

**EXCAVATION WITHIN A LATER PREHISTORIC FIELD
SYSTEM ON OVERTON DOWN, WEST OVERTON,
WILTSHIRE:
land-use over 4,000 years**

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Excavation within a later prehistoric field system on Overton Down, West Overton, Wiltshire: land-use over 4,000 years

Summary

This excavation was carried out as part of the Fyfod Project (Fowler 1997; 2000). Its sole raison d'être lies within that context.

The initial aim of excavation was to test the hypothesis that 'Celtic' fields overlay a former settlement hinted at by a curved lynchet first illustrated on an air photograph (Crawford and Keiller 1928, pl xix). Excavation began as a single cutting through a long lynchet apparently across the northern part of the presumed settlement. That first cutting intersected the arc of a circular foundation trench of an Early Iron Age timber structure. Excavation of a settlement in its own right developed, examining four Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age structural complexes and numerous other features, including several pits with structured deposits, the whole bounded by an enclosing ditch. The Early Iron Age settlement was preceded by Beaker and Early Bronze Age burials, and Middle–Late Bronze Age agrarian activity including fields and a possible building. It was overlain by new fields defined by a fence and containing ard-marks, the first such (observed) occurrence of the phenomenon on Chalk. The area then reverted to grass and has remained pasture except for brief episodes of cultivation in the first/second and twelfth/thirteenth centuries AD.

The 2000-year-long prehistoric sequence, and the nature of its various components, added a new precision to the basic questions being addressed by the project about local land-use and land-use succession. Its usefulness was enhanced by being linked to activity early in the Roman and in the medieval periods and indeed, indirectly, over the most recent 2000 years as a whole.

Introduction

Geology and topography

The whaleback centre of Overton Down is defined more or less by the 220m contour (Maps 1 and 2, Figure FWP63.1 and FWP63.2; Plate FWP63.I) within a National Nature Reserve. The Down is high relative to much of the Avebury area but palpably not so high as and less 'rough' than the northern end of this Down and Totterdown (Map 1). Apart from two little knolls of Clay-with-flints, it lies entirely on Upper Chalk; and many of its sarsen stones have been buried, repositioned and/or cleared away during cultivation 600 and more years ago (but not more recently). The Down in general slopes slightly north west–south east, falling away more steeply to the north east into the Valley of Stones and on a gentle incline into the head of Pickledean to the south west (Maps 1 and 2; Figures FWP63.1 and FWP63.2; *LPP*, figure 2.4). The whole area is uninterrupted old grassland, visibly bearing evidences of former land-use in the shape of earthworks ranging from a kerbed round barrow to an experimental earthwork of 1960 (Figure FWP63.2; Plate FWP63.I).

Earthworks and ancient fields

A curved scarp or lynchet existed in a rectilinear field system on a 3° south-westerly slope just below the brow of the highest ridgeline of Overton Down. This was first illustrated, but not remarked on, by Crawford (Crawford and Keiller 1928, 124–5, plate xix, fig 24, here reproduced as Plate FWP63.I). Crawford was principally concerned to demonstrate that this area of 'old grassland' had once been cultivated, arguably in two phases. He proposed that earthworks markedly slighter than the lynchets, called by him 'parallel ribs', represented 'the "lands" of the ancient ploughing'.

His interpretation was that the ‘ribs’ or ridges of cultivation were the marks of (at latest) Romano-British cultivation within prehistoric ‘Celtic’ fields, anticipating by half a century the recognition in northern Britain of ‘cord rig’ (Topping 1989).

Our detailed re-examination of this area led to the hypothesis that, whatever the date of the ‘ribs’, the curved lynchet which they respected might be a key to a somewhat longer, sequence than Crawford imagined. This anomalous lynchet could plausibly be explained as having accumulated on the outside of the curved perimeter of a pre-existing enclosure (Figures FWP63.2 and FWP63.3). If an enclosure had existed, and could be dated, for example by bounding a datable settlement, then the particular fields over its interior and a conjectural perimeter had to be later than it. The basic research attraction was, therefore, the possibility of establishing by excavation a *terminus post quem* for at least some of the early fields within the study area. Furthermore, fieldwork on Overton Down seemed to provide a rarely-identified opportunity to ‘sandwich’ such fields between two settlements, one earlier, the other later, not vertically on the same spot but in a large-scale horizontal stratigraphy across a landscape. The decision to begin a trial excavation (OD XI), where fields lay on top of a settlement, was therefore followed by the later decision to excavate a settlement (OD XII; FWP 64) overlying fields.

We also wanted to test Crawford’s interpretation of the ‘lands’ as Romano-British. With the recognition by the early 1960s of a marked phase of medieval activity on the Downs, we had reason to believe his interpretation might be erroneous.

Excavations

The two ‘Sites’, OD X and OD XI, were part of the same archaeological complex. OD X was the excavation code for cuttings immediately outside and concerned with the perimeter of an enclosed settlement, and OD XI, by far the larger undertaking, was the code for all excavations inside the settlement perimeter.

Building complexes

The Early Iron Age settlement as excavated was focused around three building complexes, here discussed in terms of Buildings 1, 2/3 and 4 (Figure FWP63.3). They were defined by what at the time of excavation were called ‘gullies’ ie, the ring-grooves cut mainly into Chalk which were, and still are, envisaged as the foundation trenches for timber walls of circular structures. This part of the excavation will be described briefly in terms of those three structural complexes, though in each case the Early Iron Age structures were sandwiched between earlier and later material.

In Area East 1, Gullies 1 and 2 formed the first structural complex to be examined (Building 1, probably a house with annexe; Figures FWP63.3 and FWP63.15). Areas East 2 and 3 contained Gullies 4, 5, 6 and 8 which will be dealt with as two structures (Buildings 2 and 3; Figures FWP63.3 and FWP63.19). Finally, another building (Building 4, probably a house) was also defined by a Gully 1, but this time in Area South 1 (Figures FWP63.3 and FWP63.22). In general, only evidence judged to be important to understanding the settlement, its antecedents and ending in as far as they illuminate the landscape, is detailed.

Ard-marks

Ard-marks were widespread and are considered thematically for the whole of the excavated area (OD X and XI) below (Figures FWP63.28 and FWP63.29; Plate FWP63.XVII; FWP 42). Most were

of mid-first-millennium BC date, but some are earlier and some could be of the first/second centuries AD.

Pits

Pits were also numerous, though tending to occur in groups (eg, Figure FWP63.13; FWP 34). They too are treated thematically. Their prime interest here is in what their contents and inferred functions can suggest about landscape development and its chronology. Unless otherwise indicated, all were of Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age date and likely to be within the time bracket *c* 900–600 BC; but few were assignable to any particular phase in the settlement's history (as interpreted here).

The earliest features

Beaker burials

with contributions by R. F Everton, J Rogers and J Pollard

Burial IA

The earliest datable feature on OD XI was a flexed child inhumation accompanied by a Beaker (Burial IA). The burial was in a grave (Figure FWP63.13, Pit 4; Plate FWP63.III), partly overlain by another inhumation (IB) which was unaccompanied but carefully buried. Pit 4 may in fact have been dug first as a grave to take both Burials 1A and 1B, or Burial 1B alone. It certainly seemed to take the flint nodules arranged around the latter.

A child in a flexed position was lying with its head to the south east, facing north east, with a Beaker lying on its chest (Figures FWP63.13, FWP63.14; Plate FWP63.III; FWP 62). Most of the 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.

The Beaker vessel

The accompanying vessel (Figure FWP63.14) was illustrated, described and discussed by Smith (1967). No close parallel exists locally though barrows Wilsford G51 and 52 contained similar vessels. The vessel falls within Clarke's Southern British Group (Clarke 1970), which he considered to be late in the Beaker 'sequence', with a date tending towards the middle of the second millennium BC. Within its Fyfod context, a date in the first half of the second millennium has always seemed more probable and a somewhat earlier horizon now seems, by inference, to be preferred by Case (1995) in his survey of the Avebury region. He does not, however, mention this particular beaker. Its inferred date can only be defined within the general currency of British Beakers of *c* 2500–1500 BC.

It has recently been argued that Beakers from burial contexts were produced specifically for grave deposition (Boast 1995,72) and that the form and decoration of such vessels were explicitly linked to the status of the deceased, in terms of their age, (occasionally) gender and/or their position within a burial sequence. In particular, it has been observed that a significant number of interments of infants/juveniles are associated with vessels either with all-over decoration, or with a limited number of decorative 'zones'; and that such vessels are also characterised by coarseness of

decoration and/or fabric (Mizoguchi 1995). This vessel from Burial 1A, in its decoration, fabric and association, accords with such observations. Both the similar vessels from Wilsford cum Lake barrows G51 and G52 accompanied children (Smith 1991).

Burial IB

This burial (Figure FWP63.13) was of a large adult male 22–30 years old, its knees flexed and facing south. Its knees and ankles rested on sarsen stones, like ‘cushions’, and eleven flints were carefully placed from the crown of the skull down both sides of the body to a point level with the feet. The shape formed by the flints in plan was ‘cloak-like’ or reminiscent of a shroud. The ‘topmost’ flint had been slightly displaced by the cutting of the side of Pit 7. The skeleton was complete, though many of the bones were fragmented; maximum lengths of the femora and tibiae allowed a stature estimation of 1679 mm (5ft 7in) (Trotter and Gleser 1958). Of two dental abnormalities, one maxillary diastemas was between the right first and second molars and the other between the left premolars. On the left side of the mandible was an especially large mental foramen measuring 6 x 4mm.

Burial II

Burial II had been almost totally removed by the cutting of Pit 5 (Figure FWP63.13), so that only the feet and lower legs remained. They were of an adult skeleton which was probably female. Assuming that the skeleton was correctly sexed, the stature was estimated as 1568mm (5ft 2in). There were no abnormalities or pathological conditions.

The burial had been in a flexed or crouched position, a point emphasised by the original size of the grave. Its southern end had been completely cut away by Pit 5 so the grave could not have originally extended more than 1m southwards. The body would have been facing north east, like Burial 1A. No artefacts or other relevant material came from the grave, though a Beaker sherd came from the filling of Pit 5.

That only three skeletons were represented makes comparison with other groups of a similar date unreliable. The OD XI/A examples do not, however, differ in any respect from the groups at Cassington or Eynsham (Leeds 1934; 1938) or previously excavated skeletons from Overton (Smith and Simpson 1966; *LPP*, Chapter 4).

Other beaker sherds and human remains

A few other Beaker sherds and human bones were found in Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age contexts but whether they had been disturbed from Burial II or from other undiscovered Beaker graves is uncertain. A suspicion exists that Burial 1A at least may be but one of two or more hinted at by Pit 6B (*cf* Figure FWP63.13). Pit 6B, like Pit 4 and Burial II, appeared to be another small oval-ended hole earlier than the Early Iron Age pits, though there is no certain evidence for this. The most likely location for any other graves would be south-east of Burials IA and IB, since adjacent areas in other directions were excavated without finding any more. Nor were any found throughout the rest of the excavation of OD X/XI (except probably *Pit 23*). The Beaker sherds may, of course, be non-funereal, indicating settlement and/or manuring in the vicinity (eg, Site OD I, FWP 66).

Smith (1967) commented on six Beaker sherds, five from at least two other beakers found near the three Beaker graves. All were judged to be ‘broadly contemporary with’ the Beaker accompanying Burial 1A. She considered that two (or possibly three) sherds, respectively from Pits 5 (which cut Burial II) and 6 and layer 2, might be from the same vessel. Two sherds from another vessel, found on the Chalk surface east of Gully 2, perhaps hint of at least one other grave nearby. A sixth beaker

sherd occurred c 30m south east of the graves at the bottom of the topsoil in area XI/B. Just a few metres north of that, from layer 2 on the south side of cutting South 1, half a human long bone and other bone fragments again hinted at the possibility of other ?Beaker burials in the area.

Implication

At face value the evidence indicates a small flat Beaker cemetery, possibly more extensive than the three inhumations actually discovered. Their graves could theoretically have been underneath a broad, low mound or two small mounds but no evidence for such existed. Nor were there any signs of a ditch or ditches around the burials. Had there been one or more low, unditched mounds without substructure over the burials, however, it is extremely doubtful whether any trace of them would have survived on a spot which has been sporadically but intensively scoured by cultivation at least four times over the four thousand years since the burials were made.

The Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age settlement

Stratigraphy

The stratigraphy on OD XI/A (Figure FWP63.8) was essentially very simple and shallow eastwards from the main lynchet to the enclosure ditch in East 4 (Figure FWP63.3; Plate FWP63.IV). The topmost two layers were essentially the same layer in origin, sorted since medieval or earlier times by worms. The result is an upper structureless dark brown rendzina topsoil above a thin layer of debris from it, consisting mainly of flints and man-made, largely Romano-British, objects. Below the characteristic 'site Layer 2' was a fine light grey soil with fewer flints and small fragments of chalk. That lay on the crumbly surface of the Chalk, usually 0.25–0.35m below the modern grass surface. Despite this lack of depth, long-term stratification occurred in places, both horizontally and vertically. One of the best examples was beneath the lynchet in the area of Pits 1, 2 and 3 where the sequence was:

Latest: Layers 1, 2 (top of the lynchet, Early Iron Age and Romano-British artefacts)

Layer 3 (in the earlier lynchet, Early Iron Age sherds only)

↓↓↓↓

Layer ?6a (old ground surface under lynchet)

↓↓↓↓

Gully 1 (Early Iron Age pottery)

↓↓↓↓

Pit 3 (votive deposit)

↓↓↓↓

Pit 2 (votive deposit)

↓↓↓↓

Earliest Pit 1 (GF255: Early Iron Age slack-shouldered jar +GF257 and 232)

A small quantity of Romano-British material (eg, potsherds, iron nails) occurred ubiquitously over the whole site but only in Layers 1 and 2, probably resulting from manuring. The artefactual evidence clearly indicates a phase of cultivation in the early centuries AD, initially probably in the later first century. It may therefore confirm Crawford's dating of his 'parallel ribs' (our ridge-and-

furrow), to the Romano-British period, particularly as other parts of the Downs have now also produced unambiguous evidence of cultivation at that time. Only a few sherds of medieval pottery were recorded here to support the view that the ridge-and-furrow is post-Roman, but our interpretation is nevertheless, on morphological and distributional grounds, that the 'ribs' are medieval (cf, *LPP*, chapter 2, figure 2.3).

Building I

Gully 1 A penannular gully (Figures FWP63.3, FWP63.7; FWP63.15), only *c* 50mm deep on the north, it was filled with chalky soil, probably silt. On the north-east side it was *c* 0.30m wide, with a shallow straight-sided groove and soil-filled with large flints along it. In the north-west it was filled with flints and sarsens, gradually deepening to become 0.60m deep and V-shaped with large flints. On the south west, where it was more flat-bottomed (Figure FWP63.7), its filling was of flints and chalk rubble with charcoal, burnt flint and Early Iron Age pottery. An iron penannular ring (GF 180, Figure FWP63.33, 14) was in its top filling which was sealed by a thin old ground surface, protected by the lynchet accumulation above. The depth of the wall-trench here, protected beneath the accumulations of soil at successive field edges, contrasted markedly with the attenuated remains of the same and similar features out in the cultivated areas of the fields to the east. Gullies 1 and 2 (*below*) were interpreted as foundation trenches for the timber walls of House 1, though no certain post-holes were found in them.

Gully 2

Gully 2, similar in character to Gully 1, was up to 0.60m wide and 0.25m deep with a relatively large amount of debris. On the north east it was overlain by a *c* 0.12m flinty plough soil layer; in its base was a *c* 0.15m layer of soil with daub and burnt clay. Two other contexts (GF405, 408) contained burnt daub and other evidence of burning.

Entrance and porch

The southerly gap in Gully 1 (Figure FWP63.15) presumably marked the entrance. Large post-holes internally might represent some associated structure, and the small post-holes outside it unconvincingly hint at some form of porch or screen. A patch of burnt wood was found in remarkably well-preserved condition just in the entrance.

Post-holes associated with Building I

Those considered part of the structure are depicted on Figure FWP63.15. They form no obvious pattern, though eight were close to the ring-gully of what is interpreted as the wall. The pair of 'figure of eight' post-holes roughly symmetrically disposed inside the entrance might have supported some sort of arrangement to do with a door or at least a screen, perhaps forcing entrants to turn right rather than walk over the drain. At any event, they appeared to be load-bearing and were clearly important since their posts were replaced (perhaps hinting at a life of the building of about 30 years but no more?).

Hearth

The single hearth (Figure FWP63.15, FWP63.18), probably of two phases, was sunk in a 0.15m deep pit filled with an upper area of sarsen blocks, a layer of dark soil with burnt chalk, and flints. The sarsens had been disturbed, though not westwards under the lynchet. Individual sarsens which had been moved lay north, east and south of the hearth's centre (ie, into the 'Celtic' field and the

area of ard-marks). The disturbance was therefore almost certainly caused by cultivation using an ard, and is probably to be correlated with either layer 6a or 35b in the stratigraphy of the enclosure ditch (FWP63.31).

Drain and sump

A gully up and down the slight slope north–south centrally across the interior centre was interpreted as a running towards the house entrance, and out through it into a sump (Figure FWP63.15). It was a narrow cut channel *c* 0.15m deep at most and filled to the surface of the Chalk in places with small flints, many set on edge. Markedly yellow rotting chalk below and around the sides was presumably caused by water seepage, still continuing and probably contributing to the wet area of Building 4. The depression outside and south west of the entrance had a layer of ‘cheesy’ chalk around packed flints, with an area of small flints on its east end; it was probably a sump. Although its position outside and across the entrance seems inconvenient, a covering could well have masked the worst effects. Presumably not a great deal of liquid actually seeped through the system while the ‘house’ was in use, unless it was unroofed. The results, chemical and otherwise, of the drain and sump working efficiently are post-depositional, with the system handling greater quantities of liquid collected from surface drainage over 2500 years since the house’s demise.

Other post-and stake-holes near House 1

These included the elements of a probable structure lying underneath the ‘inner’ slope of the lynchet (Figure FWP63.16) comprising Pits 9, 9a and 10, 10a–c (actually post-holes including those listed in the site records as PHs 6, 7, and intermediate PHs 5a, 5). Their pattern suggested an eight-post rectangle, an interpretation strengthened by the fact that those at the four corners were all relatively broad and deep for the site as a whole.

Buildings 2 and 3

General description

A rectangular area of *c* 840 sq m contained the focus of the excavated area within the Early Iron Age settlement, immediately inside the eastern perimeter ditch (Figures FWP63.3, FWP63.19, FWP 28: East 2 and 3). It included two successive, large timber structures, and was much occupied by pits, post-holes and ard-marks, all (except for two pits) Early Iron Age or earlier. As was the case with the area excavated around Building 1, here too slight ridge-and furrow (*cf* Plate FWP63.I) and, in Layers 1 and 2, a scatter of Romano-British material, covered the structural remains. Nowhere was there any significant accumulation of deposits above the Upper Chalk or 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 its surface level in the earlier part of the first millennium BC.

Essentially only three layers covered the whole area: turf and topsoil; flints at the bottom of Layer 1; and a thin crumbly chalk layer immediately on top of reasonably firm chalk subsoil. To an even more marked extent than the area of and around House 1, partly beneath a lynchet, here almost the whole of the excavated and recorded archaeology therefore consisted of features on, into or below the surface of the Chalk. All appeared in plan at the surface of the chalk subsoil. They consisted of four main types: gullies, pits, post-holes, and ard-marks. The ard-marks here were ubiquitously later than the settlement remains where intersections occurred to provide a relative date, though an argument is made that some might be earlier (see *Ard-marks*). As a phenomenon, they are described and discussed for the whole of the site, below. The pits likewise are discussed in their thematic section, below.

General sequence and date The pits, post-holes, and gullies together formed a fairly dense occupation complex. Overall, they can be generally regarded as being of an Early Iron Age occupation, though it was of several phases, at least in structural terms. Artefacts also indicated the presence of a succession, though probably over a short period. Many of the features were not, and cannot be, related chronologically, however, for they did not physically intersect nor were their contained materials (if any) chronologically diagnostic within an Early Iron Age phase of activity. Most of the post-holes in particular are unascrivable with any certainty to either a sub-phase or a particular structure; much the same applies to most of the pits, though some are unambiguously related to other features and relatively well-dated (below). Of the four gullies (G4, 5 with 5A, 6 and 8), their location, shape, disposition and relationships are clearly shown on Figure FWP63.19. The two main gullies (G6 and 8) belong to an early phase of occupation within the Early Iron Age. The interpretation as foundation trenches for timber buildings rests on general probability rather than specific, unambiguous evidence, although some post-holes were found in the various gullies, especially G6 (Figure FWP63.19).

Salient points about all the gullies, arranged by the Building to which they are interpretatively ascribed, were as follows.

Building 2

Gully 6

Gully 6, probably the earliest structural foundation on this part of the site, circumscribed a circular plan with gaps to the west and south east, with post-holes 22 and/or 26 lying as if central to a south-east entrance (but see G8 below; Figure FWP63.20, Plate FWP63.XI). 9.60m in diameter, the gully was of a uniform width and depth with a wide U-cross section, typically 0.23m wide and 0.10–0.12m deep. The filling was basically of two layers, the upper of earthy fill with chalk lumps, the bottom of chalky fill. PH 23 was almost exactly central to its circumference which enclosed Hearths 1 and 2 (Figure FWP63.18) either or both of which could equally well have belonged to Building 3 (G8). G8 cut G6 (Figure FWP63.19). PHs 7, 12A, 12B, 20 and 51 were in G6, perhaps evidence of original uprights but equally any one, even all, of them could have accidentally cut the gully later. A possible unit of length of *c* 2.15m exists in their spacing in plan from PH51 round the southern arc, including the entrance, as far as PH7 if the last is taken as 1½ ‘units’ distant from PH20.

