

# EXCAVATIONS ON IRON AGE AND ROMANO-BRITISH SETTLEMENTS AT CANNARDS GRAVE, SHEPTON MALLET

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## SUMMARY

Investigations ahead of construction of a new road intersection at Cannards Grave, Somerset, revealed traces of Late Neolithic–Early Bronze Age and Middle–Late Bronze Age activity in the area. The main phase of prehistoric occupation comprised the remains of four Middle Iron Age roundhouses varying in diameter from 10–14m and many associated features. This appeared to be the remains of a single, probably short-lived, settlement dated to between 500 and 300 BC.

These remains were partly overlain by deposits of Romano-British date representing five phases of occupation from the early–mid 2nd century AD until the late 4th century or early 5th century AD. The Romano-British remains, which appear to represent some form of ancillary enclosure, possibly industrial, to the south of the main area of settlement (as revealed by earlier excavations in 1990) included the southern boundary of the settlement, extensive cobbled surfaces, a masonry structure, the function of which is uncertain, drystone walls, drainage gullies, a well, a metalled trackway and stone quarries.

## INTRODUCTION

### PROJECT BACKGROUND

Somerset County Council contracted Wessex Archaeology to undertake an archaeological excavation ahead of improvement works on the Cannards Grave road junction, to the south of Shepton Mallet (centred on ST 62700 42150). The area affected by the roadworks comprised the main site (Area 1) which covered 0.6ha between the Whitstone Road (A37) and Fosse Lane and lay within a Scheduled Monument (SM 22803), and a second area (Area 2) of 0.8ha to the

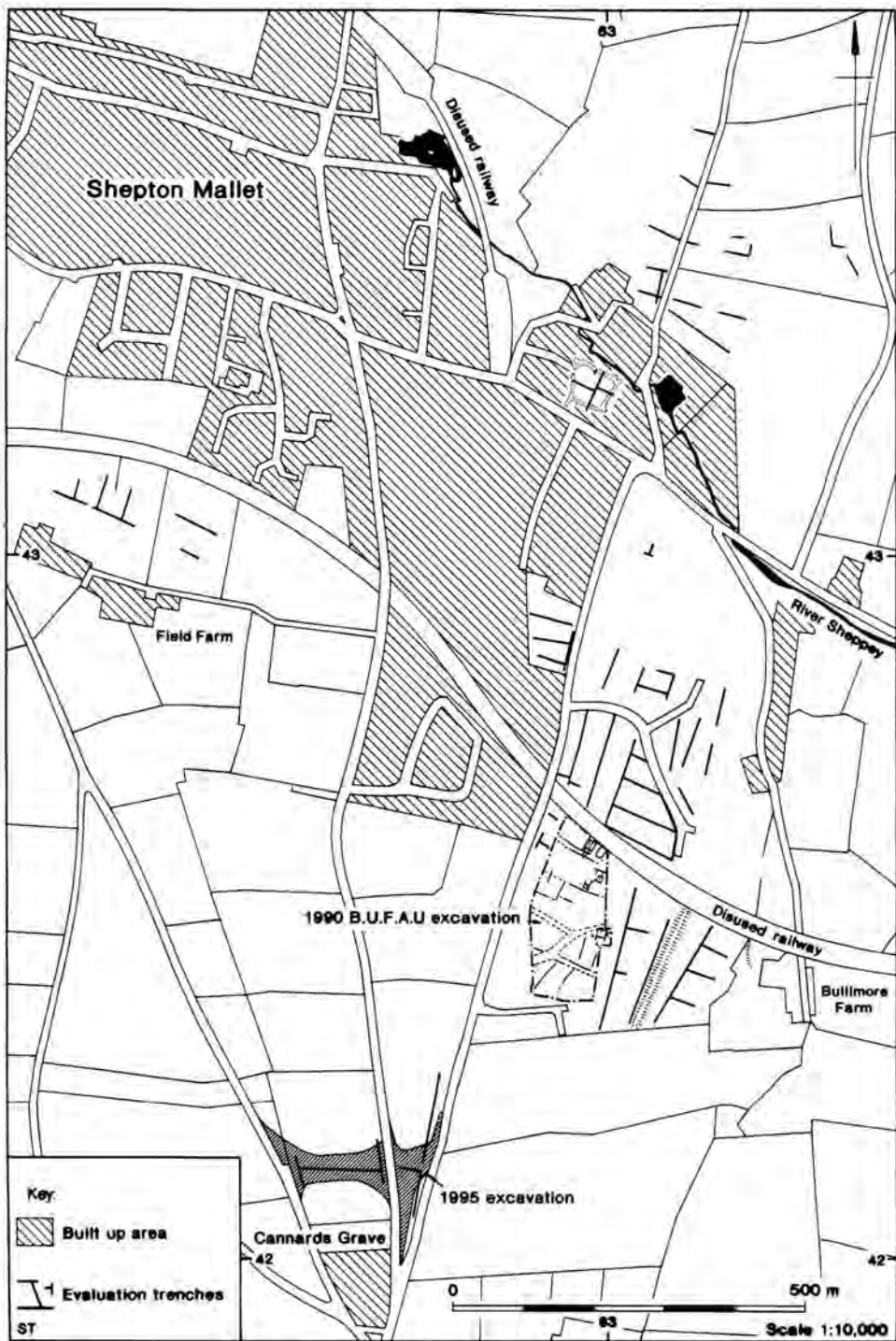


Fig. 1 Site location and archaeological background

west of Whitstone Road (A37) and adjacent to Cannards Grave Road (A371), which lay outside the scheduled area (Fig. 1).

To assess the nature of possible remains on the site Somerset County Council commissioned the Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit (BUFAU) to undertake an evaluation. The evaluation, comprising a combination of machine excavated trenches and geophysical survey on the main site, discovered a number of prehistoric ditches and Iron Age deposits in addition to Romano-British occupation deposits. The road design was altered to avoid as many of these features as possible.

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The prolonged exploitation and occupation of the Brue valley, 14–20km to the south-west of Cannards Grave, throughout the later prehistoric period is well attested in the work of the Somerset Levels Project (e.g. Coles 1989) and others. The exploitation of these low-lying wetlands appears to have begun soon after their formation in the Early Neolithic period and continued, apparently unbroken, until the Romano-British period.

Although no monuments of Neolithic date are known in the general vicinity of Shepton Mallet, diagnostic flintwork of this date has been recovered from many of the excavations and evaluations in this area (Webster and Croft 1991). The light, fertile and well-drained rendzina soils of the limestone uplands in this area would have been favoured for agriculture and settlement in the Neolithic period.

Settlement and exploitation of the area in the Bronze Age can be assumed from the presence of several round barrows on the higher ground to the north and east; at Clover Farm c. 3km to the east of the site, at Ingsdons Hill c. 1.8km to the north-east and at Beacon Hill c. 4km to the north.

Features of Iron Age date have been recorded in a number of locations in the immediate vicinity of Shepton Mallet. An evaluation by BUFAU encountered the remains of a small enclosed settlement at Field Farm (Webster and Croft 1991), approximately 1km to the north-west of Cannards Grave. Other features of possible Iron Age date were recorded at Woodlands Farm c. 1.4km to the north (*ibid.*). Finds of Iron Age pottery have also been made at many of the sites recently investigated and others within a 1km radius of the site (Leach 1990a).

During the Iron Age the area around Shepton Mallet would probably have been within the tribal territory of the Dobunni (Cunliffe 1991) close to its proposed southern border along the river Brue. It is probable that small communities owed political allegiance to local strongholds such as the hillfort at Maesbury some 5.5km to the north.

Roman remains have been known in the Shepton Mallet area for many years. The town lies on the Fosse Way, a major Roman road which crosses the River Sheppey here, almost equidistant from the Roman settlements of Ilchester (*Lindinis*) to the south and Camerton to the north (Fig. 2).

A pottery kiln of Roman date was recorded in 1866 during the construction of the Anglo-Bavarian Brewery. A large Roman building was revealed during the construction of the railway in 1887, close to where it crossed the Fosse Way (Leach 1991). In 1988 a lead coffin was discovered in fields to the east of Fosse Lane by a metal detectorist (*ibid.*). This find, together with other material of Roman date led to large-scale excavations in 1990. These revealed a system of lanes, apparently running from the Fosse Way and enclosing properties, many of which were surrounded by stone walls. The remains of several masonry buildings were also revealed, as were further burials, one of which is the earliest certain Christian burial so far identified in Britain (Leach 1990a). A further area to the north of the 1990 excavations was excavated in 1996 (Ellis and Leach 2000).

The nearest known settlements of comparable size are at Camerton to the north, which is a very similar roadside settlement, and Charterhouse, a mining settlement to the north-west. Other

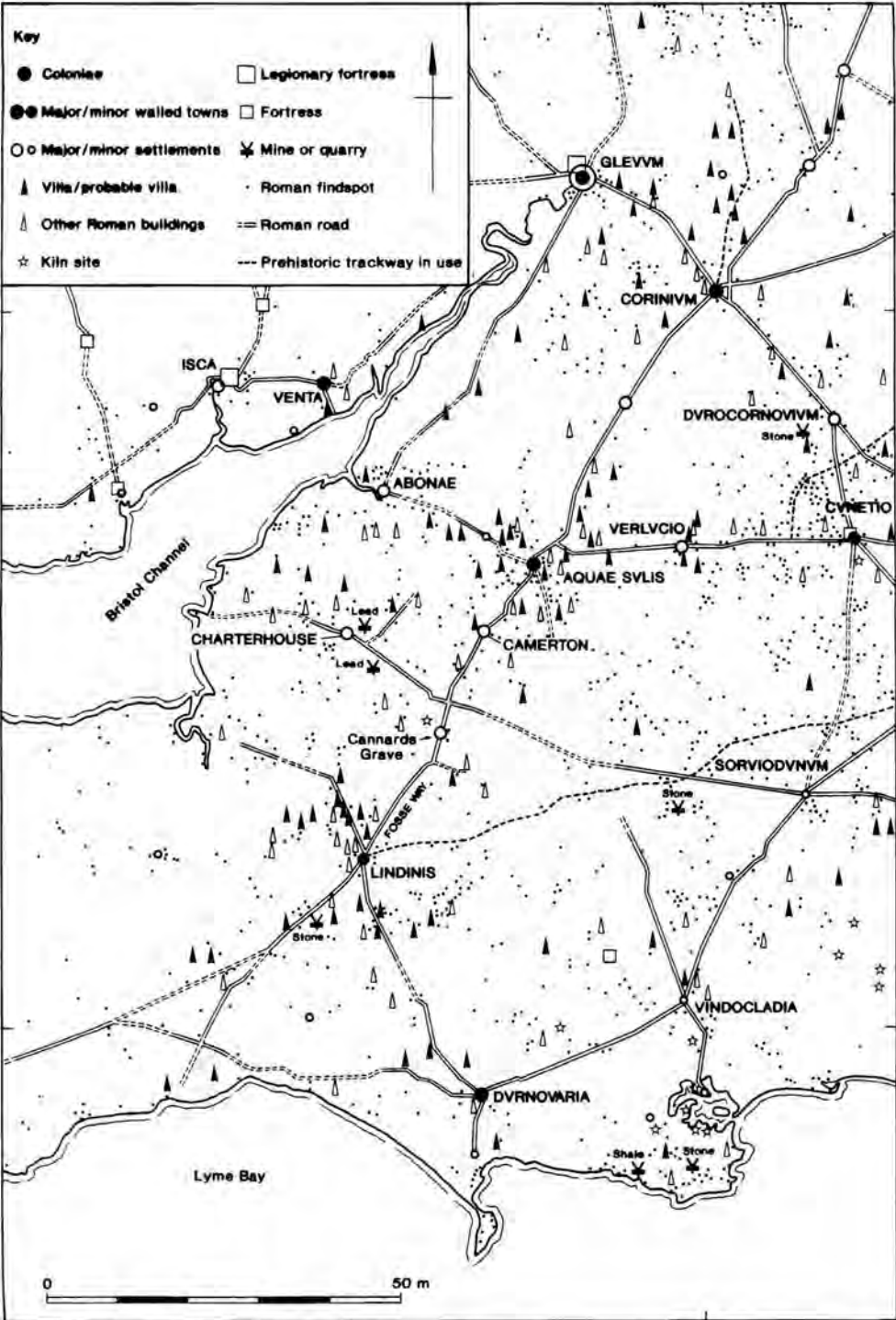


Fig. 2 Known Romano-British sites and find spots in the Somerset area (after Ordnance Survey 1956)

known Romano-British sites in the area include the hilltop temple on Lamyatt Beacon *c.* 16km to the south-east and stone quarries at Doultling some 5km to the east. No villas are known in the vicinity and the wealthy landowning aristocracy that they represent are unlikely to have lived in a small settlement like that at Shepton. The regional centre of government was probably at the walled town of Ilchester *c.* 22km along the Fosse Way to the south-west.

The Romano-British settlement would have functioned as a supply and exchange centre for the farms and hamlets in the surrounding area. Although quarrying, mining and the manufacturing of pottery, tools, clothing etc would have played a role in the local economy, the production of crops, livestock and their products would probably have been predominant.

#### GEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The site lies on a limestone plateau on the south-eastern fringes of the Mendip Hills, *c.* 0.5km to the south of Shepton Mallet, which mostly lies in the steep-sided valley of the river Sheppey. The plateau, which sweeps around the southern edge of Shepton Mallet, is between 1.5 and 2km wide and lies at approximately 165m OD.

To the east the landscape is dominated by the ridge of Doultling Sheep Sleight and Whitstone Hill, which rises 40–50m above the plateau. To the west the land does not undulate by more than 5m over a distance of 1km. Approximately 1.2km to the south of the site the land falls steeply, by some 50m, to the flat upper valley of the Whitelake, which drains into the Somerset levels to the west.

The local geology of the site, beneath the topsoil, comprises a limestone pavement with outcrops of solid limestone bedrock. The limestones appeared to be the top of the Blue Lias as recorded in the (now filled) railway cutting *c.* 400–500m to the south-south-east (D. Donovan pers. comm.; Donovan 1958).

The limestones immediately below the soil horizons were weathered by solution with rounded edges and widened joints and bedding. Calcite-filled ammonites and other shell debris stood proud. The top surfaces of the limestones were rough and pitted.

A clay-filled fault, aligned approximately north–south, was also encountered running approximately parallel with the eastern limit of excavation. Stiff khaki-green clays were juxtaposed with the limestones and marked the line of the fault. A red iron-enriched contact some 0.5m wide was noted in the clays next to the limestones. Minor north-south faults have been reported in recent British Geological Survey mapping south of Cannards Grave (Bristow and Westhead 1993). These faults may be associated with north-north-west–south-south-east strike slip movement and may have a bearing on the pattern of joints.

#### METHODS

The entire area of the proposed road junction improvements was stripped of topsoil by a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket under constant archaeological supervision. Area 2, to the west of Whitstone Road (A37), was dealt with first, no significant archaeological discoveries being made there. The only features encountered within this area were modern land drains and a single short length of ditch, which excavation proved to be of post-medieval date. In contrast, the northern section of Area 1 was observed to contain a high density of archaeological features, of both prehistoric and Romano-British date.

The features and deposits encountered in Area 1 were confined to the north-western end. It was consequently decided that detailed examination of the site would be confined to this area. Roughly 3000m<sup>2</sup> of the northern section of Area 1 were cleaned by hand (Fig. 3). All features and deposits revealed were recorded textually, graphically and photographically using the Wessex



Archaeology *pro forma* recording system and a minimum of 50% of each feature was excavated by hand. A suite of environmental samples was also taken. In addition all deposits were also recorded photogrammetrically to ensure compatibility with the archives for the 1990 excavations.

Although the field within which Area 1 was situated had not been ploughed within living memory, deeply incised ploughmarks were noted on the upper surfaces of many of the masonry settings. This and the rather mixed nature of many of the deposits exposed by machining showed that ploughing during the post-Roman period has done considerable damage to the upstanding archaeological remains and deposits.

The mechanical removal of the relatively stone-free, mid-brown, silty clay loam topsoil, which varied from 0.2–0.3m in depth, exposed the limestone pavement and, towards the extreme north-east end of the site, spreads of stone rubble and soil which contained large quantities of pottery, animal bone and other debris of human origin. These presumably represent the plough-disturbed remains of Romano-British occupation.

These deposits were removed by hand to the surface of what appeared to be undisturbed deposits. The position of all metal objects recovered from these deposits was recorded in three dimensions using a Total Station Theodolite (TST), as were subsequent small finds from stratified deposits.

## THE EXCAVATION

The irregular, horizontally bedded nature of the limestone pavement and the frequent solid limestone outcrops which occurred within this created many difficulties in distinguishing natural solution hollows and faults from archaeological features. Even when excavated the status of some of the features remained in doubt.

The nature of the limestone pavement also affected the form of many of the archaeological features. Very few features were cut into the solid bedrock, consequently nearly all of the negative features were encountered on the limestone pavement or on the clay fill of the fault and the best preserved of the features were in areas where the pavement was at its thickest. Linear features which cut the pavement terminated where they encountered solid bedrock, although in some cases they could be discerned continuing as slight discolorations running across the bedrock. In other cases the continuity of these linear features could only be assumed on the basis of the similarity of fills, alignment and dating. The very irregular form of many of the features is probably also a product of the nature of the pavement. Any interpretation or assessment of the features and the possible structures that they represent must take into account these factors.

In addition to residual Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age material recovered from later features, the excavation revealed three general phases of activity on the site: Middle/Late Bronze Age, in the form of a single large pit and a heavily truncated ditch; a small Middle Iron Age settlement which appears to represent a single phase of occupation; and the southern edge of a large Romano-British settlement. The Romano-British remains can be further sub-divided into five phases of construction and/or alteration.

### LATE NEOLITHIC/EARLY BRONZE AGE

Although no features or deposits of Neolithic or early Bronze Age date were encountered during the excavation, traces of Neolithic and early Bronze Age activity, in the form of Grooved Ware pottery and worked flint, were recovered from the topsoil and from features of a later date.

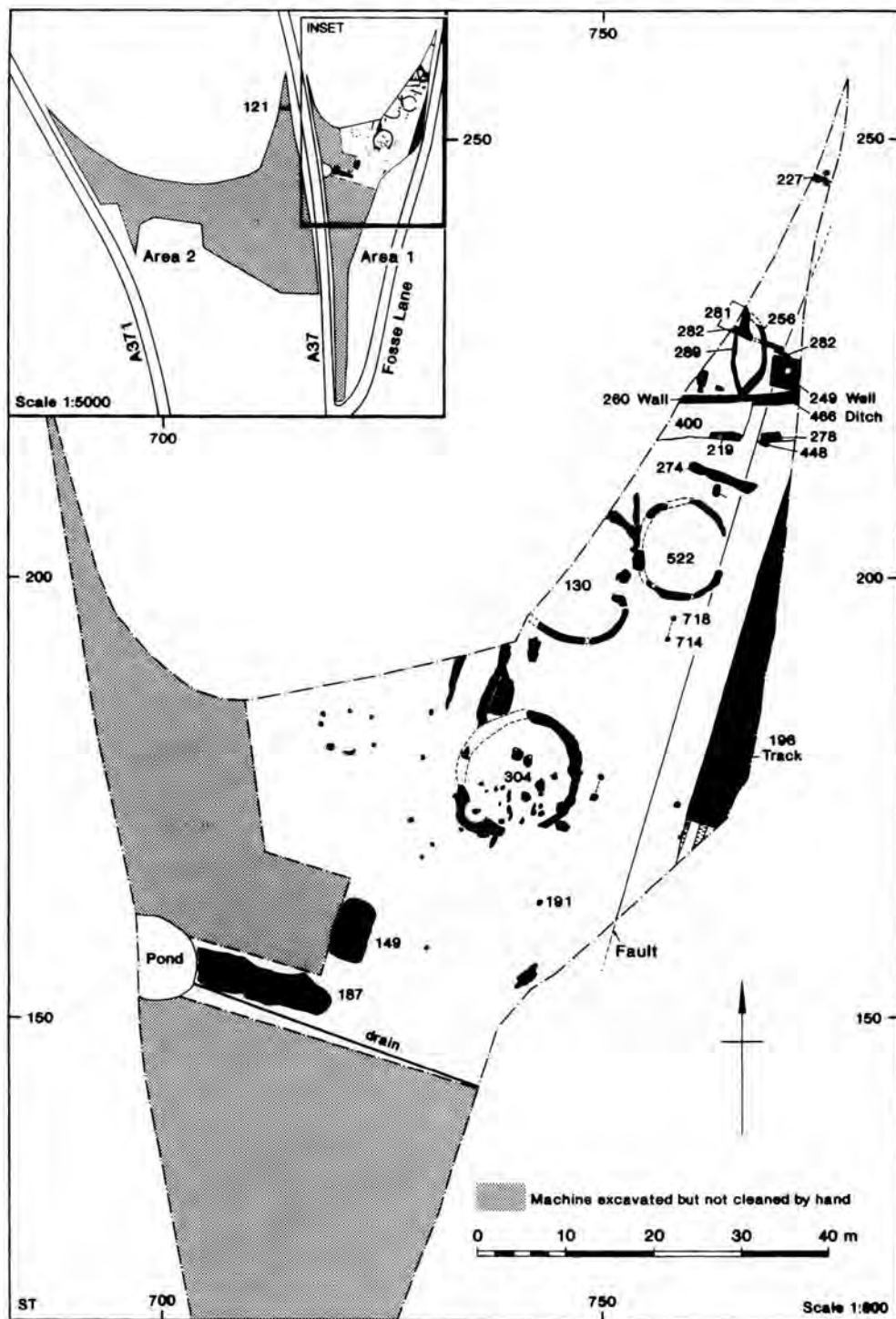


Fig. 3 General site plan showing all features

## MIDDLE/LATE BRONZE AGE

The earliest features encountered on the site were of possible Middle/Late Bronze Age date. These comprised a large sub-rectangular pit and a shallow linear feature (Fig. 4). However, pottery of this date was recovered from several later features.

Pit 123, which contained two distinct fills was 4.45m long, 2.6m wide and 0.3m deep. The primary fill comprised a yellowish brown sandy clay 0.05m thick from which a single sherd of pottery datable to this period was recovered. A single sherd of possible Collared Urn and a small assemblage of worked flint was recovered from the secondary fill. The single sherd of Iron Age pottery which was also recovered from this context almost certainly derived from the later ditch which partly truncated the western side of this feature.

Environmental samples taken from these contexts produced small quantities of charred seeds and charcoal. The seeds included wheat, hulled barley and bread wheat while the charcoal has been identified as oak, blackthorn, hawthorn and willow/poplar.

Approximately 4m to the west of this was a small ditch, 0.9m wide and up to 0.2m deep, on a roughly north-south alignment (517). This was traced from the limit of excavation for c. 6m southwards where it became progressively narrower until it petered out. However, as the limestone pavement was becoming shallower towards the south and solid bedrock was outcropping through it at the point where the feature terminated, slight discolorations of the bedrock indicate that it may originally have continued southwards, but has since been destroyed by ploughing.

A single sherd of Middle/Late Bronze Age pottery was the only datable find recovered from this feature, although its alignment parallel with ditch 147, dated to the Middle Iron Age, may indicate that this was a residual find.

## MIDDLE IRON AGE

The most extensive phase of prehistoric occupation appears to be a small Middle Iron Age settlement datable to between the 5th and 3rd century BC, probably, with only one definite exception, representing a single phase of occupation. This comprised the remains of four circular structures varying from 10 to 14m in diameter and a number of associated features.

*PIT 334/363* (Fig. 4 and Fig. 5, section A)

A single large pit (334/363), from which Middle Iron Age pottery was recovered, was the only feature of this date which could be proven to predate any of the other Iron Age features. This was cut by the western side of the penannular ditch which comprises structure 304. Due to this truncation the original form and dimensions of this feature were difficult to discern. It appears, however, to have been a large sub-rectangular pit c. 7m long, 2.5m wide and up to 0.28m in depth. It could be that this is the remains of more than one feature, but the fills encountered on either side of the later ditch appeared identical.

The upper (secondary) fill of this pit could only be distinguished from the upper fill of 304 by its slightly darker colour and marginally less abundant coarse components. The pottery recovered was not noticeably different from the assemblages recovered from the other Iron Age features, suggesting that this does not predate them by any great length of time.

*STRUCTURE 304* (Fig. 4, Fig 5, sections A, B and C)

This structure comprised a penannular ditch, c. 14m in diameter. The dimensions and profile of this ditch varied considerably due to the nature of the limestone pavement, but the average depth was 0.4m and the width 0.7m. It was excavated in 13 segments in order to examine the distribution of artefacts and ecofacts within the structure (sections through segments 332, 347



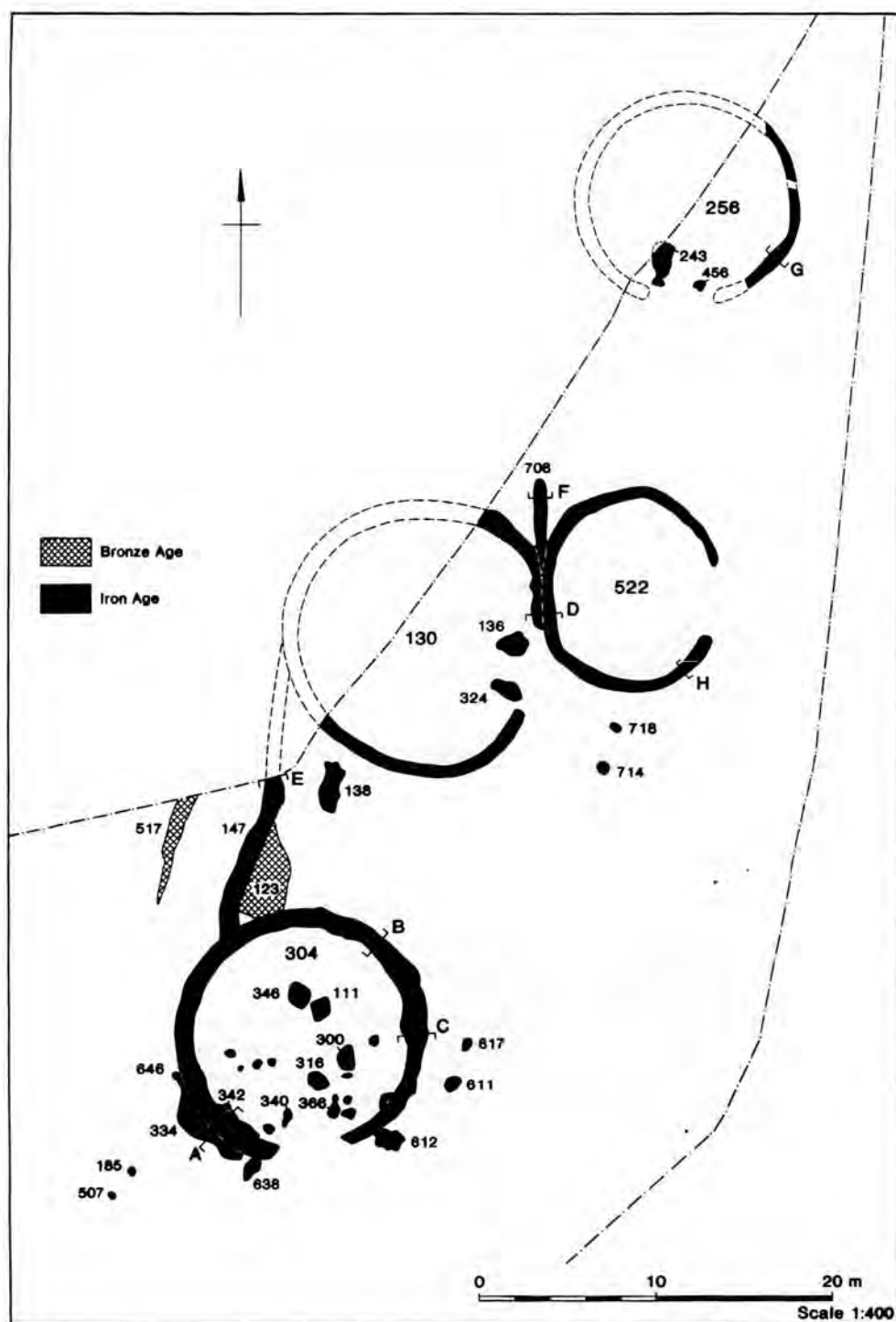


Fig. 4 Phase plan: Bronze Age and Iron Age features

and 379 are illustrated). Apart from a slight concentration of material around the south-facing entrance, however, no significant distribution of material was noted. The primary fill comprised an orange/brown sandy clay with an average depth of 0.06m. Very large quantities of pottery and animal bone were recovered from the secondary fill, a dark brown, silty clay with abundant local stone inclusions. Some 66 fragments of fired clay, likely to be of structural origin were recovered, together with a single annular glass bead (Fig. 21.8).

Two small pits (340 and 366, Fig. 6) approximately 1m in from the south-facing entrance were assumed to be settings for a pair of door-posts. The western side of this structure cut pit 334/363, described above. Several pits and postholes within, and immediately outside, the structure were assumed to be contemporary with it. No clear relationship with ditch 147 (see below) could be discerned, but this is also assumed to be contemporary with the structure.

#### *STRUCTURE 130* (Fig. 4, Fig. 5, section D)

This structure comprised two lengths of curvilinear ditch which continued beyond the western limit of excavation. This was assumed to be the eastern side of a penannular ditch *c.* 14m in diameter. The southern length of ditch was very shallow, due to the nature of the underlying bedrock which outcropped through the limestone pavement in this area, and in places survived only as a discoloration on the surface of the solid bedrock. The northern length of ditch was more substantial, cutting through the limestone pavement to a depth of up to 0.17m.

The relationship between this feature and structure 522 could not be definitively proven, a segment excavated through the apparent point of intersection (144) detected no discernable relationship. It appears that these structures are probably contemporary with one another and with the short length of ditch which extended to the north (708).

Within the east-facing entrance were two large pits (136 and 324) which appear to be settings for a pair of substantial door-posts. This interpretation seems to be confirmed by the presence of local stones set vertically within the fills, presumably post packing, although no post pipes could be discerned within the features.

