

502fyf.doc, part of Chap. 5 of the FYFOD RPT following 501fyf.doc

Editorial note for the whole monograph: subsoil types with capital letters = Subsoil or bedrock, thus `Chalk` has a specific meaning whereas `chalk` could be used adjectivally, as in `chalk rubble` or would need some explanation e.g. `the post-hole was packed with chalk`).

OD X: ALL OTHER PERIMETER CUTTINGS

With the exceptions highlighted below, none of the cuttings on this second clockwise circuit of the enclosure perimeter are important in themselves except in that they helped define the exact course of the enclosing ditch. None were excavated, except where indicated, below the surface of the bedrock Chalk, typically 9 ins. below the present ground surface under a layer of topsoil and worm-sorted flints (layers 1 and 2). Most were merely sondages or slit trenches designed solely to locate the ditch, and most were dug out, cleaned up, recorded and filled in within a matter of hours.

In that the course of the ditch was defined fairly precisely, along a route which had not been predicted and was certainly not expected, the cuttings were immensely successful at the cost of minimum effort. They also produced the interesting result of adding nothing to the record of features inside (or outside for that matter) the settlement enclosure (*below* p. 00).

Two cuttings on E perimeter: X6 was placed so as to pick up the ditch if it was curving SW towards XI/ B. That it revealed nothing, together with the negative evidence from the long slit trench S from XI/South, suggested strongly that, improbably though it seemed at the time, the E ditch continued S towards the double lynchet track. Hence **X/7** was cut, locating the ditch and exposing its two edges in order to pick up its alignment.

Two cuttings at SE angle: X8 THIS MIGHT BETTER GO ABOVE IF ITS RECORD, ONCE SORTED, PROVES TO CONTAIN A DITCH SECTION RATHER THAN MERELY A LOCATION OF THE DITCH TOP.
THERE CURRENTLY EXISTS A LITTLE CONFUSION BETWEEN THIS AND THE FOLLOWING CUTTING **X/9**

: X9

All cuttings in SW quadrant:

This rash of sondages and slit trenches precisely defined the course of the ditch along an improbable route across a `Celtic` field; and, in finding nothing but the ditch, they implied that this segment of the enclosure did not contain settlement remains. A similar rash of cuttings, however small, in the area of cuttings OD XI/A would certainly have located features other than the ditch. Cuttings X/ ? and

? defined the ditch width by locating its inner edge as well as its outer; all the other cuttings merely located the outer edge at the level of the surface of the Chalk subsoil.

X11

: X12

: 13 tiny cuts

: X13

: X10

Two cuttings into W lynchet were tiny, merely enough right at the end of the `ditch exercise` when it was apparent what was happening, to fix the presence and course of the ditch underneath the lynchet. These sondages were not intended to investigate the lynchet as such. They simply located the outer lip of the ditch, at a time when it was perfectly clear that it had to go under the lynchet if it were to complete its circuit.

In addition to almost completing that circuit, the significance of these sondages is twofold. In demonstrating the presence of the ditch, they implied that the location and shape of the later `Celtic` field was pre-conditioned by the western boundary of the enclosed settlement ((*below* p. and fig. <>). Secondly, they showed that the field was in use and the lynchet accreting after the ditch had been abandoned as a functioning perimeter to an enclosed settlement.

Cutting at 10 ` clock (WHAT IS ITS NUMBER?): the last of the slit trenches, not really necessary but useful to demonstrate the course of the ditch between the two lynchet sondages just described and its already known location in X/5.

(that`s the last of the perimeter cuttings described)

Inferences from all perimeter cuttings

Environment at the time of enclosure construction

The digging of the ditch:

The existence, location and structure of the bank: if it existed, what is the actual evidence for this? What is the basis for the assumption that it was along the inner edge of the ditch? Could it possibly have been outside the ditch?

The size, shape and functions(s) of the enclosure

The question of the entrance(s)

The slit trench at 10 o'clock, together with all the others along this W side of the enclosure, suggests that if there were an entrance on this side, it could only have been between this trench and the nearest lynchet cut to its south. Otherwise, looking at the pattern of perimeter cuttings overall, the two most likely places for an entrance were on the NE, between X/4 and East 4, or on the SE between X/15 and ?? to its W. This suggestion from direct on-site observation is independently reinforced by the observation that entrances of EIA settlement enclosures in Wessex are characteristically on the E or SE *cf.* Bowen and Fowler 1966, fig. 1. No systematic search for an entrance through the ditch of OD/X/XI was, however, made.

