

THE EXCAVATION OF IRON AGE AND EARLY ROMAN FEATURES AT VIKING WAY, ANDOVER, HAMPSHIRE, 1996

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ABSTRACT

A field evaluation carried out at Viking Way, Andover, Hampshire, led to the discovery of two ditches containing a single sherd of Iron Age pottery. A subsequent small area excavation revealed further Iron Age and early Roman evidence in the form of ditches, pits, postholes and a single crouched inhumation burial. Watching briefs carried out to the south of the site during the construction of the neighbouring housing estate in the 1970s had already revealed Roman and Iron Age settlement in the area, and the excavation reported here appears to have located the northern boundary of the site.

INTRODUCTION

The site is located approximately 2km north of the centre of Andover, between Knights Enham and East Anton, on the eastern side of the Newbury road (A343) (SU 3675 4765) (Fig. 1). In February 1996 a field evaluation was carried out by Thames Valley Archaeological Services (Ford *et al.* 1996), followed in March by an area excavation, as a part of Test Valley Borough Council's phase II proposals for housing development. The excavated area was 'L' shaped and measured approximately 40m by 20m (Fig. 2). The fieldwork was carried out to a specification prepared by Hampshire County Council Archaeology Section. It lies at a height of c. 83m above Ordnance Datum (OD) on Upper Chalk (BGS 1975) and there is a thin cap of Clay-with-Flints overlying the chalk in this area.

The site lay c. 400m north-west of the crossroads formed at East Anton by the Roman road (Margary's route 43) which ran between Winchester and Mildenhall, near Marlborough, and

thence to Wanborough (Margary 1955, 90) and the Portway (the Roman road between Silchester and Old Sarum, Margary's route 4b; *ibid.*, 89). During the 1970s, development of the area adjoining the crossroads allowed an extensive Iron Age, Roman and Saxon settlement to be investigated (Davies 1980; 1981; Cook and Dacre 1985). Immediately to the north-west of the Roman site was an Iron Age settlement, although the northern limit of the latter was not established (*cf.*, Ford and Ford 1992).

The site code is VWA96/2 and the archive has been deposited with Hampshire Museums Service (accession no. A1997.43).

THE EVALUATION

The evaluation consisted of seven machine-excavated trenches (Ford *et al.* 1996), one of which revealed a pair of intercutting ditches (Fig. 2 and 3), running NE–SW. A single sherd of Iron Age pottery was recovered from ditch 2, along with bone and burnt flint, while ditch 3 produced only bone and burnt flint. Circular feature 1 was probably only a tree-throw hole. Although few archaeological features were revealed during the evaluation, the presence of Iron Age pottery and the location of the features indicated a probable relationship with the Iron Age and Roman deposits previously observed to the south (Davies 1981; Cook and Dacre 1985).

THE EXCAVATION

The excavation consisted of an area strip of approximately 650sq m. The site had been subject

