

Easton Maudit VI, Northamptonshire – Armlets

The site – a brief summary

Located at NGR SP 895582, at Easton Top Low, part of the Compton Estates, it was recorded as site 'Easton Maudit 6' by David Hall in his 1966 Bedfordshire Archaeological Journal article, though subsequently referred to as EM 7 by the 1979 RCHM Inventory of Archaeological sites in Central Northamptonshire. Excavations of a RB structure by the Bozeat Historical & Archaeological Society was carried out between 1987 and 1994 with some investigation of the surrounding compound's boundary walls and other features continuing until 2001. The site appears to have been occupied continuously from at least a later Iron Age, to early Anglo-Saxon date, with the notable exception of much of the third century.

The excavated area revealed two stone-footed and two substantial stone-built roundhouses or towers, the former pre-dating, the latter becoming incorporated into and flanking a corridor villa. This structure included a cellar and also a large central room with a smaller heated room adjoining.

Several rooms were surfaced with coarse limestone tesserae, these included the full length corridor, linking the stone-built circular structures and which themselves may have been similarly surfaced. Smaller numbers of finer tesserae give evidence of something grander in an unknown location.

The building, part of a site, overwhelmingly agricultural in nature, we believe to have been a Villa, was notable not only for its integration of circular structures but also for its use of some innovative roof tile forms. These include those pre-formed for use in the valleys of a cross-gabled roof along with square tegulae with flanges to the top and bottom of their undersides, seemingly making them functional only as a single row of tiles. These tile types are largely unknown elsewhere, (some have been found at the nearby Harrold Kilns site, which likely manufactured these) and are the subject of one of these small reports and inventories submitted to the Roman Finds Group in an effort to make this information more widely available.

Some plans of the site are included at the end of this report.

The assemblage of Armlets and similar artefacts

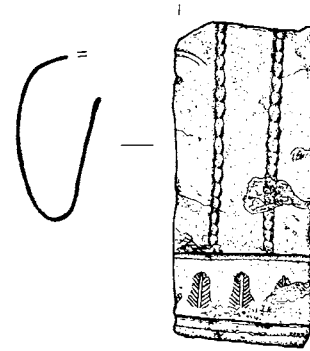
This group of artefacts comprise a couple recovered from the 1987-1994 excavation, (one from an Anglo-Saxon grave) along with a greater number of examples that were unstratified metal-detected finds, from parts of the field, mostly above the walled compound to the East and North of the Villa. These were all found prior to the establishment of the Portable Antiquity Scheme, and are not recorded on that database. Unpublished elsewhere, as yet, I make this inventory available to the Roman Finds Group membership. These artefacts, all others and the site archive are now the property of the Northamptonshire Archaeological Resource Centre. Hopefully a more detailed account of the site and artefacts can be published in some form in due course.

All artefacts are of Copper Alloy

SCALE : ALL ARTEFACTS ARE SHOWN AT 100%

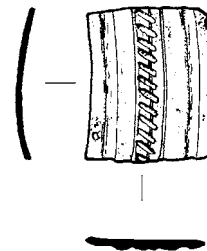
1 SF 302 (unstratified) – metal-detected field find

Part, including a terminal of a broad, flat plate armlet of the type described by N. Crummy as 'early'. Piece is 20mm wide and survives to a length of 50mm. Two longitudinal beaded grooves divide the width into three panels, these meet the terminal, which has two transverse beaded grooves, between which are three incredibly delicately incised tree or leaf motifs.



2 SF 306 (unstratified) – metal-detected field find

Short section of an armlet similar to above, the 17mm width has a series of longitudinal grooves and ribs, only the central zone being additionally adorned with a very fine groove over-cut by a series of short diagonal slots.



