

AREA A

Area A was the most northerly of the areas of salvage excavation and covered some 140 m². It measured 10 m east-west x 12 m north-south with a southward extension measuring a further 8.1 m x 2.5 m. It contained three kilns - 2, 3 and 4 - all aligned on approximate east-west orientations, and lying to the west of a north-south ditch - 8,14. The ditch ran into a large stone-filled pit - 19 - and was connected to the kiln stoke-holes by a couple of shallow east-west gullies - 15 and 10,11. Another parallel gully - 20 - delimited the area of kilns to the north and may have run into pit 19 from the west. Other less well-defined features included a plough furrow - 22 - running in a north-easterly direction, and a small feature - 23 - apparently cut by Kiln 4.

↑ *Vibulid* ? c 100-130

Kiln 2

Catranus

Kiln 2 and 3 were found in close association, with Kiln 2 being the earlier. Kiln 2 had been badly damaged by the stoke-hole of Kiln 3 but was evidently orientated on a slightly skewed east-west line. Its oven was situated to the west and consisted of a large ovoid chamber containing a central wedge-shaped pedestal. Of the rest of the kiln only the southern flue wall and south-western corner of the stoke-hole survived, the stoke-hole having also been cut away by Gully 15.

The oven showed two phases of use and measured 1.30 m east-west x c 1.00 m north-south. During the second phase the floor of the oven-pit was raised and re-laid - 2/2 - on a layer of mixed ash and fired clay fragments - 2/3. Although the earliest phase was not fully investigated it appeared likely that the clay walls - 2/4 - and central pedestal - 2/1 - were in use throughout. The walls were 0.07 m - 0.20 m thick and had been reduced to a blue-grey colour along their inner face. Elsewhere they were hard-fired to an oxidised red with a band of softer red clay surviving around the outside. The pedestal was situated 0.14 m - 0.20 m from the back wall and appeared to stand to its full original height of c 0.21 m. In plan it consisted of a round-ended wedge shape, measuring 0.65 m east-west x 0.37 m north-south at its western end, narrowing to 0.12 m north-south at its eastern. Its sides were rough-hewn and almost vertical, and fired to a blue-grey colour. The top was a similar colour and although partly eroded in the centre had been carefully moulded to form a regular, smooth, flat surface.

Both the pedestal and walls rested on the oven-pit floor which consisted of the natural sand and clay subsoil. This sloped down quite considerably eastward from the back wall of the kiln and was particularly deep between pedestal and flue; it presumably rose again slightly within the flue but this was removed by the stoke-hole of Kiln 3. No layers connected with the base of this phase were noted but during the second phase it was sealed by a deposit of fired clay fragments and ash - 2/3. The fragments were mostly small and oxidised, although a few had been reduced. These were presumably derived from the superstructure of the earlier phase of the kiln and formed a layer c 0.10 m deep to the east of the pedestal, becoming thinner further west to form a flattish surface on top of which a new clay floor could be laid.

This secondary oven-pit floor -2/2 - was c 0.05 m thick and had apparently been constructed around the existing pedestal and up to the surviving oven walls. It too sloped down from west to east, but rather less than the original floor. Its surface was uneven, particularly in the southern part of the oven, where it had subsided into the layer beneath, and had been hard-fired overall to a reduced blue-grey colour. The top of the pedestal was only 0.07 m higher than the floor at its front end and towards the back was virtually even. Presumably some extension for the pedestal would have been necessary to support the pottery-bearing floor, but none of this survived. A thin layer of ashy soil was removed from above 2/2 during the very initial stages of the salvage work and was recorded as containing fired clay fragments from the oven floor superstructure, including some with vent holes. A small quantity of pottery removed at this time was labelled as '2' and may relate to this layer.

Due to the stoke-hole of kiln 3 no relationship could be noted between the secondary activity in the oven and the surviving flue wall. The flue wall itself stood to a height of 0.19 m and appeared to be directly continuous with the wall of the oven, although a large stone measuring 0.26 m wide x 19 m deep had been incorporated into the fabric at the point where flue and oven join. The wall measured 0.17 m - 0.20 m across and its east-west dimensions suggested a flue c 0.62 m long. As in the oven the flue lining had been reduced blue-grey.

