1.7 **The corn-drying ovens: detailed descriptions**

Corn Drier 1 double T corn drier Late Roman
Tr 4 L278795

This corn drier was apparently constructed in the open, as no evidence of a contemporary building survived. In brief it consisted of the foundation cut F852, which contained the flint and cob walls, F851 and foundations, L465, which created two T-shaped flues, F827 and F849 at the south end and the stoking chamber, F850 at the north end. The degree of burning on the base of the flues indicates it was in use for some time, before it was deliberately demolished and robbed of the flint from the walls for probable reuse in building 3. The south section of wall of F851 was left *in situ* to serve as the foundation for the north wall of building 3 at this point. The robber trench F799 was refilled with debris from the demolition of the corn drier (L463–464). All the individual parts of the corn drier are described below under each feature number.

F852 Construction cut
Length: 6.00 m Width: 5.80 m Depth: 0.85 m Aligned: SSE–NNW
Rels: contained F849–51, F827, L465; ?cut F835; cut by F799; below L464

The trench was a large trapezoidal cut 6 m long. At the south end it was 5.8 m wide with recesses cut at the south-east and south-west corners 1.3–1.4 m wide and 0.8 m deep. From these the walls were angled in gradually converging so the cut was only 3.3 m wide at the north end. Here steps had been cut into the chalk in the north-east corner 1.5 m wide leading northwards out of the stoking chamber and to the west of these a recess was thus formed 1.8 m wide and 0.8 m deep. The walls on all sides were straight and vertical, all angles were sharp except where damaged by subsequent robbing, most notably along the west side. The base was flat and even, apart from hollows worn in the base of the flues.

L465: Covering the base of the foundation cut where the flue walls were to be constructed was a pinkish-brown marly clay mixed with rounded chalk grit and fragments up to 15 mm plus a scatter of chalk lumps and angular flints 30–70 mm. The surface was flat and trampled [most likely resulting from subsequent robbing activity rather than construction]. This was 70 mm thick and forms the basis for construction of F851.

F851: The wall was constructed around the outer edge, as well as a block in the centre (none of which survived) to create the two T-shaped flues, F827 and F849 and the stoking chamber F850.

F851 L262740–L310766 Corn drier wall
Length: 5.80 m Width: 0.40 m Height: 0.35 m
Part of CD1 Within F852 Cut by F799, F829 Below F802, F828

The wall was constructed within the foundation cut F852 to create the flues F827, F849 and stokehole F850. The wall originally ran round the perimeter of the whole cut to create an outline akin to a capital A. Most of the wall had been robbed out either at the time of demolition prior to construction of building 3 or subsequently during the robbing of that building. As a result only a few courses survived along its southern line, where it had

subsequently served as the foundation for F802 of building 3 and a small area in the north-east corner of the stokehole. Robbing appears to have stopped on the south when chalk started to predominate over flint in its construction. Three courses survived along the south side, but only the lowest in its entirety; the upper was very fragmentary.

The wall was constructed of carefully laid horizontal courses of chalk blocks and knapped flint nodules, both fairly angular, though the chalk is slightly worn. The blocks range in size from 100–180 mm long and in the surviving section chalk appears to be dominant forming about 80 per cent. The stones were laid in a matrix of chalk cob, composed of clay marl, chalk grit and small chalk up to 20 mm. It appears that flints were selected to form the facing blocks with chalk 80–150 mm set in two lines forming the structure behind. The flints had been rendered with a coating of cob 10–20 mm thick. There was little sign of burning or effects of heating on the cob, though a thin film of ash adhered to the lower surface up to a height of *c.*80 mm.

A small section of the wall survived around the north-east corner of F850. Here the entire width of the wall was constructed of squared flint nodules 130 x 130–260 x 160 mm. Only the lowest course remained.

F827 L290770 East flue
Length: 3.60 m Width: 2.40 m
Cross flue: length – 2.38 m width – 0.26 m depth – 0.85 m
Longitudinal flue: length – 3.20 m width – 0.70 m depth – 0.07 m
Aligned: SE–NW
Rels: part of CD1; within F852; cut by F799; below L464

All but the base has been truncated by F799. This is a T-shaped flue with the longitudinal flue set at an angle of 108° to the cross flue. It had vertical sides formed by the cob layer (465) and the flint and cob wall F851. The flue had a flat, worn base with distinct hollowing at the north end of the longitudinal flue extending for 1.8 m. The chalk had been burnt grey along most of the length of the longitudinal except for the southernmost 0.6 m. At the north end in the deepest part of the hollowing it had been intensely burnt to pinkish-grey or pinkish-brown. A number of small holes *c.*50–150 mm across and no more than 20–50 mm deep occurred along the flue edge at intervals: it would be possible to hypothesize that these related to construction or function, but the evidence from F849 suggests rodent activity was responsible.

Fill: (1) On the base of the flue confined to the worn hollow was a thin layer composed of very fine black charcoal dust and ?cereal grain. This extended north of the flue into the stokehole, where it was very fine compacted soot mixed with burnt clay flecks. [Cinders from firing] Flotation sample: [3326].

L466: above the charcoal lens (1) and over the rest of the base of the flue was a layer of pure soft powdery grey ash, which was thickest (70 mm) in the centre of the longitudinal flue thinning drastically (10 mm) in the cross flue. It did not extend as far as the north end. (From the quantity of ash lenses in the back fill of the robber trench this ash and that in the west flue were originally thicker and had been truncated by the robbing.) Flotation sample: [3447].

F849 L270760 West flue
Length: 3.80 m Width: 2.40 m
Cross flue: length – 2.40 m width – 0.28 m depth – 0.78 m
Longitudinal flue: length – 3.40 m width – 0.70 m depth – 0.88 m
Aligned: NbyN–SbyS
Rels: part of CD1; within F852; cut by F799; below L464

This flue was almost entirely truncated by F799 (and the remainder, all but wiped out by the excavator). This T-shaped flue formed the western part of the corn drier. The wider longitudinal section is set at an angle of 108° to the cross flue at the south end. The walls (where they survived) were flat with a vertical side and the floor was smooth and flat. The floor had been burnt grey along the longitudinal except for the most southerly 0.6 m and a deep hollow had been worn over a distance of 2.3 m from the stokehole. Along the edge of the flue at the south end were shallow pockets, mostly circular, 50–100 mm diameter, but some linear up to 300 mm long. Under the right conditions it was possible to see that at least some of these had scratch marks suggestive of rodent activity. A likely explanation is that rodents were attracted to the flues by fallen grain, when the driers were not actually being fired up.

Fill: (1) Soft powdery light grey ash containing rare fine flecks of charcoal and burnt daub occurred in the hollow in the northern section of the flue. A fragment of flat limestone slab *c.*100 mm rested on the surface. [Well combusted fuel from firing.] Flotation sample: [3339].

