Excavation of a Medieval Settlement at Beere, North Tawton, Devon

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THE BEERE SETTLEMENT

IN 1937, Mr. N. C. Bulleid[1] found pottery, which he recognized as medieval, in a hedge bank on his farm at Beere,[2] 2 miles NE. from North Tawton, Devon. He began excavations, which revealed structures, and his valuable field-work showed a settlement of considerable extent. Through the Devon Archaeological Exploration Society he invited us to conduct more detailed excavations, which lasted for 10 days in July 1938, and a week at Easter 1939.[3]

The settlement seems to have extended for at least 350 yards at the base of a slope at 500 ft. O.D., along the north bank of a small stream, the Gissage Lake, draining eastwards into the river Yeo (FIG. 24). It is on the yellow clay, fairly easily waterlogged, formed from the underlying Culm Measures, in country in which patches of ill-drained 'moor' are still interspersed among good cultivated lands. Possible remains of houses and other structures could be traced, extending into the copses towards the west and east. Of these, one house, one barn, and two corn-drying kilns were fully cleared, and trial trenches into several others yielded similar pottery. A slight earthwork further up the slope was shown to be contemporary.

The excavated house, a typical 'long-house', provides one of the few recorded plans of a medieval peasant house yet available for England,[4] though a number of comparable examples are known for Wales through the work of Sir Cyril and Lady Fox.[5] The corn-drying kilns are a type of structure new to

[1] A nephew of Dr. A. Bulleid, the discoverer of the Glastonbury marsh village.

[2] Grid ref. 690031.

[3] Our first debt is to the perception of Mr. Bulleid, who discovered the site and realized its significance, and worked with us. We are particularly grateful to the continued kindness of Dr. E. H. Willock of Exeter throughout our work, and also to Col. L. A. D. Montague, Col. Ransome Pickard, Mr. Percy Morris, Mr. E. H. Rogers, Mr. C. K. C. Andrew and Mr. George Penrose for their help at many times and for showing us comparative material, and to Mr. Fry and his family at Great Beere for looking after us. The work was carried out by us, with periods of assistance from Mr. Bulleid, Dr. C. E. M. Wenyon and Mr. E. M. Jope, senior. The Devon Archaeological Exploration Society made a small grant towards expenses. We are most grateful to Dr. J. K. S. St. Joseph for taking for us many air photographs of this and relevant sites in the SW. in 1953, and to Mr. A. E. P. Collins, Dr. A. G. Smith, and Dr. P. A. Sabine for their specialist reports.

[4] But see *J. Roy. Inst. Cornwall*, XI (1892-3), 57 ff., 289 ff. and compare *J. Roy. Soc. Antiq., Ireland*, LXXII (1942), 37-63; *Trans. Bristol and Glos. Archaeol. Soc.*, XXXIII (1910), 339, 346-8; *Sussex Archaeol. Coll.*, XCIII (1955), 157-79.

[5] *Archaeol. Cambrensis*, XCII (1937), 247-68; *id.* XCIV (1939), 163-99; *Antiquity*, XIV (1940), 363-76.

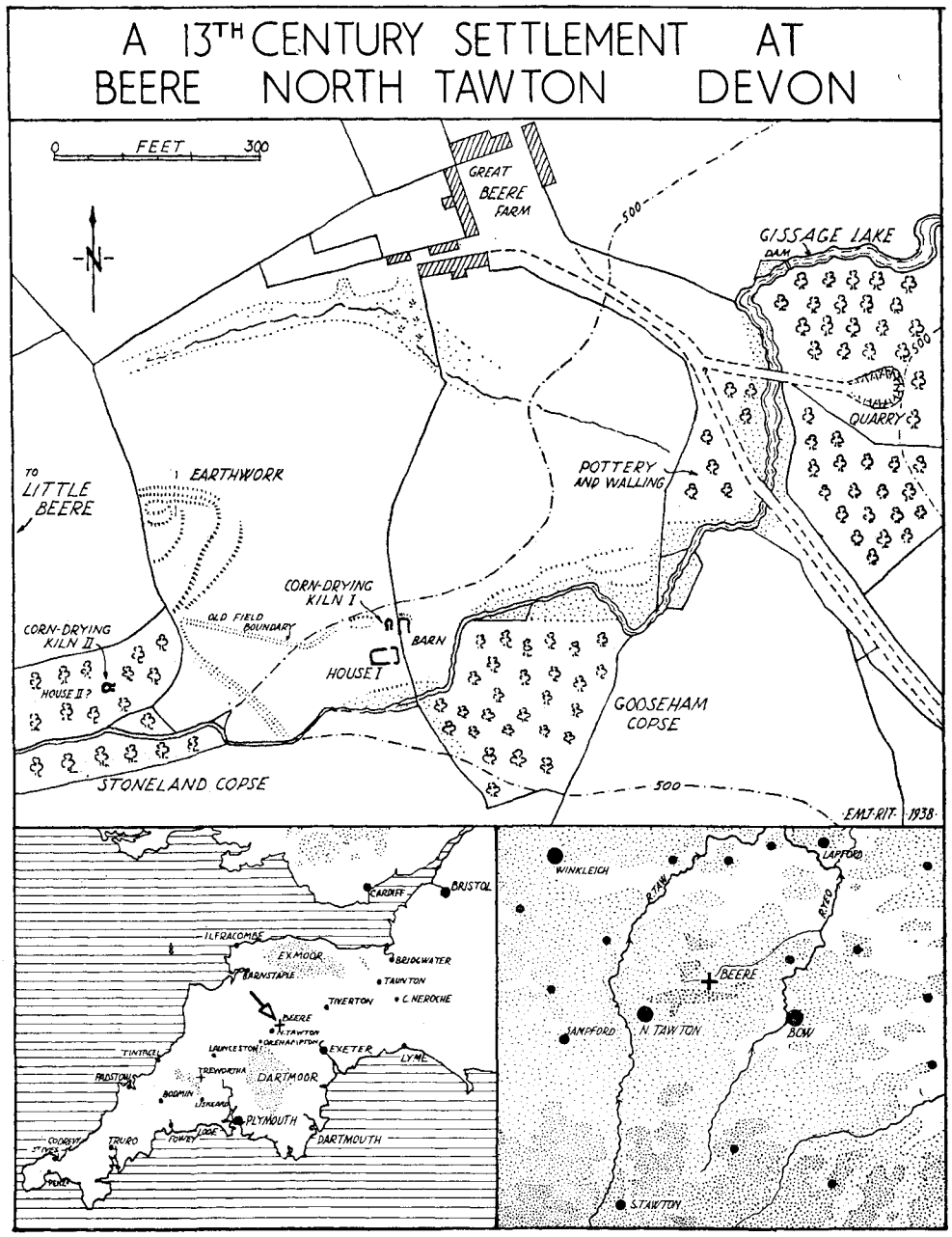

FIG. 24

BEERE, NORTH TAWTON; SITE-PLAN AND LOCATION MAPS

The scale of the map bottom right is about 4 miles to 1 inch, and the stippling shows contours at 200 ft. intervals from 300 ft. to 700 ft.; the stipple on the map bottom left shows land over 1000 ft.

medieval archaeology, and extend the southerly distribution of evidence for kiln-drying of grain derived from dialect words.

Beere is in the parish of North Tawton, and any settlement here in the time of Domesday might well have been included within the assessment of the royal manor of *Tawetona* (D.B. Exon., fol. 83) without separate enumeration, a circumstance we come to expect in dealing with the lands round a large manor.[6] It is doubtful, however, whether any settlement here had been started so early. Documentary evidence is really non-existent, for 'Beer' is a common place name in Devon. Our site was presumably called Beere in the later twelfth and thirteenth centuries, but it does not seem possible at present to identify it with any place so named in documentary sources of this period.[7]

The excavation evidence shows full occupation at Beere in the thirteenth century, probably already started by the later twelfth. This is based on full excavation of one farm 'unit' near the centre of this long straggling settlement, and of a corn-drying kiln at the west end; but sample trenchings at the east end and at other points, so far as they go, do not alter this picture.

The manor of North Tawton and the area generally were evidently well exploited by the eleventh-twelfth century, though continuing colonization of the waste may be seen in names in this area like Venn, Westworthy or Newton. Beere lies on the fringe between the good cultivable land and the waste 'moor', and it probably represents intake from the waste, expanding the limits of cultivation,[8] during the twelfth century.[9]

During the thirteenth century this Beere was evidently a flourishing corn-producing community. The area was already fairly well exploited at the time of the Domesday survey (30 ploughlands and 30 ploughs on the royal manor at North Tawton),[10] and the rise of 'Chipping Tawton' as a market centre[11] shows

[6] Compare, for instance, the royal manor of Bensington, Oxfordshire: M. T. Pearman, *History of Bensington* (1902), chap. i; E. M. Jope and I. B. Terrett, in H. C. Darby, *Domesday Geography of South-Eastern England* (forthcoming); *The Oxford Region* (ed. A. F. Martin and R. W. Steel, 1954), p. 103.

[7] The following references to names of this form associated with North Tawton Hundred seem eliminated. The *Beria* of D. B. Exon. fol. 117 has been taken as Bury in Lapford; it was held by the bishops of Exeter, and Norden (1598) says it was held of the manor of Crediton, part of the gift of Athelstan (*Trans. Devon Assoc.*, XIII (1881), 119. But Reichel excludes it from the Hundred altogether; *Trans. Devon. Assoc.*, XXIX (1897), 259). Hence the *Bere* of 1234 in the *Book of Fees* (pt. 2 (1923), p. 396-7) is the same (contrary to *Eng. Place-Name Soc.* IX, *Devon*, pt. 2 (1932), 371). There is no authority for the identification of our site with *Beria* on the map and p. 116 of *Trans. Devon. Assoc.*, LXXXVI (1954). The *Bere* held by Walter de Nimet (Nymet Rowland) in 1238 of the Honour of Okehampton (*Book of Fees*, pt. 2 (1923), p. 787) is the *Bera* held by Rowland in D.B. (fol. 295), which has been reasonably identified with Cherubear in Dolton (*Trans. Devon. Assoc.*, XXIX (1897), p. 249). Of the personal names, Randolph de Byr and Reginald de Bere, named as jurors in the Hundred of North Tawton in the Hundred Rolls of 1274 (no. 25, p. 75), and the person named in the Assize Roll of 1238 (*Eng. Place-Name Soc.* IX, *Devon*, pt. 2 (1932), 371) may have been named from any of these 'Beers', or indeed from our Beere, or, with less probability from any other 'Beer'. In the absence of early forms securely assignable to this place it is hardly possible to suggest the most probable meaning of the name here from among those possible (*Eng. Place-Name Soc.*, I (1930), 3-5; XXV (1956), 16, 22-3, 30).

[8] For discussion of colonization of the waste, see H. P. R. Finberg, *Tavistock Abbey* (1951), p. 48; W. G. Hoskins, *Devon* (1954), pp. 70-1; also M. W. Beresford and J. K. S. St. Joseph, *Medieval England; an Aerial Survey* (1958), pp. 91-5.

[9] We would not wish to adduce the nominal disafforestation of Devon in 1204 as having anything specific to do with the beginnings of Beere.

[10] Compare also Bow, *Trans. Devon Assoc.*, XXIX (1897), 249-50, note 20.

[11] First styled '*Chepintawton*' in the 1199 Fine Roll, *Eng. Place-Name Soc.* IX, *Devon*, pt. 2 (1932), 370.

the continuing and expanding prosperity. There is a record in 1315-16 of a consignment of 280 quarters of wheat being shipped from Teignmouth to Carlisle, of which 40 quarters came from Chypyngtauton.[12] As this was a famine year, with wheat prices nearly three times normal, this suggests that wheat growing was then of some importance in this area.[13] Thus there seems no general cause for the decline of the Beere settlement before this. House I seems to have been in use during the thirteenth century; it was, perhaps, built in the late twelfth but can hardly have had a life of more than about three or four generations (about a century). The Black Death of 1348 seriously affected this area,[14] but on present evidence it seems altogether too late to be held responsible for the abandonment of the excavated structures at Beere. The settlement seems to have declined considerably earlier, presumably owing to some special circumstances of which we have no record.

Further excavation and more detailed search of documentary sources (not easy with such an unspecific and common name in Devon) are needed to clarify both the beginning and the end of this settlement. So far the chief evidence for both comes from this limited excavation. It has at least opened up the problems which are liable in any area to attend enquiry into the fluctuating fringes between cultivation and waste in the middle ages: to obtain a clear picture for even the smallest settlement may require extensive work in both branches of study.

Cereals were perhaps the main produce of this settlement at Beere, and probably provided a main item of the diet. Only one piece of a quernstone was found in the total clearance of this house and much of its surroundings, but this might be no more than a reflection of the prevalent manorial restriction against tenants grinding their grain in handmills rather than at the manorial mill.[15] The griddle-plate found near the hearth is of interest, for the cooking of flat cakes on a hot surface[16] must have been of importance when restrictions against the baking of bread except in manorial ovens were widely in force. At Beere no evidence of oven structure was found (there being no hint of such on the burnt clay areas on the floors).

