

## APPENDIX 1 - ASSESSMENT OF METALWORK

### 1.1 Metalwork

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#### *Introduction*

- 1.1.1 Eight fragments including a tang with retaining washer and blade tip, possibly from a sword, were recovered by hand excavation and during sample processing from the upper fill of an Iron Age pit.
- 1.1.2 The recovery and study of the metalwork was undertaken in accordance with the Fieldwork Event Aims (see Section 2.2), in particular aim 1.

#### *Methodology*

- 1.1.3 The object has been examined visually and from the X-ray.

#### *Quantification*

- 1.1.4 The object is made up of eight fragments most of which refit along fresh breaks indicating that it was originally deposited in a more complete state.

*Table 3.1.1: Summary of metalwork*

Context	Special number	Material	Count	Period	Comments (description)
178	30	Fe	2	MIA-LIA	Sword fragments
178		Fe	6	MIA-LIA	Sword fragments

- 1.1.5 Some of the fragments refit to form part of a blade tip with mid-rib, while another fragment represents most of the tang and has a terminal washer. The blade tip was bent and therefore damaged before deposition. The blade tip and tang could come from the same object, possibly a sword. The object has a provisional middle or late Iron Age date (Cunliffe 1991, 479).

#### *Provenance*

- 1.1.6 The fragments refit to form the blade of a possible sword with midrib. The blade had been bent prior to deposition. It was recovered from the upper fill (178) of the possibly early-middle Iron Age pit 175.

#### *Conservation*

- 1.1.7 The object is adequately packed for long term storage. At this stage, all the material should be retained. It will require selective investigative conservation to retrieve details of the probable washer at the end of the tang.

#### *Comparative material*

- 1.1.8 Comparative material is likely to come from Kent and elsewhere in England. Swords are known from middle-late Iron Age burials and from other contexts. Deposition within a pit in association with pottery, quantities of burnt grain, a partial horse skeleton, burnt bone and pottery could be locally unusual but certainly has a number

of parallels with other ritually placed deposits of metalwork (eg. White Horse Stone).

*Potential for further work*

- 1.1.9 The sword fragments have some potential for further analysis and typological study. The latter should confirm and possibly refine the date of the object and the context. Its detailed study, in particular the observation that it may have been deliberately bent prior to deposition, will contribute towards the interpretation of the pit and more generally to our understanding of Iron Age ritual practices.
- 1.1.10 Avenues for further analysis include identifying the likely source of the iron used to make the fragmentary sword from Pit 175. Comparison with the early-mid Iron Age metalwork from cremation group 6131 at White Horse Stone will also be of value for identifying differences and similarities in quality, composition and typological characteristics? This may be addressed by metallographic analysis including X-ray fluorescence, optical microscopy and hardness testing. Microscopic analysis has the potential to establish the extent to which the artefact was used before being deposited, and whether or not it was broken deliberately.

*Bibliography*

Cunliffe, B, 1991 *Iron Age Communities in Britain*. Routledge, London

