

# PROCEEDINGS OF THE CAMBRIDGE ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY

(INCORPORATING THE CAMBS & HUNTS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY)



VOLUME L  
JANUARY 1956 TO DECEMBER 1956

CAMBRIDGE  
DEIGHTON BELL  
1957

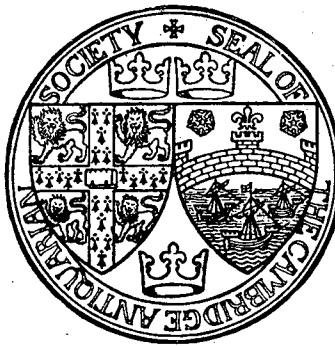
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## CONTENTS

<i>Officers and Council of the Society 1956–1957</i>	<i>page</i> vi
<i>Report of the Council for the Year 1955</i>	vii
<i>Summary of Accounts for the Year 1955</i>	viii
<b>The Wandlebury Iron Age Hill-fort, Excavations of 1955–6</b>	<b>1</b>
<i>By B. R. HARTLEY</i>	
<b>Saxo-Norman Pottery in East Anglia</b>	<b>29</b>
<i>By J. G. HURST, M.A.</i>	
<b>The Clergy of Willingham 1300–1956, Part II</b>	<b>61</b>
<i>By CANON F. J. BYWATERS, M.A.</i>	
<b>A Belgic and Roman Farm at Wyboston, Bedfordshire</b>	<b>75</b>
<i>By C. F. TEBBUTT, F.S.A.</i>	
<b>Romano-British Hoard from Godmanchester</b>	<b>85</b>
<i>By H. J. M. GREEN</i>	
<b>Medieval Gravestones of Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire, and the Soke of Peterborough</b>	<b>89</b>
<i>By L. A. S. BUTLER, B.A.</i>	
<b>Swale's Tumulus: A Combined Neolithic A and Bronze Age Barrow at Worlington, Suffolk</b>	<b>101</b>
<i>By GRACE BRISCOE, M.B., B.S., F.S.A.</i>	
<b>Index</b>	<b>113</b>

# THE WANDLEBURY IRON AGE HILL-FORT, EXCAVATIONS OF 1955-6

B. R. HARTLEY

THE excavations recorded below were undertaken by the present writer on behalf of the Department of Archaeology and Anthropology in the University, under the general direction of Prof. J. G. D. Clark. Wandlebury, and the Gog Magog Estate in which it lies, is now the property of the Cambridge Preservation Society. We are greatly indebted to the Society for permission to excavate and for all the encouragement and help given to us by its Officers, especially its Chairman, the Master of Magdalene. The earthwork is scheduled as an Ancient Monument and we owe thanks to the Chief Inspector of Ancient Monuments in the Ministry of Works for permission to carry out the investigation.

The work of excavation was largely done by undergraduates of the Department, as an integral part of their archaeological training, but much help was given by local volunteers. Although all the workers cannot be named individually, our thanks are no less real. Finally, we owe much to Dr G. H. S. Bushnell, Curator of the University Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, and to his staff for help of many sorts. The help of Mr L. Morley, Photographer in the Museum, was invaluable on the site.<sup>1</sup>

## THE SITE

Wandlebury lies 4 miles south-east of Cambridge on the crest of the Gog Magog Hills, some 230 ft. above sea-level. At this point the top of the Gogs is relatively flat, hence the regular outline of the earthwork, and offers an easy approach on all sides, especially on the east. This tactical weakness is clearly reflected in the impressive character of the defences. Nevertheless, the site is an important one strategically, offering control of the line of the Icknield Way to the south and of movement from it into the Cam valley.

The Wandlebury earthwork has long been famous, no doubt because it was an outstandingly impressive one in a region which is largely devoid of hill-forts. Its present name was already in use in the tenth century in the form Wendlesbiri.<sup>2</sup> During the Middle Ages the site attracted various legends to itself.<sup>3</sup> From the time

<sup>1</sup> The writer wishes to thank Messrs Ian Stead, Clive Crippe and Aidan Macdonald who drew much of the pottery for this report.

<sup>2</sup> *Chronicle of Ramsey Abbey*, Rolls Series, p. 79.

<sup>3</sup> For the Wandlebury Legend, recounted by Gervase of Tilbury in *Otia Imperialia*, see A. Gray, *Proc. C.A.S.* vol. xv, pp. 53-62. A recent discussion of the name Wandlebury in medieval literature by Professor R. S. Loomis is published in *Romance Philology*, vol. ix, no. 2 (1955), pp. 162-7.

of Camden accounts of it were regularly included in the topographical works, the remains being described with varying degrees of accuracy. During the early eighteenth century, when the Earl of Godolphin laid out a shooting box and stables on the site, the earthwork was badly mutilated (see p. 8).<sup>1</sup> The house and gardens were elaborated at various times and a lot of tree-planting done,<sup>2</sup> especially round the outer defences which now carry continuous belts of trees, making excavation very difficult at times. An interesting part of the excavations has been the recovery of several details of the arrangement of the estate and the ways in which it affected the Iron Age defences.

#### THE DEFENCES

At the present day the most prominent feature of the site is a circular ditch, 1000 ft. in diameter, which is still open to a depth of up to 8 ft. (Fig. 1). It is bounded on the outside by a rounded bank standing 5 ft. high in places. Although this is only marked in the south-eastern sector on the 25 in. sheet, it may be traced round the whole circuit with only minor gaps. On the inner side of the ditch is another, slighter, bank some 2 ft. high, which is all that remains of the rampart belonging to the ditch. Inside this outer rampart, a broad, shallow hollow, representing the site of an inner ditch may be followed round most of the circuit, but no trace of the rampart associated with this now remains.

Of the four causeways crossing the open ditch, two, one on the west side and one in the north-east sector (not shown on the 25 in. sheet), are clearly modern. Furthermore, only one of the others could be original, because Gervase of Tilbury specifically mentions, in recounting the Wandlebury Legend, that the earthwork had only one entrance. As the north causeway (Site II, Fig. 1) was readily accessible, two trenches were cut there in 1955. It was found to be filled with nineteenth-century pottery at a depth of 5 ft. The original causeway must, therefore, be that in the south-east sector now carrying the drive leading to the stables.

In order to establish the nature and history of the defences a section was cut through the north-east sector of the earthwork (Site I, Fig. 1). The trench was begun well outside the outer bank and carried into the interior to within 20 ft. of the walled garden. This at once confirmed the evidence of the surface indications, showing that the visible outer bank was indeed the outermost feature of the defences and that inside it were two ditches and two ramparts. As there was no ditch outside the outer bank it cannot be regarded as a rampart and it will, therefore, be termed the 'counterscarp bank'.

#### THE COUNTERSCARP BANK

This was found to be a simple, unrevetted mound of chalk rubble resting on an old ground surface of reddish brown soil. Towards the bottom of the bank were two thin layers of compact, unweathered chalk and two layers of reddish brown soil, the upper

<sup>1</sup> Lysons, *Magna Britannia, Cambridgeshire* (1808), pp. 73, 257.

<sup>2</sup> Britton and Brayley, *The Beauties of England and Wales*, vol. II, p. 131.

darker than the lower. The four layers varied considerably in detail in the two sides of the trench and probably should only be regarded as incidents in the construction of the bank at a time when its builders were dumping chalk and topsoil together and

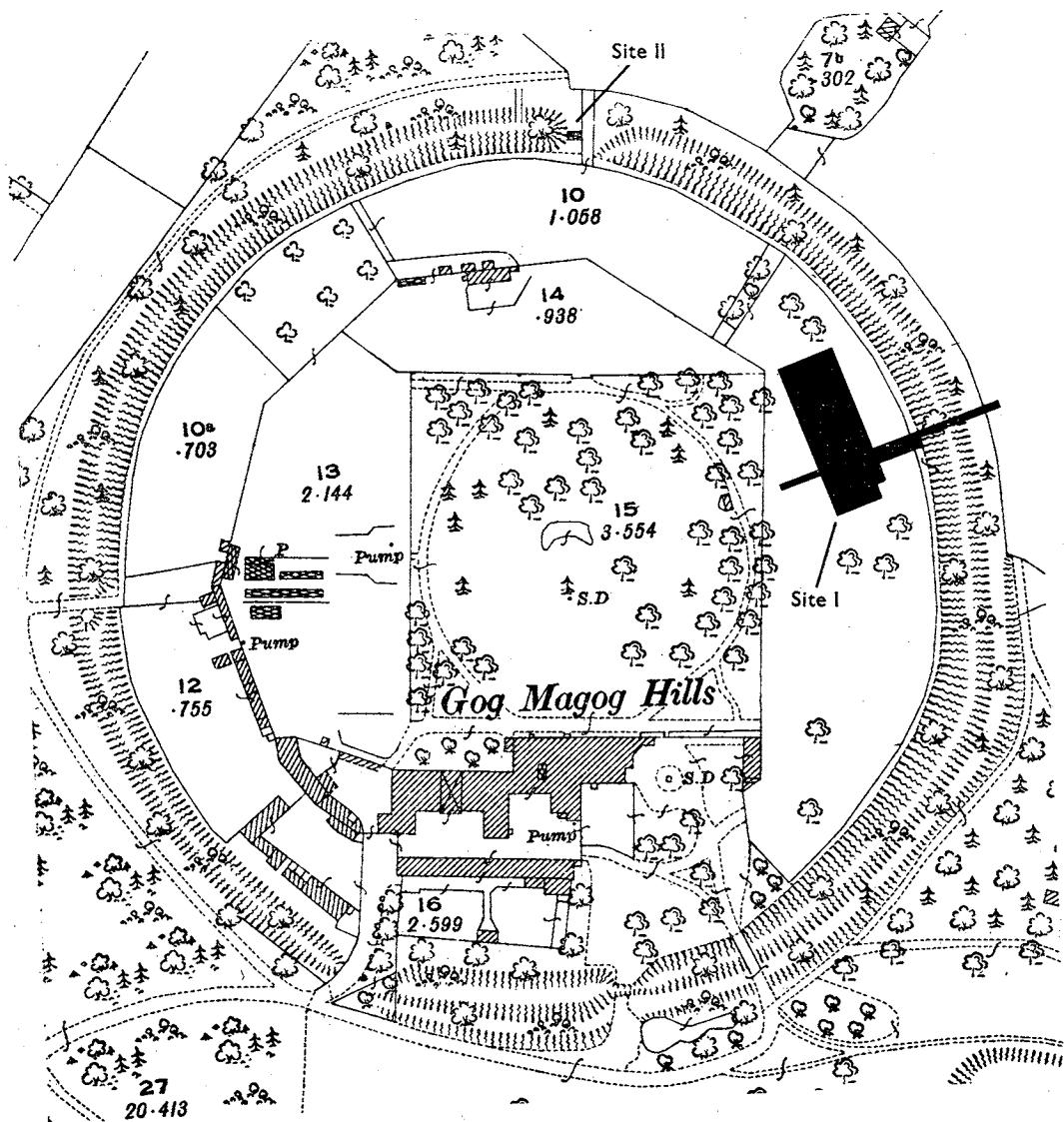


Fig. 1. The Ordnance Survey 25 in. plan of the site showing the excavation. Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey Map with the sanction of the Controller of H.M. Stationery Office, Crown copyright reserved.

trampling them down. It is not impossible, however, that the chalk layers were deliberately rammed to give a firm basis for the bank.

A few Iron Age sherds and several fire-crackled flints were found in the body of the bank and more lay on the ground surface below it.