Gully 5

This was the westernmost wall trench of the House 2 complex (Figure FWP63.19; Plate FWP63.IX), describing a semicircle 11m in diameter. Its fill was partly of two layers of packed chalk, partly a chalky humus. Associated with five post-holes on its southern arc (though all could be later) and PH52, it apparently enclosed Pit 19 and respected the western arc of G6, forming an annexe to it.

Gully 5A

Gully 5A cut into G5 (Figure FWP63.19) and apparently extended it 2m eastwards to complete a sub-rectangular addition to G5 on its south (G4). Its humic fill with large and small chalk lumps was of three layers.

Gully 4

Gully 4 (Figure FWP63.19, Plate FWP63.IX), containing an earthy fill with large and small chalk lumps, was associated with PHs 50, 53 and 54, and with P13, which it apparently enclosed within a sub-rectangular structural addition to the annexe (G5) to the main part of Building 2 (G6)

Building 3

Gully 8

Gully 8 circumscribed a horseshoe-shaped plan open to the south east (Figures FWP63.19, FWP63.20; Plate FWP63.XI). Its filling was mainly dark brown earth and chalk lumps. Traces of an eaves-drip gully were located on its north. A pair of post-holes (PH22/26; 5a, b/11) on either side of its 7m wide entrance, with PH 3 central between them, might have indicated some sort of entrance/porch arrangement, a suggestion perhaps strengthened by the concentration of post-holes in this area.

Pits in the area of Buildings 2 and 3

Data about the pits are selectively tabulated Table FWP63.1, and fully in FWP 34. Only a few points arising from their incidence and contents in the area of Buildings 2 and 3 are, therefore, highlighted here.

The pits in East 2 and 3 (Figures FWP63.19, FWP63.21) were reasonably well-dated, either or both absolutely and relatively; they apparently span close on 2000 years. One, P23, was convincingly Early Bronze Age, and probably held the remains of a cremation burial. Pit 21a was of late-prehistoric date at earliest and could well be first century AD, with P21b later than it. Pit 22 was even more assuredly of early Romano-British date. P19, which contained a 'ritual' deposit, seems convincingly related to the area enclosed by G5 as part of Building 2. Pit 13 was plausibly the pit in an earth closet added to that Building. Pit 20, still of Early Iron Age date, was structurally later than the latest of the gullies (G8), and contained an ox-skull burial, possibly an 'end of occupation' deposit.

Post-holes and stake-holes

Fewer than 50 post-holes (Figures FWP63.19, FWP63.27), other than those in other features such as G5, were noted over the whole area. No particular post-hole structures were obvious; on the other hand, apart from those arguably associated with the ring-groove buildings, as discussed above, the detached post-holes did not appear to occur at random. Few occurred west of G5 or east of G8 respectively, or north of either; conversely, they formed a marked pattern with a concentration north west-south east across an area where the 'interiors' contained within the three gullies overlapped and south east from there to south of the entrance to Building 3 (G8). The latter may have been related to some form of structure or activity outside that entrance but the concentration in general may well have belonged to a phase earlier (or just possibly later) than the structures represented by the gullies.

A number of stake-holes, other than those already noted in relation to the gullies, were recorded but no pattern in their occurrence was apparent and in general they represent nothing more than the holes to be expected from the continual sticking of stakes and sticks into the ground around a farmyard.

Building 4 ODXI/South 1 and 2, 1967–8

This excavation (Figures FWP63.3, FWP63.21–FWP63.25; Plate FWP63.XIV) was undertaken in the wake of magnetometer and resistivity surveys in search of additional ‘Beaker’ burials and the line of the southern part of the enclosure ditch. Neither burials nor a ditch was found, despite the long narrow extension South 2 (Figure FWP63.3). The first small cutting, however, was across a resistivity anomaly which proved to be a small curving gully as of a round structure now familiar from Buildings 1–3. The consequential area excavation of a 50 ft (c 15m) square was both partial and not particularly well-executed, because of bad weather and lack of time in relation to unexpected archaeological complexity. Nevertheless, it produced another round structure defined by a circular gully (Gully 1) with its entrance again to the south east; good stratification, with clear evidence of considerable activity both earlier (‘working hollows’) and later (ard-marks) than the round-house; and good absolute dating evidence across a range from Late Bronze Age to Roman.

Stratification

Under the familiar Layer 1 topsoil of Roman and later date, Layer 2, initially assumed to be the familiar ‘site Layer 2’ of the worm-sorted flint residue from Layer 1, proved to be complex, with the tops of numerous features surfacing at or immediately below its flints (Figures FWP63.22 and FWP63.26). The principal feature was a ring-ditch or circular gully 5.70m in radius. The south east corner of the area, where the chalk surface was markedly lower, contained a multiplicity of features among much larger flints, excavated to a depth of 0.30m but not fully or satisfactorily investigated.

Below Layer 2, all the soils were deposits down to the top of the Chalk in a considerable complex of features cut both into Chalk (‘working hollows’ and/or shallow quarries) and into the fillings of such features.

Building 4

Gully 1 (South)

Gully 1 (South) was c 11.5m in diameter, enclosing some 40 sq m. Its width varied from 0.45–0.75m and its depth from 0.30–0.53m (Figures FWP63.22; FWP63.24), in general deeper than anywhere else on site. This was almost certainly the result of post-depositional factors: Gully 1 was shallower and narrower around the arc from north west to south east, where it had been affected by later ploughing, and deeper and broader to south and west where, as the ground dropped away, it had not been so affected at the edge of the Early Iron Age field. There too it had in any case been covered by an accumulation of ploughsoil, certainly by and within the Roman period (Layer 2 and at least some of Layer 1) if not earlier. Its slightly greater depth below the ground surface of Roman times meant it had been somewhat protected from the post-settlement ploughing which had clearly sliced off the top of similar features in Areas East 1–3 (above).

The top of the gully was filled with flints, along with bones, teeth and some pottery. On the west, where it was sealed by the tail of the lynchet, it first appeared as a line of large flints and sarsens in a clayey/decomposed chalk layer containing burning debris – charcoal and pieces of quick lime (grey chalk) and decomposed pottery. In the area of Pits 5, 6 and 7, G1 contained no flints or sarsens but a fine loamy fill. In contrast, it contained flints and sarsens in its south-west arc passing through working hollow(s). Both replacement material and packing stones (flint and sarsen lumps) formed ‘pipes’ in section in places, presenting the best evidence on the site that posts had actually stood in the ‘gully’ (Figure FWP63.22). Gully filling layer 3 included (SF61) an unidentified skull fragment, an ox skull and a La Tène I/II brooch (SF70; Figure FWP63.34, 13; FWP 38b, Cat No 10) at c 175mm depth. Layers 7 and 8 contained standard Early Iron Age material in G1 bottom, immediately above layer 10 of lower fill of ‘working hollow’ through which G1 cut. No eaves-drip

gully or structural gullies for annexes were located. The entrance was again in the south south east with a post-hole socket on its east.

The hearth (Pit 2), Pit 19 and Pit 15

The hearth, mistakenly labelled as a pit (Pit 2), lay over the working hollow and cut Pit 19 (Figure FWP63.22). It was covered by much animal bone in an area with a considerable amount of burnt sarsen, although no charcoal; at *c* 0.25m, was a heavy packing of large burnt sarsens and flint over brown humus in the hearth pit. Pit 19 also contained a brown humus fill. It was cut into the working hollow and was cut by the hearth. Both the hearth and P19 cut into Pit 15 which was sealed by white decomposed chalk, interpreted as a floor level *sensu* a layer of deposited material on which activity occurred. It lay beneath the hearth. The filling at the bottom of the working hollow *c* 0.58m below the Chalk surface consisted rather surprisingly of light brown loose humus.

Possible entrance An extension cutting (ODXI/A/South 2, Figure FWP63.3) examined the entrance area of Building 4, marked by six post-holes and a patch of ard-marks (Figure FWP63.22). The west end of Gully 1 may have held a post. On its immediate south and just cutting it was PH29 which held a large burnt post-socket. This may have been the first post of a porch; if so, the other porch post-holes probably lie to the south east. Gully 2 which extended diagonally through the entrance area compares with the drain in Building 1.

Pits associated with Building 4

The Pits are dealt with selectively below and fully in FWP 34. Key sections are illustrated on Figures FWP63.17; FWP63.21 and FWP63.24. Here we merely bring out some points relative to their context in South 1.

Pits 8 and 9, PHs 7, 24 and 25

This group (Figure FWP63.24) formed a well-stratified complex which well-illustrates the nature of the archaeology in South 1 (Figure FWP63.22). Over Pits 8 and 9 was Layer 2 with Romano-British pot; and layer ?3 contained a decorated Bronze Age body sherd and two Early Iron Age decorated body sherds with applied horizontal cordon in fabric S 34. Pit 9 contained haematite bowl fragments (GF 491). PH 24 cut the western edge of Pit 8 and PH 25 cut the north face of Pit 9.

Pit 10, cut by Gully 1 and Pit 11

Pit 10 also contained haematite sherds (GF489) in its top layer. Pit 11 cut Pit 10 and PH23, and was cut by Gully 1. A dark brown loam with very large sarsens and a sling-stone (SF62) was *c* 0.65–0.84m below turf; the underlying layer contained the base of a Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age jar (GF499, Figure FWP63.35, 3). Burnt sarsens and frog bones occurred in the lowest layer *c* 0.99m below present ground level. PH23 was 0.32m deep and probably cut Pit 11. PH26 was cut by Pit 11 and Gully 1.

Working hollows

Initially, the existence of a working hollow or hollows (Figures FWP63.22, FWP63.26) was indicated by an area of thick flint in the south western corner of the excavated area after removal of layer 1. The hollows were subsequently partly defined by ‘steps’ with quite irregular edges cut into

Chalk to a depth of *c* 0.60–0.90m. Excavation was incomplete but eventually it indicated overall the existence of an irregular shallow scoop generally *c* 0.60m deep and filled with chalk and dirty soils.

The Chalk subsoil as found was badly decomposed ('rotten') – having suffered from a great deal of disturbance over, on and in it, most recently by rabbits. Its particular quality which made much of it like soft, structureless yellow 'cheese' may well have resulted, however, from prolonged soakings in ponded water. On the face of it, this is an improbable suggestion for an isolated spot on an arid downland slope, yet such was the effect during excavation in August, 1968. Given that the hollows were in large part filled with such 'rotten' chalk, it was rather difficult, especially in what amounted to chalk slurry, to be certain both about whether a context was within or without a 'hollow' and about the total area that had been dug out and infilled *c* 800 BC. The whole 'hollowed' area, however, certainly occupied more than the area partly excavated: apparent edges to north and east were located but the infill extended out of the cutting to west and south.

Within the hollowed area, layers of redeposited destructured chalk were interleaved with humic layers throughout the fillings (Figure FWP63.25). As deep as *c* 0.30m below the Chalk surface, for example, layer ?6 in the working hollow was a sticky light yellow clay with clods of redeposited chalk (GF 494). In the filling itself, to take another example, south of Pit 13 were two clearly defined chalk floor levels with a humic layer between them. These continued on the other side of the natural baulk which divided the working hollow into two halves (North and South).

Relationship with Building 4

Gully 1 cut through the south end of the working hollow, cutting the four layers. These layers probably represented working and temporary floor levels, deliberate infilling, and possibly occupation levels. A considerable number of pits and post-holes had been cut throughout this working hollow area (details in FWP 34). Gully 1 cut into the filling and often through it into the 'cheese' below. The filling contained animal bone but little pottery. On the floor of the hollows 0.45m below ground level was a greeny/grey clay silt plus very decomposed chalk, with some grey quick-lime-type material plus flints and sarsens.

Summary

Enough data have been supplied, it is hoped, to establish the main point that Gully 1, a round-house wall-trench (Building 4), was 'floating' in the accumulation of deposits of an already much-used area, cutting through earlier, perhaps much earlier, material and overlaid by the results of later activity. Essentially Gully 1 cut into material filling an area of quarries or working hollows of Early Iron Age date which themselves possibly disturbed earlier (Beaker?) graves and Late Bronze Age occupation, and was then covered by later ploughsoils which incorporated Early Iron Age material and was of Early Iron Age, Romano-British and medieval date.

Because Building 4 was excavated as a discrete structure, it is not known whether or not it stood alone. A long, narrow trench to its east (Figure FWP63.3), intended to demonstrate the existence or otherwise of the settlement ditch, produced no artefacts and only two features, a post-hole with an upright sarsen and a pit 1 m in diameter. Nevertheless, such provided a rare hint that features other than those excavated may well have existed with the ditched enclosure.

Pits on OD XI/A: an interpretation

Immediately outside House 1, Pits 1–3, 6–10

Some pits were of Early Iron Age date, belonging to one or more of the settlement phases of that period (though 6b is undated by any contained material). The locational coincidence of Beaker burials (Pits 4 and 5) and settlement features was almost certainly accidental.

Pits 1–3

Pits 1–3 (Figure FWP63.17; Plates FWP63.VII, FWP63.VIII) were stratigraphically the earliest structures in this area, being earlier than Building 1. They lay under, or in the case of Pit 3 partially under, the central lynchet at a point where the western arc of Gully 1 also lay under the same lynchet (Figure FWP63.3). Pit 1, almost devoid of contained material, may well be altogether earlier, perhaps correlating with the working hollows or Late Bronze Age occupation beneath Building 4; Pit 2 (Plate FWP63.VII) with its horse and ox skulls belonged presumably to an early phase of the settlement.

Pits 4–7A

These pits are all shown on Figure FWP63.13 since all were focused around the Beaker burials.

Pits 6, 6A, 6B

Cut by Pit 7, this pit contained Early Iron Age material (GF237) and a foetal pig (GF403). It was a small pit in close association with Pit 4. It contained a decorated Bronze Age upright rim sherd with finger-tipping just below the rim. Pit 6A was a 'typical' Early Iron Age bell-shaped pit, cutting Pit 6B, with a fragment of Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age short-necked furrowed bowl (Figure FWP63.35, 8; GF 360), and a rib bone with incisions (probably butchery marks *cf* Pit 20). Pit 6B may well also be of Beaker date or earlier. It contained only clean chalk rubble, was cut by Pits 6A and 7, and might possibly have been an early oval-ended grave like Pit 4.

Pits 7, 7A Pit 7 was a large Early Iron Age pit of which the west side literally appeared to scalp, without actually disturbing, the skull of Burial 1B. It cut Pits 6, 6A, 6B, and 7A. Pit 7A, containing Early Iron Age potsherds and frog bones (GF 342), was cut by Pit 7.

Pits 5 and 8

Pit 5 one of a pair with Pit 8, cut Burial 2. It contained six large sarsen stones, possibly packing, charcoal from oak and apple or hawthorn, and a fragment of a lower quern stone. Pit 8 contained an decorated Early Iron Age body sherd, two bone awls (SF 610; Figure FWP63.37, 2; FWP 38b, Cat No 4; SF616; FWP 38b, Cat No 6), a decorated antler tine point (SF611; Figure FWP63.37, 5; FWP 38b, Cat No 16) and, on its bottom, ox and pig bones.

Pit 9

Pit 9, with two large sarsens protruding above chalk level, was interpreted as a post-hole in an eight-post structure with Pit 10 (Figure FWP63.16).

Area of Buildings 2, 3 and 4

Pits 13 and 19–23

Each of the seven pits (Figures FWP63.19, FWP63.21), appears to have been created for different reasons, and probably over a period spanning the entire occupation of the site, Early Bronze Age to Romano-British. Three, P13, 19 and 20, were directly related to the structural evidence of Buildings 2 and 3 (Figure FWP63.19); four, P22 and 23 and with P21 A and B counting as two, stood apart from the others and the foundation gullies, probably because they belong to periods before (P23) and after the Early Iron Age occupation.

Pit 13

Pit 13, probably a latrine pit, lay within the area enclosed by G4 as if sited within an annexe to G5. It was probably visible as a slight depression late in the first century AD for its top layer contained Romano-British grog-tempered ware among the Early Iron Age sherds, all presumably moved into that position by early Roman ploughing. The hollow was apparently attractive enough for frogs to collect in it. Below was deliberate filling of the hollow that had been left by natural weathering of the pit sides. The thin, horizontal layer across the pit bottom was a very dark brown humic layer containing minute orange specks, soot and ash, with some flints, and burnt sarsen and bone fragments (GF372), apparently formed from cess and ash. The structure defined by G4, probably with G5A, is therefore proposed as a latrine shed or earth closet, added to the outside of Building 2.

Pit 19 Pit 19, was a secondary hole dug into the filling of an Early Iron Age pit. In the top were the rounded rim of a shouldered jar (GF380; Figure FWP63.35, 4) and two parts of a tanged iron knife (Figure SF25/27; FWP63.33, 5, 6; FWP 38b, Cat Nos 2, 3). This intrusion was probably a later pit or a large central post-hole for the structure of G5. Layer 46c, into which it was cut, contained an ox skull, two articulated long-bones, a scapula and other bones below and around a layer of sarsen stones at c 0.80m depth. Another ox-skull and scapula occurred on the pit bottom.

Pit 20 Pit 20 cut G8 and contained the probable ritual burial of an ox-skull (Plate FWP63.XIII). Its top layer contained two hobnails, again indicating the Romano-British ploughsoil sinking into the top of a slight hollow. Off-centre in the upper part of layer 23 a large sarsen sat as if it had originally lay atop the pit, marking it and then sinking into the fill. Slightly below, in the centre of the pit, were the skull of a 4–5 year-old ox and a piece of polished sarsen. Just below them in layer 23 and placed immediately above a 0.15m thick, horizontal platform-like layer of flint nodules set in a fine clay-type matrix were a knife, apparently deposited intact with its handle (SF 19; Figure FWP63.35, 4; FWP 38b, Cat No 1), a worn bone point (SF20; FWP 38b, Cat No 2), five fragments of worked or butchered bone (two gouges, SF608; Figure FWP63.37, 4; FWP 38b, Cat No 10; SF617; FWP 38b, Cat No 11), two incised rib bones and a grooved long bone, SF609; Figure FWP63.37, 6; cat No 17) and some decorated Early Iron Age sherds including a body sherd with impressed wedge-shapes (GF364; Figure FWP63.36, 21). The lowest two layers of chalk packing, and of chalk silt with chalk lumps, were thin, horizontal and interpreted as the remnants of the bottom of G8, otherwise sliced away by Pit 20.

Pit 21 (21A, B)

Pit 21 consisted of two intersecting, roughly circular pits, P21A (west) and P21B (east), both physically unlike Early Iron Age pits on the site. P21A was cut by P21B. Both were filled with an homogeneous fine dark soil containing small chalk lumps and some flints, with sarsen pieces in 21A (ploughsoil in part created out of occupation material? *cf* Pit 22). These successive pits are envisaged as having been dug in the first century BC or AD, probably the latter, through probably disturbed Early Iron Age occupation material and Early Iron Age cultivated soils. If correctly dated, then they are the only ‘structural’ features for a major phase of activity on the site otherwise

envisaged as solely relating to fields and their cultivation. While not obviously post-holes, neither were they obviously for storage or ritual. P21A contained occupation material; at 0.22m depth were a worn bone point (SF54; Figure FWP63.37, 1; FWP 38b, Cat No 1) and a decorated glass bead (SF55; Figure FWP63.37, 3; FWP 38b, Cat No 1). Their conjunction might suggest a deliberate deposit, or even redeposition; but more probable is that both, a fortuitous pairing, indicate the accidental deposition of Late Iron Age material, together with earlier material, into a new small pit during cultivation most probably in the later first century AD.

Pit 22

Pit 22 also appeared to be a pit within a pit, again with crucial Romano-British evidence but only for the later pit. A dark humic soil formed a 'pipe' cut out of the filling of a much larger pit; at its base was a large sarsen stone with a piece of (human?) skull beneath it. The 'pipe' contained a sherd of Romano-British grey ware among Early Iron Age sherds and fragments of juvenile animal bones and loose teeth. They came from cattle, sheep, pig and horse, notably from the head and legs, ie, waste matter. Similar bones, some cut, some gnawed, were in the remaining fill of the original pit which also contained pottery of standard Early Iron Age types with parallels in the gullies of Building 1 and the maxilla of a large, possibly wild, cat. The secondary pit confirmed Romano-British activity here, and is probably to be related to adjacent Pit 21. Both strongly indicated that any Early Iron Age enclosure bank no longer existed here by Roman times.

Pit 23

Pit 23, bowl-shaped in profile, 0.95m in diameter and 0.77m deep, may have been dug for, and initially held, a Beaker or Early Bronze Age cremation burial. It contained two sherds of Early Bronze Age pottery and was unlike 'typical' Early Iron Age pits in several respects. Two well-preserved, converging ard-marks cut its top (Figure FWP63.19) and Early Iron Age occupation material had been ploughed over the top of the pit, by inference during the Romano-British period. Layer 23 included a potsherd with twisted cord decoration, a thumb-nail scraper and a bone point (SF59; FWP 38b, Cat No 3). Layer 24 was markedly a 'charcoal layer' of fine light grey-brown soil with many white flecks, possibly cremated bones of immature human, and small lumps of charcoal; it contained a plain, grog-tempered red sherd (Beaker/collared urn?), some flint flakes, a few burnt cereal grains, and frog/rodent and unidentified bone fragments. Hazel, ash, pear, oak and hawthorn/apple were represented among the charcoal. Layer 25, fine light grey soil with small chalk lumps, was not typical primary fill weathered from the pit sides.

