

EXCAVATION OF AN IRON AGE AND ROMANO-BRITISH SETTLEMENT SITE AT OAKRIDGE, BASINGSTOKE, HAMPSHIRE, 1965–6

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ABSTRACT

The site of Oakridge was discovered during the building of a housing estate in 1965. Observations and some excavation over two years revealed a large site with pits, enclosure ditches, field boundaries and a well. Finds suggest that there was occupation of the site from the early/middle Iron Age to the 4th century AD, possibly continuous. The main interest of the site is the well, which was completely excavated to 87' 6" (26.67 m).

INTRODUCTION

The site (SU 642535) lies at approximately 350' (100 m) OD on the gentle north-facing slope of a small dry valley on the chalk downs to the north of Basingstoke town centre, on land which was farmed until it was acquired for housing by the Basingstoke Development Group (Fig 1). It was revealed in two stages as the building programme progressed. The first stage, called Oakridge II by the contractor's numeration, was recorded by the author and the Curator of the Willis Museum, Miss M Macfarlane. The author was replaced as Assistant Curator in autumn 1966 by Miss B Glover (Mrs B Applin) who supervised the work of the next phase, Oakridge VI, south of Oakridge II.

The opposite, south-facing slope of the valley was also occupied in Iron Age and Roman times. This site (SU 637536) was recorded by Miss Glover and is called by the contractor's numbering, Oakridge VII. A short summary of this site is included at the end of this report (p 89).

The contract numbers II, VI and VII precede the feature numbers in this report, and can be found on plans and finds at the Hamp-

shire County Museum Service (HCMS), on Figs 1, 3 and 13 and throughout the report (eg Oakridge II, pit 6, layer 14 expressed as pit II.6/14). All records were kept in imperial measurements which have been retained for accuracy in this report, with metric measurements in brackets and a metric conversion scale on the plans and sections. Work on the finds was carried out in metric measurements.

None of this settlement was suspected until building operations began, as the aerial photographs studied had revealed nothing. The existence of the photographs taken by Dr St Joseph (Fig 2) was unfortunately not known until Dr Perry published a reference to them in 1970 (Perry 1970, 43). They have greatly assisted the interpretation of measurements taken in the field.

The topsoil was about 6" (15 cm) deep over the chalk subsoil, which contained flint nodules and patches of clay characteristic of Upper Chalk. No trace of banks or mounds was noted, and stratified evidence was limited to features cut into the chalk.

Although occupation on the site may have been continuous, it has been divided in this report into 3 periods, which correspond with the main developments suggested by the evidence: period 1, the early–middle Iron Age settlement; period 2, the expansion of the site in late Iron Age/early Roman times; period 3, later Roman occupation, with little evidence other than the backfilling of the well. These 3 periods each have sub-phases. As the well is the most important feature of the site, all the information on it is presented together in a separate section, following the period reports.

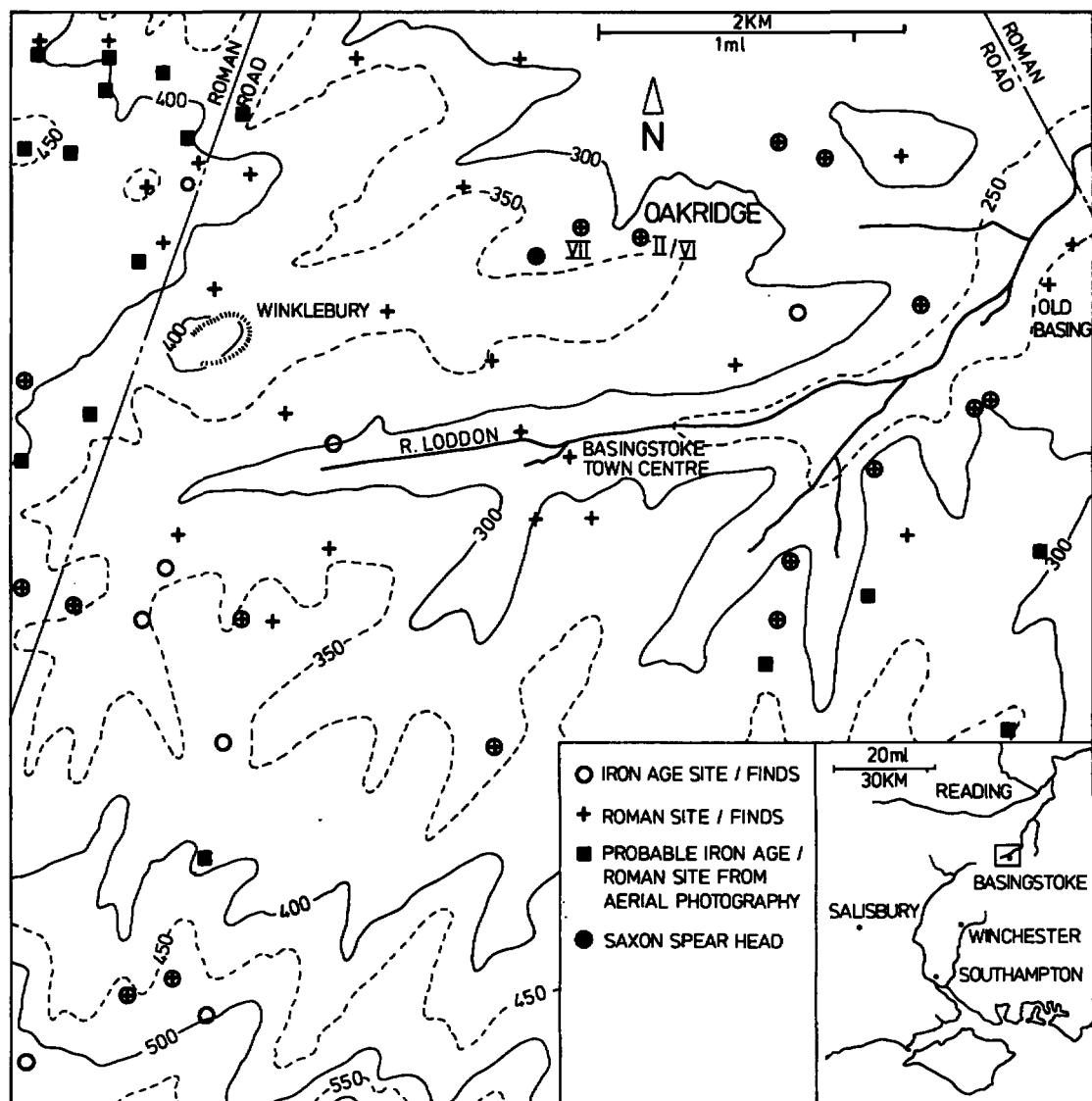


Fig 1. Oakridge, Basingstoke: map showing Oakridge and other Iron Age and Roman sites in the Basingstoke area.

Excavation Method

The site was brought to the attention of museum staff when 1st century AD cremation vessels (Fig 5) were brought in for identification. Further investigation of the burial site led to the discovery of other features, and by kind permission of the contractors, Gilbert

Ash Ltd, a watching brief was kept on the site from then on. Features were numbered and plotted as they showed up in road scrapes, house footings and service trenches. A limited amount of excavation of a selection of features was undertaken with the help of a recently formed museum group, and other features yielded a few sample finds while they



Fig 2. Oakridge, Basingstoke: aerial photograph of Oakridge II/VI. (Crown copyright: Cambridge University Collection. Reproduced with kind permission of the curator.)

were being plotted, which gave some indication of date.

One of the features chosen for excavation was a large circular pit, diameter 14' (4.26 m) at road scrape level. This proved to be the weathering cone of a well (13, well on Fig 3), which settled to a diameter of 4' (1.22 m) at a depth of 13' 6" (4.11 m). Mr Robertson Mackay of the Ministry of Works visited the site in September 1965, and offered a grant of £200 towards the labour costs of clearing the fill, which enabled the museum to engage the help of a local firm, who supplied two men, equipment, fencing, etc. A timber drum was built and fitted into the mouth of the well to provide a firm base for the ladders, light

cables, pulley and support lines, and to prevent any loose material from the surface from falling down the well. The bottom of this drum, 10' (3.05 m) below the original highest ground surface, was used as a new datum for depth measurement. Finds from the well at HCMS are marked by depth, which, after 15th December 1965 was measured from the new datum. In this report, all the well depths are calculated from the original highest ground surface (Fig 7). The water table was reached on 2nd May 1966 at 73' 9" (22.48 m), which meant that pumps had to be used until the bottom was reached at 87' 6" (26.67 m). The well cone sections were measured and drawn after excavation in the usual manner. The lack

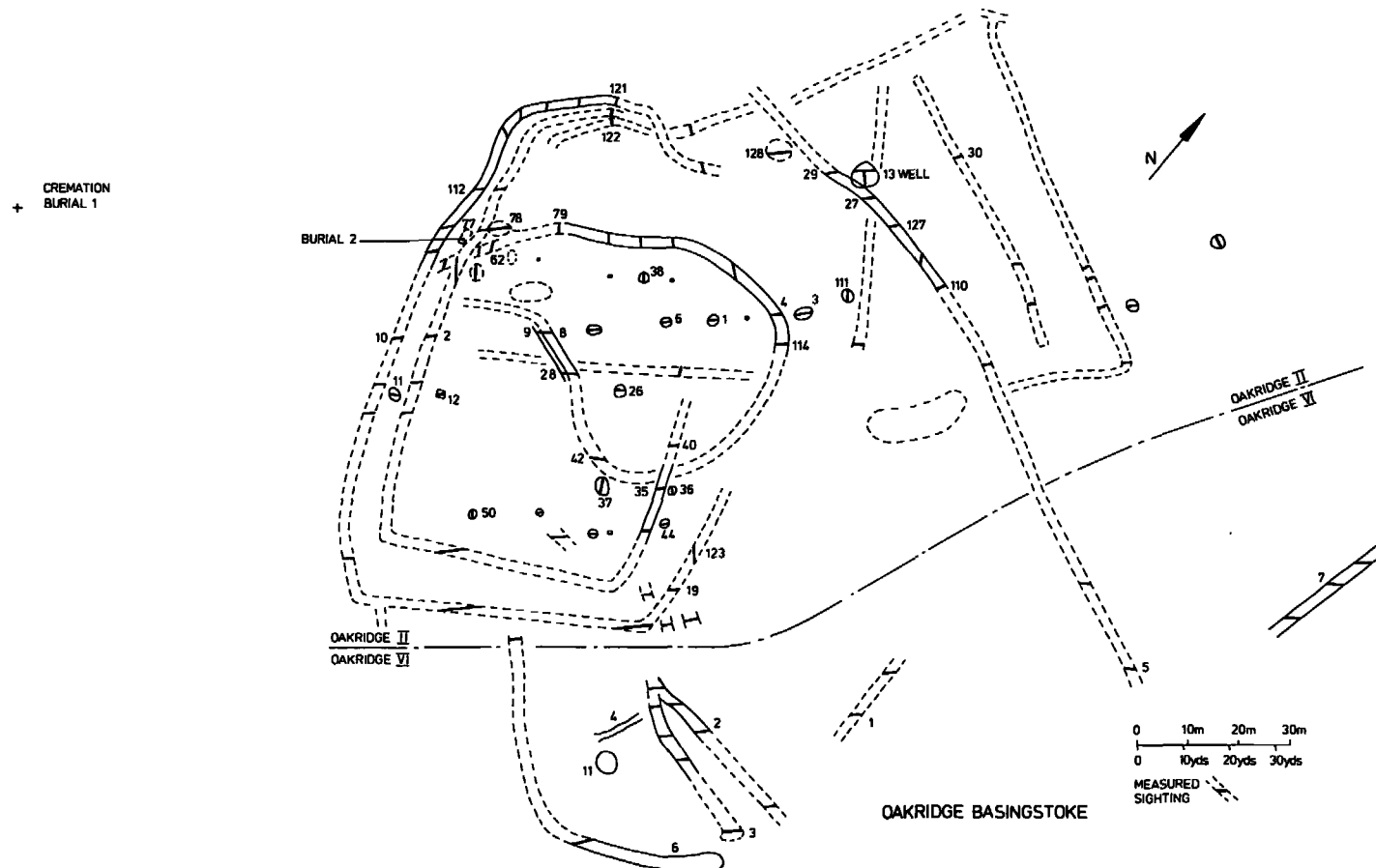


Fig 3. Oakridge, Basingstoke: site plan of Oakridge II/VI.

of space in the shaft meant that it was impractical to half-section and draw, and therefore the well section (Fig 7) has been reconstructed schematically below 14' 7" (4.45 m), using the written description of the layers. The precise definition of horizons below the water table was extremely difficult, and complete accuracy cannot be guaranteed for the last 5' (1.52 m) as the pumps could not cope with all the water.

Quantities of pottery, human and animal bone and wood were recovered from the well. It was clear from the beginning that this would need a considerable amount of specialist work before a report could be produced. However, the pace of development in Basingstoke, including further building at Oakridge itself, and the discovery of other sites meant that the Oakridge material had to be left in favour of rescue work. There have been difficulties over the years, but this report presents as full a picture as possible in the circumstances.

It was decided that the animal bone from the pits and ditches was too small a sample to repay much study, but the considerable quantity of bone from the well provided very useful information and greatly helped the interpretation of the history of the well. This intensive study by Mark Maltby is presented as a separate report in the next volume of the *Proceedings* (Maltby forthcoming). The pottery report was produced by the author with advice (see acknowledgements). The sorting into fabrics, carried out over an extended period, was kept as simple as possible – hand sorting by look and feel, without microscopic examination or thin-sectioning. The pottery has been analysed by fabric, form and weight in grams, but not vessel equivalent.

PERIOD 1, IRON AGE

Period 1 has been divided into two on ceramic grounds (Tables 1–3).

Phase 1A, Early Iron Age, 6th–4th century BC

The earliest features on the site were the circular enclosure and at least two pits, inside

the enclosure. The V-shaped enclosure ditch had a shallow gully, probably earlier, on the western edge (ditches II.8–9 and 28). These two sections and ditch II.4 were mostly filled up in periods 2 and 3, but ditch II.42 contained only Iron Age material. The quantity of bone and pottery suggests that in this area, the ditch was deliberately back-filled quite early in the life of the settlement. The two pits (II.6 and 26) seem typical of Iron Age storage pits, being at least in part deliberately filled with ash, daub, bone and pottery after fulfilling their original storage function. Joining sherds from pit II.26/12, 14 & 16 indicate that, in this instance, filling took place quite rapidly. This pit also included a few sherds of 1B and 2A pottery in its top levels. Other signs of habitation within the enclosure were a few (undated) unconnected postholes and some areas of disturbance, possibly features, near the entrance.

Phase 1A pottery is distinguished by predominantly sandy wares. This phase can be dated by comparison with other local sites to 6th–4th centuries BC and possibly earlier (see below).

Phase 1B, Middle Iron Age, 3rd–1st century BC

The sample from pits II.36 and 38 was obtained from the top level only, so their inclusion in this phase may be wrong, especially as pit II.26 included some 1B and 2A pot in its upper levels and pit II.1 contained 3C material in its top layers. Pits II.36 and 44, and two shallow, sterile pits of the working hollow/chalk quarry type (pits II.3 & 11) lay outside the circular enclosure, which indicates that the settlement grew beyond the early boundary. There were indications of a few other undefinable features in the footings between the northern side of the circular enclosure and ditch II.27/29. No dating evidence was obtained, and they have been omitted from the published plan for clarity.

Phase 1B has flint-gritted as well as sand-tempered wares. The forms are characteristic of 3rd to 1st century BC, and probably into 1st century AD (Millet & James 1983, 185; Fasham 1987, 27ff). This is reinforced by the

Table 1: Iron Age features

Feature	Excav.	Depth	Top width	Bottom width	Illus.	Comments
<i>Phase 1A</i>						
Ditch II.8-9 (circ encl)	Yes	—	7' (2.13m)	—	Fig 4 no 8	Outer gully 9 has greater % IA pot than ditch 8. Pot from all periods
Ditch II.28 (circ encl)	Yes	Dch 3'2"* (0.97m) Gy 1'5"* (0.43m)	4'6" (1.37m) 2'3" (0.69m)	9" (23cm) 7" (18cm)	Fig 4 no 11	V-shaped, 3A pot in top. 1 IA sherds.
Ditch II.4 (circ encl)	Yes	4'3" (1.30m)	5'6" (1.68m)	6" (15cm)		V-shaped. No finds from lower levels. 2C pot from top
Ditch II.42 (circ encl)	Yes	4' (1.22m)	5'9" (1.75m)	1'3" (38cm)	Fig 4 nos 12-18	Iron slag layer 2, finds all IA
Ditch II.62 (circ encl)	No	—	5'6"* (1.68m)	—		No IA finds, few 2C sherds.
Ditch II.79 (circ encl)	No	—	3'6"* (1.07m)	—		No IA finds, some 2C pot
Pit II.6	Yes	6'7" (2.01m)	5'6" (1.68m)	5'9" (1.75m)	Fig 4 nos 2-7	Cylindrical. Mostly delib. fill. Ox skull layer 7.
Pit II.26	Yes	5'11"* (1.80m)	7'3" (2.21m)	6'9" (2.06m)	Fig 4 nos 9-10	Cylindrical. Mostly delib. fill. Top has 1B and 2A pot.
<i>Phase 1B</i>						
Pit II.1	Yes	4'6" (1.37m)	4'7" (1.40m)	4'6" (1.37m)	Fig 4 nos 1,19-24	Cylindrical. 3C pot from top. 1 IA sherds layer 5.
Pit II.36	No	—	5' (1.52m)	—		Antler toggle from surface
Pit II.38	No	—	5'6" (1.68m)	—	Fig 4 no 25	Very small sample from surface.
Pit II.44	Yes	6'1" (1.85m)	3'7" (1.09m)	4'5" (1.35m)	Fig 4 nos 26-7	Beehive shape. Many loomweights from layers 2-6.

