

## Section 2

### ***Resource Assessment***

# Draft

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ENGLISH HERITAGE



## Section 2 – Resource Assessment

“We speak from facts, not theory”  
(Richard Colt Hoare, 1812, 7)

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### Scoping the resource

Good preservation, intriguing antiquities, and the prevalence in the region of scholars and antiquaries meant that the archaeology of Salisbury Plain attained a prominent place in documenting the ancient history of Britain at an early date. Reference has already been made to the use of Stonehenge by Geoffrey of Monmouth in his *History of the Kings of Britain*, written in AD1139, and the precocious excavations carried out for the Duke of Buckingham in AD 1620. Overviews, general summaries, and listings of the archaeological resource have been a feature of antiquarian and archaeological studies for nearly two centuries, and prior to the development of county sites and monuments records it was these works that made essential data about the resource widely accessible to scholars and the public alike. One of the first was Richard Colt Hoare's *Ancient history of Wiltshire* issued in five parts for binding in two volumes between 1812 and 1821, the Stonehenge area being covered under the Amesbury Station in the first volume (Colt Hoare 1812, 112-222). Colt Hoare's synthesis came at the end of a long antiquarian tradition of writing county histories, but stands on the watershed of such endeavours as one of the first to draw on extensive archaeological investigations in a sophisticated way, exemplified by his motto cited at the head of the section.

More than a century later the Victoria History of the Counties of England published the archaeological sections of the History of Wiltshire, this time in two parts issued in 1957 and 1973. The first part provides a detailed summary of the physical geography and geology of Wiltshire and, building on earlier work by E H Goddard (1913), an extensive gazetteer of the recorded archaeological resource prepared by Leslie Grinsell using published sources and original fieldwork between 1949 and 1952 (Pugh and Crittall 1957; Grinsell 1989, 22-5). The second part is a very valuable series of essays by Stuart Piggott,

Barry Cunliffe, and Desmond Bonney summarizing the state of knowledge from the beginnings of human settlement through to the later first millennium AD (Crittall 1973). Wiltshire was not covered by the county inventories prepared by the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England, although a review of the field monuments in a select area of about 13 square miles around Stonehenge was carried out in the mid 1970s and published as an occasional paper (RCHM 1979). This usefully updates the earlier inventories of Colt Hoare, Goddard, and Grinsell. Two still more recent synthetic overviews of Wessex archaeology (Cunliffe 1993; Bettey 1986) bring the interpretation of the Wiltshire evidence up to date and usefully set it within its wider regional context.

Together, these overviews define and scope what, in broad terms, may be considered the archaeological resource of the Stonehenge region. At the centre of this are the *in situ* monuments and deposits relating to the period from the earliest human occupation of the region down to modern times. The upper end of this chronological spectrum is, however, problematic. Colt Hoare was not much interested in archaeological remains later than Romano-British times, Grinsell ended with the Pagan Saxon period, while the Royal Commission dealt mainly with prehistoric monuments although they included some consideration of medieval and later structures under the heading of land-use. Wiltshire County Council's Sites and Monuments Record initially used a cut-off date of AD 1500 for the items it recorded, but during the later 1990s this was extended to cover all periods up to the 20th century. The scope of what is considered archaeological has also changed markedly over the last two decades. Historic buildings are well within the scope of archaeological remains even though they may be still inhabited, as are military remains of the 20th century and before. Ancient boundary features have long been part of the record, some still in use in the landscape such as hedgerows, banks, and fences. Tracks, paths, roads, street furniture (milestones,

signposts etc.), boundaries and associated structures (stiles, gateposts, etc.), ponds, agricultural installations, and woodland features are now equally well established as part of the overall archaeological resource. The Valletta Convention on the protection of the archaeological heritage (CoE 1992, Article 1.2-3) usefully defines the archaeological heritage as:

*All remains and objects and any other traces of mankind from past epochs:*

*l the preservation and study of which help to retrace the history of mankind and its relation with the natural environment;*

*li for which excavations or discoveries and other methods of research into mankind and the related environment are the main sources of information*

*The archaeological heritage shall include structures, constructions, groups of buildings, developed sites, movable objects, monuments of other kinds as well as their context, whether situated on land or under water.*

Thus the archaeological resource should not be seen as limited to *in situ* physical remains. Also of importance are the *ex situ* remains now curated in museums and stores; archives and records of earlier events (descriptions, plans, maps, photographs, drawings, digital data sets etc.); the cumulative body of knowledge and understanding that has built up over the centuries and which is mainly now recorded in books and papers; and the human resource represented in the skills, knowledge, experience, insights, and memories of those visiting, living, and working in the Stonehenge Landscape.

The following sections are not intended to summarize all that is known about the archaeology of the Stonehenge Landscape, rather the aim is to provide a signposted and critical guide to the resource as currently perceived. Its preparation draws heavily on the earlier surveys already referred to, published site reports and survey reports, and the Wiltshire Sites and Monuments Record. It also makes extensive use of material prepared for an Environmental Assessment carried out for English Heritage and the National Trust in 1990 and 1991 (Darvill 1991), an archaeological resource assessment prepared for English Heritage by Wessex Archaeology in the summer of 2000 (Walker 2000), and the

Stonehenge Landscape GIS maintained by English Heritage (Batchelor 1997). This last-mentioned source contains the data-set that has been used to compile the series of maps that accompany and illustrate this Section and which has been used in the assembly of quantifications cited below. After a summary of the essential physical features of the Stonehenge landscape and their relevance to archaeology the main body of this section is arranged chronologically as a series of time-slices using a back-projected modern calendrical system and conventionally defined culture-historical phases. This is followed by brief considerations of a number of diachronic themes and finally some views outwards from the Stonehenge Landscape into the region and the wider worlds beyond. Presentations in these two ways are of course selective approaches to reading the resource (see Section 1); they were adopted, however, as they represent the dominant interpretative schemes applying at the time that the data on which they are based was collected. As new interpretative schemes inform the way material is collected and study so new approaches to synthesis and review will take precedent.

## A downland landscape

Physically, the Stonehenge landscape comprises a substantial block of rolling chalk downland on the southern edge of Salisbury Plain (Illustration #17). Two rivers, the Avon to the east and the Till to the west run broadly north to south through the landscape, subdividing it into three principal topographical units (Illustration #18). Both rivers drain southwards, the Avon being the main river, emptying into English Channel at Christchurch in Hampshire. The River Till is a north-bank tributary of the Wylye which itself flows into the Avon via the Nadder at a confluence near modern-day Salisbury.

Geologically, the area is dominated by the Middle and Upper chalk which is an essentially calcareous bedrock giving rise to neutral or alkaline free-draining soils. This provides suitable geochemical conditions for the fair to good survival of many kinds of archaeological materials, including bone and calcium-rich materials such as molluscan remains. The area was subject to major geomorphological changes during the late Pliocene and Pleistocene (Kellaway 1991). Glacial and periglacial action in particular led to the formation of

superficial deposits such as clay with flints, chalky drift, and loess that are less calcareous, provide important parent material for the formation of soils (mainly rendzinas, brown calcareous earths, and argillic brown earths). Together with buried soils these create microenvironments whose chemistry ranges from neutral to slightly acidic where calcareous material is less well preserved or absent, but pollen does occasionally survive. Bands of nodular flint occur within the chalk and where near the surface give rise to stony soils. Descriptions of soil cover and the effects on the archaeology of the area have been provided by Richards (1990, 6-7); Findlay *et al* (1984) provide the broader regional context (see also Darvill 1991, 37-45).

The downland east of the Avon rises steadily from around 100m OD along the river valley to about 140m OD at Silk Hill just 2.5km east of the river. A relatively elevated plateau represented by (from south to north) Boscombe Down, Earl's Farm Down, Bulford Field, Milston Down, Ablington Down, and Figcheldean Down is characterized by thin soils and extensive views westwards.

The central block of downland between the Avon and the Till is more undulating and relatively low-lying with most of the land between 70m and 100m OD comprising large open fields and isolated tree clumps. The highest points are at about 140m OD in the south near Druid's Lodge and at Larkhill in the north. Throughout this region there are numerous small dry or seasonally running river systems, for example Stonehenge Bottom and low eminences and ridges. Stonehenge itself lies on such an eminence at about 100m OD. Some of the smaller valleys are fairly steep-sided. This land is mainly of agricultural grades 3 and 4 (Darvill 1991, 41-2).

The land east of the Till is very similar in character to the central block, again with numerous small valley systems running westwards from the main river.

Both the Avon and the Till run through relatively narrow but pronounced valleys typically 1km wide. The rivers meander through these valleys and have built up fairly well-developed alluvial flood plains. The Avon Valley is flanked by a low terrace consisting of loamy flinty drift, while the alluvium of the floodplain floor is clayey and calcareous. Some of the seasonal valleys and dry valleys that carried rivers in earlier times also contain alluvial deposits which are believed to mask underlying archaeological evidence and which have

recently been shown to preserve useful environmental sequences (Allen 1997, 120).

Colluvium deposits do not appear to be well represented in the Stonehenge landscape, or at least in the areas examined to date. Accumulations up to 1.5m thick were reported within the southern part of the interior of Durrington Walls (Wainwright and Longworth 1971, 23). Rather less substantial deposits were revealed in a slight hilltop saddle occupied by Coneybury henge (Richards 1990, 124), and may be inferred from the presence of lynchets associated with early field systems. However, a sampling programme involving the investigation of eight locations undertaken within the context of the Stonehenge Environs Project in 1981-2 failed to identify significant deposits (Richards 1990, 210-11). More recently, deposits of colluvium have been recognized on Coneybury Hill (WA 1993b), on the west side of the River Avon below Durrington Walls (Richards 1990, 263), and within and around the foot-slopes of Vespasian's Camp where its accumulation may be dated to the later prehistoric, Roman, and medieval periods (Hunter-Mann 1999).

Visibility and intervisibility within and across the Stonehenge landscape has been explored using GIS technology to examine viewsheds under a range of pre-defined conditions. This analysis demonstrates not only the very strong visual relationship between Stonehenge and numerous contemporary monuments but also the intervisibility of the sites with each other (Batchelor 1997, 71; Cleal *et al.* 1995, 34-40; Exon *et al.* 2000).

## **Pleistocene environments and their occupants (to 10,000 BC)**

Preserved *in situ* deposits from Pleistocene origin are extremely rare in Britain and in this regard the Stonehenge landscape is no exception. Secondary *ex situ* deposits are more widespread, especially in the river valleys of central, southern, and eastern England, and provide important evidence of these early times (Piggott 1973a; Wymer 1999; Wenban-Smith and Hosfield 2001). Such evidence as is available comes mainly from the study of buried soil profiles, artefact assemblages, stray finds, and collections of associated or contemporary faunal remains from river gravels and alluvial spreads. In this the Stonehenge Landscape has considerable potential. Map #E shows the distribution of recorded evidence of the Palaeolithic period.

At Durrington Walls, examination of a layer of coombe rock at the base of the two profiles suggested that the shallow valley, in which the site was carved out during a period of extreme cold, was nonetheless moist enough for solifluxion and the formation of the coombe rock. This possibly happened during the last Weichselian Glaciation c.30,000 to 50,000 BC. Later frost-weathering created a series of involutions in which there was a snail fauna, suggestive of an open tundra environment, although the dating of this horizon is extremely uncertain (Evans in Wainwright and Longworth 1971, 334). Wider issues connected with the formation and subsequent loss of periglacial deposits on the Wiltshire chalklands have been discussed by John Evans (1968).

At least two finds of Pleistocene faunal remains have been made in the Avon Valley. Grinsell (1957, 27) reports teeth of mammoth and woolly rhinoceros from an unlocated findspot in Amesbury parish, while a mammoth tooth was found in gravel in Durrington parish (Grinsell 1957, 65; Stevens 1921). Both finds confirm the potential of the Avon Valley floodplain deposits and gravel terraces as important potential sources of information about the area at this early date.

Palaeolithic artefacts have been found at six sites within the Stonehenge Landscape (Illustration #19). At Lake in the Avon Valley, discoveries made in the later 19th century include ovate handaxes (?Acheulean) and flakes from the terrace gravels (Evans 1897, 627-8; Roe and Radley 1969, 13). A handaxe from south of Amesbury Abbey may also derive from the river gravels, while two handaxes from Alington, Boscombe, come from deposits in the valley of the River Bourne (WA 1993a, Av3-1). There are also hints of finds on the interfluvies between the main rivers in the area: a flint core of "tortoise" type found southwest of Greenland Farm, Winterbourne Stoke (Anon 1973; DM 39.1972), and a handaxe from "near Stonehenge" (WA 1993a, Av3-3). Especially important is a group of three handaxes and associated worked flint found in 1992 on an upland field situated on a spur on the north side of the Wylve Valley just outside the Stonehenge Landscape at Stapleford (Harding 1993). All of these form part of a much larger body of material from the Avon Valley and its tributary valleys, itself connected to the Solent River in antiquity (Wenban-Smith and Hosfield 2001), and serve to emphasize the great potential of these deposits in the Stonehenge Landscape (cf. Roe and Radley 1969, figure 1; Harding and

Bridgland 1998; Wymer 1999). Most important is that the valley fill deposits in the Stonehenge Landscape do not appear to have been extensively quarried, unlike those lower down the Avon, and they thus represent an important reserve.

## Post-glacial hunter-gatherers (10,000 to 5500 BC)

The late glacial, post-glacial and early Holocene saw the transition from tundra environments to an open hazel and pine Boreal woodland – the wildwood. Archaeological evidence for human activity mainly takes the form of scattered lithic debris and occasional evidence of constructed features. No sites in the Stonehenge Landscape have been excavated with the primary aim of investigating aspects of this period, although relevant material has been uncovered during rescue/salvage operations and the investigation of later monuments and features. Map #F shows the distribution of findspots and sites relevant to the period 10,000 – 5500 BC.

The extensive surveys of the Stonehenge Environs Project revealed very little evidence of late upper Palaeolithic and earlier Mesolithic activity beyond a light scatter of microliths. Richards (1990,16) suggests that this may be a result of inappropriate sampling strategies being applied. Another possible bias in the picture is caused by cover-deposits sealing land surfaces of this period. Richards (1990, 263) cites the results of a sample excavation through a colluvial bench on the western side of the River Avon below Durrington Walls which revealed an *in situ* blade-based flint industry with microliths.

Despite the poverty of artefacts from the area there is constructional evidence in the form of three substantial postholes and a tree-hole found during the construction of the Stonehenge car-park north of the modern A344 in 1966 (Vatcher and Vatcher 1973), and a pit found about 100m to the east during alterations to the visitor centre in 1988-9 (Cleal *et al.* 1995, 43-7). Charcoal dates posthole A to 8560-8200 BC (HAR-455: 9130±180 BP), posthole B to 7550-6550 BC (HAR-456: 8090±180 BP), and the base of the recut secondary fill of pit 9580 to 8300-7750 BC (GU-5109: 8880±80 BP). The date of the tree-hole is not known although is it sometimes assumed to be contemporary and may in fact have been the focus of this small cluster of features. No artefacts are associated

with any of the features, and their wider context in terms of potential relationships with areas outside the investigated trenches is unknown. The posts are widely interpreted as “totem-pole”-like structures (e.g. Allen in Cleal *et al.* 1995, 55-6; Allen 1997, 125-6). The appearance of monumental features in the landscape at this early date adds an important dimension to understanding the longevity of such traditions and also serves to emphasize the need to establish the date of even the most simple of features.

### **Late Mesolithic and Earliest Neolithic (5500-4000 BC)**

The later Mesolithic and earliest Neolithic expressed by conventional cultural-historical terminology, the sixth and fifth millennia BC, is widely regarded as a period of supreme interest and importance because it embraces the transition from essentially hunter-gathering lifestyles to agricultural subsistence systems. The early part of the period is characterized by small and obliquely blunted microliths and core tools; at the very end of the period, around the turn of the fifth millennium, there is the first appearance of novel implements such as leaf-shaped arrowheads and polished axes, ceramics, the construction of monuments, and the deliberate opening up of the environment (Phase A in Whittle's (1993, 35) scheme for the Avebury area). Most authorities believe that such changes were gradual rather than abrupt and that elements of them can be traced back well beyond the sixth millennium BC. Map #F shows the distribution of finds and sites relevant to the period 5500 – 4000 BC.

Of the 30 or so findspots of Mesolithic material in the Stonehenge Landscape listed by Wymer (1977) most can tentatively be assigned to the later Mesolithic, although a full examination of the material in its wider context is long over-due (*cf.* Roe and Radley 1969,20). At least five tranchet axes/adzes have been found (Illustration #20), mainly on the downland, including one from “a field near Stonehenge” which also yielded a flake of Portland chert imported to the region from outcrops on the south coast (Wymer 1977, 333; *cf.* Palmer 1970). Another possible import is the perforated dolerite pebble hammer, probably from the Welsh marches, found inside Durrington Walls (Crawford 1929, 49-50; but *cf.* Roe 1979, 36).

The potential importance of the Avon Valley for settlement of this period is also emphasized by the discovery of a substantial Mesolithic site at Castle Meadow, Downton, just outside the Stonehenge Landscape south of Salisbury. Here structural evidence in the form of scoops, “cooking holes”, and stakeholes was found as well as a large flint assemblage (Higgs 1959). Nearby was a group of pits that can be dated on the basis of the associated finds (including Beaker pottery) to the later Neolithic (Rahtz and ApSimon 1962). Within the Stonehenge Landscape Mesolithic pits have been recorded at Boscombe Down Sports Field (Smith in prep.).

Structures and deposits securely dated to before 4000 BC are scarce. At Stonehenge itself an animal bone from the packing of Stonehole 27 in the sarsen circle dates to 4340-3980 BC (OxA-4902: 5350±80 BP) and may be regarded as residual and indicative of pre-henge activity that is otherwise invisible (Cleal *et al.* 1995, 188-90 and 529).

### **Early and Middle Neolithic (4000-3000 BC)**

From about 4000 BC the quantity and range of archaeological evidence in the Stonehenge increases considerably. The fourth millennium BC, conventionally the early and middle Neolithic (Phases B-D in Whittle's (1993, 35) sequence for the Avebury area), sees the construction of numerous monuments and it is probably at this time that substantial clearings were opened in the wildwood with pasture and secondary woodland developing (Allen 1997, 126-7).

Archaeologically, this period is well represented in the Stonehenge Landscape with many of the main classes of evidence present. Investigations of these have, in one case, been used to define a nationally recognized class of monument, the oval barrow, while the Stonehenge Cursus is widely accepted as the first example of its kind to be identified in modern times and the name applied at that time has since been used to refer to the class as a whole. Piggott (1973b) and Whittle (1977) provide useful general background accounts of the period relevant to the Stonehenge Landscape. Map #G shows the distribution of recorded sites and finds relating to the early and middle Neolithic.

Not all monuments of the period were substantial and upstanding. A large pit 1.9m

across and more than 1.25m deep on Coneybury Hill (known as the Coneybury Anomaly: Illustration #21) has been dated to 4050-3640 BC (OxA-1402: 5050±100 BP) and interpreted as a ceremonial feature associated with feasting on the basis of the rich faunal assemblage and associated ceramics and flintwork (Richards 1990, 43).

Mention should also be made of the Wilsford Shaft excavated in 1960-62 by Edwina Proudfoot and Paul Ashbee as a result of investigating the presumed pond barrow, Wilsford 33a, to the southwest of Stonehenge (Ashbee *et al.* 1989). The chalk-cut shaft was 30m deep and 1.8m wide. The bottom section was waterlogged and preserved organic remains including wooden objects such as broken buckets and pieces of cord. Although conventionally dated to the mid second millennium BC, the series of radiocarbon dates begins at 3650-3100 BC (OxA-1089: 4640±70 BP). The earliest date relates to a section of wooden bucket and is both chronologically and stratigraphically the earliest date obtained. All the other dates from the site fall in good chronological order in relation to their depth within the shaft. The early date was re-run with a similar result and tests were carried out to check for contamination resulting from conservation with negative results (Housley and Hedges in Ashbee *et al.* 1989, 68-9). Bearing in mind the use of antler picks for the digging of the shaft a Neolithic date for its construction and initial use followed by refurbishment and cleaning-out (perhaps including dressing the walls with metal axes?) should not be ruled out. At the very least the site has yielded the best evidence in Britain for a wooden bucket dating to the mid third millennium BC. Further work and additional dating on the assemblage of organic objects has considerable potential. Consideration might also be given to a role for the shaft in relation to a solar cosmological scheme given its position on the axis of the mid-winter sun-set as viewed from Stonehenge.

Other, rather smaller, pits and clusters of pits also of the fourth millennium BC were found on King Barrow Ridge and Vespasian's Ridge during the upgrading of the A303, although details are scant (Richards 1990, 65-66). Bone from the pit on King Barrow Ridge was dated to 3800-3100 BC (OxA-1400: 4740±100 BP). Another small early Neolithic pit was found in 1968 during the laying of an electricity cable west of King Barrow Ridge. Sherds of a single vessel representing a small cup or bowl were found (Cleal and Allen 1994, 60). The

exploration of a dense flint scatter northeast of the enclosure boundary at Robin Hood's Ball revealed a cluster of shallow pits containing pottery, flintwork, and animal bones. Two have been dated to 3800-3100 BC (OxA-1400: 4740±100 BP) and 3650-2900 BC (OxA-1401: 4550±120 BP). Their purpose is unknown, but similar arrangements have been noted at other enclosure sites in southern England including Windmill Hill (Whittle *et al.* 2000, 141-4).

Although early accounts of Neolithic enclosures in southern Britain cite Yarnbury as a possible example (Curwen 1930, 37), this was disproved by the results of Cunnington's excavations in 1932-4 (see Oswald *et al.* 2001, 157). The only certain early-middle Neolithic enclosure in the Stonehenge Landscape is Robin Hood's Ball, although other likely-looking sites which have yielded Neolithic finds, such as Ogbury, deserve further attention.

The enclosure of Robin Hood's Ball exists as a well-preserved earthwork towards the northwest corner of the Stonehenge Landscape (Illustration #22). Small-scale excavations in 1956 confirmed the identification of the earthworks as a causewayed enclosure of fourth millennium date (Thomas 1964; Oswald *et al.* 2001, 157; McOmish *et al.* 2002, 31-5), but no more precise information about the chronology of the site is available. Morphologically, the site has two roughly concentric ditch circuits. The inner circuit is sub-circular, the outer circuit pentagonal in plan with the flat base to the southeast (Oswald *et al.* 2001, 5). The entrance in the inner circuit opens to the southeast. Surface evidence suggests complex patterns of ditch re-cutting and changes to the alignment of individual ditch segments.

Despite the generally high level of aerial reconnaissance in the region, Robin Hood's Ball seems to be a fairly isolated enclosure spatially associated with a relatively discrete cluster of long barrows and oval barrows fitting well with a dispersed pattern of middle Neolithic enclosures across central southern Britain (Oswald *et al.* 2001, 80; Ashbee 1984a, figure 6). This pattern was interpreted by Colin Renfrew (1973a, 549) in terms of emergent chiefdoms with the long barrows representative of scattered local communities whose collective territorial focus was a causewayed enclosure (and *cf.* Ashbee 1978, figure 22).

Barrows in and around the Stonehenge Landscape have been the subject of surveys and investigations since the 18th century, and in some cases represent major contributions to

the classification of such monuments. Several types can be recognized, of which the largest, typically over 50m in length, are the classic long barrows.