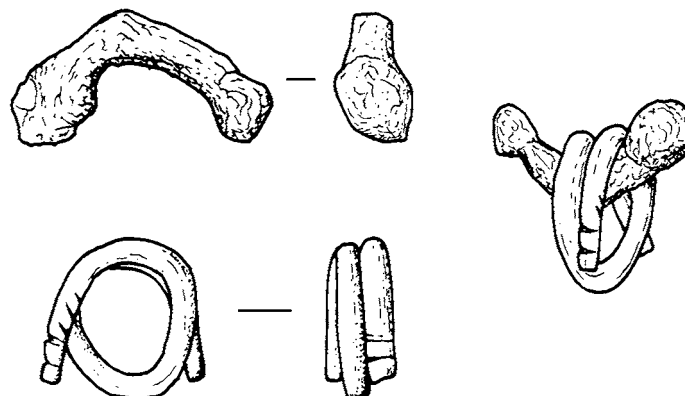
3 SF 109 (unstratified) – metal-detected field find

Short, 20mm, section of armlet (presumed to be such, although no curvature is evident) 11mm wide. Beaded grooves border the edges and the central zone is decorated with punched ring and dot motifs, these are particularly small and eight pairs of them are present on this fragment.



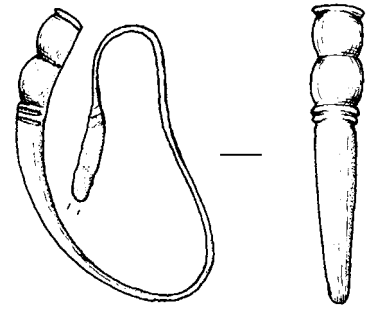
4 SF 384 (unstratified) – metal-detected field find

Bead imitative type, penannular and of broadly oval, 4 x 5mm section except at the terminal which is slightly flattened at the rear. The face and sides of this terminal is decorated by way of grooves to form two beads, three further diagonal notches at the sides only. The fragment would be 115mm long if straightened, it had however, been coiled tightly into, possibly a finger ring size, loop with an internal diameter of 12-13mm. Furthermore, after finding by metal detector, the clod of earth was opened up to reveal an iron object within the copper alloy loop. The short iron bar, about 30mm long, curved and with ball terminals was found with the looped armlet piece hanging on it, as shown in one of the illustrations below.



5 SF 251 (unstratified) – metal-detected field find

Bead imitative type, penannular, a fragment with one terminal decorated with a disc and two beads followed by two grooves forming another two discs. The remainder is undecorated. Flat section expanding to a 'D' shape at the terminal. Survives to length of 11 cm if straightened.



6 SF 134 (94179) – Area C, Grave 3, where it was found close to an Anglo-Saxon comb

A short fragment of thin, crenellated strip. Whilst looking like a piece of crenellated type armlet, this piece is surely too thin at only 0.4mm x 2.3mm at peaks and 1.1mm at troughs of the crenellations. The internal diameter is 30mm, suitable for neither a finger ring nor an armlet. The diameter of the piece could not have altered without fracturing it.

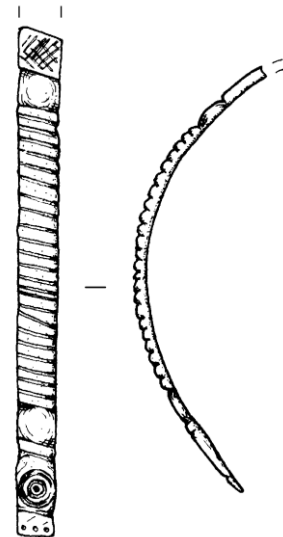
I feel that this was probably a decorative appliqué of some sort.



7 SF48 (unstratified) – metal-detected field find

Part of a multiple motif decorated penannular type armlet.

A square terminal has three punched dots, beyond which all zones have a slightly diagonal aspect, first a ring and dot motif followed by a single transverse rib, a bead, multiple ribs, a bead and a hatched panel. Fragment is then broken, at a length of 68mm from the terminal. It measures approximately 7mm in width and 2.2mm in thickness.

