

PLATE I



1. Barrow 1, from the south



2. Barrow 1. The arrow indicates the pit
BRONZE AGE BARROWS NEAR STON EASTON

PART II
PAPERS, ETC.

**Bronze Age Barrows near Chewton Mendip,
Somerset**

BY AUDREY WILLIAMS, M.A., F.S.A.

CHEWTON PLAIN, to use a local name, is the flattish central portion of a northerly extension of the Mendip Hills (O.S. 6-in. Sheet, Somerset XXVIII N.E.). It lies 11 miles south of Bristol and 6 miles north-east of Wells (fig. 1, 1). The main Bristol-Wells road between the villages of Farrington Gurney and Chewton Mendip crosses it north-east-south-west, while

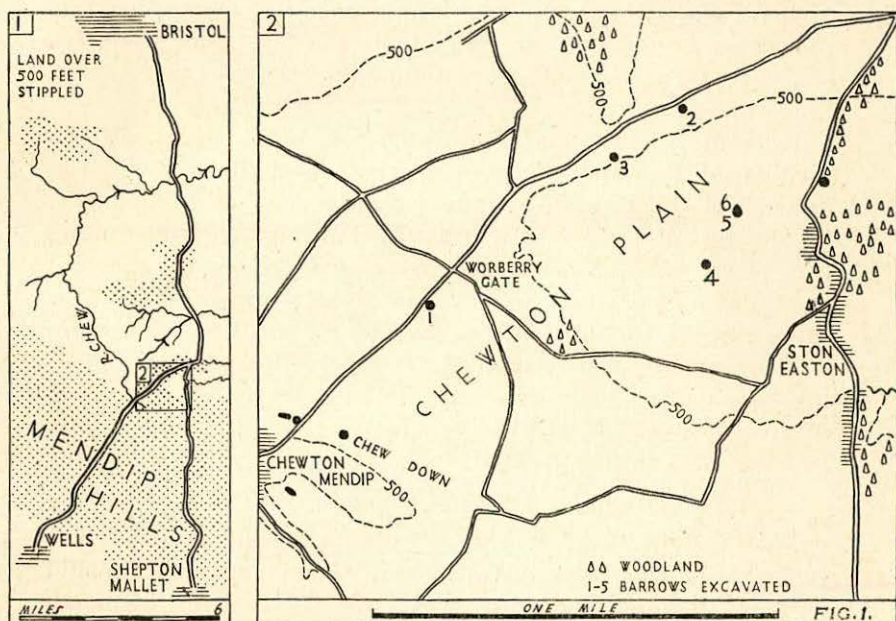


Fig. 1. (1) Map showing position in Somerset. (2) Map of Chewton Plain showing position of Barrows.

(Based on Ordnance Survey maps, by permission of H.M. Stationery Office.)

its eastern boundary is the road from the former village through Ston Easton to Shepton Mallet. Approximately 2 miles long by $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles wide the plateau has a general height of just over 500 ft. above sea-level. To the south the ground rises swiftly to Chew Down (570 ft.), and then drops to the source of the River Chew. On the north and east are the upper reaches of the Cam and Willow Brooks, tributaries of the Bristol Avon. The Plain retains patches of woodland but consists chiefly of admirable pasture and arable land. The underlying rock is silicified lower lias.

In addition to two long barrows near Chewton Mendip village¹ there are eight round barrows in this small area. Two disturbed examples on the south-west scarp and a fine mound in Ston Easton Park are marked on the O.S. 6-in. map. Of the five less impressive barrows towards the centre of the Plain (fig. 1, 2, 1-5) No. 1 had been scheduled as an ancient monument² before Nos. 2-5 were recognized in 1941 by Mr. W. F. Grimes. In the same year destruction for war purposes threatened the five sites and they were therefore examined by the Ancient Monuments Department of the Ministry of Works.

It seems likely that a sixth barrow once existed in the vicinity of Worberry Gate, somewhere near Barrow 1. The Journal of the Rev. J. Skinner³ records that on 2 May 1821, he 'opened a small barrow near the Turnpike without finding the place of interment though several pieces of charcoal appeared mixed with earth indicative of a cremation'. This cannot apply to Barrow 1 itself, where, as will be seen, there was no sign of such comparatively recent disturbance. Close inspection of several adjacent fields bearing names suggestive of ancient burial led to the conclusion that Skinner's barrow had completely disappeared.

BARROW 1 (FIGS. 2 AND 9, 1)

Barrow 1 lay near Worberry Gate in a field bordering the east side of the Bristol-Wells road. Much reduced, it could only be distinguished from the south (Plate I, 1), its north profile being completely smoothed out.

¹ O.S. *Map of Neolithic Wessex*, Nos. 123 and 124.

² No. 141 of Dr. A. Bulleid's list of Somerset round barrows.

³ *Brit. Mus. Add. MSS.*, 33671.

Cross-sections showed that virgin soil was a yellowish-brown loam about 6 in. thick over the lias. The mound consisted almost entirely of darkish yellow-brown loam, obviously scraped from the old surface elsewhere. The only variation was a band of pale friable soil at 12 in. up from the base of the mound, not more than 8 in. thick and radiating about 5 ft. from the centre point to the north. Such calcareous

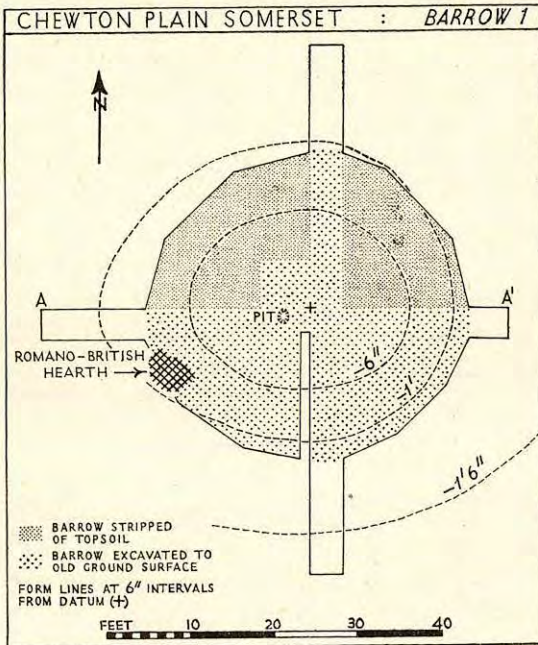


Fig. 2. Plan of Barrow 1.

tufaceous material, deposited by small springs, abounds locally; it appeared again in a nearby cutting for cable-laying. The original diameter of the barrow was 38 ft.; its surviving height 18 in. above the old surface.

The south quadrants and some square feet north of the centre were removed to virgin soil (Plate I, 2). At 3 ft. south-west of the centre lay a small oval pit, 2 ft. by 1 ft. 6 in. by 6 in. deep. Its soft black filling contained four fragments of calcined human bone (Appendix I) and scraps of charcoal of oak and ash (Appendix II), evidently representing a primary cremation burial. On the old surface near the pit were found

two flint implements, a convex scraper and a combined hollow-and-side-scraper, both with characteristic Bronze Age steep flaking with fine secondary working (fig. 6, 1 and 2). From the body of the mound came a number of flakes and blades, all used but unworked, and small lumps of carbonaceous shale from the surrounding lias.

The remaining portions of the north quadrants were stripped of topsoil and the surface of the mound examined for later insertions, with negative results.

There was evidence of Romano-British use of the surface of mound on the south-east margin, where a small discoloured area covered with charcoal and ash suggested a hearth. On it were found a few sherds of black fumed cooking-pot ware and a little bronze D-shaped buckle of common type (fig. 11, 1).

BARROW 2 (FIGS. 3 AND 9, 2)

The second site was three-quarters of a mile north-east of Barrow 1, again in a field bordering the Bristol-Wells road. Here the ground sloped gradually north-south, and the mound having been much spread by ploughing its contours on the

