

Mrs Meaker's field (Miles),
Venus St, Congresbury.
Gradiometry Survey 2009

YCCCART 2010/2

North Somerset HER 47510

**YATTON, CONGRESBURY, CLAVERHAM AND CLEEVE ARCHAEOLOGICAL
RESEARCH TEAM (YCCCART)**

General editor: Vince Russett



Pete English operating the new Grad 601.

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1. Abstract

YCCCART has agreed with the Heritage Lottery Fund to undertake a project over two years, commencing May 2009, to establish the extent of the Congresbury Roman pottery kiln sites. The field was known to contain a kiln waster heap partly excavated in 1986. .

A number of potential kilns have been identified within the field by surveys with the Bartington Gradiometer 601. It is intended to carry out a resistivity survey on the site and produce a pseudosection of targeted potential kilns. Excavation of one kiln will then be considered.

2. Acknowledgements

A Heritage Lottery Grant enabled the purchase, by YCCCART, of a Bartington Gradiometer 601 without which this survey could not have been undertaken.

This survey would also not have been carried out without the willing permission of the landowner, Mrs M Meaker.

The authors are grateful for the hard work by the members of YCCCART in performing the survey and Geoff Pearson for proof reading.

3. Introduction

Yatton, Congresbury, Claverham and Cleeve Archaeological Research Team (YCCCART) is one of a number of Community Archaeology teams across North Somerset, supported by the North Somerset Council Development Management Team..

The objective of the Community Archaeology in North Somerset (CANS) teams is to carry out archaeological fieldwork, for the purpose of recording, and better understanding of the heritage of North Somerset.

4. Site location



Fig 1 Site location

The site lies in the south east of the village of Congresbury, in the District of North Somerset. The base point for the initial survey grid lies at ST 4446 6288, some 12 miles south of Bristol

The field is privately owned but contains a public footpath.

5. Land use and geology

The site lies immediately to the south of the flood plain of the natural course of the Congresbury Yeo. The geology is mixed, with Carboniferous limestone, Keuper Marl and estuarine alluvium

Currently the field is grazed and grass from the field is used for silage.

6. Historical & archaeological context

The field is centred on reference 1856 on the 1839 Congresbury Tithe map. This is described as a pasture called Miles owned by The Trustees of Queen Elizabeth's Hospital and occupied by Anne Osmond.