(2) A very thin discontinuous lens of fine black charcoal dust and ash, containing rare chalk flecks thickened at the junction with the stokehole, where the hollowing is deepest. Here it was pinkish-black from an admixture of burnt clay or chalk. Flotation sample: [3344]. The floor of the flue here was very worn and hollowed and intensely burnt merging with the charcoal.

(3) Surviving in the cross flue was a thin lens of grey ash and fine charcoal dust containing chalk and burnt daub grit. It appeared to be thickest at the east end and was at least 50 mm thick against the rear wall. Flotation sample: [3346].

F850 Stoking chamber L270790
Length: 2.40 m Width: 1.00 m Depth: 0.73 m
Rels: part of CD1; within F852; cut by F770, F799, ?F835; below L464

The actual cut for the stokehole measured 3.4 x 2.0 m with the north-east corner given over to steps 1.5 m wide cut into the chalk. The first step 0.35 m deep and at a depth of 0.43 m survived and part of the tread of the next one up. The stoking chamber itself had a cob and flint wall (F851) constructed around it, which probably formed some sort of ledge or bench with a recess in the north-west corner next to the steps that could have been used to stack fuel. Over most of the area only the basal cob layer (465) survived, but around the north-east corner the lowest courses of the wall F851 were present. The wall probably created the lowest step into the trapezoidal stoking chamber (its length increases from 2.2 to 2.4 m).

Fill: (1) Soft powdery grey ash contained flecks and fragments of charcoal scattered throughout becoming denser to the north where the layer was thickest. A few slabs of limestone 30–120 mm lay flat on the surface and pieces of cob and burnt clay embedded in it [these probably relate to the demolition of the structure rather than its use]. Rare pot and bone occurred except for a large part of a broken pot. Fired clay sample: [3416]. SF2509: Fe nails.

Flotation samples were taken on 400 mm grid across the layer.

(2) Thin lens of blacker ash and soot lay over the surface of the floor mixed with grit of chalk and burnt clay/cob [probably material crumbled off the flue walls during use and raked out with the ash]. Flotation samples taken on 400 mm grid across layer. SF2509: 4 Fe nails; pottery (C2 AD)

The layout of flotation samples [3327]–[3338], [3340]–[3342] taken on a grid of 400 mm squares spatially and subdivided vertically along the north row.

F799 Tr4 L278800 Robber trench of corn drier
Length: 6.00 m Width: 5.85 m Depth: 0.70 m
Rels: cut CD2 (F852, etc.); cut by F802, F829

Description: In form the robber trench followed that of the foundation trench F852 of the corn drier, except that it left the south wall untouched and did not extend quite to the base leaving the final layer of cob below the lowest levels of flints in the cob walls.

Fill: There was effectively a single fill, but it was divided in excavation into two thick spits, the upper L463 and the lower L464.

L464: This mixed heterogeneous layer was composed of chalky clay marl in varying shades of brown, light brown and creamy brown mixed with a high density of chalk grit and angular chalk 10–80 mm and occasional angular broken flint nodules *c*.100 mm, flecks of charcoal and broken clay tile. Within the layer mainly towards the west were diffuse small grey ash lenses. In the centre was a mound of chalky grey clayey soil containing chalk grit and small angular chalk lumps.

L463: A mixed layer of clayey and chalky marl, mottled light and creamy brown, contained a high density of chalk grit and angular chalk 10–60 mm, plus occasional angular flints 50–70 mm, some shattered and burnt. Distributed throughout this were discontinuous horizontal lenses 20–60 mm thick of ash and fine charcoal. Artefacts were rare including a fragment of clay tile, pottery, a few pieces of limestone slabs and fired clay. [These layers were clearly the debris left from the walls and flues of the corn drier after all usable stone had been removed.]

Corn drier 2 double T corn drier Late Roman

This corn drier was constructed to fit precisely into the east end of building 3, being bounded on three sides by the north, east and south wall of the building. The *in situ* structure was not removed or excavated in any way, only deliberate infill of the cross flue, drying chamber and stoking chamber. As a result some details of the structure must remain unresolved, though the evidence of corn drier 1 can be drawn on to provide a parallel structure. As CD2 appears to be the replacement of CD1 it is likely that a similar layout was adopted.

The corn drier was composed of three parts: two drying chambers above T-shaped flues at the east end (F819, F820) and a stoking chamber (F825) at the west end. What remains unclear is whether all three were constructed in a single foundation trench comparable to F852 of corn drier 1 or whether there were separate foundation cuts. The general similarity of the structure to CD1 would support the former, but no clear cut edge of a foundation trench could be

traced, because of the similarity of the natural marl to the cob walls and the manner in which they merged. Moreover the wall between the stoking chamber and the ovens looked more akin to *in situ* natural marl, through which the stokehole flues had been cut rather than it being constructed wall.

The two drying chambers were square measuring 2.2 m^2 with the floors sunken by about 0.3 m below the level of the building floor. They were separated by a wall 0.5–0.6 m wide of either natural or constructed cob (it is unclear whether the two ovens shared a foundation trench or were constructed in separate cuts). The cross flue at the end of each chamber had been left open, but may have been covered at a higher level by some sort of shelf or structure on analogy with CD4 (see below). However the construction may have been somewhat different as in both ovens in the back fill at the junction of the flues was found a very distinctive saddle-shaped limestone slab measuring approximately 0.35 x 0.2 m deliberately shaped to the distinctive shape, suggesting this was an important or necessary feature for correct functioning of the structure.

The cross flues were narrow with the end walls sloping in to the base. The longitudinals of the T-shaped flues diverged from the stokehole to join with the cross flues at an angle of about 70°. These were not excavated but it was apparent from their opening into the stokehole that the two were slightly different: the stokehole arch of the northerly flue to F820 was noticeably lower than the southern one to F819 and the floor was not as worn. It would appear that the southern (right hand) flue had been more intensely fired, a feature also noted in CD1 and CD3.

F819 L333725 North corn drier
Length: 2.76 m Width: 2.40 m Height: 1.35 m
Cross flue: top length – 2.10 m base length – 1.60 m top width – 0.40 m
base width – 0.35 m depth – 1.35 m
Longitudinal flue: length – 3.20 m width – 0.60 m depth – 0.66 m
Aligned: E–W
Rels: within building 3; part of CD2; below L457

Structure: Only the backfill in the drying chamber and the cross flue was excavated to reveal the general structure. The structure would appear to be set into a rectangular cut, but this was not exposed except at its upper edge, which was not altogether clear because of the similarity of the cob construction with the natural chalk marl. It was not clear whether the foundation cut was continuous with the stoking chamber F825 or whether a wall of *in situ* natural marl separated the two, rather than a constructed cob wall. On analogy with the other corn driers (F852, F811) it should be the latter, but the character of the intervening wall suggested it might be *in situ* natural.

The floor: (3) At a depth of 0.28–0.32 m below the present surface of natural lay the floor of the drying chamber. This was formed of yellowish brown clayey marl containing a moderate–low density of rounded chalk 10–40 mm and grit. The floor formed a continuous curve with the adjacent wall surface and had been worn smooth, but had not been baked or burnt.

