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**A Neolithic and Iron Age site at The Lodgers, Lechlade,
Gloucestershire**

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A Neolithic and Iron Age site at The Loders, Lechlade, Gloucestershire

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With contributions by F.J. Green and J.M. Maltby

Summary

Excavations and watching-briefs during the construction of a housing estate brought to light a single pit containing late neolithic pottery, flintwork, and animal bones, and a group of five pits of early iron age date. An inhumation burial, also possibly of early iron age date, was recorded. Unstratified pottery of iron age, Roman, Saxon, and medieval date was recovered together with a small amount of prehistoric flintwork.

Introduction

Excavations and periodic watching-briefs were undertaken in the southern part of The Loders, Lechlade (OS field no. 227 at SU 212996; FIG. 1), between autumn 1964 and spring 1966 during the construction of a small housing estate and access road. The site lies about 250 m north of the River Thames on the second gravel terrace at about 77 m above sea level. The terrace surface is fairly flat and well drained, with alluvium to the south and further gravel terraces to the north. The surrounding area is well known for its great diversity of prehistoric and later settlement, mostly revealed through aerial photography (Benson and Miles 1974, 29; Leech 1977, 16). Stray finds of all periods are known from the vicinity, and 1.5 km to the north of The Loders is the extensive multiperiod settlement at Roughground Farm (Jones 1976; 1978). No finds had been reported from The Loders prior to 1964, and the field had been under pasture for some years.

FIELDWORK AND EXCAVATION by **Margaret Jones**

During September 1964 the building of an access road, about 6 m wide and 170 m long, and service trenches for eleven plots for new houses disturbed permanent pasture and led to the discovery of at least nine archaeological features and many finds ranging from the bones of mammoth and *Bos primigenius* (identified by A.J. Baxter and Dr K.S. Sandford respectively) to clay pipes.

The whole area was stripped of turf, while the road was scraped more deeply through a topsoil of about 0.3–0.5 m in depth. From the topsoil dumps a local resident, Mrs Joan Jerrome, collected finds, mostly potsherds. The site was then visited by the County Correspondent of the Ministry of Public Building and Works, the late Mrs Helen O'Neil, accompanied by Mr Tom Jones and the writer who were at that time involved with the Roughground Farm excavation 1.5 km to the north (RCHM 1976, 73). Though partly obscured by topsoil dumps, soilmarks were seen in the underlying gravel near the junction of the access road and the existing lane opposite a row of houses called Mount Pleasant. Mrs O'Neil encouraged Mrs Jerrome and another local resident, Dr Duncan McIntyre, to excavate and record them. Unfortunately the location details

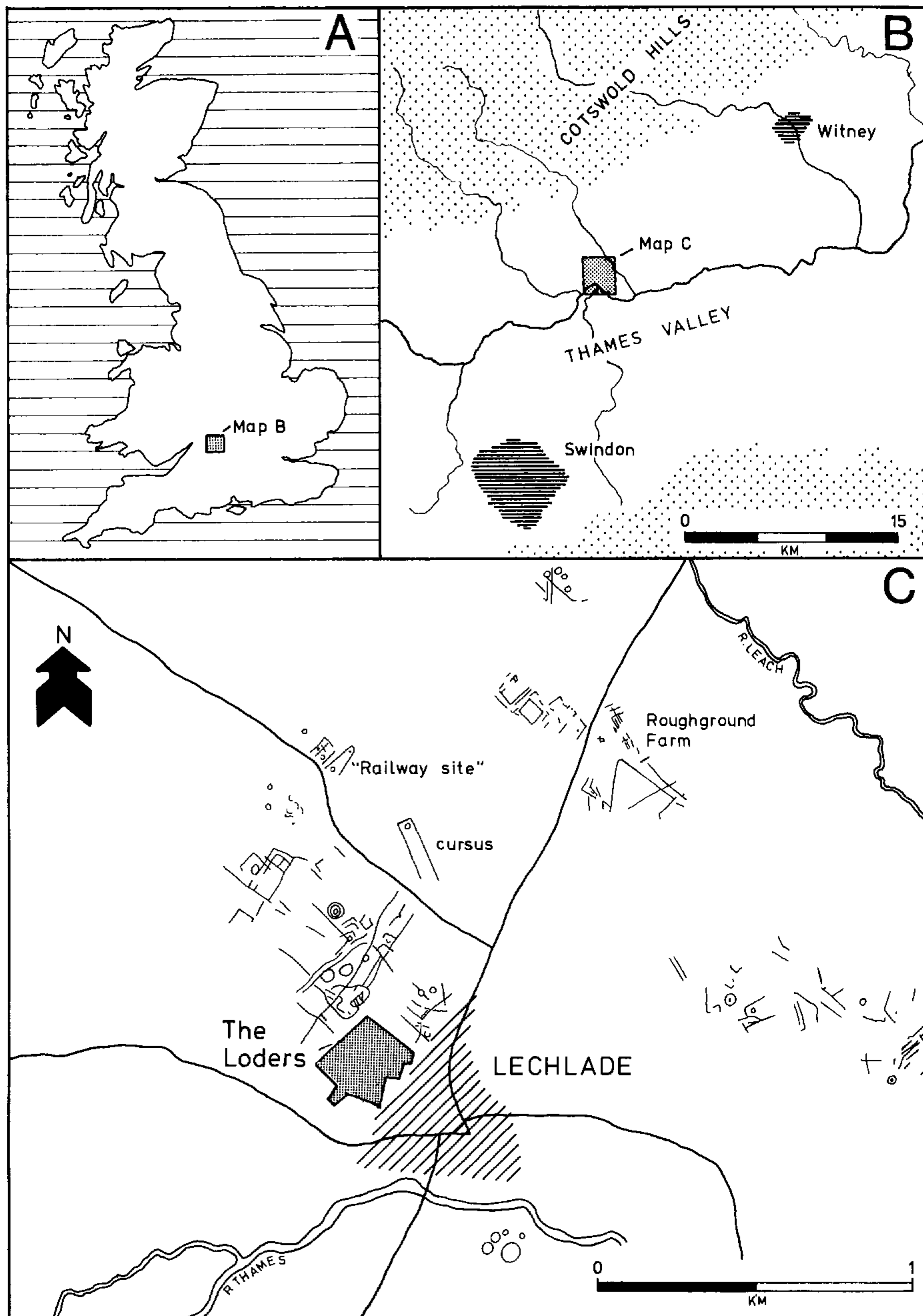


FIG. 1 General location map showing The Lodgers in its setting, with surrounding archaeological cropmarks recognized from aerial photographs. (Cropmarks after Leech 1977, map 5, with additions.)

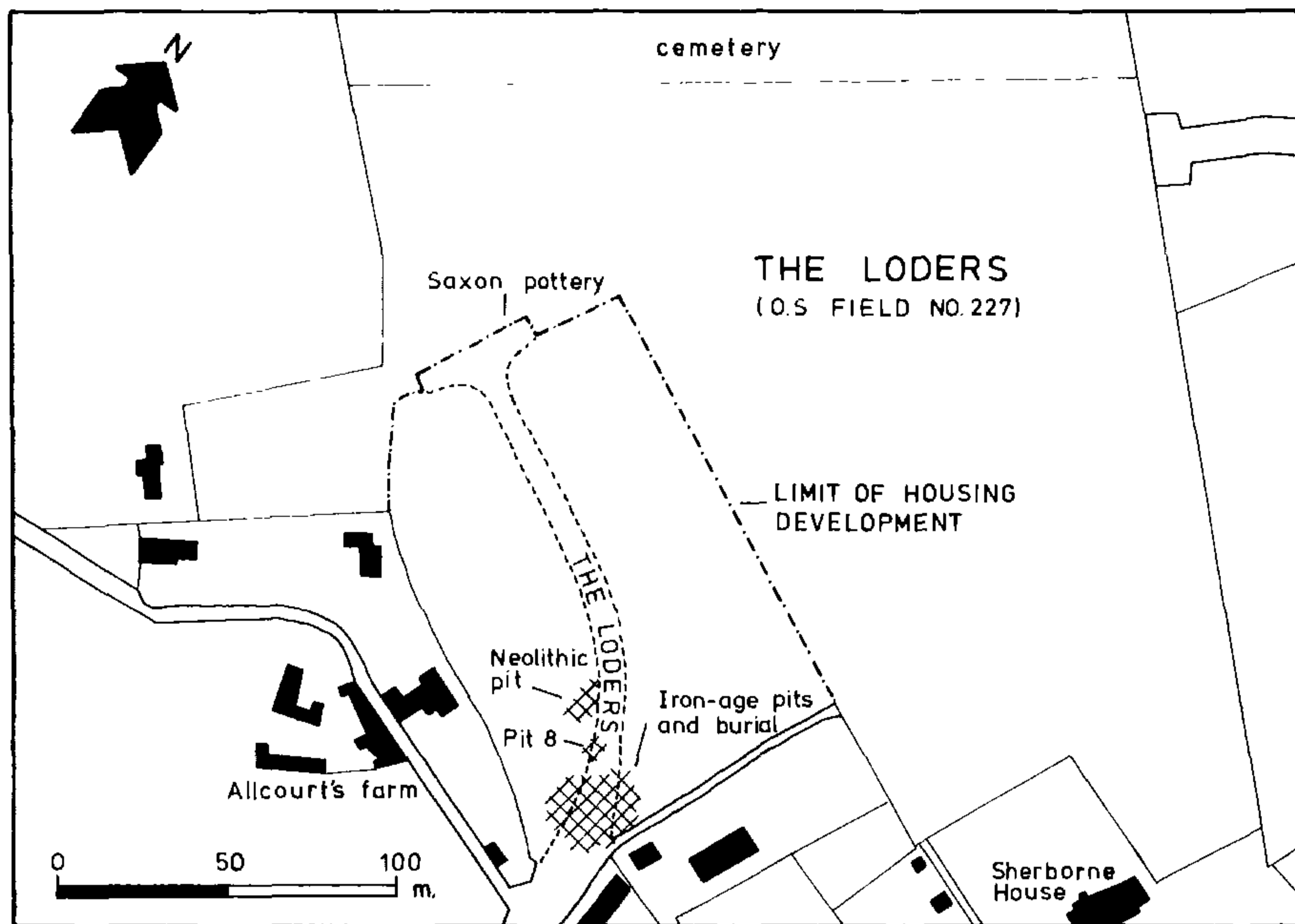


FIG. 2 Plan showing the approximate positions of archaeological features recorded at The Loders 1964–1966.

of these archaeological features were based on two electricity poles either side of the road. The westernmost one was subsequently resited, and only an approximate record of its previous position existed. However, these features, which turned out to be pits (nos. 1 to 4) and a contracted inhumation burial, were confined to a 10 m length of road where its slope was most pronounced (FIG. 2).

