

A Prehistoric and Roman Site at Wittenham Clumps, Berks.

By P. P. RHODES

THE site here described lies at the foot of the S. slope of the more westerly of the two Wittenham Clumps, about 200 yd. to the W. of the entrance to Sinodun Camp, and about 325 ft. above O.D. (FIG. 7 and PL. III, A); the National Grid reference is 41/565925. From it the ground falls gently to the Little Wittenham-Wallingford road about 30 yds. to the south. The 1-in. map of the Geological Survey shows that it lies approximately at the junction of the Lower Chalk and Upper Greensand (the Malmstone), and on reference to a tithe map of 1843 the site proved to coincide with the boundary of fields then called Malm and Rye Furlong. The former field name clearly has reference to the rock which forms, as Dr. W. J. Arkell has pointed out,¹ the main body of the Sinodun Hills. Air-photographs of Sinodun Camp taken by the late Major G. W. G. Allen do not cover the site, and others kindly taken by Flight-Lieutenant D. Clarke in August, 1947, revealed nothing of interest. The writer has been unable to find any record of previous discovery or excavation in the area.²

In the summer of 1947, both hills being then under plough, the surface of the area within the defences of the Camp was examined in the hope that it might provide evidence of Early Iron Age occupation. Several sherds of Romano-British pottery were found, but only one or two that could be assigned with certainty to the Iron Age.³ Since it seemed probable that a settlement associated with the builders of the hill-fort once existed either within the defences or upon the surrounding lower slopes, the search was widened to include the whole of the ploughed area S. and W. of the two hills as far as the road already mentioned. The more immediate result was the discovery of the site of a Roman building. The area which it covered could be roughly defined by a surface scatter of clay tegulae, loose tesserae and potsherds (FIG. 7). In addition the surface was strewn with small stones which were noticeably absent beyond its limits, and excavation showed later that

¹ Dr. W. J. Arkell, *The Geology of Oxford* (1947), 171.

² Indications of a Roman settlement in a field called 'Old Oxford' are recorded, *Berks., Bucks. and Oxon. Arch. Journ.*, vi (1901), 122. The field is not named on the tithe map, but has been identified as the one immediately S. of Hill Farm.

³ Since this report was written sherds of hard black well-burnished wares have been found by the writer on the banks to the E. of the Camp entrance.

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this stony appearance was to be attributed to debris from much-decayed mortar. Grey coarse wares formed the bulk of the pottery, though Samian and the late native imitation Samian, barbotine, and red colour-coated wares were also present. The series appeared to begin in the early 1st century

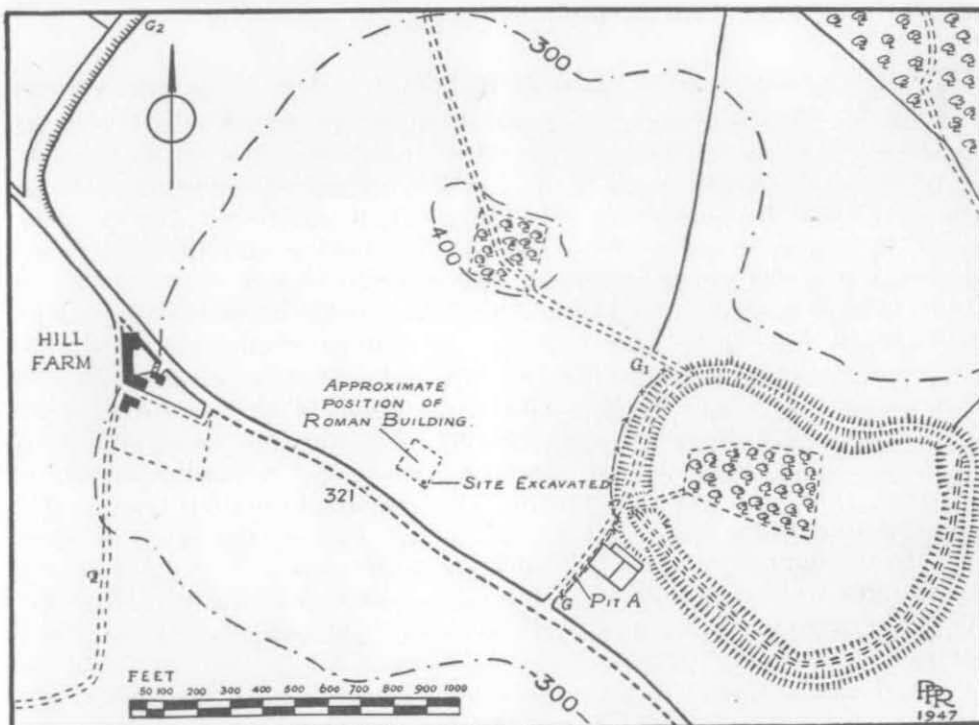


FIG. 7

WITTENHAM CLUMPS, BERKS.