* topsoil missing

presence in pit II.1/3 & 5 of a small necked jar (Fig 4, no 23), a typical latest Iron Age form, which had been turned on a wheel. It is not necessary to imply a break in occupation between phases 1A and 1B, or between 1B and 2A: the site could span the changes in fashion in pottery types which took place in the middle and late Iron Age.

FINDS FROM PERIOD 1

Although the very limited amount of exca-

vation produced only a small quantity of finds, there is evidence for most of the activities generally found on Iron Age sites – animal husbandry (bone), crop growing and corn grinding (quern stone), metal working (slag), house building and carpentry (daub and iron nails), and weaving (clay loom weights).

Metalwork

Very little metalwork was recovered from the features excavated. All are of iron, though there is a record of a brooch pin from pit II.6/2, now missing, which may have been bronze. Only a small curved

fragment of iron and two handmade square section nails were found. Slag from 2 features, both phase 1A, indicates that iron processing took place on site.

Worked Antler

A toggle most probably of antler was recovered from pit II.36. This is decorated with incised ring-and-dot design and with grooves at each end. The toggle is damaged, it is split from the pierced hole to the edge and the surface is rather eroded. It is closely paralleled by other local finds from Winklebury (Smith 1977, 110) and from Viabes (Millett & Russell 1982, 86).

Stone identified by Dr F W Anderson

Pit II.6/2 Brown sandstone, burnt glauconitic sandstone and white sandstone.

Pit II.26/3 Hard pale brown sandstone.

The fragments of non-local sandstone from pits II.6 and 26 represent imported stone used as grindstones. The fragments from pit II.26/3 were clearly from a rotary quern.

Daub

Fragments of daub were found in almost all the features. There were several kinds of daub, with varying amounts of chalk, flint and vegetable inclusions, some burnt black. Some fragments had clear wattle impressions, indicating a structural use (e.g. pit II.1/6). Pits from both phase 1A and 1B (e.g. pits II.26 & 44) produced fragments of triangular loom-weights of baked orange clay.

Pottery (Tables 2 & 3)

The Iron Age pottery fabrics were of two main types, sand-tempered and flint-tempered, numbered S or F as follows (see Tables 2 & 5):

- S1 Hard-fired fine-grained sand-tempered ware, often burnished, with occasional inclusions of chalk and flint.
- S2 Softer-fired coarser-grained sand-tempered ware with sparse small flint inclusions and occasional large ones. Sometimes has fine-ground black inclusions.
- S3 Soft, powdery-feel fabric with small iron-rich inclusions and burnt-out vegetable temper.
- S4 Soft-fired coarse-grained sandy ware which feels very sandy.
- S5 Soapy sandy ware with flint, chalk and grog inclusions. Usually burnished.
- S6 Sand-tempered fabric with flint and iron-rich inclusions.
- F1 Flint-gritted, well-fired, usually reduced fabric, with frequent small to medium white or grey flint grits, often visible on the surface. Frequently burnished.
- F2 Coarse, hard fabric with frequent flint inclusions of variable size. Colour mostly pink/orange and thick walled.

Phase 1A (Fig 4, nos 1–18) The overwhelming majority of the pottery is of sand-tempered fabric, sometimes quite soft and badly fired, and showing visible wipe marks. Very few sherds are burnished and the

Table 2: Period 1 pottery, showing weight in grams by fabric and feature

	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	F1	F2	TOT
<i>Phase 1A</i>									
II.6	63	1712	25	2211	—	28	84	100	4023
II.26	84	1050	80	275	—	—	27	—	1495
II.8–9	13	273	—	—	—	—	35	22	383
II.28	—	53	—	—	—	—	—	—	53
II.42	505	1991	—	986	—	—	15	—	3497
<i>Phase 1B</i>									
II.1	149	470	—	186	267	123	1199	1007	3401
II.36	—	—	—	—	—	—	55	—	55
II.38	—	40	—	—	—	—	49	10	99
II.44	4	54	—	11	274	—	128	279	750
TOTAL	818	5643	105	3669	541	151	1592	1418	

Table 3: Period 1 pottery forms (on rims)

Phase 1A	<i>wide-mouthed bowls</i>	<i>shouldered jars</i>	<i>straight saucepans</i>	<i>incurved saucepans</i>	<i>burnished</i>	<i>decorated</i>
II.6	1	6	—	—	2	3
II.26	—	3	—	—	—	2
II.8-9	—	1	—	—	—	—
II.28	—	1	—	—	—	—
II.42	2	3	—	—	2	1
TOTAL	3	14	0	0	4	6
<i>Phase 1B</i>						
II.1	—	1	2	12	11	9
II.36	—	—	—	—	1	—
II.38	—	—	1	—	—	—
II.44	—	—	2	1	3	3
II.26	—	—	2	—	—	—
TOTAL	0	1	7	13	15	12

only decorative technique commonly found is finger tipping, either on the rim or just below it; two sherds have a possible wide shallow groove. The most recognisable forms are jars, usually shouldered with an upright rim, and a few wide-mouthed bowls. Rims are sometimes 'pie crust' or folded in, or simply squared off with a knife. Bases are either simple or slightly pressed out and one had a hole bored through. Another base was smoothed into an incipient pedestal base. (A similar base in ditch VI.3 was associated with latest Iron Age material). There are no sherds of haematite-coated furrowed bowls, which would seem to be uncommon in this area (Smith 1977, 86), but there are a few body sherds with a red finish from ditch II.42/4. Although diagnostic sherds are not numerous, the Early Iron Age date suggested is supported by similar material from many more fully excavated Hampshire sites. The pottery seems best likened to that from other local sites, especially Winklebury (Smith 1977, 95ff) and a few sherds from Ructstall's Hill (Oliver & Applin 1979, 63ff) where it is dated from 6th-4th century BC, and also possibly to Cowdery's Down (Millet & James 1983, 173ff), where it is suggested that the pottery could date from the late 9th-4th century BC.

Phase 1B (Fig 4, nos 19-27) In phase 1B, pits II.1, 44 and probably 36 and 38 (surface material only), the majority of pottery is flint-tempered and frequently burnished. The commonest forms are the saucepan pot, especially with incurving sides, and

heavy storage jar, represented by base and wall sherds only. A number of the saucepan pots were decorated, chiefly with incised lines and stab marks in the St Catherine's Hill/Worthy Down style (Cunliffe 1975, 330). The decoration can often be closely paralleled on local sites, e.g. pit II.1/5 (Fig 4, no 19) at Viabes (Millet & Russell 1984, fig 6, A21), Winklebury (Smith 1977, fig 35, 2-3) and Ructstall's Hill (Oliver & Applin 1979, fig 18, 43-4); also pit II.44 (Fig 4, no 27) at Winklebury (Smith 1977, fig 35, 11). The high percentage in pit II.1 of decorated pots and the presence of a wheel-turned pot of latest Iron Age form, but with the fabric and burnished finish of the saucepan pots, must date this pit group to the very end of phase 1B.

PERIOD 2 LATEST IRON AGE/ EARLY ROMAN

Most of the excavated features provided material from this period, which saw an expansion in the area of the site. The suggested sequence is given in Table 4.

Phase 2A, Late 1st century BC/Early 1st century AD

It seems that the focus of activity moved south up the side of the valley during the late 1st century BC or early 1st century AD. The

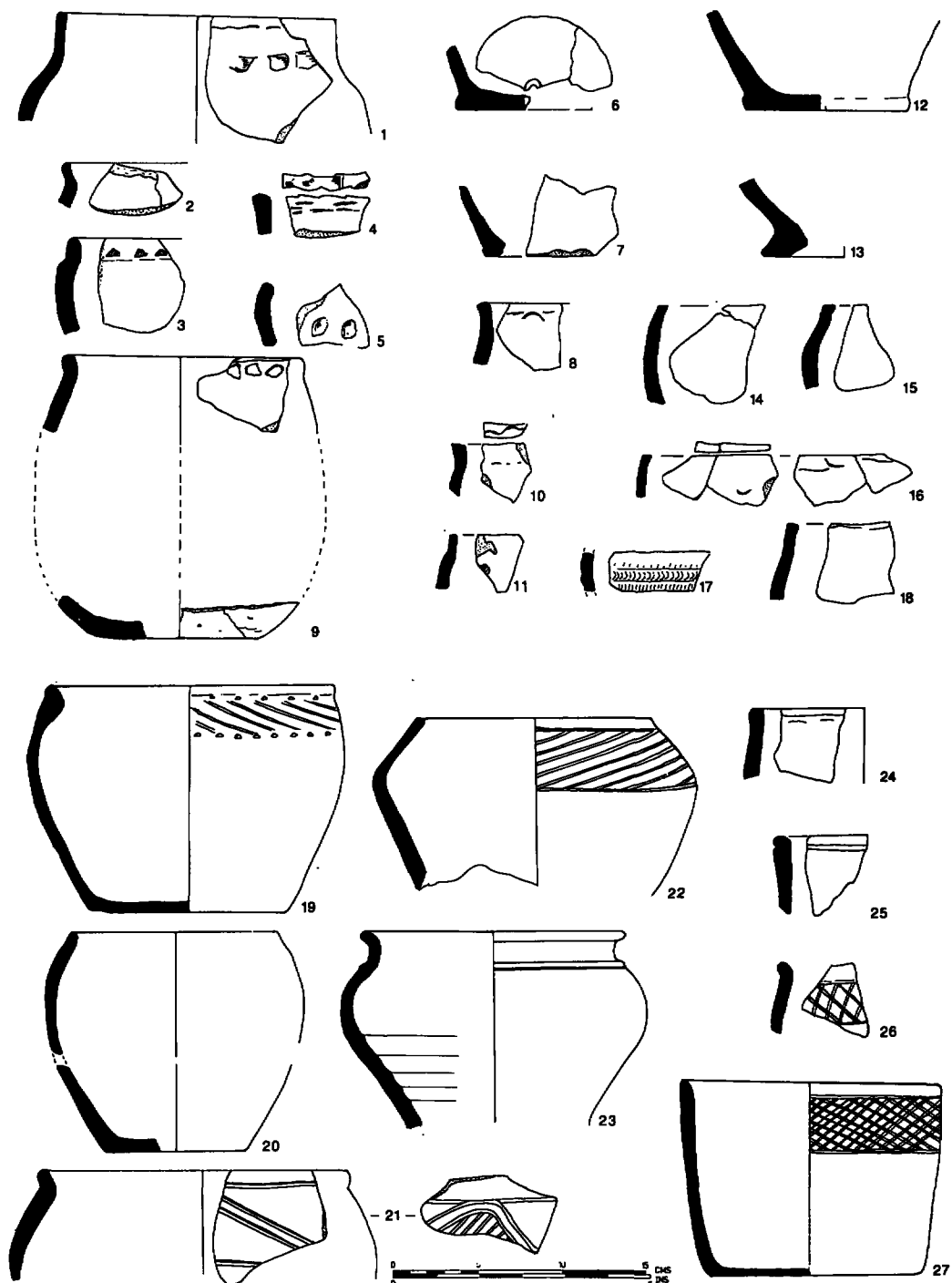


Fig 4. Oakridge, Basingstoke: pottery: phase 1A; no 1, Pit II/1, nos 2-7, Pit II/6, no 8, Ditch II/8-9, nos 9-10, Pit II/26, no 11, Ditch II/28, nos 12-18, Ditch II/42: phase 1B; nos 19-24, Pit II/1, no 24, Ditch II/8-9, no 25, Pit II/38, nos 26-7, Pit II/44.

Table 4: Features with material from phases 2A, 2B and 2C

Feature	Excav.	Depth	Top width	Bottom width	Illus.	Comments
<i>Phase 2A</i>						
Ditch VI.3 (S.encl.)	Yes	2'4"* (0.71m)	5' (1.52m)	1'3 (0.30cm)	Fig 5 nos 29-32	U-shaped profile. Butt end excavated
Ditch VI.6 (S.encl.)	Yes	2'4"* (0.71m)	5' (1.52m)	1'9" (0.53m)	Fig 5 nos 28	Butt end opposite above, 6' (1.83m) entrance between
Pit II.26	Yes	see table 1				Few sherds from top
Pit VI.11	No	—	—	—	Fig 5 nos 33-36	Surface material only Evidence of burning
<i>Phase 2B</i>						
Burial 1	No	1'9" (0.53m)	1'10" (0.56m)	—	Fig 5 nos 37-44	Cremation with 8 vessels and iron fibula
<i>Phase 2C</i>						
Ditch II.2 (inner sq.)	Yes	3'3" (0.99m)	7' (2.13m)	1'6" (0.46m)		U-shaped. Gradual infill. 2C, 3B & 3C pot in layer 2
Ditch II.4 (circ.encl.)	Yes	see table 1				2C pottery in layers 2 & 3
Ditch II.27	Yes	2'9" (0.84m)	8'6" (2.59m)	3' (0.91m)	Fig 6 nos 45-50	Oblique cut, shallow U-shape. Large quantity period 2C pot
Ditch II.29	Yes	2'3" (0.69m)	6'7" (2.01m)	1'6" (0.46m)	Fig 6 nos 51-7	Same assemblage as above with 4 period 3A sherds
Ditch II.19 (outer sq.)	Yes	3'2" (0.97m)	5'9" (1.75m)	1' (0.30m)		U-shaped, very little material
Ditch II.30 (rect.encl.)	Yes	3'4" (1.02m)	6'3" (1.91m)	1' (0.30m)		Very little found
Ditch II.35 (inner sq.)	No	—	5'* (1.52m)	—		Very little found
Pit II.50	No	—	2'* (0.61m)	—	Fig 6 no 58	Pit within inner square
Ditch II.62 (circ.encl.)	No	see table 1				Period 1 ditch with 1 sherd period 2C pot
Ditch II.77 (inner sq.)	No	—	5'* (1.52m)	—		Small sample of pottery
Ditch II.79 (circ.encl.)	No	see table 1				Period 1 ditch with a few 2C sherds

* topsoil missing

enclosure ditches revealed during the development of Oakridge VI formed three sides of an enclosure with opposing butt ends, ditches VI.3 and 6, giving a 6 ft (1.80 m) wide entrance at the south-east corner. The ditches had a U-shaped profile and the fill seemed to consist of natural silting with some deposition of domestic debris. The absence of any Alice

Holt (AH) grey wares indicates that these ditches were already filled up by AD 60 or soon after. Similar pottery was recovered from pit VI.11 but nothing was found to date ditch VI.4. The top filling of pit II.26 and the thrown pot in pit II.1 suggest that some activity still continued at the earlier centre of occupation.

Phase 2B, c. 70 AD

Some distance away, 625' (190.5 m) from the entrance of the above enclosure, was cremation burial 1 which was the first discovery on site. Little can be said about the circumstances of the burial except that it lay in a small pit in the chalk which was destroyed by the digging of a pipe trench. The finds were partly collected by a site foreman and partly recovered from the spoil heap by museum staff. The group consisted of at least 8 pots, with the cinerary urn, a buff/grey sandy ware cordoned jar, rescued virtually undamaged. The cremation was of an individual aged 25–40, of undetermined sex. The accessory vessels included a butt beaker, two imitation Gallo-Belgic platters, a small jar containing 8 calcined teeth and three fragmentary jars. Fragments of burnt daub and the broken remains of an iron La Tène III brooch were also found. The presence of early grey ware suggests a date after the Roman Conquest, about 70 AD. The high-status accessory vessels make the cremation comparable to the rich late Iron Age/early Roman cremation burials in East Hampshire recently identified by Dr Millett (1986, 80).

