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RECENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH AT SELMESTON, EAST SUSSEX

by David Rudling

with major contributions by Caroline Cartwright, Paul Garwood, Helen Clarke, Peter Leach and Christopher Whittick

Selmeston has been a favoured site for settlement since Mesolithic times. This report records recent archaeological and historical investigations in the village, and attempts to understand and explain its settlement pattern and history.

INTRODUCTION

Since 1974 the Sussex Archaeological Field Unit has been involved in recording finds and carrying out fieldwork at Selmeston. This report is an attempt to draw together the results of the Unit's work alongside that of other researchers. It is also the first archaeological village study undertaken as part of the Cuckmere Valley Project.

GEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND (by Caroline Cartwright)

The excavated trenches at Selmeston span the Lower Greensand and the Gault clay and the junction between the two. Sites on the fringe of the Lower Greensand formation have access to many springs, hence the obvious choice of the area for activity and settlement by man from the Mesolithic period onwards. The valley of the river Cuckmere and that of the Ouse are within easy reach also. Valley, downland and coastal/marine environments (Fig.1) are prime locations for raw materials, and the inhabitants of Selmeston appear to have taken advantage of these source areas from the earliest settlements to the present day.

During the excavations at Selmeston the soils in the excavated trenches and the adjacent quarry were studied by R. I. Macphail, whose

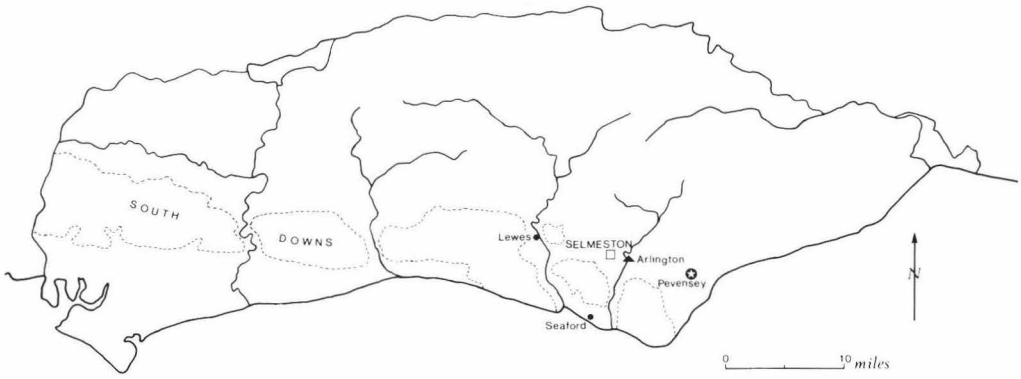

Fig. 1. Selmeston location map.

full report is on microfiche. The introduction, location of soil profiles examined and summary of conclusions follow:

Soil Report (by Richard Macphail)

During the summer of 1981 Site C near Selmeston church and Site A on the edge of the quarry (Fig.2) were excavated because of the known prehistoric, Saxon and medieval use of the area. Preliminary investigations found only medieval artefacts near the church where sandy stagnogley soils (Soil Profile 1) were present in clay (Gault)-sand (Lower Greensand) head. Excavations continued in the area near the quarry where Mesolithic artefacts had been found in the past and where sections revealed a concentration of flints and pottery (e.g. Neolithic) in the Eb horizon of the local typical (sandy) argillic brown earth. The soil investigation was concentrated in this area.

Soil development in the Lower Greensand in relationship to archaeology is of interest, because in Sussex some of the highest densities of recorded archaeological material occur on the Lower Greensand (P. L. Drewett pers. comm.). Selmeston is also interesting as an example of soil formation on the somewhat more loamy and base-rich Lower Greensand of East Sussex (mainly Sandgate and Bargate Beds (Gallois 1965)) as influenced by early (Mesolithic) anthropogenic activity. Findings can be compared with soil development for example at Iping Common (Mesolithic) (Keef *& al.* 1965) and West Heath (Mesolithic-Bronze Age) (Drewett 1976; Macphail 1981; Scaife in Drewett 1985) in West Sussex, where the Lower Greensand is much wider and the more acidic Folkestone and Hythe Beds predominate (Gallois 1965; Geological Survey Map, sheet 319). In addition, Selmeston lies on the interfluve between the rivers Cuckmere and Ouse, the latter containing quantities of inorganic sediments relating to the erosion of loess in the Boreal (Burrin & Scaife 1983). Thus, Selmeston may have

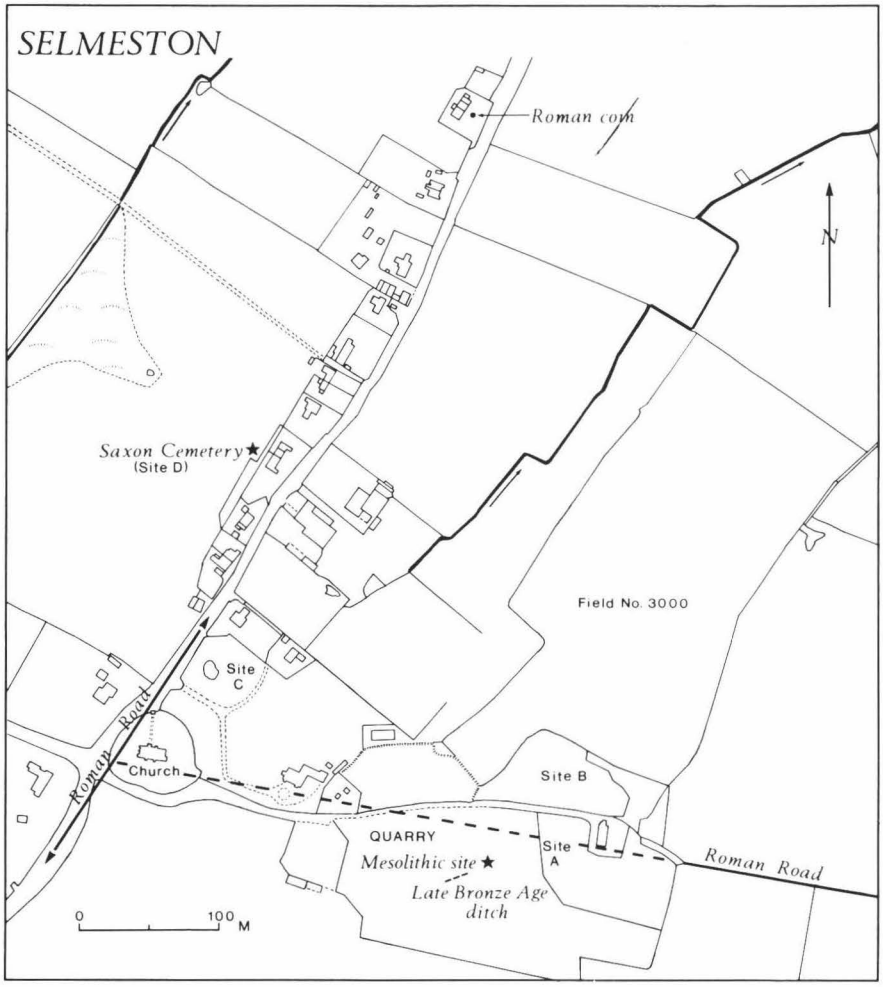

Fig. 2. Selmeston. Site location map.

been influenced by a loessial cover, as identified, for example, at Newhaven (Bell 1976).

Soil profiles studied

Details of soil profiles, including micromorphology and analytical discussion, are on microfiche (pp. 2–12).

Soil Profile 1: near the church, at the bottom of a small slope. The parent materials are clay (Gault)-sand (Lower Greensand) head. The soil type is sandy stagnogley soil with a grass vegetation.

Soil Profile 2: in the quarry on a sand ridge. Parent material: fine sandy Lower Greensand and possibly superficial silt (loess). Soil type: typical (sandy) argillic brown earth. Vegetation: old grassland.

Conclusions

By being relatively loamy and base-rich the soils at Selmeston have resisted the soil deterioration (i.e. podzolization) produced at Iping Common and West Heath, although they probably have a similar history of early disturbance.

The pedological and micropedological study indicated little development of limpid argillans as associated with an undisturbed woodland cover. It was suggested that possibly little clay translocation had taken place prior to Mesolithic interference, which could be as early as the Boreal (Burrin & Scaife 1983), and the development of dusty argillans (Slager & van der Wetering 1977; Courty & Federoff 1982) probably related to lengthy minor clearance and burning.

Evidence of later and more dramatic soil disturbance is present in the form of agricutans (Jongerius 1970) which relate diagnostically to tillage (slides scanned by Dr. Bullock, Soil Survey of Great Britain; Dr. Federoff, Grignon, Paris). They may have been initiated in the Neolithic, but it is much more likely that the majority occur because of the intensive agricultural methods practised during the later occupation of the site in the Saxon and medieval periods. Subsequently the cessation of tillage since the quarry was opened has allowed earthworms to rework the upper soil.

The above findings are probably the first correlation in England which relates multi-archaeological period and increasingly intensive usage of a site with successive micro-coatings in the soil.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS, 1978–82 (Fig.2)

Sites A, B and C were excavated by the Sussex Archaeological Field Unit. Brief context data regarding all the trenches are on microfiche (pp. 15–23). From the 1981 and 1982 excavations the most meaningful plans and a selection of the section drawings are included in this report (Figs. 4 and 5). The reader is also referred to the report by Drewett (1979). All the other site drawings and records form the archive which is held by the Unit at the Institute of Archaeology, London.

Site D (the Saxon cemetery) was excavated by D. Thomson in 1963 and by M. Welch and H. Clarke in 1979, but as yet no final report has appeared about either excavation. Interim details about the 1979 excavation are included in this article and some of the finds from Site D (especially the flintwork) are discussed below.

Site A

Trial excavation in 1978

During 1978 a trial trench was excavated by P. L. Drewett (1979) on the edge of the sand quarry at a point adjacent to the find spot of an early Neolithic pot (Drewett 1975). In advance of further erosion of the face of the quarry, the aim of the excavation in 1978 was to try and investigate the context from which the Neolithic pot had been derived. Although a spread of flintworking waste was located, unfortunately no prehistoric features were revealed. Pottery finds suggested activity from the Roman period to medieval times, and included an important group of sherds which might date to the middle to late Saxon period. The large size of some of these sherds was interpreted by Drewett as indicating 'occupation debris'. Three post-holes found cut into the underlying sand contained no dating evidence but were 'stratigraphically Saxon or earlier'. In the medieval period the area appears to have been open fields since a ploughsoil layer contained sherds of pottery of all periods and in very abraded condition (a typical fate of pottery spread with manure over fields). In the late medieval or perhaps post-medieval period three drainage ditches were dug. A dog burial, of indeterminate date, was also found.