Feature 324 appeared to cut an earlier similar feature (312). This may be the remains of an earlier posthole with the later feature a repair, or alternatively it may be that 312 is in fact part of a natural fissure (properly called a gull) within the limestone pavement.

#### *STRUCTURE 522* (Fig. 4, Fig. 5, section H)

Structure 522 comprised an irregular penannular ditch *c.* 10.5m in diameter with an east-facing entrance. The western side of this was cut into the limestone pavement, while the eastern side cut into the clay-filled fault. The profile of the ditch was broad and shallow with vertical sides where it was cut into the limestone pavement, but narrower with a V-shaped profile where it cut into the clay (Fig. 5, section H, segment 529).

Damage caused by ploughing appears to have disturbed the upper part of this feature and much of the Romano-British metallurgy which partly overlay it. This damage also appears to have caused a mixing of the Iron Age and Romano-British deposits which has caused Romano-British material to intrude into the upper fills of the penannular ditch.

No internal features were found, although possible post settings were noted within the ditch itself.

#### *STRUCTURE 256* (Fig. 4, Fig. 5, section G)

Structure 256 comprised a shallow curvilinear ditch truncated to the north by culvert 282 (Romano-British phase 4) and to the south by gully 289 (Romano-British phase 3); most of the feature was also physically sealed below later metalled surfaces and associated bedding layers.

The form of this feature (*c.* 0.65m wide and 0.3m deep) suggests that this could be the truncated remains of a penannular ditch. Although heavily truncated, enough remains to suggest

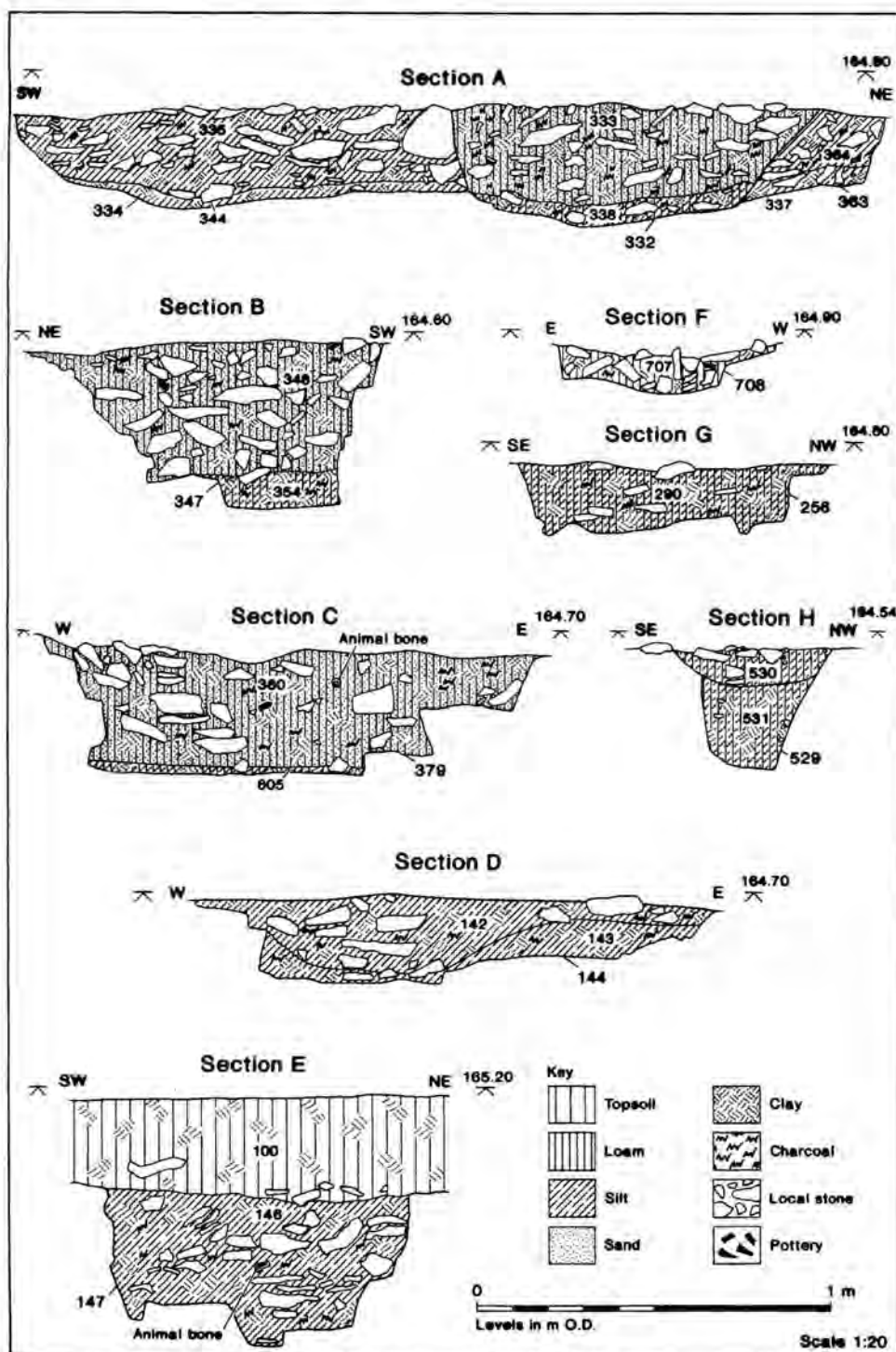


Fig. 5 Sections through Iron Age ditches

a diameter of c. 11–12m, a similar size to those structures already described, and the possible remains of two post settings (243 and 456), similar to those encountered within structures 130 and 304, indicate that this feature probably had a south-facing entrance.

Feature 243 was shallow, irregular, 2.9m long and 1.25m wide, the depth varying from 0.05m at the northern end to 0.27m at the southern end. The rather odd 'keyhole' shape of this feature may be due to the nature of the limestone pavement which it was cut into, although it is possible that it represents two separate features, a posthole to the south and a shallow pit to the north. Posthole 456, which contained a definite post pipe and packing, was approximately 0.23m in diameter and 0.23m deep and was sealed below a metal surface of Romano-British date.

#### *THE PITS*

Three pits were located within structure 304 along with an irregular feature (300) which appeared to be natural in origin. Several other features which may have been small pits or large postholes were also recorded both within and immediately outside the structure. An isolated pit of Middle Iron Age date (138) was located approximately 1m to the south of structure 130.

##### *Pit 111 (Figs 4 and 6)*

This small sub circular pit within structure 304 was cut into the limestone pavement to the level of solid bedrock and was 1.2m long, 1m wide and 0.4m deep with vertical sides and flat base. This contained three distinct fills, the primary fill (326) comprised a thin layer of yellowish-brown, silty clay, possibly the result of natural silting. The secondary fill (314) contained large quantities of charcoal, animal bone and pottery, and two worked bone objects (Fig. 21.1, 2) were also recovered. The tertiary fill (318) comprised a yellowish-brown, silty clay loam from which small quantities of pottery and animal bone were recovered.

##### *Pit 346 (Figs 4 and 6)*

Immediately to the north-east of pit 111 a sub-rectangular pit (346) was cut into the limestone pavement to the level of natural bedrock. This was 2m long, 1.2m wide and 0.35m deep. It also contained three distinct fills, the two lower fills contained small quantities of animal bone and pottery, but the upper fill (327) produced much larger quantities of both. A complete limestone spindlewhorl (Fig. 21.9) was also recovered from this context. Later, probably modern, disturbance possibly an animal burrow, partly truncated the upper fill.

##### *Pit 316 (Figs 4 and 6)*

This small irregular/sub-rectangular pit was located within structure 304 approximately 1m to the north of the presumed entrance. This was cut into the limestone pavement to the surface of solid bedrock and measured approximately 1.1m by 0.77m and was 0.34m deep with vertical sides and an irregular base. Although very little was recovered from either of its two fills a single small sherd of Iron Age pottery was found in the primary fill.

##### *Pit 138 (Fig. 4)*

This small sub-rectangular pit, which was 2.8m long and 1m wide, was located approximately 1m to the south of structure 130. The limestone pavement in this area was very shallow and as a consequence the pit had a maximum depth of only 0.16m. In addition to pottery of Middle Iron Age date a quantity of redeposited human bone was also recovered from this feature, comprising the remains of a single individual, a juvenile, c. 12% of the skeleton being represented.

#### *THE POSTHOLES*

Several sub-rectangular to oval features, which were assumed to be postholes, were excavated within structure 304, some of which contained vertical stones interpreted as the remains of post

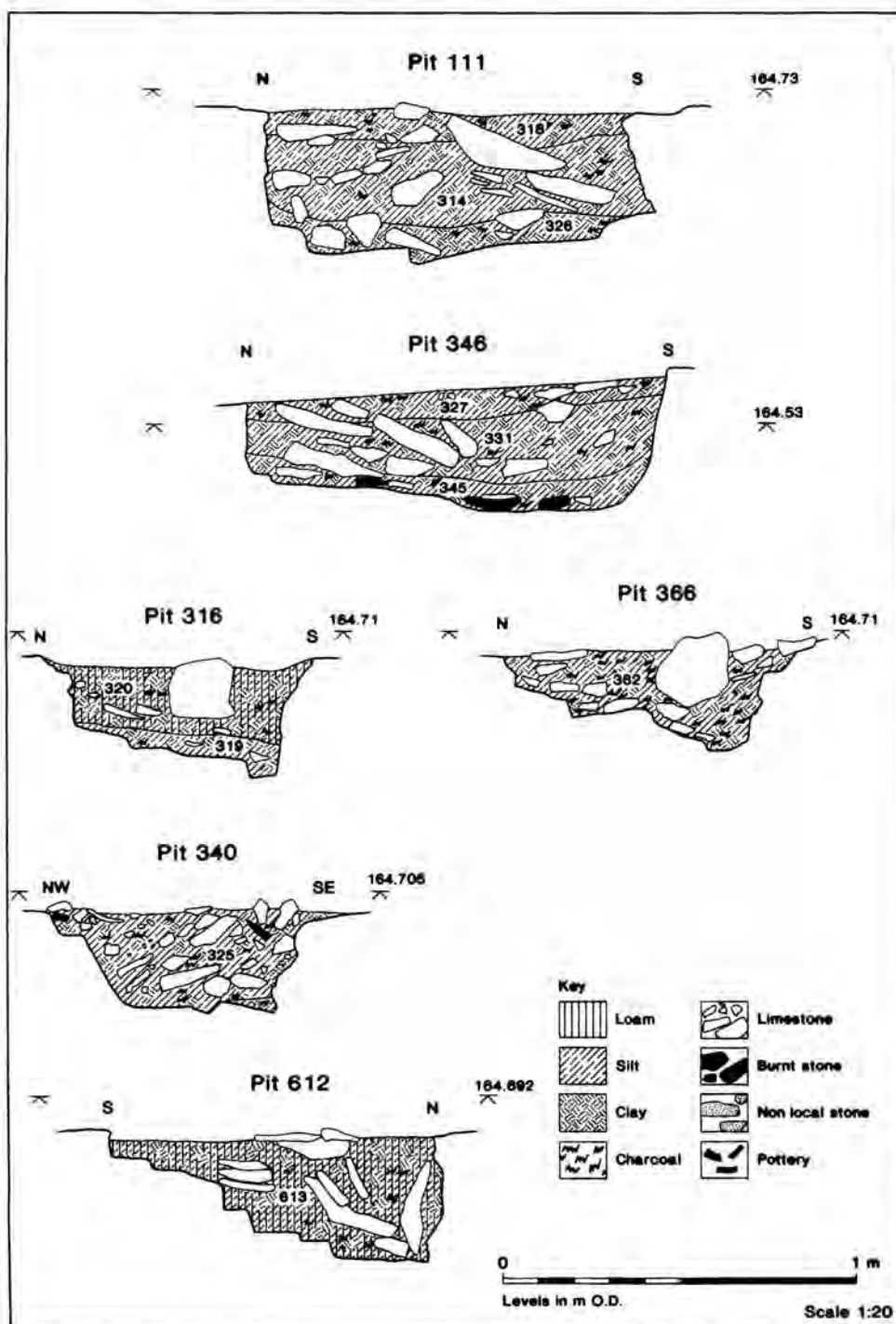


Fig. 6 Sections through Iron Age pits



packing. Datable material recovered from these features indicates that these are likely to be contemporary with the structure.

Features 366 and 340 (Figs 4 and 6) appear to represent the post settings of a possible porch immediately inside the south-facing entrance, however, no post pipes or definite post packing were discerned within any of these features.

A single small posthole (646, Fig. 4) on the external western side of structure 304 may be associated with this structure. Like 304 it cuts the upper fill of pit 334/363, although its function is unclear and it may be totally unrelated to the structure.

Several further postholes were recorded in the area around the Iron Age structures, very few of which contained datable finds. These were assumed to be broadly contemporary with the structures and pits.

Feature 612 (Figs 4 and 6) was located immediately outside structure 304 to the east of the eastern terminal of the ditch. This very irregular feature was 1.6m long, 0.9m wide with a maximum depth of 0.35m. Possible vertical settings of stones within the feature may indicate that this was a posthole. This was 'mirrored' by feature 638 immediately to the south of the western terminal.

Feature 638 (Fig. 4) measured 1.05m by 0.6m and was 0.2m deep with a single reddish-brown, silty clay loam fill which contained 23 sherds of Middle Iron Age pottery. This feature was slightly smaller and shallower than feature 612 which it appears to mirror and did not contain any possible post packing. However, the rough symmetry about the entrance of structure 304 possibly indicates that these two features are related, although their function is uncertain.

#### *Post-built structures*

Post-built structures have been recognised on many Iron Age sites in the form of two-post 'drying racks', rectangular structures of four, six or more posts and circular huts, all of which are common features found on settlement sites of this period. The distribution of the Iron Age and undated postholes encountered, which did not appear to be elements of the circular structures, was examined in an attempt to discern such structures. Three possible two-post structures were identified due to their isolation from the other groups of postholes, and these are described below. The majority of the postholes, however, cannot be related to the structures and their function is unknown.

Postholes 611 and 617 (Fig. 4) appear to form a possible two-post structure aligned north-south c. 2m to the east of structure 304. The two postholes are of comparable size (approximately 0.75m–0.85m in diameter and between 0.2m and 0.25m deep) and are set 2.3m apart. Both are cut into the limestone pavement and have no relationships with other features.

A second possible two-post structure was formed by postholes 714 and 718 (Fig. 4), set approximately 2.2m apart. This was also aligned roughly north-south and was c. 2m to the south of structure 522.

The final possible two-post structure was formed by postholes 185 and 507 (Fig. 4). This was on an approximately north-east to south-west alignment c. 5m to the south-west of structure 304. The two postholes are of comparable size, approximately 0.4m in diameter and between 0.18m and 0.22m deep, and are set 2m apart. Both are cut into the limestone pavement and have no relationships with other features.

#### *Ditches*

Two short lengths of ditch datable to the Middle Iron Age were encountered (147 and 708). Although no definite relationships with other features of this date were observed, they are both assumed to be contemporary with the circular structures on the basis of similarity of fills.

Ditch 147 (Fig. 4 and Fig. 5, section E) was aligned approximately north-south, roughly parallel with ditch 517 c. 4m to the west, and was traced for 9.3m from its intersection with

structure 304 to the limit of excavation. This was a rather irregular feature, probably due to the nature of the limestone pavement into which it was cut, however, it averaged 1m in width and was up to 0.35m in depth. Occasional apparent settings of vertical local stone fragments were noted at irregular intervals, varying from 0.35m to 1.2m, along its length, although no definite post pipes could be discerned.

Ditch 708 (Fig. 4 and Fig. 5, section F) extended northwards from its intersection with structures 130 and 522 for 3.6m before terminating, possibly due to the outcrop of solid bedrock encountered at this point. On average it was 0.6m wide and 0.1m deep.

#### ROMANO-BRITISH

Most of the Romano-British features and deposits were confined to the north-eastern corner of the site. The exceptions to this were two presumed stone quarries (149 and 187) towards the centre of Area 1 and a small trackway along the eastern side of the same area (196).

##### *ROMANO-BRITISH PHASE 1: EARLY–MID 2ND CENTURY AD (Fig. 7)*

The earliest phase of Romano-British activity encountered on the site comprised a single ditch (466). This was aligned approximately east–west and was traced from the eastern limit of excavation for c. 6m to where it was cut by a large phase 2 ditch or quarry, the northern side of which appeared to follow the same alignment. Ditch 466 was 1.5m wide and 0.7m deep with moderately sloping (c. 45°) straight sides and a fairly flat base (Fig. 9, section I).

This was presumably a property or field boundary, the alignment of which appears to have been re-established by a phase 3 dry stone wall constructed over the fills of the ditch (466) and also over the phase 2 fills of ditch/quarry pit 400 (see below).

The small assemblage of coarseware pottery recovered from the fills of this feature could only be broadly dated to the 2nd century AD or later. A single sherd of an Oxfordshire ware mortarium, datable to AD 240 or later, which was also recovered was probably derived from the construction of the overlying phase 3 wall.

##### *ROMANO-BRITISH PHASE 2: LATE 2ND–EARLY 3RD CENTURY AD (Fig. 7)*

The western end of the phase 1 ditch was totally truncated by a very large ditch or, more probably, quarry pit (400) which extended c. 9m from the western limit of excavation to its terminal. This was approximately 5.2m wide and up to 1.1m deep, cutting into the solid bedrock. The deepest part of this feature was in the terminal, and it became substantially shallower to the west, although the width remained fairly uniform (Fig. 9, sections J and K). The northern side of this feature appeared to follow the same alignment as the phase 1 ditch.

This feature appears to have been left to silt up naturally, a long process extending from phase 2 to phase 4. The silting is represented by a relatively sterile sandy clay fill with frequent clay lenses (266 and 441), partly truncated by the construction cut (261) for a later drystone wall (260: see below).

A relatively small assemblage of finds was recovered from the phase 2 fills comprising 22 sherds of pottery, 23 fragments of animal bone, two iron nails, two fragments of oyster shell and a single fragment of tile. Most of the pottery could be only broadly dated to the 2nd century AD or later, although two sherds of more closely datable samian ware indicate a late 2nd century AD date.

##### *ROMANO-BRITISH PHASE 3: LATE 3RD–EARLY 4TH CENTURY AD (Fig. 7 and Fig. 9, sections J and K)*

The third phase of Romano-British activity is represented by the construction of a drystone wall (260) above the fills of the phase 1 ditch (466) and above the phase 2 silting within the phase 2 ditch/quarry pit (400). This wall was traced for c. 14m as it ran approximately east–

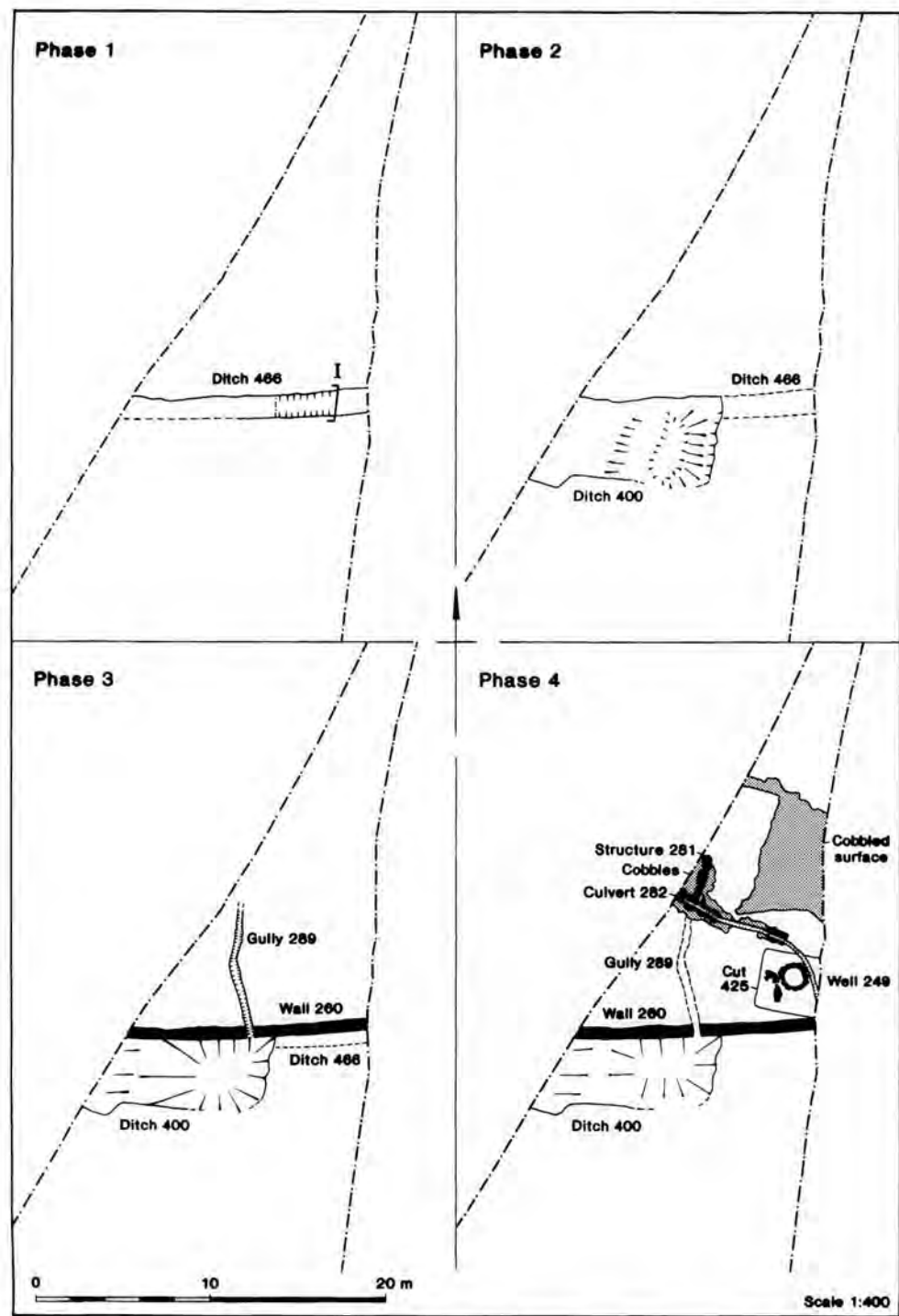


Fig. 7 Romano-British phases 1-4

west across the entire width of the site and survived to a maximum height of 0.55m within the phase 2 ditch. Construction cut (261) was cut into the phase 2 silting of ditch/quarry pit 400 in order to provide a level surface on which to build the wall, a bedding layer (263) was then laid down and the wall was constructed on this. Towards the eastern side of the site the wall was constructed directly onto the secondary fill of the phase 1 ditch.

A small aperture was made in the wall so that a small gully (289) could feed into the large phase 2 ditch. Contexts 242 and 240 represent the backfilling of the construction cut. The phase 3 silting is represented by a greenish grey humic silty clay deposit with occasional greyish-brown clay lenses (264, 239, 238, 420 and 234), some of which at least is presumably derived from material flowing in from gully 289. These fills were sealed below the later dumping/collapse represented by (220) and in turn sealed the phase 2 silting deposits.

Large assemblages of pottery and animal bone were recovered from these deposits (264, 239, 238, 420 and 234) including New Forest Colour Coated ware, dated to AD 320–50. An almost complete, though fragmentary, samian vessel (Fig. 19.2) and a stamped amphora handle datable to the late 2nd or early 3rd century (Fig. 19.3) are presumably residual here.

The gully, which was aligned approximately north-south, cut through the possible penannular ditch (structure 256) and was in turn truncated at its northern end by the phase 4 masonry culvert (282).

#### *ROMANO-BRITISH PHASE 4: EARLY–MID 4TH CENTURY AD (Fig. 7)*

The fourth phase of construction is represented by the construction of a masonry structure of uncertain function, a surrounding masonry culvert and extensive cobbled surfaces. A stone-lined well was constructed either during or before this phase of building. The phase 3 dry stone wall was demolished, or collapsed, and the large phase 2 ditch became completely filled either during or after this phase. The small metalled trackway which ran along the eastern side of the area is also included in this phase on the basis of its general date, although no relationships with phased deposits were observed.

At the extreme western side of the site two low masonry walls (279 and 280) were set at right angles to form the south-eastern corner of a structure (281) which continued beyond the western limit of excavation. These comprised single courses of unmortared, roughly dressed Douling sandstone blocks of considerable size (up to 0.95 x 0.55 x 0.3m) laid directly onto the limestone bedrock. Neither of these walls showed any signs that they may have supported further courses of masonry or any other form of superstructure. As no trace of this structure was found in the 1990 evaluation trench (Leach 1990b), which was located approximately 5m to the west, it is unlikely that this represents the remains of a masonry building.

Culvert 282, which was constructed of dressed white lias limestone blocks, derived from the Lilstock Formation, i.e. a non-local stone source (H. Prudden pers. comm.), was constructed along the southern side of structure 281. It also continued, in a fragmentary form, for c. 6.5m to the east, cutting the phase 3 gully 289 and the possible penannular ditch 256 before turning southwards to cut into the upper fill of the construction cut (425) of the well (249) and continue around its eastern side. The fill (443, 444 and 446) of the culvert comprised a homogeneous greyish-brown, silty loam from which small quantities of animal bone and 119 sherds of coarseware pottery were recovered.

Abutting either side of the culvert were cobbled surfaces comprising flat pieces of local stone (average dimensions 0.15 x 0.10 x 0.04m) set at a steep angle (c. 70–80 degrees from horizontal) to form a fairly even cobbled surface flush with the upper surface of the culvert. A similar cobbled surface was recorded within the masonry structure.

Further cobbled surfaces of similar construction were recorded to the north-east. These appeared to surround an uncobbled area approximately 5m long and in excess of 2.5m wide. It is possible that this rectangular area was formed by the destruction of parts of the cobbled

surface by ploughing; however, its regular appearance suggests that this was not the case. The recovery of large quantities of structural iron work, including a large staple or joiner's dog (Fig. 13.14), several loop-headed spikes (Fig. 13.15) and over 300 nails, from plough-disturbed and stratified deposits in this small area of the site, and the rectangular space surrounded by carefully laid cobbles, possibly indicates that a timber structure once stood here. Given the proximity of the masonry structure and the putative timber structure it is likely that these were either elements of a single structure, or closely associated. It is interesting to note that relatively large quantities of animal bone were also recovered from the deposits which appear to represent the demolition or decay of this possible structure and from the fills of the large ditch which are associated with this phase of occupation.

Approximately 2m to the south, towards the eastern limit of excavation, a stone-lined well was encountered (249). This comprised a circular drystone wall between 0.4m and 0.7m thick with an internal diameter of 1.1m built within a sub-rectangular construction cut (425). Safety considerations meant that this feature was only excavated to a maximum depth of 2m, and attempts to ascertain its full depth by auger were unsuccessful due to large stone inclusions in the fill. After the construction of the stone lining the outer cut was backfilled with redeposited clay. Over this, culvert (282) continued as a small gully running to the north-east of the well before continuing beyond the eastern limit of excavation.

The paucity of datable finds from the lining and backfill and lack of provable relationships with earlier features means that the well can only be dated to the fourth phase of construction or earlier. The alignment of the gully around the well, however, may indicate it was at least still in use at this time.

The well appears to have been deliberately backfilled when it fell out of use with a single homogeneous rubble fill (250/315) from which 3rd or 4th-century AD fineware pottery and a mid 4th-century AD coin were recovered.

During the phase 4 construction, or during the life of the phase 4 structures, the phase 3 dry stone wall 260 collapsed. Whether accidentally or deliberately is unclear. The western end appears to have collapsed into the top of the large phase 2 ditch, filling it to ground level with a mixed deposit of limestone rubble within a dark greyish-brown, silty clay loam matrix (202/220/221). The collapse of the eastern end of the wall, which survived to a maximum height of 0.15m, is probably represented by a similar rubble deposit (247) which was partly sealed by the construction of metallised surfaces during the fifth phase of construction.

### *The trackway*

A small trackway (196) was traced for a length of c. 50m along the eastern edge of the site on an approximately north-north-east–south-south-west alignment, exactly matching the projected line of the Fosse Way. This comprised a single, densely packed layer of mainly local stone, on average 0.05m thick and over 5m wide (the full width was not exposed), set into the surface of the underlying clay subsoil. Parallel linear depressions noted towards its southern end, c. 0.15m wide and 1.6m apart, cutting into this surface were assumed to be wheel ruts.

A well-preserved coin of the emperor Maximianus (AD 305–307) was recovered from immediately below the metallised surface of the trackway, and pottery and coins dated to the 4th century AD were recovered both from within the track and from the deposits overlying it. Although no relationships with phased deposits were found, the dating evidence recovered from the trackway would seem to place it in the fourth phase of construction.

### *ROMANO-BRITISH PHASE 5: MID 4TH CENTURY AD OR LATER (Fig. 8)*

The fifth and final phase of building and occupation is represented by two short lengths of drystone walling, a short ditch and an associated metallised pathway. The phase 4 structures to the north probably continued in use.



