Excavations during 1979–1985 of a multi-period site at Stanwell

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with a contribution on Moor Lane, Harmondsworth, by JON COTTON

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Summary

Excavation of crop-mark features visible on aerial photographs of the site indicated multi-period occupation. The earliest and most significant of these features were two parallel ditches marking the line of a Neolithic cursus. No evidence of further activity occurred until the Late Bronze Age which was to witness the most complex and dense spread of settlement, notably a field system with a network of ditches and trackways, succeeded by scattered habitation in the form of structures and pits. No Iron Age material was discovered and only a relatively small amount of Romano-British. The Anglo-Saxon features formed a rather nebulous picture of small scale, scattered settlement. There was nothing to suggest that the area was other than arable land during the medieval period, while the greatest change that took place in the post-medieval period was the landscaping of the western half of the site to form part of the park attached to Stanwell Place. The post-medieval trackway bordered by two parallel ditches which was found in the northern part of the site may have been medieval in origin. Changes in field boundaries, indicated from documentary evidence, were confirmed by the archaeological record.

Preface

There are certain elements in the present report which are incomplete, but the amount of new information which is likely to emerge is very limited. This applies to:

1 The environmental report. A number of soil samples were processed and the residues briefly examined by the Ancient Monuments Laboratory (Keeley 1987). Initial work was done by Maureen Girling shortly before her death but when the contents of her room were subsequently sorted out, no trace of the Stanwell residues could be found. Though the samples had demonstrated their potential, it cannot now be realised.

2 The radiocarbon (C-14) dates. Although a total of five samples were submitted to the Ancient Monuments Laboratory, only one date was produced by Harwell (who were providing all AML C-14 dates at that time). Both AML and Harwell's records and stores have been searched and no trace of the other samples or information explaining why no dates were forthcoming has been found. As the samples cannot now be found and no dates were produced, there is no possibility of further dates emerging.
3 Technological analysis of the wood from Late Bronze Age contexts. The wood was examined by Dr Bryony Coles, freeze-dried in AML, and drawn by the EH Archaeological Drawing Office. Unfortunately, extensive inquiries have failed to reveal what has since become of the report and drawing. See 3.3.2.

The archaeological investigation

This is a report on the series of excavations (see 3.4) carried out in a large field to the north of Park Road, Stanwell (fig 1) between 1979 and 1985, under the direction of Martin O'Connell for the Conservation and Archaeology Section, Planning Department, Surrey County Council (1982 season was directed by Martin O'Connell and Rob Poulton). The principal funding for the work was provided by English Heritage, supplemented by a generous grant from the landowners, Hall Aggregates (Thames Valley) Ltd, part of the Ready Mixed Concrete Group. The latter had formulated a phased plan of gravel extraction from the field but agreed to allow archaeological investigation to precede extraction.

During 1982 the British Airport Authorities were responsible for the construction of the new Heathrow Southern perimeter road which now overlies the former northern limits of the site, while, in the same year, a section of the oil pipeline between Longford and Gatwick was laid immediately to the south of that road by the British Pipeline Agency. Both companies displayed their recognition of the importance of the site, not only by permitting site observation and excavation before and during construction work, but also by contributing to the financial cost of archaeological investigation.

The final excavation, undertaken between 1983 and 1985, was the most ambitious in terms of extent and area, representing an attempt to elucidate once and for all the various phases of occupation that had occurred within the confines of the available area of the field. The equipment and workforce for this last episode was provided by the Manpower Services Commission through the agency of the Community Task Force.

Part 1: Background

1.1 SETTING

The site lies to the west of Stanwell village and immediately to the south of Heathrow Airport on the Taplow Terrace of the Thames. This terrace is made up of gravel and sand, much of which is sealed by a sheet of brickearth, considered to be essentially an alluvium (Sherlock 1960, 49). The deposit of brickearth varies in thickness and while it effectively covered the gravel surface of a site excavated at the north-west corner of Heathrow Airport (Canham 1978, 1–44), only appeared in areas of varying size at Stanwell.

As a result of recent fieldwork and research (Johnson 1975; Longley 1976) it is now clear that this part of the Lower Thames Valley was probably as densely populated in the prehistoric and Romano-British periods as the Upper and Middle Thames Valley. Furthermore the relatively small amount of archaeological investigation that has taken place, in contrast to the work carried out upstream, has produced several sites of national importance, indicating that this area has been an important focal point of activity from prehistoric times. Thus, excavated sites in the vicinity of Stanwell include a Neolithic causewayed camp near Staines (Robertson-Mackay 1987) and the prehistoric temple and village at Heathrow (Grimes 1961) where more recent excavation has produced evidence of Bronze

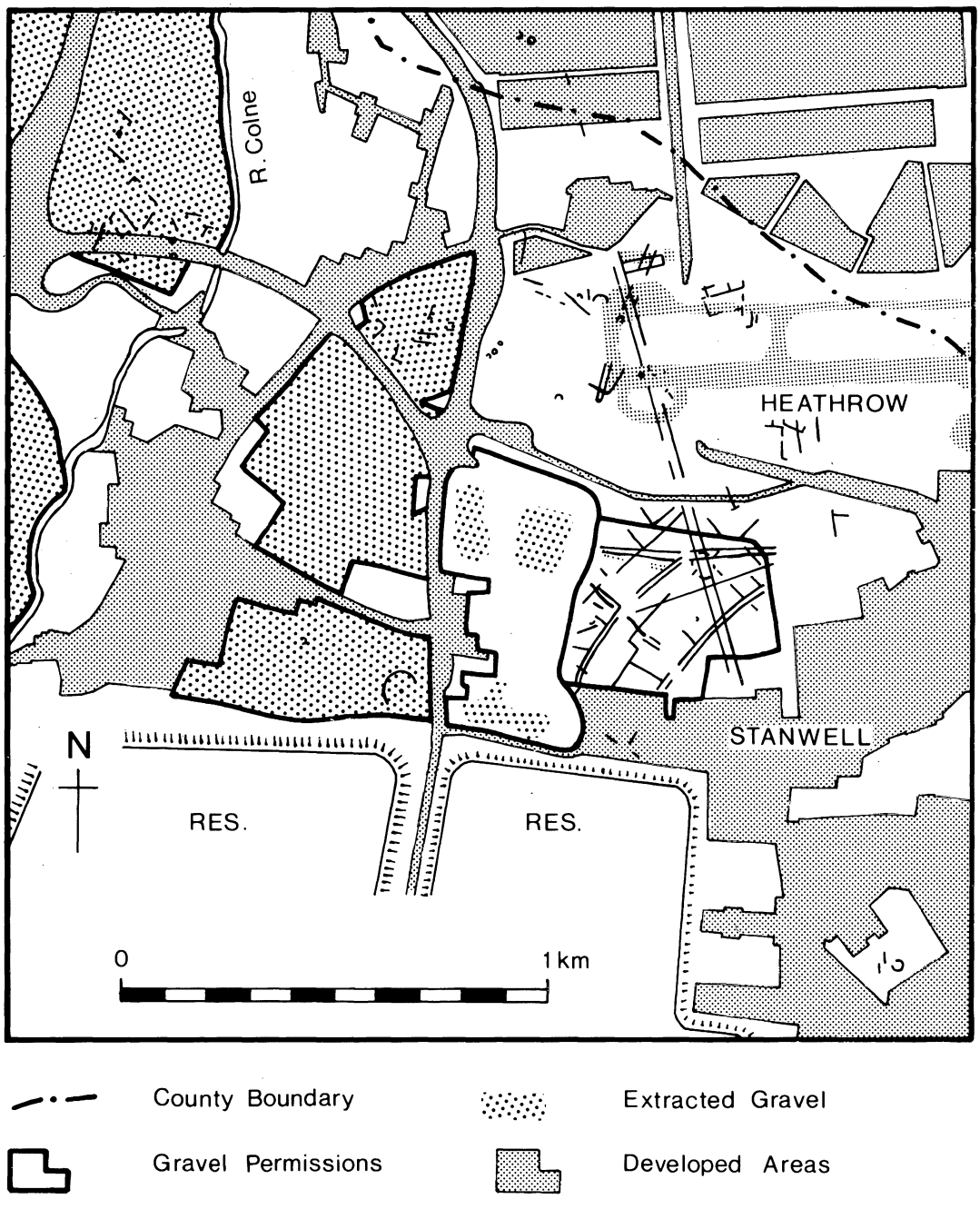

Fig 1. The Stanwell area

Age, Iron Age and Romano-British occupation (Canham 1978, 1–44). An important Neolithic and Bronze Age complex has been investigated at Runnymede Bridge (Longley & Needham 1979), while a Romano-British town (AD PONTIBUS: '[At] the bridges') existed at the crossing of the Thames at Staines and is now being investigated in advance of redevelopment (Crouch 1978). Several Anglo-Saxon cemeteries at Shepperton indicate the continuing importance of this area in the Dark Age period (Canham 1979). The Stanwell site was identified from a series of crop-marks first published by Longley (1976) and discussed at greater length by Poulton (1978) together with the results of trial excavation undertaken in 1977.

1.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND (fig 2)

The earliest surviving reference to Stanwell occurs in the Domesday Book (1086). The place-name is purely descriptive, meaning 'stony stream or spring' (Mawer & Stenton 1942, 20), referring to the gravelly character of the subsoil and some natural source of water. There are a number of streams known in the area, the nearest to the village being Stanwell Brook.

The parish is in the Hundred of Spelthorne and the church may have first been constructed *c*1200. The manor belonged to Azor before the conquest but afterwards was granted to William Fitzother who became constable of Windsor Castle and took the name of Windsor. Most of the Windsors lived at Stanwell and a manor house is known to have existed at least by the 14th century although one probably was established much earlier. The site of the original manor house is not definitely known but is thought to have stood on the site of the later one, Stanwell Place, which occupied a position to the west of the village by the 17th century at the latest. The manor was taken by Henry VIII in 1542 but after a series of different owners in the 17th and early 18th centuries was eventually sold by the trustees of the Earl of Dunmore in 1754 to Sir John Gibbons, in whose family it remained until 1933 (VCH **3**, 33–50).

Almost all the arable land in the parish lay in open fields in the Middle Ages and despite piecemeal enclosure from the late 15th century onwards (VCH **3**, 44), large areas were still open when a survey of the manor was drawn up in 1748 (GLRO Acc 809/MST 9B and 10A). A number of land divisions shown perpetuate earlier boundaries noted on the aerial photographs of the field and subsequently excavated in 1977 and 1979. In 1748 the field was divided into four plots of land – *Borough Field, Court Lay, Grigg's Close* and *Nursery* – all of which, apart from Grigg's Close, belonged to the manor. In a survey of Stanwell Manor, compiled in 1544, the first two plots were referred to as *Borrowfelde* and *Court Ley* when part of the former and the whole of the latter belonged to that estate (PRO E 315). Borough can be derived from *beorg* (OE), meaning a hill or mound, and in view of the uniform flatness of the terrain must refer to a man-made feature such as a barrow. Other field-names such as *Borough Hill Closes* and *Borough Hills Closes* suggest the former existence of more than one such monument while aerial photography has indicated ring ditches in the general area (see 3.3 below). Furthermore a possible Bronze Age barrow together with a monument of probable Bronze Age date were recently excavated to the north of the site (Canham 1978, 1–44).

Although *Court Lay* can be taken to mean pasture or meadow land (*laes* OE) with, or near, a cottage or cottages (*cot* OE), the field was described as arable land in the 1544 survey. This change of usage was probably the result of an increase in the amount of land in the parish brought into cultivation during the Middle Ages, a general trend suggested by the documentary evidence (VCH **3**, 33–50). Before 1748 the field had reverted to meadow and had become part of the parkland attached to Stanwell Place, continuing to do so until comparatively recently. Rocque's map of Middlesex (1754) shows an avenue of trees running across the top of Court Lay, the line of which can still be traced on the aerial photographs (Poulton 1978).

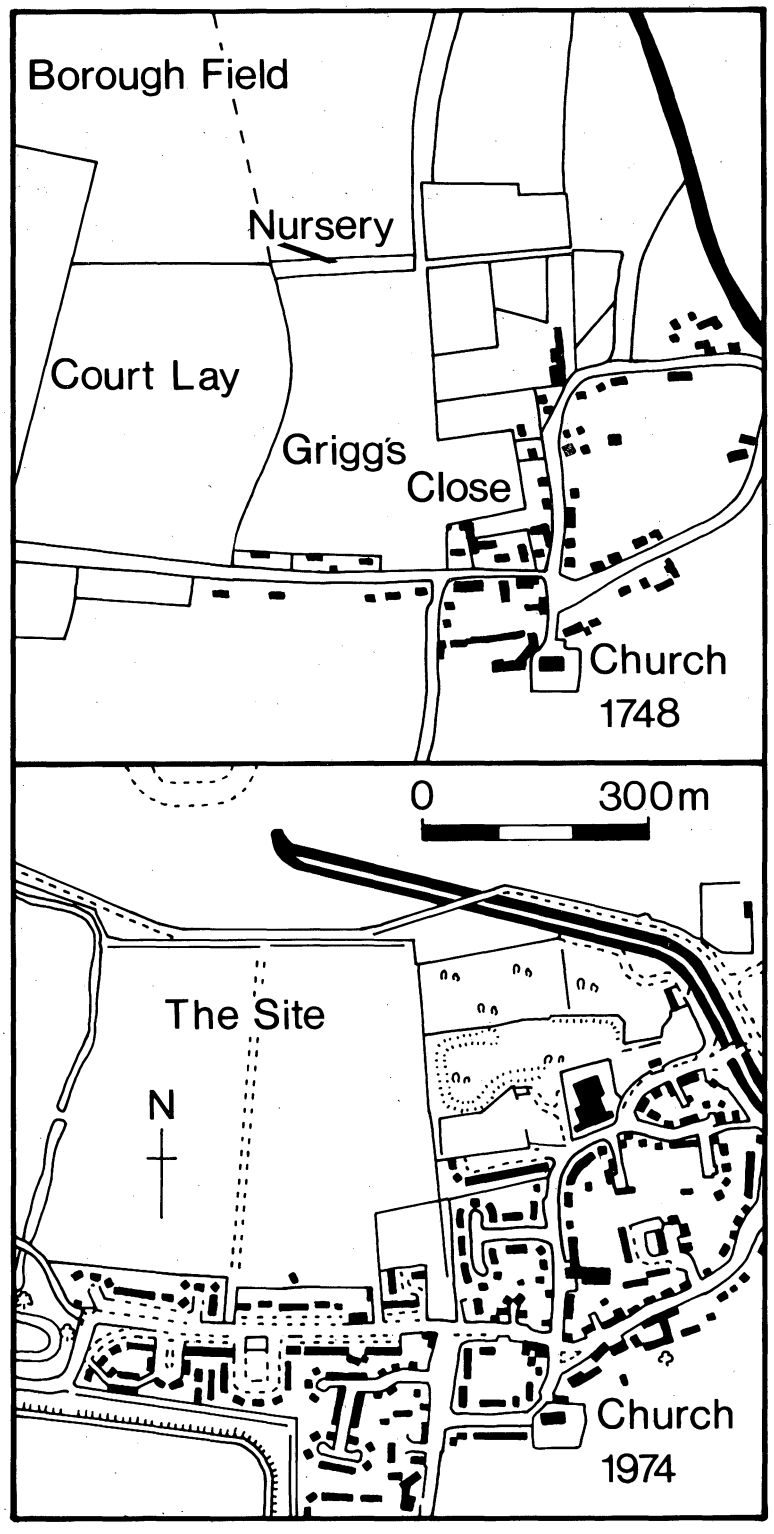

Fig 2. Stanwell, the site in 1748 and 1974

Grigg's Close was probably one of the enclosures created in the post-medieval period and referred to above. The element, close (*clos(e)* ME), meaning a fenced or hedged piece of land, is common in Middlesex field-names but the earliest examples appear to be 16th century (Mawer & Stenton 1942, 196). Originally the land would have belonged to the Grigg family but in 1748 it was divided amongst a number of different owners.

Nursery is self explanatory.

By 1792 the remaining open land had been enclosed by the Gibbons who had already enclosed Borough Field in 1771 (VCH 3, 35). A survey and plan of the new enclosures (GLRO Acc 621/14–15) indicates that *Borough Field, Court-Lay* and the *Nursery* then formed part of an enlarged Stanwell Park while *Grigg's Close* was described as arable land in the sole ownership of Sir William Gibbons. The present field had assumed its modern outline when the Tithe map of Stanwell (1840) was produced and consisted of two fields – *Court Leys* and *Court Leys* or *Grass Park* (formerly *Grigg's Close*). In 1840 the boundary between these two plots of land still followed its original curving line but had been straightened by 1868 (OS first edition 6″ map of Stanwell).

1.3 THE CROP-MARKS

Re-examination of the aerial photographic cover of the Stanwell area (figs 1,3) following the results of excavation has made it clear that the crop-mark features are not only more complex but are of much greater significance than previously imagined (cf Longley 1976, 8–12, and Poulton 1978, 239–42). The principal source of our information remains the two Aerofilm photographs (HAS/UK/49/219 and HSL/UK/62/230; pl 1 is the latter) supplemented by recent photographs taken by John Hampton of the National Monuments Record (NMR : SF 1141/62 to SF 1141/84). Additional information has been derived from aerial photographs held by the Planning Departments of Surrey County Council (HSL/UK/71/A4 4367 and 4370) and Berkshire County Council (8/989/7137) together with a number of photographs in the possession of the National Monuments Record (NMR : TQ 0075/1/4072; TQ 0370/1/0212; TQ 0567/1/41240).

1.3.1 *The Cursus*

The initial identification of the Neolithic cursus was the result of stratigraphic and material evidence obtained in 1981. Before excavation, it had been generally assumed that the feature represented the line of a Roman road, marked out by side ditches, possibly forming a junction with the London to Silchester road to the south.

The cursus is defined by two parallel ditches, 20m apart, which can be traced running in a south-east/north-westerly direction over a distance of at least 3.60km on ground that slopes gently from 25m OD north to 20m OD south of the cursus (fig 4). The alignment of the ditches is remarkably straight for a third of their known length (TQ 0545 7431 to TQ 0516 7534) but further north there is a slight deviation to the west, although the ditches remain parallel and there is no significant variation in the width of the feature. The cursus crosses the rivers Colne and Wraysbury before terminating close to the southern bank of the Bigley Ditch. The latter is a tributary of the river Colne but formed part of the old county boundary between Middlesex and Buckinghamshire, suggesting that it was formerly a more significant feature in the landscape and possibly the most important water course in the area. The northern terminal appears from aerial photographs (HAS/UK/49/221 58450 and HAS/UK/49/219 58334) to have been rounded in plan but was destroyed a number of years ago as a result of gravel extraction before the feature was recognised. The southern extent of the cursus is not known and scrutiny of aerial photographs has proved unproductive largely due to the intensity of urban development in the area to the south of the site.

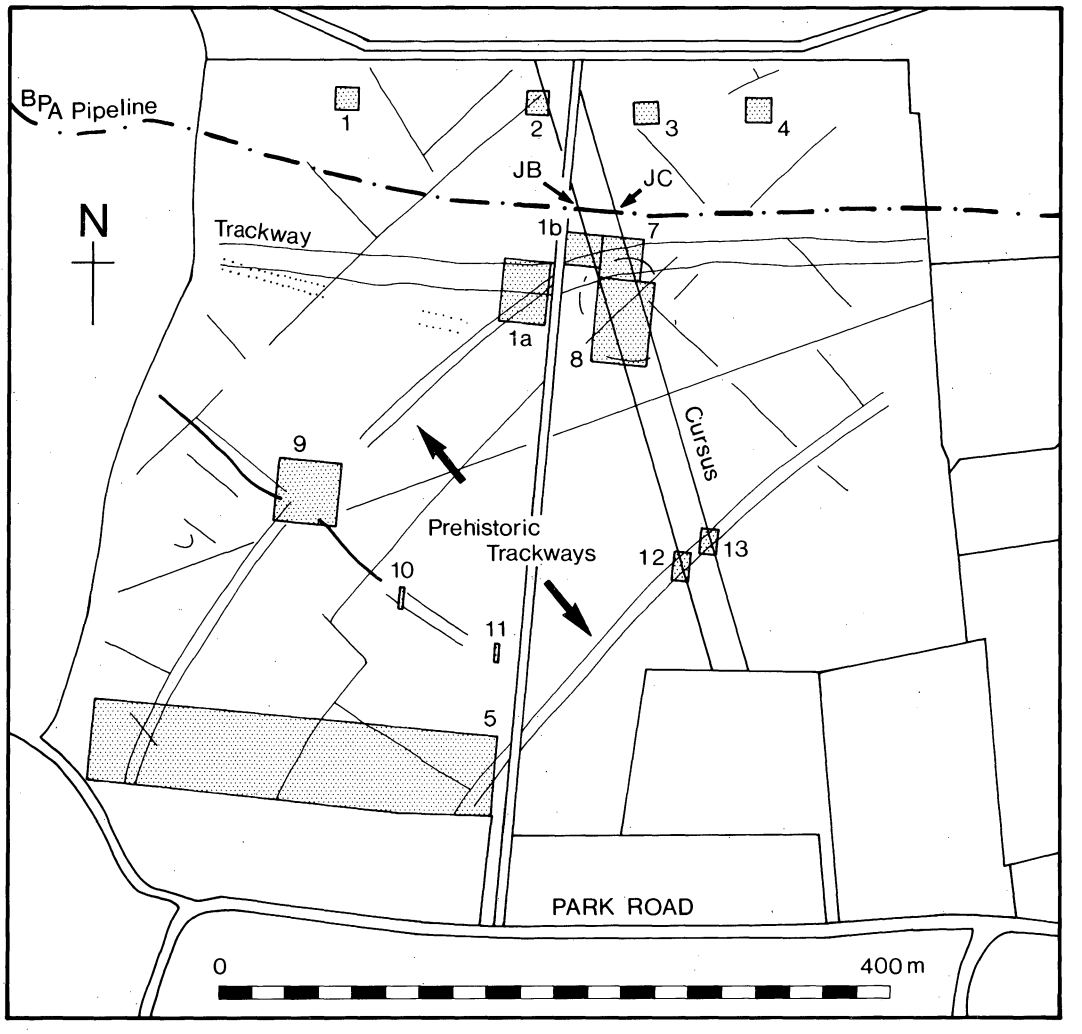

Fig 3. Stanwell, the crop marks

In close proximity to the main cursus are three similar features. The first is a square-ended enclosure, approximately 20m wide, almost at right angles to and apparently abutting the main cursus. The second is of similar width but runs in a south-west/north-easterly direction, cutting or being cut by the two former features. No terminals are visible. The third consists of two parallel ditches, 15m apart, with two rounded terminals and an overall length of 210m. It is on the same alignment as the second feature and almost abuts the main cursus. The first two features can probably be interpreted as cursus while the third is better explained as a mortuary enclosure. Regrettably the extension of the southern runway of Heathrow Airport has meant that any opportunity to establish the relationship between these features has now been lost.