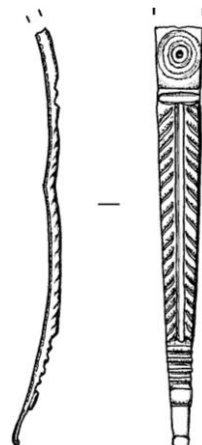


8 SF 938 (unstratified) – metal-detected field find

Part of a multiple motif decorated armlet including a hooked terminal.

Beyond the backstop for the hook and eye fixing are 4 lateral ribs followed by a zone with a central groove, the swells on either side carrying 17 pairs of diagonal slashes. After this is a rib and a rings and dot motif, at which point the breakage occurs.

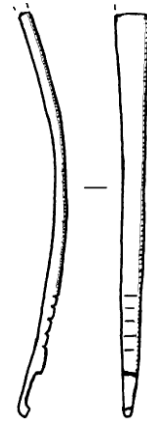
Piece survives to a length of 56mm.



9 SF 56 (uncertain) – Area B/C, found in spoil, East side

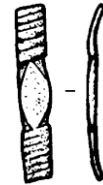
Part of an armlet including the hooked terminal. Piece is plain but for a group of five transverse grooves after an initial broadening that forms a back-stop for the fixing arrangement.

The piece survives to a length of 52mm and is 4mm wide at the point of breakage.



10 SF 132 (9204) – Area B, robber trench of wall 14, adjacent to room 7

Fragment of an armlet, or perhaps the profile suggests a flattened ring, with multiple motif decoration. This consists of an elongated bead with multiple, slightly diagonal transverse ribs to either side of it. Piece survives to 24mm in length and is 4.5mm wide



11 SF 375 (unstratified) – metal-detected field find

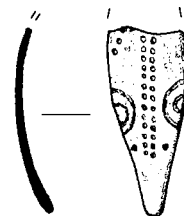
Piece of Ribbon-strip type armlet, with multiple transverse groove and the terminal with an eye from a hook and eye arrangement.

Fragment survives to 30mm, it is 4.5mm wide



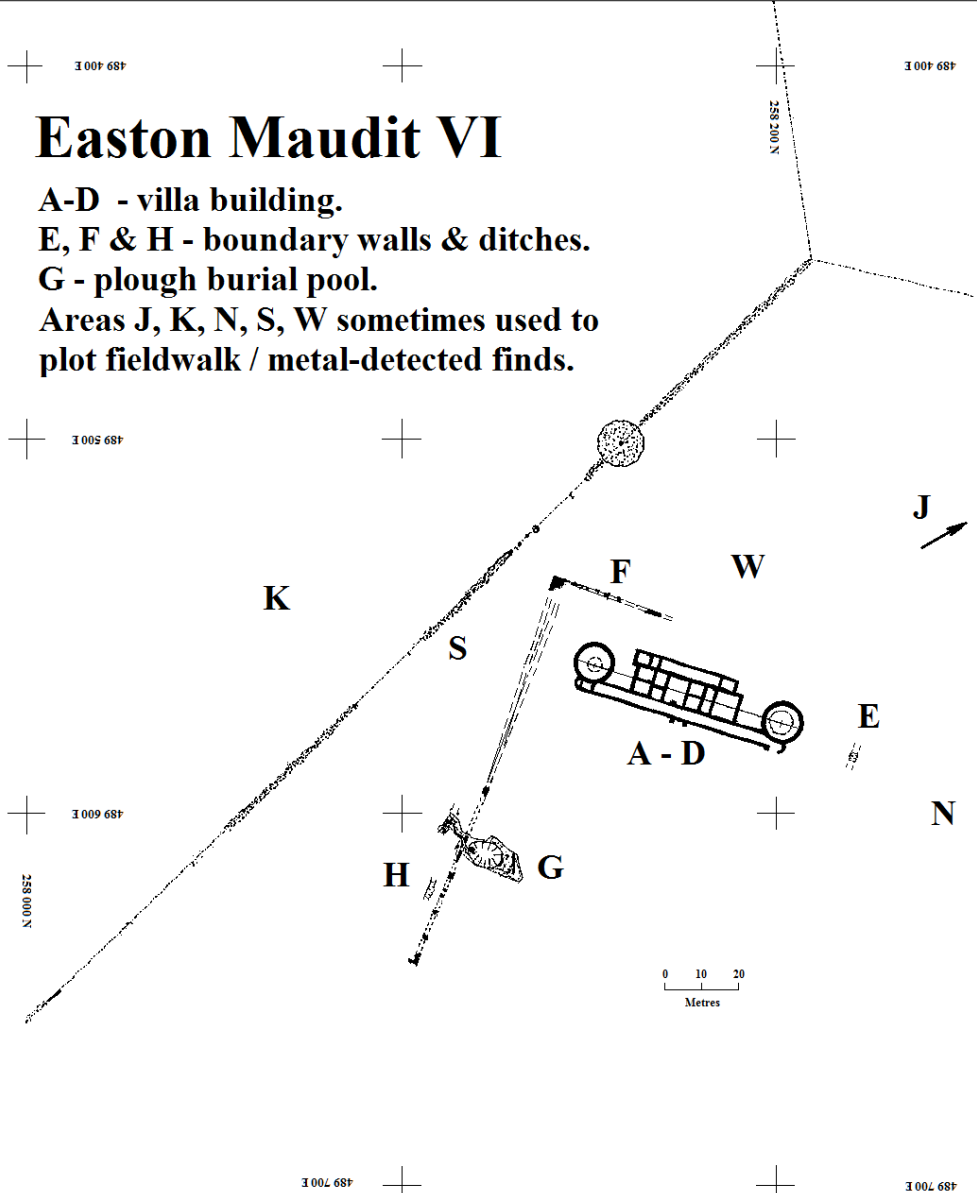
12 SF 296 (unstratified) – metal-detected field find

