1972/37. Investigation of diatomite seven kilometres east of Andover.

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LOCATION

A diatomite occurrence is situated 60 m south of Inglewood Road about seven kilometres east of the site of Andover railway station [EP436123]. The diatomite is on the property 'Inglewood' of G.H. Burbury, and lies about 2.5 km outside the eastern extremity of the Oatlands Quadrangle (fig. 1).

PREVIOUS LITERATURE

Diatomite was first recorded from this area by Nye (1921), who concluded that the quality was too poor for commercial exploitation. Nye estimated the area covered by diatomite as 1 acre (0.4 ha) and quoted the owners description of a pit put down some years previously which had shown one metre of soil and limonite concretions overlying two metres of diatomite, with the base of the latter unseen.

INVESTIGATION

The site of the bank where diatomite had been found was pointed out by Mr Burbury. Specimens were sent to G.B. Everard, who affirmed that the pale grey, light material was diatomite. Samples were also sent for chemical analysis.

The old pit site in the bank showed diatomite chips up to 50 mm in diameter set in a matrix of soil and dolerite pebbles - presumably this is where material from the pit was replaced haphazardly.

Two lines of auger holes were sited, one along the length of the bank as close as possible to the level of the pit, and the other up the face of the bank perpendicular to the pit (fig. 2). The two lines intersected at the pit. The auger used was a Stihl petrol driven auger which penetrated to just over one metre. The only trace of diatomite was found in holes along the bank within 20 m of the pit, and then only about 75-100 mm at the bottom of the hole.

Two further lines of holes were sited as shown on Figure 2, at the same level as the pit but some way away across areas of lower ground. No trace of diatomite was found.

Mr Burbury stated that diatomite had been found only in the bank where the pit had been sited, and at no other location on his extensive property. A traverse of the area for approximately 800 m around the pit site showed no signs of other diatomite outcrops.

CONCLUSIONS

The diatomite was laid down in a fresh water lake confined between hills of Jurassic dolerite in Tertiary times. The lake was eventually filled with dolerite debris from the surrounding hills. River action led to dissection of the area.

Because the auger could only penetrate to one metre, there is a possibility that diatomite is present but was not reached in the auger holes. However the area possibly covered by diatomite does not seem very

large [Nye (1921) estimated 1 acre (0.4 ha)] and diatomite is generally a high bulk, low cost commodity. Unless specific uses can be found for the material, further augering with a larger machine would not seem warranted.

REFERENCE

NYE, P.B. 1921. The underground water resources of the Midlands. *Undergr. Wat.Supply Pap.Tasm.* 1.

[1972]

