

## Chapter 5: Summary and Reassessment of Monuments Excavated before 1983–5

by Alistair Barclay

### Note:

Grid references for barrows in this area are less precise than those for monuments excavated in 1983–5, since they are derived from cropmark plots, rather than from an excavation grid based on the National Grid.

Investigation of cropmark ring ditches to the east of the area excavated in 1983–5 (Fig. 1.2) was undertaken piecemeal, almost always as salvage in advance of gravel extraction (Ch. 1; Table 5.1).

**BARROW 2** (5148 9822; Figs 5.1–3; Atkinson 1952–3, 14–23; Parrington 1977)

### Pre-barrow features

In 1976 a series of shallow linear features was excavated beneath the remains of the barrow mound and the preserved Bronze Age ground surface. Parrington interpreted these and their cropmark continuations as ditches forming a possible field system. Further excavation of these features in 1983–5 established that they were ice wedge casts. One of them, feature 14, contained a small quantity of worked flint and animal bone. It would be possible to see this as a localised feature or perhaps to see the finds as intrusive into the top of a natural feature.

### Ditch and interior

In 1944 a narrow trench was excavated across the barrow, two further central slots were dug and a small trench was put across the ditch (Fig. 5.1). In 1976 an area 11 x 40 m was excavated. The 1944 excavation showed that the barrow had an internal diameter of approximately 24 m. The ditch was excavated in 1944 and again in 1976. Comparison of the ditch sections published in the two reports (Atkinson 1952–3, fig. 10; Parrington 1977, fig. 4) makes it clear that the primary gravel fills were not recognised or excavated in 1944, a caveat against uncritical reinterpretation of the records of previously excavated barrow ditches. A Saxon inhumation with the remains of an iron knife was inserted into the top of the ditch (Parrington 1977, 37).

The remains of the pre-barrow land surface were identified in the 1944 trench. The section suggests that it covered an area approximately 11.5 m in diameter, which had presumably been protected by a barrow mound. A spread of gravel overlying this layer near the centre of the ring ditch was interpreted by the excavator as upcast from the digging of the cremation pit.

### Central grave

The grave was subrectangular in plan, 4 ft 8" (1.4 m) x 2 ft 2" (0.65 m) and 13" (0.32 m) deep. On the floor of the grave was the trapezoidal outline of a ?wooden bier or

coffin, represented by dark, black-stained soil. The bier/coffin contained two distinct deposits. At the SW end was a heap of 'relatively' clean cremated human bone associated with three metal artefacts. Two identical gold foil cones (Fig. 5.3, G1–2) which possibly formed a cover for a composite bead, were found lying apart from each other within the cremated bone. Both had been crushed and stained by fire. A bronze awl (Fig. 5.1, M9) was found lying at the edge of the heap of cremated bone to the S.

At the NE end of the tray/coffin was a 'larger heap of compact wood-ash intimately mixed with crumbs of burnt soil' which was without doubt pyre debris.

### Cremation pit 5351

In 1983–5 a secondary cremation deposit, 5351, was located immediately outside the barrow ditch to the W (Figs 5.1–2). The pit was subcircular in plan and 0.6 m in diameter and had an irregular profile. It contained pyre debris of scorched earth and charcoal and a central deposit of tightly packed cremated bone. The cremation may have originally been held in a bag or organic container.

### Human remains<sup>CJ</sup>

**Central grave.** This was a substantial cremation deposit weighing 829 g, which showed no sign of extensive or prolonged burning. The remains were those of an adult who has tentatively been assessed as female. Osteophytes and possible Schmorl's nodes were recorded on the surviving vertebral bodies.

**Cremation pit 5351.** This was a small and predominantly well calcined sample, weighing 514 g and representing a subadult. Bones present included skull (vault, maxilla, dentition), axial (vertebrae, scapula, rib, ?sacrum), upper limbs (humerus, radius or ulna) and lower limbs (femur). An age of approximately 8–10 years is suggested.

### Metalwork<sup>A,V,O</sup> (Figs 5.1, 5.3)

**G1–2. Central grave.** Gold foil cones/bead covers (Fig. 5.3; Atkinson 1952–3, 20–1, fig. 12; Taylor 1980, 47, pl. 26: d–e). The two foil cones or bead covers are

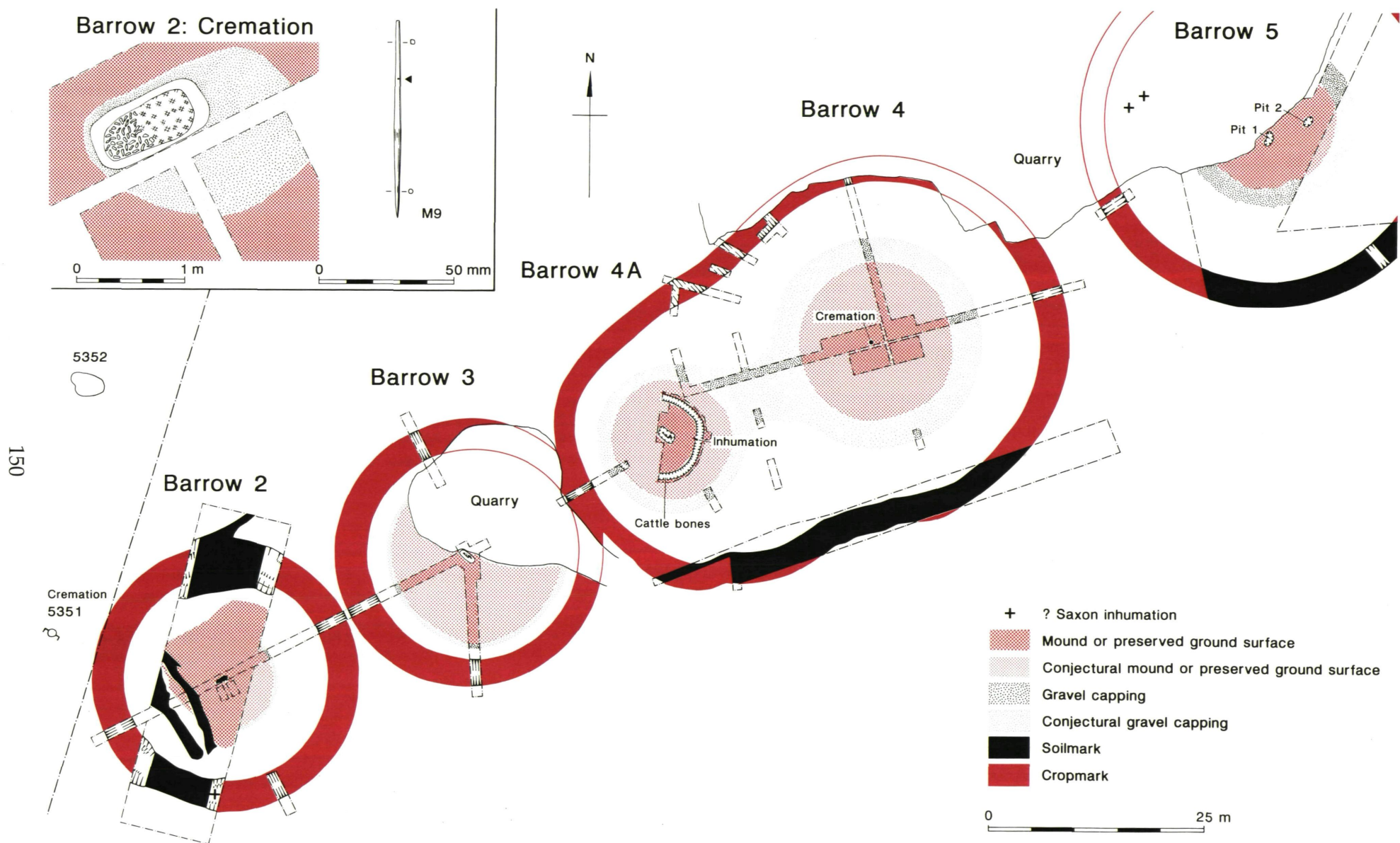
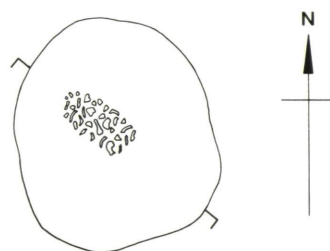
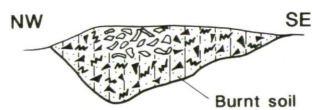
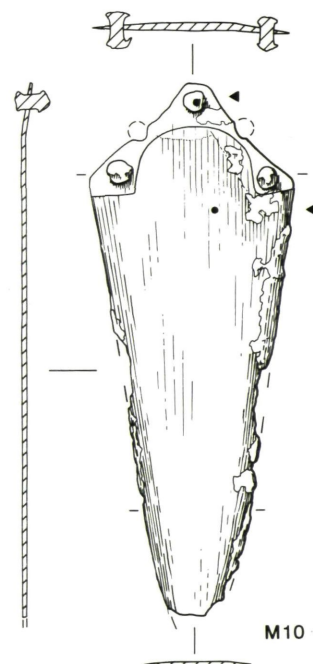


