

AMBERLEY MOUNT; Its Agricultural Story from the Late Bronze Age

By H. B. A. and M. M. RATCLIFFE-DENSHAM

Solent et subterraneos specus aperire . . . quia rigorem frigoris ejus modi locis molliunt. Tacitus. *Germania*: 16.

Three hills join one another, in line, to form the northern massif of the South Downs as it rises from the east side of the Arun valley. They are named consecutively, from west to east, Downs Farm Hill, Amberley Mount and Rackham Hill. Their steep, north slopes are continuous, and form part of the main, North escarpment of the Downs. (Fig. 1). Their gentler, southern slopes are separated from each other by two coombes, Medley Bottom and Grevitt's Bottom. Medley Bottom runs south-westwards from the west of Rackham Hill; it separates the south-eastern slope of Amberley Mount from a south-western spur of Rackham Hill. Grevitt's Bottom runs south-south-eastwards from the col between Downs Farm Hill and Amberley Mount to join Medley Bottom; it separates the south-western slope of Amberley Mount from the south-eastern slope of Downs Farm Hill.

The group is separated from Camp Hill and the rest of the Downs to the south by another coombe, called Stoke Bottom, which runs south and then westwards from the south of Rackham Hill, to end in the Arun Valley, south of Amberley station.

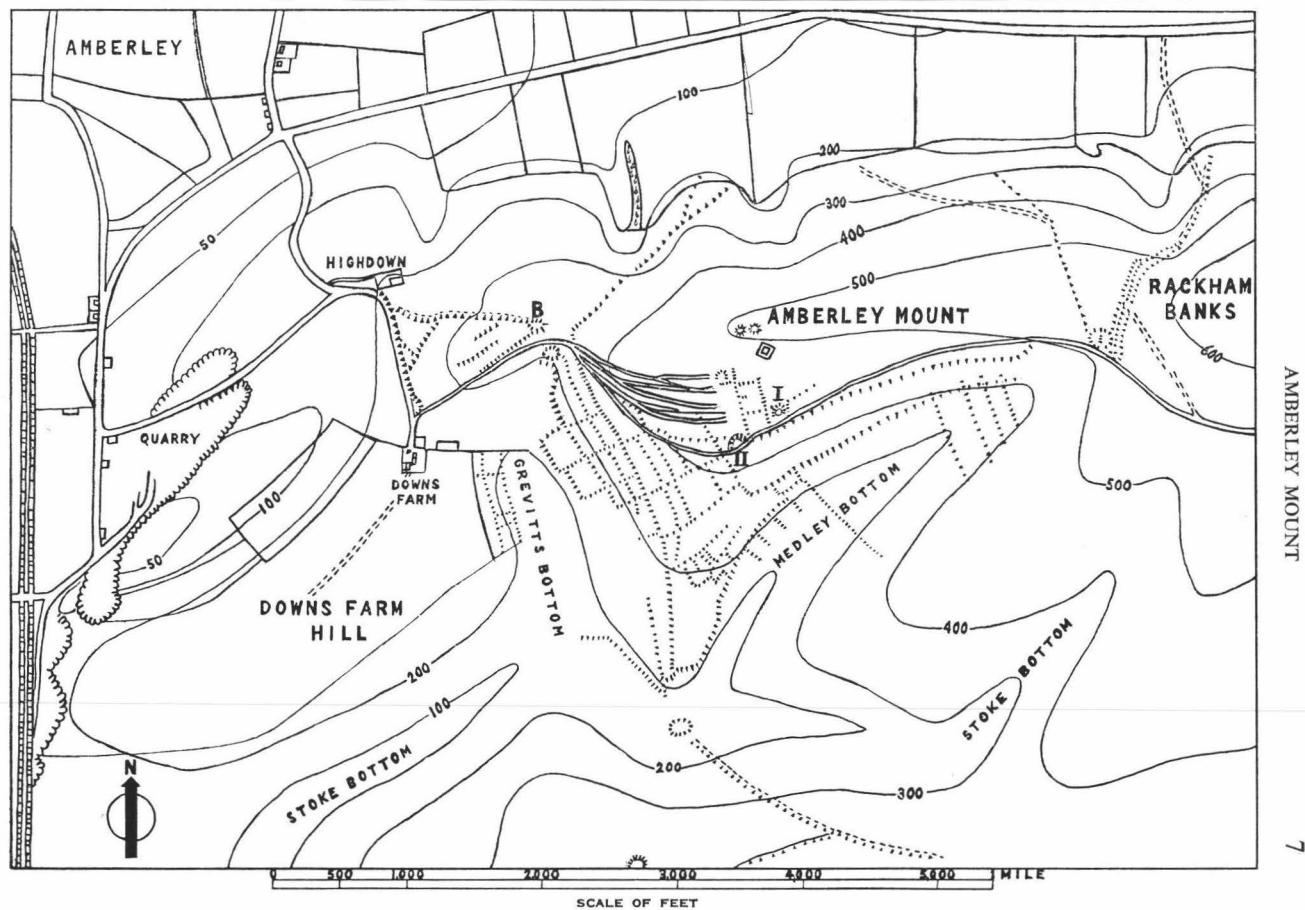
To the east of Rackham Hill the massif continues as Springhead Hill, where the open down becomes more wooded. At the other end, most of the western end of Downs Farm Hill has been removed by quarrying. (Fig. 1). To the south, Medley and Grevitt's Bottoms join one another to enter Stoke Bottom near its middle.

An ancient road leaves the Arun valley to the north of Amberley station and ascends the western side of Downs Farm Hill, between two quarries, as far as a house called Highdown, about half way up. Thence it continues, as a terrace-way, up to a barrow (Fig. 1/B) on the col between Downs Farm Hill and Amberley Mount. This road is crossed, near Highdown, by another one which climbs the hill in a southerly direction from Amberley village to Downs Farm. Both roads are called Mill Lane. In this context, the Doctors Curwen mentioned a windmill standing on the col to the north-east of Downs Farm.¹

On the col stood three lynchets. When it was ploughed, together with the above mentioned terrace-way, there was a scatter of Roman potsherds, which was especially thick on the terrace-way.

The late Mr. Tom Pepper stated verbally that several Roman

¹ Drs. E. and E. C. Curwen. 'Notes on the Archaeology of Burpham,' in *Sussex Archaeological Collections* (abbreviated to *S.A.C.* in all later refs.), vol. 63, p. 50.



AMBERLEY MOUNT

7

FIG. 1. Amberley Mount: Plan of Field System.

burials, with associated pottery were found on the site of Highdown when he was having it built. Unfortunately the finds were not preserved.

