PART II — PAPERS, ETC.

CASTLE NEROCHE: AN ABANDONED NORMAN FORTRESS IN SOUTH SOMERSET

BY BRIAN K. DAVISON

Castle Neroche is a strongly-defended earthwork site on the north-east scarp of the Blackdown Hills, commanding the approaches to the south-west peninsula. Excavation in 1961-4 *distinguished four main phases of construction. In Period I (undated) a rampart was thrown up, enclosing an area of nearly* 7½ *acres. Period II, soon after the Norman Conquest, is defined by the construction of a smaller enclosure within the earlier defences. This may have served as a base for troops engaged in suppressing the disturbances of* 1067-9, *and is marked by the local production of pottery of distinctively Northern French type. Later, in Period III, the site was converted into a motte-and-bailey castle by building a motte astride the Period II enclosure, one corner of which was sub-divided to serve as a barbican, and by adding an outer line of defence. The new castle appears to have passed out of permanent use by the early* 12*th century, but was refurbished for a brief period during the Anarchy.*

PART I

INTRODUCTION The impressive earthworks of Castle Neroche have attracted the attention of archaeologists and antiquaries over a considerable period, and many opinions were expressed during the last century in particular as to their origin. The first detailed description of the site was published by the Reverend F. Warre in 1854[1]. Some of the features mentioned by Warre — hut circles, an iron sword and a wooden coffin containing a skeleton — appear on the 1890 edition of the Ordnance Survey 6 in. map, but cannot now be traced. Sherds of pottery said by Warre to have been found at Castle Neroche, and presented by him to the (then) Taunton Museum, were recognized in 1958 as being of North French type and possibly of 11th century date[2]. However, in 1903 the extent of knowledge did not reach so far, and when in that year H. St. George Gray investigated the site for the Somersetshire Archaeological and Natural History Society, he was concerned to discover whether or not the earthworks were "British" in origin. His excavations[3] failed to throw any light on the date of the various ramparts and ditches, but produced distinctively medieval pottery from the highest part of the site, known as The Beacon (now recognized as a Norman motte). It is clear that Gray anticipated that other investigators would follow him, but it was not until 1961 that the Society was able to sponsor further work on the site. This second campaign lasted three seasons, ending in 1963. In 1964 the Ministry of Public Building and Works became involved through a proposal to demolish part of the earthworks to make room for farm buildings, and a short season of excavation was carried out in advance of this work. The excavations of 1961-4 were carried out under the direction of the present writer.

THE SITE AND ITS SETTING (Figs. 1 and 2). Castle Neroche stands on the north-eastern tip of the Blackdown Hills overlooking the Somerset Levels. To the south and west the Upper Greensand and Gault of the Blackdowns give a high rolling terrain, seamed by deep valleys. To the north and east the land falls steeply for some 600 ft., levelling out briefly at about 200 ft. O.D. before plunging again to where the solid geology of the Jurassic is overlaid by the raised bogs of the Levels. Tactically the site is immensely strong, and strategically it is well placed to command the approaches to the south-west peninsula along the Langport Ridge or following the edge of the high ground further south.

The earthworks take the form of a series of ramparts and ditches cutting off a spur thrust forward from the main mass of the Blackdowns. The apex of the spur is crowned by a large motte raised some 20-25 ft. above the natural level of the ground. The ditch of this motte attains a considerable depth at the south side, where natural defences are absent: at the north side, where the slopes are precipitous, Gray's excavation in 1903 showed that the ditch was only 15 ft. deep. On the summit of the motte a small mound has been added to the main work at the south-east side. The summit has been further disturbed by two large quarry-holes, reputedly of 18th century date. In one of these Gray found "an armful of masonry", which had "rolled down into the hole". Warre in 1854 recorded that at that time there still remained round the summit of the motte "traces of a massive wall of strongly cemented masonry". A third quarry was

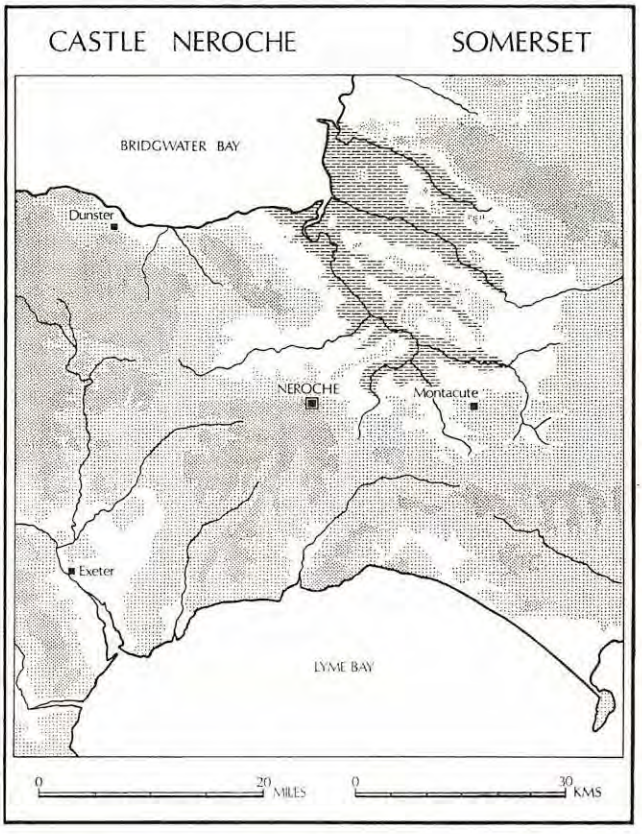

Fig. 1: Relief map of the neck of the south-west peninsula, showing the strategic position of Castle Neroche.

evidently driven into the flank of the motte on its south side during the second half of the 19th century. It is missing from Warre's plan of 1854, but appears on the 1890 edition of the O.S. map.

To the south of the motte the ground slopes gently, the edge of the scarps to the north and east being sharply defined. The approach from the south and west is barred by the remains of five successive lines of defence. The outermost of these encloses an area of nearly 7½ acres. Along the south-west side, where the Greensand outcrops, the rampart is low and spread: further east, clay-with-flints gives a sharper profile. The line of the rampart is broken in a number of places. Through one of the gaps, at the south-east corner of the site, passes a farm track which at this point follows the line of the old road from Staple Fitzpaine to Chard[4]. A gap at the south-west corner was investigated in 1962 (see below). A further breach occurs where the modern farm track passes through the earthworks at the north-east corner of the site: the south side of this gap has been cut back for a modern silage pit. The remaining gaps are the result of quarrying.

Within the south-east part of the enclosure just described are two short lengths of rampart and ditch. The rampart is low and the ditch is correspondingly shallow. What appears to be a continuation of the line to the west can be seen, on closer inspection, to be a linear sand quarry. A little to the north of this second line of defence, two further lines of rampart and ditch enclose an area of just over 2 acres. In contrast to the two outer ramparts, the inner two have retained a steep profile, the innermost surviving in places to a height of 15 ft. above ground level. These two inner ramparts diverge slightly at the north-west, where in 1854 Warre noted what appeared to be an entrance close under the lee of the motte. Since then, however, quarrying has removed much of the evidence: all that survives is a causeway across the inner ditch. The area within the earthworks is partly occupied by the buildings of Castle Neroche Farm. The present track to the farm from the south-east passes through the earthworks close to the edge of the scarp. From the west

a second track leads into the farmyard through a gap apparently of recent origin. A fourth opening, in the middle of the south-east side of the enclosure, was examined in 1962.

Farm buildings and early 19th century quarrying have badly mutilated a fifth line of defence forming a small inner bailey or barbican at the foot of the motte. The rampart now survives only at the east side. It was in this area (according to Warre) that burials were found and here in 1903 Gray excavated a medieval rubbish pit.

An overall appreciation of the strength of the earthwork defences of Castle Neroche is made difficult by the remains of the old Royal Forest. Sand quarrying and the necessary demands of a working farm have obscured the original lines of the earthworks in some places almost beyond recognition. For these reasons, the plan (Fig. 2) is the result of a combination of careful surveying and a certain amount of interpretation[5].

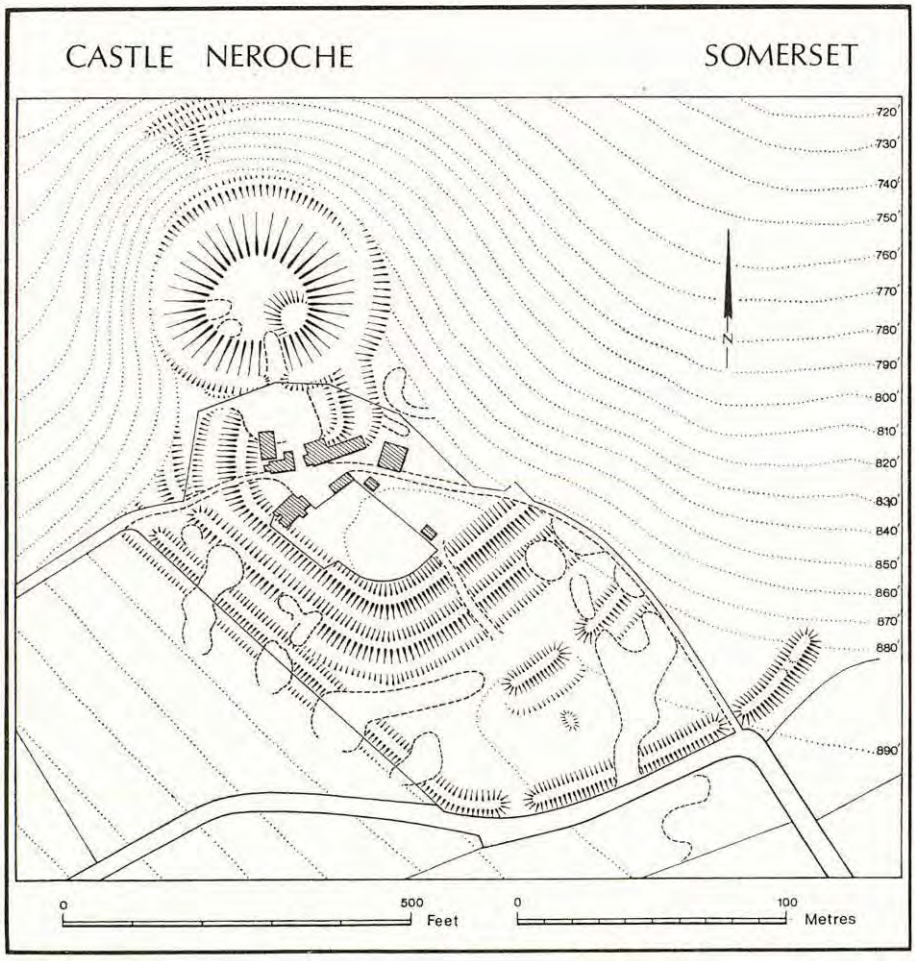

Fig. 2: General plan of Castle Neroche, showing the medieval earthworks and the buildings of Castle Neroche Farm. The broken lines indicate 18th-19th century quarries.

RESULTS OF THE 1961-4 EXCAVATIONS The results of the excavations are summarized here for the sake of clarity. Four main periods of construction can be distinguished. The plans (figs. 3-5) are interpretative, and are intended to give a visual statement of the writer's analysis of the site: modern features such as buildings and fences are omitted, as also are the numerous sand quarries. Detailed descriptions of the areas excavated are given below, in part II (see p. 26ff).

PERIOD I (Fig. 3) The outermost line of defence, enclosing an area of $7\frac{1}{2}$ acres, is accepted here as defining Period I. In point of fact this particular earthwork is undated. It is even possible that it represents the latest phase of construction on the site. However, the relationship between this and the other lines of defence suggests that we are dealing with an early work. This is to some extent supported by the absence of pottery attributable to this phase.

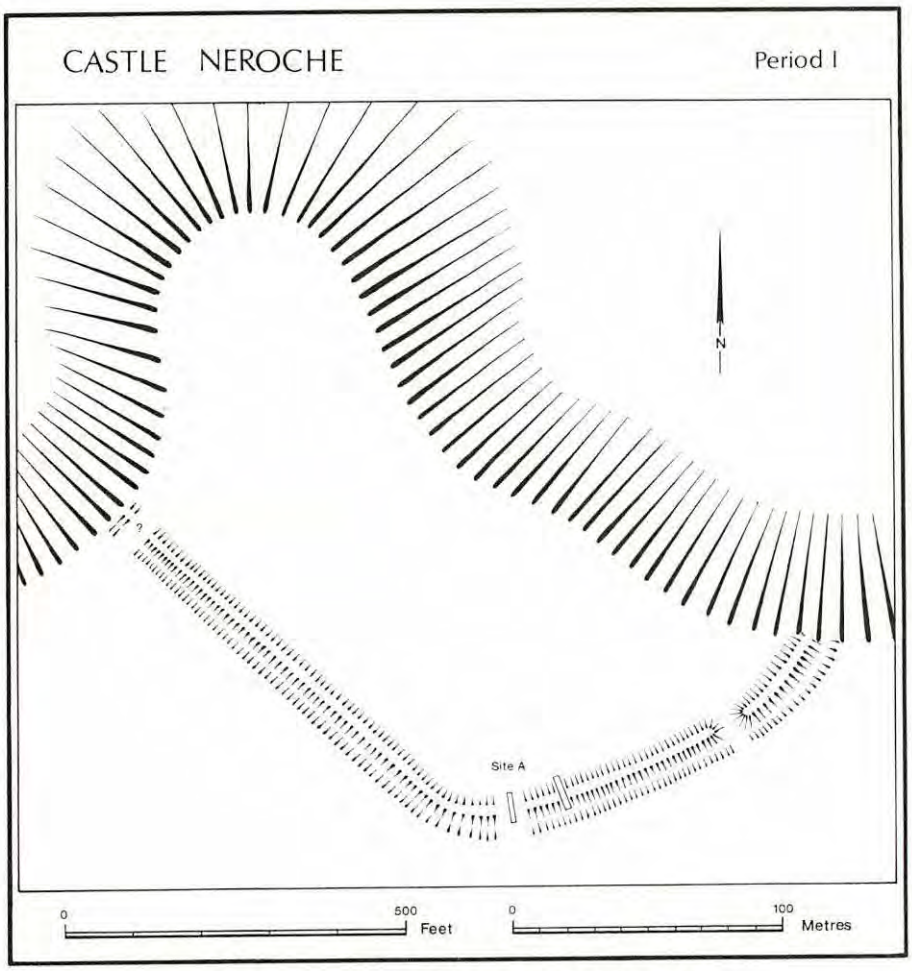

Fig. 3: Plan showing the earthworks of Period I.

The defences consist of a single line of rampart and ditch. In 1903, Gray excavated a half-section through the rampart at the south-west side of the enclosure but without result. A trench through the rampart at the south side in 1961 (Site Ai) was similarly unproductive: the rampart was apparently a single-period work of dump construction, with no trace of internal framing or external revetments. The ditch at this point is occupied by the modern road.

Of the existing gaps in the line of the rampart, five are clearly of recent origin and are omitted from the plan. A sixth was investigated in 1962 (Site Aii). The results were inconclusive. On topographical grounds the gap at the south-east corner of the enclosure, where the old road to Chard passed through the earthworks, might seem the most likely place for an entrance. Unfortunately, confirmation of this by excavation is precluded by the daily use of the gap as a means of access to Castle Neroche Farm. For similar reasons the gap at the north-west of the enclosure could not be examined.

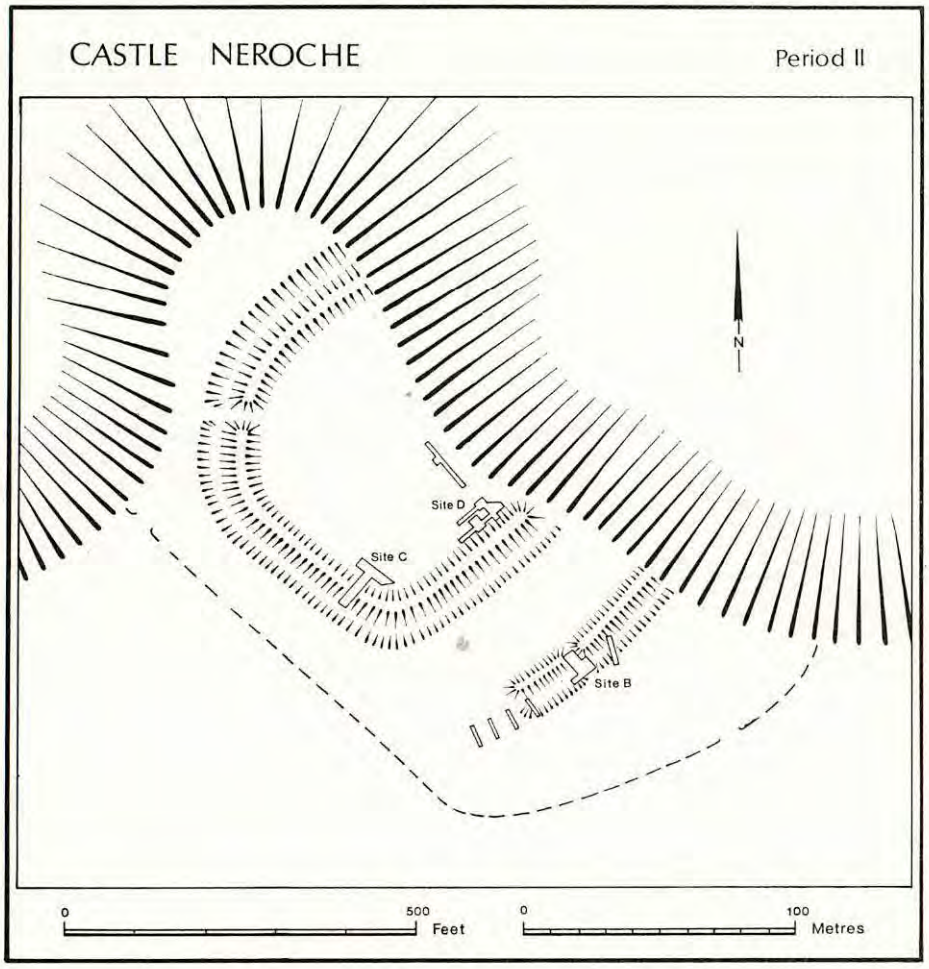

Fig. 4: Plan showing the earthworks of Period II.

PERIOD II (Fig. 4) The defences of Period II consist of a rampart and a ditch enclosing an area of 2 acres, with what appears to be an advance work covering the level ground to the south-east. The slopes to the north-east have suffered landslip within living memory, and the original plan of the earthworks cannot now be determined. It is possible that as first constructed the inner defence circuit was complete, in the form of a ringwork.

This second phase of construction was apparently marked by the production and use of a facies of coarse pottery of North French type, at present unique in Britain (see below, Part III). This ware is attributable to Period II since, although it is found mixed with other wares where clear stratification is wanting, and is incorporated as midden material in the earthworks of Period III, it is not found in occupation layers demonstrably of the later periods.

Excavation of the "advance work" confirmed that its line had never been extended further west than is shown on the plan, and that the combined height of bank and ditch had never exceeded 10 ft. Part of the existing entrance gap was examined in detail (Site B). The axis of an original narrower entrance was found to lie to the west of the present axis, the rampart having been cut back at the east side during the last century, when a farm track passed obliquely through the earthwork at this point. The entrance was apparently never fully timbered, and this — together with the meagre scale of the earthwork — suggests that the work was left uncompleted. The attempt to reduce the size of the Period I enclosure would seem to have been abandoned in

favour of the smaller ringwork nearer the end of the spur, since a sherd of the distinctive North French type of pottery was found in the make-up of the rampart at Site B.

Examination of the ringwork itself (Site Ci) showed that in its original form the rampart was 9-10 ft. high, again apparently of dump construction: no evidence survived regarding revetments or palisades. The area enclosed, just over 2 acres, is large — larger still if an appreciable amount has been lost by landslip. The original area may have been as much as 3 acres. No attempt was made to examine the interior on a large scale, though trial areas were excavated in two places. One of these (Site Cii) proved to have been disturbed by later horticulture, but it would seem that timber structures on cobbled footings had formerly stood here throughout Periods II and III: as a result of ploughing in the 18th century, pottery of North French and local types occurred at random in all levels. Ploughing had similarly obliterated all stratification on Site Di. Here, however, the uprights of timber buildings had been set directly into the ground and the evidence survived below plough level in the form of post-holes. While none of these could be assigned to Period II by direct association of pottery (North French and local types being mixed, as at Site C), the revetting of the tail of the rampart — carried out when the defences were strengthened in Period III — suggests that buildings were already standing here in the lee of the rampart in Period II. Unfortunately, the area excavated was too small to reveal any clear structural pattern. A little to the north, at the edge of the scarp, trial trenching showed that here (Site Dii) the ground level had been made-up in the 18th century, preserving the earlier levels. Apparently already sealed-off by Period III were a single post-hole, which may have held a flagpole, and a pit.

The site of the original entrance into the enclosure is not certain. The old road from Staple Fitzpaine to Chard passed through the earthworks at the edge of the scarp, to north-east of Site D, and this may have been an early route. By Period III there was an entrance at the north-west side of the enclosure, close under the lee of the motte — a not uncommon arrangement. A short and otherwise meaningless length of ditch at the north side of this suggests that there may already have been an entrance here in Period II. The two remaining gaps shown on the general plan (Fig. 2) are apparently of recent origin.

PERIOD III (Fig. 5) A radical change in the use of the site took place in Period III, when the earthworks were converted into a motte-and-bailey castle. A large mound 20-25 ft. high was thrown up astride the Period II rampart at the north side of the enclosure, on the tip of the spur. The crest of the earlier rampart, passing underneath the motte, was detected at Sites J and K, and the continuation of the ditch under the motte was checked at Site I[6]. The spoil for the motte was derived from an enormous quarry ditch which separates it from its bailey. On the north side of the motte the ditch is smaller, and here in 1903 Gray found a piece of gilt bronze strip and a sherd of indeterminate pottery lying on the bottom; higher up in the silting were sherds of 12th century ware. On the outer lip of the ditch a low counterscarp bank 2½ ft. high covered a sherd from a rouletted and glazed jug or pitcher, together with fragments of a lamp, more sherds of local post-Conquest wares, and two further fragments of gilt bronze strip[7].