Figure 5.1 Barrows 2-5

Cremation 5351



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Barrow 3:  
central grave

Barrow 4A: central grave

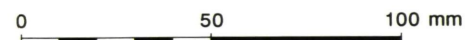
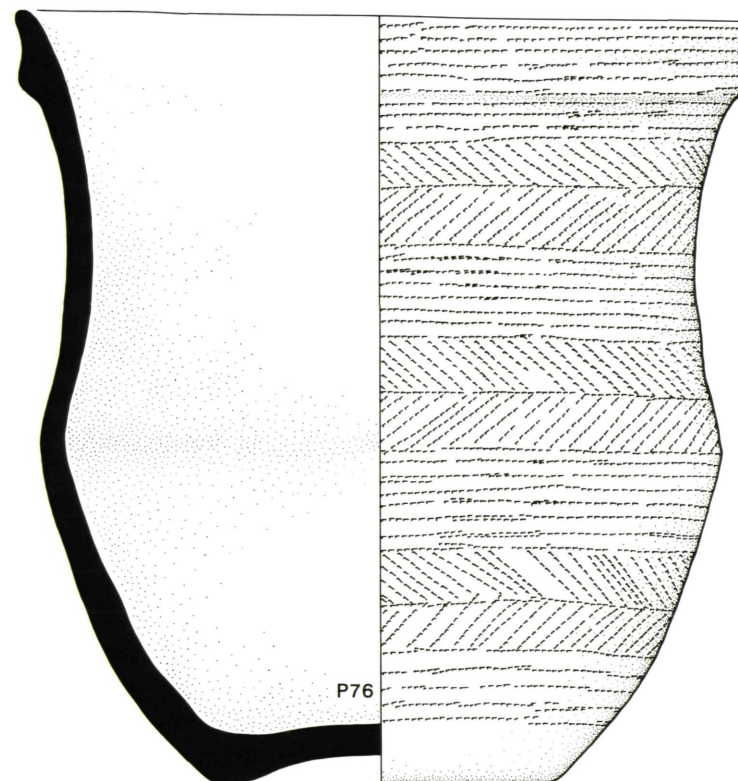
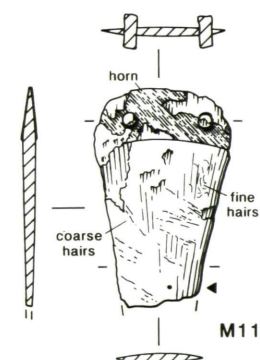
Barrow 4:  
central cremation

Figure 5.2 Cremation 5351 and finds from barrows 3 and 4

Table 5.1. Monuments E of 1983–5 area

Barrows	Dates of excavation(s)	Excavators	Circumstances
2	1944	R J C Atkinson with OUAS	In advance of gravel extraction, which did not take place.
	1976	M Parrington for OAU	In advance of the construction of Audlett Drive. E part of ring ditch possibly extant (Fig. 1.4)
	1983–5	C Halpin for OAU	In advance of housing construction.
3	1944	R J C Atkinson with OUAS	In advance of gravel extraction. S part of ring ditch possibly extant (Fig. 1.4)
4 & 4A	1944	A Williams for Ministry of Works	In advance of gravel extraction. 4A possibly extant (Fig. 1.4).
5	1944	A Williams for Ministry of Works	In advance of gravel extraction.
6	1944	A Williams for Ministry of Works	In advance of gravel extraction.
7	1945	R J C Atkinson with OUAS	In advance of gravel extraction. E part of ring ditch possibly extant (Fig. 1.4).
8	-	-	Extant.
9	-	-	Extant.
10	-	-	Extant.
11	1938	E T Leeds with OUAS	In advance of gravel extraction. Most of ring ditch possibly extant (Fig. 1.4).
14	1931	E T Leeds with OUAS	To investigate the cropmark. S part of ring ditch possibly extant (Fig. 1.4).
15	1942	D Riley with OUAS	In advance of gravel extraction. Most of ring ditch extant (Fig. 1.4).
16	1936–8	E T Leeds with OUAS and members of Oxford University Unemployed Camp	Already damaged by gravel extraction at time of excavation. N part possibly extant (Fig. 1.4).
17	1944	A Williams for Ministry of Works	In advance of gravel extraction.

identical and are made from thin sheets of gold foil decorated with repoussé lines with rows of punched dots. Each has been manufactured from a single beaten sheet of gold. At this stage two gold disks would have been produced and three shallow repoussé lines or grooves added near the outer and inner edges. The final stage probably involved hammering the disks around a conical wooden anvil to achieve the desired shape. Decoration using a small punch was added along the grooves left by the repoussé lines. Condition: the bead covers had been crushed in the ground and had been discoloured pinkish-red through contact with fire. AM 1945.110.

**M9. Central grave.** Bronze awl (Fig. 5.1): a long single-pointed awl, tapered both ends from a central swelling. Round-sectioned working end and square-sectioned tang with a neat flat butt end. A fine green patina survives all over and carries longitudinal striations and tiny hammer marks on the tang. Length 73 mm; max. width 2.5 mm; width tang end 1 mm. AM 1945.111.

#### Flint<sup>D</sup>

A single broken flake was recovered from the central cremation. It was fairly heavily corticated but unburnt. A barbed and tanged arrowhead, Sutton b type (Green

1980) was recovered from Parrington's feature 14 (Parrington 1977, 40 fig. 7, 1). These were the only pieces of flint to be re-examined. The remaining flint assemblage from the 1976 excavation is summarised by Parrington (1977, 40) and appears to include a core, unretouched flakes and an end scraper.

#### BARROW 3 (5151 9824; Figs 5.1–2; Atkinson 1952–3, 23–5)

The NE side of barrow 3 had been destroyed by gravel extraction. The barrow ditch was of a similar size to that of barrow 2, however the extent of the preserved ground surface would suggest that it contained a larger barrow mound (Fig. 5.1). It was cut by the ditch of the second, enlarged phase of barrow 4 (Atkinson 1952–3, fig. 11).

#### Ditch and interior

The ditch had an approximate internal diameter of 24.5 m. As in barrow 2, the pre-barrow ground surface had been protected by an overlying mound. Although there is no clear stratigraphic evidence for the relationship between barrows 2 and 3, it can be argued from Atkinson's section across the point where the two barrow ditches almost touched (1952–3, fig. 10) that

barrow 2 was earlier. It could be assumed that, if the two ditches were contemporary, their fills would be very similar. This is not the case, and it is possible to read the section as showing disturbed material from the interior of barrow 2 overlying the already silted ditch of that barrow and extending into the less completely silted ditch of barrow 3. Atkinson, however, argued that the central grave of barrow 2 was aligned on the centre of barrow 3 (1952–3, 25).

### Central grave

The grave was subrectangular, oriented WNW-ESE and cut 0.15 m into natural gravel. It contained the crouched skeleton of an ageing adult who was probably male. The body had been placed on its back with the head towards the WNW and the legs loosely flexed. The left arm was folded up with the hand below the chin and the right arm was folded across the chest. A bronze dagger blade (Fig. 5.2, M10), with its tip pointing to the foot of the grave, was found next to the bones of the right hand. Although no haft remains were recorded Atkinson suggests that the 'hand had clearly grasped the haft of a bronze knife-dagger' (1952–3, 24). Traces of the haft survived on the hilt and traces of a possible ?leather sheath were found beneath the dagger. A radiocarbon determination of 2500–1950 cal BC (95% confidence) (3785±90 BP; OxA-4355)<sup>44</sup> has been made on the skeleton.

### Human remains<sup>CJ</sup>

The central grave contained the much decayed remains of an inhumation assessed as an ageing adult who was probably male. Completeness was assigned classification B and the preservation of individual bones was extremely variable (1–3).

Attrition was very marked and both maxillary second incisors and the maxillary right canine were worn through almost to the roots. Two teeth (a canine and a molar) were associated with the sample but clearly did not belong to this individual. Calculus was present in mild form on most molar teeth.

Slight signs of cribra orbitalia were seen in left and right orbits, though due to excessive post-mortem damage in these areas, neither was quantified.

### Metalwork<sup>O</sup> (Fig 5.2)

**M10. Central grave.** Bronze dagger (Fig. 5.2; Atkinson 1952–3, 20, fig. 12). Flat riveted dagger of near-kite shape. The butt is peaked with a flattened apex and gently concave sides. It has three rivet holes and two rivet notches; the former three rivets are present, round in section and with domed expanded heads. The notches and part of the butt are chamfered. A pronounced omega-shaped hilt mark is apparent from differential corrosion deposits. A corrosion lump next



Figure 5.3 Barrow 2: sheet gold cones (G1–2), scale 2:1. © Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

to the top rivet retains axially aligned grain. The omega line is emphasised in places by a very shallow furrow and concentric scratch marks.

The blade has evidence for a double edge bevel, albeit indistinct: the outer bevels are straight, 2.5–3.5 mm wide, and run right back to the butt; the inner ones lie up to 6 mm back from the edges and taper out around 20 mm from the butt. Intact blade edges are very sharp, but parts are corrosion-chipped including all of the tip. There is indication of a gently convex outline towards the tip. An emerald green thin patina has in part lifted to reveal a gold surface; also patches of lumpy corrosion. Slight buckling at butt end has resulted in cracks. AM 1945.112. Extant length 139.5 mm; width butt 54.0 mm. max. thickness (no corrosion) 1.7 mm; length rivets 9.0–9.4 mm; diameter rivet shanks 4.2–4.5 mm.

**BARROWS 4A AND 4** (5155 9826; Figs 5.1–2, 5.4–6; Williams 1948, 1–9; Hawkes 1955, GB.2)

The barrow had at least two structural phases, an initial Beaker burial later being incorporated in a twin barrow surrounded by a slightly waisted ovoid ditch. The mounds survived to a height of 3 ft 6" (1.07 m).

### Barrow 4A

Over 50% of the barrow interior and enclosing ditch were excavated.

#### Ditch and Interior

The ditch was almost polygonal in plan, which would suggest that, like ring ditches 201 and 602, it was constructed as a series of intercutting segments. It was recorded as 28 ft (8.4 m) in diameter, comparable in size to ring ditches 201 and 602 and had 'gentle sloping sides with a narrow flat bottom', apart from where the callas (gravel conglomerate) was encountered, where the ditch had a V-profile. A possible placed deposit of cattle bones was found in the southern section. This deposit was probably contemporary with the central burial and its placement could have formed part of the funerary process.

#### Central Grave

A large grave was found slightly E of centre within the interior. It was subrectangular, 7 ft 6" (2.25 m) x 4 ft 6"

<sup>44</sup>Radiocarbon assessment<sup>1</sup>: sealed context of short duration (burial event). Both the age-at-death and depositional offsets are minimal. The sample dates the burial and grave context, and gives a *tpq* for the grave backfill. *Evaluation*: High-value date for burial and grave context and probably construction of barrow.

