

These are the components of Appendix IV which is not, at this stage, edited into running order, standard format etc. @ 3.6 words. p.6. xii. 96.

## APPENDIX IV A SUMMARY AND BIBLIOGRAPHY OF OTHER ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS IN THE STUDY AREA

The Fyfod project has not, of course, exercised a monopoly of archaeological excavation in the study area; such excavations occurred before 1959 and several have taken place since. They have a major contribution to make to an understanding of the study area and of our attempt to synthesise its stories, despite (because of?) the diversity of their circumstances, objectives, results and interpretations.

Here we list only the principal non-Project archaeological excavations in Fyfield and Overton parishes. We do not include chance finds nor diggings, even when they have produced archaeological material; the crucial criterion is an excavation with archaeological intent. We have used sub-terrestrial archaeological evidence obtained by other means in the text e.g. that from observation of a pipeline. Other sites and finds are, of course, listed in the SMR, to which we have frequently referred as an organised record;

<b>Parish: West Overton</b>	<b>Place: Overton Hill</b>	<b>Grid Ref. SU 1196 6835</b>
<b>Type: Round Barrow</b>	<b>S.M.R. No.</b>	<b>Excavated in 1962</b>

Barrow G6b, N of the Seven Barrow (or Overton Hill) group, consisted of a central mound 20ft in diameter surrounded by a flint and sarsen bank; together they created a mound c.65ft across and at most c 4ft high. Centrally beneath it was a grey soil which overlay Chalk subsoil and a burial pit, covered by a turf stack; the grey soil did not occur elsewhere but a buried land surface underlay the mound. An irregular arrangements of sarsen boulders, the largest 3 ft. long, lay NW and SE, enclosed by the bank. There was no surrounding ditch. Of 12 burials in the barrow, a primary inhumation with Beaker and bronze awl dated to the C16 BC was in the central pit; 5 secondary inhumations included 3 children, and 6 cremations had been buried in containers. At the NW side a pit contained blackthorn and hazel charcoal.

Several Saxon inhumations had been cut through the barrow into the Chalk sub-soil, disturbing the Bronze Age inhumations but not the primary grave and mound. Smith and Simpson 1966

<b>Parish: West Overton</b>	<b>Place: Overton Hill</b>	<b>Grid Ref. SU 118 683</b>
<b>Type: Roman Burials</b>	<b>S.M.R. No.</b>	<b>Excavated in 1962</b>

Three small, low mounds, G6, G6a and G7, lay in a straight N-S line W of barrow G6b. The line of the Roman road from *Cunetio* to *Verlucio* runs to the South of these features in an East-West direction, and the Ridgeway runs to the West.

Site G7, the most Northerly, was found to rest on the chalk sub-soil, comprising a mound and ditch of external diameter 23ft, reaching a height of 2ft. The ditch was cut into the chalk to a depth of 1-2ft, 2ft wide. A slight bank of chalk rubble under the mound shows where the fill of the ditch was upcast. The ditch when excavated contained chalk rubble, and circular features filled with brown soil, where timber posts stood. Oak charcoal was noted in the fill. A pit was found in the centre of the mound with sherds of Roman pottery. A Saxon burial was found dug into the chalk



Excavations through the bank and ditch at Red Shore and the bank at New Buildings showed marked differences in structure of the dyke, also differences in the pollen evidence from each site.

At Red Shore, a number of celtic field lynchets run under the bank of the dyke. The bank itself is at this point c.9.5m wide, and 2m high. It comprises of dump construction from ditch material, mainly clay with flints, and a mull layer from deposited turves where the ditch was cut, high up in the bank stratigraphy. The ditch was v-shaped, with the original bottom at a depth of 3.90m. A number of layers of silt deposition and flint nodules had built up in the ditch.

The smaller trench at New Buildings, cut partially through the bank, showed a different stratigraphy comprising redeposited top-soil, red clay and black layers. Differences between the two areas are highlighted by the pollen evidence. At Red Shore, high profiles of grasses, bracken and plantain suggest use of the area for pasture at the time of the dyke's construction. At New Buildings, signs of hazel, oak, grasses and ribwort plantain, also fern in higher deposits, show the long-established nature of Savernake Forest, also the lack of any real quantity of pasture vegetation.

The date of construction for the Wansdyke is ambiguous from archaeological evidence. Sherds of Samian pottery recovered from the bank material, also a penannular brooch found in the excavation suggest post-Roman construction. Dates have been suggested of A.D.450 to 500 or A.D.550 to 600.

Green, H.S. 1971, Wansdyke, Excavations 1966 to 1970, from WAM 66, pp129-146

**Parish: West Overton    Place: Overton Hill    Grid Ref. SU 61 NW    Type: Ridgeway**

S.M.R. No.                      Excavated

The Ridgeway runs in a North-South direction across Overton Hill, cutting the line of the Roman road from Cunetio to Verlucio. It runs to the West of the Roman burials, G6, G6a and G7, barrow G6b and the Anglo-Saxon cemetery on Overton Hill.

**Parish: West Overton    Place: West Overton    Grid Ref. SU 1340 6822  
Type: Round Barrow**

S.M.R.                              Excavated in 1993

The Pound Field Barrow was recognised on aerial photographs and was excavated before the laying of a pipeline. It is 100m North East of St. Michael's church, West Overton. The external diameter of the feature is 33.5m. A ditch was cut into the sub-soil, 5.5m wide, 1.2m deep. It was found filled with brown, silty clay. A greyish brown layer of silty clay was found to lie on the sub-soil of the barrow interior, containing a flint blade and charcoal. Chalk rubble then covered this layer. The charcoal was from oak and hazel, and the find suggests a lightly wooded area in the barrow's vicinity at the time of construction. Potsherds were found in the fill of the ring ditch, of either Iron Age or early Anglo-Saxon origin. Two small finds have been discovered in the vicinity of West Overton; a flint arrowhead (C2) at SU 115 677, and a bronze chisel and axe (C3), found at SU 1200 6750. From geomagnetic survey, an anomaly was noted close to the barrow in Pound Field (D1).





