

CADBURY CASTLE, SOUTH CADBURY

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Cadbury Castle is an isolated hill of the inferior oolite, lying some 6 miles west by south of Wincanton. The summit is surrounded by four concentric banks with intervening ditches, which enclose an area of about 18 acres. There is a prominent series of strip lynchets on the southern slope below the defences.¹ Of the two original entrances that on the northeast is strengthened by the deep incurving of the innermost rampart; the southwestern approach has a complicated plan, characteristic of the latest pre-Roman age. There are remains of a stone revetment to the innermost bank in several places and the much ruined base of similar walls was found during the trial excavations flanking the roadway of the south-western entrance. A gap near the centre of the east side is not original, but may possibly be associated with the use of the site in the sub-Roman period; it does not look modern.

The trial excavations carried out by Mr. H. St. George Gray, F.S.A., in 1913, produced Iron Age pottery from the bottom of the inner ditch, together with Romano-British wares from a black layer in the south-western entrance; this layer appears to date from a period after the destruction of the flanking walls. Recently the interior has come under plough and many flint implements and sherds have been collected on the surface. As these add considerably to our knowledge of the history of the site, a selection of the more important pieces is now published. Unless otherwise noted the pieces illustrated are in the collection of Mr. J. Stevens Cox, F.S.A., at Beaminster. The writers are most grateful to Mrs. Harfield, whose extensive collection has been presented to the Somerset County Museum at Taunton. They would also thank Lady Longman for permission to study the site and to publish the objects.

I. The fullest and best account of the site is by Mr. H. St. George Gray, F.S.A., in his report on the trial excavations of 1913 (*Somerset Arch. Soc. Proc.*, lix, ii, 1-24: cited as *Cadbury 1913*).

NEOLITHIC

Both the collections which the writers have examined include a considerable amount of Neolithic pottery, together with contemporary flint implements. In addition to the objects now illustrated reference should be made to the two polished axes of flint recorded by Mr. St. George Gray (Cadbury 1913, 13 and 22).

The amount of neolithic material recovered from the site is sufficient to indicate a substantial occupation. All the pottery is Neolithic A (Windmill Hill) and closely related in fabric to the earliest wares found at Maiden Castle (R. E. M. Wheeler, Maiden Castle, cited as Maiden Castle) and Hembury Fort (Proc. Devon Arch. Expl. Soc., vols. i and ii). The grooved ornament is interesting as indicating possible connections further west. There is no indication of the type of site, but the position would have been suitable for a causewayed camp as at Maiden Castle and Hembury.

POTTERY. The neolithic pottery is made of a grey clay, sometimes tinged brown or red on the surface. The surface is generally smooth, but in places irregular or lumpy. The ware contains flint grit—often in fragments up to 5 mm. across—and also fragments of chalky material and shell; these fragments have often fallen out giving a vesicular or corky appearance. The ware is softer to the touch and less well fired than the Iron Age A pottery, though small fragments are difficult to distinguish. The rims are characteristic with an irregular profile caused by pressing down the wet clay with the hand (cf. Maiden Castle, 141). The forms recognizable are simple round bottomed bowls and crenated vessels. The only ornament is the shallow groove noted on fig. 1, 2 (cf. the incised chevrons on the earlier Bronze Age pottery from Dartmoor: Proc. Prehistoric Society, xviii, 69). The fragments are much abraded. Those illustrated are among the best preserved, but even in these pieces the exact angle of the rim is not in every case closely determinable.

Fig. 4, 1. Coarse brown clay, reddish on surface, with flint grit and some shell. The rounded rim, an incipient bead, is pressed down irregularly on the outer side. Cf. Maiden Castle, fig. 28, 24.

2. Same ware, reddish interior, grey exterior, vesicular surface where grit has dropped out. Cf. Maiden Castle, 140, ware f. Shallow oblique groove below rim. For rim cf. Maiden Castle, fig. 27, 16.

3. Coarse grey clay with flint grit and shell, reddish on exterior. Surface lumpy as No. 6.

4. Coarse brown ware with much shell grit, vesicular surface.

5. Coarse black ware with smooth surface and shell grit. For flat rim with pressed down edge cf. Maiden Castle, fig. 27, 19.