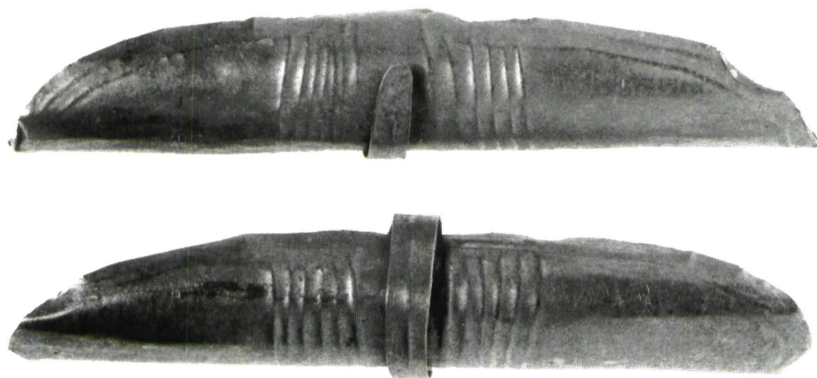


Figure 5.4 Barrow 4A: sheet gold basket 'earrings' (G3-4), scale 2:1.  
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(1.35 m), oriented NW-SE, and 3 ft (0.9 m) deep. On the grave floor was the crouched skeleton of an adult male. The body had originally been placed on the left side, with the head to the NW and facing NE. The legs were tightly flexed with the feet placed below the pelvis. The left arm was folded with the hand placed near to the face and the right arm lay across the body with the hand placed near to the left elbow. A pair of gold basket earrings (Fig. 5.4, G3-4) was found near the head. A large European style Beaker (Fig. 5.2, P76), which had been placed on its side, was found near the feet. Three barbed and tanged arrowheads came from the grave fill and were found at a level above the skeleton. The original report notes that they were not found together (Williams 1948, 5). It is possible to envisage these not as belonging to the deceased but instead being deposited by those participating in the funeral. A fourth, damaged arrowhead came from the mound material. A radio-carbon determination of 2650–2000 cal BC (95% confidence)(3880±90 BP; OxA-4356)<sup>45</sup> has been made on the skeleton.

The crouched burial of a child, on its left side with the head towards the E, was placed over the infilled ditch surrounding the Beaker burial at the centre of barrow 4A. The body seemed to have been placed in a small coffin represented by 'a thin black powdery layer' above and beneath the bones, which 'suggested carbonized wood'.

#### Barrow 4

To the ENE, a 'conical heap of powdered charcoal with a few calcined bone fragments' incorporating a knife-dagger (Fig. 5.2, M11) was placed on the old ground surface. An irregular ovoid ditch was dug around this and barrow 4A, which were covered with soil and turf mounds capped with gravel, the smaller, SW one covering both the original grave and the surrounding ditch with its secondary burial. Between the two

mounds, but not elsewhere around them, the old land surface was overlain by some 12" (0.30 m) of brown soil in turn overlain by clean gravel (Williams 1948, fig. 3). This was interpreted as showing that 'the hollow between the mounds had been deliberately filled', creating an hour-glass-shaped mound. It might alternatively reflect the survival of material weathered from the mounds in the unploughed gap between them, in contrast to 'the soil-gravel mixture' which surrounded them elsewhere and which may well have been a ploughsoil.

The central area of barrow 4A was later disturbed and a pit was recorded above the position of the

Beaker grave. If the intention was to rob the grave then it was unsuccessful. Alternatively the disturbance could have been caused by the planting of a hedge across the barrow or its subsequent removal (Williams 1948, fig. 2).

#### Human remains<sup>CJ</sup>

**Barrow 4A, central burial.** In spite of any disturbance which may have taken place immediately above the pit, the skeleton itself has survived in excellent condition (degree of completeness A; preservation of individual bones 1), though it is unfortunate that in the period since excavation the body has been variously glued and pinned together. The skeleton appears to be an adult male, and, although the wear on the molar dentition is minimal and suggests an age range of 25–35 years (Brothwell 1981, 72), a maxillary third molar had been lost in life and the socket had been resorbed.

**Inhumation above the ditch of barrow 4A.** This individual was not discussed in the published bone report (Goody 1948) and could not be relocated. We may perhaps conclude either that it was so badly decayed at the time of discovery that it was not retained or that it has completely decayed in the years since. The skeleton was described as a child whose bones were dark grey and much flattened, 'the skull being reduced to a plate-like object'.

**Barrow 4, central cremation.** The deposit weighed 668 g. The central cremation was believed to represent 'the residue of a cremation in another place' (Williams 1948, 8). The evidence of burning within the sample was extremely variable: many longbone heads were merely blackened and charred, the mandible was barely burnt at all in contrast to the well calcined skull. Bones present included skull (vault, mastoid, mandible), axial (ribs, vertebrae, ?manubrium), upper limbs (humerus, radius or ulna, lunate) and lower limbs (femur, fibula, tarsals). The largest fragment was a cracked and squashed fibula which measured approximately 59 mm.

<sup>45</sup>Radiocarbon assessment<sup>1</sup>: sealed context of short duration (burial event). Both the age-at-death offset and the depositional offsets are minimal. The sample dates the burial and grave context, and gives a *tpq* for the grave backfill. *Evaluation*: High-value date for burial and grave context, and probably original round barrow construction.

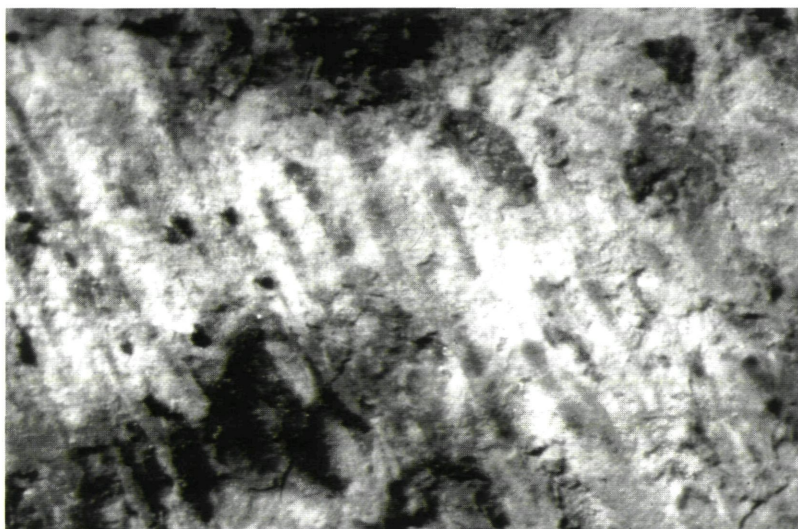


Figure 5.5 Barrow 4: photomicrograph of dagger (M11) from central cremation, showing copper-preserved horn hilt, x30. Photo Jacqui Watson

An area of copper alloy staining was noted on a probable femur shaft fragment though, as the associated bronze dagger showed no signs of burning, it must be assumed that this occurred after the deposit was collected and placed in the ground (this is in contrast to the slightly burnt gold foil and bronze awl of barrow 2). The remains are believed to represent those of an adult of indeterminate sex.

#### Metalwork<sup>A.V.O</sup> (Figs 5.2, 5.4–6)

**G3-4. Barrow 4A, central burial.** Basket earrings (Fig. 5.4; Williams 1948, 5–6, pl. IID; Taylor 1980 pl. 3d). They have been manufactured from single beaten sheets of gold. The basket edges and tang have been finished by folding. The earrings have been decorated with simple lines using a blunt point on the inner surface to produce the typical relief decoration of the repoussé technique. The decoration consists of two closely spaced parallel lines which run concentric with the baskets' outer edge. Two pairs of six parallel lines run either side of the tang across the middle of the basket. Condition: good. AM 1944.122.

**M11. Barrow 4, central cremation.** Bronze knife-dagger (Fig. 5.2; Williams 1948, 8, pl. IIE). Flat riveted knife-dagger with low arched butt. There is some damage from chipping to the otherwise subrectangular butt. The two rivets have round sections and vestigially expanded flat heads. A hilt line runs across in a gentle curve; above are good remains of hilt plates with grain on both faces aligned skew to the long axis. The surface is almost all granular-textured from corrosion and embedded sand. The blade

seems to have a hollowed-lenticular section with thin sharp edges which follow a concave line up to the main break. AM 1944.126. Extant length 58 mm; width butt 36 mm; max. thickness 3.4 mm; length rivets 8.4, 8.8 mm; diameter rivet shanks 3.7–3.9 mm.

#### Organics<sup>w</sup> (Figs 5.5–6)

There are traces of a horn hilt preserved in the copper corrosion products. The grain orientation of this suggests that a single piece of horn was used, into which the dagger blade was inserted (Fig. 5.5). One side of the blade is covered in a mass of hairs of two different types, which were recorded with a scanning electron microscope. Long, thick individual hairs cover most of the blade, with an additional mass of fine hairs in one area (Fig. 5.6).