Meyrick, O 1950, An Early Medieval Site on Manton Down, from WAM 53, June, pp328-331

**Parish: West Overton    Place: Overton Down    Grid Ref. ?    Type: Round Barrow**

S.M.R. No.                      Excavated in 1960

A small round barrow excavated for the Ministry of Works. The primary burial comprised a cinerary urn in the centre of the mound, and sherds of Roman pottery were recovered from the ditch fill.

Birmingham, J 1960, Overton Down, Wiltshire in Notes on Excavations, from PPS 26-27,p346

**Manton long barrow: SU14787135**

A long mound oriented ESE/WNW c 25 m long was ploughed over in 1952 and excavated by RJCA in 1955 by RJCA. In the barrow interior, an oxskull and sherds of Neo. (WH) pottery were discovered. Sarsens at the entrance, and underlying depressions which were probably natural, did not resolve the question of an entrance structure.

**Devil's Den, Preshute SU15206905**

Not excavated though drawn by Stukeley 1723. Passmore traced the outline of the mound, oriented SE/NW, 230 ft. long, 130 ft wide

**Temple Bottom long barrow, Ogbourne St. Andrew SU14867251.**

Excavated 1861. Described by Harrod as a low mound of earth 47 ft in diam overlain by sarsen stones (1864). Three artefacts were uncovered, a bone gouge (?primary burial?), calcined bones (intrusive secondary?), and fragments of coarse pottery.

**West Woods long barrow, West Overton. SU 15696563.**

Excavated 1880. A mound 38m long, 30 m wide and at most 3.3 m high, with well-defined ditches, the whole oriented E-W. Resting on the Chalk subsoil were a cairn of small sarsen stones over a 'dolmen' of 4 central stones containing 'black matter' but no relics.

**Wroughton Mead:**

this is Colt Hoare's 1821 a/c in full (a quote in **bold** below from this quote currently heads chap.5):

'Steering my course (from Devil's Den) westward towards Abury, **I ascended the hill to a piece of down** designated in the Wiltshire map **by the name of Rowden Mead, upon which we again meet the undoubted vestiges of an extensive British settlement.** On digging into one of the many excavations, the first stroke of our pick-axe brought up one half of a quern, or hand mill-stone, with its perforation in the centre, the tip of a deer's horn, and various fragments both of British and Roman pottery.' Hoare, *Ancient Wilts.* 1821, 45

**Shaw DMV; Church: SU 139 653.**

Excavated 1929. Visible as a low, grass-covered mound, then and still, the remains of the church were only partly examined in what was clearly, not least from the silent witness of the published photographs, a small-scale and technically-limited

excavation by masters and boys from Marlborough School. The site is on Clay-with-Flints. Internally 33 ft x 16 ft., with no chancel, the nave survived in outline defined by flint walls still standing 2-3 ft. high in places with some sarsen coins and facing stones still in place at key points (fig. 9.00). Inner wall footings had been laid in a trench; outer footings apparently just rested on soil. The floor comprised flints rammed into the Clay, covered with beaten chalk; but no flagging was found. The base of a slightly off-centre altar, 4 ft x 2 ft, lay against the E wall. A doorway in the N wall was 2 ft. wide; a dripstone on the southern interior suggested a S door. On the S too were found a complete stone window surround and the parts of a complete hood for half a window. The whole was covered by flint rubble, presumably the non-organic part of walls once 3-4 m. high and originally held in a matrix of 'clunch' or weak lime mortar.

Indeed, perhaps much more suggestively than the excavator realised, the evidence exposed seems to represent the debris resulting from a deliberate robbing and ruination of the church. The absence of a floor (flag-stones?) and most architectural fittings, plus the state of the walls, are strongly indicative. And in its way, the fact that some fragments were found, all broken except for the remarkable window, reinforces this interpretation: they were what the demolition men knowingly left behind because they were no use for the repair or new building work to which the materials were being taken. The excavator's starting point was a local story that Shaw church had been removed and rebuilt at one of the Altons in the Vale of Pewsey below.

No coins were found but 'A number of sherds of the familiar medieval green glaze turned up, particularly outside the west wall.' These sound as if they were of one of the types discussed at Wroughton Mead in Chap. 5 (*above*, p. 00), suggesting a C13 date, though Fabric 00 continues into the early C14. The architectural pieces recovered on the site indicate a date in the early C14 for the construction of the church. A blackgammon board on a broken slab from the altar was, one hopes, scratched by the demolishers rather than the builders but has not been closely dated. The ambiguities of the documentary evidence are such, concluded the excavator himself, that that source cannot clarify the issue of date. We would therefore propose that, until proved otherwise, Shaw church is interpreted as having been founded in the later C13 and demolished between one and two centuries later, perhaps in the early C15.

Brentnall H.C., 'The church of Shaw-in-Alton', *WAM* 45, 1930, 156-65

Clark Maxwell, W.G. 'Blackgammon board scratched on a slab from Shaw-in-Alton church', *WAM* 45, 1931, 488-89

**Expt. ewk. excavations** (tho there's not much more of signif. to say in addition to what I've already summarised in text chap. 6)