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OF THE
SUTTON HOO
RESEARCH COMMITTEE



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CONTENTS

Preface	3
Excavations at Sutton Hoo 1986 (M.O.H. Carver and A.J. Copp)	
– Summary	5
– Interventions 32 and 39	5-6
– Intervention 41	6
The East Anglia Kingdom Survey (J. Newman)	10
Excavations at Snape, 1986 (W. Filmer-Sankey)	13

Technical Section

The Leverhulme Project on chemical decay and the detection of organic residues (P. Bethell and J. Miles)	18
Moulding 'sandmen' for exhibition – a preliminary note (M.O.H. Carver and C.L. Royle)	20
Remote plotting at Sutton Hoo – a new way of planning (M.O.H. Carver)	21
Three-dimensional Graphics at Sutton Hoo: some preliminary investigations (P. Reilly, J. Richards and A. Walter)	24

Chronicle

Archive	28
Publications	28
Sutton Hoo Seminars	29
Public Lectures by the Research Director	29
BBC Television Broadcasts	30
The Sutton Hoo Society	30
Sponsorship and Expenditure	31
Participation	32
The Sutton Hoo Research Committee	33

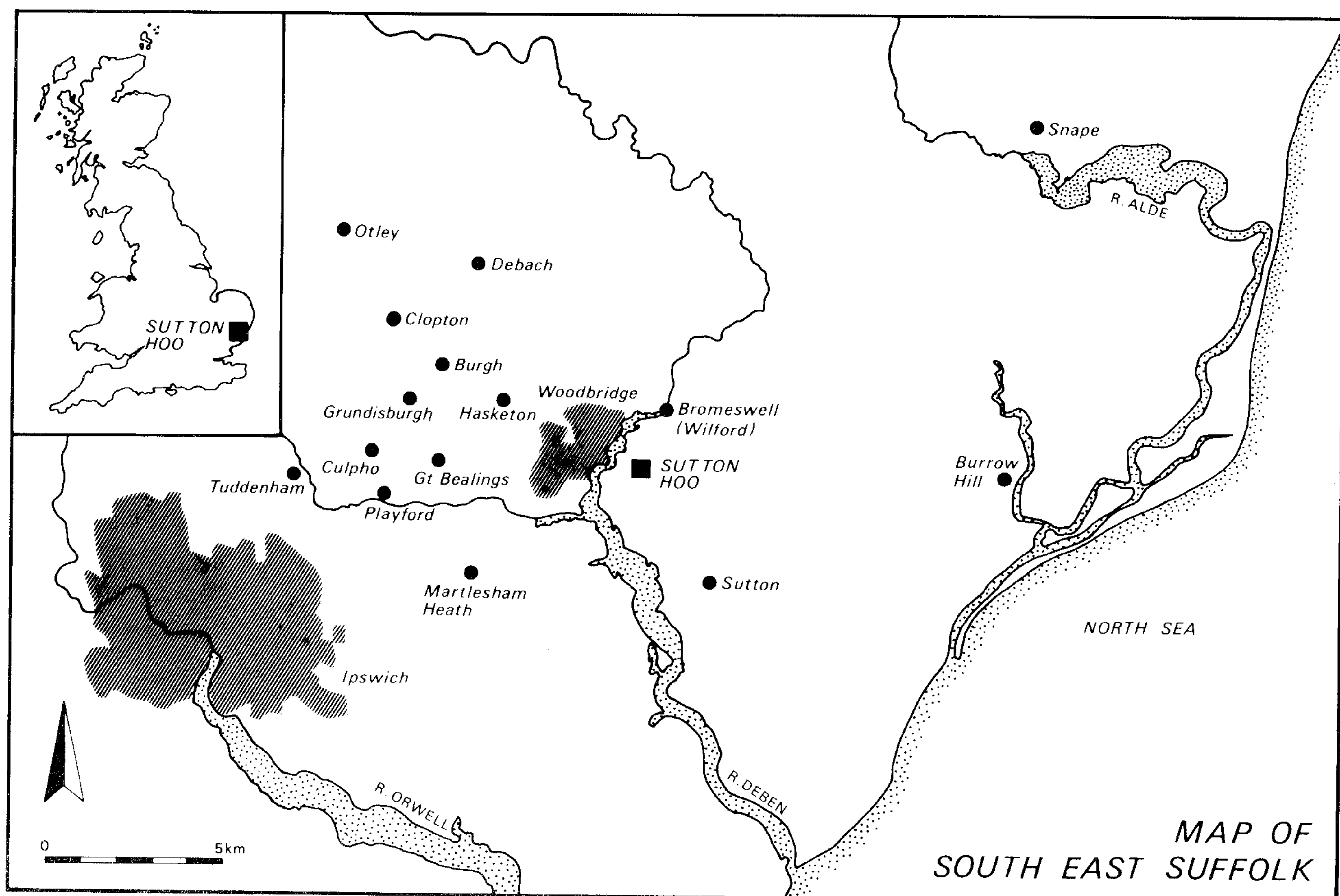
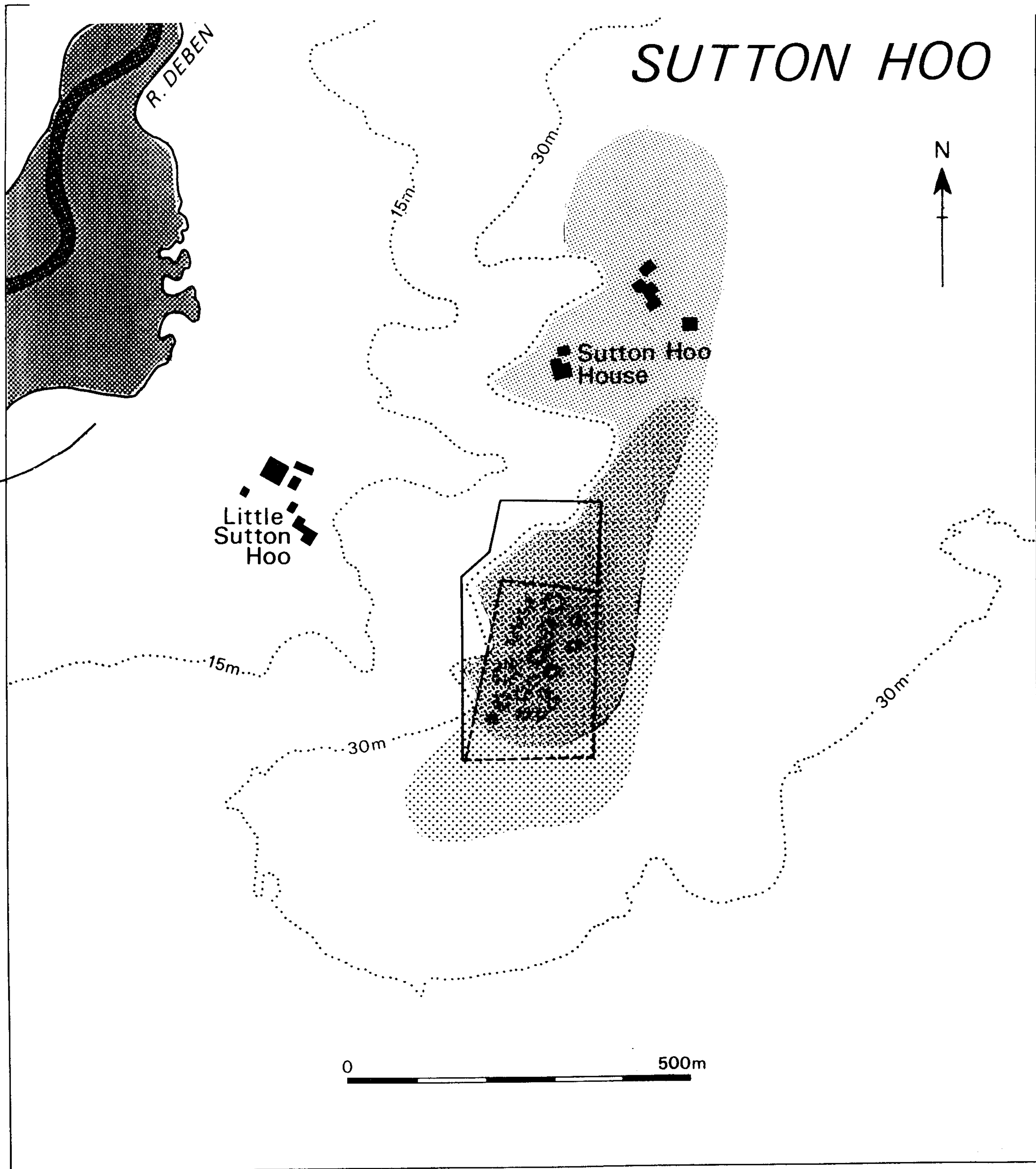
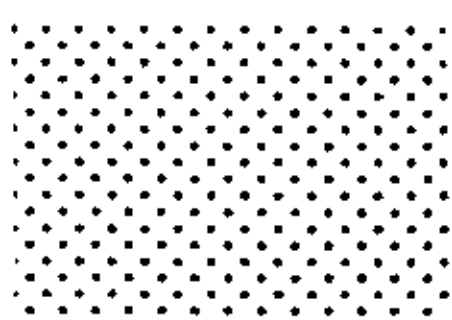


Fig. 1: South-East Suffolk (Royle).