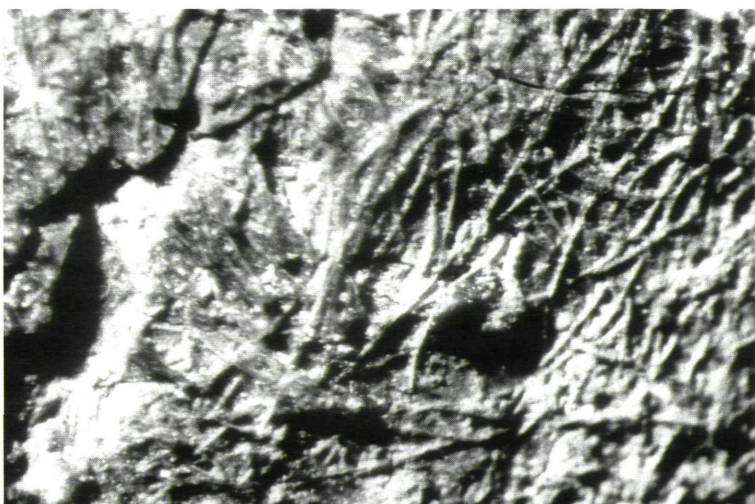
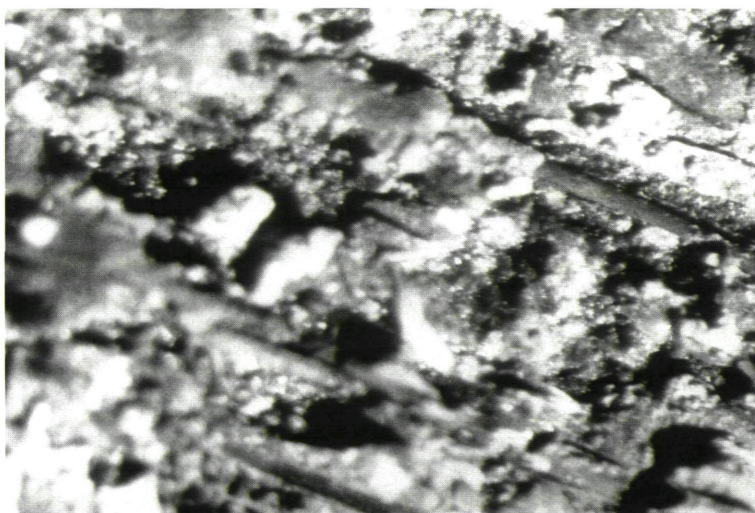


Figure 5.6 Barrow 4: photomicrographs of dagger (M 11) from central cremation, showing copper-preserved hairs on blade. Long, thick hairs above, localised mass of fine hairs below, x30. Photo Jacqui Watson

Table 5.2. Pottery from barrow 16

Context	GShL:-(CU)		G:1/BA		F:2/D-R		GQ:2/?BA		FG:1/?D-R		Sh:5/?BA		Q:4/BA		F:1/D-R	
Pit A	-	-	1	Recon- vessel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pit D	1	Recon- vessel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pit H	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	5 g	3	20 g	-	-	-	-	1	6 g
J	-	-	3	3 g	21	157 g	-	-	5	30 g	7	20 g	6	10 g	-	-
J and pit K	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	49 g	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pit K	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	68 g	-	-	-	-	-	-
L	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	10 g	3	not weighed	-	-	-	-	-	-
?N	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	45 g	-	-	-	-	-	-
P	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	18 g	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ditch - upper fill	-	-	-	-	1	5 g	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

**Pottery<sup>A</sup>** (Fig. 5.2)

**P76. Barrow 4A, central burial.** European Beaker: restored (Fig. 5.2; Williams 1948, 6, pl. IIB; Clarke 1970, corpus no. 33, fig. 152). Fabric: sand and grog, similar to GS:2/Bkr. The decoration is of rectangular-toothed comb impressions (comb length 35 mm, with teeth 1.5 x 1 mm). The comb used to decorate the vessel had one tooth missing. The vessel is well finished and the exterior surface has been smoothed. Colour — exterior: pale reddish brown; core: not visible; interior: pale brown. AM 1944.121.

There are also 2 sherds/40 g in fabric GS:-(EBA), from an uncertain context. AM 1944.125a(d).

**Flint<sup>D</sup>** (Table 5.3)

**Barrow 4A, central burial.** Three barbed and tanged arrowheads were recovered from the gravel above the skeleton (Williams 1948, 5, pl. IIC). The arrowheads, although not 'fancy' types, are quite finely worked and are Sutton b forms (Green 1980). There is slight damage to the tips of two of them (AM 1944.123a and 123c), and the barb of the third is broken (AM 1944.123b).

A further barbed and tanged arrowhead was recovered from the mound (Williams 1948, 6, pl. IIC; AM 1944.124). It is damaged at the tip and on one barb. Small areas of primary flake surface survive on each face. Pointed barb and large, square but broken tang. Probably Green's Sutton c form (1980).

**Animal bone<sup>T</sup>**

**Barrow 4A.** A 'horn-core and a metatarsus of ox (*bos longifrons*)' (sic) were recovered from the bottom of the ditch and considered to be contemporary with the primary Beaker burial (Williams 1948, 6). They were interpreted as 'apparently a ritual offering'.

The classic example of such a deposit in a burial context is from Hemp Knoll, Avebury, Wiltshire (Grigson 1980, 164–6). There a skull with mandible and

very complete sets of foot bones were found not in the ditch but near an inhumation in a position which suggested that they were the remains of an ox hide placed in the grave pit outside the coffin.

**BARROW 5**

(5160 9829; Figs 5.1, 5.7; Williams 1948, 9–11)

Barrow 5 was one of the larger barrows in the cemetery, of comparable size to barrow 7. The NW half of the barrow was quarried before excavation began.

**Ditch, interior, ?cremation pits**

The barrow ditch was recorded as 146 ft (44 m) in diameter. At the centre of the interior blackish soil representing mound material was recorded overlying buried topsoil. The mound was 68 ft (20 m) in diameter and was capped by gravel. Two pits, 1 and 2, were recorded near the centre. Both contained possible pyre debris in the form of blackish soil and charcoal, flecks of calcined bone and worked flint. Two inhumations salvaged from the berm area beyond the mound in the quarried NW quadrant of the barrow were interpreted as Saxon insertions.

**Human remains<sup>C,J</sup>**

None of the possible pyre debris from pits 1 and 2 was retained. Only one of the inhumations salvaged from the berm in the NW quadrant could be considered anywhere near complete and it comprised only the leg bones and fragmented skull of a probable adult male. The second inhumation was represented by a single subadult femur the epiphyses of which had not yet fused. Length 40.5 mm.

**Flint<sup>D</sup>** (Table 5.3)

**Pit 1.** A 'slug shaped blade' (Williams 1948, 11) has been identified on re-examination as a fabricator with

Table 5.3. Struck flint from pre-1983 barrow excavations (re-examined material only)

Context	Irregular waste	Cores	Core rejuvenation flakes	Flakes and blades	Chips	Hammer-stones	Retouched	Totals	Burnt worked	Broken
Barrow 2 BA cremation	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	1
Barrow 2 (re-excavation by Parrington 1977) <sup>1</sup>	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	1
Barrow 4A	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	4	-	2
Barrow 5, shallow scoops cut into OGS <sup>2</sup>	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	2	-	-
Barrow 6 <sup>3</sup>	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	2	-	-
Barrow 15, Pit 1	-	-	-	11	-	-	2	13	-	6
Barrow 15 (topsoil) <sup>4</sup>	-	-	-	8	-	-	-	8	1	2
Barrow 16 Pit G	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-
Barrow 16 Pit H	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-
Barrow 16 L	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	2	-	2
Totals	-	1	-	24	-	-	10	35	1	14

<sup>1</sup> Only barbed and tanged arrowhead and a flake from the cremation re-examined; Parrington (1977) summarises flint from the barrow.

<sup>2</sup> Only one blade-like flake found in re-examination.

<sup>3</sup> Core fragment with one utilized edge, this may be the object described by Williams (1948, 13) as an end and hollow scraper with a blunted side.

<sup>4</sup> Includes two plough damaged-flakes, previously published as scrapers (Riley 1982, 78, fig. 41)

a plano-convex section. Retouch is mainly confined to the edges of the implement, both the distal and proximal ends exhibit slight crushing. AM 1944.128 5.1.

**Pit 2** contained 'flakes used but unworked' (Williams 1948, 11). However, only one blade-like flake could be found during the re-examination of the flint from the earlier barrow excavations. It had been soft-hammer struck and utilized. AM 1944.120 5.

#### BARROW 6 (5164 98931; Fig. 5.7; Williams 1948, 11–3)

##### Ditch and interior

Barrow 6 had an internal diameter of approximately 30 m. A trench was excavated across the interior and the central area was stripped. This revealed the preserved pre-barrow ground surface and the extent of the barrow mound. The mound material was approximately 75 ft (22.5 m) in diameter and was capped with gravel. There was no evidence for a central funerary deposit.

##### Flint<sup>D</sup> (Table 5.3)

A 'combined end and hollow scraper with blunted side' was recovered from the old ground surface (Williams 1948, 13). This is probably a core fragment with one blunted and retouched edge that was found in the re-examination of the flintwork. The location of this artefact was not specified but a number 6 marked on the piece

would indicate that it is the object published by Williams. AM 1944.131.

A blade-like flake with a '6' marked on it was found in the Ashmolean collection, presumably also from this barrow although there was no information about the precise findspot. Both edges are battered, possibly through use. AM 1944.130.

