

## **HAMPSHIRE LATE BRONZE and IRON AGE Resource Assessment**

(1600 BC – 43 AD)

**D Allen 2007**

### **Preamble**

Shennan, S J and Schadla-Hall, R T (eds), 1981 *The Archaeology of Hampshire: From the Palaeolithic to the Industrial Revolution*, Hants Field Club & Archaeol Soc, Monog 1.

Hinton, D A and Hughes, M (eds) 1996 *Archaeology in Hampshire: A Framework for the Future*, Hants County Council.

Stoodley, N (ed), 2002 *The Millennium Publication: A Review of Archaeology in Hampshire 1980-2000*. Hants Field Club & Archaeol Soc., Hants Archaeol Committee

The past 25 years have seen two attempts, in the form of conference and proceedings, to gather together and synthesise the ever-growing body of information relating to the archaeology of Hampshire (1981, 1996) and to offer some form of research agenda. A review covering two decades of work has also been published (2002) which was retrospective in nature. This latter document does, however, contain a significant, if simple, gazetteer of 'archaeological discoveries' in the county over the twenty-year period.

### **Inheritance**

#### ***Earlier communities***

Neolithic and Early Bronze Age ritual and burial monuments were acknowledged or utilised by later communities in a number of ways. There are also instances of the curation of artefacts from earlier periods and their deposition in features of later date.

Neolithic field monuments in Hampshire are limited to long barrows (39 are known), with a scatter of flint mines on the western approaches. The barrows have a wide distribution and study of the Early Neolithic flintwork in the area (Gardiner 1996) suggests that they were foci for contemporary settlement activity. A more unexpected phenomenon is that some of them apparently served as *loci consecrati* for Late Iron Age and Romano-British communities (Massey 2006). At Kimpton a more predictable precedent may have existed in the form of a standing sarsen stone (subsequently broken) which was the focal point of the remarkably long-lived (2100 to 600 BC) urn cemetery (Dacre & Ellison 1981).

The distribution of round barrows and ring ditches is fairly liberal across the county (1286 and 764 respectively on the HER) but favours the chalk and is almost certainly skewed by uneven aerial reconnaissance. More must await discovery, even on the chalk, having been dealt a much harsher hand by modern agricultural methods than those further west. Examples of barrows attracting Middle Bronze Age (Deverel-Rimbury) secondary burials are well known in the Avon Valley, (e.g. Piggott 1938, Coles 2004) although many of them are now in Dorset. Hampshire examples include Berry Wood, Burley (McGregor, 1962) Twyford Down (Walker et al, 2000) and Zionshill, Chandlers Ford (Entwhistle 2001). Barrows were also utilised in the setting out of Late Bronze Age/Iron Age boundary ditches and field systems or given apparent 'special status' (Cook and Dacre 1985, 7; Cunliffe 2000, 159). At Rag Copse, (Knocker 1963) Portway (Cook and Dacre 1985) and Redenham (Dacre archive) large quantities of abraded Roman pottery appear to have been placed on barrows or in their ditches as votive deposits, and this implies veneration, for some at least of these monuments, throughout the later prehistoric period and beyond.

That communities existed widely is again evident from flint distributions (Gardiner 1996) and by inference, in that their agricultural activity was the cause of the extensive soil erosion and accumulation of colluvial deposits which resulted in the reorganisation of the farming regime in the Middle Bronze Age.

## **Bias**

### ***The Chalk***

At its simplest the geology of Hampshire can be described as chalk or non-chalk and this is perhaps the single most important distinction in determining the location, endurance, recognition and investigation of the major elements of later prehistoric archaeology in the county. More detailed enquiry reveals a more complex picture, giving rise to a range of landscape categories and characterisations (HCC 1993, Lambrick and Bramhill 1999). This brings with it a clear warning of the dangers of oversimplification, but does little to shake the pre-eminent position that the study of chalkland sites (around Danebury, Andover, Basingstoke, and down the M3 corridor past Winchester) has achieved in the archaeology of the county and the region.

This obvious bias is made all the more acute by the scale of the projects and the exceptional publication record of those involved in the work. This is well illustrated by *The Later*

*Prehistoric Pottery Gazetteer* ([www.arch.soton.ac.uk/Projects](http://www.arch.soton.ac.uk/Projects)). It lists 368 sites/find spots for Hampshire of which 20% are published. This is below the national average of 28%, but the county has 14 sites with 'sizeable' collections (3,000 sherds or more) all from the chalk, and all but one published. Danebury is one of the sizeable collections and is actually described as 'enormous'; hardly surprising in that it alone yielded 158,000 sherds. Northamptonshire, by comparison, although it has a similar number of sites/find spots overall, has only one that is 'sizeable'. By implication Hampshire should have produced significantly sizeable quantities of other classes of finds and contextual information, and this is indeed the case.

