

From the *Transactions* of the
Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society

The Marshfield Barrows

by G. L. Gettins, H. Taylor, and L. V. Grinsell
1953, Vol. 72, 23-44

© The Society and the Author(s)

THE MARSHFIELD BARROWS

by G. L. GETTINS, M.A., H. TAYLOR, M.C., M.B., CH.B.
and L. V. GRINSELL, F.S.A.

THE EXCAVATION

by G. L. GETTINS, M.A.

THE following report deals with work done on the two confluent round barrows, numbered III and IV on the plan (FIG. 1), among the group of barrows which includes Oswald's Tump, one mile north-east of Marshfield, Gloucestershire (Nat. Grid. Ref. ST. 795745). Though well-known, this group had not previously been scientifically excavated. In the summer of 1947, the present occupier had the field on which the group of barrows is situated converted from pasture to arable. For the purpose of salvaging any remaining evidence, it was decided to excavate and examine as much as possible before the spring sowing. A few volunteers, assisted by a monetary grant from the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, carried out the work intermittently at weekends during the winters of 1947-8 and 1948-9. They were Mr and Mrs P. A. Rahtz, Mr G. L. Gettins, Dr and Mrs H. Taylor, and Mr G. A. Brown with others. The willing permission of the farmer, Mr K. W. S. Edwards of Upper Wraxall, and the valuable advice of Mr B. H. St John O'Neil, v-p.s.a., Chief Inspector of Ancient Monuments, and his wife, and encouragement from Dr D. P. Dobson (now Dobson-Hinton) and Dr F. S. Wallis are hereby gratefully acknowledged. The text of this report has been revised by Dr Herbert Taylor, Messrs P. A. Rahtz and L. V. Grinsell. The original plans (FIGS. 1, 2 and 3) by G. L. G. have been redrawn by Mr Graham A. Brown. All objects found were presented to the City Museum, Bristol.

SUMMARY

A careful surface examination of the whole area was made and the sites of all barrows, including that of Oswald's Tump, probed. Digging was, on account of time and labour available, restricted to the confluent barrows III and IV, which were found to be of Early to Middle Bronze Age date, *circa* 1500-1400 B.C. according to present-day chronology. There was a primary cremation in the centre of III which had a kerb of sloping local oolitic slabs around the circumference of the mound. In the centre of barrow IV, adjoining III on the N.E., there were traces of fire and scattered calcined bones. The retaining kerb of this barrow was well-marked only on the S.E. side, and elsewhere it may have been unfinished; it was built fairly soon after III. The most notable feature was the existence of four secondary deposits of cremated bones probably of infants in pits beneath cairns of varying elaborateness built of stones from the kerb of barrow IV and near the junction of the two barrows.

THE SITE

The group is situated on the top of the level oolite plateau 500 feet above sea level, being the southern end of the Cotswolds. It was open grass downland until the enclosure of 1853 and there is a depth of top-soil varying between nine inches and two feet above a subsoil of disintegrated oolite whose surface beneath the barrows presents a characteristic 'smoothed' appearance similar to that of rough chips of ice after partial melting.

As will be seen from FIG. 1, after the levelling of 1947 there were scattered about the field nine patches of stones and pinkish earth which contrasted with the vandyke brown earth of the rest of the field. These marked, according to local information, the sites of some four or five grassy mounds about two feet high known as the 'soldiers' graves'. In addition there had been a very fine bell-barrow some seven feet high, known as Oswald's Tump and locally reported to be the site of King

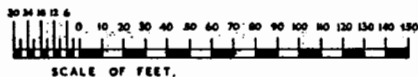
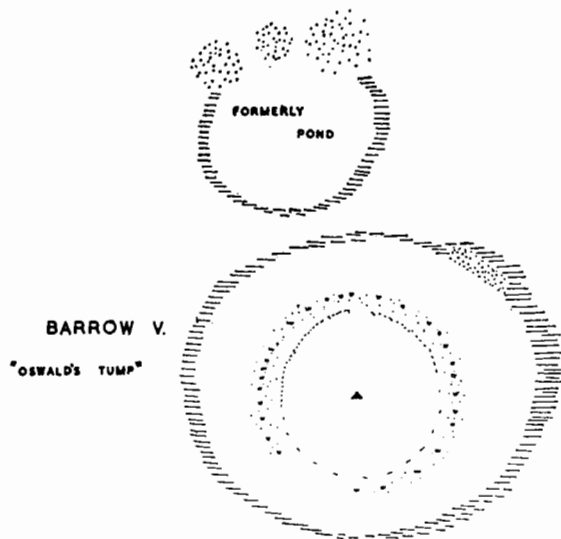
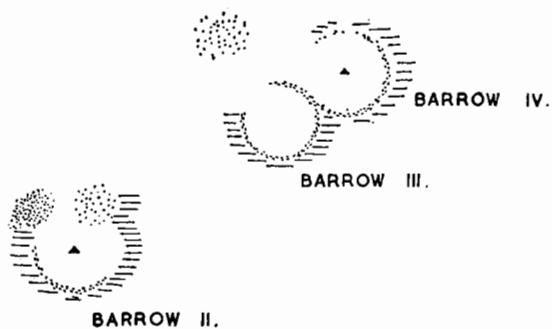
SITE PLAN

AUTUMN 1947 AFTER LEVELLING
AND FIRST PLOUGHING.

EDGE OF PLOUGHED LAND WITH
PINK-RED EARTH INSIDE.

LOOSE STONES.

GRASS UNTOUCHED
BY LEVELLING.



G.L.G. & G.A.B., 1953

Fig. 1. Site Plan of the Marshfield Group

facing p. 24

Oswald's martyrdom or burial after the Battle of Maserfield, A.D. 577. Immediately north of it there had been a depression which was filled in with spoil from Oswald's Tump in 1947.

Some 150 yards N.E. of barrows III and IV and in continuation of the rough axis of barrows I-IV, there are three very faint mounds slightly more regular than natural undulations and suggestive of small barrows levelled, perhaps, by medieval ploughing.

