

IRON AGE AND ROMAN LITTLEHAMPTON

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INTRODUCTION

During the post-war period the town of Littlehampton underwent a period of substantial growth, a process which has continued up to the present. During this development a great deal of damage was sustained by the local archaeological heritage. The work of salvaging at least some information was left to a group of local archaeologists, notably Mr G. Cutler and Mr C. F. Blick, without whom the loss of knowledge that occurred would have been a great deal more thorough than it actually was.

Two principal sites were examined: the former Royal Naval Air Station housing estate, where Gosden Road now exists, between 1949–50, and the Wickbourne housing estate from 1950 onwards. Both sites produced evidence for occupation from at least the Iron Age, but were never published.

The finds were stored in Littlehampton Museum, in a dispersed state. What follows is largely based on an unfinished manuscript by Mr Blick, which means that this paper is, to some extent, a work of editorship. Nevertheless the opportunity has been taken to update the report and to add new material. Finally I would like to take the opportunity to dedicate this paper to the memories of George Cutler and Francis Blick without whom our knowledge of ancient settlement in the Littlehampton area would be much the poorer.

THE GOSDEN ROAD VILLA (Fig. 1)

Two plans and a typescript by C. F. Blick survive giving details of this site. The site (TQ 0395 0260) had been bulldozed before Mr Cutler was able to begin work, removing all but intrusive features and wall foundations. The technique used was to plan the visible features and to explore the underlying stratigraphy via a series of trial trenches. At least six were dug in the short time allowed, although unfortunately it is no longer possible to plot their positions or the relationship of trench to trench. The finds are marked, but their numbering and that of the features on the two plans differ. Nevertheless an

attempt has been made to provide a tentative sequence for the site.

PERIOD I

Pit 9 and ditch H both produced pottery of early 1st-millennium B.C. type. The surviving sherds fit well into Cunliffe's (1978, 38) Park Brow tradition, dated to the 6th to 4th centuries B.C., although this is now known to have its origins during the Later Bronze Age. The excavator was of the opinion that ditch H might have been part of a gully surrounding a round-house. Other sites of this date are known nearby (Bedwin 1979, 255; P. Hammond pers. comm.).

PERIOD II

Pit 10 contained Middle Iron Age saucepan pots. This type of vessel is now known to have a long development ranging from the 4th to the 1st centuries B.C. (Champion 1980, 49). Although little remains of these vessels, the decorative style is more in keeping with Cunliffe's (1978, 43) Saint Catherine's Hill group, than with the more local Caburn/Cissbury style. The pit also seems to have contained some grog-tempered sherds of pottery of Cunliffe's (1978, 89–92) Eastern Atrabatic tradition, which might indicate either the residual nature of the deposit or a date in the early to mid 1st century B.C. Ditch J also contained saucepan pottery of 4th- to 1st-century date. This feature had been backfilled with brickearth, and in its eastern stretch domestic debris was sealed by a layer of carbonised grain.

It would appear that this phase probably dates to the Late Iron Age, 100 B.C. onwards, although an earlier start to this stage of occupation, at some point during the Middle Iron Age, is not impossible.

PERIOD III

A large irregularly-shaped pit (Pit 11) produced a quantity of domestic and building refuse. The pit had been dug into ditch J and the dump of rubbish sealed by a layer of brickearth and above this large flints. The fill of this feature consisted of broken

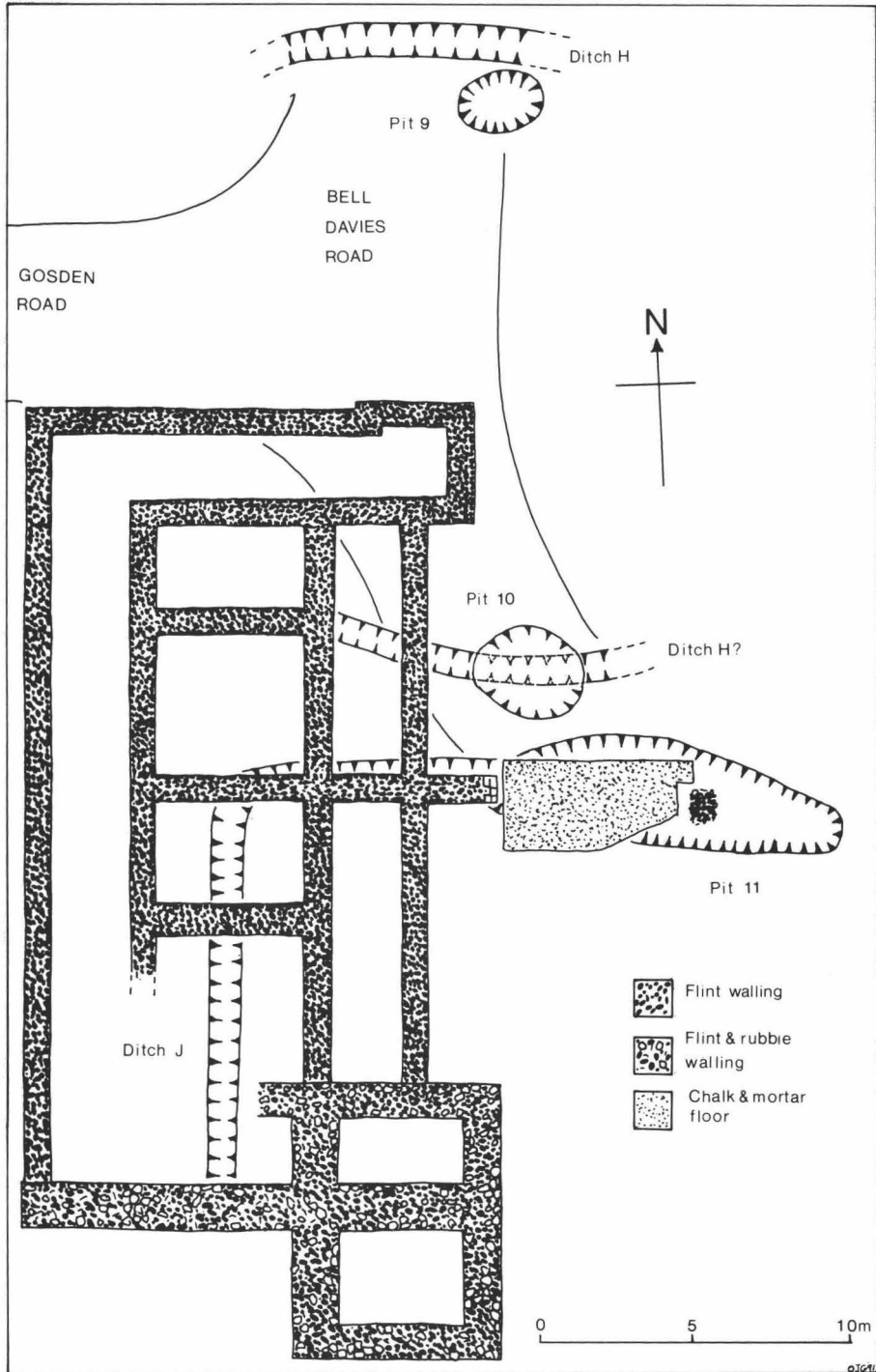


Fig. 1 Gosden Road site.

tiles, large tile and chalk tesserae, shells, iron nails, bronze objects, glass and bone. The Samian contained within the pit is datable to the mid-late 2nd century and none of the other pottery need be much later than this, although earlier types were present. A sherd of Terra Rubra and one of Terra Nigra suggest occupation by at least the mid 1st century.

The nature of the site at this stage is problematic. Only one feature appears to have been excavated and the fill suggests the clearance of building rubble and other debris. This may point to the demolition of a nearby building and the clearance and levelling of the site, possibly for a period of reconstruction. The excavator was of the opinion that the material in Pit 11 resulted from alterations being undertaken in the villa building itself. While this is possible, a fairly early date for this structure would then be feasible. However, it seems unlikely to this writer that the rebuilt villa would be extended straight away over a disturbance such as pit 11, as it did at a later date, or that the rubbish would be disposed of in such close proximity to the building. For my own part it seems preferable to regard the fill of Pit 11 as the remains of an earlier, possibly less substantial farmstead, demolished to make way for the villa building, and later levelled up to produce a cobbled surface.

PERIOD IV

During this period a small masonry building was constructed. This had been badly damaged during development; only the wall footings of mortared flint set in deep V-shaped foundation trenches survived. The structure was probably timber framed on dwarf walls, and may have had a tiled or thatched roof.

The building consisted of a range of four rooms running north–south. A corridor ran along the western side and also on the northern and southern ends. This corridor ended in a wing room on the north-eastern side of the building, and possibly originally also on the south-eastern, although any trace of this had been removed by later rebuilding. A further corridor along the western side completed the basic structure.

There is no direct dating evidence for the construction of the villa, and Pit 11 may or may not provide a *terminus post quem* of uncertain value. However a mid to late 2nd-century date would seem likely.

PERIOD V

The basic villa building later underwent a series of alterations and additions. It is not certain what the exact sequence of alterations was, or indeed if there was more than one phase.