The infilling of the ditch

The disappearance of the bank

Subsequent environmental and land-use history directly inferrable from the primary evidence of the perimeter cuttings i.e. without reference to ODXI evidence

EXCAVATION ODXI: the interior of the settlement

Description by area excavated, with inventory of features for each area

XIA:

The excavation of the interior will be described in three blocks: East, East 2 and 3, and South. This is in general the sequence of excavation, though there was some overlap in time : What is now Area East was excavated 1963-67, East 2 and 3 1967-68, and South in 1968.

The area incorporated by Area East involves not just excavations over five successive seasons, 1963-7, but different styles and objectives of serial excavations. First a small cutting was made across the central lynchet in 1963: its main objective was envisaged as stratigraphical but it also produced a small ditch cut into the Chalk subsoil beneath it. This led to a similar trench being cut immediately to its S in 1964. This was to check whether the small ditch or palisade went straight on under the lynchet. It was rather hoped this would be the case since a little marker ditch or footing for a continuous fence would make a convincing addition to the then limited repertoire of `Celtic` field boundaries. It was rather suspected, however, from the slight curve visible in the 4 ft. width of the 1963 cutting that, given the whole of Overton Down to section a lynchet, or more narrowly the whole of a hypothetical settlement in which to test our theory, our very first cutting had chanced to section the chosen lynchet at the point where it overlay a completely unrelated and earlier feature. Such proved to be

the case. We seemed to have accidentally found a palisade trench of a circular structure so a quadrant system was laid out for further excavation, based on the assumed central point of a possible circular feature.

Clearly, at this point the mode of excavation changed from trenches for sections to stripping primarily for evidence in plan. What we are now calling Area East thereafter came to include a small part of the NW quadrant as, in 1965, a 750 ft. length of lynchet was removed primarily to look for post-holes evidencing a fenced boundary to the `Celtic` field. A useful sequence of pits preceding the circular building was also found. In 1966, the whole of the theoretical NE quadrant (!! ft. x !! ft.) was removed, originally to investigate the rest of the building which had by now become apparent but then also to expose as big an area as possible of ard-marks.

Their appearance was completely unexpected. That NE quadrant was completed in 1967 when a small part of the SE quadrant was also excavated to complete the apparent building plan and some pits. (Make sure there is a list all its components as labelled in the original records; and make sure this x-ref. occurs in Archive). A figure in the Archive demonstrates the components, year by year and cutting by cutting, of the Area, so that there is an exact correlation between original written and graphic records. Parts of this Area have already been published. A (partial) plan of House 1 to demonstrate that there was a settlement here in the middle of, and earlier than, `Celtic` fields and to indicate the nature of the evidence appeared in Fowler 19<>, while a plan of a larger area was made available primarily to demonstrate the, at the time first, discovery of ard-marks on Chalk (Fowler and Evans 1967).

This Area was the one place on the whole of ODXI where there was a depth of vertical stratigraphy **over** at least part of the extensive remains of occupation. A NW-SE lynchet ran across the site, burying pits, post-holes and part of Building 1 in a strip along the western edge of the Area. Otherwise, much of the occupation was crossed by ard-marks, mainly also aligned NW-SE but with a few roughly at right angles (*see below* p. **). They were undoubtedly also later than the occupation, affording a good horizontal stratigraphy across the Area.

Two Beaker Burials

The earliest datable feature on the site was a flexed inhumation burial (BURIAL 1) accompanied by a Beaker pot (state type in modern parlance). Remains of two other inhumation burials are assumed also to be of similar date, though neither was independently dated. Two of the burials were in oval pits cut into the Chalk. Burial 1 was a near-complete skeleton; Burial 2 (have I got the numbers right?) was incomplete but had also probably been flexed to judge from the relationship and angle of the sole surviving lower leg and foot bones.

Detailed description of the grave and Burial 1 archaeologically, including what it was cut into (seems like two other features from the plan; and is there any chance that the oval pit immed E was another grave?)

Ditto Burial 2. including what it was cut by (but if it was an IA pit, deal with the latter elsewhere under Pits in Area West; and check out its relationship with ard-marks: I think I'm working from an out of date plan - which in any case needs altering immed S of burial to accommodate an extension cutting and its contents)

The Beaker Skeletons by Drs. Juliet Rogers and (the late) R.F.Everton (this report was first submitted in the early 1970s and was checked and approved by JR in 1995)

Skeletons from three individuals were examined: two adults and a child. The child (Burial 1) and one adult (Burial 1B) were nearly complete but the skeleton of the other adult, probably a female, was represented by the lower legs and feet only (Burial 2).

