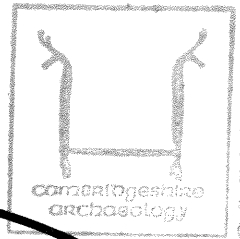
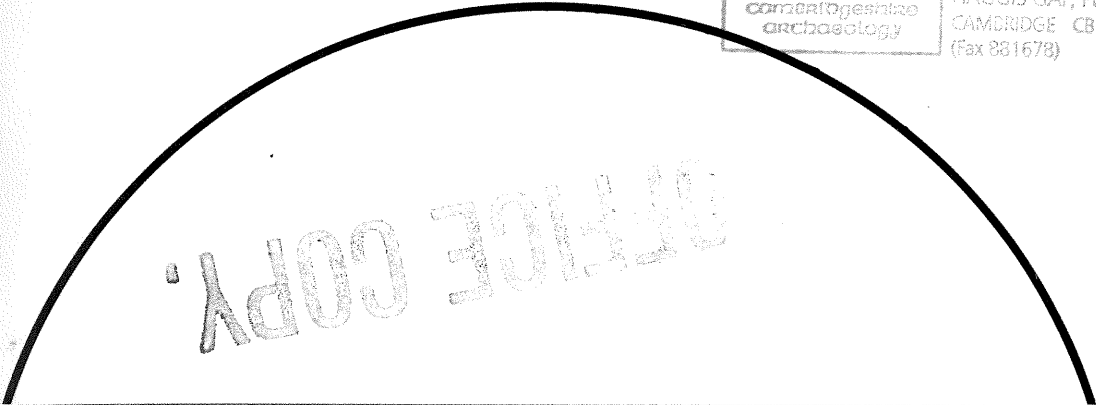


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Barrington Anglo-Saxon Cemetery - Interim Report



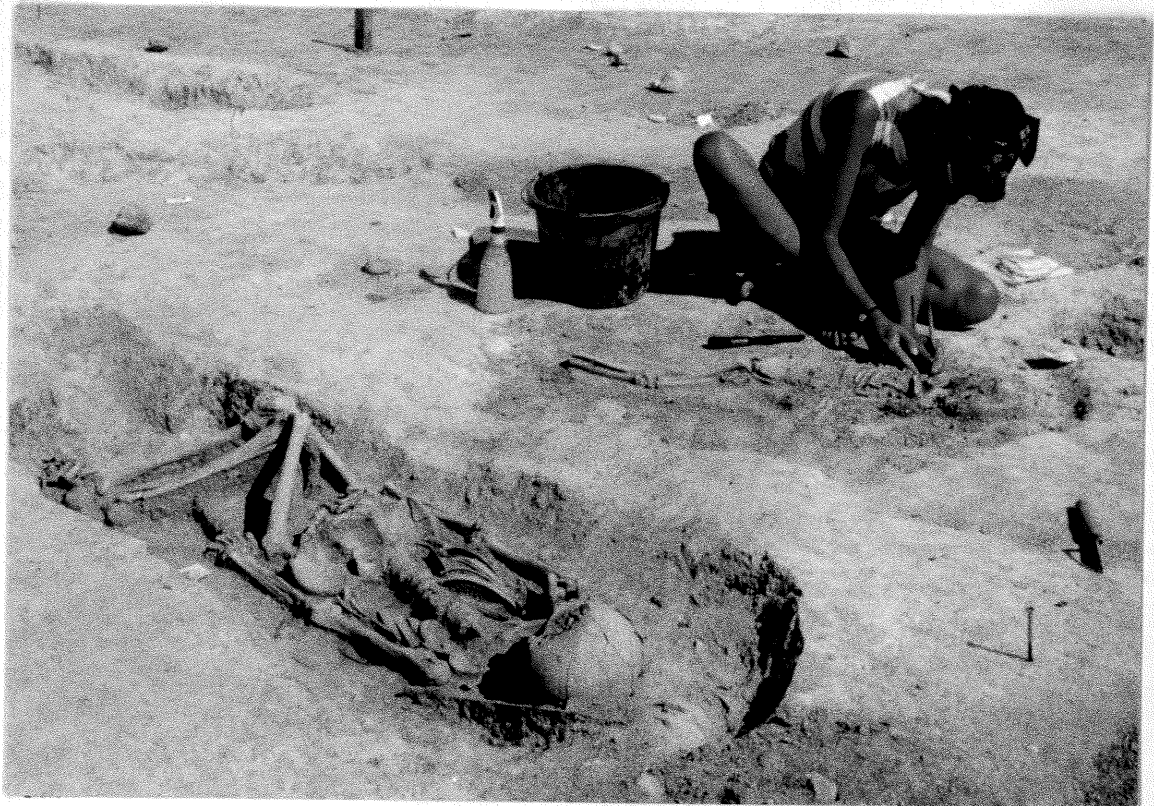
 Cambridgeshire
County Council
Rural Strategy

**BARRINGTON ANGLO-SAXON CEMETERY
EDIX HILL
1990**

INTERIM REPORT

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BARRINGTON EDIX HILL ANGLO-SAXON CEMETERY, 1990

Interim Report

Summary

Forty-three burials were discovered and excavated. They were concentrated on the brow of a chalk knoll known as Edix Hill, and bring the total number of burials investigated during the past four years to 73. Grave-goods and most skeletons were found to be well preserved. Artifact evidence has a date range extending through the 6th and 7th centuries A.D.. Of exceptional interest were two rare bed burials of young women, one buried with a sword, amongst many other artifacts. Other grave goods included spears, shields, brooches (small-long, annular, disc, and garnet disc types), beads (glass and amber), latchlifters, knives and buckles, including one "shield on tongue" example. In spite of poor organic preservation some fabric has survived, and nearly all the bronze brooches have been found to contain replaced textile, whilst ironwork show traces of replaced leather and wood. It seems likely that DNA may still exist in the bone and analysing this will help to test theories about the existence of family groups within the cemetery. A series of ditches, stake-holes, and pits were also found, and date to the late Iron Age.

AIMS AND ORGANISATION OF PROJECT

Work in previous years had highlighted the extreme vulnerability of the cemetery to modern ploughing. It had demonstrated the wealth of artifacts, and especially the fine preservation of skeletal material, a striking contrast to the soil silhouettes encountered in recent large scale and important excavations of Anglian cemeteries at Sutton Hoo, Spong Hill, Snape, Westgarth Gardens, and West Stow. Edix Hill promised a rich store of information on the local Anglo-Saxon community, on its organisation, on its cultural contacts and technology, which would help to shed light on the South Cambridgeshire region during an apparently unstable period of intermittent warfare between the emerging kingdoms of East Anglia and Mercia, and of Saxon attacks from the south-west. But above all the cemetery at Edix Hill was seen to contain an immense opportunity to study a sixth and seventh century population in depth, with much to contribute to our understanding of the health and diet of the Anglo-Saxons in general. This abundance of data was, and remains, precariously preserved beneath a mere 20 cms of topsoil. Frequent ploughing and other agricultural activity, which has already damaged some graves, undoubtedly would destroy it in a very short time, and a persistent threat from unscrupulous metal-detector users must also remain a very real possibility.

Building on last season's work the programme in 1990 was to further examine the state of preservation and vulnerability of the burials, to assess the extent of the cemetery and whether it had a boundary bank, and to investigate the nature of earlier ditches and pits that had provisionally been dated to Romano-British times.

A hectare had been kept out of ploughing for 1989/90 which protected the bulk of the area trenched in 1989, but it was apparent from previous work that the cemetery extended north beneath a bean crop, and south beneath wheat, neither of which area was available for excavation during the 1990 season. Thus it was decided to concentrate an area excavation on the brow of the chalk knoll, reopening the main trench (Trench 1) from 1989 and an area adjacent to the west that extended from the multiple burials of 4 women (burials 31, 44/A, 44/B, and 45) found in 1989, north as far as the bean field. This area of 300 square metres was in the centre of activity as defined by the 1989 trenches, with a high probability of interesting burial groups and allowing a fuller plan of the earlier ditches to be gained. In addition the south-eastern trench of 1989 (Trench 7) was reopened to examine a possible enclosing bank, and to look at some of the burials on the periphery of the cemetery.

Having the land in hand allowed us to select June and July for digging, which enabled schools to visit. Education is an important aspect of all archaeological work and Edix Hill was designed to be open to the public. A small exhibition was organised to run throughout the summer at Wimpole Hall, whilst a visitor centre on site allowed a continually developing display to be set up giving background information and showing excavation as it progressed. Approximately 7000 people visited during seven weeks, and the site was open seven days a week. A small core of experienced excavators composed the team, but volunteers and work placements offered their help throughout the season.

FIELDWALKING RESULTS

Large areas near to the cemetery have been fieldwalked in an attempt to discover contemporary settlement. It is especially true in Cambridgeshire, as in much of the East Anglian region, that Anglo-Saxon cemeteries have been found whilst the associated occupation areas have eluded detection and may be distant from the land set aside for burial. Detailed survey work can help to find such sites, but the nature of the evidence left by wooden structures and household activities are fairly ephemeral and it is not surprising that settlement remains rarely have been spotted.

During 1988 and 1989 8 hectares over the brow of Edix Hill were fieldwalked by members of the excavation team, whilst 20 hectares have been walked by the Cambridge Archaeological Field Group over 1989/90. The results are best illustrated in figs. 1-4, and metal finds by Chris Montague have also been plotted as a series of overlays to give a general feel for the provenance of artifacts from different periods (distribution not shown on figs. 1-4).

Identifiable Iron Age pottery is scarce, and concentrated on the knoll brow. Four celtic bronze coins have been found just south of the main areas of excavation.

Romano-British pottery scatters are concentrated just south of the excavations, and a sparse spread of sherds continues westwards towards the Orwell-Malton road. Metal finds concentrate on the south-east of the knoll. They consist of six coins and four brooches, including bow, trumpet, and dolphin types.

Anglo-Saxon pottery spreads north-south along the brow ridge of Edix Hill, with concentration across the southern tail of the knoll, just outside the excavated areas. Metal finds have been found all over the knoll, with concentrations to the south and east. These artifacts include an open-work disc, cruciform and disc brooches; a bronze girdle-hanger; bronze buckles and studs; iron spearheads and knives; a unique shield fitting in the form of a miniature gilded sword; and bits of shieldboss.

These results are reliable in so far as the metal artifacts have been sketch plotted some time after they were originally found, and the difficulty in distinguishing between Iron Age and Anglo-Saxon pottery probably means we should treat each distribution as indicating either of these periods. Bits of a Bronze Age rapier, an Edward III silver penny, and a Medieval jetton have also been found, as have a thin scatter of worked flint including a Neolithic celt. Animal bone was not collected, but human and animal bone was noticeable in the ploughsoil on the knoll.

In addition nearly 100 hectares has been fieldwalked on the north side of the river Rhee, west from Malton Farm. It has often been suggested that this may have been a settlement associated with the cemetery at Edix Hill as Malton was a pre-Conquest village. However, fieldwalking produced little to support this theory. Tree planting immediately east of Edix Hill will be undertaken during the autumn of 1990, and this may yield occupation evidence.

GEOPHYSICAL SURVEYING

It had been hoped to have successfully completed a geophysical survey of the area due for excavation in 1990 in advance of the digging season, so that the interpretation of the survey results could be tested by excavation. Also this would have been a useful aid to public presentation, showing the application of prospecting methods in archaeology. However the ground proved to be too hard for resistivity, and unevenness was a severe handicap to ground radar surveying and interpretation.

A recent magnetometer survey covering approximately a hectare over the brow of Edix Hill has proved more successful, and results should be available in 1991.

IRON AGE FEATURES

A number of steep V-shaped ditches over a metre deep were found running along the chalk ridge, one of which was sectioned and proved to have three main phases of digging (Ditch 15). It contained much pottery and animal bone, and the ditch cuts could clearly be phased from the earliest cut, found with first century B.C. and first century A.D. non-Belgic sherd types (notably butt-beakers), to Belgic and conquest types in the latest levels. Possible tool marks (antler pick holes) could be seen on the sides. This longterm history is mirrored in a section through Ditch 120, which was a metre deep by 3 metres wide, and which produced pottery that spanned 100 years, with the later material at the top. This ditch was cut by a much smaller one, ditch 111, which proved to have even later pottery in it, including a piece of samian, animal bone and some slag.

A pair of shallower, and parallel, ditches appeared to be circling to form a double ditched enclosure. These ditches were flat bottomed with slightly sloping sides, 30-40 cms deep. Beside these, and at times evident within them, were rows of stakeholes. A number of pits were found, some cut by the parallel ditches. In two pits stakeholes were seen in the clayey basal fills and redeposited compacted chalk.

The function of these features is difficult to determine on present evidence, but presumably they were boundaries to enclosures on the top of the chalk knoll. Therefore the larger ditches could have been cut as an animal barrier, along the lines of a ha-ha. The parallel ditches are smaller and flat bottomed, and may have been trenches for setting palisade posts. The stakeholes running beside them may represent many different phases of fencing.

Industrial processes are probably indicated by the pits with stakeholes in them, whilst some of the others have a whole series of different dumps and fills, and presumably were slow filled features that may have been for storage.

Post-holes have also been found, but no pattern is obvious to group them together, and it is impossible to say whether they are Iron Age or Anglo-Saxon.

The possible boundary bank and ditch, seen as a low undulation and soil mark on either side of Edix Hill in 1989, was investigated by reopening Trench 7, which, when widened, became Trench 11. Iron Age ditches and two Anglo-Saxon burials (52 & 161) were found, but the postulated bank and ditch proved to be relatively modern and was assumed to be a coprolite extraction trench. This "trench" was not bottomed as it was not considered worth continuing excavation after such an interpretation.

ANGLO-SAXON BURIALS

10 definite male burials and 9 females were identified by gravegood evidence, and by site visits from the project Osteologist (Corinne Duhig, Department of Biological Anthropology, Cambridge University). 5 teenagers and 5 juveniles were excavated, and there were bones from an infant in a fair state of preservation. One definite and one possible cremation were found, but these were not in pots and were merely ash and burnt bone deposits in pits.

