This article reviews the progress made in Sussex ‘Iron Age’ studies using a comparison of the data available in the 1930s with those available in the 1990s. In the 1930s Sussex was pre-eminent in the research of the period, through the fieldwork of the Curwens and others, and the pottery studies of Hawkes. By the end of the century things were very different. Present-day fieldwork and publication take place in changed contexts, and our research questions are wholly different. The old evidence has to be reused. This article provides a guide to this transformation. The present importance of the Sussex 1st-millennium BC data set is in its regionalism, both within the county, and in its divergence from the wider ‘Iron Age’ traditions of southern Britain as a whole.

### INTRODUCTION

In 1939, Cecil Curwen’s brief, but seminal review in *Sussex Archaeological Collections* of ‘The Iron Age in Sussex’ relied upon two data sets, namely the archaeological sites and their distribution, and the coeval pottery and what it could say about chronology and cultural affiliation. The latter was expanded in the same volume of the *Collections* by two companion articles which centred on the pottery from the Caburn (Hawkes 1939a) and Castle Hill, Newhaven (Hawkes 1939b). Unsurprisingly, the past 60 years have brought an exponential growth in the number of Iron Age sites in Sussex. The present-day research foci, and questions now asked of the Sussex Iron Age, need to be ‘married’ with this past body of material in order to integrate the two into a common interpretative framework. This article aims to facilitate the use of ‘elderly’ publications and archives by briefly ‘explaining’ and de-constructing the now defunct chronologies, terminology, and themes of the pre-1980s Sussex Iron Age literature. Alongside this, it outlines the nature and extent of the now extant Sussex Iron Age evidence, compared to the 1939 data base.

Today, Curwen’s (1939) review can be seen as an over-compression of the known chronological timespan of the data set. Notably, Barrett’s (1980) rethinking of the early 1st-millennium BC chronologies in Lowland Britain as a whole means that Curwen’s ‘Iron Age of Sussex’ can no longer be considered as an Iron Age, and is best labelled as ‘Sussex in the 1st millennium BC’.

Curwen (1939) and Hawkes (1939a,b) concentrated on isolating key events to offer causal explanation for change in the observed archaeological record of Iron Age Sussex. They expressed this in terms of invasion, aggression and defence, and considered the extent to which ‘natives’ adjusted their behaviour and activity to those of incomers (see Cunliffe 1991 for a summary of past frameworks of interpretation for the British Iron Age as a whole). Their argument particularly relied on the interpretation of hillforts as defensive structures. We may no longer subscribe to the idea of subjugation by aggressive immigrants as a plausible explanation of change, but how culture evolves, and how it is influenced by imports and/or immigrant populations, remain issues.

Alongside this, the article highlights a more widespread transformation of 1st-millennium BC research interests by focusing upon the ways in which artefacts have become central to the reconstruction of socio-economic and ideological life.

### CHANGING CONTEXTS OF FIELDWORK AND PUBLICATION

It is instructive to note that 75% of the Sussex ‘Iron Age’ excavations conducted in the 1930s were published within a year of excavation, 95% within four years, and none were delayed more than eight years. Any examination of changing patterns in Sussex 1st-millennium BC fieldwork and its publication over the last 60 years is hampered by the fact that c. 41% of the 1990s excavations of Sussex sites of the
period are currently unpublished ‘developer reports’. We can compare the archaeological work of the 1930s with that of the 1980s more effectively; two decades with the same number of published excavations. The 1930s excavation of the Sussex ‘Iron Age’ focused on hillforts (Fig. 1). A fairly small band of directors, and their privately paid, or volunteer, workforce undertook these hillfort excavations. The Curwens dug on Harrow Hill, Hollingbury, Philpots, Thundersbarrow, and the Trundle; Field salvaged material from the destroyed hillfort at Castle Hill, Newhaven; Holleyman worked at Harrow Hill; Wilson dug at the Caburn, Devil’s Dyke and Highdown Hill; Williamson worked with E. C. Curwen at Cissbury; and Winbolt worked at Piper’s Copse. By the 1980s, most 1st-millennium BC sites were excavated by professional directors and a largely paid workforce, and the greatest number of excavations took place on sites other than hillforts (Fig. 1). Since the 1979 Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act requires Scheduled Monument Consent for intrusive fieldwork access to scheduled monuments (which include most of the Sussex hillforts), excavation is much more difficult and requires the special circumstances of a threatened archaeology. In the 1980s, for example, Ditchling Beacon hillfort was excavated in a very limited way at the request of the Department of the Environment in order to assess plough-damage (Rudling 1983). Seaford Head, however, was not scheduled, and was excavated with the permission of the owner (Lewes District Council) in the context of coastal erosion (Bedwin 1986, 25). Two hillfort excavations of the 1980s (currently unpublished) were on sites which had also been investigated in the 1930s (Highdown and Thundersbarrow Hill). At these, storm-damage and plough-damage, respectively, provided the reasons for further limited excavations. A pattern of limited rescue, or research excavation work, on hillforts which have a long history of excavation continues today and is increasingly supplemented by surface survey work (e.g. the Caburn: Drewett & Hamilton 1999; Cissbury: Donachie & Field 1994).

A comparative study of the locus of excavations in the 1930s and the 1980s particularly highlights a shift from the Downs to the West Sussex Coastal Plain (e.g. Bedwin & Holgate 1985; Rudling 1987). Almost all of the 1980s excavation seasons on the West Sussex Coastal Plain were funded by the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission, but sponsorship was also found from developers and private research funds (e.g. Rustington Sites A and B, which benefited from both: Rudling 1990). This reflects the increased development of the West Sussex Coastal Plain, and the concomitant protection of the Downs, and has revealed a hitherto unknown density of 1st-millennium BC sites away from the Downs. Alongside this, there has been a special interest in taking opportunities to investigate sites within the area of the Chichester Dykes system. This includes excavations at Knapp Farm in advance of road construction (Late Bronze Age pits: Gardiner & Hamilton 1997, 71) and at Ounces Barn before quarrying operations started (Late Iron Age ditch, pottery and coin moulds: Bedwin & Place 1995, 45).

THE GROWING DATA SET

DISCOVERING AND EXCAVATING 1ST-MILLENNIUM BC SITES

In 1939, Curwen (1939, fig. XI) summarized the extent of knowledge of the period in his site distribution map (reproduced in Fig. 2a). This can be compared with its modern equivalent (Fig. 2b). The data set has increased at least threefold since the 1930s. New sites are being added at an
accelerating rate (especially since the 1960s), averaging approximately 10–15 per decade. This crude figure disguises subtle developments in the state of knowledge. For example, some of the sites that Curwen and Hawkes dated to the Iron Age are now known to date to the Late Bronze Age. Indeed, the framework of the ‘Three Age System’ has been challenged to a degree which now leads us to talk in terms of ‘social transformations’ of the 1st millennium BC, rather than of ‘technological breakpoints’ such as the introduction of iron.