Floor foundation: (4) The floor had been laid on a foundation of small rounded chalk 10–20 mm and grit forming a compact surface. Below this the foundation cut had been filled with a solid construction of courses of large flint nodules *c.*150 mm set in chalky marl cob.

The construction is continuous with and essentially all part of the walls (5). There are occasional large flat limestone slabs *c*.210–370 x 30 mm built in lying horizontally.

Walls: (5) The wall construction was best exposed in the east wall at the back of the cross flue. It was constructed of flint nodules 60 x 80–80 x 120 mm and some up to 200 mm long were laid as horizontal courses in a cob matrix, made of clay marl mixed with chalk grit and rounded lumps 10–25 mm. The coursing was barely visible as the walls had been rendered with daub/cob. A course of limestone slabs or roof slates were laid in the east wall behind the cross flue at a height of 0.2 m above the floor of the drying chamber (1.2 m above the base of the flue): they appear to have been broken off suggesting that originally they projected out over the flue. The wall rises 0.3 m above the floor of the drying chamber. The rear wall of the flue was vertical, but the others were all sloping slightly and at the ends of the flue the walls slope in very acutely to create a hopper effect. There is little sign of heating on the wall surface; any blackening appears to derive from ash lying against it.

Primary fill: (2) On the floor of the drier was a very thin discontinuous trample of fine ash and charcoal forming a barely perceptible skim. This extended right up to the lip of the cross flue suggesting there was no retaining rim here to prevent grain falling into the flue.

(8) Over the base of the cross flue was a spread of soft grey ash, lighter in colour at the top, becoming darker with fine flecks of charcoal to the base. Interleaved with this were lenses or lumps of yellowish brown cob eroded off the walls, plus occasional angular flints *c*.80 mm and lumps of orange burnt clay. It ranged in thickness from 170 mm at the ends of the flue to 130 mm at the junction of the T. This extended into the longitudinal flue. Sampled for flotation [3355]–[3357].

Samples taken for flotation were divided spatially along the cross flue from south to north [3355]–[3357].

Secondary fill: (10) Pure demolished cob was thrown into the longitudinal flue below the arch: it consisted of yellowish brown clay marl mixed with small chalk grit and fragments up to 15 mm. No flints were visible, which may have been deliberately removed for re-use.

(9) Infilling the upper part of the longitudinal flue was a layer of greyish brown silty clay soil containing chalk grit, small chalk fragments, lumps of yellow cob *c*.60 mm and numerous large flint nodules 80–180 mm. There was a distinct lens of cob across the centre. [Collapsed or demolished superstructure thrown into flue.]

(7) Further backfill in the cross flue was similar in character to layers 1 and 6: essentially demolished superstructure consisting of well compacted chalk marl cob and flint nodules. Within this were several large limestone roof slates or slabs lying flat against the wall. SF2463, a saddle-shaped limestone slab, had probably formed part of the rear shelf.

(6) The infill of the cross flue was similar to layer (1) but much soilier. It consisted of a high density of flint nodules with some shaping up to 200 mm long packed in a matrix of light yellowish brown clay marl mixed with soil resulting in a looser and more crumbly matrix than (1).

(1) Infilling the upper part of the corn drier above the floor was a hard compacted layer of demolished wall or superstructure of the corn drier. Large angular flint nodules, roughly shaped 150–200 mm formed *c*.30–40 per cent of the layer, whilst the remainder consisted of light brown clay marl mixed with chalk grit, subangular chalk 10–50 mm, occasional limestone roof slates up to 350 mm and rare clay tile.

F820 L320750 South corn drier
Length: 2.66 m Width: 2.26 m Height: 1.13 m
Cross flue: top length – 1.88 m base length – 1.64 m top width – 0.42 m
base width – 0.34 m depth – 1.13 m
Longitudinal flue: length – 3.20 m width – 0.60 m depth – 0.46 m
Aligned: NE–SW
Rels: within building 3; part of CD2; below L458

Structure: This corn drier was constructed in a foundation trench cut into the natural chalk and marl. The cut itself was not exposed as structural features within it were not demolished. The longitudinal flue was laid out at an angle of 105° to the cross flue.

The walls: Within the cut, walls defining the flues were constructed of cob composed of clay marl, chalk grit and small chalk lumps up to 60 mm in which had been laid courses of flint nodules up to 190 x 100 mm. In general the flint courses were barely visible having been rendered with a coating of daub/cob forming a smooth vertical surface, but heavy rain exposed the upper four courses to varying degrees in the east wall. There was no evidence of a stone tile course, indicative of a shelf, preserved. However in the wall on the opposite side of the flue there were two courses of limestone slabs built into the structure. The southern end wall of the cross flue had a distinct slope.

The floor: (2) Subangular–angular chalk lumps 15–70 mm tightly packed in a matrix of puddled chalk, chalk grit and chalky marl formed the floor of the drying chamber above the flue. It is possible a surface skim of daub over the chalk has been lost here.

(3) The floor of the drying chamber was composed of yellowish brown clay marl mixed with a moderate density of subangular chalk up to 40 mm, plus occasional subangular flints mostly *c.*15 mm but up to 60 mm. The surface of the floor was smooth and even and at the sides formed a continuous curve with the side walls. There was no evidence of a lip or any retaining structure to prevent grain falling into the open cross flue at the east end.

Floor foundation: (4) [Flint structure/arch supporting floor over flue.] Large angular roughly shaped flint nodules 150–250 mm were set in a matrix of yellowish brown clay marl mixed with subangular chalk up to 20 mm and grit [cob].

Primary fill: (7) Covering the base of the flues was a layer of fine grey powdery ash that was up to 100 mm thick in the cross flue (where it was sampled for flotation spatially from south to north [3358]–[3360]). At the junction with the stokehole it was darker grey-black with the addition of fine charcoal and a distinct lens of charcoal fragments over the floor of the flue. Within the ash were fragments of yellowish red baked daub/cob up to 80 mm, some with smooth surfaces suggestive of daub lining of the walls or ceiling of the flue.

Secondary fill: (5) Within the open cross flue was a very compacted layer of flint nodules, clay marl and chalk [derived from demolished cob walls/superstructure]. A number of limestone roof slates were also present and were probably part of the corn drier possibly forming a shelf over the flue. Sample of fired clay: [3310].

(9) This deposit appeared to be fairly localized at the east end of the longitudinal flue: the unexcavated fill collapsed after heavy rain and behind the flints to the west the flue was filled with layers 8 and 10. Squared angular flints mostly *c.*120 mm, but up to 170 mm, were lying in roughly three courses set in light brown cob matrix with lenses of small rounded chalk. [Possibly localized collapse of arch over flue.]