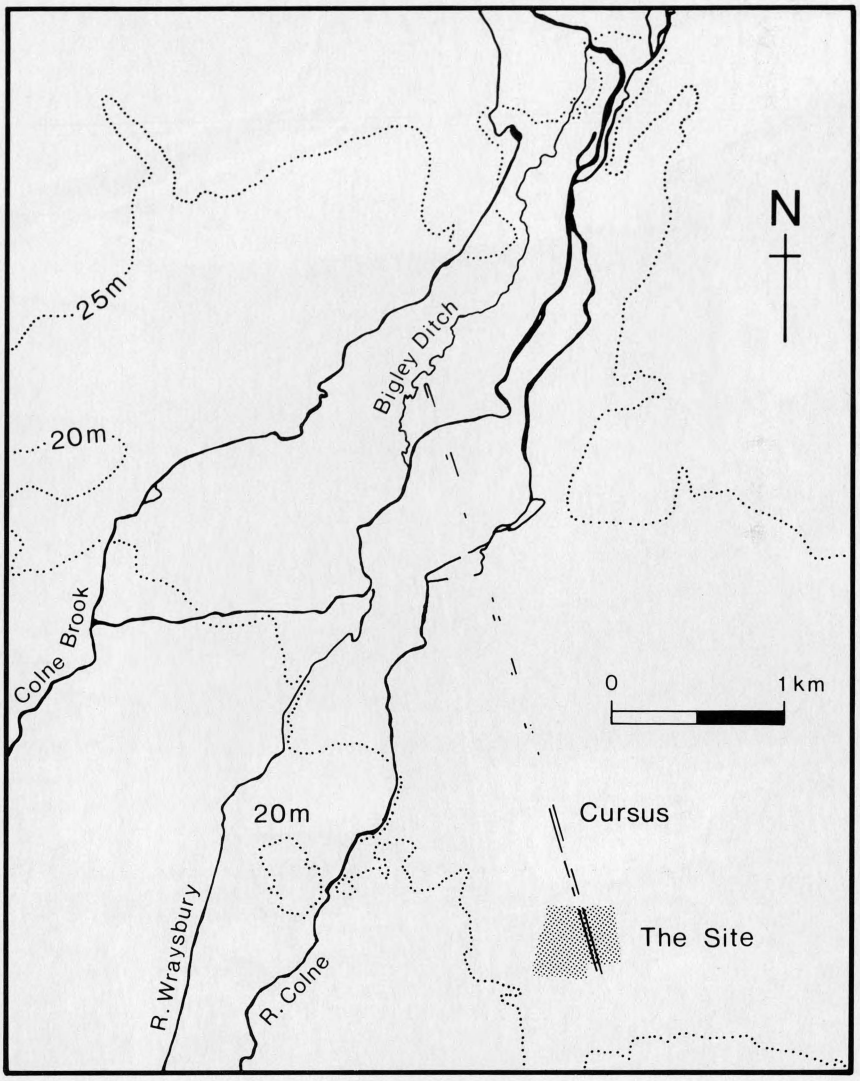

Fig 4. Stanwell, the known extent of the cursus

1.3.2 *The Ring-Ditches*

A number of ring-ditches have been identified to the north of the site within the immediate area of the cursus, but their relationship to that feature is not possible to determine on the available evidence. A ring-ditch does not necessarily signify the remains of a ploughed-out barrow but the place-name evidence (see 1.2) together with the excavation of a probable Bronze Age barrow to the east of the cursus (Canham 1978, 1–44) suggests that at least some of the ring-ditches can be interpreted as barrows. It should also be noted that the round barrow tradition is attested in the Neolithic period (Kinnes 1979, 48) so that an association between barrows and cursus is not impossible.

Pl 1. The Stanwell area from the air, 1962, copyright *Aerofilms Library*

1.3.3 *The Field System*

Although the overall picture has not changed, some further details (fig 3) can be added that relate to the field pattern discussed by Poulton who noted its similarity to 'celtic' field systems (1978, 239–42). The imposition of this network of fields and trackways on the Stanwell landscape appears to have been initiated at some time during the Late Bronze Age.

1.3.4 *The Droveway*

The identification of the two parallel ditches running in an east-westerly direction through the northern part of the site is dependent in no small part upon the documentary evidence.

Pl 2. Stanwell, areas 7 and 8, looking south

The northern boundary of *Court Lay, Grigg's Close* and *Nursery* in 1748 (1.2) followed the same line as these two ditches which were themselves continued to the east by a track known as *Sheep Lane* in the 1792 survey of the parish (GLRO Acc 621/14–15). When the material evidence is also taken into consideration it is reasonable to assume that these features formed part of an old droveway or trackway.

1.3.5 *Other Features*

It is unnecessary in this part of the report to add anything to the published description of the remaining crop-marks (Poulton 1978, 239–42). Attention should be drawn, however, to the vague outline of an oval enclosure noticeable on one of the aerial photographs (pl 1; HSL/UK/62/230) which proved to be elusive in excavation although a section of a heavily truncated Anglo-Saxon ditch (5.1) followed the same alignment as part of the feature. In view of the shallowness of the ditch it is quite possible that the remainder of the feature has been removed by recent agricultural activity, remembering that over twenty years has elapsed between the production of the photograph and the archaeological investigation of this part of the site.

A number of dark, irregular patches noted within the field from the same aerial photograph proved to be geological in origin, indicating areas where brickearth overlies the gravel subsoil.

1.4 EXCAVATION METHOD AND RECORDING

Following trial work in 1977 a programme of large-scale open area excavation was formulated, designed to precede each phase of gravel extraction (Areas 1a, 1b, 1–4, 7–9; figs 5–11 & Microfiche 77–9) while site observation followed the stripping of the overburden by the gravel company (Areas 5 and 6: see fig 3). In Area 1c it was only possible to record the sections left by the trench for the oil pipeline (British Petroleum Agency). A number

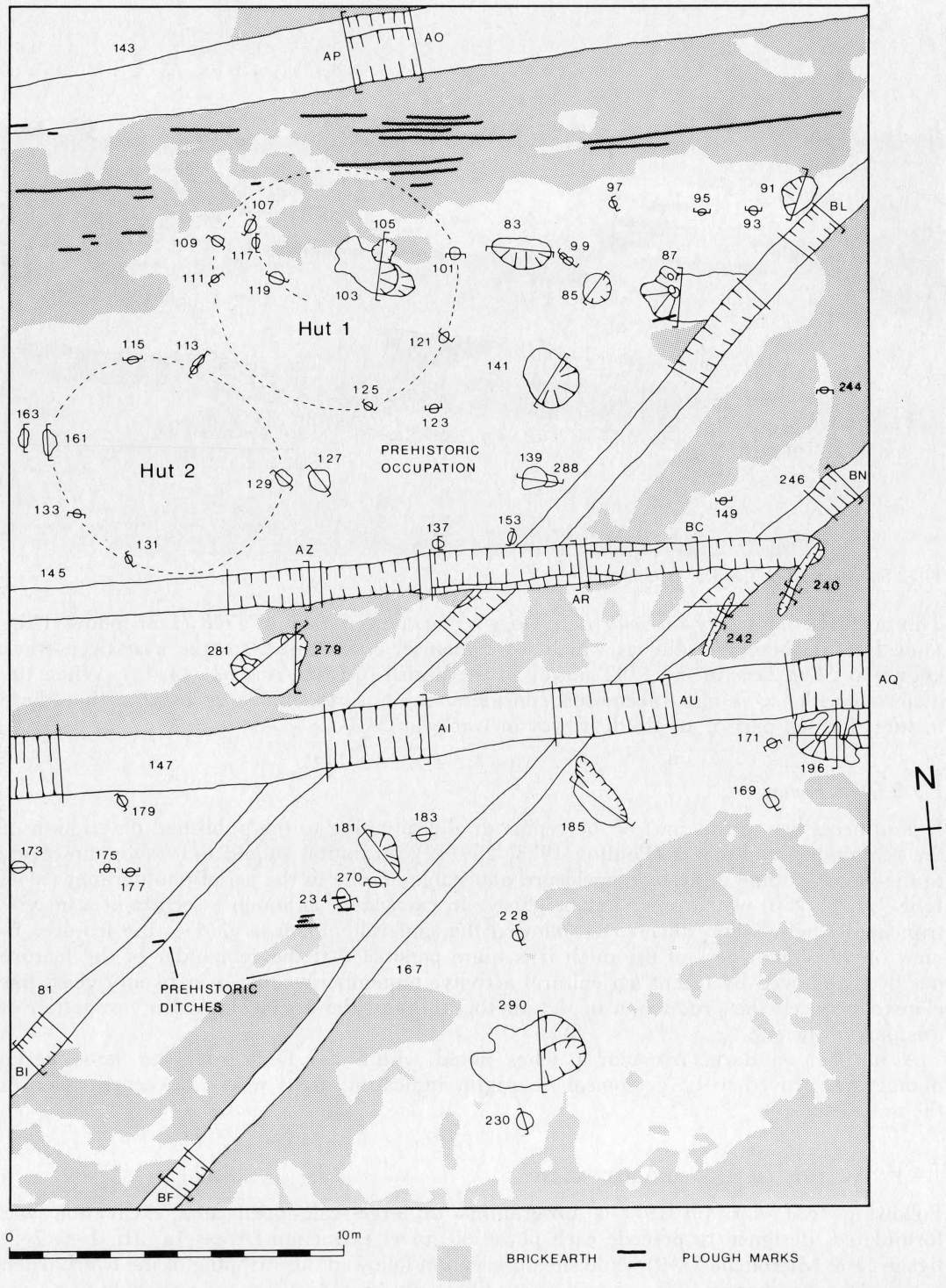

Fig 5. Stanwell, features in Area 1a

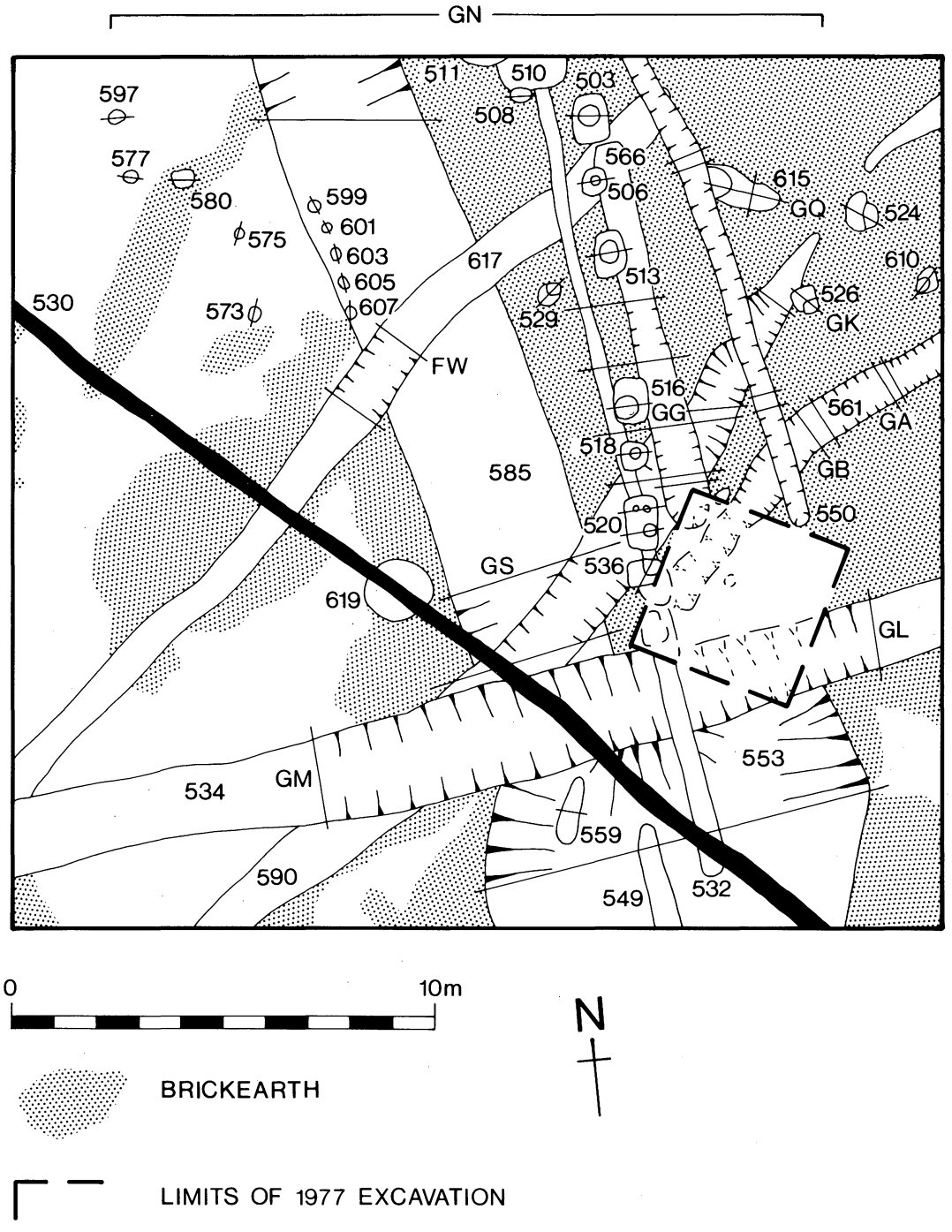

Fig 6. Stanwell, features in Area 1b

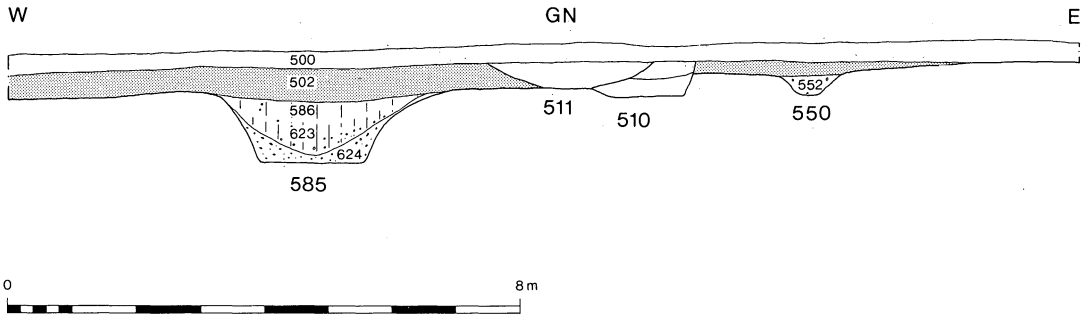

Fig 7. Stanwell, Area 1b, section GN

of smaller areas (Areas 10–13: fig 12 & Microfiche 80) were also investigated with the intention of answering specific questions relating to the crop-mark features. The site records and finds will be deposited in Guildford Museum.

The overburden consisted of two layers: dark grey/brown soil (ploughsoil), varying in depth between 0.20 and 0.35m and light brown finely particled soil (subsoil), varying in depth between 0.02 and 0.52m. The only features cutting the latter were post-medieval in origin but earlier excavation (Poulton 1978, 239–42) had demonstrated the possibility of surviving stratigraphy in the interface between this subsoil layer and the underlying gravel surface. Accordingly in Areas 1a, 1b, 1–4, 7–9, although initial clearance of the overburden was undertaken by machine, final stripping was done by hand and finds plotted individually. In the event, the superficial layers noted by Poulton only appeared to survive in relation

The sequence of archaeological investigation was as follows:

AREA	DATE	SIZE (sq m)	COMMENTS
Trial Trench	1977	16	Directed by Rob Poulton
1a	1979	910	Directed by M O'Connell
1b	1981	440	Directed by M O'Connell
1–4	1982	225x4	Directed by M O'Connell and R Poulton
5	1982	12,000	Area stripped of overburden by RMC prior to construction of an Environmental Bank – only possible to examine and record selected features. Directed by M O'Connell and R Poulton
1c	1982	Not relevant	Trench opened for oil pipeline (British Petroleum Agency) – only sections recorded. Directed by M O'Connell and R Poulton
6	1983	Not relevant	Area stripped of overburden by RMC prior to gravel extraction – only possible to examine and record selected features. Directed by M O'Connell and R Poulton
7	1983–85	625	Final phase of large scale excavation – work force and equipment supplied by Manpower Services Commission through the agency of the Community Task Force. Directed by M O'Connell
8	,,	1,800	
9	,,	1,600	
10	,,	20	
11	,,	20	
12	,,	150	
13	,,	150	

TABLE 1: Sequence of archaeological investigation

to an Anglo-Saxon gully (5.1) and, where the overburden was at its shallowest, deep ploughing had truncated many and probably entirely removed some of the smaller features. Most of the smaller features discovered were either not visible or too indistinct to be detected on the aerial photographs.

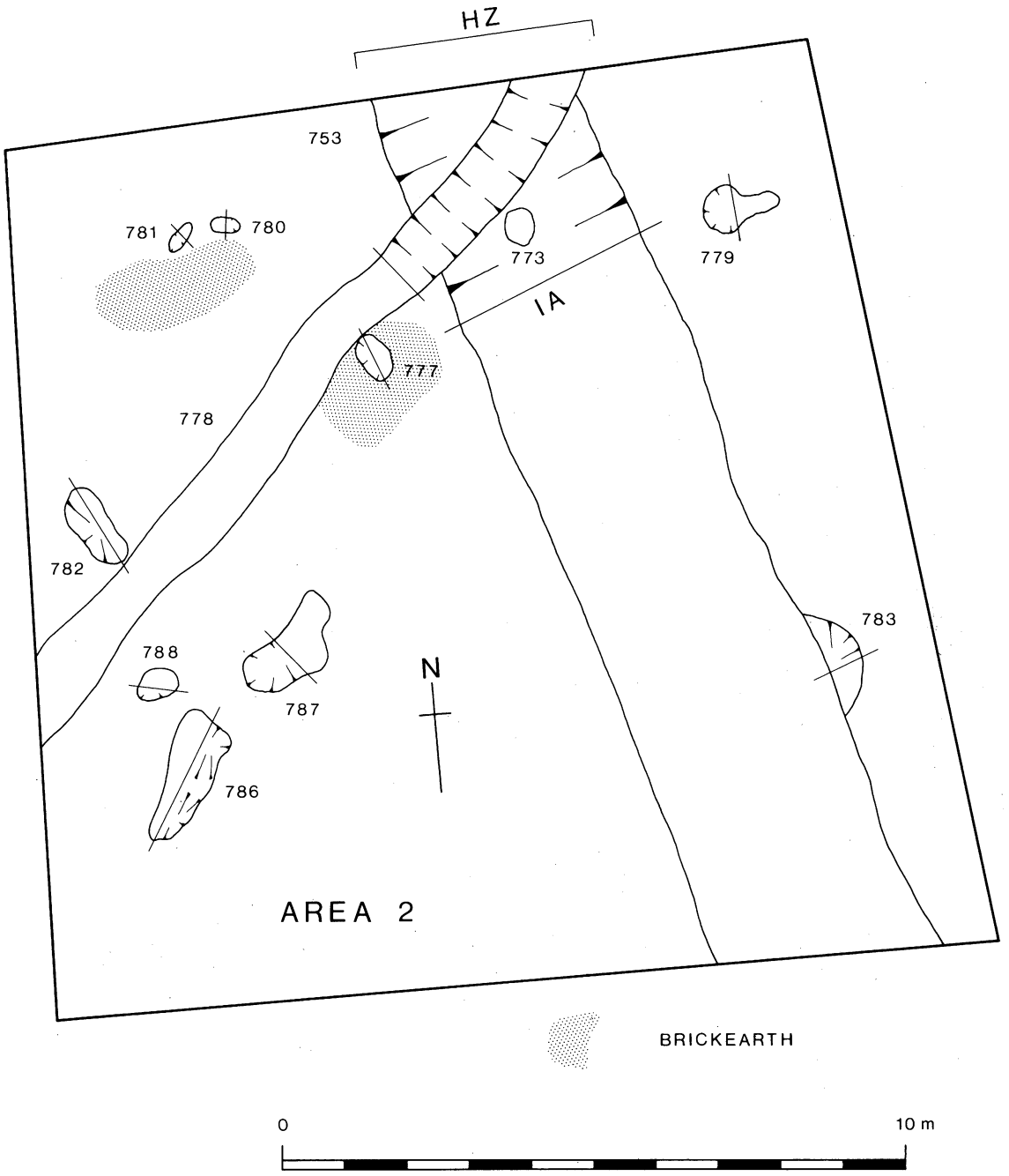

Fig 8. Stanwell, features in Area 2

1.5 THE PHASES OF OCCUPATION

Six phases of occupation were identified, one of which (Phase 2) required subdivision. Due to a lack of stratigraphy and the paucity of associated datable artefacts, a large number of features could not be assigned to a particular phase with any certainty and were therefore categorized under Phase 7 (features of uncertain age). (See Table 2, p 20)