The inhumations were predominantly supine and carefully laid in the ground. Shallow scoops had been dug into the chalk marl and into the fill of the Iron Age ditches, but occasionally deeper graves had been cut into the natural bedrock. There is no direct evidence for coffins, although there are a few nails. The strange position of "pillowed-up" skulls and "hunched-up" skeletons may be the result of burying in shrouds. However, the care with which arms have been laid over the chest, or down by the side, or the way in which legs have been crossed at knees or ankles, would suggest that the bodies were arranged once they had been placed in the ground. At present no pattern is obvious that separates one group from another by the positioning of the bodies.

Orientation varies from facing due east to facing west-north-west, and this does not conform to any gradual change in direction with time, as some of the latest 7th century burials can be seen to be facing north. There is also one example of a west facing burial.

Organisation of the cemetery shows little evidence of grouping on sexual or prestige criteria, but instead burials of young and old, male and female, and those with many or few gravegoods, seem to be fairly densely intermingled. Phasing of the graves may alter this picture, but the general mixing of all ages suggests grouping of families may be a more likely way in which the cemetery functioned. In 1989 several multiple burials were found and it was suggested that these deliberately shared graves were unnecessary in terms of space, and therefore may have been family mausoleums, with possible marker posts being represented by several postholes. In 1990 there was only one double burial found, but three males buried close to one another all had metopic sutures. It appears this condition is unusual in adults, except in malnourished populations where it is more likely to be encountered in females. The males at Edix Hill are up to 6 foot tall and the bones suggest they were healthy and well nourished. Perhaps the metopic sutures are, therefore, the product of hereditary characteristics, and direct evidence of family grouping may be possible. Samples have been taken for DNA analysis by Erica Hagelberg at Oxford, who has found DNA in far more ancient bone. Results should be available in 1991.

Many of the skulls were fragile and had been shattered, and a technique was developed for lifting them to be excavated under laboratory conditions. Kathy Tubb from the Conservation Department of the Institute of Archaeology, London, advised and aided in these lifting operations, and also in lifting delicate artifacts. After identifying which skulls or artifacts were potentially too fragile to excavate normally, and sometimes having to consult and decide whether the bone or artifactual evidence took precedence in any particular case, a block was lifted with the skull or object on it by cutting round and beneath it. The block was bandaged with plaster of paris around the sides and tinfoil spread over the cranium and plastered to the bandaging. Skulls have been found to maintain their microenvironment for months when stored after excavation. On some skulls it was possible to lift out large vault fragments first, thus lessening the weight of the block by enabling removal of much of the soil in the interior.

Artifacts are undergoing cleaning and stabilisation treatment at the Institute Conservation laboratory in London, and it is hoped to be able to have many artifacts from 1989 and 1990 in a state fit for photographing and drawing by mid 1991. Consultation with Kathy Tubb and Richard Darrah on site led to much greater understanding of what opportunities existed and what was especially important for a wood specialist when dealing with replaced wood and leather on the back of shieldbosses, or on the ironwork from the bed burials. This constant discussion also enabled more lucid recording during excavation. In the double burial (13/A, 13/B) textile remains were found surviving between bronze plates, and all the brooches appear to have replaced fabric adhering to them. Elizabeth Crowfoot has agreed to examine and report on these textile remains.

Environmental work has not been promising. Peter Murphy has been advising and will look at a number of soil samples from the past two seasons of work. Pot and pit samples may contain

interesting information but soil conditions seem to be extremely poor for pollen survival. Small samples from the stomach/chest area of every skeleton excavated during 1990 have been taken in the hope of finding stomach contents and or evidence of flowers or other plant material such as bracken put in with the bodies at burial. However a sample prepared at the Botany School of Cambridge University produced a very low pollen count.

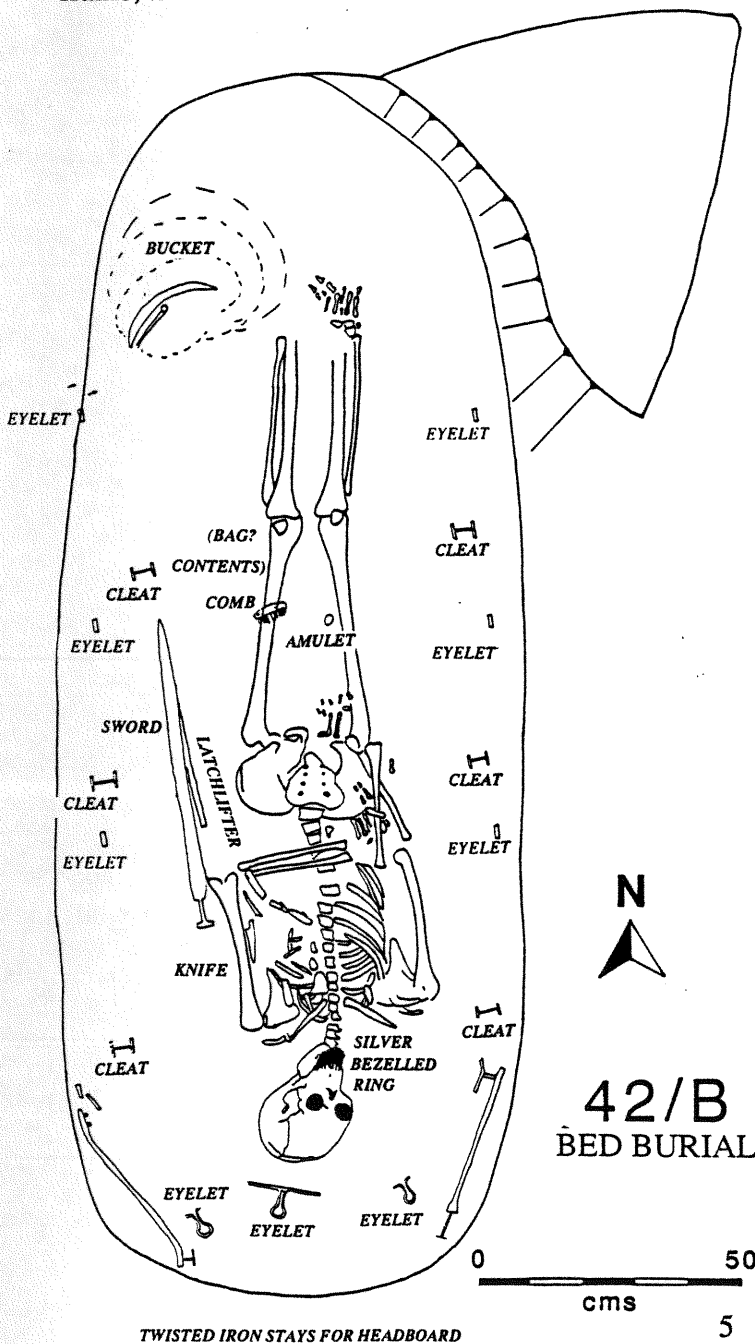
Only a few burials have so far undergone preliminary analysis. These have been selected on their apparent interest value because of the associated artifacts or because of particular skeletal histories.

The Bed Burials

Two 7th century bed burials were excavated during 1990, burial 42/B and burial 183. There were marked similarities between them as they were both of women, probably aged 25-35, and both had rings of silver wire with twisted bezels on their shoulders.

Burial 42/B is of a 25+ year old female. She was laid on her back with limbs extended, in a deep cut grave (0.5 metres deep). The grave was rounded at head and feet ends, were a number of possible stakeholes could be seen. Iron cleats and eyelets along each side were the remains of a bed frame, and on either side of the head were twisted and curved iron bars. A long-based eyelet

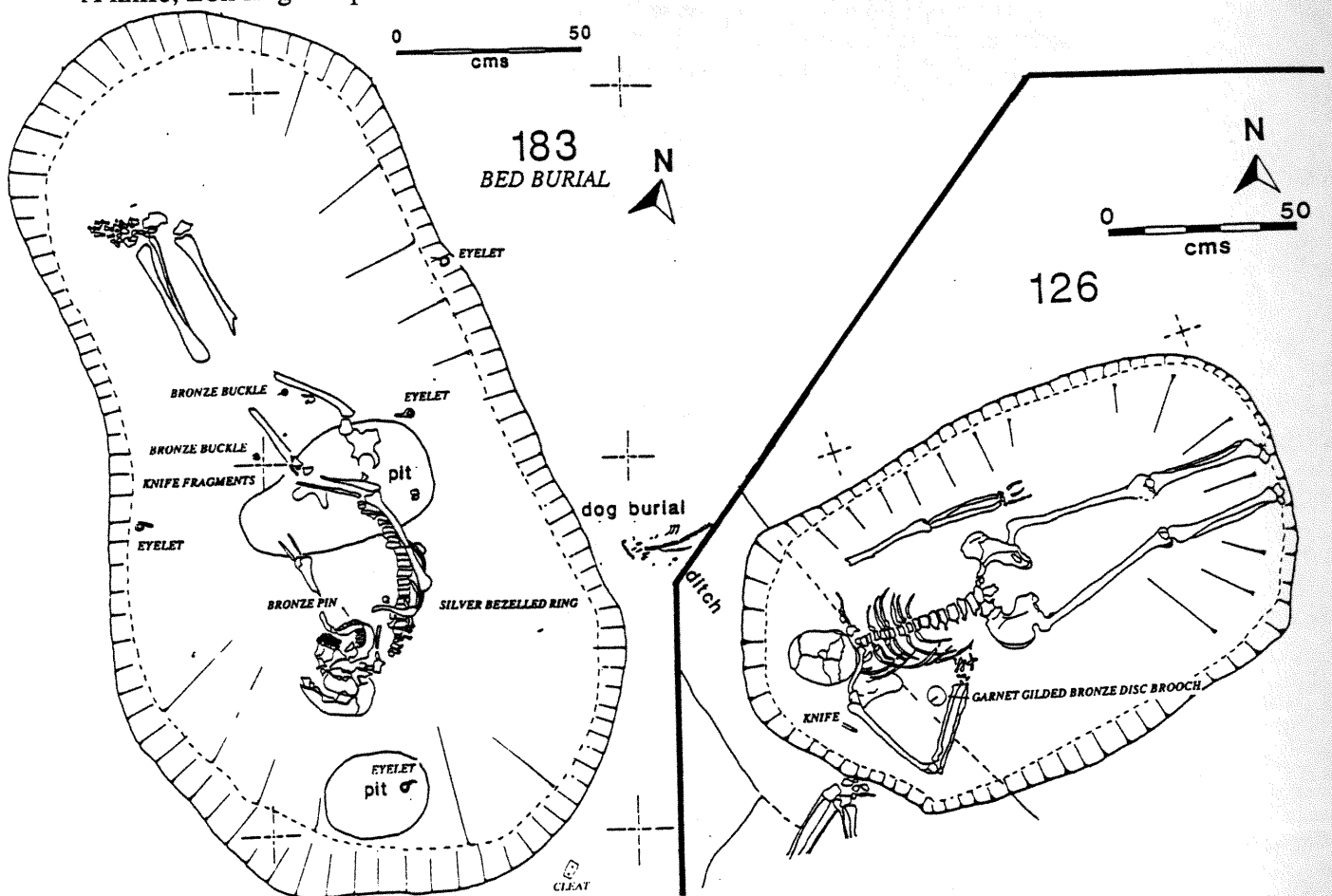
crossed the grave beyond the head, with an eyelet either side of it. This construction, linking with the twisted bars that presumably connected the frame with the head-piece, may have been for some kind of canopy. The fact that no parallel eyelets were found at the feet end shows that there was no bar running the full length of the burial bed, whereas the eyelets and cleats down the sides are almost mirror images of one another. These side eyelets face inward, and are situated above the level of the cleats. No lower row of eyelets (e.g. for suspending a mattress) were found. The cleats were probably for joining two planks, laid lengthways, that would have made the sides of the bed frame. The eyelets therefore may have been for several bars running across the bed. Alternatively the eyelets could have had rope passed through them and have been used for lowering the bed into position in the grave.



Gravegoods found with this burial included the iron hoops of a bucket set near the left foot (lifted as a block for excavation in a laboratory), a short iron sword laid along the left side of the body (which may have been for weaving), an iron latchlifter beneath it, a small silver bezelled ring on the right shoulder, a small knife, and what appears to be the contents of a bag or satchel over her left tibia. This "bag" awaits X-ray and excavation in the laboratory, but contains at least a bone comb, a glass bead, some iron hooks, and a sea-urchin fossil, which was probably a lucky charm or amulet.

Burial 183 was an oval grave cut shallowly into chalk and into the fill of an Iron Age ditch. Cut into the base of the grave were two pits, one of which (situated just above the head) may have been a marker post, whilst two other burials were closely associated with 183. This group appeared as an amorphous area until careful excavation disclosed the bed burial (183) with a dog burial adjacent, to the east of the head. Below this dog lay a skeleton buried with a small spearhead (188) cut by burial 183. It is uncertain whether the dog was directly associated with either. To the north-east of the bed burial lay another female buried with glass and amber beads (184).