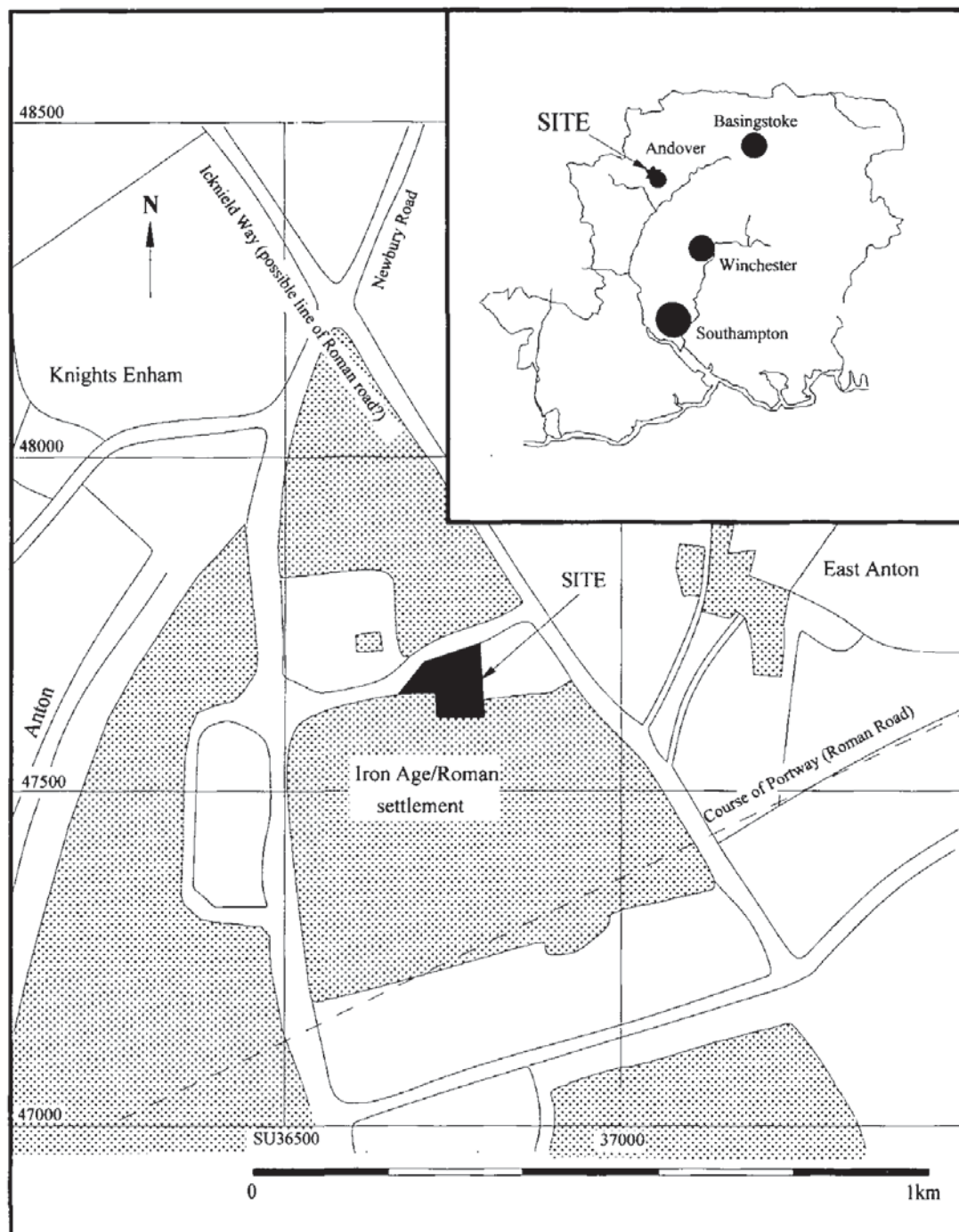


Fig. 1 Location of site within Hampshire and Andover

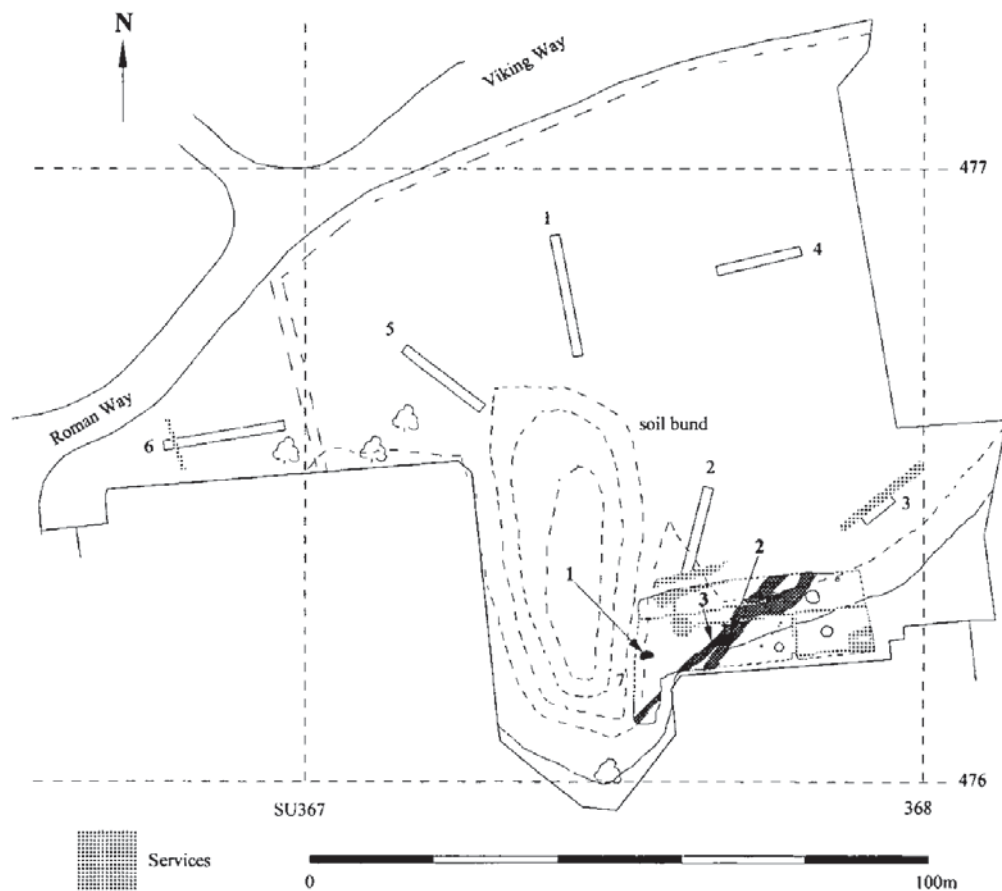


Fig. 2 Location of excavation and evaluation trenches, and features discovered during evaluation

to a moderate degree of ground disturbance, with modern services running north-south and a sewer aligned east-west across the site (Fig. 3). A modern pit was located at the south-eastern corner of the site, and a French drain had truncated the sub-soil along the northern baulk.

Description of features

The features consisted of ditches, pits, postholes and a possible hearth (Figs 2 and 3). Nearly all of the pits and postholes were located south of the SW-NE aligned ditches. The features varied in

depth and all are likely to have suffered some degree of truncation, particularly towards the south.

Linear features

A series of ditches crossed the site, all broadly running SW-NE (Figs 3 and 4). The earliest, ditch A (20, 25 and 31) produced no finds but had been re-cut by ditch B, so that only a short section of ditch A remained. The shallowness of ditch A in slot 3 (31) may suggest that it terminated not far beyond.

Ditch B (215, 24 and 30) was 1.45m wide and 0.50m deep and produced two sherds of Iron Age pottery (one potentially early, one more likely middle Iron Age) and a single struck flint flake