The bottom nine inches or more of each of the two barrows excavated had been left intact by the bulldozer, and it is believed that the subsequent ploughing—a very light one—was not deep enough to have disturbed any primary deposits in the barrows before they were excavated.

Apart from the King Oswald tradition—the 'soldiers' graves' being attributed to those who had fallen in the battle—there were accounts of travellers' horses shying at night in the nineteenth century, and also a vague general respect and awe still felt locally for the site. Dr Dobson-Hinton has heard of a tale of men struck by lightning when about to dig in Oswald's Tump. No other folklore was discovered.

A short account of the excavation here described was printed in the *Archaeological News Letter*, April 1949, p. 8.

EXCAVATION OF CONFLUENT BARROWS III AND IV

In view of the shortage of time and labour, it was decided to limit excavation to a trial trench 3 feet wide through the diameters of the contiguous earth patches which were all that remained of these two barrows, since they were the most clearly defined and possessed perimeter rings of loose surface stones. This trench was subsequently extended in a manner to be described. The following features were revealed and are here described in order from S.W. to N.E.

BARROW III

1. *The Kerb.* A well-built kerb of dry oolitic stone slabs up to 15 inches long with other irregular stones sloped inwards

towards the centre resting on a tail of earth from the original mound. The outer face of the kerb extended down to contact the undisturbed surface of the subsoil. The turf and top-soil beneath the outer edge of the kerb seems to have been removed. The most careful examination failed to reveal the slightest sign of layering in the earth above the surface of the oolite subsoil, either inside or outside the perimeter. It was however noticed that the 'tail' of earth (see above) was slightly pinker than the soil outside the kerb.

The height to which this kerb may have reached was not ascertainable. In various places around the perimeter, it seemed that the bulldozer employed in levelling the field had left undisturbed an inch or two of soil above the top edge of the slabs (unless this was caused by the later ploughing), suggesting an original kerb height of about 1 foot 3 inches above the oolite subsoil; but the evidence was slight, and it is certainly possible that the kerb slabs or stones may once have extended higher even to a total capping, which may well have been removed down to field level as a convenient 'quarry' for nearby field walls.

2. *The Layer of Burnt Material.* In the centre of this barrow was a layer of charcoal and burnt earth varying up to one inch in thickness and from three to six inches above the oolite subsoil. Subsequent widening of the trench showed it to average four feet in diameter, with scattered traces up to ten feet from the centre. Nowhere in the sections were there any traces visible of the original surface layers or platform on which this fire had taken place.

3. *The Primary Interment.* At the southern edge of the burnt layer, and resting on it, was a kidney-shaped mass, about 1 foot 10 inches long by 9 inches wide, of calcined fragments of human bone, almost free from charcoal grains. Lying on top of the mass was a small roughly spherical perforated amber bead, 0.33 inch maximum diameter. Slightly in the hollow of the 'kidney' there lay close together a small

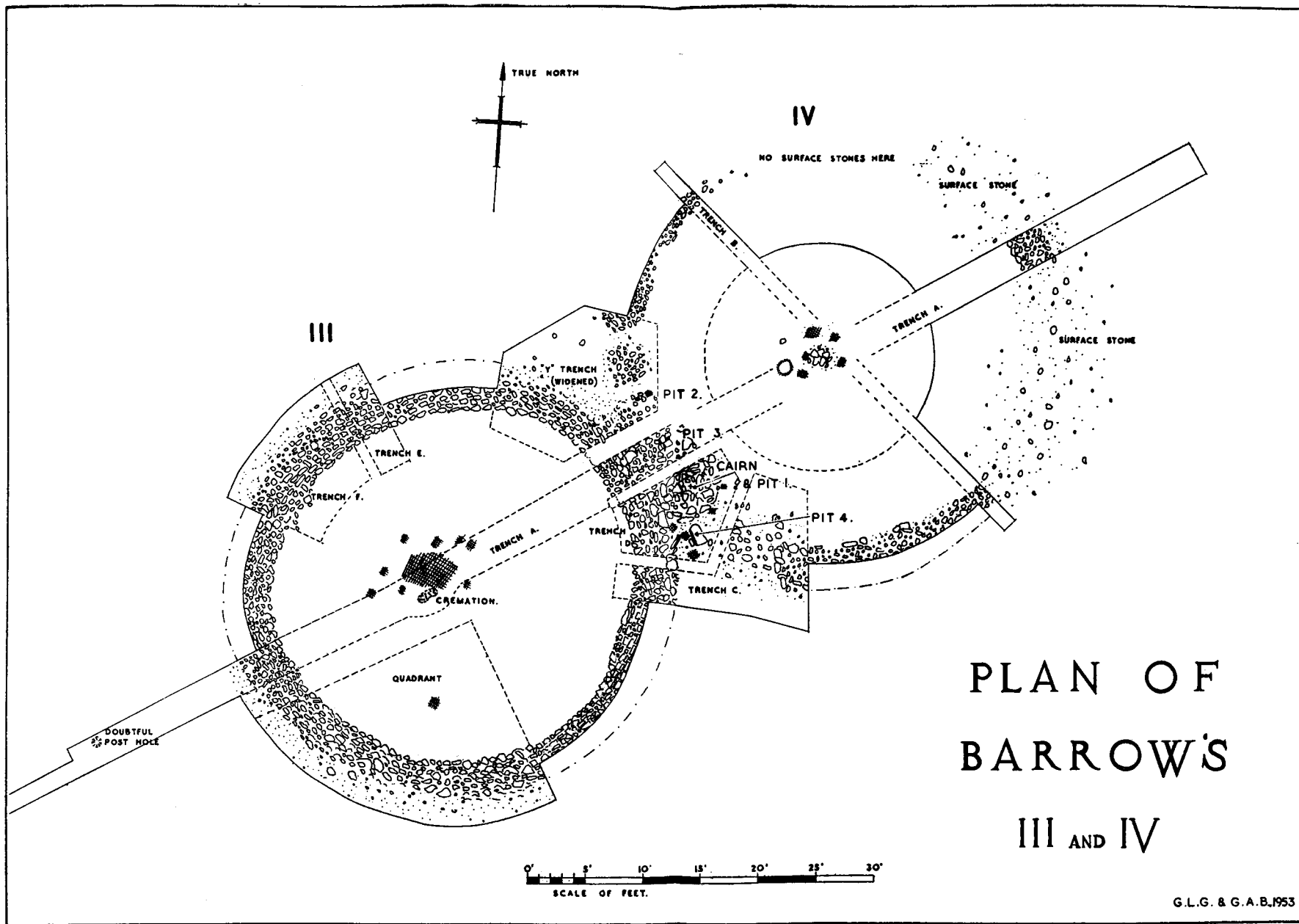


Fig. 2. Plan of Marshfield Barrows III and IV

bronze awl, and two pulley-buttons of shale, at least one of which had been burnt. Later an oval amber bead and a spherical burnt bead of shale were found amongst the bones.