Map showing position of Early Iron Age and Roman sites

Based on the O.S. 6-in. map with the sanction of the Controller of H.M. Stationery Office.

and to continue without a break to the 4th or early 5th century A.D. In addition to the characteristic Roman material, a smaller number of sherds were found of much gritted coarse wares showing no evidence of wheel turning, which it seemed were either pre-Roman or a survival of a pre-Roman technique. Moreover, these sherds were found over a considerably wider area than that of the Roman scatter.

In the hope of being able to solve some of the problems which the surface

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finds raised, a test excavation of a small area was decided upon. The dig was started in mid-October, completed by mid-November and afterwards filled in.⁴ The site is safe from danger of further damage by the plough as the 'Clumps' have been returned once more to permanent pasture. (A comprehensive selection of the finds is lodged in the Ashmolean Museum under references 1950. 2, 3, 4, 5. ED.)

EXCAVATION

The site chosen for excavation was a square measuring 10 ft. by 10 ft. near the SE. corner of the area covered by the Roman debris. The centre of this square was 510 ft. from the Little Wittenham-Wallingford road at the point where the footpath from the Camp joins it, and 103 ft. from the same road at its nearest point. The site was sub-divided into three cuttings, A, B and C, which were excavated in that order.

The topsoil, a light brown humus, had been much disturbed by ploughing. It contained more of the Roman material already noted on the surface, with a fair proportion of unquestionably Iron Age sherds,⁵ including a rim fragment with a widely expanded flat top. Below the topsoil a hard grey stratum of disintegrated mortar rubble averaging 3 to 4 in. in depth, spread across the site, but appeared to be petering out towards the south. Several pieces of red painted wall plaster, and one of yellow, were recovered from this layer. The sections W.-N. and E.-S. (FIG. 8) show a rubble-filled depression crossing the site and penetrating deep into the underlying layers.

Layer 1, a fine grained sooty black occupation earth, contained an abundance of Iron Age pottery (96 per cent. of the total), a few Romano-British sherds, and a quantity of animal bones. No sterile layer could be observed in cutting A between the mortar spread, where Romano-British wares predominated over Iron Age sherds, and layer 1 where the reverse was the case. The absence of a sterile layer was confirmed by careful observation in cuttings B and C. Continuity of occupation seems evident on stratigraphical grounds and to be confirmed typologically by the presence in layer 1 of widely expanded flat-topped rims; forms which are common on late A2 sites and which at Maiden Castle are dated as late as the third decade of the 1st century A.D.

Layer 2, a black occupation soil containing pottery and bones, was separated from layer 1 by the floor of a hut to be described later. This floor was left intact, so that excavation of layers 2, 3 and 4 was confined to

⁴ My thanks are due to Mr. R. J. C. Atkinson and to Mr. A. E. P. Collins, for help both critical and practical, and to Mr. T. Hedges who kindly allowed access to the field at all times.

⁵ A statistical summary is given with the E.I.A. pottery, p. 24.

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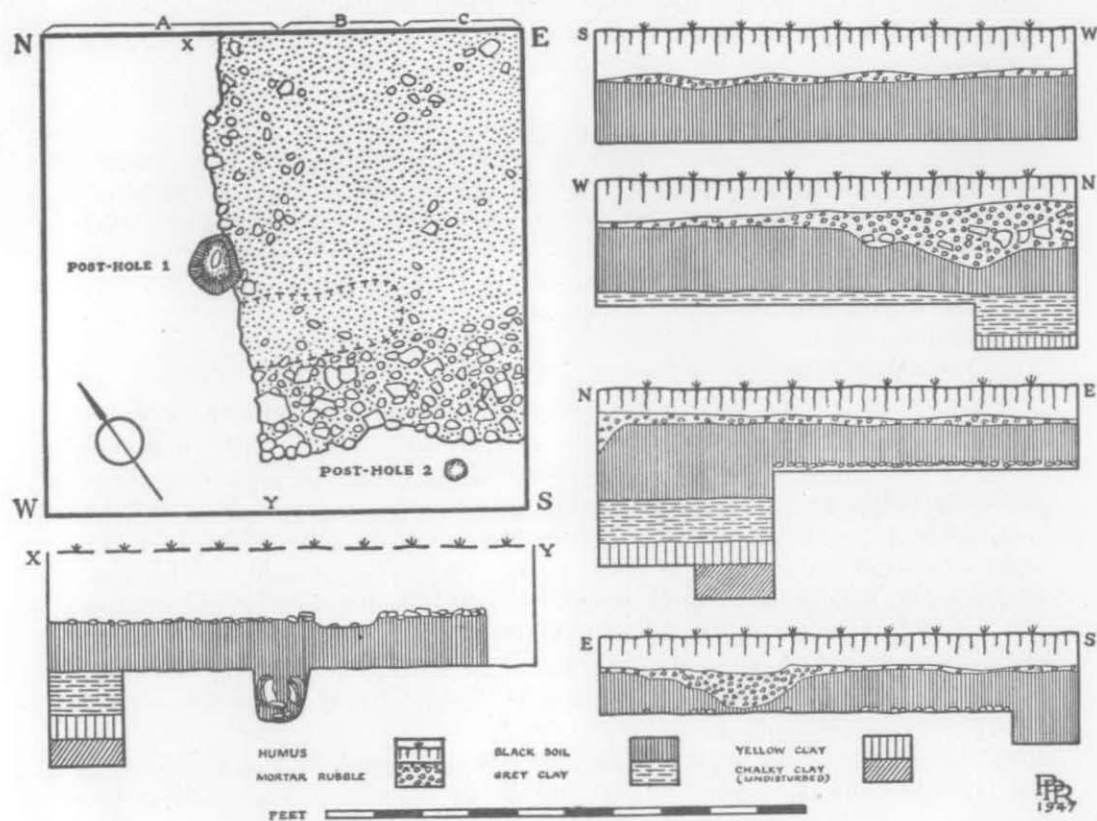