Even so this excavation bonanza is not without its drawbacks and one of the principal participants would rather have seen all the effort expended on a single area to provide a more comprehensive picture (Fasham and Whinney 1991, 161). It could be argued, however, that since then the Danebury Environs project has achieved this more concentrated view and comprehensive model. Whatever the strengths and weaknesses, there is much to celebrate about the work on the Hampshire chalk even if it does leave other parts of the county in the shade. It has produced a set of reports and collection of archives that will form the basis of the study of the later prehistoric period for generations to come.

### **Nature of the evidence base**

Given the caveats expressed in the previous section, Hampshire is richly endowed with evidence for Late Bronze Age and Iron Age activity. The surprising robustness, on the chalk downland, of ancient field systems, land divisions and settlement sites in the face of intensive agriculture, and their receptiveness to aerial reconnaissance and other forms of survey, have allowed large areas of the later prehistoric farmed landscape to be mapped and appreciated. Here and there sheer scale, steeper slopes, woodland and good fortune have conspired to preserve some of this evidence in earthwork form. Away from the chalk the background picture is less clear, but a wide range of sites and finds from Bronze Age barrows and burials to Iron Age coins shows that the exploitation of heathland, river valleys and coastal fringe were just as important in their own way. Towards the end of the period the tribal centre of Calleva Atrebatum (Silchester) provides a suitable, if currently isolated, focus for considering the comings and goings of the Atrebates and Belgae on the eve of the Roman invasion.

In the early years of antiquarian interest the upstanding Bronze Age monuments in the county attracted less attention than those to the west, or at least yielded less spectacular finds and less

detailed reporting (Grinsell 1938; 1939; 1940). This was balanced, to some degree, by the discovery of significant Bronze Age hoards, for example at Selborne (Blackmoor) in 1840 and 1870 (Colquhoun 1979, 99).

Some of the county's prominent Iron Age earthworks received honourable mention in the 17th and 18th centuries from Camden, Aubrey and Stukeley, but it was not until the second half of the 19th century that excavation on an Iron Age site took place (Cunliffe 2000, 10). In 1858 Augustus Franks of the British Museum tackled a Danbury pit discovered by chance and thirty years later Dr J C Stevens reported on a number of 'pit-dwellings' (probably storage pits) revealed during construction of Hurstbourne railway station (1888, 25). He also looked enquiringly, if superficially, at a number of 'ancient camps'. By this time, however, the *Hampshire Field Club & Archaeological Society* was in existence, ready to lead an upsurge of interest in such later prehistoric works.

Visits to sites such as St Catharine's Hill, Quarley Hill and Beacon Hill populated the first field excursions and in 1907 Dr J P Williams-Freeman undertook, on behalf of the Club, 'to make a list of the Defensive Earthworks of Hampshire'. This was to result in the remarkable volume '*Field Archaeology as Illustrated by Hampshire*' (1915), to this day an essential tool for anyone studying the earthworks of the county.

Numbered among Williams-Freeman's collaborators was OGS Crawford, and he precipitated the next leap forward by demonstrating beyond doubt the effectiveness of aerial photography as an interpretative device. Flying from Andover airfield, Crawford and Alexander Keiller used many Hampshire sites, including Meon Hill, Woolbury, Danebury and Farley Mount, as the basis for their wider view of Wessex (1928).

In the 1930s Leslie Grinsell published his survey of Hampshire barrows and in the same decade Dorothy Liddell dug at Meon Hill (Liddell 1933; 1935) and CFC Hawkes, alone and with others, examined St Catharine's Hill, Winchester, Quarley and Bury Hill, near Andover, and Buckland Rings, near Lymington (Hawkes et al 1930; Hawkes 1936; 1939; 1940). The prompt publication of the results from St Catharine's Hill 'set a new standard in the presentation of evidence from detailed excavation, and also contained an exhaustive summary of the current knowledge of Early Iron Age Britain' (Champion & Champion, 1981).

World War II was to bring Hawkes' excavation campaign to a premature end, but his invasion hypothesis, the 'ABC of the Iron Age' still had some way to travel. This was played out on a wider stage at a Council for British Archaeology conference in 1958 entitled '*Problems of the Iron Age in Southern Britain*' (Frere 1961). While the main theme of multiple invasions was further amplified and extended, F R Hodson was chipping away at the foundations with a plea for a return to a simpler cultural model (1960).

Surprisingly perhaps, the county that had helped to inspire so much discussion and debate of Iron Age and related issues was comparatively quiet during this period, but it was the lull before the storm. Cunliffe has called the period before 1970 the 'age of innocence', when 'sparse datasets [could] create tolerably cohesive models'. In order to progress our understanding of 'the complex dynamics of Iron Age societies' he maintained, only large-scale landscape studies would do, and it was in this context that the Danebury campaign (1969-1988) and Danebury Environs project (1989-1996) were conceived and carried out.