## THE OUTER DITCH

When emptied, the outer ditch was found to have a stepped profile (Fig. 3 and Pl. I b). Its filling was divided into two distinct parts by a line sloping gently down from its inner edge to the top of the step in its profile, truncating layers in the filling of the lower part of the ditch. Above this division, the filling was largely powdery, weathered chalk riddled by rabbit burrows, though some humus had silted down on to the step from the outer edge of the ditch. The upper layer peeled off easily from the more compact lower filling which was derived mainly from the inner side of the ditch, and consisted of bands of chalk rubble alternating with finer, weathered chalk. These layers were graded, the coarser material having rolled to the bottom of the ditch. The lower filling also had four thin bands of humus, among finely weathered chalk which had come from the outer edge of the ditch. Although the relation was obscured by a large rabbit burrow, there can be no doubt that the layers just described were truncated by the above-mentioned line of division in the filling.

The section is clearly a composite one showing two stages in the history of the ditch. In the first stage it was 15 ft. deep, 18 ft. wide and had steep sides and a flat bottom. The difference in the volume and nature of the material derived from the two sides of the original ditch (which is restored in outline in Fig. 3) can only be explained by assuming that the bulk of the material in the filling of the ditch had fallen from a rampart on its inner side. Strictly speaking the original ditch was not re-cut in the second phase. Instead, new material was quarried from the outer side down to a depth of 12 ft. and the top of the filling of the old ditch served as the bottom of the new ditch for its inner two-thirds. The result approximated to the so-called Punic ditch, with a steep outer side and a gently sloping inner one.

There was little archaeological material in the ditch, though a few hand-made Iron Age sherds were found in both parts of the filling.

An interesting feature uncovered in the top of the ditch filling was a path of flint gravel and mortar bounded by small retaining walls of dressed flint (Pl. I c). This was later traced around the whole circuit. Although no dating evidence for it was found, it clearly was a feature of the estate, perhaps one of the improvements known to have been made by Lord Osborne in the early years of the last century.<sup>1</sup>

## THE OUTER RAMPART (Plan, Fig. 2; Sections, Fig. 3)

Like the outer ditch this showed two phases. These were elucidated partly in Section I and partly in a subsidiary one 88 ft. to the north (Section II of Fig. 2, and Fig. 5).

The original rampart was revetted by two rows of posts, 13 ft. apart. The front row was set in neatly cut pits (Pl. II a), 11 in. in diameter and 15 in. deep, spaced at 30 in. centres. All retained traces of the post cavities which showed that 5 in. timbers were used. The back row was more closely spaced and had been partly cut

<sup>1</sup> Britton and Brayley, *op. cit.*

away by later modification. A single post-hole of similar character was found between the two rows. It is clear that the basic pattern of the rampart was two vertical timbered faces retaining the chalk dug from the outer ditch. The two faces of the rampart would be tied together by horizontal or diagonal timbers or by both.

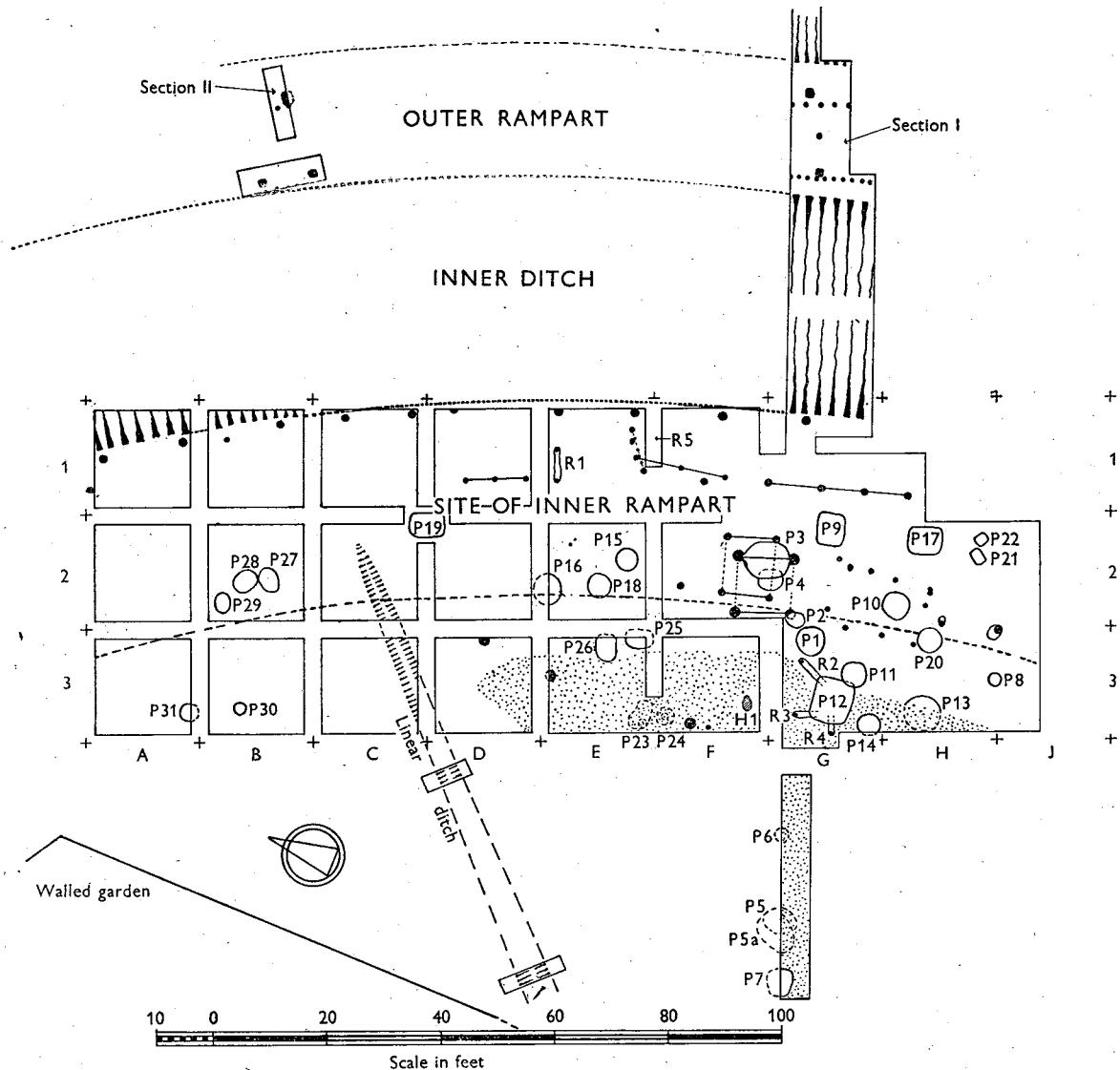


Fig. 2. Plan of Site I.

The single intermediate post-hole is presumably one of a series supporting the cross-timbers. However, the outer side of the rampart was not vertical from its foot, as the bottom layers in the rampart (chalk and topsoil) project beyond it, the chalk one as far as the lip of the ditch. We must, therefore, visualize a small ramp sloping up, at the angle of rest of the material, from the lip of the ditch to the face of the timbering.

This most interesting feature would serve a double purpose. In the first place it would mean that less timber was needed, as horizontal facing timbers would not be needed in the lower part of the rampart. Secondly, by eliminating the level berm between ditch and rampart, it would increase the strength of the defences by making it more difficult for attackers to get a foothold.

One noteworthy feature of the original rampart demands consideration at this stage. The bottom layer in the main section was unweathered, compact chalk, through which the pits for the rampart posts had been cut. In other words, there was here a primary stage in the construction before the timbers of the rampart were erected, though it should be noted that it was absent in Section II. A possible explanation is that the chalk was material thrown up in cutting a lockspit or marking-out trench for the outer ditch. This would account for the presence of chalk as opposed to topsoil in the bottom layer, as there would be little topsoil from a narrow trench. The chalk was subsequently levelled and apparently rammed, possibly to provide a firm underpinning for the rampart.

We have sufficient evidence to estimate the original height of the rampart with reasonable accuracy as 15 ft., since we know both its width and the quantity of material quarried from the outer ditch.<sup>1</sup> It is interesting that from this height the bottom of the ditch would be visible to the defenders.

No artifacts were found in the rampart material or on the ground surface below it.

It has been shown (p. 4 above) that the original outer ditch was largely filled with collapsed material from the rampart. We must, therefore, visualize a stage during which the timbers of the rampart decayed and were not replaced. When this happened the upper part of the rampart material would fall outwards and downwards until the rampart became a mound with sides at the angle of rest of the chalk rubble. A simple calculation shows that this mound would be about 29 ft. wide and 8 ft. 6 in. high. It is clear from the section (Fig. 4*b*) that the volumes of material in this mound and in the filling of the original ditch (apart from that derived from its outer lip) would, when added together, agree closely with the volume of the material in the rampart as restored (Fig. 4*a*).

We do not know how long the rampart remained in a derelict state. We can, however, be certain that it was reconditioned at some stage. In Section II (Fig. 5) a large subrectangular pit, containing a post cavity, had been cut through the old rampart material partly into the subsoil and partly into an original rampart post-hole (Pl. II *c*). The post cavity, which was 8 in. wide, still contained a large piece of wood, identified by Dr H. Godwin as oak. At the rear of the rampart, 14 ft. away, was a similar hole, while in a lateral trench along the line of the rampart another appeared at an interval of 9 ft. Two irregular holes found in the original section (plan,

<sup>1</sup> The only point which is still in doubt is whether there could have been a ramp at the back of the rampart, comparable to that at the front. On balance this does not seem probable, as the lower layers of the rampart do not project beyond the rear row of posts as they do beyond the front row. Tactically, too, a ramp here would be meaningless, while other means of providing access to the rampart walk would be less prodigal of material.

WANDLEBURY  
SECTION I-1955

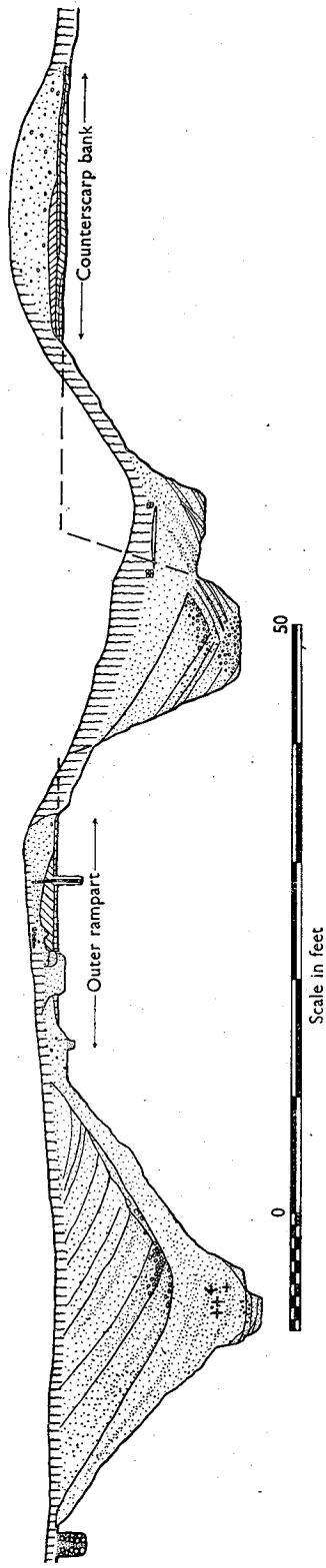


Fig. 3. Wandlebury, Section I, 1955.

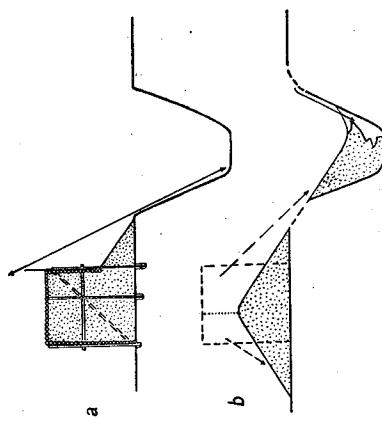


Fig. 4. Hypothetical reconstructions of the defences.