Immediately to the east were the limited remains of the stoke-hole. This had been cut away to the north by the stoke-hole of Kiln 3 and to the east by Gully 15 so that only a small part of the south-western corner, measuring c 0.45 m east-west x 0.24 m north-south, survived. The fill - 2/7 - consisted of an ashy soil containing a variety of inclusions including charcoal, soft red clay, and fragments of fired clay, including some that were reduced. The fact that no other parts of the stoke-hole survived to the east of Gully 15 or north of Kiln 3 indicates that it was probably quite small, measuring less than 1.50 m east-west x 1.00 m north-south.

Kiln 3

c 130-170 Ionius, Bruscius etc

Although more complete in its outline than Kiln 2, the structural parts of Kiln 3 had been dug less deeply into the natural subsoil and were badly eroded by ploughing. The oven and northern edges of flue and stoke-hole were particularly affected and in places preserved to a depth of only 0.02 m. The kiln was orientated east-west with its oven to the west and consisted of a large asymmetrical chamber with two central D- or wedge-shaped pedestals leading into a wide irregular flue and narrow elongated stoke-hole.

The oven measured c. 0.98 m north-south x c. 1.20 m - 1.40 m east-west and survived to a maximum depth of 0.06 m - 0.10 m. The southern pedestal - 3/2 - was located only 0.10 m from the back wall of the kiln and was difficult to define along its southern edge. It appeared, however, to form a reversed D or lop-sided wedge measuring c. 0.68 m east-west x 0.30 m north-south with traces of blue-grey firing along its straighter northern side. It survived to a height of 0.04 m. The northern pedestal - 3/3 - was marginally better preserved and retained signs of blue-grey burning around its complete outer face. This had a straight southern edge and curvilinear northern part to form an approximate reverse image of 3/2. It measured c. 0.69 m east-west x 0.35 m north-south and was found to a height of 0.06 m. The gap between the two pedestals varied from 0.05 m to 0.08 m.

Only the very base of the oven and flue wall - 3/6 - survived with a consequently variable width of 0.06 m - 0.22 m. It had a maximum height of 0.12 m (along the southern flue wall) and had been reduced to a blue-grey colour among much of its inner lining. Elsewhere the clay was fired to an oxidised red although parts of the outer facing remained soft and unburnt. There were no traces of a construction pit or trench for these walls.

The floor of the kiln - 3/4 - consisted of the natural sand and clay subsoil and was hard-fired throughout to a predominantly reduced blue-grey. It was relatively flat throughout most of the oven but sloped down sharply to the east of the pedestals. The floor of the flue was c. 0.10 m lower than that of the oven and was also 0.03 m - 0.07 m lower than the base of the flue walls. This may have been caused by a secondary activity such as the raking back of ash during the lifetime of the kiln.

The flue itself was very irregular and difficult to define particularly on its northern side where it had been badly eroded. The southern flue wall was relatively straight and measured c. 0.55 m long whilst its northern counterpart was up to c. 0.58 m north-south, although the flue was narrowest at its entrance, where it measured 0.42 m across. Its maximum surviving depth was 0.15 m against the southern flue wall.

The stoke-hole was narrow and elongated and cut through much of the earlier Kiln 2. It had a well-defined edge along its southern side where it was 0.18 m deep. In general it had a flattish, regular bottom, although there was a slight north-south scarp c. 0.45 m to the east of the flue. The stoke-hole measured 0.70 m - 1.15 m across north-south and had an approximate length of 2.20 m east-west, although its eastern end was difficult to define.

Most of the kiln fills were removed before full recording took place but they consisted of layers of mixed ash and charcoal, called 3/1 in the flue and oven, and 3/5 within the stoke-hole. They contained large quantities of mortarium sherds including a number stamped by BRVSCIUS and IVNIVS. The relationship between the stoke-hole fills and gully 15 was not ascertained although they may be contemporary.