This work was not alone. Excavations at Owslebury (Collis 1968: 1970) Silchester (Fulford 1984) and Hengistbury Head – now in Dorset, but integral to the development of the west of the county (Cunliffe 1987) were research-led, and there were more limited explorations at sites like Blagden Copse (Stead 1969) and Bramdean (Perry 1972) but the opportunities presented by rescue archaeology were ever-expanding. Balksbury (Wainwright 1970, Wainwright & Davies, 1995) and Winklebury (Robertson-Mackay 1977, Smith 1977) both saw extensive excavation and the large swathe cut through the county by the route of the M3 revealed an abundance of later prehistoric activity at sites like Micheldever Wood, Winnall Down and Easton Lane (Fasham 1985, 1987, Fasham et al, 1989, Fasham & Whinney 1991). Lesser swathes like the Southern Feeder Pipeline which sliced through Martin, Little Somborne, Ashley and Chilbolton Down (Neal, 1979, Catherall et al, 1984), also played their part. At the same time the expansion of Basingstoke and Andover led to the excavation of numerous sites, such as Portway West (Champion et al, 1974), Ructstalls Hill (Oliver & Applin 1978), Old Down Farm (Davies 1981), and Viabes Farm (Millett & Russell 1984).

Since the introduction of PPG 16 developer-funded 'rescue' projects have dominated the scene, although further research work embracing later prehistoric levels has taken place at Silchester (Fulford and Timby 2000) and on Roman villa sites near Andover (Cunliffe 2003b), the latter involving state of the art geophysical survey by English Heritage. Larger

scale investigations include Brighton Hill South (Fasham & Keevill 1995) but more typical projects result in a steady stream of interim notes flowing through the pages of *Archaeology in Hampshire*, with definitive publication often destined for *Hampshire Studies* (erstwhile *Proceedings*) the annual journal of the Hants Field Club (e.g. Butterworth 1996; Ellis and Rawlings 2001; Gibson 2004 etc).

Other key sources of new information are maritime and marine studies, English Heritage geophysical surveys – e.g. the Wessex Hillforts Survey (Payne 1996) and the Portable Antiquities Scheme (Worrell 2002). Also we should not underestimate the potential of material already out of the ground and the attendant archives in museum stores. Post-graduate research is undoubtedly the best opportunity to refine and redefine the conclusions and interpretations of the original excavators and to challenge established views. Experience has shown that often key elements have been misrepresented or under-reported, for example with human skeletal material, and feedback from the annual *Iron Age Research Student Seminars* suggests that a number of accepted ‘truths’ e.g. that there are few rectangular buildings in the southern British Iron Age and that cosmological referents provide an all-pervading guiding hand, are open to question (Hingley 2004).

## **Chronology**

Middle Bronze Age	(MBA)	1600 to 1100 BC *
Late Bronze Age	(LBA)	1100 to 800 BC
	(LBA/EIA)	800 to 600 BC *
Early Iron Age	(EIA)	600 to 350 BC
Middle Iron Age	(MIA)	350 to 100 BC *
Late Iron Age	(LIA)	100 to 43 AD

*\*Different dates appear in different publications. 1600 and 1500 are variously given for the start of the MBA, the LBA/EIA transition is reliably vague, and the MIA starts at 350 or 300.*

In ‘*Understanding the British Iron Age: an agenda for action*’ it states that ‘With the arguable exception of Wessex and parts of south-east England, there is no part of Britain where the chronological framework is understood in more than outline terms’ (Haselgrove et al 2001). That Wessex, or more particularly Hampshire, is so blessed is primarily because the Danebury and Danebury Environs excavations (38 years in total) have resulted in the compilation of an impressive ceramic sequence (Cunliffe 2000, 79) backed by radiocarbon dates and metalwork finds (e.g. 40 brooches). When one reads the caveats generally attached

to any use of this sequence by the Danebury excavators themselves, however, it's easy to feel sorry for the rest of Britain.

### ***Pottery – with C14 and selected metalwork – the Danebury sequence***

Putting any uncertainties and discrepancies to one side, the Danebury programme has produced a combined pottery assemblage which represents all phases of the Iron Age, spanning a period from the 8th century BC to the early decades of the 1st century AD.