The prehistoric site



The Early Medieval site



Scheduled Area

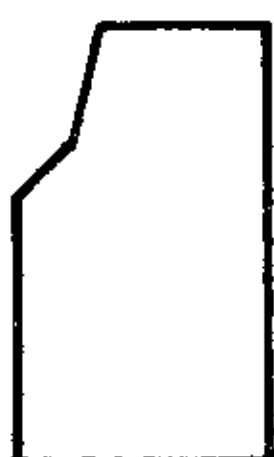


Fig. 2: Extent of prehistoric and Early Medieval sites (Royle).

PREFACE

The previous edition of the Bulletin (*Bulletin of the Sutton Hoo Research Committee* 4, 1986) carried an account of the project design that was proposed for Sutton Hoo, following three years of site evaluation and reconnaissance. After the acceptance in principle of this project design by the sponsors and the Department of the Environment, excavation of the agreed sample began in August 1986 and has continued full-time since then. Meanwhile the project has moved from its original home in the University of Birmingham to the University of York, where the director was appointed Professor in October 1986. The project staff are now members of the Department of Archaeology there, and the data base is held on the University of York's mainframe computer.

This report deals with the preliminary results of the excavations that were undertaken during 1986 in the eastern part of the site (Interventions 32 and 39), where a group of sixteen graves represented the eastern edge of the Anglo-Saxon cemetery.

During late 1986 and 1987, excavation of Sector 2 (Intervention 41), containing Mounds 2 and 5, began and is scheduled for completion in April 1988. The preliminary results from Int. 41 will be published in *Bulletin* 6 during 1988.

We are also privileged to report results from the survey work being pursued by John Newman which is doing so much to place the Sutton Hoo site in its context, and from William Filmer-Sankey's important (and contrasting) excavation at neighbouring Snape.

A new feature of the Bulletin is a *Technical Section*, designed to give notice of a small selection of the technical innovations attempted. This is in response to enquiries received, but should only be regarded as a 'trailer' to more considered assessments which are to be published later.

Chronicle provides our readers with an update on research and publication in progress, together with details of expenditure and sponsorship.

M.O.H. Carver

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SUTTON HOO : Revised Excavation Sample

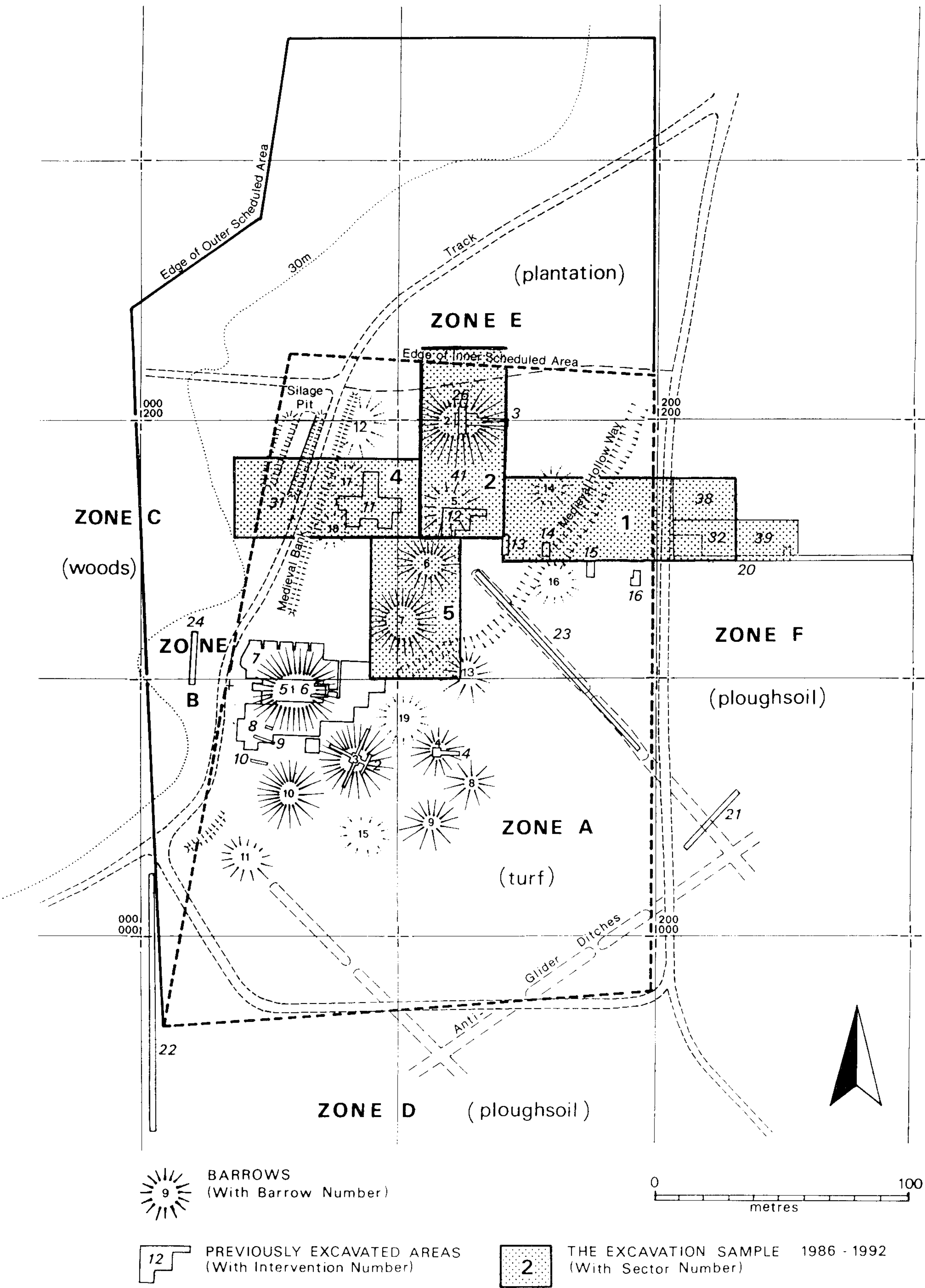


Fig. 3: The sample to be excavated, with minor revisions, 1987 (Royle).

EXCAVATIONS AT SUTTON HOO 1986/7

SUMMARY

Excavations were completed at the *eastern* extremity of the research sample in 1986, two contiguous areas 16 x 48m being examined, (INT. 32 and INT. 39). Sixteen graves were found, mainly unfurnished and with a variety of orientations. The disposition of the body was also very varied, and at least six examples showed evidence of execution or ritual killing. Two burials were radiocarbon dated to the 7th and 8th century A.D. The graves have been cut into a prehistoric settlement consisting of ditches, pits and palisade trenches, containing predominantly Neolithic and Beaker material. There was some evidence that prehistoric earthworks were still visible in the period of the Early Medieval cemetery.

Excavations began in the *northern* area of the research sample in 1986, the area opened measuring 32 x 64m (INT. 41). At the uppermost level of visible definition, Mound 2 was defined as a barrow 24m in diameter, collapsed into a quarry ditch 6m to 10m across. Mound 5 survived as a platform of buried soil 14m in diameter. At least six graves were located and excavated, five surrounding Mound 5, and one, a child's grave surrounded by a ring ditch 2.5m in diameter in the south east corner of the excavated area. There were no graves cut into Mound 2. This excavation continued in 1987 and will be reported in the next edition of the *Bulletin*.

INTERVENTION 32 (Fig. 4)

Purpose and Method

The main objective was to locate securely the eastern edge of the Anglo-Saxon cemetery, after contact had been made in an exploratory transect (INT. 20) during site evaluation. The area (16 x 24m) lay under 20–25cm of ploughsoil which was removed by machine. A series of four horizontal definitions were made in the sand and gravel subsoil, each photographed and planned over a grid and each revealing a crop of features. Prehistoric features were excavated at recovery level D, and graves at level E (see Carver 1986:78). Two burials were additionally recorded by photogrammetry, and five by moulding with silicon rubber (these are now on display at the site, see p 20).

Prehistoric Features

Two parallel trenches with post-impressions (A on Fig. 4) ran NW–SE and are thought to represent palisades of the early Bronze Age. They were superseded after an unknown interval by ditch (B) with a (presumably) contemporary palisade running parallel to the east. The area between the ditch and the palisade was enriched with stones within the ploughsoil which is thought to indicate the former existence of a bank. A series of pits containing large sherds of unabraded pottery were located along the southern edge of the area; they date from the early-middle Neolithic period (C) and Beaker period (D). A four-post structure (E) was indicated, as were a series of postholes mainly concentrated between the western palisades (A). The pit (F) is thought to have been caused by the collapse of a large tree.