#### BARROW 7 (5170 9935; Fig. 5.7; Atkinson 1952–3, 26–32)

Barrow 7 had an overall diameter of 150 ft (45 m) and an internal diameter of 40 m. It was probably the largest barrow in the cemetery. Three radial trenches were excavated, the central area was stripped and further trenches were dug across the ditch. The radial sections showed the surviving pre-barrow land surface to extend up to 40 m in diameter. An area of iron pan on this surface may approximate to the extent of a covering mound. Near the barrow centre the probable position of a cremation pyre was recorded as a 5 ft (1.5 m) wide area of burnt soil. At its NW corner was a small circular pit, 2 ft (0.6 m) in diameter and 6" (0.15 m) deep. The pit was 'filled with dark soil containing many fragments of burnt wood, and a very small quantity of cremated human bone', apparently pyre debris. The bone was described as 'very small in size . . . perhaps . . . the uncollected residue of a cremation'. Eleven rather larger fragments of cremated bone found above the iron pan were interpreted as carried downwards by

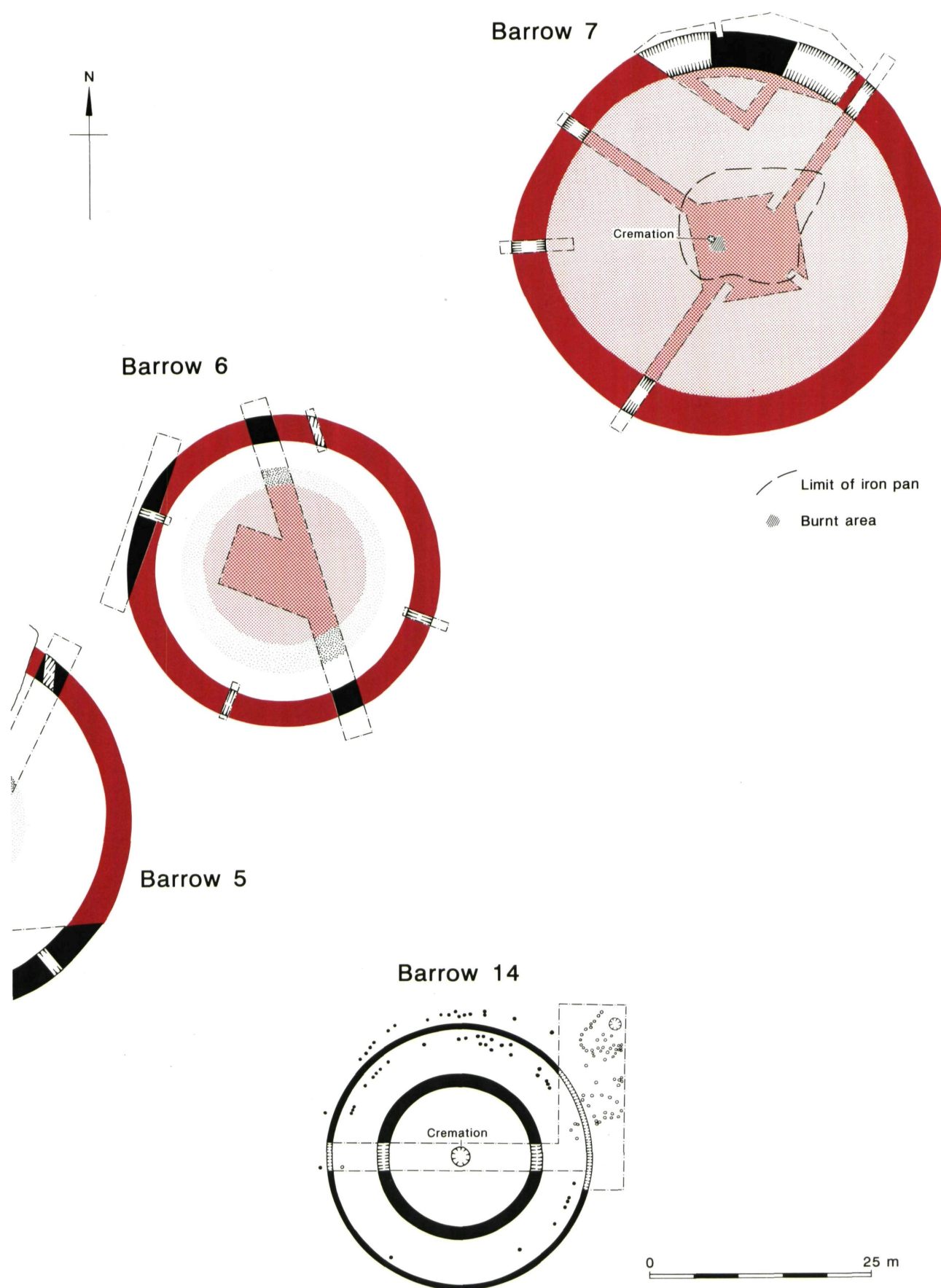


Figure 5.7 Barrows 5-7 and 14

animal burrowing from a cremation deposited higher in the mound.

#### Human remains<sup>C,J</sup>

The meagre burnt remains from this barrow cannot be relocated, which is all the more unfortunate given the range of evidence described in the original report. The description of the pit fill quoted above indicates that in this case the components of cremation had not been separated, in contrast to the deposits in barrows 2 and 16. Of further interest is the fact that the pit was located in an area reddened by fire. We may envisage the cremation being performed on the surface followed by the digging of a pit for the deposition of the remains.

#### BARROW 11 (5187 9846; Fig. 5.8; Leeds 1938a, 39–41)

A single trench was excavated across the barrow and enlarged near the centre. The barrow had an internal diameter of 87 ft (29 m). The pre-barrow land surface survived across the whole of the interior. A cremation pit 2 1/2 ft (0.75 m) in diameter and a large posthole with a ramp were located at the centre. In addition a number of stakeholes 6" (0.15 m) in diameter and 6" (0.15 m) deep, one of which contained charcoal, were found in the excavation trench E of the central features.

In addition, 8 ft (2.40 m) to the S of the central pit was an area 18" (0.45 m) in diameter of burnt reddened soil and charcoal. It is unclear in the original report whether this represented the remains of an *in situ* pyre. Its limited size could indicate the burial of pyre material rather than *in situ* cremation.

The central pit contained cremated bone from a possibly male adult and base fragments from a miniature vessel. The finds, cremated bone and pottery, from barrow 11 are almost certainly those labelled as coming from 'barrow 3'. Barrow 11 was the third barrow to be excavated, and this was undertaken before the cropmark ring ditches were numbered by Leeds (1938a, 32). Further the date of 'Feb 27 1938' on the original finds label would accord with the excavation of this barrow.

#### Human remains<sup>C,J</sup>

The central cremation deposit weighed 771 g and comprised the substantial remains of an adult possibly male individual. Bones present included skull (petrous, vault, maxilla, tooth root), axial (vertebrae, scapula, rib, ?pelvis), upper limbs (humerus, radius or ulna) and lower limbs (femur, tibia, patella, metatarsal). The majority were white and well calcined although all vertebral arches present had blue-grey posterior spinous processes. One might envisage these being buried in ashes and debris after the collapse of the pyre.

#### Pottery<sup>A</sup>

Found with the cremated bone were 14 base sherds/12 g in fabric GS:-(EBA) (moderate, ill-sorted angular grog with some sand), probably from an accessory type vessel. Base diameter 80 mm. Colour — exterior:

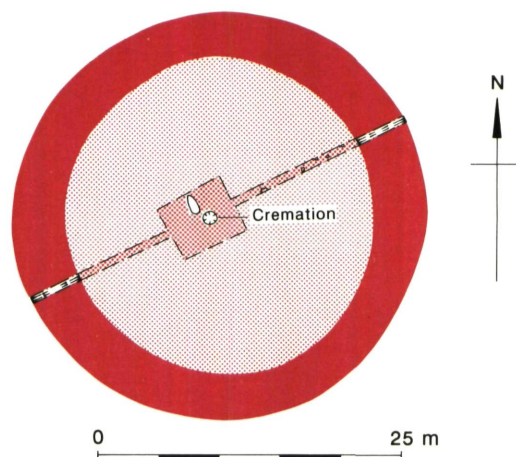


Figure 5.8 Barrow 11

orange-greyish brown; core: greyish brown; interior: not present.

From the ditch came 6 sherds/55 g in fabric QG:-(D-R) and 1 sherd/10 g in fabric Sh2:-(D-R) (Leeds 1938a, 40).

#### BARROW 14 (5166 9825; Figs 5.7, 5.9; Leeds 1936, 8–13)

Barrow 14 was clearly visible as a cropmark, appearing as a double ring ditch. Excavation commenced by the clearance of a rectangle of ground in the NE corner of a square enclosing the barrow. This revealed features beyond the barrow, in the form of a sterile pit about 5 ft (1.50 m) in diameter and 2 ft (0.60 m) deep and a multitude of possible stakeholes, roughly 1 ft (0.30 m) deep and 6" (0.15 m) in diameter, some of which seemed to flank the outer ditch. An E-W strip was dug across the diameter of the monument and the entire circumference was cleared along the edges of both ditches, to determine whether stakeholes like those observed in the NE continued around the rest of the periphery.

#### Ditches

The outer ditch was 100 ft (30 m) in overall diameter and was flanked on both sides by stakeholes forming rough arcs concentric with the ditch around part of its circumference. Their apparent absence from the SW quadrant was attributed to the loose sandy soil of that area (Leeds 1936, 12). The inner ditch, which was much wider, had an overall diameter of 60 ft (18 m). The silting of the ditches suggested that each had an external bank.

#### Central pit

At the centre of the barrow was a large circular pit approximately 5 ft (1.8 m) in diameter and 3 ft (0.9 m) deep. The gravel around the lip of the pit had been 'burnt to a bright red colour', which would suggest that the pyre was placed at the barrow centre.