Investigation of the main inner rampart at Site C in 1971 showed that this was a two-period feature. Since only the first of these periods could be traced under the motte, it would seem that the strengthening of this line — the rampart is now some 12-15 ft. high — took place in Period III. At Site G the material of this heightening was seen to be one with that of the rampart of the small inner bailey or barbican at the foot of the motte, indicating that both were the product of the same construction phase[8].

The entrance to the barbican must have been at the south side, but later farm buildings have removed most of the evidence: the last vestiges of the junction of the barbican with the heightened Period II rampart, examined at Site G, were similarly destroyed by the building of a new dairy in 1964. The defences of this inner work were sectioned at the south-east side (Site H), where the rampart survives to a height of 8 ft. No traces of timbering could be detected, but sherds of the local late 11th—early 12th century wares occurred in the make-up of the rampart. Unfortunately, the interior of the barbican was extensively quarried in the 19th century.

Either during Period III or during Period IV, a second line of defence was added to the already-strengthened Period II enclosure, which now formed the main bailey of the castle. This is indicated by the fact that the new rampart was thrown up over a small counterscarp bank on the outer edge of the inner ditch (Sites E and F). The construction of this rampart reflects the changes in the underlying subsoil. At Site E, where the subsoil is clay, the 6 ft. high rampart is a simple linear dump: further west at Site F, where the subsoil is sand, the outer face of the rampart has been roughly revetted with stone.

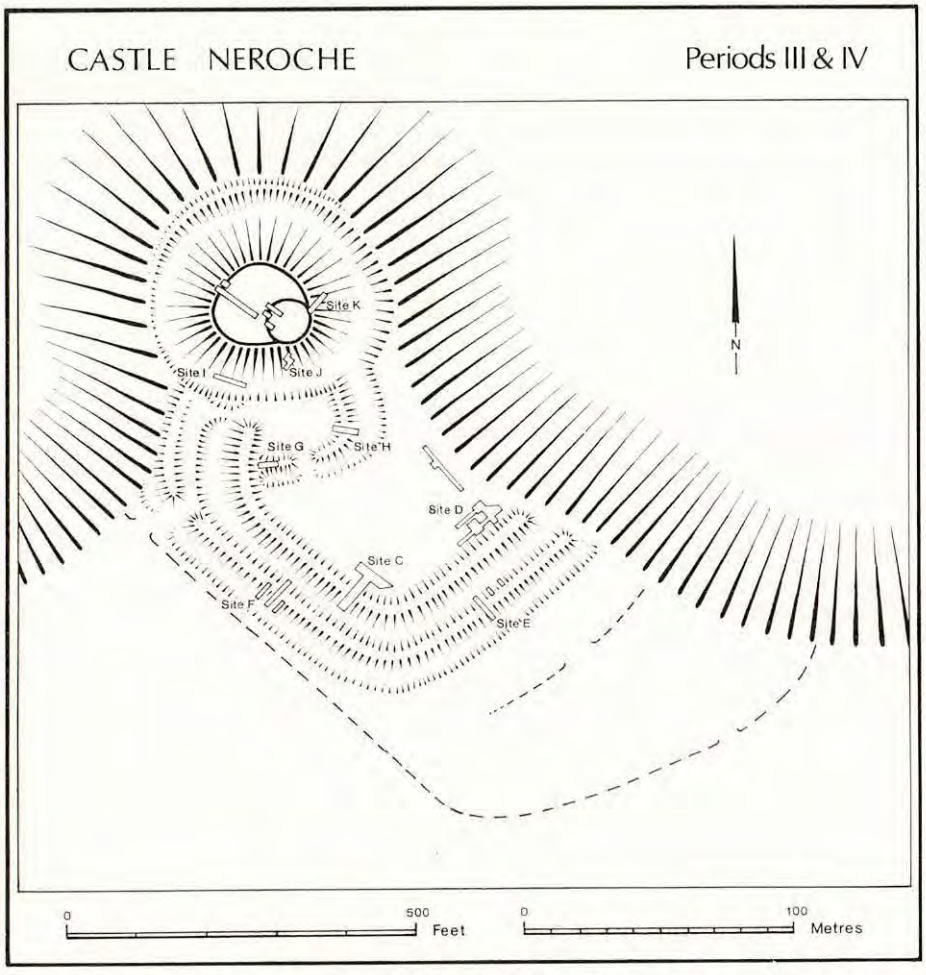

Fig. 5: Plan showing the earthworks of Period III and the structures on the motte (Period IV).

The new castle was thus a work of formidable strength, the main bailey being protected by an ultimately bivallate defence within which an inner bailey or barbican covered the approach to the motte, the whole being set round by the earthworks of Period I. Access from the west was along the edge of the scarp, between the bivallate defences of the main bailey, and under the lee of the motte. Unfortunately, late 19th century quarrying has damaged the site of the gate since Warre visited it in 1854. From the east the approach similarly seems to have been along the edge of the scarp, passing into the main bailey close to Site D. The buildings in the lee of the inner rampart at Sites C and D evidently continued in use, the rear of the heightened inner rampart being revetted at Site D to avoid burying the existing buildings.

The enormous summit area of the motte indicates that it too was intended for residential use, and not just as a citadel of last resort. Excavation showed two phases of occupation, the second of which can be regarded as defining Period IV. The earlier phase unfortunately seems to have left little trace beyond a few scattered sherds of pottery similar to the local wares found on Sites C, D and H.

PERIOD IV (Fig. 5) Clear evidence of occupation during Period IV is limited to the summit area of the motte. Here, the surface was made-up with a layer of clay and sand, sealing-off the occupation level of Period III, and a low mound was added at the south-east side. Round the

summit of this a shell-wall was built, defining an oval area 40 ft. in diameter raised some 3 ft. above the surrounding ground level: probably at the same time a curtain wall was built round the perimeter of the main motte[9]. The effect is that of a miniature shell-keep and bailey, set on the summit of the larger work.

It was presumably during this final phase that the ditch at the north side of the motte was cleaned out and the spoil deposited in the form of a low counterscarp bank, sealing a single sherd of glazed pottery (see p. 26, 56 and note 7). It is not clear whether the rampart examined at Sites E and F was also added at this time, or earlier in Period III[10].

INTERPRETATION. A perambulation of the royal forest of Neroche in 1298 referred to a "certain Mons called the Castle of Rachich". This is the first direct reference to Castle Neroche itself, and it occurs a century and a half after the site appears to have been abandoned[11]. Dating the various earthworks at Castle Neroche by archaeological methods alone, however, is difficult. The pottery and metalwork associated with Periods III and IV are of types which enjoyed a long life, and a dating bracket of at least fifty years is possible, spanning the end of the 11th and the first half of the 12th centuries. On the other hand, only two sherds of glazed pottery have been found on the site: one in 1903, under the "counterscarp bank" of the motte ditch, and one in 1962, in a disturbed deposit on Site D. This would seem to indicate that while glazed pottery could on occasion reach Neroche, the use of the site for permanent residential purposes came to an end before glazed vessels were available in any quantity. The final occupation on the summit of the motte may thus represent an unlicensed castle of the Anarchy, but the motte itself, together with its outworks, must belong to a period before this date. A *terminus a quo* of *c.*1067 for Period II is suggested by the presence during this period of a potter working exclusively in the traditions of Northern France. Period I unfortunately produced no finds at all.

The historical context must therefore be taken into consideration in attempting to assess the significance of the sequence at Castle Neroche.

PERIOD I The earthworks at Castle Neroche have been thought to be a bivallate Iron Age hill-fort[12]. The outermost defences may indeed represent a univallate hill-fort of 7½ acres. Unfortunately, the lack of structural detail or associated finds precludes any definite conclusion. The absence of any recognizable Iron Age pottery might seem to weigh against such an identification, though it is always possible that the defences were raised during the prehistoric period and left unoccupied.

The possibility should not be ruled out, however, that the outermost earthworks at Castle Neroche might be of Late Saxon origin. In the time of King Edward the Confessor the adjoining estate of Buckland was held by the Sheriff Tofig, and there was royal forest on the slopes below the site to the east. The north coast of Somerset and Devon suffered considerably in the two hundred years preceding the Norman Conquest. In 848 the Somerset and Dorset levies fought a successful engagement against the Danish host at the mouth of the River Parrett[13], but half a century later, in 893, the crews from a hundred and forty ships besieged a fort in Devonshire on the Bristol Channel. Exeter was attacked the same year. In 917 Edward the Elder stationed men on the south side of the Severn estuary, from Cornwall in the west to Avonmouth in the east, against a Danish force on Steepholm, and a surprise attack on Porlock and Watchet was driven off. In 981 raids took place on Padstow, and "everywhere along the coast", and Watchet was ravaged a second time in 988. Watchet, and the whole Severn area in general, was attacked again in 997. In the course of a fairly extensive campaign, Exeter was burnt in 1003. Cnut ravaged Somerset in 1015, and the following year there was a general engagement at Penselwood. Porlock was raided by Earl Harold in 1052, when the house of Godwin was in open revolt.

In most cases these were coastal engagements, but Neroche occupies a strategic position in the jaws of the south-west peninsula, and it may be that there was a muster-point and stronghold here in the Late Saxon period.

PERIOD II That the builders of the Period II earthworks were newcomers to the area is indicated by the use of pottery clearly of North French type, presumably the work of a Norman potter travelling in the retinue of his lord. To such newcomers the strategic position of Neroche would have been very evident. To the north, movement into and out of the south-western peninsula was restricted by the low-lying areas of the Somerset levels (Fig. 1)[14]. The Langport ridge, which must have formed one of the earliest routes across the levels, terminates at the foot of the escarp-

ment dominated by Castle Neroche. To the south, the whole country as far as the coast is within a day's riding. A troop of horse based on Neroche would thus effectively "bottle up" the whole of the south-west.

The suggestion that the strategic position of Neroche may have been the determining factor in the re-use of the early earthworks is borne out by the nature of the Period II occupation. The enclosure is larger in size than the baileys of most early earthwork castles. On the other hand, comparison with Roman fortification shows that an *ala* of 500 cavalry normally occupied an area about the same size as that of Neroche. The relative weakness of the defences as compared to the area enclosed might similarly suggest that this was the base of a striking force, rather than a garrison-point or fortified manor. The immense number of cooking pots which seem to have been in use at this time points in the same direction. Unfortunately, the pottery itself is not capable of being closely dated (see below, Part III).

The most likely occasion for the establishment of such a base is the revolt of the south-west in 1067-9. Queen Gytha had taken refuge in Exeter, and late in 1067 the city rose in revolt. The punitive campaign was apparently led by King William himself and lasted until Easter 1068. During the following years the main centres of fighting were in the north, but during the summer of 1068 Harold's sons launched an attack by sea on North Somerset. They were driven off by the local forces, led by Eadnoth the Staller. They attacked again later the same year, this time further west in Devon, and here it was Earl Brian of Brittany who resisted them[15]. Later, in 1069, the men of Somerset and Dorset "assailed" Montacute, fourteen miles to the east of Castle Neroche[16].

Just who might have commanded a force based on Neroche is difficult to determine. Earl Brian was still in Exeter in 1069, though he appears to have left England soon after. He was replaced in Cornwall by the King's half-brother Robert, Count of Mortain, who held extensive lands in south Somerset. It was presumably Robert who was assailed in 1069, for Montacute appears in Domesday as *Castellum ejus*. Robert departed for the English war "carrying the banner of St. Michael", according to his own testimony[17]. It may not be entirely fanciful, therefore, to think of the single post-hole found in 1963 on Site Dii as having supported a pole from which flew St. Michael's banner!

PERIOD III We can at least be fairly sure that it was a man of the status of Robert of Mortain who was responsible for the earthworks of Period III. The size of the motte and the strength of the bailey defences testify to the social importance of the builder. Castle Neroche is by any standard a castle worthy of a major magnate. Indeed, the resources of a major magnate would have been necessary to build it[18]. The topography of Neroche is strikingly like that of Mortain itself — both castles occupy the ends of spurs projecting from high rolling table-land and commanding extensive views over the low-lying country at their feet. There can be little doubt that the scenery of Neroche would have been familar to anyone acquainted with the country around Mortain. It is not surprising, therefore, to find Robert of Mortain holding the manor of Staple, which included Neroche, at the time of the Domesday survey.

By 1087 Robert had accumulated more than eighty manors in Somerset, for the most part strung along the edge of the high ground at the south side of the levels (compare Figs. 1 and 6). Robert was well known for his methods of acquiring land — he received the rich manor of Bishopstone (later to become Montacute) from Athelney Abbey "in exchange" for the much less valuable manor of Purse Caundle in Dorset, while Crowcombe and Kingston he acquired from Winchester and Glastonbury without any exchange being made. It seems likely, therefore, that the grouping recorded in Domesday reflects Robert's own choice to some extent.

Of his eighty-seven manors in Somerset, only twelve were worth £8 or more[19]. The four richest he retained in his own hand, distributing the remaining eight among his major supporters — Malger of Cartrai, Alvred "the butler", Ansgar "the Breton" and Robert Fitz Ivo "the constable". To these same men he also gave a number of small manors of little economic value grouped round Montacute itself, presumably to facilitate their attendance at the honorial court. Well over half of the remaining manors were of low value at the time of the Conquest. Some of these were in the borough towns, however: one near Milborne Port significantly controlled two *masurae* within the borough. The most noticeable feature of the remainder is their position on, or close beside, the main avenues of communication.

Staple was one of the eight manors of varying value retained by the Count in his own hand. It was a rich manor, and the pre-existing earthworks may have increased its desirability — particularly if, as suggested, some of these had been built by Robert himself during the campaigns

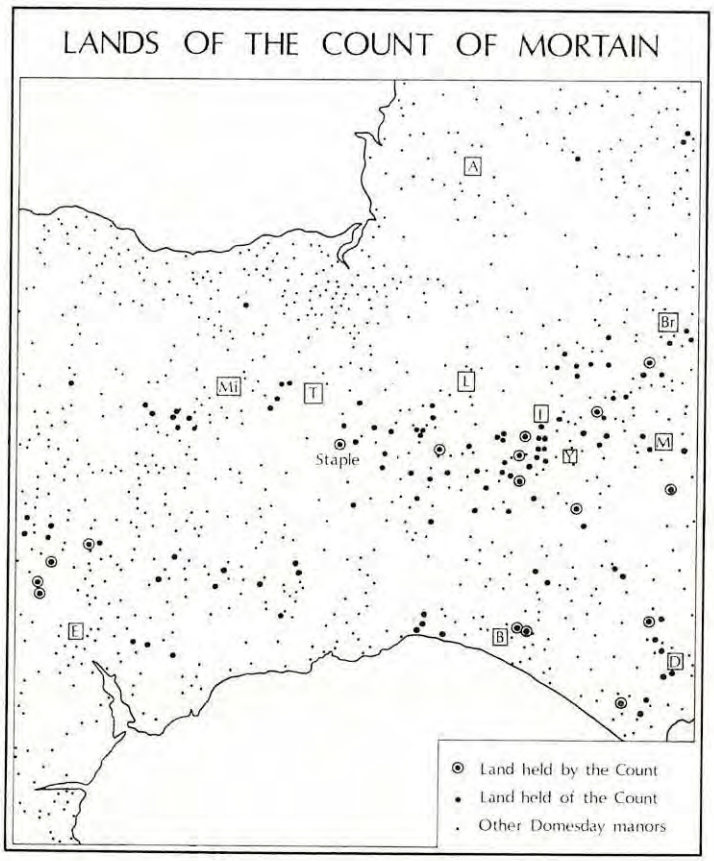

Fig. 6: Domesday map of the neck of the south-west peninsula, showing lands held by Robert of Mortain. (The square symbols denote boroughs: A: Axbridge, B: Bridport, Br: Bruton, D: Dorchester, E: Exeter, I: Ilchester, L: Langport, M: Milborne Port, Mi: Milverton, T: Taunton, Y: Yeovil).

of 1067-9. Just when the earthworks of Period III were thrown up is not clear. The pottery associated with the final period at Neroche would seem to indicate a date in the first half of the 12th century, and the absence of a clear turf-line separating the two phases of occupation on top of the motte argues against any long interval between them. Robert of Mortain died in 1103, however, and the English lands of his son William were declared forfeit in 1104. After the forfeiture no major tenants-in-chief of comparable status seem to have replaced the Counts of Mortain. The Period III earthworks — clearly those of a residential castle of some consequence — are thus unlikely to have been built after this date.

Nevertheless, in 1087 it is Montacute which is mentioned in the Domesday Survey as the castle of Robert of Mortain, and with the splitting up of the Honour of Mortain in 1088 as a result of Robert's involvement in the rebellion of that year, it was Montacute which became the *caput* of the Devon and Somerset lands. Indeed, the "assailing" of Montacute in 1069 recorded by Ordericus Vitalis led J. H. Round to assume that Robert's chief residence was already fixed at Montacute at that date[20]. On the other hand, it is difficult to fit the building of a major residential castle at Neroche into any context, political or economic, later than 1088 — the date of the establishment of Montacute as the local *caput*. We are forced to consider, therefore, whether the chance recording, two generations after the event, of an engagement at Montacute in 1069 may not have directed attention away from what was at that time a more important

castle at Neroche. An early transfer of the Count's power from Neroche, selected initially for the strategic and tactical reasons already outlined, to Montacute, more central to the main economic weight of the Count's holdings, would account for the absence of any clear evidence for long-term occupation associated with the motte during its first phase. The pottery and bronze-work found in levels of this period cannot, unfortunately, be closely dated (see below, Part III) — they are types usually attributed to the early 12th century, but they would not be entirely out of place in the 1070's.

PERIOD IV The use of the top of the Period III motte as a base on which to build a miniature shell-keep and bailey relates to a period apparently within the twelfth century, and most probably within the first half of that century. This was indicated at an early stage by the single sherd of glazed pottery found by Gray in 1903 under the counterscarp bank at the foot of the motte, and by the general absence of pottery of the later part of the century. Again, the pottery and metalwork found in levels of this period during the 1961-4 excavations cannot be closely dated, but they would appear to bear this out. On general historical grounds the most likely context is probably that of the Anarchy. In 1136 Exeter was seized and held against the King by Baldwin de Redvers[21]. Two years later the castles of Bristol, Castle Cary and Harptree were similarly held for Matilda, and in 1139 the King was forced to move against William de Mohun at Dunster[22]. Thereafter, the action seems to have moved away from the south-west. Who might have been responsible for a re-fortification of Neroche at such a time we will probably never know. By the reign of Henry II the site of the castle of Neroche appears to have been absorbed into the Royal Forest, where it remained until disafforested in the sixteenth century.

PART II: DETAILS OF EXCAVATION

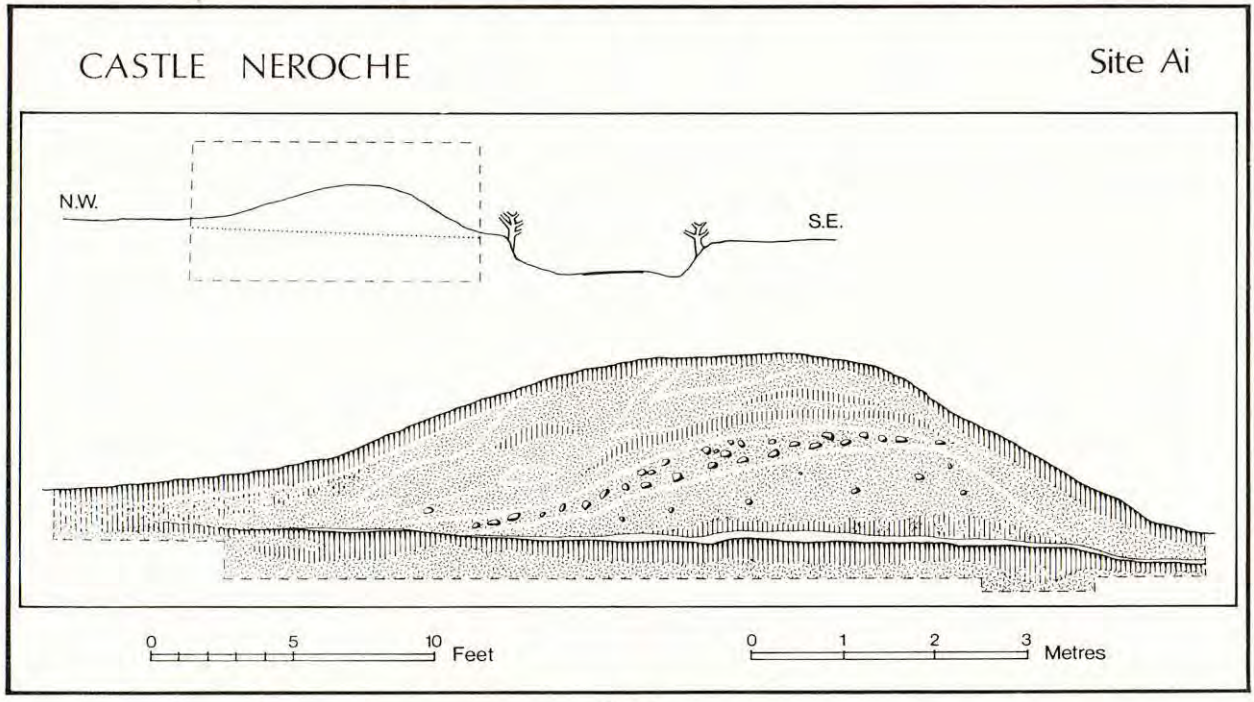

Fig. 7.

SITE A (Figs. 3 and 7)

The outermost rampart on the southern side of Castle Neroche stands to a height of 7 ft. in places. Where best preserved its width at the base is 35 ft. In 1961 a 6 ft. trench (Site Ai) was

cut through the rampart, the actual position being dictated by the need to avoid tree-roots, in order to examine the structure of the bank. The section could not be continued across the ditch, which is occupied at this point by the modern road.

The subsoil at Site A is the "Clay-with-flints" which forms a local cap to the Greensand of the Blackdown Hills. The old soil covering the clay is a dark brown stoneless sandy loam, varying in depth from 3 to 9 ins. The position of the original turf under the bank was marked by a layer of sandy clay-loam 4 ins. thick, leached white, with an intermittent iron pan on the upper surface and a better-developed pan on the lower surface — a phenomenon noted at Castle Neroche wherever the old ground surface has been covered by large quantities of sand or clay. This "sandwich" of iron-pans sealed two soil-filled hollows under the inner and outer tails of the rampart, which must thus be pre-bank features (possibly animal burrows) rather than deliberate constructional elements. No evidence survived of any internal framing or external revetment, and the tip-lines in the body of the rampart suggest that the bank was of simple dump construction. The make-up of the bank reflects the parent material, a low dump of soil derived from stripping the area of the ditch being covered by tips of subsoil, quarried at depth. The rampart appears to have been a single-period construction.