At some point after the completion of the building an east–west wall of flint construction was added which effectively divided the eastern corridor into two sections. This wall projected for a short distance beyond the outer eastern wall of the villa before terminating. Its end seems to have been finished with tiles or stone slabs to produce a quoined effect.

Other modifications were more drastic. The southern end of the villa was demolished, and replaced with a new structure founded on wide footings of flint and rubble set in wide shallow foundation trenches. A southern wing was erected with two small rooms, again with wide footings. The nature of the new southern wall suggests that some structural problems had been encountered which necessitated strengthening of the walls—possibly subsidence. The southern wing room poses a different problem. The wide wall footings could indicate that the whole of this structure was intended to act as a buttress to the southern wall. Another possibility is that there was a considerable vertical load, perhaps a tower structure of timber framed construction.

One final addition is represented by a feature constructed to the east of the projecting wall on the villa's eastern side. All that remained of this was a surface of rammed chalk and mortar with a short stretch of flint and rubble walling surviving on its eastern edge. This probably represents a small building associated with the villa and possibly of the same phase as the southern rebuilding.

The dating of Period V is uncertain. Although there is no direct evidence of post-2nd-century occupation on the site, the various modifications do suggest a considerable period of utilisation, possibly into the 3rd century. The paucity of extensive late settlement (later 3rd and 4th centuries) on the coastal plain is a notable feature of the settlement pattern. A number of causes and explanations have been advanced, from environmental deterioration to external military threats. However other explanations, such as changes in the nature of local society, and possibly even a largely aceramic phase, could also apply.

Thus despite appearances the occupation of the Gosden road villa may have continued until a late date. On the basis of the available evidence no more can be said.

PERIOD VI

The final activity on this site was the robbing of the building's superstructure. Robbing had occurred right down to foundation level, and the lack of any building debris or remains of roofing material suggested that the rubble had been removed for reuse elsewhere. A few small sherds of 2nd- to early 3rd-century date appeared to seal one of the wall footings. However, this stratigraphic relationship is extremely uncertain, and in any case this pottery could be residual.

A CREMATION BURIAL GROUP FROM GOSDEN ROAD (Fig. 2)

During the same building activity that uncovered the villa, at least one Roman cremation burial was disturbed. This was found during the cutting of a service trench some 76 metres west of the junction of Bell Davies and Gosden Roads at a depth of about 1 metre. Other pottery was observed

in the sides of the trench. In a number of sources 'burials' are mentioned, although Cutler's notes refer only to one. The numbering of the finds still extant in Littlehampton Museum suggests the existence of two burials, and in the absence of contrary information the finds are described here as two groups; although this number should be considered only a guide. The accession number for all these is A1252. Numbers with an asterisk are illustrated.

Group 1

- 1*. Large pear shaped beaker in a sandy grey fabric.
- 2*. Pear shaped beaker in a fine sandy grey fabric with inclusions of black ironstone. Some of these are 'smeared' in a fashion reminiscent of the Rowlands Castle potting tradition. Below the neck the beaker is decorated with horizontal and diagonal burnished streaks.
3. A third vessel belonging to this group, larger in size than the others, contained cremated bone, but was unfortunately broken and discarded before recovery.

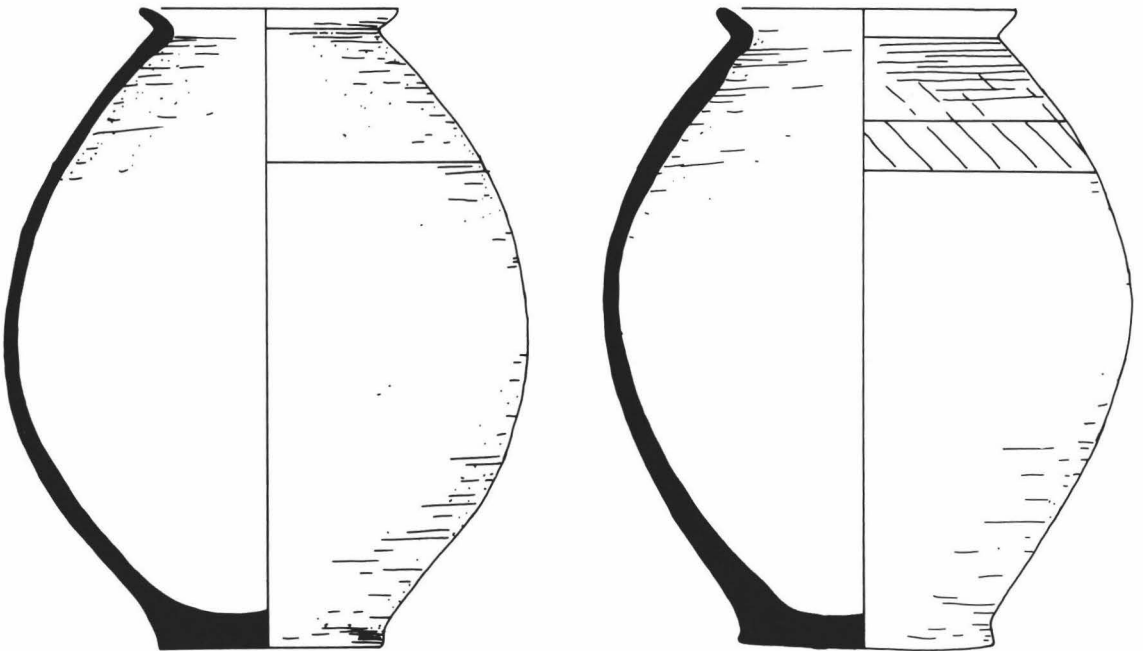


Fig. 2 Cremation burial vessels from Gosden Road.

Group 2

1. A Dr. 33 cup in an East Gaulish fabric with incised line around the outside, a mid-late 2nd-century product.
2. A Dr. 36 dish in a Lezoux fabric, with barbotine decoration around the rim. A mid-late 2nd-century product.

EXCAVATIONS ON THE WICKBOURNE ESTATE (Fig. 3)

During the construction of the Wickbourne Estate in the late 1940s and early 1950s a large number of archaeological features were uncovered. Rescue excavations in the area of Wick Farm Road (TQ 0238 0278) revealed a series of pits and enclosures dating from the 6th century B.C. to the 2nd century A.D. Recording and excavation was carried out in areas where topsoil stripping had occurred and a number of sections were dug across some of the larger enclosure ditches.

PERIOD I

Seven large pits were found. Pits 1 (Fig. 4, Section 4) and 2 and 4–6 were oval in plan and about 1 metre deep. These had been backfilled with domestic refuse, and from the numerous burnt horizons and hearths may have been used to burn rubbish or possibly for some industrial activity. A quantity of carbonised grain (seven bushels from the lowest horizon) was recovered from these layers (Arthur 1954; 1957). Pits 2–5 and 7 were subrectangular in plan and seem to have produced no indications of burning.

Three concentrations of burnt flint were found in association with the pits. Two of these were adjacent to Pits 1 and 6. It is conceivable that they may have been connected with the evidence of burning in the latter, possibly as part of some industrial process.

Ditch A (Fig. 4, Section 1) was a shallow feature to the south and west of the pit groups. It was 60 cm. wide and some 30 cm. in depth and traced an irregular course southward for at least 24 metres. The fill of this feature again produced evidence of burning where it was adjacent to Pit 1. This may indicate the contemporaneous nature of these two features. However, it was noticed that the ditch was at one point truncated by Pit 3, suggesting that the activity in this area occurred over an extended period of time.

All these features produced pottery datable to the early 1st millennium B.C., of similar type to Cunliffe's Park Brow/Caesar's Camp group. Traditionally this has been dated to the 6th to 4th centuries B.C. However, it is now apparent that this tradition originates in the later Bronze Age. The ceramics from the Wickbourne features are all undecorated, a characteristic which seems to become common in the Iron Age. This may suggest an earlier date for these particular examples.

PERIOD II

To the east of the cluster of pits another series of features was investigated. This consisted of some five postholes and a larger irregular pit. Blick was of the opinion that these represented part of a structure. While this is possible, the arrangement of the postholes is odd and would produce a strangely triangular shaped building. It may in fact be the case that the arrangement of features here is fortuitous.

The larger feature had been backfilled with domestic refuse including a weaving comb and pottery of Cunliffe's (1978, 43) St Catherine's Hill–Worthy Down group. This suggests a date of between the 4th and 1st centuries B.C.

Pit 3 also produced a few fragments of pottery, largely from one vessel, which seem to belong to this date. No further Middle Iron Age activity was recorded from Wickbourne, and indeed evidence of extensive settlement of this date in the Littlehampton vicinity is slender. However, this apparent lack may simply reflect the lack of fieldwork locally, or the continuation of earlier cultural traditions.

PERIOD III

A watching brief and limited excavation traced the southern and eastern sides of a rectangular enclosure ditch (B) (Fig. 4, Sections 1–3). No entrance was observed and this may have been on the western or northern sides. The southern stretch of the ditch was slightly irregular, having a northward kink about halfway along. The ditch itself was roughly V-shaped and averaged 1.21 metres in depth and 2.43 metres in width. It had been partly backfilled with domestic refuse and dumps of clay and brickearth.