When Curwen published his distribution map (Fig. 2a) the range of sites was restricted to the Downs. In fact, he was selective in his presentation of the state of knowledge then. For example, he must have known of Saxonbury, a hilltop enclosure in the Weald. This was reported as being of probable Iron Age date with earlier antecedents (Winbolt 1930, esp. 231–2). Similarly, another Wealden hilltop enclosure, Piper’s Copse, was excavated in 1934 and Curwen actually visited it in 1936 (Winbolt 1942, 249).

The majority of the known sites were the prominent hilltop enclosures, which Curwen categorized as ‘hillforts’. He differentiated between: i) those with counterscarp banks: Trundle, Cissbury and Hollingbury; ii) those interpreted as not permanently occupied: Seaford Head and Ranscombe Camp, of which the latter is no longer classified as a ‘hillfort’ (Hamilton & Manley 1997); and iii) small ‘hill-refuges’: Harrow Hill, Wolstonbury and Thundersbarrow Hill. It is informative to see a fourth category comprising Caburn and Castle Hill, Newhaven. They were separated out because their significant ceramic assemblages (both large and encompassing much of the 1st millennium BC) could be used as a backdrop to the interpretation of the other Sussex sites. These two sites underpinned Hawkes’ (1939a,b) analyses of Sussex’s cultural and social history. Indeed, he elevated them to a status which today would be termed ‘type sites’. The 60 subsequent years have generated more varied opportunities and contexts for archaeological investigation. These have included the disturbance of archaeological sites as a result of wartime defensive initiatives (e.g. Higdown Hill: Wilson 1950, 163), post-war urban development (e.g. Brighton), new road systems (e.g. the A27: Rudling forthcoming), and intensification of agricultural practice (particularly on the Downs).

Figure 1 shows the history of excavation of Sussex sites, analyzed by numbers per site type, using the 60-year old site classifications of ‘hillfort’, ‘settlement’ and ‘other’.

In the early 20th century, archaeologists researched sites that were usually visually obvious field monuments (notably the ‘hillforts’). These were occasionally supplemented by sites which were discovered by chance. Included in the latter are the pits at Kingston Buci, which were discovered by workpeople digging the ground in the vicinity (Curwen & Hawkes 1931, 185), and the substantial settlement evidence at Park Brow, which was excavated by archaeologists alerted by pottery scatters amongst lynchets (Wolesley & Smith 1924, 347). Similarly, plough-disturbed pottery scatters signalled the presence of the Findon Park settlement (Fox & Wolesley 1928, 449). Today, the emphasis is reversed. The data base of settlement sites, which lack surface traces, is growing, but new ‘hillforts’ are seldom found. A notable exception to the latter is Garden Hill, a promontory enclosure hidden by the Wealden woodland and rediscovered in 1968 (Tebbutt 1970, 39).

The distribution maps (Fig. 2) clearly indicate that new sites are known in the Weald and more particularly in the West Sussex Coastal Plain. Wealden evidence includes a number of sites simply not recognized in the 1930s, as this environment is not conducive to detecting archaeological features — it remains heavily wooded in parts, is more pastoral than arable, is not widely ploughed, and has heavy soil which makes fieldwalking difficult (Gardiner 1990, 33). Evidence for permanent settlement is scarce until the Late Iron Age (Gardiner 1990) and targeted surveys confirm that absence (Gardiner 1990; Gregory 1998, 141–3). On the West Sussex Coastal Plain there is now a range of sites from all phases of the 1st millennium BC, but they, too, indicate a variable presence over time. The majority of finds of Sussex 1st-millennium BC metalwork hoards date to the Late Bronze Age, and are located on the Coastal Plain (Bedwin 1983a, fig. 2). These are not necessarily a corollary of settlement. The area would have been damper and marshier than it is today. The greater wetness was the outcome of a climatic downturn at the beginning of the 1st millennium BC (Turner 1981; Lamb 1981; Bell 1996) and is evidenced in the pollen sequence and macrofossil stratigraphy from Little Cheyne Court, Romney Marsh in East Sussex (Waller et al. 1999). It has been suggested that there may
UPDATING THE SUSSEX IRON AGE

(a) Map of Sussex showing Iron Age sites.

(b) Map of Sussex showing coastal plain and South Downs.
have been a general tendency to deposit hoards in damp and marshy places, away from settlement sites (Bedwin 1983a, fig. 2; Gregory 1998, 138–9). However, in recent years, substantive Late Bronze Age settlement evidence has been uncovered on the Coastal Plain (e.g. Ford: Place forthcoming; Knapp Farm: Gardiner & Hamilton 1997; Rustington Site B: Rudling 1990; Climping and possibly Westergate: Hamilton pers. obs.; and Selsey West and East Beach: Seager Thomas 1998; 2001). The comparative lack of Early Iron Age sites on the coastal plain, and the increase in sites from c. 400 B.C. (e.g. North Bersted: Bedwin & Pitts 1978; Oving: Bedwin & Holgate 1985; Lavant: Kenny 1993; and Westhampnett: Fitzpatrick 1997a) suggest a local hiatus lasting two or three centuries.

Additionally, new types of sites are now recognized. For West Sussex, these include a small number of later Iron Age banjo enclosures, which were once considered to be a Wessex phenomenon (e.g. Carne's Seat: Holgate 1986a), and the Late Iron Age shrine at Lancing Down (Bedwin 1981). Cross-ridge dykes, currently interpreted as Late Bronze Age land or territorial boundaries, were reassessed in the 1970s (compare Curwen & Curwen 1918 versus Bradley 1971 and Bradley et al. 1994) and new ones have been identified (e.g. Ranscombe, formerly classified as an unfinished hillfort). Other ‘new’ site types include the Middle/Late Iron Age ditched field complexes associated with farmsteads on the Coastal Plain (e.g. Oving: Bedwin & Holgate 1985; North Bersted: Bedwin & Pitts 1978). A newly identified theme is the revisiting of symbolically important sites of earlier periods (e.g. Money Mound, a Beaker period bowl barrow acting as a focus for deposition from c. 100 B.C.: Beckensall 1967, 13–21).