It begins with All Cannings's Cross material (Cunnington 1923) and signals changes in the late 6th century (oolite-tempered ware), mid-4th century (unsophisticated coarseware), 3rd century (saucepan pots and other types of the *St Catharine's Hill - Worthy Down style* and the *Yarnbury-Highfield style*) and mid-1st century BC (the appearance of 'foreign' wares and production of Gallo-Belgic copies). The sequence is supported and refined by 60 'reliable' radiocarbon dates (of 70 assays) from Danebury itself, which have been subject to detailed statistical analysis (Orton in Cunliffe 1995). While the value of the method is clear it is noted that it 'require[s] computing power beyond the reach of almost all archaeologists' and is 'based upon concepts which are unfamiliar and therefore frightening to most archaeologists' (Cunliffe 1995, 130).

In the less terrifying world of sherd scrutiny the Danebury team looked at and listed comparable material from sites within their study area (450 km<sup>2</sup>) and further afield, and this has highlighted the territorial transitions - particularly a shift from east to west - that probably accounted for the ceramic changes (Cunliffe 2000, 162). The pottery has also benefited from petrological and production analysis (e.g. Morris 1994, 1997) and there are alternative interpretations of its significance and the validity of the 'style zone' approach propounded by Cunliffe (e.g. Collis 1994, Hill 1995). Whatever reservations attend this material the Danebury *form and fabric type series* is a useful resource and is housed with the Hampshire County Museums Service (A1979.1).

The detailed Danebury sequence is limited to the Iron Age proper and although pottery can be used to subdivide the period 1600 – 800 BC, it is with a broader brush. Simply stated, Deverel-Rimbury urns (Calkin 1962; Ellison 1980) are followed by a Post-Deverel-Rimbury assemblage (Barrett, 1980) also known as Plain Wares (Raymond 1994) before the highly decorated All Cannings Cross material makes its mark (Cunliffe 1991, 64). Problems of

overlap and division of domestic and funerary use make it a complicated picture, however. At the Kimpton urnfield (Dacre & Ellison 1981) the full repertoire of Wessex Bronze Age ceramics was present and 158 vessels were recovered representing the Middle and Late Bronze Age periods, but the charcoal samples did not, sadly, allow good radiocarbon results. Nevertheless, the site had an excellent spatial and stratigraphic sequence and was apparently, and incredibly, in continuous use for well over a thousand years. This archive is deposited at the British Museum.

### ***Metalwork***

The role of brooches, potentially datable to within 50 years, has been noted in relation to Iron Age ceramics. Two other groups of metal finds exist at either end of the spectrum. The earliest bronze hoards in Hampshire belong to the Middle Bronze Age and there are at least nineteen known (Lawson 1997). There appears to be an unmistakable discrimination against the inclusion of weapons in these deposits. For the Later Bronze Age there are at least sixteen hoards known and they can be divided between those dominated by axes and those dominated by weapons. The hoards with weapons occupy a date range of 1150-950 BC. Whilst Bronze Age metalwork generally has a limited application in terms of dating settlement sites, the hoarding process has wider social implications. Close dating of some individual items or deposits has taken place, however (Needham et al 1997).

### ***Coins***

Towards the end of the Iron Age the advantages of gold coinage over traditional valuables as a medium for wealth storage and payment led to it being adopted in the area. The first indisputably local issue was the type known as British B (Chute type staters), dating to between 80-60 BC, which had a distribution centred on Hampshire and Wiltshire. A decade later an extensive gold coinage depicting a triple-tailed horse copied from a mid-first century Belgic type was in circulation, as well as some rare silver issues. These were soon followed by a sophisticated gold and silver coinage produced by the Southern ruling elite, who realised the potential of coin types and legends for their own prestige and propaganda (Haselgrove 1994).

### ***Scientific dating***

*Radiocarbon dating:* The difficulties of applying C14 dating to the period are well known (Orton above). Other difficulties have come from deficient samples (Kimpton) and rogue



dates (some of the 49 assays of the M3 project). Frustration has also been expressed that some recent major projects (e.g. Maiden Castle, Dorset), which could have provided useful comparisons, did not make full use of the technique (Cunliffe).

*Dendrochronology*: This method was used to date some of the repairs to the waterfront structures at Testwood Lakes to the 1450s BC.

## **Landscape**

Aerial reconnaissance, fieldwork, geophysical survey, and excavations producing a wide range of environmental evidence have combined to create a picture of the later prehistoric farmed landscape and the way in which it was populated across a wide swathe of Hampshire. Changes in land division, field patterns, and settlement types through the period reflect responses to ecological, economic, social and political pressures.

### ***The Chalk***

The chalklands of Hampshire, along with much of Wessex, saw a major transition between 1600 and 800 BC from an open to an enclosed landscape. At the outset there were few man-made boundaries, but by the end settlements had become permanently established and the land rigorously divided. The inescapable conclusion is that land holding had become all-important and that power and prestige were now vested in the control of territory and harnessing of its productive capacity.