A gap in the line of the rampart to west of Site Ai was examined by a narrow trench in 1961 (Site Aii). The iron-pan "sandwich" capping the old soil was covered here by a layer of brownish weathered clay, above which was a horizon of water-rounded pebbles. These were in turn covered by 6 to 9 ins. of humified sand. The pebbles suggest that this gap in the rampart has been used for the passage of traffic at some time in the past, before the construction of the present road in 1821. It was not clear from the single trench cut in 1962, however, whether the gap represents an original entrance into the defended area, or merely a late- or post-medieval breach of the rampart to facilitate farm traffic. Only further excavation will settle this point.

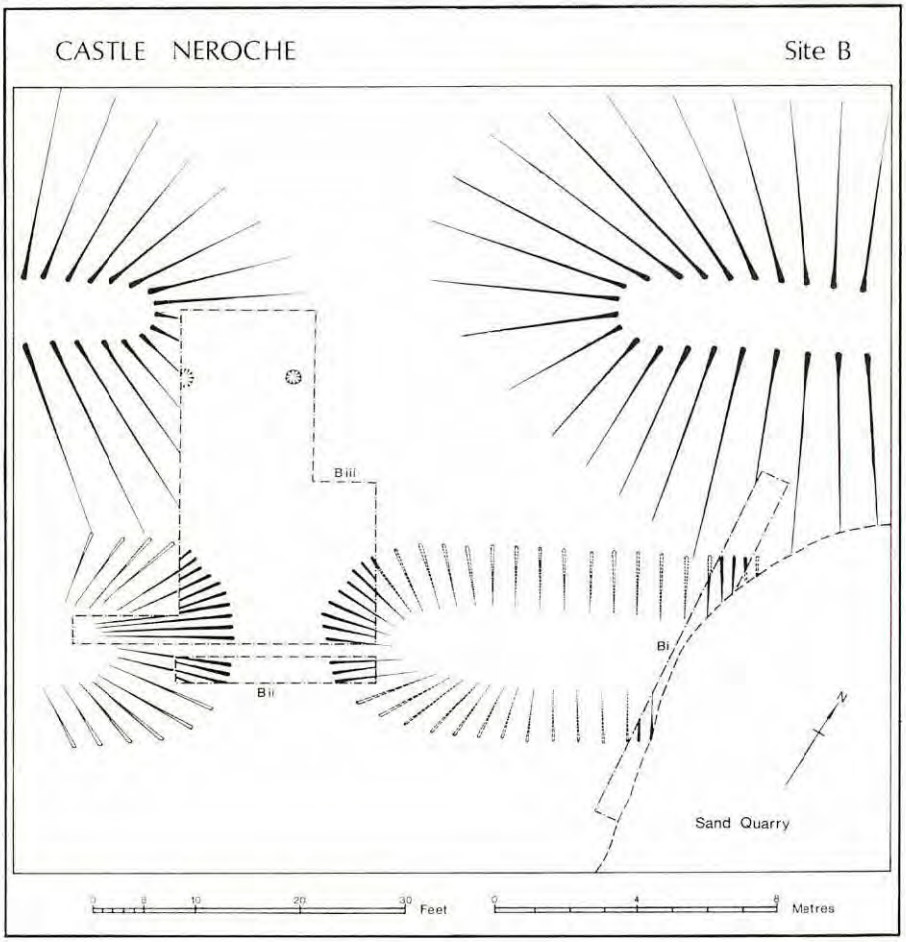

Fig. 8.

SITE B (Figs. 4 and 8, Pl. Ia)

The second line of rampart-and-ditch at the south-east side of Neroche shows only low relief, the bank standing to a height of 4 ft. Where visible at all the ditch is only 1 ft. deep. Roughly in the centre of the line is a gap in the rampart. To the east of this gap no trace can be seen of the ditch. Until the later part of the 19th century the gap was utilized by a farm-track passing obliquely through the earthwork from south-east to north-west. The track is shown on Warre's plan of 1854, but was severed before 1890 by the extension of a large quarry.

In 1961 the west side of this quarry was cut back to reveal a section of the ditch (Site Bi). This proved to be 20 ft. in width and 5 ft. in depth. Over some 3 ft. of natural silting, a soil profile 3 to 6 ins. deep developed before being buried by a further 2 ft. of redeposited clay. A trench cut some 30 ft. further west (Site Bii) revealed a narrow causeway of undisturbed subsoil, the axis of which lay 10 ft. to the west of the axis of the present gap. This causeway carried a rough metalling of small flint pebbles resting directly on the subsoil and overlapping the edge of the causeway at the east side, where it rested on the weathered top of the natural silting of the ditch and was sealed by 2 ft. of clay. The metalling must thus represent the re-use of an earlier entrance causeway some time after the decay of the earthwork as a defensive feature. The present form of the entrance gap seems to have been achieved by cutting back the rampart at the east side, the soil being used to bring level the already partly-filled ditch at the east side of the original causeway.

In 1962 the western half of the presumed original entrance was excavated (Site Biii, see Fig. 8). The old soil under the rampart was capped by an iron-pan "sandwich" similar to that at Site Ai. Above this the rampart rose to a height of 4 ft., being constructed of successive tips of clay-with-flints derived from the ditch. No evidence survived for either framing or revetment. The absence of any traces of a palisade on the crest of the bank is probably not significant, since the natural processes of erosion would tend to remove any such traces. Two possible post-holes in the jaws of the original gap might seem to indicate the position of a former gate. However, the western "post-hole"— a very irregular hollow 10 ins. deep — was sealed by the iron-pan sandwich representing the old turf, and must thus represent (if anything) a pre-rampart feature. The eastern post-hole could not be associated directly with the rampart, and may be a modern feature. There is thus no evidence to indicate that the entrance was ever put into a state of defence, or that the earthworks as a whole ever formed a serious military obstacle. One indeterminate fragment of pottery was found in the old soil under the tail of the rampart in the area of the original entrance gap, and two further fragments (one a rim-sherd of North French type) in the upper part of the make-up of the rampart at the west side of the original entrance.

Machine-trenching on the line of the ditch beyond its present westward termination confirmed that the defences petered out at this point. The apparent continuation is an illusion, and is the result of quarrying in the late 19th century.

SITE C (Figs. 4 and 9)

In 1903 Gray dug through the two outer lines of defence at the west side of Neroche: the main inner rampart remained unexcavated. The line of Gray's section was extended through the inner rampart in 1961 (Site Ci). The rampart here stands some 23 ft. above the silting of the inner ditch and preserves a remarkably steep profile. A low hedge-bank runs along the crest of the rampart at the point excavated, and a second bank (defining the garden of Castle Neroche Farm) masks the inner tail of the rampart.

The subsoil here at the west side of Neroche is a fine yellow sand, overlying a yellow sandy clay incorporating numerous lumps of chert. The old soil is a purple-brown sandy loam: again, the position of the actual turf is marked by an iron-pan sandwich, indicating a gentle natural slope from north-east to south-west. Two main periods of construction could be distinguished in the rampart. The primary rampart stood 9 ft. high, its upper surface being marked by a turf-line showing as a brownish clay-loam merging gradually into the clay make-up of the rampart below, but with a clearly-defined upper surface[23]. The body of the rampart appears to have been of dump construction, since no traces of framing were detected and the behaviour of the tip-lines does not suggest a reverted structure. On the other hand, the ditch profile published by Gray in 1903 suggests a 10 ft. berm — a feature usually associated with revetted structures. The materials used in making the bank reflect in reverse order the natural sequence of topsoil and subsoil, except that (rather significantly) the larger pieces of chert seem to have been reserved for use

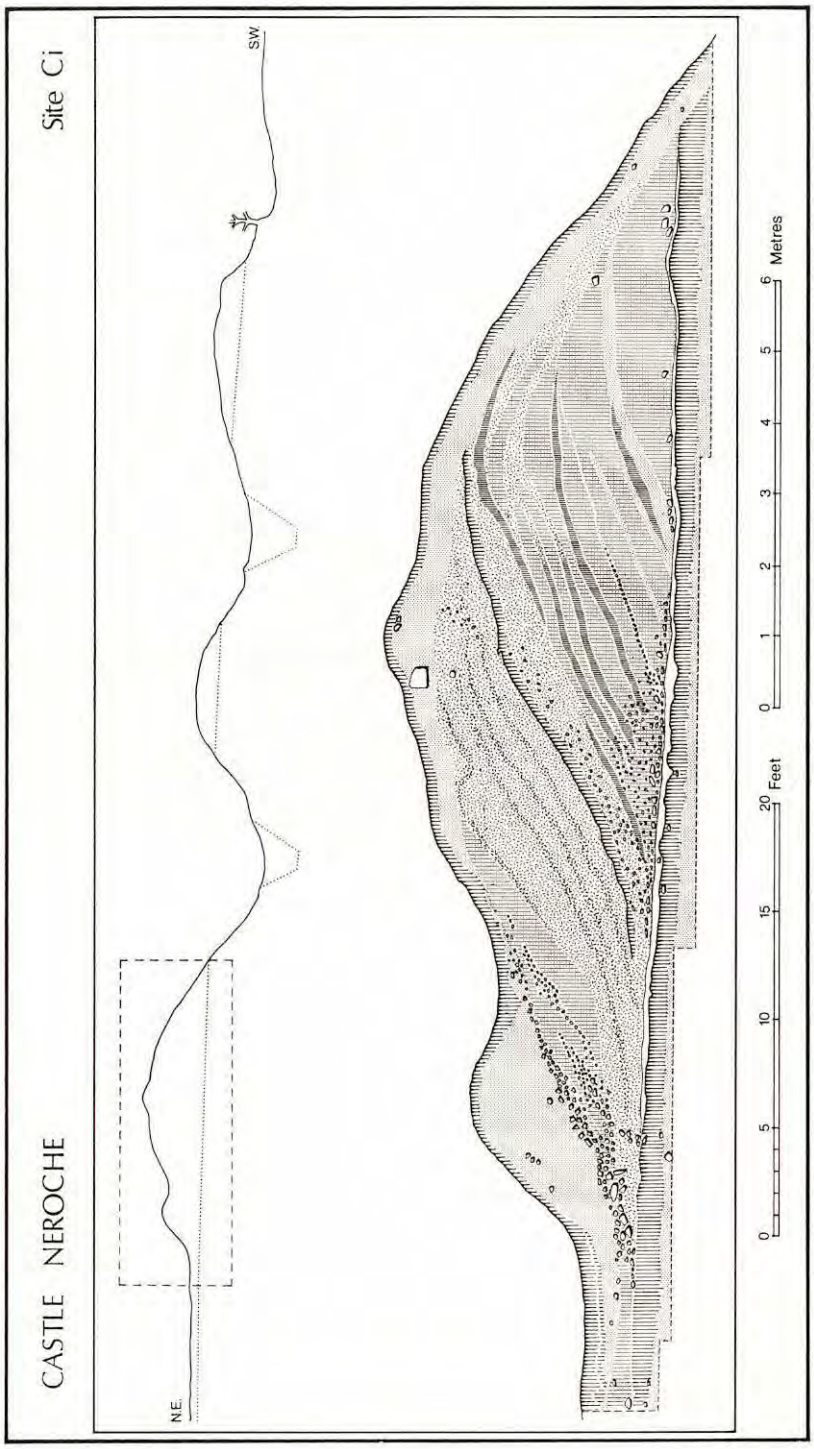

Fig. 9.

elsewhere. The smaller chert pebbles evidently rolled down the slope of each layer as it was deposited, coming to rest at the inner tail in each case.

This rampart was later heightened, possibly to about 15 ft., with tips of sandy clay. The inner tail of this addition sealed four sherds of rather indeterminate pottery and one rim sherd of local type, which lay on the old ground surface in the lee of the primary bank. Again, no trace of timbering survived. If Gray's profile of 1903 can be trusted, the ditch in its re-cut form was a much wider and shallower feature than before, cut to the natural angle of rest of the subsoil[24].

The 5 ft. high hedge-bank which defines the garden of Castle Neroche Farm is of a fine yellow sand apparently imported for the purpose, since there is no obvious quarry-ditch near at hand. Lying on the tail of the secondary addition to the rampart, and sealed by this hedge-bank, were a number of sherds of local 18th century Donyatt ware. What appears to be an older hedge-bank follows the crest of the rampart. Like its successor, this is also of yellow sand, and in places preserves a rough stone revetment: at the point excavated this revetment has fallen away, allowing the loose sand of the hedge-bank to slip down the slope of the rampart.

The garden of Castle Neroche Farm shows an unusually deep soil profile, the subsoil being covered by up to 2 ft. of dark unstratified soil. Annual cultivation of the area close to the tail of the rampart produces large quantities of pottery, and in 1961 a trial strip was excavated at right angles to the section through the rampart. Eventually five 12 ft. squares were excavated (Site Cii). Pottery of North French and local 11th to 12th century types occurred apparently at random at all levels. At a depth of 18 ins. below the surface an irregular horizon of chert cobbles was encountered. These showed no clear functional pattern, and the occurrence of 18th century and later pottery among them suggested they had been disturbed at some late date. On the other hand, they seemed to be well below the level of normal ploughing. As work proceeded, it became clear that only the lowest 6 ins. of the soil profile had developed *in situ*, the uppermost 18 ins. having been added in order to counter the natural slope of the ground and produce a good "tilth". The chert cobbles thus lay on the original ground surface, and prior to being buried were exposed to interference. This can be seen in Fig. 9, where a considerable number of cobbles, presumably disturbed by a preliminary ploughing, have been thrown onto the tail of the rampart before being covered by the bank of sand enclosing the garden. The deposition of 18 ins. of soil to form the garden evidently took place at the same time as the building of the bank in the later 18th or early 19th century[25]. Where this soil came from is not certain. It may have been derived from levelling operations in the innermost bailey or barbican at the foot of the motte, which appear to have been carried out at about this time.

It is thus possible to see the chert cobbles as representing unmortared footings for timber buildings, disturbed by ploughing and buried under soil imported for garden cultivation. Unfortunately, the plan of these buildings standing in the lee of the rampart cannot be now recovered[26]. Similarly, the significance of the apparent association of both North French and local types of pottery with these footings is hard to assess. In the absence of any clearly defined stratification it is probably unsafe to assume that both types were in use at the same time: significantly, they are found together at Neroche only where clear stratification is wanting. It is possible that the buildings remained in use throughout two successive periods, each characterised by a single type of pottery.

SITE D (Figs. 4, 10 and 11, Pl. Ib)

The northern half of the area enclosed by the main inner rampart at Castle Neroche has been encroached upon by the buildings of Castle Neroche Farm. The south-west part of the area (Site Cii, above) was found in 1961 to have been disturbed by garden works. The remaining open area, in the south-east part of the enclosure, was trial-trenched in 1962. Initially, two trenches were dug mechanically, parallel to the rampart; pottery and post-holes confirmed that buildings had stood here during the medieval occupation of Neroche. Unfortunately, ploughing had destroyed all trace of stratification. An attempt was made to examine a larger area here in 1963 (Site Di), but this had to be abandoned owing to adverse weather conditions.

The subsoil at this point is a yellowish clay, into which have been dug a number of post-holes and small pits[27]. The area excavated is too small to allow any detailed conclusions, and the apparently rectilinear arrangement of some of the features may be illusory. Thus, although it is tempting to regard a group of four post-holes dug 9 to 12 ins. into the subsoil in the north-east part of the excavated area as having held timbers framing the corner of a building, this is by no means certain. Apparently associated with the post-holes and pits are a considerable number of

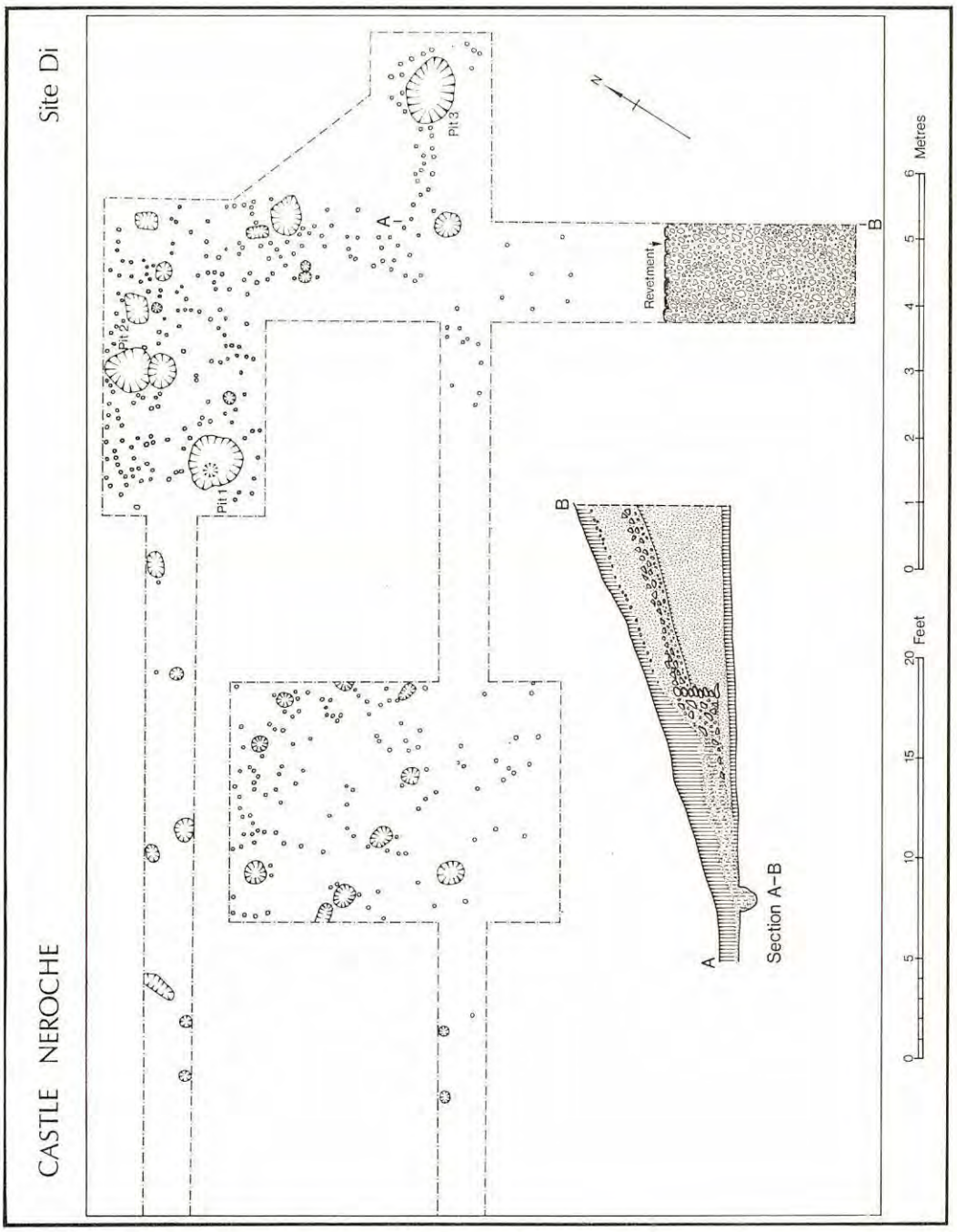
CASTLE NEROCHE
Site Di
Pit 1
Pit 2
Pit 3
A
B
Revetment
N
Section A–B
0 5 10 15 20 Feet
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 Metres

Fig. 10.

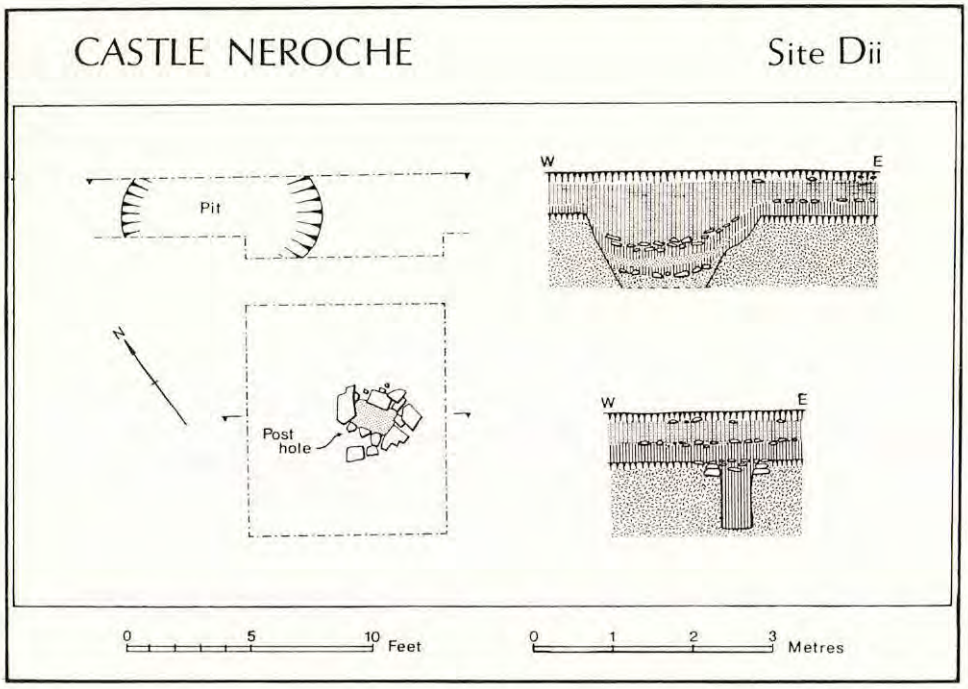

Fig. 11.

small stake-holes 3 to 5 ins. deep. These were at first dismissed as a natural phenomenon, but eventually four were found to contain sherds of rather indeterminate medieval pottery. Although these stake-holes seem in places to be grouped significantly in relation to the post-holes, so as to suggest a structural function, they also occur elsewhere apparently at random. No trace was found of any fallen clay or turf-work.

The rampart at Site D showed the same two-period construction as at Site C. The tail of the primary clay bank appeared to have been cut back to allow for a dry-stone revetment of undressed and uncoursed chert blocks which survived to a height of 2 ft. The amount of fallen debris indicates that the revetment can hardly ever have stood higher than about 3 ft. It would appear to have been built when the rampart was heightened, since it rests on a thin residual skin of the primary bank. This suggests that it was intended to protect a building or buildings standing in the lee of the primary rampart — buildings which continued in use throughout both periods.