Phase 2C, 2nd half 1st century AD

It seems very likely that the enclosure system of the double square and long rectangles was laid out during this period, as most of the ditches contained at least some phase 2C material. The ditches were of rounded U-shaped profile. There was no evidence for the precise form of the boundaries – bank, hedge or fence, but it was clearly not necessary to keep the ditches clean, and most of them contained a few fragments of pottery from late 1st to 4th century AD. As the new enclosure system would seem, from the evidence of the aerial photograph, to have overlaid the southern half of the circular enclosure, it may be that this part of the latter was already out of use by this time: certainly ditch II.42 contained only Iron Age material. The large amount of pottery recovered from the two

adjacent sections of the same ditch, II.27 and 29, suggests that it was deliberately filled at that point. The levelling was probably to facilitate access to the well, which was sunk at the end of this phase.

FINDS FROM PERIOD 2

Human Bones by S A Mays (full report on M/F)

Burial 1, Cremation 1130 fragments, mean size 2 cm, were examined. The individual was unsexable, aged 25–40. A thoracic vertebra showed evidence of osteophytosis.

Ironwork

2B A fragmentary La Tène III brooch was found associated with the cremation Burial 1 (not illud). It is 60 mm long and the bow is 5 mm across the front and 4 mm at the side. It is rather corroded, but it appears to be undecorated. This kind of Nauheim derivative brooch is well shown in the better preserved bronze examples, as at Poundbury (Sparey Green 1987, 96, no 8), locally at Ruckstalls Hill (Oliver & Applin 1979, 75, no. 3) and Fishbourne (Cunliffe 1971, 102, nos 16, 17) dated pre-75 AD.

2C A curved, dome-headed bolt resembling a latch-lifter was found in ditch II.77, uncertainly dated to this phase. A brooch pin and a fragment of slag came from ditch II.30/2, three nails, square sectioned, from various ditches and four other nails probably from this phase.

Stone

A few fragments of non-local stone were found, most of which appeared to be bits of broken quernstone (ditches VI.6/2, VI.2/4, II.29/1 & 2). A piece from II.29/2 was identified by Dr Anderson as white sandstone. A tiny fragment of slate was found in ditch II.27/3 and a residual Neolithic flint scraper in ditch II.2/3.

Daub and Tile

Only a few fragments of daub were found from some of the ditches, and the cremation burial. One fragment of brick came from ditch II.27 topsoil, and three others from the fills of the enclosure ditches which may have dated from either period 2 or 3.

Pottery (Tables 5 & 6)*List of the pottery fabrics for periods 2C and 3* (Tables 5, 8 & 10)

- A Reduced sandy wares, black surface, core varying from dark grey to red. Mostly Alice Holt (AH) fabrics.
- A1 Fine-grained hard-fired fabric, smooth black surface, possibly imitation terra nigra. Micaceous sparkle and occasional red inclusions.
- A2 Hard sand-tempered ware, grainy texture, core dark or reddish, black burnished surface. Hand-made (visible wipe marks) Dorset BB1.
- A3 Reduced ware with gritty feel, fine-ground black sand and occasional red inclusions. Similar to A2 but thrown.
- B Sand-tempered grey wares, colour varies from buff to dark grey, core sometimes oxidised. Mostly Alice Holt fabrics.
- B1 Soft light grey ware, pink core, sparse large black inclusions, up to 4 mm. Hand made. Probably Savernake kilns.
- B2 Soft fine grey or grey/buff ware, with dark inclusions as B1 but smaller. Better finished than B1. Sometimes powdery feel, sometimes harder fired. Not AH.
- B3 Fine sandy grey ware, hard-fired, small black flint filler, up to 1 mm. Dark grey paint or slip. Probable local imitation of AH.
- B4 Hard buff sandy ware, small grey/brown flint grits up to 1 mm. Not AH.
- B5 Coarse sand-tempered hard-fired storage jar, occasional iron-rich inclusions. Not AH. Grey painted finish.
- B6 Oxidised buff coarse ware with rolled flint filler, up to 2 mm. Gritty feel. Early AH fabric.
- B7 Dark sand-tempered ware with visible black and white inclusions and occasional large white flints up to 3 mm.
- B8 Dark sandy ware with very frequent dark grits, average 1 mm. Pimply feel.
- B9 Buff/grey sandy ware with small black inclusions, dark grey surface.
- B10 Buff sandy fine ware with occasional red inclusions and dark grey slip. Possible traces of white paint.
- B11 Light grey sandy ware, lightweight in relation to its thickness.
- C1 Samian fabrics, see separate report.
- C2 Cream fine ware, hard-fired, micaceous sparkle, sometimes pink tinge.
- C3 Cream with orange/pink fine ware, soft powdery feel, occasional tiny red inclusions.
- C4 Pale pink/orange smooth fine sandy ware, occasional red inclusions. Rare AH fabric (inf M Lyne).
- C5 Hard white fine fabric.
- C6 Slightly coarser hard white fabric.
- F3 Flint-tempered coarse wares, with crushed flint of varying size mostly 2-4 mm white or grey flint. Either reduced firing (grey to black) or oxidised (buff to orange). Hard-fired, hand made, used for storage vessels. Includes Silchester ware and possibly an early AH fabric (inf M Lyne).
- G Grog-tempered wares, fragments of burnt clay visible, and sometimes flint temper also. Either oxidised or reduced. Characterised by soapy feel. Some quite fine fabric, mostly coarse.
- G1 Black fine fairly soft-fired fabric with occasional white flint grits and black burnt clay inclusions. Lightweight, corky feel, very smooth. Possibly Wokingham kiln.
- G2 Brown soapy fabric with red grog inclusions 1 mm and white flint grit 2 mm. Sparkle of mica. Possibly East Hants ware.
- M Mortarium, hard fine white fabric with brown and grey grit tituration, 2-4 mm. Oxfordshire kilns.

*Table 5: Weight of period 2 pottery by fabric and feature**Phase 2A*

Feature	Fabric B	SG	F1	F2	Total
VI.3	7	356	23	1642	1728
VI.6	—	248	43	563	854
VI.11	150	1360	365	1134	3009
II.26	—	—	313	—	313
TOTAL	157	1964	744	3339	

Table 5 (cont)

Phase 2B

Cremation	Fabric B	SG	F3	C5
cin. urn	1090	—	—	—
butt b.	—	—	—	395
platters	1050	—	—	—
jars	—	190	125	—
	—	140	50	—
TOTAL	2140	330	175	395

Phase 2C

Feat	Fab A	A1	B	B2	C1	C2	C5	C6	F3	SG	G	R1	R3	R4	R6	R8	R9	R10	Total
II.2	35	4	146	5	27	4	—	—	124	53	162	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	560
II.4	242	—	142	26	20	—	—	—	1340	—	39	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1809
II.8-9	14	2	16	4	3	—	—	—	8	8	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	62
II.19	—	—	20	—	—	—	—	—	6	—	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	34
II.27	1586	—	854	19	—	43	22	—	2964	—	128	9	—	—	—	47	—	—	5671
II.29	2555	—	1779	73	—	3	—	9	4035	—	466	2	—	—	—	1	—	48	8171
II.30	—	—	36	—	—	—	—	—	27	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	—	66
II.35	—	—	16	—	—	—	—	—	19	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	38
II.50	200	—	175	—	—	—	—	—	2850	100	100	—	20	—	10	—	—	—	3455
II.62	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5
II.77	20	—	277	90	—	—	—	—	105	—	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	495
II.79	12	—	99	—	—	—	—	—	356	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	467
II.121	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4
Total	4669	6	3564	217	50	50	22	9	11833	161	913	11	20	3	10	48	3	48	

Table 6: Period 2 pottery forms

feat	neck jar	bowl	dish	beak	flag	platt	stor jar	bead rim	lid	ped bse	evert rim	fine ware
<i>Phase 1A</i>												
VI.3	1	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	—
VI.11	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	8	—	—	1	—
VI.6	—	2	—	—	—	—	2	2	—	—	1	—
II.26	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	2	2	0	1	0	0	3	15	0	1	2	0
<i>Phase 2B</i>												
Crem.	2	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	3	1
<i>Phase 2C</i>												
II.2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
II.4	1	—	—	—	1	1	—	1	—	—	—	1
II.8/9	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
II.27	7	1	1	1	—	—	5	12	—	—	—	3
II.29	8	—	—	2	2	1	8	10	3	—	—	1
II.50	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	1	—	—	—
II.77	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
II.79	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
TOTAL	22	1	1	3	3	4	13	27	5	0	0	6

- N Fine white fabric with dark brown/black colour coat. Nene Valley kilns.
- O Fine red ware with bright red slip, imitation samian, Oxfordshire kilns.
- P Fine-textured red ware with hard red slip, harder finish than O. Imitation samian.
- Q Cream sandy ware, pink core, visible fine grey/black sand filler, giving rough feel. Possibly Overwey kilns.
- R1 Fine red ware with occasional flecks of red burnt clay, 1 mm.
- R2 Orange sandy ware with flint filler, up to 2 mm. Coarse ware but well smoothed surface. 10mm thick.
- R3 Dark red sandy ware with visible sand temper, up to 0.5 mm.
- R4 Soft powdery red ware, no filler, white-slipped surface.
- R5 Soft orange/red sandy ware, grey core. Few visible flint grits and fragments of grog, 0.5 mm.
- R6 Red sandy ware with rough, gritty feel, grey core, occasional grey flint and grog inclusions.
- R7 Fine red ware, no visible filler, traces of gold mica finish. Staines mica-dusted ware.
- R8 Orange sandy fine ware with red burnt clay inclusions, powdery feel.
- R9 Hard-fired red sandy ware, possibly post-medieval (1 fragment only).
- R10 Sandy orange/red fabric, micaceous sparkle in filler. One fragment only from large vessel, 12 mm thick, little curve.
- SG Reduced sand and grog-tempered ware with occasional flint and sometimes chalk inclusions. Smooth burnished finish.
- T Fine buff fabric with red/brown slip.

Phase 2A (Fig 5, nos 28–36) Pottery recovered from enclosure ditches VI.3 & 6 and from pit VI.11 fits well into the latest Iron Age tradition. Flint-gritted fabrics predominate, as in phase 1B, with the coarse, heavily gritted F3 fabric accounting for over 50% of the total weight. The sand-tempered wares were better fired than the Iron Age fabrics. A new sandy fabric (SG) was also common in this phase. The most commonly found rim form was the bead rim; one example (Fig 5, no 36) had neatly drilled holes below the rim for suspension. Not many storage jar rim fragments survived, but the quantity of body sherds indicates that they were more numerous than the table of forms suggests. More specifically latest Iron Age forms include the barrel

shaped and cordoned jars – one with girth grooves, necked jars and a pedestal base. Most of these forms show evidence of throwing or turning on a slow wheel. Burnishing was the most common decorative treatment.

Phase 2B (Fig 5, nos 37–44) The cordoned, barrel shape of the cinerary urn (Fig 5, no 37) belongs to the latest Iron Age, but the sandy fabric could well be an early Romanised greyware, suggesting a date in the second half of the 1st century AD. The other pots, especially the butt beaker and the imitation Gallo-Belgic platters are also typical of this changeover period. A similar range of forms was found at Cowdery's Down (Millett & James 1983, 183ff) and at Silchester (Boon 1969, 60–65).

Phase 2C (Fig 6, nos 45–58) The greatest quantity of pottery was recovered from the excavated sections of ditch II.27 & 29 (Fig 6, nos 45–57). It was all of a consistent date, second half of the 1st century AD with the exception of 4 sherds from ditch II.29. Flint-gritted wares made up 50% of the total weight of pottery. Sand-tempered pottery, mostly AH wares, was the next most common, with the dark, reduced finish being more common than the grey/buff finish. There were small quantities of grog-tempered and fine wares – butt beaker, not samian. Bead rims were the commonest rim form, followed by necked jars and storage jars. Only a few other forms were found, fragments of 3 lids, 2 flagons, 2 beakers and a bowl. There is a noticeable preponderance of the early, native-derived AH forms. The whole group seems to be slightly earlier than the primary well fill. Other points along the same ditch were not excavated and the few finds from them cover a wider date-range, suggesting that the deliberate filling was a limited occurrence.

The other good deposit of pottery came from the top of pit II.50, which contained similar fabrics and forms, mainly bead-rimmed and necked jars, with one cordoned jar in grog-tempered ware decorated with cross-hatching on the neck (Fig 6, no 58).

The fill of the circular enclosure ditch at II.4 contained similar material with, in addition, a fragment of late 1st century samian and a flagon neck in fabric B2, a fabric also found in the well. Ditches II.8/9, 62 and 79 produced a little pottery of this phase.

The inner square, ditches II.2, 35 and 77, contained enough similar pottery to suggest they belong to this phase, though their upper levels contain later pottery also. Very little indeed was recovered

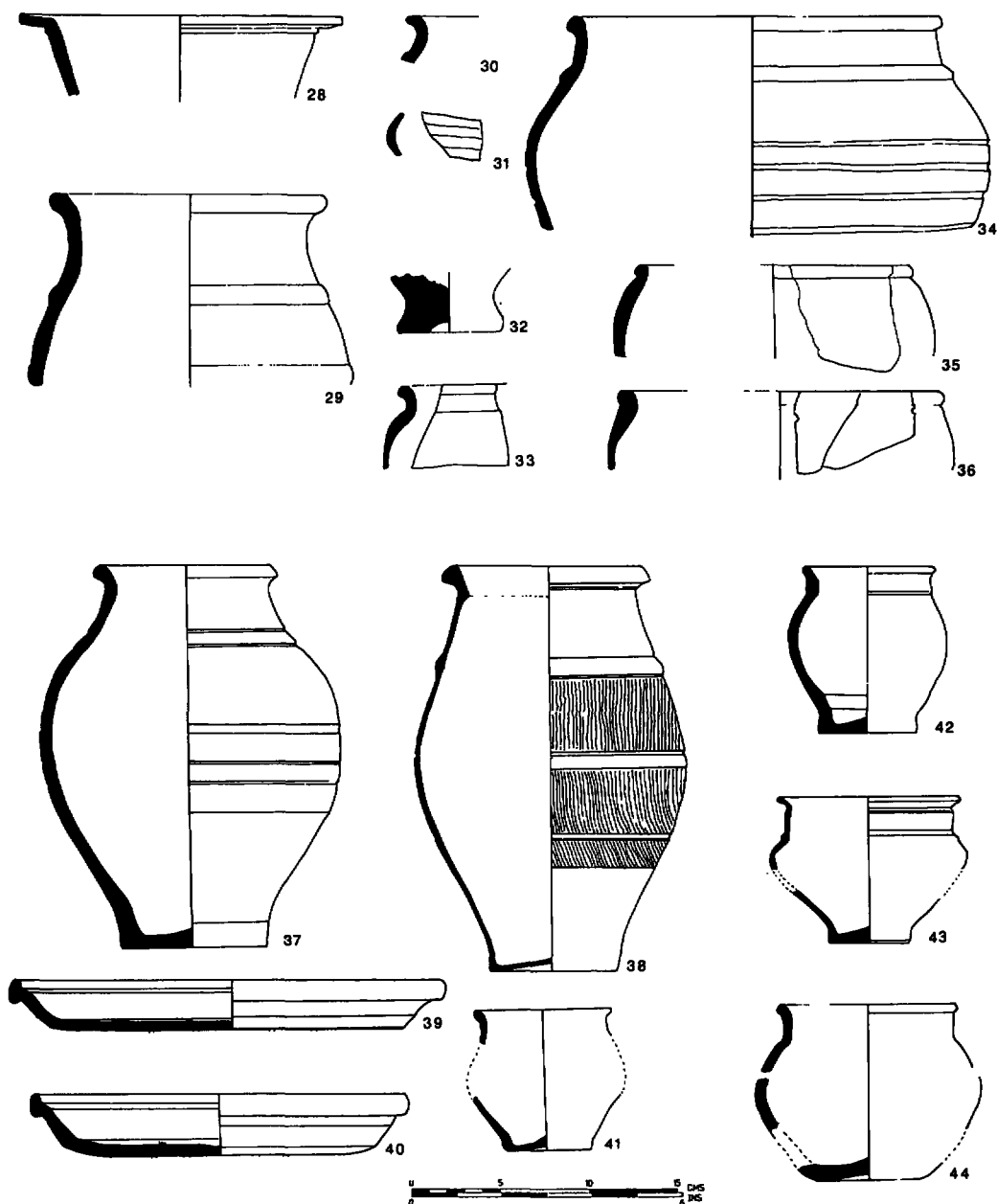


Fig 5. Oakridge, Basingstoke: pottery: phase 2A; no 28, Ditch VI/6, nos 27-32, Ditch VI/3, nos 33-36, Pit VI/11: phase 2B; nos 37-44, Cremation burial 1.