AREA C

Area C was opened up to include Kiln 1 and the area directly to the west. It measured 11.6 m east-west x 5.5 m north-south and was situated 18 m to the south of Area B. Apart from Kiln 1 which was found to be orientated on a similar east-west alignment as the kilns in Area A, the only feature to be noted was a length of north-south ditch - 13 - immediately adjacent to the eastern end of the kiln stoke-hole. This appeared to be running on an extended line from ditches 8, 14, and 6 in Areas A and B but was not fully investigated due to a lack of available time. The absence of other features in the area may be due to the removal of insufficient topsoil.

Kiln 1

130-170

The smallest of the excavated kilns, Kiln 1 was very similar in type to Kiln 4. It was orientated with its oven to the west and consisted of a small elongated oven-pit, narrow flue and irregular, ovoid stoke-hole. The pottery finds were composed entirely of coarseware.

The oven had an interior diameter of only 0.70 m east-west x c 0.65 m north-south and contained a large tongue pedestal - 1/1 - projecting 0.51 m from the back wall of the kiln. This was more wedge-shaped than the pedestal in Kiln 4 and covered a larger proportion of the oven-pit floor (up to 40%) measuring 0.40 m across at its western end, tapering to a narrower square-ended 0.18 m towards the flue. It survived to a maximum height of 0.09 m and, like Kiln 4, formed a single contemporary build with the oven wall.

The flue had a minimum width of 0.30 m north-south and measured 0.55 m - 0.60 m long. The walls of both oven and flue had been fairly badly eroded, particularly along the southern side of the kiln and survived to a height of only 0.02 m - 0.08 m. They generally measured 0.07 m - 0.13 m across but were noticeably thinner at the 'neck' between oven and flue where they were only 0.04 m - 0.06 m thick. Except along parts of the damaged southern side the inner facing of both walls and pedestal had been reduced to a blue-grey colour; elsewhere the lining had been fired to an oxidised red, although towards the back of the pedestal, and along the outer edge of the northern flue wall the clay was still soft.

The floor of the kiln -1/2 - was made up of the natural sand and clay subsoil and was most strongly fired in the area of the flue. There were traces of later patching - 1/8 - on the western part of the oven-pit but these were poorly defined. In the eastern part of the oven and through the flue to the stoke-hole much of the floor had been worn down creating a noticeable groove up to 0.20 m deep. This was particularly evident in the eastern part of the flue where a secondary floor of mixed clay and charcoal - 1/5 - had been laid levelling up the area to the base of the kiln walls. This extended at least 0.35 m into the stoke-hole and was reinforced at the junction between flue and stoke-hole by a number of stone slabs. Some of these, particularly at the eastern end of the surface, tilted down towards the centre of the layer, whilst the largest, measuring 0.25 m east-west x 0.31 m north-south, had been placed horizontally at the mouth of the flue. The surface of 1/5 had been fired throughout, with the heaviest reduction again being concentrated within the flue.

Immediately to the south of the slabs, and in the south western corner of the stoke-hole was another feature considered to be secondary. This was a small post-hole - 1/7 - This was not fully excavated but contained vertical stone packing enclosing two sides of a post-pipe 0.13 m in diameter. On the other sides the pipe was bounded by the slabs within 1/5 and it may be that the two features are contemporary.

The stoke-hole itself measured 0.99, north-south x at least 1.35 m east-west. It had a maximum surviving depth of c 0.23 m with the groove evident throughout the flue opening out to occupy the whole width of the stoke-hole at its eastern end; Prior to this the stoke-hole may have been somewhat shallower. The bottom of the grooved area was generally flattish although it did slope down very slightly towards ditch 13.