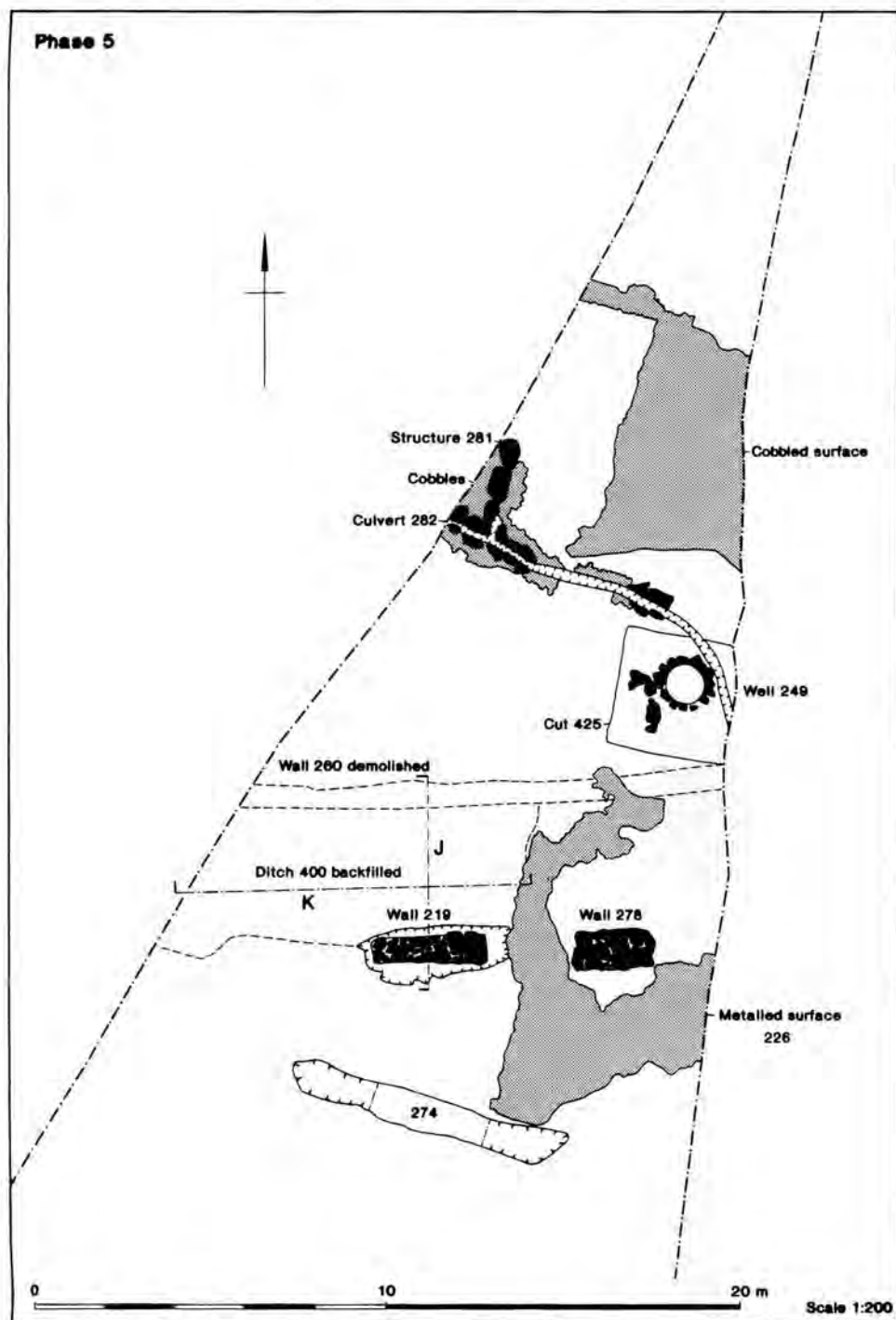


Fig. 8 Romano-British phase 5

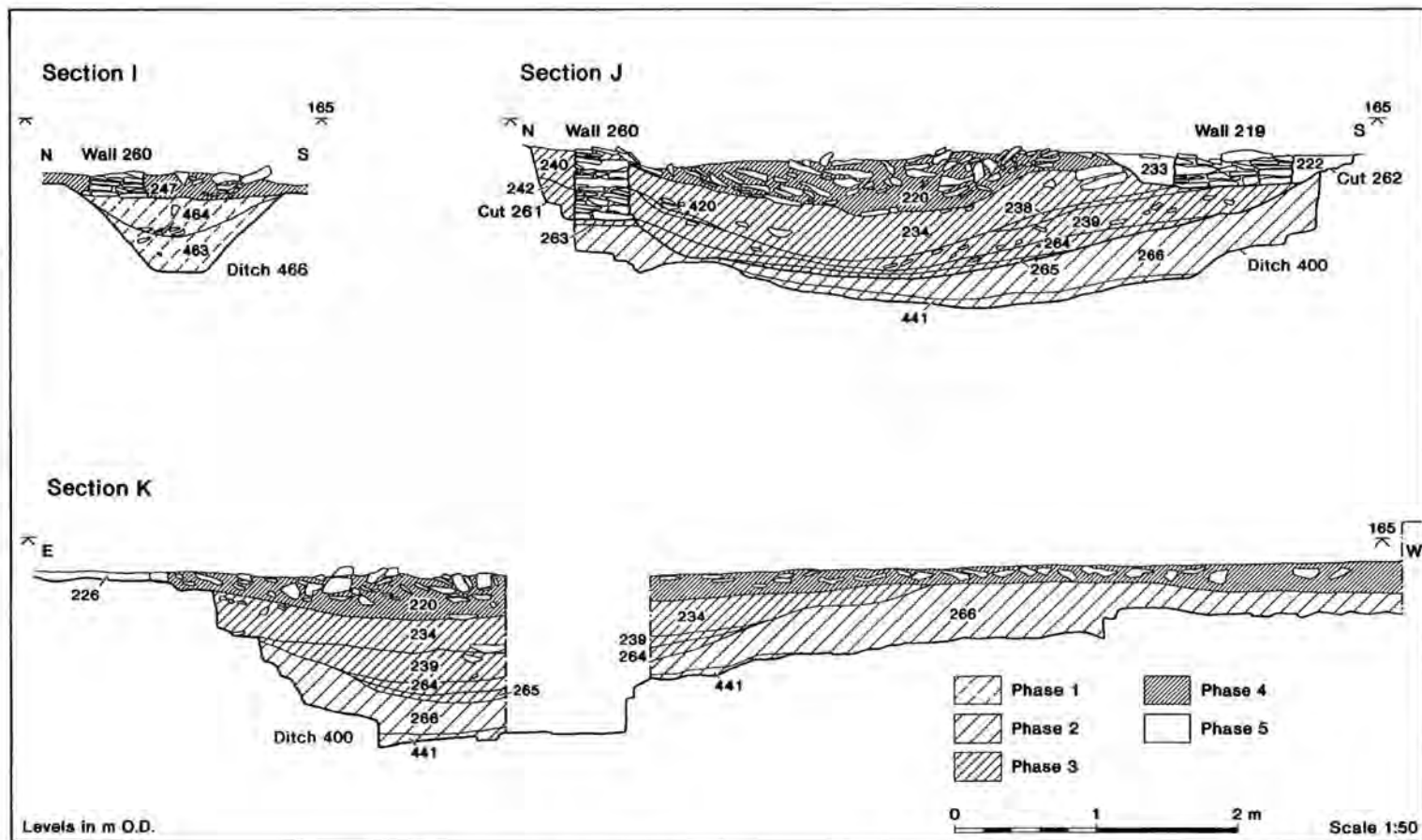


Fig. 9 Sections through Romano-British ditches; scale 1:50

Wall 219 was built within a shallow construction cut which cut into the top fill of the large phase 2 ditch/quarry pit (400) and so must postdate the collapse/demolition of the phase 3 wall. This c. 3m long wall, which survived to a maximum height of 0.25m, was aligned along the southern edge of 400, and appeared to be associated with a similar short length of wall 2.3m to the east (278) constructed as a free-standing structure upon a clay bedding layer which partly sealed an earlier, but otherwise unphased, pit (448).

Between these two walls a crude metallised surface (226), probably a pathway, with occasional kerb settings was constructed on an approximately north-south alignment. This partly overlay the upper fills of the large phase 2 ditch and the remaining footings of the phase 3 wall. To the south of the walls the metallised surface appears to be bounded by a shallow linear feature (274) and to continue beyond the eastern limit of excavation. Although no definite relationships between feature 274 and the metallised surface survived, 274 was assumed to belong to this phase on the basis of its position relative to the surface.

Several isolated patches of similar crude metallising, all badly plough-damaged, were noted to both the north and south of the phase 4 and 5 structures. These were assumed to be contemporary with the phase 5 pathway (226), on the basis of their similar construction, although very few of them exhibited any stratigraphic relationships with securely phased features or deposits and those which did could only be proved to postdate phase 3.

#### ROMANO-BRITISH UNPHASED

##### *The quarries*

Two very large (149: 7 x 4m; 187: 15.5 x 4m) features towards the centre of Area 1, both cut to a depth of c. 0.4m, the depth at which the totally solid bedrock is encountered below the limestone pavement, were assumed to be quarry pits. These probably represent the exploitation of the relatively loose, fragmentary lias limestone for construction purposes. The small trackway which runs along the eastern side of the site, and other Romano-British metallised and cobbled surfaces are composed of this stone. These features are situated only c. 30m to the west of the trackway and some 60m to the south of the Romano-British settlement.

Very few finds were recovered from either of these features, although two small sherds of Romano-British coarseware pottery were recovered from the upper fill of feature 149.

##### *Other features*

A number of isolated features of Romano-British date were also excavated, although due to the lack of provable stratigraphic relationships or close dating of artefacts within the Romano-British period these could not be incorporated into the phasing of this period. These comprised several small irregular pits from which large quantities of animal bones were recovered, including pit 227 which contains three well-preserved partial sheep skeletons, perhaps originally deposited complete, with very little other bone.

The majority of the deposits overlying the phase 4 and phase 5 structures were heavily disturbed by later ploughing, as was shown by deep plough marks cutting into the surface of the masonry settings and the patchy survival of various metallised surfaces. Where they did survive undisturbed they were confined to irregular depressions caused by the metallised and cobbled surfaces slumping into earlier features.

#### POST-ROMAN

A number of features of post-Roman date were recognised during the initial topsoil stripping. These comprised at least two separate phases of post-medieval field drains and a small boundary ditch (121) of 17th or 18th-century date in Area 2. A cast iron drainpipe and pond, both of modern date were noted in Area 1 (see Fig. 3). Several features, all small postholes, were noted

cutting through earlier deposits; however, the lack of finds from these means that they can only be dated to the late Romano-British period or later. Two out of a group of three postholes which cut the trackway towards its southern end produced very small quantities of very abraded Romano-British pottery, but these did not appear to be part of any recognisable structure.

## THE FINDS

### COINS Nicholas A. Wells

A total of 68 coins was found at Cannards Grave, 64 of which are Roman in date, the remainder being far too corroded to provide even an approximation. Most of the identifiable coins (56) are Roman copies, only eight being regular issues. The full coin list is in the archive. Less than half the coins (27) derived from stratified deposits, and of these three are intrusive in Iron Age contexts. Of the remaining 24, none derived from contexts earlier than phase 4. The largest group (13) came from contexts associated with the phase 4 infill of ditch/quarry pit 400.

The coin list is represented as a bar chart in Figure 10, showing coin loss per period, each period representing an accepted span of time in which a series of broadly similar coin issues occurred, and using the period structure set out by Reece (1991). The final two columns represent, respectively, the total number of coins which can only be assigned a general 4th century AD date, and those coins which are unidentifiable.

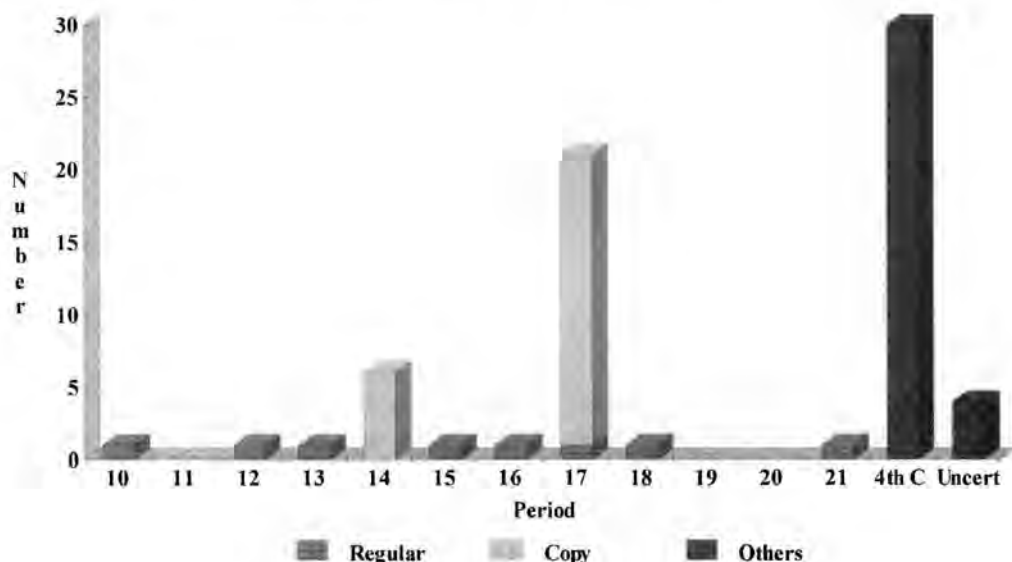


Fig. 10 Numbers of coins by Reece (1991) coin periods

Of the coins identified to a specific period, it is clear that the most common are those belonging to periods 14 (AD 275–296: 8.8%) and 17 (AD 330–348: 30.9%). This is entirely expected, as both are periods when coin loss was high, with the majority being copies.

The coin assemblage from Cannards Grave is small but, where represented, the percentage of coins per period fall broadly within the ranges established by Reece (1972) for Romano-

British sites except for periods 13 (AD 259–275) and 18 (AD 348–364), which are below average. These discrepancies may not be so significant as the low number of coins in the assemblage will tend to create distortions in the less well represented periods when a statistical comparison is attempted (Casey 1986, 89).

Perhaps the most revealing comparison, and one that would provide a check on the above discrepancies, is with the coin assemblage found across the Fosse Way during excavations in 1990 (Esmonde Cleary 2001). Table 1 shows the coin list by issue period and permills (coins/1000).

While too much should not be read into these comparisons, it is interesting to note the similarity of periods 15 to 17 (early to mid 4th century AD), and the increase in coin loss in period 21 (AD 388–402). This is unsurprising given the proximity of the two sites, but the differences are more revealing, in particular the late 3rd century AD (periods 13 and 14) and mid to late 4th century AD (periods 18 and 19), where the comparative permills are significantly down. Both periods 13 and 18 are below the Reece averages as well, and together this may suggest a comparative drop in coin loss – and hence coin use – in these periods at Cannards Grave, although there is no corroborative archaeological or artefactual evidence for this. If, however, the two sites are considered as one, and the Cannards Grave figures are added to those of Fosse Lane, the permills values of the latter site do not significantly change, and together the two sites fit comfortably into the typical late Roman south-western rural site pattern.

Period	Date	Number	Permills	Permills from Fosse Lane
10	AD 192-222	1	15	(9.2)
11	AD 222-38	-	-	(5.8)
12	AD 238-59	1	15	(1.6)
13	AD 259-75	1	15	(94.7)
14	AD 275-96	6	88	(150.8)
15	AD 296-317	1	15	(15)
16	AD 317-30	1	15	(36.8)
17	AD 330-48	21	309	(294.2)
18	AD 348-64	1	15	(151.7)
19	AD 364-78	-	-	(189.4)
20	AD 378-88	-	-	(3.3)
21	AD 388-402	1	15	(27.6)

Table 1 Coin list by issue period  
(Reece 1991) and permills

#### METALWORK by A. Hutcheson

##### BROOCHES

Six brooches were found at Cannards Grave, four of copper alloy (Fig. 11.1–4) and two of iron (Fig. 13.1, 2). One (Fig. 11.3) comes from a posthole in the Middle Iron Age structure 522. This brooch is too fragmentary to assign to a particular typological style, but from what remains it can be seen that it had a fairly straight and thick bow. The other brooches are of either Late Iron Age or Roman date, and are spread across the span of this period.

Both iron brooches (Fig. 13.1, 2) have tapering hinged strip bows with small solid, triangular feet. Both are unstratified. Iron brooches such as these are found more commonly in central southern England than elsewhere. They are not easily dated but were more common prior to the Conquest, and in general they are more likely to be Iron Age. The copper alloy strip brooch (Fig. 11.1) also dates to the early–mid 1st century AD. It was also unstratified.



A simple, sturdy hinged bow brooch (Fig. 11.2) came from the phase 4 fill of ditch/quarry pit 400 (220). A close parallel from Chew Lake, Somerset, was found in a late 3rd to mid 4th-century AD context (Hull 1977); as with many other examples from the south-west during the Roman period it seems to belong to a set of styles unique to the region. The other brooch from a stratified context came from within the metallised trackway 226 (Fig. 11.4). This is a Head Stud type; an example with similar attributes was discovered at Verulamium in a 5th-century AD context (Goodburn 1984).

#### PERSONAL ITEMS

Other copper alloy personal items found at the site included a round bowl spoon (Fig. 11.5), two ribbon strip bracelet fragments (Fig. 11.6), three finger rings (Fig. 11.7, 8), two fragmentary pairs of tweezers (Fig. 12.9, 10), and an iron *ligula*. One of the bracelet fragments is very fragmentary with simple transverse moulded linear decoration. The *ligula* (Fig. 13.3) is an unusual object, made of iron with a broken bowl.

#### STYLI

Three iron *styli* were found (Fig. 13.4–6), one from phase 5 and the other two from unstratified cleaning layers. All are of Manning's type 2a/3a (1985), having spatulate erasers and short handles, but with unusually elongated points. It has been suggested that the presence of *styli* on the similar roadside settlement at Catsgore can be interpreted as an indication that the settlement was important in the collection of *annona* or corn tax (Leech 1982). They are, however, a fairly common find on Romano-British settlement sites, and their ascription to a particular function in the Roman economy is dubious.

#### NEEDLE

The one iron needle found (Fig. 13.7) is of particularly good quality with a groove leading into an eyelet showing a fine degree of control on the part of the smith. The size of this example suggests that it was used for fine sewing.

#### TOOLS

A knife (Fig. 13.10) came from the fill of a pit within structure 304 and may be of Middle Iron Age date. The other knife (Fig. 13.9) is probably Romano-British, found unstratified above the phase 5 metallised trackway. A number of other tools were found including a reaping hook (Fig. 13.8), a chisel (Fig. 13.11) probably used for wood working, and three ox goads (Fig. 13.12–13).

#### TRANSPORT

Five objects (Fig. 14.26–30) were all found together within trackway 196 (context 292), including a U-shaped binding, an L-shaped hook and two heavily constructed objects which may be guides or mounts. All these derive from a cart. In addition a small fitting consisting of a ring with an attachment (Fig. 15.31), from a repair to a metallised surface, may be a horse fitting, possibly a snaffle bit fragment. A horseshoe (Fig. 15.32) was found in the topsoil above the site. In addition, 116 hobnails and 24 cleats (eg. Fig. 15.38) presumably fell from boots and shoes.

#### STRUCTURAL

The rest of the metal objects found are iron structural components which come mainly from demolition layers (e.g. Fig. 13.14–17; Fig. 14.18–25). Included within this group are 451 nails of various sizes, completeness and type (see Table 2) which are in the main unstratified but are most likely to be Romano-British.

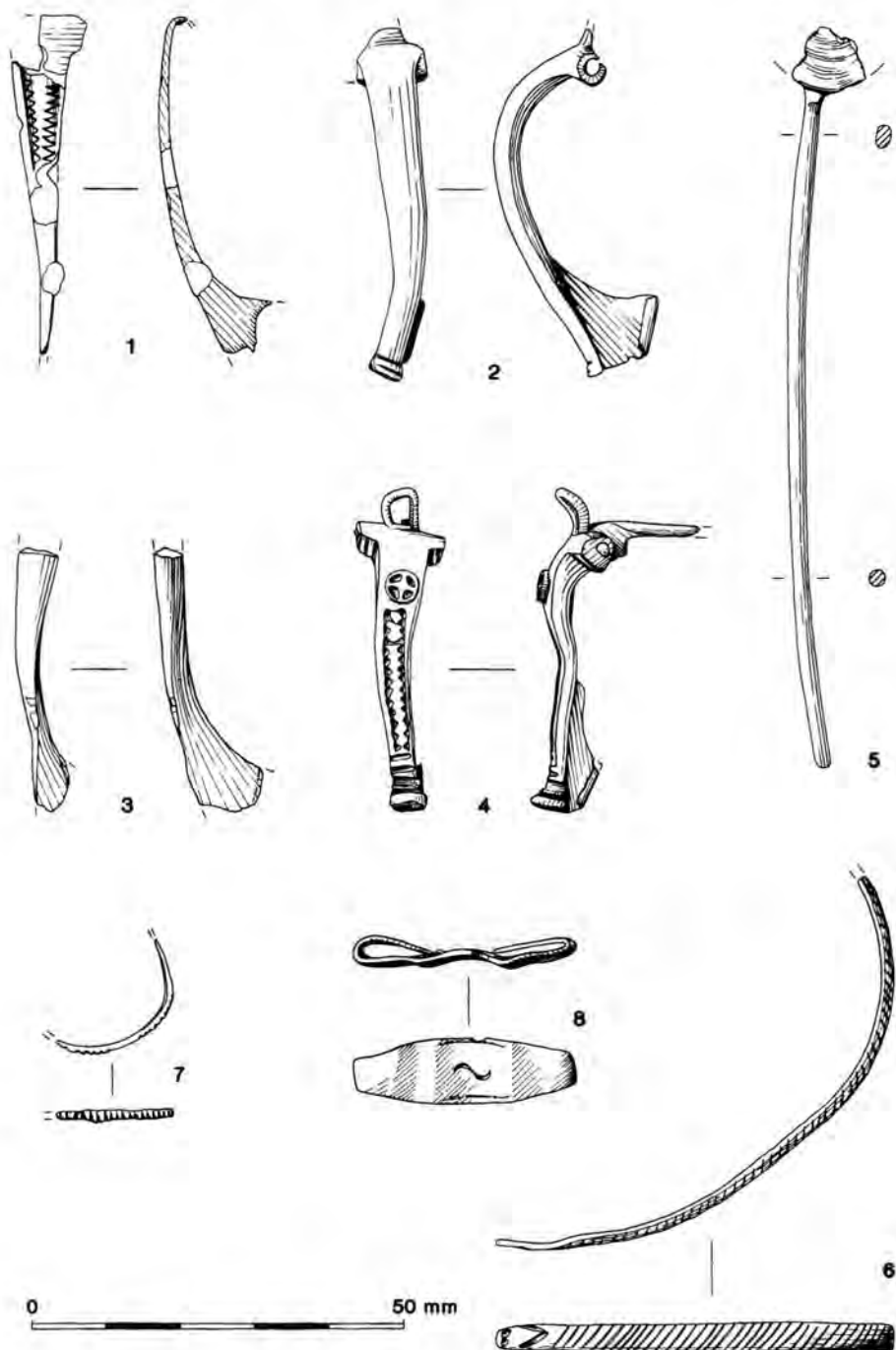


Fig. 11 Copper alloy objects, nos 1-8; scale 1:1

Phase	Number	Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 7	Type 8	Type 9
2	2	4	-	-	-	-	-
3	12	8	-	1	-	-	-
4	22	45	4	3	-	-	-
5	8	11	-	-	-	-	-
Post 5	10	23	-	-	-	-	-
Unphased	160	96	14	10	3	2	1

Table 2 Quantification of nails by type per phase; following Manning's (1985) classification

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATED OBJECTS

## Fig. 11

1. Copper alloy strip brooch. Obj. No. 5078, context 210; unstratified cleaning layer over metalised surface 297.
2. Copper alloy bow brooch. Obj. No. 5251, context 220; ditch/quarry pit 400; phase 4.
3. Copper alloy brooch fragment. Obj. No. 5245, context 717, posthole 716 in structure 522; Middle Iron Age.
4. Copper alloy brooch, Head Stud type. Obj. No. 5267, context 226, pathway; phase 5.
5. Copper alloy spoon. Obj. No. 5257, context 220; ditch/quarry pit 400; phase 4.
6. Copper alloy bracelet fragment. Obj. No. 5254, context 234, ditch/quarry pit 400; phase 3.
7. Copper alloy finger ring. Obj. No. 5208, context 411, ditch/quarry pit 400; phase 2.
8. Copper alloy finger ring. Obj. No. 5213, context 247, possible collapsed wall; phase 4.

## Fig. 12

9. Copper alloy tweezers. Obj. No. 5057, context 203; unstratified cleaning layer.
10. Copper alloy tweezers. Obj. No. 5211, context 246, possible collapsed wall; phase 4.
11. Copper alloy sheet. Obj. No. 5248, context 449, pit 448; Romano-British unphased.

## Fig. 13

1. Iron brooch. Obj. No. 5032, context 201; unstratified cleaning layer over ditch/quarry pit 400.
2. Iron brooch. Obj. No. 5042, context 201; unstratified cleaning layer over ditch/quarry pit 400.
3. Iron *ligula*. Obj. No. 5239, context 444, culvert 282; phase 4.
4. Iron *stylus*. Obj. No. 5236, context 439, culvert 282; phase 4.
5. Iron *stylus*. Obj. No. 5072, context 113; unstratified cleaning layer.
6. Iron *stylus*. Obj. No. 5390, context 113; unstratified cleaning layer.
7. Iron needle. Obj. No. 5399, context 234, ditch/quarry pit 400; phase 3.
8. Iron reaping hook. Obj. No. 5360, context 270, possible occupation deposit; Romano-British post-phase 5.
9. Iron knife. Obj. No. 5020, context 207, cleaning layer; Romano-British post-phase 5.
10. Iron knife. Obj. No. 5355, context 314, fill of pit 111 within structure 304; Middle Iron Age.
11. Iron chisel. Obj. No. 5234, context 438, bedding for wall 278; phase 5.
12. Iron ox goad. Obj. No. 5335, context 222, construction cut 262; phase 5.
13. Iron ox goad. Obj. No. 5038, context 201; unstratified cleaning layer over ditch/quarry pit 400.
14. Iron joiner's dog. Obj. No. 5220, context 247, possible collapsed wall; phase 4.
15. Iron ring-headed spike. Obj. No. 5388, context 220, ditch/quarry pit 400; phase 4.
16. Iron ring-headed spike. Obj. No. 5122, context 107; unstratified cleaning layer.
17. Iron ring-headed spike. Obj. No. 5412, context 204, loamy deposit; Romano-British post-phase 5.

## Fig. 14

18. Iron double-spiked loop with ring. Obj. No. 5209, context 315, well 249; phase 4.
19. Iron double-spiked loop with ring. Obj. No. 5367; unstratified.
20. Iron double-spiked loop. Obj. No. 5255, context 220, ditch/quarry pit 400; phase 4.
21. Iron double-spiked loop. Obj. No. 5240, context 437, bedding for wall 278; phase 5.

22. Iron anchor-shaped T-clamp. Obj. No. 5009, context 102; unstratified cleaning layer.
23. Large iron nail (type 3). Obj. No. 5193, context 239, ditch/quarry pit 400; phase 3.
24. Large iron nail (type 7). Obj. No. 5367; unstratified.
25. Iron L-shaped wall hook. Obj. No. 5142, context 246, possible collapsed wall; phase 4.
26. Iron nail. Obj. No. 5414, context 292, trackway 196; phase 4.
27. Iron object. Obj. No. 5414, context 292, trackway 196; phase 4.
28. Iron object. Obj. No. 5414, context 292, trackway 196; phase 4.
29. Iron object. Obj. No. 5414, context 292, trackway 196; phase 4.
30. Iron object. Obj. No. 5414, context 292, trackway 196; phase 4.

*Fig. 15*

31. Iron snaffle bit. Obj. No. 5336, context 430, repair to trackway 196; phase 4.
32. Iron horseshoe. Obj. No. 5111, context 100; topsoil.
33. Iron ferrule. Obj. No. 5037, context 201; unstratified cleaning layer over ditch/quarry pit 400.
34. Iron object. Obj. No. 5013, context 102; unstratified cleaning layer.
35. Iron object, unidentified. Obj. No. 5360, context 220, ditch/quarry pit 400; phase 4.
36. Iron object, unidentified. Obj. No. 5025, context 201; unstratified cleaning layer over ditch/quarry pit 400.
37. Iron L-shaped angle binding. Obj. No. 5073, context 113; unstratified cleaning layer.
38. Iron cleat. Obj. No. 5342, context 220, ditch/quarry pit 400; phase 4.

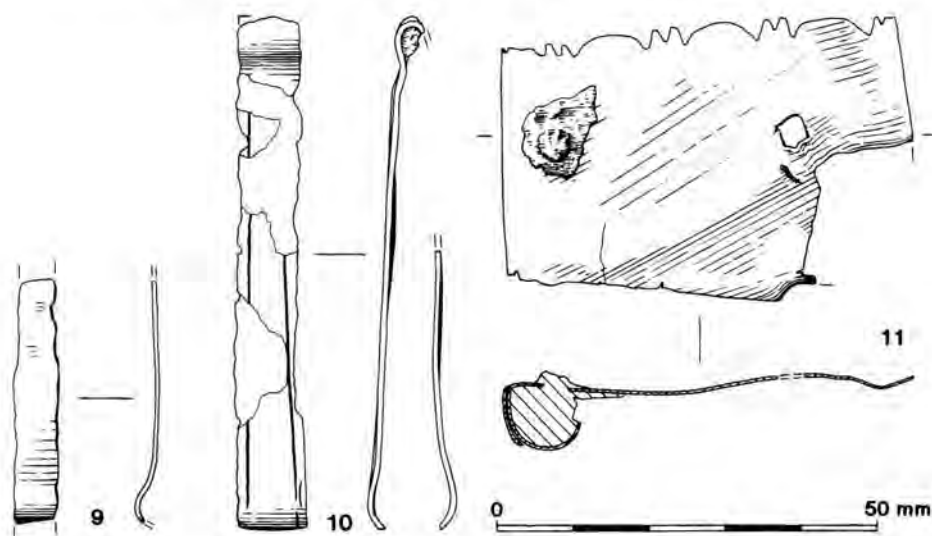


Fig. 12 Copper alloy objects (nos 9–11); scale 1:1

LITHIC ASSEMBLAGE W.A. Boismier

A total of 291 pieces of worked flint was recovered during the excavation, all from residual contexts. Table 3 summarises the total number of worked flint recovered by period.

Most of the lithic artefacts were manufactured from local surface and river gravel sources which occur within 5km of the site. Non-local raw material sources are also indicated by the occurrence of five artefacts manufactured from a very dark-grey chert. The condition of the artefacts is variable, with those from unstratified and Romano-British contexts generally exhibiting a range of post-depositional edge damage attributes. Patination in the assemblage ranges from a light mottled yellowish-grey to a white or greyish-white colour. No spatial or temporal differences in patination are apparent.