6. Fine grey ware, reddish on exterior, with fine flint and shell grit. The outer surface is irregular and lumpy, as Maiden Castle, 140, ware *b*. For shape cf. Maiden Castle, fig. 26, 7. The lower edge of the profile suggests the beginning of a lost lug as Maiden Castle, fig. 27, 19.

7. Coarse brown ware with smooth surface and shell grit. Cf. Maiden Castle, fig. 26, 7.

8. Coarse brown clay as No. 1, smooth grey black surface.

9. Grey sandy clay with fine polished surface. Cf. Maiden Castle, 140, ware *c*. Irregular pressed down rim as Maiden Castle, fig. 27, 17.

FLINT IMPLEMENTS. The arrowheads illustrated are made either of a light brown translucent flint, which is also used for other implements, or of an opaque mottled grey flint, which is commonly used for scrapers. The arrowheads are finely worked, but the majority of the other flints are coarse. The implements are only slightly patinated.

Fig. 2, 1. Birchleaf arrowhead, light brown translucent flint. Cf. Maiden Castle, fig. 42, 47-8.

2. Birchleaf arrowhead. Material as last.

3. Petit tranchet derivative arrowhead, grey opaque flint. Cf. Maiden Castle, fig. 43, 59.

4. Scraper of dark grey flint with large portion of cortex still adhering.

5. Oval arrowhead, base broken, light brown translucent flint. Cf. Maiden Castle, fig. 42, 34.

6. Broken point of oval arrowhead, brown translucent flint. Cf. No. 5.

7. Small lozenge shaped arrowhead, grey opaque flint.

8. Round end-scraper, poorly flaked, grey mottled flint.

9. Part of large implement, probably butt of an unfinished axe of grey flint.

EARLY IRON AGE

Most of the material recovered from Cadbury—well over 80% of the whole—belongs to the pre-Roman Iron Age. Pottery of this date was recovered from the bottom of the inner ditch (Cadbury, 1913, 21). This evidence and the multivallate form of the defences are sufficient to establish that the hill-fort visible today dates from a late stage in the pre-Roman Age, probably during the last century before the Roman Conquest of Somerset in c. A.D. 45. Most of the Iron Age sherds are of rough coarse wares not closely datable. Decorated pottery of the type best known from the Lake Villages of Glastonbury and Meare is very rare and the few pieces recorded among the recent finds are not typical. A sherd with characteristic ornament was, however, found at a high level in the 1913 excavations (Cadbury, 1913, 21). The dice and sling bullets of baked clay are also typical of the lake villages. The evidence as a whole points rather, as at Maiden Castle, to a culture in which the Lake Village element is intrusive in the period after 50 B.C. (cf. Maiden Castle, 215), and this is confirmed by the elaborate fortifications which fall into line with the great rebuilding of Maiden Castle about that period. These conclusions are in accord with the position of Cadbury within the area of the Durotriges, whose capital was probably at Maiden Castle. (*Proc. Preh. Soc.*, xx, 12).

There is also a representative collection of pottery belonging to the earlier part of the Iron Age. This is marked by the relative frequency of finger printed ornament and the absence of haematite coated wares. In both these respects the Cadbury collections conform to the pottery found on one side in the Iron Age beach-head at Bindon, near Lulworth (*Ant. Journ.*, xxxiii, 9) and on the other with the wares from the lowest levels in the native settlement found beneath the Roman villa at Littleton, near Somerton. The pottery at Littleton is representative of a number of sites in mid-Somerset, including Small Down Camp, Evercreech (*Somerset Arch. Soc. Proc.*, 1, ii, 42). The cultural and chronological explanation of these facts is not yet clear, but the evidence points to an Iron Age culture distinct from, and perhaps earlier than, that of All Cannings Cross, occupying central Dorset and Somerset. Littleton with its storage pits and fragments of corn-drying ovens shews that this culture practised the advanced agriculture prevalent

in the Iron Age of Wessex. The illustrations of Iron Age pottery are confined to a selection of pieces typologically attributable to the earlier phase; a few objects other than pottery are listed, but not illustrated.

POTTERY. The ware is generally coarse and gritty and the sherds are badly abraded.

Fig. 5, 1, 3, 7 and 10. Fragments of large situlate jars of coarse sandy clay with some grit, colour brown to grey, sometimes turning to red on surface. These types are very common at Cadbury. For rim forms No. 3, cf. Maiden Castle, fig. 56, 3; No. 10, cf. Maiden Castle, fig. 58, 49.