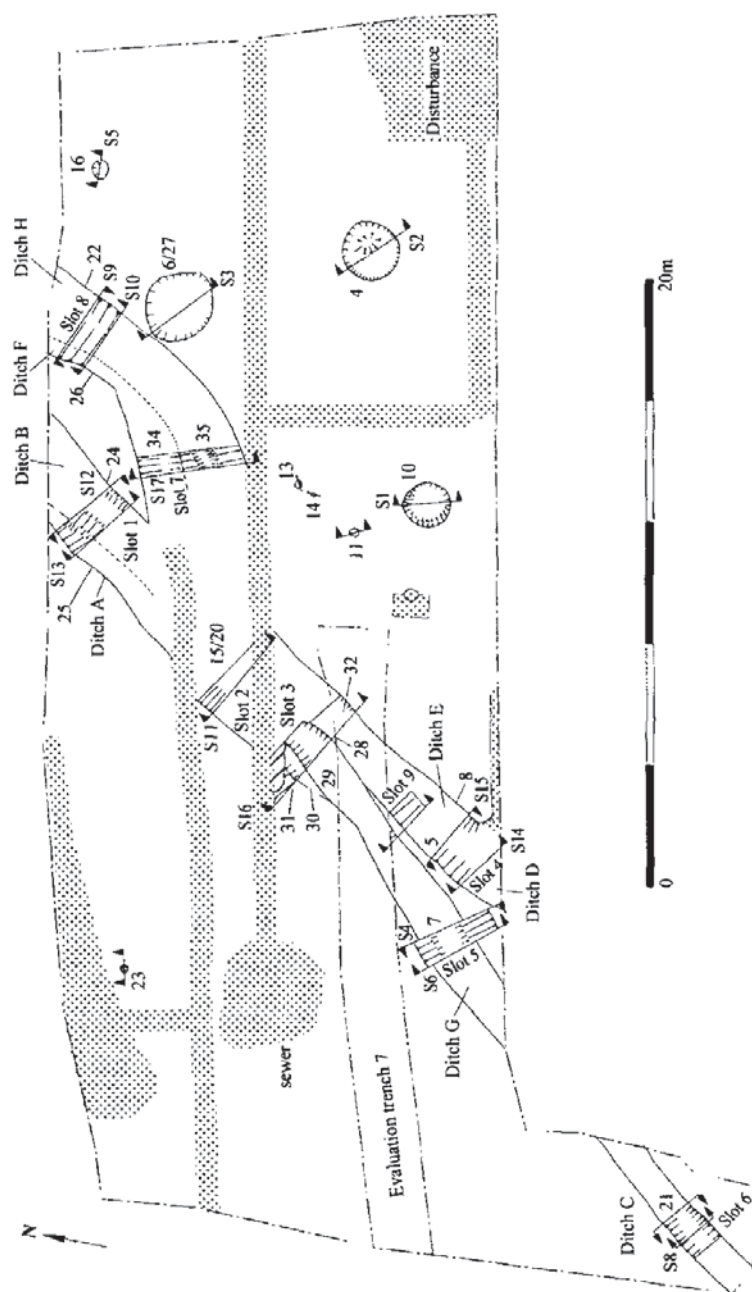


Fig. 3 Plan of excavated features

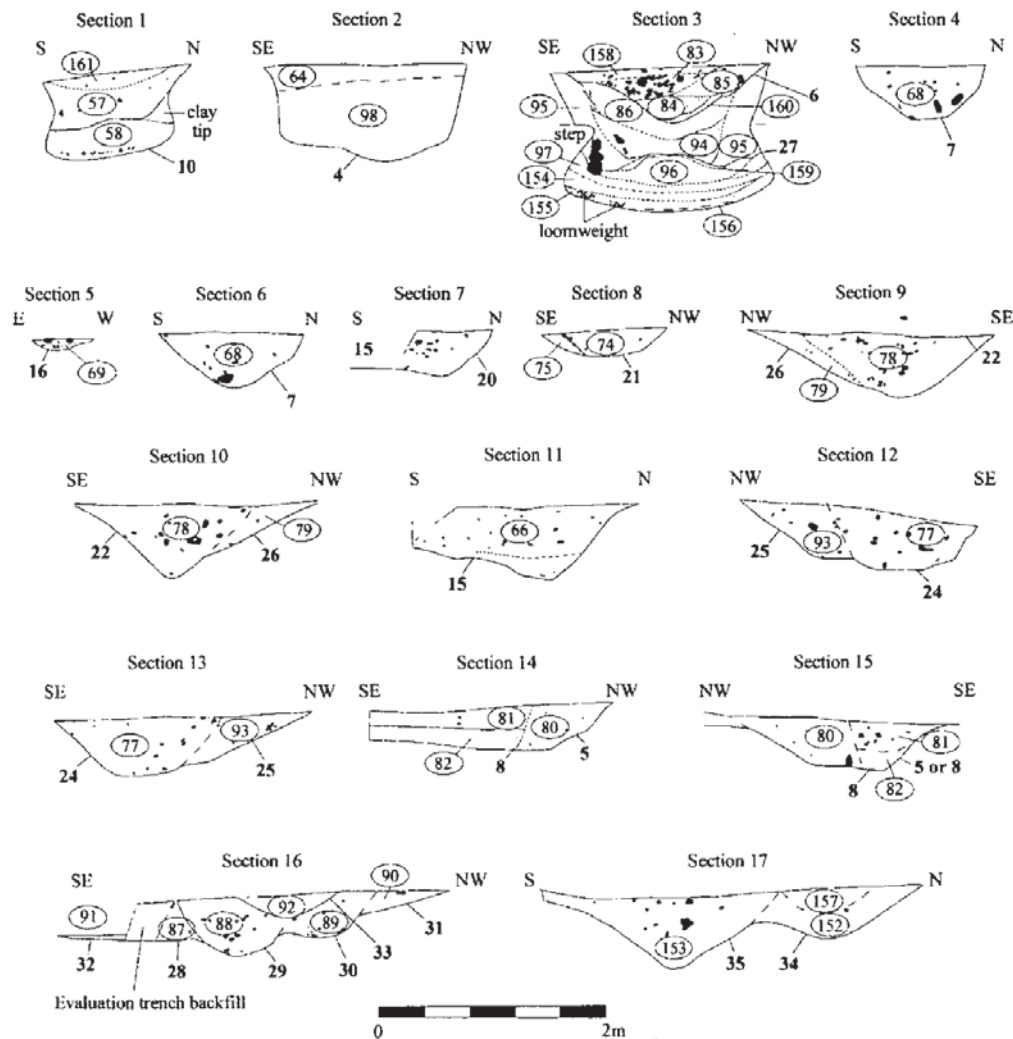


Fig. 4 Selected sections

(slot 1, 24); the early Roman sherd from 30 may have been contamination from overlying features. Feature 15 (slot 2) has been attributed to a number of possible ditches as the stratigraphy of the section was ambiguous. Based purely on profile, it would appear most closely to resemble 35 (ditch H), but almost certainly at least four ditches must have run through this location in turn.

Ditch C (21) was in the south-western corner of

the site beneath a large mound of made ground, and was 1.10m wide by 0.20m deep. It contained burnt flint and nine sherds of late Iron Age pottery. It was probably a continuation of ditch G, although it must have been more severely truncated, and differently filled.

Ditch D (5, 15? and 28) had been truncated by ditches E and G. The width of ditch D could not be fully determined due to the level of truncation,

but it was 0.44m deep. Slot 4 (5) produced 19 sherds of late Iron Age/early Roman pottery and slot 3 (28) produced three early Roman sherds.

Ditch E (8 and ?32) was *c.* 1m to 1.5m wide and 0.48m deep. The lower fill of 8 (context 82) contained the remains of a crouched female inhumation burial, as well as three sherds of late Iron Age/early Roman pottery. The equation of context 32 with context 8 is ambiguous; 32 contained two sherds of late Iron Age/early Roman pottery and it is not certain it was really different from context 28 (part of ditch D). This might suggest that context 8 may have been only a localized recut of ditch D, perhaps even dug specifically to accommodate the burial.

Ditch F (15?, 26, 34) may represent a northwards continuation of ditch D. The ditch curved through almost 90 degrees from a line perpendicular to the main alignment until it was almost parallel when it exited under the northern baulk. It had been truncated by ditch H, but it was possible to determine that it was *c.* 1.6m wide and 0.45m deep. Slot 7 (34) produced two sherds of late Iron Age/early Roman pottery. The presence of modern services and truncation by ditches G and H meant that the true relationship between ditches B, D, E and F could not be ascertained. Ditches F and G in slot 3 (30? and 29) also appear to be truncated by 33, either a localized recut of the ditch or a shallow pit.

Ditch G (7, 15? and 29), which ran beneath the baulk, was *c.* 1.1m wide and 0.50m deep. The fill contained animal bone, struck flint, burnt flint, and (in 7) 41 sherds of early Roman pottery.

Ditch H (15?, 22 and 35) truncated ditch F and followed the curving alignment of the earlier ditch. It was 1.6m to 2m wide and *c.* 0.60m deep, with a 'V'-shaped profile. It contained 35 early Roman and two more clearly Roman pot sherds (from 22), and 10 sherds of mid 1st-century pottery (from 35).

Pits

The four pits discovered were all located on the eastern side of the site (Figs 3 and 4). Pit 4 was 1.8m wide by 0.90m deep and had steep edges and a flattish base. It contained five fills (only two of which appear in section) from which were recovered 14 sherds of Iron Age pottery, four

struck flint flakes, a large amount of burnt flint, fragments of daub with wattle impressions, a small amount of cattle and sheep/goat bone and 13 fragments of human cranium.

Pit 27, the largest at 2m in diameter and 1.60m deep, had a flat bottom and cut the natural chalk. An apparent ledge/step on the southern side was probably created for ease of access. Beneath the level of the ledge the pit was bell-shaped. It contained a number of deposits, five of which together produced 31 sherds of Iron Age pottery, a flint flake, 20 fragments of fired clay/daub, fragments of a triangular? loomweight, and bones of horse, cattle, sheep/goat, pig and dog. The upper fill of the pit (86) also contained the remains of a partial horse burial. This may have been disturbed by recutting of the pit (6), but the skeletal evidence itself suggests it had, in any case, been dismembered prior to burial. The base of the pit appeared to be fire-reddened.

Pit 6 had been recut into the top of pit 27. It was 1.80m in diameter and 0.50m deep and contained five fills, indicating different episodes of dumping. The fills contained ten sherds of (?residual) Iron Age pottery and 38 sherds of late Iron Age pottery, four fired clay/daub fragments, flints (seven flakes, a scraper, a bashed lump and a spall) and a small amount of horse, pig, cattle and sheep bone.

Pit 10, which was circular and roughly bell-shaped in profile, was 1.20m in diameter and 0.75m deep. It had a flat base and was cut into the natural chalk. It had three fills, which produced 40 sherds of Iron Age pottery, two flint flakes, a Neolithic/early Bronze Age flint axe, bones of horse, cattle and sheep/goat, and a quantity of burnt flint.

Postholes

Four postholes were recorded; 11, 13, 14 and 23 (Figs 3 and 4), the dimensions of which are given in Table 1. Postholes 11, 13 and 14 were located to the south-east of the ditches that crossed the site and 23 was in the north-western corner. Posthole 11 contained four sherds of Iron Age pottery. Postholes 13 and 14 contained no finds and posthole 23 contained two flint flakes, one of which was serrated.

Hearth/pit

A single hearth/pit (16) found in the north-eastern corner of the site (Figs 3 and 4) was

Table 1 Dimensions of postholes

Posthole	Diameter (m)	Depth (m)
11	0.35	0.26
13	0.25	0.11
14	0.14	0.07
23	0.25	0.43

0.56m in diameter and 0.10m deep. Its fill contained a high percentage of charcoal and fired clay and a large quantity of burnt flint but no dating evidence.