South 1

These pits are illustrated on Figures FWP63.22 and FWP63.25

Pits 5–7, 14

Pit 5 was bell-shaped and 0.97m deep. Pit 6, a actually a post-hole with a clear socket in the weathered chalk bottom, which cut Pit 7 and 14. Pit 7, the earliest feature in the P5/6/7 complex, was shallow and cut into a worn chalk surface. It was itself cut by Gully 1, Pits 6 and 14, and PH28. Pit 14 was cut by Pit 6

Pits 8, 9, PHs 7, 24 and 25

For this well-stratified complex see *Pits associated with Building 4*.

Pits 10 and 11, PH23 and 26

Pit 10 was cut by Gully 1 and Pit 11, its top layer (3) included (GF489) haematite sherds and Coombe rock. Pit 11 cut Pit 10 and probably PH23, and was cut by Gully 1. Layer 43f, a dark brown loam with very large sarsens and a sling-stone (SF62) was *c* 0.65–0.84m below turf, surrounded and underlain by layer 15 in which was the base of a Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age jar in fabric M30 and frog bones. Layer 47a, very similar to layer 43f, contained burnt sarsens and frog bones *c* 1m below present ground level. PH23 was 0.32m deep and was probably cut by Pit 11. PH26 was cut by Pit 11 and Gully 1.

Distribution

The on-site distribution of the 40 pits was clearly non-random. Essentially they clustered in three groups in and around the three structural complexes ('buildings'), though each cluster was different from the others. That around Building 1 consisted of pits beneath and outside but not inside the building; that related to Buildings 2 and 3 was inside, on top of and outside the buildings; Building 4 contained pits under and in but not outside the building.

The group that particularly stands out distributionally lay in East 2/3. Of the three pits apparently directly related to the structures, two (P13, 19) lay unencumbered in 'internal space' (Figure FWP63.19) while the third (P20) lay directly on the line of the west wall of the latest structure in the complex. This pattern left the four pits outside to the east as a distributional oddity – until the time dimension is brought to bear. They were in fact nothing to do with the building complex, P23 being much earlier than it, and P21 and 22 much later.

Similarly various components of the subcluster east of Building 1 are much earlier than it and all three pits under its west side also preceded it. Pits 6A and 7 alone are big ones likely to be contemporary. In South 1, Pits 10 and 11 preceded Gully 1, as did some of those 'inside' it; Pit 5 succeeded it. So, although the eye is caught by the graphic correlation between pits and structures, it is not quite so clear-cut as at first appears. In fact, the 'pits' here range from Beaker graves to Roman holes. Barely more than 50% of them could be called 'typical' Iron Age (storage) pits in terms of time alone. Even less 'typical' do they appear when function is considered too.

Analysis

Contents

At least ten (25%) of the pits appear to contain structured 'votive' deposits of some kind: they are listed below (Table FWP63.1; FWP 34). All are Early Iron Age unless stated otherwise, they contained decorated artefacts, non-local stone (Coombe rock), domestic artefacts (knives, awls, bone points), and/or the skeletal remains of animals and possibly humans. Four pits contained ox remains which, in three cases (Pits 2, 19 and 20) were skulls. Pit 2 also contained a horse skull, as did Pit 3. Pit 8 contained articulated pig and ox bones. In addition to the inhumation burials in the Beaker graves, possible human bones are of an infant in Pit 23 (Early Bronze Age). Pits 4, 6, 6B, 7 and 7A were all closely associated, only P7, the last of the holes to be dug, being an 'ordinary' Early

Iron Age pit. The others may possibly represent a funereal or ritual space, part of a flat cemetery or possibly under a low, long-gone mound.

Of the 'votive' pits only 3, 11, 19 and 20 contained sarsen; the sarsen in Pit 11 was burnt. A large sarsen, presumably a marker stone, marked the central cut made in early Roman times into Pit 22. Pit 22 was a pit within a pit and contained a large amount of animal bones (mostly head and leg bones) from very young animals. A large sarsen lay at the bottom of the secondary, inner pit. Pit 5, which cut Beaker burial II, contained six large sarsens, possibly originally marking the pit (acknowledging that, surely accidentally, a grave had been disturbed and, possibly, that spirits had to be appeased?). Pit 20 was almost certainly also originally marked by a visible sarsen stone.

Spatial arrangement

Pit 20 lay on the west side of G8. Is it just coincidence that, despite different relationships in time to the buildings, a pit or pits occur at about '9 o'clock' on the circuits of all three building complexes? (Pits 1–3 beneath Building 1; P20 on top of Building 3; P10–11 beneath Building 4). The horse skull in Pit 3 echoed the probably earlier votive deposit in Pit 2, suggesting the continuity of some particular ritual or practice. Pits 10/11 on South 1 appeared to mirror not only the spatial arrangement but also the sequence of Pits 2/3 on the west of Building 1, that is a pit containing a votive deposit was cut by a later pit containing a votive deposit, which was cut by the foundation trench of a building.

Although Pit 20 was in a similar position on G8, something very different was happening there as this pit is clearly of a much later date than the gully. Pit 20 contained the most clearly structured deposit on the site. A layer of flints were placed on top of the fill of Gully 8; above this was buried a complete iron knife including the wooden handle (SF 19; Figure FWP63.35, 4; FWP 38b, Cat No 1) and a bone point (SF20; FWP 38b, Cat No 2). The skull of a nearly fully grown (4–5 year old) ox was placed over the artefacts, and was associated with a small polished sarsen stone. Five fragments of worked or butchered bone were also deposited, along with a sherd of decorated Early Iron Age pottery. The careful assemblage and placement of this superficially eclectic but doubtless deeply meaningful deposit tempts the imagination to think, for example, in terms of a ritual 'killing' of Building 3. Especially is this so if it is accepted that the pit was almost certainly marked by a sarsen stone sticking up through the ground above its 'votive' deposit.

Relationship with structures

Special functions might include Pit 13 which appears to represent a cess pit within the addition to the annexe of Building 2. Pit 19 was perhaps initially created and used before the annexe to Building 2 was built, possibly as 'the pit' of Building 2 (G6). Then the large post-hole might have been cut into Pit 19, possibly once the annexe had been built. Bronze Age and Early Iron Age sherds were found in the layers above Pits 8/9 South 1, and these two pits were again much earlier than the structure.

Dating sequence

The pits alone clearly demonstrate that the site was in use from the Early Bronze Age onwards, principally at Beaker, Early Iron Age and early Roman phases. Pits 21 and 22 were almost certainly in use in the first century BC/AD if not specifically later first century AD, and several pits contained Romano-British material in their topfill, showing that they were slight hollows collecting debris, notably segs, at a time of Roman cultivation.

Ard-marks

Distribution

Slight, shallow linear depressions *c* 0.60m apart were first noted in the surface of the rotten chalk where no occupation layer existed *in situ* over the south-east area of Building 1 beneath the flints. Similar lines then appeared to the north east, with grooves running at right-angles to them (Plate FWP63.XVII). The marks showed up partly as slight grooves in the crumbly surface of subsoil Chalk but mainly as earthy lines; they also showed as lines of flints, often small shattered flints set on edge or an irregular line of larger ones. These marks proved to be *c* 80–150mm across and at the most 30mm deep. They were on average 0.23–0.30m apart but overall appeared extremely irregular.

Within the overall plan (Figure FWP63.28), sufficient relationships were established for a palimpsest of intersecting grooves to be built up. This showed several phases of cultivation, the two main ones being slightly at an angle to one another. Marks running north–south down the slope were easier to observe. All were plotted before other features such as post-holes, most of which only became visible when the crumbly Chalk surface was trowelled off. In general the ard-marks were presumably later than other features; in some cases ard-marks visibly cut features (as shown on Figure FWP63.28).

Relationship with other features and structures

The significant fact about the ard-marks on the east side of East 3 (Figure FWP63.19) may well be, not their relationship to a ditch line, but their preservation. There are nearly as many marks, several of them close together as if from the same ploughings, on the line of the presumed settlement enclosure bank as there are for the rest of East 1 and 2 (Figure FWP63.8), ie, they are exceptionally well-preserved exactly where the bank could have been. The question is, therefore, whether they were well-preserved because they had been protected by the presence of a bank over them. If so, they were earlier than it, and we therefore have unambiguous evidence from the east side of the excavation, as there is from the west of the site having been cultivated before it became an enclosed settlement area. Conversely, the fact of the ard-marks' good preservation could be used to support the argument that the enclosure ditch was likely to have been accompanied by a bank and such was most probably on its inside as indicated by the ard-marks preserved by it (as well as the circumstantial evidence from cutting X/4).

The only comparable extent of well-preserved ard-marks on-site is towards the west side of Building 1. There, to an extent the Chalk surface was protected by the build-up of the tail of the lynchet, an observation which very much strengthens both arguments above. This preservative factor of overlying soil up here on the exposed south-west slope of Overton Down is, incidentally, one good reason why the absence of ard-marks underneath the main north–south lynchet can be taken as good negative evidence that they really did not exist there. This too reinforces the argument that the ard-marks on the north-east side of the lynchet respect the line of the field fence because ploughing and boundary were contemporary and space was needed between ard and fence in which to turn an ox-team round.

Sequence and dating evidence

The evidence of the ard-marks alone, then, suggests that the site of OD XI was cultivated in enclosed fields, occupied (in two phases?), and then abandoned and recultivated in fenced fields. The argument about the sequence is of course circumstantial, and to an extent circular, but doubts about it should not detract from the fact of extensive areas of ard-marks overlaying Early Iron Age

occupation features. That they are later than Early Iron Age occupation, however, leads on to the other question about the possibility of them being Romano-British or later. That some respect the fence, itself much earlier than the early Roman remarking and enlargement of the lynchet, clearly indicates that some ard-marks belong the Early Iron Age phase of cultivation immediately after the settlement's end; but some could still belong to the recultivation of the same area in the first century AD.

That all the ard-marks seem to belong to repeated cultivations in criss-cross-patterns, arguably stretching from Late Bronze Age–early Roman, denies the argument that some could be medieval. Ridge-and-furrow overlies the site on axes close to those of the north west–south east ard-marks and it respects the main north-south lynchet across the site; but it could not have been created by cross-ploughing. We must therefore allow for another, post-Roman phase of cultivation to create the rig, presumably with one-way ploughs with coulter. The few medieval (twelfth–thirteenth century) sherds from OD XI presumably relate to this activity.

The ards which produced the palimpsest of ard-marks on OD XI would have been equipped with shares at best tipped with small iron sockets like the example found on the site (SF3; Figure FWP63.33,7; FWP 38b, Cat No 4). It would be a strange coincidence indeed if at least some of the ard-marks recorded in one of the more extensive examples of their occurrence on Chalk were not made by the ard-tip found among them. Possibly broken (and discarded?) in use here, the fragment may, like the nails and some of the pottery, also be of Romano-British date and use but, like the bulk of the artefacts in Layer 2, it could equally well, and more probably, be of Early Iron Age date, used during the post-settlement cultivation associated with the fence and the bulk of the ard-marks. Disturbed from its original context, like so much of the Early Iron Age settlement material, by cultivation in the first century AD, it came to rest with Romano-British artefacts.

The settlement perimeter and its related features

The enclosing ditch was easily located around its northern arc early in the investigation. The line of the rest of the perimeter was only seriously tackled, however, when it was realised that there was a close relationship locationally and even structurally between the settlement enclosure and subsequent developments.

Initially, it was necessary to test the correctness or otherwise of the hypothesis that the curved scarp was a lynchet relating to a bank, palisade or ditch: hence cuttings ODX/4 and /2 (Figure FWP63.3). Cuttings X/1 and X/5 were concerned with a possible entrance, but all the other cuttings were specifically to check the course of the perimeter ditch (Figure FWP63.3); many were nothing more than test-pits to pick up the line of the top edge of the ditch and were not further excavated. Cuttings X/14 and X/15, however, respectively cut through the lynchet outside, as it subsequently proved, the south-west corner of the settlement enclosure, and sectioned the ditch itself near the centre of the south side to demonstrate its relationship to the lynchet immediately, as it proved, south of the ditch.

Cutting X/4

A cutting (X/4) was laid out across the foot of the scarp of the curved lynchet towards the centre of its curve (Figures FWP63.3, FWP63.30, Figure FWP63.31). Its primary purpose was to establish the existence or otherwise of a ditch, the presence of which was suggested by a very slight surface depression along the foot of this length of the curved lynchet.

Ditch

The ditch, very much underneath the tail of the lynchet, was *c* 3m wide across its mouth and 1.2m deep to the flat bottom which was only 0.23m wide; though the ‘ankle-breaker’ profile subsequently noted at the bases of other sections of this ditch was not quite so apparent here (Figure FWP63.30). The profile was asymmetrical, the shorter, steeper side being on the southern, inner side, whence appeared to come a disproportionate amount of the earlier filling.

Covering the ditch bottom was a fine greyish silt without chalk lumps, clearly not a ‘primary silt’ and different from the lowest material in any of the other ditch sections. The ditch had been cleaned out, perhaps several or numerous times, for none of the typical granular chalk infilling from early frost action was present. Indeed, the material appeared best interpreted as deliberate infilling, possibly shovelled down from the upper surface of a weathered, cemented bank (by analogy with the Overton Down Experimental Earthwork, Bell *et al* 1996). Perhaps, though, it originated as wind- or rain-deposited ploughsoil. The layer seemed to have come in mainly if not entirely from the inner side, ie, inside the settlement. Above it was a crumbly chalk infill, probably the product of a ‘natural’ process. Bulky though the layer was, however, it could easily all have accumulated within a few years judging by the nearby Experimental Earthwork.

On top of it an assemblage of flints suggested a period of stability as material gradually accumulated on a surface which developed over the ditch infilling. Nearly 0.60m of greyish humus with chalk lumps (layer 3) then built up in an homogeneous infill, looking very much as if either the ditch was being over-ploughed or was at least right on the edge of an arable field from which it was receiving ploughsoil. The brown humus above was clearly the ground surface which, perhaps after centuries of arable infilling of the ditch, developed over the top of the now almost level ditch surface. As it developed, however, a lense of flinty soil trickled down on to it from above and to the north, presumably indicating renewed or continuing cultivation of the field there. It might well be of medieval date, the rendzina topsoil above it representing soil development since the cessation of medieval cultivation.

Blank area and possible evidence for a bank

South of the ‘inner’ lip of the ditch, the central part of the cutting contained no features at all for *c* 5m (Figure FWP63.30). This ‘blank’ was covered only by a thin topsoil above a natural Chalk surface which was more or less level before dropping abruptly to the south. These phenomena were interpreted as indicating the area where a bank had stood, preserving the Chalk a little higher because it was protected for centuries by, first, a maintained bank and, then, the lowest remains of that bank until they were finally removed by cultivation in either Roman or, more probably, medieval times. A similar phenomenon, though substantial enough in places to also preserve a thin, mixed soil and rubble component from the bank itself, was observed in the records of various of the excavations carried out along the Stonehenge Avenue (Montague 1995) where it was termed the ‘bank shadow’.

At the break from ‘raised’ to ‘normal’ Chalk surface a post-hole, 0.29m both in girth and depth might have marked the back of a bank. More significant was the fact that, after the ‘blank’, eight chalk-cut features clustered in the southern 4.3m of the cutting. This phenomenon was probably the beginning of occupation features immediately inside the bank. It was also taken as significant elsewhere on the site, in the light of X/4, that the absence of occupation features in cuttings placed for other purposes was nevertheless a useful negative pointer to the likely spread of settlement within the enclosure.

Cuttings East 4, X/4, X/5 and X/15

Cutting East 4, (Figures FWP63.3, Figure FWP63.31; Plate FWP63.XV) was taken out across the possible line of the 'bank' and ditch on the eastern side of the enclosure where neither was visible (though the ditch showed as a parch-mark in 1995, despite the overlying ridge-and-furrow). Nothing was found by excavation outside the ditch, hinting that the enclosure did indeed contain the settlement.

Ditch in East 4

The ditch was dug with an 'ankle-breaker' bottom, above which animal bone and sarsen fragments suggested that occupation material was entering the ditch in a granular pinky-brown soil, slightly clayey in consistency, homogeneous with small to medium chalk lumps and a few scattered flints. Similar layers occurred in cuttings X/5 and X/15 (Figure FWP63.31), and similarly in all three cuttings, the overlying layer was comparable and in each case interpreted as a 'turf-line'. Here, its profile indicated that the ditch had by this stage, probably in the first centuries BC/AD, become a (presumably linear) depression only *c* 0.40m deep below Chalk subsoil surface and perhaps less than 0.60m below the ground surface at the time of the Roman Conquest. This depression was then almost levelled off, in cuttings X/5 and X/15 as well as East 4, by a layer of homogeneous infilling deposited on top of an old land surface representing a period of stability. This was interpreted as a ploughsoil, probably of first century AD date.

Overall, the layering of the ditch fill was fairly symmetrical, there being no particular indication of the settlement immediately to its west. The main asymmetry was indeed in the ditch sides themselves. The inner side, facing north east, was at a shallower angle, and therefore seemed perhaps more weather-affected, than that on the outside, facing inwards towards the south west. This is the opposite of the observation on the Overton Down Experimental Earthwork. Maybe a bank and its position relative to a ditch, rather than anything else such as climate or aspect, is a critical factor in post-constructional degradation on Chalk.

Evidence for bank

If there was a bank on the inner side of the ditch, here the westerly side, then its dimensions as suggested in Cutting X/4 would place at least part of it on the space occupied by settlement features along the eastern side of East 3 (Figure FWP63.3). This eastern strip about 5m wide had been excavated without thought of a possible relationship to a settlement perimeter, thought at the time to be well out to the east, and indeed no structural evidence of a bank had been found in East 3. But the possible bank's width as suggested in cutting X/4 would place its rear line just to the east of Gully 8 and, critically, across the western edge of Pit 22 which would therefore be 'underneath' it; but Pit 22 was Romano-British, not Early Iron Age and, therefore, on this argument would have been cut into the tail of an almost flattened bank. Pits 23 and 8 were also in the putative bank's space; but Pit 23 was an Early Bronze Age pit – long-forgotten when the Early Iron Age bank might have been built – and together with the well-preserved ard-marks around and over it, fairly strongly suggests that a bank formerly existed here.

Southern ditch (Cutting X/15)

The enclosure's southern ditch ran alongside the double-lynchet track (Figure FWP63.3). A cutting (X/15) that was only 12ft (3.7m) long was put down blindly and proved to be almost exactly centrally over the ditch, 1.7m deep at that point. Two complete runs of soil samples from top to bottom of the ditch were also taken, one remaining intact in storage for some 30 years. There was no

Romano-British or later material from this cutting. The section exposed ten layers, here briefly discussed in the sequence of deposition as illustrated in Figure FWP63.31.

Primary silts

Layer 46c, which is deposited symmetrically, can readily be explained, by comparison with the nearby Overton Down Experimental Earthwork (Bell *et al* 1996). It was most probably natural infilling from frost action during the first year or, at most, two years. The asymmetry of layers 35a–2d suggests that the source of much of the material was on its north side, ie, on its inner edge where a bank of a settlement enclosure could reasonably be expected to be. Following the Experimental Earthwork again, layers 35a–2d should represent fairly rapid deposition, probably within ten years. Layer 2d was seen when recorded as a ‘weathering tipline’, analogous to what happened in the earthwork’s ditch some 10–14 years after construction. Overall, up to this stage, all the evidence points to natural processes infilling the ditch.

The absence of artefacts from layers 35a–2d strongly suggested that occupation had ceased and that nothing was happening on the site to move occupation debris into the ditch, ie, a phase of desertion happened after the settlement was abandoned, sealed by a naturally deposited layer 2d before renewed activity. This accords with the development of an old ground surface over that part of the settlement subsequently covered by the main north-south lynchet.

Stabilisation layers

Layer 35b then represented a phase of consolidation and stabilisation as the ditch developed a rounded surface profile instead of the ‘natural’ asymmetrically angular one at the top of Layer 2d. Layer 35b was nevertheless anthropogenic, developing as a ploughsoil, probably in the Early Iron Age and perhaps even within a decade after the settlement’s end. Layer 21b was a turf line, representing a habitat which remained undisturbed long enough for a genuine humus to develop (50–100 years?) and a quiet phase after the layer 35b post-settlement cultivation.

?Romano-British cultivation layers

It was on to the stable sward of Layer 21b that the flints of layer 6a were deposited when disruptive activity began again, probably adjacent to rather than actually on the silted up but still visible ditch. Renewed cultivation in the first/second century AD seems the likely explanation, deep and vigorous enough to disturb and deposit not only largish flints but also fist-sized sarsen stones. This suggests very much that it was this ploughing, not that of Layer 35b, which was biting into the Early Iron Age settlement deposits, scattering hearths, slicing off the tops of Chalk-cut features and moving stones protruding from post-holes and pits. It was probably therefore the cultivation mainly responsible for most of the ard-marks.