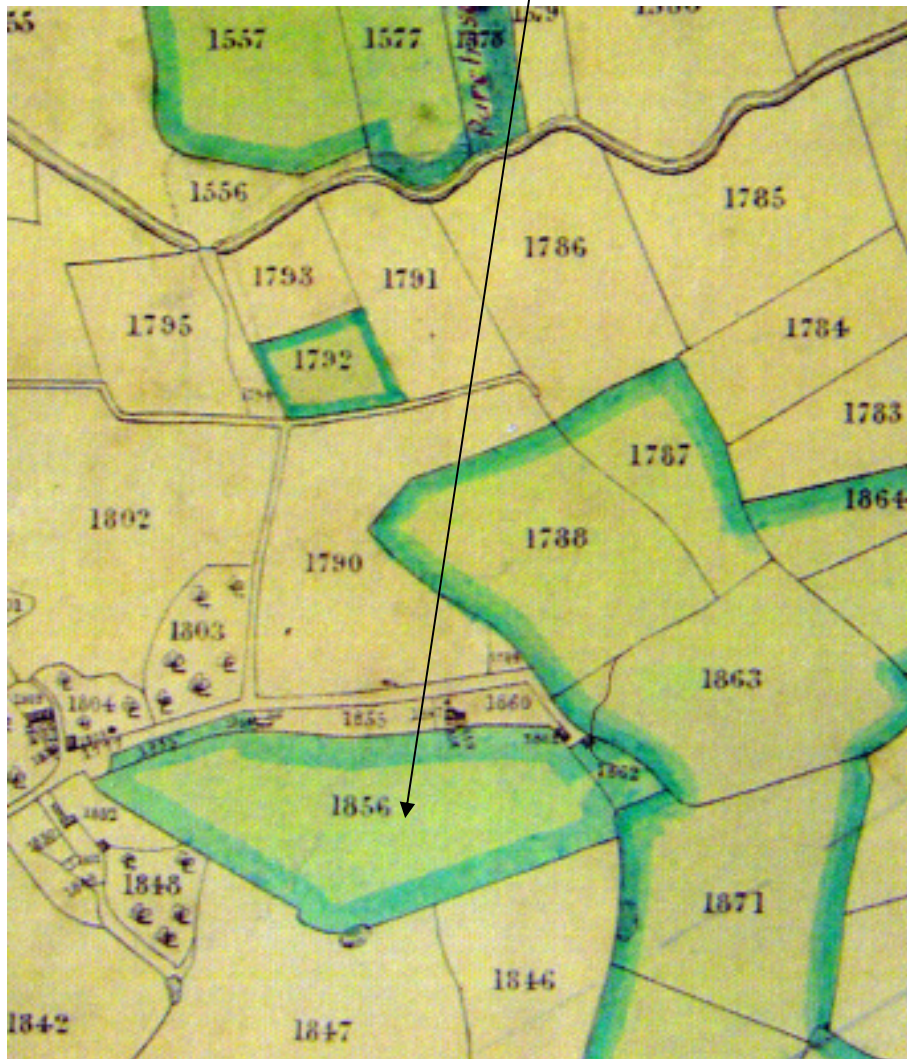


Fig 2. 1839 Tithe Map extract. Courtesy of Bristol Record Office BRO 37959/9

In 1986 members of the Congresbury History Group, under the supervision of the then Museum Curator Vickie Pirie, excavated part of a waster heap beside the field's western hedge. Unfortunately only a few rough notes exist.

7. Survey objectives

The survey had the following objectives.

- 1) To identify any additional kilns.
- 2) To use the survey to train YCCCART members and members of Community Archaeology in North Somerset (CANS) in the use of the Bartington Gradiometer 601.

8. Methodology

The survey was undertaken by teams from YCCCART during the period July to September 2009.

The completed survey was downloaded to an ArcheoSurveyor programme and the resultant composite adjusted using the following filters

- 1) Colour - Red Blue Green 2
- 2) Band weight equaliser
- 3) Grad shade
- 4) Contours
- 5) Destriped
- 6) Despiked

The report was written in Microsoft Word 2003.

Current photographs were taken by members of YCCCART, and remain the copyright of YCCCART.