The appearance and shape of the bone mass suggest the possibility that after the funeral pyre had cooled, the bone fragments were collected carefully (none were discovered in the burnt layer) in a cloth or leather bag, though no trace of it or of wrinkle impressions in the surrounding earth were noted.

4. *The Junction of the Kerbs of Barrows III and IV.* The point of contact of the perimeter kerbs of barrows III and IV was next examined (PLATE II); and from the position of the slabs belonging to the kerb of barrow IV it was clear that they were put in position after the construction of the kerb of barrow III, as the lower edges of the kerb stones of barrow IV rested on the underlying kerb-stones of barrow III. There was nothing to indicate any appreciable lapse of time between the two structures.

BARROW IV

1. *The Kerb.* Excavation for some ten feet on each side of the central trench at the point of contact of the two kerbs was now carried out, and it became clear that the kerb of barrow IV, which may have been unfinished excepting at s.e., consisted of loose stones with occasional gaps around the circumference.

Just within the kerb of barrow IV, Dr and Mrs Taylor found an animal bone, which has since been identified by Dr M. A. C. Hinton as the right calcaneum of the Small Ox (*Bos longifrons*).

2. *Secondary Interments in S.W. Sector of the Kerb.*

- (a) Cairn and Pit 1. Immediately south-east of the point of junction of the two kerbs, that belonging to barrow IV expanded into a low cairn of slabs arranged in a manner resembling the base of a fir-cone. It was thought at the time of excavation that the kerb slabs might have been disturbed and rearranged in this formation as there was

a complete gap in the kerb just beyond the cairn. On removal, it was found that the slabs forming the cairn had been laid sloping inwards against a central mound or core of clean earth some nine inches high, which had been piled on top of a large unshaped slab of oolite laid flat on the oolite subsoil, on which lay traces of charcoal and burned earth. This slab covered a small pit, about ten inches diameter and nine inches deep, with a very sharp lip. It was filled with clean charcoal tightly packed. Scattered in the charcoal were some minute fragments of calcined bone, apparently, according to Dr Taylor, belonging to the tables of an infant's or foetal cranium. The charcoal filling continued to the bottom of the pit, the sides of which showed no trace of heat. In the filling, $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches above the bottom of the pit, were two small fragments of brown charred bone, human in structure and possibly of infant vertebrae, and the crowns of three uncut milk molar teeth.

- (b) Pit 2. North-west of the kerb junction, two overlapping horizontal slabs of oolite were found beneath the earth 'tail' of the original mound and resting on a patch of burned earth and charcoal. The slabs were fire-marked and much 'smoothed' or weathered. They covered a shallow depression four inches deep, scooped out of the burned layer and reaching through it to the oolite subsoil surface beneath. The filling was of mixed charcoal and earth and burnt small stones. Resting on top of the filling in the centre immediately beneath the slabs and perhaps deliberately placed there was a small fossil bivalve identified by Dr H. M. Muir-Wood of British Museum (N.H.) as *Burmirhynchia* sp., probably derived from the Great Oolite on which the barrows are situated. It was burnt, presumably during the combustion of the funeral pyre. Scattered through the filling were a few very small fragments of well-calcined bone. At the bottom lay a few more fragments of similar bone, human in structure but too broken to identify.



PLATE Ia. Primary deposit in Marshfield Barrow III
(White circle indicates position of bronze awl and two shale studs)

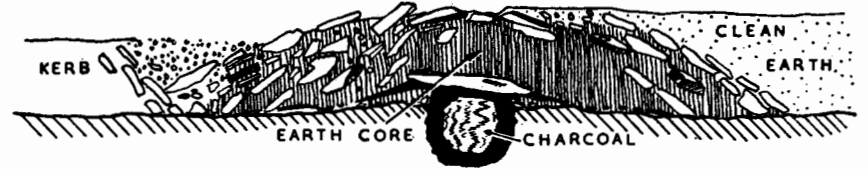
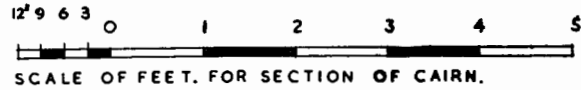
Photo: P. A. Rahtz



PLATE Ib. Cairn no. 1, in Marshfield Barrow IV, from s.e.

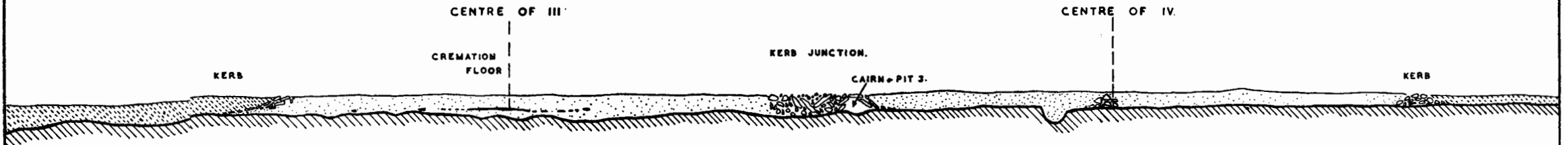
Photo: P. A. Rahtz

SECTIONS OF BARROWS III, IV.