The pit fill consisted of 'earth heavily impregnated with charcoal' which was probably pyre debris. The pit also contained a cremation identified as female, a Biconical Urn (Fig. 5.9, P77), a bronze razor/knife

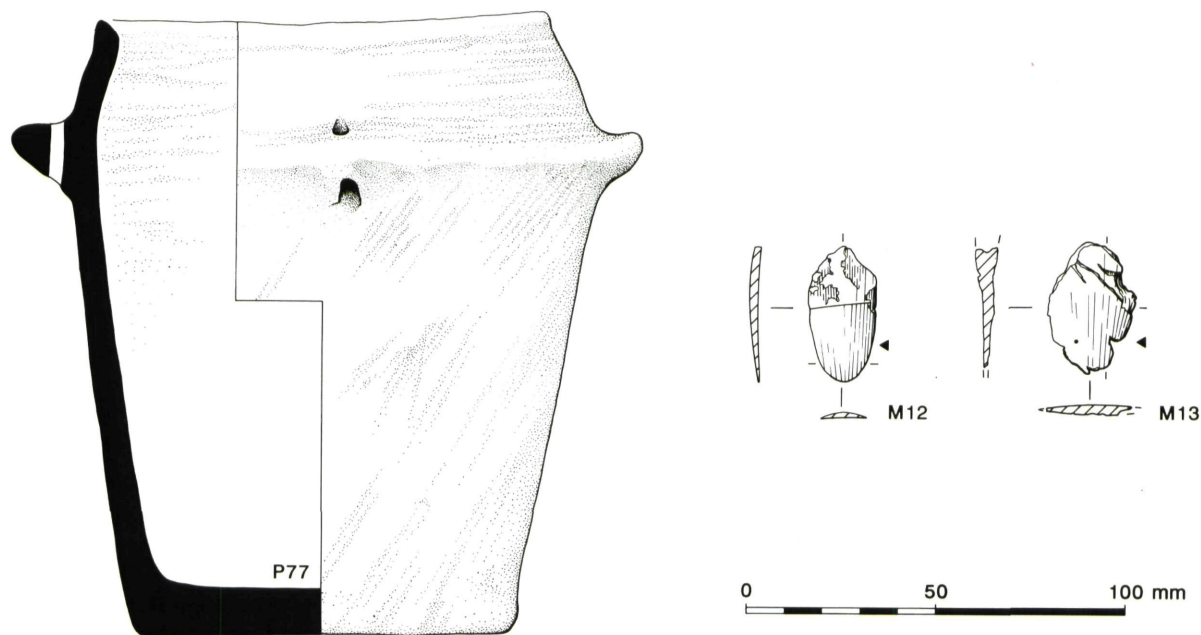


Figure 5.9 Barrow 14

(Fig. 5.9, M12/M13) and fragments of bronze. The exact positions of the cremation and grave goods within the pit were not recorded.

#### Human remains

The cremation could not be relocated. It was originally identified as female (Leeds 1936, 12).

#### Metalwork<sup>o</sup> (Fig. 5.9)

**M12/M13. Central cremation.** Bronze ?razor (Leeds 1936, 12, pl. IIB; Piggott 1946, 137, no. 26). Amongst a group of very corroded flattish fragments of copper alloy is one of identifiable shape. This seems to be reduced in size since excavation (Leeds 1936, pl. IIB); even at that stage Leeds judged part of the tang to be missing. It is not clear on what grounds he thought that additional fragments (M13) belonged to a second metal object (*ibid.*, 12).

The surface is green with granular texture, but the edges appear to be intact and sharp leading to a linguist tip. No bevels are discernible, but the edges may have been slightly hollowed. The current 'butt' is peaked, but is badly corroded and may be broken all round. AM 1931.239. Extant length 35.5 mm; width 18.0 mm; max. thickness (no corrosion lumps) 2.6 mm.

#### Organics<sup>w</sup>

There are traces of a horn hilt, preserved by contact with copper corrosion products, and vestiges of its position remain in corrosion.

#### Pottery<sup>A</sup> (Fig. 5.9)

**P77. Central cremation.** Biconical Urn, complete (Leeds 1936, 12, pl. IIA). Fabric: grog with rare shell. Plain, horizontal cord and four applied, perforated lugs on the shoulder. Colour — exterior: light pinkish orange; core: not visible; interior: light greyish orange. Condition: good.

#### BARROW 15

(5182 9834; Fig. 5.10; Riley 1982)

The barrow was visible on the ground as a cropmark double ring ditch.

#### Ditches

The concentric ditches had external diameters of 70 ft (21 m) and 120 ft (36 m). They were relatively narrow and shallow, 2 ft (0.60 m) to 4 ft (1.20 m) wide and 9" (0.20 m) to 1 ft 6" (0.50 m) deep, and probably discontinuous.

#### Pit 1

Pit 1 was subrectangular, 10 ft 2" (3 m) x 5 ft 2" (1.50 m) and 3 ft (1 m) deep, with one rounded and one squared end, and oriented N-S. It contained the semi-articulated remains of an adult male which had been placed in three separate deposits.

Two deposits of human bone were placed near the grave floor. That near the N end included the skull and jaw, and that near the S end an articulated foot. The

distribution of bones could indicate the original orientation of the burial with the head towards the N. A barbed and tanged arrowhead was found at the S end near the articulated foot. The two deposits were covered with loam flecked with charcoal. Spreads of charcoal and planks represented by carbonized wood near the pit sides could have originally formed part of a mortuary chamber or coffin which was later disturbed. Above the planks an animal bone was placed near the pit centre and covered with conglomerate blocks. The upper grave fill contained a sherd in what could be an earlier Neolithic fabric, a medieval sherd, worked flints and an ox tooth. The remaining human bone was deposited near the top of the pit. A radio-carbon determination of 2300–1750 cal BC (95% confidence) ( $3660 \pm 80$  BP; OxA-4357)<sup>46</sup> has been made on the skeleton.

The interpretation of fires being lit within the pit (Riley 1982, 78) can be questioned, as no signs of burning were found on either the human bones or the artefacts. It is plausible that the grave was disturbed, a pyre was constructed adjacent to the pit and the pit was backfilled with pyre debris. It could also be significant that the grave fill contained no gravel, unlike the fill of pit 2.

### Pit 2

Pit 2 was immediately W of pit 1, it was subrectangular, 11 ft 2" (3.30 m) x 6 ft (1.80 m) and 2 ft (0.60 m) deep, with an irregular base. An antler fragment was found near the bottom of the pit, which was backfilled with loamy gravel. An extension to the pit contained the skeletal remains of two children together with two sherds, possibly of Beaker. The grave contained a similar loamy gravel fill to pit 2.

### Suggested sequence

1. The corpse of an adult male (articulated or semi-articulated) was placed in a mortuary structure within a central pit (1).
2. The grave was reopened and parts of the skeleton and ?grave assemblage were removed. The skeletal remains were rearranged and the grave was partially backfilled with loam and charcoal.
3. After the disturbance to the grave a fire (possibly a pyre) was lit next to the pit. The half-open grave was backfilled with pyre debris and the remaining human bone was placed in the grave pit, as were animal bone and conglomerate blocks.
4. A second pit (2) was excavated adjacent to pit 1, antler was deposited and the pit was backfilled.
5. Pit 2 was extended and the bones of two children were deposited together with two ?Beaker sherds. The radiocarbon measurement and, as far as they go, the finds indicate a younger age than the form and

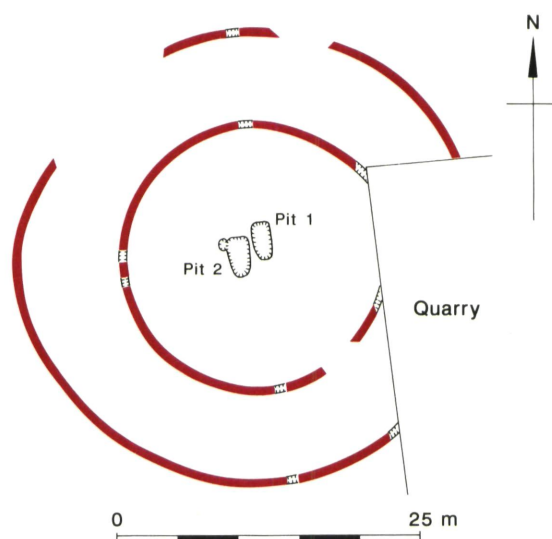


Figure 5.10 Barrow 15

character of the ditches which, as Riley pointed out (1982, 79–80), have more in common with those of middle Neolithic ring ditches in the Upper Thames than with early Bronze Age ones. Their relative slightness and irregularity may, however, have resulted from particularly dense concretion of the gravel (Riley 1982, 76), although this would be at odds with the digging of relatively substantial grave pits.

### Human remains<sup>C,J</sup>

**Pit 1.** Riley's conclusions are worth quoting here: '... if one assumes that the bones were almost all of one individual: much of the remains of an adult man, partially articulated, was arranged at the base of the pit in two deposits, the northern containing upper parts of the body and the southern containing lower ...' (Riley 1982, 78). A note published soon after the excavation adds 'There was some evidence that the tibia and fibula of both legs had been dismembered after partial desiccation.' (anon. 1942, 103), though the evidence for this conclusion was not discussed. Riley's report incorporates notes of the bone identifications made in the field by Miss B Blackwood, then of the Pitt Rivers Museum. These are of value in that they detail many more bones than have survived to the present day, in particular a near-complete torso, hands and feet. Some information is also provided by Goody (1948).

Degree of completeness of the skeleton was C–B and the preservation of individual bones was 3–2. The remains were believed to be those of a single adult male. Some slight lipping of bone was seen on the proximal articulation of the right humerus.

<sup>46</sup>Radiocarbon assessment<sup>1</sup>: disturbed context, the skeleton had been redeposited in the context (backfill of disturbed grave). The age-at-death offset is minimal; the depositional offset is unknown (redeposited, but probably minimal in relation to original burial deposit). The sample gives a *tpq* for the backfilling of the grave after disturbance, but presumably represents the original burial, of unknown form. *Evaluation*: Low-value date for grave disturbance (redeposited), artefacts (uncertain physical association) and barrow phasing (no stratigraphic or clear spatial relationship).

**Pit 2.** This time the original identifications do appear to tally with what the present writer examined. Only the skull fragments of two subadults were recovered in this pit, ages were assigned on the basis of the dentition as 9–10 years and at least 11 years. This estimate is far more tentative based as it is on the very crushed remains of the mandible and dentition.

#### Pottery<sup>A</sup>

**Pit 1** contained two body sherds originally described as Abingdon Ware (Riley 1982, 78). However, re-examination of the two sherds would suggest that only 1 sherd/10 g in a stone-tempered fabric can be identified as Abingdon Ware, the other perhaps being medieval in date.

**Pit 2** contained 2 sherds/3 g in fabric ShS:-, which were originally described as Beaker (Riley 1982, 78).

#### Flint<sup>D</sup> (Table 5.3)

**Pit 1.** A barbed and tanged arrowhead of symmetrical outline was recovered from pit 1, below the foot bones of the partly articulated skeleton (Riley 1982, fig. 41.1). Both barbs and tang are broken. The dorsal face is extensively retouched; retouch on the bulbar face is largely confined to the edges.