1981–2 excavations

Trench 1: In 1982 P. L. Drewett's trial trench was enlarged with the particular aim of trying to discover further traces of the Saxon occupation found in 1978. The topsoil was removed with the aid of a J.C.B. The area uncovered in 1978 was re-exposed and yielded an additional post-hole. The three ditches found by Drewett continued into the enlarged area of the trench, but yielded only a few extra finds. For drawings of the sections of these ditches see Drewett (1979),

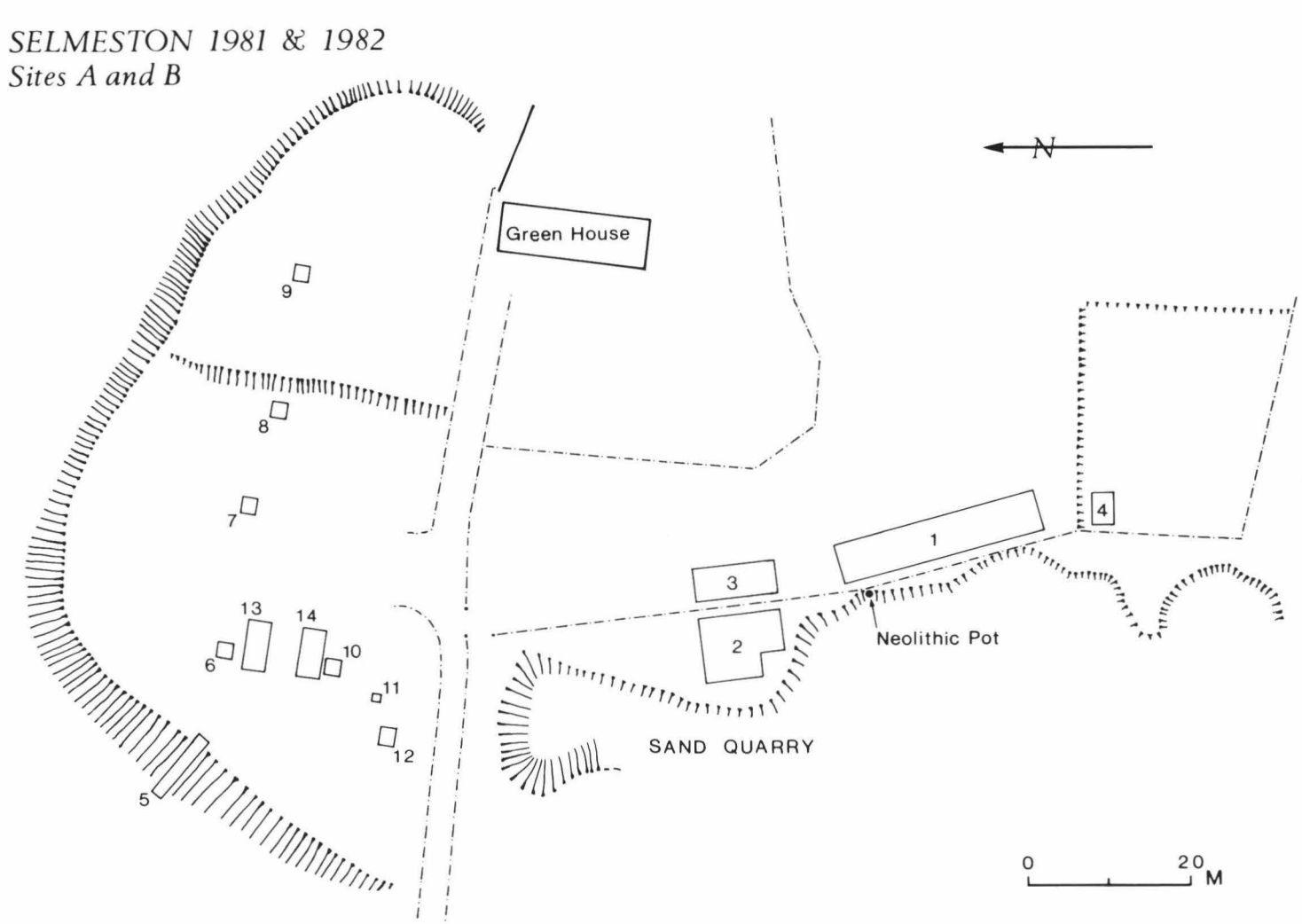

Fig. 3. Selmeston. Sites A and B: survey and trench plan.

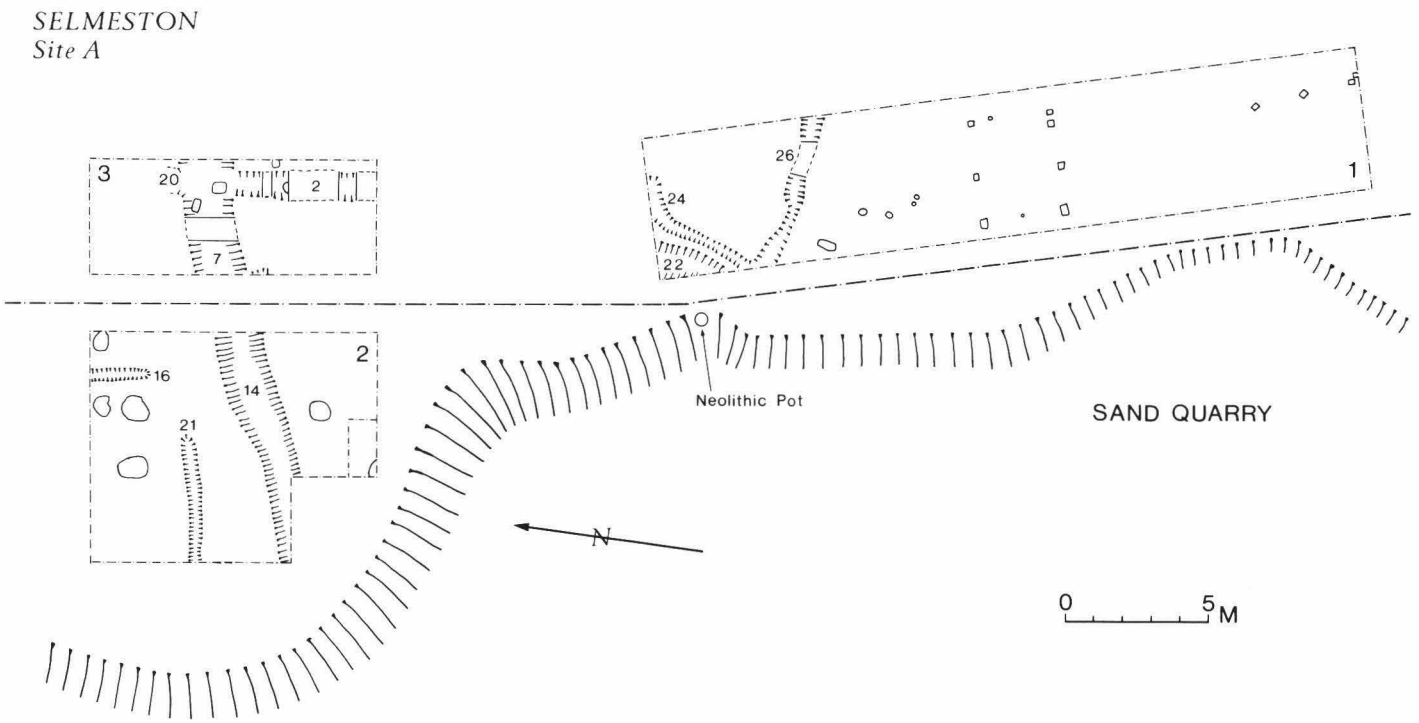

Fig. 4. Selmeston. Site A: plan of features in Trenches 1, 2 and 3.

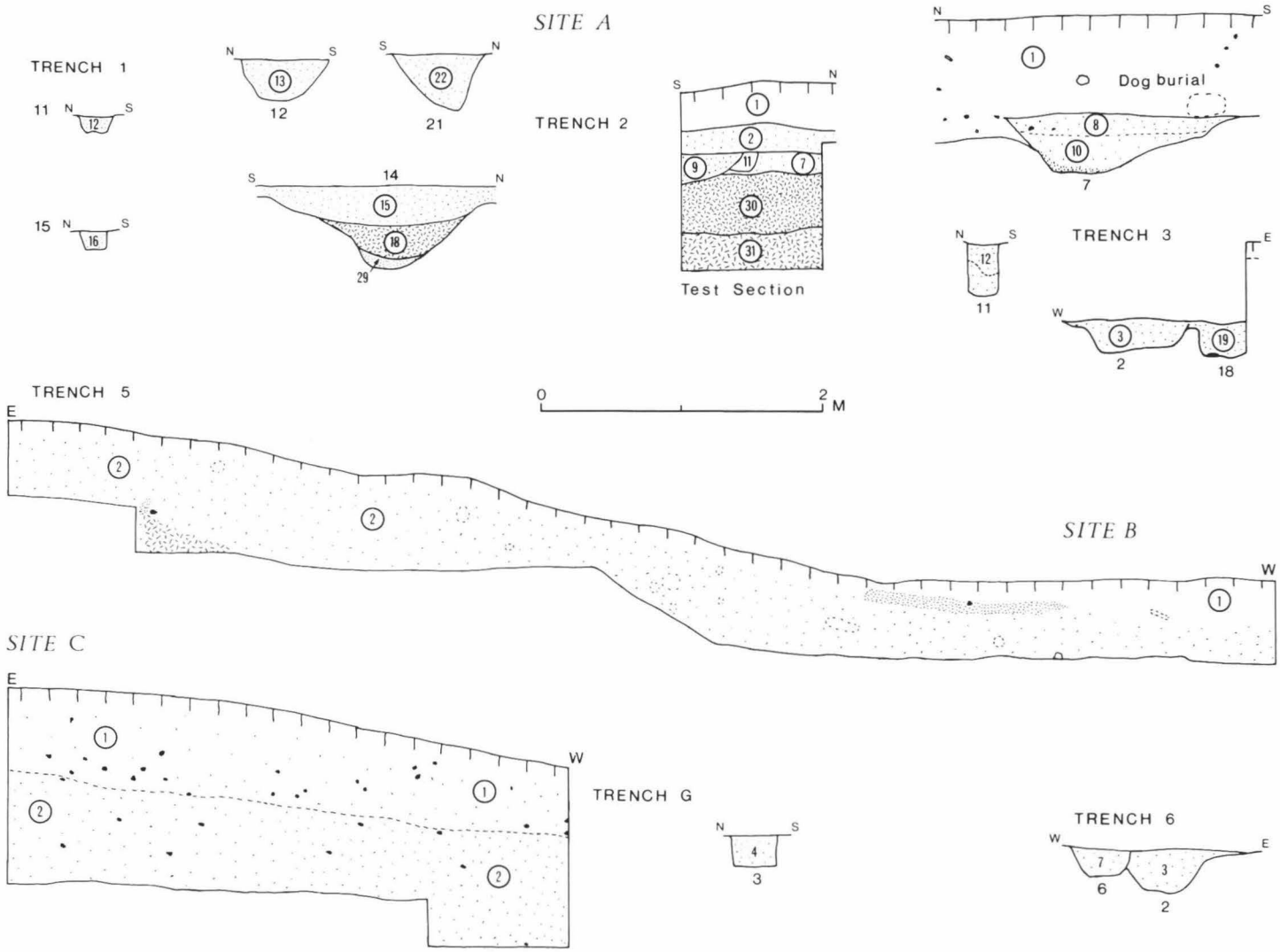

Fig. 5. Selmeston. Sites A, B and C: sections.

fig.12. The south-eastwards expansion of the trench failed to yield further signs of Saxon occupation debris. South of the area investigated by Drewett the enlarged trench did, however, reveal a rectangle of modern, squarish post-holes. The interpretation of this group of post-holes is uncertain, but possibilities include a building (such as a hut) or a small animal enclosure. Among, but not necessarily associated with, this group of post-holes were two much smaller and round post-holes. At the southern end of the trench were discovered four other (? modern) squarish post-holes, three forming a line and one being an apparent replacement of one of the other post-holes. The trench also produced a general scatter of flintwork.

Trench 2: In 1981, in order to investigate possible prehistoric and Saxon occupation in this area, this trench was entirely excavated by hand. Once the topsoil had been removed the trench was gridded into one-metre squares and for three spits the positions of all the finds were plotted and recorded. Unfortunately no significant concentration of flintwork or other categories of finds was discovered and the area appears to have been much disturbed by medieval and later agricultural activities. Features in Trench 2 included several post-holes or small pits, three ditches (14, 16, and 21), and three tree-holes. The ditches are similar to those found in Trench 1 and are similarly of medieval date (based on the pottery finds). One of the small pits (12) contained charcoal, carbonized seeds (hulled barley) and a few small pieces of medieval pottery. In the south of the trench a 2 x 1 box-section was excavated to a greater depth than the rest of the trench to see whether the natural sand (7) was in fact a deposit (possibly wind-blown) burying archaeological layers. No such situation was demonstrated, and the section (Fig.5) revealed two lower sand layers.

Trench 3: This trench (excavated in 1982: topsoil removed by J.C.B.) was located in order to trace further the large ditch (14) found in 1981. The ditch was found to continue into Trench 3 (where it was recorded as Context 7) and at the eastern side of the trench was joined by two shallower ditches (2 and 20), only one of which (2) could be properly investigated in the time available. Two rectangular post-holes were found to cut Ditch 7, whilst another post-hole cut Ditch 2. A further post-hole or pit lay east of Ditch 2. In the eastern section (Fig.5) at a level above the ditches (in Layer 1b) was a dog burial. The trench yielded a general spread of medieval pottery, but relatively few flints.

Trench 4: Excavated in 1982, this trench produced some pottery and flintwork but no archaeological features. The trench was located in an area which had already had the topsoil removed ready for the next phase of sand extraction.