The remains of animal bones show some meat eating, but it is not clear how far their sparsity was due to poor preservation.

Iron slag indicates iron-working in this settlement, perhaps smelting as well as smiths' work.

[12] We are indebted to Dr. R. A. Pelham for this reference and his comments.

[13] The Culm Measures of Carboniferous age which underlie this area can yield clays very suitable for wheat production, though not quite of the fertility of the marls from the New Red Sandstone and breccias further south and east (*Geol. Country round Exeter* (Mem. Geol. Survey, 1902), p. 111, cf. H. P. R. Finberg, *Tavistock Abbey* (1951), p. 88). Neither the 1-in. sheet nor the monograph have been printed for the area actually including North Tawton.

[14] The Black Death of 1348 hit Devon severely (H. P. R. Finberg, *Tavistock Abbey* (1951), p. 52; G. R. Lewis, *The Stannaries* (1924), pp. 40, 141, 156; *Reg. Bishop Grandisson*, III, lxv-lxx; W. G. Hoskins, *Devon* (1954), pp. 61-2, 169; the rural areas of Devon were greatly affected; only 10 miles to the NE. of Beere the dead were collected in carts in Templeton parish for burial at Witheridge, but abandoned settlements are rare in Devon; M. W. Beresford, *Lost Villages of England* (1954), pp. 42, 347. At the present farms of Great Beere (200 yards to the NE.) and Little Beere (400 yards to the W.) the houses seem to have an original core no earlier than the seventeenth century, subsequently much altered.

[15] G. G. Coulton, *The Medieval Village* (1925), pp. 56 ff., and 78 n.4.

[16] See below, p. 138.

COMPARABLE ABANDONED RURAL SETTLEMENTS IN THE SOUTH-WEST

During 1891-2 the Rev. S. Baring-Gould excavated some house sites near Trewortha, at 900 ft. O.D. on the west side of the Withey Brook, 2 miles west of North Hill in east Cornwall.[17] These house sites and their associated fields and paddocks, lying on an eastward facing valley slope at 900 ft. O.D. now isolated in desolate moor, are well shown up in Dr. St.Joseph's air-photographs (PLS. XII-XIII). In earlier times they were not unique, but were part of a settlement pattern of this moorland, similar traces of which can be found extensively both on the ground and from the air (PL. XIII).

The cartulary of Launceston priory contains some revealing charters concerning this tract of moorland, known as Twelve Men's Moor.[18] Between 1161 and 1175 Reginald, earl of Cornwall, carved out of his great manor of Rillaton the estate of Caradon (Carnedon), which he gave to Launceston priory. The bounds given in the charter show this to be about 5 square miles of largely wild, untamed moorland. A century later, in 1284, there is an agreement between the priory and twelve tenants of the moor mostly living in its fringing valleys,[19] which reserves the rights of other tenants, at Caradon, to pasture cattle on the moor in summer. There is a further private agreement in 1311 concerning rights over the area. Thus we have an indication that this wild uninhabited moorland began to be more utilized from the later twelfth century.

Baring-Gould's site is by the western bank of the Withey brook, just outside the western boundary of Twelve Men's Moor, but far into the heart of this isolated moorland tract. It would seem from its extent, and the amount of pottery and other finds, to have been a permanent farm and not a mere shieling for summer cattle pasturing (hafoding), and may have been the dwelling of one of the twelve men.[20]

The pottery from this site[21] is closely comparable with that from Great Beere. Thus the documentary and archaeological evidence combine to suggest that this area of now desolate moorland began to be more actively utilized for agricultural purposes from the later twelfth century, and that these farmsteads far out in the depth of the moor were first built about this time.

The settlement near Trewortha (and one to the south near Smallacombe[22]),

[17] *J. Roy. Inst. Cornwall*, XI (1892-3), 59 ff., 289. Grid ref. 239750, just in St. Cleer parish. Its paddocks are cut across by the engineered course of the proposed railway from Liskeard to Launceston, just south of the point where the money ran out and the scheme was abandoned, in 1872 (*Railway Magazine*, LXXVII (1935), 413-21).

[18] C. G. Henderson, *Essays in Cornish History* (1935), pp. 125-9. The cartulary, in Lambeth Palace library, is a fifteenth-century compilation of charter transcripts.

[19] Some evidently lived actually in the moor, such as William of Trewortha, and others in its fringing valleys, at Castick, for instance.

[20] But not William of Trewortha, as presumably his farm lay where the present Trewortha farm can be seen surrounded by an ancient field and paddock system.

[21] The main bulk was given to Penzance Museum and is now lost; a small selection (FIG. 32) was found by us preserved precariously in a tin box in a room in the surviving town gate house at Launceston. The nature of these sherds must modify the statement (*Roy. Comm. Hist. Mons. Westmorland* (1936), p. xlvii) that they (and by implication the houses, etc.) are 'Roman or sub-Roman "dark age" '.

[22] *J. Roy. Inst. Cornwall*, III (no. ix, 1868-70), 10.

and the interest in this moor tract generally in the thirteenth century, seem entirely agricultural, at 800-900 ft. perhaps largely pastoral.[23] Although *stannaria* are nominally mentioned along with turbaries in the 1161-75 grant, the settlements provide no hint of tin working. Tin, however, was being worked within the manor of Rillaton (of which this moor had been a part) in the thirteenth century.[24]

Remains of such abandoned medieval or later settlements with their paddocks are scattered over many areas of the east Cornish moors, and on Dartmoor.[25] Dr. St. Joseph's air-photographs are invaluable for studying these (e.g. PL. XIII, B), and there is much field work to be done (in winter and early spring) in this area alone between the head waters of the Fowey and the Lynher rivers, and this must be followed up by excavation before we can begin to understand the place of these moorlands in the medieval life of the south-west.

THE EXCAVATIONS

A. HOUSE I AND ITS FARM BUILDINGS

This house forms part of a farm unit—house, barn, and corn-drying kiln (FIG. 25). It is set E.-W. along the hill slope, rather near the bottom, and is 36 ft. by 16 ft. overall, slightly trapezoid in plan. On the long axis it tends to drain also downwards towards the E.; hence according to usual practice in long-houses the human habitation was at the higher (W.) end, and the animal byre lower at the E.

The house had two phases of use, clearly defined by the two layers distinguishable on the floor of the central room, and at the N. door, which had been at some time blocked and the cross-walk partly removed. It is difficult to assess its total life-span. Although there is a considerable accumulation of occupation-refuse (evidence of some 70 cooking-pots) there is no demonstrable development in pottery style between phases 1 and 2. There was also no evidence of any replacement of the posts of the S. door. Four or five generations, say 100-150 years, would seem a maximum. The pottery so far found was of similar character from all parts of the settlement.

The walls of house I were about 2 ft. thick, of broken stone from the local underlying Culm Measures, bonded with orange or greyish clay dug on the spot. They stand in most places to three courses, about 1 ft. high, and to judge from the fallen stone in and outside the house, were never more than about two courses higher. This low wall was not a footing to carry a cob superstructure, so commonly seen in Devon today, as there was no washed clayey material as a talus from disintegrating cob on either side of the stone wall. Outside the house the fallen stones lay in fairly loose soil on the remains of the refuse-deposit and on the old

[23] Compare H. P. R. Finberg, *Tavistock Abbey* (1951), p. 39. These Cornish upland sites need reinvestigating to recover adequate details of their economy.

[24] *Earldom of Cornwall Accounts, 1296-7* (Camden Soc., LXVIII (1945)), 229; an entry under Rillaton, '6d. de tolneto stagminis hoc anno'. L. E. Elliot-Binns (*Medieval Cornwall* (1955), p. 128) corrects G. R. Lewis (*Stannaries* (1924), p. 90) who says there is no record of the E. Cornish stannary court of Foweymore before 1342, by noting that Henry de Trethewy accounted for the perquisites of this court in 1279.

[25] R. Hansford Worth, *Dartmoor* (1953), pp. 337-8; Lady Fox, this volume, pp. 141 ff. In dealing with medieval settlements on Dartmoor it must be remembered that round huts were still used in the SW. in the middle ages (*Proc. Devon Archaeol. Explor. Soc.*, IV (1950), pp. 27 ff.)

land surface of the time when the house was in use; inside, some of these stones lay almost directly on the upper floor (FIG. 28).

House I was divided into three parts, an example of one well recognized type of long-house (FIG. 26). In the middle was the main living room with central

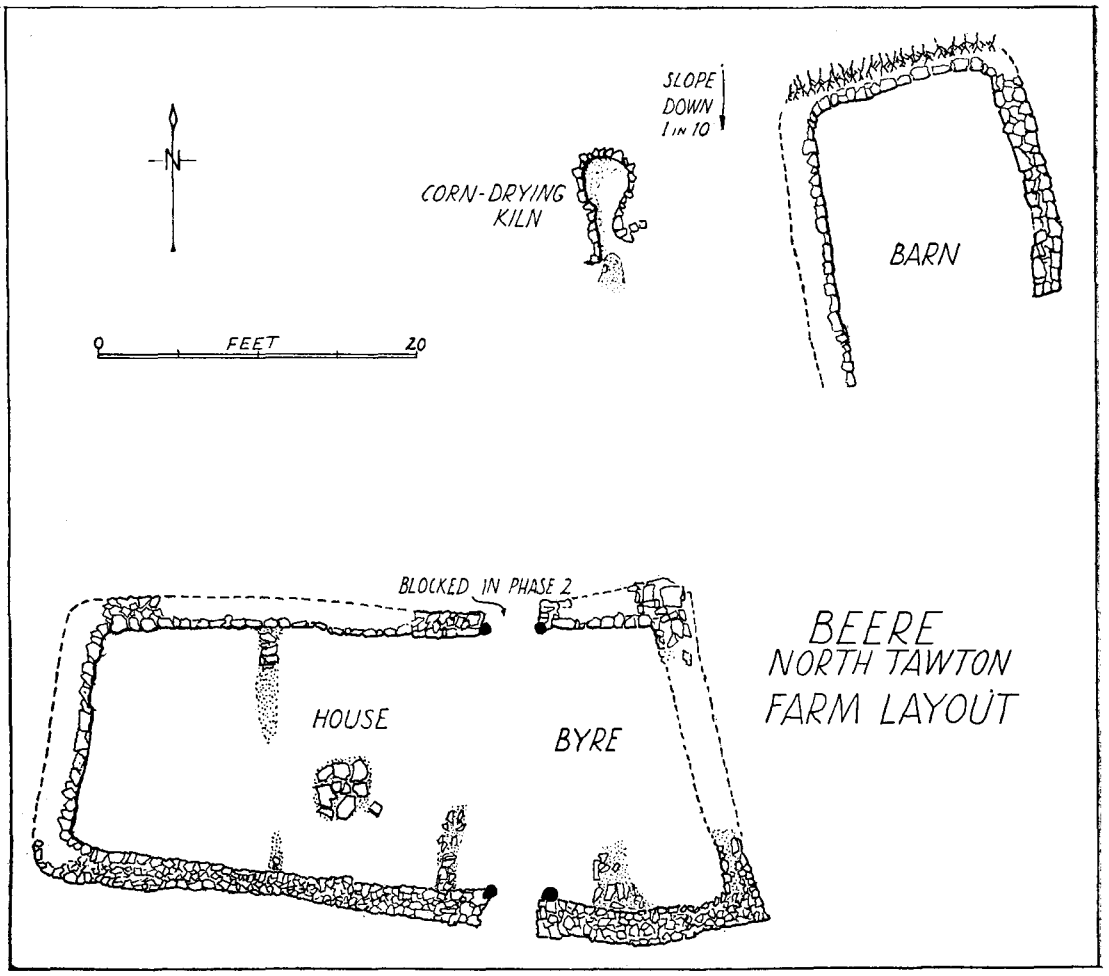

FIG. 25
BEERE, NORTH TAWTON, DEVON
Plan of the farm-unit associated with house I (pp. 117 ff.)

hearth, to the W. the sleeping room, and beyond the cross-passage between the N. and S. doors was a byre.