No particular pottery type could be associated with the post-holes. Sherds of at least three pots of North French type were found in Pit 2, together with the greater part of a large decorated storage jar: sherds of this jar were also found in Pit 1 nearby. Pit 3, on the other hand, contained only local wares. Sherds of both types of pottery occurred at random throughout the ploughsoil and resting on the subsoil. However, in the absence of any stratification it is probably unsafe to assume that both types were actually in use together: as at Site Cii, it may well be that the buildings remained in use throughout two successive periods, each characterised by a single type of pottery.

As part of the programme of trial-trenching in 1962, a single long trench was cut by machine parallel to the edge of the natural scarp to north-west of Site Di, described above. Subsequently, a small area 8 ft. by 10 ft. was opened at the south side of the trench (Site Dii). The subsoil here slopes gently down from south-east to north-west, and is covered by an old soil 6 ins. deep. From this old ground surface a post-hole and a pit had been dug. The pit was not fully investigated, but was evidently 8 ft. in diameter and at least 3 to 4 ft. deep. It was unlined, and no particular function could be deduced. The post-hole was square-cut to a depth of 3 ft. Where cut through the old soil the sides were lined with chert blocks (see Pl. IIa). The depth and method of construction of this isolated post-hole contrast with those found at Site Di, nearby, and indicate a more specialised use.

After a period of time the post was evidently withdrawn from its socket, for the hole was filled-in and sealed with stones. Some attempt was apparently made at the same time to seal-off the pit nearby. Over both these features there then formed a 9 ins. layer of soil, on the surface of which an irregular scatter of chert cobbles was found. These were in turn covered by 16 ins. of yellow earthy sand, possibly derived from further north, i.e. the area of the small barbican at the foot of the motte. The occurrence of 18th century pottery and brick all through this layer suggests that here, as at Site Cii, the ground surface was deliberately raised in order to counter the natural slope. Several further attempts seem to have been made at this time to make good the hollow left by the consolidation of the filling of the pit.

Some forty sherds from at least ten unglazed cooking pots were found scattered on the old ground surface, and in the filling of the post-hole. From the layer overlying the sealed-off post-hole and pit fifty sherds representing at least twelve cooking pots were recovered. A further twenty-two medieval sherds, one of them glazed, came from the 18th century levelling layer above. No significant differences in fabric can be detected, and while the rim sherds found in the layer sealing the post-hole were all of the local (i.e. non-French) type, the numbers involved are too small to allow any general conclusions. It is thus impossible to correlate the sequence at Site Dii with the sequence of constructional periods revealed elsewhere at Neroche. This is the more disappointing in that only at Site Dii do stratified occupation levels seem to have survived.

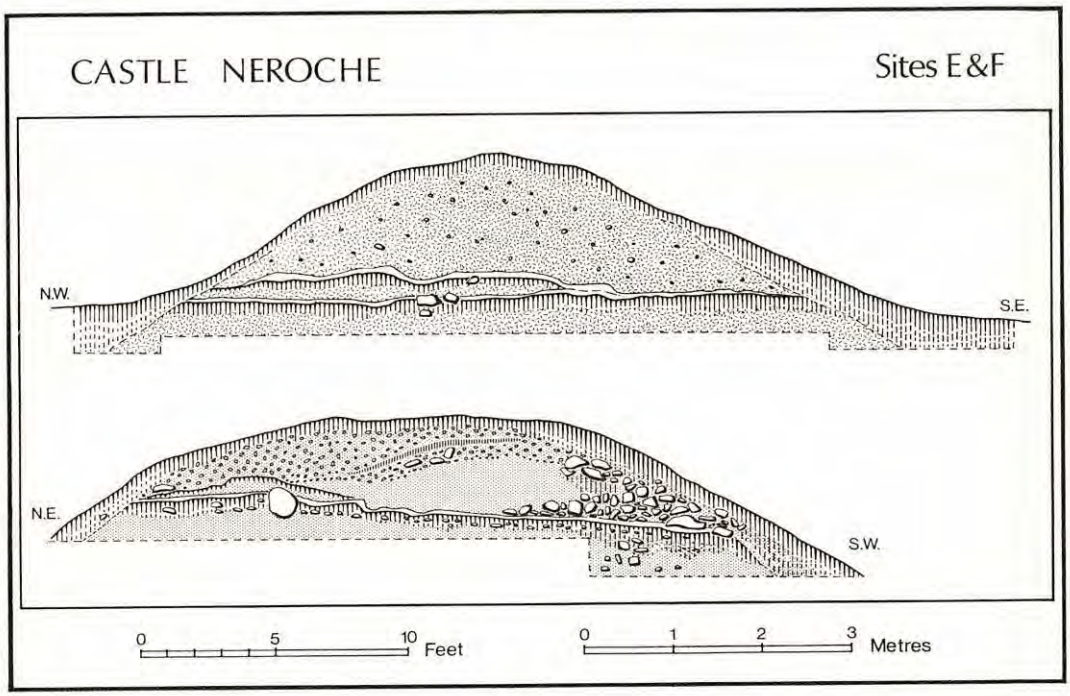

Fig. 12.

Sites E and F (Figs. 5 and 12, Pl. IIb)

In 1903 Gray excavated a half-section through the middlemost of the three ramparts which defend Neroche at the west side. The rampart stands only 4 ft. high at this point, but it is fronted by a ditch shown by Gray to have been 14 ft. deep. Gray's published account indicates that the major part of the filling of this ditch consisted of a mass of large chert blocks derived, apparently, from the direction of the inner lip of the ditch. In retrospect in 1961, this seemed to suggest that the rampart — built largely of sand — might at one time have been revetted in stone. A full section of the rampart was therefore excavated to the north-west of Gray's trench (Site F).

The subsoil here is a loose sand with occasional lumps of chert. The old soil showed as a purple-brown sand varying in depth from 6 to 12 ins. capped by a sandwich of iron-pans (as at Sites A and C). On top of the old ground surface was a low bank 7 ft. wide and 1 ft. high, made

of greyish weathered sand. The upper surface of this showed a poorly-developed soil profile, indicating that the bank was exposed as a feature for some time before being covered by the later rampart.

The rampart overlying this low bank was built up of tips of sand, apparently derived from an unweathered zone of the subsoil. The front of the rampart was revetted by a pile of closely packed chert blocks, irregularly bedded and unmortared. The lower blocks rested on the old ground surface and were overlain by the yellow sand of the rampart make-up. The blocks rose to a low crest 18 ins. high, from which a further scatter of blocks, similarly unmortared, ran back over the upper surface of the yellow sand. Between these two horizons of chert blocks, and among the blocks, the yellow sand showed a much greater degree of weathering than elsewhere.

In order to determine whether this chert revetment was a continuous feature, a half-section was dug through the rampart to the north-west of the initial trench (Site Fii). No trace was found of any chert revetment remaining *in situ*. A second half-section to the south-east, between the initial trench and Gray's 1903 section, unfortunately proved to have been disturbed by quarrying.

The course of the rampart examined at Site F is broken at the south-east side of Neroche by a trackway (see Fig. 2). In order to determine whether the features discovered at Site F continued all along the line of the rampart, the east side of the gap in the rampart was scarped back to reveal a section (Site E, see Figs. 5 and 12). At the same time the existing causeway across the ditch at this point was investigated and found to be a recent feature.

The subsoil at Site E is a sandy clay. As a result, the rampart — being constructed of material derived from the subsoil — preserves a much sharper profile than further west at Site F, and stands to a height of 5 to 6 ft. Under the inner tail of the rampart (that is, on the outer lip of the innermost ditch) a low bank of soil and subsoil occurs similar to that found at Site F, though here the poorly developed soil which has developed on the bank is capped by an iron-pan sandwich identical to that capping the old soil under the rampart.

As a further check, two small trenches were cut mechanically into the tail of the rampart to east of Site E in 1962 (Pl. IIb). In each case the same low bank on the outer lip of the inner ditch was found sealed under the later rampart. The rampart itself was made up of yellow-white clay in a homogeneous mass without visible tip-lines and without any sign of revetment.

The chert revetment found at Site Fi would appear to be a local phenomenon, possibly confined to those parts of Neroche where the subsoil is not very suitable for rampart building. This would explain its absence at Site E, though not its absence at Site Fii, where the subsoil is the same as at Site Fi. The original form of the revetment is similarly in doubt. A dry-built wall is one possibility, the walling having collapsed both forwards and backwards under pressure from the rampart. The idea of a berm, which this interpretation calls for, receives some support from the noticeably greater depth of old soil (possibly resulting from prolonged exposure to weathering) at the inner lip of the ditch. Against this, however, is the fact that even the lowest courses of blocks, which might be expected to be still *in situ*, show a very irregular bedding. Any retaining *wall* must therefore have been a rather low and flimsy structure.

The low bank under the inner tail of the rampart is on the other hand a constant feature, having been found wherever the overlying rampart has been examined. It is perhaps unlikely to have been a marking-out bank for the rampart, since sufficient time elapsed between its construction and burial for a soil to form. A more likely interpretation is that it represents spoil cast up during the process of cleaning out the inner ditch at some stage. If so, then it follows that the overlying rampart must have been constructed some considerable time after the cutting of the inner ditch, i.e. either in Period III, or later in Period IV.

SITE G (Figs. 5 and 13, Pls. IIc and IId)

The rampart of the former barbican at the foot of the motte has been largely destroyed by the outbuildings of Castle Neroche Farm. In addition, the area within the barbican has been used as a quarry (see fig. 2). In 1963 the rampart was preserved only at the east side and at the south-west corner, where a short stump of rampart abuts onto the main inner rampart. The outer face of the rampart at this latter point has been cut back in building a cow-shed and this work of destruction was completed by the building of a new dairy further to the north in 1964. Prior to this, however, a small trench was excavated to test the relationship of the barbican rampart to the main inner rampart, itself by this time known to be of two periods. This trench (Site G) was so sited as to section the barbican rampart parallel to its axis, while at the same time cutting into the tail of the main inner rampart at right angles to its axis (see Fig. 13 and Pl. IIc).

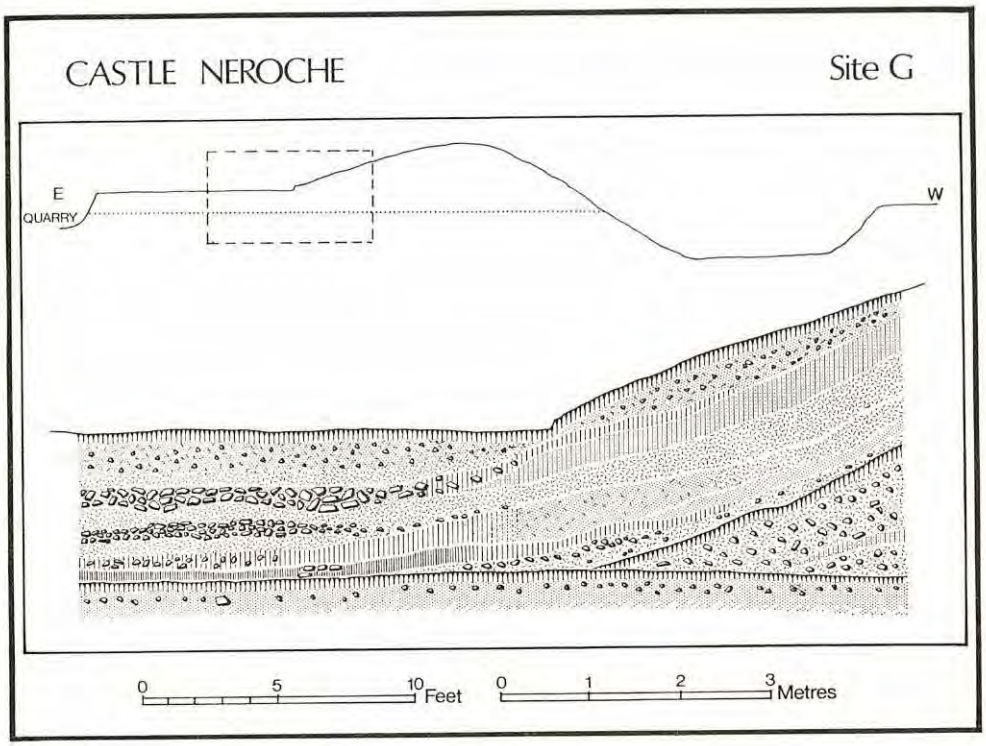

Fig. 13.

The subsoil at this point is yellow clay, capped by loose gravelly sand. The old ground surface, marked by a 6 in. layer of purple sand, dips gently from east to west. The two phases of construction in the main inner rampart were clearly distinguishable, being separated by a buried turf-line similar to that encountered at Site Ci. Above this horizon, the heightening of the rampart consisted of tips of clay, sand and earth. These upper layers ran down over the inner tail of the primary rampart, levelling out to form the material of the barbican rampart (Pl. IId). The barbican rampart was thus clearly built at the same time as the main inner rampart was being heightened.

No finds were recovered from the body of the primary main inner rampart, though twenty-four sherds of local pottery, representing five separate vessels, were found on the old ground surface under the barbican bank and on the turf-line covering the primary phase of the main inner rampart. A further twenty-five sherds of local type were found scattered through the layers heightening the main inner rampart and in the material of the barbican bank. These same layers, however, produced a great mass of pottery of North French type, more than a hundred and sixty vessels being represented among the four hundred sherds found[28]. The fact that so many vessels are represented by such a small portion of their component sherds, together with the fact that in a number of cases sherds from the same vessel were found scattered through several different layers, suggests that the bulk of the pottery was probably incorporated in the earthworks by accident. Since the material to heighten the main inner rampart was presumably obtained by widening and deepening the existing ditch, the pottery may possibly have been derived from a midden in that ditch. The association of local and North French types of pottery in the same earthwork cannot, in this case, be taken as indicating contemporaneity of use.

SITE H (Figs. 5 and 14)

At the east side of the barbican the rampart survives to a height of 7 ft.: the ditch, however, has been almost completely filled-in. Within the area enclosed by the barbican bank, the ground level has been quarried away to a depth of about 4 ft.

In 1962 a 6 ft. wide trench was cut through the barbican bank to examine its structure (Site H).

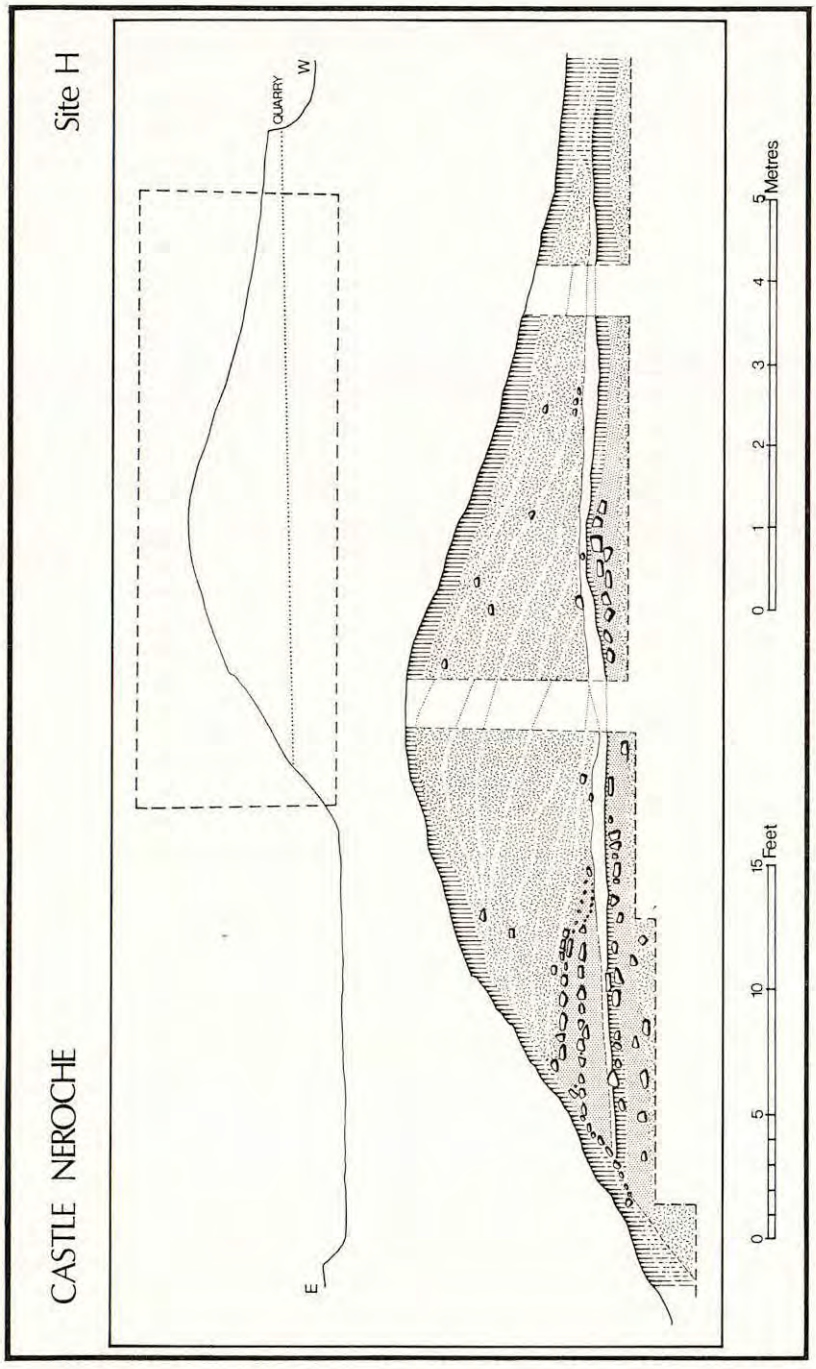

Fig. 14.

The subsoil, as at Site G, is yellow clay capped by sand and cherts. This sequence is reflected in the make-up of the rampart, the lower layers being of sand and the upper layers of clay.

No finds were recovered from the old ground surface below the bank, nor were any pre-bank structures located. The bank itself appears to have been of simple dump construction. No trace was found of any internal structure, other than two horizons of chert blocks in the lower part of the bank. The upper layers dip in such a way as to suggest the absence of any form of frontal revetment. The absence of any evidence for a palisade along the crest of the bank need not be significant, since some erosion has clearly taken place at this point.

Twenty-three sherds of pottery, representing five different vessels, all of local type, were found in the clay layers forming the upper part of the rampart. A further one hundred and ten sherds, representing four vessels, again all of local type, were found scattered among the stones on the lower part of the outer slope of the rampart. It is significant that here, where earlier works are absent, no pottery of North French type was found. This reinforces the suggestion that the mixture of both types of pottery found at Site G was the result of re-working earlier deposits.

SITES I, J AND K (Figs. 5 and 15)

In 1963 two trenches were cut into the flanks of the motte in order to determine whether it had been thrown-up at the same time as the earthworks which form its bailey, or whether it had been added to pre-existing earthworks. It was assumed that in the latter case any earlier defences would pass underneath the motte. The first of these two trenches was positioned so as to take advantage of a late 19th century quarry cut into the south side of the motte. One side of this quarry was scarped and cleaned to reveal a section of the lower part of the motte, at a point on the projected line of the main inner rampart (Site J, Fig. 5).

The old ground surface under the motte was clearly distinguishable as a purple sandy soil. Above this, tips of sand and clay rose to a height of 8 ft., the tip-lines dipping symmetrically to north-west and south-east about a horizontal axis running from south-west to north-east. Above the crest thus formed (see Fig. 15) rose a homogeneous mass of yellow sandy clay, apparently the make-up of the motte. There was no obvious weathered soil separating these two deposits.

The evidence from this trench was clearly not sufficient to demonstrate the presence of an earlier rampart running underneath the motte. Nevertheless, an unconformity in the make-up of the motte had been found exactly where predicted. A second trench was therefore cut into the upper part of the east side of the motte, again at a point on the projected line of the main inner rampart (Site K). The trench was dug in two "steps", the upper one to examine the relationship of the motte to the small eccentric mound on its summit, and the lower one to search for any continuation of the unconformity found at Site J. In the lower "step", at a height of about 10 ft. above the old ground surface, an unconformity was found similar to that at Site J. Again, layers were found dipping about an axis running from south-west to north-east. Here, however, a buried soil (similar to that at Sites Ci and G) covered the uppermost of these layers. Above this soil, the motte itself was built of alternate layers of sand and stones to a height of about 20 ft. (i.e. rising 10 ft. above the crest of the unconformity described above). The summit of the motte was marked by a second buried soil (see Fig. 15), through which a single 18 in. diameter post-hole had been cut to a depth of 2 ft. No other related structural features could be traced within the narrow limits of the 6ft. wide trench. The old soil marking the summit of the motte was in turn sealed by the sand-and-chert make-up of the small mound occupying the south-east part of the summit area.

The evidence from Sites J and K, taken together, seemed to indicate a rampart 8 to 10 ft. high, running under the south-east part of the motte. In 1964 a third trench was excavated on the south-west side of the motte, at the level of the old ground surface (Site I). The buried soil of the pre-motte surface was found to have been cut away to a depth of 8 ft. or more at a point where the outer lip of the main inner ditch would, if projected, meet the south-west side of the motte.

The task of driving a deep trench half-way through the motte at Castle Neroche, in order to obtain a complete section of these pre-motte features, was beyond the resources of the 1961-4 excavations. However, the evidence from the three trenches described above strongly suggests that the motte was built astride an earlier line of rampart and ditch. The height of this pre-motte rampart agrees with that of the primary bank found at Site Ci. It would appear, therefore, that the heightening of the main inner rampart revealed at Sites Ci, D and G was contemporary with, or subsequent to, the construction of the motte. The construction of the motte, the heightening of the main inner rampart, and the construction of the barbican at the foot of the motte may in fact have all been part of the same work-programme.