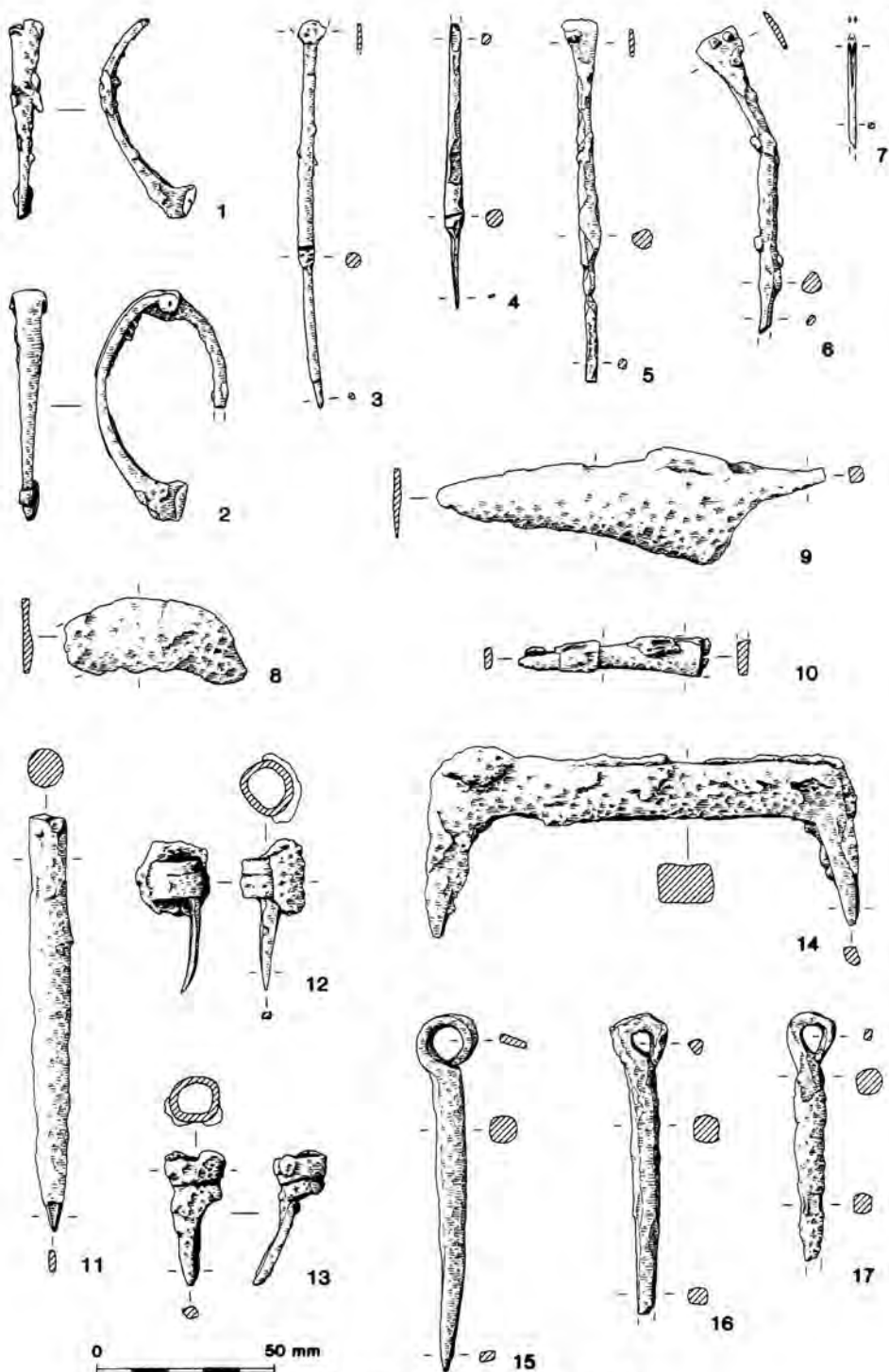


Fig. 13 Iron objects (nos 1-17); scale 1:2



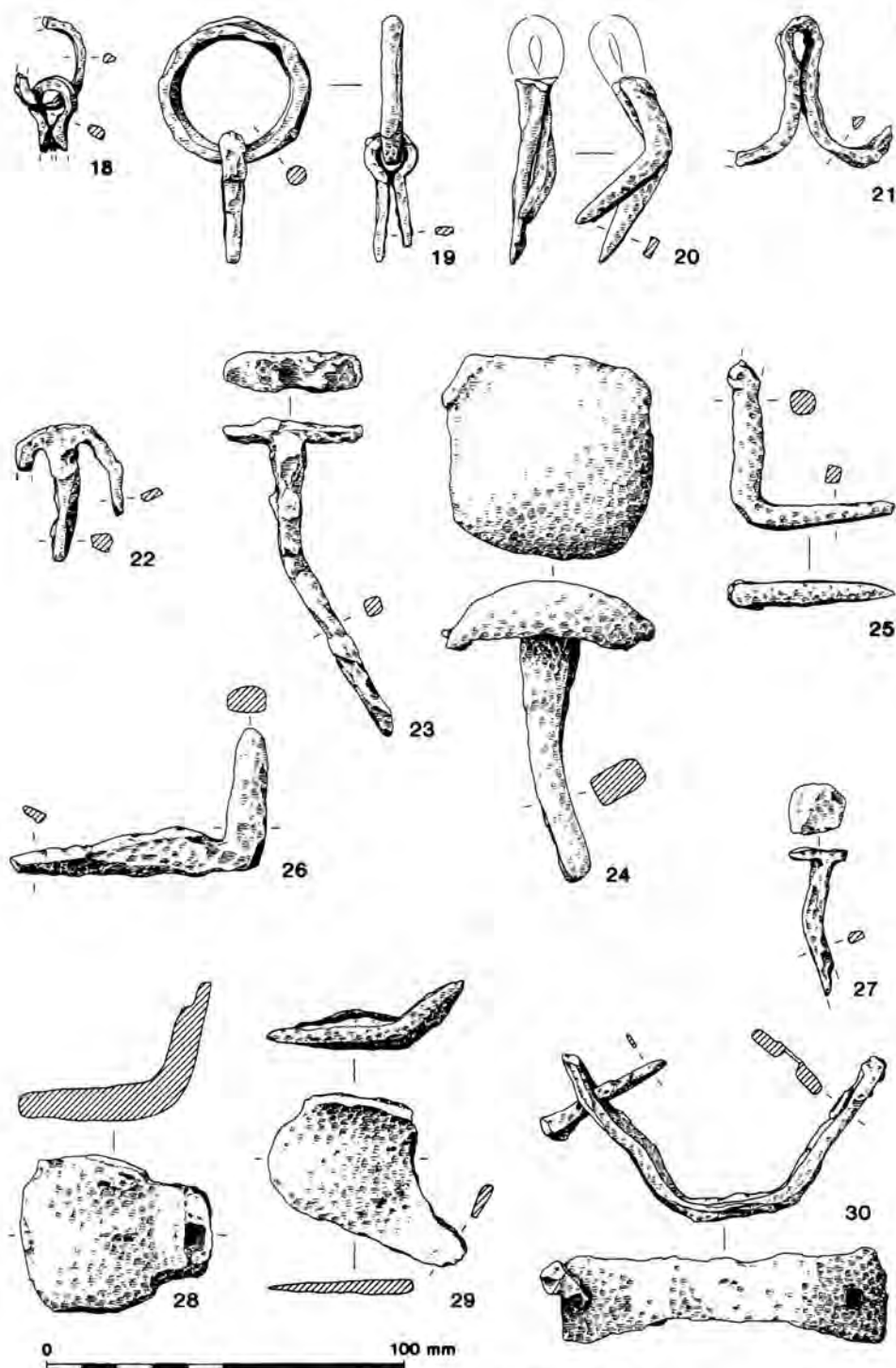


Fig. 14 Iron objects (nos 18-30); scale 1:2

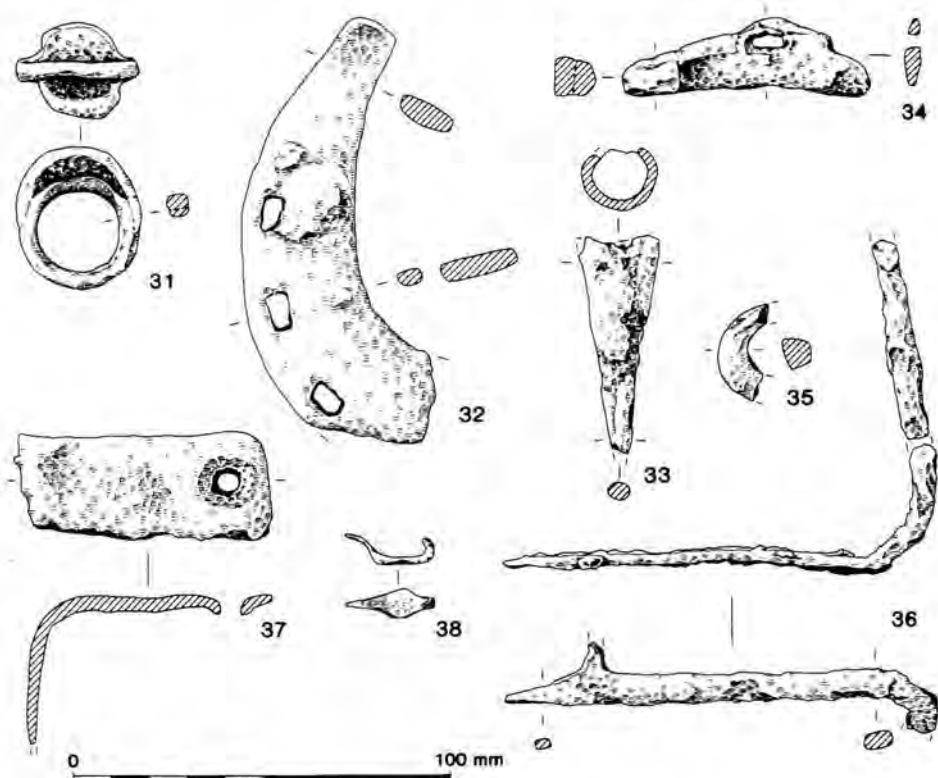


Fig. 15 Iron objects (nos 31–38); scale 1:2

Technologically, most of the artefacts conform to the general characteristics of the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age industries from southern England. Cores are generally small in size and include both prepared and unprepared single and joint platform types worked with both hard and soft hammers. Unretouched flakes and blades possess both thin platforms with diffuse bulbs of percussion and thick platforms with pronounced bulbs, indicating that they were detached using both soft hammer/indirect percussion, and hard hammer techniques. Flake shapes are variable and include narrow flake-blades with thin platforms, and squat thick flakes with thick platforms, acute platform angles, and hinge terminations. Core rejuvenation flakes are not diagnostic of any particular technological tradition but include one face/edge type and three edge/platform types. Core-trimming debris all exhibit pronounced bulbs of percussion indicating that they were detached by a hard hammer during core reduction. They are also not diagnostic of any single period or technological tradition.

Retouched tool forms comprise eight scrapers (seven complete, one broken), of which three are small 'thumbnail' types, three broken edge retouched pieces (two flakes, one blade), one complete spurred piece, one complete notched flake, one leaf-shaped arrowhead fragment, and two unidentifiable tool fragments (one burnt). The majority of the tools are indicative of both the Early Neolithic and Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age, and are in general agreement with the date range indicated on technological grounds by the unretouched artefacts within the assemblage.

No spatial patterning is apparent in the distribution across the site.

The range of datable artefacts recovered suggests that the site was in all likelihood occupied for most of the Neolithic into the Early Bronze Age, and this is supported by the presence of a small quantity of pottery of this date range (see Mephram, below). Additional lithic material recovered by the earlier evaluation of the site (Leach 1990b) also indicates that a substantial amount of Neolithic and Early Bronze Age activity occurred in and around the vicinity of the site. It is not possible to make any definitive statements regarding the character and extent of this occupation due to the subsequent use of the site during the Iron Age and Roman periods.

	Prehistoric	Roman	Post-Roman	Undated/ unstrat.	Total
Flake	36	15	1	97	149
Flake Fragment	21	3	-	32	56
Burnt Flake	2	2	-	6	10
Blade	6		-	19	25
Blade Fragment	3	2	-	10	15
Core	-	3	-	4	7
Burnt Core	-	1	-	-	1
Core Trimming Debris	1	-	-	7	8
Core Rejuvenation Debris	-	-	-	4	4
Retouched Tool	4	2	-	3	9
Tool Fragment	1	1	-	4	6
Burnt Tool	-	-	-	1	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>291</b>

Table 3 Worked flint totals by period

#### STONE Natasha Hutcheson

A total of 81 fragments of stone was retained from the site, most of which are, or appear to be, building material, with eleven portable objects.

#### OBJECTS

Two of the objects came from Iron Age contexts and comprise an annular limestone spindlewhorl (Fig. 21.8) and an almost spherical object in a coarse-grained sandstone (Fig. 21.9). The function of the latter is unclear, but it may be a stone pounder such as those discovered at Hengistbury Head, Hampshire (Cunliffe 1987, fig. 123). Five objects appear to be fragments of whetstones in fine-grained sandstones. One came from a Romano-British context and the rest from post-Roman or unstratified contexts. They could be of Iron Age, Romano-British or later date.

The four possible quern fragments are all in a ferruginous sandstone and are from Iron Age contexts, three from structure 304 and one from structure 130. None are assignable to a particular form.

#### BUILDING MATERIAL

Of the possible and probable building material, ten fragments came from Iron Age contexts and 27 from Romano-British contexts; the remainder was unstratified. All are in limestone and ferruginous sandstone, and their dimensions suggest a use as tiles. One small fragment of slate may be intrusive in a Romano-British context.

#### LIST OF ILLUSTRATED OBJECTS (Fig. 21)

8. Limestone spindlewhorl. Obj. No. 6004, context 327, pit 346.
9. Sandstone pounder, spherical. Obj. No. 5427, context 152, penannular ditch of structure 130.

## GLASS BEAD Natasha Hutcheson

One glass bead (Fig. 21.7) was recovered from the penannular ditch of structure 304. The bead is opaque yellow, annular in form with a central perforation, and undecorated. Such objects are comparatively rare in Iron Age contexts, but this example is directly paralleled at the Iron Age settlement at Meare Village East, some 17km to the west of Shepton Mallet, where one of the few known production centres of glass objects in Britain has been identified (Coles 1987, pl. IV), operating between the 3rd and 1st centuries BC.

*ILLUSTRATED OBJECT* (Fig. 21)

7. Glass bead. Obj. No. 5203, context 305, penannular ditch of structure 304.

## PREHISTORIC POTTERY Lorraine Mephram

The prehistoric pottery assemblage from Cannards Grave amounts to 1912 sherds (15,484g). This assemblage is predominantly Iron Age in date, with small quantities of Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age and Middle/Late Bronze Age material.

Only material from securely stratified contexts (1617 sherds: 11,445g) has been examined in detail, and analysis of this material has followed the standard Wessex Archaeology pottery recording system (Morris 1992) and recommended national guidelines (PCRG 1997). The stratified assemblage was divided on the basis of the range and size of macroscopic inclusions into 14 fabric types, which fall into five broad fabric groups based on the dominant inclusion type: limestone-tempered (group LI); flint-tempered (group FL); grog-tempered (group GR); sandy (group QU); and shell-tempered (group SH). Rim sherds were used to construct a type series which was linked as far as possible to vessel forms. Details of fabric, vessel form, surface treatment, decoration, measurable dimensions and cross-context joins were recorded by context, and the information entered on to a database (dBase IV). This information forms the basic pottery archive.

Pottery from unstratified or insecurely stratified contexts was examined in less detail, and has merely been quantified by fabric group (limestone-tempered, shell-tempered, etc) within each context, with no details of rims recorded. It may be noted here, however, that the unstratified material included no fabrics and forms which did not also occur within the stratified assemblage.

*LATE NEOLITHIC/EARLY BRONZE AGE POTTERY*

A total of ten sherds was identified as early prehistoric, largely on the basis of fabric type alone. All these sherds are in a similar grog-tempered fabric, which can be defined as follows:

- GR1 Soft, fine clay matrix containing moderate, poorly-sorted, subangular grog <1.5mm; rare iron oxides; soapy feel. Oxidised with unoxidised interior.

Only two sherds carried decoration and could therefore be dated more closely, one with incised diagonal hatching (Fig. 16.1), and the second with impressed and incised decoration separated by raised cordons (Fig. 16.2). Both these sherds are Grooved Ware of the Durrington Walls sub-style.

The remaining eight sherds are undecorated, and cannot therefore be dated any more closely within the Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age date bracket, or identified with any specific ceramic tradition, although one small angled sherd (not illustrated) could derive from a Collared Urn.

None of the eight sherds occurred *in situ*. The two Grooved Ware sherds came from Iron Age structures 130 and 304 respectively, and the possible Collared Urn sherd from the Middle/Late Bronze Age pit 123; remaining sherds were found redeposited in other Iron Age features.

#### MIDDLE/LATE BRONZE AGE POTTERY

Seven sherds were assigned to the Middle to Late Bronze Age, on the basis of fabric type alone; all sherds are in fabrics which are noticeably coarse. All are plain body sherds and are completely undiagnostic; their identification is not, therefore, entirely unambiguous. Two fabric types are represented, one calcite-tempered and one flint-tempered.

- LI1 Soft, moderately coarse clay matrix containing sparse, poorly-sorted, subangular 'beef' calcite fragments <4mm; sparse subrounded quartz <0.5mm; rare iron oxides. Unoxidised with oxidised exterior (6 sherds: 33g).
- FL2 Soft, moderately fine clay matrix containing sparse, poorly-sorted, subangular crushed flint <5mm; sparse, subangular, white inclusions (?calcite – do not react with acid) <4mm; rare fine mica. Unoxidised with oxidised exterior (1 sherd: 3g).

Two sherds may be considered to be *in situ*. One sherd in fabric C1 came from pit 123 which was cut by Iron Age features. This feature also produced one possible sherd of Collared Urn (see above), and one sherd in an Iron Age shelly fabric, the latter considered to be intrusive from the Iron Age linear feature 147. The single sherd of fabric F2 came from ditch 517, and is the only sherd recovered from this feature.

#### IRON AGE POTTERY

##### Fabrics

The Iron Age assemblage comprises 11 fabric types in four fabric groups: flint-tempered, limestone-tempered, sandy and shell-tempered (see Table 4).

##### Flint-tempered fabric (Group FL)

- FL1 Soft, moderately coarse clay matrix containing sparse, poorly-sorted, subangular crushed flint <3mm; rare subrounded quartz <0.5mm; rare iron oxides. Unoxidised throughout.

##### Limestone-tempered fabrics (Group LI)

- LI2 Soft, moderately fine clay matrix containing sparse to moderate, poorly-sorted crushed limestone <1mm; rare subrounded quartz <0.5mm. Unoxidised with oxidised exterior.
- LI3 Soft, moderately coarse clay matrix containing sparse to moderate, poorly-sorted crushed limestone <4mm (mostly <2mm); sparse subrounded quartz <0.5mm; rare iron oxides. Unoxidised with patchily oxidised surfaces.

##### Sandy fabrics (Group QU)

- QU1 Soft, moderately fine clay matrix containing sparse to moderate, fairly well-sorted, subrounded quartz <1mm (occasionally <2mm). Unoxidised throughout.
- QU2 Soft, moderately coarse clay matrix containing moderate, fairly well-sorted, subrounded quartz <0.5mm; rare iron oxides. Oxidised with unoxidised core.
- QU3 Soft, moderately coarse clay matrix containing sparse, fairly well-sorted, subrounded quartz <0.5mm; sparse iron oxides; rare carbonaceous material.
- QU4 Soft, moderately coarse clay matrix containing moderate, fairly well-sorted subrounded quartz <0.5mm; rare iron oxides. Unoxidised with patchily oxidised exterior.

##### Shell-tempered fabrics (Group SH)

- SH1 Soft, silty clay matrix containing sparse, poorly-sorted crushed fossil shell <7mm; rare iron oxides. All firing variations from oxidised to unoxidised.



- SH2 Soft, moderately fine matrix containing moderate, fairly well-sorted crushed fossil shell <2mm; rare crushed limestone <2mm; rare iron oxides. Could be a slightly finer variant of SH1. Firing as SH1.
- SH3 Soft, moderately fine clay matrix containing moderate, well-sorted crushed fossil shell <1mm; sparse crushed limestone <1mm; rare iron oxides. Oxidised, generally with unoxidised core.
- SH4 Soft, moderately coarse clay matrix containing moderate, poorly-sorted crushed fossil shell and limestone <5mm. Unoxidised, sometimes with oxidised surface(s).

All of these fabric types could have been produced using local resources, i.e. those which occur within a 10km radius of the site. The site lies on Jurassic deposits which could have provided the source for the fossil shell and limestone inclusions in Groups LI and SH, most probably from the Upper or Lower Lias. Shelly fabrics are overwhelmingly predominant within the Iron Age assemblage (96% of the total by weight), and this tends to support a very local origin for this fabric group, perhaps in the vicinity of the site itself. There is no evidence here of the trend towards more regional pottery production from the Early Iron Age onwards as observed at sites such as Ham Hill and Norton Fitzwarren (Morris 1987; 1999; Woodward 1989)

Fabric	No. sherds	Weight (g)	% of group	% of total
<b>FLINT-TEMPERED FABRICS</b>				
FL1	5	46		0.3
<b>LIMESTONE-TEMPERED FABRICS</b>				
LI2	39	262	70.2	
LI3	1	10	2.7	
Unspecified (unstrat.)	17	101	27.1	
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>373</b>		<b>2.4</b>
<b>SANDY FABRICS</b>				
QU1	13	52	23.4	
QU2	6	34	15.3	
QU3	8	62	27.9	
QU4	3	10	4.5	
Unspecified (unstrat.)	14	64	28.9	
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>222</b>		<b>1.4</b>
<b>SHELL-TEMPERED FABRICS</b>				
SH1	766	5350	36.3	
SH2	289	1411	9.6	
SH3	177	1407	9.5	
SH4	295	2721	18.4	
Unspecified (unstrat.)	262	3863	26.2	
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>1789</b>	<b>14758</b>		<b>95.9</b>
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>1895</b>	<b>15399</b>		

Table 4 Iron Age pottery fabric totals

### *Vessel forms*

Out of the 68 rim sherds recorded from the stratified assemblage, 26 were too small to ascertain overall vessel form (R1). The remaining 42 rims have been used to create a type series comprising eight forms: three jars and five bowls. The breakdown of vessel form by fabric type is presented in Table 5.

### *Jars*

- R2 Slack-shouldered jar with poorly-defined neck and upright or slightly everted, thickened and/or flattened rim (Fig. 17.18, 21, 23; Fig. 18.26, 27).
- R3 Round-shouldered jar with short neck and upright or everted rim (Fig. 16.4).
- R4 Ovoid jar with upright or slightly inturned, rounded rim (Fig. 16.5, 13; Fig. 17.22).

### *Bowls*

- R5 Ovoid bowl with rounded or flat-topped rim (Fig. 16.6, 7, 9, 11; Fig. 17.15, 20).
- R6 Shouldered bowl with everted rim (Fig. 16.8).

- R7 Flared, shoulderless bowl with simple rounded rim (not illustrated).  
 R8 Flared bowl with everted rim (Fig. 16.14).  
 R9 Flared bowl with inturned rim; two examples have impressed decoration on top of rim (Fig. 16.10; Fig. 17.17, 19, 24, 25).

The predominance of open forms within the assemblage is interesting since other assemblages in the region are dominated by jar forms. All but four of the identifiable rim forms occur in shelly fabrics, and there appears to be no distinction within this fabric group between the coarser fabrics such as SH1 and SH4 and the finer fabrics SH2 and SH3; all four are used for both jars and bowls.

RIMS	SH1	SH2	SH3	SH4	QU1	QU3	LI2	FL1	Total
FORM UNSPECIFIED/UNKNOWN									
R1	6	9	5	5	1	-	-	-	26
JARS									
R2	3	1	2	2	-	-	-	-	8
R3	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
R4	-	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	3
BOWLS									
R5	6	2	4	5	-	-	-	1	18
R6	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
R7	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
R8	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	2
R9	3	1	1	2	-	-	1	-	8
Total	19	13	15	16	1	2	1	1	68

Table 5 Iron Age vessel forms by fabric

### Surface treatment and decoration

Evidence for both surface treatment and decoration is noticeably sparse. Only nine sherds are burnished (all externally); this includes one sherd each in fabrics SH1, SH2 and SH3, four sherds in fabric FL1 which are probably from the same vessel, and two sherds in fabric LI2. None of these sherds could be linked to a particular vessel form. There is no trace of surface wiping, although external surfaces, particularly in the finer shelly fabrics SH2 and SH3, had frequently been smoothed. Decoration is limited to two bowl rims of type R10 with oblique impressions on the upper or outer surface (Fig. 17.19 and 25). No sooting, limescale or burnt residues were observed.

### Chronology and affinities

The assemblage from Cannards Grave, with an almost total absence of decorated wares, and indeed of any distinctive, closely datable vessel forms, has not proved easy to tie down within the established Iron Age ceramic framework for the region. The basis for this framework in south Somerset is provided by the long sequence from South Cadbury (Alcock 1980). Comparison with this sequence suggests that in the absence of distinctive Early Iron Age types such as finger-impressed wares or vessels of All Cannings Cross style, and the decorated wares characteristic of the Late Iron Age Glastonbury style, the assemblage from Cannards Grave may be dated within the broad date range of 5th to 3rd centuries BC (*ibid.*, Cadbury 6-7). Support for this dating comes from parallels from other sites in the region such as Meare (Coles 1987), Ham Hill (Morris 1987; 1999) and Dibble's Farm, Christon (Morris 1988), each of which has a similar range of vessel forms, although with a greater proportion of decorated vessels. The marked homogeneity of the assemblage, with an overwhelming dominance of one fabric group, and a limited range of vessel forms, would suggest a fairly restricted timespan for the assemblage.

One vessel form, bowl type R9, is not paralleled at any of these sites nor, apparently, within the wider Somerset region, but seems to demonstrate ceramic influences from further afield. Comparable bowls with inturned, flattened rims are known from several Middle Iron Age sites in south Dorset, for example Eldon's Seat and Rope Lake Hole (Cunliffe and Phillipson 1968,

fig. 17, nos 158–64; Davies 1987, fig. 80, nos 33–6). The fabrics in which these vessels occur (almost all shelly fabrics), however, would not suggest anything other than local manufacture.

### *Distribution on site*

Pottery was recovered from the penannular ditches of all four structures, from pits and postholes within these structures, from miscellaneous pits and postholes around these structures, and from two linear features (147 and 708). Table 6 gives a breakdown of pottery by feature. Stratigraphic relationships suggest that these features fall into at least two phases: one irregular pit (334) is cut by the penannular ditch of structure 304. This distinction, however, is difficult to substantiate in the ceramic assemblage, since the pit contains a range of fabric types readily paralleled within the material from the stratigraphically later structure. Vessel forms are also comparable. Nor is there any evidence to indicate that the four structures are anything other than contemporary.

The greatest quantity of pottery (50% by weight of the total stratified assemblage) derived from structure 304, from the penannular ditch and from several pits and postholes within the structure, particularly pit 346. The full range of Iron Age fabric types is represented, and five of the eight vessel forms, including eleven of the 18 examples of bowl type R5 (Fig. 16.5–14; Fig. 17.15, 16). Seven of the nine burnished sherds also came from this structure.

Approximately 30% of the assemblage came from structure 130 (Fig. 17.17–24), and smaller quantities from structures 522 and 256 (10% and 0.6% respectively; Fig. 17.25; Fig. 18.26, 27), and the range of fabrics and forms represented in these three structures are correspondingly more restricted. The widely differing quantities of pottery recovered from the four structures could be taken as an indication of differing function, although it should be noted that structures 130 and 256 were not fully excavated, and the degree of truncation by later activity was considerably greater in structures 130, 256 and 522.

FEATURE	LNEO/ EBA	MBA/ LBA	IRON AGE				TOTAL
			FL	LI	QU	SH	
Roundhouse 130	4/7	3/26	-	4/40	1/12	399/3471	411/3556
Roundhouse 256	-	-	-	2/15	-	28/152	30/167
Roundhouse 304	2/26	-	5/46	21/142	28/143	844/5804	900/6145
Roundhouse 522	-	-	-	11/86	1/3	171/1133	183/1222
Structure 714/718	-	-	-	-	-	7/16	7/16
Pit 123	1/3	1/4	-	-	-	1/10	3/17
Pit 139	1/2	-	-	-	-	20/87	21/89
Misc. pits/postholes	-	-	-	-	-	34/128	34/128
Linear 147	-	2/3	-	-	-	7/25	9/28
Linear 708	-	-	-	2/5	-	6/43	8/48
Curvilinear 517/521	-	1/3	-	-	-	-	1/3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8/38</b>	<b>7/36</b>	<b>5/46</b>	<b>40/288</b>	<b>30/158</b>	<b>1517/10853</b>	<b>1607/11419</b>

Table 6 Prehistoric pottery by feature

### *LIST OF ILLUSTRATED VESSELS*

#### *Fig. 16*

1. Grooved Ware, incised decoration; fabric GR1. PRN (Pottery Record No.) 1011, context 131, structure 130.
2. Grooved Ware, twisted cord decoration above a raised cordon; incised decoration below; fabric GR1. PRN 1146, context 333, structure 304
3. Upright, rounded rim; unknown vessel form (R1); fabric SH2. PRN 1048, context 146, linear feature 147.
4. Rounded jar with everted rim (R3); fabric SH4. PRN 1166, context 337, pit 363.