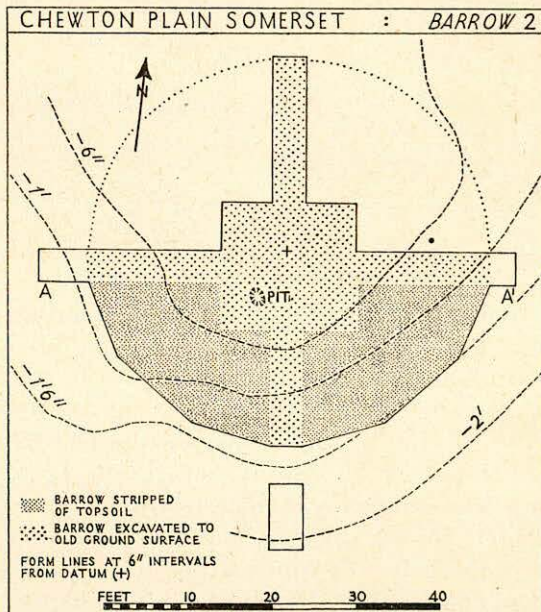
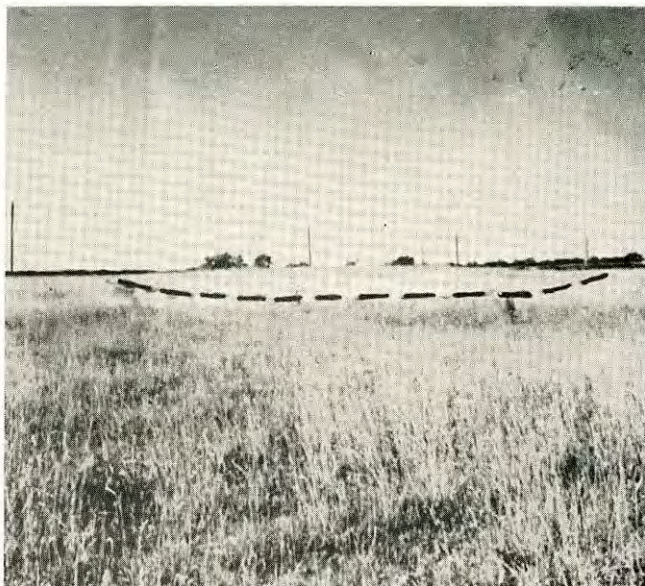
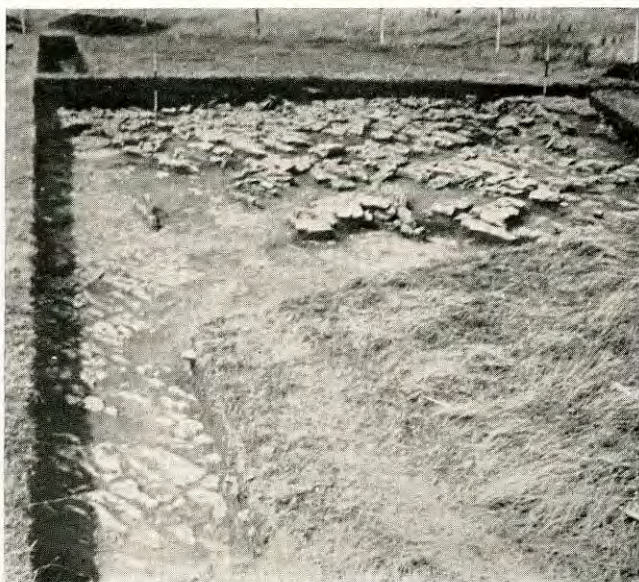


Fig. 3. Plan of Barrow 2.

PLATE II



1. Barrow 3, from the south



2. Barrow 3 ; south-east quadrant. The left ranging rod marks the primary burial

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north were obliterated, though those of the south side were definite enough to warrant excavation.

Sections were cut along the main axes and the central area cleared down to virgin soil. The surface of the rest of the south half of the mound was examined for later use, but without result. Time would not allow of further work on the north half.

The barrow, 46 ft. in diameter and now 2 ft. high from the old surface, had been built of yellow-brown loam, slightly darker in colour than the undisturbed soil on which it stood. Occasionally the lias, breaking here in a north-east-south-west direction, pierced the thin skin of loam overlying it. In some places a very thin dark streak denoting old turf could be detected.

As in Barrow 1, an exiguous primary cremation had been deposited in a small pit (2 ft. 6 in. by 2 ft. by 8 in. deep) near the centre of the mound. The pit contained dark soil impregnated with finely crushed charcoal and a few scraps of burnt human bone (Appendix I). Also from the pit came three flint tools—a *petit tranchet* derivative of Clark's type C2,⁴ a tanged arrowhead with a single (broken) barb, and a flake with side working (fig. 6, 3-5). Used but unworked blades and trimming flakes abounded in the body of the mound.

BARROW 3 (FIGS. 4 AND 9, 3A AND 3B)

Between the two barrows already described and aligned with them was a third, less than 400 yards from Barrow 2. Superficially it had a diameter of 80 ft. and a height of 2 ft. 6 in. (Plate II, 1). It was considerably spread and again the north slope had almost disappeared.

Excavation began with cross-sections and proceeded to the removal of the whole mound.

The barrow had been sited on a rock outcrop. The rock sloped steadily upward from the south margin of the mound to its centre, then declined gently to the north for some feet before dropping vertically to a lower level. In the north section (3A) old topsoil appeared as a brown layer 12 in. thick over this lower rock surface. The general appearance of the old surface was interesting (Plate II, 2), in that the rock fissured in three directions, usually north-west-south-east, occasionally north-east-south-west and, rarely, north-south.

⁴ *Arch. Journ.*, xci, p. 34.

This last line of cleavage produced a curious effect in the south-east quadrant where, combined with earth creep, it at first suggested a short length of crude kerbing, a phenomenon already noted at Wick Barrow, Stogursey.⁵

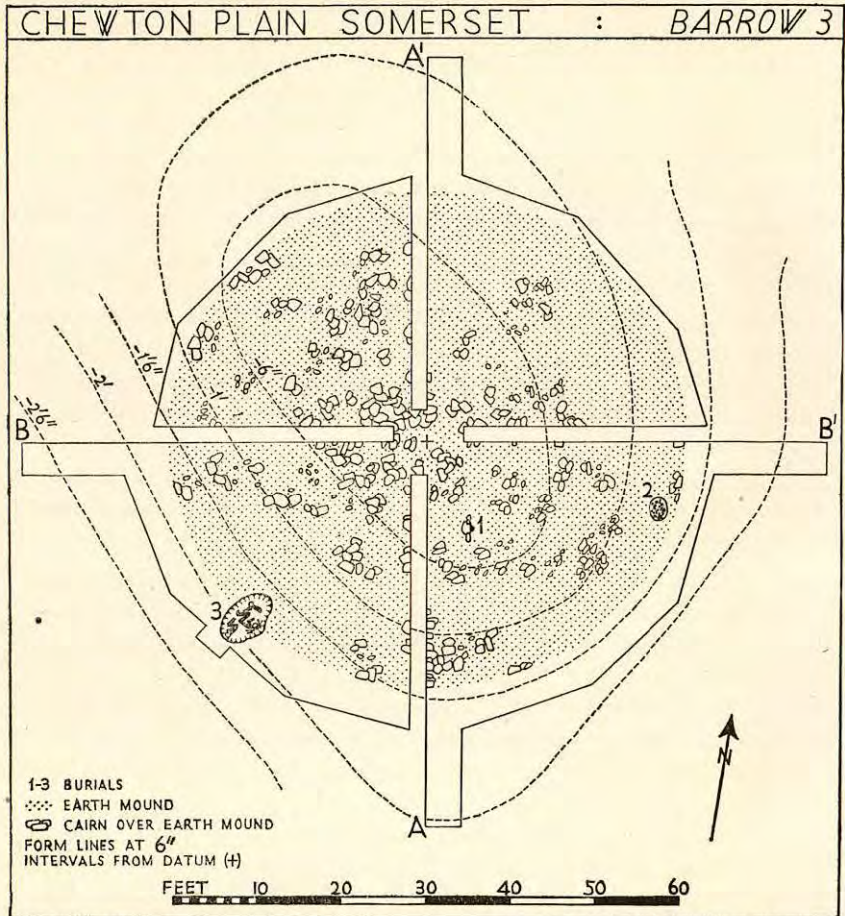


Fig. 4. Plan of Barrow 3.

The barrow, 61 ft. across, had two structural elements, an earth mound and a stone capping. For the mound dark yellow-brown loam had been used. This at the centre had leached, as the result of chemical action, to a much paler

⁵ *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, liv (ii), p. 18.

colour. Most of the capping, especially on the south-east, had been removed. At its best, in the south-west quadrant, it consisted of flattish slabs of lias pitched up towards the centre of the barrow. It was seen, notably in the south section (3A), that the capping extended to the edge of the earth mound where the marginal stones were inclined upwards but had no revetting wall or kerb. Evidently what loss of height the barrow had suffered had been in stone and the earth mound had never been higher than its present 2 ft. 3 in. The stones for the covering cairn must have been collected elsewhere for there was no encircling ditch visible in cuttings taken well beyond the perimeter of the barrow.

Burial 1 (Middle Bronze Age). The primary burial lay 12 ft. south-east of the geometric centre of the barrow. About 12 in. below the turf a flat slab, weighted down with smaller stones overlapping its north and south ends, half-covered the mouth of a cinerary urn standing on the rock (Plate III, 1). The earth of the mound surrounded the urn to rim level, except that on the south a small stone had, for some reason, been placed vertically against the collar of the pot. The urn was badly cracked and its base was too friable for removal. It held the cremated remains of a young man (Appendix I) and a quantity of charcoal, all of oak and possibly all from one log (Appendix II).

Of coarse buff ware, the urn (fig. 5) has a deep overhanging rim and a flattened shoulder, features which point to a late date in the Middle Bronze Age. Decoration consists of horizontal lines in notched technique on the collar and a line of shallow depressions, executed with a finger-tip, above the shoulder. The horizontal lines on the collar are a common form of decoration when carried out with a twisted cord as on the urn from Durrington Barrow 69, Wilts,⁶ but the use of notched technique on a cinerary urn is unusual. The Beacon Hill, Mendip, urn figured by Thurnam⁷ seems to be the closest parallel. It has the same depressions on the shoulder and horizontal lines on the collar. The technique of the lines is not stated; but while they appear to be made up of individual slabs rather than notches, the general resem-

⁶ *Devizes Mus. Cat.*, p. 176.