As in Kilns 2-4, much of the kiln fill was removed before full recording took place. That which remained, however, in the bottom of the flue - 1/3 - and stoke-hole - 1/4 - was a very dark mixture of black ash and loamy soil, containing a small quantity of charcoal flecks. 1/3 had a maximum recorded depth of 0.098 m and sealed the secondary floor level 1/5, whilst 1/4 was 0.08 m deep and possibly formed part of the same layer. No relationship was noted between the stoke-hole fills and post-hole 1/7.

At the eastern end of the stoke-hole a linear feature - ditch 13 - ran north-south at an approximate right-angle. This was only excavated to a depth of 0.15 m but its upper fill, consisting of a brown loamy soil, appeared to overlie 1/4. Its western edge was visible for a length of c 2.50 m, but its eastern side lay outside the area of excavation, suggesting a width of at least 1.10 m.

AREAS D & E

Two east-west trenches - Areas D and E - were set out in the southern part of the salvage area to examine a spread of greater pottery density adjacent to the hedge. Area D measured 10 m east-west x 1 m north-south and was located 36.8 m south of Area C. Area E measured 5 m east-west x 1 m north-south and was laid out a further 5.75 m south. Although a disproportionate number of finds were recovered from these trenches no features were found to be cutting the natural clay subsoil.

Kiln 108

post 200

Kiln 108 was orientated on an east-west alignment and consisted of a round oven with a large central circular pedestal, moderate-sized flue and small sub-circular stoke-hole. The stoke-hole had been slightly ploughed away on its eastern side by furrow 107.

The oven had a surviving depth of 0.12 m - 0.22 m and internal diameter of 0.95 m - 1.00 m. Its pedestal was located slightly to the east of centre, towards the flue, and was evidently narrower at its base than the top, producing an approximate mushroom shape. Although badly crumbled along its north and western sides it had a basal diameter of 0.33 m increasing to 0.40 m higher up. Its surviving edges had been heavily reduced to a blue-grey colour and for the most part rested directly on to of the hardened oven pit floor; beneath the eastern section of the pedestal, however, an intervening silty deposit was noted - 108/20. This was less than 0.01 m deep and consisted of a fine brown sand.

As elsewhere in the kiln-field the bottom of the oven pit was the natural subsoil which at this point consisted of a mottled sandy clay, becoming sandier and stonier towards the stoke-hole. This had been hard-fired to a relatively consistent reddish yellow throughout the oven, but was more notably burnt in the area of the flue, where it was blue-grey through to a yellowish brown. In general, the bottom of the kiln sloped down from the oven to the stoke-hole, dropping a total of 0.15 m. The slope was particularly marked to the east of the pedestal and the presence of the flue bottom 0.05 m beneath the lower level of the flue walls suggests that some of this at least was caused by raking out subsequent to the kiln's construction.

The kiln walls were best preserved along the southern edge of the oven and, in places, showed signs of becoming vertical and even returning inward at a height of approximately 0.20 m. Unfortunately these were frosted early in the excavation before they could be properly drawn in section. For the most part they were constructed directly on top of the oven pit floor and were hard fired to an irregular width of 0.05 m - 0.16 m, containing few inclusions (just one or two small pebbles) and being burnt along the inner face to a blue-grey colour. There were few remnants of a softer red clay backing, except on either side of the flue walls where it was called 108/6. This consisted of an unfired red clay with 3% dark brown silty clay loam and 1% small stones, making the total width of the flue walls 0.10 m on either side. Both the fired and unfired clay walls had been set in a construction pit measuring 1.95 m east-west x 1.62 m north-south. It was cut through earlier features 117 and 138 and had a fill of dark brown silty clay loam with 5% black ash, 5% red fired clay flecks and up to 10% red sandy clay. The ash was presumably cleared from the surrounding feature 117, which contained considerable quantities of burnt material and pottery, whilst the high proportion of fired clay flecks probably came from the outer wall of the kiln lining, suggesting that it was infilled subsequent to the kiln's construction.

