

## VII

# Excavation of Two Palisaded Enclosures at West Whelpington, Northumberland

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Excavation of the deserted medieval and later village at West Whelpington, Northumberland produced evidence of two earlier enclosures, each characteristic of the area. Their only connection with the village was in choice of site, so that it seems appropriate to report separately on them. For the geology and topography of the site the reader is referred to the *Third Report* on the village. The present report contains all that seems significant for the two pre-medieval enclosures; greater detail will be found in the *Full Report*, a monograph completed in 1985 and deposited in typescript in the Newcastle Museum of Antiquities and in the School of History and Archaeology, University of Wales College of Cardiff. That was prepared in draft by Dave Evans and revised and edited by Michael Jarrett, who has also produced this abridged version. It aims to be simply a report, and not a re-appraisal of the prehistory of Northumberland.

Division of an excavation report has produced some problems with unstratified finds and the approach, particularly to worked stone objects, has been arbitrary. Flints, which seem to be chance finds unrelated to any of the settlements, are included in the *Third Report* as are miscellaneous stone objects (discs, balls, spindle-whorls etc.) to which no date can be attached (figs. 110–111). Included here are all the querns found in 1970–76. Most, if not all, are probably to be ascribed to the settlement(s) described in this report.

Two palisaded enclosures lay towards the west end of the outcrop on which the medieval

village stood (fig. 1). Further north and east excavation was less extensive and it is possible that other evidence of pre-medieval occupation has been missed (cf. *Third Report*, fig. 5). The enclosures, which were of unequal size, could not be related to one another stratigraphically, and they might represent one or two settlements of similar or different dates. There were few stratified finds; the unstratified range in date from early in the first millennium B.C. to the 2nd or 3rd century A.D. They were too few to suggest continuous occupation throughout this period.

### 2. THE EXCAVATIONS

*The western enclosure* (Pls VI and VII; fig. 2)  
If the two enclosures represent settlements of different dates then that to the west is likely to be the earlier. Only its eastern half was excavated; the western half survives. As reconstructed on Fig. 2 it would have measured c. 75 × 60 m with an area of about 0.4 ha. The principal feature was a long stretch of palisade trench (slots 93, 129–131, 307–308) apparently skirting the base of the more southerly of two knolls at the west end of the outcrop. The trench was irregular in section, with stones set on edge at intervals as packing for posts. Its depth varied; in places it was almost undetectable. Its fill included fragments of burnt daub bearing impressions of both vertical and horizontal wattles, some as small as 0.03 m in diameter. These were presumably interwoven to form an infill between larger posts.

The palisade-trench was situated at the bot-

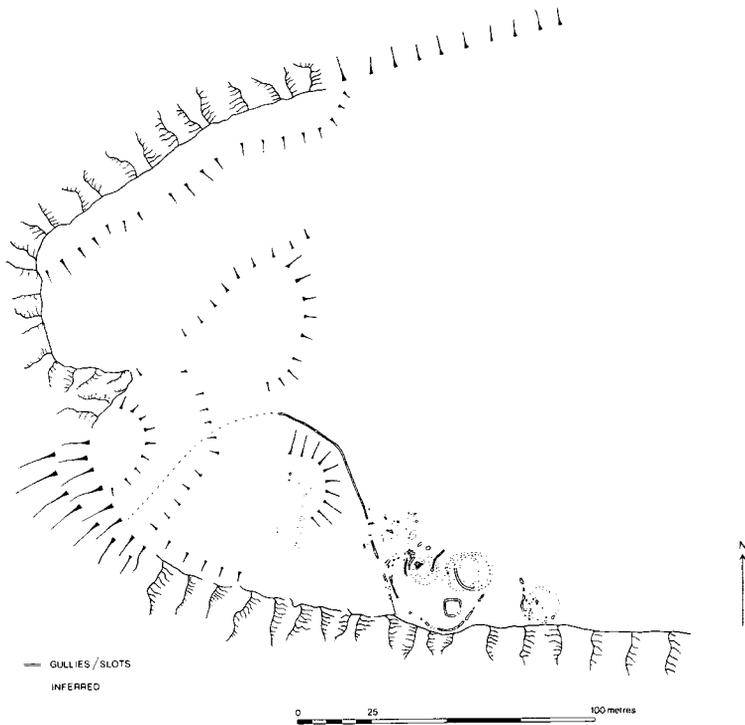


Fig. 1. Palisaded enclosure at west end of village.

tom of a steep slope, for reasons which are not clear. Defensively its siting has nothing to offer and the only area within it suitable for either habitation or stock enclosures is the hill top. This is the only area which has yielded evidence of activity. The activity is not dated, though many of the rock-cut depressions (of which 11 were certainly postholes) were stratigraphically earlier than medieval walls and levelling which probably date to the 12th or 13th centuries. Four of these postholes lay on the edge of a rectangular depression and might have formed a four-post structure. Others could have been part of an inner fence round the top of the hill.

Direct dating evidence for the palisaded enclosure is negligible. A few potsherds found in and around the palisade trench are in the usual coarse-gritted fabrics of pre-Roman and

Roman native sites and cannot be closely dated; it would help us little if they could, for the palisade-trench was not sealed and contained some early medieval sherds. Unstratified finds, like the fragment of glass bangle, might relate to the occupation of this enclosure or of that to the east. Palisaded enclosures are well known in northern Britain, and have commonly been assigned to the 7th to 4th centuries B.C. (Ritchie 1970), though we should heed George Jobey's warning that "a palisade-trench represents no more than a form of construction which may have been anticipated in many different contexts both early and late. Whilst there may have been a *floruit* of such structures in an immediate pre-hillfort phase (Ritchie 1970), there are at least isolated examples in the Border area from as early as the beginning of the first millenium to the post-Roman

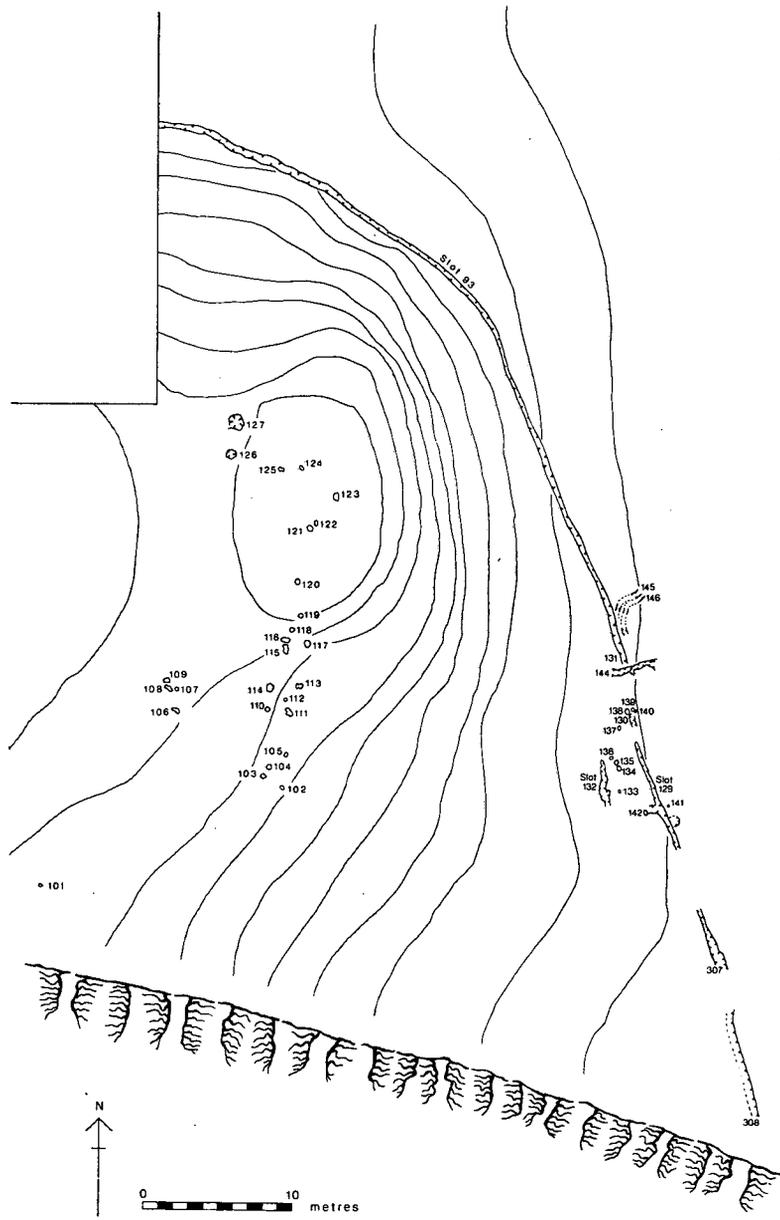


Fig. 2. West end of village: rock-cut features.