The extent and intensity of this prehistoric farmed landscape is evident from the aerial survey carried out as part of the Danbury project (Palmer 1984) and comparable data from outside this 450km<sup>2</sup> area. Investigation at a small number of locations has demonstrated some of the complexities involved. In the Middle Bronze Age, coaxial field systems were set out, with ridge-top linear ditches sometimes providing a base line. Trackways and rectilinear enclosures were also created but contemporary settlements were apparently rare and unenclosed. Pre-existing round barrows were either left alone, presumably in areas of pasture, or employed as laying-out markers (Crawford & Keiller 1928, 154; Cunliffe 2000, 159; Cook and Dacre 1985, 7).

In the Late Bronze Age new linear ditch systems were dug. These sometimes related to what already existed, either man-made features or focal points like hilltops, and sometimes cut across established fields to create new tracts of territory (Bowen 1978, Bradley et al 1994).

New types of enclosure, either large as at Balksbury, Winklebury and Danebury or small as at New Buildings (and possibly) Meon Hill and Old Down Farm, were also a feature of this period (Cunliffe 2000, 154).

Many of the Late Bronze Age linear ditches survived into and throughout the Iron Age as new elements were introduced into the landscape. Hillforts appear in some number in the 5th century BC, and in the Danebury study area the majority (4 out of 5) apparently have comparatively brief or neglected first lives. Danebury is the exception. It continues to develop and a 'special relationship' with the New Buildings complex, positioned along the route to the River Test, can be argued. Other enclosed and unenclosed farmsteads are also apparent and the Danebury Environs study was of sufficient detail to offer thoughts about preferred siting – the upper flanks of low hills but seldom the crests – and potential density – with sites perhaps 1km apart, with a similar share of natural resources (Cunliffe 2000, 170).

In the 3rd century Danebury saw a major refurbishment and this appears to have coincided with the abandonment of sites within a 10km radius, the implication being that people moved to the fort. Certainly the evidence suggests an intensification of activity there, but one that comes to an end in the 1st century BC. Now it is the fort's turn to be abandoned and a number of settlements in the region, e.g. Suddern Farm, Steepleton Hill and Meon Hill, define their boundaries with substantial ditches and continue in occupation until the Roman period. They are not alone and, as well as the limited reuse of sites like Woolbury and Houghton Down, are joined by 'banjo enclosures' - such as Nettlebank Copse – small circular sites with long funnelled entrances and, despite excavation, an uncertain function (Perry 1986, Cunliffe 2000, 188).

The excavations along the route of the M3 also looked beyond the confines of individual sites, particularly in the Itchen and Dever valleys, in an attempt to put them into a landscape context (Fasham and Whinney 1991). Further south, fragmentary but highly significant remains were found at Wallington, during the construction of the M27, which show that this isolated area of chalk was also occupied and farmed (Hughes 1974).

### *Away from the Chalk*

In the non-calcareous parts of the county field surveys, gravel quarrying, road building and urban development have added to the picture, although in comparatively sporadic fashion.

Bronze Age field systems and attendant settlements are known (or suspected) in East Hampshire astride the River Slea (Wessex Archaeology in press), at Hook, Warsash near the Hamble estuary (Ashbee 1987) and at Nursling on the Lower Test (Rees 1994, Adam et al 1997). The area of Southampton has yielded small but significant discoveries as at Maddison Street (Smith 1984) and Regent's Park (Cottrell 1986) the former prompting a useful survey of Iron Age sites and finds in and around the city by Brisbane and Cooper.

On the heathland soils of the New Forest enclosures and fields are rare but not unknown, according to Anthony Pasmore, for more than 40 years keeper of New Forest archaeology (Pasmore and Moody 2001, Pasmore and Mephram 2003). A class of Bronze Age site particularly prevalent in the Forest – there are at least 300 known - is the Burnt Mound, or more specifically the 'Boiling site' as not all feature a mound of burnt flints (Pasmore and Pallister 1967, Pasmore 2000). They are found elsewhere in the county, as at Harbridge in the Avon Valley (Shennan 1999) or Hatch near Old Basing (Oram 2006) but concentrate, or survive well, in the New Forest. The best current interpretation is that they are cooking sites, utilised by mobile transhumant groups. Another enigmatic appearance of burnt flint is in relation to burial sites and Deverel-Rimbury vessels at Langstone Harbour (Allen and Gardiner 2000) and on Twyford Down (Walker and Farwell 2000).

