

BRONZE AGE, IRON AGE, AND ROMAN SETTLEMENT SITES AT LITTLE SOMBORNE AND ASHLEY, HAMPSHIRE

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SUMMARY

Excavations at Little Somborne (Fig. 1b) revealed an oval-shaped, ditched enclosure containing two circular houses, one of possible cob and wattle construction and the other post-built with an east-facing porch. Eight four-post structures were excavated, together with numerous storage pits. The pottery ranges in date from the fifth to the second century BC, with a predominance of the later material. A wide swathe across the settlement site at Ashley revealed a complex of ditches of the Bronze Age and Roman periods. The report is in two parts. Part I deals with the excavation of the Iron Age settlement at Little Somborne and Part II (p. 128) describes the settlement at Ashley.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

LITTLE SOMBORNE

The site at Little Somborne was first noted in the course of a co-operative survey of the British Gas Pipeline across Wessex. Air photographs permitted an initial tentative statement and the formulation of questions for resolution by excavation. Some of these, because of the limited swathe available, could not be answered. Otherwise the air photographic information remains the principal source for information which complements that from this excavation.

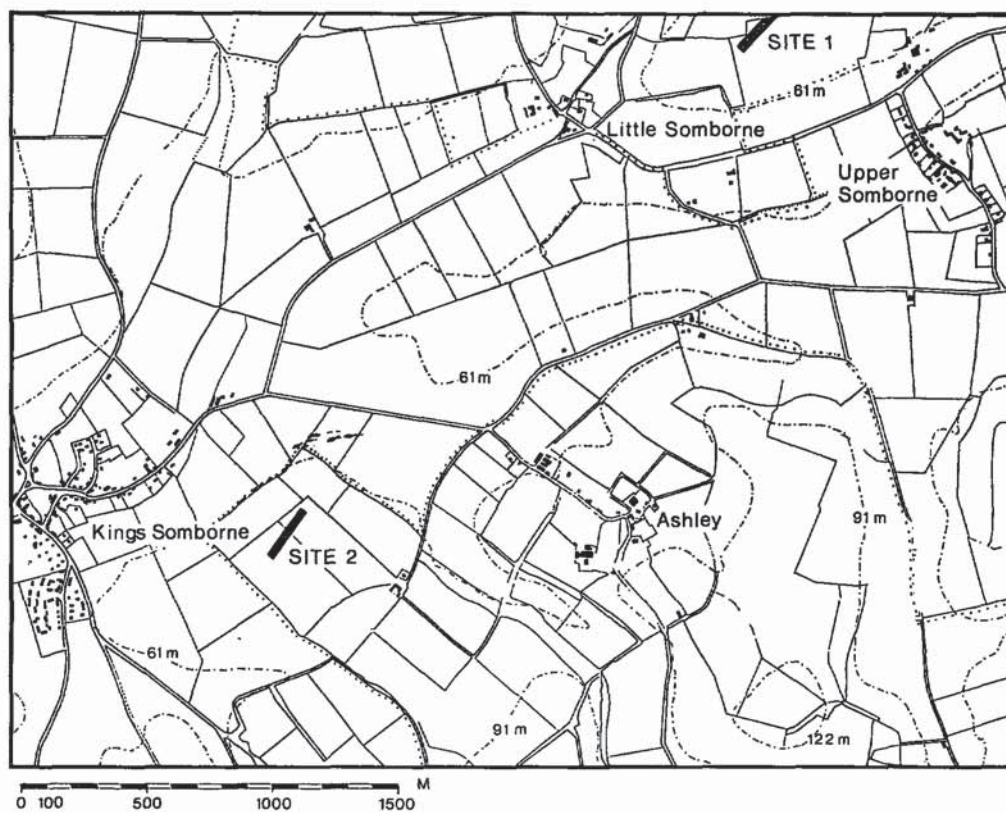
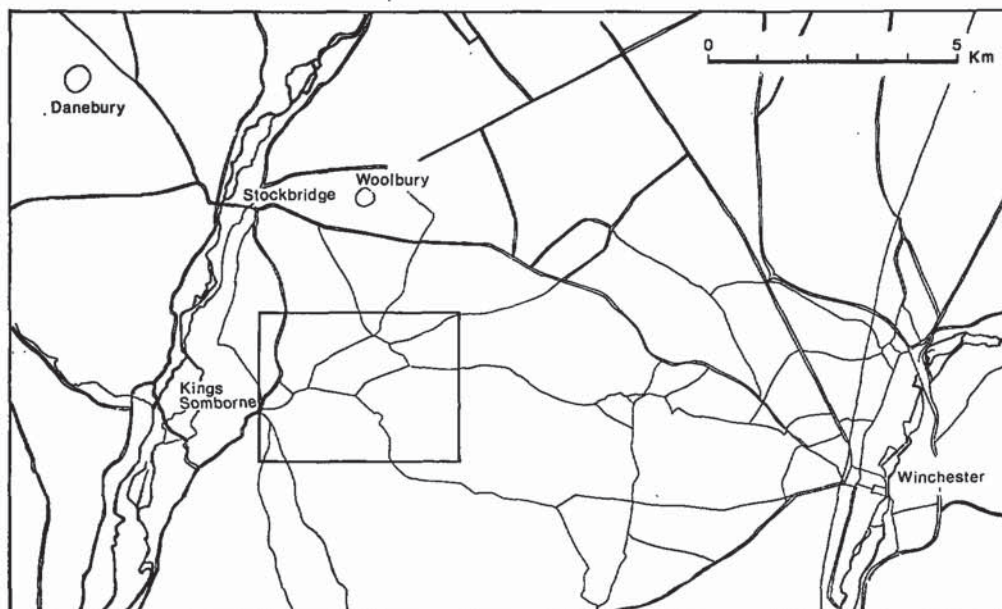
First recording and description

Examination for the Royal Commission on Historic Monuments by C. Bowen, using an Oude Delft stereoscope, of vertical air photographs taken for the British Gas Corporation (BGC) in March 1976 revealed soil marks of apparent settlements and fields on ground rising to a ridge east of the deserted village of Little Somborne (Fig. 2). There were two likely settlement areas. The more southerly, the subject of this report, consists of an in-

complete but apparently oval ditched enclosure, about three acres in area, containing 'smear' marks and the discrete dark discs of probable pits. At least two pits were visible outside the enclosure just east of south, adjacent to a ditch whose course was interrupted at (b) and which continued beyond on a slight change of alignment. At the south-east of the enclosure a gap at (a), partly obscured by a 'smear' mark, is the almost certain original entrance. From the south side of this a very narrow ditch winds into the centre of the enclosure. Extending outwards east-south-east from a point near one side of the assumed entrance is a ditch on the same alignment as at (b). This alignment is also that of 'Celtic' fields which spread for at least 60 acres (24 hectares) west and south of the enclosure. Searches on the ground by C. Bowen, K. Stubbs and helpers produced no finds.

Adjacent site north-east

Some 300 m to the north-east very narrow soil marks, describing rectangular arrangements associated with 'smears', were approached from the south by a linear feature, best interpreted as an approach road. These are adjacent to other features, not visible on air photographs, of Romano-British date and to be published by K. Stubbs, their excavator. Their position is marked by the inscription, 'Romano-British settlement' (Fig. 2). Geophysical examination by staff of the Ancient Monuments Laboratory of the 'oval' showed an unevenly 'flattened' north side, but generally the survey (Fig. 3) supported the air photographic transcript, though it was less positive about the location of the likely entrance and of the ditch line south-east of (b).



Figs. 1a, b. Location maps showing sites at Little Somborne (Site 1) and Ashley (Site 2), Hants.

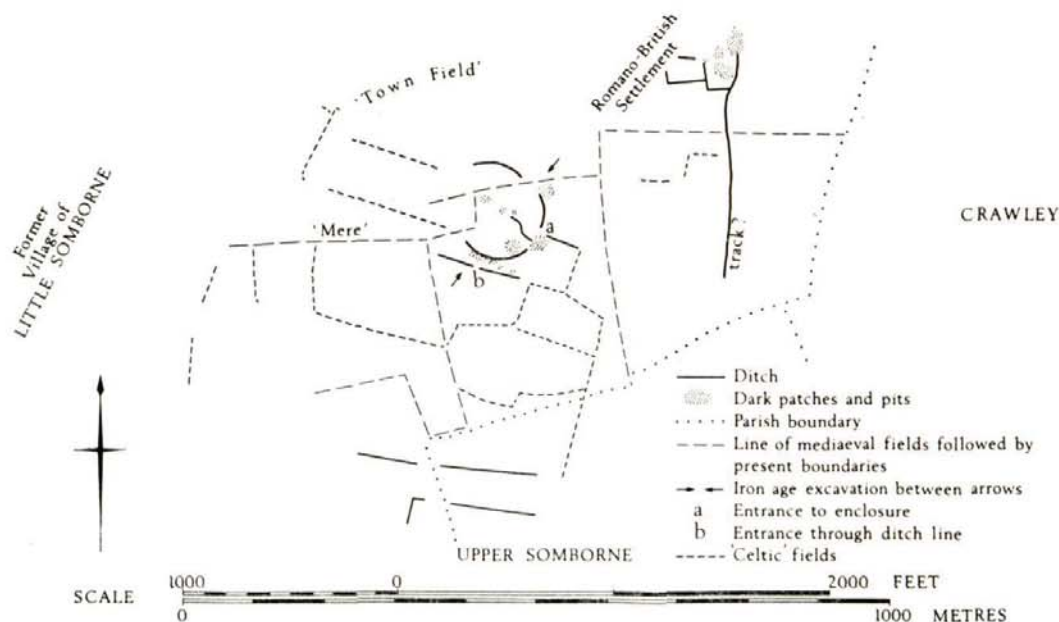


Fig. 2. Little Somborne, Hants; settlement and fields based on air photographic evidence and map information (plan by courtesy of RCHM).

ASHLEY

The Ashley settlement was not visible on these surveys and it was only aerial reconnaissance of the route of the BGC pipeline during the severe drought conditions of 1976 that enabled K. Stubbs to record the site. The photographs showed a salient of the Ashley parish boundary occupied by considerable traces of ditches and gullies believed at the time to be possibly the peripheral settlement of a Roman villa.

At the time of these discoveries, the construction of the pipeline was well under way and long stretches were completed. Limited excavation was carried out on a number of sites elsewhere along its route in Hampshire, but the speed of construction was so great that insufficient time was available for excavation. Because of this, the writer was asked to report on the problems related to excavation along the pipeline and it was reported that, where possible, excavation of sites in advance of construction was necessary, since the cutting of the easement (30 m wide) often involved considerable mutilation of the upper levels of the sites.

Because discoveries were too numerous and the time available too short for the Wessex Archaeological Committee to mount an adequate excavation programme, Stubbs and Bowen submitted a report to the Department of the Environment listing the new sites threatened by the pipeline and proposing the excavation of at least two—in order of importance, Little Somborne and Ashley. Owing to the wet autumn of 1976 work along the pipeline was halted, which presented the opportunity for excavation. With the co-operation of the BGC, emergency excavations were arranged for January and February 1977 and carried out by the Central Excavation Unit, DOE. A geophysical survey of both sites was undertaken in advance by the Ancient Monuments Laboratory. Work began on 10th January and continued until 18th February. The operations were highly mechanized and within five days both sites were stripped of topsoil along the line of the easement.

For economy, both reports are simplified and the majority of post-hole sections and duplicate ditch profiles omitted; however, virtually all the pottery and small finds with

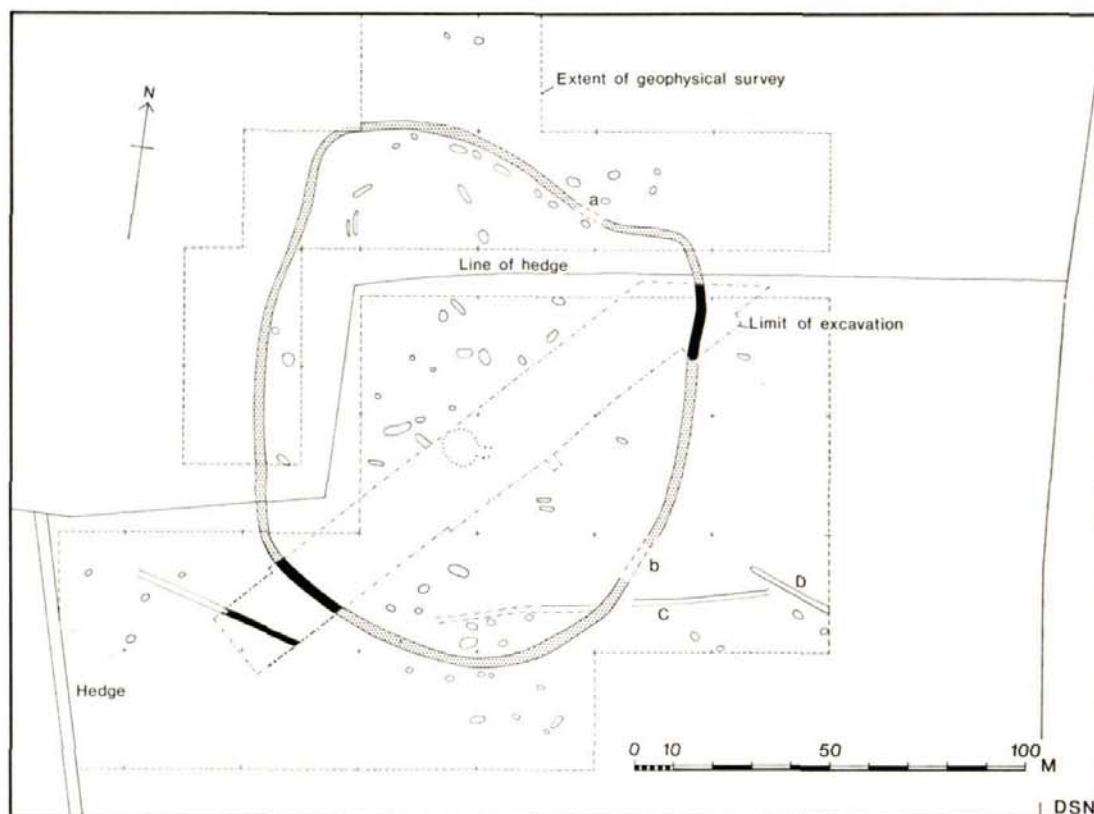


Fig. 3. Little Somborne, Hants; general plan of Iron Age enclosure.

form are illustrated. Readers wishing to make further study of these two sites should consult the microfiche archive housed at the Central Excavation Unit, Fort Cumberland, Portsmouth or the archive with the County Museum Service, Winchester.

All the finds have been deposited with the County Museum Service.

PART I, LITTLE SOMBORNE

INTRODUCTION

The Iron-Age enclosure (NGR SU 389328) lies within the parish of Little Somborne, midway between Little Somborne and Upper Somborne (Fig. 1b) at a height of approximately 70 m O.D. and is situated on a south-facing slope. Behind the site the hill rises gradually towards the north-east, where at Windmill

Hill (SU 409347) it reaches 134 m O.D. The subsoil is chalk with, in places, fissures between 1–2 m long by about 20 cm wide and, where sectioned, between 14–40 cm deep, filled with chalk rubble and silt. They were orientated downhill and apparently of periglacial origin. At the bottom of the hill, accumulations of river gravels are encountered, indicating the possibility that the stream which passes through 'The Green' at King's Somborne may have risen further north-east, nearer Upper Somborne, and within 450 m of the enclosure. The stream flows south-west, through King's Somborne, and meets the River Test at Horsebridge. Very little of the enclosure is visible from the ground, although the darker filling of the ditches is prominent following ploughing, as are also large quantities of burnt flint. The

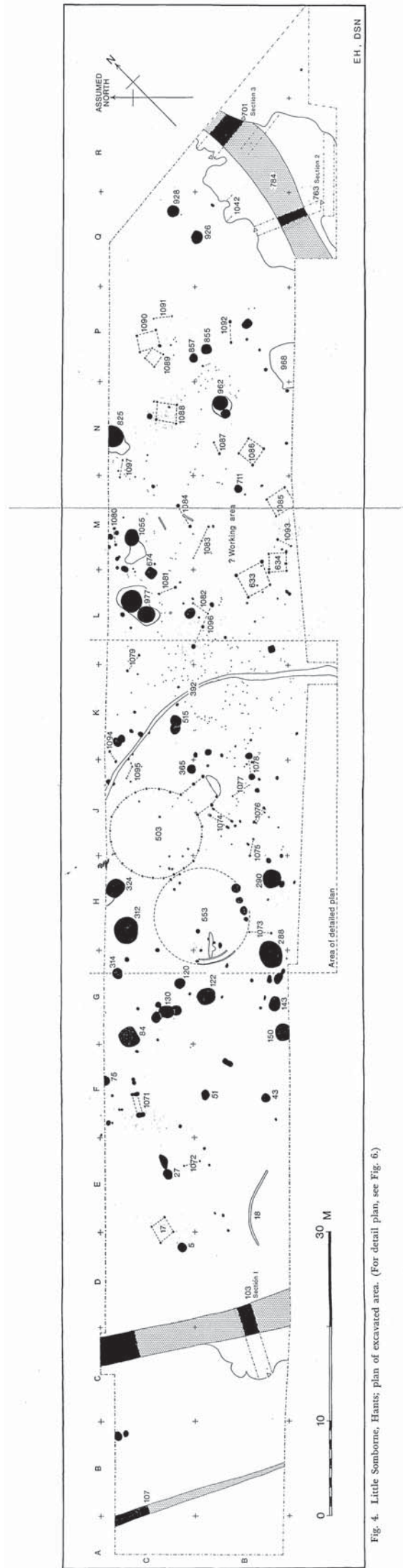


Fig. 4. Little Somborne, Haunts; plan of excavated area. (For detail plan, see Fig. 6.)

bank is also ploughed out, with the possible exception of an area north of a hedgerow that crosses the site. The pattern of modern enclosure here, and scarping associated with it, is a fairly safe indication of a former medieval field system overlying the site, running oblique to the 'Celtic' fields that preceded it. The Tithe Map of 1841 provides some confirmatory support in a twice repeated 'part of Town Field' and 'mere' (boundary).

THE EXCAVATIONS (Fig. 4)

THE ENCLOSURE DITCH

Four sections were cut across the ditch—two on the north-east and two to the south-west of the enclosure. The ditch was V-shaped in profile and had evidence for a recut.

South-West Cutting (Section 1, Fig. 5)

Here the ditch measured 1.35 m deep by approximately 2.50 m wide. It had a U-shaped gully at the bottom of the cutting, possibly for drainage. At a later date, the ditch was recut. Its depth remained much the same, but its width was increased to about 3.40 m by cutting back the inside slope. On its west side were a series of working hollows (801), possibly dug in order to extract material to increase the height of an internal bank, evidence for which is suggested by numerous lenses of earth falling down the eastern slope of the ditch. Ploughing had removed all traces of the bank, although it is of interest that the bedrock to the east of the ditch was at a slightly higher level than on the west side. Presumably differential erosion had occurred here. No evidence for a palisade pre-dating the ditch was found.

The filling of the ditch consisted mainly of chalk and loam, but in the upper filling (886) were large quantities of burnt flint.

Neither of the two sections cutting the ditch at this point revealed pottery, although five small indeterminate sherds were found in the upper filling of the quarry.

North-East Cutting (Section 2, Fig. 5)

The ditch was about 1.70 m deep by 2.50

m wide and also had a U-shaped gully at its foot. The recut reduced the depth of the ditch slightly to 1.50 m, but it was made wider by cutting back the east slope.

On both sides of the ditch were a series of working hollows. Their situation on the west bank raises problems, however, especially if a purpose similar to that of the south-west hollows is argued, since there is insufficient space for a bank between the hollows and Pits 926 and 928. There are two possible explanations: (a) the original ditch had no bank or (b) the working hollows pre-date the enclosure and were not dug for bank material. The latter interpretation is the more likely since a layer of chalk (948) over the upper loam fill (949) of the hollows may be the last vestiges of a rampart and, in places, had been cut by the secondary ditch. For provisional phasing, see discussion, p. 125. The hollows here, possibly sealed by the bank, contained three sherds (77–9, Fig. 16): a haematite-coated rim with random finger-tip impressed decoration and two rims, one from a haematite-coated jar and the other a bowl, dated to the fifth to third century BC. Hollow 968, not sealed by a bank, contained sherds (72–6, Fig. 16), the latest dated to the third to first century BC.

The only pottery from the ditch (Nos. 80–3, Fig. 16) was found in the upper filling (levels corresponding to 716–18): the latest is dated to the third to first century BC. The filling of the ditch consisted mainly of chalk, probably slipped from the bank and eroded from the ditch sides. Over what period of time the material accumulated is uncertain, but the layer of burnt flint above appears to be so thick that deliberate deposition is probable. A similar situation occurs in the filling of the south-west cutting (Section 1, Fig. 5).

DISCUSSION

The presence of quarries earlier than the enclosure is not in itself significant but their situation, far from the centre of occupation, might imply that the limit of the settlement was already fixed. Although no evidence for

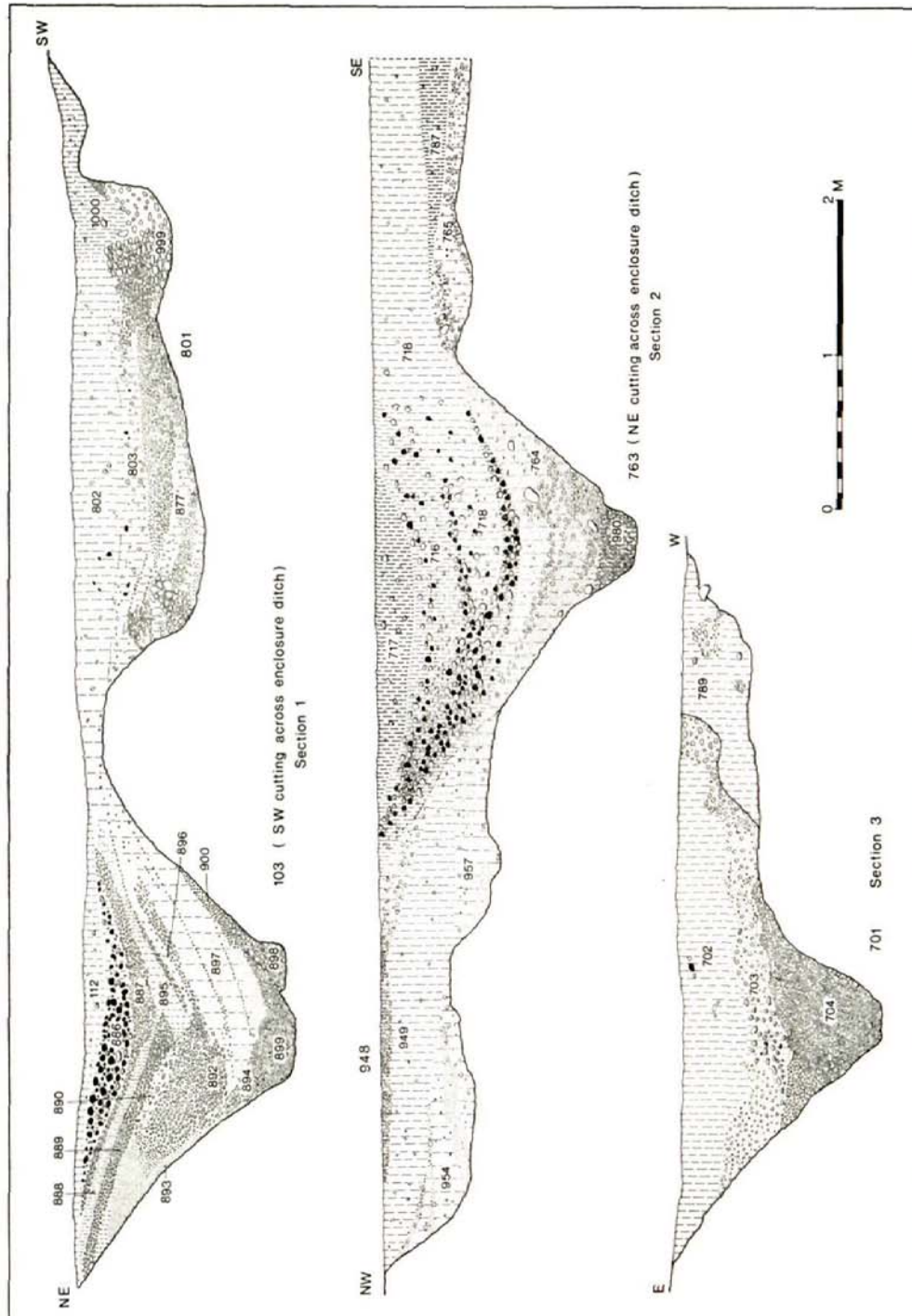
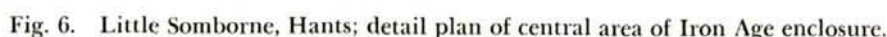


Fig. 5. Little Somborne, Hants; sections across Iron Age enclosure ditch.