Other structural details were recovered from the flue, which measured 0.34 m across and 0.70 m (north side) to 0.80 m (south side) long. It was unusual in containing six stakeholes arranged in pairs along the insides of each wall, sealed by the lowermost fill of the kiln. The two easternmost pairs - 108/16 and 108/17, together with 108/15 and 108/18 - were cut into the flue bottom almost flush with the inner lining of the wall, whilst 108/14 and 108/9 were located partly within the clay lining itself at the junction between flue and oven.

Both 108/14 and 108/19 were 0.05 m in diameter and set at a slight angle so their tops leaned inwards towards the flue centre. 108/14 was 0.09 m deep and could not have penetrated further as it had hit a stone, 108/19 was deeper at 0.23 m and was tapered at the bottom. Both were filled with brown/dark brown silty clay loam with no trace of ash or charcoal. 108/15 and 108/18 had very similar dimensions to 108/14 and measured 0.05 m diameter x 0.12 m deep and 0.04 m diameter x 0.09 m deep respectively; they also tapered to a point and leaned inwards to the centre at perhaps a slightly greater angle than the first pair. They contained the same fill as 108/19. 108/16 and 108/17 were the easternmost pair and differed in containing the very fragmentary traces of two carbonised stakes. 108/16 measured 0.05 m across with carbonised remains 0.025 m in diameter and 0.09 m deep. Whilst 108/17 was slightly larger - 0.06 m across with a near circular stake measuring 0.03 m east-west x 0.025 m north-south x 0.08 m deep. Both stakes tapered to a point at the bottom and again leaned slightly inwards towards the centre of the flue. The charcoal was unfortunately too fragmentary for meaningful analysis and was set - a fill of dark brown (108/17) and brown/dark brown (108/16) silty clay loam.

10B/16 and 10B/17 were found 0.15 m apart and set 0.15 m - 0.20 m to the east of 10B/15 and 10B/18; 10B/15 and 10B/18 were 0.25 m apart and 0.07 m - 0.10 m from 10B/14 and 10B/19; and 10B/14 and 10B/19 were 0.36 m apart.

Another small stakehole - 10B/13 was located in the northern part of the oven. This was likewise sealed by the lowermost of the oven fills (in this case 10B/1) and was cut through the oven pit floor to a depth of 0.14 m. It had a diameter of 0.07 m and also tapered to a point at the bottom whilst angled so that its top leaned in towards the centre of the oven. Its fill was a similar brown/dark brown silty clay loam with 15% small flecks of red, slightly burnt, sandy clay, containing no trace of ash or charcoal. Despite a careful examination, no further stakeholes were revealed within the area.

The kiln itself contained six main fills. These consisted of an upper layer of fine soil and kiln collapse within the bowl - 10B/11 - overlying an ashy fill - 10B/11 - and clean silty layer - 10B/7 - inside the flue. These in turn sealed two further ashy layers - 10B/12 - in the stokehole.

10B/1 was the most substantial of these fills and was made up of a very fine brown/dark brown silty clay loam with 2% black ash. It contained at least 40% mostly fired, but some unfired, clay fragments to a size of 0.35 m x 0.20 m, which can be divided into two categories:- i) blue-grey reduced fragments concentrated towards the bottom and back of the kiln, generally rather thick and blocky with a flattish upper surface, often tilting down at a slight angle from the kiln wall towards the centre of the oven, and ii) red oxidised fragment located at the junction between oven and flue at a slightly higher level than i), and consisting mostly of thinner flattish slabs slanting down sharply at a roughly parallel angle to the flue and oven sides. Included in this latter group were also a few fragments of larger amorphous fired and unfired clay. These seem to represent a separate collapse of different parts of the kiln structure with i) probably being derived from the oven floor and pedestal and ii) coming from the upper walls and roof of the oven dome and flue. 10B/1 had a maximum depth of 0.22 m and formed virtually the entire fill of the oven pit.