A "puddle" pond (Fig. 1/p) lies some 30 yds. south of the barrow "B" on the col, to the east of the head of Grevitt's Bottom. A bridle path from Downs farm passes between the barrow and the pond, where it divides into three. One branch passes down the north side of Amberley Mount as a Terrace Way, described by the Doctors Curwen.¹ Another branch, possibly the original Greenway along the escarpment, climbs straight over the top of Amberley Mount to cross the north end of the bank on Rackham Hill; it skirts the north sides of the two surviving round barrows on the top of Amberley Mount.² The third branch skirts the south side of Amberley Mount, and runs eastwards to cross the south end of the bank on Rackham Hill; it gives off secondary branches from its north side just to the east of the pond. Three secondary branches become deep, sunken tracks between raised banks, which cross the south face of Amberley Mount, one above the other, from west to east, to fade out before reaching Rackham Hill. Nine other secondary tracts ramify between the three on the west slope of the Mount, running in the same general direction, but dividing and re-uniting like the nerves of a plexus. These are shown on the air photograph (Plate I), with the pond near the upper, left corner, but are omitted from the survey (Fig. 1) for the sake of clarity.

The south slope of Amberley Mount, between Medley and Grevitt's Bottoms, is roughly triangular and runs down to a rather pointed headland, where the two coombes converge to join Stoke Bottom. The late Dr. Eliot Curwen mentioned a Celtic field system in this area.³ He also mentioned a number of depressed areas, high up on the south-east face of the Mount, below a square dewpond (Fig. 1 and Plate II) and the two round barrows which are cited above.² Dr. Curwen found that the depressions were "bose" to percussion, and suggested that they might be hut sites, associated with the field system.

In 1957 the whole of the south slope of the Mount was covered by the outlines of a Celtic field system which reached up as far as the level of the sunken tracks, and extended into both Medley and Grevitt's Bottoms. The whole area was, however, being ploughed (Plate I), except for the northern escarpment and the region of the sunken tracks on the western slope. The depressions below the square pond, mentioned by Dr. Curwen, were almost ploughed out, except for two (Fig. 1/I & II). Many of the lynchets were disappearing also. No published plan of the system existed, so it

¹ See p. 6, note 1.

² L. V. Grinsell. 'Sussex Barrows,' in *S.A.C.*, vol. 75, p. 249.

³ Dr. E. Curwen. 'Rackham Bank and Earthwork,' in *S.A.C.*, vol. 73, p. 173.



PLATE I

Amberley Mount during ploughing. *Air photo*: Lynchets black; hut sites ringed in white. [North is at the top of the picture]

was decided to survey it, and to excavate two of the depressions (Fig. 1/I & II), which appeared to be integrated with it.

The system seemed to have covered, originally, an area of between 80 and 90 acres. The map reference is—TQ037 to TQ049 E-W and TQ117 to TQ125 N-S.

In 1957 it was possible to make out 35 lynchets, of which four were on the col between Downs Farm Hill and Amberley Mount, while nine ran down into Medley Bottom. The 22 lynchets on the triangular, south slope of the Mount divided it into 20 fields, of which six were further sub-divided into terraces along the side of Grevitt's Bottom, making 30 units in all. In addition the nine lynchets in Medley Bottom were continuous with the main system, and enclosed seven strips.

The majority of the fields were rectangular, varied in size between one and three acres, and lay between the 200 and the 400ft. contours, in the *Terebratulina lata* zone of the chalk. This upper zone of the Middle Chalk formed the bedrock of the whole system, including the coombs and col between Downs Farm Down and Amberley Mount, as far up as the 400ft. contour; it is relatively free from flints and is broken up by seams of marl, so that it could be worked by a plough without an iron share or a coulter.

The top of Amberley Mount, where the square pond, the barrows and the depressions lay, is formed by the *Holaster planus* Chalk with a capping of tertiary debris. This bottom zone of the Upper Chalk is different from the subjacent *Terebratulina lata* zone. It is hard, nodular, and full of irregular masses of flints with thick crusts. When the farmers, Messrs. Lee, first ploughed the upper part of the south-east slope of the Mount between the 400ft. contour and the square pond they broke a great number of plough-shares, and the surface of the hillside appeared to be covered with stones. It would have been quite impracticable to have ploughed this surface without the aid of a steel share, wheels and a coulter, so that it was not surprising that the lynchets faded out above the 400ft. contour.

The fields were littered with "pot-boilers" and potsherds of the Roman, Iron and Late Bronze ages. Three sherds of the late Bronze or Early Iron Age were found in the lynchet which formed part of the side of Depression II.

HUT I

The Centre of Depression I, the first to be excavated, was 337ft., on bearing of 174 deg. (true) from the centre of the south bank of the square pond (Fig. 1) (Grid reference TQ04271235) (Plate II).

The slope had been ploughed from the square pond above to the bridle path below, and from 80ft. to the east to 380ft. to the west of the depression. Faint outlines of two of the sunken tracks could be made out on the ground, passing respectively 30ft. above and 65ft. below the depression. In addition there were traces of