The Circular Houses

differed in construction: the close proximity of the structures and the lack of space for eaves between the buildings is likely to rule out their being contemporary. There is no stratigraphic link between them.

House 553

Very little of the structure survives, but the remains on the west side and the entrance posts (190 and 183) to the south indicate a diameter of approximately 10 m. The walls would have consisted of hurdles set into two concentric narrow U-shaped slots set 60 cm apart and designed to revet an infilling, possibly of loose chalk, cob or turves. There is no evidence that the features inside the house belong to the structure.

Similarly constructed houses have been found at Danebury (Cunliffe 1976, Fig. 6) and at Gorhambury, Hertfordshire (Neal 1978, 38); here cob was used to infill the space between the hurdles.

Hut 503

This was 9.60 m in diameter and had a porch on its south-east side. Its walls consisted of a ring of twenty-three posts, each spaced approximately 1.15 m apart (centre-to-centre) and set in shallow post-holes (Fig. 7). Its porch (post-holes 367, 369, 462 and 464) projected 2.80 m beyond the wall and was almost square. The wider spacing of post-holes 462 and 464 may indicate that the porch was of two phases and that it had been extended. Outside was a semi-circular hollow (Section 496, Fig. 7), possibly an eavesdrip for the porch roof.

There were no post-holes in the centre of the building to suggest that its roof had supports other than the wall posts, and indeed a house of this diameter does not require them. A series of shallow post-holes (Nos. 427, 429, 431, 433, 435, 437, 486 and 490) situated on the south side of the house were too slight for roof supports although, if they were contemporary with the building, it is possible they were part of a partition or some form of furniture. House 5 at Nornour, Isles of Scilly (Butcher, forthcoming), although of stone, had irregular partitions forming narrow semi-circular compartments against the main wall of the structure; there is no reason, therefore, why a similar division, of timber, should not occur in House 503. The presence of charcoal (of oak) in the filling of the post-holes implies the destruction of the house by fire. Charcoal from various post-holes was amalgamated and submitted for C14 tests. These gave an age of 2480 ± 90 BP (HAR 2222). A rim sherd (Pot No. 88, Fig. 16) of the fifth to third century BC was found in the filling of post-hole 406.

The site of another possible house may be represented by a two-post setting (1078) south of the porch of House 503. The post-holes (Nos. 101 and 353, Fig. 6) were considerably wider and deeper than other two-post settings and had traces of the post-pipes showing in

their fillings. The post-pipe of 101 contained a sherd from a wide jar (Pot No. 89, Fig. 16) dated to the third to first century BC.

Four-Post Structures

A total of eight four-post structures was discovered (Nos. 17, 633, 634, 1085, 1086, 1088, 1089 and 1090). They ranged in size from 1.50–3 m square and, apart from No. 17, were all situated in the centre of the enclosure. The distribution of these suggests a deliberate arrangement, as they form a semicircular pattern on the east side of an area of ground relatively clear of features excepting a three-post setting (1083) and two two-post settings (1084 and 1087). That a house once stood here is a possibility, although such an open space would be required for threshing corn to be stored in the silos. The structures need not all be contemporary; indeed, 633 or 634 and 1089 or 1090 may be replacements. The reason for the isolation of No. 17 is not understood, but perhaps it was a private store and the others communal. A possible palisade (392) across the settlement, between the huts and the silos, may suggest that there was an attempt to separate this half of the enclosure, perhaps not merely from stock, but from residents also.

Two-Post Settings

Many post-holes, arranged in pairs, spaced between 2–2.50 m apart, were found on the excavation. There were at least twenty such features: 1071 (two pairs), 1072, 1073, 1074 (two pairs), 1075, 1076 (two pairs), 1077, 1079, 1080–2, 1084, 1087, 1091–5; possibly also 1078 (cf. p. 127). Other post-holes of similar size and fill were spaced wider apart. These may be from the same class of feature, but since their separation was considerably greater, they have been omitted from the above list. Ten of the settings were distributed close to House 503, some adjacent to its porch, and another group concentrated around the assumed working area.

The Storage Pits

The excavation revealed a large number of miscellaneous pits, thirty of which were possibly intended for storage. Time only allowed

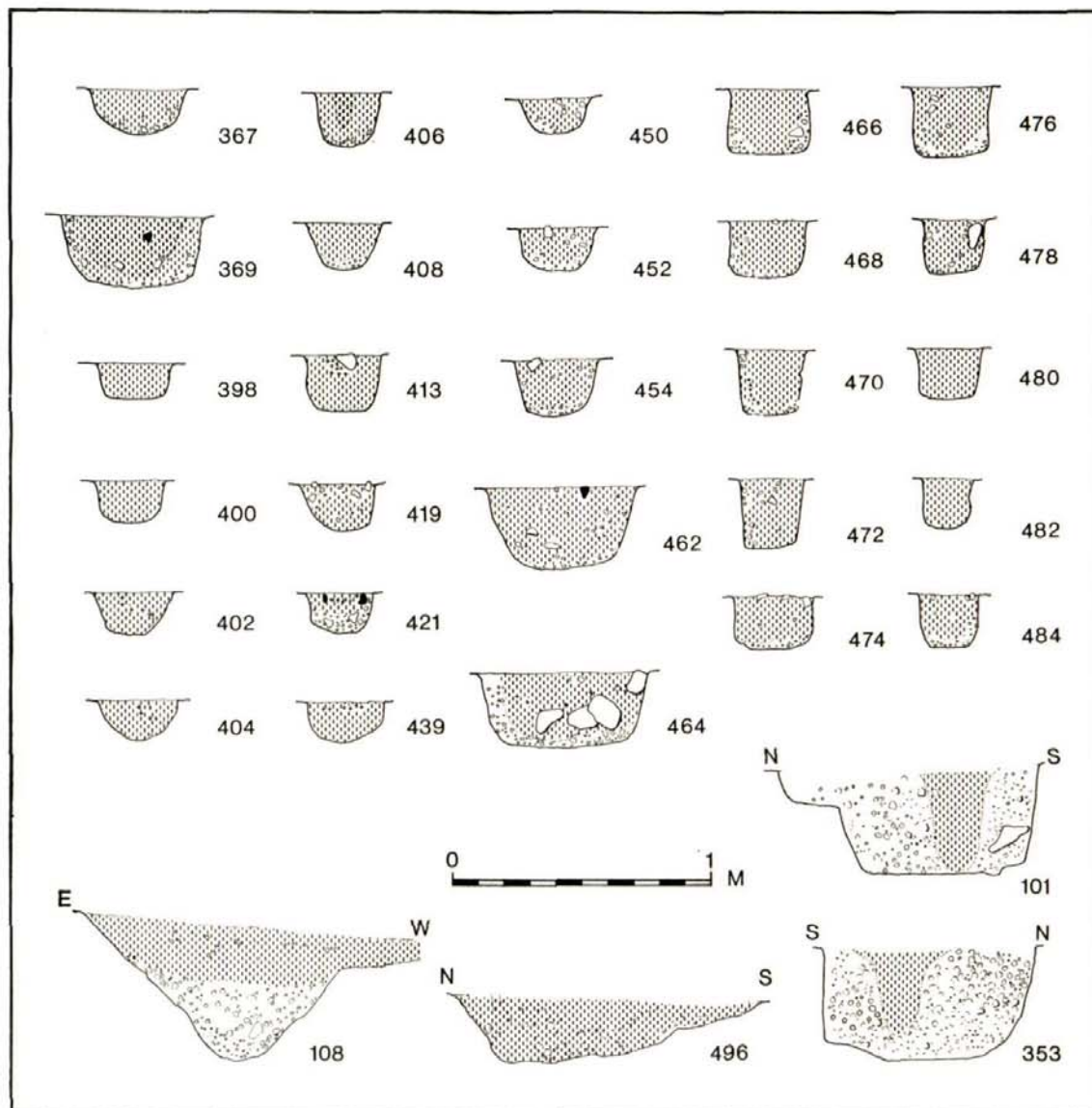


Fig. 7. Little Somborne, Hants; post-hole sections Hut 503 and miscellaneous features (101, 108, 353, 496).

for the total excavation of four, although it was possible to half-section the remainder. The pits appear to be concentrated in two areas; nineteen were situated to the west and south of the houses (Group A) and eleven to the north of the working area (Group B).

Description of Pits

The forms (A-F) of the pits are based on the criteria used at Little Woodbury.

For forms A-F to apply, the opening of the pit must appear circular or square in the horizontal plane. Forms A and B apply where the diameter of the opening is greater than or

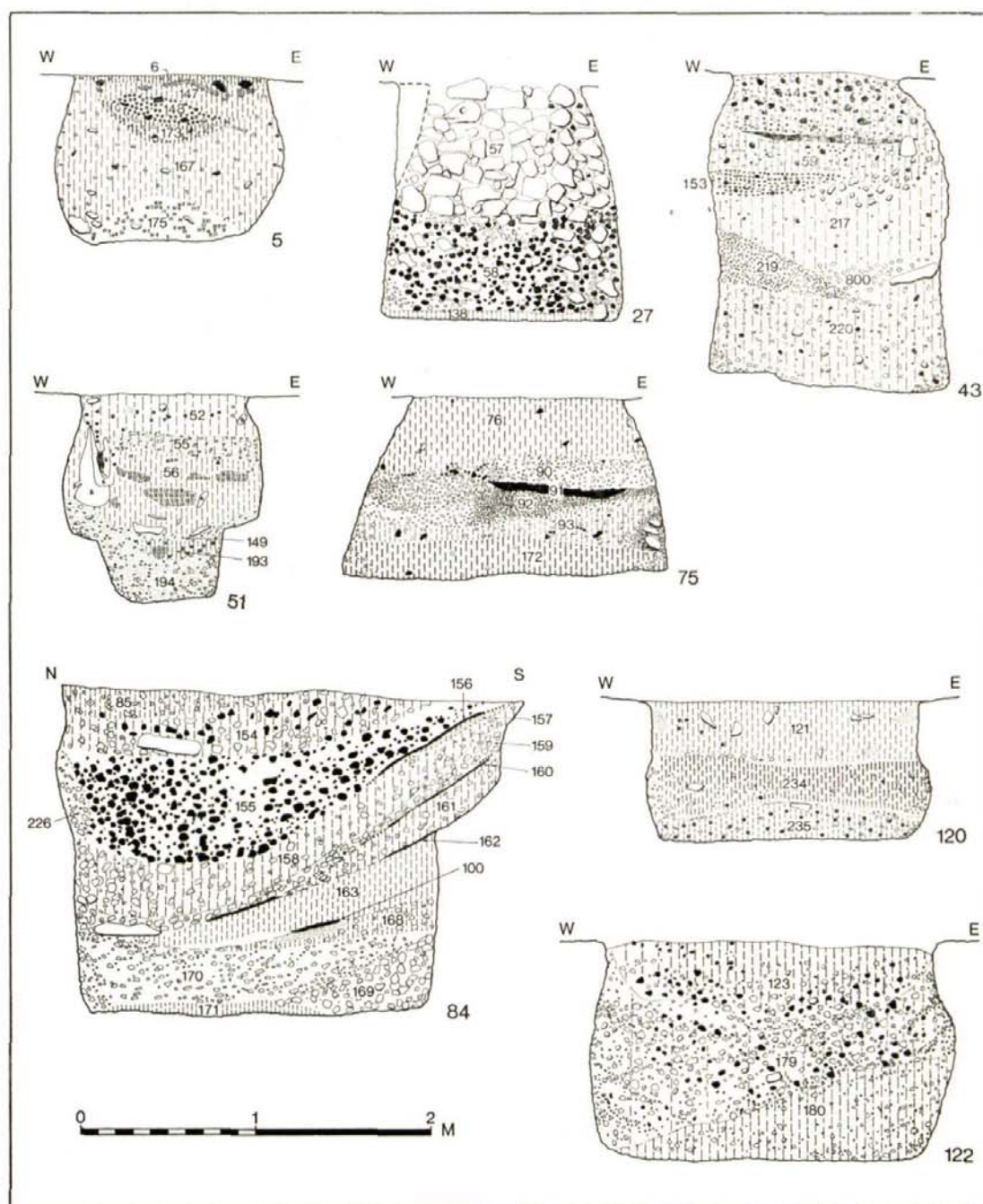


Fig. 8. Little Somborne, Hants; sections of storage pits.

equal to the depth, form A having perpendicular walls and form B having walls which slant inwards. Forms C–F apply where the diameter of the opening is less than the depth, form C having perpendicular walls, form D being in the shape of a truncated cone, form E being beehive-shaped and form F being barrel-shaped.

GROUP A

Pit 5 (Fig. 8)

Form F. It had somewhat rounded sides and was 0.95 m deep by 1.30 m wide. Its initial fill (175) consisted of burnt daub, which was also found in the upper filling, together with a number of burnt flints. Perhaps the daub formed part of a corn-drying oven similar to that from Pit 51.

The only pottery recovered consisted of 0.05 kg of sherds, all too small for drawing and positive dating but representing three separate vessels.

Pit 27

A neatly cut pit with slightly concave sides, 1.35 m deep and 1.35 m wide at the base. Form E. The mouth was no wider than 90 cm. It had three main layers of fill, an initial deposit of chalky loam (138) containing vessels (Nos. 1–3, Fig. 13) dated to the third to first century BC, an antler pin and a fragment of a saddle quern (SF Nos. 3 and 7, Fig. 17). This layer was covered with a thick deposit of loam (58) containing very large quantities of burnt flint, used for corn-drying, and pottery (Nos. 4 and 6) dated to the third to first century BC. The upper half of the pit was filled with very large flint nodules, some about 30 cm wide and so closely spaced as to suggest deliberate packing. Within this mass of flint was the skull of a pig. Pit fully excavated. Total weight of pottery recovered, 2.53 kg.

Pit 43

This was a fairly straight-sided pit with a slight bell out of its walls towards the opening. Probably Form D. It measured 1.80 m deep by about 1.30 m wide: its entrance was no greater than 0.90 m. Layer 220 of its filling contained pottery Nos. 7–9 and layer

217 pottery Nos. 10–17 (Fig. 13). Layer 153, consisting of a thick band of burnt daub, contained Pot No. 18. A triangular loom-weight (SF No. 4, Fig. 17) was found in layer 59 together with vessels 19–21. Charcoal (81) may indicate that before the pit was completely filled it was used as a working hollow to dry corn. Perhaps the deposit of daub immediately over the charcoal represents the collapse of a daub-covered frame, stretched across the pit, on which grain was dried.

All the pottery, with the exception of No. 11 which is possibly third to first century BC, is dated to the fifth to third century BC. Pit fully excavated. Total weight of pottery recovered, 2.22 kg.

Pit 51

Form F. It was originally 0.90 m deep by 1.10 m wide, but at a later date a separate pit was dug into its floor, making it 1.20 m deep. The reason for this is uncertain but Mr. Bowen has suggested it may have been intended as a secret store.

The filling of the secondary pit consisted of loose chalk (194) on top of which was a spread of loam containing burnt flint and daub. The main filling (56) consisted of loam containing many fragments of burnt cob with a curving surface and with wattle impressions. (For a reconstruction of the fragments, see Fig. 19 and discussion, p. 118). Also in the layer was an ox skull placed with its jaw set uppermost. The only sherd (Pot No. 22, Fig. 14) found in the pit came from layer 52 and is dated to the fifth to third century BC. Pit fully excavated. Total weight of pottery recovered, 0.88 kg.

Pit 75

This pit, of Form D, measured 1 m deep by 1.9 m wide at the base and 1.20 m wide at the mouth. Its lower filling contained layers of loam (172) and chalk (92–3). Midway down was a band of burnt flint and charcoal (91) similar to that occurring in Pit 43. Subsequent fills consisted of chalk (90) and loam (76), the latter containing a rim from a wide-mouthed jar (Pot No. 23, Fig. 14) dated to the fifth to third century BC. Total weight of pottery recovered, 0.085 kg.

Pit 84

Form C, measuring 1.80 m deep by 2.0 m wide at its base. A cutting on the south side suggested that the pit was recut. Its original filling consisted of bands of loam and chalk (168-71) and charcoal (100). A deposit of loam (163), truncated by the possible recut, contained three rim sherds (Pottery Nos. 24-6, Fig. 14), one of possible third- to first-century BC date.

The recut pit does not appear to have been reused for storage, as its floor was far from level; on it was a thin lens of charcoal (162). Another thin lens of charcoal (160) and chalk (159), between deposits of chalk 158 and 161, contained a grass-marked rim (Pot No. 27, Fig. 14) of uncertain date. The distinctive feature of this pit was a 60 cm-thick mass of burnt flint (155). The deposit contained very little loam or chalk infilling and it must be assumed that the flints accumulated over a short duration. A third- to first-century BC date for its deposition is suggested by Pottery Nos. 28-31, which includes two saucepan-shaped vessels. An undated rim sherd (No. 32) was found in the uppermost fill (85). Total weight of pottery recovered, 0.59 kg.

Pit 120

This was a shallow pit, Form F, measuring 0.80 m deep by a maximum of 1.60 m wide; its sides were originally rounded in profile, its rim had collapsed. The primary fill (235) consisted of loam mixed with chalk and charcoal, with subsequent deposits (121 and 234) of chalky loam. Layer 234 contained a rim sherd from a wide jar (Pot No. 37) of fifth- to third-century BC date. Total weight of pottery recovered, 0.34 kg.

Pit 122

This was similar in basic form, Form F, to Pit 120. It measured 1.20 m deep and a maximum of 2.10 m wide and contained a primary fill of chalky loam (180), above which was a thick layer (179) of chalk with large quantities of flint, many burnt, and containing Pot No. 38, dated 3rd-1st century BC. The pit was sealed by a layer (123) of chalky loam also containing large quantities of burnt and unburnt

flint. In these layers were fragments from two skeletons, both adult. Total weight of pottery recovered, 0.25 kg.

Pits 130 and 132 (complex also containing Pits 114 and 236) (Fig. 9)

The first pit in this sequence was Pit 132, Form D, measuring 0.70 m deep by at least 1.70 m wide. It was completely filled with a chalky loam (178) but later cut by a secondary pit containing charcoal (177) and loam (133). This secondary pit appears to have been a working hollow; its upper fill (133) contained a base (Pot No. 39, Fig. 14) of a pedestal jar possibly dated to the fifth to third century BC.

Storage Pit 130, Form E, was dug through the fill of Pit 132. It measured 1.50 m deep by 2.0 m wide and was beehive-shaped; its vault had collapsed. A deep layer (378) of chalky loam indicated that the pit was filled rapidly, although, as in the case of the other pits, it also appears to have been partly left open as a working hollow, subsequently used for dumping charcoal and burnt flints. Pit 114, containing charcoal, cut this level. The uppermost fill (131) of Pit 130 was cut by a secondary pit (236) 0.30 m deep by 0.90 m wide containing a thin band of charcoal and burnt daub, indicating that this pit was probably a working hollow, possibly used for corn-drying or some other process requiring a fire. A third- to first-century BC date is attested for this pit by Pottery Nos. 33-6 (Fig. 14) found in the upper filling (131). Total weight of pottery recovered, 0.9 kg.

Pit 143

Form F. This measured 1.30 m deep by 1.60 m wide and was filled with layers of chalk (181-2) containing the occasional lens of charcoal. Sealed beneath the chalk, on the floor of the pit, was a fragment of fired clay triangular loom-weight (SF No. 5, Fig. 17). The upper filling (144) consisted of brown loam containing burnt flint and sherds from five vessels, all of third- to first-century BC date. They included two jars, Nos. 40 and 44 (Figs. 14 and 15) and three saucepan-shaped vessels, 41-3. Total weight of pottery recovered, 2.79 kg.

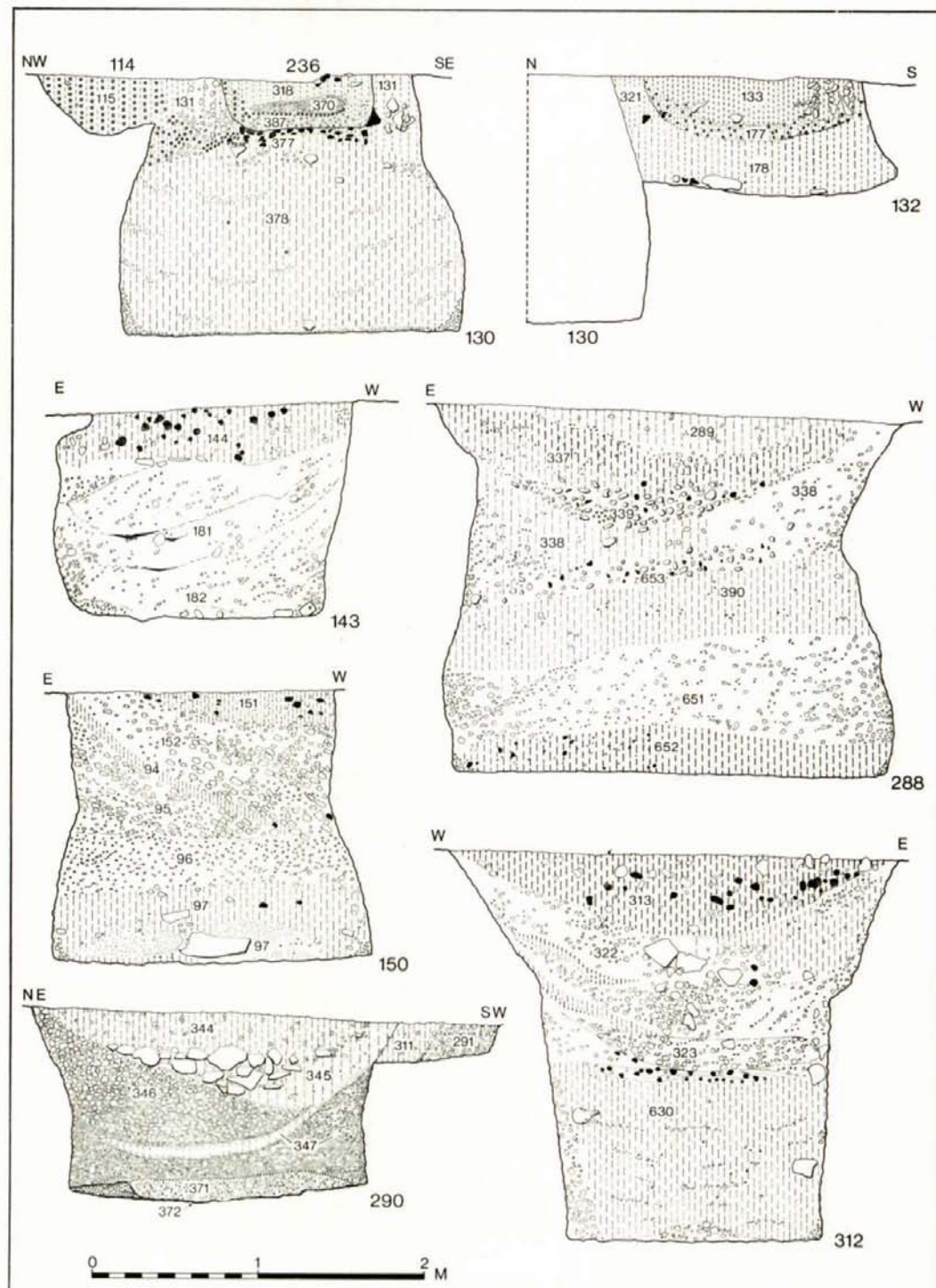


Fig. 9. Little Somborne, Hants; sections of storage pits.

Pit 150

Pit 150 was of Form E and measured 1.60 m deep by 1.90 m wide at its base. It was filled with a succession of tips of loam and chalk and does not appear to have remained open for long. Layer 96 contained a small rim sherd (Pot No. 46, Fig. 15). In the uppermost fill (151) of loam and burnt flint was another rim (Pot No. 45) of third- to first-century BC date. Total weight of pottery recovered, 0.27 kg.

Pit 288

Originally of Form E, it was the largest pit discovered on the excavation. It measured 2.10 m deep by 2.70 m wide, and the lowest filling (652) of chalky loam contained a third- to first-century BC sherd (Pot No. 49) from a saucepan-shaped vessel; a third- to first-century BC date for the pit is assured, therefore. A base sherd (Pot No. 50), also of third- to first-century BC date, was found in layer 390. The remainder of the filling consisted of layers of chalk and loam containing a greater proportion of flint, some burnt, in the upper levels. Total weight of pottery recovered, 0.47 kg.

Pit 290

Originally of Form D, this measured 1.50 m deep by 1.75 m wide. Its lowest filling (372) was a widespread layer of burnt grain (1,835 specimens), of which 99% was cereals—consisting of 69.2% wheat, 29.5% barley and 1.3% of the *Bromus* species. Perhaps it was accidentally burnt whilst being dried. (A note on the grain follows on p. 124). This was the only pit where burnt grain occurred in quantity and it is likely therefore that this type of accident was fairly infrequent. The presence of a third- to second-century BC vessel (Pot No. 51, Fig. 15) in the lower chalk filling (371) may indicate a contemporary date for the pit.

Layer 345 contained a deep bowl (Pot No. 52, Fig. 15) of the third to first century BC. Total weight of pottery recovered, 0.05 kg.