At least six long barrows can be recognized in the Stonehenge Landscape, although none have been fully excavated (Illustration #23). Amesbury 42 at the east end of the Stonehenge cursus is recorded by Grinsell as being 80m long, 21m wide, and originally over 1.1m high (1957, 137). Excavations by John Thurnam revealed at least three burials, but details are scant (Thurnam 1868). The excavation of a single section across the eastern ditch, berm, and mound edge in 1983 revealed evidence for at least two phases of construction but no evidence for absolute dating was recovered (Richards 1990, 96-109). A second well-known long barrow is at Long Barrow Crossroads in Winterbourne Stoke. Grinsell records this example as being 73m long by 21m wide and originally over 3m high (Grinsell 1957, 146). There have been no modern excavations here, and the work carried out by John Thurnam in 1863 is inadequate for anything more than a very superficial understanding of the site. What appears to have been a primary burial was represented by the remains of an adult male in flexed position and accompanied by a flint implement. Six probably secondary burials were discovered. Other long barrows include Winterbourne Stoke 71, Milston 1, Figheldean 31, and the destroyed Figheldean 36. Lukis (1864, 155; Grinsell 1957, 137) records what might be a chambered long barrow at West Amesbury that was destroyed prior to the mid 19th century (but see also Bonney 1981).

Whether all of these long barrows belong to the earthen long barrow tradition (Ashbee 1984a) is far from certain given the nature and extent of recorded excavation. Russell (2002, 25-70) proposes the reclassification of some long barrows as structured mounds. In view of the apparent poverty of remains from early excavations that some of the long barrows around Stonehenge fit within a group of chamberless mounds in central southern England typified by South Street, Wiltshire, and others (Ashbee *et al.* 1979).

In 1865 John Thurnam proposed the identification of oval barrows as a distinct class of Neolithic monument on the basis of his excavations at Winterbourne Stoke (Thurnam 1869). Although sometimes regarded as part of the spectrum of long barrow forms, recent work in Sussex (Drewett 1986) and Oxfordshire (Bradley 1992) has endorsed

Thurnam's original proposition and shown the class to be long-lived through the fourth and third millennia BC. Such barrows (also known as "short" long barrows – see also McOmish *et al.* 2002, 21-31 on Salisbury Plain examples) are generally less than 45m long and rather squat in outline with curved side ditches. There are about 10 within the Stonehenge Landscape although the little information about internal structure and date obtained from antiquarian excavation at about half of them suggests that not all belong to the fourth millennium BC and that some may be later (Illustration #24). The monument on Normanton Down excavated by Mrs F de Vatcher in 1959 and published as a long mortuary enclosure may in fact be the remains of another oval barrow; certainly its shape, size, and position are appropriate (Vatcher 1961). A radiocarbon determination from antler in the ditch fill suggests a date of 3550-2900 BC (BM-505: 4510±103 BP). Excavations at the Netheravon Bake oval barrow yielded a date of 3646-3378 BC (OxA-1407: 4760±90 BP) from antler from the base of the phase I ditch (Richards 1990, 259), but further details of this site remain to be published. Immediately south of the Stonehenge Landscape the oval barrow Woodford G2 was fully excavated by Major and Mrs Vatcher in 1963 (Harding and Gingell 1980, 15-22) and perhaps shows what might be expected at some of the examples noted above.

Rather surprisingly, none of the investigated round barrows in the Stonehenge Landscape show conclusive evidence of an early or middle Neolithic construction date, despite the occurrence of a few such monuments elsewhere in southeastern England (Kinnes 1979). A crouched inhumation in a circular grave that was loosely associated with early Neolithic pottery from the fill found in 1932 at Woodhenge, Totterdown, might have been the focus of a round barrow (RCHM 1979, 7); it might equally be a pit grave, a type also distinctive of the period although little studied (Kinnes 1979, 126-7).

The long enclosure tradition found widely across Britain in the fourth millennium BC is represented in the Stonehenge Landscape by the so-called Lesser Cursus. Levelled by ploughing between 1934 and 1954, this monument was originally bounded by a ditch with an internal bank. Sample excavations in 1983 showed that there were at least two main phases to its construction. Phase I comprised a slightly trapezoidal enclosure 200m by 60m. In Phase 2 this early enclosure was remodelled



with a more substantial ditch and an open-ended eastward extension over 200m long (Richards 1990, 72-93). A sample of antler from the Phase I ditch has been dated to 3650-2900 BC (OxA-1404: 4550±120 BP) and, rather inconsistently, antler from the Phase II ditch to 3650-3050 BC (OxA-1405: 4640±100 BP). A detailed survey of the site in 1983 using magnetometry revealed the presence of an irregular oval enclosure c.15m across off-centre near the eastern end. There are also numerous anomalies suggestive of pits within and around the main enclosure (David and Payne 1997, 87-89).

It is often suggested that the Stonehenge Cursus also belongs to the fourth millennium BC, although this has never been established. First recognized by William Stukeley in 1723, the Stonehenge Cursus is nearly 3km long, between 100m and 150m wide, and is defined by a chalk rubble bank and external ditch. It is one of very few cursus monuments in the British Isles that remains standing as a visible earthwork, although part of what can be seen at the western end is a reconstruction based on its appearance prior to being bulldozed in the late 1950s. Four episodes of excavation have taken place at various points around the cursus, the results serving to emphasize its varied form and scale (RCHM 1979, 13-15 and Richards 1990, 93 for summaries). The most recent excavations, in 1983, made two cuttings through the southern ditch but recovered no significant dating evidence (Richards 1990, 95-6). An antler recovered from the floor of the ditch of the southern boundary in 1947 (Stone 1948, 13) has been dated to 2890-2460 BC (OxA-1403: 4100±90 BP) but Richards has plausibly argued that it derives from an intrusive cut into the ditch fills and is thus not primary (1990, 96). Finds from the ditch fill include a sherd of undistinctive pottery, a fragment of bluestone, a piece of sarsen rubber, and a stone maul (Stone 1948, 15). The total excavation of the Winterbourne Stoke 30 bowl barrow in the western terminal of the cursus (now restored as a mound) provides the only substantial view of an area within the interior of the cursus. A few pre-barrow features were noted, but none could be securely dated or certainly associated with the cursus (Christie 1963). The barrow was not securely dated. A substantial assemblage of struck flint recovered from the 1959 excavations includes the remains of *in situ* working at a time when the ditch was freshly dug (including rejoinable flakes); this has

provisionally been dated on technological grounds to the later Neolithic (Saville 1978, 17).

Occupation sites of the early and middle Neolithic are few and interpretation of what is available is difficult. Round-bottomed pottery, a polished flint axe and leaf-arrowheads from below the bank of Durrington Walls suggests that activity in this part of the Avon Valley was extensive, although exactly what kind of activity the finds represent is uncertain (Wainwright and Longworth 1971, 192-3). Three radiocarbon dates on charcoal from this pre-enclosure phase at the site are 3650-3000 BC (GRO-901: 4584±80 BP), 3510-3090 BC (GRO-901a: 4575±50 BP), and 3550-2600 BC (NPL-191: 4400±150 BP).

The incidence of early and middle Neolithic finds sealed below or within later monuments is widespread within the Stonehenge Landscape, although, as with the Durrington Walls material, is very hard to interpret. At Amesbury G39 pottery, flintwork and animal bone includes eleven featured-sherds of Windmill Hill Ware (Ashbee 1980, 18). The sample of ten round barrows in the Stonehenge Landscape west of the Avon excavated by Major and Mrs Vatcher between 1959 and 1961 includes a pit containing large fragments of three Windmill Hill style bowls beneath Amesbury G132 (Illustration #25), and a selection of Windmill Hill ware and part of a carinated bowl from the ditch fills of Winterbourne Stoke G46 (Gingell 1988). Earlier Neolithic pottery was recovered from below all four of the Wilsford cum Lake G51-G54 barrows excavated by Earnest Greenfield in 1958, in the case of G52 amounting to more than 200 sherds (Smith 1991, 34-5). Elsewhere there is equally strong negative evidence. A selection of six round barrows in the Lake Group excavated in 1959 produced no residual early and middle Neolithic material (Grimes 1964); likewise none of the 18 round barrows excavated by Charles Green near Shrewton between 1958 and 1960 (Green and Rollo-Smith 1984); and the same applies to the four round barrows east of the Avon excavated in September 1956 (Ashbee 1984b). This apparent localization of early material broadly east and southeast of Stonehenge needs to be validated, but taken at face value contrasts with the situation around Avebury where early and middle Neolithic finds sealed below later monuments seem to be rather more widespread. It has sometimes been suggested that cultural material underneath later monuments has a special significance because of the imposition of the later monument. This

deserves further investigation, but in the Stonehenge Landscape it is most likely that the Bronze Age round barrows are simply preserving a sample of earlier land surfaces, some of which happen to contain traces of earlier activity; there are plenty of excavated round barrows that reveal no evidence of previous intensive land-use.

Results from the Stonehenge Environs Survey fieldwalking results add a little to the general picture of activity patterns for this period. Ground flint axes are well represented along King Barrow Ridge, especially on the east side of the Ridge (Richards 1990, figure 157). This, together with earlier finds by Laidler and Young (1938) and the incidence of early and middle Neolithic pits and the protected or residual finds in the matrix of later monuments serves to emphasize the importance of King Barrow Ridge in this period. Other concentrations of flintwork of the period were also found in the area southeast of Long Barrow Crossroads, the fields west of Stonehenge, and the area north of the Stonehenge Cursus to the east of Fargo Plantation. In all cases these scatters were characterized by a range of tool types but polished axes were not especially common (Richards 1990, 265).

Stray finds from the Stonehenge Landscape are fairly numerous, but not always typologically date-sensitive to the extent that they can be assigned to this period. Stone and flint polished axes are amongst the most significant and in some cases might indicate the presence of settlements or be related to, important features of the period. A jadite axe probably found during the mid 19th century in "a barrow near Stonehenge" (Campbell Smith 1963, 164 (no. 41)) is one such find. A single sherd of bowl-style early/middle Neolithic pottery from Stonehenge may also be regarded as a part of the overall background noise of activity across the landscape (Cleal *et al.* 1995, 350). That at least some if not all these activities of the fourth millennium BC carried through in some way to the succeeding millennium is amply demonstrated by the inclusion of ancient curated bone items placed in selected locations beside the entranceways to the circular enclosure at Stonehenge itself constructed in the opening century of the third millennium BC, perhaps around 2950 BC (Cleal *et al.* 1995, 529-30).

### Later Neolithic and Metal Using Neolithic (3000 - 2000 BC)

The later Neolithic of the British Isles, broadly the third millennium BC, is characterized archaeologically by the appearance of new forms of monuments (notably henges, stone circles, house structures, and various types of burial site); Peterborough, Grooved Ware and Beaker pottery (mainly Case's Group D (Case 1995)); and distinct types of stonework and flintwork. About 2400 BC copper, gold, and bronze objects begin circulating in the area, most of them imports to the region. The last four centuries of the third millennium BC have been termed the "Metal Using Neolithic" by Needham (1996). It has been suggested that in some parts of Britain there is a hiatus in activity, a shift in settlement patterns, and some evidence of soil exhaustion, scrub growth, and woodland regeneration around the turn of the third millennium BC (Whittle 1978; Smith 1984, 116-7; and see also Davies and Wolski 2001) but at present there is no evidence for this in the Stonehenge Landscape (Allen 1995, 129-133). The later Neolithic of the Stonehenge Landscape spans phases E and F of the Avebury area sequence proposed by Whittle (1993, 35). A general background to the period is provided by Piggott (1973c), Burgess (1980), and Needham (1996). Map #H shows the recorded distribution of sites and finds relating to the third millennium BC.

Overall, the third millennium BC is probably the best-represented phase within the history of the Stonehenge Landscape, at least in terms of the scale and character of the structures and monuments represented. Some existing structures whose origins lay in the fourth millennium BC continued to be visible and played a part in ongoing activity. Others, for example the Lesser Cursus and perhaps Robin Hood's Ball fell out of use, their gradually infilling earthworks trapping archaeological material thereby providing a record of the process of abandonment.

The creation of new monuments in the later Neolithic is amply demonstrated at Stonehenge itself; both the overall sequence and the problems surrounding its robustness have been extensively published (Cleal *et al.* 1995). The main elements that can be assigned to the third millennium BC are as follows (Illustration #26):

**Phase 1**, a circular earthwork monument, constructed around 2950-2900 BC, comprised a ditch with an internal bank defining an area about 90m across. Immediately inside the bank was a ring of 56 equally-spaced holes (the Aubrey Holes) believed to have contained

upright posts. Outside the ditch was a small counterscarpe bank. There were at least three entrances. Deposits of animal bones were placed on the bottom of the ditch in some areas, with particular emphasis on the entrances. An organic dark layer formed over the primary silting of the ditch (Cleal *et al.* 1995, 63). It may be noted that the construction of the Phase 1 enclosure at Stonehenge is broadly contemporary with the construction of the bank and ditch at Avebury (Pitts and Whittle 1992, 205).

**Phase 2**, 2900-2400 BC, the basic structure remained the same, but there is evidence for the deliberate back-filling of parts of the ditch, natural infilling, and some features cut into the fills. The Aubrey Holes survived as partly filled features lacking posts by this stage, but timber settings were constructed in the centre of the monument, at the north-eastern entrance, near the southern entrance, and outside the earthwork boundary to the northeast. Towards the end of the phase, cremation burials were deposited in the Aubrey Holes, the upper ditch, and around the circumference of the monument on and just within the bank (Cleal *et al.* 1995, 115).

**Phase 3i**, broadly 2550-2200 BC, the first stone phase of the monument is built with the erection of a setting of paired bluestones, the plan of which is far from certain, in the Q and R holes roughly in the centre of the space defined by the earlier earthwork. The main entrance to this structure was to the northeast and was marked by additional bluestones set inside the double circuit. It is possible that a large slab of greenish sandstone, the Altar Stone, was the focus of this structure; other stones may have stood within and around it. External to the earthwork enclosure it is likely that at least the first straight length of the Avenue belongs to this phase, as too stone settings around the entrance.

**Phase 3ii-v**, broadly 2400-2000 BC, sees the demolition of the Phase 3i structures and their replacement (perhaps gradual) by an arrangement of four concentric stone settings which from the inside working outwards comprise: the bluestone horseshoe, five sarsen trilithons arranged in a horseshoe, the bluestone circle, and the sarsen circle. This is the stone structure that can be seen in a ruined state today. Modifications were also made to the peripheral arrangement of stones and perhaps the Avenue. The burial of an adult

male with evidence of traumatic pathology suggesting death caused by arrow-shot was found in a grave dug into the ditch of the northwest sector dates to about 2400-2140 BC (Evans 1984; Cleal *et al.* 1995, 533).

The apparent integrity of the phasing of Stonehenge and its associated structures hides a great deal of uncertainty. Only a small proportion of the features has been dated, and some key events have very few associated dates. The distribution of elements over a large area limits the use of horizontal and vertical stratigraphy. The longevity of the sequence at the site inevitably introduces problems of residuality in the disposition of finds and datable material. Especially difficult issues include the relationship between the Phase 1 and Phase 2 features; the form and plan of the Phase 3i structure; the sequence of construction for individual elements of the Phase 3ii-3v settings; the sequence and arrangement of features in the centre of the monument (*cf.* Burl 1997; 2001); the sequence and arrangement of stone settings within and around the northeast entrance (*cf.* Burl 1991; 1994; Pitts 1982); and both the internal phasing of the Avenue construction and the links between these and the development of the stone settings (*cf.* Cleal *et al.* 1995, 533-4).

An analysis of patterning in the deposition of finds relating to Phases 1 and 2 at the site by Pollard and Ruggles (2001) suggests that the early structure of the monument and attendant depositional practices embodied a scheme of radial division, including a symbolic quartering primarily demarcated by solstitial rising and setting points. Through sustained ritual practice, however, the motions of the moon came increasingly to be referenced through deposition, particularly cremations (Pollard and Ruggles 2001, 69; *cf.* Burl 1994, 91).

Stonehenge is often regarded as entirely unique, and in terms of its overall sequence and survival this is probably true. Many of the individual elements represented can, however, be paralleled elsewhere and it remains an open question as to whether there were other structures of similar complexity elsewhere in Britain. The uniqueness of Stonehenge may lie in its survival rather than its construction.

The earthwork elements of Stonehenge inspired Christopher Hawkes to coin the term "henge" in relation to a group of prehistoric sacred places (Kendrick and Hawkes 1932, 83) subsequently defined more closely by Atkinson (1951) and Wainwright (1968). As the range of sites that may be considered henge

monuments has expanded so the utility of the term adequately to embrace the visible variation has been called into question, and in many respects Stonehenge Phase 1 may now be considered atypical and, in formal typological terms, more closely allied to Kinnes' (1979, 63 and 65-69) enclosed cemeteries. It shares many traits with, for example, the Flagstones enclosure, Dorset (Woodward 1988). A survey of henge monuments and related sites by Harding and Lee in the mid 1980s proposed three sub-divisions of the broad family that had by that time become known as henges: henge-enclosures; classic henges; and mini-henges (Harding and Lee 1987). Examples of each are known in the Stonehenge Landscape (Illustration #27).

Henge-enclosures are large sub-circular enclosures, usually beside rivers and in valley-bottom or valley-side locations. Durrington Walls is one of the four known prime examples, all of which lie within the catchment of the Hampshire Avon (the others are at Mount Pleasant, Knowlton, and Marden). Durrington Walls was extensively excavated in 1966-68 when the main A345 road through the site was realigned. This work revealed the presence of two multi-phase circular timber structures, a midden, and internal boundaries of various sorts (Wainwright and Longworth 1971). Parts of the site were well-preserved below colluvial deposits. Geophysical surveys suggest that other similar structures exist within the site (David and Payne 1997, 91-4). A great deal of Grooved Ware pottery was found during the 1966-68 excavations while the radiocarbon dates suggest that the main earthwork was constructed around 2600 BC with the remodelling of the timber structures continuing down to around 2100 BC. Much debate has surrounded the interpretation of the timber structures, with some authorities seeing them as roofed or part-roofed buildings and others as formal arrangements of freestanding posts (Piggott 1940; Musson in Wainwright and Longworth 1971, 362-77; Parker Pearson 1993, figure 58; Gibson 1998a, 97-121). Likewise, the use and role of the site has been hotly contested with the excavator favouring an essentially residential / habitational interpretation (Wainwright 1975; 1977) while others interpret the distribution of finds as indicating essentially ritual activities (Richards and Thomas 1984, 214-5). However, such binary distinctions between domestic and ritual activity are not especially helpful in the prehistoric context; at such a large site which has evidence of diversity in the scale and

nature of the structures represented more integrative interpretations deserve further exploration.

In addition to Stonehenge, two classic henges have been identified in the Stonehenge Landscape: Coneybury and Woodhenge. Both are class I henges in the typology expanded by Atkinson (1951, 82 following Piggott and Piggott 1939). Coneybury lies on high ground west of the Avon. For many years regarded as a ploughed-out round barrow, aerial photography in the 1950s called this view into question and its status was confirmed through surveys and a carefully designed sample-excavation in 1980 as part of the Stonehenge Environs Survey (Richards 1990, 123-58). Grooved Ware pottery was found in the primary ditch fill and internal features while Beaker pottery was common in secondary contexts. The central area of the monument was probably occupied by a timber building (Pollard 1995b, 124). Radiocarbon dates focus on the early third millennium BC and thus suggest contemporaneity with Stonehenge phases 1 and 2.

Woodhenge also occupies high ground on the west side of the Avon, immediately south of, and partly intervisible with, Durrington Walls. Identified through aerial photography in December 1925, the interior and cuttings through the boundary earthwork were excavated by Captain and Mrs Cunnington in 1926-28 (Cunnington 1929). A new section through the bank and ditch was cut in 1970 (Evans and Wainwright 1979). The site has a broad ditch and narrow external bank with a single entrance opening to the northeast. Like Stonehenge and Coneybury it is also a Class I henge (Atkinson 1950, 94). The interior is occupied by six oval concentric rings of postholes generally believed to be the foundations of a large timber structure although as at Durrington Walls there is considerable debate about how it should be reconstructed (Pollard 1998a). A grave containing the burial of a child was found near the centre of the site and two sockets for stones were located on the southeast side. Grooved Ware was found in many of the features and the ditch fill. Radiocarbon dates suggest the construction and use of the site in the later third millennium BC; contemporary with Stonehenge Phase 3i-v and the use of Durrington Walls. Analysis of the distribution of finds within the site suggests spatial patterning to the social use of space and considerable similarity to the patterns found in other comparable structures (Pollard 1995a).

A third possible Class I classic henge has been defined by geophysical survey at

Winterbourne Stoke (David and Payne 1997, figure 13A). Like Coneybury this site has for many years been listed as a round barrow (Winterbourne Stoke 74). The single entrance opens to east-northeast; no internal features have been detected.

Mini-henges (also known as hengi-form monuments) are small versions of classic henges typically less than 10m across. They are often found in close association with other later Neolithic monuments such as classic henges and cursus monuments. The best example in the Stonehenge Landscape is at Fargo Plantation some 100m south of the Stonehenge Cursus. Excavated in 1938 (Stone 1939) the structure comprises a slightly oval ditch broken by a pair of opposing entrances. The internal space measures about 4m by 6m; in the centre was a pit containing an inhumation and two cremations. Beaker pottery was associated with the inhumation. Other examples probably await discovery and there are a few tantalizing hints of possible examples on geophysical surveys and plots of the cropmarks represented on aerial photographs.

Closely associated with mini-henges and typically of late Neolithic date are causewayed barrows, segmented ring ditches, and pit circles of various sorts. A very good example of a segmented ring ditch was recorded by aerial photography and geophysical survey near the Winterbourne Stoke Crossroads, coincident with barrow Winterbourne Stoke 72 (RCHM 1979, 3; David 1997, figure 13B), another has been identified at Amesbury (RCHM 1979, 2 (no. 146); Harding and Lee 1987, 284). Excavations at Butterfield Down, Amesbury, part-sampled another possible example about 10m in diameter (Rawlings and Fitzpatrick 1996, 10 and 37).

A number of causewayed barrows are known through excavation in the Stonehenge Landscape (Illustration #28). Wilsford cum Lake barrow G51, excavated in 1958, shows several phases of construction on a site extensively used in middle Neolithic and later times to judge from the amount of residual material. The first phase comprises a segmented ring ditch dug to provide material for a small mound to cover an oblong grave containing the skeleton of a young adult associated with Beaker pottery (Smith 1991, 13-18). Amesbury G51 immediately south of the Stonehenge Cursus in the Cursus Group was also a barrow surrounded by a segmented ring ditch (Ashbee 1976). The central primary burial and a series of secondary burials in the ditch and mound were all accompanied by

Beaker pottery. The head of one of the burials in the central grave had been trephinated. Wood from a mortuary house containing the primary burial yielded a radiocarbon date of 2310-1950 BC (BM-287: 3738±55 BP). Beaker pottery was also associated with the primary grave in the two-phase bowl barrow Shrewton 24 (Green and Rollo-Smith 1984, 285-6). The first phase of the mound was surrounded by a segmented ditch, the whole later being covered by a much larger mound with a continuous surrounding ditch.