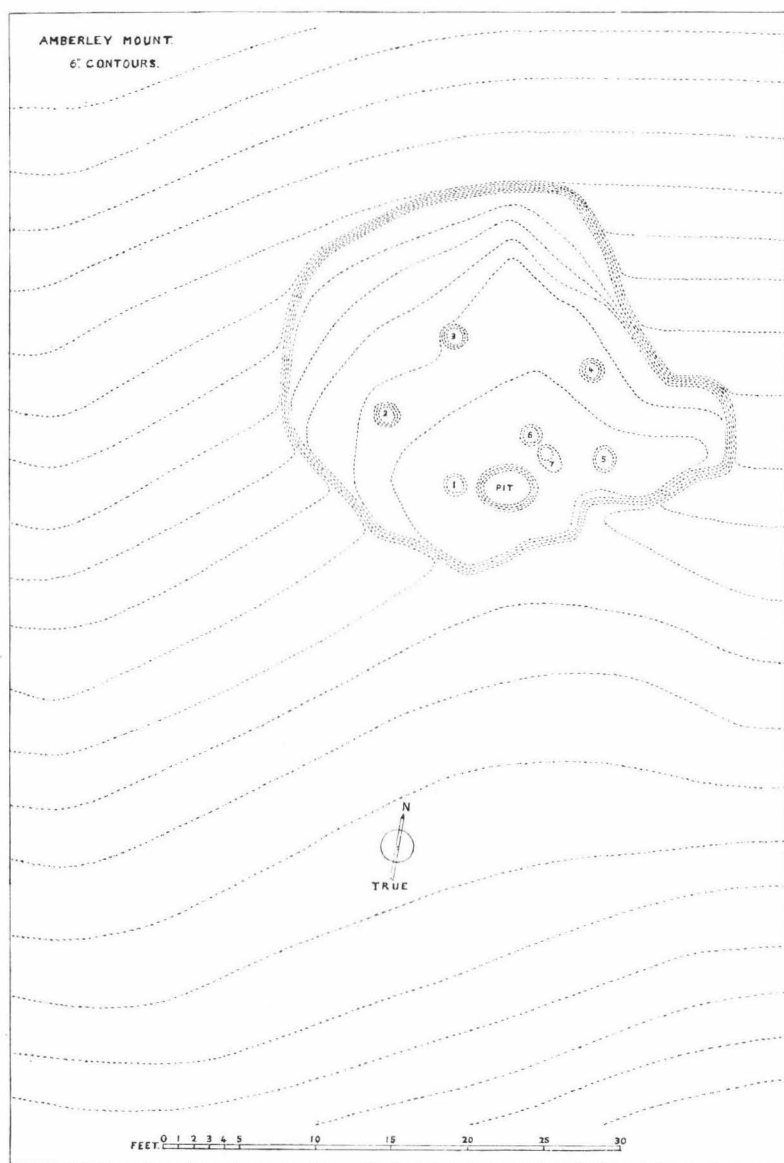


FIG. 2
Hut I: Plan. 6in. contours.

three other depressions situated respectively—200ft. 219 deg. (true) and 94ft. 189 deg. from the centre of depression I, and 250ft. 234½ deg., from the centre of the west bank of the square pond.

Careful examination of some air photographs, taken at the time, showed, in defiance of all probability, marks of four ancient field boundaries in the stony soil. One of these appeared to cross the top of Depression I. (Fig. 1 and Plate I).

Excavation of Depression I revealed a sunken, roughly circular platform, 26ft. in diameter, which was cut back into the hillside (Fig. 2 and Plate II). The platform was almost flat and had a downward slope to the south of 1:16. As the hill had a downward slope of about 1:6 at that point, it meant that the north face of the cutting which was 4½ft. high, was 2½ft. higher than the 2ft. of the south one.

The southern and eastern part of the platform had been occupied by a small, oval hut with a N-S diameter of 14ft. and an E-W one of 16ft. (Fig. 2 and Plate III). The smooth, chalk floor of the hut was outlined by rougher chalk and by 5 main post holes. The outline of the north-east sector was completed by two shallow post holes. Another, deeper post hole, marked on Plate III by a measuring pole, was cut into the base of the south-west face in a downward and outward direction. It must have held a timber buttress, lying obliquely against the lower, south wall of the structure, to take the downward thrust caused by the slope of the base. Alternatively, the timber may have formed part of the actual substance of the wall, if it was built on the batter in this sector, like a wigwam. A stake hole, about 2in. in diameter and 4in. deep, lay on either side of the north post hole (Fig. 2, no. 3). They are not clear on Plate III.

A fire pit lay just inside the apparent south perimeter of the hut, near post hole 1 (Fig. 2). It was roughly oval, with its long diameter (3ft.) E-W, its east end slightly flattened, and its N-S diameter 30in. long. Its depth was 20in. and it contained mainly burnt wood, which had blackened its floor and sides. Additional contents of this pit were pot-boilers, burnt and unburnt fragments of animal bone, flints and coarse gritted potsherds, all stained black by the wood charcoal.

Two other, shallower post holes (Fig. 2, nos. 6 and 7) were situated close to the east side of the pit. They may have held part of an entrance, a partition, or a frame for supporting a cooking pot.

A path, about a foot wide, was cut into the chalk wall of the platform; it commenced outside the south-east sector of the hut and partly circumambulated it in a clockwise direction, climbing as it did so, to end outside the north-west sector, about 18in. below the surface of the hillside (Plate III).

The depression was filled with flints beneath a foot of black loam. The flints lay in a matrix of black soil, together with some chalk

rubble which gradually replaced them towards the periphery and on the floor of the cutting. The whole filling was impregnated with wood charcoal which had infiltrated into the cracks in the chalk floor. Many of the flints showed signs of fire and among them were many hundreds of pot-boilers. Bony debris of domestic animals and coarse potsherds were present in profusion, especially in the flinty layer. Numerous pieces of querns occurred, mostly in the lower levels; all that were identifiable were flattened saucer or saddle shaped; most were of grey sandstone, some of greensand.

The surface layer of black loam contained a number of Roman and Late Iron Age sherds, together with some of the Bronze and Early Iron Age; the former were not present below the top of the main flint filling.

Great numbers of small, worn, cuboidal pebbles of reddish-purple, ferruginous sandstone were interspersed through the filling; they closely resembled carstone, but were, actually, derived from adjacent tertiary capping.

Quantities of snail and some mussel shells were present, mainly in the lower layers. Flint artifacts and fragments of baked clay also occurred.

On the actual floor of the platform the matrix of the filling altered, towards the periphery, to yellow clay. In contact with the floor were parts of three querns, both upper and lower stones; potsherds of the Late Bronze Age; bones of ox and sheep; a hammer stone; a "strike-a-light"; a flint sickle; mussel shells; baked clay (possibly loom weight); pot boilers and much charcoal.

The post holes had been cut with a sharp, flat tool, and were often polyhedral rather than circular; they averaged 18in. to 20in. in diameter, and 12in. to 18in. in depth, and were all carefully packed with large flints which were often tabular.

Post hole 2 (Fig. 2) was cut accurately, with a section 10in. square at the bottom. It contained one Late Bronze Age potsherd, some pieces of animals' bone and some of charred oak.

Post hole 3 contained sherds of small, Late Bronze Age pot and charred wood.

Post hole 4 contained only a little charred wood.

Post hole 5 contained a few Late Bronze Age sherds and some charred wood.

The evidence can be interpreted as follows: The surface flints were removed from a circular area at the edge of a field, the diameter of the circle being about 36ft. A circular platform, some 26ft. in diameter was cut into the hillside. The chalk filling was piled round to raise the sides, which were then revetted with the flints. A wooden hut was built on the platform; it was oval in shape, with a lean-to entrance at the south and a fire pit by the entrance. The footings of the walls were probably strengthened with flints. At least one fire was lighted at the back of the hut, between post holes