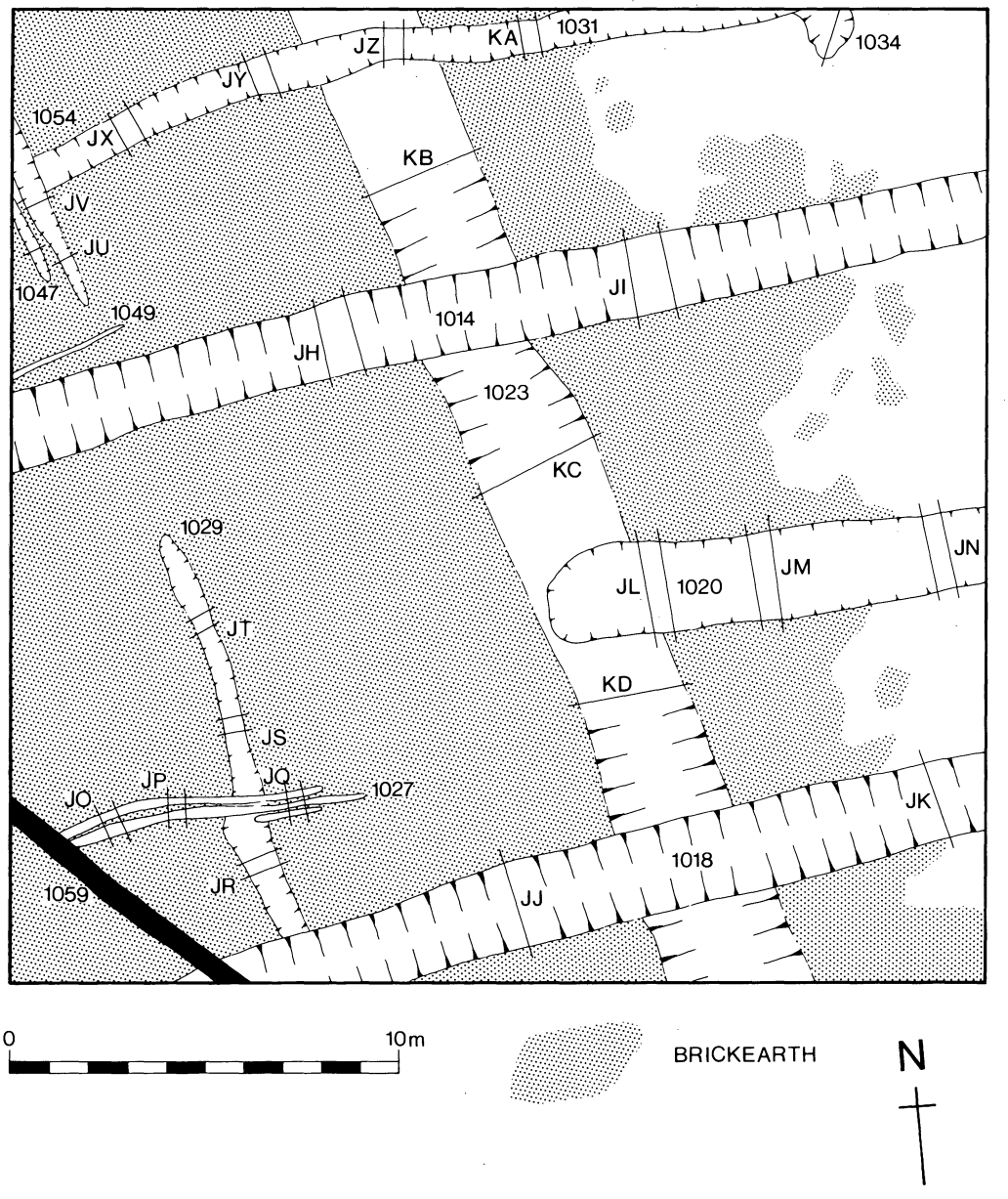

Fig 9. Stanwell, features in Area 7

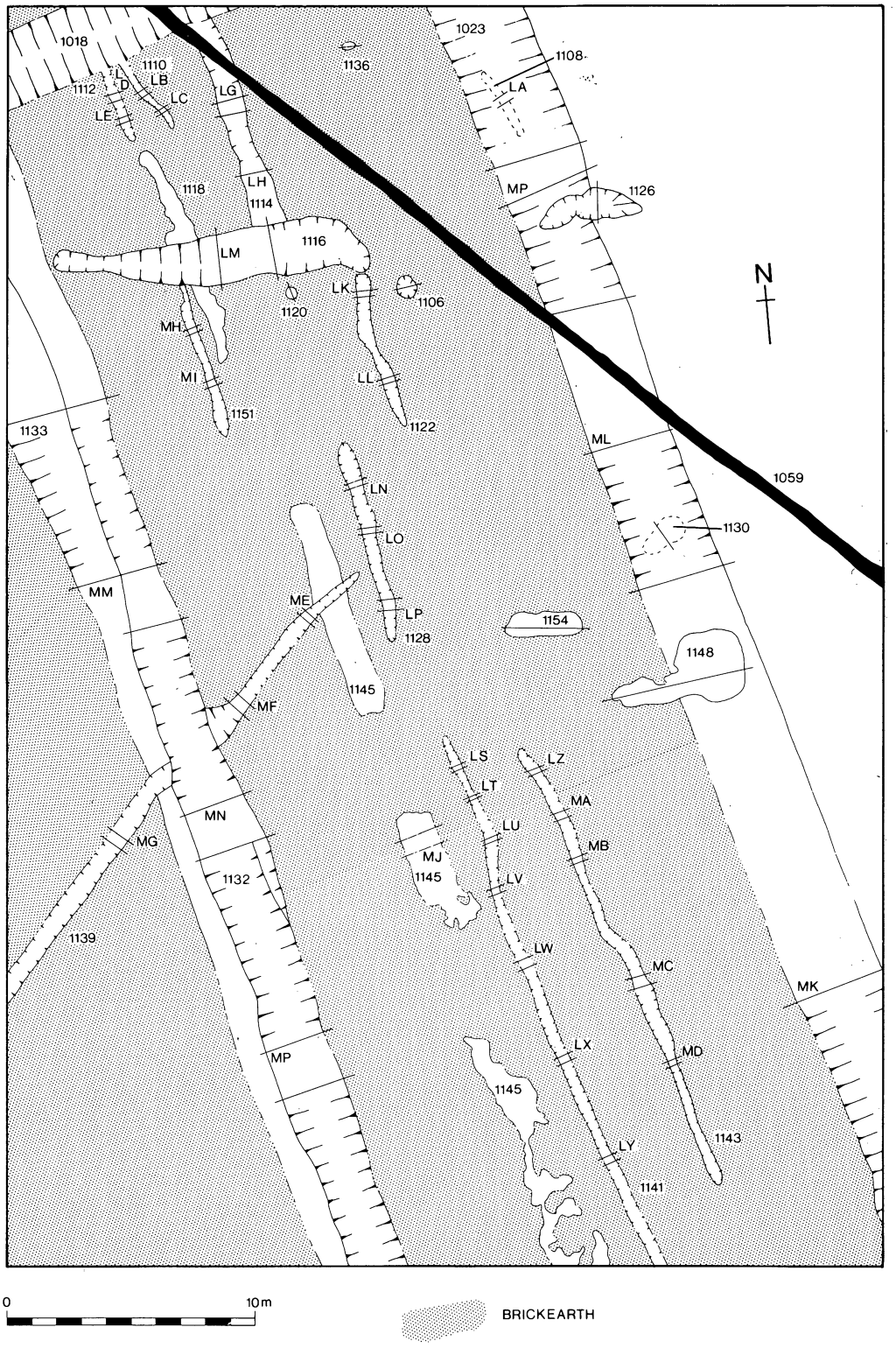

Fig 10. Stanwell, features in Area 8

NO	PERIOD	DESCRIPTION	REFERENCE
1	Neolithic	Establishment and use of the cursus	2.1.1
2	Late Bronze Age	Field system and late settlement	3
2.1	,,	?Tree clearance – limited occupation	3.1.1
2.2	,,	Setting out and utilization of field system	3.2.1
2.3	,,	Scattered settlement within area of site – ?unenclosed	3.3.1
3	Romano-British	Limited use of area – ?agricultural activity	4
4	Saxon	Scattered settlement – ?industrial activity on a small scale	5
5	Medieval	Agricultural activity – various field ditches – origin of drove road	6
6	Post-medieval	Landscaping of Stanwell Park – field enclosure – establishment of modern field boundaries	7
7	Uncertain	Various pits and postholes	8

TABLE 2: Phases of occupation

1.6 THE RECORDING OF UNSTRATIFIED MATERIAL

As noted above (1.4), three-dimensional recording of individual finds from the subsoil immediately overlying the archaeological horizon was carried out in areas where sufficient time was available (Areas 1a, 1b, 7, 13). This operation was performed in the hope that it might be possible to define concentrations of activity from different periods of occupation which could be related to features surviving at a lower level. Naturally, truncation of features and resulting soil movement by later farming and landscaping will have assisted in the disposal and spread of material, whilst the intrusion of elements from elsewhere as the result of operations such as muck spreading will have complicated the picture.

In only three areas (1a, 8 and 9) was there sufficient comparative material to justify an interpretation of the results of the exercise in this report. In Area 7, the only significant group of finds were of Saxon origin and were concentrated on the line and in the vicinity of a Saxon gully (1031).

In most cases, the finds were too small and abraded to allow any precision in dating and the material has therefore been divided into four general periods – prehistoric, Romano-British, Saxon and medieval.

Area 1a (fig 13) There is a fairly random scatter of prehistoric material apart from a concentration of finds on the line of a Romano-British ditch (145). Finds from the other three periods are scarce, although Romano-British and Saxon material is also concentrated in the vicinity of the ditch aforementioned (145).

Area 8 (fig 14) A large group of prehistoric finds was recorded with a general concentration detected on the line and in the vicinity of the two cursus ditches (1023, 1133). The particularly dense group of finds to the west of the site is largely explained by the fact that a greater depth of topsoil was left to be removed by hand at that point. Finds from the Romano-British and Saxon periods represented a general scatter of material, Romano-British finds being slightly more numerous than Saxon.

Area 9 (fig 15) A concentration of prehistoric finds is noticeable in the vicinity of three important Bronze Age features (1943, 1965 and 2025) while a large number of finds can be related to the trackway (1531/1537; 1954; 1544/1902). Romano-British and Saxon finds follow the same general pattern, tracing a gentle arc from east to west through the northern part of the site.

To a large extent, this body of unstratified material reflects a similar picture to the one established by the stratified evidence. The prehistoric period witnessed the densest and most important phase of occupation at Stanwell, a degree of settlement is attested during the Saxon period, while the medieval period was one devoted to agricultural activity as far as the site is concerned. However, it is interesting to note that, whereas only one excavated feature (Area 1a:145) has been assigned to the Romano-British period, the scatter of Romano-British and Saxon finds is comparable in terms of size and distribution in Areas 1a and 8, and in terms of at least distribution in Area 9. What significance this has in terms of settlement at Stanwell during the Romano-British period is difficult to determine on the available evidence.

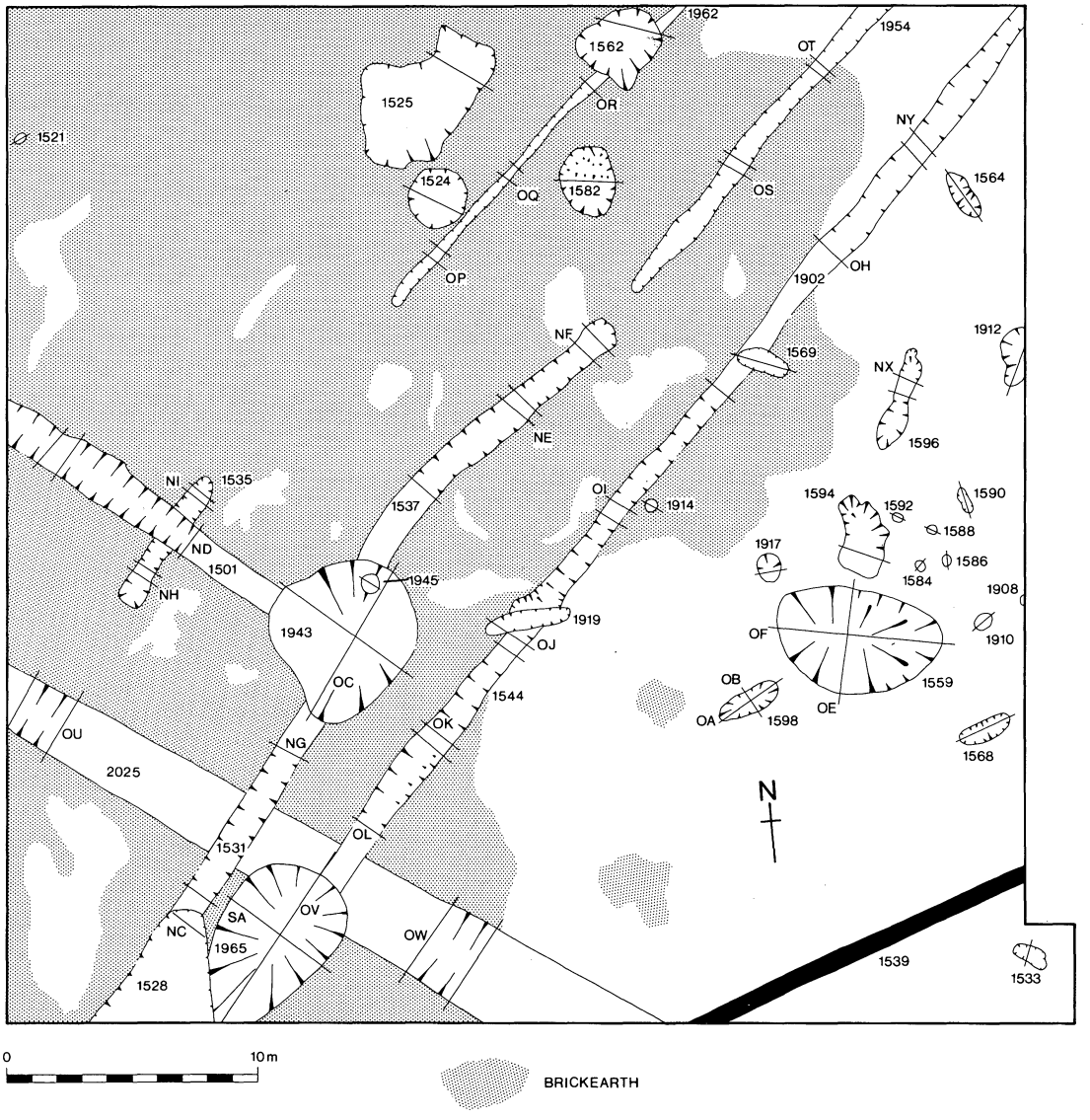

Fig 11. Stanwell, features in Area 9

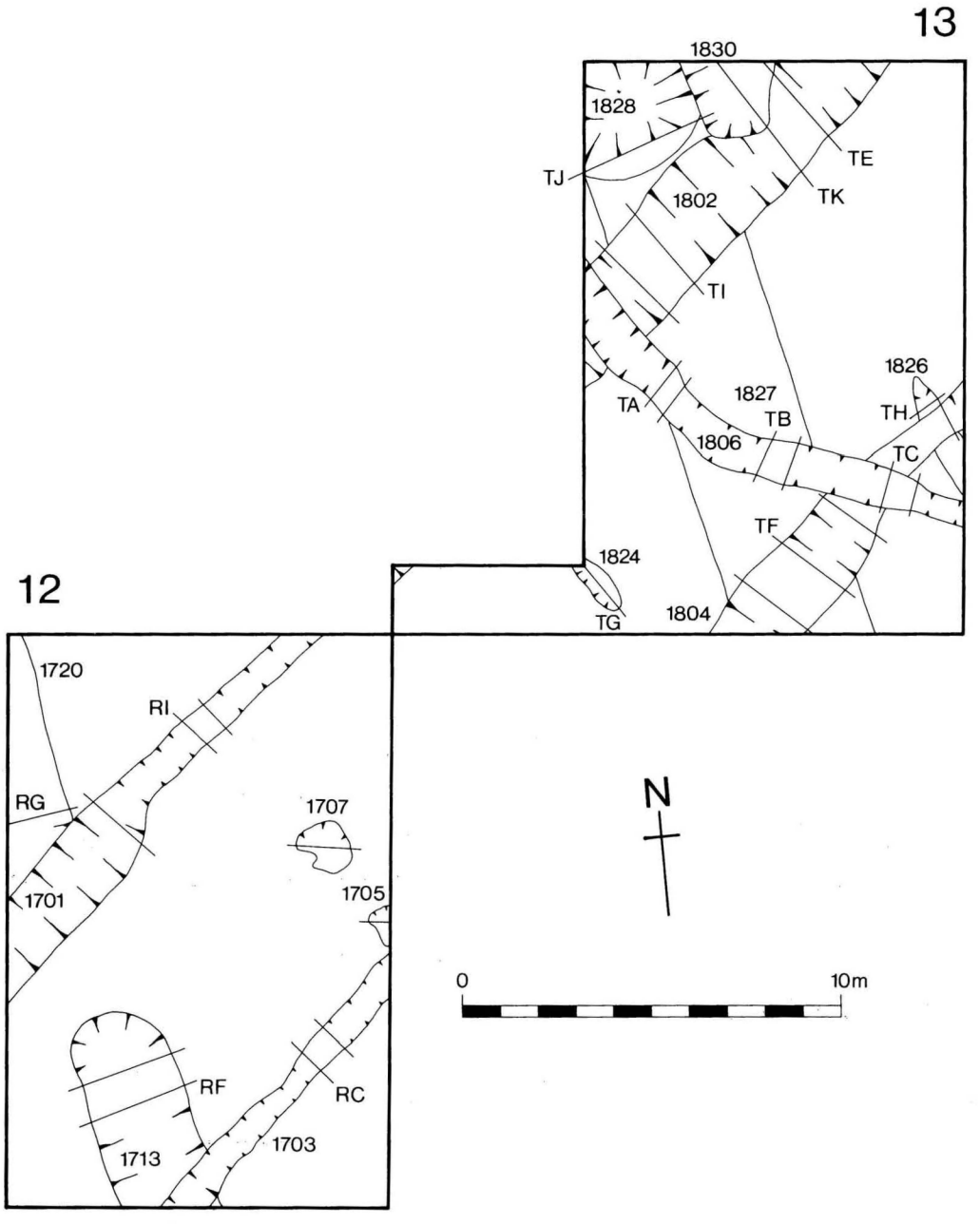

Fig. 12. Stanwell, features in Areas 12 and 13

Part 2: Phase 1 – The Neolithic Period

2.1 PRE-CURSUS FEATURES (Microfiche 81)

Evidence of activity predating the construction of the cursus was limited to a small shallow pit (783) which had been cut (Area 2) by the westernmost of the two ditches that formed the cursus (see 1.3.1). The function of the pit has not been resolved although it seems likely that it represents evidence of tree or shrub clearance prior to the laying out of the cursus.

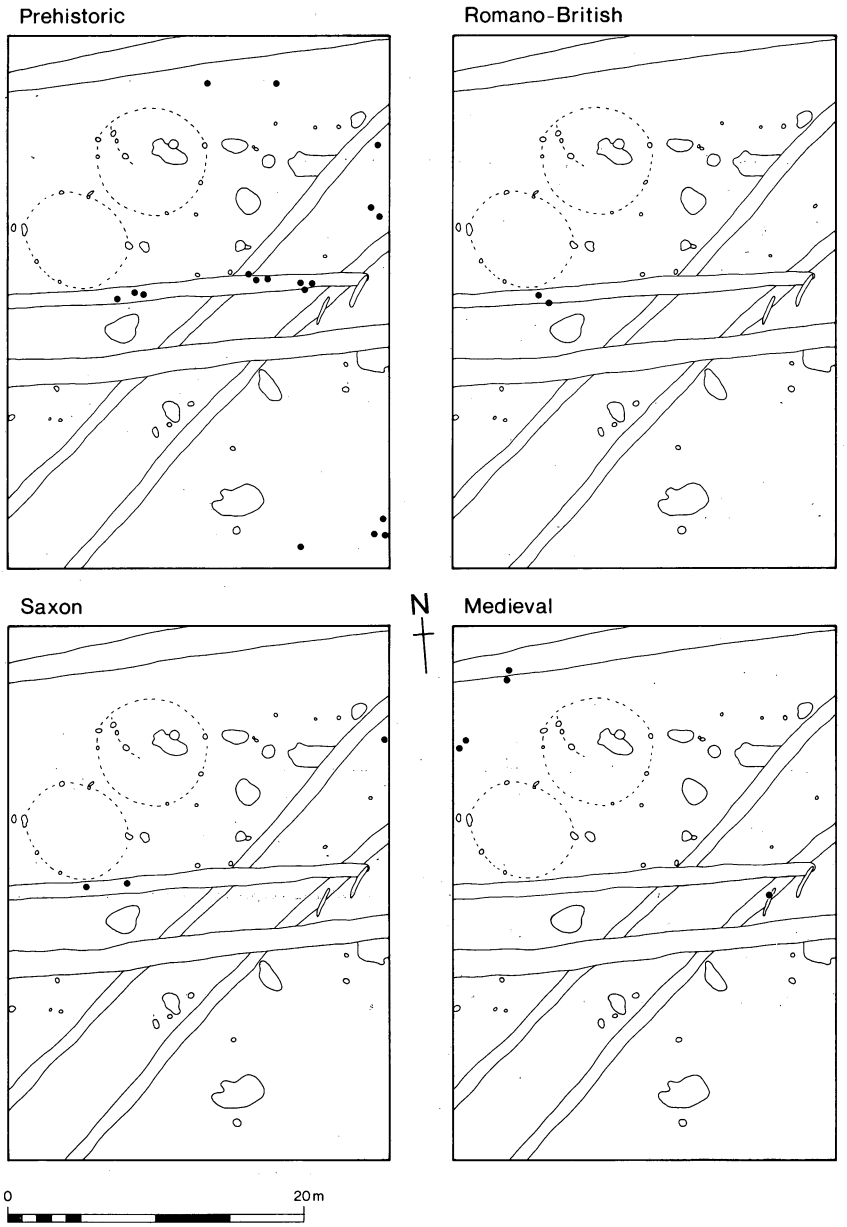

Fig 13. Stanwell, findspots in Area 1a

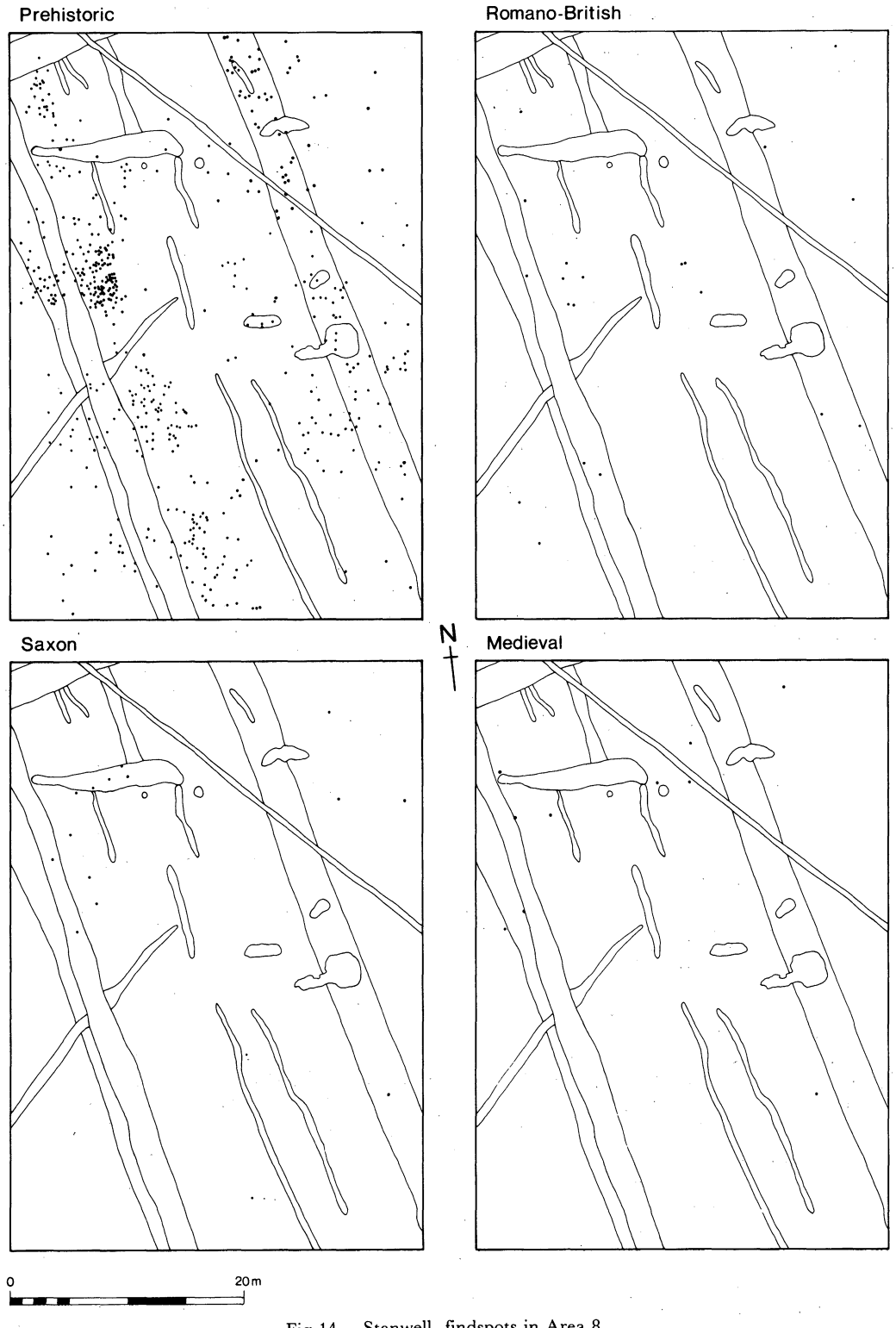

Fig 14. Stanwell, findspots in Area 8

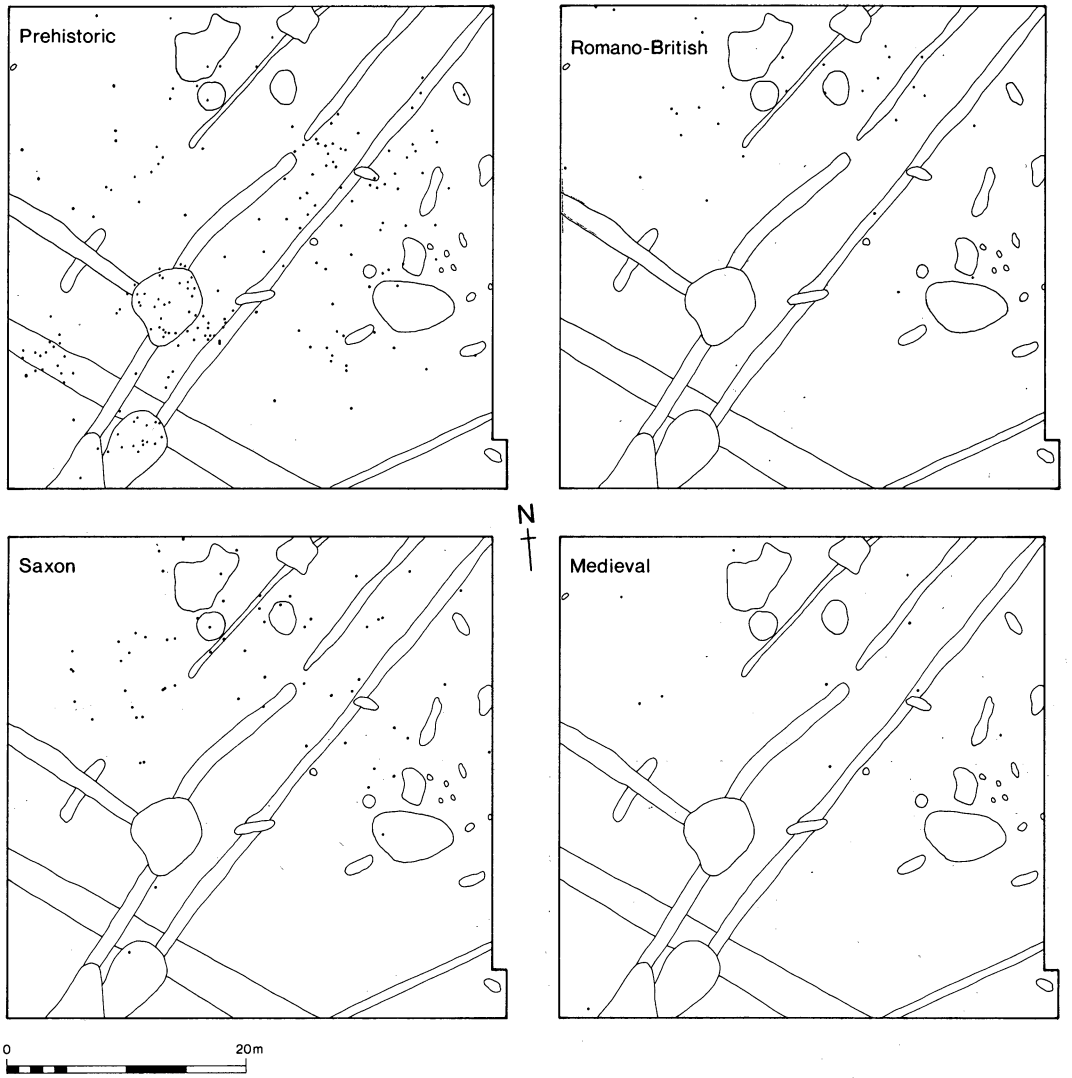

Fig 15. Stanwell, findspots in Area 9

2.2 THE CURSUS

The cursus ditches were notable for the regularity and uniformity of their construction. Little deviation could be detected in the alignment of the feature with only marginal variations in the distance between the two ditches, reaching a maximum of 19m in Area 8 and a minimum of 18.5m in Areas 12 and 13. A gap of 3.5m occurred in the line of the westernmost ditch in Area 12 (1713 and 1720) but unfortunately it was not possible to establish whether a corresponding one would have existed in the course of the easternmost ditch. An unusual narrowing of the easternmost ditch (1023) was noted in Area 7 but other variations in the width along the line of each ditch (Table 3) must be due, at least in part, to the differential weathering of the two features, a process which would have been influenced by natural variations in the composition of the underlying subsoil (1.1). Significantly the depth of the ditches, a measurement less susceptible to alteration through erosion than width, was remarkably consistent showing only minor fluctuations (Table 3, p 27).