Layer 6b, also a ploughsoil layer, was (almost) certainly of Romano-British date, the tail end of the accumulation in the upper part of the lynchet to the south east. It could begin in mid/late first century AD. Layers 1–6b are essentially lying in the same plane, sloping very slightly with the natural slope towards the lynchet immediately to the south. None of them followed the contours of the ditch or its fillings, ie, the ditch was only a slight earthwork at the start of the accumulation of layer 6b and was effectively invisible by the time of its completion. This accords with the stratigraphy in cuttings X/2 and East 4, again suggesting that the Early Iron Age settlement enclosure was effectively flattened by the second century AD.

Later cultivation and ridge-and-furrow

Layers 1–6b together constitute 0.60m of deposit, so they are unlikely to represent one single phase of activity or a short period of time. Layer 6b being Romano-British in at least some sense, Layers 2 and 1 could well be an accumulation developing between say the fourth and twelfth centuries. It was then cultivated to produce the ridge-and-furrow which fossilised on abandonment, probably in the later thirteenth century, subsequently sorted out over 700 years into the two layers that we found. Alternatively, all three might be entirely post-Roman, with layer 6b being an early medieval ploughsoil and layers 1/2 being cultivated as a single ploughsoil in the thirteenth century, subsequently dividing under 700 years of sheep-cropped grass.

South west corner: Cutting X/14

A row of sondages attempted to locate the south-western corner of the enclosure ditch (cutting X/14, Figure FWP63.3). Once the outer lip of the ditch had been defined, the ditch itself was not further excavated. The measured profile and the cutting across the double lynchet trackway to the south east were, however, extended, relating the ditch and enclosure to their immediate surroundings. Towards the field corner, plough-soil had accumulated behind the ‘old’ (pre-settlement, ?Middle Bronze Age) lynchet running north west and the later lynchet running north east on the north side of the double lynchet track.

The layer of pinky-grey fine soil with chalk lumps and flint chips was again present. An abrupt, steeply-sloping forward edge to both layers formed a ‘classic’ front of a prehistoric field lynchet. Layers 1–3 continued through the lynchet but layer 5 projected for only 0.60m in front of the lynchet face before ending just above a sharp ‘nick’ c 90m deep into the Chalk surface. This was probably a negative lynchet, indicating a phase of cultivation very late in the sequence, going with a phase of ploughing over the top of the double lynchet trackway which respected the already obvious lynchet on its north side. The earthworks here have a somewhat rounded, slightly rubbed-out appearance and a ‘late’ but pre-medieval cultivation phase was suggested on fieldwork evidence alone. The date might be in fourth/fifth century, associated with the nearby late Roman settlement. No structural or dating evidence, however, came from the small cutting on the south side of the double lynchet trackway.

Possible entrance (Cuttings X/1 and X/5)

A possible entrance was examined on the north-west arc of the enclosed settlement (Cuttings X/1 and X/5, Figures FWP63.3, Figure FWP63.31). The low bank was sectioned without conclusive result except to define the point east of which the ditch must lie. X/5 then located the enclosure ditch lying behind the break in the earthwork and showed no evidence of an entrance. The ditch was similar in profile, dimensions and filling to the sections already described. Here as elsewhere around this ditch, eg, Layer ?42c in East 4, the ditch witnessed a period of stability long enough for natural infilling to cease and a grass-covered surface to develop. Then the bulk of the upper filling was a very fine humus confidently interpreted as a ploughsoil.

Other enclosure ditch sections (Cuttings X/6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 10)

Other small cuttings succeeded in establishing the course of the ditch (Figure FWP63.3). None was excavated, except where indicated, below the surface of the bedrock Chalk. 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 minimum cost. They also produced no addition to the record of features inside or outside the settlement enclosure.

Cuttings X/8 and X/9 located the ditch as it turned a sharp corner at the enclosure's south-eastern angle. This could be interpreted as indicating that the double-lynchet trackway already existed, belonging therefore to the Late Bronze Age landscape into which the Early Iron Age enclosure was inserted. The ditch in X/8 cut through earlier Chalk-cut features, not further examined. The absence of features other than the ditch from the rash of sondages in the enclosure's south western area implied that occupation had not existed here. Two cuttings into the western lynchet were merely large enough to fix the presence and course of the ditch underneath the lynchet. In so doing, they implied that the location and shape of the later field was pre-conditioned by the western boundary of the enclosed settlement. They also showed that the field was in use and the lynchet accreting after the ditch had been abandoned as the perimeter of an enclosed settlement.

Interpretations from the perimeter

Enclosure

The ditch enclosed an area of 1.5ha (3.75 acres) in a sub-oval shape with a straight side on the north east 100m long. It contained a settlement area and, apparently, a lot of 'blank' space. Its lower fill indicates consistently that it was dug through an open environment. This was probably one of arable cultivation for, archaeologically, the indications are that the area was already long-divided up into rectangular enclosed fields, probably still under plough. If they were not being cultivated when the ditch was dug, then their disuse was recent and perhaps only along the line of the ditch and within the area it enclosed.

Ditch

The ditch was dug to a fairly consistent profile, characterised by a 'slot' or 'ankle-breaker' and fairly symmetrical, sloping sides. Originally they were probably at an angle of $c 45^\circ$, forming a mouth perhaps 3m wide. There was no direct evidence as to how the ditch was dug, nor was there any firm evidence as to what happened to the material dug from it. The stratification showed marked consistency (Figure FWP63.31). It began to fill up, apparently through lack of maintenance, during the Early Iron Age, and a soil with vegetation developed over it. Its upper two-thirds were later infilled during three distinct phases of cultivation, most probably in the mid-first millennium BC, the first/second centuries AD and the thirteenth century. The ditch was either cleared out for an unknown length of time, but probably not very long judging by the lack of evidence indicating this at the base; or allowed to collect the debris from its sides in its base from the moment when it had been completed. Either way, its primary fill as found was of freshly-fractured chalk.

Bank

At no point did an inner bank exist or survive as an earthwork, though a possible counterscarp bank existed on the north west arc of the perimeter. At two places (Cuttings X/4 and East 3) structural evidence suggested that an inner bank had existed but in general the post-abandonment ditch-filling did not convince as deriving from an eroded or flattened bank. In effect, the Chalk excavated in making the ditch had disappeared.

Nevertheless, negative evidence suggested the former existence of an inner bank, $c 4m$ wide and constructed on top of a soil profile which had already been disturbed by recent cultivation. Its height would have been influenced by:

i) whether it had consisted only of material from the ditch

- ii) whether it received all the material from the ditch
- iii) whether the material was dumped symmetrically

Assuming all three of those factors to have applied, then, extrapolating figures derived from the Overton Down experimental earthwork (Jewell 1963b), the enclosure bank around this settlement would have been some 2 m high. It would presumably have been less if a counterscarp bank consisted of original ditch material rather than clearings.

The most likely cause of the disappearance of this probable but hypothetical inner bank is prolonged ploughing over it. It seems likely that any remnant bank had effectively been flattened by the late Roman period after cultivation during Early Iron Age and early Romano-British times; it may also have been deliberately levelled or spread and indeed may well have been effectively flattened by the first century AD. Its existence was completely obliterated during medieval cultivation, though its line was, to an extent, perpetuated on the west by a lynchets and, with that of the ditch, by the alignment, accidental or otherwise, of medieval ridge-and-furrow parallel with its eastern course.

Lynchets excavations

All the excavation of lynchets, with the exception of one (OD X/3), were concerned with the main north–south lynchets across the settlement enclosure (Figure FWP63.3, FWP63.5–FWP63.10). The aim of all these cuttings was originally to investigate the structure and date of the lynchets running north west–south east across the settlement area. The general objective was to acquire a *terminus post quem* for the particular fields defined by such lynchets by establishing the existence of, and then dating, the underlying settlement. Once it was apparent that settlement features did indeed underlie the lynchets and that there was probably also structural and chronological evidence specific to the lynchets/field edge itself, it became a tactical objective to establish the extent, function, date and direction of what appeared to be a line of post-holes under the lynchets.

Cutting X/2

Purpose

A small incision (Figures FWP63.3, FWP63.6) was made into the tail of the curved lynchets and on to the top of the straight north–south lynchets across the hypothesised settlement. Its purposes were to see if a stratigraphical relationship between the two lynchets could be established; and to show, if indeed the enclosure ditch existed, that the straight lynchets overlay the ditch infilling.

Stratigraphy

The cutting located the outer lip of the enclosure ditch and showed the top of its outer side to drop 0.78m in its top 1.20m. Layer 9, brown humus with small chalk pieces, possibly ploughsoil, equates to Layer 7b in cutting X/15. The northern two-thirds of the cutting showed the familiar tripartite layering of topsoil (1), flints (2) and old ground surface (43), the last perhaps a ‘ploughsoil’ here piling up into the lynchets proper. The thick layer 43, a ploughsoil accumulation, ended and rested on the thin layer 43, the old land surface. This then left a 1.20m-wide berm between the foot of the lynchets and the outer lip of the ditch.

The settlement ditch cut the ploughsoil (layer 43), confirming that the enclosed settlement was indeed inserted into a pattern of existing fields. The fields would then have to be of Late Bronze Age date or earlier. Since a lynchets (‘thick’ layer 43) subsequently accumulated on Layer 43 1.20m and

more back from the ditch's outer lip, cultivation must have continued or restarted after the ditch was cut. No direct dating evidence indicated whether that was during or after the life of the settlement enclosed by the ditch. It seems most likely that the curved lynchet reflecting that ditch came into being during the settlement's occupation (Phase 3b/3c), thereafter becoming a permanent feature of the landscape.

Sarsen stones and dating implications

A cluster of nine sarsen stones in the south-east quarter of the cutting lay in front of the lynchet and indeed in part on the berm on layer 43. The southern edge of the cluster oversailed the outer lip of the ditch and could only have arrived at its present position after the ditch had infilled to the top of layer 9. The cluster lay exactly at the northern end of the straight lynchet north-south across the settlement and, given its 'late' arrival in the sequence anyway, the stones may have been deliberately placed, perhaps as a marker, to fix where this new field boundary should end.

Sarsens of similar size elsewhere along the lynchet were always in Layer 2, characteristically containing first/second century AD potsherds. The stones as a made feature in Cutting X/2 should therefore belong to the early Roman phase of landscape reorganisation witnessed elsewhere on this site and in the study area; and they should take with them a second phase of lynchet accumulation since the position of the stones shows that considerable cultivation had occurred before their placement in the later first century AD (and in this particular case, after the Early Iron Age settlement).

Possible fence-line: Cutting East 1

Four separate contiguous excavations of the same lynchet revealed a line of post-holes which are highlighted on Figure FWP63.9). The interpretation of these post-holes is selective and, in the absence of conclusive evidence contained within them, any one post-hole could belong to any phase of activity on the site (see FWP 2). Furthermore, while a convincing line can be perceived, its members are not exclusive in what is envisaged as a structural field boundary, ie, some form of fence. This lay across the former settlement area as it was reclaimed for arable farming, some time after its abandonment, clearly, but with enough time for a thin turf line to have formed (Figures FWP63.7, FWP63.8). The line perceived in East 1, cutting Pit 2 and Gully 1, was persuasively taken up again in the cutting immediately south of Gully 1 where PHs 1, 3, 4 and 5 (Figure FWP63.15), all cut into Chalk, seemed to represent the continuation of the fence after its intersection with the settlement features.

Dating evidence

The flints with humus layer contained all the finds from the material over the top of the lynchet, including some sherds of Romano-British pottery. No Romano-British pottery occurred any lower than Layer 2. A sarsen stone lay on and partly in layer 2, as if it had been placed on an already existing lynchet *cf* Cutting X/2. The distinctive ploughsoil material forming the bulk of the lynchet (Layer 43) and contained Early Iron Age sherds. The flinty soil and crumbly chalk (Layer 4), probably the remains of an old land surface lay directly on the Chalk. It contained much charcoal, potsherds and animal bones, almost certainly occupation material more or less *in situ*.

Relationship with Building 1

First showing at subsoil surface level was a concentration of larger flints and sarsen stones in the top of a gully (1). It continued immediately south east, proving to be a small arc of a circular wall-trench *c* 0.60m deep for what was eventually defined as House 1 (Figures FWP63.3, Figure FWP63.15).

Within its penannular plan, some redeposited stones lay north, east and south of its centre, but not to the west, ie, not towards the ‘fence’ or under the positive lynchet but into the field. This suggested that ploughing had been carried out at right-angles to the lynchet and not right up to it, an interpretation which independently reflected the pattern of ard-marks.

Area ODX1/A/West 1

The area through the lynchet was expanded in 1967, showing it to consist of three layers to a depth of 0.20m. It covered 15 stake- or post-holes ranging from 30–200mm deep, the exception being PH 18 which was 380mm deep with a bone needle (SF622; Figure FWP63.37, 3; cat No 8) just above its base. Several post-holes were in line and could have been part of a fence (Figure FWP63.9). The east edge of the lynchet covered the western tip of Gully 2.

Area ODX1/B

Areas N and M

Another cutting, opened in 1965, was designed to pick up a continuation of the ‘fence’ post-holes without sectioning the whole lynchet (Figures FWP63.3, FWP63.10). Most of the pottery in Layer 2 was Early Iron Age, but in both cuttings some Romano-British sherds occurred in that layer and that layer alone. Sixteen sherds of Roman pottery included eight of Savernake ware. Two sarsens were on top of layer 2 flints and clearly belonged to a later phase of ploughing, presumably that of the later first century noted elsewhere on the site. They probably marked the corner of the fields then, just as the same corner, but slightly to the east, could well have been marked 600 years earlier by a complete jar. This stood in the top of PH50 at the junction of lines of post-holes, perhaps actually marking the corner of three contiguous fields. Layer 3, subdivided into 3a and 3b, respectively a dry grey soil with flints (?a ploughsoil) and darker soil with no flints (?a turf-line), overlay large post-holes as well as stake-holes cut into Chalk.

The post-holes seemed to confirm the continuation of a fence line but overall hinted at the presence of another structure or structures. Some post-holes contained what might be interpreted as structural materials, eg, PH45 with layers successively containing fragments of pottery in chalk lumps, burnt clay, lumps of compacted chalk lumps, burnt flint and fragments of pottery, and a packing stone and burnt clay at 0.28m depth. This suggests the hole was cut through an existing occupation level.

Area ODX1/B/West: possible structure

Excavation was extended from the main north–south lynchet along the lynchet coming in from the west (Figures FWP63.3, FWP63.10) to establish whether or not a fence had existed under it too. No such evidence was found, though post-holes and other features occurred. This lynchet’s stratigraphy was essentially the same as that of the north–south one, though the old ground surface was more markedly than in cuttings N and M an occupation layer despite having been disturbed, probably by cultivation, before lynchet formation (eg, GF 215, 219). A fragment of a presumably more extensive set of ard-marks was etched into Chalk on the negative lynchet, interpreted as belonging to a pre-settlement phase when the area was one of enclosed fields.

Of eight post-holes (PHs 63, 66, 67, 69–73, Figure FWP63.10) cut into the Chalk, PH 67 was probably of early Roman date and PHs 70–2 contained grey soil with chalk, suggesting they had been cut through a ploughsoil. PHs 63, 66, 69 and 73 all contained daub; PH 69 also contained several decorated sherds which can be directly paralleled at All Cannings Cross. The daub and decorated pottery lends some support to the suggestion, from the distribution of the post-holes in this area, of the presence of a circular post-built structure. This is speculatively outlined in Figure FWP63.11.

Comment on Area OD XI/B

Overall in this area a phase of occupation including a possible round timber structure seemed to be sandwiched between two phases of arable-cultivation in enclosed fields. Post-holes containing Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age sherds were assignable to the possible structure, distinguishable from others apparently continuing the line of the fence post-holes (Figures FWP63.10 and FWP63.11).

We may, therefore, suggest a ceramically two-phase occupation with post-built structure (Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age and Early Iron Age) which seems to have occurred on an already cultivated soil, probably to be associated with arable-marks, followed by a main phase of cultivation related to fields divided by a fence. This last deposited occupation material from the settlement in Area XI/A into the lynchet probably soon after that settlement's desertion. A third phase of cultivation of the area, reusing the old fence-line now marked by a lynchet, began in the later first century AD, characterised by sarsen stone markers on the lynchet and Savernake ware as elsewhere on the site.

Cutting ODXI/C

A single cutting (OD XI/C, 1966) further south continued the examination of the main north–south lynchet across the site; but by the time it was excavated it was already suspected that, as the break in line of the lynchet at Area B suggests, this southern length might well be a relic of an older arrangement rather than an insertion of a new field edge across a newly-deserted settlement area. No proof was found that the fence continued this far, and the slight structural evidence could belong to either the enclosed Early Iron Age settlement – which seems most likely – or the Late Bronze Age phase indicated below Area B. If the former, this is significant evidence in showing the presence, otherwise lacking, of Early Iron Age occupation in this area of the settlement enclosure. The same standard Early Iron Age pottery fabrics were recovered from both areas (XI/A and C) in and under the lynchet; there were no Late Bronze Age sherds. Three sarsens located on the south edge of the cutting in layer 2 accurately echoed the occurrences of sarsen high in the lynchet elsewhere right across the site, interpreted as markers for or resulting from renewed cultivation in the later first century AD.

Cutting X/3

Cutting X/3 (Figures FWP63.3, FWP63.5) was across the lower part of the lynchet forming the further, northern side of the field butting up against the north side of the settlement enclosure. Its purposes were simply to provide a 'control' for a 'Celtic' field lynchet on Overton Down outside the settlement area, to see if any structure existed in the lynchet and to acquire, if possible, some dating evidence.

Essentially the stratification showed three main layers (Figure FWP63.5). Incised into the Chalk subsoil were six grooves consistently *c.* 0.25m apart. The longest was 2.02m. Five were roughly parallel, south west–north east along the general line of the lynchet and incised 20–33mm into the

soft bedrock surface; the sixth, the most southerly and the shortest at 0.34m long, was oriented more south–north. Overall, these grooves seem best interpreted as ard-marks, providing a glimpse of perhaps no more than one or two ‘ploughings’, or perhaps the very last ‘ploughing’, within a ‘Celtic’ field. They were probably created because here, at the upper end of a prehistoric field, an ard accidentally or otherwise bit into the negative lynchet. Their preservation was probably because loose materials building up into the lynchet above spilled over and covered them. No evidence at all was found of built structure in the lynchet.

Earlier activity was indicated by two, perhaps three, pits cut into the Chalk subsoil of the negative lynchet. The pits were sealed by a brown soil with small chalk lumps (Layer 43), probably also a ploughsoil but also an ‘old ground surface’ in relation to Layer 2. The pits were not apparently cut through Layer 43 and indeed may well have been truncated during an early phase of the development of the negative lynchet.

The earliest pit, Pit W (Figure FWP63.5), perhaps originally *c* 0.75m wide across its top, was filled with light brown soil with patches of chalk, and could well have been a tree-hole. Pit X may have been natural too but was more likely to have been man-made with an anthropogenic filling, probably cutting Pit W. Pit Y was not convincing but, if it was man-made, it appeared earlier than Pit X. The sequence from earliest to latest was: Pit W, Pit Y, Pit X, all earlier than the lynchet and probably earlier than any cultivation of the site. In view of other evidence subsequently obtained from the surrounding area, they should therefore be Late Bronze Age or earlier; and by analogy with the pit at the Experimental Earthwork, much earlier.

Interpretations

The model offered here took shape as plausible clarity began to emerge from the welter of data about an area some 200m square (OD X/XI). A highly-simplified and abbreviated version, it has grown out of three well-developed earlier interpretations (FWP 13) to which it is not an arbitrary alternative. As a preferred model, however, it does silently embody a number of decisions, each carefully judged, to follow one alternative rather than another. Nevertheless, it encapsulates an archaeologically viable sequence, linked to an apparently ‘hard’ chronology. The latter is, of course, actually a series of best-guesses at a time of considerable chronological revisionism, here added to a reasonably secure stratigraphical succession. The model is meant to provide, not certainty but a challenging temporal framework to encourage further thought about the dynamics of long-term landscape evolution, in this case on one spot.

Overall the evidence indicates major changes occurring quite suddenly over quite short periods within a long history of land-use change. Clearly many of the details can be differently interpreted and such differences can affect the story, though perhaps not the succession. The following phasing emerges from the sort of framework that seems to represent the scale, pace and nature of change on this small area.

Period 1: *c* 2000 BC: Beaker/Early Bronze Age burials

Period 2

Phase 2a: Middle Bronze Age field system

Phase 2b: *c* ninth century BC: Late Bronze Age occupation in field in field system

Period 3

Phase 3a: very early unenclosed Early Iron Age settlement in field in field system

Phase 3b: *c* eighth century BC: Early Iron Age settlement, complex building(s), in an enclosure within field system

Phase 3c: *c* seventh century BC: late Early Iron Age settlement, single round-house, in an enclosure within a field system

Period 4

Phase 4a: Settlement abandoned and its area, reincorporated into field system, recultivated in fields divided by a fence

Phase 4b: Sixth–second centuries BC: Middle Iron Age grassland

Period 5

Phase 5a: First century BC: renewed but non-intensive Late Iron Age activity

Phase 5b: First–second centuries AD: remarking of old, and new, field boundaries, intensive recultivation

Phase 5c: Third–fourth centuries: non-intensive, probably non-arable and pastoral farming

Phase 5d: Fifth–twelfth centuries: permanent pasture

Period 6

Phase 6a: ?Thirteenth century: cultivation in strip fields arranged within prehistoric/Romano-British fields

Phase 6b: Fourteenth–nineteenth centuries: permanent pasture (formation of ‘old grassland’)

Period 7 Twentieth century: permanent pasture, while becoming non-agrarian, multi-purpose resource

Comments

(Figure FWP63.32)

PERIOD 1: *c* 2000 BC: Beaker/Early Bronze Age burials

Three Beaker graves lay in an open but not ‘empty’ landscape (Figures FWP63.13, FWP63.15, FWP63.32a). In the wider local context (*LPP*, Chapter 5), they occurred in a landscape already littered, even if not on Fyfield and Overton Downs, with ‘old’ funereal, liturgical monuments (megalithic and earthen long barrows) and near-contemporary and current round barrows. A small, stone-kerbed round barrow which could well be contemporary, lay only *c* 130m to the north (Figure FWP63.2). Other flat cemeteries may also have existed but have simply not been located by a monument-orientated sort of archaeology. Settlements existed but are still poorly represented in the record except in general by the near-ubiquitous spread of worked flints and flakes (FWP 31).