Twelve other struck flints were recovered from the upper fills of this pit. They consist of six complete flakes, a retouched blade-like flake and five broken flakes. Both hard and soft hammers were used. The blade-like flake has been fairly roughly retouched along the LHS, the retouch is shallow and slightly invasive. This piece was probably used as a knife. This and one or two flakes are produced on good quality chalk flint, the remainder appear to be made on derived material, possibly from a local source.

**Topsoil.** Eight flakes and blade-like flakes were recovered from topsoil within barrow 15. Two scrapers illustrated by Riley (1982, fig. 41, 3–4) appeared on re-examination to be plough-damaged flakes. Both soft and hard hammers were used, one blade-like flake was utilized and one burnt.

**BARROW 16** (5195 9841; Fig. 5.11–2; Leeds 1938a, 31–9 and archive notes; Hawkes 1955, GB.3))

#### Ditch and interior

Approximately 40% of the interior was excavated and four trenches were dug across the ditch, which was ovoid in plan. The pre-barrow ground surface survived to a depth of 0.35 m above natural gravel. Two cremation deposits, pits C and E, were positioned on the long axis. Secondary cremation and funerary deposits were made close to the centre of the barrow (pits A, B, D and F) and a row of cremations, some associated with Deverel-Rimbury pottery, was inserted into the E of the interior (pits G–H, J–N).

Few of the cremation pits penetrated the underlying gravel and some cremation deposits were simply scattered on the pre-barrow surface.

#### Axial cremations

##### Pit E

Pit E was oval, 3 ft (0.9 m) x 1½ ft (0.45 m) and oriented NW-SE along the long axis of the barrow. It was excavated through the subsoil and 3–3½ ft (0.90–1.00 m) into the natural gravel. The top of the pit was defined by a streak of charcoal. A deposit of charcoal (pyre debris) was placed at the S end of the pit and above this was placed a large quantity of cremated bone. The grave assemblage, consisting of an awl (Fig. 5.11, M14), a knife-dagger (Fig. 5.11, M15) and a bead necklace (Fig. 5.12, B2-15), was placed above the cremated bone.

##### Pit C

Pit C was oval, 2½ ft (0.75 m) x 1 ft (0.3 m), at least 19" (0.25 m) deep and filled with pyre debris of ash and charcoal. Cremated bone overlapped the northern edge of this deposit. There was no evidence for an *in situ* pyre.

#### Secondary cremations near centre

##### Pit A

The pit was 18" (0.45 m) in diameter and 13½" (0.35 m) deep, and had been cut into a layer of humus overlying natural gravel. It contained charcoal and a miniature Food Vessel (Fig. 5.11, P78) placed on its side, but no cremated bone. The vessel had been refired which would indicate that it had been placed on a cremation pyre. The charcoal fill was probably part of the pyre debris.

##### Pit B

Pit B was circular, 18" (0.45 m) in diameter and 9" (0.23 m) deep. It was filled with 'earth and charcoal' and small fire-reddened pebbles were found near its base. The pit was 6" (0.15 m) deeper on the S side where there was more charcoal. Possible stakeholes, some of which contained charcoal, were recorded nearby.

##### Pit D

Pit D was 2 ft (0.60 m) in diameter and 1 ft (0.30 m) deep. It contained a miniature Collared Urn (Fig. 5.11, P79) and possible pyre debris in the form of charcoal and burnt stones ('pot-boilers'). The vessel, which was refired, had probably been placed on a pyre.

##### Pit F

Pit F contained an *in situ* cremation and was originally described as 'a pocket within the top-soil about 15" [0.37 m] deep'.

#### Deverel-Rimbury cremations

These pits formed a secondary linear group to the SE of cremation pit E, extending out to the edge of the barrow ditch.

##### Pit G

Pit G was 15" (0.37 m) x 12" (0.30 m) and cut 3" (0.07 m) into gravel. It contained a small quantity of mixed cremated bone, 'daub', and 'many' burnt stones.

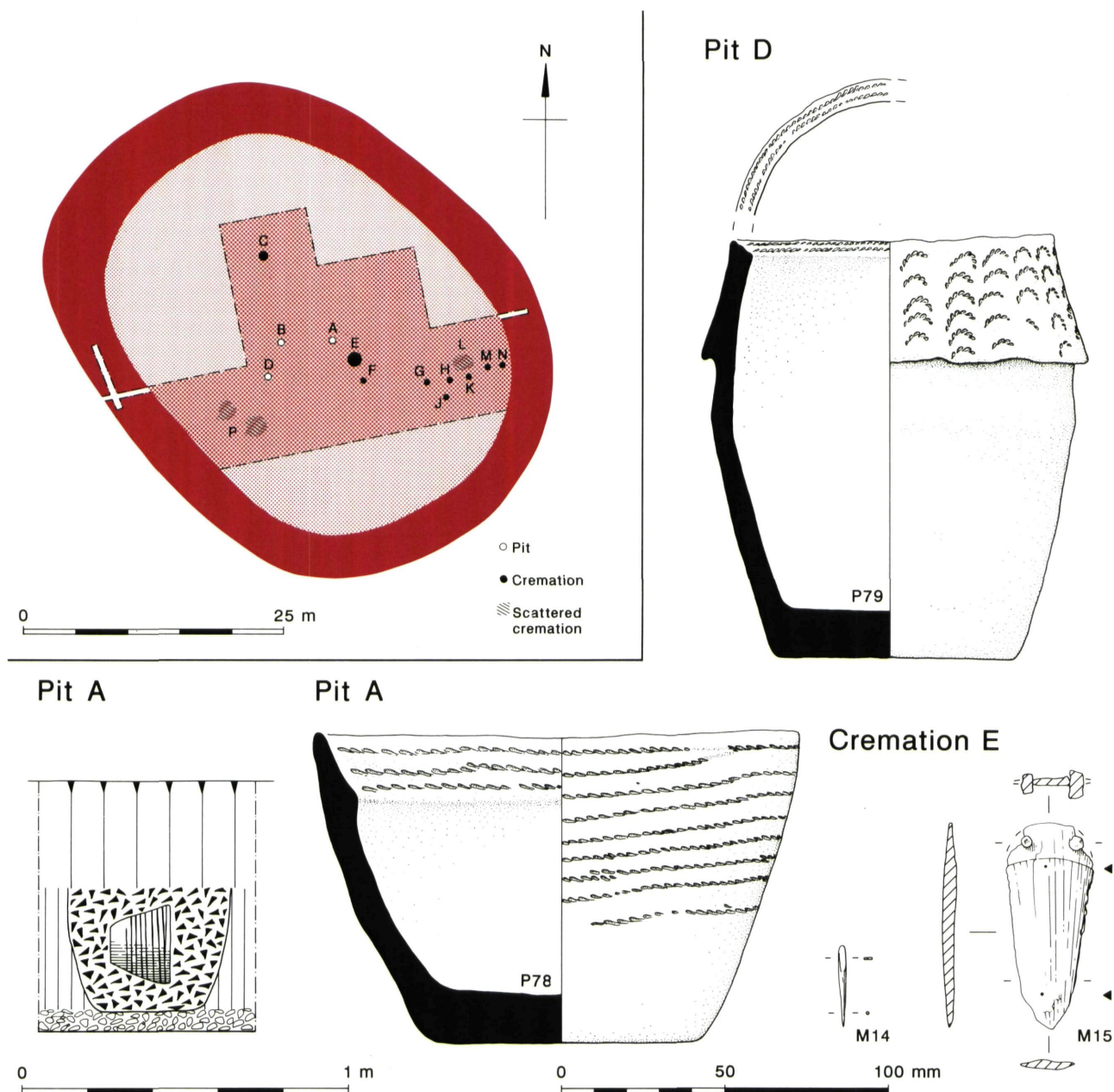


Figure 5.11 Barrow 16

**Pit H**

The dimensions of pit H are not given in the original report, instead only the depth within the topsoil, 15"–21" (0.37 m–0.52 m) is stated. The burial deposit, which was recorded as *in situ*, consisted of adult cremated bone, five Deverel-Rimbury sherds and a white-corticated flint scraper.

**J**

J was recorded as a scatter of cremated bone and Deverel-Rimbury sherds including three different rims in the topsoil from 12" (0.30 m) to 18" (0.46 m) deep.

**Pit K**

Pit K, which was cut into the gravel, was recorded

as circular, 2 ft 9" (0.82 m) in diameter and up to 12" (0.30 m) deep. The rim of the pit had been burnt red, which would suggest that the cremation took place *in situ*. The pit contained a fill of ash and sherds of Deverel-Rimbury pottery including a rim.

**L**

Finds scatter consisting of cremated bone, Deverel-Rimbury sherds, flints and animal bone.

**Pit M**

The dimensions of this 'pocket above the gravel' were never given. It contained cremated bone, 'not burnt *in situ*'.



Figure 5.12 Barrow 16: Faience, amber and jet beads from pit E. The segmented faience bead is top right. © Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

**N**

Finds scatter consisting of a flint flake, a sherd and two fragments of burnt bone, none of which could be found during the re-assessment of the material.

**P**

Finds scatter consisting of charcoal, burnt bones and a sherd.

**Human remains<sup>CJ</sup>**

**Pit E.** This was a largely well-calcined deposit weighing 545 g. A pale green stain seen on a number of fragments is likely to have been caused by proximity to the associated bronze objects. The largest fragment was 110 mm and distortion was minimal. Bones present

included skull (frontal, occipital, malar, petrous, dentition), axial (rib, clavicle, scapula, ilium), upper limbs (humerus, radius, ulna) and lower limbs (patella, femur, tibia). The remains are believed to represent an adult who may have been female.