The central room showed the main evidence of continued occupation. A trodden floor of small pebbly gravel, laid on the natural till, with its litter of small broken sherds trodden in, and patches of ash, represented phase 1. This had

become covered by a thin layer of till and again trodden in with its debris as the floor of phase 2. It has a nearly central hearth of laid stone slabs which had

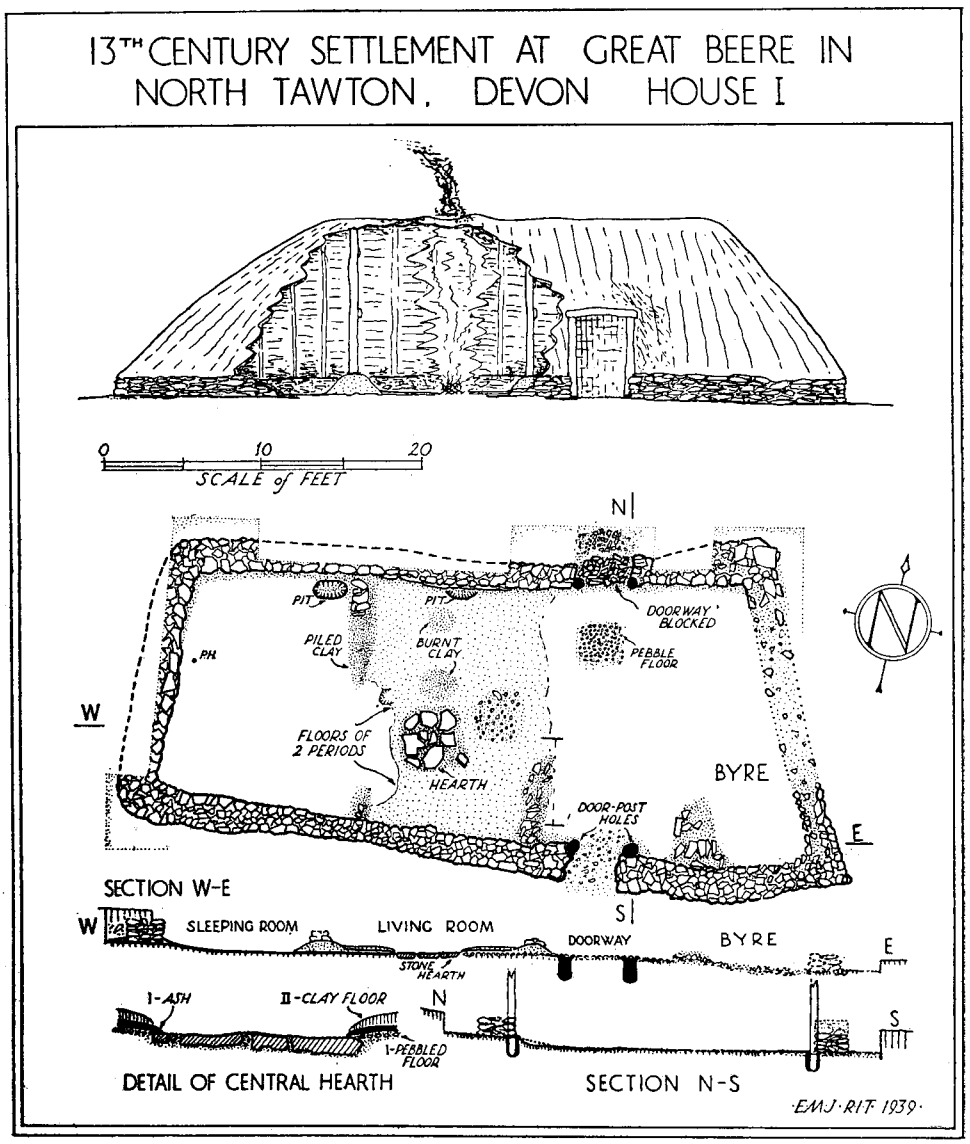

FIG. 26

BEERE, NORTH TAWTON, DEVON

Plan, excavated sections and reconstruction of house I, thirteenth century (pp. 117 ff.)

continued in use throughout both phases 1 and 2. To the N. were two other round areas of burnt clayey earth; one almost in the centre of the house, was covered by floor 2, but was probably not a yet earlier main hearth, for it was

hardly burnt enough. Beside it were found pieces of an iron griddle-plate 7-8 in. across (FIG. 34), and, near by, an iron knife. The other, further N., was smaller and was associated with the upper floor 2. These may have marked the site of an auxiliary brazier, or else where a metal griddle-plate had been placed in a pile of embers when red-hot after removal from the hearth.[26] To the E. of the hearth was a litter of burnt stone fragments, probably the remains of old hearth bottoms.

Few further interior details could be noted. There was a small pit against the N. wall both here and in the W. room, each of which contained a fair proportion of a pot.

In the W. room there was only one trodden floor-level with little pottery, and there was altogether less sign of occupation. It may be inferred that this room was used mainly for sleeping. One small post-hole was found close to the W. end wall, perhaps a minor aid to roof support, or concerned with a bed or screen. The small oval pit against the N. wall contained, however, a fair proportion of a cooking-pot (no. 10, FIG. 31).

To the E. of the central room was a cross-passage connecting doors in the N. and S. walls exactly opposite each other. The N. door had been blocked in phase 2 with a bung built of stones a little smaller than those of the main walls. This N. door is on the upper side of the slope (1 in 10 for about 40 ft. behind the house), and was perhaps blocked to reduce the water from the hillside washing into the house in wet weather; this may illustrate the wisdom of the Welsh medieval habit of setting the house end-on into the slope. Comparable blockings have been noted elsewhere in similar positions, though they can also be found where no such explanation can be applied.

The S. door seems to have had a properly hung door, for a small piece of iron was found by the W. post-hole, which looks like part of a hanging pivot (FIG. 34, no. 3).

The cross-walk between the doors had been spread over, like the floor of the central room, with a layer of small pebbles, or pebbly gravel, in phase 1, as shown by its survival under the blocking of the N. door, and its removal for 2 ft. 6 in. inside the door. This pebble floor of the cross-passage continuing southwards through the S. door had remained in use through phase 2 without much further accumulation. It could be traced outside the original N. door, though not well outside the S. door.

The doors themselves were framed by and carried on stout 9-in. posts, the 1½-ft.-deep holes for which were found (PL. XIV). The N. door post-holes had in phase 2 been filled with soil, and a few fragmentary sherds, with stones rammed in on top, and were partly covered by the blocking. No remains of any partition could be traced on either side of this blocked N. door, as they could flanking the S. door; such may, however, have existed in phase 1 and been removed at the blocking of this door, being no longer so necessary.

[26] By analogy with Scandinavian evidence (M. Stenberger, *Vallhagar*, II (1957), 843, 1099; *Medd. från Lunds Univ. Hist. Mus.*, IV (1946-7), 179), these burnt clay patches with a griddle-plate near by might be seen as remains of clay ovens in which the flat loaves were placed on griddle-plates, but no remains of their superstructure or outlines of their walls were noted by us (but compare the evidence from a thirteenth-century house near Eastbourne, *Sussex Archaeol. Coll.*, XCIII (1955), 158, 161). Neither did we observe any evidence of a spark-screen round the central hearth (cf. *Vallhagar*, II, 1022).

The space to the E. of the cross-passage seems to have been a byre. It had no defined trodden floor, but especially towards the S. or lower side the natural till was covered with several inches of an irregular greyish clayey deposit changing gradually into the orange till beneath. This must have been the result of constant trampling by animals.

On the S. was the stone and clay remnant of a partition like those elsewhere in the house, and the trampled quagmire here lay only to the E. of this and was effectively a few inches lower than the cross-passage. Thus the whole house tended to drain towards the SE.

The E. wall had been largely destroyed and it is difficult to say whether there had been an entrance in this end wall, as is sometimes seen elsewhere.[27] The passage through the S. door, which was the only entry to the whole building in phase 2, did not look as though it had been continually trampled by animals so a search was made for deep holes on the line of the E. wall, which might have carried a door frame, but none could be found. It seems doubtful therefore if there was ever a substantially framed entrance in the E. wall, and with the phase 2 interior arrangements such an entrance would have made the inside of the house very draughty. Nevertheless, if this end of the house were used for animals there probably was some kind of E. door. In later houses of this general plan in the Dartmoor area there is often a dairy in this position.

Partitions between the rooms were traceable as stone settings laid on the virgin natural till, embedded in piled clay. As floor 1 lapped up over the talus of this clay (FIG. 26), the clay cannot have come from disintegrating daub or wattle partitions, but was an integral part of the structure of the partition-footing. No holes could be found for carrying the verticals of partition-frames, and these must simply have been fixed to the roof-trusses, which must have been set up at these positions. The gap in the partition-footings shows that access between the living and sleeping rooms was along the central axis of the house. The blocking of the N. door evidently opened out the E. end of the house a little. It may, however, be suspected that there had been, at least in phase 1, more screens or partitions than were traced in the excavations.[28]

Roof structure. The only structural post-holes found were those for the two doors, and there were none for posts to carry the ridge-pole, as has been found in the Welsh medieval long-houses.[29] The roof would thus have been carried on three trusses resting on the low walls, their positions being marked by the remains of partitions between the rooms. These trusses must have had some cross-tie. The stone and clay partition-footings show that this was not a sleeper beam at floor level; there is hardly likely to have been a tie-beam at wall-top level, where it would have obstructed access through the house. There was more probably a

[27] e.g. Crane Godrevy, W. Cornwall (see note 34 below). But compare the contrasting layout, with door in the living-end gable, at Mawgan Porth, R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford, *Recent Archaeological Excavations in Britain* (1956), p. 178.

[28] But compare the partitions in the house at Strata Florida; I. C. Peate, *The Welsh House* (1944), figs. 32, 35.

[29] *Archaeol. Cambrensis*, XCII (1937), 251 ff.; XCIV (1939), 163 ff. For origins see also *Archaeol. J.*, CIV (1947), 61, espec. note 157.

collar beam about half-way up the rafters, a system which, with walls estimated at only 2 ft. high, could quite easily give 7 ft. of head space. The rafters would have rested on a wall-plate beam laid on the wall top, necessary to spread the thrust, otherwise the sidewalls would inevitably have been observed to have bulged outwards at the partition-junctions. An entirely comparable structure, in pattern and in span, may be quoted from Germany.[30] The roof over such a truss system would presumably have been of thatch, for the inevitable wash from a turf roof was not observed outside the walls, nor the deposit from its fall inside the house.

The house type. This house has all the essential features of a typical 'long-house'—men and animals under one roof-line, cross- or feeding-passage with byre to one side and human habitation with central open hearth on the other. Sir Cyril and Lady Fox have made the type familiar to us as a medieval upland farmstead in Wales, and examples can be found there still in use.[31] The Welsh type has its roof-ridge supported by a row of central posts, whereas ours at Beere differs from this chiefly in having no central post-holes, implying framed trusses for carrying the roof. Here at Beere a 'long-house' is demonstrable in England, built and used by a people who, even if they had Celtic elements in their ancestry, had not sufficient impelling Celtic elements in their speech to use other than the Saxon name 'Beere' for their settlement, started perhaps in the later twelfth century. This makes it less likely that there is anything specifically Celtic about this house-type. Comparative published excavation material hardly exists for the rest of England;[32] it may be that the cross-walk long-house type with men and animals under the same roof-ridge was in fact more widespread than has been supposed.

Houses of this general type are occasionally still in use in, for instance, Oxfordshire, though by now the animals are liable to be more securely partitioned off than in the medieval long-house. A small house laid out and used on this principle, set longways into the hillside, has been in use until recent years near Perranporth.[33]

Division of the living space at Beere (and also at Trewortha and Crane Godrevy[34]), which is not apparent in the Welsh medieval long-houses, foreshadows, some two or three centuries earlier, among the humbler orders of society, the division of the hall-space in the hall-houses which becomes usual from

[30] Quoted by Iwar Anderson, in M. Stenberger, *Vallhagar*, II (1956), 1017-8, fig. 415, where on pp. 1000-52 problems of inference of house-construction from the evidence of excavation are valuably discussed. But it must be remembered that the actual roofing system at Beere may well have been more sketchy, and without, for instance, any real roof-ridge (cp. Aage Roussell, *Norse Building Customs in the Scottish Isles* (1934), p. 46, fig. 16; I. C. Peate, *The Welsh House* (1944), figs. 32, 35; James Walton, in *Gwerin*, I (1957), 109-22, esp. 111, 115, 119).

[31] *Archaeol. Cambrensis*, XCII (1937), 247 ff.; 94 (1939), 163 ff.; *Antiquity*, XIV (1940), 363-76; I. C. Peate, *The Welsh House* (3rd ed. 1946), chap. 4. For origins see also *Archaeol. J.*, CIV (1947), 71-2, note.

[32] But it will gradually become available from more recent excavations. Compare also, e.g. Hullasey, Glos., *Trans. Bristol and Glos. Archaeol. Soc.*, XXXIII (1910), 338.

[33] Personal observations by E. M. J.; cp. *Berks. Archaeol. J.*, LVII (1959).

[34] We are most grateful to Mr. A. C. Thomas for showing us details of his excavations on the medieval site at Crane Godrevy, W. Cornwall, in advance of publication. Compare also Hullasey, Glos. (*Trans. Bristol and Glos. Archaeol. Soc.*, XXXIII (1910), 35). See also C. Thomas, 'Gwithian,' *Proc. W. Cornwall F. C.*, 1958, p. 29.

the sixteenth century,[35] and is generally taken to reflect a greater desire for privacy in domestic life that arose at that time.

B. THE BARN

The building to the NE. of house I, about 12 ft. wide and at least 24 ft. long, was set with its long axis into the slope, and was probably a barn (FIG. 25). It had a floor of trodden earth, which produced no finds except a few tiny fragments of pottery trampled in. It had no thick mud layer such as there was in the byre end of house I.