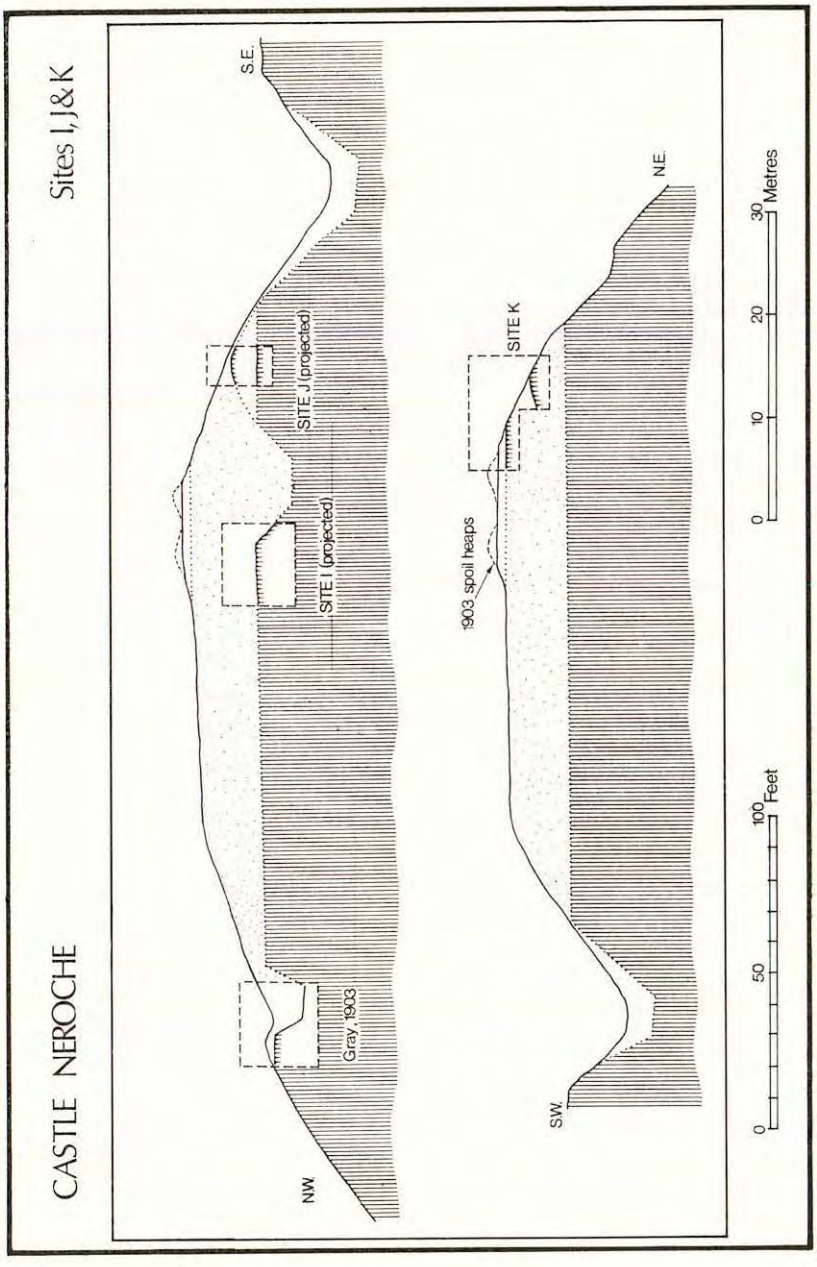
CASTLE NEROCHE
Sites I, J & K
NW
S.E.
Gray, 1903
SITE I (projected)
SITE J (projected)
1903 spoil heaps
SITE K
SW.
N.E.
0
50
100 Feet
0
10
20
30 Metres

Fig. 15.

A single sherd of pottery was found on the crest of the early rampart at Site J, sealed by the make-up of the motte. A second sherd was found in a similar position at Site K. In neither case, however, was it possible to say whether the sherd had come from a North French or a local type of pot.

THE SUMMIT AREA OF THE MOTTE (Figs. 5 and 16, Pls. IIIa, IIIb and IIIc)

The summit area of the motte at Castle Neroche is large — some 120 ft. in diameter. The surface slopes gently down from south-east to north-west. At the south-east side of the main work a second, smaller mound, 40 ft. in diameter, rises 5 ft. above the general level of the summit area.

In 1903 Gray dug into this smaller mound. In it he found twenty-seven sherds of pottery, all of local type. A second trench dug at the same time on the level summit of the main motte further to the north-west produced a hundred and fifty-five sherds, again all of local type. Gray's third trench, dug to examine a fragment of walling exposed in one of the deep sand quarries cut into the west side of the motte, was unsuccessful: the walling in question proved to be merely "an armful of masonry which had rolled down into the hole".

The 1963 excavation did not set out to explore the summit area of the motte in general, but merely to resolve two specific problems. The first of these concerned the "armful of masonry" found by Gray and "the massive wall of strongly cemented masonry" recorded by Warre in 1854. These seemed to suggest the former presence of stone defences on the motte. The second problem concerned the date of the small mound set at the south-east side of the summit of the main motte.

An interrupted trench was therefore dug from the edge of the motte at the north-west side, towards the small mound. Additional trenches were later opened to explore features revealed in the initial trench (see Fig. 16 and Pl. IIIa). The upper part of the motte consists of a fine yellow sand. The surface of this showed some signs of occupation, and sherds of pottery from at least twenty-eight different vessels were found scattered at this level. No structural features were found in the limited area investigated (though a single post-hole was found at this level at Site K, see p. 37, above).

The sloping surface of the primary motte was found to have been raised 1 ft. with a layer of yellow clay in the north part of the summit area, and with a corresponding layer of stony sand further south. On the new surface thus created numerous lumps of chert were found, scattered apparently without any coherent pattern. The original purpose of these stones is not clear, though it is tempting to see them as being derived from the dry-stone footings of timber buildings, as at Site C. Among these stones, and in the make-up below, were sherds of pottery representing at least ninety different vessels of the local type.

The small mound at the south-east side of the main motte takes advantage of the sloping surface and gives the illusion of being higher than it really is. This illusion is increased by the spoil heaps of Gray's 1903 excavation. The mound is in fact no more than 2 to 3 ft. high, and rests on the layer of stony sand which seals the earlier occupation of the main motte.This low mound was revetted by a wall 4 ft. 6 ins. wide, built of roughly-laid undressed chert blocks, set in a matrix of sandy clay. This wall, only two courses of which survive (see Pl. IIIb), also rests on the layer of stony sand overlying the primary occupation on the motte. In plan, the wall appears to encircle the small mound. The area enclosed must originally have been at least 40 ft. in diameter. It is not clear how high the wall rose when first built, since a considerable amount of stone robbing has taken place. The method of construction is certainly not appropriate to a tower or keep, though Warre commented that the masonry to be seen in his day was "strongly-cemented".

The footings of a wall of similar construction were found to encircle the perimeter of the main motte at the north-west side (see Pl. IIIc)[29]. Only the lowest course survived, resting directly on the surface of the primary motte (see Fig. 16). There would thus appear to have been a stone curtain wall round the summit of the main motte, enclosing an oval area some 130 ft. in diameter, and an inner raised area surrounded by a second curtain wall, possibly in the form of a diminutive "shell keep", commanding the approach from the south-east. In view of the very limited nature of the 1963 excavation, no further details can be adduced, and the plan of the stone defences given in Fig. 5 is necessarily speculative and requires confirmation by more extensive excavation. No datable material was directly associated with either curtain wall, though the pottery found in and on the sand and clay make-up sealing the primary occupation of the main motte presumably belongs to this later phase.

During the later 18th and 19th centuries a number of shallow pits were dug into the top of the

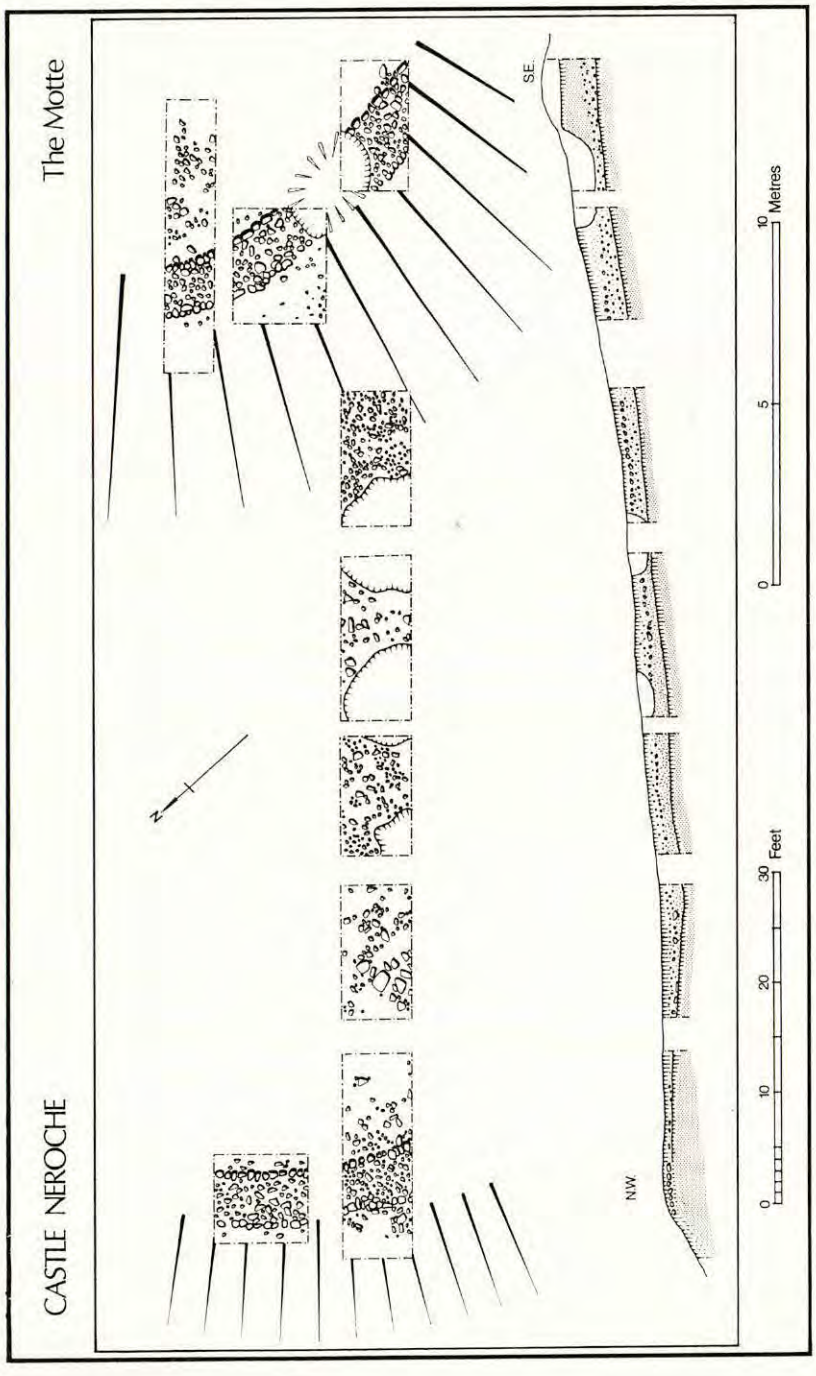

Fig. 16.

motte. No less than four were found within the area excavated in 1963. The purpose of these pits, however, remains obscure.

PART III: FINDS

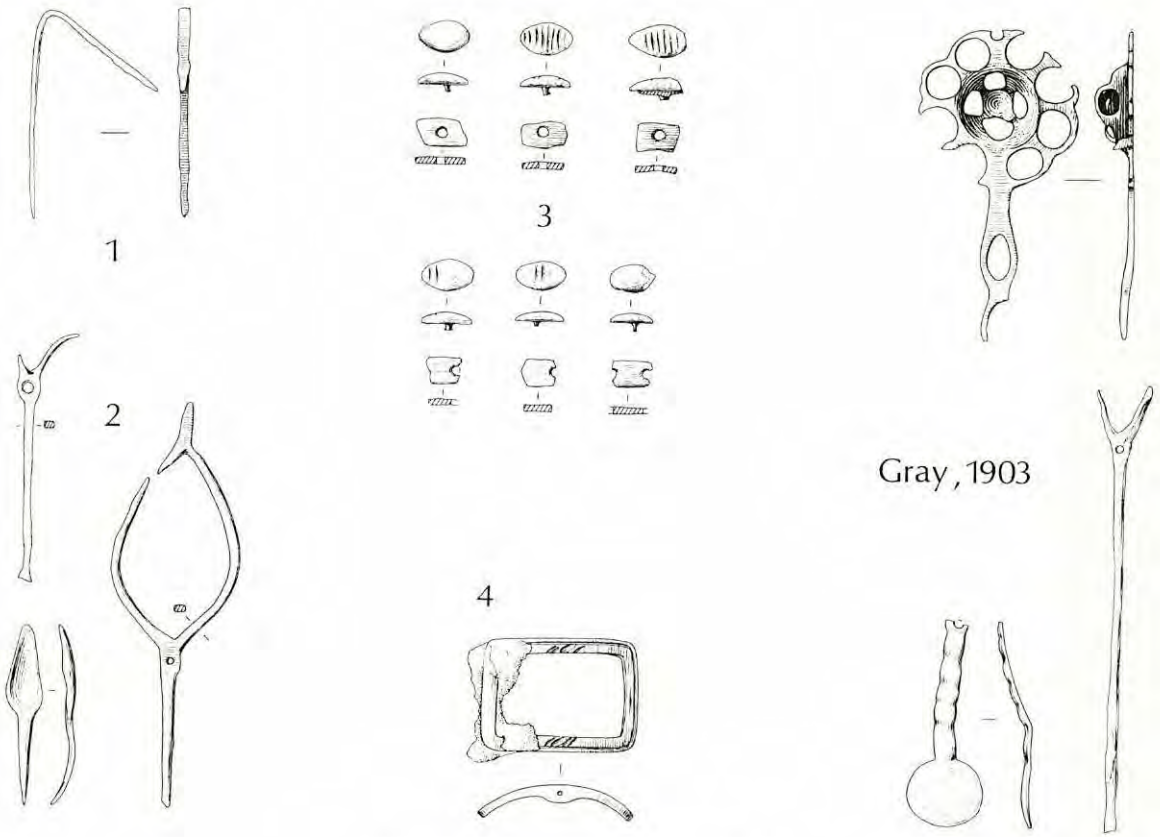

Fig. 17: Objects of bronze (×one-half).

BRONZE (Fig. 17)

1. Fragment of flat bronze strip 0.04 ins. thick. Period III, on surface of primary motte.
2. Three fragments of flat bronze strip, all 0.06 ins. thick, traces of gilding on one surface in each case. Period IV, on surface of yellow clay make-up on motte.

(*Also illustrated:* three fragments of gilt bronze strip found by Gray in 1903. One found in ditch at north side of motte, other two sealed under counterscarp bank on outer edge of this ditch).

3. Six bronze rivets with decorated oval dome-shaped heads and rectangular leather washers. Period III, on surface of primary motte.
4. Curved bronze buckle with pin missing. Unstratified, in 19th century pit on motte.

IRON (Fig. 18)

1. Iron spoon-bit, to drill hole approx. 0.75 ins. diameter. Period II or III, on old ground surface under barbican rampart at Site G.
2. Iron prick-spur with terminals missing. Unstratified, in garden-soil at Site Cii: possibly originally from area of barbican.
3. Iron missile-point with tip missing. Unstratified, in 19th century pit on motte.
4. Iron nails of various types. Period IV, on surface of yellow clay make-up on motte.

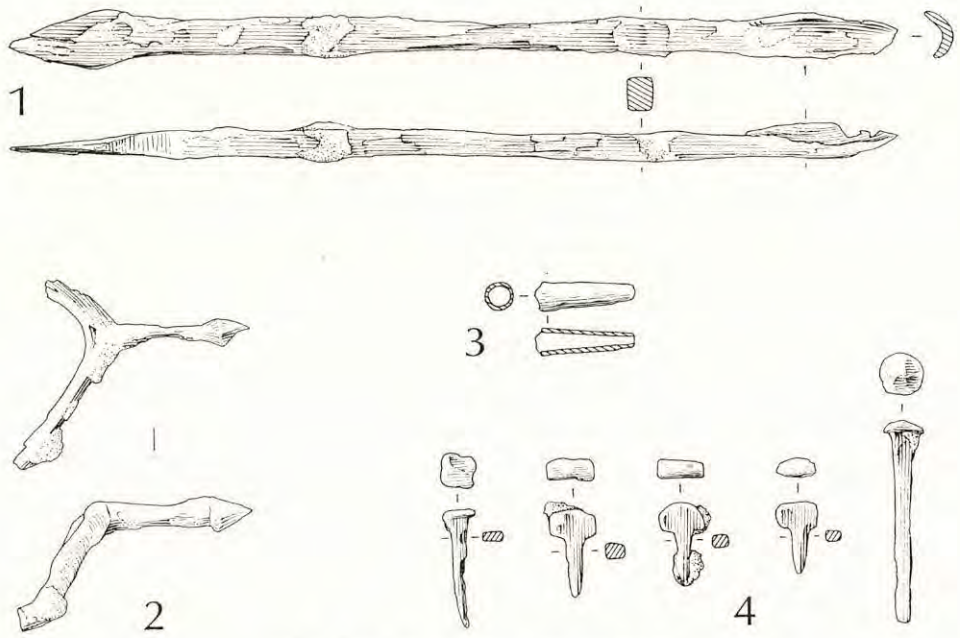

Fig. 18: Objects of iron (×one-third).

POTTERY (Figs. 19-25)

On the basis of rim-form alone, two distinct types of pottery are represented at Castle Neroche. For convenience, these have been called "North French" and "Local" wares. Briefly, pottery of the "North French" type was found stratified in the rampart at Site B (see Part II, above); unstratified at Sites Cii and Di; and incorporated — apparently as midden material — in the Period III heightening of the main inner rampart at Site G. Pottery of the "local" type was found unstratified at Sites Cii and Di; on the old ground surface under the Period III heightening of the main inner rampart at Sites Ci and G; in the upper level at Site Dii; and in the Period III and Period IV levels on top of the motte. Significantly, no pottery of North French type was recovered from the motte. This would seem to indicate that the North French type of pottery was characteristic of Period II; that the earthworks of Period III were raised by people using pottery of local type at a time when pottery of North French type was no longer available; and that this same local pottery was still in use during Period IV. No pottery of any kind was found associated with the earthworks of Period I.

POTTERY OF NORTH FRENCH TYPE (Figs. 19-22) Some two hundred and thirty pots with rim forms characteristic of Northern France have been found at Castle Neroche[30]. The fabric of the pottery is fairly consistent, variations being apparently either the result of over-firing or of differential erosion in the ground. The group is therefore considered here as a whole.

Fabric. The pottery is all unglazed, though it is wheel-thrown and (as far as can be judged from its present eroded state) quite well-finished. The pots have been produced in fine, slightly micaceous clay, coarsely gritted with rounded quartz grains and angular particles of chert, giving a rather harsh texture. Firing under oxydising conditions has given the surfaces a colour ranging from a purplish-brown to orange-yellow. Occasionally, over-firing has resulted in fissuring and distortion.

Thin-section analysis[31] shows that the materials used for gritting are common in the area of Castle Neroche. On the other hand, neither the shell particles characteristic of the local Lias, nor the glauconite and calcareous grit of the Greensand occur in the pottery. Thus, the source of the clay used cannot at present be identified. However, nineteen pots show evidence of sub-

standard firing, and the fabric of the group as a whole is very similar to that of the pottery of local type discussed below. It seems likely, then, that the pottery of North French type found at Castle Neroche was produced somewhere not far from the site.

Forms. The eroded state of the pottery, and the consequent difficulty of matching rim and body-sherds, makes the identification of forms problematical. Thus, nineteen pots show what could be the pulled-out pouring lip of a jug, but in each case too little survives to be sure that this was not the result of accidental distortion during firing. Five (or possibly nine) spouted pitchers are represented. However, the great bulk of the output of the Neroche potter evidently consisted of cooking-pots — at least two hundred of them. Even when due allowance is made for the possibility that jugs and pitchers, being for table use, may have been broken and discarded less frequently than cooking-pots, this proportion of cooking-pots to other types of vessel is remarkably high.

The cooking-pots from Castle Neroche follow a distinct pattern in which the rim is elaborately modelled to give the effect of an upright collar undercut and set-off from the neck of the pot. Sagging bases seem to have been the rule. Only a few pots appear to have been decorated in any way. Some twenty-eight show a marked rilling on the shoulder, while about twelve bear plastic decoration in the form of applied thumb-pressed strips. No other form of decoration was attempted. The pots vary a good deal in size. Unfortunately, in no case was it possible to reconstruct a complete profile, and so the exact capacities cannot be estimated with any confidence. Neck diameters (in this instance a more reliable guide than rim diameters) vary between $3\frac{1}{2}$ and 9 ins.: a diameter of 6 to 8 ins. seems to have been most common, but there is no indication of any attempt to produce pots to standard sizes.

The effect of the collared rim, which characterises these pots, has been achieved in a variety of ways. In some cases the entire upper part of the pot has been pulled out and modelled to give a severely upright collar, sharply undercut and well-set off from the neck (Fig. 19, 1-5). Occasionally, perhaps as a result of less careful work, the undercutting and setting-off is not so pronounced (Fig. 19, 6-7). In general, however, rims of this type are well finished, considerable care having gone to their formation. Where applied plastic decoration can be related to a particular rim form, it is usually of this upright type. About one third of the cooking pots belong to this group.

A second group, amounting to slightly less than half the total number, is represented by vessels with the collar worked on an everted rim (Fig. 19, 8-18). The rims are for the most part well finished, but in many cases less care has gone to the undercutting and setting-off (Fig. 19, 15-18).

A third group, about one quarter of the total, is characterised by squared rims of various types (Fig. 20, 20-29).

It must be emphasized that while the rim-sections reproduced in Figs. 19 and 20 reveal a variety of methods of working the rim, the overall external *appearance* of the pots must have been very similar whichever method was used. It seems possible that the different methods reflect the work of particular individuals. As will be shown below, the "squared" rim has been found in Northern France unaccompanied by other forms, and it may thus perhaps be regarded as a distinct Type. The first and second groups, however, differ only in the degree of eversion of the rim and the amount of attention paid to undercutting and setting-off. Everted rims are not characteristic of this class of pottery in Northern France, and it may be that the pots of the second group were the work of a man trained in the local English tradition, here working under the direction of someone more versed in the traditions of Northern France. The potter responsible for the cooking pots with upright collars, and perhaps also for those with "squared" rims, has however departed very little from the strict French canon, and must surely have been an immigrant.

Storage jars. Large storage jars are represented by a number of sherds derived from at least fourteen different vessels. Ten of these were found at Site Di, the other four at Site Cii. Only one jar survives sufficiently to allow reconstruction (Fig. 20): it was found in Pit 2 at Site Di, together with three cooking pots of North French type, and may thus serve to link these jars as a group with the pottery of North French type rather than with the pottery of local type found on the same site.