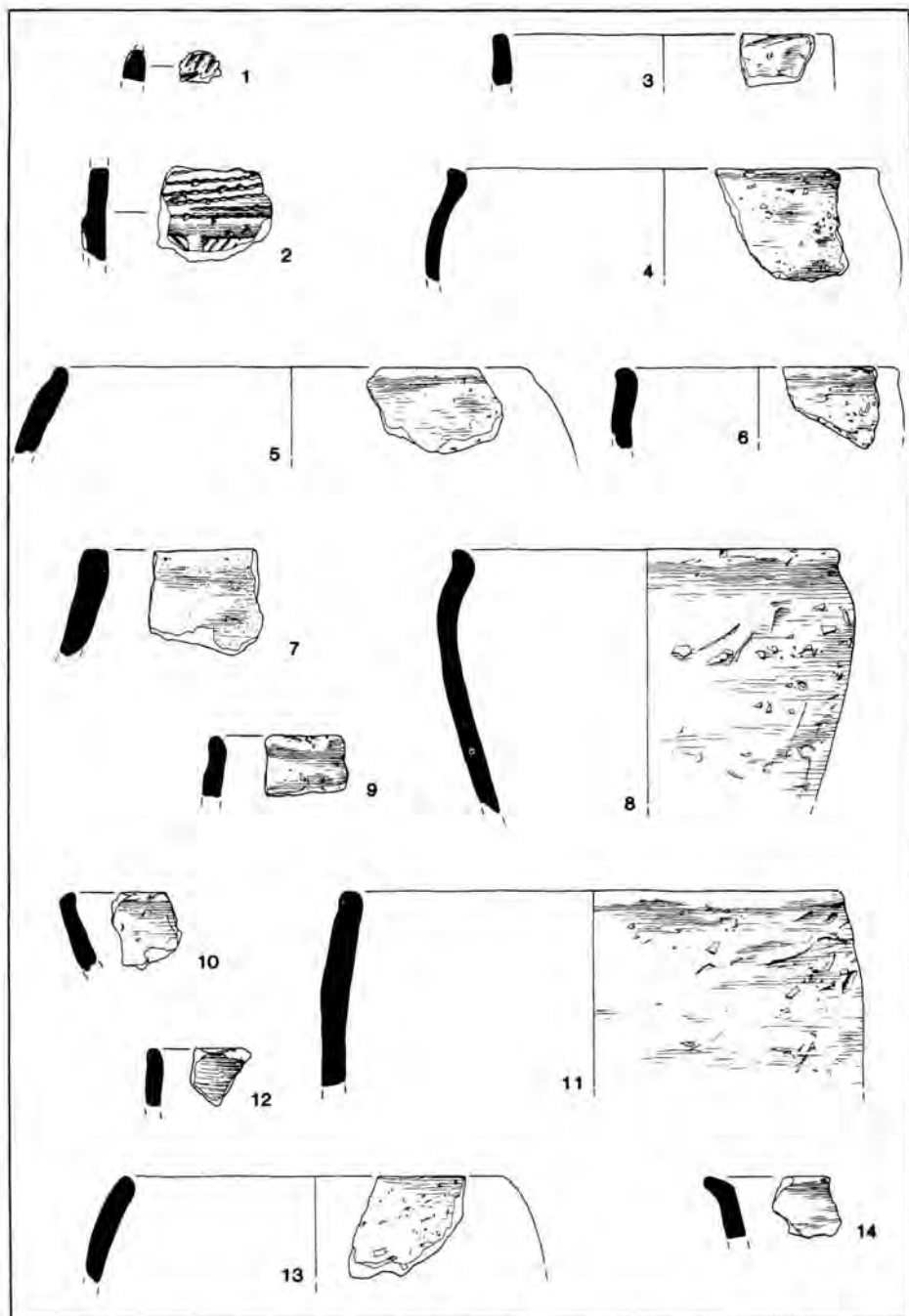


Fig. 16 Neolithic pottery (nos 1–2), Iron Age pottery (nos 3–14); scale 1:3

5. Ovoid jar with upright, rounded rim (R4); fabric SH3. PRN 1085, context 305, structure 304.
6. Ovoid bowl with slightly everted, rounded rim (R5); fabric SH1. PRN 1104, context 317, structure 304.
7. Bowl with flattened rim (R5); fabric SH3. PRN 1151, context 333, structure 304.

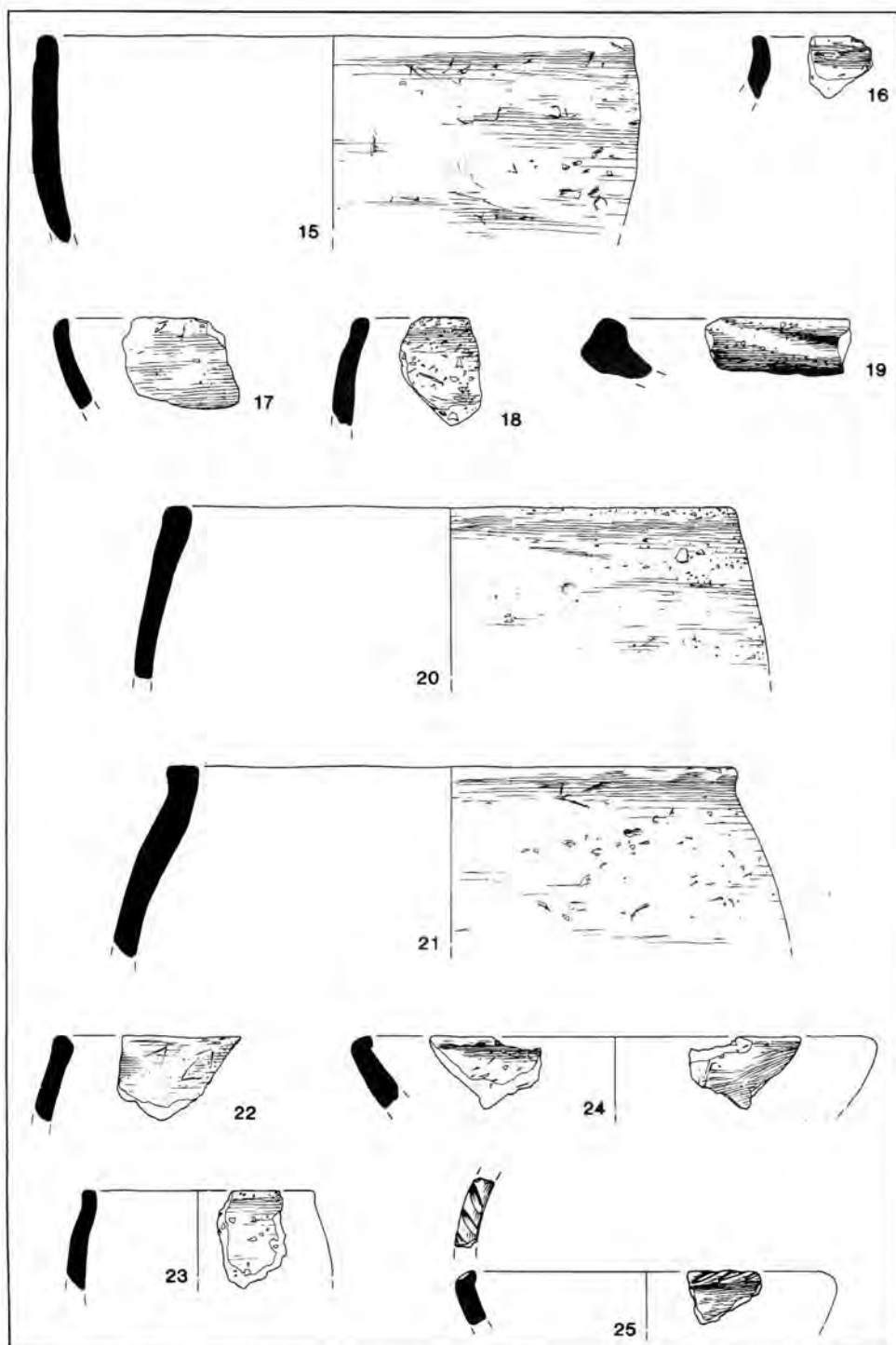


Fig. 17 Iron Age pottery (nos 15-25); scale 1:3

8. Shouldered bowl with everted rim (R7); fabric SH1. PRN 1227, context 614, structure 304.
9. Slightly everted, rounded rim; unknown vessel form (R1); fabric SH4. PRN 1097, context 314, pit 111 within structure 304.
10. Flared bowl with internally expanded rim (R9); fabric SH1. PRN 1094, context 314, pit 111 within structure 304.
11. Large bowl with flattened rim (R5); fabric SH1. PRNs 1130/1143/1172, context 331, pit 346 within structure 304.
12. Small bowl with rounded rim (R5); fabric FL1. PRN 1139, context 331, pit 346 within structure 304.
13. Ovoid jar with upright, rounded rim (R4); fabric SH4. PRN 1137, context 327, pit 346 within structure 304.
14. Flared bowl with everted rim (R8); fabric QU3. PRN 1125, context 327, pit 346 within structure 304.

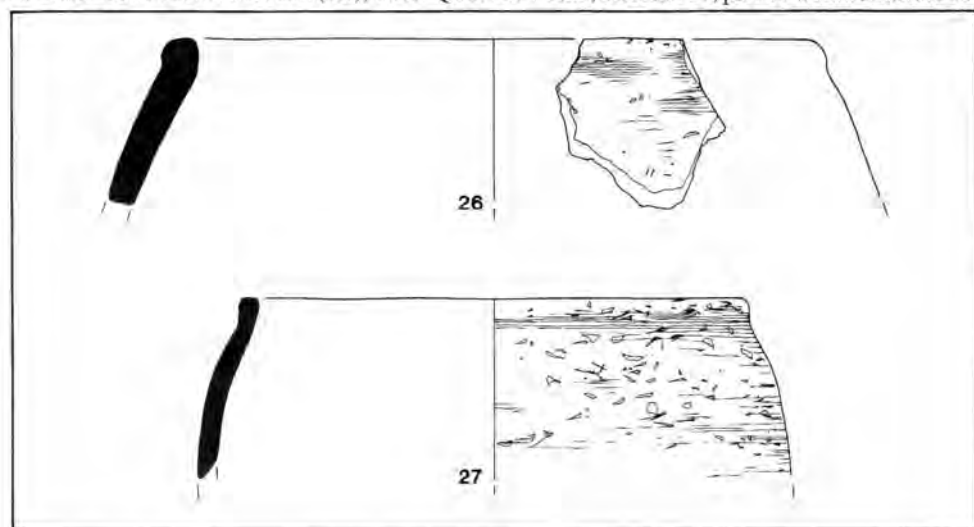


Fig. 18 Iron Age pottery (nos 26-27); scale 1:3

*Fig. 17*

15. Bowl with rounded rim (R5); fabric SH1. PRN 1127, context 327, pit 346 within structure 304.
16. Slightly everted, rounded rim; unknown vessel form (R1); fabric SH3. PRN 1081, context 303, pit/posthole 302.
17. Flared bowl with inturned rim (R9); fabric SH3. PRN 1058, context 152, structure 130.
18. Slack-shouldered jar with upright, rounded rim (R2); fabric SH1. PRN 1055, context 152, structure 130.
19. Flared bowl with heavy, internally expanded rim (R9); impressed decoration on outer surface; fabric SH4. PRN 1064, context 172, structure 130.
20. Large bowl with flat-topped rim (R5); fabric SH4. PRNs 1036-8, 1045, context 142, structure 130.
21. Ovoid jar with flattened rim (R2); fabric SH4. PRN 1035, context 142, structure 130.
22. Ovoid jar with thickened and flattened rim (R4); fabric SH3. PRN 1041, context 142, structure 130.
23. Small slack-shouldered jar with flattened rim (R2); fabric SH4. PRN 1039, context 142, structure 130.
24. Flared bowl with internally expanded rim (R9); fabric SH1. PRN 1121, context 323, structure 130.
25. Bowl with internally expanded rim (R9); impressed decoration on top of rim; fabric LI2. PRN 1200, context 528, structure 522.

*Fig. 18*

26. Ovoid jar with upright rounded rim (R2); fabric SH3. PRN 1271, context 709, structure 522.
27. Ovoid jar with thickened and flattened rim (R2); fabric SH2. PRN 1215, context 532, structure 522.



ROMANO-BRITISH POTTERY M. Laidlaw,  
with contributions by A.P. Fitzpatrick and Lorraine Mepham

The Romano-British pottery assemblage from Cannards Grave consists of a total of 12,486 sherds (80,962g). The assemblage spans a potential date range of late 1st to mid/late 4th century AD and is dominated by coarsewares, particularly products of the Black Burnished ware industry of Dorset. Fine wares are present in smaller quantities and include samian and products of the New Forest and Oxfordshire kilns. The majority of the sherds are small and abraded.

#### METHODS

Analysis followed the standard Wessex Archaeology pottery recording system (Morris 1992). The assemblage was divided into pottery from securely stratified contexts and from unstratified and cleaning contexts. The stratified pottery was analysed using the same methods as for the prehistoric pottery (see above). The fabric types fall into three broad groups: sandy (Group QU), grog-tempered (Group GR) and fabrics of known type or source (Group E). Pottery totals by fabric type are listed in Table 7. A type series was constructed for all diagnostic rim sherds, although a number of sherds were too small to be related to specific vessel forms. Quantified data used in this report are based solely on the stratified assemblage unless otherwise stated.

Pottery recovered from unstratified and cleaning contexts was divided into six broad fabric groups: unoxidised coarseware fabrics (grey wares and Black Burnished ware); oxidised coarseware fabrics; grog-tempered fabrics; British finewares including Oxfordshire and New Forest products; and imported finewares. Quantification of the unstratified pottery fabric types by context is included in Table 7. No detailed fabric and form analysis was carried out on this part of the assemblage, but any elements not represented amongst the stratified assemblage were noted.

Percentages throughout this report are calculated by weight. Terms describing the frequency of the inclusions in the following fabric descriptions are defined as follows: rare (1–3%); sparse (3–10%); moderate (10–20%); common (20–25%); very common (30%); abundant (40–50%).

#### IMPORTED FINEWARES

##### *Samian*

A moderate quantity of samian was recovered, dispersed in small amounts within a large number of features. The sherds are mostly small and abraded with only a small range of vessel forms recorded. Identified forms comprise three Drag. 18/31 platters, seven small rim fragments of possible Drag. 37 bowls, three Drag. 36 bowls, one almost complete Drag. 38 bowl, five mortarium sherds including one Drag. 45, and one stamped Drag. 33 cup with rather crude graffiti on the external surface (Fig. 19.2). One other stamped fragment was also found (Fig. 19.1). These forms suggest a fairly broad date range within the early Roman period, but do not include any forms which can be dated earlier than the very end of the 1st century AD. The most likely source for the samian is the Central Gaulish production centre at Lezoux, whose main export period was from c. AD 120.

##### *Rhenish wares*

The term 'Rhenish ware' refers to two distinct fabric groups, one produced in Central Gaul and one at Trier (Greene 1978, 18). Both are represented at Cannards Grave, consisting of three sherds identified as Central Gaulish (fabric type E122) and two sherds as Trier (fabric type E121). The Central Gaulish type is represented by three small body sherds recovered from the possible occupation deposit 270 (post-phase 5), one intrusive sherd from the Middle Iron Age structure 130, and one small cornice-rimmed beaker from trackway 196 (context 292, phase 4).

The two Trier sherds consist of one small body sherd recovered from the possible occupation deposit 252 (post-phase 5) and one body sherd derived from a folded beaker from the phase 4 fill of the large ditch/quarry pit 400. Rhenish wares are generally dated from the later 2nd century AD, continuing into the 3rd century AD, although recent continental evidence suggests that Trier material may have continued into the later 3rd or even 4th century AD (Symonds 1992, 46). The Cannards Grave sherds come from contexts no earlier than early 4th century AD, but could be redeposited.

### *Amphorae*

Three amphora handle fragments, including one stamped, and one body sherd with horizontal ribbing were recovered.

#### *Amphora stamp A.P. Fitzpatrick*

The amphora stamp is a complete two line stamp L. IVNI/ MELISSI on the handle of a Dressel 20 amphorae for olive oil (Fig. 19.3). Stamps of L. Iunius Mellissus have been found at the kiln site of Las Delicias in Baetica and a date in the later 2nd–early 3rd centuries AD, with a preference for the 3rd century, is likely for the present example (Callender 1965, 158–60, no. 879, fig. 9, 20; Remesal Rodríguez 1986, 167, no. 156). This stamped amphora fragment was found within the phase 3 fill of the ditch/quarry pit 400.

The remaining two handle fragments are also of Dressel 20 amphorae, a form commonly found in Britain from the Late Iron Age to as late as the 3rd century AD (Peacock and Williams 1986). One was recovered from the phase 4 fill of ditch/quarry pit 400 and one from a remnant metallated surface (297, unphased). The grooved body/neck sherd, which is intrusive within Middle Iron Age structure 304, may be derived from a Catalonian Dressel 1 (fabric 2), which was produced up to AD 80 (Peacock and Williams 1986, 93).

### *BRITISH FINEWARES*

A small quantity of British finewares was recovered and includes colour-coated wares from the industries of the New Forest, Severn Valley and Oxfordshire regions. Very few vessel forms could be identified as the bulk of the sherds are small, abraded and undiagnostic. Distinguishing between products of these centres was not always clear-cut for plain, undiagnostic sherds, particularly the red-slipped fabrics, and many of the sherds were therefore attributed to the catch-all fine sandy group Q105 (see below).

#### *New Forest wares (E162)*

New Forest Wares are predominantly represented by Fulford's fabric 1a (1975, 24); a hard, fine fabric generally light to dark grey with, in the case of Cannards Grave, a dark grey slip. Three bead rim beakers were recorded, one of which from the possible occupation deposit 253 (post-phase 5) could be identified as similar to the type 49 bag-bodied beaker with incised 'wavy' decoration, dated to AD 320–350 (Fulford 1975, fig. 16).

#### *Oxfordshire wares (E170)*

The small quantity of sherds attributed to the Oxfordshire industry comprise mainly oxidised wares with very abraded colour coats, with a small quantity of white ware mortaria. Vessel forms identified consist of one miniature plain-rimmed bulbous beaker (Young 1977, type 102.1); one small sherd from a hemispherical bowl or possibly a flanged bowl copying samian form Drag. 38 (*ibid.*, type 54); a second flanged bowl; one shallow bowl or platter derived from samian forms 79 and 32 (*ibid.*, type 40); and three mortaria (*ibid.*, types 22, 97, 100). All these forms may be dated from the 3rd century AD, possibly as early as AD 240 for mortarium type 97 and the possible Drag. 38 bowl, and continuing until the end of the Roman period (AD 400+).

FABRIC	No. Sherds	Weight (g)	% of group	% of total
IMPORTS				
Rhenish wares	5	10	0.4	
Amphorae	4	574	25.4	
Samian	258	1675	74.2	
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>2259</b>		<b>2.8</b>
BRITISH FINE WARES				
New Forest	37	146	5.6	
Oxford	46	373	14.3	
QU105 / E157	142	911	35.1	
Unspecified (unstrat.)	256	1168	45.0	
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>481</b>	<b>2598</b>		<b>3.2</b>
GROG-TEMPERED				
GR110	36	460	67.2	
GR111	3	49	7.2	
Unspecified (unstrat.)	17	175	25.6	
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>684</b>		<b>0.8</b>
COARSE SANDY: UNOXIDISED				
Black Burnished ware	3682	19392	26.8	
QU100	2711	17675	24.4	
QU101	213	2032	2.8	
QU102	63	756	1.0	
QU103	100	777	1.1	
QU106	157	1741	2.4	
QU107	4	64	0.1	
Unoxidised unspec. (unstratified)	4352	30016	41.4	
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>11282</b>	<b>72453</b>		<b>89.5</b>
COARSE SANDY: OXIDISED				
QU104	170	1262	42.5	
Oxidised unspec. (unstratified)	230	1706	57.5	
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>2968</b>		<b>3.7</b>
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>12486</b>	<b>80962</b>		

Table 7 Romano-British pottery fabric totals

*Severn Valley (E157)*

A very small quantity of plain body sherds was tentatively identified as Severn Valley Ware (Webster 1976, 18). The sherds are all small and abraded and no diagnostic forms could be identified, apart from two mortaria sherds positively identified as Severn Valley Ware due to the characteristic angular white and grey quartz trituration grits. These could have been produced at the Old Anglo-Bavarian Brewery kiln site recorded at Shepton Mallet, products of which are generally considered to date to the early 2nd century AD, although their very localised distribution and relatively rare occurrence hampers close dating (Hartley 2001). These two mortaria sherds came from the possible occupation deposit 252 (post-phase 5).

*Fine sandy fabric of unknown source (QU105)*

As already noted above the distinction between the fine sandy oxidised fabrics caused some problems and therefore a number of the sherds assigned to the catch-all group QU105 may in fact be abraded colour-coated sherds from either the Oxfordshire, New Forest, or Severn Valley industries.

QU105 'Catch-all' group for fine quartz fabrics, oxidised with sparse, well-sorted quartz <0.25 mm; sparse mica; sparse iron oxide. Pale orange to reddish-orange.

Vessel forms within this group are again scarce and include four small beakers/jars with bead rims, two bowl/dishes with beaded rims and one dish/platter with a grooved upturned rim similar to the Oxfordshire type C40 (Young 1977, fig 157). These are forms which again may be dated to the late 3rd and 4th centuries AD.

#### BRITISH COARSEWARES

##### *Black Burnished ware (E100)*

A large proportion of the Romano-British ceramic assemblage (41%) consists of Black Burnished ware of Poole Harbour type (BB1). Although slight variations could be seen within the fabric generally it conforms to the description given by Gillam (1976) of a fabric 'granular in fracture ... tempered with medium-grained quartz sand'.

The forms represented at Cannards Grave are all typical elements of the Black Burnished ware industry; form types and date ranges used here follow the Dorchester type series (Seager Smith and Davies 1993). Quantification of the various types represented, with date ranges, is presented in Table 8. The forms include everted rim jars/cooking pots (type 2; Fig. 19.4-6), flat-topped (or flanged) and dropped flange bowls (types 22, 24, 25; Fig. 19.7, 8) and straight-sided dishes (or 'dog-dishes') (type 20; Fig. 19.9). The everted rim cooking pots can be dated as late 2nd to late 3rd century AD on the basis of vessel form and decoration. No characteristically late 1st/early 2nd century AD forms (type 1) and no exaggeratedly splayed rims of 4th century AD type (type 3) were identified. A small number of short rims are likely to be derived from later 3rd century AD bulbous pots. Three handled dishes were recovered, including one almost complete, double-handled oval example (or 'fish-dish') with a handle at either end (type 21; unstratified). The two remaining handles may also to be derived from similar dishes (Fig. 19.10).

	Date range	1	2	3	4	5	post-5	Total
Everted rim jar (type 2)	late C1+	1	21	19	16	9	12	78
'Dog dish' (type 20)	late C1+	2	5	7	13		7	34
Flanged bowl (type 22/23)	mid C2-C3	-	19	2	4	2	2	29
Dropped flange bowl (type 25)	late C3+	-	5	1	5	1	7	19
Handled dish (?type 21)	late C3-C4	-	-	-	1			1
<b>Total</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>161</b>

Table 8 Black Burnished ware vessel forms by phase; type and date ranges follow Seager Smith and Davies (1993)

Although Black Burnished ware vessels can usually provide chronological indicators for phasing, little chronological change was visible within the assemblage at Cannards Grave, largely due to the fragmentary nature of the assemblage. Table 8, however, illustrates that straight-sided dishes, although present in the earlier phases, increase in frequency particularly from phase 3. There is also a slight visible increase in the occurrence of dropped flange bowls in later phases, corresponding to a slight decrease in flat-rimmed bowls. These trends conform to the known sequence of Black Burnished ware vessel forms, as observed at Dorchester and elsewhere in the south-west.

Table 10 shows the quantification of Black Burnished ware by phase. Notably large concentrations came from the fills of ditch/quarry pit 400 (phases 2, 3 and 4). The proportions of BB1 by phase give a rather erratic pattern, rising to over 50% in phase 2, then falling to approximately 33% in phase 3 before rising again. It must be noted, however, that proportions based on the relatively smaller quantities of pottery in phases 1, 2 and 5 may not be reliable.

##### *Coarse sandy fabrics*

The list below is of coarse sandy fabrics of unknown source. The fabrics were divided broadly by the coarseness and frequency of inclusions, and 'catch-all' groups were used due to the

problem of defining slight differences between the fabrics; the value of sub-dividing the fabrics further was not seen as being any more informative, particularly when the sherds are so undiagnostic and fragmentary.

### Greywares

QU100 'Catch-all' group for moderately coarse, unoxidised sandy fabrics, with moderate/common, poorly-sorted quartz <0.5mm; sparse black iron oxide; probably includes products of more than one source.

QU101 Fine fabric, unoxidised; moderate, well-sorted quartz <0.25 mm; moderate black iron oxide. Generally pale grey.

QU102 Moderately coarse fabric, unoxidised; common, well-sorted quartz <0.5mm. Generally sandwich core with dark grey core and surfaces, lighter grey margins.

QU103 Fine micaceous fabric, unoxidised; common, well-sorted quartz <0.5mm; moderate mica; sparse black iron oxide. Pale grey core, dark grey surfaces.

QU106 Coarse fabric, unoxidised; moderate, moderately-sorted quartz <2mm. Generally pale grey.

QU107 Coarse fabric, unoxidised; very common, moderately-sorted quartz <1mm; sparse/moderate, poorly-sorted limestone <5mm. Generally pale grey core with darker grey surfaces.

### Oxidised wares

QU104 'Catch-all' group for coarse, oxidised sandy fabrics, with common, poorly-sorted quartz <1mm.

The bulk of the fabrics from this group consist of non-distinctive grey sandy wares and smaller quantities of oxidised wares, which together make up half of the Romano-British assemblage (51.1%). These fabrics must include the products of more than one source, particularly the large quantity of sherds (37%) attributed to the coarse 'catch-all' group QU100. Similar grey wares are ubiquitous at other Romano-British sites in the region, and it is assumed that they are of at least relatively local manufacture. Possible sources local to Cannards Grave include the kiln at the Old Anglo-Bavarian Brewery in Shepton itself (Swan 1984, Mf5.594), and a few seconds or wasters in 3rd/4th century AD forms were also noted at the adjacent Fosse Lane site (Evans 2001).

Micaceous fine grey wares (as fabric QU103) are known from a variety of sites in southern England including Ilchester (Leach 1982, 141, fabric Gii), Catsgore (Leech 1982, 156) and Exeter (Bidwell 1979, 193), dated mainly to the 1st and 2nd centuries AD and later replaced by sandier non-micaceous grey wares (Leech 1982, 156). This appears to be a widespread early attempt at producing local unoxidised 'fine wares'. At Cannards Grave, however, fabric QU103 was not confined to the early contexts, but occurred in all phases from phase 2 onwards.

Other kiln sites have been found in the area, for example at Norton Fitzwarren (*c.* 50 km to the south-west) which was in use from the late 1st/early 2nd century to the late 3rd/4th century AD producing coarse sandy grey fabrics (Swan 1984, Mf5.593). At Catsgore some sandy grey wares from AD 150/180 onwards occurred in a fine, well-burnished fabric identical to wasters from the Huntspill Cut area of the Brue Valley, and these may also have reached Cannards Grave since similar forms, particularly everted rim jars, have been identified here. Kilns in the Huntspill Cut area (*c.* 25km to the west of Cannards Grave) were manufacturing pottery from the 2nd to 4th centuries AD (Leech 1982, 153). A small number of sherds in a distinctive blue-grey fabric may be from 4th century AD kilns identified at Congresbury which were producing forms such as cavetto-necked jars, everted rim jars and storage jars with piecrust rims, although no diagnostic sherds were found at Cannards Grave (Swan 1984, Mf4.584-5).

The coarseware fabrics are found in a very restricted range of utilitarian vessel forms such as storage jars, everted rim jars and bowls of various forms. Although a large number of rim sherds were recovered, the majority of them are small and complete profiles are very scarce. The rims were assigned to seven broad vessel forms, listed below. The correlation between fabrics and vessel forms is given in Table 9.



Vessel Forms	QU100	QU101	QU102	QU103	QU104	QU106	QU107	Total
Type 1 Storage jars	5	1	-	-	-	-	-	6
Type 2 Jars, everted rims	60	7	1	3	4	5	1	81
Type 3 Smaller jars & beakers	7	-	2	4	5	1	-	19
Type 4 Bowls, everted rims	3	3	-	1	-	1	-	8
Type 5 Bowls, squared & upright rims	22	2	1	-	3	1	1	30
Type 6 Flagons	1	-	-	-	2	-	-	3
Type 7 Lids & platters	-	-	2	1	-	1	-	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>151</b>

Table 9 Romano-British vessel forms by fabric: other coarsewares

- Type 1: Large storage jars with heavy rims, often finger-impressed (Fig. 19.11, 12)  
 Type 2: Jars with everted rims (Fig. 19.13; Fig. 20.18–21)  
 Type 3: Smaller jars and beakers with everted, upright and bead rims (Fig. 20.14–16)  
 Type 4: Bowls with everted rims (Fig. 20.22)  
 Type 5: Bowls with flat, square-ended or upright rims (Fig. 20.23)  
 Type 6: Flagons (Fig. 20.17)  
 Type 7: Lids and platters (Fig. 20.24, 25)

Table 10 shows that greywares were found in all phases, with large concentrations noted again in the fills of ditch/quarry pit 400 (phases 2–4). The proportion by phase remains fairly constant throughout, between 42% and 47%, except for phase 3 where it peaks at 56%. Oxidised wares occur in much smaller quantities throughout – no more than 5.5% in any phase.

	PHASE 1			PHASE 2			PHASE 3			PHASE 4			PHASE 5			TOTAL	
	No.	wt.	% of phase	No.	Wt.	% of phase	No.	Wt.	% of phase	No.	Wt.	% of phase	No.	Wt.	% of phase	No.	Wt.
BB1	21	145	30.6	280	1826	51.8	1669	4854	33.5	914	8078	45.4	104	604	39.5	2988	15507
Greywares	18	205	43.3	1148	1494	42.3	558	8093	56.0	866	8314	46.7	78	717	46.9	2668	18823
Oxidised	1	26	5.5	15	85	2.4	15	185	1.3	63	499	2.8	10	77	5.0	104	872
Grog-tempered	-	-	-	-	-	-	26	316	2.2	6	89	0.5	-	-	-	32	405
British finewares	2	85	17.9	6	77	2.2	37	268	1.9	75	431	2.4	9	84	5.5	129	945
Imports	1	13	2.7	6	46	1.3	29	741	5.1	53	390	2.2	11	48	3.1	100	1238
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>474</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1485</b>	<b>3528</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2334</b>	<b>14457</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1977</b>	<b>17801</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>1530</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

Table 10 Romano-British pottery totals by phase (Phases 1–5)

### *Grog-tempered fabrics*

Only a small number of grog-tempered sherds were recorded in the two fabrics described below. No diagnostic forms are present.