2. Very heavy store jar of coarse brown clay with large fragments of shell grit. Row of finger tip impressions on shoulder. (Mrs. Harfield.) For type see Bindon I. Finger top impressions are fairly common at Cadbury.

4. Small jar of coarse dark brown clay with some shell grit, colour turning to red on exterior. Row of finger nail impressions on shoulder. (Mrs. Harfield.)

5. Hard sandy grey clay with fine grit and row of finger tip impressions on shoulder. Cf. Maiden Castle, fig. 56, 2; finger tip impressions are very rare at Maiden Castle.

6. Hard sandy brown clay.

8. Rim of small fine bowl. Hard grey clay with polished surface and fine white grit.

9. Hard sandy grey clay.

11. Sandy grey clay with fine grit. Cf. Maiden Castle, fig. 57, 21 for form.

MISCELLANEA (*not illustrated*). 1. Fragments of corn drying ovens; one piece comes from the top showing a well formed vent hole. For type see Proc. Preh. Soc., xv, 159.

2. One complete and one fragmentary sling bullet of baked clay as Glastonbury Lake Village, pl. xc.

3. Half of elongated bone dice of the type found at Glastonbury Lake Village. See p. 408, H. 99, but with flat instead of square section. On larger sides 4 (ex 6) and 2 (ex 4 or 5); on narrower sides 2 (ex 4) and 1 (ex 2 or 3); no marks on ends.

4. Small bead of opaque blue glass, similar to examples from Glastonbury Lake Village.

ROMANO-BRITISH AND LATER.

The material from Cadbury includes a representative series of Romano-British pottery. The earliest recognizable type is the ribbed Durotrigian bowl of the middle of the first century. (A. Fox, *Roman Exeter*, 80; cf. *Proc. Preh. Soc.*, xx, 12). At least 12 fragments of terra sigillata have been collected during the past year and more are mentioned in the earlier excavation report (Cadbury, 1913, 22). Flue tiles and roofing tiles have been picked up, mostly in the north-western area, which has also yielded tesserae; these objects imply a building. A coin of Valens (364-78)—Obv. D N VALENS P F AVG; Head diademed r.; Rev. GLORIA ROMANORVM: Emperor standing r with r.h. on head of kneeling captive and labarum in l. h.—is also recorded. Mr. H. S. L. Dewar suggests that the occurrence of this material on a isolated hill enclosed by pre-Roman banks is indicative of a rural temple like that on Maiden Castle.

The sub-Roman pieces are very few. The rim fragment illustrated (fig. 3, 12) is the only piece of fine red ware that I have seen; it belongs to type Ai of Tintagel (*Essays presented to E. T. Leeds*, 60-2) and is an import from the Eastern Mediterranean of c. A.D. 500. There are also a number of pieces of combed amphoræ—type B of Tintagel. The small collection indicates an occupation during the 5th, 6th or early 7th century and provides an interesting confirmation of the traditional identification of the site as the Camelot of Arthurian legend.

POTTERY. Fig. 3, 12. Thickened rim of large shallow bowl of fine soft red ware, about 10 ins. in diameter. No traces of slip remain. Abraded.

GLASS. Fig. 3. Rim of wide bowl with sloping sides about 8 ins. in diameter. Almost colourless glass with slight opalescent tint. Identified by Dr. D. B. Harden as Merovingian of 6th century (*Essays presented to E. T. Leeds*, 149).



Fig. 1. Penny of Edward the Elder.