Discussion

The 1978, 1981 and 1982 excavations all revealed medieval ditches. These are interpreted as field boundaries, and judging from the pottery finds (which include glazed sand-tempered wares) appear to have been used, or gone out of use, in the late medieval period. The ditches probably belong to the period of demesne farming when the area immediately surrounding the later Green House formed part of the open fields of Ludlay manor, and were farmed in strips by the villein tenants (see below). Animal bones from the ditches include those of cattle, sheep, pig, deer and dog and indicate some of the medieval farm animals and presumably provide evidence of hunting (the deer bone). The three separate dog burials, from Trenches 1 and 3, remain a mystery as to their date and the reason for their deposition in close proximity to each other, although the latter might be coincidental.

The discovery in 1978 of evidence of middle to late Saxon occupation is very important given the general lack in Sussex of archaeological investigations of rural sites of this period. Unfortunately, the 1981 and 1982 excavations failed to yield further definite traces of this occupation (although some of the flint-

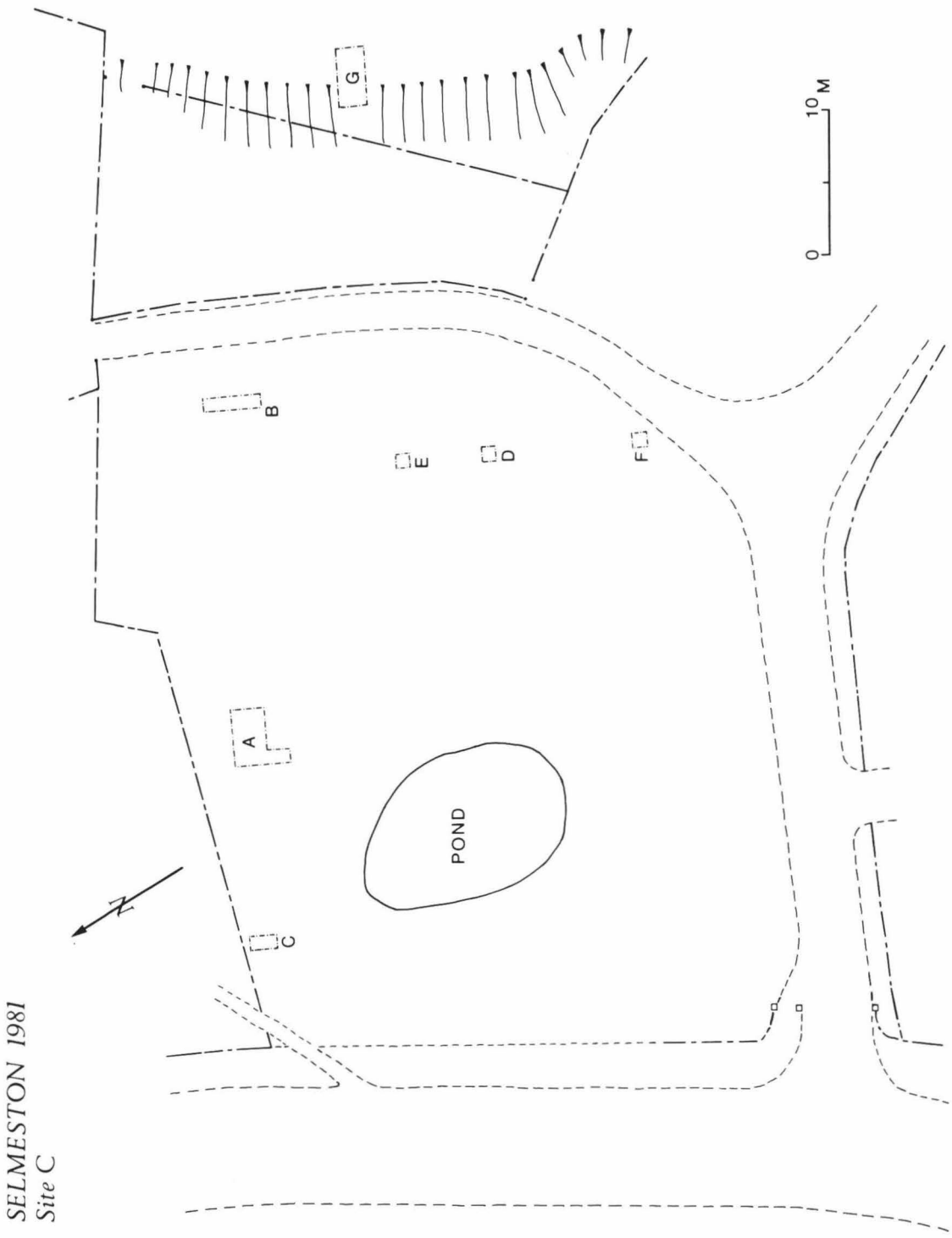

Fig. 6. Selmeston. Site C: trench plan.

tempered pottery possibly dates to this period), and it is thought possible that the Saxon occupation debris layer found by Drewett may have extended to the west in the area now on the immediate edge of, or destroyed by, the sand quarry. Further evidence (loom-weights and pottery) suggestive of middle to late Saxon occupation in the vicinity was found during sand extraction from the quarry (Bell 1978, 66).

From a prehistoric point of view the 1978, 1981 and 1982 excavations were disappointing in that they failed to locate any features or significant concentrations of flintwork. It is important to note that the flintwork retrieved is not all Mesolithic (for which the sand quarry is especially famous), but also includes material from later periods. This is no more than one should expect given the discovery in the quarry of such things as the Neolithic pot (Drewett 1975) and the Bronze Age ditches (Curwen & Curwen 1938).

Site B

The site is bordered to the north, east and west by a bank and to the south by the present track (Fig.3) which connects the Green House to Selmeston church and road. It is divided into two unequal areas by a smaller bank which runs north-south. During the Easter and summer of 1982 the site was surveyed (Fig.3) and sample-excavated to try to establish the date of the enclosing bank, the function of the enclosed area, and the location of flintwork concentrations which might exist in this area of Greensand.

Trench 5: The section (Fig.5) revealed a rather uniform build-up and produced 54 medieval pottery sherds, eight pieces of post-medieval pottery and a clay pipe fragment. Other finds included pieces of brick, daub and tile. At the western end of the trench was a flattish area which revealed a series of cart-ruts and is therefore interpreted as a former road or track.

Trenches 6–14: Most of these trenches produced a mixture of archaeological finds (from flintwork to post-medieval material) but few revealed any archaeological features. Trenches 6, 13 and 14 revealed two ditches and several post-holes or pits of uncertain date but possibly medieval. All three trenches, however, showed extensive signs of rabbit disturbance. Pottery finds are predominantly medieval but also include post-medieval examples. Fragments of tile, brick and daub were also common finds. The area revealed a general scatter of flintwork but no specific concentrations, although the area (an allotment) around Trenches 11 and 12 had in the past yielded a large number of flints.

Discussion

Finds (pottery and building materials) from the banked area are mainly medieval or later. They indicate settlement in the vicinity. The small size of the sample trenches may have prevented the location of buildings, especially if they were of types which did not involve substantial foundations. Recent destruction agencies (rabbits and horticulture) may also have removed traces of any buildings in the area. According to map evidence the present track leading to the Green House is relatively recent, being after 1811. Old maps show that the old track went to the north *around* the banked area before approaching the Green House. The fact that the road or track went around rather than across the bank area may be significant. The results of a study by E. Howard and M. Maloney of the hedge running south-east to north-west along the border of the banked area indicate that the hedge could be 'around 600 or more years old' (Howard pers. comm). Howard and Maloney's studies (microfiche, pp. 57–62) also suggest a similar date for the stretch of hedge on the south side of the lane opposite the churchyard. Thus various types of evidence (archaeological, maps and hedge studies) all suggest that the banked area may be quite old, perhaps medieval. The two banked areas may simply be fields attached to the Green House (itself an early 16th-century construction: see below), or perhaps to an earlier house. Alternatively they might relate to a much earlier medieval occupation of the land. Historical

research (see below) shows that the banked area has been attached to the Green House since at least the close of the 16th century.

Site C

Trenches A–F: In 1981 in advance of house construction the area around the village pond (Fig.6) was subjected to six trial trenches (A–F). The aim was to try to locate any evidence for occupation in the locality, which is on the clay. Although no archaeological features were discovered, Trench A yielded a number of chalk blocks and fragments. The six trenches yielded totals of only 14 flints and 35 sherds of pottery, mostly medieval.

Trench G: This trench was located (Fig.6) in order to sample an area near the junction of the sand and clay. Situated just on the Greensand, the trench sampled the upper part of a lynchet. A variety of finds included 245 flints (plus 29 fragments of fire-cracked flint) and 170 sherds of pottery, which included 60 sherds of Roman and two sherds of Iron Age pottery. The lack of well stratified deposits makes the dating of the lynchet uncertain, but the general distribution of medieval pottery throughout the section indicates that a medieval origin is possible.

Site D: the Saxon Cemetery Site

An early Saxon inhumation cemetery site is located (Fig.2) in the area of cottages opposite Church Farm. The earliest discovery was in 1897 when at least two graves were found during the construction of two cottages. In 1950 workmen digging a trench in the garden of the two cottages revealed another grave, and in 1963 the same location was the scene of an excavation (unpublished) by Mr. D. Thomson which uncovered a further dozen graves. Further details about these various discoveries are recorded by Welch (1983, 389–90).

The 1979 Selmeston Saxon Cemetery Excavations (interim report)

H. Clarke and M. Welch for the Sussex Saxon Research Group excavated on the site of the Saxon cemetery in 1979 to assess its potential for future excavation. An area 15 by 7.5 metres was opened immediately adjacent to the site of the previous discoveries. The soil conditions obliterated grave outlines for the most part and removed all bones except teeth cappings in two graves. At least 14 graves were identified and most of these were orientated west-east. A soil stain possibly representing a coffin edge was traced in one grave, and the stain of a wooden coffin in the largest grave was unmistakable. All the assemblages appear to have accompanied men, there being seven spearheads, five shields, six iron buckles, six knives, bronze tweezers and an iron ring. The male predominance is reflected in the earlier and largely unpublished finds with an estimated 19 weapon assemblages compared with two brooch and bead combinations. The spear and shield forms excavated in 1979 belong within the 6th and early 7th centuries, although the overall date range of the cemetery extends from the 5th to the early 7th century.

THE FINDS

The Flintwork (by Caroline Cartwright)

During excavations in the Selmeston area between 1963 and 1982, a total of 2,456 pieces of struck flint were found. In addition, 585 fragments of fire-cracked flint occurred, bringing the total to 3,041. An overall summary of the sites (A–D) may be seen in Table 1. Details of the artefact types and frequencies for trenches on each site may be seen in Tables 2–14 (microfiche, pp. 24–35). Descriptions of the groups of flintwork deal with individual trenches or groups of trenches; these follow sequentially. Fieldwalking material from Field no. 3000 is summarized in Table 15 (microfiche, p. 36); surface collections (1981–2) in Table 16 (microfiche, p. 37); and three collections of flintwork in Barbican House Museum, Lewes, from the Selmeston area in Tables 17 and 18 (microfiche, pp. 38–9).

Site A

Flintwork from Trenches 1 and 3: D. Rudling's excavations in Trench 1 at Selmeston extended P. L. Drewett's excavated trench of 1978 (Drewett 1979). Table 2 (microfiche, p. 24) contains the details and comparisons with the 1978 assemblage. Of the flintwork from Trench 1 and Drewett's trench combined (Table 3: microfiche p. 25), waste flakes form 79.5%, blades and blade segments 8.5%, retouched material 3.3% and cores 2.9%. Most of the cores were for the production of small flakes and blades, possibly microliths, which form 0.6%. The microliths largely comprise small points obliquely retouched down all or part of one edge (classified according to Clark, 1934); one microlith takes a geometric form. Side and end scrapers form 0.5%, rough workshop waste 2.8%, core trimmings 1% and fire-cracked flakes 0.9%. Other fire-cracked material (not included in the percentage totals) amounted to 221 pieces from Trench 1

TABLE 1

Summary of Flintwork from Excavations at Selmeston, 1963–82

	Site A	*Site B*	*Site C*	*Site D*	*Total*	*% of total struck flint*
Waste flakes	1,013	81	178	338	1,610	65.55
Retouched (including notched) material	199	31	49	135	414	16.86
Blades and blade segments	101	14	16	17	148	6.03
Cores	56	10	6	24	96	3.91
Rough workshop waste	50	1	3	37	91	3.71
Scrapers	24	4	4	10	42	1.71
Fire-cracked flakes	9			7	16	0.65
Core trimmings	13	1		1	15	0.61
Microliths	7			7	14	0.57
Awls		1	2		3	0.12
Hammerstones	1	1	1		3	0.12
Partly finished leaf-shaped arrowheads				2	2	0.08
Axeheads	1				1	0.04
Leaf-shaped arrowheads		1			1	0.04
Total of struck flint	1,474	145	259	578	2,456	100.00
Fire-cracked flint	311	123	65	86	585	—
Total	1,785	268	324	664	3,041	—

and Drewett's trench combined. Totals of flintwork from Trench 3 (Table 4: microfiche, p. 26) reinforce the overall trend illustrated above: waste flakes form 33.3%, retouched material 33.3%, blades 13.3%, microliths 13.3% and cores (for blades and small flakes) 6.8%. The character of flintwork from Trenches 1 and 3 and from the 1978 excavations (Drewett 1979) is elusive. Certain aspects suggest Mesolithic elements—the blades, microcores, cores for the production of small-element lithic material, the microliths—whereas other aspects suggest admixture with material from later periods. Much of the large proportion of waste material presumably relates to on-site knapping, but as much of the topsoil has been disturbed the material cannot be taken to be representative of a particular assemblage at a given period. Overall totals are: for Trench 1 and Drewett's trench combined, 869 flints, plus 221 fire-cracked flint fragments; for Trench 3, 15 flints, plus three fire-cracked flint fragments.