Possibly fitting in at the end of this phase is Pit 23, East 3, a small pit of which the contents indicate an Early Bronze Age date and which might have contained a cremation. Its relatively good preservation might have been due to its accidental protection by the Phase 3b enclosure bank.

PERIOD 2: Middle Bronze Age field system

Site OD X/XI did not really exist as a separate entity at this stage, between *c* 2000 and the ninth/eighth century BC, ie, between the Beaker burials and the earliest Late Bronze Age occupation

Phase 2a

The area that was later occupied by Early Iron Age settlement (and therefore excavated) was simply a fragment of an extensive, co-axial field system consisting basically of enclosed fields *c* 60 x 50 m in size (*LPP*, Chapter 2). Most of the site detail here is hypothetical, reconstructed from apparently significant on-site features interpreted in the wider landscape context but into it is tentatively put the best-preserved blocks of ard-marks on the hypothesis that, over Pit 23 and under the enclosure bank in East 3, they are at least arguably pre-Early Iron Age and therefore possibly the earliest on the site. This phase of cultivation establishes open downland later reflected in the Early Iron Age enclosure ditch microfauna (Phase 3c/4); and may have triggered erosion (*LPP*, Chapter 14).

Phase 2b: c Ninth century: Late Bronze Age occupation in a field in a field system

A Late Bronze Age phase of activity on Bronze Age fields was evidenced by a small but significant amount of pottery and metalwork, tending to clump around the south west area of South 1 and cuttings B at the lynchet junction (Figure FWP63.32b). At the latter, enough post-holes were so configured to allow the suggestion that in this phase a round structure stood there at the south side of a field, perhaps only part of an activity area developing within an existing field system. The field, it is envisaged, was taken out of cultivation within a system which continued to be farmed.

PERIOD 3: Early Iron Age occupation

This period embraces the main phases of Early Iron Age occupation, though it may well have developed out of that already identified in Phase 2b. Its absolute date, and the length of the period(s) of occupation, are uncertain but archaeologically it begins with the earliest Early Iron Age pottery and ends with the latest pottery that can firmly be associated with settlement structure (probably that in Pit 22). Ceramically, a date in the eighth/seventh centuries BC seems to be required for its earliest phase, and occupation may well have been short. It certainly ceased well before the next firm dated horizon in the first century AD (Phase 4). Outside limits of ninth–sixth century BC are not unreasonable. The possibility of a ‘three generation occupancy’, here over a century either side of 700 BC, is one interpretation further discussed elsewhere (*LPP*, Chapter 16)

Phase 3a: unenclosed occupation within one specific (hypothetical) field

The phase is posited on the concept of a first Early Iron Age occupation in the form of an open (or ‘unenclosed’) settlement within a lynched Bronze Age field. Ceramically, Gully 5 contained the earliest Early Iron Age occupation material on the site. That from Gully 8 was ceramically sequential but so closely that it could have been contemporary. An interpretative difficulty is that structurally G8 cut, and is therefore later than, G6; but the pottery may indeed all be from G6 and not from G8, having perhaps been wrongly observed, and therefore wrongly contextualised in its record, when found at the point of intersection, ie, it may well have been actually in, or disturbed from, the filling of G6 when recorded as from G8.

Figure FWP63.32c therefore shows one round building (Building 2, G6) with a southern annexe (G3). A third structure (Building 3, G4) may either have been added to it to complete a trilobate building or, perhaps, was a replacement for it. The dots represent those pits with associated early Early Iron Age material, but others may also have belonged to this phase. Some ‘working hollows’ are also indicated. The graphic expresses the idea of an open settlement lying within, indeed contained by, an earlier but co-existing field now given over from arable to occupation but within a field system still continuing in arable use. On this interpretation, the building complex is fairly central to the rectangular enclosure ‘left’ by the converted field. A negative reason for suggesting

this unenclosed Early Iron Age settlement phase is that none of the early pottery of this occupation occurred in the enclosure ditch.

Phase 3b: eighth century: Early Iron Age settlement, complex building(s), in an enclosure cut out of and within a co-existing field system

This the main occupation phase immediately preceded by major physical disruption when the size, nature and perhaps status of the settlement was changed to take local precedence over arable fields. An *enclosed* settlement, occupying three times the area of the original ex-field settlement of Phase 3a, was created by digging some 400m of ditch and (presumably) at the very least heaping up some form of accompanying bank (Figure FWP63.32d). Locally, the field system was permanently warped by the 'bite' of the northern arc of the enclosure into two fields north of the Phase 3a settlement; the curve is still there as an earthwork on the ground in the late twentieth century, as indeed is the straight line of the enclosure's southern side. The latter predetermined (or perhaps followed) the position of the double-lynchet track which also remains as a prominent earthwork (Figure FWP63.32a).

Inside, interpretation is tentative, though occupation is seen as the ceramic 'standard mainstream Early Iron Age' probably within the eighth–sixth centuries BC. The enclosure could have contained two building complexes but, on this model, it is envisaged as having contained one round-house, at least at any one moment. The possibilities are represented by Buildings 1 and 2: simple round-houses (except for the annexe on Building 1), with south east, probably porched, entrances, a hearth and some internal fittings. Each is simpler than the structures of Phase 3a.

Building 1 is shown on Figure FWP63.32d, partly because its associated material could be slightly later than that of the structural complex of Buildings 2/3 10m to the east, partly because a 'shift' slightly west from Buildings 2/3 embraces an area nearer the centre of the new enclosure. It is nevertheless possible that one or two other buildings (Buildings 3 and 4) also belonged here, sequentially or collectively. The squiggle south of Building 1 in Figure FWP63.32d indicates the area of earlier 'working hollows' with filling that contains a few 'standard Early Iron Age' sherds. If, however, the house there belongs in this phase, the 'working hollow' should go back probably to Phase 3a.

The case for Gully 8 (Building 3) belonging to Phase 3b hinges on its relationship to the putative enclosure bank as much as potsherds. Either as a stand-alone round-house or as a replacement for Building 2 in continuing to provide an eastern part of a trilobate building, G8 appears to have been constrained locationally by the back of the enclosure bank; but of course, in the absence of stratigraphical relationships, theoretically it is as likely that the bank avoided it as that it stood in its position because the bank was already there. However that may be, G8 remains structurally earlier than, but ceramically indistinguishable from, Pit 20.

Probably many of the other excavated but undated features belong to this phase. Pits 1, 2 and 3 on the north west under the lynchet should all belong in this phase or earlier since all are cut by the gully of Building 1, a house of this phase or Phase 3c. Pits 22 (the original pit) and 23 (top fill) also ceramically fit here, even though they would appear to have been under the theoretical bank of this Phase had it existed. Pit 23, of Period 1, was indeed so-related, the Early Iron Age sherds in its top having been deposited there during Romano-British or even medieval cultivation. Pit 22 could mark the back of a contemporary bank or have been cut down into its tail.

Phase 3c: seventh century: late Early Iron Age settlement, single round-house, in an enclosure within a field system

Allowance is made for a 'late' phase of Early Iron Age enclosed settlement; but whether or not the 'right' building or buildings are shown in it is uncertain (Figure FWP63.32e). One element of the model is that the general building sequence was from complex to simple. The building shown near the centre is Building 4, not far off the enclosure centre, later than the 'working hollow' and with a markedly bigger palisade trench (though that probably results from better preservation than the others). The building to the north is Building 3, shown here partly because its position is interpreted as respecting the bank. There are two main possibilities: Phase 3c could have contained two houses, Buildings 3 and 4. Ceramically, they appear to have been very close in time, but whether in use simultaneously or sequentially is uncertain and they cannot be related stratigraphically. Building 4 cut through 'working hollows' with Phase 3b sherds. Alternatively, using a 'single-house model' as guide, Building 3 has already placed in Phase 3b by Building 4; it also follows the 'from complexity to simplicity' hypothesis with its simple ground plan. Structurally Pit 20 should come in here but ceramically it appears to belong to the end of Phase 3b. The Phase 3b pottery in the enclosure ditch (Cutting X/15) represented later redeposition of occupation material rather than 'dating' a phase of infilling.

PERIOD 4: agricultural re-use, arable and pasture

The settlement was abandoned by the mid-sixth century and possibly deconstructed. Its area was incorporated into four new fields delineated by new boundaries on slightly different lines from the pre-settlement system. In particular, one new north–south boundary divided the former settlement enclosure roughly into two halves (Figure FWP63.32f). The new fields, absorbed into the existing system formerly associated with the settlement, were cultivated, perhaps only for a further short period within the Early Iron Age and not apparently into or through the Middle Iron Age. More ard-marks were nevertheless produced, everywhere crossing settlement remains. Probably the double-lynchet track past the south end of settlement enclosure was inserted at this stage: it respected the south line of the Phase 3b enclosure ditch, perhaps because it was still open, and the fact that a lynchet piled up against the north side of the track argues that the necessary cultivation began with that of Phase 4 rather than being left entirely to that of early Roman times.

Phase 4a

Phase 4a began with the enclosed settlement ending, probably in the sixth century BC, the event marked by the end of the ceramic sequence as well as by structural evidence. The site produced no 'Middle Iron Age' material, most marked being the absence of 'Wessex saucepan pots'. In land-use terms, there was sufficient time for a thin land surface to develop over the Period 3 occupation before the settlement area was converted into arable fields. Most of the ard-marks probably belong to this Phase since they clearly relate to the straight north–south fence against which a lynchet was beginning to accumulate including only Early Iron Age material of Period 3. The cultivation was, however, temporary.

Phase 4b

Throughout the whole of the rest of the pre-Roman Iron Age, c sixth to at earliest the first century BC, the downland became exactly that: a tract of grass showing no archaeological evidence of activity but presumably either deserted or, much more likely, undramatically being used for grazing.

PERIOD 5

Phase 5a: first century BC: renewed but non-intensive settlement activity

Though not well-attested, occupation may have restarted on the site in the last century BC (Pits 21, 22)

Phase 5b: first–second century AD: renewed and intensified agrarian activity

As part of what is now recognised to be a general phenomenon in the study area, OD X/XI was recultivated from early in the Roman period (and indeed Phase 5a may be at the start of this phase rather than a separate, earlier one). What seems to have been intensive but relatively short-lived cultivation was preceded by the re-marking of old, and the marking of new, field boundaries, with sarsen stones placed along the existing prehistoric lynchets of Period 4 and Phases 3a and 3c. In the case of Cutting X/2, stones were placed across the nearly-filled-in Early Iron Age enclosure ditch of Phase 3b. The phase was well-marked archaeologically by early Roman material, presumably derived from manuring, mixed with earlier material ploughed up from the occupation deposits of Phase 3. Some of the ard-marks, perhaps most, belong to this phase.

Phase 5c: third–fourth centuries AD: some activity continuing

This phase was not attested structurally but is inserted to allow for some agricultural activity, pastoral rather than arable and certainly not occupation, represented by a small amount of late Romano-British material.

Phase 5c: fifth–twelfth century: permanent grassland

The site was crossed by the double-lynchet trackway, probably still in use, down to Pickledean off the Anglo-Saxon Ridgeway along the spine of Overton Down (*LPP*, figure 2.6).

PERIOD 6: Medieval strip cultivation followed by permanent pasture

Phase 6a: medieval, probably twelfth–thirteenth century, cultivation in strips

The Phase 6a cultivation partly fitted into earlier land arrangements (Figure FWP63.32g). The blocks of former arable strips were subdivided into ridge-and-furrow or, justifiably, ‘broad rig’, here *c.* 8.5m (27ft) wide. The headlands between the furlongs lay partly in the open, partly at prehistoric lynchets. The thirteenth-century date is taken from the similar evidence on Fyfield Down and its association with the *Raddun* settlement (FWP 65; *LPP*, chapter 7), though a few sherds of medieval pottery occurred in topsoil/Layer 2 on ODX/XI. It is apparent that virtually the whole of the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age settlement area was over-ploughed, though unploughed ‘gores’ exist either side of the straight north–south lynchet across the settlement. Perhaps it was at this stage, rather than in the Middle Iron Age or Roman period, that all the earthworks were finally flattened, other than those still visible and shown on Figure 63.3. As represented by existing ridge-and-furrow, all the medieval cultivation over the settlement area was north–south, so at the very least the east–west ard-marks cannot be attributed to medieval ploughing (unless a phase of medieval cultivation unrepresented by and earlier than the existing ridge-and-furrow is postulated).

Phase 6b: fourteenth–nineteenth century: permanent pasture

The whole site was given over to permanent pasture for sheep, during which the present ‘old grassland’ developed.

PERIOD 7: twentieth century: permanent pasture

The site has continued to be maintained as pasture but its use has begun to diversify from only sheep-grazing to embrace non-agrarian functions including race-horse training, military training, and scientific and recreational purposes.

Finds

Copper alloy objects

by Andrew Hutcheson

Six copper alloy objects were recovered (Figure FWP63.33). These consist of a broken socketed axe (Figure FWP63.33, 1; FWP 38b, Cat No 1); a perforated plate, possibly originally attached to leather or cloth (Figure FWP63.33, 3; FWP 38b, Cat No 3); three sheet fragments (FWP 38b, Cat Nos 4, 5); and a wire penannular brooch (Figure FWP63.33, 2; FWP 38b, Cat No 2) of Fowler's (1960) Type D who dated the type in Britain from the third century BC. It came from general Layer 2 and is therefore likely to be a post-settlement causal loss.

List of illustrated objects

(Figure FWP63.33)

1. Socketed axe frag; opening edge of socket. SF49, GF429, Area A, Cutting South 1, layer 2/3, possibly in Gully 1.
2. Penannular brooch; simple wire loop or ring, pin missing. GF211/ SF620, Area A, Cutting North-West 1965 (East 1).
3. Perforated plate; roughly rectangular; six punched holes. SF6, GF245, Area B, Cutting West, layer 3, Ploughsoil.

Iron objects

by Andrew Hutcheson

The 16 nails, 4 hobnails and 1 cleat, most of which derived from either Layer 1 (topsoil) or Layer 2, are all probably intrusive Romano-British material. A simple, undiagnostic, ring (Figure FWP63.33, 15; FWP 38b, Cat No 12) was also recovered from Layer 2. Otherwise, the ironwork is a typical collection for a site of the Early to Middle Iron Age in Wessex, if modest in extent (11 objects).

Tools

Two knives were found in pits. Figure FWP63.33, 4 (FWP 38b, Cat No 1) was apparently complete when deposited in Pit 20 in East 2, with traces of a wooden handle surviving. It was found in close proximity to an ox skull and seems likely to have been a deliberate deposit. The two fragments of a second knife (Figure FWP63.33, 5–6; FWP 38b, Cat Nos 2–3) from the top of Pit 19, in East 2 are less likely to have been deliberately deposited.

The knives are both small crescentic blades with two edges, a type common throughout the Iron Age, but are more common in the Early Iron Age, with examples at, for instance Danebury (Cunliffe 1984, 350, fig7.10, 2.32), All Cannings Cross (Cunnington 1923, pl 20, 11 & 12) and Gussage All

Saints (Wainwright 1979, 105, fig 80, 1104). These blades may well have been multi-purpose tools (Rees 1979, 450).

One fragmentary ploughshare (Figure FWP63.33, 7; FWP 38b, Cat No 4) is probably a Rees (1979) type 1a share, common in the Iron Age. Rees suggests that a bow ard was used with this type of share, with the iron tip attached to the end of a wooden foreshare. Morphologically it resembles some examples from Danebury (Sellwood 1984a, 356, fig 7.14, 2.69), dated to ceramic phase 6 (400–300 BC). Allen (1967) considered this type to represent an unused, generally votive class, similar in usage to currency bars but the example from ODXI may well have been broken in use.

The blade end of a small chisel (Figure FWP63.33, 8; FWP 38b, Cat No 5), probably used in woodworking, is similar to one found at Hod Hill and thought by Manning (1985, 24) to be possibly Iron Age in date. Such objects are uncommon on British Iron Age sites though there is one other example from Wiltshire, from Casterley Camp (Cunnington and Goddard 1934, 106, pl xxx, 4).

A fragment of rod (Figure FWP63.33, 9; FWP 38b, Cat No 6), two awls (Figure FWP63.33, 10–11) and a loop or link (Figure FWP63.33, 14; FWP 38b, Cat No 11), possibly a bracelet, were also found. Both awls taper at both ends suggesting that they were fitted with a handle.

Brooches

Two fibulae brooches (Figure FWP63.33, 12–13; FWP 38b, Cat Nos 9–10) both belong to Hull's type 1Cb, stylistically the end of La Tène I or beginning of La Tène II, and are dated on these grounds to the third century BC. Similar brooches to Figure FWP63.33, 13 have been found in Wiltshire at Cold Kitchen Hill (Cunnington and Goddard 1934, 118, pl xxxiii, 17) and in Dorset at Gussage All Saints (Wainwright 1979, 105, fig 80, 1021) in levels radiocarbon dated to 730–420 BC, in other words significantly earlier than Hull's date range for these objects. The other brooch (Figure FWP63.33, 12) is similar to an example from Ham Hill (Hull and Hawkes 1987, pl 36, 4264). It was found in Gully 8 of Building 3. On ceramic grounds this building is considered to have been in use in Phase 3b (eighth–sixth centuries BC).

Discussion

The small size of the Iron Age ironwork assemblage, and the relative absence of well-stratified, diagnostic objects, restricts discussion, but a few points can be made. It may be noted, for example, that stratified objects derive almost entirely from the structural complex in Cutting East 2/3. Within this area, one knife came from Pit 19 (Figure FWP63.33, 5–6; cat Nos 2–3) and one from Pit 20 (Figure FWP63.33, 4; FWP 38b, Cat No 1), and one brooch was found in Gully 8 of Building 3. This area also produced the greatest concentration of worked bone objects (see *Worked bone and antler*). Evidence for activities carried out on the site is slight, but the awls, chisel and knives all have some functional significance, and the presence of the ploughshare fragment is particularly interesting given the possibility of a conversion to arable use after the abandonment of the settlement.

List of illustrated objects

(Figure FWP63.33)

4. Knife, complete; crescent-shaped blade, straight tang; unclear which side sharpened; mineralised wood on tang. SF19, GF364, Area A, East 2, Pit 20, layer 2.

5. Knife frag; crescent-shaped; small section of blade and large proportion of tapering tang. Part of the same object as No 6. SF25, GF380, Area A, East 2, Pit 19, topsoil.
6. Knife frag; part of the same object as No 5. Unclear which side of blade sharpened. SF27, GF380, Area A, East 2, Pit 19, topsoil.
7. Ploughshare frag; tapering bar with D-shaped profile ending in blunted point. SF3, GF218, Area A, East 1, layer 2.
8. Chisel frag; spatulate with slight curve. Rectangular section at thin end flattened at blade. GF430, Area A, South 1, layer 2.
9. Rod; one blunted point, other broken; shaft round. SF51, GF433, Area A, South 1, layer 2.
10. Awl; flattened bar, tapering at both ends. SF52, GF434, Area A, East 3, layer 1/2, base of topsoil.
11. Awl; tapering from centre in both directions. Possibly tanged. GF431, Area A, East 4, layer 1/2.
12. Fibula brooch in two parts; frag upper part of straight bow and one coil (originally ?three); frag lower end of straight bow with foot attached through connection at right-angles to bow, foot bent over so parallel with bow. SF16, GF362, Area A, East 2, top of Gully 8.
13. Fibula brooch in two parts; mock spring and part of pin, spring corroded probably four coils with internal chord; frag of part of straight bow and foot loop, broken where reverts back towards bow. SF70, GF504, Area A, South 1, Gully 1, layer 5.
14. Oval loop or link, possible attachments at both ends consisting of prong and overhanging catch, possibly bracelet. GF180, East 1, (south west, 1964), Gully 1 fill.
15. Oval ring; rectangular bar. SF5, GF233, Area A, East 1 (North 2), layer 2.
16. Hobnail. SF14B, GF347, Area A, East 2, Pit 20.

Worked and utilised stone

by Nicholas A Wells

Stone recovered from site OD X/XI include sarsen, limestone, and sandstone fragments, some of which are worked. In addition, a number of rounded flint pebbles were recovered, and these have been interpreted as possible slingstones. Unworked stone, chalk fragments, fossiliferous limestone and iron pyrite fragments were also found, but are not discussed below. A full catalogue and description of all worked and utilised objects can be found in FWP 38.

With the exception of the slingstones, the definitions and functional aspects of the object types below are fully discussed by Gingell (1992), and the range of stone objects from ODX/XI compares with (generally larger) assemblages from various Late Bronze Age sites on the Marlborough Downs (*ibid*, figs 86-8). The terms ‘floating fabric’ and ‘grain supported fabric’, used here with reference to sarsen follow the definitions used by Summerfield and Goudie (1980).