Fig. 2; section, Fig. 3, where they are projected in) may now be clearly explained as secondary post-pits. Again they were 14 ft. apart, but slightly more in advance of the earlier posts. These pits are large because they were driven down from the top of the collapsed early rampart roughly 5 ft. above the old ground surface.

We thus see that in the second phase the rampart again had vertical faces, though the ramp at the front was retained. It was, however, a foot wider and had more massive and more widely spaced timbers. Discussion of its height will be postponed until later.

Three features which belong to the estate period were found in the sections. One was the continuous bedding-trench of an existing iron fence. This was cut into a wider and deeper feature of the same type which contained fragments of bone china. Outside the fence on the space between it and the outer ditch was a chalk and cinder path, evidently supplementary to the one in the ditch.

#### THE INNER DITCH

The inner ditch was V-shaped, 38 ft. wide and 17 ft. deep (Pl. 1a). Its filling was divided into two distinct parts by a line curving gently down from each side to within 7 ft. 6 in. of the bottom. The lower part was filled with weathered chalk, mostly fine grained, some two-thirds having come from the inner side of the ditch. In the upper part was a series of tip lines at the angle of rest sloping down from the inner edge. The material in these was graded in a most interesting way, the coarser pieces having rolled to the bottom of each tip. Apart from a few of the small tips at the top, which contained humus, all the filling was weathered chalk. The lower filling was clearly natural silting while the upper had been deliberately pushed into the ditch from the inner side in order to level it. Fortunately the upper filling produced abundant dating evidence, including a clay tobacco pipe of the early eighteenth century and bricks similar to those used in the estate walls. Both fillings contained much occupation debris. The pottery was almost all hand-made, but the lower filling also yielded a few Romano-British sherds, the lowest within 4 ft. of the bottom of the ditch (the positions of these are marked by crosses on the section, Fig. 3).

#### THE INNER RAMPART

The inner rampart was entirely levelled in the eighteenth century and pushed into the inner ditch. Nevertheless, we can be sure of its character and size. Close to the lip of the inner ditch it had a series of 8 in. vertical timbers set in carefully cut post-holes all about 20 in. in diameter and 30 in. deep (Fig. 2). The average distance between posts was 14 ft., though one (in C 1) was a long way from its correct position.<sup>1</sup> The longest interval between posts is 18 ft., showing that timbers of this length were available from the horizontal facing of the rampart.

<sup>1</sup> This might perhaps be due to gang-work or merely to a shortage of long timbers for the horizontal facing at a given moment.

Since there were no other posts associated with the rampart, it is clear that it differed from the outer one and had a vertical outer face with a ramp on the inside sloping up at the angle of rest to a level walk on the top. The size of the rampart may be easily determined. Assuming that all the material quarried from the inner ditch was used, and allowing for a 6 ft. walk at the top, the result would be a rampart 16 ft. high and 33 ft. wide. Further, we have proof that all the material from the ditch was used, since a mound 9 ft. high and stretching back 36 ft. from the lip of the inner

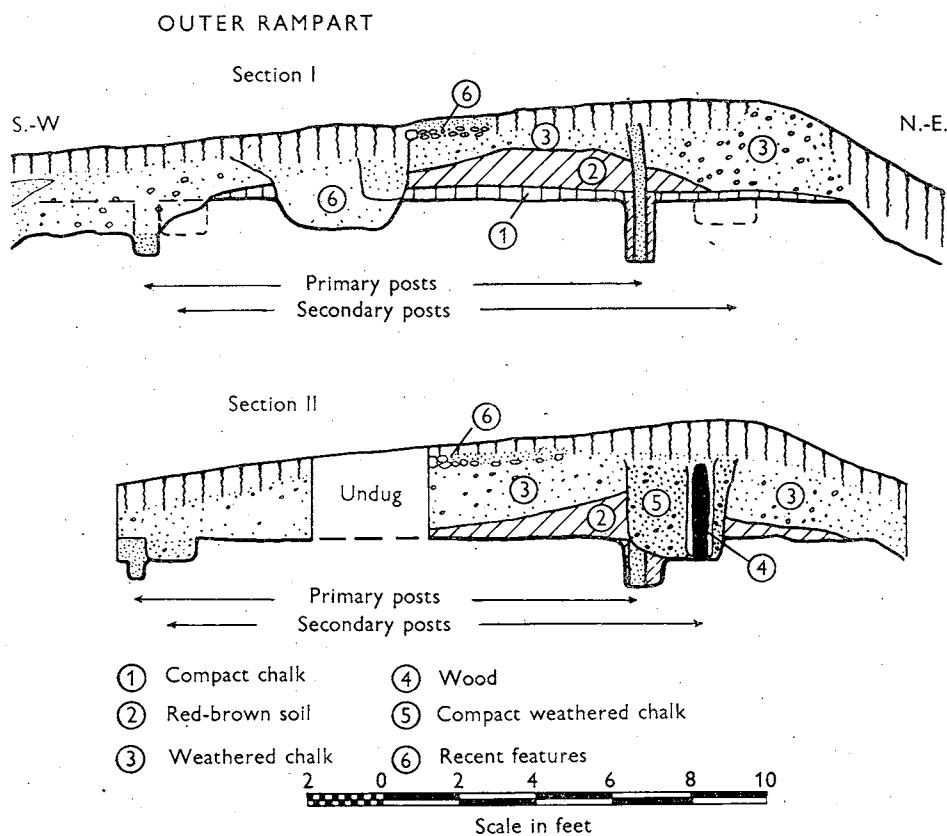


Fig. 5. Sections of the outer rampart. Section II is drawn in reverse.

ditch existed before the eighteenth-century levelling. We can state this with confidence, because we know its volume from the volume of filling pushed into the ditch, and it is clear that it must have been at the profile of rest for the material, which is given by the angle of the tiplines in the ditch filling. It also follows that the back of this mound would coincide with the back of the original rampart, for its rear slope had always been at the angle of rest. If we then add to the volume of the mound, as it was in the eighteenth century, the volume of silting in the inner ditch derived from the inside, we once more arrive at the figure of 16 ft. for the height of the rampart.

One unresolved point remains. The vertical face of the rampart would be subject to considerable outward pressure. The use of massive deeply-set posts clearly reflects this, but it seems probable that some means of relieving the pressure would be used. In default of diagonal anchoring timbers set into the subsoil, a possible method of ensuring stability would be the use of horizontal logs tied to the facing and running back into the body of the rampart. These would have been more effective if there were horizontal timbers laid on them along the length the rampart. These features are hypothetically restored in the section (Fig. 4c), but it must be made clear that we have no evidence to guide us. A partial parallel to such treatment was found in the rampart of Eddisbury, though there was a stone facing there.<sup>1</sup>

Under the site of the rampart were numerous pits and post-holes which cannot have been cut when it existed. Furthermore, these do not belong to an ephemeral occupation, as many of them had been filled and cut by others before the rampart was erected. For instance, in E1 (Fig. 2) a post-hole was partly cut away by a later one which was itself earlier than a post of structure R5.

#### THE HISTORY OF THE DEFENCES

We are now in a position to consider the relation between the various elements of the defences. It has been shown (p. 4) that the outer ditch and the outer rampart each embodied two phases of construction. The other three elements had only one phase each. Moreover, the outer rampart was erected on a ground surface with no occupation traces and did not contain any occupation debris. In contrast, the inner rampart was built on a surface riddled with pits and post-holes, while the counterscarp bank contained occupation material and was built on a surface showing traces of occupation. Finally, we cannot neglect the presence of Romano-British pottery within 4 ft. of the bottom of the inner ditch.

This evidence proves conclusively that the outer ditch and rampart together formed the earliest defence of the site (Fig. 4a). The timbers of this rampart eventually decayed and the rampart material slumped down, partly filling the ditch (Fig. 4b). Some time later the surviving part of the outer ditch was widened and the outer rampart reconditioned. The spoil from the recutting of the ditch was dumped in a bank on the counterscarp which, it will be recalled, continues round the whole circuit of the defences, implying uniform treatment of the ditch. The dumping of spoil on the less accessible counterscarp (Fig. 4c) may be taken as proof that no material from the ditch was required for the outer rampart. This rampart, therefore, cannot have been restored to its original height. Instead, the tail of the fallen rampart was removed and dumped on the top and the rampart was given a new revetment of stout oak timbers (Fig. 4c). In this process the old ground surface was scraped up from the back of the rampart, the post-holes of the first rampart being

<sup>1</sup> *Liverpool Annals of Archaeology and Anthropology*, vol. xxiii, fig. 2, facing p. 108.

partly cut away in places. Consideration of the quantity of material available suggests that the reconstructed rampart was 9 ft. high.<sup>1</sup>

There is no proof that the reconditioning of the outer rampart and ditch was contemporary with the construction of the inner defences, nor that the outer rampart and ditch were modified simultaneously. It is possible that the reconstruction of the outer rampart marks an intermediate stage, followed by the recutting of the ditch and the creation of the counterscarp bank. If so, the final version of the outer rampart must have been a rounded mound, though even this would leave dead ground in the outer ditch. The cutting of the additional line of defences inside the old ones is unusual. But it is not difficult to visualize a situation in which this would be the sensible thing to do, as the labour involved would be roughly  $\frac{7}{12}$  of that needed to make defences on the same scale outside the old ones. Then, too, if this had been done, the old defences would have needed much more drastic reconstruction to be of use.

In the reconstruction (Fig. 4c) the outer rampart is shown revetted.<sup>2</sup> If this is correct, the relative heights of the ramparts made it possible for a defender on the inner one to see over the outer one to the counterscarp bank. The latter offered little cover to would-be attackers and at the same time made the outer ditch appear deceptively shallow.

#### THE INTERIOR

Inside the defences an area close to the main section trench, measuring 60 by 180 ft., was marked out in a grid of 20 ft. squares. Within each square of the grid an area 17 ft. square was stripped, baulks being removed to follow features where necessary. In the following account the squares of the grid will be identified by the reference letters and numbers marked on the plan (Fig. 2).

As most of the area stripped was on the site of the levelled inner rampart, the majority of the features found certainly belonged to the first period of the earthwork. The arc marked on the plan by a broken line curving from A<sub>3</sub> to J<sub>3</sub> represents the probable position of the tail of the inner rampart; the only features which could have belonged to the rampart being the post-holes close to the lip of the ditch between A<sub>1</sub> and G<sub>1</sub>. With the exception of an extensive layer of gravel and a linear ditch, all the Iron Age features uncovered were either pits or post-holes. They were concentrated in the southern half of the excavated area, especially in the vicinity of G<sub>3</sub>. It will be well, however, to point out that we can know nothing of the large area of the first period fort destroyed when the inner ditch was dug. This is particularly important, for it is in just this area that a concentration of structures, clustered in the shelter afforded by the single rampart then existing, might have been expected.

<sup>1</sup> The horizontal facing timbers at the back of the reconstructed rampart must have been outside the uprights. We have no evidence of the way in which the necessary cross-timbers were inserted into the body of the rampart.

<sup>2</sup> The model at present on view in the University Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, which incorporates criticisms and advice from Messrs T. C. Lethbridge, F.S.A. and C. A. Ralegh Radford, V-P.S.A., F.B.A., shows the outer rampart without revetting in the final phase.

With so little of the inside of the fort excavated, we cannot assess the nature and degree of occupation at more than a preliminary level. Nevertheless, we can state that there were permanent structures, of a kind normally associated with Iron Age agriculture and sheep-rearing, in the first period fort. These structures show signs of renewal and clearly imply occupation over a considerable time. No structure of the second period has been securely identified (though see p. 15, below), and we are therefore not in a position to decide whether there was a break in the occupation at the time the original defences were allowed to decay, or to estimate the character of the occupation in the second period.

