

REPORTS

An Early Iron Age Occupation Site, a Roman Shrine and Other Prehistoric Activity at Coxwell Road, Faringdon

By STEVEN D. G. WEAVER and STEVE FORD

with contributions by PAUL CANNON, ADAM CRONEY,
SHEILA HAMILTON-DYER, DAVID RICHARDS, MARK ROBINSON, CHRIS SALTER,
ANDY SMITH, JANE TIMBY and DAVID WILLIAMS

SUMMARY

This report describes the excavation of archaeological deposits on land to the west of Coxwell Road, Faringdon, west Oxfordshire, carried out prior to development of the site for housing. Evidence for a number of phases of periodic activity has been recorded, ranging from the Mesolithic to the post-medieval periods. There is evidence for a substantial open site during the early Iron Age; this includes only modest evidence for occupied structures, but is dominated by a large number of pits, the large volumes of many of which suggest they can be regarded as grain storage pits. The imbalance between storage pits and occupation structures points to an unexpected type of site. A small part of the site was reused during the Roman period, the most significant aspect of which was a 2nd-century or later shrine or temple. Struck flint of Mesolithic date, pottery of early, middle and late Bronze Age date and a single middle Iron Age pit indicate some activity on the site during other periods. The site was subsequently overlain by medieval ridge-and-furrow cultivation.

The site is located on the west side of Coxwell Road (B4019), Faringdon, Oxfordshire (SU 2807 9455), immediately south of the excavation by Oxford Archaeology (see following report). Formerly a market garden, at the time of the evaluation and excavation the site comprised an area of grassland of approximately 2.2 hectares. The development area is situated on the crest of a hill which slopes down to the south and east at an approximate height of 125 m. above Ordnance Datum. The underlying geology is Lower Greensand and Corallian Beds.¹ The project was commissioned by J. A. Pye (Oxford) Ltd. and comprised two stages with field evaluation trenching followed by open area excavation. The finds and archive have been deposited with Oxfordshire Museum Service (accession number 1998.39).

ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The Upper Thames region is an area of southern England where a high density of Iron Age settlement has been both identified and investigated. The long tradition of observation and recording in the region as summarised by Harding² has been supplemented by the wealth

¹ British Geological Survey (1971), 1:63360, Sheet 253, Drift Edition.

² D.W. Harding, *The Iron Age in the Upper Thames Basin* (1972).

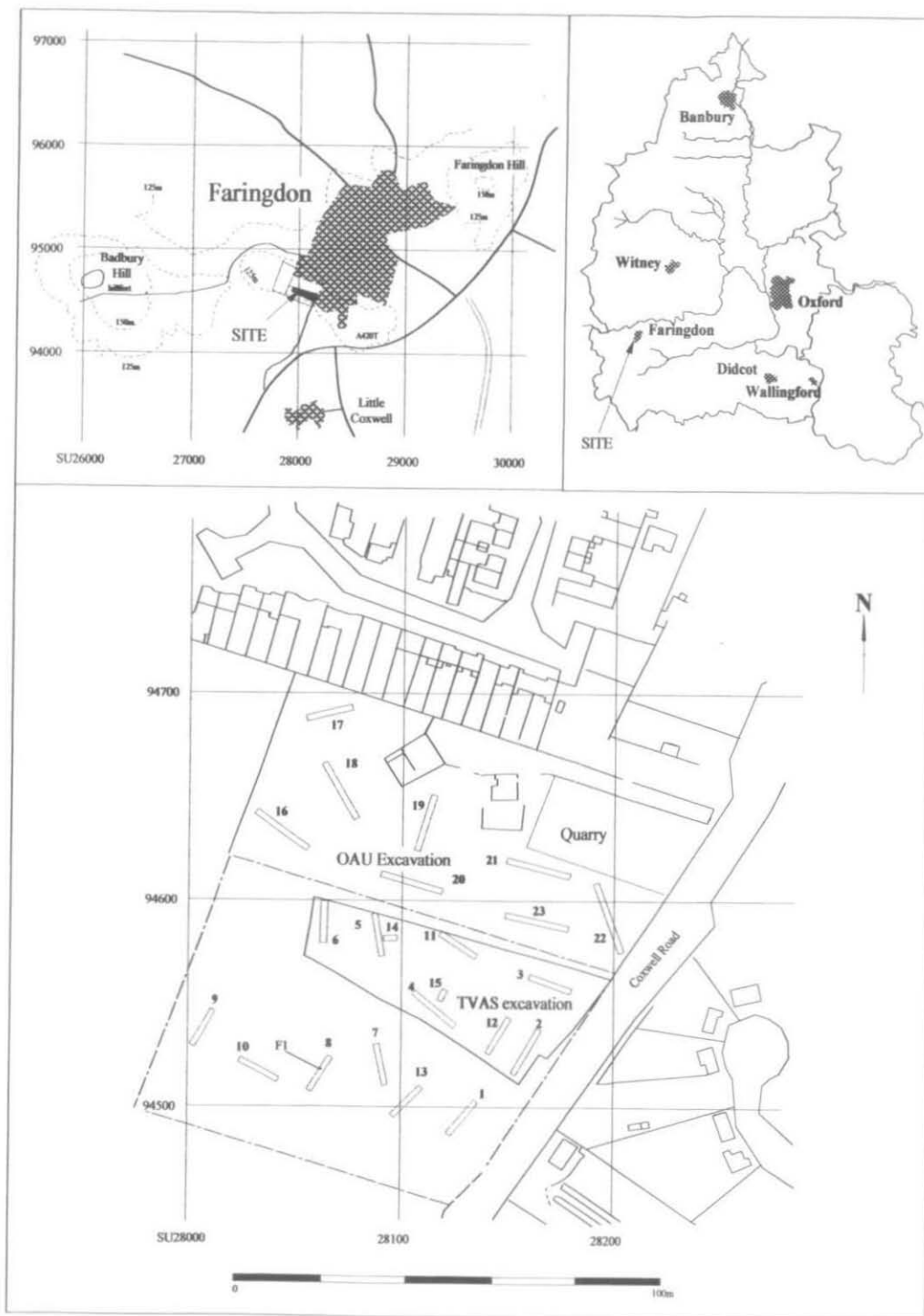


Fig. 1. Site location.

of aerial photographic evidence, for the gravel terraces at least,³ and in more recent times by systematic fieldwork and interpretation.⁴ Far to the south, in the contrasting topographic and geological setting of the central chalklands of Wessex, a similar level of investigation and interpretation has taken place.⁵ The nature of Iron Age use of adjacent areas, such as the Corallian ridge on which this site lies, is much less well understood, and in other parts of the Oxford region, fewer sites have been recorded from chance observations and aerial photography and fewer still have been subject to systematic examination. It is against this background that the significance of this site needs to be assessed.⁶

Finds previously discovered in the vicinity of Coxwell Road include early Iron Age and Roman pottery including 4th-century wares. Later Iron Age and Roman settlements have been identified from artefact scatters at Bowling Green Farm and Hatford, both nearby (Fig. 1), and dense scatters of Roman pottery have been discovered at Court House, Great Coxwell. The hillfort of Great Badbury lies only a short distance to the west. Quarrying of parts of the site immediately to the north has resulted in the discovery of the pottery which ultimately led to the further work reported here.

THE EVALUATION

The evaluation of the site consisted of 13 trenches, each 20 m. long.⁷ This identified evidence for Iron Age settlement, with the main area of archaeological potential located towards the northern part of the site. A number of small pits including two clay-lined examples and postholes of this date were found, together with layers or spreads containing Roman pottery. Large quantities of limestone rubble also hinted at the presence of a substantial building in the vicinity.

THE EXCAVATION (FIG. 2)

A single area of 5,652 sq. m., located relative to the evaluation findings, was machine-stripped of topsoil using a 360° machine fitted with a grading bucket. In the north-western part of the site, the topsoil was removed to reveal a dark homogenous deposit, interpreted as the remains of the medieval headland recorded during the evaluation (369). After planning and recording this was removed by machine, with two baulks retained to record the stratigraphy.

³ D. Benson and D. Miles, *The Upper Thames Valley: An Archaeological Survey of the River Gravels* (1974).

⁴ M. Parrington, *The Excavation of an Iron Age Settlement, Bronze Age Ring Ditches and Roman Features at Ashville Trading Estate, Abingdon, Oxfordshire, 1974–1976* (Oxford Archaeol. Unit Rep. 1/C.B.A. Res. Rep. 28, 1978); G. Lambrick and M. Robinson, *Iron Age and Roman Riverside Settlements at Farmoor, Oxfordshire*, Oxford Archaeol. Unit Rep. 2/C.B.A. Res. Rep. 32 (1979); R. Hingley and D. Miles, 'Aspects of Iron Age Settlement in the Upper Thames Valley', in B. Cunliffe and D. Miles (eds.), *Aspects of the Iron Age in Southern Britain*, Oxford Univ. Comm. Archaeol. Monograph 2 (1984), 52–71.

⁵ B. Cunliffe and C. Poole, *Danebury: An Iron Age Hillfort in Hampshire. Volume 4 The Excavations 1979–1988: The Site*, C.B.A. Research Report 73 (1991); B. Cunliffe (ed.), *The Danebury Environs Programme: The Prehistory of a Wessex Landscape* (2000); P. Fasham, *The Prehistoric Settlement at Winnall Down*, Winchester, Hampshire Fld. Club Archaeol. Soc. Monograph 2 (1985); G.J. Wainright, *Gussage All Saints: An Iron Age Settlement in Dorset*, Dept of Environment Archaeol. Rep. 10 (1979); T.G. Allen, *An Iron Age and Romano-British Enclosed Settlement at Watkins Farm, Northmoor, Oxon*, Thames Valley Landscapes: The Windrush Valley, 1 (1990).

⁶ Hingley and Miles, op. cit. (note 4), Fig. 4.1.

⁷ M.J. Saunders, 'Coxwell Road, Faringdon, Oxfordshire, Archaeological Evaluation' Thames Valley Archaeological Services Rep. 98/10, 1998.



Fig. 2. The excavation.

The site geology consisted of sand over clay but initial machine-stripping indicated that the underlying topography appeared to form a bowl at the base of the west-east slope, where sandy colluvial deposit had accumulated. Further stripping of these sandy deposits was required to define cut archaeological features clearly. It became apparent that deposition of these colluvial deposits must have occurred before the Iron Age.

DESCRIPTION OF EXCAVATION BY PHASE (FIGS. 3, 4 AND 5)

Phase 1: Mesolithic

A small collection of 81 struck flints was recovered from the excavation. The presence of this material would either suggest casual loss, or imply the presence of a small, temporary, task-specific site.⁸ The collection includes two microliths, blades, and a distinctive end scraper, and is largely, if not wholly, Mesolithic in date. The finds were dispersed across the site, with no apparent clustering. Considering the presence of a sherd of Beaker pottery on the site it is possible that some of these struck flints may belong to phase 2.

Phase 2: early to late Bronze Age

Only one feature, Posthole 1017, contained pottery exclusively of this date and this was a single Beaker sherd, insufficient to date this feature confidently to an early phase. The remainder of the sherds of this date occurred as residual material in later features. The most distinctive sherds include a possible lug on a sherd from Pit 324 and the Beaker sherd from Posthole 1017.

Phase 3: early Iron Age

The main focus of occupation on the site dates to this phase and is characterised by large groups of pits, a smaller number of postholes, several forming plausible structures, and a small number of ditches. The poverty of stratified finds and securely dated deposits of other periods suggests that the majority of the undated features on the site are likely to belong to this phase also. For the purposes of this narrative therefore the latter have been assigned to this phase.

The chronology of this phase has been determined by pottery typology but despite evidence for time depth to some of these features, there is no typological development of the pottery assemblage to elucidate this. In fact the presence of just one middle Iron Age pit (1036) on the site, and a few scraps of late Bronze Age pottery, suggests that this phase is restricted in time.

The Ditches. Twelve ditches and gullies were recorded (1600–1610, 1612). It was not clear if one feature (1613) at the margin of the excavated site was a pit or ditch.

Ditch 1600/1601 followed a sinuous path NW–SE, neatly subdividing the excavated area into two parts. It was a little over 2 m. across at its widest point with a maximum depth of 0.70 m. It was markedly thinner and shallower to the south-east (=1600) and this portion may represent a later extension. Ditch 1608 was aligned NE–SW with a northern terminal. No clear relationship could be established between this feature and Ditch 1600/1601, and a small length of ditch (1609), perhaps a recut, was present at the junction. Its plan had the appearance of a partial subdivision of the area bounded by Ditch 1600/1601. It is possible it was an earlier ditch, superseded when 1601 was extended by the digging of 1600. In the north-east corner of the site was a substantial ditch (1612), although only a small part of this could be examined as its continuation lay outside of the excavation area. It was aligned north–south and measured 1.6 m. deep and c. 3 m. wide. It was of different character from Ditch 1600/1601 and seems unlikely to have been linked to the latter to form a single enclosure.

A single curving ditch (1602) appeared to redefine and truncate two, possibly three, ditches (1603, 1604 and 1611) in the north-west section of the site, all of which surrounded Roman Structure 101. The dating of these features to phase 3 is as consistent as the dating of other features across the site, but the association with Structure 101 (below) leads to a suspicion that they should be later in date and they may have formed a *temenos*. Ditch 1603 (1202) produced only a single large sherd of pottery, while Ditch 1604 produced no datable finds. Both segments across the later ditch (1602) produced reasonable quantities (20 and 23 sherds) of Iron Age pottery but one (1210) produced 4 sherds of Roman pottery. These features lie in an area of the site disturbed by tree roots and thus the Roman pottery is thought to be intrusive, but they also lie in an area containing Iron Age pits. The truncation of the latter could have generated a large volume of residual finds. On balance, an early Iron Age date is preferred.

⁸ L. Binford, 'The Archaeology of Place', *Jnl. Anthropol Archaeol.* 1 (1982), 5–31.

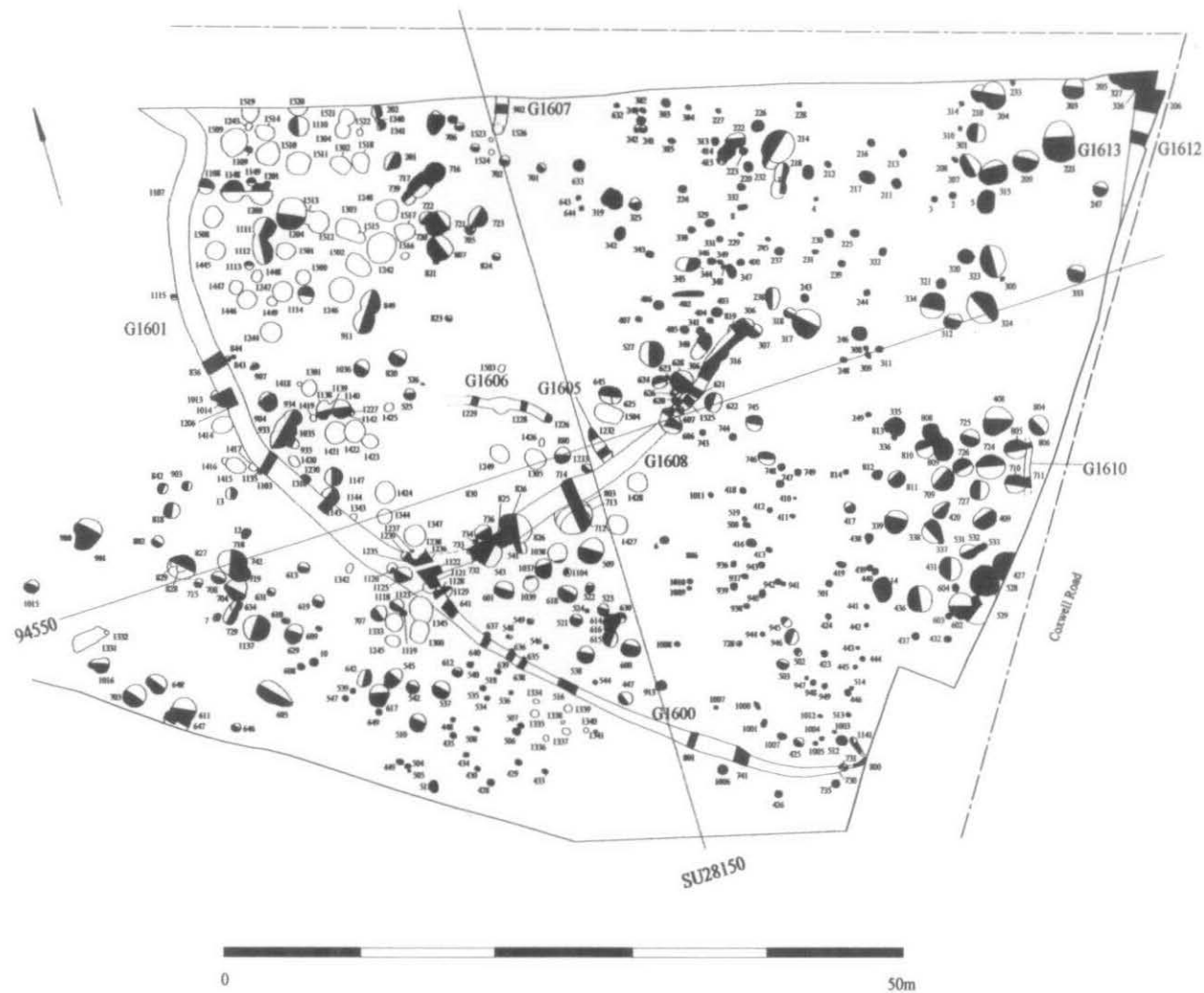
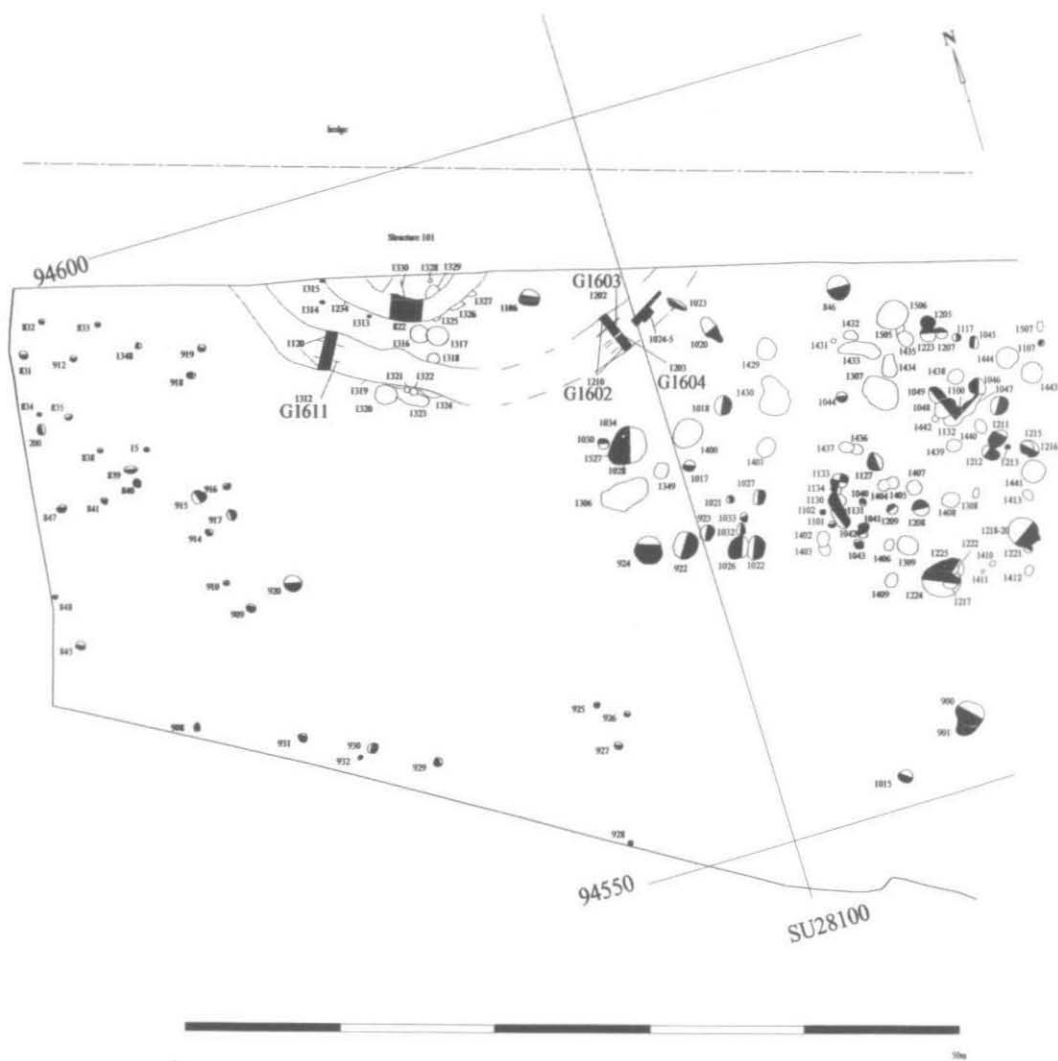
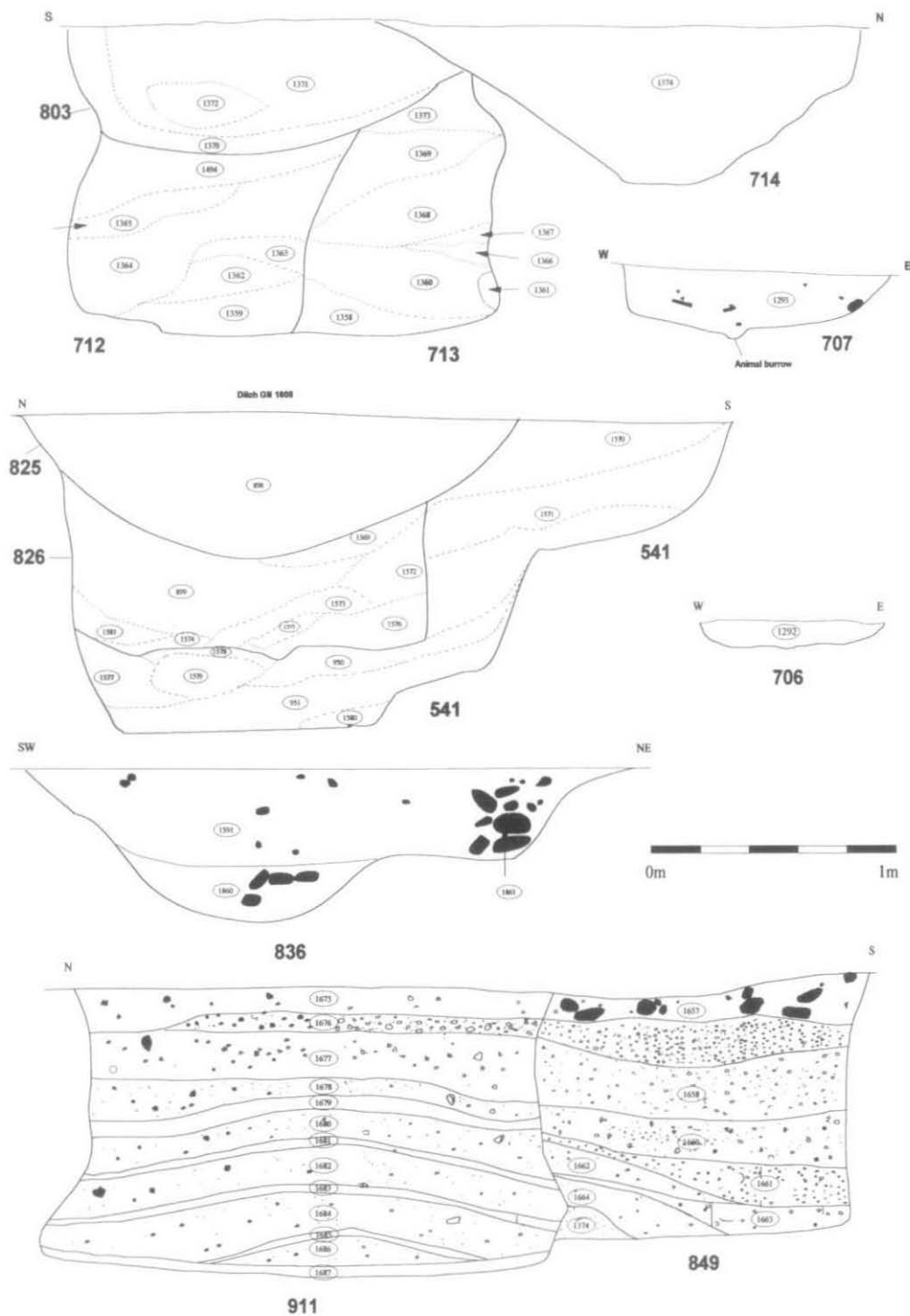


Fig. 3. Excavated features (east).