Early Medieval Graves

Sixteen graves were excavated, each containing bodies decayed to a humic conglomerate recovered in three dimensions and containing a few traces of identifiable bone matter.

All graves are assumed to belong to the central part of the Early Medieval period (6–9th century AD). On the basis of their burial rite and state of preservation they are thought to be of the same date as those encountered by the British Museum excavations in INT. 11 and 12, one of which gave a radiocarbon date of 746 ± 79 AD. In INT. 32 two samples of bone material from F9 and F109 gave radiocarbon dates of 620 ± 80 ad (Harwell 6800) and 750 ± 70 ad (OxA – 819) respectively. No features other than graves are suspected of being Early Medieval, though of course a large number of postholes and hollows are not yet dated. Grave F154, orientation W–E,

cut grave F146 (NW–SE); and F163/F166 and F109/F108 were examples of W–E graves which cut each other. F231 lay in the ditch F1, supposedly prehistoric, and appeared to be cut from well down within its fill. This, with the stones scattered by ploughing on its eastern flank, suggested that the ditch at least was still open and visible as earthworks when the cemetery was established.

Two graves (F227 and F137) each contained two bodies within a single grave-cut; in F227 the bodies were face down side by side, and in F137 a kneeling body was beneath a supine body.

The disposition of the body varied greatly. In F102, F146 and F227 the bodies were prone; in F166 the body was extended with the hands together above the head; in F137 and F163 the body was kneeling; in F235 the body lay in a flexed position on its side. F154, F173, F108, F137 and F101 were more conventional W–E and E–W burials, although F108 had been decapitated before or soon after burial, and F137 had a broken neck. Two burials were accompanied by grave goods identified from humic stains: F106 contained a decayed animal bone, perhaps the haunch of a sheep or pig. In F161, where the body was splayed in a hurdling position, a series of further stains are thought to belong to a primitive ard-shaped implement, and one or more spades. There were coffin stains in F9, F101, F106 (the curved shape of which suggested a tree-trunk) and F235, where it took the form of a box or barrel. F106 was originally surmounted with a small cairn of large flints.

The various attitudes of the buried bodies led to their acquiring nicknames during the excavation, in the manner of Haydn symphonies – F166 ('the swimmer'), F137 ('the hanged man') and F161 ('the ploughman') are examples. As with Haydn symphonies, these nicknames should not be used to justify an interpretation.

Nevertheless the number of cases of severe trauma and extravagant postures, together with the large graves deliberately constructed to contain them, does suggest a strong element of ritual. There were no detected cases of post-depositional disturbance. The establishment of a context for this section of the cemetery must await the completion of the research sample.

INTERVENTION 39 (Fig. 5)

Purpose and Method

The principle objective was to confirm the edge of the Anglo-Saxon cemetery located in INT. 32, and to ensure that no burials lay further east. An area 16 x 24m was opened by machine and defined, excavated and recorded at level D.

Results

No graves were found, and the area was sparsely populated with features of any period. At the south eastern corner, the angle of a palisade trench (H) was excavated and thought to be of prehistoric date. Apart from the 1940 antiglider ditch (G), the majority of the other features are undated and thought to derive from trees (J), or bushes, rooted up. In the case of the tree-pits in INT. 32 and 39 which both indicated uprooting in the same direction, trees could have been felled by a south wind similar to that which caused widespread damage in the area in 1987.

INTERVENTION 41 (Fig. 6)

Purpose and Method

The northern area of the research sample, an area measuring 32 x 64m, containing Mounds 2 and 5, was begun in 1986. The objective was to excavate both barrows, any graves and all prehistoric features encountered by April 1988, and this programme remains on schedule. The turf was labelled, removed and stacked by metre square, and the next 10–25cms were found to have been well scrambled by bracken and (recent) ploughing. This material was sampled at level C (allowing a finds plot to the nearest metre square) and the uppermost level of definition was achieved at between 15–40cms below the level of the grass (Horizon 2).

This horizon and others were recorded by a new and much improved method. Fixed

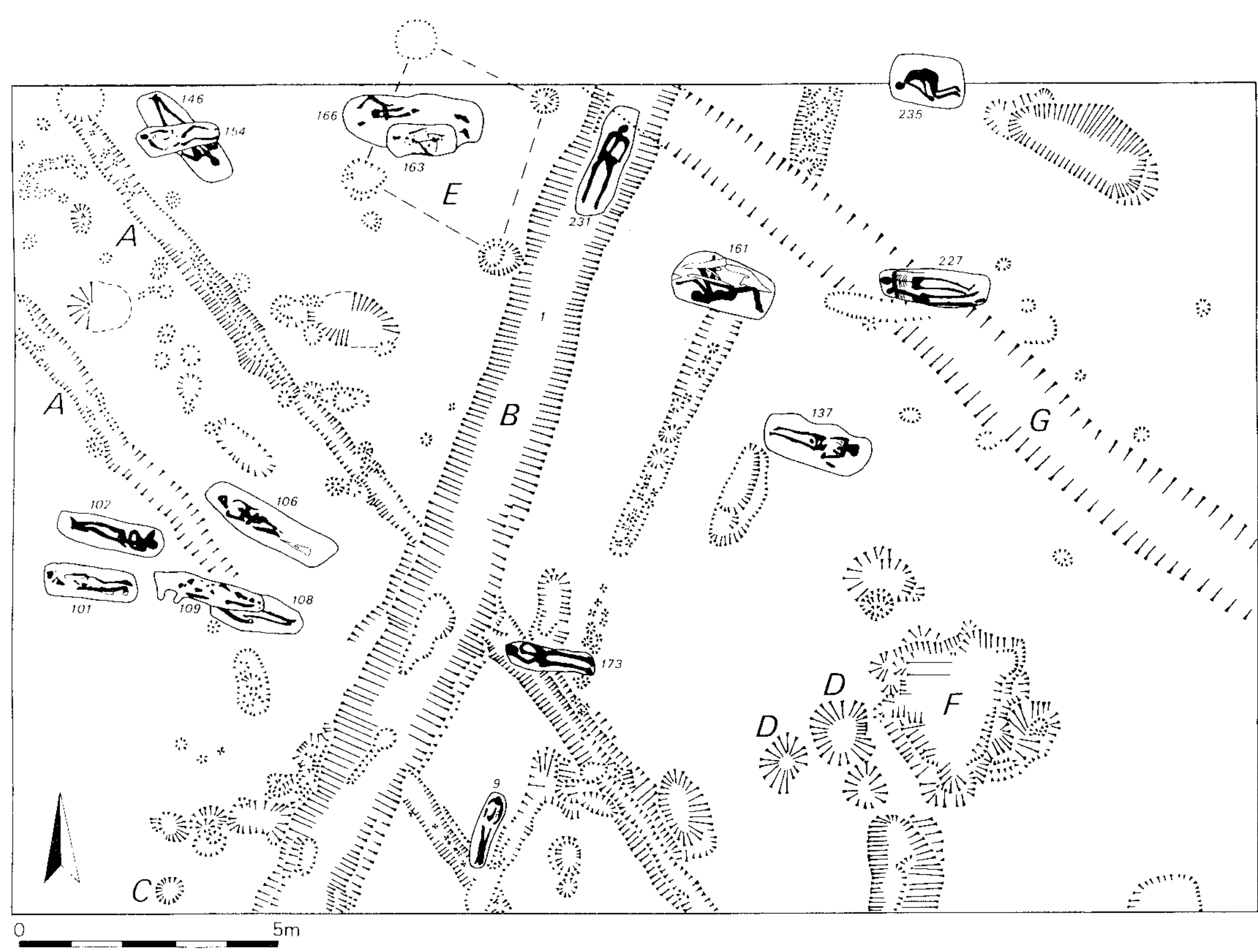


Fig. 4: Intervention 32, excavated features (Copp/Royle).