FIG. 8
WITTENHAM CLUMPS, BERKS.
Plan and sections

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the areas beyond it to the W. and S. Statistical analysis showed that Iron Age sherds from layer 2 were as numerous as those obtained from layer 1, an area twice as large, and thus indicated a greater intensity of occupation in the period preceding the building of the hut than afterwards. The rubble-filled trough which on the W. of the site penetrated into layer 2 explains the presence of a few Romano-British sherds (FIG. 8, W.-N.).

In layer 3, 2 in. of black soil overlay a greasy grey clay, and contained a fair amount of pottery but no Romano-British sherds.

Layer 4, grey clay above yellow clay, contained a few Iron Age sherds, two Beaker sherds of poor fabric and a worked flint. Below this, at 4 ft. 6 in., the yellow clay contained lumps of a chalky material (? Malmstone), and showed no evidence of disturbance.

A. THE EARLY IRON AGE

THE IRON AGE HUT (FIG. 8)

At 1 ft. 6 in. below the surface excavation revealed a floor of compacted chalk rubble reinforced by the addition of large water-worn Bunter (quartzite) pebbles. A sufficient area was exposed to demonstrate the probability that this floor belonged to a hut of approximately rectangular plan. The ease with which it could be traced in the relatively undisturbed black occupation earth which lay both above and below promises as a reward to further excavation the complete recovery of its plan. Partial plans of rectilinear huts were recognized in an 'A' context at both Maiden Castle and Park Brow, Sussex, but as yet no complete plan of a building of Iron Age 'A' has been obtained in this country comparable with those published by Dr. Gerhard Bersu from the Goldberg in Württemberg.

The surface of the floor was uneven and of average thickness of 3-4 in. The pebbles, although thinly scattered over all parts of the floor, formed a compact wall-like mass about 2 ft. wide along its southern edge (PL. III, B). The floor was treated as a separate layer and pieces of clay daub, several bearing the imprint of wattles, were recovered from its surface, as well as A2 pottery and animal bones.

A large post-hole was found close to the W. edge of the floor and a small stake-hole near to the S. edge, both being equidistant from the corner. The bottom of the large post-hole 1 was nearly 2 ft. below the chalk floor and penetrated deep into the underlying clay. It contained the fine black soil of layers 1 and 2, and some 20 sherds of a heavy round-shouldered situla, the larger fragments of which, found round the sides of the hole, seemed to have been placed there as packing. Post-hole 2, with the same black fill,

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appeared as a small saucer-shaped hole in the grey clay, its depth below the floor being only 1 ft. 3 in.

A shallow depression in the floor between post-hole 1 and the massed stones suggested the possibility of an entrance, and a faint chalky stratum, possibly due to chalk 'walked' there from the floor, appeared opposite the depression in section W.-N.

THE SETTLEMENT

Further evidence for the probable position and extent of an Iron Age settlement was provided, in April, 1948, by the excavation of some 52 pits (FIG. 7, G₂-G₁) to receive heavy timber posts for a new fence. The pits were all 4 ft. by 2 ft. at surface and 3-4 ft. deep. Nothing unusual was noticed in any of the pits lining the road from G₂-G, but the diggers reported bone fragments in some of the pits from G₁-G and particularly an occupation layer in Pit A.

All pits from G-G₁ were examined by the writer, Pit A alone containing an occupation layer and pottery. Here beneath 3 ft. of grey clay was a layer 1 ft. deep of fine grained black earth containing animal bones and sherds similar in fabric to those already recorded, including a rim fragment with a widely expanded flat top. A single piece of clay daub suggested the proximity of another hut site.

POTTERY (FIG. 9)

The Iron Age pottery selected for illustration is 3.3 per cent. of a total of 925 sherds, obtained from an excavation which in all, including the purely Romano-British layers, amounted to 210 cubic feet of soil. The excavated area thus represents but a very small fraction of a settlement which on present evidence seems likely to have extended over several acres. It is clearly premature, therefore, on a study of the pottery so far found, to form more than a provisional estimate of the Wittenham Clumps culture as a whole, or as yet to recognize the true relation in which it stands to other local groups.

As a whole the pottery suggests an A2 culture of mainly Wessex derivation, surviving, undisturbed by B or C influence, with no apparent change until the Roman period.