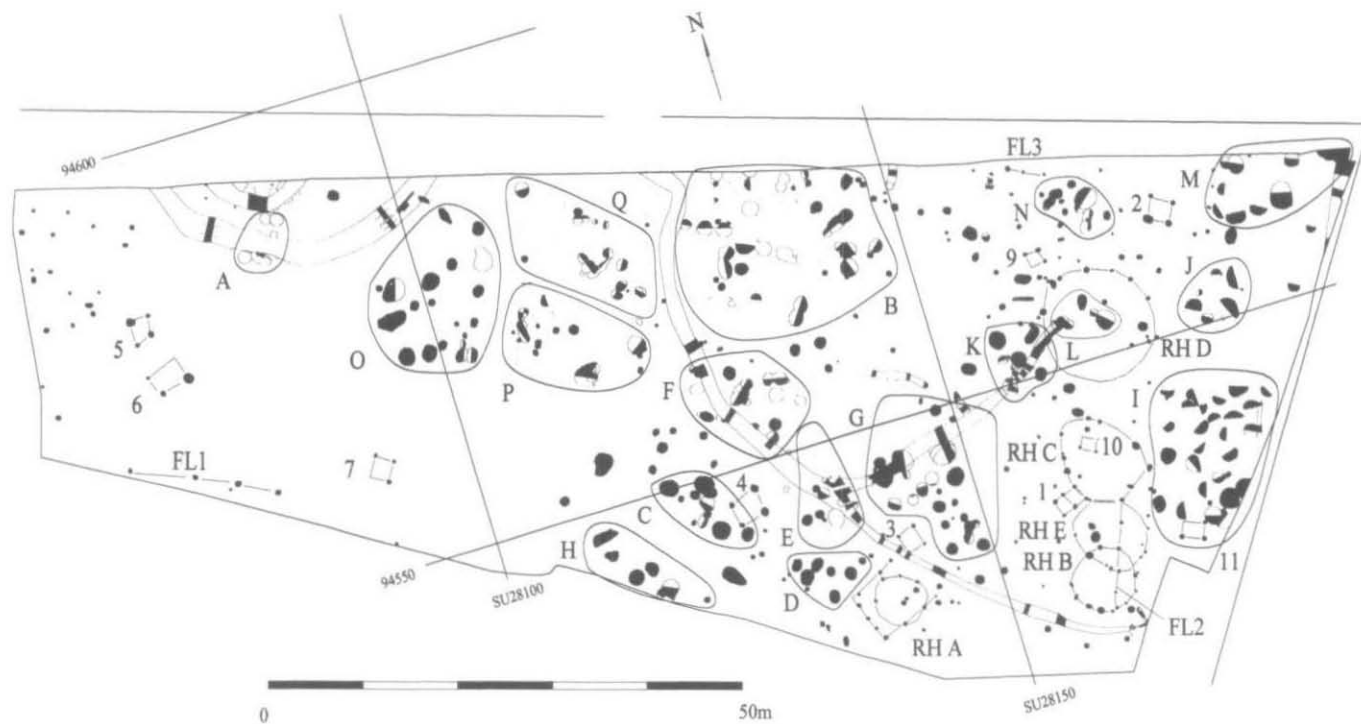


Fig. 6. Pit groups and structures.

Four short lengths of gully were also found within the main area of the site (1605-7, 1610) and one of these was truncated by Ditch 1608. None of these represented ring gully structures and their function(s) remain unknown.

Postholes and posthole structures. Some 248 features were interpreted as postholes or pits/postholes of which 112 contained pottery of this period. As on many densely occupied sites, the plan of postholes appears haphazard, and regular, easily interpretable patterning should not be expected either now or in the past. Nevertheless it is possible to interpret some groupings of postholes as deliberate structures.

Roundhouses (Fig. 4)

Roundhouse Structure A

This possible house comprised six features (508, 534, 536, 1334, 1336 and 429) forming a circular area with a maximum diameter of 5.2 m. The postholes ranged in diameter from 0.29 to 0.46 m. and in depth from 0.22 to 0.34 m. Just one of these postholes (429) produced datable pottery. There was no evidence for the position of an entrance but three more postholes (506, 507 and 1335) may possibly have been for internal structural features. Of these only 506 could be dated to the Iron Age.

Structure B

This circular structure encompassed eight features (503, 502, 423, 446, 513, 1003, 1004, 1005, 425, 1007, 1001, 1000) with a diameter of 6.8 m. The features were very diverse, ranging in diameter from 0.30 to 0.80 m. and from 0.04 to 0.72 m. in depth. Only Posthole 513 could be dated by its pottery. There was a gap on the west side but no indication of an entrance or a central hearth although a single posthole (1012) of Iron Age date lay within the roundhouse. A further posthole (514) may have been cut as a replacement for Posthole 446 or as additional support.

Structure C

Another possible circular structure consisted of up to twelve postholes (416, 500, 519, 418, 748, 749, 417, 438, 419, 501, 942, 943). These ranged from 0.27 to 0.75 m. in diameter and from 0.1 to 0.50 m. in depth. Five of the postholes (416, 419, 519, 748, 749 and 942) were datable by their pottery. Apart from a large gap on the northern side, no entrance was evident. Three postholes (412, 413 and 747) were present within this possible roundhouse, all dated by their pottery to the Iron Age. Two stakeholes (410 and 410) were also present, though these, along with 412, might represent a 3-post structure of a different sub-phase.

Structure D

This possible house comprised an arc of features (341, 403, 347, 400, 237, 231, 239, 244, 311). If this was indeed a structure, only the northern half could be detected. Two features (816 and 817) to the south lie close to the projected circumference but they have been interpreted as tree-root holes. This would, if real, have been the largest building on the site with a probable diameter of c. 12 m. The features varied in diameter from 0.30 to 0.64 m. and 0.10 to 0.37 m. in depth. Six of the features (237, 239, 308, 347, 400 and 403) contained pottery of Iron Age date.

Structure E

Structure C comprised a series of ten features (944, 942, 501, 441, 442, 444, 445, 949, 948 and 947). A small pit (503) may also be associated with this structure or may have removed an earlier posthole. The postholes ranged from 0.25 to 0.60 m. in diameter and from 0.13 to 0.33 m. in depth while the small pit/large posthole (503) was 0.85 m. in diameter and 0.72 m. deep. Only Posthole 948 and Pit 503 were dated to the Iron Age by pottery. Again no entrance could be identified and no evidence of internal structures was present. This structure, if valid, overlapped the position of Structure B and shared a feature (501) with Structure C, indicating sub-phasing within the occupation, but no sequence could be established.

Other post-built structures

Three- and four-post structures

Eleven rectangular arrangements of either four clear postholes or probable similar structures lacking one earthfast post, have been identified. It is very likely that in each of the latter cases a fourth posthole once existed but may have been shallow, any trace being removed by later activity such as ploughing. The validity of the existence of three-post versions of these structures is best supported by the presence of Structure 7, which occurred in an isolated position and cannot have been a product of random patterning or selective deep erosion.

Four-post configurations are frequently encountered on sites of this period and their most plausible interpretation is as raised granaries,⁹ although in some cases, as with two-post settings, they have also been seen as drying racks for grain or skins.¹⁰ Further explanations include suggestions that they supported sheds or platforms for other purposes or are the surviving evidence of porches for stake-walled round houses.¹¹

TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF THREE- AND FOUR-POST STRUCTURES:

Structure	Features	Size (m.)	Feature diameters (m.)	Feature depths (m.)
1	939, 937, 940, 938	1.8 x 1.7	0.40–0.60	0.22–0.33
2	216, 213, 211, 217	2.4 x 2.4	0.50–0.70	0.28–0.40
3	548, 549, 546, 635	2.0 x 2.2	0.40–0.44	0.20–0.49
4	613, 619, 610, 631	2.9 x 2.7	0.52–0.85	0.30–0.64
5	915, 916, 917, 914	2.0 x 2.4	0.48–1.06	0.20–0.63
6	910, 909, 920	3.2 x 3.2	0.40–0.60	0.39–0.50
7	925, 926, 927	2.2 x 2.2	0.36–0.52	0.23–0.43
8	1516, 821, 721	2.8 x 2.8	0.35–0.58	0.55–0.70
9	330, 329, 331	1.5 x 1.5	0.37–0.55	0.32–0.62
10	412, 411, 410	1.8 x 1.2	0.16–0.31	0.14–0.21
11	437, 432, 603	2.4 x 1.8	0.35–0.50	0.18–0.29

Six-post structure?

An alternative interpretation of Structure 1 is that it belongs to a six-post structure with dimensions of 3.0 x 1.7 m. by the addition of features 942 and 943 which had been assigned to Roundhouse C.

Rectangular structure?

An alternative interpretation of the postholes in the vicinity of Roundhouse Structure A is that they represent a rectangular structure. The building would then comprise ten postholes (518, 535, 448, 435, 434, 430, 428, 429, 1336 and 1338) giving a width of 5.5 m. and length of at least 7 m. There was no clear wall line at the north-eastern end and a corner post on the south-west side was absent.

Fence lines. Three linear arrangements of postholes (FL1–3) could be identified, which may have indicated the positions of fences or windbreaks. Fence Line 1 was aligned east–west in the south-west part of the site. This comprised Postholes 908, 929, 930 and 931 and covered a distance of 16 m. The spacing between posts was irregular and one gap especially large, but in this part of the site there were no other features which could have produced such a random alignment of posts. Fence Line 2 consists of 6 postholes (501, 424, 423, 949, 1012 and 1004) aligned NE–SW and comprises an alternative interpretation of several postholes previously assigned to Roundhouses B, C and E. Fence Line 3 is doubtful as it comprises just three postholes (303, 304 and 207) aligned east–west.

Stakeholes. Two small undated features thought to be stakeholes (410, 411) form part of the 3-post Structure 10.

The pits. A high density of pits was recorded across the site. Some 371 were identified, a total which included three scoops and a number that could equally be small pits or large postholes. Most of the pits occurred in distinct clusters, which could be both large and tightly packed, or more dispersed. Smaller groups and isolated pits were also present. Many of the pits were of substantial width and depth and would have been capable of storing considerable quantities of grain. A very small number of pits received special, perhaps placed,

⁹ H. Gent, 'Centralised Storage in Later Prehistoric Britain', *Proc. Prehist. Soc.* 49 (1983), 243–268.

¹⁰ G. Bersu, 'Excavations at Little Woodbury, Wiltshire', *Proc. Prehist. Soc.* 6 (1940), 30–111.

¹¹ A. Ellison and P. Drewett, 'Pits and Postholes in the British Early Iron Age: Some Alternative Explanations', *Proc. Prehist. Soc.* 37 (1971), 183–194; G. Guilbert, 'Planned Hillfort Interiors', *Proc. Prehist. Soc.* 41 (1975), 203–31.

deposits. The pits have been categorised and analysed based on a classification system devised at Pennyland, Milton Keynes, which draws upon earlier published works.¹² Several of the pits included in the analysis below were described as postholes during the fieldwork, and there is a large overlap in the size range of small pits and postholes. Unless there is clear evidence for the former presence of posts such as in the form of post-pipes, packing stones or a firm association with other structural postholes, such features have been included in the analysis below. In practice, any circular or oval features with a width exceeding 0.45 m. have been included.

The pit types comprise:

- Type 1: bowl-shaped profiles (Fig. 5.825)
- Type 2: beehive (2A) or bell-shaped (2B) (Fig. 5.911)
- Type 3: barrel (3A) or cylindrical (3B) (Fig. 5.849)
- Type 4: wide, shallow, flat-based pits or scoops (Fig. 5.707)
- Type 5: clay-lined (usually small with bowl-shaped profiles) (Fig. 5.706)
- Type 6: miscellaneous forms
- Type 7: unexcavated.

Pit Groups. For descriptive purposes 275 pits have been assigned to 17 groups by visually scanning the pattern and this accounts for 74% of the pits found (Table 2).

TABLE 2: ANALYSIS OF PIT GROUPS

Group	No.	Diameter (m)	Depth (m)	Type					irreg.	Undug	Volume (m ³) (types 1-4 only)
				1	2	3	4	5			
A	6	0.8-1.6	-							6	-
B	55	0.45-2.1	0.07-1.2	5	3	7	5	2	4	29	0.81
C	13	0.62-1.8	0.24-1.0	1	1	4	5		2		0.81
D	7	0.72-1.49	0.37-1.53	1	3	1			2		1.12
E	13	0.84-1.66	0.24-1.21	1		5				7	0.48
F	19	0.48-1.6	0.12-0.66	3	1	3	3	1		8	0.48
G	22	0.6-1.7	0.15-1.75	1	5	8	2	1		5	0.83
H	7	0.65-1.9	0.34-1.5		1	4			1	1	1.91
I	27	0.45-2.85	0.18-1.18	6	6	8	3		4		1.34
J	6	0.88-2.4	0.32-0.85	4		2					1.89
K	7	0.78-2.0	0.16-1.18	2	1	2	2				1.62
L	4	0.7-1.78	0.5-0.82	2	1	1					0.83
M	9	0.65-1.93	0.4-1.2		1	7	1				1.58
N	8	0.73-2.17	0.18-1.03	5		2			1		0.72
O	19	0.52-2.45	0.18-1.35	7		5			1	6	0.73
P	27	0.49-2.45	0.16-0.57	6		6	2		1	12	0.47
Q	26	0.56-1.48	0.12-0.61	8		2		2	2	13	0.37

¹² R.J. Williams, *Pennyland and Hartigans: Two Iron Age and Saxon Sites in Milton Keynes*, Buckinghamshire Archaeol. Soc. Monograph Ser., 4 (1993), 39.

Despite the large number of pits, and their volumes, for the most part their contents were unremarkable. The more distinctive examples comprise those containing special or placed deposits (below) (one, 913, containing the near complete remains of a pot (Fig. 10.9)), the clay-lined pits, and pits which were partially infilled with lenses of stone (e.g. 545). Following their last use, the remaining pits appear to have silted up naturally with bone and pottery becoming incorporated within the fills only incidentally. Apart from the very few placed deposits, there is no evidence for a specific pattern of end use. There are no examples of discrete, dense dumps of primary refuse which is subsequently deliberately buried. Finds per feature are typically few, so much so that the paucity of pottery sherds caused difficulties in providing dating. Many of the larger pits revealed a simple stratigraphy with just two or three fills. Others were more complex, with multi-layering present (e.g. 641, 712, 713, 849, 911; Fig. 5). Given the sheer density and volumes of the pits and their short time span, a plausible interpretation might be that the community simply did not generate sufficient durable refuse to fill these features.

It seems reasonable to conclude that the larger pits were for the below-ground storage of grain.¹³ Yet despite an extensive programme of sampling (273 contexts) for charred plant remains, flotation and analysis was particularly disappointing, though perhaps not entirely unexpected.¹⁴ Very few charred plant remains were recovered and the most noteworthy, a fragment of bread, is not relevant to a discussion on grain storage. There was nothing to suggest the presence of the dumped crop-processing residues. Ideally, to reduce bulk, grain needs to be prepared by the removal of the awns and this is best achieved by flailing and winnowing without the use of fire, though the subsequent use of the residues as fuel can be archaeologically recognisable as carbonised remains. The process of winnowing needs an area clear of structures and it may be no coincidence that an area at the centre of the site was clear of structures but surrounded by dense pit digging.

The average volume of the excavated pits, excluding the specialised clay-lined pits (Type 5) and un-categorised pits, was 1.01 m.³ with a standard deviation of 0.96 and a median of 0.67 m.³ The number of pits used for this calculation was 167. The calculation was achieved using a simple surface diameter/depth calculation with no allowance for irregular shape. The largest volume was 4.25 m.³ and 42 pits (25%) exceeded 1.5 m.³

Clay-lined pits. Twelve clay-lined pits (6, 7, 311, 525, 705, 706, 1044, 1205, 1209, 1230, 1233 and 1526) were recorded with diameters ranging from 0.50 to 0.92 m. and depths of 0.09 to 0.28 m. These are not an uncommon discovery on sites of this period within the Midlands region. Similar clay-lined pits were found at Bancroft, Milton Keynes, in association with burnt stone/flint 'pot boilers', and it is suggested that they functioned as boiling pits, for cooking food or heating water.¹⁵ Although no significant quantities of burnt stone were actually present within the pits, in at least two instances adjacent pits were found to contain significant amounts of burnt limestone, possibly suggesting the cleaning of debris from the others.

Placed deposits? Pits or other features with placed deposits were conspicuous by their rarity. Six features did contain deposits possibly characteristic of ritual activity. A seventh feature, Pit 509, with a distinctly shaft-like profile, produced no deposits of unusual character. Pit 301 contained the well-preserved remains of a fox and cub, a raven, two neonate piglets and small mammals including water vole, field vole and woodmouse. Worn sheep and cattle bone formed a minor component in this pit. These bones were not obviously placed on the base of the pit, nor in any specific orientation to each other. Pit 541 produced the wing and leg bones of a raven. Pit 545 had an unusual profile with a deep undercut extension. The basal infill (981) contained the articulated remains of a puppy and an upper fill (1074) contained an unusual lens of stone. Pit 818 produced a large group of bones from at least two young sheep, some of which had been charred and of which one astragalus had been cut. Of rather doubtful ritual significance were the remains of a complete skull from a young horse, and a partial skull and unusually complete cow scapula from Pit 203. As above, these items were not placed on the base of the pit nor defined in any obvious way. Pit 913 is included in this commentary as it contained a complete pottery vessel but it is not otherwise noteworthy. This small number of pits with special deposits forms a stark contrast to Danebury, where 40% of the pits contained such deposits.¹⁶

¹³ P. J. Reynolds, 'Rural life and farming', in M. Green (ed.), *The Celtic World* (1995), 176–212, 187.

¹⁴ Williams, op. cit. (note 12), 41.

¹⁵ R. J. Williams and R. J. Zeepvat, *Bancroft: A Late Bronze Age/Iron Age Settlement, Roman Villa and Temple Mausoleum, Volume 1, Excavations and Building Materials*, Buckinghamshire Archaeol. Soc. Monograph Ser., 7 (1994), 52.

¹⁶ B. Cunliffe and D. Miles (eds), *Aspects of the Iron Age in Southern Britain*, Oxford Univ. Comm. Archaeol. Monograph 2 (1984); A. P. Fitzpatrick, 'Everyday Life in Iron Age Wessex', in A. Gwilt and C. Haselgrove (eds.), *Reconstructing Iron Age Societies* (1997), 73–86.

Site structure. Despite the limited chronological range of the deposits across the site provided by the pottery analysis, it is clear from the sheer density of deposits and some vertical and horizontal relationships, that there was either structured use of space, or time depth, or a combination of both to the recorded patterns. Overall the presence of spatial structuring is not marked. There are four components to be considered in an examination of the spatial arrangement of deposits across the site. These comprise the pit groups, the ditches, the blank areas and the clusters of postholes including structures.

Ditch 1601 was present relatively early in the sequence of deposits, as its line and an adjacent parallel strip, perhaps indicating the position of a bank, were respected by two of the pit groups (B and Q). Elements of Pit Group F, however, were earlier than this ditch. Ditch 1600 extends and Ditch 1605 butts 1601 suggesting a later addition. Pit groups E, G and K not only overlay parts of these three ditches but the latter had clearly gone out of use and become infilled before the pit digging took place.

Ditch 1601 is unlikely to have been a settlement enclosure ditch. There is a small possibility that Ditch 1612 in the north-eastern corner of the site represents a return to Ditch 1600/1601 but the relevant area to examine this hypothesis lay beneath the verge of the current Coxwell Road. There is a suggestion of the former presence of a bank adjacent to the northern stretch of Ditch 1601 as respected by Pit Groups Q and B but this bank would have been sited outside the enclosure rather than inside as on most enclosed sites. This ditch is more likely to be a boundary feature or similar in function to an antenna ditch for a banjo enclosure.

The majority of the postholes and posthole structures lay in zones not occupied by pit groups and this respect implies that to a large extent the distributions were contemporary and functionally complementary. It is possible that Roundhouse Structure A was associated with Pit Groups D and G, Roundhouses B, C (and/or E) with Pit Group I, and Roundhouse D with Pit Group K.

Several blank areas were identified amidst the clusters of pits and postholes and for such a densely used site these must have been deliberately maintained. It has been suggested above that these areas could have been used for the threshing and winnowing of grain prior to storage in the pits.

The few four-post structures were dispersed across the site without any clustering. If they were mainly an alternative to below grain storage then this dry site would not require them. The apparently haphazard positioning of these structures on Upper Thames sites in general is consistent with the patterns presented here.¹⁷

Phase 4: middle Iron Age

Only a single feature (1036) could be dated by its pottery to this phase (although some of the early Iron Age features were probably still receiving pottery up until the middle Iron Age). This was a bowl-shaped pit approximately 1.15 m. in diameter and 0.45 m. deep. Some of the pottery fabrics and forms are comparable to middle Iron Age assemblages elsewhere (see Timby below).

Phase 5: Roman

Roman pottery and other finds dating from the 1st century through to the 4th century were widespread across the excavation site in topsoil and subsoil contexts but very few subsoil deposits securely dated to this period were revealed. The most significant discovery was a circular stone structure to the north-west of the site.

Postholes. Three postholes (341, 1107, 1216) may belong to this phase. Posthole 1216 only contained two Roman sherds, whereas 1107 contained one Roman and one early Iron Age sherd and 341 contained one Roman and two early Iron Age sherds.

Pits? No pits were unambiguously of Roman date. Pit 846, producing six sherds of Roman pottery, also contained twenty-three sherds of Iron Age pottery. Similarly Pit 312 contained five Roman sherds but also twenty-two early Iron Age sherds. Both of these have been placed in the Early Iron Age phase 3. Other doubtful candidates included Pit 1023 with two Roman and one early Iron Age sherds, Pit 1049 with one Roman sherd and one early Iron Age sherd, and Pit 630 with one Roman sherd.

Ditch? A single curving ditch (1602) appeared to redefine and truncate two, possibly three, ditches (1603, 1604 and 1611) in the north-west section of the site, all of which surrounded Structure 101. Although an early Iron Age date for these is preferred (see above), there is a possibility that they represent an enclosure surrounding Structure 101.

¹⁷ Hingley and Miles, *op. cit.* (note 4), 63.

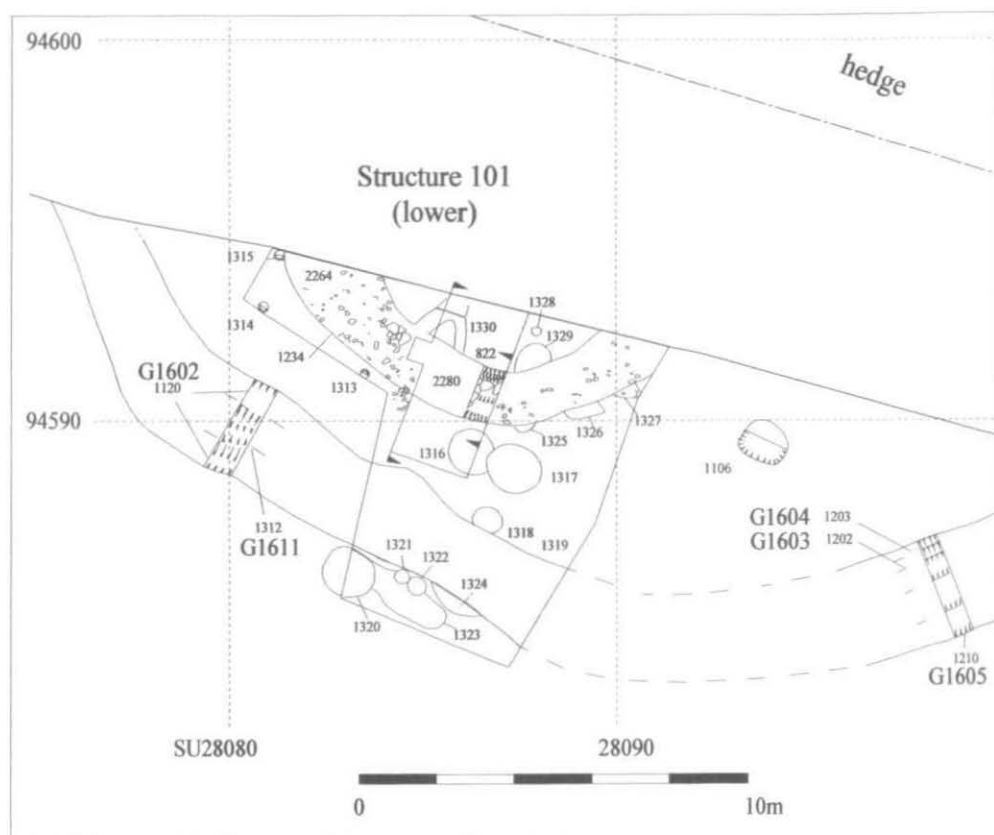


Fig. 7. The shrine, overall plan.

Shrine Structure 101. A circular stone structure (101) was partially exposed on the north-west edge of the site. The walls of this structure had been robbed away and only a c. 1 m. depth of foundations remained (Figs. 8 and 9).

The construction cut (822) for the foundations was 1.2 m. deep and 0.6 m. wide at the bottom. The internal diameter of the structure was likely to be about 6.5 m. The cut was roughly infilled with pieces of limestone with typical dimensions of 0.20 x 0.18 x 0.10 m. (2280). At a depth of 0.7 m., the cut widened to 1.1 m. and the surviving stonework above this level was 1.4 m. across. It is not thought that any of the surviving stonework represents above-ground walls. A few sherds of Roman pottery were recovered from the construction cut. The lowest fill (2281) contained one sherd most probably of the 2nd–3rd century. The upper fill (2280) contained eleven sherds representing several fabrics mostly with a long-lived date range spanning the whole Roman period but which did also include sherds of 1st–2nd century date. A tentative *terminus post quem* for construction within the 2nd century seems probable.

The infilled foundation cut was subsequently overlain by several successive layers differing in character within and without the structure. Inside, the lowest layers were 2251, 2250, 2199 and 2198, the latter lying beneath subsoil. Outside were layers 2179 followed by 2278. This suggests that the foundation cut was much wider than the above-ground wall. The internal layers did not have the appearance of floors or floor make-up layers and dipped markedly at the eastern margin, less so to the west. Layer 2199 was charcoal-rich with pea grit and also contained a discrete dump of limestone. Layer 2198 consisted of a compacted mid-brown sandy silt containing lime and pea grit mortar. These might reflect a demolition or destruction episode.