The walling was similar to that of house I, about 2 ft. thick, two to three courses of roughly split stone bonded with till from the fields. Its S. end could not be found and had presumably been removed by more recent disturbance, or it may have been merely a light wooden construction. Sufficient of the building survived to indicate the positions of the doors which were at the S. end of each long wall, but not exactly opposite each other. The N. jamb of the E. door was well preserved; that of the W. door was less clear, and both S. jambs had gone. The N. wall was built into the excavated rock outcrop and had no outside face.

C. THE CORN-DRYING KILNS (PL. XIV, FIG. 27)

To the N. of house I was a small dry-stone oval structure with walls about 1 ft. 6 in. high, a roughly paved floor and a stone built passage leading into it. A pile of ash lay in the mouth of the passage, but no sign of burning could be found in the oval chamber or up much of the passage. Examination of some of the charcoal by Dr. A. G. Smith suggests that small brushwood or undergrowth was used for firing. Some of the usual pottery was found in the ash (see nos. 7, 9, 16, 22, FIGS. 30-1) and elsewhere in the structure.

The structure chosen for excavation in the wood to the W. proved to be another exactly similar chamber and passage (PL. XIV), and had in its structure and in its floor a few sherds of the pottery so typical of this site (see no. 20, FIG. 31). Some 35 yards to the W. of drying-kiln II is the possible site of another drying-kiln, and a house or barn may have been between them.

These structures must be interpreted as drying-kilns, presumably for grain, and are closely comparable with some Roman examples in the north.[36] The grain would have been piled on top of the oval chamber, covered with green leafy branches, and a gentle fire kept burning in the mouth. Grain drying is a very necessary process in the damp northerly climates, where the summers are not long enough to ensure full ripening of the grain.[37] Corn-drying kilns have not so

[35] P. S. Spokes and E. M. Jope, in *Berks. Archaeol. J.*, LVII (1959). Compare, however, the medieval priests' houses in the SW.: W. A. Pantin, in *Medieval Archaeol.*, I (1957), 118 ff. Ordinary small domestic hall-houses of the fifteenth century in the SW., such as Truthall or Shillingham, seem to show no evidence for this subdivision (see *Essays in the Study of Building History in memory of B. H. St.J. O'Neil* (ed. E. M. Jope, in press)).

[36] Compare *Proc. Soc. Antiq. Scot.*, LXXVI (1942), 119; *Trans. Cumb. and Westm. Antiq. Soc.*, LII (1953), 51; P. Corder (*Excavations at Elmswell, E. Yorks., 1938* (Hull, 1940), pp. 12-14) excavated a kiln of squarer shape which had been heated much more strongly, and which he considered to be for roasting the grain rather than merely drying it.

[37] *Antiquity*, XXV (1951), 196; *Proc. Prehist. Soc.*, IV (1940), 61-2.

far been observed on medieval sites in Britain, though a comparable but rougher structure with a clay oven beside it has recently been excavated in a rath near Lisburn, Co. Antrim, in the north of Ireland.[38] Though Beere is rather southerly,[39] it had a fairly damp climate: corn-drying kilns (of T-plan) were in use in southern Britain in Roman times.[40]

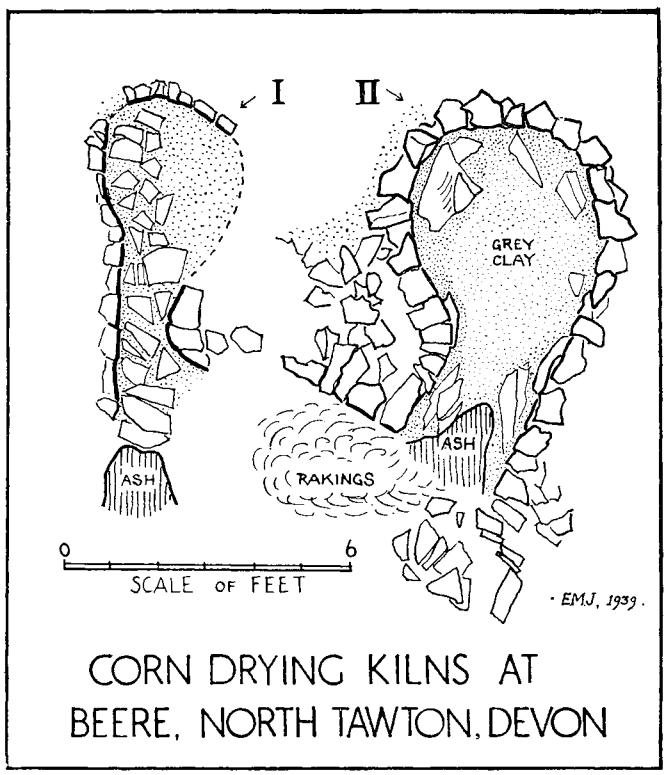

FIG. 27
BEERE, NORTH TAWTON, DEVON
Thirteenth-century corn-drying kilns (p. 123 f.)

D. THE EARTHWORK

Half-way up the slope is a slight earthwork, an enclosure with a low mound inside it towards the upper side (FIG. 24).[41] Its W. side has probably been ploughed away. A section produced one body sherd of typical pottery sealed on the old ground surface under the bank and one rim sherd (no. 36, FIG. 31) from the upper

[38] E. M. Jope, *The Rath at Ballymacash* (Belfast, H.M.S.O. forthcoming).

[39] The furthest south that the practice can be traced through the distribution of technical terms concerning kiln-drying of corn is Northamptonshire; see Sir Lindsay Scott in *Antiquity*, xxv (1951), 196. We have excavated a later medieval barn at Deddington Castle, Oxfordshire, which seemed to have a drying kiln inside it; compare Griminish, N. Uist, *Antiquity*, xxv (1951), 201. There is a possible corn drying kiln at the Celtic monastic site at Tintagel, and the kiln at Hullasey, Glos. (*Trans. Bristol and Glos. Archaeol. Soc.*, xxxiii (1920), 339, 348-50) might possibly have been for a similar purpose.

[40] R. G. Goodchild in *Antiq. J.*, xxiii (1943), 148.

[41] Some of this mound seems to have gone since 1939.

filling of the ditch (FIG. 28). Small trenches in the mound and within the enclosure produced several body sherds and a base of similar pottery at 10 in. depth. The enclosure was thus made after the medieval occupation had already started at Beere, but presumably falls within the life of the settlement, as a part of its activity. It may perhaps be compared with small manorial earthworks, derivatives of the motte-and-bailey idea, such as those at Aston or at Ashton in Herefordshire.[42] The evidence at Beere suggests a date no earlier than late-twelfth century rather than mid-twelfth century, but it is clear from evidence in Scotland and from the Anglo-Norman penetration of Ireland that the motte-and-bailey idea was still a living thing during the earlier thirteenth century in

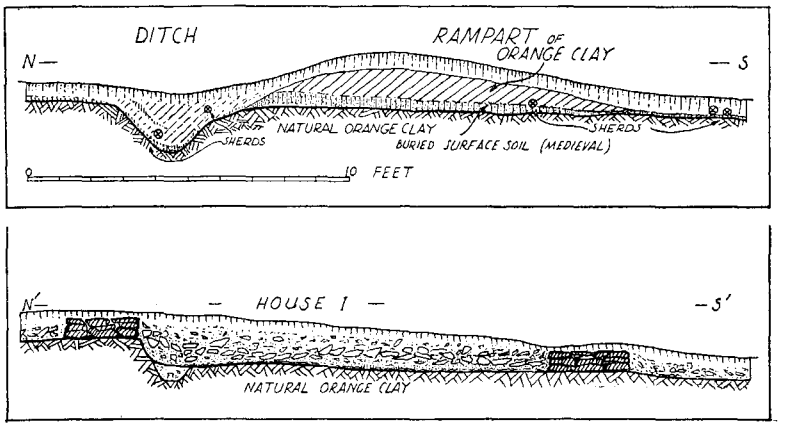

FIG. 28

BEERE, NORTH TAWTON, DEVON

Sections through N. side of earthwork, and across the centre of house I (pp. 118, 125), to show nature of stone rubble debris (both to same scale)

the minds of those colonists of new lands in more distant parts of the British Isles, but who nevertheless came from various parts of England or the Welsh Marches. Such minor earthworks in England require more detailed study followed up by excavation.

From the SE. corner of this small earthwork some slight remains of an early field boundary can be traced extending eastwards towards house I (FIG. 24). The more substantial bank and ditch running SE. down to the stream were in use in the 1840's (Tithe Map).

POTTERY

The site produced the remains of some 100 cooking-pots as well as of four jugs, mostly of a uniform rather poor ochreous fabric. There were no pans or bowls. Much of the pottery came from the refuse layer thrown outside the S. wall of house I.

[42] *Roy. Comm. Hist. Mons. Herefordshire*, III (1934), p. xxviii, 9 (no. 4), 61 (no. 24). Examination of that at Aston (Grid Ref. 517642) yielded two pieces of unglazed medieval pottery.

The mineral content of the fabric suggests that in spite of its friable character it was not made on the site, but nearer the streams draining from the granite mass of Dartmoor 6 miles to the S. It was perhaps regularly bought at the market of North Tawton, where it could have been made.

Dating. A clear indication of thirteenth-century date is given by the smaller jug, with thumb-pressed base angle, and the cooking-pots are not at variance with this dating for the site. It is possible that it was occupied before the end of the twelfth century, though not many pieces need be so early.

Little of chronological significance can be inferred from comparative study of the pottery in the two phases of occupation; more strongly moulded rims as well as simple flanges are to be found on the cooking-pots from both phases.

Fabrics. Most of the pottery is of a fine clay, poorly fired to a soft powdery texture, with bright ochreous or orange surface layer about 1 to 2 mm. thick, and a grey core. The core is rarely dark or black; firing has not been strong, but with such an open-textured clay the carbon tends both to penetrate and to burn out easily. A few blackened sherds seem to have resulted from absorbed carbon (smoking). In only very few vessels, such as no. 8, FIG. 30, is the clay matrix fired harder, and many tend to disintegrate on weathering, leaving the grit particles standing out sharply. Only one pot (no. 7, FIG. 30) contains so much grit as to have a real sandpapery surface.

The gritting is generally angular, with shattered fragments of average size about 0·5 mm., very few being larger than 1 mm. A number of particles are of black mica; some are pale and cherty, and there are a few fine-textured red fragments (see Appendix). The cooking-pot fabrics seem to contain only a few rounded particles, though this does vary from pot to pot.

The larger jug fabric, of similar orange surface and pale grey core, though with closer-textured clay matrix, contains a few rounded grit particles, mostly quartz 0·5 to 1 mm., but a few 0·2 mm. or less; there are some black mica particles.

The smaller jug (no. 4) looks quite different, apparently better made, bearing the last remains of a poor thin flaking orange lead glaze (shown spectrographically). Under the microscope, however, the added grit looks very similar to that of the cooking pottery though of smaller size—the same shattered black mica fragments, occasional red particles, a few pale cherty and a very few rounded particles.

Black mica has not been found in the local clay at Beere, nor in the deposits of the stream passing the site, which is not surprising, as it does not drain from the granite. A little can, however, be found, as well as white mica and angular felspar and quartz, in the detritus brought down by the river Taw (which rises on Dartmoor) as seen at North Tawton. A little black mica occurs in the piece of pottery from the North Tawton motte (no. 43, FIG. 32), and it may well have been here, 2 miles away, that the Beere pottery was made—obtainable perhaps (as suggested above) in North Tawton's medieval weekly market. It seems that this river grit has been added to the clay derived from the Culm Measures as raw material for this pottery (compare R. H. Worth's remarks in his *Dartmoor* (1953),

pp. 120-1). Most of this has been fired poorly, but the degree of oxidization suggests some form of kiln with a fair draught. The black mica has been altered by the heat of firing, and might give an indication of the temperature (Appendix, p. 140).

Formation. The Beere cooking-pots seem for the most part to have been made on a wheel-head, for they are of wheel-thrown shapes which would have required for their formation centrifugal forces acting on the plastic clay, as well as forces from the potters' fingers.[43] The irregularities of rotary shape may be due as much to the poor quality (and poor preparation) of the clay as to vagaries of rotary motion. Where sufficient proportion of a rim survives, it can be seen that most of the cooking-pot mouths were oval rather than truly circular. This is not unusual on twelfth- and thirteenth-century cooking-pots throughout Britain, and makes inference of diameters from small rim sherds somewhat uncertain. Bases, in spite of being more rigidly related to the turn-table, seem to be of just as irregular curvature.