THE FINDS

The pottery by Jane Timby

A small collection of some 333 sherds (2,730g, 2.05 estimated vessel equivalents (EVE)) of pottery, several pieces of fired clay/daub, and part of one triangular loomweight were recovered. The pottery, which includes material of Bronze Age, Iron Age and early Roman date, is in variable condition with a number of very small pieces, particularly from the surface layers. The average sherd weight was fairly low at 8.5g, suggesting that the material has been subjected to some disturbance. Several of the fills from the negative features produced better preserved sherds and moderately good groups, i.e. in excess of 20 sherds, were recovered from pits 6, 10, 27 and ditches 7, 15 and 22. A wide range of fabric types were present, including flint-, grog-, sand- and organic-tempered sherds with various intermixes of each. Featured sherds were unfortunately more limited, the more diagnostic examples suggesting an early Roman date.

The assemblage was sorted into main fabric types and quantified by count, weight and estimated vessel equivalent (EVE) for each excavated context. Fabrics were identified macroscopically with the aid of a binocular microscope and classified according to the main inclusions in the paste.

The pottery is discussed chronologically. A full catalogue is held in the site archive.

Bronze Age (Beaker)

Six fragmentary sherds from a decorated Beaker were present in ditch slot 15, alongside material of later date. The surfaces are worn but traces of horizontal lines of cord impressed decoration can just be discerned.

Fabric G2: A moderately soft, brownish orange ware with a dark grey core. The paste contains fine to rounded fragments of reddish grog and sparse grains of rounded white quartz.

Iron Age

A small number of handmade sherds are suggestive of middle-late Iron Age activity. In particular, material from pits 4, 10 and 27, posthole 11 and ditch B, context 24. The fabrics mainly comprise a mixture of calcined flint tempered and sandy wares. Pit 6, a recut of an Iron Age pit (27), only produced pottery from the upper, later fills which includes mainly redeposited Iron Age sherds. The paucity of featured sherds and the apparent continuity of some of the sandy fabrics makes close dating difficult for these features. A sharply carinated sherd from ditch B, context 24 (fabric 3) could potentially be of early Iron Age date. Two slack-sided vessels from pits 10 and 6 are more likely to be of middle Iron Age date.

Most of the fired clay/daub from the site was recovered from pit 4, some 60–70 fragments, including one larger piece with wattle impressions. The corners of a triangular loomweight came from context 24 (77) and pit 27 (155).

Iron Age fabrics

F1: A black, or reddish brown ware with a moderate density of angular, calcined, flint temper up to 3–4mm across in size and finer. The fabric has a harsh feel and hackley fracture. Forms: Handmade simple rim vessels (Fig. 5.4) and short everted rim globular bowls (Fig. 5.3). Some vessels have a vertically burnished finish.

F2: Moderately soft, finely micaceous, red-brown ware with a black external surface. The very fine paste is distinguished by a sparse scatter of white, angular, flint (up to 5mm and finer). Forms: Handmade closed forms.

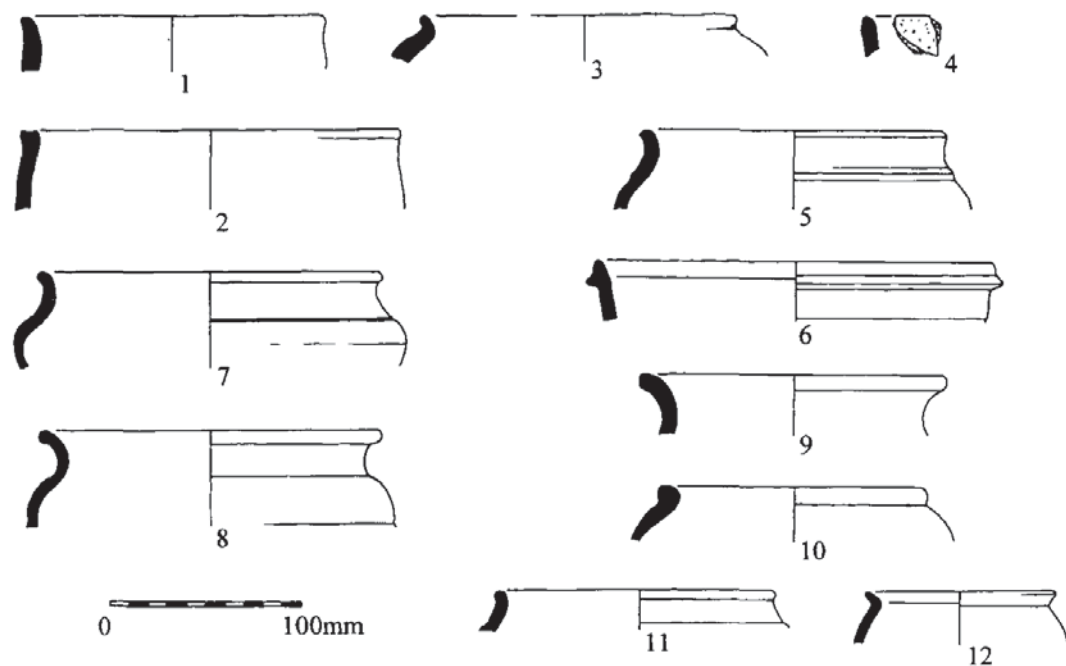


Fig. 5 Pottery (see text for detail)

F3: A moderately hard, brownish-black ware with a sparse, fine, calcined flint temper (2.5mm and less). The matrix also shows a fine, ill-sorted sand component with a scatter of fine, rounded grains in a finer background (visible microscopically). Form: Handmade sharply carinated bowl.

S1: A hard, black, sandy ware with a dark brown interior. The paste contains a common to dense frequency of well sorted, rounded quartz (microscopically visible) and occasional large angular calcined flint (up to 7mm). Forms: Handmade vessels.

S2: Hard sandy ware with black surfaces and reddish-brown or grey core. A common to dense frequency of well-sorted, medium-fine quartz sand (individual grains macroscopically visible) and rare red-brown iron. Form: Handmade slack-sided jar (Fig. 5.2).

SO1: A moderately hard, sandy ware with blackish-brown surfaces and core. The matrix contains frequent blackened streaks from burnt out organic matter. Moderately well-sorted sand

grains visible microscopically. Form: Handmade vessel.

Late Iron Age-early Roman

Approximately half the assemblage came from a series of ditch cuts; 5, 7, 8, 15, 21, 22, 26, 28, 30, 32, 34 and 35 and the recut pit 6. The smallness of many of the individual groups and the presence of redeposited sherds precludes division of these features on ceramic grounds. Ditch C (21 (74)) is suggested to be one of the earliest cuts of this phase and contained nine unfeatured sherds, fabrics S2, S6 and GS2. Fabric S6 is unlikely to date much before the conquest. Ditches D, E and F (5, 8, 26, 28, 30, 32 and 34) (see Fig. 3) and their associated fills, represent the next episode of activity on the site. Latest are recuts ditch H (22) and ditch G (35) together with 7, although this is difficult to distinguish independently on ceramic grounds. Ditches 5/8 contain wheelmade necked bowls and beaded rim bowls in grog-tempered and sandy fabrics including a 'Surrey type' bowl

(Fig. 5.6) from the Alice Holt kilns indicating a date after AD 60. Ditch 26 produced only two sherds, one a wheelmade necked jar in a grog and sandy ware. A similar sherd, possibly from the same vessel, came from the recut 22 (78) along with a wider range of sandy wares, Savernake ware and beaded rim jar/bowls perhaps suggesting a date in the later 1st century. Contexts 28 (87), 32 (91) and 30 (89) together only produced seven sherds including a globular beaker with a short everted rim (Fig. 5.12) and Alice Holt grey sandy ware which probably dates to the later 1st century or even the early 2nd century AD. Recut 29 contained no ceramic finds. Finally, context 34 produced just two sherds suggestive of a mid 1st-century AD date. The recut 35 and ditch G (7) produced similar material.