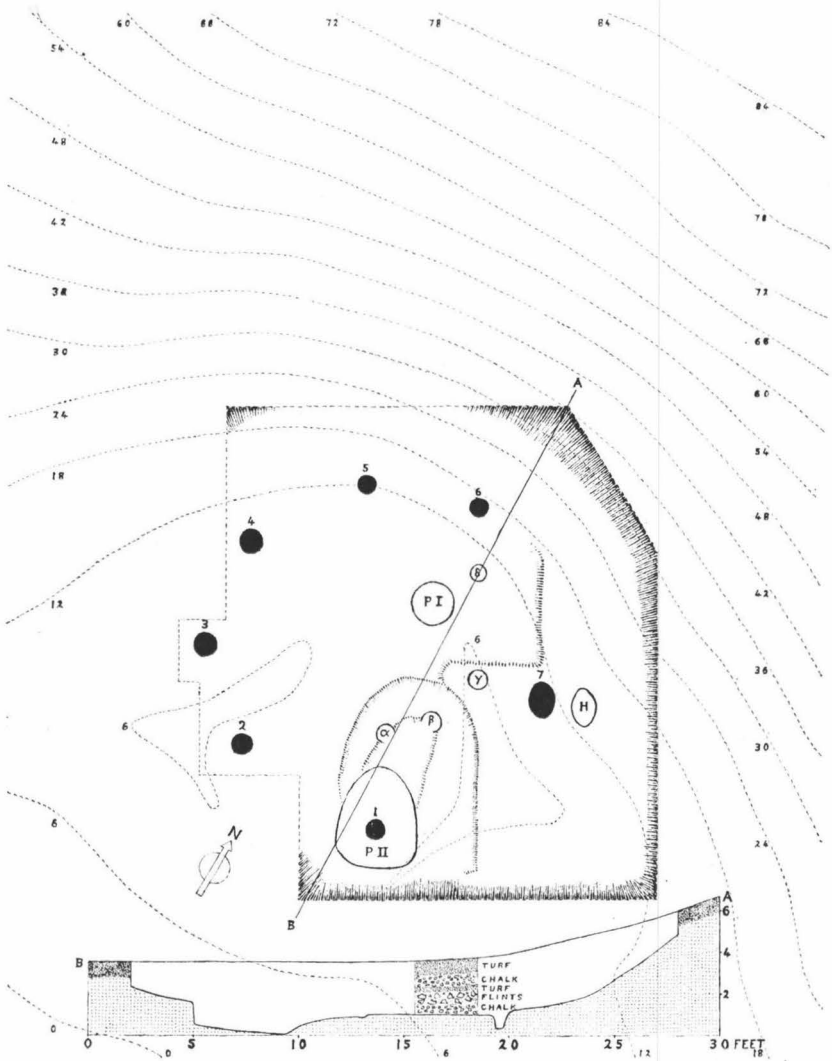


FIG. 3
Hut II: Plan. 6in. contours.

3 and 4 (Fig. 2). It was occupied long enough for a path to be worn round the west and the north sides, and was then burnt down. The chalk sides collapsed and the flint revetment fell into the depression. At the end of the Iron Age another fire or fires was lighted in the depression.

HUT II

This was very similar to Hut I; its position being revealed by a circular depression about 30ft. in diameter, whose north-western side formed part of a lynchet. The centre of this depression was 450ft. on a true bearing of 223 deg. from the centre of Hut I (Fig. 1) (Grid reference TQ04171230): It abutted on the north side of the bridle path which traversed the upper part of the field system.

Excavation of this depression disclosed a second turf line about 18in. below the surface one and separated from it by flinty chalk rubble. There lay on the second turf line: remains of many fires, including charred gorse and old newspaper; skeletal remains of several lambs; an old "Valor" stove; an estate boundary stone; rusty nails; pot-boilers and potsherds of the Roman, Iron and Bronze ages. This was explained by the presence, 40yds. further on, by the side of the path, of a mouldering shed on iron wheels as used by shepherds at lambing time during last century.

Eighteen inches below the second turf line, separated from it by flints and chalk rubble in a matrix of loam, was a roughly circular platform cut into the hill. This floor, which averaged some 25ft. in diameter, was slightly concave, like the bottom of a Norman cooking pot. It had formed the base of a circular hut, which was represented by a ring of seven main post holes, with a shallow pit at its southern perimeter (Fig. 3). Two other holes, alpha and beta, and post-hole 1, which was actually in the pit, may have supported a cooking tripod, as in Hut I. Two other stake holes, gamma and delta, and another pit (Fig. 3/P.I), may have supported some internal fittings. Alternatively, the stake-holes may have held shepherds' hurdles of later date. Pit I was certainly contemporary with the hut; it contained sherds of Late Bronze or Early Iron age date, charred wood, animal bone and pot-boilers in a matrix of dark soil.

The filling of the depression below the second turf line was not clearly stratified in a horizontal plane, except that the proportion of chalk rubble tended to increase, and that of flint and ferruginous sandstone to decrease near the chalk floor, until the main filling of the large pit (Fig. 3/P.II), consisted of charred wood and chalk rubble. Pot-boilers, snails, burnt wood, burnt and unburnt fragments of animals' bones, potsherds of the Late Bronze age, mussel shells and pieces of quern occurred at all levels: they were found on the chalk floor and in the large pit II, but faded out beyond the limits of the hut.

A shallow depression in the floor, just north of the large pit II, was almost covered by red, baked clay which might have been burnt daub

or pulverised loom or thatch weight. This depression was lined with chalk sludge and contained two broken quernstones together with sherds of the Late Bronze Age. Holes alpha and beta were cut into its edge. Hole alpha was full of pot-boilers. Hole beta was filled with dark soil, and besides packing flints, it contained charred wood, a polished flint knife, a mussel shell, and Late Bronze Age sherds, including a rim and part of a bucket shaped pot with a boss (Vessel 15).

All the main post holes were well cut and roughly circular; they averaged 12in. to 15in. in depth and 12in. to 18in. in diameter. All contained packing flints; most held a little burnt wood near the bottom. Several holes, including Nos. 1-4 and 6 contained Late Bronze Age sherds. Hole 5 contained a pot-boiler. Hole 6 had quern fragments in its packing. The post in hole 7 had apparently worked loose, and been buttressed by another in hole H. A chalk spindle whorl lay a few inches above the floor, near hole 5 (Fig. 4).

Much of the skeleton of a horse lay not far above the floor, in association with charred wood, Late Bronze Age sherds, snails, large flints and ferruginous sandstone, just outside the hut, near hole 4.

Pit I was only about 20in. in diameter and contained a number of large packing flints; it may well have held a central post to support the tip of a conical roof.

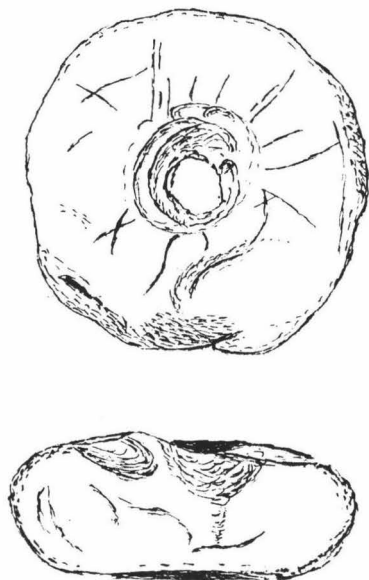


FIG. 4. Spindle Whorl
(Full size drawing)

Although the filling of this depression contained a great mass of flints and sandstone pebbles, they lay mostly in the middle layer, so that there was less evidence to connect them with the footings of the hut or with the revetment of the sides than was the case with Hut I.