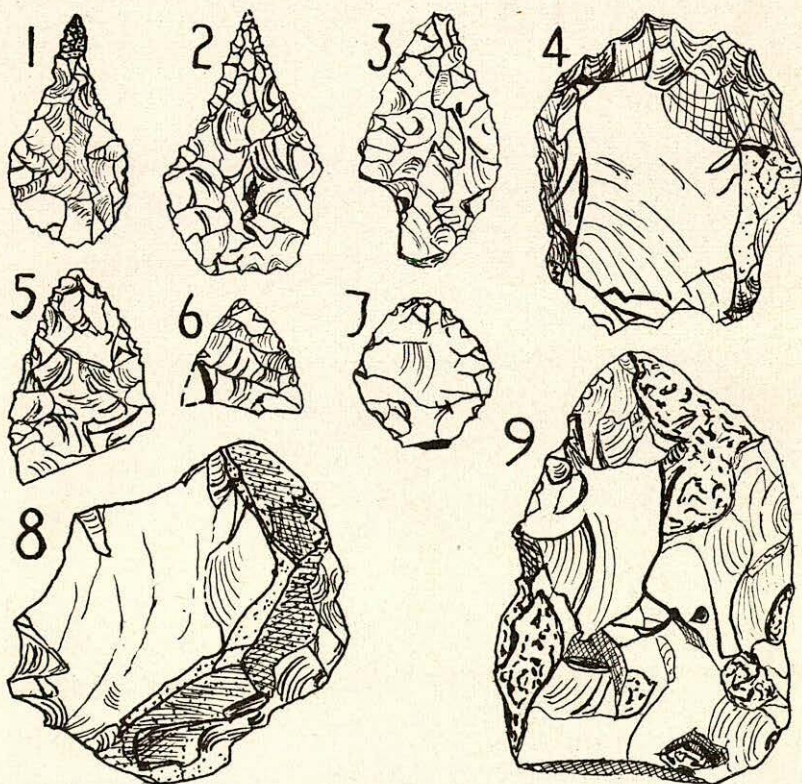


Fig. 2. Flint Implements.



Fig. 3. Rim of glass bowl.

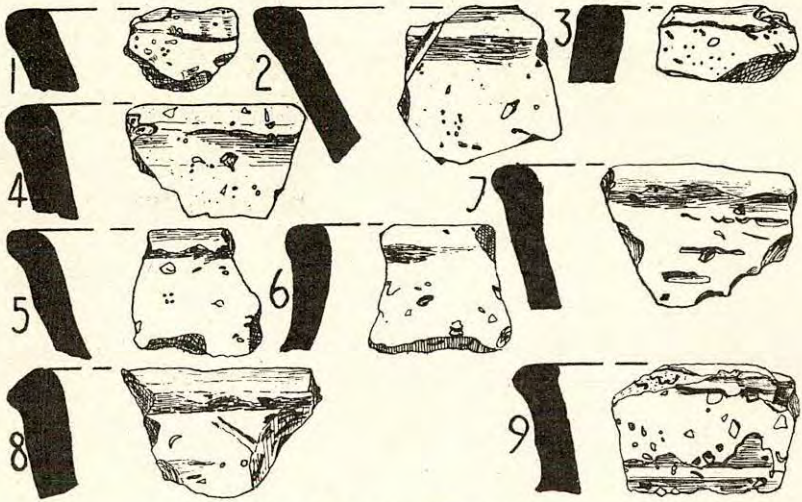


Fig. 4. Neolithic Pottery.

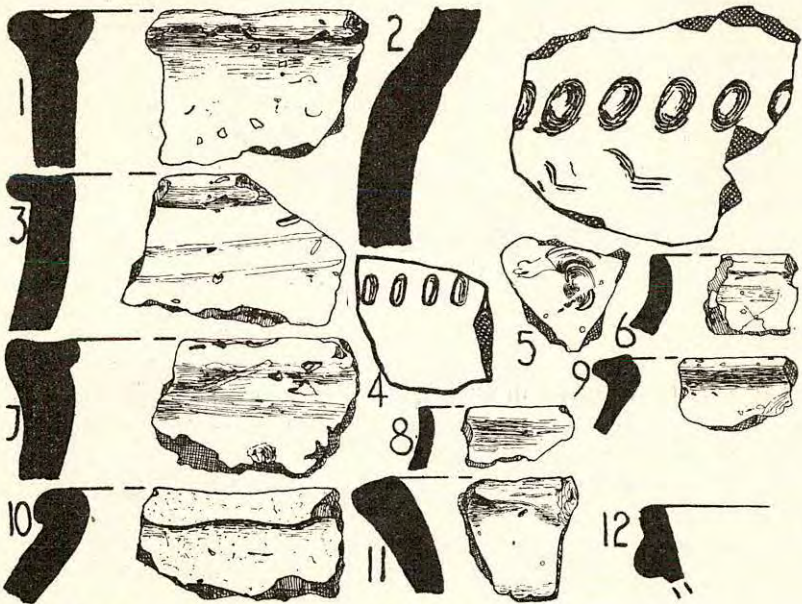


Fig. 5. Pottery of Iron Age (1—11) and sub-Roman (12) date.