Flintwork from Trench 2 (Tables 5 and 6: microfiche, pp. 27–8): Waste flakes account for 52% of the total flintwork from Trench 2. Most of these are under 6 cm. in length; those 2 cm. and under may be associated with the cores (5.1% of the total). Blades and blade segments (4.3%) may also be related to the core element present. The production of small lithic material was presumably fairly important: two microcores are present but no microliths occurred in this trench. However, there is an important element featuring retouching and notching of small flakes and blades (retouched material forms 29.2%), and 18 scrapers amount to 3.4% of the total. As with Trenches 1 and 3, there are strong Mesolithic elements within the flintwork, but certain aspects relate to later periods: the leaf-shaped arrowhead blank, the axehead, and possibly the awl roughouts, the scrapers and the notched material, suggest Neolithic, and perhaps Bronze Age, elements. A hammerstone and fire-cracked flakes each form 0.2% of the total, and core trimmings 0.7%. Rough workshop waste forms 4.7%. (The axehead forms 0.2%.) Other fire-cracked flints totalled 80 pieces. It is tempting to infer hunting and some skin preparation and woodworking activities (amongst others) from the range of artefacts represented; however it must be stressed that the flintwork described does not necessarily constitute a closed assemblage. The overall total for flints from Trench 2 is 534 pieces (plus 80 fragments of fire-cracked flint). During excavations in 1981 of Trench 2, all flint was plotted *in situ* from Contexts 2 and 3. From these it is apparent that flint occurred widely scattered across the trench, with no obvious concentrations of artefact type or waste material. Three of the flints from Trench 2 are illustrated in Fig. 7.

Flintwork from Trench 4 (Table 7: microfiche, p. 29): A total of 56 flints was recovered from Trench 4, plus seven fire-cracked flints. The flintwork from Trench 4 is in broadly similar proportions to that from Trenches 1 and 3. Waste flakes form 69.6% and rough workshop waste 1.8%. Retouched material accounts for 16%, cores 5.4% and blade segments and scrapers each 3.6%, and there are seven fire-cracked flints.

Site B

Flintwork from Trench 5: An excavated section through the medieval or post-medieval lynchet, numbered as Trench 5, contained a total of 31 flints as detailed on Table 8 (micro-

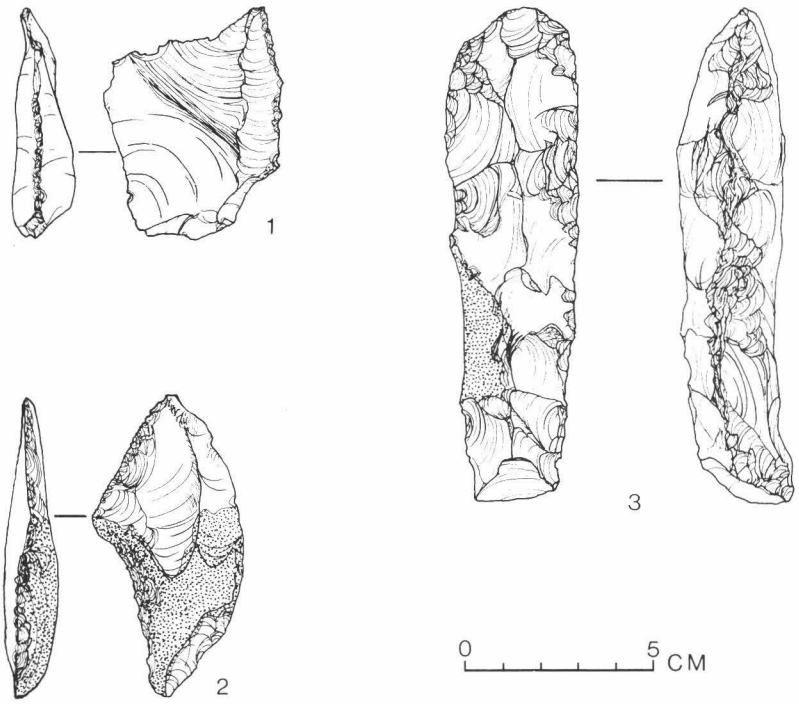

Fig. 7. Selmeston. Site A, Trench 2: flintwork (x ½): nos. 1 and 2, retouched flints from Contexts 3 and 6; no. 3, flint axe-head from Context 6.

fiche, p. 30). The flintwork presumably derives from activities in different periods. Cores (9.6%), blades (6.5%), retouched material (6.5%), an awl and a core trimming (each 3.2%) represent the artefact types. Fire-cracked flint numbers 23 pieces.

Flintwork from Trenches 6–14 (Tables 9 and 10: microfiche, pp. 31–2): Trenches 6–14 sampled the banked area north of the trackway. The flints recovered from these trenches totalled 114, plus 100 fragments of fire-cracked flint. As with flintwork from trenches already described, elements from varying traditions of flintworking are represented. The waste flake component forms 51.8% and rough workshop waste 0.9%. Blades and blade segments form 10.5%, and the small-tool tradition continues with the cores (6.1%) and much of the retouched material (25.4%). The leaf-shaped arrowhead (0.9%), the scrapers (3.5%) and the hammerstone (0.9%) complete the range of artefact types represented. The leaf-shaped arrowhead (2.6 cm.) has retouch confined to the edges of the face; one side is retouched from above and the other from below. The base is partly incomplete and partly fractured.

Site C

Flintwork from Trenches A–F (Table 11: microfiche, p. 33): Trenches A–F sampled the area near the pond. The underlying geology is mainly that of the Gault clay and little material was present. From the five trenches a total of 14 flints were recovered, plus 36 fire-cracked flint fragments. Nine waste flakes (64.3% of the total), two notched and two retouched flakes (each forming 14.3%) and 1 core (7.1%) comprise the artefact types present.

Flintwork from Trench G (Table 12: microfiche, p. 34): Trench G sectioned the lynchet mainly situated on the Greensand. By contrast with Trenches A–F much flint was recovered, totalling 245 pieces, plus 29 fragments of fire-cracked flint. Some movement downslope from the adjoining field may have resulted in accumulation of flints within the lynchet body. Waste flakes (169 pieces) form 69% and rough workshop waste (three) 1.2%. Five cores, mainly for small flake and blade production, amount to 2.1%, whilst the blades and blade segment component (16) forms 6.5%. Notched and retouched flakes and blades bring the retouched material total to 45 pieces (18.4%). Scrapers, including a small 'thumbnail' type, total four (1.6%); two awls form 0.8% and one hammerstone 0.4%.

Site D (the Saxon cemetery site)

Flintwork from M. Welch's 1979 excavations (Tables 13 and 14: microfiche, pp. 35–6): A total of 126 struck flints plus 28 fire-cracked flint fragments was recovered during Welch's 1979 excavations. Again, the flintwork has a multi-tradition and multi-period aspect. Waste flakes account for 58.7% and rough workshop waste 1.6% of the total. Retouched material features fairly prominently at 26.2% (mostly flakes with scraper-type retouched areas). Blades form 5.6%, cores 6.3%, and scrapers, although mostly very rough, 0.8%. Fire-cracked flakes also represent 0.8%. Although some of the material may relate to the periods represented by the site's contexts, there seems little doubt that there is also much earlier material incorporated into the deposits. Further flintwork from Site D was found during the 1963 excavations, and the finds deposited in Barbican House Museum, Lewes, are discussed below.

Surface collections of flint in the Selmeston area

There is a long history of surface collection of flints from the Selmeston area (Clark 1934, 134–58; Curwen &

Curwen 1938; Arundell 1953, 312–3; Holloway 1979). For details of these the reader is referred to the individual reports: it suffices to mention here that the Selmeston area has yielded large quantities of Mesolithic, Neolithic and later flintwork to the surface collector. These flintwork collections demonstrate the popularity of the Selmeston area for hunting and occupation from the Mesolithic onwards.

In 1982 Paul Garwood carried out a survey (see below) of Field 3000 which lies immediately east of Site B. A total of 79 struck flints, plus 99 fire-cracked flint fragments, were collected (Table 15: microfiche, p. 36). The retouched material comprises: 32 retouched flakes (40.5% of the total); two notched and retouched flakes (2.5%); one retouched blade (1.3%); one flake with transverse end retouch (1.3%); one leaf-shaped retouched flake (1.3%); and a 'gunflint' (1.3%). Waste flakes amount to only 22 pieces (27.8%). There are a variety of core types, mostly for the production of blades and small flakes for tools, totalling ten in number (12.6%), only one blade segment (1.3%), and eight scrapers of varying types (10.1%). The nature of this collection is somewhat ambiguous. On the one hand we have suggestions that the production of small tools is important, and there is an important element of retouched and notched material, but on the other there is a lack of 'formal' (Mesolithic) tool types or microliths. A strong possibility remains that some, at least, of the flintwork may complement the general trend of Mesolithic-type flintwork common to the Selmeston area from surface collections and excavations alike. Suggestions of Neolithic or Bronze Age activities too may be gleaned from the scraper and leaf-shaped retouched flake component in this collection. However, it cannot be treated as a single assemblage from one period (obviously the 'gunflint' represents a much later addition).

For summary details of the flintwork found during fieldwalking in the north of the parish see the report by Garwood below.

A small survey during the period of the excavations by D. Rudling was carried out over areas immediately adjacent to the excavated trenches. The results are in Table 16 (microfiche, p. 37). A total of 19 struck flints, plus one fire-cracked flint fragment, were found. Of this total 11 waste flakes represent 57.9%, six retouched and notched flakes 31.5%, one core 5.3% and one blade also 5.3%.

Three groups of flintwork from Selmeston are housed in Barbican House Museum, Lewes: one donated in 1966 by T. K. Walls, labelled as coming from a 'Saxon hearth, sandpit, Selmeston'; a single scraper labelled 'Selmeston sandpit—Mr. Musson'; and the collection of flintwork associated with 'graves' and 'cuttings' from D. Thomson's unpublished excavations of 1963.

Table 17 (microfiche, p. 38) details the flintwork in the Walls group combined with the single Musson find. Retouched and notched material accounts for 47 out of the total of 137 struck flints found, i.e. 34.3% of the total. There are 38 waste flakes, eight of them large (27.7%), and there is one piece of rough workshop waste (0.7%). Almost as many blades as waste flakes occur, 37 in all (27%); however, possible selection preferences on the part of the collector for material other than waste must be considered. Seven cores, of small flake and blade type, form 5.1%. Four microliths, broadly in the category of points retouched down all or part of one side, constitute 3% (two of these are fragmentary). Two scrapers (one end and one disc) form 1.5%, and the artefact complement ends with 1 core trimming (0.7%). (The disc scraper is the Musson find.) Collectors' preferences aside, the groups show a bias towards Mesolithic-type artefacts and high instances of retouched and notched material. It is noticeable, though, that many more of the waste flakes present are larger in size than in the similar flintwork groups described above. The high blade numbers are unusual in this respect also, although it should not be surprising to find flintwork groups such as these with high blade quantities, given that almost all cores found seem to be for the production of blade and small artefact material.