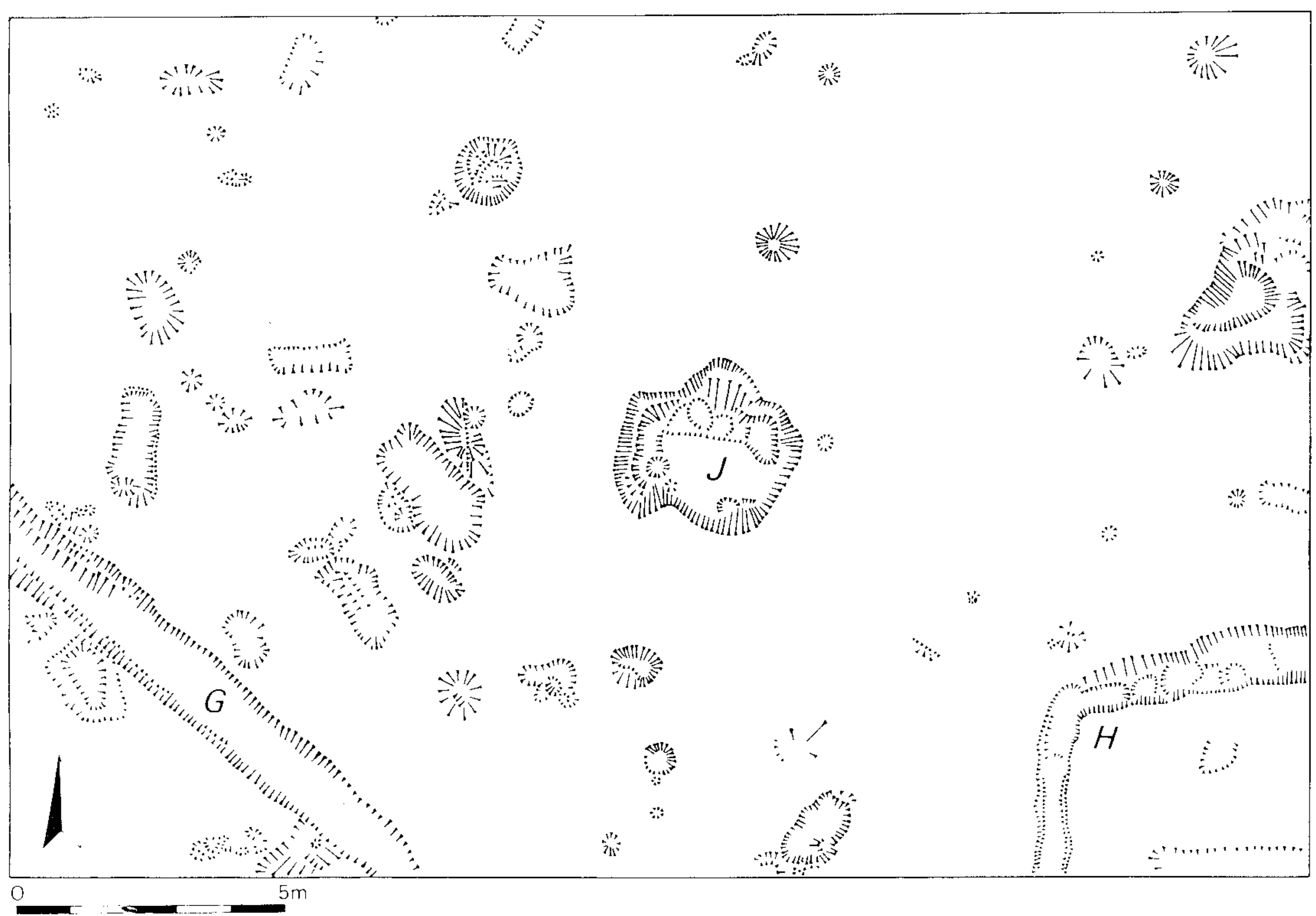


Fig. 5: Intervention 39, excavated features (Copp/Royle).

running sections divide the site into 20 quadrants. At each horizon, each quadrant is recorded at maximum enhancement with overhead colour photographs and feature and context edges marked with white tags. These edges are thus marked as dotted lines on the site instead of on a plan. The position of each tag is located three-dimensionally by remote plotting (see pp 21-3) and the array of co-ordinates logged in the database, plotted on permatrace and drawn up as a companion to the colour prints at 1:10 and 1:100. Individual features are excavated as before at level D and E.

Preliminary Results

The features located at Horizon 2 which are presumed early medieval are shown in Fig. 6. They comprise Mound 2, Mound 5 and three graves, one (in the south east corner) surrounded by a small ring ditch. Including those found by the British Museum's 1966–71 excavations (Longworth and Kinnes 1980), the total complement of graves in INT. 41 (other than barrows), is six to date.

COMMENT

The chief impression given by the excavation of the research sample completed so far is the remarkable contrast between the area containing (and dominated by) burial mounds, and the crowded and diverse burials at the eastern extremity. Provisional models for the cemetery now tend towards a separation of higher status interments, either within the burial ground, or of the burial ground from others in the Sandlings. If Sutton Hoo is a total separation of final phase early Saxon high status burial, then the accompanying flat graves should be interpreted as those of retainers or sacrificial victims. If the latter, a highly demonstrative ritual focus may be suggested, perhaps reacting to the political threat of Christianity rather than preceding it. Only the completion of the research sample can resolve these crucial and provocative questions.

M.O.H. Carver
A.J. Copp

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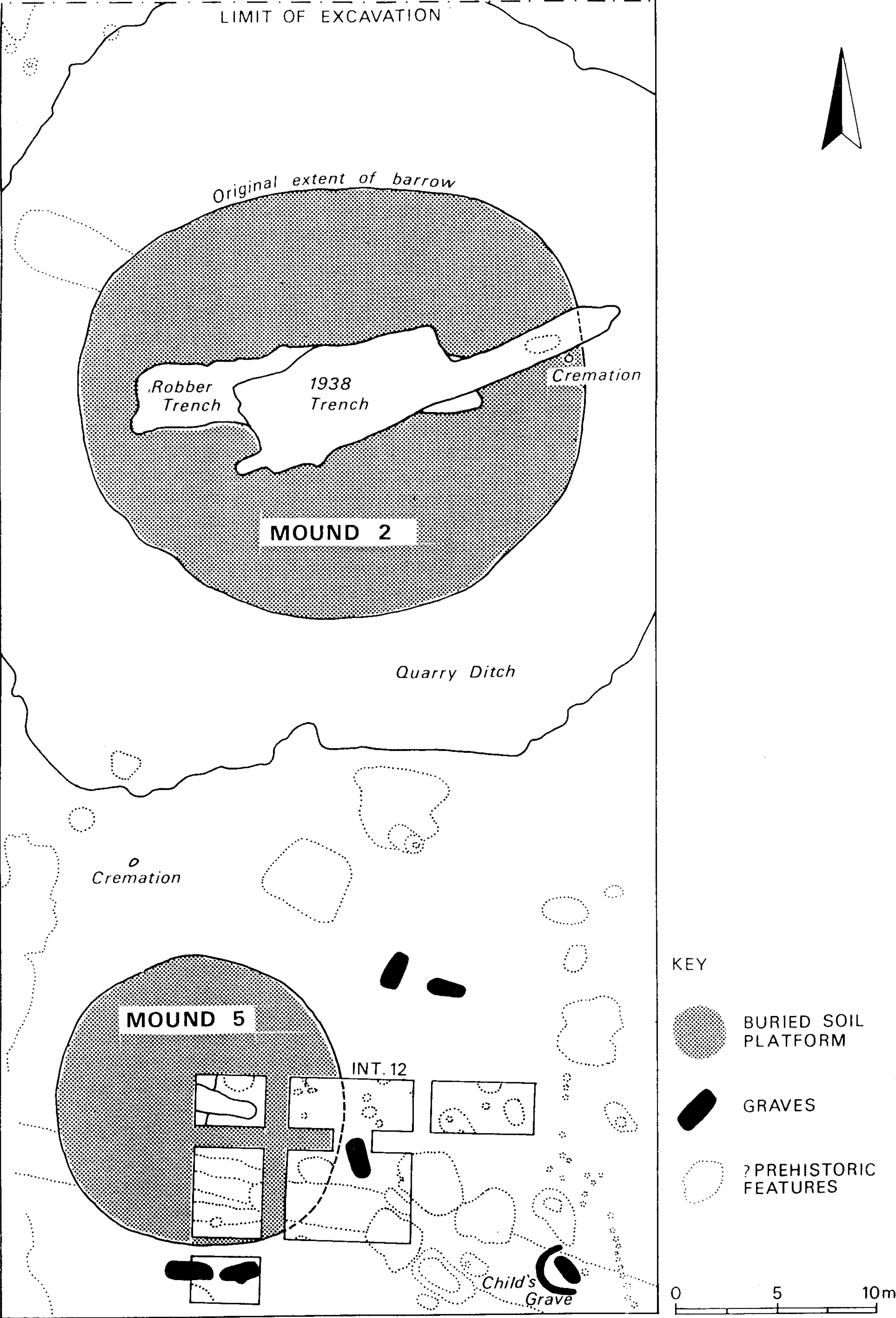


Fig. 6: Intervention 41 at Horizon 2 (Royle).

EAST ANGLIA KINGDOM SURVEY – INTERIM REPORT ON THE SOUTH EAST SUFFOLK PILOT FIELD SURVEY

The third season of fieldwork in south-east Suffolk covered an area of twenty-four square kilometres on the western side of the designated survey area, bringing the total coverage for three winters' work to 62 sq km. This fieldwork, over the winter of 1985/86, was designed to gain some comparative surface assemblages from the heavier soils of the boulder clay areas as all the previous work had been on the very light sandy soils to the east of the River Deben. The areas covered and the drift geology are shown on Fig. 7. To the west of the River Deben the heavier, boulder-clay-derived, soils cover the higher areas between the small valleys where lighter deposits of sand and gravel appear, the latter influencing settlement in all periods.