Convex bases. Almost all the cooking-pots at Beere had the usual medieval convex base. These vessels have a large base area and would not have been easy to remove from the wheel-head without distortion. Pressure at the centre would tend to curl the base up off the turntable at the edge and so help to ease it off.[44] Pressure marks can usually be seen inside the middle part of such bases, whereas rotational finger-grooves remain towards the circumference. These bases were evidently finished off by smoothing over the curved bottom with the hands, and some clay can often be seen burred over the outside angle (e.g. nos. 8, 40, 54, FIGS. 30-1, 33); occasionally some tool-trimming may be inferred. Easing the removal of such large areas of clay adhering to the turntable may lie behind the persistence of the convex base on large medieval vessels. It cannot so easily be taken to account for the earlier production of convex bases in middle and late Saxon times on small vessels alongside flat-based vessels of similar size.[45] It may, however, account for the convex bases seen on dishes of Belgic and Roman age.[46] But consolidation of the base was at least also an advantage gained by pummelling the base into this convex shape.[47]

Surface treatment. Confining attention to the well-preserved pieces, the surfaces have been mostly finished off by wiping with a soft surface, probably the hand or a cloth, while the clay was still wet. This gives a lumpy surface, leaving the grit particles standing out, but nevertheless coated with a film of fine clay. Sometimes the striations can be seen to be made by the fingers moving over the plastic

43 Mere appearance on sherds of striations due to rotation is not enough to demonstrate wheel-throwing, for such may be the result of fractional turns by one of the potter's hands. On no. 6 (FIG. 30), the top part of which largely survives, no striations can be followed for more than about ⅓ of a full circuit before giving way to fresh ones. A speed of at least 1 revolution per second would probably have been needed to form such shapes.

44 We wish to thank Mrs. T. Crowley for discussion of this point from the working potter's point of view.

45 *Proc. Cambridge Antiq. Soc.*, L (1957), 30-42.

46 R. E. M. and T. V. Wheeler, *Verulamium* (Soc. Antiq. Lond. Res. Rep. XI, 1935), p. 172, fig. 22, 16; *id.* 192, fig. 33, p. 51.

47 This extends the notes on convex bases in *Trans. Cumb. and Westm. Antiq. Soc.*, LV (1956), 102, and in *Antiq. J.*, XXXVII (1957), 50.

surface, their character giving a hint of the slowness and irregularity of the rotary motion. Some of the bases have been finished on the outside with a harder tool, which must also have been used to trim the shoulder of nos. 6 and 17 (FIGS. 30-1), though the surface of the latter pot is badly weathered. Hard tools push the grit particles into the clay flush with the surface; when they are used on clay which has dried a little, grit particles moved on by the tool leave a streak or groove, the clay being not plastic enough to fill the hole left, as it can do when wet. The scored lines are not sufficient, however, to indicate scraping of the dried clay surface.[48] A few bases have been tool-trimmed.

Most bases seem to have been worked by hand, pressing the grits more into the surface and sometimes burring over the base angle (nos. 8, 40, 54). A few, like the larger jug base, were trimmed and finished with a harder tool when the clay had dried a little, leaving hollows beside the grits where they had been shifted, which the clay had been not plastic enough to fill. One base, probably of another jug, had been tool-trimmed underneath to make it flat, when the clay was partially dry.

Apart from a few wavy lines, the only ornament put on with a hard tool (a stick) was a series of three shallow grooves on one shoulder piece, and the slashing of the large jug handle. Thus we see that in the formation of these Beere vessels very little has been done other than with the hands on the plastic clay.

Shapes. It is not easy to reconstruct complete vessels from this fragmentary and often soft pottery, but it has been possible for four cooking-pots as well as for the two jugs. Most of the pottery came from the refuse thrown indiscriminately outside the south wall of house I, and had thus been exposed to weathering and abrasion. A fair proportion of one pot (no. 10, FIG. 31) was found in the small pit on the N. side of the sleeping room.

Inferring complete shapes from incomplete cooking-pot profiles is not helped by the comparatively few (only five) complete profiles of twelfth- and thirteenth-century cooking-pots so far published from Devon and Cornwall generally, though these do reveal a wide range of shapes.[49] To these five may now be added the four complete cooking-pot profiles from Beere, and four others for comparison, three from Exeter[50] and one from Plymouth.[51]

The general shape of the Beere cooking-pots seems fairly restricted. The majority of larger rim fragments with their weak shoulder shapes, and the base fragments with their moderate angles, as well as the diameters of all these, all suggest forms similar to the complete profiles. Only one base with its more

[48] For illustrations and discussion of the appearance resulting from these various surface treatments, see Anna O. Shepard, *Ceramics for Archaeologists* (Washington, 1956), pp. 186-93, fig. 13. This is a most useful book for the study of coarse pottery. The technique of trimming the shoulder is much seen on Oxford pottery of the eleventh-twelfth centuries (*Oxoniensia*, XXIII (1958), 1-80).

[49] *Antiq. J.*, XXXI (1951), 183, fig. 1 (Exeter); *Trans. Devon. Assoc.*, LXXXVI (1954), 246, 248. The situation is not really any better for the Somerset-W. Dorset area, so that we do not really know the full range of shapes even there; *Proc. Somerset Archaeol. Soc.*, XCVI (1951), 138; *Proc. Dorset N.H. and Archaeol. Soc.*, LXXIII (1951), 108-9, fig. 2. 6. Illustrating merely a long series of rim shapes is not really adequate; what is now needed is a full series of complete profiles of cooking-pots from major sites in the SW., such as castles, even though reconstruction of them does often involve much labour.

[50] We are indebted to Col. Ransome Pickard for allowing us to draw these.

[51] *Trans. Plymouth Inst.*, VII (1876), 500; from Stilman St.

obtuse angle (no. 39, FIG. 31) implies a more bulbous vessel, and one other (no. 41, FIG. 31) with a square angle, implies a vessel with more or less straight sides sloping inwards towards the top, wider at base than at top, a type common in many parts of England.[52] All the Beere cooking-pots seem fairly large, 10-12 in. at full girth, and there seem to be no small cooking-pots.

There is no evidence for any pans,[53] large or small, nor for any bowls, which seem rarer in the SW. generally than further east.[54]

The Beere cooking-pot rims are all fairly simple flanges. Many are strengthened at the top with a little moulding, formed by pressing the top of the rim with the thumb and one or two fingers during rotation. This may yield a flange curving inwards ('bell-mouth'), flaring outwards, or quite straight, depending on the exact direction of general hand pressure during this operation. Little significance should be attached to the apparent variety; all have the characteristic channel and ridge, and imply no essential differences in the potters' procedures. This class of rim-form is widely found in the SW., and is related to and probably the result of influence from similar usage in the Somerset area, where it is usual in the twelfth century (nos. 55-7, 59, FIG. 33).[55] In Devon and Cornwall such rims were probably already being made in the twelfth century,[56] but association with a jug with a thumb-pressed base here at Beere, and the context of their occurrence at Totnes,[57] show that this simple procedure was still current well into the thirteenth century, and it probably continued even later.

These rim forms should be distinguished from strengthening of the rim by a bold inward fold-over of the flange top. This is characteristic of Gloucestershire and the Cotswolds in the twelfth century[58] (in some places persisting later), but is rarely to be found in the SW. counties, either in the Somerset area or Devon and Cornwall.[59]

The rim flange with top burred over outwards, a conspicuous element of an earlier twelfth-century group from Exeter,[60] is seen on only two rim sherds at Beere; this should not, however, be taken to have too much dating significance, for habits in coarse medieval pottery are liable to localized variations. Nos. 51 and 52 (FIG. 33) from Plymouth and Exeter show another typical twelfth-century rim-form not found at Great Beere.

Nos. 11-28 (FIG. 31) show the full range of this class of rim, from the most

[52] *Trans. Devon. Assoc.*, LXXXVI (1954), 248 (Totnes); *Oxoniensia*, XIII (1948), 71-2; *id.*, XVII-XVIII (1952-3), 84; *Trans. Bristol. and Glos. Archaeol. Soc.*, LXXI (1951), 90-1.

[53] *Proc. Somerset. Archaeol. Soc.*, LXXXV (1939), P 22 on pl. vii, opp. p. 121.

[54] e.g. *Antiq. J.*, XXXI (1951), 182-3, no. 14 (Exeter); note the eleventh-century bowls from Wedmore, Somerset (J. D. A. Thompson, *Inventory of British Coin Hoards* (1956), pl. iv, e).

[55] *Proc. Somerset Archaeol. Soc.*, XLIX (1903), 48 (where, however, the sitting-angles are misleading).

[56] e.g. no. 63, surface find from Cardinham motte-and-bailey castle, 1938. Note that some excavations on the bailey side of the motte in the 1870's (*J. Roy. Inst. Cornwall*, V (no. XIX, pt. 2, 1878), pl. of Cardinham antiquities by W. Jago, at beginning) produced pottery and chamfered freestone, suggesting building here at least into the thirteenth century.

[57] *Trans. Devon. Assoc.*, LXXXVI (1954), 242-4. Pottery of forms closely comparable with that at Beere has now been excavated at Lydford Castle; we are indebted to Mr. A. D. Saunders for showing us this.

[58] *Antiq. J.*, XI (1931), 257 (Lydney); *Trans. Bristol and Glos. Archaeol. Soc.*, LXXI (1952), 64, 66-7.

[59] Nos. 35-6 and a version of 33 at Beere seem to have been made in this way, but all trace of this is obscured except in fracture, except with no. 33.

[60] *Antiq. J.*, XXXI (1951), 183.

restrained (10, 11) to the most strongly moulded (15, 16, 27, 28). In one variant the hollow channels made by the fingers on either side of the internal fillet are accentuated (27, 28). This development has not been noted in the twelfth-century material from the Somerset area. A striking rim-form with a square-sectioned channel, though looking at first sight the product of a square-ended tool, is in fact also a product of this simple finger-working. The clay surfaces, with the grits not pressed in, show that this channel was not made with a hard tool.[61] The burring of the channel edges shows that the lower edge was made by pulling up clay during rotation from inside the rim, perhaps using the finger-nail to give a sharp angle, and that the upper edge was then made by burring the top of the rim over inwards. Comparable rim-forms burred over at the top can be found on prehistoric pottery.[62]

Some rims have been flattened on top (nos. 33, 34, FIG. 31), but there is little sign of the clubbing at the outer edge which is so marked a tendency in the thirteenth century further up into England.[63] There is also no sign at Beere of any finger-tip impressions on the rims; perhaps the poor quality of the clay of many pots precluded such secondary work if the pots were not to be pushed out of shape too much.

Ornament on this pottery is scanty. Two sherds have incised wavy line, and one of these (from drying-kiln II) has frilled clay strip applied over the line. Such applied strips are seen on two other bodies of vessels, one round the full girth of no. 7 (p. 133); they are seen also pushed into the rim-shoulder angle on several sherds (nos. 32, 33, p. 135). Such ornament is frequent on twelfth- and thirteenth-century pottery generally. There is no finger-tip ornament on the rims.

DESCRIPTIONS OF POTTERY

A. BEERE (FIGS. 29-31)

Jugs. Remains of four jugs were found, complete profiles being deducible for two. The small jug, no. 4, provides the firmest evidence for the thirteenth-century dating of the site.

1. The larger jug, from the deposit outside the S. wall of house I, is of moderately hard ware, like that of the better cooking-pots and with the same assemblage of grit particles, but not quite so well fired as is no. 8. It is unglazed. The fabric has a grey fracture and interior surface, and ochre outer surface layer 1 to 2 mm. thick. It is soot blackened over much of the outside. The surface has been smoothed over when wet, and the base angle shows signs of knife-trimming.

It has a baggy shape with a very broad almost flat base.[64] The strap handle has prod-and-slash marks down the back (presumably done to aid drying and so prevent

[61] Cp. Anna O. Shepard, *Ceramics for Archaeologists* (Washington, 1956), p. 188, fig. 13*a*.

[62] E.g. neolithic, from Gortcorbies, Co. Derry, *Ulster J. Archaeol.*, XIII (1950), 35, fig. 5, p. 10, and also from Carn Brea (Truro Museum, unpublished): here the burred-over rim top is presumably produced by smoothing the hand round rather than rotating the pot.

[63] E.g. Bungay, Suffolk, *Proc. Suffolk Archaeol. Inst.*, XXII (1934), 334. In some areas this tendency seems to appear even during the twelfth century, *Oxoniensia*, XV (1950), 54, no. 5; Swerford Castle, *Proc. Oxfordshire Archaeol. Soc.*, 1938, fig. 3, no. 5.

[64] Only about 20 per cent. of the vessel survives, and with the slight distortion due to the fixing of the handle, and the section being compiled from two overlapping parts which do not actually fit together, it is difficult to reconstruct the shape with certainty. The base is surprisingly wide and flat; though it is not perfectly round, one-sixth of the circuit survives to give the diameter of 8¼ in. Numerous pieces give the full girth diameter of about 9½ in.

firing flaws). It has been fixed at the top by pushing a plug on the handle through a hole in the neck, then smoothing over inside; at the bottom the deep extended thumb depression, flanked by finger-marks of the other hand inside the pot, shows where this strap has simply been luted on to the body at its lower end.

The inner surface of the rim has been finished with a finger channel and a bevelled facet at the top. It probably had a simple pinched lip (this part was not found). The rim is a little twisted and the top of the vessel was probably distorted when the handle was fixed on.