**ARTEFACT RANGE**

When Curwen wrote in 1939, he offered the most revealing summary of the prevailing view in his first paragraph:

Some apology is perhaps needed for inflicting upon the non-technical reader such a mass of details about dull pottery sherds. But pottery is the raw material of history, where contemporary written records are wanting, and its peculiar tendency to local development during the Iron Age gives it special importance as a clue to the movement and contacts during this phase of our history (Curwen 1939, 214). Whilst the durability and ubiquity of pottery means that it is still of key importance to the study of a non-historical period, there are a number of other categories of evidence on which to call. Curwen’s site reports recorded many other artefacts and ecofacts, but without attempting to draw many conclusions from them (e.g. Caburn: Curwen & Curwen 1927; Charleston Brow: Parsons & Curwen 1933; Trundle: Curwen 1931). These days, the importance of studying the full range of artefacts is recognized. Additionally, specialist analyses de rigueur examine the stratigraphic associations of artefacts (e.g. Hill 1995a; Hamilton 1998), their raw materials, and their possible sources (e.g. Hamilton 1998).
1993; 1997; Seager Thomas 1998). Furthermore, the value of inter-regional studies is clear. For example, Hingley’s (1990) study of the distribution of iron currency bar finds in Britain reveals that they are absent from Sussex, one of the counties which actually did produce iron for them (Ehrenreich 1994, 16–17). Although iron was valued property in non-producing areas, it may have been available on demand in Sussex, and it may have been deemed unnecessary to keep stocks for future forging into useful items (Gregory 1998, 246–7).

ENVIRONMENTAL DATA
While the early 20th-century work exhibits an awareness of on-site environmental data (e.g. Caburn: Curwen & Curwen 1927, 47–56; Findon Park: Matheson & Cowley 1928, 458–9), analysis of their implications is absent. Also lacking is any general recognition of wider environmental issues. Today, there is a particular awareness of the impact of coastal erosion (Holgate 1986b), and of climate change (see above), on site distributions. In addition, the major impact of anthropogenic activity, primarily vegetation clearance, has been identified. This impact is implicit in the resultant erosion of sites and sediments off the Downs, and the concomitant burial of sites in valley locations (colluviation) (Bell 1983; Burrin & Scaife 1984; Scaife & Burrin 1983). The pollen and molluscan evidence indicate the scale of this clearance. The Downs were largely cleared by the 1st millennium bc (land-snail evidence: Allen 1995; Petzoldt 1979; and pollen sequence adjacent to the Caburn: Waller & Hamilton 2000). By contrast, the pollen evidence suggests that the Wealden hillforts were constructed in woodland clearings (Dimbleby 1968). On a micro-level, site economies and subsistence strategies are revealed, particularly since the 1970s, in the quantified details of animal bones, molluscs, and plant remains from individual sites (e.g. the Bishopstone excavations: Bell 1977). These site assemblages of ecofacts, however, remain un-synthesized at an inter-site level.

DATING AND TIME BLOCKING
Despite the name of the period, the ‘Iron Age’, few iron finds have been closely dated. What Hawkes and Curwen designated as the pottery of the Middle and the Late Iron Age (their ‘Iron Age B and C’) can still largely be accommodated by contemporary chronologies. However, their ‘Iron Age A’ is an over-compressed horizon that now encompasses a Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age chronology (see Barrett (1980) for Lowland Britain, and Hamilton (forthcoming) for Sussex). Thus, non-contemporary sites are grouped together in the chronological element of Curwen’s 1939 figure XI (reproduced as Fig. 2a) (e.g. the Caburn and Wolstonbury). This has the confusing effect of suggesting that the advent of iron in southern Britain (c. 600bc) is concurrent with the first Sussex ‘hillforts’ (enclosed sites on hilltop and slope locations). Instead, since the 1980s, an increasing number of behavioural changes with important social implications are recognized as having emerged from the very beginning of the 1st millennium bc (Late Bronze Age), rather than being specifically associated with the Iron Age (Barrett 1980; Gwilt & Haselgrove 1997). In Sussex, these include the construction of major land boundaries (cross-ridge dykes), and hilltop enclosures. Concurrently there are new shapes, sizes and types of pottery, which collectively imply that pottery containers became more central to eating and drinking. Increased metalwork-hoard deposition is also evident. There are also shifts in settlement structure and organization (although the last remains problematic for study) (Hamilton forthcoming).

The dating terminology of all pre-1980s work (expressed by traditional time periods) in Sussex must therefore be re-framed by reference to contemporary chronologies. The ‘Three Age System’ (of Stone Age, Bronze Age and Iron Age) is redundant when considered in any detailed way. The modern view of Sussex 1st-millennium bc chronology is outlined in Table 1 and the history of key developments in chronology are summarized in Table 2. The impact of the revised chronology on older work is illustrated by comparing the dating of sites in Curwen’s 1939 fig. XI, with that given in the present Table 3. The latter provides a collective periodization for the 1930s sites, together with all Sussex 1st-millennium bc sites discovered over the past 60 years.