In the main, however, the two huts were alike in size, shape and structure and they appear to have been roughly contemporary with one another.

THE POTTERY

Most of this was exceedingly coarse, and all of it was hand made, except for a few sherds from wheel turned vessels of the Roman and the Late Iron Age which occurred near the surface. The unevenly

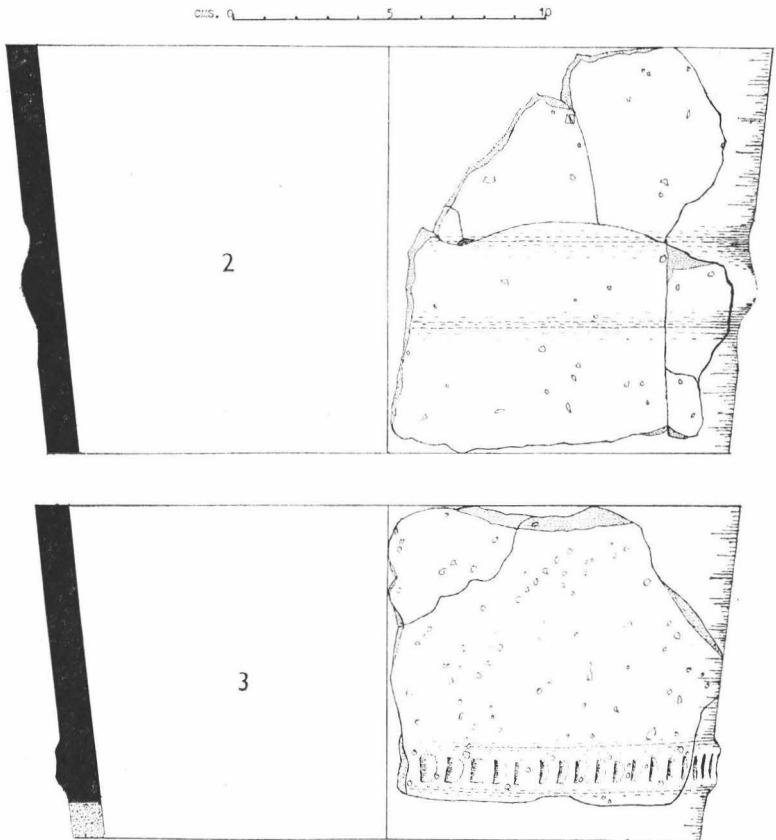


FIG. 6
Early Iron age or Late Bronze age buckets.



PLATE II. Hut 1 and Square Pond

Air Photo: View from South showing bank running eastwards from hut and another further north.

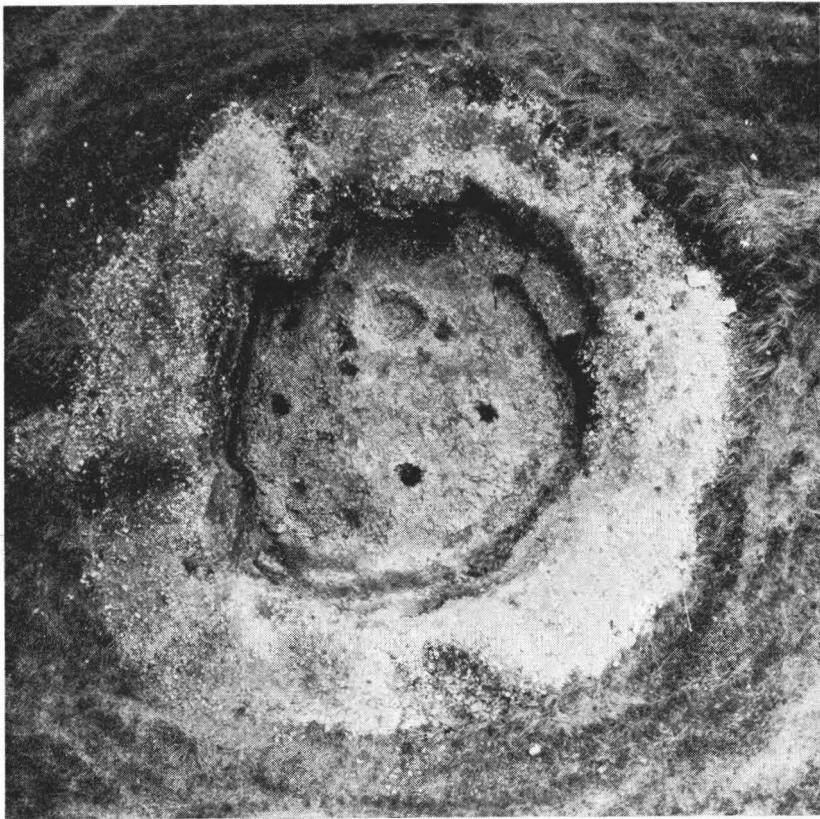


PLATE III. Hut 1

Air Photo: The pit is in the south sector of the hut.



PLATE IV

Olla: 2nd cent., near surface, Hut II



PLATE V

Mug: common basic form on most sites of Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age in Sussex.

fired pots of badly mixed clay, backed by coarse flint grit, had been severely crushed by the filling of large flints. There were between two and three thousand sherds in the two depressions, of which the great majority were less than 2in. in diameter and very worn. Only two vessels (Plates IV and V) could be rebuilt; while a score could be partly reconstructed.¹ The curvature of the greater number of them was so irregular that the diameters at different levels, which had to be calculated from measured arcs, were often only approximate. Thus the slopes of the sides of the barrel (no. 9) and the bowl (no. 8) which were calculated from a series of arcs measured on rather small sherds may not be accurate. No. 16 may have been drawn upside down because the sherd had no curvature in the horizontal plane.

Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages

All the sherds from the post holes, pits, hut floors and from the lower filling could be assigned to the above periods. Where sherds were sufficiently large for those of the Late Bronze to be distinguished from those of the Early Iron Age it was found impossible to discern any spatial separation of one group from the other. Therefore, on the ceramic evidence, both of the huts were in use during the period of transition from the Bronze to the Iron Age in that part of the country.