VI – Palisade trench of western enclosure with post-setting.

period” (Jobey 1973b; cf. Burgess 1984).

*The eastern enclosure* (fig. 3)

The eastern enclosure lay on flatter ground. In the north-western part of the area the bedrock was soft and badly weathered; over the whole area there was a greater depth of topsoil than in the western enclosure. Trenches and post-holes had not always been dug into the clay subsoil, and, even where they had, subsequent disturbance by roots and rabbits rendered identification of features difficult.



X – Roundhouse II: Gully 363.

At one point the western palisade-trench (307–8) was only about 1 m from that of the eastern enclosure (fig. 4, slot 292). The latter is represented on figs. 4 and 6 by slots 290–4, and further south and east by slots 367–9 and 391. 294 was an uneven V-shaped cut with the remains of five possible post-settings in its base (302–6). Its line was continued to the south-west by slot 293, an irregular cut with a compact mass of whinstone packing; no evidence for post-settings survived. After stopping at a hard ridge of rock it continued south as slot



VII – Palisade trench of western enclosure.

292. In places it was discernible only as packing material, its depth varying from 0.01 to 0.35 m according to the nature of the bedrock. 295–300 were six possible post-settings. The line of the palisade was continued eastwards by features 290 and 291; 290 was cut into hard whinstone to a depth of 0.3 m and was filled with rubble suggestive of collapsed packing.

*Roundhouse I* (Pl. VIII; figs. 3 and 4)

Towards the west side of the enclosure a circular timber structure was marked by an

area of sandstone paving partly enclosed by three curving rock-cut slots. Post-settings to the north and west should probably be associated with this structure. To the south and east the bedrock dipped sharply, so that the rest of the building trenches had probably been dug in topsoil where they would have been destroyed by later ploughing—for which there was other evidence (*Third Report*, 235, 241, 251).

The paving lay on orange sandy subsoil, and covered only the NW quadrant of a circle; it was c. 3.4 × 3.2 m in extent. It was delimited

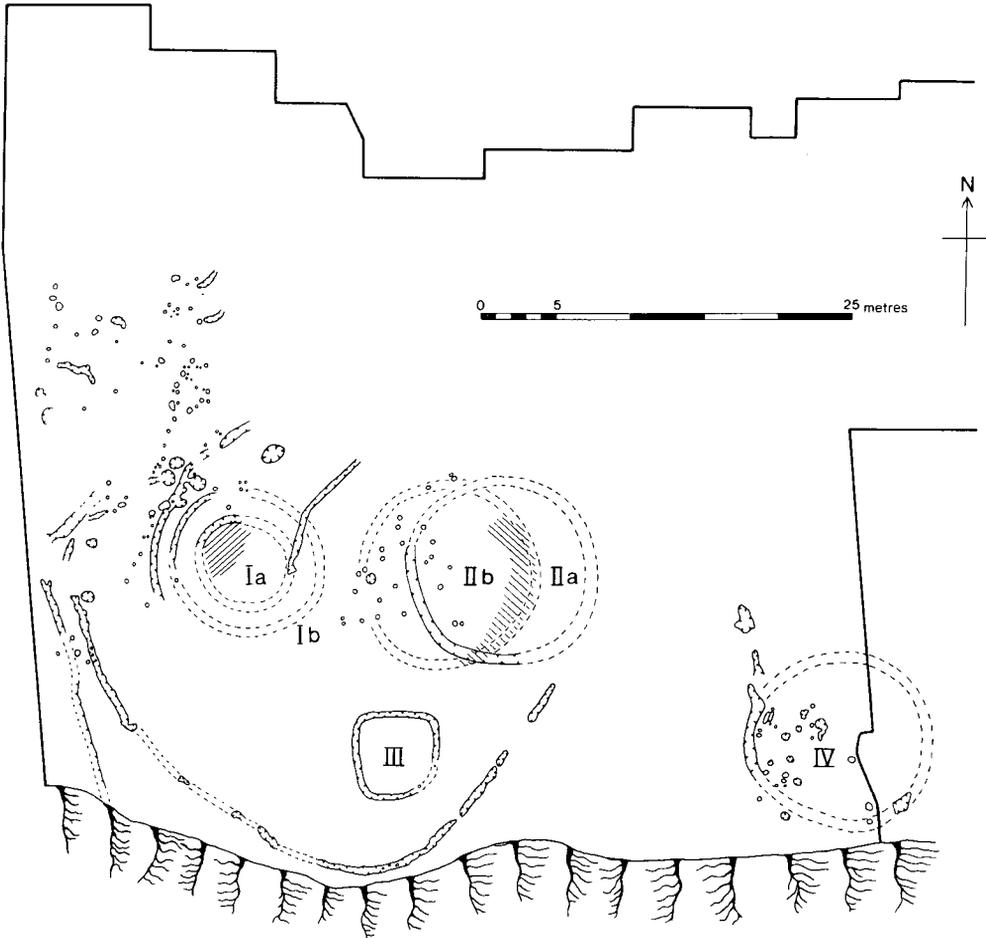


Fig. 3. The eastern enclosure.

on the north and west by a V-sectioned slot (238) cut into soft whinstone, with three possible stake-holes in it (241-3). The most northerly paving slab partly overlay slot 238, perhaps indicating an entrance, though more probably it belonged to a secondary structure. Slot 253 might be a southward continuation of 238. 1 m outside 238 was a concentric slot (239), cut partly through rock and partly through clay. This was a shallower, flat-bottomed feature and is interpreted as evidence for a second, larger roundhouse (1b); to it the area of paving

should probably be assigned. Both slots were filled with loosely packed whinstone rubble and dark brown soil. Nothing definitely precludes the interpretation of 1a and 1b as a single roundhouse with inner and outer post-rings.

Slot 240 lay approximately 1 m outside slot 239 but was not concentric with the other two. It produced positive evidence of post-settings (244 and 245) and was cut into rock with a regular, flat-bottomed profile. It may represent a palisade surrounding 1a or 1b rather than the

