

PROCEEDINGS
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CAMBRIDGE ANTIQUARIAN
SOCIETY

(INCORPORATING THE CAMBS & HUNTS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY)



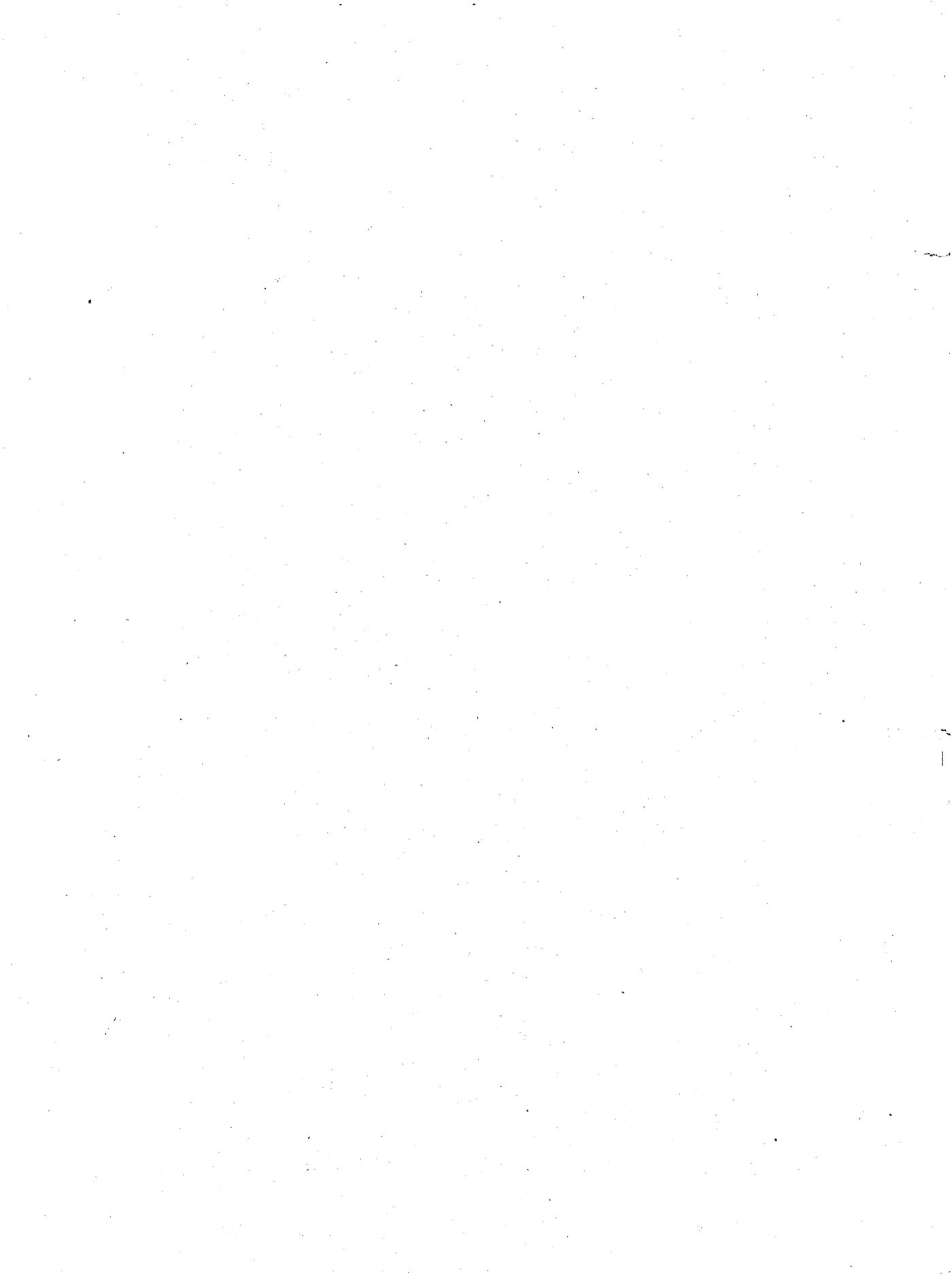
VOLUME LIV

JANUARY 1960 TO DECEMBER 1960

CAMBRIDGE
DEIGHTON BELL

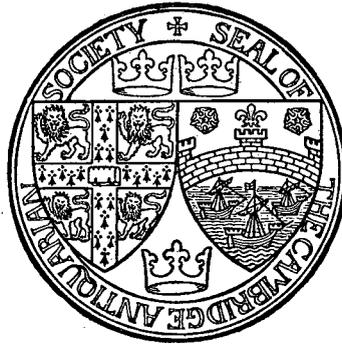
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THE ALDWICK IRON AGE SETTLEMENT, BARLEY, HERTFORDSHIRE¹

MARY D. CRA'STER

The site lies $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles south-east of Royston, on the edge of the village of Barley (National Grid Ref. 398388). The field has been known as Aldwick since the

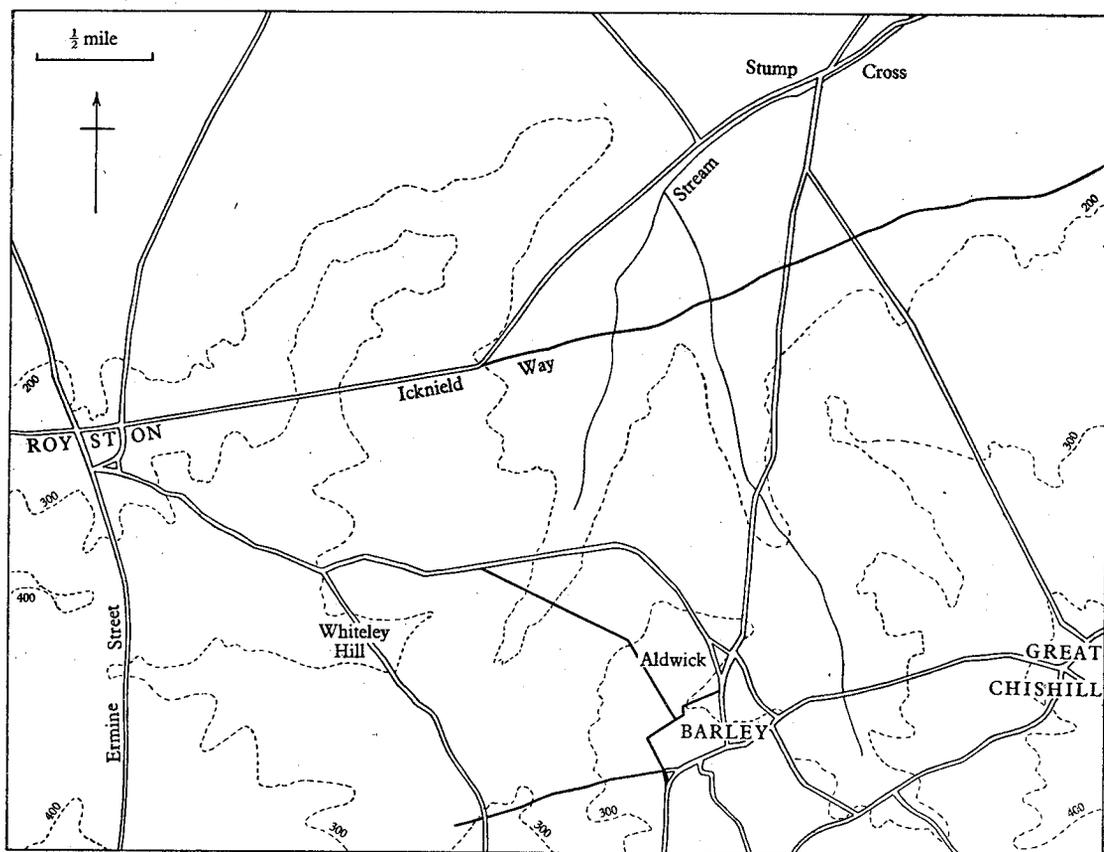


Fig. 1.

sixteenth century, and is owned by Mr J. C. Wilkerson, for whose interest and active co-operation we are deeply grateful.

It was, in fact, through Mr Wilkerson's predilection for archaeology that the site was first discovered by him in the spring of 1959. It lies at the top of a southward-facing slope of the main chalk ridge running north-east from Royston (Fig. 1). The

¹ This paper is published with the aid of a grant from the Council for British Archaeology.

actual site is on clean chalk, but it bears signs of considerable glacial—or periglacial—wear, and the opposite ridge to the south is covered with boulder-clay. No sign of the many features appears on the surface, either as crop or soil markings.

THE PROTON-MAGNETOMETER SURVEY

When Mr Wilkerson first discovered the site, he found that there were a number of pits scattered about the field. On further investigation these turned out to be circular,

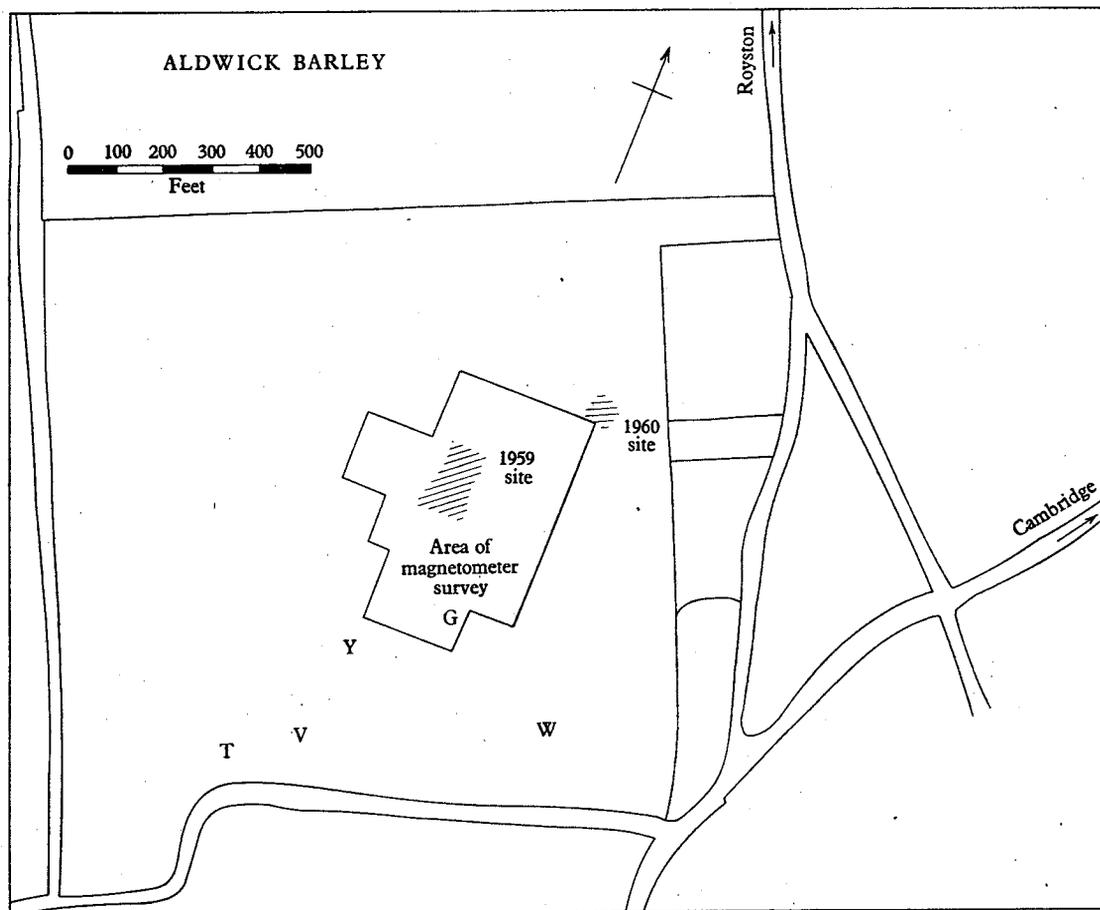


Fig. 2.

flat-bottomed, and neatly cut into the solid chalk; they were filled with humus containing Iron Age A potsherds and numerous bones of domestic animals, including the complete skeleton of a dog. It was at this point that Professor J. G. D. Clark obtained the services of Dr Martin Aitken of the Archaeological Laboratory, Oxford, to carry out a survey with the proton-magnetometer. This was the first occasion upon which the instrument had been used on chalk, and it yielded excellent results.