The above-ground wall was subsequently robbed by Trench 1234. The latest pottery recovered from the robber trench (1234) suggested a *terminus post quem* of the late 3rd or 4th century for the backfilling, and it cut through Layer 2199 which contained five coins, the latest being of the early 4th century. The build-up of

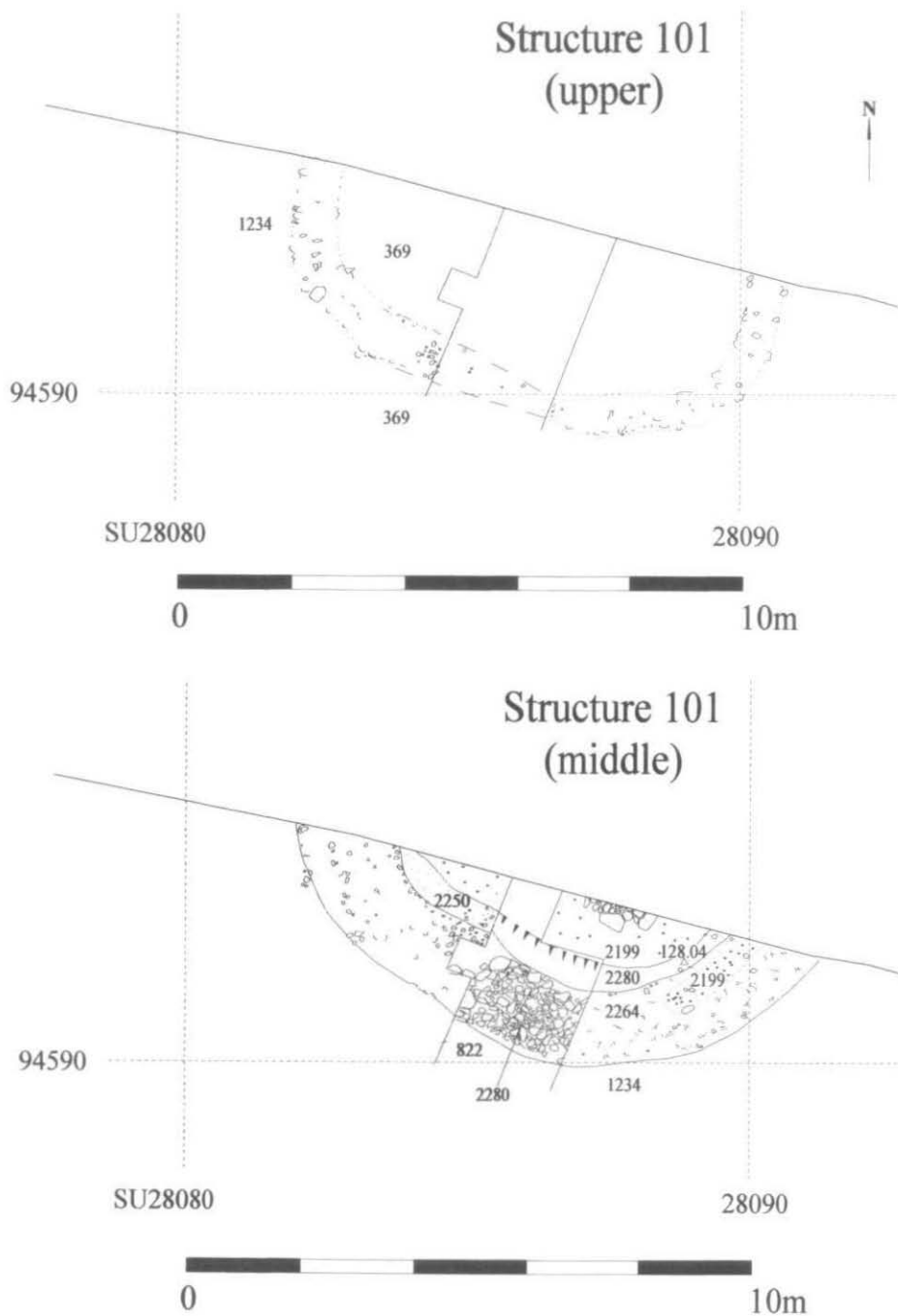


Fig. 8. The shrine; phased plan.

deposits outside of the structure (Layers 2179 and 2278) may be a product of medieval ploughing and a post-medieval date for the robbing is equally possible.

In addition to pottery a number of metal objects were recovered from the deposits associated with this structure and the area was scanned by metal detector to increase the recovery rate of small metal finds. Five bronze coins ranged in date from Claudius (AD 41–54) to Constantine (AD 310–312). In addition, a leaf-shaped spearhead and a small diamond-shaped arrow or bolt head were also recovered. Objects similar to the latter were found in association with the temple complex at West Hill, Uley.¹⁸ A small iron disc, possibly from a belt mount or harness, a small copper alloy bracelet, seventeen nails and three scraps of copper alloy along with what might be a piece of *tessera* were also recovered from within the structure. The structure is best interpreted as a religious shrine.¹⁹ The ditch which appears to curve around Structure 101, and was recut on three occasions (1602–4, 1611), is possibly a *temenos*. It is thought that the ditches are of early Iron Age date (above) but there is some possibility that they are of Roman date.

Phase 6: medieval

Evidence of medieval activity on the site was limited to the presence of ridge and furrow, and field headlands. A small number of unstratified sherds of medieval pottery were recovered and resemble Newbury fabrics A and B. These are probably of the 11th to 13th centuries.

THE FINDS

POTTERY by JANE TIMBY

The evaluation and follow-up excavation at Coxwell Road resulted in the recovery of c. 6809 stratified sherds of pottery weighing 76.4 kg. to which can be added a further 411 unstratified sherds. Most of the assemblage appears to date to the early Iron Age (c. 8th to 5th centuries BC). Middle Iron Age (c. 5th to 3rd/2nd centuries BC) and Roman wares (1st to 4th centuries AD) are also well represented. A few pieces of earlier prehistoric, medieval and post-medieval date were also identified.

The nature of the assemblage

The assemblage is of mixed condition. Many sherds are relatively well preserved, with several large fresh pieces. There are many examples of joining sherds and in some cases reconstructable profiles. By contrast, some pieces are very fragmentary, perhaps a reflection both of the friable nature of some of the fabrics and of disturbance from later activities.

Pottery was recovered from 397 features, a total of 577 discrete deposits. Most of the pottery derived from pits. Despite half-sectioning, if the number of sherds per feature is considered, only 12% of the prehistoric features yielded in excess of thirty sherds. This might have been a difficult problem on a multi-period site as fifty sherds has been suggested as the minimum number with which to reliably date a prehistoric feature with any degree of confidence.²⁰ Many of the deposits containing Roman material contained significant quantities of prehistoric wares, either showing much redeposition of earlier material in later horizons, or indicating that the features are essentially prehistoric and have had some surface contamination. The same applies to the earlier prehistoric material which inevitably occurs in later prehistoric deposits.

In the absence of any widespread stratigraphic information the pottery has been grouped into ceramic phases based on the incidence of diagnostic types. There is no independent dating of any of the features to act as a control and the pottery is dated on the basis of similar wares found elsewhere. This exercise is in itself fraught with problems in the light of the evident redeposition, the continuity of many of the fabrics, the low incidence of featured pieces per context and the lack of any clear chronological spatial patterning (see discussion below).

¹⁸ A. Woodward and P. Leach, *The Uley Shrines 1977–79* (1993).

¹⁹ W. Rodwell, 'Temple Archaeology: Problems of the Present and Portents for the Future', in W. Rodwell, *Temples, Churches and Religion: Recent Research in Roman Britain*, B.A.R. 77 (1980), 212.

²⁰ C.D. De Roche and G. Lambrick, 'The Iron Age Pottery', in J. Hinchcliffe and R. Thomas, 'Archaeological Investigations at Appleford', *Oxoniensia*, xlv (1980), 45–57.

Methodology

The assemblage was sorted into broad fabric classes based on the main macroscopically visible inclusions. Subdivisions were created based on the grade and relative proportions of inclusions visible. The fabrics were quantified by sherd count and weight for each excavated context. Sherds of less than 10 mm.² were not scrutinised but listed as unclassified, counted and weighed. Unstratified material was simply sorted into broad period categories (Iron Age, Roman, medieval and post-medieval). The prehistoric assemblage was analysed broadly following the guidelines recommended by the PCRG.²¹ Rims were recorded independently and classified by shape (see below). Details of surface finish, decoration and evidence of use such as sooting and limescale were noted. The data are summarised in the site archive. In the following report the pottery is discussed chronologically as ceramic phases.

Ceramic Phase 1: earlier prehistoric

A very small number of sherds could potentially date to the Bronze Age. Most of the definite pieces placed in this group are grog, or coarse, calcined flint-tempered wares. One sherd of possible Beaker has incised zonal decoration. To these could be added some of the coarse shell-tempered wares currently grouped with the later prehistoric material. With the exception of the Beaker sherd, which was the sole ceramic find in Posthole 1017, all the above sherds occurred alongside Iron Age or later material.

Ceramic Phase 2: later prehistoric

The bulk of the assemblage dates from the later Bronze Age/early Iron Age through to the middle Iron Age. A possible lug on a sherd from 324 (Fig. 10.4) and some of the bipartite forms (Fig. 10.1–3) might be material dating back to the later Bronze Age or a continuation of these traditions into the early Iron Age. Whilst distinctive elements of the earlier (EIA) and middle (MIA) Iron Age periods could be recognised, the perpetuation of many of the fabrics and the smallness of most of the groups made it impossible in the case of some features to draw a distinct line between which could be designated to EIA and which to MIA. The apparent juxtaposition of both pottery types in some features suggests that a significant proportion of the material could be redeposited. The ceramic phase is subdivided into CP2A and CP2B for those features which could be designated EIA or MIA respectively, whilst CP2C is allocated to groups for which only a broad early-middle date could be proposed.

Fabrics

At least twenty-five later prehistoric fabrics have been defined (Table 3) which can be divided into eight basic groups:

- I calcareous types (H1–3; H11; L1–3)
- II sandy wares (S1–4)
- III sandy with sparse limestone (SL1, SL2, SL, S1/L, S2/L)
- IV ferruginous (I1–3; L1, H12)
- V organic
- VI flint
- VII limestone and grog (LG)
- VIII sandstone (SST).

Description of prehistoric fabrics

Fabric ascription has been kept relatively simple, based on the principal inclusions macroscopically visible in the clay matrix. A binocular microscope (x20) was used to describe the fabrics more fully.

1 Earlier prehistoric

EP1: GROG

A pale orange fabric with a slightly chalky feel. The paste contains a moderate frequency of ill-sorted sub-angular to rounded darker orange grog/clay pellets, and rare rounded fine quartz.

²¹ Prehistoric Ceramic Research Group, *The Study of Later Prehistoric Pottery: General Policies* (1995) Occas. Paper 1; Prehistoric Ceramic Research Group, *General Policies and Guidelines for Analysis and Publication*, Occas. Paper 2 (1997).

EP2: GROG AND LIMESTONE

A bright orange ware with a fawn inner surface and dark grey inner core. Soapy feel. The paste contains a sparse to common frequency of sub-angular light orange grog, sparse rounded quartz grains visible and rare voids/white calcareous fragments at x20 magnification.

EP3: FLINT

F1: A hard dark grey ware with a red-brown core. The paste contains a moderate frequency of white, angular, calcined flint, larger fragments up to 2–3 mm. Also present are red-brown ferruginous grains up to 2 mm. in size.

F2: A moderately soft orange-brown ware with a light grey core and interior. A finely micaceous paste, individual grains of muscovite mica visible at x20 magnification, containing a sparse scatter of sub-angular mainly grey flint grit, mainly less than 2 mm. in size.

2 Iron Age*I CALCAREOUS WARES**I.1 Shell**H1: Coarse fossil shell*

Mainly oxidised fabrics with a grey core. Fine sandy texture with a moderate to common frequency of surface voids where fragments of fossil shell and limestone have leached out. Some of the large shell fragments (up to 7 mm.) have left fluted impressions. At x20 magnification occasional rounded fine quartz grains are visible.

H2: Sparse fossil shell

A dark brown, variably hard or moderately soft ware with a black core. The paste contains a sparse frequency of fine fossil shell, many inclusions appearing as white specks, the larger ones up to 2 mm. across. At x20 magnification occasional grains of rounded quartz (0.5 mm.) and occasional iron grains are present.

H3: Fossiliferous material

A red-brown ware with a dark grey-black exterior. Fairly friable, soft fabric with a soapy feel. The paste contains a common frequency of fossil shell (3 mm. and less), other fossiliferous matter including bryozoa and rounded fragments of fossiliferous limestone, some fragments up to 7 mm. in size.

HI1: Fossil shell-tempered with iron

Mainly oxidised ware with a grey core. A finely micaceous paste containing a moderate frequency of fossil shell, fragments up to 5 mm. Also visible, mainly on the surfaces, is a sparse frequency of distinctive fine (up to 1 mm), rounded, orange-red argillaceous inclusions, possibly naturally occurring iron.

*I.2 Limestone**L1: Limestone-tempered*

A brown or black moderately hard, dense heavy ware with slightly soapy feel. The paste contains a common to dense frequency of sub-angular limestone up to 3 mm. in size but mainly finer. Occasional oolites, calcite and fossiliferous material are also visible at x20.

L2: Oolitic limestone

A brown to grey, moderately hard ware containing a common to moderate frequency of oolitic limestone both as discrete oolites and as rock conglomerates with a calcitic matrix. Accompanying this is a small amount of fine fossiliferous material including shell fragments.

L3: Sparse fine limestone

A brown, slightly soapy ware with a black core and interior. In fresh fracture the paste contains a sparse to common scatter of fine (less than 1 mm.) sub-rounded limestone and occasional calcite, rounded quartz sand grains and iron. The calcareous material has leached from the surfaces leaving voids.

HL: miscellaneous other calcareous ware

II SANDY WARES

S1: Hard, compact fabric fired to black or dark brown. The paste contains a moderate to common density of well-sorted, fine, sub-angular quartz sand with rare red fine iron. The fine grains less than 0.25 mm. are just macroscopically visible.

S2: A red-brown to dark grey-black ware with a dark grey core. Moderately hard, slightly micaceous with a fine sandy texture. At x20 the matrix contains fine, moderately well-sorted quartz sand and occasional rounded orange-brown grains (?weathered glauconite) (0.5 mm. and less).

S3: Hard, fine black, compact sandy ware. The very finely micaceous clay contains a fine, ill-sorted, common frequency of rounded to sub-angular quartz sand and rare to sparse fine, rounded limestone or calcareous-lined voids.

S4: A fine sandy ware with orange surfaces and a black or brown core. The paste contains sparse very fine quartz sand and occasional fine, red ferruginous grains. The quartz is clear with facets which reflect the light giving a fine sparkle to the surfaces. The exterior surfaces generally have a red (haematite) finish.

S00: Miscellaneous other fine sandy wares.

III SANDY WITH LIMESTONE

SL1: Sandy with coarse fossil shell. Brown, black or grey ware with a reduced core. The paste has a sandy feel and contains a sparse frequency of coarse shell fragments up to 5 mm. in size. At x20 magnification the sandy nature of the clay is more obvious with a common frequency of fine to very fine quartz sand. Occasional fragments of limestone are also visible.

SL2: Sandy with sparse shell. A dark brown to black sandy ware containing a sparse frequency of coarse shell fragments. Distinguished from SL1 by the presence of organic matter visible as elongated impressions on the sherd surfaces, or burnt-out voids in the matrix, up to 5 mm. but generally finer.

S1/L: As sandy fabric S1 but with rare to sparse fossil shell/limestone inclusions.

S2/L: As sandy fabric S2 but with rare to sparse fossil shell/limestone inclusions.

SL: Miscellaneous other sandy wares with occasional fossil shell/limestone.

IV FERRUGINOUS

I1: A distinctive dark orange-brown ware containing an abundant frequency of fine, dark brown, rounded to sub-rounded, moderately well-sorted (glauconitic) iron, less than 0.5 mm. in size. A rare fabric represented by a single body sherd.

I2: A hard dark brown ware with dark grey exterior surfaces. A very distinctive, finely micaceous, ferruginous fabric containing soft, fine-grained orange-red iron, up to 2 mm. Also present is a scatter of very coarse iron-stained, rounded quartz grit up to 4 mm. across in size, and rare angular fragments of dark red-brown ironstone (?haematite). Also present are very rare organic inclusions and occasional sub-rounded limestone. A second sherd shows a higher incidence of iron, both rounded and angular pieces, some fragments up to 8 mm. in size.

I3: Oolitic iron. A hard, orange-brown fabric containing a moderate to common frequency of very well-sorted spherical grains of oolitic iron. These are accompanied by a sparse scatter of fossil shell of more irregular size ranging from fine up to 10 mm. and rare sub-rounded grains of ironstone up to 4 mm. Microscopic study of an identical fabric from Abingdon by Chris Doherty (University of Oxford Research Laboratory) noted that the likely source for this clay is the Banbury outcrop of the Lower Jurassic limestone.

LI: Limestone with frequent iron.

HI2: Dark brown, moderately soft ware with a slightly soapy feel. The clay is very ferruginous containing a common, ill-sorted frequency of red-brown rounded grains up to 2-3 mm. throughout the matrix. Also present is a sparse frequency of well-fragmented fossil shell mainly less than 2 mm. in size.

V ORGANIC

ORG: Dense organic-tempered.

A dark brown, friable ware distinguished by a moderate to common frequency of blackened organic matter in the clay body.

VI FLINT

FL: A small, slightly variable group containing a sparse to moderate frequency of fine (2 mm. and less), crushed calcined flint.

VII LIMESTONE AND GROG

LG: A moderately hard ware with a brown exterior and black interior and inner core. The paste contains large fragments of sub-angular grog (up to 5 mm.) some of which contain dense fossil shell. In addition there is a sparse frequency of fine white specks throughout the fabric (1 mm. and less), rare grains of rounded quartz and iron.

VIII SANDSTONE?

SST1: A hard grey-black ware containing very coarse fragments of fine-grained stone (?sandstone) (up to 12 mm). At x20 the matrix contains very fine, sub-angular, well-sorted clear/white quartz.

In many cases the fabric definition is quite broad as there is quite a lot of diversity present. Most of the sherds fall into the first three fabric groups, calcareous, sandy wares and sandy with sparse limestone/fossil shell. The former includes fossil shell, shelly limestone and oolitic limestone-tempered wares. Accompanying these are a small number of other wares, notably fabrics containing significant amounts of iron, including ferruginous oolitic grains, organic material, grog, sandstone and flint. In broad terms, the calcareous class accounts for 44% by weight of the later prehistoric assemblage, the sandy wares for 21.5%, the sandy with limestone for 32%, the ferruginous group for 1%, and the other wares for 1.5%. The coarse shelly wares along with the finer sandy fabrics clearly belong to the LBA/EIA phase. Progressing into the MIA are the finer calcareous fabrics and sandy wares with sparse limestone. Amongst the new fabrics appearing at this time are some of the ferruginous types, in particular the Fabric 13 containing oolitic iron.

Vessel forms

Seven basic classes of vessel were recorded broadly following schemes developed for similar material elsewhere.²² A representative range of the rim sherds and decorated sherds have been illustrated (Figs. 10.1–4). Sufficient sherds were recovered of four vessels for the complete profiles to be reconstructed (Fig. 10.9, Fig. 12.42, 48–9). In total 284 prehistoric rims were recorded from stratified contexts. An attempt was made to classify all the rim sherds although in some cases insufficient remained to be absolutely certain, so certain elements will remain a little subjective.

Description of forms*A Vessels with expanded rims*

A1: vessels with expanded T-shaped rim (e.g. Fig. 11.17–20).

A2: rims expanded internally (e.g. Fig. 11.16).

A3: rims expanded externally.

B Coarse ware jars with curving profile

B1: slack-shouldered vessels with upright or slightly out-turned rims (e.g. Fig. 13.66–9).

B2: globular jars with short out-turned rims (Fig. 13.76).

B3: barrel-shaped jars with either thickened, upright or hooked rims (Fig. 13.73).

B4: jars with simple in-turned rims (Fig. 12.61, Fig. 13.70).

B5: jars/bowls with simple out-turned curving rims (Fig. 12.58, Fig. 13.74–5).

B6: jars/bowls with beaded rims (Fig. 13.77–8).

C Angular vessels

C1: coarse ware vessels with flaring rims. Subdivided into a) angular types (Fig. 11.22) and b) with sharply everted rim and rounded body.

C2: fine ware vessels with flaring rims. Subdivided into a) angular tripartite types (Fig. 11.25) and b) with sharply everted rim and rounded body (Fig. 12.50–4).

C3: bipartite vessels (Fig. 10.1–3, Fig. 11.15).

²² B. Cunliffe, 'The Iron Age Pottery', in B. Cunliffe, *Danebury: An Iron Age Hillfort in Hampshire, Volume 2. The Excavations 1969–1978: The Finds*, C.B.A. Res. Rep. 52 (1984), 231–331; S. Elsdon, 'The Iron Age Pottery', in P. Dixon, *Crickley Hill. Volume 1: The Hillfort Defences* (1994), 203–41.

TABLE 3: PREHISTORIC POTTERY FABRICS

<i>Group</i>	<i>Fabric</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No %</i>	<i>Wt</i>	<i>Wt %</i>	<i>Forms</i>	<i>Decoration</i>
EP1	Grog	grog-tempered	5	*	74	*	Beaker	
EP2	GL	grog and limestone	1	*	3	*		
EP3	Flint	coarse calcined flint	2	*	21	*		
I1	H1	coarse fossil shell	1697	27	27219	39.5	A1-3, B1-2, B4-5, C1, F/C1, F, F2H	A2, A3
	H2	sparse fossil shell	38	*	299	*	C1-2	A2
	H3	fossil shell, bryozoa, etc	137	2	1393	2	B1, B6, C1-2	A3, B, E
	H11	fossil shell and iron	3	*	26	*	F	
I2	L1	limestone	4	*	59	*	B1, C	
	L2	oolitic limestone	63	*	877	1	B2, B2/6, B6, C1, F	A3, B, E
	L3	sparse fine limestone/voids	11	*	143	*		
	HL	misc. other calcareous	14	*	80	*		
II	S1	medium sandy	906	14.5	8377	12	B1-2, B4, C1-2, D, D1, D4, F, G, L	A3, B, B4, E
	S2	glauconitic sandy	38	*	458	*	B1, B4	A1, B1/2, D
	S3	micaceous sandy, rare limestone	759	12	5584	8	B1, B4, C1-2, F, L	A3, B, B2/D, B4, C, E, E/F
	S4	sandy with haematite finish	12	*	167	*	C2	
	S00	misc. other sandy	39	*	264	*	C2, D3	E
III	SL1	sandy paste with coarse shell	1671	27	19215	28	A1, A3, B1-2, B4-5, C1-2, F, H	A2, A3, B, D, E, G
	SL2	sparse fossil shell	56	*	341	*	B4, C1-2	C
	S1/L	S1 with sparse limestone	53	*	510	*	C1, F	
	S2/L	S2 with sparse limestone	52	*	741	1	C1, F	
	SL	misc. sandy with limestone	116	2	1289	2	C2, C1, F, G	B, B/D
IV	I1	coarse iron (?limonite)	2	*	8	*		
	I2	frequent iron	4	*	127	*		
	I3	oolitic iron + some limestone	5	*	77	*	B2	
	LI	frequent iron, limestone	4	*	40	*		
	HI2	frequent iron, fossil shell	26	*	565	*	B4	E
V	ORG	dense organic-tempered	11	*	11	*		
VI	FL	finer calcined flint	8	*	53	*	B5	
VII	LG	limestone and grog	2	*	102	*	A1	
VIII	SST	sandstone	1	*	7	*	B5	
	OO	unclassified crumbs	463	7.5	558	*		
TOTAL			6203	100	68688	100		

D Bowls

D1: coarse ware bowls (Fig. 13.62).

D2: small bowls/cups, fine wares and coarse wares (Fig. 10.5, Fig. 12.48–9).

D3: globular, cordoned bowl (Fig. 12.50).

D4: furrowed bowl (Fig. 11.37).

D5: everted rim, hemispherical (Fig. 12.53).

E Saucepan-style pots (Fig. 12.55–6)*F Bucket-shaped coarse ware vessels with simple vertical squared rim* (Fig. 10.9)*G Lids* (Fig. 12.63–4)*H Handles* (Fig. 12.51–2)*U Unidentifiable*

TABLE 4: PREHISTORIC RIM FORMS AND FABRICS

FORMS	No of rims	No vessels	Fabrics
A1	6	6	H1, SL1, LG
A2	3	3	H1
A3	2	2	H1
B1	19	16	H1, H3, SL1, L1, L2, S1, S3, SL1
B2	8	4	H1, SL1, S1, SL
B2/6	1	1	L2
B3	1	1	H1
B4	15	14	H1, SL1, SL2, HI1, S1, S2, S3
B5	17	12	H1, SL1, SL2, HI2, S1, S2, S3, FL, R00
B6	7	5	H3, L1, L2
C1	29	25	H1, H2, H3, SL1, SL2, G, S2/L, L1, L2
C1a	1	1	H1
C2	46	41	H2, SL2, S1, S3, S4
C2b	12	8	H3, S1, S3
C3	13	5	H1, H3, S1, S3
D	1	1	S1
D1	2	2	S4, S1
D2	7	4	H3, SL, S3
E	2	2	H3, SL
F	51	33	H1, SL1, HI1, L2, S1, S3, SL
B/H	8*	8	H1, H3, SL1, SL
LID	4	4	S1, S3
U	37	36	H1, SL1, L2, S1, S2, S3, S00, SL1
TOTAL	284	234	

* excluded from total

Table 4 lists the forms identified from rim sherds only, and handles, only one of which included the rim zone, along with the fabrics in which each type occurs. Apart from lids and coarse ware bowls every identified type was made in both calcareous and sandy wares. Amongst the earlier forms (Ceramic Phase CP2A) are the bipartite vessels (form C3) (Fig. 10.1–3) and the vessel with a lug (Fig. 10.4) which may date back to the later Bronze Age. A similar type was found at Roughground Farm, Lechlade.²³ Alongside these are some of the large, plain types with undifferentiated rims (form F), for example the almost complete vessel from Pit 913 (Fig. 10.9), although it should be noted that such types could also occur in the MIA (cf. Watkins Farm).²⁴

²³ R. Hingley, 'Early Iron Age Pottery', in T.G. Allen, T.C. Darvill, L.S. Green and M.U. Jones, *Excavations at Roughground Farm, Lechlade, Gloucestershire: A Prehistoric and Roman Landscape*, Oxford Archaeol. Unit, Thames Valley Landscapes: The Cotswold Water Park, 1 (1993), 40–4.

