

Chapter 5

Medieval & Post-medieval Wroughton Mead

Introduction - The Corner of a 'Celtic' Field

The earliest recognisable phase of human activity within the Mead are the 'Celtic' field boundaries which criss-cross it. Although these form part of the far wider earlier field system on Fyfield Down, this chapter is concerned with one stretch of 'Celtic' field, and more particularly one corner of such a field which remained an integral part of medieval and post-medieval settlement at Raddon. Why this specific bank and corner were chosen is unclear. Certainly the slight south-westerly slope of the area behind the 'Celtic' field corner is as best a position as one would hope for sunshine and shelter on the Downs and it is certain the bank's height meant it would remain as a useful land boundary or stock barrier. Moreover, here the topsoil lies on Clay with Flints, as opposed to Chalk, and thus the soil is significantly more fertile. Whatever the reason behind the decision to use this particular field, once it had been chosen, it dictated the subsequent settlement morphology at Raddon throughout the thirteenth century and into the post-medieval period.

This field, in the N, was formed by a bank, which further E forms the N side of Enclosure C, joining a bank which transects Enclosure A and formed the southern two sides of Enclosure B. The E edge of this field was presumably formed by a bank which would have run NW-SE, just beyond B2 and the mound. Indeed, it is evident that by far the greatest proportion of the known settlement of Raddon is confined within the bounds of this 'Celtic' field. Clearly, this field offered the first inhabitants a satisfactory area in which to construct buildings and settle.

Pit 6

Phase I

A pit approximately 8.1m in diameter at present ground level, 3.3m deep into the natural Chalk and *c.* 6m in diameter across its flat bottom was uncovered to the N of B4. Its sides were slightly convex, so that in section the pit appeared rather bell-shaped.

At the very bottom of the pit a layer of thin 'silt-like' material and decayed Chalk lumps was recorded. A substantial amount of red clay, sometimes containing powdered or lumps of Chalk, was noted on the sides of the pit over the natural Chalk walls and pit bottom, similar to Cutting 9 (see p. XX). The presence of Chalk powder or pockets of Chalk lumps in this and the previous layer, may be the result of Chalk fragments falling off the sides and lip of the pit during construction or when open to the elements.

Above this clay and chalk layer, a distinct layer of brown clayey soil with flints approximately 30.5cm in thickness was noted. This was not found to be 'silt-like' and may therefore represent deliberate in-filling rather than natural weathering. When some 2.4m in depth, a massive spill of sarsens was tipped into the pit. The 1.2-1.5m thick layer of sarsens was unloaded onto the layer of brown clayey soil with flints, as most either rest directly on or slightly in it. Around these stones a layer of brown soil and charcoal accumulated. Further sarsen stones, possibly a second dumping, came down on top of this soil and charcoal layer. These stones, on the other hand, were found lying in a layer of weathered Chalk rubble. The skull of an animal, probably a dog, came from this weathered chalk layer (GF697).

Above that, a layer of light brown soil with weathered Chalk and some clay, but no charcoal, was noted. In places this layer was found to be level with the tops of several sarsens. Above that, several thin layers were apparent, most containing black or dark brown soils with charcoal and chalk lumps. A skull, possibly of an ox (GF575), was uncovered in this layering, along with several 13th century coarseware sherds. This distinct change in the consistency of the layers apparent above the stones, was referred to in the site books as 'the midden over the pit'. Clearly the predominantly dark brown and black soils, in which many sherds, bones and a few iron objects were uncovered, represent a period of increased activity, no doubt the occupation of B4, its collapse, the fire-pit and the oven (see B4 p XX).

Discussion

This circular pit was dug near the eastern corner the 'Celtic' field, just to the N of where B4 was later placed, probably to abstract chalk which would subsequently be spread on the fields as a fertiliser. Evidently, the Downland area was coming under the plough again.

The date for the digging of Pit 6 is unclear. A piece of thirteenth century coarseware pottery, of a type found in abundance throughout the excavation, was uncovered at the bottom of the pit, which otherwise produced 11 RB sherds. Clearly the latest dates the feature, although with comparatively so many RB sherds, in fact 34% of the total RB sherds uncovered at WC, one cannot but wonder whether the 13th century sherd is somehow a contaminant, possibly one which fell into the pit bottom during the extremely arduous task of clearing the pit filling, of which more in a moment. I am tempted to see this as a pit dug during the 1st century AD as part of the widespread 'Roman-induced' reorganisation of the land north of the Kennet.

A certain amount of weathering was evident at the side and bottom of the pit, although there were clearly some periods when deliberate in-filling had occurred. After a fairly brief period of being open to the elements, the pit changed its function, possibly because enough chalk had been excavated, and became a water reservoir, shown by the red clay over its sides and bottom. This reservoir phase came soon after the pit's construction and was thus also part of the RB landscape; the pottery evidence from below the sarsen spill,

if one excludes the 13th century sherd, is all RB. Above this clearly deliberately laid clay lining, various soils built up, consisting of chalk in lumps and in fine powder and brown clayey material, often with flints. As the slope of the soils below the sarsens and their thickness of some 1.5m indicate, these layers represent the gradual natural silting up of the reservoir.

When large scale agricultural activity returned to this area, the reservoir, which would have remained poorly-drained at times and was presumably full of weeds, was a hollow some 2m in depth. It became the obvious place to dump the largest of the stones being cleared from the adjacent fields during a renewed burst of agricultural activity in the Mead. These stones landed in the topsoil of the hollow, some, due to their immense weight, sinking into it. That the sarsens lay in a layer of weathered chalk lumps and chalk silt indicates Chalk rubble was also dumped in the hollow about the same time.

This phase is possibly one which pre-dates any permanent occupation within the Mead and may well be related to the ploughing of the lynchet to the SW of the hollow, as well as the ploughing elsewhere in the Mead. The evidence from this sarsen layer points to a 13th century date for the dumping, though the scant nature of the finds, especially pottery, compared to later phases, suggests no permanent occupation in the vicinity. A thin layer of what appeared to be a short-lived grassed surface amongst and over some of the sarsens indicated a short period of stability before the hollow found itself being used for a different purpose.

Once the field clearance had finished, the hollow was an ideal place into which to dump rubbish. The layer above the sarsens was found to contain a mass of burnt material, animal remains and pottery and clearly demonstrates the pit had taken on a new role; that of a midden for the occupants of B4. This phase, being part of the occupation and post-occupation period at B4, is dealt with below (see B4).

Building 2 & The Mound

Phase I

With increased activity on the Downs, a more permanent shelter, albeit possibly one only used seasonally, was erected. An area c.14.5m (48ft) by 19m (64ft) was thus levelled off, some 250m to the east of the pit, and surrounded by a hawthorn and blackthorn hedge. A timber structure made of elm with hazel panels built in its SE corner, along with a larger enclosure (Enclosure B). The banks of Enclosure B were possibly constructed from some of the material dug up during the levelling of this area. The building was no doubt a penning for sheep and/or a stable for horses, with the two enclosures to contain the animals.

Phase II

This first shelter appears to have burnt down, although perhaps the burning associated with this area reflects the burning of a scrub covering. Undeterred, indeed spurred on by this unfortunate incident, the decision was taken to construct a more substantial timber building. This required further, deeper levelling, which included removing the debris from the first shelter. The soil was thus carted off and dumped 13m to the east. This meant the burnt ground surface material was dumped first onto the ground surface to the east, then the underlying Clay-with-Flints was dug and dumped, and then natural Chalk.

This levelling created a low mound, c.6.3m in diameter, with what was described at the time of excavation as a 'reverse stratigraphy'. Meaning that under the topsoil a hard packed layer of flints and brown loam was uncovered, which in turn covered a core of chalk lumps. This disturbed chalk layer lay over redeposited Clay-with-Flints on top of a black humic layer, the burnt OGS from the west, which in turn was lying on a light brown clayey soil, the OGS of the pre-mound phase. The hard packed layer over the redeposited Chalk, which contained several metal items, was a second phase of mound building, maybe as a result of further levelling in the B2 area. The Chalk lumps were found to continue away from the centre of the cutting in a NW direction, that is to say towards B2.

Pit 4

What was at first thought to be part of trench system of the Phase II structure, was found running westwards from the NE corner of B2 c.30cm inside of, and parallel to, the N wall of B2. However this 'trench', about halfway along the N wall, developed into a 0.9m deep pit and 2.4m in diameter (E-W). It had an homogenous fill of large, mostly smooth, rounded Chalk lumps in light brown/yellow clayey soil (AWC225).

The pit was uncovered under the chalk floor level and N wall of B2 and had not been cut down through the upper layers. The late medieval and early modern sherds from the top 6cm of the pit fill must, therefore, be remnants of the previous year's excavation when this area was covered by spoil from the B2 excavation - GF763 came from the S half of the pit, at approx. 0.3m, but is not on pottery report. Pit 4 must have been filled in before the stone phase of B2 was built, possibly just before as the inside face of the N wall respects the lip of the pit. The function of this large pit, which was either associated with the first shelter or was just N of the timber building of B2 phase 1, is unknown, maybe it was a quarry for daubing material.

Building 2

An earlier, 'pre-stone wall' phase of B2 was inferred from the dateable material evidence, the position of two trenches under the W and E (stone) walls of B2 and two rows of post-holes sunk through the floor level. The E trench was certainly earlier than the wall, as the wall stones were found to be resting on about 15cm of chalky silt trench filling. Both W and E trenches ended in the S at the same point, c. 1.5m from the internal edge of the stone S wall and the E trench was found to end 2.4m short of the NE corner of the stone building; the end of the W trench in the N was not determined. As the E trench no doubt

represents the full length of the first building, this gives a structure 4.2m in width (14ft.) by 6.9m in length (23ft.), an internal floor area of approximately 29m².

In the W, the trench was interrupted by a series of shallow holes along its centre and three notches, of unknown size, were uncovered in the E trench. The equidistant nature of the three suggested post-holes in the E trench present a construction with fixed distances between posts and as such may have held timber uprights, set in the trench which was subsequently filled in around the posts to give support. The shallow holes in the W were interpreted as the regular placing and removal of a hurdle across the entrance to the timber building, though the presence of solution hollows confused any definite interpretation.