THE MEANING OF SITES AND THINGS
There have been many new research foci over the last 60 years, but we will take Curwen’s (1939) and Hawkes’ (1939a,b) emphases on ‘hillforts’, ‘pots’ and ‘everyday life’ to illustrate the divergence in the
Table 1. Present Sussex late 2nd-millennium and 1st-millennium BC chronologies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modern general date range</th>
<th>Current terminology</th>
<th>Correlation to Continental European terms (Cunliffe 1991, 26; Hill 1995b, 48)</th>
<th>Needham (1996) terminology or Cal BC</th>
<th>Key type fossils (sourced from e.g. Cunliffe 1991, Hamilton 1993 and specific Needham 1996) with reference to Sussex</th>
<th>Key developments in Sussex (These phases rely heavily on the sequences provided by pottery chronologies)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>c. End 2nd millennium–1000 BC</td>
<td>later Middle Bronze Age; Deverel-Rimbury</td>
<td>Hallstatt Al and A2 (c. 1200–1000 BC)</td>
<td>Period 6 (c. 1550–450 BC)</td>
<td>• Deverel-Rimbury pottery • Penard I and II bronze metalwork early Wilburton metalwork</td>
<td>• Settlements in form of main dwellings and auxiliary houses in enclosures and field systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>750–500 BC</td>
<td>Late Bronze Age</td>
<td>Hallstatt Bl to BJ (c. 1000–700 BC)</td>
<td>Period 7 (c. 950–750 BC)</td>
<td>• Plain-post-Deverel-Rimbury pottery • Late Wilburton bronze metalwork • Ewart Park bronze metalwork</td>
<td>• Cross-ridge dykes • Pre-hillfort enclosures (stock enclosures?) • Early hillforts • Hoards of bronze metalwork on the West Sussex Coastal Plain • Open settlements?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 750–500 BC</td>
<td>later Late Bronze Age and earliest Iron Age</td>
<td>Hallstatt C (c. 700–600 BC)</td>
<td>Period 8 (c. 750–450 BC)</td>
<td>• Decorated post-Deverel-Rimbury pottery • Llyn Fawr bronze metalwork • Early iron metalwork (rarely found) • Four-post structures • Continental metalwork e.g. ‘Covesse’ bracelets and swan’s-neck pins</td>
<td>• Enclosed settlements - often described as ‘hillsforts’ with settlement material within • ‘Special sector’ sites in Arun: Adur downland block? (see text), i.e. Chantrydown Ring may have had ritual significance and a high degree of intervisibility with other sites (Bedwin 1980); Harrow Hill (Holleyman 1937) may have been used for animal slaughter and ritual associated (Manning 1995); Highdown Hill appears to have been differentially high status as a hillsfort settlement site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500–400/300 BC</td>
<td>Early Iron Age</td>
<td>La Tène la (c. 500–400 BC)</td>
<td>Period 8 (c. 750–450 BC)</td>
<td>• Pedestalled vessels • Fibulae</td>
<td>• Open settlement • Possible increase in differential status between communities (e.g. on the basis of pottery; metalwork finds; labour input to building enclosures and roundhouses inter alia).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 400/300–100 BC</td>
<td>Middle Iron Age</td>
<td>La Tène Ib (c. 400–300 BC)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>• Saucepan styles of pottery • Small lead weights • Early coins, including potin coins in East Sussex • Currency bars (not Sussex) • Fibulae • Increased use of storage pits (e.g. on hillforts) • Developed hillforts • Open settlement • Ditched field systems in West Sussex Coastal Plain • Banjo enclosures (West Sussex examples only known at present)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 BC–Late pre-Roman Iron Age</td>
<td>Late pre-Roman Iron Age</td>
<td>La Tène III (c. 100 BC–Roman)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>• Wheel-thrown pottery in West Sussex • East Sussex ware (previously known as South-eastern B, and South-eastern Atrebatic) in East Sussex; a.k.a. ‘Cooking Jar Fabric’ • Coins • Currency bars (not Sussex) • Fibulae</td>
<td>• General trend away from Downs to the West Sussex Coastal Plain and Weald • Demise of hillforts on the Downs • Open settlement most areas • Small, ‘special sector’ enclosures in the Weald - also described as ‘hillsforts’ • Iron-working sites • Specifically ritual sites e.g. Lancing Down ‘shrine’; Westhampnett cemetery • Territorial boundaries (Chichester dykes)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. There is a parallel system of continental chronologies of La Tène A, B, C, D Central and Northern Europe and La Tène I, II, III for North-western Europe (see Collis 1994; Cunliffe 1991 for general details).
### Table 2. Review of past Sussex chronologies and their changing terminologies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period Term</th>
<th>Terminology in 1920s/1930s</th>
<th>Terminology in 1940s/1950s</th>
<th>Terminology in 1960s/1970s/1980s (and into the 1990s in some cases - see Table 1 above for the 1990s view)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>End 2nd millennium – 1000sc Middle Bronze Age</td>
<td>Sites today classified as having Deverel-Rimbury associations generally referred to as ‘Late Bronze Age’ at this time. Hawkes’ analysis of the Plumpton Plain (esp. Site A) pottery was specially influential in this report, establishing correlations between this assemblage and those of Park Brow, Kingston Buci and New Barn Down (Hawkes 1935, 43–4).</td>
<td>The influence of Hawkes’ (1935) Plumpton Plain A report remained high, archaeologists working in the 1940s and 1950s continued to look to that to identify types and many make explicit cross-references to it. For example, Ratcliffe-Densham &amp; Ratcliffe-Densham (1961, 89, 97) in analyzing the Cock Hill assemblage and Burstow and Holleyman (1957, 194–8) that of Iron Hill. The New Barn Down report refers to currently-termed ‘Middle Bronze Age’ pottery as ‘Late Bronze Age’ (Curwen 1934, figs 17–20) and that recognized today as ‘Late Bronze Age’ pottery as being ‘of doubtful report’ (Curwen 1934, figs 21–5 &amp; 27).</td>
<td>Analysis of the Cock Hill assemblage refers to currently-designated Middle Bronze Age pottery as Late Bronze Age (e.g. Ratcliffe-Densham &amp; Ratcliffe-Densham 1961, figs 4 &amp; 5). The Black Patch report clearly designates the Deverel-Rimbury element as ‘Middle Bronze Age’, (the current terminology, referring to a review of that material erstwhile termed ‘Late Bronze Age’ by Ellison (1978)). In the Black Patch analysis, Ellison refers to her new analysis in detail (Ellison 1982, 361–8) but the site as a whole is still called a ‘Later Bronze Age’ site (e.g. DREWETT 1982, 161) which could trip up the unwary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 1000–750sc Late Bronze Age</td>
<td>Hawkes coined the term ‘Late Bronze Age II’ to describe what he viewed as early ‘All Cannings Cross’ pottery in the Plumpton Plain site B assemblage Hawkes (1935, 56, 59). Today we would designate this as plain post-Deverel-Rimbury ware (a Barrett (1990) term).</td>
<td>The LBA designation remained current and the Plumpton Plain report was still the key point of reference (e.g. Norris &amp; Burstow 1950, 45–8) on West Blatchington.</td>
<td>Following Barrett’s (1980) reassessment and partial back-dating of Iron Age pottery, the dating of the Late Bronze Age phase of plain post-Deverel-Rimbury pottery was secure (e.g. YAPTON; Hamilton (1987)).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 750–600sc later Late Bronze Age/earliest Iron Age</td>
<td>The analyst may see references to ‘Hallstatt’ and ‘Early La Tène’ in reports of Sussex finds and sites which have subsequently been reassessed as belonging to the later Bronze Age and the earliest Iron Age (e.g. HAWKES 1935; Rees 1937; reassessed by Hamilton (1980; 1993)) (Hamilton &amp; Manley 1997, 97). Hawkes (1939a, 217–30) identified a distinct ‘Caburn I’ tradition with an East Sussex distribution which is still considered to fall in this phase or slightly later (DREWETT &amp; Hamilton 1999).</td>
<td>Few mass-produced late ‘La Tène’ sites provisionally dated on iron ceramic evidence (e.g. Norris &amp; Burstow 1950, 45–8) on West Blatchington.</td>
<td>Pottery today falling into the later Late Bronze Age/earliest Iron Age was, pre-1990s, often dated rather later. This pottery comprises Barrett’s (1980) post-Deverel-Rimbury decorated wares. For example, the latest Late Bronze Age hillfort of Harting Beacon was dated to the C6th–C5th century BC on the basis of a pottery assemblage initially identified as ‘Early Iron Age’ (BEDWYN 1982b, 201; BARRETT 1990, 312). The Sussex ‘Early Iron Age’ pottery has now been reassessed as a whole and an earliest Iron Age phase recognized in the early 1990s as including Hollingbury and Caburn (HAMILTON 1993, 146, 166–8, 341).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 600–400/300sc Early Iron Age</td>
<td>Analysis of pottery depended heavily on making direct comparisons with the Continent for most of this period (e.g. CABURN &amp; CURWEN 1930) and the then extant view of dates was explicitly stated in e.g. Fox and Woolliscroft’s (1926, 45) Finton Park report, placing La Tène I as concluding in 250sc. There are some references to ‘Early Iron Age’ pottery (e.g. Curwen (1935, 331) on Thundersbarrow, seeing it as ‘native’ and ‘home-made’ ware (OAKLEY 1934, 141–51). Hawkes became the authority on Sussex ‘La Tène’ pottery (HAWKES 1939a,b); archaeologists wholeheartedly accepted the Iron Age ABC system and new sites and assemblages simply refined the system and its sub-divisions. So, for example, the Highbourn report designated pottery of this period ‘Iron Age A’, dating that from C3th–C4th century BC (Wilson 1950, 167–176): Highbrown can now be seen to have a pottery sequence which falls both within this phase and Earlier (see Table 1). Keef (1953, 205) saw Harting Beacon as being ‘Iron Age (Sussex) A2’, and Hawkes analyzed the Goodshill pottery, defining a transitional ‘Iron Age AB’ following just a little evidence of ‘Iron Age A’ (BOWDEN 1956, 86, 91). The pedestal bases associated with the Goodshill pottery (HAWKES 1939a,b) today have a CSC. Cunliffe published his highly influential synthesis of the Iron Age of Britain in 1974 (with a 3rd edition in 1991) and that included a comprehensive re-evaluation of Iron Age pottery. Whilst new sites add to the data and there may be some small points of disagreement on date ranges, reports continue to make reference to Cunliffe’s Early Iron Age style groups. So, for example, Torbryan pottery is of the ‘Kimmeridge Caburn style’ dated to broadly the C6th century BC. CUNLIFFE 1976, 23). Stolk Hill has elements of ‘Park Broe/Caesar’s Camp style’ (E. B. BRADLEY 1978, 115) as does Blatchington (HAMILTON 1977, 98) and Rustington A (RADLING 1990, 11).</td>
<td>Pottery today falling into the later Late Bronze Age/earliest Iron Age was, pre-1990s, often dated rather later. This pottery comprises Barrett’s (1980) post-Deverel-Rimbury decorated wares. For example, the latest Late Bronze Age hillfort of Harting Beacon was dated to the C6th–C5th sc. on the basis of a pottery assemblage initially identified as ‘Early Iron Age’ (BEDWYN 1982b, 201; BARRETT 1990, 312). The Sussex ‘Early Iron Age’ pottery has been reassessed as a whole and an earliest Iron Age phase recognized in the early 1990s as including Hollingbury and Caburn (HAMILTON 1993, 146, 166–8, 341).</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
of course, the Caburn). This culminated in his seminal review of Sussex Iron Age pottery stated in his Caburn pottery analysis (Hawkes 1939a: 241). ‘Early Iron Age’ pottery was designated ‘Iron Age A’ (see as extending to c. 250 sc) (Hawkes 1939a, 241).