A total of 452 struck flints, plus 58 fragments of fire-cracked flint, was recovered from Thomson's 1963 excavations. This material from the 'graves' and 'cuttings' includes 270 waste flakes (59.7%) and 35 pieces of rough workshop waste (7.7%). In addition, retouched and notched flakes and blades amount to 102 pieces (22.6%). There are 16 cores of various types (Table 18: microfiche, p. 39) which form 3.6%. Ten blades form 2.2%, and nine scrapers 2%. Seven microliths occurred: six are points retouched down all or part of one side, and one has a concave base (total 1.6.%). There are two partly finished leaf-shaped arrowheads (0.4%) and one core trimming (0.2%). In this collection we may see strong Mesolithic elements (the microcore, the blades and microliths). Later traits emerge: the (presumably Neolithic) leaf-shaped arrowheads (partly finished), the scrapers and some of the notched and retouched material. As with all the material from the early and recent excavations, the fire-cracked flint fragments suggest domestic or transient hearths; the fire-cracked flakes tend to reinforce the suggestion of much on-site flint-knapping for specific activities.

Discussion

For much of the flintwork from the excavations and from surface collections many of the details of Clark's descriptions (Clark 1934) still hold good and redefinition here would be superfluous. The abundance of the material found in his Mesolithic contexts is a fine measure of the importance of the Selmeston area as hunting and occupational territories. Whilst not all the artefact types may be matched in detail with those of Clark, we may see many reflections of the variety and resourcefulness of the Selmeston inhabitants through time in the artefact spectrum of the present excavations and fieldwalking surveys.

The Pottery

Introduction

The 1978, 1981 and 1982 excavations at Sites A, B and C produced a total of 1,826 pieces of pottery and 16 clay pipe fragments. Most of the potsherds are fairly small, and unfortunately none are from 'well-sealed' groups. The sherds have been identified by fabric type and the totals are summarized *by site* in Table 19. Tables 20–2 (microfiche, pp. 40–2) summarize the pottery *by trench* for each site. The analysis of the pottery *by context* forms part of the archive. In addition, a quick examination was made of the pottery finds from Site D obtained during the excavations in 1963 (material lodged at Barbican House Museum, Lewes) and 1979 (in the possession of the excavator, M. Welch). No attempt was made to quantify these sherds since in the case of the 1979 material a large number still remain unprocessed, thus making accurate identifications difficult or impossible. Site D, however, was found to have the largest range of fabric types and includes pottery of all periods from prehistoric to post-medieval. The 1963 and 1979 finds clearly require detailed analysis.

Fabric types

a. *Prehistoric*

1. Coarse calcined flint-gritted wares. Probably Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age.
2. Sandy grey/black wares with iron oxides. Iron Age.

b. *Roman*
3. Handmade grog-tempered wares ('East Sussex Ware'). These wares were continuously made in East Sussex from the Late Iron Age until the end of the Romano-British period at least. Site D produced several examples of a distinctive Late Roman grog-tempered fabric called 'Thundersbarrow Ware'.
4. Samian Ware. Site B (Trench 13) produced a sherd of Central or East Gaulish manufacture and Site D (1979 excavations) an East Gaulish sherd (form: Dragendorff 18/31) of Antonine date (C. Johns pers. comm.).
5. Colour-coated wares. These include (from Site D, 1979 excavations) examples of red colour-coated bowls of Oxfordshire and Pevensey Wares. See below.
6. Sandy 'grey' wares.
c. *Saxon/medieval*

The medieval flint- and sand-filled fabrics were subdivided by grain size according to the analysis of the pottery finds from the excavations in 1978 (Drewett 1979, 242–3). None of this pottery is easily datable but grain size has been shown to be a useful guide to chronology in Sussex, with the coarser grains tending to be used in earlier pottery.
7a. A distinctive sandy black ware. ?Saxon.
7b. Grass-tempered wares. Saxon.
8. Coarse flint-gritted wares (Fabric 5 of the 1979 report).
9. Medium flint-gritted wares (Fabric 4).
10. Fine flint-gritted wares (Fabric 3).
11. Sand-tempered wares (Fabric 2).
12. Fine wares (Fabric 1).
d. *Post-medieval*
13. Various types/wares.
14. Clay pipes.

A small selection of the pottery finds are described below.

Site A

a. *Finds from the medieval ditches* (see also Drewett 1979)

Very little pottery was recovered from these features and there are no obviously associated assemblages or groups. With the exception of several residual Roman sherds the ditch generally produced a variety of medieval flint- and/or sand-tempered fabrics (Fabrics 8–11), including some sherds with glazing. Examples:
4. Rim. Fabric 8. Dark grey-buff. Finger-tipping on rim. Trench 1, Ditch 24, Fill 25.
5. Rim. Fabric 9. Grey-buff. Trench 2, Ditch 14, Fill 15.
6. Rim. Fabric 9. Grey-buff. Trench 2, Ditch 14, Fill 15.
7. Grooved handle with centre stabbed. Partial mottled yellow-green glaze. Fabric 11. Grey-buff. Trench 2, Ditch 14, Fill 15.
8. Rim. Fabric 9. Buff (grey core). Trench 3, Ditch 7, Fill 8.
9. Not illustrated. Rim/junction with handle from a skillet. Fabric 10. Orange-buff. Trench 3, Ditch 7, Fill 8.
10. Grooved handle with centre stabbed. Exhibits a projecting 'tongue' for attachment to body of jug. Partial mottled yellow-green glaze. Fabric 11. Orange-buff. Trench 3, Ditch 7, Fill 8.
11. Grooved handle with thumbed sides. Fabric 10. Buff (dark grey core). Trench 3, Ditch 7, Fill 8.
b. *Miscellaneous finds*
12. Rim. Fabric 10. Orange (grey core). Trench 2, Context 6.
13. Rim. Fabric 10. Orange (grey core). Trench 2, Context 6.

Site B

14. Handle. Fabric 9. Dark grey. Trench 5, Context 1.
15. Grooved handle with centre stabbed. Fabric 10. Orange. Trench 5, Context 2.
16. Not illustrated. Body sherd with applied thumbed strips. Fabric 11. Grey. Trench 13, Context 1.
17. Rim with beginning of pulled spout (not shown on illustration). Fabric 10. Light orange-buff (grey core). Trench 14, Context 1.
18. Rim. Fabric 10. Buff (grey core). Trench 14, Context 1.
19. Rim and strap handle. Partial light green glaze. Fabric 11. Orange (grey core). Trench 14, Context 1.

The sand quarry

During the 1979 excavations at Site D, Dr. Welch was given eight sherds (six of Fabric 9 and two of Fabric 10) which had been found in the sand quarry. These have now been deposited in Barbican House Museum, Lewes, and one is described below.
20. Rim. Fabric 9. Grey with some buff patches on the sufaces.

Site D (1979 excavations)

21. Not illustrated. Rim. East Gaulish Samian Ware. Form: Dragendorff 18/31. Antonine. 91.
22. Not illustrated. Oxfordshire red colour-coated mortaria with upright rim and angular flange. White and rose quartz trituration grits. Type C 100. *c.* A.D. 300–400+ 343.
23. Not illustrated. Rim from a red colour-coated bowl. A smooth 'soapy' orange fabric with grey core and 'laminating' surfaces. Pevensey Ware, Fulford Type 3. Late 4th century+ A.D. Fill of Grave B1.

TABLE 19

Summary of Pottery from Excavations at Selmeston, 1978–82

	Fabric types															
Site	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7a*	*7b*	*8*	*9*	*10*	*11*	*12*	*13*	*14*	*Total*
A	29	1	30			1			70	312	246	285	17	34	7	1,032
B			3	1	1				10	138	90	289	5	60	8	605
C (A-F)	1					1			3	13	8	6		2	1	35
C (G)	2		60						8	36	24	36		4		170
Total of sherds	32	1	93	1	1	2			91	499	368	616	22	100	16	1,842

Note

All fabric types were present among the finds from the 1963 and 1979 excavations (Site D).

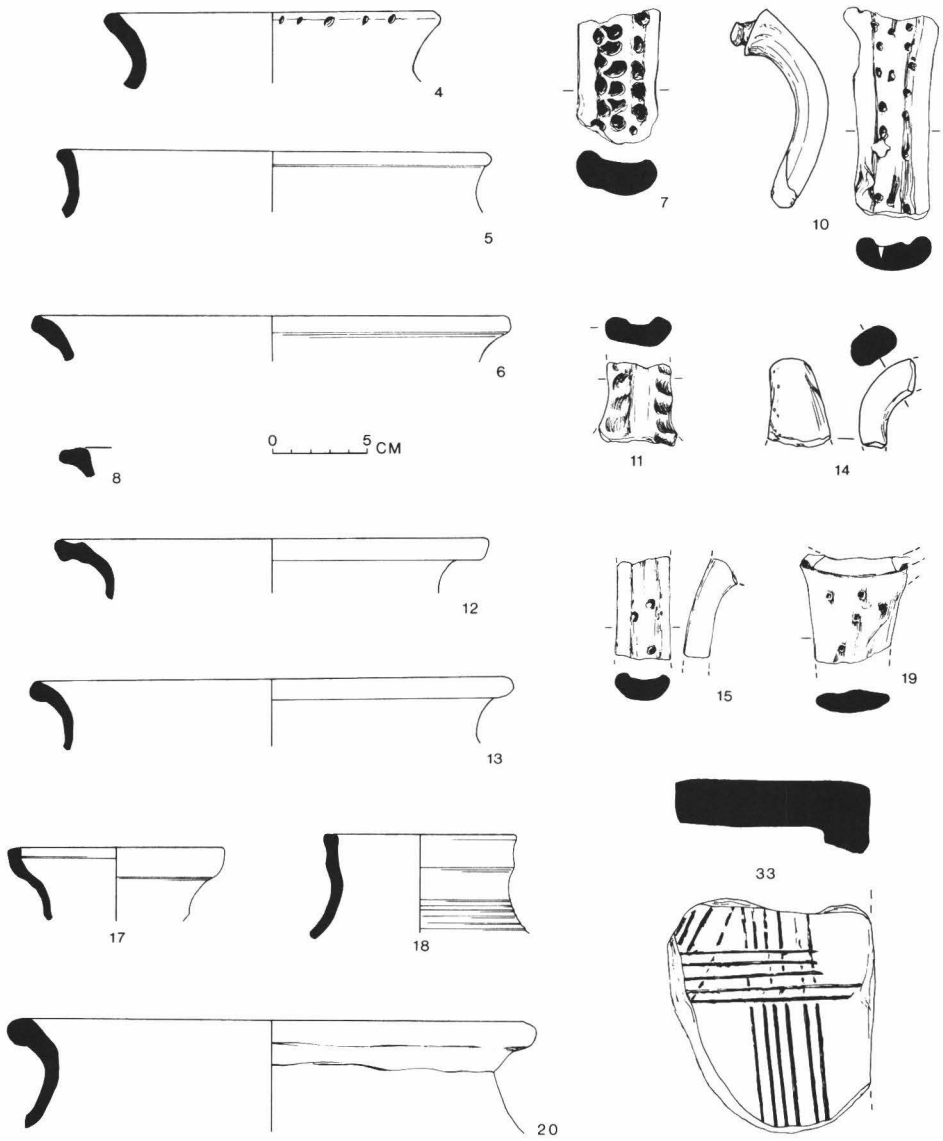

Fig. 8. Selmeston. Pottery and tile (x $\frac{1}{4}$).

The Glass (by J. D. Shepherd)

Ten fragments of vessel glass, one fragment of window glass and one glass bead were recovered from Sites A and B. No glass was found at Site C. All are catalogued below.

Vessel glass

24. Not illustrated. Small fragment from a beaker or bowl. Blown, rim folded inwards. Pale bluish-green glass. Possibly Roman in date. Site B, Trench 12.

In addition nine fragments of post-medieval glass, of which six are probably from bottles, were found on Sites A and B.

Window glass

25. Not illustrated. Fragment of window glass. Cylinder-blown. Dull greenish colourless glass. Thickness *c.* 2.5 mm. Post-medieval. Site B, Trench 9.

The bead

26. A globular bead. Very dark, purple glass appearing to be black. Dull, pitted surface caused by weathering and/or rolling. Without any closely associated datable material it is very difficult to assign this find to any particular period. The only datable finds from this context were nine sherds of medieval pottery. Site B, Trench 13, Context 2.

The Coin

27. Not illustrated. Large fragment of an Ae 22 mm. of Magnentius (350–3 A.D.). Obverse: DN MAG[NENTIVS PF AVG], pearl-diademed, draped and cuirassed bust right. Reverse: [FEL]ICITAS [REIPVBLICE], emperor in military dress standing left holding Victory on globe and standard. Mint of Arles. Reference: type as *RIC* 136. Site A, Trench 1, Context 1.