CAIRN AND PIT No. 1

THOUGH CENTRE PARALLEL
TO TRENCH A.



SECTION OF TRENCH A.
BARROWS III. AND IV.

- DARK BROWN EARTH
- REDDISH "
- OOLITE SUBSOIL SHOWING "SMOOTHED" TOP SURFACE.



G.L.G. & G.A.B.,

Fig. 3. Section through Marshfield Barrows III and IV



PLATE II. Junction of the Kerbs of Marshfield Barrows III and IV,
from north-west

Photo: P. A. Rahts

- (c) Pit 3. On demolishing the kerb of barrow IV at the point of junction with barrow III, seven or eight slabs were found covering and leaning against a central earth core, as in the more elaborate cairn above pit 1. Beneath the earth core was likewise a horizontal slab covering a small pit filled with charcoal. Only a few eggshell-like fragments of calcined bone (perhaps from the tables of an infant's cranium) were found in the clean charcoal filling.
- (d) Pit 4. The fourth and last of this series of pits was found under a slab lying on the kerb, about 5 feet east of pit 1. It was 1 foot 3 inches diameter, 1 foot deep on its west side, and 1 foot 3 inches deep on its east side. The filling was more earthy than that of the other pits, and contained a few minute pieces of bone, which were all on the east side of the pit, and ten snail shells.

The perimeter of this barrow was closely examined further to the east, but no more pits were found, though within six feet of pit 4 were two small patches of charcoal without any bone or other material, which were presumably spread from pit 4.

3. *Relation of Pits to Barrow IV.* The position of these pits and cairns in the south-western sector of the barrow, which is the most usual position for secondary interments, leaves little room for doubt that they were inserted into the retaining kerb, especially as all four pits were on its circumference; and they should probably all be regarded as normal secondary interments. Pit 2, however, appeared to be situated beneath the earth 'tail' of the original mound; but it seems best to regard this as caused by subsequent overspreading of the mound. The small cairns over pits 1 and 3 were most likely of stones taken from the retaining kerb.

4. *The Primary Interment.* The earth between the bulldozed level and the very uneven surface of the oolite subsoil was intact except for slight disturbance by superficial ploughing. In the centre there was a pile of six or seven large blocks of oolite (4-8 inches diameter), fire-marked externally. The earth

around contained a large amount of scattered charcoal at different levels, a little calcined bone probably of a youth in his teens, and also several fragments of one or more Middle Bronze Age collared urns. The primary interment seems to have comprised a cremation represented by the calcined bone, charcoal, and parts of cinerary urn.

A small piece of unburnt human cranium, found on a spoil-heap, could have been either:

- (1) From a secondary or intrusive inhumation yet to be located; or
- (2) Dropped by a visiting archaeologist (!); or
- (3) A trepanned 'roundel' put into the barrow for reasons of superstition (*cf.* Piggott, in *P.P.S.*, VI for 1940, 112-32).

5. *Sequence of Events*

- (i) Possibly the circumference was marked out by a series of stones (but of this, however, there is no evidence).
- (ii) A small central cairn was made.
- (iii) A fire was burned against one side of this cairn, and from this fire, small quantities of black ash were carried over the ground subsequently covered by the barrow, possibly by the feet of the builders or those concerned with the funeral ceremonies.
- (iv) Scraps of burnt human bone, almost free from ash and charcoal, and therefore separated from the pyre, were placed on the outside of the cairn, falling into some of its interspaces. In one spot, a small slab had covered about half the total amount of burnt bone, the whole of which weighed probably not more than an ounce.
- (v) Soil was then laid on and around the cairn. The soil first spread over the base of the barrow either already contained, or was later strewn with, small scraps of calcined human bone free from charcoal, all of which occurred in the first four inches above the original ground surface. The sherds of cinerary urn(s) were in the same level.

- (vi) A kerb of stones was built overlapping the perimeter of the mound. Dr Taylor considers that there was, at any rate on s.e., a shallow ditch (or marking-out trench), on the inner edge of which oolite slabs were placed leaning inwards against the edge of the kerb.
- (vii) The four pits were then made in the s.w. sector of the kerb to receive the deposits of burnt bones.

ADDITIONAL EXCAVATION, AUTUMN 1948

Permission was given to extend the excavation in the autumn of 1948, and the whole of the area inside barrow III was cleared. Nothing further was found except some 40 flint flakes scattered throughout the filling. The kerb was found to be of uniform structure throughout. The central area of barrow IV and all the south-western half of the interior were also cleared to sub-soil surface. The only finds were a few more fragments of urn.

The excavation trenches were filled in as the site was required for agriculture; but some of the stones were removed by the farmer. It seems certain that repeated ploughing will gradually destroy the kerb of barrow III as it lies too near the surface for preservation.

COMPARATIVE STUDY AND CONCLUSIONS

by G. L. GETTINS and L. V. GRINSELL

The outer retaining-walls of barrows III and IV may be compared with other examples on the Cotswold Oolite, e.g. Lansdown barrow 6a¹, and perhaps Cow Common in the parish of Nether Swell (Greenwell ccxviii)². It can be said in general terms that round barrows on the chalk downs almost always have a circumferential ditch, the material from which was added to the mound, or (especially in the case of barrows of the Wessex Bronze Age culture) used to form an outer bank.

¹ *Ant. J.*, xxx, 1950, 44-6.

² Greenwell, *British Barrows*, 1877, 452.