Terminal of armlet decorated with a central, longitudinal line of paired punched dots, with uncertain arrangement of additional dotted infilling, along with a pair of twin punched ring motifs.



Easton Maudit VI

A-D - villa building.
 E, F & H - boundary walls & ditches.
 G - plough burial pool.
 Areas J, K, N, S, W sometimes used to plot fieldwalk / metal-detected finds.



DATE:--		SCALE:--		DRAWN:--	
DRAWING No.				CHECKED:--	
PROJECT:-- name of work:					
CLIENT:-- name of organization:					
BRUCE PATRICK MAINT. C.E.S. 75 BROADWAY, NORTHAMPTON, NN1 4SE. Tel. (045) 71888					
TITLE:-- site name:					

Easton Maudit VI - The Four Roundhouses

This plan is provided to explain the many and various names and numbers which have been applied to the four stone-footed roundhouses found within the excavated area.

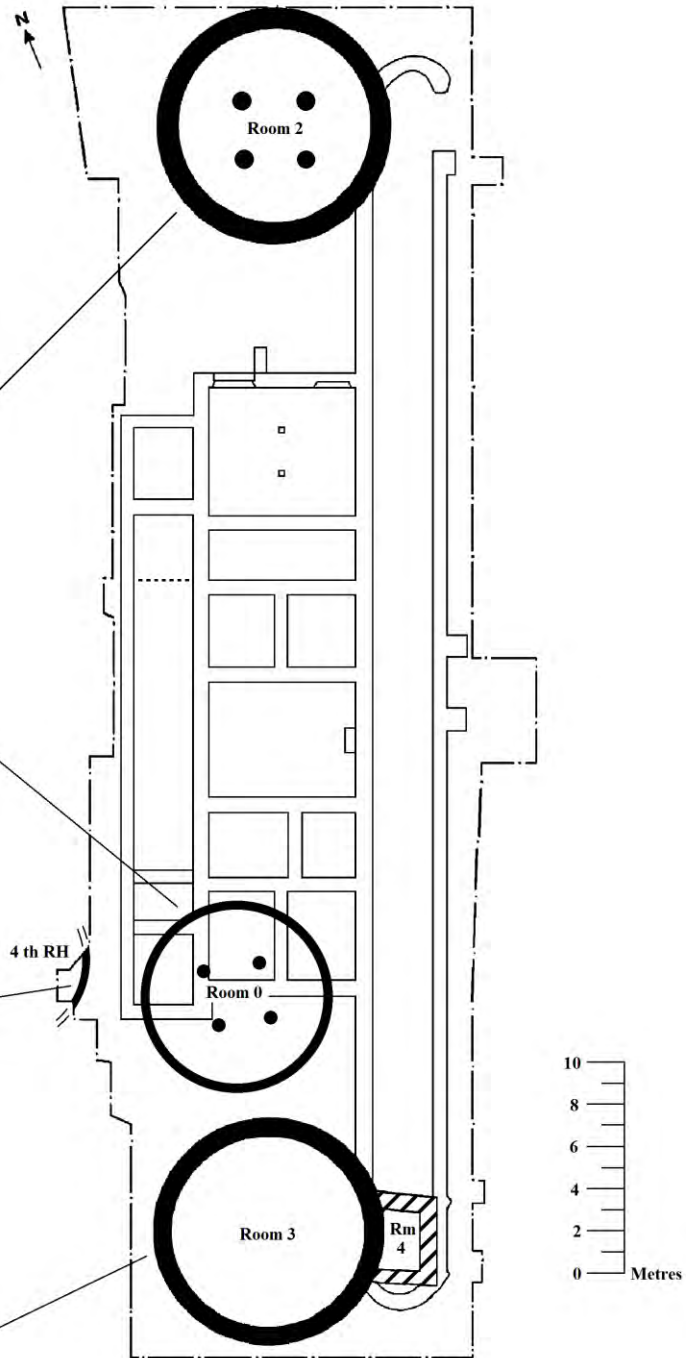
For clarity, all wall circuits are shown intact, omitting the cuts made into them variously by the villa walls, land drains and a ditch.

Northern roundhouse, Room 2 of the villa is also known as Roundhouse #2, it being the second to be found. Its wall is of coursed limestones on pitched limestone footings, the wall being #45 in the wall numbering sequence. Four solidly packed limestone pads are interpreted as being the base of supports for the building's roof, (and maybe a second storey).

Early Roman roundhouse, the third to be found, it is also referred to as Room 0, and sometimes as the ERRH. Its footings are a circuit of paired bunter pebbles, given context number (94175). These enclose a mortar floor, (8003). An arrangement of four pads of densely packed clay with stones, within and beneath this floor surface are interpreted as the bases for roof supports.






The fourth roundhouse, is given context number (94174) as a whole, only a very small part of it was within the excavated area. It featured in the excavation less substantially even than the plan suggests, the uncovered arc being cut by a later ditch. The structure appears to have stood on a circuit of bunter pebbles in a similar manner to that nearby. These pebbles on either side of the ditch are contexts (94156) and (94157), whilst the remnants of a mortar/clay floor shares number (94174) with the structure as a whole.