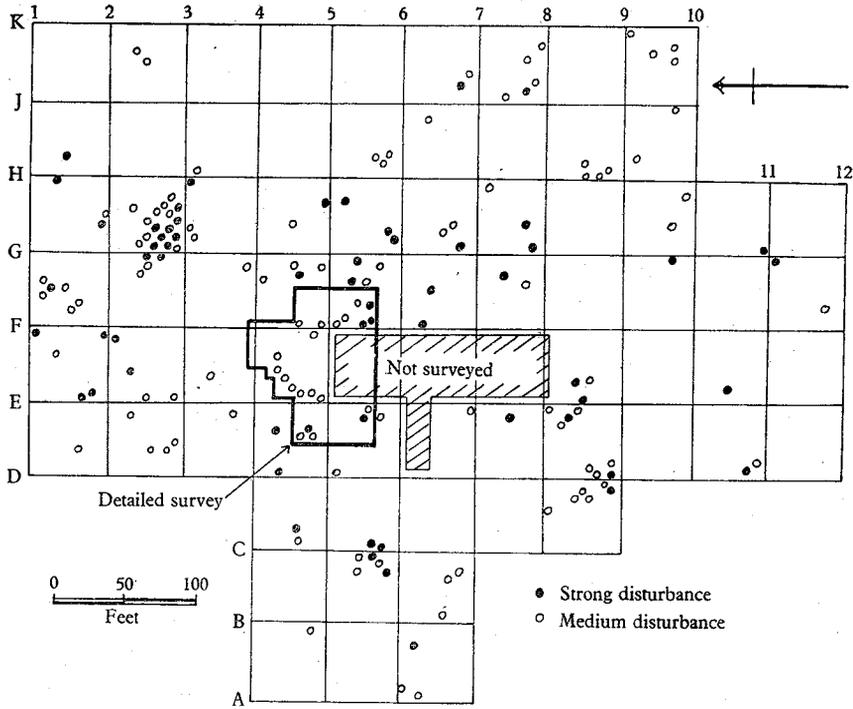


Fig. 3a.

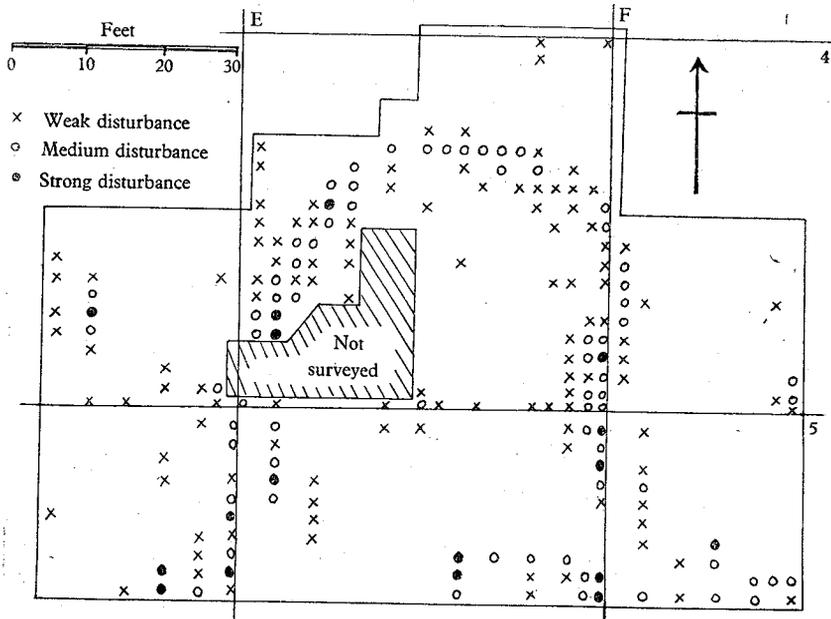


Fig. 3b.

An area of 300 by 600 ft. near the top of the hill, on the eastern edge of the field was chosen (Fig. 2). This proved to be covered with features, most of them probably pits; several test-holes were dug to check what was causing the reactions on the instrument. There was no sign that the edge of the settlement had been reached (Fig. 3*a*).

The horseshoe-shaped pattern of reaction in square E₄ immediately attracted attention, and this area was again surveyed in greater detail; the result is given in Fig. 3*b*.

THE 1959 EXCAVATION

An excavation was now organized by the Department of Archaeology and Anthropology, Cambridge, and undertaken by the present writer.

The area of the horseshoe-shaped feature and as much again down the slope was stripped of topsoil by bulldozer. This revealed a most satisfactory number of pits, and a ditch exactly corresponding to the feature plotted by the proton-magnetometer (Figs. 3*b*, 4; Pl. IV).

THE HORSESHOE DITCH

Two sections, (*d*) and (*e*), were cut across the central section of this ditch (D 1); three others were cut near the ends, to discover the relative age of the ditch and the pits upon which it impinged; (*a*) at the west end, and (*b*) and (*c*) at the east.

The ditch was V-shaped in section and fairly regularly cut in the solid chalk (Pl. VI, *e*). The fill was singularly homogeneous and showed no signs of gradual silting up; on the other hand there was no positive evidence that it had been deliberately filled, and domestic rubbish in the form of bones and potsherds was almost entirely absent (Fig. 6, 1).

At each end, the ditch was found to cut through the fills of earlier pits (Fig. 6, 2-6). At the east end, the situation was complicated by the fact that the ditch had been dug over the top of a pit (P 96) even earlier than P 6, which was itself cut by the ditch (Fig. 6, 2). The existence of P 96 was not suspected until after the first section (*c* 1) had been dug; so another section (*c* 2), was cut in order to confirm the presence of P 96, which had in fact been almost entirely dug away in antiquity.

The area enclosed by D 1 was roughly 40 ft. across—about the right size for a house.¹ The ditch only surrounded the uphill side of the house area, however, and cannot therefore have been integral to the structure, as was probably that at West Harling. The obvious purpose of D 1 would be for drainage, though a subsidiary use could have been collection of surplus rain-water. The necessity for some form of drainage was effectively shown during a brief rainstorm in the summer of 1959. Section (*d*) had been left open, and collected a substantial amount of water; this took some hours to drain away, and nearly 6 in. of silt, which had washed in from the uphill edge, was then seen to have accumulated in the bottom of the ditch.

¹ West Harling: *Proc. Prehist. Soc.* vol. XIX (1953). Little Woodbury: *Proc. Prehist. Soc.* vol. VI (1940).

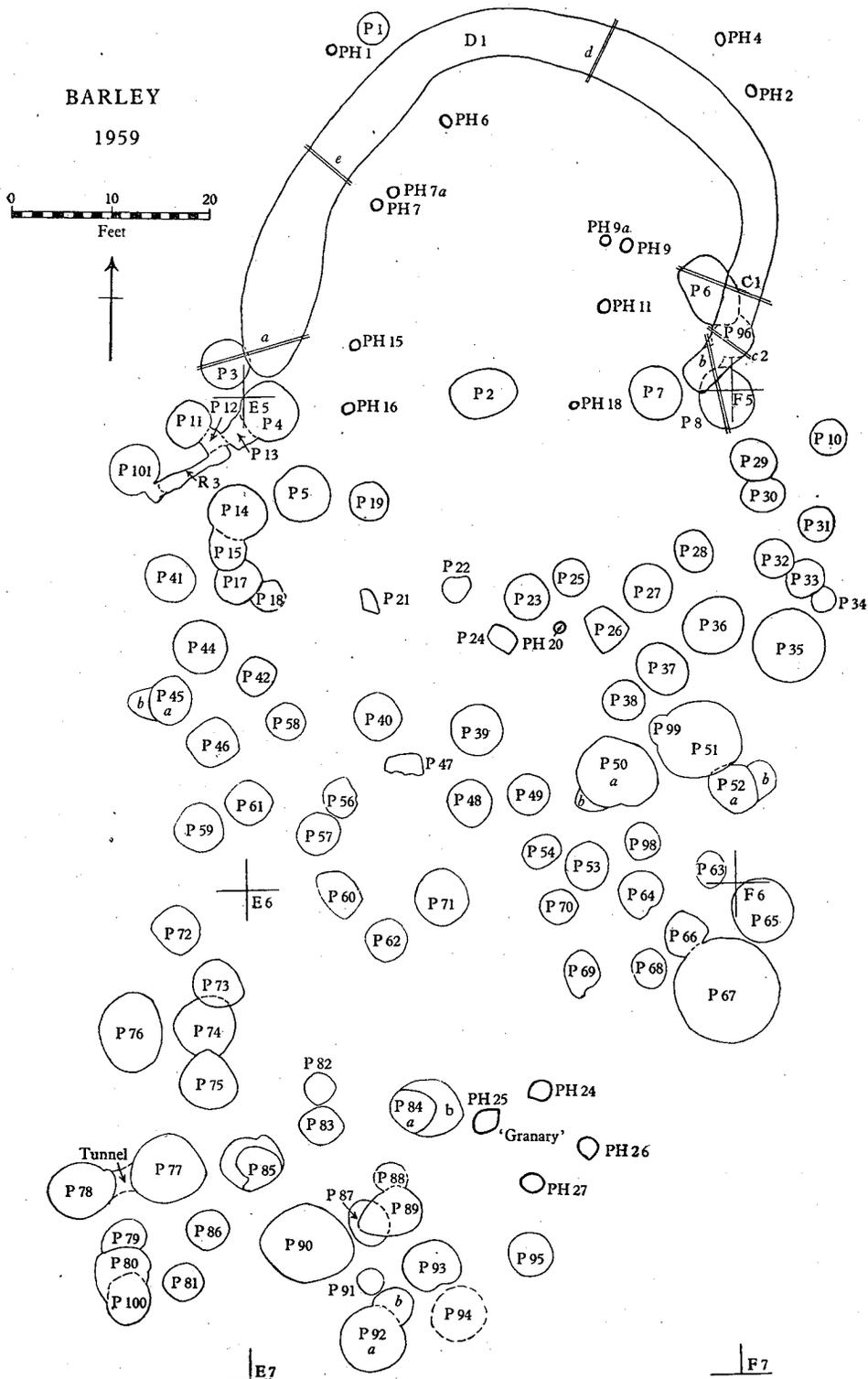


Fig. 4.