Round barrows were a common kind of burial monument during the third millennium BC, building on earlier traditions (Kinnes 1979), but not all can be distinguished by the presence of segmented or causewayed perimeter quarry ditches. Without associated datable material or absolute dates from appropriate deposits or construction material it is impossible to separate them from the ubiquitous second millennium BC examples. Within the Stonehenge Landscape as a whole there are c. 639 round barrows and 308 ring ditches, an unknown proportion of which (?10-15%) date to the third millennium BC.

In addition to the excavated barrows with segmented quarry ditches already noted, all of which are of third millennium BC date, several other excavated round barrows appear to be of the same period. At Amesbury G71 the first phase of a multi-phase barrow comprised a continuous ring-ditch about 7m in diameter, within which was a sub-circular ring of stakes surrounding a central grave pit that was covered by a low barrow. This putatively late Neolithic barrow was later covered by a larger mound (Phase II) containing stake circles and enclosed within a ring-ditch about 23m in diameter. The central grave pit of the Phase II monument cut into the Phase I grave pit, disturbing the earlier burial. A radiocarbon date of 2900-2100 BC (3960±110; NPL-77) was obtained from charcoal in the grave of the Phase II monument (Christie 1967, 339-43). At Durrington Down W57 excavations in 1983 as part of the Stonehenge Environs Project revealed a ditchless bowl barrow with a flint cairn over an oval grave-pit containing the crouched inhumation of a juvenile accompanied by a large cattle lumbar vertebra and a fragment of antler, and the cremated remains of a second juvenile (Richards 1990, 171-84). A radiocarbon determination on a sample of bone from the inhumation returned a date of 2500-1750 BC (3700±100; OxA-1398).

Round barrows containing burials accompanied by Beaker pottery and associated artefacts span the period when metal objects begin to circulate. At least 17 excavated examples are known in the Stonehenge Landscape, some only from antiquarian records (see Case 1995, figure 1 for a recent map of sites). Three of the 18 barrows examined by Charles Smith near Shrewton in 1958 included Beaker pottery: Shrewton G5a, 5e and 5k (Green and Rollo-Smith 1984). Of these, Shrewton 5K is especially important because the grave also contained a small copper dagger with remains of an organic hilt adhering to the tang and a bone pommel. Typologically it is a Roundway style dagger and may be assigned to Burgess's metallurgical Stage II within his Mount Pleasant Phase (1980, 71-8). Southwest of Stonehenge, three of the four barrows excavated in 1958 by Ernest Greenfield at Wilsford cum Lake, G51, G52 and G54 contained burials accompanied by Beaker pottery (Smith 1991). G51 has already been discussed because it has a causewayed ditch. G54 was a ditchless bowl barrow and is important because the primary grave (which was found to be heavily disturbed and may contain more than one phase of burial: Illustration #29) contained at least three Beaker pots, six barbed and tanged arrowheads, a bronze dagger of Gerloff's Type Butterwick (1975, 42), and a stone battle axe of Roe's Calais Wold group of spotted dolerite (Group XIII rock) from the Preseli Hills of Pembrokeshire (Smith 1991, 27-9).

Other burials accompanied by Beaker pottery under round barrows include: Amesbury G51, G54 (Annable and Simpson 1964, 39); Durrington G36 and G67 (Annable and Simpson 1964, 39-40); Wilsford G1, G2b, and G62 (Annable and Simpson 1964, 40 and 43); Winterbourne Stoke G10, G43, and G54 (Annable and Simpson 1964, 38 and 40; Ozanne 1972).

Oval barrows were considered in the discussion of fourth millennium BC monuments but given that some are undated and several unexcavated it is probable that some at least of the ten examples noted above belong to the third millennium BC. Wilsford 34, excavated by Thurnam in 1865-6, is interesting in this connection as he found five contracted burials, one accompanied by a Beaker pot (Cunnington 1914, 405-6). Excavated examples elsewhere in southern England suggest that single inhumations and multi-phase construction should be expected (Drewett 1986; Bradley 1992).

Flat graves containing inhumation burials associated with later Neolithic or Beaker pottery are well represented in the Stonehenge Landscape. These include examples within monuments such as Stonehenge (Evans 1984), Woodhenge (Cunnington 1929, 52), and Durrington Walls (Wainwright and Longworth 1971, 4). Seemingly isolated inhumation burials in flat graves or pit graves of the same period including those near Durrington Walls (RCHM 1979, 7), at Larkhill Camp (Shortt 1946), and Totterdown Clump (Wainwright and Longworth 1971, 5). It may be noted, however, that many of these last-mentioned sites were chance discoveries and were mainly recorded with little attention to establishing context or associations. The re-investigation of some sites might yield valuable information. Some other undated flat graves may also be related to this period. The great potential of the burial record from contexts beyond the obvious round barrows and barrow cemeteries was emphasized in April 2002 when an exceptionally rich grave was found on land being developed for new housing at Amesbury (WA 2002). Dubbed the "Amesbury Archer", this single grave contained the inhumation of an adult male together with nearly 100 grave goods including two stone wrist-guards, three copper knives, a pair of gold earrings or tress-rings, five Beaker pots, and many other stone, bone, and flint objects.

Cremation burials of the third millennium BC are also well represented, and include the group of about 52 deposits / burials from Stonehenge Phases 1 and 2 (Cleal *et al.* 1995, 451), the Durrington Down W57 barrow (Richards 1990, 176), and a pit-grave with a cremation and three sherds of Grooved Ware in Circle 2 south of Woodhenge (Wainwright and Longworth 1971, 3).

Enclosures of many forms are known to date to the third millennium BC. In addition to the henges already mentioned in this section, and the possibility that the Stonehenge Cursus also dates to the later Neolithic as discussed in the previous section, there are two other sites in the Stonehenge Landscape that deserve attention. First is the so-called "Palisade Ditch" or "Gate Ditch" immediately west and north of Stonehenge, known through relatively small-scale excavations in 1953, 1967, and 1978 (Cleal *et al.* 1995, 155-61) and traced through aerial photography and geophysical survey for a distance of over 1km (David and Payne 1997, 87). Each of the excavated sections differs in detail, but most show a V-profile ditch cut to support upright timber posts which can be interpreted as a palisade or stockade. Dating is

uncertain, but there is late Bronze Age pottery from the upper fills and in the 1967 cutting it can be shown that the palisade pre-dates a crouched inhumation burial dated to the mid first millennium BC (Cleal *et al.* 1997, 157). When this feature was excavated there was little comparable known to provide a wider context, but since the later 1970s a number of very large later Neolithic palisaded enclosures have been discovered and sampled (Gibson 1998b), including a notable group of such monuments in the valley of the River Kennet south of Avebury (Whittle 1997b, 53-138). A third millennium BC date is consistent with the evidence from the Stonehenge Palisade Ditch although whether it should be seen as a full enclosure or simply a linear boundary remains to be determined. Whichever, its impact on the appearance of Stonehenge during Phases 3i-3v of its existence must have been considerable.

A second possible enclosure, just as poorly understood as the Stonehenge Palisade Ditch, is the so-called North Kite. This lies south of Stonehenge on the eastern side of the Till / Avon interfluvium. The site was recognized by Colt Hoare (1812, map op. 170) and recorded from the air by Crawford and Keiller (1928, 254) as a large three-sided earthwork enclosure of about 123 ha, roughly trapezoidal in plan, which they regarded as being Romano-British in date. Since the 1920s the North Kite has since been badly damaged by ploughing and lies amid a series of later prehistoric boundaries and field systems that rather confuse attempts to understand the earlier features. Two early Bronze Age barrows in the Lake Group stratigraphically overlie the southwestern boundary earthworks of the North Kite (RCHM 1979, 26), while small-scale excavations undertaken in 1958 suggested a date in the later third or early second millennium BC and confirmed the absence of a fourth side (Annable 1959, 229). Further excavations in 1983 as part of the Stonehenge Environs Project yielded Peterborough and Beaker pottery from the buried soil below the bank broadly confirming the previously suggested date (Richards 1990, 184-92). The scale of the enclosure is impressive: the axial length is at least 400m (north-south) by 150m at the narrow northern end expanding to 300m wide at the southern end. An unexcavated ring ditch (Wilsford cum Lake 93) lies roughly in the centre of the open southern end. The only comparable excavated monument is the early fourth millennium BC three-sided trapezoidal ceremonial structure at Godmanchester, Cambridgeshire, with an axial

length of 336m and a maximum width of 228m (McAvoy 2000).

Flint mines were recorded east of the Stonehenge Inn in 1952 (Illustration #30). Three were shallow open-cast scoops about 0.6m deep while three others were rather deeper pit-shafts that included low galleries and undercutting to optimise the amount of flint extracted (Booth and Stone 1952; Wainwright and Longworth 1971, 6). These finds have not been followed up but are amongst just three confirmed mining sites in Wiltshire (Barber *et al.* 1999).

Pits and shafts, also perhaps of ceremonial or ritual significance, continue earlier traditions through into the third millennium BC. On King Barrow Ridge there is the so-called "Plaque Pit" because it included in its fill two square chalk plaques bearing incised decoration (Illustration #31). The pit was discovered and excavated in 1969 during the widening of the A303 (Vatcher 1969; Harding 1988; Cleal and Allen 1994). Sherds of Grooved Ware, an antler pick, and animal bones were also found in the pit. Two radiocarbon dates place the material in the early third millennium BC. These are amongst the earliest dates for Grooved Ware in southern Britain and illustrate the potential of the evidence from the Stonehenge Landscape to help illuminate the appearance of this highly distinctive ceramic tradition (*cf.* Cleal *et al.* 1995, 481). Two seemingly isolated postholes about 30m apart were also found on King Barrow Ridge north of the Plaque Pit during the monitoring of a cable-trench in 1968 (RCHM 1979, 33). One of these, Feature A, contained Grooved Ware pottery while the other was of early-middle Neolithic date (Cleal and Allen 1994, 60-2).

Excavations at Butterfield Down, Amesbury, revealed a number of pits that can be assigned to the late Neolithic on the basis of pottery and worked flint. Pit 2 contained an extremely large Beaker pot, one of the largest known in southern England, and because of its completeness considered to be in a non-domestic context (Rawlings and Fitzpatrick 1996, 37). A decorated chalk plaque of the same date was found residual in a later context (Rawlings and Fitzpatrick 1996, 22-23)

One of the two chalk plaques from the Plaque Pit carries an incised image in the form of an opposing Greek key pattern set within a tram-line frame; the other has a cross-hatched design within a tram-line frame (Harding 1988). The example from Butterfield Down also has a tram-line frame, the interior being filled with

parallel lines (Rawlings and Fitzpatrick 1996, 23) All three plaques from the area carry images that compare with the decoration found on Grooved Ware and Beaker pottery and also as a component of rock art found on natural rock surfaces, earthfast boulders, and components of stone-built monuments such as cairns, cists, standing stones, and stone circles.

This tradition is also represented in the Stonehenge Landscape by the rock art on the structural components of Stonehenge itself (Illustration #32). These have been fully described by Walker and Lawson (in Cleal *et al.* 1995, 30-33). Eleven stones are currently believed to carry prehistoric motifs: stones 3, 4, 5, 9b, 23, 29, 30, and 120 in the sarsen circle and 53, 55a, and 57 in the sarsen trilithon horseshoe. Unhafted axe blades represented blade-up are the most common motif, although the dagger, knife, torso, and quadrilateral motifs have prompted the most discussion (*cf.* Burl 1997; Scarre 1997; and see Loveday 1999). Overall, this is the largest group of rock art panels currently known in southern England, but it is by no means certain that all the motifs and panels have yet been recorded at the site. At least one of the pieces of carved chalk from the site is also decorated (Cleal *et al.* 1995, figure 222). Rock art is also represented on the east wall of the central shaft-grave below the Shrewton G5k barrow. This small panel comprises groups of intercutting straight lines incised into the chalk (Green and Rollo-Smith 1984, figure 12).

A standing stone, known as the Cuckoo Stone, is recorded on early maps and antiquarian accounts although it now lies recumbent (Colt Hoare 1812, plan opp. 170; Cunnington 1929, 11). The stone is a block of sarsen 2.1m long by 1.5m by 0.6m. Its position in line with the axis of the cursus makes the definition and investigation of this site highly desirable. It is one of very few recorded single standing stones in central southern England.

Spreads of features and occupation material resulting from chance finds, recorded observations of construction works and small-scale excavations play a major part in understanding the archaeology of the third millennium BC and serve to illustrate the importance of continuing such work. A water-pipe trench cutting through Durrington Walls in 1950-1 revealed the existence of features outside the henge-enclosure which were followed up by excavations in 1951-2 (Stone *et al.* 1954). These revealed a double line of postholes over a distance of nearly 21m with other postholes at right angles suggestive of the

remains of a building or structure predating the construction of the bank of Durrington Walls. Occupation debris accumulated around the posts and sealed the primary weathering of the adjacent bank. Further south, investigations connected with the realignment of the A345 through Durrington Walls revealed the plan of one late Neolithic post-built structure and associated pits (Structure A) and a ditch (Structure B) also dated to the later Neolithic (Wainwright and Longworth 1971, 44-7). To the southwest, excavations in advance of tree-planting in 1970 revealed evidence for Neolithic settlement comprising four pits and a shallow ditch all associated with Grooved Ware pottery (Wainwright 1971, 78-82). Further south still, the Woodlands pit group was found in the garden of a house called Woodlands in Countess Road in 1941 and 1947 (Stone and Young 1948; Stone 1949). There were four pits in all, each oval in plan and rather shallow. They contained Grooved Ware pottery, part of a group VII stone axe from North Wales and a wide range of worked flint, worked stone, animal remains, fish remains, marine shells, and carbonized hazel-nut shells. The pottery provides the site-type name for one of the four recognized sub-styles of Grooved Ware (see Longworth in Wainwright and Longworth 1971, 238). All these features form part of what must be considered as a very extensive spread of third millennium BC activity extending from King Barrow Ridge eastwards to the Avon, especially focusing on the higher ground south of Durrington Walls along the east side of the Avon Valley (Illustration #33). This area has been labelled the Durrington Zone by Richards (1990, 269-70).

Rather similar is the collection of material from Ratfyn, east of the Avon, found in 1920 (Stone 1935; Wainwright and Longworth 1971, 5-6). A ditch (undated) and pits were the main features represented. Finds included human skeletons, Grooved Ware, an axe-hammer, worked flints, animal bones and a large scallop shell suggesting links with the coast. Further south is the site of Butterfield Down which also provides abundant evidence for activity in the later third and early second millennium BC (Lawson 1993; Rawlings and Fitzpatrick 1996, 10 and 37-8).

Scatters of third millennium BC pottery and artefacts are fairly numerous through central part of the Stonehenge Landscape. The area around Durrington Walls is especially rich in findspots of Grooved Ware and Beaker pottery as residual finds in later contexts particularly around the north, west, and south sides (*cf.*



Wainwright and Longworth 1971, 3-6; RCHM 1979, 22-23). These finds serve to confirm the significance of this area and the high intensity of activity here throughout the third millennium BC.

Six pits containing Beaker pottery were excavated at Crescent Copse near Shrewton in 1997 (Heaton and Cleal 2000) but nothing is known of their wider context. The same applies to a group of three pits found in 1940 during military digging on Knighton Down, Durrington.

The Stonehenge Environs Survey revealed several more or less discrete scatters of datable material. Pottery scatters are the most distinctive. Peterborough Ware first appears during the middle Neolithic (around 3500 BC) but is predominantly an early third millennium BC tradition (Gibson and Kinnes 1997). Within the Stonehenge Landscape no Peterborough Ware has been recovered from pits, only occurring as surface finds, in buried soils (see below) or within amorphous subsoil hollows. Surface scatters have been recorded on King Barrow Ridge, Wilsford Down, Fargo Wood / Packway, and Stonehenge Down (Richards 1990, 267). Similar scatters with Grooved Ware are far less common, and almost exclusively in the eastern part of the Stonehenge Landscape. The only exceptions are around Stonehenge and on Wilsford Down (Richards 1990, 270). Beaker pottery was found thinly scattered throughout the surface collections with a slight concentration on Wilsford Down (Richards 1990, 271; Cleal *et al.* 1995, figures 78 and 225). What these scatters represent is not known, and may in some cases simply be background noise representing the extensive off-site dimensions of activity that is otherwise locally intensive. Some of the scatters coincide, for example around Wilsford Down, and this has led them to be interpreted as significant places of some kind repeatedly visited over a long period of time (Cleal *et al.* 1995, 488).

Collections of worked flint from field survey are less diagnostic than pottery, but again provide evidence for the differential concentration of activity across the landscape. Two late Neolithic flint scatters were investigated during the Stonehenge Environs Survey. One, at King Barrow Ridge, revealed pits and stakeholes in four of the twelve 5m by 5m excavated trenches. Pottery and worked flint was mainly of Peterborough and Grooved Ware affinity. Interpretation is difficult, but is seen in terms of occupation and domestic activity (Richards 1990, 109-123). The second area was on Wilsford Down. Here only one feature was recognized in the sixteen 5m by 5m

trenches excavated. Activity here was mainly seen in terms of flint working with minimal domestic occupation (Richards 1990, 158-171). Together, these two investigations illustrate the diversity of activity represented by surface scatters and at the same time illustrate the potential for further investigation and the systematic characterization or "fingerprinting" of assemblages collected from the ploughzone.

Perhaps the most important collections are those preserved beneath the earthworks and mounds of later monuments, especially round barrows. These illustrate great potential for future work, although locating suitable places to target investigation is always going to be difficult. Woodhenge Circle 2 (Durrington 68: Illustration #34) preserved a setting of postholes that has been reconstructed as the remains of a late Neolithic structure, possibly a house (Cunnington 1929, 45 and plate 39; Pollard 1995b), fairly typical of others around the country (Darvill 1996, 107 and figure 6.8).

Amesbury G39 and other barrows in King Barrow Ridge incorporated much Peterborough Ware, Grooved Ware and Beaker pottery in the matrix of the mound (Cleal and Allen 1994, 62-5 and 70); Amesbury 133 (a twin bell barrow) sealed a large hollow containing Peterborough pottery and the remains of an antler and Grooved Ware was recovered from the buried soil (RCHM 1979, 4); excavations in the Lake Wood group revealed Peterborough Ware and Beaker pottery within and under the mounds G36f, G37, G38, and 39 (Grimes 1964); Amesbury G133 yielded a small but diverse assemblage of pre-barrow ceramics including Grooved Ware and Beaker pottery (Gingell 1988, 39); Beaker pottery at Winterbourne Stoke G39 and G47 (Gingell 1988, 54); but the largest group is from G51-54 excavated by Greenfield in 1958 where 144 sherds of Peterborough Ware, 49 sherds of Grooved Ware and 5 sherds of Beaker pottery were found in pre-barrow contexts (Smith 1991, 34-8); Amesbury G61 also yielded a range of Beaker pottery (Ashbee 1984b, 76-9).

The potential for finding late Neolithic activity on the lower ground in the main river valleys is hard to assess because opportunities are few. Mention may, however, be made of the assemblage of late Neolithic flintwork recovered during watching briefs on pipeline developments near Netheravon on the Avon Valley (McKinley 1999, 30), and the extensive evidence for late Neolithic occupation, including a possible house structure, at Downton just

outside the Stonehenge Landscape south of Salisbury (Rahtz and ApSimon 1962).

Overall, evidence of sectoring within the landscape can be glimpsed even if it is not fully understood (Richards 1984, 181; Richards 1990, 270). Thorpe and Richards (1984) note the almost mutually exclusive distribution of associations between Beaker pottery and Peterborough Ware as against Beaker pottery and Grooved Ware (Thorpe and Richards 1984, figure 6.3). This they attribute to the way that the users of Beaker pottery consciously sought to acknowledge and re-use earlier centres of power in the landscape. As a result of the Stonehenge Environs Survey it is possible to add further detail. The Durrington Zone along the east side of the Avon is perhaps to be associated with residential and domestic areas, Wilsford Down and the northeastern part of Durrington Down may be flint-working areas, while the central area focused on Stonehenge and the Cursus may be considered sacred or ceremonial areas. Darvill (1997, 182-89) has suggested that such divisions may be fitted with a quartering of the landscape based on a simple cosmological scheme grounded in a four-fold subdivision of space structured around the movements of the sun (and *cf.* Pollard and Ruggles 2001 for a similar pattern within Stonehenge itself). Parker Pearson and Ramillisonina (1998) prefer a slightly different scheme in which the space is structured and conceived in terms of a domain of the ancestors centred on Stonehenge and a domain of the living centred on Durrington Walls. During the later third millennium BC the River Avon acts as conduit for the transformation from life to death with the Stonehenge Avenue providing a route for ancestral initiates to move from the River Avon to the circle of the ancestors (Stonehenge). Oppositions between life and death are expressed in the deposition of ceramics, the range of material culture represented, and the metaphorical use of timber structures in the domain of the living but stone in the domain of the ancestors.

The physical subdivision of space during the third millennium BC is fairly well represented by several finds. Evidence of a fenceline in the form of a line of postholes was sealed below Shrewton G23 (Green and Rollo-Smith 1984, 281-85). A group of five postholes on a NNW - SSE alignment were found below the Woodhenge Circle 1 (Durrington 67) and may be interpreted as a possible fence (Cunnington 1929, plate 39; RCHM 1979, 23). A similar line of six postholes was found on the northern edge of the northern bank at

Durrington Walls within the stripped road corridor although their exact date, their relationship to the henge bank, and continuation to the northwest and southeast is a matter requiring further research (Wainwright and Longworth 1971, 15-16). All of these glimpses of what appear to be fragments of rather larger features suggest that by about 2000 BC parts at least of the Stonehenge Landscape were being formally divided up through the creation of physical boundaries.

Some of these land divisions may be connected with an expansion of arable cultivation represented in the fill sequences of a number of ditches. At the Amesbury 42 long barrow changes in the mollusca populations and soil matrix suggests the onset of cultivation in levels associated with the presence of Beaker pottery (Entwistle in Richards 1990, 108). Below the neighbouring Amesbury G70 and G71 barrows there is evidence for pre-barrow cultivation in the form of rip-ard marks cutting into the chalk bedrock surface (Christie 1967, 347). The importance of the buried ground surfaces preserved below round barrows of the second millennium BC can hardly be underestimated. Collectively, the Bronze Age round barrows in the Stonehenge Landscape probably preserve the largest sample of buried late Neolithic ground surface in such a small area anywhere in England.

Stray finds broadly datable to the third millennium BC have been found widely across the Stonehenge Landscape. These include 15 flint and stone axes, of which at least two of the stone examples are of Cornish origin and three of the flint examples are listed on the GIS database as "roughouts". Rather surprising in view of the presence of early metalwork in graves is the apparent absence of early styles of copper or bronze axe as stray finds from the surrounding landscape.

## Early Bronze Age (2000-1500 BC)

From around the turn of the second millennium BC the styles of pottery, flintwork, and metalwork change fairly markedly in southern England, as too the form and use of funerary monuments and settlement sites. The circulation of Beaker pottery is over by about 1800 BC (Kinnes *et al.* 1991; Case 1995), its place in funerary contexts being overtaken by collared urns, food vessels, bi-conical urns and early forms of Deverel-Rimbury styles urns including globular urns. Metalwork

characteristically belongs to Burgess's industrial Stages V-VII within his Overton and Bedd Branwen periods (1980, 80-131), Needham's Period 3 and 4 (1996, 130-33). Map #1 shows the distribution of recorded sites and finds of the early second millennium BC.