Not many round barrows on Oolitic Limestone have yet been scientifically excavated for the purpose (*inter alia*) of studying their structure. It seems already evident, however, that in view of the difficulty of quarrying a surrounding ditch, most of the barrows were formed of either earth or stones or both, gathered from the surroundings, and sometimes edged round with either a continuous retaining-wall or an 'open' peristalith. Such retaining-walls were studied in detail by the late E. H. Payne, whose premature death from drowning while on Active Service in 1943 robbed us of an archaeologist of outstanding promise.¹

Pairs of round barrows either almost touching or even with their margins overlapping, occur occasionally in all regions where barrows exist in quantity, and as such are of no special significance. It is good to get a clear demonstration of relative date of barrows III and IV, while admitting that they are roughly contemporary. The two adjoining round barrows on Charmy Down, Somerset, excavated by Mrs M. A. Williams in 1941, were likewise roughly contemporary, but one did not overlap the other excepting by subsequent overspread.²

With regard to the cairns and four pits, it seems difficult to consider them as normal secondary interments of infants similar to those on record elsewhere. It is clear that in each case only a small portion of a cremated body had been interred. The absence of the other bones can hardly be accounted for either by their softer texture, since some have survived in good condition, or by 'lime-hungry' soil, since the subsoil is oolite and the primary interment in the centre of barrow III was intact. Whether they were interments of a ritualistic nature, and whether the fossil bivalve in pit 2 was of any significance at all, must remain for the present matters of conjecture.

There is, however, increasing evidence of the presence of pits containing 'token' cremations (i.e. representing part only of

¹ Payne, E. H., in *Proc. Dorset N.H. & A.S.*, LXV, 1943, 38-52, and *W.A.M.*, I, 1944, 83-91.

² *Ant. J.*, XXX, 1950, 34-43.

a human body) beneath barrows in the south of England (e.g. barrow 5 at Radley, Berkshire) and particularly in the south-western counties. Barrows I and II on Chewton Plain, Mendip, excavated by Mrs Audrey Williams, contained token cremations, and such were also found by Mr W. F. Grimes on the Cotswolds during the 1939-45 War (*Proc. Somerset Arch. Soc.* xciii, 58-9). The date of the latter is believed to be Middle Bronze Age.

Parallels from ethnographical sources are easy to find. Among the Andaman Islanders, and in parts of America, Australia, New Guinea, and elsewhere, parts of the cremated bones of a deceased husband are collected and worn by the widow (E. S. Hartland, *Legend of Perseus*, 1895, II, 315-6). It is not impossible that mothers might have retained a portion of the cremated bones of their deceased children in certain instances. Another point is that selection of cremated bones from a funeral pyre for insertion in a barrow must always have resulted in a percentage of smaller fragments being left in the pyre.

NOTES ON OTHER SITES IN THE MARSHFIELD GROUP

Site 1 consists of an oval patch of very red earth quite clear of stones. Probing revealed no indications of pits beneath.

Site 2 (BARROW I) is a dense stony patch with traces of red earth in the centre. The appearance suggests a low barrow, the topmost materials from which were probably dumped by the bulldozer to form what we now see as Site 1.

Sites 3 and 4 (BARROW II). Site 3 has the appearance of a round barrow, consisting of a patch of pink earth edged on s.w. quadrant by traces of a loose stone perimeter. In the centre, and also 8 feet to the west, were found five very small fragments of coarse pale brown ware, and a few small pieces of calcined human bone: apparently all that remained of an inurned cremation. Site 4, a patch n. of site 3, was probably a soil-dump from this barrow, caused by bulldozing.

Site 5 (BARROW III): described earlier in this Report.

Site 6 is a patch of scattered stones, dumped from barrows III and IV by the bulldozer.

Site 7 (BARROW IV): described earlier in this Report.

Site 8 (BARROW VI (?)) consisted formerly of a circular depression, believed to have been a disused pond; but Mr A. T. Wicks considers that it might have been a pond-barrow. It was filled in with material from Oswald's Tump in 1947.

Site 9 (BARROW V) is Oswald's Tump. This barrow was visited by Mr A. T. Wicks for the Ordnance Survey before 1942. He reported that it was a large bell-barrow, showing signs of disturbance by a central pit and by the more modern method of trenching from the side. 'A sharp lookout', which the driver of the bulldozer is said to have kept when the site was levelled in 1947, did not reveal anything of note. A careful search of the bulldozed surface of the levelled barrow in 1948 resulted in the finding of a few flint flakes only. The area was probed but no indications of any pit or depression in the centre were located. The site consists of a circular area about 72 feet diameter, surrounded by traces of a loose ring of stones,—the perimeter of the original mound.

Note. Since the text of this paper was written, Mr K. W. S. Edwards, the farmer, has informed L.V.G. that the only barrow which was bulldozed was that known as Oswald's Tump.

Amendment to Fig. 3. The central heap of stones in barrow IV rested on the original turf-line and not on the sub-soil or bedrock as drawn. The kerb of barrow IV should have been drawn sloping inwards towards the mound.

APPENDIX I: THE HUMAN REMAINS

by HERBERT TAYLOR, M.C., M.B., CH.B.

CENTRE OF BARROW II

These few calcined fragments represent an individual, probably at least 45 years of age. They include parts of a stout femur, other long bones and cranial bones. The anterior end of the sagittal suture is partly obliterated, the coronal appears open but I suspect that obliteration had begun internally.

BARROW III

Primary Interment

The bones appear to represent one individual between about 25 and 35-40 years of age, if modern data be applied. Their sex is uncertain; it may be female. The one exception is a burnt fragment which Mr Martin Hinton has kindly identified for me as part of the molar of a hedgehog.

All regions of the body are represented—head, trunk, pelvis, upper and lower limbs including both hands and both feet. The larger bones are far from complete; very many of the smaller are missing; clearly they have been gathered from the pyre, a deduction confirmed by the scarcity of charcoal and ash. Most are fully calcined but a few are merely charred.

All the epiphyses have fused with their shafts, including that of the clavicle which normally unites at about 25 years. The cranial sutures show no trace of obliteration, which begins between about 30 and 40; since calcination tends to disguise its early stages and since some of the parts first affected are missing, we cannot set the upper age limit of this skull much less than 50. But the teeth, though heavily worn, are less so than some from Bronze Age deposits; the articular surfaces, even those of the vertebrae, show no so-called osteo-arthritic lipping; probably, therefore, they are relatively young.

Certain pelvic fragments appear to be female but are too much distorted by fire for certainty. The supra-orbital ridge is well marked yet not necessarily male. The size of the bones is hard to determine, the muscular impressions are good, the teeth appear small. It may be repeated here that the size and muscular development of bones and the size of teeth are of little value as criteria of sex.