#### POST-HOLES

In both periods, the rampart post-holes were carefully cut and well packed. The same is true of the post-holes inside the fort which, with only three exceptions (in D<sub>3</sub>, E<sub>3</sub>, and J<sub>3</sub>), were all circular and had vertical sides and flat bottoms. Two types of packing were used. In the first, chalk and soil were rammed around the post (Pl. III*a*). In the second, the post was packed with chalk rubble only and the filling was not rammed (Pl. III*b*). In both types the cavity left by the decay of the post was frequently plainly visible.

Many of the post-holes uncovered could not be related with certainty to others, but some were grouped in ways which allow us to identify a few minor structures. Nothing which can be claimed as a house was found.<sup>1</sup>

#### MINOR STRUCTURES

In the area uncovered were four examples of a distinctive kind of structure. The only complete one (R<sub>1</sub> in E<sub>1</sub>) had two stone-packed post-holes 5 ft. 6 in. apart, joined by a shallow channel cut through the glacial subsoil to the top of the chalk. There were three similar features cut through the gravel layer in G<sub>3</sub> (R<sub>2-4</sub>), but these had all been partly destroyed by Pit 12 so that only one post-hole and part of the connecting channel of each survived. These double-posted structures were presumably racks for drying corn or hay, similar to those found at many Iron Age sites.<sup>2</sup> The channel between the posts is, however, not known elsewhere.<sup>3</sup>

One other structure (R<sub>5</sub> in E<sub>1</sub>) may also be tentatively identified as a drying rack. This had two stone-packed post-holes 8 ft. apart with four small irregularly spaced holes between them. The small holes were only 3 in. deep and can only have held thin stakes. Both this structure and R<sub>1</sub> must have belonged to the first period of the fort.

Attention should also be drawn to three more groups of posts which may belong to racks (in D<sub>1</sub>, F<sub>1</sub> and G<sub>1</sub>). Each group has either three or four equally spaced

<sup>1</sup> The promising-looking concentration of post-holes in G<sub>2</sub> cannot be interpreted as part of a house. The post-holes vary greatly in depth and character and are certainly not all contemporary; nor can any coherent system of replacements be traced.

<sup>2</sup> The classic site is Little Woodbury. For a full discussion of the racks there see *Proc. Prehistoric Soc.* vol. vi, pt. 1, pp. 94ff.

<sup>3</sup> Its purpose is not clear, though it may have been intended to assist drainage, as the glacial subsoil tends to hold water.



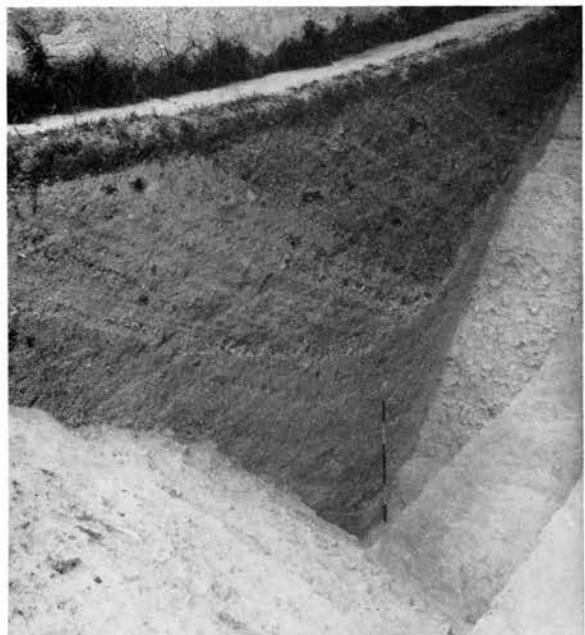
a. General view of the defences looking towards the outside from the inner edge of the inner ditch.



b. The outer ditch and rampart looking towards the interior.



c. The modern path in the outer ditch.



d. The inner ditch showing tip lines in the upper filling.

(Facing p. 112)

post-holes set in a row. The character of the post-holes varies from group to group, but within each they are the same.

Finally, two groups of post-holes in F<sub>2</sub> to G<sub>2</sub> must be considered. One is a 10 ft. square with post-holes 2 ft. deep and 22 in. in diameter at the corners; the other a rectangle 8 ft. 6 in. by 10 ft. with corner post-holes 21 in. deep and 17 in. across. Similar structures at Little Woodbury were interpreted as granaries with floors above ground level, used to store the seed-corn which could not be parched and kept in pits. At Little Woodbury the granaries were several times rebuilt on approximately the same site which makes the juxtaposition of the Wandlebury examples all the more interesting. It is clear that both were earlier than the inner rampart. They were also earlier than Pit 3 which is cut into post-holes belonging to both.

#### THE PITS

Thirty-three pits were completely or partly excavated. The variations in size and shape were considerable and will be best represented diagrammatically (Fig. 6, to be studied in conjunction with the plan, Fig. 2). The outstanding characteristic is their comparative shallowness, only three (Pits 12, 23 and 24) being more than 3 ft. deep, and two of these had abnormal features. Even the shallowest pits were clearly defined in plan, however, and all had a characteristic filling including much domestic rubbish. The deeper pits frequently had three or more separate layers in them, but in every instance pieces of the same pot were found in two or more of the layers, suggesting that the pits were filled with any available rubbish when they had served the purpose for which they were dug. The only certain exception to this rule was Pit 12 which was only half filled when a body was dumped into it (p. 15). Pits 2 and 19 were dug specifically for use as graves (pp. 14, 15) and Pits 23 and 24 may have been dug for a special purpose, but the rest were presumably all intended for storage. It is here that the shallowness of so many of them becomes puzzling. Pits believed to have been used as store-chambers are one of the most constant characteristics of Iron Age A sites in this country.<sup>1</sup> Normally, however, the pits are considerably deeper than the Wandlebury ones, many of which could have been of little use for storage unless they held containers projecting above ground level. There was no trace of wattles associated with them, but independent wicker baskets could have been used, though, if so, it is difficult to see why a pit was needed at all.

Two pits, 23 and 24 in E<sub>3</sub> and F<sub>3</sub> respectively, call for special comment. They differed from the usual Wandlebury type in having strongly undercut sides, and each has a smaller, deep pit in its bottom (Fig. 6). The small pits appear never to have held posts—there was no packing, their fillings were homogeneous with the lower fillings of the main pits and they were excessively deep. Nor does it seem likely that they were dug to ensure drainage of the main pits, for if such provision were needed the absence of drainage holes in the other pits would be inexplicable. It is clear that Pits 23 and 24 were used for some special purpose, but what it was cannot be inferred.

<sup>1</sup> For a recent discussion, see *Proc. Prehistoric Soc.* vol. xx, pt. 1, pp. 10ff.

## THE BURIALS

Fragments of human skeletons were found mixed with domestic rubbish in at least six of the pits. This may only mean that previous burials were disturbed in digging new pits and incorporated in the filling of old ones, since we know that burial inside

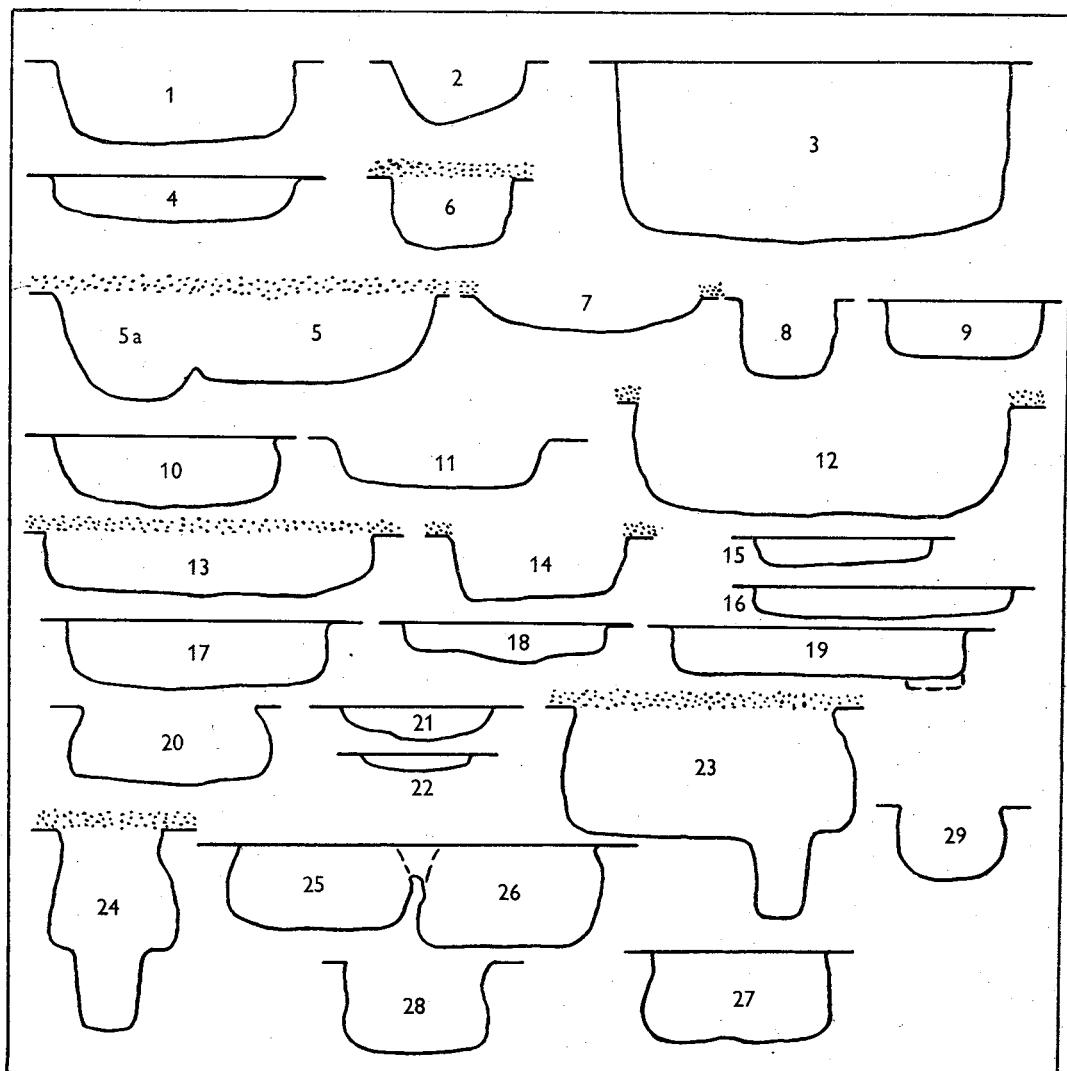
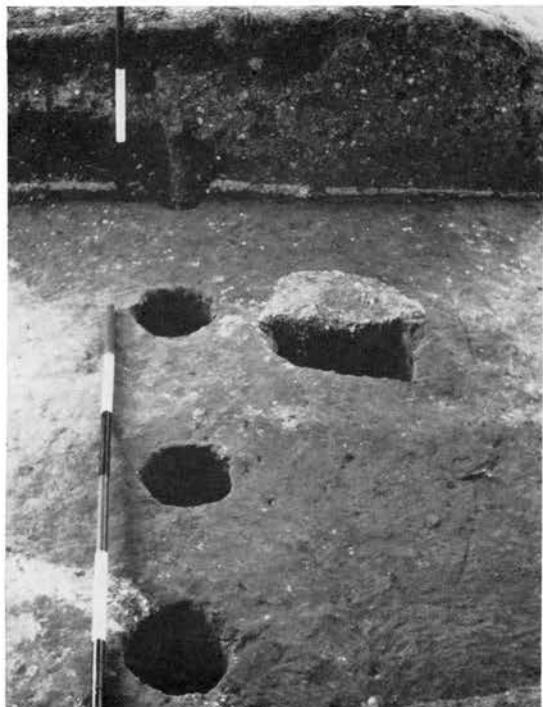