⁷ *Archaeologia*, xliii, Pl. XXX, fig. 1, and pp. 345-6.

blance of the two urns is so close as to leave no doubt that they were the work of members of the same comparatively restricted group occupying the eastern Mendips. Beacon Hill is but five miles south-east of the present site. Less akin is the urn from a Blackdown, Mendip, barrow (No. 3, T.7),⁸ in

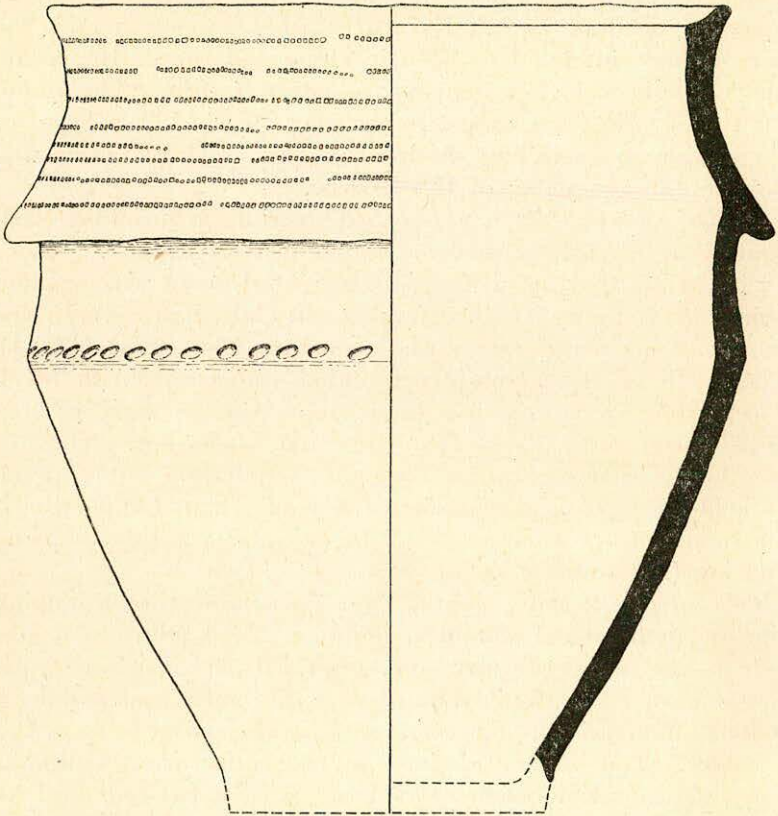


Fig. 5. Barrow 3 : Cinerary Urn. ($\frac{1}{3}$)

which though the shoulder decoration and the form are analogous with those of the Chewton Plain urn the collar decoration is quite different. The general significance of urns with shoulder depressions has been discussed in recent years.⁹ It has been shown that they are derived from the lugged and

⁸ Dobson, *Arch. of Somerset*, p. 76, fig. 7, A.

⁹ Fox, *Arch. Camb.*, 1925, p. 177 ff.; Varley, *Ant. Journ.*, 1938, p. 163.



1. Barrow 3 ; the primary burial

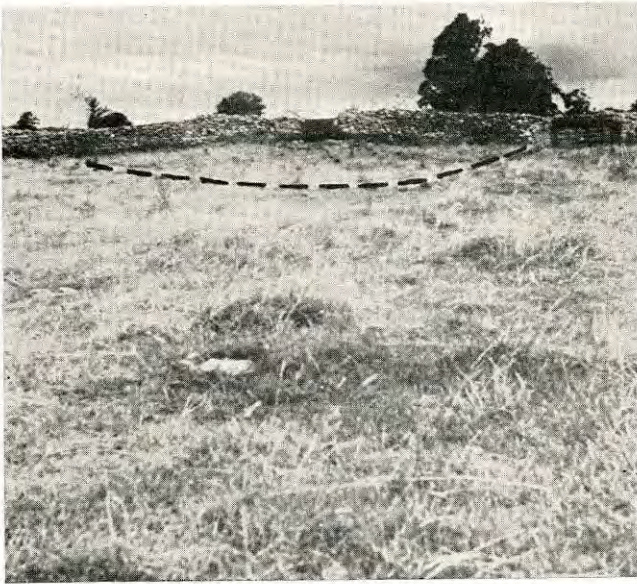


2. Barrow 3 ; Romano-British grave before excavation.
The arrow indicates a skull

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1. Barrow 3 ; Romano-British grave after excavation



2. Barrow 4, from the south

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grooved food vessels characteristic of the north-east, the number of grooves and lugs on the shoulder increasing as time passed until by the later Bronze Age they have become, as here, a series of spaced thumb or finger-tip impressions. The distribution of these later shoulder depressions is perhaps too wide to allow them to be used as an index of origins, but their northern affinities must be borne in mind.

Burial 2 (Middle Bronze Age). A secondary burial lay, without protection or grave goods, in a hollow (3 ft. by 2 ft. 3 in. by 6 in. deep) in the rock near the east edge of the barrow. The imperfectly burnt bone fragments represent a young person whose sex cannot be determined (Appendix I).

Of the many flints strewn on the old surface or in the body of the mound most bore signs of use; only a few had been worked. These included three convex scrapers (fig. 6, 6-8; No. 8 of the 'thumb' variety), an end-scraper on a thin blade (fig. 6, 9), a hollow scraper (fig. 6, 10), and a combined hollow scraper and borer (fig. 6, 11).

Burial 3 (Romano-British). The barrow had been used again in Roman times. Romano-British potsherds, all of uncertain form, occurred on its south-west margin where an oval patch of flattish stones (Plate III, 2), such as had served for the capping of the earth mound, concealed a shallow pit (fig. 4, 3) containing three crouched skeletons (Plate IV, 1 and Appendix I). The pit, 7 ft. 6 in. by 5 ft. with a small lobe on the east side, was 12 in. deep at the north end where it reached the rock; at the south end it was a mere scoop in the subsoil, so shallow that the upper surface of the cranium of the south skeleton could be seen between the covering stones.

The pit had evidently been used for burial on two separate occasions. Its shape and the position of the remains suggested its having been dug as a regular oval to accommodate two bodies. Across its north half a man aged over thirty had been laid on his right side with his limbs flexed; while in the south half, with her head to the shallow end of the pit, a woman was buried lying on her left side in a crouched position. At some later date the man's skeleton was disturbed to make room for a third insertion. The removal of the lower part of the existing skeleton and the slight enlargement of the pit on the east allowed another man's body to be placed across the

centre of the pit. He lay crouched on his right side with his head in the eastern lobe of the pit. On and around his head had been thrown back the leg bones of the earlier male burial ;

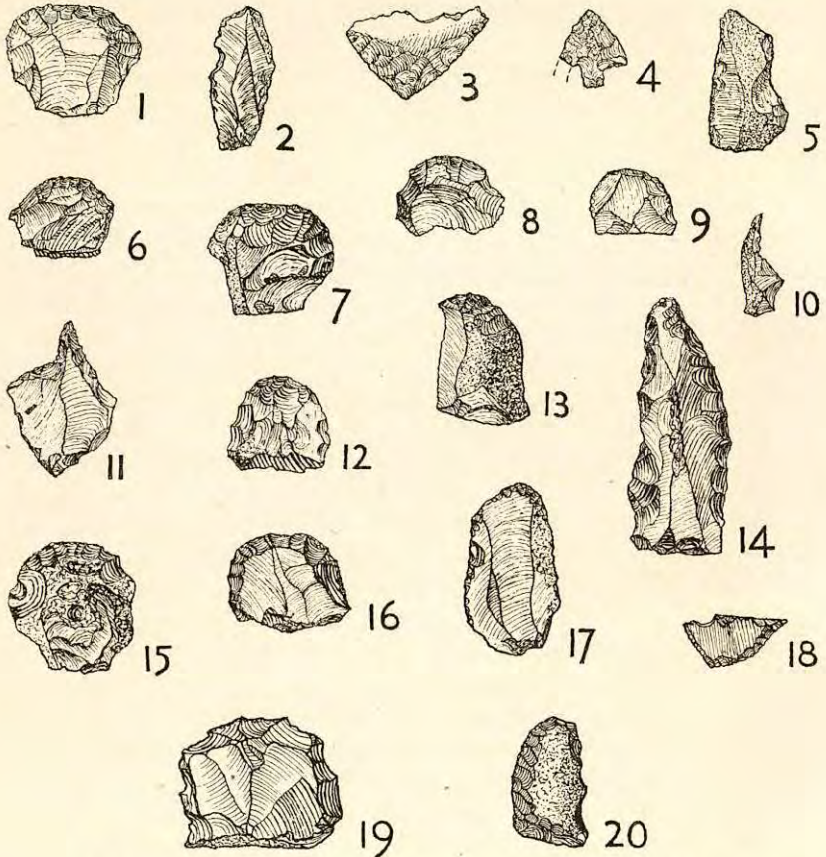


Fig. 6. Flint Implements : Barrows, Chewton Plain. ($\frac{1}{2}$)

on his legs lay the displaced sacrum. Two Romano-British sherds came from the pit, one from the floor, the other from the loose black soil between the skeletons.

BARROW 4 (FIGS. 7 AND 9, 4)

Barrow 4 lay a third of a mile south-south-east of Barrow 3. A field wall ran over it and, indeed, gave the clue to its existence (Plate IV, 2). South of the wall the mound was reasonably

well defined, but on the north it had been flattened by the passage of cattle to a drinking trough fixed in the wall. Part of this wall and the trough had to be removed before excavation began. The necessity for preserving certain water-pipes accounts for areas left unexcavated.