The articular surfaces of the mandibular condyles are broad, almost oval, suggesting much rotary grinding by the molar teeth. The right condyle is much the stouter; Professor E. K. Tratman tells me that such differences are not uncommon. He also notes several teeth badly affected by pyorrhoea.

A shale bead, apparently burnt, was found wedged between the neck of the left scapula and an adherent rib; it may well have formed part of a necklace worn by the dead when cremated. An amber bead lying amongst the bones, however, must have been added afterwards. One fragment of charcoal may have been derived from a turned wooden bracelet, another shows a perforation either of human or insect origin. The absence of burnt flint is perhaps worth notice.

BARROW IV

Primary Deposit

(Beneath slab resting on side of small central cairn)

Amongst about an ounce of broken calcined limb, cranial, pelvic and other bones is the proximal end of a massive 1st. R. metatarsal, lacking its epiphysis which unites with the shaft between about 17 and 20 years. To judge by the big feet, it belonged to a youth.

Contents of 'Beehive' Pit, 1 and 2 being 3 inches above floor; 3 at all levels.

Box 1

Charred bone from the face and skull of a human foetus or very young infant. It includes the orbital part of the L. malar, the petrous part of the L. temporal, the basilar process, etc.

Box 2

Parts of the calcined maxilla and developing deciduous molars of both jaws of a foetus or very young infant. Professor E. K. Tratman has identified all four 2nd molars and noted the absence of dentine.

Box 3

Many calcined fragments of skull and the shafts of two long bones, almost certainly human: either foetal or infantile.

APPENDIX II: THE ARTIFACTS

by L. V. GRINSELL, F.S.A.

(a) The Pulley-Buttons or Studs from Barrow III

The two pulley-buttons or studs were found just below the top of the concave centre of the kidney-shaped mass of burnt bones, and near them was a bronze awl. Each stud is about 0.6 inches in diameter and has a flat base, and one (probably both) had a conical top. Both are of shale, and the black example has been burned. (It is regretted that they have both largely disintegrated since being found; but one was photographed and a model of each was made before the originals disintegrated).

This type of stud is known in amber, shale, jet, and baked clay, but the majority of the English examples are of jet, suggesting manufacture in Yorkshire. Examples with adequate associations belong to the Food Vessel period in the north of England, and to the Wessex Early Bronze Age culture in the south. It is possible that the Marshfield examples may have been traded along the Jurassic Route though the evidence is admittedly very slender.

Whenever the sex of the interment with which they have been associated has been determined, it has been female; and those found with crouched inhumations have always been near the neck. They often occur in pairs. They were most probably dress-fasteners.

(b) *The Beads of Amber and Shale from Barrow III*

The two small spherical amber beads are of the normal type of common occurrence in round barrows of the Wessex Early Bronze Age culture in the south of England and require no other comment.

The bi-conical shale bead, now in two parts but originally in one piece, is of more interest. Its maximum diameter is 14 mm. and present thickness 12 mm., but a small portion has been lost by disintegration. The type is essentially that of the biconical globular beads sometimes found with interments of the Wessex culture, occasionally covered with gold foil as in Hoare's barrow 156, Normanton, Wiltshire (*Devizes Museum Cat.* 1, no. 140).

(c) *The Bronze Awl from Barrow III*

The awl is of Thurnam's Class I (*Archaeologia* XLIII, 465), of circular section excepting at one end where it has been flattened on opposite sides to form a tang for insertion into a handle of wood or bone. The point is missing. The present length is 1.25 inches; the original length was probably about 1.4 inches. A similar example, likewise associated with a Wessex Bronze Age cremation, was found by Dr J. F. S. Stone and the late Sir Norman Gray Hill in a barrow on Stockbridge Down, Hants. (*Ant. J.* xx, 1940, 44-7); bronze awls of this type are indeed common in Early and Middle Bronze Age contexts in Southern England.

The writer is much indebted to Mr L. Biek (of the Ancient Monuments Laboratory, M.O.W.) who examined the awl, and discussed with the British Non-Ferrous Metals Research Association, Mr H. H. Coghlan, and others, whether the awl passed the fire or was added afterwards. The gist of the matter is that in general, the temperatures of funeral pyres of wood are thought to be in the region of 1000°, but under special conditions this temperature may be exceeded, The melting point of copper (1080°) is not much lowered by the addition of 10% tin.

The provisional conclusion is that the very smooth corrosion of the awl indicates that it did not pass through the funeral pyre but was added to the cremated bones afterwards; whether they were still hot or had cooled down is uncertain.

(d) *The Potsherds from Marshfield Barrow IV*

Between 6 inches and 2 feet N. of the centre of the barrow, on or just above the layer of black ash, Dr and Mrs Taylor found part of the neck, and parts of the body, of what appears to have been a collared urn of Abercromby's Type I. A few more sherds were found three yards S.E. of the centre, and yet a few more between 10 and 15 feet N.E. of the centre. These sherds are all of the same type,—a rather coarse ware, brown externally and brownish-black on the inside, and between 0.4 inches and 0.55 inches thick. They appear to have all come from the same urn, which was most likely about 10 inches in diameter at the widest part, and perhaps 13–14 inches high. The upper rim of the neck is ornamented by indentations, probably by finger-nail, the centres of which are 0.6 inches apart. The sherds of the body of the urn are all plain. Unfortunately there are not enough sherds remaining to reconstruct the urn.

(e) *Flint Flakes and Implements from Marshfield Barrows and Barrowfield*

A very careful search was made by Dr and Mrs Taylor and others not only over the barrows, but also over the rest of the field in which they are situated. This search made it abundantly clear that flint flakes and implements were much commoner on and in the barrows than elsewhere. Estimates given by those concerned vary from five times as frequent (G.L.G.) to a hundred times as frequent (H.T.), but there is no room for doubt as to their much greater frequency on and in the barrows. The absence of dark earth and occupation débris from the material of the barrows, noted by Dr Taylor, renders it very unlikely that the flints in the barrows were present in the soil before it was added to form the mounds. The balance of evidence therefore favours the view, expressed with emphasis by Greenwell in 1877, that the flints were scattered over the barrows deliberately as part of the funeral ritual while the barrows were being built.

