

Further notes on Paulton Villa

The Paulton Villa (see Camerton No 35 p23) on which Bill Wedlake had done an exploratory excavation and which had been the focus of our April field walk in 1996 had in fact been previously excavated by the Reverend John Skinner in 1818. It is difficult to discover the precise site but Skinner describes the excavation of two adjacent houses in some fields on high ground between Paulton and Camerton overlooking Clandown with a view into Wiltshire and just south of the Ridgeway road (known as Pow's field to Bill).

There appeared to be a rural dwelling houses of a corridor type, the eastern one being better built and containing a wing with a large hypocaust room which seemed to have been floored with cement and its walls plastered with stucco painted green, yellow and brown.

Immediately to the north of the north-west angle of the house were two, 7 feet deep pits in which were found coins of Pius and Faustina, a Samian cup and an urn of Castor ware.

Close by, an internment was found in a corner of a room. Another internment was found in the front of the house, containing an urn with burnt bones and a silver coin of Pius.

Excavation showed that the second house was not so well built but that it seemed to have contained some sort of tessellated floor.

Traces of other buildings or walls were noticed on both the north and south of these houses but nothing definite could be made out on Skinner's plans.

The Society's field walk in 1996 did discover fragments of Roman pottery, pennant roof tiles and indeed a few tesserae at Pows field, east of Paulton.

An attempt at aerial photography of the site by Jeff Adams from a balloon in the summer of 1997 was thwarted by adverse winds.

This is one of the sites that we may investigate further in the future. A report on the finds has yet to be completed.

Pat Briley