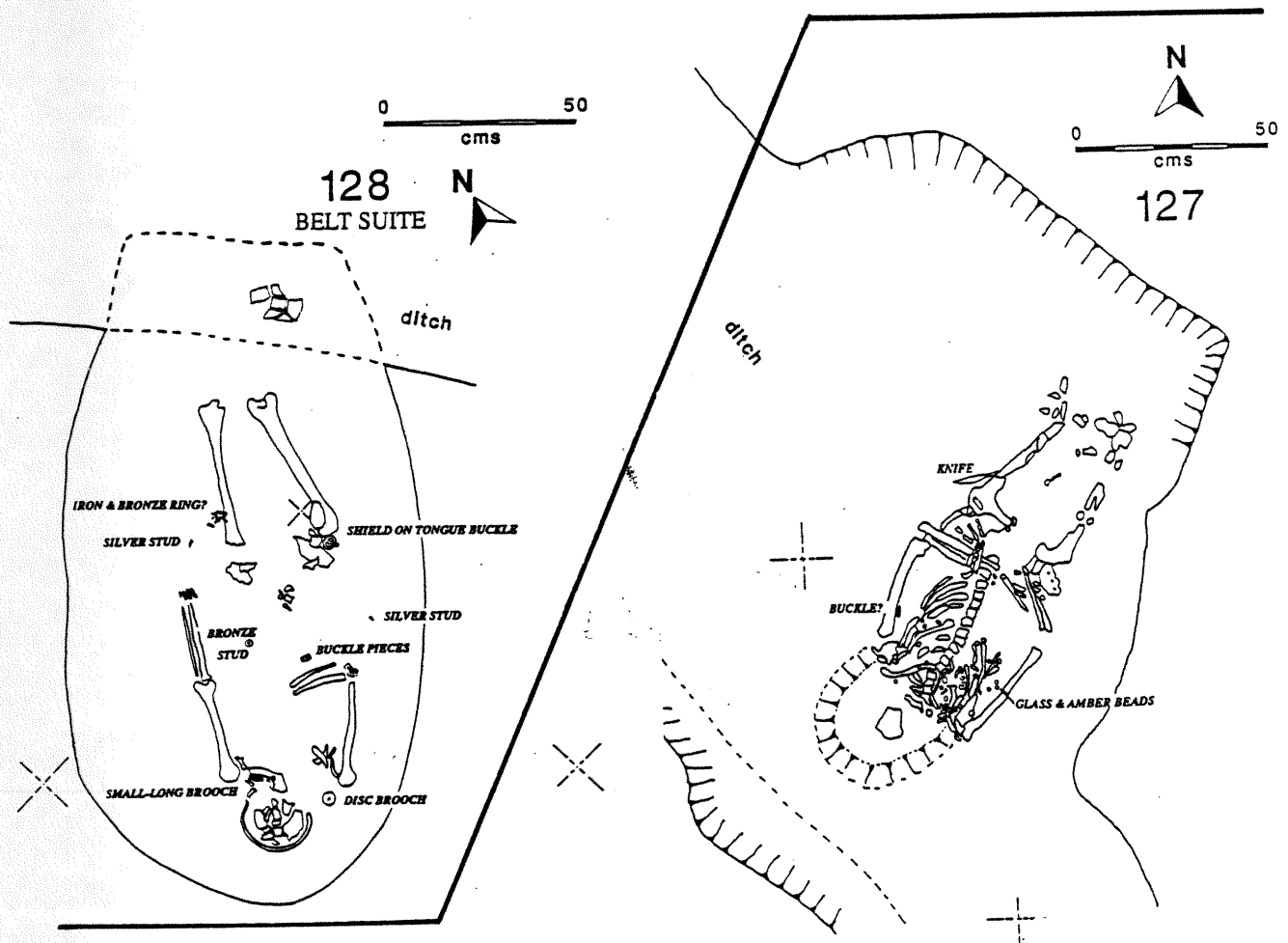
All this activity in one spot may account for the disturbance of the bed, although the shallowness of the burial would have allowed the upper part to become disturbed by ploughing. Six iron eyelets, a twisted piece of headstead railing, and several possible bits of cleat were found around the grave, and although these were not in situ, they clearly indicated that burial 183 was a bed burial. The skeleton in the grave was of a female, probably aged 25-35, positioned facing north-west and lying on her back, with a slope to her left. She was beginning to suffer from degenerative arthritis along her spine. She had been buried with a pair of bronze buckles on her upper legs, and a silver bezelled ring lay on her right shoulder whilst a bronze pin (point towards the head) was found below the left jaw. All these finds are probably articles used for fastening clothing. A knife, iron ring and piece of bronze were found under her right forearm.



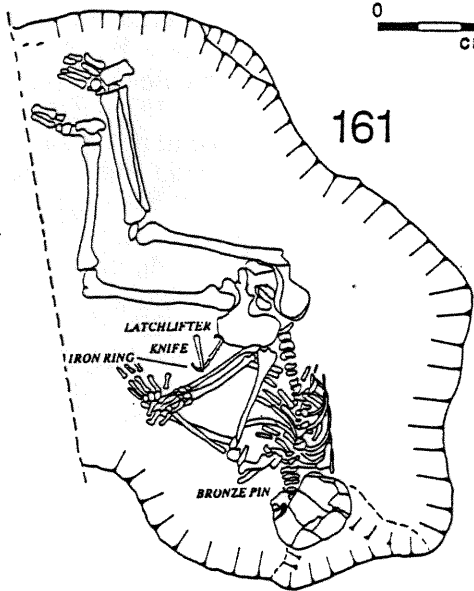
Burial 126 was of an east-facing female laid on her back with her right arm crooked up. Her age has not been ascertained but osteo -arthritis is evident in lumbar vertebrae; she was fairly tall and of slender build. Apart from a small knife near her head, buried with her by the right forearm was a bronze gilt disc brooch with four circular and four keystone garnets, plus two blue-glass rectangles set in shell as decoration (in addition two empty settings probably also contained blue-glass). The central gem was missing, although the shell case remains. This brooch is of early 7th century date. It has clearly slumped down from decaying fabric on the right side of the body, and inverted itself. This may suggest space for movement during decay, perhaps evidence of a coffin or wooden mortuary structure. However the shallowness of the grave (35 cms from top of ploughsoil to base of grave), its oval shape and U-shaped profile, would argue otherwise. This grave cut into one immediately west of it (burial 151) and had been partly dug into the fill of an Iron Age ditch.

Burial 128 was a shallow cut grave scooped out of chalk-marl and the fill of an Iron Age ditch. The burial faced north-east and had been laid on its back with the right forearm positioned across the chest. Bone condition was poor but the analyst estimates this skeleton as being a female of approximately 17. This is interesting because she was buried with a "belt suite", a series of bronze and iron buckles and other belt fittings, the finest of which were two shoe-shaped silvered or tinned studs, and a shield on tongue Kentish buckle, also "silvered". In addition a bronze disc brooch was found high on the right shoulder, whilst a horned small-long brooch lay beneath her head. "Belt suites" have generally been attributed to males, and it is important to have sufficiently good bone survival to give an independent, and opposite, opinion on this. Brooches, on the other hand, should only be found with females.

Both burials 126 and 128 show signs of long femoral necks and flattened femoral shafts. They also both have grave-goods of Kentish tradition, and are situated within 3 metres of one another. On such evidence it is possible to suggest that these two individuals might have been related, although fine dating of the artifacts could put them temporally too far apart.



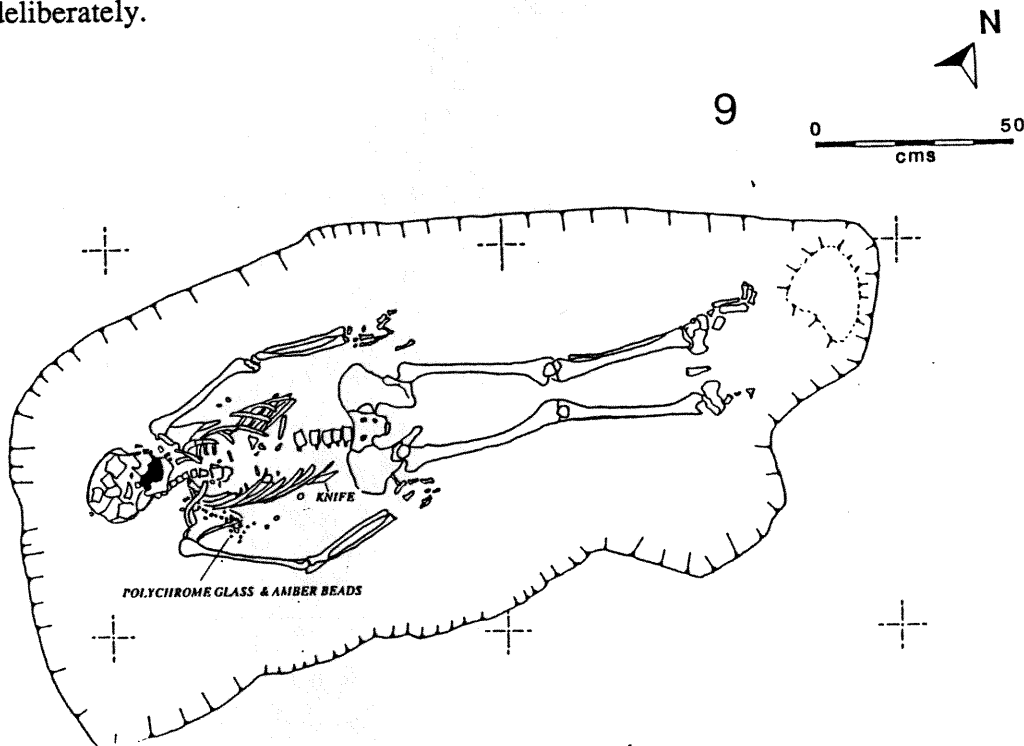
Burial 127 was in a very poor state of preservation as it had been laid on top of the fill of a ditch, high enough to be badly damaged by agricultural activity. However the ribs, arms, and upper legs remained and 21 glass and amber beads formed a necklace over the chest and right side of the body. A green mark was noticed on each clavicle which must have come from bronze brooches. The fact that the bones are still in situ but that the brooches have gone points strongly to removal by metal detecting. Although ploughing itself has not removed most of the bones (the skull has probably been spread by this) yet the terribly fragmented state of the skeleton bears testimony to the pressure from agricultural machinery compacting the ground and shattering bone.



Burial 161 was of a mature adult female laid flexed on her left side in a 40 cms deep grave. She was orientated north-south and her bones have changes possibly indicative of child-bearing. The grave-goods suggest a person of importance with a small bronze pin under her jaw, a knife, iron ring and buckle by her waist, with a latch-lifter beneath.

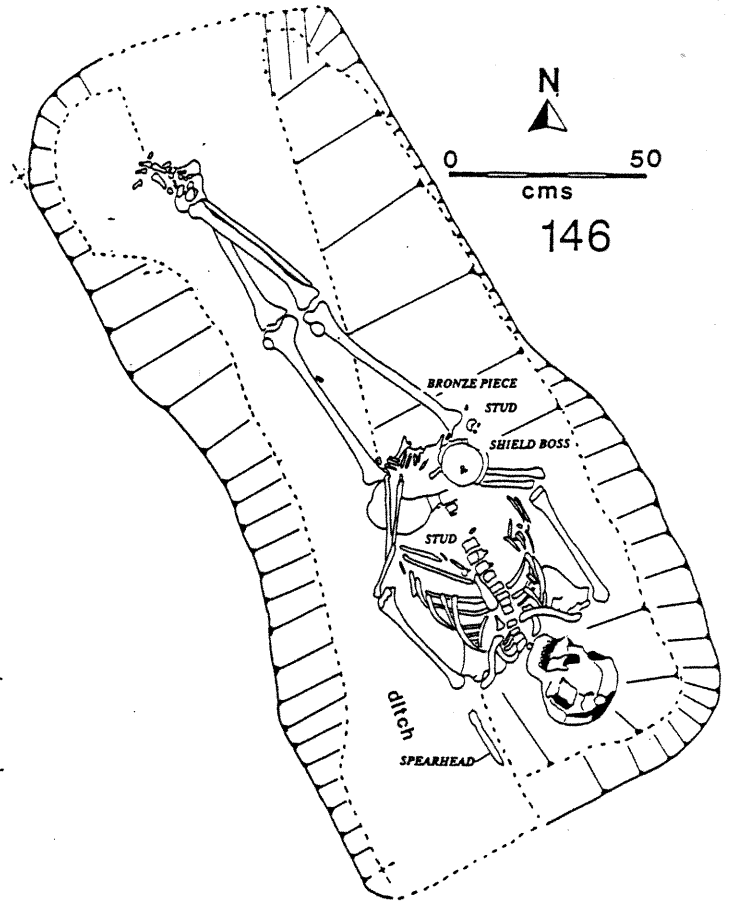
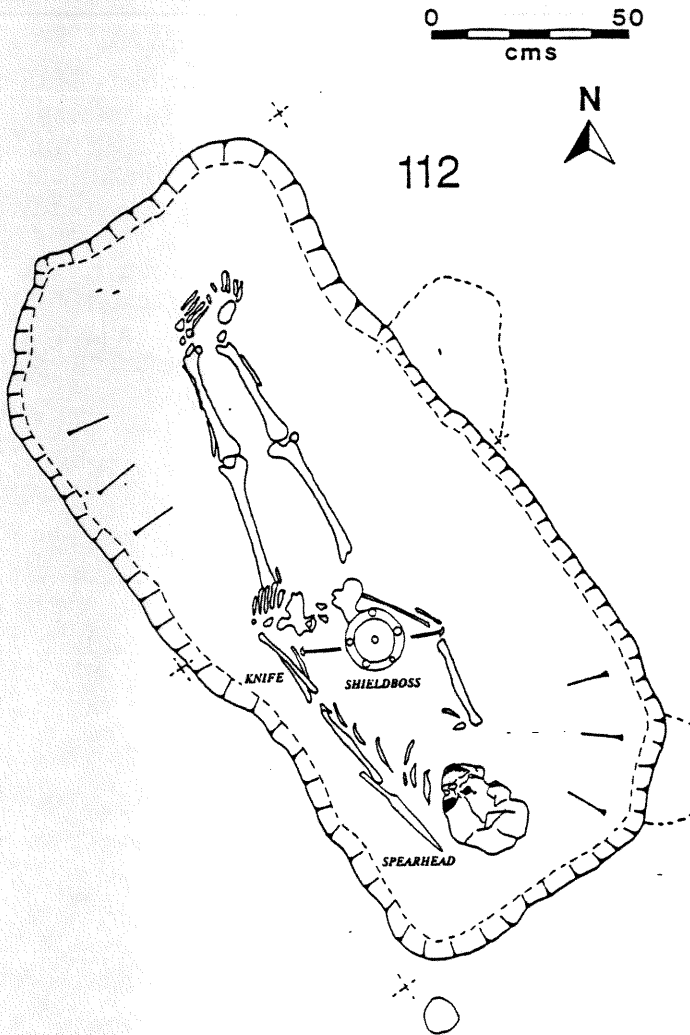
Burials 10/A and B were of two children excavated in 1989, orientated east-west, and badly damaged from ploughing. It was not possible to sex them but the older was a young teenager, and the other was between 6-12 years old. Beside them was a grave that was left to be excavated in 1990, and in this was found the skeleton of a young person (**burial 9**) on its back and facing east, identified on the pelvis as a male, but found with 67 glass and amber beads which must mean the burial of a female. These beads had

slumped down the right side of the skeleton and may represent two bands of a necklace. A small knife was also found, and some large pottery sherds looked as though they had been put in the grave deliberately.



