

Fieldwalking at Coldean along Segas Pipeline

Sunday 21st October 1990

A trench was cut to lay Segas pipes from the junction of Saunders Hill Coldean westwards towards Hollingbury, North of the hillfort. The trench was cut to the Ditchling Road,

Walking along the topsoil deposits laid to the side of the trench produced several flint flakes and pieces of fire fractured flint. Two pieces of flint were removed in situ from the lower deposits in the valley bottom, one from the sandy chalky layer and one from the darker layer above. One piece of pottery was found on the topsoil deposit half way up the west hill incline.

The chalk natural ran down the hill, but at the valley bottom layers of loam replaced the chalk. In the middle of the valley bottom for five or six meters was a heavy flint proliferation. On the top of the west hill the topsoil was heavy clay with flint, but the depth of this varied considerably along the section. The cutting was approximately 1.75 meters deep and the clay with flint ran the full depth of the section for only 33 meters in length. However during this 33 meters the chalk natural reached within 20 centimeters of the surface in two places. On the west side of the hill the clay with flint on the side of the hill reached nearly a meter in depth in several places, but the soil depth over the majority of the chalk surface was only about 20—30 centimeters.

There were several obscure sectional features cut into the chalk lacking real definition. There was however a clear pit feature 23 meters east of the 'Medieval' trackway and this feature was 70 centimeters in width and was as deep at the trench cutting and deeper, the section on the opposite side of the trench picked up the feature in only the top 40 centimeters. The feature was cleaned and found to be heavy clay with flint, but no finds were found in it.

A smaller 'posthole' feature was observed, the feature had a tapered profile and was filled with light soil, it was 80-90 centimeters in depth and was also cleaned up, but no finds were found in the feature.

The section through the trackway indicated variations in depth of soil and a possible cutting into the chalk, but the section was covered by a walkway for the cows to get from one field to another. The trackway was excavated by the field unit closer to Coldean Lane, but was found in section to have very little top soil before reaching the chalk natural,

John Funnell

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