9. Results

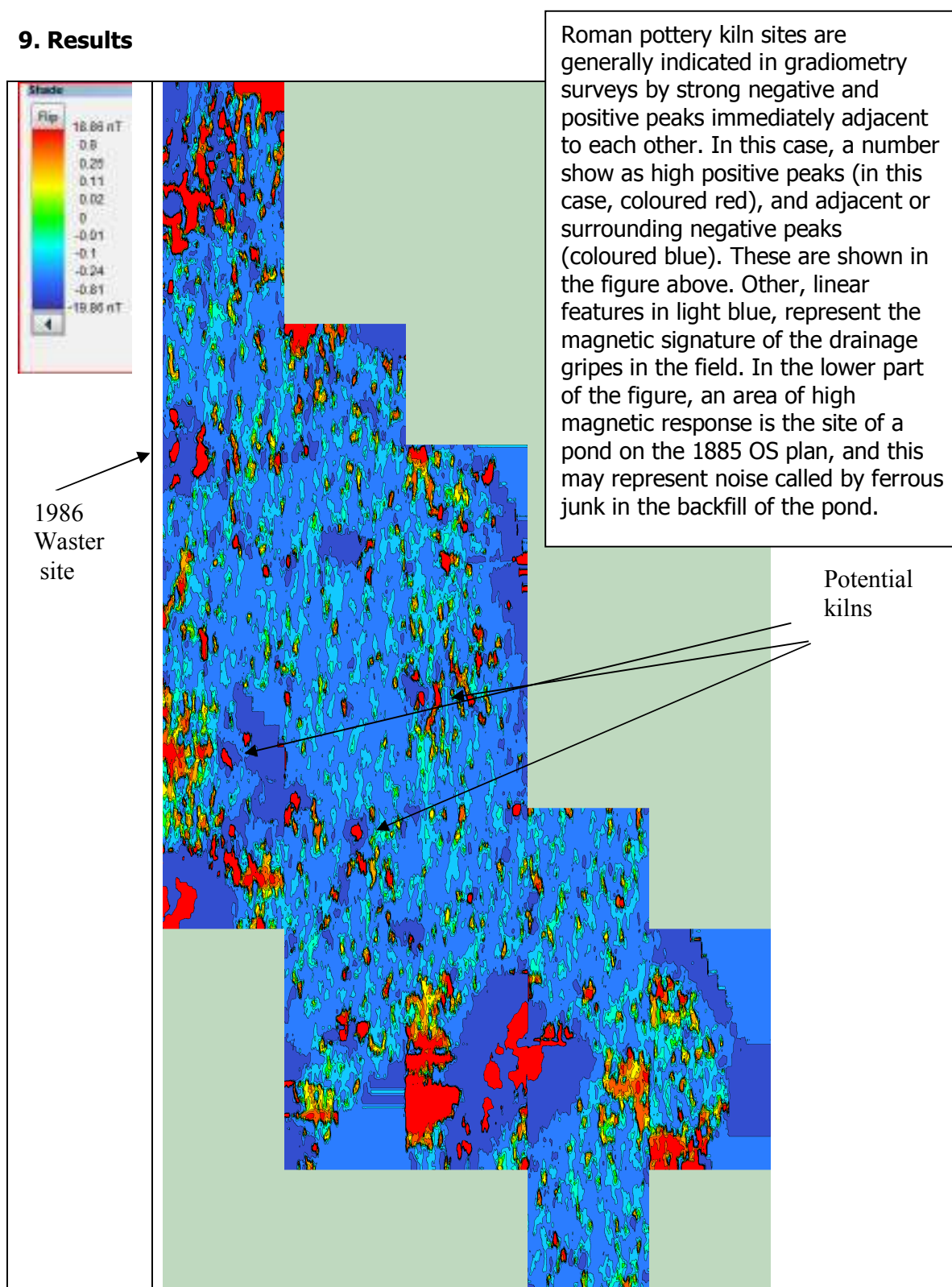


Fig 3: Shade view

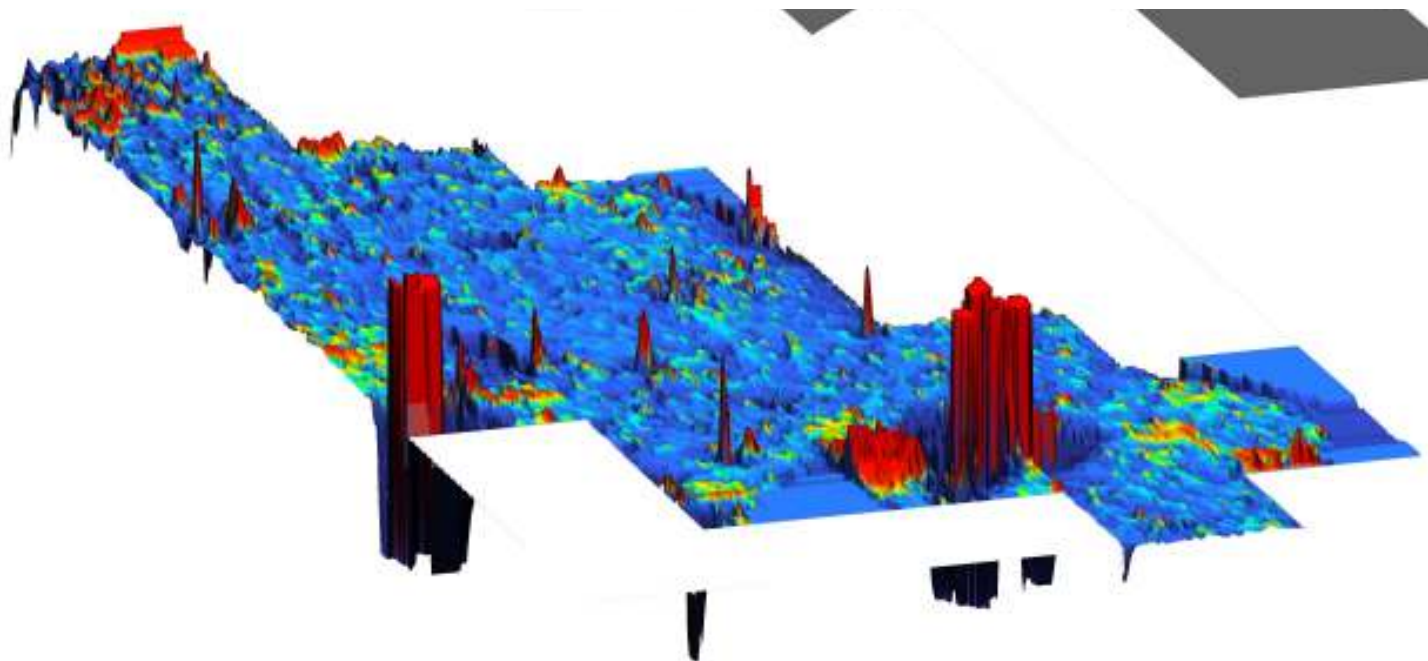


Fig 4: Axonometric view

These results illustrate the points made under the shade view, except that the anomalous nature of the readings on the site of the backfilled pond is, if anything, clearer. In this view, the potential kiln sites are indicated by red peaks surrounded by blue anti-peaks. Other high positive responses around the edges of the field are due to interference from items such as barbed wire and metal waste.

NB. For orientation of the above results see the summary of weekly site records at Appendix 1.

10. Recommendations for further work

The extremely useful results obtained in this survey indicate the potential sites of previously unknown Roman pottery kilns. Further geophysical techniques can be used to try and characterise the potential kilns, and so it is recommended that

1) A pseudosectioning survey is required of the anomalies identified (potential kiln sites?) in order that consideration can be given to full excavation of one kiln.

11. References

Extract from Congresbury Tithe Map - *BRO 37959/9*.

Authors: Ian Morton & Chris Short.

Date: 1st February 2010.