An official excavation (in conjunction with that at Roughground Farm) was considered, but this did not materialize because the sale of the house plots was expected to be very slow.

However, on subsequent visits more features were apparent: Pits 5 and 8 were excavated, and at least one more pit (too close to the westernmost electricity pole to allow excavation) and the sections of perhaps two or three ditches were observed. The only features located at the north end of the road cutting were a possible ditch, while 'grass-tempered' sherds came to light when fencing posts were erected (FIG. 2). In the event, only two days' official excavation time (10 December 1964, when Pit 5 was excavated, and 25 February 1965) was spent on this site, though Mrs Jerrome observed it throughout two years.

The late neolithic pottery from Pit 5 has been briefly published (Jones 1976), and it was intended to incorporate the definitive report of the site with that of Roughground Farm (T. Allen and M.U. Jones in prep.). However, this notable discovery has stimulated further research, co-ordinated by Tim Darvill, which made it appropriate to publish The Loders as a separate report.

It should be emphasized that, in contrast to the more usual discoveries of Thames Valley archaeology through cropmarks, The Loders' evidence is the result of persistent fieldwork

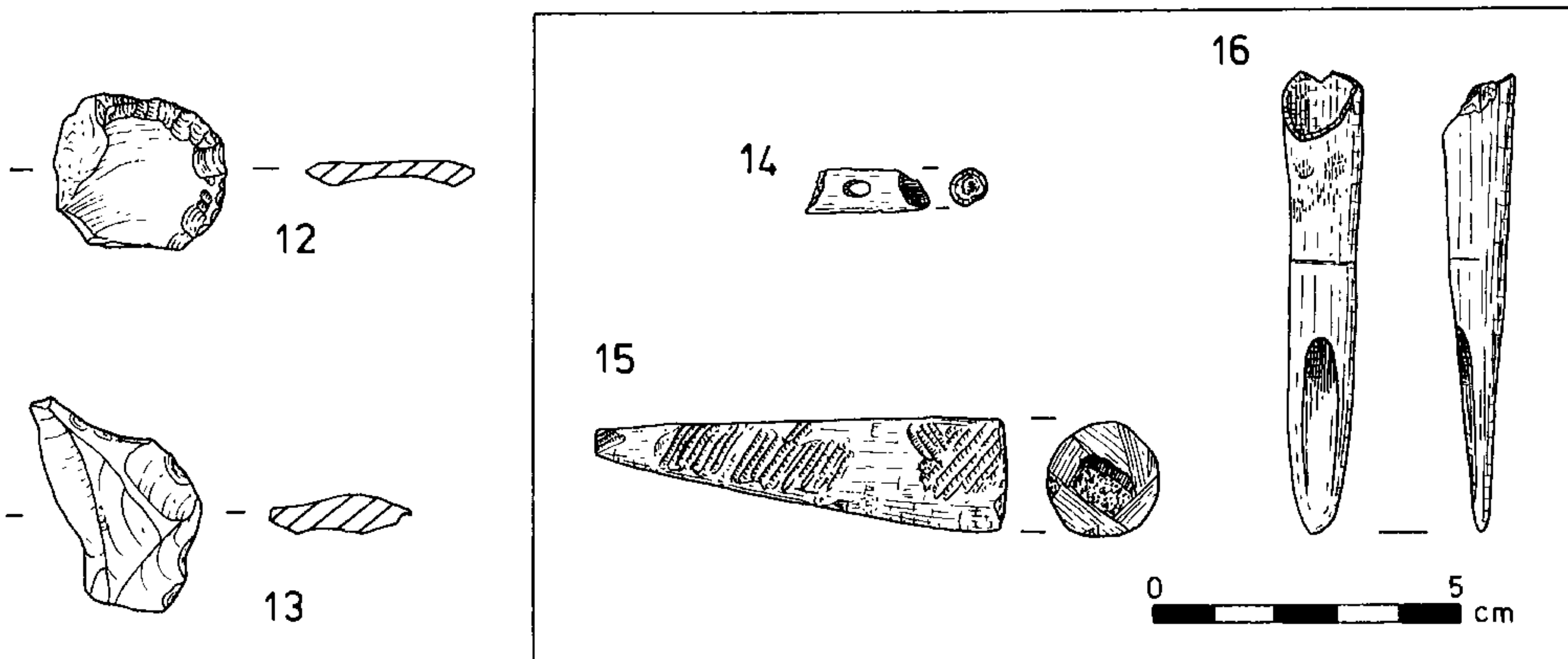
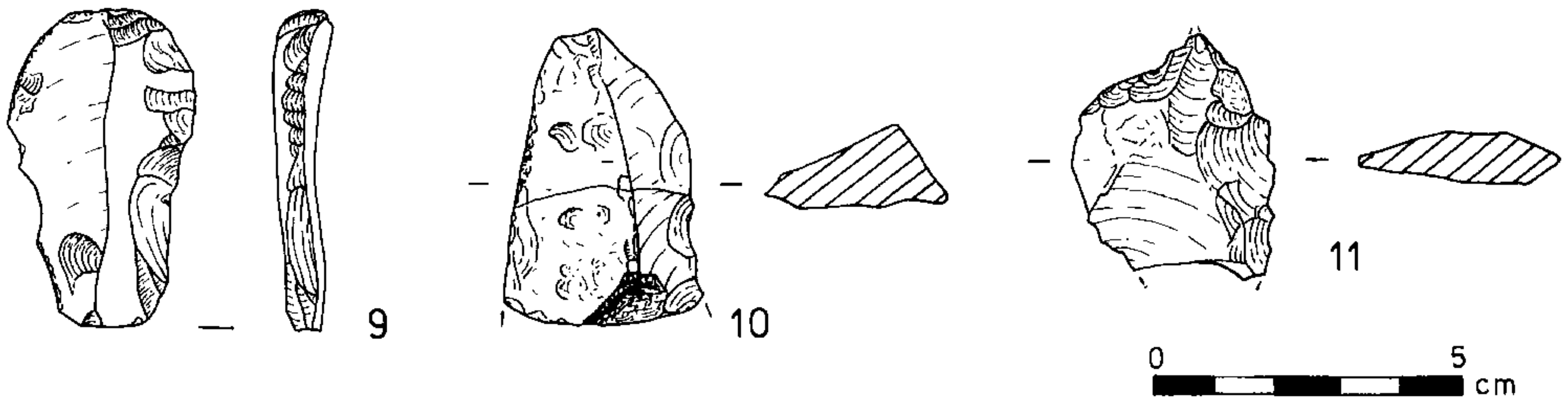
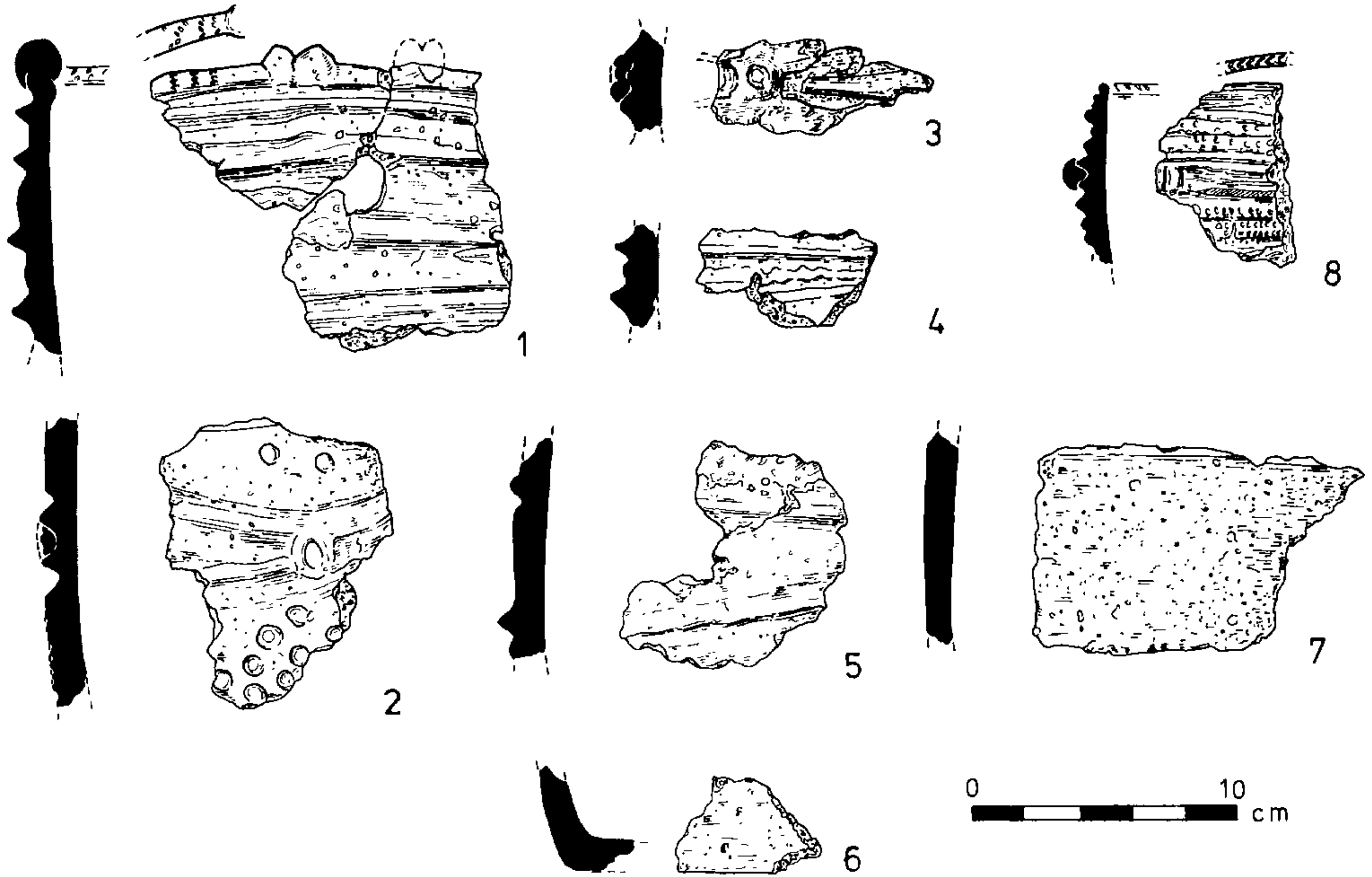


FIG. 3 Grooved ware pottery (1-8; after P.C. Compton in Jones 1976, figs. 2-3), earlier prehistoric flintwork (9-13), and iron age bone objects (14-16). 1-8 scale 1:4; 9-16 scale 1:2.

following ground disturbance, and that the certain features lay within a 200 sq m area, while no postholes were seen.