10B/11 lay beneath this collapse in the flue and consisted of a mixed dark brown silty clay loam with 35% very dark grey ash, 5% small mottles of red clay and 4% charcoal flecks. It formed the uppermost of the ashy fills sloping progressively back from flue to stoke with the earliest located toward the eastern end of the stoke-pit (similarly to kiln 105). It covered the whole length and width of the flue measuring 0.71 m east-west x 0.07 m deep, and sealed a clean layer of mixed brown and strong brown silt loam - 10B/7 - at the junction between flue and oven. 10B/7 contained virtually no inclusions and was deepest in the centre of the floor (0.06 m); it extended 0.40 m east-west to within 0.20 m of the pedestal, and clearly overlay the main ashy fill of stoke-hole and flue - 10B/2.

108/2 was ashier than 108/11 and consisted of very dark grey and black ash with 35% dark brown silty clay loam, 3% fragments of red fired clay and a similar quantity of small charcoal flecks. It had a maximum depth of 0.16m and directly covered most of the flue floor, sealing stokeholes 108/16, 108/17 and 108/18. Its interface with the underlying ashy layer - 108/10 - was often indistinct, particularly in the northern and eastern parts of the stoke-hole. 108/10 was very similar in description but contained a greater percentage of black ash and also had a small quantity of larger charcoal fragments. It formed the lowermost of the ashy fills and was restricted to the area of the stoke-hole, overlying the irregular stoney stoke-pit floor. The only other fill was a small layer - 108/12 - confined to the northern side of the stoke-hole cut, underlying 108/10, consisting of brown/dark brown silty clay loam with 3% brown sand and 15% small stones; it measured 0.69 m east-west x 0.25 m north-south and was 0.05 m deep.

The stoke-hole itself, although truncated by furrow 107, appeared to be a similar size and shape to the kiln oven and survived to a total depth of 0.20 m. It measured 1.00 m north-south x 0.89 m east-west, although its southern edge was indistinct in places, having been cut through a feature - 117 - containing a very similar ashy fill.

Kiln 113

Kiln 113 was located some 1.5 m to the north of Kiln 108 and was orientated on the same west-east alignment. It was the largest of the excavated kilns and also one of the least well preserved, being bisected between flue and stoke-hole by a north-south furrow (107), and having the southern half of its oven removed by a later pit (115). It was also badly eroded from not having been cut as deeply into the subsoil as Kilns 105 or 108.

The oven had a minimum internal diameter of 1.10 m and survived to a maximum depth of 0.12 m. The oven pit sloped down very slightly from the back of the kiln to the flue and contained one large D- or wedge-shaped pedestal. This was located in the northern part of the oven and measured 0.65 m east-west x 0.38 m north-south; it had a vertical-sided inner (southern) edge which had been heavily reduced to a blue-grey colour. Traces of further blue-grey reduction on the the northern side of the pedestal correspond with the oven pit floor to show an area of greater heat in the central and eastern parts of the oven and flue. A second pedestal in the southern half of the kiln had presumably been removed by 115 so that the arrangement would originally have been similar to that in Kiln 3.

The oven walls only survived to full width in a short stretch immediately to the west of 115; here they were heavily reduced along the inside and had been hard-fired to a width of up to 0.09 m (113/4) with a backing of soft clay (113/6) making the wall a total of 0.11 m - 0.16 m thick. Although little survived of the flue, the softer clay backing in this area remained to a width of 0.14 - 0.18 m, suggesting that the kiln wall at this point was much more substantial. There were no inclusions in 113/4 which was fired variously from red through to blue-grey; a few small mottles of brown/dark brown sandy clay loam with c 2% small stones in the unburnt red clay backing of the wall was probably the result of root action.

The construction pit for the oven measured 1.52 m across north-south and contained a single fill - 113/5 - of brown/dark brown sandy clay loam with 10% small red clay mottles and 3% yellowish red sand. As in the other kilns the bottom of the construction pit was used as the oven pit floor which, in this case, had been dug through a layer of sandy subsoil onto a finer and more clayey bedding.

The stoke hole had been dug to a similar depth - 0.15 m - but there was no such concern over the nature of the floor which was cut into a subsoil of mixed sand and stone. It was very large and irregular and was separated by over 1 m from the oven by a large furrow -107. It measured 3.65 m east-west x 1.70 -2.25 m north-south and had been dug to a relatively consistent flattish bottom, surviving to a depth of 0.05 m - 0.15 m.