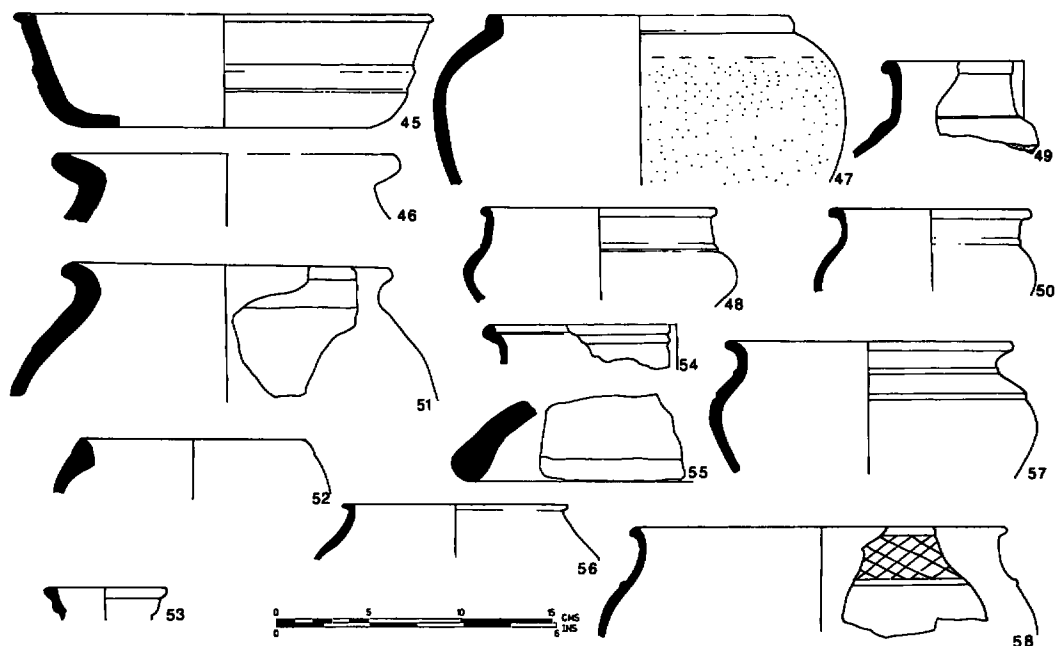


Fig 6. Oakridge, Basingstoke: pottery: phase 2C; nos 45–50, Ditch II/27, nos 51–7, Ditch II/29, no 58, Pit II/50.

from the outer square ditch, II.19; it is consistent with this phase.

PERIOD 3 LATER ROMAN

The features excavated gave no clue as to where the centre of occupation was situated in the later Roman period. The main evidence for activity on the site came from the well, which went out of use at the end of 2nd century AD and was then back-filled in a series of depositions until the late 4th century. Three phases were distinguished (Table 7).

Phase 3A, Late 2nd century AD

One of the few features to produce pottery of this date, ditch II.28, had almost every sherd matched in the well (layers 35, 36). It would seem that this area of the circular enclosure ditch was receiving material at the same time as the well, and from a source not reserved specially for the well.

The other major feature of this date was pit II.12. Its squared corners contrasted with the rounded shape of the Iron Age pits. The small mammal skeletons found in the granular chalk filling on the bottom suggest that the pit remained open for a while. The pottery covered quite a range in date from butt beaker to late 2nd century Alice Holt storage jar, and may well have been disposed of from a long-accumulating midden. There were adjoining sherds in layers 2 and 3. As well as pottery and food debris (animal bone and oyster shells), there were 2 boot plates and a number of hobnails.

Phase 3B, Late 3rd/early 4th century AD

There are only hints of activity on the site, other than the well. A few of the ditches produced a few sherds, which may have silted in from the fields after manuring with household refuse.

Table 7: Features with material from Phases 3A, 3B and 3C

Feature	Excav.	Depth	Top width	Bottom width	Comments
<i>Phase 3A</i>					
Ditch II.28 (circ.encl.)	Yes	see period 1			Sherds from layer 2 match some from the well (Fig 11, 65, 68, Fig 12, 74–5)
Pit II.12	Yes	4'1" (1.24m)	3'10" (1.17m)	2'6" (0.76m)	Square shape. Iron boot plates and hob nails.
Ditch II.122 (inner sq.)	No	–	6'* (1.83m)	–	Prob. 2C ditch, 1 sherd 3A pot
Ditch II.29	Yes	see period 2			4 sherds 3A pot
Pit II.37	No	–	8' (2.44m)	–	Few sherds
<i>Phase 3B</i>					
Ditch II.2 (inner sq.)	Yes	see period 2			Few sherds
Ditch II.8–9 (circ.encl.)	Yes	see period 1			Few sherds
Ditch II.110 (field dch)	No	–	6'* (1.83m)	–	Prob. 2C ditch, few 3B sherds
Ditch II.122 (inner sq.)	No	–	6'* (1.83m)	–	Prob. 2C ditch, few 3B sherds
Ditch VI.5	Yes	2'2" (0.66m)	6'* (1.83m)	9" (0.23m)	Prob. 2C ditch, few 3B sherds
<i>Phase 3C</i>					
Ditch II.2 (inner sq.)	Yes	see period 2			Few sherds
Ditch II.1/1,2	Yes	see period 1			Few sherds
Burial 2	Yes	2'3" (0.69m)	2'–2'3" (0.61–0.69m)	1'10" (0.56m)	Truncated grave, max. length 5'9" (1.75m), insecurely dated by presence of hobnails

* topsoil missing

Phase 3C, Later 4th century AD

A very few fragments of 4th century pottery were found in Ditch II.2/2 and in the top of pit II.1.

Although burial 2 had no firm dating evidence, it has been included in this phase because of the hobnails found at the feet of the body. Burials in the well at this time were also found with hobnails, and it was a practice more common in the mid 4th century than earlier at Lankhills cemetery (Clarke 1979,

370). This inhumation of a 40–60 year old female was found in a chalk-cut grave which was 2' 3" (68.6 cm) at its widest point, across the chest. Building ground work had cut the grave obliquely, destroying the skull and some of the upper part of the skeleton. The orientation was north/south, with the head to the north (Black 1986, 212ff). A few disarticulated human bones were found near the grave in feature II.78, which were probably from a disturbed and redeposited burial, so this may have been the settlement's burial area at some stage.

FINDS FROM PERIOD 3

Human Bones by S A Mays (full report on M/F)

Burial 2, Grave inhumation The bones were less well preserved than those from the well. The individual was female aged 40–60. Two arm bones were probably derived from a feature adjoining the grave. The fibula showed a healed fracture.

Ironwork

Most of the ironwork can be identified as boot or sandal nails and boot plates.

3A A good group was found in pit II.12, – 2 boot plates and 18 small dome-headed nails 8 mm diameter.

3C Burial 2 contained the ironwork from a heavily nailed pair of boots, 5 boot plates, 4 of the same size and 1 larger, possibly a repair, 18 large hobnails, 17 mm diameter head and 70 hobnails of 13 mm diameter head. Very similar boot plates were found locally at Ructstall's Hill (Oliver & Applin 1979, 76) and Choseley Farm (Morris 1986, 102). 2 other hobnails were found in ditch II.2/2.

A few nails and bolts of various shapes and sizes were found in all phases.

Stone

A few fragments of sandstone were found in pit II.12 and also in ditches II.2 and II.8–9, which might be period 2 or 3. A sample from II.8–9/2 was identified by Dr Anderson as sandy nummulitic limestone (Upper Eocene).

Daub

A small quantity came from pit II.12 and ditch II.8/9, which might have been from either period 2 or 3.

Pottery

Not very much pottery was recovered from features other than the well (see Tables 8 and 9).

Phase 3a The filling of pit II.12 probably took place in this phase, although the pottery included some earlier survivals, such as samian and imitation butt beaker. The AH large class 1A storage jar sherds

must date from the late 2nd century. Similar sherds of AH storage jar and everted rim dish came from pit II.37.

The circular enclosure ditch II.28 was being filled in this phase, with sherds present from the same vessels as those found in the well, layers 35 and 36 (see below). Sand-tempered wares predominate over flint- and grog-tempered, with some fine wares. The same ditch at II.8–9 also included AH sandy everted rims and a few sherds of Castor ware.

Ditch II.29 contained 4 sherds of this phase in the mass of phase 2C pottery – 2 jar rims and 2 pie-dish rims, one of BB1 fabric. Inner Square ditch II.122 contained part of an AH lid.

Phase 3B Very little pottery was recovered from this phase. Circular enclosure ditch II.8–9 contained sherds of AH storage jar with combed decoration and a few sherds of mortarium. Inner square ditch II.2 produced a few sherds of AH jars and ditch I.122 greyware (not AH) storage jar sherds. Ditch II.110 and VI.5 produced one or two sherds.

Phase 3C Ditch II.2 produced a sherd of Oxfordshire colour-coated bowl, and pit II.1/1 a fragment of pie-dish rim.

Samian Ware by Joanna Bird

(NB The catalogue numbers follow on from the samian ware in the well, p 00)

Pit II.12

10. II.12./2. Dr 27, South Gaul, Neronian-Flavian
11. II.12/2. Dr 30 probably, South Gaulish, with neat bifid leaf at base. Pre- or early Flavian.
12. II.12/2. Dr 33 (diameter 11 cm) Central Gaul, Antonine.
13. II.12/4. Dr 18/21 or 31, Central Gaul, later Hadrianic-Antonine.
14. II.12/4. South Gaulish sherd, 2nd half first century.

Ditches

15. II.9/2. Dr 37 probably, South Gaul, Flavian-Trajanic; the surviving traces of decoration are too abraded to identify.
16. II.2/3. Dr 36, South Gaul, Flavian(-Trajanic).

THE WELL (Pit II.13)

Phase 2C, Late 1st Century AD

The well was originally dug towards the end of

Table 8: Weight of period 3 pottery by fabric and feature

Feat	A	A1	A2	B	B2	C1	C2	C4	F3	SG	G	R2	M	N	O	TOT
<i>Phase 3A</i>																
II.8-9	78	-	-	196	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	276
II.12	287	4	84	528	-	29	4	-	79	4	185	-	-	-	-	1204
II.28	12	12	-	138	139	-	-	34	36	-	-	-	-	-	-	371
II.29	25	-	15	36	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	76
II.37	-	-	-	78	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	78
II.122	380	-	-	140	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	520
TOTAL	783	16	99	1116	139	29	4	34	115	4	185	0	0	2	0	
<i>Phase 3B</i>																
II.2	45	-	-	190	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	235
II.8-9	-	-	-	122	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16	-	-	138
II.110	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	135	-	-	-	135
II.122	-	-	-	400	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	400
VI.5	-	-	-	85	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	85
TOTAL	45	0	0	797	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	135	16	0	0	
<i>Phase 3C</i>																
II.1	-	-	-	44	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	44
II.2	-	-	-	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	21	41
TOTAL	0	0	0	64	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	21	

Table 9: Period 3 pottery forms

Feat	neck jar	bowl	dish	beak	flag	platt	stor jar	lid	mort.	fine ware
<i>Phase 3A</i>										
II.8-9	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
II.12	-	1	1	-	-	-	2	-	-	5
II.28	1	-	2	1	-	1	-	-	-	2
II.29	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
II.37	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
II.122	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
TOTAL	10	1	6	1	0	1	3	1	0	9
<i>Phase 3B</i>										
II.2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
II.8-9	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-
II.110	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
VI.5	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	2	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	1	0
<i>Phase 3C</i>										
II.1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

this phase close to ditch II.27 & 29. This stretch of the ditch appears to have been deliberately filled in at this time, probably to make easier the considerable work involved in digging such a deep well, removing the spoil and setting up the well-head, and it would also have made possible access from the south. Examination of the seeds from the waterlogged primary silt suggests that the area surrounding the well was grassland: grass and weed seeds were found, but no cultivated plants (see Murphy below). It may be that the main reason why the well was dug was for watering stock, probably cattle, which need more water than sheep. It probably also provided domestic water supplies, although no buildings were located.

The well was dug to a depth of 87' 6" (26.67 m) at a constant diameter of 4' (1.22 m) until 72' (21.95 m) when it widened slightly to a width of 5' (1.52 m, see Fig 7 for section). Water was reached during our excavations at 73' 9" (22.48 m) on 2nd May 1966 and the water level dropped in June to 76' 4" (23.27 m). This suggests that the water-table was locally very much the same in the early Roman period as it is now, and that the depth of the well allowed for seasonal variation, although now the water-table probably falls more in a dry year, due to the high modern demand for water.

At the bottom of the well the thick, chalky silt with some large flints (layer 37) contained most notably an almost complete and largely unbroken late 1st century AD flagon (Fig 11, no 59). This water-carrying vessel had probably been placed at the bottom of the newly dug well as a propitiatory offering to ensure a good water supply, a common Roman practice (Millett & Graham 1986, 32; Ross 1974, 46-9). Other pottery finds, fragmentary sherds, reinforce a late 1st century AD date for the sinking of the well. This level also contained quantities of waterlogged wood which ranged from small natural fragments to quite large pieces of worked timber. Most of it defies identification. A few pieces were found against the sides, and possibly formed part of a lining. There was also the double base and one complete and two

partial staves of a bucket (Fig 8, nos 6-9). A link of iron chain and fragment of iron strap were also no doubt associated with the bucket (Fig 8, nos 2-3). All traces of the wellhead and winding gear had disappeared as the weathering cone developed, but there were several pieces with one rectangular and one flattened end, suggestive of the spokes of a wheel, which may have formed part of the winding gear (Fig 8, no 11).

There was a small amount of animal bone from this lowest level, in poor condition compared with the rest of the bone from the well. A few small mammal bones were noted at the time but are no longer with the rest of the bone from the site. They had no doubt accidentally fallen down the well, which suggests that it was not very efficiently or not consistently covered. It is possible that more sediment and rubbish built up while the well was in use, and was removed when the well was cleaned out. There was certainly a noticeable colour change between layers 37 and 36, the primary fill and the later deposits.

Phase 3A, Late 2nd century AD

Above c 85' (25.91 m), the character of the fill, in particular the large quantity of animal bone, makes it impossible to believe that the well was still being used as a source of water. There was nothing to indicate why the well was abandoned no more than a century after it was dug. It is unlikely to have run dry unless other wells were sunk nearby and chalk groundwater does not usually become tainted, unless a fissure had developed in the chalk close to where the animals were stockaded. From the quantity of animal bone found in the later fill, it seems that stock raising, and therefore some demand for water, continued on site after the well fell into disuse. A possible reason would be that the centre of activity moved away from the immediate vicinity of the well. The well shaft thereafter provided a useful place for disposing of unwanted materials. This is clearly brought out by the character of the bone refuse, predominantly waste from butchery or skin-processing, both unpleasant and smelly

