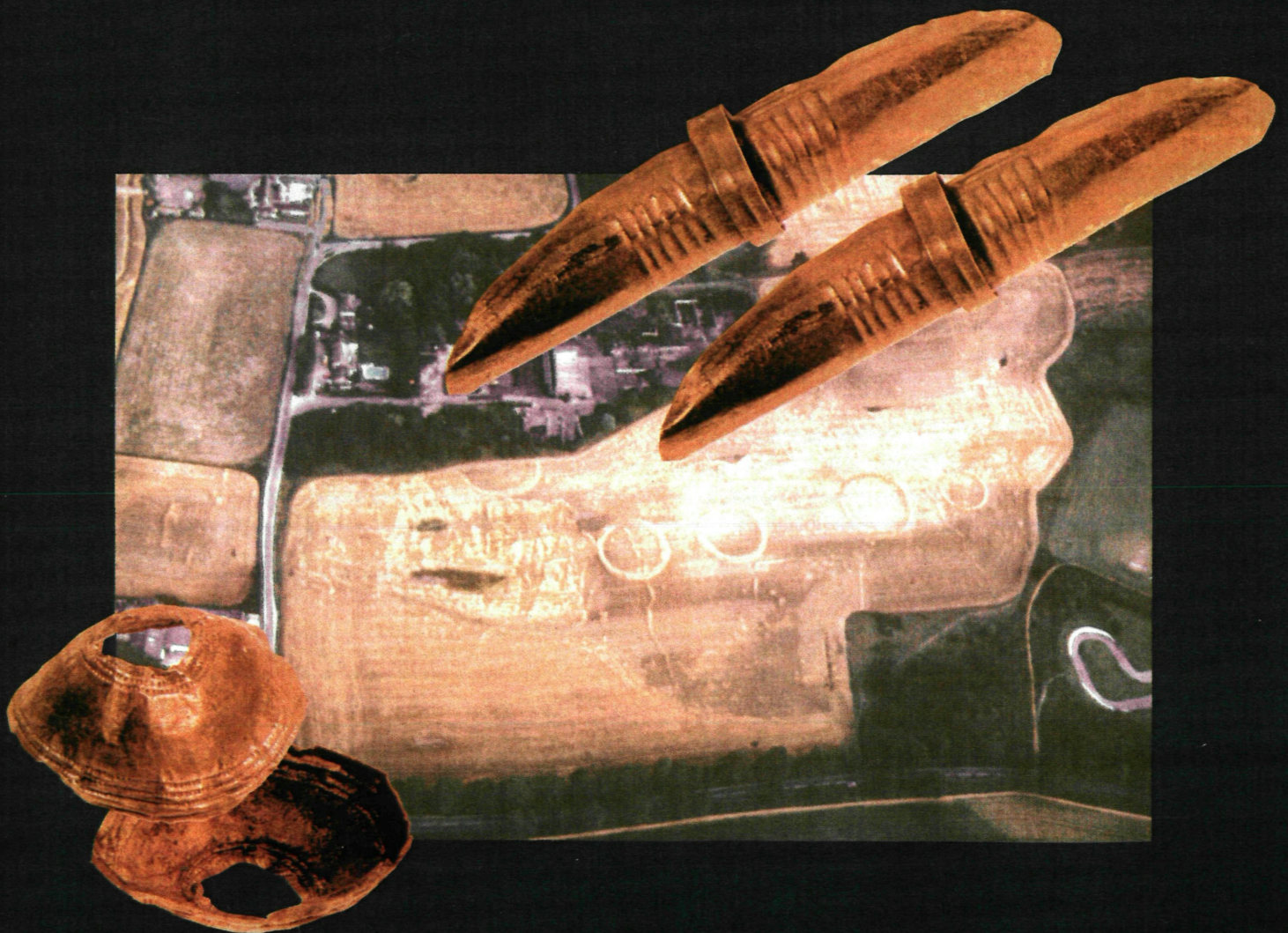


Excavations at Barrow Hills, Radley, Oxfordshire.

Volume I:

The Neolithic and Bronze Age Monument Complex

by Alistair Barclay and Claire Halpin



Oxford Archaeological Unit
Thames Valley Landscapes Volume 11

Area excavations conducted in 1983–5 in advance of housing construction over the W end of the early Bronze Age barrow cemetery at Barrow Hills, close to the Abingdon causewayed enclosure, yielded evidence for ceremonial and funerary use of the complex from the earlier Neolithic to at least the middle Bronze Age. Among the ring ditches known from air photographs were Neolithic pits, Neolithic and Beaker flat graves, pond barrows and a linear early Bronze Age cremation cemetery. The opportunity is taken to review earlier salvage excavations of barrows in the E part of the cemetery, much of which has been quarried away. Together the results of the previous excavations and the 1983–5 seasons make Barrow Hills one of the most fully-excavated round barrow cemeteries in Britain. The whole provides a conspectus of burial and other ritual spanning three thousand years, and a continuous record of local landuse throughout this period.

A series of 52 radiocarbon dates provides a basis for detailed examination of the phasing and layout of the complex, and of the chronology of its artefacts. These include elaborate later Neolithic pit groups, Beaker grave groups — one of which yielded copper ornaments dated to the mid-third millennium cal BC, and 'Wessex Culture' grave groups.

The complex is placed in the context of the topography and contemporary archaeology of the immediate area, and is discussed in the context of regional, British and European developments.

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