Pit 312

Form C. This was the deepest pit found on the excavation, but its relatively narrow width reduced its capacity to 3.7 cu m; it measured 2.30 m deep by 1.50 m wide at the base. Its sides sloped inwards. The first one

metre of its fill consisted of a uniform deposit of chalky loam (630) containing a small jar (Pot No. 53, Fig. 15) of third- to first-century BC date. On top of this deposit was a scatter of burnt flint and above that, in layer 323, the articulated skeleton of a dog (for report on the bones, see p.), and two vessels (Pottery Nos. 54–5) including a rim from a possible fifth- to third-century BC haematite-coated bowl with finely scored zig-zag decoration. The remainder of the pit was filled with a succession of tips of chalk and large flints. The uppermost deposit of loam contained, like so many of the pits, burnt flint. Total weight of pottery recovered, 0.63 kg.

Pit 314 (Fig. 10)

This pit, of Form E, measured 0.70 m deep by 1.30 m wide; it had a beehive-shaped profile. Above its primary fill of chalk (336) was a deposit of loam (334) containing a sherd possibly of third- to first-century BC date (Pot No. 56, Fig. 15). The remainder of the pit was filled with tips of chalk, flint rubble and loam. Total weight of pottery recovered, 0.076 kg.

Pit 324

Form E. Pit 324 measured 1.60 m deep by 1.75 m wide, and was originally beehive-shaped. Its uniform deposit of chalky loam (513) suggested a rapid fill, later cut by a secondary pit containing layers 514, 511 and 325–7. Layer 511 consisted of a thick deposit of charcoal indicating, possibly, that the pit had been used as a working hollow. Total weight of pottery recovered, 0.11 kg, none worthy of comment.

Pit 365

This measured 1.40 m deep and wide. Its sides were rounded in profile and therefore of Form F. The pit contained two inhumations, buried without grave goods. Their haphazard arrangement suggested that they had been thrown into the pit without ceremony. Skeleton 798 was that of a male aged between 17–22 but probably 20–1. Maximum stature was 161 cm (5 ft 3½ ins). Skeleton 799 was that of an adult, probably male, of uncertain age. Maximum stature was about 171 cm (5 ft 7 ins); there was evidence of osteo-arthritis (see p. 122).

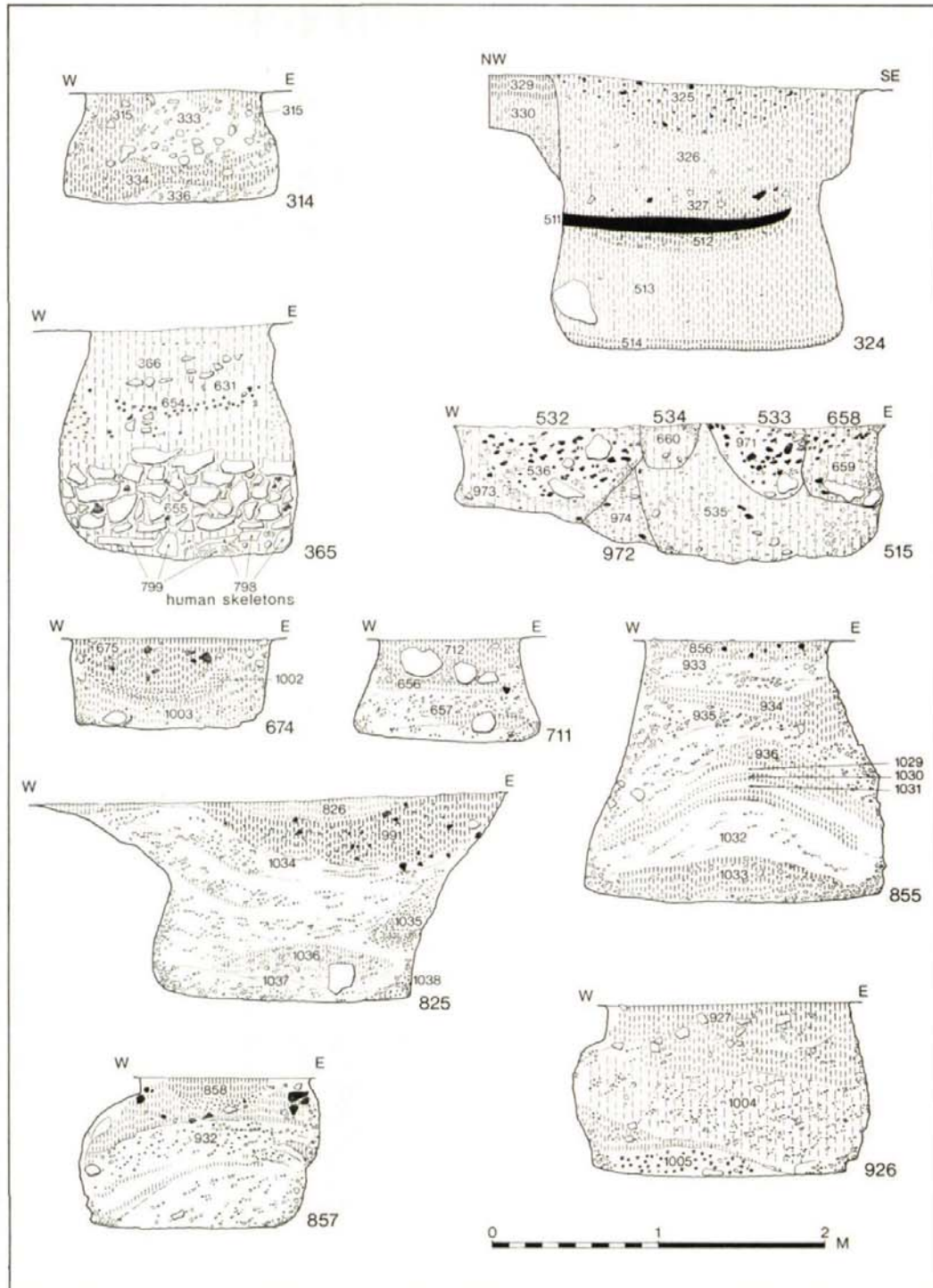


Fig. 10. Little Somborne, Hants; sections of storage pits.

The skeletons were packed with a heavy concentration of flint (655) and a large rotary quern (SF No. 10, Fig. 18). In the upper filling (654) of the pit was a fragment of a jar (Pot No. 57, Fig. 15) of third- to first-century BC date and a fragment of a triangular, baked-clay loom-weight. The burials are likely to be of similar date.

In the upper filling (in a layer equated with 366) was an iron spear-head (SF No. 1, Fig. 17) with grooved decoration on the socket. The spear is unlikely to be a grave offering related to the inhumations. Pit fully excavated. Total weight of pottery recovered, 0.26 kg.

Pits 515 and 532

Pit 515, of Form B, measured 0.80 m deep by 1.40 m wide and cut an earlier pit, 972. Its filling (535) consisted of loam and chalk which was cut by Pit 532, on its west side. This contained an initial deposit of chalky loam (973) followed by chalk and flint, some burnt. Both pits were cut by three small features (534, 533 and 658), possibly post-holes. Total weight of pottery recovered, 0.006 kg, none worthy of comment.

GROUP B

Pit 674

Form B. This measured 0.55 m deep by 1.20 m wide; its primary filling (1003) of chalky loam contained a jar (Pot No. 58, Fig. 15), fragments of which were also found in the uppermost layer (675) together with sherds from five separate vessels (Pottery Nos. 58–62). A fifth- to third-century BC date for the pit is probable. Also in layer 675 was a bone gouge (SF No. 2, Fig. 17). Total weight of pottery recovered, 0.42 kg.

Pit 711

Form D. This was the smallest storage pit found on the excavation, measuring 0.60 m deep by 1.10 m wide at the base; it contained fills of loam and chalk. Total weight of pottery recovered, 0.1 kg.

Pit 825

Pit 825, possibly of Form E, measured 1.20 m deep by originally 1.50 m wide. Most of its filling (1034–7) consisted of tips of chalk, above which was a layer of dark loam (991)

containing burnt flint. No pottery was recovered from the filling, apart from 0.09 kg of small unidentifiable fragments.

Pit 855

This pit, of Form E, measured 1.60 m deep by 1.80 m wide at the base; its walls tapered upwards towards the mouth which was 1.10 m wide at maximum. Its filling consisted of a succession of layers of chalk and loam, one of which (936) contained a body sherd with punched dot decoration (Pot No. 63, Fig. 15). Pieces of smithing and fuel ash slag were also present. Total weight of pottery recovered, 0.09 kg.

Pit 857

This measured 0.90 m deep by 1.35 m wide and had a well-preserved barrel-shaped profile, Form F, which overhung 35 cm. If this overhang was originally consistent, the mouth would have been no greater than 0.60 m. Its chalk and loam fill contained 0.02 kg of pottery, none worthy of comment.

Pit 926

Form F. This was 1.05 m deep by 1.80 m wide; its lowest filling (1005) contained charcoal capped with deposits of chalk (1004) and loam (927). Total weight of pottery recovered, 0.24 kg, none worthy of comment.

Pit 928 (Fig. 11)

Form E. This measured 1.25 m deep by 1.55 m wide; its lower filling consisted of tips of chalk and loam, and the upper filling of deposits of burnt flint. The layer of burnt flint (929) contained three vessels (Pottery Nos. 64–6, Fig. 15) dated to the third to first century BC; a similar date for the pit is probable. Total weight of pottery recovered, 1.21 kg.

Pit 962

This measured 1.10 m deep by 1.40 m wide; its intended form is uncertain. Its bottom was irregular on account of a stratum of flint which the pit diggers had only partially cut through. The filling consisted mainly of chalk and loam, although the occasional burnt flint was noted in the upper levels. The relationship of a shallow pit (1016) is uncertain. Total weight of pottery recovered, 0.15 kg, none worthy of comment.

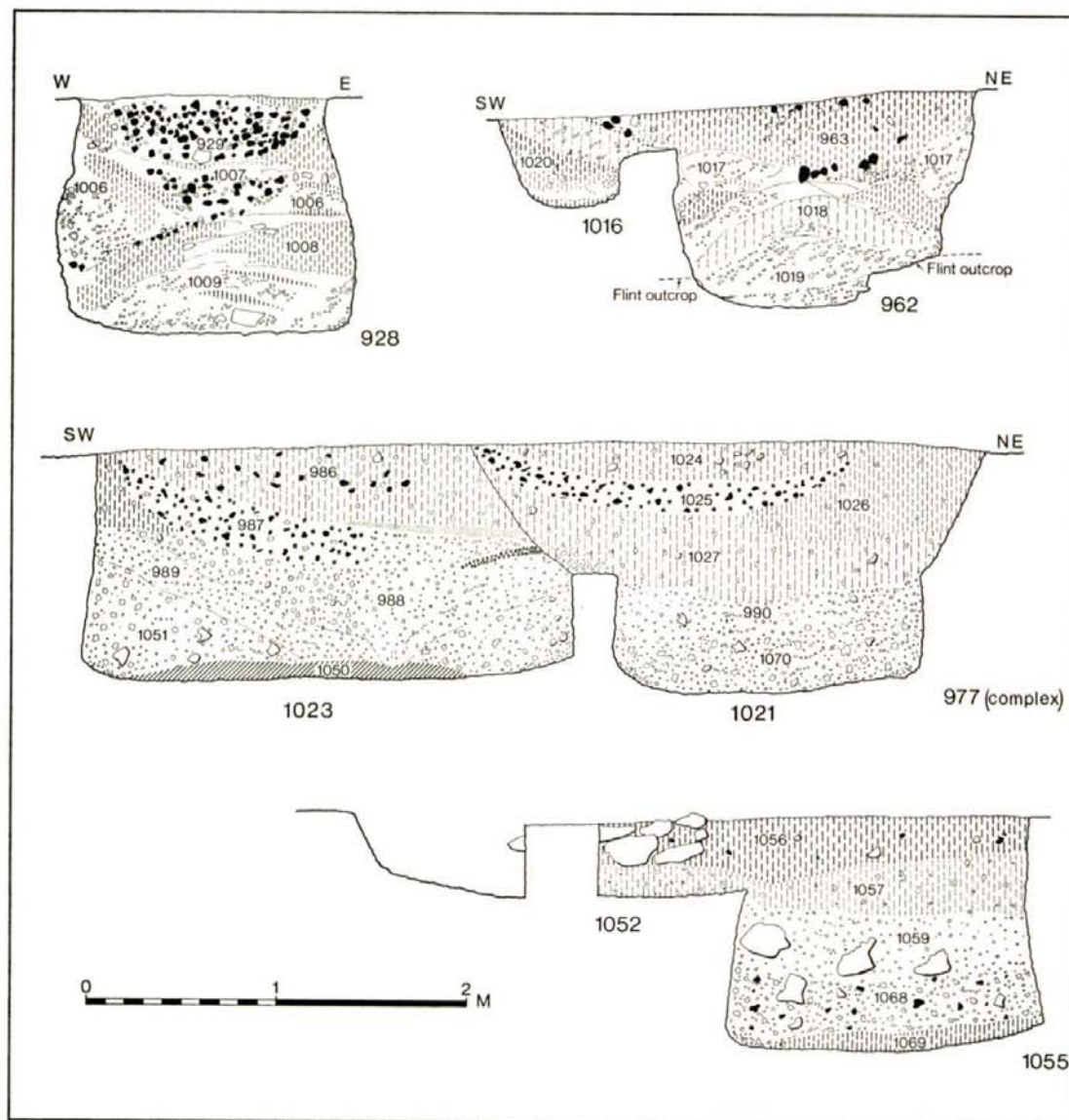


Fig. 11. Little Somborne, Hants; sections of storage pits.

Pits 1021 and 1023 (complex)

Pit 1023, of Form C, is the earlier and will be described first.

It measured 1.20 m deep by 2.50 m wide and was as wide as the largest pit (Pit 288) on the site, but owing to its relatively shallow depth its capacity was 4.4 cu m. Its lowest filling (1050) consisted of organic material covered by tips of chalk (988, 989 and 1051), containing a chalk weight or whorl (SF No. 6,

Fig. 17) and two sherds (Pottery Nos. 70–1), the latest of which is possibly of the third to first century BC. It had burnt flint (987) in its upper filling.

Pit 1021, possibly of Form E, was considerably narrower than 1023 but slightly deeper. It measured 1.30 m deep by 1.60 m wide (its upper sides had eroded) and contained a filling of chalk (1070 and 990) and loam (1026), containing fragments of two vessels (Pottery

Nos. 67–8, Fig. 15), one of possible fifth- to third-century BC date. A layer of burnt flint in its upper filling contained a fifth- to third-century BC rim (Pottery No. 69, Fig. 16). The pit was below average size (1.8 cu m). Total weight of pottery recovered, 0.64 kg.

Pit 1055

Form D. This measured 1.20 m deep by 1.70 m wide at the base and was filled with a succession of tips of loam and chalk rubble containing fragments of iron smithing slag (AM No. 773193). At a later date a secondary pit (1052) partly cut the south profile. The fact that the filling (1056–7) in this pit ran across the fill of Pit 1055 indicates that the latter was incompletely filled when Pit 1052 was in use. Total weight of pottery recovered, 0.56 kg, none worthy of comment.

Another six pits were discovered in the sections of the pipe-trench to the north of the site during pipe-laying operations. These are not illustrated. One, however, was significant in that it had a lining of clay where the pit cut the loose filling of an earlier example. No evidence for lining was found in the pits already described.

DISCUSSION

Shown on Fig. 12 is the estimated cubic capacity of the pit and the number of bushels of grain the pit could contain. This information has been prepared by Miss M. Nation using the following formulae (allowing for the erosion of the sides and vaulting and the circular bases of the pits). An imaginary cylinder was drawn in each pit to aid the calculations.

$$C = \pi r_1^2 h + xh (\pi r_2^2 - \pi r_1^2) + y (\pi r_1^2 h)$$

Where C = approximate cubic capacity of pit,

r_1 = radius of imaginary cylinder,

r_2 = radius at widest point of pit,

h = height of imaginary cylinder,

x = a percentage to allow for profile of pit between limits of h ,

y = a percentage to allow for profile of pit above upper limit of h .

The average size of pit, calculated by using the mode and median, is between 1.7 and 1.8 cu m, six pits (43, 75, 290, 825, 928 and 1021)

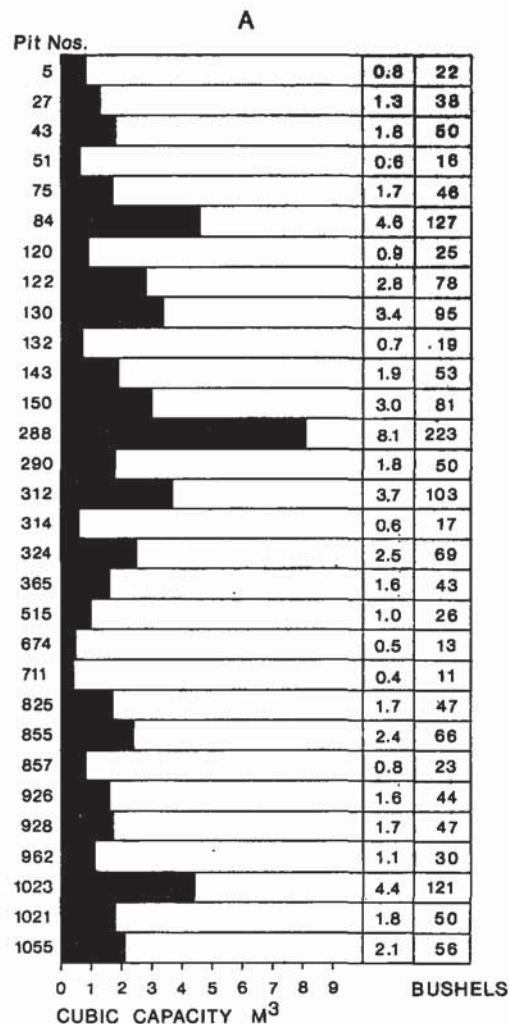


Fig. 12a. Little Somborne, Hants; bar histogram showing capacity of storage pits.

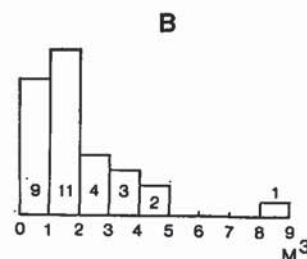


Fig. 12b. Bar histogram showing pits in Fig. 12a. grouped in cubic metres.

being within this range. Thirteen pits (5, 27, 51, 120, 132, 314, 365, 515, 674, 711, 857, 926 and 962) are below average capacity and eleven pits (84, 122, 130, 143, 150, 288, 312, 324, 855, 1023 and 1055) are above.

Fig. 12 shows that the majority of the pits are between 0.4 and 2 cu m—a capacity of between 11 and 52 bushels.

A plot of the pits by date, based on the pottery evidence, was made, but their distribution was scattered arbitrarily, with the possible exception of 150, 143, 288 and 290 which were situated in a row on the south side of House 553. A plot was also made of the various forms using the Little Woodbury classifications (Bersu 1940, 49) for pit profile, but again no pattern of distribution emerged. Similarly, no distribution emerged when plotting by cubic capacity.

It has been assumed that the purpose of each pit was the storage of grain. This is undoubtedly the case with many, but not necessarily all; some could have been for silage, although probably not for hay which could be kept in stacks. It has been suggested that small pits could also have been used for keeping meat, although if so, the storage of unsmoked or unsalted meat within them could only have been for a short period.

A reason for the close proximity of pits of Group A to the buildings may possibly be for protection of grain. The large pits here may suggest that the seed-corn storage capacity was more than required for a single family unit and that these pits were the main granary for the settlement. The pits of Group B may also be related to a building north of the excavated area; it is unlikely that House 503 is the only house in the enclosure.

Most of the pits had been merely infilled with earth, but one (365) was used for human burial. It contained two inhumations covered with a mass of heavy flint (655) and a large quern (SF No. 10, Fig. 18). The nature of the filling led to the suggestion that perhaps the stones were intended to prevent spirits rising from the deceased.

A fairly common feature of the pits is that they appear to have been left partly unfilled.

The occurrence of burnt daub in the holes may possibly suggest that they were being used for corn-drying—perhaps a daub-covered frame, on which to spread grain, was placed across the mouth of the pits with a fire below.

MISCELLANEOUS FEATURES

Feature 392

On the north-east side of House 503 and running across the width of the excavation was a gully, curving south-eastwards. It measured about 0.50 m wide at its west end but was 0.75 m wide towards the east; the alteration in width was not gradual—it widened suddenly. It was 20–40 cm deep and filled with loam and small fragments of chalk.

Its purpose is uncertain; there was no evidence in the filling for post-holes suggesting it was a palisade trench, but neither was there silting to suggest it was a gully. In favour of the former interpretation is the possibility that the huts and south side of the enclosure were divided off from the rest of the compound, either to prevent stock from entering the area or, conversely, to keep them in. A point in favour of the gully interpretation is the possibility that flood-water from the uphill slope was causing problems and the cutting of the gully was a means of draining this area.

Pot No. 87 (Fig. 16), possibly dated to the third to first century BC, was found in the filling and Pottery Nos. 84–6, dated to the fifth to third century BC, were found in a post-hole (530) pre-dating the feature. Total weight of pottery recovered, 0.39 kg.

Feature 18

This was situated on the south side of the site and consisted of a curving slot, 30 cm wide by 8 m long, with a U-shaped section. It may have contained a wattle fence, perhaps erected against the enclosure bank and intended as an animal pen. Ploughing may have truncated much of the feature, and therefore its extent is uncertain. Total weight of pottery recovered, 0.12 kg.

Feature 107

On the south side, 15 m outside the enclosure was a ditch with a V-shaped section (No. 107, Fig. 4; Section 108, Fig. 7) running east-

west. Interpretation of aerial photographs shows it as having a gap (at b, Fig. 2) and being related to 'Celtic' fields west and south of the enclosure. No pottery was recovered, although the fill contained fragments of iron-working slag (AM No. 773006), probably from smithing.

THE FINDS

THE POTTERY by Michele Nation

The excavation yielded pottery which divided into two periods. The earlier period produced material similar to the All Cannings Cross-Meon Hill and Park Brow-Caesar's Camp groups (Cunliffe 1974, 37-8), dated to the fifth to third century; the later material was similar to the St. Catharine's Hill-Worthy Down style (Cunliffe 1974, 42-3), dated to the third to first century.

The coarse wares of the early period are typified by jars with rounded shoulders and upright or flaring necks, some having flattened rims. Decoration consisted of finger-nail and finger-tip impressions on the rim and finger-tip impressions on the shoulder and neck; some of the vessels are burnished. Two bowls, Nos. 14 and 19 (Fig. 13), have burnished lattice decoration on their shoulders. The site yielded three vessels with possible haematite-coated surfaces, a small jar, No. 78 (Fig. 16) and two bowls, Nos. 55 and 79 (Figs. 15 and 16); No. 55 has a finely scored zig-zag design. The pedestal base of No. 39 (Fig. 14) is given a possible fifth- to third-century date, being similar in form to the pedestal vessel from Swallowcliffe, Wilts (Cunliffe 1974, 321). The low foot-ring, No. 21 (Fig. 13), is distinctive, being of much finer paste than other vessels in this early group.

The later-phase coarse wares consist of jars and bowls or saucepan pots. The jars are predominantly narrow-mouthed with smooth body profiles: it is on account of this latter characteristic that No. 73 (Fig. 16) is given a third- to first-century date. Many of the jars are lightly burnished. There are only two large vessels in this group, Nos. 14 and 89 (Figs. 13 and 16). Vessel No. 3 (Fig. 13) is

probably of a form similar to Nos. 53 and 66 (Fig. 15), the fabric being of the same group, and thickness and surface texture being comparable. The bowls, like the jars, have smooth profiles and are predominantly bucket-shaped. The only decoration is an impressed groove below the rim and around the base of the vessel, as in Nos. 42 and 43 (Fig. 14); some are burnished. The only other decorative forms found are Nos. 35, 36, 63, 76 and 77 (Figs. 14, 15 and 16); none can be attributed with any certainty to a particular influence, though the punched-dot decoration of No. 63 is similar to Cunliffe's Pot 14 (1974, 331) dating to the third to first century.

The pottery from the site was sorted into fabric groups and submitted for petrological examination at the University of Southampton. Examination showed that groups of fabrics (1-6) are not confined to vessels of particular types or dates. The petrological report follows the descriptions of the pottery p. 117).

DESCRIPTIONS

POTTERY FROM THE STORAGE PITS

Pit 27 (Section, Fig. 8; pottery, Fig. 13)

1. Group 2. Jar with horizontal burnishing. 3rd-1st century BC. L138.
2. Group 3A. Jar with horizontal burnishing below rim and vertical burnishing on body and base. 3rd-1st century BC. L138.
3. Group 3A. Base and body of a jar. Soot-blackened internally. Possibly 3rd-1st century BC. L138.
4. Group 4. Wide jar. 3rd-1st century BC. L58.
5. Group 5. Jar. 5th-3rd century BC. L58.
6. Group 4. Jar with vertical burnishing. 3rd-1st century BC. L58.