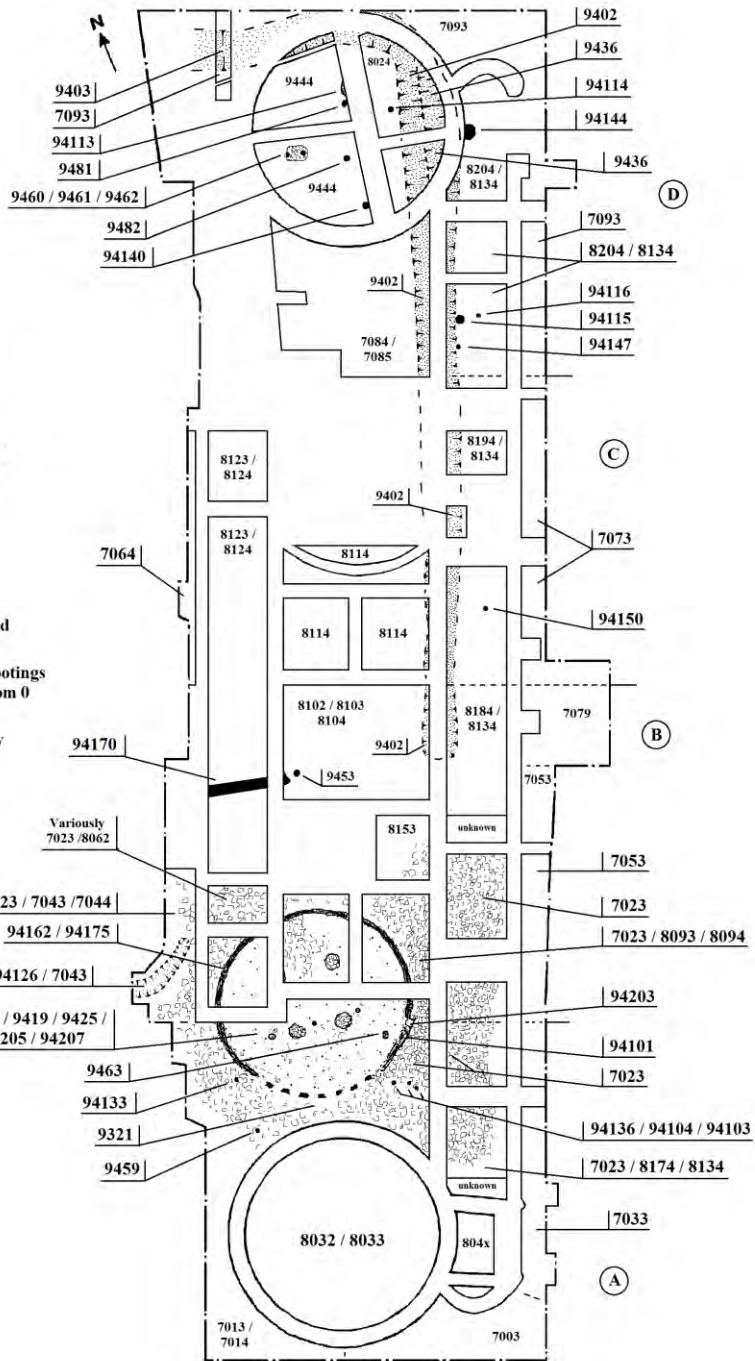
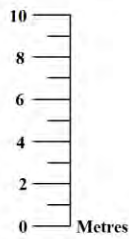
Southern roundhouse, Room 3 of the villa is also known as Roundhouse #1, and as Top roundhouse, it being the first to be found and located towards the top of the field. Its wall is of limestone, coursed on pitched footings. Wall is #1 in numbering sequence. This structure is believed to have once stood alone but for a porch, Room 4. We believe it was later incorporated into the villa, with the porch being amalgamated into the eastern corridor. Unlike Rooms 0 & 2, no substantial post pads to base roof supports were found. A circuit of modest sized postholes within the wall, not shown here, appears inadequate for this purpose.



Easton Maudit VI






Interpretation of the villa site with only the Early Roman roundhouse, Room 0 built, along with a yard and enclosing ditch