Vessel 1. Transitional from bi-conical to Deverel bucket. Surface and paste both tarmac colour. Both surfaces smoothed. Evenly fired. Grey and white patinated, medium flint backing. Soft, smooth paste. Left part of drawing compressed laterally.¹

Vessel 2. Straight sided bucket. Rougher and more buff coloured, but otherwise similar to No. 1. Girth band pushed up between two grooves.²

Vessel 3. Straight sided bucket. Outer surface buff coloured and rough, with vertical finger smears. Hard, buff, evenly fired paste. Grey and white patinated, small flint backing. Finger-nail imprints on applied girth band. Inner surface sooted.²

Vessel 4. Straight sided bucket. Rough, badly mixed and badly fired paste. Otherwise similar to No. 3.³

Vessel 5. Plain rim of small barrel. Outer surface red-buff and grey coloured and rough with finger-tip impression below rim and vertical finger smear. Paste buff and grey, badly mixed and unevenly fired. Profuse, medium sized, grey and white patinated flint backing.¹

Vessel 6. Mid section of barrel. Uneven surfaces: buff coloured, with some sooting of the inner one; vertical finger smears of the outer one. White patinated, large and small flint backing. Possible pictograph on left of the sherd. Left part of the drawing compressed laterally.¹

Vessel 7. Upper part of a straight-sided barrel, with plain rim applied separately. Soft, buff, ill-fired paste. Smooth, tarmac coloured surfaces, with light finger smears. White patinated, large and small flint backing.¹

Vessel 8. Upper part of rough bowl or bucket, from hole 1, Hut II. Uneven rim and surfaces. Tarmac colour right through. Badly mixed and fired paste. Large and small, white patinated flint backing.¹

¹ Copies of drawings of these are available at Barbican House.

² Illustrated, Fig. 6.

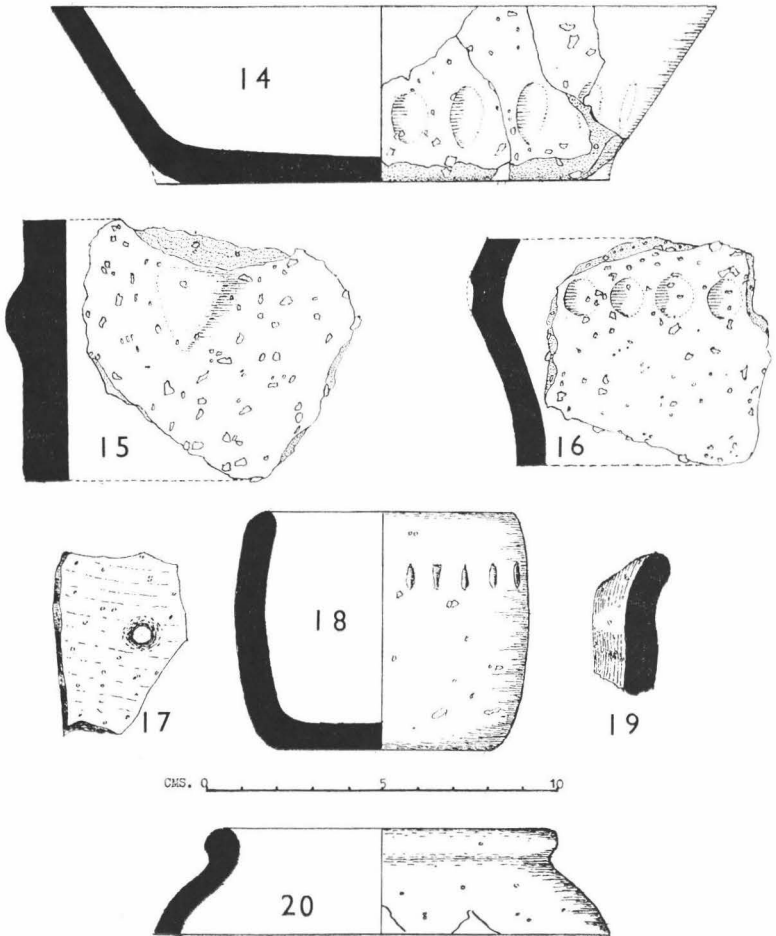


FIG. 7
Various Vessels: Early Iron Age.

Vessel 9. Upper part of a barrel, with even, rounded rim and a horizontal row of finger-nail impressions two inches below it on the body of the pot. Buff colour at the rim and burnt grey-black below it. Grey and white patinated, small and medium sized flint backing. Rough surface and uneven firing. Hole 1. Hut II.¹

Vessel 10. Upper part of straight sided barrel with uneven, slightly flattened and splayed rim. A raised circular or semi-circular band, ornamented with finger-tip impressions, contained a finger-made depression in the outer surface, 2in. below the rim; this may have represented a handle or have formed part of a decoration. An effort had been made to smooth the buff surface. The paste was very badly mixed and fired, and contained burnt bone, shell and both cracked and white patinated flint backing.¹

Vessel 11. Rounded base. Smoothed, buff surface; sooted inside. Badly mixed and fired dark brown paste. White patinated, medium flint backing.

Vessel 12. Flat base with splayed edge. Tarmac colour except for rough brown outer surface. Marks of finger-nails splaying out the edge which was not a true foot ring. Fine, white patinated flint backing.³

Vessel 13. Flat base with very slight trace of splaying. Thumb-tip depressions on the body of the pot at varying distances above the base. The pot was out of the true when it was broken and may have had a larger diameter than that shewn. Dark brown, medium smooth, medium fired paste and lining. Buff surface. Small, white patinated flint backing.³

Vessel 14. Base, probably flat, with horizontal row of finger-tip impressions just above it, on the body. The outward splaying of the walls may have been less than is shewn. Slightly smoothed, buff surfaces, the inner one partly sooted. Fairly smooth, grey paste, with medium sized, white patinated flint backing.⁴

Vessel 15. Sherd from grey-brown, straight-sided pot, showing pyramidal boss. Ill-fired, black paste. Medium-sized, white and grey patinated flint backing.⁴

Vessel 16. Sherd from carinated pot with finger-tip impressions on the carination. Black right through, except for buff outer surface. Ill-fired. Profuse, medium sized, white patinated flint backing.⁴

Vessel 17. Sherd, showing perforation for suspension.⁴

Vessel 18 (Plate V). Small, saucer-shaped pot with row of finger-nail impressions round the body, below the rim. Buff outside, sooted inside. Grey-black paste, badly fired. Sparse, large and small, white patinated flint backing.⁴

Vessel 19. Sherd of pot with an out turned rim. Approximate diameter 17 cms. Uneven, rounded rim. Buff, sandy paste, soot-stained on the outside. Fine, white patinated flint backing.⁴

Vessel 20. Upper part of hand made, globular pot with beaded rim. Badly mixed and fired, brown paste; medium and fine, white patinated flint backing. Smooth, tarmac coloured, external slip. Sooted inside. This was low down in the filling at the back of Hut II.⁴

Plate IV was a wheel turned, brown olla with an oblique rim of typical second century form. It had a smooth, sandy evenly fired paste, with soot staining. It lay between the turf lines above Hut II, together with sherds of grey ware and a piece of the rim of a Samian cup.