The actual form of the house remains a mystery, for no coherent set of postholes or other structural features was discovered. There were several postholes (see Fig. 4), but none was very substantial and all were under 6 in. deep (Fig. 6, 5 and Pl. V, *d*). This need not necessarily disprove the existence of a house. It must be remembered that only the deepest portion of all holes could be seen—that which penetrated the solid chalk subsoil. The field has been under plough for many years: Norden's map of the parish in 1593,¹ shows it to have been cultivated at that date. In the course of the years, the topsoil has crept down the slope, so that now there is a bare 9 in. of soil on the brow of the hill, and lumps of solid chalk are brought to the surface during ploughing; by contrast, at the bottom of the field, soil has in places accumulated to a depth of nearly 3 ft. above the chalk. The 1959 site was just in the area of shallowest topsoil; thus the upper part of postholes had been ploughed away, and it is probable that a considerable part of the top of the chalk itself may have been removed.² It is thus necessary to add at least 1 ft. and probably more on to the depths of all pits and postholes, and quite possible that a number of small postholes may have disappeared altogether. Another possibility is that the material excavated from D 1 may have been used to form a low chalk rubble wall or foundation, into which the uprights supporting the walls were set.

THE PITS

There were a hundred of these in an area of 80 by 110 ft.; in spite of this concentration, there were not many overlapping pits, so that it would appear that the positions of old pits were still known, even when filled in. It was also noticeable that a substantial space was left clear of pits below the house, in front of the open ends of ditch D 1. In addition the area of the house itself had only one pit dug in it, although existing pits on each side were apparently used to save trouble in digging the ends of the horseshoe ditch.

The pits themselves were usually of the same approximate proportions, varying between 2 ft. 6 in. and 10 ft. in diameter and in depth from 6 in. to 4 ft. 6 in., remembering that at least a foot should be added to the depth measurements (see above); they were circular, straight-sided, and with flat bottoms, and most gave the impression of having been carefully cut in the solid chalk (Fig. 6 and Pl. V, *b*).

There were a certain number (9 out of 101) of irregular pits; these were not circular and were usually fairly shallow, with no trouble taken to flatten out sides or bottoms. It is uncertain whether these were unfinished pits, or whether they served a different purpose altogether—possibly as temporary storage-places while a new pit of the more elegant sort was being prepared. At all events, the material with which they had eventually been filled showed the same range of variety as that of the regular pits.

The filling of the pits was everywhere deliberate; none had been left open and

¹ British Museum Add. MS. 42508.

² In this connexion it is interesting to note that on the Wiltshire Downs, the chalk where protected by barrows has been regularly found to be about 1 ft. higher than the modern subsoil surface.

allowed to silt up. In a few cases the pit had apparently been loosely filled, and the hollow caused by the subsidence of this filling left a certain time, although not long enough for any kind of turf-line to be formed. A great quantity of snail shells did accumulate in these shallow hollows, perhaps attracted by the damp. The bulk of these are *Helix (Cepaea) nemoralis*, a species which is fairly ubiquitous¹ (see P 51 and P 67; Fig. 6, 15, 11).

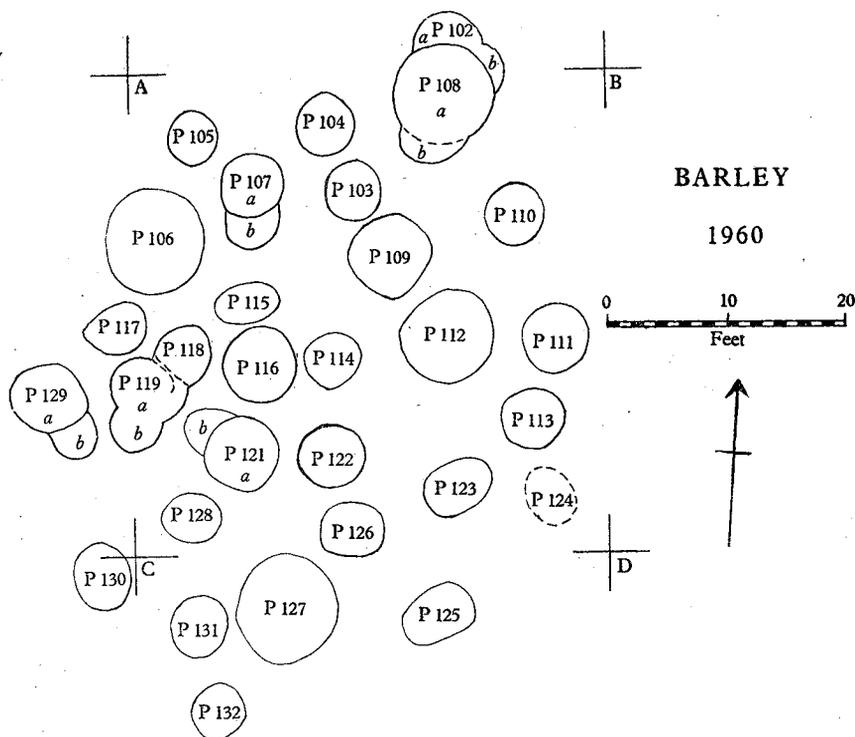


Fig. 5.

In one or two cases, the straight sides of a pit collapsed on to its floor, either because they had been dug through a former pit, previously filled in (P 51—P 99; Fig. 4), or in one case probably because of damage by fire (P 67) (see p. 31, below). Apart from these isolated instances, there was no sign of rapid silt on the pit floors, so that they must have been filled and covered immediately.

The pit-fillings found varied from almost clean chalk rubble to very black humus containing quantities of potsherds and domestic animal bones. In some cases there was a sharp difference visible in the tip lines (P 30; Fig. 6, 16; Pl. V, e), showing that a pit might be filled from different sources, probably by several men working together. The clean chalk was presumably produced in the course of digging new pits; the sherds and bones are obviously domestic rubbish. However, the sequence of events by which this rubbish got into the pits is a bit puzzling. The original idea

¹ Information kindly supplied by Mr B. Sparks of the Department of Geology, Cambridge.

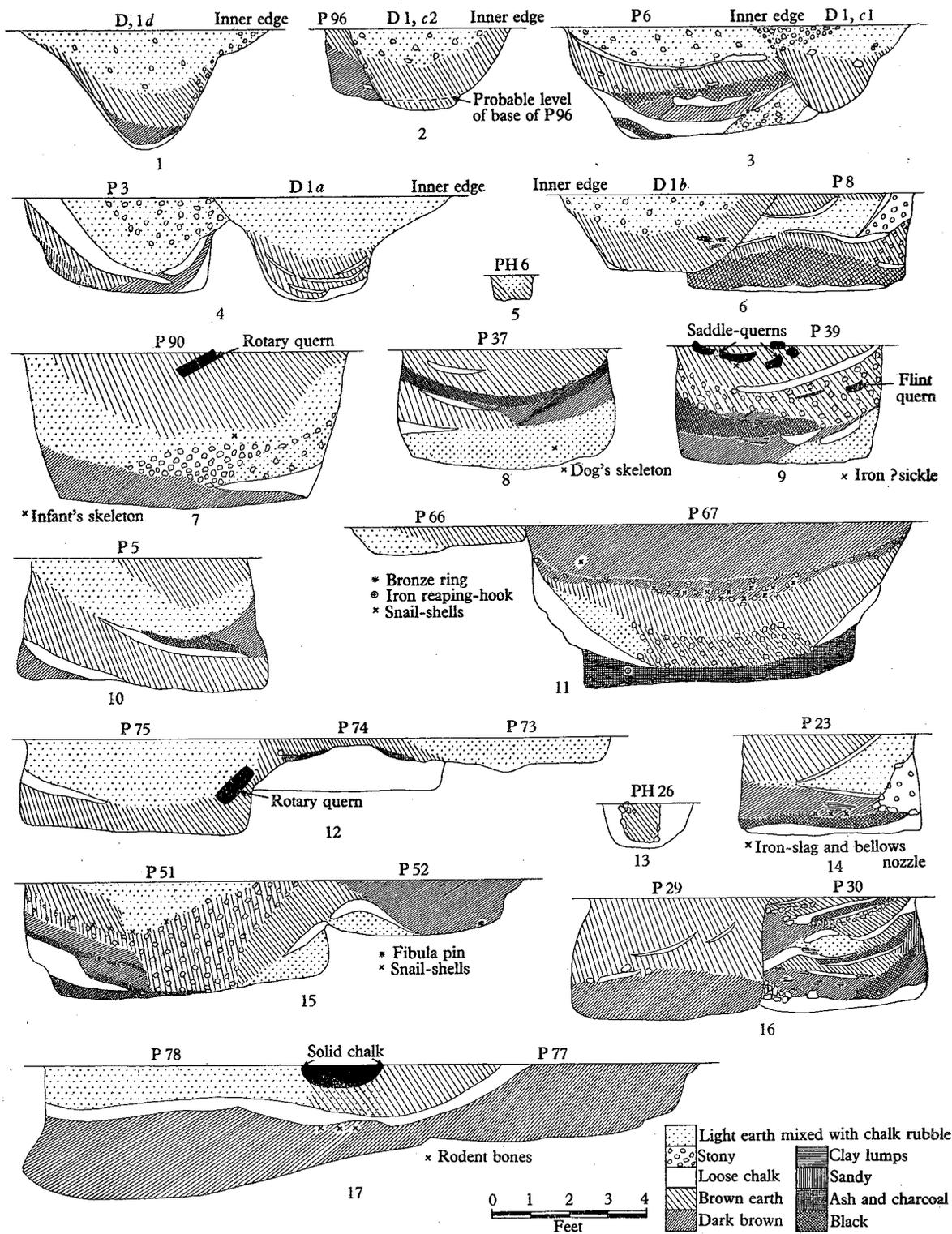


Fig. 6.

suggested by Bersu in his report on Little Woodbury,¹ was that the pits were corn silos, which were filled with whatever rubbish happened to be lying around the settlement, when they became 'sour' or weevilly with age and use.