Quernstones

Three quernstone fragments were found, all of sarsen, and all representing saddle querns. Two are bottom stones. The first (Figure FWP63.34, 1; FWP 38b, Cat No 1) is a fragment of floating fabric sarsen, with a worn concave face, found in Pit 5 (East 1); the second (Figure FWP63.34, ; FWP 38b, Cat No 2) a fragment of grain supported fabric, again with a worn concave face, found in Pit 1

(South 2). The third fragment (Figure FWP63.34, 2; FWP 38b, Cat No 3) is a floating fabric topstone with a worn convex face, found in Post-hole 2 (East 1, south east).

Portable objects

Three objects and two flakes of floating fabric sarsen were recovered; a heavily abraded spherical hammerstone (Figure FWP63.34, 4; FWP 38b, Cat No 4) from Pit 5 (South 1); a rubber (Figure FWP63.34, 4; FWP 38b, Cat No 5) with one end smoothed and rounded and the other flat and heavily abraded, from in Layer 2 (East 1); and a heavily abraded object (not in catalogue), circular and flattened on both faces but with no indication of wear, that has tentatively been interpreted as a muller, from the enclosure ditch in Cutting X/4. The two sarsen flakes (Figure FWP63.34, 6–7; FWP 38b, Cat Nos 6–7) are flat and almost circular. Figure FWP63.34, 6, from Layer 2 in Cutting XI/B/West has some indications of pecking around the edges and may have been intended to be a muller. the other was found in Pit 20 (East 2).

One fine-grained, flat, red sandstone whetstone (Figure FWP63.34, 8; FWP 38b, Cat No 8) was recovered from PH 2 (East 1 south east) and a worn, circular limestone spindlewhorl was found in Hearth 2 (East 3).

Slingstones

A total of 17 flint pebbles have been interpreted as possible slingstones on the basis of their shape and dimensions. All the pebbles are oval, measuring on average 30–40mm in length (min 20mm, max 43mm) by 20–30mm in width (min 15mm, max 34mm), varying in weight between 8g and 46g. The sample is very small and does not represent such a uniform collection in terms of size and shape as was found, for example, at either Maiden Castle or Danebury (Laws 1991), but the weight range is similar to that of slingstones from Maiden Castle (14–57g). No specific concentrations have been observed, roughly equal numbers being associated with each of the structures: four from Pit 20 (East 2), four from Cutting South 1, three of which are from Gully 1, three from features in East 3 and two from East 1.

Discussion

None of these objects is particularly closely datable. The comparable assemblages from Late Bronze Age sites on the Marlborough Downs have already been mentioned (Gingell 1992); parallels are also easily sought within the Iron Age assemblages from Maiden Castle and Danebury.

Querns, whetstones and spindlewhorls have an obvious functional significance. Hammerstones are most frequently considered as being used in flintknapping, though a variety of functions is possible, here perhaps sarsen working, as has been suggested for similar objects from the Marlborough Downs (Gingell 1992, 118). The muller may also have been used in sarsen working, since it has been observed that they are frequently found in association with sarsen querns (*ibid*, 118). The fact that some level of sarsen working was taking place here is indicated by the two waste flakes. The locally outcropping sarsen would have been an obvious source of raw materials across the Marlborough Downs and its working is demonstrated, for example, subsequent to the abandonment of the Late Bronze Age settlement at Dean Bottom, and on other contemporary sites in the area (*ibid*, 30).

No particular patterning was observed in the distribution of the stone objects, although it may be noted that the spindlewhorl came from Hearth 2 within the structural complex of East 2/3, the area

where a clustering of bone implements, possibly connected with textile working, was also found (see *Worked bone and antler*).

List of illustrated objects

(Figure FWP63.34,34)

1. Sarsen bottom quernstone frag. GF238, Area A, East 1, Pit 5.
2. Sarsen top quernstone frag. GF270, Area A, East 1 (South-East), Post-hole 2.
3. Spherical sarsen hammerstone. GF482, Area A, South 1, Pit 5, layer 4.
4. Sarsen rubber/hammer stone. GF382, Area A, East 1, layer 2.
5. Possible utilised flake. GF230, Area B, West, layer 2.
6. Sarsen flake. GF364, Area A, East 2, Pit 20, layer 2 (below skull).
7. Old Red Sandstone whetstone frag. GF270, Area A, East 1 (South-East), Post hole 2.
8. Limestone spindlewhorl. SF69, Area A, East 3, Hearth 2.

Pottery

by T C S Machling

Introduction

The pottery assemblage from OD XI consists of 4279 sherds, weighing 30,507g. Of this total, less than 6% by number show any diagnostic traits (eg, rims, bases, angle and decorated sherds). The assemblage quality is generally poor with most sherds being small and heavily abraded. In consequence, it is difficult to assign definite form types to many of the sherds. Much of the pottery from the site is unprovenanced and it is therefore difficult to give more than broad date ranges for the much of the material.

The assemblage was analysed and recorded following recommended guidelines for the analysis of prehistoric pottery (PCRG 1992). All sherds were assigned a fabric type after macroscopic examination and the use of a hand lens (x10 and x20 power), and the sherds were then counted and weighed to the nearest whole gramme. Surface treatment, evidence of manufacturing technology, decoration, etc, were also noted. The assemblage did not justify the use of further scientific analysis (eg, thin section analysis).

Fabrics

In total 34 fabric types were identified, grouped into eight dominant inclusion types: quartz and glauconite (Group Q), flint (Group F), shell (Group S), iron oxides (Group I), limestone (Group C), organics (Group V), micaceous (Group M) and grog (Group G). Table FWP63.2 gives the quantity and percentage of each fabric type present. In the fabric descriptions below, the terms used to describe the size of inclusions are defined as follows: very fine (<0.1mm); fine (0.1–0.25mm); medium (0.25–0.5mm); coarse (0.5–1.0mm); very coarse (1mm+). Terms used to describe the frequency of inclusions are defined thus, based on the density charts devised by Terry and Chilingar (1953): rare (1–3%); sparse (3–10%); moderate (10–20%); common (20–30%); Very common (30–40%); abundant (40%+).

Group Q: Sandy fabrics with probable glauconite

- Q1 Very friable, almost uniquely sandy; abundant fine–medium quartz sand, rare ?glauconite. Some organic voids, linear nature of which suggests grass being burnt out of vessel during firing. Fabric usually associated with thick-walled vessels often showing severe erosion due to sandy nature and poor firing.
- Q2 Hard grey/black; moderate fine–medium quartz sand, medium–coarse ?glauconite, sparse mica. Similar to Q3 but noticeably harder.
- Q3 Soft, sandy; abundant fine–medium quartz sand, moderate fine–medium ?glauconite, sparse very fine mica. Fabric often severely abraded; may represent more poorly-fired variant of Q2 but as fabrics discernibly different in firing it has been decided distinguish between them.
- Q4 Differentially fired (red–grey/black), coarse, sandy; common fine–very coarse quartz sand, moderate fine–medium ?glauconite. Fabric commonly associated with thick-walled vessels (cross- section 7mm).
- Q5 Soft, unusually coarse, glauconitic; moderate fine–very coarse (6mm)?glauconite and quartz sand, rare medium–coarse angular flint and iron oxides. Fabric exclusively associated with thick-walled vessels, usually jars (cross-section 10mm).
- Q6 Very fine, sandy; moderate fine–medium sand and ?glauconite. Fabric associated with thin walled ‘haematite-coated’ vessels, similar to Q7 in that associated with distinctive furrowed bowls.
- Q7 Soft, reasonably fine, sandy; moderate–common medium–coarse sand and ?glauconite, rare mica. Fabric also associated with furrowed bowls but distinctively coarser than Q6.
- Q8 Fine, soft, barely sandy; sparse fine–medium quartz sand and ?glauconite, sparse very fine mica.
- Q9 Reddish, coarse sandy; few finer inclusions, moderate quartz sand and ?glauconite, sparse mica.

Group F: Flint-tempered/flint-gritted fabrics

A distinction is made here between ‘flint-tempered fabrics, ie, those to which flint has been added deliberately in order to strength and make the clay more workable; and ‘flint-gritted fabrics, ie, those in which flint inclusions are likely to occur naturally.

- F10 Hard, coarse, flint-gritted; sparse flint and limestone, moderate fine–medium sand, rare iron oxides and mica. ?Later Bronze Age, probably residual.
- F11 Soft, grey/black, flint-gritted; moderate angular medium–coarse flint, sparse fine quartz sand and ?glauconite. compares with Potterne fabric FT33 (Morris forthcoming) but, with no visible iron oxides.
- F12 Soft, irregular, flint-tempered; common fine–coarse angular flint, moderate coarse iron oxides; rare medium grade ?glauconite and quartz sand. Similar to Potterne fabric FT31 (*ibid*) possibly representing very irregular form of this fabric.
- F13 Soft, flint-gritted; sparse medium–coarse angular flint and iron oxides, sparse fine ?glauconite and quartz sand, rare very fine mica. Mainly associated with thick-walled (cross-section 11mm) sherds.

- F14 Very coarse, flint-tempered; sparse coarse–very coarse (4mm) flint, common–moderate medium quartz sand and ?glaucanite, sparse medium iron oxides.
- F15 Moderately flint-gritted; sparse very coarse (2mm) angular flint, moderate medium sand and ?glaucanite, sparse medium–very coarse (4mm) grog. Sherds usually highly abraded. Fabric very similar to Q8 but with quantities of flint; may represent a similar clay source to that for Q8.

Group S: Shelly fabrics

- S16 Soft, sandy, shelly; moderate fine–coarse iron-rich fossil shell, common quartz sand and ?glaucanite, rare medium rounded grog. Similar to S17 but contains more quartz sand and ?glaucanite. Similar to Potterne fabric FT42 (Morris forthcoming).
- S17 Fine shelly; moderate fine–very coarse (6mm) iron-rich fossil shell, sparse fine–medium quartz sand. Very similar to Potterne fabric FT41 (*ibid*).
- S18 Soft; moderate crushed medium–coarse fossil shell, sparse fine–medium limestone, sparse fine ?glaucanite. Commonly associated with thin-walled vessels (cross-section 5mm).
- S19 Coarse, shelly; moderate–common fine–very coarse (6mm) iron-rich fossil shell, sparse similarly-sized limestone, moderate fine–medium quartz sand and ?glaucanite. Similar to Potterne fabric FT46 (*ibid*).
- S20 Soft, shelly; moderate fine–very coarse (6mm) fossil shell, sparse medium flint, grog and ?glaucanite. Frequent smoothing on exterior surface.
- S34 Soft, coarse, shelly; common fine–very coarse fossil shell, common fine–medium quartz sand and ?glaucanite, moderate medium–coarse angular flint. Only one sherd (*c* 10mm cross-section) present in assemblage, decorated with applied strip cordon. ?Deverel-Rimbury cordoned urn (Figure FWP63, 36, 37).

Group I: Fabrics containing iron oxides

- I21 Iron-rich; sparse–moderate medium–very coarse red/brown iron oxides, rare coarse limestone and ?glaucanite. Similar to I22 but iron oxide finer and more fragmentary.
- I22 Sandy, iron rich; scarce, but macroscopically obvious, medium–very coarse (6mm) pieces spherical red iron oxide, common fine–medium quartz sand and ?glaucanite.

Group C: Limestone-tempered fabrics

- C23 Soft, oolitic; moderate–common medium–coarse (2mm), iron-rich oolitic limestone, sparse coarse fossil shell, medium quartz sand. Similar to Potterne fabric FT51 (Morris forthcoming).
- C24 Soft, ; common fine–very coarse (5mm) limestone, sparse coarse fossil shell, moderate fine quartz sand and ?glaucanite, sparse–rare coarse angular flint and iron oxides. Similar to Potterne fabric FT13 (*ibid*).
- C25 Soft; moderate–common fine–very coarse (6mm) limestone, sparse fine–medium quartz sand. Similar to Potterne fabric FT17 (*ibid*) but not micaceous.
- C26 Soft, fine; sparse coarse–very coarse limestone, sparse–moderate fine–medium quartz sand and ?glaucanite. Usually associated with thin-walled vessels.

- C27 Soft, oolitic; sparse–moderate medium–very coarse oolitic limestone, moderate fine–very coarse fossil shell. Very similar to C23 but contains larger quantity of fossil shell.
- C33 Hard, fine, calcitic, sandy; sparse–moderate angular calcite crystals, moderate quartz sand, some fine mica. Occurs in three rim sherds only, heavily burnished to glassy effect. ?Black Burnished ware.

Group V: Organic void fabrics

- V28 Soft, sandy, micaceous; moderate fine–very coarse grade (6mm) linear voids, common fine–medium quartz sand and ?glaucanite, common very fine mica. Linear nature of voids suggests burning out of grass during firing. Similar to Potterne fabric FT22 (Morris forthcoming).
- V29 Soft, coarse, sandy; fine–very coarse linear voids, moderate medium quartz sand and ?glaucanite, moderate very fine mica. Similar to V28 but much coarser.

Group M: Micaceous fabrics

- M30 Soft, sandy; common very fine–fine mica, moderate medium–coarse quartz sand and ?glaucanite. Often burnished on exterior. Similar to Potterne fabric FT21 (*ibid*).
- M31 Soft, fine, sandy; common very fine mica, moderate fine–medium quartz sand. Similar to M30 but much finer; generally associated with thin walled vessels (cross-section 5–6mm).

Group G: Grog-tempered fabric

- G32 Soft, sandy; moderate fine–very coarse grog pieces, sparse medium quartz sand and ?glaucanite, some very fine mica. Similar to Potterne fabric FT15 (*ibid*), usually associated with thick-walled vessels (cross-section 9mm).

Discussion of fabrics

In general, the fabrics from ODXI represent standard Early Iron Age types. The forms, where recognisable, support this interpretation (eg, ovoid and shouldered jars, plain and furrowed bowls with wide flat bases). Comparisons can be made with other Early Iron Age sites in Wiltshire such as Groundwell Farm (Gingell 1981) which produced a similar range of fabrics. The limestone and shell fabrics are very similar to wares A–E from Budbury, Bradford-upon-Avon (Wainwright 1970). Worth noting, however, is the comparatively wide range of fabric groups (eight) represented within the Iron Age assemblage, a pattern echoed within the contemporary assemblage from Potterne (Morris 1991; forthcoming), and which indicates in both instances the exploitation of a number of different local and non-local resources.

Fabrics F10 and S34 are represented by an ovoid jar and an applied cordoned vessel respectively and are representative of an earlier, Deverel Rimbury period, but the presence of more standard Iron Age fabrics alongside these sherds may suggest a continuation of activity from the Bronze Age into the Early Iron Age on the site. A few later sherds (eg, fabric C33) suggest later activity in the vicinity of the Pit 1/2/3 complex. However, again the assemblages from these features are not especially distinctive and may represent a fading out of activity rather an abrupt halt.

Resources for the pottery

It is generally accepted that if suitable resources can be found within 7–10km of a site, the pottery made from those resources can be said to be of local production (Arnold 1985). Clays that derive from outside this area can be treated as non-local.

The presence of probable glauconite throughout the majority of fabrics suggests a fairly localised utilisation of clay resources, most probably from the Greensand and Gault deposits which surround the site at not too great a distance. Fossil shell fabrics (including the Deverel-Rimbury type fabric S34) are likely to have been derived from resources of Kimmeridge clay which outcrop approximately 7km to the north west of the site. However, the differing amounts of sand within these fabrics suggests that a number of different sources were being utilised. Flint fabrics are likely to have been derived from flint of the Upper Chalk in the immediate vicinity. The micaceous fabrics are likely to have derived from a source in the Gault deposits which lie close to the site.

Of particular interest are the oolitic fabrics which do not have a local source. These fabrics are most likely to derive from clays in close proximity to a weathering Jurassic outcrop of Oolitic Limestone. The nearest resource lies 25km to the west in the Bradford-upon-Avon area. It is also possible that the oolitic material could have come from the deposits of Gault Clay which lie close to the Coral Rag series *c* 10km to the north west, but the absence of glauconitic sands within the oolitic fabrics suggests the former interpretation.

The calcitic fabric C33, falling at the end of the ceramic sequence described here, represents another non-local source, this time probably from the Purbeck area of south Dorset.

Vessel forms

The fragmentary nature and poor quality of many of the sherds means that it was only possible to identify a few forms. Diagnostic form sherds are rare: only *c* 4% showed any evidence of form (2.5% rims, 1.2% bases, and 0.35% angle sherds). Of these, it is difficult to assign detailed descriptions to the forms, and it is often only possible to give a generalised form description (eg bowl, jar etc). Numbers of vessels are impossible to estimate and it would be difficult, and misleading, to give approximations.

Most forms seem to be ovoid and shouldered jars (Figure FWP63.65, 2, 4-6), wide mouthed bowls and 'red-finished' furrowed bowls. An illustrated type series was deemed inappropriate for the purposes of this report, but parallel forms from other published series have been given. Table FWP63.3 shows the identifiable forms present. Vessel numbers are based on numbers of rims present.

The forms are mostly suggestive of standard Early Iron Age types. However the presence of more typically Bronze Age surface treatments and decoration (eg, finger wiping and finger-tip decoration) suggests a slightly earlier date to some of the typical forms. The ovoid jars are particularly prone to this approach. It seems that the period represented by some of the forms could be seen as a transitional time where a mix of later Bronze Age and Iron Age pottery trends are blended together. The bead-rimmed vessels are indicative of a later Iron Age tradition, but are in such small quantities that they are of negligible importance.

Of particular interest is the presence of two distinct forms of furrowed bowl. The first type has a short neck and is generally a more squat vessel (Figure FWP63.35, 8). The second displays a long, flared neck which gives the appearance of a taller, slimmer vessel (Figure FWP63.35, 9, 11). It is thought that the short necked form is found from the ninth century BC onward and is gradually superseded by the long necked form towards the middle of the period in around the seventh century BC (Elsdon 1989). The presence both types with apparently indistinct assemblages of Early Iron

Age pottery suggests that the flared neck variety has an earlier date than previously assumed. It is also possible that there is very little change in 'standard' fabric types between the Early and Middle Iron Age periods. There is however a distinct absence of other Middle Iron Age types (eg, pedestal bases, etc) which suggests that the former interpretation is more likely.

Also of interest is a sherd in fabric C26 (unlocated). This sherd (Figure FWP63.35, 10) is very similar to those from a short-necked furrowed bowl. The fabric, however, is coarse and the technology of the vessel is crude. The sherd shows no evidence of a haematite coating or burnishing. The fabric, finish and technology all seem to point to an attempt at copying the fine ware furrowed bowl tradition typical of the All Cannings Cross assemblage.

Surface treatments and decoration

A number of different surface treatments were seen. The abraded nature of many of the sherds, however, meant that occurrences of such treatments are rare and it impossible to say how much of the assemblage would have originally showed such treatments. The range includes finger smoothing, grass wiping, burnishing and the application of a red 'coating' to the pottery.

Finger smoothing occurs most often on the large jars (115 sherds, *c* 3% of the total by number). This trait is more commonly associated with the later Bronze Age pottery tradition and probably represents the final phasing out of this tradition in the earliest Iron Age. Only one sherd shows evidence of grass wiping suggesting that this practice was not common on the site.

Burnishing is the most common form of surface treatment; it occurs on 138 sherds (*c* 3.5%). Most burnished examples also show evidence of a 'haematite' coating and the burnishing is generally restricted to the exterior surface, usually on the upper three-quarters of the pot. A few examples (most noticeably the ?Black Burnished Ware rim sherds from GF232, 255 and 257) show heavy burnishing on both surfaces on the upper part of the vessel.

'Red finishing' and burnishing can be seen on 113 sherds (*c* 3%). The 'red-finished' vessels present an interesting problem. Although previously thought to have been caused by the application of a haematite coating, recent work has established that the finish can be achieved by a number of different methods including the application of a dry powder or a liquid slip (Middleton 1987). The precise mineralogy of the material used has also been disputed and in the absence of any other accepted alternative, the term 'red finishing' has been retained for the purposes of this report. A few of the red-finished examples also show evidence of a chalky white infill in incised decorated examples. A precise mineral identification of the coatings and infills was not possible for the purposes of this report.

Only a few sherds showed evidence of residues, but due to the abraded nature of the sherds this was not surprising. Sooting can be seen on a few sherds from GF226 and GF340 and an internal 'limescale' residue could be seen on a few sherds from GF454 and GF464.

In addition to the illustrated decorated sherds (Figure FWP63.35, 7–11, Figure FWP63.36, 12–37) 26 further sherds from furrowed bowls were identified, but the poor condition of these sherds meant that they were not chosen for illustration. In general, decoration occurs only on body sherds which could not be related to specific vessel forms; it was therefore not considered appropriate to produce a detailed correlation of decoration to vessel forms.

Decoration can be divided into five distinct techniques, and within each technique are a number of different motifs or styles of decoration (Table FWP63.4). The most commonly occurring technique is the horizontal grooving visible on the shoulders of furrowed bowls (30 examples); all but one example are in the sandy fabrics Q6, Q7 and Q8. Impressed and incised motifs such as dots, circles, wedge shapes, chevrons and lozenges are also relatively popular (Figure FWP63.36, 15–31); these

occur in a variety of fabric types, mainly sandy. The single example of applied decoration comes from a Deverel-Rimbury-type vessel with an applied cordon (Figure FWP63.36, 37), and the finger-tip impressions found on shoulders and below rims (Figure FWP63.36, 32–6) also refer back to later Bronze Age decorative techniques. Altogether, decorated sherds account for *c* 1.5% of the total assemblage by number.