### **...and land use**

An extensive array of environmental evidence, including carbonised seeds, pollen, snails and animal bones, has been considered in detail for the Danebury, (Jones in Cunliffe 1995) Barksbury (Wainwright and Davies 1995, 83ff; Ellis and Rawlings 2001, 54ff) and M3 excavation projects (Fasham and Whinney 1991, 97ff). It indicates a self-sufficient farming regime essentially based on spelt wheat and six row hulled barley, with processing and storage, and stock rearing based on flocks of sheep and herds of cattle and pigs. The evidence also allows an appreciation of the way in which a variety of natural resources were exploited. With more animal bone pathology from Danebury than any other British, and possibly even European later prehistoric site, there are a myriad of details to consider, however. Were the late period occupants of Danebury really more careless and callous in handling livestock than their ancestors, for example, or had these bruised beasts already singled themselves out for sacrificial rites (Cunliffe 1995, 233)?

## **Settlement**

More than 70 years of contemplating aerial photographs and, more recently, of studying well-defined geophysical surveys, has resulted in a growing appreciation of the form and features of Late Bronze Age and Iron Age enclosed settlement sites in Hampshire (RCHM(E) 1984, 20/21). Large-scale excavation has added further detail (Fasham and Whinney 1991, 162-4) but the key word is 'enclosed', as sufficient traces of *unenclosed* occupation have been revealed by chance to suggest that the overall pattern is considerably denser than it appears. In addition, there is no simple way to predict the date of an enclosure from its morphology. Recent work in the Test Valley has examined two large rectilinear enclosures, at Flint Farm (Cunliffe 2003) and Fir Hill, Bossington (Brown et al, forthcoming) both of which defied the extended 'Danebury Environs model' by having earlier origins than anticipated. Furthermore the Bossington site, on clay with flints, yielded a triple-ditched enclosure c 25m diameter of Early Iron Age date, which did not show on air photos. Caution is clearly the watchword.

## ***The Chalk***

### *Middle Bronze Age*

Informative excavations on Middle Bronze Age settlements took place just across the county boundary in Wiltshire at Easton Down and Thorny Down (Stone 1935, 1937) but the small enclosure and large circular house noted there are clues as to what might have been revealed at Ashley in the Test Valley (Neal, 1980) if the investigation had been more than a restricted rescue operation. That occupation was widespread is shown by pottery finds from Nutbane (de Mallet Morgan 1959), Portway (Cook & Dacre 1985), Kimpton (Dacre & Warmington 1976) and Bawksbury (Wainwright and Davies 1981) and the presumption that settlements are never far distant from Deverel-Rimbury cemeteries e.g. Dummer (Willis 1952, 60) Daneshill (Millett and Schadla Hall, 1992). The extensive area excavations at Twyford Down, however, failed to find an occupation site associated with a multi-period barrow (Walker and Farwell 2000).

An extensive area of unenclosed occupation was revealed at Easton Lane, on the line of the M3 motorway (Fasham et al 1989). Here, ten circular post-built structures, numerous other buildings, pits, ditches and burials of Middle Bronze Age date precede the Later Bronze Age and Iron Age sites at neighbouring Winnall Down (Fasham). Parallels can be drawn also with the more limited finds at Chalton (Cunliffe 1970) and West Meon (Lewis and Walker 1977).

### *Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age*

At New Buildings, examined as part of the Danebury Environs programme, a Late Bronze Age rectilinear ditched enclosure was revealed laid out in relation to a straight metalled track linked to a coaxial field system. Although no contemporary structures were found a number of burials, one probably accompanied by a disc-headed bronze pin, came from an area of ditch lip quarrying. Other contemporary rectilinear enclosures must populate Palmer's aerial survey (1984) and prime candidates are Meon Hill (Liddell 1933) and Old Down Farm (Davies 1981) although here the Late Bronze Age activity may be obscured by Iron Age use of the site. This featured, in its Early Iron Age phase, a large post-built roundhouse, 12m in diameter, which compares with the 15m diameter structure found more recently at Flint Farm (Cunliffe, 2004). Storage pits, quarry scoops and other post-built structures were also present at both sites.

At Twyford Down, Winchester, several circular and four-post structures of Late Bronze Age date were found (Walker and Farwell 2000) and at Winnall Down, just to the north, at least four Late Bronze Age houses were present. A major change came at the latter site in the Early Iron Age, when eight circular structures and other features were surrounded by a bank and ditch. This settlement then migrated to the edge of ditch system dating from the Bronze Age, and back again, this time as an open site. A small Late Iron Age – Early Roman enclosure followed.

The large plateau enclosures at Balksbury, Winklebury, and Danebury constructed in the Late Bronze Age may not have functioned as permanent settlements, but even if they were employed on a seasonal basis, the nature of their use resulted in the accumulation at Balksbury and possibly Winklebury, of rich colluvial deposits. These may be equated with the make up of the large Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age 'middens' at Potterne, Wiltshire (Lawson 2000) and elsewhere and relate to deliberate depositions of organically rich material.