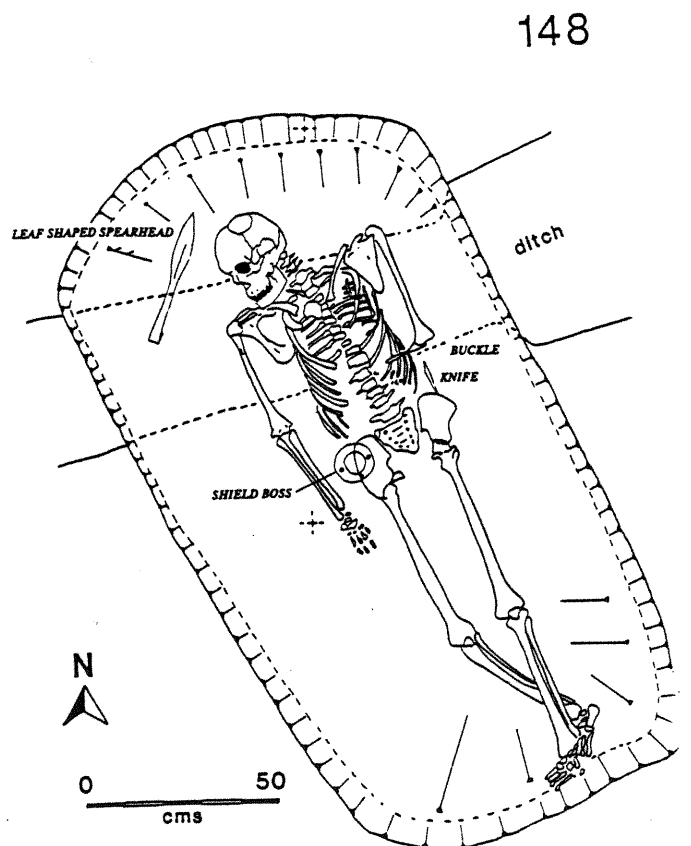
It may be that this group are all members of one family, as has been suggested for several of the multiple burials discovered in 1989, and this theory is further strengthened by a group of adult male burials (112, 146, 148) set close together, which all had one aspect in common. The metopic sutures at the front of the skulls had not fused, and yet the skeletons were those of very mature and healthy males. Could this condition, therefore, be the product of some heritable variant?

Burial 112 was a very deep cut grave of a north-west facing male buried with a knife, spear, and a shield placed on his middle. These artifacts belong to the 6th century with the spear being pre 550 A.D., and are common in south-east England. Carbonised seeds were also found in this grave.



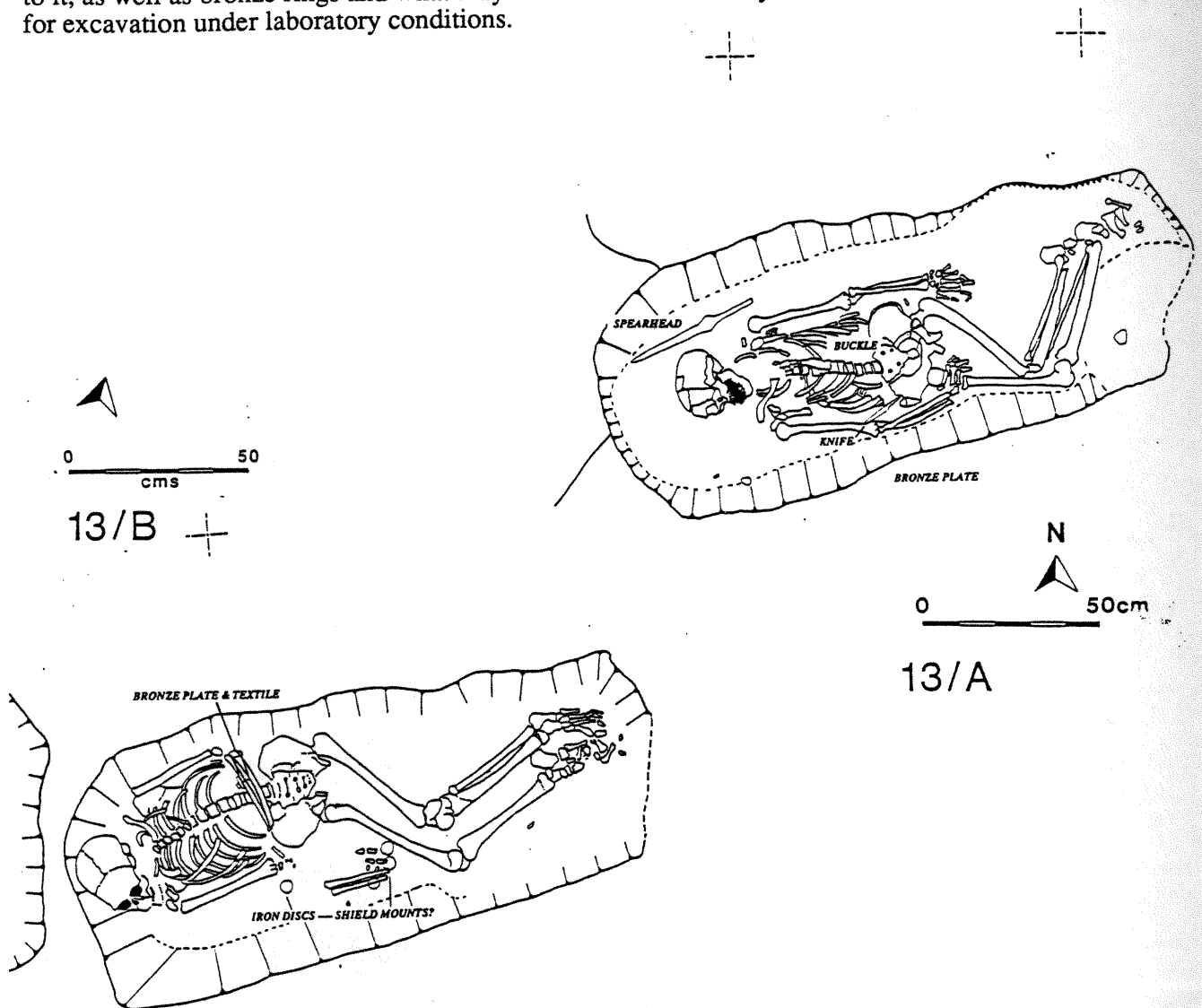
Burial 146 was of a robust middle-aged male facing north-west, and placed in a grave along the line of an Iron Age ditch. He was positioned on his back with legs crossed at his ankles, and he had a shield placed over the right arm. A small spear head, a knife, and a D-shaped buckle were found. The spear is a very early type (5th-6th century) and its distribution is concentrated in Cambridgeshire, and the shield boss fits into the same period.

Burial 148 was of a supine mature adult facing north. On bone evidence it has been sexed as a possible female, but it was buried with a knife, leaf-shaped spearhead, and a shield. The spear type is found throughout the 6th century and is very definitely alien to Anglian tradition, although common elsewhere.



Burials 13/A and 13/B were the only multiple burials discovered in 1990, and they are of a pair of males laid one on top of the other. They have both been positioned on their backs, but with knees bent to the right, and head facing right. Orientation is to the north-east, and the older male is buried on top with a long spearhead, of widespread distribution, but especially found in the Midlands, and date range from late 5th through 6th century. A small knife, a D-shaped iron buckle, and a bronze fitting were also found.

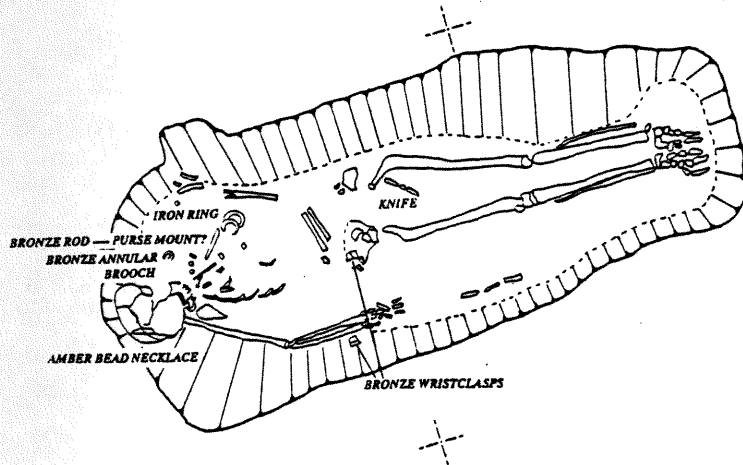
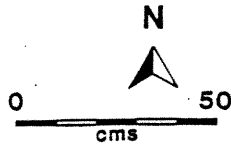
Burial 13/B was of an adolescent approximately 17 years old, with possible hip dislocation. He had been buried with four large iron studs, which may have been shield decorations, but no shield boss was found. Fragments of a knife were found, and a bronze plate that had surviving textile attached to it, as well as bronze rings and what may be the remains of ivory. This area was lifted in a block for excavation under laboratory conditions.



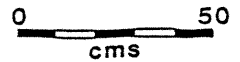
Burial 16/B was of an extended supine adolescent female facing east-north-east. She had been wearing clothes fastened by bronze wrist clasps and bronze annular brooches, and had had an amber bead necklace that clearly went around her neck. In addition she had a bronze purse mount or girdle hanger situated in the chest area, but this area was so full of small objects cemented together in earth that the whole area was lifted in a block for excavation in a laboratory.

Burial 119 was of an adult female badly knocked about by ploughing. However it could be seen that the original way in which she had been buried was very strange. Her legs were bent back beneath her, the right arm was lying beneath and towards the left side, and her pelvis and backbone were bent over in an impossible position without first having been broken. It could be that this burial represents a sacrifice, a phenomenon not unknown in Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, or it could also be indicating a practice of excarnation.

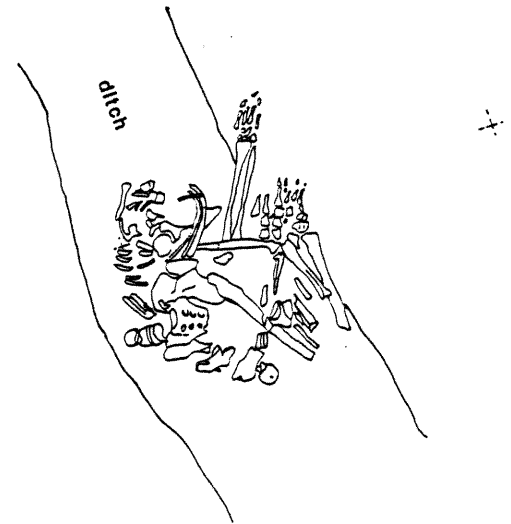
16B



N



119



Burial 149 was of a supine extended female, probably 25-35 years old, facing due east. She had been buried in the fill of a ditch that was cutting a large Iron Age ditch. Buried with her were two beads and an Iron Age fibula (presumably residual), but of most interest was the fact that her jaw had been placed between her legs. This must have been done after organic decay because there were no signs that it had been cut off, and there was disturbance on the left side where the arm was missing. This apparent access to the body after initial decomposition, with moving the jaw to the leg area, would argue for a space around the body from a coffin.

Burial 103 was of an old arthritic female with worn teeth. She was positioned on her back and facing north, and had apparently been buried with very few grave-goods. However a pit had been dug on the left side and her left arm and upper leg had been removed. Also the tiny toe and ankle bones of her left foot were found along her spine. Obviously a great deal of disturbance had been going on which may be similar to that discussed for burial 149, but it may also be evidence of grave robbing. Another burial suggests possible early grave robbing when the burial (52) was found to have only one foot and the right arm and ribs in situ, with a mass of other broken bones dumped on the chest and stomach area. This definitely was not the result of ploughing as it all occurred within the grave cut, and suggests deliberate and selective disturbance.

CONCLUSIONS

Direct evidence of settlement on Edix Hill for either the Iron Age or Anglo-Saxon period has so far been elusive, but it is an aspect that must be thoroughly explored in next season's work. An understanding of Iron Age features should be clearer with a large-scale open area excavation, allowing an overall plan to be obtained. Initial geophysical prospecting (magnetometer) results by Chris and Sue Gaffney of Bradford Geophysical Surveys shows a complicated pattern of ditched enclosures presumably dating to the Iron Age. In amongst these enclosures and possible droveways are smaller features which may well be Anglo-Saxon, and it should now be possible to establish the full extent of the cemetery with a high degree of accuracy.

Fine preservation of human bone will allow detailed study of cemetery organisation, population health and nutrition, and the extent of cultural contacts. Distribution plans of the cemetery by period, by cultural artifact groups (Anglian, Kentish, Saxon, and Midland), by sex, by age, and very possibly by family group, will explore the complexity of social organisation in a South Cambridgeshire community of this date, throwing much light on present understanding of contemporary society. The relationship between East Anglia, the Midland area, south-east England, and indeed, contacts between these areas and continental Europe, can all be studied from the data recorded from Barrington. The depth of ploughsoil over many of the graves can be as little as 20cms, and further ploughing will undoubtedly destroy at least those burials on the brow of Edix Hill, whilst seriously damaging others. The opportunity has to be taken now to fully excavate and record the cemetery, as methods of protection seem untenable.