¹ Illustration available at Barbican House.

³ Illustrated, Fig. 8.

⁴ Illustrated, Fig. 7.

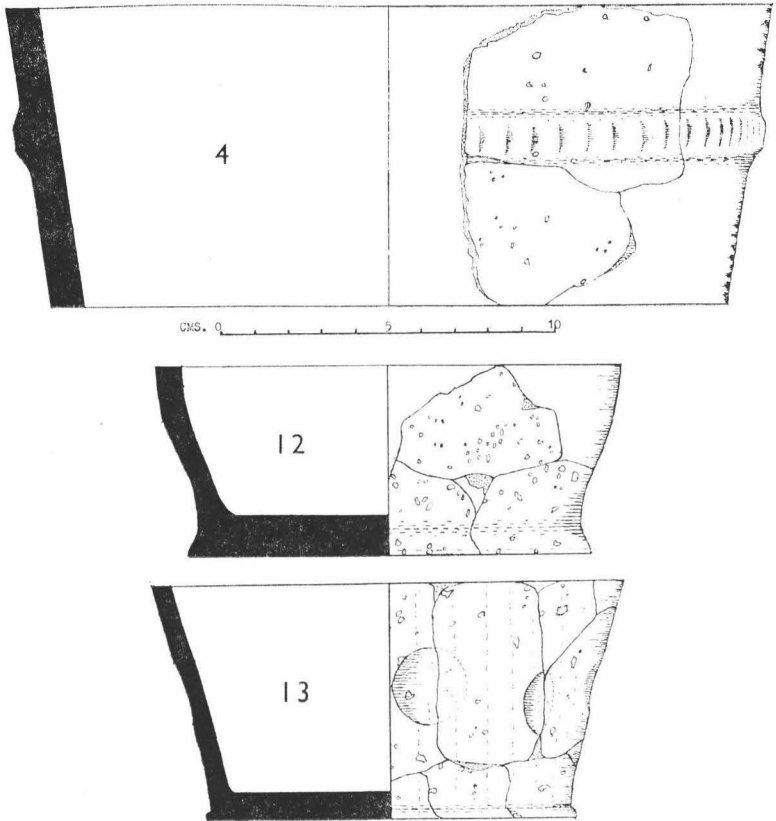


FIG. 8

No. 4. Bucket: Late Bronze Age. Nos. 12, 13. Bases: Early Iron Age.

Scattered both above and below the lower turf line in Hut II were sherds of a small, sharply carinated pot with a flat, obliquely out turned rim of typical Hallstatt form. Its backing of organic material had all disappeared, leaving it with the consistency of pumice.

A sherd of a very coarse, brown base from the floor of Hut I had a sherd of another, red pot (of the consistency of Beaker) as part of its backing.

TOOLS

A chalk spindle-whorl lay just above the floor, at the back of Hut II (Fig. 4). The grooves round the sides of the central perforation and the deep scratches radiating from it indicated that it had been

cut by a rough, flint blade from the original chalk lump. Examination of the contained foraminifera in the Geological Department of Worthing High School suggested a probable local origin for the chalk in the *Holaster planus* layer.

A small, much calcified horn core of a goat (or sheep), which was battered at the end, lay not far away and may have been used in the manner of the flint miners, like an antler tine, to start the perforation of the spindle whorl.

The broken beam of a red deer's (cast) antler, with only the brow tine attached, may have been used in digging the depression.

Two pieces of mud stone appeared to have been smoothed by use as whetstones rather than by water rolling and suggested the use of iron. No sign of bronze or iron was found in any position which could synchronize its use with the original occupation of either hut.

The seven flint tools which are illustrated (Fig. 5) were among the best of over 50 which were found on or near to the floors of the huts and in the holes and pits. They included also saws and a strike-a-light which lay near to some broken iron pyrites. All were patinated white, including the fractured surface of the axe, no. 3 in Fig. 5.

FAUNA

Sheep. At least 27 animals were represented, of which 11 were lambs; at least one being practically new born: Only four were really mature. They were smaller than those of the present day.

Cattle. A minimum of eight beasts was represented: At least two were very young. The bones were very fragmentary, but they appeared to be smaller than those of modern beasts. Butchering had been carried out inexpertly, without the aid of sharp tools.

Horses. A metacarpal and a radius of a small pony or an ass occurred low in the filling of Hut I. The teeth and much of the appendicular skeleton of another small pony were buried in the wall behind Hut II; this animal was male and old; the bones were much rotted. The upper canine of a young pony also occurred.

Pigs. Two animals were represented: an old one by some teeth, and a young one by part of a maxilla and part of a humerus.

Red Deer. A cast antler and, probably, a lower molar.

Dog or Wolf. One carnassial tooth.

Hare or Rabbit. The upper ends of two tibiae, one large and one very tiny. These appeared to be fresher than the other bones; their position was not noted.

Bird. Half a dozen unidentifiable fragments of bone occurred.

Shellfish. Many mussels, a few limpets and a cockle were found. An oyster lay in the upper filling above Hut II, among the Roman sherds.

QUERNS

There were 14 definite fragments of quern which included the major parts of four small, lower and one upper, stones. The upper stone was circular and the lower ones were irregularly oval. The grinding surfaces were flat, rather than saucer or saddle shaped.

Mr. C. J. Ainsworth reported that one of the lower stones was composed of Horsham stone from the wealden beds; another,