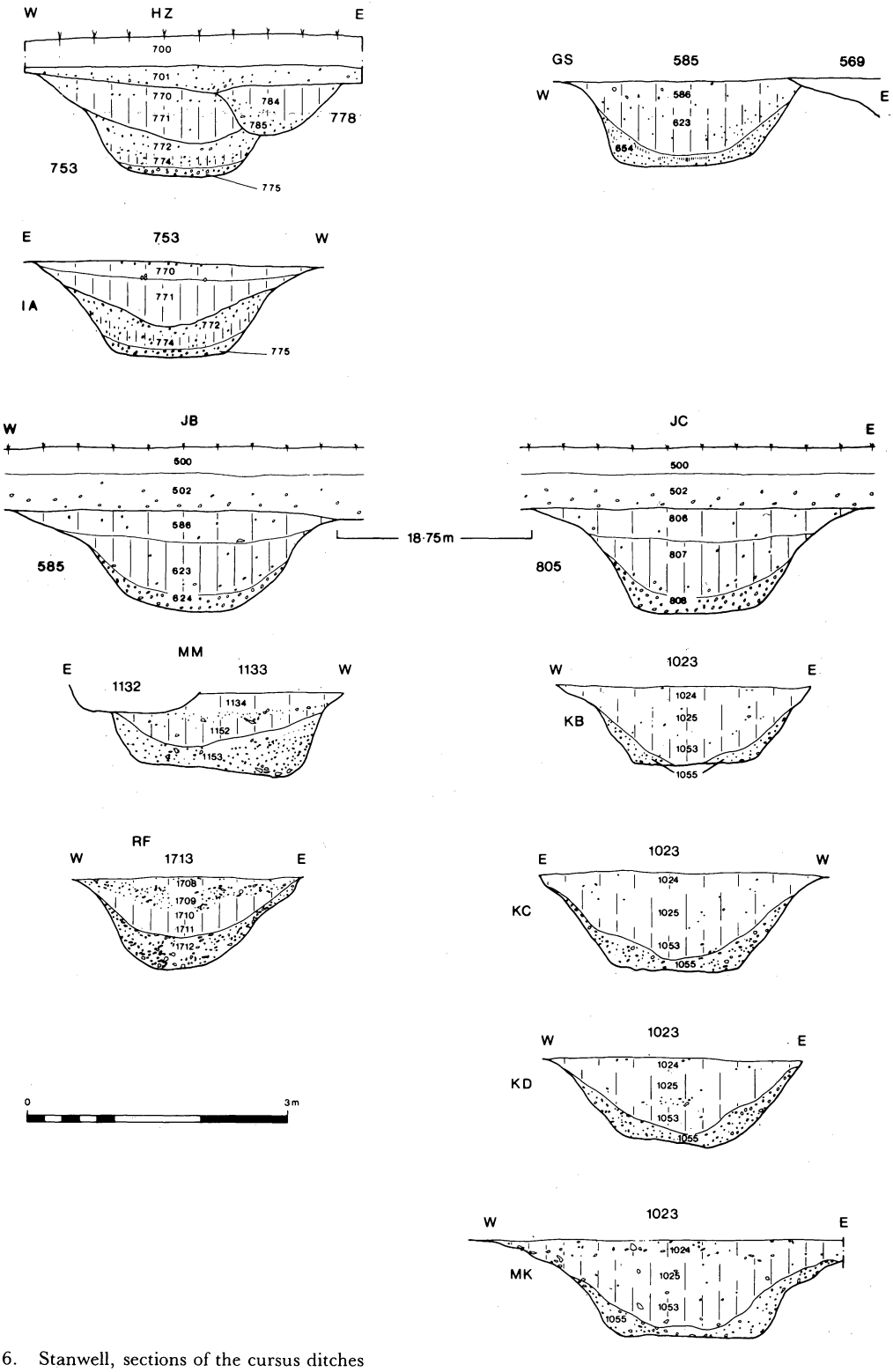

Fig 16. Stanwell, sections of the cursus ditches

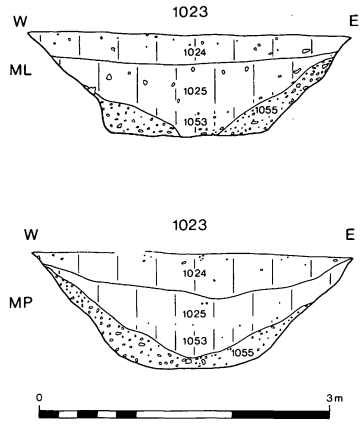

Fig 17. Stanwell, cursus ditch 1023 section

The cursus ditches had an eroded U-shaped profile and differences in the nature of the fill between the two were marginal (see 4.2.1). In general an initial period of rapid silting was followed by a more gradual process of natural infilling. This last phase was more complex in certain sections, while in Area 2, a small pit (773) containing charcoal provided evidence of activity within the ditch before it had completely silted up.

There was no evidence of surviving internal banks and no clear indication from the stratigraphy that they had ever existed. Although banks are generally associated with cursus, there have been other excavated examples which have failed to produce evidence for the location of the banks (Hedges & Buckley 1981, 12). Disappointingly there appeared to be a total absence of contemporary activity between the two ditches in the areas that were investigated.

AREA	DITCH EAST CONTEXT NO	MAX WIDTH (m)	MAX DEPTH (m)	DITCH WEST CONTEXT NO	MAX WIDTH (m)	MAX DEPTH (m)
1b	—	—	—	585	3.30	1.05
1c	805	3.60	1.18	585	3.60	1.18
2	—	—	—	753	3.30	1.12
7	1023	3.40	1.12	—	—	—
8	1023	3.60	1.16	1133	approx 3.0	0.98
12	—	—	—	1713 1720	2.70	1.06
13	1827	3.40	not excavated	—	—	—

TABLE 3: Dimensions of cursus ditches

FINDS FROM THE CURSUS DITCHES, by J Cotton

2.3.1 *The flint*

Two pieces of struck flint were recovered from the cursus ditches: a fragment of shattered gravel nodule from the western ditch (Area 2, context 771) and a cortical flake from the eastern ditch (Area 7, context 1024). Neither are illustrated.

2.3.2 *The pottery*

In all, some 32 sherds of pottery weighing 159.83g were recovered from the cursus ditches: 14 (79.05g) from the western ditch in Areas 1b (1981) and 2 (1982), and 18 (80.78g) from the eastern ditch in Areas 7 and 8 (1984) (see Table 4). None were of any size (the largest sherd measures 45 x 47mm), and all had suffered varying degrees of abrasion. A few fragments of ?daub (weighing 13.89g) were also present.

Using fabric and decoration as a guide, only 9 sherds weighing 88.60g could be identified as Neolithic with any confidence: 6 (39.10g) from the upper silts of the western ditch and 3 (49.50g) from the upper silts of the eastern. All but one are characterised by the liberal use of ill-sorted crushed burnt flint as a tempering agent. 4 of the 9 are decorated, and can be ascribed to the later Neolithic Peterborough series. They are illustrated (fig 18, nos 1–4) and described below.

Of the remaining 23 sherds, 8 (39.95g) were recovered from the western ditch and 15 (31.28g) from the eastern. No diagnostic forms or decorated pieces are present, but the fabrics – which are characterised by the presence of well-sorted crushed burnt flint, rounded and sub-angular quartz and occasional 'grog' inclusions – are best accommodated within the local first millennium BC pottery sequence. Notwithstanding the fact that some of the sherds were recovered from positions low down in the ditch fills (see Table 4), all are of small size and may therefore be regarded as intrusive.

Area 1b

W ditch 585	*Neo sherds*	*Weight*	*Others*	*Weight*
586	2	12.45g	—	—
623	—	—	—	—
654	—	—	—	—

Area 2

W ditch 753	*Neo sherds*	*Weight*	*Others*	*Weight*
770	—	—	—	—
771	3	20.25g	4	15.02g
772	1	6.40g	4	24.93g
774	—	—	—	—
775	—	—	—	—

Areas 7 & 8

E ditch 1023	*Neo sherds*	*Weight*	*Others*	*Weight*
1024	2	35.60g	6	20.53g
1025	1?	13.90g	—	—
1053	—	—	9	10.75g
1055	—	—	—	—

TABLE 4: Pottery from the cursus ditches

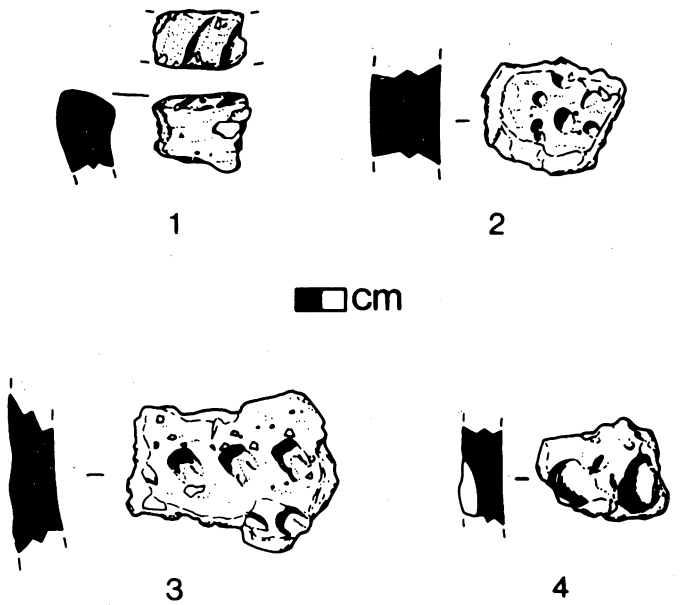

Fig 18. Stanwell, Neolithic pottery from the cursus ditches

The decorated Neolithic sherds are as follows:

Ebbsfleet Ware

1 A single small rim sherd of Ebbsfleet Ware (weight 4.10g), with incised decoration on top of the rim. The fabric has been tempered with large crushed burnt flint up to 5mm across: the core and internal surface are fired black, the exterior surface grey-brown. Area 8, context 1024 (fig 18, no 1).

Mortlake Ware

2 A thick-walled body sherd of Mortlake Ware (weight 8.70g), decorated with a series of small, random 'bird-bone'-type impressions. The fabric is hard and well fired and tempered with crushed burnt flint up to 5mm across; the core and interior surface are fired black, the exterior surface leather-brown. Area 1b, context 586 (fig 18, no 2).

3 A body sherd of Mortlake Ware (weight 11.80g), with at least two horizontal rows of 'bird-bone' impressions. The fabric is tempered with crushed burnt flint up to 5mm across; the core and interior surface are fired black, the exterior surface buff-brown. Traces of ?carbonised residue adhere to the interior surface. Area 2, context 771 (fig 18, no 3).

4 A body sherd of ?Mortlake Ware (weight 3.75g), decorated with finger-tip impressions. The fabric is hard and well fired and sparsely tempered with crushed burnt flint up to 5mm across; the core is fired black, the interior and exterior surfaces leather-brown. Area 1b, context 586 (fig 18, no 4).

In addition to the four sherds described above, a further shattered rim sherd of ?Mortlake Ware (weight 3.53g) was recovered from Area 2, context 771.

Discussion

Standard decorative traits are employed on the Stanwell Peterborough sherds, involving the use of incision (no 1), 'bird-bone'-type impressions (nos 2 and 3) and finger-tipping (no 4). Similar vessels have been found on a number of local sites. Ebbsfleet Ware, for instance, has been recorded from Thorpe (Grimes 1960, 181–5) and Yeoveney Lodge, Staines (Robertson-Mackay 1987) in Surrey, and from Sipson in Middlesex. Mortlake Ware, meanwhile, has been recorded from Iver, Buckinghamshire (Lacaille 1937), Egham, Surrey (O'Connell 1986b) and from Caesar's Camp, Heathrow (Grimes 1960, 186–97), Holloway Lane and Sipson Lane in Middlesex (Cotton *et al* 1986, 36).

Peterborough Ware has been found high within the ditch silts of a number of other Neolithic monuments in the past – locally at the causewayed enclosures of Yeoveney Lodge (Robertson-Mackay 1987, 90, fig 52) and Eton Wick near Windsor (Ford 1986, 320) and further afield, but more relevant in the present context, within the cursus at Dorchester-on-Thames (Piggot 1954, 65) and the Dorset cursus (Bowden *et al* 1983, 376). (Equally, however, Mortlake Ware has recently been recovered from a position deep within the ditches of the cursus identified at Springfield, Essex (Hedges & Buckley 1981).

If the sherds of first millenium BC pottery from the monument ditches are therefore regarded as intrusive, the Peterborough Ware from Park Road may provide a *terminus ante quem* for the construction of one part of the Heathrow/Stanwell cursus.

2.4 EXCAVATIONS AND OBSERVATIONS IN MOOR LANE, HARMONDSWORTH, MIDDLESEX, 1982, by J Cotton

Summary

Two parallel ditches, thought to belong to the Heathrow/Stanwell Neolithic cursus monument, were examined prior to destruction in gravel extraction south-west of Moor Lane, Harmondsworth, London Borough of Hillingdon. The ditches, which were less substantial than those recorded at Park Road further south, produced eight pieces of struck flint and a single fragment of pottery or daub. The disparity in the size of the ditches as excavated at Moor Lane and Park Road, together with slight changes in ditch alignment observed from the air, may cast doubt on the interpretation of the monument as a one phase construction. The finds and site records are held by the Museum of London.

Introduction

The Museum of London's Department of Greater London Archaeology (DGLA) provides an archaeological coverage for the five West London boroughs of Brent, Ealing, Ham-

mersmith & Fulham, Hillingdon and Hounslow (fig 19). In discharging this responsibility, staff regularly visit new and existing gravel permissions to observe and record discoveries of archaeological interest.

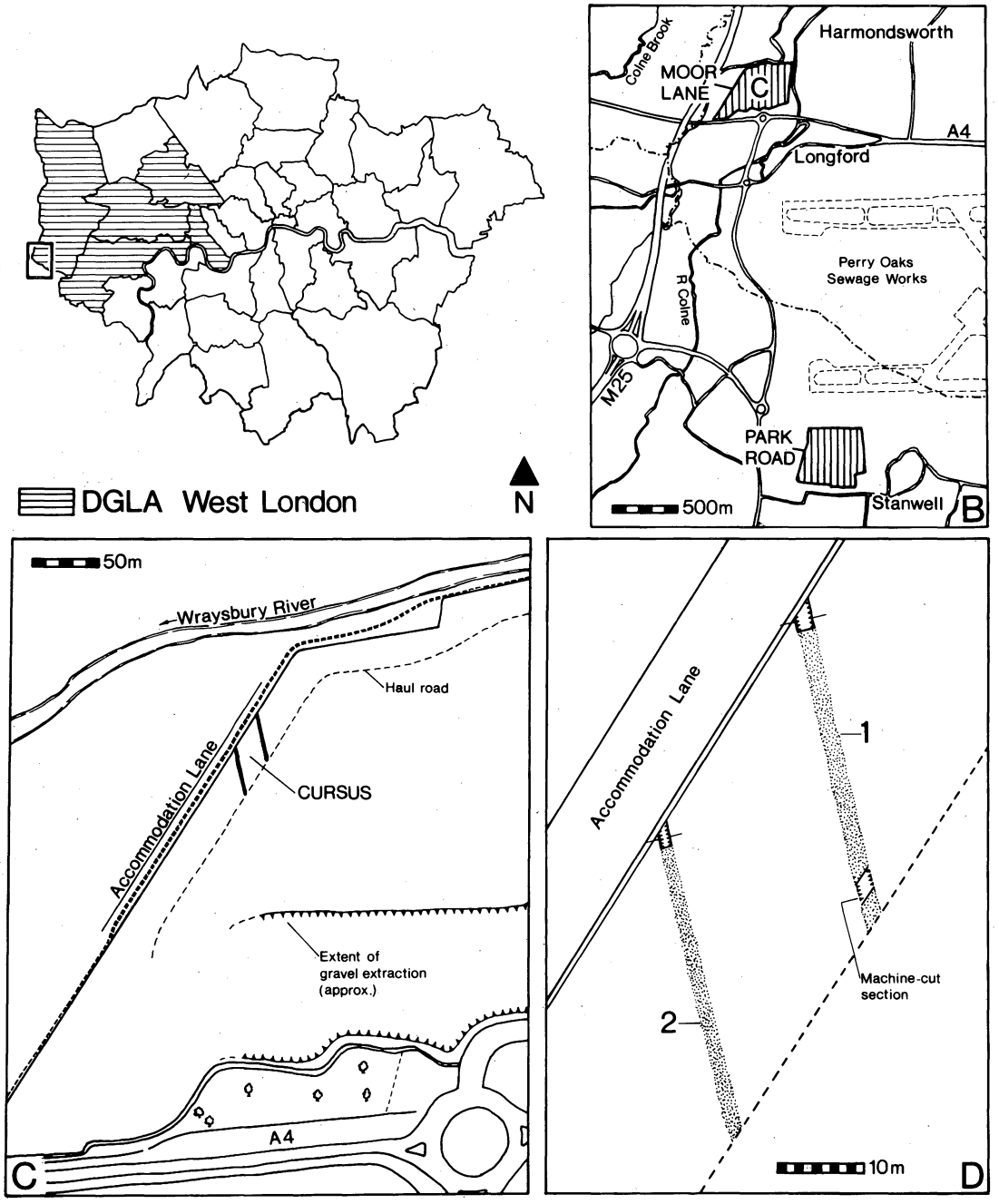

Fig 19. Moor Lane, Harmondsworth, location map

Location

The excavations and observations described here took place at the end of January 1982 on an existing gravel permission some 3km north-north-west of Park Road, Stanwell. The gravel pit in question is situated on the floor of the Colne valley immediately north of the Bath Road (A4), a kilometre west-south-west of the village of Harmondsworth, London Borough of Hillingdon (centred TQ 0475 7735). Worked since 1980 by the Summerleaze Gravel Company, the pit lies between two main channels of the Colne drainage system, the Wraysbury or Wyrardisbury river to the north and west, and the Colne itself to the east and south (fig 19c).

The geology comprises alluvium (Colney Street Gravel (Gibbard 1985, 81–2)) over London Clay. The topography is flat (*c*23m OD) and the soils, locally of Waterstock Association (Jarvis *et al* 1983), are variably affected by groundwater.

Archaeological excavations and observations

Routine inspection by Museum staff of a new phase of working in January 1982 located two substantial parallel ditches 20.80m apart at the western perimeter of the pit (fig 19). Orientated north-north-west/south-south-east, these had been revealed following machine-stripping of topsoil for a temporary haul road. Gravel was already being dug further south, adjacent to the Bath Road, but several previous visits had failed to locate any features or artefacts in this area (apart from an unstratified quartzite hammer or rubbing stone), even though it lay across the projected line of the ditches.

The haul road ran parallel to the western perimeter of the pit – a narrow track known as Accommodation Lane. The constant passage of contractor's plant along it made inspection of the two ditches difficult, although the courses of both were clearly marked by the darker ditch fills against the grey-white of the alluvial gravels into which they had been dug.

Permission to section the ditches was sought and received on the strict understanding that plant movement was not restricted or hampered in any way. Accordingly two small hand-dug sections 2m in width were excavated against the site boundary on the northern side of the haul road; a further machine-cut section was dug through the easternmost ditch on the opposite side of the road to the south (fig 19d).

The ditches

As noted above, the two ditches lay 20.80m apart (22.60m apart, centre to centre). Both were of flat-bottomed U-shaped profile, and contained similar fills of sticky grey-black clay admixed with a few gravel pebbles (fig 20). The ditches appeared to have silted naturally and no conclusions could be drawn from their fill-patterns as to the whereabouts (ie internal or external to the ditches) of any accompanying banks. No other features were identified during the work, either between or beyond the ditches.

The eastern ditch (1) appeared to have a somewhat cusped outline in plan, as though dug in discrete segments. At the point where it was hand-sectioned it was both wider and deeper than its western counterpart, measuring 1.90m in width and 0.60m in depth from the modern ground surface. The bottom 0.40m of its profile had been dug into the alluvial gravels.

Finds recovered from the hand-cut section were few, but included small fragments of burnt flint, three pieces of unidentifiable bone and five struck flints. In addition, a small fragment of pottery or daub and some burnt flint were recovered from the machined section (see below).

The western ditch (2), by contrast, was only 1.20m in width and 0.45m in depth from the modern ground surface. Only 0.25m of its profile had broached the alluvial gravels.

Finds comprised three struck flints.

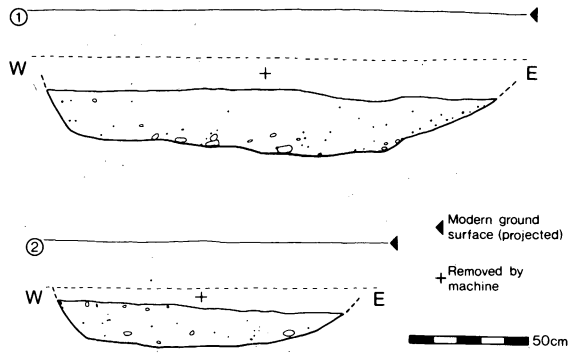

Fig 20. Moor Lane, Harmondsworth, sections of two parallel cursus ditches; (1) eastern, and (2) western, observed in an existing gravel pit

Discussion

Although little dating evidence was recovered from them, it seems likely that the two ditches identified south-west of Moor Lane form part of the same ditch alignment examined further south, and there interpreted as a Neolothic cursus monument (O'Connell 1986b). This suggestion is supported by the available aerial photographic evidence, and the similarities in ditch profile and alignment.