Pit 43

7. Group 1. Jar with burnished external surface. Possibly 5th-3rd century BC. L220.
8. Group 3A. Fragment with finger-nail impressed decoration on top and side of rim. 5th-3rd century BC. L220.
9. Group 1. Rim fragment. L220.
10. Group 2. Rim of small jar with burnished surfaces. L217.
11. Group 2. Jar with lightly burnished external surface. Possibly 3rd-1st century BC. L217.
12. Group 1. Small jar with finger-nail impressed decoration on rim. Traces of trimming on external surface. 5th-3rd century BC. L217.
13. Group 2. Wide jar with finger-impressed

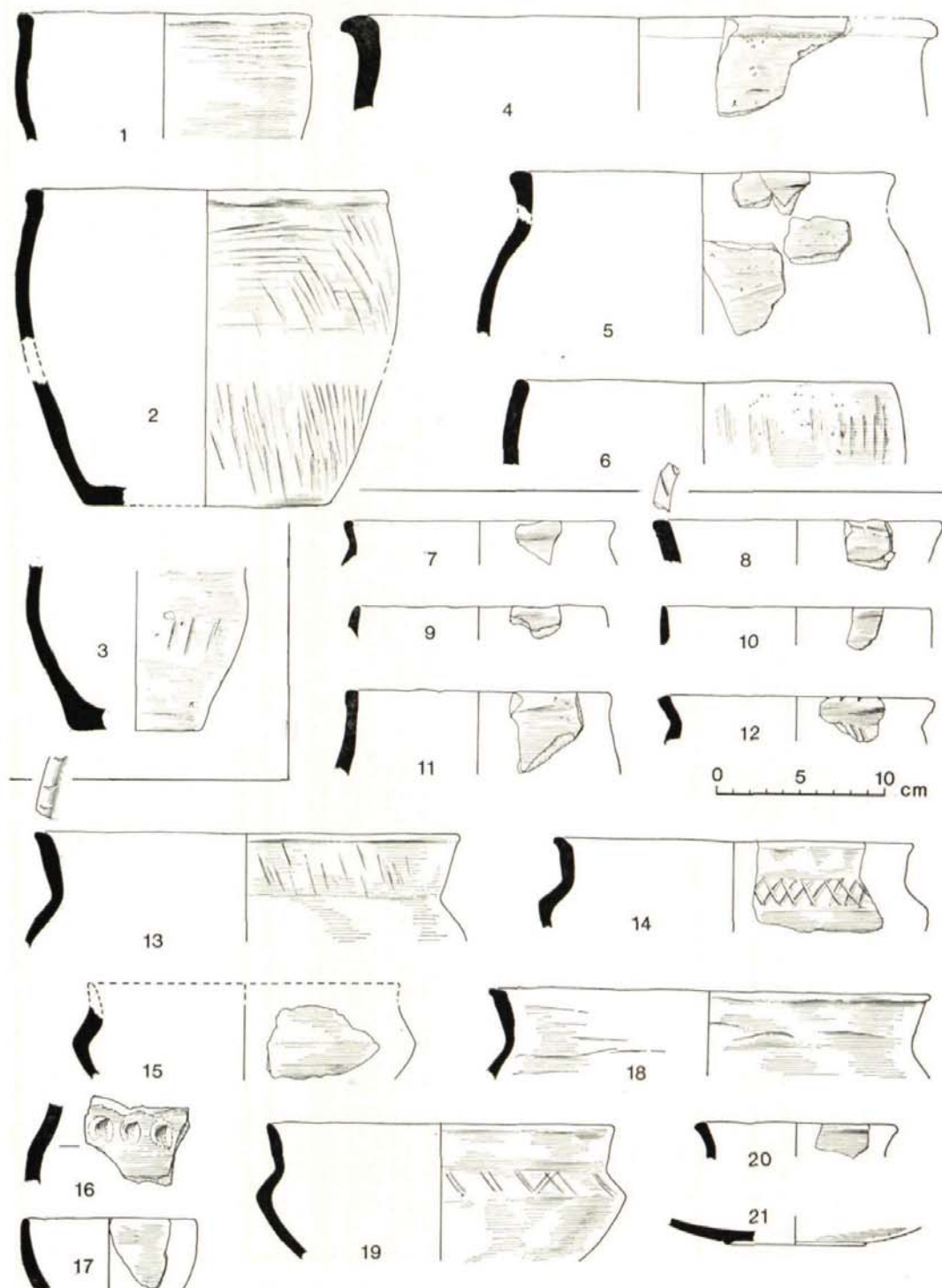


Fig. 13. Little Somborne, Hants; Iron Age pottery. Scale $\frac{1}{4}$.

- decoration on rim and with vertical trimming on outer wall of rim. 5th–3rd century BC. L153.
14. Group 1. Bowl with external burnishing and latticed decoration on shoulder. 5th–3rd century BC. L220.
 15. Group 3A. Sherd from a shoulder of a bowl. Possibly 5th–3rd century BC. L217.
 16. Group 1. Body sherd of large jar with deep finger-impressed decoration. 5th–3rd century BC. L217.
 17. Group 1. Small cup with lightly burnished external surface. 5th–3rd century BC. L217.
 18. Group 3A. Wide jar with traces of vertical trimming on outer wall of rim and traces of arc score marks, possibly decoration. 5th–3rd century BC. L153.
 19. Group 2. Wide bowl with burnished surfaces and with traces of lattice decoration on shoulder. 5th–3rd century BC. L59.
 20. Group 1. Rim from a small jar. L59.
 21. Group 6. Base with low foot-ring with burnished surfaces. 5th–3rd century BC. L59.
- Pit 51* (Section, Fig. 8; pottery, Fig. 14)
22. Group 1. Rim from wide jar with horizontal burnishing on wall of rim. 5th–3rd century BC. L52.
- Pit 75*
23. Group 1. Wide jar with lightly burnished surfaces. Possibly 5th–3rd century BC. L76.
- Pit 84*
24. Group 4. Wide jar with traces of vertical trimming on outer wall of rim. Possibly 5th–3rd century BC. L163.
 25. Group 2. Jar with burnished surfaces. 3rd–1st century BC. L163.
 26. Group 2. Small rim sherd. L163.
 27. Group 2. Small jar. L159.
 28. Group 3. Deep bowl with burnished external surface. 3rd–1st century BC. L155.
 29. Group 2. Wide jar with burnished surfaces. Possibly 3rd–1st century BC. L155.
 30. Group 2. Deep bowl with burnished surfaces. 3rd–1st century BC. L155.
 31. Group 2. Jar with burnished external surface. Possibly 3rd–1st century BC. L155.
 32. Group 2. Small rim sherd with traces of horizontal trimming. L85.
- Pits 114/130* (Section, Fig. 9; pottery, Fig. 14)
33. Group 4. Wide jar with lightly burnished decoration. Possibly 3rd–1st century BC. L131.
 34. Group 3. Jar with external burnishing. 3rd–1st century BC. L131.
 35. Group 6. Body sherd with criss-cross decoration. In contrast to the fine quality of the paste, the surface treatment is uneven and lacks burnishing, unlike No. 21. L131.
36. Group 2. Rim sherd with coarse oblique scoring. Possibly 3rd–1st century BC. L131.
- Pit 120* (Section, Fig. 8; pottery, Fig. 14)
37. Group 3A. Wide jar with horizontal burnishing on surfaces. 5th–3rd century BC. L234.
- Pit 122*
38. Group 2. Deep bowl with burnished external surfaces. Possibly 3rd–1st century BC. L179.
- Pit 132* (Section, Fig. 9; pottery, Fig. 14)
39. Group 1. Pedestal base with burnished surfaces. Possibly 5th–3rd century BC. L133.
- Pit 143*
40. Group 3. Jar with lightly burnished surfaces. 3rd–1st century BC. L144.
 41. Group 2. Bowl with burnished surfaces, now abraded and possibly burnt. 3rd–1st century BC. L144.
 42. Group 3. Bowl with burnished outer surface and internal rim. Burnished groove on base and rim. 3rd–1st century BC. L182 and L144.
 43. Group 3. Fragments of a rim and base from a large deep bowl with burnished grooves on rim and base. 3rd–1st century BC. L144.
 44. Group 1. Rim from a jar with lightly burnished external surface. 3rd–1st century BC. L144.
- Pit 150* (Section, Fig. 9; pottery, Fig. 15)
45. Group 2. Wide jar with burnished external surface. 3rd–1st century BC. L152.
 46. Group 2. Rim with traces of diagonal trimming on outer surface. L96.
- Post-holes 183 and 190*
47. Group 3. Straight-sided jar with burnished external surface. 3rd–1st century BC. From post-hole 183, Hut 553 (Plan, Fig. 6).
 48. Group 3. Bowl with burnished external surface. 3rd–1st century BC. From post-hole 190, Hut 553.
- Pit 288*
49. Group 3. Rim from a saucepan pot with heavily burnished external surface and burnished groove below rim. 3rd–1st century BC. L652.
 50. Group 3. Base of saucepan pot with vertical burnishing on external surface. 3rd–1st century BC. L390.
- Pit 290*
51. Group 3. Deep bowl, burnished externally. 3rd–1st century BC. L371.
 52. Group 3. Deep bowl with burnished surfaces. 3rd–1st century BC. L345.

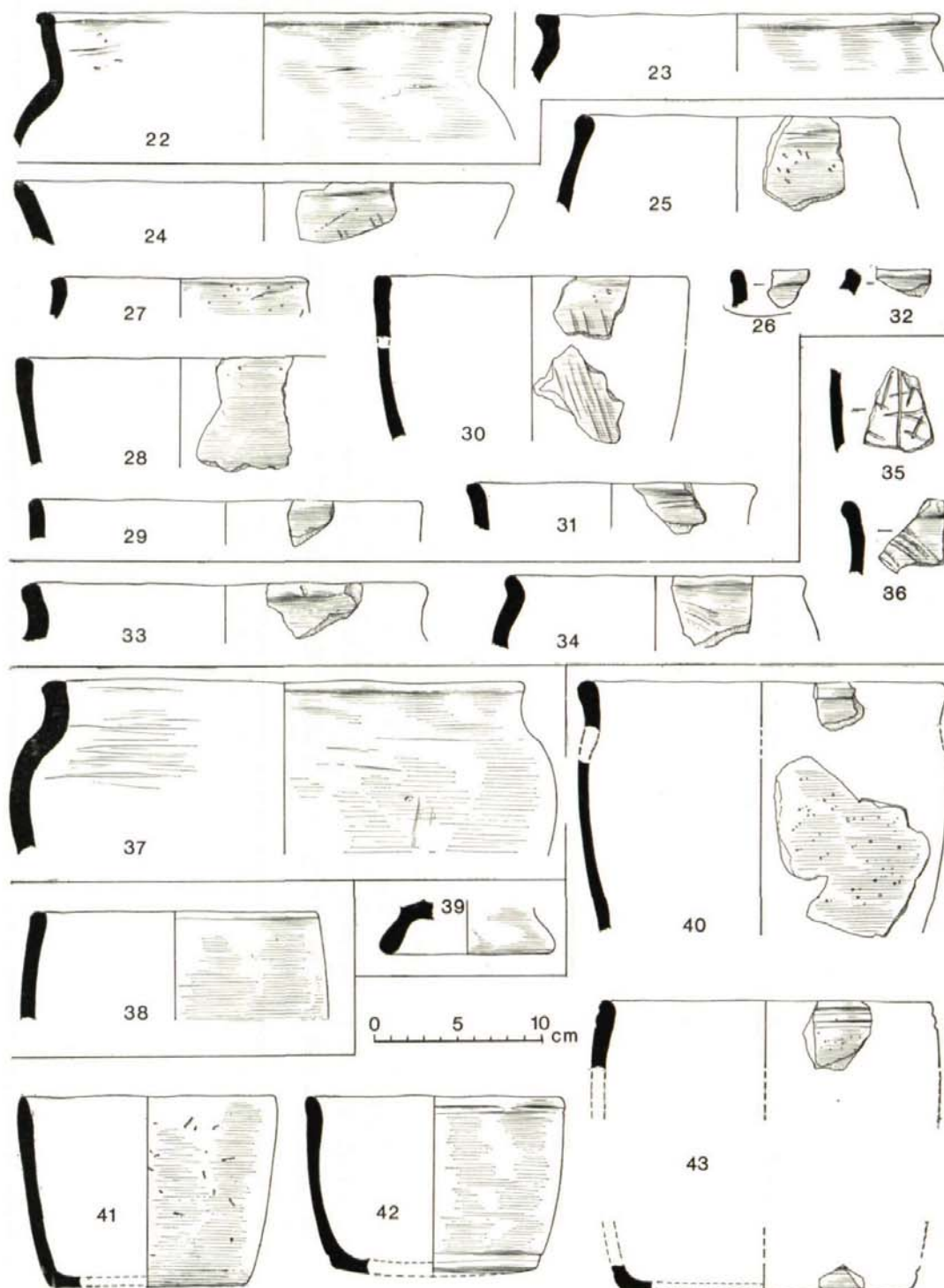


Fig. 14. Little Somborne, Hants; Iron Age pottery. Scale $\frac{1}{4}$.

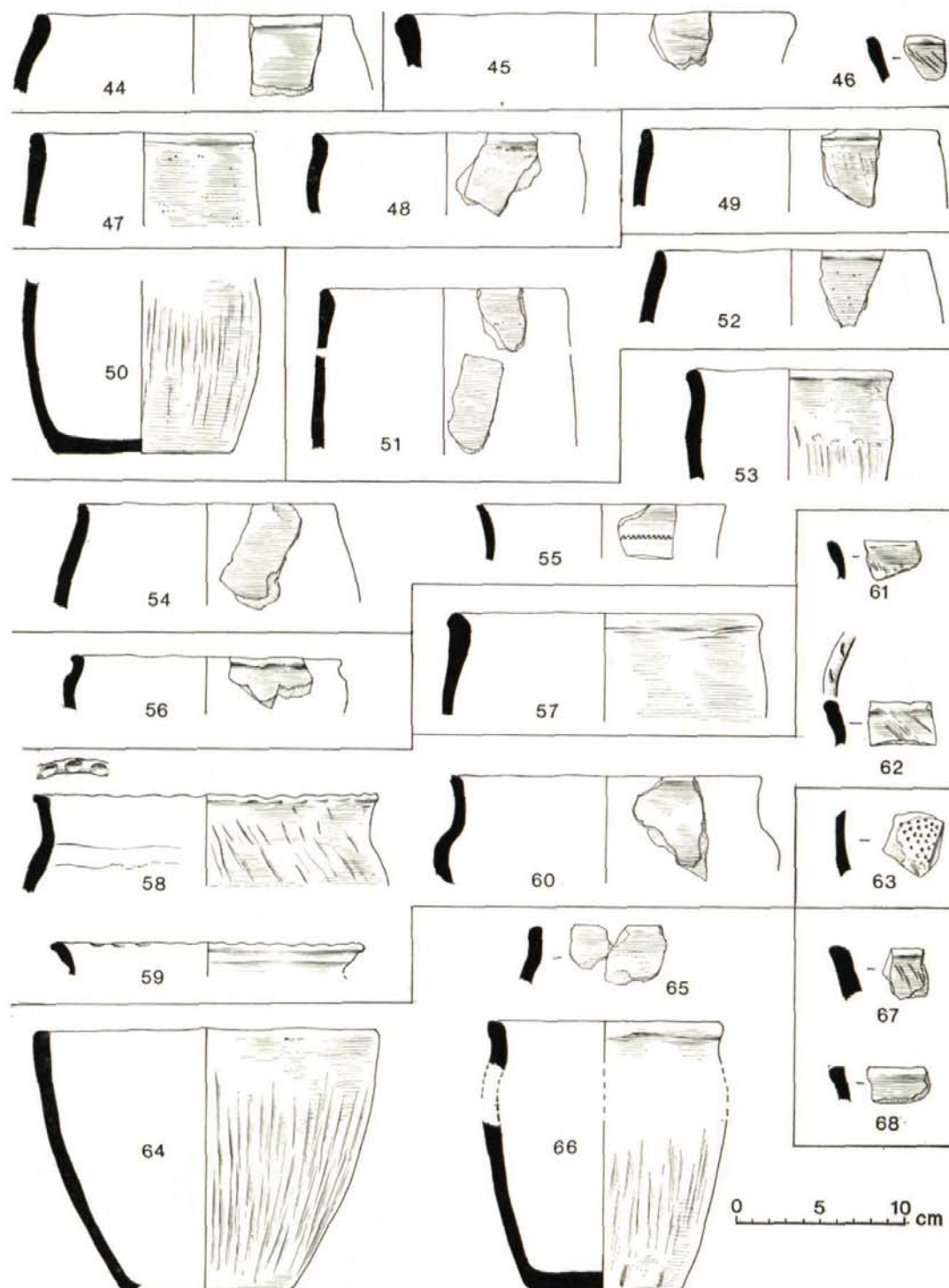


Fig. 15. Little Somborne, Hants; Iron Age pottery. Scale $\frac{1}{4}$.

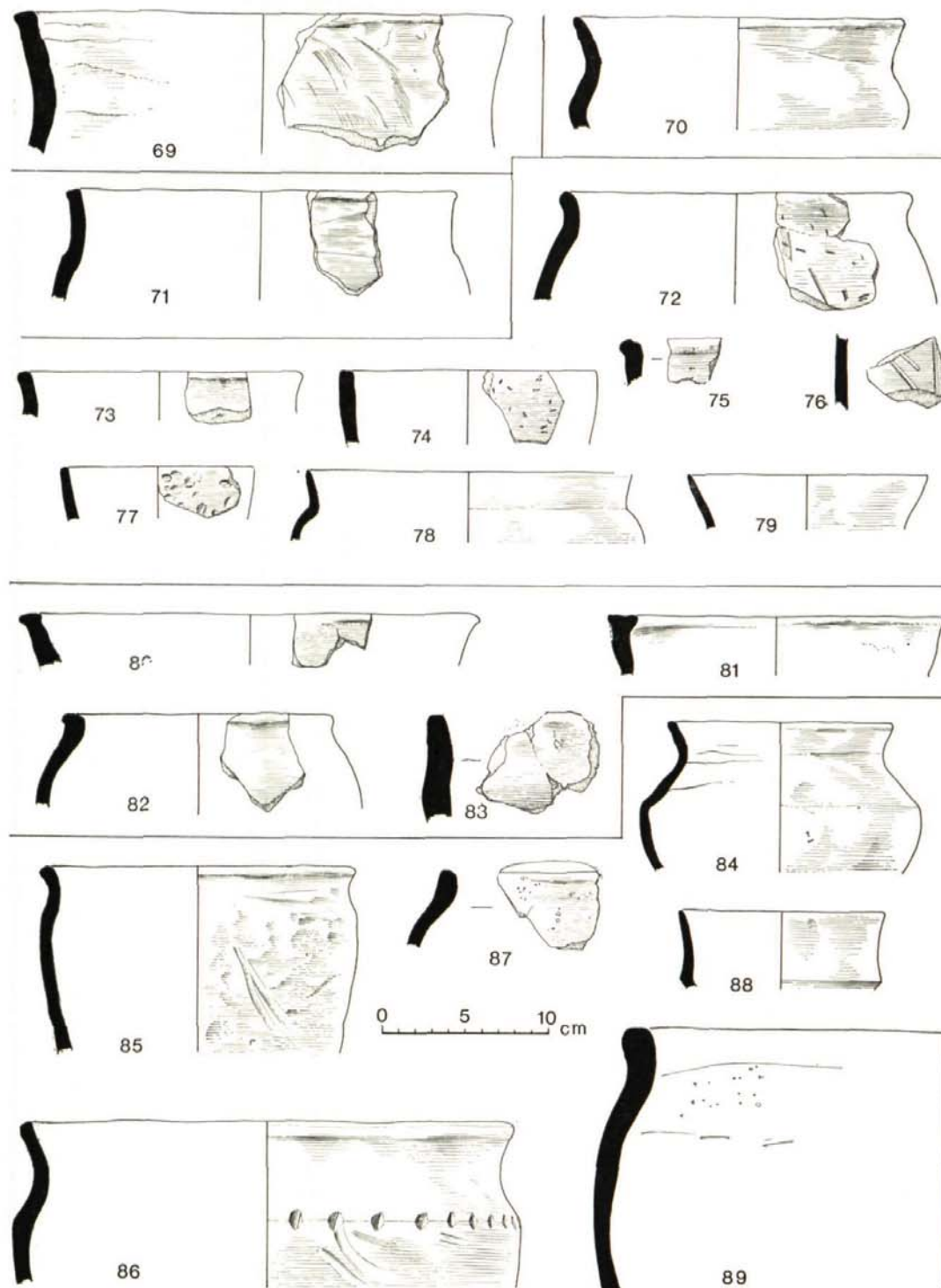


Fig. 16. Little Somborne, Hants; Iron Age pottery. Scale $\frac{1}{4}$.

Pit 312

53. Group 3. Jar with vertical trimming on body. Possibly 3rd–1st century BC. L630.
 54. Group 1. Rim fragment with burnished surfaces, now abraded, possibly burnt. 3rd–1st century BC. L323.
 55. Group 1. Bowl with burnished, possibly haematite-coated, surfaces and with neatly scored zig-zag decoration. Possibly 5th–3rd century BC. L323.

Pit 314 (Section, Fig. 10; pottery, Fig. 15)

56. Group 3A. Jar with a crude, uneven finish. Possibly 3rd–1st century BC. L334.

Pit 365

57. Group 3. Wide bowl with lightly burnished external surface. 3rd–1st century BC. L654.

Pit 674

58. Group 2. Wide jar with finger-impressed decoration on upper rim and with diagonal trimming on outer rim and body. 5th–3rd century BC. L675 and L1003.
 59. Group 1. Wide jar with finger-impressed decoration and diagonal trimming marks on outer rim. Base and body sherds, possibly from the same vessel, were also found. 5th–3rd century BC. L675.
 60. Group 1. Bowl with burnished surfaces. 5th–3rd century BC. L675.
 61. Group 1. Rim sherd with traces of diagonal trimming on outer rim. Possibly 5th–3rd century BC. L675.
 62. Group 2. Rim sherd with finger-tip decoration. Traces of diagonal trimming on outer wall of rim. Possibly 5th–3rd century BC. L675.

Pit 855

63. Group 1. Body sherd with punched-dot decoration, with burnished diagonal line indicating extent of decorative zone. L936.

Pit 928 (Section, Fig. 11; pottery, Fig. 15)

64. Group 3A. Bowl with vertical burnishing on body and horizontal burnishing near the rim. 3rd–1st century BC. L929.
 65. Group 2. Rim sherds possibly from a jar. 3rd–1st century BC. L929.
 66. Group 3A. Jar with coarse tooled surface. 3rd–1st century BC. L929.

Pit 1021 (Section, Fig. 11; pottery, Figs. 15, 16)

67. Group 1. Rim sherd with traces of diagonal trimming marks. L1026.
 68. Group 1. Rim sherd. Possibly from a jar. Possibly 5th–3rd century BC. L1026.
 69. Group 4. Large jar with coarse diagonal burnishing. 5th–3rd century BC. L1025.

Pit 1023

70. Group 2. Bowl with lightly burnished surfaces. Possibly 5th–3rd century BC. L989.
 71. Group 1. Jar. Possibly 3rd–1st century BC. L989.

MISCELLANEOUS FEATURES

Pottery from the working hollows

Hollow 968 (Section not illustrated; pottery, Fig. 16)

72. Group 3A. Jar with grass-marked surfaces. 3rd–1st century BC. L1012.
 73. Group 1. Rim from a jar with slightly burnished surfaces. Possibly 3rd–1st century BC. L1012.
 74. Group 2. Bowl with lightly burnished, grass-marked surfaces. Another sherd (No. 76) probably comes from the same vessel. Possibly 3rd–1st century BC. L1012.
 75. Group 3. Rim from a fairly wide jar. Lightly burnished surfaces. 3rd–1st century BC. L1012.
 76. Group 2. Body sherd with a vertical and diagonal burnished line decoration. Possibly from the same vessel as No. 74, above. L1012.

Hollow 1042

77. Group 1. Rim sherd with random finger-tip impressed decorations. L1046.
 78. Group 2. Jar with haematite-coated surfaces. 5th–3rd century BC. L1047.

Hollow 953

79. Group 3A. Bowl with haematite-coated surfaces, possibly burnt. Possibly 5th–3rd century BC. L957. (Section 2, Fig. 5.)

Pottery from the enclosure ditch 784 (Fig. 4)

80. Group 2. Wide jar with coarse horizontal trimming. Possibly 5th–3rd century BC. L703.
 81. Group 2. Jar. Possibly 5th–3rd century BC. L703.
 82. Group 2. Jar with burnished surfaces. 3rd–1st century BC. L702.
 83. Group 3. Wide jar. Probably 5th–3rd century BC. L731.