²⁴ Allen, *op. cit.* (note 5).

Typical early Iron Age forms are represented by the expanded rim vessels (form A) and the angular C1-2 bowls. Flared-rim bowls with angular or rounded bodies dominate the assemblage, accounting for 31% of the classified vessels. These occur as both fine wares with thinner walls, finer fabrics and a burnished finish, occasionally red-finished, and as coarse wares. Fine wares are slightly more common, accounting for 67% of the form type. Several of the other forms belonging to the early or early-middle Iron Age phase are unique in the assemblage, for example the small bowls/cups (Fig. 11.37, Fig. 12.48-50).

Middle Iron Age wares (Ceramic Phase CP2B) are represented by the larger jar forms with slack carinated shoulder, barrel-shaped or globular bodies (Fig. 10.4). It is likely that the lids and possibly the jars with countersunk handles also belong to this phase. Forms recognisable as later Iron Age are not well represented typologically although it is possible that many of the middle Iron Age types are persisting through into the 1st century AD. A small proportion of necked bowls (Fig. 13.80) and beaded-rim vessels (Fig. 13. 77-8) probably relate to this period. Most of these come from overlying layers rather than features.

Manufacture, surface treatment and decoration

All the vessels are handmade, mainly coil-built. One vessel, broken along a coil break, shows fettling marks suggesting it may have been made in two halves (Fig. 12.58). Several of the base sherds have organic impressions on the underside.

Five types of surface treatment are recognised: no special finish; rough burnishing or finger wiping; haematite coating; burnishing but streaky and discontinuous; and a high quality, fine overall burnishing. Vessels with sandy fabrics tend to show a higher incidence of deliberate surface finish, particularly burnishing. Many of the bowl forms were burnished on both the interior and exterior surfaces. A few vessels show evidence of wiping, either vertically or multi-directionally.

TABLE 5: DECORATED SHERDS AND FABRICS

<i>Decor Code</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>No sherds</i>	<i>Fabrics</i>
A1	Finger-tip impressions on shoulder	1	S2
A2	Finger-tip impressions on rim	9	H1, H2, SL1
A3	Finger-tip impressions on body	23	H1, H3, SL1, S1, S3, L2
A3/B	Finger-tip impressions/lines	1	SL
B	Incised horizontal/single lines	17	H3, S1, S3, SL
B/D	Incised/stabbed	2	S3, SL
B1	Infilled geometric	1	S1
B1/2/D	Infilled triangles/tramline+stabs	1	S2
B2/D	Incised tramline with stabs	1	S3, SL
B3	Incised chevrons	3	S1, S3
C	Tooled lines	2	SL1, SL2, S3
D	Stabbed	1	SL1
E	Haematite slipped	18	H3, S1/3, S1, S3, S4,
H12			
E/B4	Haematite/incised chevrons	1	S1
E/F	Haematite/furrowed	1	S3
EB	Haematite/incised	1	S1
G1/A	Cordon/finger-tip	1	SL1
G1/A3	Cordon/finger-tip	1	SL1
G2	Applied lug	1	H1
TOTAL		86	

The various types of decoration, including the addition of a haematite-rich slip, were coded (see Table 5). In total 86 sherds were recorded with decoration, of which 18 sherds had a red (haematite) finish. A total of 36 sherds had finger-impressed decoration either on the top of the rim (Fig. 11.15, 23), on the shoulder or upper zone of the vessel (Fig. 10.6, 7), or adjacent to or on a body carination (Fig. 10.2, 12). In two cases the finger-tipping occurred on cordoned vessels (Fig. 10.10-11). A total of 28 sherds had some form of incised decoration. The commonest is Category B in which small sherds had single lines, where insufficient survived to show the overall scheme. Most of the designs, where identifiable, appear to be geometric types involving straight lines and stabs; there were no examples of sherds with curvilinear decoration. The curvature of the sherds suggests that many pieces derive from sharply carinated bowls (e.g. Fig. 11.35-8) whilst others appear to come from more globular, perhaps slightly later forms (Fig. 11.39-41). One observable feature of all these

sherds is their small size. Examples of complete or semi-complete decorated vessels appear to be very rare on EIA sites, suggesting that they may have been deliberately (symbolically?) smashed and perhaps selectively deposited.

Evidence of use was limited to a few instances of limescale and of sooting. The former occurs on both fine wares and coarse wares, the latter is mainly restricted to coarse wares although there are examples of burnished vessels with sooting and a form C2 bowl from 323 shows internal sooting.

Briquetage

A single fragment of possible briquetage was recovered from 933 (1690). Such material is relatively rare in this part of the Thames Valley although fragments have been identified from Thornhill Farm, near Fairford.²⁵

Ceramic Phase 3: Roman

A total of 363 sherds of Roman pottery was recovered from the stratified deposits to which can be added a further 34 unstratified sherds. Most of this pottery comes from the post-Roman soil accumulations including the medieval/post-medieval headlands (369) and (56) and Robber Trench 1234. A total of 51 sherds of Roman pottery was associated with 22 features. Nearly all these features also contained Iron Age material and it is possible with some that the Roman pottery has been introduced into the upper fills through ploughing. A further 63 sherds were associated with Layers 2198, 2199, 2250/2251, 394 and 798 which may be CP3 or 4. The Roman pottery appears to be of mixed chronology, spanning the 1st to 4th centuries. Much of the material is non-diagnostic, local grey sandy wares or grog-tempered storage jar which are quite long-lived. Table 6 summarises the total quantities of each ware present.

Roman

Traded and regional wares are referred to by the codes adopted for the National Roman Fabric Collection (NRFC) and are not described further.²⁶ See also Table 6.

IMPORTS

Gallo-Belgic *terra nigra* (GAB TN1) (NRFC, 15).

Central Gaulish Samian (CGSAM).

Baetic olive oil amphora (BAT AM) (NRFC, 84-6).

REGIONAL WARES

Savernake ware (SAV GT) (NRFC, 191).

Dorset black-burnished ware (DOR BB1) (NRFC, 127).

Severn Valley type (SVW OX) (NRFC 1998, 149).

Midlands late Roman shelly ware (ROB SH) (NRFC, 212).

LOCAL WARES

Oxfordshire colour-coated ware (OXF RS) (NRFC, 174).

Oxfordshire parchment ware (OXF PA) (NRFC, 173).

Oxfordshire white ware (OXF WH) (NRFC, 174).

Oxfordshire white-slipped ware (OXF WS) (NRFC, 176).

Oxfordshire fine grey wares.²⁷

Oxfordshire grog-tempered storage jar (OXF GR).

Oxfordshire oxidised sandy wares.²⁸

LOCAL/SOURCE UNKNOWN

GREY: Miscellaneous grey or black sandy wares.

GREY1: Medium-grade sandy wares, quartz grains macroscopically visible.

OXID1: Miscellaneous oxidised sandy wares.

WHITE: Miscellaneous white wares.

WSLIP: White-slipped, fine sandy oxidised ware, possibly an Oxfordshire product.

²⁵ J.R. Timby, 'The Pottery from Thornhill Farm, Fairford, Oxon.' (in prep).

²⁶ R. Tomber and J. Dore, 'The National Roman Fabric Reference Collection: A Handbook' (1998).

²⁷ C.J. Young, *Oxfordshire Roman Pottery* (B.A.R. 143, 1977), 202 ff.

²⁸ Ibid. 185.

Grog-tempered wares

G1: Later Iron Age to early Roman grog-tempered ware. A generally black or dark brown, occasionally red-brown, smooth ware with a soapy feel. The fine sandy paste contains sparse, fine sub-angular grog/clay pellets. Wheel-made and handmade forms, often with a burnished finish.

G2: A very well-fired mid grey ware with a bright orange-red inner core. The surfaces have a lumpy appearance from sparse to common angular grog inclusions (up to 1 mm.), some of which protrude from the surfaces where burnished.

G3: Sandy textured grey or black wares with sparse grog/clay pellets. At x20 sparse very fine quartz sand is visible with a sub-angular to angular grey grog up to 2 mm. in size. The quantities vary from very sparse to quite common giving a slightly lumpy surface texture. Handmade and wheel made.

GL: Grog and limestone-tempered.

LIME: Sherds containing a Jurassic limestone temper.

FLINT: Hard fired, grey wares, with a sparse to common frequency of fine angular white flint. Handmade and wheel made examples. Possibly a variant of the Savernake industry.

TABLE 6: ROMAN FABRICS

	<i>Fabric</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No %</i>	<i>Wt</i>	<i>Wt %</i>
ROMAN						
Import	SAM	Gaulish Samian	7	1	100	1
	GAB TN	Gallo-Belgic terra nigra	2	*	28	*
	BAT AM	Dressel 20 amphora	1	*	37	*
Regional	SAV GT	Savernake ware	58	10	1155	16
	DOR BB1	Dorset black-burnished	24	4	260	3.5
	SVW OX	Severn Valley type	5	*	100	1
	ROB SH	late Roman shelly ware	1	*	3	*
Local	OXF RS	Oxon red-slipped	7	1	25	*
	OXF RSM	Oxon red-slipped mortaria	2	*	14	*
	OXF PA	Oxon parchment ware	1	*	10	*
	OXF WSM	Oxon white-slipped mortaria	2	*	106	1.5
	OXF RE	Oxon grey ware	220	38	2203	30.5
	OXF OX	Oxon oxidised ware	14	2.5	147	2
	OXFWH	Oxon white ware	8	1	18	*
	OXF GR	Oxon grog-tempered storage jar	16	3	355	5
Local/ unknown	GREY	misc. grey sandy wares	9	1.5	75	*
	GREY1	fine-medium grey sandy ware	53	9.5	450	6
	OXID1	medium oxidised sandy ware	2	*	15	*
	WHITE	misc. white sandy ware	3	*	30	*
	WSLIP	white slipped oxidised ware	12	2	65	*
	CC	misc. colour-coated ware	1	*	1	*
	G1	hm/wm grog-tempered	53	9	607	8.5
	G2	grog-tempered	12	2	310	4
	G3	sandy ware with sparse grog	27	4.5	574	8
	GL	grog and limestone-tempered	12	2	132	2
	LIME	limestone-tempered	20	3.5	325	4.5
	FLINT	flint-tempered various	3	*	58	*
TOTAL			575	100	7203	100

Early Roman

Amongst the earlier features possibly dating to the later 1st to early 2nd century are Posthole 1216 and Pit 214. Features with just single grey ware sherds include Pits 220, 633, 621, 911, 1205, Posthole 341 and Ditches 306, 1023–1025 and 1235. Only seven sherds of Samian were present from the complete Roman assemblage and only one, a Drag. 31 dish, stratified in CP3/4, from Layer 2198. Other early imports include a sherd of Dressel 20 amphora fashioned into a crude counter (Layer 2199) and a redeposited base sherd from a Gallo-Belgic *terra nigra* platter dating to the 1st century AD to add to a cup (*Camulodunum* type 56) recovered from the evaluation. Other wares include sherds of Savernake ware and various grog- and flint-tempered wares. The grog-tempered wares occur in both handmade and wheel made types in forms typical of the later Iron Age/early Roman period, for example, necked bowls and beaded-rim jars. Further beaded-rim vessels occur in limestone-tempered fabrics.

Later Roman

Later Roman activity in the vicinity of the site is suggested by the sparse number of Oxfordshire colour-coated wares and Dorset black-burnished ware. Part of a 3rd- to 4th-century oval fish dish was present in Pit 221. Other features containing later Roman sherds include Ditch 1602 (1210) surrounding Structure 101, Robber Trench 1234, Ditch 1612 (206), Tree Bowl 18 and Pits 312 and 846. Further examples of the Oxfordshire industry are present from the post-Roman layers including parchment wares, mortaria, white ware and grog-tempered storage jar. Amongst the other sherds of Dorset black-burnished ware are jars, a grooved-rim bowl and a flanged bowl, types current in the 3rd and 4th centuries. A single small sherd of late Roman shelly ware from Layer 2198 suggests some activity in the general area into the later 4th century.

A small number of non-diagnostic tile fragments, probably of Roman origin, were found across the site. Examples were present in Wall Cut 822 and Ditches 621 and 1024.

Ceramic Phase 4: post-Roman

Most of the pottery from features designated on stratigraphic grounds as post-Roman comprises wares of later prehistoric and Roman date. Only thirteen medieval and seventeen post-medieval sherds were present. A sherd of glazed white earthenware from 1036 which otherwise appears to be of Iron Age date may well be intrusive. The other sherds came from Layers 77, 251, 369 and the unstratified material.

Distribution of pottery across the site

Faringdon has many similarities with the unenclosed settlement at Ashville, Abingdon,²⁹ which has recently been further investigated.³⁰ It also appears to be contemporary with various enclosed settlements in southern Britain such as Winnall Down, Hampshire and Gussage All Saints, Dorset.³¹ These along with the entrance zones of enclosures have yielded good results when considering patterns of structured deposition by other researchers.³² Ditches are present crossing the site but the quantity of pottery recovered from these is unfortunately low and the pits and postholes occur either side of the ditches.

Several attempts were made to look for patterning across the site based on the ceramic content of the individual features. The presence of blank zones to the east of the main Ditch Group 1601, where no pits or other features occur, might suggest the former presence of structures or some other form of monument which have left no sub-surface traces. The pits do appear to form a number of concentrated clusters around these negative zones but no logical patterning could be discerned. Similar problems have been encountered at Danebury when trying to phase features producing very little distinctive pottery.³³

Ditches. Table 7 summarises the pottery by percentage count and weight for the eleven ditch groups yielding pottery. The totals vary greatly from a single large sherd in 1603 to 116 sherds from 1612. Only three ditches

²⁹ Parrington, *op. cit.* (note 4).

³⁰ D. Miles, 'Conflict and Complexity: The Later Prehistory of the Oxford Region', *Oxoniensia*, lxi (1997), 1–20.

³¹ Fasham; Wainwright; *op. cit.* (note 5).

³² J.D. Hill, *Ritual and Rubbish in the Iron Age of Wessex* (B.A.R. 242, 1995); M. Parker-Pearson, 'Food, Fertility and Front Doors in the First Millennium BC', in T.C. Champion and J.R. Collis (eds.), *The Iron Age in Britain: Recent Trends* (1996), 117–32.

³³ L. Brown, 'Iron Age Pottery', in B. Cunliffe and C. Poole, *Danebury: An Iron Age Hillfort in Hampshire Volume 2. The Excavations 1979–1988: The Finds* (1991), C.B.A. Res. Rep. 52.

TABLE 7: SUMMARY OF POTTERY FROM DITCHES

[illegible]

TABLE 8: SUMMARY OF POTTERY FROM PITS/POSTHOLES

Feature	Calc %No	Calc %Wt	Sand %No	Sand %Wt	SL %No	SL %Wt	Flint %Wt	Flint %No	Other %No	Other %Wt	Crumbs %Wt	Crumbs %No	Rom %No	Rom %Wt	Tot No	Tot Wt (g)	Avgwt (g)
17	95	83.9	5	16.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	112	5.6
203	40	49.6	20	12.4	30	37.2	-	-	-	-	0.8	10	-	-	40	250	6.3
204	6.8	2.6	22.7	27.3	67	69.8	-	-	-	-	0.3	3.4	-	-	88	1000	11.4
205	54.2	69.5	12.5	2.4	33.3	28	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	24	246	10.3
209	31.4	25	45.7	39.3	20	21.4	-	-	2.9	14.3	-	-	-	-	35	280	8.0
214	38.7	35.7	22.6	7.7	35.5	56.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	3.2	0.2	31	426	13.7
221	59	74.7	10.3	5.5	15.4	7.5	-	-	-	-	0.7	10.3	5.1	11.6	39	292	7.5
315	6.9	1.3	58.6	42.2	34.5	36.6	-	-	-	19.8	-	-	-	-	29	303	10.4
317	46.3	70.6	34.1	23.4	4.9	4.2	-	-	-	-	1.9	14.6	-	-	41	479	11.7
324	26.3	23.4	60.5	50.9	7.9	12.5	-	-	2.6	10.9	-	-	2.6	2.3	38	385	10.1
325	28.6	15.1	33.3	10.7	38.1	74.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	21	596	28.4
339	57.1	71.3	19	5.6	23.8	23.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	21	286	13.6
340	-	-	82.1	85.2	17.9	14.8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	169	6.0
405	47.1	72.1	26.5	21.5	2.9	3	-	-	-	-	3.4	23.5	-	-	34	265	7.8
425	-	-	33.3	60.5	20.8	33.3	-	-	-	-	6.2	45.8	-	-	24	162	6.8
436	18.2	11.9	36.4	39.6	45.5	48.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	22	134	6.1
510	6.1	22	87.9	73.4	6.1	4.6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	33	109	3.3
512	79.2	64.8	2.1	3.7	12.5	20.9	-	-	6.3	10.7	-	-	-	-	48	244	5.1
527	12.2	19.6	14.3	25.7	71.4	38.3	-	-	2	3.5	-	-	-	12.9	49	311	6.3
528	87.5	59.8	6.3	10.1	6.3	30.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	48	346	7.2
538	17	14.9	68.1	62.4	14.9	22.7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	47	599	12.7
541	21.4	38.7	50	46.3	28.6	14.1	0.8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	42	710	16.9
545	26.5	46.3	52.9	34.6	20.6	19.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	34	492	14.5
600	84.8	71.4	12.1	12.8	3	14.2	-	-	-	1.6	-	-	-	-	33	374	11.3
606	23.8	42.9	52.4	24.3	23.8	28.9	-	-	-	3.9	-	-	-	-	42	622	14.8
617	2.7	4	2.7	8.9	74.3	79.6	-	-	-	-	7.5	20.3	-	-	148	496	3.4
618	3.4	3.4	37.9	36.4	58.6	60.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	29	118	4.1
619	20	16.9	32	55.8	8	13	-	-	-	-	14.3	40	-	-	25	77	3.1
623	17.4	26.5	34.8	40.2	21.7	32	-	-	-	-	1.4	26.1	-	-	23	219	9.5
628	11.8	20.9	44.1	26.9	44.1	52.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	34	368	10.8
629	13.6	23.9	23.7	47.5	20.3	21.7	-	-	-	-	6.7	40.7	1.7	0.3	59	314	5.3
704	13	14.3	39.1	24.1	47.8	61.6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	23	203	8.8
707	-	-	15.9	6.6	84.1	93.4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	44	731	16.6
709	-	-	50	44.8	50	55.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	26	116	4.5

712	45.3	67.3	3.1	3.7	20.3	26.4	-	-	-	-	2.7	31.3	-	-	64	736	11.5
713	18.5	13.8	7.4	5.2	74.1	81	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	27	268	9.9
715	100	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	52	2047	39.4
716	48.4	70.6	22.6	6.1	29	23.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	31	670	21.6
717	4.2	0.9	4.2	1.3	91.7	97.8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	24	690	28.8
718	18.5	21.3	31.5	28.2	22.2	43.4	-	-	-	-	7.2	27.8	-	-	54	348	6.4
722	38.5	23.5	28.2	10.7	33.3	65.8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	39	582	14.9
724	8.3	6	16.7	27.5	45.8	40.7	6	4.2	20.8	16.8	-	-	4.2	3	24	167	7.0
802	-	-	87.5	89.4	6.3	9.6	-	-	-	-	1.1	6.3	-	-	32	94	2.9
807	75	84.9	21.4	13.6	3.6	1.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	403	14.4
818	23.7	52.3	39.5	15.2	5.3	29.3	-	-	-	-	3.2	31.6	-	-	38	375	9.9
840	-	-	3.2	4.5	96.8	95.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	285	3068	10.8
845	85.6	89.2	12.9	10.2	0	-	-	-	1.4	-	-	-	-	-	139	3543	25.5
846	9.7%	9%	51.6%	50.9%	19.4%	26.8%	-	-	-	-	-	-	19.4%	13.3%	31	422	13.6
849	12.2%	32.8%	44.6%	37.8%	29.7%	28.7%	-	-	-	-	0.8%	13.5%	-	-	74	1148	15.5
900	9.2%	10.5%	36.8%	51.4%	15.8%	31.4%	-	-	-	-	6.7%	38.2%	-	-	76	494	6.5
901	19.2%	25.3%	-	0%	65.4%	70.7%	-	-	-	-	4%	15.4%	-	-	26	150	5.8
911	39.5%	62.5%	4.7%	9.1%	39.5%	25%	-	-	-	-	0.9%	11.6%	4.7%	2.6%	43	549	12.8
913	93.2%	99.1%	-	-	6.8%	0.9%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	263	6575	25.0
922	11.4%	10.4%	34.3%	34.1%	28.6%	52.2%	-	-	-	-	3.2%	25.7%	-	-	35	249	7.1
925	100%	100%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	32	252	7.9
1015	96%	96.4%	4%	3.6%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	112	4.5
1016	9.1%	6.2%	77.3%	88.1%	13.6%	5.7%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	22	455	20.7
1029	9.1%	1.1%	13.6%	6.1%	77.3%	92.8%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	22	525	23.9
1118	-	-	84.2%	55.9%	15.8%	44.1%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	38	744	19.6
1125	8.5%	7.2%	2.1%	0.7%	74.5%	90.9%	-	-	-	-	1.1%	14.9%	-	-	47	705	15.0
1131	28.1%	62.4%	18.8%	13.2%	50%	23.1%	-	-	-	-	1.3%	3.1%	-	-	32	234	7.3
1141	-	-	-	-	100%	100%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	33	300	9.1
1147	70%	65.4%	10%	3.7%	15%	28.5%	-	-	5%	2.3%	-	-	-	-	20	428	21.4

produced in excess of 50 sherds, 1601, 1608 and 1612. Five produced less than 10 sherds. Ditch 1605 is possibly of Roman date but of the 27 sherds only four are actually Roman, the rest being Iron Age, and it has been phased to the Iron Age.

The main N-S ditch, 1601, produced a total of 73 sherds of which 59.5% by weight were calcareous, 16% sandy, 21% sandy with some limestone and 3.5% other wares/unclassified crumbs. The average sherd weight of 11 g. suggests relatively good but not exceptional preservation. Featured sherds include the plain vessel with a finger-tipped rim (Fig. 11.23), a fine ware bowl (form C2) and a sherd with incised chevron decoration (Fig. 11.31), all of which point to an EIA date. Also from the same feature is a beaded-rim vessel (Fig. 13.77) which would appear to be later in date, being more typical of the MIA. This combined with the significant amount of sandy with limestone wares might suggest a date of abandonment in the MIA phase.

Ditch Group 1608 produced 110 sherds with a slightly lower average sherd size. The proportion of calcareous ware to sandy ware is reversed with calcareous wares accounting for 18.5% by weight, sandy wares for 55% and sandy with limestone for 23.5%. Amongst the featured sherds is a lid, a C2 fine ware bowl, a countersunk handle and an everted rim jar with finger-tip decoration (Fig. 10.13). The fabric proportions might suggest that this ditch is slightly later than 1601. The third ditch group, 1600, an extension of 1601, only produced 38 unfeatured sherds of which 42% were sandy with limestone, also suggesting a MIA rather than an EIA date.

The other ditch group to provide a moderately good group of sherds is 1612. Here the pattern is different again, with 64% calcareous wares, 2% sandy and 25% sandy with limestone but also two Roman sherds. The sherds are also noticeably small at an average of 5.2 g, which might argue for the Iron Age material being residual in a Roman feature. There are clearly different patterns of deposition at work but the evidence is difficult to interpret. The groups may be too small to draw any meaningful conclusions and the differences may not necessarily be chronological.

Pits and postholes. The featured elements of the assemblage, for example recognisable forms and decorated sherds, were isolated and their incidence across the site plotted. In addition, the wares from all the pits/postholes containing 20 sherds or more were analysed in greater detail. This amounted to just 36 features.

Despite the lack of obvious patterning some points can be observed. Looking at the distribution of some of the more distinctive forms there is no clear spatial patterning apparent. The earlier bipartite forms (form C3) occur in pits either side of Ditch Group 1601 (Pits 600, 716, 729, 735). Similarly expanded-rim coarse ware vessels (form A) and flared-rim bowls (form C1-2) show a scattered distribution across the whole site.

Most of the three commonest decorated types, finger-tip, incised and haematite-slipped sherds, occur in isolation. Examples of each type were recovered from pits east and west of the N-S ditch. Excluding incidence in Roman features, there are only two examples where haematite-slipped sherds occur alongside sherds with finger-tip decoration (Pits 317 and 849), and one example where haematite sherds occur with sherds showing incised decoration (Pit 317). Only two pits contained both finger-tip decorated sherds and incised decorated sherds (716/717 and 317). The MIA types and the pits labelled CP2C (early/middle) also failed to show any clustering or zoning and again occurred either side of the ditch systems. The data summarised in Table 8 show quite a range in the sherd size across the features looked at, indicating different formation processes at work. Although there are some clear differences in the proportions of different wares these do not appear to make a great deal of sense against the provisional ceramic phasing. It must be concluded that the fabric grouping is too broad to discern more subtle changes, the samples are just too small or that the basis for the ceramic phasing is flawed, perhaps due to a high degree of redeposition. In many cases designation is on the basis of single featured sherds.

The pottery, therefore, is pointing to use of the complete area of the site investigated during the early Iron Age when a number of pits and postholes were dug and subsequently refilled.³⁴ Evidence of non-intensive Roman activity is indicated from the 1st century through to the 4th century.