Late Iron Age-early Roman fabrics

Grog tempered

G1: A black ware with a grey core containing a sparse to moderate scatter of pale coloured sub-angular grog in a slightly sandy matrix. Rare iron. Forms: Late Iron Age/early Roman handmade beaded rim bowls.

G3: Moderately soft (scratched with finger nail) fabric with a very soapy feel. The fine fabric contains a moderate frequency of sub-angular, grey and orange grog and rare white, angular flint. Forms: Thick-walled handmade vessels, probably storage jars.

Sandy wares

S2: Fabric as Iron Age S2. Forms: wheelmade everted rim necked bowls (Fig. 5.7) and flanged rim bowl (Fig. 5.6).

S3: Hard, pale grey fine sandy ware with a slightly micaceous paste and a reddish-brown to grey core. The matrix contains rare, dark grey, iron, flint and rounded clay pellets. Forms: Wheelmade necked cordoned bowls (Fig. 5.11).

S4: Hard grey ware with a rough sandy texture. The paste contains a common to dense occurrence of well sorted, fine quartz sand, grains visible microscopically. Forms: Wheelmade beaded rim jars.

S5: A fine sandy, even textured fabric, grains less than 0.5mm in size. Rare grains of dark brown

iron. Orange-brown in colour with a dark grey core. Form: Slow wheelmade closed form with heavy slightly protruding foot.

S6: Very hard black ware with a granular texture. The paste contains a dense frequency of moderately well sorted, rounded to sub-angular quartz, slightly faceted, giving a 'sparkling' quality to the surfaces. Probably the equivalent of Silchester fabric S8 for which a source from the Alice Holt/Farnham area is suggested (Timby 2000). Forms: Handmade and wheelmade closed forms.

S7: A fine, black, sandy ware with a distinctive reddish orange core. The finely micaceous paste contains very fine sand and sparse iron. Forms: Wheelmade necked bowls.

S8: A moderately soft, brownish-orange ware with a scatter of fine, dark brown iron (?glaucanite), fine ill-sorted rounded quartz sand and rare flint. A source from the Greensand deposits is likely. Forms: Handmade, no featured sherds.

S9: Miscellaneous other sandy wares.

Sand and organic

SO2: A moderately hard, light grey ware with a lighter grey core. The fine sandy paste appears to contain rounded clay pellets, iron and fine blackened halos from fine organic matter, possibly charcoal. Forms: Handmade, no featured sherds.

Mixed wares: sandy wares with grog

GS1: A moderately hard, well fired, sandy ware with a scatter of large sub-angular beige and red-brown grog inclusions (up to 0.5mm and finer). The fabric is pale brown in colour with a mid grey inner core, or black with a dark grey core and has a fine sandy texture. Forms: Handmade vessels including a lid, necked jars with slightly beaded rims.

GS2: Pale grey sandy ware with a moderate to common scatter of fine, rounded to sub-angular quartz and a scatter of large, sub-angular inclusions of grey grog (up to 4mm). Forms: Handmade.

GS3: Savernake ware (cf., Annable 1961).

Grog and flint-tempered

GF1: A hard, dark brown to grey ware with a sparse scatter of coarse sub-angular grog inclusions, calcined flint (up to 4mm) and occasional

iron. Forms: Large handmade vessels, probably storage type jars.

Catalogue of illustrated sherds (Fig. 5)

1. Handmade slack-sided jar with brownish-black exterior and black core and interior surface. Fabric SO1. Pit 10 (58).
2. Handmade slack-sided vessel with a slightly expanded rim. Black surfaces and core. Fabric S2. Pit 6 (85).
3. Globular bowl with a short everted rim, brownish-black in colour. Fabric F1. Ditch H, 35 (153).
4. Simple rim fragment, black in colour. Fabric F1. Pit 4 (64).
5. Wheelmade necked bowl in a pale grey ware with an orange-red core. Fabric S3. Ditch D, 5 (80).
6. Atrebat or 'Surrey type' bowl in a black sandy ware. Fabric S2. Ditch D, 5 (80).
7. Wheelmade necked bowl smoothed on upper exterior surface. Black ware with a reddish-brown core. Fabric S2. ditch G, 7 (68).
8. Wheelmade light grey jar with a slight constriction around the girth. Fabric GS1. Ditch G, 7 (68).
9. Everted rim jar. Dark grey exterior, grey core with red-brown margins. Fabric GS. Ditch H, 22 (79).

10. Beaded rim jar in a dark grey sandy ware. Fabric S4. Ditch H, 22 (78).
11. Wheelmade necked bowl with black surfaces and a red-brown core. Fabric S7. Ditch H, 22 (78).
12. Short everted rim beaker in a black medium-fine sparse sandy ware with a brown interior surface. Ditch H, 22 (87).

Conclusion

The initial impression is that this is an Iron Age site extending from at least the middle Iron Age through into the early Roman period. Redeposited sherds suggest earlier Bronze Age and possibly early Iron Age activity in the locality. The assemblage is relatively conservative with no clear markers suggesting a change to Romanized wares. There are, for example, no fine or decorated wares. Most of the vessels appear handmade, with only a few wheelmade examples. The repertoire of forms appears very limited; mainly jars and bowls.

The ceramic characteristics of the site and the chronology are comparable with other rural sites in the region, in particular Park Farm, Binfield (Roberts 1995) interpreted as a low status middle Iron Age and early Roman occupation site, occupied until the mid-later 2nd century AD. Other rural sites showing similar occupation phases

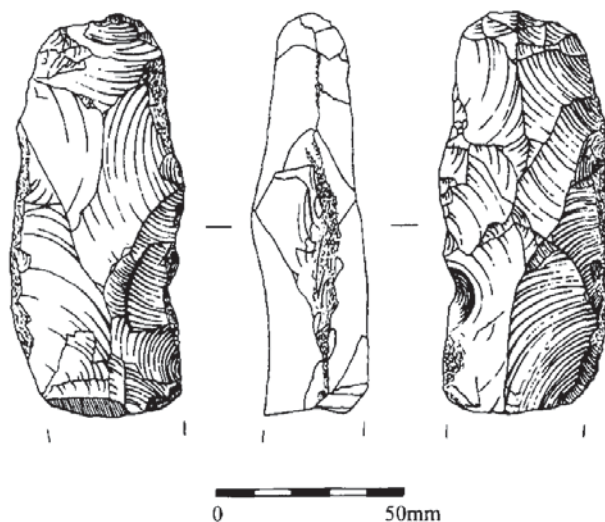


Fig. 6 Broken flaked flint axe from pit 10

Table 2 Animal bone distribution by species and date

Phase	Horse	Cattle	Sheep/ goat	Pig	Cattle size	Sheep size	Mammal	Dog	Small mammal	Total
undated	1	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2
MIA/LIA	67	7	15	2	3	14	1	2	2	113
LIA/ERom	4	8	1	–	5	2	–	–	–	20

include Ufton Nervet, Berkshire (Manning 1974) and Aldermaston, Berkshire (Cowell *et al.* 1978) although the pottery repertoires from both of these sites shows a slightly different character in terms of fabric types. In particular, flint-tempered wares appear to be more common, and the early Roman fabrics from these Thames Valley sites can be more easily paralleled with contemporary material at Silchester, Binfild, which lies further east and thus further from Andover, nevertheless has greater affinity with the material from Viking Way in that sandy wares tend to dominate.

