is supremely a county of the larger country house, and these are in consequence better known and well-summarised (Sherwood and Pevsner 1974). Some of the larger houses and their parkland settings have received individual studies or at least descriptions (eg. for Blenheim, Green 1951; for Ditchley, Hollings 1960; for Cornbury, Hussey 1950; for Chiswelhampton, Oswald 1954) with other houses in the care of the National Trust or otherwise open to the public being covered by their guidebooks (eg. Chastleton, Stonor, Grey’s Court, Milton House; Buscot). Other important houses remain in private or institutional hands and only present opportunities for investigation when proposals for change bring them within the planning process. This includes two important houses developed in the 16th century from monastic beginnings, at Thame Park and Rycote, both of which have been partially investigated recently (Time Team, 2001; OAU 2002), the identification of a highly important 17th-century building at Cornbury Park (Cormier 1996) and the only example of Sir John Soane’s work in his native county, at Woodeaton Manor (OA 2005, unpublished conservation plan). The acquisition of Chastleton for the National Trust led to a series of studies of the house and service buildings (Steane 1984; National Trust, Gary Marshall 1995 and 2004), and the Trust has a good record of reporting other investigations in South Midlands Archaeology, as at Ashdown House, Greys Court and elsewhere (Nat. Trust, Gary Marshall 1998, 2002, 2003, 2004). Much less work has been done on documentary studies of country houses or the relationship of houses to their estates or to local social effects; the documentary evidence for the remarkable staircase at Bletchington Park was matched by very little physical evidence on site (Turner 1996).

Buildings of the University/colleges
The buildings of the university and colleges, celebrated in description and illustration over a long period from Bereblock onwards (Durning 2006; Loggan 1676; etc. etc.) were well described in summary in the Royal Commission Inventory of 1939 (RCHM 1939), in the University volume of the VCH (VCH, 3 1954) and latterly in the architectural sections of the History of the University (Catto et al., ed. 1984-2000). These major overall studies have been illuminated by Colvin’s examination of Oxford buildings never built (Colvin 1983) and by the authors of other general studies (Sherwood and Pevsner 1974; Tyack 1998) and by the literature relating to the major surviving institutional buildings of the university: the Bodleian Library the Old Ashmolean, the Clarendon Building, the Radcliffe Camera and the other Oxford libraries.
Some of these latter have in addition received more detailed archaeological analysis of their fabric, with investigation of the roof of Duke Humphrey’s Library (OA Client Report ?date), the Radcliffe Camera (Gillam 1995) and the Old Ashmolean (Bennett et al. 2000). Colvin in his study of the Canterbury Quadrangle at St. John’s (Colvin 1988) pointed out how much may remain to be discovered by assiduous work, documentary studies and archaeological investigation during alterations or new building, even about well-known structures, (Whyte 2001; Lawrence 2005; Steane and Ayres, ?2006; see also Munby 2003, 6-8). Munby also raises (ibid.) the question of the plundering for re-use of historic fabric (such as happened
with the recycling of the roof of the monastic college of St Mary for the chapel of Brasenose), and it may be that more remains to be identified of the practice.

The modern buildings of the university represent a contemporary archaeology still in the making and continue to attract published treatment as well as other comment, reflecting the new buildings’ contributions to the architectural stock as well as the potential losses in what they replace, or the potential for new information from the necessary excavations in advance of their development (Plommer 1969; Hinton 1972; Tyack 1998, 299-343). Some of these new buildings (as well as the extensive repairs to the old over the last 30 years, which have not always been used as an opportunity to record or preserve ancient fabric) have been carried out by Oxford building firms, heirs or successors to those which built Oxford in the past. Some of these firms have been studied and published (Sturdy 1997; Law 1998) and more remains to be done on investigating the firms and craftsmen and tracing their work not only in the buildings of the university, but the extent of their involvement in country house and other buildings in the county at large.