La Tène II (and occasionally La Tène III) was also equated with ‘Early Iron Age’ e.g. the study of the date of Cissbury published in 1931 (Curwen & Williamson 1931, 23). Fox and Wobseley (1928) placed La Tène II as spanning 250–100 sc. Pottery of this phase was referred to as ‘saucepan shapes’ from at least the 1930s e.g. in the Charleston Brow Report. Parsons & Curwen 1933, 170, and today. Hawkes identified a distinct ‘Caburn II’ tradition within an East Sussex distribution which was characterized by ‘saucepan forms’ (Hawkes 1939a, 243–62).

La Tène III was the most common designation for the Late Iron Age, although the assumed absolute dates vary from, for example, c. 150 sc–c. 43 in Winbolt’s Saxonbury report (1930, 228) to c. 50 sc–c. 50 in Parsons and Curwen’s Charleston Brow report (1933, 165). East Sussex Late Iron Age pottery is occasionally equated with ‘Iron Age ABC’ e.g. Curwen (1937, 262) describing the Horsted Keynes pottery assemblage. Late Iron Age pottery at Kingston Rux was referred to as ‘Late La Tène Class D’. The Late Iron Age pottery of East Sussex was subsequently designated ‘South-eastern B’ (see adjacent column) and is currently known as East Sussex Ware. Late Iron Age quartz-sand-gritted ware in West Sussex was classified as Seaby Class D Wares (White 1934) which are now recognized to be often wheel-thrown (see Late Iron Age column on 1960s and later terminology in this table).

Following the ‘Iron Age ABC’ classification, there is some site-based refinement of Late Iron Age assemblages, so, for example, the Little Horsted pottery was regarded as an example of ‘South-eastern B’ (Wilson 1955, 67) and placed very late in the period, perhaps into the Romano-British period (c. 50–75). Horsted Keynes was associated with Samian ware interalia and similarly placed late in the period (Wilson 1955, 66).

Late pre-Roman Iron Age’ term coined, overcoming confusion in ‘Romano-British’ Iron Age designations (see, for example, Money’s (1977) Garden Hill report). Generally, pottery of this phase is referred to in reports as ‘Late Iron Age’. East Sussex Late Iron Age pottery, formerly ‘South-eastern B’, is now designated as part of an Eastern Atrebatic tradition (Cunliffe 1974 and following) and locally referred to as East Sussex Ware (Hamilton 1977). West Sussex Late Iron Age pottery is fully recognized as wheel-thrown and hand-turned, quartz-sand-gritted wares (Hamilton 1985).
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Key:
The periods of currency for each site are coded in columns headed:
1' = late 2nd millennium–1000 ac
2' = c. 1000–750 ac
3' = c. 750–600 ac
4' = c. 600–400 ac
5' = c. 400–100 ac
6' = c. 100 bc–ad 43.

The periods of currency columns (1–6):
‘y’ = some archaeological evidence at this site dating to this period
‘y*’ = some archaeological evidence at this site dates to one, other or both of the periods denoted thus;
finer analysis is not possible on present evidence

The ‘Curwen?’ column:
‘yes’ = in Curwen (1939)

The ‘80s+?’ column:
‘yes’ = an excavation/evaluation for the first time in the 1980s or later; if this column is blank, then original
excavation reports must be treated with caution when considering their evaluation of dating and the dates
may have been revised to those shown in this table.

nature and breadth of past and present interests.