Haematite coated wares represented nearly 9 per cent. of the Iron Age sherds, an abundance which forms a striking contrast with the majority of explored sites in the Oxford basin where haematite has been conspicuously absent. Elsewhere, only at Frilford, 8 miles to the W., and at Blewburton Hill, 4 miles to the S., has it as yet been found in quantity. Varying in quality from a thin wash to a thick slip coat, the best examples attained a fine scarlet

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colour and a brilliant polish. Well represented in layers 1, 2 and 3, it was evidently in use at an early stage and seems to have retained a popularity above all other techniques for fine wares until the very end of the Iron Age, being found latterly in association with vessels with swollen flat-topped rims. No example of haematite with incised linear decoration which was characteristic of A1 bowls at All Cannings Cross, Meon Hill, etc., was found. Indeed, with the exception of a carinated bowl with incised multiple chevron ornament and white infilling, decorated wares other than the variants of finger-tipping were entirely absent. Furrowed haematite bowls were not represented, but a single sherd belonging to a cordoned bowl occurred in layer 2, a layer which should ante-date or possibly be contemporary with the dwelling house. Bowls with cordons were numerous at All Cannings Cross and were there representative of the close of the A1 phase. Cordons are not recorded at Frilford or Blewburton Hill or elsewhere in the Oxford basin. Even within the haematite province of Wessex these bowls have a limited distribution and an example at Wittenham Clumps is thus suggestive.

The following is a statistical summary of the pottery and other finds.

	No. of sherds			Percentages of Iron Age sherds			Clay daub. No. of pieces	Other objects
	Total	Romano-British	Iron Age	Haematite	Burnished other than Haematite	Finger-printed		
Topsoil	50	36	14	Nil	Nil	0.5	Nil	Tesserae, tegulae, iron nails, bronze objects, oyster shells.
Mortar spread ..	49	39	10	20	Nil	0.5	5	Painted wall plaster (15).
Layer 1	337	14	323	7	10	2.5	22	Painted wall plaster (2). Burnt chalk. Worked bone.
Chalk floor ..	120	2	118	10	18	Nil	10	
Layer 2	311	14	297	12	10	1	1	Sherd of Middle Bronze Age cinerary urn with cord pattern.
Layer 3 (Cutting A only) ..	138	Nil	138	7	16	1.5	Nil	Worked bone.
Layer 4 (Cutting A only) ..	28	Nil	28	Nil	14	Nil	Nil	Worked flint. Beaker sherds.

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Coarse vessels of uncertain form, with widely expanded flat-topped rims and finger-printing on the outer lip, here form a characteristic series. The stratigraphical evidence suggests that these heavy vessels were fashionable during the latest Iron Age phase and were in use until native pottery was finally replaced by Roman wares. Closely parallel material was in use at the Mount Farm settlement about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles to the N. across the river Thames, and further examples have been found at Blewburton Hill. Rims of similar form but without finger-printing are common on local A2 sites such as Radley and Hinksey Hill, and at Maiden Castle an undecorated series was dated by Dr. Wheeler to the turn of the 1st centuries B.C. and A.D. This survival of a Hallstatt finger-printing tradition together with the uniformly A2 character of the pottery from all layers supports a view of the Wittenham Clumps settlement as a cultural backwater which remained relatively undisturbed until finally receiving, and succumbing to, the impact of Rome.

CATALOGUE (FIG. 9)

1. Rim and shoulder of situliform jar with finger-nail decoration below rim. Coarse fairly hard ware; inner and outer surfaces roughly smeared (? with grass). Fired smoky brown to black. Diameter of rim $8\frac{1}{2}$ in. *C/Layer 1*.
2. Heavy situliform jar with rounded shoulder. No evidence for size and set of neck. Coarse grey fabric with admixture of small pebbles, some over $\frac{1}{2}$ in. in length. Outer surface smoky grey to buff and roughly smoothed. Smoothing vertical below shoulder, horizontal above. 17 sherds. *Post-hole 1*.
3. Flat-topped swollen rim of bucket or cauldron-shaped vessel. Finger-tipping on outer lip. Light pink ware full of shell. *Surface. Cp. this and nos. 4, 5, 6 and 7 with the closely analogous series from Mount Farm, Dorchester, Oxoniensia*, II (1937), 31, fig. 7; also Radley, *Ant. Journ.*, XI (1931), 401, fig. 26, Hinksey Hill, *J.B.A.A.*, XXXVI (1930), 383, fig. 5, and Blewburton Hill, *B.A.J.*, XLVI (1942), 101.
4. Flat-topped swollen rim probably of bucket-shaped vessel. Rim drawn outwards and shaped by finger-tipping on upper and outer edges to form a pie-crust. Ware as last. Diameter of rim 12 in. *C/Layer 1*.
5. Flat-topped swollen rim probably of bucket-shaped vessel with finger-tipping roughly executed on outer lip. Hard grey to buff ware with less shell than nos. 3 and 4. Diameter of rim about 12 in. 3 sherds. *B/Layer 1(2), A/Layer 2*.
6. Flat-topped widely expanded rim of probably cauldron-shaped vessel with neat finger-printing on outer lip. Hard brown to black ware with shell admixture. Diameter of rim about 11 in. *B/Layer 1*.
7. Flat-topped widely expanded rim of vessel of probably cauldron shape. Finger-printing on outer edge of rim. Considerable internal overhang with rough bead. Ware as last. Diameter of rim about 12 in. *A/Topsoil*.
8. Rim fragment of situliform vessel. Hard rough grey to black ware with small stone admixture. Rim diameter about 8 in. *A/Layer 3*. This and rims nos. 9, 10 and 11 belong to situliform jars with sagging profiles and all are typical examples of the debased wares common on local A2 sites. *Cp. Mount Farm, op. cit.*, fig. 8.