Flint by Steve Ford

A small collection of struck flint comprising 38 flakes was recovered, mostly from features, including: a core, a bashed lump, two spalls, a scraper, a serrated flake and a flaked flint axe. The condition of the flint was variable, with both fresh and patinated pieces. It is likely that the majority of the flints are residual in features of later date. Of particular note, is the presence of a broken flaked flint axe from pit 10 (Fig. 6) and a serrated flake from posthole 23. Both are of Neolithic/early Bronze Age date. A complete catalogue can be found in the site archive.

Stone by David Williams

A large block of Old Red Sandstone, probably from south Wales or Somerset (1,554g) was recovered from pit 27 (155). The piece is much broken and only a small area on the slightly domed upper surface of the stone shows much sign of wear. It probably belongs to the lower stone from a rotary quern.

Animal bone by Sheila Hamilton-Dyer

Animal bones were recovered from 13 Iron Age/Roman features, mainly pit and ditch fills. Some material results from wet sieving of soil samples. Species identifications were made using the author's modern comparative collections. Many bones were recovered in fragments and where possible these have been joined and counted as single bones. Undiagnostic fragments have been divided into cattle/horse sized (LAR) and sheep/pig sized (SAR) with a further group identified only as mammalian. The few measurements are in millimetres and follow the methods of von den Driesch (1976). The site archive includes anatomy, butchery, measurements and other details for each bone.

Results

A total of 135 bones was recorded, nearly half of these are from the burial of a partial horse skeleton in pit 27. In addition to horse, the bones of cattle, sheep, pig, dog, woodmouse and water vole were identified. Excluding the horse burial, bones of cattle and sheep are the most frequent taxa at 16 bones each. Isolated horse bones occur in several contexts other than in pit 27. The species distribution by feature is given in the archive.

The horse burial, pit 27

This pit contributed the bulk of the bone from the excavation, 79 bones in total. Most of these are of a partial horse skeleton from fill 86 (Fig. 7). Some bones of other animals were recovered from the pit; cattle, sheep/goat, pig and dog. Small mammals, a woodmouse jaw and the partial remains of a water vole, were also recovered from a soil sam-

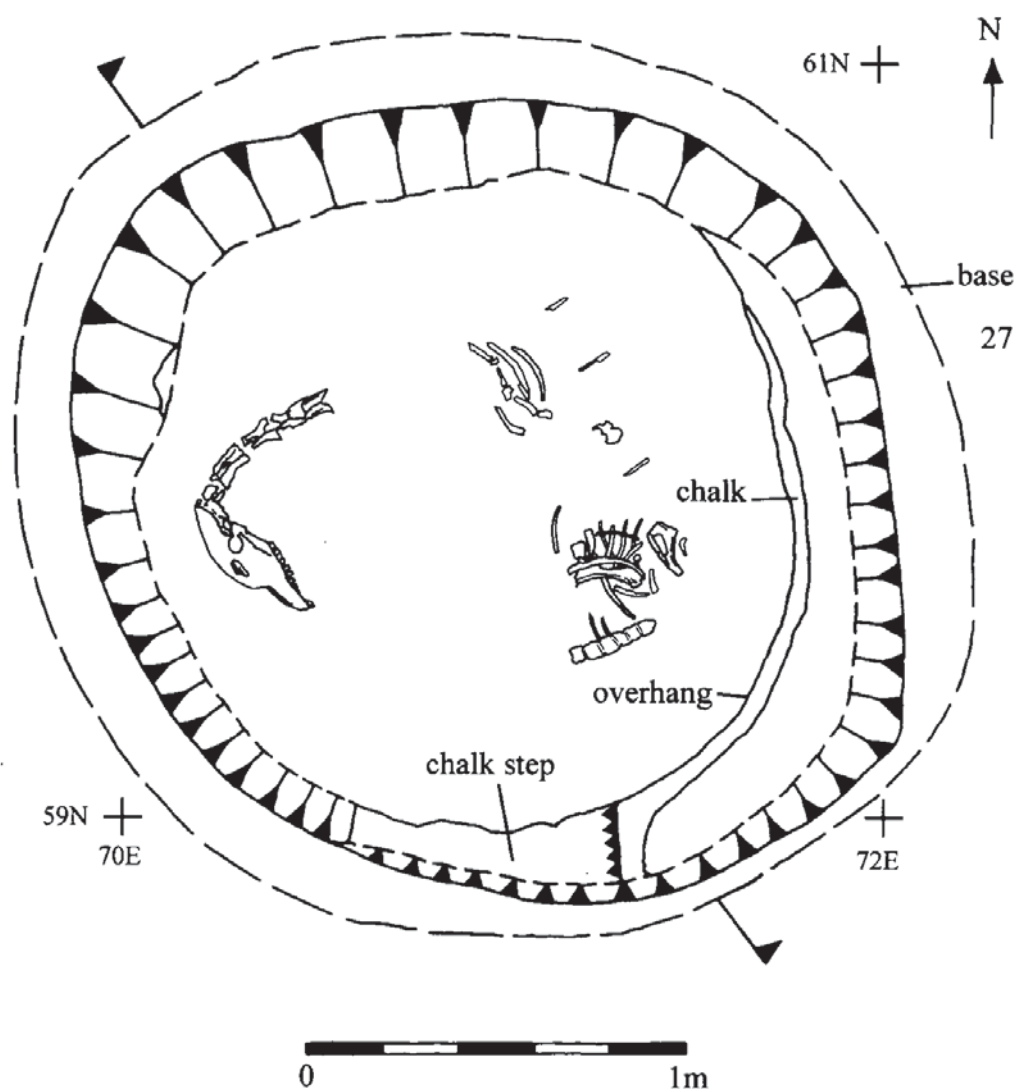


Fig. 7 Partial horse skeleton in pit 27

ple from the bottom of the pit. These are probably natural mortalities.

The horse remains consist of the skull, vertebrae, ribs and pelves. No lower jaw or limb bones are present. A patella was recovered from fill 96, but may not belong to the same animal. Knife cuts are visible on the sixth cervical vertebrae suggesting partial or complete separation of the neck from

the rest of the spine at this point. No other marks were observed but, as the pit was completely excavated, it is clear that the other parts of the body were disposed of elsewhere. The horse was a young animal with tooth eruption unfinished, the third molar is unerupted and the deciduous premolars and incisors are still present with the new teeth visible in section. Levine (1982) suggests an age of

about 2–3 years old. Pathological changes to the bone surface (osteoperiostitis) are visible on the maxilla, frontal, ribs and vertebrae. These are of unknown cause but may indicate why such a young animal died or was killed.

This was the only feature in this small assemblage to contain pig and dog. The remains are of a pig jaw and premaxilla, and a dog jaw and premaxilla/maxilla. The dog jaw has cut marks just behind the last tooth, perhaps made during removal of the tongue. These remains may be split heads, although the bones are damaged and there is no direct evidence of axial butchery. Similar butchery marks on a dog jaw (and on bones of young horses) were also observed in the larger assemblage from Charlton (Hamilton-Dyer 2000). Burials of complete and partial horse skeletons are frequently encountered in late Iron Age/early Roman assemblages. These are often associated with other remains, particularly of dog, and may have ritual significance (Green 1992). Several special deposits were recorded at Danebury (Grant 1984a; 1984b; Grant *et al.* 1991) including a partial horse skeleton without limbs (Grant 1989).