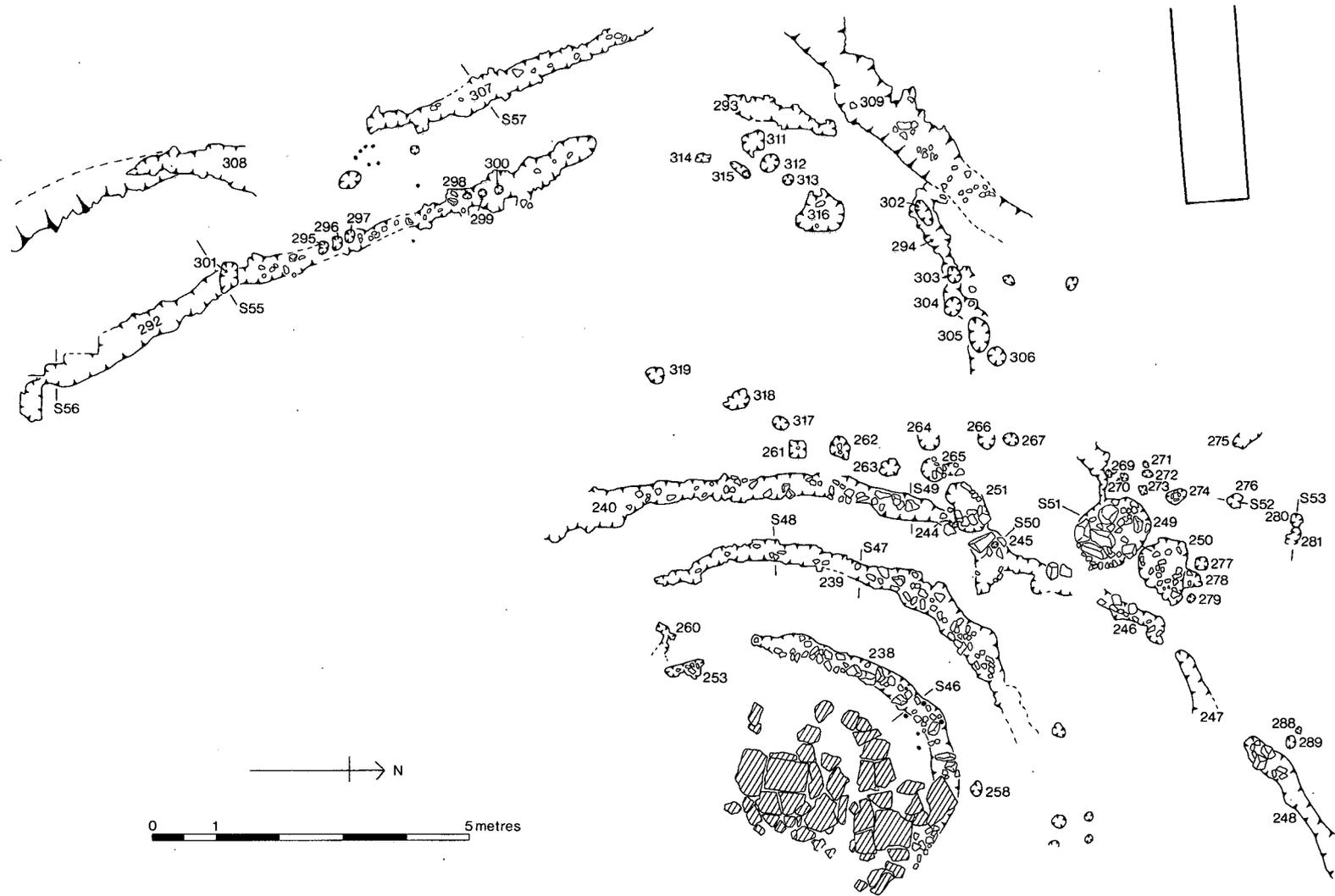
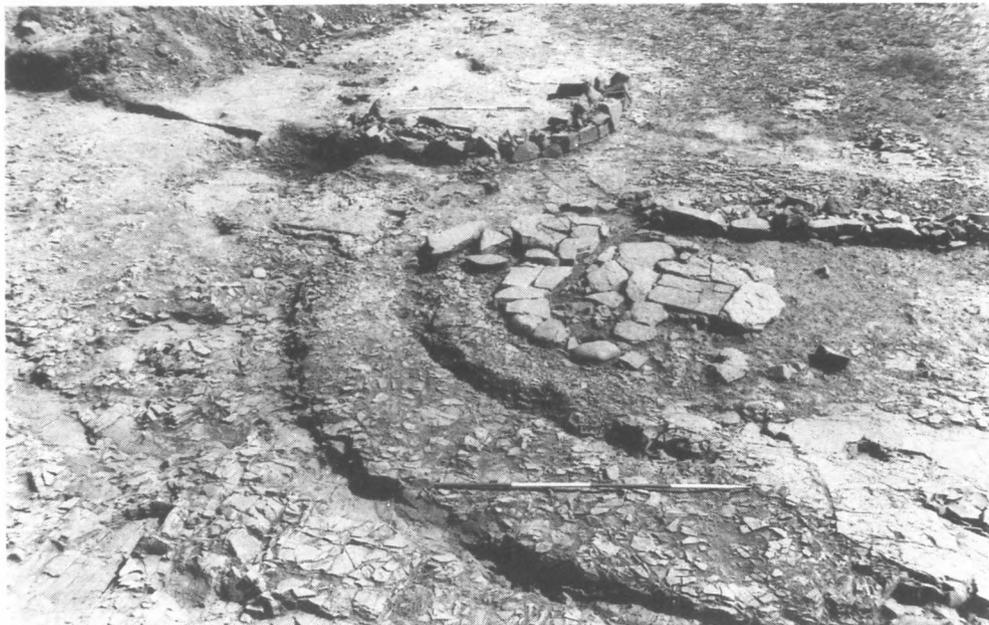


Fig. 4. Roundhouse I and palisade-trenches.



VIII – Roundhouse I from west.

construction trench of a third roundhouse. Slots 246–8 are probably a north-easterly continuation. Three external pits (249–51) may be contemporary with the occupation of 1a or 1b.

*Roundhouse II* (Pls. IX and X; figs. 3 and 5)

East of roundhouse I a curving rock-cut gully (335) suggests an enclosed area some 11 m in diameter. An arc of tumble within this area may represent a second, intersecting structure. A number of postholes, inside and outside the enclosed area, may be associated with one building or the other.

Gully 335 was a flat-bottomed cut, 0.15 m deep on average. It was packed with large quantities of stone, including a fragment of a rotary quern (fig. 12, no. 26); although no post-pipes were detected in the fill several possible post-settings were noted in the bed-rock. The feature seems best interpreted as part of the foundation trench for a continuous-post roundhouse. An arc of tumble within its curve and apparently overlapping its trench suggests an intersecting circular structure (IIb), though no other evidence for it survived; the

evidence of the tumble suggests that it was stone built, or at least that stone was packed against the base of the wall. The postholes which may have been associated with roundhouse II are: 336–45; 347–8; 350, 352, 358, 360–2. Most contained packing or a post-pipe; 343 produced a number of sherds of a hand-made barrel-shaped pot (fig. 9, a1 and a2). A clay-cut gully (363) north-west of roundhouse II may belong to this phase of occupation; it was sealed by the walls of a medieval building, and had apparently held a fence with a double row of stakes (Pl. X).

*Roundhouse III* (Pl. XI; figs. 3 and 6)

South of roundhouse IIb a shallow clay-cut slot (364) enclosed a sub-rectangular area 5.0 × 4.8 m; it was possibly associated with spreads of cobbling to the north and north-west.

Slot 364 was earth-filled and contained very little packing material; traces of small postholes were found at the west end of the south side and in the north-east corner. There was a gap of 1.5 m in the slot at the south-east corner of the building; it corresponds with a natural



IX – Roundhouse II from north-east

rift in the bedrock. On either side of the gap was a post (365, 366) 0.2 m in diameter; these might represent a doorway. If they do not the entrance might be indicated by either of two spreads of cobbling which overlay the line of the foundation trench. No hearths or internal features were found in house III; the stonework in the area may derive from this house or from a robbed medieval building.

#### *Roundhouse IV* (figs. 3 and 7)

East of roundhouse III and outside the palisade-trench of the eastern enclosure a curving rock-cut slot (374) enclosing a number of postholes may represent a further roundhouse. If it did, its east side lay in an area where few features could be recognized.

The fill of slot 374 consisted of packing-stones, whin chips and dark brown earth. To the north it ended in a projecting terminal which might be part of an entrance. Trench 375 might represent a piece of wall on the east side

of the building, though it contained very little packing material; it could be medieval. East of slot 374 were a number of possible postholes; 380-1, 384 and 386 all contained packing. The position of postholes cut only in topsoil may be indicated by a few clusters of stone lying on top of the bedrock; they seem best interpreted as the packing from postholes which left no other recognisable trace. It is far from certain that these features represent a roundhouse; if they do, it seems likely (to judge from the tumble found) that its building involved the use of stone as well as timber.