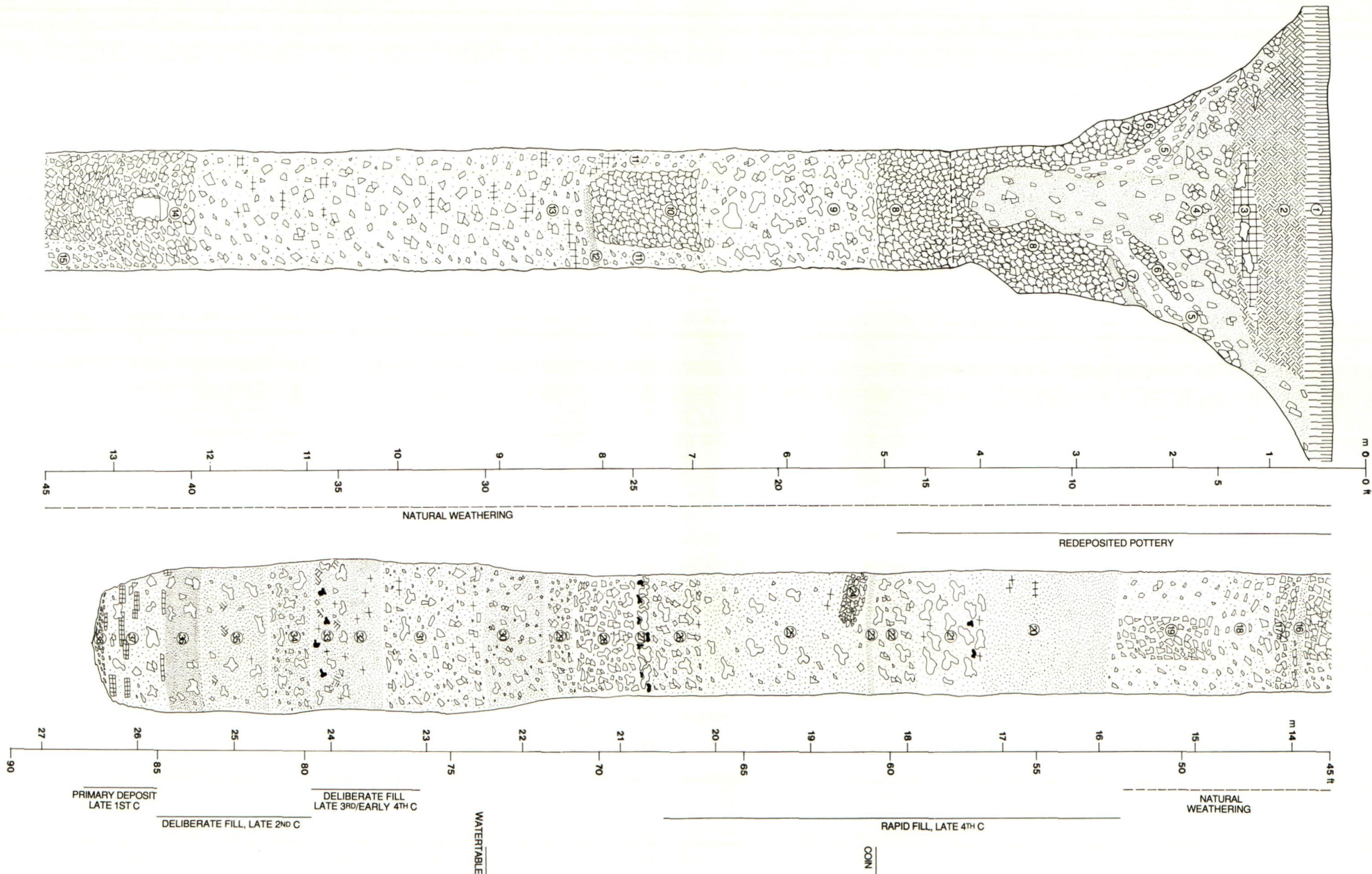


Fig 7. Oakridge, Basingstoke: section of well, feature II/13. Layers: **1** topsoil, **2** wet heavy clay with some chalk and flint, **3** charcoal and large flints, **4** silt and coarse chalk fill, **5** chalk wash and rubble, **6** chalk rubble, **7** silt, **8** chalk rubble to 16'6" (5.03m), **9** chalk rubble with silt and large flints to 22'9" (6.93m), **10** coarse chalk rubble to 26'3" (8.00m), **11** smaller chalk rubble and silt to 26'3" (8.00m), **12** narrow silt layer to 26'6" (8.08m), **13** chalk rubble and silt to 39'6" (12.04m), **14** larger chalk rubble to 45'9" (13.94m), **15** chalk rubble and silt to 45'9" (13.94m), **16** narrow silt layer to 46' (14.02m), **17** chalk rubble to 47' (14.33m), **18** silty with some chalk to 52' (15.85m), **19** more chalky to 52'3" (15.93m), **20** dark silt to 57' (17.37m), **21** silty with many large flints, calcined flints and charcoal to 59'6" (18.14m), **22** as above plus chalk rubble to 60'8" (18.49m), **23** thin layer of silt to 60'10" (18.54m), **24** chalky wash (west) to 61'11" (18.87m), **25** silty

with few chalk nodules and large flints to 66'6" (20.27m), **26** silty with more chalk and flint to 68'6" (20.88m), **27** large flints and calcined flints to 68'9", **28** chalky with large flints to 71' (21.64m), **29** silty with chalk rubble to 72' (21.95m), **30** brown silt with a few chalk and flint nodules to 74'2" (22.61m), **31** brown silt with more chalk plus charcoal traces to 77'7" (23.65m), **32** silt plus charcoal traces to 78'8" (23.98m), **33** as above with large flints and clay lumps to 79'10" (24.33m), **34** silt (mud) with many large flints and some small chalk rubble to 81'3" (24.77m), **35** as above with less chalk to 83'8" (25.50m), **36** darker silt, large flints and large chalk lumps to 85'1" (25.93m), **37** thick grey silt and chalk rubble to 87' (26.52m), **38** chalky wash to 87'7" (26.70m). (Fig 7a shows section in relation to the hill-slope.)

operations best carried out away from the centre of habitation.

Layers 34 and 36 contained some pot, but the pottery from layer 35 represents a large deliberate deposit with a variety of fabrics and forms of late 2nd century date. It is interesting that one of the few other features on site to produce material of this date, ditch II.28, should have virtually every sherd matched in the well.

A quantity of brick and tile was also found, mostly small fragments but with one complete roof tile. So many different bricks and tiles are represented that it is unlikely they formed part of a demolished building. They are more suggestive of hard core. Perhaps, with the large flints also found at this level, they formed part of a base or hard-standing at the wellhead.

Phase 3B, Late 3rd/Early 4th century AD

A second major session of dumping down the well can be recognised above 80' (24.38 m). There was quite a large quantity of late 3rd/early 4th century pottery between depths 77' 6" (23.62 m) and 79' 9" (24.31 m), in layers 32 and 33, and a further considerable deposition of animal bone. The well must have been securely covered during the long interval between the two periods of intense deposition in the late 2nd and late 3rd centuries, as there was hardly any natural weathering and there were few small mammal casualties.

The character of the pottery deposit from this level is rather different from the earlier one in that it contains a greater percentage of complete or almost complete pots. They were mostly in fragments, but the two small samian flagons were found virtually undamaged (see p 84 and Fig 10, nos 2-3). These two Antonine flagons, a fairly unusual samian form, must have been about 150 years old when they were consigned to the well, and this deliberate burial of high value pots, probably treasured heirlooms, must represent a special deposit of some kind. This view might be reinforced by the large numbers of dog and puppy bones, and the two hare skeletons, also the evidence of burning, all recognised as elements in ritual

behaviour connected with wells and shafts (Wait 1985, 51-82; Millett 1986, 32; Ross 1974, 46-9; Black 1986, 211). However, most of the animal bone consisted of cow and sheep bone, which was again characteristic of primary butchery or leather-working waste.

The first human bones from the well were found between the depths 75' 9" (23.09 m) and 78' 9" (24.00 m). The commingled bones of the two adults were partly in the zone of deposition and partly at the bottom of layer 31, which above the bones contained little other deliberate deposition and probably weathered in over the burials. The disarticulation may have been caused by the processes of decay and the compression of later filling, or it could have been the result of re-burial. This entire deposit can be regarded as partly rubbish disposal, partly funerary/religious in nature.

Phase 3C, Later 4th century AD

Between the late 3rd/early 4th century zone of deposition and the next major fill, layers 28-30 and most of 31 contained little to suggest much activity around the well. It seems likely that the shaft was not covered over as completely as it had been, as the fills contained a greater amount of chalk rubble and there were more small mammal and amphibian bones. The few sherds of pottery that were found were small fragments, many of them rubbish survivals weathering in from the surface, with a few bits of domestic animal bone. Over 7 feet (2.13 m) of material accumulated in the half century before deliberate deposition resumed. Joining sherds from 66' (20.12 m) and 73' 9" (22.48 m), and from 65' 10" (20.07 m) and 77' 4" (23.57 m) may indicate that this phase of the filling took place rather more rapidly than that. A layer of large flints and burnt flints between 68' 6" and 68' 9" (20.88-20.96 m) marked the resumption of intensive deposition, particularly cattle and sheep bone of the same character as before. The concentration of animal bone at this level and above - mostly processing waste, not food debris - contained a number of foetal skeletons, then neonates, then young animals.

Careful study of these skeletons suggests they may all have been deposited within one breeding season. Between 54' (16.46 m) and 58' 6" (17.83 m) were the unbutchered complete skeletons of a number of adult cows, at least three, which must represent a most unusual situation (see Maltby, forthcoming).

There were also a number of human burials from this phase. The partially commingled bones between 63' (10.20 m) and 67' (20.42 m) represented at least five individuals. It seems likely that the hobnails at 65' 10" (20.07 m) and 69' (21.03 m) and the bronze belt buckle at 66' 7" (20.29 m) found their way down the well as items of dress associated with these bodies. The only coin from the site, an Ae 3 of Valentinian I found at 60' 5" (18.42 m) can certainly be regarded as contemporary with the bronze buckle which is closely paralleled at the Lankhills cemetery (Clarke 1979, 251), and also with two imitation samian Oxfordshire bowls. These pots may have been buried with the fourteen individuals found between 51' 9" (15.77 m) and 58' 10" (17.93 m). This large number of burials included three children, also three adults which the bone evidence suggests could have been genetically related (see Mays below).

Phase 3D, Late 4th century to ? 7th century AD

Above a depth of 52' (15.85 m) the fill of the well changed dramatically and consisted of a high percentage of weathered chalk and almost no deliberate deposits. The large-scale dumping of organic matter in the 2nd half of the 4th century could well have filled or almost filled the shaft, but subsequent decomposition and settlement eventually led to this deposit sinking to 52' (15.85 m) and below. The gradually widening cone of natural weathering formed as chalk rubble fell down the shaft. Mathematical calculation roughly equates the volume of chalk from the cone with the weathered chalk fill in the shaft. It is clear that the complete filling and stabilisation of the well shaft took some time to evolve. If the

7 feet (2.13 m) deposit between phases 3B and 3C did take 50 years to accumulate, it could have taken at least 300 years to reach layer 3. The swallow bones, including those of fledglings, between 42' 6" (12.95 m) and 57' 9" (17.60 m) indicate that swallows were nesting in the shaft as the well went out of use. There was a large number of amphibian bones, especially between 36–42' (10.97–12.80 m) and other animal casualties also suggest that the weathering process did not keep pace with the slumping of the fill; falling down the shaft proved fatal to thirteen polecats, two foxes, three deer and numerous shrews, mice and voles.

The preferred environment of these wild species, woodland or scrub, indicates that the settlement was then deserted and overgrown, but there was human activity somewhere in the vicinity; a few items of butchery waste were disposed of down the well from time to time, as was yet another litter of pups and a few human skeletons, at 32'–33' 6" (9.75–10.21 m), 25'–29' (7.62–8.84 m), 19'–21' (5.79–6.40 m) and 13'–14' (3.96–4.27 m). The incomplete remains from 46' 6" (14.17 m) and 5' (1.52 m), and the cremated fragments from 5–10' (1.52–3.05 m) were most likely redeposited from the area at the top of the shaft with the weathered chalk. Pottery was rarely found. The few fragments are best explained as rubbish survivals weathering in from the surface. Above 16' (4.88 m) a quantity of early material, very like the pottery from ditches II.27 & 29, no doubt originated from there as the weathering cone cut into that ditch. Layer 3 consisted mostly of very large flints and charcoal, which could be explained by the later clearance to the area; the top of the shaft would have offered a suitable hollow for burning off the wood and scrub and for disposing of large flints and other obstacles to the plough. Nothing was found to date these final phases, the pottery was predominantly residual early Roman. Above this layer was a build up of plough soil. Not all of the top of the well was available for excavation, as grading into the hillside for the new road had removed up to 3' (91 cm) on the southern edge (Fig 7).

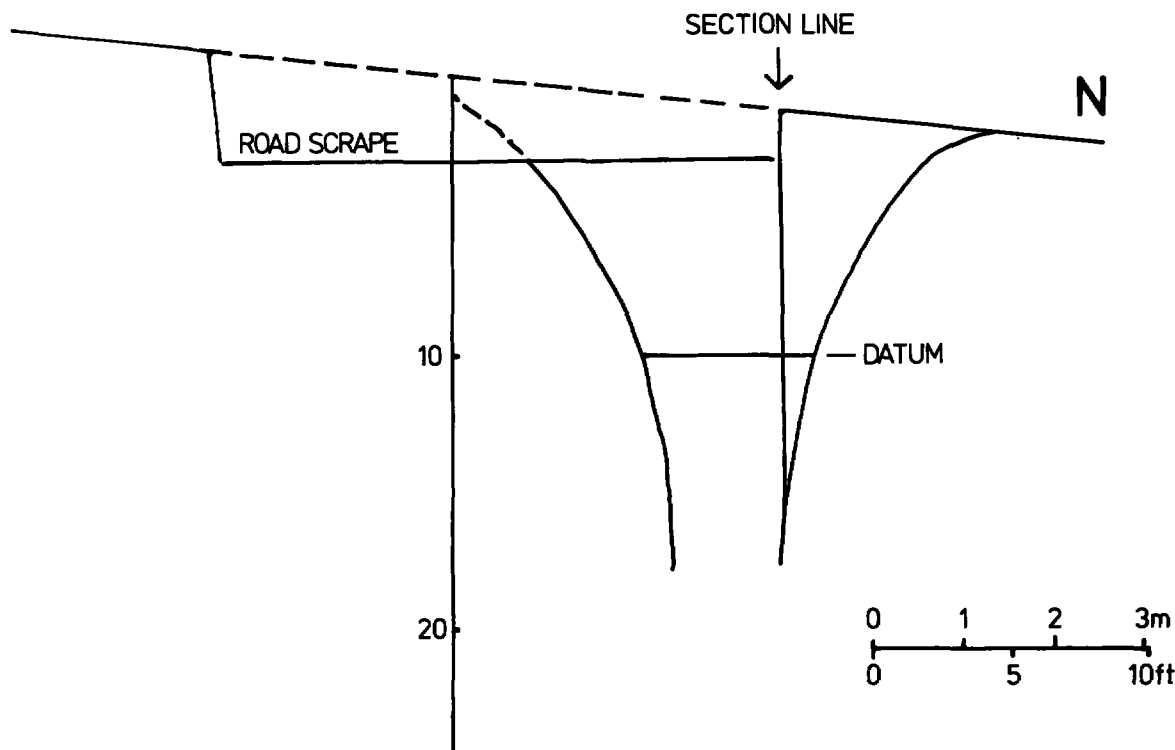


Fig 7a. Section of top of well in relation to hill slope and road cutting.

FINDS FROM THE WELL

Coin

The one coin from the site was found in the well at 60' 5" (16.42 m). It is an Ae 3 of Valentinian I (AD 364–7) type 8 GLORIA ROMANORUM, Lyons S mint Type 286 (Carson & Kent 1960, 51). It is not in mint condition.

Bronze

A bronze oval or D-shaped buckle with its clasp plate was found in the well at 66' 7" (20.29 m, Fig 8, no 1). It is undecorated apart from three grooves on the tongue. The clasp plate was secured by three tacks inserted from the underside. Similar buckles from the Lankhills cemetery at Winchester (Clarke 1979, 251, fig 34, nos 27, 481) suggest a date AD 350–410.

A small bronze tack, with a square-section shank and a crushed head, was found close to the surface of the well at 3' 6" (1.07 m).

Ironwork

- 2C** A large chain link (85 × 44 mm) and adjoining it, one and a half links of figure-of-eight chain came from the well layer 37, 87' (26.52 m) depth (Fig 8, no 2). The large link is worn a little thinner in the corner where the smaller chain had rubbed. Similar links were found at Poundbury (Sparey Green 1987, 100) and Rudston (Stead 1980, 115). A small fragment of iron strap with a nail hole (Fig 8, no 3) was found at 86' 6" (26.27 m). It is very thin, 1.5 mm, and could well have been part of the binding of the bucket. The bent shank of a rectangular-section nail or bolt was also found at the same depth.
- 3A** A group of 18 dome-headed sandal nails came from layer 35, between 82' (24.99 m) and 84' 6" (25.76 m). The diameter of the head is 8 mm. There was a hint of leather attached to some of these nails, disappointingly the only examples of leather from the waterlogged layers.