GR110 Hard, moderately coarse fabric; moderate poorly-sorted grog <5mm; common, well-sorted quartz <0.5mm; unoxidised.

GR111 Soft, soapy fabric; moderate, moderately-sorted grog <5mm; sparse moderately-sorted quartz <0.5mm; oxidised.

The bulk of the sherds (36) were attributed to the hard unoxidised fabric GR110 but this includes 26 sherds from ditch/quarry pit 400 (phase 3) which may represent just one vessel. The remaining sherds were dispersed in small quantities within post-phase 5 contexts and associated with the phase 4 collapse of wall 431.

### *DISCUSSION* Lorraine Mephram

The Romano-British pottery from Cannards Grave may be considered as part of the overall assemblage from the Roman settlement at Shepton Mallet, together with that recovered from the adjacent site at Fosse Lane, and forms a useful adjunct to the latter assemblage (Evans 2001). Overall trends in fabrics and forms noted at Fosse Lane were also observed at Cannards



Grave, although some interesting contrasts are visible at a more detailed level. In this discussion, therefore, the emphasis will rest not on detailing the local and regional context for the Cannards Grave assemblage, which is ably dealt with elsewhere (*ibid.*), but on comparing and contrasting those trends observed here to those at the adjacent site.

The most immediately apparent contrast with Fosse Lane lies in assemblage composition, in terms of both fabrics and forms. Fosse Lane has a greater range of both, which would be expected given the larger size of the assemblage (just over twice the size of Cannards Grave), but the marked lack of the 'tableware' component at Cannards Grave, represented at Fosse Lane by a range of beakers, cups, tankards and bowls, often decorated, in finewares (New Forest, Oxfordshire, Severn Valley) as well as the finer coarsewares, cannot be explained entirely by relative numbers of sherds, nor by the markedly fragmentary nature of the assemblage. The Cannards Grave assemblage appears almost unremittingly utilitarian, a pattern which is echoed in the metalwork and in the general range of material types found here, and which is found consistently throughout the Romano-British period, even in the later phases (3 and 4) where there is a definite increase in activity (and implied prosperity) on the site. Vessels associated with food preparation and storage (jars in a range of sizes and bowls/dishes) are overwhelmingly predominant, and even the finewares (in particular samian and Oxfordshire wares) include a fair proportion of mortaria amongst the identifiable vessel forms.

The predominantly utilitarian nature of the Cannards Grave assemblage means that its usefulness as a dating tool is relatively limited. Imports and British finewares are too restricted in numbers, and too fragmentary, to offer much help; moreover many of these wares are obviously residual in later contexts. Dating therefore relies largely on the diagnostic coarseware forms, particularly those in BB1 which are well, if relatively broadly dated within the regional ceramic sequence. The trends observed within the BB1 assemblage have already been mentioned: the gradual increase in straight-sided dishes from phase 3, and the decrease in flat-rimmed bowls at the expense of dropped flange bowls. The relative scarcity of the BB1 dropped flange bowls, however, and the apparently complete lack of jars with exaggeratedly flared rims, both common forms of the mid 3rd century AD onwards, are interesting, and do not seem to be chronologically related; both trends are paralleled at Fosse Lane.

The range of both fabrics and forms identified at Fosse Lane demonstrates the wide-ranging nature of the trading links and ceramic influences of the Romano-British settlement at Shepton Mallet. Traded wares include mortaria and finewares from south Wales, Oxfordshire, Hertfordshire, and the New Forest, as well as samian, Rhenish wares and amphorae from the Continent. Most of these sources are represented, albeit in much smaller quantities, at Cannards Grave. Predominant amongst the traded wares in both assemblages, however, is Dorset BB1. At Fosse Lane this accounts for 31% (by weight) of the total assemblage, and at Cannards Grave 41% of the *stratified* assemblage (the overall percentage is likely to be similar), but neither site produced the quantities seen at sites further to the south such as Ilchester (50–60%; Leach 1982, 142–3) and Catsgore (70%; Leach 1982, 159), a pattern which could be explained by the position of Shepton Mallet on the *civitas* boundary between the Dobunnii and Belgic territories (Evans 2001, 158–60).

Also echoed at Cannards Grave is the relatively low proportion of oxidised wares (including Severn Valley wares) as opposed to greywares (3.9% of the regional wares, including BB1; 7.8% at Fosse Lane), in contrast to 'classic' Severn Valley assemblages further north; this again may be due to the boundary position of Shepton Mallet (Evans 2001, 158–60). More specifically, the proportion of Severn Valley wares on both sites is markedly low given the location of at least one kiln making these wares in Shepton itself (*ibid.*; Swan 1984, Mf5.584). Identifiable Severn Valley wares are particularly scarce at Cannards Grave, although the difficulties of identification have been mentioned, and there is a complete absence of the characteristic tankard

form, despite the supposed specialisation of the Shepton potters in this particular form (Webster 1976, 38). This may be partly chronological, since these tankards were only produced in Severn Valley ware until the 2nd century AD, although they were also noted as scarce in early phases at Fosse Lane.

Overall, then, the Cannards Grave assemblage may be seen to provide corroborative evidence for most of the ceramic trends noted at Fosse Lane. The main point of difference, however, is in the contrasting nature of the two assemblages – on the one hand Fosse Lane with a wide range of vessel forms including a significant proportion of ‘tablewares’, and on the other the predominantly coarseware, utilitarian assemblage from Cannards Grave. This may be explained by differences in status and/or function of the two sites, and the Cannards Grave assemblage is likely to reflect partly the peripheral position of the site, on the southern boundary of the known settlement, and partly the possible industrial function of the structures of phases 3 and 4.

#### *LIST OF ILLUSTRATED SHERDS*

1. Samian stamp. PRN (Pottery Record No.) 231, Obj. No. 5200, context 239, ditch/quarry pit 400; phase 3.
2. Samian stamp and graffito on Drag. 33 cup. PRN 232, Obj No 5223, context 239, ditch/quarry pit 400; phase 3.
3. Stamped amphora handle, Dressel 20. PRN 775, Obj. No. 5222, context 234, ditch/quarry pit 400; phase 3.
4. Everted rim jar, Black Burnished ware, burnished lattice decoration. PRN 304, context 234, ditch/quarry pit 400; phase 3.
5. Everted rim jar, Black Burnished ware, burnished lattice decoration. PRN 556, context 239, ditch/quarry pit 400; phase 3.
6. Everted rim jar, Black Burnished ware, burnished lattice decoration. PRN 692, context 449, pit 448; Romano-British unphased.
7. Flat-rimmed bowl with grooved rim, Black Burnished ware, burnished decoration. PRN 153, context 220, ditch/quarry pit 400; phase 4.
8. Dropped flange bowl, Black Burnished ware. PRN 156, context 220, ditch/quarry pit 400; phase 4.
9. Straight-sided dish, Black Burnished ware, burnished decoration. PRN 542, context 234, ditch/quarry pit 400; phase 3.
- 10.Handled dish, possible ‘fish-dish’, Black Burnished ware. PRN 554, context 237; possible occupation deposit over well 249.
11. Storage jar with ‘pie-crust’ rim, fabric Q100. PRN 553, context 237; plough disturbed deposit over well 249.
12. Storage jar with thickened, folded rim, fabric Q100. PRNs 658/662, Context 437/438, bedding for wall 278; phase 5.
13. Everted rim jar, fabric Q100. PRN 546, context 534; intrusive in penannular ditch of Middle Iron Age structure 522.
14. Bead rim jar, fabric Q102. PRN 111, context 220, ditch/quarry pit 400; phase 4.
15. Narrow-necked jar, fabric Q100. PRN 555, context 239, ditch/quarry pit 400; phase 3.
16. Small jar or beaker with everted rim, fabric Q104. PRN 97, context 220, ditch/quarry pit 400; phase 4.
17. Neck of flagon, fabric Q100. PRN 129, context 220, ditch/quarry pit 400; phase 4.
18. Hooked rim jar, fabric Q100. PRN 132, context 220, ditch/quarry pit 400; phase 4.
19. Hooked rim jar, fabric Q100. PRN 130, context 220, ditch/quarry pit 400; phase 4.
20. Everted rim jar, fabric Q100. PRN 545, context 234, ditch/quarry pit 400; phase 3.
21. Narrow-necked jar with lid-seated rim, fabric Q100. PRN 563, context 246, possible collapsed wall; phase 4.
22. Everted rim bowl, fabric Q100. PRN 427, context 264, ditch/quarry pit 400; phase 3.

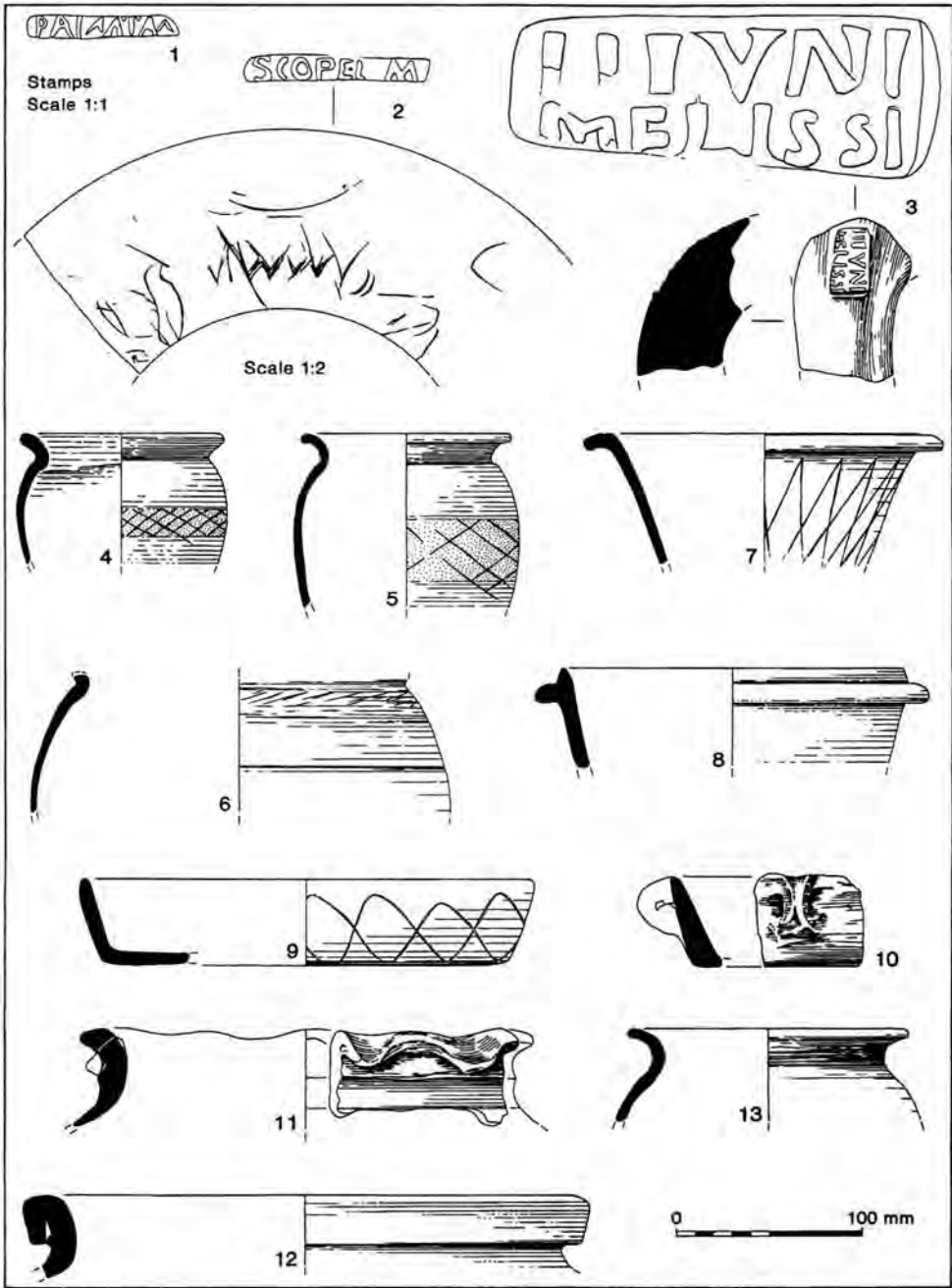


Fig. 19 Romano-British pottery (nos 1–13); scale 1:4

23. Flat-rimmed bowl, fabric Q100. PRN 253, context 239, ditch/quarry pit 400; phase 3.  
24. Lid, fabric Q102. PRN 561, context 239, ditch/quarry pit 400; phase 3.  
25. Platter or lid, fabric Q100. PRN 266, context 239, ditch/quarry pit 400; phase 3.

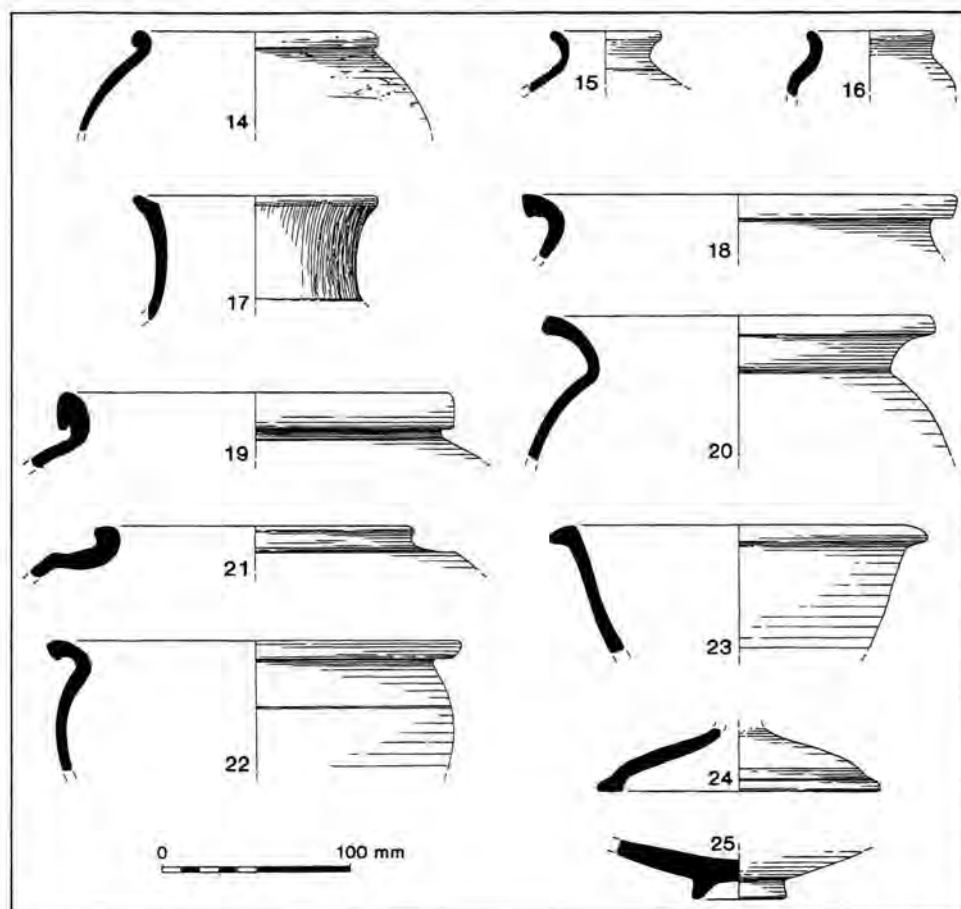


Fig. 20 Romano-British pottery: nos 14–25; scale 1:4

#### CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL Rosie Edmunds

A total of 220 fragments of ceramic building material was recovered from the site, although it should be noted at the outset that the distinction between ceramic building material and fired clay was not always clear. All of the fragments are small and often heavily abraded, and this has made the identification of featureless fragments difficult.

On the basis of surviving dimensions, fabric type and associated pottery the assemblage can be divided into Romano-British, medieval and post-medieval fragments, of which only the 86 Romano-British fragments are discussed here. These are mainly featureless fragments in soft, poorly-wedged fabrics, often with large iron ore and grit inclusions. Only one diagnostic fragment of *tegula*, from a clearance layer, was identified, and other fragments, including some from post-Romano-British, post-medieval and unstratified contexts, have been tentatively identified as Romano-British on the basis of fabric type alone.

Fifty-seven fragments of ceramic building material occurred in Iron Age contexts, all intrusive and associated with Romano-British pottery. Fragments from Romano-British contexts include a small concentration in phases 3 and 4 in the construction cut and later collapse of wall 260.

## FIRED CLAY Rosie Edmunds and Natasha Hutcheson

A total of 298 fragments of fired clay was recovered from a variety of contexts across the site (see above for the difficulties of distinguishing fired clay from ceramic building material). With the exception of two identifiable objects, both spindlewhorls, these fragments are small and featureless, although a few had recognisable surfaces; all are likely to be of structural origin, from wattle and daub structures, or from pit linings. Eleven fragments show possible wattle impressions and a further 18 fragments appeared to have been severely burnt.

Although no detailed fabric analysis was carried out, a quick visual inspection revealed that a variety of fabric types were apparent, mainly poorly-wedged with large iron ore inclusions, some more sandy than others. A few fragments of a finer sandy, well-fired fabric are also present in the clearance and unstratified layers, and may be of post-medieval date.

The distribution of these fragments on site shows an almost equal division between Iron Age contexts (95 fragments) and Romano-British contexts (109 fragments); the remaining 92 fragments are from unstratified or undated contexts. More than half of the fragments from Iron Age contexts (57) came from the penannular ditch of structure 304, and a further 13 fragments from pit 346 within structure 304. Just under half of the fragments from Romano-British contexts (58) derived from phase 2 and phase 4 fills of ditch/quarry pit 400.

## SPINDLE WHORLS

The two spindle whorls recovered, one complete (Fig. 21.6) and one incomplete, have both been made from reused sherds of Romano-British coarseware pottery, one greyware and one Black Burnished ware (BB1). Both whorls are of similar diameter (*c.* 35mm). One came from the phase 3 fill of ditch/quarry pit 400 and the second from the possible collapse of wall 260 (phase 4).

## ILLUSTRATED OBJECT (Fig. 21)

6. Ceramic spindlewhorl, made from sherd of Romano-British pottery (greyware). Obj. No. 5261, context 264, fill of ditch/quarry pit 400, Romano-British phase 3.

## OBJECTS OF WORKED BONE Natasha Hutcheson

Thirteen objects of worked bone were recovered. Of these, three came from Iron Age contexts, seven from Roman contexts and three were unstratified. Two of those from Iron Age contexts were found in pit 111 within structure 304. One is identifiable as an undecorated toggle or fastener (Fig. 21.1). The second is similar, slightly longer, with a perforation through only one wall at one end (Fig. 21.2). Like the 'toggle', this object has a smooth and polished surface, but its function is unknown. A close parallel has been identified from Meare Village East (Coles 1987, fig 3.5, B49). Both are probably made from sheep tibiae. A third object, from pit 334, may be a pin blank, made from a long bone shaft from a large mammal (cow or horse).

Romano-British bone objects consist of five pins, one probable pin blank, a needle, a pin/needle shaft fragment, a handle fragment and half a counter. Three pins came from stratified contexts. Using Crummy's typology (1983), two may be classified as a type 6 (Fig. 21.3) and a probable type 2 with incised decoration around the head (Fig. 21.4); the third is of uncertain type. In addition, a second type 6 pin with a reel/bead-shaped head came from an unstratified context, as did a further pin shaft fragment of uncertain type. Type 2 pins are generally considered to have a terminal date of *c.* AD 200, while type 6 pins have a range of 2nd to 4th centuries AD (Crummy 1983, 24–5).

The needle (Fig. 21.5) came from the fill of the phase 2 ditch/quarry pit 400. It has broken across the eye, but seems most likely to be a type 1 needle with a simple tapering shaft and pointed head (Crummy 1983, 65). The roughly-hewn shaft fragment, from an unstratified context, could derive from either a pin or a needle. The bone counter was found in the phase 4 culvert 282. This has been broken in half, probably in antiquity. It has relatively rough edges and appears to have been 'clipped' into shape, unlike the majority of Romano-British bone counters which are lathe-turned. The handle fragment, from the phase 4 fill of ditch/quarry pit 400, has two incised lines of decoration which would have run around the top of the handle.

*LIST OF ILLUSTRATED OBJECTS (Fig. 21)*

1. Toggle. Obj. No. 5202, context 314, pit 111 within Middle Iron Age structure 304.
2. Object of head of unknown function. Obj. No. 5247, context 314, pit 111 within Middle Iron Age structure 304.
3. Pin. Obj. No. 5218, context 247, collapsed wall; Romano-British phase 4.
4. Pin. Obj. No. 5084, context 218, possible occupation deposit; Romano-British post-phase 5.
5. Needle. Obj. No. 5217, context 411, ditch/quarry pit 400; Romano-British phase 2.

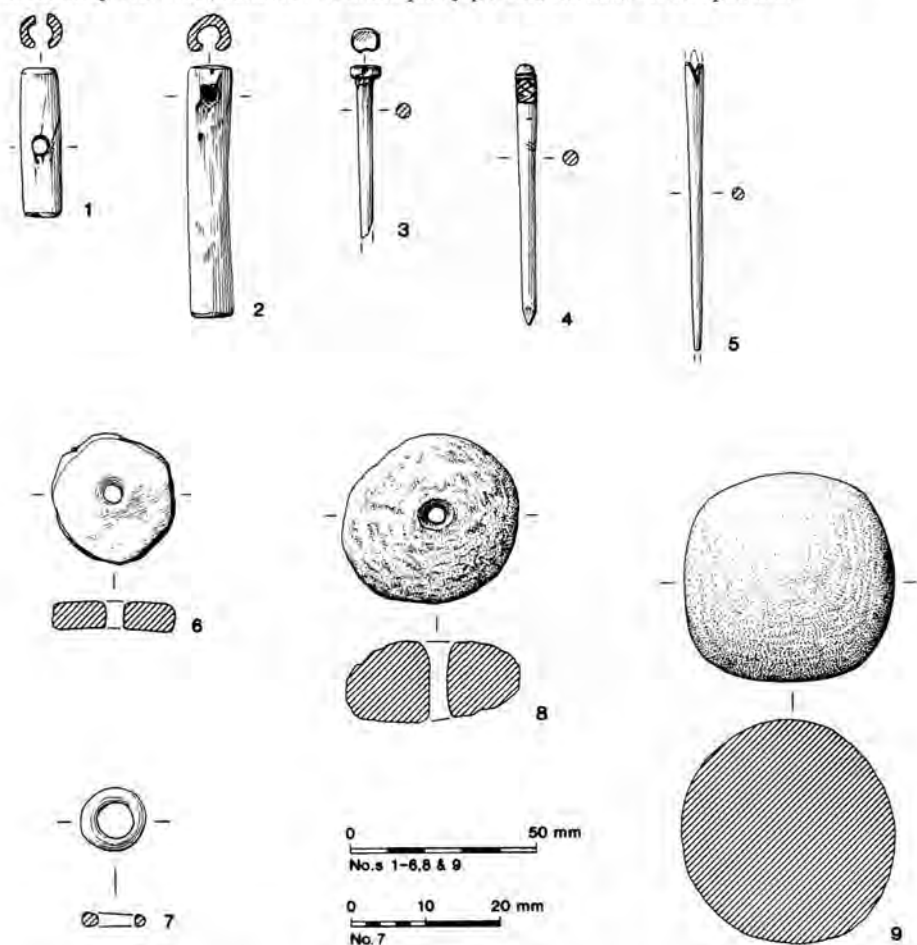


Fig. 21 Objects of bone, nos 1-5, pottery, no. 6, glass, no. 7 and stone, nos 8-9; scales 1:2 and 1:1



## HUMAN BONE Jacqueline I. McKinley

Human bone from two contexts was received for analysis. The bone had not been recognised as human during excavation, having been recovered with a quantity of animal bone and other material from the Middle Iron Age pit 138, and the phase 3 fill of Romano-British ditch/quarry pit 400.

## METHODS

Age was assessed from the stage of ossification and epiphyseal bone fusion (Gray 1977, McMinn and Hutchings 1985, Webb *et al.* 1985). Sex was assessed from the sexually dimorphic traits of the skeleton (Bass 1987). Pathological lesions and morphological variations/non-metric traits were recorded, and diagnoses suggested where appropriate.

## RESULTS

The bone was generally in fairly good condition, that from pit 138 having a 'fresh' appearance. Most of the bone was, however, rather abraded and badly fragmented with most of the breaks being old. The single bone fragment from ditch/quarry pit 400 appeared slightly worn.

The bone from pit 138 represented the remains of a single individual, a juvenile, c. 12% of the skeleton being present including elements of axial skeleton, upper and lower limb. The fragment of innominate from ditch/quarry pit 400 was that of an adult male.

Extensive pitting was noted across the medial metaphyseal surface of the right clavicle from pit 138. The one (right) femoral distal epiphysis and one (right) tibial distal epiphysis recovered, both had a covering of open, disorganised new bone across the epiphyseal surfaces. In both cases the adjacent metaphyses were missing. All the other metaphyseal surfaces (radial, ulna, proximal tibia and fibula) appeared normal, and no other lesions were observed in the affected epiphyses. The lesions are likely to be indicative of some form of infection, but incomplete recovery of the skeletal remains precludes conclusive comment. Fused third centres of ossification were noted in the metacarpals and first metatarsal from pit 138, this is a common morphological variation (Rogers and Waldron 1986; Weddell 1939).

## DISCUSSION

The condition of the bone indicates that it was redeposited, possibly more than once. The lack of weathering on the bone from pit 138 suggests it was not exposed to the elements for long, whilst the slightly more worn appearance of that from ditch/quarry pit 400 may suggest some weathering. The original date and mode of deposition of these remains is unknown. The location of their final deposition may have been accidental, the bone having been disturbed at some date from burials not recorded in the recent excavations and subsequently incorporated with other 'debris' later deposited in the pit fill and ditch. The deposition of human remains together with other 'midden' material in the Middle/Late Bronze Age is not unknown (Brück 1995; Wait 1985; Walker 1984; Wilson 1981), and the remains in pit 138 may possibly represent a deposition of this type. However, the human skeletal elements present in this deposit are not of the 'selective' nature generally observed in such midden deposits (*ibid.*; McKinley 2000).

## ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

## LAND MOLLUSC ANALYSIS Michael J Allen

A series of 17 samples was processed by standard methods for land snail analysis (Evans 1972) to provide general information about the local landscape use and environment. Shell numbers

were low, which is common in limestone regions. Although limestone is calcareous, it is harder than chalk and does not dissolve readily. In consequence snail shells are often slightly thinner than their counterparts on the chalklands. Furthermore, the less calcareous soils are less conducive to the preservation of shells (Evans 1972; Bell 1987). The paucity of shells does not allow detailed, specific palaeo-environmental information about the local environment from any individual assemblage, however, the general picture gained from an overview of all the samples can provide an indication of the nature of the local environment from the Middle/Late Bronze Age to the Romano-British period.

Analysis was therefore complemented by an assessment of the flots of 70 bulk samples, generally of 10 litres. These flots were deemed representative as during extraction of the analysed samples almost all the shells, with the exception of slug plates (Limacidae), were found in the flots. Site specific questions about the possibility of wet or fluvial environments, and the possibility of abandonment phases indicated by vegetation regeneration, were examined. The flots from these bulk samples were scanned under a stereo-binocular microscope and the shells only semi-quantified by Sarah Wyles and the writer, to provide an indication of species present and their abundance. This can only provide a very general indication of the local environment and land-use, but was deemed a satisfactory method of answering the very general questions posed.

#### GENERAL ENVIRONMENT AND LAND-USE FROM ASSESSED SAMPLES

The flots from the 70 bulk samples from the Middle/Late Bronze Age to the Romano-British period were rapidly assessed. None of the assemblages contained any fresh-brackish water snails, nor any of the terrestrial species more inclined to wetter slum habitats. However, for species which colonise these habitats to become established there must be a source environment (ie. wet ponds, streams or damp areas) nearby. If no such habitats existed in the vicinity during in the Bronze Age to Romano-British periods, then even ditches with running water need not have supported fresh-water mollusc life. It is unlikely that any of the deposits were waterlain, or contained bodies of water for any prolonged period.

#### LOCAL LANDSCAPE USE AND ENVIRONMENT THROUGH TIME

Land snails from a series of features ranging from Middle/Late Bronze Age pits to Middle Iron Age and Romano-British ditches (Tables 11 and 12) were analysed in order to establish the nature of the local environment. All the assemblages were dominated by open country species with *Trichia hispida* as the most common and no shade loving species (as defined by Evans 1972, 194–6) were identified. The assemblages, though small, are typical of open intensively utilised environments such as grazed pasture, trampled grassland (occupation) or arable habitats. A column of seven samples through the fills of Romano-British ditch/quarry pit 400 indicates continued open environments (Table 12).

The assessment of the bulk samples attempted to isolate assemblages indicating vegetation regeneration with the ditches, which might indicate abandonment between the phases of Iron Age round house construction, or between the Iron Age and Romano-British occupation.

Only 20% of the samples contained any shade-loving species and never more than two shade-loving species in any one sample. Throughout the 70 samples open country species *Vallonia* spp. and *Vertigo pygmaea* dominated. These are species typical of open, short dry grassland. The catholic species (mainly *Trichia hispida* and *Cochlicopa* sp) are common in these habitats. Many of the shade-loving species (eg *Punctum pygmaeum*, *Nesovitrea hammonis* and *Vitrea* spp.), are also common in longer grassland (Cameron and Morgan-Huws 1975).