### 3. THE BUILDINGS

#### *Palisades*

As with the Phase II perimeter at Belling Law (Jobey 1977) each of the West Whelpington palisades appears to have stood in a continuous trench 0.3 m wide and up to 0.4 m deep. Stone

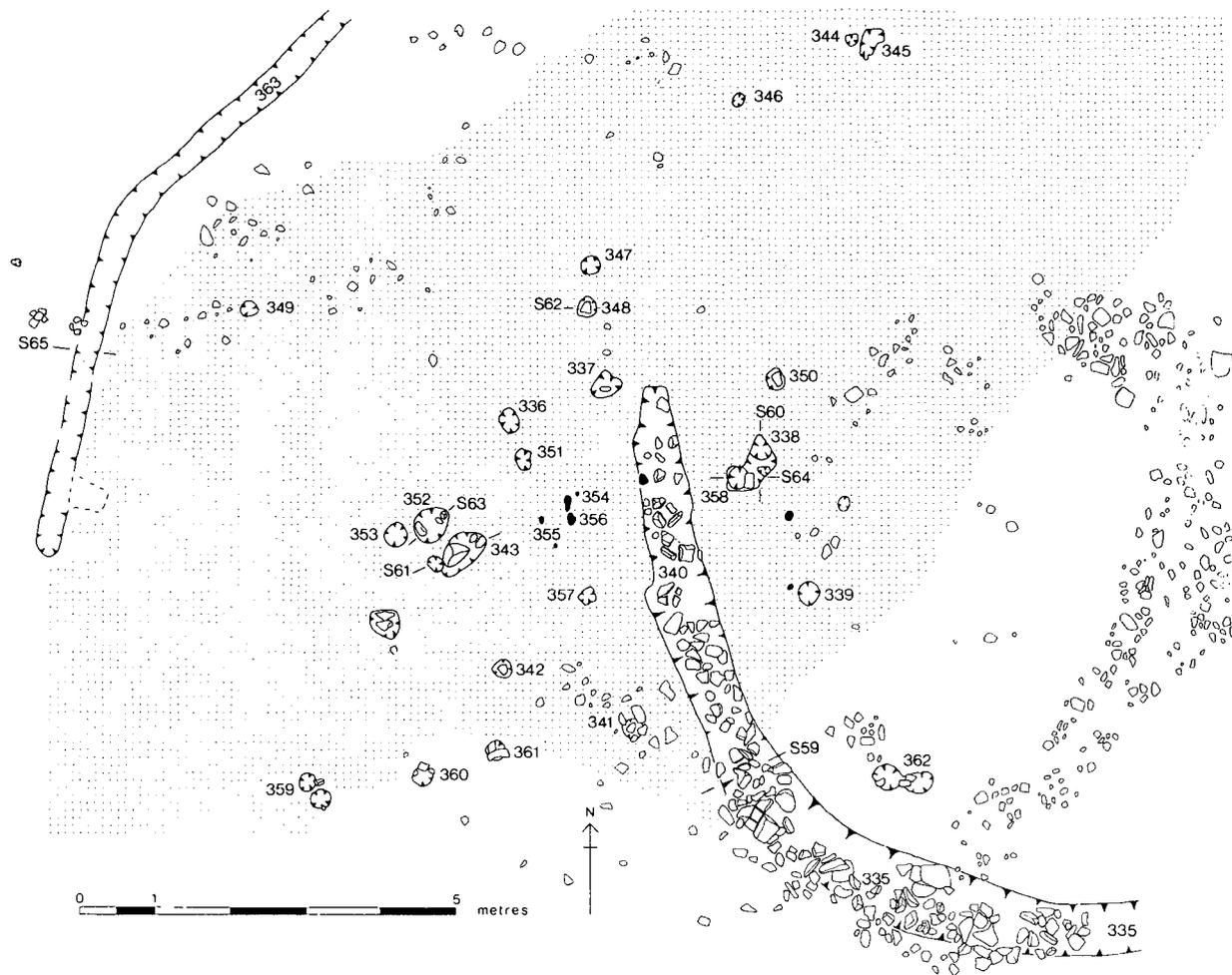


Fig. 5. Roundhouse II.



XI – Roundhouse III from north-east, with palisade trench.

packing was driven home on each side of the trench and occasionally between the posts. The evidence from other sites suggests that rounded rather than split timbers were used. Burnt daub from slot 93 indicates the use of vertical and horizontal wattles, either interwoven between the larger posts or prefabricated into hurdles which could be attached to those posts.

#### *Roundhouses* (fig. 8)

Buildings Ia, Ib and IIa were of timber while IIb and IV were at least partly of stone. There is less certainty about Building III. Trench 364 may have been an eavesdrip round a circular or oval building, of timber or stone, as in Fig. 8; it may have held the timbers for the wall of a “roundhouse”; or it may merely have held a fence round an unroofed enclosure. The evidence is too slight to justify preference for any one of these interpretations. The general problems of constructing and roofing roundhouses have been discussed at length elsewhere (e.g.

Musson 1970; Jarrett & Wrathmell 1981, 67–74; and see now Reid 1989) and require no further comment.

All three timber buildings had a ring trench and all were apparently constructed of contiguous vertical timbers. The uprights, either planks or split trunks, were set in narrow, square-sectioned trenches which were then packed with stones inserted on either side of the trench. The construction trenches were shallower on the downhill side as at Hartburn (Jobey 1973a); presumably this part was cut through topsoil and has left less discernible evidence. It is also possible that the timbers were shortened where the underlying surface was too hard to make trench digging practical, as happened at Belling Law (Jobey 1977, 12). None of the houses produced clear evidence for an internal post-ring, though Ia and Ib could be so interpreted; their sizes are consistent with the observation that internal posts are not essential with diameters of less than 10 m,



Fig. 6. Roundhouse III, palisade trench and site 15e.



Fig. 7. Roundhouse IV.

even though they were sometimes incorporated. The houses at West Whelpington have diameters in the range 6 to 11 m, though these figures must be treated with caution since they have been calculated from small segments of trenches which are assumed to have been parts of perfect circles. They compare well with houses excavated elsewhere in Northumber-

land, e.g. Hartburn (Jobey 1973a), Tower Knowe (Jobey 1973b), Belling Law (Jobey 1977) and Kennel Hall Knowe (Jobey 1978); these are of similar construction, with diameters between 7.2 and 10.8 m. No certain traces of porches were found at West Whelpington but, if entrances were on the south or east this is not surprising since this part of the