The vessels were clearly large, with a wide mouth and multiple strap-handles springing from shoulder to rim. It is not clear whether they were spouted. The single example capable of being reconstructed has decoration on the body in the form of a lattice of applied thumb-pressed strips.

The base is not reconstructable, but would seem to have been egg-shaped rather than flat. The fabric is very similar to that of the cooking pots, though more coarsely gritted.

Parallels. The pottery described and illustrated above, though apparently produced in the neighbourhood of Castle Neroche, nevertheless has close analogies with forms current from the 10th to 13th centuries in Northern France. The collared rims which characterize the pottery from Castle Neroche during Period II appear also in the early glazed wares of Andenne by the end of the 11th century, and soon after in the unglazed wares of the Dutch Limburg[32]. Plastic decoration in the form of flat thumb-pressed strips similarly occurs at Andenne in the late 11th and early 12th centuries. However, these wares would appear to be derived from pottery produced at about this time or slightly earlier in north-west France, where collared rims are found in a variety of fabrics over a wide area embracing Beauvais, Paris, Rouen, Evreux, Anjou and the Orléanais[33]. The red-painted and glazed wares from this area are well known, but collared rims also occur in many coarse unglazed and unpainted fabrics (see Fig. 21). Flat thumb-pressed strips occur on cooking pots at Evreux and Rouen, and deep rilling (*décor annelé*) on the shoulder of the pot is a feature found over much of north-west France.

In the absence of known sources of manufacture it is at present impossible to define regional groups of cooking pottery within the general area of north-west France. The *patrie* of the Neroche potter — or potters — is thus difficult to determine. However, it may not be entirely coincidental that the flat ladder-like applied strips on the storage jars from Neroche are closely parallelled on a series of pottery mortars from the Mayenne valley, thirty miles from Mortain.

Date. Only a small proportion of the medieval pottery represented in museum collections in north-west France has been acquired in the course of archaeological excavation. In 1910 M. Guébhard found collared rims and *décor annelé* in a ringwork known as La Butte de la Nocherie at St. Bomer des Forges (Orne)[34]. Similar rims have been found in other ringworks at Viévy-le-Rayé (Loir et Cher)[35], Houlbec Cocherel (Eure)[36], and La Butte Olivet (Eure)[37]. In none of these cases, however, was it possible to establish a close date for the pottery. Collared pots appear to have been associated with a coin of Philippe I of France (1060-1108) in the excavations at Le Vieil Evreux in 1912-15[38]. More recently Professor Arbman carried out excavations at another ringwork, known as Le Grand Besle at Buchy (Seine Mme): here collared rims, applied strips and *décor annelé* were found associated with a coin apparently of late 11th or early 12th century date[39]. The excavation of two more ringworks at Bretteville (Calvados) and Urville (Calvados), dated by the excavator to the later 12th-13th and later 11th-12th centuries respectively, produced "squared" rims similar to those found at Neroche (cp. Figs. 20 and 22), but no collared rims[40]. However, collared rims have been found together with squared rims nearby in yet another ringwork at Le Plessis-Grimoult, in an 11th century context[41]. In Anjou collared rims have been found under a motte at Doué-la-Fontaine in levels believed to date from as early as the 10th century[42]. On the other hand, that collared rims continued to be produced as late as the 13th century is shown by the excavation of a kiln of that date at Argentan (Orne)[43].

In England, collared cooking pottery imported from north-west France has been found at Exeter (see Fig. 22), associated with pottery of local type very similar to that found in the Period IV levels at Neroche and dated by the excavator to the first half of the 12th century[44]. At Winchester, a collared cooking pot decorated with red paint (Fig. 22) was found in a pit with local wares datable perhaps to the second half of the 11th century[45]. At Wareham, part of a small imported cooking pot with a "squared" rim (cp. Figs. 20 and 22) was found on the earliest floor of the keep, dated to the first part of the 12th century[46].

Cooking pottery similar in form to that found during Period II at Castle Neroche is thus characteristic of a wide area and a long period of time in north-west France. Examples imported into England seem at present to fall into a smaller date range, though further work will probably extend this. It may well be, in fact, that the pottery from Neroche should rather be used as a guide to the dating of pottery in France. The historical dates suggested for the earthworks at Castle Neroche (see Part I, above) would indicate a maximum bracket of *c.*1066-1140 for the pottery used during Period II. Within this bracket, the writer has argued for a probable date of 1066-1080, possibly the years 1067-9. If this is acceptable, then the pottery of North French type from Castle Neroche is of considerable importance as revealing the repertoire of an immigrant craftsman — or craftsmen — travelling in the retinue of Robert, Count of Mortain. In the present state of our knowledge it is not clear to what extent this situation was necessitated by

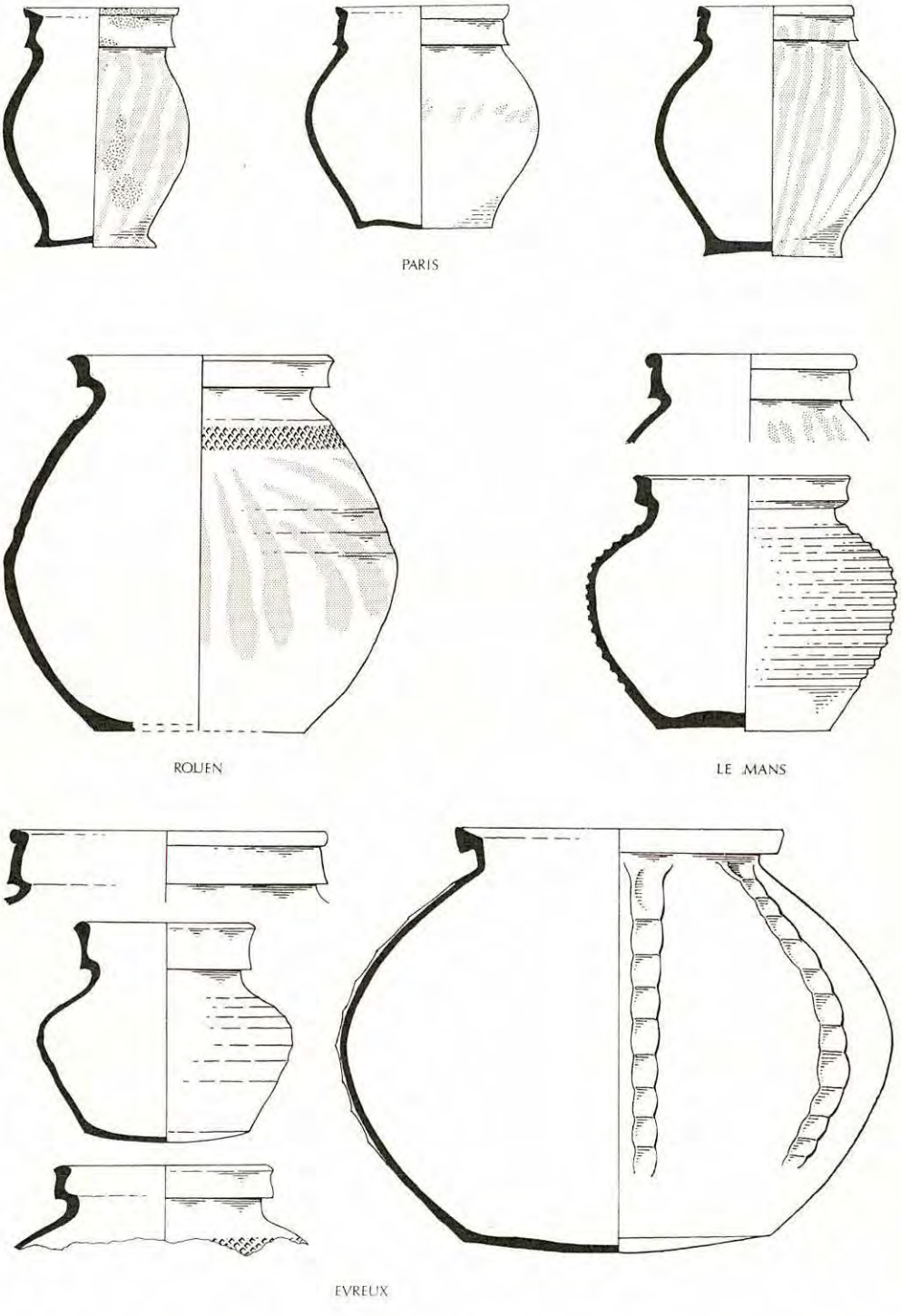

Fig. 21: North French pottery from various localities (×one-quarter).

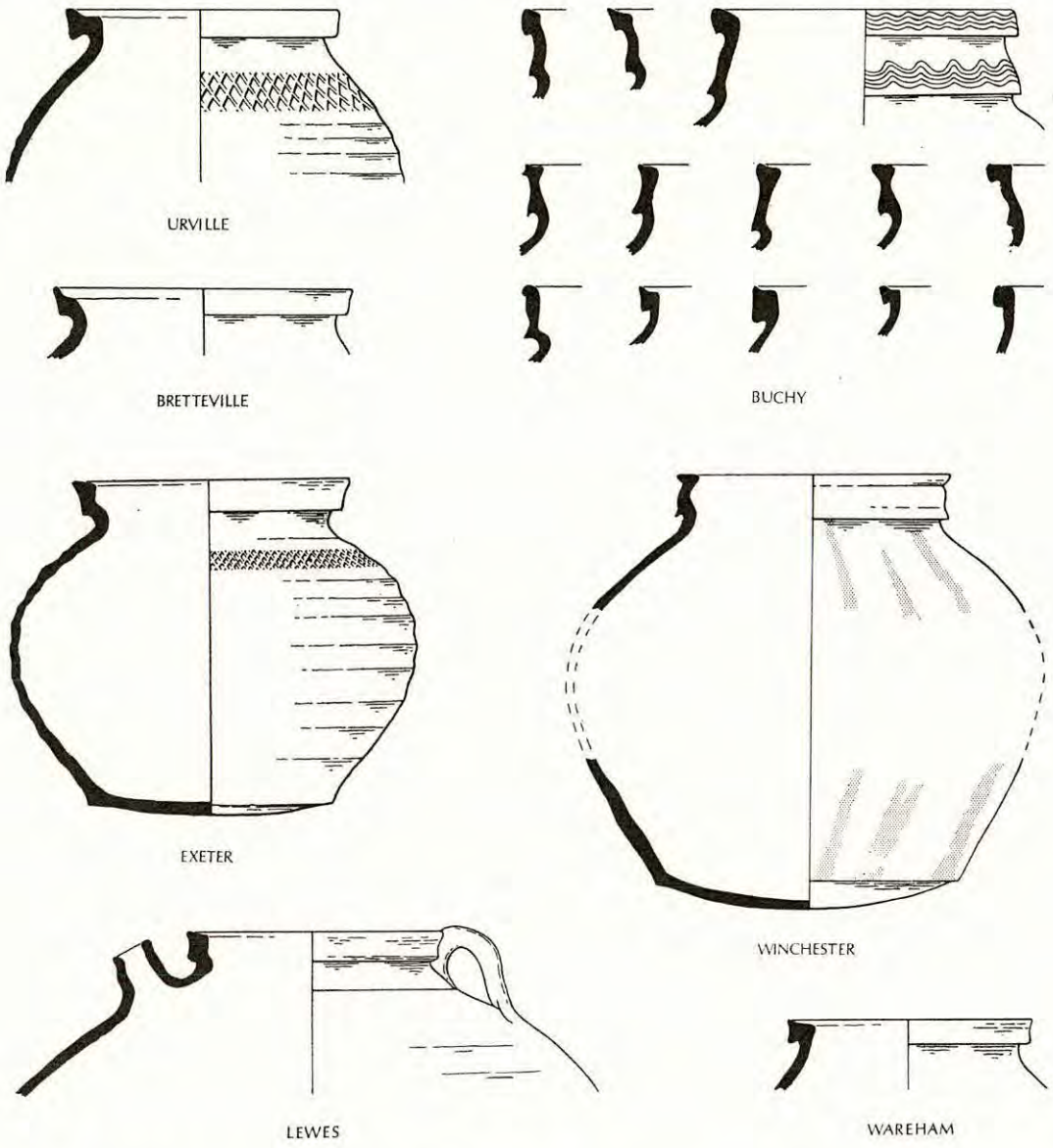

Fig. 22: North French pottery from France and England, found in excavated contexts (×one-quarter).

a dearth of local craftsmen during the years of conquest in the south-west. By Period III, however, pottery apparently made by local craftsmen was readily available, and the Neroche potters had moved on. It may eventually be possible to identify their work at Count Robert's other castles, and thus to establish a reference horizon for the study of these sites. Similarly, the two hundred or so vessels produced by these men at (or near) Neroche represent an important horizon in the study of the development of pottery styles in north-west France.

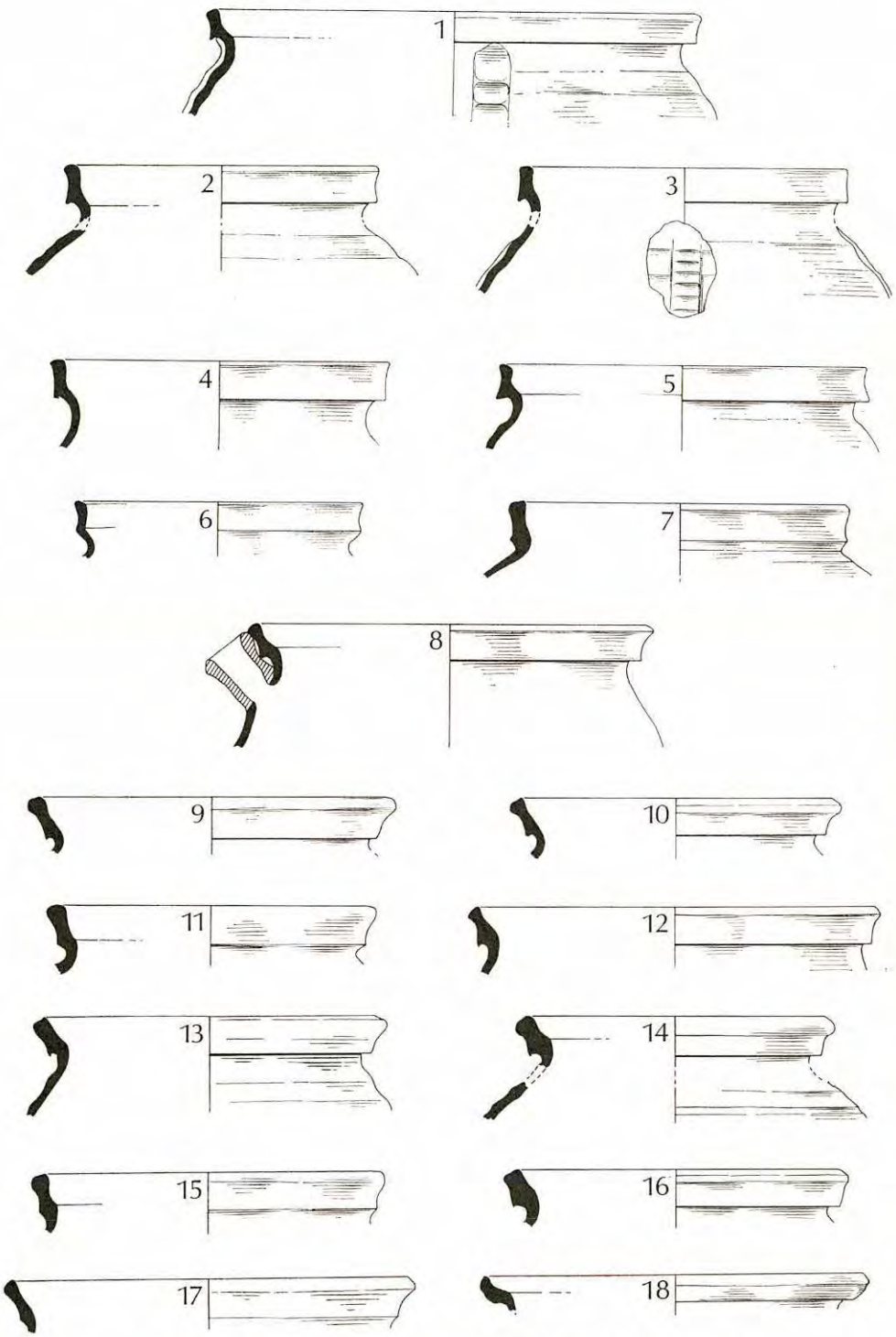

Fig. 19: Pottery of North French type, Period II (×one-quarter).

DESCRIPTION OF POTTERY ILLUSTRATED IN FIGS. 19 AND 20

(*Note:* In the following descriptions "Standard Fabric" refers to a fine, slightly micaceous clay with rounded quartz grains and angular fragments of chert. All neck diameters are measured internally).

FIG. 19

1. Cooking pot. Collared rim sharply undercut and set off; rilling on shoulder, applied thumb-pressed strip(s) on shoulder and body. Standard fabric, light grey core, eroded orange-yellow external surface, pinkish-buff internal surface. Neck diameter 10.25 ins. Site G, in heightening of main inner rampart.
2. Cooking pot. Collared rim sharply undercut and set off; slight rilling on shoulder. Standard fabric, buff core, pinkish-buff surfaces. Neck diameter 6.25 ins. Site G, in heightening of main inner rampart.
3. Cooking pot. Collared rim sharply undercut and set off; rilling on shoulder, applied thumb-pressed strip(s) on shoulder and body. Standard fabric, grey core and surfaces with orange sub-surface zones. Neck diameter 6.75 ins. Site G, in heightening of main inner rampart.
4. Cooking pot, distorted in firing. Collared rim sharply undercut and set off, lower part of collar burred inwards. Standard fabric (overfired), blue-grey core, orange-yellow eroded outer surface, grey inner surface. Neck diameter 6.7 ins. Site G, on old turf-line on main inner rampart, below Period III heightening.
5. Cooking pot. Collared rim sharply undercut and set off; sagging base, slight rilling on shoulder. Standard fabric (overfired), blue-grey core, surfaces eroded but originally pinkish-orange. Neck diameter 7.7 ins. Site G, in heightening of main inner rampart.
6. Cooking pot. Collared rim set off, but not undercut. Standard fabric (overfired), orange core and inner surface, outer surface brownish-grey: surface shrinkage, resulting in a gritty surface texture. Neck diameter 6.2 ins. Site G, in heightening of main inner rampart.
7. Cooking pot. Collared rim only slightly set off. Standard fabric, buff core and surfaces. Neck diameter 7.0 ins. Site G, in heightening of main inner rampart.
8. Spouted pitcher, represented by single rim-sherd. Collared rim everted, but sharply undercut and set off. Standard fabric, dark grey core, eroded red-buff surfaces. Neck diameter 8.0 ins. Site G, in heightening of main nner rampart.
9. Cooking pot or pitcher. Collared rim everted, but sharply undercut and set off, with slight groove on top; two body sherds with stumps of handles may belong to this pot. Standard fabric, buff core, reddish-buff surfaces. Neck diameter 7.0 ins. Site G, in heightening of main inner rampart.
10. Cooking pot. Collared rim everted, but sharply undercut and set off, with slight groove on top; traces of rilling on body. Standard fabric, grey core, eroded orange-buff surfaces. Neck diameter 6.25 ins. Site G, in heightening of main inner rampart.
11. Cooking pot. Collared rim everted and slightly set off. Standard fabric (overfired), blue-grey core, inner surface grey, outer surface brown-grey. Neck diameter 6.5 ins. Site G, in heightening of main inner rampart.
12. Cooking pot. Collared rim everted and thickened, but sharply undercut and set off. Standard fabric, orange core and surfaces, badly eroded. Neck diameter 8.4 ins. Site G, in heightening of main inner rampart.
13. Cooking pot. Collared rim everted and set off; rilling on body. Standard fabric, orange-yellow surfaces. Neck diameter 6.75 ins. Provenance uncertain; found at Castle Neroche by Rev. F. Warre in 1854.
14. Cooking pot. Collared rim everted and set off, with marked external beading; rilling on body. Standard fabric (overfired), blue-grey core and surfaces with orange sub-surface zones. Neck diameter 5.75 ins. Site G, on old turf-line on main inner rampart, below Period III heightening.
15. Cooking pot. Collared rim everted and thickened, and only slightly set off. Standard fabric, buff core, red-buff surfaces. Neck diameter 7.2 ins. Site G, on old turf-line on main inner rampart, below Period III heightening.
16. Cooking pot. Collared rim everted and thickened, and set off. Standard fabric, grey core, orange-buff surfaces. Neck diameter 6.7 ins. Site G, in heightening of main inner rampart.
17. Cooking pot. Everted rim, with slight collared effect produced by external ridge. Standard fabric, dark grey core, gritty purplish surfaces. Neck diameter 6.8 ins. Site Cii, on old ground surface under 18th century make-up.
18. Cooking pot. Everted rim, with slight collared effect produced by setting off. Standard fabric, grey core, red-buff surfaces. Neck diameter 7.5 ins. Site G, on old turf-line on main inner rampart, under Period III heightening.

FIG. 20

19. Storage jar. Simple everted rim, with three (possibly four) strap-handles with thumb-pressing along edges. Applied thumb-pressed strips on neck, handles and body: decoration on body takes form of lattice, with crossings emphasized by thumb-pressed hollows. Base not reconstructable, but apparently rounded. Vessel hand-made in standard fabric, coarsely gritted, with grey core and red-buff surfaces. Neck diameter 9.0 ins, body diameter 22 ins. Site Di, in Pit 2 and on old ground surface nearby.
20. Cooking pot. Squared rim, sharply undercut and set off. Standard fabric, grey core, purple surfaces. Neck diameter 5.1 ins. Site G, in heightening of main inner rampart.
21. Cooking pot. Squared rim, sharply undercut and set off. Standard fabric (overfired), buff core, orange-brown surfaces. Neck diameter 5.5 ins. Site G, on old turf-line on main inner rampart, below Period III heightening.
22. Cooking pot. Squared rim, sharply undercut and set off, with groove on top. Standard fabric, buff core, red-buff surfaces. Neck diameter 5.75 ins. Site Di, in topsoil.
23. Cooking pot. Squared rim, set off but not undercut, with internal bevel. Standard fabric, grey core, eroded buff surfaces. Neck diameter 5.8 ins. Site G, in heightening of main inner rampart.
24. Cooking pot. Squared rim, set off but not undercut, with internal bevel; slight rilling on shoulder. Standard fabric (overfired), buff core, orange-brown surfaces. Neck diameter 7.0 ins. Site G, in heightening of main inner rampart.