The *prehistoric* periods, as might be expected, are characterised by the location of numerous flint scatters within which diagnostic artifacts and pottery sherds are generally scarce. Confident identification of the sherds that are found is also difficult, because of their small and abraded nature and the similarity between much of the Neolithic and Iron Age wares and the Iron Age and Pagan Saxon wares. Hopefully, comparison with excavated material in the future will sort out these problems. However, a general pattern of settlement and landuse is emerging with the densest flint scatters being located near water sources and usually producing a few scraps of pottery (Fig. 8a), in contrast to the much lower density of flintwork found all over the Sandling, and on the edges of the boulder clay plateau where the density of waste flakes rapidly drops off to a very low level. The problem of identifying prehistoric settlement sites has recently been illustrated by the discovery of an Iron Age site with some Neolithic material in Great Bealings parish, during a watching brief on a gravel quarry for the Martlesham bypass. When fieldwalked earlier in the year, a few small abraded Iron Age sherds were discovered as well as some waste flakes. The surface collection gave little indication of the state of preservation of this site below the plough, which had been subsoiled: pits and probable hut circles were located and investigated after the top-soil had been removed. If Iron Age sites of this type do not appear on aerial photographs then they may remain very nearly archaeologically invisible except for a few pottery sherds that are retrieved from the surface through fieldwork. This emphasises the destructive nature of ploughing on fragile handmade pottery, and the potential significance that such fragments may have.

For the following *Romano British* period the durable nature of the wheel-made pottery makes the location of settlement sites much easier. The area surveyed to the west of the Deben last winter produced one dense pottery-scatter per square kilometre, in contrast to a density of one every three square kilometres to the east of the river. This contrast may also be seen in the greater number of fields to the west of the Deben producing thin pottery scatters indicative of manured arable land compared with the very light sandy area to the east. These dense pottery scatters are predominantly made up of greywares with very few producing much fine pottery or building tile. The known site at Burgh stands out in this respect as a high status settlement. Where metalwork evidence is available (through the co-operation of members of Ipswich and District Detector Club), sites that have been searched indicate 1st and 2nd century occupation in the form of a few coins and brooches and moderate quantities of the common 3rd and 4th century bronze coinage. The final picture is one of a densely settled agricultural landscape making full use of all its resources.

But it is in the study of the *Early Anglo-Saxon* period that the Ipswich Detector Club has made the greatest contribution to this survey. Settlement sites of this date are notoriously hard to locate, and even when they are found it is very difficult to separate Iron Age and Pagan Saxon pottery when all the sherds are plain and abraded. In contrast, many metalwork finds are relatively easy to date and may also indicate Pagan cemetery sites with a low ceramic content which may be otherwise difficult to locate. For example, in the parish of Playford one multi-period site has

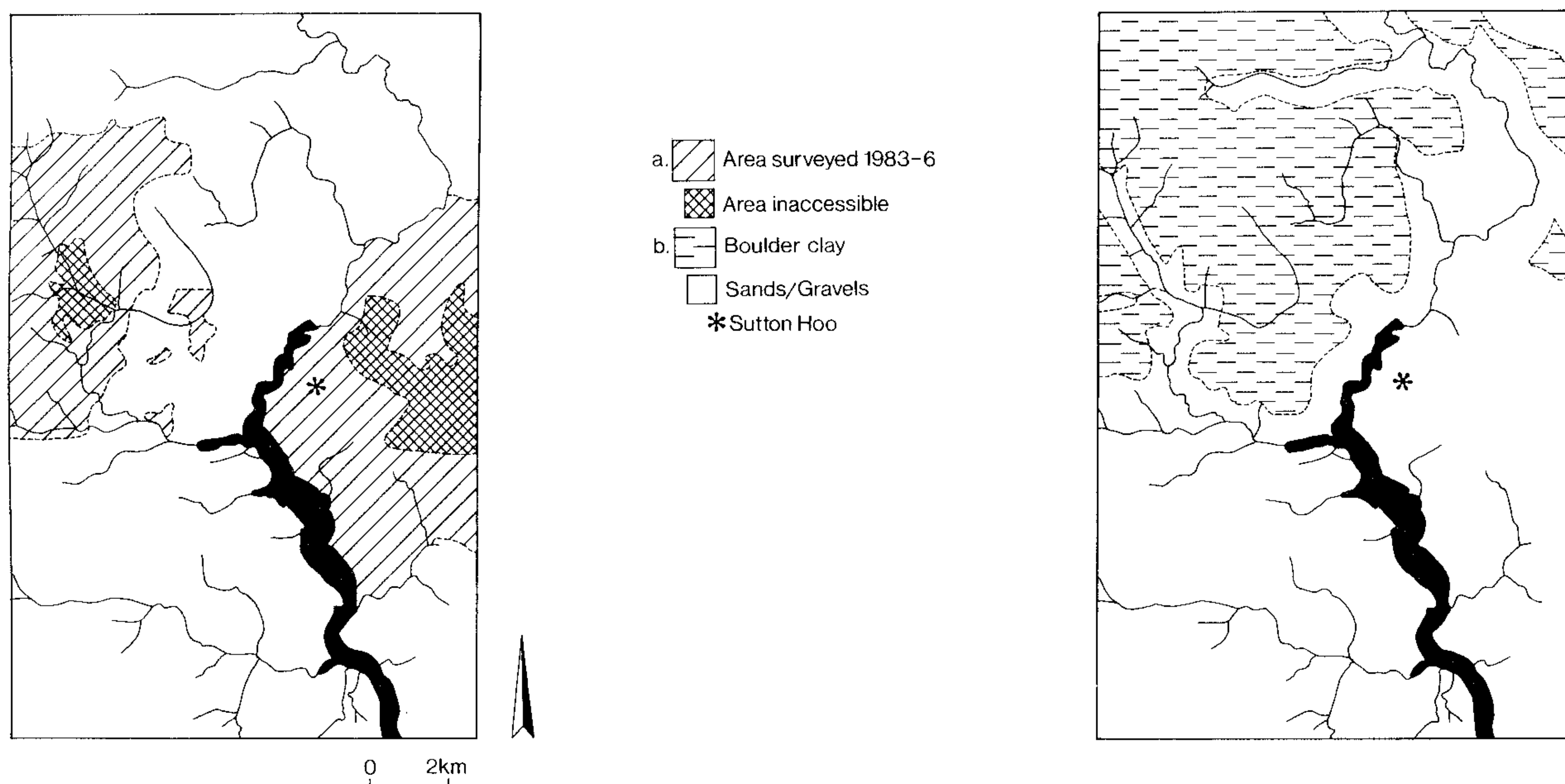


Fig. 7: Drift geology of the Survey area (Newman).