The oven and stoke-hole contained a total of eight fills which can be divided into clean lower layers (113/4 and 113/13), ashy firing residue (113/2 and 113/11 in the flue and oven, 113/3, 113/12 and 113/14 in the stoke-hole) and kiln collapse and abandonment in the oven (113/8). 113/8 contained up to 20% small to large fragments of fired and unfired clay in a matrix of brown/dark brown silty clay loam with under 5% black ash mottling; this had a maximum surviving depth of 0.10 m and was located in the western half of the oven, extending 0.55 m eastward from the back wall of the kiln.

To the east of this the main fill consisted of a mixed layer of black ash with 35% very dark greyish brown silty clay loam, overlying a more concentrated black ashy lens containing only 25% brown/dark brown silty clay loam - 113/11. 113/11 probably formed the remnant of the lower fill of the flue and was only 0.02 m deep, whilst 113/2 had a more westerly distribution and extended as far into the area as the eastern tip of the pedestal; this lay to a depth of 0.10 m.

A number of similar layers in the stoke-hole were concentrated in the western and southern parts of the cut, and differed from 113/11 only in percentages of ash. The most westerly of these - 113/12 - contained up to 80% ash, whilst its more widespread variant - 113/3 - held up to 50%. These extended 2.30 m into the stoke-hole and lay to a depth of 0.03 m - 0.12 m, measuring up to 1.40 m across. A more isolated ashy patch in the south-eastern part of the stoke-hole measured 0.85 m east-west x 0.60 m north-south x 0.10 m deep and contained small quantities of fired clay and pottery wastes.

Underlying these layers in the stoke-hole and oven were two much cleaner deposits. 113/9 was sealed by 113/8 and 113/2 and consisted of a mixed strong brown silty clay loam and brown/dark brown silty clay with a very small amount of charcoal and red fired clay flecking (less than 2% each); this was 0.09 m deep and confined to the central part of the oven pit, extending to the north and south of the pedestal, having perhaps been raked away in the eastern section of the oven. 113/13 survived rather more extensively and formed the main lower fill of the stoke-hole; this consisted of a brown/dark brown silty clay loam (in places silt loam), with 5% black ash and 20% brown and strong brown sand. It also contained a comparatively large quantity of stone (12%) and less than 1% red fired clay flecks. It lay to a depth of 0.15 m and was found throughout the stoke hole except the very western part, increasing in depth towards the north and east. Both 113/9 and 113/13 may represent a silting up of the kiln prior to firing.

Enclosure Ditch 109, 114

Surrounding the kilns to the north and east was a continuous ditch excavated as 109 in its western stretch and 114 in its northern. This ran northward for some 11 m within the excavated area (109) before turning east at a sharp right angle and proceeding at least another 27 m towards Area C (114).

Sections were recorded at approximate 6 m intervals and established a consistent sequence showing that the ditch had been re-cut, probably along its whole length. For the most part the re-cut followed the line of the original ditch and had removed much of the earlier fill. Sufficient of the original cut survived, however, to show that it had irregular, partly stepped sides and a flat or slightly rounded bottom.

This was best preserved in the north-western corner of the enclosure where the original profile measured 0.42 m deep x 1.2 m across (truncated along its eastern edge). At this point it contained three fills of which the uppermost - 109/5 - was a mixed loam, and the mid and lower fills - 109/12 - and 109/13 respectively - were subsoil eroded deposits. 109/5 consisted of a brown sandy silt loam with 20% brown/dark brown silty clay loam and 15% small and medium stones, and was 0.15 m deep; 109/12 was

0.11 m deep and made up of equal proportions (24%) of light brown silt loam and fine yellowish red sand with 2% reddish brown clay; and 109/13 was 0.22 m deep, consisting of a fine reddish brown sand with 10% light brown silt loam, 10% light brown sand and 10% reddish brown clay. Both 109/12 and 109/13 contained very small quantities of charcoal (less than 0.5%) and 109/13 had a rather compacted feel.