B2 Post-holes

Two more or less parallel rows of at least twelve holes, 1.5m apart (N-S), 25-30cm apart in the centre (E-W), and 1.5m from the walls were evinced cut into the floor of B2. The proximity of the post-holes, their shallow depth and narrow diameter, indicate these were not holes for wooden uprights. They were more likely, therefore, to be where tethering posts had been or represent the end posts of stalls. The pottery from the holes was 13th century in date, although one RB sherd came from PH2E and two Martincamp (GFs530 & 564) sherds were found in PH1E (see *B2- Post-utilisation phase*). It was unclear as to which Phase of B2 these postholes were associated, though, ignoring PH1E which is later, none were evident N and S of the ends of the trenches, suggesting they went with Phase II.

The Mound & B2 (Phases I & II) - Dating

Layer 4, the black, charcoally layer, being the lowest layer in the mound, gives a *terminus ante quem* for the mound and, therefore, for B2 (and the B1/2/3 complex). This layer contained pieces of charcoal from hazel, cherry/blackthorn, apple/hawthorn and elm (GF282 & GF311), which indicate that the Phase I penning burnt down. This layer also contained thirteenth century pottery, a 'Norman' horseshoe nail (9th-mid 14th C: GF526), a medieval iron buckle (GF283, TWA, 8), as well as two EG sherds (GFs 268 & 511), all of which suggests the mound was constructed (and thus Phase I of B2) in the late 12th / early 13th century.

An early 13th century date was also inferred from the material associated with Phase II of B2. One EG sherd (late 12th to mid-13th century) came from under the wall stones of B2 (GF736) and two were recovered from the wall itself (GF382), although 'Coarseware 38' sherds were far more prevalent. Two horseshoes classified as 'Norman', that is to say from the latter part of the 11th century up until the mid-13th century (GF356 & GF548) came from the pre-stone phase trenches; evidence which dates Phase II of B2 to before the mid-13th century.

Of interest are the sherds of a 13th century coarseware bowl (XFit 1) which were uncovered in the trench filling under the E wall of B2 (GF376), inside the E wall (GF293), outside B2 (GF318) and over the top of the ditch in Area 10/O5. This would imply that the ditch in Area 10 was substantially filled before the construction of Phase II of B2 (*i.e.* late 12th to mid-13th century). Consequently, it is more likely that B2 Phase I, that is to say the penning, and the construction of the first phase of Enclosure C were contemporary.

Enclosure B

Several excavations to date and ascertain the construction method for Enclosure B were undertaken (Cuttings 2T/U, 2F/G, 4P, 6Y, 6H(iii), 6H(ii), 6A(i) & trench on its internal side.

The internal trenches of Enclosure B

Investigation uncovered several sections of trench along what is interpreted as part of the original western bank of Enclosure B, under the floor level of B1 South (Cuttings 2T/U & 2F/E) and directly south of B2 (Cuttings 4P). The evidence suggests these ditches were all part of the drainage and/or stock control system for this area. In the east, there was a suggestion of a trench (Cutting 1).

The ditch discovered under B1 South was, in all probability, a continuation of the one uncovered running in a NE-SW direction from the B1/2/3 complex towards B4. In the area south of B2, a trench was also uncovered along with three large sarsens and several smaller ones set on edge in the subsoil in a line E-W across the centre of the cutting. These stones may have acted as some sort of revetment to the ditch (Cuttings 4P). To the west, a ditch 83cm deep was found along the southern edge of the slight bank (6Y), though as it curved south the trench became less evident (6H(iii)) and eventually, at roughly 9 o'clock, was not noted at all in excavation (6H(ii)).

The upper layer of the ditch in the west consisted of a blackish soil with small flints over a line of flints, which itself lay on a layer of weathered material from the bank (Cutting 6Y). Under this was a layer of flinty soil and a further line of flints, which was also noted further south (6H(iii)), as was a clear vertical line within the fill demonstrating it had been redug. At the bottom of the ditch small, rounded redeposited clay and chalk nodules were apparent, as was much rotten chalk and a deep solution hollow on the east side. The presence of this clayey layer and flint lining may represent part of the water-proofing of the ditch; indeed the rotten chalk suggests waterlogged conditions. Interpretation thus points to the trenches acting as the drainage system within the enclosure, helping to drain the bank, as well as the enclosed land and farm buildings.

The possible relining of the trench in the west (6H(ii)), was not mirrored in the NE corner where it was apparent that the trench gradually filled with rubbish from the activities going on in B2. As such, the ditch would have ceased to have acted as an efficient

drainage gully there, suggesting the drainage of Enclosure B was no longer necessary during the latter part of the 13th century. Cross-fit sherds from a 13th century 38CW cooking pot also show there was some activity around the south of B2 and the entrance to B4 during the latter building's post-occupation phase (Xfit 7). This, coupled with the fact B2 (Phase III) and B3 were in use at the same time, indicates B4 continued to have a role during the utilisation phase of B2 & B3, no doubt activity associated with the fire-pit or oven.

The bank of Enclosure B

The bank was consistently found to be made of a brown, clayey soil with flints. The combined length of the eastern and southern side of Enclosure B measured *c.* 70m (230ft) in length, approximately 45m (150ft) of which was made of 'Celtic' field bank. The W bank, however, was less clearly defined as it was later used as a raised trackway to and from the (post-occupation) B4 area. Originally it was about 36m (120ft) in length, bending E at its N tip to form the entrance to the enclosure. With the addition of the ditch S of B2, the total length of Enclosure B's bank and ditch was approximately 114m (380ft).

In the east (Cutting 1), stones along the external edge of the bank appeared to have been a revetment. Investigation also showed the bank consisted of two phases; the upper section 13th century in date, the lower, earlier bank set upon the OGS, of unknown date. This occurrence was not noted elsewhere during sectioning of the enclosure. It is possible that Cutting 1 uncovered an early 13th century bank or a 'Celtic' field bank, heightened, as was so often the case in Wroughton Mead, in the medieval period. The E bank of Enclosure B ended where the level area of B2 began and did not continue westwards.

The western side of Enclosure B is interpreted as the low bank running NE-SW from the B1/2/3 complex towards the entrance of B4. Analysis of the depth and layering within the ditch, uncovered along the bank's western edge, indicated the bank was clearly higher when originally constructed. With the construction of B1 South, part of the bank was destroyed and it is possible that it was also at this date that the trackway to and from B4, presumably when the fire-pit or oven was inserted into the remains of B4, shifted up onto the bank, subsequently 'rubbing-out' the west bank. It is therefore unsurprising that, being a well-used thoroughfare, the bank is now so slight.

The addition of another bank, joining the 'Celtic' field at the SW corner of Enclosure B with the edge of Pit 6, was added for the insertion of B4; thus B4 sat between two banks, with a trackway running west of the W bank of Enclosure B (Fig XX). This bank W of B4 subsequently became the E bank of Enclosure A.

The entrance to Enclosure B

As no gaps in the E, W nor S banks of Enclosure B were evident, the entrance had to have been through the N one. The northern section of the bank of Enclosure B was noted in

part, whereas the remnants of ditches were fully investigated. In the west, a ditch was uncovered under B1 South, ending at Pit 1 (see XX; 2T/U). Interestingly this W ditch did not run due E, but NE. In the E, a ditch was found to continue from the NE corner of Enclosure B and to run directly W, c.4m from the S wall of B2 (4P). This area to the south of B2 also produced a paving of sarsen chips, along with the indication of a low wall joining the south-western corner of B2 with the ditch. Thus, across the N side of Enclosure B the entrance was formed by a c.6m (20ft) gap between the ditch (and possible bank) to the W, and a shorter ditch, with no bank to the E. No bank was necessary in the E as the need for its added protection was replaced by a low wall, building and yard to the north.

The investigation of this entrance area reveals the reason behind the positioning of the B1/2/3 complex. Not only were the three buildings at B2 confined to the levelled area, they were erected just to the east of the entrance to Enclosure B. Furthermore, with the discovery of the angle of the W trench under B1 South, the reason for the positioning of B1 Phase I becomes clear. During the initial stages of excavation it was unclear why the NW corner of B1 North cut the low bank at the edge of the level area instead of lying square onto the level platform parallel to B2 and B3. Clearly there had to be a reason why the new farmstead was constructed so and even if B1 had not been envisaged as part of the complex when level area was dug, this still did not explain its alignment. The angle of the W ditch, however, did: B1 North respected it. In addition, B1's angle of alignment, parallel to the ditch (and bank?) of Enclosure B, would have funnelled animals towards B2 and the staggered entrance into Enclosure B. Indeed, it is likely that the gap between the S wall of B1 North and the N side of Enclosure B was easily bridged.

The entrance to Enclosure B remained in the same place, even with the construction of B1 South was and a shift in emphasis towards Enclosure A, indicating a change in function for Enclosure B. As such, this area would have experienced a great deal of traffic, which explain the presence of the paving of sarsen chips and the possible sarsen revetement to the trench, both of which would alleviate the erosion problem caused by decades of hooves, barrows and feet.

Enclosure B - dating

The cuttings to the south of B2 found the trench contained 13th century sherds, with the flinty material overlying the trench producing a ?12th to mid 13th century knife, a 12th or 13th century bronze casket key (GF852; TWA, 2), late 13th-early 14th century horseshoe equipment (GFs 837, 840 & 856), five MG sherds and one early modern refined earthenware sherd (GF840). Not only does this diversity of material which accumulated in the area to the south of B2 suggests the trench was used as a dump throughout the 13th century, it also, being trench in-fill material, indicates a mid to late 13th century date for the in-filling of the trench and thus an early to mid-13th century date for its construction. This date range for the construction of Enclosure B is supported by evidence from the other cuttings; Cutting 6Y produced four 'Norman' horseshoe nails (pre-c.1350AD; GFs

681, 717 & 738) and, to the NE, under B1 South, a similar nail was recovered (GF2A), with 13th century sherds coming from Cutting 1.

Interpreting Enclosure B, the Trackway & B2 (Phases I & II)

The position of B2, the level area on which it sits and the eastern bank of Enclosure B, indicate contemporaneity between these features. Thus, in the early 13th century, our 'Celtic' field corner was used as two sides of the pentagonal enclosure, with the necessary extensions on the western side constructed to exclude the Pit 6 and on the eastern side to join the 'Celtic' field lynchet with the levelled area on which B2 sat. The northern half had a ditch dug on the internal side, which acted as both drainage system and part of the stock-control barrier, with the ditch material presumably being thrown up to make the bank. The rest of the bank may well have been constructed from the material removed when the levelling was being done. The entrance to Enclosure B was from the W, up past the ditch and then S, through a gap in the bank and ditch.