Pottery from post-hole 530 (Plan, Fig. 6; pottery, Fig. 16)

84. Group 2. Jar with burnished external surface. 5th–3rd century BC. L531.
 85. Group 3. Jar with very coarse surfaces. 5th–3rd century BC. L531.
 86. Group 1. Wide jar with finger-tip decoration on the shoulder angle. Coarse diagonal tooling on body. 5th–3rd century BC. L531.
 Nos. 84–6 were found in a context pre-dating the palisade trench or gully 392.

Pottery from palisade trench, post-holes 406 and 101

- 87. Group 3. Rim fragment with lightly burnished surfaces. Possibly 3rd–1st century BC. From palisade trench or gully 392.
- 88. Group 1. Bowl with burnished surfaces. 5th–3rd century BC. From post-hole 406, Hut 503 (Section 406, Fig. 7).
- 89. Group 3. Large jar. 3rd–1st century BC. From post-hole 101 (Plan, Fig. 6; section, Fig. 7).

PETROLOGICAL EXAMINATION OF THE POTTERY
by Robin Turner and Winfred Scutt
(Department of Archaeology, University of Southampton)

Of 107 Iron Age sherds submitted for examination, all were examined under the binocular microscope, and a number were examined in thin section under the petrological microscope (bold type below). Munsell Soil Colour Charts are referred to throughout. Six fabric groups can be distinguished.

Group 1

Published Pot Nos. 7, 9, 12, **14**, 16, 17, 20, 22–3, 39, 44, 54–5, 59–61, 63, 67–8, 71, 73, 77, 86, 99.

This group comprises moderately hard fabric types ranging in colour from dark grey (5–10YR 3.4/0–1) to black (2.5–7.5YR 2/). Some of the thicker sherds have reddish-brown to dark reddish-brown surfaces (5YR 3–5/3–4) due to oxidization during firing, while the occasional thinner fabrics are reddish-brown throughout.

Thin sectioning shows an optically anisotropic groundmass of fired clay containing numerous inclusions of angular or sub-angular quartz grains, ranging in size from 0.15–30 mm. There is nothing to suggest that the clay is not locally derived. Fabric Group 2 at Winklebury, Hampshire (Smith 1977, 89), an Iron Age hill-fort site in a similar geological setting on chalk, provides a close analogy to Group 1.

Group 2

Nos. 1, 10, **11**, 13, 19, 25–7, 29–32, 36, 38, **40–1**, **45–6**, 58, 62, 65, 70, 74, 76, **78**, 80–2, 84.

In colour and hardness the fabrics in this group closely resemble those of Group 1. Examination of the sherds under the binocular microscope, however, showed distinct signs of an organic content which, in thin section,

gives rise to a lower density of quartz grains relative to the groundmass.

Group 3

Nos. 2, 3, 8, 15, 18, **28**, **34**, 37, 42, 43, 47–**49**, 50, **51–2**, 53, 56–7, 64, 66, 72, 75, 79, 83, 85, 87, 89.

The fabrics are again of moderate hardness and thickness and are generally of a dark grey to black colour (7.5YR N2–4/), frequently having reddish-brown surface tones. To the naked eye inclusions of angular fragments of flint in varying density are clearly visible. In thin section an optically anisotropic groundmass of fired clay is seen to contain sub-angular quartz grains averaging from 0.05–1.5 mm in size, and much angular flint, up to 1.7 mm in size. Inclusions of iron ore and chalk are occasionally found. (During post-excavation work the fabrics in this group were considered to be too wide and therefore Nos. 2, 3, 8, 15, 18, 37, 56, 64, 66, 72 and 79 have been subdivided into group 3A on account of their being of a generally softer and finer fabric with a lower frequency of fine quartz grains and flint inclusions. DSN.)

Group 4

Nos. **4**, **6**, 24, 33, 69.

Moderately hard reddish-brown fabric containing small fragments of shell. In thin section these range from 0.10–70 mm in size.

Group 5

No. **5**.

Under microscopic examination this group is not distinctive, being brown to very dark grey and moderately hard, and similar to the sherds in Group 1. However, thin sectioning reveals well-rounded, light brown grains of glauconite, average size 0.05–30 mm, in equal proportion to sub-angular quartz grains, average size 0.04–1.5 mm, in an optically anisotropic groundmass. The glauconite content suggests an origin for the clay in the Reading Beds, the nearest deposits of which occur at Ashley, 1½ miles south of the site. Glauconitic fabrics have also been identified at Winklebury, Group 3 (Smith 1977, 89).

Group 6

Nos. **21** and **35**.

The two sherds allocated to this group are

distinguished by the very fine character of the paste (especially in No. 21). They are reddish-brown to black in colour. In thin section two average sizes of sub-angular quartz grains can be discerned, a) around 0.01 mm and b) around 0.10 mm.

Conclusions

With the exception of the glauconitic sherd of Group 5, which need not have been imported from any great distance, all of the sherds examined could have been made at or near Little Somborne, lying at it does on the chalk. Similar fabric groupings are also to be found in a comparable analysis of Iron Age pottery from Winklebury (Smith 1977, 89) and Ructstalls Hill, Hampshire (Williams 1978).

THE SMALL FINDS (Figs. 17-19)

The Ancient Monuments (AM) Laboratory small-find number is given with each identification to make retrieval possible.

1. Leaf-shaped iron spear-head with a slender shaft and pierced through the socket with an iron rivet. The socket is decorated with two grooves. Length 13.8 cm. AM No. 773162. Found in Pit 365 (Fig. 10) in a layer equating with 366 and associated with 3rd-1st century BC pottery.
2. Bone gouge made from a tibia of a Roe deer and pierced through the distal end. Length 17 cm. AM No. 773173. Found in the upper filling (L675) of Pit 674 (Fig. 10). Probably 5th-3rd century BC.
3. Pin made from an antler tine. Length 6 cm. AM No. 773007. From the lowest filling (L138) of Pit 27 (Fig. 8).
4. Triangular baked-clay loom-weight in fairly soft, dark-grey fabric with reddish-grey surfaces. Height 18 cm, thickness 8 cm. AM No. 773178. From L59, Pit 43 (Fig. 8).
5. Fragment of a triangular baked-clay loom-weight in very hard, fine, dark grey fabric with reddish-grey surfaces. Original height about 13 cm, thickness 7.5 cm. AM No. 773021. The setting of the holes shows this example to be smaller than No. 4 above. Found in L182, Pit 143 (Fig. 9) and associated with pottery of the 3rd-1st century BC.
6. Chalk spindle whorl or weight. Width 6.1 cm. AM No. 773184. From L989, Pit 1023 (Fig. 11). Associated with possibly 3rd-1st century BC pottery.
7. Fragment of quern in red sandstone, probably Old Red Sandstone, possibly from Devon. AM No. 773008. From L138, Pit 27 (Fig. 8).
8. Leaf-shaped flint arrow head. Neolithic. Length 4.8 cm. AM No. 773000. From the filling of ditch 103 (Fig. 5, Section 1).
9. Fabricator on a blade, retouched along one margin. Proximal (butt) end heavily worn, butt removed. Smaller area of distal end also with similar wear. Height 6.0 cm. AM No. 773192. From working hollow 1042, pre-dating ditch on the north side of the enclosure.
10. Rotary quern made out of a Binstead variety of Bembridge Limestone and probably from the Bembridge-Ryde area, Isle of Wight. 43 cm diameter by 17 cm thick, sides tapered. Both surfaces have been dressed (the wider surface is the smoothest and presumably the most used) and have shallow circular hollows 5 cm wide by 1 cm deep in their centres. AM No. 773180. Found within the stone mass (L655) sealing the skeletons in Pit 365 (Fig. 10).
11. Fragments of burnt cob found in Pit 51 and believed to have come from a warmer or drying apparatus.

The majority of the pieces have wattle impressions and are smooth on one side where the cob has been burnt. The impressions on some show the wattles to have been creased to form a curving structure—this curvature is reflected on the inside face of the fragments, some of which have traces of circular holes between 5-10 cm wide. Two fragments have wider openings, one possibly an entrance and the other either a wide vent or a chimney.

The shape of the fragments would suggest the structure to have been n-shaped in section and to have had a flat outer surface perforated by holes. Two reconstructions are possible. Fig. 19 shows a semi-circular structure with an external flat roof with at least three vents. Fragments of two other wider openings (one fragment has wattle impressions aligned with the opening and the other has wattle impressions at right-angles to the openings) are possibly from an entrance where the first opening would fuel, and the second lead from, a chimney. An alternative reconstruction, basically similar to the first, could be argued. The wide vent fragments could be transposed, one to form an entrance through the side of the feature and the other to form its chimney.

In an attempt to establish the temperature reached in the firing of the structure, Dr. Tylecote took a fragment of the material up to a temperature of 1,000°C under oxidising conditions and found considerable reddening (which the fragments lack). He felt, therefore, that the material had not been heated

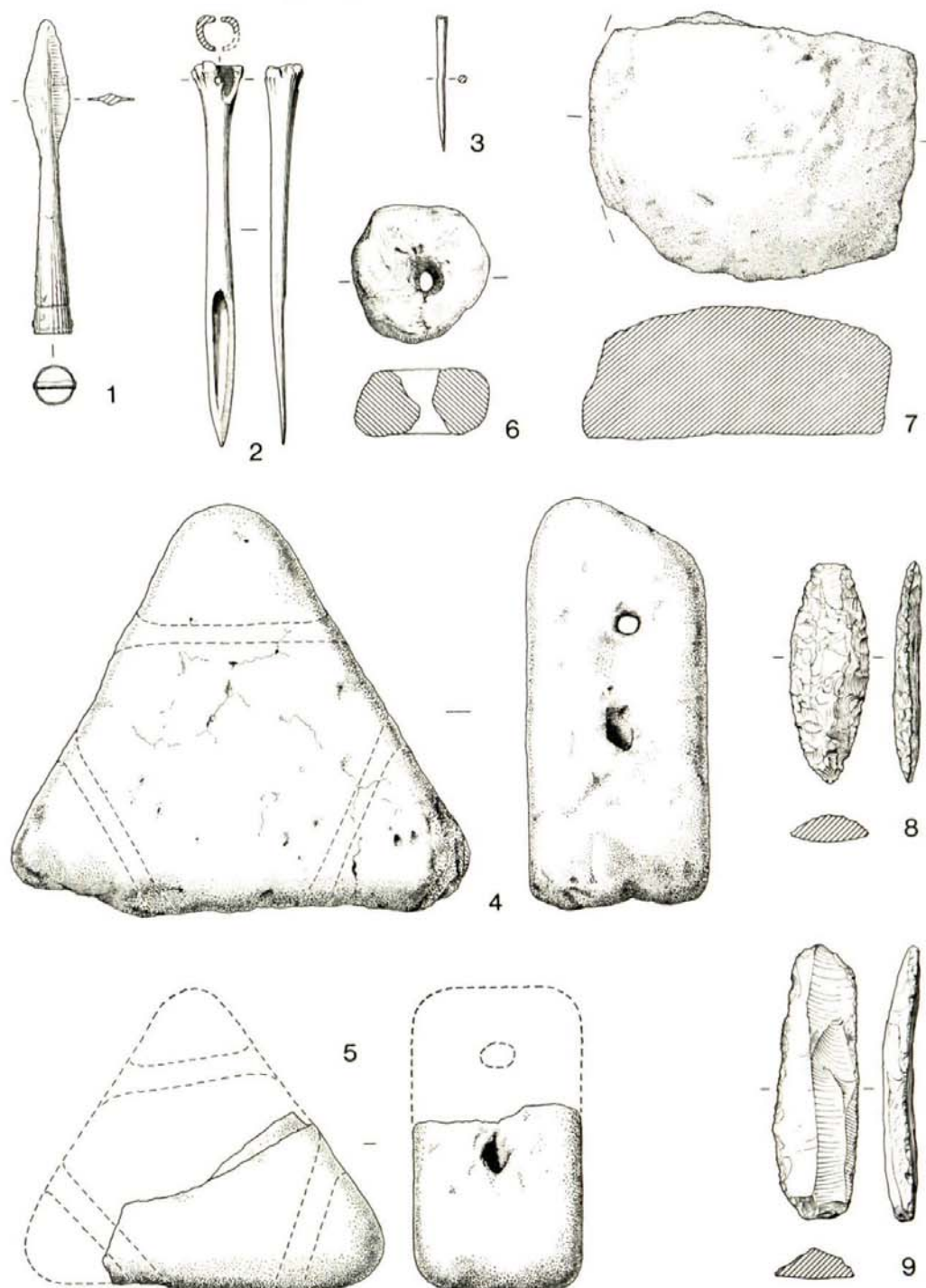


Fig. 17. Little Somborne, Hants; the small finds. No. 1, iron; 2, 3, bone; 4, 5, baked clay; 6, 7, stone. Scale $\frac{1}{2}$. Nos. 8, 9, flint. Scale $\frac{1}{4}$.

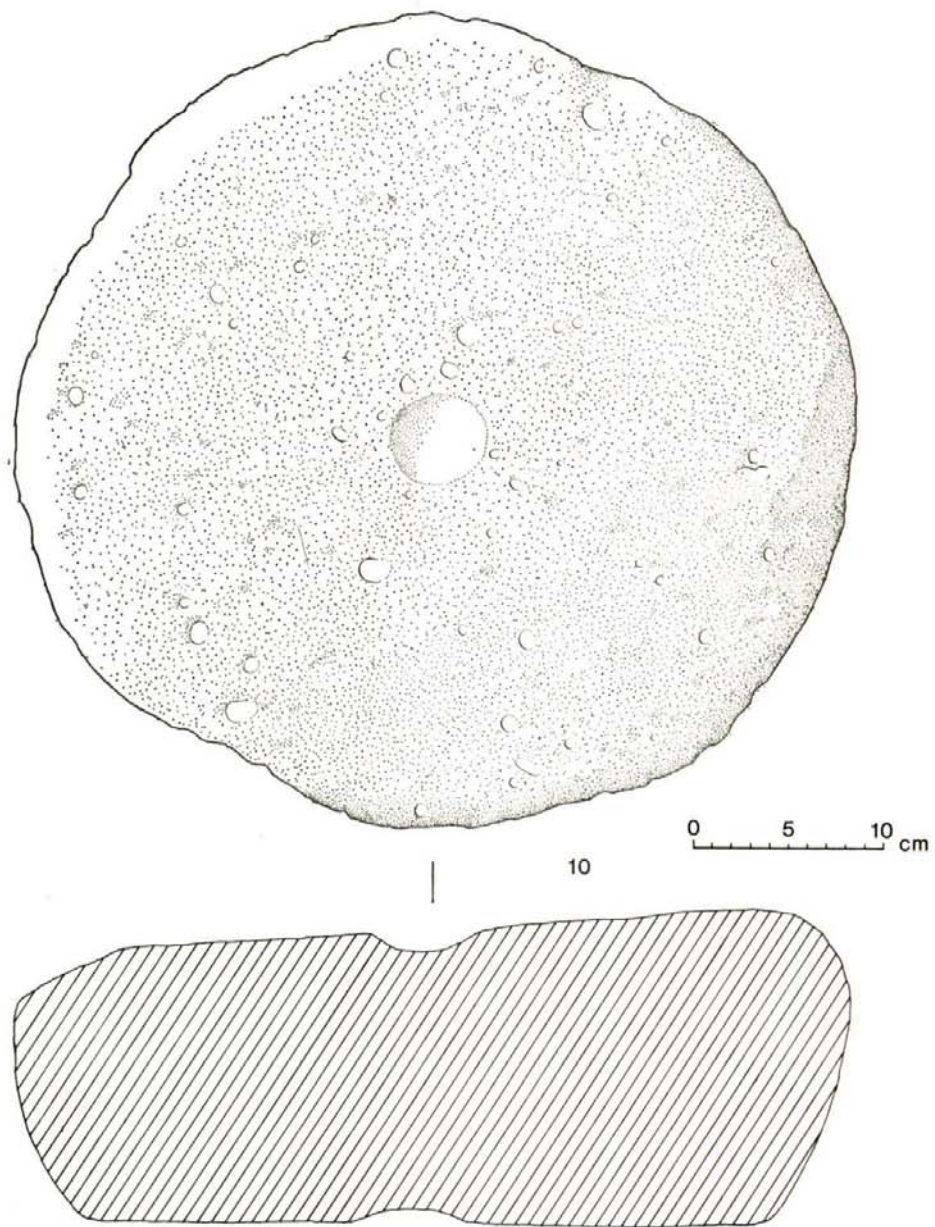


Fig. 18. Little Somborne, Hants; rotary quern of Bembridge limestone. Scale $\frac{1}{4}$.

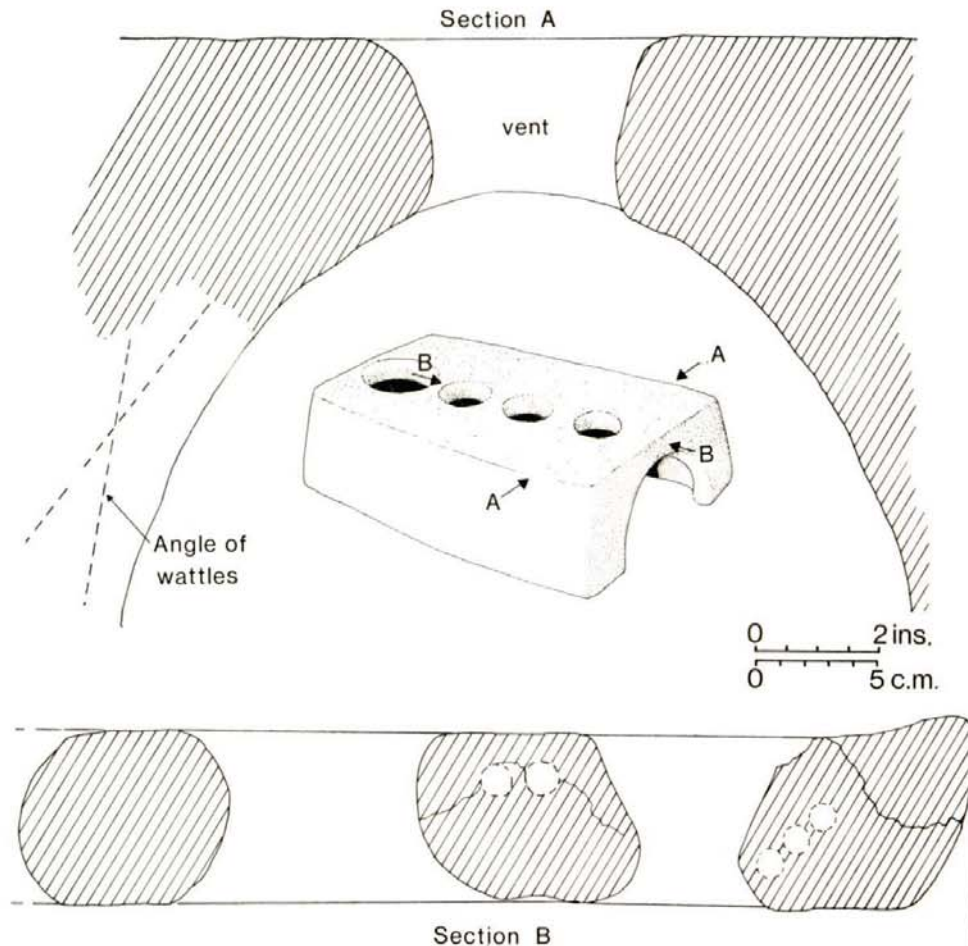


Fig. 19. Little Somborne, Hants; tentative reconstruction of 'drying apparatus' based on fragments of cob found in Pit 51.

above a temperature of 500°C, if that. The low firing temperature of the pieces rules out the purpose of the structure as a domestic oven, as a kiln, or for some other industrial process. The most likely interpretation, therefore, is that it was a warmer or corn dryer into which charcoal or hot flints were placed.

At Little Woodbury (Bersu 1940, 53) fragments of cob, some with wattle impressions, were found in association with ashes and burnt flint and interpreted as ovens. Fragments have also been found at All Cannings Cross (Cunnington 1923, 67) but interpreted there as a dome or lid for a pit. The vents on the Little Somborne example would rule out this interpretation, and a warmer or drying apparatus is the more likely interpretation.

THE BONES

HUMAN BONES by Justine Bayley

The bones examined were mainly from two fairly complete skeletons, both from Pit 365; a few scattered fragments were also submitted. Age at death was estimated from epiphyseal fusion for the immature individual and from dental wear for the adult (Brothwell 1972, 69); the appearance of the pubic symphysis was also used (Krogman 1962, 92). Stature was calculated from the formulae of Trotter and Gleser (1952, 498).

Key to the dental formulae:

- / =lost post mortem
 — =tooth present, jaw missing
 U =tooth erupting
 E =pulp cavity exposed
 NP =not present, congenitally missing
 MC =mesial caries
 DC =distal caries

Skeleton 798

The bones were those of a male individual aged 17–22 (Brothwell 1972, 58) and probably 20–1 (Krogman 1962, 93). The skull had an inca bone and also at least one lambdoid wormian bone. The dental formula was:

NP																
8	7	6	5	A	B	E	A		A	E	3	4	5	6	7	(8)
(8)	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		A	E	3	4	5	6	7	(8)

There were slight calculus deposits on most of the mandibular teeth. Maximum stature was 161 cm (5 ft 3½ ins). The left radius had a shallow depression 3 mm across in the centre of the proximal articulation. The sacrum belonging to this skeleton was found in layer 655 and part of one innominate bone in layer 654.

Skeleton 799

The remains were those of an adult, probably male, aged 25–35 (Brothwell 1972, 58) or 30–40 (Krogman 1962, 93). There was a double mental foramen on the left side of the mandible and three lambdoid wormian bones. The dental formula was:

DC																
E																
8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
MC MC NP																
8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

Most of the teeth, especially in the mandible, had slight calculus deposits. There was widespread alveolar recession (probably due to periodontal disease) varying from slight to severe.

Maximum stature was about 171 cm (5 ft 7 ins). There were slight signs of osteo-arthritis in the thoracic region of the spine and on the ribs which also showed some ossification of cartilage, as did the sternum. Schmorl's nodes,

caused by a normal but genetically linked degeneration of the inter-vertebral disc material, were noted in the lumbar region of the spine. One patella from this skeleton was found in layer 655.

The following contexts also produced fragments of human bone:

- Pit 122, L123 The distal third of a right humerus; from a small adult.
 Pit 122, L179 The proximal part of a right humerus from a much larger adult than that from L123.
 Two (joining) fragments of a left parietal, probably adult.
 Pit 122, L180 The distal part of a right humerus (joining that from L179).
 Pit 1023, L989 A left parietal, probably from an adult.

ANIMAL BONES by Alison Locker

The amount of animal bone recovered from the site totalled 1,666 fragments. The following species were represented:

- Cattle (*Bos sp.*), 268 fragments.
 Cattle-sized fragments, 171.
 Sheep (*Ovis sp.*), 256 fragments.
 Sheep-sized fragments, 161.
 Horse (*Equus sp.*), 47 fragments.
 Pig (*Sus sp.*), 45 fragments.
 Dog (*Canis sp.*), 120 fragments.
 Red Deer (*Cervus elaphus*), 2 fragments.
 Rook (*Corvus frugilegus*), partial skeleton not included in total number of bones present.
 Unidentifiable fragments, 596.

The bones were recovered from three main feature types: ditches, pits and palisade trenches; however, most of the bone came from the pits. Small mammals are discussed below, p. 124. A chart has been made showing the relative frequency of each species from the different types of feature. For simplicity, because the features are broadly contemporary, the discussion of age, butchery etc. treats the bones as a single group.

Methods

Records were made directly on to computer punchtape (at the Ancient Monuments Laboratory). The bones were examined con-

text by context. Measurements were made whenever possible (Jones 1974).

Two computer catalogues were produced; the first tabulates all the basic measurement data by species, anatomy and context number, together with the total number of measured and non-measured bones. The catalogues also show the maximum, minimum, mean, standard deviation and standard error for each type of measurement.

The Ditches

A total of 88 bones was recovered from the ditches; 23 cattle, 15 sheep, 3 pig, 7 horse, 3 dog, 9 cattle-sized fragments and 28 unidentifiable fragments. The predominance of cattle is not significant as the total number of bones from the ditches is so small. Mandibles appear to be the most frequently occurring bone, but this may just be a factor of preservation.

The Pits

A total of 1,555 bones was recovered from the pits; 241 cattle, 240 sheep, 41 pig, 40 horse, 117 dog, 2 red deer, 159 cattle-sized fragments, 161 sheep-sized fragments, 554 unidentifiable fragments.

Cattle: apart from mandibles (24), the most frequently represented parts of the skeleton are: scapulae (20), tibiae (18), femora (15) and humeri (14).

Sheep: again mandibles are the most important (34), also tibiae (27), radii (26), humeri (21) and metatarsals (21).

Pig: only certain parts of the skeleton are present; mainly mandibles (10).

Horse: mandibles (18), radii (5) and tibiae (4) appear most frequently.

Deer: red deer is represented by 2 bones.

Dog: the major proportion of 2 skeletons is present from 2 contexts (L323, Pit 312 and L513, Pit 324). Both are adult specimens; the pathology observed on the dog from L323 is discussed below (p. 124). A few bones from other adult specimens were also present.