The ceramics contained within the fill have a number of local parallels, particularly at Copse Farm (Bedwin and Holgate 1985) and North

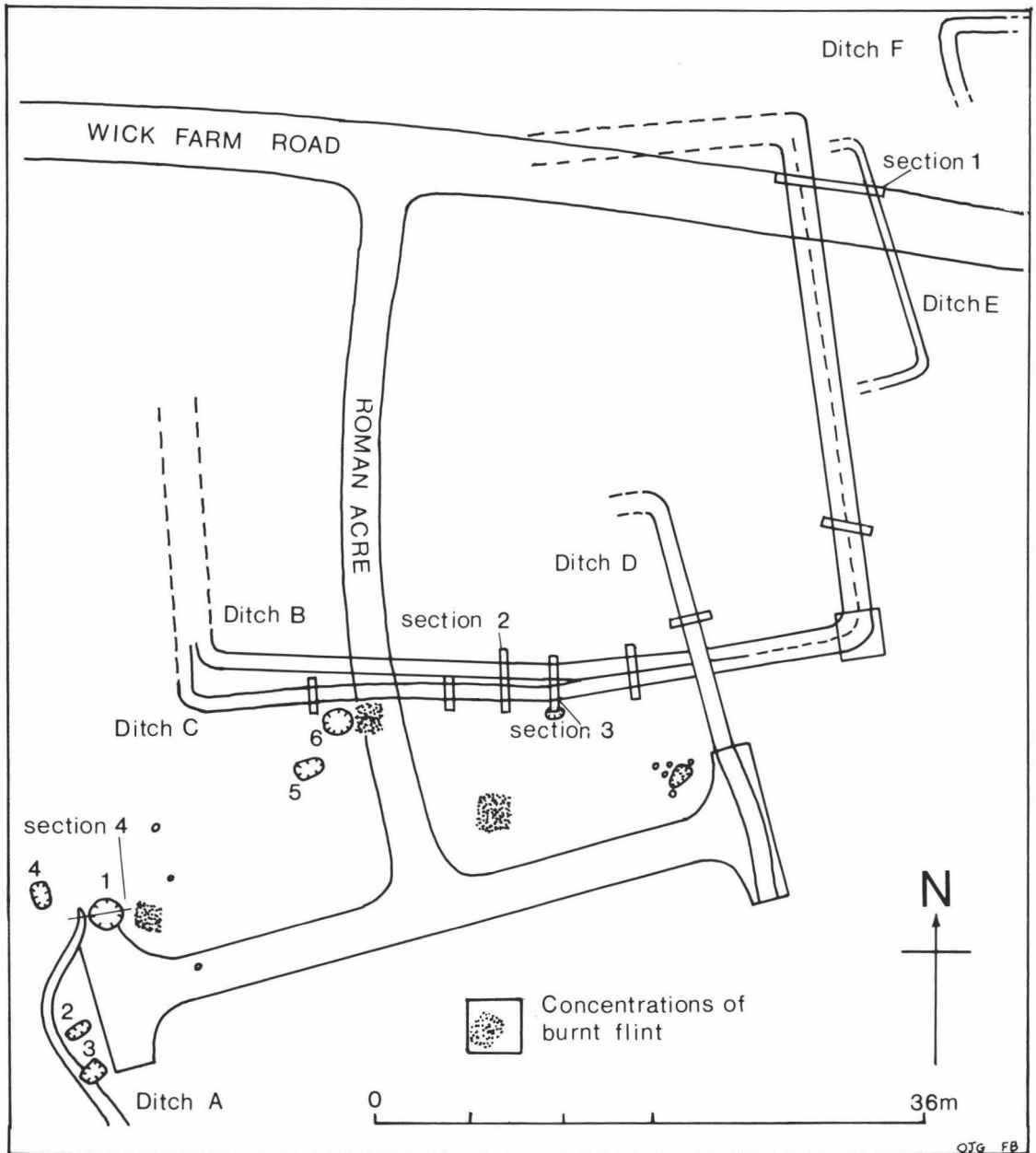


Fig. 3. Wickbourne Estate: archaeological features.

Bersted (Bedwin and Pitts 1978), and also sites such as Lancing Down (Frere 1940; Bedwin 1980). The assemblage from this ditch contains vessels with stylistic similarities to 'Aylesford-Swarling' and 'Southern Atrebatian' traditions but in contrast to the

coastal plain sites to the west of the Arun there are also some examples of the grog tempered 'Eastern Atrebatian' tradition. The pottery assemblage from this ditch suggests a date in the early decades of the 1st century A.D. Among the surviving finds in

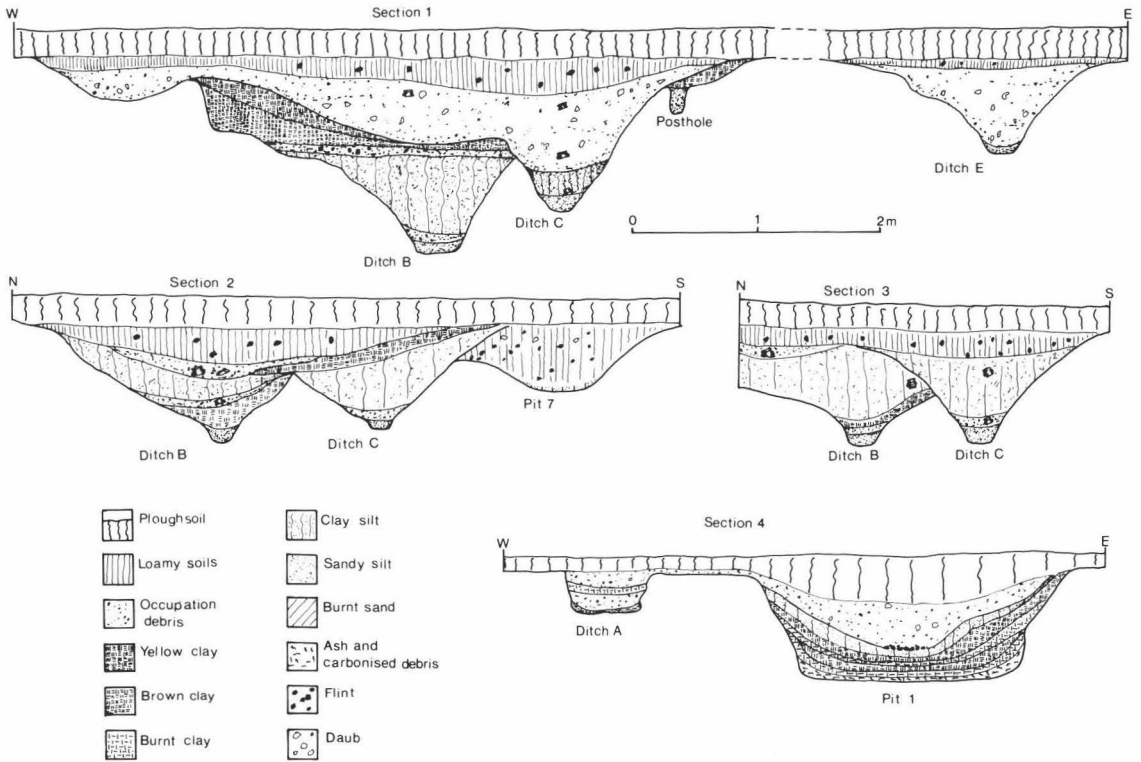


Fig. 4. Wickbourne Estate: sections.

Littlehampton Museum are some sherds of a saucepan pot, which are probably residual. Certainly ceramics of a later date predominate.

It was not possible to excavate within the enclosure so its purpose, whether for example a field boundary or building compound, is unknown. The presence of the refuse within the ditch fill might suggest the latter, but this is far from certain.

PERIOD IV

At some point in the immediate pre-Conquest period the enclosure ditch was recut. The new ditch C delineated roughly the same area as ditch B had done, with some slight discrepancies on the south western side. This new ditch was V-shaped and of roughly the same dimensions as its predecessor.

A number of dumps of occupation debris had been deposited within this feature. The pottery is an interesting assemblage containing a number of

imported Gallo-Belgic vessels, with a possible date range of A.D. 18–45. The lack of any quantity of Samian ware may suggest that the ditch had been infilled before Samian imports reached Sussex in any quantity. The coarse wares tend to support this suggestion. There are certainly no forms which need be later than the mid-late 1st century A.D. The presence of some vessels with clear affinities to the 'Aylesford-Swarling' tradition in the assemblage lends credence to this concept.

Two sherds of Samian ware (Dr. 18/31) were found in the upper deposit of occupation debris in Ditch C. This could be taken to suggest an early 2nd-century date for the close of this deposit. However examination of the ditch profile strongly suggests the existence of another unrecognised feature here. At no other point where excavation occurred did Ditch C have this wide form. It is possible that the Samian is intrusive and may be indicative of limited activity on the site in the 2nd century.