Considering the position of B2, it was clearly constructed to stand at the enclosure's entrance, which in turn determined the positioning of the subsequent farm buildings. The need for permanent occupation and animal shelter led to the building of B4, which meant a bank to the west of Enclosure B was constructed to take the western wall stones of B4. This meant B4 sat between two banks, making roof construction of the byre end simpler, with the gap between Pit 6 and the W bank of Enclosure B being used as a trackway to and from B4.

After the temporary abandonment of B4 in the mid to second half of the 13th century and the subsequent insertion of the fire-pit and oven into the northern end of B4, along with the construction of Enclosures A and E, the western bank of Enclosure B was no longer required as a stock-control barrier and thus became the natural place for a raised trackway for carts to reach B4.

In summary, Enclosure B was thus an integral part of the farming activities at Wroughton Mead from the early to late 1200s. Initially, a hazel and elm penning (B2 Phase I) stood in the SE corner of a levelled area at the entrance to Enclosure B, with Enclosures C and D to the north and east. When the penning burnt down, a more substantial timber framed barn (B2 Phase II) was constructed, later to be replaced by a stone-footed one (Phase III). Though the inhabitants moved, from B4 to B1 North, Enclosure B remained in use, judging by the fact that B1 North respected its NW bank and the whole complex respected the entrance. However, with the construction of Enclosure C and the extension south of B1, Enclosure B changed its function.

But what was Enclosure B? Having a ditch on the inside indicates, as previously mentioned, it was to keep animals in, rather than out. It would seem likely that sheep (and some cattle) entered Enclosure B from the north and west, and were kept in the enclosure waiting their turn to be milked in B2, whence they were sent into Enclosure D to graze. However, with the expansion of the Wroughton Mead homestead towards the end of the

13th century and the suggestion that the trench was redug and possibly lined with the flints and clay, showing it required draining, maybe because the small, now well-manured penning, became the toft. The simple penning was not just for sheep and cattle, however. The discovery of, *inter alia*, horseshoe nails, as well as three iron arrowheads on and under the paved sarsen entrance (GFs 2F/G, 818 & 837) to Enclosure B, show that the enclosure kept horses in it and that these horses were not only used for ranching, as would be expected, but were also used for hunting and, even more unusual, for military activity.

Enclosure A

An almost rectangular enclosure (Enclosure A) lay to the W of the main settlement area. Its eastern bank was formed by the bank into which the W wall of B4 had been built. The N bank measured 17.5m (58ft), the W and S ones 28.8m (96ft) and the W one 41m (136ft), giving a total length of approximately 116m (386ft), almost exactly that of Enclosure B.

Excavation across the northern bank of Enclosure A (Cuttings 3 & 3a) was undertaken in May 1959 to establish the composition and nature of the bank, to obtain dating evidence for the construction of Enclosure A and to ascertain whether a gap in the bank at this point indicated an entrance to the enclosure. Investigation revealed the bank, 0.9m in height from crest to the natural Clay-with-Flints subsoil, consisted of a slightly clayey soil with flints. On the S slope of the bank a large sarsen boulder was revealed, as were three to the E. The latter formed the end of the bank at the apparent entrance to the enclosure. Smaller sarsens, possibly tumble, were noted towards the S end of the bank. A ditch, c. 0.6m in depth, was revealed to the north of the bank (AWCXXX).

Cutting 6L across the pit north of B4 sectioned part of the eastern side of Enclosure A. Although the evidence is indeterminate, there is a suggestion of a bank on the eastern side of Enclosure A made up of brown soil, flints and some chalk, with a 'step' cut on the eastern side through part of the fill of the pit.

Discussion

The material recovered from the investigation of the thin layer of brown soil above the flinty bank of Enclosure A included RB, 13th century and 15/16th century pottery sherds, as well as a Norman horseshoe fragment (GF13) and a late 12th-13th century iron prick spur (GF44; TWA, 9). Evidence from the bottom of the ditch, on the other hand, produced late 13th century glazed sherds (GF45), which allow us to date the utilisation phase of the ditch, and thus presumably the bank of Enclosure A. The sherds of an early 13th century date over the bank represents material thrown up during the construction of Enclosure A. Material of a later date, such as the hard-fired sherd from the 15th or 16th century (GF22), indicate Enclosure A may have continued to serve a purpose some two hundred years later.

It is fairly certain the gap in Enclosure A at this north-eastern corner was the entrance. The bank came to an end here, as did the shallow depression to its north where the ditch had been. The stones lying on the old turf-line of the bank, with some poking through the topsoil, seem to have been laid as a simple embankment to the entrance or to demarcate it. The entrance way into the enclosure itself was not represented by a well-defined layer or paving, although a shallow depression at the centre of the cutting (Cutting 3a) may be from wear, whilst it is possible the heavy flinty material noted in section formed part of a simple, loose cobbling, similar to the one found around the entrance to B4 and S of B2. The gap was 3m across, from bank foot to bank foot, narrower than the entrance to Enclosure B.

Unlike Enclosure B, where a ditch was apparent on the inside of the enclosure, the ditch around Enclosure A was on the outside. If one surmises that the bank was in the region of 1.5m high, coupled with the ditch, this would have given a combined rise from ditch bottom to bank top of around 2m. This fairly substantial undertaking suggests that the enclosure was dug to provide extra protection from incursions by livestock or predators, *i.e.* it was to keep certain animals *out*, possibly wolves, whilst, naturally, keeping others safely *in*. As such, it may have been a penning for sheep, although the height of bank and ditch suggest larger animals such as horses were kept in this enclosure, an interpretation endorsed by the material evidence.

Building 1 (B1)

Situated some 20m to the NE of B4, three further buildings were uncovered during excavation. Building 1 (B1), found to be of two phases, lay about 6m away from Buildings 2 & 3 (B2 & B3) across what is thought to have been a farmyard. B1 and B2/3 were not set parallel to each other; whereas B2/3 lay in a more or less exact N-S alignment, B1 sat at an angle of 70° to the N-S axis (see *Discussion* in **Enclosure B**).

The Excavation

A brown clayey humus (topsoil) *c.* 28 cms thick was removed to reveal a Chalk surface or, in some quadrants, a surface of small flint nodules. These layers appeared to have been deliberately laid or puddled on top of the natural Clay-with-Flints or Chalk. It also became apparent that the underlying Clay-with-Flints and natural Chalk had been cut through, especially towards the northern end. This was interpreted as being where the ground had been dug away to produce a level area on the 3° slope and as such these layers of disturbed Chalk and/or flint nodules were considered to be the 'floor level' of the building.

At the edges of this 'floor', stone footings or low walls were uncovered, most with their straight sides exposed, where possible, towards the inside of the building. The walls were covered by an agglomeration of sarsens, stretching 1m to 2m either side of the wall proper, and were some 0.6m thick and approximately 0.3m high on the N and W. At the E

and S, however, there was no walling at all, only a spread of sarsens on the E and a single course sarsen kerb. The S lacked even a kerb, although large sarsens lay in the SW and SE corners. B1 was thus found to be set lengthways into the slight south-falling slope and was, in its latest form, 17.4m long with a width of 6m in the N and 4.2m in the S, giving a total internal floor area of approximately 88m².

Excavation has revealed that this building was of two phases. The original B1 was altered when a S extension was added. That the original building underwent substantial improvements is suggested by the slightly skewed plan of the building, the occurrence of a set of post-footings *and* post-holes, the existence of a blocked entrance in the N part and the material evidence. As such, Building 1 is thus discussed under two separate headings: 'B1 Phase I' being the earlier building, consisting of the northern section of B1 ((B1 North), and 'B1 Phase II' being the later, longer structure, consisting of both B1 North and B1 South.

B1 - Phase 1

Walls, postholes & roof

The interpretation forwarded in this chapter sees B1 Phase I as constituting a building 8.7m (29ft) in length, with a width of 6m (20ft), giving an internal floor area of 52m². This building is illustrated in Fig XXX.

The presence of two postholes¹ set into the floor level of B1 North indicate the centre of the original building. As the postholes lie 3m from the outer E and W walls of B1 North and 1.8m from the N and S walls, the roof would have been hipped, with diagonal beams reaching down to four corner stones (see Fig XX). As noted above, the walls were in an advanced stage of collapsed, though the N wall of B1 was found to be in a better state of preservation in comparison to the E and W walls, indicating it had been remodelled during Phase II. The remains of what was interpreted as the S wall of B1 Phase I were uncovered across the central area of B1, though the SE corner of B1 Phase I was uncertain and the SW corner more so as it was certainly destroyed when B1's S extension was added.

Entrances

Two lines of sarsens leading up to the centre of the W wall (Entrance 1) suggest it had once been possible to enter B1 at this point. However, this entrance was subsequently blocked, possibly when the chimney for the hearth was constructed. In the E, a further entrance was uncovered (Entrance 2), though here a line of sarsens did not block the entrance but acted as kerb to the rough flint cobbling of Entrance 2, thus forming a slight step down into B1. Two small patches of Chalk in the NW and SE corners of Entrance 2 appear to have been post-footings, showing where a door or gate pivoted or where small timbers held up a porch. One similar post-footing is noted inside the southern wall of Entrance 1, mirroring the example at the SE of Entrance 2 (AWC214).

Why Entrance 1 was blocked (and Entrance 2 not) is unclear, though perhaps with the construction of B1 South with its entrance (Entrance 3), Entrance 1 ceased to serve a purpose. Whatever the reason why the orientation of B1 changed from being East *and* West, to being East only, it clearly indicates a move from looking towards B4 and Enclosure A, to looking towards the B2 and B3 across the farmyard.

Recesses

Two areas inside the E wall of B1 North were interpreted as recesses (Recesses 2 and 3), with another possible one in the NW corner (Recess 1). Patches of charcoal in the centre of Recess 2 and associated ceramic evidence suggest this area was used for cooking, with a patch of dark humic material in Recess 3 indicating this one may have been used for storage. To the S of Recess 3, N of Entrance 3, a small area of black soil and cooking-pot sherds, from the same vessel as found in the pit inside B2 (Pit X; Cross-fit 3), would also indicate a possible cooking function here, possibly related to two large sarsens. There was a possibility of a further recess (Recess 1) in the NW corner of B1. At the junction of the internal wall of Recess 2 and the N wall of B1, a large sarsen, which is not integral to the N wall, indicates Recess 2 was added to the NE corner of B1 North after the external walls were completed. As such, Recess 2 was built into the NE corner, and Recess 3 into the SE corner, of B1 North after, though not soon after, its completion. Being inside B1 and considering the angle of the roof, the height of these recesses would have been so low as to mean it would have been impossible to stand up.