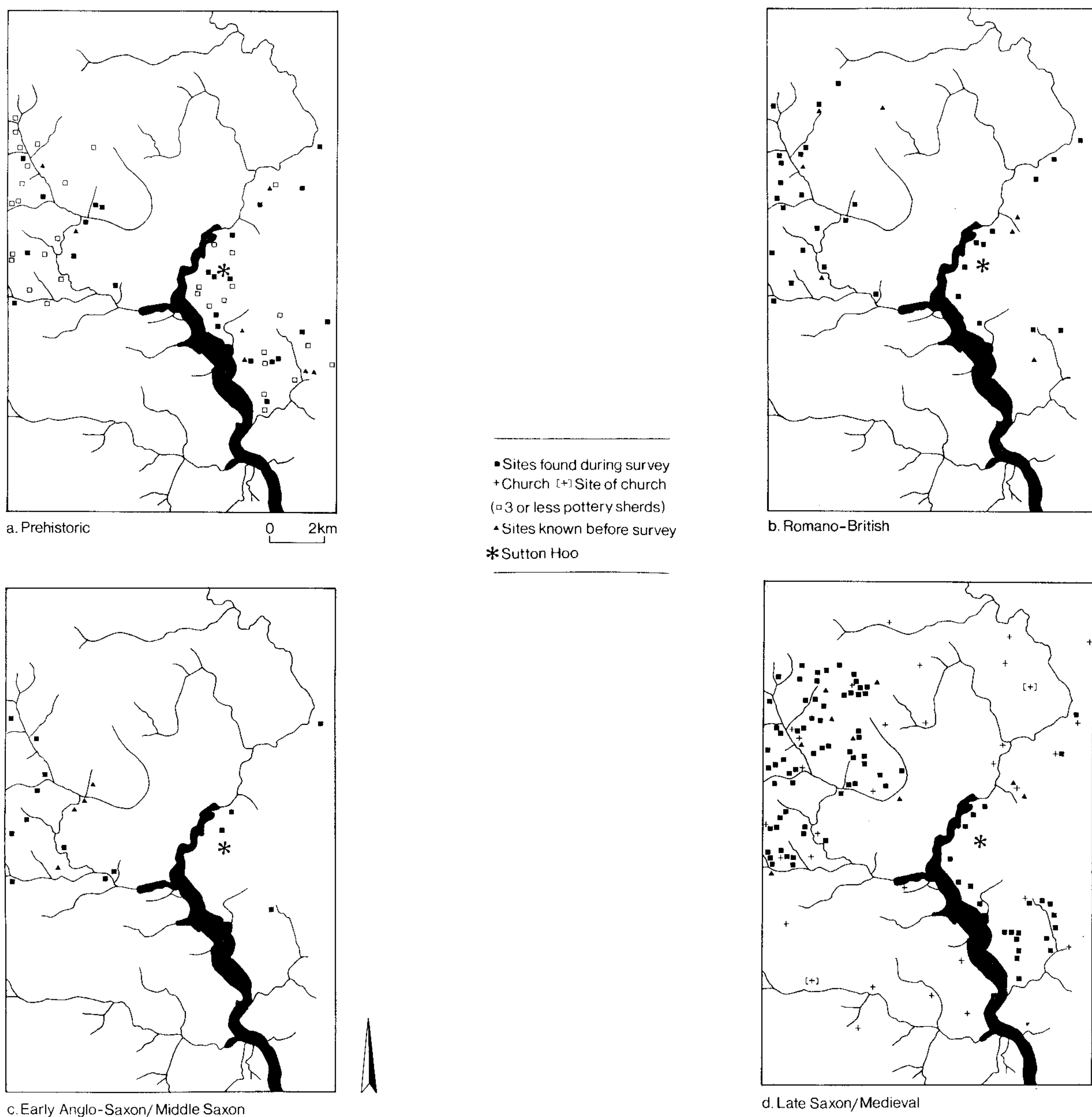


Fig. 8: Distribution of sites by period, showing those located by the Survey (Newman).

produced metalwork of the early 6th century. When fieldwalked, handmade pottery was also found, but was of both Iron Age and Pagan Saxon date making the definite identification of many of the sherds impossible. The discrete distribution of some of the metal finds however, possibly indicates a cemetery alongside a settlement site. Metalwork finds also give much closer dating than surface collections of pottery. Pagan pottery may date to any time between the 5th and 7th centuries, a period where more exact dating is crucial to the historical interpretation of the evidence. For example, in south-east Suffolk the "empty" period of the 5th century is beginning to be filled with finds such as part of an equal armed brooch from Hasketon and an early cruciform brooch from Tuddenham St Martin. Finds such as these indicate Early Anglo-Saxon occupation in very close proximity to Romano-British sites with coin evidence into the second half of the 4th century, areas where questions about the nature of the very late Romano-British settlement may be answered. With the combined evidence of fieldwork and detector search a much greater density of Early Anglo-Saxon sites is becoming apparent in the area, all lying on the lighter sands and gravels in the river valleys. The Fynn valley to the west of Woodbridge, which is the most thoroughly searched, gives the most complete picture with sites at two kilometre intervals in the survey area (Fig. 8c). The other find of note for this period east of the River Deben was the discovery of five Pagan handmade and two Ipswich Ware sherds close to the garden of Sutton Hoo House, indicating that this promontory near Sutton Hoo was in use at the same time as the cemetery.

For the *Middle Saxon* period East Anglia is fortunate to have been using Ipswich Ware (produced c.650 to 850), which is durable and distinctive although it may be difficult to separate from Roman greyware when very abraded. Over the winter of 1985/86 Ipswich Ware scatters were located adjacent to Clopton, Culpho and Grundisburgh churches and a smaller scatter within one hundred metres of Great Bealings Church. This confirms the impression previously formed that the 7th and 8th century settlements are to be found close to parish churches. Other smaller scatters of Ipswich Ware were located in two cases near parish boundaries, possibly indicating 9th century daughter settlements which were to become the smaller Domesday Book villas but never parishes. Such settlements have now been located between Sutton and Bromeswell (Wilford), between Grundisburgh and Culpho, and between Clopton and Otley.

Continued occupation on all these sites in the *Late Saxon* period is demonstrated by the presence of Thetford Ware, (produced c.850 to 1150), again a distinctive pottery tradition but which may be confused with Roman greyware if abraded and if no definitive decorated sherds or rims are present. The earliest post-Roman settlement evidence in Debach parish is represented by Thetford Ware, indicating a Late Saxon foundation date.

As indicated in Fig. 8d, a great number of dense pottery scatters indicative of settlement sites dating to the *Medieval* period have been located by fieldwork. As in the Romano-British period, this area west of the Deben appears to have supported a much higher population than the area surveyed to the east of the river, and both areas are characterised by a very dispersed settlement pattern. The big drop in settlement numbers comes in the late 13th or 14th century with the majority of the sites on Fig. 8d disappearing or being drastically reduced in size. This change, dated by the almost total lack of glazed pottery on the sites, is probably associated with the Black Death, the climatic deterioration of the 14th century and the possible over-exploitation of arable land. The smaller number of settlement sites that did survive often have the timber framed farmhouses that stand today.

Acknowledgements

The Suffolk Archaeological Unit is grateful to all landowners in the area for allowing access to carry out survey work and to the Sutton Hoo Research Trust for grant aid towards the costs involved.

J. Newman
September 1986

THE SNAPE ANGLO-SAXON CEMETERY

A Report on the 1986 Excavation

INTRODUCTION

The Snape Anglo-Saxon cemetery lies 16km from Sutton Hoo, and in 1862, excavation of a burial mound uncovered a ship burial very similar to that found later at Sutton Hoo. Within the ship was found a gold ring, testimony to the status of the man buried, and a glass claw beaker.

As well as the ship, the 1862 excavators found a number of Anglo-Saxon cremation burials and this number was added to in 1972, when a sewer trench along the main road crossing the site produced more cremations, one in a bronze bowl. These cremations span the whole of the pagan Anglo-Saxon period from the 5th through to perhaps the 7th century. Based on the information available, it was assumed that the Snape cemetery consisted of the burial mounds known from 1862 and an associated cremation cemetery (Filmer-Sankey 1984).

As neither the extent nor the state of preservation of the cemetery was known and as renewed work at Sutton Hoo had revived interest in Snape as the best, indeed only, parallel to Sutton Hoo, it was decided to undertake a trial excavation in September 1985. The strategy was based on the assumption that Snape was primarily a cremation cemetery, with closely-spaced urns which could be picked up in small 3 x 3m trenches. This turned out to be incorrect, since in the fourteen trenches excavated, only two cremations were found. It was only when one trench was enlarged to 6 x 6m and an inhumation burial was found that the reason for the failure to find the urns was understood (Martin et al. 1986:154).

Further excavation took place from 1 – 26 September 1986 and was directed by the author for the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Unit. I am most grateful to Mrs Vernon-Wentworth for permission to excavate and to Dr Stanley West for advice and encouragement.

AIMS

As the establishment of the limits of the cemetery remained a priority, it was necessary to devise a new strategy for doing this, which took into account the likely presence of inhumation burials. One lesson of the 1985 excavation was that it was wrong to make assumptions about Snape based on the information from other cemeteries. It was necessary to know more about the site itself and its character before any sampling strategy could be devised. The excavation of a larger area seemed the best way to do this. The principal aim for 1986 was to gain an idea of the character of the cemetery, of the ratio of cremation to inhumation, of the density of graves, etc., so that any further sampling strategy could be more securely based. It was also hoped to get more detailed information about the state of preservation which, it was known from 1985, varied widely. A final aim was to test the existence of a circular area of high resistance, located during the 1982 survey and interpreted tentatively as a tumulus base and associated ring-ditch (Filmer-Sankey 1984:14).

METHOD

An area of 17 x 16m, lying in the south-west corner of a field immediately west of the supposed site of the ship burial and enclosing the inhumation found in 1985, was selected (Fig. 9). This, together with a 2m wide trench extending 30m to the west, was cleared of its ploughsoil mechanically. The underlying surface was then cleaned and planned. The layer of grey-brown sand which intermittently covered the whole site was then removed by hand and the cremations excavated. Finally the surface of the natural sand was cleaned and the features cut into it were planned and, where time allowed, excavated (Fig. 10).

RESULTS

After the removal of the c.26cm deep ploughsoil, the site was found to be covered by a layer of grey-brown sand, deeply scored by ploughing and subsoiling. At its deepest it was c.30cm deep, but over substantial areas of the site had been totally ploughed away, leaving nothing between the ploughsoil and the natural sand. This layer (0273) is thought to represent the remains of the pre-ploughing heathland topsoil. As the cremations and inhumation burials are cut through it, it is clearly of considerable antiquity. Its variable survival is due to the undulations in the underlying natural sand. It seems likely that, before its present cultivation, the surface of the heath was uneven. Cultivation has levelled it off. This has important implications for the survival of the archaeology, for any cremations buried on a 'hump' will have been severely damaged by ploughing, while those protected by a 'hollow' will stand a better chance of being reasonably intact. The 2m trench provided an excellent example of this. Within its 30m length there was a variation of 30cms in the height of the top of the natural sand and the thickness of layer 0273 varied correspondingly from 0–30cms. The circular area of high resistance located by resistivity in 1982 turned out to be not a tumulus base but an area where the natural sand came especially close to the surface. The 'ring-ditch' was where layer 0273 was thickest. From this it would appear that the potential of resistivity lies as much in spotting those areas of the site where preservation is likely to be best as in locating archaeological features.