The proportion of implements to flakes,—1 : 10,—is rather high because it is believed that all flakes seen were retained. A feature of special interest is that the two *parts* of implements found (one from the barrows, the other from the field) both show fractures which have the same patina as the unbroken surfaces of the implements, and the fractures can therefore be regarded as most likely of the period of the implements themselves. They must have been broken either accidentally

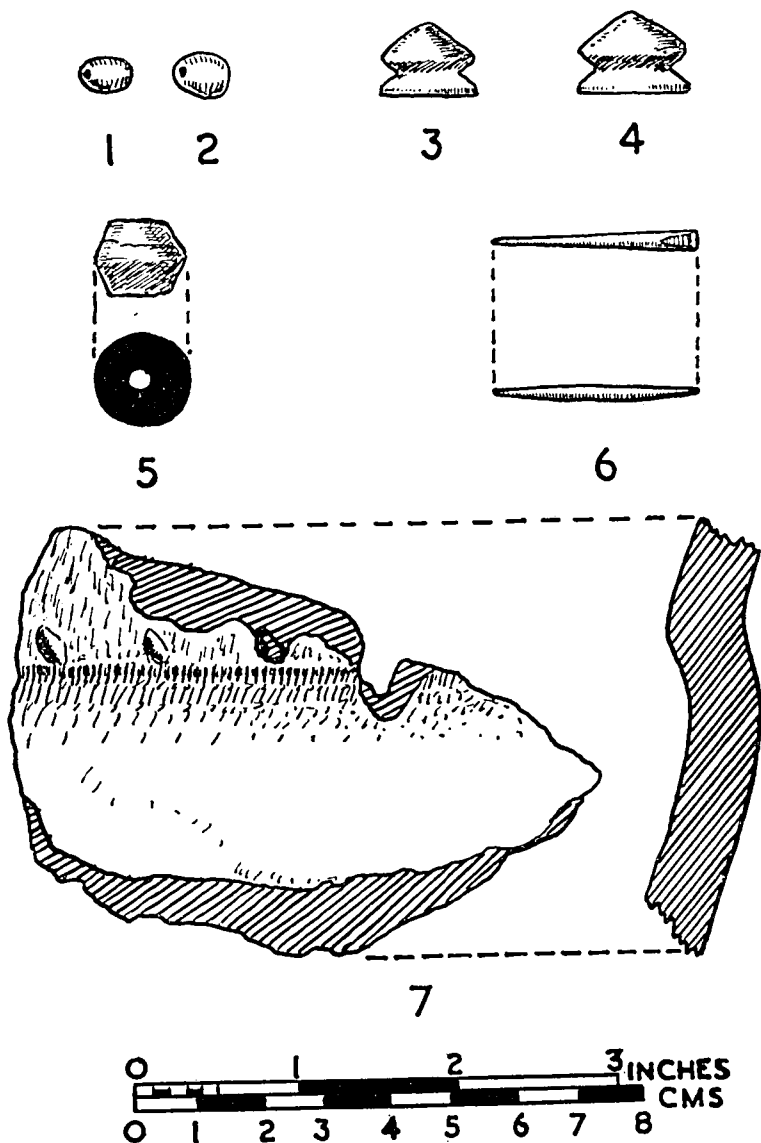


Fig. 4. Beads, Studs, Awl, and Pottery from Marshfield Barrows III and IV

or deliberately. The central portion of a finely worked flint knife, with ancient fractures on both sides, was broken by a blow which left a bulb of percussion and a bulbar scar, and therefore seems to have been broken deliberately. The flake from the ground axe (not from the material of a barrow but from the field) shows no clear evidence as to how it was broken. It seems likely however that the broken implement from the barrow was broken ceremonially as a funeral ritual, for which there is abundant evidence in nearly all periods from Neolithic to pagan Saxon times. On the other hand it is possible that the axe-fragment may have resulted from normal implement-breakage incidental to the use of flint axes in constructing the barrows. Another fact to be borne in mind is that it was customary, in the Oolitic areas in question, where flint had mostly to be obtained from a distance of 10-15 miles, to break down discarded axes and manufacture smaller tools from them.

ANALYSIS OF FLINT FLAKES AND IMPLEMENTS FROM MARSHFIELD
BARROWS AND BARROW-FIELD

<i>Site No.</i>	<i>Barrow No.</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>B.C.M. No.</i>
1-2	I	3 flakes, unworked 1 scraper 1 in. long, bulb missing 1 rough core, 2.1 in. long	F 3557
3	II	4 flakes, unworked	
5	III	36 flakes, unworked 1 flake 0.85 in. long, perhaps a poorly made petit tranchet, with crust remaining on obverse (fig. 5, no. 4) 1 flake worked to scraper edge on two adjoining sides (1.1 in. long) 1 poor scraper, milky-white patina, 1.1 in. diam. 1 finely worked scraper, patinated white, 1.1 in. long 1 core-scraper, 1.5 in. longest side 1 core, 1.6 in. longest side	
7	IV	113 flakes, unworked or almost unworked 1 core-rejuvenation flake 2 worked flakes	

Site No.	Barrow No.	Description	B.C.M. No.
7	IV	1 scraper, 0.95 in. long, bluish-grey patina 1 scraper, 1.25 in. long, white patina 1 hollow-scraper, 2.45 in. long 1 superb geometric microlith, worked along three sides, 0.65 in. long (fig. 5, no. 1) 1 portion (central) of well-worked flint knife, fractures on both sides being contemporary with implement (fig. 5, no. 5) 2 cores 1 fine barbed and tanged arrowhead (fig. 5, no. 2)	F 3559 F 3558 F 2406
9	V	76 flakes, unworked and unburnt 3 calcined flakes 1 calcined core (part of) 2 worked flakes (one perhaps a poorly made knife) 1 knife, finely made (fig. 5, no. 6) 2 cores 1 scraper 1 scraper 1 scraper, 1.6 in. long, roughly made 1 small scraper, 0.85 in. long 1 scraper, 1.5 in. long, with scraper-edge on bulb side 1 scraper 1 hollow scraper (hollow on bulb side) 1 fine barbed and tanged arrowhead (fig. 5, no. 3)	F 2423 F 2408 F 2409 F 2407
From Field	—	48 flakes, almost entirely unworked 1 scraper, 1.2 in. longest side 1 scraper, 1.7 in. long 1 flake 1.7 in. long, made from polished axe (fracture contemporary with implement)	F 2410

SUMMARY OF FLINT MATERIAL

A. *From the Barrows*

235 flakes

12 scrapers from flakes

1 scraper from core

2 hollow scrapers

7 cores (one calcined)

1 core-rejuvenation flake

3 flakes with nondescript secondary working

1 worked flake (knife ?)