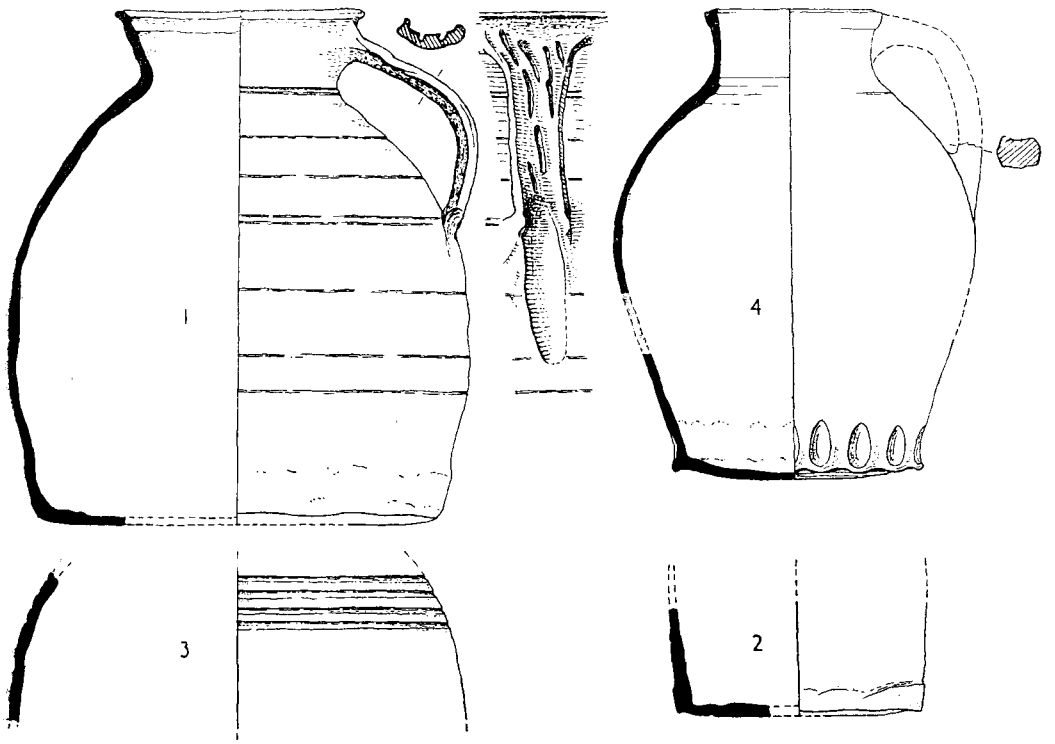

FIG. 29

Jugs from Beere, North Tawton; thirteenth century (pp. 130-2). Sc. $\frac{1}{4}$

This type of large baggy pitcher, so far as the SW. is concerned, must have its roots in the twelfth century farther up in England to the NE.[65] Here it seems by its context to be thirteenth century, and this awkward shape with wide flat base may be paralleled by one from Barry Island, Glamorgan,[66] which is again, though unglazed, probably thirteenth rather than twelfth century, for this deep prod-and-slash seen on its handle as on ours, is probably a mark of the thirteenth rather than the twelfth century; it is not found on the twelfth-century unglazed examples of Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Wiltshire,[67] which have light combed ornament on the handles.

[65] E.g., *Oxoniensia*, XV (1950), 48-51, fig. 17, 1 (note similar treatment of inner surface of rim); *Devizes Mus. Cat.* (2 ed., 1934), p. 266, fig. 45; *Wilts. Archaeol. Mag.*, XLVI (1935), pl. i, 1, opp. p. 264.

[66] *Trans. Cardiff Nats. Soc.*, LXIX (1936), pl. iii, 18 and p. 33. For the top part of a rougher unglazed jug from Devon, compare one from Totnes, *Trans. Devon. Assoc.*, LXXXVI (1954), 245-6, A,v.

[67] *Berks. Archaeol. J.*, L (1947), 53, no. 10, 56; *Oriel Record*, Jan. 1942, p. 177, no. 1; *Oxoniensia*, IV (1939), pl. x, top; *id.* XV (1950), fig. 17, 1.

Parts of a similar jug handle come from the monastic site at Lamanna near Looe.[68] Some jugs of 'class C' at Tintagel[69] seem also comparable and are probably local wares of this period.

2. Part of base of a narrower jug (base diameter 5 in.); of slightly harder fabric with ochre interior surface; unglazed, and knife trimmed on base, which is almost flat. These narrower unglazed jugs, again, would have their roots in the twelfth century traditions farther into England,[70] going back ultimately to later Saxon times in eastern England.[71]

3. Shoulder part of a large pitcher, with shallow girth-grooves; of coarse, soft, light red fabric with gritting as in the cooking-pots; irregularly modelled.

4. The smaller jug is of a harder, closer texture, with finer sand: it is different from any other pottery on the site, though examination under the microscope reveals a similar assemblage of grit particles to that of the cooking-pots. There seems little reason to suppose it was made outside the district. It has a dark grey fracture with a buff interior surface-layer about 0·5-1 mm. thick, flaking off in places, and pale greyish exterior over which remain in places the last flaking-off traces of a poor thin orange lead glaze. The base is black, and contains much organic matter within the fabric (including apparently some seed grains): this had led to damage in firing—spalling or 'dunting'[72]—either in the kiln or in a later fire: this effect is not seen on other parts of the jug. The shape may be paralleled on thirteenth-century jugs;[73] the thumb-pressed base angle is not known from contexts in the twelfth century and probably did not come into fashion in Britain generally until the thirteenth century.[74] It has a bar handle of square section and a simple, slightly expanded rim, which probably had a pinched lip. It has two slight grooves round the shoulder.

Cooking-pots

5. Large bell-mouthed pot of rather soft powdery fabric with a moderate amount of the usual grits; pale grey core and ochreous surface layer 0·5 to 1 mm. thick. It has been thrown on a turn-table but is irregular and distorted by finger pressure. Knife-trimming of the base is implied by the section. It has a sooty layer outside and a brownish carbonized layer inside. For shape compare a pot from Sherborne Old Castle, *Proc. Dorset N.H. and Archaeol. Soc.*, LXXIII (1951), 108-9, fig. 2, 6; and Kidwelly, *Archaeologia*, LXXXIII (1933), pl. XXV, 4. From outside the S. wall of house I.

6. Fairly hard ochre to grey-brown fabric. Grooving irregular round outside of rim flange. By contrast the rim has an evenly flattened top, and the inside of the flange and a facet just under this have been carefully smoothed during rotation to form a very regular sharp angle, leaving a burred-over ridge of clay on the under edge. Smudged signs of knife-trimming are seen on the shoulder, a process implied by the section. From deposit outside S. wall of house I.

7. Harsh, sandy, friable fabric, dark ochreous smoked grey-brown on outside; this open-textured material gives no protection against oxidization and so has no grey core. It is nevertheless a good fabric preserving its original surfaces, with many concentric small grooves. It has a frilled band in low relief roughly applied round full girth. From

[68] Unpublished; shown to us by Mr. C. K. C. Andrew.

[69] *Dark-age Britain: Essays presented to E. T. Leeds* (ed. D. B. Harden, 1956), pp. 60-1.

[70] *Berks. Archaeol. J.*, L (1947), 53, no. 10, 56.

[71] *Proc. Cambridge Antiq. Soc.*, XLIX (1956), 54-6.

[72] See *Trans. Cumberland and Westm. Antiq. and Archaeol. Soc.*, LV (1956), 101.

[73] *Oxoniensia*, IV (1939), 100, fig. 23 H.

[74] *Oxoniensia*, IV (1939), 118; *id.* XXIII (1958). There has been no subsequent evidence to alter Mr. Bruce-Mitford's conclusions, though it must be pointed out that we still seriously lack well dated later twelfth-century pottery over much of Britain. A thumb-pressed base on a site producing a coin of Henry II at Soberton, Hants., is sometimes quoted, but the other pottery shows that the occupation must have extended even into the fourteenth century (excavated by Mr. C. E. Stevens; Alton Museum). See also one with a much worn coin of Richard I from Chichester (*Sussex Archaeol. Coll.*, XCI (1953), 149, fig. 13).

deposit outside S. wall of house I; another such girth-band comes from between house I and drying-kiln I.

8. A hard cohesive fabric with grey core and thin light brown surface layer flecked with light red. This is almost the only cooking-pot from the site in which the firing seems to have given adequate consolidation of the clay matrix. Parts of base and body

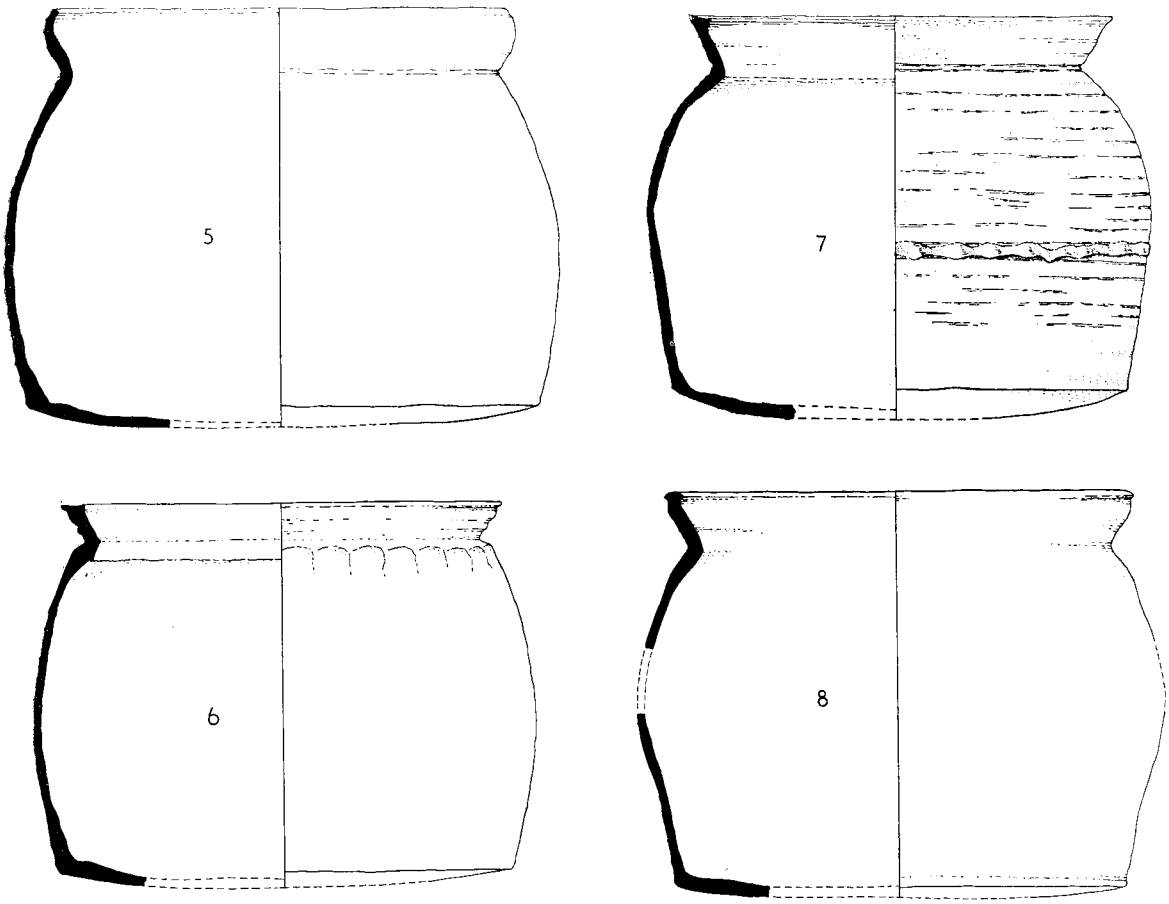

FIG. 30
Cooking-pots from Beere, North Tawton (p. 132 f.). Sc. $\frac{1}{4}$

of same fabric as rim do not yield a full profile, which, however, cannot be very different from the reconstruction. From outside S. wall of house I.

9. Fairly cohesive brown to ochre ware; pimply surface with grits coated with fine clay matrix by wiping while wet. Simple rim flange burred over outwards and inner surface smoothed into a facet. A twelfth-century type. From phase 1 floor, central room of house I; one comparable in more usual ochreous fabric from ash between kiln I and house I.

10. Rather poor friable gritty fabric, intermediate between 7 and the usual fabric on the site; grey core and rich ochreous surface, but with some grey patches where a

smoky flame has played on it during firing, or where some damping material has masked it from the oxidizing flames. About half the top part of the pot, from the small pit by N. wall of W. room of house I.

11-20. These show the range of rim shapes produced by moulding the top of a simple rim flange with the thumb and one or two fingers during rotation. All are of ochreous soft powdery fabric standard on the site, with some grit particles mostly 0·5 to 1 mm. No. 17 shows signs of knife-trimming round the shoulder, which is implied by the section of 18.