FUTURE PLANS

The excavations at Barrington also give an unparalleled chance to enhance educational facilities in the county, and presentation of the site to the public during excavation will be a prime objective. With full conservation and analysis of the artifacts a long-term display of this cemetery will be possible in future years. Reconstructions of the bed burials, of Anglo-Saxon clothing and way of life, and a display of other aspects of South Cambridgeshire Archaeology can be set up, and it is to be hoped that a home for such a venture will be found in South Cambridgeshire District.

(The information in this interim report may be changed
when full analysis has been completed)

Acknowledgements

The work at Barrington has been possible through the kindness of the Breed family in continuing permission to excavate on their land, and in the donation of finds from the site to the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge. Funding has come from South Cambridgeshire District Council, Conservation Committee, from Cambridgeshire County Council, Vulnerable Sites Fund, and from English Heritage. Support for the project has been strong within the councils, and special thanks go to Chris Burton, Rose Desmond, John Ette, David Nuttycombe, Nesta Rooke, John Selby, and Alison Taylor. Alison has also made an invaluable input through her research into identifying and dating the artifacts, in envisaging the educational and display possibilities, and in helping in many other aspects throughout the work. Large numbers of people worked on the project, as paid staff or as volunteers, and the dig's success is due very much to all their enthusiasm: Helen Bailey, Andrew Beresford, Simon Bray, Karen Brush, Bob Butler, Rachel Chamberlain, Anne Cowking, Andrew Duke, Jane Elsom, Charles Evans, Erika Guttmann, Natasha Hall, Bob Hatton, Beverley Holder, Lara Jobson, Gavin Lucas, Audrey Meaney, Chris Montague, Will Morrison, Helen Paterson, Sophie Reader, Judith Roberts, Ben Robinson, Lucy Skaer, Mark Spalding, Edmund Sutton, Elizabeth Wilson, many members of Cambridge Archaeological Field Group, and to various other helpers whose names we never established! Consultants whose advice and assistance has been vital are: Corinne Duhig (human bone: Biological Anthropology, Cambridge); Richard Darrah (wood: West Stow Country Park); Chris and Sue Gaffney (magnetometer survey: Bradford Geophysical Surveys); Michael Halliwell, Kathy Tubb, Margot Wright, (all from the Conservation department of the Institute of Archaeology, London); Bernard O'Conner (coprolite digging: research); Erika and Vincent Utsi (resistivity and radar surveys); and Morag Woudhuysen who has been looking at the pottery. Thanks also go to the staff at Wimpole Hall who hosted a display of Barrington finds throughout the summer, and to Chris Chipindale and the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology for lending artifacts for the exhibition. Finally the help of Cambridge Fire Brigade is much appreciated, who came to our aid by providing fire-engine and ladder for high level photography.