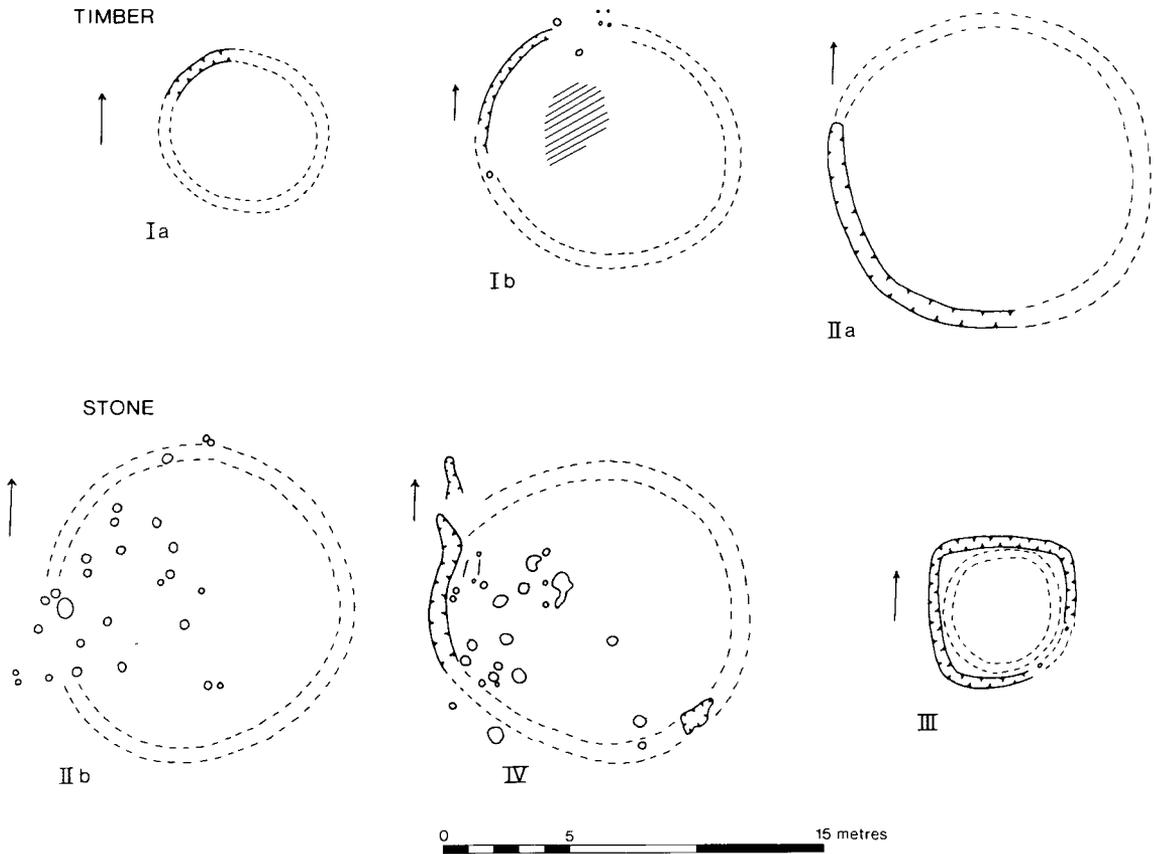


Fig. 8. West Whelpington roundhouses: comparative plans.

trench never penetrated the bedrock. The only evidence for internal arrangements was an area of paving in house I, which overlay the construction trench of Ia and is presumed to be contemporary with Ib. It may be paralleled in house 4 at Hartburn (Jobey 1973a) where two hearths were sunk into a central paved area.

The probable stone buildings (IIb, III and IV) were badly robbed and little can be said about them. It is likely that the stone incorporated in them—deduced from tumble which was stratigraphically earlier than medieval buildings in the area—was no more than extra support for wall timbers. House IV was not fully excavated but may have had a north porch; some of the postholes within it may

have held supports for its roof. IIb may also have had internal roof supports; most postholes in the area lay outside IIa and must belong to IIb if they relate to either house.

#### 4. THE FINDS

*For the location of medieval and later crofts (A-V) and buildings (1-26) see Third Report, especially fig. 4, p. 205.*

#### Pottery (fig. 9)

A small quantity of coarse hand-made pottery was found in the area enclosed by the two palisades. Some was clearly associated with the

western palisade and another vessel was sealed in the packing of a posthole in house IIb. All these vessels appear to have been coil-built jars in a fairly homogeneous fabric; the vessels from the eastern enclosure tend to have thicker walls and to be better finished. A solitary sherd from croft A has been included since it is clearly in the same tradition. All the material can be paralleled readily by pottery from other Iron Age and Roman native sites in the county.

From the general area of the eastern enclosure came two fragments of wheel-made pottery. One appears to be a much abraded sherd from a Roman colour-coated vessel, the other a local copy of a tazza or flanged bowl. These, and a very small amount of other Roman material, imply that the latest occupation continued into the second century A.D. or later.

a1 and a2. *In the packing of post 343, inside house IIb.* Fragments of a barrel-shaped jar with a plain roll rim. Reddish-brown fabric with black core; inclusions of angular quartz up

to 8 mm in size; reddish-brown surfaces. Smoke-blackened, with deposits of soot. As the height of the vessel is uncertain no reconstruction has been offered.

a3. *Sealed beneath east wall of croft M.* Everted rim, probably from a jar. Reddish-brown fabric and surfaces.

*Not illustrated:*

Sherds in similar fabrics from crofts A and O, also from the western palisade trench (slot 93), and from posthole 107 in croft L.

*Site 15.* Fragment of abraded colour-coated ware, possibly from the base of a beaker. Soft orange fabric with small flecks of mica and quartz; interior buff, exterior light grey and micaceous. The vessel from which this came is unlikely to be earlier than the second century A.D. and would be commoner in the third.

*Croft N.* Rim fragment with an external flange—possibly from a tazza or small flanged

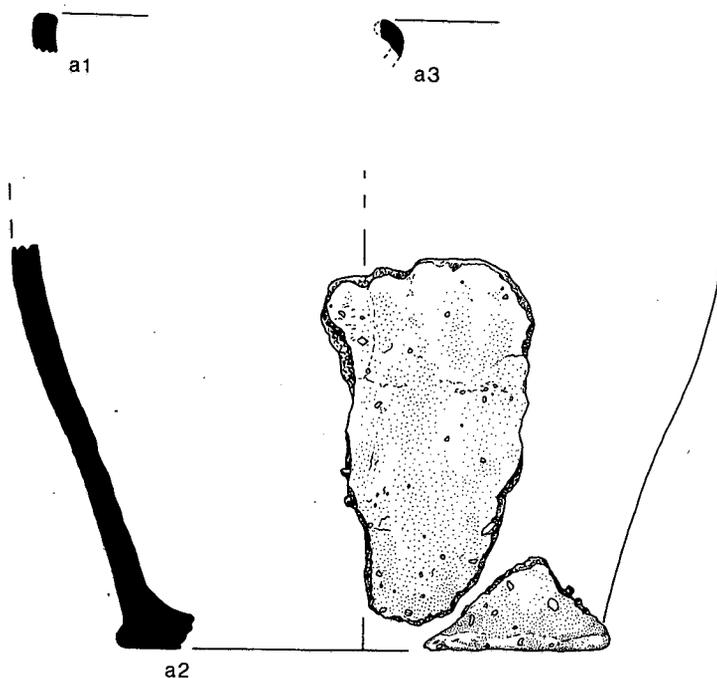


Fig. 9. Pottery (4).

bowl. Coarse white fabric; creamy white surfaces.

*Glass (figs. 10 and 11) by Jennifer Price*

The site has produced two fragments of Roman glass: a probable fragment of a blue pillarmoulded bowl (*First Report* 219) and a piece of a bangle.

*From the western enclosure, adjoining pallsade trench 93.* Fragment, glass bangle. Opaque yellow. Some bubbles, horizontal band of usage scratches on outside surface, otherwise little visible wear or weathering. Part of undecorated bangle, D-shaped section, slightly flattened at top and bottom. Spun. Height 11–11.5 mm; inside diameter 58–60 mm; maximum thickness 6 mm.

Several types of glass bangles or armlets occur at Roman and native sites in Britain, especially in contexts dated to the first and second centuries A.D. They were initially studied and classified by Kilbride-Jones (1937–8), who distinguished between the three main types and divided Type 3 into ten groups based on their colour and decorative features. Since then they have been examined in detail by Stevenson (1954–6; 1976) who has added many examples and greatly extended the known distribution of the bangle types within Britain.

These bangles appear to have been produced by gathering a lump of molten glass on a pointed metal rod and pushing a second rod into the centre, then spinning and manipulating the two rods in order to widen the aperture; see Korfmann 1966 for details of this process, which was also used to manufacture some types of beads.

The West Whelpington fragment, from an undecorated opaque yellow bangle, is an example of Kilbride-Jones Type 3B and has the slightly primrose shade of yellow and the shiny surfaces associated with this group, though the rather flattened D-shaped section is not typical of 3B bangles, which usually have a more or less triangular section.