The number of sherds (33) from the floor of B1 North, as opposed to around 230 from the amongst the wall stones, indicated thorough cleaning of the floor with rubbish accumulating along the edges of the wall and outside the building. The 230 sherds were mostly from Recesses 1 (98 sherds: 43%) and 2 (87 sherds: 38%), with a further 35 sherds (15%) coming from the floor of Recess 3. The rest (10 sherds: 4%) came from the area around Entrance 1. This accumulation of ceramic material show that recesses of the sort uncovered in B1, with their low stone walls on the internal sides, were more difficult to sweep out or, being for storage or sleeping, they were swept less frequently. It is also possible that the sherds formed part of the rubbish which accumulated outside the building, and on the lower section of the roof, so that when the roof rotted and collapsed, the sherds fell into the recesses. Other possibilities, such as a hen-house or wood store, neither requiring regular cleaning, cannot be ruled out. Clearly such outshuts, whatever their precise function, would have increased the space available and may well have served a variety of purposes (Beresford 1989, 80 & 115, Fig. 20A, 109).

Hearth

A hearth, cut 23cm into the floor 1.2m from the W wall of B1 North, was found to be full of a dark humic material with much charcoal. A semi-circular recess in the wall of B1 directly to the W of this hearth was interpreted as being where the chimney to this hearth had been situated.

Pit 3

A rectangular pit, c.75cm in length (E-W) by 30cm in width (N-S) was uncovered against what appeared to be a one-course high stone kerb at the northern edge of Cutting 2J, just inside the N wall of B1. The top of the pit filling was found to be of burnt chalk, lying on a pit fill of burnt clay over humus, chalk and flints, with most of the lowest section of the pit being clay with flints (not natural). Ceramic evidence dates it to the 13th century (CW38; GFs 102 & 116). The function of the pit is uncertain. It had clearly experienced burning and the possibility of a low platform between it and the inner kerb of the N wall would suggest it was for cooking, with the platform acting as a bench or shelf. The near absence of sherds does not preclude this interpretation, as B1 was regularly and thoroughly swept. As such, it appears likely that Pit 3 and the low platform formed the cooking area of B1 Phase I.

Pits 1 and 2

Pits 1 and 2 underlay the E wall of B1 South and are thus Phase I or earlier, thus allowing a *terminus post quem* for B1 South.

Pit 1, which was cut into the deeper Pit 2, had a clayey fill with flints. This filling was brownish rather than reddish and contained much charcoal. The Norman horseshoe fragment in the pit filling (TWA, 8; GF187) indicates a date range from the mid 11th to the mid 13th century, with the ceramic evidence indicating a 13th century date for the filling of this pit.

The E wall of B1 South was built on soil which sealed a filled in pit; namely Pit 2. This had been deliberately and carefully cut into the Chalk with almost vertical sides and was unlined. The fill consisted of a humic material and charcoal fragments at the top, which was clearly darker in colour around the numerous stones also uncovered in the filling, though towards the bottom it became lighter in colour. It was also observed that the filling became damper towards the bottom, so much so that pieces of wood were recovered in a good state of preservation. Many stones, some large, were uncovered loosely packed and lying at angles, as if dumped in when filling had reached a certain stage. Several iron objects were also recovered.

Amongst the ubiquitous coarseware sherds found across the site, two later 13th century glazed pottery sherds (GF66 and GF82) lay on the floor above Pit 1. The ceramic material from the pit itself revealed 'coarseware Fabric 38', except for one early-glaze sherd (GF187) which came from the top layer of Pit 1 and/or Pit 2. The position of this sherd, above chronologically later ones, points Pit 1 or Pit 2, or both, being disturbed or filled in deliberately rather than naturally.

Amongst the coarseware Fabric 38 sherds from Pit 2 came two glazed sherds interpreted as dating from the latter part of the 13th century (GF202 and GF204). This is clear evidence of B1 South having been built towards the end of the 13th century or into the

14th *i.e.* after the use of this glazed jug. Two Fabric 38 sherds, one from the lower section of the pit, the other from the top fill, were from the same vessel (Cross-fit 22: GF190 & GF196). This, and the fact that the wall of B1 South had not sunk into the top of Pit 2, implies Pit 2 was deliberately and carefully filled in to ensure the wall was not left unstable.

Pit 2 contained several further items of interest. An iron axe (GF210) found 0.25cm from the bottom of Pit 2 in the damp, clayey soil, would seem to be a wood-working axe for dressing timber as opposed to one used for warfare (TWA, 3/4). The 'unravelling' iron staple (GF204) may well have been used to attach fittings to masonry and/or to attach wood to wood (TWA, 5). The thin iron object (GF208) may represent part of a lock mechanism (TWA, 7), possibly a padlock hasp, and the figure-of-eight hasp (GF210) could have been used in conjunction with a padlock to secure a chest (10th-15th century - TWA, 7).

In addition to this metalwork, pieces of wood are also noted as having survived. All in all, Pit 2 may have been dug to hold a chest as part of a foundation deposit for the new building. After the chest was positioned in the bottom of the pit with the axe, glazed jug and cooking pot, large stones were carefully placed on the chest and the pit filled with earth. The E wall of B1 South was then built over the buried chest. The 5cm layer of humic material uncovered between the top of the pit and the wall (AWC216) may have built up naturally, though it is more likely, as the wall showed no signs at all of sinking into Pit 2, that this was part of a clearly well effected in-filling.

Pit 2 was uncovered at the end of the ditch at the entrance to Enclosure B, which is why it lay at an angle of 35° to the wall of B1 South and not directly under or at right-angles to it, as would be expected. As such, it is fairly certain that the chest was initially a deposit at the end of Enclosure B, which may have had later ceramic goods added to it before the construction of B1 South.

The position of Pit 1 is equally of interest. Its shape and fill leads one to suggest it is in fact a 'robber's pit', dug to retrieve the goods buried in Pit 2. Maybe the occupants of Wroughton Mead were leaving and the items which they had buried years previously were of sentimental or monetary value. They therefore dug down, took the lid off the chest (breaking the pots and leaving the remainder of the chest, its hinges and lock; suggesting they were in a rush) and took the contents they sought. The axe (GF210) was left as it was not in the chest but tucked into a corner of the pit and was therefore missed.

B1 - Phase II

Walls

The southern extension to B1, judging by the stonework of the walls, was carried out by a well-trained mason. At probably the same time, B1 North appears to have been modified². This S extension was 9m in length by 4.2m in width, that is 1.8m narrower than the

northern part, giving an internal floor area of 36.5m². Like B1 North, a surface of flints was regarded as the floor level and again the area seems to have been regularly swept, with rubbish piling up along the edges of the interior and exterior walls.

Although the remains of the W wall of B1 South, and to a lesser extent the E wall, were clearly well constructed, the reason for the lack of a substantial S wall suggests that the S wall was periodically removed to sweep the building out. The presence of over 250 sherds in the SE and SW corners of B1 South (GF139 & GF188) is due to them accumulating up against the large corner sarsens which were too heavy to move. Evidence of similar quantities of sherds found outside B1 around, and S of, Entrances 1 and 2, (e.g. GF154) are also the result of cleaning inside B1, but this time with rubbish being thrown out of the doorways.

Post-footings & roof

Two small lumps of packed Chalk forming grey, slightly raised patches, 0.3m to 0.6m across, on the reddish-brown floor were evident in B1 South (PF3 and 4), with another along the partition wall between B1 North and B1 South (PF2). These were interpreted as post-footings, indicating the position of three uprights which held the roof to B1 South. Considerable amounts pottery, including glazed ware, were recovered from around PF4, in contrast to sparse finds in centre of building, showing that rubbish accumulated against the post.

These post-footings show a new roof was constructed along the length of B1 South. Post-Footing 4 was found to be 2.1m from the E and W walls, that is to say at the centre of the axis of B1 South. Post-Footings 2 and 3, however, were 1.5m from the W wall and 2.7m from the E wall. This positioning meant that the roof of B1 would have had a steeper pitch in the west than in the east and been off-line, *i.e.* not parallel to the walls. Why these post-footings were set back from the E wall is explained by the proximity of Entrance 3. Any closer to the E wall and the posts would have hampered access for livestock and machinery. Thus the roof of B1 South was held up by central posts in a XXX manner, whereas, unusually, to the north the roof appears to have remained hipped in design. If this interpretation is correct, then there would have been a space between the vertical N wall of B1 South and the S, sloping wall of B1 North, making a partition wall between the two ends difficult to conjecture. **ANY IDEAS ??**

Entrance 3 & partition between North & South

In the NE corner of B1 South, an entrance (Entrance 3) 1.5m in width, was evident. A rough layer of flints, presumably a coarse cobbling, ran up to this entrance. The remains of a partition wall dividing the N and S ends of B1 was hinted at, with a gap in the line of partition stones near the E wall, suggesting where access between the two ends may have been possible. A complete cooking-pot was found inside B1 South, at the S end of Entrance 3, buried with its rim at floor level. Its function is unclear, though it is unlikely to have been for cooking as no carbon was associated with it. Perhaps it was a piss-pot.

Building 1 - Conclusions

Dating Phase I - B1 North

A few later 13th century sherds (*e.g.* GF167), coupled with horseshoe nails from between the collapsed wall stones dated to the second half of the 13th to early 14th century (GFs 96, 110, 158 & 201), indicate B1 North was in use in the late 13th century, however the great majority of the evidence points to a long period of activity throughout the middle and later 1200s.

Dating Phase II - B1 North & South

After careful analysis of the ceramic evidence, it is clear that of the 148 medieval glazed (latter C13th) sherds from Wroughton Mead, 89 come from B1 (60%). Of those, 83 came from B1 South (56% of the total), mostly from the occupation layer. This evidence, coupled with that from Pits 1 & 2, demonstrate that B1 South was built and in use in the latter part of the 13th century. The 'Transitional' horseshoe fragment uncovered under the W wall of B1 South (GF212) supplements this date and further shows that this extension must have been constructed in the second half of the 13th or early 14th century. That B1 South was in use at the same time as B1 North is shown by the pieces of the same jug found in the occupation layers of both ends (X-fit 4).