The ceramic assemblage from Ditch C would then seem to span the immediately pre-Conquest and early Roman periods. If this hypothesis is correct then it is possible to postulate continuity of activity from Period III; the first time that this has been observed on the coastal plain. The suggestion of Bedwin and Holgate (1985, 241) that later Iron Age settlement in this area suffered a recession in favour of the Selsey/Chichester *oppidum* might be questioned on the basis of the Wickbourne evidence.

PERIOD V

Activity continued in the area even following the infilling and presumed abandonment of the rectangular enclosure. Three further ditches, D, E, and F, were observed. These ran on a different alignment to the early enclosure and in the case of Ditch B appeared to truncate and so seal the earlier features. Blick suggested that these three features might represent later field boundaries.

Unfortunately Ditch D produced no dating evidence, but the Ditches E and F produced some sherds of New Forest ware, as well as daub, giving a date for their period of use somewhere in the 3rd or 4th centuries. The contemporary nature of all three features must be questioned and it is possible that they might represent successive periods of activity. On the other hand it would be tempting to see them as part of a general reorganisation of field boundaries occurring in the late 2nd or 3rd century associated with the node of late Roman activity in Belloc Road to the north.

EXCAVATIONS IN BELLOC ROAD (Fig. 5)

Housing development to the north-west of the site in Wick Farm Road revealed further Roman features. Two ditches, G and H, possibly delineated field boundaries but were not traced for any great distance.

Ditch G to the south of Belloc Road produced a group of pottery dating to the early-mid 3rd century (see below). Although its full extent was not determined the western stretch was observed to run for 24 metres before making a turn southward. Ditch H, now under the junction of Belloc and Clun Roads, does not appear to have produced any closely datable finds.

In addition to the boundary ditches a series of three corn drying ovens and associated features were found. Oven 1 was found 11 metres to the north east of ditch G. It appeared to be of a double-flued type with a straight and L-shaped flue leading out from a firing chamber. Construction was simple with the oven being dug directly into the brickearth. No evidence remained to suggest the nature of a firing chamber.

The ceramics from Oven 1 formed a fairly coherent group which permitted analysis. This suggested a date of c. A.D. 280–350 (M. Lyne pers. comm.), making this feature later still broadly contemporary with ditch G.

Oven 2 was situated 152 metres to the west of Oven 1, and south east of Ditch F. Again this was of simple construction with a single flue, and possibly a T-cross flue. The main flue had been fired red and it is possible that it had been lined with clay. Equally however, the brickearth subsoil into which the cut for the oven was dug would also react in this fashion. The section seems to suggest that the oven may have been deliberately dismantled and possibly used for some industrial process. The datable finds were few. However, a BB1 jar and a beaded and flanged bowl suggest a date in the 3rd or 4th centuries.

To the north west of Oven 2 an area of different soil colour, roughly square and measuring approximately 2.8 by 2.7 metres, seemed to indicate an activity area or possibly a building. This feature appears to have had a slightly sunken bottom and a raised area 80 cm. by 1 metre on its north eastern side. The fill contained the fragments of a Rowlands Castle finger-impression storage jar, which has a wide chronological range. Also found here was a fragmentary millstone with clear indications of having had a mechanical drive.

Oven 3 was found at the northern corner of the junction of Belloc Road and Clun Road. Unfortunately this was destroyed before it could be examined.

A quantity of carbonised grain was found in the corn drying ovens. The results of an examination of this material have already been published (Arthur 1954; 1957).

Two further features, Pits 7 and 8, were found in proximity to Ovens 1 and 2. Although these were excavated they do not appear to have produced any datable finds.

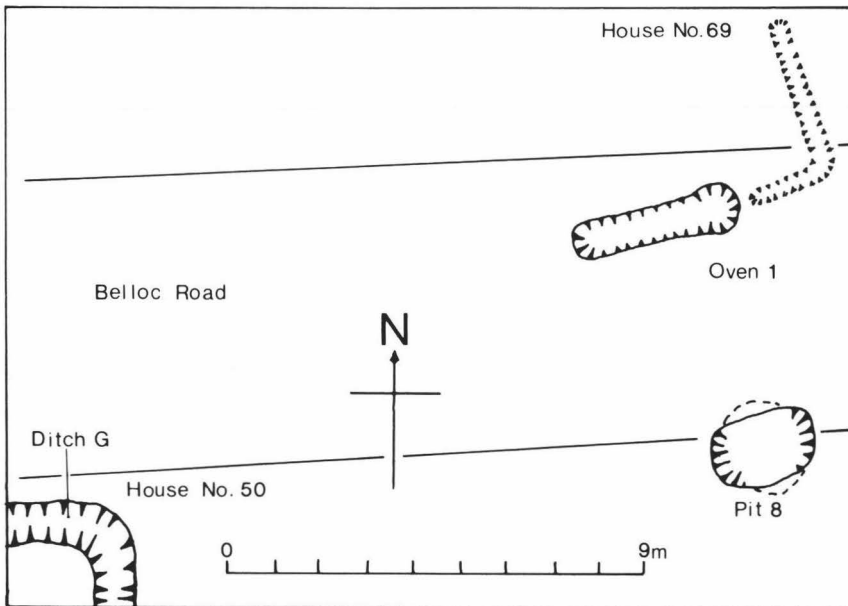
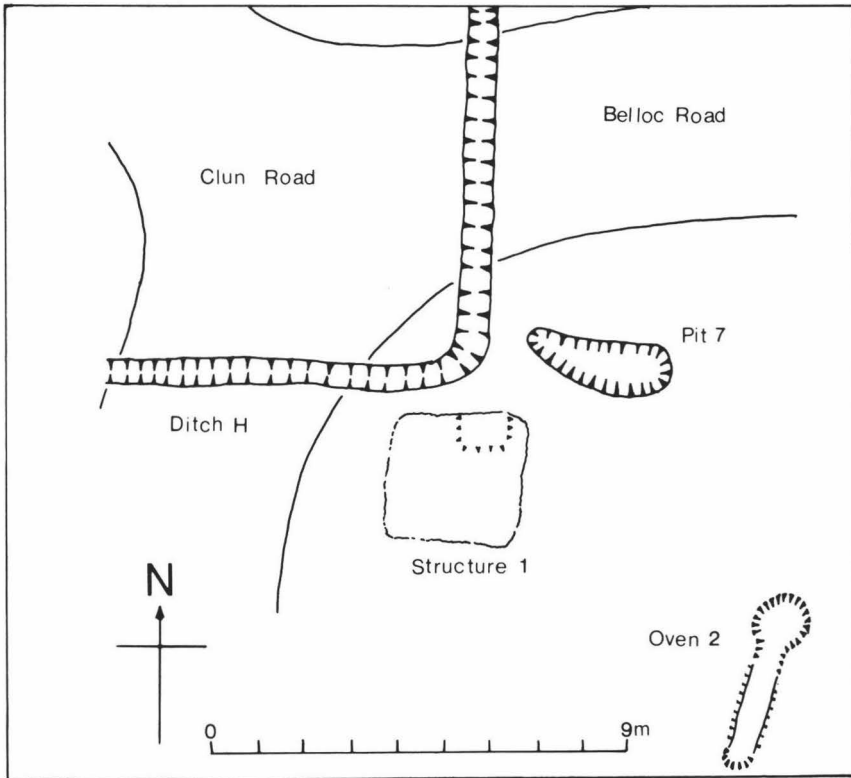


Fig. 5. Belloc Road: location of archaeological features.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The sites described above represent only a small sample of the local later prehistoric and Roman settlement pattern. Salvage work undertaken on recent developments makes it abundantly clear that activity was intensive and settlements widespread. Given the fertility of the coastal plain soils this should not be surprising, and the existence of a landscape as clear and organised as that of today is highly probable. Forest clearance seems to have been an accomplished fact by the dawning of the Bronze Age. Evidence from the Rifes of the coastal plain indicates that the forests and woods once existing on their banks had been removed; certainly substantial quantities of timber are known from the lower colluvial deposits of those few which have been substantially sectioned, but are lacking from higher horizons (B. Wedmore pers. comm.).

The major factor affecting the settlement pattern was undoubtedly sea level change. The Littlehampton area is effectively a marine wetland, highly susceptible to changing base water levels. Settlement tends to concentrate on higher points of land, especially above the 5-metre contour. Marshland was once extensive and the streams and wetlands provided a series of rich environments for the exploitation of local inhabitants.

Earlier work in this area has suggested that settlement in the earlier 1st millennium B.C. was sparse in nature (Bedwin 1983, 35). It is now apparent that this impression has been created by the unsystematic method in which evidence was recovered. A number of settlement sites are well known—at Wickbourne, Gosden Road, and Angmering, both beneath the Villa site and on a new site observed during development in Station Road. Occupation of these settlements seems to span the 6th to 4th centuries B.C. However, it is becoming apparent that the ceramic traditions represented here have an origin within the later Bronze Age (Sue Hamilton pers. comm.). This would provide a longer time span for this phase as well as filling a considerable lacuna in the settlement pattern of the coastal plain (Bedwin 1983, 34–35).