Possible future research agenda

- A more regular and broader approach to the extent of survey required as a condition of consent by Conservation Officers; Oxford City tends to require only a record of the portion of the building affected, Vale has broader interpretation of PPGs and may request survey of the wider complex.
- Necessity to encourage documentary study to accompany physical survey work as part of planning process; important elements may otherwise be unrecognised, lost or unexplained.
- Protection should lie at the heart of research and survey work. Historic building surveys may bring to light the significance of features, structural or decorative, which may then need to be accorded additional protection.
- The place of deposit for historic building surveys required for planning purposes should be identified and consistently followed, being written into the brief for the survey. Surveys and the information they contain need to be recorded, indexed and accessible if the growing body of work is to make a useful contribution to knowledge and the necessary process of synthesis.
- Encouragement of work in building recording and documentary studies through local groups and through assignment/project work by OU Dept of Continuing Education class and certificate students, Oxford Brookes University etc.
- In the vernacular field, more work is needed to refine and extend understanding of structures, particularly roof structures and their chronology, in order to identify regional types and developments. More surveying and recording of roofs is required, associated with a funded programme of dendro. dating. Good candidates should be identified through historic building surveys as a condition of consent, buildings coming up as planning applications, and buildings already known or identified through other means such as the Oxfordshire Buildings Record.
- Further improvements to the currently very uneven listed building lists, with additional work to improve the quality of information on buildings already listed (including more information on interiors and minor features) and identification of significant buildings missed in earlier listing. The work of local groups may be valuable in this.
- It is important that the model of co-operation of local groups under guidance and
training by professionals, currently active under the umbrella of VCH at Burford and Henley, is maintained in some form as these projects are completed. A form of organisation to continue training and co-ordination is required, with the availability of modest funding to support projects.

- Continuing documentary work as an adjunct to building studies, by building historians and recorders. There is also a matching need to encourage a recognition of the importance of building studies among students of general local history.
- There is a major challenge in the approach to the sheer quantity of surviving documentary evidence for buildings in the county and elsewhere, especially in the relatively recent past, on a scale unique to post-medieval studies. Much of this (local authority planning material, architectural and legal records, local builders records etc., as well as general trade records) is at risk of destruction from weeding, decay or lack of knowledge of its existence, and some policy is required to identify, evaluate and if necessary secure preservation (through collection of paper originals or by electronic means). The OBR is aware of this need and has done some work of rescue and deposit, but a broader approach seems necessary.

8 Ceremony, ritual and religion

Early study of Gothic architecture; recording of churches, contents and churchyards; college chapels; non-conformist places of worship; war memorials

Early modern study of archaeology in the county was church archaeology, with the county society effectively established in 1839 as the diocesan ‘Oxford Society for Promoting the Study of Gothic Architecture’, with the task of encouraging Gothic Revival style for both ecclesiastical and domestic buildings. The title change to ‘Oxford Architectural Society’ in 1848 (Pantin 1939; Prout 1989) reflected a broadening of interest with a further addition of ‘and Historical’ in 1860. The Society’s library and its important collection of casts of Gothic detail underlined the study of church architecture and furnishings as a significant part of its activities. They have however formed a smaller and smaller proportion both of published studies and of general recording work, reflecting a sense that much is known especially of Anglican churches, and that other areas of medieval and post-medieval work may be more rewarding and productive.

This may be true of the buildings (brought together in Sherwood and Pevsner 1974 and in more detail as VCH volumes are produced), though studies in Oxfordshire have not yet followed detailed and valuable work elsewhere on the furnishings and contents of churches, especially surprising perhaps being interior funerary monuments and churchyard surveys, though these have been sporadically pursued (Rosen 2005; see also articles on some post-medieval wall paintings: Edwards 1993; church monuments well summarised in Sherwood and Pevsner 1974, 374-82). Investigation of burial practice has also been randomly possible, as in the discovery of a Commonwealth period burial ground at Abingdon, with 250 burials aligned north-south and most within coffins). Within the churches themselves and in their immediate contexts much useful work of excavation has revealed the development of buildings through their medieval and sometimes post-medieval phases, particularly in Oxford but in the county too, with excavations at the splendid, classically inspired All Saints (1701-10) and at St Peters in the East, both before conversion to college libraries (see Dodd, ed.
2003 for All Saints), at St Aldate’s (Tyler 2001) and, outside Oxford, at Dorchester Abbey (Keevill et al. 2003).