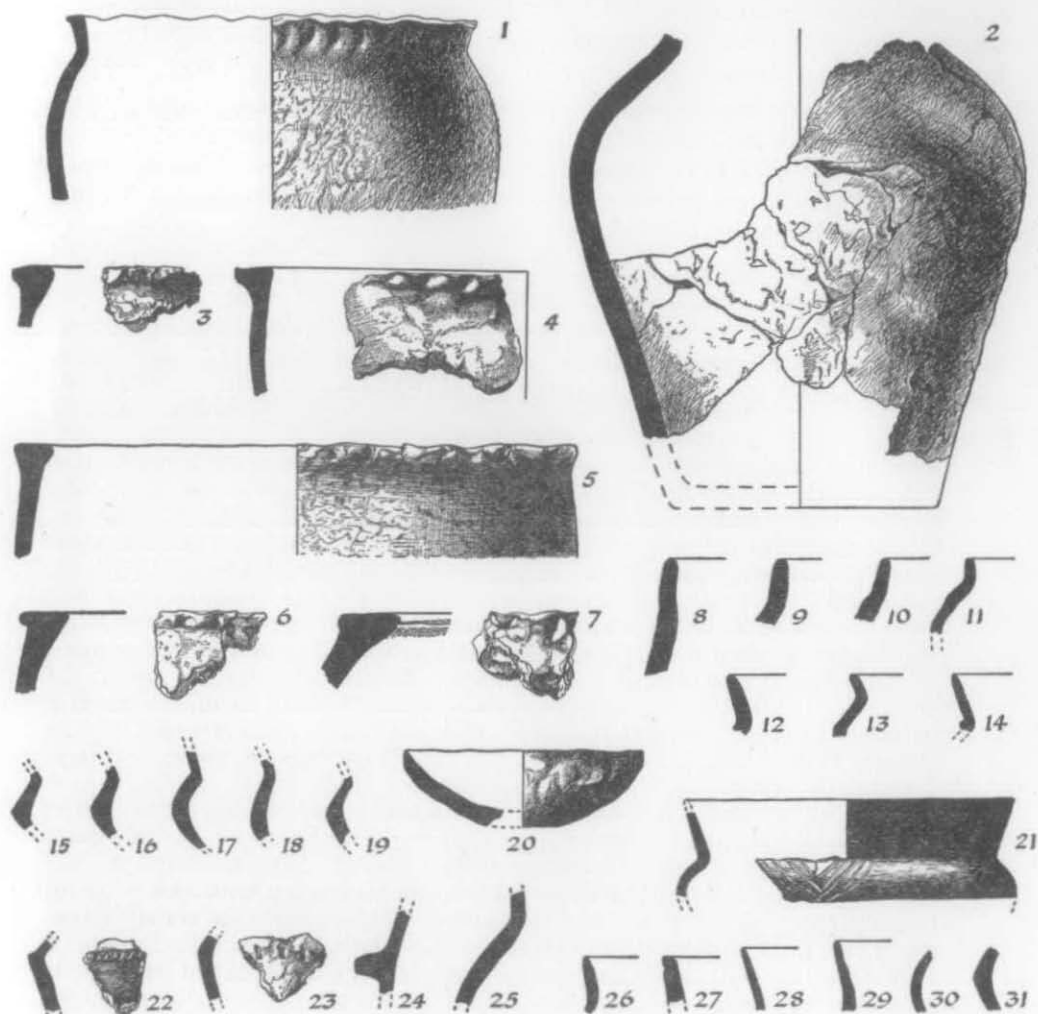


FIG. 9
WITTENHAM CLUMPS, BERKS.
Iron Age pottery
Sc. $\frac{1}{4}$

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9. Rim of situliform vessel. Hard grey gritted ware with trace of horizontal burnishing. *A/Layer 3.*
10. Rim of situliform vessel. Rough black gritty ware. *A/Layer 2.*
11. Rim and shoulder of small situliform jar representing the ultimate phase of degradation. Ware as last. *A/Layer 2.*
12. Rim of bowl, pale red fabric, with well polished red-brown haematite wash on outer surface. Rim diameter about 7 in. *A/Layer 2.*
13. Everted rim of bowl, the form of which suggests Belgic influence. Black ware with thick red-brown slip coat on both surfaces (? haematite). Hand made. Diameter of rim about 7 in. *C/Layer 1.*
14. Flaring rim of well polished red haematite coated bowl with cordon at base of neck. Black polished interior, both surfaces burnished horizontally. *A/Layer 2.* *Cp. Cunnington, All Cannings Cross (1923), pl. 28, nos. 3 and 4.* A typical product of the Wessex A culture it may here be representative of an early phase of A2.
15. Sharply carinated shoulder of small bowl. Hard, sandy, buff-coloured ware. *Surface find.* Sherds indicating bowl forms of the type with flaring rims and carinated to rounded profiles are numerous, with haematite well represented.
16. As last but with slightly less sharp carination. Outer surface buff-coloured and polished (horizontal burnishing). *A/Layer 2.*
17. Shoulder of bowl with flaring rim; a more rounded form of nos. 15 and 16. Good hard ware; smooth buff to grey outer surface, black interior. Both surfaces burnished. *A/Layer 3.*
18. Form and ware as last but less angular and less well polished. *A/Layer 2.*
19. Blunt carination of bowl, with a dark red haematite wash on outer surface. Dark grey ware with a pale red-brown slip on both surfaces. 2 sherds: *B/Layer 1* and *C/Chalk Floor.*
20. Small shallow bowl or cup, with roughly modelled black to brown exterior and slight burnish. Smooth black burnished interior. Diameter of rim 5 in. *B/Chalk Floor.* The better finish of the interior is noteworthy in a vessel of this form where the outside would seldom be seen. The clay is drawn to a fine rim which suggests use as a drinking cup. No near parallel found.
21. Part of carination and high tapering rim of bowl. Hard grey ware with black well burnished (horizontally) outer surface. Multiple line chevron ornament between neck and shoulder, deeply incised before firing with traces of white inlay. The bowl may have had as many as four similarly decorated zones. Diameter of rim about 7 in. 5 sherds from *B/Chalk Floor.* Variations of the chevron motif are characteristic on A1 pottery at All Cannings Cross, but multiple chevrons with 'a suspicion of white filling' occur at the neighbouring site at Allen's Pit, Dorchester, *Oxoniensia*, VII, 43, fig. 8, no. 3, on a situla of early A1 form, but doubtful Wessex ancestry.
22. Sharp carination of pot of uncertain form with neatly incised cable ornament. Sandy grey ware with pounded shell. *Surface.* *Cp. Caburn 1 pottery, S.A.C., LXXX (1939), 217.*