There was no trace of any prehistoric occupation.

The Anglo-Saxon Cremations (Fig. 10)

Eleven definite cremations were found in the area of the excavation (including three found in 1985). Their state of preservation varied from virtually totally destroyed to totally intact and seems to have been influenced by two factors – the depth of the layer 0273 and the depth at which they were originally buried. Thus in the 30m trench were two urns within one metre of each other. The fabric of one survived only below the carination, the other, buried deeper, was complete.

Neither the pottery nor the bone has been examined in any detail yet. The urned cremations numbered nine. Two of these, in the top of inhumation 0031, are discussed below. One urn (0070) contained no bone at all. A fragment of its rim lay inside on the base of the pot indicating that it was buried empty or containing an organic substance. An intact cremation (0171) was found 1m away. It is tempting to link the two. Neither in plan nor in section was there any sign of the pit in which the urns must have been buried.

In addition to these cremations were several scatters of pottery and burnt bone, which may, on analysis, turn out to be plough-shattered remains of urned cremations. There were also two patches of burnt bone without containers which appear likely to have been unurned cremations.

The Anglo-Saxon Inhumations (Fig. 10)

The area of the 1986 excavation was designed to ensure that any inhumation graves were located. In the event, the grave 0031 (left unfinished in 1985) was completed and burial 0111, consisting of a grave within a ring-ditch, was excavated. In addition, a number of other features, among them a second ring-ditch with central grave and many other possible inhumation graves, were located and planned.

Inhumation 0031 (Fig. 11)

Orientated E – W, surviving to a depth of 60cms, the grave had a large shallower annex on the north side and a small 'shelf' at its west end. Two pots had been placed in the top of the grave within this 'shelf'. Both of these were removed intact and proved, on excavation, to contain cremations, apparently of juveniles. Their position in the grave is probably not coincidental. It seems likely that they are exactly contemporary with the inhumation burial and in some way linked with it (cf. Hills, Penn and Rickett 1984:11). A spearhead was found at the level of the top of the coffin. There was no trace of the shaft nor of a ferrule. The spear had perhaps been placed on the top of

the coffin. The sides of the coffin were clearly visible and the sections show the distortion caused by the pressure of the earth on the decaying wood. There was no sign of a lid. The dimensions of the coffin were 178 x 58cms. No bone survived, but the shape of the body was well preserved as a sand silhouette. It lay with head to the west, legs slightly flexed and hands crossed over the left shoulder. On the left shoulder was a small iron object, possibly a knife. Outside the coffin were found three plank-like pieces of wood, remarkably well preserved.

Burial 0111 (Fig. 11)

The ring-ditch and central grave of burial 0111 were clearly visible when the area was cleaned. The 1862 excavators mention that, in addition to the large burial mounds, there were smaller ones, 'not exceeding 6 or 7 feet in diameter' (Davidson 1863:177). It seems likely that burial 0111, with an internal diameter of the ring-ditch of 3.7m, is one of these small tumuli. The ring-ditch had a rounded profile. It was fully excavated, its fill of mid-grey sand being found to contain no more than a few fragments of pottery.

The central grave was orientated E–W and survived to a depth of 80cms. The fill, particularly towards the top, contained numerous small fragments of pottery. It seems most likely that these come from the make up of the barrow which slumped into the grave when the coffin collapsed. The coffin stain did not show clearly until the final 15cms, when it appeared much distorted. Analysis of the plans at a higher level indicates that a stain did appear intermittently higher up but that it was probably not connected with the coffin. It is possible that the sides of the grave were shuttered. A curious feature at the west end of the coffin is an apparent double end. The body, again preserved as a sand silhouette, was extended, with arms at the side. At waist level, on either side of the spine, were two small plaques of tin(?), probably connected with a belt, and an iron object. There were no other grave goods.

Unexcavated features (Fig. 10)

The final cleaning of the site located a number of features which there was no time to excavate. Most significant was a second ring-ditch and central grave in the south-east corner of the site. It seems likely that a high proportion of the remaining ten unexcavated features are also graves.

Later Features (Fig. 10)

An east-west line of postholes (0095), probably a fence line, cut grave 0111. It seems likely that they must also postdate the disappearance of the burial mound. Their fill was similar to that of some of the plough furrows.

CONCLUSION

The aims of this year's excavation were to obtain evidence of the limits, state of preservation and character of the cemetery. The state of preservation has been shown to vary from good to destroyed. Furthermore, it appears that the erosion is continuing. The field suffers seriously from sand-blows which must, however gradually, be lowering its surface. Each time the field is ploughed, a small amount of archaeology is shaved off, not enough to be noticeable in fieldwalking, but with a serious cumulative effect. Nor is it only the cremations that are threatened. For, while the sand silhouettes and accompanying grave goods are clearly well out of reach of even a subsoiler, evidence (such as food-offerings and stray pottery sherds) from the upper fill of the graves is not. The two cremation urns in the top of grave 0031 only just survived. Similarly, the tree and bush roots in the garden and, ironically, on the scheduled tumulus must be doing damage. The Snape Anglo-Saxon cemetery is a threatened site.

The character of the cemetery, or at least the character of part of it, has been established by the excavation. The area excavated this year revealed a mixed inhumation/cremation cemetery, with probable inhumations in a slight majority (12:10). Two of the inhumations were under small burial mounds. The extent to which the character of the whole cemetery can be judged from the information now

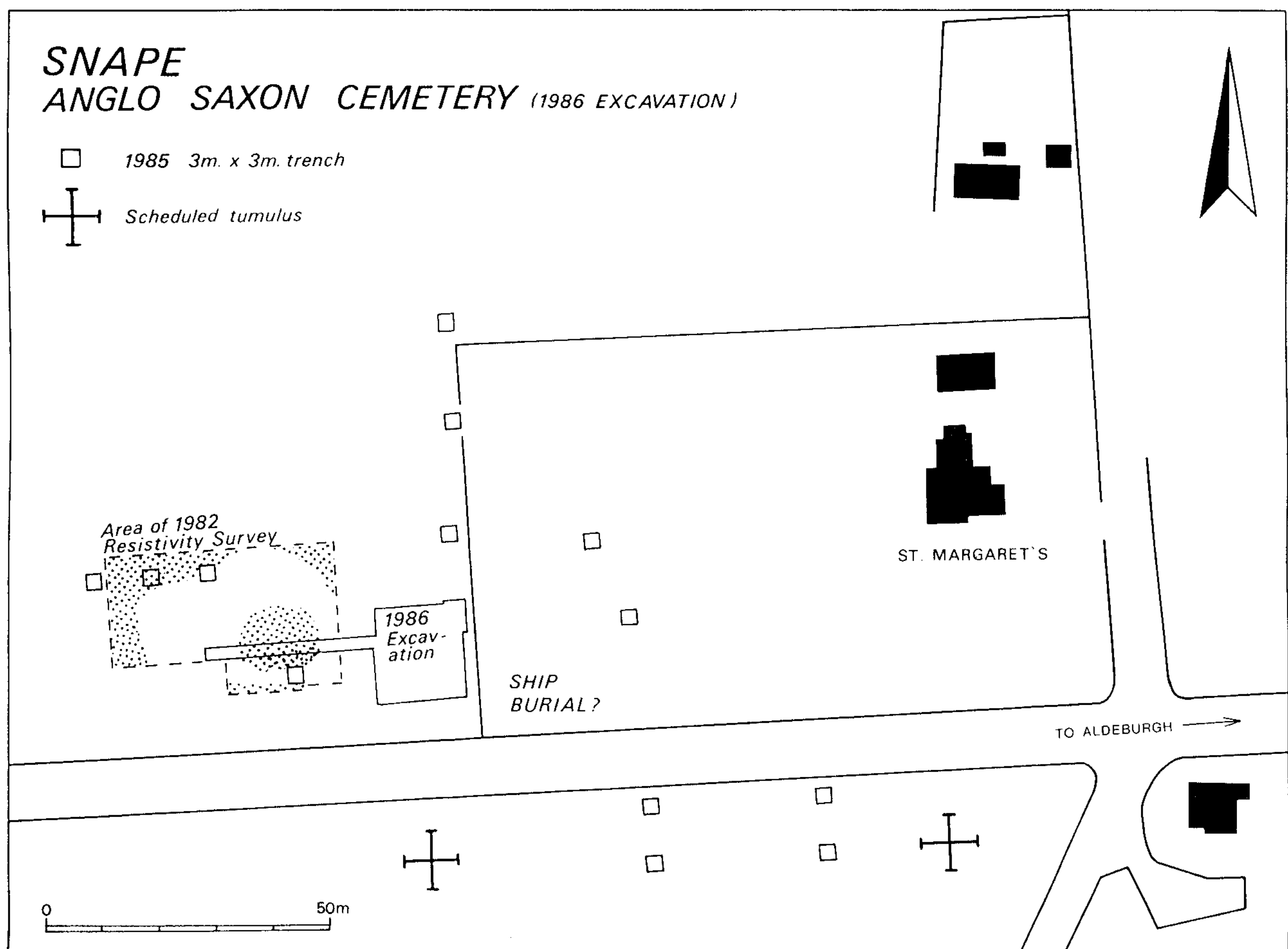


Fig. 9: Location of 1986 excavation at Snape (Royle, after Filmer-Sankey).