As to church furnishings generally, the inventories compiled by the county branch of NADFAS have been progressing, with a dozen or more records now completed and lodged with the V&A, NMR and other places of deposit (though not apparently the county SMR). Such records are of particular value in recording not merely contents but layouts, and become more and more necessary as churches face increasing threats of redundancy and alternative uses or, through changes for liturgical or dual-use reasons, re-organisation of their internal arrangements.

College chapels have also been covered to the same or greater degree both in terms of physical description (RCHM 1939; Sherwood and Pevsner 1974; Tyack 1998) and of their fortunes through periods of religious change and rebuilding (eg. Fletcher and Upton 1983). Of particular interest are post-medieval Roman Catholic chapels, of which notable examples are found in Oxfordshire at Stonor and at Milton House, both remodelled in Gothick style in the 18th century, and Mapledurham, built in the same style in 1789.

Non-conformist places of worship have generally been much less the subject of study, partly because of their more modest architectural pretensions and partly because of their relative inaccessibility and, latterly, rate of conversion for domestic uses. A valuable record of what remained was made during the late 1970s (by Mr and Mrs Eustace; see also Marples 1986) and deposited in the SMR. Some of these places of worship have or had burial grounds attached. A rather greater potential area for recording is in the large parish or municipal cemeteries established in Oxford and some of the growing market towns in the mid- to late-19th century. In Oxford cemeteries were opened at Osney (on the site of the abbey) and at Jericho (St Sepulchre’s), with additional ones at Cuttesloe and Rose Hill. At Banbury two cemetery chapels in late Victorian Gothic style were built in the town’s new burial ground, both now demolished. These cemeteries contain interesting examples of funerary monuments during a period of considerable vigour in their design, and merit careful photographic survey and recording of memorial inscriptions. A separate category of monument, the war memorial has examples in virtually every town and village, principally commemorating those who fell in the Great War, often re-used for the dead of the Second World, though there are other memorials from earlier campaigns. In Oxfordshire the category is extended by the memorials in college chapels. All these were often the occasion for impressive and significant design, but as a category they are very much under-studied, with little published work (eg. Bruce 1991). There are opportunities for valuable work here to survey the whole field and hope to establish a pattern of commissioning and design across the county and beyond, as well as to establish particular needs for protection.

Possible future research agenda
- More planned work to identify, list, record and study the war memorials of the county as a category of monument.
- Encouragement and support for recording of selected churchyards and cemeteries would be valuable.
- Continuation of the recording of church interior decoration and furnishings is desirable, with selection led to a degree by impending internal re-arrangement or the possibility of redundancy.
- A specialist study of church monuments in the region (form, design, commissioning...
Historic military activity in Oxfordshire has two focusses, the involvement of the city and county in the Civil War of the 1640s, and the Second World War and subsequent cold war of the 1940s -80s. The city and county were central in the fighting and strategy of the Civil War (Eddershaw 1995), with three major registered battlefields within the region, at Edgehill 1642, Chalgrove, 1643 and Cropredy Bridge, 1644 (English Heritage Register of Historic battlefields 1995; see Stevenson and Carter 1973 for Chalgrove; ) and Oxford serving as the king’s capital throughout the war. The Civil War defences of Oxford are well-known from the map drawn by Bernard de Gomme in 1644, used as the basis for the later large-scale Siege of Oxford painting by Jan de Wyck (Munby 1988), and have been much discussed (Lattey et al. 1936; Kemp 1977) and confirmed on the north side of the city in a series of excavations in the 1980s and 90s (Durham et al.1983; OAU 1993). Elsewhere in the county the existence of garrisons in most of the market towns and some country houses has left little evidence known to date (though the deaths of soldiers is witnessed from time to time in local burial registers) but at Banbury excavations on the site of the castle in the 1970s brought to light a good deal of evidence for re-fortification and garrisoning, the defence of the castle and the destruction of parts of the town associated with the sieges (Fasham 1973 and 1983; Rodwell 1976). Elsewhere the archaeology of the war appears in isolated occurrences: the discovery of a Civil War sword in the thatch of a house at Chadlington (Gilmour 1992), the unexplained collection of armour, horse- and personal equipment from a house at Stanton Harcourt (Gilmour 1995) and a soldier’s pass issued at the end of the siege and found in a house in Oxford (Munby 2000).