23. Carinated fragment with row of triangular punch-marks. Form of vessel uncertain. Grey shelly ware with pink-buff outer surface. *Surface find.*
24. Solid lug, of hard black ware with rough grey-buff surface. *C/Layer 1.* *Cp. Frilford, Oxoniensia*, IV, 18, fig. 6, no. 52. Lug-handles, apparently of the normal

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- horizontally pierced type, are represented by three fragmentary examples. *C* (*Chalk Floor*), (*Surface*) and (*Unstratified*).
25. Sherd of very hard grey ware with smooth well burnished grey-black surface. Probably representing part of the shoulder and neck of a situliform vessel. Black burnished wares of this quality were relatively few. *A/Layer 2*.
 26. Flaring rim of polished haematite coated bowl. Worn dark red haematite wash on thick sandy buff slip. Interior grey sandy fabric with no sign of polishing. *B/Chalk Floor*.
 27. Flat-topped rim of vessel of uncertain form. Finger printed on the flattened surface to form a pie-crust. Shallow external groove. Hard sandy grey ware with black outer surface. *C/Chalk Floor*.
 28. Flaring rim of bowl with grey to black burnished (horizontal) surfaces. Thin carefully made ware. *A/Layer 2*. A similar form to no. 21.
 29. Rim of bowl of same form as last, but roughly made of coarse stoney fabric. Traces of polish on outer surface. Diameter of rim about $4\frac{1}{2}$ in. *C/Layer 1*.
 30. Round shoulder of bowl of thin hard black ware with good burnish (horizontal). *A/Layer 4, Post-hole 1*.
 31. Carinated shoulder of large vessel in pink-brown polished haematite. Hard grey ware with haematite slip on outer surface only. *Cp. Frilford, loc. cit., 18, fig. 6, no. 4. A/Layer 3, Post-hole 1*.

ANIMAL BONES

The following is based on the identifications kindly made by Dr. Francis C. Fraser of bone fragments which he examined from layers 1, 2 and 3.⁶

The following animals are represented: Sheep or goat, ox, and pig (all layers), horse (layers 1 and 3), bird and dog. In all layers sheep or goat, and ox are more common than the other animals mentioned. The bones are mostly very fragmentary so that few measurements could be taken for comparative purposes, but those recorded indicate that small breeds of sheep and ox were involved.

Dog and horse are represented only by teeth. The bird bones are not identified to species.

Four examples showed traces of working:

(1) Part of scoop or 'gouge' too fragmentary for identification, but possibly of sheep; surface well polished. The numerous examples from All Cannings Cross, pls. viii and ix, are all rather smaller (*Layer 3*).

(2) Fragmentary metapodial of young sheep or goat. On either side of bone about 1 in. above distal end, are four parallel grooves 1 mm. apart. The grooves are polished as if by wear from a thread and the bone is much worn and polished close to the grooves. Similar areas of grooving and polishing $2\frac{1}{2}$ in. below distal end. *Cp. All Cannings Cross, pl. ix, no. 18; Fifield Bavant Down, Wilts. Arch. Magazine, XLII (1924), pl. x, no. 3; and Swallowcliffe Down, ibid., XLIII (1925), pl. ix, where they were found associated with loom-weights, an antler comb and spindle whorl (Layer 1).*

⁶ Layer 4 contained only a few unidentifiable splinters.