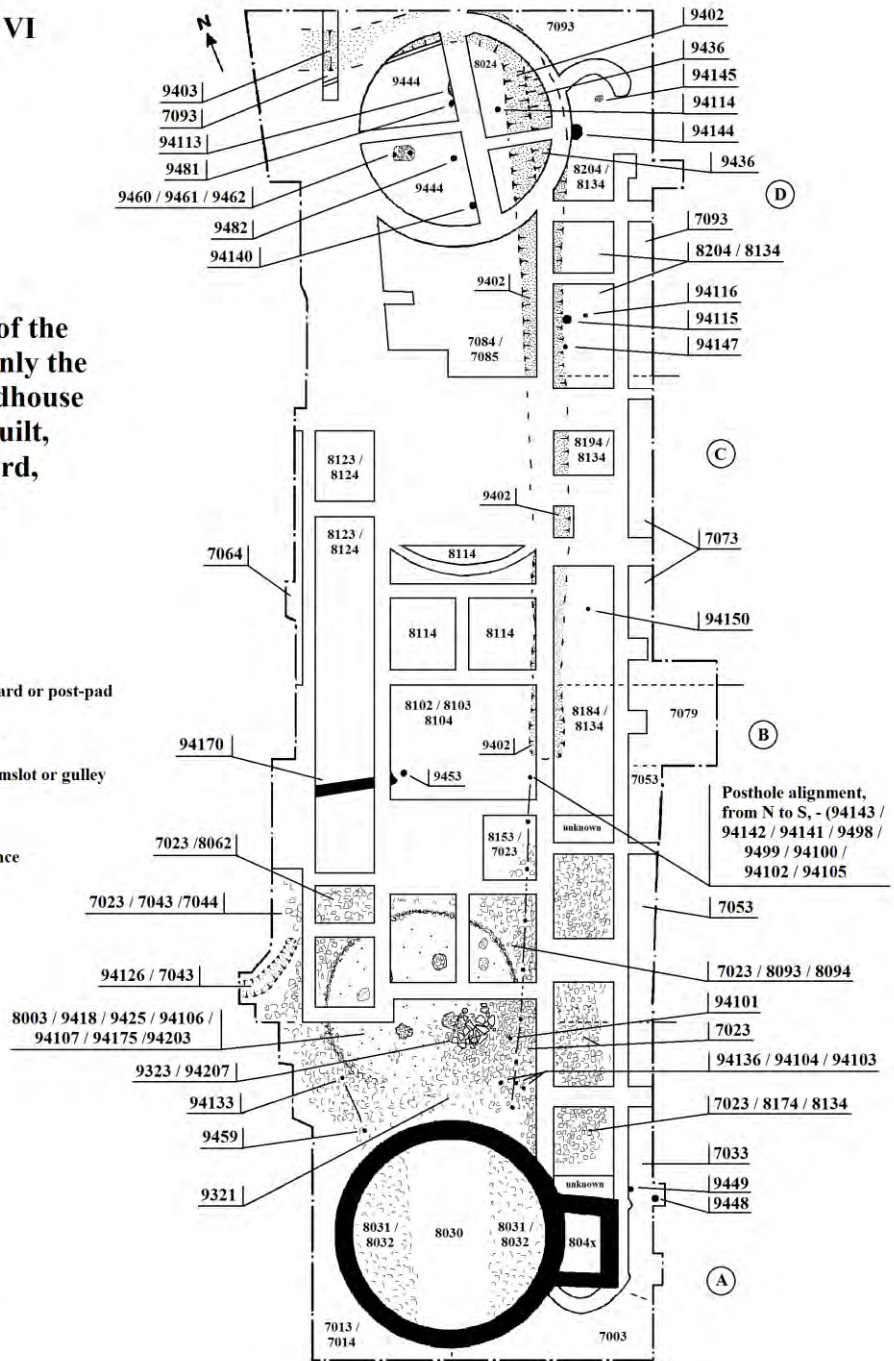
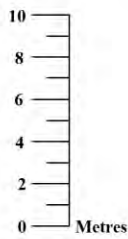
-  - Stone surface, of yard or post-pad
-  - Pebble, clay and flat limestone footings of early Roman roundhouse, Room 0
-  - Undetermined beamslot or gully
-  - Posthole
-  - Clay / mortar floor



Easton Maudit VI

Interpretation of the villa site with only the Southern roundhouse and its porch built, along with a yard, enclosing ditch and fences