For convenience the material is described according to the principal chronological divisions of the total assemblage.

THE LATE NEOLITHIC by **Tim Darvill**

A single pit (site reference Pit 5) containing late neolithic material was located approximately 4 m north of the westernmost electricity pole (FIG. 2). Like the other pits it was recognized (by Mrs Jerrome) because of the distinctive fill, in this case notably redder in colour than the surrounding subsoil. The following account is based on field notes and other information supplied by Margaret Jones; the section drawing and plan are lost.

In plan, Pit 5 was roughly circular, about 0.9 m by 0.75 m. When excavated (in two halves) it proved to be basin-shaped, with a greatest depth of *c.* 0.46 m below the gravel surface, after the removal of perhaps 0.3 m of overlying topsoil and subsoil. The ginger-coloured, clayey, gravelly fill contained occasional reddened gravel pebbles, but no *in situ* burning was seen. The lowest fill was dark, and there were other dark lenses. At the bottom was the characteristic peagrit of oolitic gravel.

Road scraping had disturbed the east edge of the pit, so that it was uncertain whether three black sherds, a basesherd, sherd scraps, and two animal bones from the vicinity were actually from the pit. However, most finds were reliably stratified: pottery, flint, stone, and animal bones. A flint scraper lay beneath pottery, most of which was lying together, along with an oblong sarsen boulder burnt on one face. A piece of gravel rag (conglomerate) was also burnt. On the floor lay a longbone and sacrum. Because the pottery had become softened by frosting, some sherds were lifted out together with their surrounding soil, thus providing material for analysis. A number of non-marine mollusca shells were recovered. All were identified as *Cepaea nemoralis* (the grove snail) and probably represent the remains of a colony that lived within the pit while it was open.

Taking the evidence of snail shells and soil texture together, it can be suggested that the pit filled up relatively slowly. The dimensions and contents suggest a hearth-pit rather than a storage pit.

Pottery

A total of 83 sherds was recovered. All were assignable to the grooved ware style of late neolithic ceramic traditions principally on the basis of their decoration. The bulk of the material (61 sherds) has already been briefly described by Dr Ian Longworth (see Jones 1976, 4–5), whose comments have been used extensively in compiling the following notes. The other sherds, which were all very small and totalled only 35 grams in weight, were recovered from the soil blocks removed from the pit fill during its excavation. These additional sherds could be matched with the fabrics represented among the larger pieces. At least two vessels are present.

Vessel 1. Represented by a large decorated rimsherd and bodysherds (FIG. 3, no. 8). Finely incised herringbone-pattern decoration adorned the top of the rim, the external surface was covered in a series of plain and decorated small angular cordons with intervening grooves, the decoration consisting of deeply impressed jabs. One applied stop piece is decorated with a vertical groove. Dark shelly fabric.

Vessel 2. Represented by a large rimsherd and decorated bodysherds (FIG. 3, nos. 1–7). Decoration on the rim comprises pairs of applied double pellets breaking a herringbone pattern of whipped cord impressions. On the internal surface a single, sharply angled, applied horizontal cordon. On the external surface sharply

angular applied cordons and grooves set horizontally and diagonally. Four sherds (FIG. 3, nos. 2–5) carry converging cordons, in two cases meeting at a stop decorated with a single hollow reed impression. One sherd (FIG. 3, no. 2) carries hollow reed impressions in the triangular areas defined by cordons. Another sherd (FIG. 3, no. 7), which may also belong to this vessel, carries the remains of a horizontal groove above a deep plain zone. Dark shelly fabric.

Although the exact forms cannot be reconstructed because of the fragmentary nature of the pieces, both were probably flat bottomed, bucket or tub-shaped vessels. The decorative motifs represented demonstrate affinity with the Woodlands sub-style of grooved ware as defined by Longworth (Wainwright and Longworth 1971, 238).

A sample sherd typical of each vessel, drawn from the collection of sherds recovered with accompanying soil, was thin-sectioned so that the fabrics could be examined in detail. Although some variability in the density of non-plastic additives was noted between the vessels, both samples clearly derived from the same clay source. The clay matrix contained a light scatter of fine, rounded quartz grains, mostly less than 0.05 mm in diameter set in an anisotropic groundmass. Flecks of muscovite mica up to 0.1 mm long, and fragments of non-translucent iron-ore were also noted. The only non-plastic additive was crushed fossil shell which occurred as well-broken pieces up to 3.0 mm long, although generally more finely crushed in slide N398 which related to the second vessel described above. Very little sign of the calcareous cement that once surrounded the fossil shell could be seen, which may be taken as indicative of the tempering being derived from a weathered deposit. Unfortunately the fragmentary condition of the shell precluded specification of a source area. The clay matrix is most likely to be lias clay, or a weathered product of it, and could have been obtained within a few kilometres of the site.

Comparison of the pottery fabrics from The Lodgers with grooved ware from the nearby site of Roughground Farm (Jones 1976, 2–3; Darvill in prep.) revealed very little similarity. Fabrics at Roughground Farm all contained more quartz within the matrix, and the shell used as tempering is accompanied by ooliths and grog. A source on the Cotswolds can be suggested for the Roughground Farm pottery.

The flints

Fifteen pieces of flint (including two joining fragments) weighing 90 grams were recovered. All appear to have been discarded either because they were broken tools or waste flakes. As far as can be determined all the raw flint is of good quality 'chalkland' type, but the condition of the pieces varies greatly between fresh, hardly patinated flakes and totally calcined or frost-fractured lumps. The assemblage can be classified as follows:

Scraper	1
Edge-worked knife	1 (2 joining fragments)
Awl/point	1
Unretouched flakes	7
Calcined pieces	2
Battered lumps	2

All the flakes are thin with irregular outlines, most have a light grey patina, but one is covered in thermal fractures, and one has signs of heat shattering. One of the calcined pieces was probably once a scraper, now almost unrecognizable, the other is a squat flake with a hinge fracture. The battered lumps are both small, display hinge fracturing, and may derive from core rejuvenation or core-trimming.

As already indicated, all the implements are broken. The most complete is an end scraper (FIG. 3, no. 9) made on a long relatively narrow flake, comparable with type Ai scrapers from Durrington Walls, Wiltshire (Wainwright and Longworth 1971, 164). Approximately half the circumference is retouched with steep edge-working, producing an edge angle of 35–90 degrees. One side appears to have been damaged prior to the formation of a milky patina. The second implement is a small point or awl manufactured on a reused broad squat flake (FIG. 3, no. 11). Working to produce the point cuts through existing patina. The point clearly broke off in antiquity, and the piece has since acquired a calcareous concretion on one face and a certain amount of battering along all edges. The third tool was a large edge-worked knife represented by two joining fragments, which together constitute about half of the original implement (FIG. 3, no. 10). It was made on a large flake or blade with a triangular cross-section giving a shallow cutting-edge angle. The cutting edge is finely worked and straight. The surface is slightly calcined and covered with thermal fractures. Considerable post-discard damage has occurred. There is no trace of silica gloss.

Stone

An oblong sarsen boulder measuring approximately 200 mm × 115 mm × 100 mm was recovered from the pit. It had been burnt on one face.

Animal bones by J.M. Maltby

A total of 17 bone fragments was recovered from Pit 5, weighing approximately 300 grams. All pieces were reasonably well preserved, but had been fragmentary when deposited. None showed any trace of burning or pathological features. The following identifications were made:

Cattle, domestic	1	Unfused cranial end of sacrum with evidence of butchery (see below).
	1	Femur, proximal articulation showing slight traces of ?dog gnawing.
Sheep/goat	1	Lower 3rd molar, worn.
Pig, domestic	1	Tibia fragment.
Red deer (<i>Cervus elaphus</i>)	1	Anterior segment of metatarsus showing signs of working (see below).
	1	Midshaft fragment of a fused radius and ulna.
Unidentifiable mammal	1	Vertebra fragment from a large mammal.
	5	Fragments from large mammal bones.
	2	Fragments from large mammal longbones.
	1	Fragment of 'sheep-sized' mammal femur.
	1	Skull fragment from 'sheep-sized' mammal.
Bird	1	Unidentified sternum fragment of large bird.

Two of the bone fragments call for further comment as they show distinctive signs of primary and secondary animal product processing. The first is the cattle sacrum which shows marks resulting from butchery of the animal (FIG. 4). All the marks occur on the dorsal surface, and show two directions of cutting. Rude chopping marks in the medio-lateral direction and in a cranio-caudal direction were probably made during the disjuncting of the carcass, while cuts on the wing suggest severance of the bone from the pelvis. Until more late neolithic animal bone assemblages have been studied for traces of butchery practice it is impossible to set this evidence within a more general pattern of carcass processing.

The second bone to merit comment is the red deer metatarsus which appears to have been discarded after primary working, presumably connected with tool production (FIG. 5). Only the