Fig. 6. Pit sections. A line across the top of a pit indicates that it was sealed by the inner rampart, stippling that it was sealed by the gravel layer. Stippling at the sides denotes pits cut through the gravel. The numbering corresponds with Fig. 2. (1 in. = 4 ft.)

the fort was practised. Pits 2, 19 and 12 each contained an inhumation burial, the first two having been dug especially for that purpose. Pit 2 contained the upper half of the skeleton of an infant six years old (Appendix, no. 1). The lower limbs were

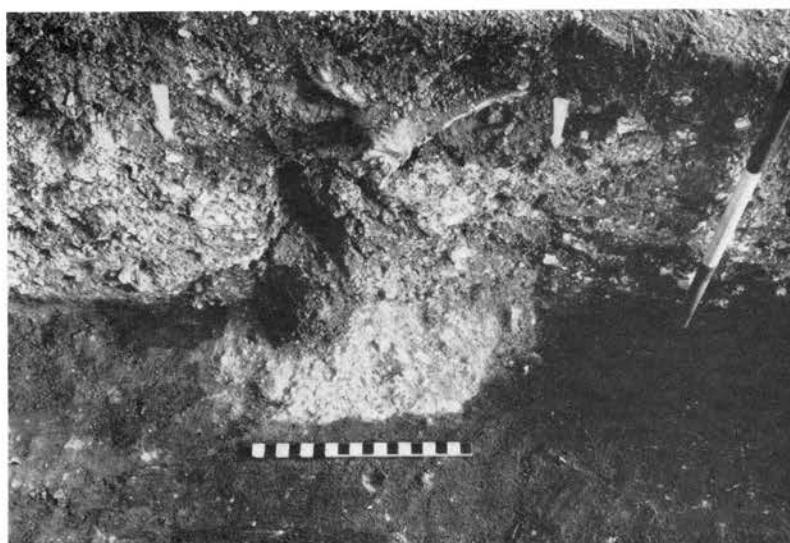
PLATE II



a. The front post-holes of the outer rampart in Section I. Note the post-cavity in the section and a secondary post-hole to the right of the early row.



b. Post-holes at the back of the outer rampart in Section I. Note a secondary post-hole cut through the chalk layer.



c. A secondary post-hole in Section II cut through the original bank.  
The limits of the post-hole are shown by the arrows.



a. Post-hole with packing of rammed chalk and soil.



b. Post-hole with packing of chalk blocks.



c. The burial in Pit 2 (see p. 14), showing the partly exposed skull and traces of the wrapping round the body.



d. The burial in Pit 2 completely exposed.



e. Burial in Pit 12 (see p. 14).

entirely absent and there can be no doubt at all that the burial was made after they had been removed, but before the flesh of the upper half of the body had decayed. The mutilated remains were buried in a sack or shroud, clear traces of which survived (Pl. III*c*). This had been tied together by a single bronze needle (Fig. 9, no. 8) which rather suggests the use of a sack. The body lay front downwards, the head turned to the left (Pl. III*d*). There were no grave-goods and only a little domestic rubbish in the filling.

The skeleton in Pit 19, an adult female (Appendix, no. 2), was more drastically mutilated, so much so, that it might appear at first sight that it was not a burial at all. There can, however, be little doubt that it was. The pit itself was almost certainly dug specifically for it, as it was the only one on the site which had not been cut completely through the glacial subsoil. Furthermore, the pit was shallow in proportion to its size, and its filling of compact brown soil with chalk rubble was different from that of any other pit and did not contain the usual domestic debris. The presence of a shallow, circular basin cut into the chalk in one corner while the pit was open was a unique feature. The skull lay apart from the rest of the skeleton including the lower jaw which were in the west half of the pit. The femora were still socketed into the pelvis, but had been broken off a few inches below it; the pelvis had been crushed by a large block of chalk thrown in on top of it. Eighteen vertebrae remained in position, showing that some flesh or ligament was left at the time of burial; some of the ribs may also have been in position, but the rest of the bones were scattered in chaotic fashion. It would be unwise to speculate on the significance of this burial at present.

The third burial, another adult woman (Appendix, no. 3), was made in a partly filled storage pit (Pit 12). The skeleton lay on its back (Pl. III*e*) fully extended, with the left arm, which was also extended, partly under the pelvis. The right arm was flexed at right angles and lay across the top of the abdomen. The skull was lying on its right side, but the top vertebrae were not in their proper relationship to it or to each other. There is no evidence, however, to show whether they had already been displaced at the time of the burial. After the body was deposited, the pit was filled with grey chalky earth containing refuse (including two penannular brooches, Fig. 9, nos. 3 and 4, and pottery, Fig. 8, 64-71), but there were no grave-goods.

#### THE GRAVEL LAYER

A layer of flint gravel and small chalk rubble, in places as much as 8 in. thick, was found in D<sub>3</sub> to H<sub>3</sub>. It also occurred in the original section trench where it extended for 60 ft. into the interior of the fort with no signs of ending. (The extent of the layer is indicated by stippling on Fig. 2.) Unfortunately it could not be related with certainty to the defences, though it will be noticed that its eastern edge approximately coincides with the back of the inner rampart. The layer sealed several pits and deposits of occupation material and had been cut through by other pits and features. Its purpose will become more apparent when its full extent is known, at

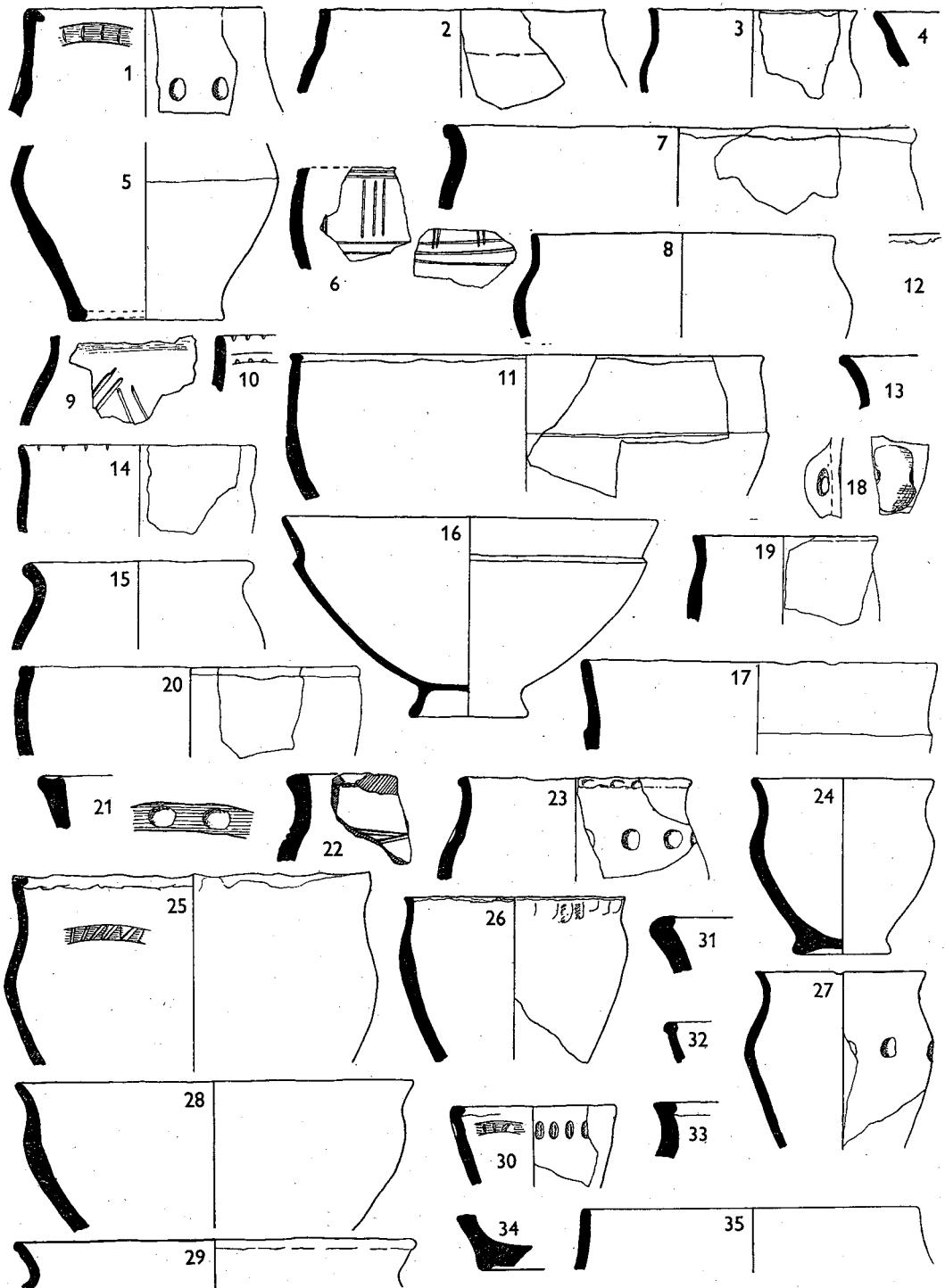


Fig. 7. The pottery. 1/4.

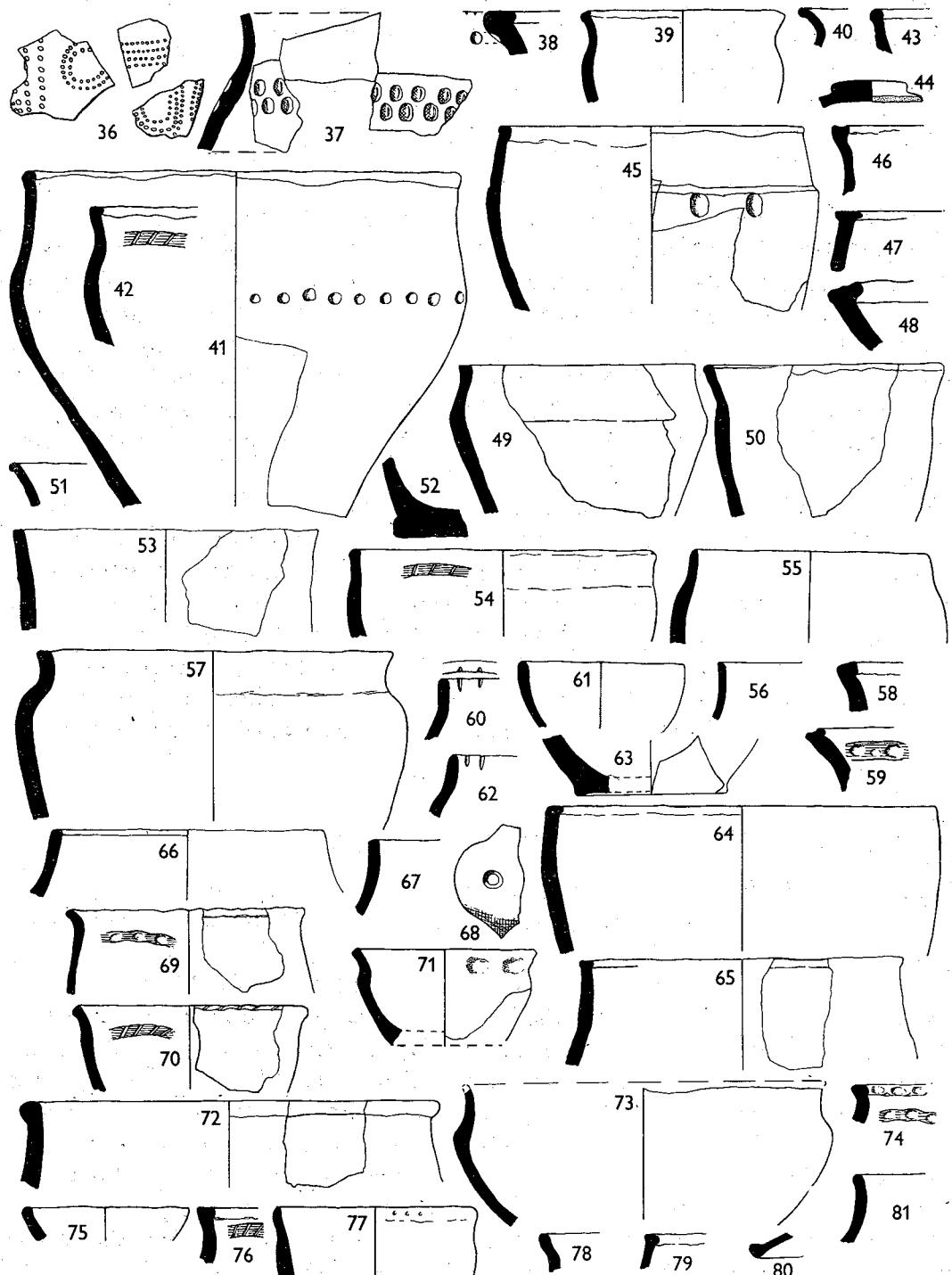


Fig. 8. The pottery. 1/4.

present it seems likely that it was a stack-yard floor. As it was a major feature of the area uncovered, the pottery and other finds are described in groups in relation to it as well as to the defences (pp. 22, 23).