GENERAL DISCUSSION AND PARALLELS

Current Iron Age studies have a particular emphasis on the social and symbolic aspects of the period. Pit and ditch deposits are no longer seen as random dumps of rubbish accumulated during the use, or after the abandonment, of a site but as deliberately constructed deposits, with different artefact types occupying distinct areas of the site.³⁵ An assemblage such as the one recovered from Faringdon would appear to be ideal for this sort of detailed analysis and may well prove to be so in future studies.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ B. Cunliffe, 'Pits, Preconceptions and Propitiation in the British Iron Age', *Oxford Jnl. Archaeol.* 11 (1992), 69-84; Parker-Pearson op. cit. (note 32); Hill, op. cit. (note 32).

Coarse shell-tempered wares are a common feature of the later Bronze Age to early Iron Age. The presence of the decorated sherds places the assemblage into Barrett's³⁶ decorated assemblage, which seems to date, on present evidence, from the 8th century BC continuing in this area until the 5th/4th century. Similar decorated wares appear in the Ashville, Abingdon assemblage in Period 1 dated from the 8th to 5th century (radiocarbon date 790–400 cal BC at 2sigma (HAR1247)).³⁷ The assemblage from Faringdon shows many parallels to that from Ashville, with a similar range of fabrics and forms. An additional facet to the Faringdon assemblage is the presence of a small number of distinctive vessels which may show links with ceramic styles of the Wessex region.

Amongst the more distinctive wares are the haematite or red-finished wares which are particularly common on sites in central southern Britain. Several sites in the Thames Valley have now produced sherds, for example Groundwell Farm West near Swindon, Lechlade, Frilford, Wittenham Clumps, Appleford and Ashville.³⁸ The proportions are generally low compared to the Wessex sites, with The Lodgers, Lechlade producing one of the highest percentages. Of the 1060 sherds analysed from here, 29 were haematite-slipped (3%).³⁹ At Faringdon the proportion is much lower at 0.3% but this may to a certain extent be a reflection of the larger, chronologically more diverse, assemblage. The E-MIA settlement at Groundwell Farm West, near Swindon, had similar proportions with haematite wares accounting for 0.4%.⁴⁰ The fabrics used for the haematite wares are quite variable, suggesting more than one source. Work at Danebury, Hampshire (Cunliffe 1984; Brown 1991) suggests one major producer north of Salisbury for the production of scratch-marked haematite coated bowls dated to the 6th–5th century.⁴¹ This type of vessel is not present amongst the Faringdon assemblage. Work by Middleton⁴² has shown that a range of techniques were employed to achieve the red finish and work elsewhere has suggested that a variety of locations were producing this type of ware. Furrowed bowls with a haematite finish are more typical of the 8th century but the fragment tentatively identified here (Fig. 11.37) is redeposited. The cordoned, globular, haematite bowl (Fig. 12.50) and the cups with omphalos base (Fig. 12.48–9) are rarities which are difficult to parallel but may show links to the south rather than with traditions in the Thames Valley.⁴³ It has been observed that furrowed bowls, which are probably earlier, rarely occur on the same sites as cordoned vessels unless there is prolonged occupation.⁴⁴ The cordoned bowl in particular may belong to the same phase as Cunliffe's All Cannings Cross-Meon Hill group dated to the 5th–3rd centuries BC.⁴⁵ Other comparable incised decorated assemblages are quite plentiful in the Thames Valley basin, for example, Knights Farm, Berkshire; Ashville, Abingdon; Long Wittenham, Mount Farm and Chinnor, Oxon.⁴⁶

³⁶ J.C. Barrett, 'The Pottery of the Later Bronze Age in Lowland England', *Proc. Prehist. Soc.* 46 (1980), 297–319.

³⁷ Parrington, op. cit. (note 4), 39.

³⁸ C. Gingell, 'Excavation of an Iron Age Enclosure at Groundwell Farm, Blunsdon St Andrew 1976–7', *Wiltshire Archaeol. Nat. Hist. Mag.* 76 (1982), 34–75; R. Hingley, 'The Iron Age', in T. Darvill, R. Hingley, M. Jones and J. Timby, 'A Neolithic and Iron Age Site at The Lodgers, Lechlade, Gloucestershire', *Trans. Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeol. Soc.* 104 (1986), 41; De Roche and Lambrick op. cit. (note 20); De Roche in Parrington, op. cit. (note 4).

³⁹ R. Hingley, op. cit. (note 38), 41.

⁴⁰ Gingell, op. cit. (note 38), 49.

⁴¹ Cunliffe, op. cit. (note 22); Brown, op. cit. (note 33).

⁴² A. Middleton, 'Technological Investigation of the Coatings on Some "Haematite-Coated" Pottery from Southern England', *Archaeometry* 29(2) (1987), 250–61; cf. E.L. Morris, 'Artefact Production and Exchange in T.C. Champion and J.R. Collis' (eds.), *The Iron Age in Britain and Ireland: Recent Trends* (1996), 43.

⁴³ Harding, op. cit. (note 2), Figs. 43 and 51.

⁴⁴ Harding, op. cit. (note 2), 164.

⁴⁵ Cunliffe, op. cit. (note 22).

⁴⁶ Parrington, op. cit. (note 4); R. Bradley, S. Lobb, J. Richards and M. Robinson, 'Two Late Bronze Age Settlements on the Kennet Gravels: Excavations at Aldermaston Wharf and Knight's Farm, Burghfield, Berkshire', *Proc. Prehist. Soc.* 46 (1980), 217–96; H.N. Savory, 'An Early Iron Age Site at Long Wittenham, Berkshire', *Oxoniensia*, ii (1937), 1–11; J.N.L. Myres, 'A Prehistoric and Roman Site on Mount Farm, Dorchester', *Oxoniensia*, ii (1937), 12–40; K.M. Richardson and A. Young, 'An Iron Age Site on the Chilterns', *Antiq. Jnl.* 31 (1951), 132–48.

Expanded rim coarse ware vessels (form A) occur on many EIA sites in the Thames Valley, for example at Mount Farm, Dorchester and Blewburton Hill, Appleford, as well as on sites in the Cotswolds such as Crickley Hill.⁴⁷ Harding has suggested a progression from externally expanded rim to those with internal flanges, the latter being dated to the mid-6th to mid-5th centuries.⁴⁸ The sample from Faringdon is too small to draw many conclusions but A1 types (T-shaped) appear to dominate (see Table 4) although examples of each type are present.

The fine ware tripartite bowls can also be widely paralleled in the Thames Valley, for example at The Lodgers, Lechlade, at Ashville, Long Wittenham, Blewburton and Appleford amongst others.⁴⁹ A similar form, often with incised decoration and a pedestalled foot, occurs at Chinnor in the Chilterns to the north.⁵⁰ At Ashville such bowls feature alongside coarse wares with finger-tip decoration. The flared-rim bowls with a sharp angle between the rim and a rounded body (Fig. 12. 42–45) appear to be less common on the Oxfordshire sites. Harding shows similar examples from Old Marston, Blewburton Hill and Mount Farm.⁵¹ It is possible that these represent a typological progression from the tripartite examples.

The middle Iron Age in the Upper Thames Valley is characterised by a small range of vessel types, a typical assemblage being that from Watkins Farm, Northmoor, dated to the 3rd–mid 2nd century BC.⁵² Many of the vessel types from this site and other MIA sites such as Abingdon can be paralleled amongst the material from Faringdon. Work in the Upper Thames Valley at sites such as Farmoor and Ashville, Abingdon has suggested that there is an increase in sandy fabrics throughout the Iron Age.⁵³ The assemblage from Faringdon suggests a progression from the coarse shelly wares towards sandier fabrics with small quantities of limestone. The distinctive oolitic iron fabric (Fabric 13) has been noted from Abingdon and more recently Benson, and is thought to come from a source near Banbury.⁵⁴ Most of the glauconitic sandy fabric (S2) sherds likely to come from a source within Upper Greensand deposits appear to date to the MIA. Elsewhere glauconitic sandy wares seem to become more common in the middle Iron Age along with other less local types, suggesting pottery perhaps becoming a more specialised craft based at fewer production sites with increased regional trading.⁵⁵

Amongst the Faringdon material are at least two saucepan-style pots, a rarity in assemblages in the Upper Thames Valley. Single examples have been found at Ermin Farm, Gloucestershire, Groundwell West, and possibly Ashville, and the type is well-known at Blewburton Hill; otherwise the Wessex style of saucepan pots is rare.⁵⁶ In Wessex it occurs over a wide area between the 4th and 2nd centuries BC.⁵⁷ Globular bowls akin to the Frilford type and round-bodied jars are quite rare in the Faringdon assemblage. Some of the fragmentary decorated sherds may derive from globular bowls but none show the curvilinear decoration familiar on the Frilford types.

In conclusion the pottery assemblage recovered from Faringdon is a valuable addition to the growing corpus of material from the Upper Thames basin. The assemblage appears to follow the trends already established from other work in the area and shows many direct parallels with sites such as those at Lechlade, Abingdon and Blewburton Hill in particular. Interesting links to the south are suggested by a small number of more unusual vessels in the early to middle Iron Age periods, not previously recorded from Thames Valley assemblages.

⁴⁷ Myres, op. cit. (note 46); Harding, op. cit. (note 2); De Roche, op. cit. (note 38); Elsdon, op. cit. (note 22).

⁴⁸ Harding, op. cit. (note 2), 77–8.

⁴⁹ Hingley, op. cit. (note 23); De Roche, op. cit. (note 38); Savory, op. cit. (note 46); Harding, op. cit. (note 2), plates 50 and 54; De Roche and Lambrick, op. cit. (note 20).

⁵⁰ Richardson and Young, op. cit. (note 46).

⁵¹ Harding, op. cit. (note 2), plate 58.

⁵² Allen, op. cit. (note 5).

⁵³ Lambrick and Robinson, op. cit. (note 4); De Roche in Parrington, op. cit. (note 4).

⁵⁴ J.R. Timby, 'The Pottery from Abingdon Business Park' (in prep); J.R. Timby, 'The Pottery' in J. Pine and S. Ford, 'Excavation of Neolithic, Late Bronze Age, Early Iron Age and Early Saxon Features at St Helen's Avenue, Benson, Oxfordshire', *Oxoniensia*, lxxviii (2003), 132–78.

⁵⁵ Morris op. cit. (note 42).

⁵⁶ J.R. Timby, 'The Pottery' in A. Mudd, R.J. Williams and A. Lupton, *Excavations Alongside Roman Ermin Street, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire: The Archaeology of the A419/417 Swindon to Gloucester Road Scheme. Volume 1: Prehistoric and Roman Activity* (1999), Fig. 7.7.61; Gingell, op. cit. (note 38); De Roche in Parrington, op. cit. (note 4) Fig. 48, 259; Harding op. cit. (note 2), plate 66.

⁵⁷ Cunliffe, op. cit. (note 33).

*Catalogue of illustrated sherds**Figure 10*

1. Large vessel with a simple undifferentiated rim. Evidence of vertical slashed decoration on the break. Light brown exterior with a dark grey core/interior. Fabric H3. Form F. Pit 600 (983). CP2B.
2. Slackly carinated bowl with spaced finger depressions around the maximum girth. The upper part of the vessel is mid brown; the lower zone below the finger depressions is dark grey and sooted. Finely micaceous sandy fabric, S3. Form C4. Spread 738 (1464). CP2A.
3. Carinated bowl, dark grey-brown in colour. Fabric S3. Form C4. Unstratified (150E/98E).
4. Vertical walled vessel with a simple undifferentiated rim. Evidence of an applied lug at the break. Light orange-brown in colour. Fabric H1. Form F. Pit 324 (493). CP2A.
5. Small cup decorated with multiple line chevrons below the rim and finger depressions around the maximum girth. Black exterior and core with a dark grey-brown interior. Fabric SL. Form D2. Pit 911 (1676). CP3.
6. Simple rim vessel with deeply impressed finger depressions just below the rim. Form B2. Dark brown, partially blackened exterior, orange/grey interior, grey core. Finely vesicular fabric, L2. Pit 729 (1453). CP2A.
7. Vessel with an undifferentiated rim. Angle uncertain. The body is decorated with finger depressions on the shoulder. Dark brown to grey in colour. Fabric S2. Layer 887. CP4.
8. Bowl with smoothed interior and burnished exterior showing tooling marks. Dark grey-brown surfaces with a dark grey core. Fabric SL1. Form B1. Pit 204 (262). CP2C.
9. Large slack-sided vessel with flat base and plain rim. Mid brown in colour with patchy surface blackening and a grey-black core. Fabric H1 with surface voids on both the interior and exterior. Vessel form F. Possible irregular finger-tipping on rim surface. Pit 913. CP2C.
10. Body sherd with a horizontal applied strip below which are finger depressions. Black in colour, with a brown interior. Fabric SL1. Pit 325 (484). CP2B.
11. Body sherd, orange-brown with a grey core/interior. Fabric SL1. Decorated with a horizontal applied strip with spaced finger depressions, below which are further finger depressions. Unstratified, 146/97.
12. Body sherd decorated with finger depressions around the maximum girth. Orange-brown in colour with a grey core. Fabric H1. Pit 528 (878). CP2A.
13. Small everted rim with spaced finger depressions along the outer face, developing into a rounded body. Dark brown in colour. Fabric SL1. Form B5. Ditch 621 (1161). CP2A.
14. Simple vertical, slightly expanded rim with a slightly concave upper surface. Form A variant. Brown with a grey core and interior. Fabric H1. Pit 617 (1176). CP2A.

Figure 11

15. Large diameter vessel with a finger depressed scalloped rim. Red-brown to dark brown in colour with a dark grey core/interior. Roughly burnished exterior surface. Fabric H1. Form C4. Pit 716 (1352). CP2A.
16. Thick-walled vessel with an internally expanded rim, form A2. Brown in colour with a dark grey core and interior. Fabric H1. Pit 1135 (2073). CP2A.
17. Expanded rim vessel, form A1. Fabric SL1 with a sooted exterior. Pit 717 (1479). CP2A.
18. Vessel with an internally expanded rim, form A2. Red-brown exterior with a grey core/interior. Fabric LG. Pit 315 (474). CP2A.
19. Expanded rim vessel, form A1. Brown in colour, lighter on the interior. Fabric H1. Pit 827 (1582). CP2A.
20. Vessel with an internally and externally expanded rim, form A1. Orange fabric with a grey core. Fabric SL1. Vessel A1. Posthole 213 (286). CP2A.
21. Large diameter vessel with a slightly flaring rim. Brown with an orange-brown core/interior. Fabric SL1. Form C1. Pit 342 (582). CP2A.
22. Flared rim from a large, sharply carinated, bowl. Grey to orange surfaces with a grey core/interior. Fabric H1. Form C4. Post hole 243 (395). CP2A.
23. Simple vertically sided vessel with an undifferentiated rim, with finger-tipping. Orange with a grey inner core. Very coarse vesicular fabric H1. Form F. Ditch 1235 (2265). CP2A/3.
24. Everted rim vessel with a squared-off rim. Orange surfaces with a grey core. Fabric H3. Form B5. Pit 607 (995). CP2A.
25. Tripartite bowl, dark brown in colour with a dark grey interior/core. Fabric H3. Pit 241 (392). CP2.
26. Flared-rim bowl with a burnished red haematite-slipped finish. Roughly burnished interior surface. Red fabric with a black core. Fabric S00. Pit 1118 (1990). CP2A.
27. Body sherd from an angular bowl with incised decoration. Black surfaces with a grey interior/core. Fabric H3. 600 (983).
28. Body sherd from an angular bowl with incised line decoration. Dark grey sandy ware. Fabric S1. Pit 317 (480). CP2A.

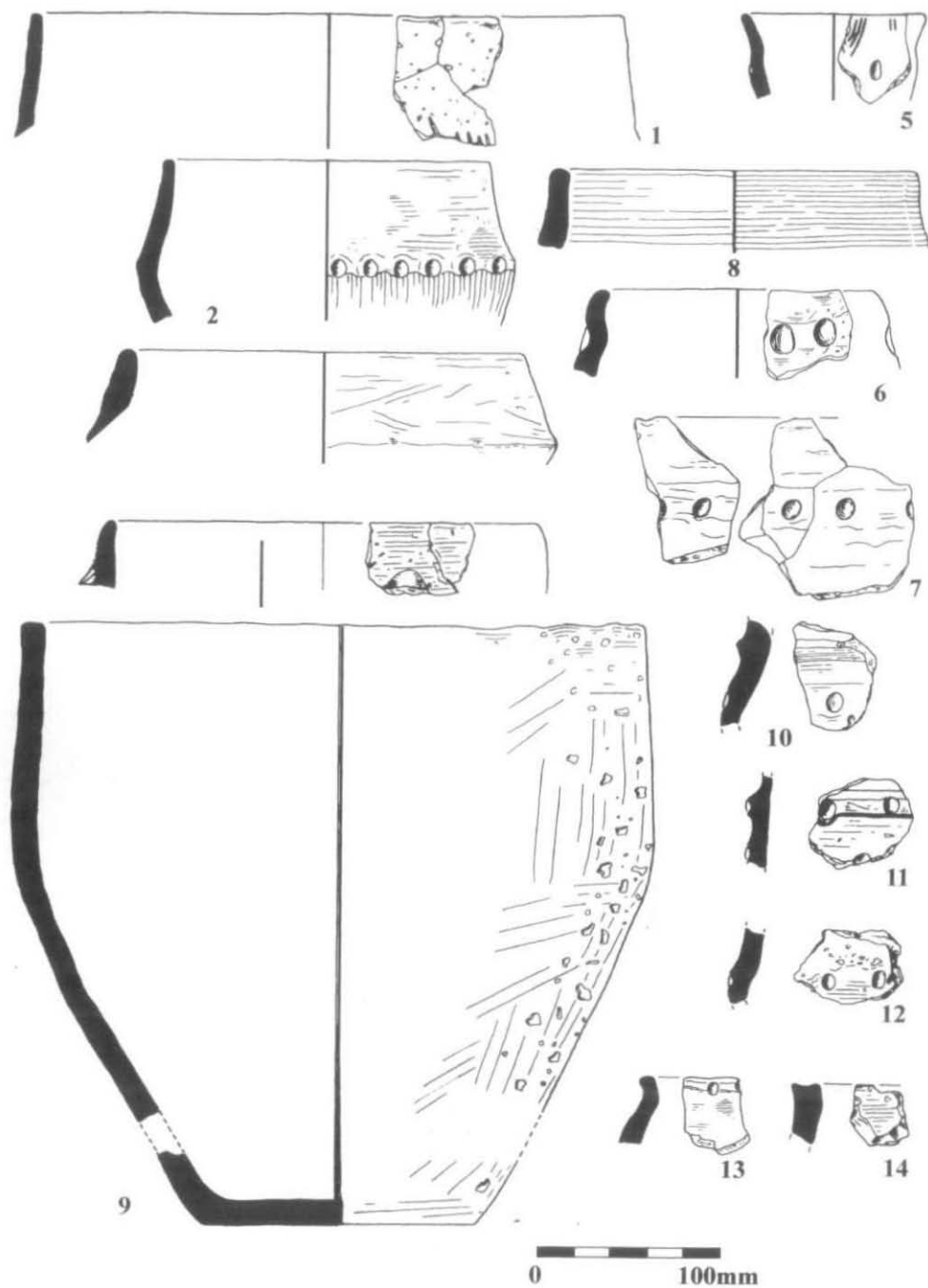


Fig. 10. Pottery (1-14) (see text for details).

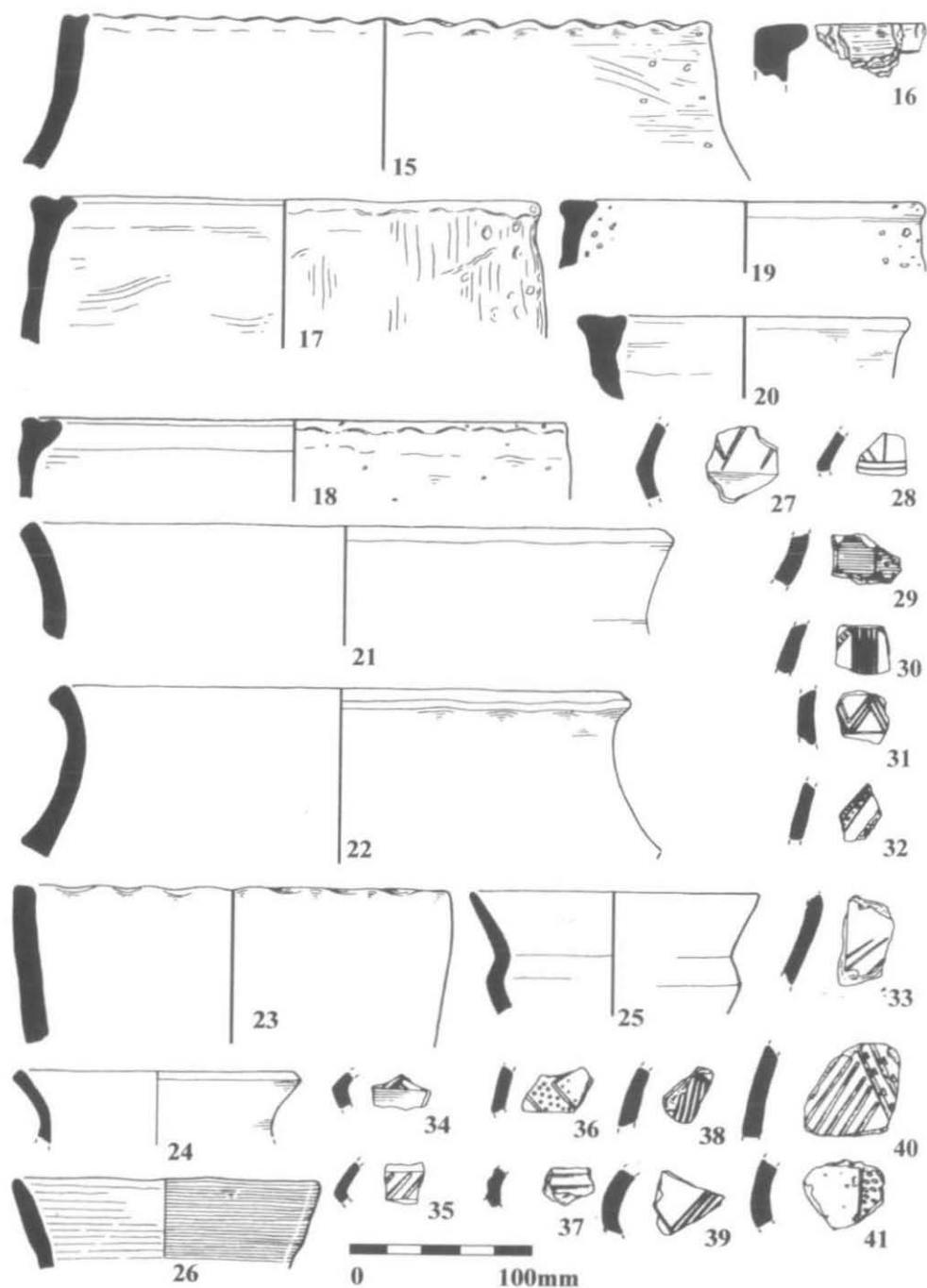


Fig. 11. Pottery (15-41) (see text for details).

29. Body sherd from an angular bowl decorated with a vertical line defining a zone with stab decoration. Black with a red-brown core. The exterior is burnished. Fabric SL1. Pit 1047 (1950). CP2A.
30. Body sherd decorated with incised parallel lines and diagonal impressed motifs. Dark brown with a dark grey core/interior. Fabric S00. Layer (862). CP2C.
31. Bowl body sherd with multiple line chevron decoration. Black in colour. Fabric S1. Ditch 836 (1591). CP2A.
32. Body sherd from an angular bowl with incised and impressed tramline-style decoration. Red-brown exterior with a dark grey core/interior. Fabric S3. Pit 648 (1262). CP2A.
33. Body sherd from a carinated bowl with incised diagonal line decoration. Smoothed exterior surface. Brown to grey in colour, fabric S3. Pit 1036 (1885). CP2C.
34. Body sherd from an angular bowl decorated with incised lines on the upper zone. Black sandy ware, fabric S3. Pit 1302.
35. Bodysherd from a carinated bowl with tooled diagonal line decoration. Dark grey-brown in colour. Fabric SL2. Pit 316 (478). CP2A.
36. Body sherd from a carinated bowl with a tramline-style decorative scheme involving incised lines and impressed dots. Dark grey sandy ware, fabric S3. Tree bowl 319 (483). CP2A.
37. Body sherd from a furrowed bowl. Orange exterior, possibly slipped. Grey interior/core. Fabric S1. Ditch 621 (1161). CP2A/3.
38. Body sherd from an angular bowl with an incised infilled linear design. Brown exterior, red-brown interior and grey core. Fabric S1. Pit 922 (1867). CP2C.
39. Body sherd from a ?globular bowl decorated with incised chevron style decoration. Red-brown exterior with a dark grey interior/core. The external surface is burnished. Fabric S3. Pit 628 (1356). CP2C.
40. Body sherd from a ?globular bowl. Decorated with tooled lines combined with stab marks. Mid brown surfaces with a dark grey core. Broken on a coil join. Fabric S2. 1123 (1984). CP2A.
41. Body sherd from a ?globular bowl decorated with defined zones with stabbed impressions. Dark grey-brown surfaces with a brown core. Fabric SL1. Pit 904 (1671). CP2B.