Whilst settlement sites are known, evidence for associated field systems is lacking. This may simply be due to the paucity of finds, making identification difficult. Nevertheless their absence is interesting and may suggest a relatively

unenclosed agricultural system, in itself perhaps a reflection of a lack of depth to social structures. Certainly, the Wickbourne evidence shows clearly that cereal growing was a major activity.

The close proximity of several settlement sites to waterside locations suggests but does not prove the exploitation of the extensive wetland resources then existing. Judging by earlier (Bedwin 1983, 34) and later evidence, proximity to marshland was a major determining factor in the location of settlement.

Settlement continues in the second half of the 1st millennium, but there is a distinct paucity of evidence for intensive occupation. The only certain indications of activity come from Wickbourne and Gosden Road, but even here the traces are slight and may not imply permanent habitation. However, once again the disjointed nature of the archaeological evidence may account for this. Another possibility is the continuation of preceding cultural traditions, perhaps into the 3rd or 2nd centuries B.C.

The later Iron Age appears to represent a period of revival in the intensity of the settlement pattern. A much larger number of nodes of activity are known when compared with the middle centuries of the 1st millennium. Sites are known at Wickbourne; Gosden Road; Toddington (the Watersmead Industrial Park); North Lane, Rustington; and possibly on the Villa site at Angmering. Virtually all the evidence pertaining to these was recovered as the result of salvage operations, so definite statements are not really possible. However, from the limited information it appears that enclosures and extensive field systems were part of this pattern.

At Wickbourne it seems possible to be able to postulate occupation in the early decades of the 1st century A.D. (see above). This would seem to contradict Bedwin and Holgate's (1985, 241) suggestion of a hiatus in rural settlement on the West Sussex coastal plain at this time. It is of course possible that the wide Arun flood plain acted as a social boundary as has been suggested by Cunliffe (1973, 10–11), insulating the eastern parts of Sussex from changes further west, as well as providing a cultural frontier (Cunliffe 1978). This frontier was to some extent permeable, as can be determined from the mutual overlap of ceramic traditions from both banks (Sue Hamilton, pers. comm.).

Waterside locations continued to be important. The southern bank of the Black ditch is notable in this respect, but the enclosure at Wickbourne is also positioned to take advantage of lower lying land.

Initially the Roman conquest had little effect on the settlement and cultural pattern of the Littlehampton area. Both the Wickbourne and Gosden Road sites continued in occupation, and insofar as evidence is available so did other sites. The chief feature of this period is the apparent intensity of activity. Deposits of ceramics and other artefacts in archaeological contexts are noticeably richer than in later centuries. Quantities of early continental imports are known from Wickbourne, Gosden Road, Northbrook College and Angmering. What this material actually represents is problematic; is this the expenditure of wealth by the local aristocracy expressing an interest in Romanisation? Or possibly a material representation of the advantages accruing to the region under the aegis of the Regni?

Field systems are for the first time extensively known, and it is possible to reconstruct a landscape intensively subdivided around a series of farmsteads, including Wickbourne and Gosden Road, but also introducing other sites: Toddington (Watersmead Industrial Park), Courtwick, and the buildings and yard surfaces found on the Beaumont Estate (Blick 1969, 114-5 and information in Littlehampton Museum). It is interesting how few of these sites developed into more elaborate complexes of masonry buildings. Only Gosden Road and further east Northbrook College, eventually saw the erection of 'Villas'.

The utilisation of waterside locations continued. Evidence from the Rustington By-pass construction suggests net fishing in the tributaries of the Arun. It is possible that water milling also occurred in this area. Certainly a substantial deposit of quern- and mechanically-driven millstones were also discovered in a waterside situation, possibly associated with a timber building (information: author). Waterside sites also seem to have provided frequent opportunities to act as refuse tips. At least two sites in the Littlehampton area, and others elsewhere in West Sussex, have produced substantial deposits of ceramics and other domestic rubbish (Pitts 1979, 76).

The frequent watercourses and the Arun in particular may also have acted as highways (Black

1987, 13 and Lyne below). The "Villa" at Angmering was deliberately placed in close proximity to the Black Ditch and possible canalisation works were carried out (information: author). This complex of buildings differs markedly in arrangement from what is known of the other early villas of Sussex, while reflecting their elaboration in at least one of its structures. It is suggested here that far from being a Villa, Angmering was intended to serve as a local centre for this area of the coastal plain. Further work is now urgently required on this important but plough-damaged site.

A marked change in the settlement pattern appears to occur at the end of the 2nd century. The extensive deposition of artefacts of all kinds which characterised the preceding century and a half ceased; the site at Wickbourne may have been abandoned, and the Gosden Road settlement seemed to suffer a similar fate. Other evidence for abandonment can be seen at Angmering (Scott 1938, 22), and the possible settlement at Darlington Nurseries (Rudling 1990, 13). The Villa at Northbrook College shows little sign of intensive occupation after the last decades of the 2nd century, although activity here may continue into the 3rd century (Frere 1983, 333).

Later settlement is difficult to pin down. Industrial reuse of buildings, possibly in conjunction with a small Villa complex, occurred at Angmering in the 3rd century (information: author), and at Wickbourne a new field system was laid out over the top of the Iron Age and early Roman enclosure, also during the 3rd century. This appears to have been associated with a node of settlement found in Belloc Road to the north. Here corn drying ovens were in use and mechanical milling seem to have been occurring into the 4th century. Beyond this there is only one late 3rd- or 4th-century cremation group from Littlehampton and a scatter of coins and occasional sherds of pottery to indicate that some form of activity was still occurring.

The reasons for this sudden change are still elusive. A change in the social pattern leading to the concentration of land ownership in the hands of a few has been suggested (Rudling 1990, 18). However the centre of such a concentration of wealth is as yet unknown. Another possibility is the well-worn explanation of political instability,

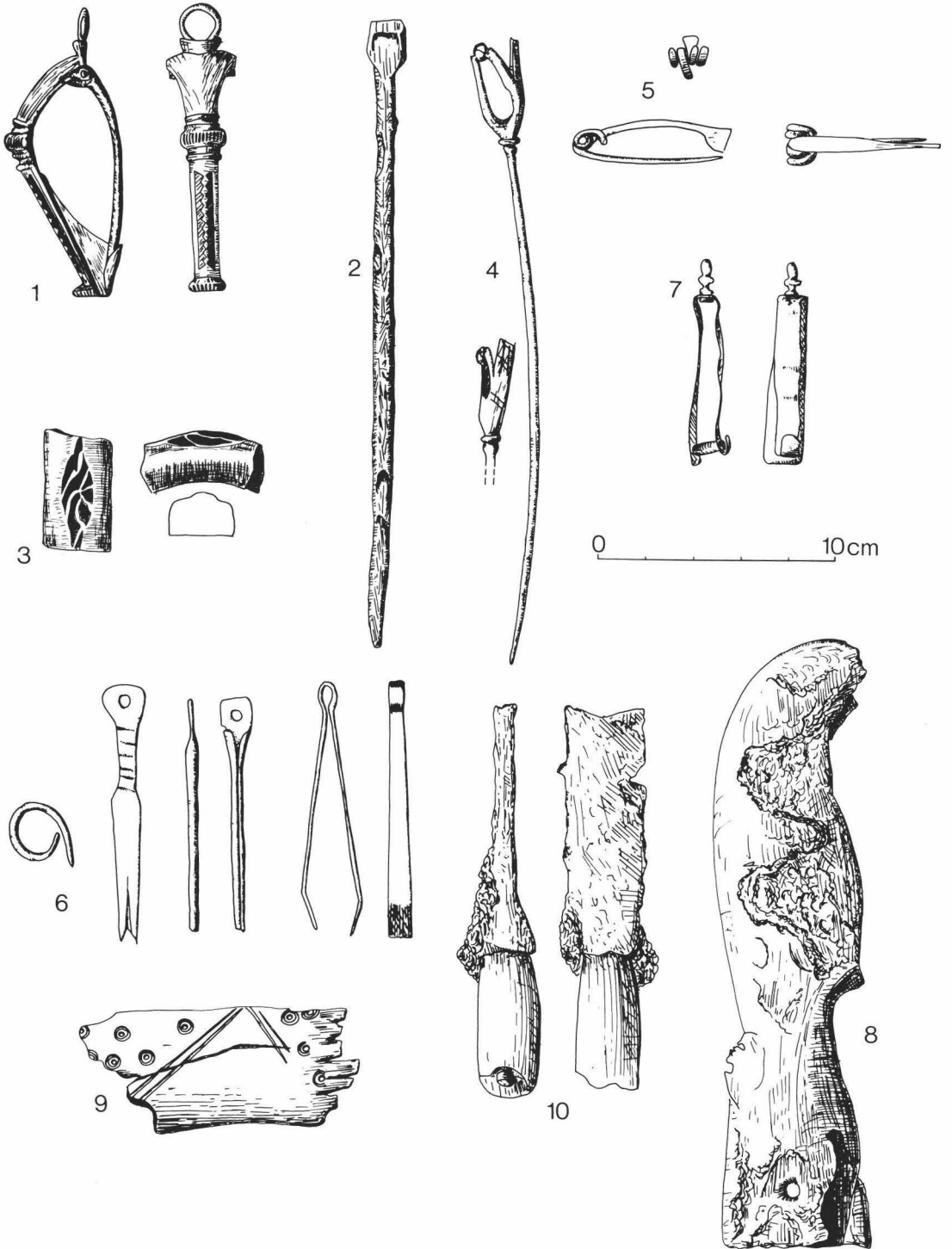


Fig. 6. Small finds: all sites.

although this seems to be somewhat out of favour of late. A further hypothesis is that of environmental deterioration. Sea level rises have been postulated elsewhere in Britain during the 3rd century (Cunliffe 1973, 69–70; Potter 1981, 128) which would certainly have had an adverse effect on the low lying coastal plain. Unfortunately this suggestion is now at variance with the well established sequence of water frontages at London, where transgression seems to have followed regression in or after the mid 4th century. It is interesting though that in an annoyingly inconclusive note C. F. Blick mentions evidence of water-deposited silts overlying part of the Wickbourne settlement (Archive in Littlehampton Museum, D1740).