A slightly higher proportion of shade-loving species was noted in the Romano-British ditch/quarry pit (400) and included *Oxychilus cellarius*, *Nesovitrea hammonis* and single occurrences of *Clausilia bidentata* and *Ena obscura*, but this does not indicate any overall change in the

Phase	NAT.	MIDDLE IRON AGE							ROMAN	
Feature type	nat. feature	pit	struct	struct	struct	p'hole	p'hole	ditch	ditch	quarry
Feature	191	138	304	522	304	612	612	147	466	149
Sample	6026	6022	6008	6045	6065	6043	6047	6044	6100	6032
Context	193	139	317	532	649	613	613	127	465	150
Depth	spot	spot	spot	spot	spot	spot	spot	spot	spot	spot
Wt (g)	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500
MOLLUSCA										
<i>Cochlicopa lubrica</i> (Müller)	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
<i>Cochlicopa</i> spp.	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
<i>Vertigo pygmaea</i> (Draparnaud)	-	-	2	-	-	4	3	-	-	1
<i>Vallonia costata</i> (Müller)	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-
<i>Vallonia excentrica</i> Sterki	1	2	8	-	-	6	4	1	-	1
Limacidae	-	1	3	1	2	1	2	1	-	-
<i>Cecilioides acicula</i> (Müller)	-	2	20	-	3	12	15	2	1	3
<i>Helicella itala</i> (Linnaeus)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
<i>Trichia hispida</i> (Linnaeus)	-	2	6	2	5	4	4	-	3	-
Taxa	1	3	5	2	2	7	5	2	2	2
Shannon Index	0	1.05	1.39	0.64	0.6	1.78	1.51	0.69	0.56	0.69
TOTAL	1	5	20	3	7	23	14	2	4	2

Table 11 Mollusca from various features subsampled from bulk samples

environment, merely that there were more shady habitats, perhaps provided by the rock rubble habitat (cf. Evans and Jones 1973) which existed in the quarry.

#### CONCLUSION

The environment of the Middle/Late Bronze Age to Romano-British period was an open one, probably of dry, short or trampled grassland. The samples from the Iron Age features associated with the roundhouses contain faunas typical of grassland, but indicate slightly longer grass or more shade in these shallow features.

Phase	Roman							
Feature type	ditch/quarry pit							
Feature	400							
Sample	6058	6059	6060	6061	6064	6066	6067	
Context	441	266	265	264	239	234	220	
Sub-Phase	RB2	RB2	RB3	RB3	RB3	RB3	RB4	
Depth	163.65-163.75	163.80-163.70	164.00-164.10	164.06-163.99	164.10-164.20	164.30-164.40	164.60-164.70	
Wt (g)	675	950	1250	900	1500	2000	1250	
MOLLUSCA								
<i>Cochlicopa lubrica</i> (Müller)	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	
<i>Vertigo pygmaea</i> (Draparnaud)	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	
<i>Vallonia excentrica</i> Sterki	-	-	-	1	3	1	6	
<i>Cecilioides acicula</i> (Müller)	-	-	-	-	3	2	63	
<i>Helicella itala</i> (Linnaeus)	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	
<i>Trichia hispida</i> (Linnaeus)	-	-	-	3	5	-	4	
Taxa	0	0	0	2	2	3	3	
Shannon Index	0	0	0	0.52	0.66	1.10	1.08	
TOTAL	0	0	0	4	8	3	14	

Table 12 Mollusca from ditch 400

## CHARRED PLANT REMAINS Pat Hinton

## METHODS

Seventy bulk 10 litre soil samples were processed by standard flotation methods (flots retained on 0.5mm mesh and residues 1mm mesh) and flots assessed by Wessex Archaeology to select samples for extraction and full analysis. The 'flots', and items extracted from the residue of these samples were searched by the writer with a stereo microscope at 7–40x magnification.

Except for the cereals the taxonomy and order in the tables (13–15) is in accordance with Stace (1991). All taxa are represented by seeds (which includes nutlets, caryopses and fruit stones etc.).

## RESULTS

## Middle/Late Bronze Age (Table 13)

The two samples from this phase, both from pit 123, included only very few cereals, in poor condition, brittle and 'clinkered'. One grain of wheat in the primary fill appears to be the compact form of *Triticum aestivum* s.l. (club wheat). *Hordeum vulgare* (barley) and *Avena* sp. (oats) also were identified.

Only two weed seeds were found, both in the secondary fill. One is the apical half of *Bromus cf. secalinus* (rye brome), and the other is unidentified. It is less than 1mm, and part of a radicle can be seen between two separating cotyledons. This presumed embryo is clean and contrasts with the surfaces of the other seeds.

The flots from these samples contained, as well as the charred plant material, modern roots, leaf fragments, small pieces of bone and shiny coal-like fragments.

Feature		Pit 123	
Context		128	129
Sample no.		6041	6042
Sample vol. (litres)		10	10
<b>Cultivated</b>	<b>Common Name</b>		
<i>Triticum cf. aestivum</i>	bread wheat		1
<i>Triticum</i> sp.	wheat	(2)	1
<i>Hordeum vulgare</i> L.	hulled barley	(1)	1
<i>Avena</i> sp.	oat		1
Cerealia - fragments (ml)	indeterminate cereals	<0.25ml.	0.5ml.
<b>Arable</b>			
<i>Bromus cf. secalinus</i>	rye brome	1	
<b>Woodland, Scrub</b>			
<i>Corylus avellana</i> L. - nut shell frag.	hazel	1	
<b>Unidentified</b>			
Embryo		1	

Table 13 Plant remains: Middle/Late Bronze Age feature

## Middle Iron Age (Table 14)

The cereals in all the samples from this phase are severely burned, and with only one or two exceptions, grains are distorted and degraded and often barely recognisable. Wheat, barley and oats are noted as before, and the presence of glumed wheats *Triticum dicoccum* (emmer) or *T. spelta* (spelt) is confirmed by chaff fragments.

The few weed seeds are mostly represented by parts, e.g. *Fallopia convolvulus* (black bindweed) is represented only by testa fragments, and several have not been identified.

As in the earlier period these samples also include modern root material, seeds, a few pieces of bone and occasionally small coal-like lumps. There are numerous fragments with texture

Feature		Group 130					Group 304							Group 522			
		Ring ditch			Pit	Ring ditch				Pits			Ring ditch				
Context		141	173	701	137	333	374	649	644	345	362	633	526	528	532	535	
Sample no		6039	6006	6015	6048	6027	6030	6038	6065	6050	6007	6018	6056	6021	6024	6045	6046
Sample vol.		10	10	10	10	10	10	10	7	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Cultivated	Common Name																
<i>Triticum dicoccum/spelta</i> - glume bases - rachis node	emmer/spelt		1	1						1	6					2	
<i>Triticum cf. spelta</i> - grains - glume bases	spelt							1			2					1	2
<i>Triticum spelta/aestivum</i>	spelt/bread wheat			1							1				1		
<i>Triticum cf. aestivum</i> s.l.	bread wheat	1						2			1						
<i>Triticum</i> sp.	indeterminate wheats	3	6	2	6	2	1		(1)	1	3	1		1	2	1	2(1)
<i>Hordeum vulgare</i> L.	hulled barley		3	2	6	2(1)		4(1)	(1)	1	6	1	(1)			4	
<i>Avena</i> sp.	oats			1	(1)	1	(1)										
Cerealia - fragments (ml.)	indeterminate cereals	c.1	c.2	c.1.5	c.2	c.1	<0.5	c.1	<0.5	1	c.2.5	<0.5	c.1	<0.5	<0.25	<0.25	c.1.5
Arable, Grassland																	
<i>Chenopodium album</i> L.	fat hen		1								1						
<i>Atriplex</i> sp.	orache										1	1					
<i>Stellaria media/neglecta</i>	chickweed	1															
<i>Fallopia convolvulus</i> (L.)Å Löve	black bindweed							1		1	1						
<i>Rumex</i> sp.	dock									1							
<i>Vicia cf. hirsuta</i>	hairy tare																1
<i>Trifolium/Medicago</i> sp.	small clover/medick					1											
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i> L.	ribwort plantain										>3						
<i>Galium aparine</i> L.	cleavers											1					
cf. <i>Festuca</i> sp.	fescue																
<i>Bromus cf. secalinus</i>	rye brome		1(1)		1						2(1)					1(1)	
Poaceae	small grasses		1		1	1				(1)	1						
Woodland, Scrub																	
<i>Corylus avellana</i> L. - shell fragments	hazel		1		1		1										1
<i>Prunus spinosa</i> L.	sloe		1														
Unidentified			2					1		1	1						1

Table 14 Plant remains: Middle Iron Age features



resembling cereals or other burned starchy material and some of these have the appearance of being part of a fused mass. In one sample from the penannular ditch of structure 304 it is possible to see part of an incorporated *Rumex* (dock) seed. As before, many of these fragments are hard and brittle.

#### Romano-British (Table 15)

The few cereal grains in the three contexts from this latest phase are in better condition. Wheat is probably the main cereal and the majority of the glume bases are characteristic of spelt. Hulled barley and oat are only probable identifications of one poorly preserved grain of each species.

These samples include rather more weed seeds than those of the preceding periods, and of these a larger proportion are likely to be grassland plants. As before the samples also include modern plant material, suggesting possible contamination, and the same coal-like fragments.

Feature	Well	Pit	Ditch/ Quarry
Feature No.	249	448	400
Context	315	449	239
Sample no.	6017	6078	6072
Sample vol. (litres)	10	10	10
<b>Cultivated</b>	<b>Common Name</b>		
<i>Triticum dicoccum/spelta</i> – glumebases	emmer/spelt		20
<i>Triticum cf spelta</i> – grains	spelt	3	5
– glume bases	2		25
<i>Triticum spelta/aestivum</i>	spelt/bread wheat		1
<i>Triticum</i> sp.	wheat	2	2
<i>Hordeum vulgare</i> L.	hulled barley	(1)	
<i>Avena</i> sp.	oats		(1)
Cerealia - fragments (ml)	indeterminate cereals	<0.5	<0.5
<b>Arable, Grassland</b>			
<i>Urtica urens</i> L.	small nettle	1	
<i>Chenopodium album</i> L.	fat hen	1	
<i>Stellaria media/neglecta</i>	common/greater chickweed		
<i>Stellaria cf graminea</i>	lesser stitchwort	1	
Caryophyllaceae	pink family		1
<i>Polygonum aviculare</i> s.l.	knotgrass	1	
<i>Rumex</i> sp.	dock	>1	2(1)
<i>Trifolium cf repens</i>	white clover		3
<i>Trifolium cf pratense</i>	red clover		1
<i>Trifolium/Medicago</i> sp.	clover/medick	1	
<i>Vicia cf hirsuta</i>	hairy tare	1	
<i>Geranium dissectum</i> L.	cut-leaved cranesbill		1
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i> L.	ribwort plantain	2	
<i>Galium aparine</i> L.	cleavers	2	
<i>cf Festuca</i> sp	fescue	1	1
<i>Cynosurus cristatus</i> L.	crested dog's tail	1(1)	
<i>Alopecurus</i> sp.	foxtail		1
<i>Bromus cf secalinus</i>	rye brome	1	1
<i>Danthonia decumbens</i> (L.) DC	heath grass	2	
Poaceae	small grasses	1	6
<b>Woodland, Scrub</b>			
<i>Corylus avellana</i> L. - shell fragments	hazel	2	1(1)
<b>Unidentified</b>			2

Table 15 Plant remains: Romano-British features



## DISCUSSION

Perhaps because of their sparsity and, in most cases, poor condition, little change can be seen in the range of cereals in use during the three periods. Wheat was probably the major cereal, mainly spelt but with a possibility of emmer and bread wheat. Hulled barley is a little more obvious in the Middle Iron Age samples but oats occur in fewer numbers in all three and are therefore more likely to be weed species.

Weed seeds in the Middle/Late Bronze Age and throughout the Iron Age samples are mostly those of typical field crops, some of which may also occur in grassland, possibly encroaching from field margins. In the Romano-British samples, however, there is the appearance of more 'grassy' species among the weeds. The association (loose because found in different contexts) of such plants as *Stellaria cf. graminea* (lesser stitchwort), *Trifolium* spp. (clovers), *Geranium dissectum* (cut-leaved cranesbill), *Cynosurus cristatus* (crested dog's tail), *Alopecurus* sp. (foxtail) and *Danthonia decumbens* (heath grass) with *Festuca* sp. (fescues) and other possible grassland plants is suggestive of established grassland. Heath grass, which will grow in either mildly acidic or calcareous soils (Grime *et al.* 1988), cut-leaved cranesbill, foxtail and fescues are characteristic plants of damp neutral pasture, which may also include crested dog's tail, a typical plant of hay meadows.

In all contexts the plant remains probably represent part of a gradual accumulation of burned refuse. In the Middle/Late Bronze Age phase the pit contents, with few cereal grains and weeds and items such as bone and slag-like material, suggest general rubbish or waste. However, the low density suggests chance inclusion from surroundings rather than deliberate disposition.

From the hut groups of the Middle Iron Age the picture is similar. Samples from the penannular ditches in structures 130, 304 and 522 do not differ significantly in that all include cereals and common field weeds, probably becoming deposited over a period of time. The sample from pit 346 within structure 304 contains a few more seeds but again too few to suggest other than chance incorporation in rubbish – probably in all cases waste from cereal processing. There is no evidence which might suggest any variation in activities within these structures.

There is some difference in the Romano-British contexts. The few small cereal fragments, and the relatively larger proportion of chaff and weed seeds again suggests an origin for some in cereal waste disposal, but the grassland species indicate either a rather different weed flora in the crop fields, or another source, possibly meadow or pasture. The charred seeds in that case might have reached the archaeological contexts by way of burned animal bedding or dung, perhaps from middens. This suggestion however is difficult to support, and particularly so when the sample contents are few and identifications often not close.

Little information about soil conditions comes from the weed seeds which accompany the cereals since most have no particularly specific requirements other than the open conditions of cultivated fields. *Galium aparine* (cleavers) and *Bromus cf. secalinus* (rye brome) are characteristic of autumn-sown crops.

*Corylus avellana* (hazel) in all three periods and *Prunus spinosa* (sloe) in the Middle Iron Age are evidence of woodland or scrub vegetation nearby.

## CHARCOAL Rowena Gale

## INTRODUCTION

Charcoal and carbonised plant remains were present in contexts dated to the Middle/Late Bronze Age, Middle Iron Age and Roman periods. The earlier periods included pits and ditches; those from the Middle Iron Age contexts were closely associated with four contemporary structures. Romano-British contexts comprised a ditch (phase 2) and a well (phase 4).

Seventy bulk soil samples of 10 litres were collected and processed by standard flotation methods to extract plant remains. Flots and residues produced disappointingly small amounts of charcoal but when sufficient quantities were present, and particularly where comparable samples of seeds and charcoal occurred together, the charcoal was examined to provide information on the use of woodland resources and environmental evidence.

#### MATERIALS AND METHODS

The charcoal deposits were generally sparse and the fragments relatively small. Twenty one samples were selected for identification. The condition of the fragments was variable and some were poorly preserved. Some samples included vitrified material which had lost structure and contained insufficient information for identification.

Fragments measuring  $<2\text{mm}^2$  in cross-section were sorted into groups based on the anatomical features observed on the transverse surfaces using a x20 hand lens. Representative fragments from each group were selected and prepared using standard techniques. These were fractured to expose fresh transverse, tangential and radial surfaces and supported in sand. The anatomical structures were examined using a Nikon Labophot incident light microscope at magnifications of up to x400, and matched to prepared reference material.

#### RESULTS

A summary of the results is given in Table 16. The taxa identified are listed below. Classification follows *Flora Europaea* (Tutin, Heywood *et al.* 1964–1980).

##### Middle/Late Bronze Age

Although the charcoal was sparse in pit 123 samples from two contexts were examined. The primary fill included oak (*Quercus*), blackthorn (*P. spinosa*) and hawthorn type (Pomoideae), while the secondary fill included hawthorn type and willow/ poplar (*Salix/Populus*). The function of the pit is unknown.

##### Middle Iron Age

The three structures were enclosed by penannular ditches which included deposits of charred plant remains and charcoal. For excavation purposes, the ditches were divided into segments and the charcoal from four of the segments (one from each terminal (anterior) and two from posterior positions) from each ditch was selected for analysis. Associated pits and postholes were probably contemporary with the structures. Charcoal from the pits was identified but few fragments were recorded from the postholes and these did not warrant examination.

##### Structure 130

Context 141 included oak (*Quercus*), heartwood, and blackthorn (*P. spinosa*). Contexts 152 and 173 contained oak (heartwood was noted in 152), blackthorn, hazel (*Corylus*) and hawthorn type (Pomoideae). Ash (*Fraxinus*) was identified in Context 701. The greatest range of taxa occurred in contexts 152 (the terminal area of the ditch on the southern aspect of the entrance) and 174 (which was also on the southern side of the round house). The close proximity of these contexts may, therefore, be considered noteworthy but is of dubious significance since it is probable that the paucity of taxa in contexts 141 and 701 merely reflects the smaller number of fragments examined.

Pit 136 was situated within the structure and contained a quantity of grain and charcoal. The latter consisted of oak (*Quercus*), hazel (*Corylus*) and hawthorn type (Pomoideae). The siting of the pit inside the structure tends to suggest that the charred material was the result of domestic activities within the house, for example, cooking, although evidence of hearths or *in situ* burning was not recorded.

### Structure 304

A similar range of taxa was identified in samples from the segments 333, 374, 644 and 649 and included oak (*Quercus*) and hawthorn type (Pomoideae). Blackthorn (*P. spinosa*) occurred in contexts 644 and possibly 649, and ash (*Fraxinus*) in context 374.

Features within the penannular ditch from which charcoal was identified included pits 346 and 366. Pit 346 was probably used for storage but the high percentage of butchered animal bone and pot sherds present in the fill suggested that it was eventually used as a rubbish tip. The charcoal included oak (*Quercus*), hawthorn type (Pomoideae), blackthorn (*P. spinosa*), hazel (*Corylus*) and dogwood (*Cornus*). Pit 366 was small and tentatively interpreted as a posthole. The fill appeared to be charcoal rich but, once processed, the charcoal fragments proved to be small and poorly preserved. Oak and hawthorn type were identified. The similarity of these taxa to those in the charcoal identified from the ring ditch suggests a common origin and it is unlikely that they represent the remains of a post burnt *in situ*.

Pit 638 was situated outside the entrance of the ditch (adjacent to the western terminal) and contained bone, flint, pottery and charcoal. The charcoal was sparse, poorly preserved and vitrified, and included oak (*Quercus*).

### Structure 522

Features 525 and 527 were recorded as being more or less similar in character. Both included bone, pot sherds and charcoal. The latter was fairly sparse and included oak (*Quercus*) and, in 528, hazel (*Corylus*) and possibly hawthorn type (Pomoideae).

In contrast, context 532 (from the south-east terminal of the ditch) differed from the above in structure and content; the pot sherds here were Romano-British. The charcoal was abundant and included mainly oak (*Quercus*), of which most fragments exhibited very narrow growth rings characteristic of slow growth; also blackthorn (*P. spinosa*), ash (*Fraxinus*), hazel (*Corylus*) and probably birch (*Betula*). Birch was not identified from any other pre-Roman context and it is possible that its presence here may, in common with other artefactual evidence, be attributed to Romano-British activities. context 535 (from the east terminal of the ring ditch) included Roman and, probably, pre-Roman pot sherds. The charcoal included oak, blackthorn and ash.

### Romano-British

The Romano-British deposits represent five distinct phases of occupation. Charcoal analysis was undertaken on unrelated features from two of these phases.

#### Phase 2

Ditch/quarry pit 400 was interpreted as a large ditch marking the southern limit of the settlement. The finds were sparse but included pot sherds, bone and charred plant remains. The charcoal consisted mainly of oak (*Quercus*) and ash (*Fraxinus*) but also blackthorn (*P. spinosa*) and willow/poplar (*Salix/Populus*).

#### Phase 4

Charcoal from the fill of stone-lined well 249 (probably deliberately backfilled with a single dump of rubble) identified the widest range of woody taxa identified from the site. The sample was taken from a depth of about 1.2m and included oak (*Quercus*), blackthorn (*P. spinosa*), ash (*Fraxinus*), alder buckthorn (*Frangula alnus*), hazel (*Corylus*), birch (*Betula*) and maple (*Acer*).

### DISCUSSION

None of the contexts from which charcoal was identified produced evidence of *in situ* burning (eg. hearths) but, nonetheless, since the samples were associated with other domestic debris

(pot sherds, bone and very frequently grain) it is, almost certainly, the discarded remains of fuel used in local (and probably domestic) activities.

It is not known whether the fuel was used as wood or charcoal but the range of species used was more or less consistent in all the Iron Age samples, with oak (*Quercus*), blackthorn (*P. spinosa*) and hawthorn type (Pomoideae) occurring most frequently. These genera produce heavy, dense woods with relatively high calorific values. Although most of the charcoal fragments were too small to assess the maturity of the wood, it was evident that some oak heartwood was used. Other taxa identified included hazel (*Corylus*), ash (*Fraxinus*), dogwood (*Cornus*) and willow/poplar (*Salix/Populus*). The more infrequent occurrence of these may indicate species selection but could equally reflect their status in the environment. Comparison of these results with pollen analysis would give a clearer indication of distribution and usage, but pollen samples were not available.

The contexts from the Middle Iron Age were probably contemporary. In contrast, fewer samples were examined from the Roman sequences and, since these related to different periods of occupation, they were not directly comparable. Interestingly, hawthorn type (Pomoideae) was not identified, although oak (*Quercus*) and blackthorn (*P. spinosa*) were present in all three samples, and also ash (*Fraxinus*). Birch (*Betula*) was present in samples from phases 2 and 5. The well (Phase 5) included the widest range of taxa including alder buckthorn (*Frangula alnus*).

### The environment

The bedrock at Cannards Grave is limestone and the topography of the site suggests that in many areas the overlying soil was probably fairly shallow during the Iron Age and Romano-

Feature	Context	Sample	Acer	Bet	Corn	Coryl	Frang	Frax	Pom	Prun	Quer	Sal
MIDDLE / LATE BRONZE AGE												
Pit 123	128	6041	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	2	-
	129	6042	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
MIDDLE IRON AGE												
Structure 130												
Ditch 140	141	6039	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	4h	-
Ditch 153	152	6006	-	-	-	1	-	-	3	3	5hs	-
Ditch 174	173	6015	-	-	-	2	-	-	2	4	3	-
Ditch 702	701	6048	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
Features within Structure 130												
Pit 136	137	6027	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	2	-
Structure 304												
Ditch 332	333	6030	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	4	-
Ditch 373	374	6038	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	3	-
Ditch 643	649	6065	-	-	-	-	-	-	(1)	(1)	-	-
Ditch 645	644	6050	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	5	-
Features within Structure 304												
Pit 346	345	6007	-	-	1	2	-	-	3	1	3	-
Pit 366	362	6018	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-
Pit 638	633	6056	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-
Structure 522												
Ditch 525	526	6021	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
Ditch 527	528	6024	-	-	-	1	-	-	?1	-	2	-
Ditch 529	532	6045	-	?1	-	1	-	5	-	8	25	-
Ditch 534	535	6046	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	9	-
ROMANO-BRITISH												
Phase 5												
well 249	315	6017	1	1	-	2	1	3	-	1	2	-
Post-Phase 4 (pre-Phase 5)												
Pit 448	449	6078	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	1	9	-
Phase 2												
Ditch/Quarry 400	239	6072	-	2	-	-	-	9	-	2	20	1

Table 16 Charcoal; abbreviations: *Bet* = *Betula*; *Corn* = *Cornus*; *Coryl* = *Corylus*; *Frang* = *Frangula alnus*; *Frax* = *Fraxinus*; *Pom* = Pomoideae; *Prun* = *Prunus spinosa*; *Quer* = *Quercus*; *Sal* = *Salicaceae*; h = heartwood



British periods. The major woodland component was oak (*Quercus*). The abundance of charcoal from blackthorn (*P. spinosa*) and members of the Pomoideae attests to the frequency of these taxa in the environment.

Blackthorn forms dense thickets in woodland margins and on scrub land and rapidly colonises open ground. The most likely members of the Pomoideae are hawthorn (*Crateagus*), rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia* L.) and whitebeam (*S. aria* (L.) Crantz). Hawthorns grow as scrub in open landscapes and woodland margin, and quickly colonise cleared areas; they form small trees within woodland. Rowan is characteristic of limestone but is generally associated with higher altitudes in northern Britain. Whitebeam occurs on calcareous soils, frequently in secondary woodland.

Blackthorn (*P. spinosa*) and hawthorn (*Crataegus*) are spiny and, traditionally, have provided hedges and barriers to enclose livestock (Porter 1990). Evidence of Iron Age hedgerow flora, including spiny species of blackthorn, hawthorn, buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica* L.) and (non-spiny) field maple (*Acer campestre* L.), at Alcester, Warwickshire, is described by Greig (1992). The possible presence of hedging has been noted, by implication from the comparatively high incidences of blackthorn charcoal, at other Iron Age sites, as for example, at Runnymede, Egham (Gale, in preparation). While the evidence for hedges at Cannards Grave can only be considered slight when based on so few samples, and when the area is one in which dry stone walling occurs, the suggestion of hedging is an interesting possibility. Prunings from hedges would have provided a useful supply of firewood.

Maple (*Acer*) and ash (*Fraxinus*) are characteristic of calcareous soils and typically grow in mixed deciduous oak (*Quercus*) woodlands; hazel (*Corylus*) is a common component (as understorey) of oak woodlands and also of open clearings. Dogwood (*Cornus*) is a shrubby calceophile which grows in marginal woodland and open areas.

Areas of more neutral or acidic soils are indicated by birch (*Betula*) and alder buckthorn (*Frangula alnus*). Birch is a pioneer species and evidence from the charcoal suggests that it may have been more common in the Roman period, possibly colonising wasteland or, perhaps, indicating loss of soil fertility, but more data is necessary to substantiate these ideas. Alder buckthorn thrives on damp land or waterlogged soil and can form thickets (alder carr) with willow (*Salix*) and alder (*Alnus*).

### Conclusions

The charcoal analysis suggests that most of the material represents spent fuel residues, probably from domestic fires, redeposited with other rubbish. There was no evidence to suggest the differential usage of fuel at any of the three structures. The distribution and frequency of taxa was fairly consistent and it seems reasonable to conclude that the activities in the three houses were similar. There was no evidence to suggest that the charcoal derived from structural components of the structures.

Oak (*Quercus*) was the dominant tree in the landscape, particularly in the earlier periods. Ash (*Fraxinus*) and maple (*Acer*) were probably less frequent. Clearings or open land was colonised by hazel (*Corylus*), blackthorn (*P. spinosa*), hawthorn (*Crataegus*) (and possibly whitebeam (*S. aria*) and rowan (*S. aucuparia*)), and shrubby calceophiles such as dogwood (*Cornus*). Hedges may have been a feature of the landscape but their presence cannot be substantiated. Patches of neutral or acidic soil supported birch (*Betula*) and, where damp, alder buckthorn (*Frangula alnus*) willow (*Salix*).

### THE ANIMAL BONES Sheila Hamilton-Dyer

An assemblage of 6492 fragments of animal bone was recovered by hand with further material recovered from soil samples, of which 316 bones have been recorded. Apart from a few bones

from a Bronze Age feature, the material comes from the Middle Iron Age settlement and Romano-British deposits overlying it.

This report concentrates on the Iron Age penannular ditches and two associated pits, and on the phase 3 and 4 deposits of the Romano-British period of activity. Other material is recorded in archive and briefly noted in text.

Because the soils are of mixed types above a limestone pavement and there are areas of cobbling in the Romano-British layers; the condition of the bones is variable. On the whole, however, preservation of the bones is good, and sufficient for observation of fine details such as knife marks.

#### *METHODS*

Species identifications were made using the author's modern comparative collections. Ribs and vertebrae other than axis, atlas, and sacrum were identified only to the level of cattle/horse-sized (LAR) and sheep/pig-sized (SAR). Unidentified shaft and other fragments were similarly divided. Any fragments which could not be assigned even to this level have been recorded as mammalian only. Unidentified fragments from soil samples were not recorded. Recently broken bones were joined where possible and have been counted as single fragments. Measurements follow von den Driesch (1976) in the main and are in millimetres unless otherwise stated. Withers heights are based on factors recommended by von den Driesch and Boessneck (1974). Archive material includes metrical and other data not in the text and is kept on paper and floppy disk.

#### *GENERAL RESULTS*

The domesticates, horse, cattle, sheep, goat, pig and dog are present. There are also a few bones of hare, birds, small mammals, fish and amphibians. These last three taxa were all recovered from soil samples.

Just over 43% of the bones were identified to species. Most of the identified bone is of cattle and sheep/goat. Of the 1254 ovicaprid bones most of the fragments were indistinguishable between the two species, of those that were distinctive 126 were identified as sheep and only three as goat (Boessneck 1969; Payne 1985). As cattle and sheep dominate the identified fragments it is likely that those identified only as cattle/horse-sized and sheep/pig-sized are probably also mostly of cattle and sheep.

#### *Middle/Late Bronze Age*

Only 21 fragments were recovered, all from the secondary fill of pit 123. Of these, three are unidentified scraps of large mammal bone and 18 are of a small mammal, probably all mouse, from a sieved sample.

#### *Iron Age*

Iron Age features contributed 2403 bones, 35% of the total. Most of the bone was recovered from the eavedrip gullies of structures 130, 304 and 522, and the two pits, 111 and 346, associated with structure 304 (Table 17). The remaining features, mainly post-holes, contributed only 360 bones.