The early second millennium BC is synonymous with currency of the widely accepted Wessex Culture proposed originally by Stuart Piggott (1938; and *cf.* Piggott 1973d) to embrace the material culture of a series of richly furnished graves found widely across the chalklands of southern England and extending northwards into the upper Thames basin and the Cotswolds. Originally seen as the result of an incursion by a dominant aristocracy from Brittany, the sequence, relationships and distribution have been elaborated and reviewed by ApSimon (1954), Coles and Taylor (1971), Gerloff (1975), and Burgess (1980, 98-111) amongst others. Since the 1970s, increasing emphasis has been placed on the essentially indigenous character of the main body of archaeological material for the period with the proposal that the rather exceptional well-furnished burials "were the graves of the rich and powerful in each chiefdom" (Burgess 1980, 99).

Of the 100 Wessex Culture Graves listed by Piggott (1938, 102-106), 35 lie within the Stonehenge Landscape emphasizing something of the significance of the area.

The single most richly furnished and best-known Wessex Culture burial is that from Bush Barrow on Normanton Down to the southwest of Stonehenge (Illustration #35). This barrow was investigated by William Cunnington and Richard Colt Hoare in September 1808 to reveal the burial of an adult male set north-south on the floor of the barrow (Colt Hoare 1812, 202-4). Grave goods with this burial include: a bronze axe, two very large bronze daggers (one with gold nails in the haft), two quadrangular gold plates, one gold scabbard-mounting or belt-hook, head and bone inlay of a sceptre, and other fragments of bronze and wood (Piggott 1938, 105; Ashbee 1960, 76-8; Annable and Simpson 1964, 45-6; Burgess 1980, 101). The burial itself appears to have been re-buried at the site, and it remains far from certain that the burial examined was in fact the primary burial. The grave goods are widely regarded as representative of the early phase of the Wessex Culture (Wessex I), but absolute dates for any graves within the tradition are extremely sparse and it has long been held as a priority to improve this situation.

Within the Stonehenge Landscape the only dated Wessex Culture grave is the cremation burial accompanied by a jet button and jet and amber beads from Amesbury G39 on the western slope of King Barrow Ridge. On typological grounds this would be assigned to the later stage of the Wessex Culture (Wessex II), but has a superficially rather early date of 2300-1650 BC (HAR-1237: 3620±90 BP) from oak charcoal from the area of burning in the centre of the barrow (Ashbee 1980b, 32; and see Ashbee 1986, 84-5 for general comment on this and other available dates and Coles and Taylor 1971 for a minimal view on the duration of the Wessex Culture).

The dating of the rich graves might most usefully be considered in the context of establishing the sequence and date of all the round barrows in the Stonehenge Landscape. Although around 40 richly furnished graves are now known, they represent just 6% of the 670 or so known round barrows within the Stonehenge Landscape; only 4% of such monuments if the 309 ring ditches are considered as the remains of round barrows and also taken into account. Accepting that some round barrows pre-date the second millennium BC, the sheer number of remaining barrows that can be attributed to the five centuries between 2000 BC and 1500 BC is impressive and may be estimated at a minimum of about 800 monuments. Since work of William Stukeley in the 18th century round barrows have been classified on morphological grounds as bowl barrows (the most long-lived form and including the Neolithic examples) together with a series of so-called fancy barrows comprising: bell barrows, disc barrows, saucer barrows, and pond barrows (*cf.* Thurnam 1868, plate xi (based on Stukeley); Grinsell 1936, 14-25; Ashbee 1960, 24-6). In general, barrows that survive well or which were recorded by fieldworkers who were able to observe them prior to their more recent damage can be classified according to this system; however, many others remain unclassifiable with the result that it is now impossible to provide more than an impressionistic analysis of the main types and classes represented. Table 2 provides a breakdown of all recorded round barrows by type based on the information recorded on the English Heritage GIS for the Stonehenge Landscape (see McOmish *et al.* 2002, 33-50 for a discussion of the distribution and typology of round barrows within the SPTA).

Various doubts have also been cast on the value of such typological analysis and since the mid 1990s considerable attention has been given to the study of landscape situation, visibility, position, and relationships (e.g. Field 1998). Independently, Woodward and Woodward (1996) and Darvill (1997, 194) recognized a concentric patterning to the distribution of round barrows around Stonehenge and suggested that this might somehow reflect belief systems and the physical representation of cosmological order. A rather different view was taken by Fleming (1971). He saw broad groupings of barrows as cemetery areas visited by pastoralist communities living within seasonally defined territories.

Prominent amongst the distribution of round barrows in the central part of the Stonehenge Landscape is a series of barrow cemeteries or groups (Ashbee 1960, figure 6). The Stonehenge Barrow Groups have been reviewed by Grinsell who described eight of them in the immediate vicinity of Stonehenge in some detail (Grinsell nd). Further groups can be identified within the wider Stonehenge Landscape to give about fifteen in all:

- Cursus Group
- Lesser Cursus Group
- Winterborne Stoke Group
- New King Barrows
- Old King Barrows
- Normanton Down Group
- Lake Group
- Wilsford Group
- Lake Down Group
- Rollestone Barrows
- Durrington Down Group
- Countess Road / Woodhenge Group
- Silk Hill Group
- Milston Down West Group
- Earl's Farm Down Group

Several different styles of round barrow cemetery are represented including linear, nucleated, and dispersed examples. Most are focused around an early barrow, usually a long barrow, oval barrow, or large bell barrow that might be considered a "founder's barrow". Richards (1990, 273) notes that many of the cemeteries around Stonehenge are positioned on the crests of low ridges, positions in which the mounds of the more substantial barrows are silhouetted against the skyline. Interest in the visibility of barrows within the landscape is considered in general terms by Field (1998, 315-6), and in detail for the Stonehenge area

by Peters (2000). Peters defines two main kinds of barrow mound – conspicuous and inconspicuous – the former being mainly built in the early Bronze Age on ridges and high ground (2000, 355).

None of the cemeteries have been completely excavated, nor have any of the large ones been subject to detailed geophysical survey. A small group of barrows within the Stonehenge triangle has, however, been surveyed using magnetometry with good results that emphasize the great diversity of barrow forms even within the seven barrows represented (David and Payne 1997, 83-7: Illustration #36).

Available records suggest that about 40% of known round barrows have been excavated to some degree, although the vast majority of these took place during the 19th century AD with the result that rather little is known about what was found. In many cases re-excavation has proved successful. Most of those studied have been upstanding mounds. Very little work has been done with the ring-ditches in the area; none have been fully excavated although transects were cut through previously unrecorded examples in the Avon valley near Netheravon during the construction of pipe-trenches in 1991 and 1995 (Graham and Newman 1993; McKinley 1999). This group of four or five ring-ditches also serves to illustrate the potential for more such sites on lower ground in the river valleys. At Butterfield Down, Amesbury, the planning and sample excavation of a ring ditch showed no evidence of a central burial, but a pit-grave immediately outside the ring-ditch on the northeast side contained the burial of a child that included one sherd believed to be from an accessory vessel (Rawlings and Fitzpatrick 1996, 10-11).

The range of finds recovered from the excavation of round barrows is impressive and very considerable. It includes not only the usual selection of pottery, ornaments, and weaponry (well described by Piggott 1973d), but also some extremely unusual pieces such as the bone whistle made from the long bone of a swan from Wilsford G23 (Annable and Simpson 1964, 44-5; Megaw 1960) and the bronze two-pronged object from Wilsford G58 (Annable and Simpson 1964, 47-8). The two unusual shale cups believed to be from the Amesbury area also probably came from barrows although the circumstances under which they were found are not known (Piggott 1973d, 369; Newall 1929). Evidence of cloth, wood, and leather has been found in the corrosion on the surface of several metal

objects, as for example the dagger from Amesbury G58 (Ashbee 1984b, 69-70 and 81). Taylor (1980, 87-8) records the presence of gold objects in six barrows within the Stonehenge Landscape. Imported objects are also represented including the very rare glass bead from barrow Wilsford G42 (Guido *et al.* 1984; Henderson 1988, 448), and an Armorican vase à anses from Winterbourne Stoke G5 (Tomalin 1988, 209-10).

Structurally, the early second millennium BC round barrows typically comprise a turf or loam core covered by an envelope of chalk rubble derived from the perimeter ditch (Illustration #37). The examination of sections revealed by storm damage to barrows on King Barrow Ridge suggests that here there were two main kinds of construction: the conventional turf mound and chalk envelope, and a less common form involving only a turf and soil mound without a chalk capping (Cleal and Allen 1994). Some structural elaboration is however represented. Amesbury 61 had a stake circle around the central burial and perhaps a rectangular stake-built structure in the centre (Ashbee 1984b, 55); a stake circle at Amesbury 71 (Christie 1967). Stakeholes were noted below Winterbourne Stoke G32, G33, and G38 but formed little by way of a coherent pattern. In contrast, G39, G47, and G50 each had a central setting enclosed by a ring of stakeholes and further groups of stakeholes both inside and outside the perimeter ditch (Gingell 1988). All these features fall comfortably within the range of stake-circle structures within British and continental round barrows (Ashbee 1960, 60-5). Amesbury G70 had a single posthole marking the centre of the mound (Christie 1964, 32).

It is assumed that the reason why so many barrows concentrate in the area around Stonehenge is the “draw” of Stonehenge itself as a special, presumably sacred, powerful place. Little appears to be happening at Stonehenge, during the early second millennium BC, at least in terms of construction or modification. The last phased event is the digging and infilling of the rings of X and Y holes outside of and concentric with the sarsen circle (Sub-phase 3vi) probably around 1640-1520 BC (Cleal *et al.* 1995, 533). The purpose of these holes is not clear, but they do not seem to have held posts or stones and may be seen either as an abandoned attempt to expand the circles or as rings of ritual pits. The absence of dated events relating to the early second millennium BC does not mean that the existing

structure was not used but it is odd that after a millennium of fairly constant change things all go rather quiet with very little pottery or other datable material from this period either. It is possible, then, that the “power” of Stonehenge in the early second millennium BC was not its use but rather an ancestral memory of what it had been and a desire to associate with its former glory in selecting a final resting place. In this context it may also be noted that dates of 2350-1650 BC (BM-286: 3630±110 BP) and 2300-1500 BC (BM-285: 3560±120 BP) relate to hearths in the secondary fills of the ditches at Durrington Walls (Wainwright and Longworth 1971, 20-1) and that none of the other henges and related monuments in the area seem to have evidence of primary usage after about 1900 BC.

Pit groups and possible settlement areas that can be dated to the early second millennium BC are unknown in the Stonehenge Landscape. The Stonehenge Environs Survey revealed four concentrations of early Bronze Age pottery: around Long Barrow Crossroads, east of Fargo Plantation between the Cursus and the Packway, on Durrington Down, and west of Stonehenge (Richards 1990, 272). Worked flint was found more widely with slight concentrations not connected with pottery spreads on Wilsford Down and King Barrow Ridge. The interpretation of these requires further work. Broadly contemporary assemblages of worked flint have also been recovered from a number of excavations, notable those from work by Patricia Christie between 1959 and 1964 later analysed by Alan Saville (1978). Although tentatively considered as essentially domestic assemblages that happen to be preserved at or recovered from barrow excavations (Saville 1978, 22), another possibility is that barrow sites provided a context for flint knapping either because of their ancestral connections or because they were by this time “out of the way” places (*cf.* Fasham 1978). Excavation of a ring-ditch at Butterfield Down, Amesbury, also revealed a substantial quantity of primary knapping debris in the ditch fills (Rawlings and Fitzpatrick 1996, 10) suggesting that perhaps such structures had similar roles to round barrows in respect of flint working.

Especially important are the finds of early metal objects that serve to complement the material deposited as grave goods associated with Beaker pottery (Illustration #38). Such finds include a flanged axe from near Stonehenge which is in the Lukis collection (Grinsell 1957,

29); a decorated flanged bronze axe of Irish type found on Stonehenge Down in 1952 (Stone 1953); a flanged axe with slight stop ridge from Durnford (Saunders 1972); a short flanged axe from Beacon Hill, Bulford (Grinsell 1957, 52); a bronze axe of Irish origin with hammered chevron decoration on its butt found north of the recreation ground at Figheldean (SM 1958, 10); a flat axe with a slight stop-ridge from between Figheldean and Netheravon (Saunders 1976); and a flanged bronze axe from Wilsford (Grinsell 1957, 123).

## Middle and later Bronze Age (1500-700 BC)

The middle and later Bronze Age was a period of far-reaching and widespread change across the British Isles, represented archaeologically in fundamental changes to the very nature of the evidence recovered. This is best seen in the switch from a predominance of ceremonial and burial monuments to an archaeology dominated by what appear to be settlements, fieldsystems, and agricultural structures. Piggott (1973e) provides a general overview of the period in Wiltshire. The metalworking traditions belong to Burgess's Bedd Branwen, Knighton Heath, Penard, and Wilburton traditions (1980), Needham's Periods 5 and 6 (1996, 133-36). Environmental evidence suggests an opening up of the landscape and the development of extensive agricultural systems after 1600 BC (Allen 1997, 136). Map #J shows the recorded distribution of middle and later Bronze Age sites and finds.

This shift in focus is well typified at Stonehenge itself where the only activity is represented by a small amount of Deverel-Rimbury bucket-urn style pottery, occasional finds such as the bone point from in the upper fill of stonehole 8, and silt accumulating in the gradually infilling Y holes (Cleal *et al.* 1995, 334 and 491). The only remaining question mark hangs over the phasing of the eastern part of the cursus from Stonehenge Bottom to the River Avon. Radiocarbon dates from cuttings through it are inconclusive and suggest a long period of construction, although not necessarily as long as Atkinson (1979, 216) proposed with the eastern section being added in the late second millennium BC. Recutting and some use at this time may, however, be possible and Darvill (1997, 195) has linked this to an increasing interest in wet places and rivers

through the late second and early first millennia BC.

The main filling of the Wilsford Shaft dates to the period from about 1500 BC through to about 700 BC (Illustration #39), with Deverel-Rimbury pottery well represented (Ashbee *et al.* 1989). Broken wooden vessels and important environmental evidence suggestive of an agricultural landscape were recovered. Interpretation remains difficult with the two main alternatives being a well serving the needs of local populations or a ritual shaft of the kind known in many parts of Europe from the mid third millennium BC onwards (Ashbee *et al.* 1989, 128-38). Other environmental evidence confirms the picture of a mainly open landscape (Cleal *et al.* 1995, 491).

Three settlement sites of the period have been recorded and variously investigated, while others are suspected. At Winterbourne Stoke Crossroads watching briefs and recording work during the construction of a new roundabout at the A303/A360 junction revealed the presence of at least three circular structures with substantial porches (Richards 1990, 208-10). A palisaded ditch to the west of the structures may be part of a surrounding enclosure, but it just might be connected with the putatively late Neolithic Stonehenge Palisade Ditch noted above.

A second Bronze Age settlement is represented by a scatter of pottery and burnt flint towards the northern end of Fargo Plantation. Detailed test-pitting and the excavation of five 5m by 5m sample squares yielded substantial amounts of finds but little structural evidence (Richards 1990, 194-208). Subsequent work in the area in connection with the evaluation of a possible access route to the proposed Larkhill visitor centre site sampled a substantial ditch and yielded a bronze side-looped spearhead (WA 1991, 13). This site may originally have been enclosed.

A third middle or later Bronze Age settlement is represented at an enclosure known as the Egg, situated a little to the south of Woodhenge on the western slopes of the Avon Valley (Illustration #40). Discovered through aerial photography at the same time as Woodhenge, this enclosure was sampled through excavation by the Cunningtons (Cunnington 1929, 49-51; Wainwright and Longworth 1971, 6; RCHME 1979, 23). The enclosure boundary comprised a palisade trench, one terminal of which is extended in a straight line southwards where it meets a linear ditch. In the interior were 25 pits, one containing carbonized barley. Subsequent analysis of

aerial photographs and finds recovered from monitoring a pipe trench suggest that the Egg is part of a more extensive spread of middle Bronze Age occupation that would repay detailed investigation (RCHM 1979, 24). A ditch excavated beside the Packway Enclosure north of Durrington Walls might also be part of the same system of boundaries (Wainwright and Longworth 1971, 324).

Other sites may be indicated by spreads of ceramics, burnt flint, and quern fragments recovered during the Stonehenge Environs Survey, for example around the Packway north of Fargo Plantation, Durrington Down, and to the west of Stonehenge (Richards 1990, 276).

One of the most extensive features of this period is the arrangement of fieldsystems—the so-called Celtic fields. These have been discussed and described by the RCHM (1979, xiii and 29-31), Richards (1990, 277-79), and McOmish *et al.* 2002, 51-56) the following blocks being recognized (from west to east, and see Map #D):

#### West of the Till

- Parsonage Down / Shrewton system

#### Between the Till and the Avon

- Rox Hill and Wilsford Down
- Long Barrow Crossroads
- Stonehenge Down
- Fargo Wood
- Durrington Down

#### East of the Avon

- Amesbury Down
- Earl's Farm Down

Not all these systems are necessarily contemporary, nor are all the features visible within them as earthworks or cropmarks recorded from aerial photographs. The present “blocking” of recognizable chunks of fieldsystem is almost certainly as much to do with survival patterns as to the original extent of coherent units. All of those systems recognized around the edge of the Stonehenge Landscape as defined here continue into adjacent areas (see McOmish *et al.* 2002, figure 3.1 for example) and cannot easily be considered in isolation. Moreover, although it is widely believed that these systems have their origins in the mid or late second millennium BC, they are generally poorly dated, in many cases probably multi-phase, and even a superficial examination of their plans and structural arrangement

suggests that several quite different patterns are represented. A great deal of unpicking is needed to establish the nature of particular systems at given points in their development as well as the overall sequence. Associated enclosures, possibly of Bronze Age or later date, have been recognized on Rox Hill (RCHM 1979, 24), north of Normanton (RCHM 1979, 24), and southwest of Fargo Plantation (RCHM 1979, 24-5).

A network of linear earthworks runs through the landscape variously pre-dating, joining, delimiting, and post-dating the fieldsystems. They are especially notable on the southern part of the Avon Till interfluvium and have been fully described (RCHM 1979, xii and 25-29). As with the fieldsystems, dating is difficult. The best preserved are those on Lake Down southwest of Stonehenge (Illustration #41). Two sections through linear earthworks on Wilsford Down were cut as part of the Stonehenge Environs Project (Richards 1990, 192-3). Both confirmed the presence of substantial, although different, bedrock-cut ditches, but neither yielded dating evidence for their construction.

Not all the linear boundaries are confined to the areas west of the Avon. On the east side they can be seen in major arrangement on Earl's Farm Down which lies within the study area of the Wessex Linear Ditches Project (Bradley *et al.* 1994, figure 22). A section through one part of this system at Butterfield Down, Amesbury, failed to yield firm dating evidence (Rawlings and Fitzpatrick 1996, 38). Overall, the linear boundaries within the Stonehenge Landscape form part of a much more extensive series of boundaries on Salisbury Plain (Bradley *et al.* 1994).

Burials of this period are represented by flat cemeteries typically involving the deposition of cremated remains in small pits or in Deverel-Rimbury style urns. These often encroach upon or lie adjacent to earlier round barrows, especially those constructed in the early second millennium BC, and in central southern England are generally found within a short distance of contemporary settlement sites (Bradley 1981). Within the Stonehenge Landscape evidence of small numbers of secondary burials is commonplace in excavated barrows, but fairly extensive cemeteries have been found at several sites including Woodford G12 (15 burials: Gingell 1988, 26-7), Shrewton G5a (19 burials (Illustration #42): Green and Rollo-Smith 1984, 262-3); and Amesbury 71 (7 burials: Christie 1967). Broken pottery from

superficial contexts at and around other barrow sites might suggest the former existence of a flat cremation cemetery broken up and scattered by later ploughing as at Durrington 7 barrow on Durrington Down (Richards 1990, 171-84).

Stray finds of the later 2<sup>nd</sup> and early first millennium BC are surprisingly rare within the Stonehenge Landscape. The scatters of Deverel-Rimbury pottery generally match the areas of known settlement evidence and probable early fieldsystems (Richards 1990, figure 160). Best represented are the finds of metalwork to complement that found with burials. An unlooped palstave was found west of Fargo Plantation (Anon 1978, 204) perhaps associated with the settlement in the area referred to above; a socketed bronze knife was residual in a later context at a settlement on Fargo Road southwest of Durrington Walls (Wainwright 1971, 82); two socketed axes were also found in the area (Grinsell 1957, 66); a bronze spearhead and a small socketed axe were found on Wilsford Down (Grinsell 1957, 122); and a bronze spearhead was found during building work at Bulford Camp in 1914 (Goddard 1919, 360). The most significant find is a hoard of bronze ornaments found in 1834 near Durnford (Illustration #43), perhaps in or near a barrow (Moore and Rowlands 1972, 61-3). The hoard comprises 14 items, including twisted bar torcs, bracelets, and rings, and is typical of the Ornament Horizon of the Taunton industrial phase of the Bronze Age, Burgess's Knighton Heath Period of the 12th and 11th centuries BC (1980, 131-158). A number of unlocated and poorly provenanced finds may also be considered from the area, including a socketed spearhead from the Amesbury area (Grinsell 1957, 29); a side-looped spearhead from the top of a barrow west-southwest of Stonehenge (Grinsell 1957, 29); and a rapier from Wilsford Down (Grinsell 1957, 122). At Oldfield near Stonehenge a socketed axe, class II razor, and tanged tracer are said to have been found together perhaps in or near a barrow (Piggott 1946, 138, no.54). A miniature Bronze Age axe was found by a metal detectorist at Upavon (Robinson 1995, 62 (no.9)). Evidence of later Bronze Age metalworking has been recorded along the Nine Mile Water in Bulford in the form of part of a stone mould for casting socketed axes (Grinsell 1957, 52 with earlier references).

## Iron Age (700 BC – AD 50)

Traditionally regarded as a period of relatively little activity, the Iron Age of the southern part of Salisbury Plain is poorly represented in the archaeological literature (see Cunliffe 1973a-c for regional context). In fact many of the main features of the southern British Iron Age are represented, based around open settlements, enclosures, and hillforts. The full chronology and sequence of these is poorly understood, but taken with the additional evidence of well-preserved fieldsystems and boundaries this period has considerable potential for future research. Map #K shows the distribution of sites and monuments of the Iron Age.

Most of the earlier ceremonial monuments so characteristic of the second and third millennium BC see very little sign of activity after about 700 BC. Nothing firmly attributable to the period has been found at Stonehenge itself, and even the numerous barrows and cemeteries of the middle and later second millennium BC seem to have been left alone. The Wilsford Shaft is almost completely infilled by about 400 BC to judge from a small group of dated material in the very upper fill (Ashbee *et al.* 1989, figure 64). The Stonehenge Environs Survey failed to yield a single piece of Iron Age pottery from its fieldwalking programme (Richards 1990).