As far as is known none of the few later Roman sites shows convincing evidence of occupation after the 4th century. In fact the later Saxon and medieval settlement patterns were organised on a markedly different basis, although still affected by the same factors of environmental determination that applied to earlier occupation. Much more work is required before the transition from Roman to Saxon in this area of Sussex is understood.

THE SMALL FINDS (Fig. 6)

A number of the small finds recovered from the excavations at Gosden Road and Wickbourne are no longer extant. Fortunately, drawings were made by Francis Blick and these have been adapted and are used here.

Finds from Gosden Road

1. Bronze trumpet brooch of Collingwood's type Riii. Decorated on leg of the bow with a fixed chain loop cast onto the head. Probably early 2nd century. Pit 11.
2. Iron stylus. Pit 11.
3. Fragment of a green glass bangle or handle, decorated with applied blue and white glass. Pit 11.
4. Tinned bronze pin with a head in the form of a stylised human (right) hand holding a ring. Possibly originally part of a pair? Pit 11.
5. Bronze fibula of Collingwood's type A2. Pit 11.
6. Set of bronze manicure instruments, tweezers, nail cleaner, and ear pick, with a bronze suspension loop. Pit 11.
7. Bronze object, possibly a case or container. Fastened at one end with an iron rivet. Bronze attachment affixed to one end. Originally another item, now missing, may have pivoted on the iron rivet. Pit 11.

Finds from Wickbourne

8. Iron bill hook, with a socket for a haft and pierced for fixing with a nail. From Period II "structure".
9. Bone weaving comb with six teeth. Decorated with a series of concentric circles and scored lines. From Period II "structure".
10. Small tanged iron knife with a bone handle. From Ditch G, Belloc Road.

THE QUERNSTONES (Fig. 7)

The following report incorporates comments made by Dr John Cooper of the Booth Museum, Brighton.

1. A907, fragmentary saddle quern, in Lodsworth green sandstone. Iron Age from Pit 1, found with a grinding stone. Wick Farm Road.
2. A988, fragmentary lower rotary quernstone in Lodsworth green sandstone, reused as a saddle quern or mortar, late 1st-century B.C. from Ditch B. Wick Farm Road.
3. A993, fragmentary lower rotary quernstone in Lodsworth green sandstone, reused as a saddle quern or mortar. Wick Farm Road, unstratified.
4. A989, fragmentary upper rotary quernstone with hopper in Lodsworth green sandstone. Unstratified from Wick Farm Road but a 2nd- to 4th-century A.D. type.

The following stones are all of a size to warrant questioning the nature of the techniques used to turn them. At least one shows definite signs of having had a more complicated drive than those listed above. The others are very sizeable but being fragmentary or lower stones show no features which would allow reconstruction of the drive mechanism. Possible forms of locomotion include human, water or animal power. Whilst the Arun is

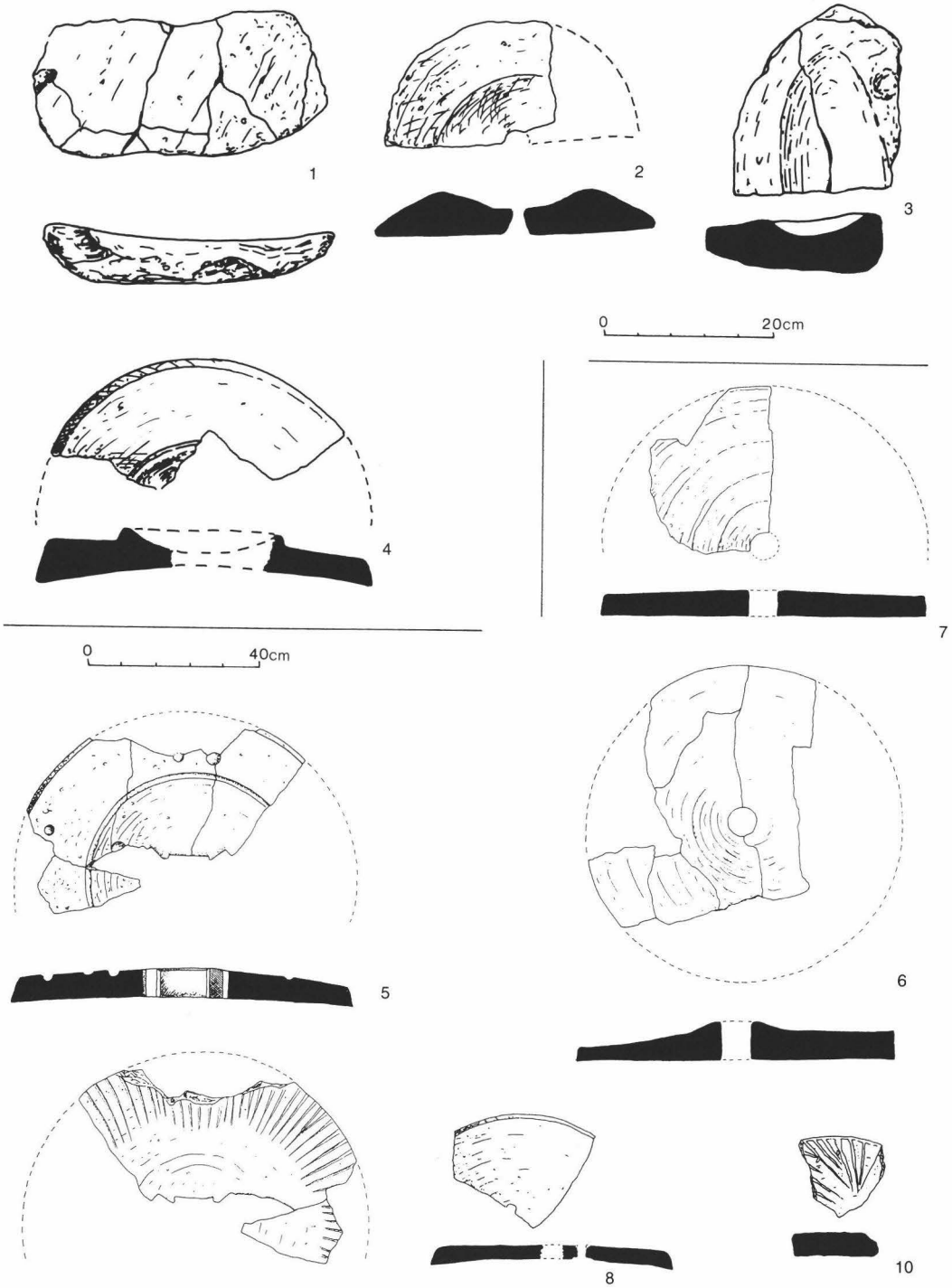


Fig. 7. Quernstones: all sites.

nearby it seems unlikely that the stones would have been moved back into the site from a waterside location. Locomotion by human or animal power, with a mechanical drive, contends strongly here. Moritz (1958, 122 ff) has suggested several possible arrangements for such facilities.

5. A990, large fragmentary upper stone in Lodsworth green sandstone. A square central socket and dovetailed cutaways to accommodate a rynd suggest a mechanical drive. The underside is furrowed and depressions and grooves on the upper surface may be associated with the drive mechanism. From Structure 1, Belloc Road, and probably later Roman in date.
6. A1000, fragmentary lower stone in a sandstone with much iron staining. Found in Oven 1, Belloc Road, late 3rd to mid 4th century in date.
7. A991, fragmentary rotary lower stone in Lodsworth green sandstone. Unstratified from Wick Farm Road.
8. A984, fragmentary rotary upper stone in a green sandstone, possibly from Lodsworth. The grinding surface is very worn and the remains of furrowing can be seen on the edge of the stone. Oven 1 or 2, Belloc Road.
9. A998, 1 fragment or rotary lowerstone in Lodsworth green sandstone. From Oven 1, Belloc Road, late 3rd- to mid 4th-century date. Not illustrated, 500 mm. in diameter and 45 mm. thick.
10. A999, 1 fragment of a rotary upperstone possibly in Lodsworth green sandstone with a furrowed underside. From Oven 1 or 2, Belloc Road.