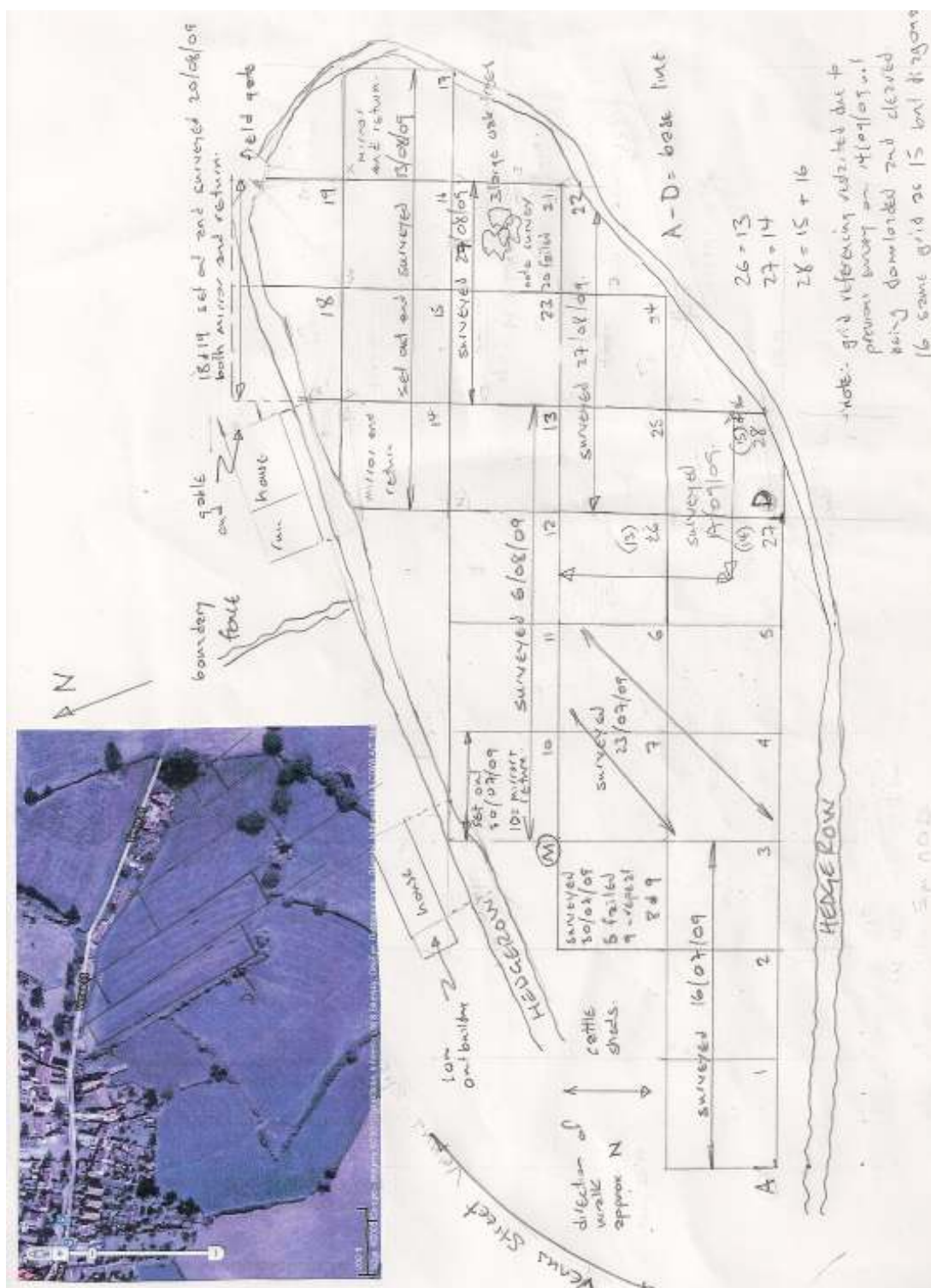
Appendix 1

Summary of daily site records

YCCCART Site Survey Project – Congresbury Kilns				
Summary Report date				
Type /Instrument	Grad 601			
	Pace :1.5m/s Lines/m : 1 Range:100nT Volume: High Sensors:2		Grid size: 30m x30m Pattern : Zig Zag Samples/m:4 Audio: On Threshold:1nT Reject:50 Hz	
Location		Venus Street, Congresbury Base line		
	A	N51°21'44" W 2°47'56" ST 46 4446E 6288N	D	N51°21'39" W 2°47'52" ST46 4456E 6272N
Ref	none			
Site name	Weaver field			
Landowner	Mrs. M Meaker, Yew Tree House, 41 Venus Street			
Tenant	Mr. T Thomas, Thomas Farm, Smallway, Congresbury			
HER ref	NSHER 47510			
Site type	Open field			
Description	Large grass field with cattle grazing throughout survey			
Period	Unknown			
Geology	Carboniferous limestone, Keuper Marl and estuarine alluvium			
Land use	None			
Survey members	Peter English, Peter Wright, Mike Fox, Colin Campbell & Philippa Cormack.			

Survey area		notes		readings		
		Note; magnetometer display has max/min of ±100 but actual readings downloaded may be greater				
		size	walk direction	max	min	mean
Date 16/07/09	1	30 x30m	N	Grid values not recorded in field for this survey		
	2	30 x30m	N			
	3	30 x30m	N			
Date 23/07/09	4	30 x30m	N			
	5	30 x30m	N			
	6	30 x30m	N			
	7	30 x30m	N			
Date 30/07/09	8	30 x30m –failed	N			
	9	30 x30m-replacement	N			
Date 6/08/09	10	Mirror & return	N			
	11	30x30m	N			
	12	30x30m	N			
	13	30x30m	N			
Date 13/08/09	14	Mirror & return	N			
	15	30x30m	N			
	16	30x30m	N			
	17	Mirror & return	N			
Date 20/08/09	18	Mirror & return	N			
	19	Mirror & return	N			
Date 27/08/09	20	30x30m-failed	N			
	21	30x30m-replacement	N			
	22	Mirror & return	N			
	23	30x30m	N			
	24	30x30m	N			
	25	30x30m	N			
Date 17/09/09 Sequence reset due to other survey work. Shown as 26, 27 & 28 on sketch	13	30x30m	N			
	14	30x30m	N			
	15	Mirror & return	N			
						-
Summary		Survey complete				
Ian Morton 05/01/010		Version 1				

Setting out details



Appendix 2

Pottery from the 1986 excavation





Appendix 3



A shard of Samian ware picked up by Vince Russett 2009.