Type 3B bangles are comparatively rare and have a limited distribution which, with one doubtful exception, is confined to the area between the Tyne-Solway and Forth-Clyde

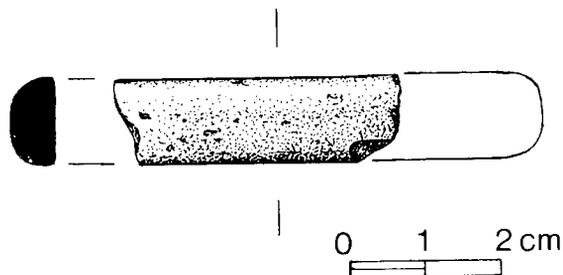


Fig. 10. Glass bangle.

isthmuses (fig. 11). With the exception of Traprain Law, where 26 fragments of this type have been found, only one or two fragments have been found at any of the sites shown.

There is very little evidence for the dating of these fragments. The contexts at Traprain Law perhaps suggest the use of these bangles in the late first/second century A.D., but there is no information about the dating of the other fragments and unfortunately the West Whelpington piece was not stratified. It is noteworthy that only the fragments from Burnswark and the doubtful piece from Corbridge are associated in any way with Roman military sites, and that all the others have been found at native sites which are often extremely difficult to date closely. It is at least possible that Type 3B bangles were no longer being produced when military sites were established in lowland Scotland in the late first century.

Opaque yellow glass was much used during the pre-Roman Iron Age in Britain for production and decoration of beads as well as bangles, which have been produced at several centres, such as Meare, Somerset and the Culbin Sands, Moray Firth (Guido 1978; Henderson 1980). Recent analysis by X-ray diffraction has shown that the opaque yellow colour was in all cases produced by the addition of lead antimonate; but quite similar-looking yellow beads and bangles had very different compositions, clearly suggesting that the yellow glasses did not all come from the same source and that they may have been made at, or imported as specialist glass from, more than one place

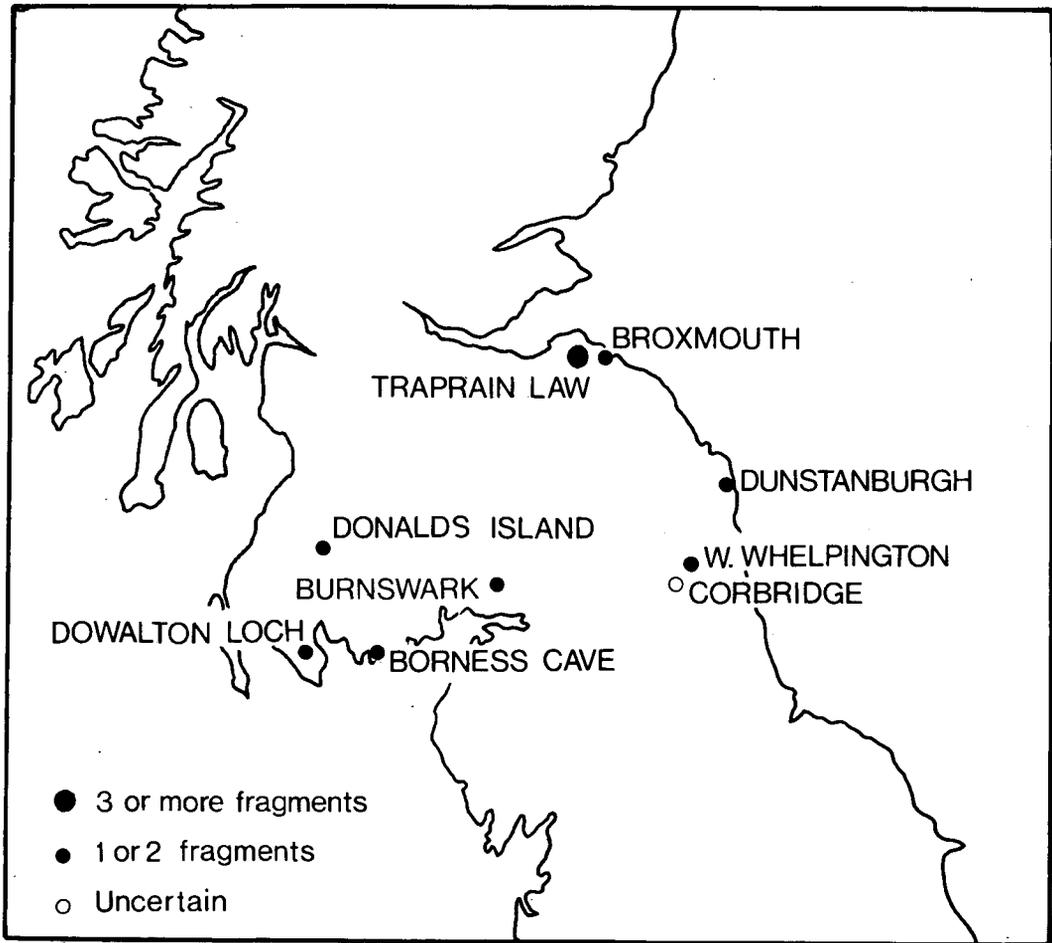


Fig. 11. Distribution of glass bangles of Kilbride-Jones type IIIb.

(Newton 1971). It seems extremely likely that Type 3B bangles should be seen as part of this late pre-Roman Iron Age production; if they were being produced as late as the late first century A.D. it seems strange that they do not occur more frequently at Roman military sites.

#### *Querns* (figs. 12 and 13)

The numbering in this section is that of the *Full Report* where (as well as in the *Third Report*) other worked stone artefacts are recorded. Site numbers are those of the medieval village but querns from the areas of the palisaded enclo-

tures are noted as such. We are indebted to Stephen England for geological identifications; greater detail will be found in the *Full Report*.

Fragments of one saddle quern (no. 22) and ten rotary querns (23–31; *Second Report* fig. 42, no. 13), some of which are near-beehive in shape, have been found at West Whelpington. It is probable that most of these relate to the pre-medieval settlements. No complete querns were found. Of the 11 fragments one was found in the packing of the construction trench of a roundhouse, seven were re-used in medieval or post-medieval walls or paving and

the remaining three were found amongst tumble.

Seven of the 10 querns described here are made of quartz sandstone, probably of local origin, and the remaining three are of granite.

22. *Reused in the platform of the forge, 15/4*; north of, and probably close to, the eastern enclosure. Fragment of a saddle quern in a fine to medium grain quartz sandstone, possibly from local carboniferous sandstone.

23. *Reused in the west wall of enclosure D/1*. Upper stone of a rotary quern in granite.

24. *Reused in the east wall of croft L*; within the west enclosure. Upper stone of a near-beehive quern in granite.

25. *Croft M, in tumble west of site 15d*; north of roundhouse I, probably within the eastern enclosure. Upper stone of a rotary quern in an impure medium to fine grained quartz sandstone. Possibly from local Carboniferous sandstone. Side hole for turning handle.

26. *In the fill of trench 335 in roundhouse IIa*. Lower stone of a rotary quern in quartz sandstone.

27. *House 9/3, reused in threshold paving between house and byre*. Upper stone of rotary quern in medium grained quartz sandstone; possibly a local Carboniferous sandstone. Side hole for turning handle.

28. *Site 8*. Lower stone of a rotary quern in a medium to fine grained quartz sandstone; possibly Carboniferous.

29. *Site 8*. Upper stone of a rotary quern in a poorly sorted quartz sandstone. Possibly a local Carboniferous sandstone. Hole in the top for turning the stone.

30. *Reused as levelling between enclosures L/2 and M/2*; just outside the western palisade. Upper stone of a rotary quern in granite.

31. *House 8/1, reused in the cross-passage*. Broken quern fragment in sandstone.