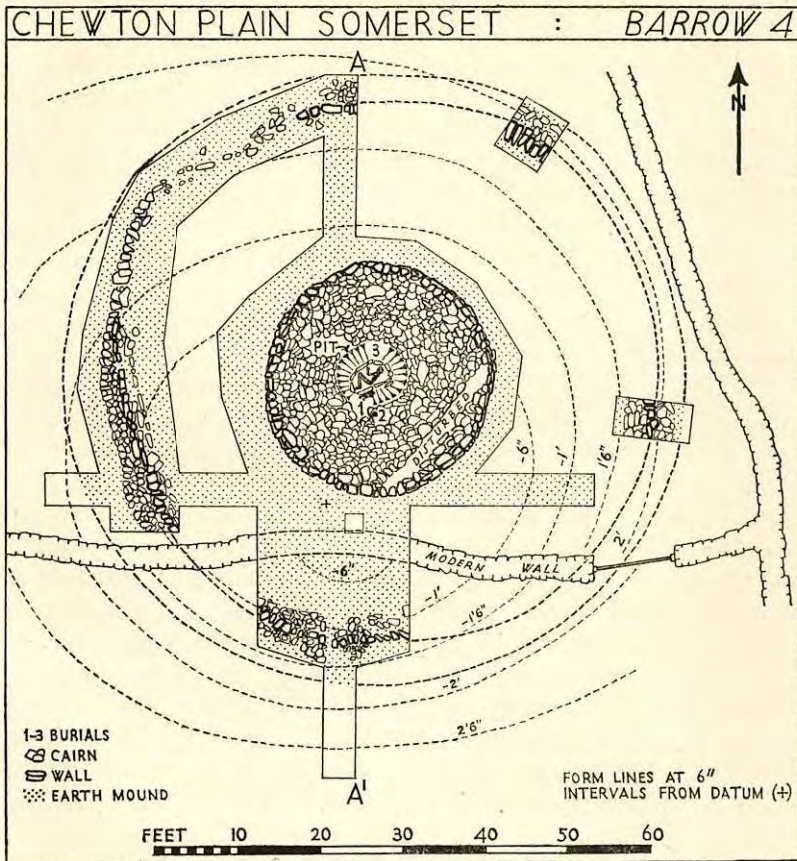


Fig. 7. Plan of Barrow 4.

The appearance of the mound proved misleading. An east-west cutting across its apparent centre, immediately north of the wall, showed that the centre must lie further north. It was reached in a north-south cutting which also revealed the five structural elements of the barrow—(i) a central pit containing a cist, (ii) a small earth mound over the cist,

(iii) a walled cairn over the mound, (iv) an outer stone ring, (v) a final earth mound.

(i) The pit was dug to a depth of 2 ft. 9 in., through natural soil, here a reddish-brown loam, and into the underlying rock. At the mouth it measured 8 ft. 6 in. by 7 ft. 6 in., but at the bottom it was very little bigger than the rectangular cist it contained (3 ft. by 2 ft.). Slabs of lias standing on end and uniformly 16 in. high formed the walls of the cist, bedrock its floor. On the south the slabs rested against the vertical side of the pit; elsewhere a packing of stones had been inserted between them and the sloping pit-wall. This packing and also the original horizontal stone filling of the pit above and west of the cist had been left in position when, in Roman times, a shaft was sunk through the centre of the barrow and the cist re-used. The original capstone or corbelled roof of the cist had disappeared, the burial inserted in Roman times being given, as will be seen, other protection.

Burial 1 (Early Bronze Age). Outside the south-east corner of the cist, just below the top of the slabs and resting on the undisturbed packing stones, lay part of a skeleton (Plate V, 1, right foreground). Its covering was the loose haphazard stone-filling of the Roman shaft. The position of this small pile of bones at once suggested that they had been lifted out of the cist to make room for the later burial. Examination of the bones confirmed this. They represented an adult of Beaker type. The skull was brachycephalic with an index of 83.4 and the jaw characteristically heavy. Any accompanying beaker had been totally removed.

(ii) Disregarding for the moment the later use of the pit the small internal mound is the next feature to be described. This had a diameter of 16 ft. 6 in., and, judging by the remaining profile, was about 18 in. high. Its soil was much the same colour and texture as the undisturbed surface and must have derived partly from the digging of the pit. A few darker brown streaks of somewhat sticky material were taken to represent decayed turves, the old topsoil from the pit area incorporated in this first mound.

(iii) The cairn (Plate V, 2), roughly circular with a diameter of 28-29 ft., had a revetting wall of megalithic character which stood 2 ft. high with a maximum of five courses



1. Barrow 4 ; the cist with Romano-British skeleton and
(right) Beaker skeleton



2. Barrow 4 ; the walled cairn from the east
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(Plate VI, 1). In places its outer face had a batter of 6 in. ; on the east it was practically vertical. Inside the wall the lower cairn material, all flattish slabs of lias, was steeply pitched ; above, the pitch was less pronounced and the stones made a continuous slightly inclined line from the top of the wall towards the centre of the cairn (Plate VI, 2). It would seem that the wall and cairn retained their original height (see under (v)).

Burial 2 (Middle Bronze Age). High up in the body of the cairn, just outside the south edge of the Romano-British disturbance, was found a trace of a second burial, this time of Middle Bronze Age date. Several fragments of coarse reddish-buff ware lay on a horizontal slab. They suggest an overhanging rim urn (fig. 8, 1) crudely decorated on the collar with alternating chevrons filled with incised lines and horizontal

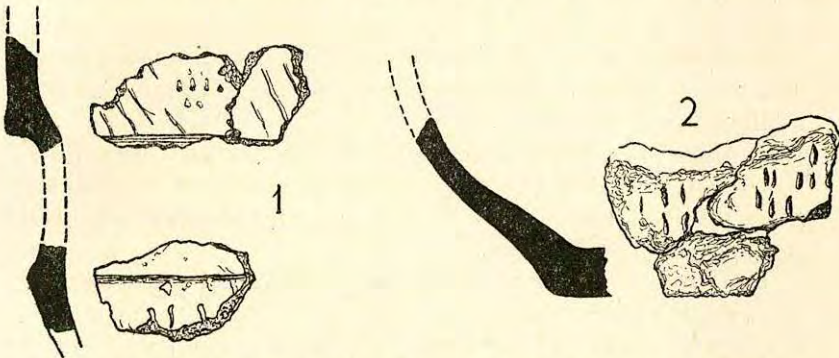


Fig. 8. (1) Fragment of Urn, Barrow 4. (2) Fragment of Beaker, Barrow 5. ($\frac{1}{2}$)

rows of circular impressions, and on the body with finger-nail impressions. This burial had not been tampered with in the Roman period, but had suffered through more shallow digging dated to modern times by scraps of wine-bottle glass among the stones thrown back into the cavity. No other burials had been inserted in the body of the cairn.

(iv) The stone ring encircled the cairn at a distance fluctuating from 14 to 19 ft. Structurally it varied from sector to sector as though built piecemeal. On the west (Plate VII, 1) it was 4 ft. wide and faced externally with rectangular slabs laid lengthways, internally with two or three courses of squarish

stones. The inner face rested on undisturbed soil but the rock had been scraped bare before the outer revetting stones were placed in position. For some reason this prepared surface occurred only in this sector. Elsewhere the ring was simpler. On the north-east it consisted of a single line (2 ft. 6 in. wide) of larger slabs with their short ends to the perimeter of the ring. Everywhere the outer face was masked with small pitched stones, an arrangement equating with the extra revetment material of megalithic tombs. The stones for the ring, like those of the cairn, must have come from some other place; there was no sign of a ditch in the south cutting which extended 12 ft. beyond the edge of the barrow nor in trial holes dug elsewhere to test the point.

(v) The final covering of brown loam had disappeared from the top of the cairn, but could be seen as a thin skin over the slabs of the cairn wall. It filled the space between cairn and stone-ring and ran out over the latter for a distance of about 2 ft. (Plate VII, 2). Evidently the ring was intended to be an internal feature. The mound gave the completed monument a diameter of 75 feet.

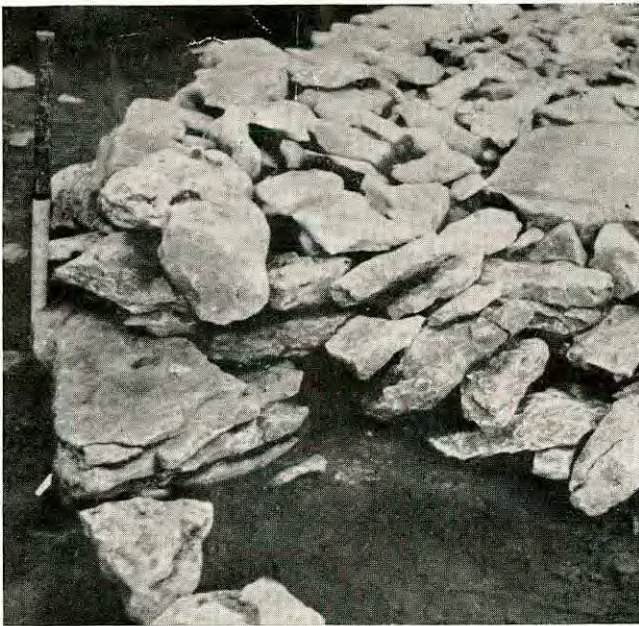
Of the many flakes and blades of flint, mostly unworked, recovered from the old surface and the body of the mound three are illustrated (fig. 6, 12-14), a convex scraper, a beaked scraper and a fabricator.