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(3) Distal end of tibia of sheep or goat with four cuts or notches above joint (Layer 1).

(4) Fibula of pig, with polished surfaces (? worked).

B. THE ROMAN PERIOD

The surface scatter of Roman building debris and potsherds was limited to an area of approximately 100 ft. by 100 ft. (FIG. 7), dimensions which suggested that a comparatively small building was involved, but excavation on so small a scale could not be expected to, and did not in fact, yield any further knowledge of its plan or purpose. Small villas of simple corridor type, in marked contrast with the big establishments of the regions further to the W. and N., have been excavated at Letcombe Regis and Frilford and these and many other as yet unexcavated sites in North Berkshire suggest that villas in this part of the upper Thames valley were of modest proportions. A small villa at Wittenham Clumps would thus be in accord with the general view of the economics of the region suggested by Mr. J. S. P. Bradford.⁷

The spectacular appearance of the 'Clumps' as seen from Dorchester and nearby Romano-British or native settlements such as Mount Farm, Northfield Farm and the Dyke Hills favours the possibility of a Romano-Celtic temple situated on or near the summit of the unforfeited western hill. The area of surface debris roughly equalled the area occupied by the Frilford temple, but no evidence for the type of building was found. The presence of painted wall plaster is indecisive, since its use for interior and exterior decoration of Romano-Celtic temples was attested at Frilford and Maiden Castle.

POTTERY (FIG. 10)

Rim fragments representing more than 100 different vessels were collected, 90 per cent. of which were surface finds. For reasons of space and in the absence of any clear stratification, only sherds which are datable on their own merits or of unusual type are here illustrated.

1. Wall-sided mortarium. An imitation of Drag. 45. Red, red colour-coat. Late 3rd to 4th century.
2. Roll-rim bowl. Fine grey fabric. Late 1st to 2nd century.
3. Small beaker with sharply everted rim. Mid-1st to mid-2nd century.
4. Pie-dish with curved side and trellis pattern. 2nd century.
5. Mortarium. Cream to buff fabric. A transition between the bead-and-roll and later flanged type. A typical product of the kiln at Cowley, Oxon. *Cp. Oxoniensia*, VI, 19, fig. 5, 61.

⁷ *Oxoniensia*, IV, 26.

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6. Flanged bowl of mortarium form but without grit on inside. Grey ware. 2nd to 4th century.
7. Bowl with flanged rim. Grey with red colour-coat. *Cp.* Dorchester kiln, *Oxoniensis*, 1, 88, fig. 15, 13. 4th to 5th century.
8. Pedestal base in standard grey ware. An unusually large type. Three examples found.



FIG. 10
WITTENHAM CLUMPS, BERKS.
Roman pottery
Sc. $\frac{1}{4}$

SAMIAN

Two fragmentary bases of form 18 or 18/31.

TERRA NIGRA

Fragment of base of Gallo-Belgic platter. *Cp.* Hawkes and Hull, *Camulodunum* (1947), 215-21. First half of 1st century.

COARSE WARE

The rim fragments fall into eight characteristic groups :

	Sherds per 100
Standard Romano-British hard grey fabrics ; jars, pie-dishes and beakers	58
Imitation Samian fabrics ; bowls with beaded rims	14
Sandy grey fabrics with grey to black coat ; flanged bowls and platters of probably native manufacture	8
Soft shelly native fabrics ; jars with everted rims	6
Red colour-coated fabrics	4
Small beakers	4
Mortaria	3
Other red fabrics	3

SMALL OBJECTS

The following small objects were found ; nos. 1, 2 and 3 are of bronze.

(1) Circular stud. Diameter $1\frac{1}{8}$ in. A common object on Roman sites. *Surface*, within area of Roman debris.

(2) Part of a bracelet with snake's-head terminals. Probably late 3rd century. *Cp.* R. E. M. and T. V. Wheeler, *Verulamium*, 210, no. 44. *C/Topsoil*. (FIG. 11, no. 1.)

(3) 'Cheek-piece'.⁸ (FIG. 11, no. 2.) The purpose and dating of this object remains uncertain, though the typologically developed examples of probably Viking date from Lundby, Sweden, provide convincing evidence for their forming

⁸ I am indebted to Mr. R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford for notes on parallel objects.

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some part of a horse's bridle. It is related to a long series discussed by Reginald Smith,⁹ where close parallels are illustrated. Unfortunately in each case conclusive evidence for date is lacking.