The later period of 20th century military activity in the county is much less well-covered in the published record, either as regards the identification and description of surviving features in the landscape, documentary study of activity or the recognition of artefact evidence. A local group in the 1980s-90s surveyed the range and remaining evidence of military airfields in Oxfordshire and the tally of bomb fall sites, information which was deposited in the SMR. There have been similar studies and listing of air-raid shelters, and of concrete pill-boxes and tank-traps built as part of the strategic defence of the country during the Second War, also placed in the SMR though not published, and the major national survey for the CBA (Foot 2006). Recently there has also been some work in the recording of surviving local pill-boxes (at Coleshill, National Trust 2001). A particularly eloquent example of the archaeology of war is the collection of shrapnel from a Banbury bombing raid, preserved in the museum there.

For the Cold War in Oxfordshire there are two sites; the county’s emergency headquarters, first set up in the 1950s at Woodeaton Manor and now a relatively rare surviving example of such a provision (OAU unpublished client report 2005), and the massive USAF air base at Upper Heyford, finally abandoned in 1994. Upper Heyford presented, in its extensive range of buildings and other military features, particular problems of protection for a site of outstanding importance for military activity and strategic defence in the post-war period, and
was the subject of a Conservation Plan which considered these issues (OAU unpublished client report 2005).

**Possible future research agenda**

- Continue to seek opportunities to extend knowledge of Oxford’s Civil war defences, particularly in the eastern and southern sectors so far not well covered
- Extend the scope of information about 2nd World War defensive arrangements to include more on civilian defence, particularly air-raid shelters and including both identification and recording of sites and accompanying oral testimony
- Further studies of cold war operations and defences should be pursued, in order partly to identify features for protection; the scope and range of research activity will need to be on a wider-than-county, regional scale.

10 Material culture

*Earlier developments; study of post-medieval archaeological assemblages; probate and other records*

Consideration of the smaller-scale physical evidence for past ways of life, particularly of personal and domestic equipment, ceramics, furnishings and decoration, was part of the early identification of medieval and post-medieval archaeology as a subject worthy of attention, in the work on the New Bodleian site in the 1930s (Pantin 1937; Bruce-Mitford 1939). Continuing excavations with a post-medieval content in Oxford (as elsewhere, and particularly in London) confirmed the value of artefact studies of the period as a worth-while subject in their own right (in illuminating a personal aspect of the past), and as pointers to dating sequences, status and cultural and trading connections, as for earlier periods. Excavation added much material (especially ceramic) to the displays and reserve collections of the Ashmolean, but it was only relatively recently that close study of categories of finds material, the establishment of typologies and an extension of the range of finds has brought the subject to the level of understanding and detail for post-medieval material first suggested in studies in the USA (e.g. Noel Hume 1970) The material itself can now be seen as reflecting significant changes in material culture from medieval to post-medieval, as in the larger artefacts of houses, which was valuable in understanding the transition (Gaimster and Stamper 1997)