(10) Infilling the lower half of the longitudinal flue overlying the primary ash (7) was a layer of light yellowish brown marl-clay mixed with rounded chalk grit plus occasional subangular chalk lumps up to 40 mm and flints up to 20 mm. [Cob from demolition/robbing of upper walls/superstructure and dumped in flue.] Within this were a few limestone roof slabs up to 340 mm, the largest lying at a steep angle close to the north wall. At the base of the layer was a lens of angular broken flints *c*.120 mm [probably collapsed from the flue arch].

(8) Light grey uncompacted chalky soil containing a high density of subrounded chalk grit and small lumps up to 15 mm, plus scattered burnt daub grit infilled the upper part of the east end of the longitudinal flue.

(6) Infilling the upper part of the longitudinal flue at its west end (and overlying layers of F825) was a compact light brownish grey silty soil containing a high density of chalk grit and a scatter of subrounded chalk 10–30 mm, plus occasional fragments of clay tile, chert pebbles 25 mm and flint *c*.20 mm. It is roughly equivalent to layer 8 at the east end of the flue, but the two are not necessarily continuous. Found within this layer was SF2464 a saddle-shaped limestone slab. It probably formed part of a shelf or structure above the junction of the two flues.

(1) Large angular broken flints 100–200 mm occurred in moderate density in the layer predominantly of yellowish brown clay marl mixed with a high density of chalk grit and small chalk fragments up to 30 mm. This occurred within the hollow over the slumped arch of the longitudinal flue. It was the same as the material infilling the whole of the drying chamber, which was excavated as part of L458. [Deliberate infill consisting of demolished cob and flint superstructure.] SF2510: Fe pointing trowel.

F825 L303720 Corn drier stokehole
2.10 1.60 1.15
Rels: within building 3; part of CD2; cut by F818; below L454, L456

Structure: This rectangular feature was cut partly through chalk natural, partly through clay marl. The deepest part of the cut, which formed the stoking chamber, was 1.1 m wide while along the west side was a shelf 0.48 m deep and 0.4 m wide, which appears to have formed a step. It had a trampled surface with considerable wear along its edge and a particularly deep hollow worn at its south end. The walls were near vertical and straight.

At the entrance to the flues for F819 and F820 the floor surface had been worn into hollows and burnt grey. Similarly the arch cut through the natural marl had been fired to various shades of red and yellowish red. The hollowing of the floor surface and intensity of burning appear to have been greatest in the southern flue to F819. This arch was also larger being 0.66 m high as opposed to 0.46 m in F820.

Primary fill: (4) Covering the floor of the stokehole was a thin layer of grey ash mixed with charcoal dust and fragments and a trample of dirty brown clay soil. [Cinders and trample from firing up corn driers.]

(5) Occurring in the angle and over the tread of the step was a thin layer of brown clayey soil containing a little small rounded chalk grit – 15 mm and rare flecks and grit of burnt orange clay and charcoal. [Trample from use of corn drier.]

Secondary fill: (3) Compact light yellowish brown clayey marl containing frequent chalk grit and scattered small subangular chalk *c*.20 mm. This forms a flat layer 80 mm thick overlying the primary ash (4) on the floor of the stokehole. [Interpreted on site as eroded or

demolished cob wall; however this could be quarried marl dumped in the base of the feature – layers 1–3 mirror the geology dug through in the cutting of F800.]

(2) Pure brown clay virtually stone-free except for a few small pieces of rounded chalk and grit. It formed a flat layer close to the base of the stokehole. [Deliberate infill of natural clay – possibly quarried as part of same event as (1).] SF2384: Fe strap; SF2438: Fe nail.

(1) This layer formed the majority of the infill extending from the west side over the step across to the east wall and into the flues of F819 and F820. This clast-supported layer was composed of angular chalk rubble 60–150 mm plus occasional angular flints and broken nodules 60–200 mm with crumbly small chalk and grit between and very little soil matrix. [Deliberate infill of freshly quarried chalk – possibly from adjacent pit F800.]

L460: Broken limestone roof slates 70–150 mm formed a tip of rubble sandwiched between layers 6 and 1 sloping down from the surface to the east wall and into the flue of F819. All the slabs were sloping from west down to east, frequently overlapping in a loose packed crumbly matrix of rounded chalk grit and light brown clayey soil. Towards the toe of the tip the matrix is almost pure brown clay natural.

(6) Light brown clay marl mixed with a high density of chalk grit and a little small angular chalk 10–30 mm with occasional mottles of brown clay soil. The layer formed a tip sloping from the surface in the centre to the east wall, against which were some broken limestone roof slab 160–180 mm set on edge. [Degraded/demolished cob wall dumped in top of stokehole.]

L456: This layer formed a deliberate tip sandwiched between layers 7 and 6 sloping from the west down against the east wall of the stokehole. It was composed of small rounded chalk 20–60 mm becoming more angular lower down plus rare flints of similar size and broken limestone slates up to 200 mm set in a matrix of crushed chalk or chalky clay marl with rare charcoal flecks. Well compacted, where trampled near the surface, but looser and unconsolidated below. [Deliberate tip of fresh chalk.]

(7) Stratigraphically the uppermost layer in the fill overlying L456, this was a crumbly grey clayey silty soil mixed with a high density of rounded chalk grit and moderate quantities of large subangular chalk 15–40 mm, occasional angular flints of similar size, flecks of charcoal and a burnt limestone slate 150 mm long. This layer formed a wedge against the east wall.

Corn drier: 3 double T Late Roman

This corn drier was constructed inside the east end of building 4 tight up against the east wall but with a little space left between it and the walls to north and south. Virtually all of the drying chambers had been destroyed by the construction of CD4. However the basic design can be obtained from the surviving evidence: its basic form was similar to CD1 and CD2. At the east end was the double drying chamber with two T flues, to the north F844 and F845 and to the south F846 and F847. At the west end was the stokehole F812. The form of the foundation cut for the structure is uncertain, but the fact that the northern cross flue F844 is cut into chalk suggests the trench was smaller than those for CD1 and CD2, with each drying chamber having a separate foundation trench. The west ends of the longitudinal flues (F845 and F847) were well preserved, where they entered the stoking chamber. Once again it was apparent that the southern (right hand) flue had been more intensively burnt and was more worn than the northern (left hand) flue.

F844 K980570 Cross flue of north T of corn drier
Length: top – 2.00 m; base – 1.30 m Width: top – 0.60 m; base: 0.25 m
Depth: 1.14 m
Aligned: NNW–SSE
Rels: within building 4; part of CD3; cuts F755; cut by F811, F813, F769

Form: This linear feature had straight even vertical sides with sharp angles cutting into the natural chalk and marl. The base was essentially horizontal with a slight step up at the north end, but very irregular because of the broken nature of the chalk natural. On the north the sides widened out to form a bulbous rounded terminal with sloping sides in distinct contrast to the southern half. It almost looks as though this has been caused by wear, possibly from having to clean out the flue from this end. Part of the junction with the longitudinal flue (F845) survives on the north side. The walls at either end sloped in at an angle of 70° at the north end and 77° at the south.