#### THE LINEAR DITCH

One other important feature of the inside of the fort was a linear ditch which was aligned almost radially to the perimeter of the fort. (It pointed slightly south of the centre.) This began in C2 (Fig. 2) and extended for at least 84 ft. into the interior. It became wider and deeper towards the centre of the fort, the bottom falling 19 in. in 70 ft. to a maximum depth of 30 in. The ditch must have been cut in the first period of the fort as it was partly covered by the inner rampart, though it need not necessarily have been entirely filled in the second period, except in C2. Indeed, it seems possible that it was not filled, as two pieces of a Romano-British jar were found 18 in. down in the filling in C3. There was no trace of an associated bank or banks.

Drainage ditches were very common on Iron Age sites in this country, but they were usually smaller and less regular than this. Furthermore the Wandlebury ditch did not drain any structures in the area uncovered. Nor does it seem likely to have been a boundary ditch, as it was consistently wider and deeper towards the centre of the earthwork. The remaining possibility is that it was used for water catchment and fed some kind of reservoir in the interior of the earthwork. This appears to be the most likely explanation of it, one moreover that is not invalidated by the nature of the subsoil, for in the wet summer of 1956 the ditch held water for two or three days after heavy rain.

#### THE POTTERY

##### *General points*

The pottery is described, below, in stratified groups arranged in their relation to the defences or the Gravel Layer where possible. Some, however, is from pits whose relation to other features of the site is uncertain (Group III).

Most of the material, both from the pits and from below the Gravel Layer, was very fragmentary and it is all residual rubbish. The pits would be filled with any refuse that happened to be available and, though the bulk would probably be more or less contemporary domestic rubbish, it is clear that older material could easily become incorporated in the fillings. It is, therefore, all the more necessary to assemble many groups before attempting to evaluate the dating evidence. At present there is not sufficient material to attempt any general outline of the development of Iron Age pottery on the site, especially as there are no groups which we can certainly assign to the second period of the fort. Further work at Wandlebury will, however, enable a general outline to be made eventually, and it should then be possible to use the Wandlebury results to assess the material from other sites in the Cambridge Region, the Iron Age pottery of which is very imperfectly known.

About 80% of the pottery found came from large situla jars in coarse fabrics. This has almost always an in-turned rim, often with 'pie-crust' decoration, and quite often with finger printing round the shoulder. It is doubtful whether any useful chronology can be based on the presence or absence of this sort of decoration.

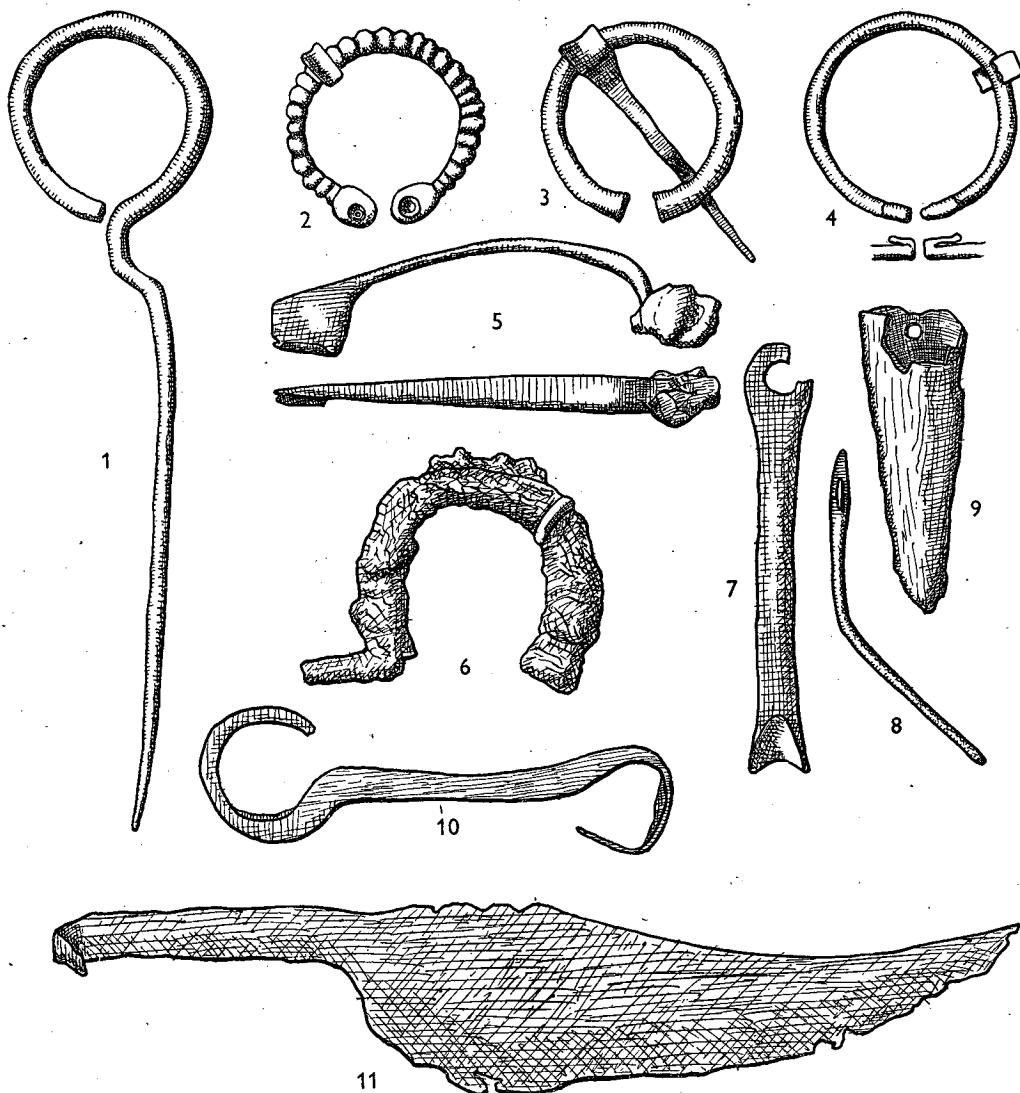


Fig. 9. Small objects of metal. All 1/1.

More useful for dating purposes are the burnished decorated wares (nos. 6, 9 and 36) and the finer wares with parallels outside the Cambridge Region (e.g. nos. 15, 18 etc.).

A few general points may be made about the affinities of the pottery. First, a negative point. Nothing resembling the angular and cordonate jars from West Harling or Fengate was found. Nor were there any of the angular bowls so common

at Linton, only 5 miles away to the south. Secondly, the outside affinities seem to be mainly with the Lower and Middle Thames area, where many parallels to the Wandlebury pottery are to be found at such sites as Chinnor in the Chilterns. This connection with the south-west is no doubt a result of the presence of the Icknield Way and it seems to suggest that the inhabitants of Wandlebury came from that direction originally. The Wilbury hill-fort in Hertfordshire and, nearer Cambridge, the Abington Pigotts site have yielded a lot of pottery in the same tradition, but whether such pottery represents a movement independent of that which brought Wessex traditions to sites such as Linton, or whether it represents the gradual devolution of the original Wessex forms in the area, is not clear.

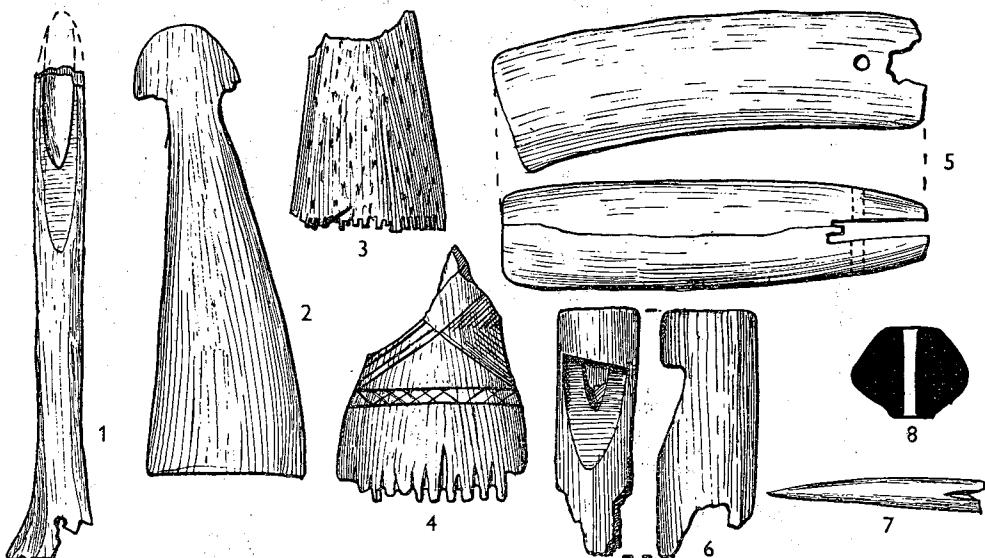


Fig. 10. Small objects of bone and pottery. 1-6 and 8, 1/2. 7, 1/1.

It is very difficult indeed to give absolute dates to Iron Age pottery. Broadly speaking, the Wandlebury material must be assigned to a secondary stage in the development of Iron Age pottery in Britain, though the earliest material retains some of the features which are often held to belong to the first stage. Formally it belongs to Iron Age A<sub>2</sub>, but it must be remembered that this cultural label has different chronological values in different parts of the country, and that in the Cambridge Region the Iron Age A peoples continued to be little affected by others until the immediately pre-Roman period. The earliest Wandlebury groups, sealed by the inner rampart, nos. 1-10 below, should probably be assigned to the third century B.C. The latest groups cannot yet be dated archaeologically, but on grounds of general probability should belong to the late first century B.C. or the early first century A.D.