The limits of the shaft sunk through the centre of the barrow were easily recognized by the change in the pitch of the stones. There was a marked difference between the compact pitched material of the original cairn and the loose haphazard filling of the shaft.

Burial 3 (Romano-British). The cist, emptied of its Beaker occupant, now held the skeleton of a young woman of long-headed type (Appendix I). She had been buried in a semi-crouched position, her body turned to the right (Plate V, 1). A scrap of Samian ware, too small for dating purposes, was lodged in a crevice by her feet. An interesting feature was a mass of carbonized wood, about 9 in. deep, running diagonally across the cist, concealing the bones and, when removed, leaving a dark stain on them and the walls of the cist. This gave the impression of a decayed log and microscopic examination has shown that a log of oak had indeed been used as



1. Barrow 4 ; cairn-wall on the south-west



2. Barrow 4 ; the walled cairn in Section AA
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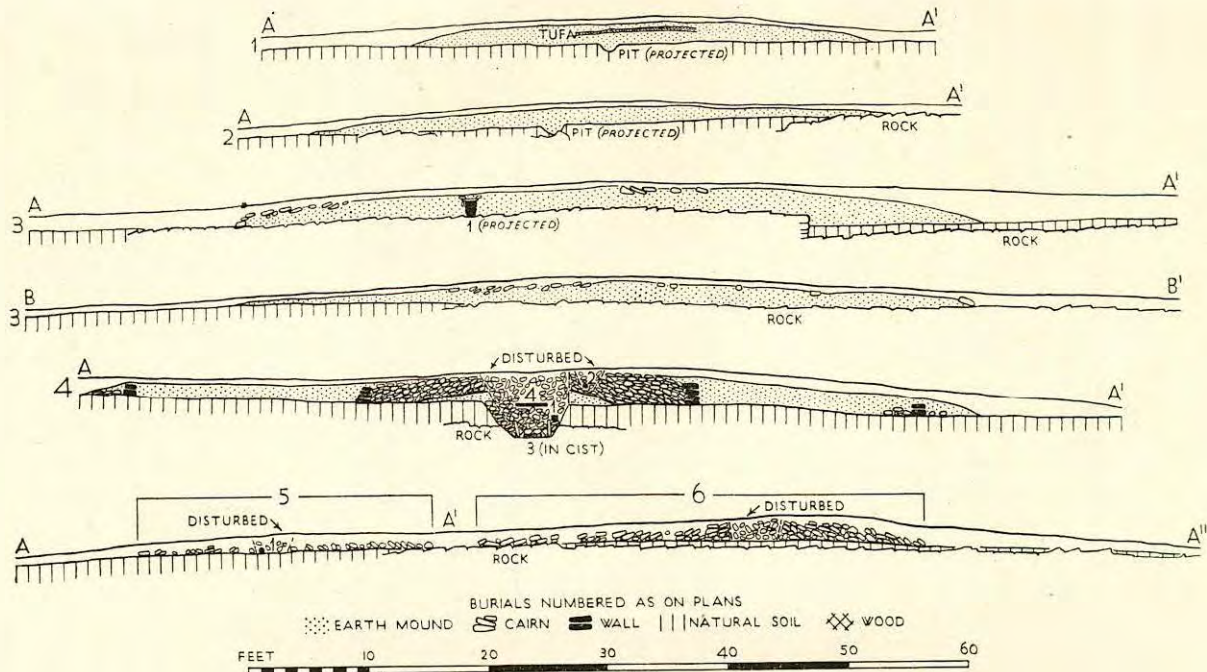


Fig. 9. Sectional Diagrams, Barrows, Chewton Plain.

protective covering for the body (Appendix II). Stones and soil, the latter doubtless derived from those parts of the earth-mounds dug away, were thrown back pell-mell into and over the cist.

Burial 4 (Romano-British). A mass of bones, representing a youth and a very young child, lay spread on the infilling of the shaft at 2 ft. 6 in. above the floor of the cist. These skeletons had been partially disturbed, but enough articulation remained to indicate extended inhumations. Beside the bones were found indeterminate fragments of Romano-British coarse ware. These burials, obviously contemporary, appeared to have been deposited at roughly the same time as the woman in the cist, during the infilling of the shaft.

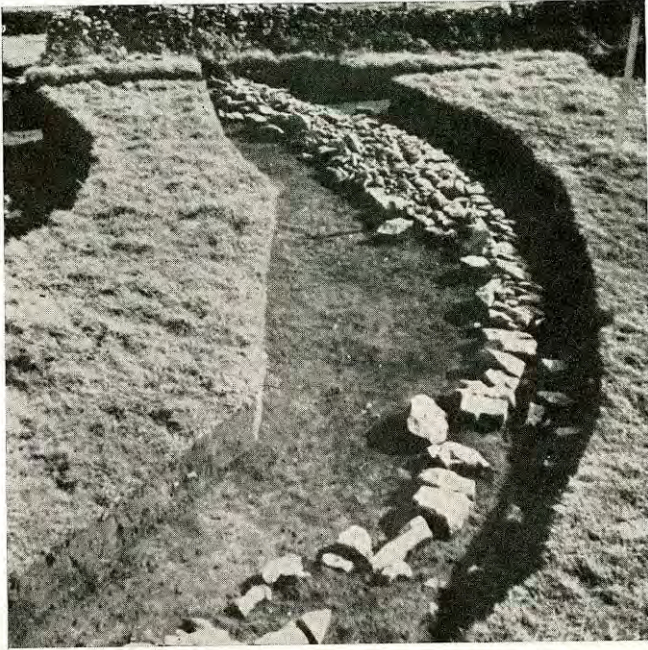
BARROW 5 (FIGS. 10 AND 9, 5)

The fifth site, about 300 yards north-east of Barrow 4, on the brink of the north slope of a tiny valley, was much spread and had a curiously elongated flattened top (Plate VIII, 1). It could be distinguished only from the north and west; elsewhere it merged into the natural declivity. A depression south of the centre hinted at disturbance.

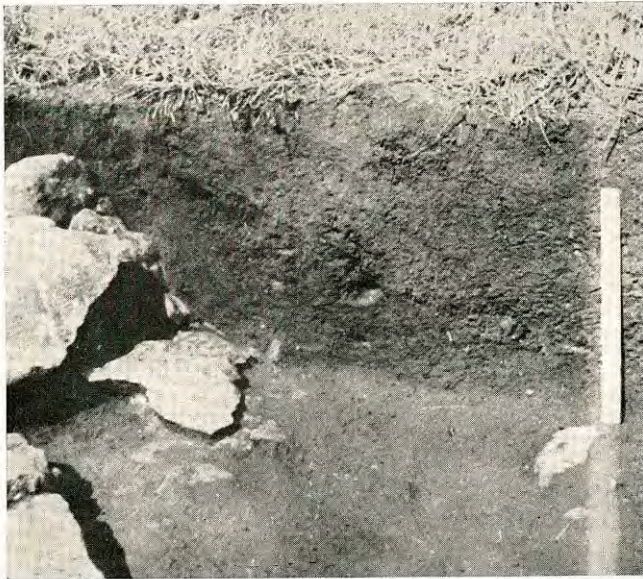
A cutting on the longer, north-south, axis showed that the site comprised two small cairns (Plate VIII, 2), the depression resulting from the gap between them. This gap, less than 4 ft. wide where the edges of the cairns came closest together, was filled when a few stones tumbled from the cairn and topsoil. Had the cairns ever had a covering-mound vestiges of it might be expected to survive here in the gap, but the section showed them never to have been thus linked. Later it became clear that they were built at different times.

Virgin soil throughout the site was a reddish-brown loam, like that of Barrow 4, but here so thin that the underlying rock frequently protruded.

Of Barrow 5, the smaller south cairn, little more than the first layer of stones remained, and sometimes not even that. The cairn, 24 ft. across and of simple construction, covered a single burial (fig. 10, 1). A small area (4 ft. by 3 ft.) at the centre had been plundered, an event dated by a few sherds of Roman coarse pottery scattered on the old surface. Embedded in the undisturbed loam, however, were fragments of a beaker. The position of the biggest fragment (fig. 8, 2)



1. Barrow 4 ; the stone ring on the west



2. Barrow 4 ; earth mound covering the stone ring on the south-east

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indicated that the beaker had been deposited lying on its side in the north-west corner of the burial area, at, presumably, either the head or the feet of the body.