Another Roman coin is recorded as having been found at Selmeston. This is a silver siliqua of Constantius II (337–61 A.D.) and was found in 1962 during digging in the garden at Church Farm Cottage (Fig.2). Both coins were discovered near the courses of Roman roads traced by Margary (1956).

Copper-Alloy Objects

28. Pin with spherical head. Site B, Trench 13, Ditch/Gully 2.
29. Strengthening plate with end rivets. Site B, Trench 12.

Lead Object

30. Not illustrated. Lead musket ball. 11 mm. diameter. Site B, Trench 5, Context 1.

Iron

Sites A and B yielded a number of iron nails and fragments of nails. These were generally undatable. Site A, Trench 3, Context 2 (a ditch or gully), however, produced a number of very small (*c.* 15 mm. in length) ?hobnails. Other iron objects from Site A (e.g. a staple) are probably modern.

Clay Building Materials

Sites A–D all produced pieces of medieval or post-medieval roofing tiles and post-medieval bricks. Two are described below:

31. Not illustrated. Fragment of a nib tile. 15 mm. thick. A hard grey fabric with small black inclusions and sand-covered surfaces. There are no signs of a fixing hole and the fragment exhibits a firing bubble. This type of tile has been dated by Martin (1978, 39) as between *c.* 1300 and the late 15th or early 16th century. Site C, Trench D.
32. Not illustrated. A complete brick: 230 x 110 x 30 mm. A hard orange sand- and grog-tempered fabric. Site B, Trench 5, Context 1.

Sites A, B and C all yielded small pieces of daub or burnt clay, some fragments from Site B clearly showing wattle impressions.

Site D (1963 excavations) produced a fragment of Roman tile.

33. Fragment from a Roman box-flue tile. Hard orange sandy fabric. Combed decoration. Found in 'Grave 11. R. side'. This find suggests that a fairly sophisticated Roman building once existed in the vicinity of Selmeston.

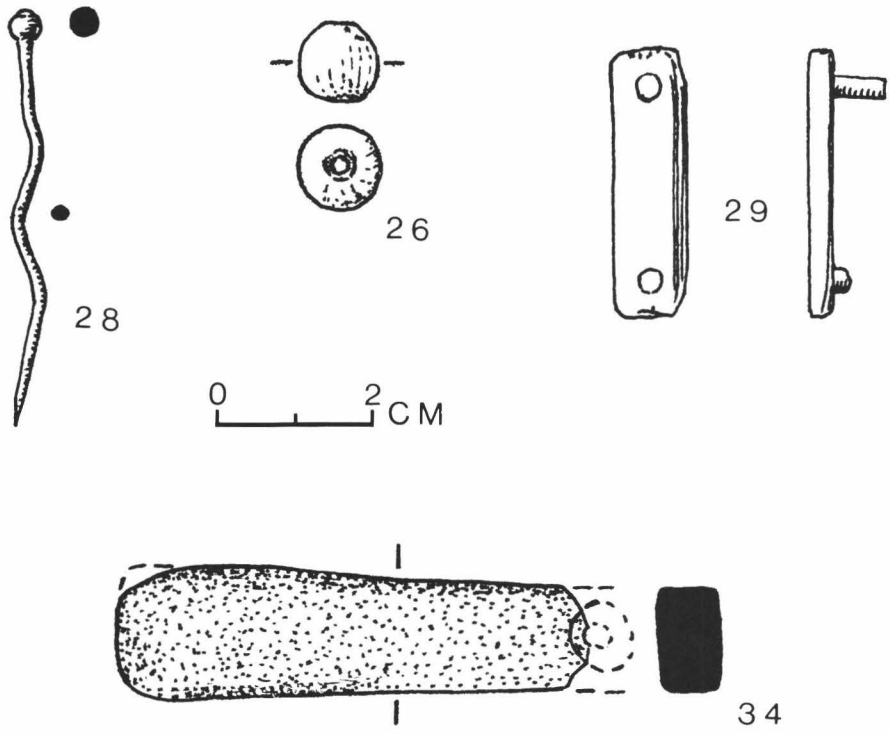

Fig. 9. Selmeston. Small finds (1:1 except no. 29 which is x 2).

Stone (by Caroline Cartwright)

Details of stone fragments from individual trenches are in Tables 23–31 (microfiche, pp. 43–7). Most of the fragments of stone other than flint found during excavations at Selmeston seem to have derived from sedimentary deposits, largely within the Wealden district. Ferruginous sandstone accounts for 37.8% of the total; these fragments may mostly derive from the Folkestone Beds of the Lower Greensand, although it is relatively thin in depth in East Sussex. The glauconitic sandstone, or 'Greensand', fragments can be found in the Sandgate and Bargate Beds of the Lower Greensand formation; these amount to 20.9% of the total. The remaining sandstone and siltstone fragments are largely traceable to beds within the Wealden series, particularly the Tunbridge Wells Sand and the Ashdown Sand of the Hastings Beds. (Details of these are summarized in Table 32: microfiche, p. 48). Although few of these beds outcrop in the immediate Selmeston area, we may expect some movement of material from surrounding areas through river action, and subsequent use by man as raw material for building, artefacts and so on. It is also possible that stone was a marketable commodity between people from different regions with varying geological resources. From Selmeston we have examples of such trade from much further afield in the form of the Mayen lava fragments (2.7% of the total), which ultimately derive from Germany, and form part of the extensive (Iron Age and) medieval network of trade in this material for quernstones from the Continent to Britain. The micaceous schist whetstone, too, has a source outside Sussex and may ultimately derive from Norway.

The nature of the deposits at Selmeston hinders close dating of these stone fragments, but it may be assumed that those mentioned were particularly useful for the manufacture of artefacts (e.g. querns, whetstones, pestles, etc.), or for building purposes probably, in this case, mostly during the medieval period. Also present within the excavated trenches were fragments of chalk (2% of total), calcite (8.8%) and iron pyrites nodules (4.7%), which may be directly linked to the Chalk formation of the downs. They may represent usable raw material, or be present on site as a result of the spread of material by natural processes. Similarly, the beach pebbles (2%) may have arrived on site as a result of transportation of other marine resources to the site from the nearby coast (e.g. shellfish, fish, seaweed, flint, etc.) or may be residual in the deposits or reworked material. Gypsum (4.1%) and shale (2%) occur in the Purbeck Beds (Upper Jurassic) along the Wealden anticline crest between Battle and Heathfield; possibly the Selmeston site material derives from these beds. One of the shale fragments, however, has been traded in from Kimmeridge (Dorset).

One stone object is illustrated (Fig.9).

34. Mica-schist whetstone. Site B, Trench 13.

Animal Bones (by Owen Bedwin and Caroline Cartwright)

The animal bone fragments from the excavated trenches at Selmeston, with the exception of Trench 3, Context 1b, do not generally constitute well stratified groups, but are scattered representations. Animals important in farming economies (whatever the period) are well represented, i.e. *Bos, Ovis* and *Sus,* and there is one *Gallus* tibiotarsus. Trench 3, Context 1b, contained a (presumed) single burial of *Canis,* possibly similar to that found in Trench 1 in 1978 (O'Connor in Drewett 1979, 244). Context 9 in Trench 3 contained a further nine *Canis* vertebrae. The condition of the bone fragments was generally poor and many small friable unidentifiable bone splinters and fragments were also present. A catalogue of the animal bones is on microfiche (pp. 49–50).

Marine Molluscs (by Caroline Cartwright)

The overall total of marine molluscs from the excavated trenches at Selmeston is not large (see Table 33: microfiche, p. 51), but the species represented mostly constitute a valuable supplement to the human diet, i.e. oysters and scallops. With the addition of one specimen from the 1978 excavations already published, in Trench 1 (Cartwright in Drewett 1979) there are seven oysters represented (minimum number), two scallops (minimum number), and one small limpet. Selmeston is within fairly easy reach of the coast, from Newhaven to Birling Gap; some marine resources may derive from here, or from further afield through trade and market exchange.

Charcoal (by Caroline Cartwright)

With the exception of Trench 2, Context 13, most excavated trenches at Selmeston contained small scatters of charcoal fragments rather than apparent concentrations. Most of the fragments were fairly small though adequately preserved for identification purposes. Totals of species in individual trenches and combined for Selmeston as a whole can be seen in Tables 34–42 (microfiche, pp. 52–6).

Almost all the trenches revealed a high percentage of oak (*Quercus* sp.) charcoal; the combined trench total for Selmeston is 77.3% oak charcoal (by weight in grams). Next in frequency is hazel (*Corylus* sp.) whose combined total reaches 13.8%. Hawthorn (*Crataegus* sp.) accounts for 7.6%, and there are small isolated occurrences of beech (*Fagus* sp.) and birch (*Betula* sp.) (the latter two may be modern contamination). Amongst individual trenches Trench 1 and Trench 2, A–F contain the highest proportion of oak, and Trench 1 the highest proportion of hazel. All other charcoal scatters are 10 g. or less and represent the five above-mentioned species.

As the fragments are generally small it remains unclear what the charcoal represents in terms of resource material. In Trench 2, Context 13 the 41 g. of *Quercus* sp. may indicate the remains of fuel. The use of timber and brushwood for domestic, building and artefactural purposes seems likely. Oak is a good all-purpose timber for fuel, building and artefacts; hazel has many uses in composite tool-making and in fencing and hedging, for which hawthorn is equally suitable. Acorns from oaks and nuts from hazel trees are obvious supplements to the human diet. Although acorns are currently considered chiefly as animal fodder, suitably prepared they may provide a human food source in times of shortage. The protein yield weight of hazelnuts when compared with many more obvious protein-rich foodstuffs (e.g. eggs) is considerable. Trench G contained carbonized hazelnut fragments. Hawthorn berries are also useful for many culinary purposes, and young hawthorn leaf buds and shoots may be eaten raw or cooked. Clark records the investigation of charcoal samples from Mesolithic contexts during the 1933 excavations in the Selmeston sandpit; oak, hazel (including fragmentary nutshells) and hawthorn were present (Maby in Clark 1934). Maby also identified oak and hawthorn charcoal during excavations into what were termed at the time 'Late Bronze Age ditches' at Selmeston in 1936–7 (Curwen & Curwen 1938).

The present-day vegetation in the sandpit area and fringing the trackway relects much of that in the archaeo-

logical record as outlined above; oak, hazel and hawthorn are common. The sandpit area also supports some ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), field maple (*Acer campestre*), blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) and other *Prunus* species, elder (*Sambucus nigra*), willows (*Salix* sp.), and elm (*Ulmus* sp.). Rose (*Rosa* sp.) occurs in the hedges alongside the trackway to the Green House.

Carbonized Seeds (by Pat Hinton)

Site A, Trench 2, Context 13 yielded five grains of hulled barley (*Hordeum vulgare*).

FIELDWALKING IN SELMESTON PARISH, 1982–3 (by Paul Garwood)

During the course of the Cuckmere Valley fieldwalking programme, 1982–3, directed by the writer (Garwood 1984), six fields in the parish of Selmeston were surveyed. Two flintwork sites were defined, together with other scatters of artefacts.

The overall intention of the fieldwalking programme was to contribute to an understanding of the nature and distribution of settlement and exploitation patterns over time in a regional context, in this case a geomorphologically typical Sussex river valley cutting the Chalk downland. It is important that any use of the fieldwalking data takes into account the approach of the project as a whole, and particularly the objectives, assumptions and methodology of the fieldwalking programme itself. These aspects will have influenced the form and extent of data recovery, analysis and interpretation (for a full account of these see Garwood 1984).

The fieldwalking technique employed was linewalking parallel traverses set out at 30-metre intervals from a baseline, and collecting artefacts for each 30-metre section of these lines. Consequently it was possible to plot the finds distribution as a grid, and thereby define concentrations of artefacts proportional to their overall distribution in each field. 'Site' definition is inevitably highly subjective and particular to each field, given the problems with artefact identification and dating and biases in recovery inherent in this type of fieldwork. Thus the results described below are open to re-analysis and re-interpretation.