Tim Malim, December 1990

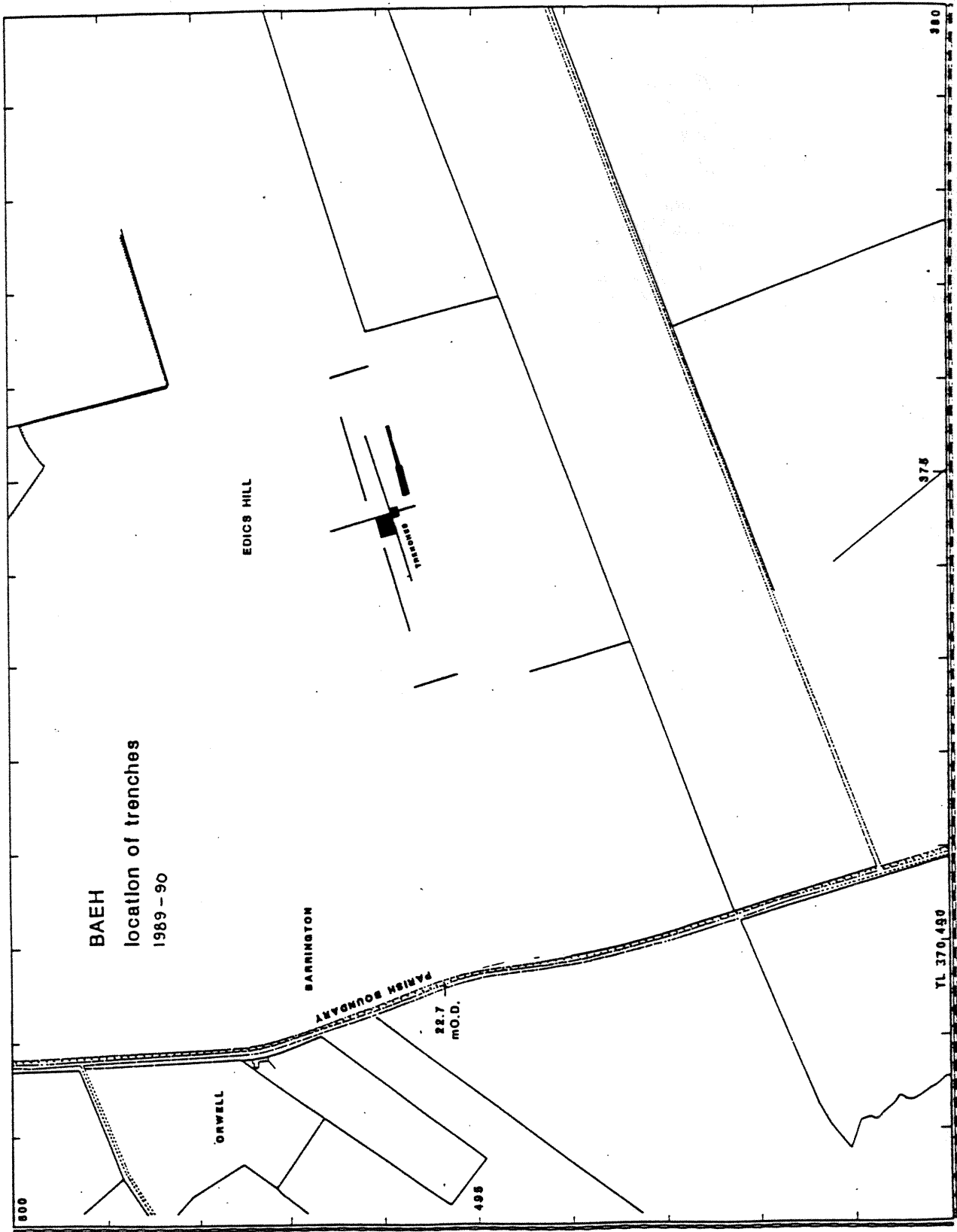


Fig.1

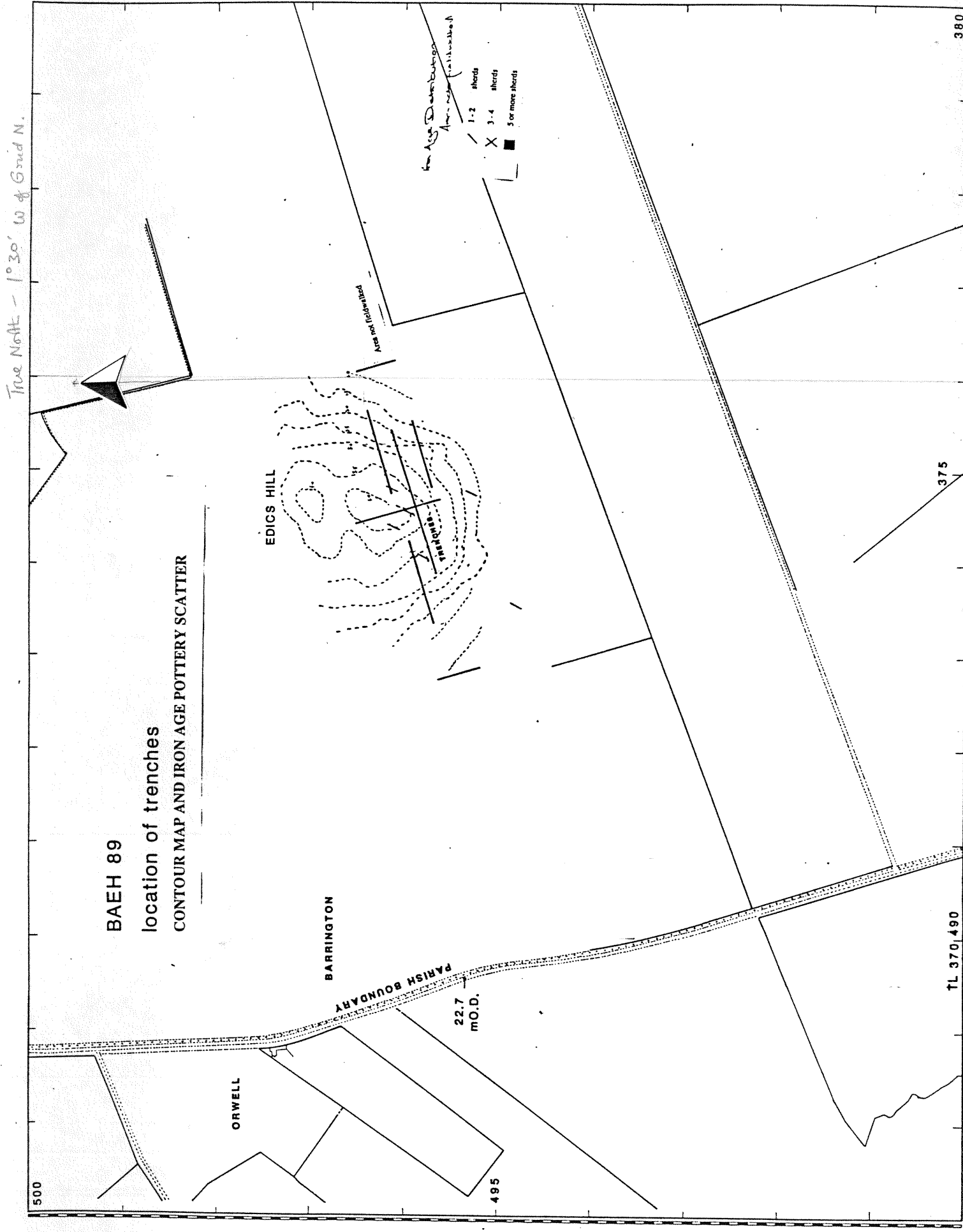


Fig. 2

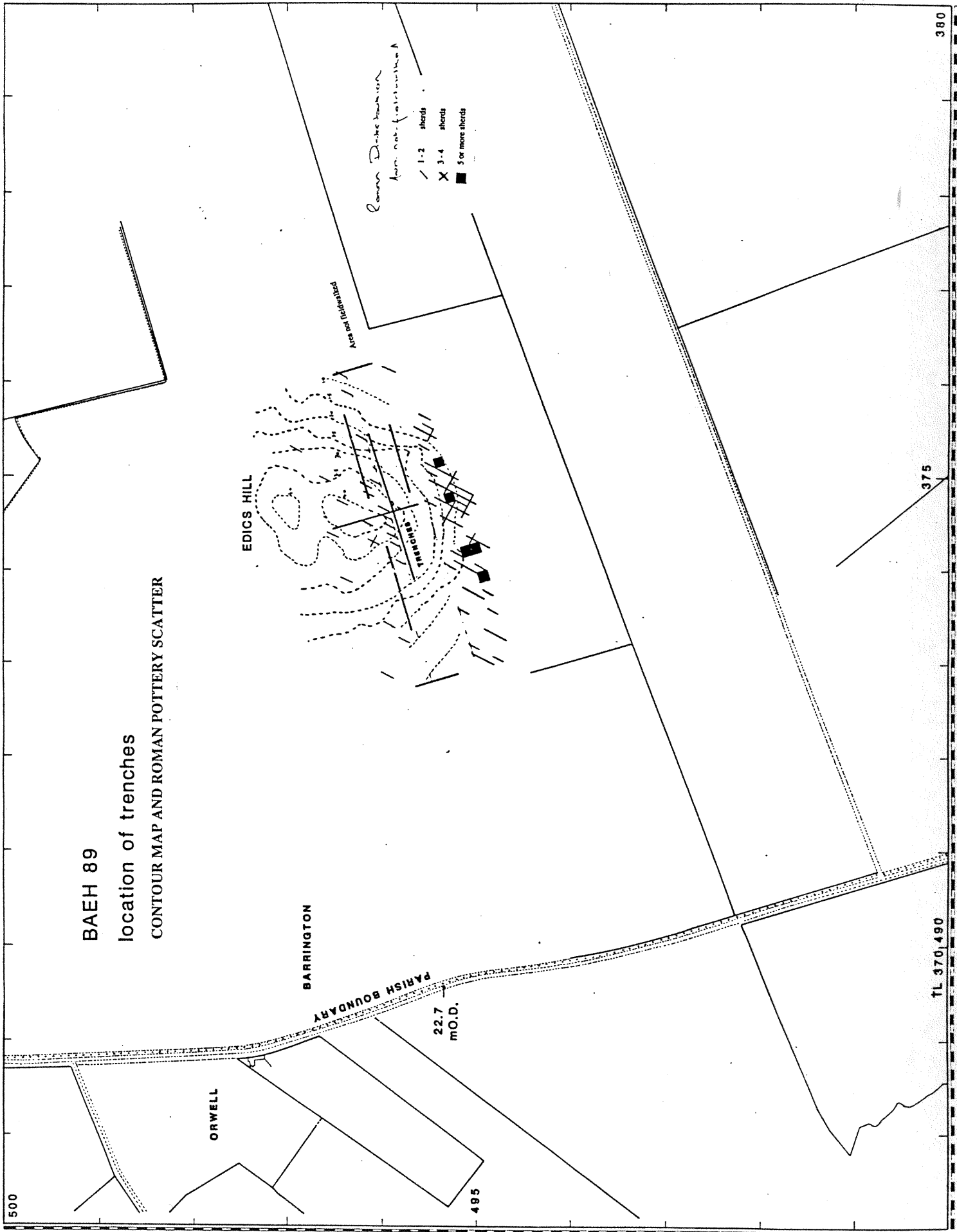


Fig. 5

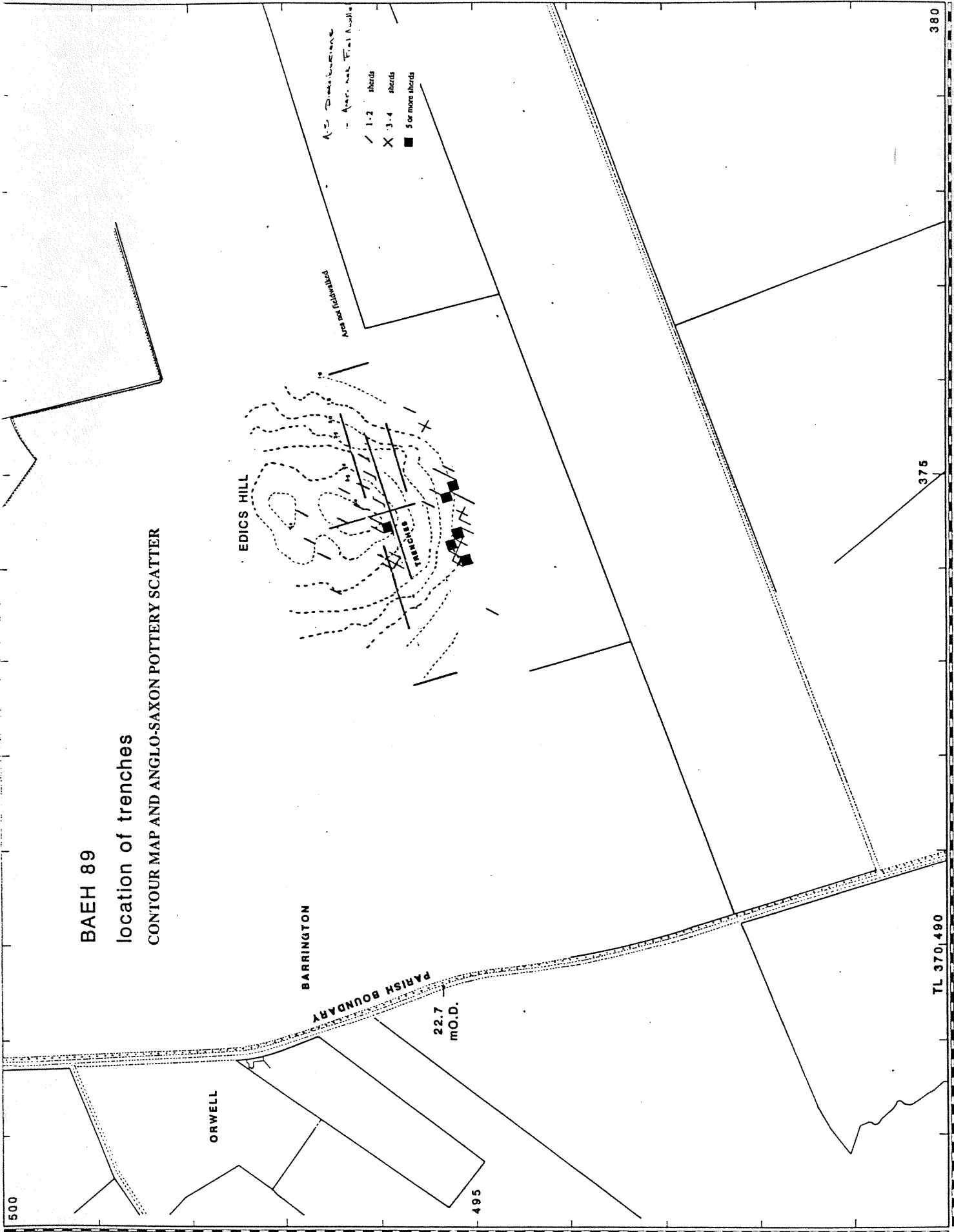


Fig. 4

**DISTRIBUTION OF POTTERY SCATTER FROM
CAMBRIDGE ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD GROUP**

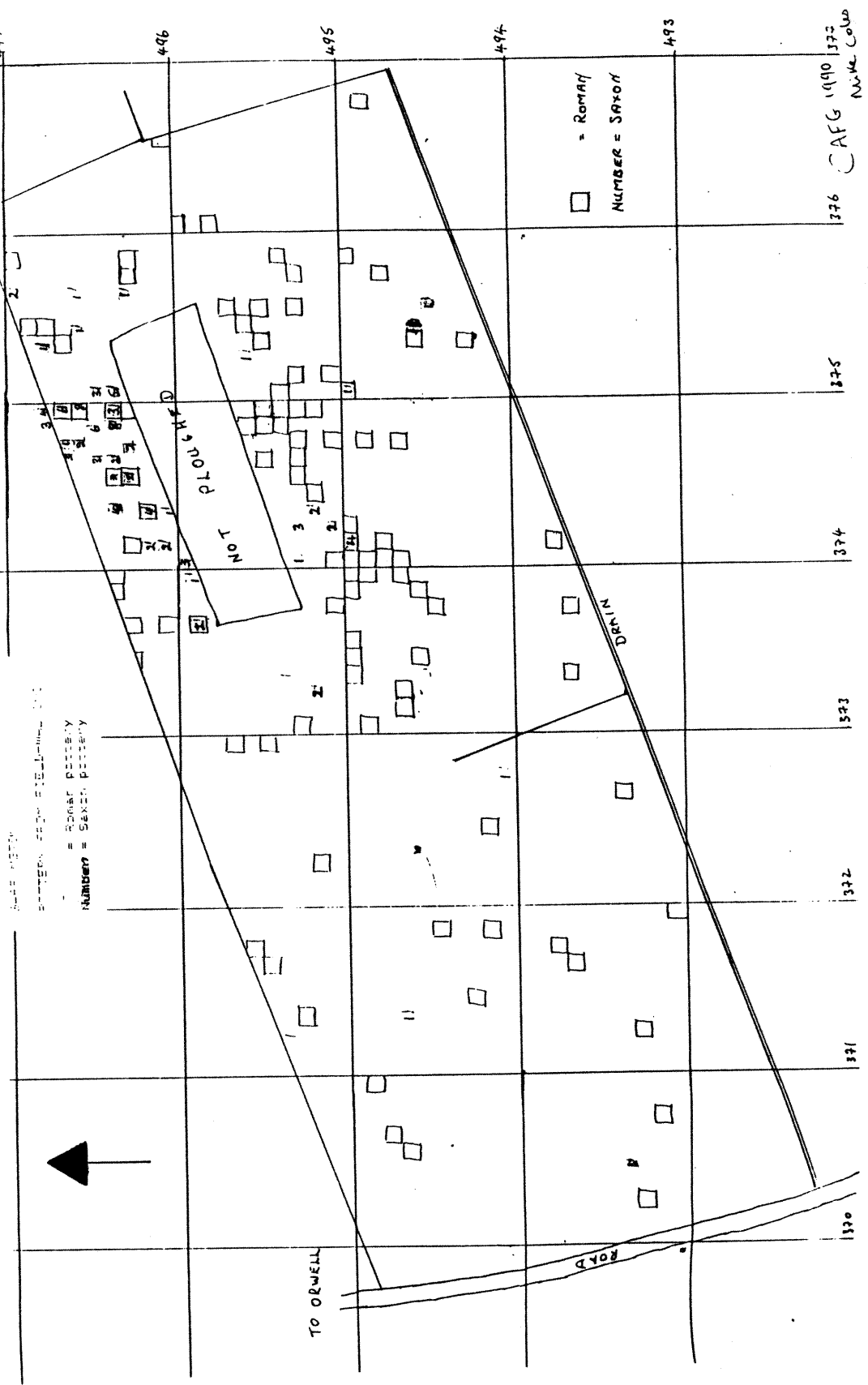


Fig. 5