Studies in Oxford were attracted initially to three main categories of find: ceramics, sealed bottles, and clay pipes (Leeds 1941; Haslam 1969 and 1970; Biddle 1988; Banks 1997) and also to the decoration of post-medieval houses by means of wall-paintings, for which both city and county provided a good range of examples as the houses were investigated through demolition or conversion, from No 3 Cornmarket Street and the Golden Cross through a regular succession of houses in both city and county (Leeds 1936; Rouse 1972; Airs and Rhodes 1980; Munby 1992). The first opportunity to establish an extensive range of post-medieval material, in meaningful assemblages from closely identified contexts, and to subject them to close study was the excavation of the extensive area of the city in the Westgate excavations in the 1960s and 70s. The publication of that material (in Hassall et al. 1984) established a valuable framework and set of type series for future studies of post-medieval
material culture to which subsequent, smaller-scale discoveries have added detail and reliability, from a succession of excavations in the city (eg. Taylor and Hull 2002), and also in the market towns. The St Ebbe’s material included a full range of artefact types from the 16th to the mid-19th century, with a wide range of local and other English ceramics and imported wares (allowing a summary of pottery trends over the period within roughly 20 year periods); coins, tokens and counters; dress and harness fittings; iron knives, tools, keys and horse-equipment; bone and ivory combs, brushes and knife handles; glass bottles (including seals) and flasks; drinking glasses; window glass; clay tobacco pipes; hair and wig curlers; roof and floor tiles.

In providing context for some of this post-medieval personal and domestic material (and especially also the larger but more fugitive furniture and furnishings), the study of inventories in Oxfordshire also has a long history, with the publication of the early documents and of local studies based on them (Havinden 1965; Dannatt 1961/2), a great deal of work in eg. local studies classes, and latterly a more focussed interpretation of inventories for dwellings in Thame as a source of information for the status, layout and furnishing of houses (Buxton 2002).

The furnishing and use of college rooms is an aspect of material culture, and there are opportunities through colleges inventories to study this aspect of post-medieval university life also, linking with the investigation and analysis of new or altered accommodation within the colleges. Other aspects of college life will be revealed by excavation, as in the archaeology of food and drink bound up with the study of food remains, sealed bottles, and occasionally cesspits (Durham 1982). Other specialised areas of the archaeology of learning were demonstrated by excavations in the laboratory/basement of the Old Ashmolean (Bennett et al. 2000) and by implication in the finds of anatomised skeletons in the Castle Ditch (OA 2006).

Possible future research agenda

• Post-medieval below-ground archaeology tends to be investigated only as a by-product of sites identified for their medieval interest, in urban situations where later levels may have been extensively disturbed. There is a case for including in planning conditions the proper investigation of sites likely to be productive for their post-medieval interest, in order to provide the data for detailed studies of contexts and associations and help to build up a better picture of ceramic and other artefact sequences. This will be particularly productive for urban sites in Oxford, Wallingford, Wantage, Abingdon, Bicester and Witney.

• In particular, more detailed work should be concentrated on ceramics as a dating base, particularly for the 15th/16th century, and on helping to establish patterns of sources and manufacture for the market towns of the county.

• Studies are also needed on developing detailed understanding of non-ceramic artefact types found in excavation, especially perhaps bottle glass and tobacco pipes.

• It would be helpful to establish a methodology for the analysis of probate records, hearth tax returns etc., in order to maximise the benefits of work by a wide range of students of local history in this field. There is a need to help workers to contribute to the assembly and synthesis of material, perhaps through the creation of specific websites.
11 Crafts trade and industries

Range of activities from medieval to post-medieval and modern; studies and recording in the 1960s-80s; acceleration in closure of industrial enterprises; shops; mills