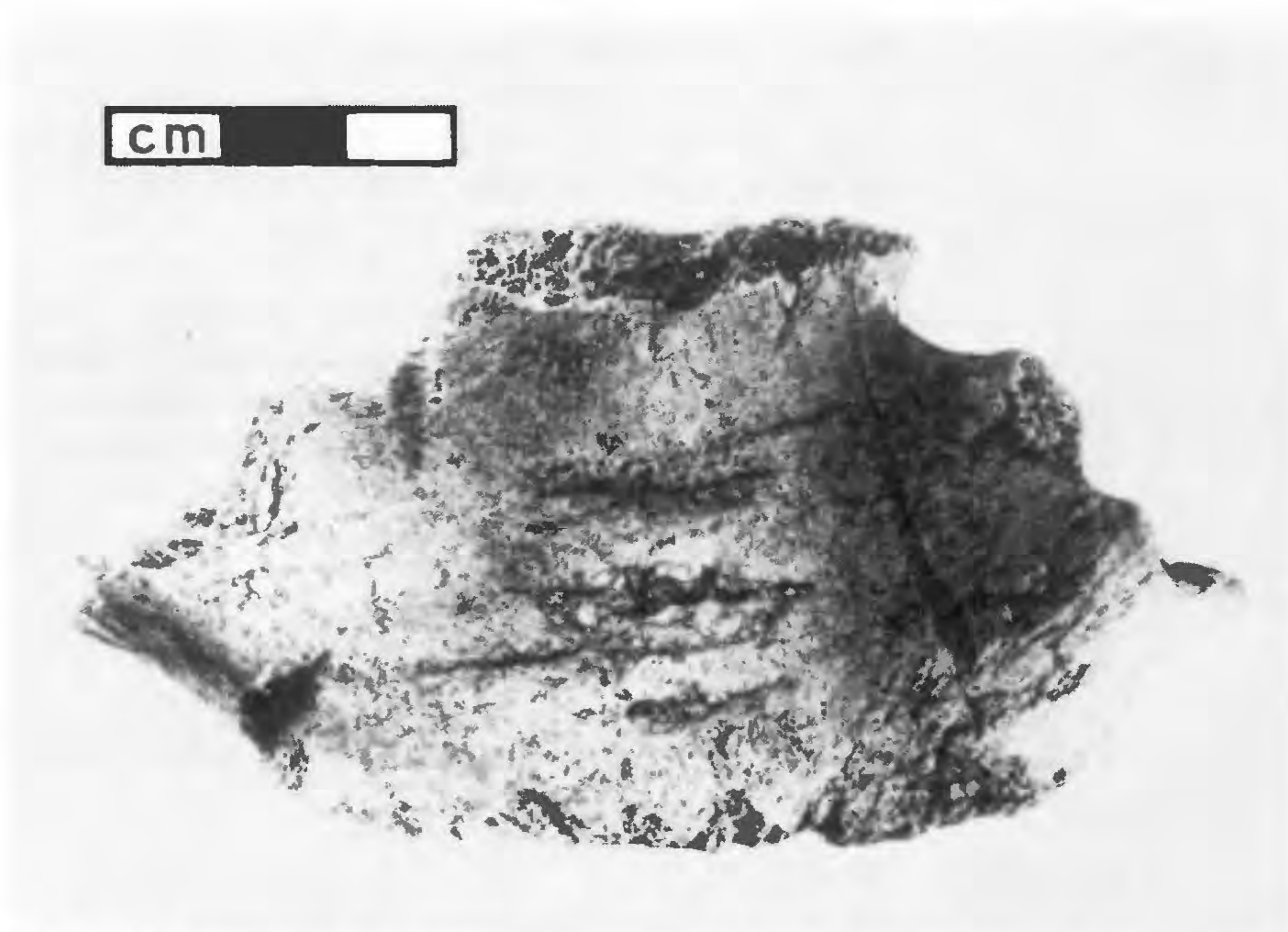


FIG. 4 Detail of butchery marks on ox sacrum recovered from Pit 5. Scale totals 30 mm. (Photograph by T.C. Darvill.)

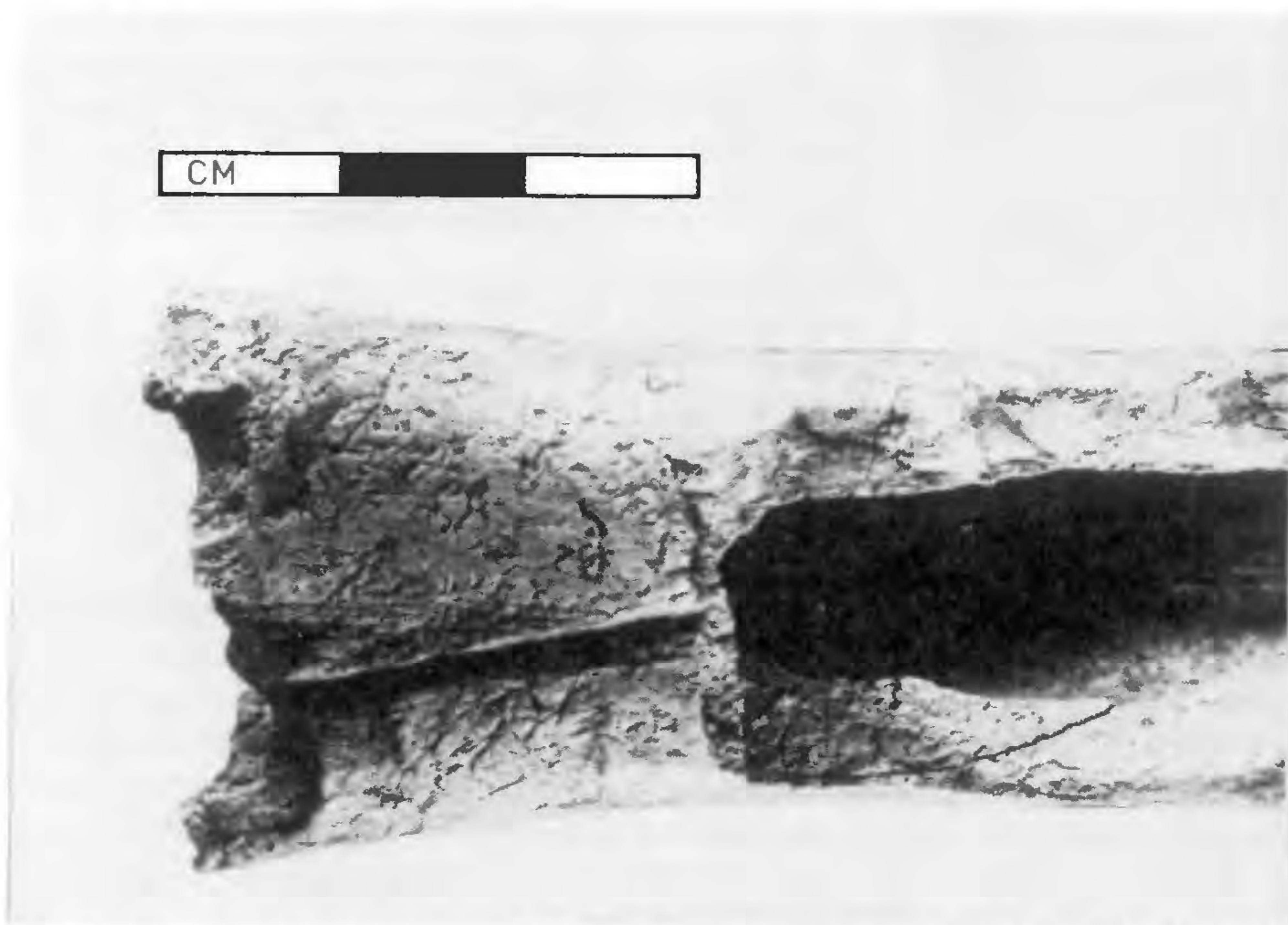


FIG. 5 Detail of working marks on red deer metatarsus recovered from Pit 5. Scale totals 30 mm. (Photograph by T.C. Darvill.)

anterior and a little of the distal posterior portion of the bone survives, the remainder having been cut away. The jagged edge of the removed portions clearly shows the artificial nature of the edge rather than a break simply caused by splitting. A groove cut on the remaining area of the posterior surface towards the distal extremity of the bone, suggests that it was the groove and splinter technique of bone working that was being used (cf. Clark and Thompson 1953). The relatively dense and long shaft of the metatarsus makes it ideal raw material for use in boneworking.

Although the bone assemblage is small and provides no useful data on species composition or sex and age spectra, the presence of evidence for butchery and the use of bone in the production of artefacts provides a welcome addition to existing knowledge of late neolithic faunal assemblages and the activities behind their deposition.

Soil sample analysis by **F.J. Green**

A single soil sample comprising material derived from around the late neolithic pottery in Pit 5 and weighing 482 grams was examined for palaeobotanical remains. The sample was disaggregated and then floated and water-sieved through a 250 micron mesh sieve. Other than a small quantity of abraded charcoal no identifiable plant remains were present.

Discussion

There is nothing among the late neolithic material from The Lodgers which suggests anything more than a small domestic occupation site, with an abandoned pit providing a repository (and incidentally the only preservation context) for discarded objects and debris. The original purpose for which the pit was dug is unclear, but it seems too shallow to have been for storage. Wainwright and Longworth (1971, 250) were able to list 63 putative settlement sites with grooved ware pottery, of which 20 (31%) comprised little more than a single pit and small quantity of debris such as that represented at The Lodgers. It should be emphasized that the actual size of the late neolithic occupation at The Lodgers is not known, and other features may well lie undetected nearby.

No sites comparable with The Lodgers are yet known on the Cotswolds proper (Darvill 1984, 100), but just west of the escarpment edge, at Broadway, Hereford and Worcester, a probable pit containing three sherds of grooved ware came to light sometime before 1936 (Warren *et al.* 1936, 196). In contrast, a number of comparable sites have been recorded in the upper Thames Valley, among them Roughground Farm, Gloucestershire (Jones 1976; Darvill in prep.), Purwell Farm, Cassington (Oxfordshire County Museums Service PRN 3966), Tolley's Pit, Cassington, Oxfordshire (Leeds 1940, 5-6), Cassington Mill, Cassington, Oxfordshire (Case 1982), and Partridge's Pit, Stanton Harcourt, Oxfordshire (Thomas 1955, 4). Grooved ware has recently been discovered in the ditch of the cursus at Lechlade (Moore 1985), and from the evidence of these excavations, and fieldwork studies (Holgate 1984), it can be suggested that the area was relatively densely occupied in late neolithic times.

The animal bones from The Lodgers attest the use of cattle, sheep, and pig as well as the availability of red deer. Bird bones have only been previously recorded from two late neolithic sites, Puddlehill, Bedfordshire and Skara Brae, Orkney (Wainwright and Longworth 1971, 265). The question of cereal cultivation is less certain. The pit is unlikely to have been a storage pit and no cereal remains were found in the soil sample analysed.