Nos. 13 and 14 are from the small pit near the N. wall of the central room of house I, and are probably from opposite sides of the same pot, illustrating the distortion during shaping; the curvature is variable (2·6 to 3·7 in. radius) indicating an oval mouth as with many pots from the site. Nos. 11, 15, 17, 19, 20 are from the deposit outside S. wall of house I; one like 17 but without knife-trimming of shoulder, from blocking of N. door of house I; one like 20 also from the ash of drying-kiln II; 16 is from phase 2 (upper) floor in central room of house I; several sherds of a similar rim come from the ash at the mouth of drying-kiln I, and two sherds of the same rim from the refuse-deposit outside the S. wall of house I. No. 18 is from the trial trench at the E. site. No. 12 is from the old surface under the stone blocking of the N. door of house I (therefore phase 1).

21-24. Three examples of an incurved rim with a square-sectioned channel inside, produced, however, by finger-work and not a tool, the grit particles not being pressed into the clay matrix. During rotation clay was first pulled up inside to form the lower ridge, the nail probably giving the angular edge; the top of the rim was then burred over inwards, the general inward pressure giving the inturned profile. A comparable profile can sometimes be seen on prehistoric pottery (e.g., neolithic from Gortcorbies, Co. Derry, *Ulster J. Archaeol.*, XIII (1950), 35, fig. 5, pl. 10.), where no doubt the burring of the top was achieved by smoothing the hand round rather than rotating the pot. No. 23 has a band of clay inserted to consolidate the angle between the rim and shoulder. Nos. 21, 23 and 24, of fairly hard standard fabric, are from the deposit outside S. wall of house I; 22 (five pieces), ochreous, very powdery and disintegrating, comes from the ash of drying-kiln I.

25-28. These are more extreme versions of the type 11-20, in which two fingers have been used to press up a rib on the inside of the rim-flange, the lower one leaving a marked channel (already just seen in 15 and 16). No. 26 is of harsh, fairly hard, ochreous ware with much angular grit, from outside S. wall of house I, and cf. another similar from ash between drying-kiln I and house I. No. 27, of the usual fabric but brown rather than ochre, is from the structure of the bung of the N. door of house I (therefore the earlier phase 1); the rim top is flared outwards. The more extreme form 28, similar ware but ochreous, is from phase 2 floor, near hearth.

29. Hard purply-brown fabric containing sparsely the usual grit particles of the order 1 mm. size. The rim is incurved and has been finished concave on top with the finger. No. 52 shows a complete pot with comparable rim-form from Exeter. From under the blocking of the N. door of house I.

30. Top part of pot of usual powdery gritty ware, ochre to brown; a plain rim-flange finished at the top by rounding over inwards. From outside S. wall of house I. Another rim intermediate between 29 and 30, with flattened top, came from floor 2 in the angle against the N. wall of house I. Compare no 43, from the motte site at North Tawton (Grid Ref. 666017).

31. Incurved rim with top burred over outwards, a rare type here; usual ochreous, fairly hard fabric: from outside the S. wall of house I.

32-34. Examples of rims consolidated with a band of clay in the rim-shoulder angle. On 32 and 33 the band is frilled by finger-tipping, on 34 it is quite plain and marvered in to the surface: compare also 23. All are from outside the S. wall of house I.

35-36. The only examples from the site which seem to show the forming of a

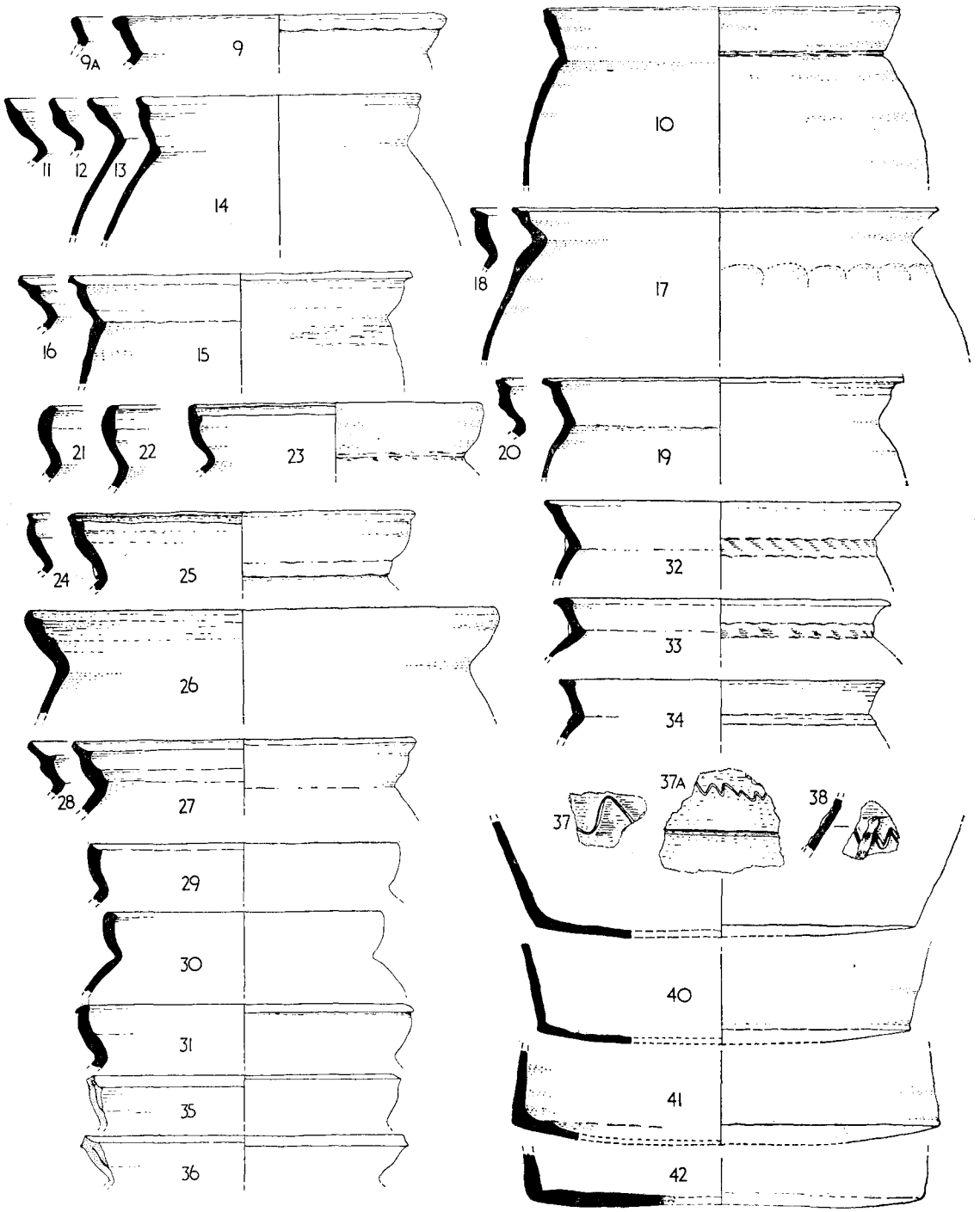

FIG. 31

Rims, bases and ornament of cooking pottery from Beere, North Tawton (pp. 133-6). Sc. $\frac{1}{4}$

thickening moulding at the rim top by folding over inwards, a type common in Gloucestershire and the Cotswolds. It is here inferred from the lie of the grit particles and cleavage planes in the clay as seen in fracture. No. 35, of gritty ware, from floor 2 of house I, central room, against N. wall, three small pieces. No. 36, of more powdery ochreous ware, from the upper filling of the ditch of the earthwork to the NW. of the site. A small fragment of rim of this type, only with rounded-off angles, came from under the blocking of the N. door of house I.

37-38. Body sherds with wavy incised line, of powdery ochreous cooking-pot fabric: both from deposit outside S. wall of house I.

39-42. These show the range of base forms. Nos. 39-41 are of ochreous, fairly hard, but powdery fabric; 42 is of harder ware with small meandering firing cracks. All are from the deposit outside the S. wall of house I.

B. POTTERY FROM RELATED SITES: NORTH TAWTON, TREWORTHA (E. CORNISH MOOR) AND DARTMOOR (FIG. 32)

43. Cooking-pot rim from the motte-and-bailey in North Tawton (surface find): of fairly hard but slightly powdery ware with light grey core and 1 mm. ochreous surface layers. Moderately gritted with particles of the order 1 mm. size, a few rounded, and

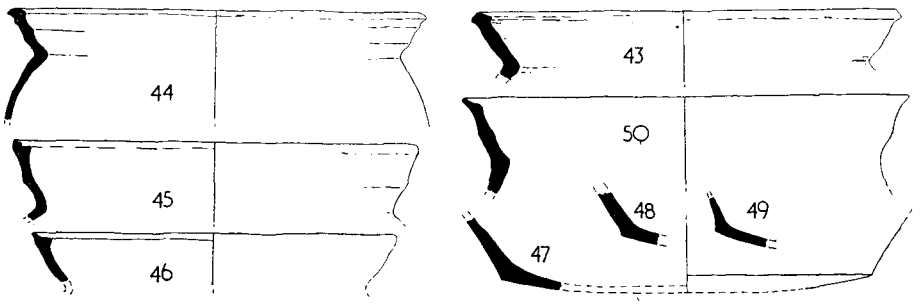

FIG. 32

Pottery from the Rev. S. Baring-Gould's excavations in 1891-2 at Trewortha, St. Cleer parish, E. Cornwall (now in Launceston town gatehouse) one sherd from N. Tawton (43), and one from Headland Gert, Devon (50). Sc. $\frac{1}{4}$

with a little black mica. The appearance is very similar to the general run of pottery from Beere; the simple rim is quite usual for the twelfth century (cp. Exeter, *Antiq. J.*, XXXI (1951), 183).

44-49. Sherds, all that can now be traced from S. Baring-Gould's excavations at Trewortha, near Altarnum (Grid Ref. 239750). In Launceston Museum. Of rather soft fabric with grey core and ochreous surface layer from which grits stand out, closely comparable with that from Beere.

50. Rim sherd from Headland Gert (Grid Ref. 690810) near Challacombe, Dartmoor, of friable fabric with pale grey core and pale reddish surface, pitted where grits have fallen out. In Plymouth Museum in 1938, now destroyed.

C. MISCELLANEOUS COMPARATIVE MATERIAL (FIG. 33)

51-54. Four cooking-pots with complete profiles deducible for comparison. 51 is from Stilman Street, Plymouth;[75] 52-54 from Exeter (52 from Banfield Street, 53 from Rougemont House grounds, 54 from road-widening operations on the new by-pass near Countess Weir; shown to us by Col. Ransome Pickard). All are fairly coarse, lumpy-surfaced fabric, 54 with crushed flint or chert, and shows well the burring of the base-angle resulting from final working over of the convex base with the hand.

[75] *Trans. Plymouth Inst.*, VII (1876), 500.