Primary fill: (2) Across the base of the flue was a layer of soft grey ash, loose and uncompacted at either end but firmer in the middle, where it was mixed with grit of degraded clay cob wall and chalk. At the south end the ash was darker and thicker (150–250 mm compared to 70–150 mm to the north) containing rare charcoal fragments and one pot rim sherd. Scattered chalk blocks 20–60 mm pulled up from the irregular base were sparsely scattered through the ash. Flotation samples: (2) – [3324] from centre and north end of flue, [3325] from south end of flue.

Secondary fill: (1) Flint nodules lying in a matrix of cob, made up of yellowish brown clay marl and small chalk fragments and grit. [Deliberate dump of demolished walls of corn drier infilling disused flue.]

F845 K900500 North longitudinal flue of corn drier 3
Length: 3.50 m Width: 0.68 m Depth:1.02 m Height of arch: 0.64 m
Aligned: SW–NE
Rels: within building 4; part of CD3; cut by F811, F813

The central 2.5 m had been destroyed by F811. It was partly excavated at the west end, where it was best preserved.

Structure: The wall dividing the stokehole F812 from the corn drier itself was constructed of large shaped flint nodules, knapped to have flat faces where required and laid in horizontal courses usually with their long axes across the wall. The flints average 150–200 mm in size though one was 230 x 260 mm and some were less than 100 mm. To create the arch over the flue, which was 0.64 m high, flat limestone slabs had been laid stepping out over the one below and capped with a single slab 0.35 m long. A flat sloping surface where the flue begins to arch suggests timbers may have been used to support it during construction. The stones were set in a matrix of chalk cob, composed of light yellowish brown clay and marl mixed with a high density of rounded chalk grit and small subrounded chalk lumps 15–40 mm. This material was also used to render the surface so most of the flint coursing is not visible. However some has fallen off along the north side of the flue leaving flints exposed. These had been heat shattered, though elsewhere on the arch and walls of the flue there was little evidence of burning.

The floor of the flue was flat and worn to a shallow hollow 60 mm below the floor of

the stoking chamber F812.

Primary fill: (8) Thin (20 mm), soft, friable, black lens of fine charcoal dust covered the floor of the flue interleaved with lenses of powdery grey ash in the centre. Flotation samples: [3349].

(7) Soft, powdery, grey ash given a pinkish brown tinge by an admixture of burnt clay/cob worn off the flue walls. It contained lenses of lumps of orange-brown burnt daub/cob. Thickness 50–80 mm. Flotation samples: [3349].

(6) Soft, friable very pale grey ash with occasional charcoal smears and a few small fragments of chalk and flint. 30–50 mm thick. Flotation samples: [3349].

(5) Dark grey ash and fine charcoal dust containing chalk grit and occasional lumps up to 15 m. A few shattered burnt flints *c*.80 mm and lumps of burnt cob 40 mm were embedded in this. 30–80 mm thick. Flotation sample: [3348].

(4) Soft, friable pinkish grey ash discoloured by a high density of burnt clay dust worn off the flue walls. It contained occasional fragments of chalk and burnt clay 10–20 mm and dark grey-black smears and mottles from charcoal. 30–90 mm thick. Flotation samples: [3348].

(3) Soft, friable pinkish grey ash mixed with rounded chalk 5–20 mm and grit containing fallen flint nodules *c*.150 mm, flakes of burnt shattered flint *c*.60 mm and fragments of burnt clay/cob. 70 mm thick. [Material fallen from wall during firing of corn drier.] Flotation samples: [3347]; fired clay: [3421] [3423].

(2) Thin discontinuous lens (10–20 mm thick) of soft, friable, dark grey-black ash and fine charcoal. Flotation sample: [3347].

Secondary fill: (1) The upper horizon was composed of loosely packed chalk grit and lumps 10–25 mm plus occasional pieces of shattered flint *c*.70 mm set in a greyish brown matrix of mixed soil, ash and clay with lumps of burnt clay and cob. The lower horizon was a mix of flint nodules *c*.80 mm, broken angular flints *c*.40 mm and angular chalk 15–50 mm dispersed through a brown marly clay [degraded cob] matrix with frequent chalk grit and sparse charcoal. [Deliberate dumps of demolished corn drier structure.] Fired clay sample: [3424].

F846 K900500 Unex
Length: >1.8 m Aligned: NNW–SSE
Rels: within building 4; part of CD3; cuts F755; cut by F811, F813

Only the east side of this cross flue was exposed at the surface, where it appeared to have cut into the edge of the wall footing F755. Most of the flue appeared to have been cut away by F811. The flue had apparently been backfilled with chalk and marl or cob [probably demolition debris from the corn drier walls.]

F847 K900500 Longitudinal flue of southern T of corn drier
Length: 3.40 m Width: 0.64 m Height of arch: 0.64 m Depth: 1.05 m
Aligned: W–E
Rels: within building 4; part of CD3; cut by F811, F813

Most of the length of the flue had been destroyed or obscured by F811. Its length is an estimate. It had been partially excavated at the west end, the only section to survive.

Structure: The wall through which the flue was constructed was fully described in relation to F845. However the arch of this flue does not appear to have been supported with horizontal limestone slabs. The height of the arch was 0.64 m and at its narrowest 0.6 m wide. However it widened eastwards to 0.9 m at floor level and the upper part of the arch measured 0.73 m wide because of some collapse of the flue wall. There had been considerable wear along the sides of the flue with areas of daub surface sheared off to expose the flints below, which had been very intensely burnt and shattered and heavily sooted. There was also considerable wear and burning on the floor of the flue lowering it by 80 mm below the stokehole floor. The surface was smooth and worn, burnt to a dark pinkish brown colour. The widening of the flue towards its interior was no doubt due to the raking out of cinders; the effect of wear at the base of the flue walls was also visible at the entrance.

Primary fill: (4) Thin lens (10–15 mm) of soft, friable dark grey-black ash and fine charcoal dust covering floor of flue. [Cinders from firing up corn drier.] Flotation sample: [3350].

(3) Pale–light grey, soft, friable ash containing sparse charcoal flecks and scattered rounded chalk grit. Thickness 20–40 mm. [Cinders from firing up corn drier.] Flotation sample: [3350].

(2) A thin (20 mm) horizon of friable, powdery dark grey ash containing sparse fine flecks of charcoal and charcoal fragments *c*.15 mm. [Cinders from firing up corn drier.] Flotation sample: [3350].

Secondary fill: (1) Infilling nearly all of the flue was a single thick layer of cob lumps 50–160 mm, sub-angular/-rounded chalk 10–60 mm and chalk grit. The cob varies from yellowish to pinkish brown. The matrix in the upper part of the fill included raw clay, but in the lower part it is degraded structureless cob mixed with a little soil and containing mottles of grey ash and flecks of charcoal. [Deliberate dump of demolished corn drier walls, probably followed by some redeposited clay natural from construction of new corn drier.] Fired clay sample: [3420]. SF2513–5: worked sst, worked lst, worked stone.