However, there is a distinct dissimilarity in the depths of the ditches as excavated at Moor Lane and Park Road. At the latter, the ditches averaged 'slightly over a metre in depth' (O'Connell 1986b, 124); at Moor Lane they were 0.60m and 0.45m at most.

There were no obvious signs of truncation or disturbance to account for this disparity, which, together with the apparent gap in the ditches noted north of the Bath Road, and indeed the slight change in alignment observed from the air (O'Connell 1986b, 123), may cast doubt on the interpretation of the Stanwell monument as a strictly continuous, one-phase construction. However, its identification as an 'episodic site of significant alignment', to use Pryor's term (Pryor & French 1985, 301), comprising a series of short-lived sites sharing a common alignment, must remain no more than an interesting possibility for the present.

The finds

1 The flintwork

Eight pieces of struck flint were recovered from the ditches, five from the eastern (1), and three from the western (2). These can be classified as follows:

Ditch 1

1 cortical flake
1 robust, broken, cortical blade (fig 21, no 1)
1 core fragment (fig 21, no 2)
2 miscellaneous cortical waste pieces

Ditch 2

3 spalls, one cortical

Discussion

All appear to utilise local gravel flint, with the possible exception of the core fragment (fig 21, no 2), which is of a somewhat better quality banded white-buff material. Five of the eight are cortical, suggesting that the nodules from which they were detached were of small size. Five pieces are sharp and unpatinated while three – two spalls and the worn, robust, broken blade (fig 21, no 1) – have a well-developed lustrous white surface patination.

No diagnostic pieces are present, though the robust blade appears to have been reworked and broken at a later date, revealing the original smoke-brown flint along both lateral edges and across the break. It may be referable to an earlier (?Mesolithic) phase of activity on the valley floor. The remaining pieces, meanwhile, would not be out of place within later prehistoric (ie Neolithic/Bronze Age) lithic assemblages.

2 Pottery/daub

A single small fragment of pottery or daub weighing 5.06g was recovered from the machine-cut section placed through the eastern ditch (1). Its external surface has been smoothed and fired red-buff; the interior is fired grey-brown. Use of a binocular microscope of × 20 magnification revealed the presence of a number of rounded grains of quartz, presumably derived from the addition of sand as a tempering agent; no other such (eg crushed burnt flint) was visible.

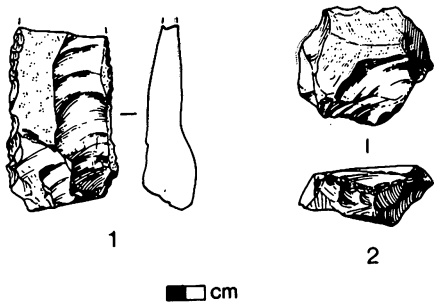

Fig 21. Moor Lane, Harmondsworth, flintwork from cursus ditch 1

2.5 PHASE 1 – DISCUSSION, by M O'Connell

The extent of our available information relating to cursus monuments is as yet comparatively limited although the results of recent excavation at sites such as Springfield, Essex (Hedges & Buckley 1981), the Rudston Complex, Yorkshire and Maxey, Cambridgeshire (I Kinnes, pers comm) have made a significant contribution to the body of evidence. The Stanwell cursus is a somewhat problematical addition to the list of proven examples of this type of monument because in one important respect it is to date unique in terms of size, being the only narrow site of extended proportions with precise ditch lines. Until now there was a generally acknowledged correlation between the length and width of cursus, the longest examples being also the widest. Thus, the Greater Stonehenge cursus (Atkinson 1955, 9) measures approximately 2.8km in length and varies in width between 60 and 125m whereas the Stanwell monument is over 3.5km in length but only about 20m wide. The few accepted sites of any great length less than 20/25m in width – for instance, Llandegai, Gwynedd (Houlder 1968, 219–20) or North Stoke, Oxfordshire (Case & Kirk 1952–3, 218) – are not considered to be true cursus (R Loveday, pers comm) and are therefore not helpful in this discussion.

The site at Scorton, Yorkshire (Topping 1979) provides the closest basis for comparison, measuring over 2.1km in length with a wide of 33/35m, although it lacks the same precision in the ditch lines and undergoes a more obvious change in alignment. There is no definitive evidence for the location of banks at Stanwell and, in view of the narrowness of the monument, a more practical and plausible arrangement would have been the existence of a low internal mound or mounds, similar to those identified at Scorton, rather than two separate banks. Moreover, there is circumstantial evidence for such a mound. In Area 8, the spread of material (fig 14) indicates that the cursus ditches had survived as depressions in the Late Bronze Age. The finds cluster on the line and along the internal edges of the ditches, the larger concentration on the western side being explained by the fact that the ground slopes gently away to the west of the site (Area 1b: Section GN; Area 8: Section MS). By contrast, there is a relative dearth of material in the central area which would be expected if a low mound had once existed and had then become truncated by later activity. Such an eventuality might also explain the exiguous nature of the ditches belonging to the prehistoric field system where they are found between the cursus ditches (Areas 8, 12 and 13). It is not inconceivable that the irregular patches of gravel (Area 8: 1118, 1145) that run parallel with the monument, represent the vestigial remains of an internal mound.

Without the material and stratigraphical evidence available from excavation, the nearest parallels for the Stanwell site in dimensional terms are the claimed cursus monuments, like those at Dorchester Overy (Benson & Miles 1974, Map 36), Ufton Nervet (Gates 1975, Map 8) and Lawford (Erith 1971, 38–40) which are now generally regarded as roads or trackways, for the most part Roman in origin. It is hardly surprising, then, that the Stanwell monument was interpreted as part of a probable Roman road (Longley 1976,

8–12; Poulton 1978, 239) on the basis of the crop-mark evidence. The suggested northern terminal by the Bigley Ditch is a rather vague crop-mark feature which cannot be verified due to the disappearance of this area through gravel extraction. The termination of a cursus in such close proximity to a river is unusual although such a situation is paralleled at Maxey (R Loveday, pers comm). Unfortunately there is no aerial photographic evidence for the location of a southern terminal and in view of the scale of urban development in this area there seems little chance of discovering one.

In common with others, a number of monuments appear to have existed within the vicinity of the Stanwell cursus according to the evidence of aerial photography (see 1.3). There is no proof of contemporaneity but collectively the existence of such monuments within a relatively confined area indicates the religious or communal significance of this part of Surrey during the prehistoric period. Moreover, the Stanwell cursus lies almost midway between the causewayed camp, 4km to the west, at Staines (Robertson-Mackay 1981, 107–31) and a second possible camp, detected on aerial photographs, 3km to the east at Bedfont (Longley 1976, 7, 11). The possibility of the cursus belonging to the same phase of construction (Earlier Neolithic) as the causewayed camp at Staines has already been suggested elsewhere (Field & Cotton 1987, 95) and, if proven, questions the contention that causewayed enclosures are not generally associated with cursus monuments.

Despite the area examined, the Stanwell site adds little to our understanding of the function of this type of monument. No contemporary features associated with the cursus were excavated and the small quantity of cremated bones from the upper fill of one of the ditches were too small for identification. The planning and construction of such a monument demonstrates a highly organised and motivated labour force and it is clear that the monument must have served as a major focal point of religious and/or community activity.

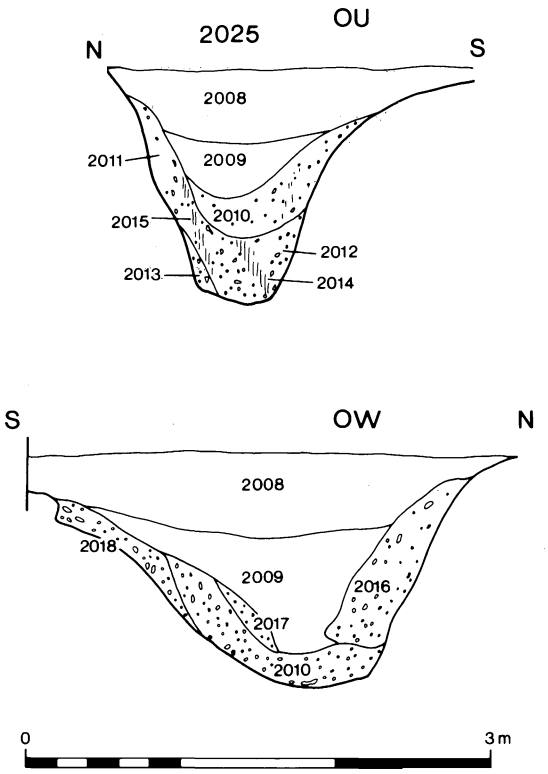

Fig 22. Stanwell, Bronze Age ditch 2025

Settlement patterns and the economy of this area during the Neolithic period have been discussed in a recent paper by Field & Cotton (1987, 71–96) which summarises the extent of our available knowledge. As far as the environment of that period is concerned, the regularity in the layout and alignment of the cursus ditches, apart from a minor deviation (1.3.1), suggests that the landscape was relatively clear when the monument was constructed. Only one possible example of a clearance hollow, predating the cursus, was discovered in Area 2 (783).

There is reason for supposing that there was more than one phase in the construction of the Stanwell monument. The change in alignment has already been discussed above (1.3.1), to which can be added the results of excavation at Moor Lane (2.4) where a section of the cursus was uncovered, approximately 3km to the north of Stanwell, and within the area through which the feature had altered direction. The evidence can be referred to in detail in the report by the director, J Cotton, but the most significant element is the contrast in the dimensions of the ditches at the two sites.

The date of construction itself must remain a subject for hypothesis although, on stratigraphical grounds, the monument predates the Late Bronze Age field system and a number of Late Bronze Age features. The intrusion of such elements as the latter, as well as the fact that the ditches were probably still visible as depressions in the Late Bronze Age, would explain the discovery of small, abraded sherds of Late Bronze Age pottery within the later phases of silting of the ditches (see 2.3.2). The identification of a small amount of similar material from a lower level within the western ditch (Area 2: 771, 772) is perhaps more difficult to explain although the very size and nature of the sherds suggests that they are intrusive. The latter were found in the vicinity of a pit (Area 2: 773) representing activity within the feature after it had undergone some degree of silting. The quantity of Neolithic pottery is relatively meagre and, as Cotton indicates, provides only a limiting factor to the dating of the monument.

Part 3: Phase 2 – The Bronze Age

3.1 PHASE 2.1 – PRE-FIELD SYSTEM FEATURES (Microfiche 82)

A number of features were excavated (Area 1a: 87, 103, 185, 196, 279, 281, 290; Area 9: 1535; Area 13: 1826) which, in view of their irregularity in plan and profile, are unlikely to have fulfilled any practical function and for the most part probably represent clearance hollows resulting from the removal of small trees or shrubs prior to the establishment of the field system (Phase 2.2). Several of these can be assigned to this phase on stratigraphic grounds (Area 1a: 87; Area 9: 1535; Area 13: 1826) while the others have been included because of material evidence (Area 1a: 196) or on the grounds of probability.

The Ditch – Area 9: 2025

The ditch (2025) (fig 22) – maximum width 3.20m, maximum depth 1.52m – was part of a crop-mark feature that followed a slightly unsteady course in a north-westerly/south-easterly direction through the south western corner of the site. Before investigation the feature had been tentatively identified as an old stream course but excavation indicated a man-made origin, despite irregularities in the line and profile. The latter varied from a V to an eroded U shape while the nature of the initial silting suggested the former existence of a bank to the north. The fill was remarkable for its texture and colour, consisting of an orange to yellow fine clayey silt with evidence of gleying. The infilling appeared to have been part of a natural process while the extent of gleying and character of the fill pointed to waterlogging. It was not possible to relate the ditch to any other feature while there was a total absence of any artefactual material. It may have served as some form of irrigation or drainage channel but whatever its purpose it clearly predated the field system.

The Pit – Area 9: 1559

Although it would have been convenient to allot 1559 to the same phase as the other large pits (Phase 2.3) material evidence demonstrated an earlier origin for this feature (fig 23), which apparently predated the field system and subsequent occupation of the site in the Later Bronze Age. The pit was roughly oval in outline – maximum width 6.5m and depth 1.14m – with sloping sides and a flattened base. Primary silting was followed by gradual infilling. The completion of the infill appears to have been a more rapid, deliberate process analogous to the dumping of refuse, an event made likely in view of the character of the material remains, namely pottery, bone and quantities of charcoal. The contrast between 1577, 1570 and the rest of the final infill – 1571 – made a recut seem plausible but there was no firm basis for such an occurrence nor any indication of a significant lapse of time between the deposition of 1577, 1570 and that of 1571. The function of the pit is problematical as clearly it was not designed for initial use as a storage pit nor does it seem likely that it was meant simply for rubbish disposal. There was no evidence of waterlogging that would have suggested its use as a well or dew-pond. It may have been the result of gravel extraction, serving later as a convenient rubbish pit.

3.2 PHASE 2.2 – THE FIELD SYSTEM (Microfiche 83–5)

The field system (fig 3) consisted of a number of plots defined by ditches aligned in a north-easterly/south-westerly and north-westerly/south-easterly direction. No complete plots or units could be determined absolutely although a near complete example can be postulated in the south western corner of the site, measuring 140 × 80m (11,200 sq m or 0.01 ha). Two trackways, 170m apart, formed part of the system and were aligned in a north-easterly/south-westerly direction. Although the ditch (2025) (see 3.1) followed the same alignment as the field pattern, it proved to be earlier in origin.

The field boundaries

Irregularities occurred in the plan and profile of the field boundaries (see Table 5) but in general the profile varied between an eroded U shape (778) to a V shape (1501). In Area 6, the ditch (1007) had been severely truncated during topsoil removal by the gravel company and only vestigial remains were available for investigation. The infilling of the ditches showed a familiar pattern, beginning with a rapid silting followed by a more gradual process of natural infilling (see 3.2). The finds were notable only for their paucity.

AREA	FIELD BOUNDARIES	MAX WIDTH (m)	MAX DEPTH (m)
1c	809	0.80–1.00	0.60
2	778	0.80	0.58
6	1007	0.50–1.00	0.05
8	1139	1.00	0.28
9	1501	1.50–2.00	0.58

TABLE 5 Dimensions of field boundaries

The trackways (Microfiche 83–5)

The trackways (fig 3) were relatively uniform, consisting of two parallel ditches, 4–5m apart (northernmost trackway), and 6–7m apart (southernmost trackway), following a rather unsteady course through the field system. Considerable variations occurred in plan and profile (see Table 6). The profile altered from an eroded U to V shape while the depth increased significantly where the ditches cut earlier features, in particular the cursus (Areas 1b, 12 and 13). The ditches would have been easier to dig out at these points but would

also have eroded more quickly, necessitating re-excavation which would have resulted in a wider, deeper profile. Small gaps were apparent in the line of the north ditch (Area 9: 1.70m) and south ditch (Area 1b: 2m) belonging to the northernmost trackway. The process of infilling betrayed a similar pattern to the one undergone by the field boundary ditches, namely rapid silting succeeded by gradual infilling, largely natural in origin. Finds were few and limited largely to abraded pottery and heat crazed flint.

Northernmost Trackway

AREA	DITCH NORTH	MAX WIDTH (m)	MAX DEPTH (m)	DITCH SOUTH	MAX WIDTH (m)	MAX DEPTH (m)
1d	81	1.0	0.14–0.30	167 246	0.90–1.18	0.28–0.30
1b	617	1.30	0.28	569 590	1.70	0.69
9	1531 1537 1950 1954	1.30	0.10–0.38	1544 1902	1.20	0.29–0.50

Southernmost Trackway

AREA	DITCH NORTH	MAX WIDTH (m)	MAX DEPTH (m)	DITCH SOUTH	MAX WIDTH (m)	MAX DEPTH (m)
12	1701	1.0–1.90	0.21–0.50	1703	0.60–1.0	0.12
13	1802	2.60	0.75–1.10	1804	1.0–2.10	0.25–0.40

TABLE 6 Dimensions of Trackways

3.3 PHASE 2.3 – LATE BRONZE AGE OCCUPATION

3.3.1 *Structural Evidence*

Although a relatively large number of postholes were identified, most of these were undatable and could not be related to any particular structure. None of the postholes, whether they formed part of an identifiable structure or not, were found with a postpipe *in situ*, indicating that the posts had been removed.

Huts (Microfiche 86)

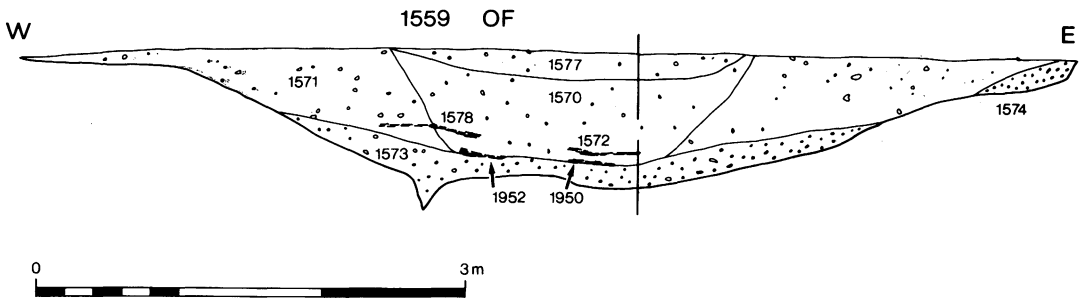

Fig 23. Stanwell, Late Bronze Age pit 1559

One probable (Hut 1) and one possible (Hut 2) huts are postulated, both found within Area 1a (fig 5). Their suggested outline is necessarily hypothetical because of the lack of consistency in posthole depth and spacing while reconstruction of their form is further complicated by the fact that later plough damage appears to have removed not only any occupation layers but several postholes as well. The two hut plans proposed have a diameter of about 7m and are oval in shape. There is insufficient evidence to propose an entrance for either hut.

Hut 1

Six postholes (101, 109, 111, 121, 123 and 125) were excavated whose average diameter was 0.34m, varying between 0.42 and 0.26m, and average depth was 0.15m, varying between 0.26 and 0.09m. The one external posthole (123) may have been associated with the structure as part of an external support.

Within the ring of postholes, a hearth (105) was discovered which produced pottery of the same character and date as that found in two of the postholes (101 and 121). The hearth consisted of a small, shallow pit with a fill (106) of brown clayey soil and gravel, charcoal flecks and some baked clay. There was some discolouration of the fill due to the active use of the feature.

Three other postholes (107, 117 and 119) are not readily assignable to the hut outline and may belong to a second structure.

Hut 2

Eight postholes (113, 115, 127, 129, 131, 133, 161 and 163) were defined, two of which (127 and 163) could have formed part of the basis of an external support for the structure. The average diameter of the postholes was 0.57m, varying between 0.87m and 0.21m, and the average depth 0.15m, varying between 0.22m and 0.09m. One posthole showed evidence of replacement (113) but there was no distinction clear enough in the fill to be certain which part of the feature was the earlier in date.

Two-post structures (Microfiche 86)

A number of undatable postholes were located, six of which – (93 and 95; 97 and 99; 137 and 153) – could conceivably have formed the basis of three two-post structures (Bersu 1940, 94–6; Bradley & Ellison 1975, 60). (99) showed evidence of replacement.

Hut Platform (fig 10, Microfiche 87)

Superimposed on the easternmost (1023) of the two ditches belonging to the cursus (Area 8) was the irregular outline of a shallow hollow (1148). The primary fill of the feature consisted of a layer of compacted gravel (1147) which extended beyond the confines of the pit and was partially sealed by brown clayey silt (1149) containing some domestic debris. Close to and originally probably part of the same feature as (1148) was another small depression (1154) with an homogenous fill of compacted gravel (1146). From the nature of (1147) and (1146) it is clear that the gravel surface had been deliberately laid to form an area of hard standing which had become contracted due to later agricultural activity upon the site. These surfaces could have served as a basis for a habitation or provided a regularized area for some domestic or industrial activity.

STRUCTURE	POSTHOLE (Context No)	MAX WIDTH (m)	MAX DEPTH (m)	FINDS
Hut 1	101	0.40	0.26	Prehistoric Pottery
	109	0.40	0.12	
	111	0.26	0.20	
	121	0.42	0.12	Prehistoric Pottery
	123	0.28	0.09	
	125	0.30	0.10	
? Hut	107	0.45	0.08	
	117	0.34	0.07	
	119	0.45	0.04	
Hut 2	113	0.75	0.22	
	115	0.43	0.09	
	127	0.78	0.15	
	129	0.87	0.09	
	131	0.27	0.21	
	133	0.21	0.19	
	161	0.80	0.17	
	163	0.50	0.12	
Two-Post Structures	93	0.27	0.11	
	95	0.20	0.12	
	97	0.25	0.08	
	99	0.52	0.14	
	137	0.38	0.05	
	153	0.28	0.04	

TABLE 7 *Catalogue of Structure Related Postholes*

3.3.2 *The Pits* (figs 24–7 and Microfiche 88–9)

The pits fall into four general categories (Table 8, p 44) and will be considered under each of those headings.

1 Irregularly Shaped/Elongated

The pits in this group have no more in common than general irregularities in outline and profile while the majority are difficult to define in terms of function. For the most part little further can be added to the details relating to the features in the catalogue of contexts (Microfiche 13–25) and Table 8. Shallowness was a feature common to all pits apart from 1126 (Area 8). The latter was so irregular in plan and section that it could represent a hollow resulting from tree or shrub clearance. 1569 (Area 9) could conceivably have served as a hearth and produced evidence of activity associated with burning.

2 Oval/Circular

Three of the pits (83, 85 and 141) probably belong to the occupational life of Huts 1 and 2 (Area 1a) and appear to have been used for rubbish disposal. They are unlike conventional prehistoric storage pits (Bersu 1940, 48–64) and their general shape and profile makes them unsuitable for storage purposes. All three had a similar fill of dark brown loam with a greater percentage of silt than clay or sand while (84) contained some flecks of charcoal. 1106 (Area 8), 1521, 1533 and 1945 (Area 9) were broadly similar and produced significant amounts of domestic debris.