Burial 1 comprised a skeleton in which the majority of bones were represented although many, including the skull, were broken and too distorted by earth pressure for reconstruction. The face, five cervical vertebrae and five thoracic vertebrae were missing. The state of epiphyseal fusion, the lengths of the long bones and the eruption of teeth all suggest an age of about seven years (Brothwell 1981, Genoves 1969). There were no abnormalities or evidence of disease.

Burial 1B was a complete male skeleton aged between 22 and 30. Many of the bones were fragmented but maximum lengths of the femora and tibiae could be measured, allowing a stature estimation of 1679 mm (Trotter and Gleser 1958).

The lamboid suture contained multiple ossicles. The third and seventh to eleventh thoracic vertebrae exhibited a slight degree of osteophytic lipping on their upper and lower margins.

The only other abnormalities apparent were dental. There were two maxillary diastemas, one of them 6 mm, between the right first molar and second molar; and one of 4 mm between the left premolars. On the left side of the mandible was an especially large mental foramen measuring 6 x 4 mm, although no underlying abnormality was seen in an x-ray of the area.

Burial 2 was only represented by the lower legs and feet of an adult skeleton which was probably female. Assuming that the skeleton was correctly sexed, the statue was estimated as 1568 mm using the maximum length of the fibula. There were no abnormalities or pathological conditions.

The small number of skeletons examined from this site makes comparison with other groups of a similar date unreliable. However, the observations that were made show that they do not differ in any respect from the groups at Cassington or Eynsham (Leeds 1934 and 1938) or previously excavated skeletons from Overton (Smith and Simpson 1966).

Stratigraphically, as distinct from from by association with datable material as in the case of the Beaker burials, the earliest features on the site were Pits 1, 2 and 3.

Then deal with all other pits

Then with G1 (Building 1)

Then with ard-marks

Then with lynchet in detail

Then with remaining post-and stake holes

Then with any other features

Then with odd slightly diagonal parallel wide straight grooves N of and cutting G1: they are the latest `chalk-cut` feature on the site stratigraphically, I suspect because they are 2WW lorry tracks or the like

Area East 2 & 3 (but excluding E extension) (fig. ++)

This area lay 4 (2?) ft. E of Area 1 and consisted of two 50 ft. squares with a 2 ft. baulk between them. This was eventually removed. The squares were excavated in successive years (1967-68) so, although this Area was the most extensive investigated as one, it was never all visible at the same time. A small extension made to the N to encompass a chalk gully (G8), and an extension (EAST 4) made to the E intersected the settlement enclosure ditch (*above p. ***). The whole area was covered with ridge-and-furrow, scarcely visible on the ground but a reminder that this apparently `undisturbed` old grassland was been arable some seven centuries ago.

Partly as a result, the stratigraphy was basically uniform, as elsewhere on the site: grass, some 18-20 cms. of topsoil, layer 2 of flint and other `heavy` material such as sarsen chips, and then the surface of the Chalk subsoil, its top 2-3 cms. characteristically crumbly and sometimes admixed a little with humus. Nowhere in Area East was there any old ground surface; and indeed it was difficult not to believe that everywhere the present surface of the Chalk was below what had been the surface in the latter part of the 1st millennium BC. By how much was, however, unclear here (*see above p%%*).

Excavation showed four main types of feature to exist. All appeared in plan at the surface of the Chalk subsoil

Area South

Discussion by feature type from the whole of ODXIA

The Beaker burials

The Settlement Features

The `working-hollows`

The Pits

The Post-holes

The round buildings

Any other settlement features

The ard-marks

Are they really prehistoric or RB and not MED???????????

What is the significance of their clumping, or differential survival/preservation???????????

What caused them?

How have they survived at all?

Are they of one or more phases?

The significant fact about the ard-marks on the E side of East 2 may well be, not their relationship to a ditch line, but THEIR PRESERVATION i.e. there are nearly as many marks, several of them close together as if from the same ploughings, on the line of the presumed bank as there are for the rest of East 1 and 2 i.e. they are exceptionally well-preserved exactly where the bank could have been. Ergo, are they well-preserved BECAUSE of the bank, and therefore earlier than it; and, by a circular argument, can the fact of their existence be used to strengthen the argument for there having been a bank here?