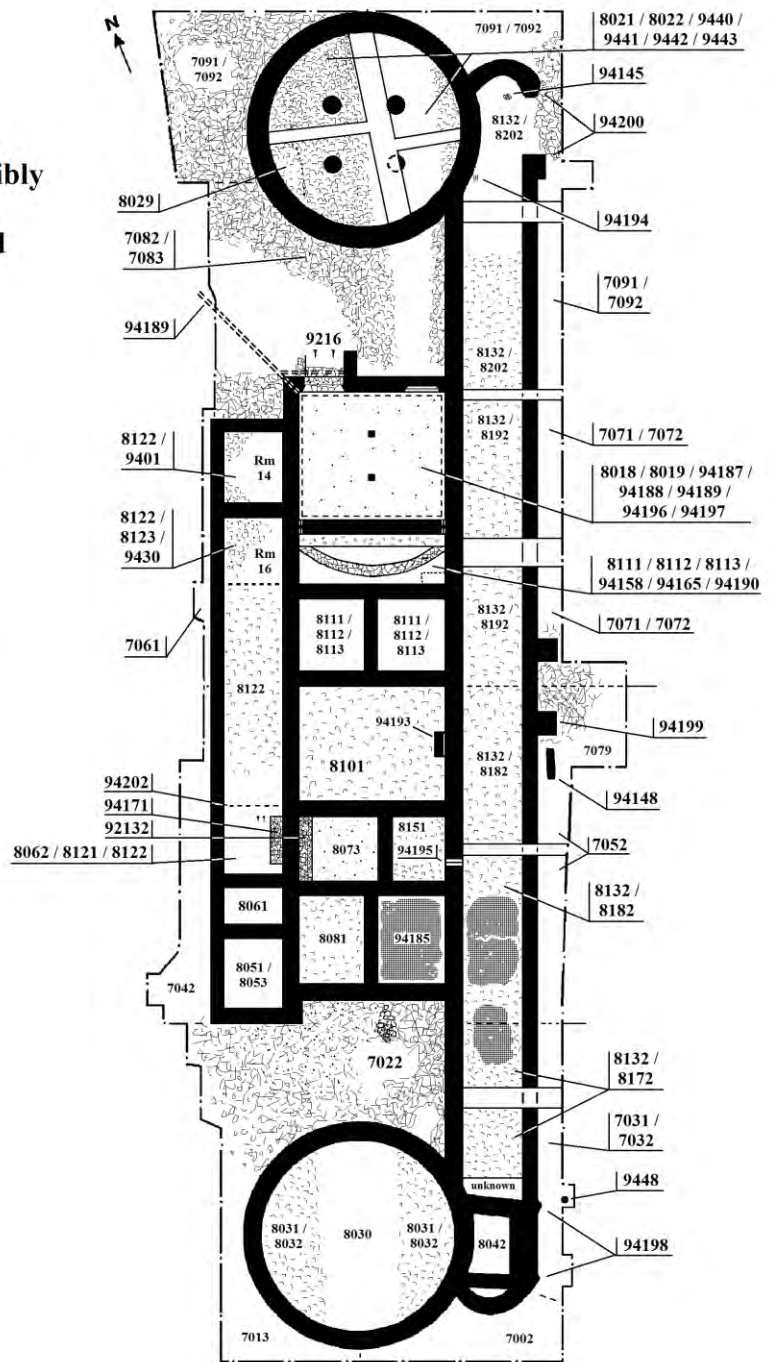
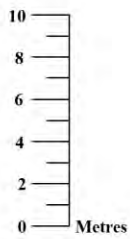
-  - Stone surface, of yard or post-pad
-  - Threshing surface
-  - Undetermined beamslot or gully
-  - Posthole
-  - Postholes in sequence



Easton Maudit VI

Interpretation of the villa
at its most complete, possibly
being reconfigured at the
time of its destruction and
abandonment

- Yard surface or other stonework.
- Clay berm.
- Substantially intact
Tessellated floor surface.
- Stone subfloor, those in Rooms
10 & 13 are substantial enough
to support a Tessellated floor,
others are less so.
- Clay / Mortar floor, both
subterranean



Easton Maudit VI
Wall and room numbering