The fragments, one from a square-sectioned rim and the rest from the lower part of the body of the pot, are insufficient to give the complete form of the beaker. The hard buff ware

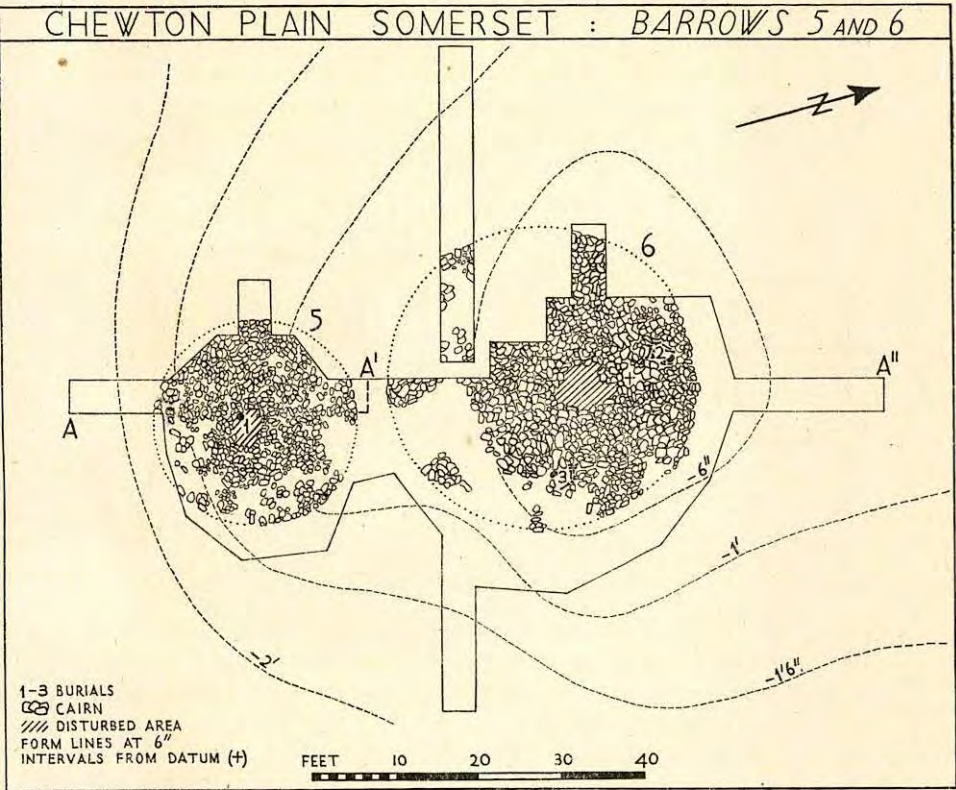


Fig. 10. Plan of Barrows 5 and 6.

is rusticated with pairs of opposed finger-nail impressions in the Holdenhurst manner.¹⁰ Similar ware occurred at the Gorsey Bigbury, Mendip, ditched circle¹¹ in association with normal 'A' beaker material.

¹⁰ Clark, *Proc. Prehist. Soc.*, 1936, pp. 19-23.

¹¹ Grimes, *Proc. Univ. Bristol Spelæol. Soc.*, vol. 5, pp. 38-42.

A metatarsus of ox (*bos longifrons*) lay on the old surface beneath the cairn stones immediately west of the burial. The flints from that surface included a convex scraper, an end scraper and an oval flake with side-workings of two periods, before and after patination (fig. 6, 15-17).

BARROW 6 (FIGS. 10 AND 9, 6)

The north cairn, 37 ft. in diameter, was, like its neighbour, of the simplest construction. Its height had been diminished to 18 in. and its pitched stones were nowhere more than four deep. As in the other cairns of the area the stones must have derived from some adjacent outcrop; within 10 ft. of the south

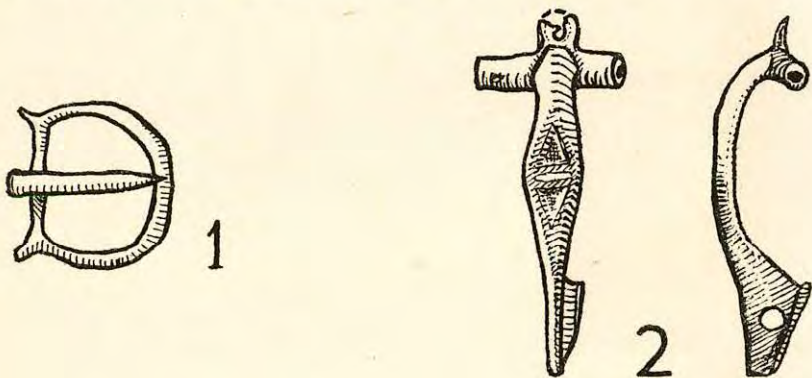


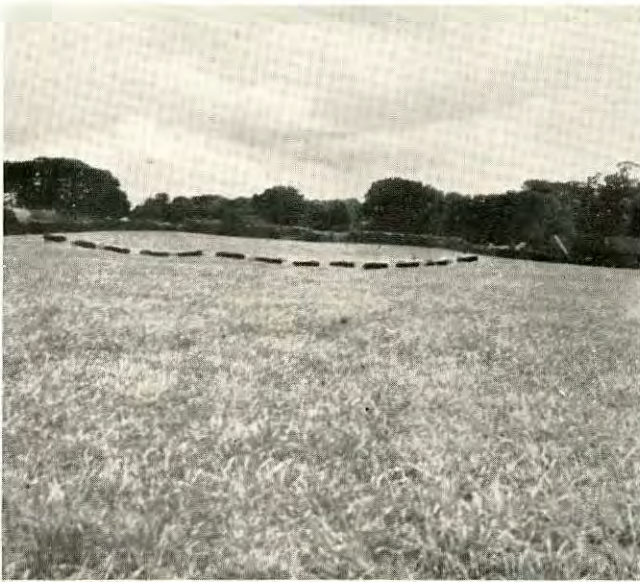
Fig. 11. Romano-British objects, Barrows 1 and 6. (†)

cairn and 23 ft. of the north cairn there was no sign of a ditch. Beneath and among the stones were found several flint tools—a *petit tranchet* derivative of Clark's type C2, a side-scraper and a crude convex scraper (fig. 6, 18-20).

The centre of the cairn had been disturbed but flecks of charcoal crushed into the surface of the undisturbed loam suggested a primary cremation burial.

The disturbance was dated to the earlier fourth century by a coin of Constantine I (A.D. 307-337)¹² found in good condition on the loam beneath the infilling of the robbers' hole. From among the stones thrown back into the hole came a scrap of Samian ware, a small sherd of Rhenish glazed ware, and a brooch. The brooch (fig. 11, 2) had traces of enamel in the

¹² 3 Æ. Cohen's type, 530-1.



1. Barrows 5 and 6, from the west



2. Barrows 5 and 6 after excavation, from the north-east
BRONZE AGE BARROWS NEAR STON EASTON

two triangular depressions ornamenting the bow and a (broken) head-loop. It belongs to Collingwood's Group N,¹³ a simple form popular on both sides of the Severn.¹⁴

Further Romano-British activity on the site could be traced. Potsherds, plentiful but indeterminate, dated the insertion of two adult burials (fig. 10, 2 and 3, and Appendix I) to Roman times. One skeleton lay on the old surface just within the north edge of the cairn. The size of the area cleared of stones (4 ft. by 3 ft.) suggested some flexing of the body. The bones, with no protective covering save a few loose stones, had been deranged and partly removed, apparently by animals. They were inadequate for determination of sex. The second skeleton, again incomplete and indeterminate as to sex, rested on the first layer of cairn stones, slightly east of the centre, and was, again, covered only by a couple of stones.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Evidently a Bronze Age colony took possession of this plateau of medium height below the crest of the Mendip Hills. A topographical unit with good soil and ample water supply, Chewton Plain became a focus of settlement in the Bronze Age, though in Neolithic times the local population seems to have concerned itself more with the Chew valley to the south. Both the long barrows already mentioned (p. 40) belong to this valley rather than to the plateau.

At the same time some link between the Neolithic and Bronze Ages is indicated by the presence of a round barrow at the east end of long barrow No. 123. This juxtaposition of long and round barrows is a well-known feature of the Cotswold area,¹⁵ and demonstrates continued use of the same sites for burial whether or not there was unbroken racial or cultural continuity.

Whatever continuity there may have been the beaker intrusion certainly affected the Plain. It is represented by Barrows 4 and 5, the one with its human remains of definitely beaker type and its walled cairn, the other with its fragmentary rusticated beaker. The walled cairn of Barrow 4 at once

¹³ *Arch. of Roman Britain*, p. 249.

¹⁴ Wheeler, *Caerleon*, p. 161.

¹⁵ See, for instance, Crawford, *Long Barrows of the Cotswolds*, pp. 89-90 (Colnpen), and pp. 90-2 (Cow Common).

invites comparison with that of Wick, Stogursey¹⁶ barrow which contained, with secondary burials, three beakers, two of A and one of B type. Mr. St. George Gray has cited parallels for the cairn structure as widespread as Denmark and Norway. Of somewhat similar walls in cairns found nearer home in recent years only that at Charmy Down Barrow 2¹⁷ is strictly comparable, the others being more kerbs than true walls. There are, however, differences in detail even in the closely akin Wick, Charmy Down and Chewton Plain barrows, particularly in the protection afforded to the face of the wall. At Wick soft soil separated the wall face from the encircling outer cairn, at Charmy Down vertical slabs served the same purpose, while the present barrow has the soil of its final earth mound filling the space between the cairn wall and the stone ring which here takes the place of the outer cairn.