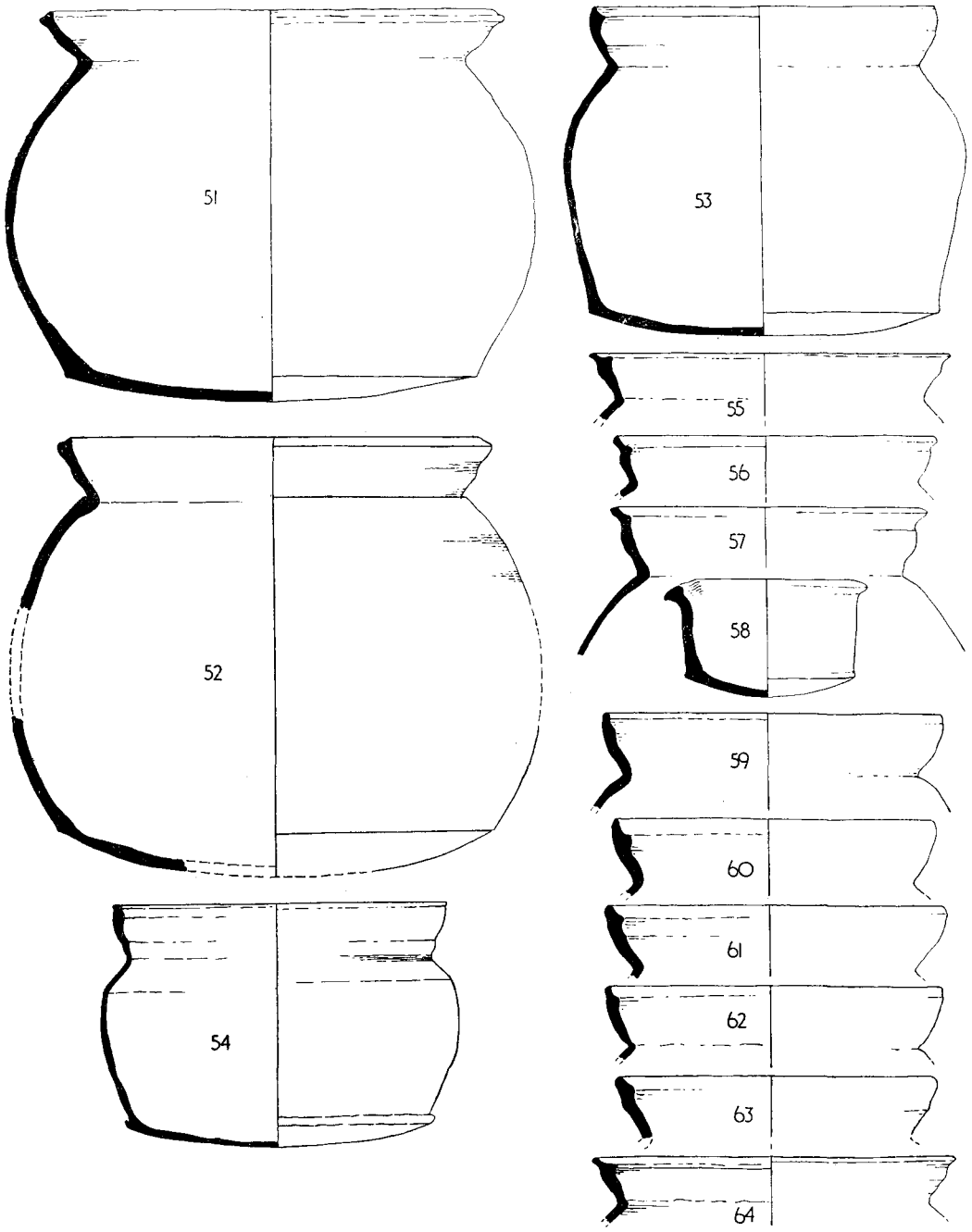

FIG. 33

Comparable twelfth-thirteenth-century cooking pottery from SW. England (pp. 136-8). 51, from Plymouth; 52-4, Exeter; 55, Downend, Somerset; 56, Castle Neroche, Somerset; 57-9, Greylake, near Bridgwater; 60, Landulph, Cornwall; 61, Lamanna, near Looe; 62, Constantine, N. Cornwall; 63, Cardinham Castle; 64, Penhale, Cubert, N. Cornwall. Sc. $\frac{1}{4}$

55-64. A series of cooking-pot rims to show the spread of a particular type and formative procedure from the Somerset area SW. into Cornwall. No. 55 (Downend, 2 miles N. of Bridgwater[76]), 56 (Castle Neroche[77]), both motte-and-bailey castles; 57-59 (Grey Lake,[78] near Middlezoy) show the Somerset twelfth-century tradition. The small bowl no. 58 is a twelfth-century type also in Somerset, and occurs at Castle Neroche (unpublished); here it serves to define the twelfth-century shelly fabric at Grey Lake, a site producing thirteenth- and fourteenth-century pottery as well (57 and 59 are of similar fabric comparable with that of Castle Neroche). Bowls are evidently a late Saxon tradition as far west as Somerset.[79]

60. Cooking-pot rim among much material from Landulph rectory, E. Cornwall.[80]

61. From the monastic site of Lamanna, S. of Looe.[81]

62. From a kitchen midden at Constantine, N. Cornwall; in Harlyn Bay Museum, where there is another similar from Harlyn.

63. From Cardinham Castle (Grid Ref. 127680), a motte-and-bailey earthwork (surface find, 1938).[82]

64. From the N. end of Penhale Sands, Cubert, N. Cornwall (surface finds); similar rims come from sites on Kelsey Head.[83]

This type of rim is not so clearly demonstrable in the medieval pottery of Cornwall farther west, but very little medieval pottery from the twelfth century onwards is so far recorded from the area.[84]

IRON (FIG. 34)

1. Fragments of a round iron plate, originally about 7-8 in. across and once perhaps as much as $\frac{1}{8}$ in. thick; about one-quarter survives. It was found lying near the burnt area in the middle of the central room in house I, sealed in the phase 1 floor. It may perhaps have been a griddle-plate. Cooking flat cakes on a hot surface is a southern habit of great antiquity (*Hist. Technol.*, I (ed. C. Singer and E. J. Holmyard, 1955), 273, fig. 174). Similar flat iron plates are known from Scandinavian sites, usually having central handles; there is not enough of the Beere plate to show whether it had a central hole for such a fixture (M. Stenberger, *Vallhagar*, II (1957), 843, 1099, fig. 458). For an iron-age small pottery griddle-plate on iron legs, see Castle Dôre (*J. Roy. Inst. Cornwall* n.s. 1 suppl. (1952), 89, pl. vii, 5). Earthenware bell-shaped covers like one from Exeter (*Antiq. J.*, XXXI (1951), 183, fig. 1, 15) were used for baking food in the embers. Cp. J. G. N. Renaud in *Ber. v.d. Rijksdienst v.h. Oudheid. Bodemonderzoek*, VII (1956), 109.

2. A very corroded small iron knife-blade, 2·1 in. long, with part of tang. It was found in an ashy layer sealed in floor 1, near the griddle-plate.

3. Fragment of a small iron bar, broken at a bend. It was found beside the W. post-hole of the S. door of house I, and may be the remains of a hanging pivot for the door; a complete one was found by us in a similar position beside a door-post in an eleventh-twelfth-century building at Deddington Castle, Oxfordshire. Although

[76] *Proc. Somerset Archaeol. Soc.*, LIII (1907), 174; *id.*, LV (1909), 162 ff. (cooking pottery unpublished): although the excavations in 1908 showed one occupation-layer only, of not long duration, at this motte-and-bailey site, there seems to be a certain amount of thirteenth-century pottery amongst that from the site in Taunton Museum.

[77] *Proc. Somerset Archaeol. Soc.*, XLIX (1903), 23-53 (rims published with wrong sitting angles).

[78] Pottery and site shown to us by Mr. H. S. L. Dewar.

[79] J. D. A. Thompson, *Inventory of British Coin Hoards* (1956), pl. iv, e; A. D. Hallam, *Proc. Somerset Archaeol. Soc.*, forthcoming.

[80] Shown to us by the rector. For such rims at Exeter, see *Proc. Devon Archaeol. Explor. Soc.*, I, pt. 3 (1931), pl. xi.

[81] Shown to us by Mr. C. K. C. Andrew, the excavator (unpublished).

[82] For excavations here in the 1870's, see *J. Roy. Inst. Cornwall*, V (no. xix, pt. 2, 1878), plate at beginning.

[83] For map, see *Antiq. J.*, XXX (1950), and see also pp. 159-60.

[84] See, for example, Gunwalloe, *Proc. W. Cornwall F.C.*, n.s. 1, no. 4 (1955-6), fig. 27, nos. 9, 10; and also Mr. A. C. Thomas's excavations at Gwithian, forthcoming.

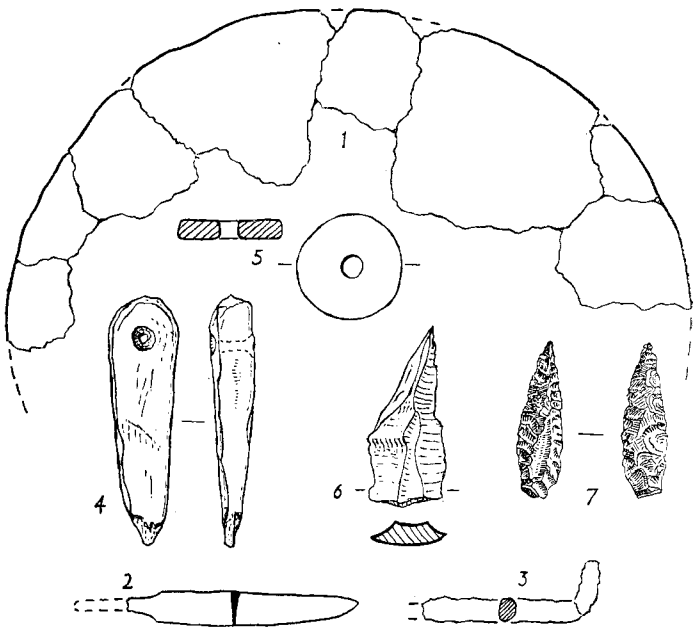

FIG. 34
BEERE, NORTH TAWTON, DEVON
Objects of iron and stone (p. 138 f.): 1, iron griddle-plate; 2, iron knife; 3, iron door-hanger; 4, whetstone; 5, slate spindle-whorl; 6, 7, flints. Sc. ⅓

slender it is comparable with the latter and with one from the late Saxon pits under Oxford castle mound (*Oxoniensia*, XVII-XVIII (1952-3), 98-9, fig. 38, G). The only evidence of nails came as two fragments from the top of the pit against the N. wall of the middle room of house I.

Iron slag. A number of small lumps of iron slag from various parts of the site show that iron-working processes were being carried on somewhere in this settlement. The vitreous and bubbly character of some pieces suggests smelting as well as smiths' work.

STONE (FIG. 34)

4. A small hone of poor slate, of characteristic medieval pattern with drilled suspension hole: from central room of house I, on floor 2, S. side. Similar ones were found at Trewortha (*J. Roy. Inst. Cornwall*, XI (1892), 64, 69).

5. Small spindle-whorl of slate, from central room of house I, floor 2, S. side; one found also at Trewortha (ref. as above).

6. Distal end of a blade of semi-opaque brownish grey flint, from floor 2, house I, near hearth. Its position suggests use as a strike-a-light; it may have been so intended, though as Mr. A. E. P. Collins points out, there is evidence of use and/or secondary trimming on the bulbar face along both edges, and as these are not battered, it can scarcely have been used for this purpose. Flint flakes were also found at Trewortha.

7. Small flint arrowhead, from W. side, near drying-kiln II. Mr. Collins reports 'that it is apparently a rather roughly-shaped leaf arrowhead, more slender in proportions than is usual. Such a form, for instance, is hardly represented among the 64 illustrated examples from Hembury causewayed camp. Areas of primary flake surface are visible on both faces.'

8. Part of a roughly-trimmed granite rotary quernstone about 2 in. thick and 10 in. across (not illustrated) was among the stones to the east of the hearth in house I.

ANIMAL BONES

Some rather fragmentary animal bones were found, mostly in the refuse deposit to the S. of house I. These were identified at the time by Dr. E. H. Willock as of ox, sheep or goat, and pig. They are no longer available for a fuller report, but they do at least show some evidence of activity in animal husbandry. Organic remains were not well preserved in the soil conditions at Great Beere.

APPENDIX

BLACK MICA IN THE POTTERY FABRIC

Report by P. A. SABINE, *Chief Petrographer, Geological Survey*

The optical properties of black mica undergo marked changes on heating (A. N. and H. Winchell, *Elements of Optical Mineralogy* (1951), II, 376). It was hoped that data on that in the Beere pottery might give an indication of firing temperature, though the changes may depend on factors other than temperature, such as duration of heating. Through the kindness of Dr. P. A. Sabine some Beere material was examined, the X-ray work being carried out by Mr. B. R. Young. The following is Dr. Sabine's report:

'The black crystalline material in your pottery from Beere is a mica or one of the related minerals, best referred to provisionally as "black mica". The optical properties are unusual and do not agree well with normal micas: it is biaxial negative, large 2V (about 65°-75°) and is magnetic, possibly owing to the development of magnetite or native iron. It has $\beta' = c.\ 1 \cdot 770$.

'The first flake examined by X-ray, although brown in colour, proved to be of muscovite type. The flake was examined in a single-crystal camera, with (001) parallel to the X-ray beam when the flake was in the centre of a 15° oscillation about the a-axis, the a-axis being vertical and beam horizontal. Spots of strength "strong" and "medium" were recorded on the film at 10 Å and 5 Å respectively (film X 1659). The layer line spacing gives a=5·1 Å approximately.

'Three other flakes proved to be of phlogopite-biotite type. An a-axis rotation photograph (film X 1668) of a twinned flake gave a fairly strong (001) reflection but an extremely weak (002) reflection and a fairly strong (060) reflection at 1·53 Å, indicating that it belonged to Nagelschmidt's phlogopite-biotite type. This film also showed a very weak set of layer-lines, parallel to those of the mica, owing to an unidentified substance of spacing about 11·2 Å.

'Photographs X 1669 and X 1676 of two other flakes of mica rotated about the b-axis gave a "b" cell-dimension of 9·2 Å and proved the mica to be of phlogopite-biotite type. There were no spots other than those due to mica on these films.

'All the flakes were readily attracted by a hand magnet, but we were unable to discover the cause of the magnetic property: it is presumably due to magnetite or native iron. No spots of magnetite or iron were detected on the X-ray films despite a careful search.

'Optical examination of two flakes (including a fragment probably from the flake examined by X-rays and thought to be of muscovite type) showed $2E_\alpha$ to be large, about 75° and 64° respectively. The refractive index β was difficult to determine but appears to be about 1·70 and perhaps 1·77 for the two specimens. These figures of refractive index are very high for mica, and the optic axial angle is large for biotite. Both the refractive index and large optic axial angle may be due to the heating which the mica has undergone. Refractive indices as high as 1·82 have been reported for mica which has been heated to 700°.'