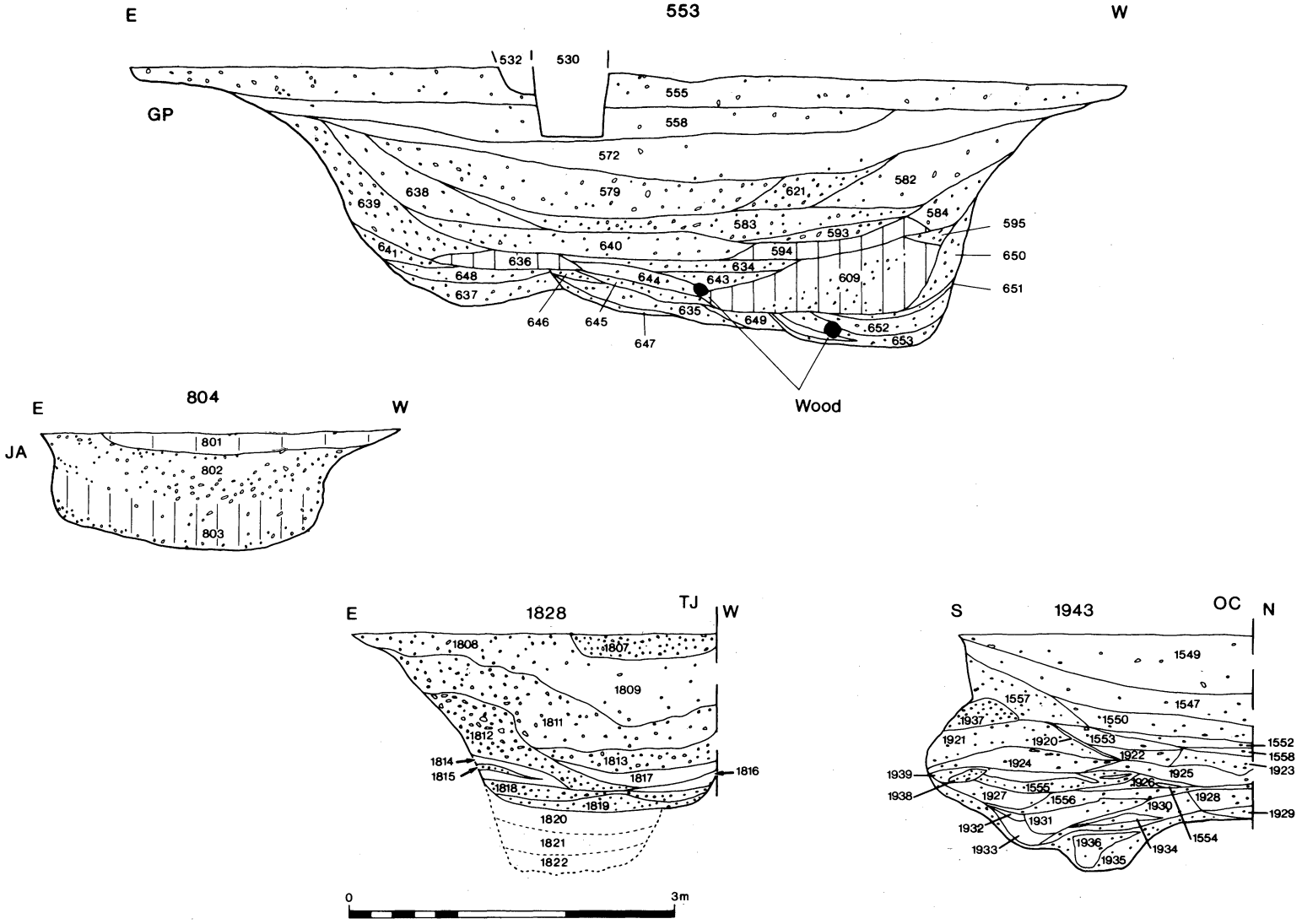

Fig 24. Stanwell, Late Bronze Age pits 553, 804, 1828 and 1943

3 Large Oval

The only pit in this category was 804 (fig 24), discovered in Area 5. It appears to have been used as a rubbish pit and only differs markedly from the features in category 2 in terms of size. Variations in the fill were characterised by differing quantities of gravel present in each layer and there was no indication that the process of infilling had been a lengthy one. A large quantity of domestic debris was noted which included a large and important group of pottery.

4 Very large, waterlogged

Four pits (Area 16: 553; Area 9: 1943, 1965; Area 13: 1828) were broadly similar in terms of size, content and nature of fill and are most satisfactorily explained as wells. All produced domestic detritus as well as waterlogged deposits containing preserved pieces of wood.

553 (fig 24)

A massive pit, irregularly shaped with steeply sloping sides, indentations at both corners and depressions at the base. The primary fill consisted of a series of gravelly, clayey layers above which were a number of thick clay layers. The ultimate fill was more earthy and less gravelly. There was evidence of recutting at the base of the feature indicating a deliberate attempt(s) to extend the useful life of the pit. The bottom of 553 was over 0.50m below the present water table while several layers above that level (594, 636 and the upper half of 609) are probably of organic origin and contained well preserved fragments of wood, including some large, worked pieces (one of which has been tentatively identified as part of a ladder). The organically formed layers must be the result of waterlogging, suggesting either that the water table was higher in the Late Bronze Age or that it was subject to seasonal fluctuation. The purpose of digging a pit to this depth would presumably have been to obtain or collect water, indicating that the feature functioned as a well. The sides of such a feature would have eroded fairly rapidly, with the formation of organic deposits following as a more gradual process. The accumulation of occupational debris in the upper layers would seem to indicate a degree of deliberate infilling. The interval between this last phase and the primary silting is difficult to ascertain but certainly the pottery throughout the fill (apart from one exception (see 3.5)) is of the same character and type.

1943 and 1828 (fig 24)

Much of the foregoing description of 553 is applicable to 1943 and 1828 although the latter were not excavated completely and 1828 showed no definite evidence of recutting within the limited section available for investigation. Part of the edge of 1943 had obviously collapsed at some stage (see fig 24), when the pit had been open, leaving an obvious undercut in section. Only a few fragments of wood were recovered from both pits, none of which were recognisable as artefactual.

1965 (fig 25)

The infilling of 1965 appears to have been a gradual natural process culminating in a deliberate phase of dumping and there is little evidence for recutting comparable to that found in 553. However, the pit is remarkable for the discovery of a wooden structure which had survived partially *in situ* (figs 26 and 27). This structure resembled a small revetment which was supported by three sharpened stakes and had been constructed after the deposition of the primary fill (1968). Two of the stakes (3455 and 3457) had been

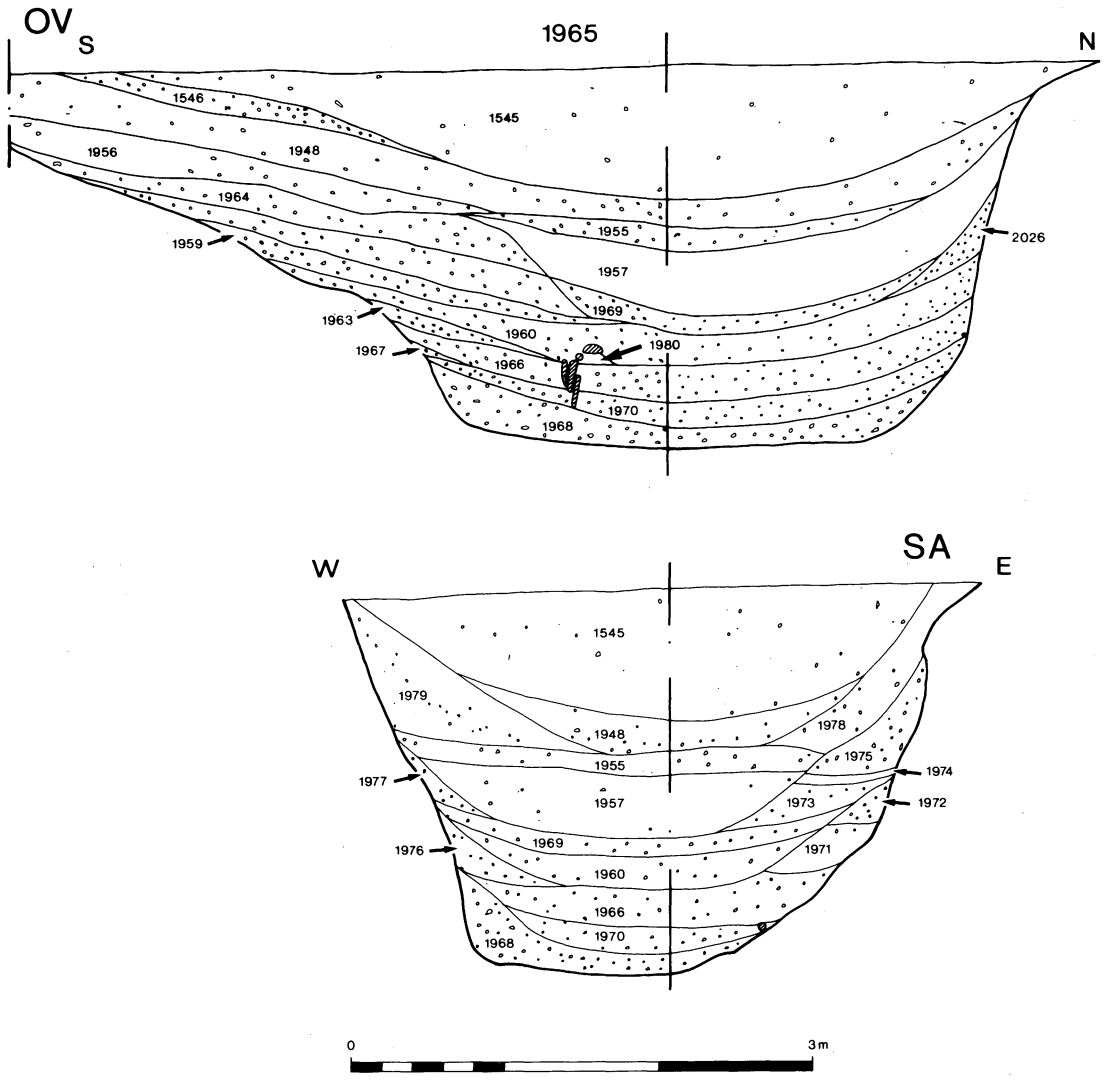

Fig 25. Stanwell, Late Bronze Age pit 1965

driven almost vertically into the base of the pit and then fitted into a horizontal plank (3450) through two carved holes. The trimmed natural offshoots from the branch which had been used to make the third stake (3456) served to support the plank (3450) at an angle from the northern side of the structure. A roughly shaped rectangular piece of wood (3454) rested against this framework.

The evidence indicates that the structure had either partially collapsed or had been partly dismantled. Two wooden planks (3452 and 3453), supported only by the surrounding soil, rested against the front of the structure while a fourth stake (3454) lay on its side in loose association with the feature. There was also little obvious difference in the fill either side of the structure.

The base of the pit was below the present level of the water table, and, due to the waterlogged nature of the lower deposits in which the structure was sealed, the wood was in a reasonable state of preservation. Some fragmentation of the individual pieces occurred as a result of their removal, but insufficient to prevent reconstruction.

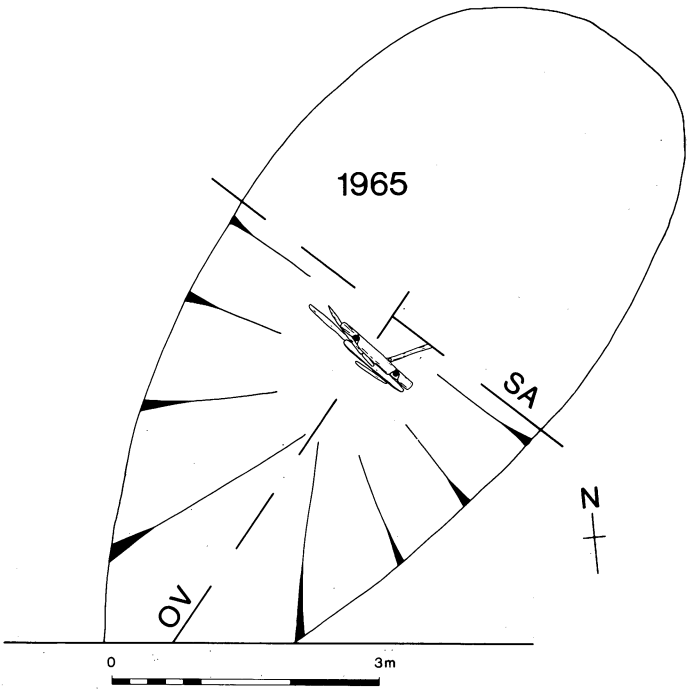

Fig 26. Stanwell, Late Bronze Age pit 1965; plan showing wooden structure

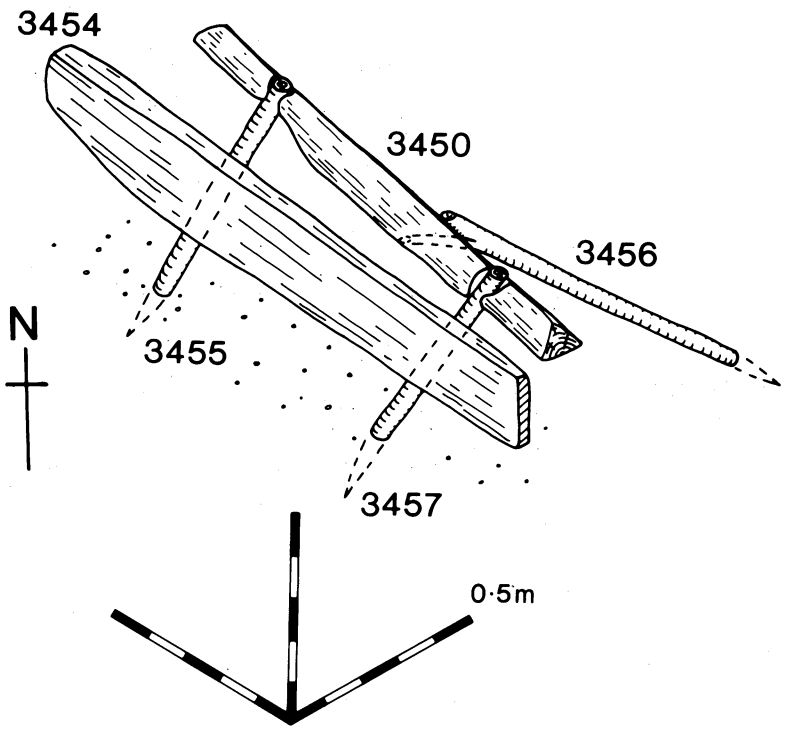

Fig 27. Stanwell, wooden revetment found in Late Bronze Age pit 1965

1 *Irregularly Shaped/Elongated*

Area	Context No	Max Width (m)	Max Depth (m)
7	1034	1.40	0.25
8	1126	4.20	0.75
9	1528	4.80 +	0.15
9	1569	2.00	0.28
9	1598	2.60	0.21

2 *Oval/Circular*

Area	Context No	Max Width (m)	Max Depth (m)
1a	83	1.82	0.41
1a	85	0.99	0.14
1a	141	1.78	0.41
8	1106	0.90	0.25
9	1521	0.50	0.22
9	1533	1.40	0.14
9	1945	0.70	0.78

3 *Large Oval*

Area	Context No	Max Width (m)	Max Depth (m)
5	804	3.30	1.05

4 *Very Large, Waterlogged*

Area	Context No	Max Width (m)	Max Depth (m)
1b	553	9.30	2.48
9	1943	6.60	2.20
9	1965	8.40	2.52
13	1828	3.40 +	2.25

TABLE 8: *Catalogue of Pits*

3.3.3 *Gully* (Microfiche 88)

A shallow curving gully (1806) – maximum width 1.20m and depth 0.20m – was excavated in Area 13. The feature bore no obvious relation to the occupational evidence but could have functioned as a boundary or part of an enclosure. Dating was problematic although it clearly postdated the prehistoric field system.

3.4 THE POTTERY (figs 28–32)

A total of 1,989 sherds were excavated. Of these 810 derived from the disturbed plough soil overlying the identifiable features. Almost all of the sherds in the latter category were too small and abraded to be of any practical use in a statistical analysis of the pottery and their relevance is considered in a separate section (3.4.5). 1,079 sherds were stratified while 100 came from residual contexts.