F812 K947540–K950545 Stokehole
2.30 2.10 1.09
Rels: within building 4; part of CD3; cut by F811, F809, F780

Form: A subrectangular cut with near vertical walls to north and south. On the west there was a slightly recessed area in the north-west corner with a more sloping side and two steps were cut into the south-west corner. These were 1.0–1.2 m long, the treads 0.1–0.2 m wide and 0.28–0.3 m deep; there appeared to be considerable wear on the front edge of the steps. The actual stoking chamber measured 1.9 m wide by 1.0–1.3 m deep. The drying chambers of this corn drier were cut through by F811, but the presence of a cob wall surviving on its east side suggests that the stokehole was continuous with the construction cut for the flues of the corn drier.

Structure: The east wall: the wall on the east side was constructed of courses of flint nodules 180–250 mm x *c*.150 mm set in a chalk cob matrix. Only the upper two courses of flint were exposed with only occasional flints from lower courses exposed in the wall face. Over the arch of F845 a limestone slab 300 mm long had been laid to support the wall. The flints had been laid in yellowish brown marl/clay mixed with chalk grit and small subangular fragments 10–40 mm and the same material had been used to render the surface of the wall. In the flues some of the cob had worn away to leave the flints exposed and severely burnt.

(See also F845 wall.)

Primary fill: (8) Thin alternating lenses of very soft and smooth dark greyish yellow ash and dark grey-black fine charcoal dust and fragments; rare chalk grit. [Cinders raked out of corn drier after firing.] Charcoal sample: [3278].

(7) Fine soft dark yellowish grey ash with a little slightly clayey soil formed a thin layer across the base of the stokehole. [Ash raked out after firing of corn drier.] SF2468: 2 Fe nails; fired clay sample: [3391]; charcoal sample: [3375]; slag sample: [3375].

Layers (7) and (8) sampled by specialist for flotation/phytoliths.

Secondary fill: (6) Dark reddish brown stiff clay (very similar to layer 4) containing some chalk and cob fragments. [Deliberate tip of redeposited natural with contamination from demolished corn drier.] Fired clay samples: (6) [3166][3262].

(5) Thin discontinuous band of soft weathered chalk 10–30 mm and chalk grit in pale yellowish brown chalky soil. [A deliberate tip of probably chalk marl dug out as part of digging of F769.]

(4) Dark reddish brown sticky compact clay with occasional rounded lumps of cob up to 60 mm and patches of chalk grit formed a thin layer running over the tread of the lower step and sloping down to the east wall. [Deliberate tip, probably of redeposited natural, which may have derived from digging the new stokehole F769.]

(3) Mixed thick layer composed of dark yellow clayey soil, decayed and degraded cob with some distinct lumps 20–50 mm, high density of chalk grit but sparse larger chalk 10–80 mm. Rare ash and charcoal mottling was present. [Probably material derived from the demolished corn drier walls to the east, which this stokehole served.] SF2378: Greensand column fragment. Fired clay sample: [3323].

(2) Dark grey very fine silty ashy soil, extremely soft and loose containing scattered small chalk and grit and degraded lumps of cob/mortar. [Deliberate tip of ash probably derived from the demolition of F844–847.] Flotation sample: (2) [3448].

(1) Yellowish brown firm clayey soil containing moderate density of chalk grit and subrounded fragments 10–40 mm. Occasionally mottled by grey ash and charcoal. This layer was very compacted and dense, so much so that it initially appeared to form part of the natural. [Deliberate infill possibly utilizing demolished chalk cob hard packed to form floor surface over disused stokehole.] SF2428: 1 Fe nail; charcoal samples: [3274].

Corn Drier 4 Tr 3 K980550 single T Late Roman

This corn drier was the latest in the sequence of corn-drying ovens present in the excavation. It differed from the others in that it had a single drying chamber (F811) with a T-shaped flue (F859) on the south side and stoking chamber (F769) to the north. It had been re-aligned at right angles to the corn drier (CD3) that it replaced. Unlike the preceding three, which had all been deliberately demolished and infilled, this one had still been in use (quite literally) and may have been the cause of the fire which destroyed building 4. As a result the corn drier has been preserved in a remarkable amount of detail. None of the standing structure was excavated or removed, but all the fill in the stoking chamber, the drying chamber and the cross flue was excavated, consisting largely of demolished building debris overlying ash or carbonized grain.

The floor of the drying chamber was well preserved and very worn (in contrast to CD2). The arch supporting the longitudinal flue had survived for almost all its length. The walls of the

drying chamber sloped outwards towards the top to create a hopper effect. The cross flue was open at the level of the floor, but had been covered about 0.3 m above this level by a shelf of limestone slabs built into the rear wall and supported at the front by *imbrex* tiles set on end at the floor edge alongside the flue. This would have effectively redirected the hot air emanating from the flue back across the drying chamber over the grain.

The wall constructed between the stoking and drying chambers was considerably thicker than the other walls perhaps indicating that this one extended higher, possibly to form a barrier between the fire in the stoking chamber and the grain, to minimize the likelihood of fire.

F813 K962566 Construction cut
Length: 5.70 m Width: 3.20 m Depth: 1.40 m
Aligned: NNW–SSE
Rels: contains F811; within building 4; part of CD4; F769; cuts CD3

The cut for F769, the stokehole is described under that context number below. The exact shape of the cut for the corn drier is uncertain as the structure F811 was not dismantled. However F811 appears to be set into a rectangular trench about 3 m square. There appears to be a narrower gap to the north, where it joins with the stokehole. It is possible that cut was irregular if parts of corn drier 3 were incorporated within it. Along the south side there was a shallower ledge running parallel that was 0.5 m wide and 0.25–0.35 m deep and was packed with chalk (essentially part of L453) behind the wall of F811. The only area where the wall of the cut was exposed was on the west side of the narrower extension for the flue to the stokehole, where a small area of vertical roughly cut chalk wall was visible behind the cob wall F858.

Fill: (1) No layers were assigned to this context though on site it was regarded as the cut for the stokehole (F769), which was rather superfluous; hence it has been used here for the construction cut for the whole corn drier. Finds assigned to this context possibly come from F769 (1), or possibly from F831 (1): both contained burnt roof debris. SF2435: 11 Fe nails; fired clay: [3321].

F811 K980550
Length: 3.60 m Width: 3.20 m Height: 0.50 m
Cross flue: length: base – 0.80 m; top – 2.06 m width: 0.26 m depth: 0.85 m
Longitudinal flue: length: 3.10 m width: 0.75 m depth: 0.70 m
Aligned: NNW–SSE
Rels: within building 4, F813; part of CD4; cuts F812, F844–F847; cut by F780, F809; below L444, L459

Structure: *In situ* standing structure was not removed. This structure was set in foundation cut F813 and was integral with the stokehole F769. The basic structure is a solid construction of flints set in cob, forming the walls for the flues (F859), the arch over the central flue, the floor foundation for the drying chamber and the walls of the drying chamber. Although some parts have separate feature numbers (F858, F859) and are described in detail separately, they all formed a single construction. The walls are described as layer 4, the floor as layer 8 and the structure over the flue as 3. The fill of the drying chamber comprised layers 1, 2, L444 and L459.