Fieldwalking in Selmeston parish was therefore part of a far wider scheme, and especially related to the sampling strategy adopted, that of examining the range of geological deposit and topography within defined environmental 'zones' traversed by the river system. The area around Selmeston, for example, is typified by an open rolling landscape with isolated prominences and scattered woodland, with a complex underlying geology giving rise to variable drainage conditions (Lower Greensand, Gault and Weald clays, and superimposed head and alluvial deposits). In total approximately 38.2 ha. were fieldwalked within the parish, entirely to the east and north-east of the village. Full details of each field, artefacts recovered, and their basic interpretation are given below.

Ordnance Survey Field No. 3000 (TQ 514072) (4.4 ha.)

Total number of diagnostic finds 129: 79 struck flints (see above for a detailed analysis); 46 pre-modern pottery sherds; four fragments of foreign stone. The field is located on land sloping down northwards from Selmeston sandpits (see Fig.2). The distribution of struck flints (Cuckmere fieldwalking programme Site 24) consisted of clusters of flintwork across the northern half of the field and upslope in the southernmost corner. The pre-modern pottery has a similar distribution to that of the flintwork, which might suggest that both artefact categories were subject to the same depositional processes, that is through natural soil movement downslope. The pottery is almost exclusively medieval, though there is a single Roman East Sussex ware sherd and a possible sherd of Saxon coarse ware. The date range of the medieval pottery argues against a discrete period assemblage, and the presence of this material is perhaps the outcome of manuring practice.

Field No. 5452 (TQ 515075) (4.88 ha.)

Total number of diagnostic finds 71: 52 struck flints; 18 pre-modern pottery sherds; 1 fragment of foreign stone. Two concentrations of flintwork were defined approximately 100 metres apart on level ground, divided by a small stream; this was originally either two separate sites or a single large one subsequently bisected by the stream. It was designated Cuckmere fieldwalking programme Site 25. The assemblage includes a number of blade and flake cores, and several tools, predominantly of fine black and grey flint. Although none of the material is specifically datable by type, its overall character (e.g. with blade cores and fine flaking) suggests a probable Mesolithic date. The pre-modern pottery is divided clearly into two periods: early medieval Saxo-Norman ware (including a possible Saxon coarse ware sherd) and post-medieval. The pottery is evenly scattered across the field and probably derived from manuring practice.

Field No. 0059 (TQ 519075) (6.83 ha.)

Total number of diagnostic finds 32: 22 struck flints;

nine pre-modern pottery sherds; one fragment of foreign stone. The flintwork is not distinctly clustered in any way, though most common on the lower slope and level ground. It includes a single Mesolithic item. The limited pottery is widely scattered and ranges through medieval and post-medieval periods. Other than indicating probable activity in the area of the field during those periods the material is uninformative.

Field No. 0073 (TQ 522077) (11.84 ha.)
Total number of diagnostic finds 74: 36 struck flints; 37 pre-modern pottery sherds; one fragment of foreign stone. The flintwork is scattered except for a cluster corresponding to the focus of the pottery distribution. The flint is mostly debitage and consistently small in size, largely of black and brown flint, perhaps Mesolithic. The pottery, concentrated by the field edge close to existing farm outbuildings, is mainly medieval. The interpretation of this material is difficult, and the associated flintwork and pottery clusters possibly reflect the same depositional process.

Field No. 4651 (TQ 525075) (4.7 ha.)
Total number of diagnostic finds 15: five struck flints; ten pre-modern pottery sherds. The limited number of artefacts were widely scattered across the field. The pottery is mostly medieval and probably derived from manuring.

Field No. 5475 (TQ 526077) (5.59 ha.)
Total number of diagnostic finds 16: 13 struck flints; three pre-modern pottery sherds. The flintwork occurs across the western half of the field without any clustering, and consists of debitage.

The artefacts collected during the fieldwalking programme, together with a complete programme archive, are stored and available for study at Barbican House Museum, Lewes.

SELMESTON CHURCH (by Helen Clarke and Peter E. Leach)

The present parish church of Selmeston dates from 1867 and replaces an earlier church which was demolished in the previous year. A number of watercolours of the church before demolition, showing the exterior from the north-west (signed by a Miss Latham) and the exterior from the south-east and three interiors (all by the same unknown hand, two dated 22 February 1866) suggest that the modern church closely follows its predecessor in plan and architectural details. These watercolours are preserved at the church.

As shown in Fig.10, the church today consists of chancel, nave, south aisle separated from the nave by a wooden arcade of two bays, porch and vestry. The irregularity of plan, particularly noticeable in the chancel which is distinctly canted to the north, suggests that the 1867 rebuild followed the original pattern and may even have used the old foundations, although none are now visible. The vestry displays a slightly different type of flintwork on its external walls from that of the rest of the church and may be a post-1867 addition. The 19th-century watercolours indicate that it did not form part of the earlier church.

Some details of the earlier church which differ from those in the rebuilt structure may be seen from the watercolours. There were triple lancet windows lighting the east end of the chancel, a small round-headed window high in its south wall and another possibly similar window in the north wall. There may have been a doorway west of this, for a doorway seems to be depicted on one of the interior views but not on the external view from the north-west. A square-headed, twin-light window in the south wall of the chancel by the priest's stall is repeated at the east end of the south aisle. The chancel arch also appears to have been lower than that of today, with a flatter profile below the roof tiebeam and the royal arms (G.R.) above. The south arcade, however, appears to be virtually identical with the present one and it is not impossible that some of the timbers were incorporated into the rebuilt church.

Little remains of the earlier church apart from the jambs and arch of the now blocked west doorway and some stones in the west window of the south aisle. The stone altar-top with three consecration crosses inscribed on it must also be of early date, although it is now supported by a timber frame, not the twin-arcaded stone base depicted in the watercolours. Two fragments of worked stone found during 20th-century rebuilding of the lychgate on the north side of the graveyard probably also came from the earlier church. One is a fragment of window tracery with cusping. The other (Fig.10) appears to be a column base with four engaged smaller columns and may be part of the base of an earlier font. The base of the 19th-century font still in use is very similar in design and may well be a copy of the original.

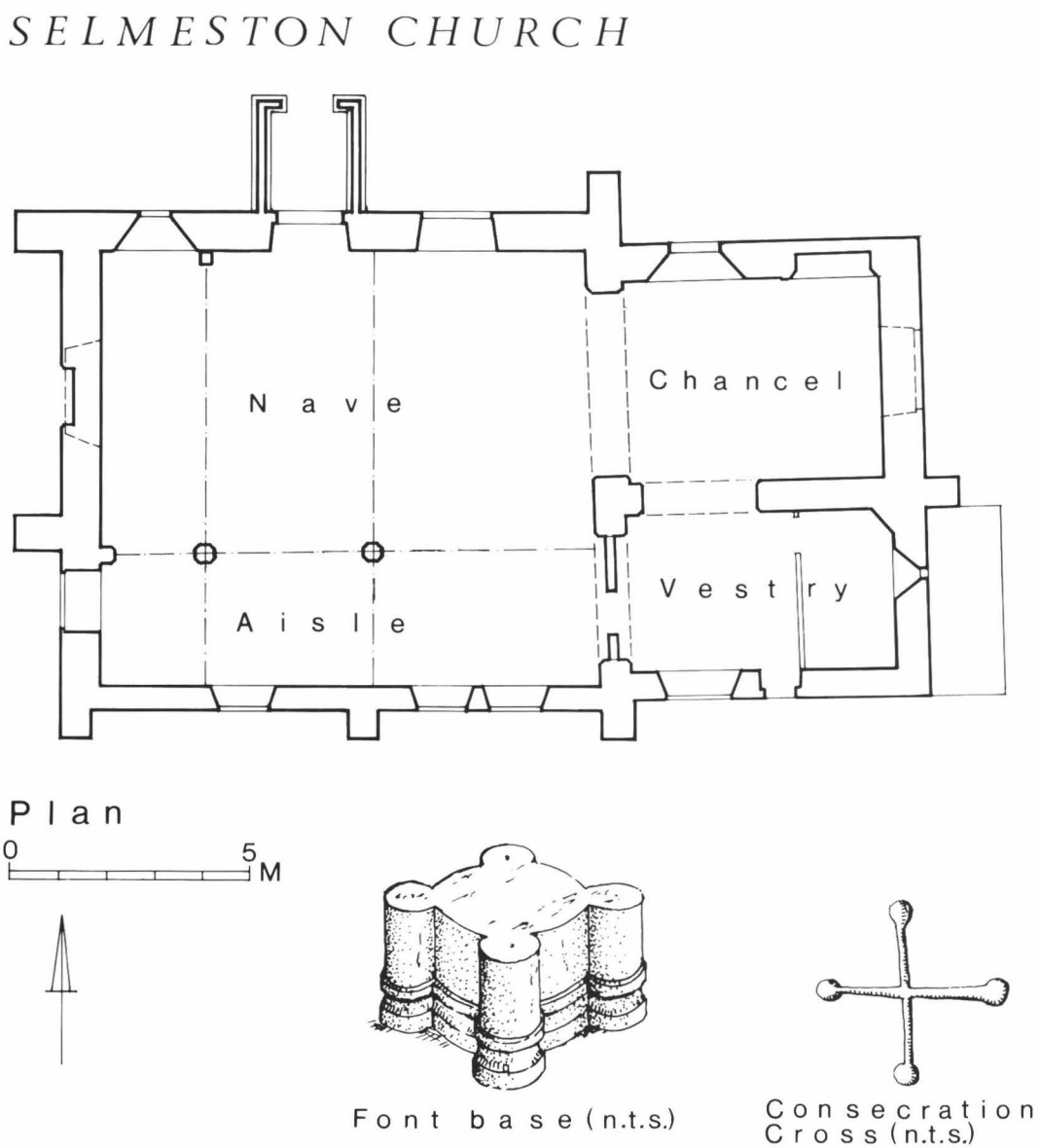

Fig. 10. Selmeston. Plan of church, 1983; the font base and consecration cross are not to scale.

Selmeston is mentioned in Domesday Book as *Sielmestone* (Morris (ed.) 1976, sect. 9,92) and *Selmestone* (Morris (ed.) 1976, sect. 10,53), when it had both a church and a priest. What form that church took is not known, but on the basis of the 19th-century watercolours it is possible to postulate that before restoration the chancel was of Saxon or Norman origin (small round-headed windows in north and south walls) with triple lancet windows inserted in the east wall in the 13th century when the nave (on the evidence of the west doorway) may have been added or altered. The south aisle, porch and buttresses (all with similar external plinths)

may have been contemporaneous additions in the 15th century.

Our thanks are due to the Rev. V. W. House for permission to survey the church and to Mrs. Pike for allowing us to examine the two stone fragments in her possession.

THE GREEN HOUSE, SELMESTON

(by Christopher Whittick)

Documentary Evidence

All the excavations on Sites A and B in this report lay within the area of land which has been attached to the Green House since at least the close of the 16th century. On 5 March 1606 Thomas Gower the elder was admitted to a house and 7 a. of copyhold land late Adams, held of the manor of Ludlay.[1] The court book states that the fine for admission had been paid many years earlier, and indeed in a deposition before the court of the archdeacon of Lewes in May 1605 Gower, who had been born in Framfield *c.* 1538, said that he had lived in Selmeston since 1573.[2] Thomas died and his son Thomas was admitted in June 1608; when entries resume in the court book in 1667 after a gap of 48 years no more is heard of the property.[3] Thomas II was buried at Selmeston in February 1631 and did not devise the house in his will; it probably descended to his son Thomas III.[4] In the hearth tax return of 1662 a Richard Gower was charged for three flues.[5]

In August 1678, Robert Rochester of Ludlay in Selmeston settled a house, barn and 8 a. of land called Gowers on his son Henry, who was about to marry Susan Markwick. With the house were settled five other fields amounting to 43½ a.; the whole was occupied by Richard Hasting.[6] Rochester was the lord of Ludlay manor and a sale to him of one of the copyholds would result in the property's merger into the demesne of the manor and its subsequent disappearance from the court books. Hasting was listed in the 1670 hearth tax but the date of the sale by the Gower family is uncertain; the tax was paid by occupiers, and Richard Gower could have reserved a right of tenancy.[7] The family remained in the parish at least until the burial of a Richard Gower in 1682.[8]

What of the increased acreage mentioned in the settlement? It is possible that the land was first associated with the house in 1678, but the evidence seems to suggest that it had been either owned or leased by the owners of Gowers from an earlier period. The house itself not only lies against the eastern boundary of its original plot; it also faces away from Selmeston village and out over the fields. What is more, the Gower family at least appear to have been substantial yeomen farmers. Thomas I witnessed wills shortly after his arrival in Selmeston, and although he had probably retired from farming had goods worth £12 18*s.* 10*d.* at his death; his son served regularly as churchwarden in the 1610s and 1620s and had an inventory total of £148 17*s.* 10*d.*; his son William married by licence.[9] All these factors suggest that the house was the centre of a larger estate than the small copyhold plot.