Two related objects have been published more recently, from Old Sarum,¹⁰ and a close parallel from a Roman site at Newtown, near Basingstoke.¹¹ The original report on the latter, by J. Stevens,¹² mentions only 'a small bronze swivel which might

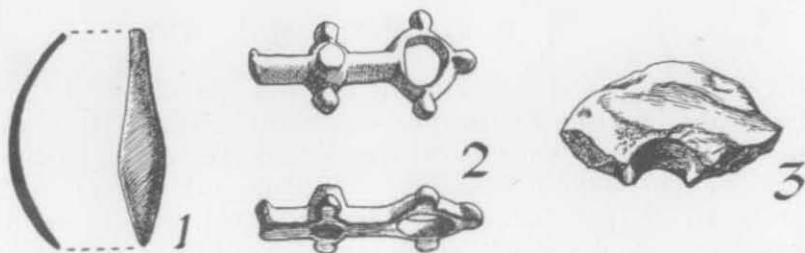


FIG. 11
WITTENHAM CLUMPS, BERKS.
Small objects
Sc. $\frac{1}{2}$

have been an appendage to a dog-chain' and allowing this to be the object illustrated by Grove it is still not from an unshakable Roman context since 'the remains were found intermingled with scraps of glazed mediaeval ware which had got there during removal'.

A cruciform example from Polden Hill, Somerset, is the only one attributed to the Iron Age.¹³ It was not, however, mentioned in the publication of the find,¹⁴ and when this hoard of Iron Age bronzes reached the British Museum in 1846 some Romano-British material was included in it.

A Roman date has been proposed for some of these objects, and the Wittenham Clumps piece, itself a surface find from a point 500 ft. N. of the Roman site, unfortunately adds but one more inconclusive link to an already weak chain of evidence. It possesses the following features which are characteristic of most of the English examples:

- (a) Knobbed rings, bevelled on under side and frequently bent or broken.
 - (b) A flat under surface.
 - (c) A central boss with cavity in under side.
 - (d) Constant length between centres of rings (about $2\frac{1}{8}$ in.).
- (4) Spindle-whorl? Pottery fragment, probably part of a base, of hard grey fabric. Shallow groove on one surface; central hole bevelled from both sides. (FIG. 11, no. 3.) Surface.

⁹ *Proc. Soc. Antiq.*, XXIX (1916-17), 24-41, figs. 6-11.

¹⁰ *Ant. Journ.*, xvii (1937), 438.

¹¹ *Proc. Hants F.C.*, xiii, pt. 2, 179.

¹² *J.B.A.A.* (1888), 118.

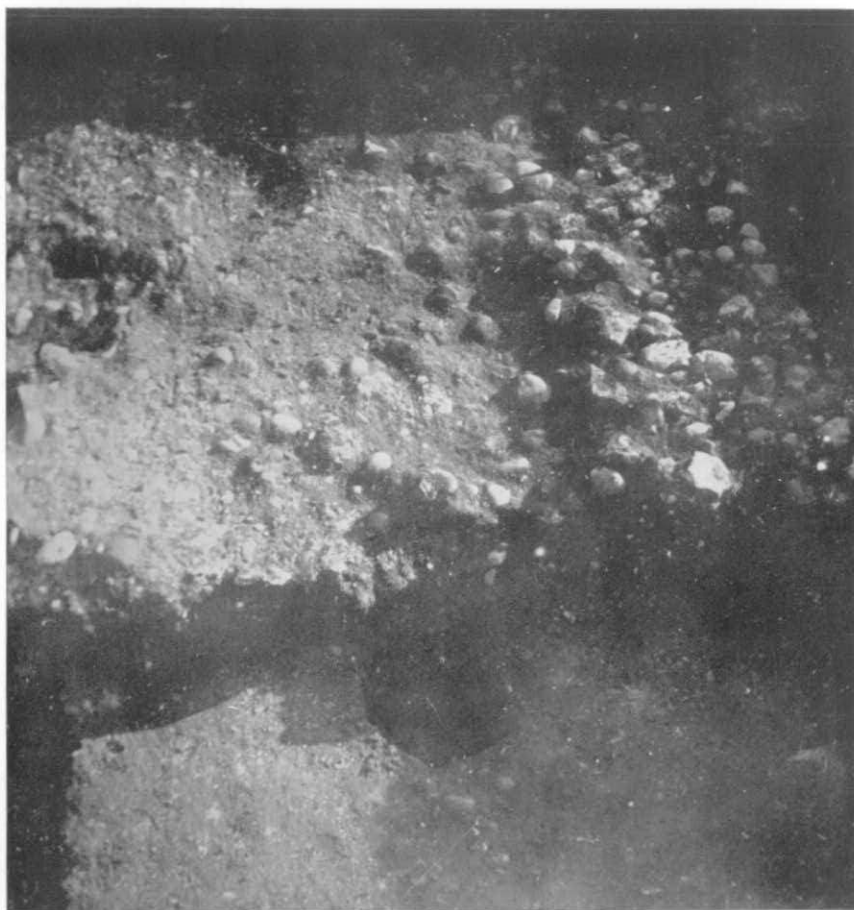
¹³ Reginald Smith, *loc. cit.*, fig. 6.

¹⁴ *Archaeologia*, xiv (1806), 90-93.

PLATE III



A



B

WITTENHAM CLUMPS, BERKS.

- A. Air-view looking NW.; the position of the excavation is marked with a cross.
 B. The Iron Age floor, looking SE.; the 'wall' (right) and post-hole I (foreground)

*Phh. A: D. Clarke.
 B: P. P. Rhodes.*