Shelf supports: (3) Along the edge of the cross flue (F859) on the floor of the drying chamber *imbrex* clay tiles were set upright on end with the concave side pointing north, secured in place by daub around the bases. They were placed at intervals of 150 mm of which two survived *in situ* and an impression of a third. A total of six or seven can be estimated for the complete set.

Shelf: In the south-east corner resting on the end tile was a limestone slab set horizontally into the back (south) and side (east) walls of the structure at a height of *c*.0.25 m above the floor of the drying chamber (1.15 m above the base of the flue) and projecting 0.35 m to cover the cross flue. This end slab was about 0.5 m long and further slabs were visible set in the wall measuring 150–300 mm long: these had been smashed off, when the roof collapsed into the drier. It is clear from the slabs retained that these were not reused roof tiles, but specially cut for the purpose. The pieces recovered were thick (*c*.35–40 mm) and had been chipped to a square/rectangular shape. All the slabs had a band of sooting along the underside at the front 70–100 mm wide. One slab recovered had a thick (*c*.40 m) layer of daub/cob on its upper surface. This structure formed a hood along the back wall of the corn drier covering the cross flue that would have deflected hot air (and smoke) back across the top of the drying chamber. Tile and daub: [3398].

Walls: (4) The wall enclosing the drying chamber was 0.45 m thick. It was constructed of flint nodules, which had been roughly shaped and squared where they were exposed in the wall face. They ranged in length from 100–250 mm, but most were about 150 mm. The flints were laid in courses set in cob, composed of clay marl mixed with small rounded chalk 15–30 mm, chalk grit and occasional larger subangular chalk blocks 50–80 mm. A maximum of six courses above the floor of the drying chamber survived, best preserved on the south-east. On the east it stood to a height of 0.5 m above the floor; on the south the chalk floor (453) of building 4 was 0.63 m above the floor surface. The walls are unlikely to have stood higher than this. The wall face had been smoothed by a rendering of cob over the surface of the flint coursing. The south wall was vertical, but the other three were all battered sloping in at an angle of 110–115° to the floor. The wall surface had been burnt and baked, discoloured pink and blackened on the surface. This is more likely to be a result of the final conflagration of building 4, than the use of the corn drier.

Floor: (8) The foundation supporting the floor was not excavated but was presumably constructed in a similar manner to the walls. The arch over the flue F859 is described with that structure. The central part of the floor was constructed of worn chalk blocks up to 70 mm, but mostly 20–40 mm tightly packed and compacted in puddled chalk. The surface was worn smooth and over the top of the flue arch the chalk had been burnt grey brown. Over the remaining areas the surface had been covered with cob/daub, though areas of wear had exposed flints and limestone slabs within the floor foundation. To either side there were deep linear hollows running from both of the northern corners along the side walls having rounded terminals at the south end. They were no deeper than 40–80 mm and appear to represent areas of wear.

Fill: (2) On the floor of the drying chamber below the grain was a thin (20–50 mm) lens of very fine black carbonized material – fine soot like dust, very compact at its thickest. It was noticeable that this became greyer ash towards the corners, where grain was at its thinnest and there appears to have been more complete combustion. This layer was included within the lowest flotation samples, though these were probably a mix of the lower part of layer 1 with 2. SF2432: 2 Fe nails; fired clay: [3269].

(1) Within the drying chamber was a thick layer of carbonized grain, which was clearly in the process of being dried when the conflagration which destroyed building 4 took place. The grain was 50–100 mm thick, loose, powdery and incoherent with much fine carbon dust as well as seeds. The great majority appeared to be individual seeds, sometimes with glumes and rachis, more rarely a spikelet and one ear fragment was observed and retained. Distributed throughout the layer were shattered fragments of limestone roof slate 20–150 mm long, occasional nails and large chunks of charcoal 20–50 mm all apparently oak [and presumably roof timbers]. Occasional small fragments (20–40 mm) of burnt daub/cob were scattered through the grain. The grain was thinnest on the south side (50 mm) increasing to *c*.120 mm in the centre north (close to the area of collapse of the floor). Essentially the grain appears to have been piled thickest in the centre (over the flue F859). It was also observed that grain and burnt debris were caked up the walls of the drier. The grain was sampled on the basis of a 300 mm grid subdividing the area into 42 squares, of which 18 were selected on a random basis for sampling (see diagram). SF2431: 30 and SF2459: 2 Fe nails; fired clay: [3263]; charcoal: [3233]; (1) and (2) flotation samples: [3195]–[3239].

Artefacts and samples from secondary fill (described as part of building 4): (+) SF2465: sandstone column; fired clay: (459) – [3317], (444) – [3322], charcoal: (459) – [3283]

F859 K9805450 T-flue of corn drier: 4
Longitudinal flue: length – 3.10 m width – 0.75 m depth – 0.70 m
Cross flue: length: top – 2.06 m base – 0.80 m width – 0.26 m depth – 0.85 m
Aligned: NNW–SSE
Rels: within F813, F811, building 4; part of CD4; F811

Structure: The flue was a symmetrical T-shape in plan with the cross and longitudinal flues set at right angles. The cross flue at the south end was very narrow and had straight vertical sides. The ends however sloped out from the central longitudinal flue at an angle of 53° to the base and at the top forming a continuous surface with the sloping walls of the drying chamber. The surfaces appeared to be burnt reddish-yellow or grey. It is possible that at least some of this resulted from the use of the corn drier; however the burning roof structure that collapsed into the corn drier would also have had a considerable effect. The longitudinal flue was much wider and ran below the floor of the drying chamber to the stokehole. The lower 0.4 m was straight and vertical, though having suffered some wear on the surface. This lower part was constructed of flint nodules 70–140 mm set in chalky marl cob walls. The arch was best preserved at the south end at the junction with the cross flue, where it had been constructed by setting limestone slabs radiating in an arc over the top of the flue. The lowest limestone slabs were horizontal over the flint coursing, being gradually angled so the two uppermost in the top were at 65° forming a V in profile with flints wedged between. At the north end where the flue entered the stokehole, the arch had sagged to half its height (presumably because of the greater weight of F858 here) and the same arch construction was not extended into this wall. The flue floor was very worn and burnt at this end and a distinct hollow had been worn.

Primary fill: (7) On the base and largely confined to the longitudinal flue was a thin layer of charcoal-rich ash. At the north end this layer of charcoal fragments lay directly below the roof debris (5) on the intensely burnt floor. It was continuous with layer 6 in the stokehole. Flotation samples: [3303] – east, [3304] – west.