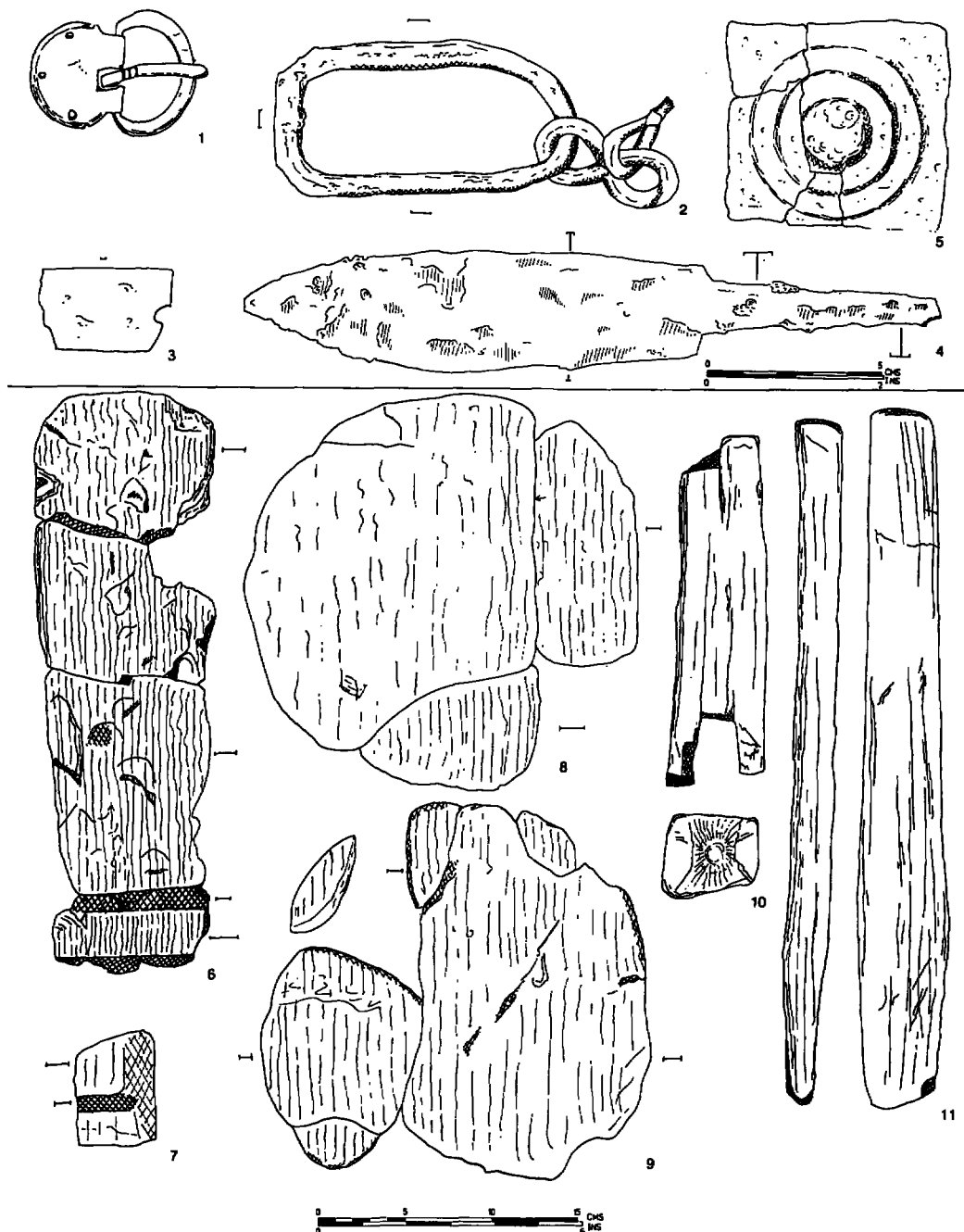


Fig 8. Oakridge, Basingstoke: finds from the well; bronze, no 1, 13/22; iron, nos 2-3, 13/37, no 4, 13/25, no 5, 13/20; wood, nos 6-11, 13/37.

- 3C** The largest number of hobnails was found in the well between 65' 10" (20.07 m) and 67' (20.42 m). They occurred in groups of 25, 28, 27 and 47, with a few isolated nails also. They were probably associated with five burials at this level. Most of the nails had 8 mm domed heads, but a group of 28 at 66' 3"-8" (20.19-20.32 m) were slightly larger at 13 mm diameter.

A well-preserved knife with a tang was found in the well at 66' 6" (20.27 m) in association with one of the burials (Fig 8, no 4). A small fragment of blade was found at 56' (19.07 m). A square plate, 60 × 60 mm with the head of a bolt or a boss was found at 54' 4" (16.56 m). Fragments of wood were preserved diagonally across the back of the plate, with no trace of a shank. Circular grooves surrounded the boss (Fig 8, no 5). A bolt from the same depth and also with traces of wood attached may have been from the same object. The bolt was of square section, 8 × 8 mm, and 76 mm long.

- 3D** A small iron knife was found between 33' 10" (10.31 m) and 34' 2" (10.41 m), possibly in association with the adult male burial from this level.

Wood

A quantity of wood had been preserved in the waterlogged levels of the well between 85'-87' (25.91-26.52 m). The most substantial pieces and some of the smaller fragments have been treated and conserved. The great majority are of the same species, which has been identified as oak by Mr R Holmes (Conservator of Antiquities, HCMS). Most of the wood is too fragmentary to recognise a shape or function, but some has been identified as the remains of a bucket (Fig 8, nos 6-9). Four pieces fit together to form a complete bucket stave, and there are several incomplete staves and two rounded pieces making bases. The bottom of the stave has two grooves, suggesting a double-bottomed bucket. The base is 230 mm in diameter and the stave 90 mm wide at the level of the grooves, which suggests a bucket made of eight staves. The height of the stave above the grooves is 280 mm which would have given a capacity of about 2.5 gallons (11.6 litres). One of the bases is made up from two pieces of wood with the position of the iron pin still identifiable. No nail holes can be seen in the complete stave, though several of the smaller stave pieces have them. The small fragment of iron strap with a nailhole was probably part of the bucket

binding (Fig 8, no 3). The absence of a handle and most of the ironwork normally associated with a bucket of this kind suggests that they were probably salvaged from the damaged bucket before it was discarded - the waterlogged conditions at the bottom of the well would otherwise have ensured their survival, as at Rudston (Stead 1980, 114-6).

A number of pieces of oak were worked in a similar way, with one squared end, the other wider and thinner (Fig 8, no 11). The dimensions average 35 × 35 mm at the squared end, 50 × 25 mm at the tapered end, with the longest one measuring 395 mm in length. There are two more of 350 mm length, one of 230 mm, one of 200 mm, three of c 170 mm, five of c 120 mm, and several shorter pieces which probably once joined up. It is possible that they once formed about eight handles which fitted into some kind of windlass or drum, for winding up the buckets. The equipment and mechanics of raising water from a deep well are fully discussed in the description of the Rudston well (Stead 1980, 114-5).

Other worked pieces include one with a slot cut across it (Fig 8, no 10) and another (now missing) with a peg inset into one side.

None-Local Stone by Dr F W Anderson

The site is on Upper Chalk near the western margin of the London Basin. Most of the material seen appears to be from the local Bracklesham and Bagshot (Tertiary) Beds. The quern fragments appear to be mostly Carstone, probably imported from East Anglia (Snettisham). Almost all the pieces are from the first deliberate filling episode, Phase 3A.

79' 6" (24.23 m)	glaucous sandstone, quern fragment
79' 8" (24.28 m)	glaucous sandstone, quern fragment
81' 11" (24.97 m)	glaucous sandstone, quern fragment
82' 8" (25.20 m)	glaucous sandstone
83' 8" (25.50 m)	ferruginous sandstone
84' 4" (25.70 m)	ferruginous sandstone
	glaucous
84' 9" (25.83 m)	glaucous sandstone (quern fragment)

Glass

- 3D** 2 small chips of greenish glass were found in the top, redeposited levels of the well, between 8' 6" (2.59 m) and 9' 3" (2.82 m).

Table 10: Well, weight of each pottery fabric by layer

Fabric Layer	A	A1	A2	A3	B	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	B7	B8	B9	B10	B11	C1	C2	C3
1	-	-	-	-	65	-	19	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	17.6	-	-	-	-	33	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	75.9	2	-	-	421.1	-	6.5	4	-	-	10	-	-	-	-	-	3	9	11
4	34.8	-	2.4	-	265.4	-	6	-	18	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13.2	-
5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8	29.4	5	-	-	105.4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
9	16.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
11	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
13	-	-	16.8	-	13.9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
14	-	4.4	6	-	19.7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7.8	-	-	-	-	-	-
15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
16	-	-	-	-	1.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
17	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
18	2	-	-	-	10.8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
19	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
20	4.9	-	-	-	23.8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5.5	-	-	-	-	-	-
21	-	-	3.6	-	8.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
22	-	2.7	-	-	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7.5	-	-	-	-	-	-
23	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
24	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
25	2.2	-	159.3	-	39.6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.5	34.8	-
26	-	-	-	-	1.6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
27	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
28	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
29	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
30	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
31	8.1	9.7	4.8	-	4.6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
32	1120	-	2470	-	445.7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	277	-	-
33	1300	-	294	-	25.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	43	-	-	266	-	-
34	43.6	-	3.5	-	32	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
35	949.5	28.5	1117.7	1128	2832.2	3148.4	1356.7	177	-	88.8	36	153	-	-	175	180	1017	-	-
36	59	-	39.3	-	65	3	36.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	18	-	-	-	-	-
37	482.1	3	3	-	1137.8	-	54.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	4145.6	55.3	4120.4	1128	5527.8	3184.4	1481	189	18	88.8	46	153	20.8	61	175	180	1564.5	57	11

Table 10 continued

Fabric Layer	C4	F1	F3	G	G1	G2	N	O	P	Q	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	T	TOTAL
1	-	-	21	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	113
2	-	-	31.6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2.7	-	-	-	-	84.9
3	-	-	561.2	37.2	26	-	-	-	-	-	6.8	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	1184.1
4	-	-	865.1	156.1	-	13	-	-	-	-	11.2	-	16	-	-	-	-	-	1401.2
5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
8	-	-	74.2	14.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	228.3
9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16.5
10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
11	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
13	-	-	35.9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	66.6
14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	37.9
15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.5
17	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
18	-	-	7.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20
19	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
20	-	-	267.7	40	-	-	-	514.1	6	-	-	-	-	-	12.5	-	-	-	874.5
21	-	-	40.9	40	-	-	-	1	14	-	-	-	-	12.8	-	-	-	-	120.8
22	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	700	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	724.2
23	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
24	-	-	22.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	22.3
25	-	-	3.3	135.8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16	392.5
26	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.6
27	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
28	-	-	250	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	250
29	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
30	-	-	4.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	10.7
31	-	-	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	127.2
32	-	-	2	62.7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11.8	-	-	196	-	-	-	4585.2
33	-	-	78.3	236.4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	75.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	2318.1
34	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	35	-	-	114.1
35	659.5	-	361.2	520	10	-	12.3	23	-	3	-	9.5	-	-	-	-	186	-	14172.3
36	-	50	462	56	-	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	808.8
37	-	18	31.6	329.7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2059.7
TOTAL	659.5	68	3225	1628.2	36	33	12.3	1238.1	20	3	18	102.7	16	17.5	208.5	35	186	16	

Table 11: Well, main pottery forms by layer

layer	necked jar	bowl	dish	beak.	flag.	platt.	storage jar	lid	bead jar	fine ware
1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
3	8	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	5	2
4	4	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	1
5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
8	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	—
9	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
14	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
15	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
16	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
17	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
18	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
19	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
20	2	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
21	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	2
22	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
23	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
24	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
25	6	1	—	1	—	1	1	—	1	2
26	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
27	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
28	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
29	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
30	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
31	—	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
32	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4
33	3	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	1	2
34	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
35	14	3	6	4	2	1	5	1	1	5
36	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—
37	1	—	1	—	1	—	1	—	1	—
TOTAL	50	9	7	5	4	6	12	4	15	20

Daub

A very few fragments of daub were found in all the main phases of the well.

Tile/Brick

Most of the tile came from phase 3A, the first major filling episode of the well. Between 80' 6" (24.54 m)

and 83' 8" (25.50 m) were 7020 g of brick and tile, especially at the top of layer 34 at 80' 6"–9" (24.54–24.61 m). Most of the pieces were small, 5–8 cm square, with the exception of one whole tegula and one other large piece, and they were of different thicknesses, compositions and colours. There was no trace of mortar attached to them, and they did not seem to have derived from a building or roof,

but were more suggestive of a collection of oddments used as hardcore at the top of the well to consolidate the ground around the wellhead, or as soakaway backfill – there were a great many large flints from this level too. Another concentration, weighing 2857 g, was found immediately above, between 77' 9" (23.70 m) and 79' 6" (24.23 m), which probably represents the completion of the demolition of the wellhead area. A few more fragments (1180 g) came from the top of the third filling episode (56'–58', 17.07–17.68 m), and two (484 g) from the redeposited top levels at 8' (2.44 m).

Pottery (Table 10 & 11)

Phase 2C, layers 37, 38 At the very bottom of the well was an almost complete and largely unbroken Alice Holt (AH) greyware flagon (Fig 11, no 59) of late 1st century AD type (Lyne & Jefferies 1979, 92). No handle was found, though the pot was slightly damaged in the relevant area. There was also the greater part of an AH type 1 cordoned jar (Fig 11, no 60) with bands of burnish on the shoulder (Lyne & Jefferies 1979, 21) and a fragment of a footringed carinated dish (Fig 11, no 62) in light grey ware with traces of a dark finish, not an AH product. This provincial imitation of a Gallo-Belgic, samian-derived form also fits a late 1st, possibly early 2nd century AD date. The rest of the sherds were fragmentary, some seeming abraded by the water; they included a flint-gritted bead rim (Fig 11, no 61) and a grog-tempered storage jar base fragment. A tiny fragment of BB1 may have percolated down from the level above, as this fabric is not found in the area until the second quarter of 2nd century (Thompson in Millett & James 1983, M4/79).

Phase 3A, layers 35, 36 This level contained by far the largest pottery deposit in the well (Fig 9, Fig 10, no 1, Fig 11, nos 63–72, Fig 12, nos 73–75). From the disposition of the sherds, deposition occurred in two main episodes of unknown duration, between 82'–82' 8" (24.99–25.20 m) and 82' 8"–83' 8" (25.20–25.50 m). AH sandy wares at 28% were the most common fabric type. Half a figured samian ware bowl, Dr 37, was found (Fig 10, no 1, see Bird below). The tiny sherds of Castor ware were almost the only examples of this fabric from the whole site. The most common fine ware was a pale pink/orange fabric, a rare product of the AH kilns where it was found in very small quantities in early/mid 2nd century AD deposits on kiln site AH52 and was sometimes glazed (Lyne forthcoming). The three bowls in this fabric (Fig 12, 73–75) were all inspired

by samian prototypes. The two finger-printed dimples on the inner surface may be derived from potters' stamps. Further fragments of two of the bowls were found in the filling of ditch II.28; other vessels were also found at this level and in ditch II.28/2 (Fig 11, nos 65 & 68).

There was a wide range of pottery forms. As well as necked, bead rim and storage jars there was a range of table wares, dishes, bowls, beakers and flagons. There was a handled beaker (Fig 11, no 69) in AH fabric imitating a BB1 form (Sparey Green 1986, 126, 60) and a mica-dusted dish (Fig 11, no 66). Another unusual vessel is a small Lyne class 2 pedestal beaker (Fig 11, no 70). This type of jar occurred quite frequently in wells at Neatham (Millett & Graham 1986, 32) but is not common on settlement sites. Although the form and dark slip are similar to the AH examples, the fabric, with brown burnt clay inclusions, is unusual for AH. A

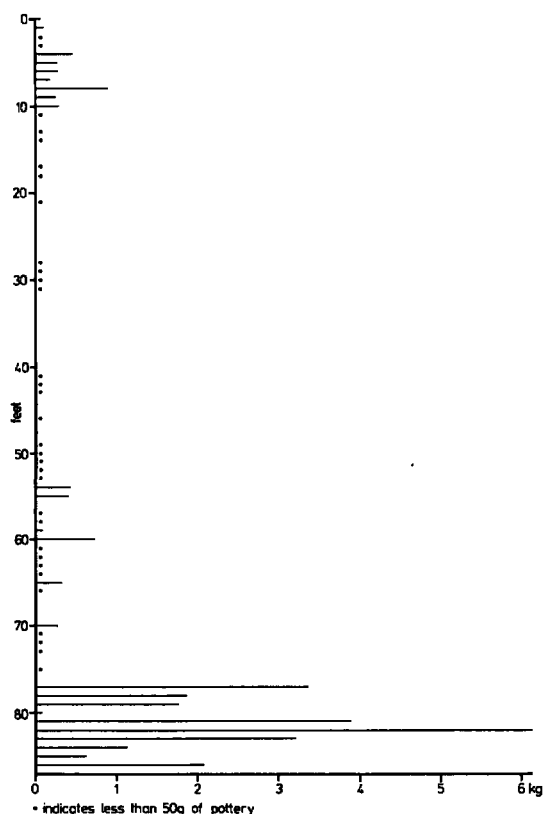


Fig 9. Oakridge, Basingstoke: bar-chart of pottery from the well.