The best-known class of monument of the Iron Age is the hillfort, of which numerous types have now been recognized (Cunliffe 1991, 312-70). Within the Stonehenge Landscape there are two major hillforts. The largest is Ogbury overlooking the River Avon at Great Durnford. This very poorly known site is a univallate enclosure of 26 ha but it has never been adequately surveyed and is an obvious candidate for study. Crawford and Keiller (1928, 150-2) provide the best description and illustrate their account with a fine near-vertical aerial photograph; accounts of the site extend back to Stukeley's visit in the early 18th century. Internal boundary features have been noted and Grinsell (1957, 65) recorded finding Iron Age pottery at the site in 1951. Flints are also reported from the site and it is tentatively suggested that what can be seen today represents a multi-phase site with elements extending back into earlier prehistory (Darvill 1997, 182: note 6).

The second hillfort, Vespasian's Camp on the north bank of the Avon west of Amesbury, is better known as a result of recent investigations (RCHM 1979, 20-2; Hunter-Mann 1999. Illustration #44). It is a univallate enclosure of 16ha with two phases of glacis-type rampart



constructed around the hill in the early Iron Age around 500 BC.

Outside the Stonehenge Landscape 1.5km to the southwest is the multivallate hillfort of Yarnbury Castle and a series of associated settlements and enclosures at Steeple Langford and Hanging Langford (Cunnington 1933, 198-217; Crawford and Keiller 1928, 68-71 and 162-4). Slightly further away 5km to the south is Old Sarum (RCHM 1981, 1-24) and 4km to the southeast is Figsbury Ring (Cunnington 1925; Guido and Smith 1981). About 4km to the northeast is Sidbury (Applebaum 1954; McOmish *et al.* figures 3.6 and 3.25), and 6.5km to the north Casterley Camp (Cunnington and Cunnington 1913; McOmish *et al.* figures 3.7 and 3.28) These sites, and others in the vicinity too, illustrate the point that much of the high-order settlement pattern of the area has to be seen in a regional rather than a local context. In the early Iron Age the Wessex chalklands support a scatter of hillforts of various kinds each serving relatively small local territories in some way (Cunliffe 1991, 348-52). In this pattern, Ogbury and Vespasian's Camp have important positions relative to the "East" Avon (see Sherratt 1996, figure 2), but the Stonehenge Landscape itself has no special significance within the wider picture. By the middle Iron Age there are rather fewer, but larger, hillforts (so-called developed hillforts) with much more extensive territories around them. By this time the Stonehenge Landscape lay on the junction of the putative territories of four developed hillforts outwith the Landscape itself: Yarnbury, Old Sarum, Casterley Camp, and Sidbury (Cunliffe 1971, figure 14).

More common are the enclosed and open settlements which for much of the later first millennium BC represent the basic settlement pattern of compounds, hamlets, and farmsteads. Within the Stonehenge Landscape the most extensively known settlement area is around Durrington Walls and along the western flanks of the Avon Valley, perhaps perpetuating the focus of late Neolithic settlement in the area although generally slightly separated from the earlier evidence in a way that suggests settlement drift within a limited compass; this would no doubt repay further investigation.

To the southwest of Durrington Walls a series of excavations was carried out in 1970, in advance of tree-planting, and revealed a few pits associated with Iron Age pottery (Wainwright 1971, 82-3). Within Durrington Walls a small cluster of Iron Age pits containing Little Woodbury style pottery was recorded in

1951 ( Stone *et al.* 1954, 164). The 1966-8 excavations also recorded Iron Age features inside the henge-enclosure including a palisade trench perhaps forming part of an enclosure and a group of pits, postholes and a linear ditch north of the northern circle (Wainwright and Longworth 1971, 312-28). Immediately north of Durrington Walls is the Packway Enclosure, partially excavated in 1968 during the construction of a roundabout on the A345 west of the Stonehenge Inn (Illustration #45). This kite-shaped four-sided enclosure had an entrance on the south side. Little was recovered from the inside of the enclosure because of the circumstances of discovery which had truncated the natural chalk surface and it remains poorly dated within the Iron Age (Wainwright and Longworth 1971, 307-311; and see Graham and Newman 1993, 52-55).

Northwards of Durrington Walls at Figheldean / Netheravon in the Avon Valley excavations in connection with pipeline construction in 1991 and 1995 revealed a large multi-sided ditched enclosure on the west side of the river (Illustration #46). Within the main boundary are numerous smaller enclosures and suggestions from geophysical surveys of round houses and pits (McKinley 1999 with earlier references; McOmish *et al.* figure 3.31). This site continued in use through into the Roman period (see below).

Another major group of Iron Age sites was investigated at Boscombe Down West by K\*\*\* Richardson and others in 1948-9 in advance of the construction of the Boscombe Down RAF station (Richardson 1951). Early Iron Age settlement comprised an extensive spread of pits and working hollows on the northern part of the site (Area Q) and another about 650m to the south (Area R) which again included pits perhaps set within a small ditched enclosure. The pits were generally large and contained a rich material culture. Of later Iron Age date was a double-ditched enclosure, roughly circular in plan with an internal space some 200m across. Many pits were seen in the interior here. The limited excavation undertaken included what was probably one of the earliest instances in the country of the use of a drag-line excavator in an archaeological situation to remove ditch fills (Richardson 1951, plate 5). Further evidence of pits and a posthole were recorded at Boscombe Down in 1998 by Wessex Archaeology.

Within the World Heritage Site, excavations on Wilsford Down in 1910-13 revealed traces of a settlement that again included two storage

pits. One pit yielded a bronze chape and binding for the scabbard of a sword or dagger; chalk loom weights, spindle whorl, hammerstones, animal bone and pottery were also found. Various stray finds from the area, including a bronze pennanular brooch and a variant style ring-headed pin, suggest a fairly extensive settlement (Grinsell 1957, 122).

Several separate finds of Iron Age material at Southmill Hill, Amesbury, suggest the presence of a settlement site. Numerous pits and a V-sectioned ditch have been reported over a period of more than 50 years (Grinsell 1957, 29; Anon 1976, 134). Evidence of other sites represented by accidental finds of storage pits or collections of Iron Age pottery include an area of settlement east of Ogbury Camp investigated by Colt Hoare (1812, 220; Crawford and Keiller 1928, 151), and two pits revealed during excavations of the Stonehenge Avenue near West Amesbury (Smith 1973, 50-2).

Possible and probable Iron Age enclosures known through accidental discoveries, sample excavations or surveys include a large circular earthwork at Rattyn discovered while constructing a railway line in about 1908 (Hawley 1928, 166-7); a pair of conjoining curvilinear enclosures north of Druid's Lodge, Berwick St James (RCHM 1979, 22); a square-shaped example north of Normanton (RCHM 1979, 24); and a circular example southeast of Druid's Lodge in Woodford parish (RCHM 1979, 25). Geophysical surveys at Scotland Farm, Winterbourne Stoke (Illustration #47), added much detail to an oval enclosure previously known from aerial photography (David and Payne 1997, 96-7), while a square enclosure was discovered on King Barrow Ridge (David and Payne 1995, 98). This work demonstrates very clearly the potential for geophysical surveys as an aid to understanding later prehistoric settlement patterns.

Iron Age burials are generally rather rare in southern Britain but several have been found in the Stonehenge Landscape. In 1967, a crouched adult inhumation was found in a grave cut into the top of the Stonehenge Palisade Ditch. It has since been dated to 770-410 BC (UB-3820: 2468±27 BP) (Cleal *et al.* 1995, 161). Others include a flexed inhumation in a pit on Parsonage Down, Winterbourne Stoke, (Newall 1926); Boscombe Down West where an oval pit in Area R contained an inhumation burial of a kind now well-recognized as an Iron Age burial rite (Richardson 1951, 131); disarticulated human remains mixed with animal bones and early Iron Age pottery dated to the

period 760-400 BC in the upper fill of the Wilsford Shaft (Ashbee *et al.* 1989, 69); and two pits containing burials at Southmill Hill, Amesbury (Anon. 1976, 134).

Many of the fieldsystems discussed in earlier sections continued in use and were presumably modified during the later first millennium BC; some may originate in these centuries. The physical connection between the Pasonage Down system and the hillfort at Yarnbury is especially strong and worthy of note. Connecting fieldsystems and settlements was a series of trackways. Most are now lost although glimpses can be seen in the arrangements of boundaries visible on aerial photographs. Hunter-Mann (1999, 39) notes that an ancient track known as the Harroway connects the Stonehenge area with southeastern England and runs past the northern side of Vespasian's Camp (and see the Ordnance Survey's *Map of Roman Britain*).

Stray finds of Iron Age date from the area include pottery from superficial contexts at half a dozen or so barrows; a large saddle quern from Druid's Head Wood, Stapleford; a late bronze stater found near Amesbury before 1891 (Grinsell 1957, 29); a bronze drachma of the Hellenistic King Menander from "near Stonehenge" before 1880 (Grinsell 1957, 29); a Durotrigian silver stater from Middle Farm, Shrewton; a silver Durotrigian silver stater from Stonehenge or near-by (Robinson 1991), another Durotrigian coin said to have been found at Amesbury (Robinson 1991, 119); a gold stater of the Armorican tribe the Aulerici Cenomani from Lake, Wilsford (Robinson 1991, 119), and a Carthaginian bronze coin found in March 1956 north of the Boscombe to Amesbury Road.

By the 1st century AD the Stonehenge area lay on the periphery of several major territorial (?tribal) units: the Durotriges to the southwest, the Dobunni to the northwest, the Atrebates to the northeast, and the Belgae to the southeast (Illustration #48). It also lay on the boundary between the southeastern tribes which are sometimes seen as occupying a core area with close contact with the Roman world and the peripheral tribes who had much less contact and were perhaps more traditional in their social organization and lifestyles (Cunliffe 1991, figure 14.38).

## Romano-British (AD 50 - AD 450)

The Roman invasion of AD 43 and the subsequent conquest of southern Britain has

been extensively discussed with reference to central southern counties and the west country (Cunliffe 1973d; Branigan 1973; Manning 1976). The Stonehenge area lies within the lands taken during the first phase of conquest, being well to the southeast of the Fosse Way frontier believed to have been established by AD 47. Manning (1976, 19) noted, however, that in the area north of Old Sarum, across what is now Salisbury Plain, there are no known Roman forts and very little evidence for the presence of the Roman army. The reason for this is probably the peripheral position of the region relative to the centres of the surrounding tribal territories which were the focus of Roman attention (Illustration #49). Nonetheless, a substantial Romano-British settlement developed around a junction of four or five roads at Old Sarum 5km south of the Stonehenge Landscape (see RCHM 1981, 1; James 2002). Map #L shows the distribution of recorded Romano-British sites and finds in the Stonehenge Landscape.

Within the Stonehenge Landscape it is clear that some existing Iron Age settlements continued and perhaps expanded. This is certainly the case at Boscombe Down West where settlement drift is evident; Area P contained late Iron Age and 1st –2nd century AD pits while Area S saw occupation of the 3rd and 4th centuries AD and Area R contained contemporary burials (Richardson 1951, 136). Rather significant are the imported butt beakers and St Remy ware found in Area P which perhaps arrived from Gaul via Poole Harbour, and the imitation *Terra Nigra* platters perhaps from eastern England (Richardson 1951, 149-53). Equally, at Figheldean / Netheravon, occupation of the large multi-sided enclosure beside the River Avon continued through into the 2nd century AD with unenclosed occupation, a Roman villa, and a cemetery of the later Roman period (Graham and Newman 1993; McKinley 1999; McOmish *et al.* figure 3.31).

A similar picture can be seen in other parts of Salisbury Plain (Bowen and Fowler 1966), with the strongest evidence coming from the Great Ridge – the Nadder / Wylve interfluvium – just to the southwest of the Stonehenge Landscape with its characteristic single and multi-ditched enclosures and villages such as Ebbsbury, Hamshill Ditches, Hanging Langford, and Stockton (Cunnington 1930, 194-5; Corney 1989).

The traditional view of Salisbury Plain from the 2nd to 4th centuries AD period is that

it was an Imperial Estate, or *Saltus*, and for this reason contained rather few large Roman settlements and villas of the kind found elsewhere across southern Britain (Collingwood and Myers 1937, 224; Branigan 1976, 123) but this view is being gradually eroded by the accumulating evidence (Cunliffe 1973e; 1973f; Graham and Newman 1993, 51-2). Within the Stonehenge Landscape the Avon Valley is the focus of Roman occupation of the 2nd century and beyond, some of it fairly substantial and involving a number of what appear to be villa-based settlements.

Starting at the northern end, at Netheravon House just outside the Stonehenge Landscape, a villa site with a mosaic pavement and bath-house was uncovered in 1907 (Grinsell 1957, 90-1 for summary). Sample excavations were carried out at the site in 1996 confirming most of the earlier observations (Rawlings 2001). To the south, within the Stonehenge Landscape at Figheldean, excavations along pipeline routes in 1991 and 1995 revealed extensive occupation and a cemetery of at least four graves within the long narrow trenches. A T-shaped oven or corn drying kiln was also found together with ceramic building materials and stone slates suggesting the presence of a fairly substantial structure in the vicinity (Graham and Newman 1993, 34-6). Good samples of animal bones and carbonized plant remains were also found and this is clearly a site that would repay further investigation (McKinley 1999 for overview and the results of geophysical surveys).

About 4 km south of Figheldean is another area of Romano-British settlement of later 3rd and 4th century date sampled by excavation prior to tree-planting west of Durrington Walls (Wainwright 1971; and see RCHM 1979, 24). Postholes, pits, gullies and hollows were recorded in Site II, while in Site I on the north side of Fargo Road two small ditched enclosures, one containing a corn drying kiln and two infant burials were examined. These features were regarded as peripheral agricultural facilities with the main focus of the settlement, perhaps a villa of some kind, lying on the higher ground to the west. Pieces of roofing tile in stone and ceramic from the excavations hint at a substantial structure in the vicinity. The scale of the site is considerable to judge from quantities of Samian ware and other pottery recovered over many years from both sides of Fargo Road on Durrington Down (Cunnington

1930, 186; and see Richards 1990, figure 17). About 1km south again, around Countess Farm and the to the northwest of the Countess Road roundabout a scatter of Roman material found by metal-detector users suggests another site. Although very little is known about it, the finds include military objects as well as personal ornaments (Darvill 1993, 63-68).

On the east side of the River Avon on Butterfield Down, Amesbury, an unenclosed settlement of about 6ha included timber-framed buildings and a corn-drying oven very similar to the example already noted from Durrington Walls. Cattle and sheep were the most common farm animals represented. An infant burial within the settlement and the possibility that a ring-gully represents the remains of a shrine indicates aspects of the religious side of life at the site (Rawlings and Fitzpatrick 1996, 38-40).

South of Amesbury evidence of Roman settlement appears less abundant but this is probably a result of fewer opportunities. Finds made over a long period of time at Boscombe Road / New Covert in Amesbury suggest another extensive site here. A pot containing a hoard of bronze and silver coins and three silver finger-rings was found in c.1842 (Cunnington 1930, 172; Grinsell 1957, 30); more recently a midden and pits were seen by Mr St John Booth.

Just outside the Stonehenge Landscape the small town of *Sorviodunum* developed beside the Avon around Old Sarum and modern-day Stratford-sub-Castle (James 2002).

Roman settlement was not confined to the Avon Valley. East of the Avon occupation on Boscombe Down West continued into the 3rd and 4th centuries in Area S and its associated cemetery in Area R (Richardson 1951). On Earl's Farm Down, Amesbury, pottery and foundations suggest a substantial site (Cunnington 1930, 173; Grinsell 1957, 30). On the high ground between the Avon and the Till there is evidence for occupation at Wilsford Down which has yielded a number of brooches, ornaments, and ironwork (Cunnington 1930, 208; Grinsell 1957, 122) and is revealed as a pottery scatter in the fieldwalking undertaken for the Stonehenge Environs project (Richards 1990, figure 17). At Normanton Ditch, Wilsford, a possible pewter hoard is recorded as having been ploughed up about 1635 (Cunnington 1930, 208; Grinsell 1957, 123). A second area of Roman settlement is represented by two groups of finds, connected by a linear ditch, one

either side of the Amesbury to Shrewton road on Winterbourne Stoke Down (Colt Hoare 1812, plan op. 170; Cunnington 1930, 209. Illustration #50). Strangely, this pair of sites is not represented in finds made during the Stonehenge Environs Project fieldwalking, although the fieldwork would have only touched the eastern edge.

A third area of settlement may lie on Rox Hill to judge from a scatter of Roman pottery recorded during the Stonehenge Environs Survey (Richards 1990, figure 17), possibly the Romano-British village referred to by Colt Hoare (1812, 227; Cunnington 1930, 208). West of the Till, there is again substantial traces of occupation at Maddington Farm, Shrewton, on the very far western side of the Stonehenge Landscape. Here, two burials found during the construction of a pipeline led to the excavation of a wider area and the identification of a small farmstead of 3<sup>rd</sup>- 4th century date together with an associated inhumation cemetery (McKinley and Heaton 1996). Cunnington (1930, 209) recorded another settlement on High Down, Winterbourne Stoke, northwest of The Coniger confirmed as such by Colt Hoare (1812, 95). On Berwick Down in the southwest corner of the Stonehenge Landscape there is extensive evidence of Roman occupation tested "by the spade" by Colt Hoare in the 19th century (Cunnington 1930, 174).

It is important to note that in all these areas there are hints of settlement sites provided by antiquarian finds and early rescue excavations but it is really only since the mid 1980s that firm indications of the nature of these sites has really come to light as a result of evaluation and recording work at development sites. In all cases it seems that the areas available for investigation were peripheral to the main occupation zones; there is thus considerable potential at all these sites for further exploration and research. It is also worth noting that northwards, within the SPTA, what appear to be rather different kinds of settlement involving compact villages, linear villages, and extensive evidence of cultivation have been revealed by detailed ground survey and the study of aerial photographs (McOmish *et al.* 2002, 88-106). Whether similar arrangements were also present on the downlands Stonehenge Landscape east and west of the villa-based settlements along the Avon valley remains to be seen.

Romano-British pottery and coins have been recovered at a number of barrow and other prehistoric sites within the

Stonehenge Landscape (see for example Cunington 1929; Ashbee 1981; Hunter-Mann 1999). Even though the finds are unstratified, the evidence supports fairly extensive Romano-British occupation / activity within the Stonehenge Landscape. Stonehenge itself was clearly visited during the Roman period as a fairly substantial collection of finds suggests: 20 coins ranging in date from AD 41-50 through to AD 330-395; pottery (1857 sherds found in 20th century excavations); and personal ornaments brooches, pins, toilet equipment, and possibly some graffiti (Cleal *et al.* 1995, 431-35 and 491). Whether these visits were made out of curiosity or because of some residual significance attaching to the site is not known. Ritual and ceremonial activity of Roman date is poorly represented in the Stonehenge Landscape. There are no temples or major shrines known, which is perhaps odd given the prehistoric significance of the area.

In addition to the burials noted in association with settlement sites, Roman graves have also been recorded at four other sites including a cemetery at Boscombe Down, Istmiston, excavated in 1995 (Seager Smith in prep.); an inhumation at Ratfyn (Grinsell 1957, 29); a cremation south-east of Milston Farmhouse, Figheldean; and an inhumation at Lake House Pond.

Some of the field systems in the Stonehenge Landscape undoubtedly originated in the early first millennium AD while many earlier ones continued in use or were re-used. The Fargo Road settlement noted above is located on the periphery of a major fieldsystem and lynchets were recognized in the excavation areas (Wainwright 1971). A detailed landscape characterization focusing on the morphology of linear features and field patterns could perhaps further elucidate the connections between settlements and associated agricultural features.

The only substantial Roman road identified within the Stonehenge Landscape is the Old Sarum to Mildenhall road which is likely to be a Romanised trackway. The trackway passes just east of Amesbury running in a north-north-easterly direction, through Boscombe Down Camp and Bulford Camp (Margary 1973, 99-100). Other routeways include the Harrow Way (Ordnance Survey *Map of Roman Britain*) and the Old Sarum to Mendip Hills road which passes just south of the Stonehenge Landscape (Margary 1973, 101-103).

Overall, the density of known Romano-British sites, their fairly regular spacing, and the range of available stray finds and snippets from antiquarian reports suggests that much if not all the Stonehenge Landscape was significantly more intensively used in the early first millennium AD than many recent commentaries would suggest, and with abundant scope for further research.

### **Saxon and early Medieval (AD 450 - AD 1100)**

Archaeological evidence relating to the period from about AD 450 through to the Norman Conquest and even a little beyond is widely regarded as being notoriously difficult to find, and hazardous to interpret. This problem is exacerbated by the general desire to integrate purely archaeological evidence with tradition, myth, and written historical sources. There is a general perception that within the Stonehenge Landscape there is very little evidence relating to the later first millennium AD; this not, however, entirely so. For while there is certainly rather less than for some phases of prehistory, there are clear indications that the six centuries following AD 450 are strongly represented and provide much potential for research (and see Cunliffe 1973f; Bonney 1973; Hinton 1977; and Eagles 1994 and 2001 for regional background studies). Map #M shows the distribution of recorded Saxon and early medieval sites and finds within the Stonehenge Landscape.

Eagles (2001) has argued that Germanic migrations into Wiltshire took place within the framework of the former Romano-British *civitates*, with the Avon Valley seeing an Anglo-Saxon presence relatively early, accompanied by the development of new cultural identities and social order among local communities. Activity in the 5th century AD is represented at Butterfield Down on the east side of Amesbury. Here a hoard of eight gold and one silver coins was found by a metal-detector user outside the area of the excavations. The group is believed to have been deposited sometime after AD 405, making it one of the latest coin hoards in Britain (Rawlings and Fitzpatrick 1996, 19). Within the excavations was a sunken-floor building containing much 3rd and 4th century AD pottery (Rawlings and Fitzpatrick 1996, 13-14. Illustration #51), perhaps an example of the increasingly widely recognized class of native

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British sunken-floor or terraced structures seen also at Figheldean Site A (Graham and Newman 1983, 19-22) and further afield at Poundbury, Dorset, and Godshill, Wiltshire (Eagles 2001, \*\*). No certain examples of the classic Germanic *grubenhaus* with a large posthole at either end of the sunken floor, conventionally dated to the 5th to 8th centuries AD have been found in the Stonehenge Landscape.

Other evidence of the mid first millennium AD from Amesbury includes a group of inhumation burials from London Road to the north of the town. Found in 1834, they are considered sub-Roman or early Saxon in date (Bonney 1982; Chandler and Goodhugh 1989, 6). Kurt Hunter Mann (1999, 51) has suggested limited use of Vespasian's Camp during the later Roman and sub-Roman period, but there is no substantial archaeological evidence represented in the areas examined. Saxon pottery attributable to the 5th to 8th centuries AD was found during field evaluations of the proposed Stonehenge Visitor Centre northeast of Countess Roundabout (WA 1995, 19). At least two brooches datable to the 5th to 7th centuries have been found in the area (Darvill 1993, 63-8). Further finds of mid first millennium AD date have been made in the Avon Valley north of Amesbury (McOmish *et al.* 2002, 109 and figure 5.1).