In order to save space, the descriptive section on the pottery omits details of the form of drawn vessels. The fabric will be mentioned only when it differs from the normal gritty black with flint tempering and rough black and brown surface. All

THE WANDLEBURY IRON AGE HILL-FORT, EXCAVATIONS OF 1955-6 21  
the drawable stratified pieces are illustrated. Parallels are quoted from local sites when possible.<sup>1</sup>

*Group I, from pits sealed by the inner rampart (Fig. 7, nos. 1-10)*

1. Strongly inturned rim, nail impressions on the top. Pit 3.
2. A little chalk tempering, slight surface burnish. *Wilbury*, Fig. 8, 19. Pit 3.
3. Slight surface burnish. Cf. no. 8. Pit 3.
4. Bowl or dish with highly burnished surface (diameter 20 cm.). *Wilbury*, Fig. 8, 10B; *Jack's Hill*, Pl. XXXVIIb. Pit 3.
5. Jar with unusually broad base. Patchy brown and black burnished surface. Pit 3.
6. Hard fabric with black burnished surface. Decoration incised after firing, as in many Wessex examples (*Kenyon*, p. 35). Pit 3.
7. Red-brown fabric with large flint grit. Pit 9.
8. Highly burnished surface. Cf. no. 3 and *Linton*, Fig. 4, 20. Pit 9.
9. Shoulder of jar in brown-grey fabric with small flint grit. Burnished surface. Decoration incised after firing. *Chinnor*, Fig. 6, 30. Pit 15.
10. Hard brown-black fabric. The form and the incisions around the inside of the rim are paralleled in nos. 14, 60, and 62, the latter in a pit later than the Gravel Layer. No parallels have been noted elsewhere. Pit 15.

*Group II, from pits probably sealed by the inner rampart (Fig. 7, nos. 11-19)*

11. Rough purplish brown surface. Cf. no. 45. Pits 27 and 28.
12. Rim of a large jar (diameter 24 cm.). This is the standard rim profile on the site for the medium and large jar, cf. nos. 31, 33, 65, etc., the flattened inturned lip being characteristic. Similar rims are well-represented at Chinnor (*Chinnor*, Fig. 5) and at Abington Pigotts (e.g. Fig. 3A and unpublished material in the University Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology). Pit 27, but several similar ones in Pits 28 and 29.
13. Black burnished surface (diameter c. 14 cm.). *Wilbury*, Fig. 8, 10. Pit 28.
14. Cf. no. 10. Pit 28.
15. Soft brown fabric with large flint grit. Surfaces black, the exterior slightly burnished. Jars resembling this were found at Chinnor (Fig. 6, 29). Pit 28.
16. Patchy brown and black burnished surface. The form appears to be a Middle Thames one (cf. *Chinnor*, Fig. 8), though the Wandlebury dish is more elegant than most. Pits 27, 28 and 29.
17. Hard sandy brown fabric with thick black core, very gritty with some of the grits as much as 5 mm. long. The correct horizon was difficult to work out, but that shown is probably not far out, though it is possible that this is a coarse copy of a dish like no. 16. Pit 29.
18. Lug handle in brown to black fabric with burnished surface. Several similar handles were found, all in the same fabric, but in no case was there enough of the rest of the pot to make the form certain. Probably, however, no. 55, which is in the same characteristic fabric, belongs to one variety of these vessels, which is also known from Abington Pigotts (Fig. 2B), while nos. 35, 66 and 67 may belong to another. Some of the unstratified pieces had the incised lines around the handles also found in the Chilterns (*Chinnor*, Fig. 6, 24 and 26). Cf. no. 68. Pit 29.
19. Red-brown fabric with rough black surface. Cf. no. 26. Pit 10.

*Group III, from pits unrelated to other features (Fig. 7, 20-35)*

20. Cf. no. 11 and *Wilbury*, Fig. 12, 51. Pit 1.
21. Soft red-brown fabric with shell and flint grit (diameter c. 34 cm.). Several other examples

<sup>1</sup> For a list of the abbreviations used in referring to reports see p. 27.

of this form were found all with thumb impressions on the top of the rim. Probably a bowl rather than a dish. No precise parallels have been found, so the form may well be a local one. Pit 1.

- 22. The incised lines on the shoulder are sharply cut, probably by a metal tool. Pit 1.
- 23. Red-brown fabric with burnished surface. *Chinnor*, Fig. 5, 2. Pit 1.
- 24. For a parallel (form only) see *Abingdon Pigotts*, Pl. IA. Pit 1.
- 25. Hard orange-brown fabric with small flint grits, the outer surface smoothed and with grass markings. The rim has been impressed with a stick, etc. (cf. nos. 42, 54 and 70), a technique also found on the Jack's Hill pottery (Pl. XXXVI, j). Pit 8.
- 26. Same fabric as no. 25. Cf. no. 19 and *Wilbury*, Fig. 8, 11. Pit 8.
- 27. Rough light brown surface. Pit 31.
- 28. Soft red-brown fabric without tempering, not burnished. Similar in form to no. 73, but with a less strong carination. Several others were found unstratified. Pit 32.
- 29. Orange-brown fabric with black burnished surface (diameter c. 10 cm.). Pit 32.
- 30. Soft red-brown fabric with black core. No parallels have been noted for this unusual type.

Pit 32.

- 31. Brown fabric (diameter c. 28 cm.). The rim has impressed grooves as on no. 25. Pit 32.
- 32. Rim from a vessel of uncertain form and diameter. Pit 32.
- 33. Fabric as no. 31. *Abingdon Pigotts*, Pl. V, h. Pit 20.
- 34. Black fabric with some chalk tempering. There is a slight footstand. Several examples of this type were found, mostly unstratified, but cf. no. 63. Pit 20.
- 35. Black fabric with a black burnished surface wash. Cf. nos. 66 and 67 which are, however, in soft brown fabric though with the same kind of surface treatment. The form of all these vessels is uncertain, but they may belong to a type of handled jar known in Surrey (*Kenyon*, Fig. 19). It may be noted that a handle from such a jar was found in the same pit as nos. 66 and 67. Pit 26.

*Group IV, from deposits sealed by the Gravel Layer (Fig. 8, 36-52)*

- 36. Fragments from a large decorated vessel in dark brown gritty fabric. Burnished surface decorated before firing. Although many fragments were found, few joined and the form of the vessel and the decoration remain obscure. It is clear, however, that most of the surface was undecorated. Punctured decoration of festoons or circles is not uncommon on Iron Age A sites (cf. *Chinnor*, Fig. 7, for instance), but it is normally enclosed between incised lines. No precise parallel has been noted, though *Linton*, Fig. 5, A and B, have unenclosed punctured decoration. Pit 5. A piece from another pot with similar decoration was found unstratified.

37. Hard brown fabric with much flint grit. This is noteworthy as the only pot from Wandlebury to bear more than one row of finger-printing. Pit 5.

38. The top of the rim is incised like nos. 14, 60 and 62, the lower part of the rim is frilled by finger-printing. Pit 5.

39. Soft black fabric without grit. The outer surface, which is brown, has been slightly smoothed. Pit 13.

- 40. Surface burnished. Pit 13.
- 41. Hard grey-brown fabric, rough red-brown surface. *Hengistbury*, Pl. XVI, 10. Pit 23.
- 42. Red-brown fabric with small flint and chalk grit (diameter c. 28 cm.). See no. 25. Pit 23.
- 43. Dark brown fabric with flint grit (diameter c. 20 cm.). Pit 23.
- 44. Red fabric with brown core, dark brown burnished surface. This is evidently from a lid.

Pit 24.

45-52 were all found in the occupation layer sealed by the Gravel in C3, together with fragments of a haematite-coated vessel.

- 45. Sandy brown fabric with rough surface. Cf. no. 11.

46. Red-brown fabric with flint grit (diameter c. 28 cm.). *Abington Pigotts*, Fig. 2A.
47. Black fabric with much coarse sand, slightly burnished (diameter c. 32 cm.). *Abington Pigotts*, Pl. V, g.
48. Soft orange-brown fabric with thick brown core. Large diameter.
49. Some chalk tempering, surface patchy orange-brown to black. Cf. 66 and 67.
50. Rough surface, light brown to black. *Chinnor*, Fig. 5, 16.
51. Hard brown fabric without tempering, burnished (diameter c. 18 cm.). Cf. no. 73.
52. Soft brown fabric with chalk and flint tempering, rough grass-marked surface.

*Group V, in Gravel Layer* (Fig. 8, 53-56)

53. Reddish brown surface.
54. Patchy brown surface. For the form cf. no. 11, for the decoration on the rim cf. nos. 25, 42 etc.
55. Soft brown fabric with chalk tempering, smoothed brown and black surface. From a handled jar in all probability, cf. *Abington Pigotts*, Fig. 2B. Several unstratified examples.
56. Surface like no. 54.

*Group Va, in surface of Gravel Layer* (Fig. 8, 57-61)

57. Surface orange-brown and dark brown (diameter c. 8 cm.). *Abington Pigotts*, Fig. 2B.
58. Diameter c. 25 cm.
59. Soft red-brown fabric with chalk and flint grit, interior red, exterior brown (diameter c. 24 cm.). This is presumably a variant of the large jar rim.
60. Soft black fabric with sandy brown surface. Cf. no. 10.
61. Cf. *Chinnor*, Fig. 5, 18.

*Group VI, from features cut through the Gravel Layer* (Fig. 8, 62-71)

62. Brown surface (diameter c. 10 cm.). Pit 11.
63. Patchy orange-brown to black surface. The foot-ring is reminiscent of some Wessex types (*Kenyon*, Fig. 4, 2), and is also known in the Chilterns (*Chinnor*, Fig. 8, 69). Pit 11.
64. Black fabric with chalk and flint tempering, orange-brown surface. *Wilbury*, Fig. 10, 53. Pit 12.
65. Brown fabric with large flints, orange-brown surface. Cf. no. 2, and some Lower Thames forms, e.g. *Kenyon*, Fig. 17, 1. Pit 12.
- 66 and 67. Reddish brown fabric with flint grit, black wash and burnish. See no. 35. Pit 12.
68. Fabric as nos. 66 and 67. Perhaps from one of them. See note on no. 35. Pit 12.
69. Black gritty fabric with black granular surface (diameter c. 5.5 cm.). No parallel has been noted for this form. Pit 12.
70. Fabric as no. 69. This is the only example of the form on which there was any rim decoration. Pit 12.
71. Shallow impressions on the neck. Similar squat jars have been found at Abington Pigotts (in C.M.A.E.).

*Group VII, from the filling of the linear ditch* (Fig. 8, 72-81)

72. Large flint grits (diameter c. 10 cm.).
73. Dark brown fabric with flint grit, black burnished surface. Cf. no. 28, but this is more carinated.
74. Soft brown fabric (diameter c. 12 cm.).
75. Hard brown gritty fabric, black burnished surface. Cf. no. 61 and *Chinnor*, Fig. 8, 18.
76. Soft brown fabric (diameter c. 22 cm.).

77. Very sandy brown fabric with corky texture, possibly stabbed decoration on outside of rim.
78. Soft black fabric (diameter c. 10 cm.).
79. Hard grey fabric with large flint grit, rough brown surface. Cf. no. 47.
80. Soft black fabric without grit, black burnished surface (diameter c. 12 cm.).
81. Diameter c. 14 cm. Cf. no. 67, but the lip has a suggestion of a bead.

#### SMALL OBJECTS

Considering the small area so far examined, the relative abundance of iron objects is striking. Flint clearly was not of major importance in the economy of the Wandlebury inhabitants: although some two dozen flakes were found, most were unstratified, including the only two finished implements, both scrapers. In view of the usual abundance of flint on early Iron Age A sites and the availability of good flint nearby, its rarity at Wandlebury suggests that iron tools were already available in quantity at the time of the initial occupation. The relative proportion of iron to bronze objects is also unusually high.

Weaving is abundantly attested by the presence of carding combs (Fig. 10, nos. 2-4), a spindle whorl (Fig. 10, no. 8), and many fragments of triangular daub loom-weights (not illustrated, but of the same form as *Maiden Castle*, Fig. 100, 1).