What is the probable origin of the extra land? All the additional fields lie east of a line (A–B on Fig.11) which runs through Mays House, a house site to its south, just to the east of the Green House itself, and on into Alciston parish, where it forms the boundary between the open fields of Alciston manor on the west and its demesnes on the east. In Selmeston there is evidence that the line formed a similar boundary; to the west the strips of the open fields, on the east the demesne of Ludlay, indented on its northern edge by the Mays holding (Fig.11). Even on the latter estate, where exchanges during the 15th and purchases in the 16th centuries had almost obliterated the evidence, two strips (C), one a piece of glebe, survived in 1822 to confirm the hypothesis.[10]

In 1691 Henry Rochester conveyed three of the fields (amounting to 22 a.) to John Spence, and the remainder (with the addition of another field) was settled on Henry's grandson Richard Rideout the younger on his marriage to Elizabeth Payne in 1739. The farm, tenanted

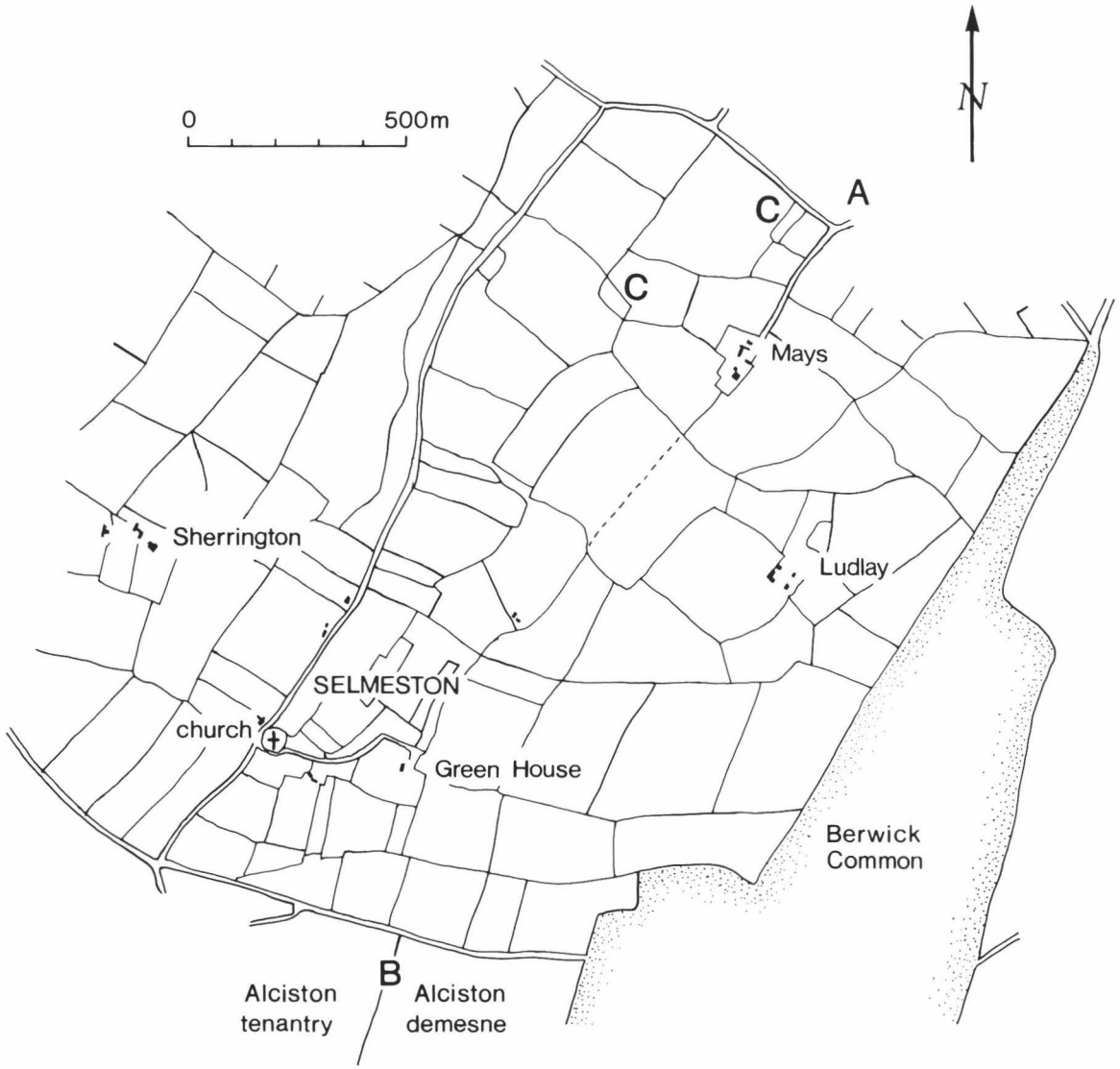

Fig. 11. Selmeston. The environs of the Green House, based on the relevant portions of the Gage archives at E.S.R.O. and E.S.R.O., AMS 3433.

successively by John Acton, John Stephens and George Gasson, descended in the Rideout family until October 1817, when the Revd. Richard Rideout and his assigns in bankruptcy sold it to Henry Hall, Viscount Gage for £4030. George Gasson, who died in July 1808, was probably the last tenant farmer. In 1810 the farm was leased to Trayton Payne, a wealthy Lewes butcher, and it was later occupied with Stonery farm.[11] In 1841 the house was occupied by two families of agricultural labourers.[12]

The Building[13]

The Green House is a timber-framed building of two or three periods. The southern end of the present house is the earliest part and

incorporates an open hall of two almost equal bays with a rear aisle to the west. The hall measures 5.00 x 5.16 metres (6.90 metres including the aisle). At the southern end is a return lean-to which in the second period accommodated a storage area. Originally it may have been part of the hall, since at the upper level there was no division apart from arch-bracing up to the tiebeam. To the north of the hall was a separate room which was probably lofted over. With the exception of a small section of roof, this area was rebuilt during the second period. A low-set bressumer survives in the east wall of the hall's northern bay and there is clear evidence for a high-level bressumer above, both suggesting that the main hall window was divided longitudinally. Some of the plain arcade braces survive in the rear wall. The Period A roof survives and is of side purlin and queenpost construction with at least two original straight windbraces nailed in position. The south terminal is hipped but the design of the northern terminal cannot be deduced from the surviving structure. The entire roof is sooted but only of an intensity to suggest a short life as an open hall. All this evidence is consistent with a building date in the first four decades of the 16th century.

At a later date the Period A north bay was removed and replaced by a hall, 4.12 metres long, with a chamber above; a chimney stack was inserted in the northern bay of the Period A hall. North of the new hall a parlour bay, 4.12 metres long with a chamber above, was also built; the small portion of walling visible from this period is formed of large daub panels. It is likely that the Period B works were carried out at the end of the 16th century.

Early in the 17th century the ceilings of the Period B hall and parlour were raised, the central girder of the parlour supported on a moulded corbel. It is tempting to connect these works with the two bay windows which now adorn the front of the house, although the more northerly of the pair may be a modern insertion and indeed both the bays and the flanking window south of the door may belong to Period B.

Discussion

It seems likely that, during the period of demesne farming, the area immediately surrounding the Green House formed part of the open fields of Ludlay manor, farmed in strips by the villein tenants. When the manorial demesne became available, either for lease or purchase, the original Green House was constructed on the edge of a line which divided the demesne from the tenant land, facing east towards the newly available land. Alternatively, the suspiciously straight western boundary of Berwick Common may point to an unrecorded partition and consequent allocation of the land immediately east of the Green House to the lord of Ludlay manor. The Period A core of the present house, built soon after 1500, may represent this phase or may be a rebuilding of an earlier structure. During the period of owner-occupation by the Gower family, *c.* 1570–1660, the property became known as Gowers. The house was almost doubled in size towards the end of the 16th century and the old-fashioned open hall was floored in. In the early years of the 17th century the prosperous Thomas Gower II added fashionable bay windows to the new range and raised the ceilings. After the purchase of the estate in the 1660s by the lords of Ludlay it was leased to tenant farmers until 1808, when on the tenant's death the land was taken by a non-resident farmer and the house became the home of agricultural labourers, which it remained until the middle of the present century.

CONCLUSIONS

The various pieces of archaeological and historical research described above help to provide a more detailed understanding of settlement at Selmeston from the Mesolithic to the present day. Although settlement is unlikely to have been continuous the location has clearly

been popular at different periods and one of the main reasons for this may have been its situation on the edge of the Lower Greensand formation and consequent access to many springs. Availability of a variety of environments (valley, downland and coastal/marine) is also likely to have been an important factor.

The soil analysis, excavations and fieldwalking projects add to the already fairly large amount of archaeological data from Selmeston concerning the prehistoric periods (Clark 1934; Curwen & Curwen 1938; Arundell 1953; Drewett 1975; Holloway 1979). Unfortunately the recent excavations failed to locate any more of the Mesolithic 'pit-dwellings' investigated by Clark (1934), which it would be particularly interesting to excavate with modern techniques. The archaeological fieldwork has greatly increased the number of recorded Roman finds from Selmeston. The church is located at the junction of two Roman roads (Fig.2) identified by Margary (1956), and a late Roman coin has now been found near the lines of each of these roads. The discovery of small pieces of Roman pottery at Sites A, B and C and generally during fieldwalking indicates that during the Roman period these areas were probably fields and subjected to manuring practices.

The initial examination of the pottery finds from Site D is especially interesting since this site has yielded relatively large and unabraded sherds of Roman pottery, ranging in date from Antonine times to the late 4th century or later. The discovery of a piece of Pevensey ware and a fragment of Roman box-flue tile in two of the Early Saxon graves is interesting, and a detailed analysis of all the pottery from this site may prove informative about the 'continuity' or 'discontinuity' of occupation from the late Roman to the Saxon period. Other Roman discoveries from the vicinity of Selmeston include the presumed villa at Arlington (Rudling 1982, 281–2).

The Early Saxon 'flat cemetery' is the only evidence so far of what must have been an early (5th-century) settlement at Selmeston. The settlement site itself is not known, but from parallels is likely to have been near the cemetery site. The Roman finds mentioned above may indicate that it was established on the site of a late Roman settlement, as with the 5th-century Saxon settlement at Bishopstone (Bell 1977). The implications of the 'relative density' of such 5th-century Saxon sites between the Ouse and the Cuckmere have been discussed elsewhere (Welch 1983). During the middle and/or late Saxon periods settlement may have shifted to the area of the sand quarry. Alternatively the finds from this area may simply be evidence of an expansion of settlement. A more detailed study of the pottery finds from Site D may help to show whether there is continuity of occupation in this area.

The area of Sites A and B appears to have been farmed during the medieval period, and the historical study shows that major changes occured in this locality following the availability for lease or purchase of the manorial demesne.

Contents of Microfiche

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Author: David Rudling, Institute of Archaeology, University of London.

Notes

[1]E(ast) S(ussex) R(ecord) O(ffice), SAS/Acc 907.
[2]W(est) S(ussex) R(ecord) O(ffice), Ep. II/5/7, f. 50.
[3]E.S.R.O., SAS/Acc 907.
[4]W.S.R.O., Ep. II/16/176A (Challen transcript in E.S.R.O. searchroom library); E.S.R.O., W/A 21/81.
[5]P(ublic) R(ecord) O(ffice), E 179/258/16 (microfilm at E.S.R.O., XA 5/2).
[6]E.S.R.O., SAS/C 349.
[7]P.R.O., E 179/191/410 (microfilm at E.S.R.O., XA 5/1).
[8]E.S.R.O., PAR 482/1/1/1.
[9]E.S.R.O., W/A 6–12; W/B 3/90; W.S.R.O., Ep. II/16/176A (as above); E.S.R.O., W/B 6/80; *Suss. Rec. Soc.* **1**, 170.
[10]*The Book of Bartholomew Bolney* (Suss. Rec. Soc. **63**); E.S.R.O., SAS/Acc 929.
[11]E.S.R.O., SAS/C 263–4; SAS/GA 343–57; ELT/Selmeston; LT/Selmeston.
[12]P.R.O., HO 107/1114 (microfilm at E.S.R.O., XA 19/4).
[13]This description is based on an inspection by David Martin.

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