THE POTTERY

A large quantity of pottery was recovered from the rescue excavations of the 1950s. For the reasons outlined above much of this is now effectively unstratified, and most of the identifiable groups that do remain may not be complete. Detailed discussion of the ceramics is therefore limited to two apparently intact later Roman groups from Belloc Road. The remainder of the Iron Age and early Roman material from Gosden Road and Wickbourne, a substantial body of material, is not in a state to permit a similar examination; consequently a microfiche catalogue of the diagnostic pottery is provided.

TWO LATE ROMAN POTTERY ASSEMBLAGES FROM BELLOC ROAD (by M. A. B. Lyne)

There are two significant 3rd- to 4th-century pottery assemblages surviving from the Belloc Road site. The assemblage analyses which follow use the estimated vessel equivalent or EVE method (Orton 1975) based on percentages of vessel rims surviving as per vessel type and fabric. Each of the two tables has vessel types tabulated horizontally and fabrics vertically. The first part of each table lists coarse ware rim percentages per fabric and form converted into percentages of total coarse ware. The coarse ware total is then shown as a percentage of all pottery in its respective group. The second part of each table is devoted to fine wares with their percentages shown as of all pottery in the group.

Both of the assemblages are rather small and have probably suffered some material loss since their discovery. Despite these drawbacks, the almost total lack of published late Roman pottery groups from the Sussex Coastal Plain east of Chichester makes detailed analysis worthwhile.

The earlier of the assemblages is that from Ditch G and appears to consist mainly of early-mid 3rd-century material but with some late 1st- and 2nd-century vessel fragments. The extant pottery consists of 153 sherds weighing a total of 4102 grams and representing a minimum of 28 vessels.

The dominant coarse fabric is B.B.1 from the Poole Harbour region of East Dorset. Recent work by the author (Lyne forthcoming) shows the marketing pattern for this ware to differ in character from those of all other Romano-British pottery industries. The pottery is hand-made and has the widest distribution of all Romano-British coarse wares; being found in virtually all parts of the province as well as in Normandy. B.B.1 was the subject of intensive study by Gillam (1970; 1976), Farrar (1973) and Peacock (1973) during the period 1950-1976 and more recently by Bidwell (1977; 1985). The black-fired fabric is heavily tempered with rounded and sub-angular quartz sand with a little shale and varies considerably in coarseness.

During the 3rd century, such wares were being marketed through Chichester in large quantities and probably by sea. The level of this trade was already high by the middle of the century, with the combined coarse pottery assemblages from the

TABLE 1

Fabric	Jars EVE %	Bowls EVE %	Dishes EVE %	Beakers EVE %	Store Jars EVE %	Others EVE %	Total EVE %
BB.1	0.23	0.29	0.27				0.79 42.2
Vectis	0.05						0.05 2.7
Alice Holt	0.06						0.06 3.2
Rowlands Castle	0.15						0.15 8.0
Oxidised sandy			0.05				0.05 2.7
Miscellaneous grey-wares	0.28	0.18		0.31			0.77 41.2
Total coarse wares	0.77 41.2	0.47 25.1	0.32 17.1	0.31 16.6			1.87 45.2
New Forest parchment ware						Mortaria 0.32	0.32 7.7
New Forest colour-coat				0.32			0.32 7.7
Nene Valley colour-coat				0.20			0.20 4.8
Colchester colour-coat				0.51			0.51 12.3
C. G. Samian		0.31	0.47				0.78 18.8
Oxidised sandy						Mortaria 0.14	0.14 3.4
Total all	0.77 18.6	0.78 18.8	0.79 19.1	1.34 32.4		0.46 11.1	4.14

contemporary pits O.40 and P.37 at the Central Girls' School site in Chapel Street (Down 1973, 262) having up to 31.8% of B.B.1. This ware seems to have been marketed in considerably smaller quantities from Chichester into the rural hinterland. Analyses of 3rd-century coarse ware assemblages from Sidlesham, Slindon and Bignor give only 9.6, 10.9 and 8.4% of B.B.1 respectively.

The 42.2% of B.B.1 from Belloc Road Ditch G is even greater than that from the Chichester deposit referred to above and includes three incipient beaded-and-flanged bowls of Gillam's Form 227. There are also rims from two everted-rim cooking pots of earlier 3rd-century type and a straight-sided dish. The assemblage has a date range of c. 220–280 and suggests that there may have been direct B.B.1 marketing by sea to a small port or harbour at the mouth of the Arun. Further east, a similar trading point may have existed at the mouth of the Adur as a small 3rd-century pot group from Pit 32 at Slonk Hill behind Shoreham (Fulford 1978, 127) included a similarly high EVE-generated 46.4% of B.B.1.

A rim sherd from a handmade, sandy grey, black-fired, Vectis ware jar (Tomalin 1987, 30) also came from the ditch and indicates some sort of intercourse with the Isle of Wight. This isolated representative of that industry does not have to be the result of deliberate trade but could have been discarded by a fisherman putting in at the mouth of the river. Vectis ware does not occur in any significant quantities beyond the confines of the Isle of Wight but small amounts found their way into

Chichester, Portchester and other Hampshire coastal sites (Lyne forthcoming). The industry would appear to have ceased production around A.D. 300 although possibly continuing into the early 4th century.

Coarse pottery from two other long-distance sources is also present. The first such source is the Alice Holt/Farnham pottery industry which was situated in the north-west corner of the Weald on the Hampshire/Surrey border and is represented in the ditch assemblage by a hook-rimmed Class 3C jar rim (Lyne and Jefferies 1979). Fine-sanded, self-slipped 3rd-century Alice Holt/Farnham wares are found across much of Sussex although usually in very small quantities traded down the Silchester/Chichester road and along the Greensand way. The pottery assemblages from Kilns 5, 6 and 8 at West Blatchington included several vessels from this source (Norris and Burstow 1952, Plates VI-41 and VII-61, 62).

The Rowlands Castle industry (Hodder 1974), centred north of Havant, supplied Chichester and Sussex west of the Arun with much of its coarse pottery needs during the 2nd and 3rd centuries. The Arun formed something of a barrier to trading but small quantities of the high-fired sandy grey ware are found across the rest of the county as far east as Beddingham villa near Lewes. The Ditch G assemblage contains one solitary cooking-pot rim in the fabric.

The remainder of the coarse pottery (43.9%) comes from a variety of relatively local sources.

Recent work by the author on late Roman pottery assemblages from Sussex sites indicates the presence of a pottery industry or complex of industries of considerable size centred on the coastal plain in the vicinity of the River Adur (Lyne forthcoming). This industrial complex made use of a variety of clays including an iron-free ball-clay which fired white and frequently had a thin, blue-grey firing slip applied to it. Such white-firing clay is not characteristic of the Wealden formations but does occur in thin bands towards the base of the Eocene sequence. These clays were used by the New Forest and Alice Holt grey ware industries in applied decorative slipped bands on their products. Similar Eocene clays outcrop along the Sussex coastal plain as far east as Brighton and the variability of their composition may explain the variety of other fabrics appearing to be associated with this newly discovered industry. Some of the 'Adur Valley' products are very close copies of 3rd- and 4th-century Alice Holt forms, but in different fabrics, and suggest a connection between the two industries.

Although the white ware variant is not represented in the Belloc Road ditch assemblage, one dish fragment present is in an oxidised sandy fabric recognised at West Blatchington, Cissbury and Truleigh Hill and probably produced by the same industry. It is probable that many of the miscellaneous coarse-ware vessels have a similar origin. These latter include two vertical-sided sandy black-fired bowls, one of which has horizontal rilling (Fig. 8.1) and the other, carinated, one burnished diagonal-line decoration on its exterior (Fig. 8.2). They, along with a slack-profiled jar (Fig. 8.3), are of late 1st- to 2nd-century type. The two bowls are in black-fired sandy fabric and are both paralleled at Wiggonholt (Evans 1974, Fig. 12.65 and 67) although not products of the kilns there. The horizontally rilled type also occurs at Newhaven and Angmering (Green 1976 and Wilson 1947).

The fine and specialised wares, which make up an unusually high 54.8% of all the pottery, include a New Forest purple-colour-coated beaker of Fulford's Type 27 and a parchment ware mortarium rim from the same source. Evidence from a number of sites in Hampshire and Sussex indicates that the accepted date of *c.* A.D. 260–70 for the commencement of this industry may be about

twenty years too late (Lyne forthcoming). There is also a rim from a Colchester ware colour-coat beaker which should be earlier than *c.* A.D. 250. A variety of Central Gaulish Samian fragments include a DR.37, a DR.33 and four DR.18/31 dish rims.

The second pottery assemblage is that from the corn-dryer, Oven 1. This, with a total sherd weight of 6269 grams is somewhat larger than that from Ditch G and rim sherds from 41 vessels are present. The character of this assemblage suggests that it dates from sometime between A.D. 270 and 330. The assemblage includes a number of vessels similar both in form and fabric to examples from the West Blatchington corn-dryers, Kilns 5 and 6, which contain pottery which appears to be contemporary with both Belloc Road Ditch G and Oven 1.