Human bone by Andy Smith

Two deposits of human remains were recovered from the site. A complete skeleton (Sk1) came from ditch E (8) (Fig. 8) and a group of cranial bones (Sk2) was found in pit 4. The condition of the bone in both deposits was good, with some slight post mortem damage, especially to the cranium, in each case. Full metrical and pathological data are held in the archive.

Gender

Although it displays some masculine characteristics, the majority of indicators would suggest that Sk1 was a female, c. 1.61m tall. From within Sk1's abdominal cavity, a pre-natal ilium was also recovered. The fragmentary nature of the bone deposit in pit 4 (Sk2) precludes a definite identification.

Age

Sk1's biological age cannot be wholly accurately assessed, due to the incompleteness or absence of

indicators. The most one can posit is that she was an adult (total epiphyseal fusion), the fragment of distal symphysis suggesting a young age; this is supported by the fact that there are no signs of joint abrasion or attrition. As there is only a portion of the left pubic symphysis surviving, the age estimate must be treated with caution. However, according to both Todd's (1920) and Katz and Suchey's (1986) methodologies, the surviving remnant falls into a range of 18–24 years. The dental record also suggests a young adult, with hardly any major occlusal wear on the surviving molars. Sk2 can only be assessed as an adult.

The morphology of the ilium associated with Sk1 suggests a prenatal nature; approximately five to seven months before birth. Sk1 therefore seems to have died in the middle stages of pregnancy.

Pathology

The pathology is located mainly in the skull of Sk1. The dental pathology suggests severe dental decay. This individual has thirteen cases of dental caries, two abscesses, and four cases of enamel hypoplasia; there are also indications of cribra orbitalia (porotic hyperstosis). Enamel hypoplasia indicates stress at a young age, during tooth formation. Porotic hyperstosis may indicate slight anaemia; this may have been caused by the pregnancy. The high rate of dental caries and the presence of two laterally opposing abscesses, in conjunction with the heavy abrasion and chipping of the anterior teeth, might suggest that this individual had a secondary use for her teeth. There are comparisons found at Danebury (Hooper 1984) and Maiden Castle (Goodman and Morant 1939). Anthropological studies of Inuit women have shown similar pathologies caused by using the teeth as a form of tool to tenderize leather by chewing and scraping the hide with their molars. The site of Qilakitsoq, Greenland, also revealed grooving and chipping of the enamel caused as a result of sinew thread making, in which the threads are dragged between clenched teeth (Hart-Hansen *et al.* 1991). The state of Sk1's front teeth has certain similarities, for example the molar wear is not flat but irregular and the incisors are chipped and worn into uneven points. Hooper (1984)

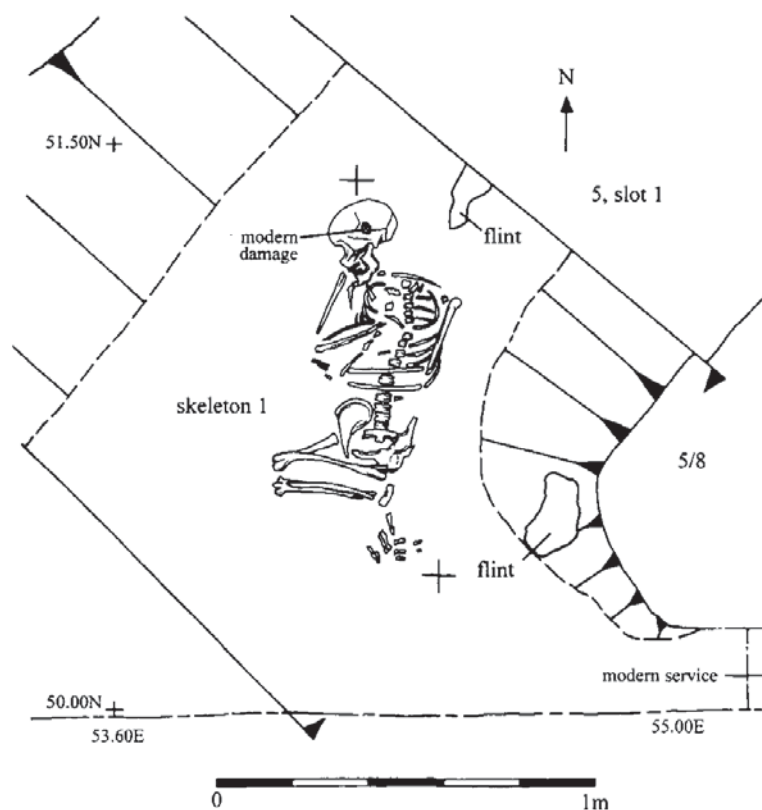


Fig. 8 Plan of the crouched inhumation found in ditch E

suggests the reason why some of these individuals have such bad front teeth is the fact that the back teeth are too diseased for use (or absent) and so chewing is moved to the front of the mouth. Sk1 has no lower back teeth, but the maxillary back teeth show a degree of irregular wear. However, the abscesses on the maxilla would make even anterior chewing difficult. It has also been noted on the Qilakitsok individuals and the Pedersen group that the molars are usually lost or worn down early, creating more work for the front teeth (Pedersen 1949; Hart-Hansen *et al.* 1991). The two symmetrically opposed abscesses on the maxilla could also have been caused through extreme pressure on the teeth and gums as noted on individual T21 (with exactly the same pathology), from Maiden Castle, Dorset (Goodman and Morant 1939).

Carbonized plant remains by John Letts

Most samples examined contain small amounts of charcoal, but only five of the samples contain identifiable plant remains. No sample yielded more than 10 items, and most of these were indeterminate. In terms of the cereals present, context (58) in pit 10 contains the most important single specimen – a single glume base of hulled wheat, too battered to be identified as either spelt wheat (*Triticum spelta*) or emmer wheat (*T. dicoccum*). Spelt wheat, which was the dominant wheat in Southern England through the Iron Age and the Roman period, fell out of use very early in the Saxon period. Free-threshing bread wheat (*T. aestivum*), which occurs in samples 12 (60) and 21 (74), was relatively uncommon throughout most of the Roman period. Samples 4 (64) and 21 (74) also

contain single grains of quite poorly preserved barley, most probably a hulled variety of 6-row barley (*Hordeum vulgare* ssp. *hexastichum*). These five samples also contain unidentifiable cereal grains and fragments. Sample (74) from ditch C (21), contains single specimens of brome grass and another large-seeded wild grass, both of which are common in charred cereal assemblages.

In summary, the samples examined do not contain sufficient specimens to justify detailed interpretation. The carbonized plant remains are tabulated in the site archive.

CONCLUSION

The presence of an Iron Age settlement site had been recorded through extensive watching briefs and limited excavation, carried out to the south of the site by the Andover Excavations Committee, the Test Valley Archaeological Committee and Andover Archaeological Society during the construction in the 1970s and early 1980s (Davies 1980; 1981; Green 1983; Hughes 1982). The northern extent of the settlement was not located at that time, and the fieldwork described here appears to have provided this information.

The evidence suggests the presence of a middle to late Iron Age settlement continuing into the early Roman period. The presence of residual cord-impressed Beaker pottery sherds and a single posthole (23) containing two flint flakes, along with the residual flint axe in pit 10, would suggest that the site may also have seen use during the early Bronze Age, although this material could have been imported from elsewhere.