**Pit C.** This deposit weighed 188 g and comprised the quite well calcined remains of an adult of indeterminate sex. Bones present included skull (vault, petrous, temporal, frontal, zygomatic, mandible), axial (vertebrae, ?scapula, ?ilium) and upper limbs (metacarpals and phalanges).

**Pit F.** Human remains not relocated.

**Pit G.** This deposit comprised only 6 g of bone of variable colour. Bones present include skull (vault, petrous, temporal, dentition) and lower limb fragments (femur and possible tibia). Tooth fragments may

indicate the presence of an infant, although all other fragments belong to a more mature, ?adult, individual.

**Pit H.** This deposit weighed 6 g and was mostly white and well calcined, with the exception of some blue-black skull fragments and blackened longbone shaft cortices. Skull vault was slightly distorted and there was much cracking and fissuring of longbone shaft fragments. Bones present included skull (vault), axial (vertebrae and rib), upper limbs (radius or ulna) and lower limbs (femur, tibia). The bones appear to be those of an adult of unknown sex.

**J.** A total of 187 g of cremated bone was recovered. Fragments were largely white and well calcined, though a few were bluish-black. The largest fragment measured 40 mm. The remains were those of a probable adult of uncertain sex. Bones present include skull vault, dentition, scapula, rib, femur and probable tibia. A small quantity of charcoal (1 g) and unburnt bone belonging to a small animal, ?rodent.

**Pit K.** Human remains not relocated.

**L.** A total of 36 g of cremated bone representing an adult of unknown sex was examined. With the exception of a fragment of tibia, which was white, the bone was merely blackened. The largest fragment measured 65 mm. Identifiable bones included skull, pelvis and rib. One fragment of femur shaft appeared to be unburnt.

**Pit M.** A total of 26.5 g of cremated bone represented a probable adult of unknown sex. Colour varied from black through to white. The largest fragment measured 81 mm. Identifiable bone included skull vault, petrous, pelvis, ulna, femur and tibia.

**N.** Human remains not relocated.

**P.** A total of 7 g of cremated bone was recovered. It was burnt white and the largest fragment measured 29 mm in length. Fragments may represent femur and tibia.

**'Scatter 31/10/36'.** A total of 337 g of bone was tentatively identified as representing a possible adult, though this was far from certain. The largest fragment measured 55 mm. Identifiable bones included skull vault, cervical vertebrae, ribs (possibly not adult), radius or ulna, ?humerus, tibia, femur and patella.

**'Scatter 6/6/37'.** A total of 28 g of cremated bone was tentatively identified as a possible adult. The bone was white and well calcined, with the exception of one unburnt fragment which was not identified. The largest fragment measured 27 mm. Identifiable bones included frontal bone, rib, radius, ulna, tibia and femur. Charcoal was also present.

#### Metalwork<sup>o</sup> (Fig. 5.11)

**M14. Pit E.** Bronze awl (Leeds 1938a, pl. VIIB). Single-pointed awl with a wedge-shaped tang. The tang has a slightly swollen shape, perhaps arising incidentally from post-cast forging. Its faces gradually taper out as they run into the round-sectioned working end. A green patina is largely retained. AM 1937.170. Length 25.0 mm; max. width 2.1 mm; max. breadth 1.4 mm.

**M15. Pit E.** Copper knife-dagger with bronze rivet(s) (Leeds 1938a, pl. VIIB; Gerloff 1975, no. 257).

Two-riveted knife-dagger with gently arched butt from which both corners have been detached. The rivets are slender with minimally expanded heads. A gently curved hilt line shows in the corrosion products. The surface is largely obscured by heavy corrosion. There are a number of minor chips from blade edges and may be some contortion towards the tip. Nevertheless, traces of a triangular structure may be discerned along the axis of either blade face; this may have constituted two converging ribs since the intervening surface appears slightly hollowed. AM 1937.169. Extant length 62 mm; extant width butt 26.4 mm; max. thickness 4.5 mm; length rivets 7.4, 8.7 mm.

#### Beads<sup>A,v</sup> (Fig. 5.12)

**Pit E.** Jet/shale, amber and faience 'necklace'. Fourteen beads were recovered from the cremation pit E. (Leeds 1938a, 35–7, pl. VIIB).

**Amber** (Beck and Shennan 1991, 167–8, fig. 11.9, 3). Condition: poor.

**B2.** Flat disk bead with rounded profile. Length 4 mm, diameter 9 mm.

**B3–4.** Long cylindrical beads. Length 20 mm, 17 mm, diameter 8 mm, 9 mm.

**Jet/shale.** Condition: good to fair.

**B5–7.** Fusiform long. Length 22–5 mm, diameter 9–10 mm.

**B8–10.** Fusiform short. Length 10–15 mm, diameter 8–10 mm.

**B11–14.** Oblate. Length 5–7 mm, diameter 8–10 mm.

**Faience:** condition: fair to poor.

**B15.** Segmented bead, pale greenish blue. Up to three segments survive although the third is broken. Length 6 mm.

#### Pottery<sup>A</sup> (Fig. 5.11; Table 5.2)

**P78. Pit A.** Miniature Food Vessel (Leeds 1938a, pl. VIIA; Case *et al.* 1964–5, fig. 27, 2). Fabric G:1/BA (very coarse angular grog). The decoration is of impressed twisted cord which spirals anti-clockwise up the vessel. The rim has three rows of impressed cord. The vessel may have originally had a clay slip. It has been refired; the inside appears burnt and the rim is distorted. Colour — exterior: pale buff and refired brownish grey; core: not visible; interior: burnt dark grey.

**P79. Pit D.** Miniature Collared Urn (Leeds 1938a, pl. VII C; Case *et al.* 1964–5, fig. 27, 1; Longworth 1984, corpus no. 1379, pl. 220c). Fabric GShL:- (grog and calcareous inclusions). The decoration is of impressed twisted cord crescents on the collar and two rows on the rim bevel. Longworth's secondary series, form II. The vessel has been refired. Colour — exterior: light grey; core: not visible; interior light grey.

**Pit H.** One shoulder sherd, probably from a globular urn, and four body sherds.

**J.** The sherds include a simple rim, a fragment of a 'horseshoe' handle and a base sherd, possibly all from the same vessel. The reconstruction published by Case *et al.* (1964–5, fig. 27, 4) is misleading as the rim and handle are in different fabrics and the shoulder is more

likely to be a base sherd; the sherds probably derive from Bucket rather than Biconical Urns. A second rim probably belonged to the same vessel as a rim from pit K.

#### Flint<sup>D</sup> (Table 5.3)

**Pit G.** A single utilized, blade-like flake. It was hard-hammer struck and has a hinge fracture.

**Pit H.** An end scraper on a broken flake, heavily corticated and probably made on chalk flint.

**L.** A broken blade-like flake and a miscellaneous retouched piece, probably a piercer, were recovered from the finds scatter.

### BARROW 17

(5171 9849; Fig. 5.13; Williams 1948, 13–4)

Barrow 17 never appeared as a convincing cropmark and was discovered only during topsoil stripping for gravel extraction. The stripping had destroyed any surviving earthworks. Before excavation nearly all of the barrow's southern half had been quarried away.

#### Ditch

It was suggested by the excavator that, if the barrow was circular, it would have had an overall diameter of 76 ft (23 m). The ditch had a flattened U-profile and was 7–8 ft (2.1–2.4 m) wide and 3 ft (0.9 m) deep. Two inhumations (pits 1 and 2) were located W of the barrow centre.

#### Pit 1

This was recorded as subrectangular, 6 ft (1.8 m) x 3 ft 6" (1.1 m) and 9" (0.2 m) deep, and was oriented approximately E-W. It contained a crouched burial placed on its left side with the head towards the W. The grave fill was of 'soft brown soil'. Traces of carbonized wood found within the fill were thought by the excavator not to belong to a coffin. A radio-carbon determination of 2350–1750 cal BC (95% confidence)(3660±90 BP; OxA-4358)<sup>47</sup> has been made on the skeleton.

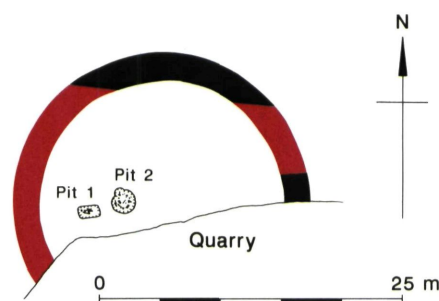


Figure 5.13 Barrow 17

#### Pit 2

This was recorded as 'roughly circular', 6 ft 6" (2 m) x 5 ft 9" (1.8 m) and 10–11" (0.3 m) deep. It contained the disarticulated remains of an infant, described as follows: 'The bones of a child had been thrown pell-mell into the hole, some lying horizontally on the bottom, others being against the sides. Long bones overlay a jaw-bone; fragments of the skull occurred at opposite ends of the pit, and ribs were widely scattered.' (Williams 1948, 14)

#### Human remains<sup>C,J</sup>

**Pit 1** contained an adult male. Degree of completeness of the skeleton was B and the preservation of individual bones was 3–2. Degree of attrition suggested an age of 35–45 years. There were four carious cavities and mild calculus affected all surviving dentition. An area of swelling was seen on the lateral midshaft of the right humerus. It was difficult to ascertain if any surface change had taken place due to the level of post-mortem damage. A swelling of the lateral distal half of the left ulna was associated with a small bony exostosis. This is likely to have been caused by fracture of the ulna.

**Pit 2.** Human remains not relocated. The level of disarticulation described above is very different from the obviously structured deposition of the ?partially disarticulated individual in pit 1 in barrow 15.

<sup>47</sup>Radiocarbon assessment<sup>4</sup>: sealed context of short duration (burial event). Both age-at-death and depositional offsets are minimal. The sample dates the burial and grave context, and provides a *tpq* for the grave backfill. The feature is clearly contemporary with the ritual use of the barrow, but it is not centrally located and has no stratigraphic relationship (secondary inhumation?). *Evaluation*: Moderate-value date: directly dates burial, but unknown relationship to ring ditch and the other burial.