In this connexion, it is interesting to compare modern primitive underground storage of grain.² In Somaliland and in northern Nigeria, pits of comparable size to our Iron Age ones are used. These are lined with straw, or chaff and grass-matting, and filled with grain to slightly above ground-level. The top is sealed with several layers of the lining material and earth, perhaps alternating, and built up to a shallow dome, so that water runs off it. Dung and clay are also used as sealing materials. Admittedly, these are low rainfall areas, but when it does come, the rain is in heavy showers, on the face of it more likely to damage such pits; but almost no wastage is reported from water penetration. Corn so stored is not parched beforehand, and is reported to keep perfectly well for 3 years or even longer—though 12 months is more usual. However, once a pit has been opened, it is best to empty it immediately, to avoid infestation by insects.

It would thus seem that corn-storage is the most likely explanation of the time and trouble taken by the people of Barley in digging so large a number of pits.

On the other hand there is evidence from the Iron Age that some pits had been intended to hold rubbish from the first;³ indeed domestic refuse of this nature would have been very valuable as manure for the fields. Which purpose was served by the Barley pits is uncertain—but most probably both. No sign of any sort of a fixed lining of wattle could be found in any pit, such as was seen at Conderton; but this does not preclude the possibility that there was a loose lining of brushwood or straw—at least for the corn-storage pits—of which no trace remains. A few of the shallow, irregular pits (never those with a chalk rubble filling) did however have a thin hard skin of dark brown material on the floor and sides; this scraped off in flakes, and could possibly have been a deposit from the rubbish in the pit, when it was fresh. If this is so, it would appear that such pits at least were used for the storage of manure rather than corn.

The rubbish contained many potsherds, but—as might be expected—no unbroken pots (see App. I). Several complete pots could be reconstructed, however, and it was noticeable that the sherds of one pot often came from several different pits. Thus it looks as if some form of midden existed, upon which rubbish could become scattered in the course of a short time, even if on occasion the refuse was put into a pit immediately. Another feature in favour of a midden is that many of the pits had been filled with a mixture of rubbish and chalk-rubble, which would have been useless as manure (e.g. P 30; Fig. 6, 16). Again, there is the case of the dog's skeleton in P 71. Although the complete skeleton was there, and most of it in articulation, the skull and lower jaw were behind the spine and below the breast respectively, and the shoulder-blades were not in position. I can think of no satisfactory explanation for

¹ *Proc. Prehist. Soc.* vol. VI (1940), p. 60.

² *Colonial Research Studies*, no. 21: *Underground Storage of Grain*.

³ Excavation of Danes Camp, Conderton, Glos., by N. Thomas.

this curious state of affairs, except that the creature had been lying out on the midden long enough to have largely rotted away, so that when finally thrown into the pit the skeleton partially disintegrated.

The conclusion seems to be that the pit fillings fall into three groups. First the clean chalk rubble, presumably dug out in the course of preparing a new pit. This was probably used to fill up an old corn-storage pit, since there seems to be no reason why one for keeping manure should not continue in use as long as required.

Secondly, mixed rubble and rubbish fills; these resulted either from deliberate filling from different sources (P 30), or occasionally from the collapse of the walls of the pit itself, after which the remaining hole was filled with rubbish (P 51). In any case the purpose of filling the pits must have been the same as in the first group, and the pits may thus be disused corn silos.

Thirdly, fillings composed of pure rubbish (e.g. P 29; Fig. 6, 16; Pl. V, *c*, *e*)—although this was rarely homogeneous throughout the pit, but showed traces of having come from different sources. Here again the pits may have been first used for corn-storage, as in groups one and two; on the other hand, they may equally well have been manure pits. A small proportion of this group are stained at the bottom with the dark skin on the surface of the chalk (p. 30); this staining may perhaps be caused by the storage of manure.

One pit (P 67; Fig. 6, 11), although it fell into the second group, deserves a separate description. This was one of the largest pits, being 10 ft. in diameter and 4 ft. 6 in. deep; it had been cut through the previously existing P 66 on one edge. The side-walls of P 67 had fallen in over the bottom layer (of which more below), and the pit had then been filled with mixed chalk and rubbish—in other words, chalky earth containing a good many animal bones. This filling had not been consolidated, so that it soon subsided, leaving a hollow about 2 ft. deep at the centre; there was time for a large number of snails to gather in this hollow, before it was finally filled up to the top with dirty chalk. This later sequence of events is quite usual for many of the Barley pits; what was of interest was the bottom layer and the possible cause of the collapse of the side walls.

The whole of the bottom of the pit was covered with a layer of solid fine ash, between 5 in. and 12 in. thick, varying from black to pinkish-buff; and it was on top of this ash layer that the pit walls had fallen. Moreover, the actual chalk on the floor of the pit was stained a blackish grey—quite unlike the brown skin noted earlier as occurring in some other pits. When one considers what a lot of material is needed to produce a little ash, and how much ash itself can be compressed, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that the whole contents of P 67 must at some point have caught fire. We experimented by burning three large bales of straw (kindly provided by Mr Wilkerson) in one of the other smaller pits—a fire which lasted only half-an-hour or so, and cannot have generated so great a heat; but even this did turn the surface of the chalk a curious pale blue-grey. However, it produced only a very small quantity of ash compared with the amount in P 67.

On closer examination of the ash in P 67, it was found to contain a good many cereal grains together with other seeds. Immediately on the floor of the pit, there were at one spot traces of a burnt log or plank—a possible indication that the corn-storage pits were in fact lined. The cause of the fire was perhaps spontaneous combustion, due to heating of damp corn, which may possibly not have been threshed, but stored in the ear. It is hard to think how else such a fire could have been started. Arguing against this interpretation is the presence in the ash-layer of a reaping-hook and several large potsherds, all showing traces of burning; many of these sherds belonged to one pot (Pl. VII, *b*), but from their different individual colouring had clearly been refired after the pot was broken—presumably in the conflagration which produced the ash-layer.

OTHER FEATURES

The 'granary'. Near the bottom of the site were four large postholes, standing in a square about 8 ft. across (Fig. 4); one showed the line of the post itself in the section (Fig. 6, 13). This little structure is an exact parallel, in type and scale, with the 'granaries' on stilts found at Little Woodbury¹ and at Wandlebury.² However, if the corn could be successfully stored in pits without being first parched to prevent germination—as is apparently possible (see p. 30)—the necessity for seed-corn granaries seems to disappear, and another explanation for these structures should perhaps be sought. If the tentative interpretation suggested above to explain the ash in P 67 is correct, this would seem to confirm that unparched corn was stored underground.

The runnel. This unexplained feature (R 3) joined pits 12 and 101 (Fig. 4). From their chalky earth content, all three appeared to have been filled at one time.

The tunnel. This ran between P 77 and P 78 (Fig. 4), which were otherwise perfectly ordinary pits (Fig. 6, 17 and Pl. V, *a*). No obvious explanation of this feature has occurred to me. The fill of pits and tunnel was similar, except for large quantities of small rodent bones in the tunnel.

THE BONES

A word more should perhaps be said on the animal bones found in the pits. The bulk are discarded food bones and have been much broken up. But there are several cases of large parts of a skeleton—a leg, or most of the spine of an ox, for instance—being found still in articulation. The explanation of these has not yet suggested itself. Two complete dogs were found³ and many cows' skulls. Horn-cores, both of cow and

¹ *Proc. Prehist. Soc.* vol. VI (1940), p. 97.

² *Proc. C.A.S.* vol. L (1957), p. 13.

³ Complete dog skeletons: P 71 and a second in P 37 (Fig. 6, 8 and Pl. VI, *f*). In contrast to the P 71 dog, that from P 37, although lying amongst the general rubbish in the pit, had its entire skeleton in articulation.

sheep, were often seen to have saw-cuts near the base; possibly these were made in the course of cutting off the horn, which could of course be turned to many uses. The chief species were:

Sheep or goat.

Cow (very little below modern size).

Horse.

Pig (a few only).

Red deer (very few examples).

Birds (as yet unidentified, but probably poultry, except one wild duck).

Small rodents (in large numbers).

A metrical and statistical analysis is at present being carried out on these bones by Mr E. S. Higgs of the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology—all identifiable examples having been kept. It is hoped that eventually they will form a standard sample for the study of Iron Age domestic animals in lowland Britain.

No human remains were found, apart from those of a tiny infant in P 90 (Fig. 6, 7), (see App. II). This was a complete skeleton, but had been put into the pit together with the usual selection of rubbish. It is perhaps interesting to compare this with the curious, often partly dismembered, but obviously deliberate burials found in the Wandlebury pits.¹

OTHER FINDS

The pottery, which formed the bulk of the finds after the bones, is dealt with separately (see App. I).

Iron tools formed the most striking section of the other finds, although there were not many of them. But both the saw and the pruning-hook (Pl. VIII, *a, b*) are useful and efficient tools. Slight traces of iron-working were found on the site, in the shape of a few small lumps of iron-bloom in one or two pits, and a clay tuyère-cap, or bellows-nozzle (P 23; Fig. 6, 14; Pl. IX, *m*), such as was used in simple forging.²

IRON WORK

1. Saw (P 14; Pl. VIII, *a*). This is typical of those used in Britain shortly before the Roman conquest,³ and may be compared with examples from Glastonbury, Hunsbury and other Iron Age sites.⁴

Two features are worth noting: the leading end has finer teeth, and the teeth themselves slope backwards, so that the cut was on the pull—not on the push as in a modern saw; this would be necessary to prevent snapping, when using untempered metal.⁵

¹ *Proc. C.A.S.* vol. L (1957), p. 14.

² Similar objects have been found at Sussex Iron Age sites, e.g. Crowhurst Park, *Sussex Arch. Coll.* vol. LXXIX (1938), p. 226.

³ *Practical Education and School Crafts* (January 1959): W. L. Goodman, 'History of Woodworking Tools; The Saw (2)'.
⁴ *Glastonbury Lake Village*, vol. II, p. 371.

⁵ This saw exactly fits the cut-marks noticed on several horn-cores (see top of page).

2. Pruning or reaping-hook (ash-layer, P 67; Pl. VIII, *b*). This is similar to a Roman hook from the Worlington hoard, Suffolk (Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology 55. 131, *f*) and to modern fenland reed-cutters. Compare also the Iron Age hook from Linton, with an antler handle.¹ A fragment of the wooden handle can be seen attached to the rivets.
3. Fragment, possibly from the tip of a scythe or sickle (P 39; Pl. VIII, *d*).
4. Iron sheath or tip, perhaps off a digging-tool of some kind (P 85; Pl. VIII, *c*).

Flint work appeared to be almost non-existent, but bone was commonly used. This was on the whole not particularly skilfully worked, the most ordinary tools being sharp points or awls made from one end of a long bone (Pl. IX, *e, f, g, k*).

There was also a bone 'gouge' (P 32; Pl. IX, *i*) and a bone 'chisel' (P 37; Pl. IX, *j*) and two bone needles or bodkins (P 71; P 36; Pl. IX, *h, l*).