As in other areas, the presence of the university probably encouraged the recording of industrial activity while still current, with general reviews and surveys in the late 19th and early 20th century (British Industries Business Review 1895; Woods 1921) and the first VCH volume to be published was partly devoted to a historical treatment of the principal crafts and industries of the county (VCH, 2 1907). The range of activity in the post-medieval to modern period maintained some of the emphases of the medieval situation, particularly with respect to woollen and leather trades, the processes of milling and malting, stone-quarrying and masonry connected with the university and with church-building or repair (Arkell 1947; Oakschott 1975), brick, tile and pottery manufacture, and the wide range of wood-based crafts which supported building and agriculture. To these were added in post-medieval times the university-associated industries of paper-making (Carter 1957) and printing (Barker 1979), specialist weaving such as silk (VCH, 2 1907, 227 and 252), and an intensification of existing activities, with the development at one end of the scale of clockmaking particularly in Oxford and North Oxfordshire (Beeson 1962), and at the other a great growth in malting at Henley between 1600 and 1630 to supply local brewing and the river trade down to London (Plot 1677; Peberdy 1996). Some medieval manufacturing centres declined, as did Oxford, Burford and Abingdon for the production of textiles (Jackson 2002), but other centres eventually came to prosper by specialising, with blanket-making at Witney (Plummer and Early 1969), plush at Banbury and neighbouring villages (Beckinsale 1963; Hodgkins and Bloxham 1980) and eventually tweed at Banbury and Chipping Norton. Latest to appear were the metal based industries developing from the work of the blacksmith - ironworks in Oxford and other market towns, agricultural implement making including some on a large scale (John Allen’s of Cowley; Samuelson of Banbury), and from the early 20th century the growing motor-manufacturing industry of Morris at Cowley.

The establishment of the City and County Museum at Woodstock in 1966, with a particular brief to reflect local craft and industries, led to a good deal of activity in identifying and recording what survived or what had only recently disappeared, beginning with a summary of the field (Sibbit 1968). Work by the museum and its study group contributed a good deal of detail on craft and industrial activities to be incorporated in the SMR, and with publications on glovemaking (Leyland and Troughton 1974), Stonesfield slate (Aston 1974), and Oxfordshire mills (Foreman 1983). In the 1970s/80s a sequence of co-ordinated research projects looking at field and map-evidence, buildings, processes and equipment, and the people involved, considered some major Oxfordshire industries: brickmaking (Bond et al. 1980), pottery manufacture, at Nettlebed and Leafield though with a further site identified archaeologically at Combe (Stebbing et al. 1980) and brewing and malting (Bond and Rhodes 1985). The next candidates for research and recording would have been textile manufacture and agricultural implement making, though the work was not done with the same planned method.

At that time some of these industries were still active in the county, though they have since
gone, often with little record of buildings or processes. Only occasionally is it possible to trace the development of an industry through below-ground archaeological excavation, as it was at the old Clothing Factory site in Abingdon (Wilson 1989). It is particularly regrettable that when the detailed above-ground evidence was still there, it remained unrecorded, as for example at Chipping Norton, where tweed manufacture ended with very little record, or at Witney where the town’s major industry of blanket making finished with no co-ordinated attempt to record the processes and the people, though the VCH did a valuable service (Vol 14, 2004) in tracing the development of the sites and buildings from historical sources. Brewing in Oxfordshire within the last ten years has greatly contracted, with the ending of brewing at Abingdon, Oxford and Henley, again with no record made. Perhaps most extraordinarily, great swathes of Oxford’s major industry at the Cowley works were cleared for redevelopment in the 1990s with no survey or record of its buildings and processes, matching the astonishing dearth of preserved records for the company, and there is now remarkably little on which to base any coherent future studies. More recently the Eagle Ironworks in Oxford has been demolished for housing without, as far as is known, any record of buildings or processes.

The crucial point in recording an industry is to do so while the processes are still active or at least fresh in the memory, and the people still around who can describe and explain. This at least was the case with the exemplary record and publication of the highly specialist Spencer Corsets factory at Banbury, recorded by Sally Stradling, with the involvement of Banbury Museum (Stradling 1996). This will mean the identification of such significant craft or industrial activity as still exist before they are under threat, since once the processes of closure begin the physical evidence will begin to be eroded, the portable evidence removed and the essential human input may no longer be around to aid detailed understanding of how things worked. A particular threat currently seems to be the multiplicity of small industrial workshops near to the old town centres, often e.g. early garage services, which are fast disappearing with the pressures for house-building plots.

