

Cam Roman Villa

Excavations at Millfields, Cam, Dursley, Gloucestershire

The Villa at Cam

The villa appears to have undergone at least three phases of development. The original building consists of a very well-built outer wall and two separately-built inner walls dividing the building into three rooms. The second phase was an extension along the building's western side, achieved by terracing into the hillside and creating three extra rooms. Here the walls are of a much poorer construction and with minimal foundations. This has resulted in the longer section of wall starting to bow into the building. The third phase consists of the installation of the hypocaust, the possible bath and the corner pool. Following the abandonment of the villa, large sections of the walls were robbed for their stone leaving only the cuts for the foundation trenches. Initial dating of the coins found during excavation of the building suggests that it was in use in the 3rd-4th century AD, the latter part of the Roman period in Britain (AD43-410).



Above: The hypocaust stacks in Room 1.

The Hypocaust

A furnace, possibly in Room 2, would have been used to heat the air which would then have circulated around the stacks of tiles under the floor of Room 1. A large number of ceramic flue tiles were also found during excavations that would have taken the hot air up through the walls adding extra warmth to the room. Due to very little evidence of burning or heat effects on the hypocaust system there is a chance it was hardly used.



Above: Fragment of painted wall plaster found within the villa.

The Warm Bath

A bath house is a common element to villas, either as part of the villa building (e.g. Room 5) or as a detached structure.

The Cold Pool

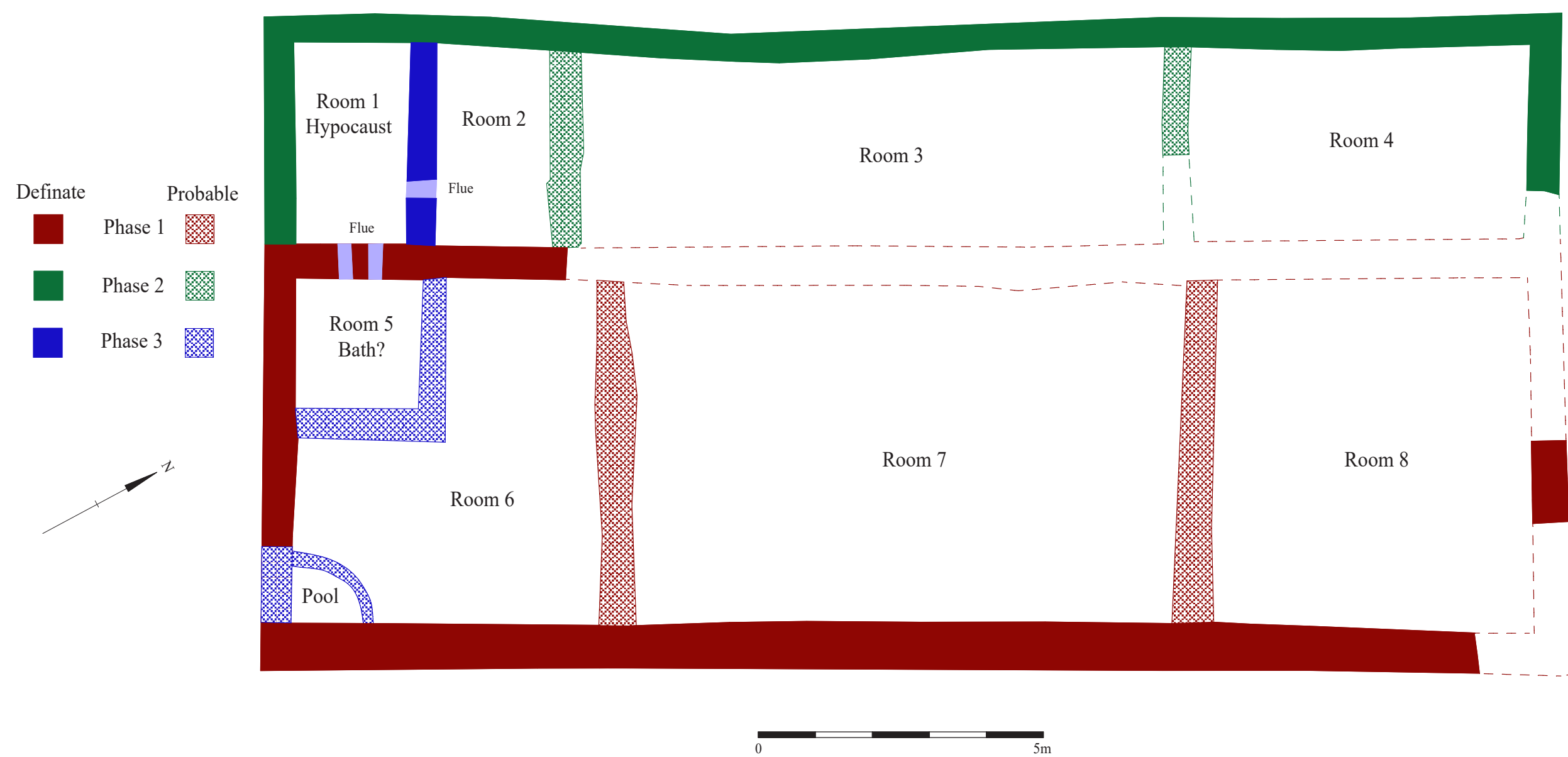
Common practice in Roman baths is after time in the hot pool you move to a cold pool. This feature may have served that purpose as suggested by the lining of waterproof mortar and the presence of a lead drainage pipe connecting it to the outside of the building.