The Palisade Trench

A total of 23 bones was recovered from the palisade trench; 7 cattle, 1 sheep, 1 pig, 14 unidentifiable fragments. The very small amount of animal bone from the palisade

trench does not contribute anything to the interpretation of the site.

Ageing

Owing to the small quantity of material, it was not possible to show any age groupings such as those calculated for Gussage (Harcourt 1974, 1). However, the mandibles of cattle, sheep and pig do suggest a predominance of individuals with full dentition in wear, with smaller quantities of mandibles at varying stages of deciduous dentition. These immature mandibles showed no signs of butchery and could reflect the proportion of natural deaths as opposed to those killed for food.

As many long bones were only represented by their mid shafts, the proximal and distal ends being broken off, it was difficult to assess how many were fully fused. Of the proximal and distal ends present, the greater proportion were fully fused; there were no cases of numbers of a particular bone being unfused. The exception to this was horse; all examples of horse indicated full epiphyseal fusion, and full permanent dentition. This may be open to the same interpretation that Harcourt puts forward for Gussage, i.e. that horses were not bred, but periodically rounded up for selection for work; however, the small size of the sample makes this rather tentative. All the examples of dog indicated mature individuals.

Size

The fragmentary nature of many of the bones meant that very few measurements could be taken and therefore few estimations of withers heights obtained, but the bones do suggest a similar size-range to Gussage (Wainwright 1979) and Winklebury (Smith 1977, 58). The dog measurements also fall well within the size range of other dogs known from the Iron Age (Harcourt 1974b, 163).

Butchery

The butchery practised seems to fall into two main categories: chopping and knife cuts. Cattle horncores frequently showed repeated knife cuts around the area adjoining the skull and horncore; these may have been to facilitate the removal of the horn or may have been made during skinning. Other forms of butchery observed on cattle are chop marks,

especially on the shaft area of long bones at varying angles; out of sixteen humeri, six showed chop marks. In contrast, sheep showed mainly knife cuts, noted on some long bones, os coxae and vertebrae. No butchery was observed on pig, but this may be due to the small representation of this species rather than a lack of butchery. Similarly no butchery was present on horse, red deer, and dog. Canid gnawing was present on some bones, often accompanied by butchery. Burning was apparent mainly on heavily fragmented bone, e.g. on twenty-two of the 595 unidentifiable fragments, and was also seen on a few long bones of cattle and sheep.

Pathology

A few examples of limb pathology were present, but no dental abnormalities were observed. The most interesting limb pathology was associated with the dog skeleton from Pit 312. This affected four bones. A fracture towards the distal end of a humerus shaft had a false joint which had formed between the un-united fractured bone ends; this may possibly be the result of inadequate immobilisation. Associated with this was an ulna, in which the olecranon had formed a false joint which articulated both laterally and medially with the proximal end of the ulna. The fracture may possibly have occurred at the same time as that of the humerus. The other ulna had a fissure running along the proximal end of the olecranon in a dorsal/palmar direction. A rib fragment from the same individual showed a healed fracture.

Pathology on other species was very limited; resorption and pitting were present on the os coxae of a cow, exostosis appeared on the radius of a sheep and also on the distal end of the femur of a cow.

Bird

The only bird identified was the partial skeleton of a rook (*Corvus frugilegus*) from layer 163 (Pit 84). There is no indication that this was used for food.

General Conclusions

The small amount of bone precludes any valid economic interpretation, but it does suggest that cattle and sheep were of approxi-

mately equal importance in numbers. However, in terms of meat weight cattle are predominant and therefore probably of greater importance economically.

The rarity of the occurrence of wild fauna which might supplement the diet is in contrast to the numbers found at Gussage All Saints and Winklebury, and perhaps suggests a reliance on domestic animals for food.

Small Mammals

Bulk soil samples, often weighing up to 30 kg, were taken from a number of pits. These were wet sieved for the extraction of small mammals and the following species were identified: *Microtus agrestis* (Field vole), *Apodemus sylvaticus* (Wood mouse) and *Mus musculus* (House mouse). All may be found in open grassland and a number of other habitats (Lawrence *et al.* 1974, 100).

A full list of identifications (by Miss C. Tucker, Ancient Monuments Laboratory) is available on request.

GRAIN REPORT

By J. R. B. ARTHUR

Two samples were examined, both from Pit 290.

Layer 371. AM Nos. 773024-5, 773030.

410 grains (only whole or almost whole grains were counted). 97.5% represented cereals of which 86% were wheat, 14% barley and 2.5% grasses.

Wheat: principally *Triticum spelta* L (spelt wheat) with occasional specimens of *T. dicoccum* (Schrank) Schub (emmer) and *T. compactum* Host or *T. aestivum* L.

Barley: principally *Hordeum vulgare* L (hulled six-row barley) with occasional grains of *H. polystichon* Doell (both hulled and naked varieties).

Grasses: *Bromus secalinus* L (rye-brome) and *Bromus mollis* L (lop-grass).

Layer 372. AM No. 773023.

1835 grains, 99% of which were cereals, comprising 69.2% wheat; 29.5% barley; 1.3% *Bromus* spp.

Wheat: principally *Triticum spelta* L with occasional specimens of *T. dicoccum* (Schrank) Schub and *T. compactum* Host or *T. aestivum* L.

Barley: principally *Hordeum vulgare* L with occasional grains of *H polystichon* Doell (both hulled and naked varieties).

Grasses: both *Bromus secalinus* L and *B mollis* L were represented. The sample also contained an achene of *Crepis capillaris* (L) Wallr (smooth hawk's-beard).

Comment

The samples analyzed contained spikelets and numerous glumes which were an aid to the accurate identification of the species present.

It was not possible to quantify the proportions of naked and hulled grains of six-row barley, owing to the poor state of preservation; neither was it possible to quantify the proportions of the several forms of six-row barley represented. Happily, numerous grains in these samples included the attachment rachis (internodes) which confirmed that the majority of the grains represented were those of the 'Bere', *Hordeum vulgare* L.

The percentage of the *Bromus* species is so small that it is likely to have intruded as a weed (DSN).

DISCUSSION

From the evidence of cuttings made across the enclosure ditch, it is possible to conjecture that the site may have had four phases of development. It appears to have begun (Phase I) as an open settlement—suggested by a number of chalk quarry hollows underlying what may be traces of an internal bank, and pits showing on aerial photographs, outside the enclosure ditch. The extent of the settlement, therefore, may have already been defined before the construction of the enclosure ditch (Phase II) began. Dating evidence for this phase is poor, but the three sherds from the quarry hollows, possibly sealed by the bank, would indicate a date no earlier than the fifth to third century BC. Regrettably no pottery was found in the lower fill of the ditch to support this. The date of the recut (Phase III) is also doubtful—the recut has been observed on both sides of the enclosure, so it is reasonable to assume that the whole ditch

was similarly affected. A considerable depth of silt (possibly collapsed bank material), followed by deep accumulations of burnt flint, may perhaps signify an abandonment and subsequent re-occupation (Phase IV) in the third to second century BC of a site now no longer protected by an effective ditched enclosure, but merely an eroded bank. There is no pottery from the site later than the St. Catharine's Hill-Worthy Down saucepan style (Cunliffe 1974, 42–3) and therefore the site would not appear to have been occupied long into the first century BC. There is no evidence that the site suffered a catastrophe, although the disruption of House 503 by fire, perhaps in the late fifth century BC, could have been by raiders—however, an accidental fire is just as likely. Gradual abandonment and a shift of occupation further up the spur appear to have taken place, for the terminal date of the pottery is in marked contrast to that from a site only a short distance to the north-east (centred at SU 392332 in the parish of Little Somborne) also affected by the construction of the gas pipeline and excavated by the Test Valley Archaeological Committee under the direction of K. Stubbs. He found a series of storage pits of the first century AD and two T-shaped corn-drying ovens of the third to fourth century AD. The storage pits are evidence that the earlier Iron Age methods of corn storage were maintained (in places) into the Roman period, even though corn-drying was later to be carried out within more sophisticated structures. The pits were shallower than the Iron Age examples and had barrel-shaped profiles with rounded, not flat-bottomed, floors: another site, possibly an enclosure also, situated still further east (about half a mile from the Little Somborne enclosure) at SU 397336, just inside the parish of Crawley, is believed by K. Stubbs to be possibly of late Iron Age date. If this is so, then it would appear that settlement on this chalk spur varied in location over the course of time. Continuity of occupation, albeit centred on different sites, could therefore be argued. Another enclosure, roughly circular in plan, has been located on the north-facing slope just east of Upper Somborne in the parish of

King's Somborne at SU 403322 and about three-quarters of a mile across the valley from the Little Somborne enclosure. It was distinct during the winter ploughing in 1977; its date is not known. Two miles south at Farley Mount, Hursley (Bowen and Fowler 1966, 44) is a larger enclosure occupying six acres with a small internal enclosure and an east-facing entrance.

The three-acre Little Somborne enclosure is of comparable size to that at Gussage All Saints (Wainwright 1979) but a little smaller than the Little Woodbury (Bersu 1940) enclosure which covered an area of about $3\frac{1}{2}$ acres. At these sites the enclosure ditches had antennae outside their east-facing entrances, but there is no evidence from aerial photographs that Little Somborne had a similar feature.

A possible fifth- to fourth-century BC date for the construction of the ditch is a date broadly similar to that given for the Gussage All Saints and Little Woodbury enclosures. In those places the lower filling of the enclosure ditches was believed to have been deliberate, although the writer sees no problem in interpreting the lower filling (as in the Little Somborne ditch) as merely slippage from a bank. This slippage would have resulted if the bank's angle of slope was greater than about 40° , especially if its make-up was not protected by turf. The burnt flints in the upper filling of the Little Woodbury ditches (Bersu 1940, 39), especially layer D, were regarded as deliberate filling resulting from occupational activity and are reminiscent of the burnt flint associated with our postulated re-occupation (Phase IV).

The earliest pottery on the site is similar to the All Cannings Cross-Meon Hill and Park Brow-Caesar's Camp groups dated to the fifth to third centuries BC (Cunliffe 1974, 37-8). House 503, although dated by C14 tests to 530 BC, is likely to fall within this general period—a similar period to the post-built houses at Winklebury (Smith 1977).

The huts at Little Woodbury, Gussage and Winklebury had entrances facing south-east towards the main enclosure entrance. The

orientation of the Little Somborne house is similar, but it does not appear to face the postulated entrance (b, Fig. 3). The house at Old Down, Andover, excavated by K. Stubbs, also faced south-east in an opposite direction to the north-west entrance. House orientation was common to all, therefore, but need to face an enclosure entrance does not appear to have been important: orientation is thus likely to relate to house entrances needing a sunny, wind-free aspect.

The siting of the house within the central area of the enclosure is also paralleled at Little Woodbury, although it is in marked contrast to Phase 2 at Gussage where the house was placed well towards the west of the enclosure, in which position there would possibly be less interference from stock and farming activity.

House-construction techniques also vary between sites. The Little Somborne hut measured 9.50 m in diameter and had a ring of twenty-three posts; Little Woodbury, House II, however, although one metre wider, had only seventeen posts. This does not imply inferior building, because the supporting posts here were about 30 cm wide, compared to only 20 cm at Little Somborne. House 553 with its double wattle frame is not all that dissimilar in form to Little Woodbury, House I, and to that at Old Down Farm, Andover, both of which had a double ring of posts.

At House 1, Little Woodbury, the internal ring of posts was interpreted as bearing the main weight of the roof, with the outer ring being the external wall. This interpretation is also given for structure 3888 at Winklebury, where an inner ring 9.60 m in diameter and of nineteen posts (excluding replacements and entrance posts) appears to have been surrounded by a ring of stakes. House 553 at Little Somborne, however, seems to have had an inner and outer wattle frame designed to revet a solid infilling of cob, clay or turf, a construction technique similar to those found at Danebury (Cunliffe 1976, Fig. 6) and Gorbambury (Neal 1978, 38). All the post-built houses at Winklebury belong to Phase I, of sixth- to fifth-century BC date, similar to the Little Somborne post-built house.

Other structures present at Little Somborne and typical of many sites include four-post granaries and two-post settings. The interpretation of the former structures is that they were intended for the storage of corn for household use, while seed corn was kept in storage pits.

Two-post settings are found on many sites and are believed to have been racks for the drying of corn (Bersu 1940, 94). However, hanging corn on racks to dry would seem an unnecessarily complicated idea since the corn could simply be spread out on the ground. Before an alternative suggestion is offered for their use, a consideration of their superstructure should be attempted. At Little Somborne the post-holes for these structures were usually shallow, 10–30 cm in depth (the deepest was 45 cm, excluding turf); and deep post-holes would have been necessary if the posts were of any height or free-standing. If the structures supported much weight, therefore, the posts would have required diagonal braces to prevent them tilting and would have had to be joined by horizontal timbers at the top and bottom. No trace of diagonal braces has been found on any of the twenty-two possible groupings (although this does not necessarily rule out their presence, since they could merely have been heeled into the turf) and therefore the frames should perhaps be regarded as having supported something fairly light in weight to prevent overbalancing. A more likely explanation for them, possibly, is that they were stretchers designed for the drying of skins. Although loom-weights attest wool production, there would still be a need for the preparation of skins, possibly for dress but certainly for harnesses. It would be necessary to affix the skins on stretchers well above ground level, out of reach of scavenging dogs. Tenters may be another possible use for the frames. This may also be the explanation for two three-post structures (1083 and 1096) also situated close to the assumed working area. One was 5 m and the other 3.75 m long.

The report on the grain would suggest that of the cereals 86% was wheat and 14% barley.

By far the largest sample came from the lower filling (L371) in Pit 290, a storage pit. The upper unfilled levels of old storage pits would seem to have been used in the corn-drying process—frames, with grain spread upon them, may have been placed across the pits over a low fire or on pre-heated stones. Pits 5, 43, 75, 84, 130, 132, 324, 674 and 825 appear to have been so used. More sophisticated methods of drying corn may be indicated by the presence in Pit 51 of a 'drying apparatus' (Fig. 19) made from wattles covered with cob.

The grinding of corn was usually carried out on saddle querns, but rotary querns, exemplified by that from Pit 365, were being traded (in this case possibly from the Isle of Wight) and must have made the task considerably easier and possibly faster.

If the ratios of bones are a reliable indication, cattle and sheep would appear to have been approximately of equal importance in number, if not in meat weight. There is no evidence from the animal bones for specialization in any breed, and this may be contrary to the results at Winklebury where sheep and pig appear to predominate in the early phase, and cattle in the later phase. However, as the excavator there remarks (Smith 1977, 56) 'the bone might be an indication more of the dietary importance of different animals rather than their value as stock, with sheep providing food in the early phase, but being kept for their wool value later'. Wild fauna are almost absent at Little Somborne, unlike Gussage and Winklebury; Little Somborne produced only two fragments of bone from a red deer. Successful rearing of cattle and sheep sufficient for the needs of the settlement may have made the hunting of wild game counter-productive. Among the bones, the skeleton of a dog is of interest. The animal had suffered two fractures (which did not mend) of its leg and also a broken rib. Although considerably lamed, it continued to live for about a year following its injury. Such an animal would have been of no use as a working dog, so we must assume it was tolerated on the settlement after its injury and was either treated and fed as a pet or left to fend for itself.

Evidence for industrial activities was meagre—only five samples of slag were recovered, two from Pit 855, one from Pit 1055, another from Ditch 107 and one from Hollow 969. Miss Justine Bayley has commented that 'most of the slag appeared to be the product of iron smithing although, on a site of this period, small-scale smelting cannot be ruled out. Among the samples were pieces of hearth lining (clay vitrified on one side from contact with the fire), vitrified clay and fuel ash slag. These last two are indicative only of high temperatures and need not be associated with metallurgy.'

PART II, ASHLEY

INTRODUCTION

The settlement site at Ashley (SU 371310) lies about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile east of King's Somborne village on an O.D. of 76 m and commands fine views to the north, and to the west towards the River Test (Fig. 1). It lies within a north-west salient of the Ashley parish boundary and showed faintly on aerial photographs as a series of ditched enclosures covering an area of about eight hectares. Erosion and ploughing have removed virtually all surface traces of these monuments and the only features still to be seen are lynchets along the present field boundaries and a trackway on the same alignment as the north boundary to the field. The trackway runs south-east towards New Farm, Ashley, and beyond, and north-west towards the ford crossing the stream at SU 367314. Cutting part of the site is a quarry, possibly of eighteenth- or nineteenth-century date, and a small reservoir. The discovery of the site during aerial reconnaissance was fortunate, since it was only the severe drought conditions in the summer of 1976 that showed features for the first time. Curiously, it was not the moist and therefore richer crop over the ditches which showed up, but the reverse. The more porous ditch fillings had become extremely dry in relation to the surrounding clay.

Excavation revealed two periods of occupation—Bronze Age and Roman—but the

occurrence of native first-century AD pottery fabrics may suggest that late Iron-Age occupation occurs in the immediate area.

The nature of the subsoil varies; it is predominantly clay, sometimes 1 m thick, over chalk. In places the chalk outcrops and here, where it meets the clay, marl occurs. Elsewhere, pockets of gravel are found mixed with sandy clay (outliers of the Woolwich and Reading Beds); the presence of this gravel and the outcrops of chalk are not sufficient in extent to improve what is naturally poorly drained land.

THE EXCAVATIONS (Fig. 20)

THE BRONZE AGE

This is represented by Ditch 188 which ran approximately north-south, and measured 17 m long by about 2 m wide. It had a U-shaped profile (Fig. 21) with, at the south end, an undercut bell-shaped terminal. Its lower filling consisted mainly of clay and loam and contained no finds, but in the upper filling (234) was a layer of dark loam containing (within the excavated area) 3 grammes of fragments of Middle Bronze Age pottery with finger-impressed decoration, some of Boscombe Down (Stone 1936) and Thorny Down (Stone 1937, Fig. 3.8 and 1941, Pl. 4) type (Fig. 25. 1–11). In the same level as the pottery was a circular baked clay loom-weight (Fig. 28. 13). The purpose of the ditch is uncertain. None of the other features on the site can be attributed to this period, although an arc of post-holes, 9, 11, 13 and 25, could be a related house. Unfortunately the post-holes contained no pottery to substantiate this. Neither the geophysical survey nor the aerial photographs indicate whether the ditch alignment resumes to the north or south—further excavation to establish the nature of this feature is desirable.

ROMANO-BRITISH

Ditch 116

This was situated towards the west side of the excavation and ran on a north-south alignment; at its south end it turned sharply east. It had a V-shaped profile and measured 1.90 m wide by 0.85 m deep. Its lowest layers

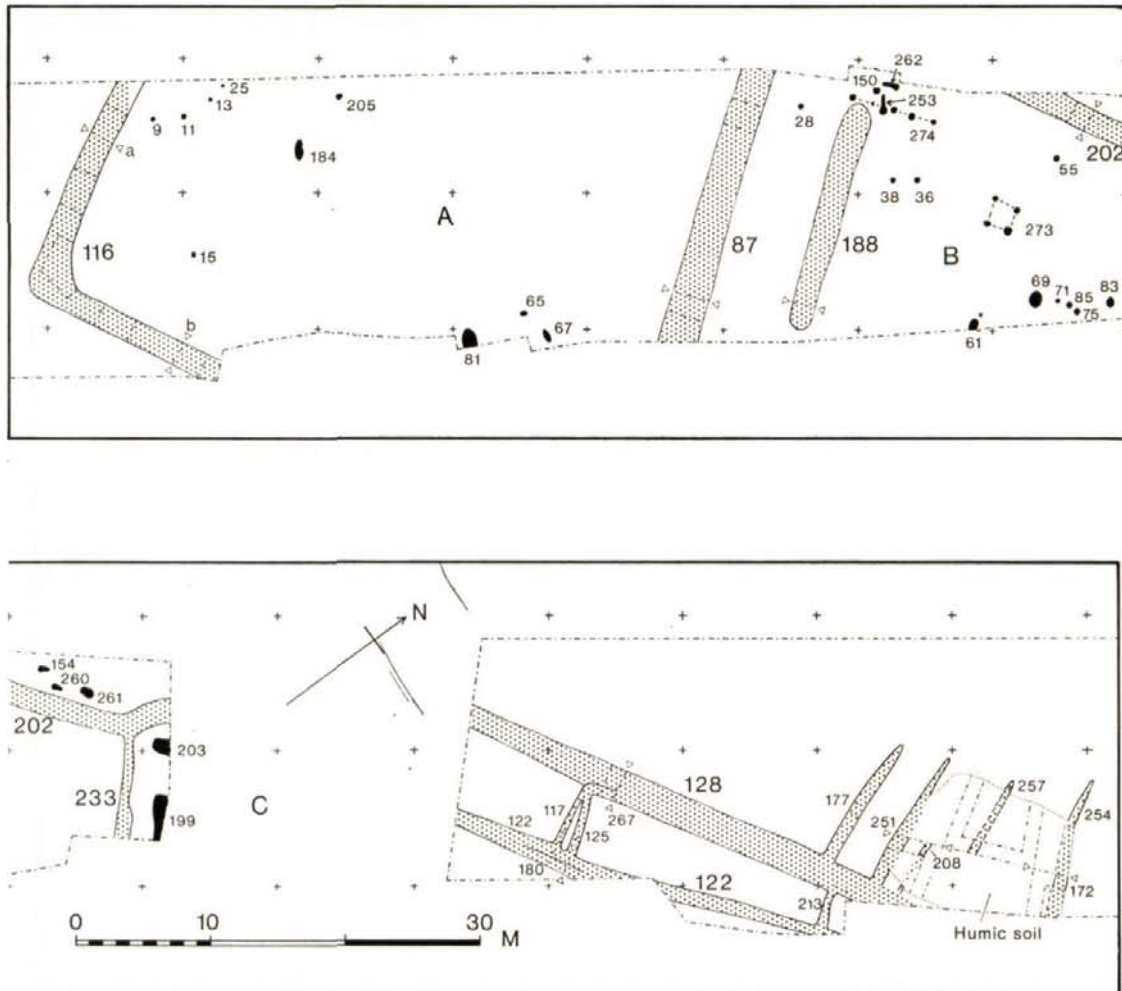


Fig. 20. Ashley, Hants; plan of excavated area.

(77 and 145) contained no pottery, but in the upper layers were five Roman sherds (Fig. 26. 12–16) of later first-century date and a Colchester-type brooch (Fig. 28. 1). The date of the ditch cutting is uncertain, therefore, although a mid-first century date is likely. The silty nature of the filling indicated a fairly rapid accumulation. In layer 17 were fragments of a glazed bowl (Fig. 26. 14) imitating a samian Dr 37.

The geophysical survey suggests that the ditch on the south side extends at least 70 m east; its northern extent is not known.

Ditch 87

This also ran on a north-south alignment. It was V-shaped in cross-section and measured 3 m wide by 2.60 m deep. The geophysical survey (Fig. 22) suggests that this stretch of ditch was approximately 35 m long and turned east at both the north and south ends to form a square enclosure of 0.14 hectares ($\frac{1}{3}$ acre).