Burials and finds suggestive of burials of the pagan Saxon period are probably the most widespread form of evidence available. Grinsell (1957) gives examples from all but three of the 16 modern parishes that include territory within the Stonehenge Landscape:

- *Amesbury*: Barrow G44 intrusive interment; Barrow G85 socketed iron spearhead and other objects perhaps associated with an intrusive interment; Stonehenge burial (see below).
- *Bulford*: Socketed iron spearhead found on Bulford Down in 1861 and a similar piece found at Bulford Camp in 1906.
- *Durnford*: Barrow G1 or 2 intrusive interment
- *Durrington*: Barrow G? (pond barrow) yielded a skull possibly from an intrusive interment; Possible cemetery site of 30+ graves (see below)
- *Figheldean*: Barrow G25 inferred intrusive interment from the socketed iron spearhead found; Netheravon Aerodrome find of an interment believed to have been deposited in a wooden coffin.
- *Idminster*: Barrow G23 intrusive interment with iron shield-boss that is unlikely to be later than the mid 6th century AD, socketed spearhead, and wooden bucket with bronze mounts
- *Milston*: Barrow G3 intrusive interment; barrow G7 intrusive interment; small pot and fragment from a comb above a chalkpit.
- *Netheravon*: Two burials found during the construction of the Aviation School in 1913, one accompanied by weapons, bronze pin, and perhaps a bucket.
- *Orcheston*: Inhumations (one adult and one youth) with an iron knife found at Elston before 1856 (Robinson 1987).
- *Shrewton*: Inhumation found at Shrewton Windmill, accompanied by a bronze armlet, ?girdle-hanger, iron knife, and pot. A find of a split iron spearhead suggests a second unlocated burial in the parish.
- *Wilsford cum lake*: Barrow Wilsford G3, intrusive interment; Barrow G50b intrusive interment; long barrow G30 intrusive interment.
- *Winterbourne Stoke*: Barrow 4, five intrusive interments; Barrow 61 intrusive interment; Barrow 23a glass bead of Saxon type suggestive of an intrusive burial.
- *Woodford*: Socketed iron spearhead found in 1863.

To these can be added the large Saxon inhumation cemetery northwest of the allotment gardens in Maddington, Shrewton (Wilson and Hurst 1968, 241), and an intrusive

burial in a barrow south of Druid's Lodge, Winterbourne Stoke (\*\*\*\*).

The possible cemetery on Durrington Down found in 1864 is intriguing. Grinsell (1959, 66) suggested that it is near Fargo and that the graves were orientated north-south. Ruddle (1901, 331) indicated that they were in an arable field near the Durrington / Winterbourne Stoke boundary and that while 30 were found only two were laid north-south. He also mentioned that these two burials had flints set like a low wall around and over the skeletons (and see RCHM 1979, 7). Unfortunately, the exact position of this find is not known. It may be significant, however, that during the examination of Barrow G7 on Durrington Down, as part of the Stonehenge Environs Project, a scatter of 22 sherds of grass-tempered Saxon pottery was found (Richards 1990, 182). In addition, M Cunnington found a group of eleven inhumations in shallow graves intrusive to barrow Durrington 67 (Cunnington 1929, 43-4; RCHM 1979, 7). Taken together these finds suggest the strong possibility of one or more Saxon occupation sites and cemeteries along the high ground between Fargo Road and Fargo Plantation. A late Saxon mount was found at Knighton Farm, Figheldean (Robinson 1992, 66 (no. 5)).

A burial found by Hawley in 1924 at Stonehenge, outside the circle to the east, was flanked by two postholes (Illustration #52). Originally considered to be of Roman date, radiocarbon determinations have now shown it be of the 7th century AD (610-780 AD (OxA-9361: 1359±38 BP) and 430-660 AD (OxA-9921: 1490±60 BP)) and forensic analysis suggested a traumatic death (Pitts 2001, 319-20; Pitts *et al.* 2002). The postholes are interpreted as the remains of a gallows. A small amount of organic tempered Saxon pottery was found at the site, and also, of slightly later date, a penny of Aethelred II (Cleal *et al.* 1995, 432-5). The liminal position of Stonehenge and its powerful associations with an ancient order make the site ideal for executions, a point that links with David Hinton's comments on the derivation of the very name of the site – the stone hanging place (Hinton 1998; and see \*\*\*\*). Evidence of execution may also be provided by the cleft skull of one of the intrusive burials in the Wilsford G3 long barrow near the Wilsford-Charlton parish boundary (Cunnington 1914, 403). Bonney (1966) has noted the prevalence of pagan Saxon burials near parish boundaries which he takes as both evidence for

the pre-parish system origins of the boundaries themselves and the peripheral location of burials relative to the main settlement areas. This arrangement does, however, deserve further exploration as the location of settlements remains largely unknown.

By the 9th century, the Stonehenge landscape is comfortably within the early medieval Kingdom of Wessex (Illustration #53). Documentary evidence for this period is rather better than it is in surrounding areas, mainly because of the ecclesiastical and royal associations with Amesbury.

The town of Amesbury itself has been subject to several historical investigations which together provide a fairly detailed understanding, although tentative, of its early development (Chandler and Goodhugh 1989; Haslam 1984; Hinton 1975. Illustration #54). There are references relating to Amesbury in Saxon Charters, the Will of King Alfred (d.899) bequeathing (*aet*) *Ambresbyrig* to his younger son Aethelweard, and lands left in King Eadred's (d.955) will to his mother Eadgifu (Finberg 1964). It has been suggested that the place-name *aet Ambresbyrig* probably indicates its early existence as a *burh* or fortification belonging to *Ambre* (Gover *et al.* 1939, 358). Indeed, the place-name *Ambre* may have pre-Saxon origins and perhaps represents the name of the semi-mythical Ambrosius about whom legends were well established by the 8th century (Gover *et al.* 1939, 358; Morris 1973, 100). If so, it may support the notion that Ambrosius Aurelianus established a garrison in response to the resistance against the Saxon invaders during the third quarter of the 5th century (Bond 1991, 385). Alternatively, the personal element could represent *Ambri*, who is mentioned in Geoffrey of Monmouth's legend of Stonehenge and 'of the hill of *Ambrius*' although Geoffrey does not specify where this was (Chandler and Goodhugh 1989, 5).

If the origins of Amesbury are obscure, so too is much of its early development. If it was the centre of a royal estate, as has been suggested (Haslam 1976, 5), then it is likely to have been a settlement for the estate staff. Such a settlement might have consisted of a minster, a headquarters for the priests working throughout the estate, a 'mother' church for all Christian worship, and various staff premises; the beginnings of a 'small town' (Hinton 1975, 27-28). The king held assemblies at Amesbury in AD 932 and AD 995 (Bond 1991, 386). In AD 979, a new abbey was founded by Queen

Aelfthryth at Amesbury, one of only two churches dedicated to St. Melor in the country (Haslam 1984, 130-1). It was later refounded in its present location in AD 1177 as a priory under the Order of Fontevrault, suggesting that an earlier church of the order had existed prior to the 10th century. The location of this early settlement is wholly based upon conjecture, the best estimate being somewhere near the 'ancient' river crossing at Queensberry Bridge near Vespasian's Camp and extending along the present High Street (Chandler and Goodhugh 1987, 7). Two fragments of a 10th or 11th century wheel crosshead found under the chancel of St Mary and St Melor church in 1907, supports the existence of an early church and settlement. A royal palace would be expected at such a settlement but none has yet been found.

The Domesday survey records that the estate was held by the King in 1066 and had never paid geld nor had they been assessed in hides, the usual form of taxation, but instead by means of payment in kind. Levy in kind is concurred to be the earliest form of formalised taxation known in England, dating at least as far back as the 7th century (Chandler and Goodhugh 1989, 6). By the 11th century, Amesbury was the focal point for a hundred, which was accredited with substantial areas of woodland. It has been proposed that the original estate could have incorporated the whole of the Hundred of Amesbury (Bond 1991). The hundred extended from Biddesden in Chute Forest to below Durnford in the Avon Valley, and eastwards to the Hampshire border (Thorn and Thorn 1979).

It is assumed that smaller settlements must have been developing in the countryside surrounding Amesbury, probably along the Avon and Till valleys in situations that became the villages still familiar in today's landscape (see McOmish *et al.* 2002, figure 5.2 for the Avon Valley). Certainly, the majority of the present settlements are mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086. Parish units must also have been established in this period, in many cases utilizing prehistoric barrow cemeteries and indeed individual barrows as boundary markers and alignments (Bonney 1976). To what extent the existing later prehistoric and Romano-British fieldsystems continued in use, or were abandoned, is not known.

## Later medieval (AD 1100 - AD 1500)

The later medieval period sees the continuing importance of the crown and the church as formative agents in the development of the towns and the countryside alike. Castles, palaces, churches, monasteries, towns, villages, hamlets and farmsteads form elements in a complicated and structured system. Bettey (1986) and the papers in the volume edited by Aston and Lewis (1994) provide a background to this period and the archaeology of it. Indeed, Aston and Lewis (1994, \*\*) suggest that Wessex as a whole is ideal for the study of the medieval rural landscape due to its abundance of documentary evidence and variety of landscape types. Map #N shows the distribution of recorded sites and finds relevant to the medieval period.

The Conquest period is represented by a small horsehoe-shaped ringwork castle at Stapleford in the Till Valley in the southwest corner of the Stonehenge Landscape. The ringwork was later expanded to operate in a manorial capacity with the addition of a fishpond and suite of paddocks (Creighton 2000, 111). The much larger castle with its associated royal and ecclesiastical centre at Old Sarum lies about 6km south of the Stonehenge Landscape on the east bank of the Avon (RCHM 1981).

All of the settlements recorded in the Domesday Survey of 1086 grew to become established villages in the succeeding period, together suggesting fairly densely populated river valleys with more open land between. Table 3 shows the names of the main settlements and the Hundreds within which they lay. Illustration #55 shows the extent of the identified Hundreds around Stonehenge.

Several of the modern parishes have been created out of the amalgamation of medieval tithings or townships but some original medieval land units still remain (Illustration #56). As observed on modern Ordnance Survey maps, Wilsford-cum-Lake, for example, was created out of the medieval townships of Normanton, Lake and Wilsford. Also, Shrewton incorporated the medieval townships of Rolleston, Netton, Shrewton, Maddington, Bourton, Addestone, Normanton, and part of Elston (Aston 1985, 40-41 and 79-80). Some township units seem to have incorporated prehistoric features at certain points on their boundaries, perhaps reflecting earlier land-divisions. West Amesbury, Winterbourne Stoke, and Normanton townships, for instance,



converge at Barrow 10 of the Winterbourne Crossroads barrow group. Amongst others, potential prehistoric boundaries can be found at the bell-barrow Amesbury 55, where Amesbury Countess, West Amesbury and Winterbourne Stoke converge, and the north bank of the Cursus forms part of the Durrington / Amesbury / Countess boundary (Bond 1991, 394).

Amesbury remained the largest settlement throughout the medieval period, and the two manors in the town are the only ones in the area to have been researched in any great detail (Pugh 1948). During the later 11th century, the royal estate of Amesbury was divided into two smaller manors; one consumed into the Earl of Salisbury's estate and the other owned by the Sheriff of Wiltshire and later by his grandson, Patrick, Earl of Salisbury in 1155-6 (Bond 1991, 392). For some four centuries the Amesbury manors and associated lands passed through many hands and were divided, detached under multiple ownership, and finally reunited with almost all of its lands intact in 1541. Edward, Duke of Somerset and Earl of Hertford, acquired the manor of Amesbury Earls in 1536 and Amesbury Priors in 1541.

Until the Reformation, the Benedictine Abbey of Amesbury continued to flourish as a nunnery, gradually increasing in size and wealth. In 1256, there were 76 nuns and by 1318 the nunnery housed 117 nuns with 14 chaplains (Betty 1986, 74). By the 15th century, the abbey had become the second wealthiest and fifth largest in England until its dissolution in AD 1540 (Haslam 1984). The buildings were given to Edward Seymour who dismantled the abbey (Jackson 1867).

It is likely that the settlement of Amesbury grew up alongside the abbey during its prosperous years, but little is known of the town from an archaeological perspective. The only known surviving domestic medieval building seems to be West Amesbury House. With a 15th century core, medieval screens passage with an *in situ* wooden screen, arched doorways and a medieval arch-braced and wind-braced roof in the west wing, the medieval building is proposed to be located within the remains of a grange of Amesbury Priory (Chandler and Goodhugh 1989).

Throughout the medieval period, Amesbury Hundred constituted part of the Royal Forest of Chute, the earliest known documentary evidence for which dates from the 12th century (Bond 1994, 123).

Villages, as we recognize them today, appear to have developed during this period, although some presumably have Saxon or earlier origins. Settlement has a propensity to centre along the river valleys, particularly the Till and Avon. The 18th century map by Andrews and Drury provides a detailed overview of pre-enclosure settlement within the Stonehenge Landscape, covering the whole of Wiltshire. Villages tended to be either compact nucleated agglomerations or regular rows with contiguous tofts running parallel with the valley (Lewis 1994, 173-4). Medieval settlement evidence has been found at: Orcheston; Nettleton (c. AD 1330); Shrewton; Stapleford; Berwick St James; Rolleston; Winterbourne Stoke (earthworks); Bulford; Briggerston; Milston; Rاتفyn; Durnford; West Amesbury; Durrington; Pickney Farm, Durrington; and Wilsford. There are also crofts and house platforms in the gardens of Lake House, and in Figheldean at Syrencote House (*Sexhamcote* 1227), Knighton Farm, and Ablington Farm.

During the later medieval period, landscape and documentary evidence exists for settlement desertion and shrinkage along the valleys of the River Till and the Avon (Aston 1982, 11; 1983, 11). Durrington has been the subject of detailed study and shows a decline from 30 customary tenant families in the mid-14th century down to 19 at the end of the 15th century. By AD 1506 just 12 virgates were held by five tenants in contrast to the situation in the 13th century when there was individual virgate ownership (Hare 1981, 167). In common with many chalkland settlements in Wessex, Durrington shows a varied pattern of shrinkage and desertion while still maintaining its traditional agricultural and settlement character (Hare 1980).

Now a polyfocal village, Shrewton once existed as eight separate hamlets each with its own church or dependent chapel: Shrewton, Maddington, Netton, Rolleston, Elston, Homanton, Addestone, and Bourton (Illustration #57). The latter three are now deserted, whereas Elston, Netton, Maddington, and Rolleston are largely shrunken.

Shrinkage can also be observed elsewhere within the Stonehenge Landscape. Empty crofts and paddocks, for example, have been found at the small compact hamlet of West Amesbury, and Rاتفyn, which now only exists as a single farm. The documentary record also provides evidence in support of deserted settlement. Hyndurrington, a 'lost'

hamlet in Durrington parish, is recorded in the Lay Subsidy and Poll Tax returns of the 14th century, but not in the field (Aston 1985, 41).

Each township unit comprised a mix of three land-types: meadow on the valley bottoms which was a valuable source for hay production; arable open fields on the lower slopes; and downland common pasture on the higher, more remote areas. Although there is some evidence to support enclosure, most of the arable land remained in open fields until the 18th century. Indeed, the basic pattern of three-field land-types can still be seen in many of the modern parishes (*cf.* Aston 1985, figure 15).

The local economy was largely based upon the production of corn, particularly wheat and barley, up until the later 19th century. In order to produce and maintain good yield, the thin soil required folding of sheep to fertilise the land; they were set out to pasture on the chalk downland during the day and close-folded on the arable land of the lower slopes at night (Bond 1991, 407). It has been proposed that the 'extensive pasture resources and more balanced economy' of the Wiltshire chalklands enabled communities here to resist the late medieval general agricultural depression experienced elsewhere in the country even though evidence in support of settlement shrinkage exists during this period (Bond 1991, 397). An undated rectangular enclosure on Winterbourne Stoke Down has been identified through early aerial photography and comprises a narrow bank and external ditch with no apparent entrance. It has been suggested that this earthwork may have been used as a sheep penning during medieval or later times (RCHM 1979, 25). There are a number of other undated enclosures on the SMR, which might also be pennings.

The place-name Coneybury Hill in West Amesbury, is derived from its use as a rabbit-warren during medieval times. The earliest records date to an Inquisition of 1382 in which the lord of Totness and Harringworth granted the manor of Amesbury called 'le Conynger' (Bond 1991, 398). Another medieval warren site is at the Coniger, an earthwork enclosure at Winterbourne Stoke, first mentioned in 1574, and recorded as encompassing a number of Bronze Age barrows (RCHM 1979, xxi). The utilization of barrows as rabbit warrens was probably fairly widespread, but is hard to document because rabbits naturally seek accommodation in such features. Documentary evidence is the most

reliable source of information (RCHM 1979, xxii).

The creation of parks was a feature of the Wiltshire landscape during medieval times, but the Stonehenge Landscape is remarkably devoid of known examples (Watts 1996, figure 2).

Stonehenge itself is first mentioned in available written sources around AD 1130, presumably as a place of interest, intrigue, and the source of patriotic and mythical schemes for early British history (Chippindale 1983, 6). To what extent Stonehenge was robbed of some of its stones during later medieval and post-medieval times has been a matter of some discussion. Atkinson (1979, 85-6) favoured deliberate destruction, perhaps in the Roman or early medieval period, while Ashbee (1988) suggests that noncompletion may have as much to do with its present condition as slighting and dilapidation.

## **Post-medieval (AD 1500 - AD 1800)**

From about AD 1500 the Stonehenge Landscape and the communities living within it come into sharper focus as additional written and cartographic sources become available. These have been extensively discussed by Bond (1991) as part of a landscape regression analysis for the Stonehenge Conservation and Management programme. The wider background is provided by Bettey (1986). Map #O shows the distribution of recorded sites and features relevant to the archaeology of the post-medieval period within the Stonehenge Landscape.

Through the 16th century the traditional medieval settlement pattern prevailed, dominated by the town of Amesbury and the villages along the Avon and the Till valleys, as too the agricultural regime based on sheep rearing and corn husbandry. Land needs to support this in terms of access to valley-bottom meadow-land, valley-side land, and upland pasture remain reflected in the organization and lay-out of manors and parishes.

Changes to the physical character of the medieval landscape during the post-medieval period can however be observed in the documentary record and from archaeological evidence. One of the most significant changes during the 17th century was the introduction of floated meadows along the valley bottoms (Atwood 1963; Kerridge 1953; 1954. Illustration #58). Floated

meadows were created at Wylve and Chalke in around 1635; many other villages followed their lead later in the 1640s (Aubrey 1969). The Amesbury water-meadows were also constructed during the 17th century, some time before 1680, as written records mention repairs and replacements to the water-meadow machinery (Betley 1979).

The expansion of arable farming from the 17th century, with the subsequent diminution of the downland, also contributed to the changing character of the physical and cultural landscape. Widespread evidence from place-names shows the extent of these changes (Kerridge 1959, 49-52). The fieldname 'Burnbake' on later maps is indicative of a method of turf removal, known as 'burnbeating', 'burnbaking', or 'devonshiring'. Examples can be found on the south side of Durrington Down where new fields were created, and in the fields of Amesbury Countess where existing arable fields were extended beyond the Seven Barrows (Bond 1991, 409).

Studies of fieldnames have also contributed to an understanding of the development of agriculture and farming, and subsequently the changing character of the Stonehenge Landscape. For instance, a tithe award for Durnford gives the field name 'Sainfoin Piece' to land on the northern boundary of Normanton tithing; it suggests that the leguminous crop sainfoin was cultivated here presumably to reduce the fallow period. Much more work remains to be done with the place-name evidence and has relevance to the post-medieval period and perhaps earlier times.

Concerns over the impact on archaeological remains of expanding arable agriculture and ploughing up the downland were expressed by antiquarians. William Stukeley, for example, records that (1740, 1):

*The Wiltshire downs, or Salisbury plain, (as commonly call'd) for extent and beauty, is, without controversy, one of the most delightful parts of Britain. But of late years great encroachments have been made upon it by the plough, which threatens the ruin of this fine champain, and of all the monuments of antiquity thereabouts.*

A parish by parish account of the extent and impact of 18th century and later agricultural change and its impact on the archaeological remains is provided by the RCHME (1979, xvi-xix). Ridge and furrow cultivation, some of it perhaps quite late in origin, is represented on

some lower ground and hill-slopes, especially along the main river valleys (Illustration #59)

Enclosure began late in the Stonehenge Landscape, probably during the second half of the 18th century. However, no Acts or Awards have been found for Amesbury, Bulford, or Wilsford and it must therefore be assumed that enclosure was by 'agreement'. Written sources suggest that, at least for Amesbury, open fields were still used up until the mid 18th century, after which they were piecemeal and limited. Towards the end of the 18th century all the land owned by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Marquess of Queensberry (largely around Amesbury) was enclosed and divided between six farms: West Amesbury; Countess Court; Red House; Earl's Court; Kent House; and South Ham (Bond 1991, 419). Durrington, Shrewton, and Winterbourne Stoke were not enclosed until the 19th century. Elsewhere, essentially medieval patterns of land ownership were reorganized with a propensity towards the merging of smaller holdings and development of existing larger farms (Bond 1991).

Work on the manorial history for the Stonehenge Landscape is fairly limited but includes Chandler and Goodhugh's (1989) accounts of Amesbury. Edward Seymour procured the manor of Amesbury Priors in 1541 after the dissolution of Amesbury Priory (Chandler and Goodhugh 1989, 25-6). Five years earlier, Seymour had been bequeathed Amesbury Earls manor which combined both estates and thus largely comprised the whole of Amesbury. The Amesbury estate changed hands a number of times during the post-medieval period. In 1676 to 1720, the Bruce family acquired the manor, which was later sold to Lord Carleton who five years later died and bequeathed Amesbury to his nephew, the Marquess of Queensberry. Upon the Marquess of Queensberry's death in 1778, the estate was passed to his cousin, William Douglas, the 4<sup>th</sup> Marquess of Queensberry (Pugh 1948, 70-110).

These changes in land ownership affected the character of the cultural landscape and the extent of innovation and development within it. This is especially well represented in the development of Amesbury Park (English Heritage 1987, Illustration #60). In 1725, for example, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Marquess of Queensberry engaged in an extensive programme of improvements to the Amesbury estate. This involved expanding the existing park of about 12 ha, mainly east of the

Avon, to take in land west of the river around Vespasian's Camp. Landscaping features west of the river included tree planting within Vespasian's Camp (previously arable land); the creation of a grotto known as Gay's Cave; establishing a number of serpentine and straight walks, glades, and radiating vistas such as the prospect towards Stonehenge; building a Chinese temple over the Avon; and the construction of a balustrated bridge (Bond 1991, 419). By 1773, the Marquess extended the park further to the north, as far as the Amesbury-Durrington road, and to the west incorporating the Seven Barrows, which engulfed existing open fields at West Amesbury and Amesbury Countess. By this time the park covered about 120 ha. However, in 1781, the 4<sup>th</sup> Marquess of Queensberry removed the park pale and in 1823 transformed the land back to arable, relinquishing the park landscape.

During the 3<sup>rd</sup> Marquess of Queensberry's occupation, the estate experienced a period of investment in building construction. The Countess Court Farmhouse, originally constructed in the early to mid 17th century, received a new three-bay façade in the Georgian style. To the south of the house, a five-bayed timber-framed stavel barn and granary were constructed during this improvement period (Slocombe 1989, 26-7. Illustration #61). Estate cottages were also built on Countess Road, but have since been demolished for the construction of Amesbury bypass (Chandler and Goodhugh 1989, 71).

