

## **FWP42a**

This was done by R. Parkes ('Sparks') 6/95

### **Ard-marks**

The v shaped grooves in the chalk bedrock are certain to be plough-marks judging by there layout and distribution. It appears that there is evidence of more than one period of activity or season of ploughing. The task was then to separate out the probable plough-marks which were made at the same time. I assumed that the plough lines that were either parallel or perpendicular to each other were from the same period of activity. This resulted in 36 sets of plough marks which had a definite correlation, some of these correlation's were so close to others it became apparent that they were part of the same phase of ploughing.

Analysis of the direction of the plough-marks indicated that there was in-fact 7 distinct phases which could be determined these I have shown on drawings B through H. In the drawings where there was sufficient information to make a valued judgement (drawings CDEFGH) the distance between plough runs was about 250 millimetres, so with this palimpsest there was no distinct evidence of differing plough run widths.

The next interesting details come from the nature of the plough-marks firstly they seem to congregate into three distinct areas, this may mean that these were the only areas ploughed, however if we consider the evidence of correlation's mentioned above this patterning may be an indication of the surface terrain. i.e. if we assume that the ard has a constant nominal length (at least when first used), then in the area where the bedrock marks occur the surface of the land must be closer to the bedrock than the areas where there are no plough-marks. These plough marks then may be a record of levelling the land around the settlement by removing unwanted ridges.

It is also interesting to note that the majority of the plough marks range between 5 and 10 feet in length and a significant number of these being 8 feet long. This may be to do with terrain but it may also be an indication of the farmers knowledge of his land, while a good depth of plough is desirable, ploughing the bedrock is not, these ard-marks may then be evidence of a trade-off of plough depth against plough life.