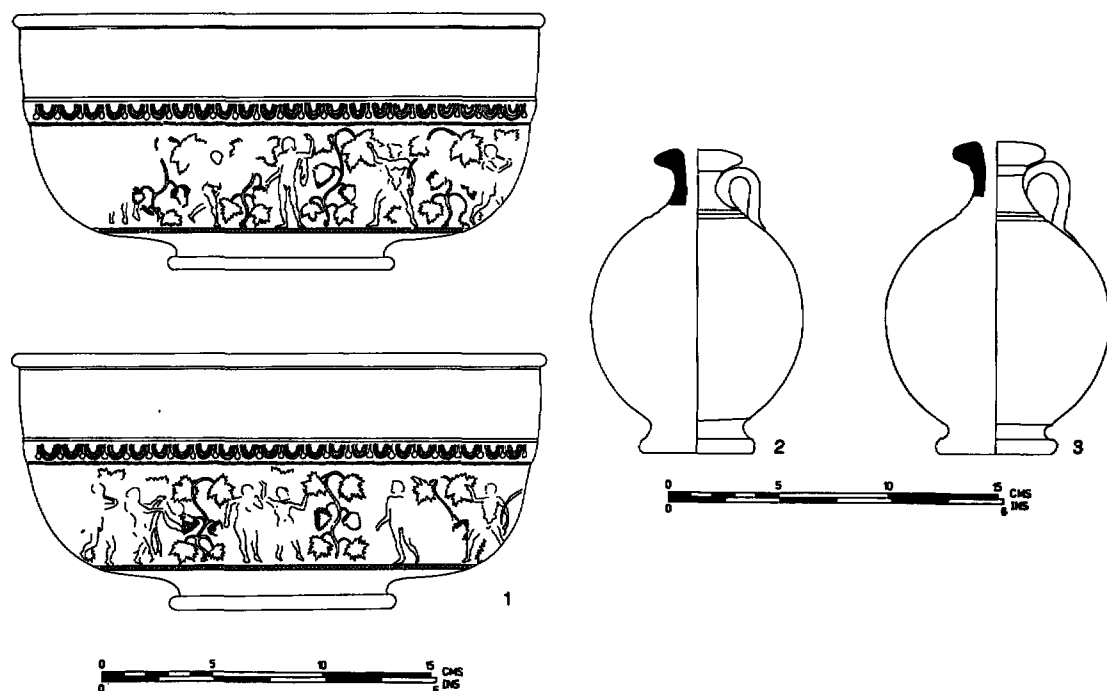


Fig 10. Oakridge, Basingstoke: pottery from the well: samian ware, no 1, 13/35, no 2, 13/33, no 3, 13/32.

large coarse ware storage jar (Fig 11, no 71), virtually complete, is the sole example of this fabric type, probably the product of the Savernake kilns. It is hand made and represents 22% of the total pottery from this level. There were a few 1st century AD fragments (Fig 11, nos 63–64) from the very bottom of this zone (which perhaps should belong to 2C) but the vast majority of the pots date from the 2nd half of the 2nd century AD. An exception is a rim fragment from a BB1 cavetto-rim jar from 82' (24.99 m), which probably fell down a crevice during the decomposition of organic material. This may also explain the two tiny fragments which may be Overwey fabric from 81' 4" (24.79 m) and 83' 4" (25.40 m).

Above layer 35, layer 34 contained but little pottery, 114 g, including a 2nd century AH lid fragment and a jar rim.

Phase 3B, layers 32, 33 This large deposit of pottery from 77' 7"–79' 10" (23.65–24.33 m) included several complete or near complete, though mostly fragmentary vessels (Fig 12, nos 76–79, Fig 10, nos 2–3). The two most common fabrics were AH (2890 g) and BB1 (2726 g), and there were three almost

complete BB1 cavetto-rimmed jars common in the late 3rd and 4th century AD (Spary Green 1987, 121, 7 & 8). There was also a late AH fabric plain jar, Lyne type 3c, also late 3rd century AD (Fig 12, no 77), a cordoned and grooved Lyne type 1 jar (Fig 12, no 76) and a black slipped cordoned jar, probably a waster, all near complete. Samian ware was richly represented in this zone, with two almost undamaged one-handled flagons that would have been "antiques" when deposited (Fig 10, nos 2–3; see Bird below). A flanged bowl imitating a Dr 38 samian bowl is probably the local version of the Oxfordshire type C51 (Young 1977, 160) and also fits a late 3rd/early 4th century AD date (Fig 12, no 78). Flint-gritted and flint and grog-tempered fabrics were sparsely found and together only amount to 5% of the total pottery.

Phase 3C, layers 20–31 Layers 26–31 contain very little pottery (Fig 9), what there is seems to be rubbish survivals, such as early storage jar rim. Joining sherds were found from 66' (20.12 m) and 73' 9" (22.48 m), and from 65' 10" (20.07 m) and 77' 4" (23.57 m).

Layer 25 contained rather more pottery, again a

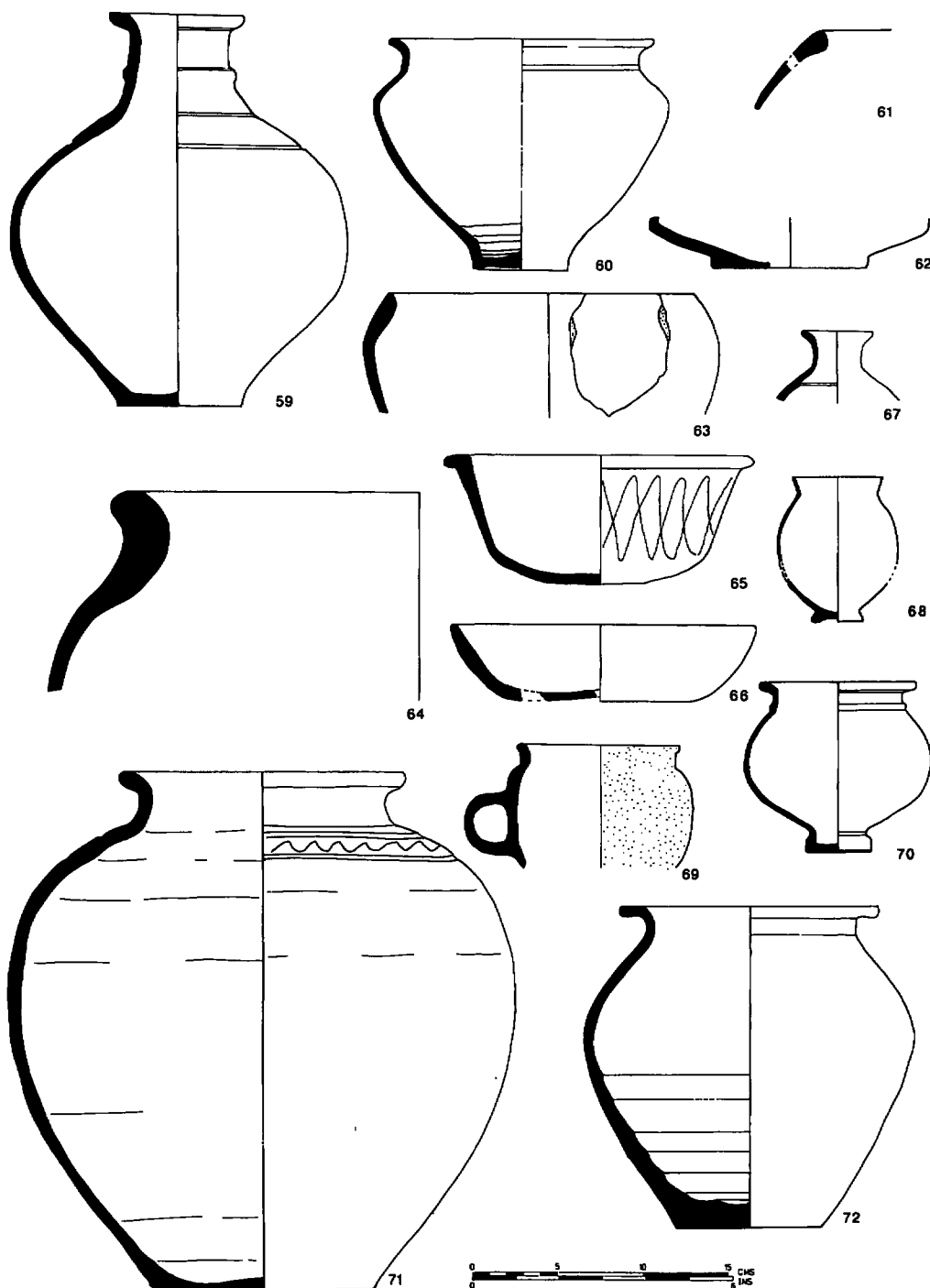


Fig 11. Oakridge, Basingstoke: pottery from the well: phase 2C; nos 59–62, 13/37: phase 3A; nos 63–72, 13/35 & 36.

mixture of early and late sherds. There was a shoulder fragment of a cordoned colour-coated beaker, probably an early survival. There was also part of the rim and body of a BB1 bowl (Fig 12, no 80), a less common form than the cavetto-rimmed jar (Spary Green 1987, 124-41). A further small fragment of this was found in layer 31 13' 2" (4.01 m) below.

A small chalk fall and a narrow silt layer separated layer 25 from the very similar layer 22. Layers 20-22 were contemporary and contained a greater quantity of pottery than the previous nine layers. Again there were a few sherds surviving from previous phases but the most notable vessels were a complete plain Oxfordshire bowl, type C46 (Young 1977, 158) and the greater part of a stamped and rouletted Oxfordshire bowl, type C84 (Young 1977, 170) both dating from the 2nd half of the 4th century (Fig 12, nos 81-82). The date is confirmed by the only coin from the site, issued by Valentinian in AD 364-7.

Phase 3D, layers 1-19 Between layers 9-19, pottery is extremely sparse in the largely natural chalk. Above that, it seems likely that the weathering cone cut into the filling of a disused ditch, II.27-29. Many of the forms - gritted bead rim jars, Lyne type 1 AH jars, AH platters, butt beaker fragments - can all be exactly paralleled from that ditch. A few tiny fragments of later AH also occurred. No pottery from the final in-filling was recovered.

Samian Ware by Joanna Bird

The samian from the well included two complete flagons and the greater part of a decorated bowl with a Bacchic frieze; these indicate some votive or ritual element in the filling of the well (see Ross 1968).

1. II.13/35, 81' 9"-83' 4" (24.92-25.40 m). Over half of a Dr 37 bowl in the style of the potter X-13 ('Donnaucus') of Les Martres-de-Veyre, dating c AD 100-125. The bowl has been restored from many small pieces. The diameter is 24 cm, the height a maximum of 11.4 cm, and the diameter at the top of the mould 22.5 cm; the uneven footring shows wear but still has a lot of extraneous clay adhering to it.

The decoration comprises vines and a Bacchic thiasos; from the left, the figures are: a satyr playing a syrinx (a smaller version of Oswald 1936/7, type 590), a dancing satyr (a taller version of Oswald 647), Bacchus carrying a cup (a smaller version of Oswald 566), a

naked satyr with a ?crook (a larger variant of Oswald 607), a satyr playing a flute (a smaller version of Oswald 610) and a dancer (a smaller version of Oswald 353). At least the first four figures are then repeated in the same order. Each vine bears two bunches of grapes (Rogers 1974, type M39), three small leaves (Rogers H161) and one large leaf (Rogers H77); the small leaf is also partially impressed into the background where space permits. The ovolo (Rogers B185) is bordered above and below by fine beads (Rogers A1) and the frieze is bordered at the base by ovoid beads (Rogers A2).

Apart from the naked satyr, the motifs all occur elsewhere in X-13's work, with the figures the same size as those on the Oakridge bowl. Stanfield & Simpson (1958) pl 46, no 545, has the vine stem, grapes, smaller leaf, flautist and ovoid beads, pl 47, no 558, has the ovolo and ovoid beads, pl 48, no 571, has the piper and fine beads, pl 49, no 577, has both leaves and the grapes, and pl 49, no 585, has the Bacchus. Terrisse (1968) pl XXXV, no 390, has the dancing satyr and piper, and pl XXXV, no 215, has the dancer, vine, grapes and smaller leaf.

- 2-3. II.13/33, 78' 9" (24.00 m); II.13/32, 78' (23.77 m). Pair of small one-handled flagons with disc-shaped mouths. Both are in Central Gaulish Lezoux ware, and both rather abraded with worn footrings. No 2 stands 13.7 cm high with a rim diameter of 3.8 cm, base diameter of 5.1 cm, and maximum girth of 10 cm; no 3 stands 14.5 cm high with a rim diameter of 3.9 cm, base diameter of 5.4 cm and maximum girth of 10.5 cm. Both are complete with small repairs.

The form is uncommon, and therefore not closely dated, but the available evidence indicates an Antonine date for the Central Gaulish examples. There is a single example from the London waterfront at New Fresh Wharf, found with a large group of mid-to-later Antonine samian. However, there is a closely similar flagon in South Gaulish ware of mid-later first century date from Tharros in Sardinia (British Museum), indicating a long if sporadic tradition for the form. Stanfield (1929) fig 14, nos 67-9, and Oswald & Pryce (1920) pl LXXXIII, no 2, are close parallels from British sites; Stanfield considered that his nos 67-8 were Central Gaulish, and no 69 possibly East Gaulish. The ware and slip of the

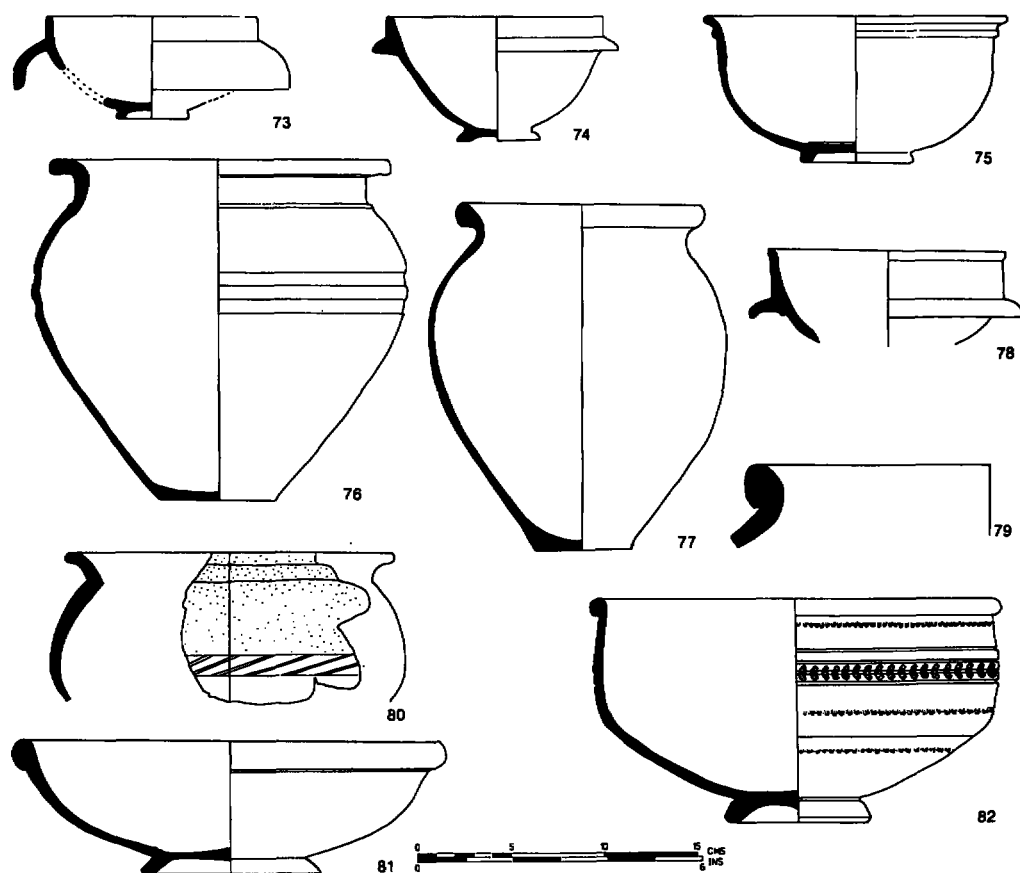


Fig 12. Oakridge, Basingstoke: pottery from the well: phase 3A; nos 73–5, 13/35 & 36: phase 3B; nos 76–9, 13/32 & 33: phase 3C; no 80, 13/25, no 81, 13/22, no 82, 13/20.

two Oakridge flagons would suit an Antonine dating.

4. II.13/35, 82' 8" (25.20 m). South Gaulish sherd, probably Dr 29, Neronian–early Flavian.
5. II.13/33, 79' (24.08 m). Dr 31, Central Gaul, Antonine.
6. II.13/32, 77' 7" (23.65 m). Dr 33, Central Gaul, Antonine.
7. II.13/.25, 66' 6" (20.27 m). Dr 27, South Gaul, 2nd half of the first century and probably after AD 70.
8. II.13/20, 55' 3" (16.97 m), 57' (17.37 m). Three sherds of fine micaceous orange-brown ware with dark pink core and worn but still fairly glossy dull-red slip. The fabric is not samian, nor is it one of the usual terra rubra or Pompeian red ware fabrics; it is probably a

copy of an imported ware and made fairly locally, especially as it has a large chalk inclusion. A date in the later first or early second centuries is likely for such a copy.

9. II.13/3, 4' 9" (1.45 m). Dr 18/31 (diameter c 20 cm) from one of the earlier East Gaulish factories; Hadrianic–early Antonine.