Two small rectangular plaques, each with three holes irregularly placed, were found; they are made of a piece of rib-bone. Their purpose is unknown, but might conceivably have been archers' wrist-guards (P 67; P 70; Pl. IX, *p, q*).²

One piece was probably a toggle, made from a sheep's metapodial, pierced (P 70; Pl. IX, *o*).

A curiously shaped bone object (P 11; Pl. IX, *n*) might be a 'sleeve' or 'ferrule' used in hafting some metal tool.

Only one ornamental bone piece was found and this was a tiny fragment, unfortunately burnt, with a pattern of neatly incised concentric circles (P 95; Pl. VIII, *i*).

Of objects of adornment there were only three: a dog's canine (P 75; Pl. VIII, *f*) pierced for suspension, a spiral bronze ring and the pin of a bronze fibula.

BRONZE OBJECTS

1. Spiral bronze finger-ring: a typical Iron Age pattern (P 67; Pl. VIII, *e*).
2. Bronze needle, found in PH 27 one of the 'granary' postholes (Pl. VIII, *g*).
3. Bronze fibula pin with iron 'hinge' (P 52; Pl. VIII, *h*).

There are three possible reconstructions of this fibula:³

(i) A penannular brooch with iron hoop; this seems rather unlikely, and in any case, if of mixed metals, it is usually the pin that is of iron.

(ii) A La Tène I or II brooch. There are instances of these with rods through the spring.⁴

(iii) 'Poor man's brooch' of the first century A.D. It is also possible that only half the spring is left and that there should be a couple of coils on the other side of the pin as well; but there is no visible evidence of this.

Cloth, presumably woollen, was evidently made, as one complete and several fragmentary loom-weights were found; these were of the typical Iron Age variety, of daub, heavy and triangular (Pl. IX, *d*). No weaving-combs were found, but several

¹ *Proc. C.A.S.* vol. xxvi (1923-4), p. 132.

² They look like miniature versions of the gadgets used to tighten the guy-ropes of tents.

³ With acknowledgements to Mrs. Elizabeth Fowler.

⁴ *Proc. Prehist. Soc.* vol. xxv (1960), p. 163.

spindle-whorls; these, however, were all extremely crude, being made either of rough lumps of chalk, or old potsherds (Pl. IX, *a, b, c*).

Finally, mention should be made of the querns, of which thirteen were found. Eleven of these were rough saddle-querns, some upper and some lower stones (Pl. VI, *c*); all were made of glacial erratics, except three, of which one was a large septarian nodule, and two were big flint blocks (Pl. VI, *a*). The querns were thrown into the rubbish-pits—in one case there were six in one pit—together with large numbers of burnt stones (Fig. 6, 9). The last two querns were, however, not saddle-, but rotary-querns (Pl. VI, *b, d*; Fig. 6, 12). This is in itself surprising in an Iron Age A context, particularly as they are of the flat, 'Roman' type, rather than beehive-shaped such as were found at Hunsbury. They both appear to be bottom stones, and show definite signs of wear; they are 13 and 14 in. in diameter respectively, the larger being $2\frac{1}{2}$ in. thick, and the other $4\frac{1}{2}$ in.

The only other finds were considerable numbers of small fragments of burnt daub; some of these showed the marks of wattle running through them. What this was used for is uncertain, but there are several possibilities. The walls of the houses may have been wattle and daub. The grain-storage pits might have been sealed with clay, though in this case the wattle seems rather unnecessary. The fragments may be from the temporary covering of pottery kilns; the irregular firing of the pottery suggests that these must have been rather primitive in construction.

THE 1960 SITE

During 1960 Mr Wilkerson cleared and excavated a second area, 50 by 60 ft., nearer the top of the hill (Figs. 2, 5). This revealed thirty-one pits, similar to those already found. The pottery was of the same type, but there was very much less of it, in most pits only a few sherds. The only exception was pit 127, which had an almost complete jar resting on the floor of the pit (Pl. VII, *d*).

The animal bones, on the other hand, turned up in the usual large quantities, and there were several cases of whole joints having been thrown in intact.

PITS G, T, V AND W

In the course of trying to determine the total extent of the site—which appears to extend over a large part of the field—several outlying pits were examined, both on the top of the hill at the northern end of the field, and at the opposite, downhill end.

In four of these (Fig. 2) small sherds of Roman pottery were found, though to all appearances the pits were exactly similar to those in the excavations. Pit G was in fact two intersecting pits, filled with very black earth, near the top of which were two small sherds of coarse-ware.

Pit T was a large circular pit, 8 ft. across by 4 ft. deep, and amongst the bones and other rubbish with which it had been filled, was a sherd of coarse-ware. Pit V, again two intersecting pits, produced a sherd of a folded beaker together with a coarse-ware sherd.

Finally, pit W had a large pile of black earth in its centre, near the bottom of which were many pieces of what appeared to be egg-shell, a triangular clay loom-weight, and a large sherd of 'Samian' form 18; the potter's stamp (OFM—) was a short one but the name was unfortunately broken away; it is probably of the late first century A.D.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The excavation so far has shown that the Aldwick site is an Iron Age agricultural settlement of considerable extent, and apparently unfortified. Its inhabitants were typical farmers of the period, engaged in arable cultivation and stock-raising in quite large quantities.

What dating evidence there is seems to indicate a starting-point somewhere in the second century B.C. and a possible continuation of the same pattern of living until well after the Roman conquest. It is uncertain whether in fact the site was continuously inhabited for as long as this, or whether the initial date should not be lowered.

Contacts with the outside world seem to have been moderately good, at least so far as South-eastern Britain and the East Midlands (see App. I). But Belgic influence is practically non-existent. Except for this, the pottery can be paralleled in other sites in the region.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Apart from Mr Wilkerson, whose continued and active interest in the excavation is, I hope, apparent from this report, thanks are due to all those who gave freely of their time and energy. In particular I should like to mention Mr Roy Sapsed for his kindness in clearing and filling back the excavation, and Mr E. S. Higgs of the University Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology for his help and advice; also Mr G. E. Connah for assistance with the planning of the site, and Mr P. Ozanne and Mr C. B. Denston for working on the pottery and the human bones. The co-operation of Dr G. H. S. Bushnell and the Museum staff was also invaluable, and essential to the completion of the undertaking.

APPENDIX I

THE POTTERY

P. C. OZANNE

The excavation produced a very large quantity of Iron Age pottery, which would all appear to belong to the final stages of the period. Comparison of pit assemblages failed to reveal any differences which might have a chronological validity, except perhaps in one case, discussed below. Thus although the variety of form is quite wide, there is no reason to assume that the several types and sub-types were not contemporaneous.

These forms are, with a few exceptions, of the same character as the material from the Wandlebury hill-fort.¹ The vast majority are bowls and jars with rounded shoulders; the latter vary between a strongly pronounced curve and a very slight swelling. The necks are upright or slightly everted, and in most cases the rim has been emphasized by rolling, internal thickening, or both; a few simple rims occur in this form, however, like Wandlebury no. 55. The base-forms of this class also vary; many are simple, but the angle of others is coarsely exaggerated laterally into a swelling around the foot. A few fragments of vertical handles (Fig. 7, 29) probably belong to large vessels of this class.

A second major type is represented only in fragments, and seems to have been a wide-mouthed bowl with curved shoulder and plain everted rim, cf. Wandlebury no. 28. This type was disproportionately represented in pit 37, being rare in other pits; the suggestion that it is a comparatively early form is strengthened by its close similarity to 'degenerate' bowls of Maiden Castle 'A' type.²

The fabric is usually of a fairly smooth paste, with finely ground temper consisting mainly of crushed flint or local glacial pebble, but occasionally with a little vegetal temper; the presence of the latter has usually made the pottery very friable, although the majority of the sherds are hard. The colour varies widely even within one pot, most sherds being black but many being oxidized to browns and light red or orange-buff.

Burnishing of the surface is very common, being found on over 40% of the rim-sherds, and equally represented on the various forms; it is, however, rarer on the larger jars, many of which have the surface roughened by scoring or by grass impressions—a technique most typical of Miss Kenyon's³ Trent Basin group, but well represented in our area by vessels from Thriplow,⁴ Wangford,⁵ Chesterford,⁶ and elsewhere.

The treatment of the internal surface varies similarly. Very careful smoothing is more common on, but not restricted to, the smaller bowls; it is not confined to those vessels with burnished outer surface, and does occur on some of the large pots with roughened outer surface. In a few cases a thin layer of very fine red paste is found on the inside, which is difficult to understand; it may be an accidental slip formed by smoothing the interior with the aid of water.

It is interesting to note that several sherds, especially fragments of small brown burnished bowls, have fractured within the core, the two surfaces coming apart; the same feature was noticed on sherds of similar type and finish at Thriplow.⁷ At Barley it seems to be connected with certain rare vessels with tooled decoration, considered below.

With few exceptions, decoration is restricted to the rims of the bowls and jars with vertical or slightly everted necks. Of these, 30% have some form of incision or impression, but in no case does this ornament occur on a burnished pot. The proportions of decorative devices on the rims are approximately:

- (i) Finger-tip impression (Fig. 7, 53): 42 per cent.
- (ii) Radial incision or finger-nail impression (Fig. 7, 50): 26 per cent.
- (iii) Wide-spaced oblique incision (Fig. 7, 48): 11 per cent.
- (iv) Close-spaced oblique incision (Fig. 7, 11): 7 per cent.
- (v) Irregular scoring (Fig. 7, 20): 7 per cent.

¹ *Proc. C.A.S.* vol. L (1957), pp. 16-17.

² *Maiden Castle*, p. 195, fig. 56, 7-11.

³ *Inst. Arch. Rep.* vol. VIII, pp. 67-73. Compare the Lower Thames version, *ibid.* p. 66.

⁴ *Proc. C.A.S.* vol. XLIX (1956), p. 6, fig. 3, 10.

⁵ *Proc. C.A.S.* vol. LI (1958), p. 22, fig. 3, 2.

⁶ C. Fox, *Archaeology of the Cambridge Region*, p. 94.

⁷ *Proc. C.A.S.* vol. XLIX (1956), p. 8.