The cultural relationships of the site at The Lodgers are hard to determine. None of the defined sub-styles of grooved ware show marked spatial clustering, but use of converging cordons as

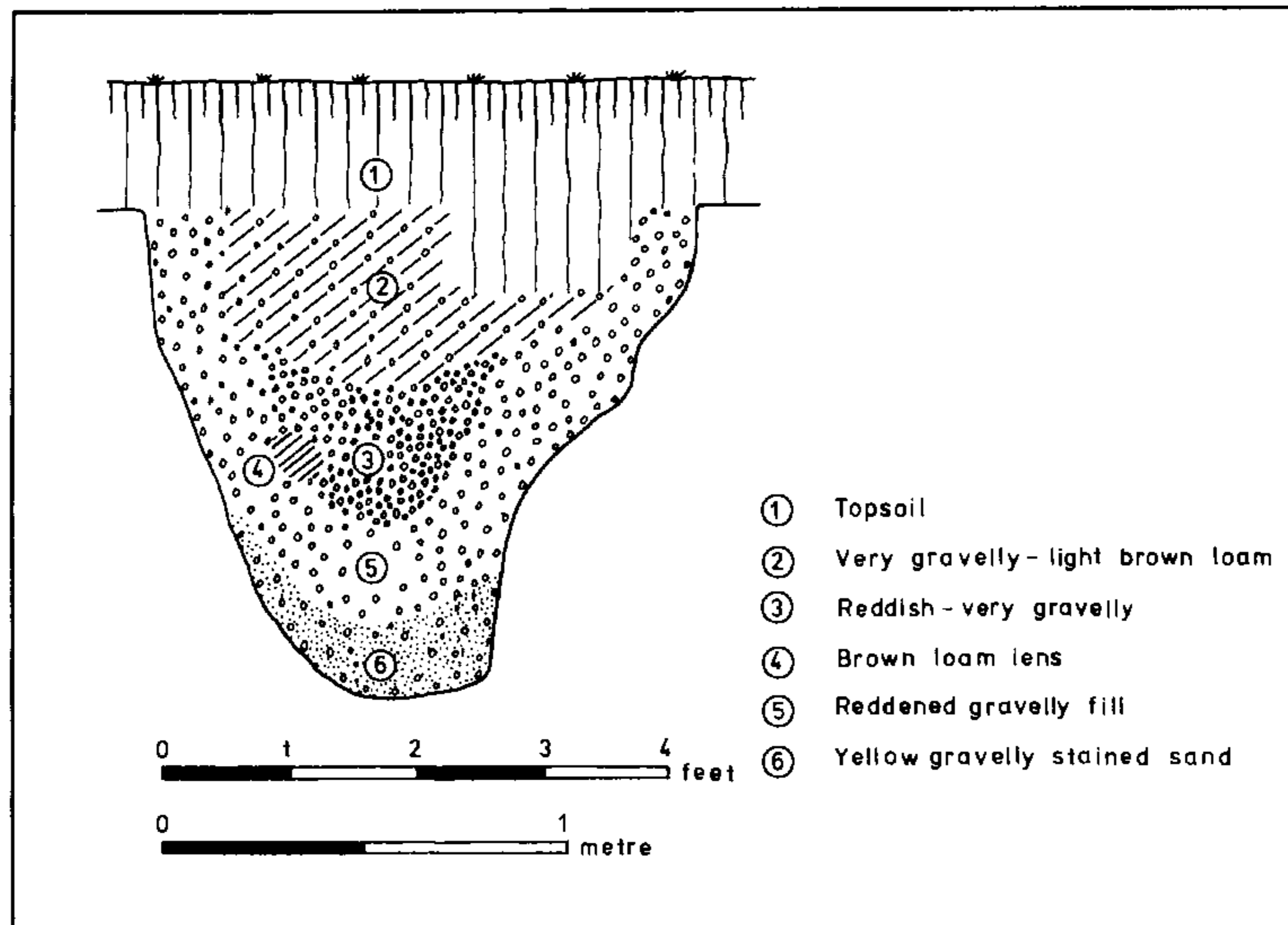


FIG. 6 Section of Pit 8 (after field drawing by J. Jerrome and M.U. Jones).

found on both vessels from The Lodgers can be paralleled lower down the Thames valley at Sutton Courtney, Oxfordshire (Warren *et al.* 1936, 195 and fig. 7.1), and to the north-west at Broadway, Hereford and Worcester (Warren *et al.* 1936, 195, and fig. 7.6–8). It should be emphasized that neither the fabrics nor the decorative motifs found at The Lodgers show similarities with the grooved ware from Roughground Farm, Gloucestershire.

UNSTRATIFIED EARLIER PREHISTORIC MATERIAL by **Tim Darvill**

In addition to the material recovered from the late neolithic pit, 19 flints were found on spoil heaps and in disturbed topsoil, while a further four, all seemingly residual, came to light during the excavation of the iron age pits. One sherd of earlier prehistoric pottery was also found during watching-briefs.

All the flints are edge-battered and slightly damaged as might be expected from material that has spent some time in the topsoil. Chalkland type flint predominates; only four pieces are of drift pebble flint. The pieces recovered from the iron age pits are simply waste flakes with no evidence of use. Of the remainder, 11 are unutilized flakes, four are utilized flakes, and one is a core-trimming flake. The only worked pieces are a small end scraper made on a short squat flake which retains some cortex and has shallow retouch around half its circumference (FIG. 3, no. 12), and an irregular flake with a hollow worked in one side (FIG. 3, no. 13). No firm date can be assigned to such a small group, but there is no reason why they should not belong with the late neolithic activity on the site.

The single featureless piece of pottery can be referred to the earlier prehistoric period on the basis of its general appearance but cannot be dated with any certainty. It is fresh looking, grog tempered, and has a reduced core with oxidized exterior surfaces. It is generally similar to large domestic beaker or early bronze age pottery from the area.

THE IRON AGE by **Richard Hingley**

The evidence relating to this period comprises four certain iron age pits (numbers 1, 3, 4, and 8), one probably iron age pit (number 2), a considerable quantity of unstratified material which presumably derived from unrecognized features and, possibly, an inhumation burial.

Pits 1–4 were found either side of the road at the south end of the field (see FIG. 2). Pit 8, first known as the 'Red Pit' was recognized on 25 February 1965 when Margaret and Tom Jones

visited the site. It was close to the westernmost electricity pole and so about 5 m south of Pit 5 (the late neolithic pit). Because of its proximity to the pole, the second half of the fill was left after clearing the soilmark and section (FIG. 6). Excavation was completed on 4 April 1965 when it was learnt that the electricity pole was to be moved. Pit numbers 6 and 7 were allocated to features which could not be excavated. Table 1 summarizes the diameters and depths of all the excavated pits as recorded at the time of excavation.

Table 1 Summary of iron age pit dimensions

<i>Pit number</i>	<i>Diameter</i>	<i>Depth</i>
1	1.5 m	1.1 m
2	0.7 m	0.9 m
3	1.1 m	1.3 m
4	0.9 m	0.4 m
6	[feature not excavated]	
7	[feature not excavated]	
8 (The 'Red Pit')	1.2 m	1.3 m

No finds are attributed to Pits 2, 6, and 7, but the remainder produced a total of 500 sherds, a few flint flakes (see above), and animal bones. The pottery is of early iron age date. Coarse ware jars and fine ware bowls are well represented, and can be paralleled at other early iron age sites in the upper Thames Valley. Some examples of fine and coarse wares are decorated in a variety of ways.

About 560 unstratified iron age sherds were recovered from spoil-heaps on the site. In addition, two fragments of triangular clay loomweights and two pieces of worked bone were found.

Pottery from the pits

The pottery has been characterized in terms of form and fabric. Table 2 shows the number of sherds from each pit, and also the proportions of fabrics and methods of finishing/decorating sherds. Fabrics were tentatively identified on the basis of macroscopic inspection according to the approach outlined by DeRoche (1978, 41). Two main fabric groups were identified. Shelly wares, Fabric 1, include all sherds with significant amounts of calcareous inclusions. Fabric 2 includes all wares without significant amounts of calcareous material. These were usually, although not always, characterized by their rather sandy texture. No thin section analysis of these wares has been carried out.

In general, the pottery from the pits is of two classes, fine ware bowls and coarse ware jars.

The coarse wares are mostly bipartite vessels with fingertip/fingernail impressions in a horizontal row either on the shoulder of the pot or on the outside of the rim (see FIG. 7, nos. 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 18, 19; FIG. 8, nos. 27, 28; FIG. 9, no. 38). These coarse ware jars are commonly produced in fabrics which are tempered with shell grit (Fabric 1).

Fine wares are usually angular and tripartite in form (FIG. 7, nos. 8–16, 20–25; FIG. 8, nos. 31–36; FIG. 9, no. 37). Burnishing of the outer face of these fine wares is fairly common (Table 2), and the occasional pot is haematite coated. In addition, some sherds are decorated with incised

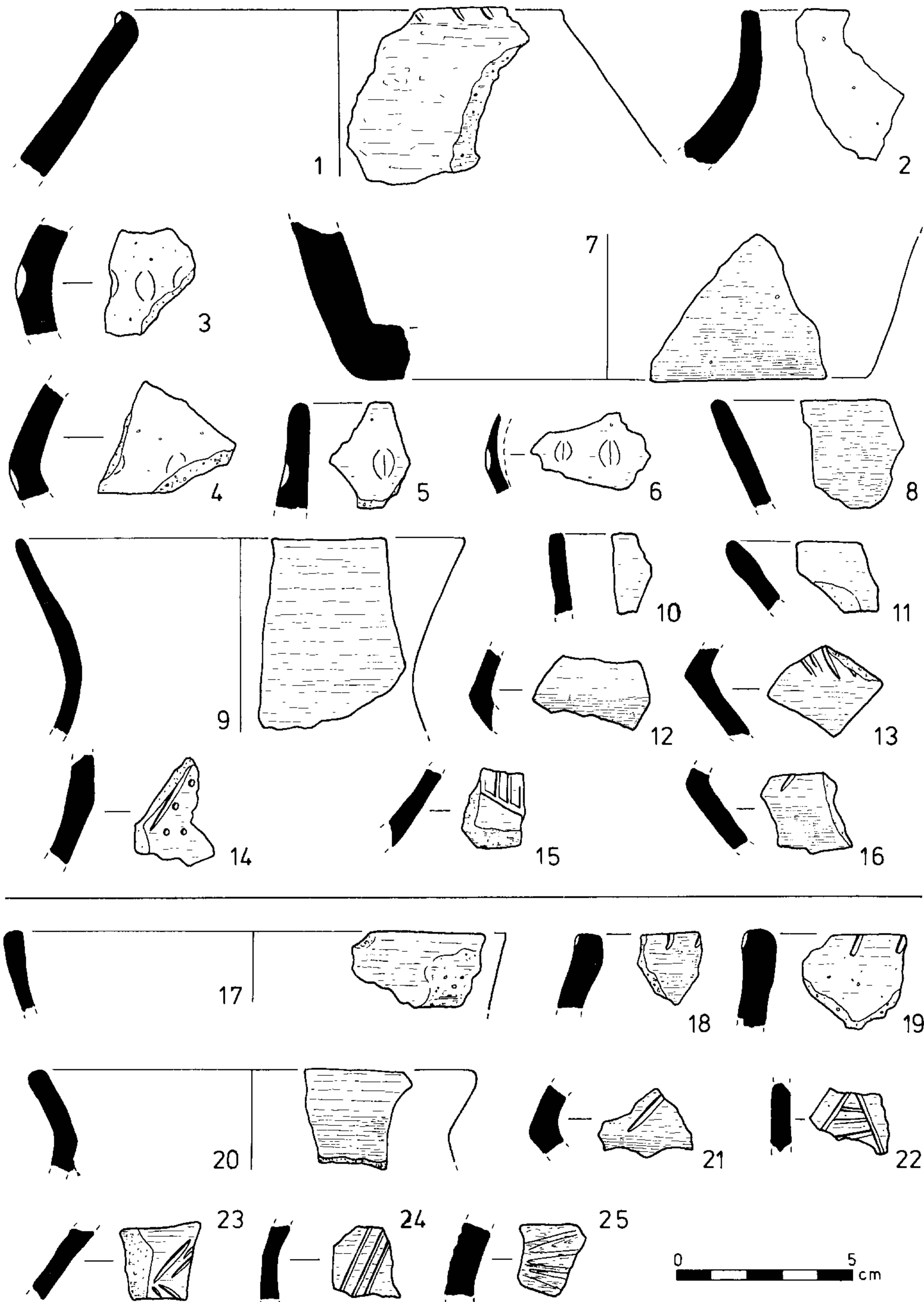


FIG. 7 Iron age pottery from Pit 1 (1-16) and Pit 3 (17-25). Fabric 1 (nos. 1-7 and 18-19); Fabric 2 (nos. 8-16 and 20-25); Fabric 3 (no. 17). Burnishing on nos. 12, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23, and 25. Haematite coating on no. 9. Scale 1:2.