### *Middle Iron Age*

Over the next 200 years a new type of hill top enclosure appeared. These were usually contour works, 5ha in extent, defended by a single ditch with a rampart faced with stonework or timber. There were normally two opposed entrances, east and west. After about 400 BC a number of forts were abandoned and those remaining in use were strengthened, often on a massive scale. Danebury is a good example of such a 'developed fort'. It is notable for the

ordered regularity of its layout, the intensity of occupation, resulting from the repeated replacement of timber buildings, and the sheer quantity of material debris. Some of the implications are considered under 'Warfare and defence' below.

The Danebury Environs model sees an exodus from the countryside to Danebury for the period 300 to 100 BC, and intensification in all manner of activity there. Then the fort is abandoned and sites established or resettled in the 1st century BC. Banjo enclosures, which do not appear to have housed conventional occupation, are a feature of this period (Cunliffe and Poole 2000e), and Bury Hill is rebuilt on a massive scale (Cunliffe and Poole 2000b). The evidence, in the form of a comparative abundance of horse bones and vehicle and harness fittings, suggests that this circular arena may have been the scene of horse training and chariot manufacture. Some of these deposits have been selected for close dating under the 'Technologies of Enchantment' project. Geophysical survey has indicated the presence of a substantial, and presumably contemporary, enclosure just to the south of the fort.

### *Away from the Chalk*

On the Tertiary sands and gravels traces of settlement are more difficult to find, but there is enough evidence to suggest that this is as much to do with the problems of detection as any other factor. Deverel-Rimbury cemeteries are known, as at Zionshill (Entwhistle 2001) and Berry Wood, Burley (McGregor 1962) and occupation has been noted at Grange Road, Gosport (Hall and Ford 1995) where the excavators realised the significance of the fugitive features. The locations mentioned above, in East Hampshire, the Hamble valley, Southampton, Lower Test Valley and New Forest also have sufficient evidence to be confident that settlements accompanied the field systems and enclosures noted there. Finds often include fragments of loom weight and quernstone. A remarkable assemblage of Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age pottery and animal bone found in streambeds near the La Sagesse convent at Romsey, is nearing publication.

### **Warfare and defence**

The period from the Late Bronze Age to the Middle Iron Age saw profound changes in the Hampshire area, most clearly visible in the division of land and the emergence of defensive architecture. A few authors (e.g. Hawkes 1938, Ride 2006) are prepared to give such a role to some of the 'Wessex Linear' ditches, but the current consensus is that they were more concerned with defining rather than defending territory (Cunliffe 2000).

A similar challenge attends consideration of the Late Bronze Age hilltop enclosures, for example Balksbury, early Danebury and Winklebury. Although they are often categorised as 'hillforts' they are far removed in form and function from the more monumental militaristic structures of the Middle Iron Age. Nevertheless, as already noted, the rigour employed in partitioning land and the preponderance of weapons in Late Bronze Age hoards in the area is evidence of strong centralised control. Direct evidence for warfare at this period is slight but palisade enclosures may precede a number of rampart enclosures, e.g. Ladle Hill (Piggott), Meon Hill (Liddell 1938), Quarley (Hawkes) and Danebury (Cunliffe 1995). Also, research involving bronze sword blades has suggested that they have evidence of hand to hand conflict, but the examples in the Andover (Varndell) and Blackmoor (Colquhoun) hoards appear to have had a ritual beating before their deposition.

In the 6th century BC the new type of hill top enclosure – the hillfort - essentially a contour work, defended by a single ditch and rampart with opposed entrances, east and west, appears on the scene. Hogg (1979) lists about 40 hillforts for the county. There is good geographical coverage and Forde-Johnston (1976, 25) has considered their wider regional significance. Ten sites have seen some form of excavation, but the combined work at all but one of these would comfortably fit within the 2.5ha investigated at the other - Danebury. The picture is further concentrated in the Test Valley because three more of the excavated forts, Bury Hill, Quarley and Woolbury, are in the Danebury 'orbit'. Their limited use, despite substantial defences, allows a model to be created of a central, intensively utilised site – a stronghold and storehouse – surrounded by satellites which may be no more than tribal boundary markers (Cunliffe 2000).

Arguments about the role of a developed hillfort, like Danebury, will continue, but there is evidence, in the form of weapons, skeletons with wounds and gates destroyed by burning to suggest that the elaborate fortifications were not just for show. Particularly striking are the pit with 11,300 sling stones (River Test pebbles) found near the east gate, and skulls with spear and sword wounds, although just how these individuals received these injuries is a matter for conjecture.

Caesar described the effective use of the chariot by the Britons during his campaigns. Hampshire evidence includes possible vehicle and harness fittings from a number of sites, and

there is compelling evidence from Bury Hill (Cunliffe and Poole 2000b), where the later fort was probably the focus of a 'chariot school'. Late Iron Age coins also show the local Atrebatian rulers striking a fine pose as mounted warriors.