B1 (North and South) seems to have been in a state of abandonment after the mid-14th century and certainly by the early 15th century. This is illustrated by the 'later medieval' horseshoes above the wall tumble in B1 South (GF7) and near Entrance 2 (GF122) and a button, comparable to one dated 1418-1434 (GF128; TWA, 1), found in the lower level of the humic material covering the site.

B1 North was therefore built and occupied from the middle of the 13th century, at the earliest, with its southern extension added in the late 13th or early 14th century. Both were in use until the early to mid 14th century.

Function

The hearths, deep humic layer over the floor level, animal bones and recesses clearly indicate B1 North was the habitation end. That no evidence of a sump, drain or stalling was found in the floor of B1 South, coupled with the number of sherds and metal items related to agriculture, leather-working and horses³, implies B1 South was not used as a byre, but as a storage and work area.

The finds from this area also illustrate the types of activities the occupants of B1 undertook. The amount of metal objects associated with binding wood shows that substantially built furniture may well have been used in the house, along with storage chests. There is also evidence of shutters and doors, both requiring catches, hinges, locks and bolts (GF199). The leather working tools, such as the awls, could well be associated with the working of cattle hides. In addition, the knives and wood-working tools point to the building and repair of hurdles, predominantly for the penning of sheep.

The faunal evidence indicates that the sheep were of a type kept primarily for wool, and though some were consumed at Wroughton Mead, the main source of meat was cattle with some chickens and ducks (TWA, 28). It is therefore likely that the majority of the sheep, their fleeces and skins, were taken off site to markets or central stores. In addition, the equipment associated with the preparation and spinning of wool, such as the pair of shears (GF89), also indicate use on a domestic, rather than an industrial scale, although being expensive, such equipment would have been taken off the site when it was abandoned.

The upper layers of Pit 6

The material uncovered in the dirty brown soil and carbon layer immediately above the sarsens at a depth of between 1.07m and 1.3m(1) in Pit 6, was from the occupation phase at B4 when the hollow was accumulating rubbish. Above that, the 30cm layer of black earth between 76cm and 1.07m in depth, with charcoal, some clay and pockets of cob amongst the black soil, all evident under the base of the oven, is likely to be associated with the fire-pit. The 15cm layer of brown soil with flints and chalk lumps, at a depth of between 61cm and 76cm, could show a brief period of a stabilised ground surface. Over this, the chalk, cob, larger sarsens and flints in dark brown soil with chalk lumps, some 38cm in thickness, represents the utilisation phase and collapse of the oven. During excavation, the topsoil, *c.*23cm in thickness, down to *c.*50cm was referred to as a 'midden'. When Pit 6 was a shallow depression, Enclosure A was built to the west. Part of the bank of this enclosure skirted the western edge of Pit 6 so, to prevent the collapse of the bank, the eastern and part of the northern side of the bank were reveted with sarsens.

Dating

The amount of metal objects in the upper 50cm of the pit, that is the 'midden' and oven phase, is of interest. GF591, for example, produced a knife blade dated from between the 10th and 12th century, 'Norman' horseshoe nails (9th-mid 14th century), as well as an MG sherd (later C13th), two 'Transitional' horseshoe nails (later 13th-early 14th century). A 'Norman' horseshoe (C11th-mid 13th; GF547) and an 11th to 14th century armour-piercing arrowhead (GF599; TWA, 10) also came from this black soil, all of which indicate a 13th century date, with a leaning towards the later 1200s, for the midden and oven phases of the pit.

If this material represents a midden, as is clearly suggested, then, being the uppermost fill of the pit, this midden must represent a phase during and after the collapse of the oven. As the oven is later than the occupation phase of B4, the midden cannot, therefore, contain rubbish thrown out by the occupants of B4. This leads to the conclusion that the then shallow Pit 6 was used as the natural place to dump rubbish by the occupants at B1. Thus the oven is not therefore, as once believed, the final chapter in the history of human occupation at Raddon.

This upper 0.4m also produced an abundance of coarseware (CW38 - Newbury B) sherds, but only 3 sherds of West Wiltshire Sandy-Coarseware (CS41; GF591), whereas from 0.75m in depth, the latter became far more evident, especially above and in the clayey pit filling at *c.* 1.3m in depth; a layer which, it is believed, predates the fire-pit and is probably contemporary with the occupation phase of B4. Also below this upper level, few metal objects were found, though many bones were.

Building 4

The walls of Building 4 (B4) and the features uncovered within it are discussed separately below, with corresponding discussions as to the date and function of each. A concluding section deals with B4 as a whole and places it within the settlement pattern at Wroughton Mead.

Excavation

The excavation of Building 4 (Cutting 6) began in August 1961 and was completed in August 1962. The building measured 11.1m in length and 4.2m in width internally, giving it a floor area of *c.*46.5m².

Walls & floor

The walls, where uncovered, were built of broken and unbroken sarsen stones. The E wall, to the N of the entrance, was in the best state of preservation, probably because much reconstruction of this area had been undertaken later to insert the oven (see below). In the southern half of the building, however, on both east and west sides, it appeared that many of the stones had been removed, obviously after the occupation of B4. There, the former line of the walls was clearly marked by a slight scarp in the Clay-with-Flints subsoil. This was a characteristic feature of Buildings 1, 2 & 3 and is presumably the result of wear and sweeping within the building.

The N wall of B4 was difficult to locate precisely due to the insertion of the 'oven', although a slight step the length of the floor level in this area, into which the lowest courses of the oven were placed, indicated its position. B4's stone revetment at the W was at most two courses high, and since there was little tumble from it, this may represent its original height. If this were the case, it is likely that the rafters would have been embedded in the bank immediately behind the revetment, rather than on the stones themselves, though no evidence of this was found, nor any evidence of the roofing technique. It is suggested here that the bank into which the W wall of B4 was built was constructed specifically to take that wall (see below). The floor consisted of a red clay with many flints. No evidence of a partition between the N and S ends of B4 was found.

Posthole

In the NW corner of B4, c.1m from the N wall and partially underlying the west wall, a posthole was noted. Being so close and partially under the wall of B4, it is presumably associated with the roof or wall of the occupation phase of B4.

Drain & Sump

Into the Clay-with-Flints floor of B4, a trench 5.4m in length, 1.2m wide at the top and 60cm wide at the bottom and 23cm deep, had been cut down the centre of the S half of the building. It was full of sarsens lying in a brown soil with flints. This trench ended to the south in a small pit, which, being partly beneath the southern wall, had been dug mainly into the disturbed soil of the enclosure bank and lynchet. This pit was 90cm wide at its mouth, with curving sides descending to a bottom 30cm below and was filled with a brown soil with flints, similar to that in the trench beneath the stones, but not noticeably darker or dirtier than the normal flinty soil in the area. From the S side of the pit ran a smaller trench, dug entirely through the enclosure bank, and filled with a fine earthy silt (AWC242 & 253). The pit, central trench and small trench were thus dug prior to the completion of the S wall of the long-house (and after the construction of Enclosure B).

These three features; trench, pit and second trench, were clearly part of the drainage system for the S end of B4 and, as such, were, correspondingly, drain, sump and sump outlet or overflow. This system, starting as it did in the exact centre of the building, is fairly conclusive evidence for the stabling of cattle at the southern end of B4.

The infilling of the drain with small sarsens was deliberate, judging by the fact that the stones continued along the length of the drain and under the southern wall of B4. A stone packing such as this would have acted both as a safeguard against animals stumbling in and as a filter for the urine and excrement. In fact, it would have been essential to contain the solids and not allow them to wash away as they were primary fertiliser. In fact without a filter system, solids would also rapidly fill the sump and block the outlet. Indeed, a drain full of stones would contain the solids far better than a drain with a covering spanning its width and the latter would also allow for the filtration of the liquid through the stones, down the slightly sloping drain and into the sump. Thus solids could be collected from the drain and the liquid from the sump. Any excess was presumably collected outside the south-western side of Enclosure B via the outlet through the bank.

This drainage system bears similarities to many previously excavated long-houses, such as the ones on Dartmoor, especially Houndtor 1, Houses 7 and 3 and Hutholes, House 3 (Beresford, 1979) and one at Treworld (Dudley & Minter, 1966).

Entrance & entrance track

A 3.6m wide entrance was clearly defined in the E wall of B4, north of centre. A large sarsen stone lay on either side of this entrance and a very irregularly surfaced track led up to it, stopping level with the inside face of the wall and forming a slight step down into the interior of B4. There was no entrance in the W through the enclosure bank.

In comparison with the S and W walls of B4, the well-constructed nature of the entrance and the walling directly to its north and south, clearly suggest that this entrance was constructed after the occupation phase of B4. This no doubt necessitated the destruction of the remnant E wall of B4, and, subsequently, the original entrance. An indication of an earlier entrance is given by a pit (Pit 5), uncovered under the remains of the stone wall in the E of B4, 1.2m to the S of the entrance. This feature contained 13th century sherds (CS41 & CW38; GF729) and appeared to have been deliberately filled as it was sealed by a possible OGS onto which the southern wall stones of the extant entrance had been placed (AWC245). Two deeper holes were apparent within this pit, one just inside, the other outside the E wall; both of which were partially covered by the large sarsens of the later entrance. These holes may have held uprights associated with an earlier entrance structure, with one post inside and the other outside the original, narrower, E wall of B4.

The entrance track was undoubtedly laid at the same time as the entrance. It may not, however, have been very efficient since the rough cobbling consisted of stones of different sizes and shapes, with many lying with edges uppermost and several inches apart. That two glazed sherds of the latter part of the 13th century (GF724) were uncovered under the cobbling, amongst 30 or so CW38 sherds and one 36EG, a construction date for the entrance track, and consequently the entrance, can be assumed.

In summary, the entrance was not contemporary with the occupation of B4, and was therefore associated with either the fire-pit or oven, or both. The track, on the other hand, is likely to have been in use through each phase of activity at B4 as it was the only route to the area (though it did not necessarily follow the exact same line of approach). As such, it would have needed paving and repaving. The entrance was constructed in the latter half of the 13th century or early 14th, which endorses previous discussions as to the dating of the B4 post-occupation features (see C6hii & C6hiii). The entrance was possibly built, considering its width and the position of the track between two low banks, to allow hand, rather than animal-drawn carts to be backed as close up to either the fire-pit or oven.