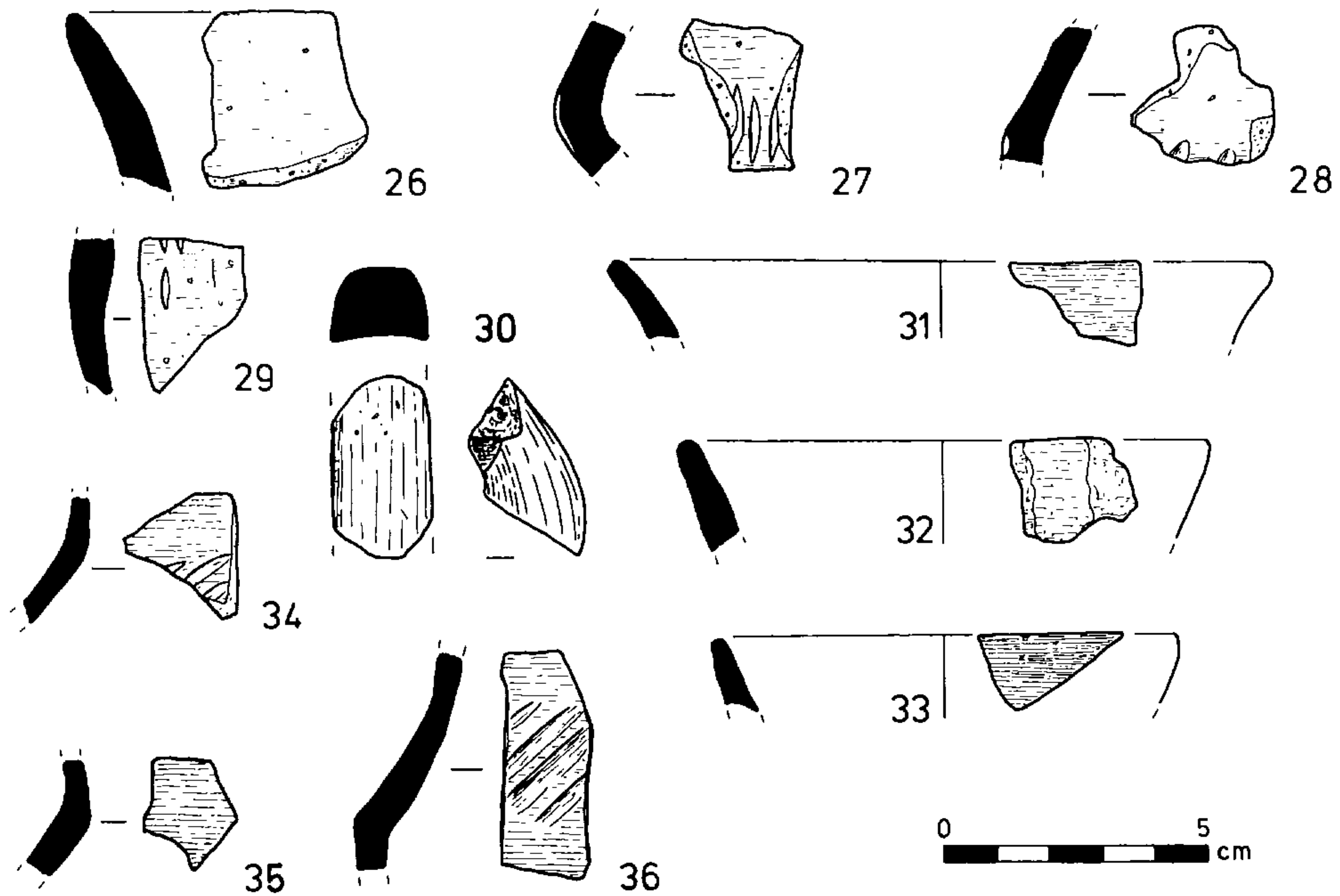


FIG. 8 Iron age pottery from Pit 4. Fabric 1 (nos. 26, 28, 30, and 32); Fabric 2 (nos. 27, 29, 31, 33-36). Haematite coating on nos. 31, 33, 34, 36. Scale 1:2.

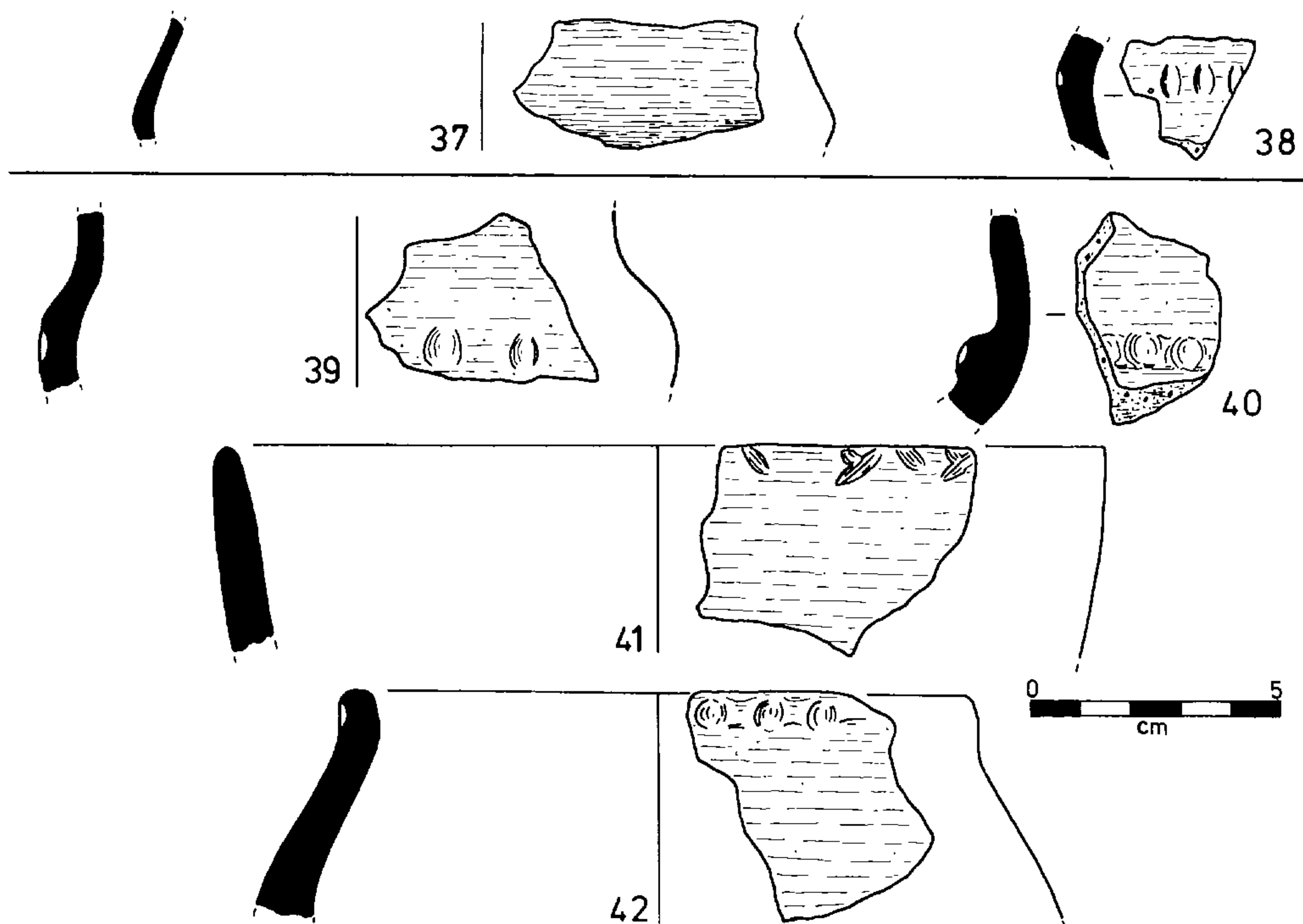


FIG. 9 Iron age pottery from Pit 8 (37 and 38), and unstratified (39-42). Fabric 1 (nos. 37, 39-42); Fabric 2 (no. 38). Scale 1:2.