## 5. DISCUSSION (fig. 14)

It is not clear whether the two palisaded enclosures were occupied at the same time. The evidence would be consistent with such an

interpretation, though this statement is more correctly seen as a reflection of the inadequacy of the evidence for dating. It is just as likely that there was a period of several centuries between the abandonment of the western enclosure and the creation of that to the east. Figure 14 reflects one possible interpretation, which is perhaps the most likely; other interpretations could be advanced which would be consistent with the restricted evidence yielded by a site which had been damaged by six centuries of medieval and post-medieval activity.

There is no direct evidence for the date of the western enclosure, though analogies suggest that it should be placed somewhere in the first millennium B.C. If it ever proves possible to complete its excavation we may learn more about its date and function. For the handful of radiocarbon dates for palisades see Gates 1983, 107 and 141.

Dating of the eastern enclosure depends on the assumption that it was contemporary with some at least of the roundhouses within it, in which case it may have been built in the late pre-Roman Iron Age or in the Roman period. Here at least we have many analogies. The best are such rectilinear palisaded homesteads as Tower Knowe (Jobey 1973b) and Belling Law (Jobey 1977). At both these sites an early timber perimeter enclosed a succession of timber roundhouses, and was not replaced in stone until the 2nd century A.D. A C14 date from Belling Law suggests that the first roundhouse may be dated as early as 270–180 B.C. At Tower Knowe the succession of buildings indicated that the earliest might have been built in the 1st century A.D.

At West Whelpington there appear to have been two roundhouses (I and IIa) in this phase. Both were of contiguous plank construction. House I may have been rebuilt. The southern corners of the enclosure survived but the layout of the rest is uncertain. A fence west of house I may indicate an internal division or may have been a posthole precursor of the continuous-trench palisade, as at Belling Law. Presumably most of the palisade-trench had been dug in topsoil and had not penetrated the

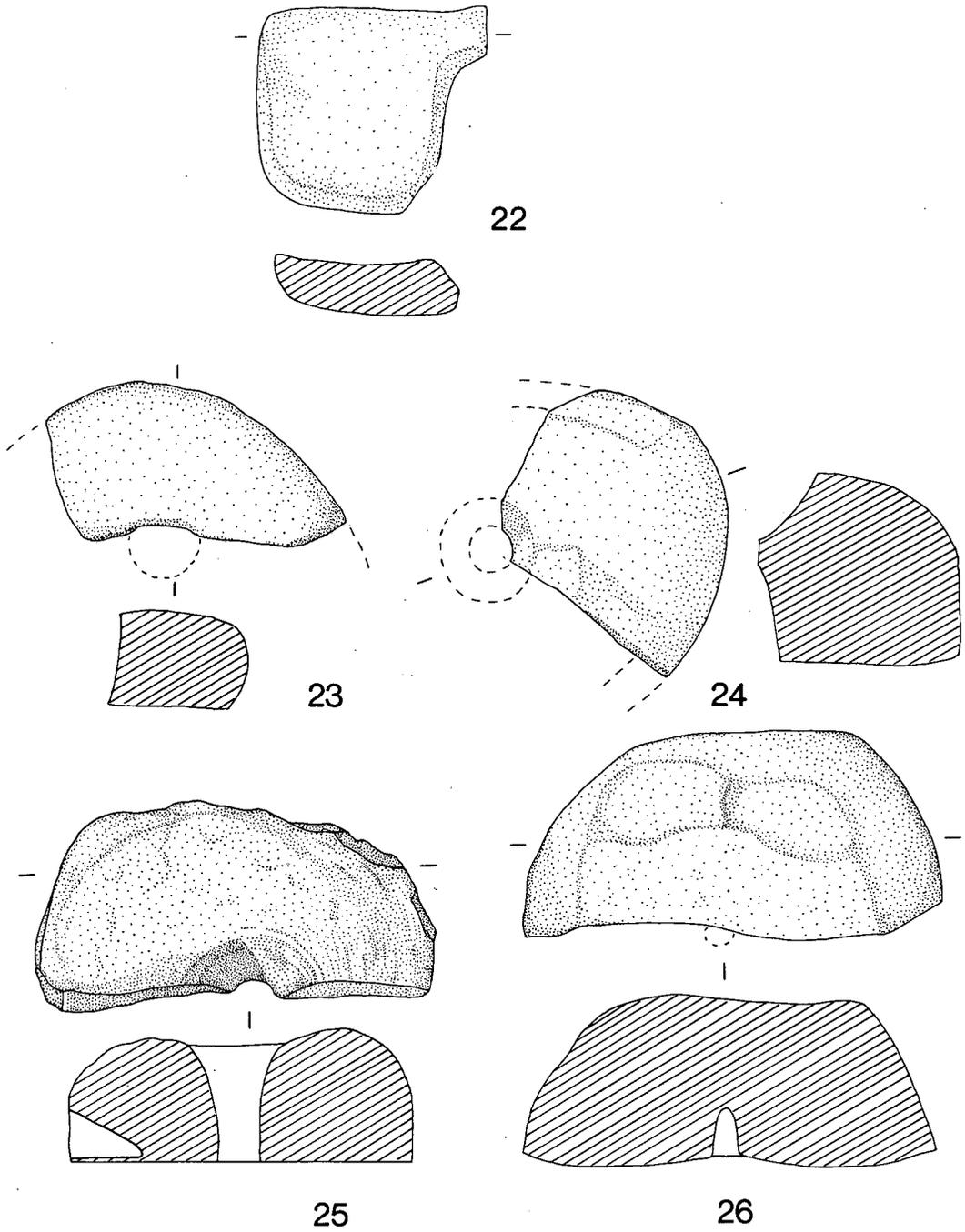


Fig. 12. Querns (1).