HILLFORTS
In 1939, Hawkes (1939a) used the opportunity of analyzing the Caburn pottery to expound upon a
prevalent ‘invasion hypothesis’. He posited sequential invasions from the Late Bronze Age
onwards, and identified a ‘fracture’ in the
development of the Caburn pottery styles when compared with the pottery styles of neighbouring sites (seen as a certain ‘isolation’ of the Caburn). He used this observation to argue for unwelcome influence from abroad (specifically the Marne region of France), successful at, for example, Cissbury and Park Brow, but meeting effective resistance by Caburn peoples (Hawkes 1939a, 236). This ‘invasionist approach’, to which Sussex sites were key, was to become very influential over the next 20 years or more and set the agenda for the British Iron Age research. In excavating the ‘ramparts’ (i.e. enclosing earthworks) of the Caburn and other Sussex hillforts, excavators were keen to establish the date(s) of invasion(s). They evinced no doubt either that aggressive incursions were made or that the primary intention in building hillforts was to provide defensive strongholds. Since the 1980s, the defensive ‘purpose’ of the hillfort as a site-type has been challenged (e.g. Bowden & McOmish 1987; 1989; Collis 1994; Hill 1995c). Whilst modern interpretation does not wholly argue against the building of hillforts with defence in mind, the emphasis on how they constructed and maintained social relationships is now more pertinent. Interestingly, although the focus has shifted towards understanding how people lived on hillforts, Sussex excavation still tends to concentrate on the enclosing earthworks because earlier excavations were not fully clear on dating and chronology (Drewett & Hamilton 1999).

Few today would place all prominent hilltop enclosures (to use Hamilton and Manley’s 1997 term for hillforts) in one functional bracket. Indeed, their role and purpose may have varied through time and inter-regionally (Hamilton & Manley 2001). For example, enclosed hilltop sites in the Arun to Adur section of the Downs seem to have had a high status when compared with those of the rest of Sussex. To elaborate: in the Late Bronze Age (perhaps into the Early Iron Age period), Hightown Hill was a high-status settlement (judging by the pottery and metalwork finds) and the Chanctonbury and Harrow Hill enclosures may have been important sites of ritual performance (Manning 1995). In the Middle Iron Age, Cissbury was built, and is the county’s largest and most impressive hillfort; finally, in the Late Iron Age, this sector of the Downs housed the Lancing Down ‘shrine’ (Gregory 1998, 148–61, 237–40).

The ‘rethinking’ of hillforts has additionally prompted inter-site visibility studies of Sussex hillforts as a whole. The results of this work include the conclusion that Sussex Middle Iron Age hillforts were sited primarily to be visual focal monuments for surrounding communities, rather than as places for major permanent settlement (Hamilton & Manley 1997; Holgate 1986a).

A thematic analysis of enclosure (with ‘hillforts’ being just one important example of enclosing practice), considered in the context of other concurrent community architecture and collective activities, offers further insights into the possible role of hillforts in consolidating community identity. Such a study crosses traditional site type boundaries and posits that the very act of enclosing land on some scale implies that there was an understanding of who the ‘members’ of the group were (i.e. the group of people contributing to building the enclosing structures). In such a scenario group ‘membership’ became permanently ‘inscribed’ in the landscape by the existence of the constructed ‘monument’ (Gregory 1998, 315, 355–65; Connerton 1989). Various forms of landscape ‘inscription’ and monumentality can be suggested to be coeval with, and immediately preceding, the construction of hillforts (Gregory 1998, 358, 362–403). These are outlined briefly below.

‘Inscription’ could be said to apply to Middle Bronze Age settlements that were sited proximate to earlier burial monuments, perhaps thereby validating rights of access to specific landscapes. Examples include the Itford Hill and Black Patch settlements, both of which were established proximate to older round barrows (Burstow & Holleyman 1957; Drewett 1982). During the 1st millennium BC these barrows, together with the subsequently deserted settlements, may have functioned as earthwork monuments which provided points of ancestral reference.

Late Bronze Age linear ditch systems (cross-ridge dykes), could be seen as ‘inscribing’ rights of ownership of land and rights to pass over it (see especially Bradley 1971). Late Bronze Age stock enclosures may have had similarly fixed rights of ownership of stock and pasture. These enclosures include those small features which are ‘attached’ to lengths of cross-ridge dykes (Bradley 1971) and also, perhaps, two larger sites often grouped in with the ‘hillfort’ site type, namely Belle Tout and Seaford Head (Gregory 1998, 143–7).

Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age settlements
enclosed by substantial earthworks may have ‘inscribed’ membership of the community who viewed them as ‘home’. Hollingbury and Highdown, both traditionally seen as ‘hillforts’, may fall in this category, together with smaller sites such as Goosehill (Gregory 1998, 171–3, App. E).

Sites where inter-community gatherings were held for a specialized purpose may have ‘inscribed’ ‘sector membership’; the latter including those qualified to join in by virtue of their age, gender, skills, or roles. Sites and activities open to such an interpretation include the slaughter of cattle at Harrow Hill (Holleyman 1937; RCHME 1994; Manning 1995; Gregory 1998, 152, 493–5), and the possible ‘religious’ ritual at Chanctonbury Ring (Bedwin 1980; Gregory 1998, 151–2). Equally, sites for collective inter-community gatherings may have consolidated membership of a group comprising more than one community. This interpretation could be placed upon the very largest, best-developed ‘hillforts’ i.e. Cissbury, Caburn, Trundle and Torberry (Gregory 1998, 143–7, 173–5).

The ‘inscription’ patterns listed above can be taken to be the aggregate outcomes of the behavioural choices of individuals. The resultant archaeologically recognizable patterning and larger-scale architecture rely on varying degrees of social alliance (Gregory 1998). Formal evaluation of the social effects of this patterning suggests the existence of regional differences (Gregory 1998). Comparing 1st-millennium BC Sussex with concurrent patterns in Hampshire, it can be argued that Sussex communities remained more politically autonomous than their Hampshire neighbours right through to c. 300 BC. Thereafter they relatively rapidly joined together into larger alliances, to a degree altogether greater than that of those neighbours (Gregory 1998, 348–54) (Fig. 3). Interpretative attempts at causal explanation for those developments lie beyond the scope of this article.

**POTS AND THE LIFE HISTORY OF OBJECTS**

Pottery remains the backbone of Sussex 1st-millennium BC chronologies (Hamilton 1993; Drewett & Hamilton 1999; Hamilton forthcoming), and it is still used to isolate regional variability (Cunliffe 1991). However, the increasingly fine-tuned nature of Sussex 1st-millennium BC pottery chronologies, and their associated radiocarbon dates, now releases analysts to focus on other issues which we might describe as the life histories of objects. The Sussex excavations of more recent years provide the detailed contextual and stratigraphic data necessary to support studies of, for instance, intra- and inter-site deposition (Gregory 1998; Hamilton forthcoming). The life histories of artefacts in terms of their contexts of production, use, and disposal are particularly open to analysis and are discussed below.