Elsewhere, the original ditch was represented by the remnants of a lower fill very similar to 109/13 (109/11, 114/6, 114/14, and 114/16). This was characterised by its harder texture, containing variable quantities of clay and sand according to the nature of the subsoil through which it was dug. It survived to a depth of 0.04 m - 0.11 m and showed this ditch cut to have drained from west to east.

The re-cut was both shallower and broader than the original ditch and had a consistent profile with regular sides, steeper along its inner edge, graduating to a broad flattish bottom. It also drained eastward and had a primary fill sequence consisting of a lower layer of mottled sand, clay and silt (109/6, 09/14, 114/5, 114/10, 114/11) overlaying a mid-fill of silty loams, sand and clay (109/2, 109/4, 109/7, 114/3) as well as a more general upper silting of silty clay loam (109/2, 109/10, 114/2, 114/7, 114/9).

The primary layers were collectively 0.10 m - 0.33 m deep with an interface between lower and mid-fills which was often indistinct. The lower fill consisted predominantly of brown sand with 30% brown/light brown silt loam and 15% - 35% reddish brown clay in ill-defined mottling, whilst the mid-fill was a more integrated layer of brown/dark brown silty clay loam and/or sandy silt loam with lesser quantities of reddish brown clay and brown sand.

Directly above these layers in the north-western corner of the ditch was a clay deposit containing large amounts of pottery - 109/7. This measured 0.90 m long x 0.09 m deep and unlike the primary fills of the re-cut and the fill of the original ditch, appears to have been a deliberate dump of material. It consisted of 40% pottery fragments in a matrix of reddish brown clay with 10% stone and 1% charcoal; the pottery was in unusually small and consistent pieces (both mortaria and coarseware).

Sealing this was a more widespread secondary silting of brown/dark brown silty clay loam (109/2, 109/10, 114/2, 114/7, 114/9) which was present throughout the whole length of the ditch, except for the southern end of 109. It generally became deeper towards the eastern end of 114 where it lay to a depth of 0.24 m, and contained a variable quantity of finds, notably dense to the north of Kiln 113 (114/2) but tailing off to the east of Kiln F5 (114/7, 114/9) and, to a lesser extent, southward through 109 (109/2, 109/10).

Other layers in the very top of the ditch contained even greater amounts of pottery and fired clay and, like 109/7, probably represent deliberate dumping; 109/3 and 109/4 were both situated immediately to the west of kilns 108 and 113 and additionally contained much burnt stone, charcoal and, in the case of 109/3, ash. 109/3 was the more widespread of the two, measuring 8.80 m north-south x 0.15 m deep, and consisted of mixed black ash and brown to very dark greyish brown sandy clay loam with 5% charcoal flecks and 12% stone. 109/4 lay directly above this and measured 2.30 m north-south x 0.11 m deep; this was made up of brown sandy clay loam with 8% reddish brown sand, 5% charcoal flecks, and 15% stone. 114/3 was very similar but located to the north of kiln 113. This measured 6.45 m east-west x 0.20 m deep and contained up to 30% fired clay and pottery (mostly mortaria) in a matrix of dark grey ash and dark brown to dark grey silty clay loam with 5% charcoal flecks and 5% stone. The quantity of burnt material in 114/3 and 109/3 suggests that they were the residues of kiln firing.

FLINT by John Pickin

SF1, AREA F, Context 102

A backed knife on a flake of grey mottled flint with steep retouch along one edge; the cutting edge has been finely denticulated through use. Rough flake scars at the proximal end of the dorsal surface relate to trimming or damage before the main flake was detached from the core.

This type of knife cannot be closely dated and may belong to either the Neolithic or Bronze Age.

BRONZE COIN by W A Seaby

SF5, Area F, Context 109/9

Portion of a very decayed coin. Possibly (from diameter) an As of the 1st or 2nd century BC.