Figure 12

42. Globular bowl with a flared rim. Patchy red-brown to grey surfaces with a black core with brown margins. Burnished exterior and inner rim surface. Calcareous deposits on the interior. Fabric S1. Pit 845 (1653). CP2A.
43. Globular bowl with a vertical flared rim. Orange-brown burnished surface, possibly slipped. Black interior/core. Burnished interior. Fabric S3. Pit 832 (1587). CP2A.
44. Globular bowl with flared rim. Black in colour with external and internal burnishing. Fabric S00. Pit 301 (454). CP2B.
45. Flared-rim globular bowl with a particularly highly polished dark red haematite-slipped surface. Burnished interior. Red interior surface with a dark grey core. Fabric S3. Pit 1106 (1963). CP2B.
46. Globular bodied bowl with a flared rim. Orange surfaces blackened in the rim zone. Possibly originally with a haematite slip. Fabric S1. Posthole 437 (698). CP2B.
47. Flared-rim bowl. Black to red-brown patchy surfaces with a black core/interior. Originally burnished although now worn. Fabric SL5. Pit 241 (392). CP2.
48. Flared-wall bowl with a rounded base with a slight recess in the base. Dark grey to dark brown in colour with a mid grey core/interior. Finely micaceous sandy ware with rare flint. Fabric S3. Pit 629 (1171). CP2B.
49. Small bowl with a flared rim, rounded body and omphalos base. Burnished red haematite-slipped exterior, dark grey burnished interior. Fine sandy fabric with occasional shell, fabric H3. Pit 849 (1659). CP2B.
50. Beaded, rounded, cordoned bowl with a bright red haematite-slipped surface. Finely micaceous, sandy fabric with an orange brown interior and dark grey core. Fabric S00. Form D3. Posthole 701 (1197). CP2B.
51. Loop handle, brown in colour. Fabric H1. Pit 611 (1265). CP2B/3.
52. Countersunk handle with a single oval stab-mark on the upper surface. Dark grey to red-brown surfaces with a dark grey inner core with red-brown margins. Fabric SL1. Pit 325 (484). CP2B.
53. Squat, rounded bowl with a slack shoulder carination and an everted rim. Light brown to grey burnished exterior and a black burnished interior. Fabric S1. Form D5. Pit 339 (576). CP2B.
54. Rounded bowl with a slightly beaded rim. Well-burnished black exterior. Dark grey interior and a dark red-brown core. Fabric S1. Form B2. Pit 1036 (1885). CP2C.
55. Simple rim vessel with an internal bevel. Decorated just below the rim with four slightly irregular tooled lines. Possibly a devolved saucepan-pot style. Black in colour, fabric SL4. Form E. Pit 541 (951). CP2C.
56. Simple vertical-walled vessel, possibly from a saucepan-style pot, form E. Red-brown exterior, brown interior and dark grey core. Fabric H3. Pit 901 (1695). CP2C?
57. Everted-rim vessel with exterior and interior burnished surfaces. Brown to black surfaces with a dark grey core. Fabric S1. Form B5. Pit 722 (1383). CP2A.

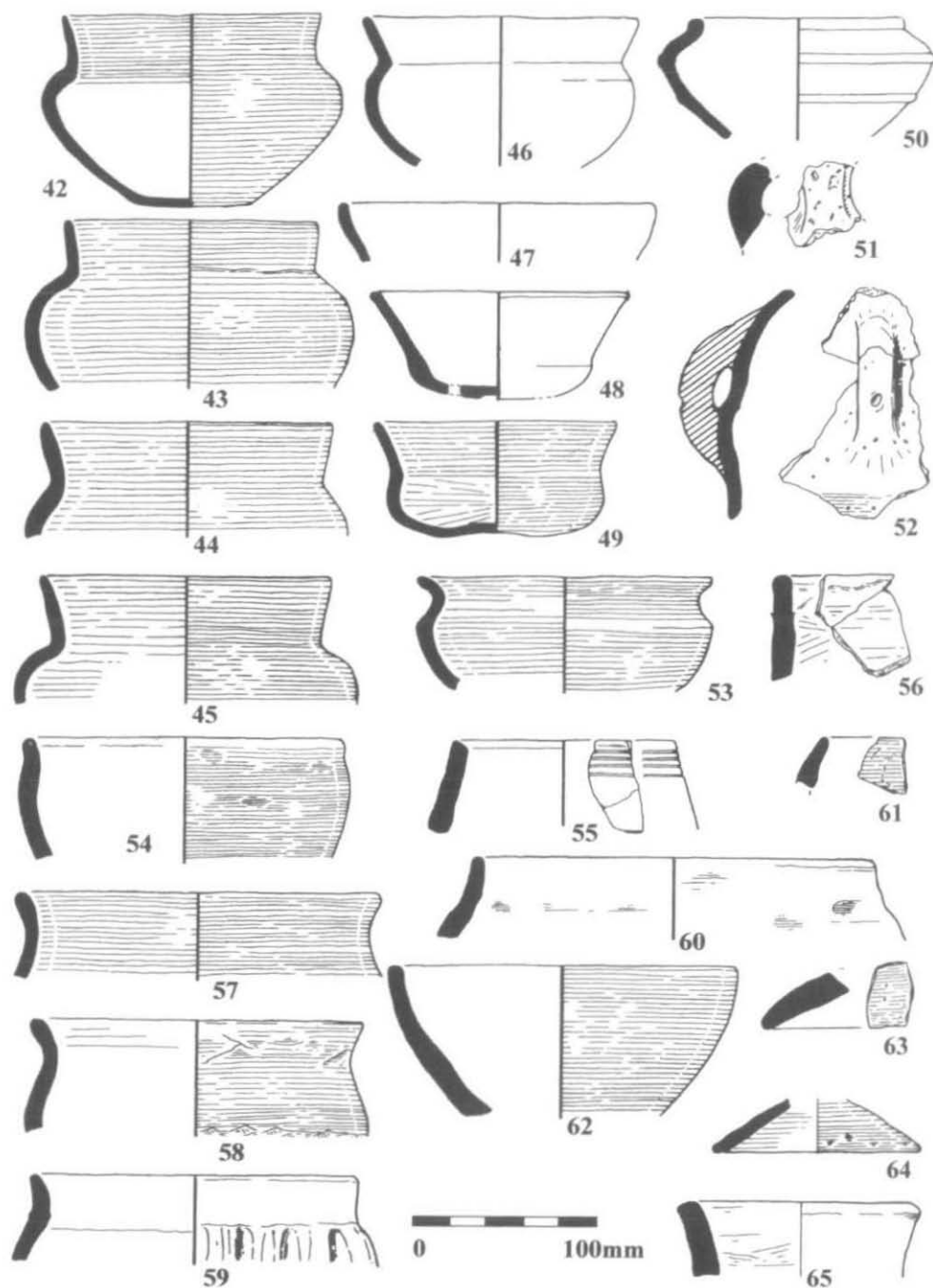


Fig. 12. Pottery (42-65) (see text for details).

58. Everted-rim rounded bodied bowl. The vessel has broken along a coil join marked by a series of incisions suggesting a possible change of angle. The upper exterior body is burnished, the interior smoothed. Dark brown to black in colour with some external sooting. Fabric S3. Form B5. Pit 903 (1670). CP2A.
59. Everted-rim vessel with a rounded body. The body below the rim has shallow, vertical finger grooves, the rim has been smoothed. Black in colour with a dark grey core. Fabric SL1. Form B5. Pit 606 (998). CP2B.
60. Simple rim vessel with a rounded body, form B5. Light orange-brown in colour, fabric H1. Pit 624 (1164).
61. Rim fragment from a simple in-turned globular bowl. Black burnished exterior surface. Fabric S2. Form B4. Pit 1036 (1885). CP2C.
62. Conical bowl with a well-burnished exterior. Black in colour with brown patches and a black core. Fabric S1. Form D1. Ditch 1202 (2155). CP2C.
63. Simple undifferentiated rim, probably a lid. Dark red-orange in colour. Fabric S1. Post hole 400 (590). CP2B.
64. Small lid with a roughly burnished exterior and interior surfaces. Black exterior/core with a brown interior. Fabric S3. Pit 527 (875). CP2B/3.
65. Simple, slightly flaring narrow-necked vessel. Black with a brown interior. Fabric H1. Wipe marks on the interior. Pit 1204 (2157). CP2A.

Figure 13

66. Large-shouldered jar with patchy black to brown surfaces. Fabric H3. Form B1. Pit 818 (1559). CP2C.
67. Large, slackly shouldered jar. The upper external body is dark grey-black with some sooting. The lower body and interior is red-brown with a dark grey core. The body has been vertically smoothed. Fabric H1. Form B1. Pit 1020 (1957). CP2A/3.
68. High-shouldered slackly carinated jar. Black surfaces with a red-brown core. Fabric S1. Form B1. Pit 204 (261). CP2C.
69. Shouldered jar. Orange exterior, dark grey core, mid brown interior. Fabric S1. Form B1. Pit 601 (992). CP2B.
70. Barrel-shaped jar, black in colour. Fabric S1. Form B3. Robber Trench 1234 (2264). CP4.
71. Barrel-shaped jar. Mid-orange exterior, brown interior and dark grey core. The body is vertically smoothed; the rim zone horizontally wiped. Fabric S1. Form B3. Pit 739 (1483). CP2C.
72. Large jar with a small vertical rim. Mid-brown surfaces with some sooting on the exterior. Dark grey core. The surfaces show irregular wiping marks. Fabric SL1. Pit 818 (159). CP2C.
73. Large jar with a slack shoulder. Orange-brown surfaces with a dark grey core. Wipe marks apparent on the interior surface. Fabric H1. Form B1. Pit 911 (1676). CP3.
74. Barrel-shaped jar with a slightly everted rim. Black to red-brown surfaces and a dark grey core. Fabric SL1. Form B2. Pit 628 (1168). CP2C.
75. Small-necked jar/bowl. Dark brown exterior with a red-brown interior. Fabric SL1. Form B2. Pit 622 (1162). CP2C.
76. Large rounded jar with a slightly thickened rim. Orange-brown surfaces with a dark brown inner core. Fabric SL. Form B2. Pit 1125 (2051). CP2A.
77. Beaded-rim bowl, dark grey brown in colour. Fabric H3. Form B6. Ditch 1103 (1956). CP2B.
78. Bowl with an internally thickened rim, form B6. Dark grey exterior/core, brown interior. Fabric L2. Layer (2251). CP3.
79. Base. Black with a light brown interior. Fabric SL1. Pit 528 (878). CP2A.
80. Wheel-made necked, cordoned bowl. Black. Fabric SVW variant. Robber Trench 1234 (2264). CP4.

Brick and tile

Twenty undiagnostic fragments of brick and tile (761 g.) were recovered from the site, eight of which came from subsoil contexts and two from surface layers of Iron Age pits. Ten fragments were associated with Roman Structure 101.

Fired clay and daub

A total of 192 fragments of fired clay/daub were recovered from the excavation. Amongst these were a number of pieces with clearly defined wattle impressions. Also present were three loomweights and two spindle whorls from Pits 203, 214, 339, 905 and 1049 respectively (Fig. 14.1)

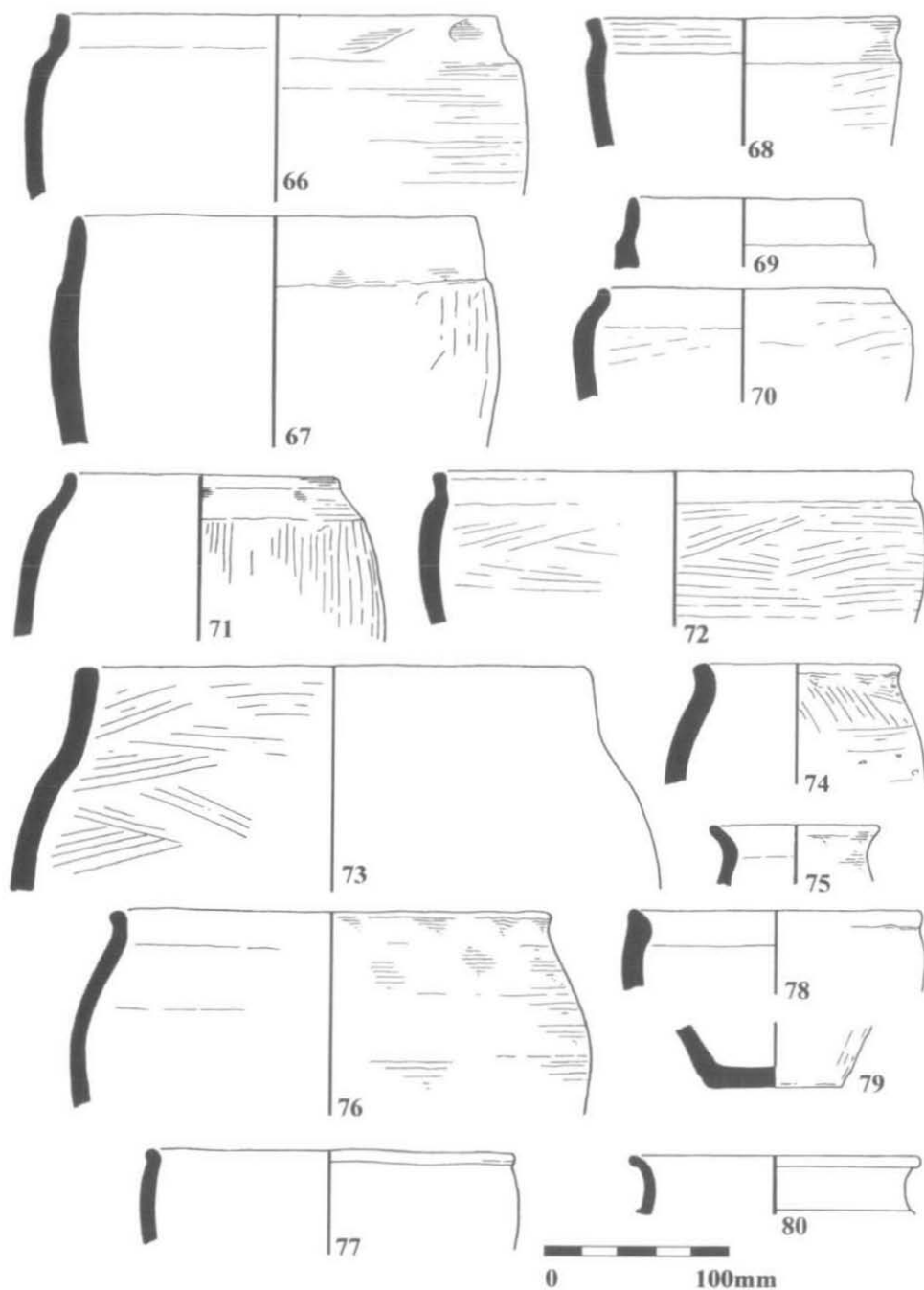


Fig. 13. Pottery (66-80) (see text for details).

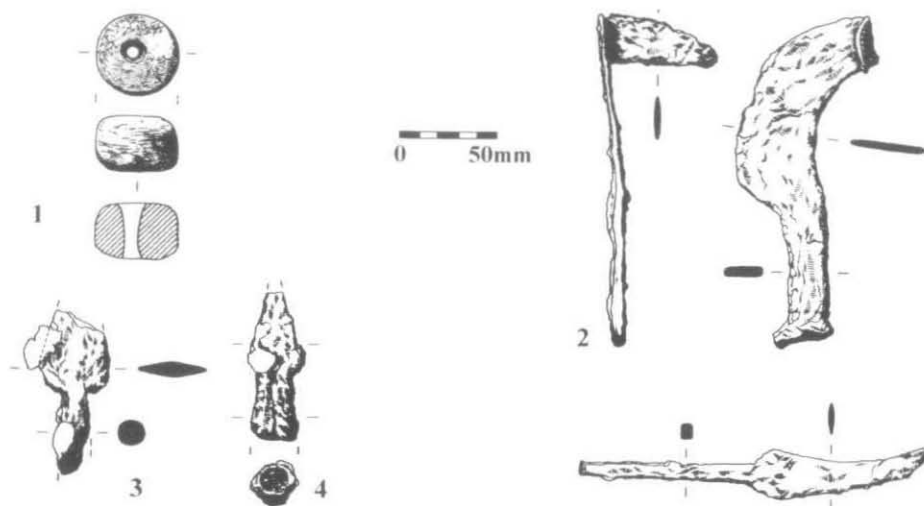


Fig. 14. Selected finds (1 baked clay spindle whorl, 2 iron sickle, 3 iron spearhead).

ANIMAL BONES by SHEILA HAMILTON-DYER

Almost 4,000 fragments of animal bone were recovered from the evaluation and excavation. The major part of the material was recovered from a large number of pits, postholes and ditches of mainly early Iron Age date. Some bone was recovered from features that could not be accurately phased but which appeared to belong to the main, Iron Age, phase. The bones from these features do not appear to be significantly different from the phased material and have been included in the analysis. A small quantity of bone is from contexts associated with a stone structure of Roman date, discussed separately. A few bones (49) were recovered from features that may be post-Roman; these are not further discussed but are recorded in archive. The majority of the features were half sectioned; ditches were sampled by slot excavations. The bone therefore derives from a very large number of features which comprise almost 50% of the pit contents and a substantial proportion of the ditch fills.

Methodology

Species identifications were made using the author's modern comparative collections. All fragments were identified to species and element with the following exceptions. Ribs and vertebrae of the ungulates (other than axis, atlas and sacrum) were identified only to the level of cattle/horse-sized and sheep/pig-sized. This restriction does not apply to burials and other associated bones where ribs and vertebrae were assigned to species. Unidentified shaft and other fragments were similarly divided. Any fragments that could not be assigned even to this level have been recorded as mammalian only. Recently broken bones were joined where possible and have been counted as single fragments. The small number of bones from sieved samples is included. Measurements follow von den Driesch in the main and are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.⁵⁸ Withers height calculations of the domestic ungulates are based on factors recommended by von den Driesch and Boessneck.⁵⁹ Archive material includes metrical and other data not presented in the text.

⁵⁸ A. Von den Driesch, 'A Guide to the Measurement of Animal Bones from Archaeological Sites', Peabody Museum Bulletin 1 (1976).

⁵⁹ A. Von den Driesch and J. Boessneck 'Kritische Anmerkungen zur Widerristhöhenberechnung aus Längenmaßen vor- und frühgeschichtlicher Tierknochen', *Säugetierkundliche Mitteilungen* 22, Munich (1974), 325-48.

TABLE 10: ANIMAL BONE FROM PITTS

	horse	cattle	sheep/goat	pig	cattle-size	sheep-size	mammal	Total
<i>Major Pit Group</i>								
202	1	7	8	2	4	5	-	27
204	1	5	9	7	11	36	6	75
209	-	5	4	-	9	3	-	21
214	1	9	13	6	6	9	10	54
317	3	9	11	7	7	10	-	47
323	-	2	6	-	1	6	6	21
334	-	3	6	-	10	12	-	31
509	2	10	3	-	6	3	4	28
528	-	10	7	3	1	-	-	21
541	6	10	13	4	22	24	6	85
545	-	3	7	3	1	6	-	20
601	-	3	11	-	6	14	-	34
606	1	2	10	2	10	32	1	58
617	-	12	3	-	6	13	5	39
622	-	4	4	1	2	13	12	36
628	1	9	13	3	1	20	-	47
629	-	1	7	1	6	13	-	28
703	-	5	8	-	4	12	-	29
716	-	2	6	4	10	10	-	32
718	-	7	20	4	1	25	13	70
818	-	1	29	3	4	47	25	109
842	-	4	5	-	14	4	5	32
849	-	7	8	2	4	8	9	38
842	-	4	5	-	14	4	5	32
846	-	-	8	2	6	8	-	24
900	1	9	11	4	10	23	22	80
903	-	3	9	-	6	11	-	29
911	-	7	12	3	4	7	12	45
913	-	2	6	-	4	20	17	49
1039	-	-	7	-	1	17	-	25
1111	-	4	2	-	3	12	-	21
1204	-	3	6	4	8	4	1	26
Total (large pit groups)	17	150	272	65	196	418	154	1272
<i>Percent</i>	<i>1.3</i>	<i>11.8</i>	<i>21.4</i>	<i>5.1</i>	<i>15.4</i>	<i>32.9</i>	<i>12.1</i>	
Percent horse, cattle, sheep, pig	3.4	29.8	54.0	12.9				504

TABLE 11: ANIMAL BONE FROM DITCHES

	horse	cattle	sheep/goat	pig	cattle-size	sheep-size	mammal	Total
<i>Ditch group</i>								
1600	4	2	5	1	11	5	2	30
1601	5	7	4	1	3	6	18	44
1605	2	6	3	2	5	5	-	23
1606	1	-	1	1	2	3	-	8
1607	1	1	2	2	1	-	-	7
1608	1	7	12	-	12	13	-	45
1611	-	-	2	-	3	1	-	6
1612	-	7	8	1	7	5	-	28
Total (ditches)	14	30	37	8	44	38	20	191
<i>Percent</i>	<i>7.3</i>	<i>15.7</i>	<i>19.4</i>	<i>4.2</i>	<i>23.0</i>	<i>19.9</i>	<i>10.5</i>	
Percent horse, cattle, sheep, pig	15.7	33.7	41.6	9.0				89

Results

The majority of the bones are of the main domestic ungulates: sheep/goat, cattle and pig. Bones of other taxa are very few; they include horse, dog, fox, red deer, Brent goose, greylag, raven, small mammals and amphibians (Tables 9, 10 and 11). Bones of sheep/goat dominate the assemblage with cattle in second position and pig third. The ovicaprid material was distinguished where possible using the methods of Boessneck and Payne.⁶⁰ Of the 735 bones 74 could be positively identified as sheep and three as goat (all horn cores).

Preservation of the material is variable. Most bones are in good condition or slightly eroded, very few fragments are in poor condition and some are so well preserved they have a fresh, ivoryed, appearance. About half of the bones are identifiable to species, a relatively high proportion. The remainder are fragments of ribs, vertebrae and limb shaft, which are difficult to assign to taxon, but are likely to be of the main domestic ungulates. Surface details such as butchery and gnawing marks are clearly visible on several bones and some fragments have been burnt (Table 12).

Although the condition of the collection appears good, survival of the material is typically uneven. Teeth are resistant and survive well, also aiding the survival of jaws. Sheep/goat tibia number 128. These are bones that survive well and are easily identified, yet 82% (105) of these are shafts only. Just four (3.1%) are complete; two (1.6%) are proximal ends, and 17 (13.3%) are distal ends. This discrepancy between the numbers of proximal and distal ends is related to epiphyseal fusion; the proximal epiphysis fuses later than the distal and unfused bone is less dense and more prone to damage, including gnawing.⁶¹

Iron Age

Anatomical representation

Apart from the expected taphonomic bias, the anatomical distribution indicates the remains of whole animals (Table 13). Jaws, loose teeth, rib fragments and shaft fragments are common. The smallest elements such as carpals and phalanges are few even though these are the most common elements in the skeleton. They are more likely to be overlooked than large elements, and may have already been destroyed by gnawing and soil acids. Apart from jaws the most frequently represented elements for sheep were radius, tibia and metapodia. As explained above, the early fusing elements are more resistant to attrition. Cattle elements are more evenly spread but also suffer from taphonomic loss even though these bones are larger and less subject to collection bias. Pig bones are less frequent but also represent the whole skeleton and offer a high proportion of jaws and teeth. The greater proportion of teeth reflects pig anatomy: pigs have more teeth than cattle and sheep, and the incisors are large. Metapodia are less common; although more numerous in pig they are also smaller. The minimum number of individuals (MNI) of the main domestic ungulates ranges from zero to over 50 and is clearly an inappropriate analytical tool for this material.

Ageing

Ageing data from epiphyseal fusion are likely to be unreliable due to the taphonomic bias already indicated.⁶² For cattle, sheep and pig there are bones from skeletally mature animals, young stock, and a few from very young or neonatal animals.

The sheep/goat assemblage offers a good number of jaws suitable for assessment of the population structure. At least twenty-one are of young sheep; none of young goat were identified. Tooth wear was recorded then the jaws were grouped into seven classes.⁶³ Although not all of the jaws had complete tooth rows most could be allocated within two classes. There are peaks around Class 3 and Classes 6 and 7. There is also a secondary peak of incomplete jaws of at least Class 4 and less than Class 6, but without the 3rd molar (Table 14). No jaws of very young lambs were present although there are a few bones from neonatal animals. The early peak is equivalent to a cull (or natural mortality) of lambs between six and twelve months old, but not yet at the optimum for meat production. Ewe lambs are unlikely to be killed so most of the culls are likely

⁶⁰ J. Boessneck, 'Osteological Differences Between Sheep (*Ovis aries* Linné) and Goat (*Capra hircus* Linné)' in D. Brothwell and E.S. Higgs (eds.), *Science in Archaeology* (1969), 331–58; S. Payne, 'Morphological Distinctions Between the Mandibular Teeth of Young Sheep, *Ovis*, and Goats, *Capra*', *Jnl. Archaeol. Science*, 12 (1985), 139–47.

⁶¹ L.R. Binford, *Bones: Ancient Men and Modern Myths* (1981); J.M. Maltby, 'Patterns in Faunal Assemblage Variability' in G. Barker and C. Gamble (eds.), *Beyond Domestication in Prehistoric Europe* (1985), 33–74.

⁶² J.M. Maltby, 'The Variability of Faunal Samples and their Effects on Ageing Data', in B. Wilson, C. Grigson and S. Payne (eds.), *Ageing and Sexing Animal Bones from Archaeological Sites* (B.A.R. 109, 1982), 223–50.

⁶³ A. Grant, 'The Use of Tooth Wear as a Guide to the Age of Domestic Ungulates', in Wilson et al., op. cit. (note 62), 251–54.

TABLE 12: BUTCHERY

	<i>butchered</i>	<i>burnt</i>	<i>gnawed</i>	<i>eroded</i>	<i>loose teeth</i>	<i>total excl.teeth</i>	<i>overall total</i>
horse	2	1	14	15	18	46	64
%	4.3	1.6	30.4	23.4	39.1		
cattle	49	3	88	119	69	375	444
%	13.1	0.7	23.5	26.8	18.4		
sheep/goat	21	33	124	163	94	641	735
%	3.3	4.5	19.3	22.2	14.7		
pig	14	4	23	22	40	457	497
%	3.1	0.8	5.0	4.4	8.8		
lar	22	44	25	153		537	537
%	4.1	8.2	4.7	28.5			
sar	13	43	35	118		899	899
%	1.4	4.8	3.9	13.1			
pther	0	23	4	76	3	588	591
%	0.0	3.9	0.7	12.9	0.5		
total	121	151	313	666	224	3497	3703
%	3.5	4.1	9.0	18.0	6.4		

Calculations of butchery and gnawing exclude loose teeth.