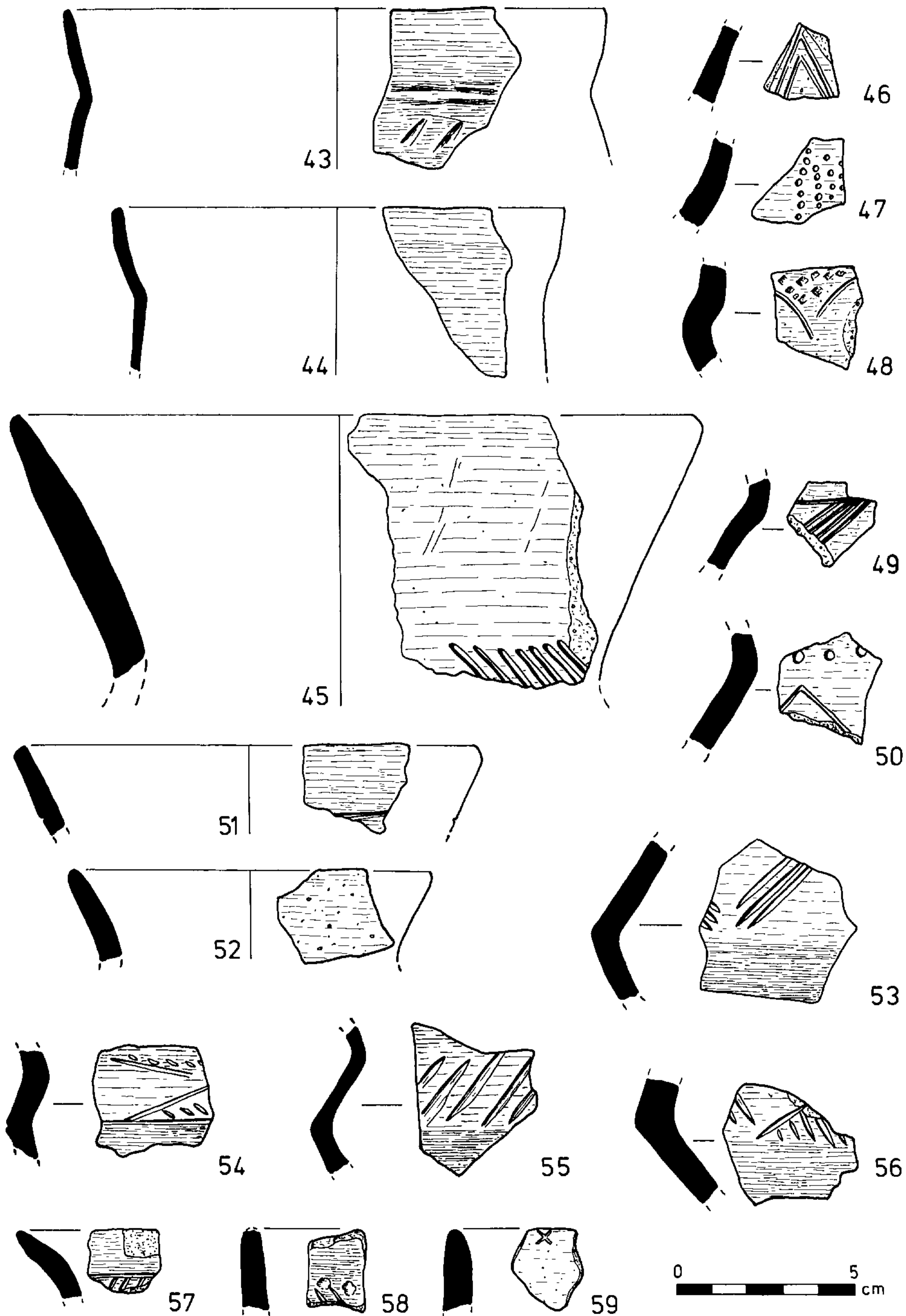


FIG. 10 Unstratified iron age pottery. Fabric 1 (no. 51); Fabric 2 (nos. 43-50 and 53-59); Fabric 3 (no. 52). Burnishing on nos. 43, 44, 46, 49, 53, and 55. Haematite coating on no. 43. Scale 1:2.

Table 2 Summary of the iron age pottery assemblage (by sherd count*)

Context	Sherd count	FABRIC						DECORATION		
		1 (shell)		2 (sand)		3 (other)		burnish	haematite	incised
Pit 1	309	172 (55%)	137 (45%)	–	–	–	54 (18%)	6 (2%)	11 (4%)	
Pit 2		[no pottery recorded]								
Pit 3	51	23 (48%)	24 (48%)	4 (8%)	–	–	10 (20%)	4 (8%)	5 (10%)	
Pit 4	108	54 (50%)	54 (50%)	–	–	–	16 (15%)	4 (4%)	4 (4%)	
Pit 6		[not excavated]								
Pit 7		[not excavated]								
Pit 8	32	18 (56%)	12 (36%)	2 (6%)	–	–	2 (6%)	–	–	
Unstrat.	560	299 (53%)	254 (45%)	7 (1%)	–	–	88 (16%)	15 (2%)	24 (8%)	
Totals	1060	566	481	13	–	–	170	29	44	

* Numbers in brackets show percentage of context assemblage represented

lines, some better preserved pieces displaying white inlay, and occasionally stabbed dots. These markings often create motifs, and triangles are a common form. Fine wares are usually in the 'sandy' Fabric 2.

Pit 1 produced 309 sherds, which included approximately equal proportions of Fabrics 1 and 2. Less than half of the fine ware sherds had a burnished finish, while smaller proportions had haematite finishes, or incised/impressed decoration (Table 2). Bipartite coarse ware jars and tripartite fine wares are represented in the pit (FIG. 7).

Pit 3 produced similar proportions of fabrics, finish, and decoration to Pit 1 (Table 2). Once again coarse ware jars and fine bowls are represented (FIG. 7).

Pit 4 produced similar proportions of fabric, finish, and decoration to Pits 1 and 3 (Table 2). Coarse ware jars, including one example with a lug-handle (FIG. 8, no. 30), and fine ware bowls occurred.

Pit 8 produced smaller quantities of pottery, and proportions vary from the other three features (Table 2). However, fine ware bowls and coarse ware jars occur (FIG. 9).

Unstratified pottery

Of the 560 unstratified sherds of probable early iron age date the proportions of fabrics, finish and decoration are similar to those from the pits (Table 2). Coarse ware jars (FIG. 9, nos. 39–42) and fine ware bowls (FIG. 10) were collected during watching-briefs. One coarse ware jar (FIG. 9, no. 40) has an applied band on the neck with a line of finger tipping. This vessel could be of late bronze age date, but is paralleled on sites that appear to be of early iron age date: Badbury hillfort, Great Farringdon, Oxfordshire (surface find in the possession of R. Hingley); Hinksey Hill, Oxfordshire (Myres excavation, unpublished sherd in the Ashmolean Museum); and at Ireley Farm, Stanway, Gloucestershire (Saville 1984, fig.3, no. 33).

Discussion of the pottery

The nature of the assemblage is significant, as excavated early iron age sites in the Lechlade region of the upper Thames Valley are scarce. The Lodders material enables the ceramic scheme

developed for the lower reaches of the upper Thames Valley (DeRoche 1977 and 1978; Harding 1972) to be extended up-river and examined in relation to material from the Gloucestershire Cotswolds.

The early iron age pottery in the Dorchester/Abingdon/Stanton Harcourt area of Oxfordshire is typified by bipartite and tripartite coarse wares which are usually in the shelly fabric (like Fabric 1 at The Loders). These coarse wares are often decorated with finger-tipping. Fine wares in this area are angular or carinated and often decorated or burnished (DeRoche 1977; Harding 1972; Lambrick 1984), and of 'sandy' (Fabric 2) fabric.

On the Gloucestershire Cotswolds large shouldered jars, often decorated with fingertip impressions, and carinated bowls, often with incised decoration, typify the early iron age sequence (Marshall 1978; Saville 1984). Such wares have been found on the 7th-century BC hillfort at Crickley Hill (Dixon 1971, fig. 8), at Shenberrow Camp (Fell 1961), and on what appear to be unenclosed sites at Ireley Farm, Stanway and Sandy Lane, Cheltenham (Saville 1984, 154). Thus it appears that the pottery from The Loders can be paralleled at early iron age sites in the Oxfordshire portion of the upper Thames Valley and at sites in the north-west Cotswold region. Early iron age material has yet to be found on any other sites in the Gloucestershire portion of the upper Thames Valley. Claydon Pike, the only iron age site in the Gloucestershire upper Thames Valley excavated on a large scale, was apparently first occupied in the middle iron age (S. Palmer pers. comm.).

In terms of proportions of Fabric 1 to 2, The Loders may be rather unusual, although quantitative data from early iron age sites are rare. At The Loders almost 50% of the pottery (by sherd count) was of fine sandy fabric. This contrasts with rather higher proportions of the shelly fabric from many other early iron age sites. At Farmoor, Oxfordshire, for example, 60–95% of the pottery was shelly ware (Lambrick 1979), while of the pottery from 'certain' early iron age features at Ashville, Oxfordshire, between 56 and 91% was shelly ware (DeRoche 1978, tables II and III), and at Frilford, Oxfordshire, a single excavated early iron age pit produced about 87% shelly wares (Hingley, unpublished data). The significance of this observation is uncertain.

The high percentage of Fabric 1 at The Loders may be related to a high ratio of fine to coarse wares on the site. About 16% of the pottery from the pits produced evidence of burnishing. Comparative data are again hard to find, but at Frilford, Oxfordshire, about 6% of the pottery was burnished (Hingley, unpublished data). In relation to Frilford, and some other upper Thames Valley sites, the percentage of sherds with incised decoration and those with haematite finish does not seem unusually high at The Loders (Table 3).

Table 3 Inter-site comparisons of fabric and vessel finish (by percentage of total assemblage by sherd count)

<i>Site</i>	<i>FABRIC</i>		<i>DECORATION</i>		
	<i>1</i> (<i>shelly</i>)	<i>2</i> (<i>sandy</i>)	<i>burnish</i>	<i>haematite</i>	<i>incised</i>
Roughground Farm*	60%	40%	3.0%	0.7%	2.5%
Frilford*	87%	13%	6.0%	8.0%	4.0%
Wittenham Clumps*	9%**	55%	NR	1.2%	NR
The Loders	55%	45%	16.0%	3.0%	4.0%

* Work in progress by R. Hingley

** Fabric 1 replaced by a third fabric on this site

NR Not recorded

Flints

Three flint flakes were collected from Pit 8. As the pottery from this pit is early iron age in type the flints may be regarded as residual.

Triangular clay loomweights

Fragments of two clay loomweights were collected from spoil-heaps on the site. These can be paralleled at other iron age sites in southern Britain.

Animal bones

Collectively the four pits yielded 58 fragments of animal bone. These were examined by Mark Maltby and Jenny Coy. Remains of sheep, sheep/goat, red deer, and fragments from the skull of a goose were identified.

One bone gouge (FIG. 3, no. 16) from Pit 1 was made on the distal end of a sheep tibia. Bone gouges of this type are fairly common on iron age sites in Wessex and the upper Thames Valley. In addition, a piece of sawn bone (FIG. 3, no. 15) and a small bone toggle (FIG. 3, no. 14) were collected from spoil-heaps.

General discussion

The pits at The Lodgers were probably part of a more extensive settlement of early iron age date. No evidence of a boundary ditch was recorded, and for the time being it may be assumed that the settlement was an open, or unbounded, one. Such sites typify the early and middle iron age of the Oxfordshire Thames Valley (Harding 1972; Lambrick 1978, 112; Hingley and Miles 1984), and examples are also known from aerial photography on the gravels of the Thames Valley in Gloucestershire. Few have been investigated in detail and The Lodgers therefore provides a rare glimpse of the material culture of such a site even though the evidence for its layout is slight. An example of an open settlement of middle iron age date has recently been excavated at Claydon Pike about 2 km west of The Lodgers (Miles and Palmer 1983).