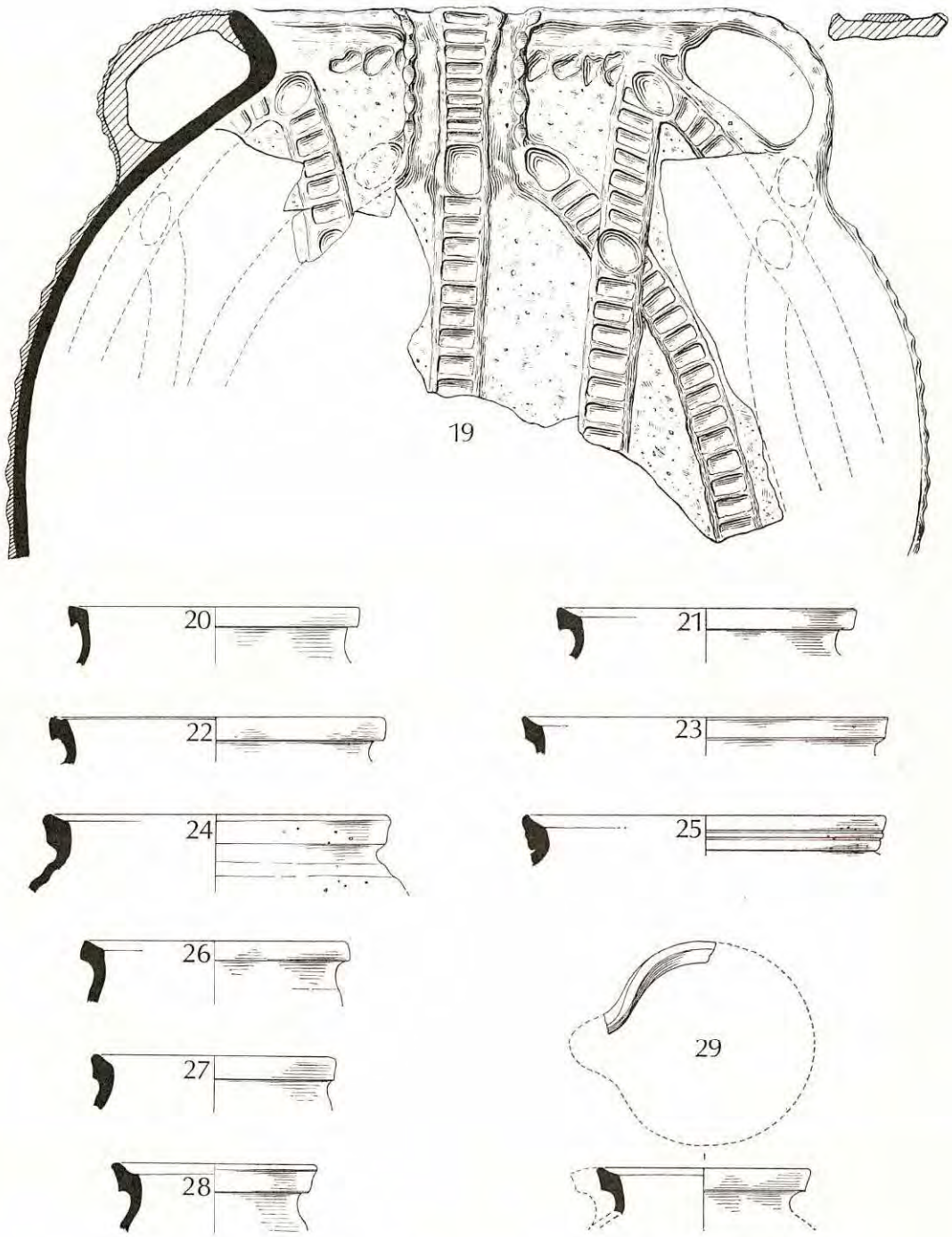

Fig. 20: Pottery of North French type, Period II (×one-quarter).

25. Cooking pot. Rim thickened and squared on exterior, with two horizontal incised lines, but not set off Standard fabric, purple core, red surfaces. Neck diameter 7.5 ins. Site G, in heightening of main inner rampart.
26. Cooking pot. Squared rim, set off but not undercut, with internal bevel. Standard fabric, grey core, eroded orange surfaces. Neck diameter 5.25 ins. Site G, in heightening of main inner rampart.
27. Cooking pot. Squared rim, set off but not undercut, with internal bevel. Standard fabric, grey core, orange-red surfaces. Neck diameter 5.75 ins. Site G, in heightening of main inner rampart.
28. Cooking pot or jug. Squared rim, undercut and set off. Standard fabric, grey core, brown surfaces. Neck diameter 3.5 ins. Site G, in heightening of main inner rampart.
29. Cooking pot or jug (apparent pouring-lip could be result of distortion during firing). Squared rim, set off but not undercut, with internal bevel; sagging base. Standard fabric (overfired), grey core and surfaces, with orange sub-surface zones. Neck diameter 3.5 ins. Site G, on old turf-line on main inner rampart, below Period III heightening.

POTTERY OF LOCAL TYPE: PERIOD III (Fig. 23) Some thirty-eight pots with rim forms characteristic of south-west England were found during the 1961-4 excavations in layers assigned to Period III[47].

Fabric. The fabric of the Period III pottery is unglazed, and is virtually indistinguishable from that of the pottery of North French type described above. The same fine micaceous clay has been used, and though the pots are more coarsely gritted, the materials used — rounded quartz grains and angular fragments of chert — are the same. The surface texture is generally more pimply, however, except where underfiring has resulted in a rather soapy texture. Firing under oxydising conditions has given the surfaces the same colour range of purplish-brown to orange-yellow. Some body sherds show a greater irregularity in thickness than is to be found in the pottery of North French type, suggesting that at least some pots may have been coil-built, a wheel being used only for shaping rims.

Forms. A simple pitcher is represented by a fragment of its spout: a strap-handle and parts of two rod-handles indicate the presence of other table-vessels, though it is not clear whether these were pitchers or jugs. A single rim-sherd suggests a small hemi-spherical bowl. The rest of the sherds are from cooking pots.

In the absence of any complete profiles, little can be said about the general shape or size of the cooking pots. Most of the pots show a neck diameter of 5 to 8 ins., indicating that they were much the same size as the cooking pots of North French type: a few vessels were much larger, however, with neck diameters of up to 14 ins. The necks are all everted and flaring, often bell-mouthed. The rims are simple, compared with those of the North French type. Most common is a plain internal bevel: in some cases this bevelling has resulted in a slight external beading, and on one or two pots a hollowing of the rim has given a more pronounced beading. Decoration seems to have been used sparingly, being confined to one example of an incised meander on the inside of the neck, one example of an incised meander on the outside of the neck, and a double-meander incised on the body of a third pot.

Date. The cooking pottery from Period III forms a fairly coherent group, the rim-forms being variations on a single theme. Pottery of this type is known from other castle sites in Somerset[48] where it has been assumed to be of Anarchy date (though an earlier date cannot be ruled out), and where it was apparently associated with pots showing a slightly different form — a more upright neck with an external beading on the rim. The two rim-types are similarly associated at Castle Neroche during Period IV (see below), and here again an Anarchy date is suggested. Both types have a long life in the south-west, occurring as far west as Cornwall and (ultimately) as late as the fourteenth century[49]. The Period III pottery from Castle Neroche does not include other recognizable later twelfth or thirteenth century types, however, and must thus represent a relatively early stage in what was to become in effect the standard medieval cooking pottery of south-west England. How early a stage it represents is difficult to determine. In the absence of closely dated comparable groups from other sites, it may be that recourse must be had to the dating suggested in Part I above (see p. 25) on historical grounds. The most that can be said at present is that the Period III pottery at Castle Neroche reflects a tradition evidently already well-established in the area by the mid-twelfth century, and extending back in time perhaps into the eleventh century. It must in any case be earlier in date than the pottery of Period IV discussed below.

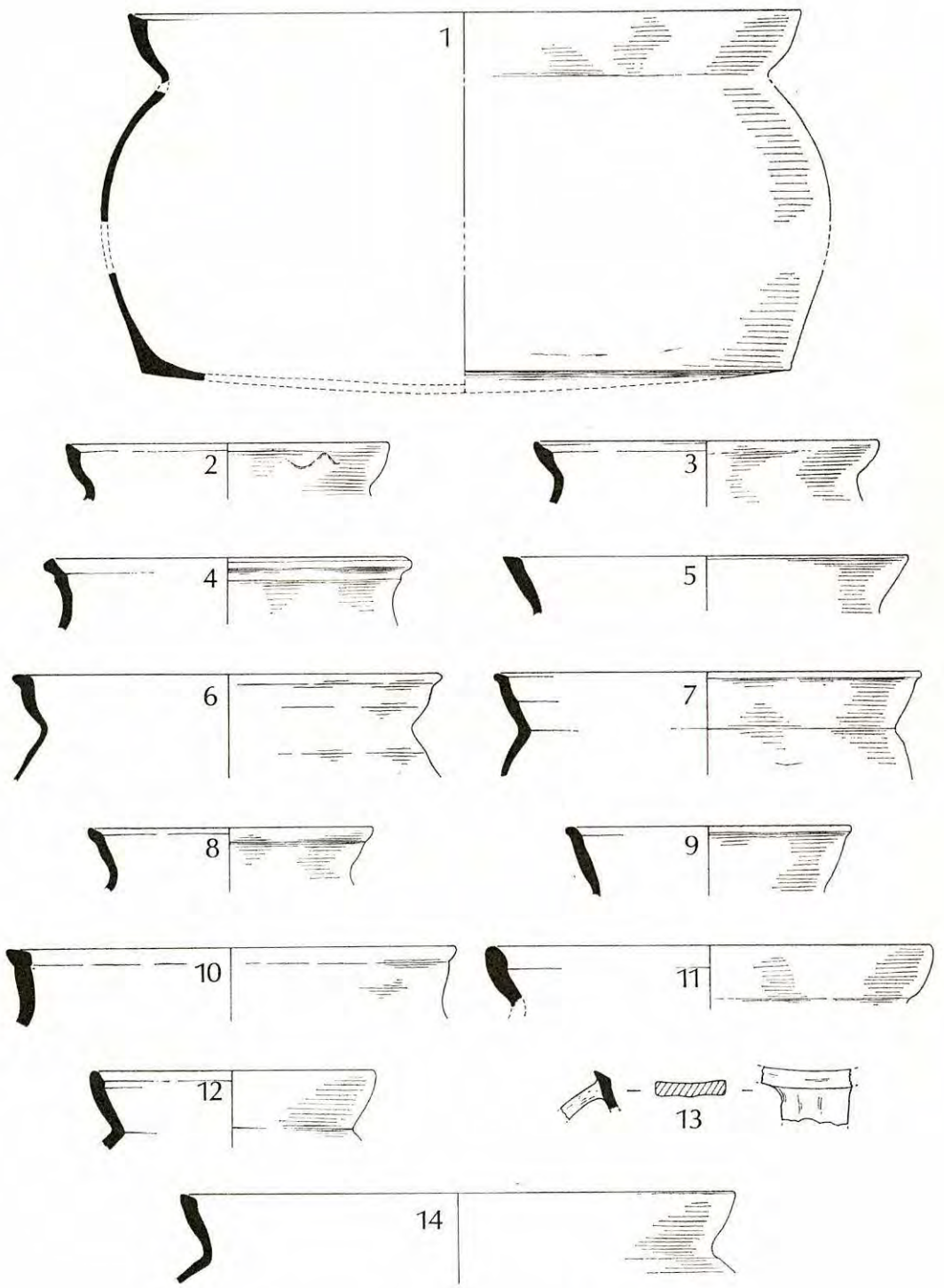

Fig. 23: Pottery of local type, Period III (×one-quarter).

DESCRIPTION OF POTTERY ILLUSTRATED IN FIG. 23

(*Note:* In the following descriptions "Standard Fabric" refers to a fine, slightly micaceous clay with rounded quartz grains and angular fragments of chert. This fabric is very similar to that used for the cooking pots of North French type during Period II, though the gritting is slightly coarser and the surface texture correspondingly more pimply).

1. Cooking pot. Everted bell-mouthed neck, rim with hollowed internal bevel; sagging base with slight external burr on angle. Standard fabric, grey core and internal surface, buff-red external surface. Neck diameter 13.5 ins. Site G, on old ground surface under barbican bank.
2. Cooking pot. Everted bell-mouthed neck, rim with internal bevel; single shallow meander incised on exterior of neck. Standard fabric, grey core and surfaces. Neck diameter 6 ins. Site G, in heightening of main inner rampart.
3. Cooking pot. Everted bell-mouthed neck, rim with wide internal bevel. Standard fabric (underfired), black core, buff surfaces. Neck diameter 6.5 ins. Site G, in heightening of main inner rampart.
4. Cooking pot. Tall, almost upright neck with sharply everted rim. Standard fabric, grey core, buff internal surface, orange-red external surface. Neck diameter 7.2 ins. Site G, in heightening of main inner rampart.
5. Cooking pot. Everted neck, rim with horizontal bevel. Standard fabric, grey core, buff to grey surfaces. Neck diameter 7.5 ins. Site G, on old turf-line on main inner rampart, under Period III heightening.
6. Cooking pot. Everted bell-mouthed neck, rim with slightly rounded internal bevel and external beading. Standard fabric (overfired), blue-grey core, red-buff surfaces. Neck diameter 8.1 ins. Site G, on old turf-line on main inner rampart, under Period III heightening.
7. Cooking pot. Everted neck, rim with narrow internal bevel and small external beading. Standard fabric, grey core, red-buff surfaces. Neck diameter 8.0 ins. Site G, on old ground surface under barbican bank.
8. Cooking pot. Everted neck, rim with internal bevel and external beading. Standard fabric, grey core, grey-brown surfaces. Neck diameter 5.2 ins. Site G, in heightening of main inner rampart.
9. Cooking pot. Everted neck, simple rim with slight external beading; sagging base with exterior burr on angle. Standard fabric, grey core, red-buff surfaces. Neck diameter 4.9 ins. Site G, in heightening of main inner rampart.
10. Cooking pot. Tall upright neck, rim folded over with internal bevel and external beading. Standard fabric (underfired), grey core and internal surface, red-buff external surface. In primary occupation on summit of motte.
11. Cooking pot. Thick everted bell-mouthed neck, rim with folded-down internal bevel. Standard fabric (overfired), orange core and external surface, grey internal surface. Neck diameter 8.4 ins. Site G, in heightening of main inner rampart.
12. Cooking pot. Everted bell-mouthed neck, rim with narrow internal bevel. Standard fabric, grey core, red-buff surfaces. Neck diameter 5.0 ins., possibly more. Site G, in heightening of main inner rampart.
13. Jug or pitcher. Everted neck, rim with internal bevel; part of plain strap-handle attached. Standard fabric (underfired), grey core, grey to off-white surfaces. Neck diameter unknown. In primary occupation on summit of motte.
14. Cooking pot. Everted bell-mouthed neck, rim with internal bevel. Standard fabric, orange core, eroded pink-buff surfaces. Neck diameter 11.2 ins. Site G, on old ground surface under barbican bank.

POTTERY OF LOCAL TYPE: PERIOD IV (Fig. 24) Layers defining Period IV were identifiable only on top of the motte. It is not impossible that there were Period IV horizons also at Sites Cii and Di, but ploughing has destroyed the stratification here. Pottery from these two sites is therefore treated separately (see below, p. 54).

Fabric. Some ninety pots were found in the Period IV levels on the motte, of which thirty-four show rim profiles. Four different fabrics can be distinguished. A single glazed vessel is represented by four sherds in a hard fine sandy orange fabric with a scatter of green glaze on the surface. Slightly over half of the unglazed pots are in a fabric almost identical with that used in Period III. A third of the pots are in a similar, though slightly sandier fabric, the remainder being in a more coarsely gritted and less well fired fabric with a pimply texture.

Forms. Of the thirty-four pots with recognizable profile, thirty-one are cooking pots. One, or possibly two, jugs are represented, while two rod-handles may have come from either a jug or a pitcher. A single rather thick base-sherd suggests a storage vessel of some kind.

The cooking pots show sagging bases and everted necks varying in diameter between 6 and 11 ins. Pots in the fabric most resembling that of Period III show also the Period III flaring necks and internally bevelled rims (Fig. 24, 1-5). Since these pots cannot all be attributed to rubbish surviving from the earlier occupation of the motte, it would seem that the tradition of potting represented in Period III was still continuing during Period IV. The cooking pots in the sandier fabric, however, are larger in size and show a more upright neck with the rim modelled to give a pronounced external beading (Fig. 24, 6-10). Unfortunately, no rim-profiles in the coarse pimply fabric were found.

Decoration. Decoration on the pots of Period III type (i.e. in the fabric most like that of Period III, and with flaring necks and internally bevelled rims) is confined to four examples of combed meander patterns on the body of the pot. Five of the ten rim-sherds in the sandier fabric show incised meander patterns on the inside of the neck, and in one case on the body of the pot also.

Date. Period IV is thus characterized by the continued use of pots with internally bevelled rims in a rather coarse pimply fabric, and by the introduction of pots with a somewhat different rim-form carried out in a slightly sandier fabric. At least one glazed vessel was in use at this time, and a second (decorated) glazed pot found by Gray in 1903 (see below) may belong to this period.

The Period IV pottery from Castle Neroche is closely parallelled by the pottery from Downend and Burrow Mump, both of them castle sites and assumed to be of Anarchy date[50]. There is, unfortunately, nothing very diagnostic about the Neroche cooking pots, while too little survives of the glazed vessels to allow any conclusions to be drawn from them. As has already been noted, the cooking pots with internally bevelled rims have a long life in the south-west, as indeed do the cooking pots with the more upright modelled rims, though these are less characteristic of the south-west, being known from a much wider area of Southern England. The pottery from Period IV thus cannot at present be closely dated within the period *c.*1100-1200. It is clear, however, from the few sherds found that glazed wares could on occasion reach Castle Neroche, and also that the 1961-4 excavations included those areas where the broken fragments of such vessels might come to rest. The absence of recognizable late-twelfth or thirteenth century glazed wares thus probably does have some significance at Castle Neroche, and it may be that the pottery from Period IV should be placed more towards the middle of the twelfth century.

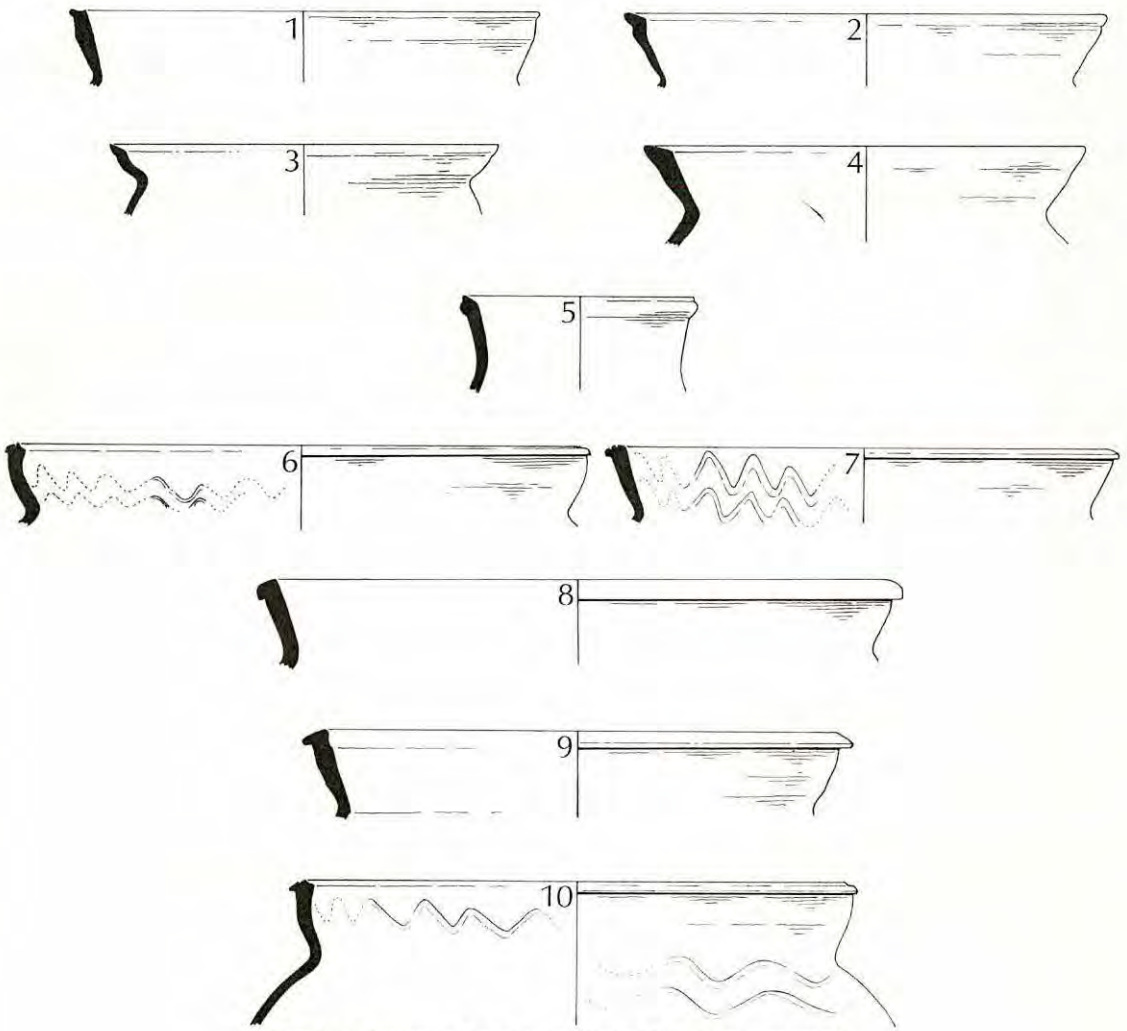

Fig. 24: Pottery of local type, Period IV (×one-quarter).

DESCRIPTION OF POTTERY ILLUSTRATED IN FIG. 24

(*Note:* In the following descriptions "Standard Fabric" refers to a fine, slightly micaceous clay with rounded quartz grains and angular fragments of chert. This fabric is very like that used during Periods II and III. "Sandy Fabric" refers to a similar fabric, but with a finer quartz sand and without the fragments of chert).