(6) Infilling the lower part of the cross flue (continuing for an unknown distance into

the longitudinal flue) was a thick layer of grey ash, pale almost white at the top, but becoming darker with much charcoal towards the base. Embedded in the upper part were fragments of limestone slates and lumps of burnt cob – material fallen with any degree of force would become easily embedded in the soft ash. There was considerable merging over the boundary of layers 5 and 6. Flotation samples: [3297]–[3299] upper horizon E–W, [3300]–[3302] lower horizon E–W. SF2433: 18 Fe nails; fired clay: [3395].

Secondary fill: (5) The upper part of the cross flue was filled with loose packed broken burnt limestone roof slates up to 200 mm in size in brown crumbly silty soil mixed with frequent daub, fragments of stone, mortar/cob and a little chalk. Some of the roof slates were extremely intensely burnt. The north end of the longitudinal flue was almost entirely filled with closed packed burnt limestone roof slates 20–200 mm long with a matrix of ash between except towards the west side and top, where voids were apparent. The longitudinal flue was not excavated, but it was apparent that apart from the ends where roof debris had slumped in it was largely void.

F858 K900500 Wall between F811 and F769; unex.
Length: 2.50 m Width: 0.95 m Depth: 1.43 m
Aligned: ENE–WSW
Rels: within building 4; part of CD4

Structure: This wall was constructed to form the north wall of F811 separating it from the stokehole F769. It was almost twice as thick as the other walls enclosing the corn drier, measuring 0.8 m at the top, but stepping out to the base by a further 0.3 m. It possibly butts up against a remnant of wall structure of corn drier 3 at either end. It appears to have several levels of construction. [During excavation these horizons were considered possible rebuilds as the arch subsided. However a better explanation is that these represent stages in the construction of the wall and arch.]

(1) At the base on either side of the flue (F859) a coursed flint wall had been constructed of squared flints ranging from 70 x 80 mm to 150 x 140 mm. On the east this was 0.4 m long, but only 0.25 m to the west. There were three or four courses (which included some blocks of ?sandstone) at the top of which at a height of 0.4 m had been laid a string line of limestone slabs 130–200 mm long by 20–30 mm thick. All the stonework had been set in cob, composed of clay tempered with small chalk. The whole of this section of wall had been burnt, the daub/cob subjected to the most intense firing alongside the limestone slabs and at the flue entrance, where the flints were extremely heat shattered.

(2) Over this was a thick (0.12–0.15 m) layer of cob, composed of brown marly clay mixed with small chalk and grit and fragments of red burnt clay [?material reused from earlier corn drier]. Some flint nodules *c.*100 mm were built into this course, most prominently towards the sides of the wall, whilst in the centre there was a layer of overlapping limestone slabs, clearly burnt grey-purple. Although this section across the flue has slumped seriously, it was possible to see that thick (30–35 mm) limestone slabs had been laid (originally horizontally) to overlap so they stepped out to form a support for the arch (cf. corn drier 3).

(3) Above this there was another sagging course of overlapping limestone slabs, overlain by flint nodules 80–150 mm and smaller flints and chalk blocks *c.*20–60 mm covered by a thick layer of cob. This had a distinct smooth surface at the top and could be seen to slump even more acutely to the south.

(4) Resting on the surface of layer 3 was another line of limestone slabs, some clearly overlapping, but also following the underlying slumped hollow. Flint nodules were the

dominant stone to the sides in the lower horizon of this layer. These and the limestone slabs had been covered by a horizon of light greyish brown cob, composed of clay marl mixed with soil, chalk grit and small stones. At the top of the layer, there was a much higher content of worn chalk blocks *c*.30–50 mm with a further course of flints inset.

(5) The upper part of the wall (0.4–0.6 m thick) was a solid mass constructed of unshaped flint nodules laid in courses set in yellowish brown chalky marl cob, with some soilier lenses giving a feel of the horizontal layering. Squared flints may have been used for the wall face, but not in the inner part of the wall.

F769 K962566 stokehole
Length: 2.90 m Width: 2.10 m Depth: 1.39 m Depth of flue: 1.47 m
Rels: within building 4; part of CD4; cuts F754,F844; cut by F780, F809

Form: Rectangular feature cut to varying levels. On the west side there were a series of ledges, only one of which at a depth of 0.75 m could be properly described as a step with a flat tread 0.3 m wide by *c*.1.0 m long. The rest had sloping surfaces but with small semi-circular foot-holds *c*.200 mm wide cut into either the north or south end. There were three at the south end at depths of 1.09 m, 0.75 m and *c*.0.35 m. At the north end there were two: one at 0.9 m depth and one at 0.58 m, which had *in situ* burning around its upper edge. A third step at the base of the row was formed in effect by a low ledge cut into the chalk natural at a depth of 1.15 m. This was 1.34 m long by 0.2–0.4 m wide and could have formed a bench or a recess for stacking fuel. The lowest area was the actual stoking chamber directly in front of the corn drier flue. This was almost square measuring 1.3 x 1.0 m and reached a maximum depth of 1.39 m. The walls were steep and vertical on the east and north, but sloping on the west, where the steps were cut and flared out at the top on the north.

Primary fill: (6) Solid, but thin layer of dark brown ash streaked with grey and black apparently as a result of fine lenses; it contained rare burnt flint and rounded chalk 10–40 mm. [Cinders from final firing of corn drier.] This layer was supposedly sampled for flotation, but there was no record in the index.

Secondary fill: (5) Solid layer of burnt, shattered limestone roof slates and numerous Fe nails tightly stacked and wedged in a loose matrix of dark grey-black ash and charcoal. [Collapsed burning roof structure of building 4.] This layer was supposedly sampled for flotation, but there was no record in the index. There is no record in the SF index of any nails being retained.

(4) Compacted layer of clayey soil and degraded clay cob mixed with a high density of chalk grit and mottled with redeposited dark orange natural clay formed a level deposit across the stokehole. It also contained numerous burnt limestone roof slates and broken flint nodules 100–150 mm.

(3) A thick layer of pale yellowish brown crumbly soil and cob mix with greyish mottling, sparse charcoal flecks, subangular chalk 10–30 mm and rare flint nodules 150 mm. [This could either be cob eroded or demolished from the adjacent building wall F754 or from the corn drier superstructure. Weathering of the wall/structure surfaces in the abandoned building might be favoured, as layer 2 could then be explained as the flints exposed collapsing *en masse* from the exposed core of the wall.] Fired clay sample: [3168]. SF2412: 6 Fe nails.

(2) Large flint nodules, in some cases knapped to shape, 70–200 mm were densely packed with occasional limestone slates in a matrix of dark brown fine clayey soil mixed with

chalk grit and sparse small chalk and flint 10–40 mm. [Collapsed or demolished wall of building or corn drier superstructure.] Charcoal sample: [3185]. SF2411: 4 Fe nails.

Tertiary fill: (1) Loose soft, brown clayey soil incorporating a high density of chalk grit, but sparse rounded chalk 10–30 mm. Scattered through it were rare flint nodules 100–120 mm and occasional burnt limestone slates up to 120 mm. [Largely natural silting with rare building debris incorporated.] SF2364: pierced bone. SF2410: 11 Fe nails.