Above: Cold pool.

Below left: Bone die.

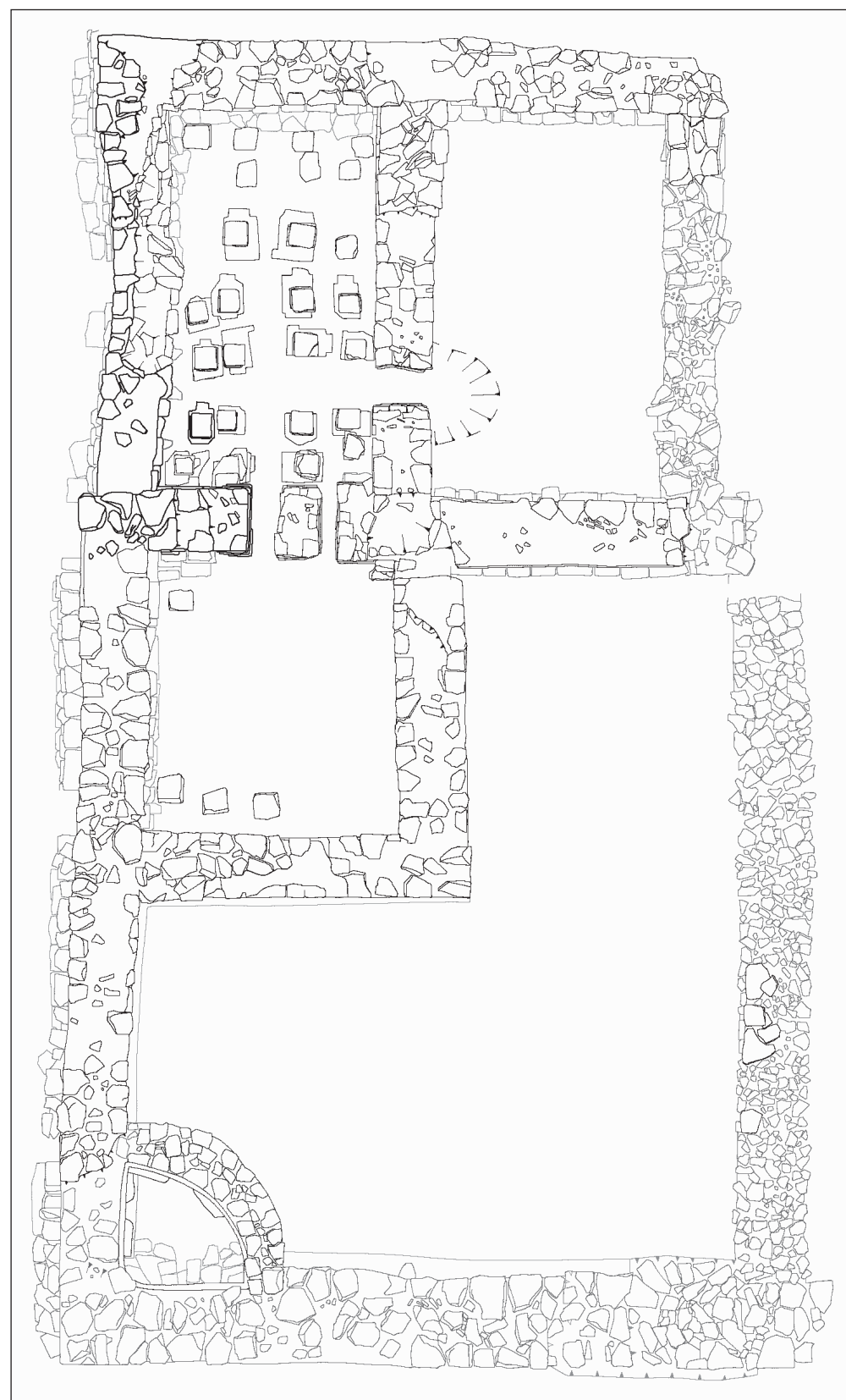
Below right: Decorated copper object.



The Finds

A large number of finds were recovered during the excavation of the villa. These were for the most part fragments of pottery and animal bones although a number of more personal items were also found. These include coins, a brooch, bone pins, spoons and even a bone die.

Right: Detailed plan of hypocaust and bath end of the villa. Remaining walls are down in black with foundation drawn in grey.
Below left: Crossbow booch.



Above left: Coin FEL TEMP REPARATIO AD348-358.

Above right: Metal spoon.