**Making things**

An increasing interest in the technology of production and the characterization of materials has resulted in recent work identifying sources of raw materials more often. Sussex 1st-millennium BC analyses have particularly focused on the sources of clays and temper for pottery (Hamilton 1980; 1985; 1993, 255, 362, 364), and the types of stone used for querns (Peacock 1987, 61–85; Seager Thomas 1999). The combined results of these studies suggest either that people from different communities exploited common resources, or that some individuals supplied multiple communities with a single-source raw material or product. This is particularly evident for the use of Wealden clays and sandstone by downland communities (Hamilton 1993). In either case, the resources and the products can be seen as focal points for the mediation of social relationships.

For the Sussex 1st millennium BC, the most direct evidence of specialization is the finished products and the occasional production debris. With respect to pottery, Hamilton (1993, 334–5) has argued that
the evidence for on-site production on settlement sites decreased through the millennium, suggesting that it was increasingly specialized and non-domestic/settlement-based. During the Early and Middle Iron Age, the limited output and distribution of any one particular pottery style, taken with the fabric homogeneity within these discrete style-distributions, suggests small-scale workshop production (Hamilton 1993, 368–9). During the later Iron Age (c. 100 BC +), the standardization of pottery (notably grog-tempered East Sussex Ware and wheel-thrown quartz-sand-tempered West Sussex pottery) is great enough to suggest larger-scale, production centres (Hamilton 1993, 369–70).

Living with and using things
While the stratigraphic recording of objects has improved over the years, recreating the original use-context of artefacts remains difficult. This is both due to the recurrent lack of large-scale area excavations, and to the nature of 1st-millennium BC artefact disposition. The latter appears to have involved deliberate site clearance and deposition rather than in-situ loss or abandonment of artefacts (Hill 1995a).

Recent studies of the symbolism inherent in 1st-millennium BC material culture have been carried out on a scale much broader than a county basis. For example, Fitzpatrick (1997b) and Oswald (1997) have studied the door orientations of Iron Age roundhouses, finding a considerable degree of commonality; however, the Sussex’ data are interesting because they do not conform. The same is true of other cultural patterning (e.g. the presence of rectangular houses, in addition to round-houses), and this area suggests a productive avenue for detailing (Hamilton forthcoming).

Disposing of things
The majority of Sussex ‘Iron Age’ artefacts that Curwen and his contemporaries drew upon was recovered from pits and surface finds. It was tacitly assumed that this was rubbish and thereby a direct reflection of on-site activities. With the foresight of recent research, even Curwen’s excavations of the Trundle highlighted a problem with this view. At the Trundle, two pits had layers of exclusively Early Iron Age material alternating with layers of exclusively Middle Iron Age material culminating in the former (Curwen 1931, 114–17: pits 7 and 8). Drawing on the Wessex work of Hill (1995a), the Trundle phenomenon suggests curation of ‘rubbish’ and wilful manipulation of its deposition. Hill’s (1995a) work has prompted retrospective analysis of old data bases (Caburn, Trundle and Cissbury pits: Hamilton 1998) and detailed analysis of deposits from recent excavations (Westhampnett: Fitzpatrick 1997a). These collectively suggest that the deposits do not have the characteristics of random rubbish and that belief systems or customs required the selection of certain objects and combinations of material for deposition (e.g. human remains, wild animal bones, quernstones, horse jaws). For Sussex, the ‘rules’ governing such deposition now require broader analysis in the contexts of 1st-millennium BC settlements and artefact production, given that a high level of 1st-millennium BC regional variation in Lowland Britain is well-recognized (Hamilton forthcoming).

EVERYDAY LIFE

Everyday life in 1st-millennium BC Sussex
Our increasing recognition of some of the distances between the sources of raw materials and the findspots of the final products suggests that Sussex 1st-millennium BC communities were not fully self-supporting (contra Curwen’s (1939, 215) assumption). Indeed, the size of communities was too small for self-reproduction (which requires a minimum population of c. 150 to avoid incest: Wobst 1974; 1976), and people must have been reliant on the maintenance of relationships with communities further afield. To continue the study of how that may have occurred would provide useful insights not only into economic aspects of life, but also into the wider socio-political milieu (Gregory 1998, 386–98).

While Fitzpatrick (1997b) has recently entitled an article ‘Everyday life in Iron Age Wessex’, it is disconcerting to realize that it remains difficult to supply such an account for Sussex. While the Sussex earlier Bronze Age offers an abundance of settlement architecture and evidence of site layouts, the Sussex 1st-millennium BC evidence is restricted when compared with Wessex. This is the result of the combined effect of the comparative lack of early excavation work on Sussex settlements and modern restrictions on the extent of excavations. Of the 75 Sussex settlement sites with occupation datable to the 1st millennium BC, only 11 allow any substantive analysis of intra-site relationships and support a judgement of the ‘type of site’ to which they belong (Gregory 1998, table 6.4).
Intra- and inter-community differentiation

Indications of community specialization and socio-economic disparities can be sought in a number of lines of evidence. Whilst it may be argued that any one of these lines is tenuous, together they suggest the existence of both personal, and community, wealth and status variation throughout the 1st millennium BC in Sussex. An increase in these disparities is suggested for the Late Iron Age.

Evidence of differential levels of domestic wealth suggests that the capacity for production and exchange varied between individuals (Gregory 1998, 196–8). This is seen in the differences in size of round-houses: in the period c. 600–400 BC, for example, one round-house at Hollingbury (Site ‘A’) was ten times the size of any other there (Holmes 1984). However, the history of excavation in Sussex is such that ‘interiors’ of sites tend to have been sampled, at best (Hamilton & Manley 1997), with the result that there are few sites where such comparisons can be made with any confidence.

From c. 1000 BC evidence for different levels of collective wealth suggest that it was possible for one community to ‘produce’ enough of something valuable to allow more than was essential for day-to-day living to be amassed (Gregory 1998, 168–70). Higdown Hill has notably yielded a currently unique assemblage of Late Bronze Age gold and bronze metalwork contemporary with its enclosure by a substantial earthwork (Hamilton forthcoming). The greater wealth or status of certain settlements is suggested by the Early Iron Age settlement at Hollingbury hillfort, which was built at comparatively great cost in terms of the hours expended on building the hillfort’s earthworks. Also in this category, perhaps is the large Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age round-house which preceded the ‘hillfort’ enclosure of Caburn. Whole communities must have been involved in the building of three of the four Sussex ‘developed hillforts’ of the Middle Iron Age (Gregory 1998, 169). These ‘developed hillforts’ of the 400–100 BC period had numerous pits, which could betoken a differentially large storage capacity associated with those who had access to/or occupied the hillforts.