While the disturbance of the beaker burials in both Barrows 4 and 5 has destroyed much of the desired evidence, what remains is sufficient to show that the beaker folk here were related to those in other parts of the Mendips.

To the Middle Bronze Age belong Barrow 3, the secondary burial in Barrow 4, and probably Barrow 6, in which only slight traces of a cremation survived. The barrow structure of this period is comparatively simple. As has been mentioned, the form of the urn from Barrow 3 points to a late date in the phase, as do, with less certainty, the fragments from Barrow 4. Once again, by the complete pot from Barrow 3, the homogeneity of the Middle Bronze Age culture of the Mendips is emphasized.

Barrows 1 and 2, the small earth mounds with diminutive pits containing 'token' cremation burials, cannot be closely dated, but may well belong to the Middle Bronze Age on analogy with similar (as yet unpublished) sites in the Cotswolds, where the outstanding feature was the very small quantity of burnt bone buried in a shallow pit,¹⁸ and with the Combe Beacon, Somerset, barrow where the small pit contained charcoal only.¹⁹ While this appears to have been a common

¹⁶ *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, liv, ii, p. 56 ff. The whole report on Wick covers pp. 1-78.

¹⁷ To be published.

¹⁸ Information from Mr. W. F. Grimes.

¹⁹ *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, lxxxi, p. 101.

west-country practice it cannot be considered limited to any one locality since instances occur also in the Oxford region,²⁰ and, without even the token burial, in Dorset.²¹

The evidence for later periods includes none for Iron Age activity; but, with or without a break, occupation continued in Roman times. The scraps of pottery found in several of the barrows are not sufficiently distinctive for dating purposes. The disturbance of the centre of Barrow 6 in the fourth century is of interest because at Wick Barrow also a coin of Constantine I (covered by a piece of mortarium) was found on the site of the disturbed primary burial. The hearth at Barrow 1 presumably marks a temporary squatting place, but the various burials suggest more settled occupation in the neighbourhood in Romano-British times. Particularly at Barrow 3 the twice-used grave on the margin of the mound stresses this continuity in that not merely the same barrow but the same limited area of it was resorted to, obviously after an interval, for burial purposes.

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Dr. F. S. Wallis very kindly made several visits to the site to advise on geological features. The late Professor E. Fawcett inspected the skeletal material *in situ* and began the examination of the bones; on his death Mr. L. F. Cowley most generously undertook to complete the work and his report is here published. For the report on the carbonized wood we are indebted to Mr. H. A. Hyde.

The finds from Barrows 1 and 3 are in Wells Museum, from Barrows 2, 4, 5 and 6 in the Somerset County Museum, Taunton Castle, the gifts of the landowners.

APPENDIX I

THE HUMAN REMAINS FROM CHEWTON PLAIN, SOMERSET.

BY L. F. COWLEY, M.SC.

Barrow 1. From pit. These remains consisted of a few fragments of burnt human bones.

²⁰ Radley, Berks., Barrow 5. To be published.

²¹ Crichel Down 4. Piggott, *Archaeologia*, xc (1944), p. 67.

Barrow 2. From pit. These likewise consisted of a few fragments of burnt human bones.

Barrow 3. Cremated bones from the primary urn (fig. 4, 1). The remains were fragmentary. They represented an adult male of 18 to 25 years of age.

Secondary cremation on south-east edge of barrow (fig. 4, 2). These fragments represented a young person.

Burials in a pit on south-west edge of barrow (fig. 4, 3). The material under this head consists of three skeletons which are described under the letters S, N and E indicating they were situated south, north and east in the pit.

S. Female. The skull which had undergone some compression gave the following dimensions and indices :—

Glabella-occipital length	..	..	..	190 mm.
Greatest breadth	..	..	..	136 mm.
Auricular height	..	..	..	116 mm.
Cranial capacity	..	..	..	1,420 c.c.
Cephalic index	..	..	..	71.5
Inter-temporal/inter-angular index	..	..	..	93.5

These figures show that the skull was dolichocephalic ; the height also is probably rather more than it would have been had the skull not been compressed. The occiput showed that the person was left-handed.

The jaws showed an overlapping bite. The molar crowns were worn but not carious. The 3rd molar was the smallest. In the upper jaw the 2nd and 3rd molars were absent from the left side and both incisors of the right were also absent, the latter probably having been lost during exhumation.

The mandible, which was slender, gave the following measurements :—

Angle, of the left side	..	..	..	114°
Length from mental protuberance to the vertical plane at back of condyles	..	..	..	101 mm.
Width across coronoid processes	..	..	..	94 mm.
Biangular width	..	..	..	84 mm.
Bicondylar width owing to damage could not be ascertained	..	..	..	—
Vertical height of both coronoids	..	..	..	63 mm.
Vertical height of left condyle	..	..	..	58 mm.
Width of left condyle	..	..	..	21 mm.
Antero-posterior dimensions of ramus measured at level of molar crowns	..	..	..	31 mm.

With exception of three incisor teeth all the mandibular teeth were present. The 1st and 2nd molars measured 11 × 11 mm. ; and the 3rd molar 10 × 10 mm. ; but the 3rd molar of the left side had not erupted. All the teeth were regular in alignment.

Vertebrae, sacrum, and ribs were fragmentary and showed nothing of special interest.

Both scapulae were incomplete; the glenoid cavity of the left side measured 26×35 mm., that of the right 25×35 mm. Likewise both clavicles were incomplete.

Both humeri were present; they were very straight with the deltoid impression well-marked and the nutrient (medullary) foramina unusually large. The left humerus was 297 mm. in length, the right 305 mm.

Both radii and ulnae were incomplete distally. The left ulna showed a very well developed ridge for the origin of the *pronator quadratus*. It will be remembered that the skull indicated left-handedness, and the above-mentioned ridge may be associated with the constant handling of a corn-grinding stone. There is nothing of special interest in the bones of the hand and wrist.

Of the hip-bone, apart from its being a female, there is nothing of interest to report.

Of the femora, whilst both were incomplete, the platymeric index of the upper shaft was 66.6.

Both tibiae were likewise incomplete; the left gave a platycnemic index of 60.6, that of the right 55.8. There was but slight retroversion of the heads of the tibiae. The fibulae were fragmentary. Of the few bones of the feet there was nothing of special interest.

The stature of the individual represented was 5' 0" to 5' 1".

N. Male. As with the other skulls the facial bones were wanting, but the malars and attached fragments of the corresponding maxillae were present with this skull.

The dimensions and indices of the restored skull are as follows:—

Glabella-occipital length	..	..	..	194 mm.
Greatest breadth	..	..	..	132 mm.
Auricular height	..	..	..	124 mm.
Cranial capacity	..	..	..	1,518 c.c.
Cephalic index	..	..	..	68
Inter-temporal/inter-angular index	..	..	..	93.6

The orbital index of the right side was approximately 83 and for the left 84.

The lower jaw had a length of 110 mm. measured from the mental protuberance to the vertical plane at the back of the condyles. The angle of the jaw was 125° on the right side and 122° on the left. The biangular width was 95 mm. the bicoronoid width 99 mm., and the bicondylar width about 114 mm. The vertical height of the coronoid was 65 mm. on both sides and the vertical height of the condyles was 57 mm. for the left and 53 mm. for the right. The symphysial depth was 33 mm. Both condyles were abraded. Of the teeth the central incisors were spatulate with a maximum width of 9 mm.; these only slightly projected over the lower incisors. All the teeth were present save the 1st lower premolar

of the left side. In its antero-posterior dimension the 3rd upper molar was only about half that of the 2nd molar.

There is nothing of importance to state about the vertebræ and ribs which were very fragmentary. Both scapulæ were incomplete and the glenoid cavity of each measured 27×29 mm.

Of the clavicles, the left, which was more intact than the right, measured 143 mm., but probably its real length was 145 mm.

The humerus had a maximum length of 315 mm. for the right side, while that of the left measured 310; the dimension for the head was 46 mm. and 45 mm. respectively; and the epi-condylar width for the bones was 65 and 64 mm.

The right radius measured 242 mm. and the left 245. This greater length of the left radius may have been some compensation for the lesser length of the left humerus.

Neither the ulnæ nor the bones of the hand and feet call for special mention.

The femur length (maximum) of the left side was 449 and for the right 448 mm. The right femur gave a platymeric index of 76.4.

Both tibiæ were fairly complete, the overall length of the right measured 365 mm. and without spine 359 mm. The left tibiæ gave 365 and 360 mm. Platymeric index of the left was 62.1 and of the right 63.1. Both tibiæ showed marked squatting facets, and a retroversion of the head of about 16° .

Only the right patella was present and this had a height of 42 mm. and a width of 45 mm.

Of the ankle bones the left calcaneum was the more complete and measured 80 mm. in length: the left astragalus measured 59 mm. with an angle of the neck of 20° .

The remains represent a male in the early thirties with a stature of about 5' 5".

E. Male. The restored skull gave the following dimensions and indices:—

Glabella-occipital length	..	..	..	198 mm.
Greatest breadth	..	..	..	127 mm.
Auricular height	..	..	..	122 mm.
Cranial capacity	..	..	..	1,479 c.c.
Cephalic index	..	..	..	64
Inter-temporal/inter-angular index	..	..	..	92

The skull was unusually high and marked dolichocephalic. The occiput showed a prominent boss and also that the individual was right-handed.