Middle to late Iron Age use of the site is characterized by ditches A and B, aligned NE-SW, and a series of pits (4, 6, 10 and 27) south of this line. This places the pits within the settlement enclosure, albeit in a marginal position. Precise dating for this phase is problematical, given the paucity of pottery and near-total lack of other finds. The layout of the site suggests continuity into the later Iron Age phase, so a compressed chronology seems likely, and it may be suggested the middle Iron Age ditches were being filled not earlier than the 2nd or even the early 1st century BC. Given the evidence for constant recutting of these boundaries, their

original construction cannot be closely dated, but it is unlikely to have been significantly earlier.

The late Iron Age/early Roman period seems to have been the main phase of activity on the site. The calendar dating assigned to this phase may be the early-mid 1st century AD, with the conquest, as is often the case on rural sites, not necessarily marking any sharp break. An earlier start to the phase is certainly possible, with the evidence only pointing to the date of the ditches' infilling. A series of intercutting ditches (C, ?D and F) still defined the limits of the settled area to the south. Ditch F may represent a new form of layout, but it could equally be a minor deviation from the existing line. Associated features within the enclosure cannot be dated to this phase with any confidence.

The early Roman period proper is represented by further similarly-aligned ditches (?D, E, G and H). All of which seem to have been filled in the later 1st century AD or, in the case of H, perhaps just into the early 2nd century. All of these ditches could be construed as simply redefining the existing lines. A number of other features (the postholes and hearth/pit 16) may also belong to this period. However, these features produced no dating evidence. The continued use of late Iron Age rural sites into the early Roman period is a pattern that has been recognized at a number of Hampshire excavations, for example Winnall Down (Fasham 1985) and Gussage All Saints (Cunliffe 1993, 219). Continuity from the middle Iron Age to the early Roman period is much rarer, although attested, for example, at Park Farm, Binfield (Roberts 1995). The detailed chronology for Viking Way is probably insufficient to permit this site to be cited as a further case.

Although many late Iron Age sites continued in use beyond the Claudian conquest, enclosure patterns were commonly redefined, a pattern which may have permitted greater control of livestock (Cunliffe 1993, 219), although different tenorial arrangements would be as plausible a reason. It is possible, therefore, that the more insubstantial ditches (D, F, G and H) may have served as demarcations between land holdings or for the corralling of livestock, rather than constituting a settlement enclosure, but the continuity of layout argues for continuity of function. Any changes in enclosure form seem to have occurred

in the 2nd century, when the series of ditches finally passed out of use.

Excavation of ditch E produced the remains of a crouched inhumation burial. Pottery (only three sherds) from the fill around the body suggests a 1st century AD date for the deposit. The body was lying on its right side in a flexed position. The young female adult skeleton was almost complete but the knee bones and small finger and foot bones were lacking (more probably a result of preservation conditions than of, for example, exhumation). The skeleton also produced a small fragment of ilium from an unborn child, recovered during dry sieving of soil from the abdominal area. The high degree of wear on her teeth may suggest, besides an unbalanced diet, that she used them to tenderize leather to make sinew thread for clothes production.

The placing of human remains within pits or beneath ramparts was a common practice on Iron Age sites (Wait 1985). A large number of pits at Danebury and Bury Hill produced human and animal remains (Cunliffe 1993, 196). The bodies were invariably in a flexed position at the base of storage pits. At Danebury a number of these human deposits were covered with blocks of chalk or flint and probably represent ritual sacrifices (Cunliffe 1993, 195; cf., Isserlin 1997, for the Roman period). Cunliffe suggests that these burials may represent disposal of enemies, infants and the unclean (Cunliffe 1993, 196). This young woman may have died as the result of a miscarriage. If this was viewed as an unnatural death, or the circumstances were otherwise inauspicious, the remains may have been deliberately disposed of in the ditch and not accorded the apparently more usual rite of exhumation (Cunliffe 1993, 196; Carr and Knüsel 1997). It is already clear that Iron Age cemetery evidence cannot represent the entire population, nor can it be in any sense a random sample (Wait 1985, 118). It is becoming apparent that individuals were selected for burial, and those chosen were often marked out by being somehow different, in life or in the manner of death, rather than necessarily a political or economic élite (cf., Knüsel 1998, for one exceptional case).

Fragmentary remains of a human skull, possibly another female, were recovered from pit 10, along with the site's largest assemblage of Iron Age pottery (40 sherds), likely to be middle rather

than later Iron Age. Partial remains of human bodies are not uncommon on Iron Age sites. Cunliffe (1993, 195) suggests that fragments of skulls (predominantly young adult males) may represent the taking of heads of enemies as trophies. A number of pits excavated at Danebury produced partial human remains. It is argued that these special deposits of human and animal remains may represent some form of propitiation or fertility ritual in relation to the pits' former use for grain storage (Cunliffe 1995, 100).

It has been noted that the ditches were insubstantial. One could surmise that the ditches were not defensive in nature but were perhaps associated with banks or hedges. Settlements enclosed by a ditch, bank or hedge are characteristic of rural Iron Age sites in Hampshire. A number of excavated sites in the county have produced sub-rectangular ditched enclosures, including Ructstall's Hill (Oliver and Applin 1978), Old Down Farm (Davies 1981), Cowdery's Down (Millet and James 1983), Viabes Farm (Millet and Russell 1984), Winnall Down (Fasham 1985) and Brighton Hill South (Coe, Fasham and Keevil 1995) to mention only a selection. These characteristically consist of a ditched, enclosed settlement with post-built, circular structures, generally high numbers of pits, and four-post structures commonly interpreted as granaries.

A series of large pits (4, 6, 10 and 27) lay to the south-east of the boundary ditches. Substantial bell- or barrel-shaped pits are typical of Iron Age sites in the region, often occurring in large numbers (Cunliffe 1984; Davies 1981). Their primary function is thought to be for grain storage. At Viking Way, pits 10 and 27 were bell-shaped; pit 4 was bowl-shaped. No evidence was recovered of the use of these pits for grain storage, although scorching on the floor of pit 27 could be related to cleaning the pit for reuse. Alternatively, the burning could be related to ritual cleansing, given that this pit ultimately was used for a horse burial. The 'step' or ledge on the south side seems to have been intended to allow access to the still-open pit, and the flat profile of the lower fills, contrasting with the steeply slumped upper fills, suggests two very different depositional processes at work, one during the life of the (open) pit and one when it had passed out of use. This suggests it was not

primarily a storage pit. The partial remains of a watervole and woodmouse in the base of the pit further point to its having been left open for some time, perhaps even accumulating water. Caution should perhaps be urged, however, in automatically assigning a 'ritual shaft' interpretation, as there may be a world of difference between the purpose for which the pit was dug and any structured ritual deposition after it had fallen out of use (also cf., Webster 1997, for the dangers of uncritical acceptance of Iron Age 'ritual shafts', which often turn out to be Roman in date).

Part of a horse skeleton was recovered from a fill (86) near the top of pit 27. The body was partially articulated with the lower legs missing and neck having been cut, either simply to make the body fit within the pit, or as a result of sacrificial practice. It is also possible it was incomplete because it had been disturbed by the subsequent digging of pit 6, as it was in the top surviving fill of pit 27. The horse appeared to be young and may have died or been killed due to a bone infection. In association with the horse burial were the frag-

mentary remains of a dog jaw. No other dog remains were recovered from the rest of the site. Both horse and dog were often treated significantly differently from other animals in Iron Age deposits, occurring significantly more often as articulated or near-complete skeletons than other species (Wait 1985, 145-7), and this is usually held to have ritual implications. The animal bone assemblage from Viking Way is too small to allow definite conclusions about differential treatment of species here, but appears to complement similar data from the region.

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