In Sussex small lead weights are present from c. 400 BC (e.g. at Torberry: Cunliffe 1976, 14 and Caburn: Curwen & Curwen 1927, 16–17 — both comparable with those from Glastonbury: Bulleid & Gray 1911, pl. XLV). These appear to be standard measures (Gregory 1998, 200). By the Late Iron Age, together with coins, they may have facilitated a more formalized exchange system, which was perhaps related to an increase in specialist production (either by communities or individuals) specifically for exchange. Included in this would be the evidence for Late Iron Age specialist pottery production, and also iron-working. By the Late Iron Age the localization of iron extraction and smelting suggests specialist settlements. In some instances the iron-smelting locations are associated with hillforts (e.g. Garden Hill). These largely comprise apparently otherwise unoccupied and heavilybounded, small enclosures (e.g. Piper’s Copse, and Saxonbury) (Gregory 1998, 170). These, and the unenclosed sites associated with iron-smelting (Crowhurst Park, Eridge, and Sedlescombe), are in wooded areas, and at some distance from the main areas of Sussex later Iron Age settlement on the Downs and the Coastal Plain. Pragmatically, the sites must have been placed to access both the iron ore and the wood (for smelting processes) of the Weald. However, the effectively hidden nature of the sites may have generated an exclusivity, and concomitant secrecy, associated with iron-smelting communities. Some of the hillforts are sited in association with potentially symbolically imbued locales such as bizarre rock formations (Gregory 1998, 175; Hamilton & Manley 1997, table 2, 106–7), which may have additionally heightened the mystique of the iron-working procedures.

Taken together, the evidence suggests that, both within and between communities, differential access to wealth developed through the 1st millennium BC, and that these differences probably resulted from production specialization. A base of broadly equal, self-sufficient communities became increasingly differentiated from c. 750 BC and markedly so from c. 100 BC. These changes can be noted particularly in the areas of artefact-production and iron-extraction (but probably not smithing) (Ehrenreich 1994, 18). Specialization may also have been a factor in other areas such as stock-breeding and monumental construction works such as that associated with hillfort ramparts and architecture (Gregory 1998, 227–8, 242–8).

Evolution and cultural transmission

For Curwen (1939), and Hawkes (1939a,b) pottery was central to isolating evidence for cultural contact and transmission for the Sussex Iron Age. Thus, Hawkes (1939a) posited an invasion/immigrants
from the Marne as the source of Sussex Early Iron Age pottery with pedestalled bases. Curwen and Hawkes were writing and interpreting at a time when ideas about the evolution of culture derived from 19th-century Darwinism still remained unchallenged. They are likely to have assumed the inevitability of uni-directional technological ‘progress’ towards the modern, the perceived ideal being the most advanced technology. This gave rise to a tacit belief that an aggressive dominance of the ‘naturally strong’ over the ‘naturally weaker’ was to be expected, and resulted in the assumption that immigration and aggression from abroad provided the mechanism for the appearance of new artefact styles and technologies (Hawkes 1939a).

It was not until the 1950s, and the key challenge of ‘neo-evolutionism’, that the Darwinian views were re-interpreted (especially White 1949; 1959; Steward 1955). Current views on cultural transmission are based on theories of cultural evolution (e.g. Boyd & Richerson 1985; Dawkins 1989; Dennett 1995). Today, we recognize that those regarded as the ‘most fit’, the ‘most able’ or the ‘strongest’, are culturally determined. The ‘fittest’ may be, for example, the wealthiest, the cleverest and / or the most politically powerful. We also recognize that the transmission of culture (material and otherwise) can be seen as evolving, in a way that is analogous to the evolution of biological organisms. Applying those ideas to changes in material culture in 1st-millennium BC Sussex, styles of material culture (e.g. pottery) may have simply changed along with ‘fashion’ by seeing and adopting ideas from elsewhere. Examples would include the Late Bronze Age ‘Covesea-type’ (Atlantic types) metalwork from the Sussex coastal area, and the affiliation of West Sussex Middle Iron Age pottery styles with styles further west in Hampshire, (Hamilton forthcoming). Very often, emulation of other styles reflects admiration for those whom we associate with them; that is the basis of many trends and fashions today and will have been just the same 3000 years ago.

It is possible that Sussex 1st-millennium BC potters did see examples of pottery brought by people from elsewhere. Foreign visitors may have come to Sussex to establish social alliances, to find marriage partners or to settle. Equally, Sussex potters and others may have travelled themselves. The separation of the ‘Caburn’ culture, which Hawkes (1939a) identified in pottery, nowadays can be seen as having multiple interpretative options. These potentially include an absence of admiration for the styles of others; a local taste; an assertion of local identity; an antipathy to those who did admire the new ideas; or less contact with the cultural ‘influences’ (e.g. no social alliances, or no inter-marriage, with them). It is no longer fashionable to interpret British Iron Age style changes and affiliations as the outcome of invasion and incomers. However, the investigation of the possible mechanisms of style transmission, such as are suggested above, has yet to be actively pursued, even though the social implications for 1st-millennium BC communities are important.

CONCLUSION

The present 1st-millennium BC data set and its interpretation have indisputably evolved since the work of Curwen (1939) and Hawkes (1939a,b). We now have a much greater bank of interpretative theory, drawn from other geographical areas, from other periods of prehistory and from other academic disciplines, to apply to 1st-millennium BC Sussex. Using a combination of illustration by example and quantitative analysis, this article has demonstrated that the 60 years since Curwen’s and Hawkes’ summaries of the Sussex Iron Age have seen not only a substantial increase in the data set, but the emergence of a very different data set. Today the emphasis is more on the Coastal Plain and non-hillfort sites. Changes in our chronological understanding have been summarized and provide a basis for re-evaluation of older reports in the light of the modern state of knowledge (Tables 1, 2 & 3, above). It is crucial that such ‘elderly data sets’ (Hamilton 1998) be ‘maintained’ and ‘decoded’ so that they can continue to contribute to knowledge.

Access to the archaeological past in Sussex and elsewhere is constrained by Planning Policy, yet archaeological interpretative theory trends require broader datasets to support wider horizons of interpretation of life and times in the 1st millennium BC. It is already clear that different regions within Sussex appear to have had different histories of settlement. Significantly, at a larger scale, Sussex does not conform to the more general patterns of southern Britain, which are traditionally based on Wessex evidence. Thus, not only do we have a substantively different Sussex Iron Age compared with that of 60 years ago, we have a Sussex ‘Iron
Age’ that is now important for its differences, rather than for what it typifies.

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