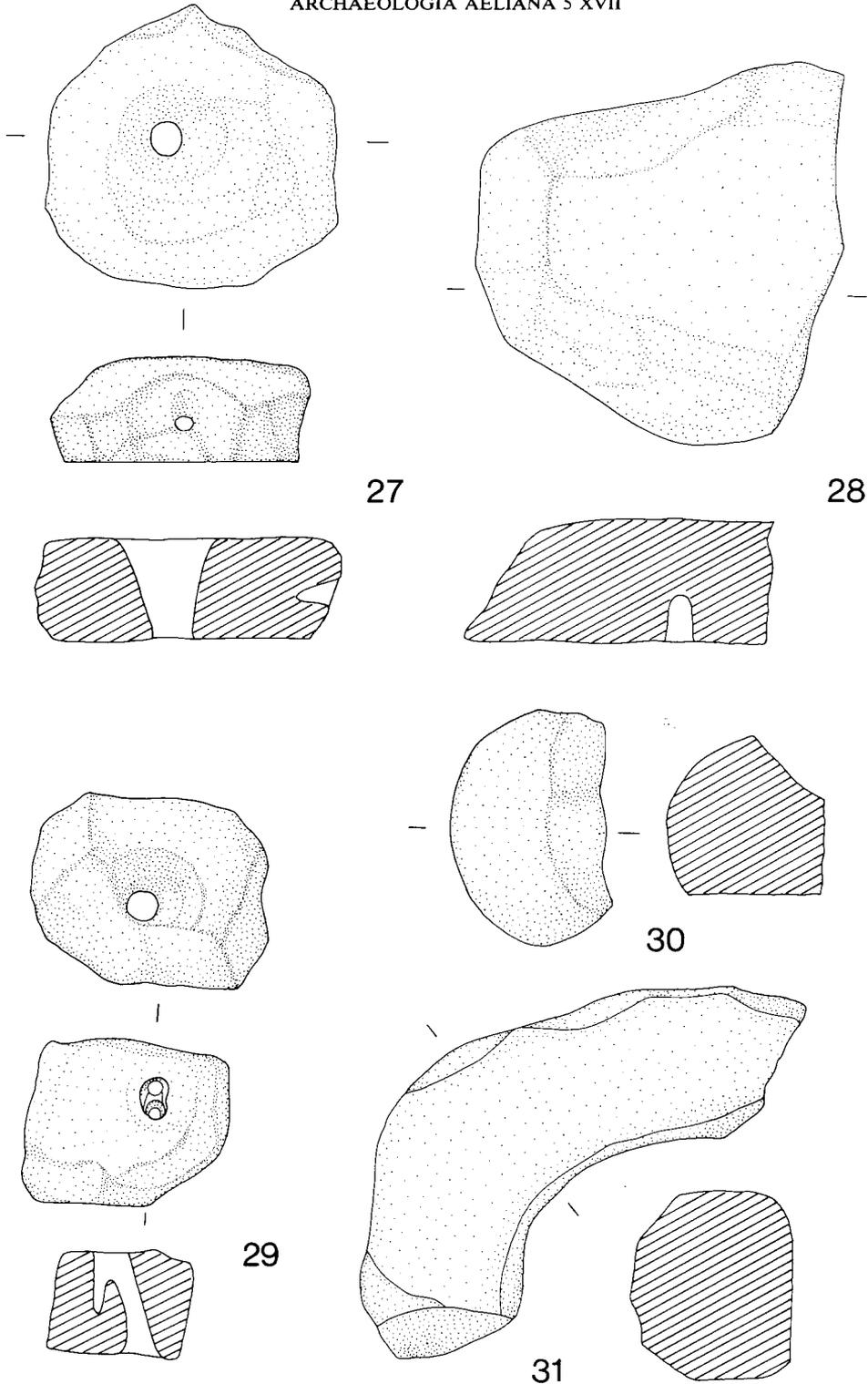


Fig. 13. Querns ( $\frac{1}{3}$ ).

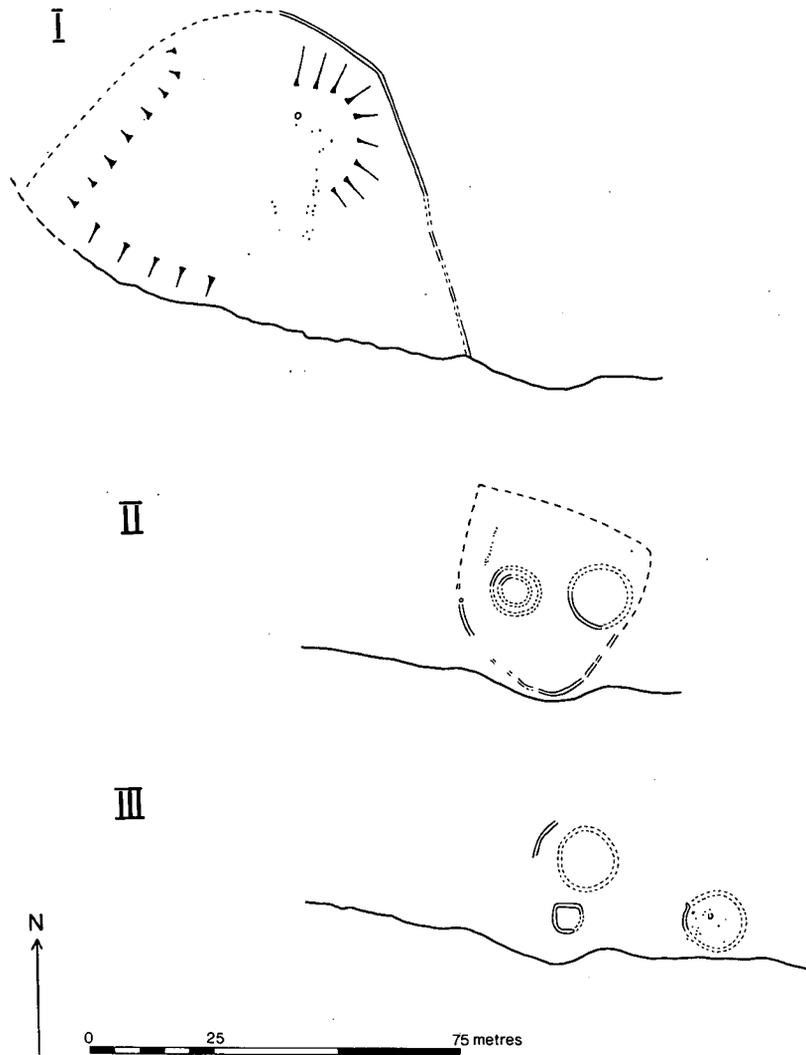


Fig. 14. Pre-historic and Roman settlements: suggested phasing.

bedrock. The northern limit of the enclosure is consequently unknown; if the extent of the excavated features (fig. 3) is any guide the enclosure measured c.  $35 \times 30$  m. An enclosed area of about 0.1 ha would compare well with Belling Law (0.085 ha) and Tower Knowe (0.13), and on this basis a northern boundary has been postulated on Fig. 14.

The principal dating evidence is the rotary

quern fragment from the fill of the construction trench of house IIa. If this represents packing material for the uprights the house is unlikely to be earlier than the 2nd century B.C.; it might be much later. If the quern were packing for one of the posts of roundhouse IIb (coincidentally cutting the earlier feature) we have no satisfactory *terminus post quem*.

At some stage the timber houses seem to

have been rebuilt using a proportion of stone. Continuity of occupation is assumed rather than proven; it did occur at comparable sites.

House IIa was probably replaced on a slightly different alignment by house IIb which is interpreted as a circular stone building with a roof supported on internal posts. To the south hut III may have been a stone structure surrounded by a sub-rectangular gully: at Gubeon Cottage (Jobey 1957, fig. 3) a sub-rectangular ditched enclosure with a diameter of 6.1 m contained a badly robbed stone building. At West Whelpington the area is smaller, 4.8 m in diameter, and tumble in this area could belong to this structure or to a medieval outbuilding.

To the east lay house IV. It is assumed to be late in the sequence because it lay outside the palisaded homestead and because its construction seems to resemble that postulated for House IIb. It suggests either that the settlement was no longer enclosed or that the enclosed area had been enlarged—something for which no positive evidence was found. On similar sites it was more usual for a palisade to be replaced by a stone perimeter wall. No evidence for this survived at West Whelpington, but it might have been removed by medieval clearance.

Dating for this phase is as unsatisfactory as for others. A large storage jar from feature 343 (one of the postholes for the roof of IIb) is of a type and fabric commonly found on native sites in the area both before and during the Roman period. The unstratified finds indicate that occupation continued somewhere on the outcrop at least until the second century, and perhaps into the third; note, in addition to the objects reported here, the probable fragment of a pillar-moulded glass bowl (*First Report* 219) and a possible third-century *antoninianus* from site 16c, only a few metres from the postulated north-east corner of the enclosure (*Second Report* 257).

It is not certain when the native settlement was abandoned. One pot (*Second Report*, fig. 31, no. 81) suggested the possibility of Anglo-Saxon occupation; since its discovery much more extensive excavation has failed to produce structural or artefactual evidence for such

occupation. Evidence may have been missed in the small-scale excavations of the eastern part of the village, or may yet be found at the west. It is more likely that we have an isolated pot—for which no parallel has yet been found to establish a date. It may be worth noting that its find-spot was close to the presumed line of the eastern palisade, and a connection with the native settlement is possible.

Each palisaded enclosure is of a type characteristic of the area; excavation of other sites not disturbed by later occupation has yielded more information than survived at West Whelpington. Elsewhere in the township three farmsteads comparable with the eastern enclosure are known from fieldwork but have not been excavated (*Third Report*, Part Two, AA<sup>5</sup>, 16 (1988), p. 166 and Fig. 128, and Appendix D (M1/A12)). If all prove to have been contemporary the township will have supported four farms as it did in the 18th century; whether more detailed comparisons would be of value is a matter for the reader's judgement.

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