The same need to identify and record relates to the evidence for trading, in the built evidence for market activities and shops as well as in the documentary or pictorial record (Graham 1979; Vaisey 1966; Tiller 1997; Turner and Vaisey 1972). A good example of the survey of a socially significant store and collection of associated material (physical and oral) was the recording of Cape’s Department Store in the early 1970s (Foster 1973). Detailed investigation of structures, with recording as part of the planning process, will also have a role to play, for all areas of the topic, industrial or trading. Some investigations of early mills have been done at Holywell, Oxford and at Somerton in recent years (Bell 1996; North Oxon Field Archaeology Group, 1998). There may also be valuable information to be gained on earlier shopping in the market towns by looking for evidence during historic building surveys in the town centres.

Possible future research agenda

- Major industrial manufacturing or scientific undertakings still in production in the county should be identified and their archaeology, architecture and activities recorded now, before closure is threatened or major change effected. Candidates will include eg. breweries still in production (Hook Norton), printing works, industries such as aluminium and food processing at Banbury, Oxford’s continuing motor industry and the major national research operation of the atomic age at Harwell.
- There is a need to identify a smaller category of craft and industrial workshops
currently at risk of closure from redevelopment pressures and the difficulties in meeting new safety etc. legislation. It is important to identify candidates for recording before closure, when premises are still equipped and in operation and people are still around who can explain and illuminate.

- Means are needed as part of the planning process to apply pressure on companies closing down craft, industrial or commercial undertakings for conversion to other purposes to protect evidence and leave as much in place as possible to allow early recording.

12 Transport and communication

Medieval legacy of land routes; post-medieval river navigation; canals through the county; railways; motorways; air transport

The archaeology of post-medieval transport is involved first with roads and river navigation, then in canals and road improvement, the coming of the railways, and roads again (VCH, 4, 1979). The medieval system of high roads for the Upper Thames region comprised the east-west route from London via Tetsworth, Oxford, and on to Gloucester (with a branch via Faringdon towards Bristol), and the possibly more important north-south route from Southampton through Winchester to Oxford and on to Banbury and the Midlands, the two routes crossing at Carfax. There were other, earlier routes such as the Portway on the east side of the Cherwell and a network of lesser roads connecting the market towns with Oxford, with each other, and with the contiguous counties (see e.g. Lambrick 1969).

The maintenance of these roads provides a subject for documentary study in their upkeep by the parishes through which they passed, and their changing routes is an important aspect of landscape archaeology, involved in the charting of topographical change following from enclosure from the 16th century onwards. The forms of transport employed on such roads are not amenable to direct study until the coming (and survival) of the local regional waggon (an 18th century development), but can be followed in the depictions of coaches, carriages, carriers waggons and more humble means in the illustrations of Loggan and others from the 17th century onwards.

Road transport was particularly important to Oxford in the 16th century because of a decline in river trade and communication between Oxford and down-river in the late medieval period, not reversed until the earlier 17th century with improvements to navigation above Culham. Until then, and afterwards, Henley was the most significant river port for Oxfordshire, for exporting firewood, Chiltern timber, timber products, and malt (Plot 1677), and most goods were trans-shipped from there to Oxford, by road or by river, as suggested by recent work (Prior 1981 and 1982; Peberdy 1996). The improvements through to Oxford, however, allowed stone from Headington to be taken out and coals for Oxford to be brought in. There is a need for further investigation of early river improvements in locks and weirs, with fieldwork to extend what is known from the documentary and illustration (eg. Michael Angelo Rooker of Folly Bridge; Siberechts of Henley) and photographic record (Taunt 1872; Banks and Stanley 1990), and some recent work has been done in the area (Wessex Archaeology 1999; OAU 2000, i and ii). There is also a need to know more of the archaeology of river craft, from sailing barges to punts, extending what is known from other sources (Thacker 1914 and 1920; Wilson 1987).
Rivers and roads brings in bridges, and though work has been done on medieval and later bridges in Oxfordshire (from Tollit 1878 to later, 20th century work by Steane and others, unpublished but with detail in the SMR) much remains to be done for a detailed and comprehensive survey for the county. The improvements in roads and the introduction of turnpikes has received some attention (Albert 1972), including work by members of the OCCM study group in the 1970s (published as Museum Information Sheets, Lawrence n.d. and 1979) but again a more focussed survey from documentary and field sources would be valuable.