Several earlier extant buildings dating from the 16th and 17th centuries can be found within the Stonehenge Landscape; these include West Amesbury House and Diana House in Amesbury. Medieval in origin, the shell of West Amesbury House was extensively altered during the late 17th century. The alterations consisted of an entirely new stone and flint exterior, a new gabled and symmetrical, fenestration frontage and mullioned windows. Diana House in Amesbury, south of the Avon beyond Grey Bridge, was probably built by the Earl of Hertford as a lodge around 1600. Also noteworthy is the domed lock-up at Shrewton.

Rabbit warrens continued to be an important part of the rural economy of the area (RCHM 1979, xxi). In the early 17th century the planned introduction of rabbits to the barrows at Amesbury Abbey is well recorded. An account of AD 1609/10 records that in 1605 'Two round connye berryes were made to his Lordship's appointment and at the same

time 14 couple of conies put into the ground. Which 14 couple of cunnies with their encrease did breade and feed there...'. (RCHM 1979, xxi; WRO 283/6). Stonehenge had become a well-established rabbit warren by the early 1720s, although by the later 18th century were regarded locally as a nuisance (Bond 1991, 420).

The construction of sheep-folds was widespread during the 18th century, and sometimes occasioned damage to ancient sites. One fold was cut into the southwestern side of Bush Barrow with a small spinney of thorn bushes planted for shelter on top (Bond 1991, 417; RCHM 1979, title page and xxi).

Evidence for roads and trackways within the Stonehenge Landscape during the 16th and 17th centuries is rather limited. However, Ogilby's road book of about 1675 shows the line of the London-Barnstaple road just north of the present A344. This may relate to the apparently unfinished road still visible as an earthwork (RCHM 1979, 31-2). The 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19th century documentary record is slightly more comprehensive, and includes Andrews and Drury's county map of 1773, the map of the Amesbury Hundred published by Colt Hoare in 1826, 1<sup>st</sup> edition OS map (1817), and various 18th century manorial court records. Many of the tracks and roads which appear on the Andrews and Drury map have ceased to exist or exist in a relocated and realigned form in the present Stonehenge Landscape. These include parts of the old Amesbury-Market Lavington road, a diverged track from the Avenue in Stonehenge Bottom to head north-eastwards towards Durrington, and part of the Old Marlborough Road (Bond 1991, 421). Queensberry Bridge, Amesbury, built in c.1775, may mark the route used for many years previously as a trackway running north and north-east of Stonehenge (RCHM 1979).

The present Salisbury to Devizes road (A360) was turnpiked in 1760. Soon after, in 1762, the Amesbury Turnpike Trust was established by Act of Parliament. This body constructed a road followed by the modern A344. Roads were turnpiked soon after 1762, subsequently realigning and improving the existing network. A number of listed milestones and toll-houses exist within the Stonehenge Landscape (DoE 1988. Illustration #62). Although the economy of the Stonehenge Landscape was largely based upon sheep-crop husbandry, there is considerable evidence for various industrial activities around Amesbury. For example, in

1662 Thomas Fuller wrote that 'the best [pipes] for shape and colour ... are made at Amesbury' (Brown 1959). This accolade seems to relate to a clay-pipe factory owned by the Gauntlet family from c.1600 to 1698. It was situated at Wrestler's Gate outside the Priory Manor between Normanton and West Amesbury. Remnants of clay-pits were found at the site in c.1840 (Ruddle 1895). Small-scale gun-flint making sites have been identified on Rox Hill and at Rox Hill Clump (Fowler and Needham 1995).

Mills were also present along the main rivers, some perhaps on earlier sites; a millstone and a number of timbers have been recorded at Durrington.

Intellectual interest in Stonehenge and its surroundings increased with visits by notable antiquarians of the day, Inigo Jones in 1655, John Aubrey in 1666, William Stukeley in 1740, and John Wood in 1747 amongst them. The wider interest they promoted no doubt led to others making visits and it is interesting that several views of the site from the 1750s onward show casual visitors arriving by carriage and on horseback. One picture of 1790 shows a shepherd-guide wearing a smock showing two gentlemen and a lady one of the great trilithons (Illustration #63). Graffiti carved into the stones from the 17th century onwards is further evidence of its attraction to visitors, in some cases perhaps because of the mid-summer games that in 1781 at least included a sack-race, cricket, wrestling, and bowling (Goulstone 1985, 52).

## **19th century AD**

Bond's (1991) analysis of a major part of the Stonehenge Landscape provides an excellent overview of 19<sup>th</sup> changes. Map #P shows the distribution of the principal recorded sites and features relevant to the 19th century archaeology of the Stonehenge Landscape.

Enclosure through Act of Parliament played a major role in altering the physical organization of the countryside in some areas during the 19th century. Amongst the earliest parishes to enclose open fields and downland under the Parliamentary Act were Shrewton, Winterbourne Stoke in 1812, and Durrington in 1823 (Bond 1991, 424). Later piecemeal mergers and subdivisions have also contributed to the present form of the field boundaries. Prompted by the desertion of communal farming techniques and the introduction of

enclosure, isolated farmsteads and field barns appear in the 19th century landscape; Durrington Down Barn by 1811; Fargo Cottages west of Stonehenge in 1847; Grant's Barn in Winterbourne Stoke by 1841; and Greenland Farm by 1887.

Not all areas were enclosed however. Extensive tracts of the higher ground remained under permanent pasture, retaining their existing characteristics; these included Tenantry Down; Durrington Down; Normanton Down; Countess Court Down; West Amesbury Down; Winterbourne Stoke Middle Down; and Wilsford Down.

New turnpike roads were created during the early 19th century. The Swindon, Marlborough and Everleigh Trust turnpiked the modern A345 Amesbury-Old Sarum road in 1836, and in 1840, the Amesbury – Rushall - East Kennett road was turnpiked by the Kennett and Amesbury Trust. A number of public and private roads in Durrington and Winterbourne Stoke were constructed to replace unfenced tracks and open-field baulk and headland-ways.

Water meadows created in the 18th century continued in use and benefited from the introduction of better mechanical systems for sluices and drainage. Most were in the Avon valley below Ham Hatches, at Durrington, and at Winterbourne Stoke in the Till valley.

Plantations of trees, both conifer and deciduous, were a new feature of the landscape from the early 19th century. Early plantings were mainly for shelter belts, game coverts, and ornamental clumps. These include the Long Barrow Plantation in Wilsford; Normanton Gorse (also known as Furze Cover); Fargo Planation; and Luxembourg Plantation (Bond 1991, 425). Extending to the north of Vespasian's Camp and to the west towards King Barrows are dispersed sets of ornamental clumps which first appear on the Ordnance Survey map of 1879. It is widely believed that these clumps represent the disposition of ships at the opening of the Battle of the Nile or Trafalgar; however, there is no evidence to support this idea (RCHME 1979, xxi).

Although attempts to rear rabbits in formal warrens had ceased by the early 19th century, the rabbit population of the area remained high and Long (1876, 118) notes how in 1863 the under-gamekeeper of Sir Edward Antrobus was digging deeply for rabbits in the vicinity of the fallen trilithon at Stonehenge.

Many local crafts and industries continued, chalk-pits for example being worked in most parishes to provide road-metal and top-dressing for cultivated land (Bond 1991, 426).

The scale of visitor interest in Stonehenge increased through the 19th century, and from the 1860s a Mr Judd ran a photographic business at the site photographing visitors and then developing the pictures in a mobile dark-room (see Chippindale 1983, 148-9). Goulstone (1986) has drawn attention to a mid 19th century description of hare-coursing around Stonehenge and suggests the presence of a turf-cut geoglyph or emblem in the form of a shepherd's crook at or near Stonehenge itself. There are several superb pictures of the site by renowned artists from the early 19th century, including water colours by Bridges in about 1820, Turner in 1828, and Constable in 1835 (Chippindale 1986a).

Perhaps the biggest change of the 19th century, and one that has had a far-reaching impact ever since, was the acquisition of land for military training. In 1897 the Army purchased about 40,000 acres of land for about £10 per acre, mainly west of the Avon around Durrington and Rollestone, but some east of the Avon around Bulford.

## **20th century AD**

The last century was a period of great and profound change for the Stonehenge Landscape, although not yet documented in detail (see Bond 1991 for a useful start based on a landscape regression analysis). Map #P shows the distribution of the principal recorded sites and features relevant to the 20th century archaeology of the Stonehenge Landscape.

Following the acquisition by the Army of 40,000 acres of land in the southern part of Salisbury Plain in 1897 (see above) the military presence has been marked. A century later the physical remains of military activities here and elsewhere have attracted considerable attention (Schofield and Lake 1995; Dobinson *et al.* 1997; Bond 1991), and in 1998 a detailed assessment of the 20th century military activity was carried out by Wessex Archaeology (WA 1998) to assess the potential impact of past and future occupation and land-use, and to emphasize its value as part of the archaeological record of the area.

The research, based mainly on written sources, proved effective and allowed the documentation and interpretation of extant and sub-surface remains, as well as temporary structures which had long been dismantled. The assessment covers activity from before World War 1 through to post 1945.

The military land, now known as the Salisbury Plain Training Area (SPTA), has been the subject of archaeological surveys and management initiatives (DLA 1993; Bradley *et al.* 1994; McOmish *et al.* 2002). The effect of military occupation on earlier remains has been a matter that has aroused considerable general interest. There is certainly evidence of localized damage to sites and monuments, but against this must be set the widespread preservation of earthworks and structures that had they been subject to agriculture as elsewhere on the Plain would surely have disappeared long ago. In many respects the training areas have become archaeological reserves of considerable importance.

The military remains themselves also have an important story to tell (Bond 1991, 435-6; WA 1998). In 1902, a permanent camp was established at Bulford Barracks, the most easterly part of the Stonehenge Landscape (Bond 1991). Later, in 1914, Larkhill was also made a permanent base by the School of Artillery (Watkin 1979, 115). Evidence for temporary military camps has been revealed through documentary sources, including the 'extensive hutted encampment', constructed at the eastern end of the Stonehenge Cursus during the First World War and still in place into the 1920s (RCHM 1979, xxiv; Bond 1991, 435).

Balloons were the first form of aircraft used by the army and came to play an important role in the Boer War. War balloons were launched on Salisbury Plain and the earliest aerial photographs of Stonehenge were taken from such a platform in 1906 (Capper 1907). Larkhill Airfield is one of the earliest surviving military airfields, constructed in 1909, and was one of the very first flying schools in England (Watkin 1979, 115). It was later involved in training pilots in preparation for the First World War (WA 1998, 16). The aeroplane sheds at Larkhill, built during this time, are still used by the army today. The remains of other airfields or landing strips can also be found dotted around the Stonehenge Landscape. These include airfields at Stonehenge Down, Lake Down, Rollestone Balloon School, Oatlands, Shrewton, Bulford

Fields, and the still operational Boscombe Down.

From 1906 onwards Salisbury Plain has been extensively used as a practice ground for target exercises (James 1983, 20). Former military sites also include military railways, hospitals, military housing, memorials, defensive structures and paraphernalia, such as pillboxes and anti-tank obstacles, and recreational facilities. Records have been particularly useful as they have revealed sites previously unknown, such as the Fargo Camp Military Hospital. The hospital was out of use in 1925, but was still occupied, although on a reduced scale, until at least 1939, when it was known as Fargo Lodge (Bond 1991, 436). Narrow-gauge railways and standard-gauge military railways built from 1916 onwards were used for moving military supplies and for tank firing practice (Cross 1971).

A series of excellent vertical aerial photographs taken on Christmas Eve 1943 show the extent of military works at the end of the Second World War (Illustration #64). Especially notable are a defensive works and trenches on the south side of the training area, well within the Stonehenge Landscape. Some of these were sampled by excavation in 1991 as part of the evaluation work at a prospective new visitor centre site at Larkhill (Wessex Archaeology in Darvill 1991, 491).

War graves are known at Durrington, Bulford Village, Maddington, Orcheston St Mary, Hewetson Cross in Fargo Plantation, and the Lorraine / Wilson Cross at Airman's Cross on the A360/A344/B3046 junction (Illustration #65). At Wood Road, Larkhill there is a brass plaque to mark the site of the first military airfield at Larkhill. The Bulford Kewi is a modern geoglyph cut into the chalk hillside east of Bulford Camp by New Zealand troops stationed at Sling Camp in 1918 (Newman 1997, 202-3).

The population of the Stonehenge Landscape rose considerably during the 20th century, some attributable to the increasing scale of military occupation. In Bulford, for example, there were 341 residents in 1891, which had increased to 4,000 by 1941 (Betty 1986, 288). A large village was created to accommodate the soldiers and their families. As a result of rises in the population there was very considerable settlement expansion around Amesbury and all the other established settlements too.

During the early 1950s there was a renewed period of arable expansion within the Stonehenge Landscape. This led to the leveling of many archaeological monuments and fundamental changes to the appearance of the landscape. It was in response to these agricultural changes that a number of important excavations were carried out (see Section 1).

The road network was considerably modified during the 1960s, the single biggest change being the creation of the Amesbury bypass on the A303 in 1967-68. Associated work was carried out on the A345 in 1966-68 (see Wainwright and Longworth 1971), and around Long Barrow Crossroads in 1967 (Richards 1990, 208-10).

Stonehenge visitor numbers rose dramatically through the 20th century. In 1901 the site was enclosed and arrangements for the use of a number of tracks in the area changed (Chippindale 1976). The tourist potential of the area was widely recognized and prompted much comment (Illustration 66). The triangle of land containing Stonehenge and bounded by the A303, the A344, and a trackway now known as By Way 10 was gifted to the nation in 1918 by Mr (later Sir) Cecil Chubb. A programme of restoration and investigation was instigated by the Ministry of Works in 1919 and lasting through to 1926 (Chippindale 1983, 176-83). Much of the surrounding land was acquired by the National Trust piecemeal from 1927 onwards when about 587 ha was purchased following a public appeal; the estate totalled about 760 ha by 1990. As part of the management of the estate through to the later 20th century much arable land was returned to pasture and a selection of monuments was restored to the condition they had been in the 1950s. Further excavations took place at Stonehenge itself most years between 1950 and 1959 with some later work in 1964 and 1978 (Cleal *et al.* 1995, 11-12). In 1967-68 a major infrastructure development took place north of the A344 to the northwest of Stonehenge to create car parks, visitor facilities, and an underpass to provide access to the monument (Illustration #67). A Stonehenge Festival took place in fields around Fargo Plantation between 1974 and 1985, eventually lead to a decade or more of conflict and tension between the authorities and a wide range of interest groups (Chippindale 1986b; Bender 1998). Various proposals were made to provide a more worthwhile celebration (*e.g.* Chippindale

1985). Archaeologically, however, the activities of 1974-85 resulted in the installation of new security measures and will have left familiar kinds of features such as pits, postholes, and artifacts in the topsoil in the areas of temporary encampment. In 1981 a new enclosure and visitor pathway through the site was made to protect the stones of Stonehenge from direct public access (Bond 1982).

A continuing interest in the construction of "ancient monuments" is to be seen in the stone circle built on the edge of a new housing development at Butterfield Down, Amesbury, in 1998 (Illustration 68).

## Diachronic themes

Cross-cutting the chronologically based narrative presented above it is possible to pursue a number of themes and developments that run through many periods and which thus provide rather different perspectives.

### Holocene environments (10,000 BC to the 20th century)

Environmental archaeology has made considerable progress in documenting the paleoenvironment of the Stonehenge Landscape, at least in broad outline. A general setting for the prehistoric environment is provided by the papers brought together by Ian Simmons and Michael Tooley (1981), detailed accounts are provided by Michael Allen on a general chronology (in Richards 1990, 254-58) and in relation to the phasing of Stonehenge (in Cleal *et al.* 1995, 470-91; Allen 1997). This and other work can be summarized in terms of a changing series of distinct environments.

**Holocene Wildwood** characterizes the period from before 8000 BC down to about 4000 BC. The Boreal climate was relatively warm and dry. The chalkland at this time had a thick cover of brown earth or argillic brown earth soils (perhaps up to 1m thick) supporting open woodland dominated by hazel and pine. Vegetation was not static, and periods of more open conditions may have punctuated a generally more closed woodland. Human populations as well as animal populations may have played parts in these changes.

**Tamed Wildwood** characterizes the period from 4000BC to 3000 BC, as the impact of human communities gets stronger. Soils of this period sealed beneath later monuments are

thinner than for earlier millennia and include rendzina soils. Charcoal suggests the presence of elm, ash, oak, hazel, and yew within the woodland, but the extent of woodland was reducing and several buried soil profiles suggest that areas of grassland were already established before 3000 BC, often providing the setting for the construction of monuments. Allen (1997, 127) has described the vegetation cover in this period as a "complex mosaic ... with areas of ancient denser woodland, light open mixed hazel and oak woodland and clear-felled areas of shrubs and grassland for grazing, browse, cultivation, and occupation". Some cereal cultivation was practiced, probably in small clearance plots of "gardens". Hazlenuts and tubers are represented amongst the palaeobotanical material recovered from fourth millennium BC sites (Carruthers in Richards 1990, 251). Domesticated cattle are well represented, pig and sheep are present in small numbers amongst the earliest faunal assemblages from the area. The native fauna is known to include red deer, roe deer, and beaver, but other species may well have been present too (perhaps including brown bear, wolf, wild cattle, wild pig, horse). The rivers supported fish; a brown trout is present amongst the assemblage from the Coneybury Anomaly (Maltby in Richards 1990, 57).

**Emergent downland** characterizes the period from about 3000 BC down to 1600 BC with the balance between woodland and grassland shifting so that for the first time grassland predominates. The process by which this happened is currently seen in terms of expanding initial clearances (Allen in Cleal *et al.* 1995, 477). Many of the main monuments established at this time were constructed within areas of grazed downland, although Coneybury provides an exception and seems to have been built in a small woodland clearing that was allowed to become overgrown (Bell and Jones in Richards 1990, 157-8). The existing range of domestic animals continues to be represented, although the relative abundance of species changes slightly with some sites showing a higher proportion of pig than cattle. Sheep are poorly represented until well into the second millennium BC. Mallard was reported from at Site A Figheldean (Egerton *et al.* in Graham and Newman 1993, 38). Wheat and barley were cultivated. Little is known about the wild plant species in this phase, but palaeobotanical material recovered includes onion couch, chickweed, stinging nettle, hazlenut, and hawthorn (Carruthers in Richards 1990, 251). Although the extent of woodland is not known,



charcoal suggests that its composition can be seen to include oak (used in cremations at Durrington Down G3), hazel, blackthorn, and hawthorn/whitebeam/rowan (Gale in Richards 1990, 252-3). Evidence for ploughing, perhaps with a rip ard, sometime around 2000 BC is preserved below the mounds of Amesbury G70 (Christie 1964, 33) and G71 (Christie 1967, 347). The increasing extent of cultivation through the early second millennium BC may also account for the presence of mobile sediments in the secondary fills of ditches dug in the third millennium BC. Soil erosion does not, however, seem to be a major problem at this period.

**Farmed downland** characterizes the period from about 1600 BC down to perhaps as late as AD 1500. Formal fieldsystems were established by the later Bronze Age to provide the framework for mixed agriculture that included both arable and pasture (Illustration #69). Wind-blown sediment trapped in archaeological features suggests that some arable land was left as open ground for part of the year. Elsewhere, the grazing was characterized by open short-turfed grassland. It is currently believed that many of the fieldsystems established in later prehistoric times continued in use through the early first millennium AD, although this has yet to be fully demonstrated. Ridge and furrow cultivation cuts earlier fieldsystems in several areas, for example south of Long Barrow Cross Roads, and on Rox Hill (RCHM 1979, xiv). Ridge and furrow cultivation is also visible on aerial photographs of the land east of King Barrow Ridge (RCHME 1979, plate 9). Mapping the former extent of this distinctive phase of land-use would provide a useful perspective on monument survival as well as an insight into the medieval economy.

Late first millennium BC and early first millennium AD environmental evidence from Boscombe Down West includes emmer wheat, bread wheat, club wheat, spelt, and barley; charcoal representing birch, holly, beech, birch, and oak as wood exploited by the users of the site; and animal bones representing cattle, horse, sheep/goat, pig, red deer, fox, raven, and frog (Richardson 1951, 165). Carbonized plant remains from grain drier 3020 at Butterfield Down (Illustration #70) confirmed the use of wheat and barley during Roman times (Allen in Rawlings and Fitzpatrick 1996, 35). Animal remains from the same site revealed a wide range of wild and domestic species including cattle, sheep, horse, dog, pig, chicken,

red deer, hare, bird, and amphibian. The cattle bones were heavily butchered and there was evidence for the use of all body-parts amongst both sheep and cattle (Egerton in Rawlings and Fitzpatrick 1996, 35-6). Broadly the same range of animal species was recorded at Site A Figheldean (Egerton *et al.* in Graham and Newman 1993, 38) and both wheat and barley were present in samples from the Roman corn drier here too. The range of wild plants and weeds from the site as a whole gives an impression of the diversity of represented in the Roman landscape: corn gromwell, campions, orache, goosefoot, lesser knapweed, medicks, poppies, plantain, knotgrass, sheep's sorrel, buttercups, cleavers, eyebright, bartsia, corn salad, fat hen, chickweed, bindweed, dock, tare, red clover, mugwort, mayweed, foxtail, and various grasses and legumes (Ede in Graham and Newman 1993, 38; Allen in McKinley 1999, 29).

**Pasturelands** are believed to characterize much of the Stonehenge Landscape during the post-medieval period from AD 1500 down to the early 20th century, although detailed studies are absent and generalization is therefore extremely difficult. The higher ground more remote from settlements along the main river valleys was open grassland, nearer the settlements there was a higher incidence of cultivated ground. However, the balance between these uses shifted according to economic and political circumstances with increases in the extent of arable in the early 17th century and again in the mid 19th century. A fair reflection of the situation about 1840-50 is provided by the Tithe Award maps which show extensive arable along the Avon valley in particular (RCHM 1979, Map 3).

The 18th century was probably the all-time low-point in the level of woodland cover in the landscape. Deliberate planting began soon after, and in the 19th century a number of fairly substantial plantations were added, including Fargo Plantation and Luxenborough Plantation. In some cases these developed into mature stands, protecting monuments within them (Illustration #71).

Since the early 20th century there have been a number of changes to the environment of the central part of the Stonehenge Landscape. Intensive military usage until 1950 gave way to a period of agricultural intensification in the wake of clearing away many of the former military installations. Following acquisition of the Stonehenge Estate by the National Trust and ongoing programme

of downland reversion has been pursued, gradually returning arable land to grazed pasture with consequent opportunities for the reestablishment of grassland fauna and flora populations.

### **Cybernetic approaches to early societies**

Axiomatic to much processualist analysis of prehistoric and historic societies is the recognition, modelling, and study of related themes - technically subsystems of a cultural system - and the way that through linkages, communications, and control mechanisms (*i.e.* cybernetic processes) the content and articulation of these change through time (Clarke 1968, 101-23; Renfrew 1972, 22 and 486). The number, nature, and scope of the themes selected depends on the nature of the inquiry, the exact questions being asked, and the way in which an ancient society is being conceptualised (Illustration #72). Thus rather than attempting to provide a detailed analysis of a particular set of themes here, the following notes are intended to illustrate the potential for further study represented within to a selection of overlapping themes common to many conceptualizations of social and environmental systems.