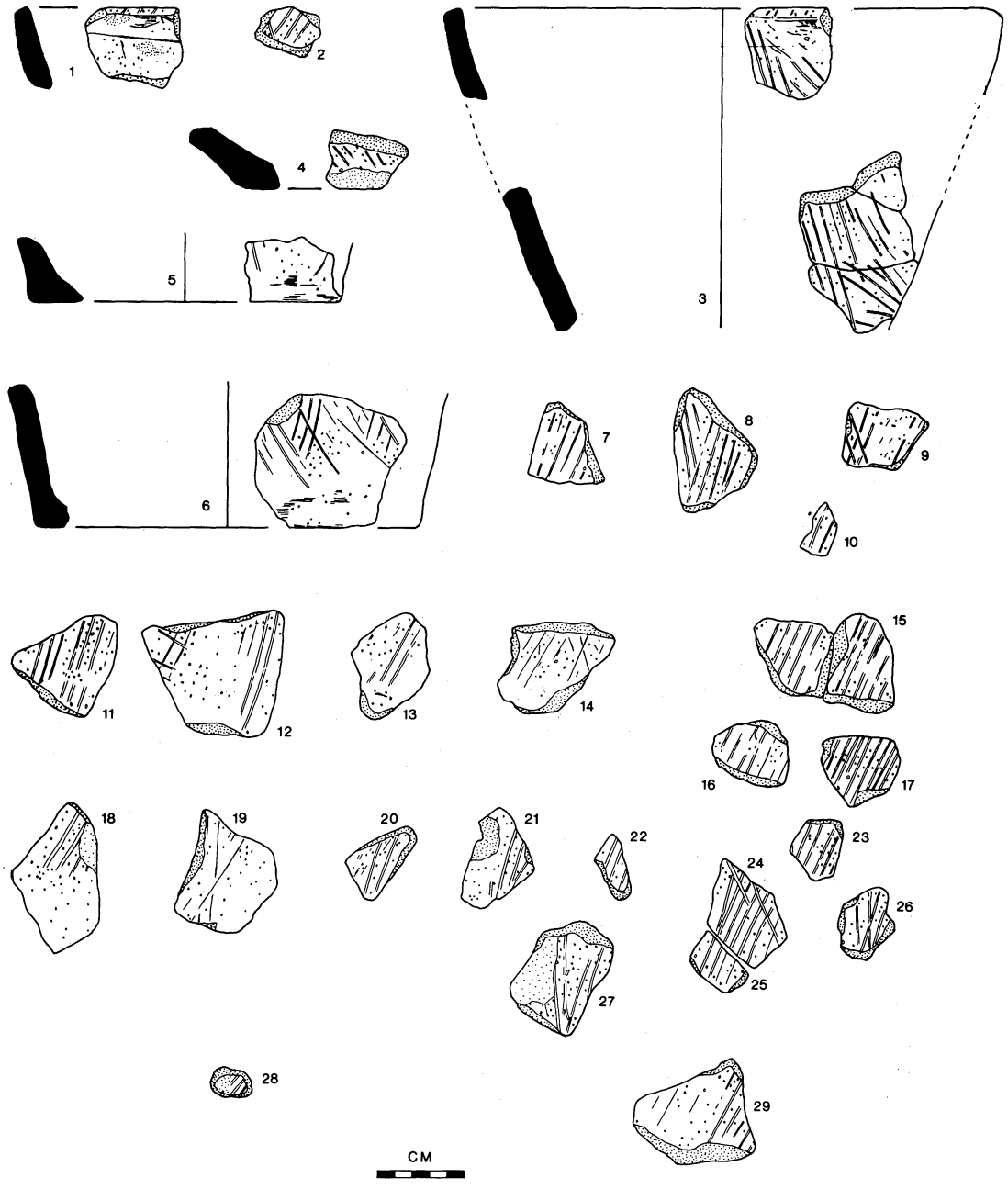

Fig 28. Stanwell, Bronze Age pottery of phase 2.1, nos 1–29

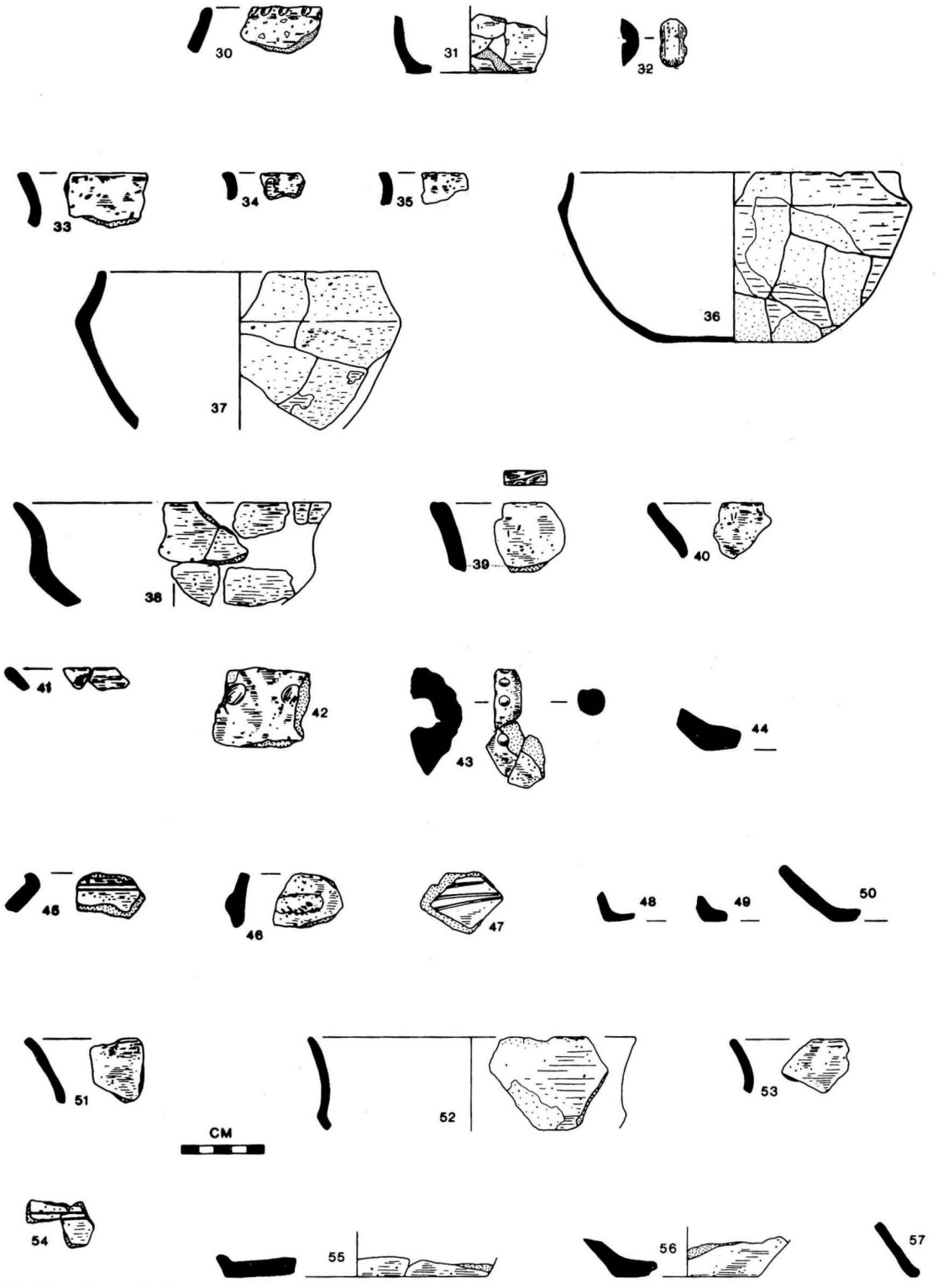

Fig 29. Stanwell, Bronze Age pottery of phases 2.2 and 2.3, nos 30–57

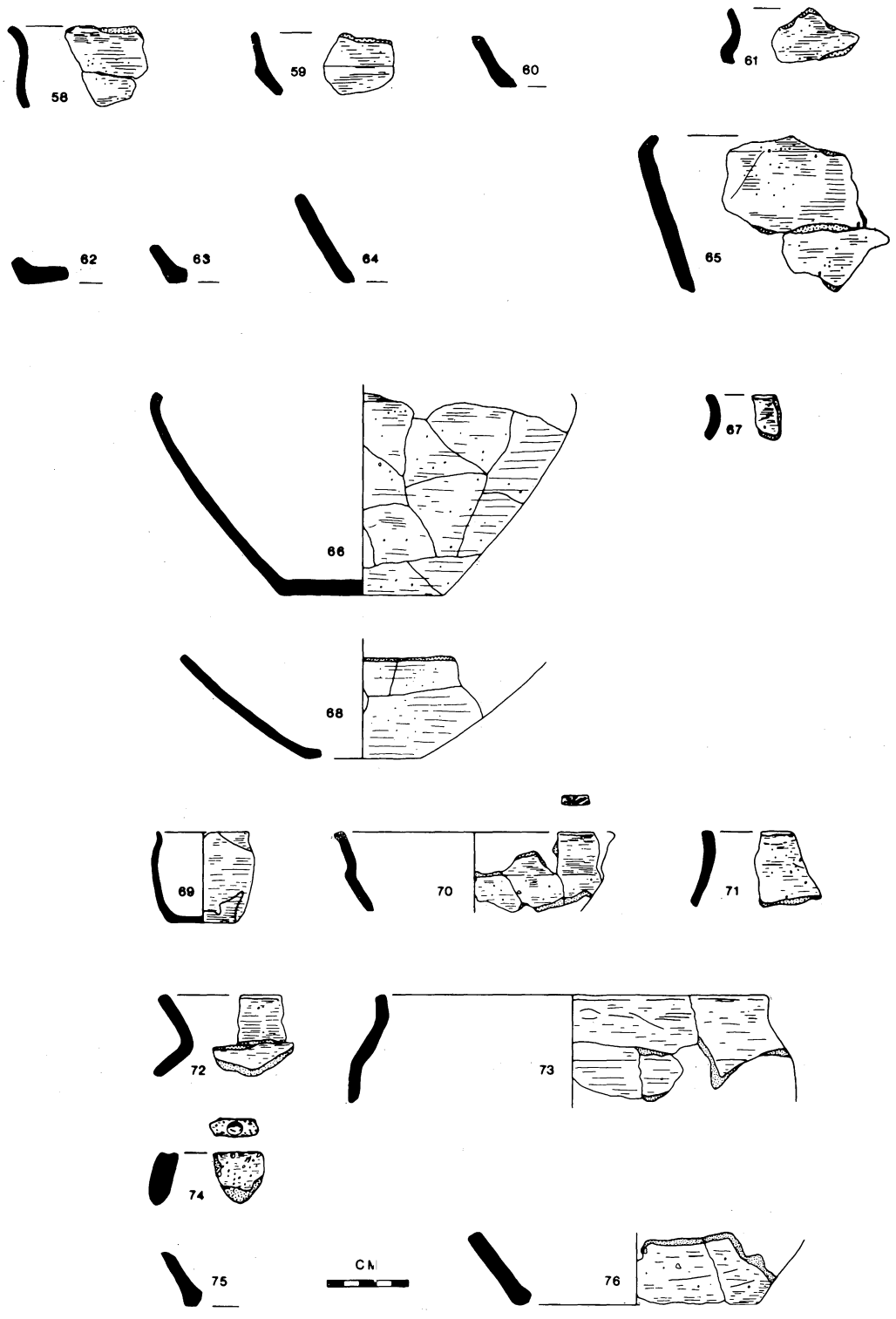

Fig 30. Stanwell, Bronze Age pottery of phase 2.3, nos 58–76

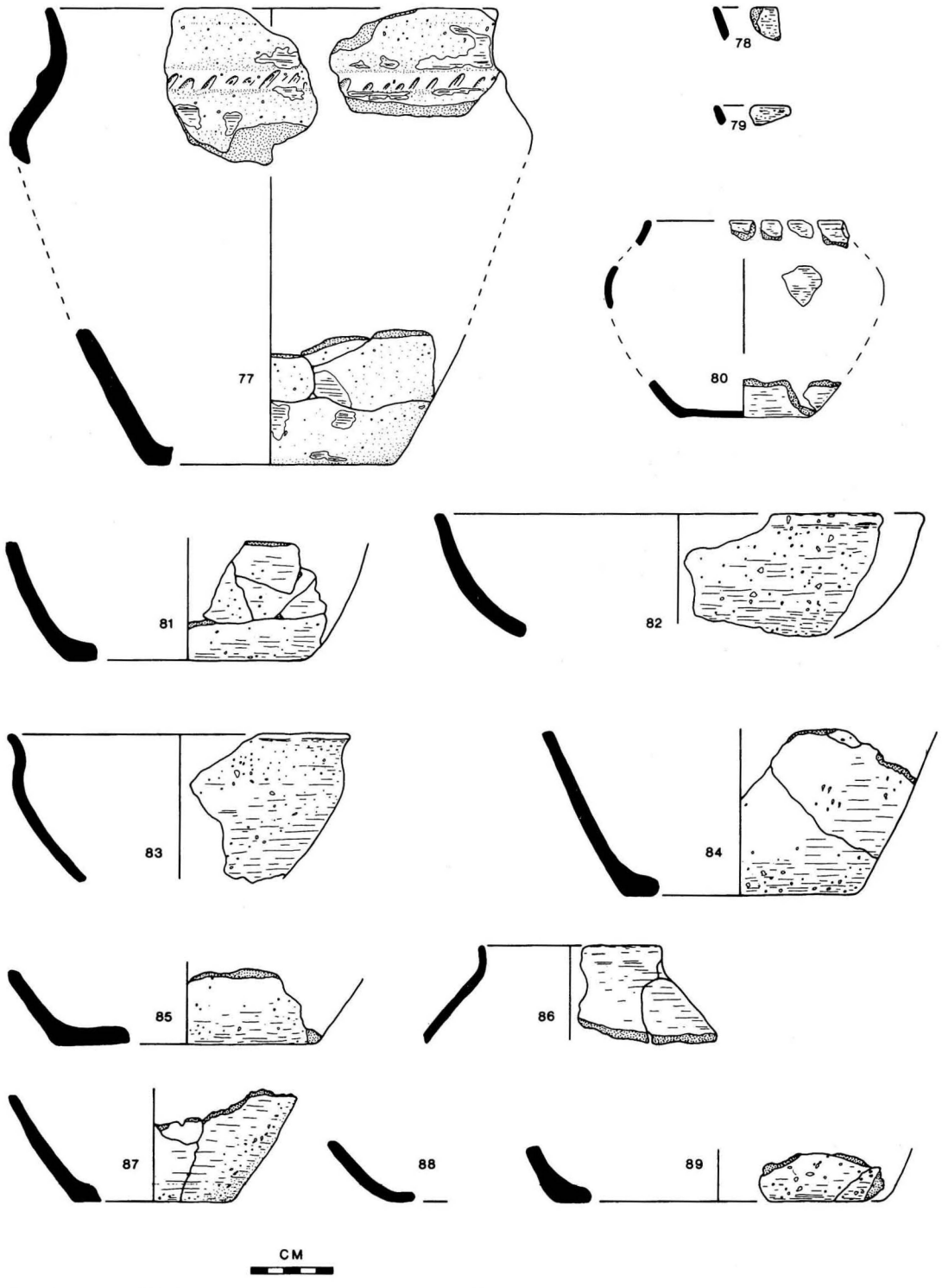

Fig 31. Stanwell, Bronze Age pottery of phase 2.3, nos 77–89

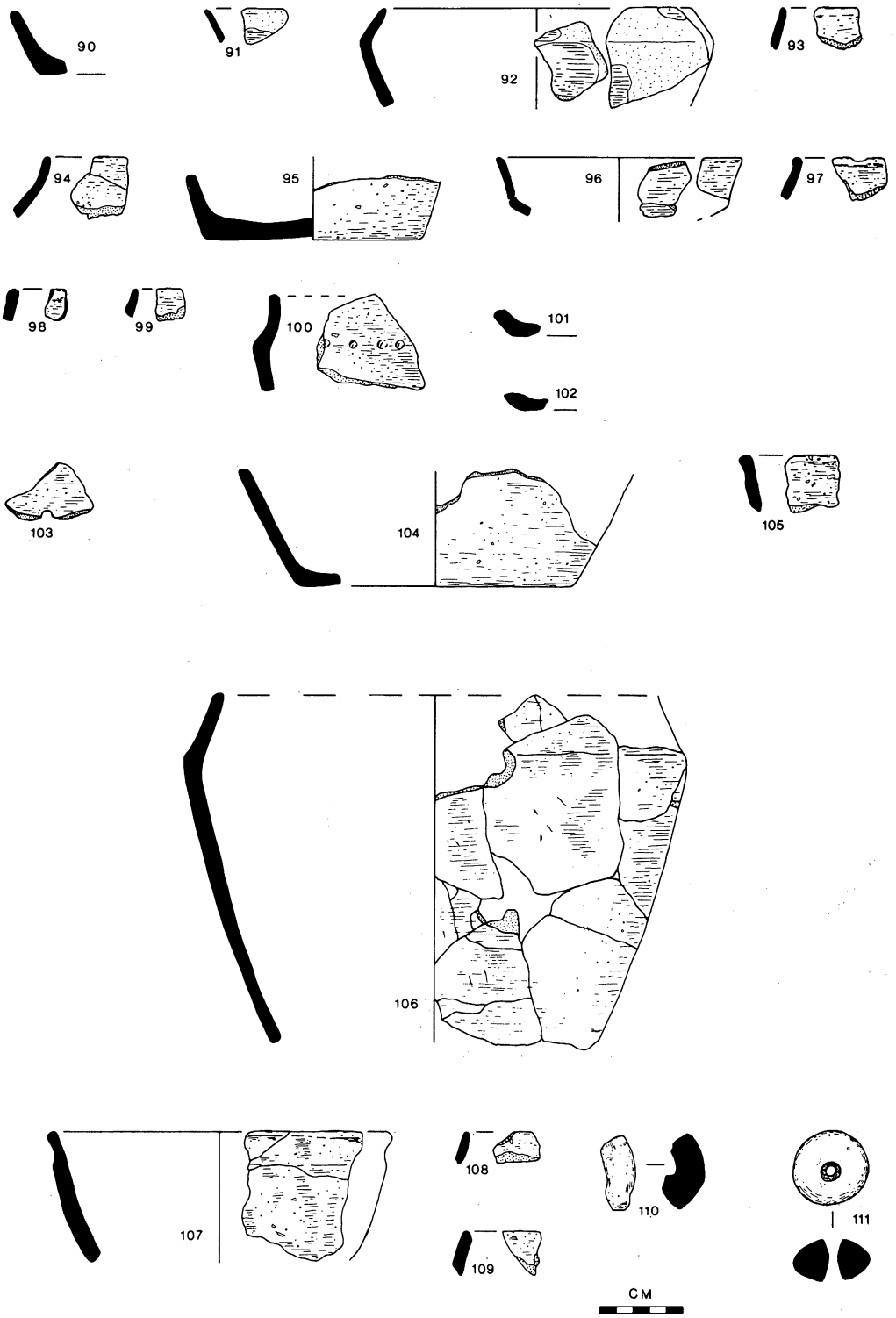

Fig 32. Stanwell, Bronze Age pottery of phase 2.3, nos 90–111

3.4.1 *Fabric*

Twelve fabric types were recognised to which 892 sherds could be assigned with some confidence. The percentages listed below are based upon the latter figure.

Fabrics

1 Body walls up to 15mm in thickness; high density of flint grits up to 3mm in diameter, some grog; surface oxidised to red/orange/brown; core grey/orange/brown; coarse. (5.26%)

2 Body walls up to 5mm in thickness; high density of well sorted flint grit up to 2mm in diameter; surfaces oxidised to red/brown, core red/brown; fine, traces of polish. (7.40%)

3 Body walls up to 8mm in thickness; high density of flint grits up to 4mm in diameter, some grog; surfaces reduced to dark grey/black/dark brown, core grey/black; coarse, crushed grit on bases. (13.34%)

4 Body walls up to 10mm in thickness; high density of flint grits up to 4mm in diameter, some grog; surfaces and core uniformly grey; coarse; examples have a vesicular appearance as a result of the leaching of the solid temper. (0.56%)

5 Body walls up to 5mm in thickness; high density of flint grits up to 4mm in diameter; surfaces reduced to dark grey/black, core black; medium to coarse. (1.23%)

6 Body walls up to 10mm in thickness; high density of flint grits up to 4mm in diameter, some grog; surfaces oxidised to orange/red/brown, core grey; coarse. (10.20%)

7 Body walls up to 15mm in thickness, although generally 8–10mm; high density of flint grits up to 5mm in diameter, some grog; outer surface orange/red/brown, inner surface dark grey/brown, core dark grey/black; coarse. (34.75%)

8 Body walls up to 11mm in thickness; medium density of flint grits up to 5mm in diameter, grog; surfaces brown/orange with a grey/black core; medium to coarse. (6.28%)

9 Body walls up to 11mm in thickness although normally averaging 6mm with one example of 4mm; high density of well sorted flint grits up to 5mm in diameter although the smaller grits predominate; some grog; surfaces reduced to dark grey/black with a grey/black core; fine, traces of surface polish. (16.59%)

10 Body walls up to 9mm in thickness; high density of well sorted flint grits up to 5mm in diameter, some grog; outer surface dark brown/red, inner surface dark grey/black, core black; fine, smoothed. (13.56%)

11 Body wall up to 14mm in thickness; very occasional flint grits up to 0.5mm in diameter, some grog; the principal tempering medium is shell; outer surface brown/grey, inner surface black, core black; coarse with a vesicular/pitted appearance due to leaching of temper. (0.11%)

12 Body walls up to 4mm in thickness; high density of well sorted flint grits up to 1mm in diameter, some grog; surfaces oxidised to orange/brown, core black; fine, smoothed. (1.90%)

3.4.2 *Forms*

Eleven different forms were identified and the percentages given are based upon a maximum number of rim sherds, supplemented by recognisable profiles without rims.

Forms

A Small cups. (2%)

B Bowls. Angular profile with out-turned rim and pronounced shoulder in which the rim diameter exceeds that of the shoulder. (22%).

C Bowls. Out-turned rim, slight shoulder. Rim diameter greater than shoulder. (Unstratified) (4.5%)

D Bowls. Distinctly angular profile in which the shoulder diameter exceeds that of the rim. All with plain rim except one example with a developed one. (13.5%)

E Bowls. Rounded profile with upright rim. Shoulder diameter exceeds that of rim. (2%)

F Bowls. Open mouthed. (2%)

G Hooked rim jars. (2%)

H Large bucket shaped jars. (4.5%)

I Jars with a convex profile and upright rim. (11.5%)

J Jars with an angular profile and flared rim. (9%)

K Large jars with a less angular profile, more rounded shoulder and upright rim. (6.5%)

Three handles were discovered but could not be related to any of the distinct forms. The bases were fairly simple, some of the coarser examples having crushed grit on the underside.

3.4.3 *Decoration*

5.6% of the sherds were decorated in some form. Six distinct decorative techniques had been used. The percentages are based upon the same figure used in assessing fabric types.

i) Smoothing and/or polishing. This technique was the prevailing characteristic of certain fabrics and therefore no percentage has been estimated. See Fabrics 2, 9, 10 and 12.

ii) Finger-tipping. On rim, shoulder, body and one handle (0.67%). See Form G in Fabric 6, Form K in Fabric 7. Also Fabric 3.

iii) Fingernail impressions on applied cordon on neck (0.33%). See Form I in Fabric 8. Also Fabric 7.

iv) Cable decoration on rim (0.22%). See Form J in Fabric 7, Form B in Fabric 9.

v) Incised linear decoration. Horizontal (0.33%). Form D in Fabric 6/7. Also Fabric 9.

vi) Incised linear decoration. Oblique, occasionally crossing to form a criss-cross pattern (2.9%). See Form H in Fabric 1. Also Fabric 6.

Forms and fabric can be related as follows:

FORM	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
Fabric 1								2			
2					1						
3										1	1
4						1					
5		1							2		
6			2				1				
7									1	1	2
8									2		
9	1	9		4						1	
10				1						1	
11											
12				1							

TABLE 9: Late Bronze Age pottery, forms and fabrics

BARRETT		STANWELL	PERCENTAGE
Class I	Coarse jars	G in Fabric 6 H in Fabric 1 I in Fabric 5, 7 and 8 J in Fabric 3 and 7 K in Fabric 3 and 7	28%
Class II	Finer jars	I in Fabric 10 J in Fabric 9 and 10	6%
Class III	Coarse bowls	B in Fabric 5 C in Fabric 6 F in Fabric 4	6–8%
Class IV	Finer bowls	B in Fabric 9 D in Fabric 9, 9/10 and 12 E in Fabric 2	35%
Class V	Cups	A in ? Fabric 7 and 9	2–4%

TABLE 10: Late Bronze Age Pottery, Functional Classes; Barrett classification applied to Stanwell assemblage

ILLUSTRATION	CONTEXT	(AREA)	FABRIC	FORM	DECORATION
Fig 28, 1	1573	(9)	1	H	vi
,, , 2	1573	(9)	1		vi
,, , 3	1570/1	(9)	1	H	vi
,, , 4	1571	(9)	1		vi
,, , 5	1571	(9)	1		vi
,, , 6	1571	(9)	1		vi
,, , 7	1571	(9)	1		vi
,, , 8	1571	(9)	1		vi
,, , 9	1571	(9)	1		vi
,, , 10	1571	(9)	1		vi
,, , 11	1571	(9)	1		vi
,, , 12	1571	(9)	1		vi
,, , 13	1572	(9)	1		vi
,, , 14	1572	(9)	1		vi
,, , 15	1570	(9)	1		vi
,, , 16	1570	(9)	1		vi
,, , 17	1570	(9)	1		vi
,, , 18	1570	(9)	1		vi
,, , 19	1570	(9)	1		vi
,, , 20	1570	(9)	1		vi
,, , 21	1570	(9)	1		vi
,, , 22	1570	(9)	1		vi
,, , 23	1570	(9)	1		vi
,, , 24	1570	(9)	1		vi
,, , 25	1570	(9)	1		vi
,, , 26	1570	(9)	1		vi
,, , 27	1570	(9)	1		vi
,, , 28	1597	(9)	?6		vi
,, , 29	1011 SF 3417	(9)	1		vi
Fig 29, 30	1131	(8)	3		ii
,, , 31	1800	(13)	7	A	
,, , 32	1543	(9)	6		
,, , 33	86	(1a)	10	J	i
,, , 34	86	(1a)	10	J	i
,, , 35	86	(1a)	10	?J	i
,, , 36	102	(1a)	?12	D	i
,, , 37	106	(1a)	10/9	D	i
,, , 38	572	(1b)	9	B	i
,, , 39	572	(1b)	7	J	iv
,, , 40	572	(1b)	3	?J	
,, , 41	572	(1b)	9		i
,, , 42	572	(1b)	3		ii
,, , 43	572	(1b)	7		ii
,, , 44	572	(1b)	9		i
,, , 45	579	(1b)	6/7	?D	v
,, , 46	579	(1b)	7		?iii
,, , 47	579	(1b)	9	?D	i,v
,, , 48	579	(1b)	7		
,, , 49	579	(1b)	7		
,, , 50	579	(1b)	7		
,, , 51	582	(1b)	9	B	i
,, , 52	583	(1b)	9	B	i
,, , 53	583	(1b)	9	B	i
,, , 54	583	(1b)	9		i,v
,, , 55	583	(1b)	3		
,, , 56	583	(1b)	9		i
,, , 57	583	(1b)	7		
Fig 30, 58	593	(1b)	9	B	i
,, , 59	593	(1b)	?3	B	
,, , 60	593	(1b)	6		
,, , 61	640	(1b)	7	?K	
,, , 62	594	(1b)	9		i
,, , 63	594	(1b)	3		
,, , 64	636	(1b)	?9		i
,, , 65	635	(1b)	3		
,, , 66	803	(5)	10	I	i
,, , 67	803	(5)	10		i
,, , 68	803	(5)	9		i
,, , 69	801	(5)	9	A	i
,, , 70	801	(5)	9	B	i,iv
,, , 71	801	(5)	7	I	
,, , 72	801	(5)	9	J	i
,, , 73	801	(5)	3	K	
,, , 74	801	(5)	6	G	ii
,, , 75	801	(5)	7		
,, , 76	801	(5)	7		i
Fig 31, 77	1520	(9)	8	I	iii
,, , 78	1520	(9)	10		i
,, , 79	1520	(9)	?3		
,, , 80	1811	(13)	2	E	i
,, , 81	1930	(9)	3		
,, , 82	1927	(9)	4	F	
,, , 83	1927	(9)	5	B	
,, , 84	1927	(9)	3		
,, , 85	1927	(9)	3		
,, , 86	1555	(9)	5	I	
,, , 87	1555	(9)	3		
,, , 88	1553	(9)	6		
,, , 89	1553	(9)	7		
Fig 32, 90	1553	(9)	7		
,, , 91	1552	(9)	9	?B	i
,, , 92	1551	(9)	9	D	i
,, , 93	1551	(9)	9	?D	i
,, , 94	1550	(9)	5	?I	
,, , 95	1550	(9)	3		
,, , 96	1549	(9)	9	B	i
,, , 97	1549	(9)	9	D	i
,, , 98	1549	(9)	9		i
,, , 99	1549	(9)	9	?D	i
,, , 100	1549	(9)	7	K	ii
,, , 101	1549	(9)	6		
,, , 102	1549	(9)	5		
,, , 103	1957	(9)	6		
,, , 104	1955	(9)	10		i
,, , 105	1546	(9)	6	?C	
,, , 106	1527	(9)	8	I	
,, , 107	1011 SF 3278	(9)	6	C	
,, , 108	1011 SF 3132	(9)	9		i
,, , 109	1011 SF 3228	(9)			
,, , 110	1011 SF 3373	(9)			
,, , 111	1011	(9)		Spindle Whorl	

TABLE 11: The Illustrated Bronze Age

3.4.5 *Discussion of the pottery*

Considering the extent of the area examined, the number and, in some cases, the size of the features investigated, only a relatively small group of pottery was produced by the site. The material was derived from a number of pits, most of which cannot be fitted into any sequence on stratigraphic grounds. In terms of fabric, typology and decoration, there is little ground for differentiating between pottery from Phases 2.2 and 2.3. However, the material from Phase 2.1 appears to be earlier, possibly much earlier, in origin. The latter is virtually exclusive to one large pit in Area 9 (1559). The fabric is characterised by its thickness and coarseness, with a much higher density of large flint grits than those found in pottery from Phases 2.2 and 2.3. The one form identified (Form H) from this group, as well as the treatment of the rim, suggests affinities with bucket urns from Deverel-Rimbury assemblages, although the decoration found on the Stanwell vessels is less easy to parallel.

The remainder of the material, apart from a small group assignable to Phase 2.2, comes from Phase 2.3 and demonstrates the characteristics of a typical Late Bronze Age domestic assemblage as defined by Barrett (1980). The comprehensive nature of that paper obviates the necessity for lengthy discussion in this report although some general observations should be noted. Only a broad contemporaneity can be assumed for features from Phase 2.3 unless further radiocarbon dates were to be produced from the samples submitted for analysis (see Preface). A sequence of radiocarbon measurements would be of immense value in assessing the significance of differences noticeable in the pottery from individual pits. In this context attention should be drawn to the fact that the greatest proportion of decorated ware occurs in Area 16:553, while Fabric 2, Form E was unique to Area 13: 1811. The one radiocarbon date available (HAR4823 490 ± 70 BC), obtained from wood found in Area 16:553 (Phase 2.3), indicates a date range comparable with that established at Petters Sports Field, Egham, where an important group of Late Bronze Age pottery (O'Connell 1986, 60–73) was discovered. Similarities betweeen the two assemblages include the nature of the fabric employed and the importance of the fine bowl series at both sites. The most significant variations at Stanwell are:

1 Smaller proportion of decorated pottery.

2 The occurrence of Fabrics 2 and 11. The use of an organic tempering agent in the prehistoric period of this region is difficult to parallel, though it should be noted that only one sherd was found in Fabric 11.

3 The presence of cups, entirely absent at Petters.

3.5 *Phase 2 – Discussion of the Late Bronze Age occupation*

The Bronze Age barrow tradition in this part of the Lower Thames Valley has been discussed recently by Needham (1987, 105–8) while the documentary and crop-mark evidence for such monuments in the immediate vicinity of Stanwell can be found in earlier sections of this report (1.2 and 1.3).