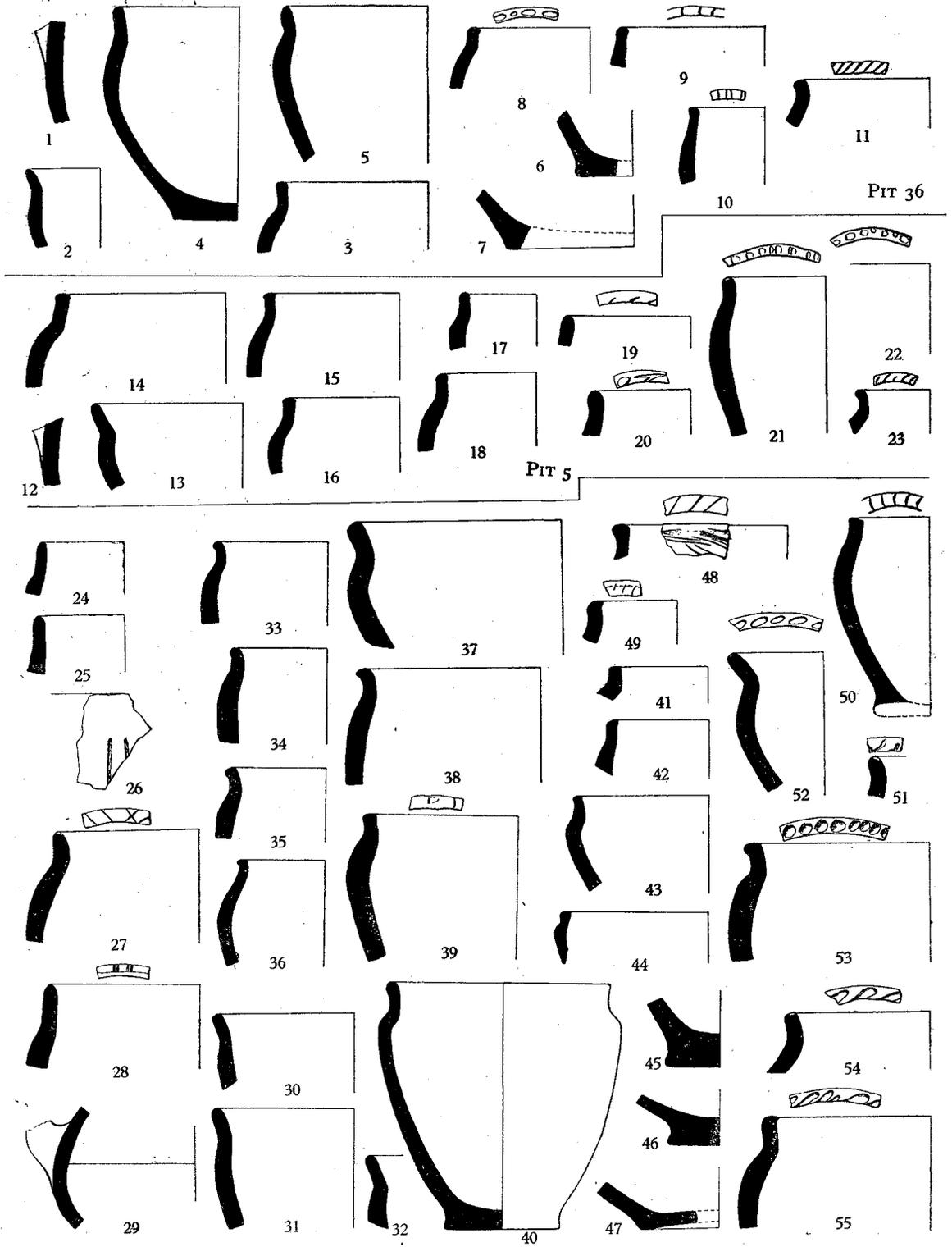


Fig. 7 (quarter natural size).

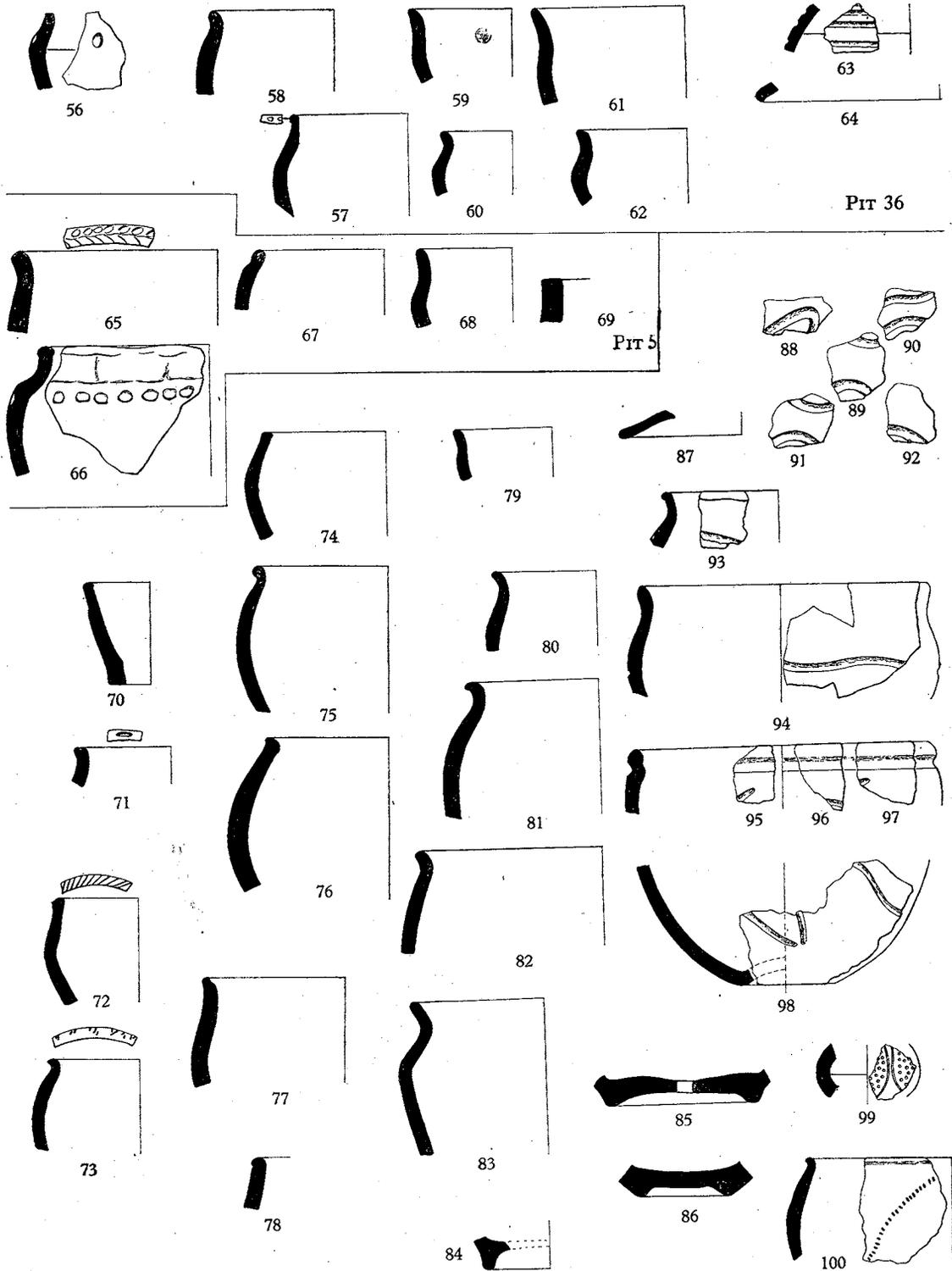


Fig. 8 (quarter natural size).

- (vi) Longitudinal stabs (Fig. 8, 71): 5 per cent.
- (vii) Small pits on the outer face of rolled rim (Fig. 8, 57; only example).
- (viii) The rim of one vessel (Fig. 8, 65) was peaked in section, with a line of finger-tip impressions on both the internal and the external slope.

Finger-tip impressions on the shoulder were found on two sherds, one (Fig. 8, 66) being part of a bowl of irregular shape with rolled rim and very irregular surface; in this case the impressions were deep, forming a continuous line around the maximum circumference.

UNUSUAL FORMS

Apart from the main range of types, a number of more distinctive forms were found:

- (i) A few bowls with sharply everted rims (Fig. 8, 83).
- (ii) A biconical form with everted lip (Fig. 8, 82).
- (iii) A vessel somewhat similar to the last, but with a burnished surface and an internal groove to the rim (Fig. 8, 77).
- (iv) A few globular bowls, whose rims are either thickened into an oval section, gently rolled, slightly everted, or, in one case, 'beaded' by a shallow groove (Fig. 8, 74-6, and 78).
- (v) A low but well-made foot-ring, probably belonging to a globular bowl with everted rim (Fig. 8, 84).
- (vi) A gently dished base from a wide bowl (Fig. 8, 98).
- (vii) A wide, low-bellied bowl with internally thickened and lipped rim, to which the dished base may belong (Fig. 8, 95-7).
- (viii) A few very coarse small 'crucibles' of flower-pot and barrel shapes (Fig. 8, 70).
- (ix) Two rim-sherds which appear to be possibly lids (Fig. 8, 87).

Three forms of body decoration were found in very small quantities, apart from the finger-tip impression described above. First, several of the globular bowls ((iv) and (vii) above) bore tooled decoration, either as a straight line dividing the body into two plain zones (Fig. 8, 63), or forming meander patterns (Fig. 8, 88-98). Secondly, a squat wide-bodied cup was decorated by a scroll-design outlined by incision and filled by punched dots containing chalk, which may be original (Fig. 8, 99). Thirdly, one sherd from the topsoil, a fragment of a well-made 'saucepan'-shaped vessel, was ornamented with a 'rouletted' or 'comb-impressed' design (Fig. 8, 100).

DISCUSSION

Although the similarities between the Barley pottery and the Wandlebury types are very strong, certain general differences can be detected. First, the proportion of decorated rims is much higher at Barley, and the number of vessels with finger-tip impressions on the shoulder very much lower. Secondly, Barley has produced no examples of offset grooves to the shoulder, a feature well represented at Wandlebury,¹ where it seems to be a degenerate version of the grooved shoulder characteristic of the earlier Iron Age of the region, as seen at Linton² and Fengate.³ Thirdly, the Iron Age 'A' incised decoration found at Wandlebury⁴ is not found at Barley. It is thus probable that Barley should be given a later initial date than Wandlebury; conventional schemes would suggest some time in the second century B.C.

¹ *Proc. C.A.S.* vol. L (1957), p. 16, no. 11, and p. 17, no. 45.

² *Proc. C.A.S.* vol. XLVI (1953), p. 36, no. 25.

³ *Arch. J.* vol. C (1943), p. 200.

⁴ *Proc. C.A.S.* vol. L (1957), p. 16, nos. 6, 9.

The presence of a Samian sherd in one pit (pit W, p. 36 above), although not in association with earlier material, suggests that the site was continuously inhabited up to and after the Roman conquest. The absence of wheel-turned pottery of 'Belgic' type is not necessarily a point of objection to this survival. This technique is essentially one of a specialized worker, suitable for mass-production within the new towns, and there is no reason to assume that all outlying farms should, like Abington Pigotts,¹ either adopt the technique or buy their pottery in the towns.