The only comparable extent of well-preserved a-ms - and it may be a significant support of the point just made, - is towards the W side of Area 1, esp. in its NW `quadrant`, where to an extent to Chalk surface was protected by the build-up of the tail of the lynchet. This preservative factor up here on the exposed SW slope

*of Overton Down is, incidentally, one good reason why the **absence** of a-ms underneath that lynchet can be taken as good negative evidence that they did not exist there, with the corollary that the a-ms immediately NE of the lynchet **do** go along with the `fence` field boundary and the accumulation of ploughsoil against it.*

The a-ms may be pre-bank: we cannot assume that all of them are of the same cultivation phase since the overploughing of the site after its occupation cannot seriously be doubted; but if some were under the bank, then there must be both a cultivation phase and occupation before enclosure.

However, the point has to be proved from the primary evidence that the ard-marks really are prehistoric or RB (in itself a tricky point) and not medieval. The bulk of them, NW/SE, are on same alignment of r-&-f as clearly demonstrated in OGSC`s AP and the RCHM map (fig. 00), with the most southerly respecting the CF lynchet .

Lynchet structure and field boundaries

Other features

ODXIB:

Description of features, with an inventory of them by cutting

Cutting B1

Cutting B2

ODXIC:

The cutting and its features

Discussion of feature type and stratification for all XIB & XIC

Post-holes

Lynchet structure

Stratification

THE MATERIAL (FROM THE WHOLE SITE)
(insert TWA report after Ncle editing)
Headings as per Assessmt. Rept.

Pottery

Metalwork

Glass

Minerals

Bone:

human

animal

Discussion of and conclusions about the whole site

Environs

Environment

Stratigraphy

Chronology

The nature of the settlement: physically

_____ : structurally

_____ : economically

_____ : socially

Culturally

The place and significance of ODX/XI in the FYFOD Project: a summary
(to be picked up in Chap 10)

The most attractive interpretation of this site overall is of major changes occurring quite suddenly over quite short periods within a long history of land-use change. Within that sort of framework, then clearly many of the details can be differently interpreted and such differences can affect the story, though perhaps not the succession. The sort of framework that seems to represent the scale,

pace and nature of change on this small area, some 200 m square, may well be reasonably expressed by the following interpretive model(s):

A provisional interpretive model for Site ODX/XI

1. Beaker graves

2. Field system (red phase), reconstructed on site plan in area of later settlement from hints of pre-settlement layout; includes ard-marks, and establishes open downland later reflected in ditch micro-fauna

(from here on, any of the phases could contain all, some or none of the considerable number of pits, PHs or stakeholes etc which puncture the site and in most cases are stratigraphically unrelated to anything else except perhaps later ard-marks)

3a.. Unenclosed occupation within in one specific but hypothetical field:

: pits 22/23, PH8 (cf ODXII)

: pits under NW Gully 1

: working hollows in South 1

*: Gully 6, probably with G5 and perhaps with G4:
an elaborate structure but with no big PHs, no*

certain

*hearth and with each of the annexes each
containing a large central pit*

3b. Enclosed settlement within bank and ditch, roughly tripling the settlement area compared to that of the field: contains buildings represented by G1 and in South 1 and probably G8: 3 simple round houses (except for annexe on G1) all with SE, probably porched, entrances, a hearth and some internal fittings

4. Bank shoved into ditch; some `late` occupation, notably P20 cutting G8, which may be pre-destruction (perhaps going with G1 or South 1 houses if either can be shown to be late ceramically?), contemporary or post-destruction

5. Fields re-occupy settlement area, their boundaries on slightly different lines from pre-settlement system and more ard-marks are made, everywhere crossing settlement remains. Perhaps double-lynchet track past S end of settlement enclosure inserted at this stage? - see below

If not the same as last, area re-cultivated in Roman period

Perhaps part of the last phase but perhaps a later one of late-Roman date, double lynchet track cuts through fields, respecting S line of EIA enclosure ditch which had been long filled in. Perhaps (probably?) that trackway was itself

of EIA origin, though it was undoubtedly (later?) part of a network of `country lanes` connectng RB settlements. (But perhaps they are where they are because they are along a pre-existing track, or perhaps are themselves EIA in origin tho` only producing RB pottery on surface: discuss in Chap. 10). Either in Mid-1M or C1 positive lynchet piles up against N side of track over the top of the EIA ditch, showing that cultivation was contemporary. In fact this DL phase could be of EIA date, cutting through LBA fields as part of new layout which also saw desertion (?razing) of settlement and re-division of its area into fenced fields)

6. Medieval cultivation in strips, producing ridge-and-furrow witin `Celtic` field pattern

7. Sheep-grazing (producing `old grassland`)

8. Military activity in 1940s (can we find out more about this? - Home Guard or `real`?)

9. 1950s-90s: Sheep AND cattle pasture, with major conservation interest
1960s: archaeological excavations

end of chap 5 as on 27 vii 95