Lynchet/ Enclosure bank

The bank of Enclosure B consisted of a clayey soil with flints and some chalk lumps. It had been dug into so that the W wall of B4 could be inserted, although only a single line of stones remained *in situ*. The W bank was not found to continue below the floor level of B4, which suggests it was constructed specifically to take the W wall of B4. When the N section of the original wall of the building was removed, the bank was again cut through to take the circular wall of the oven. The N part of the bank had a layer of chalk over it, whereas none was recorded in the S section. The whole length of the bank was covered with *c.*7.5cm of black soil. The bank was found to be sitting on the edge of the pit filling.

Evidence from the cuttings across the bank show it to have been constructed in the 13th century, and, as it appeared to have been built to take the W wall of B4, it is likely to have been the first, rather than the second, half of that century. The presence of chalk at the N end of the bank may be material dug up during the digging of the fire-pit or the insertion

of the oven; the black layer covering the bank is undoubtedly from burning associated with one or both of these.

Hearth

A patch of burnt material over a chalk rock base was uncovered, partially sealed by the oven, up against the inside of the N wall. This slightly sloping feature lay on 2.5cm of dark earth with charcoal (the occupation layer of B4), demonstrating it cannot be associated with the occupation phase of B4. As such, it is likely it was related to the fire-pit or oven. A 'post-occupation' date for this hearth would explain its position right up against the wall of the building, that is to say it was built against a collapsed wall to serve the immediate needs of those working the fire-pit or oven and not up against the inside of a thatched long-house. Whatever its function, no evidence of a hearth from the occupation phase of B4 was thus uncovered.

B4 - Discussion

Examination of the above material demonstrates B4 was a long-house constructed and in use in the 13th century. Whether this was in the earlier, middle or latter part of that century, or indeed throughout it, is unclear, although B4 was certainly abandoned by the early 14th century (see below). It is possible, however, that B4 was used for a period spanning the middle decades of the 13th century. This, it could be argued, can be demonstrated by the near total absence of early 13th and later 13th century sherds.

The N half is assumed to be the occupation area, although the evidence to support this interpretation is sparse, as, although many sherds were recovered, there was no evidence of an occupation hearth. This is not, however, so unusual considering the amount of later digging and construction activity which took place in this N end. What is certain, however, is that the S end, with its drain and sump, was where animals, presumably cattle, were stalled. The absence of a partition wall between these two ends, as would be expected in a longhouse, remains unexplained.

Sherds from a coarseware cooking-pot found at floor level within B4 and on the platform in the area of Cutting 10, indicate contemporaneity with B4 and Enclosure C in the 13th century, even though the platform in C10 is clearly post-medieval (Xfit 16).

That B4 was kept free of debris is shown by the small quantity of broken pottery and domestic or agricultural equipment on the floor area within the building. Their sheer quantity, correspondingly, along the edges of the wall outside B4, especially in the NE corner by the entrance and in the midden, indicates regular sweepings and clearings out. Although, this concentration in the NE corner may be due to the clearing out of the internal area of B4 to build the fire-pit and/or oven (see below).

B4 went out of permanent use as a longhouse in the mid to latter part of the 13th century. This is evident from the material recovered, such as a 'Norman' horseshoe nail (GF596)

from the drain fill below the S wall and finds from the post-occupation phase, for example the sherds from a 13th century jug uncovered with later 13th century material (Xfit 13), and two Norman horseshoe nails from the post-occupation material over the N end (GFs 353 & 474). Although it is extremely difficult to assign which burnt material to which burning process, the enormous amount of burnt stones and charcoal over and around the tumble from B4, as well as the carbonised soils from c. 1m down Pit 6, would suggest B4 burnt down.

Fire-pit

A U-shaped pit, referred to as a 'fire-pit' at the time of excavation (Fowler 1963, 345), was uncovered in the NE corner of B4, dug slightly more than 0.6m below the floor level of the building. This fire-pit was 3.3m long, with a square, almost vertical N end cutting through both Clay-with-Flints and Chalk. The sides had been carefully lined with knapped flint blocks and small sarsen stones which formed vertical faces. Their line at floor level was continued for a short distance to the S before the lip of the fire-pit curved round in a regular U-shape. **At this S end the sides dropped downwards in a relatively long slope so that the area of the pit bottom was much less than the top of the pit at floor level.** The northern end of the fire-pit was only a few centimetres away from the northern end of B4 in its longhouse phase. The fire-pit was built over at its NW corner by part of the 'oven' (see Fig. XXX).

The fire-pit was filled up to floor level with various sorts of burnt soils, charcoal, sarsens and burnt flint, on the whole of a similar nature to the material below the oven wall in Pit 6 at between 76cm to 1.07m in depth. At its lowest level, the filling of the fire-pit was of burnt chalk, burnt cob, burnt flints and charcoal. This was covered by a layer of burnt soil, stones and charcoal, presumably material associated with the oven, and then by cob and chalk rubble, which was the debris from the collapse of the oven. This clearly suggests the fire-pit was in use after the occupation of B4, but was constructed before the 'oven'.

The ceramic evidence does not distinguish the fire-pit from B4 in chronological terms, as both have a predominance of 13th century coarseware sherds. However, it is clearly of a post-occupation date. Not only is this obvious by its fill and the fact that it had been dug through the occupation level. In addition, it also obstructed the entrance, and, if it had been in use at the same time as the building, it would have been perilously close to the walls and roof. However, seeing that its northern edge respected the original northern end of B4, it seems probable that this determined the positioning of the fire-pit and, consequently, that the northern wall of B4 was a visible, albeit tumbled, length of walling when the fire-pit was inserted through the floor level.

The amount of burnt material to the south-east of the fire-pit over the tumble wall stones of B4, and noticeably not much to the south with hardly any to the south-west, show that raking took place predominantly in a SE direction. Why, though, is unclear. The amount of burnt debris, including pieces of hazel, oak and *prunus* noted at floor level within B4,

under the oven and under the wall tumble outside the building, suggests this is the detritus from the activities associated with the fire-pit. The cob in the lowest layer of the fire-pit, which can be compared with examples from the layer below the oven, hint at a cob structure associated with the fire-pit, probably covering it, whose collapsed remains were dumped, or fell, into the fire-pit.

Indeed, the proximity of the fire-pit to Pit 6, and the burnt material apparent in the upper part of the pit, suggest Pit 6 was used firstly as a midden by the occupants of B4 and subsequently as a dump for the burnt material from the fire-pit. If B4 burnt down, then perhaps the debris was cleared from the N end of B4 and dumped into the pit when the fire-pit was dug. This debris layer would, in turn, have been covered by a layer of natural Clay-with-Flints and Chalk from the digging of the lower levels of the fire-pit. This would give a burnt layer, followed by a Chalk/ Clay-with-Flint layer, followed by another burnt layer, which is, in fact, the case with the levels below the lower courses of the oven structure.

The exact function of the 'fire-pit' is unclear. Judging by its shape, design, filling, possible cob covering, and the large quantity of burnt material surrounding it, and presumably associated with it, it is clear the fire-pit was designed for some sort of small-scale industrial purpose. However, the flints reveting the sides the fire-pit showed few signs of thermal fracture and the sarsens little burning, indicating that high temperatures were not necessary or that it was only in use for a short period. The charcoal and burnt cob in the bottom of the fire-pit and below the 'oven' layer in Pit 6, indicate that the fire-pit had a covering of wattle and cob.

The near total absence of wasters makes it unlikely to have been a pottery kiln, but it could have stored ash or been used for baking (Beresford 1989, 98). Perhaps the fire-pit was part of an earlier structure, possibly a flue, evidence of which has totally disappeared with the insertion of the 'oven' or perhaps the fire-pit was used to dry crops during the poor weather of the early 1300s. There was a brief mention in the site notes of 'ten stake-holes, which appeared in the Chalk to the S of the fire-pit', which suggests the fire-pit may have had a wind-break on its S side; the direction of the prevailing wind. The interpretation favoured, however, is that localised smithying had taken place here, possibly producing the 'white metal plating' which is unusually high in quantity on the metal goods from Raddon (TWA XXX). A comparable feature to the fire-pit was excavated at Bullock Down, Kiln Combe, E Sussex (Freke 1982 Fig. 78, 153, Contexts 256 & 162, 154) where a flat-bottomed scoop was lined with burnt stone and was partially sealed by a later, circular feature; both of which were considered to be corn-drying ovens (*ibid.*).

Whatever the function, the sequence appears clear: after the abandonment of B4, a return to this area was made and a well-built, flint and sarsen lined pit with a wattle and cob covering was constructed for smithying purposes towards the end of the 13th century. It respected the existing, but collapsed northern wall of B4. No longer necessary, this fire-pit was replaced by the 'oven', which neither respected the fire-pit, northern wall of B4

nor Pit 6. The oven was possibly built using the wall stones of B4, which is why the southern walls of B4, both on the E and W, were not *in situ*, along with a larger entrance and cobbled track. Pit 6, which remained a shallow depression, was used as a dump for material being dug up from the fire-pit and for rubbish from the B1/2/3 area. This later change, coming after the abandonment of B4 and the fire-pit, has to have occurred in the late 13th or early 14th century.

The remains of two French stoneware vessels (GF414) dated to the 17th century, one bearing the arms of Amsterdam, in the topsoil on the bank of Enclosure B and over the W wall of B4, coupled with the remains of a flower pot and other post-medieval and early modern sherds, show the area experienced some activity, albeit probably only picnics, into the Early Modern period.

Building 2

The Mound

When it was decided a stone footed building would replace the timber B2, further soil clearance was necessary and the obvious place was to dump this spoil was the mound. This second phase of levelling was reflected in the material from the upper layer of the mound, which included several broken iron fragments (GF235) and horseshoe and structural nails, as well as a heckle tooth (GF237), an iron rectangular staple (GF460), a chain link (GF328), an iron perforated strap and sheet fragments (GF339 & GF404; TWA,7), an iron strip object, and a white metal plated perforated fitting (TWA, 11). This layer also included a bronze finger ring (GF232), which can be compared with a 13th century example from Salisbury (TWA, 1), and a copper alloy annular brooch, dating from between the 12th and 14th centuries (GF275). The accumulation of this layer continued into the later part of the 13th century (GF259; MG sherds) and even after the mid-14th century (GF259; horseshoe nails, type 3).

When the timber building (Phase II) was replaced by the stone footed one (Phase III), not only would further levelling have been necessary to take the walls of the larger building but a new floor area would have been cleared. The upper layer of the mound thus represented material which was cleared up from the floor level of the timber-phase of B2 as the ground was being prepared. It therefore contained items, such as the ring and bracelet, dropped and lost by its occupants and provides a clear *terminus post quem* for Phase III.