A chronological link with the wheel-turned pottery of Abington Pigotts is provided by the sherd with 'rouletted' ornament.² This sherd is also of interest in that it is one of several which all suggest close connexions with South-eastern England. Although the technique is found at Hengistbury (Class F),³ the best parallels are in late contexts in Ward-Perkins's 'South-eastern B' group⁴—for example, Horsted Keynes,⁵ Crowhurst Park⁶ and Kingston Buc.⁷ The globular bowl with gently S-profiled form, probably provided with a low foot-ring like Wandlebury no. 24, is the same as the typical vessel of Ward-Perkins's 'Wealden Culture';⁸ the two elements—base and body—are found separately in sherds from Linton⁹ and Hunsbury,¹⁰ and indicate a close similarity of tradition between the Weald and our region. The tooled decoration of our globular vessels corresponds in general to that on the scroll-ornamented bowls of Hunsbury,¹¹ especially in the division of the body into two zones (also found at Fengate);¹² but the best comparisons come from the Caburn¹³ and, to a lesser extent, Newhaven,¹⁴ in contexts 'parallel (to the Wealden Culture)'. Newhaven also provides an exact analogy to our squat pot with punctate ornament,¹⁵ regarded by Hawkes as belonging to 'South-eastern B'—and examples from the Caburn closely resemble our sharply everted rims ((i) above)¹⁶ and biconical cup (ii).¹⁷ The low-bellied bowl (vii) with dished base (vi) is similar to a typical vessel of 'South-eastern B'.¹⁸

The similarity between the earliest Iron Age material of the Caburn and of Fengate has recently been mentioned by Dr Hodson¹⁹ and myself,²⁰ and Miss Kenyon has emphasized the Lower Thames—East Anglia connexion in the ensuing period.²¹ It is now clear that throughout the Iron Age this whole region developed along similar lines, sharing many traditions although retaining many local peculiarities. It is certain that in the Cambridge Region there was a continuous development of one culture; the only marked innovations were of rare types, both in pottery and metalwork, and consequently the term 'Iron Age B' can only be applied to such details, without any conception of a definite change in culture.

The parallels between our area and the south-east at the end of the Iron Age are sufficiently strong to question the validity of Ward-Perkins's 'Wealden' and 'South-eastern B' cultures. In defining these, Ward-Perkins restricted his distribution maps to the south-eastern counties; extension of the area studied, however, reduces their significance. The typical glass bead type of the Wealden Culture is found at Weekley²² and Hunsbury²³ in Northamptonshire, and the pottery

¹ *P.P.S.E.A.* vol. IV, pp. 211–33.

³ *Hengistbury Head*, pl. XXI, p. 42.

⁵ *Sussex Arch. Coll.* vol. LXXVIII (1937), p. 258, no. 12.

⁶ *Sussex Arch. Coll.* vol. LXXIX (1938), p. 231, no. 11.

⁷ *Sussex Arch. Coll.* vol. LXXII (1931), p. 196, 25.

⁸ *Arch. Cant.* vol. LI, p. 158, fig. 7.

¹⁰ *Arch. J.* vol. XCIII (1937), p. 90, B1.

¹² *Arch. J.* vol. C (1943), p. 209, R4, R6.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* p. 284, fig. 4a.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* p. 260, no. 25.

¹⁸ *Proc. Prehist. Soc.* vol. IV (1938), p. 163, fig. 9, 8.

¹⁹ *Antiquity* (1960).

²¹ *Inst. Arch. Rep.* vol. VIII, p. 59.

²² *Arch. J.* vol. XCIII (1937), p. 68.

² *P.P.S.E.A.* vol. IV, pl. v, c, d.

⁴ *Proc. Prehist. Soc.* vol. IV (1938), pp. 154–6.

⁹ *Proc. C.A.S.* vol. XLVI (1953), p. 36, nos. 20, 27.

¹¹ *Arch. J.* vol. XCIII (1937), p. 75.

¹³ *Sussex Arch. Coll.* vol. LXXX (1939), p. 253.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* p. 285, fig. 5, 8.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* p. 261, fig. M.

²⁰ *Antiquity* (March 1961).

²³ *Ibid.* p. 68.

types are, as we have seen, widely scattered. The most probable interpretation seems to be that the predominance of various types in different areas was due to the extent of influence upon the underlying culture of either Wessex decorated saucepan traditions (most marked in Sussex), or Kentish wheel-turned pottery (mainly influencing East Kent and West Sussex), whilst in the depths of the Weald and north of the Thames the influence of both was very weak.

Figs. 7 and 8

A complete selection of all pottery forms found in two pits has been illustrated, in order to emphasize that individual pit assemblages seem to have no chronological significance so far as the pottery is concerned.

Pit 36: Fig. 7, 1-11 and Fig. 8, 56-64.

Pit 5: Fig. 7, 12-23 and Fig. 8, 65-9.

A. Bowls or jars with rounded shoulders and simple, more or less upright rims; compare Wandlebury, no. 55.¹ The fabric is usually unburnished:

Fig. 7, 24; coarse fabric: P 62.

25; P 4.

26; vertical grass striations on the body: P 49.

27; oblique incisions on top of the rim: P 33.

28; irregularly spaced incisions on the outer slope of the rim: P 35.

B. Vertical handles, probably belonging to vessels similar to the above:

Fig. 7, 1 and 12.

29; P 6.

C. Wide-mouthed bowls with curved shoulder and plain everted rim: compare Wandlebury, no. 28.² The fabric varies from coarse to burnished:

Fig. 7, 2; coarse fabric.

13; several fragments of similar rims were found in this pit; some were burnished, others not.

30-2; P 59.

D. Jars, often large, with rounded shoulders, either pronounced or very slight; the necks are upright or slightly everted, and the rims vary from everted rolled examples, to flat-topped ones with internal or external thickening, or both. The fabric is generally unburnished, and varies from reddish to dark brown, often irregularly fired. The bodies of these jars often bear heavy irregular scorings or grass brush marks, and the rims are ornamented in many cases:

Fig. 7, 3 and 14-16.

33; P 62.

34; P 14.

35; P 30.

36; P 67.

37; P 49.

38; P 40.

39; finger-tipping on top of rim: P 49.

¹ *Proc. C.A.S.* vol. L (1957), pp. 16-17.

² *Ibid.*

Pl. VII, *a*; vertical grass brushings on body: P 70.

b; P 67: ash-layer; note differential colouring of individual sherds, due to refiring after breakage. Radial finger-nail incisions on rim (see Fig. 7, 50).

c; sherds of this jar were found both in P 5 and P 6. The rim has slightly oblique, longitudinal finger-nail incisions on top. The body is scored in a rough 'arcading' pattern, perhaps slightly reminiscent of Belgian 'combed' ware.

E. Jars similar to the above, but burnished and undecorated; the ware tends to be blacker, but firing is still ill-regulated:

Fig. 7, 4, 5, and 17, 18.

40; complete jar, reconstructed: P 70.

41; P 59.

42; P 67.

43; P 40.

44; P 48.

Pl. VII, *d*; P 127.

F. Bases from all the foregoing groups: they vary from simple forms, to ones with heavy lateral or basal exaggeration. Most are flat but occasionally they are slightly concave:

Fig. 7, 4, 6, 7.

45; P 59.

46; P 111.

47; burnished and concave: P 29.

G. Examples of decorated rims:

(i) Finger-tip impressions:

Fig. 7, 8 and 21, 22.

52, 53; P 48.

These are sometimes placed so as to give an effect of cabling:

Fig. 7, 54; P 39.

55; P 37.

(ii) Radial incisions, often made with the finger-nails:

Fig. 7, 9, 10.

49; P 40.

50; P 67 (see section D above and Pl. VII, *b*).

(iii) Wide-spaced, oblique incision:

Fig. 7, 19.

48; note also irregular scoring of surface: P 14.

(iv) Close-spaced oblique incision:

Fig. 7, 11 and 23.

This also occurs on a little jar found in Hollow Y (Fig. 2):

Fig. 8, 72.

(v) Irregular scoring:

Fig. 7, 20.

51; P 33.

This is also seen on a small finely made pot from P 117:

Fig. 8, 73.

(vi) Longitudinal stabs:

Fig. 8, 71; P 59.

Pl. VII, *c*; this jar was reconstructed from sherds found in P 5 and P 6 (see section D above).

(vii) Small pits on outside edge of rim:

Fig. 8, 57; the only example.

(viii) Peaked rim with finger-tipping on both slopes:

Fig. 8, 65.

H. Finger-impressions on shoulders; only two examples:

Fig. 8, 56 and 66.

I. Globular bowls with flat S-profile; compare Wandlebury no. 24.¹ These tend to be burnished and fired black; they are undecorated:

Fig. 8, 59-62 and 68.

79; P 59.

J. Unusual forms:

(i) Bowl with pronounced shoulder and sharply everted rim:

Fig. 8, 83; burnished: Hollow Y.

(ii) Biconical bowls with everted lip; these are usually burnished:

Fig. 8, 80; P 119.

81; P 130.

82; P 40.

(iii) Similar to the above, but with an internal groove below the rim:

Fig. 8, 77; P 29.

(iv*a*) Globular bowls with slightly thickened, everted, or rolled rims; generally well burnished:

Fig. 8, 58 and 67.

74; D 1, section (*c* 2), or possibly P 96 (see p. 25).

75; P 40.

76; P 67: ash-layer.

(iv*b*) A similar bowl with 'beaded' rim made by a shallow groove below the rim:

Fig. 8, 78; P 60.

Compare Fig. 8, 67.

¹ *Proc. C.A.S.* vol. L (1957), pp. 16-17.

(v) A low foot-ring, burnished:

Fig. 8, 84; P 130.

(vi) A gently dished base with tooled ornament (see section K below); burnished:

Fig. 8, 98; P 71.

(vii) A wide bowl with internally thickened and lipped rim; some fragments of a similar rim have tooled ornament (see section K below); burnished:

Fig. 8, 95; P 4.

96; P 5.

97; P 3.

(viii) Rough, small 'crucibles', poorly made and of irregular form:

Fig. 8, 70; PH 26: one of the 'granary' postholes.

(ix) Possible lids:

Fig. 8, 64.

87; P 49.

(x) A thick, completely square rim.

Fig. 8, 69.

(xi*a*) Bases with a rough concave centre, possibly a crude attempt to imitate a foot-ring:

Fig. 8, 85; P 39.

86; P 6.

(xi*b*) Pierced bases; (cf. Hunsbury¹ and Glastonbury²):

Fig. 8, 85.

K. Tooled decoration:

(i*a*) Dividing the body into straight horizontal zones:

Fig. 8, 63.

(i*b*) Forming meander patterns on the body:

Fig. 8, 88; P 67.

89; P 24.

90, 91, 92, 95; P 4.

93; P 40.

94; P 35.

96; P 5.

97; P 3.

98; P 71.