TABLE 13: ANATOMICAL REPRESENTATION

	<i>cattle</i>		<i>sheep/goat</i>		<i>pig</i>		<i>cattle-sized</i>		<i>sheep-sized</i>	
skull	19	4.5	30	4.4	9	5.8	34	6.7	9	1.1
maxilla/premaxilla	12	2.9	15	2.2	8	5.2	-	-	-	-
jaw	64	15.3	95	13.9	19	12.3	-	-	-	-
loose teeth	66	15.8	89	13.0	36	23.4	-	-	-	-
atlas	2	0.5	-	-	2	1.3	-	-	-	-
axis	3	0.7	4	0.6	-	-	-	-	-	-
other vertebrae	-	-	-	-	-	-	51	10.1	58	6.9
ribs	-	-	-	-	-	-	98	19.4	283	33.9
scapula	28	6.7	23	3.4	9	5.8	-	-	3	0.4
pelvis	22	5.3	16	2.3	16	10.4	-	-	-	-
humerus	24	5.7	31	4.5	14	9.1	-	-	-	-
radius	24	5.7	74	10.8	3	1.9	-	-	-	-
ulna	14	3.3	19	2.8	6	3.9	-	-	-	-
femur	16	3.8	22	3.2	3	1.9	-	-	-	-
tibia	32	7.6	114	16.7	5	3.2	1	0.2		
astragalus	10	2.4	4	0.6	-	-	-	-	-	-
calcaneum	7	1.7	8	1.2	1	0.6	-	-	-	-
other carpal/tarsal	10	2.4	0	0.0	1	0.6	-	-	-	-
metacarpus	24	5.7	47	6.9	7	4.5	-	-	-	-
metatarsus	24	5.7	72	10.5	3	1.9	-	-	-	-
phalanges	17	4.1	19	2.8	7	4.5	-	-	-	-
shaft fragments	-	-	-	-	-	-	245	48.4	472	56.5
other	1	0.2	1	0.1	5	3.2	77	15.2	10	1.2
419			683		154		506		835	

Sheep/goat includes 74 sheep, 3 goat.

Cattle-sized may include some horse, sheep-sized may include some pig.

Pig excludes piglets from Pit 301.

to have been surplus male lambs. The secondary peak equates to a broad age range of animals over a year old but less than three. The largest grouping is of mature animals over three years, some considerably older. These are probably barren ewes and other stock in poor condition, such as those with periodontal disease.

Though there are very few cattle jaws available for analysis of ageing, it can be said that there are jaws from elderly, mature and young animals, but not very young calves. Most of the bones are fused but there are some of animals under three years and a few bones of young or even neonatal calves.

The few pig remains that offer ageing data indicate the presence of neonatal piglets, young stock and adult animals of both sexes.

All of the horse bones are fused and the teeth are all of the permanent dentition. One jaw indicates an age of about eleven years.⁶⁴ The partial skull in Pit 205 is of a relatively young animal of only three or four years.

TABLE 14: SHEEP/GOAT TOOTHWEAR

Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	total						
No. of jaws	0	0	0	5	10	3	4	8	1	5	10	4	12	62
Classes:	1 dp4 not in wear; 2 M1 not in wear, dp4 in wear; 3 M1 in wear, M2 not in wear; 4 M2 in wear, M3 not in wear; 5 M3 in wear, M1 not in heavy wear (Grant H); 6 M1 in heavy wear, M2 not; 7 M1 and M2 in heavy wear.													

Metrical data

Few bones are complete but the collection does offer several measurable bones and some estimates of withers heights. The most frequent values for cattle and sheep are summarised in Table 15. The two withers height estimates available for horse are 1.346 m. and 1.279 m. All the measurements are comparable with contemporary material and indicate the small stock typical of the Iron Age.

Butchery

The incidence of visible butchery is low apart from cattle, where it occurs on 49 (13.1%) of the bones (Table 12). Some marks may have been obliterated by gnawing and erosion. Most of the butchery was carried out using knives, rather than the cleavers and axes often used at later sites. The shave marks on a radius from Pit 729 and a femur from Pit 718 are more typical of Roman material and, as some Roman pottery was encountered in some features, these bones may be intrusive. It is possible that other features have bone from both periods which may blur the distinctions between the assemblages, but as the majority of ceramics are of the early to middle Iron Age it is likely that the majority of the animal bone is also Iron Age.

The style of butchery in all other respects is typical of the Iron Age. The evidence indicates disjuncting and removal of head and feet. One sheep skull had been split to access the brain. Some bones with mid shaft cuts and spiral fractures probably indicate breakage for marrow. Cuts on cattle jaws and a hyoid indicate removal of the tongue, and cuts round the eyes and feet of cattle and sheep show where the skin was removed. The cut marks on a horse pelvis, and round a femur, show that horse carcasses were also sometimes utilised, as at other sites.

Pathology

Some bones exhibited signs of abnormalities; most are age related pathologies. The six abnormal cattle bones include two acetabulae with eburnation, associated with arthritis. The femur that offered a small withers height of 0.972 has pronounced muscle and ligament attachments; these often develop with age and/or work. One of the metatarsi had a distorted medial trochlea, which may be an indication of a traction animal.⁶⁵ One jaw fragment had perforations in the articular surface, and an upper third molar had extremely uneven wear. For sheep all four instances were of oral pathology, and most of these on animals of some age. Ewes with a 'broken mouth' do not thrive, rarely produce viable lambs, and would be ideal candidates for culling. Horse and pig produced one abnormal bone each, a horse tarsal with exostosis round the outer surface and a pig peripheral metacarpus with a lateral proliferation of bone.

⁶⁴ M.A. Levine, 'The Use of Crown Height Measurements and Eruption-Wear Sequences to Age Horse Teeth', in Wilson et al., op. cit. (note 62), 223-50.

⁶⁵ L. Bartosiewicz L., W. Van Neer and A. Lentacker, *Draft Cattle: Their Osteological Identification and History*, Annales Sciences Zoologiques, 281 (1997).

TABLE 15A: METRICAL DATA, SHEEP

<i>bone measurement (mm)</i>	<i>radius Bp</i>	<i>humerus BT</i>	<i>tibia Bd</i>	<i>metatarsus Bd</i>	<i>metacarpus GL</i>	<i>withers heights (m)</i>	<i>metatarsus GL</i>	<i>withers heights (m)</i>
value	25.8	17.8	22.2	20.0	107.2	0.618	123.9	0.562
	27.2	22.7	22.4	21.0	123.5	0.604	132.5	0.601
	28.0	24.1	22.5	21.9	126.3	0.524	140.7	0.639
		24.1	22.5	22.0				
		25.0	22.5	22.3				
		25.0	23.7					
		25.5	24.0					
		25.7						
		26.1						
		27.2						
	<i>radius</i>	<i>humerus</i>	<i>tibia</i>	<i>metatarsus</i>		<i>withers heights (m)</i>		
MAX	28.0	27.2	24.0	22.3		0.639		
MIN	25.8	17.8	22.2	20.0		0.524		
N	3	10	7	5		6		
MEAN	27.0	24.3	22.8	21.4		0.6		
SD	0.9	2.5	0.7	0.8		0.04		
Co. Var.	3.3	10.3	3.1	3.7		6.7		

Measurement codes as per Von den Driesch (1976).

TABLE 15B: METRICAL DATA, CATTLE

	<i>humerus BT</i>	<i>radius Bp</i>	<i>scapula GLP</i>	<i>tibia Bd</i>	<i>astragalus GLI</i>	<i>metacarpus Bp</i>	<i>measurement GL (mm)</i>	<i>withers height (m)</i>
	61.3	68.3	59.5	52.3	55.0	50.7	279.0	rad 1.200
	62.0	70.0	62.0	52.4	56.0	54.9	275.0	rad 1.183
	65.5	70.3	64.2	56.5	57.9	55.3	253.0	rad 1.088
	68.9	70.3	72.5	56.8	58.6	56.3	250.0	rad 1.075
		72.1		63.3	59.1		242.0	rad 1.041
		72.1			61.6		280.0	fem 0.972
		72.7			62.1		298.0	fem 1.034
		76.5			62.8		340.0	tib 1.173
		77.4					178.0	mc 1.090
		79.1					182.0	mc 1.115
		81.3					198.0	mt 1.079
							210.0	mt 1.145
	<i>humerus BT</i>	<i>scapula GLP</i>	<i>scapula GLP</i>	<i>tibia Bd</i>	<i>astragalus GLI</i>	<i>metacarpus Bp</i>		<i>withers height (m)</i>
MAX	68.9	81.3	72.5	63.3	62.8	56.3		1.200
MIN	61.3	68.3	59.5	52.3	55.0	50.7		0.972
N	5	11	4	5	8	4		12
MEAN	64.4	73.6	64.6	56.3	59.1	54.3		1.1
SD	3.0	4.1	4.9	4.0	2.7			
Co.Var.	4.7	5.6	7.6	7.1	4.6			

Measurement codes as per Von den Driesch (1976).

Notable features

Most of the pits appear to contain broadly similar assemblages. A notable exception is the cylindrical pit (301). The 466 bones include 322 of at least two neonatal piglets, 30 of a fox and cub, 18 of a raven and 18 bones of small mammals. These are of water vole, field vole, and woodmouse. Many of the bones are well preserved, even ivoryed. In addition there are a few bones of sheep and cattle and some small scraps of mammal bone. Some of these non-associated bones had been gnawed and appear similar to other material from the site. They may have been incorporated into the fill from a different source, perhaps rubbish lying around the site rather than the fresh carcasses of the other animals. The origin of the small mammals is not clear; they may have been gut contents of the fox or even the raven, or were perhaps pit fall victims prior to the infilling of the pit. The fox bones have no marks indicating skinning for fur, the other skeletons do not have any butchery or other distinguishing features, and all appear to have been deposited as complete carcasses. Several foxes and the remains of a red deer were found in a pit at Winklebury.⁶⁶

Pit 541 also contained raven bones; a wing and part of a leg were collected, possibly from an articulated skeleton. Although now almost absent from England, the raven was once a common scavenger and also had symbolic significance.⁶⁷ Statistical analysis of the raven bones at Danebury indicated an association with special deposits.⁶⁸

Another feature with unusual contents is the Barrel Pit 205. The much-fragmented remains of a partial horse skull were recovered. This is probably female and was relatively young at death, about three or four years. At this age it would have only just become usable. Part of a cattle bucranium was also found. This was a hornless individual. This pit contained very little other material: an unusually complete scapula, a few gnawed bones of cattle and some sheep-sized ribs.

Barrel Pit 818 is also worthy of special mention. This feature produced 109 bones, one of the largest groups. Almost all of the bone is from a minimum of two young sheep. Ageing from epiphyseal fusion and from tooth wear and eruption indicates animals of approximately 9–12 months. Although all areas of the body are represented, at least one animal was not deposited as a complete carcass; eight bones are charred and one of the astragali is cut. There is insufficient evidence to tell whether meat was stripped from the carcass, or perhaps just the fleece.

Shaft 509 was thought to be an unusual feature during excavation but the animal bone, from an upper fill, is an unremarkable mixture of 28 cattle, sheep and horse bones.

TABLE 16: ANIMAL BONE DISTRIBUTION BY FEATURE TYPE

	horse	cattle	sheep/goat	pig	cattle-size	sheep-size	mammal	total
ditches	14	30	37	8	44	38	20	191
percent	7.3	15.7	19.4	4.2	23.0	19.9	10.5	
% horse, cattle, sheep, pig	15.7	33.7	41.6	9.0				(89)
major pit groups	17	150	272	65	196	418	154	1272
percent	1.3	11.8	21.4	5.1	15.4	32.9	12.1	
% horse, cattle, sheep, pig	3.4	29.8	54.0	12.9				(504)
other features	27	239	374	81	266	379	166	1532
percent	1.8	15.6	24.4	5.3	17.4	24.7	10.8	
% horse, cattle, sheep, pig	3.7	33.1	51.9	11.2				(721)
Grand Total	58	419	683	154	506	835	340	2995
Percent	1.9	14.0	22.8	5.1	16.9	27.9	11.4	
% horse, cattle, sheep, pig	4.4	31.9	52.0	11.7				(1314)

NB Pit 301 is excluded.

⁶⁶ G.A. Wait, *Ritual and Religion in Iron Age Britain* (B.A.R. 149, 1985), 122–153.

⁶⁷ M. Green, *Animals in Celtic Life and Myth* (1992).

⁶⁸ A. Grant, 'Animal Husbandry' in B. Cunliffe, *Danebury: An Iron Age Hillfort in Hampshire, Volume 2. The Excavations 1969–1978: The Finds*, C.B.A. Res. Rep. 52 (1984), 496–548.

Pit 545, with an unusual layer of stone infill, contained an articulated skeleton of a young puppy at the base. Some foot bones are absent including all the toes. These were either missed on account of small size or were not preserved. The fills of this pit contained very little other bone: 20 mixed fragments of cattle, sheep and pig. Pit 913, which contained a complete vessel, offered an unremarkable, mixed, group of 49 ungulate bones and one of field vole. As the pits were half sectioned only, there may have been other associated material in these features, and also other features with unusual deposits which have remained buried. The clay-lined pits contained no bone or just a few scraps.

Discussion

Although taphonomic loss is likely to be significant (in common with most bone assemblages), there are few remains in comparison with the number and size of the pits. At Danebury the frequency of bone in pits was compared by phase and clearly increased over time. The number of bones per pit from the early Iron Age phase was comparably low, particularly in those near the centre of the fort. Disposal of the bone (and other finds) is unlikely to be the primary function of these large pits. Grain storage is likely to be their origin, with rubbish disposal a secondary function. In common with several other sites, some ritual procedure appears to have taken place with the deliberate placement of items in certain pits, presumably after use as storage pits. At Danebury a number of skulls and partial and complete skeletons were found at the bottom of pits, sometimes in association with other finds or chalk blocks.⁶⁹ Winnall Down also produced several partial and complete skeletons, some of which may have been ritual depositions rather than mundane disposal.⁷⁰ Pits 205 and 545 may fall into this category of special deposit. Others are more difficult to assess: the young sheep in 818 may be just butchery waste. Pit 301 is unique: these species have all been found at other sites but not together.

It has also been suggested that all rubbish disposal in pits may have had a ritual significance and not just the obviously structured deposits.⁷¹ Most of the bone does not appear to have been disposed of in the pits and ditches immediately after processing/consumption, as the dog gnawing illustrates. The bone may have accumulated around the settlement, perhaps in middens, before its final disposal, ritual or otherwise.

There are small differences in species distribution between features and feature types (Tables 10, 11 and 16). The bulk of the material is from pits; the ungulate distribution for pits with 20 or more bones is given in Table 10. It can be seen that all contain sheep and almost all contain cattle. Most also offer a few fragments of pig while horse occurs in nine of the 31 pits listed. The ratio of cattle to sheep varies; sometimes cattle is more frequent than sheep, but overall sheep dominate. The ditch sample is much smaller (Table 11) but does offer a greater proportion of cattle and horse in most of the samples. The summary Table 16 includes the remainder of the bone; this was from a small number of layers and spreads, pits with under 20 bones, and postholes. Although the total seems large, the bone derives from a very large number of features, most of which offered just one or two bones. The ungulate proportions are similar to those of the major pits.

The presence of a higher proportion of bone from the larger species in ditches is a common finding for Iron Age assemblages.⁷² Such differences are thought to be the result of a combination of preservation and disposal practices.

Several sites in this part of the Thames Valley have produced bone assemblages, mostly from lower-lying settlements on the river terraces. Farmoor offered a very small amount only.⁷³ Northmoor offered a larger sample but mainly from house enclosure ditches. Horse was at a high level at this site, more common than pig.⁷⁴ At Ashville, Abingdon, the large assemblage was mainly from ditches, but like Coxwell was dominated by bones of sheep, and horse was less frequent than pig. The sheep age profile also appears to be similar.⁷⁵ A very large group of Iron Age material was recovered from the site of Mingie's Ditch, Hardwick with Yelford

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ J.M., 'The Animal Bones', in P. Fasham, *The Prehistoric Settlement at Winnall Down, Winchester*, Hampshire Fld. Club Archaeol. Soc. Monograph 2 (1985), 97-112.

⁷¹ Parker-Pearson, op. cit. (note 32); J.D. Hill, 'The Identification of Ritual Deposits of Animals: A General Perspective from a Specific Study of "Special Animal Deposits" from the Southern English Iron Age', in S. Anderson and K. Boyle (eds.), *Ritual Treatment of Human and Animal Remains* (1996), 17-32.

⁷² Maltby, op. cit. (note 61).

⁷³ B. Wilson and D. Bramwell, 'The Vertebrates', in Lambrick and Robinson, op. cit. (note 4), 128-33.

⁷⁴ B. Wilson, 'The Animal Bones' in Allen, op. cit. (note 5), 94-105.

⁷⁵ B. Wilson, J. Hamilton, D. Bramwell and P. Armitage, 'The Animal Bones', in Parrington, op. cit. (note 4), 110-39.

in the Windrush valley,⁷⁶ but the assemblage was not as well preserved, and mainly from pennanular enclosure ditches, house gullies and occupation layers. Sheep still dominates but is less frequent than at Ashville and horse is more frequent than pig. Once again there is a peak of young sheep mandibles. Variation across the site was found with horse and cattle bones more frequent in the peripheral features.

The excavated site at Coxwell Road is clearly only part of an extensive settlement and the spatial patterning seen at some other sites is not detectable; the site bone derived mainly from clusters of pits of indeterminate chronological sequence.

Conclusion

Excluding the bones from Pit 301, bones of domestic ungulates dominate the assemblage. Sheep are the most frequent bones with cattle second and pig third. With the difference in carcass size, cattle may have been as important as sheep for meat. Butchery was carried out mainly using knives and includes horse. Horse is a minor but consistent part of the assemblage; dog is also present at a low level and is attested not just by the bones but also by indirect evidence from gnawing. Wild species are negligible; the foxes and other material in Pit 301 are an unusual find. This low species variety is typical of Iron Age assemblages, with an almost total reliance on domestic mammals for food and most secondary products. Red deer is often one of the few wild species present but, as here, often only the antlers are present, which could have been shed and are not necessarily evidence for hunting. Ageing information indicates a peak of sheep culling at six to twelve months, as found at several other sites. The exploitation of sheep appears to be general purpose, with no indication of specialisation for meat, milk or wool. There is some evidence for special deposits in a few features but the restrictions of the site do not offer opportunities for spatial analysis in relation to structures and position in the settlement.

In summary, the assemblage at Coxwell Road is broadly comparable with other similar assemblages from Iron Age sites in Wessex, but has its own character.⁷⁷

Roman

The major part of the assemblage derives from features of Iron Age date. The sample from Roman features is relatively small. Although of insufficient size for detailed analysis and comparison, the material has been fully recorded for the archive and is briefly described below.

The 170 bones are of the expected domestic ungulates, fragments of these sizes, two bones of a small passerine, and six small mammal bones including the jaw of a field vole and the skull of a common shrew. Sheep/goat dominates this small sample, as it does the Iron Age material.

One sheep/goat jaw with all teeth missing is swollen, distorted and has a draining sinus below the 2nd premolar. Both of the pig jaws are of mature males, but other pig material is of young stock and did not offer information on sex.

The few butchered bones differed little from those in the Iron Age assemblage, and did not include the distinctive filleting marks found in some Roman assemblages.

The amount of sheep was also very high at Lowbury temple on the Ridgeway, even though the preservation was poor and would have favoured cattle over the smaller bones of sheep.⁷⁸ As at Lowbury there is little evidence here of selection of goats, rams or cockerels (as at Uley and Chelmsford) but again this is a small sample.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ B. Wilson, 'Reports on the Bones and Oyster Shell', in T.G. Allen and M.A. Robinson, *The Prehistoric Landscape and Iron Age Enclosed Settlement at Mingies Ditch, Hardwick with Yelford, Oxon.* (1993) Oxford University Committee for Archaeology.

⁷⁷ J.M. Maltby, 'The Exploitation of Animals in the Iron Age: The Archaeozoological Evidence', in Champion and Collis, op. cit. (note 32), 125–38.

⁷⁸ S. Hamilton-Dyer, 'The Animal Bone', in M.G. Fulford and S.J. Rippon, 'Lowbury Hill, Oxon.: A Reassessment of the Probable Romano-Celtic Temple and the Anglo-Saxon Barrow', *Archaeol. Jnl.* 151 (1994), 185–8 and fiche.

⁷⁹ B. Levitan, 'The Animal Bones', in A. Ellison, *Excavations at West Hill, Uley, 1977: The Romano-British Temple. Interim Report*, CRAAGS Occas. Pap. 3 (1978); R.M. Luff, *A Zooarchaeological Study of the Roman North-Western Provinces* (B.A.R. Int. Ser. 137, 1982).

TABLE 17: WORKED BONE

a>Gouges or points

<i>Feature/context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Manufacture</i>	<i>Surface</i>
202 (2272)	gouge/point	Sheep or goat tibia, longitudinal, diagonal cut to remove distil end.	Very highly polished on face of gouge.
210 (276)	gouge/ point	Sheep or goat long bone trimmed longitudinally to create tapering point.	Highly polished on surfaces and tip.
312 (468)	gouge	Sheep or goat tibia, longitudinal, diagonal trim to remove distil end.	Highly polished on face and sides of gouge, transverse score marks on the sides at the distil end.
528 (877)	gouge	Sheep or goat tibia, longitudinal, diagonal trim to remove distil end.	Highly polished on surface of gouge, tip broken.
(252)	gouge	Unidentifiable bone fragment, longitudinal trim.	Highly polished on surface of gouge, broken.
1029 (1855)	point/spatula	Unidentifiable bone fragment, shaped and trimmed to form point at one end and spatula at the other.	Polished surface, transverse scoring all over the spatula end.

b>Worked rib bones

<i>Feature</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Manufacture</i>	<i>Surface</i>
242 (393)	spatula	Cattle rib trimmed in centre to make spatula shape with rounded ends.	Polished surface.
331 (557)	spatula	Horse rib? Shaped on both sides to narrow the width of the rib.	Polished surface, some score marks on sides where it has been narrowed.
525 (861)		Small rib fragment.	Polished surfaces.
1145 (1993)		Rib fragment broken at one end, the complete end being pierced.	Wear on the side of the rib below the drill hole.
1147 (2098)	denticulate	Cattle rib fragment with notches cut into narrow edge.	Polished surface.

c> Pierced bone fragments

<i>Feature</i>	<i>Manufacture</i>	<i>Surface</i>
u/s edges.	Unidentifiable flat bone fragment, pierced in the centre.	Hole is well rounded and polished around its
1037 (1892)	Flat bone fragment, with squared-off end, and pierced in the centre of this end.	Very fragmented but shows slight polish to sides.

d> Miscellaneous worked bone

<i>Feature</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Manufacture</i>	<i>Surface</i>
202 (2272)	pick	Splinter from long bone tapers from one end to a blunt point.	Highly polished surface.
214 (289)	bag handle	Complete sheep or goat metacarpal with worn grooves on both sides just below the distal end.	Highly polished surfaces, with score marks transversely near the grooves.
406 (596)		Sheep or goat tibia broken at proximal end, trimmed longitudinally towards the distal end where it has stepped and fractured	Polished on all sides especially on the trimmed surface.
606 (996)		Fragment of large bone, with shallow depression in one side.	Polished around edges of the shallow depression or groove.
723 (1389)	pin	Long bone splinter that has been rounded and trimmed to created two tapering points.	Very highly polished surface.
933 (1690)		Sheep or goat tibia, badly broken at both ends.	Very highly polished, and a large number of transversal and longitudinal score marks.
(2250)	gaming piece	Rounded bone fragment, with a groove on one side.	Rounded and worn surface.

HUMAN BONE by ANDY SMITH

Ten fragments of human bone (355 g.) were retrieved from four sealed contexts. The bone condition was moderate to poor, with no complete elements available for examination, which limited the scope for analysis. The fragments comprised a single right femur (two pieces) from Pit 622 (1162); a single right humerus from Pit 210 (210); four fragments of a left humerus from Ditch 1608 (714, 1374); and three cranial fragments from an occipital, recovered from Pit 628 (1357).

WORKED BONE by ADAM CRONEY

A total of twenty pieces of worked bone were found during the excavation. These consisted largely of pieces of worked sheep or goat long bones, or worked rib bones. The most frequent category of artefacts was gouges or points, with other fragments representing the working of the bone for some indeterminate purpose. This has resulted in the polishing or grooving of the surface of the bone. Other bone fragments appear to have been drilled. Gouges or points are typically made from sheep or goat long bones such as the tibia or metacarpal, which is shaped by trimming into a flat pointed tip. This is done by cutting longitudinally in a diagonal fashion across the bone, removing either the distal or proximal end. The worked rib bones are made from a variety of animal ribs, namely cattle, horse, sheep or goat. Of those found, the majority show a great deal of polishing and tapering of the width of the rib bones. One piece was notched to create a denticulate edge, whilst another was pierced. Among the pieces of worked bone a small number featured drilled holes, although the incompleteness of the fragments does not allow an interpretation of their use.

METALWORK by DAVID RICHARDS

A small but significant collection of iron and copper alloy objects was recovered from the site. The more important objects are a long-tanged and crescent-bladed knife and a sickle. The latter has an iron handle, apparently once ending in a ring instead of the tang or socket which are the usual methods of hafting a sickle (Fig. 14.2). Ring-ended handles, as in numerous iron knives from Manching in southern Germany, and commonly on the simple keys termed 'latch-lifters' from Britain and elsewhere in Europe, seem to be an Iron Age practice, although one which, in the latter case, extends well into the Roman period.