THE INHUMATION BURIAL

The disturbed remains of a single crouched inhumation burial were found near Pit 4 by Dr McIntyre in September 1964 and taken to the Ashmolean Museum on 1 October 1964. A few sherds of iron age pottery were thought to be associated with the bones, but because the burial was examined in less than ideal circumstances, after the area had been graded, their true stratigraphic position is not certain. The burial may have been in a shallow oval grave, but again bulldozer damage made the exact circumstances of deposition difficult to reconstruct. At the time of writing the bones could not be located, but in a letter dated 26/11/1964 Dr McIntyre records that the skeleton '... was that of a young man of 20-25 years about 5'4" in height. There was nothing to suggest the cause of death to me and the bones were in good preservation'.

POST-PREHISTORIC FINDS by **Jane Timby**

Approximately 2.6 kilograms of post-prehistoric pottery were recovered from the site, all unstratified. The material, generally fragmentary and very abraded, ranges in date from the Roman through to the post-medieval period.

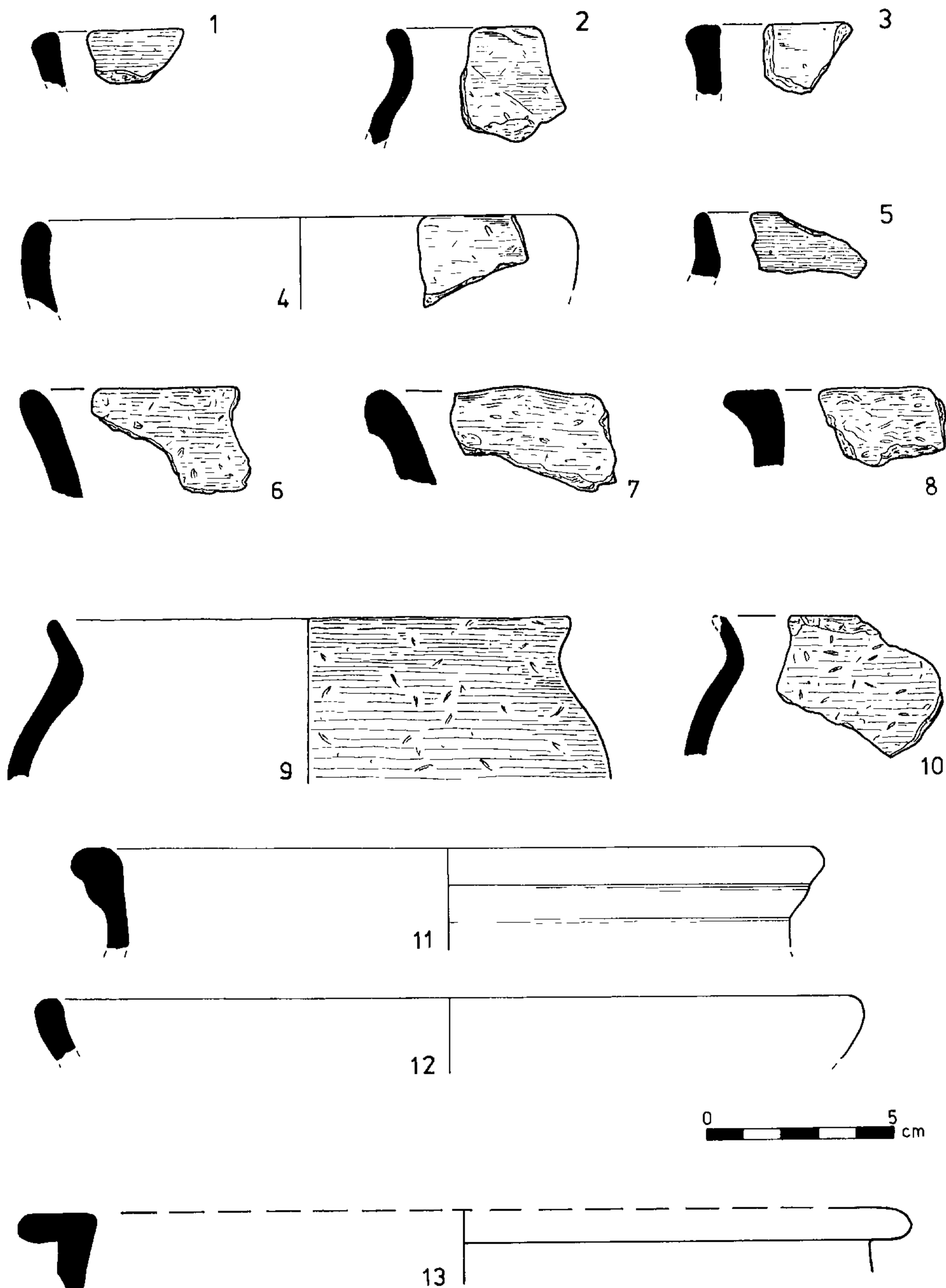


FIG. 11 Saxon (1-10) and medieval (11-13) pottery. Scale 1:2.

Roman

Roman potsherds constitute 47% of the residual material by weight (22% by sherd count). The most common fabric is a hard grey/brown sandy ware represented in jars, flanged dishes, and bowls. In addition there are two abraded sherds of south Gaulish Samian and a base sherd from a mortarium. This is a large sherd forming 39% by weight of the Roman assemblage. The fabric is rather unusual and contains fragments of quartz, quartzite, biotite mica, and feldspars set in a fine pale brown matrix. It can be identified as an import from central Gaul. Similar examples have been noted in 1st-century AD contexts in Gloucester (Gloucester City Excavation Unit Type Fabric series TF 9AA) and in London (P. Tyers pers. comm.).

Overall the Roman pottery present in this assemblage ranges in date from the late 1st century to the 3rd century AD. Despite the abraded edges of the sherds, many were quite large compared with later material, suggesting the presence of some sort of Roman occupation in the vicinity.

Saxon

Approximately 107 sherds, together weighing some 765 grams, could be assigned to the early Saxon period on the basis of fabric and form.

Three major fabrics groups are represented among the assemblage:

1. Organic-tempered wares

This fabric group can be subdivided into three individual fabrics on the basis of organic content and ancillary tempering.

i. Dense organic matter. This constitutes the largest portion of the organic wares, comprising 71 sherds (425 grams). The fabric is generally reduced, black or dark brown in colour, with a smooth, slightly soapy texture. The surfaces are marked by numerous impressions left by organic material. The fracture is hackly because of the high organic content. The clay matrix is very fine, slightly micaceous with no other macroscopically visible inclusions. Feature sherds include flat and slightly rounded bases, probably from the jars represented by simple rims (FIG. 11, nos. 2, 7, 8, and 10). Burnishing is common.

ii. Sparse organic matter. Sixteen sherds (155 grams). Generally mid-brown in colour with a matt unburnished surface. A very fine, moderately soft, micaceous clay with appreciably less organic tempering than 1.i above. The bodysherds are frequently thick walled (8–11 mm). Feature sherds include a rim from a small bowl (FIG. 11, no. 6) and a rim from a small hemispherical bowl (FIG. 11, no. 4).

iii. Organic matter and sand. Three sherds (43 grams). Dark brown to black colour, hard with a hackly fracture. The clay matrix contains frequent fine rounded quartz sand with a moderate quantity of organic matter. Feature sherds include a rim from a simple everted-rim jar (FIG. 11, no. 9).

2. Sandy wares

Two separate fabrics can be identified within this group.

i. Abundant sand. Nine sherds (82 grams). A rough textured black–dark brown fabric with a dense scatter of fine quartz sand in the matrix producing a pimply effect on the exterior and interior surfaces. Traces of organic material are present. Several sherds have a black carbonized deposit on the internal surface. Feature sherds include a rim from a simple jar (FIG. 11, no. 1).

ii. Sand and chalk. Five sherds (42 grams). A brown, very fine micaceous sandy ware with sparse inclusions of chalk. All bodysherds except for one rounded base sherd.

3. Shell and limestone wares

Two rimsherds and a bodysherd of possible Saxon date (FIG. 11, nos. 3 and 5). The exterior surfaces are mid-brown in colour, and the interior and core brown and grey respectively. The fabric is moderately soft and contains frequent fragments of finely crushed (0.1 mm) fossil shell and limestone.

These are the first Saxon sherds reported from Lechlade, and when found, in 1964, suggested the presence of a settlement nearby. Excavations in 1985 have identified a large Anglo-Saxon cemetery of 6th-to-7th-century date at Butler's Field, approximately 0.5 km north of The Lodgers, and aerial photographs suggest the presence of *Grubenhäuser* and other settlement features between the cemetery and The Lodgers (Miles and Palmer 1985).

Elsewhere in the upper Thames Valley broadly similar pottery has been found in 6th-century features at Abingdon, although no limestone and shell wares were noted (Avery and Brown 1972). Kilns were discovered at Purwell Farm, Cassington, producing grass/straw tempered wares alongside limestone gritted wares, both in simple bowl and jar forms (Arthur and Jope 1962–63, 9–12). Pottery of this general type and date was, however, produced in small scale domestic industries and had a rather limited distribution.

Medieval

Approximately 32% of the post-prehistoric pottery could be assigned to the medieval period (14% by weight). The sherds are extremely small and abraded and mostly of single fabric type. This consists of a limestone-tempered ware with a characteristic pitted appearance where inclusions have leached out leaving surface voids. Occasional fragments of chert/flint of varying size are also present. The vessels are wheelmade, well-fired, and are grey or grey and orange in colour (FIG. 11, no. 13). A few sherds have a thin light green glaze on either the interior or exterior surface. Two vessel types are represented: cooking pots with everted rims and jugs/pitchers. The latter is indicated by a single fragment of a thumb-pressed base and some externally glazed sherds decorated with bands of horizontal combing. This pottery type probably belongs to the tradition of squat limestone-tempered cooking pots described by Dunning (1949). Lechlade falls well within Dunning's distribution for this tradition which is confined to the West Country.

The other medieval wares cover a range of fabric types (FIG. 11, nos. 11 and 12). These include two sherds from a tripod pitcher, a sherd from a 14th- or 15th-century jug, and a sherd from a cooking pot, all of Minety fabric (Gloucester City Excavation Unit Type Fabric TF44). Also present is a rimsherd from a cooking pot in a fabric well-represented at sites in the upper Kennet Valley in the late 12th to 14th centuries (A. Vince pers. comm.). 13th-century pottery has previously been reported from the area (Case and Sturdy 1960, 133).

Post-medieval

Approximately 10% of the post-prehistoric pottery is of post-medieval date (11% by sherd count). This includes fragments from three imported Rhenish stone-ware vessels. The remainder of the sherds are fine sandy wares, mostly glazed.

Four bowls and one stem fragment of clay pipe were recovered. The bowls can be assigned to Oswald's (1975) types 4 (c. AD 1600–40), 5 (c. AD 1640–60) and 19 (AD 1690–1710).

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