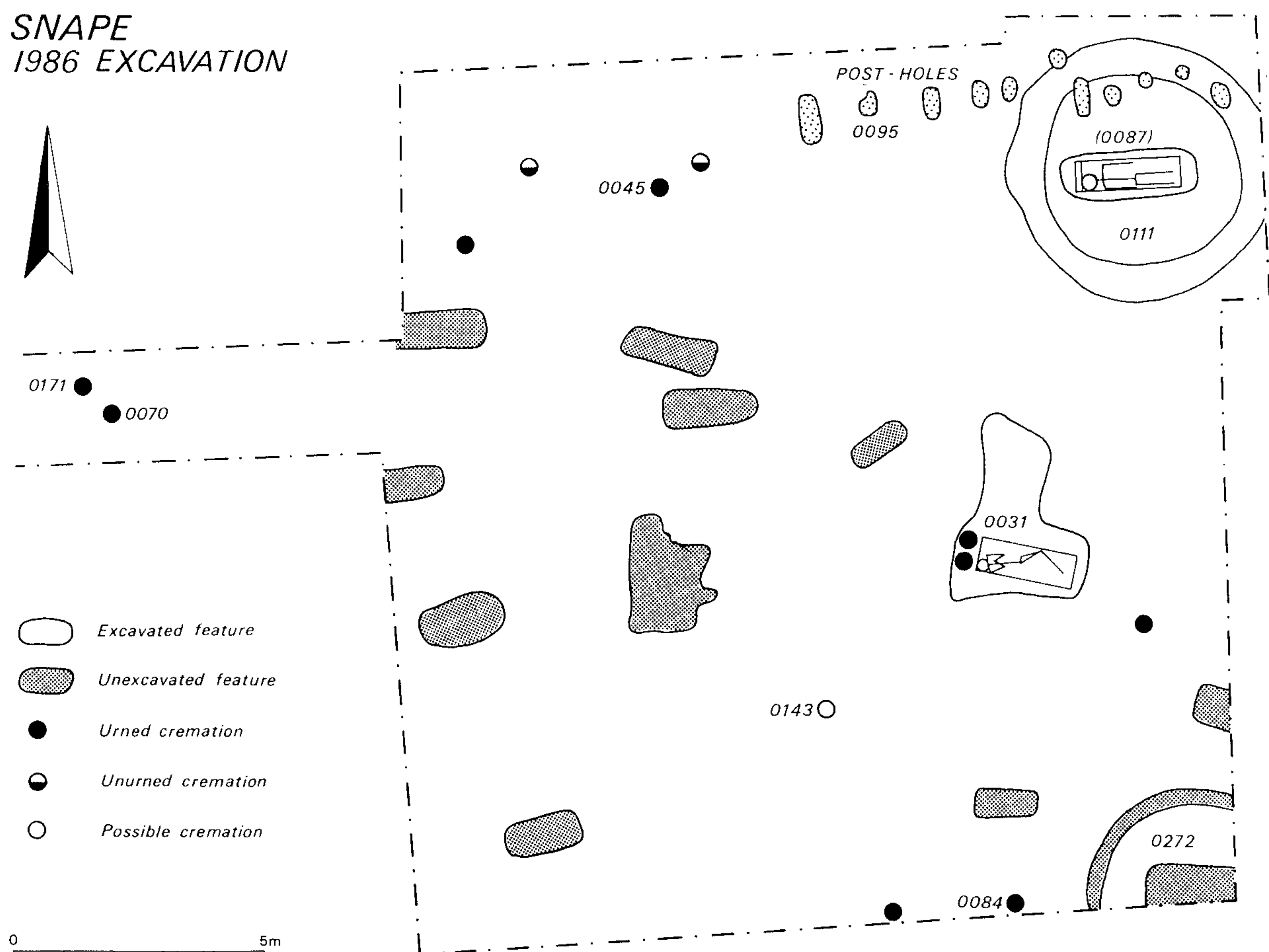


Fig. 10: Plan of the excavated area at Snape, 1986 (Royle, after Filmer-Sankey).

available, and whether it will be possible to use this information to produce a valid sampling strategy to locate the edges of the cemetery, without the need for a large-scale stripping, are questions which need careful thought.

The need to find the limits of the cemetery remains a pressing one. For, without this knowledge, no accurate assessment of the scale of the problem can be made. The fact that the site is being gradually destroyed by tree roots and agriculture means that something must soon be done either to excavate or protect.

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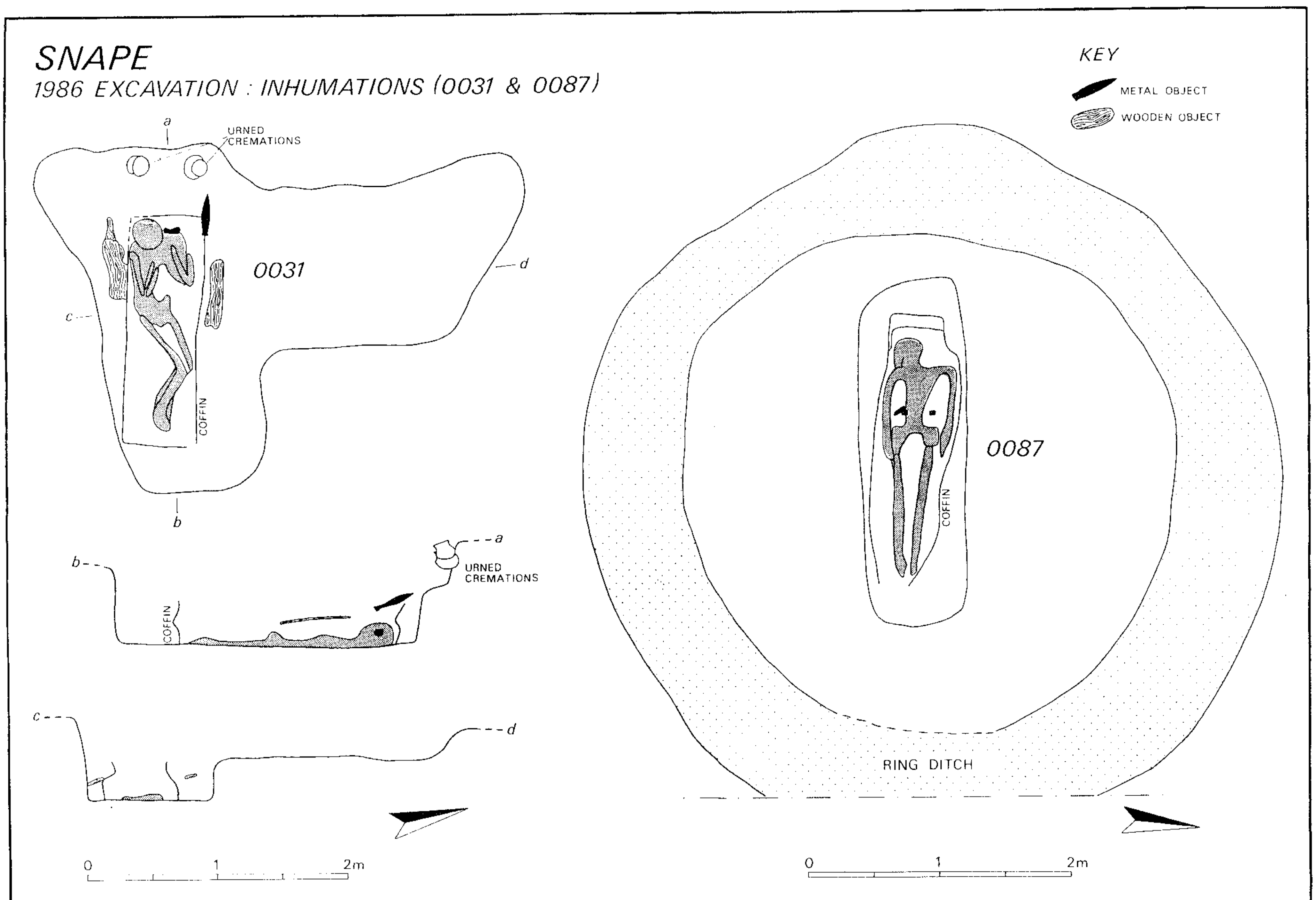


Fig. 11: Two burial groups from Snape (Royle, after Filmer-Sankey).