Human Bones by S A Mays (Full report on M/F)

<i>Depth</i>	<i>Deposit</i>
75' 9"–78' 9" (23.09–24.00 m)	Commingle bones representing a minimum of 2 adults
67'–63' 1" (20.42–19.23 m)	Partially commingled bones representing a minimum of 5 adults
51' 9"–58' 10"	Commingle bones representing

(15.77-17.93 m)	a minimum of 11 adults and 3 children
46' 5" (14.15 m)	A few post-cranial remains of 1 adult
32'-33' 6" (9.75-10.21 m)	Bones of 1 adult
25'-29' (7.62-8.84 m)	Bones of 1 adult
13'-21' (3.96-6.40 m)	Bones of 2 adults
Layer 4 (5'; 1.52 m)	A few bones, probably from 1 adult
Unstratified	A few fragments of bone and dental material

Preservation of the bones was generally good but the material was often fragmentary, with joining fragments of particular bones sometimes being located several feet in depth from one another. There was no significant difference in the numbers of male and female burials. Infants and children were under-represented. A number of non-metric variations in the skeletons were noted, the most interesting being the three of a group of nine skeletons which showed metopic suture of the skull. As there is evidence that this is often an inherited trait, it may be that these individuals were members of the same family but the small size of the assemblage means that this may merely be a chance finding. 40% of individuals showed evidence of tooth decay, 50% suffered tooth loss, and there were two

cases of dental abscess. There were numerous indications of degenerative joint disease and a few specific injuries. From the group at 51' 9"-58' 10" (15.77-17.93 m), there was an unreduced shoulder dislocation, a healed tibia fracture, a tibia lesion probably resulting from local injury and three fused vertebrae, possibly a congenital condition. The male skeleton at 32'-33' 6" (9.75-10.21 m) had a healed compression fracture of a lumbar vertebra. A female skeleton from 25'-29' (7.62-8.84 m) showed evidence of infection, possibly tuberculosis, in a lumbar vertebra.

Fruit and Seeds by P Murphy

Three samples of waterlogged deposits from depths between about 86'-87' (26.21-26.52 m) were received for examination. All three were highly organic, consisting almost entirely of wood chips and twigs. The samples were graded into size fractions, using a minimum mesh size of 250 microns, prior to sorting the finer fractions under low power of a binocular microscope.

These deposits appear to consist of collapsed well lining or woodworking waste which accumulated rapidly, allowing little opportunity for fruits and seeds to become incorporated into the well filling at this depth. The species identified (Table 12) comprise grassland, scrub and ruderal plants, derived presumably from vegetation around the well-head. No remains of cultivated plants were present.

Table 12: *Fruit, seeds, etc, from well samples*

Sample depths	86' (26.21m)	86'8" (26.42m)	86' to below 87' (26.21m-26.52m+)
<i>Ranunculus repens/acris</i>	0	1	0
<i>Ranunculus</i> sp.	1	0	0
Cruciferae indet.	3	1	0
<i>Aethusa cynapium</i> L.	1	0	0
<i>Rumex acetosella</i> agg.	1	0	0
<i>Rumex</i> sp.	1	0	0
<i>Urtica dioica</i> L.	49	1	2
cf. <i>Ballota nigra</i> L.	6	2	0
<i>Sambucus nigra</i> L.	6	2	0
<i>Cirsium</i> sp.	1	0	0
Gramineae indet.	1	0	0
Volume sorted (ml)	900	600	600

OAKRIDGE VII

The plan of Oakridge VII, plotted from the observed features and from the aerial photograph 168/637536, is shown in Fig 13. This settlement was also incompletely explored, under rescue conditions, but the evidence that was obtained suggests that it had two main periods of occupation, in the early and in the late Roman period; a fine weaving comb from R5 also hints at earlier activity. The main enclosure ditches were probably laid out at the same time as the Oakridge II/VI system, and similar pottery was found in their fill. Latest Iron Age fabrics and forms such as flint-gritted bead-rim bowls, and early AH products such as Atrebatian bowls and necked jars were well represented. Samian ware, mica-dusted ware and greyware B2 were also found. Some later Roman material was found in pit D3 (indented purple beaker and 3rd century AH) and in

burnt area GH, which contained colour-coated sherds and 3rd century AH as well as some building materials.

The bulk of the later Roman material, however, came from outside the enclosure at NFD2 on Fig 13, at the site of what appears to be part of a bath house (Fig 14). The apsidal end of the building and part of the stoke hole constructed of chalk rubble and tile, also the bases of some hypocaust piers and some ghosts of piers were found, suggesting that it formed part of a caldarium of the type often found in Hampshire villas, eg Wyck (Cole 1988, 30). The quantities of building material included nails, pieces of hollow flue tile, limestone roofing slate fragments, mortar and plaster with traces of pink, white, green, cream and brown paint. Fragments of green glass and of lead also support the building's identification as a bath house. The pottery included late AH, Oxfordshire imitation samian, BB1, flint and

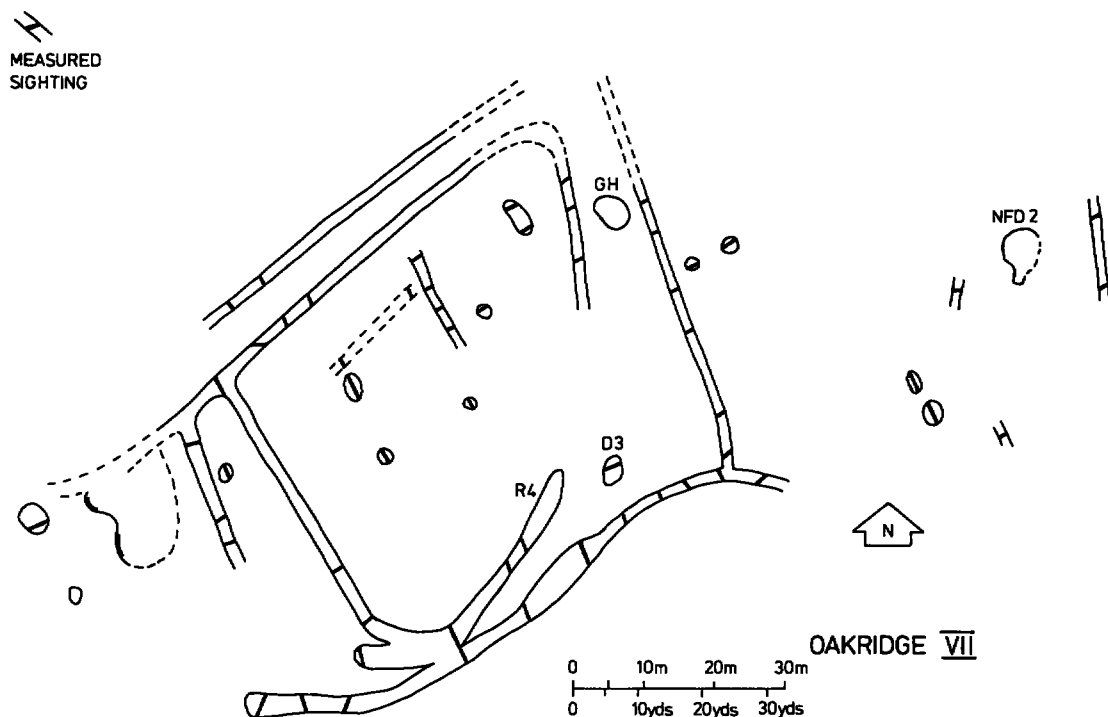


Fig 13. Oakridge, Basingstoke: site plan of Oakridge VII.

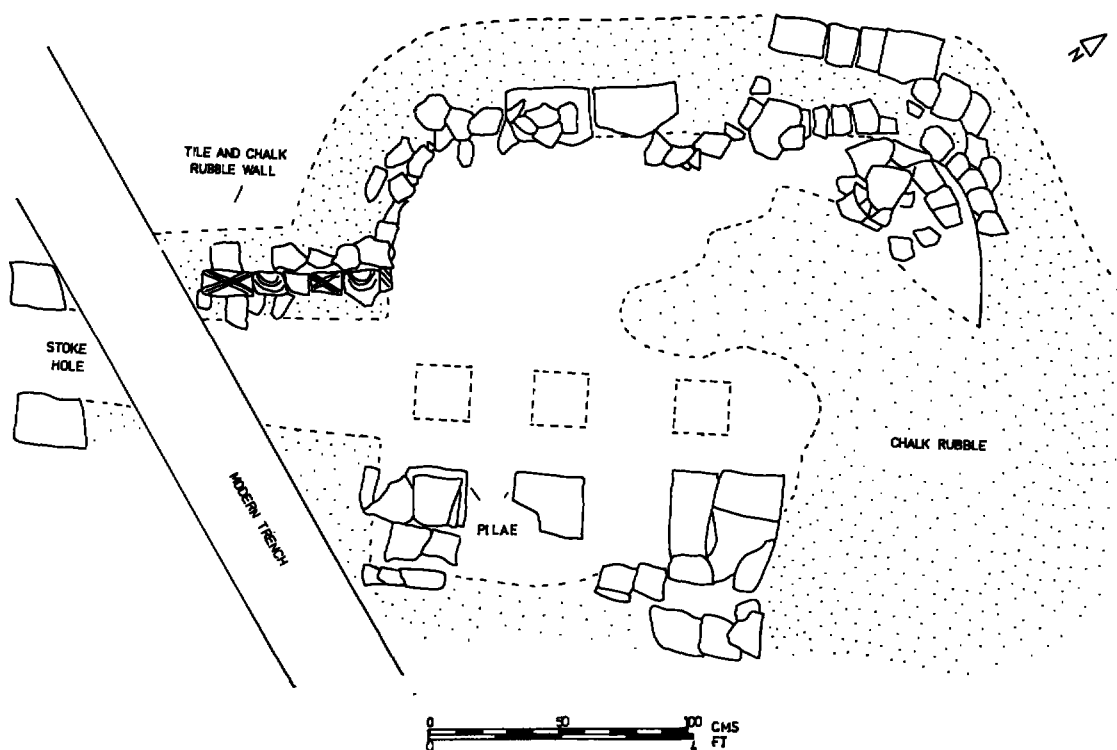


Fig 14. Oakridge, Basingstoke: plan of part of bath-house, Oakridge VII.

grog-tempered storage jar, and grog and chalk-tempered flanged bowl, all in keeping with a second half of 4th century date for this building.

It was not possible to complete the excavation of the bath house or trace other domestic buildings, but the position high on the south-facing slope of the valley, was a favoured siting for a villa. Although bath houses are sometimes found in isolation as at Chatley Farm (Frere 1949) and Braishfield (Rogers & Walker 1985), they are generally thought to have been part of a villa complex (Bird & Bird 1987, 176).

DISCUSSION

The settlement at Oakridge is a good example of the frustrations of piecemeal rescue and

observation work: what was achieved gave only a few keyhole insights into a large and complex site. At no time was any sizeable area exposed, and although the aerial photographs have been extremely helpful in interpreting the measurements taken, there are still uncertainties in the final plan.

The site was occupied from the early/middle Iron Age when the circular enclosure was dug. The dimensions of the ditch cannot have made it seriously defensive, but it was comparable with other domestic sites in the area already referred to. The few postholes and pits which were located indicate that the enclosure was inhabited, and the finds suggest the usual range of activities, but there was also some activity outside the enclosure where some of the pits were found.

A reference to the site, interpreted from the aerial photographs, was published (Perry

1969, 43) as a banjo enclosure of Bramdean type, and was included in illustrations of banjo enclosures (Cunliffe 1975, 159). However, the entrance area, rather faint on the aerial photograph, was not clarified by the features observed during the building work. No certain evidence for a banjo was found, and the dating of the circular enclosure would seem to be rather early in comparison with other excavated Hampshire banjo enclosures (Fasham 1987, 8ff; Perry 1982, 57ff; 1984, 42ff). It is more likely to fit into the class of sub-circular enclosures common on the Wessex chalklands from the early Iron Age. Some of the other ditches may have been first dug in this period, such as the antenna-like ditch II.121 although there is no direct evidence to support this.

It is probable that the site was continuously occupied throughout the later Iron Age and Roman conquest period, with the cultural and political upheavals being reflected in changing pottery styles. The site seems to have flourished, as it was extended first with the enclosure to the south, then with the enclosure system covering an area four or five times bigger than the circular enclosure. At the same time, it seems that the ditch system at Oakridge VII was established, also illustrating the increased take-up of land.

The expansion of the site and the considerable investment involved in digging the well in the early Roman period probably reflect the response to the economic demands of the new political system (Johnston 1981, 47), or it may have resulted from a change in ownership. The digging of the well and the provision of small, rectangular paddocks suggest that cattle raising was an important part of the farm's economy. The decision to sink the well apparently came after ditch II.27, 29 was dug. This was then deliberately filled in near the well, probably to allow access. This was the only ditch section which contained any quantity of material, although most contained a few sherds of early Roman pot. No early Roman buildings were located during the partial examination of the site.

The abandonment of the well in the late 2nd/early 3rd century must represent an

important change in the running of the settlement. The deliberate filling of the well shaft began. Quantities of pottery and animal bone were disposed of, probably with other organic material that would have since decayed. The nature of the animal bone suggests activities that would have been best carried out on the edge of a settlement, but conversely, the pottery is unlikely to have been carried for great distances. It is possible that the centre of activities moved across the valley to Oakridge VII, where there was certainly a building in the 4th century, but it is perhaps more likely that the 1960s building work did not uncover the appropriate part of Oakridge II.

After the first major filling episode, the pottery evidence indicates that there was a lull of almost a century, during which the well must have been efficiently covered, as there was little natural infill. The well was opened up again at the end of the 3rd/beginning of the 4th century AD to receive deposits which suggest that the shaft may at this time have had some religious significance. These levels contain many of the elements recognised as indicating ritual deposits in shafts (Wait 1985, 79). Against this can be set the purely functional disposal of 'industrial waste': quantities of head and foot bones derived from animal processing. It would seem that two supposedly inconsistent uses of the well could co-exist.

After the deposition of two human burials, deliberate filling seems to have halted for 50–60 years. The character of the fill suggests that the well was not covered during at least some of this interval, but it was presumably fenced so as not to present a hazard to people or animals. The ebb and flow of interest in the well is hard to explain. Possibly the settlement itself had periods of boom and slump in population and activity; possibly the fluctuation favours the interpretation that the site was peripheral to the main activity in the later Roman period. There is simply not enough evidence from the rest of the site to formulate any reasonable hypothesis.

The last period of activity is perhaps the strangest of all, and is represented by another

very large deposit of material in the last half of the 4th century. There is a strong suggestion from the animal bone evidence – from the sequence of skeletons from foetal to young – that the filling between 52' (15.85 m) and 68' 8" (20.96 m) took place very rapidly indeed, within one breeding season. There is nothing in the other finds to contradict this. The bone deposit was very large and the considerable quantity of meat it would have yielded, over 2720 kg (c 6000 lb), means it is unlikely to represent the normal annual butchery practice of the community, especially as pregnant animals were killed and some of the carcasses were disposed of without the meat being removed. It seems more likely that some kind of plague affecting both sheep and cattle afflicted the herds. The well would have provided an obvious place for disposing of unusable carcasses. The large number of human burials from this level – nineteen, in two groups, including three individuals possibly from the same family – probably also reflects some kind of disaster. The finds suggest that this cataclysmic year occurred round the last quarter of the 4th century. It is possible that the disaster was the result of some kind of raid, but a raid is unlikely to have affected the community for as long a period as the evidence suggests. It is also unlikely to have been famine, as this would not explain the disposal of unbutchered carcasses. It is more likely that both humans and stock fell victim to some disease, possibly one, such as anthrax, which affects both humans and animals.

It seems to have been a conclusive disaster, as there is little sign of later occupation on the site. The well shaft gradually filled up naturally, as the organic matter settled and to judge from the wild species which fell down the shaft, such as fox, polecat and deer, the land reverted to scrub and woodland. The area was never completely depopulated, as the few human and domestic animal bones in the top 50' (15.24 m) demonstrate. It may have taken a few centuries for the well shaft to stabilise

and reach an angle of rest, probably leaving a shallow hollow on the surface. The 6th-century spearhead found at Oakridge during earlier housebuilding indicates an early Saxon presence in the area (Fig 1). The charcoal and large flints at the top of the weathering cone could represent their recovery of the land for farming. It was certainly part of a Saxon estate in AD 945, called 'Acrycge' (LH, fo 21r), and was by then woodland. This Saxon name survived as the name of a farm and is now perpetuated as an area of Basingstoke. The excavation of the well also provided an unusual name for the new public house there, 'The Nine Saxons', even if it is erroneous in the number of burials and their cultural associations.

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