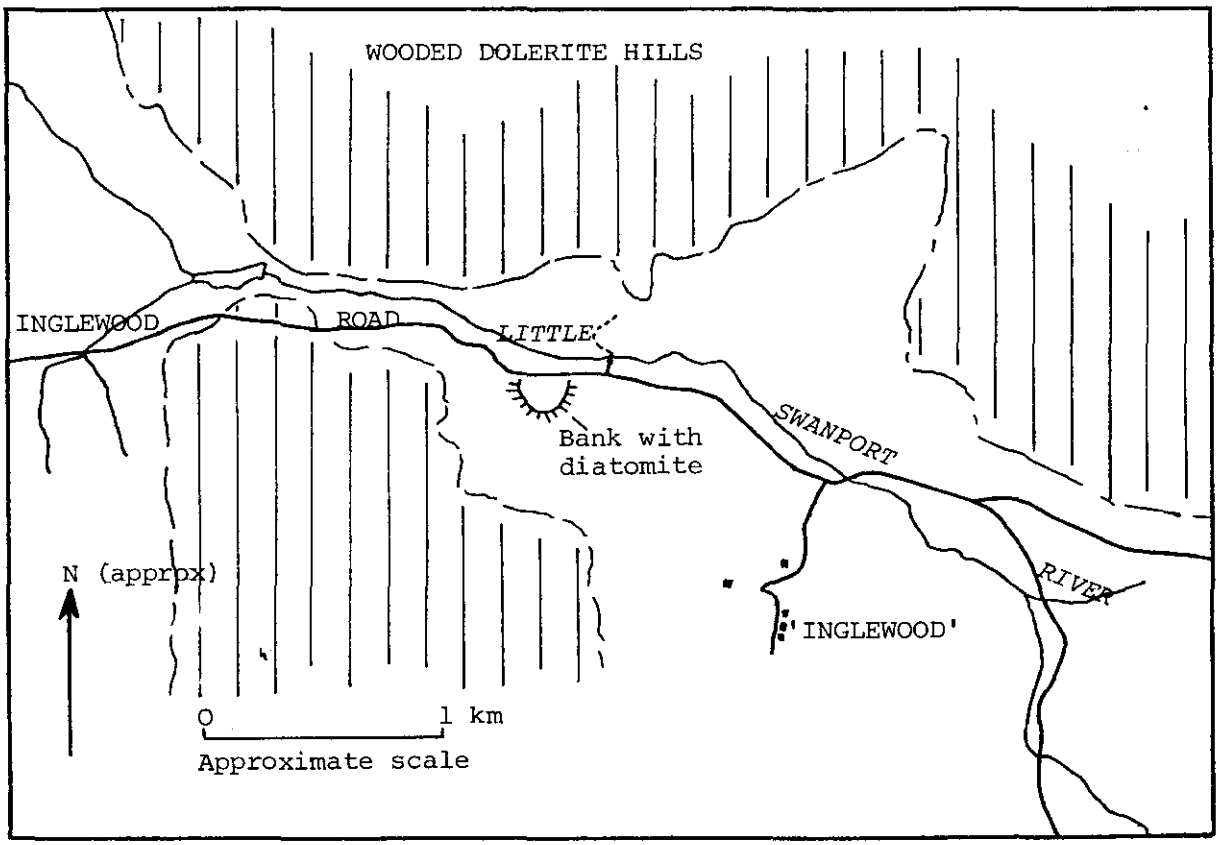

Figure 1. *Location map of diatomite deposit east of Andover (from aerial photograph T502-237, Project 1591, Run 11)*

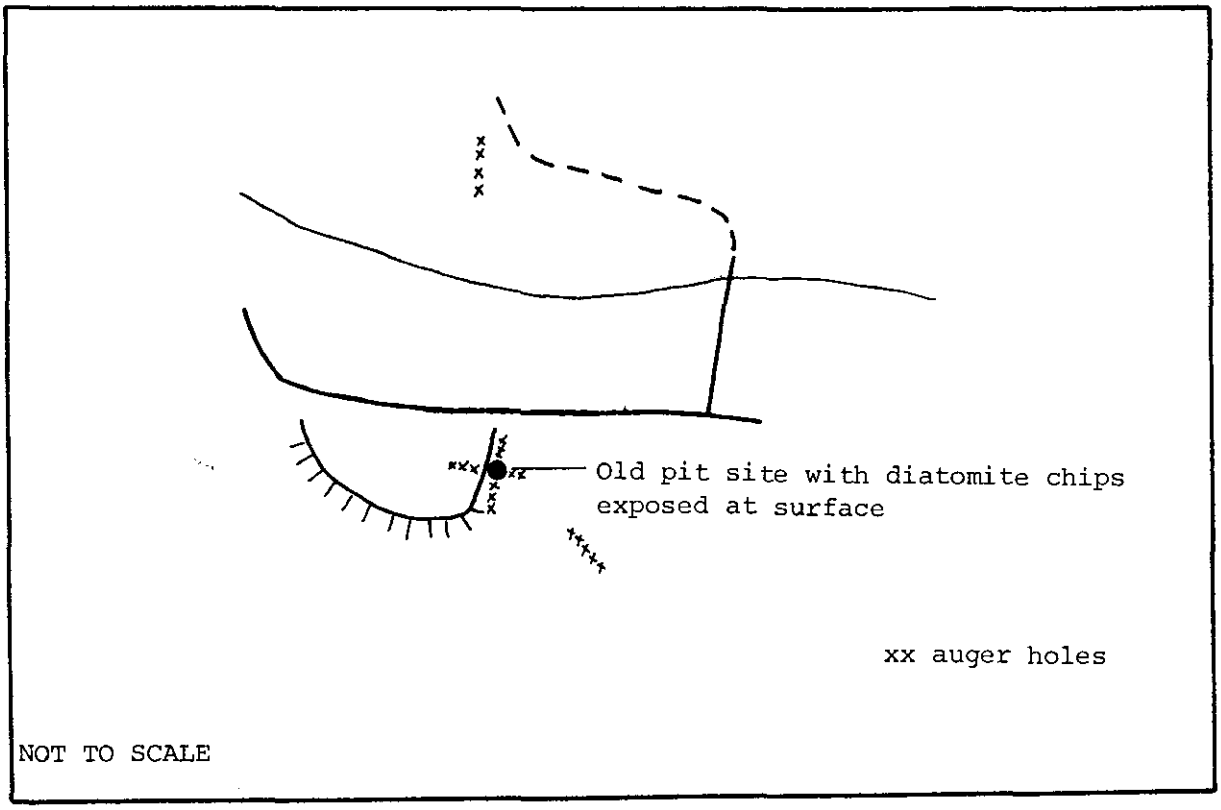

Figure 2. *Location of auger holes*

5 cm