By examining this material, it is apparent that Phase II was a timber building requiring structural nails, which, along with the post-holes in the floor level of B2, suggests a substantial wooden structure. Although it is unclear what the iron fragments were used for originally, it seems likely that sheep were tethered there - it was not for cattle as a drain would have been essential. The ring and bracelet, suggest women were involved in the work in Building 2 during its timber phase.

B2 Phase III - The Stone Phase

Walls & roof

The timber building at B2 (see pXXX) was replaced by a stone-footed building, probably with a cruck roof based on sleeper beams, as the walls were no more than three courses high when complete. This second building used the filled trenches of the previous one as an outline onto which low stone walls were built. The ground was also levelled further north and south of the previous structure to allow the construction of a building 11.4m (38ft.) in length by 5.1m (17ft.) in width; a floor area of about 58m².

As the walls did not slump into the trenches, the trenches must have already been filled in deliberately prior to the walls being built. Furthermore, as the walls were built over the silted up hollows of the trenches, it suggests that they were either not recognisable and, consequently, that the builders were unaware of an earlier phase (which seems unlikely), or that the building was constrained by the levelled area; *i.e.* it was more sensible to rebuild in an already level place with the enclosure entrance nearby.

Entrances

Two post-holes were uncovered in the trench at the E entrance and, being near the entrance to the stone phase at B2, were probably associated with the eastern entrance to the stone-footed building. In addition, the remains of a possible door jamb were revealed when clearing the flinty layer at the north side of the western entrance and a large nail, of a type used for doors (GF293), was found just outside this entrance.

Pit 7

A sub-rectangular pit (Pit 7), cut and partially deliberately filled, was uncovered at floor level in B2. The clay and charcoal fill at the bottom of this pit had been levelled and towards the lip several large flints and stones were apparent. Although the precise function of this pit is unclear, the presence of numerous sherds from cooking pots (X-Fit 10), coupled with the presence of charcoal and a possible stone covering, suggest it was a cooking or storage pit. It is not known whether this pit was associated with Phase II and/or Phase III of B2.

A sherd from a cooking-pot uncovered in this pit is from the same vessel as one from the black soil overlying the hard-packed flint occupation layer in Recess 3 of B1 North (Xfit 3). This indicates that B1 North and South, as this southern part of Recess 3 is part of the southern wall of the partition, and B2 were contemporary.

B2 Phases II & III - Discussion

The relatively few C13th sherds recovered from the humic layer inside B2 (45 sherds) as opposed to the large quantity of sherds outside the SE and SW corners of B2 (GF312 & GF313), indicates that B2 was kept fairly well-swept. With no hearth, but a possible cooking-pit (see Pit 7, *above*) and a large quantity of pottery, it is possible B2 (Phases II

& III) was inhabited. However, the animal bones (GF252 & GF264), including whole skeletons (GF236), found inside B2, along with the several horseshoes and horseshoe nails and possible horse equipment (GF317), as well as an ox shoe, suggest the building was more likely to have been used as a stable and for stalling animals.

The sherds from a decorated glazed jug (Xfit 5: TWA, 20) found amongst the tumbled wall stones of B2 (Phase III) and amongst the wall stones of Building M/N, demonstrate contemporaneity between these two structures.

Analysis of the metal finds from B2 points to a date ranging from the second half of the 13th to the early 14th century for its use¹, although the area received visitors later in the 14th century, after B2's abandonment, as the buckle, thimble and buttons show².

The sequence at B2 thus indicates a timber building of the early to mid-thirteenth century replaced by a stone-footed one in the latter half of that century or early in the fourteenth [see Gomeldon, WAM 80, 140]. Both Phase II and Phase III structures seem to have been animal shelters, although one or both buildings experienced some activity associated with burning, possibly cooking (Pit 7).

B2 - Post-utilisation phase

B2 appears to have been abandoned at a similar time to B1 (N & S), B3 and the oven, *i.e.* the early to mid 14th century. The material overlying B2, especially the ceramic evidence, is surprisingly varied and other finds were numerous in comparison to Buildings 1 and 4. As noted below, someone broke a Martincamp stoneware flask here in the late 15th century and its remains were subsequently spread across the disintegrated remains of B2 (XFit 11, TWA, 20). In the 15th or 16th century another visitor left the remains of a beer mug, originally from the Rhineland (GF309, TWA, 20) and further activity is evident in the 17th and 18th centuries and probably later (GFs241, 246, 248 & 289).

Hearth

A circular patch of darker soil uncovered up against the wall in the NE corner of B2 was flecked with charcoal and red earth, indicating there had clearly been a small fire here at one time. When sectioned, however, it was clear it did not rest on the house floor and therefore could not be a hearth associated with either phases of B2. On the other hand, as several stones from the wall of B2 lay on top of the burnt area, the fire had to have been started while the wall in the NE corner of B2 remained standing. Further investigation uncovered a possible cupboard in the N wall, though whether this was related to B2 or the building of the fire is not clear.

Numerous pieces of glass were also found in this area, under the tumble from the wall stones but not down to the floor level. The sherds of a Martincamp stoneware flask, dating to the late 15th century, from this area, as well as from PH1E, clearly point to activity in the area of B2 in the late 1400s. Could it possibly be at this date that the fire in

the remains of the NE corner of B2 was built, with posthole 1E sunk or reused to support a temporary shelter? Indeed, is there any association between the button found in the 'cupboard' (GF273), the button (GF284) found with much glass outside the NE wall, the button - with cover (GF298) - in the NE corner of B2 above the floor, PH1E and the broken remains of a flask which, although spread across the B2 area, were found in a concentration in the NE corner?

Building 3

At first, a line of sarsens which appeared to the N of B2 was thought to be the side of a trackway entering the settlement area from the NE. Further investigation revealed it to be the W wall of a further building; Building 3. In the W, the wall was found to be one or two courses high and 0.6m in thickness. Very little remained of the E wall, if ever there had been one, though a wall-line was observable by the dished effect at floor level. It was also possible to perceive these courses from a marked edge to the brown soil over the interior. The line of the E wall was also suggested by several flat sarsens resting on a step cut back into the clay subsoil, which had been subsequently covered by flinty humus from above. The middle section of the S wall of B3 joined the N wall of B2, which explained the peculiar thickening observed at the N end of B2. Due to the curvature of the SE corner of B3, however, the SE corner of B3 was not integral with the rest of the N wall of B3. The S wall of B3 deviated from the line of the N wall of B2 to a width of c.60cm at the far SE end. Thus only two wall corners, NW and SE, remained in anything like completeness, so perhaps B3 was substantially robbed, possibly for other building within the settlement (see below & Cutting 10 M/N3 and O3). On the other hand, the scarp cut into the Chalk in the E may have formed sufficient revetement without necessitating stone courses.

The building was trapezoid in plan, with an internal width of 3.3m (11ft), though in length it measured 7.8m (26ft) from internal wall to internal wall in the W and 6.6m (22ft) in the E, giving a total internal floor area of approximately 24m². Buildings 2 and 3 lay on a N-S axis and were not parallel to B1, with B3 situated c.8.4m to the east of B1.

The entrance was probably through the southern half of the W wall, where two large sarsens may have provided a form of door jamb. As the stone walls were possibly only two courses high originally, the rest of the wall may well have consisted of turf. The decomposition of such a turf wall and thatch roof could explain why a thick layer of brown, clayey humus covered the flinty floor. The flint and clay of the floor level sloped towards the centre of the building, which may have been a simple, central drain.

Structure SW of B3 - pit / garde-robe

1.8m W of the SW corner of B3 was an oval pit 1.5m (E-W) by 1.2m (N-S) and 45cm deep into the Clay-with-Flints. Some of the stones from NW wall of B2 had fallen into the S side of this pit. A large patch of charcoal was found in the black, sticky pit filling

(GF444). Stake-holes were uncovered to the E and holes with fills of orange clay were noted to the W.

The stake-holes would suggest some sort of wooden structure over the pit [WAM, vol 58, 111], with the absence of walling in the SW corner of B3 showing how this pit was reached, that is to say from within B3. The amount of hazel and ash charcoal from this pit (TWA Finds/27) suggests the structure associated with this pit consisted of hazel panels on an ash frame, which subsequently burnt down. The pit is likely to be a toilet, with the stake-holes supporting a seat or a wind-break.

B3 - Discussion

The precise function of B3 is uncertain, although several items associated with horses suggest it was predominantly used for storing horse equipment³, which would have necessitated shutters and a door⁴. Pottery and metal analyses indicates a utilisation phase similar to that of Buildings 1 and 2 (Phase 2), *i.e.* 13th century. Of the *c.* 150 sherds recovered from the B3 area, only 4 were medieval glazed (later 13th C) and 3 were post-medieval; the vast majority were CW38 of 13th century date.

Other objects, again possibly associated with harnessing, indicate activity in this area in the 15th century. For example, a bronze buckle plate, dating from *c.* 1400 to 1450 (GF507, TWA, 1) came from the post-utilisation phase of B3. An 18th century copper alloy shoe buckle (GF545) was noted on archive drawing 218 as on the wall stones of S wall B3 (*i.e.* N wall B2). This could be associated with the objects of a similar post medieval date recovered from the humic layer over B2, *i.e.* pottery: GF223, GF241 & GF246 retrieved from inside B2, near the entrances. A rectangular collar of copper alloy (GF347 TWA, 2) dating from 1100 to 1400, though possibly post-medieval, was uncovered between the topsoil and flints. An iron buckle (GF363 TWA, 8/9) from below the topsoil, outside the NW of B3 is typical of long usage through mediaeval times, but fell out of use before the late 15th century.

The remains of a 13th century cooking-pot were found in the utilisation layer over B3 (GF459), to the S of B2 in flinty soil (*e.g.* GF845) and on top of or outside the wall of B4 in the NE (GFs305 & 348 - Xfit 7). This indicates that this area of B4, was in use, even if partially, at the same time as B3.

Evidence of a relationship between the B2/3 area and Cutting 10 (M/N3) is demonstrated by the fact that the cross-fitting sherds of a later-13th century lead glazed jug (XFit 5) were found at the NW corner of B2 (GF332-3 sherds) and in the wall foundations at Cutting 10 - Area M/N3 (GF314-16 sherds). As the majority of the sherds came from 10/MN3, it is therefore likely the jug was broken in this area and some sherds were carried to the B2/3 area. As the sherds were found in the wall foundations of Area 10, it would be likely that this feature was also constructed during the 13th century.