(ii) Tiny bowl with tooled and punched decoration; the punched dots show possible signs of having been filled with white and red incrustation:

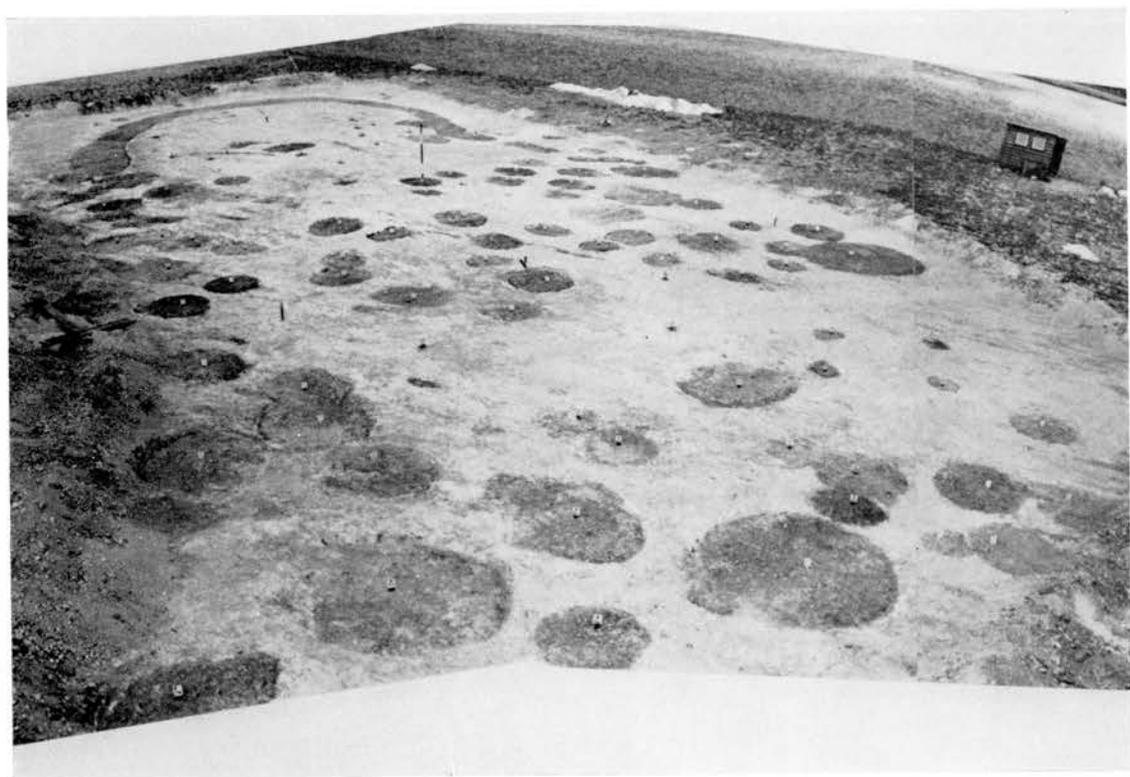
Fig. 8, 99; P 71.

(iii) Burnished black sherd with 'rouletted' ornament; it is doubtful whether this is in fact regular enough to have been made either with a roulette or a comb:

Fig. 8, 100; scraped off the upper surface of one of the pits by the bulldozer.

¹ *Arch. J.* vol. XCIII (1937), pp. 89-90.

² *Glastonbury Lake Village*, vol. II, pp. 516-17.

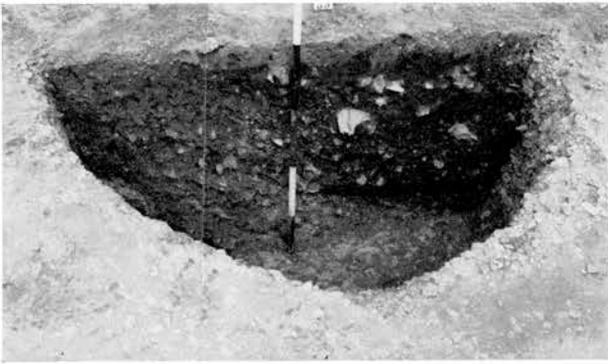




(a)



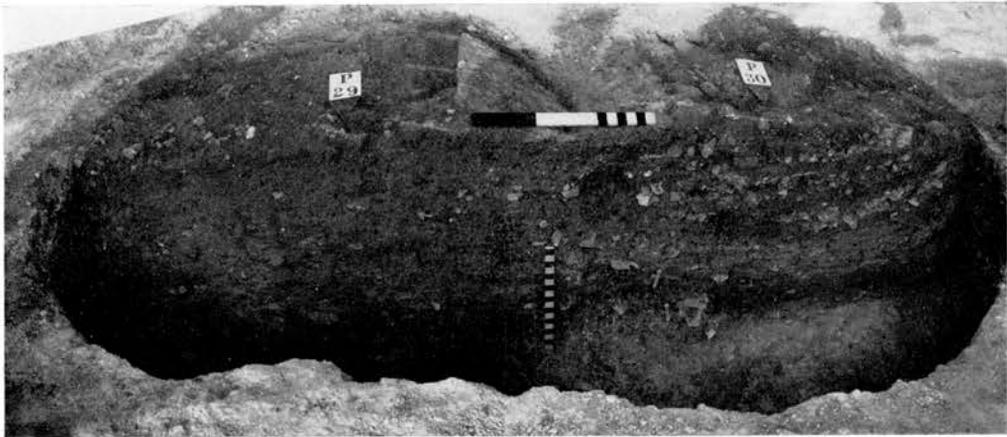
(b)



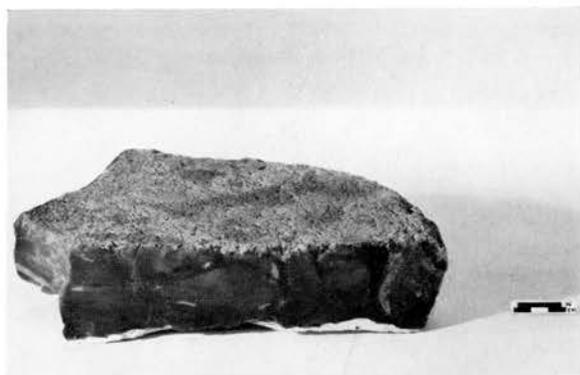
(c)



(d)



(e)



(a)



(b)



(c)



(d)



(e)



(f)

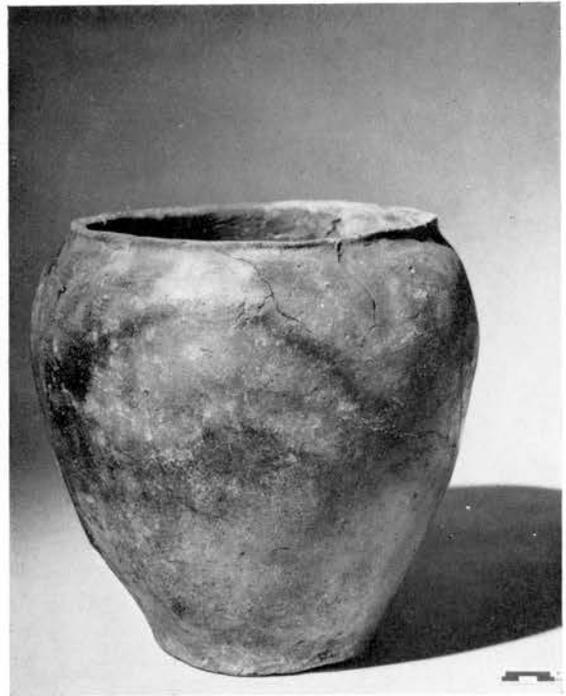


(a)

(b)



(c)



(d)



(a)

(b)

(e)



(c)

(d)



(g)

(h)

(i)

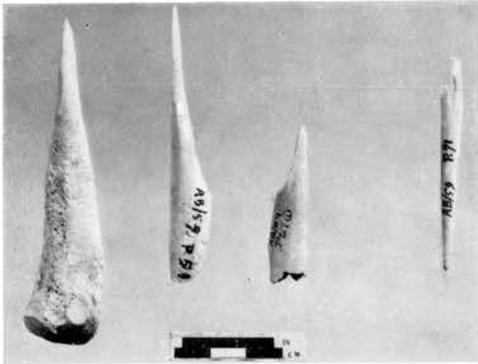
(f)



(a) (b) (c)



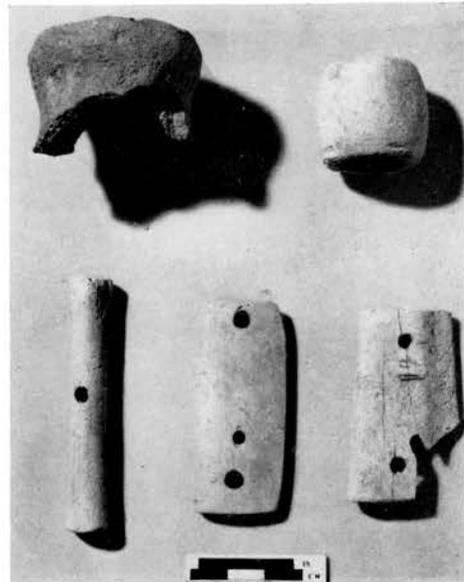
(d)



(e) (f) (g) (h)

(m)

(n)



(o)

(p)

(q)



(i) (j) (k) (l)

APPENDIX II

*Iron Age Skeletal Remains from Barley*¹

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*Duckworth Laboratory of Physical Anthropology,
Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Cambridge*

The remains submitted for examination are in a good state of preservation, just a few being broken. All are slightly discoloured through earth staining.

The bones examined include a nearly complete skull, all long bones of the arms and legs, clavicles, pelvic bones, scapulae, probably all the vertebrae, metacarpals, metatarsals and phalanges, thirteen complete ribs and fragments of others.

(a) *Age*. The bones are those of an infant whose probable age was not more than a few months, as indicated by the following points:

(1) The mandible is still in two halves, suggesting an age of under 6 months.

(2) The crowns of the milk teeth are only about half formed. Judging by modern standards, this suggests an age of no more than 3-4 months, but the infant could have been newly born.

(3) The tympanic ring of the external auditory meatus has started to fuse with the petrous portion of the temporal bone, thus suggesting an age between birth and 2 months.

(4) The anterior fontanelle is very open and there is a noticeable extension along the frontal in midline (but presumably this comes within normal variations). There is not much sign of a posterior fontanelle, suggesting an age 0-2 months.

Summing up the evidence available, one may conclude that the age of the infant probably falls between birth and 4 months, the younger part of the range being more likely.

(b) *Sex*. At this very early age the sex of a person cannot be distinguished from the skeleton.

(c) *Stature*. By laying the bones out in their normal skeletal positions, the total length of the body would seem to have been about 19 in. Comparing this estimate with the height range for modern whites, which at 3 months is 22-25 in. (♂ and ♀), the calculated length for the Barley infant gives weight to the view that it is about new-born.

(d) *Pathology*. There is no obvious evidence of disease or injury.

¹ Found in P 90 (Fig. 6, 7).

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CAMBRIDGE ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY

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