*People, health, and populations:* The preservation of human skeletal remains within the Stonehenge Landscape is generally good and several hundred individuals are represented amongst excavated assemblages (Illustration #73). Much additional material was re-buried after being excavated and this too could be recovered for analysis with minimal effort and disturbance. Although some studies relating to the physical anthropology of these populations has taken place (*e.g.* Davies and Thurnam 1865; Thurnam 1868) there is much potential here, especially in the application of forensic archaeology, biochemical analysis in relation to health and diet, and DNA studies of genetic relationships. The material is, however, widely scattered and a first step to its use would be the development of a gazetteer of what is extant, where it is kept, and what condition it is in.

*Settlement and land-use patterns:* The longevity and high intensity of activity within the Stonehenge Landscape is one of its great strengths in terms of research potential. Like many areas of Britain there is what appears to

be a fundamental difference between the period before about 1000 BC when the archaeological record is dominated by what appear to be ceremonial monuments and later times where what might be termed settlement archaeology predominates. Inevitably, attempts have been made to find settlements in the early periods and ceremonial sites amongst the archaeology of later periods. These have largely failed, in all probability because the basic categories that are being imposed (settlement, ritual site etc.) are inappropriate to material under scrutiny. New categories that are more sensitive to the archaeology itself are needed to overcome this interpretative conundrum.

The Stonehenge Environs Project and subsequent field walking and test-pitting programmes provide an extensive, although as yet incomplete, picture of activity at different times, mainly within the World Heritage Site (Illustration #74). From this work it is clear that different things happened in different places at different times. Models of settlement drift and the structuration of space have been applied to these data. Perhaps the most important focus of activity through prehistory and historic times is the valley of the River Avon and the slope-land on either side. Although heavily disturbed in places by modern settlement, a detailed study of this area, including the detailed mapping of existing finds and investigations, would not only create a better picture of the disparate material already recognized, but also allow better targeting of future research and development control activity.

There are limitations to what can be recovered through this approach, but the SEP is a very good example of its type. Work is currently in progress to re-analyze the lithic assemblages (see Section 4), and in due course the results will be integrated with the very extensive museum collections of flintwork that have built up over the last two centuries.

Equally important is the mapping of the fieldwalking data against archaeological features represented as earthworks and cropmarks on aerial photographs (Map #D). Picking all the cropmark evidence apart and setting out its relationships will need sample excavations and field-testing. The greatest potential for enhancing understandings of settlement patterns comes through combining geophysical and geochemical surveys to create detailed plots of anomalies to set alongside the aerial photographic evidence and broad use-pattern fingerprints to set

alongside the evidence of artefact scatters. In some cases the importance of such work revolves around the definition of incompletely known structures and monuments, for example the Stonehenge Palisade Ditch, and here blanket rather than selective geophysical studies are needed.

Combining data sets derived from a range of techniques, based as they are on different sample intervals and with markedly different constraints, will be a challenge for future data capture, storage, analysis, and visualization systems.

*Ceremony, ritual, and belief systems:* In one sense this is the most extensive and robust element of the database relating to the Stonehenge Landscape. The density of prehistoric ceremonial and ritual monuments in this small area is probably greater than for any other part of the British Isles. However, the proportion of sites that have been excavated to modern standards with opportunities for scientific studies that allow detailed insights into the date and sequence of events, spatial variations in the nature and extent of activities, and sampling for macroscopic and microscopic environmental data is very low. While much has been made of the results of antiquarian excavations, and there is undoubtedly more to be learnt; new excavations at typical sites within the Stonehenge Landscape are needed.

*Social organization:* Many papers and studies dealing with prehistoric social organization and socio-cultural evolution have used the Stonehenge area as a case study (e.g. Renfrew 1973a; Thomas 1999, 163-83), yet critical elements of picture are essentially missing. This is most acute in relation to habitation sites. It remains an outstanding issue as to whether people lived in the Stonehenge area at all; a secondary issue being whether such occupation may be temporary, seasonal, or more or less permanent. And beyond this there is the question of settlement size and composition. Only in this way will it be possible fully to address issues such as the scale and organization of social units.

*Economy, craft, and industry:* Although the Stonehenge Landscape is famed for its ritual and ceremonial monuments, recent surveys and the results of excavations over the last century or so show plentiful evidence for what is conventionally referred to as industrial activity, especially flint working. In fact of course, the

association of this work with ceremonial activity may not be fortuitous and this question of embeddedness between apparently diverse activities deserves further attention. Small-scale flintworking is represented at a surprising number of sites, throughout the fourth, third, and second millennia BC, amongst them: in the ditch of the Amesbury 42 long barrow, including re-fitting material (Harding in Richards 1990, 99-104); and in Christie's cutting V through the ditch of the Cursus (Saville 1978, 17). Larger-scale activity is represented by the working areas recognized at Wilsford Down (Richards 1990, 158-71) and the mines north of Durrington (Booth and Stone 1952). Geophysical surveys in both areas are needed to define more closely the extent of these activities, especially the presence of quarries and extraction pits.

Technical and comparative studies of *in-situ* flint-working assemblages have been undertaken by Saville (1978) and Harding (in Richards 1990, 213-225), while specific classes of flint artefact from sites in the Stonehenge Landscape include Riley's review of scrapers and petit tranchet derivative arrowheads (in Richards 1990, 225-28). Saville's (1978, 19) comments on the use of flint derived from the clay with flint deposits at the Winterbourne Stoke G45 barrow as against the more commonly exploited chalk-derived nodules serves to emphasize the need for further technological and typological analyses (and cf. Piggott 1971, 52-3).

*Trade and exchange:* Discussions of this theme have been dominated by the matter of the Stonehenge bluestones, their origins, and the means by which they came to Salisbury Plain. (Green 1997; Scourse 1997; Williams-Thorpe *et al.* 1997). Although the glacial-action theory has had many supporters over the years, human agency is generally considered the most likely means of transport. As suggested below, however, the further investigation of this topic requires work around the source areas in south-west Wales as well as on Salisbury Plain. The incidence of bluestone in other monuments around Stonehenge is often commented upon in excavation reports and remains intriguing. In some cases the material is assumed to be waste from dressing the pillars of the bluestone circles and horseshoe in Stonehenge 3. In other cases, as for example the block from Bowls Barrow (Cunnington 1889), the stone seems to be an original piece rather than waste. It has long been postulated that another bluestone

monument existed in the area, but this is as yet not proven. A quantification and mapping exercise to plot the density and spread of bluestone fragments within monuments around Stonehenge may be enough to highlight search areas to help pinpoint such a structure.

The bluestones and other structural components for monument building were by no means the only items being moved about the Stonehenge Landscape or brought in from other areas of Europe. In the early and middle Neolithic items such as the jadite axe from near Stonehenge and the stone axes from western and northern Britain. Together with several axes imported from Cornwall, mention may also be made of the gabbroic pottery identified by Peacock (1969) from Robin Hood's Ball on the very eastern edge of the distribution of such ware. Despite the potential for petrological work on the pottery from other Neolithic and Bronze Age sites in the Stonehenge Landscape, using both macroscopic and microscopic analysis, very little seems to have been done to date (*cf.* Cleal 1995).

During the later third millennium and early second millennium BC the range of imports to the area is increased with the availability of new stone sources, metal objects, and imported pottery. Amongst the stone artefacts known to date some of the finest include the Group XIII (spotted dolerite) axe-hammer from Wilsford G54 (Annable and Simpson 1964, 43), and the battle-axe from Shrewton barrow G27 (Annable and Simpson 1964, 49). The origin of possibly imported metal objects, shale, amber, and faience beads from Wessex Culture contexts have been extensively discussed (Branigan 1970; Barfield 1991; Watkins 1976; Newton and Renfrew 1970; McKerrell 1972; Needham 2000. Illustration #75). Bradley and Chapman (1986) have considered the general nature and development of long-distance relations in the later Neolithic of the British Isles.

The continuation of long-distance relationships into the later Iron Age may be suspected on the basis of coin finds which form part of a widespread pattern across southern England (De Jersey 1999).

### **Archaeoastronomical interest in Stonehenge and its landscape**

*Contributed by Clive Ruggles*

Over the years, the sarsen monument at Stonehenge has been portrayed variously as a cosmic temple (*e.g.* Hawkes 1962, 168; North 1996, xxxv; Aveni 1997, 85 and 91), a

calendrical device (*e.g.* Burl 1987, 202–4), and an astronomical observatory and calculating device or “computer” (Hawkins 1964; Newham 1966; Thom 1975; Hoyle 1977). Many of these ideas have attracted widespread public interest.

The majority of astronomical theories concerning Stonehenge are based on the idea that, at one stage or another, the monument incorporated deliberate architectural alignments upon horizon rising and setting positions of celestial bodies, particularly the sun or moon. To be plausible, such claims must be consistent with broader archaeological facts and chronologies, must be viable astronomically, and must also pay attention to the fact that astronomical alignments can easily arise fortuitously, since every oriented structure must point somewhere. Most of the ideas proposed in the 1960s and 1970s were subsequently shown to be seriously questionable on archaeological, astronomical, or statistical grounds, or a combination of these (Heggie 1981, 145–51 and 195–206; Chippindale 1983, 216–35; Castleden 1993, 18–27; Ruggles 1999a, 35–41).

A more general problem with theories of this type is that they tend to be based on drawing lines between points on a site plan of the monument or a map of the wider landscape - an abstract exercise undertaken from an external perspective. It is better to focus on how people experienced and perceived Stonehenge and its landscape, moving within or around it (Darvill 1997; Whittle 1997, 162). This opens up a vast range of possibilities, which are only just starting to be explored using modern computer techniques for 3D-visualization and for reconstructing ancient skies. However, it is important not to abandon quantitative studies of astronomical potential: a careful balance is needed (Ruggles 2001).

The solstitial axis of Stonehenge 3 remains the only really uncontentious astronomical alignment at the site (Ruggles 1997; Ruggles 1999a, 136–9. Illustration #76), although even here there is continuing debate as to whether the principal focus of attention was the midsummer sunrise to the north-east and/or the midwinter sunset to the south-west (*e.g.* Burl 1994; Parker Pearson and Ramilisonina 1998). It is generally accepted that the adjustment of the main axis to a solstitial orientation represented an attempt to reinforce the symbolic power of the monument at the time of its reconstruction in stone (*cf.*

Bradley 1993, 100). Despite much-quoted claims to the contrary, there are no structural features at Stonehenge 1 or 2 that convincingly indicate an earlier interest in the moon, although some evidence to support the idea has emerged recently from studies of the spatial patterning of carefully placed animal and human bone deposits, human cremations, and other artefacts in the ditch and Aubrey holes (Pollard and Ruggles 2001).

A more widespread but coarser concern with astronomy, manifested in consistencies of orientation amongst widely spread groups of monuments that could only have been achieved in relation to the diurnal motion of the sky, is evident even in the early Neolithic. Burl (Burl 1987, 26–8) has noted that the orientations of 65 long barrows on Salisbury Plain are consistently oriented between NNE and south. Although Burl's own lunar interpretation has been questioned (Pollard and Ruggles 2001) this pattern fits a "sun rising - sun climbing" explanation that applies to many groups of Neolithic tombs and temples throughout western Europe (Hoskin 2001). An alternative suggestion that alignments on various bright stars were widespread in early and middle Neolithic Wessex (North 1996) has been heavily criticised (Aveni 1996; Ruggles 1999b). Systematic studies of the siting and orientation of monuments in the Stonehenge area landscape, from the early Neolithic onwards, are needed to clarify such issues.

Broader cosmologies remain relatively unexplored. Darvill (1997, 186–7) has presented a case that Stonehenge 2 and 3 lay at the centre of a conceptual quadripartitioning of space, demarcated by the solstitial directions, that influenced patterns of monument construction and many other activities (e.g. flint mining). The spatial distribution of "formal" deposits at Stonehenge itself bears strongly upon this issue, but because the available data are limited to the eastern part of the site, their ability to distinguish between various possible prevailing cosmological schemas is severely limited, something that would be altered drastically if it were ever possible to excavate critical sections of the north-western and south-western parts of the ditch.

## Stonehenge in its region

There can be few if any times in prehistoric and historic times when the Stonehenge Landscape as defined here represented the total living-space of a community; the Stonehenge Landscape must be seen as part of much larger environments, territories, and regions. Such spaces can be seen in the structure of medieval and later administrative and political units, first estates, townships, and hundreds; more recently parishes, districts, and counties. Working backwards, the Stonehenge Landscape lies towards the northwest corner of the Roman *civitas* of the *Belgae* centred on *Venta Belgarum* (Winchester). This administrative region may have provided many of the social, political, and economic needs of the numerous communities living around Stonehenge (Frere 1967, figure 1). How far back the geographical limits of these tribal units can be projected is not known, but it is interesting that throughout the later first millennium BC and early first millennium AD the Stonehenge Landscape was on the edge of, or at the junction of, a series of four or five large territorial units extending off in all directions. A similar territory may have existed in the 6th and 5th centuries BC to judge from the distribution of All Cannings Cross – Meon Hill style pottery (Cunliffe 1991, figure 4.4). Ellison's (1981) analysis of Deverel-Rimbury ceramics of the later second millennium BC allows the recognition of a wide distribution of Type I fine wares across central southern England, again possibly indicative of a social territory of some kind. In the second millennium BC differences in the construction styles of round barrows either side of Bokerley Dyke / River Avon have been noted, at least in relation to its southern reaches (Bowen 1990, 79-81) with ring-and-tongue barrows confined to the area west of the line and elongated paired barrows only east of the line.

During the third millennium BC, when Stonehenge was at its zenith, there is some evidence to suggest that the group of monuments hereabouts was at the centre rather than the edge of a sphere of interest. In this connection it is interesting that the Stonehenge Landscape lies fairly central to the main distribution of Case's Group D series Beaker pots (Case 1993, 260-3 and figure 3). All across Britain there are major ceremonial centres of the third millennium BC at intervals of about 40-50 km. Around Stonehenge these include Knowlton to the south; Priddy to the west; Marden and Avebury to the north; and Dorchester on Thames to the northeast. Each

comprises a selection of monuments of similar general types drawn from a fairly long list of possibilities: henges, henge enclosures, palisade enclosures, henge-forms, pit circles, cursuses, and so on. Many lie near earlier foci. Various interpretations have been placed on these sites, amongst them the idea of central places within substantial chieftain-based territories (Renfrew 1973a, 547-54), or that they were fixed points within cycles of movement by essentially peripatetic communities (Barrett 1994; Whittle 1997c).

In the fourth millennium BC the region within which the Stonehenge Landscape fits might be rather different and based more on the catchment of the Avon and the group of long barrows and oval barrows clustered to the west side of the Avon and around the Nine Mile River (Ashbee 1984a, figure 6). These may be associated with the causewayed enclosure at Robin Hood's Ball and in Renfrew's model of Neolithic Wessex (1973a: Illustration #77) forms the east Salisbury Plain region.

Still greater uncertainty attaches to what can be said about the relationships of the area before about 4000 BC. Roger Jacobi (1979) has mapped the regional variations in tool type for the later Mesolithic to create a series of social territories across northwest Europe. On this model, the Stonehenge Landscape lies within an extensive territory between areas characterized by Wealden type assemblages to the east and the southwestern type to the west. No distinctive type of assemblage is defined for what is essentially Wessex; doing so remains a challenge for the future and is important in setting the scene for the development of the regionally distinct traditions and territories already referred to.

## **Stonehenge worlds**

Beyond its region the archaeology of the Stonehenge Landscape suggests much wider connections for the communities who occupied it. Here there is no one Stonehenge World but a whole series of spatially diverse worlds. Focusing on the Age of Stonehenge, the fourth to second millennia BC, it is clear that the groupings of monuments at different periods within that period are replicated in many other parts of the British Isles from mainland Orkney (Ritchie 1990; Barclay 2000) to the Boyne Valley of Ireland (Eogan 1997), and the Carnac area of Brittany (Burl 2000, 331-48). The range of monument types represented at each of these centres varies, but the age-span and

essential mix of ceremonial enclosures, burial monuments, stone settings, and residential sites concentrated in an area of perhaps 20 square kilometres remains constant. In this sense, what we see in the Stonehenge Landscape and its surrounding region is entirely consistent with the activities of other communities in the Stonehenge World at the same time.

Movements and contacts within the Stonehenge World have long been recognized. These are most obviously visible in the range of raw materials used in the construction of Stonehenge 3, much of which must ultimately have derived from outwith the Stonehenge Landscape and probably from outwith the Stonehenge Region. The sarsen stones, the biggest elements in the construction, are most likely to have come from the Marlborough Downs some 40km to the north (Green 1997, 260-3; and see Bowen and Smith 1977), although difficulties with the petrology have been raised (Howard in Pitts 1982) and other possible source areas such as the Dorset downs and eastern Kent deserve to be more fully investigated. It is possible that more than one source is represented.

Since the early 1920s, when H H Thomas confirmed by petrological analysis earlier suggestions (Thomas 1923), it has been known that the bluestones used in Stonehenge 3 ultimately derive from the Preseli Hills of southwest Wales (Illustration #78), as too the rhyolite and the sandstone used for the Altar Stone (Green 1997 with earlier references). Much debate has surrounded the means by which these stones reached the Stonehenge Landscape but the inescapable conclusion is that they were brought there by human agency whether rolled along on logs, carried on sledges or stretchers, or loaded onto boats and shipped by water. Stone axes and perforated stone implements were moved in much the same way; the impressive thing about the bluestones being not the fact that they moved but the scale of the achievement. As with the sarsens, however, there is still much work to be done in exploring the sources of the stones, especially in the application of archaeological fieldwork to unpick the cultural landscape, rather than the purely geological landscape, of the Preseli Hills and surrounding areas.

The novelty of Stonehenge and the richness and variety of objects deposited as grave goods in the surrounding barrows has long attracted attention in terms of the wider social, cultural, and trading links represented. In 1938, Stuart Piggott made a very strong case

for links between his Wessex Culture of southern England and the early Bronze Age of northern France, especially Brittany (Piggott 1938). These proposed links were investigated further by Sabine Gerloff (1975) in a study of early British daggers which essentially reinforced Piggott's views. More recently, Stuart Needham (2000) has suggested that there is little evidence for the migration of more than a few individuals between the two areas and that similarities between them were driven by the procurement of exotic materials and goods through what he calls "cosmological acquisition".

Debate has also surrounded possible parallel connections between the same regions in terms of monument construction, design, and meaning. Aubrey Burl (1997) proposed a series of similarities between the form of Stonehenge 3 and the rock art it carried with various horseshoe-shaped settings and rock art in Brittany, a view subsequently challenged by Scarre (1997) who prefers the autonomous development of these structures and motifs in the two areas. However, focusing on relatively few sites and limited geographical areas rather misses the point. Connections along the Atlantic façade of Europe through prehistoric and later times are well established and well documented (Cunliffe 2001, 213-60); what is needed is a more wide-ranging review of similarities and differences in the structure and form of stone monuments dating to the later third and second millennia BC throughout the Irish Sea basin and western approaches.

Continental links extending beyond the stone circles and megalithic constructions are represented in the form and structure of round barrows and the timber monuments. The use of stake-circles within barrow mounds has long been recognized as a regular feature of monuments on both sides of the English Channel, but especially in southern England and the Netherlands (Van Giffen 1938; Glasbergen 1954; Gibson 1998a, 70-5). There are also close similarities in the design of some metal artefacts and in the form and decoration of the associated ceramic vessels in the two regions, especially the Wessex bi-conical urns and the Hilversum and Drakenstein urns of the Netherlands and surrounding areas (Butler and Smith 1956; ApSimon 1972. Illustration #79). Gibson (1998a, 63-70) has drawn attention to certain similarities between the design of British palisaded enclosures and contemporary examples on the continental mainland. Recognizing that the English Channel is as

likely to encourage communications rather than hinder it, and that continental Europe is rather closer to central southern England than many northern and western parts of the British Isles there is clearly much scope for further studies of early prehistoric artefacts and monuments. That communities living in or visiting the Stonehenge Landscape were closely involved in those connections, perhaps through links with coastal communities via the River Avon, is amply demonstrated by the presence of imported objects such as the Armorican vase à anses from Winterbourne Stoke G5 (Tomalin 1988, 209-10).

Still longer-distance relationships have been proposed for elements of the archaeology of the Stonehenge Landscape. Gordon Childe (19\*\*, \*\*) and Oscar Montelius (1903, \*\*) amongst many others long ago suggested that the architecture of Stonehenge has similarities with the fortified citadels of Mycenaean Greece, and that some of the rich grave goods of the Wessex Culture barrows could be paralleled amongst objects from the Shaft Graves of Mycenae itself (and see Piggott 1938, 94-6; Atkinson 1979, 165-6). This Aegean view, and the diffusionist perspective that it represented, were called into question by Colin Renfrew (1968; 1973b) when it became apparent from radiocarbon dating that the main features of Stonehenge were more than 1000 years older than the supposed prototypes in Greece. Discussion and debate has continued because further dating has made the picture still more complicated (see Selkirk 1972 for useful summary; also Barfield 1991). Here it is important to separate out Stonehenge itself from the rich graves round about. The construction and associated primary use of Stonehenge can now be placed very clearly within the third millennium; as noted above there is very little evidence for constructional work after about 2000 BC, although it may of course have continued in use in the form that it had reached at that stage. This is clearly too early for Mycenaean connections and Renfrew's argument stands. The rich graves of Piggott's Wessex Culture belong mainly to the first half of the second millennium BC and thus appear to post-date the main constructional activity at Stonehenge. Within the broad span of the early second millennium BC, however, the dating of Wessex Culture burials remains difficult and it is still uncertain as to what extent the conventionally recognized Wessex I and II should be seen as successive, partly overlapping in duration, or essentially

contemporaneous; this is a matter that could usefully be clarified by a programme of radiocarbon dating material from excavated graves. With the dating of the Mycenaean Shaft Graves and associated material culture to the period from 1600 BC through to about 1200 BC (Harding 1984, \*) there is clearly some chronological overlap and thus the possibility of links whether through the exchange of actual objects (*cf.* Branigan 1970) or the transfer of knowledge. Given the links between southern England and northern France, however, any wider contacts with the Mediterranean world are likely to have been indirect through much wider networks of relationships with communities falling within the Reinecke A1-B1 horizons of central Europe rather than by direct exchange or extensive population movements (and see Gerloff 1975, 245-6; Harding 1984, \*\*).

Long-distance links between communities in the Stonehenge Landscape and other parts of Europe should not be ruled out. In 1962 Stuart Piggott published a remarkable paper entitled "Salisbury Plain to south Siberia" in which he explored the relationships of the perforated bone points and associated objects from Upton Lovell barrow 4, Wiltshire, finding parallels in a "well defined but scattered series of similar interments stretching across Eurasia from the Baltic Sea to Lake Baikal" (Piggott 1962, 93). The Upton Lovell barrow lies 17km west of Stonehenge but well within the central distribution of Wessex Culture barrows. That the occupant of the grave might be a shaman was tentatively considered by Piggott (1962, 96) and has been taken up by others since (*e.g.* Burl 1987, 167-8). Shell (2000) has also raised the possibility, originally noted by John Thurnam, that this is a metalworkers grave. In all these, of course, the question of how people in the notional Stonehenge Landscape, Stonehenge Region, and Stonehenge World related to each other may be as much about the role, place, and connections of specific individuals in the past as it is about the more generalized relationships between communities implied by the study of whole artefact assemblages and monumental constructions.

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