1. Cooking pot. Tall everted neck with slight hollowing on top of rim and external beading. Standard fabric slightly harsher than usual, grey core, red-buff surfaces. Neck diameter 8.2 ins. Unstratified, in 19th century pit cut into Period IV occupation horizon on summit of motte.
2. Cooking pot. Everted, slightly bell-mouthed neck, rim with internal bevel and external beading. Standard fabric (overfired), grey core, surfaces eroded but originally possibly red. Neck diameter 8.0 ins. Summit of motte, in occupation horizon overlying Period IV make-up.
3. Cooking pot. Everted bell-mouthed neck, rim with internal bevel and external beading. Standard fabric slightly harsher than usual, grey core, grey-brown surfaces. Neck diameter 6.4 ins. Summit of motte, in occupation horizon overlying Period IV make-up.
4. Cooking pot. Everted neck and rim with internal bevel. Standard fabric, slightly sandy, grey core, red-buff surfaces. Neck diameter 6.5 ins. Summit of motte in occupation horizon overlying Period IV make-up.
5. Jug. Tall neck and slightly everted bevelled rim, rounded cordon below outer edge of rim. Standard fabric, grey core, buff internal surface, red-buff external surface. Neck diameter 3.8 ins. Summit of motte, in occupation horizon overlying Period IV make-up.
6. Cooking pot. Upright, slightly bell-mouthed neck, rim with ridge and groove on top, and external beading; faint double-meander incised on inside of neck. Sandy fabric, grey core and surfaces. Neck diameter 10.4 ins. Summit of motte, in occupation horizon overlying Period IV make-up.
7. Cooking pot. Everted neck, rim with two grooves on top and external beading; shallow double-meander incised on inside of neck. Sandy fabric, grey core and internal surface, red external surface. Neck diameter 8.7 ins. Summit of motte, in occupation horizon overlying Period IV make-up.
8. Cooking pot. Everted neck, rim simple with external beading. Coarse sandy fabric with chert grits, grey core, red surfaces. Neck diameter 11.3 ins. Found by Gray in 1903, in make-up of small mound at south-east side of summit of motte.
9. Cooking pot. Everted neck, rim with external and faint internal beading. Sandy fabric with some chert gritting, grey core and internal surface, external surface eroded, but apparently also grey. Neck diameter 9.0 ins. Summit of motte, in occupation horizon overlying Period IV make-up.
10. Cooking pot. Upright, slightly bell-mouthed neck, rim grooved with external beading; single shallow meander incised on inside of neck, and double (or possibly multiple) meander incised on shoulder, Sandy fabric, grey core, surfaces grey or purplish-red. Neck diameter 10.0 ins. Summit of motte, in occupation horizon overlying Period IV make-up.

POTTERY OF LOCAL TYPE: UNSTRATIFIED (Fig. 25) The absence of stratified levels at Sites Cii and Di makes it difficult to determine whether the pottery of local type from these sites should be assigned to Period III or to Period IV. The pottery has therefore been treated as being, in effect, unstratified, and has been excluded from the foregoing discussion of pottery types. Illustrated here are examples of types or forms not already discussed (Fig. 25, 1-5). In addition, Gray in 1903 found a number of vessels worthy of attention, some of which are illustrated here (Fig. 25, 6-12)[51]. Gray's pottery comprises three groups. The largest group was recovered from a pit in the interior of the barbican at the foot of the motte. The second group was recovered from two cuttings on top of the motte. The third group came from the old ground surface under the small counterscarp bank at the north side of the motte ditch. None of these groups can be assigned now to a particular Period, and all three groups are therefore treated as being unstratified.

DESCRIPTION OF POTTERY ILLUSTRATED IN FIG. 25

1. Cooking pot, complete profile preserved. Everted neck, rim with external "lip" and folded-in internal bevel and beading; sagging base. Standard fabric, grey core, buff internal surface, grey-brown external surface. Neck diameter 7.8 ins. Site Di, unstratified in ploughsoil.
2. Cooking pot. Everted bell-mouthed neck with marked internal hollowing, and rim with internal bevel and external beading. Standard fabric very hard fired, grey core, buff surfaces. Neck diameter 4.6 ins. Site Cii, on old ground surface underneath 18th century make-up.
3. Cooking pot. Everted, slightly bell-mouthed neck, rim with internal bevel; short oblique slashes on exterior of neck, apparently deliberate. Standard fabric, grey core and surfaces. Neck diameter 7.3 ins. Site H, on surface of barbican rampart.
4. Cooking pot. Everted neck, rim with marked internal and external beading. Standard fabric, black core and surfaces. Neck diameter 8.8 ins. Site Cii, unstratified in garden soil.
5. Cooking pot. Everted neck, rim folded outward and then inward to give internal and external beading with an internal bevel. Standard fabric heavily gritted, grey core and internal surface, red-buff external surface. Neck diameter 8.8 ins. Site Di, unstratified in ploughsoil.
12. Strap-handle, decorated with four incised lines (possibly combed). Standard fabric, grey core, buff surfaces. Site Di, unstratified in ploughsoil.

POTTERY FOUND BY GRAY, 1903:

6. Jug. Upright neck with marked rilling, simple everted rim; stump of strap-handle decorated with three slashes or grooves. "Coarse grey ware, chert gritted, smooth reddish-brown surfaces" (Dunning). Neck diameter 3.4 ins. Found by Gray in 1903, in rubbish pit in barbican.

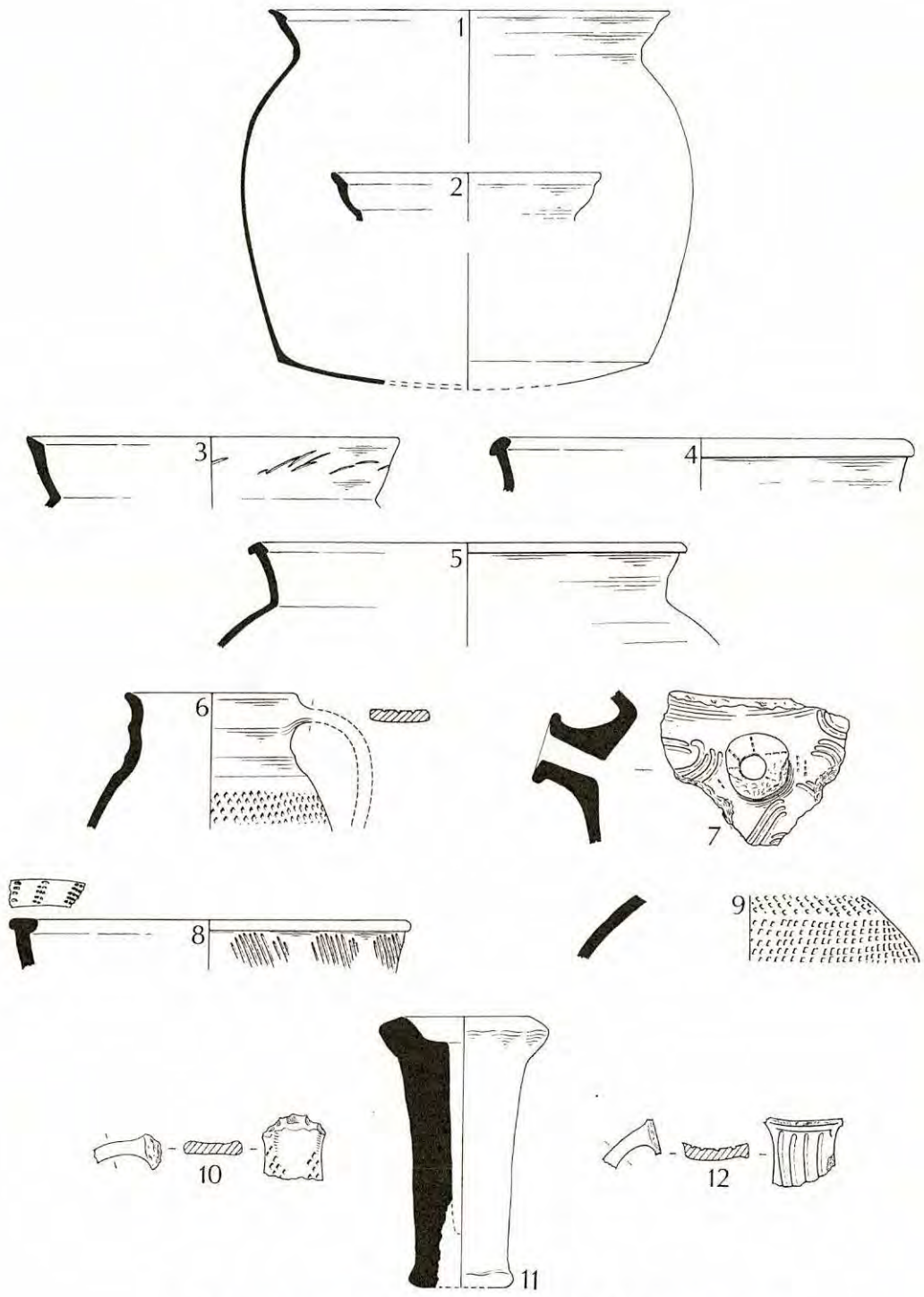

Fig. 25: Pottery of local type, Periods III and IV (×one-quarter).

7. Spouted pitcher. Rim missing; tubular spout decorated with comb impressions in radial lines; body of vessel decorated with similar impressions and with combed meanders. "Grey ware, chert gritted, orange-red surfaces" (Dunning). Neck diameter about 10 ins. Found by Gray in 1903, in rubbish pit in barbican.

8. Bowl (?) Rim with internal and external beading, decorated on top with short comb impressions; oblique combed panels on body of vessel. "Coarse grey ware with large chert grits, light red surfaces" (Dunning). Diameter 8.5 ins. Found by Gray in 1903 in rubbish pit in barbican.

9. Glazed jug or pitcher, represented by single shoulder fragment, decorated with bands of rouletting. "Fine grey ware, slightly gritty, traces of pale green glaze" (Dunning). Found by Gray in 1903 on old ground surface under counterscarp bank on north side of motte ditch.

10. Strap handle, decorated with rouletting. "Coarse grey ware with chert grits, reddish-brown surfaces" (Dunning). Found by Gray in 1903 on top of the motte.

11. Pedestal lamp. "Coarse light-red ware with chert grits, rough buff surfaces: inner surface discoloured by fire" (Dunning). Found by Gray in 1903 on old ground surface under counterscarp bank on north side of motte ditch.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The 1961-3 excavations were sponsored by the Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society, and it is to the officers and members of that Society that the greatest debt is owed: in particular, Mr. C. A. Cookson undertook the administration of the work, while Mr. F. Hawtin took a great deal of the archaeological load, eventually supervising the 1963 season's work.

Excavation in 1964 was carried out for the Ancient Monuments Branch of the (then) Ministry of Public Building and Works, and all subsequent work has been done as part of its programme. Miss Margaret Wood undertook the difficult task of sorting and classifying an intractable mass of highly eroded pottery, the pottery and small finds eventually being drawn by Mr. D. S. Neal and his colleagues of the Inspectorate Illustrating Office. Mr. J. E. Watkin of the National Agricultural Advisory Service in Bristol carried out analytical tests on soil samples and gave valuable help in the field. The writer is also indebted to many people for helpful advice and criticism, notably Mr. Welldon Finn and Dr. G. C. Dunning.

Finally, a debt of gratitude is owed to the Forestry Commission and to their tenants, Mr. W. Moore and family, who allowed the excavations to take place and who contributed much to making the work enjoyable for all those who took part.

APPENDIX A: RAISING A MOTTE

It must be said at the outset that there is no direct way of calculating the time taken to raise a motte, there being too many variables to take into account. These variables fall into two groups. The first group relates to the labour force — how many labourers, length of working day, breaks in work due to bad weather, etc. The second group relates to more basic issues, in particular to the time taken to raise a given load *by hand* through a given vertical distance.

R. J. C. Atkinson gives a formula for chalk-built earthworks, in which

$$H = \frac{V(120+8L+2F)}{1{,}000}$$

where H is the total of man-hours, V the volume in cu. ft. of material moved, L the vertical distance in feet moved, and F the horizontal distance in feet between the "centre" of the quarry and the "centre" of the mound[52]. The formula is for linear works rather than mottes, but can be used with suitable modification. The subsoil under the Neroche motte is sand, which is easier to dig than chalk: digging and spreading, however, are two separate tasks, and only the former is affected by differences in subsoil. At Castle Neroche the bulk of the spoil must have come from the ditch at the south side of the motte, and much time must have been spent in moving the spoil after it had been loosened in the ditch. Making allowance for this (on the basis of the standard estimates for the Construction Industry), the Atkinson formula would give 13,780 man-days of 12 hours per day for the motte at Castle Neroche. Estimates supplied by several Superintendents of Works (Ancient Monuments), without using this formula but based on their own practical experience, average out at 18,980 man-days.

What these figures mean in a medieval context is difficult to assess. The Domesday figures for Somerset suggest a fairly scattered population in the western part of the county, and any large labour force would have to be brought to the site, under escort, from some distance away — a task involving problems of guarding, feeding and sheltering. Bad weather, and the need to attend to the land, may have caused fluctuations in the labour force. Once assembled, the labour force may not always have been willing — Hugh de Lacy seems to have been killed when an Irish labourer, digging the castle-ditch at Durrow, turned on him with his shovel! In these circumstances, it would seem unlikely that the motte at Castle Neroche could have been raised in less than 4-6 months: the work may in fact have taken considerably longer. Additional time and labour would have been required for heightening the Period II defences and for adding the barbican at the foot of the motte. Escorting, guarding and overseeing must have absorbed much of the time of the prospective occupants of the new castle, while a corps of woodmen and carpenters would be necessary to fell timber and erect palisades, etc. The castle of Neroche was evidently a major work, intended for a man of some considerable substance.

In conclusion, it may be of interest that a motte was constructed in Oxford as recently as 1931. Under the direction of Sir Arthur Evans, a mound 50 ft. high, with a summit 30 ft. in diameter, was erected by twenty men, using small railway trucks and a tower-crane[53]. The work took nearly three years!

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1 Rev. F. Warre, *in Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.* **5** (1854), 40-48.
2 By Professor E. M. Jope and Dr. C. A. R. Radford.
3 H. St. George Gray in *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.* **9** (1903), 23ff. Gray's excavations were based on the high standards of his mentor, General Pitt-Rivers. His drawn sections in particular were sufficiently comprehensive to be of value when work on the site was resumed more than fifty years later.
4 Until 1821 this road, known as Green Lane, climbed the end of the spur and passed along the east side of the motte. The modern road skirts Castle Neroche to the west, but a branch in the direction of Ilminster follows the line of the outer ditch for some 500 ft. before swinging south-east on the old alignment.
5 The plan is based on a resurvey of the site by the Archaeology Division of the Ordnance Survey, carried out in 1962, with additions and alterations by the writer.
6 The line of the northern defences in Period II, shown in Fig. 4, is based on the evidence from these three trenches.
7 The low elevation of this "counterscarp bank" suggests that it may represent the spoil derived from cleaning out a partly-silted ditch during Period IV, rather than a tactical obstacle built in Period III.
8 A considerable quantity of the North French type of pottery was found incorporated, apparently accidentally, in the material of the heightening at this point. The most likely explanation for this is that the pottery came from a Period II midden in the ditch, and was cast up with the spoil during the heightening process in Period III.
9 Only the unmortared footings were found in 1963. However, in 1903 Gray found fragments of mortared masonry which had rolled down the north and west sides of the motte, while Warre in 1854 noted "traces of a massive wall of strongly cemented masonry" still *in situ* on the summit.
10 Alexander Neckham, writing in the 12th century, states "if a castle is properly built, it should be surrounded by a double ditch (*duplici fossa*)": T. Wright (ed.) A Volume of Vocabularies (1857), 103.
11 Early variants of the name Neroche were collected by Gray, in *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.* **9** (1903). A history of *Staple Fitzpaine and the Forest of Neroche* by Mrs. R. A. Sixsmith was published privately in 1958.
12 Ordnance Survey: *Map of Southern Britain in the Iron Age*, 1962.
13 *The Anglo Saxon Chronicle: A Revised Translation* (ed. D. Whitlock, with D. C. Douglas and S. I. Tucker, 1961), *sub anno* 845, etc. for this and subsequent events.
14 While the levels were by no means impassable at this date, to a newcomer they would appear sufficient to hinder the rapid movement of large bodies of men. *The Domesday Geography of South-West England*, ed. H. C. Darby and R. Welldon Finn (Cambridge, 1967).
15 *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, *sub annis* 1067 and 1068.
16 Ordericus Vitalis, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, ed. A. Le Prévost (Paris, 1838-55) **II**, p. 193.
17 Cartulary of Mont Saint-Michel: Bibliothèque d'Avranches, Ms. 210, folio 33. *Ego Robertus dei gra moritonij comes . . . . habens in bello Sci Michaelis vexillum.*
18 An attempt is made in Appendix A to assess the labour involved in such a work.
19 *Victoria County History of Somerset* **I**, pp. 473-481. *Domesday Geography of South-West England*, ed. H. C. Darby and R. Welldon Finn.
20 J. H. Round, in *V.C.H. Somerset* **I**, p. 409.
21 *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, Ms. E, *sub anno* 1135.
22 *Gesta Stephani*, (Rolls series) 51.
23 Examination in the laboratory showed a pattern typical of a weathered profile, but suggested that the surface in question had not been exposed to weathering for very long.
24 This seems the most reasonable interpretation of Gray's work at this point. The published details inspire a degree of confidence in accepting the drawn section at face value.
25 The bank is shown on Warre's plan of 1854.
26 For this reason, the cobbles (although planned and photographed at the time) are not illustrated here. The original drawings and records of the excavation are deposited with the finds in the Somerset County Museum, Taunton Castle, Taunton.

27 See Fig. 10 and Pl. Ib. It has not been thoughtworth while to specify here the dimensions of the pits (which vary in depth from 13 to 22 ins.) or of the various post-holes.
28 The fabric of these vessels is too homogeneous to be of any help in distinguishing individual vessels. The figure of 167 vessels is therefore based on differences in rim form, diameter, etc.
29 The wall was not found at site K at the east side of the motte, but erosion has been severe at this point in recent times.
30 The acid soils of Castle Neroche have not been kind to the pottery found there, and almost all the sherds are highly eroded. Some of these two hundred and thirty pots are represented by a single rim-sherd, while a great many body-sherds cannot be attributed to any one particular vessel. The total number of pots may in fact be more than two hundred and thirty. A detailed statistical analysis of the pottery would thus be meaningless.
31 By Miss L. Riller, then of the Ancient Monuments Laboratory.
32 R. Borremans and W. Warginaire: *La Céramique d'Andenne* (Rotterdam, 1966). A. Bruijn, in *Berichten van de rijksdienst voor het oudheidkundig bodemonderzoek* **12-13** (1962-3).
33 For Rouen, see K. J. Barton, in *Archaeological Journal* **122** (1965), 73: for Paris, K. J. Barton in *Medieval Archaeology* **10** (1966), 59. For Evreux, unpublished collections in the Musée Municipal and Archives: for Le Mans, unpublished collection in the Musée de Tessé. For Anjou and the Orléanais, see below.
34 M. Guébhard, in *Bulletin de la Société préhistorique de France* 7 (1910), 164.
35 J. Venant, in *Bulletin de la Société archéologique, scientifique et littéraire du Vendomois* **5** (1899), 40.
36 A.-G. Poulain, in *Bulletin de la Société normande d'Etudes préhistoriques* 1930-1, p. 171.
37 H. de Kerville and A.-G. Poulain, in *Bulletin de la Société normande d'Etudes préhistoriques* 1930-31, p. 102.
38 H. Lamiray, in *Bulletin de la Société normande d'Etudes préhistoriques* **28** (1927-9), 125.
39 H. Arbman and M. Ockborn, in *Meddelanden fran Lunds Universitets Historiska Museum* 1966-8, p. 128.
40 J. Decaens, in *Annales de Normandie* **18,** 311 and 346.
41 E. Zadora-Rio in *Château Gaillard* V, (Caen, 1972), 227-39.
42 M. de Bouard, in *Medieval Archaeology* **13** (1970), 117.
43 M. de Bouard and M. Leenhardt, in *Annales de Normandie* **17** (1967), 365 and 383.
44 G. C. Dunning and Aileen Fox, in *Antiquaries Journal* **31** (1951), 180.
45 B. Cunliffe: *Winchester Excavations* 1949-60 **I,** p. 109.
46 D. Renn, in *Medieval Archaeology* **4** (1960), 66.
47 Once again, the eroded condition of the pottery makes it difficult to give an exact figure. In addition, at least forty pots of local type were found by Gray in 1903 in the barbican and on the motte. Some of these may well belong to Period III, but since this cannot be proved they are treated separately (see p. 54).
48 e.g. at Downend, *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.* **55** (1909), 162 and Burrow Mump, *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.* **85** (1939), 95.
49 See, for instance, Jope in *Medieval Archaeology* **2** (1958), p. 129 and fig. 33.
50 See above, p. 50, note 48.
51 Gray's pottery from the 1903 excavations was examined and re-drawn in 1931 by G. C. Dunning. Dr. Dunning's drawings and descriptions are reproduced here with his kind permission.
52 R. J. C. Atkinson, in *Antiquity* **35** (1961), 295.
53 Sir A. Evans, *Jarn Mound, with its panorama and Wild Garden of British Plants* (Oxford, 1933).

Plate Ia. Castle Neroche. General view of the entrance through the Period II earthworks (Site B), from S.E.

Plate Ib. Castle Neroche. General view of Site Ci (Periods II and III), from N.W.

Plate IIa. Castle Neroche. Stone-lined socket for possible "flag-pole" (Period II, Site Cii), from S.W.

Plate IIb. Castle Neroche. Machine-cut trench (Site E), showing the early counterscarp bank sealed below the tail of the later rampart.

Plate IIc. Castle Neroche. The small barbican at the foot of the motte, from S.W. In the foreground, Site G.

Plate IId. Castle Neroche. Site G, from E., showing the turf-line covering the Period II rampart, and the Period III heightening above.

Plate IIIa. Castle Neroche. General view of top of motte during excavation, from S.E.

Plate IIIb. Castle Neroche. The footings of the "shell-keep" at the S.E. side of the summit area of the motte, from N.E.

Plate IIIc. Castle Neroche. The footings of the "curtain wall" at the N.W. side of the summit area of the motte, from S.W.

Plate IIId. Lufton Villa. Southern end of corridor, room 1.