

Geophysics at Iford Manor

A survey on a steep sloping field north of the Manor House

During the early months of 2011, a geophysical survey led by David Kerrison was undertaken, on the steep field next to the orchard which is immediately north of the manor house and garden, on the Wiltshire side of the River Frome, at approximate location ST79955905. The modern driveway loops round this field in order to find an easier gradient down the hill.

John Oswin

The survey was conducted using a twin probe resistance meter (0.5m probe separation) and magnetometer – fluxgate gradiometer. The field was divided into 20m grid squares, and in each square 20 traverses were done, taking readings with both instruments at 0.5m intervals. A contour survey using a total station was started but not completed.

The magnetometer was greatly hindered by the iron fence around the field and also by protective fences around saplings. The steep slope also added difficulties, but the measurable area of the field was surveyed in total using manual logging. The results of the surveys are shown below.

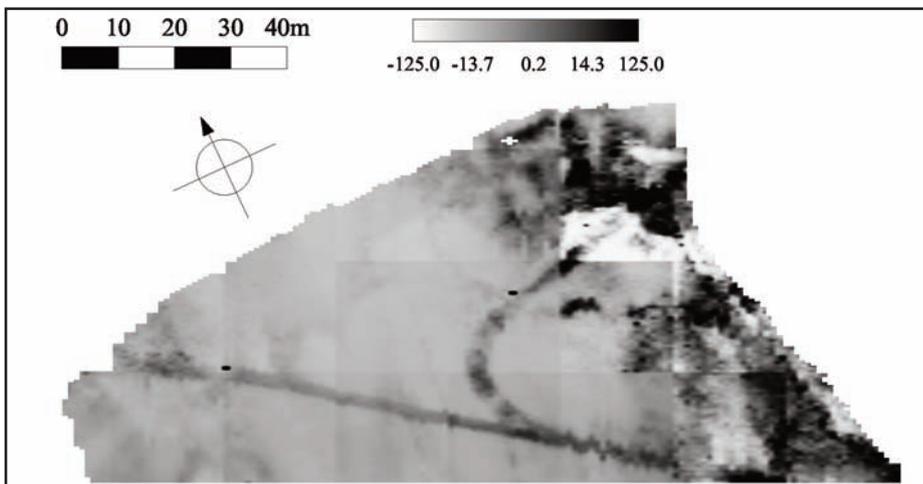


Figure 1
Resistance survey Iford

The resistance survey proved the main source of information. It shows a trackway running from the house gently across the slope, heading north. A track also branches off this and curves round sharply as it climbs the steep slope to the top of the field. The latter track is also evident as a hollow way, but the former is not visible on the ground.

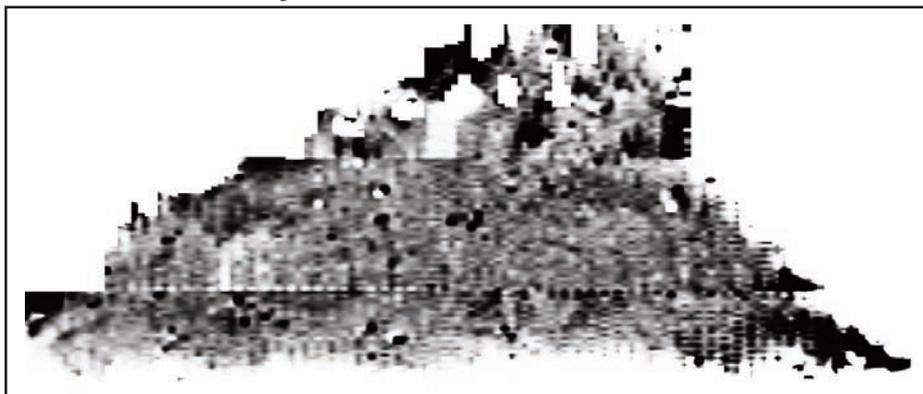


Figure 2
Magnetometer survey Iford

There is an area of high resistance at the top of the field, and this suggests walls, either of a building, or of some form of compound. It has rectangular portions, but overall has a bowed shape. This sits on a slight terrace. The purpose of this building and its age cannot be discerned from the ground surface. It does

seem to be served by the curving steep trackway, and this suggests that it has some connection with Iford Manor House, either in its current or in some previous form.

The magnetometer survey shows little other than ferrous interference, but there are signs of a circular feature low down in the field, and there may be further rounded features surrounding it or attached to it. Their purpose and age are not obvious on the surface or from the plot. There are two short curving lines of possible post holes, about 5m apart, descending the steep slope. It is intended to undertake further geophysics at Iford in 2012.