River navigation on the Thames was given fresh impetus during the 18th century by the building of connections through canal navigation. The Oxford Canal from Coventry (Bloxham and Bond 1981; Hadfield 1970) connected London with the Midlands by 1790 and, despite the opening of the Grand Union Canal four years later, remained important, especially for the bringing of coal and building materials to Oxford, and the taking out of agricultural and industrial products from the county, with Banbury developing as a significant canal port. Detailed work has recently been done in connection with the Banbury wharves and boatyards in advance of major canalside redevelopment (Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit, unpublished client reports, 1999 and 2000; OAU 1999), an excellent example of the survey of a site in its totality. A second canal, the Wilts and Berks, opened in 1810, connecting the Kennet and Avon with the Thames at Abingdon. It was abandoned and closed in 1914, but current plans to restore and re-open it provide opportunities for investigation and recording of early features, preserved by disuse from 20th century improvement or renewal.

Railways are also the subject of volunteer enthusiasm as well as professional study, and much work of recording and illustration has been done for the railways of Oxfordshire, main and branch lines, built since the 1840s (MacDermot 1964). A specific recording need was met for the internationally important LMS station building of 1851 at Oxford, demolished in 2000 (OAU Client report 1999), and further recording has been carried out for the railway turntable bridge over the Sheepwash Channel connection in Oxford between canal and river (OAU 1996), awaiting conservation with the support of Oxford Preservation Trust.

Other forms of public transport have been covered by studies of horse trams (Hart 1972) and motor buses, mostly based on documentary sources, though the Bus Museum at Long Hanborough provides a rich resource for studying the archaeology and social significance of the motor bus.

The late 20th century improvements to road transport and travel have on the whole been relatively well recorded in terms of physical change in the landscape and of detailed information on the processes of road construction, partly because the need to survey and excavate in advance has brought them within the ambit of professional archaeology. The major work of constructing the M40 through the county (especially the later length from Waterstock to Banbury in the 1990s) was well reflected in a planned series of recording projects aimed at preserving information and responses in the face of major topographical, social and economic change.

The other major form of 20th century transport, air transport and travel, is well represented in the county through the existence of the military airfields at Benson and the important base at Brize Norton, with civilian air services embodied in the small-scale commercial and training facility at Kidlington. The whole history of the development of flying in the county (early manifested through Royal Flying Corps activity on Port Meadow) is involved in military and
defence activity and is covered in Section 9 Warfare etc.).

Possible future research agenda

- Long distance routeways and communications need to be borne in mind when studying landscape changes brought about by enclosure in individual parishes.
- The social and architectural aspects of road transport - particularly study of surviving buildings connected with long-distance road travel by coach (inns, stabling and repair services) in towns and villages on main routes would be a productive subject for study.
- The need for further investigation of early river improvements in locks and weirs is indicated, with fieldwork to extend what is known from the documentary sources and from illustrations.
- There is also a need to know more of the archaeology of river craft, from sailing barges to punts, extending what is known from other sources.
- Current plans by volunteer group to restore and re-open the full length of the Wilts and Berks Canal provide considerable opportunities for investigation and recording of early features, preserved by early abandonment from 20th century improvement or renewal.

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Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Client report,
  Jo Pine 2003, 51,52 & 53 St Mary’s Street, Wallingford, Oxfordshire, an archaeological evaluation and watching brief
  (and TVAS 2004, Post-excavation assessment).

HISTORIC MAPPING
Oxford  Ralph Agas  1578
   Wenceslaus Hollar  1643
   Bernard de Gomme  1645
   David Loggan  1675
   William Williams  1732
   Isaac Taylor  1750
   Longmate  1773
   William Faden  1789
   Robert Hoggar  1850
OS 1:500 Map 1878 and subseq. OS mapping

Oxfordshire  Robert Plot  1677
   Thomas Jefferys  1767
   Richard Davis  1797

Berkshire  John Rocque  1760