1 knife, well made

1 part of well-made knife, with 'original' fractures

1 geometric microlith, very fine

1 flake (poorly made petit tranchet?)

2 b and t arrowheads

 268

B. *From Field*

48 flakes

2 scrapers

1 flake from ground axe

 51

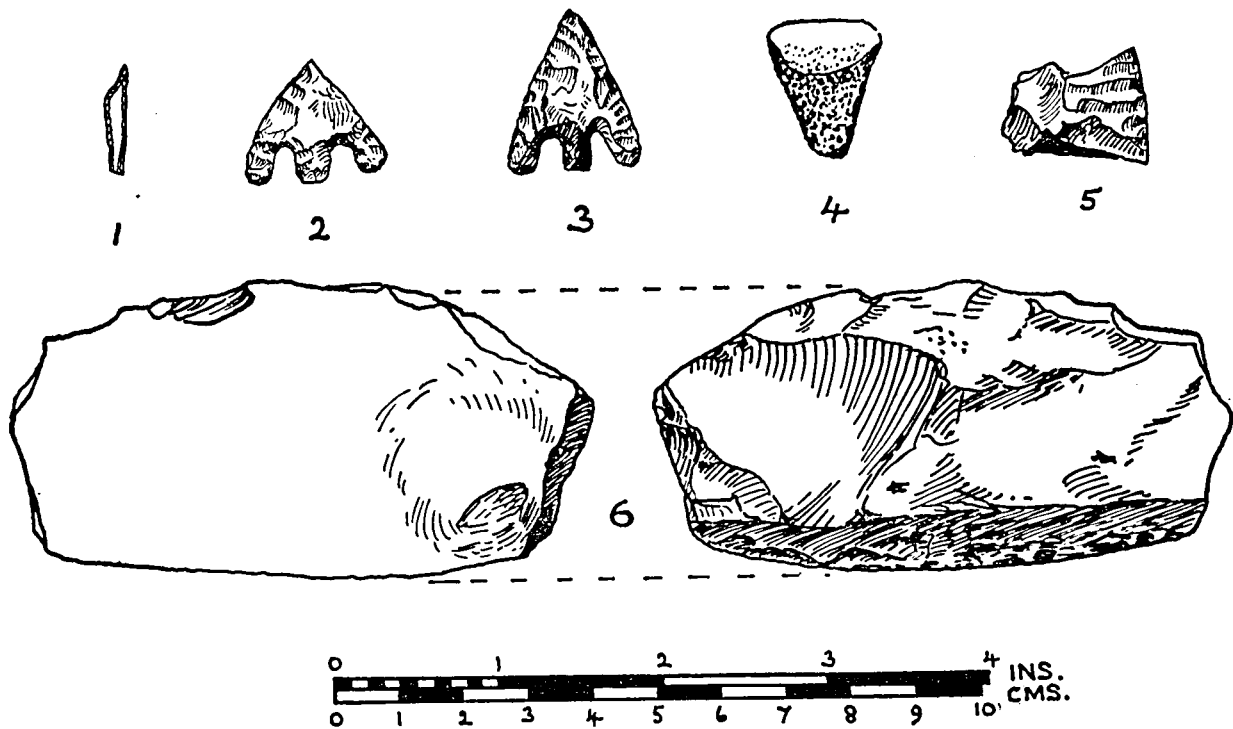


Fig. 5. Flints from the Marshfield Barrows

SCHEDULE OF PULLEY-BUTTONS OR STUDS FROM EARLY BRONZE AGE INTERMENTS IN ENGLAND

County	Parish or Locality	Material	Number	Rite, and position on body	Sex	Associations and Bibliography
Derbyshire	Stanton Moor, Barrow T13 from Interment J	Baked clay	1	Cremation	Young adult female?	In biconical incense-cup, which was in overhanging-rim urn. <i>D.A.J.</i> LVII, 1936, 29
Glos.	Marshfield barrow III	Shale	2	Cremation	Young adult female?	Bronze awl (class 1) and amber bead. This paper. Bristol City Museum.
Wiltshire	Amesbury barrow G44	1 or both of Amber	2	Cremation	Female?	With many female ornaments; Wessex interment 35. Stukeley, <i>Stonehenge</i> , 44-5, Tab. XXXII. Lost.
	Preshute G1 (Manton barrow)	Baked clay	1	Crouched. Inhumation (by neck)	Elderly Female	Wessex interment 68; <i>W.A.M.</i> , xxxv, 1-20. Devizes Museum.
Yorks. E.R.	Wharram Percy, barrow 70	Jet	2	Crouched. Inhumation (by neck)	Female	None. Mortimer, <i>Forty Years' Researches</i> , 1905, 47, pl. ix, nos. 74, 75. Hull Museum.
Yorks. N.R.	Crosscliffe, from barrow	Jet	2	?	?	Elgee, <i>Early Man in N.E. Yorks.</i> III. Lost?
	Fylingdales, from barrow	Jet	1 surviving	?	?	Elgee, <i>Early Man in N.E. Yorks.</i> III, fig. 37. British Museum.
	Peak, near Robin Hood's Bay; from barrow	Jet	2	?	?	Mortimer, <i>Forty Years' Researches</i> , 1905, 47, n. Private Hands?