Distribution

Although pottery was discovered over much of the site, several areas are of particular importance: the gullies of the huts, the lynchet which runs north–south through the site, the features beneath this lynchet and various pits (particularly Pits 1, 2 and 3). These features can be divided into several phases of activity on the site and all contain pottery crucial to its dating.

Gullies associated with the buildings

Building 1, Gully 1: This gully contains a standard Early Iron Age assemblage with shelly, flint and sandy fabrics dominant. This feature has similar types and proportions of fabrics to Gully 2 and is therefore probably contemporary with this feature. The structural evidence from this feature (ie, the larger, more substantial construction of the building) suggests that the building is of a later date than gullies associated with Buildings 2/3, and represents a post-3b Phase of occupation.

Gullies associated with Buildings 2/3 – Gullies 4, 5, 6 and 8: Gully 5 contained a standard assemblage of fabrics including Q2, Q3, Q6, Q7, F12, S19 and V28. A sherd of a ‘red-finished’ furrowed bowl was also found. This feature relates to Pit 19 inside Building 2, and similar standard fabrics were also found in this feature which also contained a sherd of slack shouldered jar with everted rounded rim. Pit 13, which is located within the extension to Building 2 defined by Gully 4 may represent the latrine for this feature. Pit 13 has reasonably large quantities of pottery including standard Early Iron Age fabrics and two decorated sherds of an Early Iron Age type (Figure FWP63.36, 16, 27; GF376). It therefore seems likely that these four features can be reliably dated to the same period and probably fall into the earliest phase of occupation on the site, Phase 3a.

Gully 6 also shows a similar range of fabric types to Gullies 4 and 5 and is assumed to be of a similar date. However, the material from Gully 8, which cuts Gully 6, if compared to the material from Gullies 4, 5 and 6 could be seen to be of a slightly later date in the Early Iron Age. This feature is still of Early Iron Age date but represents the later Phase 3b of the site.

Gully associated with Building 4 – Gully 1: This gully cut several indistinct ‘working hollows’ containing a standard assemblage of Early Iron Age pottery including shelly, sandy and limestone-tempered fabrics. These hollows can be seen to represent Phase 3b on the site and were then later cut by Gully 1 (South 1) in the post-Phase 3b occupation phase.

Gully 2, East 1

This feature contained standard Early Iron Age pottery with sandy, shelly and flint fabrics prominent. From the pottery present, this feature is probably of a similar date to Gully 1 within Phase 3b of occupation.

?Gully 3, East 1

This feature has been reinterpreted and is no longer regarded as a gully. Though little pottery was retrieved from this feature, it would seem that it can be assigned a standard Early Iron Age date with the presence of Q2, Q3, Q6 and F12 fabrics. This feature has a similar assemblage to Gully 2 and is probably of a similar date within Phase 3b of the site.

Pits

Pits in Area East 1 – Pits 1, 2 and 3: this group of pits lay immediately outside Building 1. Pit 1 was cut by Pit 2, which in turn was cut by Pit 3; itself cut by Gully 1 (Figure FWP63.15). Gully 1 was later cut by the occupation layer. Pit 1 contained no pottery, but Pit 2 contained standard Early Iron Age fabrics including shelly, sandy and micaceous types (see Figure FWP63.36, 24). This pit therefore appears to be of Phase 3b date but within a local chronology as being later than Gully 1. Pit 3 contained Fabric Q2 sherds and can therefore be dated to the Early Iron Age. This feature could, consequently, be related to the final phase of activity on the site; the construction of the lynchet which overlays Gully 1.

Pits in Area East 2/3 – Pits 20, 22 and 23: Pit 20 cut Gully 8 and is therefore structurally later than that gully. The material within the pit is of a standard Early Iron Age date with flint, shelly and sandy fabrics present (see Figure FWP63.36, 21) and is therefore probably of Phase 3b, but has a later date than the Phase 3b Gully 8.

Pits 22 and 23 were located to the east of Gullies 5, 6 and 8, with Pit 23 situated beneath the proposed bank of the Phase 3b boundary ditch. The pottery from these features is of standard Early Iron Age type and includes shelly, sandy and flint fabrics. Two sherds, however, (GF460 (impressed); GF461), both grog-tempered, are almost certainly Early Bronze Age in date. GF460 with twisted cord decoration is most likely to derive from a collared urn, although the body wall is unusually thin (it could be from a miniature vessel). The second plain sherd (GF461) may be either Beaker or Collared Urn (R Cleal, pers comm). The rest of the pottery from these features best parallels the types found in Gullies 2 and 1 (East). It is therefore difficult to be certain that these features are earlier than most of the buildings but our preferred interpretation (*LPP*, chapter 6) sees them as Early Bronze Age with later, intrusive material.

Enclosure ditch, Cutting X/15

This cutting produced shelly, sandy, flint and limestone-tempered fabrics indicative of an Early Iron Age date, and can probably be related to the Phase 3b activity on the site.

The lynchet and ditch

The lynchet produced reasonable quantities of pottery with many of the fabric types represented. This feature contains mostly Early Iron Age material previously associated with a Phase 3b date. This feature does however contain a certain amount of Late Iron Age/Romano-British date pottery in the upper layers, probably the result of later ploughing. Pottery from the lynchet includes 'red-finished' wares as well as shelly, sandy, limestone-tempered and flint fabrics. The lynchet seems to be of a secure Early Iron Age date and is cut by Pit 3, which contains Late Iron Age material.

Gully 1 beneath the lynchet (Figure FWP63.15) contains similar fabrics of an Early Iron Age date including furrowed bowl sherds. This feature contains one short-necked furrowed bowl (Figure FWP63.35, 7). From the pottery evidence in these two features a date of Early Iron Age Phase 3b occupation can be envisaged.

Post-holes beneath the lynchet, Area B West

Several post-holes were excavated in Area B, West, at the bottom of the lynchet: PH50, PH63, PH67, PH69, PH70, PH71, PH72 and PH73, the last five of which may have been part of a structure (Figure FWP63.11, see *Area ODXI/B/West: possible structure*). The largest quantities of pottery derived from the top of PH50, which produced 112 sherds, although most seem to derive from the same vessel; an ovaloid jar in Fabric Q2. Apart from this vessel, there are sherds in other coarse sandy wares, including one from a furrowed bowl and single sherds in a flint-gritted and sandy, iron-rich fabric respectively. All of these can be regarded as standard Early Iron Age wares. PH 63 contained a standard Early Iron Age group of sand, shell, flint and limestone fabrics. PH69 produced several decorated sherds which can be directly paralleled with examples from All Cannings Cross. Post-holes 67 to 73 contained Early Iron Age pottery (Figure FWP63.36, 22, 31) but also contained sherds more typical of the Deverel-Rimbury tradition.

While these post-holes contain mainly standard Early Iron Age wares, there is a small but significant presence of sherds characteristic of a Late Bronze Age tradition, perhaps residual in this context. PH 69 contained a sherd of finger-smoothed coarse sandy ware, PH70 contained a sherd of F10, PH71 had a coarse flint-gritted sherd which showed finger-smoothing on the exterior surface and PH72 has a coarse sandy sherd showing finger-tip impressions. These post-holes would therefore seem to be of an Later Bronze Age tradition and probably represent the earliest phase of activity on the site.

Summary

Although the assemblage from OD X/XI at first appeared small and abraded it has offered some interesting decorated examples and has further added to the picture of transitional Bronze Age/Early Iron Age sites within the south west of England. The significance of this assemblage is highlighted by a general lack of well-dated, comparable assemblages in the area, although a good framework is provided by the large Late Bronze Age–Early Iron Age assemblage from Potterne near Devizes which has a series of radiocarbon dates from a stratified midden deposit (Morris 1991; forthcoming).

The undiagnostic nature of much of the assemblage has hampered clear-cut dating, but three factors (vessel form, decoration and varying proportions of fabric types) may be used to suggest a maximum date range of ninth–seventh centuries BC. Vessel forms seem to represent a combination of Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age traditions. More utilitarian forms such as the ovoid jars, as might be expected, have more affinity with Late Bronze Age traditions while later influences are marked by the occurrence of the furrowed bowls, a standard Early Iron Age form. The two types of furrowed bowl observed at Overton Down may have some chronological significance, the short-

necked variety appearing from about the ninth century BC and being gradually superseded by the longer-necked type around the seventh century BC. There is no evidence from OD X/XI, however, that these two types were anything other than contemporary here.

The principal dating evidence is to be found in the decorated sherds. These sherds, although small in number, have reasonable dating affinities with other sites. The decorated sherds are best paralleled with those from Potterne (Morris forthcoming) and All Cannings Cross (Cunnington 1923), suggesting a date within the eighth–seventh centuries BC for the majority of the sherds with a few earlier and later decorated pieces (the Deverel-Rimbury applied cordon sherd (GF471, fabric S34; Figure FWP63.36, 37) and the probable Black Burnished ware decorated bead rim (fabric C33).

Analysis of the relative proportions of fabrics from Potterne through time (Morris 1991; forthcoming) suggests that certain fabrics were more ‘popular’ than others at certain times. At Potterne, flint fabrics are replaced by higher proportions of sandy wares and fossil shell fabrics are replaced by more oolitic fabrics. The proportions of fabrics from OD X/XI, if compared to Potterne, match most closely the later periods on that site and further suggest a maximum date range of ninth–seventh centuries BC for ODX/XI.

List of illustrated sherds

(Figure FWP63.35)

1. Base; form unknown. Fabric M31. GF403, Area A, East 1, near bottom of Pit 6A.
2. Slack-shouldered jar, burnished exterior. Fabric Q2, C26 or C33. Area A, East 1, north west, bottom of Pit 1 (GF255) and Pit 3 (GF232, GF257).
3. Base of jar. Fabric M30. GF499, Area A, South 1, Pit 11, layer 7.
4. Slack-shouldered jar; everted, rounded rim. Fabric S16. GF380, Area A, East 2, Pit 19, top fill.
5. Ovoid jar; plain squared rim. Fabric Q3. SF11, Area A, East 1, Pit 7.
6. Ovoid jar; internally thickened rim. Fabric M30. GF331, Area A, East 1, Pit 7, layer 3.
7. Short-necked furrowed bowl, three horizontal furrows (*cf* Cunnington 1923, pl 28, 16). Fabric Q7, thickness 5mm. GF524, Area A, South 1, Post-hole 40, layer 1.
8. Short-necked furrowed bowl, three horizontal furrows (*cf* Cunnington 1923, pl 43, 3). Fabric Q8, thickness *c*6mm. GF360, Area A, East 1, Pit 6A.
9. Flaring-necked furrowed bowl, three horizontal furrows (*cf* Cunnington 1923, pl 28, 1). Fabric Q8, thickness 4mm. GF341, Area A, East 1, north 1, Pit 10, layer 1.
10. Short-necked furrowed bowl, three horizontal furrows (*cf* Morris forthcoming, type 3.4). Fabric C26, thickness 6mm. Unlocated.
11. Flaring-necked furrowed bowl, four horizontal furrows (*cf* Cunnington 1923, pl 28, 11). Fabric Q7, thickness 5mm. GF236, Area B, north, Post-hole 3.

(Figure FWP63.36)

12. Upright rim, incised horizontal parallel lines below rim (*cf* Morris forthcoming, type 3.1). Fabric C27, thickness 7mm. GF233, Area B, North, Post-hole 1.
13. Body sherd, incised irregular linear motifs on shoulder (*cf* Cunnington 1923, pl 36, 1a). Fabric Q8, thickness 6mm. GF326, Area A, East 1, north 1, Pit 9, layer 1.

14. Body sherd, incised diagonal lines above shoulder (*cf* Morris forthcoming, motif 7.1). Fabric V28, thickness 5mm. GF209, Area A, East 1, north east, baulk, post-hole fill or Area A, East 1, north west, layer 3.
15. Body sherd, incised diagonal lines above shoulder (*cf* Morris forthcoming, motif 7.1). Fabric Q8, thickness 8mm. GF471, Area A, South 1, Pits 8 and 9, layer 3. Same context as Nos 23, 26 and 37.
16. Body sherd, parallel incised lines and stabbed pin pricks (*cf* Cunnington 1923, pl 35, 10). Fabric M31, thickness 5mm. GF376, Area A, East 2, Pit 13, top fill.
17. Body sherd, incised lozenges in horizontal row. Fabric Q7, thickness 4mm. GF267, Area A, East 1, south east, Gully 1 fill.
18. Rim/shoulder sherds, incised linear motifs and chevrons below rim. Fabric F11, thickness 5mm. GF344, Area A, East 1, Pit 7, topsoil.
19. Body sherd, stabbed and linear incised motifs (*cf* Morris forthcoming, motif 11.4). Fabric Q8, thickness 7mm. GF208, Area B, north, layer 3.
20. Body sherd, impressed leaf shape (*cf* Morris forthcoming, motif 11.4). Fabric Q6, thickness 6mm. GF330, Area A, East 1, Pit 8, top fill.
21. Body sherd, impressed wedge shapes on shoulder (*cf* Morris forthcoming, motif 11.2). Fabric M31, thickness 4mm. GF364, Area A, East 2, Pit 20, layer 2.
22. Body sherd, incised circles (*cf* Morris forthcoming, motif 9.1). Fabric Q3, thickness 7mm. GF224 (same vessel as No. 25?), Area B, West, Post-hole 67.
23. Body sherd, incised circles with central stabbed dots on shoulder (*cf* Morris forthcoming, motif 9.3). Fabric Q2, thickness 7mm. GF471, Area A, South 1, Pits 8 and 9, layer 3. Same context as Nos 15, 26 and 37.
24. Body sherd, impressed circles (*cf* Morris forthcoming, motif 9.1). Fabric Q7, thickness 5mm. GF246, Area A, East 1, north west, Pit 2, or Area C, layer 2.
25. Body sherd, incised circles and lines (*cf* Morris forthcoming, motif 9.1). Fabric Q3, thickness 7mm. GF230 (same vessel as No 22?), Area B, West, layer 2.
26. Body sherd, impressed concentric circles with traces of white chalky infill (*cf* Cunnington 1923, pl 36, 2, 3). Fabric Q7, thickness 8mm. GF471, Area A, South 1, Pits 8 and 9, layer 3. Same context as Nos 15, 23 and 37.
27. Body sherd, impressed circles (*cf* Morris forthcoming, motif 11.1). Fabric Q7, thickness 6mm. GF376, Area A, East 2, Pit 13, top fill.
28. Body sherd, stamped dots and diagonal incised lines with traces of white chalky infill (*cf* Cunnington 1923, pl 32, 1; pl 32, 2). Fabric Q2, thickness 7mm. GF230, Area A, East 1, north west, topsoil, or Area B, West, layer 2, bottom of lynchet. ?Same context as No 25
29. Body sherd, single stamped dot. Fabric Q2, thickness 7mm. GF233, Area A, East 1, north 2, layer 2, or Area B, Post-hole 1 (at base of lynchet).
30. Body sherd, single stamped dot. Fabric F10, thickness 6mm. GF233, Area A, East 1, north 2, layer 2, or Area B, Post-hole 1 (at base of lynchet).
31. Body sherd, worn stamped dots (*cf* Morris forthcoming, motif 11.7). Fabric Q3, thickness 6mm. GF224, Area A, East 1, south east, layer 1/2.
32. Upright rim sherd, finger-tipping just below rim (*cf* Morris forthcoming, motif 1). Fabric Q3, thickness 7mm. GF237, Area B, north 1, Post-hole 6.

33. Body sherd, finger-tipping along shoulder (*cf* Morris forthcoming, motif 1). Fabric Q3, thickness 8mm. GF397, ODX/4, Post-hole II (unlocated post-hole).
34. Body sherd, finger-tipping along shoulder (*cf* Morris forthcoming, motif 1). Fabric Q2, thickness 10mm. GF232; Area A, East 1, Pit 3. Same context as No. 2.
35. Body sherd, finger-tipping along shoulder (*cf* Morris forthcoming, motif 1). Fabric Q2, thickness 7mm. GF219, Area A, East 1, north west, Gully 1, or Area B, West, Ploughsoil/layer 3, bottom of lynchet.
36. Body sherd, finger-tipping along shoulder (*cf* Morris forthcoming, motif 1). Fabric Q3, thickness 10mm. GF385, Area A, East 1, west 1, layer 3.
37. Body sherd, applied horizontal cordon, plain. Fabric S34, thickness 10mm. GF471, Area A, South 1, Pits 8 and 9, layer 3. Same context as Nos 15, 23 and 26.

Fired Clay

by Nicholas A Wells

A total of 77 fragments of fired clay (266g) was recovered. Only three showed any degree of shaping, the remainder being completely featureless and undiagnostic.

The three objects comprise two slingstones and one bead. The slingstones are both ovoid and very similar to those found in Iron Age contexts at Danebury (Poole 1984, 398), Maiden Castle (Poole 1991, 210) and Gussage All Saints (Wainwright 1979, 101). The first is 43 mm long with a diameter of 26mm and a weight of 28g (Figure FWP63, 37.1; FWP 38b, Cat No 1). This object came from the working hollow in South 1. The second, almost identical, is 41mm long with a diameter of 25mm and a weight of 23g. This object came from Pit 11 (South 1). These finds do not coincide with any of the flint pebbles interpreted as possible slingstones.

The bead (Figure FWP63, 37.2) is spherical, with a diameter of 16mm and a partial perforation running three-quarters of the way through. Again, this object finds parallels at Danebury (Poole 1984, 398). It was found at the base of the topsoil in East 2.

Glass bead

by Lorraine Mephram

One glass bead (Figure FWP63.37, 3) was recovered from the top of Pit 21A (East 3). This is a spherical bead in pale green translucent glass with an overall trellis design in opaque yellow. This object falls within Guido's Class 11 Iron Age beads (1978, 81, fig 30), which are described as 'Meare variants'. The example from OD X/XI is cited as the only example of the trellis design, and is cautiously dated by Guido to the second–first centuries BC (*ibid*, 83 and fig 31).

Worked bone and antler

by Nicholas A Wells

Seventeen worked bone and one worked antler objects have been examined. A discussion of the functional aspects of the definitions used below can be found in Sellwood (1984b).

Points and splinters

Three bone points were found, one of which is formed from a splinter of a tibia from an unidentified animal. This object came from Pit 23 in East 3 (FWP 38b, Cat No 3). The other two are worn

smooth (Figure FWP63, 37.4; FWP 38b, Cat Nos 1–2); these derived, respectively, from Pit 21A in East 3, and Pit 20 in East 2.

Awls

Four awls are made from the proximal bone ends, with the points exhibiting a high degree of polishing. Two very similar examples (Figure FWP63, 37.5; FWP 38b, Cat Nos 4–5) are made from the second or fourth metapodial of a horse; one exhibits wear marks just beneath the proximal articulation. This is analogous to one found at Maiden Castle (Laws 1991, no 25), the wear marks being interpreted as the result of a possible thread tying-off area. One came from a the enclosure ditch in X/8, the other from Pit 8 in East 1. The remaining two are fashioned from the proximal ulna of a horse and sheep/goat respectively, and conform to the awl categories (classes I and III respectively) outlined in Sellwood (1984b). The horse ulna (FWP 38b, Cat No 6) also came from Pit 8, East 1, the other (FWP 38b, Cat No 7) from Pit 19 in East 2.

Needles

Two needles were found. Both are polished, one (Figure FWP63, 37.6; FWP 38b, Cat No 8) heavily so, and both are broken mid-way through the perforation. FWP 38b, Cat No 8 came from Post-Hole 18 in East 1/West 1, and FWP 38b, Cat No 9 from Gully 5 of Building 2 in East 2.

Gouges

Two gouges came from Pit 20 in East 2. One (FWP 38b, Cat No 11) is made from the radius of a sheep/goat, its tip having been broken off. The other (Figure FWP63, 37.7; FWP 38b, Cat No 10) is from the metapodial of a fallow deer, with one perforation, and another incomplete bore hole adjacent (Sellwood 1984b, class I).

Incised bone

Three rib bones were found to have lateral incisions scratched into them. In all cases the incisions were on one face and at one end, and the rib bone had been broken at both ends. None of the incisions is evenly spaced and it seems likely that they represent butchering marks. Two of these objects (FWP 38b, Cat Nos 12–13) were from Pit 20, East 2, and the third (FWP 38b, Cat No 14) from Pit 6A in East 1.

A further bone, the tibia of a roe deer with the proximal end broken off, shows a series of lateral incisions running along one face. Again, these may be butchering marks. This object (FWP 38b, Cat No 15) came from the base of the topsoil in South 1.

Antler object

An antler tine point was found in Pit 8, East 1, with some faintly incised decoration along one side (Figure FWP63, 37.8; FWP 38b, Cat No 16). It appears to have been roughly hacked off from the rest of the antler.

Miscellaneous objects

A worn sheep/goat metatarsal with two pairs of grooves set into the sides of the bone (Figure FWP63, 37.9; FWP 38b, Cat No 17) came from Pit 20, East 2. The deeper pair are nearer the (broken) distal end while the shallower pair are the same distance from the proximal end. A series of 'ripples' occur in one of the grooves from each pair, diagonally opposite each other (*cf* Sellwood 1984b, sheep long-bone class iv). The grooves may have been used to provide grip while winding thread. The distal end of a sheep/goat tibia from the base of the topsoil in East 3 (Figure FWP63, 37.10; FWP 38b, Cat No 18) has been cut neatly across, and the cut smoothed down and may be manufacturing waste (*cf* Sellwood 1984b).