#### *Structure 304*

The best preserved structure (304) was excavated in 13 segments, and had two fills. The bone recovered from the primary fills numbers just 50 fragments. Sheep and sheep-sized fragments are the most frequent taxa. This small sample also includes a few bones of cattle, horse, and pig and the lower canine of a dog. The anatomical distribution and ageing do not show any special concentrations. Bone condition is good and one context contains a neonatal sheep humerus. This context also contributes the two horse bones; a fragment of radius and its associated ulna which has been cut with a knife.



		horse	cattle	sheep /goat	pig	cattle size	sheep size	mammal	dog	small mammals	bird	fish	Total
Structure 130	Total	5	25	34	8	84	55	48	0	83	0	5	347
	Percent	1.4	7.2	9.8	2.3	24.2	15.9	13.8	0	23.9	0	1.4	0
Structure 256	Total	0	2	4	1	1	7	6	0	0	0	0	21
	Percent	0	9.5	19.0	4.8	4.8	33.3	28.6	0	0	0	0	0
Structure 304 - primary fills		2	3	13	2	8	10	11	1	0	0	0	50
- secondary fills		18	78	82	9	100	187	107	0	68	0	2	651
	Total	20	81	95	11	108	197	118	1	68	0	2	701
	percent	2.9	11.6	13.6	1.6	15.4	28.1	16.8	0.1	9.7	0	0.3	0
Structure 322	Total	7	31	36	11	71	94	94	2	26	0	0	372
	Percent	1.9	8.3	9.7	3	19.1	25.3	25.3	0.5	7	0	0	0
Pit 111	Total	2	19	97	2	36	124	79	0	4	1	0	364
	Percent	0.5	5.2	26.6	0.5	9.9	34.1	21.7	0	1.1	0.3	0	0
Pit 346	Total	1	13	50	5	34	59	35	0	41	0	0	238
	Percent	0.4	5.5	21	2.1	14.3	24.8	14.7	0	17.2	0	0	0
Overall total		35	171	316	38	334	536	380	3	222	1	7	2043
Overall percentage		1.7	8.4	15.5	1.9	16.3	26.2	18.6	0.1	10.9	0.1	0.3	

Table 17 Animal bone: summary of species distribution in selected Iron Age features

Most of the bone from structure 304 was derived from the secondary fills. Of the 651 bones just over half could not be positively identified to species, but are likely to be of sheep and cattle which are the most frequent of the identified taxa. Horse and pig are again present but no bones of dog were recovered. There is, however, indirect evidence of dog in the form of gnawed bones which occur throughout the feature. Fieldvole and woodmouse were identified in the bone from soil samples, together with two small fish tooth fragments. Although the bone is mainly in small pieces with negligible metrical information, the preservation is relatively good with little attrition and several neonatal sheep bones are present, these fragile bones would not be expected if preservation was poor. There are four bones with visible butchery marks, all are knife marks consistent with joint disarticulation or meat removal, again one of these is a horse bone, in this case multiple cuts across the back of a femur. The other cuts are on cattle bone and two further cattle bones are spirally fractured indicating probable breakage for marrow extraction.

Although the assemblage varies slightly from sector to sector there are no outstanding differences, other than a slight concentration of bone in sectors 328, 332 and 347.

### Structure 130

Structure 130 is of the same size as 304 but less of the eavesdrip gully was available for study; 347 bones were recovered nevertheless. Preservation is varied; several fragments are in good condition, about half are slightly eroded and a few are charred. The majority of bones are represented by small fragments and only two were measurable. As in 304 the main species are sheep and cattle with some pig and horse. The cattle bone includes a frontal with the remains of a large solid horncore probably indicating a bull. Sieved samples add several collections of small mammal bones which include bankvole as well as unidentified remains comparable with voles and mice. As before a few small fish teeth were also recovered.

Of the few butchery marks a knife cut was again observed on a horse bone, across the front of a humerus. A similar cut was observed on a cattle humerus.

### Structure 522

The smaller structure 522 contributed 372 bones to the Iron Age assemblage. Sheep and cattle are again the main species together with small amounts of pig, horse, and dog, together with fieldvole and bankvole from sieved samples. The horse bones include the jaw of an animal of about ten years old and two foot bones with infected joint surfaces. Of only three measurable bones one, a complete cattle humerus, offers an estimated withers height of 1.07m. This bone was also cut repeatedly near the distal joint, one of very few bones where butchery marks were clearly visible. The material was not as well preserved as the previous two groups, although there were still a few fragments in good condition and of an ivoryed appearance. Several bones were, again, dog gnawed. Another horned cattle skull fragment is present, sawn near the tip. This is unusual as the horncores are usually chopped or sawn off near the

skull for later removal of the horn for working. There is no evidence for this horncore tip having been removed during life and it must be assumed that only the horn tip was required for working in this instance.

#### Pits 111 and 346

The two probable storage pits 111 and 346 are the largest features associated with structure 304. They are very similar in content; sheep is the most frequently identified taxa, cattle is less frequent, pig and horse occur as a few fragments only and hare is present in both pits. Differences are minor, sieved material contributes several bones of woodmouse and field vole in pit 346. No sieved bone was available from 111 but one rodent bone was recovered by hand. The single bird bone recovered, one of only six from the entire assemblage, is of partridge in pit 111. Although there are only four hare bones it is interesting to note that these occur in both pits, yet are absent from any other context on site. Measurable bones number only four, pit 346 contains a complete cattle metatarsus and offers one of the very rare withers heights available for the site, 1.1m. The material is very slightly better preserved than that from the ditches and includes some fragments with an ivoryed appearance. Both pits also contain several fragile fragments of neonatal sheep. The proportion of sheep is nevertheless higher than might be expected purely from differential preservation (see discussion below).

#### Ageing data for the Iron Age assemblage

There are both fused and unfused representatives of most anatomical elements but the sample is small and taphonomic factors make this ageing data unreliable. Cattle jaws are very few and of pigs almost absent, the bones of these species are, as expected, mainly of mature cattle and young pigs.

In general very few sheep jaws containing teeth were recovered, but pits 111 and 346 both contain several jaws which can be assigned to Maltby's toothwear and eruption stages (Maltby 1979). Five jaws are at stage 3/4 or about six to twelve months, two are at stage 4 between one and two years, and the remaining six are older, between two and four years. Few of the other Iron Age contexts have sheep jaws are sufficiently complete, of those that do, one is at stage 2, equivalent to under six months, and the remaining seven are all between stages 4 and 6, about two to four years old. No neonatal jaws are present but some bones of very young lambs were recovered. It is possible that the small fragile jaws of the youngest lambs may not have survived here, as this assemblage is highly fragmented.

#### Romano-British

The total number of bones recorded from this period is 4379. About half of these are from phases 3 and 4. The main group from phase 3 numbers 900 fragments from the secondary filling of ditch/quarry pit 400. A total of 1044 bones was recovered from phase 4, the demolition of the phase 3 wall and dumping over the phase 3 fills of ditch/quarry pit 400. The phase 2 primary silting of ditch/quarry pit 400 is briefly discussed for comparison with the later fills of this feature. A summary of the species distribution for these selected features is given in Table 18. Bone from all other contexts is recorded in archive.

#### Phase 2

Bone from the primary fill of ditch/quarry pit 400 totals 288 fragments. Only sheep, cattle, horse and pig were positively identified (Table 18). Bones of sheep are slightly more frequent than those of cattle, pig and horse are a minor constituent. Over 62% of the bone was not identified to species, with cattle-sized fragments twice as frequent as sheep-sized ones. The discrepancy between the proportions of the identified and unidentified bone is largely due to the presence of many small pieces of cattle-sized limb shaft, probably resulting from the breakage of relatively few bones. Much of the identified bone is of head and feet, several of the cattle jaws, and other bones, are chopped. One of the seven horse bones is also chopped. The three

cattle jaws which contain molars are of very old individuals, one has lost the third molar and the resulting gap has almost completely filled in.

### Phase 3

Of the 900 bones 47% were identified to species, mainly sheep and cattle (Table 18). Several bones of horse were recovered but only six of pig. Whilst the sheep and cattle bones are very similar in frequency at 24.6% and 23.6% of the total, cattle-sized fragments are twice as frequent as sheep-sized fragments. Although some of these may be of horse, the proportion of identified horse bones is low and is unlikely to account for this large discrepancy, which is also seen in the small sample of phase 2 material and again in the large group from phase 4. The difference can be explained by the presence of large numbers of limb shaft fragments and small pieces of skull, the majority of which are almost certainly of cattle; although the sheep bone is fragmented, the pieces are often a higher proportion of the original bone and can be more easily determined to species. In addition to the bones of the main domestic ungulates there are a few bones of small mammals, fish including eel, and part of a dog skull. The sheep/goat bones are mainly identified as sheep but context 234 contains a goat radius, one of only three goat bones identified from the site.

### Phase 4

A slightly larger sample of 1044 bones was recovered from this phase, much of it from rubble (220), but all the fills may be of the same depositional event. The species representation is like that of the previous phase with cattle and sheep the most frequent, horse and pig present at low levels and almost no other species, in this case just two bones of small mammals.

Several bones are measurable and four cattle metapodia are complete, giving estimated withers heights of 1.063m, 1.072m, 1.117m, and 1.164m. This last is probably a bull. The horse withers height was also calculated from a metapodial and gives a height of 1.396m, a good sized pony typical of the period. Sheep withers heights were calculated on four bones, 0.575m, 0.591m, 0.586m, and 0.6m.

Phase	Feature	Context	horse	cattle	sheep/goat	pig	cattle size	sheep size	mammal	dog	small mammal	fish	Total
2	ditch / quarry 400	266	1	3	1	-	3	2	-	-	-	-	10
		411	5	34	47	5	83	42	20	-	-	-	236
		412	-	-	5	-	13	11	2	-	-	-	31
		413	-	2	4	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	7
		414	1	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	4
		Total	7	40	57	5	101	56	22	-	-	-	288
		Percentage	2.4	13.9	19.8	1.7	35.1	19.4	7.6	-	-	-	
3	ditch / quarry 400	234	10	135	134	5	145	97	30	-	-	1	557
		238	1	4	5	-	5	2	6	-	-	-	23
		239	7	57	50	1	42	17	20	-	9	2	205
		264	8	25	23	-	44	4	10	1	-	-	115
		Total	26	221	212	6	236	120	66	1	9	3	900
		Percentage	2.9	24.6	23.6	0.7	26.2	13.3	7.3	0.1	1	0.3	
4	ditch / quarry 400	202	3	13	9	2	24	15	-	-	-	-	66
		220	22	120	179	12	209	104	73	-	2	-	721
	wall 431	221	2	6	4	-	6	1	2	-	-	-	21
		246	2	36	22	1	41	5	-	-	-	-	107
		247	2	34	30	-	47	16	-	-	-	-	129
		Total	31	209	244	15	327	141	75	0	2	0	1044
		Percentage	3.0	20.0	23.4	1.4	31.3	13.5	7.2	0	0.2	0	
		Overall total	64	470	513	26	664	317	163	1	11	3	2232
		Overall %	2.9	21.0	23.0	1.2	29.7	14.2	7.3	0.1	0.5	0.1	

Table 18 Animal bone: species distribution in selected Romano-British features, phases 2-4

### Romano-British butchery

Butchery marks are visible on many of the ungulate bones, a few of these are from knives but most are chops from a heavy bladed instrument. Just over 20% of the cattle bones are chopped; this includes nearly half of all the jaws. In the phase 4 material the chop marks are close to, or involving, the articulation, as would be expected if they resulted from separation of the jaw from the head. Similar marks have been reported from several urban/military sites (Maltby

1989a). In the phase 3 material the chop marks are unusual and less easy to interpret; these are almost always along the ventral part of the rear of the jaw in an anterior/posterior direction. This seems rather low for removal of the jaw from the head, or indeed the head from the spine. Stripping of the cheek meat would be expected to leave marks along the cheek rather than below, the intention of the butcher is therefore unclear. A quarter of the jaws also have knife cuts on the inner surface consistent with the removal of the tongue. Butchery on the other cattle bones includes axial splitting, mid-shaft breakage, disarticulation by chopping or knives, and occasional 'shave' marks from filleting. Fourteen of the horse bones (18%) are also chopped. Several of these are metapodia and one has been whittled, indicating that perhaps some of these were intended for working rather than eating.

### Ageing

A few of the cattle and sheep/goat bones are unfused but the majority are fused. As expected most of the pig bones are unfused. More cattle and sheep/goat jaws were available for ageing than in the Iron Age assemblage. No calf jaws were found, 14 of the jaws had the third molar in the process of erupting, the remaining 25 all had complete tooth rows, of which four were aged. The sheep/goat jaws are also concentrated on mature animals; just three jaws were between stage 3 to 4 (six to twelve months), the remaining 30 are all at Maltby's stage 5 or above, with 19 at stage 5. These would have been three years and over.

The species representation and treatment of the bone in these three main groups is similar enough to suggest, if not one episode of dumping, then a continuing practice.

### Other Romano-British

The bone from all the other various Romano-British contexts amounts to a sizable sample of 2147 bones. Some are plough disturbed, some have uncertain or no relationships, and others offer only small amounts of bone.

The unphased pit 227 contains three well preserved partial sheep skeletons, perhaps originally complete, with very little other bone. Although not all of the bones can be grouped together into their respective skeletons, most of the limbs and jaws can be separated into pairs. One skeleton is probably of a large horned male about two to three years old, another is also mature but a little smaller, and the third is of an animal under 18 months old and perhaps under 10 months. Although metacarpal, cervical vertebrae, and skulls were found there are no scapulae or forelimb bones. None of the bones had any signs of disease, but some have butchery marks. The largest of the ankle bones, probably of the ram, were cut just above the metapodial joint and a pair of incomplete femora were repeatedly cut mid-shaft. The estimated withers heights are 0.633m and 0.645m for the probable ram skeleton and 0.621m and 0.606m for the other mature sheep. The distal tibia measurements are 27.2mm and 23.7mm. The data for the ram are at the top end of, but within, the range reported for southern England.

### DISCUSSION

The species representation is broadly similar between the Iron Age and Romano-British material with cattle and sheep dominant, pig and horse minor constituents and other taxa rare. There are differences between the two periods but those between feature types in the Iron Age are at least as significant as between the two date groups.

Apart from some individual context variation, the ratio of cattle and sheep to one another is consistently similar and roughly equal; except in the two Iron Age pits where sheep is very much the dominant species at about four times the amount of cattle. The actual percentage of the total bone represented by the two species varies considerably; the combined average value



is lowest for structures 130 and 522 at under 10% and the highest is just over 24% for the phase 3 deposit in ditch/quarry pit 400. This wide variation is almost entirely balanced by the relative amounts of unidentified bone and is clearly due to the taphonomic effects of fragmentation and preservation. There is more horse in the Roman assemblage than in the Iron Age; although at 2.4% to 2.9% of the total horse is still not a major component of the assemblage, it does outnumber pig in all of the major feature groups. Pig is less consistent throughout, partly a function of the very small numbers, it varies from as low as 0.5% of the total bone in pit 111 up to 3% in structure 522 but does not exceed 1.7% in any of the Romano British features. It is difficult to judge the significance of differences in the rarer taxa due to the extremely low numbers and the presence or absence of sieved material. The small mammals, where recovered, are those expected from a rural or semi-rural site. Most of the identified bones are of woodmouse and field vole with a few of bank vole and mole. Amphibian bones were also occasionally noted. Bird remains are restricted to six bones only; fowl, mallard, partridge and crow. All can be eaten but it is likely that the crow was a natural mortality or killed as a pest. The domestic fowl appears to have been introduced during the Iron Age in southern Britain, but is not commonly found in archaeological material until the Roman period and the single fragment here is from a possibly plough-disturbed layer overlying the phase 5 metalled surface. Dog was recovered from both periods and is also evidenced by gnawing. Hare numbers just four bones, and only from the two Iron Age pits. With such small numbers it is difficult to gauge the importance of this difference but hare does appear to be an important animal in the Celtic hunt (Green 1992). A few fish remains, some identified to eel, are present in some of the sieved samples. This is consistent with other sites, even where sieving has been extensively undertaken fish remains are very rare in Iron Age and Roman deposits in southern England, except in urban Roman deposits (Hamilton-Dyer 1993a; 1993b; Wilkinson 1979).

The distribution of body area for cattle and sheep is variable. It is illustrated and discussed here for the major groups only. Even for these, the small numbers of bones involved may cause bias but there are some interesting groupings. As detailed above both cattle and sheep jaws are common in the Roman dumps (about 20% and 14% respectively). Loose teeth, mainly from these jaws, are also frequent but they are also common in the Iron Age where jaws were rarer. For sheep they form over 30% of the Iron Age remains, cattle are more variable, from 15-47%. Loose teeth are often an indicator of poor preservation, and indeed it has already been noted that the Iron Age bone is much fragmented. Loose sheep/goat teeth are not common in phase 3 where almost all survived within jaws. Allowing for the small sample sizes, distribution results for the two Iron Age pits are very similar. The three eavesdrip gullies have several differences in the sheep/goat distribution; structure 130 has a relatively high number of foot bones while 522 has more of the foreleg. Structure 304 is more evenly distributed but all are low in the amount of skull pelvis and shoulder, perhaps because these are more fragile and small pieces are less easily identified to species than other bones.

### *Size*

Considering the size of the sample, metrical information is sparse; 132 bones were measured, just 5% of the bones identified to species. The most frequent measurement available is of sheep distal tibia, as is the case in most assemblages. There are only three from the Iron Age contexts but the Romano-British contexts offer a better sample of 27. The overall range of these is 22.3mm–27.2mm with a mean of 24.4mm, skewed to the left (lower end) of the distribution with a mode of just over 23mm (in fact the Iron Age measurements also fall within the lower part of this range). This is the pattern to be expected if most of the remains are of ewes from a single population. Although the samples are too small for statistical significance there seems little difference between the phases. These values are very similar to those reported from the Roman deposits at Exeter (Maltby 1979) and are larger than those from Iron Age Cadbury

(Hamilton-Dyer and Maltby 2000). There were no Iron Age sheep bones sufficiently complete for withers height estimations but 21 could be calculated for the Romano-British bones, mainly from metapodia. The range is 0.546m–0.645m with a mean of 0.597m. The range for the 18 calculated at Exeter was 0.527m–0.649m with a mean of about 0.57m, again very similar. Cattle measurements were much less frequent because many more of the bones were broken or chopped. Withers heights were calculated for six, five between 1.06m and 1.1m comparable with the small animals from Exeter and other material in the south-west. The remaining one is a metacarpus from phase 4 and has the morphology of a bull; at 1.16m it is larger than any from Exeter. A few of this size were found at Dorchester (Maltby 1993). The single complete astragalus, from phase 3, is also very large. At 72mm it is larger than many reported for England, and is at the top end of the range of those from Dorchester.

### *Butchery*

Distinct differences are evident in the butchery styles of the two periods. Marks on Iron Age bones are less frequent than on the Roman bones and are mainly made with knives. In contrast the majority of the Roman marks were made by chopping with a heavy cleaver or similar implement. These differences have been recorded, not only between Iron Age and Roman deposits but also, between Urban/military and rural assemblages of the Roman period. The extensive use of cleavers is thought to indicate Romanisation to a greater or lesser degree, with rural sites tending to continue the Iron Age use of knives (Maltby 1989a; 1993).

### *Ageing*

The probability of taphonomic bias renders epiphyseal ageing data unreliable. The more resistant teeth are considered here. Only the assemblages of sheep and cattle are sufficient for discussion. The small collection of Iron Age sheep/goat jaws are of a mixture of ages, some are first year kills, a few are from the prime meat age and several are older, though not aged. Iron Age assemblages often contain large numbers of lambs under a year old, in addition to those of adult stock, with few at prime meat age (Danebury (Grant 1984), Winnall Down, and Easton Lane (Maltby 1985; 1989b), Cadbury (Hamilton-Dyer and Maltby 2000)). It may indicate a dual purpose or low intensity exploitation of the flock and not one concentrating on meat or wool. The larger Romano-British group shows a shift towards older animals than the Iron Age with most at or older than the age for prime meat. Very few are of first-year mortalities, a finding repeated at most Roman sites (Maltby 1981). The large group of cattle mandibles from the Romano-British phases are mainly of mature animals. A dichotomy of cattle ages has been found between groups with numbers of immature jaws from villas and rural settlements on the one hand, and those with almost exclusively mature jaws from urban and military sites on the other (Maltby 1981). The results here seem at variance with this unless the remains are those of cattle selected from animals *en route* to major settlements along the Fosse Way. It should be remembered that these remains do not necessarily reflect the composition of the herds and flocks in the field. The Romano-British deposits in particular appear to be selective rather than the discard of a largely self sufficient rural settlement, as is likely to be the case for the Iron Age material. Allowances must also be made for taphonomic bias.

### *CONCLUSIONS*

Examination of this material was selective and set out to answer certain questions; for the Iron Age, do these remains represent the refuse of a largely self sufficient farmstead, and how does the animal husbandry compare with other Iron Age material. The main groups of Roman material were analysed for indications of the activities represented (domestic rubbish or organised processing?); comparison with contemporary material; and comparison with the Iron Age for indications of change.



It is always difficult to make comparisons where feature types are different but, taking taphonomic bias into account, the remains from the Iron Age are consistent with refuse from a small settlement largely reliant on cattle and sheep, but also having horses and pigs. Dog is also present but other species play only a very minor role. The animals are typically small and husbandry seems to be of a general, low intensity, exploitation. The Roman remains represent quite different animal management, utilisation and disposal. The cattle appear to be bigger animals, butchery is mainly by heavy cleavers rather than the knives of the Iron Age, and the assemblages contain groups of processed bones as well as more general domestic refuse. Although the butchery style reflects Roman influence there are few of the superficial shave marks so often associated with urban and military sites and (in this sample at least) no dump of processed limbs and scapulae as has been found on the outskirts of some of the major settlements. Butchery on the phase 3 cattle jaws is unusual, and different to that of phase 4. Other than this the material from the two main phases of dumping is very similar and may represent the same type of activity. The cattle from these phases, and most of the sheep, are of mature, sometimes even aged, animals. It seems likely that they represent animals brought to rather than raised at the settlement for direct use and possibly for further exchange. It would be most interesting to compare these results with those from a more rural settlement and with those from a major town such as Ilchester. It would also be highly desirable to examine more material from this settlement, and other similar sites in the area, to confirm these results which, though substantial, are still limited in terms of the settlement as a whole.

## DISCUSSION

### NEOLITHIC

Finds of Neolithic date, comprising flintwork and Grooved Ware pottery were recovered from the topsoil and as residual finds from later features. Although no features of this date were encountered during the excavation they indicate Neolithic activity in the vicinity. The 1990 evaluation also recovered material of this date (Leach 1990b).

### BRONZE AGE

Two features were dated to the Middle-Late Bronze Age, however, as both of these were dated on the strength of a single sherd of pottery their dating is perhaps questionable. Other finds of this date were recovered from the topsoil and as residual finds within later features which indicates Bronze Age activity in the general area of the excavation.

### IRON AGE

Four structures, all dated to the 5th to 3rd centuries BC, were recognised on site, all in the form of penannular ditches. Although vertically set stones, possibly the remains of post packing, were noted within 304 and 130, no definite post pipes or postholes were identified with the exception of a single posthole close to the southern terminal of ditch 522. It is uncertain whether these ditches represent the wall foundations of roundhouses similar to those excavated at Groundwell Farm, Wiltshire (Gingell 1981) or drainage ditches which surrounded the house sites, similar to those excavated at Ashville, Abingdon, Oxfordshire (Parrington 1978). The relatively large quantity of fired clay, which was probably of structural origin, recovered from structure 304 (approximately 23% of the total from the site) possibly represents the remains of a wattle and daub wall; although a much larger quantity may have been expected if this was indeed a wall foundation.

Entrances to the structures ranged from south (256) through south-east (304 and 130) to east (522). Three of the four structures appear to have substantial pairs of post settings immediately within the entrances which probably represent porch structures. No form of porch setting was associated with structure 522, the smallest of the structures, and it is possible that this represents a small circular enclosure, perhaps an animal pen similar to those found at Farnoor, Oxfordshire (Lambrick and Robinson 1979) and elsewhere.

Within structure 304, the best preserved of the four structures, several smaller possible postholes were recorded. These did not appear to form any coherent internal supporting structure, but could perhaps have supported some form of internal partitions.

The two short lengths of shallow ditch dated to the Middle Iron Age appear to be contemporary with the structures. Irregularities in depth and occasional vertical stone settings within ditch 147 possibly indicate that this was a foundation trench with upright posts supporting a wattle or wattle and daub wall. Assuming that this structure continued northwards to meet with structure 130, a sheltered area of approximately 10m by 10m would be enclosed between the two structures and feature 147. Similar configurations of structures have been recognised at other locations and have been variously interpreted as working areas, livestock pens, storage areas and as subsidiary buildings, the closest parallels perhaps being the Middle Iron Age phase of occupation at Ashville, Abingdon, Oxfordshire (Parrington 1978), Claydon Pike, Gloucestershire (Allen *et al.* 1984) and at Hod Hill, Dorset (Richmond 1968). Similar 'courtyards' or 'work floors' between roundhouses have also been recognised at the nearby Glastonbury Lake Village (Clarke 1972).

The features and deposits dated to the Middle Iron Age appear to represent the remains of a small, probably short lived settlement or farmstead, possibly that of a single family unit.

The environmental evidence indicates that the settlement stood in an open environment, probably of dry, short or trampled grassland. This, together with the large assemblage of animal bones recovered, particularly of sheep/goat and cattle, and the relatively sparse remains of domesticated grain seeds indicates that animal husbandry was probably the main basis for the economy of the settlement.

The almost complete absence of non-local materials – only one small glass bead, recovered from structure 304 was definitely imported, probably from Meare c. 17km to the west – indicates that this was probably a largely self sufficient settlement, probably one of group of small settlements or farmsteads in the general area (Webster and Croft 1991).

#### ROMANO-BRITISH

Although the archaeological remains appear to show a hiatus in occupation of the site of some 300–400 years, the continuity of settlement between the Iron Age and Romano-British periods in the general vicinity of Cannards Grave could perhaps be inferred from the presence of two iron brooches, both datable to the immediate pre- or post-conquest period, which were recovered from plough disturbed deposits overlying the large phase 2 ditch. The environmental evidence indicates that the local environment during the Romano-British period was one of dry, short or trampled grassland, much the same as during the Iron Age phase of occupation, possibly suggesting that the immediate environment, and presumably the local agricultural economy, remained largely unchanged throughout these periods.

It is probable that the Romano-British settlement developed from a dispersed native agricultural community as a direct result of the construction of the Fosse Way which was probably established during the early years of the Roman conquest (Aston and Burrow 1982). The through traffic on this, and possibly a military or official presence associated with the river crossing, would have supplied a market for local produce and wares and may even have stimulated local industries such as potting. This is perhaps reflected in the apparent increase in prosperity of the local

population. Whereas the Iron Age phase of occupation indicates a largely self sufficient community with very rare non-local products the Romano-British phases produced material from a wide range of sources including some pottery imported from the continent and large quantities of Black Burnished ware from the Poole harbour region of Dorset, particularly in the later phases.

There was a definite increase in activity on the site beginning in the 3rd century AD and continuing until the end of the 4th century or later. This increase was also noted at the very similar roadside settlement of Camerton (Wedlake 1958) and probably reflects the increased regional prosperity of the south-west during this period (Burnham and Wachter 1990).

The earliest recognised phase of Romano-British activity comprised a simple ditch, probably a field or property boundary, dated to the early-mid 2nd century AD. This was superseded by a much larger ditch on the same alignment in the late 2nd or early 3rd century AD. This boundary appears to mark the southern limit of the large Romano-British settlement which extends along the Fosse Way from the river Sheppey approximately 1.2km to the north (Webster and Croft 1991). The 1990 evaluation of the site showed that this area appears to represent some form of ancillary enclosure to the south of the main area of settlement (Leach 1990b; Leach and Evans 2001, fig. 3). Similar zones have been found around the peripheries of Roman small towns, often associated with industrial functions (Burnham and Wachter 1990).

The original phase 1 boundary appeared to have been re-established along its original course by a dry stone wall during the late 3rd or early 4th century AD (phase 3). The partly silted-up phase 2 ditch appears to have been utilised as a dump during this period with definite 'fans' of silty clay material emanating from the small gully feeding in from the north and elsewhere. Whatever kind of structure or feature this gully was draining was completely destroyed by the phase 4 construction.

The fourth phase of construction during the early-mid 4th century AD comprised substantial areas of carefully laid cobbles surrounding and within a masonry structure which appeared to require draining by the culverts. The rectangular space observed within the cobble settings could well represent a timber structure of some description, probably associated with the masonry structure immediately to the south.

The culvert and masonry setting of this phase could well indicate an industrial function. The assemblage of animal bone within the phase 4 fills of ditch/quarry pit 400 contains groups of processed bones as well as more general domestic refuse, again suggesting an industrial function. Apart from a difference in butchery techniques noted on the cattle jaws, the assemblage of animal bone from the phase 3 fills is very similar to the phase 4 assemblage and may represent the same type of activity. This, along with the need for drainage represented by the phase 3 gully (289) and the phase 4 culvert (282), may suggest that a similar industrial function is represented by the phase 3 remains. The nature of this activity is, however, unclear.

The trackway along the eastern side of the area appears to also date from this phase of construction, although on the projected alignment of the Fosse Way this appears both too flimsy in its construction and too late in its dating to be this major road and is more likely to represent a small lane similar to those excavated in 1990 (Leach and Evans 2001).

The well, which is dated to this phase or earlier, is very similar in construction and form to other Romano-British wells known in the area such as the example excavated in 1990 (*ibid.*) to the north and to a purported Romano-British well within the bar of the Cannards Well Inn to the south.

The fifth phase is represented by the construction of two short lengths of wall, probably some form of gateway, aligned along the southern edge of the large phase 2 ditch, the original phase 1 and phase 3 boundary having fallen out of use, and by the construction of a crude metallised pathway, the phase 4 structures to the north probably continued in use during this period.

Although the vast majority of the deposits overlying the latest phase of construction were found to be heavily disturbed by ploughing a *terminus post quem*, in the early 5th century, can

perhaps be inferred from a coin dated to AD 388–410 that was recovered from plough disturbed deposits which abutted the phase 5 wall 278. This is in broad agreement with the findings from the 1990 excavations (*ibid.*), and reflects the general decline and abandonment of all other urban communities in the 5th century (Esmonde Cleary 1989).

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## ARCHIVE

The project archive has been deposited with the Somerset County Museum, Taunton under the accession number TTNCM 100/1996, including the finds which have been donated to the Museum by the kind permission of the landowners, the Duchy of Cornwall.

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