Excavations on hillfort sites.

Ashley Camp?	Williams-Freeman 1934	trench
Buckland Rings	Hawkes, 1936	300m <sup>2</sup>
Bury Hill	Hawkes, 1940, Cunliffe & Poole, 2000b	2,000m <sup>2</sup>
Caesars Camp	Riall, 1983	15m <sup>2</sup>
Castle Ditches, Whitsbury	Rhartz 1960	93m <sup>2</sup>
Chilworth Ring	Liddell, mss	
Danebury	Cunliffe, 1984, Cunliffe & Poole 1991	30,000m <sup>2</sup>
King Johns Hill, East Worldham	Maitland Muller	trench
St Catharine's Hill	Hawkes et al 1930	
Quarley Hill	Hawkes	
Woolbury	Cunliffe & Poole, 2000a	2,440m <sup>2</sup>

*Balksbury* *Hawkes, 1940 Wainwright, 1970, Wainwright & Davies, 1995, Ellis et al, 2001*

18ha – almost total investigation

*Oram's Arbour* *Biddle, Whinney*

20 ha? 3% investigated

*Winklebury* *Smith 1977, Robertson-McKay 1977*

7.6 ha – 30% investigated

### **Transport & Communications**

The Harroway is one of the most celebrated of Hampshire's ancient trackways (Williams-Freeman 1915, Hawkes 1925, Crawford 1960, 78). Leading from Salisbury Plain to Surrey and Kent, it is acknowledged as a prehistoric thoroughfare. Along its route stands Weyhill, site of a famous medieval sheep fair. Packhorse and drove roads converged on this point and provided good routes north and south. Hawkes, in particular, examines the longevity of these



and a number of other long distance paths in Hampshire. Whilst dates of origin are difficult to determine the increasing air photographic evidence (e.g. RCHM(E) 1984) leaves it in no doubt that a comprehensive pattern of tracks and droves, some accompanied by ditches and presumably hedges, some forming hollow ways, existed to serve the prehistoric fields and farmsteads right across the area.

Excavation has revealed details of a track at New Buildings, part of the Danebury Environs programme, which was metalled with flint gravel as early as the Late Bronze Age and probably had a gate or barrier (Cunliffe 2000, 19). This site was on the direct route from Danebury hillfort to the Test and the track linking the two sites and leading to the river has been traced. Within the fort, metalled road surfaces were noted at both entrances, and the interior plan involves a number of radiating streets of uniform width.

Trading activities, particularly in salt, metals and specialised rocks for querns and whetstones, show regular contact between sites in the interior and the coast and here the river systems of the Test, Itchen and Meon would have played their part. To the northeast of the county the headwaters of the Wey and tributaries of the Thames offered a different axis and the clear influence that this had late on in the period (Fulford and Timby 2000, 545ff) suggests that it was equally important at an early stage.

Work by Wessex Archaeology at Testwood Lakes, Totton, revealed the waterlogged remains of timber bridges and causeways dating from 1600 to 1450BC. One significant find was a cleat from a plank boat capable of cross-Channel journeys (Van de Noort in press). Other potential causeways have been noted in Langstone Harbour (Allen and Gardiner 2000).

Sea crossings in the early part of the period can be inferred from finds such as the numerous bronze hoards of northern French type (Lawson 1999). By the Iron Age, trade with the Continent was well established and Christchurch Harbour and Hengistbury Head played a significant role (Cunliffe 1987). The site was in use during the Early Iron Age and again in the 3rd/2nd century BC when the apparent dominance of St Catharine's Hill/Worthy Down pottery argues for a particular alliance with the area of central Hampshire (Cunliffe and de Jersey 1997). By the 1st century BC these links had intensified still further, but finds from central Hampshire, e.g. amphorae from Hook, Warsash (Ashbee 1987) suggest that the Solent route also came into its own.

Cattle are the traditional 'beasts of burden' for the period, with 'traction stress' arthropathies of the hip joint and lower limbs particularly evident in the Danebury sample (Cunliffe 1995, 219). Recent work by Bendrey, however, (2007) has revealed new diagnostic evidence for horse biting which may give these animals a wider role. Cart and chariot fittings (nave rings and linch pins) and harness gear are familiar finds from a range of sites, including farmsteads such as Old Down Farm (Davies 1981) as well as hillforts like Danebury and Bury Hill (Cunliffe 1995, 2000). A specialised role, the war chariot, can be argued for some of this equipment and the Bury Hill fort, in its later circular manifestation, may have been the scene of chariot manufacture and associated horse training (Cunliffe 2000, but see Bendrey (2007).

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