The B.B.1 fabric is no longer the predominant one in the oven 1 assemblage; being reduced to a mere 13.9% of the coarse-ware element. A dramatic slump in B.B.1 trading is a feature of early 4th-century assemblages in south-eastern Britain. Layer A1.3 from the upper fills of a drainage ditch sectioned in the 1970 Tower Street, Chichester excavations (Down 1974, Fig. 5.4) had only 13.5% of B.B.1. The B.B.1 forms present in the Oven 1 assemblage consists of an everted-rim cooking-pot, two developed beaded-and-flanged bowls and a small short-rimmed jar (Fig. 8.11). This latter is almost certainly a rubbish survival from the late 2nd or early 3rd century.

The dominant coarse-ware fabric is now the Alice Holt/Farnham one. All of the vessels present, with the exception of a self-slipped Class 5C strainer, are post-A.D. 270 types and include a white-slipped Class 6A dish, two Class 5B bowls and four jars (Fig. 8.8). This industry took over much of the Chichester pottery market from the B.B.1 and Rowlands Castle industries at the beginning of the 4th century, although it is not certain as to whether it was instrumental in or merely a beneficiary of their decline. This take-over of the Chichester coarse-ware market by the Alice Holt industry was just one small part of a general expansion of its trading area during the late 3rd-early 4th-centuries.

A surprise element in the Oven 1 assemblage is the abnormally high Rowlands Castle ware presence. This consists of six cooking-pots (Fig. 8.5) and a

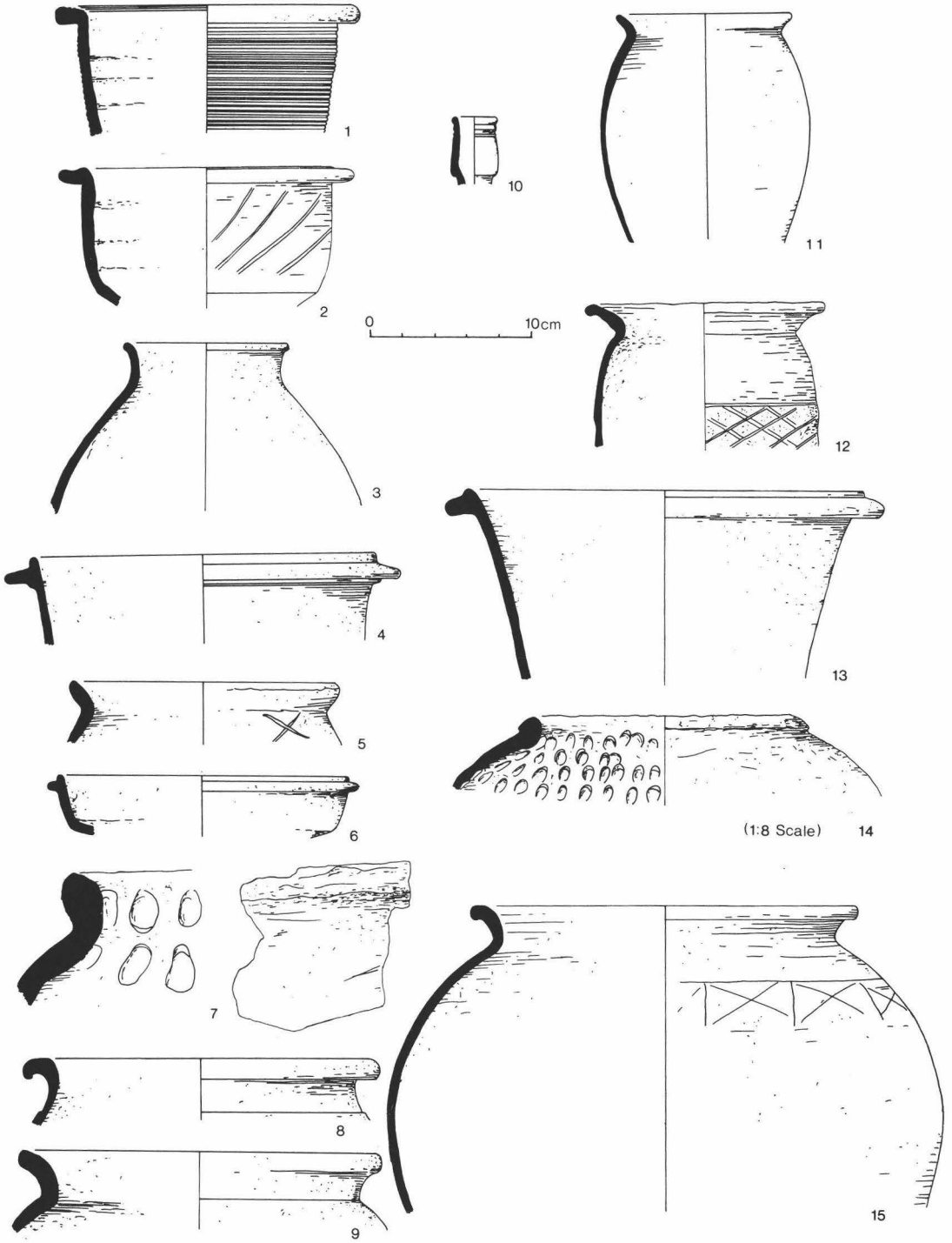


Fig. 8. Late Roman pottery from Belloc Road.

TABLE 2

Fabric	Jars EVE %	Bowls EVE %	Dishes EVE %	Beakers EVE %	Store Jars EVE %	Others EVE %	Total EVE %
BB.1	0.06	0.30		0.22			0.58 13.9
Alice Holt A.D. 270-						Strainer 0.16	0.16 4.1
Alice Holt A.D. 270+	0.50	0.23	0.10				0.83 19.4
Rowlands Castle	0.70				0.07		0.77 18.5
'Adur Valley' sandy oxidised		0.48	0.22		0.08		0.78 18.8
'Adur Valley' white ware	0.07						0.07 1.7
'Adur Valley' ?Vectis ware	0.51						0.51 12.3
gritty blue-grey	0.09						0.09 2.2
Misc. grey	0.39						0.39 9.3
Total coarse	2.32 55.8	1.01 24.3	0.32 7.7	0.22 5.3	0.15 3.6	0.16 3.8	4.18 75.1
New Forest parchment ware						Mortaria 0.10	0.10 1.8
New Forest colour-coat				0.11			0.11 2.0
Oxford white-ware						Mortaria 0.06	0.06 1.1
Oxford colour-coat		0.11					0.11 2.0
Miscellaneous					Bottle 1.00		1.00 18.0
Total all	2.32 41.7	1.12 20.1	0.32 5.8	0.33 6.0	0.15 2.7	1.32 23.7	5.56

storage jar (Fig. 8.7). The Rowlands Castle potteries went into terminal decline around A.D. 300 and the exaggerated presence here, along with the B.B.1 short-rimmed jar, would appear to confirm that there is a considerable 3rd-century element present in the assemblage.

The bulk of the remainder of the pottery is in three fabrics associated with the 'Adur Valley' industry or industries. An oxidised orange, coarse-sanded beaded-and-flanged dish (Fig. 8.6) and a developed beaded-and-flanged bowl in similar fabric (Fig. 8.4) together with a finer orange copy of an Alice Holt storage jar of Lyne and Jefferies type 4-41 make up 18.8% of the coarse pottery and a jar in the grey-fired white fabric described above, 1.7%. The third fabric, a gritty blue-grey one, is also represented by a solitary jar. The remaining 21.6% of the coarse ware consists of miscellaneous, grey, sandy wares; some of which may be of local or 'Adur Valley' origin but possibly including some very late Vectis ware. The vessels which may come from this source are two in number; both jars with squared-off, everted rims (Fig. 8.9, 8.15). They do however have red angular inclusions mixed in with the quartz sand temper, making a Vectis attribution somewhat questionable.

The fine and specialist wares includes a New Forest parchment-ware mortarium and a folded

beaker rim from a pre-A.D. 340 variant of Fulford's Type 27. There is also an Oxfordshire white ware mortarium rim of Young's type M22 and a colour-coated bowl of Type C71 (Young 1977). The former type appears around A.D. 240 but is more common after 300. The bowl is a purely 4th-century type. A complete bottle neck in a grey-cored buff-brown fabric without colour-coat is of uncertain origin (Fig. 8.10).

Apart from the above two assemblages there is a much smaller one from the Oven 2 corn-dryer. This consists of most of a 3rd-century B.B.1 cooking-pot (Fig. 8.12) and a developed beaded-and-flanged bowl in a coarse-sanded and grogged fabric of possible 'Adur Valley' origin (Fig. 8.13).

The accompanying hut yielded the greater part of a Rowlands Castle store jar (Fig. 8.14); very similar to an possibly the same as that from Oven 1. Blick regarded this vessel as a product of the Alice Holt/Farnham kilns but, although the store jars of this type from the two sources are superficially similar, the sandy Rowlands Castle fabric of the Belloc Road example is much harder and has a hackly texture on the breaks.

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