Within the confines of the site, there is an apparent hiatus between the end of the Neolithic period and the Later Bronze Age. Limited activity (Phase 2.1) preceded the field system but, apart from a ditch (Area 9:2025) and a large pit (Area 9:1559), the remaining features can be assigned to the same general period. Moreover, a number of the latter were probably the result of site clearance prior to the laying out of the field boundary ditches (see 3.1). It has been suggested (Needham 1987, 135) that the imposition of the field system came at a time of agricultural intensification (*c*1000 BC) when areas like Stanwell were cleared and utilized for cereal production.

Although the ditches of the Neolithic cursus would still probably have been visable as linear depressions (2.4), the field system was laid out on a totally different alignment, marked out by a series of ditches with two trackways provided to enable traffic to pass through the fields without damaging the crop.

Towards the end of the Late Bronze Age (7th or 6th century BC) the field ditches and trackways had become infilled and a period of occupational activity followed. It is from this period that the largest amount of material evidence from the site derives although the occupation itself is characterised by a number of scattered, unenclosed elements with no coherent form. The only clear structural evidence (two possible huts), found in Area 1a, may have provided the nucleus of the community although this is by no means certain. Whether the abandonment of the field system denotes a change to pastoralism can only be surmised. The bone assemblage is too small to be of any significance. The most interesting features are the four massive pits, interpreted as wells (3.3). The latter were found at various parts of the site and indicate a need for maintaining a large readily available water supply. In view of the small scale of the settlement it is conceivable that livestock were the primary concern in the provision of such pits which, if so, is significant for an understanding of the economy of the site at that time.

Part 4: Phase 3 - Romano-British Period

4.1 THE DITCH (145) (Microfiche 90)

The terminal and part of the line of a shallow ditch - maximum width 1.30m and depth 0.33m - was discovered within Area 1a. It was thought that it might have served as a bedding trench for a fence or palisade but a longitudinal section produced no evidence of post sockets or postpipes *in situ*. The profile varied from V- (Section AR) to U-shaped (BC) while the fill (416) was uniform and consisted of mid brown loam with gravel. Finds comprised a number of abraded sherds of prehistoric and Romano-British pottery, Romano-British tile and a lump of what appeared to be iron slag. Prehistoric and Romano-British pottery was also found when the ditch and the area close by were first cleared after machine stripping. The ditch may have served as a property or field boundary.

4.3 PHASE 3 - DISCUSSION OF THE ROMANO-BRITISH OCCUPATION

The quantity of scattered Romano-British material is indicative of settlement at or in the vicinity of Stanwell. Some doubt is cast upon the age of the only feature (Area 1a:145) assigned to this phase because of the discovery of a Saxon baked clay object in the ultimate fill of the former. Intrusive elements have been found in earlier contexts elsewhere - (Area 1b:553; Area 9:1544/1902) where, as in the case of the Romano-British ditch, the material was discovered at the very top of the ultimate fill of those features.

Part 5: Phase 4 - The Saxon Period

5.1. THE LINEAR FEATURES

The gully (Microfiche 91)

The gully (Area 1b: 561; Area 7: 1031) was a shallow curving feature - maximum width 1.20m and depth 0.27m - terminating in Area 1b and generally U-shaped in profile. The fill (5.3) was fairly uniform apart from variations in the southern half of the feature (Area 1b: Section GB) where two further layers (562 and 564) could be distinguished. There was no evidence of recutting, however, and 562 and 564 differed from 563 only in the quantity of clay and stones present in the fill, but must nevertheless indicate a more complex period of infilling in this part of the feature. The finds consisted of grass-tempered pottery, several iron objects and some slag suggestive of metalworking in the vicinity of the site.

Previous excavation (Poulton 1978) coupled with the results of investigation within Area 7 demonstrated the existence of a layer overlying the gully, consisting of brown clayey silt

(Area 7: 1032) and containing finds of the same nature and period as those produced by the gully itself. It is not clear whether this layer represents the partial survival of an occupational level or simply the scattered remains of the upper section of the gully which had certainly been truncated by later activity on the site, diminishing in depth to 0.09m in Area 7 (Section JY).

The ? ditch (fig 9)

A shallow depression – maximum width 2.40m and depth 0.14m – linear in plan with a rounded terminal (Area 7: 1020) – may represent the vestigial remains of a ditch associated with an oval enclosure which had been noted as a vague, shadowy outline on an aerial photograph of the site (see 1.4).

The excavated feature (1020) would, in that case, have been part of the northernmost section of the enclosure whose southern limit had not survived (no trace being discovered in Area 8 where it would once have existed). The fill (1019), brown to grey clayey silt, produced Saxon pottery, bone and slag together with some residual prehistoric sherds.

5.2 OCCUPATIONAL FEATURES (Microfiche 92–3)

Two pits could be placed fairly confidently within Phase 4, namely Area 1b: 619 and Area 6: 1004.

The first (Area 1b: 619) was a roughly circular feature, with eroded vertical sides and a flat base – maximum width 1.5m and depth 1.22m. The ultimate (630) and tertiary fill (631) produced no finds but the secondary (632) and in particular the primary fill (633) contained quantities of charcoal and domestic debris. Pottery (grass-tempered), bone, iron objects and slag were discovered in (633), indicative of rubbish disposal. The original function of the pit is not certain but the nature and content of the primary fill does suggest that it served as a rubbish pit in its final stage.

Rubbish disposal would also appear to have been an important element in the infilling of (1004) (Area 6). This was oval to circular in plan – maximum width 2.70m and depth 1.11m – and contained a fill of only two layers (7.3), the most recent of which produced the only datable material.

5.4 THE POTTERY, by P Jones (figs 33–4)

226 sherds (1878g) were considered to be of Saxon pottery although a few sherds may be prehistoric. Those of questionable date are of several minority fabric types tempered with quartz sand and variable quantities of organic inclusions, grog and flint, the 'Saxon sandy wares' (see note, 5.4.1, for assumptions regarding the differentiation of Saxon and prehistoric sherds). The majority however (190 sherds) are in typical variants of the grass/chaff tempering tradition as found and described from several Early to Mid-Saxon occupation sites in the area.

GC 1 and 2 (standard grass/chaff-tempered ware)

148 sherds, 1245g; 66% of all sherds that are probably Saxon. Badly handmade, generally with dark grey/black core and similar or patchy brown straw or chaff from cereals (*Hordeum* internodes and husks have been identified in some Staines pottery), and there are often rare or sparse inclusions of quartz sand, grog, flint and chalk that were probably accidentally incorporated into the clay body. In Staines those without and with chalk grains have been divided into types GC1 and 2 but this is not followed here.

Most of the recognizable Saxon vessel forms that could be illustrated are of this fabric type. There are at least 6 jars, 3 bowls and a lid that are represented by rim sherds, but only 2 base angles could be identified, implying that most vessels were round-based, with no carination between the body and the base. All of the jars seem to have globular bodies and are of small diameter at the rim (*c*10–14cm). Their rim forms are simple everted types with either no substantial neck or with a longer eversion, and all

have round-end terminations. The 3 bowls are each of a distinctive form; one of which is truly bowl-like, one which may be classified as a cup, and the other is possibly a handled bucket type. The lid rim sherd is crudely beaded and although there is a possibility that it is from a pedestal base or even a jar, this is considered to be slight. The two base angles have rounded profiles and were probably formed by depressing the undersides of globular vessels when still plastic, so forming slightly omphaloid bases.

Several of the rim sherds described below were of such crude manufacture that there is little exactitude in the illustrations as to either rim diameter or the correct orientation.

(fig 33, no 15). Rim and upper part of a jar with simple everted rim on a short neck. Dark grey/black core and internal surfaces; patchy brown to black external surfaces. Rim diameter and orientation as illustrated is probably correct.

(fig 33, no 18). A similar jar to the above with slightly longer neck. Dark grey/black core and surfaces. Rim diameter and orientation as illustrated is probably correct.

(fig 34, no 23). Rim sherd of a jar with simple rim. Dark grey/black core and internal surfaces, brown to black external patchy surface. Rim diameter and orientation as illustrated is approximate.

(fig 33, no 21). Rim sherd of a jar with short and simple rim. Dark grey/black. Diameter and orientation as illustrated is approximate.

(fig 33, no 19). Two joining sherds from the rim and shoulder of a jar with a long everted and simple rim. Dark grey/black. Rim diameter and orientation as illustrated is probably close to being correct.

(fig 33, no 17). Three joining sherds from the rim of a jar with a long and fairly straight everted neck. Dark grey/black core and internal surface, red/brown to black external surface. Rim diameter and orientation as illustrated is approximate.

(fig 34, no 25). Rim sherd. Dark grey/black core, grey/black to brown surfaces. The orientation of the vessel as illustrated is probably incorrect except at this small fragment of the rim. If the rim is more upright instead of in-turned as shown, then it is possibly from a part that is close to a projection such as a handle. This would explain such a distortion of

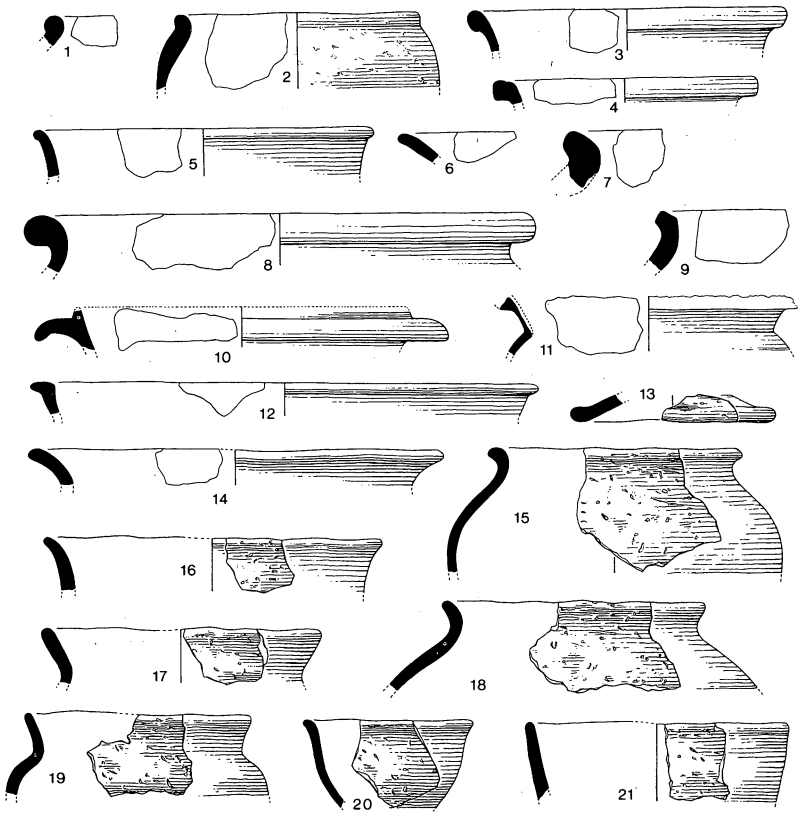

Fig 33. Stanwell, Roman and Saxon pottery, scale 1:4

observed orientation. Perhaps a bowl with an inturned rim, but possibly from a bowl/bucket such as (fig 34, nos 31–33) below.

(fig 33, no 13). Rim sherd, probably of a lid. Red/brown to dark grey/black core and surfaces. The diameter and orientation as illustrated is probably close to being correct.

(fig 33, no 20). Rim and upper part of a cup or small bowl. Red/brown to dark grey/black core and surfaces. The diameter as illustrated is probably correct as it was measured at two places, on the rim and mid-body; the orientation is less secure but probably almost correct.

(fig 34, no 24). Rim sherd of a bowl. Dark grey/black core, dull red/brown to dark brown surfaces. The diameter and orientation as illustrated is approximately correct; the vessel may be slightly more upright or splayed than is shown.

(fig 34, nos 31–33). Five sherds possibly of one vessel were found in this context: A rim sherd of a bowl with near-vertical upper part and curving lower part (fig 34, no 32); part of a handle of roughly rectangular section, springing from, and continuing the line of a near-vertical rim (fig 34, no 31); two joining sherds probably from the lower wall and rounded base angle (fig 34, no 33); and a small body sherd (not illustrated). It is difficult to be certain that these are from one vessel which is why they are drawn separately, but the colour variation and texture are very similar, and both the handle/rim sherd and the rim sherd seem to be of hemispherical bowl form. There are some problems with this interpretation however. The handle is presumably sprung across the mouth of the vessel, but considering the curvature of the extant fragment it would have to be of inverted V shape with an angle in the middle, unless the rim diameter is inaccurate and the vessel is wider than is apparent from the rim sherd. Also, the wall-sherds indicate a deeper vessel than is suggested by the incurving lower wall of the rim fragment. A suggested reconstruction is that of a bucket-shaped vessel, deeper or the same as it is wide, with rounded omphaloid base and a handle across the top.

Dark grey/black with grey/black to dark red/brown surfaces; some intermittent burnishing on the topside of the handle and the body.

(fig 34, no 28). Rounded base-angle, probably slightly omphaloid. Dark grey/black.

(fig 34, no 27). Rounded base-angle, probably slightly omphaloid. Dark grey/black with grey/black to red/brown external surface.

GC3 (as GC1 and 2 but with less grass/chaff inclusions)

10 sherds, 71g; *c*4% of probable Saxon sherds. Only body sherds were found.

GC4 (as GC1 and 2 but with more quartz sand, now deliberately added as temper)

30 sherds, 394g; *c*14% of probable Saxon sherds. Only two sherds could be illustrated:

(fig 33, no 10). Rim sherd, probably of a jar. Dark grey/black with dark brown external surface. Burnished on the upper interior of the rim. Both the orientation and diameter as illustrated are approximate.

(fig 34, no 29). Segment of a thick, and crudely-made handle, approximately oval in section and with

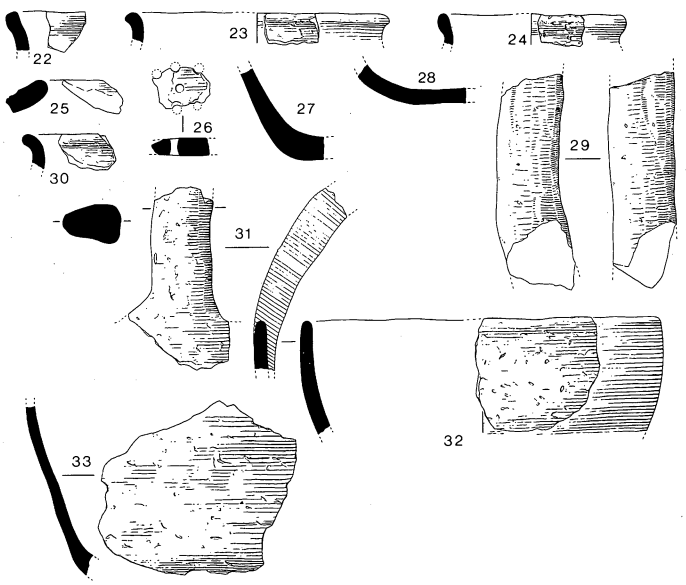

Fig 34. Stanwell, Saxon pottery, scale 1:4

little curvature along its length. Dark grey/black core, red/brown to brown surfaces. This may also be from a bucket-type vessel but is more substantial than that from F8 (fig 34, no 31).

Saxon sandy wares

35 sherds, 148g; 15% of all sherds that are probably Saxon. Nine fabric types were differentiated although there could be more, or else they could be rationalized into fewer types. Since all but two sherds are undistinguished body sherds; some sherds are possibly prehistoric; as most are unstratified finds, there seemed little point in any prolonged study. All sherds are handmade.

Sherds predominantly tempered with quartz sand and containing some grass/chaff:

(i) + sparse grass/chaff: (13 sherds, 49g. Dull brown to dark grey. All are probably Saxon.

(ii) + rare grass/chaff: 5 sherds, 25g. Similar to (i). Probably Saxon.

(iii) + moderate grass/chaff and sparse flint: 1 rim sherd (fig 34, no 22), 4g. From a jar or bowl. Dark grey/black core and internal surface, dull red/brown external surface. The orientation as illustrated is very approximate. Probably Saxon.

(iv) + sparse grass/chaff and sparse flint: 7 sherds, 30g. Probably Saxon.

(v) + moderate grog and sparse grass/chaff: 3 sherds, 30g. Possibly Saxon but perhaps prehistoric.

Sherds predominantly tempered with quartz sand but with no discernible grass/chaff inclusions:

(vi) + sparse flint and grog: 1 sherd (fig 34, no 26), 6g. Dark grey/black with dark brown surfaces. This is a sherd from a perforated base and shows six round holes pierced before firing. Probably Saxon.

(vii) + some grog: 1 sherd, 4g. Possibly Saxon.

(viii) + sparse flint: 3 sherds, 5g. Possibly Saxon.

(ix) + rare flint: 1 sherd, 5g. Possibly Saxon but perhaps Roman.

Saxon grog-tempered sherds

3 sherds, 20g. Two fabric types are represented and both are handmade.

Frequent grog and sparse grass/chaff: 2 sherds, 18g. Probably Saxon.

Frequent grog and sparse quartz sand: 1 sherd, 4g. Possibly Saxon.

There seems little point in any lengthy exposition of the Saxon pottery from Stanwell since there are few distinguishing features that would allow for precise dating within the Early to Mid-Saxon period. The jars for example, could as easily belong to the 5th or the 9th century, although for a number of reasons it is more likely that most sherds are of Mid-Saxon date and are perhaps as late as the 9th century.

There is an absence of decorated Early Saxon pottery types such as have been found on domestic sites at Ham (Jones, forthcoming), Shepperton Green (Canham 1979), and Staines (Jones 1982), and although this in itself is no more than circumstantial evidence, negative at that, one would have expected at least some stamped, fluted or carinated sherds within a collection of 226 sherds if there had been any 5th or 6th century occupation.

The handled vessels, lid and cup are not unique within the area; some have been found at Old Windsor in Phase 3b occupation of the late 8th or early 9th century when many new forms of grass/chaff-tempered pottery were made in addition to the ubiquitous globular jars of earlier Mid-Saxon phases (O'Neil 1958). Ipswich-type ware was also found at Old Windsor and at a nearby Saxon site that occupied the central area of the Neolithic causewayed camp at Yeoveney Lodge (Robertson-Mackay et al, 1987), but its absence at Stanwell need not discount Mid-Saxon occupation since the pitchers that were made of this imported ware are rare finds within domestic assemblages west of London.

The only other possible indication of date is provided by the form (fig 33, no 17). This is a long and straight everted rim with round-end termination which is medieval in character and very similar to cooking-pot rims found in other fabric types in 10th and 11th century assemblages throughout southern England. Rim forms, especially of handmade vessels are never wholly reliable as a basis for typological seriation, but this one tends to confirm the impression gained from the other finds, that much of the pottery is from a late stage within the period of grass/chaff-tempering within the area.

Much of the Stanwell Saxon pottery therefore, is more likely to be of late 8th or 9th century date, and although some may be earlier there is no ceramic evidence for Early Saxon occupation.

ILLUSTRATION	CONTEXT	AREA
Fig 33, 1	1011	9
,, 2	1011	9
,, 3	1011	8
,, 4	1011	8
,, 5	1011	9
,, 6	1011	9
,, 7	5	1a
,, 8	5	1a
,, 9	535	1b
,, 10	1011	9
,, 11	5	19
,, 12	1131	8
,, 13	1019	7
,, 14	1011	8
,, 15	1030	7
,, 16	1011	9
,, 17	1011	8
,, 18	1030	7
,, 19	1011	7
,, 20	1019	7
,, 21	633	1b
Fig 34,22	1011	9
,, 23	1019	7
,, 24	633	1b
,, 25	1543	9
,, 26	1024	8
,, 27	1030	7
,, 28	1030	7
,, 29	1030	7
,, 30	1011	9
,, 31	F.8	Trial Trench 1977
,, 32	F.8	Trial Trench 1977
,, 33	F.8	Trial Trench 1977

TABLE 12: The illustrated Saxon pottery

5.7 PHASE 4 – DISCUSSION OF THE SAXON OCCUPATION

The oval enclosure was one of the vaguest and least well defined of the crop-mark features (1.3) and not surprisingly the only remains of it consisted of a shallow linear depression excavated in Area 7 (1020). Very little Saxon material was found within the supposed interior of the enclosure (Area 8) and its southern limits remained undetected. With such a depth of evidence it is impossible to draw any valid conclusions about such a nebulous feature.

Most of the occupational material was found in relation to a gently curving gully (see 5.1) and a substantial pit (Area 1b:619). Some distance to the west (*c*100m) two pits were discovered (Area 6: 1003 and 1004) after stripping of the overburden by the gravel company, while a spread of Saxon pottery can be discerned in Area 9 (fig 15).

What emerges from this collection of disparate elements is a picture of small scale rural settlement. Most of the datable evidence is thought to be late 8th or 9th century (see 5.4).

Part 6: Phase 5 – The Medieval Period

6.1 THE LINEAR FEATURES (Microfiche 94–5)

A series of shallow gullies (Table 12; 6.3) were investigated which formed two roughly parallel lines, 2–4m apart, on the same general alignment but slightly to the east of the post-medieval field boundary between Court Lay and Grigg's Close (see 1.2).

The course of the gullies is discontinuous and a number of gaps, varying in length, occur, while irregularities both in the plan and alignment of the features are noticeable. At the southern extremity of Area 8 the gullies begin in a fairly regular fashion (1141 and 1143) but further north the alignment goes astray (1151, 1122, 1128) and is complicated in Areas 7 and 8 by the addition of smaller gullies (Area 7: 1047; Area 8: 1110). In Area 1b, 550 continues the western line of the features but 1–2m to the west, another gully, 9.30m in length, was discovered. The gaps that were noted may be due, at least in part, to later truncation of the features, which vary in depth between 0.04 and 0.39m. For the most part, the features resemble furrows and may well have been produced by plough action although their proximity to an old land division suggests that they were dug with the intention of delineating or establishing a boundary.

It is possible that the area between the parallel lines of ditches was intended as a trackway although the irregularities observed in Area 8 may have made such a function difficult to work in practice.

The fill of the gullies varied little (apart from Area 16: 566), consisting generally of brown clayey silt with differing amounts of gravel. 566 was a larger feature containing a primary silt layer (568) below an ultimate earthier fill (567). The datable finds were relatively scarce and apart from medieval pottery included residual material from prehistoric, Romano-British and Saxon periods.

6.2 OTHER FEATURES (Microfiche 94)

One of the gullies (Area 1b: 550) cut a hearth which showed evidence of two phases (613 and 615) but unfortunately produced no datable material (8.3).

An elongated, irregularly shaped depression with a U-shaped profile (Area 8: 1116), overlay at least one of the gullies (Area 8: 1118). The fill was similar to that of the gullies and produced finds from several periods, namely Romano-British, Saxon and Medieval.

AREA	GULLY	MAX WIDTH (m)	MAX DEPTH (m)
1b	550	0.55	0.24
1b	566	1.10	0.39
7	1029	1.15	0.16
8	1114	1.30	0.22
7	1047	0.25	0.04
7	1054	0.60	0.07
8	1110	0.30	0.12
8	1112	0.40	0.15
8	1122	0.60	0.21
8	1128	0.70	0.18
8	1141	0.40	0.17
8	1143	0.60	0.13
8	1151	0.60	0.10

TABLE 13: Dimensions of Medieval gullies

6.5 PHASE 5 – DISCUSSION OF THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD

Little can be added to the description of the linear features (6.1) other than that the starting point for settlement in this period could be as early as the late 11th or 12th century. The most interesting aspect of the features is the fact that, at least in this part of the site, they follow the same alignment as the Neolithic cursus, while the post-medieval field boundary that succeeds them (see 7.1) is actually superimposed upon the western ditch of that prehistoric monument (Area 8). By contrast, linear features from the intervening periods (Bronze Age, Romano-British and Saxon) ignore the line of the cursus. Perhaps it is too

facile to explain this arrangement as coincidental although there are no obvious topographical restraints that would have influenced the medieval occupiers of the site unless some part of the Neolithic enclosure were still visible as a denuded mound or depression.

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