The three armour-piercing arrowheads from B3 and B4 (GF199, GF506, GF599) and three hunting ones from Enclosure B (GFs 2F/G, 818 & 837) are of particular interest as they point to some sort of hunting and military activity within the vicinity. The proximity of the Knights Templar at Rockley and their land holdings in adjacent Lockeridge could explain these unusual finds. Although the evidence is inconclusive, the number of high status horse and military-related items indicate that B3 acted as a storage depot for the equipment of the Knights Templar, although, less glamorously, they could easily have been picked up by the inhabitants of Wroughton Mead whilst out shepherding.

The Oven

During the investigation of the N end of B4 in August 1961, it became apparent that the walls of a subcircular, domed structure had been inserted between the extant E and W walls of B4. As excavation of this feature continued, much charcoal, reddened sarsens, burnt chalk rock slabs and flints with thermal fractures were recovered, once again indicating that some process involving high temperatures had been undertaken in the N end of B4. Amongst the tumble and within the upper layers of Pit 6, much chalky material was observed, as well as what was interpreted as cob, which was still *in situ* on the south-facing, lower courses of the circular feature.

The dome was excavated from the centre down into its interior. Although two slightly varying descriptions were made of the investigation into the interior, it was basically the stone base of a structure which had been carefully filled with alternate layers of mortar-like chalk powder and knapped flints, after an initial layer of chalk lumps had been laid on top of the lowest layer of flints which rested directly on the red Clay-with-Flints.

The site notes describe the removal of an overlying dark, humic layer followed by a layer of small chalk nodules and soil, interpreted as washed down cob, at a depth of 12.5cm to 18cm, then chalk rock slabs between 18cm and 23cm, cob at 23cm to 29cm, then large flints exhibiting thermal fracture at 29cm to 39.5cm, followed by chalk lumps down to an unknown depth. The section drawing (AWC237) shows a cob with brown humus from 15cm to 28cm, then a layer of flints 7.5cm in thickness, then a layer of cob with carbon from 35.5cm to 46cm, then another 7.5cm layer of flints, then chalk from 53.5cm to 58cm, then a layer of flints from 58cm to a red clay bottom at 68.5cm.

The interior was slightly oval in shape, and as such it had a diameter of 1.15m when measured NW-SE and 1.8m SW-NE. The eighteen stones forming the core were lying on a thin soil layer directly above the Clay-with-Flints and were not actually touching one another in most cases, nor were they bonded in any way with other stones. As such, it seemed that they were the marking-out feature and base for the rest of the structure which was then built around and above them.

The upper courses of the feature were found to be 1.37m thick in the N, whereas in the S, W and E they measured between 76cm and 91.5cm. Its external diameter was *c.*4.2m,

though, with the varying thickness of the walls, when measured from NW to SE this increased to 4.8m. This gave the finished structure a deliberate curve along all its sides apart from the N edge, which was equally deliberately almost straight. The maximum height of its walls was about 60cm, though originally it would have been a little higher on the S side at least, judging by the amount of tumbled stones at the N end of B4. There was some tumble on the E, but none on the other two sides. At the SW corner of Cutting 6K, some 60cm in depth, a quernstone (?GF602) was found bedded in the black soil of Pit 6, apparently acting as part of the foundation for the base.

To the N, and predominantly in the NE, the lower courses of this feature were found to lie over the filling of Pit 6 by some 60cm to 90cm. As such, they lay on layers of black and brown soils, chalk lumps and charcoal, (interpreted as material associated with the fire-pit and occupation at B4), which in turn lay on the sarsen dump some 2.4m below (see pXX). Structurally, it was sheer folly to build the stone base so that its northern wall sailed out over a filled-in pit, some 3.3m deep. Although the builders were aware of the soft upper layers of the pit, as they dug through them to reach the chalk side of Pit 6 so that some of the inner stones of the base could be placed on a firmer bedding, they were clearly unaware of its real depth. Although the straight N wall may have been a further attempt to ensure the base was somehow strengthened, this did not prevent the whole of the northern half of the base from canting over from east to west as the wall gradually sank into the soft material filling the top of Pit 6.

At the N end of B4, the southern curved side of the structure sailed over the scarped line marking the original end of the house, part of the hearth and the NW corner of the fire-pit. Other alterations included, to the West, the digging away of the inner (eastern) edge of the bank of Enclosure A to insert the western side of the base, the rebuilding of the entrance in the E and the addition of several stones to the N end of the E wall of B4, so that it now continued up to the eastern side of the base. These stones lay on a 7.5cm thick occupation layer.

Function

This circular structure was not a kiln, not only because no wasters were recovered from the area but, even if the fire-pit had been a flue, it was not connected to it nor to any other subterranean feature, so there was no way of heating it from below. It was not a chimney breast or base since no fire place was identified with it, nor was it the base of an external staircase. Certainly the structure had been associated with much burning, considering the extensive covering of wood ash across the N end of B4 and burnt red outer southern face, as well as the burnt topmost layer of the chalk 'mortar', the flecks of charcoal throughout the central filling beneath and the many burnt slabs of chalk rock which had tumbled over the structure from a position at and above the extant surface.

The carefully laid core is the key to interpretation. The alternate layers of chalk mortar and knapped flints were used, not only because they would withstand considerable temperatures from above, but, moreover, because they would retain the heat for several hours. It is suggested, therefore, that the structure was the base for an oven. The base, as

noted above, thus consisted of a circle of sarsens, flints and chalk mortar, with the dome of the oven being built up of slabs of Chalk rock, with possibly a covering of clay for further insulation. Regular Chalk slabs such as these would appear to be particularly suitable for an oven as the material does not crack or splinter when heated. In addition, once the dome had finally succumbed to the heat, another could be quickly rebuilt with such a readily available substances. If so, then the base is likely to have been the permanent site for numerous ovens of this type.

When complete, a fire, often of hazel and oak (GF557) would have been lit inside the oven. The fire would subsequently be raked out and be replaced by the material requiring baking. Considering the burnt débris on the floor in the northern end of B4, the raking clearly took place here; the S side can thus be regarded as the front of the oven. It is possible that the extension to the E wall was carried out to take a low wooden wind break, with the souwesterlies stopped by the bank of Enclosure A. At the same time, the entrance was redesigned and the trackway repaved, no doubt enable easier access to the oven. Its position away from the settlement area of B1/2/3 is clearly to reduce the risk of a serious fire. That no grains of corn were recovered either from inside or around the oven, even after careful sifting, shows that this was not a corn-drying oven. As such, it would have predominantly been used for baking bread.

Date

Clearly, this structure had been inserted into the width of B4 at a time when B4 was no longer occupied, and the fire-pit and hearth were no longer in use. This, considering the dating evidence from these three features (see ppXXX), means the oven had to have been built towards the end of the 13th century or in the first two decades of the 14th. The ceramic evidence is inconclusive, however, as the majority of the sherds are 13th century in date (CW38) and little other material, such as metalwork, was recovered. Of interest are the remains of a sandy ware (Newbury C) cooking-pot found 30cm from the bottom of the interior of the oven (?XFit 30) and, predating the oven, the remains of one West Wiltshire and several Newbury B curfews (*e.g.* GFs 558, 574, 616 & 715).

Enclosure E

Enclosure E forms the largest enclosed space within the Mead, covering the area S of the main settlements and Enclosures A, B and D. Its banks measured approximately 907m (3,020ft). Cutting 7X investigated the bank and ditch of Enclosure E in its far NW corner where it joins the south-western corner of Enclosure A. Here a ditch was found on the internal side of the large enclosure with a maximum depth of 0.5m and 1m from the top of the bank, similar to the bank and ditch of Enclosure A. Although the site records refer to 'IA sherds' from this cutting, this has not been corroborated (or denied) and the only diagnostic sherds from this area are from 13th century vessels (CW38). Enclosure E is clearly an addition to Enclosure A, and as Enclosure A was constructed in the late 13th century, Enclosure E is therefore late 13th or early 14th century in date.

Wroughton Mead

The medieval limits of Wroughton Mead were not fully determined during the Fyfod investigations, though it is believed to be an amalgamation of Enclosures A, B, C, D and E, giving an approximate length of 972m (3,240ft).

1 The northern posthole, uncovered in the I/J baulk, was approximately 25cm to the E of Pit 4 and 1.50m from the N wall. The southern one, 23cm deep, was 1.5m NE of the hearth and 1.80m from the presumed S wall of B1 North.

2 The similarities between the walling techniques in the N wall and those of the Phase 2 extension suggest the N wall of B1 was altered, even rebuilt during Phase 2.

3 knives (GF31, GF158, GF160); 13th-14th century shears in the entrance to B1 South (GF89); awls (GFs88, 149, 147 & 175) found at 'occupation level'; horse equipment (GF151, GF172, possibly also GF59, GF76 & GF188); heckle teeth and small piece of binding comparable to ones dated c. 1280-1434 (GF199; TWA, 6); lock bolt (GF199), comparable to a 10th-12th century example (TWA, 7); arrowhead (GF199) dating from the 11th - 14th century (TWA, 10).

4 GF514; 12th-14th century copper alloy annular brooch; GFs296 & 320, two Transitional horseshoe nails.

5 later in the 14th century buckle, GF221; post-medieval thimble, GF606; buttons, GFs 273, 284 & 298.

6 incomplete prick spur (GF559) comparable to an example from Portchester Castle 13th-14th century (TWA, 9); one complete archetype found in the 'garde-robe' (GF422 - late 13th to 14th centuries, although there is a possibility it dates from between 1080 and 1150 - TWA, 9); military arrowhead, designed to pierce armour, dated 11th to 14th C (GF506- TWA, 10); horseshoe fragments (Transitional GF510), plus approx. 3 (see AWC218) unassignable horseshoes (GF501); approx. 9 horseshoe nails (GF445, GF475, GF544); copper alloy piece which may be a decorative fitting, possibly a harness ornament for a horse (GF482 - TWA, 2).

7 iron hinge pivot (GF506) for supporting a door or shutter; latch rest (GF544 - TWA, 6); GF484, a latch not in TWA Report recorded to W outside B3; 3 perforated strap fragments (GF390, 485 & 552) found in the topsoil above the floor of B3; possibly from caskets or chests although, the large example (GF390) is more representative of a hinge (TWA, 6); pinned hinge (GF492).

8 All measurements are from the turfline, 60cm N of the peg at the SW corner of Cutting 6K (AWC248).