Discussion

While none of these objects is closely datable, the range of pointed tools and implements finds general parallels on other Iron Age sites such as Maiden Castle and Danebury; and a very similar range of artefacts is illustrated for the Late Bronze Age site at Burderop Down on the Marlborough Downs (Gingell 1992, fig 83). The value of these objects lies more in their functional significance to the site, and in the indications of the range of animal species exploited. Many of these pointed implements could have been used in textile working, for example the awls and needles. The gouges are less easily linked to any one activity and are most likely to have been multi-functional. A few objects seem to represent bone- or antler-working waste.

Of the identifiable bones, those of sheep/goat form the largest single group, followed by horse, chiefly represented by metapodial awls, with fallow and roe deer bones as isolated examples.

The distribution of the objects reveals some interesting patterning. It is noticeable that many of these objects were found in pit fills, and there is a marked concentration within the structural complex of East 2 and East 3, where five objects (two gouges, one point and two cut ribs) were found in Pit 20, one awl in Pit 19 and a needle in Gully 5. One further point came from the outlying Pit 23. This might suggest that textile-working activities were concentrated in this area, a suggestion further supported by the presence of a stone spindlewhorl in Hearth 2 within the inner structure. If so, at least some of this activity must post-date the use of the innermost structure represented by Gully 8, since this is cut by Pit 20.

List of illustrated objects

(Figure FWP63, 37)

1. Baked clay slingshot. SF56, GF449, Area A, South 1, Working Hollow, layer 4/ clay silt.
2. Baked clay bead. SF606, ?GF335, Area A, East 2, topsoil.
3. Spherical glass bead; pale green with overall opaque yellow trellis design. SF55, GF443, Area A, East 3, Pit 21A.
4. Worn bone point with flattened head. SF54, GF443, Area A, East 1, Pit 21A, top of filling.
5. Bone awl. Wear marks below proximal articulation. SF610, GF330, Area A, East 1, Pit 8, top fill.
6. Bone needle. Highly polished. GF407, East 1 (West 1), near bottom of Post-hole 18.
7. Bone gouge. Perforated, with incomplete bore hole adjacent. GF364, Area A, East 2, Pit 20, below skull, part of deposit.
8. Antler tine point. Faint decoration. SF13, GF340, Area A, East 1, Pit 8, near bottom of pit.

9. Bone object. GF364, Area A, East 2, Pit 20, layer 2, below skull, part of deposit.
10. Bone object. GF434, Area A, East 3, topsoil.

Environmental evidence

edited by Michael J Allen

Animal bones

by the late Barbara Noddle

Introductory note

by Michael J Allen

The following report is extracted from three archive reports prepared by Barbara Noddle in the early 1970s. These were summaries of the faunal remains from OD X/XI, ODXII (FWP 64) and *Raddun* (FWP 65). The data for ODX/XI has been extracted largely from her reports and although some further bone that may not have been reported upon was found, this was assessed and does not significantly add to the overall interpretation provided by Noddle. The aim of Noddle's reports was to assess animal husbandry over time, rather than provide detailed information about the disposal patterns and spatial variation on each site. The detailed information of material by context does not survive in the current archive. The faunal report below is accompanied by the short report on the non domestic and amphibian bones extracted from an original report by N E King and P J Fowler (FWP 87).

Introduction

A total of 986 bones was examined and these are dealt with here as a single assemblage with the exception of a few of the better preserved deposits in pits. This total excludes the small mammal and amphibian bones discussed separately.

The material was analysed in a number of different ways after the initial identification; proportion of fragments per species, minimum number of individuals (MNI), percentage of species, proportions of certain anatomical fragments and the age of those individuals (where possible) were calculated (Table FWP63.5). The bones were also measured where appropriate, to determine both the size and weight of the animals, and to compare populations at different periods. The number of recognisable fragments is not used as a term in this report; since one bone may be broken into a number of recognisable fragments.

Preservation and recovery

The preservation of the bone was variable, but much tended to be fragmentary. Loose teeth are all that may survive when the bones are subjected to heavy weathering or mechanical erosion. These make up about one-third of the bovine fragments and between a quarter and a half of all the sheep/goat fragments and a third of pig. This indicates that preservation was generally not good but that the recovery of material was good. The lack of phalanxes may be partially a taphonomic problem (see *Anatomical distribution*), but might also indicate that not all were recovered by manual excavation.

Proportions of species (common domestic animals)

Sheep and cattle are the most frequently occurring animal, whether they are assessed from fragment numbers or as individuals. Sheep represents about 35% while cattle is about 25% when assessed as MNI (Table FWP53.5). Pig and horse are the other main domestic animals with pig being more common (16%) than horse (6%).

Cattle

The remains from a minimum of 22 individuals were found, of which only *c* 40% were mature (over four years old.). Both waste and edible bones are well represented, indicating that animals were butchered on the same site that they were eaten upon. Very few phalanges were found, so perhaps the hooves were removed with the hides or were not recovered. All horn-cores were of the same type, short (about 10cm outer circumference). Pit 2 contained three complete skulls, elsewhere two almost complete hind limbs were recovered; it is considered that these do not represent the normal processes of butchery and consumption, and may be evidence of some ritual activity. None of the skulls showed any sign of pole-axing on the frontal bones. The cattle appear to have been of the 'Celtic shorthorn' type.

Sheep

The remains from a minimum of 30 individuals were found, of which less than 30% were mature (over four years old). If these animals were culled from a flock kept primarily for wool, one would expect a much higher percentage. The proportion of waste bones to edible bones is high, and it is possible that some of the joints, particularly the forequarters, were eaten off-site. Most of the metapodials were represented by proximal half only, and there were few phalanges, so presumably the distal metapodials and hooves were removed with the hides. Two astragali were from rams; this and the predominance of choice hind limb joints again indicate local consumption whereas the head and feet of a single three-year-old animal (layer 268) may represent the discard of primary butchery waste. The sheep were probably of the short-tailed Northern race typified by the present day Soay of the Outer Hebrides. The polled specimen of Pit 454 may also be of this type, since its form of horn is so variable. Two larger horn-cores were however found and these are similar to two specimens were from medieval deposits at *Raddun*.

Pig

The remains of a minimum of 14 pigs were found, one of which was new-born and could have been stillborn. Several more were under two years old (33% mature). All parts of the skeleton are represented including the phalanges.

Horse

The remains of eight individuals were found, which included a skull from Pit 3, wedged inside which there was a fairly large flint, and also the nearly complete hind limbs of another individual; the bones of this were about half the size and bulk of the modern Clydesdale. Ritual slaughter is suggested.

Less common domestic animals and wild animals

It is always difficult to distinguish the bones of sheep from goats, and it is probable that goat is underestimated throughout but the remain of at least one goat were identified. Also found were the remains of two dogs, two cats, two red deer and three roe deer. The last indicates that hunting was carried out as well as stock rearing. The dogs are largely of alsatian, and mastiff to greyhound size; it seems likely that these animals were sheep dogs. However, modern representatives of the Soay race of sheep will not be driven by dogs; it is possible that their prehistoric counterparts, which were probably the same race of sheep, exhibited the same behaviour pattern.

Cat is very uncommon and its presence here is notable. It is generally supposed that the domestic cat did not occur in Britain before the Roman period, but Harcourt (pers comm) has recently found animals which he believes to be domestic at an Iron Age site in Dorset; it is possible the Overton Down animals were of the wild variety (*Felis sylvestris*), for the fragments could not be measured.

Age of animals at death

Ageing followed the methods provided by Silver (1963) based on dental evidence and that of epiphyseal closure. It is recognised by the author (BN) that there are limitations of using this data. It is unlikely that livestock grew and matured at the same rate as the modern livestock on which Silver bases his figures; indeed for pig dental and epiphyseal evidence are always at variance if Silver's data are employed.

The age at which an animal is killed gives some indication of its economic function. Young animals under the age of about one year by modern standards are probably casualties or the victims of winter shortage; animals killed between the ages of 1½ and 4 years are probably being slaughtered for their meat and or hides, whereas animals older than this, although they of course provide meat and hides also have produced other economic returns such as offspring, wool, or labour (the pig is of course limited in this respect, providing meat, hide and offspring only). The proportions of mature individuals can provide some information about the agricultural systems in use. In the case of cattle, the proportion of mature individuals is about 40% and this might indicate that some cattle were being used for traction or dairy production. For sheep over c 30% were mature animals which may suggest they were primarily kept for their meat rather than wool or milk.

Anatomical distribution

Anatomical analysis of the bone fragments may give some information about what has happened to the bones after the animals' death, and is more concerned with the consumer than the agricultural system. In any carcass the bones of the head and lower limb provide a very small proportion of the meat. The phalanges are frequently removed with the hide, and may be absent except where tanning was carried on, but also may not all be recovered by manual archaeological excavation. Loose teeth are all that may survive when the bones are subjected to heavy weathering or mechanical erosion. Where meat is cooked on the bone the small bones of the carpus and tarsus and patella may be lost (they are rather too large to be overlooked in cattle) whereas if the limb is fleshed and discarded in an articulated state, or buried, they should be present.

The proportions of loose teeth, carpals, etc, metapodials and phalanges was calculated for each site (FWP 29). The analysis of the limb bones showed that the proportion of this bone is low, and for the majority of the animals the feet were probably removed with the hide. Larger proportions of all the bone groups of sheep suggest that whole limbs were present. The majority of the carcasses were probably skinned and the feet removed.

The main assemblage (pre-1968) contained two complete bovine limbs and the entire hind quarters of a horse. There were three complete bovine femora, a fragile bone which rarely survives intact.

These bones were not only deposited intact, but were spared the fragmentation processes; it seems likely that they were buried. Jackson (1948) observed a similar phenomenon at Little Woodbury, and Harcourt at another Iron Age site in Wiltshire (pers comm). Harcourt suggests that the process of butchery was to hand up a whole limb and cut strips of flesh from it, after which the still articulated bones were discarded, but it is also possible that the limbs were buried with the flesh still on.

Contents of the pits

A few pits contained well preserved deposits, some of which are summarised below. All are detailed in FWP 29, 34, 34a.

Pit 2

Pit 2 contained three complete skulls (other parts of the site produced two almost complete hind limbs); it is considered that these do not represent the normal processes of butchery and consumption, and may be evidence of some ritual activity. None of the skulls showed any sign of pole-axing on the frontal bones. Portions of a cow skull (frontal bone of skull bearing round horn-core) enabled the horn to be measured (82mm in circumference) and a second, oval horn-core was 115mm in and 55mm long. Other bone included a skull fragment of an elderly horse and a pelvis fragment.

Pit 3

Horse skull containing a flint c 80mm x 50mm. The skull was shattered, so that the flint may have gained entry by natural means, but it was found just below the frontal bone and therefore could have been inserted deliberately. The hind limbs of another individual were also recovered.

Pit 27

Portions of the skull of a cow (frontal bone and horn core); typical 'Celtic shorthorn' appearance (Jackson 1936). The portion of horn-core was 105mm in circumference and 89mm in length along outer curvature. Other bone included a horn-core of young cattle, sheep scapula fragment and teeth, and horse teeth.

Pit 22

GF 436: Mandible fragments and loose teeth of two cattle (one juvenile and one lacking third premolar, a condition not uncommon in Romano-British cattle (Meek and Gray 1911; Rixson 1972) and said to be hereditary (Ohtaishi 1972)). Various sheep bones including a mandible fragment, tooth, radius and scapula, and a mandible and loose teeth of an immature pig. Long-bones of horse (radius, ulna, tibia fragments) were also found.

GF 435: Mandible fragments of a juvenile cow and pelvis fragments, sheep tibia and new-born sheep metacarpal, and juvenile pig mandible.

GF 454: Immature cattle mandible, sheep skull fragment (polled animal) and immature juvenile pig mandible. This also produced a maxilla from large cat, probably *Felis sylvestris*, the wild cat.

Small mammal and amphibian bones

A report on the non-domestic mammalian and amphibian bones from pre-Roman and Roman Iron Age settlements on Overton Down, was prepared by NE King and PJ Fowler (FWP87). The identifications discussed below are extracted from that report.

The bones of small mammal and amphibians have not been fully quantified. The species recorded included weasel (*Mustela nivalis*), short-tailed vole (*Microtus agrestis*), harvest mouse (*Micromys minutus*), water vole (*Arvicola amphibius*), frog (*Rana tempoaria*) and toad (*Bufo bufo*). Many skeletal fragments of most species were recovered (ie skulls and limb bones, etc), the exceptions being the frog (no skulls) and the weasel for which only two skulls were recovered. Nearly all the animals were recovered from low down in pits with one pit (*no unknown*) in particular having toad, frog, weasel and harvest mouse. These are almost certainly pit-fall victims, only the weasel skulls are more dubious. Nevertheless even they might be pit-fall victims and the meat scavenged by dogs.

The range of animals present is typical of open downland pasture and fields; frogs and toads migrate from dew ponds and are often pit-fall victims. Only the water vole is more unusual in this context.

Conclusions

There are few meat joints and evidence of food waste. The presence of whole skulls and whole limbs, and the number of young male sheep (particularly in pits) seems to indicate the disposal of primary butchery waste and of young animals that may have died naturally.

The food waste may not have survived if scavenged by other animals (eg, dogs) or may have been disposed of elsewhere on the site. Horses were fairly common, and a portion of a whole burial was recovered. The type of cattle was probably the Celtic Shorthorn, and the sheep not easily distinguishable from the modern Soay.

Mollusca

by Sarah F Wyles

Introduction

The enclosure ditch surrounding the settlement at ODXI was sampled at Cutting X/15 along the south-eastern edge of the site (Figure FWP63.3). The ditch is thought to be contemporary with Phase 3b of the site. The sampled ditch sediments have been described as primary, secondary and tertiary fills following Evans (1972, 321–32) and Limbrey (1975, 290–300). A series of eight spot samples was taken from this section to provide a sequence through the deposits.

The aims of the mollusc analysis were to attempt to provide a broad landscape history, an environmental history for the site and to attempt to elucidate when the site was ploughed, as indicated by the occurrence of the lynchet and ard-marks here. The location of the sampling point means that the analysed molluscan assemblages are likely to provide a broad indication of the general landscape environment with a more detailed, site-specific environmental history.

Method

The processing and analytical methods employed follow those outlined by Evans (1972), and nomenclature follows Kerney (1976). The results are presented in Table FWP63, 6. Some species have been grouped for this purpose; the shade-loving species group includes *Aegopinella pura*, *A*

nitidula, *Oxychilus cellarius*, *Vitrina pellucida*, *Carychium tridentatum*, *Punctum pygmaeum*, *Discus rotundatus* and *Clausilia bidentata*; and the other catholic species group includes *Pomatias elegans*, *Cochlicopa*, *Cepaea* and *Arianta*.

Three molluscan zones were recognised, which appear to equate with the primary, secondary and tertiary fills described by context as follows. The assemblages are discussed by these fills (for an explanation of the layer numbers, see FWP 69).

Ditch fill	Context/ layer no	Description
Tertiary fill		
0–0.15m	1/	Brown humus with few flints in top of enclosure ditch fill beneath. Plough soil.
0.15–0.31m	2	Brown humus with common flints in top of enclosure ditch fill beneath. Plough soil. (Early Iron Age pottery)
0.31–0.55m	3/6b	Brown humus with few flints in top of enclosure ditch fill beneath. Plough soil
Secondary fill		
0.55–0.66m	4/6a	Soil, chalk lumps and flints.
0.66–0.82m	5/21b	Light brown soil with flint and chalk flakes. (Early Iron Age pottery; Phase 3b and 3c).
0.82–1.03m	6/35b	Soil with few chalk and flint inclusions. Stabilisation.
1.03–1.13m	7/2d	Fine light brown chalky soil with common chalk and flint inclusions. Section notes this is 'top of silt'.
1.13–1.32m	8/35c	Fine light brown chalk soil with large flint inclusions. (Early Iron Age pottery).
Primary fill		
1.32–1.56m	9/35a	Soil with frequent flint and chalk inclusions. Stabilisation.
1.56–1.76m	10/46c	Soil with very frequent chalk inclusions, common flint inclusions and decomposed natural. (Early Iron Age phase 3b).

The molluscan evidence

Although some of the sample sizes were low (>350g), shell numbers were, however, high, with the mollusc per kilogram range being 77–849 shells, and preservation was good.

Primary fills

The assemblages of the primary fills are characterised by a predominance of *Trichia hispida* and *Vallonia costata*, with its congener, *V. excentrica* occurring in low numbers. Shade-loving species were present, but only represent up to 10% of the assemblages.

The molluscan assemblages are indicative of well-established open grassland. This is likely to be ungrazed, thus providing some more humid micro environments for the shade-loving element. The high mollusc numbers at the top of the primary fills may represent some degree of stabilisation and slower sedimentation in the ditch. The openness of the environment shown by these assemblages indicate that the ditch was likely to have been constructed in a long established open landscape rather than a recently cleared area.

Secondary fills

These assemblages are dominated by *Trichia hispida*, *Vallonia costata* and *V. excentrica*, *Helicella itala* and *Pupilla muscorum*. The shade-loving species, observed in the primary fill assemblages, have declined.

This seems to reflect an environment of short-turfed grazed grassland. The presence of *Pupilla muscorum*, a species favouring broken ground, may reflect areas of trample as well as grazed grassland and thus the occupation. In areas of trample, the xerophilic proportion of the assemblage is thought to increase while shade-loving species decline. As a result of low trampling pressure, some herbs thicken to create greater resistance and thus develop patches of increasingly 'closed' habitats (Chappell *et al* 1971). These patches would provide a humid micro-environment for *Trichia hispida*, if it was not exploiting a mesic micro-environment within the ditch or along the ditch-edge. The high shell numbers in the upper part of the secondary fills may be indicative of stabilisation and slow rates of sedimentation.

Tertiary fills

The molluscan assemblages of the tertiary fills are characterised by the virtual absence of the shade-loving species, a decline in *Pupilla muscorum* and an increase in *Limicidae*. The predominant species are *Trichia hispida*, *Vallonia costata* and *excentrica* and *Helicella itala*.

The molluscan and sedimentary evidence appear to indicate an arable environment and these fills completely seal the ditch. An increase in *Vallonia excentrica*, *Helicella itala* and *Limacidae* is typical of molluscan assemblages of arable contexts (*cf* Bell 1983). Ploughing was likely to have been taking place across the settlement area and the ditch at this time.

Discussion

The ditch was dug in an area of long established open grassland in the Early Iron Age, Phase 3b. The molluscan evidence for the secondary fills, which are attributed to Phase 3b and Phase 3c, late Early Iron Age, indicates that this grassland was being grazed and that there were possible areas of trample, reflecting occupation (*LPP*, figure 14.2). The sediments and molluscan assemblages of the tertiary fills indicate arable and plough wash. These fills, however, only produced a single very worn sherd of Early Iron Age pot and are thus insecurely dated in this cutting.

As the ditch was sampled downslope of the settlement, the mollusc sequence provides a very local environmental history of the site. The landscape of the general area, however, was an open one and is likely to have been a mixture of arable and grassland, as demonstrated by the stratigraphic relationship of the settlement features with the underlying field system (Figure FWP63.32) and the presumed rate of infilling of the ditch.

There is no indication of an arable environment on the site pre-dating the Phase 3a unenclosed settlement and the molluscan assemblages reflect an area of well established, but not intensively grazed, grassland in existence by Phase 3b. The first indication of arable in the mollusc sequence is from the undated tertiary fills. This arable event may be contemporary with that reflected by the ard-marks across the site. It can, therefore, be argued that this arable episode is in Phase 4, the possible razing of the settlement. The field lynchet, orientated south east–north west across the middle of the settlement, is also attributed to this phase. Evans's molluscan evidence shows that this lynchet, attributed to the Late Iron Age, formed in an area of mixed arable and grassland (Evans 1972; Fowler and Evans 1967). However, as the pre-lynchet soil had been severely disrupted by ploughing, it is possible that these ard-marks and the tertiary ditch fills may pre-date the lynchet.

The settlement, may therefore, have been enclosed, abandoned and ploughed over within the Iron Age. The lack of detailed dating evidence does not allow this arable episode to be more closely dated than probably occurring between the late Early Iron Age, Phase 3c, and the centuries preceding the Roman Conquest.

Charcoal

by Rowena Gale

The identification of charcoal fragments was undertaken on 20 samples from ODX/XI, all deriving from feature fills. The charcoal was prepared and identified using standard techniques. Where possible the presence of stem, sapwood or heartwood was noted. Results are summarised in Table FWP63.7. The structure of one sample (1024) was too poorly preserved to identify, and one sample (1048) included insufficient material to identify. The following taxa were identified:

Acer sp, maple; *Corylus* sp, hazel; *Fraxinus* sp, ash; Pomoideae, subfamily of the Rosaceae which includes *Crataegus* sp, hawthorn, *Malus* sp, apple, *Pyrus* sp, pear and *Sorbus* sp, rowan, whitebeam and wild service (these genera are anatomically similar); *Prunus* sp, which includes *P avium*, wild cherry, *P padus*, bird cherry, *P spinosa*, blackthorn (it is not usually possible to separate the members of this genus using anatomical methods); *Quercus* sp, oak; Rosaceae which includes the Pomoideae and Prunus. Samples in poor condition (as in this instance) may not be identifiable beyond family level.