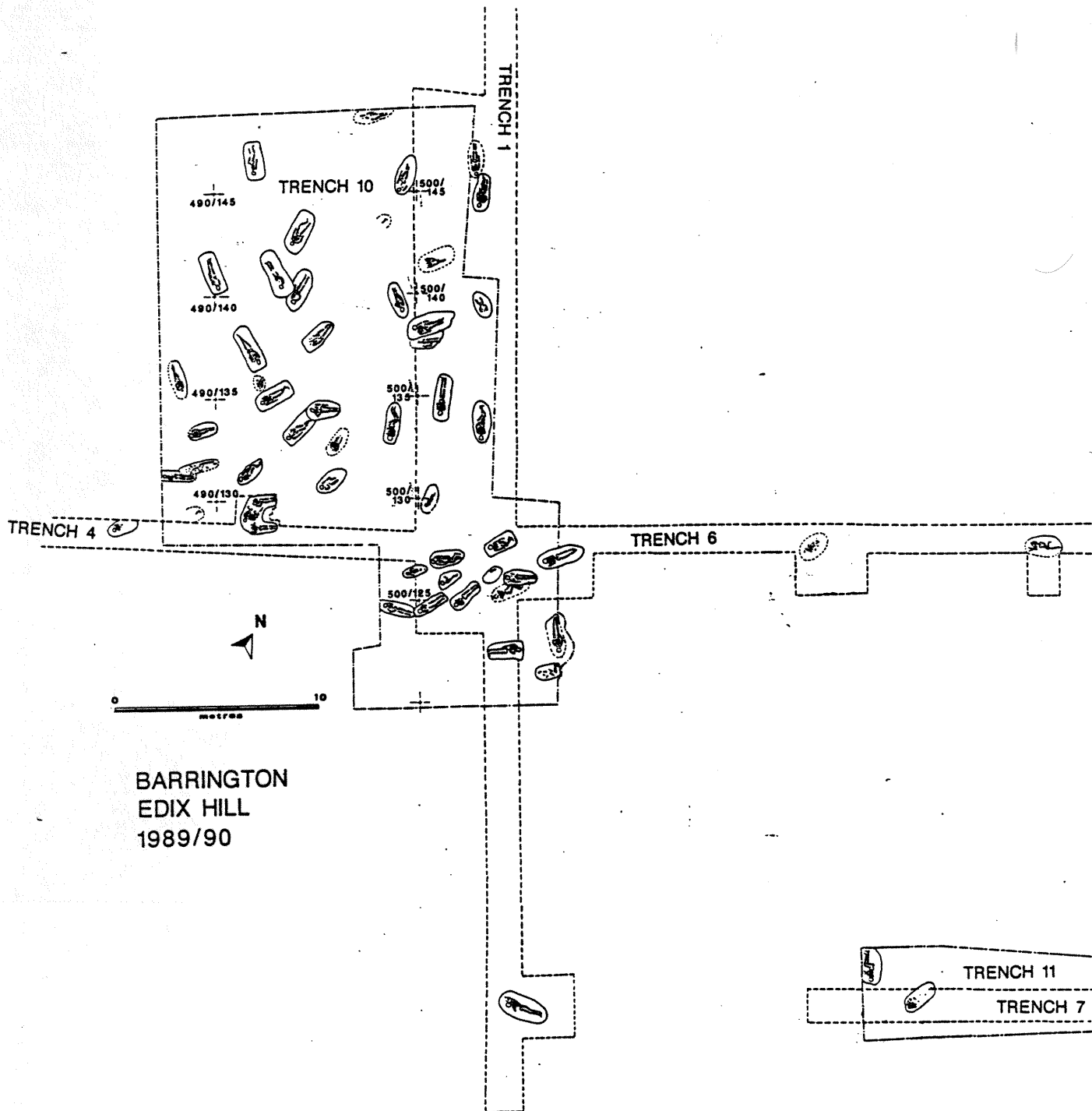


Fig. 6

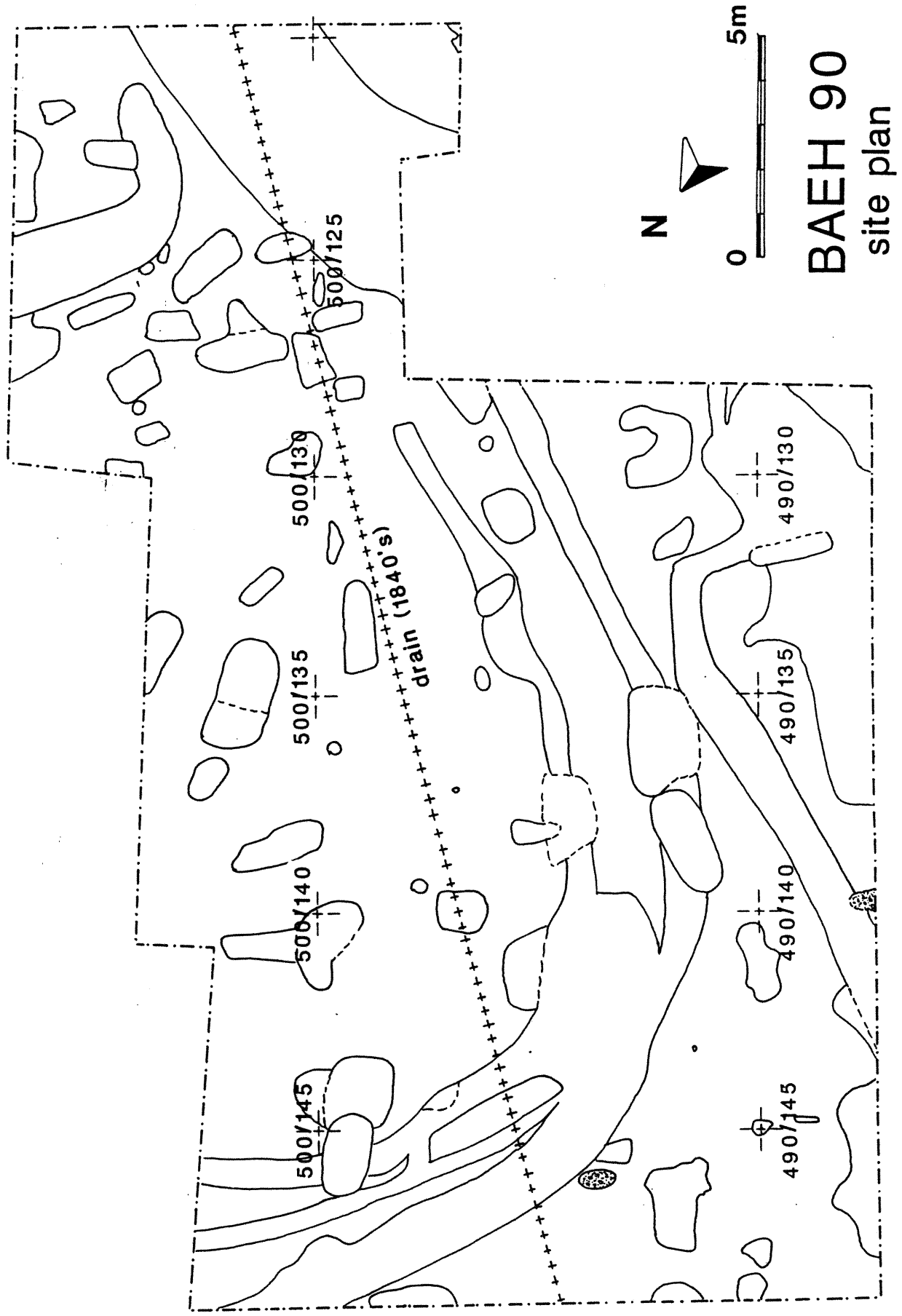
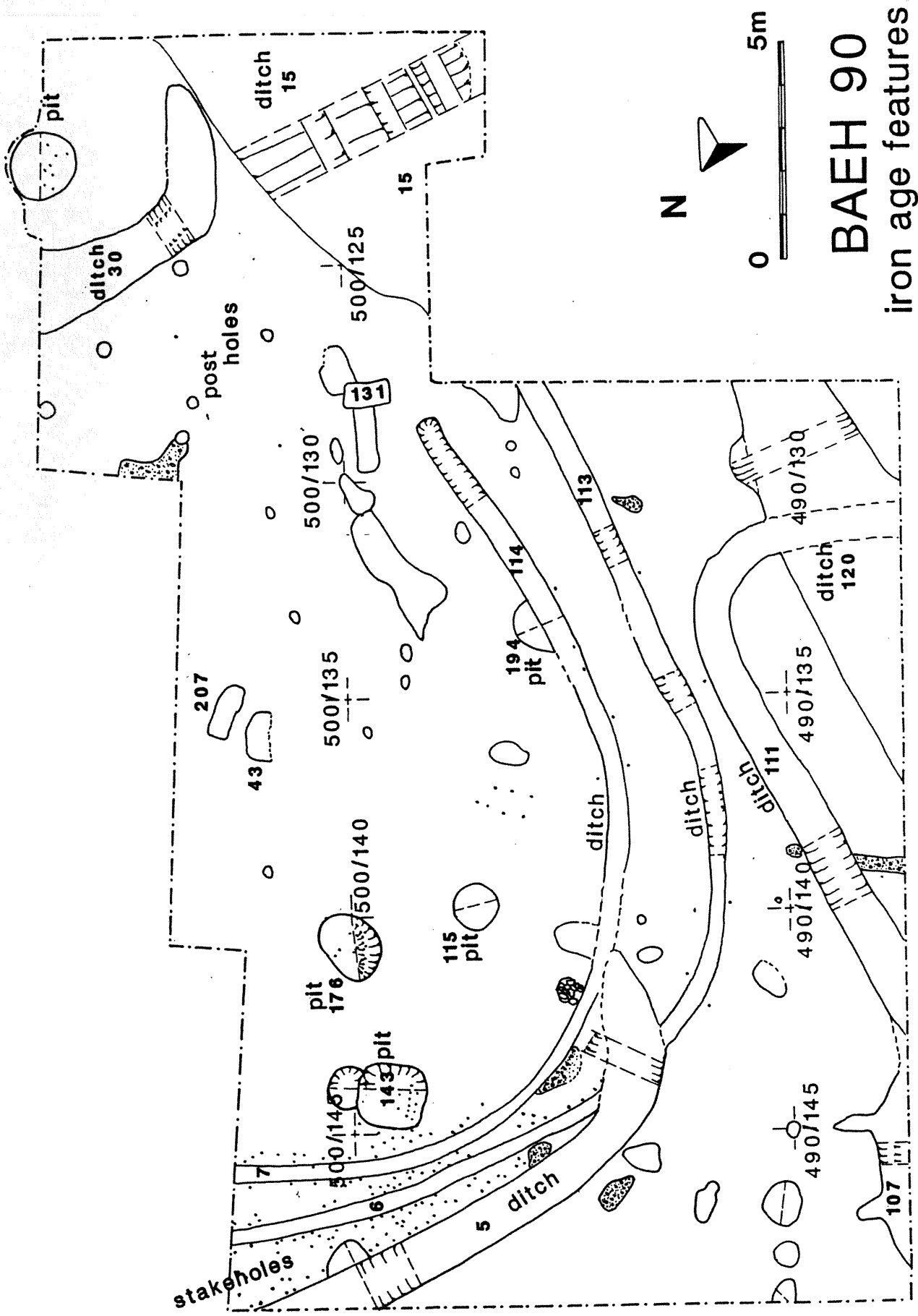


Fig. 7



BAEH 90
iron age features

Fig. 8

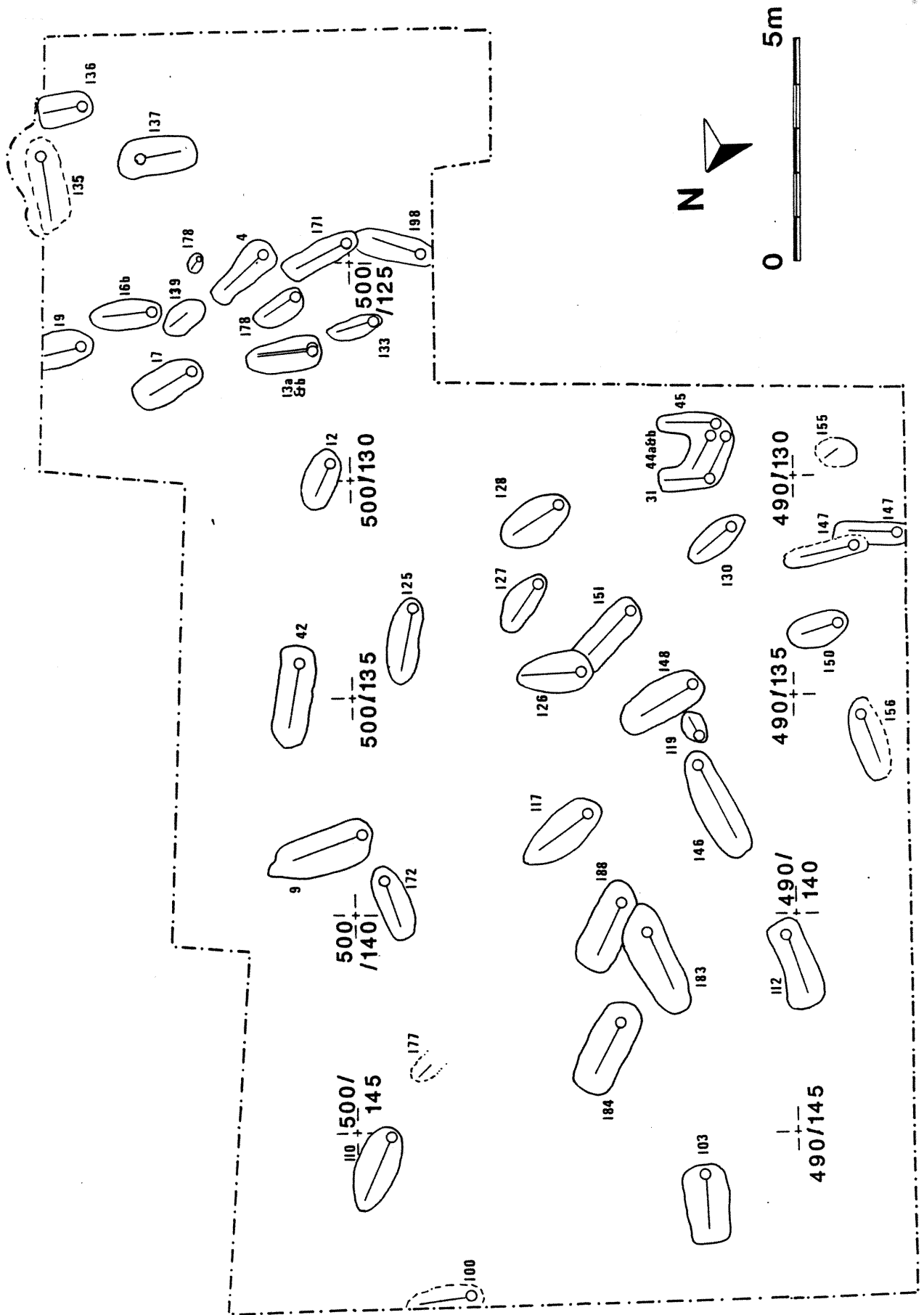
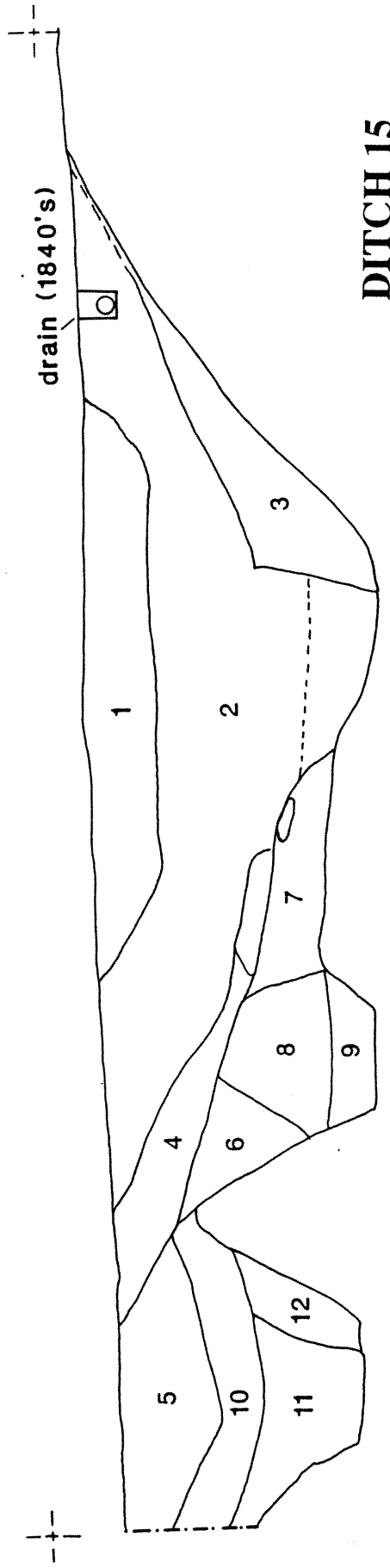


Fig. 9

BAEH 90 Late Iron Age ditch 15

(3 main episodes of ditch cutting)

0 1m



DITCH 15

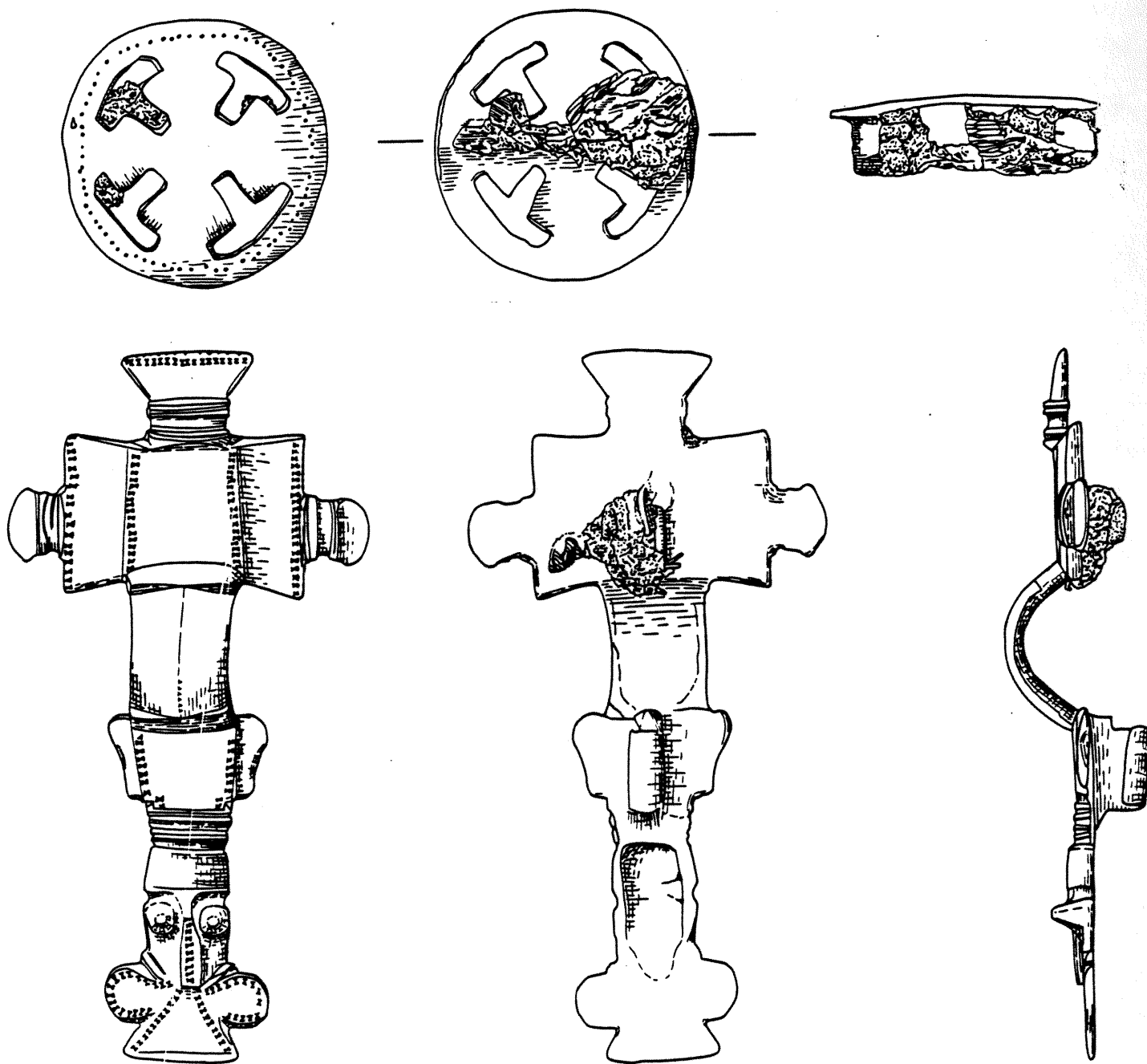
Section A

key to layers:

No.	Context	Description of fill	Pottery
1	15A	dark brown silty loam	Predominantly 1st century A.D. Romano-British: Samian & grey wares, and flagon sherds.
2	15B/1	dark brown silty clay-loam	Predominantly Iron Age, B.C.-A.D. transition, with some R-B & Belgic: grog, & shell tempered wares
3	15B/2	light greyish yellow silty clay	
4	15B/3	light brownish grey silty clay	
5	15E/1	light grey silty clay	Complete rim of Late Iron Age pot
6	15D	light greyish yellow silty clay	
7	15B/2	(see 3 above)	
8	15C/1	light grey-yellow silty clay	Iron Age 1st century A.D.: Butt Beaker sherds, straight sided & hand-made
9	15C/2	(as above)	(as above)
10	15E/2	mid brown silty clay	
11	15E/3	light greyish yellow silty clay	
12	15E/4	light brownish yellow silty clay	

Fig. 10

Barrington '89 Disc Brooch
 44/B, 43/L Drawn by S.Cann Nov. '90
 Scale 1:1



Barrington '89 Cruciform brooch
 20/B 33 Drawn by S.Cann Nov. '90
 Scale 1:1

Fig. 11
 Brooches from 1989 excavation, from burials 44/B and 20/B (after conservation)

GRAVE LISTS

Alison Taylor

BURIAL 9

Female

Supine
Fair condition, skull crushed
Shallow grave, scoop

Grave-goods

59 glass beads	20 yellow swags on rust-red glass
	7 blue swags on yellow glass
	6 red swags on yellow glass
	3 white swags on red glass
	2 blue swags on yellow glass with red spots
	1 yellow ovals on blue glass with red spots
	4 yellow
	3 blue-green
	2 rust-red
	2 blue
	5 indefinable

(This list may change after cleaning)

6 amber beads	all large and irregular
1 "white composition" bead	
Small iron knife	L: 88mm, blade 59mm, straight back, angled cutting edge, traces of wood on blade.

BURIAL 12

Child

Flexed
Poor condition

Grave-goods

Small iron knife	L: 70mm, blade 50mm, curved back, straight cutting edge, Traces of wood on blade
3 unidentifiable iron fragments.	

BURIAL 13a

Male

Flexed
Good condition
Above 13b in deep grave

Grave-goods

Iron spear L: 405mm, Swanton type H3, early type, late 5th or 6th century, widespread distribution, especially in the Midlands
Iron buckle D-shaped, L: 30mm
Small iron knife L: 135mm, blade 90mm, curved back, straight cutting edge
1 iron nail and 1 nail head
Iron fragments
Bronze fitting with iron rivets, organic remains.

BURIAL 13b

Male

Flexed
Good condition
Beneath 13a in deep grave

Grave-goods

4 iron discs Diam: 40 - 42mm, possibly shield fittings
Iron knife fragments
Bronze plate attached to ivory and bronze rings, with textile, (lifted as block and not yet excavated).

BURIAL 16b

Female

Supine
Good condition
Shallow grave

Grave-goods

1 pair wrist-clasps One with row of repousse dots, other plain, Hines B7
1 pair wrist-clasps Totally plain, does not match the above pair, Hines B7
1 large hexagonal amber bead
2 fragments of bronze sheet.

BURIAL 17

Female

Grave-goods

2 tiny iron nails	13mm and 14mm
Medium iron knife	Broken, blade 100mm, straight back, curved cutting edge
Bronze hasp	L: 18mm, probably from a wooden box (parallel: Holywell, gr.70) C7.

7th century grave

BURIAL 42b "Bed Burial"

Female

Supine
Good condition
Deep grave

Bed furniture

11 iron eyelets	L: 60mm, all with wood traces
6 iron cleats	L: 30 - 70mm
2 twisted iron bars	L: 310 and 360mm

Grave-goods

1 short iron sword	With hilt L: 590mm
1 iron latch lifter	L: 160mm
1 small iron knife	L: 130mm
1 bucket	At least 3 iron bands and handle (awaiting excavation in laboratory)
5 iron objects	Including 2 possible hooks
1 iron ?buckle	
1 ?silver ring	broken
1 bone comb with iron rivets	
1 sea-urchin	
1 glass bead	

(The comb, bead and buckle were lifted as a block which may contain other items).

7th century grave

BURIAL 52

Grave-goods

- 1 medium iron knife L: 156mm, blade 123mm, curved back,
probably originally straight cutting edge
2 iron fragments
1 tiny bronze buckle Oval with plate, L: 19mm

7th century grave.

BURIAL 100

Lower half only survived

Grave-goods

- Small iron Knife Broken in 3, L: 106mm, blade 60mm.

BURIAL 103

Supine
Fairly good condition
Much of right side removed
Foot displaced

Grave-goods

- 3 iron fragments Including one possible buckle
Mother of pearl fragment.

BURIAL 110

Supine
Fair condition, skull damaged, feet, ribs and part of arm removed

Grave-goods

- 1 small iron knife L: 130mm, blade (tip broken) 90mm, curved
back, straight cutting edge.

BURIAL 112

Male

Supine

Fair condition, skull crushed and some bones missing

Very deep grave

Grave-goods

Iron spear

L: 330mm, blade 180mm, Swanton type H2
Almost all of these are pre 550 AD,
widespread distribution

Iron shield boss

Diam: 160mm, ht: 95mm, wall ht: 30mm,
apex, and 5 bronze rivets, probably
Dickinson's Group 3, common in SE England,
dated between ca. 520 and early 7th century

2 iron shield bars

1 knife.

BURIAL 117

Male

Grave-goods

Shield boss

Diam: 130mm, ht: 70mm

Spear

1 small iron knife

L: 132mm, blade 85mm, angled blade,
straight cutting edge

4 iron discs

Diam: 20 - 30mm, with attachments, 2 with
textiles

2 iron nails

L: 15mm and 24mm

1 iron object.

BURIAL 119

No grave-goods.

BURIAL 125

Male

Flexed
Fair condition

Grave-goods

1 spear L: 590mm, blade 300mm, Swanton type H3,
late 5th or 6th century, widespread
throughout the Midlands
1 iron disc Probably from shield, wood replacement on
back
Bronze and iron fitting Associated with iron disc
1 small iron knife L: 120mm, blade 70mm, straight back, angled
cutting edge, ?wood grain on blade.

BURIAL 126

Female

Supine
Good condition

Grave-goods

Garnet disc brooch of gilded bronze
4 keystone and 4 circular garnets set in
shell, 2 rectangles of blue glass and 2
empty settings, Cabochon centre,
Centre setting and 2 garnets missing,
probably early 7th century.

BURIAL 127

Female

Supine
Poor condition, many bones missing

Grave-goods

1 small iron knife L: 100mm, blade 70mm, straight back,
angled blade
Fragments of 2 iron pins (probably from missing brooches)
2 iron rings or round buckles Diam: 23mm and 26mm
24 amber beads 13 are large, 9 are medium and 2 are
broken, all roughly rectangular in shape
1 fluted glass bead Translucent, very slightly greenish glass.

BURIAL 128

Female

Supine
Poor condition, many bones missing
Very shallow grave

Grave-goods

1 tinned or silvered "shield on tongue" buckle
2 shoe-shaped tinned or silvered studs
1 disc brooch Plain, with small central hole Diam: 35mm
1 square-headed small-long brooch
with horns, end missing, textile remains
1 broken bronze stud Diam: 17mm
1 bronze and iron fitting
Iron fragments

BURIAL 135

Supine
Good condition - skull crushed

Grave-goods

3 fragments of iron knife
1 small iron bar fragment
1 iron object

BURIAL 137

Supine
Shallow grave
Good condition

Grave-goods

1 medium iron knife L: 122mm.

BURIAL 139

Grave-goods

1 small iron knife L: 85mm, blade 50mm, broken tip.

BURIAL 146

Male

Prone, with legs crossed
Good condition

Grave-goods

- 1 spear head L: 175mm, blade 95mm, Swanton type H1,
This is an early type of spear, 5th or 6th
century, Distribution widespread with
concentrations in Cambridgeshire,
Wood preserved in socket
- 1 shield boss and 4 fragments of ?grip; Diam: 150mm, ht: 70mm,
Dickinson group 1.1. This is an early
type, (late 5th or 6th century)
- 1 small knife Straight back, curved cutting edge,
L: 115mm, blade 80mm
- 1 iron buckle D-shaped, L: 25mm
- 1 iron nail
- 1 bronze crescent-shaped object L: 6mm
- 1 counter of re-used Roman grey-ware
- 2 residual flint blades and 3 flakes.

BURIAL 148

Male

Supine, legs crossed
Good condition

Grave-goods

- 1 spear leaf-shaped, L: 325mm, Swanton type C2,
This is a common type, found from the
earliest times through to the late 7th
century, but it is not normally found in
E Anglia. Much wood remains in the socket.
- 1 shield boss Diam: 160mm, ht: 60mm, Dickinson Group 1.1
(late 5th or 6th century)
- Fragment of iron ring
- Iron buckle
- 1 small knife L: 130mm, blade 85mm, (broken tip), curved
back, straight cutting edge.

BURIAL 149

Supine
Good condition

Grave-goods

1 iron nail L: 35mm
1 iron fibula (Residual Roman/Iron Age)
Iron fragment
1 cylindrical "white composition" bead
1 annular green glass bead.

BURIAL 150

Supine
Good condition
Deep grave

Grave-goods

1 medium knife L: 152mm, blade 105mm, indefinite shape
Half iron ring Diam: 30mm
Iron fragments.

BURIAL 151

Male

Slightly flexed
Good condition
Grave

Grave-goods

Spear
Shield boss Incomplete, with bronze rivets, and iron
strengthening bars, Diam: 170mm
Bronze ring Diam: 13mm
Small iron knife L: 135mm, blade 95mm, curved back, straight
cutting edge, broken tip, tang
1 iron and bronze rivet
Bronze ring.

BURIAL 156

Female

Supine, legs crossed
Fair condition, skull missing

Grave-goods

1 small iron knife L: 115mm, blade 85mm, flat back, curved cutting edge
Iron bar fragments
1 bronze small D-shaped buckle with iron tongue(missing), L: 30mm
2 trefoil-headed small-long brooches, with triangular feet, L: 85mm, one has catch-plate missing, fibres associated
26 amber beads 3 large, 4 medium and 19 small, mostly globular or 3-sided.

BURIAL 161

Female

Flexed
Good condition

Grave-goods

1 latch lifter L: 220mm
1 knife
2 fragments of iron ring
Nail head
Bronze buckle With plate, oval loop 16 x 7mm
Bronze pin
Buckle and pin are 7th century.

BURIAL 178

Child

Slightly flexed
Moderate condition

Grave-goods

Iron/bronze stud and fragments Diam: 15mm.

BURIAL 183 "Bed burial"

Female

Supine

Bed furniture

9 eyelets L: 50 - 53mm
Twisted iron bar L: 31mm, head piece

Grave-goods

1 silver ring with twisted bezel
1 bronze pin Flat-head, L: 40mm
2 round bronze buckles Diam: 21mm
2 tiny bronze links L: 12mm

7th century grave

BURIAL 184

Female

Supine

Good condition

Grave-goods

1 small iron knife L: 125mm, end missing
5 glass beads 1 yellow swags on rust-red glass, medium disc
1 blue swags and red spots on white glass, large disc
1 cylinder, yellow combed trails on rust-red
1 biconical, thin yellow lines on rust-red
1 short cylinder, blue glass
16 amber beads 5 large, (including one very large disc)
8 medium, 2 fragments, mostly irregular or short cylinders.

BURIAL 188

Male

Supine
Moderate Condition
Deep grave

Grave-goods

1 spear head	Swanton F1, L: 210mm (type found in poor graves, often very early, uncommon type, spread from Humber to Thames)
1 small iron knife	L: 130mm, blade 85mm, angled blade, straight cutting edge
1 iron buckle	L: 32mm
1 iron pin fragment	L: 50mm
1 iron object	?Knife-point.

BURIAL 198

Supine
Good condition

Grave-goods

1 medium knife	L: 144mm, blade 100mm, curved back, straight blade, point missing
1 iron buckle	(Still attached to sacrum)
2 iron nails	28mm and 20mm.

NB Few of items described above have been conserved. There are also additional items lifted as blocks and not yet excavated. Descriptions are therefore likely to change in the final report.