In a lower layer of the ditch (166) were two sherds, one of the later first century (Fig. 26. 30) and a sherd from a jar (No. 31) in a coarse fabric, probably native in tradition, but of a

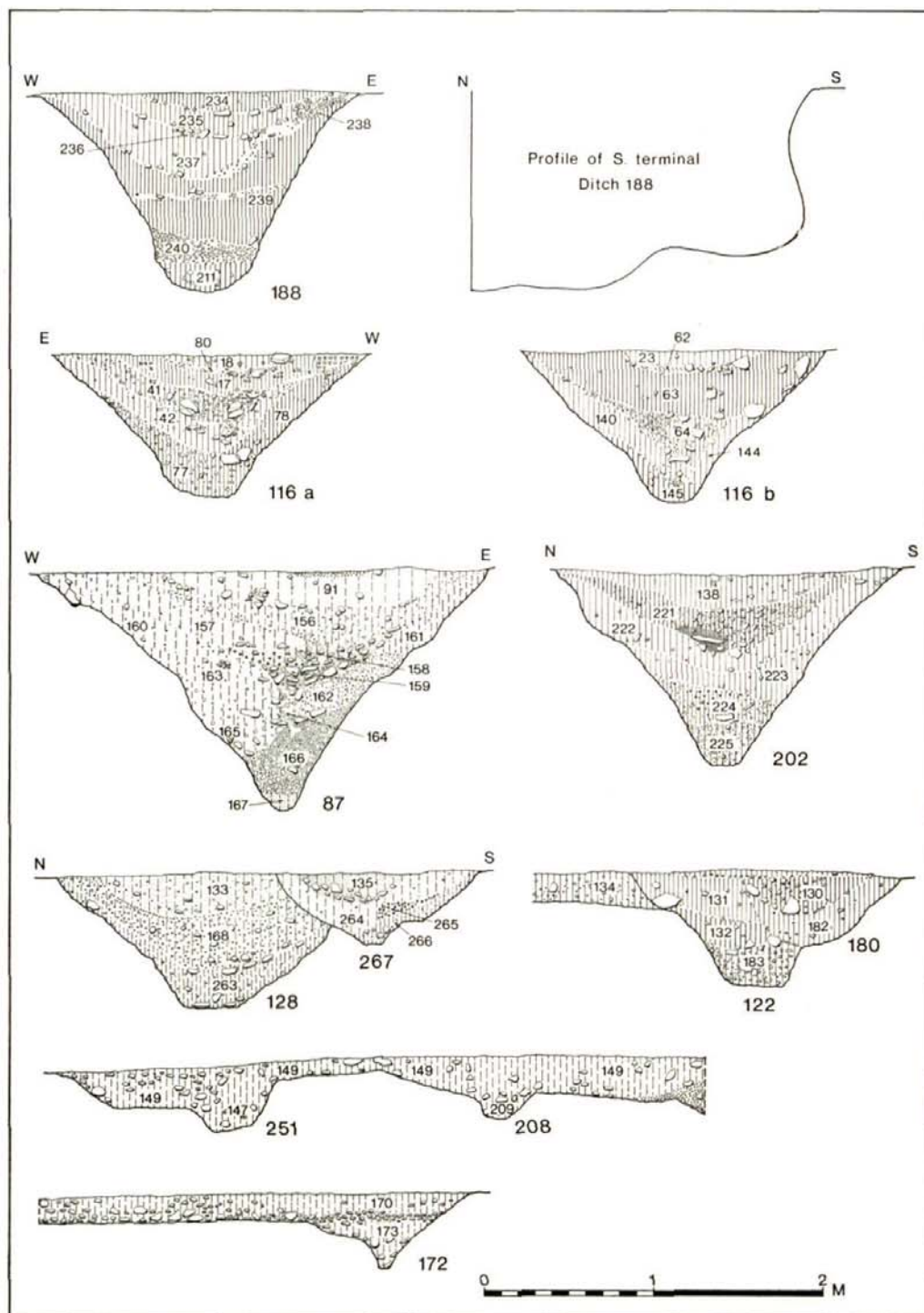


Fig. 21. Ashley, Hants; sections across ditches and gullies.

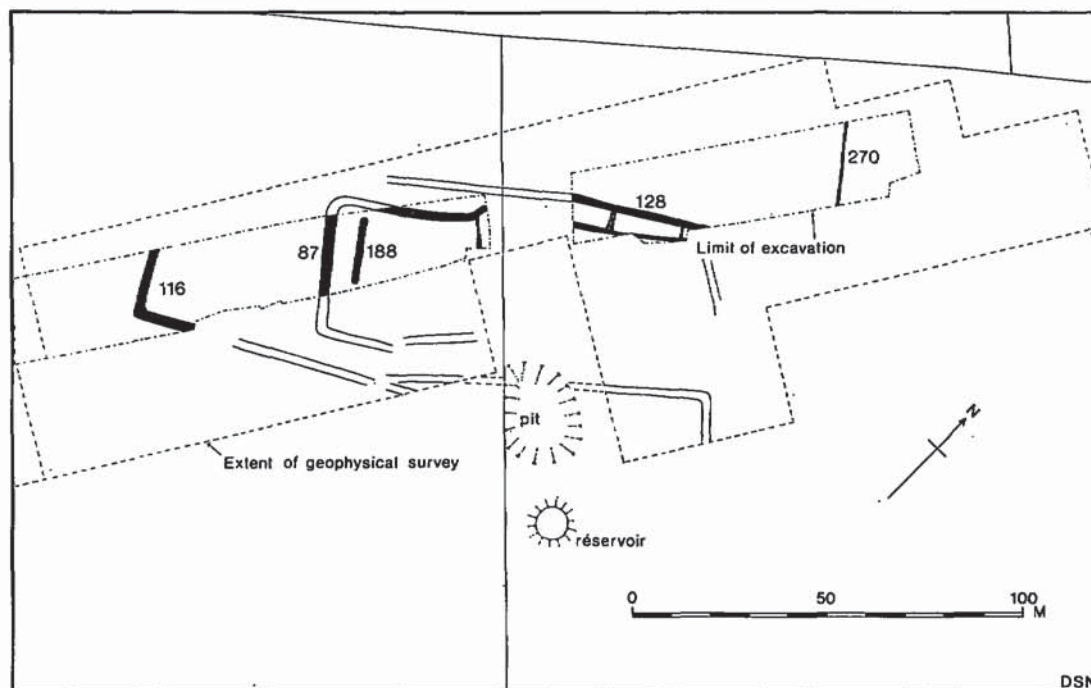


Fig. 22. Ashley, Hants; general plan showing excavated area and extent of geophysical survey. (For detail plan, see Fig. 20.)

comparable date. The remainder of the vessels (Nos. 17–29) consist mainly of first- to early second-century types.

Ditch 202

Ditch 202 is probably the northern limit of the enclosure, the western limit of which is represented by Ditch 87. A single cutting across the ditch established its dimensions here as 2 m wide by 1.10 m deep (Fig. 21, Section 202), slightly narrower and shallower than Ditch 87.

The material from the lower filling (225) suggests a later first-century date for the ditch, and is in accord with the material from the filling of Ditch 87, of which the feature is probably part. The pottery in the upper filling (138) suggests that the ditch remained a surface depression into the late third-early fourth century, judging from a possible fourth-century form (Fig. 26. 33) and a coin dated AD 330–7. Residual forms are very much in evidence here (Fig. 26. 33, 35).

The eastern end of Ditch 202 turned slightly northwards and continued east, possibly to link with Ditch 122. On its south side, running north-south was a narrower gully (233), whose relationship to the ditch was not established (but see discussion, p. 141).

Ditch 128, Gully 267

Ditch 128 measured 1.70 m wide by 0.80 m deep and ran on an east-west alignment. The geophysical survey traced the ditch westwards almost as far as the angle of Ditches 202 and 87 but its eastern continuation is uncertain—it may possibly turn south (Fig. 20) close to its excavated eastern limit. Ditch 128 was recut by gully 267, an eastern return of either gully 117 or gully 125.

No pottery was found in the lower levels of Ditch 128, although in the upper filling (133) were four sherds (Fig. 27. 40–3) all probably early second-century forms. In the upper filling (135) of the recut (Gully 267) were two sherds including a fourth-century

cooking-pot (Fig. 27. 52) in BB1 fabric. A late third- to early fourth-century date for the cutting of the gully is probable. Burnt cereal grains were found in the filling.

Ditch 122, Gully 180

Ditch 122 ran parallel to and to the south of 128 and may have been part of the same enclosure represented by Ditch 202 further west. This was not proven, however, because of disturbance of the magnetometer survey by a wire fence here. It measured about 1.20 m wide by 0.70 m deep and was filled with gravelly loam. No finds were made within the excavated cutting. The ditch was recut by gully 180, the extent of which is not known. Its upper filling (130) contained a number of vessels (Fig. 27. 44-50), all Flavian forms, including two imitation Gallo-Belgic dishes (Nos. 49-50). Ditch 122 is likely to be of pre-Flavian date, but rapid silting may indicate only a short time-gap before its recut by gully 180.

Gullies 177, 208, 251, 254/172 and 257 (Fig. 20)

At the eastern limit of Ditches 128 and 122 was a spread of dark gravelly loam over and filling the five gullies (listed above) aligned north-south. They were U-shaped in profile and measured about 10 m long and between 0.50-1.0 m wide by about 30-50 cm deep; they were spaced approximately 3-4 m apart (Sections 251, 172, 208, Fig. 21). Their purpose is uncertain, but they may have been bedding trenches for plants. In the upper filling of the gullies was a flanged bowl of probable third-century date and a fourth-century rouletted and stamped colour-coated bowl (Fig. 27. 53-4). In the spread over the gullies was a coin (No. 4) dated AD 335-41 +.

Gully 270 (Shown on Fig. 22 only)

Towards the eastern end of the area excavated was a gully running north-south on a similar alignment to the features already described. The feature was not excavated and therefore its date is not known. It was not detected on the geophysical survey, nor on aerial photographs. It is not a field drain.

Pits and Post-holes (Sections, Fig. 24)

It is not possible to relate any of the internal features to the ditches.

Enclosure A

In the westernmost enclosure (A), bordered by ditch 116, was a collection of six post-holes, of which four (9, 11, 13 and 25) lay on the arc of a circle of about 6 m radius as though they may have belonged to a wall of a circular hut. If this was so, ditch 116 must post-date their construction since no post-holes were found in the upper filling of the ditch. However, it could be argued that the features belong to a simple sheep fold erected against the internal bank of the ditch. Also within the enclosure was a deep post-hole (15), 60 cm deep, filled with charcoal; its tapered profile would possibly indicate the post to have been driven into the ground. Single post-holes are rarely understood, but the depth of the hole (indicating that the post stood to some height) and the concentration of charcoal may possibly indicate that it was the central post for a hay stack that caught fire. The date of the feature is not known. Further east, on the south side of the trench, were three features (65, 67 and 81), one of which (67) was a bowl-shaped oven containing a filling of charcoal and pottery (Fig. 27. 61-2) of late first-century form. No evidence for a structure was found nearby, although 5 m west of 67 was a shallow pit (81) containing two vessels (Fig. 27. 58-9) also of late first-century date.

Enclosure B

Possibly the earliest feature within this area was a four-post structure (273), probably a granary, measuring about 2 m square. The post-holes (49, 51, 58 and 73) measured about 0.40 m wide by 20 cm deep; some had flint packing. A fragment of Central Gaulish samian was present in the filling of one of the post-holes, indicating that the structure was possibly of Roman rather than Iron Age date. Another of its post-holes contained a rim from a second-century jar. West of the granary was a two-post setting (36 and 38), possibly a drying rack; no pottery was recovered from its post-holes. Further north (Fig. 23), close to the north end of the Bronze Age ditch (188) was a row of five post-holes (30, 92, 174, 32 and 60), possibly the south wall of a hut. Running across the alignment, on a north-south axis, was an oval-shaped oven (Section 253, Fig. 24)

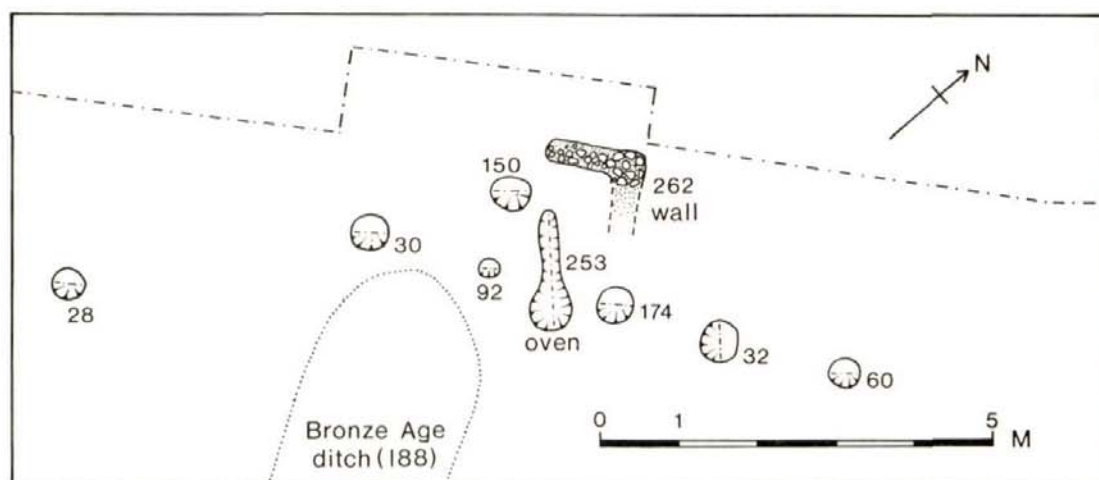


Fig. 23. Ashley, Hants; detail plan of structures.

with a flue on its north side; it contained two fourth-century sherds (Fig. 27. 56-7). North of the oven, running east-west, were the remains of a short length of wall which turned south at its east end. It was constructed in blocks of chalk set in yellow lime mortar. Its purpose is uncertain but perhaps it was designed to provide shelter near to the oven. A post-hole nearby (150) contained a pie-dish (Fig. 27. 63) of probable early fourth-century date.

Other features on the south side of this enclosure included three shallow pits (61, 69, 83) and three post-holes, all of Roman date.

Enclosure C

In the north-west corner of this enclosure were two features (203 and 199), both densely packed with flint. Their purpose is uncertain, but perhaps they were intended as sumps. Feature 203 contained a fourth-century flanged bowl (Fig. 27. 60) and a coin of Hadrian (AD 117-38).

Miscellaneous features

North-west of Ditch 202 were three shallow bowl-shaped ovens, possibly used for corn-drying; only one was excavated (154). They were all filled with charcoal; no finds were made.

THE FINDS

THE POTTERY

MIDDLE BRONZE AGE POTTERY

The pottery (Fig. 25. 1-11) came from the upper layers (Fig. 21, 188, L234-5) of Ditch 188; all the vessels are of barrel-urn form. Two fabric types are represented. A is a hard, dark grey fabric with fine to medium flint grit tempering; surfaces dark grey/brown, sometimes with a mauve hue. Fabric B is a coarse, dark grey material with fine flint grit tempering and possibly containing chaff. It has buff or grey surfaces with grit and chaff impressions; slightly soapy to the touch.

Nos. 1-3, 5-8, 10-11 are of fabric A, and Nos. 4 and 9 of fabric B.

1. Large urn with finger-impressed decoration on a possibly applied rim and on body.
2. Large urn with applied horizontal and vertical strip decoration.
3. Large urn with finger-impressed decoration on the edge and immediately beneath rim and on wall of vessel. Similar fabric to No. 1.
4. Urn with traces of finger-impressed decoration on wall of vessel. The reduced core and oxidised surfaces contrast with the other vessels in the collection.
5. Urn with finger-tip impressed decoration on body.
6. Urn with finger-impressed decoration on an applied band set close to the rim. The surface treatment contrasts with the other sherds of this fabric in that it is rather rough and the flint tempering stands proud of the surface.

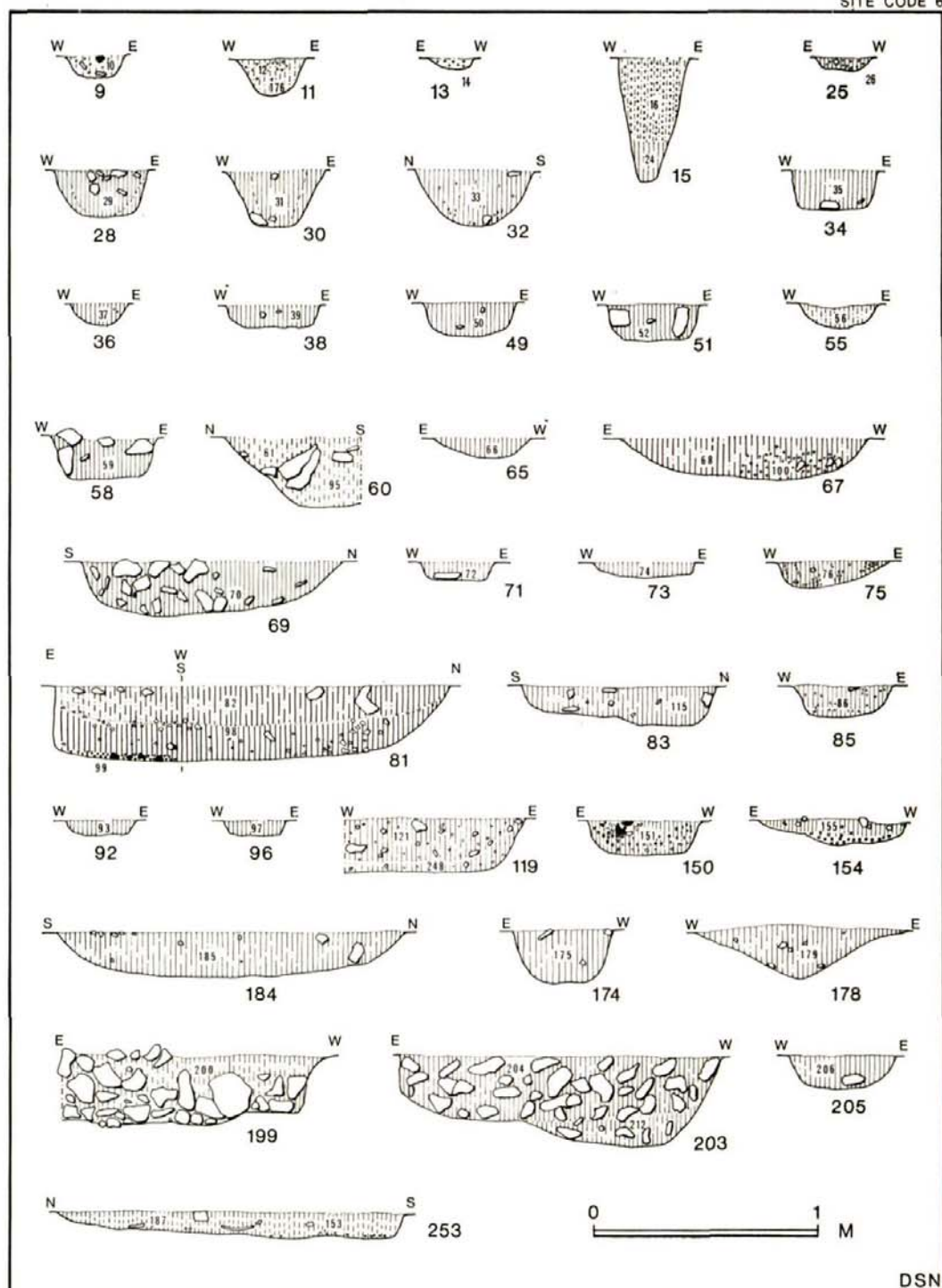


Fig. 24. Ashley, Hants; sections of miscellaneous features.

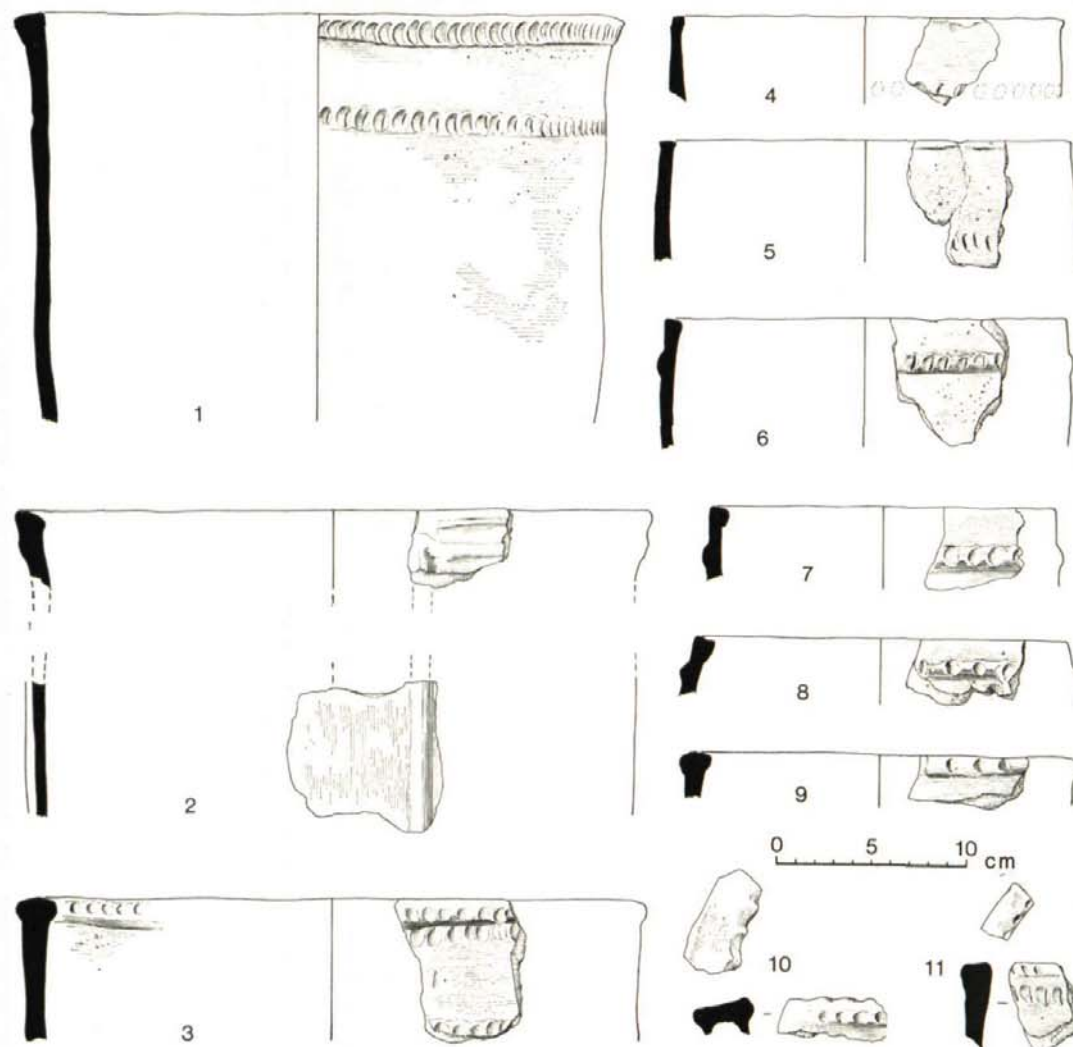


Fig. 25. Ashley, Hants; Bronze Age pottery. Scale $\frac{1}{4}$.

7. Urn with deep finger-impressed decoration on an applied strip set close to the rim.
 8. Urn with finger-impressed decoration close to rim. Fairly coarse surface treatment similar to No. 6.
 9. Urn with finger-impressed decoration on worked, drawn-out rim.
 10. Rim from large urn with finger-impressed decoration on internal and external flanges. The rim has broken from the body in such a way as to indicate that the vessel, or at least the rim, was coiled.
 11. Sherd with finger-tip decoration on outer rim flange and on body.
- The pottery of Boscombe Down (Stone 1936)

and Thorny Down (Stone 1937 and 1941) type appears to be the work of two potters, a theory based on the two fabric types (A, B). The vessels are all barrel-urns; no globular urns of Calkin Type 1 (Calkin 1962, 7) are represented.

In the upper surface of the ditch, unstratified, was a fragment of a bowl of Iron Age date with finger-impressed decoration on the body angle (not illustrated).

ROMAN POTTERY (Fig. 26, 27)

Many of the Roman sherds were yellowish/grey in colour, which appears to be the result of later oxidation of the surfaces and not as a consequence of firing.

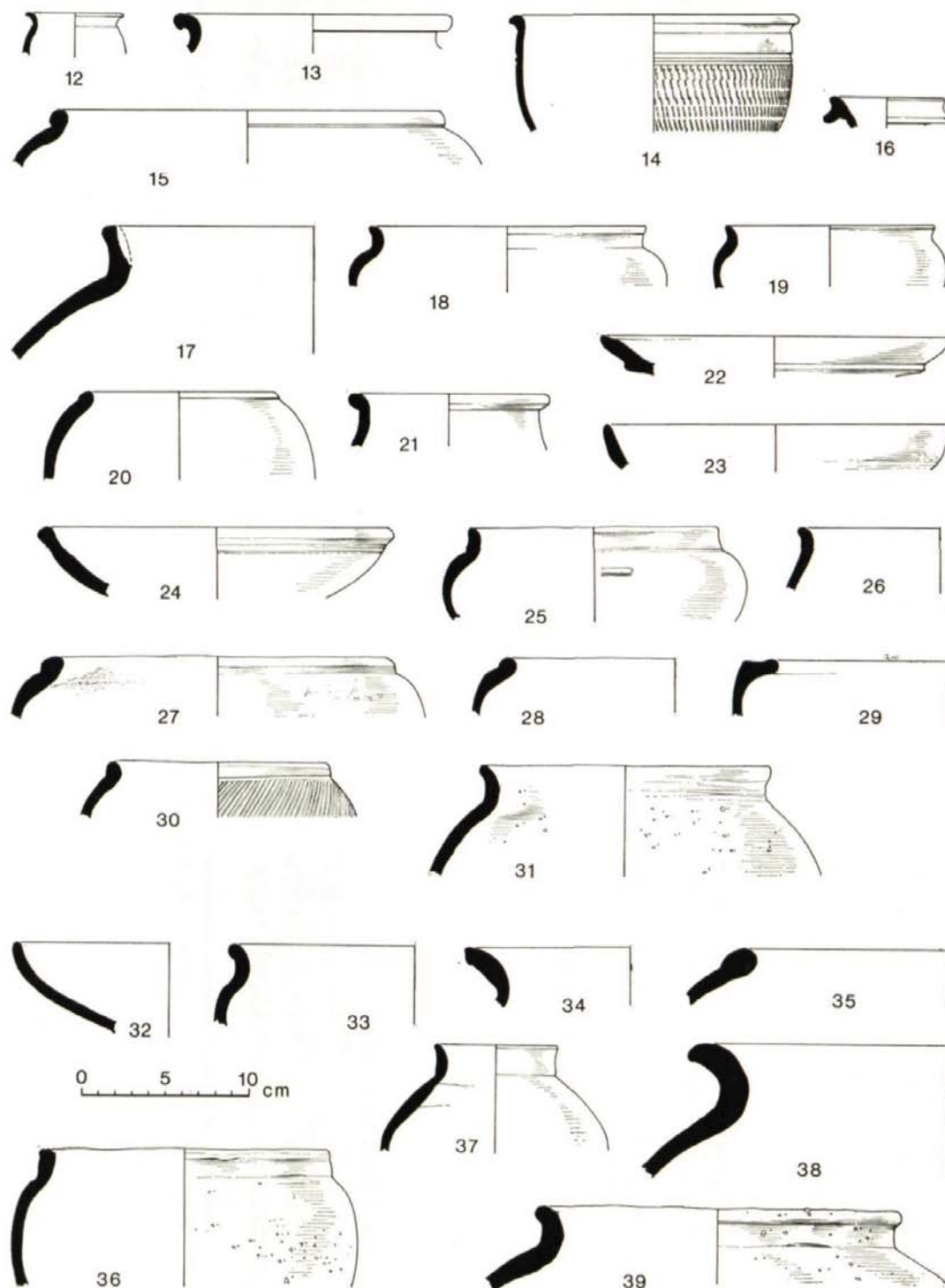


Fig. 26. Ashley, Hants; Roman pottery. Scale $\frac{1}{4}$.