The maxillæ showed the face to be rather prognathic and the incisor teeth of the upper jaw overlapped those of the lower; all the teeth, however, were beautifully regular. The crowns of the molars were much worn and the crowns of M2 and M3 of the left side and the front of M2 of the right side were carious.

In the lower jaw the molars diminished in size very slightly from

before backwards, whereas the maxillary molars were in marked contrast. The antero-posterior length of the crown of the last mandibular tooth was 12 mm. with a transverse diameter of 10.5 mm. The corresponding dimensions of the last maxillary molar was 10.5 mm. and 8 mm.

The glenoid cavity measured 26 × 35 mm. in both scapulæ, which were incomplete.

Of the clavicles the left was complete and measured 149 mm. in length.

The right humerus had a maximum length of 333 mm. and the left 329; their respective epi-condylar widths were 61 and 61.5 mm. The right radius measured 247 mm. and the left 250 mm.

A maximum length of 450 mm. was obtained for the right femur and its oblique length 447 mm.; the left femur gave 453 and 449 mm. Both femora gave a horizontal measurement for the head of 46 mm. and both showed a platymeric index of 71.2.

The right tibia (less spine) measured 353 mm. Platymeric indices of 58.8 and 60.2 were obtained for the right and left tibia respectively.

The ribs were fragmentary and of these, the vertebræ, and hand and foot bones, there was nothing of special interest. The sacrum and pelvis both showed male characteristics. The stature of the individual was 5' 5" to 5' 5½".

Barrow 4. Bones heaped alongside cist (fig. 7, 1).

The skull (reconstructed) measured:—

Glabella-occipital length	..	..	..	181 mm.
Greatest breadth	..	..	..	151 mm.
Auricular height	..	..	..	115 mm.
Cranial capacity	..	..	..	1,505 c.c.
Cephalic index	..	..	..	83.4

In the upper jaw all the teeth, save the left canine and the incisors, were present. Also in the lower jaw all the teeth were present, and like those in the upper jaw showed no trace of disease.

The lower jaw gave the following dimensions:—

Bicondylar width	..	..	102 mm.
Bicoronoid width	..	..	130 mm.
Biangular width	..	..	97 mm.
Width of condyle	..	..	18 mm.
Vertical height of coronoid	..	..	L. 57 mm., R. 57 mm.
Vertical height of condyle	..	..	L. 45 mm., R. 45 mm.
Symphysial height	..	..	31 mm.
Width of ramus at level of molar crowns	..	..	30 mm.
Angle of jaw	..	..	137°
Distance of mental protuberance from vertical plane at back of condyles	..	..	110 mm.

The left humerus had an estimated total length of 332 mm. ; its head and tuberosity 43 mm. The epi-condylar width of the right humerus measured 55 mm. ; this bone was incomplete proximally and less robust than the left humerus.

The length of the left radius was 225 mm. ; the width of its head 21 mm. ; width of lower extremity 31 mm. The right radius was missing.

The right ulna measured 273 mm. overall.

The femora yielded the following particulars :—

	<i>Left femur.</i>	<i>Right femur.</i>
Greatest length ..	490 mm.	488 mm.
Oblique length ..	486 mm.	487 mm.
Diameter of head ..	42.5 × 42.5	43 × 42
Bicondylar width ..	75.5	73 (slightly abraded)
Platymetric index ..	89	86

The left tibia gave the following dimensions :—

Maximum length including spine ..	..	396 mm.
Maximum length excluding spine ..	..	389 mm.
Platycnemic index ..	..	75
Retroversion of head ..	..	10°

The squatting facet was well marked.

The right tibia, which was incomplete, gave a platycnemic index of 75.

The stature of the individual, estimated from the length of the long bones, was 5' 6".

In cist (*fig. 7, 3*). The skull, of a woman, gave the following dimensions and indices :—

Glabella-occipital length ..	..	178 mm.
Greatest breadth ..	..	131 mm.
Auricular height ..	..	115 mm.
Cranial capacity ..	..	1,310 c.c.
Cephalic index ..	..	73.5

The lower jaw was measured and the following measurements obtained :—

Symphysial height ..	..	30 mm.
Width of ramus at level of molar crowns ..	..	31 mm.
Biangular width ..	..	84 mm.
Angle of jaw ..	..	140° approx.

The length of the humerus of the right side was 312 mm., that of the left 311 mm. The right radius measured 234 mm., and its proximal head had a diameter of 22 mm. The maximum lengths of the ulnæ were, left 252, and right 251 mm.

The right femur had a maximum length of 432 mm., and a platymetric index of 74.2. The index of the damaged left femur was 76.6.

A maximum length of 360 mm. was obtained for the left tibia, and a platycnemic index of 67.8 and an angle of retroversion of

the head of 20°. The remainder of the skeleton calls for no special mention.

A stature of 5' 1" to 5' 2" was estimated from the various long bones.

Two burials (disturbed) from higher level in filling of pit (fig. 9, Section 4, 4).

These remains represented a young man of about 20 years of age and a very young child. Of the latter, since the remains were few practically nothing can be stated. Particulars of the adult, however, are as follows:—

From the skull (after partial reconstruction) the following dimension was obtained:—

Length 181 mm.

Since neither breadth nor height could be determined, cephalic index and cranial capacity could not be obtained.

Of the upper limb the right humerus measured 273 mm. in length, and the right radius 203 mm. The lower limbs gave the following measurements and indices:—

	<i>Left femur.</i>	<i>Right femur.</i>
Maximum total length ..	397 mm.	400 mm.
Diameter of head ..	38 × 37 mm.	37 × 37 mm.
Platymeric index..	85.1	88

Neither tibia was complete, but the platycnemic index of the left was 71.4, that of the right 75.0.

A portion of the hip-bone showed male characters. From the long bones the stature of the individual was estimated to be 5' 1" to 5' 2".

Of its upper jaw there was a small portion carrying molars 1 and 2; while part of the lower jaw also carried portions of the permanent dentition save M3.

Barrow 6. Burial from north edge of cairn (fig. 10, 2). This material consisted of fragments of limb-bones and skull of an adult.

Burial east of centre of cairn (fig. 10, 3). There were present two petrous bones, right and left, part of the lower jaw with 1st molar on left side, and portions of a thin-walled skull of an adult.

APPENDIX II

THE CARBONIZED WOOD FROM CHEWTON PLAIN, SOMERSET.

BY H. A. HYDE, M.A., F.L.S.

Material from three different barrows was submitted to me. Microscopic examination gave the following results:—

Barrow 1: from the pit. About 20 distinct fragments, all small, but mostly identifiable and, to judge from the state of preservation,

all charcoal, i.e. wood carbonized by the action of heat. Two different woods were present, viz. ash (*Fraxinus excelsior* L.) and oak (*Quercus robur* L. sens. lat.).

Ash: eight fragments in all, the largest 2.0 cm. (measured tangentially) \times 1.0 cm. (radially) \times 1.0 (longitudinally). All the specimens were wider tangentially than radially and showed a distinct tendency to form tangential flakes in marked contrast with the radial flakes formed by oak (see below).

Oak: four fragments, the largest (part of a young stem) measuring 0.5 \times 0.7 \times 1.4 cm.; the other three being thin radial flakes.

Four other specimens showed a confused and obscure structure and could not be identified. The remainder of the material consisted of minute fragments, including some flakes similar to those identified as above.

Barrow 3: from the cinerary urn. All organic material included here had been completely carbonized by heat. The wood charcoal was all of one kind, oak, present in the form of 50 fragments, the largest 0.5 \times 1.0 \times 1.5 cm., but mostly much smaller and all very thin radial flakes; all these fragments may well have been derived from the same log.

Barrow 4: from the burial pit. Five more or less coherent masses of carbonized wood still partly embedded in a matrix of clay. All were extremely friable and portions large enough for microscopic examination were obtained with some difficulty: all were, however, identified as oak (*Quercus robur* L. sens. lat.). The structure of the wood was found to be distinctly distorted: this fact, as also the general condition of the material, and the description of how it was found, are all consistent with the view that it represents a log which had not been carbonized previous to burial but which may since have become carbonized as the result of decay.

Note on the significance of the finds.

OAK. The Linnean species *Quercus robur* includes both Common or Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur* L. sens. str. = *Q. pedunculata* Ehrh.) and Durmast or Sessile Oak (*Q. petraea* Liebl.).

There appears to be no way of distinguishing between the two species when presented in the form of wood specimens, certainly not in that of carbonized fragments. However, to judge from the present-day vegetation of the area immediately surrounding Ston Easton (as indicated in Moss, C. E.: *Geographical Distribution of Vegetation in Somerset, Bath and Bridgwater District*, Royal Geographical Society, 1907) it is almost certain that the tree concerned is *Quercus pedunculata*.

ASH. Pure ashwoods occur on the steeper slopes of the Carboniferous Limestone in the Mendips and elsewhere in Somerset: the nearest woods dominated by this species appear, to judge from Moss's map, to be about 4 or 5 miles from Ston Easton. Oak-hazel woods, which in this part of Somerset in general contain also

abundant ash, occur much nearer, at Farrington Gurney: in all probability such woods would in the absence of human interference occupy the whole of the local area of clays and loams.

The botanical finds, therefore, are consistent with the supposition that the local Bronze Age vegetation was similar to that of the present day.