The two, or probably three, spearheads are of known Roman form (Fig. 14.3), but are particularly significant in a religious context, as generally similar weapons have been found at temple sites, particularly Uley and Lowbury Hill.⁸⁰ In contrast, two iron objects and one of copper alloy are medieval in date. A copper alloy finger ring and bracelet have near parallels from other Roman sites, but wire rings in particular are a long-lived and varied class, found from the Iron Age through to Saxon and early medieval times and made from drawn or forged wire. The thickness of the rod used in this ring suggests the earlier date. There is an example of an armlet with a looped terminal, used to adjust the size, among the bracelets from Lowbury and, although not common, others are known from Colchester and other Roman sites.⁸¹

The twenty-two iron nails, from several contexts, contribute little to dating. The majority conform to Manning's type 1b, i.e. they are plain rough-headed nails with square section stems, typical of handmade nails from perhaps the 1st century BC through to the 19th century AD.⁸² However, two nails have the flatter stems and heads typical of some medieval nails, but since one is apparently from a Roman context and is in a group which is otherwise of type 1bs, it is best disregarded as being intrusive.

⁸⁰ Woodward and Leach, op. cit. (note 18); D. Atkinson, *The Romano-British Site on Lowbury Hill, Berkshire* (1913); Fulford and Rippon, op. cit. (note 78).

⁸¹ Atkinson, op. cit. (note 80); N. Crummy, *Roman Small Finds from Colchester*, Colchester Archaeological Reports No. 2 (1983).

⁸² W. H. Manning, *Catalogue of the Romano-British Iron Tools, Fittings and Weapons in the British Museum* (1985), London.

COINS by PAUL CANNON

Five coins were recovered from the site, all of Roman date and all from Structure 101 (Layer 2199):

- 1) Dupondius of Claudius, AD 41-54
- 2) Imitation As of Claudius, AD 41-54
- 3) Dupondius of Nerva, AD 98
- 4) Dupondius of Trajan, AD 98-9
- 5) Follis of Constantine I, AD 310-2

METALWORKING DEBRIS by CHRIS SALTER

A total of 0.66 kg. of material was examined, the major part of which proved to be natural rock fragments of various ironstones and mudstones. The iron-rich nature of the local geology results in the development of ironstone and iron-rich breccias that are difficult to distinguish from iron-working debris on the basis of their external morphology. The remaining material (0.28 kg) was broken fragments of dense iron-working slag, none of which retained their original surfaces. It is difficult to determine the type of iron-working process that produced this sort of slag even when the fragments have retained sufficient of their surface to make a morphological identification. This is particularly true for those periods when iron was produced using non-slag tapping furnaces, i.e., during the Iron Age and the post-Roman periods. When small quantities of slag are recovered it is usually considered that they are the result of normal rural smithing activity (the fabrication and repair of artefacts). However, as Iron Age smelting sites are relatively rare (early and middle Iron Age very rare), two specimens were sampled and prepared for metallographic examination. This confirmed that the slags were generated during smithing. It is likely that the samples from unstratified contexts are originally from the same settlement. The small amount of slag recovered is typical of the 'background' scatter pattern found on many Iron Age/Roman rural settlements.

STONE by DAVID WILLIAMS

A small number of worked stone fragments were recovered, many of which were made from locally available rock. Only a small number of the stone finds can be regarded as representing long-distance imports to the site. One of these is part of a rotary quernstone in a quartz conglomerate, most probably from the area of the Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire. Two small pieces of cherty Greensand quernstones may be from the Lodsworth quarries in West Sussex while most of the others are probably of local origin. A quern quarry is known at nearby Coles Pit, which utilised the local Upper Greensand although it is difficult to say if any of the Faringdon pieces belong to querns obtained from this source.⁸³

STRUCK FLINT by STEVE FORD

Eighty-one struck flints were recovered during the course of the excavation. Several of these occurred as surface finds during stripping of the site but the vast majority were residual finds in features of Iron Age and Roman date. Several periods are probably represented, although only material of Mesolithic date is clearly recognisable. Several of the pieces are burnt, heavily patinated and abraded, whereas others are in a fresh condition. The raw material appears to have been derived from more than one source, with pieces made both of small, poor quality and often cherty material locally available, whereas other larger pieces are probably made from material direct from a chalkland source. There is a clear Mesolithic component within the collection, characterised by microliths, fine blades, narrow flakes and blade cores. Two microliths were found, one an obliquely blunted form, the other obliquely blunted with opposed retouch at the tip. The latter had a notch along one side and it would appear that the piece was intended to be snapped across this notch, but in fact snapped further along the blade. One end scraper made on a fine blade is also most probably of Mesolithic date.

⁸³ O.G.S. Crawford, *Archaeology in the Field* (1953).

TABLE 18: METALWORK CATALOGUE

a> Iron objects

<i>Cut</i>	<i>Deposit</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Comment</i>
201	2270/1	nail	Stem frag.ent 10 mm. long, 6 g.
206	284	staple	modern intrusion? 48 mm. long, 6 g.
345	585	barmount	Rectilinear with concave sides and remains of rivets in each end. the squarer end is possibly broken and may have once ended in a hook. 52 mm. long , 6 g. ⁸⁴
703	1281	knife	Small crescentic blade (83 mm.) with very long (80 mm.), rectangular section, untapered tang. No parallel has been found for a Roman or Iron Age knife in this form, which, with a long wooden or organic handle, must have had some special use. 163 mm. long, 40 g.
902	1666	arrow head	Triangular blade and neat, thin socket. Medieval as well as Roman form. 60 mm. long, 46 g.
1136	1995	knife	Small triangular blade with flat tapering tang set in line with the back. Extreme tip missing and blade is sharply bent. Manning's type 13, a long-lived Roman 'everyday' knife. 112 mm. long, 46 g. ⁸⁵
1234	2264	nail	58 mm. Long, 6 g.
	251	sickle	Broad crescentic blade ends in flat parallel sided handle set at an angle with the remains of a ring end. Unusual implement as most published Iron Age or Roman tools are either tanged or socketed. 130 mm. long, 220 g. ⁸⁶ (Fig. 14.2)
	251	tang?	Tapering rectangular section spine, broken off cleanly at the thicker end. Although there is no trace of a blade this appears to be the tang of a large knife or cleaver. 78 mm. long, 19 g.
	251	strap fragment	Badly corroded, little remains of original edges. Curved section suggests this is a piece of a binding strip (reinforcement) or perhaps from a hinge. 95 mm. long, 18 g.
	369	nail	Incomplete T-headed and rectangular section stem. Late medieval or early modern. 4 g.
	369	nail	Complete type 1b? 55 mm. long, 8 g.

b> Copper alloy objects

<i>Cut</i>	<i>Deposit</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1206	2159	scrap	Oval piece of sheet. 1 g.
439	697	ring or earring	Made from spiral or thick round wire, or a thin rod? Medieval, 11th-14th century. ⁸⁷ 2 mm. long 1 g. 20 mm. Diameter
	251	spacer	Crescentic spacer from a composite strap-end. Projecting knop missing. 25mm. long, 2g.

c> Roman shrine Structure 101: iron objects

<i>Cut</i>	<i>Deposit</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Comment</i>
	2198	disc	Slightly concave disc with central hole, slightly lipped. Belt mount or harness?
	2199	arrow head or bolt head	Small diamond shaped head hardly wider than the crude split socket. Manning 'local manufacture' type. 78mm. long, 56 g. There is a similar object from Uley. ⁸⁸ (Fig. 14.4)
	2251	spear head	Leaf shaped blade with round shoulders and neat socket. Similar head from Uley. 85 mm. long, 54 g. ⁸⁹ (Fig. 14.3)
822	2280	nail	Complete type 1b. 50 mm. long, 4 g.
	2198	14 nails	10 Complete type 1b. 50–75 mm. long, 68 g; 4 incomplete, 11 g.
	2199	3 nails	2 Complete type 1b. 50 mm. long, 28 g; 1 incomplete, 4 g.

d> Roman shrine Structure 101: copper alloy objects

<i>Cut</i>	<i>Deposit</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Comment</i>
	2199	dross	Irregular corroded lump. 2 g.
	2199	scrap	1 g.
822	2280	bracelet	Made from a single length of oval section wire. Thinner end looped in a spiral as a means of adjustment. 5 g., 60 mm. diameter
822	2281	sheet	1 g.

⁸⁴ G. Egan and F. Pritchard, *Dress Accessories 1150–1450*, Museum of London (1991), 212, Fig. 133 no. 1136.

⁸⁵ Manning, op. cit. (note 82).

⁸⁶ S.E. Rees, *Agricultural Implements in Prehistoric and Roman Britain* (B.A.R. 68ii, 1979); G. Jacobi, *Werkzeug und Gerat, aus dem Oppidum von Manching* vol. 5 (1974), Table 24, sf. 562.

⁸⁷ Egan and Pritchard, op. cit. (note 83).

⁸⁸ Manning, op. cit. (note 82), Fig. 77 v39 or v44; A. Woodward and P. Leach, *The Uley Shrines*, 1977–79 (1993).

⁸⁹ Manning, op. cit. (note 82), Fig. 77 v55 or v83.

CARBONISED PLANT REMAINS by MARK ROBINSON

Extensive sampling for carbonised plant remains was undertaken from 273 individual contexts. A group of 67 sub-samples, mostly of 10 litres each, were floated. All the dried flots were first inspected by eye and then rapidly scanned at a x10 magnification under a binocular microscope. Carbonised seeds, chaff, etc. were observed in 36 of the 67 samples. Only two samples contained more than 2.5 items per litre and a further three contained more than 1.0 item per litre. The remains most frequently present are grains of *Triticum spelta* (spelt wheat) and *Hordeum vulgare* (hulled six-row barley) but a few grains of possible free-threshing wheat (*Triticum* sp.) and possible *Triticum dicoccum* (emmer wheat) are also present. Weed seeds are quite frequent and they include *Chenopodium album* (fat hen), *Atriplex* sp. (orache), *Polygonum aviculare* agg. (knotgrass), *Fallopia convolvulus* (black bindweed), *Rumex* spp. (dock) and *Bromus* cf. *secalinus* (brome grass).

A vesicular carbonised lump containing broken cereal grain including *Hordeum* sp. (barley) from Pit 849 is apparently some sort of bread. A little charcoal including *Quercus* (oak) and cf. Rosaceae (hawthorn, sloe, etc.) is present in some of the samples.

DISCUSSION

The main successes of this excavation have been in revealing a substantial early Iron Age settlement and the presence of a Roman shrine. Other finds point to small-scale use of the site and general area in earlier prehistory.

Mesolithic

A small group of later mesolithic flint work has been identified within the flint collection from the site. The quantity of struck flint recovered is not large, despite careful monitoring of the topsoil stripping operation. This suggests that the removal of large numbers of finds contained only within the topsoil has not occurred. This site falls into a broader pattern of settlement within the region, which is concentrated on the Corallian ridge north of the River Ock.⁹⁰ The finds are too few to suggest the former presence of a large occupation site and may be a product of casual loss or possibly a small, temporary task-specific site.⁹¹

Later Neolithic to late Bronze Age

Sherds of Beaker, middle and late Bronze Age pottery indicate sporadic use of the area during these periods. This usage may be no more intense than as manured and cultivated land. The few struck flints that are more likely to be of Neolithic or Bronze Age date are probably also a product of casual loss, although some could be contemporary with the early Iron Age occupation on the site as flint usage on sites spanning the late Bronze Age and early Iron Age is well attested on the chalk downlands to the south.⁹²

Early Iron Age

The vast majority of the deposits uncovered belong to this period and represent a major discovery for this area of the Upper Thames region. Further extensive archaeological deposits extend to the north.⁹³ The small-sample excavation of this latter area showed that middle Iron Age and Roman deposits were also present but our early Iron Age site certainly

⁹⁰ R. Holgate, *Neolithic Settlement of the Thames Basin* (B.A.R. 194, 1988).

⁹¹ Binford, op. cit. (note 8).

⁹² M. Bowden, S. Ford and V. Gaffney, 'The Excavation of a Late Bronze Age Artefact Scatter on Weathercock Hill, Berkshire Archaeol. Jnl. 74 (1991-3), 69-83.

⁹³ J. Cook, E.B.A. Guttman, A. Mudd et al., 'Excavations of an Iron Age Site at Coxwell Road, Faringdon' (this volume of *Oxoniensia*, 119-285).

extends in that direction. It is not clear how far the site extends to the east beneath and beyond Coxwell Road. As the introduction has highlighted, Iron Age use of the gravel terraces of the region is extensive and dense but the fieldwork here has adequately demonstrated that similar extensive sites are present on adjoining geological outcrops. The density and extent of the deposits here has provided some important information with which to consider the nature of agricultural production and the centralisation of storage at this time.

The extent of the site has been reached on the southern and western segments and it seems clear that the site was unenclosed. A single ditch was considered a doubtful candidate for an enclosure ditch and even if enclosure could be demonstrated, the area defined within it became obsolete, with large pit groups both cutting the infilled ditch and lying beyond its line.

Structural evidence for occupation was recovered from the site and there is sufficient spatial differentiation to suggest that the occupied areas were respected by the pit groups. This suggests a broad degree of contemporaneity. The structural evidence for houses is wholly in the form of post-built remains, which is to be expected for buildings of the early Iron Age.⁹⁴ There are no examples of ring-gully structures typically encountered on middle and late Iron Age sites. There is evidence to suggest the presence of five circular structures, four of which could have been in use at the same time. The presence of approximately circular structures does not seem in doubt even though some of the suggested ground plans are open to reinterpretation. The postholes on the site are markedly clustered towards the south and east and several alternative reconstructions of irregular, 'circular' structures could be presented. Their location, however, would be coincident with the structures suggested here and whilst several phases of use might be present, the number of buildings occupied at any one time will not be much greater than the four or five indicated here. One cannot exclude the presence of further buildings with turf or stake walls which have not survived in the archaeological record. Several areas of the site are unoccupied by any cut features and could have housed several such buildings.

There is some limited evidence for zoned use of the site. The pits occur in clusters and several of the latter respect the line of the main ditch. A second ditch that joins the main ditch may provide a subdivision of an area but for what purpose is unclear. The best evidence for post-built houses is also limited to clustered areas of the south and east. In contrast, the small number of four-post structures are randomly distributed across the excavated area. Of particular interest are the several blank areas between pit groups which must surely have been kept clear for specific purposes, such as for winnowing of grain, if they were not occupied by buildings which left no subsoil traces. There is a general absence of facilities for the corralling of stock such as in the form of small pens or yard facilities and this perhaps adds weight to the notion that cereal storage and production was the most important agricultural activity on the site.

A marked contrast becomes apparent when the density of pits is compared to the numbers of buildings. For 'typical' early and middle Iron Age farmstead sites comprising one to three houses, the number of associated pits may only be in single figures.⁹⁵ Reynolds

⁹⁴ T. Allen, D. Miles, and S. Palmer, 'Iron Age Buildings in the Upper Thames Region', in B. Cunliffe and D. Miles (eds.), *Aspects of the Iron Age in Central Southern Britain*, Univ. Oxford Comm. Archaeol. Monograph. 2 (1984), 89–101.

⁹⁵ R.N. Everett and R.M.G. Eeles, 'Thrupp House Farm, Radley, Nr. Abingdon', *Oxoniensia*, lxiv (1999), 117–153; G. Walker, 'A Middle Iron Age Settlement at Deer Park Road, Witney: Excavations in 1992', *Oxoniensia*, lx (1995), 67–93; A. Mudd, 'The Excavation of a Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age Site at Eight Acre Field, Radley', *Oxoniensia*, lv (1995), 21–66.

surmises that a typical storage pit 1.5 m. across and between 1 and 2 m. deep contains sufficient grain (1.5 cu. m.) to feed thirty people on a mixed diet, or sufficient seed to plant 25 hectares.⁹⁶ It is quite clear that for our site, the density of pits is such that whatever their use, their numbers are much greater than would be indicated by the needs of the occupants of the roundhouses. There seems little doubt that the digging of pits for grain storage took place, with a substantial body of experimental data and classical references to this practice.⁹⁷ At sites such as Danebury, numerous pits received votive offerings following the ending of their primary use, prompting the suggestion of a ritualistic component to the process of pit digging, but at Faringdon, the vast majority of the pits were simply abandoned and apparently allowed to fill naturally; a utilitarian function is the preferred interpretation.

Using the calculations provided by Reynolds of the numbers of people who could be fed from the typical volumes of grain stored in pits, it is possible to explore a component of the population dynamics of our Faringdon site.⁹⁸ However, a crucial factor is how long each pit remains in use. Cunliffe and Poole in a later interpretation of the Danebury evidence concluded that pits were dug there for one use only, whereas earlier assumptions were for a use life of ten years.⁹⁹ From a modern perspective a single-year usage seems an extraordinary waste of the labour of digging these large holes. The experimental data produced by the Butser Ancient Farm project suggests a use life of chalk-cut pits ranging from five years upwards, and Hill considered Cunliffe's earlier suggested use life of ten years plausible.¹⁰⁰ Similar experimental data for pits cut through gravel or sandstone subsoils are not available, but there seems no rational reason why a hole in the ground cannot be cleaned out and revamped on an annual basis for many years. A small late Iron Age farmstead at Moulsoford Road North, Oxfordshire, occupied for at least 25–75 years, only possessed a single very large storage pit.¹⁰¹ The fact that the occupants used the pit at all indicates that there was a need to store at least some grain on site (rather than exporting both seed grain and surplus to a central store) yet one would expect further pit digging if storage pits were replaced on a short-term, or single-event, basis. There are no data from Coxwell Road to indicate how long any one pit was in use for, apart from the presence of intercutting pits, but it is assumed here that a twenty-year span is not impossible. The chronology of the site is also open to question but the pottery could have had a currency of something of the order of 200 years. Analysis of the pit types shows a wide range of volumes overall and the average at Faringdon at 1.01 m.³ is only 40% of that used by Reynolds. If, therefore, one assumes 36 pits (359 pits over 200 years at 20 years per pit) with a storage volume of 1.01 m.³ are used each year, then the grain present is enough to contribute the cereal component of the diet of about 480 people year in, year out. This rough and ready calculation excludes the component which would need to be retained for the following year's seed, but this is partly offset by the further storage capacity which might have been provided by the nine three- and four-post structures. If the use life were reduced to only ten years, then a figure of about 240 people could be fed.

⁹⁶ Reynolds, *op. cit.* (note 13), 187.

⁹⁷ Cunliffe and Poole, *op. cit.* (note 5), 161.

⁹⁸ Reynolds *op. cit.* (note 13), 187.

⁹⁹ Cunliffe and Poole, *op. cit.* (note 5), 161; Cunliffe, *op. cit.* (note 22), 555.

¹⁰⁰ P.J. Reynolds, 'Experimental Iron Age Storage Pits', *Proc. Prehist. Soc.* 40 (1974), 118–31; P.J. Reynolds, *Iron Age Farm: The Butser Experiment* (1979); J.D. Hill, 'Re-thinking the Iron Age', *Scot. Archaeol. Rev.*, 6 (1989), 16–24, 20.

¹⁰¹ S Ford, 'The Archaeology of the Cleeve–Didcot Pipeline, South Oxfordshire, 1989', *Oxoniensia*, lv (1990) 1–40.

One characteristic of the higher gravel terraces of the Thames is the presence of dense clusters of storage pits.¹⁰² At City Farm, Hanborough, some 152 pits were recorded and at Gravelly Guy there were 700 pits and 30 houses interpreted as the requirements of an extended family group (or two).¹⁰³ The initial excavations at Ashville, Abingdon recorded a more modest total of 26 pits for the earliest Iron Age phase but more recent work in adjacent areas has revealed an extensive spread of similar deposits.¹⁰⁴ Hingley and Miles suggest similar dense clusters are present on the Corallian ridge as at Frilford,¹⁰⁵ but the number of pits at Coxwell Road seems to be at a much greater density than these single farmstead sites and is more comparable with the numbers from hillforts. A comparison of the density of pits (pits per sq. m.) within the hillfort at Danebury with a number of other hillfort and non-hillfort sites in Wessex has been presented.¹⁰⁶ Danebury produced a ratio of 1:11 and Maiden Castle 1:14. Sites such as Gussage All Saints (1:20) and Little Woodbury (1:39) produced the lowest ratios for the non-hillfort sites. For Coxwell Road a ratio of 1:15 is clearly more comparable with the hillfort rather than the non-hillfort sites.

Recent Iron Age studies have considered a wide range of social, economic and religious functions of hillforts and other site types within the settlement pattern. The significance of hillforts as central places within the settlement hierarchy and as places of elite residence of a warrior hierarchy engaged in the redistribution of stored foodstuffs and production and exchange of non-agricultural products has been questioned. Criticism of this model highlights the low density or absence of hillforts in large areas of the country, such as the Upper Thames region, and the apparent high status of other types of site such as banjo enclosures. An alternative view of hillforts is that the presence of defences and extensive ritual deposition can be taken to indicate that they are better regarded as places of temporary refuge with a religious function.¹⁰⁷ The site at Coxwell Road shares very few of the critical features characteristic of either hillforts or 'banjo' enclosures and the only feature that requires this contrast to be made is the common feature of the density of pits which strongly suggests a significant centralised storage of produce. This report is not the place to reinterpret the nature of settlement and hierarchy in the early Iron Age but does contribute to the overall discussion. This one aspect of the Faringdon site alone requires that the debate be widened to otherwise 'ordinary' Iron Age sites and highlights a need to examine the nature and role of central places with the physical and social landscape of the Upper Thames region.

Roman

A modest quantity of Roman pottery and other finds was recovered from across the site, but assessment of these finds shows that they were mostly from superficial contexts and, when recovered from features cutting the soft sandy subsoil, were most likely to be intrusive. Very few deposits are confidently dated to this period but Roman deposits are better represented in the sample-excavated area to the north. The exception to this is the presence of a shrine.

¹⁰² Hingley and Miles op. cit. (note 4).

¹⁰³ H.J. Case, 'Excavations at City Farm, Hanborough, Oxon.', *Oxoniensia*, xxiv/xxx (1964), 1-98; D. Miles, 'Conflict and Complexity: The Later Prehistory of the Oxford Region', *Oxoniensia*, lxii (1997), 1-20.

¹⁰⁴ Parrington, op. cit. (note 4), 11; Hingley and Miles, op. cit. (note 4), 13.

¹⁰⁵ Hingley and Miles op. cit. (note 4), 57.

¹⁰⁶ Cunliffe, op. cit. (note 22), 555 and Table 96.

¹⁰⁷ Cunliffe, op. cit. (note 22); J.D. Hill, 'Hillforts and the Iron Age of Wessex', in T. Champion and J.R. Collis (eds.), *The Iron Age in Britain and Ireland: Recent Trends* (1996), 95-117; Hingley and Miles, op. cit. (note 4), 15; Fitzpatrick, op. cit. (note 16), 77.

The Roman shrine

The circular structure discovered towards the north-western end of the site is best compared with religious buildings and would appear to be a Romano-Celtic shrine. The full extent of the structure could not be exposed but despite the massive wall footings, it seems most likely that this was a shrine rather than temple. Rodwell suggests that the term 'temple' is reserved for elaborate and complex religious buildings with the term 'shrine' applied to simple single-celled rooms, perhaps set into the ground.¹⁰⁸ Dating evidence was not clear cut but it is possible that the structure was constructed in the 2nd century and may have gone out of use, and its walls robbed out, by the 4th century.

A curving length of ditch recut on three occasions appears to be concentric with Structure 101 and was considered to be an enclosure or temenos. However, a Roman date for these ditches is at best tentative and until a complete ground plan can be uncovered with less ambiguous dating evidence, this possibility will have to remain unanswered.

There is great variation reported in the layout of circular Roman shrines and various sites provide some comparable details with Structure 101. The nearest comparable example lies on the temple complex at Noah's Ark Inn, Frilford, which lies 16 km. to the north-east.¹⁰⁹ In contrast to Faringdon the 'rotunda' at Frilford has a larger, internal diameter of 9.5 m. and with a narrower (0.76 m.) foundation made from unmortared oolitic limestone blocks laid in a herringbone pattern. There was evidence for extensive burning within part of the interior. The 'rotunda' overlay an early Iron Age structure also considered to be a shrine. The shrine within the Iron Age hillfort at Maiden Castle is more comparable, with a diameter of 6.5 m. and a dry-stone wall construction with a tiled roof.¹¹⁰ At Bancroft, Milton Keynes, the 4th-century stone-built structure was of comparable diameter but produced a pit containing a pig burial, thirty coins from either stratified or adjacent contexts, nine iron spearheads, two iron sockets and a collar ferrule from a spearhead.¹¹¹ In general, excavations of shrines revealed the remains of hearths or burning within, and a layer of charcoal-rich soil for Structure 101 may be a related burning activity.

Associated artefacts appear to provide the best evidence of confirmation of the religious nature of Structure 101 despite a lack of a range of distinctive features such as an abundance of coins, sacrificial animal burials or distinctive religious objects. Yet the presence of five coins, an iron disc perhaps from a belt harness, a copper alloy bracelet, an iron spearhead and an arrow or bolthead are typical of some of the artefacts recovered from shrines.

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¹⁰⁸ Rodwell, *op. cit.* (note 19).

¹⁰⁹ J.S.P. Bradford and R.G. Goodchild, 'Excavations at Frilford, Berkshire', *Oxoniensia*, iv (1939), 1-72, 36.

¹¹⁰ P.J. Drury, 'Non-Classical Religious Buildings in Iron Age and Roman Britain: A Review' in W. Rodwell (ed.), *Temples, Churches and Religion: Recent Research in Roman Britain*, B.A.R. 77 (1980), 45-78.

¹¹¹ Williams and Zeepvat, *op. cit.* (note 15), 107.