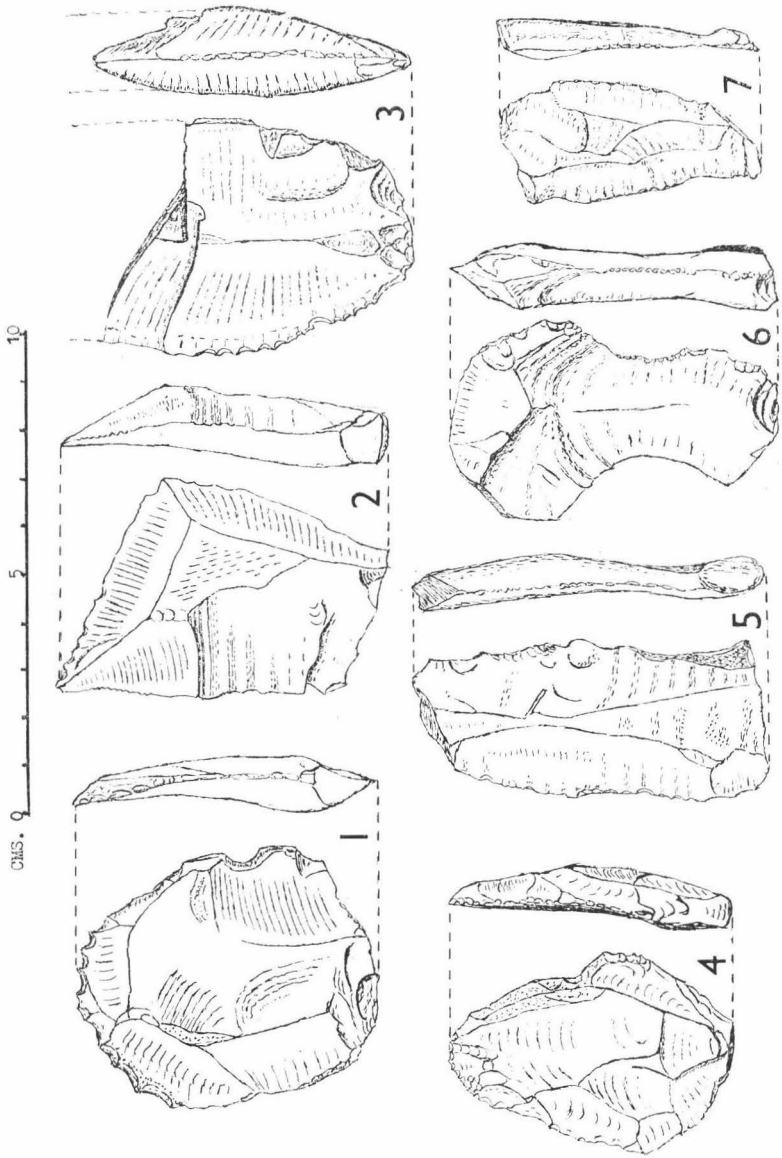


FIG. 5. Various worked flints

together with one of the fragments, was from the lower greensand. The upper stone was a (quartzite) Sarsen; the remainder were of plain sandstone, probably from tertiary, surface debris.

There were also some thousands of pebbles of a coarse, tertiary, ferruginous sandstone which closely resembled Carstone; some of these may well have been used as upper quern stones. A number of little pieces of plain sandstone had probably been broken off querns.

CHARCOAL

Quantities of charcoal occurred at all levels; some, just below the upper turf in Hut II, was mixed with newspaper of Queen Victoria's reign.

Mr. R. A. Kennedy reported on various samples. The fire-pits contained hawthorn, spindleberry and guelder rose, together with burnt bone. The post-holes, as usual, contained mostly oak. All these woods still grow locally.

DISCUSSION

The period of occupation of the two huts was established by their contained artifacts as that of the transition from the Late Bronze to the Early Iron Age.

One of the lynchets of the field system formed part of the surrounding bank of the depression which contained Hut II. This lynchet was continuous with another one from the middle of which potsherds of Late Bronze Age date were obtained without admixture with any others.

An almost obliterated field boundary appeared to join the bank which surrounded the depression of Hut I.

The huts were then associated with the field system and were occupied while some of the lynchets were being formed.

Although the slope above the huts was so stony that ploughing and the formation of lynchets must have been impracticable in the Bronze Age, it may well have been divided into small fields of pasture by hedges of hawthorn and spindleberry.

Both huts were circular, with conical roofs: Hut I like a wigwam and Hut II with a central post. There was suggestive, but not conclusive, evidence that the walls of Hut I were partly constructed of flints and those of Hut II of turves.

Although the situation of the huts is high and exposed, the farmer, Mr. Lee, states that it is the mildest part of the massif and that, although it is stony, the soil there can usually be worked in cold weather when that in the bottoms and round Downs Farm is still frozen.

The economy was mixed farming. Spinning and, probably, weaving were practised, but there was no evidence of hunting. Horses were kept, and, presumably, used on the farm, because one stallion or gelding was not butchered after death.

Flint was still used for many purposes, such as cutting, scraping and making fire.

Journeys were made to the coast for shellfish and far into the weald for quern stones.

The arrangement of the huts, on platforms, cut deeply into a steep slope, and containing a pit, filled with charcoal, somewhat resembled the hut which held the bovine at Itford,¹ or the Late Bronze Age huts on Park Brow.² However, the cuttings on Amberley Mount were much deeper, more widely separated and later in date, some of the pottery being like some at All Cannings Cross,³ but coarser.

SUBSEQUENT OCCUPATION

Two terrace ways up the north escarpment were mentioned above, the western one being covered with a scatter of Roman potsherds. A Roman cemetery at Highdown House was also mentioned (pp. 6, 8). Roman sherds were present in quantity all over the field system, especially in a depression which appeared to be a hut site, just above the headland, near to the junction of the bottoms; Dr. Curwen found them, too, down in the bottom by Stoke Hazels Wood.⁴

The narrow shape of the fields along the sides of the bottoms and the presence of a valley, lynchet system in Medley Bottom pointed to continued activity in the post-Roman period. This was confirmed by the presence of mediaeval sherds in the fields. Mr. C. Ludlow, in a personal communication, reported the existence of strip lynchets on the east side of Grevitt's Bottom, at its lower end and on the south slope of Downs Farm Hill, but the latter were completely obliterated and the former nearly so by the post-war ploughing.

In the above context the names of the bottoms are significant:

Stoke—O.E. "Stoc": Religious place or Secondary settlement, was mentioned in Domesday as Stoches, with land for seven ploughs. This indicates that a considerable area of downland was under cultivation then, because the flood plain of the Arun was never fit for ploughing.

Medley—O.E. "Maed": Meadow, and "Hlio": Slope or Hill-side. It will be noted that the field system under discussion was continuous with the fields in this bottom and that it lay on its north, sloping side.

¹ G. P. Burstow and G. A. Holleyman. 'Late Bronze Age Settlement on Itford Hill, Sussex,' in *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society*, vol. 23 (1957), plate xxiv(b).

² G. R. Wolseley, *Archaeologia*, vol. 76 (1927), p. 4, fig. c.

³ M. E. Cunnington. *All Cannings Cross* (George Simpson and Co., Devizes). Plate 38, 1-3; plate 39, 4; plate 46, 1.

⁴ Dr. E. Curwen. 'Rackham Bank and Earthwork,' in *S.A.C.*, vol. 73, p. 173.

Grevitt—Hugo atte Grevette lived in Amberley, at the bottom of the hill, in 1327.¹ Alternative spelling Gravett or Gravatt—O.E. “Grafett” from the stem “Grafan”: to dig.

SUMMARY

The sites of two huts were excavated and, together with their associated field system, were found to date from the end of the Late Bronze Age.

The writers wish to thank the following gentlemen for their help in connection with this paper: C. Ainsworth, esq., Rev. John Clark, B. Cooper, esq., Maj. J. D. D. Forrest, and C. Ludlow, esq. The farmers, Messrs. Lee, were extremely kind and helpful.

¹ A. Mawer and F. M. Stenton. *The Place-Names of Sussex*, vol. 1, p. 125.