Nos. 12–16 are from Ditch 116 (Section, Fig. 21); Nos. 12 and 13 are from layer 18, No. 14 from layer 17, No. 15 from layer 63, and No. 16 from layer 41.

12. Beaker. Fine, khaki fabric, grey/buff surfaces.

13. Jar. Hard, grey, slightly sandy fabric and surfaces.

14. Bowl. Imitation of samian form 37. Fine, dull buff/orange fabric with translucent glazed surfaces. Rouletted decoration. A similar vessel has been found at St Pancras Cemetery, Chichester (Down and Rule 1971, Pl. 15) in a later first-century context. It has been suggested (Down and Rule 1971, 77) that glazed vessels, imitating samian forms, were being manufactured in the Chichester area.

15. Wide jar in hard, coarse grey, sandy fabric with rough, grey/red, sandy internal and smooth, dark grey, external surfaces. (See comments following Pot No. 50). First-century type.

16. Flagon rim. Fine buff fabric and surfaces. Occurs at Chichester in context of c. AD 75–100 (Down and Rule 1971, 5.21, 60c).

Nos. 17–31 are from Ditch 87 (Section, Fig. 21); Nos. 17, 18, 21–23 from layer 90, Nos. 19, 20, 22 from layer 91, No. 24 from layer 111, Nos. 25–9 from layer 159, and Nos. 30–1 from layer 166.

17. Storage jar. Hard, dull orange fabric with sparse flint grit tempering. Dull orange/grey surfaces. At Chichester (Down and Rule 1971, 3.10, 90) it occurs in a mid first-century context.

18. Jar. Hard khaki fabric with orange/grey, slightly sandy surfaces.

19. Jar. Hard, dark grey, fine sandy fabric with dark grey/buff, sandy surfaces once burnished.

20. Jar. Coarse, dark grey fabric, buff surfaces.

21. Jar. Hard brown/grey fabric with dull red core. Grey sandy surfaces.

22. Platter. Hard, brownish grey, fine sandy fabric, with black burnished surfaces.

23. Bowl. Fairly hard, dark brown fabric with very fine grit tempering. Very dark grey surfaces.

24. Bowl or possibly a lid. Hard, dark grey, slightly sandy fabric with smooth, dark grey external surface and internal rim. Grooved decoration below rim.

25. Bowl. Hard, grey/brown, fine sandy fabric with rough, dark grey internal, and highly burnished, black external surfaces. Traces of iron rivet.

26. Jar. Hard, grey, slightly sandy fabric. Grey surfaces, originally burnished externally.

27. Storage jar. Hard, coarse, grey fabric with sparse flint grit tempering. Dark grey surfaces. External surface burnished. These wares persist at Chichester (Down and Rule 1971, 3.8, 57) into the second century.

28. Jar. Hard, pale grey, fine fabric. Grey surfaces.

29. Bowl. Hard, pale grey, fine, sandy fabric with pale grey surfaces. Once burnished.

30. Jar. Fine, brown/grey, sandy fabric with fine flint grit tempering. Grey/red surfaces. Oblique burnished line decoration.

31. Jar. Very hard, fine grey fabric with dense medium flint grit tempering. Dark grey, lightly burnished surfaces. L166.

Vessels 20, 27, 28 and 30 are beaded-rimmed jars of 'Belgic' type. They are common in the first century and continue in use into the early second century. The presence of a platter (Fig. 26. 22) imitating a Gallo-Belgic form suggests a date of c. AD 50–75 for the group.

Nos. 32–9 are from Ditch 202 (Section, Fig. 21); Nos. 32–5 from layer 138, No. 36 from layer 222 and Nos. 37–9 from layer 225.

32. Bowl or lid. Hard, grey sandy fabric. Dark grey surfaces, burnished externally. Black burnished ware (cf. below, p. 139).

33. Jar. Hard, slightly coarse, grey/brown sandy fabric with grey surfaces, burnished below rim. A similar form at Chichester (Down 1974, 8.23, 32) is dated late Flavian- early second century.

34. Large jar in very hard, pale grey fabric with slightly sandy surfaces. A vessel of this form was found at Chichester (Down 1974, 8.23, 33) associated with late third- to fourth-century pottery. Whether it was residual is uncertain.

35. Storage jar. Hard buff fabric with fine, flint-grit tempering. Buff/grey surfaces. Burnished external surfaces. Belgic derivative—probably first century.

36. Jar. Hard, dark grey fabric with fine flint grit tempering. Grey surfaces with tempering protruding.

37. Narrow-necked jar. Hard, pale grey, sandy fabric. Worn, dark grey external surface possibly originally coated with grey slip. First century.

38. Storage jar. Very hard, dull red, sandy fabric with dull, red/grey surfaces, burnished externally and on internal rim. Probably first century.

39. Jar. Hard, dull red fabric with medium (2–3 mm) flint tempering. Reddish grey surfaces.

Also in Ditch 202 was a Black Burnished Ware sherd of similar form to No. 28 (cf. below, p. 139). Nos. 40–3 are from Ditch 128 (Section, Fig. 21), Layer 133.

40. Wide jar in hard, dull red, slightly sandy fabric. Dull red/grey surfaces.

41. Bowl. Hard, dull red fabric with smooth, dull red/grey surfaces.

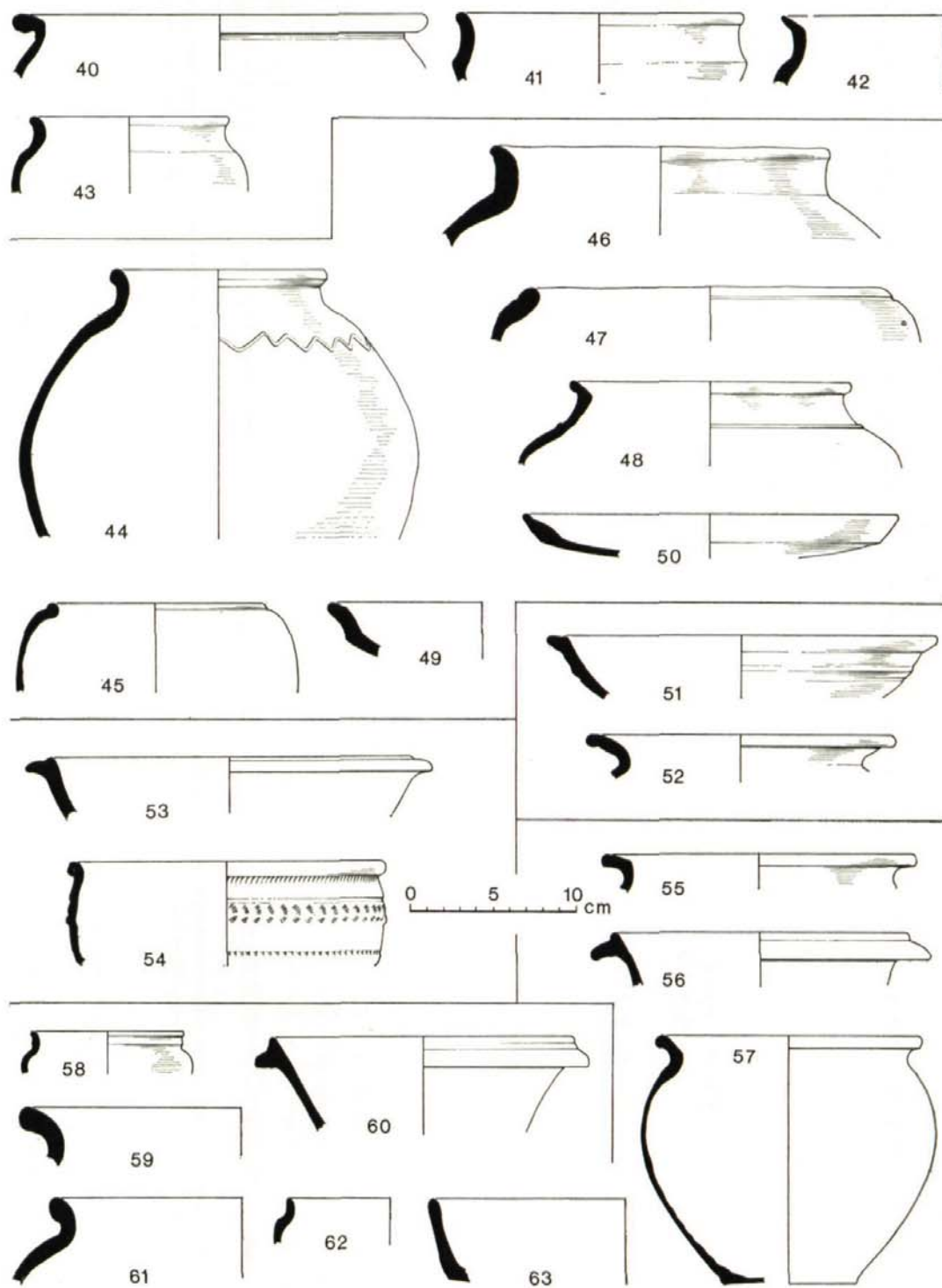


Fig. 27. Ashley, Hants; Roman pottery. Scale $\frac{1}{4}$.

42. Jar. Hard, fine grey fabric and surfaces.
 43. Jar. Hard, dark grey, slightly sandy fabric and surfaces. Burnished externally.
 Nos. 44–50 are from Gully 180 (Section, Fig. 21), layer 130.

44. Jar. Hard, dull red fabric with pale grey core containing grog. Dark grey, lightly burnished surfaces. Wavy line decoration on shoulder.
 45. Jar. Hard, dark grey fabric with flint tempering. Grey surfaces.
 46. Storage jar. Hard, coarse, red/brown sandy fabric with grey/brown surfaces. Burnished externally and on inside rim.
 47. Jar. Hard, dark grey, slightly sandy fabric and surfaces. Knife trimming on body.
 48. Jar. Hard, pale grey, fine sandy fabric and surfaces.
 49. Platter. Hard, dark grey, slightly sandy fabric. Smooth orange/buff surfaces.
 50. Platter. Fairly hard, slightly sandy grey fabric and surfaces.

In Ditch 122, pre-dating Gully 180, was a jar of similar form to No. 15.

Nos. 51–2 are from Gully 267, layer 135.

51. Bowl. Hard, dark grey, slightly sandy fabric and surfaces. Burnished externally.
 52. Jar. Hard, khaki, fine fabric with buff/grey surfaces. Black Burnished Ware (cf. below, this page). A vessel of similar form and fabric was also found in a layer of humic soil sealing features 172, 207, 251, 254 and 257. Late third-fourth century.

Nos. 53–4 are from a humic soil sealing gullies 172, 207, 251, 254 and 257. No. 53 is from layer 170 and No. 54 from layer 196.

53. Flanged bowl in hard, coarse grey fabric with reddish-grey surfaces. Wear on internal surface may indicate that vessel was used as a mortaria.
 54. Bowl in hard, dull red fabric with fine micaceous inclusions. Red colour-coated surfaces with rouletted decoration below rim and stamped decoration on body. Oxfordshire ware. Fourth century.

Nos. 55–63 are from miscellaneous features.

55. Jar. Hard reddish-grey fabric with grey core. Buff/grey surfaces. From Oven 150 (Plan, Fig. 23; Section, Fig. 24). (See also No. 63.)
 56. Flanged bowl. Hard, fairly fine, khaki fabric with grey burnished surfaces. From Oven 253 (Plan, Fig. 23; Section, Fig. 24).
 57. Jar. Hard, fine grey, sandy fabric and surfaces. Findspot as 56.
 58. Jar. Fine, grey fabric with fine flint tempering. Surfaces abraded. From Pit 81 (Section, Fig. 24).
 59. Storage jar. Hard, yellow/grey, slightly sandy fabric containing traces of grog. Findspot as 58.
 60. Flanged bowl. Very hard, pale grey fabric

and surfaces. From Pit 203 (Section, Fig. 24).

61. Large jar. Hard grey, slightly sandy fabric with reddish surfaces, possibly burnt. From Hearth 67 (Section, Fig. 24).
 62. Bowl. Pale khaki, slightly sandy fabric. Reddish grey, slightly sandy, surfaces. Findspot as 61.
 63. Dish. Reddish-brown fabric with grey core. Traces of grey surfaces. Worn. Findspot as 55.

THE BLACK BURNISHED WARE by Dr. D. F. Williams

64. A heavy mineral analysis was undertaken on four Black Burnished Ware 1 (BB1) vessels, an early cooking-pot with short, upright bead-rim (see comments following Pot No. 39) (Gillam 1960, Fig. 11, No. 3), a (?) lid (No. 32) and two late cooking-pots (No. 52) (Gillam 1957, 147/148). All the samples produced assemblages characterised by a high tourmaline content, and agreed well with analyses on BB1 vessels shown to have been made in the Wareham-Poole Harbour area of Dorset (William 1977, Group I). A similar origin for the Ashley sherds is likely.

The results from the three cooking-pots confirm previous analyses showing that these two particular types of early and late cooking-pots seem to have been made solely by the Dorset centre (Williams 1977).

The occurrence of BB1 lids in the published reports is comparatively rare, and this seems to be a fair reflection of their appearance in deposits of Roman pottery examined by the writer (nevertheless, a few examples do exist, see Dodd and Woodward 1922, Pl. 22, No. 6; Farrar 1965, 116; Petch 1960, Fig. 8, No. 53).

SMALL FINDS

THE COINS by P. E. Curnow

- | | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1. Hadrian | 117–38 Sest. O/HADRIANUS AUGUSTUS | R/Uncertain female figure with? cornucopiae. AM No. 771034, Layer 212. |
| 2. Victory on Prow (Constantinopolis) | 330–7 | Mint uncertain, cf. LRBCI. AM No. 771041, Layer 247. |
| 3. Irregular | 330–7 | Small AE3. AM No. 771028, Layer 201. |
| 4. Irregular Gloria Exercitus (1 standard) | 335–41 + | Minim. AM No. 771029, Layer 198. |
| 5. Irregular Fel Temp Reparatio (fallen horseman) | c353 + | Minim (? cut from a radiate). AM No. 771030, Layer 204. |

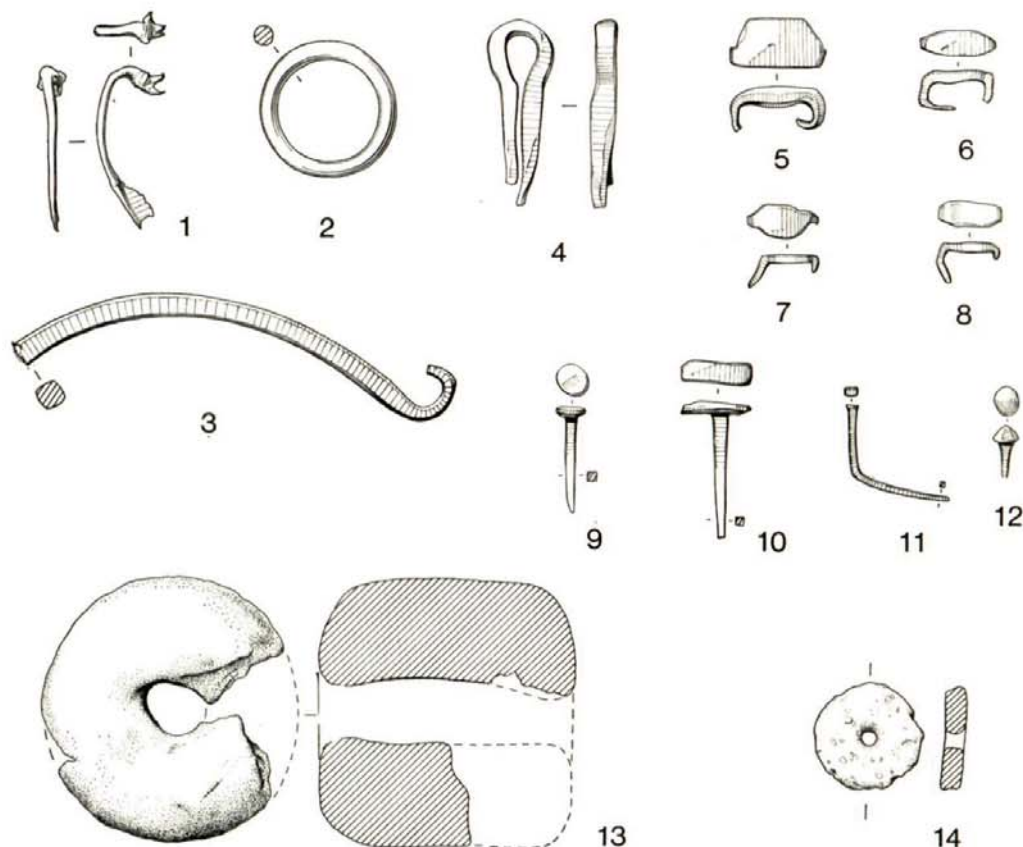


Fig. 28. Ashley, Hants; the small finds. Nos. 1, 2, bronze. Scale $\frac{1}{2}$. Nos. 3-12, iron; 13, 14, baked clay. Scale $\frac{1}{4}$.

MISCELLANEOUS OBJECTS (Fig. 28)

All objects except No. 13 are of Roman date.

1. Bronze brooch of the Colchester type. At Camulodunum (Hawkes and Hull 1947, 309), the type occurs in levels of *c.* AD 10-65 although elsewhere the type persists somewhat later. Found in a layer equating with layer 18, Ditch 116 (Fig. 21). Length 3.3 cm. AM No. 771000.
2. Bronze ring. Found in a level equating with layer 41, Ditch 116 (Fig. 21). Diameter 2.7 cm. AM No. 771001.
3. Fragment from an iron bucket handle. From post-hole 75, Enclosure B (Section 75, Fig. 24). Length 17.8 cm. AM No. 771002.
4. Iron split-spiked loop. From upper filling (133) of Ditch 128 (Fig. 21). Length 7.3 cm. AM No. 771001.

5-8. Iron joiner's dogs. Used for linking two pieces of wood. Findspots: No. 5: L212, Pit 203 (Fig. 24), width 3.8 cm, AM No. 771044; No. 6: findspot as No. 5, width 3.0 cm. AM No. 771035; No. 7: from bedding trenches to east of site, findspot equates with layer 149 (Section 251/208, Fig. 21), width 2.5 cm. AM No. 771032; No. 8: findspot as above but within fill of gully 251, width 2.5 cm. AM No. 771016.

9-11. Iron nails. No. 9 from layer 204, Pit 203, length 4.1 cm. AM No. 771033; No. 10: findspot as No. 7, length 5.3 cm. AM No. 771020; No. 11: layer 135, Gully 267 (Fig. 21). Original length 6.4 cm. AM No. 771046.

12. Iron hobnail. One of many found in a context equating with layer 149—upper filling of bedding trenches (Section 251/208, Fig. 21,

- refers). Length 2.1 cm. AM No. 771021.
13. Loom-weight of baked clay. The object is of Bronze Age date and was found in association with pottery (Fig. 25. 1-11) in the upper filling of Ditch 188. Diameter 10.6 cm. AM No. 771037.
 14. Spindle whorl of baked clay. Findspot as No. 12. Diameter 4.4 cm. AM No. 771038.

ANIMAL BONES by Alison Locker

A total of 496 bones was recovered from the site of Ashley, but the paucity of animal bone precluded any interpretation of the relative importance of species, estimation of stature or butchery techniques. The following species were present:

Cattle (*Bos sp.*), 79 fragments.
 Cattle-sized fragments, 174.
 Sheep (*Ovis sp.*), 55 fragments.
 Sheep-sized fragments, 29.
 Pig (*Sus sp.*), 5 fragments.
 Horse (*Equus sp.*), 4 fragments.
 Dog (*Canis sp.*), 1 fragment.
 Cat (*Felis sp.*), 1 fragment.
 Unidentifiable fragments, 148.

Most of the bone was recovered from ditch fills, and as the quantity was so small the bone from all the features is discussed as a whole. It was in generally poor condition and so much fragmented that a high proportion of fragments could at best only be attributed to a size range. Most of the mandibles had full permanent dentition in wear and most of the long bones were fully fused. All cattle long bones were fused except a metatarsal that was unfused at both ends and still porous. One sheep mandible retained deciduous premolars, and two long bones were unfused at their distal ends. Of the five occurrences of pig, two long bones were unfused, and one mandible retained deciduous dentition. Horse, dog and cat were all adult individuals.

A few examples of butchery were noted, two humeri and one cattle metacarpal showed chop marks and the left radius of a sheep had knife marks. A post-hole fill produced nine burnt fragments of sheep size.

DISCUSSION

The settlement site at Ashley occupies a salient of the Ashley Parish boundary. It has been questioned whether the salient had archaeological significance insofar as the boundary respected ancient field banks, but no evidence was found for this in the easement cutting. Since the land to the north and west scarps steeply, it is more likely the natural terrain rather than man-made features that has dictated the presence of boundaries here.

The excavation was on too small a scale in relation to the whole site for useful discussion, but it is apparent from traces on the aerial photographs and the geophysical survey that the plateau around the area of the easement and within the salient is covered with a series of ditches and gullies. The scatter of occupation about the site and the relatively high proportion of pottery from the ditches excavated would suggest that they formed enclosures defining settlement areas rather than field systems although they could have been for stock control. The suggestion that they formed enclosures is supported by the presence of a number of structures within the enclosures and also by the clayey nature of the subsoil which is heavy and damp. The lighter, more chalky, soils further down the slopes would have been easier to cultivate. It is the ground conditions which may explain the absence of Iron Age occupation, for the soils are unlikely to have been workable until the introduction of the coulter plough in the Roman period.

The occurrence of a Bronze Age ditch is not evidence for earlier farming and it is regretted that the nature of the site in this period is not understood. The ditch is too short for a field system, and geophysical survey shows no north or south continuation. The later ditch system, dating from the mid-first century AD, appears to form square or rectangular enclosures, while a clay strip of land to the north-west, bordered by ditches 202 and 128, may have been sub-divided into small plots. This interpretation of the photographs was supported by the subsequent discovery of such a division (Gully 117 and 125) north-west of Enclosure

C. These sub-divisions, a later feature of the settlement, are dated to the late third-fourth century AD. The cultivation of these smaller plots would appear to be broadly contemporary with the bedding trenches (177, 207, 251, 254/172 and 257) north of the site.

If the row of post-holes in the north-west corner of Enclosure B can be interpreted as the south wall of a building, then the structure would seem to have been situated in the corner of an earlier enclosure, possibly still visible as a shallow ditch and low bank, perhaps now topped by a hedge. The date of the structure is not certain but a fourth-century date is indicated by pottery found in an adjacent oven and a post-hole. A scatter of first- to fourth-century occupation material is to be found across the whole site, indicating the agricultural use of this area of the plateau throughout the Roman period. Whether the settlement was related to and in the immediate vicinity of a villa is not known. No evidence for a villa shows on aerial photographs, although a Roman structure is believed to lie further down the hill slope towards King's Somborne. The lack of building debris about the site precludes the existence of a villa nearby. The nearest known Roman site is an earthwork at Ashley 1½ miles east at SU 394301 and believed to be a camp (Bowen and Fowler 1966, Fig. 1). It lies just north of the Winchester-Old Sarum Roman road which passes ¾ mile south of the settlement under discussion. The nearest known villas are at Sparsholt and Upper Somborne.

Although no Iron-Age occupation has been found, much of the pottery is coarse and the forms are indicative of early pottery techniques. These native fabrics and the Iron Age form of the Roman four-post granary would indicate that the settlement belonged to a native society still using some traditional building techniques. Roman influence may have made little change in life-style. The absence of Roman storage pits is of interest, since they remained in use into the first century at sites near Little Somborne (p. 125).

The reason for their absence from Ashley is probably that the site was too wet. No medieval pottery or occupation has been located.

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