#### *Metal objects* (Fig. 9)

1. Iron ring-headed pin. Cf. *Arch. J.* vol. xcI (1934), pp. 269ff. and also *Maiden Castle*, pp. 267ff. At Maiden Castle, ring-headed pins appear to have been in use throughout Iron Age A. Iron ones are rare outside Wessex. Below the Gravel Layer in C3 with Fig. 8, 45-52.

2. Bronze penannular brooch of torque-like form. No parallels have been noted for this remarkable piece. Found with no. 6 below in Pit 28. For the associated pottery see Fig. 7, 11-16.

3. Iron penannular brooch with slightly expanded terminals. The form is a simple one and was probably made for a long time, but a close parallel at Maiden Castle was found in a deposit of the first century A.D. (*Maiden Castle*, Fig. 86, 3 and p. 264). From the upper filling of Pit 12, found with no. 4 and with Fig. 8, 69-71.

4. Iron penannular brooch with terminals folded back in the same plane as the ring. Brooches with such terminals appear commonly in Belgic contexts. They have been recorded from Maiden Castle (*Maiden Castle*, Fig. 86, 8: dated c. A.D. 25-50), Rotherley (Pitt-Rivers, *Excavations in Cranbourne Chase*, II, Pl. CII, 15), Prae Wood, Verulamium (*Antiquity*, vol. vi, Fig. 4, 1), Sutton Walls (*Arch. J.* vol. cx, Fig. 23, 8), and from many Romano-British sites. With no. 3.

5. Iron fibula of Mrs Fowler's type 3B (*Arch. J.* vol. cx, p. 101). The form occurs in both Belgic and Romano-British contexts. As no early Roman pottery has been found at Wandlebury, it seems likely that this brooch reached the site before the Roman period. Found in a badger sett in the subsoil under the site of the inner rampart. Under the circumstances, no reliance can be placed on this brooch for dating the inner rampart, though it is difficult to see how the brooch could have reached the position in which it was found unless it was already there before the rampart or was in the rampart material. However, it is useful as evidence for some occupation of the site in the first century A.D.

6. Hook-shaped iron object. This is very badly rusted and swollen. It looks as though it might be the bow of a fibula. Found looped through no. 2 in Pit 28.

7. Iron hanger, perhaps a belt fitting. Unstratified.

8. Bronze needle. Pit 2, where it had probably been used to fasten the shroud or sack containing the burial.

9. Iron ferrule. Found under the Gravel Layer in C 3.
10. Iron bar of rectangular section with the ends curved back to form an elongated S. This is almost certainly part of a three-link bit, cf. Fox, *A Find of the Early Iron Age from Llyn Cerrig Bach* (1946), Pl. XXVIII, 85. Pit 23, with Fig. 8, 41-3.
11. Iron knife. A common Iron Age type which lasted into the Roman period. Pit 5.

*Objects of bone and antler (Fig. 10)*

1. Bone gouge of All Cannings Cross Type A, made from a sheep tibia. Unstratified.
2. Bone comb which has not been finished or which has been pared down for use as a scoop. Unstratified.
3. Fragment from a similar comb. Pit 12.
4. A similar fragment with finely incised decoration. Pit 20.
5. Bone handle with transverse hole for rivet. Highly polished. Unstratified.
6. Part of an antler tine with a wedge removed near the base. The tine has been hollowed out near the base. A parallel is forthcoming from Sutton Walls (*Arch. J.* vol. cx, Fig. 26, 2 and Pl. XVI B). This is more complete than the Wandlebury example and is certainly the cheek-piece of a bridle. Pit 12.
7. Bone needle, highly polished. This is a common Iron Age type, cf. *Maiden Castle*, Pl. XXXV. Pit 13.

ANIMAL REMAINS

Large quantities of stratified animal bones were found on the site, especially in the fillings of the pits. These have not yet been examined in detail and are stored temporarily in their groups in the University Museum of Archaeology. Sheep, oxen, pigs, dogs and horses are all represented, in that order of frequency most probably, by hundreds of fragments.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The excavations of 1955 and 1956 have shown that the Wandlebury earthwork was an Iron Age A hill-fort. Occupation of the site probably began in the third century B.C. From the first the settlement was defended by a circular ditch and timber-reveted rampart enclosing about 15 acres. When the timbers of the rampart decayed, they were not replaced and the rampart became a rounded mound, material from it partly filling the ditch.

At some later date, not yet closely defined, the site was refortified. The outer ditch was recut, and the original rampart refurbished. It was almost certainly at the same time that the defences were deepened by the construction of an inner ditch and rampart. As Romano-British pottery was found in the ditch filling within 4 ft. of the bottom, it can hardly have been cut before the late first century B.C. There is no evidence that the two phases of construction are the work of different cultural groups; indeed, the homogeneity of the pottery, which is all Iron Age A, strongly suggests that they were not. The reconstruction must be the reaction to a hostile intrusion into the Cambridge neighbourhood. This can hardly be other than the Belgic intrusion into the area, perhaps in the early first century A.D., and the presence of metal-work of this period, though Belgic pottery is entirely absent, is significant. There can be little doubt that at this stage Wandlebury was a border fort of the Iceni.

Inside the fort, permanent occupation is attested by the presence of numerous intersecting pits and post-holes and by minor structures associated with Iron Age farming. Provision was also made for the collection of rain-water.

There is, however, no evidence so far of the nature and duration of the second phase.

There was some occupation of the hill-top during the Roman period, probably from the second century A.D., but no structures of the period were found. Nothing belonging to the interval between the end of the Roman period and the eighteenth century was found.

## APPENDIX

### THE HUMAN REMAINS<sup>1</sup>

#### i. *The burial in Pit 2 (see p. 14)*

When the remains were examined in the laboratory, it was found that they represented the almost complete upper half of the skeleton of a child, in practically perfect condition.

The skull, vertebrae, thoracic cage, pectoral girdle, and upper limbs were found to be completely present, except for two pieces of the corpus sterni, and the xiphoid process which could not be positively identified; even the body of the hyoid and one of its horns could be distinguished. This makes it all the more remarkable that the lower limbs were entirely missing and that despite a thorough examination no possible traces of them could be found.

The pelvic girdle fell into an intermediate category, being present in part and in a damaged condition. The following pieces were distinguished:

Sacrum: two pieces and possible fragments.

Iilia: two almost complete, but damaged (see below).

Pubis: fragment of left.

Ischia: no traces.

The age, at death, of the human remains can be given fairly certainly as six years. Evidence from the eruption of the teeth, the cranial sutures, and the ossification of the head of the humerus all point to this age.

The sex could not be ascertained without doubt, although certain features of the skull, such as the very small size of the mastoid processes, do suggest it was female.

#### *Note on the damage to the ilia*

It may be added to the above that the nature of the damage to the ilia in conjunction with the absence of the lower limbs, proved to be an interesting source of speculation. Absence of any sign of repair indicates that the damage must have been inflicted shortly before or else after death. Absence of diploe and the staining of the inside of the 'cut', suggests that the damage is not recent and that it *could* have occurred at the time of death. The nature of the 'cut' itself is one which is well recognized in forensic studies and from this point of view could have been inflicted by a sharp heavy instrument as an axe or a sword. One is, therefore, led to imagine that the limbs were possibly cut off at the time of death and the body buried without them. The evidence is not, needless to say, conclusive. It is, however, compatible with it.

<sup>1</sup> Mr Longton, University Demonstrator in Physical Anthropology, who contributes this section to the report, took a great deal of trouble over examination of the skeleton remains both in the field and in the laboratory, and our most sincere thanks are expressed to him.

*2. The burial in Pit 12 (see p. 15)*

The skeletal remains were found to comprise the greater part of a human skeleton in good condition, and complete in the main. It was decided from an examination of the skull and the pelvis that the sex was female, although the feminine features were not very marked. The state of the cranial sutures suggests that the age at death must have been about 40 years old. The stature, as estimated from the length of the femur, was 5 ft. 4 in. With regard to race, the form of the skull is quite typical of that associated with the Iron Age people.

As is often found with these people, the teeth are in a very bad condition. The teeth in the lower jaw are very crowded, and in the upper jaw the third molars have not erupted, and there are signs of dental caries and abscesses. With regard to the rest of the skeleton, there is a certain amount of arthritis but no gross abnormalities. This last point is of especial importance with reference to the position of the bones in the ground, there is no medical evidence to explain the distortion of the vertebral column which was observed.

*3. The burial in Pit 19 (see p. 15)*

*Report on the remains found at Wandlebury (EL/1).* Duckworth Lab. Ref. EU. 1. 3. 209.

The remains comprise the greater part of one human individual, but there are a few animal bones (horse?) mixed in with these.

*Details of the human remains*

1. Sex: female.
2. Age: 25 to 35.
3. Stature: It was impossible to give even an approximate figure as there are no complete long bones surviving, but it was possible to say that the individual was short in stature.
4. Race: the skeletal features are compatible with an Iron Age people.
5. Pathology: there was a very slight trace of osteo-arthritis in the lower half of the vertebral column, but the teeth appeared to be normal, and there were no indications of chronic infection in either the upper or lower jaws.
6. Fractures: the bones are severely fractured, but it has proved impossible so far to arrive at any definite decision as to whether these fractures are natural or were intentionally produced.

P. A. LONGTON

ABBREVIATIONS

- Abington Pigotts:* C. Fox, 'A Settlement of the Early Iron Age at Abington Pigotts, Cambs', *Proc. Prehistoric Soc. of East Anglia*, vol. iv.
- Chinnor:* K. M. Richardson and A. Young, 'An Iron Age A Site on the Chilterns', *Ant. J.* vol. XXXI.
- Hengistbury:* J. P. Bushe-Fox, 'Excavations at Hengistbury Head, Hampshire in 1911-12', *Soc. of Antiquaries Research Report No. III*.
- Jack's Hill:* C. F. Tebbutt, 'Early Iron Age Settlement on Jack's Hill, Great Wymondley, Herts', *Proc. Prehistoric Soc. of East Anglia*, vol. vi, pt. iv.
- Kenyon:* K. M. Kenyon, 'A Survey of the Evidence Concerning the Chronology and Origins of Iron Age A in Southern and Midland Britain', *London Institute of Archaeology, Eighth Annual Report*.
- Linton:* C. I. Fell, 'An Early Iron Age Settlement at Linton, Cambs', *Proc. C.A.S.* vol. XLVI.
- Maiden Castle:* R. E. M. Wheeler, 'Maiden Castle, Dorset', *Soc. of Antiquaries Research Report No. XII*.
- Wilbury:* E. S. Applebaum, 'Excavations at Wilbury Hill', *Arch. J.* vol. cvi.



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## CONTENTS

<i>Officers and Council of the Society 1956-1957</i>	<i>page</i> vi
<i>Report of the Council for the Year 1955</i>	vii
<i>Summary of Accounts for the Year 1955</i>	viii
The Wandlebury Iron Age Hill-fort, Excavations of 1955-6 <i>By B. R. HARTLEY</i>	I
Saxo-Norman Pottery in East Anglia. Part II <i>By J. G. HURST, M.A., and S. E. WEST</i>	29
The Clergy of Willingham 1300-1955, Part II <i>By CANON F. J. BYWATERS, M.A.</i>	61
A Belgic and Roman Farm at Wyboston, Bedfordshire <i>By C. F. TEBBUTT, F.S.A.</i>	75
Romano-British Hoard from Godmanchester <i>By H. J. M. GREEN</i>	85
Medieval Gravestones of Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire, and the Soke of Peterborough <i>By L. A. S. BUTLER, B.A.</i>	89
Swale's Tumulus: A Combined Neolithic A and Bronze Age Barrow at Worlington, Suffolk <i>By GRACE BRISCOE, M.B., B.S., F.S.A.</i>	101
<i>Index</i>	113